

JUNE 25, 2014 MHPAC PRESENTATION SCRIPT

I. Introduction

Don

- Thank you, [Rich/Chris]. It's great to be back in front of the Committee and the community again, and I'm excited about the ideas we are about to share with you today.
- When we last spoke back in September, we shared with you our thoughts about the public realm possibilities at the Harbor Garage site and how we might best be able to achieve Chapter 91's primary goal of increasing public accessibility to the waterfront.
- We talked about three options for the future of the Garage:
 - We could leave it as-is, make cosmetic changes, and do our best to re-program the first floor retail;
 - We could build on top of the Garage, adding residential units and maintaining the existing structure as a podium, or
 - We could completely re-imagine the site by tearing down the existing garage and constructing an entirely new project
- We asked for your feedback, and over the last nine months, we've received it:
 - You liked the creative thinking about the public realm;
 - You *weren't* so excited about the public hot tubs...;
 - But, most importantly: Given the choice, no one wants to see the Garage stay.
- That said, we also understand that there are many who are reserving judgment until they hear more about what we propose to replace the Garage with.

This is only fair.

So today, with the benefit of 9 more months of discussion as to our collective vision for this part of the waterfront, we are here to move the conversation forward.

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- From the first charrettes, this process has been about *aspiration* ... about possibilities ... about bold thinking as to what the Downtown Waterfront could be.
 - The Public Realm Plan we've been working on together for over a year sums it up nicely:

“the Downtown Waterfront should be a premier waterfront destination in North America.”
 - We share that vision and are committed to creating a “wow” -- which is the descriptive many have used when trying to explain what they want to see on the site.
 - As with our initial presentation, we will continue working from the ground up and describe how we think re-imagining a site with ZERO OPEN SPACE TODAY can

ultimately provide so many of the benefits contemplated by the MHP objectives and the Public Realm Plan.

- What you are about to see represents our vision for creating
 - visual and physical permeability,
 - an abundance of public amenities, and
 - a new vitality where there is now an “activity gap” on the waterfront and the Greenway
- This is a vision for producing a destination for all Bostonians, as well as the many visitors who come to our city every day
- To accomplish these goals, we are going to share with you an economically viable program – including square footage and approximate height – that would allow us to unlock the site’s potential.
- As we have said consistently, any development scenario that contemplates investing \$180 million to demolish the garage and rebuild it below grade must be significant in scope in order to convert vision to reality.
- And any significant project will bring with it opportunities, as well as trade-offs
- Our guiding principles in finding an appropriate balance are simple:
 - Design a **slender, elegant form**, that will **maximize open space and view corridors**, while incorporating **optimal floor plates** for the uses inside
 - The end result will be a project that makes the most of its location, with world-class architecture that reflects the city on one side and the ocean on the other
- We have been studying the form that program might take and have a number of conceptual images to share with you for your feedback, including – among many other things – a one-of-a-kind open space that is truly groundbreaking and would become this City’s next great public space.
- Substitutions for height and open space will be necessary -- precisely as Chapter 91 intended, and as all of Boston’s other major waterfront projects have required.

But we are confident that the unprecedented benefits we can provide will more than offset the impacts.

- Before I turn the presentation over to the design team, I want to emphasize that what you will see today, at the ground level and above, are concepts only.
- Though we have done a lot of thinking, and our team has produced some incredible images, we are not bringing you a complete design or a concrete proposal. We still have a lot of work ahead of us, but our intent today is to provoke thoughtful discussion and gather your input.
- We want to bring the people of Massachusetts and beyond to our Downtown waterfront – that is the mission of Chapter 91, and we have made it our mission, as well.
- We want to create a place that **EXCITES** the senses, **EDUCATES** the mind, and **ENERGIZES**

THE HARBOR AND THE GREENWAY. And we think we have some pretty exciting ideas for making that happen.

- I would now like to turn it over to Fred Kramer of ADD, Inc. and Trent Tesch of Kohn Pederson Fox to talk in more detail about our approach and our ideas.

