**BVNA Executive Committee Meeting Minutes**

October 3, 2016

**Present:** Ben Beck, Brian Boisvert, George Brackett, Pricilla Smith Brackett, Bernice Broyde, Jamie Brewer, Paul Buta, Nancy Cahn, Jo Campbell, Sam Chambers (ONS) Eric Cordes, Roque Dion, Allie Fitzgerald, Dick Junghans, Judy Komarow, Joe Kuranda, Tim Kacich, Kendra Mar, Nancy Morrisroe, Bethany Patten, Grant Simpson, James Springgs, Rob Stinson, James Sutherland, Annie Quin (Michelle Wu’s liaison), James Sutherland (Ayanna Pressley’s liaison), Beth Treffeisen (Back Bay Sun)

Meeting commences: 6:59 PM

**Minutes:** A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the September EC meeting and the EC voted to approve the minutes.

**Guests: *South End Community Health Center:***  Henry Goodrow, the Director of External Relations at the South End Community Health Center (“SECHC”) and Dr. Greg Culley, Chief Medical Officer, introduced the work of the SECHC.

SEHCH is one of the oldest community health centers, started in 1968. For many years SECHC was seen as a Latino center reflecting the population of South End. In the past 5 years SECHC has been through some difficulties. In the last year or so, the board brought in Bill Walczak, President and CEO and Joel Abrams, Associate CEO to turn things around. SECHC is governed by a Board, half of which are South End community members. Very much a grassroots organization.

Dr. Cullen and Mr. Goodrow provided an overview of the extensive services and flexible hours of SECHC. All insurance is accepted and they encouraged Bay Village residents to take advantage of what SECHC has to offer.

***John Keith*, Candidate for Suffolk County Register of Deeds.** While the BVNA cannot endorse candidates (as a 501(c)(3)) we welcome all candidates to our meetings. John Keith briefly introduced himself. He used to live in the South End and now in Seaport. He’s a non-party candidate. Register of Deeds is land transactions. John to be a real estate agent, and a software developer. What he’d like to do: traditionally it was a “tail end” of political career job. Not him. His goal is to consider people based on experience not party affiliation. Since it isn’t a policy role, it doesn’t need party affiliation really. Position reports into the Secretary of State. One of his proposals is to change it from elected to and appointed position. It used to be about trusting the person who kept the records. Now that it’s electronic, it doesn’t need that level of oversight. Also, he believes that there really only needs to be one position. They work with the city in situations where properties can’t be sold at market rate for zoning or low income, or if there are surcharges for sale of other kinds of properties. Goal is to make it more accurate & transparent.

**Planning:**

*Stuart Street Lots:*The two lots (former Jae’s / Billy’s) have been sold and the developer is putting together their final project notification this week, with a hope to submit the actual plan to the BRA in November. They have talked to BRA to see what will be acceptable. A smaller group from the BVNA will meet with the developer, and then bring them into the formal neighborhood process.

The BRA previously approved 112 feet. It is just outside of Stuart Street re-zoning. Developer is Transom Real Estate on Boylston St, Peter Spellios. Have done some stuff in the South End. Need more resident involvement if we want to press on height.

*Back Bay Station:* There was an informative meeting with the MBTA about the station design & ventilation.  It was well-attended by the public & by elected officials.  Kenzie was encouraged that they had put some more space back into being circulation space, rather than retail, in response to the concerns we'd expressed about the early design being too constricted.  There are concerns about whether the long-time vendors will still be able to afford space in the station, and lots of questions about what the larger potential retail plan (adding a floor 2 and maybe 3, which is under consideration by the CAC) could mean for the feel/look of the station (in regard to light, air, aesthetics, etc).  But the stand-alone station renovation plans -- which is what were up for discussion last week -- seem like they would make it more pleasant to sit in the station, easier to find things, and nicer to use the bathrooms!  One overall concern people expressed, however, is that they aren't convinced the MBTA has really done a projection of how the station will get used over the next 30 years -- for instance, if mass transit usage increases lots more.  There is a worry that they're leaving enough circulation space for now, but that the retail space on the ground level will box out some of their flexibility to accommodate growth later on.

On the ventilation side, they really are at only 15% design -- i.e., they haven't really figured it out yet.  Currently, there are 3 exhaust towers and 2 intake vents, but only one exhaust tower occasionally operates.  The others are all closed due to various states of disrepair.  So they want to fix the towers so that they all actually work operate.  They may also close up the stinking intake vents outside the Salty Pig (across from the station, at the start of the Southwest Corridor Park).  And they want to put jet fans in the tunnel to drive the air through; there were some noise concerns raised about that, which they're aware of, but which they think will mainly just affect cars in the tunnel.  They also want to put a set of doors at the top of the escalators to the offending diesel-train platforms (the ones that go to NYC etc.), to basically create an 'air lock' (so the air from the platforms isn't getting up into the concourse).  There are already doors at the bottom of the escalator to that platform.

