

## DRAFT MINUTES

### BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2016, starting in the BRA Board Room, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor, Boston City Hall, and beginning at 5:19 p.m.

Members in attendance were: Michael Davis (Co-Vice-Chair); Deneen Crosby, Linda Eastley, David Hacin, Andrea Leers, Paul McDonough (Co-Vice-Chair), William Rawn, and Kirk Sykes. Absent were David Manfredi and Daniel St. Clair. Also present was David Carlson, Executive Director of the Commission. Representatives of the BSA were present. Corey Zehngebot 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 Sunday, April 17, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

**VOTED: To approve the April 5<sup>th</sup>, 2016 Boston Civic Design Commission Meeting Minutes.**

Votes were passed for signature. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Haymarket Hotel / CATHT Parcel 9 Project**. David Carlson (DAC) noted that this project had been reviewed and approval recommended by the BCDC in 2014. Since that time, in finalizing the MDOT lease, the MHC raised objections to the design and effectively required that the Project be redesigned to meet the original Guidelines criteria for the Parcel. There is nothing to do regarding that action, which necessitates the revised design the BCDC will see tonight. A renewed vote to review is required, since the BCDC's prior action was approval. Size remains above the threshold. It was duly moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission review the revised schematic design for the proposed Haymarket Hotel Project on CATHT Parcel 9, bounded by the Greenway and North, Blackstone, and Hanover streets in Boston's Market District.**

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Boston Landing Parcel C1 Project** at the corner of Guest and Life streets in the (New Balance) PDA area. DAC noted that the Project was 140,000, over the BCDC review threshold, and review was required in

any case due to the condition of approval for the PDA Master Plan. It was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed 40 Guest Street (Parcel C1) Project in the Boston Landing PDA Master Plan area in the Allston/Brighton neighborhood.**

DAC then noted the Review Committee recommendation for the **33-61 Temple Street Project** on Beacon Hill. DAC: The Proposed Project is in essence a rehabilitation, although it also reconstructs a portion of one building's facade and proposes a rooftop addition. It is above the BCDC threshold, but is subject to review by the oldest of the Architectural District Commissions, the BHAC. Impacts on the public realm apart from the modifications to the buildings are minimal, and it is suggested that review be passed in favor of review by the BHAC. However, the BCDC has reviewed and worked with other Commissions in the past. The Commission itself should make the decision, and so it is recommended that the vote be deferred until after a presentation of the Proposed Project, scheduled later this evening, as we have done recently with Harvard's Soldiers Field Housing and BU's Myles Standish Hall. MD: We will defer until the presentation.

David Hacin (DH) arrived. The next item was a presentation of the revised **Haymarket Hotel (CATH Parcel 9) Project**. Eamon O'Marah (EOM) of Harbinger Development noted that the Mass. Historic Commission required adherence to the prior approved Joint Development Guidelines, which limited height to 55'-65' along the block, which forced modifications. Matt Pierce (MP) of Perkins + Will presented the revised design, noting the changes, and first showing views and a section indicating the height. Linda Eastley (LE): What about the height [on the north]? EOM: That was not required by the Guidelines, but the community demanded it. Bill Rawn (WR): Can we see what we approved in 2014? MD: We will see that in Committee. EOM: We don't have that with us tonight. MP continued, showing a number views and precedents for the chosen material and detail vocabulary. MP: The prior version was 103', with a low portion to the [north] as well. The issue was really 55-65'; it was 10 stories, now it's 6. It was 224 rooms, now it's 212. We are working on the details, which were the main feature of the earlier design. We are equating elements with precedents. (Shows plans.)

Kirk Sykes (KS) arrived. LE: On the second floor, is that a publicly accessible roof deck? MP: One could walk through there...the guests of the hotel could access. DH: It would be better to have that [conference] program adjacent. LE: That would be much better. There are great views from that terrace. Deneen Crosby (DC): That was a nice feature of the prior scheme. MP then showed an illustrative section and street profile, noting the relationships, and then a rendered elevation along Blackstone. He compared the historic and current views at the corner of North Street, then two more views and a night view. LE: Blackstone Street...that facade...how does the canopy work on that side? It's broken in the middle. The question is why the canopy isn't extended there - it seems to provide a public service. MP: This is still a work in progress. LE: I'd like to see more. This could have a great sculptural quality, with the vendors. DH: I'm remembering. This massing is sympathetic. The facade before was

exploring different details; this is sympathetic but more ordinary. If you could bring some of that inventiveness and playfulness that you had before...this feels like the life got sucked out of it. Mel Schuman: The Guidelines also talk about materials. DH: You can be inventive in brick. EOM: We can advance this and explore that again - we liked that, too. DH: There were curves, bows...it was beautiful. It feels a little sober now.

