

Harvard Allston Task Force
Meeting Minutes
Wednesday, August 22, 2007
Honan-Allston Library
6:30 p.m.

I. Attendance

Harvard Allston Task Force

Paul Berkeley
John Bruno
Cathi Campbell
John Cusack
Rita DiGesse
Brian Gibbons
Mike Hanlon
Bruce Houghton
Harry Mattison
Millie McLaughlin
Ray Mellone, Chair

Harvard University

Will Donham
Harris Band
Peggy Hayes
Ken Johnson
Kevin McCluskey
Alison Reinhardt
Kathy Spiegelman
Ed LeFlore, CSL, Construction Mitigation Consultant
Taya Dixon, Epsilon Associates

City of Boston

Gerald Autler, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Mike Glavin, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Commissioner Tom Tinlin, Boston Transportation Department (BTD)
Vineet Gupta, Boston Transportation Department (BTD)
Bill Conroy, Boston Transportation Department (BTD)
Paul Holloway, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS)

Harvard Allston Task Force chair Ray Mellone began the meeting at 6:34 p.m. Ray made several announcements, which were:

1. There are some events still going on related to the review of the Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR) for the proposed Allston Science Complex: Aug. 23, 2007 there is a MEPA Consultation meeting to review the Environmental Notification Form (ENF) filing

for the Allston Science Complex at the Spangler Center Auditorium at the Harvard Business School.

2. Aug. 27, 2007 - Task Force meeting. The meeting will likely include review of the issues that come up at the MEPA meeting on August 23rd.
3. Aug. 28, 2007 - Boston Civic Design Commission (BCDC) design subcommittee will be meeting at the Harvard Graduate School of Design to look at a scale model of the Harvard Allston Science Complex.
4. Sept. 4, 2007 – BCDC will hold a hearing on the merits of the design and public realm issues of the Allston Science Complex.
5. Sept. 10, 2007 – Task Force meeting at the Honan-Allston library- Kairos Shen, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) will give an update.
6. Sept. 27, 2007 – The BRA meets to decide whether Harvard has met the scoping requirements. If so, then Harvard may be able to present to the Boston Zoning Commission on the IMP Amendment.

Ray then turned the meeting over to Gerald Autler for some BRA updates.

1. The BCDC meeting will be held at the Harvard Graduate School of Design because the physical model of the Allston Science Complex is located there for an exhibit. Typically these meetings are held at Boston City Hall. Therefore, the meeting has not been moved out of Allston, as these meetings are normally held in City Hall anyway.

Q: Audience Member- Is the BRA Board meeting on the September 27th open to the public?

A: Gerald – yes, and audience members can share their comments directly to the BRA Board of Directors.

Kathy Spiegelman gave the Harvard updates, after seconding Ray's thanks to those who continue to come to the Task Force meetings every week.

1. Regarding the confusion about why Harvard has not replaced sidewalks on North Harvard Street – back in 1997 when Harvard had an Institutional Master Plan approved, replacement sidewalks were part of that agreement. Most of the improvements were completed, but the North Harvard Street improvements were postponed until 2006 because there was a plan in the works that included a more major reworking of North Harvard Street. Harvard has agreed with the City that it will redo the sidewalk, as was agreed to back in 1997 and postponed to 2006, even though in the next few years more extensive work may be done again. Harvard plans to do full concrete sidewalks, not just patch jobs. Harvard has submitted design drawings to the City of Boston. Upon approval from the City, Harvard expects to begin the work in September.
2. In addition, Harvard has simultaneously submitted a plan to do similar sidewalk improvements in front of Harvard's property along the north side of Western Avenue, going west from Barry's Corner. If Harvard has more to update on this, she will continue to share it at next week's meeting.
3. Regarding the construction fence, Harvard has received some responses about the different heights, and is still looking for specific answers from the property owners whose property abuts where the fence is going. There are issues of noise protection, but also shading and enclosure feelings that have to be considered. Harvard is also looking for

general opinion regarding an 8', 12' or 16' fence along the entire site. Harvard will take comments until the end of August and then bring the results back to the Task Force.

