

Suffolk University  
Public Meeting for 10 West Street Dormitory  
June 26, 2007  
Hyatt Regency Boston

The public meeting for 10 West Street was called to order by Gerald Autler, BRA, at 6:40 pm.

Gerald gave an update on the comment period for the Draft Project Impact Report, which ends on July 9. The project is scheduled for a vote by the BRA Board on July 19. The vote was scheduled before the end of the comment period due to the process for scheduling public hearings, which requires requesting authorization at the prior Board meeting, which was held June 21. The original rationale of reviewing the project as an amendment was based on the fact that the Task Force deemed it desirable to keep open the possibility of the project opening in September, and that would only be possible with a July 19 Board vote. He stated that this public meeting was another opportunity for the public to get information and ask questions about the 10 West building.

There were brief clarification questions relating to the comment period, meeting summaries and BRA staff recording the summaries.

John Nucci, Vice President for Government and Community Affairs, said that Suffolk closed on the 10 West property the day before and clarified that purchasing the property does not entitle them to use it; Suffolk still has to get approval through the full Article 80 process.

John Nucci said that he feels that both Suffolk and the City of Boston need the building in order to fulfill their housing needs and to fulfill the City's desire to have more students living in dormitories.

He then went over the draft community benefits associated with the 10 West project which include: move-in procedures, ground floor retail uses, security, project place/Downtown Crossing Clean Corners Program, lighting, community meeting space, community cultural calendar, sidewalks and cultural programming. John also mentioned exploration of potential redevelopment of the Modern Theatre and design enhancement at 150 Tremont Street Cafeteria as additional community benefits.

Gerald and John both commented on the RFP being issued by the BRA for redevelopment of the Modern Theater.

CBT Architects gave a detailed explanation of the floor plans and architectural elements of the 10 West building including the lighting possibilities and cameras on the façade.

During the question and answer portion of the meeting topics touched upon were zoning, move-in/out procedures, commercial loading spaces, trash and traffic management, student behavior, PILOT payments cooperation agreements, signage and student enrollment numbers.

There was a question on the zoning for 10 West. Gerald responded that the zoning for the Downtown Crossing area supports a broad range of uses, since it is a mixed-use area with housing, retail, office, and other commercial uses. Student housing is a conditional use under the existing zoning.

There was concern about the meeting summaries by a community member who also mentioned that he has consulted a lawyer about the project.

Sidewalk maintenance came up and there was a concern about upkeep around the dorm, for example, cigarette butts.

One community member commented the whole neighborhood is against the project while another said that he was from the area and thinks it is a great idea.

An audience member asked about PILOT payments and Suffolk stated that they were actually the school that invented PILOT payments and that they actually contribute more than many schools around the city. Further information can be attained from the City's Assessing Department.

It was suggested by a Task Force member that Suffolk not increase their enrollment until they have housed the recommended number of students. John Nucci answered that they have "right-sized" Suffolk at 5,000 students which means that enrollment will continue to increase until that number is reached.

A community member asked about signage because it was shown on one of the display boards. Suffolk said that there will be signage.

A Task Force member suggested that there be more detail about move-out procedures.

Lastly, there was discussion about how specific a cooperation agreement will be and sidewalk possibilities.

The meeting ended at 8:20 p.m.