

Call to Order

The meeting was called to order at 8:35 a.m. in the 3rd floor Conference Room at the Town Offices. Present were: Chairman Charles Kendrick, Elaine Clements, Robert Daidone, Joan Duff, Ann Knowles, Suzanne Korschun, Austin Simko, and Karen Van Welden-Herman; also present were: Planning Director Paul Materazzo, Senior Planner Lisa Schwarz, Director of Business, Arts and Culture Ann Ormond, Lieutenant Ryan Beal and Safety Officer Glen Ota.

Minutes

On a motion by Ms. Knowles seconded by Ms. Duff, the Task Force voted to approve the January 8th minutes by unanimous vote.

On a motion by Ms. Knowles seconded by Ms. Duff, the Task Force voted to approve the January 30th minutes by unanimous vote.

On a motion by Ms. Knowles seconded by Ms. Duff, the Task Force voted to approve the February 27th minutes by unanimous vote.

Review of February 27th Placemaking Meeting

Mr. Materazzo summarized the PowerPoint slides from the Gamble Associates HMD Strategic Placemaking Plan public meeting. Each area was defined with ideas generated from the community on how to redevelop. Fostering connections, consistent branding, transportation, preserving smokestack, lighting, murals, pedestrian bridge, community park, boating, gardens, performance spaces are examples of ideas and possibilities. Proposed placemaking opportunities were shown utilizing community priorities. Concern about the lack of action by the MBTA was expressed as their involvement is critical to the redevelopment success. Stantec Team Alex Phillips and Steve Kearney were introduced to continue the discussion and explain the community-authored RFP process.

Discussion with Stantec to Review Community Developed RFP Outline

Mr. Kearney's PowerPoint presentation summarized the information gathered from Stantec's first community meeting. Opportunities were consistent with what Mr. Materazzo presented and listed top priorities including creating a mixed-use development, outdoor programming/green space, indoor activities/cultural center, connectivity, and family-friendly activities. Some challenges include: funding concerns, storm water issues, maintaining historic elements, sensitivity to abutters, and improving traffic.

Ms. Phillips facilitated the discussion on the RFP Draft Outline which includes an Introduction, Goals and Objectives, Property Description, and Planning Commitments. Sales Terms and Submission Requirements were also outlined. Differentiating between "objectives" and "requirements" is important. Describing community priorities more specifically, while allowing flexibility for a developer, was suggested. There was discussion about having the Town lease the parcel versus sell to developer. Collecting financial information and feedback from recent projects are examples of how to confidently choose a developer who will deliver what is promised. A selection committee will review developer proposals based on established objective criteria and chose 2-3 developers to interview. Once selected, the developer will need to abide by Town guidelines and established timetable.

Discussion with Stantec to Review Community Developed RFP Outline (cont'd)

The market will dictate how much and what type of retail will be on this site which will cater to commuters and hopefully be a destination point. The success of this development can help complement and integrate with Downtown. Another public meeting will be held in May where residents will have an opportunity to provide additional feedback about community goals and objectives.

Stantec had preliminary discussions with MassDot and will continue to move forward. An analysis was done to better understand the Town Yard land value and MBTA property. Additional parking can possibly be built on Town land to replace MBTA 150 spaces as they will not want to lose parking revenue. It is essential that a real train station, which provides protection for those waiting in inclement weather, be built. Stantec will meet with MBTA folks and a more formal report will be provided.

Adjournment

On a motion by Ms. Duff seconded by Ms. Clements, the meeting was adjourned at 10:10 a.m.