

MINUTES
BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, April 1, 2022, beginning at 5:00 p.m, and was held virtually via Zoom to ensure the safety of the public, staff members, and the BPDA Board Members during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Members in attendance were Andrea Leers, Deneen Crosby, Jonathan Evans, Anne-Marie Lubenau, Linda Eastley, Jonathan Evans, Kathy Kottaridis, William Rawn, David Manfredi, Eric Howeler, and Mimi Love. Absent were Mikyoung Kim, David Hacin, and Kirk Sykes. Elizabeth Stifel, Executive Director of the Commission, was present. Representatives of the BSA attended. Patricia Cafferky, Scott Slarsky, Jeong Jun Ju, and Matt Martin were present for the BPDA. The Chair, Andrea Leers, 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. She 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 March 13, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the March 1, 2022 Monthly Meeting Minutes, and the Design Committee Minutes from meetings on March 8, 15, 22, and 29. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the March 1, 8, 15, 22, and 29, 2022 BCDC Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **415 Newbury Street** project. The project is proposed to be 126,000 SF. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the design for the proposed 415 Newbury Street project in the Backbay neighborhood.

The next Review Committee report was for the **1170-1190 Soldiers Field Road** project. This PDA which includes 4 Article 80B buildings proposes 800,000 SF of new life science and residential. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the design for the proposed 1170-1190 Soldiers Field Road project in the Allston neighborhood.

The third item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Seaport Circle** project. The project consists of 600,000 SF of life science development. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the design for the proposed Seaport Circle project in the South Boston Waterfront neighborhood.

The fourth item was a report from the Review Committee on the **24 Drydock Ave** project. The project is proposed as 235,000 SF of life science development. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the design for the proposed 24 Drydock project in the South Boston Waterfront neighborhood.

The Commission moved to project presentations, the first being for **415 Newbury Street** in the Backbay neighborhood. William Rawn is recused.

Jeong Jun Ju, BPDA: Introduces the project.

Abby Goldenfarb, Trinity: Introduces the project's development context.

Alfred Wojciechowski, CBT: Review of the proposed historic reuse, project program, massing, and site design.

Linda Eastley: In subcommittee I'd like to understand more what touches Newbury Street and on the alley side. I'd like to understand better how that alley works - how do you get in and out, what are the dimensions, etc. How can the alleyway become as important as Newbury Street in some ways?

Eric Howeler: Is there any open space adjacent to your building that is not sidewalk and not your deck? I would appreciate hearing more in subcommittee about the building's relationship to the adjacent open spaces surrounding it, especially if the building has no open space of its own. Additionally, a section of your project through the context to Commonwealth Ave would be helpful.

Kathy Kottaridis: I'd like to see some site sections and a better understanding of logistics for this project and surrounding buildings. Additionally, more views of the project from Commonwealth Ave, straight on, not at an angle, would be helpful.

David Manfredi: I agree sections would be helpful. More detail on how this works at grade is needed, and an explanation of how new fits into old. I'm not understanding how the new attaches to the old, pre-existing Harvard Club.

Anne-Maria Lubenau: I'd like to understand the negotiations of heights that have happened on this site, and why the 3 story building is being held so low.

Jonathan Evans: I would like to understand the architectural argument you're making for this building, how it meets the ground, and what the architectural language being used is.

Andrea Leers: I would like to better understand how the project treats the first 2 floors of the mid-rise building and how it relates to the other buildings on Newbury Street, especially across the street to Charlesgate. Also a good site plan with the new ramp to the highway and more of the surrounding context.

Deneen Crosby: It would be helpful to see a section through Newbury street, and to understand if there's space to do anything at the highway edge.

Public comments: No public comment

A motion was made, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommend the 415 Newbury Street project continue in design committee.

The next project presentation was for **1170-1190 Soldiers Field Road** in the Allston neighborhood. David Manfredi is recused. Bill Rawn, and Eric Howeler did not attend this portion of the meeting.

Matt Martin, BPDA: Introduces the project.

Ted Tye, National Development: Introduces the project's development team and history.

Simon Beer, OJB: Overview of the PDA's site design.

Doug Gensler, Gensler: Overview of the project's commercial architecture.

David Snell, PCA: Overview of the residential architecture.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: In design committee I would like a better understanding of how this project relates to the surrounding context in terms of its architecture and connections. It's hard to understand how the ground floor works and how it relates to the context. I would also like to understand more clearly the connections from this site across Soldiers Field Road, and how those connections can be signaled in the site design.

Mimi Love: These buildings ideally have no backs, but some images look that the building services face major roads and the parks. Some clarification of what is happening at the ground plan would be helpful.

