

DRAFT Minutes

10 Brookline Place Committee: Architectural Subcommittee

February 16, 2022 7:00PM
Held remotely via Zoom

Committee members (in attendance noted by Y/N):

George Cole, Co-Chair	X	Tom Nally	X
Alan Christ, Co-Chair	X	Sara Schwartz	X
Diane Sokal	X	Matt Hyatt	X
Shelly Chipimo	X		

Staff & consultants present: Meredith Mooney, Sophie Robison

Guests included:

Meeting materials included: Agenda,

Sophie Robison opened the meeting remotely via Zoom due to COVID, ensured all members were able to participate with audio and video, and announced the meeting would be recorded. Co-Chair Alan Christ reviewed expectations for public engagement during the meeting.

Sophie reviewed the agenda.

Subcommittee Member Introductions

As this was the first meeting of this group, all subcommittee members were asked to share a bit about their background, and what their biggest hopes/concerns for this redevelopment are relevant to its architectural design/form. George also asked that members share how their world-views shape the lens through which they see this development.

Member Perspectives on the Development of the Site

Identify words that describe what the redevelopment of 10 Brookline Place would need to achieve to be successful. This was a rapid-fire discussion; Sophie took notes live on-screen:

- Active public spaces
- Contextual
 - Scaled
 - Transitions in scale
- Discrete
- Connections
- Approachable
- Accessible
- Polite
 - Humble (not “look at me”)
 - Not impactful (not shadows on T-Stop)
 - Unimposing/invisible
- Penetrable (not impenetrable)
- Pedestrian friendly
 - Street lively
- Fun/joyful
 - Hip/cool
 - Forward-thinking/future
 - Flexible
 - resilient
- Renewable
- Good neighbor
- Resilient
- Exciting spaces (arcade)
- Elegant
- Transparency
- Well-made (materials)

- Supports vitality
 - Interactive
 - Vibrant/lively
- Beautiful
- Connector
- Innovative
- Anchor/grounded
- Sustainable
- Tapestry/woven
- High quality design
- Public services/accessible (Amenities)
- Restrooms
- Green space
- Imaginative/creative
- Diverse spaces
- Tone setting
- Promote diversity (uses & tone)
- Inclusive & welcoming

The Committee organized the above words into categories and began creating vision statements for each category. Three highlighted categories include:

1. **Promoting Diversity/Inclusion/Accessibility:** The building should be open and embracing the community. There should be no border between the public realm and the interior of the building. Remove barriers to interaction.
2. **Green/Sustainable:** The building will seek innovation and excellence in sustainability, being a showcase for beautiful, resilient spaces. Maximizes recycling of materials during demolition.
- **What makes a good neighbor?** Not overwhelming, fits in. Scale has to be contextual (a tall building can be well-scaled). Consider how it makes transitions to other street/neighborhoods. Mitigate perception of height. Carefully located setbacks. Good community engagement in development process, and how people interact with the building going forward. Architecture is respectful to the nuances that already exist and preserving them as much as possible. Big to small – transitions of height and relation to surroundings (what are the steps to the surrounding buildings?). Sympatico of materials. Human scaled ground floor/level. What does it look like from a distance? There's a lot of aerials that include the Longwood Medical buildings, but that's not the lived experience (show in context). Consider view corridors – frame can draw attention/set scales (what other projects are happening simultaneously?). Consider what this looks like from high street (topography). How do these buildings all work together to create an “entryway” to Boylston Street? (NOT A GATEWAY BUILDING.)

Initial Reactions to the Presentation by the Developer

Sophie opened the presentation from the Developer and the Subcommittee identified outstanding/next questions for the Committee and the Developer. The Committee discussed the desired balance between lab and office. The Committee requested straight elevation of what the building looks like from walking view along Boylston, as well as for the developer to think about the scale of the building from the fire station and what the texture/articulation of the building could look like.

There was significant conversation about the space and size of the building, and how these can be shaped and how they're impacted by parking. The Committee would like to see the developer be less timid with transparency, make the building more porous/open.

Needs from Developer:

- New massing studies with ground level perspectives (including across High and Walnut Street) (see page 19 in presentation)
- Want to see inspirations for arcade

- No more birds-eye perspectives
- Further study of the arcade. See pg 15 in presentation: shows lots of public space examples but leaves questions. Where is the light coming from? Can the arcade be on the edge of the building? Arcades are best when heavily activated – how will you activate it? We do not want a mall lobby – needs to be programmed and used by neighbors.
- Can they provide on-site childcare (not only for employees, but also for neighborhood)? Would there be an outdoor play space?
- What shadows does the building cast and at what times of day/year?
- Need perspectives from the T, as well. One of our values is for this to be a multi-modal building, so perspectives must show that experience.
- Feedback on the three schemes. Bulfinch likes Scheme 1. Several subcommittee members prefer Scheme 1, too. How do the grade changes across the site impact the various schemes?

Next Steps

At the next meeting of the Architecture Subcommittee:

- Put these renderings on the screen and let Subcommittee members respond to them. Want to ask specific questions. Ex. Why is bike storage area in least active corner of the building?
- Next meeting: provide pedestrian level renderings of existing schemes, come to next meeting ready for open ended conversation.
- Want to understand what tradeoffs are available with respect to scale from their developer's perspective. What if you had half as much parking? What ifs – this is a dialogue more than a presentation. Show adding/removing floors in different spaces, etc. More interactive, less final.
- What is their argument for materials and context? This won't always be a white blob.

The Architecture Subcommittee needs from the broader Committee:

- Would like the broader committee to address parking and traffic.
- Would like the Committee to report back on preliminary findings of scale (later than the March meeting)
- Share our words!

Closing

**Meeting adjourned at approximately 8:57 pm.