

MINUTES  
**DESIGN COMMITTEE OF THE BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION**

January 19, 2020  
Held virtually via Zoom

5:00pm

Project: **135 Dudley Street**, Roxbury

Present: Commissioner Linda Eastley, Commissioner Mikyoung Kim, Commissioner Kathy Kottaridis, Commissioner Andrea Leers, Commissioner William Rawn

DISCUSSION: When the Commission last saw the project at the December 1, 2020 Monthly Meeting, the commissioners acknowledged that the building massing and plaza spaces along Dudley Street had improved. The space between the condo building and library needed further study, as did the area behind the condo building. The proponent reported that the design team presented design changes to BPDA and DND staff on December 16, 2020, and received a positive response.

Michael Liu presented a walkthrough video showing the context surrounding the site. Katya Podsiadlo showed the previous and current landscape plan. The design team eliminated parking spaces to address grade changes on the rear of the site by the courthouse, further developed the two plazas along Dudley Street at the east and west ends of the site, and added an accessible ramp/cut-through along the condo building connecting the courthouse to Dudley Street. They also added greenery in the form of groundcover and canopy trees and an extended planting bed to relieve the presence of paved concrete and enhance the experience of circulating from the courthouse to Nubian Square, while trying to be respectful of safety and surveillance concerns. The design team added trees and other refinements to the plaza (Nubian Plaza) fronting the condo building and created a streetscape to complement the Nubian Square complete streets design guidelines. They also added more circulatory permeability to the plaza at the northwest corner of the site.

Commissioners complemented the accessibility provided by the ramp and the softening of the existing harshness of the paving, but questioned the sharp geometry of the acute angle in the public space near the courthouse. They questioned the sense of safety in the cut-through and asked if this might adversely create a sense of danger given the added transparency, but acknowledged that the space occupied by the cut-through is an inherited existing condition. Commissioners also asked for clarification about the tree coverage in Nubian Plaza. Overall, they appreciated the design improvements.

The project will return to the full Commission for a vote.

6:00pm

Project: **Fenway Center Phase 2**, Fenway

Present: Commissioner Linda Eastley, Commissioner Mikyoung Kim, Commissioner Kathy Kottaridis, Commissioner William Rawn

DISCUSSION: To familiarize Commissioners with the status of the project, the design team presented drawings and a set of views from the March 2020 BCDC subcommittee meeting, along with an overview of Phase 1. At the March 2020 meeting, Commissioners recommended a series of changes, such as breaking up the large scale of the west plaza with landscape elements, creating more of a pedestrian scale along the pedestrian spine, and opening up the sidewalk at Brookline Avenue. The design team also mentioned suggestions from a meeting in November 2020 with the BPDA. The design team presented historical maps showing the presence of an historic estuary on the site, as well as scale comparisons, and zone/sequence diagrams of the public realm. The open space strategy includes three zones (west plaza, pedestrian spine, and east portal). Public realm design elements include a sinuous seat wall, a raised lawn with an organic retaining wall, a plaza with opportunities for public art along Beacon Street, special paving by the café, music embedded in the landscape, surfacing drawing inspiration from rippled water, vertical fins with lighting to accommodate spaces to rest, a digital wall. The design team showed a site walkthrough video. The building materiality included a pre patina copper to draw reference to Fenway Park.

Commissioners appreciated the storytelling aspect of the public realm. They questioned the use of vertical fins as a strategy to expand the tightness of the pedestrian spine, and asked if the security fence could be leveraged as a form of public art. They also had questions regarding grade changes on the west plaza and the presence of planters along Brookline Avenue in order to widen the sidewalk. Commissioners recommended better integrating required security features and additive spatial features, and asked the design team to explore how the west plaza could potentially accommodate rainwater strategies. They also suggested exploring ways in which the organic landscape elements and more rectilinear elements could work together. Lastly, Commissioners questioned architectural elements like the blank wall across from Lansdowne Station, and the framing of the entrance to the east portal.

The project will continue in design committee.