

DRAFT MINUTES

BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, December 2nd, 2014, starting in the BRA Board Room, 9th 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, Paul McDonough (Co-Vice-Chair), William Rawn, Daniel St. Clair, and Kirk Sykes. Absent were: Andrea Leers, David Manfredi, and Lynn Wolff. Also present was David Carlson, Executive Director of the Commission. Michael Cannizzo and Dana Whiteside were present for the BRA. Representatives of the BSA were present.

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 Wednesday, November 19, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the November 4th, 2014 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the November 4th, 2014 Boston Civic Design Commission Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. MD asked for a report from the Review Committee on the (sic) **Spaulding Rehab Rehab Project**. David Carlson (DAC) reported that the Spaulding Rehabilitation Hospital building was being taken over by Partners (Mass General) and converted to administrative space as a part of their campus, thus freeing up space in their more contiguous buildings where adjacency was more key to operational efficiency. Because of the change from a clinical use, the retrofitting was expensive, but very little exterior work was proposed. The existing open spaces, including a water taxi dock, would be unaffected, and the Project did not encompass the adjacent parking lot (also controlled by Partners). Thus, although encompassing about 200,000 SF, there was *de minimus* impact on the public realm and a vote NOT to review was recommended. A motion was made, seconded, and it was

VOTED: That the Commission NOT review the schematic design for the proposed Massachusetts General Hospital renovation at 125 Nashua Street (Spaulding Hospital site) in the North Station Economic Development Area.

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **99 Rivermoor Street Project**. DAC reported that the site, near Millennium Park and the City Archives (and a Home Depot), had an existing distribution warehouse building that was being converted to a self-storage

facility. The building itself would have minimal changes - primarily a new lobby area. An interior mezzanine level increases the SF to over 150,000 SF, over the BCDC threshold. The site would continue to have a screen of trees, as was the case now, with some modification of the landscape and the parking lot configuration. Once again, there was very little impact on the public realm, and a vote NOT to review was recommended. A motion was made, seconded, and it was

VOTED: That the Commission NOT review the schematic design for the proposed warehouse-to-self-storage conversion at 99 Rivermoor Street in the West Roxbury neighborhood.

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Melnea Cass Parcel 9 Project Changes**. DAC noted that this Project had been seen by the Commission and approved in 2013. However, critical financing issues (Newmarket Tax Credits) had forced the Project to trim costs, and parking below grade was too expensive - so was now proposed at grade. In addition, a hotel partner had been identified, and their layouts and required efficiencies had forced a simplification of the prior design. Urbanica's in-house architecture team is trying to keep to the spirit of the prior. These changes required a formal approval by the BRA before a financing deadline at the end of January, and so a formal vote to review by the BCDC was recommended. Square footage, although reduced, remains over the threshold. It was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the changes to the schematic design for Urbanica's Parcel 9 Project on Melnea Cass Boulevard and Washington Street (bounded also by Ball Street and Shawmut Avenue) in the Lower Roxbury neighborhood.

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Emerson College Little Building Renovation Project**. DAC noted that Emerson had referenced the Little Building renovation when they presented (and the Commission recommended approval of) their 1-3 Boylston Place Project in late September of 2013. Forensic investigations revealed, however, that the structural issues of the Little Building and its facade were too great, and reconstruction of the facade cladding and reinforcement of building structure were now required. In order to meet bed count goals and in part to mitigate against the costs of these repairs, Emerson was now proposing to reconfigure the room layout, add a floor behind the parapet, and partially infill the lightwells in the iconic 'E'- form building. This required the submission of a PNF and modification to their IMP. Unlike earlier recommendations on other Projects where little exterior changes would be visible, here the infill in the lightwells suggests instead a vote to review. Square footage at 275,000 SF (of which about 37,000 SF is new) is over the BCDC threshold. It was then moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the Emerson College Little Building Renovation (and associated IMP amendment) at 80 Boylston

Street in the Midtown Cultural District.

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Seaport Square Parcel L2 ('121 Seaport') Project**. DAC noted that this Project was part of the Seaport Square PDA and therefore subject to review by the Commission as a condition of the original approving vote. Additionally, at over 600,000, the Proposed Project was well over the BCDC threshold; review was recommended. It was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review 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.

