



Building a Better Brookline

Robert Sperber, Founder Emeritus

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

Meeting Minutes February 3, 2020

EDAB Members Present: Anne Meyers (Co-Chair), Paul Saner (Co-Chair), Cliff Brown, Derrick Choi, Alan Christ, Susan Houston, Tom Nally, Marilyn Newman, Al Raine

EDAB Members Not Present: Carol Levin, Ken Lewis, Donald Warner

Staff: Kara Brewton, Meredith Mooney

Guests: Jeff Wachter, Elizabeth Zachos, Max Paradis

Materials Presented: 12-2-2019 draft EDAB minutes, two powerpoint slides by Pam McKinney related to Inclusionary Zoning (2-3-2020), outline agenda of March 2nd Joint Board Meeting

- 1) **Approval of 12-2-2019 Meeting Minutes** – unanimously approved as drafted.
- 2) **March 2nd Joint Board Meeting regarding Development** - on behalf of Ken Lewis, Paul Saner noted that volunteers were needed to help with the logistics for the evening. Paul noted that one thing he was hoping as an outcome of the joint board meeting was enthusiasm over zoning reform. Paul and Kara Brewton reviewed the outline of the agenda for the March 2nd meeting.

[Al Raine arrived].

- 3) **Business Improvement District Grant & Storefront Survey** – Meredith Mooney updated EDAB members on the Select Board endorsement for staff to work on exploring the creation of a BID in Coolidge Corner with the Coolidge Corner Merchants Association, as well as the approval to apply for a state grant that could help with technical assistance. In addition to a group of independent businesses leading this effort, five commercial property owners have now also expressed interest to further explore a BID. Anne Meyers added that one of the next steps would be for a steering committee to work on an implementation plan, which would define the geography, budget, and revenue system (e.g., what percentage or flat fee for which types of uses or property owners). Susan Houston noted that just the organizing effort seemed like it would be valuable work on its own, whether or not the BID moved forward in the end.

[EDAB members then took a photo for the annual report].

- 4) **Boylston Street Corridor Study Committee** – Tom Nally reviewed the previous lower Boylston Street study efforts to date, noting that the residents seemed to have a more common vision after conducting a joint site walk (all of this work was done without a formal Study Committee). Tom

thought that there may more residential than commercial development in this area, primarily because of the depth and footprints of the sites. Kara Brewton added that the Select Board was beginning interviews this week with potential Committee members, and reminded everyone that in addition to the priorities set by residents, the Select Board's charge included specific language about studying strategies aimed to support households between 100 and 120% Area Median Income and strategies to increase housing rental and ownership opportunities for historically excluded populations in Town. Kara referred to the Central Transportation Planning Staff's Priority Corridor Study that was recently completed (and linked in the agenda), noting that it was an initial technical report that included traffic and crash data as well as a concept for a bike lane along the entire length of Route 9.

5) 2018 Liquor Licenses Granted by Special State Legislation & Small Business Development

Committee – Meredith Mooney noted that of the 12 liquor licenses granted in 2018 throughout Town, only three remained unspoken for in Washington Square. Following a meeting with State Representative Vitolo and Advisory Committee member Janice Kahn, staff will be drafting a warrant article for this Spring Town Meeting to ask the state legislature to extend and move the available licenses to other commercial areas in Town. At the same time, we will be drafting the language with flexibility, as two businesses in Washington Square continue to show intermittent interest in pursuing a liquor license, and a third restaurant space that is currently vacant could in the future desire a liquor license. For some of the smaller operating businesses, having the appropriate number and authorized liquor managers for all shifts may be a reason they do not move forward with the process. Prior to the end of May, we may be in a position to request no action on the warrant article if the licenses are taken up in Washington Square. Meredith will be reviewing this information at the next Small Business Development Committee; they may decide to sponsor the warrant article.

6) Other updates

- a. **Brookline Fiscal Advisory Committee** – Paul Saner and Cliff Brown gave a summary of the final report issued by BFAC and noted their upcoming presentation to the Select Board on February 4th. Marilyn Newman and several other EDAB members complemented the thoroughness and ease of read of the report. Marilyn expressed interest economic development metrics.
- b. **Welltower (formerly Newbury College)** – Paul Saner stated that the massing is now locked down, the design guidelines have been drafted, and the zoning for the Welltower redevelopment parcel (southeast of Fisher/Holland intersection) has been drafted. Welltower would either build 18 1-bedroom affordable units at 125 Holland (likely selecting New Atlantic with a \$3 Million cash infusion and contribution of that property by Welltower to do so), or they would write a check to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund for \$6,525,000, which could help the renovation and expansion projects by the Brookline Housing Authority. The Town will likely hold a debt exclusion vote on May 5th to raise enough funds to purchase the west parcel (adjacent to Fisher Hill Park). Paul stated that the Committee's consultants believe that if not for the Welltower proposal, a tax exempt buyer would likely purchase the property, or a piece of the property. With Pam McKinney's assistance, the Committee has determined that Welltower's purchase price is on the low end. Additionally, an alternative scenario was run by Ms. McKinney which assumed an even lower purchase price, and the returns are still sub-par to industry standards. Derrick Choi noted that following Pam McKinney's analysis about the returns

being so narrow for this type of development at this site, the architects on the Committee stopped pushing for further massing reductions.

- c. **Inclusionary Zoning** – Paul Saner reviewed the work Pam McKinney presented to a recent Housing Advisory Board meeting, reviewing the financial feasibility of a proposal by HAB Chair Roger Blood. The proposal would increase the percentage values of cash payments, required under inclusionary zoning (or payments) for 4 and 5-unit housing projects, and extend the ability to cash out for projects between 16 and 19 units in size. Paul believes the proposed changes are simple text changes and expects a warrant article this Spring Town Meeting. He estimates the cost of delaying this article by six months would result in lost revenue to the Affordable Housing Trust Fund of more than \$1,000,000.
- d. **Housing Affordability Stakeholders Group Event** – Paul Saner is representing EDAB in the planning of this meeting on March 29th; it is expected to be the first of three forums. The real nexus for EDAB is working on ways to provide more housing including affordable housing along mixed use corridors.
- e. **Potential Citizen-petitioned Spring Town Meeting Warrant Articles** – Kara Brewton noted:
 - i. Clint Richmond is pursuing the creation of a task force to study various issues related to environmental toxicity – he is also thinking about a way to ban Teflon in cosmetic and personal care products.
 - ii. Hugh Mattison is considering writing a warrant article that would require electrical plugs wherever there are common bike racks, which would be helpful for building out infrastructure for electric personal mobility devices such as scooters and e-bikes.
 - iii. Michael Zoorob is drafting warrant articles that would require tenant notification wherever notification is required in the general or zoning by-law.
 - iv. Jeff Wachtner volunteered clarification about a proposal to remove single-family homes as a single use allowed in a district – his proposal is to change the dimensional requirements like allowable Floor Area Ratio and setbacks as well, so that all single-family districts outside of the Transit Planning Overlay District (TPOD) would become T-5 (two and attached single family districts), and within the TPOD would become F (three family) districts. Also mentioned is a proposed article to eliminate residential parking minimums in the TPOD.

- 7) **Annual Election of Co-Chairs – Following a nomination by Marilyn Newman, EDAB unanimously voted Paul Saner & Anne Meyers as Co-Chairs and thanked them for their continued leadership.**

Meeting Adjourned.