

## DRAFT MINUTES

### BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017, starting in Room #900, Boston City Hall, and beginning at 5:15 p.m.

Members in attendance were: Michael Davis (Co-Vice-Chair); Deneen Crosby, Linda Eastley, David Manfredi, Paul McDonough (Co-Vice-Chair), and William Rawn. Absent were David Hacin, Andrea Leers, Daniel St. Clair, 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 BPDA.

The Co-Vice-Chair, Michael 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 Thursday, April 20, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

**VOTED: To approve the April 4<sup>th</sup>, 2017 BCDC Meeting Minutes.**

Votes were passed for signature. David Manfredi (DM) was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Hodge Boiler Works Project NPC (99 Sumner Street)**. David Carlson (DAC) noted that the Commission had seen and recommended approval of two prior versions of the Project in 2003 and 2012; the owner and design team had changed since then. The third version of the Hodge Boiler Works Project remained (125,000 SF) over the BCDC threshold; a new vote to review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission review the newly revised schematic design for the Hodge Boiler Works Project at 99 Sumner Street in the East Boston neighborhood.**

DM returned. Bill Rawn (WR) arrived and ratified the vote to review 99 Sumner. The next item was a report from Design Committee on the **47 LaGrange Street Project**. B.K. Boley (BK) of Stantech presented the design update from Committee, starting with the locus and 'theme' of the building. He showed a series of views, mostly rendered perspectives, of the Proposed Project from different angles, and then a view of the streetscape showing the proposed 'halo' lanterns over the street. BK: Tamworth is paved and tabled (shows a ground floor/site plan). The tabling goes all the way to Boylston Street. (Shows a new view of the ground floor, then line perspectives showing the relationship with Phase 2 of 48-50 Boylston, the street level views.) We have parking with stackers in the basement, and trash is down there too. This has allowed a full (active) perimeter on LaGrange. It's a concrete structure with a curtainwall system. We're still working on the materials.

Linda Eastley (LE): We talked about the tabling and the trash in Committee.

How are you handling the trash with your neighbors? BK: Right now, it's in the basement because that's simpler, but the trash trucks go up Tamworth. The neighbors are supportive of the tabling; the trash can be worked out. There are precedents.... BTD hasn't said 'no' yet, so we feel positive about the tabling. LE: This is such a compact site. I'm thinking of Tamworth and LaGrange - the corner has worked out beautifully, and the massing at the corner helps. Deneen Crosby (DC): I think it's really great; I love the alleys in this area. Paul McDonough (PM): The notion of tabling Tamworth is a good one for this spot. DM: It's a nice Project; you've made it better, and simpler. LE: I'd suggest one thing - adding language in the vote which supports the tabling of Tamworth. This was agreeable to the Commission, and it was (hearing no public comment) moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the 47 LaGrange Street Project at the corner of Tamworth Street in the 'Hinge Block' area of the Midtown Cultural District, with strong BCDC support for the notion of tabling Tamworth Street from LaGrange to Boylston.**

The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **105 West First Street Project**. DC: The only thing...was to show more views along Second Street. BK presented the design update for this Project, starting again with the locus and views. BK: The interior lobby and pass-through is 24' wide; the importance of views toward the park were noted. We have a new simplified design, with an oko expression. The roof material is a dark gray painted metal; at the base, a similarly-colored ironspot brick. The roof screen is more transparent; there are balconies all around. There are entries on West First and West Second; you can see the art inside. On Second, we have canted the canopy and chamfered the plan - and notched the interior space with a view down into the maker space. (Shows a view from West Second.) We brought the window down. (Shows new updated perspectives, starting with an evening view.) You can see all the way through.... (Shows a day view from West Second, then from West First and across the park.)

LE asked about the landscaping. BK showed the site plans, then alternative site plans, with the added ex-street (State) parcel. He noted they were widening the sidewalk along West First, as well as the sidewalk along West Second (the width of one car), enhanced also by the chamfer. The back corner also has a chamfer that neighbors requested for a view connecting to the park space. DC: I think that's a nice connection to make. BK: We shifted that a bit.... DC: I love the passageway through...I wish there were a better connection at the park. If you control the road, does that help you? BK: We can get down a little more, and move the (less wanted) program away from the main entry there. With that, and hearing no public comments, it was moved, seconded and:

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed 105 West First Street Project on the parcel bounded by West Second and West First streets, and the Haul Road, and abutting the Artists for Humanities building, in the South Boston neighborhood.**

DM was recused from the next item and left. The next item was a presentation of the **Hodge Boiler Works NPC (99 Sumner Street) Project**. While Brian O'Connor (BOC) of Cube3 Studio worked on the projector interface, Stephen Davis (SD) of The Davis Companies introduced the Project. SD: There were prior versions of this Project with more, and less units. When we acquired it, we looked at a Project that made sense for us, and submitted an NPC. BOC noted the locus, showing photos of the site and the area along Sumner in both directions - as well as along London Street and its

extension. BOC: We are creating an edge for LoPresti Park, creating Harborwalk, and making more space along Carlton Wharf. There are car and building entries off of Sumner, and several building entries onto the plaza, which has more public and more private areas. (Shows plans.) The parking is not fully below grade, so the building is elevated - but it steps down directly to Sumner, and opens to the plaza and terraces in the back. (Shows upper floor plans.) The inside corner of the ell is used for storage. The roof has very low-profile condensers, and PV panels.

