

**WENTWORTH INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY
COMMUNITY TASK FORCE MEETING
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8, 2008**

MINUTES

Task Force Members Present: Jimmie Beverly, Robert Chambers, Susan D'Amato,
Pat Flaherty, Marta Rivera

Guests: Amy Kohn, Goody Clancy / Perkins+Will
David Damon, Goody Clancy / Perkins+Will
Katelyn Sullivan, Program Assistant, Boston Redevelopment Authority
Lisa Martin, Legislative Aide, Office of State Representative Jeffrey Sanchez

Wentworth Representatives: David A. Wahlstrom, AVP, Business
Sandy Pascal, AVP, Community Relations & External Affairs
Mary Ollinger, Assistant, Business & Finance
Dick Towle, President, Fallon Towle & Associates

Public: David Holtzman, Fenway CDC & Allston Brighton CDC
Mark Laderman, Fenway CDC
Richard Orareo

1. Welcome & Introductions

Sandy called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone. She briefly discussed the difference between the Campus Master Plan and the Institutional Master Plan (IMP). Attendees introduced themselves.

2. Wentworth Campus Master Plan

Amy (of Goody Clancy / Perkins+Will) gave a PowerPoint presentation (see attached) with updates on the Campus Master Plan. She ran through the agenda and discussed where we are in the process. She reviewed the activities that have taken place as part of the process (including the neighborhood meeting), and discussed the themes and principles that have emerged.

At this point in the meeting, Rich Orareo asked whether we were collaborating with Colleges of the Fenway (COF) with regard to a public park. Sandy replied that yes, there has been significant discussion about what we can do together. However, she noted that with the passage of time, institutes are realizing the importance of keeping some of the key amenities on campus. Rich raised the example of Emmanuel's proposed project to upgrade Clemente Field with artificial field turf, asking specifically why they couldn't use our field. Dave Wahlstrom replied that the use of Sweeney Field is pretty significant during sport seasons, adding that with the growth of the COF intramural program, we don't have the capacity to house all the activities. Dave noted that collaboration with COF is a very high priority, mentioning the collaborative fitness center built last year with MassArt and MCPHS.

On the "Neighborhood Meeting" and "Master Plan Principles" slides, there were a number of comments:

- Pat noted that we should promote a shared, walkable and active mixed-use environment along *all* the edges, not just Huntington. She added that, as some buildings are approaching end of life, perhaps they could be developed to support it, particularly with the new land. Amy said that was a very good point, and Jimmie noted that this had been mentioned at the last meeting.
- Rich asked for clarification on “*Promote neighborhood stability*,” adding that development plans are extending outside the core campus. He voiced concern about preserving the history of the area. Amy responded, as far as stability, this was mainly in response to concerns about safety. Pat suggested replacing “promote” with “participate in,” noting that there’s a broader impact and more participation involved in getting to a stable neighborhood.
- Pat noted that, as land resources become more limited and with the COF, it has been difficult to elicit collaboration from the medical institutions, emphasizing the importance of institute *and* neighborhood partnerships. She also reiterated the need to make campus edges permeable.
- Jimmie explained that, as part of this master plan, we are trying to plan to bring our old buildings up-to-date. Amy replied that this was a very good point, adding that there really aren’t too many facilities that go away, mainly Kingman and Willson. She added that there’s been an emphasis on bringing old facilities up-to-date.

Amy continued with her presentation on the Campus Master Plan, and introduced the *Draft Long-Term Campus Master Plan*. She explained that the vision was generated based on the master planning principles, Wentworth’s needs and aspirations, and feedback on the alternatives. She emphasized that it will activate Huntington as well as the core of the campus, and it will improve the edges, connections, and stewardship of the campus as a whole. She noted that red indicates new development (reiterating that the vision is 30 years out), and that pink denotes existing facilities.

Dave Wahlstrom asked if David Damon could talk a little bit about the buildings that “need love.” Dave added that the building we’re in (Beatty Hall) was built in 1967 when the campus was all male. He added that there are a number of issues related to gender equity and accessibility that need to be resolved. Dave noted the gender equity issues in Nelson Recreation Center and the accessibility issues of the Annex Complex (formerly the Boston Trade High School). In the Annex, service elevators are being used for accessibility and the Industrial Design studios (Annex East) haven’t seen renovations since the 1950s. Dave noted that Edwards & Rodgers dates back to 1924 and has accessibility, elevator, and bathroom issues. Pat asked why, despite being one of our newer buildings, students don’t like Baker Hall. Dave responded that Baker Hall was originally built as a traditional, male dormitory with double-loaded corridors and gang bathrooms. Pat noted that dissatisfaction with student housing could cause some students to live off-campus.