4. Last week, there were several requests to extend the comment period for the MEPA process. The filing with MEPA consists of information that was part of the IMPNF filing that was submitted in January and the DPIR filing submitted in June. Harvard is not offering to extend it past September 7, so that a decision will come from MEPA that coincides with the decision on the DPIR. The information in the MEPA filing is the same as in the DPIR that has been discussed at the Task Force meetings all summer. We're hoping to hear the public comments at the meeting tomorrow.

Ray then asked Commissioner Tom Tinlin of the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) to give his updates. Tom also thanked everyone who has participated and has appreciated being part of the process.

1. All of the signs for the resident parking program have been fabricated. Usually, before the signs go up there is a final community meeting to make the community aware before they go up, where exactly they will go up, and what the community can expect.
2. In regards to the construction truck routes for the Allston Science Complex, during the beginning stages of construction, BTD is going to allow trucks to use existing roadways so new roads don't have to be built. The impact on traffic flow will be monitored.
3. Traffic Access Plan Agreement (TAPA)– This is an agreement that will be worked about between BTD and Harvard and it will cover things like the scheduling of deliveries, trucks, construction. We will continue to work with you on the development of the TAPA with Harvard.
4. BTD asked Harvard to look at at-grade access from the Turnpike ramp to the construction site in order to eliminate the impact from the trucks. BTD received the analysis from Harvard today, and hasn't had a chance to go through it yet. Once BTD reviews the analysis, it will come back to the community to share its review and determine what can be done.
5. There has been some discussion of queuing up trucks along Western Ave, but BTD agrees that that is not a good idea. One of the things BTD has been looking at is queuing trucks along the Harvard-owned roadway Rotterdam Street, and having good police enforcement so no truck traffic in the residential streets adjacent to that roadway. That would eliminate the need to have the queue along Western.
6. Regarding resident parking: BTD has preliminary plans, and the signs are ready. The community is getting resident parking and it will be enforced. The Mayor has heard loud and clear what this neighborhood wants, and he has directed Tinlin to take care of it.
7. Regarding construction worker parking, Tinlin suggested that the site behind the Sears slab continued to be considered as a location for construction worker parking. In his experience, the more centralized the parking is, the fewer problems that will arise, especially in the winter months. All of these issues are a part of construction management, and will be subject to ongoing discussion. If community members have problems, BTD can continue to address these issues.

Q: Harry Mattison– what about CSX's abandoned rail line? Has that been considered as an option?

A: Commissioner Tinlin – it’s all under consideration – we at the city need to better understand what the CSX issues are. We have an initial plan, which is to use the existing roadway network, but if we can move it to the Harvard roadways (as analyzed in the plans we got today) as well as the rail line, then I think that would be better overall.

Commissioner Tinlin said there would be a small walkway for construction workers to get from the construction worker parking lot to the job site. He said some of the solutions sound very simple, but sometimes the simplest thing is the most difficult to do. Regarding construction workers exiting the parking lot onto Cambridge Street, BTM would need to work out the schedules and the signal timing – no one is talking about 400 cars leaving the job site at the same time at rush hour.

Q: Harry Mattison– Would BTM consider asking Harvard to locate worker parking to the west of the construction site by the Comcast site and VW dealership? There’s something like 8 acres of land over there, and Harvard plans to use it for the construction manager’s offices, not parking.

A: Commissioner Tinlin – The more parking you have closer to the site, the better. The more dedicated parking lots, the less likely it is that someone is going to park elsewhere.

Bruce Houghton said CSX has changed their routes for their trucks. If CSX could discharge their trucks through their other exit, then the output along this exit in combination with Harvard’s construction truck traffic would be neutral.

A: Commissioner Tinlin – there have been a lot of options available. We’ve been challenging Harvard’s assumptions that one way is better than another. We don’t want them to rule out a plan without presenting us the data. We just got more analysis today on one option. I don’t want to get hung up about a conversation about CSX, because none of their representatives are in the room, and I don’t want to put all our eggs in a basket we have no control over. Right now, as commissioner of the BTM, this is what I have to work with. My charge and goal is to protect this neighborhood during that construction period. I need to make sure that the quality of life in this neighborhood is not damaged. BTM doesn’t walk away after the project receives approval – everyone from the Mayor on down realizes the importance of this issue and the need to protect the neighborhood.

