

DRAFT MINUTES
BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, May 7th, 2013, starting in the BRA Board Room, 9th Floor, Boston City Hall, beginning at 5:19 p.m.

Members in attendance were: Michael Davis, Co-Vice-Chair; Andrea Leers, David Manfredi, William Rawn, Daniel St. Clair, Kirk Sykes, and Lynn Wolff. Absent were: Deneen Crosby, Linda Eastley, David Hacin, and Paul McDonough (Co-Vice-Chair). Also present was David Carlson, Executive Director of the Commission. Representatives of the BSA were present. Michael Cannizzo was present for the BRA.

The Co-Vice-Chair, Michael Davis (MD), announced that this was the meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission that normally meets the first Tuesday of every month and welcomed all persons interested in attending. He added thanks to the Commissioners for the contribution of their time to the betterment of the City and its Public Realm. This hearing was duly advertised on Thursday, April 19, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the April 2nd, 2013 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the April 2nd, 2013 Boston Civic Design Commission Meeting Minutes.

Votes and the sign-up sheet were passed for signature. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Melnea Cass Parcel 10 Project**. David Carlson (DAC) reported that the Melnea Cass Parcel 10 Project, on BRA/DOT Parcel 10, had been years in the conceiving, but was now moving forward quickly, with the Tropical Foods supermarket aiming to start in the fall. The overall Project is nearly 130,000 SF, over the BCDC threshold, and the site is a significant point of entry for Dudley Square. Review was recommended. It was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the Madison Tropical Parcel 10 Project on Melnea Cass Boulevard and Washington Street, in the Roxbury neighborhood.

David Manfredi (DM) was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on **Fan Pier Park**. DAC reported that the Park, about 1.75 acres on the Harbor, was adjacent to Fan Pier Parcel C recently reviewed by the Commission, and an initial scheme was seen then. Review of the Park is a condition of the BCDC's approval of Fan Pier, and so a vote to confirm review was recommended. It was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the proposed schematic design for Fan Pier Park in the Boston Fan Pier PDA within the South Boston Waterfront District.

DM returned. Lynn Wolff (LW) was recused for the next item. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **399 Congress Street NPC**. DAC reported that the BCDC had seen and approved the Project as a hotel in 2006. Hotel operators/backers could not be found, and the MCCA was pursuing other courses to increase hotels, and so the Project is now residential, with a new architect. It remains (at about 370,000 SF) well over the BCDC threshold. A new vote to review was recommended. It was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the revised schematic design for the proposed 399 Congress Street Residences Project on the parcel bounded by Congress Street, B Street north- and south-bound I-90 extension ramps, and the East Service Road in the South Boston Waterfront District.

LW returned. Kirk Sykes (KS) was recused for the next item. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **University Place Residences Project and PDA**. DAC reported that the BCDC had seen the Columbia Point Master Plan and approved a nearby Project recently on Morrissey Boulevard. The site was part of the Bayside complex and very visible. The Project alone (at about 200,000 SF) is well over the BCDC threshold and a vote to review was recommended. It was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed University Place Residences development and PDA at 140-144 Mount Vernon Street in the Columbia Point section of the Dorchester neighborhood.

KS returned. DAC reported that the **1282 Boylston Project** was returning later tonight for a design update, required by a condition of their approval vote, focused on the facade patterning resolution and streetscape detail. No further vote was necessary, although comments were welcome.

DM was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **Millennium Tower and Burnham Building Project**. LW noted that the open space thinking had advanced considerably, and there was more information on the Tower as requested. Andrea Leers (AL) added that they had made adjustments to the canopies and ‘connector’ along Washington Street. MD: We are inclined to approve; please give a *quick* update. Blake Middleton (BM) of Handel Associates went through some slides, showing views of glass precedents - buildings using the same glass as proposed here. After a series of this, he showed the Tower scheme again, starting with the whole, then zooming in on the corner of the lower portion. BM: There is a slight differentiation in the glass at the base (shows elevations) and canopy adjustments; we are showing likely entries, and adding new terra cotta on the edge of the Burnham Building. (He then showed the view up the Franklin edge, and a conceptual lighting sketch for the Burnham Building.) The canopies at the base have the effect of theater bulbs, as originally designed for the building. BM noted the landscape design, with planters, pleached landscape trees, paving patterns emphasizing entry points and similarity of program aspects. He showed views of the Park area, including the amphitheater (modified T headhouse) space with glass defining its edges.

