11.305  Doing Good by Doing Well: Planning and Development Case Studies that Promote both the Public Good and Real Estate Value

Wednesdays 2:30-4:00; Room: 9-451
Friday field trips as noted in Schedule

Kairos Shen, Lecturer, Center for Real Estate
Office Hours: Tue & Thurs. 11:30-1:00, Rm 9-344

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This seminar will study how the messy and complex forces of politics, planning and the real estate market have collectively shaped Boston’s urban fabric and skyline in the last two decades. Using some of the city’s most important real estate development proposals as case studies, the course will dissect and analyze Boston’s negotiated development review and permitting process to explore what it takes beyond a great development concept and a sound financial pro forma to earn community and political support. Throughout the seminar there will be an effort to identify strategies for success and pitfalls for failure within this intricate approval process and how these lessons can be generalized and applied to other cities and real estate markets. The following are some key issues and questions the seminar will explore:

- How can the city enlist real estate developers in the implementation of public planning and economic development policies and objectives?
- How do developers build great buildings and places that deliver extraordinary public benefits and civic value to the city that are also commercial successes?
- How the continual give and take between planners, developers and the community can lead to innovative planning and creative developments that enhances both the public good and real estate value.
- How politicians, advocates, activists, and the community adjust their expectations and negotiating positions depending on the project proponent and the purpose of the project.
- How developers modify their proposals and vary their negotiating tactics in response to unpredictable public expectations and non-market forces.
- How the city’s planning agency uses its broad discretionary powers to mediate conflicts and negotiate workable compromises between competing community and development interests.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

This seminar is designed to serve as a practical supplement to the academic courses offered by DUSP and the CRE. Students will be expected to participate in class discussions, but there will be no assignments and grades, credits will be earned through attendance in class. Each session will have a set of associated readings and articles that will provide the political, planning and community context of the featured case studies. Students are encouraged to familiarize themselves with the case studies through the readings prior to class. Readings are available on Stellar, MIT's web-based platform that contains all relevant information for the course. You need MIT web certificates installed on your computer.
SYLLABUS AND SCHEDULE

Wednesday, Sept. 4  Introduction

Wednesday, Sept. 11  Private For-Profit Developers  
The South Boston Innovation District

Wednesday, Sept. 18  Private For-Profit Developers  
The Big Dig and the Downtown Waterfront

Wednesday, Sept. 25  Non-Profit Institutional Developers  
Harvard University and North Allston

Friday, Sept. 27  Field Trip  
(8:30-12:00 TBC)  
The South Boston Innovation District

Wednesday, Oct. 2  Non-Profit Institutional Developers  
The Longwood Academic and Medical Area

Wednesday, Oct. 9  Guest Presentation

Wednesday, Oct. 16  Once-in-a-Lifetime City Building Opportunities?  
Boston 2024 and Amazon HQ2

Wednesday, Oct. 23  Professional Sports: City Building or Real Estate Development?  
The Boston Red Sox & the Fenway

Wednesday, Oct. 30  Guest Presentation

Friday, Nov. 1  Field Trip  
(8:30-12:00 TBC)  
The Fenway

Wednesday, Nov. 6  Community Based Non-Profit Developer  
Chinatown and South Bay

Wednesday, Nov. 13  Public Sector Developer  
The Commonwealth and the Boston Convention & Exhibition Center

Wednesday, Nov. 21  No Class

Wednesday, Nov. 27  Public Sector Developer  
The City of Boston and Dudley Square

Wednesday, Dec. 4  Last Class & Concluding Discussion