

Minutes

Boylston Street Corridor Study Committee: Report Subcommittee

January 24, 2022 10:00AM

Held remotely via Zoom

Committee members (in attendance noted by Y/N):

John VanScoyoc, Chair	Y	Wendy Friedman*	Y	Tom Nally	Y
Rachna Balakrishna	N	Joe Gaudino	N	Carlos Ridruejo*	Y
Deborah Brown*	Y	Wendy Machmuller*	Y	Mark Zarrillo*	Y

**Arrived late or left early*

Staff & consultants present: Kara Brewton

Meeting materials included: agenda, BSCSC Presentation: Analyzing First Round of Financial Feasibility Tests and Zarillo Building Envelope Proposal

Guests included: Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert, Tad Champion, Brian Kane, Paul Saner, Perry Grossman, Carla Benka, Anne Meyers, Arran French

Kara Brewton opened the meeting, noting that it was being held remotely on the Zoom platform due to COVID, and after checking that all participants' audio/video were working well, and Kara announced that the meeting was being recorded.

Analyzing First Round of Financial Feasibility Tests and Building Envelope Proposal

Today's meeting is a follow up on the financial analysis presented by the Committee's consultant as well as Committee member Zarillo's building envelope proposal. Kara shared a presentation that reviewed context for the sites being discussed.

Tom Nally reviewed his analysis of the FAR options for 361 Boylston Street. He reviewed a test of various development options on the site, and Kara reviewed the architectural needs within Tom's established parameters (including: parking, access, etc.).

Kara asked the Committee to consider reviewing a 3.3 and 3.6 FAR for the Madris Site closer with the real estate consultant, noting a lean towards the 3.3 schematic before analyzing shadow and visual impacts.

Regarding the car dealership & U-Haul site, Kara shows options for development that looked "like Fenway", noting that the shown options were still quite a bit shorter than Fenway. Kara recommends that the Committee show shadow impacts for various heights, identify how to incentivize infill housing, and looking forward to review from the financial consultant for additional sites at future meetings.

Kara showed potential redevelopment scenarios around 58 & 59 Boylston Street (backing up onto the T tracks). Kara shows various height options and the limitations of redevelopment on these sites.

Finally, Kara showed redevelopment scenarios for the Tire/Muffler Site, and how the various scenarios would impact nearby homeowners. Recommendations to add to Zarillo's building envelope proposal include: consider allowing height up to 45' if in building envelope, consider as-of-right uses for reuse of existing buildings, and allow for minimum 3-story if similar to adjacent conditions by special permit.

Comments from the Committee

- The Committee discussed the assumptions made when estimating and assessing these numbers.
- The Committee discussed the differences between a landowner redeveloping, versus a landowner selling to a new developer.
- There was discussion of whether or not the recommendation was forward thinking enough, and making sure we're creating an overall vision instead of just recommendations for individual lots. Some Committee members thought about this from the perspective of Brookline's limited land opportunities for new tax base generation. Several Committee members commented on the planning versus economic vision for the area and the Committee's process to identify these visions.
- It was noted that the comfortable development scenarios shown today do not pose many opportunities to build new affordable housing, and the Committee was challenged to be more creative.

Comments from the Public

- Paul Saner (Co-Chair of EDAB) commented on his review of the financial consultant's assessments, particularly regarding the mid-block sites, and how to approach planning for these sites that don't have a clear date of redevelopment. Not surprised that you need far in the high 3's to make the economics work.
- Brian Kane (Chair of Transportation Board) commented that a 12-story building at the Madris Site seems too big. From a transportation perspective, he is interested to see more ideas.

Next Steps

Going forward, the Committee will meet weekly as we approach the Town Meeting deadline.

Closing

**Meeting adjourned at approximately 11:43 am.