Q: Rita DiGesse– The Genzyme trucks are already coming down North Harvard Street. No matter how many signs you put up, they’re all going to go down North Harvard, because it’s easier.

Commissioner Tinlin said he would talk to Rita about this further after the meeting and said he was happy to come to her home to observe the traffic in order to figure out what’s going on. He said he is happy to help resolve this.

Q: Audience Member- You’ve got to build an overpass off of the Turnpike loop. Harvard has said “we can’t, because of the CSX easement.” And I guess that’s where you stop, if you’re just talking to lawyers. But it is the best solution that should be done.

A: Commissioner Tinlin - That’s exactly the analysis we asked Harvard to do – provide the analysis, and we’ll take a look. Again, construction management does not begin and end with

votes and deadlines. We do know that it costs money, and it has to do with CSX, but until we have all the information, we can't make a decision about it. I'll tell you one thing right now: I'm not going to sign off on something that I don't believe in my heart of hearts is good. I'm going to give you the best that I can give.

Q: Paul Berkeley— at around 6 a.m., there are also trucks with huge building pieces idling in Brighton Mills and in front of Harvard Stadium. They're using the lots to camp out overnight.

A: Commissioner Tinlin - Sometimes when you have a regional trucking route – if they arrive at the scene before they have to be there to do deliveries, they sometimes find somewhere to crash for a bit. But I'll take it up and follow up on that. We'll send someone out there in the morning to find out what's going on- who they are and where they're coming from.

Q: Audience Member- The alternate queuing road that you suggested—Rotterdam Street— would that be closed to automobile traffic?

A: Commissioner Tinlin— no, the trucks will be lined up on one side (Not idling, per law. The law will allow a maximum 5 minutes for idling). So the local traffic has two lanes, and the trucks have one lane on the side – one direction in, and out the same direction they came in.

Q: Brian Gibbons- Who's going to be enforcing that?

A: Commissioner Tinlin – The police and the city officials. If you call and let us know the problem, then it's the government's responsibility to do something about it. If there's a road that consistently has a large amount of trucks on it, then we'll send someone out to wait for them and stop them. We'll come up with an enforcement plan to fix the problem.

Commissioner Tinlin also mentioned the need to discuss the ability to install cameras in traffic signals and around the intersections to see what's going on. He and the BTM want to be as proactive as possible, because that will help them respond more readily should there be a problem.

Q: Harry Mattison— Is the enforcement something you can ask the developer to fund? Between enforcing resident permit parking and stopping idling trucks, that could be a fulltime job, and there's not that many people.

A: Commissioner Tinlin— When you anticipate there being a problem, you fix it. You've shown me where the problems are and what your concerns are, but then it's up to me to fix it. Leave it to me to worry about the resources. If we need more resources, then we'll have that discussion at a future time. We do this all the time in other areas of the city. I understand that this is real and new to you because you're dealing with this, but trust me, we know how to deal with this. (I promised I'd never say "trust me" in public meetings – so, I guess "give me the chance to mess it up".)

Q: I don't see why all of a sudden, we need to mess with cameras.

A: Commissioner Tinlin - Cameras and traffic signals are part of the process of the TAPA. Before dirt starts getting kicked around, we want to make sure we have the plan to deal with it. We need to be proactive in getting this out there during construction, as opposed to after it's done and we need to deal with the traffic flow. Once those cameras are there, they're staying.

And don't worry about "Big Brother" watching – they don't record a full tape, and the only people we share the tapes with are other government agencies.

Q: How will BTD and Harvard monitor the dirt from the trucks going all over the community?

A: Ed LeFlore – We've developed a plan that includes a kind of filter fabric, and a type of basket that keeps the filter fabric in place, so that dirt doesn't clog the catch basins. Also, full-time street sweeping will be in place, and we'll have a wheel washing system so that when the trucks leave the site, there will be hardly any dirt on them. These filters are a requirement by law.

