

Offered by City Councilor **Julia Mejia**, Breadon, Flynn, Essaibi-George, Arroyo, Campbell, Wu,

Edwards, Flaherty, Bok and Janey

CITY OF BOSTON

IN CITY COUNCIL



**ORDER FOR A HEARING ON COMMUNITY VOICE IN IMPACT
ADVISORY GROUPS**

WHEREAS, In October of 2000, Mayor Thomas M. Menino introduced An Order Relative to the Provision of Mitigation by Development Projects in Boston, which outlines the process through which Impact Advisory Groups (IAGs) were to be created for large projects under Article 80 review; *and*

WHEREAS, While originally proposed to be made up of up to 9 members, current IAGs are groups of up to 15 individuals, nominated by local elected officials, composed of residents, business owners, or designees of community organizations within the impacted area; *and*

WHEREAS, IAGs are tasked with providing advice and feedback on large-scale projects proposed by the BRA to ensure that these development projects meet the needs of the community and do not contribute to displacement, gentrification, a loss of community character, and other values integral to the community; *and*

WHEREAS, Twenty years after the creation of IAGs, there is reason to examine how well these IAGs are working, and how the existing community participation infrastructure sincerely impacts developments sponsored by the BPDA; *and*

WHEREAS, Community advocates across Boston have raised concerns about whether or not the advice and feedback offered by community members is taken seriously in the design process of certain large-scale developments; *and*

WHEREAS, In addition, community members have questioned whether the representation of IAGs sincerely reflects the neighborhood that is being impacted by these new developments, and whether or not individuals nominated by local elected officials make their way onto the IAG; *and*

WHEREAS, The principles of collaborative and caring governance means that the City should not merely be consulting with the public, but rather following their leadership in designing communities that are directly rooted in their needs; *and*

WHEREAS, While the Boston City Council does not have direct authority over the BPDA, we do play a role in dismantling top-down systems of engagement and accountability; ***NOW THEREFORE BE IT***

ORDERED,

That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to examine the functionality of IAG meetings, from how nominations are made, to how meetings are facilitated, to how the advice and feedback of the members is heeded. Representatives from the BPDA, particularly individuals who help to oversee the IAG process, as well as IAG members and community advocates are encouraged to attend.

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