

## DRAFT MINUTES

### BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017, starting in Room #900, Boston City Hall, and beginning at 5:27 p.m.

Members in attendance were: Michael Davis (Co-Vice-Chair); Deneen Crosby, David Hacin, Andrea Leers, David Manfredi, William Rawn, and Kirk Sykes. Absent were Linda Eastley, Paul McDonough (Co-Vice-Chair), and Daniel St. Clair. Also present was David Carlson, Executive Director of the Commission. Representatives of the BSA were present. Tim Czerwienski, Elizabeth Stifel, Gary Uter, Dana Whiteside, and Corey Zehngbot were present for the BPDA.

The Co-Vice-Chair, 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 Tuesday, May 23, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

**VOTED: To approve the May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2017 BCDC Meeting Minutes.**

Votes were passed for signature. Bill Rawn (WR) was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **88 Seaport Project (Seaport Square Parcel D)**. David Carlson (DAC) noted that the Commission was currently reviewing the Seaport Square NPC for the remaining overall parcels; this particular Parcel (D) was not the focus of those changes and could be approved as part of the prior PDA approval. The 88 Seaport Project was 490,000 SF, well over the BCDC threshold, and review was in any case a condition of prior approval of the Seaport Square PDA. Therefore, a confirmatory vote to review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the 88 Seaport Project (Seaport Square Parcel D) in the Seaport Square PDA, in the South Boston Waterfront District.**

WR returned. DAC noted that the votes would need to be ratified later in the meeting due to the recusals and current lack of quorum. The next item was a report from Review Committee on the **L Street Station Redevelopment Project**. DAC noted that this was the redevelopment of the significant Exelon (old Edison power plant) site at the corner of Summer and East First streets. At over two million square feet, the Project was well over the threshold and review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed L Street Station Redevelopment Project at 776 Summer**

**Street at the intersection of East First Street in the South Boston neighborhood.**

The next item was a report from Review Committee on the **Rio Grande Dudley Square Project**. DAC noted that this was a significant redevelopment and investment directly in Dudley Square, unlike the recently seen Tremont Crossing. At over 250,000 SF, the Project was well over the BCDC threshold; review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

**VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the Rio Grande Dudley Square Project at 2343-5 Washington Street, at the corner of Marvin Street and Shawmut Avenue, in the Roxbury neighborhood.**

David Manfredi (DM) arrived. The last two votes were ratified, as was the approval of the minutes. The next item was a joint report from Design Committee on the **159-201 Washington (St. Gabriel's) and the 139-149 Washington (AvalonBay) projects**. Brian O'Connor (BOC) of Cube3 Studio presented the modified design, with a very large neighborhood model featuring the two projects on the table in front of the Commissioners. He noted changes to the site plan since first presented, then used photos of the model to discuss changes to the program and site elements. He noted a color strategy shown in a diagram, indicating the different portions of both Projects, how they relate, and how different material uses comprise the color manifestation as part of the relationship. Then a series of view - around Building #1's updated design, the space between that and AvalonBay, the church/monastery space, then a view through the space between Building #1 and the condo building, and the top of Monastery Path. Deneen Crosby (DC) asked about Monastery Path. BOC: Monastery Path has not been entirely resolved. We have worked together as teams, but the resolution requires action on a City property. Shadley noted that the ADA conversation had not yet taken place. BOC then went on to more views - between the Monastery and Building #3, then Building #4, noting the modified massing and garage entry.

Katria Julienne (KJ) of CBT presented the changes to the AvalonBay project. KJ: We have reduced the Project by 20% and increased the open space. She then showed the Project in the context of the site plan for the entire block. Then a site plan and sections with both the main and the rear building, noting the changes; a view from Washington looking at both Building #1 and the AvalonBay building, noting the space in the new U-shape; a closer look at his same view; a view of the space between which reprised one shown by Brian, noting the unit entries along Washington; a view of the corner at Fidelis Way; and, views up and around Fidelis Way. KJ then compared existing conditions and photos with the proposed plan, and showed precedent images. A view of the condo was shown, and of the space between that and Building #1 leading to the space around the Church.