Ray passed the floor back to Kathy to open the discussion on historic resources. She introduced Taya Dixon of Epsilon Associates to discuss the Historic Resources chapter of the DPIR.

Taya explained that historic resources may include sites above and below ground, such as bridges, buildings, or archaeological sites. They cover properties listed in state and national registers of historical places, and the Inventory of the Historic and Archaeological Assets of the Commonwealth, a list of over 5,000 properties across the state that have been surveyed. There are no historic resources on the science center site itself, and the closest buildings near the site are a local school building, and the area around the Harvard Business School. Since there are no buildings directly impacted, the DPIR looks at indirect impacts – such as shadow and visual impacts - on these close sites.

Taya also discussed the City's Article 85 review which deals with demolition delay. She said that there are 6 buildings on the science center site that need to be torn down and which are over 50 years of age. An application has been submitted to the Boston Landmarks Commission for four of the buildings, and the Commission found that demolition on those can go forward. The Massachusetts Historical Commission, as part of Chapter 254, looks at impact to historical resources listed in the national registers. They will comment on the MEPA review.

Q: Are there any anticipated problems with the remaining 2 buildings?

A: Taya – No. All the buildings on the site have been significantly altered since they were built, so they likely don't have the historical integrity that would pose a problem and make them historically significant.

Q: Can new buildings become historic?

A: Taya - Generally 50 years is a standard cut-off for the historic preservation community, but there are some that have risen to that level in less time.

The Boston Landmarks Commission typically asks that new buildings have a date plaque so people know when it was constructed.

Q: Millie - Where do we find these date plaques?

A: We usually don't see them on private residences, but in many municipal buildings, there's a stone that's carved by a mason. It's often the corner stone.

Ray then opened the meeting for public comments and questions.

Q: John Cusack – Kathy, after the sidewalks on North Harvard Street, do you have a date when you're going to pursue the sidewalks on Western Ave?

A: Kathy Spiegelman– the idea is to do the whole thing in sequence.

Q: Millie Hollum McLaughlin– On the height of the fence, what kind of response have you gotten so far? Are people leaning toward one height or another? In particular on Western Ave. or in the neighborhood?

A: Kathy Spiegelman– Harvard has received 31 responses: 10 have voted for 8', 11 have voted for 12', and 8 have voted for 16', and 2 people commented but did not vote. We thought that we would collect all of the responses until August 31, and then we would present it to the Task Force, and you'd help us decide.

Q: Harry Mattison– regarding the landscaping, the landscaping proposed doesn't seem to be on the level of what is in Cambridge, and I wonder if the Task Force can encourage something more attractive and substantial.

An audience member said she asked Harvard about this issue a few weeks ago, and that it wasn't willing to put in mature trees because the trees are temporary and will eventually be moved.

A: Kathy –Spiegelman it was intended to be a buffer between residential properties and the fence, and it's not meant to be there permanently. There will be landscaping associated with the new development of that property, and it probably won't be just a strip of trees.

A: Kevin McCluskey– we understand the concern of the residents and we're trying to buffer the fence as much as we can.

Q: John Bruno – do you not anticipate anything that could be more permanent?

John Cusack clarified that this is supposed to be temporary. Residents don't necessarily want to have something like this in their backyards permanently. The residents have asked for it to be as tall and dense as would be necessary to block out the construction.

A: Kathy Spiegelman– when we go over the review of the master plan, we will talk about landscaped edges between the community and Harvard.

Q: John Cusack – The fence and the trees are paired, so can we assume that if we have a 16' fence, then the trees will be at least 16' tall?

A: Ken Johnson- that's the kind of feedback Harvard is looking to get from the community through this process.

Bruce Houghton made the following comments:

1. We've still done a very incomplete job of discussing community benefits. For example, the park that Harvard proposed is undefined – who will own it, and where it will be. They've also proposed daycare, but it's not fixed, and the resources are not firmly dedicated to it. I also don't know anything about the educational needs assessment – who is going to perform the survey, who is the advisory committee going to report to, and when are the results of the assessment going to be presented to the community?

