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October 22, 2008

**REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE WHOLE  
ON HOUSING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

The Committee on Housing and Community Development met as a Committee of the Whole on October 22, 2008 with Chairman Rebekah Gewirtz presiding and Committee members Aldermen William White, Bruce Desmond, Maryann Heuston, Sean O'Donovan, Walter Pero, William Roche and Dennis Sullivan also present and voting. Also present were Administrative Assistant Jesse Baker, Monica Lamboy and Sergio Lucan from SPCD, Ellen Resnor from STEP and several interested members of the public.

Ms. Lamboy addressed the committee regarding growth opportunities in the Brickbottom area and said that the city wants to leverage transit service with stations, noting that there is a need for a second station in the area. The Brickbottom and Innerbelt area is equal to the combined acreage of Assembly Square and Boston's Fort Hill. There are potential opportunities for development in the areas of life sciences, academics, finance, sports and entertainment. The city wants to achieve the right mix of commercial and residential development. Roadways, networks and open space need to be decided upon.

The Green Line stations, beyond Lechmere, would be positioned over 6 miles apart and rail cars would travel at approximately the same rate of speed as the commuter rail. The Executive Office of transportation (EOT) is considering an 11.5 acre site for a Green Line maintenance/storage facility that would be operational 24/7. This proposal adds rail vehicles and would impede access from Brickbottom to the Innerbelt and would impact the artists building, adding light, noise and smells to the area. The Mayor has contacted EOT and expressed the city's concerns regarding the proposed facility, among them, the lack of air rights and unfriendly access for pedestrians and bicyclists. The city wants the MBTA to provide a share of the cost for the community path. The cross section of the facility is flat and the maintenance shop would be 22 feet above ground with a total elevation of 55 feet, thereby creating a visual barrier. In order to provide the city with viable potential to develop above it, the city prefers that the maintenance facility be configured in a square shape. As an alternative, the city has identified a 12 acre parcel in Yard 7 that could be used for the maintenance facility.

The public Advisory Group will be meeting on November 12<sup>th</sup> and December 1<sup>st</sup> and the DEIR/EA will meet in the fall/winter.

Ms. Lamboy also spoke about the Greenberg/CBT Architects study of Brickbottom and informed the members that there is an enormous amount of information to be reviewed. Ms. Lamboy expects to have a clear understanding of the study by November and Alderman White requested that the study be given to the committee once it is made public. Ms. Resnor stated that the public process has been ridiculous and that the city needs to understand how development is going to impact economic development and noted that there is little to no information regarding the extension of the Green Line.

Alderman Heuston wants to know what the MBTA's determining factors will be regarding the Green Line extension and when the process will play out. Ms. Lamboy replied that the MBTA has to submit its plans to the federal government and that planning is still on a conceptual level.

Alderman Heuston's motion **that the Board of Aldermen request that the city's state delegation attempt to clarify the timeline and deadline for the MBTA's Green Line extension's maintenance facility**, was approved

Alderman White requested that Ms. Lamboy send a communication to the Department of transportation to obtain the deadlines on the extension.

Chairman Gewirtz's motion **that the Administration examine the possibility of decoupling the Green Line extension from the maintenance facility**, was approved.

Alderman White's motion **that the Director of SPCD provide a written response to the following questions: 1) does the city get property tax revenue from air rights development, and 2) how would the city's zoning apply to air rights development**, was approved.

Alderman White's motion **that the Director of SPCD provide, in writing, to the Board of Aldermen, a calendar of critical dates for the Green Line extension, including the dates of submission to the federal government for funding and how those dates impact the proposed maintenance facility**, was approved.

Mr. Lee Auspitz also commented on the Greenberg/CBT Architects study of Brickbottom.

No papers were acted on.

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Alderman Rebekah L. Gewirtz, Chairman  
Committee on Housing and Community Development

**COMMITTEE REPORT**

Report of the Committee of the Whole on  
Housing and Community Development,  
October 22, 2008

In Board of Aldermen

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Clerk