

## DRAFT MINUTES

### BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, May 5<sup>th</sup>, 2015, starting in the BRA Board Room, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston City Hall, and beginning at 5:24 p.m.

Members in attendance were: Michael Davis (Co-Vice-Chair); Deneen Crosby, David Hacin, Andrea Leers, Paul McDonough (Co-Vice-Chair), William Rawn, Daniel St. Clair, and Lynn Wolff. Absent were Linda Eastley, David Manfredi, and Kirk Sykes. 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, Mike Davis (MD), announced that this was the meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission that 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 Monday, April 20, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

**VOTED: To approve the April 7<sup>th</sup>, 2015 Boston Civic Design Commission Meeting Minutes.**

Votes were passed for signature. MD first asked for a report from the Review Committee on the **Pier 4 Phase 2 NPC Office Building Project**; David Carlson (DAC) noted that this was intended as an update and recommended deferring any new vote to review - similar to the Sepia component of the Ink Block - until seeing the presentation. The Commissioners agreed and voted to defer action (an informal vote) until the presentation.

DAC then noted that the **Seaport Square Parcels M1 and M2 Project** would be presented in an advisory session at the end of the meeting. This was pursuant to discussions earlier in the year to allow the BCDC to see some projects earlier to provide guidance, rather than projects that had been fully shaped and defined. Another informal vote was taken to perform an *advisory review*.

Lynn Wolff (LW) was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from Design Committee on the **AC Hotel South End Project**. John Martin (JM) of Elkus/Manfredi presented changes, showing a series of views. He showed the notion of a green wall on the parking wall behind the Hotel, and pointed out the animation of the blank areas of the metal wall with illuminated white panels and articulated metal. On the long facades, he noted the vertical interruptions at the cross-corridors near the ends. He showed the ground floor uses, pointing out

the transparent circulation corridor and amenity spaces behind glass walls. The material on the facades was natural zinc metal; this was articulated with fins and seams.

MD recalled the issues: The response was best articulated by the initial view and plan. So, the space defined by the trees and planters is around the hotel entry - and the trees further along (and the green wall) lead you in. Ted Tye (TT) of National Development: That's the pedestrian path. The side is service only, and allows ventilation and removal of garbage, etc. out of the lower garage level. We do *not* want to encourage passage down that path. Andrea Leers (AL): You have a pretty strong pedestrian movement; you don't *want* to invite people down the service corridor. Deneen Crosby (DC): And do not direct people toward the transformer box. You should reinforce the East/West path, and screen the parking more. David Hacin (DH): I appreciate the changes to the architecture. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed AC Hotel / South End Project at 223-237 Albany Street in the South End neighborhood.**

The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **375-399 Chestnut Hill Avenue Project NPC**. JM continued as presenter. JM: We have modified the park facade by recessing the balconies and aligning them in a 12- and 36-foot rhythm, and so have broken up the length. We have modified the brick choice more toward beige from a red, to respond to Cleveland Circle. We have raised the brick line near the top slightly, to the sills. We're using metal shingles...(shows the small amenity deck with the fireplace, shows the corner). We've added windows here, but not behind the balconies, so they're only at the top. Bays are above. (Shows the brick wrapping at the rear 'piazza' space.) The zinc at the corner is now the same color, but still goes from shingled to flat.

AL: I appreciate the change in the color. The buildings come together better, they are more articulated, they speak to each other. Daniel St. Clair (DS) asked about the other park view; JM obliged. DH: I echo Andrea's comments; I think the articulation is better. MD asked if there were any public comment. Eva Webster (EW): I've been a member of the IAG for four years now. The Project has improved. May we see that corner? I am concerned that it's still not there in addressing Cleveland Circle. The 'Circle' sign does, but that's impermanent. The developer is doing the corner to do a better layout for the units, but we want something iconic. We want something that's of its place. You shouldn't simplify the materials; they are complex in the area, with detail. That's the character of the area. And Andrea had said it was top-heavy...I don't think that's been addressed. The balconies are over the only public space that is granted; the balconies won't be occupied by seniors. They stick out, and will be seen when the Marathon goes by, etc. No.... MD: This will be seen by the IAG and others? EW: Yes. At meetings of the IAG and BAIA. MD: Then continue to work there. Your issues are really beyond the purview of this Commission. EW: I appreciate the work that you do and all the changes that come from your review. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the modified schematic**