At this point, David Damon briefly ran through the facilities condition assessment and criteria. He added that this information was vital in prioritizing building needs and will play a significant role in establishing renovation schedules.

Amy continued with her presentation, and introduced the shorter-term plan that will go through the upcoming IMP Process. She started with the Student Center, explaining that

this will give more for students to do on campus and make on-campus housing options more attractive. She noted that another key element of the IMP plan will be to modernize existing spaces, and to replace the space that will be lost with the demolition of Kingman and Willson with an addition behind Ira Allen. Amy discussed the edge improvements, and then the plans for the Sweeney Parcel. Amy noted that the commercial development on the Sweeney Parcel will be a revenue builder and the design will create an open public space and crossroads between the Museum of Fine Arts, Wentworth, and Northeastern.

There were a number of questions/comments at this point:

- Pat asked about the “P” on the commercial building on the Sweeney Parcel, and Amy explained this meant there would be parking underground. Pat followed-up and asked if there has been any thought given to the usage of the commercial building. Amy responded that it really depends on a number of factors. Dave briefly discussed some of the financial implications, noting that we have \$10m from a recent gift, \$5m from a prior campaign, debt capacity of approximately \$20m, and potentially we could use some dollars out of operations. From the cost perspective, he explained that we’re looking at approximately \$500/sf. The Ira Allen addition will cost roughly \$10m, the Sweeney Field move with underground parking will cost roughly \$20m, and the residence hall will cost approximately \$30m. Dave added that these numbers don’t consider any renovations. Pat revisited her question and asked about the uses. Dave replied that he envisions a relationship to education or medicine, perhaps the COF. Sandy said that we still have a ways to go before we narrow that down, noting that it’s really just come through the alternatives phase. Dave added that students need stuff to do on campus, which prompted a brief discussion about the student center and its location. Dave noted that this concept for the student center really solves a lot of problems, and Amy added that it gives us a lot of “bang of our buck.”
- Rich asked for clarification about the field relocation, specifically where it would go. Amy said that it would likely be relocated to the big parking lots of Parker Street, adding that there would be parking beneath the field. Amy discussed the advantages, noting that the current field is undersized and the new location would allow for a regulation-size field, plus additional room for amenities. She added that she’s aware of the implications of putting a field in a neighborhood (e.g. lighting, hours, etcetera). Sandy provided some further context, explaining that there was talk under the previous administration about building a covered hockey rink in that location, adding that over time, the plans morphed into an area. She continued, saying that there has been significant talk with the Task Force over the years about having recreation in that location. However, she added that there is a long way to go as far as coordinating with abutters. She noted that Wentworth would have individual meetings with abutters, specifically Mission Main, Alice Hayward Taylor, the Greek Church, and Parcel 25. Noting that the area used to be known as the “Back 40,” Sandy added that, with Parcel 25, there is a great opportunity to spruce up that area. Building on Pat’s point, Sandy reiterated the importance of mixed-use development. Amy noted the importance of preserving the connections already in place and strengthening that connection to campus, adding that that part of campus seems so far away. Pat added that that corner (Ward & Parker) is particularly important, and suggested we consider opportunities for people to enter Beatty from that angle.
- Dave noted that in the IMP Phase plan, the warehouse building should have stripes indicating it would undergo some renovations.

- Rich asked if Sweeney Field is shared with neighborhood groups. Sandy replied that it is, although not enough. She explained that it's really only used for groups and organized sports and events. She added that there's a process to go through to reserve the field and that unfortunately, no, neighborhood kids can't just walk onto the field. Rich noted that if Emmanuel takes over Clemente field, kids won't really have anywhere to go to play. Sandy said that his point was well taken, and that it's something we will need to explore further. She added that Wentworth sees this as a particularly exciting opportunity, especially being so close to Parcel 25. Rich asked that we make it a guarantee to provide better access to kids in the neighborhood. Sandy replied that we agree it's a necessity, but noted the tricky part is figuring out how to make it work.

