



## Building a Better Brookline

**Economic Development  
Advisory Board**  
333 Washington Street  
Brookline, MA 02445  
617-730-2468

### **Meeting Minutes: March 7, 2016**

Anne R. Meyers, Co-Chair  
Paul Saner, Co-Chair  
Dr. Robert I. Sperber, Founder  
Cliff Brown  
Derrick Choi  
Susan Houston  
Kenneth Lewis  
Carol Levin  
Thomas Nally  
Marilyn Newman  
Alden Raine  
Donald A. Warner

#### **Attendees:**

*EDAB Members Present:* Paul Saner, Ken Lewis, Tom Nally,  
Carol Levin, Marilyn Newman, Cliff Brown, Anne Meyers, Don Warner, Al Raine,  
Derrick Choi

*EDAB Members Absent:* Susan Houston, Bob Sperber

*Economic Development Division:* Kara Brewton, Andy Martineau

*Materials:* Agenda, draft minutes from both February meetings, informational  
handout on State zoning reform bill

*Guests:* Henry Winkelman, Sara Slymon, Karen Livingston

### **1. Review and Approve Minutes**

- Minutes from February 1 and 24 were approved as amended

### **2. Discussion and Possible Vote on a draft letter of support for the State's Zoning Reform Bill**

- Kara provided an overview of the State's zoning reform bill, noting that some of the proposed changes may be more impactful than previous bills
- There is one provision that would enable municipalities to opt into a 40Y program designed to incentivize zoning that allows for housing to be built.
- Municipalities that opt in to the 40Y program can become certified and would be able to levy impact fees that could be used to support schools, which is currently not permitted under state law
- The town does not actually have to build the housing, they just have to create the zoning that could allow for it
- This type of program would have been useful to the town many years ago to help offset the cost of schools, but could be useful going forward.
- Kara stated that more information is needed about the reform bill before it is decided whether The Town should submit a letter of support.

#### *Questions/Comments:*

- What else is involved in the certification process?
- How much could a town charge for a school impact fee?
- The fee would likely require an analysis by an economist factoring in a number of variables

- Some cities and towns currently levy impact fees, but the money is preprogrammed for things like workforce training
- Does the new bill streamline the appeal process?
- Does the bill have specific implications for Economic Development?
- Could we make the case now that additional housing is feasible in our commercial areas as a means of becoming certified?

### 3. Development Updates

#### Red Cab:

- Andy Martineau stated that he and Kara were able to participate in a last minute site visit with the Building Commissioner
- The Construction Manager anticipates an early April opening
- Andy noted that the sky plane zoning concept is working as planned

#### Circle Cinema:

- Kara noted that construction trailers have arrived on site
- The town is holding off on issuing a demo permit until the required financial documents are received from National Development
- The Transportation Board is finishing up comments on their TDM proposal

#### Brookline Place:

- The Children's Hospital Board of Trustees voted to set money aside to finance the project  
 Children's Hospital's planned construction on the Prouty Garden has prompted controversy. Children's has submitted a Determination of Need for new and expanded facilities,, of which their use of 2 Brookline Place as an outpatient clinical facility, is part. DPH is now doing a routine review to determine how the hospital's proposed expansion would affect health care costs.  
 Since Children's has received notice from the DPH that the first phase of the Brookline Place project, the replacement of parking garage, is not subject to their review, the DON process is not expected to further delayed the start of demolition of the existing 2 and 4 Brookline Place buildings.
- However, other delays have impact the Town's financial plan in the coming years as the additional tax revenues anticipated as a result of the project will also be delayed

#### 25 Washington Street:

- Andy stated that the River Road Study Committee and subcommittees have had several meetings over the past month
- The committee has begun discussing several mixed use scenarios and massing options
- Parking, market and financial feasibility need to be explored in greater detail over the next month

- Staff anticipates an independent financial consultant coming on board in April to provide some additional analysis on the preferred scenarios advanced by the Committee
- Parcel assemblage will be key in this district
- The analysis conducted by the MIT students is a great start
- Understanding floor plate efficiencies will be critical with respect to some of the proposed uses
- The additional cost of environmental remediation and permitting should be considered in the financial feasibility equation

#### **4. Budget Update**

- Kara Brewton stated that the Advisory Subcommittee approved the Planning Department budget last week, including an additional FTE for Economic Development as part of an expanded division including long-range planning, as well as funding for consultant studies.

#### **5. Misc./Other Business**

- Library Director Sara Slymon and Library Trustee Karen Livingston briefly discussed the feasibility study process for the Coolidge Corner branch. The MBLC requires that a town consider multiple sites for a new library, which is one of the reasons why they looked at the Centre. St. parking lot.
- Sara noted that her predecessor considered other scenarios including working with a private developer to create a mixed-use project including the library, but it was determined that the height of the building required in that scenario would not be acceptable in the neighborhood.
- Cliff Brown stated that the moderators committee on eminent domain is focusing on a strip of land by Hancock Village. The Town should also consider using eminent domain as a tool for acquiring other strategic properties.

#### *Questions/Comments:*

- As a municipality, you can only take property in good faith for a valid public purpose
- The use of eminent domain by the town is an important discussion, but one that is outside the purview of EDAB
- The town is always in a reactive position when it comes to managing development
- There should be a understanding of criteria for when eminent domain should be used as a tool by the town