



MINUTES
January 24, 2011
8 a.m. – 10 a.m.
BCEC Room 153C

Attendees: *Partnership Members:* Representative Nick Collins, James Coyle, Rick Dimino, James Doolin, Mark Erlich, David Giblin, Scott Jordan, Colleen Keating, Councillor William Linehan, Patrick Moscaritolo, David O’Shaughnessy, John Palmieri, James Rooney, Paul Sacco, Darryl Settles, Charlayne Murrell-Smith

Others in attendance (partial list): B. K. Boley, Ali Butler, Mac Daniel, Howard Davis, Katie Hauser, Milt Herbert, Michelle Ho, Carol Houghtaling, John Loveluck, David Lunny, Angela Olszewski, Jack Plaxco, Colleen Richards Powell, Tamara Roy, Ken Sinkiewicz, Bill Smith, Johanna Storella

1. Welcome

Mr. Rooney opened the meeting with an overview of the planned discussion topics and turned to floor over to Mr. Davis. Mr. Davis reviewed the core principles of expansions including, multiple options, and flexibility for those options – components can be developed independently, over time or all at once. He also noted that expansion elements must be respectful to the surrounding neighborhood and consistent with state and city economic development plans. Mr. Davis reminded the convention partnership that expansion elements also had to include plans for additional support and parking space. He then overviewed the expansion criteria for the exhibit hall and multi-purposes spaces.

2. BCEC Expansion Scenarios – Three Options

Mr. Jack Plaxco of tvs design walked the Partnership through 3 different scenarios for expansion. With each scenario, Mr. Plaxco outlined the details such as locations of multipurpose, exhibit and meeting space and total gross enclosed space; plans for arrival and entrance space as well as plans for kitchen support space and parking; rendered views of expanded space from multiple vantage points. His presentation is on file with these minutes.

- Mr. Dimino asked if the planned parking option on D St. remained the same for all three BCEC expansion options, and Mr. Rooney replied that yes, it did.
- Ms. Murrell asked if there was a planned pedestrian connection from the proposed parking on D St. to the BCEC. Mr. Plaxco explained that street crossing was not included in the design element. Mr. Rooney added that a pedestrian bridge was unlikely from the parking area, but that pedestrian bridges across the bypass to a potential hotel would be possible. He reminded the Partnership that urban design principles would be considered later in the design process, especially when it comes to connecting the building to the Fort Point neighborhood.

- Mr. Dimino asked if use of the roof for event space was planned in any of the proposed expansion scenarios. Mr. Plaxco said no, but roof space had been suggested. Mr. Dimino replied that the group should strongly consider it and building access to the roof into expansion design.
- Ms. Keating asked why there were two planned food courts in the Southeast expansion design scenario. Mr. Plaxco explained that based on client complaints, additional food court areas were added to expansion scenarios when possible. The southeast scenario allowed for two additional food prep and service locations.
- Mr. Giblin asked whether or not columns would be used in the expanded exhibit hall. Mr. Plaxco noted that the east and southeast scenarios would be virtually column-less – with about the same number of columns per square foot as the current BCEC exhibit hall. The south option, on the other hand would have more columns than the other two, but would still have a better ratio than average.
- Mr. Rooney noted that while the south option was presented as the most elaborate and biggest build out option, there was room in the design to scale down if the placement of elements was preferred, but size was found to be cost prohibitive.
- Mr. Dimino asked how the new space would be accessed via roadways with specific emphasis on dock requirements and truck access. Mr. Plaxco replied that the loading dock would stay in the same place with elevators to take pallets to new meeting space.
- Mr. Kinton asked how parking would be handled during construction. Mr. Rooney replied that parking would be planned early in design phases and phased along with any expansion construction.
- Mr. Dimino asked if new registration areas would be built into expansion for multiple events being held at the same time. Mr. Plaxco noted that there would be prefunction space included all around the new exhibit, multipurpose and meeting spaces that would be flexible enough for any meeting purpose.
- Mr. Dimino asked if the MCCA owned the land designated for new parking in the presented expansion scenarios which moved the meeting onto the next presentation.

3. Initial Implementation Steps

Mr. Davis covered some initial implementation decisions and moves that could be made in the near future while long-term decisions are being considered for an overall BCEC expansion including: land acquisition, relocation of MassDOT testing lab and maintenance facility, pre-permitting for expansion, RFP process for a headquarters hotel, create opportunities for mid-priced hotels, devise a long-term parking and truck marshaling strategy, reposition Hynes as a congress center. His presentation is on file with these minutes.

- Mr. Richards asked what the necessary qualifications a group would need to bid on a hotel RFP. Mr. Davis answered that they would need a qualified team of staff and a funding source.
- Mr. Linehan asked if the MCCA would be acquiring the property to be used as a site for a future hotel. Mr. Rooney answered that that decision would depend on the final site chosen. Mr. Davis noted that one potential site was owned by Massport in which case the MCCA would work closely with them and could maybe work out a ground lease, whereas the USPS

land site would require different measures to acquire site control. He added that regardless of what option is chosen, there are a series of actions that could be taken.

- Mr. Richards said he felt that the term “create opportunities” was the correct term to make the case for driving mid-priced hotel development. Mr. Rooney reminded the group of an earlier presentation by Rachel Roginsky that suggested without intervention, there would be no mid-priced development anytime soon.
- Mr. Dimino suggested asked when Mr. Rooney would approach the MCCA board for approval to move forward with implementation steps. Mr. Rooney answered that he wasn’t moving forward yet, just showing the Partnership the menu of possibilities.

4. One Expansion Scenario

Mr. Boley and Mr. Lunny walked through an example of a phased southeast expansion scenario and what the finished product might look like. That presentation is on file with these minutes.

5. Hynes Convention Center

Mr. Rooney presented a brief market study of the Hynes Convention Center and spoke to how improvements to the Hynes fit into the overall Top 5 strategy. Mr. Rooney suggested repositioning the Hynes as a “Congress Center” to market its – and Boston’s – international appeal. Upgrades would include improvements to street activity and entrances, improved building circulation, wayfinding directional signage and connectivity to the Prudential Center and Sheraton Hotel, as well as selective technology upgrades including digital displays. Mr. Rooney’s presentation is on file with these minutes.

Mr. Rooney concluded the meeting with a look at the coming Convention Partnership meetings and topics including drafting and publishing the final report.

The meeting was adjourned at 10 a.m.

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