



MINUTES
BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, January 14, 2019, starting in Room #900, Boston City Hall, and beginning at 5:15 p.m. Members in attendance were Linda Eastley, David Hacin, Eric Höweler, Mikyoung Kim, Anne-Marie Lubeanu, Andrea Leers, David Manfredi, Paul McDonough, William Rawn, and Kirk Sykes. Absent was Deneen Crosby. Elizabeth Stifel, Executive Director of the Commission, was present. Representatives of the BSA attended. Eva Jermyn from the Department of Neighborhood Development attended. Meghan Richard, Ed Carmody, and Natalie Punzak 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 Wednesday, January 1st, 2020, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the December 3, 2019 Monthly Meeting Minutes, and the Design Committee Minutes from meetings on December 10 & 17. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the December 3, 10, & 17 BCDC Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Boston Medical Center IMP** project. In anticipation of the expiration of its 2010 Institutional Master Plan (IMP), on November 20, 2019 Boston Medical Center (BMC) filed an Institutional Master Plan Notification Form laying out an IMP for the next ten years. The new IMP proposes two new Article 80 Large Projects, 10 Stoughton Street and a New Administration/Clinical Building (ramp parcel on Albany Street). They, along with the other previously entitled Article 80 Large Projects, will return to the BCDC for review of those specific projects. BMC is located in the South End neighborhood of Boston and most of the campus is located within the South End Landmark District Protection Area. Given the scale and integration with the surrounding neighborhood, review is recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Boston Medical Center Institutional Master Plan project in the South End neighborhood.

The next Review Committee report was for the Fenway Center Phase 2 project. This project was initially approved by the BCDC in December 2008. It has seen several changes over the past decades, including the review of Phase 1 in 2016. The project rebuilt the MBTA Yawkey Way Station before beginning construction of Phase 1, which consists of two residential buildings on the terra firma part of the site and is currently under construction. The Notice of Project Change brings impetus for the Commission to review the modified project and it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Fenway Center Phase 2 project in the Fenway neighborhood.

The next Review Committee report was for the Lot F4 in the Bartlett Place PDA project. Bartlett Place is located just outside Nubian Square in Roxbury. The project consists of 32 market-rate and 5 income restricted condominium apartments within the PDA. Note that this project is well below the 100,000 SF threshold. It is reviewed by BCDC as part of the approval for the Bartlett Square PDA. Review with direction to BPDA staff is encouraged as an appropriate outcome. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Boston Civic Design Commission review the schematic design for the Dover Station at the corner of Bartlett Street and Bartlett Station Drive in the Roxbury Neighborhood.

The next Review Committee report was for the Allston Green/Nova Allston project. Partners Properties, LLC, proposes the redevelopment of an approximately 1.8-acre site. The redevelopment, known as Allston Green aka Nova Allston, will include three new residential buildings with approximately 348 residential units, parking, ground floor amenity and non-residential space, and new open space along Linden Street and Pratt Street. The project well-exceeds the 100,000 SF review threshold and will impact the surrounding public realm. As such, review is recommended. It was then moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Boston Civic Design Commission review the schematic design for the Allston Green aka Nova Allston at 20 Linden Street in the Allston neighborhood of Boston.

The last Review Committee report was for the South Boston Innovation Campus project. The project consists of a 380,000 SF laboratory and office building with surface and below grade parking and a landscaped plaza in the Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park. The site is across the Haul Road from the Silver Line Way T-stop and the Massport Parcel H development site. It is catty-corner from the Blue Hill Bank Performance Pavilion. Review is recommended given the scale and public realm implications. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Boston Civic Design Commission review the schematic design for the South Boston Innovation Campus at 2 Harbor Street in the Raymond L. Flynn Marine Park.

The Commission moved into Votes of Recommendation for projects from the Design Committee. The first presentation was for **449 Cambridge Street**. David Manfredi was recused.
Anne-Marie Lubenau: At the most recent Design Committee we felt the team had addressed most of our concerns, which largely included how the building meets the street and ways to incorporate public art into the building.
Andrew Grote, Perkins Will: This building bridges two levels along grade at Emery and Rugg Roads. The facade has been simplified, primarily with the addition of a mural at Emery road and the materiality of the building base on Cambridge Street.

