

DRAFT MINUTES

BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, April 3rd, 2018, 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 Hacin, Andrea Leers, David Manfredi, Paul McDonough (Co-Vice-Chair) William Rawn, and Kirk Sykes. Absent was Daniel St. Clair. Also present was David Carlson, Executive Director of the Commission. Representatives of the BSA were present. Elizabeth Stifel, Michael Cannizzo, Corey Zehngbot, and Matt Martin were present for the BPDA.

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 Saturday, March 17, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the March 6th, 2018 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the March 6th, 2018 BCDC Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **37-43 North Beacon Street Project**. David Carlson (DAC) noted that the Project was slightly under the BCDC threshold, but similar in scale to another recently reviewed Project nearby, and located at a significant intersection in the Allston-Brighton neighborhood. Review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the BCDC review the schematic design for the proposed 37-43 North Beacon Street Project at the corner of Everett Street in the Allston-Brighton neighborhood.

The next item was a report from Review Committee on the **40 Mount Hood Road Project**. DAC noted that this was a site containing a mid-century motel a little removed from Commonwealth Avenue in the Brighton area, and would be subject to review by the Aberdeen Commission, setting up a potential joint review session. At 163,000 SF, the Project was over the BCDC threshold of 100,000 SF; review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed 40 Mount Hood Road Project at the corner of Egremont Road in the Allston-Brighton neighborhood.

The next item was a report from Review Committee on the **Dock Square Project**. DAC noted

that this was the Dock Square Garage site on the Greenway between Faneuil Hall Marketplace across Clinton Street and the Parcel 9 Haymarket Hotel across North Street. Review was recommended due primarily to size, at over 250,000 SF, but also due to its prominent location. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Dock Square Project on the Dock Square Garage site, bounded by the Greenway (southbound Fitzgerald Surface Road) and North and Clinton streets in Boston's Market District.

The next item was a report from Review Committee on the proposed Herb Chambers / Jaguar Land Rover Boston Project at 1186-1198 Commonwealth Avenue. DAC noted that the use was unusual for Commission review, but at 143,000 SF, well over the BCDC threshold. Review was recommended. It was then moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Jaguar Land Rover Auto Dealership Project at 1186-1198 Commonwealth Avenue in the Allston neighborhood.

The next item was a presentation of the **37-43 Beacon Street Project**. Linda Eastley (LE), Deneen Crosby (DC), and Andrea Leers (AL) arrived. David Hacin (DH) arrived a bit later. Architect David Snell presented the design, first noting the locus and then focusing on an aerial photo to define the site, noting the bounding roads. He showed context photos, program numbers, and then the site plan, noting garage access off of Harvester and Sinclair streets. Landscape architect Rebecca discussed plantings and tree species, and plantings with art along the North Beacon 'Zen Walk.' Snell noted street setbacks, then went through floor plans of both buildings. He showed an axonometric view, noting the Project's relationship to - and the eclectic nature of - the surrounding neighborhood. He showed sections. Snell: We've branded the Project as the 'Arthaus.' We're developing the notion of the building as a folded piece of canvas, organized horizontally and vertically, both coming together at the front. (Shows perspective.) You can see how the ideas are coming together. Snell then showed a series of views: down Everett, up Harvester, the corner of Harvester and Sinclair (art in the windows, framing the garage), the corner of Sinclair and North Beacon (where the more quiet and active come together), then a pedestrian vignette of the curated space inside and along the sidewalk. Snell pointed out the sidewalk and setback zones, with the latter becoming a plaza with art, gathering elements. This was an attempt to balance between the high traffic and energy and the more peaceful. He ended by showing the rooftop.

David Manfredi (DM): There's a lot to like here, infilling urban sites. I would like to see more of the condo building. And explain more of the curated space - I'm worried that this becomes simply an amenity space. You say it is, but public space seems appropriate here, going toward the [Union] Square. The north side of the building feels like it's the back of the building. DC: Everett is less of a residential street, more a connector. Think about the landscape as it goes around the corner.... Give us more information on the spaces along North Beacon. Kirk Sykes (KS): More context. I don't have a strong sense of how this fits into the surroundings. If the space at the front is active, is there a way of, say, opening it up, lifting up the glass? DH: I'm

