

MSLD Study Committee Notes #19

August 5, 2026, 6:30 pm

Zoom <https://www.zoomgov.com/j/1619983364>

Study Committee Attendees:

Ameeth Deenanath (Alternate)
Crystal Galvin
Julie Hall
Kirsten Hoffman
Nancy Johnsen (Chair)
Lindsey Mac-Jones
Linda Neshamkin
Ian Urquhart

Staff:

Elizabeth Sherva
Jennifer Gaugler

Members of the Public:

Action/follow-up items for staff are highlighted in yellow.

I. REVIEW AND VOTE ON MEETING MINUTES

- A. **Linda** motions to approve meeting minutes from July 15, 2026. **Kirsten** seconds the motion. Meeting minutes approved unanimously.

II. PUBLIC FEEDBACK SINCE LAST MEETING

A. Feedback received by staff:

1. **Jennifer** reports that three messages were received asking this meeting to be rescheduled due to a conflict with a Planning Department meeting about citywide zoning updates. However, this meeting has been noticed since April 24th and video of the meeting will be made available by Friday; comments can be sent in by email at any time. Jennifer also adds that Diane Valle sent in an updated opposition letter with 13 additional signatures, for a total of 59. This letter is saved in the committee's Google Drive folder.
 - a) **Crystal**: Myth vs. fact needs to be made clear.
 - b) **Linda**: With Section 106 being threatened, it may be useful to discuss potential loss of protections for historic neighborhoods at the Monument Square community engagement event in the fall.
 - (1) Staff agree and will add to presentation.
 - c) **Nancy**: The FAQs will be really important to dispel any misunderstandings.
 - (1) Staff will have this ready before the working study report is posted.
 - (2) **Ian**: Be clear that this study report is not a done deal. This is still a work in progress.
 - d) **Nancy**: Also emphasize that we are providing an extra draft of report beyond what is required by law in order to provide extra opportunity for comment.
2. **Jennifer** also reports some helpful suggestions from Diane Valle: we could add a section to the report discussing how the Committee's recommendations evolved in response to public input. We could also add in-person informational sessions at the public library and/or on Zoom.
 - a) **Linda**: How would the public comment be represented?
 - (1) **Jennifer**: TBD but maybe graphs, charts, maps, etc.

- b) **Nancy:** Maybe written comments can be included in an Appendix. Regarding mapping the source of comments, it could be helpful to understand where people are coming from.
 - (1) **Crystal:** This may be useful for our own knowledge but we don't need to overemphasize where people live, as all public opinion is valid. Also, we can reemphasize the information that we have already collected – we have very useful data.
- B. Feedback received by study committee members:
 - 1. **Linda:** Was talking with Toby Goldstein who is working on the Harvard Mall and shared that it might fall within the Protection Area.

III. REVIEW PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT PLANS

- A. **Nancy** suggested we add a meeting in early September after study committee has had a chance to do a complete read-through to agree on the release of the working study report and begin prepping for community engagement event.

IV. REVIEW STANDARDS AND CRITERIA

- A. Protection Area boundary (continued from last meeting)
 - 1. **Nancy** reviews the criteria for a Protection Area from Chapter 772.
 - 2. Staff presents the working boundary map for study committee review. **Jennifer** points out that the area around Austin Street could be included because it satisfies the criteria defined in Chapter 772 as a gateway into the Landmark District for both vehicular travel and pedestrians coming from the Orange Line.
 - a) **Nancy** describes the importance of certain parcels in that area.
 - b) **Elizabeth** says that we will need to review whether we can include an entire parcel if the 1200' boundary cuts across it.
 - c) **Nancy** asks if there are any objections to including the Bunker Hill Mall, Peter Looney Park, Lawrence St.
 - d) **Elizabeth** points out that we should not cut through a block - it is best practice to align to streets or rear lot lines. Boundary is adjusted accordingly.
 - e) **Linda** comments on the Austin St. lots - it would be awkward to divide them.
 - (1) **Lindsey** will almost always say to protect more rather than less, but crossing over Rutherford feels like a reach. Rutherford Ave is like a dividing highway.
 - (a) **Ian, Crystal** and **Nancy** agree.
 - f) **Nancy** asks why not include City Square Park?
 - (1) **Elizabeth** explains that it is an individual Landmark with its own, more stringent standards, and it would cause some confusion.
 - (2) **Nancy:** There are other Landmarked buildings that fall within the Protection Area, so why would this be confusing?
 - (a) **Elizabeth:** Because it's on the edge.
 - (3) Discussion of including the Charlestown Navy Yard, the Blackmoor Building, and the Marriott:
 - (a) **Linda** feels there may be an argument for controlling height here due to views of the Monument.
 - (b) **Ian:** What is the goal of the Protection Area? Reviewing the criteria from 772 again, wouldn't cross

- Chelsea St., Rutherford Ave., or other major barriers. These areas have different character.
- (c) **Jennifer** points out criteria (a) from 772 that a Protection Area should be an area “contiguous” to the landmark district.
 - (d) **Nancy** asks if anyone feels strongly about including these sites? (Blackmoor, Navy Yard, etc.)
 - (i) **Julie**: No.
 - (ii) No one else has a comment.
- (4) **Julie**: Returning back to City Square Park - it may look confusing to the public that we “excluded” City Square Park even though it is already Landmarked.
- (a) Staff updates the map to include City Square Park in the Protection Area but also will update the map so it shows Landmarks and will update the study report to identify the Landmarks and explain that their standards and criteria supersede the Protection Area.
 - (b) **Nancy**: We should reach out to the Friends of City Square Park and the Friends of the Training Field, as well as the owners of any Landmarks in the District or Protection Area.
 - (i) **Julie** agrees that we should do this.
 - (ii) **Linda** also suggests Friends of the Harvard Mall.
- (5) North side of the Protection Area: **Crystal** observes that it might seem less meaningful to the homeowners north of Bunker Hill Street to be in the Protection Area because that area is already being redeveloped?
- (a) **Nancy** responds that the Protection Area also responds to future development concerns.
 - (b) **Elizabeth** points out that we could grab some of Polk St, Elm St., etc., but would it appear arbitrary?
 - (c) **Crystal** points out that the residents immediately adjacent to the redevelopment might need protection (ex. west side of Polk St.). Boundary is stretched up Polk St and over to Mystic St to see what that looks like.
 - (d) **Crystal** is concerned about protecting Newtown but the 1200’ line cuts through it. Also the cemetery. We need to find out the answer about partial parcels.
 - (e) **Nancy** suggests maybe going up Decatur, crossing over to Corey St, west on Medford to Mystic. Study committee assents. Staff adjusts boundary.
 - (f) Discussion of west side will be continued next week after we have an answer about partial parcels.

V. PUBLIC COMMENTS

- A. No members of the public in attendance.

VI. ADJOURNMENT: 8:42 PM

- A. **Ian** motions to adjourn, **Crystal** seconds. Unanimous vote to adjourn.