**design for the proposed Cleveland Circle Mixed-Use Project NPC at the Circle Cinema site at 375-399 Chestnut Hill Avenue in the Brighton neighborhood.**

The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **Fan Pier Parcel D Project**. JM introduced Christian Galvao from the Elkus/Manfredi office and proceeded into a presentation of the changes. JM showed the ground floor/site plan, noting the change in the retail chamfer. JM: We lost about 10% of our retail (1500 SF), but I think that it's better, it opens up (the view). We have brought the serrated edge down to the ground. The issues of the 'ship's prow' - we have withdrawn the ground floor, so that it's more of a thrust above. (Goes up through the floor plans and the rooftop. Shows views. Shows a wall detail of the east facade.) Richard Martini (RM) of The Fallon Company showed the before and after models, pointing out the differences.

LW: What about the Harbor view? That box on the top - could that be more dynamic? JM noted the shape on the roof plan. DH: If you could shape that to echo the balcony (at the NW corner), that would be good. AL: I appreciate the change in the podium mass. DH: The shaping of the base to open it up, is good. What is the glass choice? RM: We are working on that now. We have blue, green, and dark around us. DH: There's a lot of blue. RM: The stone choice was to offset that, and make the stone the main thing. DH: The glass color - if it's wrong, it won't help the district.... LW asked if they could play with the height of the HVAC enclosure (FAA limits). AL: The balconies are boxy...some are diamond-shaped. Can the ones in front be more shaped? That might be more organic. Right now, they're just chopped off. DH: The stack of balconies, with an adjustment to the top, could appear more prow-like. MD: Work with BRA staff to refine this. Circulate the design to us when it's done - we don't need a re-presentation. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed Fan Pier Parcel D Project in the Boston Fan Pier PDA within the South Boston Waterfront District.**

The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **14-20 West Broadway Project**. AL: We talked about the facade, straightening it - making more sense of the [elements at the] rear and the entry via the *porte cochere*. Kevin Deabler (KD) of RODE (collaborating architects with RCA) showed earlier renditions, the locus, and then some context. KD: Our charge was to show that this fits into that...we have more verticality on the front; the brick is rising vertically. We have worked to resolve the rear...and improve the relationship to the light wells next door. We (RODE) were part of the origin of that lightwell concept. And there was a question about where the building line is - understanding what's going on, on West Broadway.

MD: So, the 6-story zone is against the building next door, with light wells beyond. KD: I should have explained that more (shows more information). There are duplexes at the top. LW asked about balconies. KD: There's a single balcony for the duplex. We are striving to give every unit some open space. MD: So, the strategy is the same on the rear. KD: Yes, we are

echoing West Broadway...we thought that would work here. (Shows changes to the entry/retail along West Broadway, and the nature of the *porte cochere* at the rear. Shows a night view. Shows a ground floor plan.) We have pulled the core into the center of the building. We have shrunk the lobby space, but added skylights to pull light into the space. Bill Rawn (WR): Is there a car elevator? KD: There is a car elevator (shows). It's a valet operation. (Shows the plan evolution on West Broadway.) We could either bring the building down, or connect the spaces more. This allows for both, with columns. (Goes through plans.) DS asked about the corner. KD: It's a balcony. DC: You cut back the corner. KD: There's still some [corner projection]. We worked on that side...it's about the relationship of balconies. DH: What are the facade materials? And what is the status of the hotel? This may be visible for some time. One strategy might be to bring the brick around. KD: It's zinc, in two colors (balconies and facade). (Notes brick returns and ends.) DH: This has really come a *long* way. A lot you've done is really good; it's a difficult problem. This could be there a long time. DS: This is hugely forward. Still, there could be some simplification. You go straight, but then you chamfer...the intermediate pieces could be one. I would simplify the backdrop, the brick frame. The base should be simple also...the 2-story expression vs. a 1-story frame seems busy. MD: I only have some concerns around the west facade. DH: I would be fine with a conditioned vote. MD: Return when the facade can stand on its own. It was then accordingly moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed 14-20 West Broadway Project in the South Boston neighborhood, with the condition that the Project return for an informational update when the facade design has been developed and refined.**