curious about Harvester and Everett street - that house there. Will such houses remain? Will this area be densified? If not, how does the Harvester side relate, with the garage, etc. MD: I want to understand the context a little better, but this is a fabulous project. Bill Rawn (WR): The folded piece is very nice. I assume you had opposition from the neighborhood...? Snell: We looked at how far it should go. It took its presence away, to extend it. WR: I'm curious about how your team envisions the area, connecting to Stop'n'Shop, etc. It's more a curiosity [than an issue]. Paul McDonough (PM): Have you reached out to BLC on the demolition? Snell: We did. It's deemed non-contributing. AL: I appreciate the tension on North Beacon. On Harvester, look at the whole street, and how the condo building relates across Sinclair. With that, and hearing no public comment, the 37-43 North Beacon Project was sent to Design Committee.

DM and WR were recused from the next item, which was deferred to this time to achieve a quorum. The next item was a report from Review Committee on the **Seaport Square Parcel L4 Project**. DAC noted that this site was the first of several parcels modified under the recently approved Seaport Square Masterplan NPC. The Project itself was over half a million SF, but review was also required as a condition of approval of the overall PDA Plan. An affirmational vote was suggested, and it was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the Seaport Square Parcel L4 Project in the Seaport Square PDA, in the South Boston Waterfront District.

This vote was followed by a presentation on the **Seaport Square Parcel L4 Project**. Yanni Tsipis (YT) of WS Development introduced Bob Perry (BP) of Gensler's San Francisco office, and the L4 Project. YT: We have spent some time with you on the Masterplan context - and the public realm context. There has been some recent press about this, but this (shows fact sheet) is consistent with the Masterplan. A good portion of the central square will be built with this building; that will be the topic of a future presentation. BP: This is a great opportunity - we're starting from several principles.... YT: This is a part of a larger Seaport Square parcel. We wanted to be aspirational in a different way, so we chose the SF office of Gensler to bring a west coast ethos and vocabulary. (Shows the circulation and ground floor diagrams.) Working with the BCDC, we had introduced passages through L4 and L5, and we are being faithful to that. This is where we left off last November.

BP: That's how we were instructed by WS. There's a connection through (shows ground floor plan with diagrammatic landscape) with a focus on the passage through, not the office entry. On Autumn Lane, we have loading and a ramp down. Most of the loading is actually below grade. (Shows the garage footprint, noting it's larger than the footprint above.) YT: There is loading above and below. All the smaller trucks will go below, and that will also service the other buildings. We are trying to minimize the Autumn Lane impacts. BP summarized a series of precedent photos of 'paseo' precedents: They are interesting and accessible. For our massing study, the big idea is one of hinging and bending. (Shows two diagram sets, showing the evolution of the bending, shifting, and setting back of the building.) YT: We spent a lot of time with the BCDC and BPDA on the massing. We are respectful of that, bringing out those urban design concepts. BP: On the architectural expression, we wanted to give the building scale and texture, something that harks back to the older architecture. Metal, shadow lines, texture, 18"

mullions. The massing - bending relieves the scale, and sets off the base expression of retail. We didn't want the building to look the same from all sides. (Shows an East Service Road multilevel retail diagram.) YT: We agreed last fall to work hard to accentuate the retail. We had a setback at the fifth floor, but dropped it down to the second floor. DH asked if the retail, and the Paseo, were two stories. YT: Yes. The Paseo is mostly one story, but we are exploring areas where it can pop up. BP showed a view from Autumn Lane, noting the retail, terraces, stepping up to above. BP: The storefront is organized, hosting a series of tenant expressions. (Shows Autumn Lane and other elevations, noting the (1-story) Paseo expressions and decorated service dock doors. Shows a Harbor Square view.) The Paseo entry is an extension of the storefronts, flowing in and out of that space. LE: Can you diagram how much of the Harbor Square Park will be built? YT showed the extent on a plan: It's on top of the garage, so I know that will be of concern to the Commissioners. Amy Prang of WS noted that they are conceiving of the structure to support the landscape.

