



# River Road Study Committee Architecture Subcommittee June 23, 2016

## MEETING NOTES

### Committee Members

Select Chair Ben Franco  
Dick Benka  
Alan Christ  
Chris Dempsey  
Steve Heikin  
Brian Hochleutner  
Yvette Johnson  
Ken Lewis  
Wendy Machmuller  
Hugh Mattison  
Tom Nally  
Marilyn Newman  
Mariah Nobrega  
Charles Osborne  
Linda Pehlke  
Bill Reyelt  
Daniel Weingart

*Subcommittee Members Present:* Ben Franco, Steve Heikin, Tom Nally, Charles Osborne, Wendy Machmuller

*Subcommittee Members Absent:* Alan Christ

*Committee Members Present:* Hugh Mattison, Yvette Johnson

*Guests:* Arlene Mattison, Betsy Dewitt, Kate Taylor

*Materials:* Agenda, draft minutes, shadow study powerpoint showing each hotel massing option and the district massing model revised to account for the flood zone, hotel massing option powerpoint

*Committee members met from 8:30 am to 9:35 am*

### 1. Review and Approve Minutes

- Minutes from June 16 were approved as amended.

### 2. Review and Discussion of shadow studies

- Andy Martineau reviewed the shadow studies completed for each of the hotel massing options and the district massing model that has been revised to account for the flood zone.
- Several Committee members commented that the shadow impacts seem to be about the same for each of the hotel massing options.
- Andy noted that one of the primary concerns related to shadows is the impact on the Village Way residents.
- Andy noted that the Village Way units with backyards fronting on Brookline Ave are already well shaded as the backyards are shallow, enclosed by a tall fence and have mature tree coverage. Andy stated that shadows are a concern for Village Way residents, but that those concerns may be secondary to people looking down into backyards from taller buildings.
- No Committee member expressed significant concern about the shadow impacts on neighboring properties.

### *Subcommittee Questions/Comments:*

- Charles Osborne stated that the shadow impacts may be the most significant along the easement area.

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**3. Review and Discussion of proposed hotel massing options**

- Andy Martineau stated that he is hoping the architects on the committee will help to steer the discussion on height and massing by providing some urban design context to each option. Andy stated the he believes the future decisions surrounding height and massing should balance urban design and project feasibility with what the Committee and neighborhood feel is acceptable.
- Each Committee member expressed their personal preference for massing options and also offered their thoughts on the pros and cons of the others.

Option #	Pros	Cons
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The height is where it belongs from an urban design and architectural standpoint</li> <li>• Defines the corner</li> <li>• Provides better views for Village way residents</li> <li>• Offers clarity in an architecturally confusing area</li> <li>• Height just makes sense along Wash St.</li> <li>• Height located on high volume street</li> <li>• Mediates between urban and neighborhood scale</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May be to much height for Rt. 9</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Preferred option from Village Way resident standpoint</li> <li>• Also addresses concerns about height on Rt. 9 and on the park</li> <li>• Creates a gateway concept for east and west</li> <li>• The edge is not to broad</li> <li>• Creates a nice frame the width of a double loaded corridor</li> <li>• Aligns with the Brook House</li> <li>• The lower level transitions nicely from the upper floors providing exposure for the hotel and future buildings and also respects the park</li> <li>• Compromise between all variables</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Awkward juxtaposition between hotel and future development</li> <li>• Confusing architecturally. I do not know what kind of building it is supposed to be</li> <li>• Does not do any one thing particularly well, where the others have defining characteristics</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pushes height to more urban side of the district</li> <li>• Won't see taller height as you enter from Boston</li> <li>• Steps down towards park</li> <li>• Seems to do the most for the park</li> <li>• Defines one corner</li> <li>• Makes sense because of view from Pearl St.</li> <li>• Does not hide the Emerald Necklace</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creates canonization along Brookline Ave</li> <li>• Creates a long mass that is unarticulated along Brookline Ave and has strange articulation on Washington St.</li> <li>• Ambiguous</li> <li>• Brookline Ave is more of a neighborhood street than Wash St. so height does not make sense here</li> </ul>
4	N/A (not being considered)	N/A (not being considered)

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*Subcommittee Questions/Comments:*

- The final design will need to keep guest's experience in mind
- What is the upper floor setback on option #3?
- *Marc Rogers: I believe the setback is approximately 4'*

*Public Comment/Questions:*

- Kate Taylor: The hotel should be downsized and setback more from Rt. 9. It creates more of a barrier to the south side of Rt. 9. The Red Cab hotel is an abomination. We are doing a poor job of planning. This is supposed to be a town, not a city.
- Arlene Mattison: 110' is too tall. What will this be a gateway to? It should feel like a village. Why do the hotel rooms have to be so large? The Brook House should not be the comparison for height.
- Betsy Dewitt: I am becoming more tolerant of height. I recently traveled to a place where there were tall buildings and narrower sidewalks, but the buildings were well designed and articulated. 10 stories could be acceptable if articulated well.
- Andy Martineau: *The Architecture subcommittee is working on design guidelines to help inform future discussions between the project architects, Planning Board and DAT.*
- Andy stated that the Committee will likely vote a preference for 1-2 of the proposed massing options and that preference may be included in a report to town meeting, but ultimately the zoning will likely specify a maximum amount of lot coverage for taller massing.

**VOTE: The subcommittee took straw votes for the preferred massing options. Subcommittee members voted options 1 and 3 as their preferred options for further discussion.**