DC: Is the plaza area sloped, or level? BOC: It's level. LE: How does the interior space transition to Sumner? BOC explained, noting first the extent of the garage: The amenity space on the first floor is split, with the ceiling maintaining a constant level. The lobby is at street level. (Shows sections, then elevations.) On the Sumner elevation, we are picking up the scale of the neighborhood at the base, then step slightly above that. We show the LoPresti elevation without trees, but there are fairly hefty rows of trees there. The work/share space program connects to the plaza, not LoPresti. (Shows sections, and elevations from London Street.) LE asked about the grade to the water's edge; SD described that transition. BOC: We are using fiber cement panels with a stacked coursing above, and metal panels with soldier coursing below. (Shows views from LoPresti, from the rear of Carlton, then looking west along Sumner.)

John Copley (JC) of the Copley Wolff Design Group talked first about the location of the site, the importance of it. JC: There are great views. (Notes location in the larger context.) We want to knit the Projects together, from Clippership to New Street ('The Eddy'). (Describes the elements of the site plan.) We are taking the idea of the Harbor landscape and stones, that Clippership did; we want to continue that vocabulary at the edge, through the plaza, and then shift to riprap. We're considering which paving material to use on Harborwalk...pavers, or stone dust (used in LoPresti). We're using a boiler element and providing an overlook, and have buffered the edges of the plaza to Harborwalk. We're working on softening the corner to allow views over the plaza edge. We're working with the City on a wayfinding system from Central Square to East Pier, including two new water taxi sites. We're trying to make the Harborwalk elements here fit as a group, a family.

MD: I remember the issue at Clippership, about the raised space - with a 7-foot difference. It's important to communicate public access. We need views of what that looks like...accessibility, the *feel* of it. DC: Three feet feels accessible - 7 feet, a separation. Is there a way to terrace that down, so you don't feel so walled up - a way to bring the grade down? That might also allow better accessibility. JC: We'll look at that. MD: On LoPresti, is there a path? JC: We looked at a path there, but it would be redundant - one exists. WR: How is Chapter 91 addressed? Jamie Fay (JF) of Fort Point Associates: There is the shared work space open to the public. This is public space in private tidelands; the requirements are different than for Commonwealth tidelands. This counts, as well as the open space. WR: I'm trying to understand the requirements; is this different than other projects? JF noted Burroughs Wharf and other examples. On public tidelands, 3/4 of the ground floor has to be public space (FPAs). But public space may not always be in the best space (on the street). Urban design-wise, we have two masters. WR: Did you look at a flipped scheme? Aren't the views the other way better? BOC: We worried about blocking the views from the Carlton building, and from our own on that side. We looked at that. We felt the best option was to come close to Carlton, then open up. Also, you wouldn't get the same sun.

WR: Coming back to Deneen's point, about the separation of space. Do we really think a 7-foot-high space feels accessible/public? That's the fundamental question of the scheme. BOC shows the view from the back of Carlton Wharf: We can do more like this. WR: Isn't there a question of the spirit of Chapter 91 - isn't it slightly compromised? SD: One regulation we're dealing with is FEMA, the flood regulations. How do we experience the site?

It's meant to be a space that *invites*. WR asked Stephen to 'walk around' the site to help understand; SD did so. WR: The spirit of Chapter 91 is that it be inviting to the public. Looking at the hill, it doesn't look at all public. LE: If you could put a red box on the piece next to me, and show pedestrian desire lines.... I'm not as convinced by the terrace, especially outside the work/share space. It should be more Harborwalk. If there were a diagonal connection across at the level of Harborwalk, there would always be low and high, but a stronger visual connection. DC: Opening it up more along the water. MD: There's a lot of potential with your 'high reader.'

SD noted that the community liked the design, but was concerned about the Harborwalk corner. DC: The community doesn't always understand the grades. LE: Create a view of the space along Sumner at the corner, the amenity space. SD: The operator of the work/share space usually provides more public space, so we thought of coffee, etc. MD: Uses in the amenity space, perhaps. LE: You don't want a vacant corner. With that, and hearing no public comment, the Hodge Boiler Works 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 6:44 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for June 6, 2017. The recording of the May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.