

## Harbor View Neighborhood Association

### Meeting Agenda

Date: February 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021

Location: Salesian Boys & Girls Club

### 6:00pm - Meeting Begins:

#### **- City Councilors' Legislative Updates**

- **Lydia Edwards:**
  - Suffolk Downs:
    - Single largest private development in Boston history
    - We wanted to not be the Seaport and have a neighborhood still.
    - Made sure an increase of affordability from 13% to 20%
    - PLA – Project Labor Agreement – will be union and good paying jobs at development.
    - Looking at building trade school on the campus
    - Job training of \$1m and ESL of \$1m
    - Daycare Facilities
    - Half of the units will be for families.
    - Roads are going to public and not private anymore.
  - Fair Housing Amendment Passed:
    - Increase civil rights and equity in the planning stage.
    - What is the impact of these developments?
  - Charter Initiative:
    - We are writing ourselves into the budget process.
    - It only passes if residents of Boston approve it.
    - City Council will be able to negotiate the budget and not just advise the mayor.
    - City Council can override the mayor.
    - Participatory Budget – the people of Boston and the City Council can decide on where it goes (goes on the ballot to vote on)
  - ZBA Reforms:
    - Electronic mapping will be publicly available to track projects.
    - More language inclusivity
    - Electronic noticed and better records
    - Board cannot benefit from projects they are voting on.
    - Transparency on who the LLC's are.
    - Term limits on board members
  - Cannabis Equity
    - If you want delivery as a dispensary, you need to come back to the community.
  - Lydia will be re-running for City Council for our district.
- **Anissa Essabi-George:**
  - Filed a number of hearing order with improved access to special education, technical education, and re-opening schools. Also had a hearing on libraries and that all our schools have that.

- Improved mental health access (especially for women with opioid addition)
- Services provided by 311.
- Prevention of elder scams
- Making sure our teachers have access to the COVID vaccine.
- **Michelle Wu:**
  - Local Wetland Ordinance
    - Passed in 2019.
    - Provide protection from sea level rise etc.
    - Shifts power from BPDA and puts it to Conservation Committee.
  - Face Surveillance Ban
  - Full inclusivity for city forms, licenses, etc.
  - Vaccination Access
  - Affordable and Climate Resilient Public Housing
    - Using City Bonds
  - Local Food Systems
    - BPS and other foods the city is buying should be local and fresh

- **61-63 Horace Street:**

- **2<sup>nd</sup> Presentation & VOTE**
- **Attorney: Richard Lynds**
- **Owner/Developer: Terese & Richard Riamondi**
- **VOTING Results:**
  - **Support: 29**
  - **Oppose: 12**
  - **RESULT: Passes**
- **Proposal:** Proposal to build a 3 Unit building with parking.
  - Current Use – Existing 2-family dwelling with adjoining lot
  - Previous proposal (supported by HVNA) TO ERECT TWO (2) family dwelling with two parking spaces on existing lot.
  - Recently acquired additional 2,375 sq ft lot (proposed lot to now contain 4,875 sq feet – capable of being developed into 2 separate 2 family structure
  - Updated proposal would include only a 1single 3-unit dwelling.
  - To include 1 one bedroom and 2 3-bedroom units
  - Intended as home ownership.
- **Zoning Variances Summary:**
  - Use – 3 Family proposed in 2F lot.
  - Height – 3 story/35 feet proposed vs. 2.5 story/35 feet allowed.
  - Other – IPOD needed
- **Rendering:**



- **RESIDENT QUESTION/CONCERN SECTION:**

- **Resident:** Give Frank (architect) kudos with the rendering and I think it's actually nice. I am always talking about green space and what they are proposing is better than what is as of right. If there were 2 families then there would be less green space. This new proposal encroaches less on the next-door neighbor's house. I like this project and I like that this is under 35 feet. With the design of new building, would that allow a building to be constructed on the green space without a variance? Or could the owners fill in that green space without variances?
  - **Attorney:** Under current zoning my gut is that it would require further variances if you tried to sub divide lots further.
- **Resident:** Thank you Frank and Rich for listening to the community and coming down to 35 feet
- **Resident:** I own 67 Horace Street (2-3 buildings down). Over the past 6 years I feel like I am being sandwiched in with all these developments. I am looking for something lower in height and less in length from the back and maybe wider. Also this could impact my view of the skyline from my back porch. How do we know as neighbors that these parking spots will be used by the people living in the building and not rented to outsider?
  - **Attorney:** I don't believe there will be any shadow impact on your property. We are in compliance with the setback. Most likely 2 of the parking spaces will be for Raimondi's and the other 2 will be for the units. Mr. Raimondi will occupy by this as his residence and maybe Frank can do a quick sketch of your concerns with the back porch.
  - **Architect:** The portion of the rear only goes up 2 stories (26 feet high). The part that is 35 feet high is where gable is and it's out of the view of his second-floor porch view.
- **Resident:** This is a great design. With the rise in the street and all, it looks like it's been there for along time. Thing that bothers me the most about these meetings is that we give a hard time to old time residents who want to develop their property and giving carte blanche to the developers. We want to encourage people who have been here to be happy with their new neighbors. For the first time we enough parking, and a good design. I support this project.
- **Resident:** It's everything we asked for. A family could move into the home and I love the greenspace.
- **Resident:** We are trying to keep them in line, and we want everyone to show up to the abutter's meetings. As we get that info from the city or our neighbors share it, then we can get it out there. Based on the abutters meeting the developer has lowered the height of the building.

