

Town of Brookline Advisory Committee Minutes

Sean Lynn-Jones, Chair

Date: April 11, 2019

Present: Carla Benka, Ben Birnbaum, Cliff Brown, Carol Caro, John Doggett, Dennis Doughty, Harry Friedman, Janet Gelbart, David-Marc Goldstein, Neil Gordon, Susan Granoff, Alisa G. Jonas, Janice S. Kahn, Steve Kanes, Bobbie Knable, Carol Levin, David Lescohier, Pamela Lodish, Sean Lynn-Jones, Mariah Nobrega, Lee L. Selwyn, Kim Smith, Claire Stampfer, Charles Swartz, John VanScoyoc, Christine Westphal

Absent: Stanley L. Spiegel, Kelly Hardebeck Amy Hummel, Michael Sandman,

Also attending: Paul Saner, EDAB co-chair; Kara Brewton, Director of Economic Development; Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert, attorney for Chestnut Hill Realty; Mark Levin, Chestnut Hill Realty; Ken Lewis, EDAB member, Elton Elperin, Frank Caro, Sergio Modigliani, Suzie Roberts, and Lauren Bernard, Coolidge Corner Study Committee members; Roger Blood, Housing Advisory Board member; and Neil Wishinsky, Select Board Chair.

The Chair called the meeting to order at 7:10 pm.

MEETING AGENDA

1. Review and possibly vote on Warrant Articles 13, 14, and 15 (Development of Waldo Durgin Parcel on Pleasant, Waldo, and John Streets in North Brookline via the approval of a Zoning Overlay District, Tax Certainty, and Memorandum of Agreement between the Town and Chestnut Hill Realty, owners of the properties)

Economic Development Director Kara Brewton gave a PowerPoint presentation of the proposed mixed-use project (attached).

Planning and Regulation Subcommittee member Carol Levin presented the Subcommittee's report (attached). Her comments focused on what the Subcommittee believes to be the strong advantages of the development proposal over a 40B project. She also noted that there was no opposition to the articles expressed at the Subcommittee's public hearing (although there was a preference expressed for shorter buildings with less massing) and that what is now proposed is the result of negotiations with the 15-member Coolidge Corner Study Committee (CCSC), aided by an outside consultant, who helped to evaluate and implement the community's goals for the development.

The Chair noted the presence of members of the CCSC in the audience and invited comments. Susan Roberts noted that there had been a meeting of 30+ residents in Precincts 2,8,9, and 10 in December 2018 and a range of views were expressed regarding the proposed development. There was a strong interest in having as many units as possible counted as "affordable" and a concern that the overlay district could be considered spot zoning. Some felt that too much parking was being provided and would result in generating additional traffic in the area. Lauren Bernard, who lives next to the site, stated that she

supported the project, that it was an improvement over what is there now, and that the Town needs the additional tax revenue. She reiterated the Committee's strong support for retail use on the first floor and preferably outdoor seating space near any restaurant or café that might locate on the first floor.

Q. Who will maintain the revitalized green space/park? A. The Town.

Q. Are there a sufficient number of provisions in the proposal to satisfy Town Meeting's strong and demonstrated interest in meeting the Climate Change Action Committee's goal of zero emissions?

A. Haven't tested the waters yet in terms of environmental considerations.

Q. Do we know that a 40B would be approved by the state since existing zoning for this site would permit only a few fewer units? A. The State ignores existing zoning from the get-go.

Q. Will there be EV charging stations in the garage? A. Yes. Comment: the developer should ascertain how many EV stations could be used by neighbors, in addition to residents/hotel guests.

Q. Could the 289 spaces in the garage be reduced, resulting in lowering the height of the residential building? A. Not financially feasible because the loss of one floor would result in the loss of too many units. However, if the demand for parking declines, the MOA provides for retrofitting a portion of the underground garage for other uses.

Q. How much of the proposal could change between Town Meeting approving the Warrant Articles and the project being built? A. The height of the building (8 and 10 story hotel building with 143 rooms and 13 story residential building with 143 one and two bedroom residential units) is restricted by zoning, and the overall bulk, mass, and setbacks have been determined. The massing (solid walls vs. openings) and site plan could change if there is agreement between the developer and the Town. Since this is a major impact project, there will be a Design Advisory Team, which will apply the design guidelines that are part of the package of Articles pertaining to Waldo Durgin.

Q. Are shadow studies available? A. Slides of shadow studies were shown. The buildings have been designed to minimize the shadows cast on the existing abutting residential units.

Q. When will the project be completed? A. The project will probably start in two years and will be finished in or around November 2014, assuming no major surprises.

Q. What will be the number of affordable units? A. 11 units at 80%, plus a \$3,275,000 contribution to the Town's Affordable Housing Trust Fund.

Q. What will be the parking rate for neighborhood use? A. Same rate as on-site residents pay.

Q. What about potential damage to neighboring properties during excavating and construction? Regulated by Building Code and Fire Rating. Property owners should take

photos before construction starts and use for documentation. Should also know where the "fault lines" are on the site.

Q. Why is the building LEED Silver and not Platinum? A. Might be platinum, LEED rules aren't hard and fast.

Q Will there be solar panels? A. Not likely but they haven't been ruled out.

Comment: I urge wider sidewalks; they will contribute to the vitality of the area.

Comment: There is an advantage to having the money instead of additional affordable units because it means we can site the additional affordable units where we want them.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend FAVORABLE ACTION on Article 13. By a **VOTE** of 19 in favor, none opposed and 3 abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION on Article 13.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend FAVORABLE ACTION on Article 14. By a **VOTE** of 19 in favor, none opposed and 3 abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION on Article 14.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to recommend FAVORABLE ACTION on Article 15. By a **VOTE** of 19 in favor, none opposed and 3 abstentions, the Advisory Committee recommends FAVORABLE ACTION on Article 15.

A **MOTION** was made and seconded to adjourn; there being no further business, the meeting adjourned at 9:30 p.m.