

DRAFT MINUTES

BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, July 8th, 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); Linda Eastley, David Manfredi, Paul McDonough (Co-Vice-Chair), William Rawn, Daniel St. Clair, Kirk Sykes, and Lynn Wolff. Absent were: Deneen Crosby, David Hacin, and Andrea Leers. Also present was David Carlson, Executive Director of the Commission. Representatives of the BSA were present. Michael Cannizzo was briefly 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 Thursday, June 19, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the June 3rd, 2014 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the June 3rd, 2014 Boston Civic Design Commission Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. MD asked for a report from the Review Committee on the **Mission Hill Parcel 25 Project**. Kirk Sykes (KS) was recused. David Carlson (DAC) reported that the Parcel 25 Project was phased, and the initial Phase One was really the most developed and so the focus of the review; nevertheless, all phases would be included in a PDA, and a conditioned approval was anticipated. Total PDA SF was over 300,000 SF, but even Phase One was proposed at about 88,000 SF, and this was a significant site at Roxbury Crossing. Review was recommended. A motion was made, seconded, and it was

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Mission Hill Parcel 25 Project and PDA on the corner of Tremont and Gurney streets in the Mission Hill neighborhood.

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **99 Tremont Street Project NPC**.

DAC noted that the BCDC had recommended approval of a prior scheme for this site 10 years ago; this proposal was a significant improvement, and remained at the SF thresholds that prompted review previously. Because of the prior review and that fact, given the design and team change, a new vote to review was recommended. It was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the new schematic design for the proposed 99

Tremont Street Residences Project in the Oak Square area of the Brighton neighborhood.

Paul McDonough (PM) and Lynn Wolff (LW) were recused from the next item. Daniel St. Clair (DS) arrived. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **888 Boylston Street Project**. DAC reported that the Commission had approved the Project in December of 2008, but it had not moved forward due to the economy. It now had a tenant, allowing the Project to proceed; however, changes in the architect and landscape architect had resulted in design changes significant enough in aspects of concern to the BCDC to merit a renewed review by the Commission. No new Article 80 process was triggered, but a new vote to review was recommended. It was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the revised schematic design for the 888 Boylston Office Building Project located in the Prudential PDA within the Huntington/Prudential District.

Bill Rawn (WR) arrived. DAC noted that a condition of the vote recommending approval for the **Nashua Street Residences Project** was a return with an informational presentation showing resolution of items less than fully addressed in the BCDC process. The next item *was* this informational presentation. Alfred Wojciechowski (AW) of CBT noted the issues left open: the park at Nashua, the arcade, lighting, and the climate in the arcade. He started with the park design, noting the pedestrian circulation through it, and talking about the drop-off. There was a back-and-forth with WR about the vehicular circulation - why was it two-way? - leading to an explanation of all movements, parking, loading, the elephant ramp, etc.; pedestrians will have to look both ways. Further, in more detail, WR questioned the resolution of this, and KS asked about events. Linda Eastley (LE): This was an issue when discussed and still doesn't seem resolved. AW noted that their TAPA with BTB was all worked out and agreed to. David Gillespie (DG) of Avalon noted that the asphalt defined the loading areas. LW: You will need some pedestrian passage along the (southern) edge of the park. DG: We looked at that; we can't meet the 5% slope requirement. The scheme shown is fully accessible. WR: Can't trucks be forced to go only one way? And cars, too - so that pedestrians only have to look one way. AW: The operations of the building are complex. DG: It's a very circuitous route to return for one-way circulation or drop-off. AW: Normally in the City, pedestrians will look both ways, and a lot occurs here. So this was the simplest solution, considering things holistically.

LW: Lighting was another topic. AW showed boards illustrating the lighting schemes for the building from different points of view. LW: The pergolas in the park look more like they are solid...perhaps if you used glass, or more reflective materials.... KS: When we talked about the lighting, I had expected something more iconic, expressing a Gateway into the City. AW: We struck a balance. When we investigated schemes, we felt that no other building had a strong, 450-foot-high light shaft - we *do*, and there are the other arcs and lines. DS: The Garden lighting seems in conflict with that. It changes a lot, there is a flare on the building...I'm not sure how they work together. AW: We're not a part of the Garden. KS: I would encourage you to think about something stronger on the top. DG: Intensity can be a problem (notes the bright lights on the top of the Exeter Residences) with the LED lights. AW: We think it's going to be

very powerful. LW: And the climate? AW presented their wind studies. AW: We think it's going to be all very comfortable internally.

