

DRAFT MINUTES

BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, March 3rd, 2015, starting in the BRA Board Room, 9th Floor, Boston City Hall, and beginning at 5:23 p.m.

Members in attendance were: Michael Davis (Co-Vice-Chair); Deneen Crosby, Linda Eastley, Andrea Leers, David Manfredi, Paul McDonough (Co-Vice-Chair), William Rawn, Daniel St. Clair, Kirk Sykes, and Lynn Wolff. Absent was: David Hacin. 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 Thursday, February 19, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the February 3rd, 2015 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the February 3rd, 2015 Boston Civic Design Commission Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. MD asked for a report from the Review Committee on the **3200 Washington Street Project**; David Carlson (DAC) noted that this was a project proposed along one of the Special Planning Area corridors with more study to be conducted by the BRA; this project was perhaps a good paradigm for more to come, and the BCDC had already recently reviewed two projects closer to the Forest Hills station. The Proposed project is at the BCDC threshold of 100,000 SF and review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed 3200 Washington Street Project, at the intersections of Iffley and Montebello roads, in the Egleston Square area of the Jamaica Plain neighborhood.

David Manfredi (DM) was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from Design Committee on the **Garden Garage (West End Apartments) Project**. Kevin Lennon (KL) of Elkus/Manfredi began to note the changes made. DAC noted that the last meeting had been in December, but the vote was scheduled tonight to more closely precede the BRA Board action. KL pointed out the changes in the open space to better facilitate pedestrian crossings and clarify the site entry. He showed the tower, noting the change from precast concrete to a unitized metal and glass curtainwall. Showing the view of the base looking from across the street, KL noted

the garage office, amenities, retail, and the general level of transparency. He noted the green birds'-eye view overlooking Thoreau Path, and showed a view of the garage entry.

Bill Rawn (WR): The garage entry is two-way - how is the pedestrian conflict resolved? KL: The wall was removed; now it's very open, and there is much more space in which to see things.

Kirk Sykes (KS): The size of the space is so significant. I'm not sure why there aren't more

bollards, defining the space. Lynn Wolff (LW): I feel that bollards would help define the pedestrian [safety/comfort] space.

Andrea Leers (AL): The setback, and the elimination of the wall, were well received.

MD: I would suggest that BRA staff can work to ensure safe conditions.

AL: I appreciate your taking a look at this, and at the building on the skyline. It was then moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the Garden Garage (West End Apartments) Project at 35 Lomasney Way in the West End neighborhood.

DM returned. LW was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from Design Committee on the **110 Broad Street Project**. Paul McDonough (PM) reported that the main issue in Committee was the large bay extending over Broad Street, which is now removed, and the materials along that edge.

AL: Also, the relationship to the historic building.

Jim Alexander (JA) of Finegold Alexander Associates presented the Project changes, showing first the plan, then noting the elimination of the bay and the running of the cantilever nearer the corner.

He reminded the Commissioners of the ground floor plan, and noted that the BLC had recommended approval of the revised Project.

He noted in particular the glass bay, now intersecting the historic roof plane.

JA: We explored animating the corner (along Broad) and have introduced glazing, but could not shift the core enough [to create unit space].

(Shows the Broad Street elevation.) WR: Does the glass at the end project? JA: (Considers a bit.)

The glass is co-planar, parallel to the wall. The metal we would like to project and 6-8 inches in general.

(Goes through views and variations at the corner, then shows the current scheme.)

WR pointed out that the view (shown) down Broad Street was the trigger for the comment from him and David M.

JA then showed more views, and noted the site landscaping - low planted mounds, here related to the Greenway.

Daniel St. Clair (DS): I'm convinced by the plan and strategy for the garage. I'm not quite there yet on Broad Street.

Do you have a rendered model? (-No.) Did you show variations in Committee?

JA: We discussed the difficulty of doing that, and showed this instead.

Linda Eastley (LE) asked about the landscape plan.

John Copley (JC) of the Copley Wolff Design Group: The idea is to bring the 'lenses' across from Parcel 16.

Trees here are difficult in grades, so they are now in planters, with seatwalls.

There is the idea of the old granite wharf, with benches that look like they dropped from the building.

LE: It's nice how they work together to form a small pedestrian neighborhood.

AL: What's now interesting is that both buildings (referencing 55 India Street) are faceted; it makes them familial.

Therefore, I think that the paving should not stop at the corner in-between. There should be more of a continuum; the spaces are crying out to be treated similarly.

(Some discussion ensues around this point.) MD: It might be better if simpler.

KS: Where is the [restaurant] entry? JA: A tenant is not signed, yet. Possibly at the corner, but the idea is to have the Greenway side open-able. KS: The nature of Broad, is a series of punctuated openings. Make it as porous as you can; animate Broad. JA: There is the rhythm of the piers now. David Goodman: We agree with the point and are considering it. It depends on the potential tenant. DM: Your response is appreciated. It was really important. I'm a little nervous about how the metal meets the brick, the glass meets the curtainwall, etc. You should work really hard on how those planes meet each other. MD: Do consider the comments on the paving detail. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed 110 Broad Street Project on the corner of Broad and Wharf Streets and the Rose Kennedy Greenway in the Custom House District.