The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the proposed **Wentworth New Sweeney Field Project**. Bill Rawn (WR) reported that a number of issues were resolved, and that the Committee focused ultimately on changes to the stairs/entry at the northeast corner. WR: We saw several alternatives, and had a strong preference. The Project was recommended back for a vote. Yanni Tsipis (YT) recapped the site and general Project description, noting modifications to the edge transparency and the 'Kegger' wall. He showed the corner as originally proposed, and then the investigations about 'enriching' the wall. YT: After the comments, we reinvestigated the entry with more transparency, making it more a part of the whole and bringing wood here (as used at the other corner entry), and lanterns to highlight the top of the stairs. The screen at the field level now has more figures suggesting the activities therein. (Shows changes in transparency on the field walls with elevations and views. Shows precedents for the proposed lighting in the Brewery Plaza area. Shows the proposed Kegger wall and recalls the BCDC encouragement to retain a sense of the brick wall. Shows that brick and the retained granite foundation stones used as part of the revised composition.)

Linda Eastley (LE): I really appreciate your work in opening up at the main entries and along the edge. Deneen Crosby (DC): It's nice to see people from Parker Street. I still have a concern about the width of the sidewalk along Parker; there are a lot of students, I imagine, and trees and other furniture would reduce the width. Kirk Sykes (KS): It's nice along Parker, though...it would have nice to make the other edges better. YT: The NCAA regulations dictate the size (of the field, etc.), and the overruns require padding - except along Parker, where there are spectators. KS: Whatever can be done. At the Brewery, is there fencing, or is it open? I assume it's a security issue. YT: It will have to be managed, so fencing will be a part of the security when the field is closed. MD: The users on the field? YT: We feel there will be no lack of users, many of them Wentworth events, and it will be open for more. LE: I'm not sure about the diagonal (landscape edge treatment) - how used it is, along Halleck. With no other comments forthcoming, a motion was made, and it was seconded and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design of the Wentworth Institute of Technology Sweeney Field Athletic Complex Project

at 600 Parker Street within the Wentworth IMP in the Mission Hill neighborhood.

Daniel St. Clair (DS) was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **Parcel 9 Haymarket Hotel Project**. MD asked WR to summarize. WR: This Project was more complex, and I see one of the neighbors. It's a Central Artery Parcel, higher at the south, and two stories at the north. There was a lot of discussion; we were okay with the height and the details on the south, and with the height of the north. MD: The BCDC felt that the 27-foot height was appropriate; one didn't lose sight of the historic structures. [Some difficulty was encountered in booting the computer/screen visuals.] Robert Brown (RB) of Perkins & Will instead used their model to begin to describe the Project and changes. [Slides come up.] RB noted the overall site locus, then the ground floor program and the site around it. He showed an axonometric section, and recounted some of the BCDC comments. RB: Commissioners felt that changes in the window scales were not needed. We agreed, and have simplified the design. (Shows views, then closer vignettes along Blackstone. Shows photo/photo-inset comparisons.) MD: Do you have any slide showing the brick panel details? RB: We removed them, sorry. David Hacin (DH): I left before the end of the Committee session; the facade studies were very convincing. I am sympathetic with the issue about the size of the north portion, but we felt that height was appropriate to frame the street, and does allow the public to have views of the marketplace. It was compelling. KS: (Looking at the view taken from Hanover/Salem) I like the Project; this is not the best view. I would address your lighting so that *activity* is highlighted. DH: Warm lighting would be good.

Victor Brogna (VB) described his involvement with the Project and its process. VB: There are two issues, one procedural. This Project does not involve a piece of property controlled by the developer. This property is owned by MassDOT, who issued an RFP with specifications. The Project was consistent, and now it isn't. This violates the specifications. So it's improper procedurally, and reflects on the public bidding process. Second, an important aspect of the public realm is visual corridors. The desire to have a one-story hall at the north end was not arrived at without deliberation, in fact quite a lot, including the participation of Tad Stahl. We all feel (IAG members) that views should be preserved, and the ancient street patterns visualized. The views don't show Cross Street, they show the Surface Road. There is no view from Hanover at Cross; that is blocked. This is two stories, squashed, and not the desire of the (IAG) committee. Eamon O'Marah (EOM): Specific to your comments, our proposal did include the option of two additional stories on the hotel side. In terms of heights, we agree, and have the height no more than 5-7 feet higher than the guidelines suggested. This was approved by the Neighborhood Council. DH: I might suggest adjustments to make it more open, vary the edge; it's not out of scale with European market buildings. I do feel that the prow as a 2-story space might help. So that it's legible as a one-story structure, but with a mezzanine. EOM: We share the same objectives; we can look at these suggestions. DC: The view corridor...I would not want the building to expand. KS asked about the process. EOM: The State process (of designation) has ended. DAC: The Article 80 process finishes the public review, as it has with

other Central Artery parcels. The comments made are worth study. Paul McDonough (PM): (To VB) It was a good letter. MD: This is respectful of the historic buildings. KS: The scale is appropriate and respectful. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed Haymarket Hotel Project on CA/T Parcel 9, bounded by the Greenway and North, Blackstone, and Hanover streets in Boston's Market District.