WR asked where cars (and entry) were in the condo; KJ noted they were on the ground floor. DM asked for more detail: Is the garage naturally ventilated? KJ: We are working on that. David Gillespie of AvalonBay: We are sensitive to the views of the building. DM: It has to seem like a building when you approach it; you should be sensitive to that. Some discussion about views and the sense of a garage ensued. MD: We can ask staff to focus on the design based on our comments, or ask them to return. Kirk Sykes (KS): It could be treated, maybe with art. DC: You have focused on making a *place*. DM: It would be helpful to look at the section down the path, with elevations to either side. KS: This project has come a long way. The treatment of the roadway is very good. Both teams have worked together, and it shows. DM: It feels like the Projects relate to each other. I don't know how you did it, but they're much better. The long building (#1) - I wish it were more deferential

to the Church, recognized it better in a formal way. Not by being shorter...perhaps a referential kink. WR: I feel likewise. The opening up of the courtyard, getting rid of the garage entry, improvements to Fidelis Way...I would ask that you come back to us to look at the resolution of the garage treatment at the condo. KS: One other thing, maybe a staff task? We never got around to site lighting - the uplighting of trees, using bollards - whatever, a site-wide strategy. I'd be interested to see that. MD: St. Gabriel's - the approval includes the site, so that one is done. Hearing no public comment, two votes were then moved, seconded, and...

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed 159-201 Washington Street Project on the St. Gabriel's site in the Allston/Brighton neighborhood.**

**And VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed 139-149 Washington Street Project, located between Monastery Road and Fidelis Way in the Allston/Brighton neighborhood, with the condition that the parking resolution for the condo building return for presentation and discussion with the Commission.**

The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **212 Stuart Street Project**. MD: We have seen this in a joint Committee session with the Bay Village Architectural Commission; the Project was responsive to the issues that are the purview of this Commission, and we recommended it back for a vote. Eric Howeler (EH) of Howeler + Yoon presented the Project changes, in part using their large model studies on the table. He showed the site plan, noting the plaza [building ground floor] set back to create more space. He noted the strategy of scalloping the facade materials, a textured look that varies in the different lighting that it gets. (Shows a view looking at the Proposed Project with the Motor Mart to the side, with the park in front, then a closer view, and finally views from the neighborhood. Shows a quick shadow study summary. Shows plans of the site, starting with existing, then prior Project, then new proposal.) EH: We now have two residential entries on the 'back' now, and the loading and trash were relocated to Stuart. We did studies of area houses, then transformed the base in to include stoops and plantings. (Shows Church Street before and after, then a series of before & after view comparisons.) The building has two faces; it's more commercial on Stuart. (Shows the widening of the pedestrian alley, and pulling back the facade to match that of the Revere Garage.) The ironwork motif of the rear wraps around and through the alley, becoming a textured metal panel. EH noted the lighting, and showed the canopy in plan, and finished noting the model again.

DC: I was wondering...if you could get a little more space, the alley could be 1-2' wider. But you've done a great job. DM: You've been responsive; I appreciate the work shown in Committee. WR: I appreciate the inventiveness of your facade treatment. The Bay Village side has improved immensely; I hope the neighborhood agrees. Normally we would not want a loading dock on the major street, but here, it's a legitimate trade-off. This is an impossible site, with prior mediocre schemes which we approved. KS: Look at the loading dock and lobby - you can stretch the lobby activity over more via lighting, etc. What are the materials on the facade? EH: Milled limestone, with possibly precast above. KS: The choices are important; stone and precast vary. DM: Actually, the developer said he would try to keep the stone. Peter Spellios of Transom Real Estate: It may actually be granite rather than limestone. KS: I appreciate that. Hearing no public comment, it was moved, seconded and:

**VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the new schematic design for the reimagined 212 Stuart Street Project at**

## **the edge of the Bay Village neighborhood.**

David Hacin (DH) arrived. DM and WR were recused from the next item. The next item was a presentation of the **88 Seaport (Seaport Square Parcel D) Project**. Yanni Tsipis (YT) of W/S Development introduced the Project team, noting that W/S took over about a year ago, and soon contracted with OMA to do something different, to shake things up. This conforms to the 2010 PDA plan, as have the others you've seen; there is no extra height or density contemplated. Shohei Shigematsu (SS) of OMA presented the design, starting with the locus. SS: I teach at Harvard, and this area is a bit charged. There is a trend to a new type of workspace...this site has an area with character, and a datum (height) from the airport. We bring the green from the park inside the building, creating a continuum; the volume is split in half. This is at the nexus between Seaport and Fort Point, with that break in the building relating to the scale of Fort Point. The section colors show two office types, with retail at the base and a restaurant or conference center at the top. The trusses at the top - they are hanging the building. They allow it to be more dramatic. The retail at the base works synergistically with other retail nearby. (Shows views of the building - straight on, then a diagonal from the south, then two from across Parcel F Park, then a Northern Avenue view of the cut.) The facade is composed of zigzag panels in plan, showing its duality - perhaps of Seaport (metal) and water (glass). The choice is also to distinguish it from the glass buildings, and make a reference (zinc) to the materials and texture of the older buildings - again, creating a distinction.

MD: The undulating facade...wraps the building? SS: Yes, and its top and bottom, to make the intention of the split clear. KS asked about the structure, and whether it informed the break (Yes). DH: This is an extraordinary proposal, transformational. You've embraced the condition, but linked back to the historic district. I appreciate the approach. The skin is refreshing - it has texture, metal, and a really inventive way of dealing with it. Also, I want to congratulate the client on their choice of an architect for this important site. If we send this to Committee, I want to understand the street, the treatment of the loading, etc. I'd like to know more. The architecture is great. DC: I'd like to understand how much light the green (in the building) gets. SS shows a detail: There is an additional opening at the edges of the break. MD: I'd like to understand how the green relates as public space. DH: The top...this would be a great site to have public space at the top. It's hard to get into many spaces in the area.

Andrea Leers (AL) arrived. MD: I assume the retail is typical? YT: There is also 5,000 SF of civic space. MD: So, I'd like to understand those relationships. KS: I want to understand the views closer in, how it stands out in a sea of non-deconstructed buildings, what's happening in the middle. DH: The quality of the architecture should come all the way down. Show how that meets the ground - signage, streetscape. KS: It's like 50 Post Office Square. The only sense you have of it is the Deco light fixtures. But this is not Deco! With that, and hearing no public comment, the 88 Seaport Project was sent to Design Committee.

DM and WR returned. The vote to review 88 Seaport was ratified. The next item was a presentation of the **L Street Station Project (776 Summer Street)**. John Sullivan (JS) of SGA presented the design, first introducing the SGA design team, and Greg Bialecki (GB) of Redgate. JS noted the Proposed Project stats, then the site in the area context. JS: This is one of the sites noted in IB2030. (Shows the site in the context of the area's green spaces, shows the site bounds on an aerial slide.) There is NO connection to the community now. What's on the site, notably some early 20<sup>th</sup>-century buildings (3-4) that have wonderful character - we want to uncover that hidden history. They have glazed tiles, ornate masonry, and industrial light fixtures.