Chris Jones, IBI Group: Major comments and subsequent revisions included details in the furnishing zone and creating interest where the building meets the ground. We had shown detailed cross sections through the site during Design Committee.

Kirk Sykes: You've successfully incorporated a lot of the comments and suggestions we offered, particularly of the view along Rugg Road.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: Continue thinking about the enclosed terrace as an opportunity for public art with elements like railings being incorporated into architecture. Strive beyond the utilitarian.

William Rawn: This project started off strong. It should be a model for mid-sized developments in neighborhoods like Allston that have a strong sense of urban design principles.

Hearing no public comment, a motion was made, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommend approval of the schematic design for the proposed 449 Cambridge Street project in the Allston neighborhood.

The next project was **1252-1270 Boylston Street**.

Andrew Flynn, SCAPE: The project is a 451 unit residential project with a retail podium. From an urban design standpoint, we hoped to reduce the dimensional envelope and improve the public realm around the site. We will be including a black box theater and 15% income-restricted units in the project.

Chris Anderson, Gensler: In response to your comments, the building height was reduced. On the alley, the building has been brought in so as to not cantilever over the alley and added a green roof. The piers at the southwest corner on Boylston were a focus of BCDC comments; we've added a fourth pier to make the corner symmetrical. The public realm complies with the surrounding Boylston Street corridor improvements. We've introduced seating and detail to the public realm.

Kirk Sykes: The massing changes are well received. The images of the alley are in stark contrast with the rendered views from Boylston. I encourage you to find ways to break the mass of the podium and add texture near the ground.

Linda Eastley: When the building was cantilevered there was a bit more dimension on the alley that will be viewed by many abutting residences. Now that it is flush, are there ways to add detail or banding the material to add more visual interest?

David Hacin: Congratulations on the expansion of the theater; this brings the public realm into the building. The consolidation of the loading dock is one less element intruding on the space.

Eric Höweler: The structural expression is nice. As a big building, it's important to carefully consider how the building meets the ground.

Pam Beele, IAG member: This developer worked really well with the community and we are all very pleased with the end result.

Elaine Simmons, South End resident: The extensive wall along the alley could be an opportunity for public art.

Bobby, representative from carpenters union: We are looking forward to working with the team as the project continues to move forward.

Sydney Carmick, Resident: Having some kind of sound suppression material on the alley wall would be great because of the noise inherent to loading.

A motion was moved, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: That the Commission recommend approval of the schematic design for the 1252-1270 Boylston Street project in the Fenway neighborhood.

The **Common Allbright project at 525 Lincoln** was presented next.

David Manfredi: At the last subcommittee we were generally pleased by the responsiveness of the proponent to break down the street wall along Cambridge Street. We felt that the stair protruded too far into the public realm and asked the team to look into visually reducing the stair.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: A key challenge of this site from the beginning was dealing with a long narrow site, especially on a site that starts to transition to a smaller residential scale. This design has progressed a great deal at addressing our concerns.

Andrew Coppolotti, Boylston Properties: We're excited by the changes that have been made in process with the Commission.

Hans Strauch, Arx Urban: We have a series of before and after photos of both the plan and perspectives from around the site. The public realm around the site has been greatly expanded and improved. There are opportunities for sitting along Cambridge Street, and the façade design on this side of the building has been scaled visually through your feedback. The Lincoln Street corner is now much more visually transparent. We thank you for all your input. This was a challenging project and challenging site.

David Hacin: The changes you made to articulate the massing have made a huge difference. The shifting of the building to create a more welcoming sidewalk condition will be a huge improvement.

Mikyong Kim: The introduction of the curved planters on Cambridge Street seems a bit out of place. I miss some of the wood that was in the previous design that introduced some consistency up the Cambridge Street hill. I really appreciate the effort this team has put in.

David Manfredi: You've listened to all of our comments and have been very responsive. The building has gotten a lot better.

