

Minutes

Boylston Street Corridor Study Committee: Report Subcommittee

February 22, 2022 12:00PM

Held remotely via Zoom

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

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

**Arrived late or left early*

Staff & consultants present: Kara Brewton, Meredith Mooney

Meeting materials included: agenda, draft design guidelines (working document)

Guests included: Fred Perry, Frances Shedd-Fisher, Margaret Beal, Tad Champion, Betsy DeWitt, Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert

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.

Revised Design Guidelines

Tom Nally reviewed the Committee's current draft of design guidelines and the comments so far received from other Committee members. A major point of discussion included setbacks along the various property lines (12' setback from property line) to ensure wide enough sidewalks. Tom discussed how the design guidelines will be used by the Planning Commission and the history of design guidelines along this corridor.

Deborah Brown noted that she somewhat disagrees with Tom's definition of design guidelines and that the current draft doesn't fully incorporate the charge of the Committee. Deborah noted that she feels the design guidelines should actively encourage more height. She also expressed that the design guidelines should include equity goals and be clear about how the design guidelines do/don't achieve those equity goals.

Tom expressed concern that there is content in the design guidelines that doesn't belong in design guidelines. Some Committee members agreed.

Kara noted areas of discussion today that are instead covered in the zoning language, and where these two areas can/could/should overlap (i.e. sustainability).

Comments from the Committee

- The Committee discussed what can be required in design guidelines versus in zoning.
- The Committee noted that there should be no on-site parking in the front setback of buildings. There was broader conversation about how to use design guidelines to minimize the impacts of

parking overall, and how the design guidelines should consider side-yard parking since the corridor has very few opportunities for parking in the back. Screening options were considered.

- The Committee found more areas to incorporate sustainability goals.
- The Committee considered methods to incorporate equity into the design guidelines.
- Tom will add a preface on the purpose and role of design guidelines.

John proposed a vote on the guidelines as is, except for an outstanding preface written by Tom Nally and added equity language to be written by Deborah Brown.

Committee moved to approve the draft design guidelines as currently written notwithstanding previously noted edits by roll call vote: TN, RB, DB, WM, JG, MZ, CR, JVS.

Façade Loan Program Updates

Meredith Mooney discussed intended updates from staff to the Façade Loan Program structure to improve the way that it services local, small businesses. The program is underused, and the Department is requesting ARPA funding to increase the available funds and improve the administration of the program itself to better emphasize accessibility, sustainability, etc. Meredith is open to input on any potential changes to the program. In the coming weeks, she will be reaching out to local business owners and various Boards/Committees for their input.

Next Steps

The financial consultant will bring forward further financial analysis, and there are only two more meetings before the Warrant closes. The next meeting is February 28 at 10:30am.

Closing

**Meeting adjourned at approximately 1:13 pm.