DH and DS were recused from the next item. The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **45 West Third Street Project**. Scot Thompson (ST) of Hacin + Associates re-introduced the team, including Joshua from H+A and David Warner (landscape architect). ST: A robust discussion with community groups led to the Project you'll see tonight. (Notes locus.) Two streets connect; two do not (points out on area plan). ST then went through a series of metrics (units, FAR, parking, sidewalk width, etc.) to describe the Project changes over time. He showed an aerial overview of the Project, noting it was a story lower than last seen. He showed the ground floor plan, noting the duplex unit entry strategy. He noted and described in detail the retail and restaurant spaces.

MD: What did the Committee ask you to do? We're familiar with all this. ST noted that the relationship to KO Pies and the facade along Third were an issue. He described the current status...and went through a series of views, noting materials and metal panel areas. DC: What's on Athens, on the other side? ST: The nature of Athens is basically a service driveway to other buildings around. It's 13' wide; we don't plan to use it except as emergency egress. ST then showed more views - semi-aerials, a West Third Street frontal perspective. Describing that, he noted the townhouse expressions, and noted that the pavement was also special out from the center. He showed sidewalk sections, and then a view of the retail space with planter, recessed into the building. Then sections along West Third - at the main entry, then at townhouses - in a

series of section/view couplets. DC: When you're selecting street trees, look at the whole street. WR: I appreciate the explanation of the genesis of each of the changes. I'm sorry to see some, and glad you've held on to as much positive as you have. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed 45 West Third Street Project, on the block defined by West Third, A, and Athens streets, in the South Boston neighborhood.**

DH and DS returned. MD reminded Commissioners of the vote that may be required. The next item was a design Update presentation of the **Pier 4 Phase 2 NPC Office Building Project**. Gary Kerr (GK) of Tishman/Speyer introduced the team, noting that Tishman acquired the site in December 2014. GK: The Mayor asked us to look at both building sites to do something we could be proud of. We hope to start in the fall. We've hired SHoP Architects for the residential; we hope to be back in a couple of months for that. JM again took the floor: It's rare when a client acquires an approved building and asks you to make it better. JM then noted the changes the Commission would see, and went quickly through the **old** scheme, including views. He noted the 3-story podium, now subsumed into the volume of the building. And noted the undulating facade separated by metal bands.

Starting on the newer design, JM showed the variation in the street alignment. JM: You had asked us to do it before, and we can do it now. JM then showed plans indicating the old profile with a pink color, and new with a blue. He showed the ground floor and the street/site plan. JM: At the top (shows), the roof deck is both open and closed. The skin [of the building] is more elegant; more crisp and clear in its volumes. The trays have more play on the east, the cantilever is further out. (Shows views from the north, and shows details that produce the expanded trays, notably the splitting spandrel.) We have an incised element on the west. At the top, we are showing an enclosed observation deck.

Gary Hilderbrand (GH) of Reed/Hilderbrand: We are able to normalize more in the [street] pattern we've been developing over the last eight years. The road had crashed into the ICA; now it aims at the Harbor. GH noted the relationship to Phase 1 (residential); he noted the trees and showed sections. GH: The paving...is highly variegated. We need to mesh with that. There is a variable condition...we are [proposing] a continuity in granite with a variation, but in a larger size. There is a more generous pedestrian zone. We are suggesting a shift to a more discrete ending [of the Phase 1 treatment] in the interface at Harborwalk. A seawall, a projecting revetment along the edge - a kind of rumble strip - it's an exposed site - there is no public access to the water now. Transitions, plants out of cracks, boardwalk, more...we are looking at all of these, for Phase 2 as it turns into Phase 3.

WR asked about Phase 3. GH noted the general site/open space conditions (including a water sculpture), a great lawn, and the connection through. DH: I appreciate your returning. I'm glad you've upped the ante; it seems to derive from the Mayor's challenge. We have a concern about the curtainwalls in the area...keep that in mind. You are resolving a number of conditions on the

landscape - a challenge, with the first Phase, Goodwin Proctor, and the ICA all different. Lynn reminds me - I appreciate the straightening. WR: This is an improvement on a number of levels. I do remember we went through a *lot* of details to arrive at that. As much as we are inclined to like this, I'd like to send it to a Committee session. AL: I am inclined the same way. But to the extent we are looking at a number of things going on simultaneously.... Pause for a moment. Look together with us on early studies for Phase 3. That may affect how you may want to come back to us, and may impact Phase 2.