We developed some Guiding Principles. These include: Clean Up, Open Up, Live/Work/Play, Preserve Conley Operations, Include Unique Retail, Make a Commitment to Arts & Culture, Preserve Significant Building Elements, Minimize Cars, and Practice Green/Sustainable Design. (Shows precedent images.) The open space vision is that of the industrial waterfront experience. In preserving the Turbine Halls, we are creating a destination. The array of uses includes not just retail, but also the arts, and cultural activities/events. JS then showed a series of diagrams looking at the site plan: the Turbine Hall, connections to the community, use zones, waterfront open space, stepping the height down toward the neighborhood edge and at the Chapter 91 line, and the FAA height overlay. He showed the site plan that resulted from overlaying the diagrams, noting pedestrian paths as well as vehicular one; the overall block plan was next, with blocks A to G and the Turbine Hall. Then oblique aerial views with the existing heights noted, and preliminary street sections. JS: We are creating a pedestrian-first approach. We are thinking about zones - 'districts' with different feels, like 'Turbine,' 'Water,' etc. Programming thoughts inform the precedents for the open space. (Shows a circulation diagram, Project statistics, and neighborhood sections. Shows perspective views along Summer and East First streets.)

KS: You mentioned less truck traffic - what does that mean? JS noted Massport's planned Haul Road which will bypass directly to the Conley Terminal. DH: I have a question about process. What are we looking at here? DAC: This is an initial submission. It's large enough, and so should be like New Balance, if it's a Master Plan PDA. We would look at the whole and focus on the first phase in any case. DH: We'll need a model - this is the size of Bay Village - and time to consider the Project. JS showed two more views - the interior of the Turbine 'neighborhood,' then along the waterfront. KS asked about the truck road - the freight corridor. DM noted that it's built already (shows at the left in the waterfront view). GB, going back to the plan view, showed the location of the Freight Corridor (Haul Road) on Massport property. GB: The Massport property now includes Coastal Oil. Next door, the MBTA uses five acres as a bus layover area. The back area includes an emergency back-up power facility. We are working to improve the available transportation and bus services. WR: The bridge is built? GB: Yes. WR: It's unclear from the recent press. GB: Massport is moving trucks on a route back away from the neighborhood residential. They did not want us moving residential back up to it.

AL: What about the buildings on the site? GB used an aerial site shot to explain the various building conditions and character. He noted the (3) Turbine Hall building(s) and then the corner building, which is a boiler plant filled with equipment. Once the equipment is removed, the building is *not* preservable. The switchgear station [small, to the west] is still owned by Eversource. AL: I'm just asking the question. Rather than the token retention of Turbine Hall, these structures often have extraordinary character. Have you explored [saving more]? DM: I agree with Andrea. I would suggest an unusual thing - that we go to the site and walk through the buildings. It's amazing on the interior. Your team is to be congratulated. This is an extraordinary site; I would like to examine all the possibilities. MD: I agree with the notion of a site visit. I have no idea what the vision is. Can your program fit on the site? I'm not sure it's all gelled yet. Take a 10,000-foot view; we'd like you to consider more. KS: Consider all the development in the area; help us get up to speed. DH: Like if development is intended for those parking lots [to the west]. MD: At New Balance, once we understood the context and considered the urban vision, we understood the development much better. GB talked briefly about the context and requested that the BPDA send the planning (charrette) document. With that, and hearing no public comment, the L Street Station Redevelopment Project was sent to Design Committee.

The next item was a presentation of the **Rio Grande Dudley Square Project**. David Lee (DL) of Stull & Lee presented the design, noting that it was early in the process. DL: "There's no such thing as a Roxbury 2x4." This means that construction costs are the same all over the City. The Rio Grande Project name is a river in Jamaica, honoring the developer's heritage. Dudley, as you know, is the geographic center of the City. The site is really a complex - the [Moderne] building, and the Roxbury Savings Bank building. And a parking lot, where the tower is planned. Roxbury was once the second leading commercial center in the Commonwealth, after Boston. (Shows site and context photos. Notes adjacencies, and takes the time to 'walk' visually around the block, with detailed observations.) Shawmut doesn't lead anywhere. But Washington and Marvin do.... The Bolling Building has enlivened the square, but it needs more...and Dudley Terminal is right there. We're mixed use - retail, office, rental, and condos (shows bird's-eye view of Proposed Project). We want to develop a space that brings you in to the office building, with the residential entry off of Marvin.