Linda Eastley: I really appreciated the seam of the building. When you look toward the west, this seam is prominent, but kind of disappears when looking from the east. I think it's key to breaking up the two parts of the building. I really like that you've flattened the nose of the building where Cambridge meets Lincoln; that makes all the difference as the first impression of the building. The project has two very different personalities; this strategy is appropriate and I like that you've created a neighborhood scale with an art park and community center on Lincoln Street.

Hearing no public comment, a motion was made, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommend approval of the schematic design for the proposed Common Allbright project at 525 Lincoln Street project in the Allston neighborhood of Boston.

The last report from the Design Committee was **290 Tremont, Parcel P-12c**. Kirk Sykes was recused. Linda Eastley: When I last saw the project, we were focused on the nature of the pedestrian corridor at all hours with the right security and lighting measures. We talked a lot about the servicing of the many programs in the building and if possible consolidating some of the loading.

Angie Liou, Executive Director ACDC: We are the non-profit development partner. The proponent is four partners, including ourselves, Millennium Partners, Corcoran Jennison Company, and Tufts Shared Services. This project contains affordable housing, hotel, a parking garage, and a future library and open space.

Aeron Hodges, Stantec: We have 168 100% affordable housing units on top of 168 hotel rooms, expansion of the parking garage, and future space for the Chinatown public library. We will create an active pedestrian zone from Tremont Street through to Washington which will be a site for future development. The design of the facade draws inspiration from the Chinese bamboo slip. We were asked to integrate the pedestrian passageway with the building base. There are views from around the building showing the change in facade patterning.

Shauna, GROUND Landscape: The concerns in the courtyard were safety and security, particularly with landscape elements that create hiding spaces. We are keeping a visually open plaza with removable bollards and movable tables and chairs. Seating platforms are integrated with planters.

William Rawn: I compliment you on the improvements to the project. This is a layered, complex project and it feels coherent. This pathway through is a challenge. Can the opening on Tremont Street be made taller? The horizontal band at the second floor terrace feels too closed.

Andrea Leers: There are ways to reinterpret the amenity terrace over the pedestrian passage to make it read as more open. I see that you're still working on this design.

David Hacin: There are a lot of existing shortcuts through this neighborhood that are not very well signed/identified. I'm seeing this project for the first time and I think the permeability on the site is exciting and I am wondering if there can be a clearer navigation system of this campus area. There are parts of the public realm around Tufts Medical Center that feel very degraded and I'd like to think that this project will create some spill over to improvements beyond this block.

Linda Eastley: When I saw the views today, I felt like the bollards really jump out. I think there is a way to make these part of the sculptural quality of the park, which is more organic.

Director of ToD for Alternatives for Community & Environment in Roxbury: From a public viewpoint, I'd like to see some more green and grass for children to engage with. This can be really developed into something more welcoming that becomes a destination for people to sit and play.

Kyle Hepner, South End resident: This area is still cut off from Chinatown along Washington Street. What does it look like to get from Chinatown on Washington Street to get to this courtyard, especially since it will be hosting the Chinatown public library? What will the back entrance look like and how will it encourage people to come through?

Andrea Leers: This is an extraordinary project that binds together many uses that are beneficial to the city. Each step in its development has enhanced the project. More greening and presence on Tremont will be a condition of approval.

A motion was made, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommend approval for the 290 Tremont Project (Parcel P-12c) with the condition that the proponent continue to improve the portal on Tremont Street and

further introduce greenery in the parklet, then return to the Commission for an informational presentation.

The Commission moved to project presentations, the first being for **Boston University Medical Center** in the South End neighborhood.

Bob Biggio, Senior VP of Facilities & Support Services, BMC: Our goal in the overall Master Plan is to improve the streetscape and pedestrian experience along Albany Street while preserving the green space. This new IMP is the first in which BMC will be filing separately from Boston University. The new IMP proposes two new buildings, a new administration/clinical building along Albany Street and a new administration building at 10 Stoughton Street.

Linda Eastley: When you come to design committee, you will need to clarify the overall campus and urban design approach to this master plan. First look at bigger buildings, then at smaller buildings to help us understand views and campus entry points.

