

Minutes

Boylston Street Corridor Study Committee
January 21, 2021 12:00PM

Committee members present: John VanScoyoc (Chair), Wendy Machmuller, Rachna Balakrishna, Deborah Brown, Tom Nally, Carlos Ridreujo, Joe Gaudino, Wendy Friedman, Mark Zarrillo

Guests: Helen Charpulski, School Committee Member, the Public Schools of Brookline

Staff: Eddie Bates, Kara Brewton

Members of the public: Tad Champion, Linda Pehlke, Bill Reyelt, Fred Perry, Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert, Matthew Hyatt, Carla Benka

Meeting materials: Agenda

The Meeting began at 12:00PM

1. Discussion with Helen Charlupski, Public Schools of Brookline Committee Member, on future uses of the Old Lincoln School

Helen Charpulski, a School Committee member for the Public Schools of Brookline, spoke about the Old Lincoln School. Helen stated that the Old Lincoln School is currently being utilized as swing space. Over many years, the school has been used by a number of Brookline school students and has also acted as the Town Hall, the Police, Fire and Health Department during various town-wide renovations. It will be used for Pierce School students when the school is being renovated in the future.

Committee members then discussed the uses for the Old Lincoln School and their recommendations for future use. John VanScoyoc first stated that the School Department has always needed the school to be utilized as swing space and the idea for other uses has never been discussed. John Van then showed an aerial of the school and the abutting U-Haul site and said that these two sites could be combined in the future.

Tom Nally spoke that it is important that the Town needs to maintain the Old Lincoln School for town use. It's a valuable asset that needs to be preserved.

Mark Zarrillo then talked of all of the upgrades to the site which the Town has funded over the years and that there should be an assessment done to explore the total number of enhancements which has been made to the building. He added that this site would not be good for housing.

Carlos Ridruejo then spoke that the building itself is quite beautiful and that it should be preserved. He also noted that the Town should explore if this site is appropriate for a life sciences use.

Wendy Machmuller also added that the site is important to be preserved.

Committee members had further discussion on the Old Lincoln School and asked Helen additional questions.

2. Presentation and Discussion with Deborah Brown, a member of the Boylston Street Corridor Study Commit and a board member for the Brookline Improvement Coalition (BIC), on BIC's property in the neighborhood and future development scenarios for the organization.

John first provided the committee with a list of BIC's properties in Brookline and presented an overview of each property.

Deborah Brown then spoke, and stated that affordable housing in Brookline is not simple and part of the problem is that there is no reliable funding stream to support it. There are also major zoning limitations and also physical space issues as well. Covid is currently an issue and this has caused people to change their thoughts on many things, including housing.

With the many issues Brookline faces concerning affordable housing, it was important for BIC to work on priority criteria highlighting the important aspects in building more affordable housing. Some criteria includes ensuring that more people have access to affordable housing, helping people achieve financial stability, promoting racial and economic diversity, and growing a base of leaders who can help influence key decisions on housing.

For strategic plan priority areas, Deborah discussed that this includes community engagement, asset management, financial sustainability, and housing development and programming. Deborah also explained that BIC was to utilize smart goals which are specific, measurable, achievable and realistic.

Deborah then further explained the strategic goals for BIC. She also stated that BIC needs additional board members and that she'd like to conduct a charrette on affordable housing in the future.

Committee members continued discussed on the presentation, made comments and asked Deborah questions on BIC.

3. Approval of minutes from the December 30, 2020 Public Participation Subcommittee meeting and the January 6, 2021 full committee meeting

The Public Participation Subcommittee was not able to vote to approve the Public Participation Subcommittee minutes from December 30, 2020 because there was not a quorum of Subcommittee members.

VOTED: By unanimous Boylston Street Corridor Study Committee members' vote: JV, DB, MZ, WF, WM, JG, CR, TN, the minutes from the full committee's January 6, 2021 meeting were approved

After members voted on the minutes, they also discussed additional members to the subcommittees.

VOTED: The committee voted for the following assignments to subcommittees:

- Mark Zarrillo to the Urban Massing Subcommittee
- John VanScoyoc to the Public Participation Subcommittee
- Deborah Brown to the Urban Massing Subcommittee
- Wendy Friedman to the Public Participation Subcommittee

By unanimous roll call vote, JV, DB, MZ, WF, WM, JG, CR, TN, the committee voted to approve these new assignments to the subcommittees.

Meeting ended at 1:16PM

Chat Summary

- **Wendy Machmuller**56:40

so quasi public private?

- **Wendy Machmuller**57:13

Debra, in which channels are you advertising for the Board member invitation?

- **Wendy Machmuller**01:03:02

Have renters in B'Line been engaged to provide feedback? I for one, am a renter, and would to be able to buy here, IN my precinct, but there is no path forward for that

- **Wendy Machmuller**01:03:43

sorry, I would love to be able to buy, but cannot afford it here in B'Line

- **Wendy Machmuller**01:06:36

How much \$ is in the housing fund? what is that \$ being spent on at this time, or plans for those funds?

- **Kara Brewton**01:07:41

See <https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/14147/Strategic-Asset-Plan-PDF> which includes a lot of work on our existing municipal properties; I can also send Deborah the backup excel sheet and a map-based link

- **Kara Brewton**01:15:38

We will send the survey out to everyone once it's ready to go out; it is already in the final "approval" route with Administration...

- **Kara Brewton**01:18:42

YES!

- **Kara Brewton**01:22:12

(About Wendy's idea to: Maybe it could be a student run restaurant or café, like at the HS, but that serves the public.)