Andrea Leers (AL): I appreciate the simplicity of the long pavilion, although I liked what you had before. The difference is that before, you had two elements. One tall, one low and long. Now, you have a paired element, and the low element is lower. The strategy is respectful and comfortable, but I wonder if it could be one sleek, solid thing and one sleek glass thing. Clarify the difference without changing a whole lot. DC: I'd be interested in seeing views of the terrace from above, to see what it looks like. The other question - are you making improvements to Blackstone Street? EOM: In our agreement with MDOT, we are leveling the street. Getting rid of the platforms of the vendors, and the cleaning operation, was one thing - and using stanchions to supply power, etc. Paul McDonough (PM): Are you replacing the bronze pieces? EOM: Yes, that's part of the Project. KS: The sign is really its own datum. It seems like the building could be more unified...how do you know it's this from the other side? EOM: We haven't figured out the details of the sign, but everyone likes it. KS: I'm not talking about that...that was just a thought. A datum.... WR: I seem to remember there was an elevational issue, looking across from the Greenway. EOM: That's elevated. WR: We should see the views across. A question - is the sign too low? DH: I know it's a placeholder. But, like Seattle - there should be something iconic in the sign. MD: I appreciate you're between a rock and a hard place, but I recall the last project. I thought it was a great design, expressive. This is a less exciting project. Inventiveness, creativity...if we'd had a chance to review the Bolling Building, we would have supported *that*. You need to do more with the architecture. With that, the Haymarket Hotel was sent to Design Committee.

MD and WR were recused on the next item.. The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **Northeastern Columbus Avenue Housing Project**. Brian O'Connor (BOC) presented the design after a brief introduction from Kathy Spiegelman of Northeastern. BOC started with a site plan, noting the insertion of street trees along Burke. BOC: Comments were that we were pushing on (crowding) the buildings to the south, and coming down sheer on Burke. So we have set back toward Tremont at the same elevation as on Columbus - about 15-16'. Another comment was that the massing was in 3 pieces, with two on the south and a low piece. The glass separation remains, and we have tried to marry the low and high volumes together, bringing some materials around...(shows view from Tremont)...a composition of white and 'rust' color metal comes down, and continues around. We have also added bays along Burke, to add texture and shadows, with the Columbus datum coming across as a light white metal frame. (Shows a plan for the entry space off of Columbus, and precedents for features.) We have simplified the entry, dialed it back. There was too much going on. It's not crowded, but clean and bright, with the entry visible and legible. The other access corridors in are treated as gated alleys, with permeable pavers and some plantings. But they are just *safe*. (Shows more views of the main entry from across Columbus, noting its simplicity and openness.

Shows a view along Burke, noting the building is set back slightly.)  
Kathy: The only other thing was what it was like to be in the spaces.  
We did not bring that back in Committee.

KS: And the other street? BOC (shows the plan): We don't have a view, but the plan has changed; we have filled the space with program, so it's no longer a space. The loading is enclosed. DH: I want to thank you for addressing most of the comments brought up. I'm pleased with the setback you introduced, and the changes along Burke. My only comment is, Beware the white building. Our climate is not kind to them visually. Think of a light color, not white. At the entrance, the clarified ground plane seems to go a ways toward addressing Daniel's concern. Kathy: It's good to hear your comment on the white buildings. PM: Any other comments? DC: I agree with the comments. You might think of lighting in the ground plane. KS asked about activity: At International House, it's look but don't touch. Northeastern just opened something there.... Kathy: It's a community room. The building is a residence; there's a security concern. KS: Whatever you can do to get people to move down the street. DH: More trees would be a nice thing. AL: I've been trying to picture what it's like to be on that bridge. These folks are in a lightwell. There's no place to gather.... With that, and hearing no further public comment, it was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed Columbus Avenue Student Housing Project (and associated changes to the IMP) on the Northeastern campus at 10 Burke Street (corner of Columbus and Burke) in the Lower Roxbury neighborhood.**