2. I don't understand what the Task Force is supposed to do here. We've asked a lot of questions that haven't been answered, but I don't know what is expected of us by the city. Are we supposed to make a recommendation based on our discussions? I think everyone is agreed that we want this building, but we have a lot of questions that have to be answered. Are our questions just going to be taken into consideration by the city, and go from there, or do we have a more concrete role? What does the BRA expect from us?

Gerald said community benefits is an area that still needs to be developed more. He said the Task Force shouldn't feel like the clock stops ticking on September 10th – the discussion continues on after that. He said there's a lot of work that needs to still be done before the BRA Board vote so that everyone feels comfortable that there's a broad-based package of community benefits even if every detail hasn't been worked out. The fine details get worked out as the Cooperation Agreement is prepared, and typically that happens after the Board vote.

Gerald said the focus of the meetings through the summer has been to look at the DPIR and try to come to a conclusion about it, which is primarily about the impact of the physical building itself. He said he hopes that after a year and a half of work, people feel that this process has helped to shape the building in various ways and that is the primary way the Task Force has played a role in this. He said Task Force members may feel like some of their concerns haven't been addressed and answered, but he hopes that people feel comfortable with the notion that this is a building they want to see get built, and can find a way of expressing that while also making clear the things that need to continue to be worked on and addressed.

Q: Bruce Houghton- So is that what we should discuss at the next meeting?

A: Gerald - You've been making a running list, and it's up to Harvard to respond to all these things. If you come to a consensus, I think you should articulate those concerns in any official way you feel necessary.

Q: Bruce - I guess what bothers me is that, after sitting here for a year and a half, now we're at D-Day where the plan has to be approved, but we have benefits, a park and a plan that are unclearly defined. And you go and approve the building, and the BTM will mitigate the transportation, but there could have been a whole lot more done. How does the BRA, once they've given approval for the building, negotiate those things after the building is being built? Do we do it by not approving the museum or the master plan? Where is our leverage?

A: Gerald – The building can't get built until there's a Cooperation Agreement signed. Harvard is not going to get a permit until there's a specific package of community benefits and a signed legal contract.

A: Commissioner Tinlin – The BRA Board vote is not the approval of “a building” – Harvard is given the right to develop a site. That is the time when you can get into deeper discussion about things like daycare slots. You don't lose your voice on those dates; if anything you gain momentum because it forces people to come to the table and ask how they can make you happy. This is merely the beginning of a “different type of process” rather than the end of the process.

A: Gerald – At the same time I also agree with you Bruce, before the board takes a vote on this we want a much clearer package of community benefits worked out.

Q: Bruce Houghton– we’re losing our negotiating strength is what worries me.

Gerald and Commissioner Tinlin both stated that this is a misconception – the negotiating strength continues throughout the next phase of the process. Ray also stated that the Task Force needs to take a “leap of faith” in the fact that the discussions will continue and the Task Force will continue to have input.

Kevin McCluskey added: I’d ask you to also judge us by what we’ve done when we do not have any projects on the board – a whole host of benefits that Harvard has provided to the neighborhood when not required to by a specific project’s Cooperation Agreement. I don’t think casting it in the light of a “negotiating leverage” is the right way to look at it. We’re committed to working with folks in the long term, and we’ve demonstrated good will in the past.

Bruce responded: all the benefits that you’ve delivered to this community are appreciated, so thank you. However, relative to the scale of effort that you’ve placed in this one building alone, and relative to the resources of urban planning and public health and the ability to provide services to the community, I don’t think Harvard has paid the attention or provided the resources that you could have or should have for community benefits for this building.

Kathy stated that it is Harvard’s thinking that the community benefits will be developed in conjunction with the Task Force and with the representatives of the community, because Harvard doesn’t know this community as well as the residents. She said Harvard is striving for collaboration and benefits that we can look back on in 100 years and be proud of together. Kathy said at her presentation on community benefits last week included a specific timeline of the plan and needs assessment survey.