LW remained recused for the next item. The next item was a report from Design Committee on the **Seaport Square Parcel L2 Project (121 Seaport Boulevard)**. MD noted that the Commission would expect to see responses to the conversation in Design Committee. David Nagahiro (DN) of CBT Inc. first showed an animation, picking out themes from the overall conversation in Committee. DN: There was a focus on the top and bottom, but we discussed the middle, too. The originating idea was the necessary structure over the Silver Line. (Shows early massing shadow comparisons - less impact - and notes skin efficiency increased 10% with the elliptical form.) There were also savings on the structure, based on lesser wind loads. (Shows studies of skin patterns - vertical and horizontal; notes simpler resolutions and moves were preferred; notes the simple chamfer at the top; shows the notion of a simple, elegant and *transparent* top, with a lighter touch and glow [than Atlantic Wharf]. Shows new inflections at the base to better tie the podium to the tower, per Committee discussion. Notes the vertical cadence that this sets up, and the potential for the office to open onto the podium roof. Shows the transition of the lobby to plaza space, and examples of the furnishings.) JC: The comments were to open the plaza, make it 'wild and woolly,' thin the trees (near the entry). (Shows the current design; notes changes.)

Deneen Crosby (DC): How does this relate to the larger context? DN shows the larger plan area. LE: The Project is amazing. I appreciate the changes, and the spaces you've created - a lot of different 'districts'. I like the story line. DS: You make a good idea very believable. Well done. WR: I agree. At the chamfer - you noted a different glass? DN: We noted the comment about the relationship to Parcel L1...the glass should be different. At the chamfer, the idea is to have the glass slightly lighter. AL: This is the first time I'm seeing this. I like the whole story, and how it responded to the constraint. The corner at the lobby is not well-resolved yet - but everything else *is*. Maybe because it's small...a small zone, where *everything* happens. Keep working there. DM: I agree, it's a very nice building, and breaks with the geometry of the surrounding structures. MD: This is one of those projects that makes the criticism of the District premature. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for

Seaport Square Parcel L2 ('121 Seaport') at the corner of East Service Road and Seaport Boulevard in the Seaport Square PDA, in the South Boston Waterfront District.

LW returned. The next item was a presentation of the **3200 Washington Street Project**. Kevin Deabler (KD) of RODE Architects introduced the team: Eric Robinson (ER), Dan, Mike, etc. and thanked the BRA staff for getting them there. He noted the locus in Egleston Square, near the confluence of Washington and Columbus. KD: This is also an edge condition to a residential area. And the slope is notable, coming down from Franklin Park. (Shows context photos, then photosims, looking north and south down Washington. Notes the change at the stoplight to the south.) You are entering Egleston *here*. (Describes the photosims looking down Iffley and Montebello roads, shows a closer view of the lobby area, shows a night view of the restaurant. Shows the massing axonometric and diagrams.) This (on Iffley) is a smaller building *deliberately*. The larger buildings are broken up, layered; one aligns with the streetwall, the other picks up on neighborhood datums. (Shows the site plan with the ground floor, noting the outdoor seating wrapping the corner. Shows the garage.) Atop the garage is a second story plaza and courtyard, related to the urban wild up Montebello. (Uses axons to show how the garage is embedded in the site. Shows the materials strategy and actual samples.) Wood is used as a 'warm element.' It's mostly a rainscreen, with porcelain panels, and tile at the base. (Shows close-up of materials studies, and vertical fins, noting also variation in the porcelain. Shows another axon.) The materials are meant to read 'in front of' each other. (Notes low lines can be drawn to diagram this relationship.)

DM: I applaud your process as well as the product - and your excellent presentation. Even how you lifted up the building at Montebello. I wonder why you didn't run through the building (into the garage) from Iffley instead of from Washington. KD: There is more slope on Iffley; it was eroding the second floor. We looked at that. It also helps the flow (with an exit on Montebello), since the side streets are one-way. We didn't want to have introduced too much traffic onto Washington. WR: What is the height variation? KD: About 3'. Also, there's a traffic light at Montebello. ER: We looked at every option. Trucks are the only in *and* out there. MD: I think this is really the only issue.

DC: Also, could one get some sense of the second-story space from Washington? LW asked about the length of the building...KS suggested that some work on the massing/colors would keep it quieter. KD: On the massing, we were breaking it into chunks...perhaps it could stand as fewer materials. DS: Those could be simpler, with that massing. KS: The chroma is not needed. MD: I'm not sure I agree. The model is all one color, and it gives a different read. DS: I like the front a back building reading (looking at the view from the south). LW asked about the overhang, and wondered if they had a section (they did not). DC thought that the sidewalk could be too narrow...unclear from the material.

AL: This is a terrific project in so many ways. You've used the site to have an appropriate scale

on Washington, but relate to the neighborhood above. I like the use of dark and light materials; you'll find the balance. The entry is very recessive to me. It can be either more forward - or *more* recessed - but it's unresolved vs. the entry to the retail, green space, and building/garage. You need to take up the slope with the masonry at the base. One small thing: I'm not persuaded by the small vertical fins. You've already got a lot going on. Focus on Washington Street; you may be able to inch it back. WR: We are seeing, in neighborhoods like this, a lot of ~6-story projects. I find, like Andrea, that a lot is well done. If there were added colors, it would be too much. But there is a lot of variety, with not many changes. Don't mess it up; it's very nice now.

MD: There are things you should address, and others you can if you wish. Mainly the street and parking relationships. LE: I really wish you could see the 'public space' from Washington. Also, I'd like to see more intention on how the plaza meshes with the lot next door - make a more deliberate relationship with the 'borrowed' site. DM asked about control of that parcel. KD: The team is responding to a DND RFP now on 52 Montebello, which also includes this. LE: Perhaps a stairway. Or a view. AL: And tell us about your little triple decker in Committee; it's a clever idea. With that, the 3200 Washington Street Project 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 7:12 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for April 7, 2015. The recording of the March 3, 2015 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.