DH left. MD and WR returned. The next item was a report from Design Committee on the **150 Seaport Boulevard Project**. DC noted that in Committee, WR had had concerns about the [lack of] folds on the water side; they were able to address this. There were ground plane questions - how the parking worked, views, and the elevation changes. Rob Halter (RH) of Elkus/Manfredi presented the changes, noting particularly the modification of the wrap, and being more consistent with the balconies. Chris Jones (CJ) of CRJA showed the site plan, noting how the radial plan meshed with that of their neighbor. CJ: We have introduced a granite band along the edge. (Enlarges the plan, noting the grade inflection points.) We are still allowing for level areas for dining. (Shows their night lighting scheme, and streetlight locations.) We are using bidirectional bollard lights, which will help with the car/loading area. And catenaries on the pier. WR asked what DC thought about the bollards. DC: They don't make too much of a wall. LE suggested making the area as interesting as the water [feature] area. RH showed the view from across the street. DC: Be careful where you place the fixtures - like that light fixture, blocking the view. (RH showed a view from the Harborwalk, looking at the 'wedge' on the NW.) MD asked about the transformer there. RH noted the planter, as well as the wedge, that screened it. MD: That mitigates.... WR: It's better. RH then showed the view down the Seaport Blvd. sidewalk, noting a very clear delineation of parking and drop-off, with the pedestrian zone going straight. DC: You'll see the garage doors from this view, but not the other direction. RH then showed a site plan with cars, suggesting 3 cars might queue during rush hour. RH: The restaurant drop-off is separated from the residential;

there's capacity there, with the pedestrian path going through. KS: I wonder if there should be a visual signal too. LE: In the bollards, yes, that would help. I think you've done a nice job addressing our concerns. There's a lot of hardscape, but the wood around the ground will help give this some warmth. I'm struck by the garage doors: they're very visible, so work on that. MD: Are the windows openable? RH: Yes. AL: I appreciate the changes at the corner with the transformer. There are other ways to do it, but you've made it a place to pause. WR: When you think about it, this is a pinch point. *Everyone* has to pass through...there is an incredible responsibility to allow people to go through. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed 150 Seaport Boulevard Project on the parcel bounded by Seaport Boulevard, 100 Pier 4 to the west, Boston Harbor, and Commonwealth Pier to the east, in the South Boston Waterfront District.**

The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **171 Tremont Street Project**. Ross Cameron (RC) of Elkus/Manfredi presented the changes, starting with their mission statement and locus. He showed a list of items they worked on, noting that Bryan Chou (BC) of Mikyong Kim's office was present. RC: We reduced the height; we tried to retain the qualities of simple elegance. This reduced the shadow impacts, and we added more glass at the top in response to comments. (Shows a diagram indicating changes in the elevation, shows a shadow diagram.) We have achieved a 41% reduction in shadows, it's now less than a 3,000 SF withdrawal from the 'bank.' WR asked if this was consistent with the shadow regulations. RC: yes. DAC: That's right; they have followed the protocol. RC then noted the worst case scenario, and showed the solar angle diagram which required stepping at the top. He showed the neighborhood context elevation. RC: We were encouraged to keep the 'up and down character' of the edge here. (Shows a diagram indicating a 'mathematical' approach to the height, with half the variation the result.) The plans haven't changed; we still feature a 'great room' in front. (Shows more rendered elevations and views from the Common.) We were encouraged to make the top glassier, and have done so. The palette is very restrained; we have held onto the material quality. (Shows more partial views of details.)

BC showed the revised parklet design. BC: The idea was to create something of a jewel along Tremont. This belongs to that side. It has something of the past...cobble and granite. (Shows plan, then perspectives.) There's a row of trees and a simple fountain in the center. (Shows a night view.) The sidewalks are heated, for winter.