MD: And what does your model have to tell us? AW noted that it helped in the study of walking through the space, experiencing the light and the volumes of the space. David Manfredi (DM): And it's not closed at all - it's open all the time. AW: Yes (notes views). Commissioners got up and walked around the model setup. LE asked about the treatment above the entry. AW explained the locations; the idea was to mark (or attract) looking down the alley. More discussion on various topics ensued. MD: Any questions? This is an *informational* update. WR: I am fully aware of the complexities, and appreciate your efforts. My only concern is the new Nashua Street edge that pedestrians experience - it's an important part of the public realm, but I don't have any specific suggestions. KS questioned the entry. AW noted there was a tactile strip and bollards, 3-D cues. MD: I suggest you work to continue to privilege the pedestrian, address the comments on the pergola, and strengthen the lighting and contrast. (To Commissioners) Should we have them return? Paul McDonough (PM): We could have the BRA staff work with BTM and other BRA staff. KS: Either they or staff should return; it would be good if the sense then was that we were heard. This notion was

VOTED: That the Commission continue a portion of the original condition of the Nashua Street Residences approval, namely that the Proponent (or staff) return to show final resolutions on the issues of a pro-pedestrian Nashua Street edge, and strengthening the lighting schemes on the building and park pergolas.

DM and PM were recused for the next item. The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **Innovation and Design Building Project**. KS reported that Committee felt the Project was good - they had studied the differentiation of the entries along the length of the building, with a combination of elements, including the containers. And the lighting. Mark Sardegna (MS) of Elkus/Manfredi: We could not come to agreement with MassDOT on the drawbridges with the active rail. Not at this time. But we have another route. Chris Jones (CJ) or Carol R Johnson Associates presented the design of the plazas at the entries, noting the entire envelope was permeable, and showing stairs and lifts. LE: Lifts don't really work. CJ noted the grade change, and MS noted that it wasn't really a lift; it was a two-sided elevator. LW asked about a centralized ramp (MS: doesn't work) and LE asked about a rectangle shown. CJ: The containers are used as markers, they frame the entries, and they serve other uses, like bike storage. All are more permeable than before. In the vegetation, we have variations - in part, possibly amongst and using reclaimed materials. MS notes that they had moved the T stop to a more central location. WR asked why they didn't locate it near an entry, but it turned out, looking at a different plan, that it *was*.

MS: One thing discussed in Committee was the color of the containers (shows their study) and the idea of aggregating groups of differing colors for each entry. (Shows views, a tiny full elevation showing the variations, views of each entry, and on one such notes the transformation

of the containers with perforations and openings.) The retail shown is non-specific; we don't have tenants. WR: Is the retail still there? Katie Scallon of Jamestown LLC: Yes, but it's not yet fully permitted. MS showed a view along the retail promenade, the lighting idea including skylights, and a section. MS: There is an LED strip 1340' long at the top of the canopy. There are downlights between bays, lights on the pilasters, and lighting in/on the containers. There's a difficulty with lighting in the train ROW, but we are thinking about catenaries. We are redoing the sidewalks and adding new storefronts (shows a photo of a mock-up). The intent is to use this same area to test lighting strategies, containers, etc. KS: The entry islands...are they oriented in such a way that people will come there? MS: We think so. A preliminary test with food trucks indicated that they were very popular, so it will be convenient to have full gathering places. DS: Is there room on the promenade for that? Katie: We have also experimented with moveable furniture; it's very well-used. LE: It reminds me of Copenhagen. You can be more inventive with the containers. WR: We threw out ideas at the meeting; you've chosen some of the better ones. I compliment you on the improvements. With that, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for THE Innovation and Design Building (Phase 1) in the Boston Marine Industrial Park in the South Boston Waterfront District.

DM and PM returned. LW was recused for the next item. The next item was a report from Design Committee on presentation of the **New Street Development Project NPC II**. Dave Weyant (DW) of ADD Inc. presented the revised Project, noting the locus and the context in an aerial photograph. He noted that this information had been requested, and began to present the changes in the plans. MD: Perhaps I should bracket this. They were asked to disconnect the lower piece from the main building, and to align it with Sumner; they did both. They added a floor in exchange, which we also liked. DW then continued, showing views of the changes, noting a new tower design change (removal of bays, scale of 'frames'), showing pedestrian-level views, moving closer, showing the corner, the pass-through from New, then to New, and the view from the amenity deck. DW: At the tower corner, we have orthogonalized the inset. At the garage, we have eliminated the fins (they were over a private property line) and instead have alternating panels of 'corrugated' brick and wood panels. (Shows long views.) John Copley (JC) of Copley Wolff Design Group showed the sidewalk continuing along LoPresti Park. JC: We are keeping our wide sidewalk, though they are narrowing theirs. We are using contemporary rails and lighting. (Notes materials.) We are still using wood on the ground, but less of it.