Kathy then continued to detail elements of the plans that have been specified and presented in previous Task Force meetings. She said there are specifics around some issues, but a lot of them haven’t been totally decided yet, because Harvard wants to involve the Task Force.

Q: Audience member - What’s going to happen on September 17? I’ve heard different answers, including “absolutely nothing” and “trust each other” etc.

A: Gerald – where did you hear that nothing was going to happen?

Q: I’ve heard that we’re still going to be able to negotiate, so it seems that nothing important is going to happen?

A: Gerald – The date is September 27th not September 17th. If there is a BRA board vote on that day, then an approval would be a major milestone, so I don’t want to suggest that nothing important is happening. The vote would essentially approve the Article 80 process and also let Harvard continue on to the Zoning Commission. But, as we’ve talked about, there are other elements to this – the construction management plan, the Cooperation Agreement – so there are other things that need to be dealt with before Harvard can complete their process and get permission to build the building.

Gerald proposed to the Task Force that he help them work to get something concrete together regarding community benefits that can be presented to the BRA board so that the Task Force and Community can all feel comfortable that there is something specific in the works.

Q: John Bruno - There should be some benefits tied in specifically to the science building, separate from the benefits associated with the master plan as a whole – for example, day care slots, and jobs for Allston-Brighton residents to work in the science building, etc.

Q: Millie – No one wants to minimize the things that Harvard has done, but I personally feel a responsibility to make sure we can point to something that we as Task Force members have accomplished for our community. It's not meant to be critical of what Harvard has done – we don't like to play it up, because we're trying to get more.

A: Kevin McCluskey– I don't take it as criticism – what we're trying to do is make sure that we can work with the community and make sure that you can get those things to point to.

A: Ray – the process doesn't end on September 10th – it's just a stepping stone. Maybe the BRA will decide that it doesn't want to give initial or automatic approval. If they say that a preponderance of issues have not been resolved, they may not let it go forward.

Q: Audience member – assuming the BRA Board votes to support the project, at what point do the Task Force and the community have further input with the Zoning Commission?

Q: Gerald – in terms of community benefits, what's a process from here on out that will make people feel comfortable? Maybe while most Task Force members are focusing on the DPIR, some others can focus on community benefits. Let's figure out a way that you can get some comfort over the next month that the package of benefits is the right one for this project.

A: Bruce – if you tell me and the city tells me that, at this moment, we have ongoing input, and the negotiations will go on with the strength and power that they had before the building was approved, then why should this committee need to focus for the next 6 months on the museum building coming up and the 50 year plan. In conjunction with Harvard's long term plan, this community should also have a long term plan with what kind of benefits we would like to see. That would mean that every time Harvard comes up with a new building, then this Task Force would be able to go back to a plan that to a significant degree had an understanding and the support of the community. We never finished the discussion of what our goals are.

Millie – that would mean we need a certain amount of time allotted for this. [Bruce suggested allotting the next 6 months of meetings.]

Ray warned that the community shouldn't tie the community master plan to Harvard's institutional master plan, because if Harvard (hypothetically) stopped its master plan after the science building, the community couldn't force Harvard to continue building something they didn't want to build. He stressed that whatever entity owns a property has the right to do whatever they want with their property. He doesn't think the way Bruce phrased it is the right way – it doesn't sit well with him. He thinks we have to look at it as a benefits package, more than a requirement that will match this benefit with this building.

Q: Millie – how much time goes between the approval of the DPIR and the time when the first permit is issued?

A: Gerald – a lapse of at least 20 days needs to occur before they go the Zoning Commission for approval. Probably about a month is the absolute minimum amount of time possible if everything falls into place.

Q: Millie - When we agree to the community aspect part of that, that's like a lien that attaches to the building, correct?

A: Gerald - Yes – there's a signed legal contract that's enforceable.

Q: So, Ray, were you thinking that we'd have 20+ days to deal with this?

A: Ray – I think we should have as many days as we are comfortable with.

Harry expressed his concern that, although the construction sounds like it's going in the right direction, the BTDC just got more analysis today, and the Task Force has never seen a model that accurately presents what the science complex will look like, among many other things that have been mentioned in the Task Force meetings but never decided upon, such as the number of parking spaces below the building, the amount and type of retail on the first floor, the location of the parking and loading dock ramps.