MD: What are the issues for Design Committee? LE: East Service Road feels less interesting, less articulated. L6 on its south will hide where it changes toward the park side. Show more on that. The Paseo is articulated on the park side, but I'm not convinced that anyone will know it exists on East Service Road. It's not celebrated enough; it doesn't invite you in. DC: I agree. There's a nice connection on the interior. On the exterior, I'm not sure what you're looking at across the East Service Road. Look at that as well as Linda's comments. From Autumn Lane, it looks more convincing, but I'd like more information on the interior. MD: The midblock connection is not *nearly* as expressed as it should be. We worked hard on that - it was a breakthrough, a public benefit. Show us more on that. There's been a lot of work on the architecture, not the park....

AL: There's a lot to like here. What we spent a lot of time on, is how the buildings are shaping the space. I would like to know more about how the four buildings might all contribute to that space. The architecture of the buildings - are they all expressed like this? Is this the intention? I'd like to see guidelines for all four buildings. Your argument is that this is an ensemble that shapes the public space. That's what I'd like to see. KS: I agree. At Suffolk Downs, we looked at how the two buildings worked with each other. So, that. And more on the Paseo. Does it have transparency, can you see *through* it? That's not what shows yet. The street, the park, what you see between. DH: I agree with all the comments. The Paseo should be expressed as two stories, at least at the perimeter. Study the scale of it, and detail - does the paving flow through? There's a lot to like on the sculpting. I'd like to understand the materiality of the building a little more in the District. Two blocks away, there's a similar strategy, with the facade slipping and sliding. Where this is a little looser, it's more successful. Where it's tighter, make sure it's sufficiently different. Bring some of the character on the inside to the outside. AL: Let's see East Service Road as a street, with both sides.

Sarah McKinnon, resident of the Seaport: This looks interesting. Kudos for upping the game. The Fort Point neighborhood is a historic district. I would like to see a knitting, something less abrupt. And more information on resiliency, more green measures. Grocery stores would be good.... Hearing no further public comment, the Seaport Square Parcel L4 Project was sent to Design Committee.

DM and WR returned. The next item was a presentation of the **40 Mount Hood Road Project**. John Matteson (JM) introduced the Project: We acquired this Best Western property about 18 months ago and have been working converting the site to residential use. We're excited about

the design. B.K.Boley (BK) of Stantec introduced Aeron Hodges (AH), their design team leader. BK: There is a 7-story building going up at 1650 Commonwealth Avenue, directly adjacent. (Shows site aerial photo, then site and area context photos.) There's a very steep drop-off on Mount Hood. On the elevations, we are adding height to the existing 3-story buildings at the hotel and across the street because of the grades. We worked with the BPDA and the community on the massing (shows diagram of massing studies).

AH: There are two lobbies - one condo, one rental. There are two garages - they don't connect. There's a residential wrapper along Egremont. (Shows plans, noting this condition; notes the buffer/open space at the corner and up Mount Hood, shows the upper garage, then upper floors with courtyard space between, then an axonometric view looking up toward Commonwealth.) The Aberdeen District guidelines ask for picturesque views, the massing broken by rhythms. AL asks for clarification on the entries, AH obliges. BK adds: The garage is fronted by townhomes with duplex entries; the main building entries are off of Mount Hood. DH: Where is public transportation? BK: Up on Commonwealth. (Shows the view down, noting the entry there.) AH shows the view at the opposite corner, looking at the garage entry on Egremont. Then a view of the 'park area' at the corner of Mount Hood and Egremont, and a view of the private courtyard, looking south toward Mount Hood. BK: That allows plenty of sun.

Ian Ramey (IR) of Copley Wolff: There's a slope of about 8% along Mount Hood. So we have a series of terraces that come in from the sidewalk, with granite seatwalls. At the corner, the grade levels to 2%, and there's a small plaza area. Along Egremont, it's flatter. The stoops are accessible at first, and eventually get steps. Around the corner, the building has a 17' grade change, which allows a small, secluded dog run area. LE: What are you looking at, at the rear of 1650? IR: That's a 7-story building, with some parking and stackers visible there. It's on the model. (Shows a series of sections through the edges, including sidewalks, then character vignettes.) There's granite and puddingstone in the area (shows photos), so we had the idea of stone walls, and tiers with different spaces. (Shows the courtyard circle, and precedent images.) BK: It's 178 units, 114 of which are condo. There's been a good response so far to the materials, and the stepping. There's still a conversation on height with Eva. AL asked about the space between, seen in the Mt. Hood view. BK pointed out the entries and connecting amenity space.