DM: This is so much better. I like that the bridge does not have units. The Chapter 91 corner is much better, and the proportions on the tower facade are better. WR: I agree. Compliments to the team - the architects came up with solutions that met all our issues. LE: The landscape is much simpler. It reads clearly now; it was muddy before. KS: The resolution is much better. I urge you to be more exciting, at the corner of the Harbor. With that, it was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the newly revised schematic design for the proposed New Street Development Project in the East Boston neighborhood.

LW returned. KS was recused for the next item. The next item was a presentation of the **Mission Hill Parcel 25 Project**. Pat Flaherty (PF) of the Mission Hill NHS introduced herself and her team. PF: Our other projects include One Brigham Circle. Like there, we engaged in a grass roots planning process with the neighborhood, in part focused on the existing conditions and the site's many constraints. We purchased (*sic*) the site in 2012. We are bringing back to Roxbury Crossing a place for people to work, a space for non-profits, a place to shop, and housing. Rob Chandler (RC) of Goody Clancy presented the design, showing an aerial view of the full intended massing (showing overall intent and the context of other approved and planned projects), the Phase One site plan, noting constraints imposed by the MBTA and easement conditions, and showing both the interim and full build-out plans. LW asked about orientation; RC responded, noting that the 2-story building allowed light into the interior plaza. He showed views along Tremont, day and night. RC: The building picks up the vertical elements of Tremont Street. He then pointed out the retail entries and the residential entry off Gurney, and showed views into and of the courtyard space.

DM: And that's the entry to the office. RC: Yes, right around the corner. And the entry to Phase 3 is right behind that. LE asked about Mindoro Street, possibly picking up a connection in the neighborhood: It would be good to look at that, to imagine such a future. LW: At the entry from Gurney, the view into the space needs an accent. And the bus stop, and the wall next to it, are so disappointing. Have you worked with the MBTA? PF: This is mostly affordable housing, and the T would have us pay for *all* improvements. RC indicates it on the plan: It's a formidable structure, and partly in front of the building. Both stop and solid fence are on the bridge. So the perception depends on your point of view. WR: Bring more information, photos. DM: So, on the retail, I'm confused. You do get a head-on view from the T station...where do you park in Phase 2? RC indicated this: In part, below; and, below in Phase 3. DS asked about Phase 3. RC: It's a 16,000 SF footprint. DS: What if it doesn't go? PF: It will.

WR: The site plan seems okay. The 'Youth' building indicates that something is going on that's an improvement in the community. I'm not sure that the (mixed-use) building on the left continues that. I understand it picks up some moves, but wouldn't you have some flair at the retail? A little excitement...do you have other views (down Tremont)? You're restraining yourself. MD: This seems like a level of complexity...you could simplify this, or strengthen it. The retail and office - you could have the base expressed, and the top be another architecture. WR: Is there any question of asking the City to help with the T stop and fence. It's kind of a drag on your Project, it forces it back. RC: Actually, the T easement does. (DAC was requested to look into the City asking the T what could be done.)

MD: Provide more information on the context and buildings. DM: On Phase 3, I'm not sure of the office use, but if it's vital, ignore me. But it were residential, what does that do to the site

plan, and how does that impact Phase 1? PF: People said One Brigham wouldn't work, and it happened. DM: You're right. DS: There were different adjacencies at One Brigham. PF: One Brigham has LMA-related uses, and the Harvard School of Public Health is on Smith Street. MD: There's a question about how those things might shape this. Richard Giodordano of the MHNHS: We have worked with the community, and have a plan that the community developed. We did an economic feasibility analysis; the community supports the uses. The site is very constrained. The Stony Brook conduit runs through the site; the purchase price dictates what goes on. There is excitement about the housing. And the Youth Center is positive. This is supported by the other uses of the Project; we got to this point after a decade of work. Maria then was recognized and spoke in favor of the Project. Alison Pultinas spoke: It's time for this. It's taken 40 years for this land to reconnect. I applaud the project. With that, the Parcel 25 Project was sent to Design Committee.

