

Thursday, 10/29/2020

## **FIRST: Advisory Group Meeting for the Lower Roxbury Transportation Study**

### **ATTENDEES**

- Paulette Ford, Camden Lenox (issues with connectivity)
- Ron Wittaker, Peoples Baptist
- Don Ward, Tenants Development Corp
- Frank Williams, 888 Tremont Street
- James S Dilday, Community Development Corporation and Alexandria Ball
- Kelly Sherman, BPDA
- Kenya Beaman, BPDA
- Lillie Searcy, Hattie B Copper Center

**[PRESENTATION](#) (click link to download)**

**[TALKING POINTS](#) (click link to download)**

### **DISCUSSION**

(After slide 20) Ron made a brief introduction:

- [Ron has] been involved in the project since before Jen was the lead. This all began when the City had some meetings with several designs for the reconstruction of Tremont Street. The idea was to improve the traffic flow and the challenges of crossing the street, maybe BTDC should add more stop lights and stop signs? [BTDC said] “Here are several plans, choose from among them.”
  - [The meeting attendees] did not think any of the plans were viable and [Ron] is glad the team scrapped it and started from scratch. We are glad to be working on this project and we want to be part of the community’s transition. There are many concerns in the neighborhood and we should work together to respond to the community’s needs, come to resolve and put something together.

**Clarification:** These conversations will focus on how to create an inclusive process--not the particular outcomes of that process. Of course, advisory group members are also welcomed and encouraged to provide their own input and feedback and you can expect to be informed about all the opportunities to do so--it’s just that the outreach advisory group isn’t going to be the forum for those conversations. The types of things we are hoping to discuss include:

- How to design outreach that’s likely to work for folks in your communities, even when we can’t gather in person.

- How we can go at an appropriate pace--not going too fast because we know there's a lot going on, but still moving forward because we all want to see tangible improvements, and soon.
- How we can engage those who have been left out of processes in Boston and whose voices are not heard as often.
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(After slide 22) Clarification of the conversations we plan to have in this forum:

- *James*: Elderly people trying to cross the street, it is very challenging (on Tremont St)
  - Ron agrees
  - Jen explains that this is a concern we could address with this project. Jen also clarifies that the outreach advisory group will focus on how BTD does outreach to understand the transportation safety priorities of Lower Roxbury communities. It will not decide or discuss what priorities get addressed through the project.
- *Paulette*: do you want us to do the outreach for you? Gather the information for you?
  - Jen goes over the expectation slides and clarifies that no, BTD will do the outreach and conduct communication with the public. What we need from this group is guidance and advice on how to conduct outreach that is effective for the communities in Lower Roxbury, how we design activities that people will be engaged with, and who we are reaching and who we are missing.
- *Frank*: Are you implementing some of the ideas we have or are you just here to listen to our concerns?
  - Jen: We will be implementing ideas that we hear from the communities. We have a budget for construction but before construction we want to make sure we understand the transportation safety priorities of people living in Lower Roxbury.
  - Jen also clarifies that the outreach advisory group will focus on how BTD does outreach to understand the transportation safety priorities of Lower Roxbury communities. It will not decide or discuss what priorities get addressed through the project.
- *Paulette*: what is the role of this group? Just confirm the plans the city has already created?
  - Jen: No we do not have plans we just have ideas that people have proposed. The role of this group is to make sure we are reaching the members of the community that need to be involved in this process.
- *Ron*: Is there a deadline for when these decisions need to be made?
  - Jen: no we are working on a timeline that allows the communities to feel comfortable moving forward.

Other contacts BTD should engage in its outreach:

- Hollywood Liquor (Ray and Ivan), *does Frank have a contact?*
- Slades (Kenya Beaman has contacts)
- More youth should be involved in the process

**Next meeting date: Thursday, Dec. 3rd at 11 AM**

More questions after slide 29:

- *Frank*: What is the plan? I did not know this was about neighborhood streets as well.
  - *Jen*: We expanded our scope to neighborhood streets as well after we were asked by the neighbors in Lower Roxbury to take a broader look in the neighborhood instead of just Tremont St.
- *Paulette*: We are doing a petition for resident parking on Camden and Lenox street. Does this affect this project?
  - *Jen*: this type of change can go through independently from us and this project.
- *Ron* discusses the history of Tremont Street project and how he hopes to develop off-street parking for use by Peoples Baptist Church and potentially neighborhood businesses.
  - Frank supports the need for more parking, off site on Tremont and no bike lanes.
  - *Jen*: private efforts for developing off-street parking may go ahead independent of this project. T
  - *Jen* clarifies that the outreach advisory group will focus on how BTD does outreach to understand the transportation safety priorities of Lower Roxbury communities. It will not decide or discuss what priorities get addressed through the project.
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- *Frank*: Are bike lanes still on the table? Our communities need cars and if you want bike lanes you can go to Columbus Ave
  - *Jen*: All the tools are on the table, we want to respond to the safety concerns of the communities in Lower Roxbury including those concerns we heard from community members that would like to bike in the neighborhood safely.

Hearing nothing further the meeting ends with a reminder that the next meeting day is Thursday Dec. 3rd at 11:00 AM. Following this meeting we will send a summary of what was discussed and the slideshow.