WR: This is a very neat project. I wanted to make sure...were the changes generated by the Commission? RC: It was stepped before; we added one riser. WR: It's just a concern...did we ask for that? RC: Not specifically. The idea was to reduce the height and shadow. We were able to use the steps effectively to reduce the shadow impact. WR: I only ask, if other Commissioners feel, that if it's simpler it's not better architecture. RC: The step is in response to the BRA scoping, and public comment. LE: I like this passage. I assume there are no benches because you don't want to encourage lingering? RC: Our neighbors. We had movable chairs and tables. They aggressively did

NOT want that. But, at the same time, this makes an easier passage for the residents of 80 Mason Place. LE: This is quite nice for that purpose. Is there a plan view of Avery? There are heavy pedestrian flows there. Were you able to do anything there? RC: We are quite challenged with the footprint. The building is built out to the same place the wall is today. We hope people will find their way through the new park. KS: What is that space in the front? RC: A concierge desk/security. KS: So not much in the way of eyes on the Park. RC: There will be security cameras and the like, monitored. It will be a dual process, to change the ways people use the space. AL: Is there any way to treat it like Louisburg Square - fenced, but open during the day? RC: There's a legal easement requirement; I'm not sure that we can do that. LE: It would be nice to evolve it so that chairs appear.

Kathy Iacomo (KI): I'm on the IAG. An observation - when the rules were put in place, there's about 10,000 Sf left (of shadow 'bank'). This uses about 1/3. A question/observation. The second question, about height - when and how do you decide on exceptions? Parkside and others are also higher. They are basing this on things already higher than zoning. Exception, exception, exception; and, there are other buildings coming. MD: We appreciate these questions. We are not regulatory, just advisory to the BRA, on impacts to the public realm. Richard Serio (?): I'm on the Board of the Ritz Carlton. To pick up on shadows, that needs a bigger study. They will all have additional impacts. We see them one by one, but I'm not sure that anyone is looking overall. Here, Tremont is one-way, turning onto Avery. There's no distinct drop-off here. At Millennium, there are everyday needs; cars are out, waiting. This (Avery) services 400 residences, the hotel, sports buses, etc. Now you have the Mason Place alley, which is also the main access point for all the buildings along Washington...this needs a traffic study. I've seen systems staging that work. This has not been addressed here. And solar glare...the sun is blinding, it shoots right through. Just a personal comment. It doesn't address Millennium towers.

MD described the larger approval process. MD: At this point, we're essentially done. Take your comments to the BRA Board. We look to the BRA for planning context. We're not sure either, where this area is intended to go. You have an inopportune moment here, the comment should go to the Board. PM: And, as part of the process, the IAG should participate. AL: I appreciate the two comments. The amount of vehicles on the street, and how all the projects add to the shadow. This is the least of them, but these will be issues we see over and over again. MD: Next stop, BRA Board. KI: This was not explained to us by the BRA Project Manager. MD then called for the vote. It was duly moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed 171 Tremont Street Project at the corner of Avery Street in the Midtown Cultural District.**

The next item was a presentation of the **33-61 Temple Street (Archer-Donahue Residential) Project**. Matt Duggan of The Architectural Team presented the design, noting first the locus, then showing an aerial view. Matt: The proposal is to re-skin the Donahue Building, and remove the rooftop equipment, replacing it with a 2-story

penthouse. (Shows a plan view, noting the back-of-church space across Temple, and the alley cut-through on their side, which allows cars to access a parking elevator down.) At the entry level on Temple, the plan becomes the basement of the Archer building, which has bike storage. All commercial traffic will be limited to Derne Street, with a parcel drop to the side. (Goes through plans, shows photos of the buildings, then elevations - existing and proposed.) The idea is to break down the scale of the entry, and step down to the townhouses further down the street. (Shows more views.) At the penthouses, they are metal with large glass areas. The idea is to make them like other rooftop elements. [One view shows screened mechanicals.]