DS returned. KS was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from Design Committee on the **Bayside Doubletree Hotel Expansion Project**. DH summarized: We suggested ways of better connecting to the future UMass Campus expansion; we were very pleased at the change in the building massing to hold the corner. They also added street trees to reinforce that street-like edge. And a positive modification of the facade treatment, a better composition. MD: Please focus on the changes; we are inclined to approve. Kate Bubriski (KB) of Arrowstreet presented the modified design, showing first a perspective view revealing the shift along the edge and the expansion of the corner, noting the reduced profile of the connector. Showing a view taken from the Mount Vernon intersection, she noted the stronger line of street trees. Moving the view up, she noted the change in the volume of the ell (more open) and in the restaurant configuration. KB: The outdoor seating is now more in the middle, and it all (lower restaurant and circulation space) has a screening element. (Shows view from the other corner, noting the high break-out corridor.) We have proposed an enhanced street treatment, but it's on property not controlled by us. We have a 15' sidewalk, trees, and a possible drop-off. At the loading area, we have moved out the cover, so you're not looking out at trucks; there's a green roof above instead.

LE: What I really like about the revised building, is that it sets up a cadence for future buildings. And the northeast side can set up as an open space, or a new building. The street trees make it feel like a real space. DH: Thanks for your responsiveness. The stair tower was too apparent before; now, the retail and the rest of the changes make it fit better. DC: On the street itself, the dimensions are good. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed Bayside Doubletree Hotel Expansion in the Columbia Point area of the Dorchester neighborhood.

KS returned. The next item was a presentation of the **Melnea Cass Parcel 9 Project Changes**. Stephen Chung (SC) first showed what had been approved in 2013, using an overall plan, and then the ground floor plan. SC: The drop-off was on Ball Street, the building envelope defining the space (shows). Parking was below grade. (Shows the massing above the podium.) We interviewed 15 different operators; with every room different in plan and elevation, it made it interesting - and challenging. The architecture of NADAAA proposed the skin as metal panels, with some wood paneling, with the residential building warmer, possibly fibre cement, but the two were cousins. (Shows existing conditions photos.) The defining issues became the Newmarket Tax Credit Grant - costs had to be less, and there was a deadline. And the Hotel

brand. To address the expense, the City suggested eliminating the basement garage. Retail required pre-leasing for financing, so we created less of it. We changed the architect - because NADAAA did not desire to deal with the restrictions and new parameters. They are still advisory, but the architect is now Urbanica. (Compares the two programs.) Our mission was to be respectful, and marry the new objectives with old ideas. On the ground floor, we tried hard to reinforce the site. The residential building is very similar (to the prior design), and aligns with the street across Shawmut. Shauna Gillies' firm has started - *just* - the design of the green area along the building. (Notes new ground floor program, pointing out the drop-off, hotel lobby, and bar at the corner.) The uses are very transparent. On the other side, we wrapped the garage with retail/flex space. (Shows the plans and program of the upper hotel building.) The hotel rooms are to their standards. (Shows views.) The windows of the hotel conform to their requirements. We show trees, but the landscape is not really designed yet. WR asked about the parking screen shown. SC: It's some kind of screen, possibly wood. We wanted more active uses, but couldn't imagine what would work. (Shows more views.) The corners all around are active, transparent, as much as possible. (Shows the view from across Melnea Cass.)

MD asked about the circulation: You have several different entries - from three sides? Kamran Zahedi (KZ) of Urbanica: The City did not want the drop-off along Melnea, because of the reconfiguration proposal. And the Hotel did not want their entry just from Ball Street. Chris (representing the Hotel interests) elaborated on that point somewhat, noting the location. DH: We should talk more in Committee. I'm not sure why access from Ball wouldn't still work. The program at the lobby is good. Crossing Melnea (and more) to go into the building is difficult. MD: It's a non-starter for me. It's one more curb cut, when the City is trying to establish a strong public realm along Melnea Cass Boulevard. The parking is one strike. But to add another vehicular access...this is not a wide block. KS: A Washington Street address wouldn't hurt, if the entry were shifted. The other thing is the parking wall along Melnea. I would trade off space along Ball for parking along Ball. By the way, the Tropical Foods across the street is the best-looking market in the City. SC: The change to our front was recent, from BTD; they are thinking now of a series of landscape strips. The Hotel did not want to manage the retail. LE: When you come to Committee, a model with other area Projects would be helpful. We can also see how the open space is working on a District scale. DC: I know, when it's set back...the public space now may be more a permanent thing. And it's so important along Melnea. It should be a special place - lighting is important. DS: It would be nice to have the building come down. Right now, it's all on top of a glass base. Touching ground in a few places would help.