LW asked about programming, and supporting infrastructure. BM and Tony Pangaro (TP): Yes, all of that will be accommodated. BM noted the grades, and some steps between areas. KS: I thought you were grading the entire street? BM: Yes, from certain points (describes further, notes resolution at the corner, for example). KS: Aside from the bollard separation, it's more a plaza than a through street (along Franklin). TP: There is no through traffic at all. The bus stop was moved to the next block. We did add a turnaround for the residents, but that also solves a drainage issue. KS: But taxis and buses are allowed through. TP: Yes, taxis too. KS: Same as now. AL: This is an extraordinary project - the building, the urban place, the detail. It will be a wonderful place. Bill Rawn (WR): I second that. MD: The team is good - Blake, Eric, Skip, Tony - thanks. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends full approval of the revised design for the proposed Millennium IV Tower / Burnham Building (nee One Franklin Street) Project on the Filene's block bounded by Washington, Franklin, Hawley, and Summer streets in the Midtown Cultural District; this vote removes the condition of the vote of September 4, 2012.

DM returned. LW was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **105A South Huntington Avenue Project**. DM: There has been a significant change in the Project from when we first saw it. They've maintained about the same square footage and FAR, but have elevated (and shrunk) the tower. There is a much better expression at the base; they have achieved a view through the building, and the loading and parking access are much improved as well. MD: The public realm has been very well served. (To David Chilinski [Chil]:) Just highlight recent developments.

Chil: There has been a significant revision to the overall massing (shows old and new models, shows views). The parking access is now down the side and into the center, so there are no garage doors directly on South Huntington. The lobby didn't have enough *gravitas*, per one comment; we have now emphasized that as a two-story glass expression, with a slot all the way through the building. The paving too starts at the outdoor café seating, and goes all the way through the building to the other side. Daniel St. Clair (DS): What does that look like on the Jamaica way? Chil: (Showed views from that side.) This building (the base and tower) has two approaches to it. (Shows other buildings in the area, mostly masonry.) That side is now masonry, while the tower is a lighter metal skin, in the 'family' of its taller neighbors. (Shows views of both sides.) AL: Are there other side views? Chil showed an array of building views. To further answer DS's point, he noted the planar relationship to other buildings both on the Jamaica way and along the Avenue. He noted the program elements, and pointed out decks with views to the skyline. He noted the BRA Corridor Study, and that this was one of the sites that could have 'special height.' DS: The only question I have, on the Jamaica way side, with more development along the South Huntington side, maybe the Jamaica way is an opportunity to differentiate slightly. At the 2-story gesture, perhaps, vary the skyline (sic) of the building. Maybe that might inform how you do that. But this has come a long way. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed 105A South Huntington Avenue Project in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood.

LW returned. The next item was a presentation of the **Melnea Cass Parcel 10 Project**. Fernando Domenech (FD) of DHK set up, while Russ Tanner (RT), Development Director of the Madison Park Development Corporation, introduced the team, including Ron Geary, the owner of Tropical Foods. RT: The context now is the Article 80 submission; our intent is to have the supermarket under construction by September. There is investment in Dudley Square; the steel of the Ferdinand Building is going up. Tropical Foods is *very* cramped now, and they are excited to move to the larger space.

