

MSLD Study Committee Meeting #1 Notes

April 1st, 2025

Discussion Topics:

(1) Councilor Coletta welcome

- Councilor Coletta congratulated everyone and thanked them for their service.

(2) Swearing in by City Clerk

- Alex Geourntas conducted the swearing in ceremony.

(3) Introductions and roles

- Kathy Kottaridis (Director of the Office of Historic Preservation)
 - Elizabeth Sherva (Executive Director of the Landmarks Commission)
 - Gabby Amore (project lead and point of contact)
 - Jennifer Gaugler (study report management)
 - Nick Armata (public outreach; advising on standards and criteria)
 - Chelsea Blanchard (advising on standards and criteria)
 - Study committee members
 - Jeff Gonyeau, BLC Commissioner, Dorchester-Ashmont Hill resident
 - Kirsten Hoffman, BLC Commissioner since 2007, Aberdeen commissioner, North End resident
 - Fadi Samaha, BLC and Highland Park Commissioner, lives in South End
 - Lindsey Mac Jones, BLC Commissioner, lives in Charlestown
 - Intiya Ambrogi Isaza, lives in Charlestown, affordable housing developer for Madison Park DC in Roxbury, member of CPS design review committee
 - Linda Neshamkin, architect in Charlestown, lives on Monument Sq, over 40 year resident of Charlestown
 - Ameeth Deenanath, Charlestown resident, CNC member
 - Crystal Galvin, Charlestown resident, CNC member (representing as resident)
 - Julie Hall, Charlestown resident, Charlestown Historical Society, founder of Bunker Hill 250, etc
 - Nancy Johnsen, CNC rep to PLAN Charlestown, etc
 - Ellie Sanchez, Councilor Coletta Zapata's staff
 - Robert _____, BHMA
 - Elaine Donovan, Charlestown liaison to the councilor
 - Scott Haldane, lives on Monument Square
 - Jessica Morris, Chief of Staff for cabinet
 - Johanna Hynes, Charlestown resident
- Gabby:
 - This meeting is in person to accommodate the swearing in. The mode of future meetings can be determined by the committee.

(4) Proposed group norms to discuss and approve

- Nick:
 - Presents Code of Conduct
 - Please sign signature page when you are ready

- Gabby:
 - The work of the study committee is always public and transparent.
 - Distribution of draft work products will be handled by MSLD project lead in order to keep public input organized.
 - Please direct any requests for information from the media to the project lead.

(5) Planning:

- Gabby presents [slides](#)
 - ACTION ITEM: Distribute slide deck after meeting - update schedule (see later note**)
 - Jen adds comment on timeframe - HPACD was 18 months; this will probably be 6-12 months.
- Gabby presents one-pager information sheet: [Purpose and goals of study committee](#)
- Is using Google Docs OK? Committee agrees.
- Meeting format?
 - Intiya - feels strongly about in-person meetings. Meeting in Charlestown.
 - Crystal - in-person meetings in community.
 - Ameeth - let's add hybrid.
 - Committee members agree.
 - CNC meetings are held at the Knights of Columbus, but that's a challenge with technology.
 - ACTION ITEM: Committee members will find a space.
 - Nancy likes in-person meetings but we should also have a dial-in option for people who work outside of Charlestown. Meetings should be accessible for all residents. Glad that meetings will be recorded regardless so people can go back and hear the conversation.
 - Consensus is to meet on weekday evenings.
 - Days to avoid:
 - CNC meetings first Tuesday of the month
 - Last Tuesdays of the month are Historic Society board meetings
 - Nancy: Avoid the Planning Dept meetings related to Charlestown
 - Gabby: We will also check w/ ONS and other City departments.
 - Wednesday evenings has a general consensus
 - Nancy: frequency - recommendations?
 - Jen: It can vary based on momentum on certain sections, holidays, summer, etc.
 - Jeff: We do want to be careful not to make the community feel rushed.
 - Nancy: Having more frequent meetings may actually be good opportunity for engagement.
 - Crystal: There is a general misunderstanding about the goals and the committee's role so maybe we should engage the public sooner rather than later.
 - Gabby: We have a website, a newsletter, and other mechanisms to keep the community informed.
 - Nancy: CNC feedback was that people didn't understand how committee members were selected, etc. A roadmap is needed for the monument page!

- ACTION ITEM: Jen to develop this roadmap in coordination with Gabby.
- ACTION ITEM: Gabby to coordinate a community presentation (CNC) in May or June.
- Crystal: The utmost goal should be transparency and community inclusion.
- Intiya: What do the doubters want to see? A super focused committee or a slower paced careful committee?
 - Crystal: Pacing in a way that shows the committee is processing the process.
 - Nancy: We can do every other week when we need to get through something in the study report, but slow down when we need to plan community events.
 - Crystal: If it means extra meetings to make sure people are involved, so be it.
 - Liz: Maybe we have benchmarks where the community knows they are going to hear from the Study Committee.
 - Nancy: We should add in some meetings where we process the community feedback.
 - Gabby: It can also be included into each meeting.
 - Nancy: Let's add in some rows to the proposed schedule that talk about official digesting of feedback.
 - **ACTION ITEM: Gabby to update schedule with these lines and share slide deck with committee.
 - Intiya: We could also do every 3 weeks. 2 weeks feels like a bit much.
 - ACTION ITEM: Gabby to send out a poll with options for meeting times.

(6) Next steps to discuss/finalize proposed boundaries of district

- a. Map of proposed boundary to be distributed to committee via email
- b. Homework assignment: individual walking around the district to consider proposed boundaries and identify important character-defining features
- c. Distribute draft study report

- ACTION ITEM: Gabby to share petition with Committee members in their folder (shared drive).

- Intiya: Are stoops allowed? Typically not by building code today. NA: There are exemptions due to historic status.

(7) Next meeting:

- ACTION ITEM: Next meeting to be scheduled via poll.

Adjourn by 6:30 pm.