DH: I would love to see a model. Because the land along Melnea is up in the air, and the time frame is short, just a suggestion about the timing of designing the open space.... A model would help; with buildings nearby, you might have a kind of sinuous edge along Melnea. I wonder if the corners might be played up, more exciting - not rectangular, but sharp corners. Maybe that's where the corners could come to the ground. Amp it up. WR: How open is the garage below the apartments? SC showed the door into the space. A discussion of the approval timing ensued. WR: you're in a bind, and we are too, because we are being asked to approve an undeveloped scheme. What about the (multiple) angles of the (prior) hotel? Chris: Many hotels had the same issue, with the space lost at many corners. WR: But maybe one bend is not

many, as before. We thought it would be difficult, but David is right that something is needed. DC: I agree with Mike's concern; I wonder if it would take a longer time to work out. SC: I'm not sure of that. KZ: Security and visibility issues would make a Ball-only entry difficult. MD: It's difficult for us given the time we spent on this design before. [More discussion ensued on this point.] KS: Once approved, the Newmarket deals can change their design. PM: It's hard to do 80% documents by January 30 - which Kamran said was your deadline. KS: Letting the Newmarket go through would allow more time to consider design. DS: This seems like we'd let something go now on the chance it might be better later...? [More discussion.] Michael Cannizzo of the BRA noted that the carriage road was a new aspect of the design. DH: I recall that. I understand the issue of visibility; I'm not sure that a drop-off along Washington and Ball wouldn't be visible. MD: I'm taking note of the time; these are issues better discussed in Committee. Anything else? With that, the Melnea Cass Parcel 9 Change was sent to Committee.

The next item was a presentation of the **Emerson College Little Building Restoration**. Peggy Ings (PI) of Emerson introduced herself, noting that the last time she and the BCDC met it was at 11:30pm regarding 1-3 Boylston Place. PI: At that time, we had a phasing plan for the Little Building, which was part of the urge for 1-3 Boylston. There was a lot of discussion at Emerson, because the phasing plan was disruptive. We plan a combination now of repair, rehabilitation, and restoration. Ross Cameron (RC) of Elkus/Manfredi: (Shows locus plan.) The Little Building was designed in 1917 by Clarence Blackwell as a "City Under One Roof" - it had its own stores, a subway connection, and 600 offices. The facade is cast stone, not cut stone, with some marble additives and some hand-tooled finishes. But over time, the mortar failed, water seeped in, the structural steel rusted - not just secondary members, but some primary members as well. Emerson has spent a lot repairing recently. (Shows pictures of some of the issues; shows a diagram of the steel frame.)

MD: Please keep the presentation to things within our purview. RC: Sure.... We have the ability to replicate the entire facade above the third floor. There is a requirement to address seismic forces, but we do not want to penetrate the (semi-public) arcade. The infill in the wells above threads it structure through, so we are adding corridors and study rooms, more dorm rooms, and a 13th floor behind the unusual 14.5-foot parapet. (Shows elevations, and the 'finger' character along Tremont. Shows the infill design.) At Allen's Alley, we will likely replace the brick, but in a thin-brick system. WR: How high does the infill go? RC: Up to the 12th floor. (Shows a sectional perspective cut through the 2-story study rooms.) The windows all operate; the building is ventilated; the glass is set back about 3.5". (Shows night view.)

PM immediately moved to approve. DH seconded. KS asked about the glass infill, wondering why it wasn't sheer glass and cross-bracing. RC: the idea was to give a sense of what's behind it. DS: I think the view of the cross-bracing and the contemporary treatment is good. PI noted their cooperation with BLC staff. DS: The base has a different glass? PI: It's a restoration there. WR asked about the BLC review. PI noted that they had a policy "not to review un-landmarked buildings" stated after a recent submission - a request for a waiver of Article 85 (Demo Delay).

