



**LEGISLATION AND PRESERVATION TOOLS SUBCOMMITTEE
MEETING MINUTES**

Boston City Hall Boston, MA, 02201
Held virtually via Zoom

OCTOBER 8, 2024

Commissioners Present: *Amanda Zettel, Alison Frazee, Chelsea Blanchard, Cyerrah Walker, Margaret Dyson, Lydia Lowe*

Commissioners Absent: *Michael Creasey, Chief of EEOS Cabinet, Senator Mike Rush, Kenzie Bok, Rebecca Tomasovic, Jean Luc Pierite, Lynn Smiledge*

Staff Present: *Genesis Pimentel, Commemoration Commission Manager*

Public: Alison Pultinas

Press: Alison Pultinas

A full recording of the meeting is available on boston.gov/commemoration-commission

SESSION BEGINS - 2:00 PM

I. WELCOME

- a. Commemoration Commission Manager Genesis Pimentel welcomed attendees.

II. ORDER OF BUSINESS

- a. Meeting minutes were approved.

III. ARTICLE 85 WORKING SESSION

- a. Genesis Pimentel gave an update on the work being done to put together the memo for Article 85, including data analysis and research.

IV. OTHER RESEARCH TOPICS AND ACTION ITEMS

- a. Genesis Pimentel reviewed the Article 80 Action Plan posted by the Planning Department.
- b. Questions and comments that came up:
 - i. Commissioner Amanda Zettel asked if there was a part of the Planning Department's process that would incorporate the feedback they receive within the next 60 days.



- ii. Chair Lydia Lowe asked how it can be ensured that Planning is accountable to community feedback. She noted that while there are different mechanisms for collecting feedback, there is no metric for how input is weighed and no information on whether a summary will go out into the community, so it seems like there is a lot of discretionary power in the City staff's hands. She'd like to know what the recourse would be if a community does not feel heard since in the past the BRA/BPDA would ignore community concerns.
- iii. Commissioner Zettel stated there should be a more tailored survey, especially collecting feedback about what people thought about the process and whether the action plan will make issues better.
- iv. Commissioner Margaret Dyson thought that the survey being open-ended allowed for the department to not neglect something by providing pre-selected options.
- v. Commissioner Dyson added that in this A80 Action Plan, the effort to improve engagement does not implement best practices as the Planning Department states the most popular/preferred method of feedback is surveying when if you are responding to surveys already, you prefer surveys but that's not indicative of the whole.
- vi. Chair Lowe added that there is an expectation to rely on Neighborhood Services, but experiences with liaisons can be mixed.
- vii. [Public Comment A](#)
- viii. Commissioner Zettel added that pilot programs have gates where the success of the pilot is measured to see if it accomplishes the goals set out, and that there should be another checkpoint for reassessment, but it does not seem the Planning Department planned for that.
- ix. Commissioner Chelsea Blanchard stated that this A80 Modernization does not impact what she reviews as the Staff Architect in Historic Preservation, which is Article 80 Small Projects. She added that she expressed that the Planning Department should have a checklist for applicants to acknowledge that they have historic properties on the project when they submit because some automatically assume that older buildings have already been demolished.
 1. Commissioner Dyson expressed that if Commissioner Blanchard didn't realize this did not apply to small projects as in a professional capacity, then there is a need to know how clear this is to the public.



- x. Commissioner Dyson asked to pivot as she noted that the Definitions page gave “preserving existing landmarks” as mitigation, which concerned her since that is legally required so it is regulatory compliance, not mitigation. She expressed that this indicated a lack of clarity about regulatory structures on the Planning Department’s part.
- xi. [Public Comment B](#)
- xii. Commissioner Dyson stated that the document seemed to be defining mitigation as compliance and community benefits as a more traditional understanding of mitigation, but monetary contributions to protect historic resources in the vicinity of a project is a new preservation for the City.
- xiii. [Public Comment C](#)
- xiv. It was recommended that the meeting be adjourned, so that commissioners can close read the document themselves and come back for feedback next time.

V. PUBLIC COMMENT

- a. Alison Pultinas commented that the schedule created by the Planning Department lists the endpoint as a Pilot, so the actual implementation is still unclear as she adds that this will probably have to go through Legal reviews with Zoning.
- b. Frank O’Brien wrote in the chat that it seems that rather than narrowing the definition of mitigation, Planning seems to expand it to include and get kudos for doing what is already required.
- c. Alison Pultinas commented that she has gone to the public meetings for Article 80, and it seems that enabling infrastructure as a term is what was previously considered mitigation, but that this would benefit the project itself to highlight elements that would benefit the developer but they haven’t defined mitigation.

VI. ADJOURNMENT - 3:22 PM

- a. Commissioner Zettel motioned to adjourn the meeting.
- b. Commissioner Dyson seconded.