- **490 Bennington Street:**

- **1<sup>st</sup> Presentation**
- **Attorney: Richard Lynds**
- **Owner: EB MHRC Holding LLC**
- **Proposal:** Demolish existing single-family home and erect a 4 story mixed use building with retail space on the ground floor level and 9 residential units with roof decks. (Board note: this project is in the Neighborhood Shopping zoning sub-district.)

- 3,752 square foot lot
- Units to range in size from 595 s.f (studio) to 1,830 s.f. (3 bed)
- Intended for home ownership.
- This is a single family on the lot and no single families are allowed in NS sub districts so it's technically non-conforming.
- There is no significance historically or worthy of preservation.
- The current single family is currently in not good shape and needs a lot of work.
- This lot is considered a shallow lot.
- They are not in a flood zone.
- This is going to be a transit-oriented project since we are so close to Wood Island

- **Rendering:**



- **Zoning Variance Summary:**

- Rear Yard: 3.2 feet proposed vs. 10 feet required.
- FAR: 3.59 proposed vs. 1 required
- Maximum Height: 43.5 ft proposed vs. 35 ft required.
- Parking: 0 parking spots proposed vs. 13 spots required

- **RESIDENT QUESTION/CONCERN SECTION**

- **Resident:** Just because it's zoned for commercial doesn't mean commercial should go there. That house has been there for a long time. Commercial may not fit in neighborhood. Traffic is an issue especially on Bennington and putting retail there is not an option.
  - **Attorney:** I appreciate the comments and I don't disagree with you that it must be commercial. We are in the early stages of the process and we tentatively looking at retail since that is what the zoning district encourages.
- **Resident:** Is head house a unit? Headhouses are another way for you to creep upwards. There is no parking now on Saratoga Street and on much of Bennington. We have not seen the effect of the other two development on Saratoga. A variance for 0 parking at the corner of Bennington and then lumping retail space will only add to the misery of the staunch East Boston residents. You need to lower the height and provide parking.
  - **Attorney:** No habitable space in there.
- **Resident:** I live across the street and I will have to look at this every day. It's way too big and this is a neighborhood where people live and not a shopping district. There is extremely limited parking and when a snow emergency there is a parking ban on Bennington. The T is not an option since it is already packed.
  - **Attorney:** Your points are well taken. We dealt with you on Frankfort St which had parking, but you still weren't happy. We will stay try.

- **Resident:** These variances are to be granted for hardships. This is a blank slate of land, why can't you build within the proper rules?
  - **Attorney:** You have made yourself clear on many other projects. When someone builds within what is allowed you still oppose it. I am saying it like it is.
- **Resident:** I do own the 5k square feet directly next to this project. I could move forward if I wanted to, but I am not going to do that. I was born here 70 years ago and have lived in this home for 40 years. Even though this falls under shopping district that house has been there for 100 years. Just like our councilor said, current zoning laws are outdated. It is possible there will be more than 9 vehicles there. I have nothing against investors coming into this neighborhood, but the problem I have is that once these projects are completed the developers walk away with a hefty profit and the residents are stuck with the problems. Retail is out of the question here and there is already no parking. Before COVID the traffic was backed from Swift Street all the way to Burger King a mile way. Retail Space will not be agreed upon at all. We had to fight to get residential parking here because people from North Shore would come here and leave their cars to go to airport. I do not know how this neighborhood could tolerate of 20 more vehicles being placed on the street with retail. I do not think height of building should be more than the building that was recently constructed behind it. I am totally against any retail space and totally against the 9 units proposed and I would like a copy of the site plan. There is no reason this property cannot be developed with 6 units with parking and no retail. The majority of the homes in that area are 2 family homes. We are not against construction or developers, but we need projects that conforms to our neighborhood.
  - **Attorney:** The purpose of the meeting is to have the dialogue and address the concerns of especially the direct abutters. You want us to look at elimination of retail use, incorporate parking, and the height of the building. I can't propose to my client to make these changes if people will still not support the project after the changes are made. We are happy to take these back to my client and can we address these issues. Happy to have that conversation with you.

- **Other Announcements:**

- Next Meeting will be on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 2021
  - Please check out our HVNA website at [harborvieweastboston.com](http://harborvieweastboston.com)