DH: I'm familiar with the neighborhood. The scale of this is a game-changer - it fits in well. The shifts and twists make it not as boxy as it could be. As you get into the detailing - the folding walls are exciting, so emphasizing that, playing it up, would be good. The elevations feel a little derivative of other projects; I would like to hear more on that. And the roofscape on the lower building is visible, seen by the upper units...think about that. LE: Show more about Egremont. It's hard to understand if the facade undulates enough in response to the units across Egremont. BK: It's all residential (notes breaks in that mass visible on the model). LE: Did you consider the central space to be a public, or a private amenity? I would like a break - that's a long facade [on Egremont]. BK: We studied that; this felt more urban. LE: If not connecting to the court, then something which breaks the facade. BK: We can study something which doesn't break the circulation. LE: You've done a nice job on Mount Hood - it would be good to have a small space on Egremont. I could be convinced otherwise. DC: I'd like to know more about the sidewalk along Egremont - that section, how it feels. AL asked again about the 2-story section; BK explained. KS: There's something about the buildings across the street...yours seems more planar. DH: There is a lot of consistency...whether sculpted or not. Elizabeth Stifel of the BPDA encouraged a meeting with the Aberdeen Commission as a joint session.

With that, and hearing no public comment, the 40 Mount Hood Road Project was sent to Design Committee.

The next item was a presentation of the **Dock Square Project**. BK introduced John Matteson again and his development partner on this, Jon Landau of New York. BK: The intent here is to keep the garage, with roughly the same number of spaces. Bob Corning (BC) and Grace from Stantec are the landscape architects. The garage was built in the 70s against the highway. With the Central Artery came wide sidewalks and no plantings. It's not real architecture. And there's a split sidewalk along North Street. (Shows photo views, also of the existing sunken plaza.) We want to level the plaza, turn it into a drop-off, and create a denser park at that corner. Our neighbors want Clinton Street kept open - there are traffic issues, and the drop-off would help. The building massing has the idea of a nautilus spiraling up, with the lowest portion toward the North End park. (Shows some massing model alternatives, and explains why they chose the height to be where it is. Points out details of the stepping, the courtyard space, and the pool in the space between. Shows birds'-eyes and other rendered views.) The height is 125', going up to 200'. The Greenway Guidelines suggest 125'. We will apply for a PDA....the facade cants back along Clinton, a shift of 8' away, which hides the view from North Market Street.

AH showed the plans. She noted the lobby entry at the corner, the drop-off, the difficulty of the spaces at the ramp end; she showed the upper garage levels, then the residential floor with the courtyard, and the stepping back, going up. BK: The cants are important, to lessen the impact. BC: This is a tough site with a lot of concrete. (Goes through existing conditions - the crosswalks, utilities, areaway along the north side.) We're adding a green area to soften the edge along North Street. There will be planters along Clinton Street and more green on the Greenway. We have developed a contemporary palette and forms of materials. There's an opportunity at the small park on the corner, we have a large study model of that. The plantings also define a small seating area for a restaurant. (Shows a view of the plaza.) We intend sculptural planters, with rich wood materials. BK then showed a series of photo-insets to show the impacts on Faneuil Hall and the Quincy Market buildings - then a view from the North End parks, and a variety of views from further distances and then closer. BK: We are enclosing the entire garage; it will be mechanically ventilated. We're thinking glass (frosted white) and terra cotta. The lobby of the garage on Clinton will be re-done. (Shows a view past the park, with glass up to form the edge of the terrace.)

DH: Can you give us some background on this? DAC: The City/BPDA thinking (we included at least one session with the BLC staff) was to consider allowing the SF that the Guidelines limits would have created for an office use, and applying that to a residential footprint...necessarily going higher. The plan *wanted* the garage reconsidered. Then it was a series of studies thinking about what might minimize the impacts of the added height. The absolute limit was suggested to be the shoulder (about 200') of the 200 State Street building on the other side of the Marketplace. We thought the result could be tested during the Article 80 process.