FD then presented the design. FD: Essentially this is three projects in one: a new Tropical Foods, an office, and residential in the old Tropical Foods building. FD then showed the Dudley area, the immediate locus, and context photos, including views of the parcel, which was created originally by the demolition - along with much of the neighborhood - for the Southwest Corridor (Inner Beltway). He showed views of existing buildings on and adjacent to the site, Williams Street, etc. FD: The expansion of Melnea Cass forced a reconfiguration of the Project - the parking for the supermarket. We are trying to build an urban street wall around the site, particularly at the important sides. (Shows the sequencing of uses/phases from September to 2016.) Chuck Bromley (CB) of Plan B Retail presented the supermarket building itself. He showed the plans and the main entry, noting they had just added a revolving door on the other side at the Melnea corner for pedestrians, not shopping carts. He noted the tight receiving area on Shawmut; the upper floor has storage, break areas, and offices. CB: The entry area is high and open. And the HVAC is in the center, so there is acoustic control, and it's not visible. (Shows exterior views.) This will be modified; the door isn't in yet. There is a lot of glass, so activity (in the store) will be visible. There is clerestory glass above solid areas. We are using masonry modulars and oversized brick.

MD: What do you see at the corners? CB: They are very transparent. The cashiers/registers are at the east; the bakery area is toward Shawmut, where you can see the customers being served, the goods, a café. MD: This will forever doom this block of Melnea. DS: It would be best to have a major gesture at the corner. I understand the cars.... CB defended the parking scheme. DS: I understand the need to get to the cars; I would flip the expression of hierarchy. MD: How is the customer base arriving? FD: From the neighborhood. KS: What is possible to do? I'm racking my mind. Trader Joe's at Coolidge Corner has multiple entries and transparency.... This prompts a discussion and other examples. LW noted the Star at Packard's Corner, with a bakery entry - AL added that was on a lower level, too.

FD showed the design for Building B. FD: There is retail at the base, lining the streets; it's an important corner. There is office above. It's not as far advanced as the supermarket, but we were told to show the whole thing. The residential is less developed still. MD: We are looking at the whole thing. FD showed views, and line drawings. Moving on to the residential building, he showed old photographs of the structure, noting it was originally two old buildings. FD: We will have to review this with the Department of the Interior. MD: So you are using Historic Tax Credits. FD: Yes. (Shows views in 3D modeling, this time focusing on the spaces between the buildings.)

AL: I have a question about the site plan in the first instance. You could build up the density of the site to give a good walking experience along the street. I wonder...the existing design for the 4-story building feels comfortable. Why wouldn't you extend your building, make more of it?

MD: And do we really need access from all three streets? FD: Like Washington Street? AL: Like the entry from Washington, yes. And tighten the space along Melnea. DS: Did you consider placing the program at the second level, with parking on the ground. Like some stores in Brookline, or Whole Foods (and Star) in Cambridge. DM: The suburban character of the interior.... I wonder if there isn't a strategy which makes it more a street-like connection to Williams Street. It's understood you have to carve out the surface parking; make it less visible. I've been in the store; it's very cool. There are things I can't find elsewhere. It's special - how it engages the street should reflect that. One other thing- as you evolve the corner building, create the opportunity for individual storefronts for the tenants below. It could be 6, 2, or 7 tenants - but *develop a strategy* for diversity. The messiness of the edges, the diversity, will make it all the more walkable. MD: There should be messiness too at Shawmut. You can't leave it as a wasteland, even though it's not as important as the other corner.

FD: We have struggled with our urban design instincts. We had underground parking under the existing structure, but had to back into the scheme you see, plus deal with loading, etc. Folks who know their business are saying that. KS: You might study what Daniel suggested. And parallel parking (per DM) would have activity that a parking lot doesn't generate. I agree with the others. How do you promote the trip from Shawmut to Washington? AL: Think of it not as three buildings but as a *block*. A series of buildings related in height and material. Make it all parts of the same, related; bring it all visually together. LW: Tighten up the openings. The pedestrian becomes more important, even on the interior. Knowing the character of the streets around might help - where people come from. And traffic engineers. AL: Zoom out on the birds'-eye axonometric, all the way to Dudley - the same view, but more information. DS: Are you committed to the program of office and residential? Office seems unsure at the corner, but a better fit in the existing building; the new building could be residential. FD: An interesting thought; I'm not sure we're beyond that. MD: This is an important site. KS: Parcels 9 and 10 are a slingshot - they will either bring people in, or turn them away. With that, the Melnea Cass Parcel 10 Project was sent to Committee.