Jonathan Evans: The context of the drawings in the packet should be expanded - the sections, plans, and aerials, so that we can better understand the relationship to the surroundings.

Deneen Crosby: I'd like to better understand the programming of the ground floor - interior and exterior. Driveway A is also very important, and I would like to understand access across Soldiers Field Road to the river.

Kathy Kottaridis: Having a sense of future connections to the proposed WBZ building would be helpful.

Andrea Leers: I'm interested in more clarity about the site strategy for the four buildings. The North and East buildings have a clear relationship to Soldiers Field Road. The South building does not seem as grounded in a site strategy. I would like greater hierarchy of space, and a framing of a major common space, as opposed to an office park strategy. I would like to see other site studies that you did to locate these buildings. This should be thought of as a 5 building complex actually, to include the WBZ headquarters as an equal partner. For the first design committee meeting we should approach it as a PDA and consider the site design.

Linda Eastley: I would like to understand more about Speedway and Macdonald Ave. I would hope that there is a continuity between them. I would also like to explore the residential building. It feels like a fragment of the site, and I wish it had a sight connection at least to the project's green space. It feels like a leftover sight at the moment. I would also like to see the site for the new WBZ building.

Public comments: No public comment

A motion was made, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommend the 1170-1190 Soldiers Field Road project continue in design committee.

The Commission moved to its third project presentation, **Seaport Circle** in the South Boston Waterfront neighborhood. David Manfredi, William Rawn, and Eric Howeler returned.

Scott Slarsky, BPDA: Introduces the project.

Mark Callahan, Lincoln Property Company: Introduces the project team and site context.

Shonali Rajani, Arrowstreet: Overview of the project's goals and design.

Kaki Martin, KMDG: Overview of the landscape design.

Natasha Espada, Studio Enée: Overview of the architecture link portion of the proposal.

Linda Eastley: I would really like to see several animations showing us what you see at the slow pace of a pedestrian walking all around the site, from Congress street, and from the silverline.

David Manfredi: I completely agree with Linda's idea and the need for an animated walkthrough. Some of these connections are really very attractive, but I need to better understand the project.

Mimi Love: I also agree with the need for an animation. Sections would also be really helpful. Daylight is also definitely a concern given the heights being proposed. Understanding the lighting at different points year round would be really helpful.

Deneen Crosby: I would also like to understand more of the context, and how circulation on the ground plan is working in a larger area. Additionally, how is the Silver Line being accessed by the public? The relation of the plaza and the building entries is also a question for me, as well as the nature of that plaza. I would like to understand also, the sharing of the bridge open space by the hotel and the rest of the project.

Andrea Leers: The choices you've made seem really good - to have a two part tower and a separate learning pavilion - they seem like sound choices. We all want to better understand the levels of the project, and how the public come to ground and wayfind.

Jonathan Evans: I would like to better understand the bridge connection and its impacts on the public realm.

Public comments: No public comment

A motion was made, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommend the Seaport Circle project continue in design committee.

The Commission moved to its final project presentation, **24 Drydock Ave** in the South Boston Waterfront neighborhood. David Manfredi is recused and left the meeting.

Scott Slarsky, BPDA: Introduces the project.

Toshihiko Taketomo, DHK Architects: Introduces the project team, site design, and project goals.

Eric Howeler: The site apex no longer looks like a feature.

Linda Eastley: Could the beacon be shifted further to the North, so it could also serve as a viewing area of the drydock? It would mean rethinking the site plan and service. I would love to hear more about this at subcommittee. The site design could also be borrowed from Tide Street Park.

Mimi Love: I wonder if the expression of the building could be make more industrial and more true to form, as opposed to the decorative use of the free columns. Could the design relate more to the actual structural grid? The facade depth could be increased also, as right now it is reading flat.

Andrea Leers: I agree with Mimi. Additionally, the added bulk to the North might be rethought in the massing. The plinths also look like occupiable balcony spaces, which they are not, they are decorative.

William Rawn: I would ask for a physical model to be placed in the site model to better understand the building in context.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: I'm curious to talk more about the transition of the design over time during subcommittee. It doesn't seem to be acting as a beacon or a gateway site any longer, and I would like to discuss the building's function a little more.

Public comments: Question asked if any of the mechanical systems are being incorporated into the building to reduce the penthouse height.

A motion was made, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommend the 24 Drydock Ave project continue in design committee.

There being no further items for discussion, a motion was made to adjourn, and the meeting was duly adjourned at 7:20 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for May 3, 2022. The recording of the March 1, 2021 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.