

MINUTES
DESIGN COMMITTEE OF THE BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

December 15, 2020
Held virtually via Zoom

5:00pm

Project: **Mass General Hospital Cambridge Street Project**, West End
Present: Commissioner Deneen Crosby, Commissioner David Hacin, Commissioner Mikyoung Kim, Commissioner Anne-Marie Lubenau, Commissioner Kirk Sykes

DISCUSSION: When the Commission last saw the project at the July 10, 2019 Monthly Meeting, they focused much attention on the massing differentiation between the two tower buildings and the bridge connection. Significant changes since the last meeting include the integration of a new MBTA head house, added bike parking, and the removal of central service building from the project scope. Commissioners appreciate the way the building podium's scale is broken up by the auditorium and meditation space. The Bulfinch arcade is an improved concept compared to the earlier service-oriented condition. The pedestrian bridge between the new wings of the building is no longer over a street and now is engaging with aperture and asymmetry.

Commissioners raised questions related to how the design meets the adjacent urban context and asked for a stronger engagement with the urban context. Commissioners asked for study of materiality, façade expression, and architectural gesture, and also want the new arcade to be more public and inviting. With a project of this scale and such significant impact on the public realm, issue of Yawkey Street garage fate is still outstanding.

Councilor Kenzie Bok and the President of West End Museum spoke to opposition of removal of historic buildings on Cambridge Street and that the proposed buildings feel out of scale with the Beacon Hill neighborhood they face.

6:00pm

Project: **Bunker Hill Housing Redevelopment**, Charlestown
Present: Commissioner Linda Eastley, Commissioner David Hacin, Commissioner Mikyoung Kim, Commissioner Anne-Marie Lubenau, Commissioner David Manfredi

DISCUSSION:

At the last meeting on November 17, the Commission raised questions about the massing of building F. This building has since been reconfigured, and Commissioners approve of the new massing strategy. The rest of this design committee meeting discussion focused on

the open space and public realm strategy. The presentation outlined street types and sections, view corridors, open space program, and connections through the masterplan and to the neighborhood. Each of the four proposed parks has a distinct character, moving from an urban green space that references the scale of the historic neighborhood and open spaces to a more organic, passive meadow space.

Commissioners commented that when they last saw the project, the parks felt fragmented. They now feel more connected through Festival Street. However, they are too equal in program/use/scale. Commissioners asked the team to push the diversity of each of the parks and create a stronger hierarchy and progression of the green space. The design and programming goals are correct but program should be reallocated.

Several public comments were made regarding the project phasing, plan for parking, and concern for loss of trees on the site. The project will return to the full Commission for a vote on the masterplan and urban design framework. Design and specific massing of each building will come to the Commission for review in the future.