II. Guiding Principles	Fred
III. Harbor Garage in Context	Fred
IV. Development Program & Design Concepts	Trent
V. Potential Public Benefits / Offsets	Fred
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- This an incredibly exciting time for the neighborhood.
- For over 25 years, Ted and I have spent our days (and many long nights) in this community ... we have watched it transform before our eyes, and we are committed to doing our part in its *continued* transformation
 - At International Place, we've rededicated ourselves to offering amenities, like the Palm Restaurant, that support a first-class business environment, but **also** contribute to the community.
 - Meanwhile, at the Harbor Garage, we've been working to make small changes that make a real difference.
 - Design Museum Boston joined us this past winter, and in so doing became the *seventh* exhibiting museum within a square mile, but the first to open on the Greenway
 - And just last week, Marshall's Farm Stand began offering its selection of fresh, local produce for the summer season
- As you can tell, we've been focusing on **re-imagining** both International Place and the Harbor Garage
- And this Municipal Harbor Planning process presents us with a truly historic opportunity to imagine the possibilities for creating "**the** exemplary twenty-first century waterfront."
- The BRA and Utile have done a fabulous job distilling the community's feedback into a Public Realm Plan that, if implemented, will result in a Downtown Waterfront that will serve an example for the world. And we know that the Harbor Garage redevelopment can and should be a driving force in the Plan's implementation.
- Now, as Kairos and Rich have noted in past meetings, the economic feasibility of particular developments is not a consideration you will find expressly referenced in

the Municipal Harbor Plan regulation. However, the Public Realm Plan implicitly recognizes its importance... No fewer than **41** of the public benefits listed in the Plan are linked at least partially to significant development.

- Therefore, to convert the Public Realm Plan from vision to reality – and to ensure that the goals of the MHP itself can be realized – significant development needs to occur, and significant development only occurs if it is
 - Economically feasible,
 - Operationally feasible, and
 - Financeable

- We learned from our previous trip down this road. In 2008 and 2009, we proposed a 780’ tall, 1.5 million square foot project for this site. And we heard the feedback – loud and clear.
- As a result, we’ve embraced the guiding principles of the MHP process and re-thought our project. We’ve reduced the density by 200,000 square feet and reduced the height by nearly 200 feet... And we’ve completely changed the way the buildings meet the public realm.
- And though our target is the *smallest project that is feasible*, we know this is no small project, and we know that -- late in the day, late in October -- a redeveloped Harbor Garage like the one we’ve described today will cast net new shadow.
- But the Municipal Harbor Plan is about much more than shadow alone. It is really a studied value judgment of the trade-offs inherent in a significant development -- the trade-offs between impacts and benefits.
- When all is said and done, the MHP regulation requires that you as a committee, and ultimately the BRA and the state, will have to decide whether the concepts we’ve shared with you today will produce a ground level environment that is conducive to the use of – and public access to -- Downtown Boston’s waterfront.
- We have every expectation that we will be required to offset all of the one-hour net new shadow produced by our project; we just ask that the Municipal Harbor Plan gives us the opportunity to do so.

- The reality is that this committee has the power to ensure that the Garage remains in place for generations to come... **or, conversely**, to open the door for the Garage to come down and become a place that captures the imagination of Boston and the world.
- So now, I invite you to imagine with me:
 - Imagine vitality where now there is precious little
 - Imagine world-class architecture on our harbor, instead of a concrete monument to the car
 - Imagine a place that delivers on Chapter 91’s promise to connect *all* of the people of the Commonwealth to their waterfront – one that capitalizes on its transit-friendly location and doesn’t add a single new parking space
 - Imagine over 27,000 square feet of open, public spaces where currently there

are none

- And imagine if, when the cold wind starts blowing off the harbor, we could comfortably continue enjoying those spaces.
- Imagine a place that contributes a dynamic mix of uses to this most mixed-use district of the city
- Imagine a project that converts the vision of the Public Realm Plan into reality, not in decades, but today
- And imagine a catalyst that not only brings unprecedented benefits to the waterfront, but also generates millions of dollars for middle-class housing and other worthy initiatives across the City of Boston
- All of this is what we imagine for the Harbor Garage site
- We're still only in the early stages, and we invite you to imagine along with us.

- Thank you and we look forward to answering your questions.