WR was recused from the next item. The next item was an update presentation of the **1282 Boylston Street Project**. MD: Remember that this is an update only, there is no vote, so focus on the changes. Hank Keating (HK) from Bruner/Cott introduced his clients - Jason Epstein, and Bill Keravoui (BK) from the Abbey Group. He noted the change to all residential, and began by showing the old view, describing the massing strategy and fenestration as expressed there. HK: The notch allows light and air through, with a court above. The curtainwall projections are at the office and the 'extroverted units.' MD and AL interjected, encouraging getting to the new material. HK continued to the elevation. AL: Is that the old one? Cut to the chase. HK then showed the new next to the old, and described changes, noting cement panels may now be a kind of terra cotta system. He showed a perspective and a series of elevations.

AL: So you haven't changed the massing - the protrusion in front. HK: It's narrower; you don't need the depth. We have also simplified the rear, bringing it straight down. KS: Why do you have different masses? HK begins to explain/describe. KS: In back, you have a fair amount going on, but it's still complicated, and that's the easy side, where you could have a simple band wrapping the building. I'm still not sure I get the other side. DM: Did you show the

streetscape? HK shows one board. MD: That's better... DS: The front is better; you've cleaned up the notch, the massing. But there is a strong delineation of differences in the building; I would have expected a program change. HK: 'Extroverted...' DS: Sure, but you can do that in a number of ways. LW: I like the simplification of the horizontal and vertical. The new facades with the green and vertical look a little busy to me. I do like the unity of the two sides. DS: The new streetscape, including signage, was a *specific* request. BK points out some changes. KS: The renderings are the most successful part of your presentation. There's a lot going on; a material change might help. MD: On the other Boylston buildings, the retail really pops. Your (upper) building could recede more. Is that a restaurant at the corner? Seating, bollards, planters, etc...

BK: It will have all that. How we have positioned that, we expect it to work with the community center. KS: We need to see these things in the greater context. In multiple blocks, in many projects we are reviewing. DM: A good point. Even when the future is not designed, we can see what's happening for a distance. One should make 3-4 block elevations. MD: Should we ask them to come back with more? DAC: *We could...* DS: Is there an ability to modify at this point? Can the massing or fenestration change? LW: Perhaps we've already given our comments, and it's not been productive. DM: Exactly where are you? BK: We have ordered the steel, but the facade details will change. KS: Focus on the entries, retail, and signage. How does this fit in? MD: We could have the streetscape return. AL: We should wrap this up. We've given it a lot of time. MD: It's advisory, so BRA staff can continue with them and our comments.

WR returned. DM was recused from the next item. The next item was a presentation of **Fan Pier Park**. Myrna Putziger (MP) of The Fallon Company introduced herself and Skip Burck (SB) of Richard Burck Associates. MP: Fan Pier is a phased development. As the buildings are built, the public realm is built. Here, it is not yet required, but it's the front door of Parcel C, so we are doing 60% of this design now. SB showed views *from* the site, and *of* the overall site. And overlays of historic pier forms and the boat slip, and a photo of the edge. SB: The seawall here is more of a 'rubble' wall where the slip was; a change in condition because it never was a wall, before. (Shows a photo looking down into the water.) You can see about 3-4 feet into the turbidity. (Shows viewsheds again, and more photos.) The wave attenuators block views, but also define others. The basic scheme (shows) has one-foot-high tidal steps in a well. Like a clock, a step is covered or uncovered about every 45 minutes. The pavilion at the corner has an elevator to the top, for views. There is a deck over the water at the other corner. There are smaller things - a fire pit to have a different activity, seating along the Parcel C edge, trees not against the building, but outboard of it, strategically placed for views. The slope works for them because the terraces can slope up, but you can still see over them. The building elevation is 18', it's 15' at the edge. (Shows precedent views and other parts of the site.) The tidal well also is a fountain feature, using recirculated seawater.