Amy added that part of what she loves about being on the Wentworth campus in the evening is all the kids. Amy continued, saying that the campus might be used by the community and community programs more than people realize. She said that if the field is closer, there might be more of a drive to use it. Marta asked if the new field would be fenced. Amy said that there will need to be a number of long discussions about how to make the field work in and with the neighborhood.

Pat said she appreciated that we're still thinking about the opportunities around that field, pointing out the uses established around the edges around the field. She added that these could serve the institute as well as the neighborhood. Building on that point, Sandy explained that we need to find out what the best vehicle is for having those discussions. She added that we are very lucky that we have a neighborhood that likes to get involved, as demonstrated with Parcel 25 and Brigham Circle. She noted that the neighborhood brings so many good ideas, adding that we have the advantage of having some extra space.

- Lisa Martin inquired about Parcel 25. Pat explained that the plans are for a mixed-use development project that truly represents the community's vision having gone through an extensive community planning process. Pat added that it will include senior-housing. There was a brief discussion and Pat said she would send Lisa additional information.
- Mark Laderman asked if Wentworth was making a promise not to acquire any more property in this IMP, and perhaps even the next 30 years. Sandy responded that there was a clause in the current IMP with the specific language, noting that we would likely do the same thing in the next IMP. Dave said that there are certain properties Wentworth would be interested in acquiring if they were to become available. Specifically, Dave noted property on Vancouver Street and the fire station, adding that the fire station had initially approached Wentworth about their property. Dave added that while we would *like* to have that property, we would need to either incorporate the fire station into what we build or build them a new station across the street. Either way, he added, that would be part of a more long-term vision.
- Mark restated his question, asking if these would be the only properties we intend to acquire. Dick Towle responded that we will identify the properties we are interested in in the IMP, and if other properties were to come along, we would need to file for an amendment. Sandy noted that she would bring the language from the last IMP regarding land acquisition to the next meeting.

Amy went over the next steps in the process and ended her presentation. Sandy noted that Goody Clancy was involved with developing the plan for Parcel 25, adding that they're very familiar with the area. Pat added that they also worked on Brigham Circle.

There was a brief discussion about the next meeting with the neighborhood regarding our Campus Master Plan. It was decided that the meeting would be the evening of Wednesday, November 12th in the Faculty/Staff Dining Room. It was noted that, with the holiday the day before, it will be important to do an advertizing blast the week before.

4. Updates

Dave provided some quick updates. He noted that the Parker Street Crosswalk was completed a couple weekends ago; the 525/634 Huntington Open Space Projects are underway; and the Evans Way Park work is near completion, with the fence to come down by the end of the month.

Rich asked if there were any plans to rebuild the footbridge that crossed the Muddy River by the Evans Way Park. Dave said that Wentworth has contributed to do this as a student project, bringing all levels of expertise to the project.

5. Other Business

Marta voiced her concerns about the Task Force moving on as the Impact Advisory Group (IAG) for the IMP process. Sandy asked if Marta felt we should reconstitute our Task Force, and Marta voiced that yes, Wentworth should abide by the BRA processes. Katelyn (BRA) noted that it would be evaluated, adding that members would most certainly be added. Sandy suggested we discuss this further at the next meeting. Marta noted that she was only raising the issue for the sake of the integrity and transparency of the process, and was essentially putting it on the city. She also noted her concern regarding the format of the Task Force Meetings, commenting that they should really be run by a chair or co-chairs, and that they shouldn't be facilitated by the institution.

6. Schedule Next Meeting(s)

Our next regular Task Force Meeting will be on Wednesday, December 10th in the Faculty / Staff Dining Room. At this meeting, there will be a presentation about the Final Campus Master Plan that will then move forward in the IMP process. As always, dinner will be available at 5:30pm and the meeting will begin at 6pm.

Additionally, there will also be a campus master planning meeting for the neighborhood on November 12th. This meeting will be held on campus and will serve as a follow-up to the meeting back in June.

In response to a request at the August 13th Task Force Meeting, there was a campus tour scheduled for Saturday, October 25th at noon.

The meeting ended at approximately 7:40pm.