Robert Rudman: What you're suggesting is very disruptive to the building [development] plans. We are intending to move forward. (Notes prior approvals.) Tying the approval of this to Building 3 was not done before, so we ask that it not be done now. DH: It's the design not so much of the building, but of the public realm. MD: We can work out something...we understand the foundation, etc. won't change. We can send to Committee, correct? DAC: I would instead suggest a modified vote - to make the prior condition stronger on the landscape (which is not resolved), and to add a condition regarding any change to the building. AL: Further, we would fully expect the third Phase to inform the second. GK: It's unlikely to change.... MD (to WR): What was your notion? WR: It was more a matter of the Projects before us, and a fair consideration - treating them all equally, when we've had deep conversations on these before. DH: I'm comfortable moving forward, and think [something along the lines of] what DAC suggested might work... (More discussion ensues.) ...I'd like to include all the context, including Phases 1 and 2. (More discussion. A suggestion is made to vote first to review, then take another action.) DAC: We could instead go right to a conditional approval, amending our prior vote. Conditions to be added would include that: 1) the landscape returns for review and vote; 2) any changes to the building return; and, 3) any return incorporates full information on all three phases and [informing] context. This notion was moved, seconded, and it was

**VOTED:** That the Commission recommends approval of the revised schematic design and PDA plan changes for the Pier 4 Project Phase 2 NPC in the South Boston Waterfront District, with the following conditions: First, that the landscape proposed for Phase 2 is not deemed approved and shall return to the BCDC for review and vote; Second, more generally, that the site plan (with particular concern expressed for the areas interfacing with the ICA) return to the BCDC for review and vote when further developed in association with any ongoing Project Phase; Third, that any substantive modifications of Phase 3 as originally approved return to the BCDC for final review and vote upon submission to the BRA for the ongoing stages of design review or any PDA amendments; and, Fourth, that any changes to the Phase 2 building shall return to the BCDC for further review. Any return to the BCDC shall incorporate full available information on all three Phases and the informing (adjacent) context.

The next item was an *advisory presentation* of the **Seaport Square Parcels M1 & M2 Project**. MD reminded the Commissioners that there would be no vote; this was informal, and an idea that came out of a conversation with the Director [of the BRA]. This is just advice. John Hynes

(JH) of BGI introduced the team, including Tinchuck Agnes Ng, representing their Asian investors, acknowledging also the influences of Mayor Walsh and Director Golden. JH: We have brought back KPF (Seaport Square Master Plan architects) and engaged CBT as local architects. This is more complicated for us, but we think it will yield richer results. (Notes locus, notes Autumn Lane under construction, notes the idea of a pedestrian walkway through the site.) This [parcel M1M2] concept wasn't fully developed in the PDA. The idea now is to do three towers, not two. The SF and zoning are the same; we'd like to move forward with what you see.

James von Klemperer (JVK) of KPF: The designs are very conceptual; we'd like your feedback. We worked on the masterplan 4-5 years ago. David Nagahiro (DN) of CBT noted the relationship to the Silver Line on the site. DS: Will there be a supermarket here? JH: There aren't enough people yet - grocers won't come. But it's good that you raised the issue. It can fit in the base of the upper L parcels, and is definitely in the plan. JVK then showed an 'urban forces' diagram. JVK: The 'MWay' path originally led toward Congress. But that's an unfortunate intersection. So instead, we are proposing an internal square of some dimension - about 120'x120', with some resonance with Parcel Q Park, and augmenting the distribution of open spaces in the neighborhood. AL: What is your notion of the intersection? JVK: Somewhat like the buildings around the Holland Tunnel - blank, but beautifully crafted. AL: We spent some time reviewing the building to the south [399 Congress] that has worked hard to address that traffic/condition. JH: You'll be pleased with what you see. WR asked about the green. WR: Others' parks in the area are visible, off of streets. JVK: This is like this space in London (shows), about 40' in, the scale exactly the same, and readily visible looking in. JH: This is not like the other parks; it's a different kind of space.