They seem like they've hired a competent firm re: ventilation, but it's just a hard problem to solve.  Especially since no one wants more of the polluted air being vented out near them.  Also, pretty much everyone seems convinced that they're going to blow through the $10 million they have set aside and still need more to fix the ventilation.  The MBTA guy there committed to solving the problem -- 'whatever we need to spend' -- but Kenzie thinks everyone is nervous about that, given the MBTA's funding shortages.  However, Rep. Rushing, Rep. Livingstone, & Sen. Brownsberger (who were all there, and spoke) are very aware of the issue and focused on making sure it gets resolved.  Rep. Michelwitz was there too, he just didn't speak.  Rep. Livingstone explicitly asked that they come back to meet with the community again when they're further along on ventilation design.

There is a meeting of the **Back Bay CAC this Thursday, October 6th, from 6 to 8PM at the Transportation Building.** It won't feature any slide presentations, as Boston Properties hasn't submitted their DPIR yet -- it'll just be a chance for the CAC and the public to discuss the BRA's scoping determination.  So a good chance for people to come and learn what the lines of concern are, but not so good of a chance to see lots of visuals/data on the project.

**Parks/Public Spaces:** On September 19th, the Friends group voted to merge. The BVNA will need to vote on it at the annual meeting. Sarah will send an email all members need to attend or send a proxy. All members need to attend the annual meeting and VOTE. If members cannot make it, we will need to track down people for proxy.

**Licensing:**

*Mike and Patty’s:* Mike, Anya and Jesse from Mike and Patty’s attended to discuss concerns about double parking, trash pick-up plus and length of time trash sits out.

On trash, Mike responded that they have difficulty getting a company that will come when it is good for the neighborhood. They have tried multiple companies, but seems they all have the same constraints. There is no space inside to store the trash. The BVNA suggested working with local restaurants to see if they would be willing to allow them to use a dumpster.

On parking the issue is the delivery service (a large portion of their businesses). They are illegally parking on the corner and causing congestion for the area. M&P’s does not have the capacity to regulate them. Sarah mentioned that the streets in Bay Village are designed so that there’s really only one way in and out. Blocking streets becomes a fire hazard, plus alienates the neighbors. Sarah suggests putting signs that say “towing strictly enforced”. Someone suggests giving up some neighborhood spaces during the day for delivery. Judy suggests the school, but they say the delivery people won’t park there. Sarah suggested changing two spots around the corner as 15 minute drop off, pick up.

Follow up: Sarah offered the community to help with connecting to local business for trash. Encouraged M&P to suggest a “pilot” parking plan to change two metered spots on Tremont Street Friday, Saturday, Sunday for 15 minute pickup and drop-off. Sue Buta to work with Mike & Patty’s and Sam Chambers on these issues. Mike & Patty’s promised to give the sidewalk a good cleaning.

**Social:**

*Block Party:* Mayor came, everyone loved it. Weather was great. Attendance was probably only about 20 people less than last year. We lowered the ticket price at the last minute. Some years we make $$ some years we lose it. Tim will give numbers at the annual meeting. Some questions about the cost, especially younger people. A reminder that in the past, the cost of the event was the cost of membership. Maybe revisit this for next year. Was also tough because of timing with the annual fundraiser. Could use raffle ticket people for next year. Can’t just be Alex & Ali, need more support for set-up and take down.

**Membership:**

**Safety:** Over 30 people attended. Police were great. Police think they got the car break in guy. Asian. Call 911 whenever you see anything. Police did a survey. A lot of people are still not turning the lights on. 2 people are doing a light survey and following up with commercial.

Usual stuff: homeless guys rummaging, clubs being obnoxious, and having a little stabbing. Police are aware and are trying their best to deal with it. It’s up to us to call 911.

Hopefully when we get the cameras going, police think they will be extremely helpful and just catching one person will be cost effective. Police will be hooked in, as well as the schools cameras. 4 cameras right now, because that is all we can afford. Individuals can buy more. All will be on residential places. They will be where the security company have identified gaps in coverage.

Request is to share the report on where the security company recommends their placement.

Question about whether the commercial properties are participating (Mike & Patty’s, LAH, Erbaluce, etc)

Question about the city offering to offset the price. There is a camera funding shortage, and with the new budget, these have not been approved. Could we put them on light posts instead? Could ask the DPW.

**Misc.**

*Nominating :* Nominating Committee is needed to put together the slate of officers. Committee includes: Nancy, Grant, Sarah, Jo and Allie. A motion was made and seconded to approve the proposed Nominating Committee and the EC voted to approve the minutes.

*Annual Meeting:* Annual meeting is October 26th. Every EC member will give an update on their committee. Food might cost a little more. There was a request for more and earlier marketing of the event. Flyer with a proxy on the back will be prepared.

*Plaque:* Cocoanut Grove plaque is completely resorted and looks wonderful. The historic commission voted in our favor. The controversy is over. Plaque restoration was paid for by dedicated donations.

**City Services:** DPW will not be dropping the tools off, as it’s been switched to the Mayor’s office. Sam’s group to pick up tools, drop off at the 1010 Mass Ave sight. Sam will be asking for help for a date. South End wanted to do the Saturday before thanksgiving.

**Adjournment:** Meeting adjourned at 8:20 pm