

Meeting Minutes
 Economic Development Advisory Board
 April 4, 2022 7:00PM
 Held remotely via Zoom

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

Anne Meyers, Co-Chair	Y	Derrick Choi	Y	Carol Levin	N	Marilyn Newman	N
Paul Saner, Co-Chair	Y	Alan Christ	Y	Ken Lewis	Y	Al Raine	Y
Cliff Brown	N	Sandi Silk	N	Tom Nally	Y		

**Arrived late or left early*

Staff & consultants present: Meredith Mooney, Sophie Robison, Kara Brewton

Guests included: Regina Frawley, Werner Lohe, John Van Scoyoc, Perry Grossman, Joe Viola, David Gladstone, Wendy Machmuller, Jeff Wachter

Meeting materials: *Links to warrant articles to be heard and a proposed Zero Emissions Advisory Board (ZEAB) amended version of Article 15.*

Zoom Meeting Recording:

<https://brooklinema.zoomgov.com/rec/share/Zvh7m9yflfXanqqlrG7ATEbh5UN6kAuL7UsoekK55MUNdZMHMKq6epQCpOAUdKQ.Ptlnj45f-2dZA775>

MEETING MINUTES

Anne Meyers opened the meeting remotely via Zoom due to COVID, ensured all members were able to participate with audio and video, and announced the meeting would be recorded.

Update on ARPA Funding

Paul discussed the work that he, Anne and Meredith have done keeping track of the ARPA Committee’s deliberations. The end goal for this process is for the Select Board to be presented with a slate on April 19. The Economic Development recovery grants (from Town and Chamber) were not assigned to the same person (there is no economic development seat on the Committee). The Town Administrator recommended \$3 million for business recovery. Jenny Raitt (Committee member) scored the planning Dept. grants and gave \$2.24 million from her scoring prioritization. Next Friday, we hope to hear the Committee’s review of the Chamber’s proposals. This is not a final decision from this process, and we will keep advocating. The funding is for economic recovery and for assistance to vulnerable persons.

The ARPA Committee is hosting a public hearing next week at 7pm. The public is invited to speak for 90 seconds each by signing up in advance, or sending in a letter.

Minutes

- February 7 EDAB Minutes: TN Y, AR Y, AC Y, DC Y, KL Y, PS Y, AM Y
- March 7 EDAB Minutes: TN Y, AC Y, AR Y, DC Y, KL Y, PS Y, AM Y

Public Hearing, Discussion, and Possible Vote on Warrant Article 15

Planning Director Kara Brewton discussed this Warrant Article, with assistance from Tom Nally, a member of the Boylston Street Corridor Study Committee. The Article proposes two overlay districts.

Tom discussed the Committee's process, which has spanned more than a year, including discussion with property owners, neighbors, public meetings, etc. At a later date, the Committee will also propose design guidelines to the Planning Board.

Comments from the Board

- Discussed provision for on-site Affordable Housing Units. The Committee felt it was very important to have required Affordable Housing Units on site, instead of payments in lieu. Staff do not prefer this, however, because the money goes as far if not farther when funds are managed by the Town. Ken Lewis said that he disagrees with the requirement that affordable units need to be on site and he and Board members were concerned about requiring 100% units be affordable in the context of a HAB policy (and provisions for inclusionary zoning in the Zoning By-law) that tries to promote flexibility for the HAB in negotiating with applicants.
- How many sites would be able to achieve a 4.0 FAR at their current parcel size? Kara responded that the only site is the Audi Car Dealership. Kara discussed the considerations made when making this decision, highlighting the work of the Committee's financial consultant.
- The Committee discussed why certain areas were/were not included in the Study. Most of these decisions were based around the likelihood that a parcel could/should be redeveloped into commercial/office.
- Kara noted that Ken Lewis pointed out a mistake in the language around the replacement of existing residential housing units. Kara clarified and corrected the language.
- The Committee discussed the changes to the parking requirements in the proposed zoning changes. Ken Lewis explained why he disagrees with the parking language in the proposed zoning changes.
- The Committee discussed Paul's question about the Zero Emission Advisory Board's standards, how they relate to the Boylston work, and how they support/conflict with the Attorney General's track record.
- Paul asked if anyone from the Committee had thoughts on the amendment from ZEAB that was shared (showing redlined changes to the Article as filed).
- Derrick Choi asked for clarification about the LEED requirements in the Article, and how the Committee considered the equity implications of these requirements, especially as they relate to existing business owners/operators.
- Alan asked how the Committee landed on this particular density (past discussions varied from 4-6 stories on various sites). Four stories is less than several other buildings along this corridor, including several that EDAB has previously supported.