David Hacin: A model would be extraordinarily helpful, even at a small scale.

Eric Höweler: A master plan is not just square footage and real estate. What do these collections of buildings have in common? What are the ambitions of this master plan?

Anne-Marie Lubenau: What is the connecting sense of identity and way finding?

Cynda Stoner, South End resident: The East Brookline Street neighborhood has a lot of opposition to Building H. I would ask that you read the scoping response that the neighbors have offered. These buildings have been around since the 1870s and we have concerns about the structural impacts of these new buildings. There has been damage caused to some of these historic buildings from BU expansion already.

The project will continue in design committee.

The next project presentation was for **Fenway Center NPC** in the Fenway neighborhood.

Elizabeth Stifel, Executive Director: Staff are early in the review process. Internal concerns included added bulk as a result of the change in program and the added height along Brookline Avenue.

John Rosenthal, Meredith Management: As many of you know, this has been a lengthy development process. This is a multi-phase mixed-use project and major air rights project over the Massachusetts Turnpike. To create land is tremendously challenging and expensive. In 2009, the BPDA approved the whole project. Prior to starting Phase 1, Lansdowne Commuter Rail Station (formerly Yawkey) was reconstructed into a full-service station. We are now completing Phase 1 which will be done this summer. We are proposing to change some of the residential and parking area in Phase 2 into office/lab space. We must first build a structural deck before the rest of the development can begin.

Alex Fernandez, Gensler: The first and most difficult part of this project will be constructing the platform over the Turnpike. We've worked with the BPDA to scale down the massing through setbacks and articulated facade on Brookline Ave. There will be roof terraces throughout the project for public amenities. The north side of the site will not be accessible, so the loading is embedded in the ground floor.

Marcus Gansen, Copley Wolff: We are creating 48,000 SF of publicly accessible open space on what is currently a highway. There will be major streetscape improvements along Beacon Street and Brookline Ave (bike lane, wide sidewalk, furnishing zone). A Long pedestrian spine will connect east and west lobby/portals.

John Rosenthal: This is a gateway to Boston from the West and will be the last building seen on the way out of the city. It's a mixed-use development that will activate the street with retail and add jobs and residences to the city.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: This is an opportunity of a lifetime with major value capture. Regarding the massing of the building, it feels like this revised proposal has too stark a jump in scale. There are many scales to consider from an experiential level to pedestrians and passersby: street level, view corridor on approach, and in the skyline. The skyline is part of the public realm and this will shape the experience/impression of Boston from afar.

Linda Eastley: I'd suggest that the first subcommittee meeting help us understand what has changed in this revised proposal.

Andrea Leers: My memory is that in the previous proposal, this project was more connected with the streets around it. I want to better understand this project in context with the surrounding network.

William Rawn: We need to understand how this fits into the Boston skyline and find a way to see it in scale as compared with recently approved projects like BU Data Sciences Center and the Parcel 12 Air rights.

Eric Höweler: This is a project that fills the void left by highway construction and knits the city back together. There is a larger urban and historic argument about continuity and street wall. How is the project intentionally reconnecting Boston?

Kirk Sykes: Help us understand what this building brings that isn't there already. This will add amenity, activity, and an urban center; what does it connect and relate to?

David Hacin: This is a rebalancing of density in the city, creating a new hub of activity especially when considered alongside major Kenmore Square redevelopments.

IAG member: We want to see this density and development in Boston and are excited about this project.

The project will continue in design committee.

The **Bartlett Yard Building F4** was the next presentation. Kirk Sykes and William Rawn were recused.

Sara Kudra, DREAM Collaborative: This project is part of a larger Planned Development Area, and the Commission reviewed changes to the Master Plan last year. This building will contain 37 residential units. We are breaking the massing into 3 sections to follow the topography. Cost effective corrugated metal with brick make up the material palette.

Andrea Leers: This project seems underdeveloped, but I think you can continue to develop the design with BPDA design.

David Hacin: I think there is a complicated mix of contextual and modern design in this design. I can understand the rationale for either approach but I'm not sure it should be mixed. This project has a nice scale and navigates the change in grade successfully.