Harry's remarks were followed by some discussion, in which Harvard representatives stated that the model and plans that have been presented to the Task Force are simply the way the architectural firm hired for the job does its models.

Harry stated that to characterize it as a community benefits issue is just a piece of it. He added that the idea that the BRA is willing to waive discussions about that and say 'ok, we're done' doesn't seem right. Harry said Kairos Shen is going to be at the meeting on September 10 with his design for the public realm, and since that's the last day of the comment period, there seems to be something amiss with the process, and the community isn't getting enough of a say.

A: Gerald – Kairos is working on suggested changes to the timing and implementation of the public realm improvements, but he's not proposing things that no one has ever seen before.

Q: Harry – but he's going to show us specific details that we haven't ever seen before. It's strange that the BRA doesn't want more time to review all the elements of this project.

A: Gerald – the BRA hasn't said that, and there are ongoing discussions between all the parties involved. I hope that you would have some ability to trust that, for example, in terms of design the building has been reviewed extensively by the BRA's designers and by the BCDC, which includes architects that are some of the best in the area and in fact the nation. Other elements of the proposal have been presented to other city agencies, which are weighing the issues and discussing the project.

Q: Harry – it's more, I think, a question of public review. When all these things are still changing, and BTDC just got the information today, then there is no public comment in the end, because what can we comment on if none of the information has been presented in time to give us an opportunity to understand it?

Q: Ray – if the BRA decides there are issues that need to be resolved after the 27th would the Task Force get a copy of the agreement for public record?

A: Gerald – Yes, we will absolutely provide that. Clearly there are some differences of opinion as to how this review process should work, and I respect those differences, but you need

to understand that this is a fluid, ongoing process. You say there's no public comment, but for example, the truck routes presented by the BTM were a direct response to the request received from this Task Force and public opinion. They're going to do everything possible to make that truck route work based on a clearly stated preference from the community. And at the same time they're going to continue to study alternatives in case it turns out it doesn't work. But there's no way we can answer every question before we take a single step forward.

Q: Harry – that's not what I was trying to suggest, it just seems that there's a significant period of time needed to discuss the new information that the BTM has just received. Why would the BRA Board take a vote before that's resolved?

A: Gerald – The BRA Board is voting on the project, not on the construction management plan, which as we've said will need approval before Harvard gets its building permits. There will be an ongoing evaluation of the construction management, and the community will have input into that, and there will be built-in triggers in the construction management plan so that if there's a need to do things differently there's a procedure for changing course.

The representatives from the city (Vineet Gupta and Gerald among them) stated that they understand the issues and have been listening to the meetings of the Task Force and the desires of the community.

Bruce – I think most of this committee's time has been spent delivering what Harvard's needs are, and I think we need to spend at least as much time on delivering what the community's needs and desires are as far as community benefits.

Q: I know that Harvard would like to build a park, is there a day when the kids can come in and they can tell Harvard what they would like?

A: Kathy – I think that would be a great idea for the Task Force to deal with.

Q: It feels like the interaction that we've had with the representatives of the city (e.g. having the BTM reps here, and having Kairos Shen here a few weeks ago) is what gives the Task Force and the community confidence in the process. I don't think we've had enough of that in the past, and it would be great to hear from other city representatives about the scoping determination. But it seems that we have 1 or 2 months after the 27th deadline before our negotiating has to stop, and I would support the idea of spending more time on the community benefits proposal. When asked about what city departments should provide input, he responded that he would like to talk to someone from Parks, about open space; to hear from Kairos again; and someone about economic development aspects- retail, jobs, etc.

John Bruno made a motion to accept the minutes as written for August 6 and August 13. Harry stated that that he thinks that the August 6 minutes excluded much of Kairos's commentary on his working relationship with Harvard. John Bruno asked that Harry's comments on the minutes be recorded and included in tonight's meeting minutes.

Motion to accept the minutes was seconded, and passed.

Ray adjourned the meeting at 8:44 pm.