PM: Have you met with the Commission? Matt: Just staff. AL: The question is why you take a preservation attitude toward the 1930s building, but not the 1950s building. Why not let the difference continue. Have a respectful attitude to the earlier building, but the *same* for the Donahue. Why not look at it that way? Don't create a history that wasn't there, especially in a district mindful of changes over time. You don't expect to recreate something that was never there. The scale is the issue here, not the details. Step back. Don't make them all the same thing, but each respectful of its time. NPS guidelines require you to respect your place in history. PM: The question of philosophy there is best taken up by the BHAC. LE: I do appreciate the centering of the entry opposite the park. KS: I'm curious...who still has an obstructed view? Matt noted the distances at which the addition is visible. WR: Isn't that the task of the BHAC, in their area? KS: they're removing a cluttered rooftop, but obstructing more view...as a question. WR: That's not our job. MD: Masonry is still a skin. The design can be expanded to do more than just mimicking. If the rooftop is cluttered, I'm not sure the addition is less so. It's fine for us to express our disappointment. WR: We could make all sorts of suggestions - and be overruled.

A gentleman from the IAG noted the two parking spaces (in the alley). Samantha Argyll (?): We contributed to that noted park. This street is the biggest in the area, massive in its context. You are the Commission that looks at that scale. The street (Temple) was pedestrianized in the 1970s. This building is visible from, and will cast shadows, even on Peace Park. The main issues are the height, and the amount of cars. Matt described the intent in response. KS: The changes to the height merit some attention. Whether to review...can this wait until after BHAC review? DAC: It's likely then to be less. But if modified considerably, it could return. PM: What is the process? DAC: It's in Article 80 analysis...I'm curious about the shadow, if Matt could go through that quickly. (Matt complies.) Steve Derne (?): I don't believe the shadows have so little impact. Rob: I'm concerned about shadows on our patio. MD: What is the statutory purview of the BHAC - is it similar? DAC: Yes. It includes impacts on the fabric of the District. They predate the BRA in their authority. MD: We should not place ourselves in conflicting meetings with the BHAC. We are not statutory - they are.

With that, the Commissioners moved, seconded, and then

**VOTED: That the Commission NOT review the schematic design for the proposed 33-61 Temple Street (Archer-Donahue Residential) Project in the Beacon Hill neighborhood.**

The next item was a presentation of the **40 Guest Street (Boston Landing Parcel C1) Project**. Keith Craig (KC) of New Balance introduced the Project, noting it would be an office and sports use - the latter to be announced soon, but consistent with the vision for the area. KC: The public benefits will include the completion of Life Street. Mark Sardegna (MS) of Elkus/Manfredi presented the design. MS: This is the next-to-last building [in the Master Plan]. The garage was completed with its new alignment in Summer of 2015, the Headquarters building was open in September 2015, C3 will open this year, and the others will start. (Shows location of C1 in the Plan area. Shows a 'views through' diagram.) The Life Street alignment could eventually connect across North Beacon...the T (bus) still goes through here. In the pedestrian realm, we are able to extend the retail fronting Guest Street along C1. Christian of Elkus/Manfredi presented the design genesis: Parts, then layers, the shifting. The ground floor plan (aligned with Guest and Life) with retail, and an entry to the sports facility. Garage service is at the rear. Up to the middle layer, which rotates to be perpendicular. Then the sports program on top, back to the Life alignment. (Shows a neighborhood context elevation.) The components (lab/office, sports) read clearly. (Shows the Life elevation.) There is variation - very calm in the middle, and graduated glass at the top. The calmness in the middle helps to emphasize the top. (Shows a series of sketch/view variations.) The column element balances the cantilever. MS then briefly showed the public realm improvements - consistent with their master plan, and all approved by PIC.

WR asked for a view looking down the street. MS: We don't have one with us. WR: What is the view east/west? I'm worried about the view from the Pike as a distraction. KS: You get used to novelty, like the WGBH sign. I think this is compelling. MD: We should look at the street, especially as it goes [down Life] to the service drive. LE: There's all this effort to realign Life Street, but it ends in a rail wall. It would be great to end in something interesting. I understand it's service. And you have constraints. So something narrow.... (KS left.) AL: I wonder...this has changed...it was a series of office blocks. Little by little, each has become iconic. What happens next? I'm trying to see this differently than what you had before. What's making this interesting is what happens on Guest Street. Not just views through, it's harder to align all of them. Along Life, this building is promising. As with the rink, you just have to work on both sides. With that, the 40 Guest 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 8:35 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for June 7, 2016. The recording of the May 3, 2016 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.