DS: What is the nature of the stone - is it rough? SB: We don't want people to walk there. It will be slippery. So there will be a railing, and battered walls. And a very simple bridge at the edge. (Shows section at the deck, and stepped trays up to it.) AL: What is the nature of the brown areas (on the plan, trapezoidal curves with trees)? SB in response showed precedents of both the water strategy and the stepped trays, as well as a long section. DS: Is the bridge flat? SB: Yes. LW: What is the edge of the Harborwalk? SB: A good question. In some places, it

has a curb. But we talking to LAM lighting about light bollards, and the suggestion came up about the seatwall, which could have lighting. But we wanted to differentiate. LW: As much seating as is possible is good. SB: We will build the first phase. The Master Plan - second phase (shows the line) is about 5 years out. DS: And the trapezoid at the far left? SB: A tot lot. AL asked about the green area lines. SB: They were more parallel; they are now shifted, more dynamic. DS: Are the green areas just lawn? SB: *Great* lawn. MP: We have an advisory committee. They want the notion of a simple green carried over from the existing. Too many plantings would make it less used. SB: It's terraced, with chairs and tables at the areas noted by Andrea. LW asked about the nature of the tot lot. SB: It's curbed...(describes briefly). And the dark line there? SB: A hedge. AL: This is really a thoughtful plan. This would just be a pleasure. A continuous seatwall would be nice there. I like the idea of the tide well. WR: I compliment it as well. The site analysis is good. We could approve it today. DS: You have executed such a good green at the other space - I'm confident. LW: We'd like to see the pavilion with Parcel D or E.

With that, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the proposed schematic design for Fan Pier Park in the Boston Fan Pier PDA within the South Boston Waterfront District, with the caveat that the pavilion design return before execution with Parcel D or E.

KS was recused from the next item and left. The next item was a presentation of the **University Place Residences Project**. Ed Hodges (EH) of DiMella Shaffer presented the design, first noting the location with aerials and the future context of the Columbia Point Master Plan. He noted the property lines of DCR and UMass - which required variances - the BRA had wanted to push the building to the edge. EH then went through the site plan, showed several axonometric studies, pointed out the entry and retail (which fronted the future commercial road leading toward the Harbor). AL and WR asked about the office entry - its location, what it fronts. And what future plans are for the Corcoran Jennison sites. EH noted a possible second 'head' as a tower. WR: We will want to see that in Committee. EH then showed site and floor plans. DS: Back to the site - why is the garage entry *there*? EH: The BRA wanted to remove it from near the entry. That does not preclude a future phase. LW: So you enter from the commercial street, and a drive. And there's a ramp down from grade. That's tricky for the circulation around the new building. EH: Duly noted. EH then finished with the plans and showed elevations. EH: Because of the folding, the facades read differently. The materials feature an interplay between vertical and horizontal. The textural quality is accomplished in metal, with a vertical irregular pattern, then shingled horizontal siding. It frees itself, creating an impression along the (west, ramp) side. EH then showed a series of views and again noted the retail areas.

DS: Are there users for that retail space? A demand? Would you allow University use? Mark Matel of Corcoran: We would allow that, sure. EH: The intention is small scale retail. LW: The whole thing, relative to your other parcel, seems (undefined).... EH: When we tried to define the park space shown on the Master Plan, we couldn't get those parties to all work together. So we have made it independent. AL: Actually, it's interesting how all those constraints have shaped the building. The result is interesting, surprising. Two things. The front of the building is indistinct. There's the side with the entry, and then the courtyard side. It's

straddling the issue. Second, there's a strategy of 'tail and head.' I think it could all be tail. Like Baker House, where Aalto was asked to extend it further - that was carried off. It faced the River. I don't question but that people will enter from both sides, but I think you need to declare the front. WR asked to see the route from the T; EH showed it. AL: That helps. The entry is right there. DM: I appreciate the amount of context you've shown. And also think the result is interesting. The retail is okay. But I am confused by the residences at the ground. And how (urban) it is. How the building meets the ground...on the left side, residences in a 'park.' I understand, you've run out of other stuff. But I am thinking 20 years in the future, the architectural expression, and what that might be. MD: This is going to Committee; what would we like to see? LW: If you draw Mount Vernon Street and take out the leg, what might happen? It would be good to anticipate that. EH: Remember - we don't control beyond, and when that might change. MD: Show the development envelope on the next site. And what happens to the transformer, etc. That might take the curse off of the driveway cut. With that, the University Place Residences Project was sent to Design Committee.

