



Select Board/Planning Board Meeting Minutes Monday, June 22, 2020 at 8:30 am - Zoom Meeting

Planning Board Members Present:	Heather von Mering (chair)
Diab Jerius	Maureen Meister
Planning Board Members Absent:	
Elizabeth (Betsy) Cregger	Heather Hannon (vice chair, clerk)
Select Board Members Present:	Michael Bettencourt (chair)
Susan Verdicchio (vice chair)	Mariano Goluboff
Amy Shapiro	Jacqueline A. Welch
Also Present: Brian Szekely, Town Planner	Nancy Polcari, Recording Secretary
Others attending: Francis Goyes-Flor, MassHousing	Barry Fradkin, JM Goldson

Chair Bettencourt (Select Board (SB)) called the joint meeting to order at 8:40 am, a quorum being in attendance for both Boards.

Mr. Bettencourt suggested Ms. Goyes-Flor provide a background presentation about the Waterfield Request for Proposals. Ms. Meister indicated that the Planning Board is current with the project details and requested a summary on the number of applicants for the RFP. Nine developers were approved through the RFQ process, with the expectation that at least eight would submit a RFP. Discussion followed.

The Planning Board (PB) members voiced several questions/concerns regarding the draft RFP:

1. The draft is not clear regarding the PB's role and the process; this project will most likely require a special permit from the PB; the RFP needs to align with the Zoning Regulations (specifically Section 7) and include language that specifies the participation of and input from the PB .
2. The draft is not clear on where abutters and other committees have participation (Historical Commission, Design Review, etc.).
3. The RFP refers to zoning/permitting in the chart on page 14, Item 11 (lower level of importance in the selection criteria). The design criteria (in Zoning Bylaws) are an attachment. The RFP needs to be much clearer that it is a requirement to address the Zoning criteria and the separate Design Guidelines in the submittals.
4. Town Meeting will make the final decision of a developer and SB will go through the selection procedure (evaluations); PB wants to work with the SB through the process to avoid a problem with a developer/design that doesn't include and respect the PB's role and the Design Guidelines.
5. The scoring chart appears to provide "partial credit" for Item 11; suggestion made to make it "either/or" (either the proposal meets the criteria, or it does not).
6. Recommend giving the developer the opportunity to present their proposals to the PB to allow the PB to give feedback, giving the developer the opportunity to revise and incorporate changes enhancing their ability to comply with the regulations.
7. Mr. Jerius wants the developers to "think outside the box". Suggestion not to impose too many restrictions "early-on" to encourage creativity.

Responses from Consultants:

1. Will look at where to include stronger/additional language in the RFP regarding the process and complying with Zoning Regulations/Design Guidelines. Also noted that the SB with the help/input of staff and boards will be scoring the submittals to narrow down the list to probably three or four "finalists". At that time, the other Boards and committees will participate more directly in the process.
2. One intention of the RFQ process was to avoid the "difficult" developer who would not respect the process or the many individual interests. All these developers are "vetted" and have indicated they are ready to partner with the Town, community, committees, and boards.

PB asked about the schedule. Mr. Szekely noted that the RFP should be issued by July 1st, submittals due August 31st. There will be an open public meeting in early September and a second meeting (smaller) with boards. PB requested the second meeting be limited only to the boards needing to provide input.

After completion of scoring, the SB will select the top three or four and move to the interview process. The intent is to finish and present at the Fall Town Meeting in November. The schedule is very tight due to the land transfers required. Ms. von Mering preferred not to rush. Mr. Fradkin indicated that the developer expects a "good faith effort" to work toward moving ahead. Ms. von Mering noted that the MBTA will be moving ahead with the train station project which will include some land associated with this RFP. Mr. Fradkin noted that the developers are aware of this scheduling issue. It was agreed that the RFP would call for two public meetings, one of which would be a joint SB and PB meeting.

Additional issues raised by PB:

1. Height is a concern.
2. Affordability is also a concern.
3. Parking for the small businesses in that area is a concern.

A lengthy discussion about parking ensued with the following comments:

1. This project will address parking, but it cannot solve a larger problem that the downtown area has experienced for several years.
2. Need to address parking from a broader picture. This problem is bigger than each individual project happening in our downtown area.
3. How can we figure out a solution?
4. What data is available now regarding the use of the Waterfield lot? Realistic data begins to form the basis for identifying solutions and making decisions.
5. When was the traffic study done and what did it say?
6. Any solution must also address parking for deliveries and trash pick-up for the businesses backing on the Waterfield lot.

Mr. Szekely summarized the schedule indicating the RFP will move forward to be issued on July 1st and will incorporate edits based on today's discussion.

Meeting adjourned at 10:00 am.

Heather von Mering, Chair

Nancy Polcari, Recording Secretary