Anne Meyers opened the public hearing.

Comments from the Public

- Werner Lohe: Thanked the Committee for working on this. As a ZEAB member, he thanked the Committee for pushing this and considering their amendment.
- Kara noted that Regina Frawley, in attendance, worked through the language with Kara previously and provided helpful edits.

Anne closed the public hearing.

Paul led a process to take several straw votes on various points of discussion.

- The Friendly Amendment from ZEAB. Paul asked if anyone took issue with the conceptual amendment. There were no issues raised from the Board.
 - Ken noted the important distinction that this stops at the building envelope. The language as written focuses also on how the internal equipment is created, which Ken supports.
- The Committee discussed the on-site affordable housing requirement. Tom noted why the Committee felt strongly about keeping the language as written. Ken noted opportunities for change to this language, as well as to the parking language.
 - Elimination of on-site requirement
 - Change to parking payment limited to residential
 - Replacement issue limited to residential as well
 - Fossil fuel free

To address the language proposed by Ken Lewis and ZEAB, EDAB suggests the BSCSC consider the above referenced changes.

Ken made a motion to recommend EDAB endorse WA 15 subject to those clarifications.

AR Y, TN abstain (because of ask for affordable housing on site), AC Y, DC Y, KL Y, PS Y, AM Y

Public Hearing, Discussion, and Possible Vote on Warrant Article 16

Kara discussed that Article 16 relates to the provision in Zoning Bylaw about residential units in business districts. The Zoning today says that upon redevelopment a certain percentage of the frontage must be for commercial use. This amendment notes a minimum depth of 15' for this type of commercial use. 15' is a rather arbitrary line, but it is related to a recent redevelopment case.

Committee Questions

- Ken asked about how this amendment will impact parking.
- Alan asked if the lobby is included in the language. Alan expressed concern that 15' was quite shallow.
- Paul Saner expressed a desire to see the Article use the language of "mixed use" in its proposal. EDAB questioned whether G&L should camp on multi-family. Kara discussed the reasons that the language does not do this.

Anne Meyers opened the public hearing.

Comments from the Public

- None

Anne Meyers closed the public hearing

Ken noted that he felt the language was confusing as first presented. Alan agreed with Ken. Kara reviewed the Advisory Committee language which all agreed is clearer than the article as filed. Anne made a motion to approve the language as amended by the Advisory Committee.

TN Y, AR Y, DC Y, KL Y, AC Y, PS Y, AM Y

Public Hearing, Discussion, and Possible Vote on Warrant Article 30

Jeff Wachter (petitioner) gave a presentation on the Resolution regarding eliminating the parking requirement at the Ken/Station Street Senior Affordable Housing Development. He reviewed a summary

of the history related to the Article, including previous Warrant Articles as far back as 2016. This resolution asks that this project no longer be required to maintain ALL 39 parking spaces currently on site. This does not seek to prevent ANY parking spaces from being included; the goal is to provide the flexibility for the team negotiating with the selected developer, or a new developer if a new RFP results in a different developer, to get the proposal across the finish line. Jeff noted several amendments under consideration.