The BCDC action was then completed, and it was

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the Emerson College Little Building Renovation (and associated IMP amendment) at 80 Boylston Street in the Midtown Cultural District.

The next item was a presentation of the **Seaport Square Parcel L2 ('121 Seaport') Project**. AS the team set up their laptop and model, Charlie Leatherbee (CL) of Skanska introduced the Project: This is 121 Seaport Boulevard, on Parcel L2. Seaport Square is a PDA totaling some 6.3 million SF; Skanska acquired L2 in November of 2013. We have been working with CBT on the design. David Nagahiro (DN) of CBT introduced the design team - Phil, Chris, Joe. He showed the location, a diagram indicating relationships to the area, aerials with other projects noted, the FAA height limits, and PDA podium requirements, with towers rising above. He then showed a multi-parcel plan with the Silver Line tunnel box shown below. DN: We are looking at how to deal with the tunnel box. We can only land at one point beyond it (on our property). WE could do a trapezoidal shape. But we also investigated an elliptical shape; it compares in SF to the other, and it's an innovative shape in the area. The ellipsoid has a 10% more efficient skin and so, energy ratio. (Shows a wind diagram, and a perspective diagram showing the ground floor relationship to the area.) The parking connects (to L1) below grade. (Shows a Harbor Way diagram.) We have a threshold, then a 'room,' then a Harbor Way threshold. We are working out the relationship to the space outside the lobby. Copley Wolff (specific) and Reed Hilderbrand (Master Plan) are working together. (Shows the ground floor site plan with both L1 and L2. Shows the second and third floors, pulling away at three, and the typical floors above. Shows sections/stacking diagrams.) We are doing some 'belt tightening' where the tower meets the podium. DN then noted the chamfer above the entry, and showed view comparisons between the approved PDA massing and the proposed massing, rendered equally. DN: The facade is a high-quality unitized curtainwall system. A taut skin, expressive of the architecture. (Shows a lower podium comparison; shows a view from the NE corner, noting the effect of pulling the mass away from the corner; shows a view showing the structure continuing through the 'belt cinch'; and more views, one of the lobby, giving a sense of its space.) The ellipse vs. the rectangle uses 10% less skin, but 15% less energy. It has better solar exposure, and less shadows on Harbor Way. Currently we're at LEED gold, and going for platinum. We have PV panels, water collection, sunlight.... DN moved to the model to show the difference between the three massings: PDA, trapezoidal, elliptical.

DC asked about the green arrow shown on one plan. DN: That's the Silver Line path. DS: The M parcels are likely to have a path through them - can you have a connection through your building diagonally, or an equivalent path? A diagonal building without such a passage is a real miss. And we have talked with BGI about a supermarket, etc. in the area. CL: We do not control the retail on the ground or other floors; another entity will control that. DS: We should discuss that in Committee; it would be beneficial to see the Master Plan. LE: It's clever how you took the chamfer from the subway and turned it on its head. Tying together with Harbor Way is good. With Harbor Way, we had seen that with L1; the connections to that are very important to understand. And sustainability - the podium roof should be green, not just for the occupants here, but as a visual amenity. DC: We do need to understand the relationship to the

Master Plan. CL begins to describe: you've seen prior Projects. DC: We've seen those; I'm talking about the future context. MD: You're going to turn over (the retail) to WS Development. There should be an intermediate expression. That, and the landscape, is very important. DC: The open space - what does it look like?

MD: I recall your attention to glass on 101 Seaport. CL: We can't achieve the triple glazing here. MD: That's not expected. WR: We approved Harbor Way as part of L1 - where does that stand? DAC: That plan always anticipated a second side, and so was always subject to changes due to that. This reopens that discussion. KS: How you finish the building...and the lighting scheme. Show that. WR: You spent some time on the trapezoid. The ellipsoid is a more interesting shape. How do you see your design shaping the urban design on those parcels? Is this likely to have an impact nearby that would generate a new local vision? DN: We tried a box, and you couldn't tell which building it was. The cost of building above the tunnel box was prohibitive. But shaping, and seeing past corners...the building recedes no matter where you are. KS: Show some examples of where that works beneficially in other places in the world. LE: What does it do to your experience as a pedestrian? More light would be a nice effect. DS: So many buildings have been built - or designed - I just wonder if another all-glass building isn't a little Texas-like. It may be worth a discussion beyond the choice of glass. It's about time we had an innovative building. LE: Nice presentation. With that, the Seaport Square Parcel L2 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 8:13 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for January 6, 2015. The recording of the December 2, 2014 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.