

Boston College Task Force (DRAFT)
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, February 20, 2007
Brighton Marine Medical Center
6:30p.m.-8:30p.m.

I. Attendance:

Boston College Task Force

Jean Woods, Chair
Janet Tambascio Fraher
Kevin Carragee
John Bruno
Tim Burke

Boston College

Jeanne Levesque
Evie Kuran
Tom Keady
Bill Mills

VHB

Howard Muise
Ken Schwartz

Sasaki

Ricardo Dumont

Elected Officials

Representative Michael Moran
Senator Steven Tolman

City of Boston

John FitzGerald, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Katelyn Sullivan, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Paul Holloway, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services

The meeting started at 6:40 p.m.

John FitzGerald, Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA), introduced himself and welcomed Representative Michael Moran. John said that the goal for this meeting was to listen to the presentation and take note of issues but to not dive too deeply into particular items. He then introduced Tom Keady, VP of Governmental Relations & Community Affairs, at Boston College (BC).

Tom Keady introduced his team from BC which consisted of Jeanne Levesque, Evie Kuran and Bill Mills. Tom gave a short background on BC's planning and development goals. He made clear that the presentation is a vision of what BC could look like in 30-50 years. Tom then introduced representatives from VHB/Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. and Sasaki.

Ricardo Dumont of Sasaki started the presentation with an overview of BC's values and mission. He then acknowledged the Task Force's concerns of open space, mods site, undergraduate housing and enrollment. Then he went over BC's design concept of a connected system with open space and mentioned the ideas of linked quadrangles and central green. The goal, he said, is a unified campus. As the presentation went on with regards to traffic, open space, proposed buildings and effects on community there were questions being asked by the audience.

Once the design concept was outlined there was a cluster of comments related to map orientation such as names of buildings, gray colored area (not owned by BC) and open space near the reservoir. There were also questions on handicapped accessibility, impact of fields on nearby Edison Middle School, seating for the proposed baseball field, preservation of the stone wall along Commonwealth Avenue and the T stop relocation.

There were multiple questions expressing concern with regard to the long range plans of adding parking spaces for 500+ cars to the area and the traffic that would be generated. Exits and intersections were brought up, specifically level of services and intersection grades. One member of the public asked why BC thought that the relocation of Thomas More Drive would benefit the public, not just BC. It was pointed out by BC that the new intersection would be more efficient from both a pedestrian and vehicular aspect. There will be a whole meeting dedicated to the discussion of transportation, and that it might be a better idea to leave the specific questions until then.

After the presentation John Fitzgerald (BRA) opened the meeting for discussion and questions but asked that members of the Task Force be given an opportunity to go first. At this point, Tom (BC) said thank you to the Task Force/audience and reminded everyone that what they just saw in the presentation was a 'Vision'. He touched upon how BC houses 85% of its undergraduate students which is more than any other college in Boston and that BC is trying to increase this number. He also wanted to stress that BC is not increasing enrollment.

Tim Burke, Task Force member, inquired about the zoning of the remaining parcels on the Brighton campus still under the ownership of the Archdiocese. Jeanne Levesque indicated that this land was zoned under Article 51 of the Code as a Conservation Protection Subdistrict. This did not mean that the land could not be developed, but certain restrictions would apply. The parcels acquired by Boston College from the Archdiocese, however, are now included in the Boston College institutional master plan district since the approval of the Brighton Campus amendment in 2006.

The proposed baseball field was of concern to many who felt that the 2,000 seat field would have a major negative impact and affect the quality of life in the area. John Bruno, Task Force member questioned why there needed to be so many seats because from his experience baseball did not attract that many people to the games.

A Task Force member (Kevin Carragee) then commented on the presentation saying that it was much clearer and that we need to revisit housing and that in ten years certainly we can come up with creative ways to address the matter perhaps with mixed use buildings on lower campus, for example, a campus center with dorms attached. Additionally, Eva Webster (community member) commented that what BC is proposing now does not make much sense since the placement of the new dorms is far away from the main campus. BC answered that there will be shuttles to take the kids to class.

It was brought up by Tim Burke, Task Force Member, that people are going to want to move out of the area because of the BC baseball field. Tom (BC) stood up and said that he is very sensitive to this topic and said that it is about choices and they chose what is the least offensive to the community.

Lastly, issues of dormitories and off-campus housing were addressed. It was said that if landlords do not rent to BC students it will be students from another school. Poor student behavior was also touched upon.

An audience member wanted to know if studies on the baseball field will be done as far as lighting / noise. The presenter said that no they had not been done at this stage, but it is something to look in to.

At the end of the meeting Representative Moran and Senator Tolman made comments. Rep. Moran said BC has done a good job with the presentation but that he has a few problems: the T stop, rerouting of traffic and the baseball field. He said he would like to see an actual use schedule for the field. There should also be a baseball fields subcommittee which he thinks will give assurance to the people in the community.

Senator Tolman stood up and spoke briefly about off-campus housing and that there should be long-term thought as well as protective measures.

John (BRA) said that it is a city problem that many are aware of.

There was an announcement about a public event and then one more question was fielded by BC from an audience member who brought up the idea of green buildings and potential flooding.

John (BRA) announced that it was past 8:30p.m. and the meeting had to come to an end. He thanked everyone for coming and reminded the audience that the next meeting would take place on Tuesday evening March 20, 2007.

The meeting ended at 8:35p.m.