Community member: This is a historic neighborhood. We need to bring more life and vegetation to this project.

The project will be developed with BPDA staff and then return to the Commission for a presentation and vote.

The **Allston Green** project presentation was next. David Hacin recused.

Dave Salle, PCA: This project consists of three residential buildings at the intersection of Cambridge and Linden Streets next to the Massachusetts Turnpike in Allston. Open space fills the ground plane between the buildings, and we are treating two small parks like a living room for residents and the community. Along the edges building there will be seating in the notched facade. The ground floor along the park consists of lobbies, residential amenity space, and artist lofts and coworking space that opens up onto a plaza. We looked at the Guest Street study for a reference point. Any shadows cast for the buildings are on highway and tracks, not on open space or the neighborhood.

Andrea Leers: This project is twice as tall as the surrounding buildings. Why not just look at one tower against the pike with a midrise building instead of the larger stepped mass you have here. Consider a point instead of a slab building.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: This was a comprehensive presentation. I have questions regarding the height of the project and how you meet the neighborhood. We're seeing a tremendous number of development projects in this area and I appreciate that you've included recently reviewed projects in context. How does this fit into a broad city strategy?

Linda Eastley: The two buildings feel comfortable and the step down of building A is persuasive. I'm struggling with the wall condition on Cambridge Street. This feels like a very different kind of development for Allston. Regarding open space, I appreciate that you're thinking carefully about how to get to the internal parcel. Why is space between building B and C so wide; feels suburban. I'm sympathetic that there isn't much open space in this neighborhood right now. Could the open spaces each become more distinct and programmed differently to serve a diverse community?

Mikyoung Kim: Linden Street is a cut through to the Turnpike that will only get worse so I'm concerned about open space that fronts onto it. I don't think you need two open spaces and it might be stronger to focus on one strong open space at the corner of Linden and Pratt.

The project will continue in Design Committee.

The last project presentation of the evening was for the **South Boston Innovation Campus**.

Seth Reisman, Handel: The project is on a gateway site between recent Seaport development and the Raymond Flynn Marine Industrial Park. It will contain lab/office commercial space. There will be open space that integrates parking on the site that is roughly the equivalent size of Post Office Square.

Natasha Espada, Studio Enee: The façade design features a metal lattice that opens up to the lobby. We are considering corrugated metal and modular panels to engage the pedestrian scale toward the ground. We are studying solar efficiency in the façade design.

Klopfert Martin: The green space with parking is about the size of post office square. We are hoping to create a flexible green room with surface parking that can serve multiple programs depending on

the time/day. There will be pedestrian and bike connectivity across the site. Promenade with views to the water.

Kirk Sykes: Could you capture more open space with a different parking configuration?

Linda Eastley: It's unusual for a project to have both surface parking and below grade parking. I understand that this is due to restrictions on height by the FAA, but maybe you can be more creative about it.

Mikyoung Kim: Even if the open space is small, it's an asset for the seaport.

David Hacin: You can't build easily on this parcel but you've talked about getting high enough to see the water. I wonder if there could be decked over/concealed parking built into the landscape. The current parking situation makes this project feel a bit like a suburban anomaly in the Seaport/South Boston.

Andrea Leers: You've made really good choices about where to put your building and what it faces. This is like a modern warehouse building for new tech. The part that feels less settled/clear is the use of the open space. It feels like you've put too little building on your site in relation to the open space. I'm craving a piece of building on the parking lot like a pavilion that fronts a corner garden. This could be part of your social or transportation program.

Linda Eastley: There are many creative ways to think about the corner and draw vibrancy to the site. Just like you're thinking about flexibility of ground floor use in future.

David Hacin: I think the building is quite nice. In design committee, we can focus on public space and the relationship of the lobby to the exterior.

Mikyoung Kim: Think about edges on the site. There should be a more fluid relationship between parking and the pedestrian plaza.

The project will continue in Design Committee.

There being no further items for discussion, a motion was made to adjourn, and the meeting was duly adjourned at 9:40 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for February 4, 2020. The recording of the January 14, 2020 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.