Questions from Committee

- Derrick asked for clarification of what was cost prohibitive about the current parking requirements and what the viable alternatives would be.
- Anne Meyers noted her concerns about precedent set by this language and its impact on small businesses access to parking for employees in Brookline Village. Anne noted a letter received by EDAB from the Village Works, a small business in Brookline Village. Jeff noted that the resolution doesn't say there will be NO parking, but Anne noted that as a member of the broader public that doesn't provide assurance that there will be any parking. There is no minimum parking requirement noted in this language.
- Ken Lewis asked if there was any discussion of any market rate housing to subsidize this work and make the parking more financially viable.
- Paul Saner said he cannot support this language as it shows another example of commercial drawing the short straw. Paul noted the lack of any thoughtful parking study being planned for this area. Paul noted that he understands that next Tuesday the Select Board will be presented with a report on this work that may clarify this amendment.
- Anne voiced questions about the "Whereas" language around the Brookline Parking Benefits District, and the raised rates at certain areas. The money, however, will never raise enough for a subsidy to create this housing or build a garage, etc. (the money would go to marketing, benches, etc.).
- Meredith noted that Joe Viola, Assistant Planning Director, is in attendance and can answer questions as needed.
- Alan Christ (member of Kent Street Committee) expressed several frustrations about this proposal and the process. Alan expressed desire for this proposal to have been considered more holistically in light of nearby parking lots. This Article's focus on eliminating parking requirements doesn't seem to address the issues at play.
- Al Raine expressed that it would be bad if this development didn't happen because of a few parking spaces. The open-ended nature of the Article is concerning and reflects that the Petitioners clearly do not know what the "magic number" of parking spaces is. Al sees an opportunity for this to be solved with a smaller change than the most extreme versions of what this Article allows.
- Jeff Wachter suggested the Committee listen to the HAB hearing next week to see if there are additional details that help make their decisions. Jeff noted that we have until mid-May to make changes to the Article, and it may make sense to withhold this and make other tweaks instead.
- Anne Meyers asked for additional information about the reference in the Article to the potential for another Developer.
- Alan asked clarifying questions about the study plans for this project. Alan said he thinks that removing one of the levels of proposed parking may be a starting point for negotiation. Alan agreed that a global study of the area would be helpful.
- Al Raine noted that this may be an opportunity, given that the difference of 6-10 spaces may make the difference, for the Town to subsidize a handful of spaces in perpetuity or a parking

management study, etc. given the concerns about over-built and under-utilized parking in Brookline existing parking garages.

Anne Meyers opened the public hearing.

Comments from the Public

- David Gladstone noted that the Chamber fully supports affordable housing, but that this proposal gives commercial businesses the short stick. He noted that a proposal like this should not be considered without a more substantial parking study, and that this is an issue across Brookline at-large. David discussed the various issues with reducing parking in Brookline Village, and across Brookline.
- Carol Caro, who has been involved in this process for many years, discussed the availability of parking in various areas around Brookline Village, and noted that she agreed with Alan that it's a crime that there's a new garage in Town across the street that is not being utilized. The Town should negotiate that several of these spaces be used by local businesses.

Anne closed the public hearing.

Ken moved to wait on further discussion until the Board has access to the Committee's report. Paul noted that this is likely our only opportunity to weigh in unless EDAB hosts a special additional meeting.

Paul moved to take a vote to support article as filed. Ken seconded. AR abstain, AC abstain, TN abstain, DC abstain, KL N, PS N, AM N.

Staff and Committee Member Updates

- Paul noted that the 10 Brookline Place Committee will meet this Wednesday. Alan will lead a discussion on feedback from the Architectural Subcommittee in its first meeting. We have spent much of the last month discussing the process with the developer moving forward. We have a path forward for the next 3-4 months.
- Ken updated on the US Open and thanked Meredith for her work on adding US Open ads to the Soofa signs around town, and circulating a newsletter with additional information. The Chamber has also installed promotional signs along Route 9, and the Arts Council is still working on their banner design competition. Ken asked Board members to share the promotional materials with their networks.
- Meredith shared that the Select Board appears to be moving forward with moving Brookline Day to Coolidge Corner on Sunday, September 18, 2022 (9/17 will be Porch Fest). Representatives from the Chamber and Coolidge Corner Merchants are working together on this.

Closing

The next scheduled meeting is May 2, 2022.

**Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:57 pm.