LW was recused from the next item and left. The next item was a presentation of the **399 Congress Street NPC**. Don Wiest introduced himself as counsel to the developer. He noted the Project was first proposed in 2006, and approved as a hotel of about 500 rooms. It became clear that the site was difficult for a hotel, and it had no high end amenity spaces. The scheme was modified to residential. Because of its proximity to the BCEC, there was a lot of discussion due to its previous use approval. It's now residential, at about 377,000 SF. Dennis Dowdle is the developer.

Tamara Roy (TR) of ADD Inc. then presented the design, starting with the locus, the overall site, and view/viewshed diagrams. Alignments and views were noted on an old model of the scheme. She showed the site plan, and the ground floor. TR: The street limit where you can enter: in the middle. A lot has to happen here - trash, loading, parking, etc. all has to happen in the same place. There is a spot for retail, and an innovation program. Bruce of the Copley Wolff Design Group presented the landscape plan (reversed in orientation). DS asked about the large green triangle area shown. Bruce noted that Massport controlled it; the area is intertwined with the permitting, but it was not a part of the Project, and the Project bore no responsibility for it. TR showed more views, noting the glass curtainwall at the ends. TR: The canopy wraps around. The entry is marked by a facade change as well, as is the innovation area above the canopy (somewhat; shows a view from the other side). You can see green at the Congress corner; there is fencing and equipment at the ramp corner. A transformer yard with all our stuff. The facade treatment conditions are to break up the long facade (about 300' overall). The precast wall has a 2-story window expression; we are using ironspot brick tiles embedded in the precast. (Shows precedent pictures, including the ribbed precast grooves at Boston Wharf Tower and Channel Center. Shows a section diagram and notes the stacking; shows floor plans.)

AL: This is a terrific project in terms of planning and realization. The two sides - each side to its side is really *quite* different. One with views, the other with the vent building, but to the south, too. The treatment of the two sides might reflect their very different orientation/contexts. It's kind of an 'underspace' of sorts. TR recalled the floor difference at 275 Albany Street. DS: This is good work. There's a lot of that blond/beige material. You've done that at Gerdling (Boston Wharf Tower). Also it's in the vent building. I wonder if you want to

consider something different. TR: Maybe, now that it's (the Boston Wharf Tower) up, more a brown, or a beige. We will want to study that.

WR: This is a very difficult site. My first question - In the future, I hope that people will walk up Congress. But the road ramp now is very intimidating. The building seems much more conservative than the site. I'm not trying to be Pollyanna here. It's not an extension of Congress, not Kallman McKinnell, maybe more like Mass College of Art. And the dipped ends. Could you have a wild curve at the ends? TR: There's definitely a budget issue with the curves. We felt it would become more a part of the City fabric. (Shows a picture of the model.) We could not afford the Mass Art facade now, but we could have, *then*. WR: I hear the others. The skin is of the urban context, but the site is not. DM: I'm a little disappointed in that there isn't a recognition of where the geometries collide. It may be due to views. But it's a *very* long building. I really want to be convinced that you can't bring the transformers into the building. I could see that space as more green in the future...I don't want to burden you, but it's worth pursuing. MD: Bring a model to Committee. With that, the 399 Congress Street Project NPC was sent to Design Committee.

There being no further items for discussion, a motion was made to adjourn, and the meeting was duly adjourned at 8:43 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission is scheduled for June 4, 2013. The recording of the May 7, 2013 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.