JVK showed the PDA plan and compared it to the current concept. He showed a tower scale comparison - downtown, vs. the full block scale of the Seaport. JVK: This is a massing policy. (Shows a larger site diagram, noting secondary (covered) connections.) On the connections, WS Development is not convinced, flagging the nature of the streets at the north and south edges. DN: It's part of the strategy to create a more attractive, and different kind of retail, and a more gracious pedestrian feel. DC and AL asked about the nature of Autumn Lane. JH explained the circulation in response, noting that the upper L block strategy might change. JVK showed another preliminary site plan, noting a strong possible 2-story retail site at the south corner. He showed sections, noting solar orientation, and presenting the notion of an internally stepping podium. DN pointed out aspects of the shadow analysis. JVK showed a small study model. JVK: The MWay section at the end is more street-like, flanked by 2-story spaces. (Notes scale comparisons: King's Court in London, the circle at Marketplace Center in Boston, Placa del Sol in Barcelona [very close approximation], Place Sainte Catherine in Paris.) WR asked about scale. JVK: About a 2-story level (for the space). AL: The overall height proposed? JVK: Up to 258'. AL: All the examples so far are groupings of lower buildings, 6+ stories. The plans only are analogous. JVK: Kerry Parkside Center in Shanghai has 40-story buildings. And pedestrian pathways are found in Quincy Market, Covent Garden in London, and Rockefeller Center. There, the space has a visible impact from Fifth Avenue. (Shows more examples of retail arcades as passages, and then just passages.)

JVK showed podium plans, indicating rough locations for lobby, retail, parking, and loading areas. Loading would be off of B Street. JH: Whether loading is off B Street or East Service Road, the circulation is similar. The type of retail is smaller, so the largest trucks would likely be movers, not retail. JVK: No curb cuts off of Congress Street is a Massport requirement. AL wonders why. DS: Moving trucks.... JH: We have to have some accessible loading. JVK then showed a quick massing study, noting material might be masonry, have some texture. JH: We are proposing things much more granular than the 24,000 SF of Parcel L2. JVK: We intend to bring the facades down on occasions. (Shows a view looking into the courtyard.)

DC: The sense of sky will be important in how it feels. A lot of people will be meandering; the Seaport Boulevard connection is important. There's a nice connection to Autumn Lane, but I'm not sure yet how many people will use that. Charlie Reid of BGI: There will be more with the connection to Summer Street. WR: I'm trying to understand this in the context of your parcels. You mentioned bookending, but this is very different than B & C. JH: Large scale retailers - and grocers - didn't want to come. And there was a lot of criticism about the scale of the area. So we are breaking it up, creating a sense of smaller massings with the buildings. WR: The entries to the apartment buildings have to be on the street. I'm not sure they will use the small entries set into the space. MD: The space could be animated by that. JH: We think it will work.... AL: I like breaking the parcel into three parts - that's good. Heading back to Seaport on the diagonal - is good. It's wise to just let the base line the streets. The space will be nice. What I wonder about is the strategy for the towers. It is *so* fragmented. It's so many pieces...it makes me long for the Amsterdam perimeter buildings. You don't need to go that far. JVK: We are just developing the strategy. We can group them. AL: The tall piece in the back of the [west] entry to the site seems good. JH: Also, [the placement] allows views to the water. AL: Your basic instincts are good here. MD: Seaport Square (L parcels) is the next block up. JH: The idea is that they're also like that. MD: That's a type we haven't seen yet. JVK: May be a modulation of the green. AL: Not so much a strategy of fragments, but more a modulation of green spaces. JVK: It's a good thing to differentiate the buildings. AL and WR: Yes.

JH: Other comments about the plan choice? DS: I was going to say - the preference in loading could go through (East Service to B), and you could tighten the retail above. Bring it down or up along Congress. I'm concerned about the wall. JVK: It could be a great artwork - or a green wall, memorable at this scale. The stepping building concept is also used in more quaint buildings.

There being no further items for discussion, a motion was made to adjourn, and the meeting was duly adjourned at 8:53 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for June 2, 2015. The recording of the May 5, 2015 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.