



Town of Brookline Massachusetts

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PLANNING BOARD

Steve Heikin, Chair
James Carr
Linda K. Hamlin
Blair Hines
Matthew Oudens
Mark J. Zarrillo

BROOKLINE PLANNING BOARD MINUTES By Zoom Event July 28, 2021 – 8:30 a.m.

Board Present: Steve Heikin, Linda Hamlin, James Carr, Shelly Chipimo.
Staff Present: Victor Panak, Polly Selkoe, Kara Brewton

Steve Heikin opened the meeting.

1) PUBLIC COMMENT ON MATTERS NOT ON THE AGENDA

There were no public comments on matters not on the agenda.

2) OTHER BUSINESS

Presentation and Discussion of Boylston Street Corridor Study

Kara Brewton provided the Board with a presentation on preliminary ideas coming out of the Boylston Street Corridor Study Committee regarding an overlay zoning district for east Boylston Street. Ms. Brewton highlighted some of the Committee's recommendations including allowing parking reductions by Special Permit and allowing as-of-right infill development. She discussed some of the visioning ideas like reducing traffic speeds, improving the pedestrian experience, encouraging economic development, adding housing, etc.

Linda Hamlin pointed to what Newton has done regarding improving the pedestrian experience. Ms. Hamlin also expressed skepticism about reducing Boylston Street to two lanes because she felt that drivers will be redirected to side streets. She also suggested a subsidy program for small businesses along the corridor.

Shelly Chipimo asked if the use of the Lincoln School was something that was discussed with members of the community. Ms. Brewton responded that it was, though indirectly.

Mr. Heikin made some suggestions about traffic management on Boylston Street and also suggested that form-based zoning may not be ideal for the east Boylston Street corridor. Mr. Heikin also expressed support for an at-grade pedestrian crossing at Davis Path. He requested that financial feasibility studies be done to identify to what extent upzoning would be

effective in the corridor. He also suggested that more thought should be given to the southwest corner of Boylston Street and Cypress Street.

Board members briefly discussed the pros and cons of demolishing and reconstructing buildings in the corridor to produce new/additional housing.

Mr. Heikin expressed support for parking reductions by Special Permit and pointed out that there are several warrant articles to that effect being proposed for Fall Town Meeting. Mr. Heikin expressed opposition to the concept of as-of-right development in the Corridor. Ms. Hamlin agreed with Mr. Heikin's opposition while Mr. Zarrillo pointed out that the lack of a Special Permit does not preclude the existence of some other plan review process.

Public Comment

Deborah Brown emphasized that the permitting process needs to be streamlined and that the FAR should be as high as 4.0 in some places.

John Bassett suggested that the Hearthstone building presents an opportunity for active commercial uses and a pedestrian space.

Ms. Brewton requested that a further discussion on as-of-right development be added to an upcoming Planning Board agenda.

The Board discussed site plan review.

The meeting was adjourned.