DH: In Europe, one would do a development here in the scale of the District. At this most sensitive site, despite the high level of the architecture on top of a use we don't like, it should be 125'. That's it. AL: Clinton Street is very tough. It's top heavy right now; it overwhelms the floors below. Both the absolute height, and the proportion. The height along the Greenway is

okay. And there's a lot of good here. But it's too much mass and height for this location. I would support it if it were lower. DM: There is a lot of good here. Looking at this - I'd like to drop the garage, lower the garage, and keep the building on top. LE: That's what I said to myself. (AH goes to their model, removes the residential top, and replaces it on the site without the garage - to laughter and instant approval.) I am struggling with the mass - a lot - it *would* be successful at grade. KS: It's not just a problem with the height, it's the mass too. You can begin to sculpt, carve away at it...going up to go down. I would almost go to a point tower, with a slender mass. But this is a different typology. DC: It's too high, too massive. I appreciate the view from the North End parks, because it's clear that it will block [a view of the Custom House Tower] as you approach it. MD: The public realm improvements along North and the Greenway are important. I'm not sure it isn't as valuable as bringing the architecture down, so that it reads as a more cohesive building. WR: Agreed. One thing - you owe us a series of renderings that show the impact on Faneuil Hall Marketplace, etc. Views every 30' or so, so that we understand the full impact. That doesn't for a moment change what DH said. State Street's height doesn't justify this...this is an important part of the City.

PM: I'm not sure what a trip to Design Committee would do. What can they respond to, with this? MD asked for public comment. Hearing none, he asked for a motion. DM: We should send to Committee. This is a creative architect and good developer. It was so moved and voted, and the Dock Square Project was sent to Design Committee.

The next item was a presentation of the **Herb Chambers Jaguar/Land Rover Dealership** on Commonwealth Avenue. Paul Lesodo (PL), attorney for Herb Chambers, related the story of the Nobel Laureate and the chauffeur by way of introduction, and apologies for the high fever that their architect is running. PL: I'm not an architect, and won't pretend to be one. Herb Chambers has five dealerships here (notes and describes that context). This is about a 50,000 SF footprint, with three substantial stories. We need height and FAR zoning relief. (Uses some boards, since their team was struggling with the projector. Chooses a perspective view.) There are the improvements, with the planters we've proposed, designed by Clara Batchelor. The community has asked for more internalizing, like the 5-story Cadillac Building (where PL himself worked in the past) converted by Boston University, so we propose a parking garage. The traffic will actually go down by 50%. (Boards are used to show the site, the site plan, and back to the perspective view. The projector is finally resurrected at the appropriate scale.)

DH: The architecture is very basic. Can you explain? Elizabeth Stifel noted that if the architect were here, he would note the *very strong* brand requirements. PL: We have run some initial ideas past the corporate brand groups. DH: On Land Rover, for instance, I've seen buildings that are more interesting than this. I would to see a lot of precedents, and understand what the constraints are, the floor heights, etc. The only different thing here is the thicker cornice on top. The *good* thing is the height. All the rest - needs work. KS: This is a residential context here. In New York City, the car dealership areas are industrial, in a different area. How can the brand be led to a better outcome? PM: The landscape needs work. PL: Clara Batchelor has been brought on late; she will appear in Committee. DC: You should include the City's design intent for this part of Commonwealth. PL: We're aware of and will work with that; it may create opportunities to expand the landscape.

AL: One big issue - you've nearly recreated the footprint you have here. You have the opportunity to build *more* street frontage, with parking in the rear, and claim the whole front.

Articulate the garage (service) entry if its important. Even though it's not a residential use, it can have that scale. PL: Herb Chambers is interested in pursuing the idea of better scale/texture. DH: What Audi went through in Brookline - that process took four years and is still not done. Maybe here, tweak those standards a bit. We're taking notes. We'll compare; we can take comments to the leadership. KS: there's an evolution of the site, if you look at the street.

Eva Webster: The IAG members agree with what you're saying. This building is sticking out beyond the edge of the other buildings. The box encroaches on the sidewalk. I agree, it's a simplistic design - it's shocking. This is three stories, the height of six. It needs big trees. There's too much dark horizontal. PL responded and set the record straight as to sidewalk encroachment (it doesn't, and the basement entry of the neighboring building aligns with their front planter). DH: If you have other examples, bring them - like the Land Rover in central London. PL: We need to know the locations, and the date they were built, because the standards vary with time and location. We will try to get more creative. With that, and hearing no further public comment, the Herb Chambers Jaguar/Land Rover Dealership 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 8:24 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for May 1st, 2018. The recording of the April 3rd, 2018 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Planning and Development Agency.