(Shows interior of the Bank building.) This could be a wonderful space - we cut through two false ceilings to show the original height. (Shows the site plan - the whole, and then a focus on the tower footprint. Notes the possible program adjacencies in the two existing buildings. Shows a typical office floor, then a typical residential floor. Shows a view of the entry from Washington.) We are activating the plaza.... On Marvin there's also access to the office lobby, but it's also the residential entry. Locally owned shops are part of the concept, and new dining options. "Legal night life" is needed - a supper club. The City is looking at height, where one can build T.O.D. (Shows an aerial view with other towers nearby, along Columbus and beyond. Shows elevations.) We are getting people used to the idea that you can have height here. The materials will need to be affordable to the Project - we're thinking of precast, metal, etc.

KS: It's great that you guys have been able to bring this forward. Mr. Guscott's dream.... You noted that now people [just] go home at night. How do you make this four-sided, and active? DL: We hope that the 211 units will make a difference that will bring more energy. This will be an exclamation point. DH: Rental and condo. Is it a shared lobby condition? DL: It's likely key access to the upper floors, with maybe their own amenity space. DH: I'm both concerned about and interested in the arrangement; it's key to your economic success. There are fabulous views, but shared with rental uses, the condos may lose value.... DL: It's a matter of two security people vs. one. DH: And this is such a departure from the scale of the neighborhood. A model would help. The Pierce is a good example; it makes a place in the City, which is what this aspires to. DL: Champagne taste, but a beer budget. MD: One of the things the Pierce does, is that it's a simple, strong gesture. Make the architecture figural, iconic. DL: We have looked at ways of doing that, working with WSP/Janney. DH: The Treehouse (MassArt) is a simple metal panel building. DL: We will decide on a system we can afford, and then work with that.

AL: Is there parking in the building? DL: Ramps didn't work. The plan is to do structured parking with retail at the base nearby. BTD has been supportive of our doing nothing here on site. AL: That's what I think is most exciting. I thoroughly support that. I like that you've reclaimed the two older buildings. A lot depends on that; that will draw people to the tower. Spend a moment on them. People will go there, and then discover the atrium. WR: I want to compliment you on the thinking and planning. I do think it will be important to understand how the atrium works. DL: One thing, is making that space available for neighborhood group programming. WR: The (tower) base is really strong; the cross section is beautiful. But I worry about the L or T shape. Is there a way to soften that? DL: We need that - this is a tough proposition. WR: The Nashua Street project is that shape; it could be better. DL: We thought about that, making part of it go higher. We started higher [overall], then the BPDA made us go down. WR: 30 stories would be okay,

with 15. DL: We would love to push and pull. We can work with the IAG. The trade-off would be great. WR: This has the potential to be a really beautiful building. AL: A slender, tall thing. A simple shape. KS: Comparing this to the Ruggles project is crazy; there's not a context yet for a tower here. So why not be bold. DH: Much was made of the Bolling Building being at the geographic center of the City. This could be the place for height.

DM: I agree; the urban planning is good. But this is a *complicated* project. Two rehabs, then a stack of uses - this is an important project. There's no opposition here for the height. But is there a simple, elegant marker, like the Treehouse building...? DL: Simple elegance is hard to achieve. We're trying to make sure of the balance, and make the numbers work. AL: Why not come to the first meeting with alternative massings? Just take a look. DL: We *have* looked at shadows...there are no impacts on the burial ground, or key parks.

MD asked for public comment. Alison Pultinas: You should zoom out more, so we see the relationship to Malcolm X Boulevard, the ball fields, etc. As with P-3 (Tremont Crossing), there's the question of developing some access. It would be nice to reinforce the options for walking all around...you want to have multiple options. With that, and hearing no further public comment, the Rio Grande Dudley Square 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 8:11 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for July 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017. The recording of the June 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.