KS returned; PM was recused for the next item. The next item was a presentation of the **99 Tremont Street NPC**. Henry St. Hillaire (HSH), representing Saracen Properties, spoke: This is a fairly new product for us in housing. We hope to start soon. We've had a positive reaction from the community. Doug Farrar (DF) of Cube3 Studio presented the design. He showed the locus, noting the larger buildings in the area, and also noting that this Project was replacing a building that burned down decades ago. LE: Who owns the property to the east? HSH: The Archdiocese. DF: The immediate context, the church at the top of the hill, is now not functional (although it may be used as a Conference Center). The stairs on this property are closed, crumbling; they may not be used on their Project. (Shows photos of context. Shows Project approved in 2004.) We were asked to create something more environmentally friendly, and pedestrian-friendly. (Shows new scheme. Notes uses along the front.) The streetscape is more inviting. The old scheme had two curb cuts; now there are none. The massing and density are similar. The garage entry is via an existing curb cut. A vertical element, a stair, signifies the entry. (Shows a view from the other corner.) The stairs will go...you can see the upper courtyard. (Shows an aerial plan view, then a courtyard view.) The courtyard has a public component, an outdoor room, with separated patios outside the units fronting the plaza. (Shows a higher view, then another aerial. Notes the sun access in the courtyard, the green roof, white roof, and other sustainable components. DS: Why are you still showing the stairs? DF: They will go away. (Shows plans. Notes the multi-floor clubhouse amenity, with access to the courtyard.) Materials are stone and storefront glass, with fiber cement above. (Shows elevations all around, and a section.)

Mike Radner (MR) presented the landscape design. MR: There are three components: streetscape, side treatments, and the courtyard. We will continue the streetscape typical along Tremont, with landscaped areas in islands back to the building, framing the entry. On the side and back, there is a lot of grade, and we are doing erosion control along the edge to the side, then carving out some space for the units at the rear. We will re-vegetate the back. Mitch Fischman clarified that the stairs *were* in the proposed plan in 2003, but they are *not* our property. WR: Does the courtyard need it as egress? DF: No.

LW: I have some comments on the courtyard and patios. Think how few patios there are; it doesn't seem like a good use. It's not used as well as a big social space. DF: You think it's out

of balance? LW: No, I just think that courtyards tend to be more communal. It's just a thought, a different way to look at it. MR: The patio is a bit of compensation, an amenity for those units, for marketing. HSH: That's a good point. If there are units in the space, and it's communal outside the bedroom window, it needs a buffer. LE: The streets are parallel here, but they are superblocks. A curiosity - you have the opportunity in this development - or if not you, the Archdiocese - it would be a real public benefit to connect the streets. It's just a comment, not anything I'm requesting. HSH: It's really church property. (LE leaves.) WR: I want to compliment you on your presentation. I like how it steps down the hill on the one side. Could you do something on the other side? DF: A treatment at the top? WR: Something more radical. I would at least like to raise the issue. (DF shifted to that view.) Maybe shift the facade? KS: On the storefront, it's a good idea to animate it, but I wonder if it will be *animated*. DF: The apartment office space is open 9-5, and the club house space, if done well, should be well-used. DS: I would like to de-emphasize the blue element (stairs). MD: This should be simple, the comments are light. With that, the 99 Tremont Project NPC was sent to Design Committee.

PM was recused for the next item and left. The next item was a presentation of the new design for the **888 Boylston Office Building**. Mike Cantalupa (MC) of Boston Properties introduced the team, including John Schuyler (JS) of FXFowle. MC: This Project was previously approved by the BRA and BCDC (shows prior scheme rendering, and plaza plan overview) in 2008, just before the recession. It's a one-sided building; we have thought how to position it in the marketplace - so, one of the *most sustainable* buildings in the City is planned. The FXFowle portfolio has good examples for tight urban infill plazas....We are not seeking height, FAR, or substantive dimensional changes. This is really just design. JS then noted their sustainability points. JS: The energy consumption is 45 KBTU/SF vs. a norm of 83. It's *very* efficient. The envelope - we have transparency, but also high performance. And there are views out, but also daylight in, to 95% of the floor area. We are using a chilled beam system, and more. (Shows an overall site plan, and a view.) It's the same tripartite organization as an urban commercial palazzo. But this makes sense urbanistically. We have narrowed the front, and created shoulders. The frontality toward Boylston felt apropos. (Notes building elements and the multiple entries.) All parts are working together, none overwhelming. The entry is *very* glazed; you can see inside. (Shows a mid-level view/detail, with a variation of the glass.) There is a robust frame on the northern facade, and more 'pin-striping' on the east and west. And high ceilings; most offices are 9' or 9'6", it's higher here. WR: Are the east and west walls frit? JS: They are simply not as transparent. They are not as translucent as drawn on this view. (Shows the top of the building - a terrace, facing the River. A translucent glass cornice. On the sides, wind turbines to express sustainability, giving a sculptural and dynamic quality, but giving some power input. Shows long views.) The building has a dignified presence, but is a good neighbor. It's not viewed from all sides equally.

WR asked about the roof HVAC and total height; KS asked about more long range views; LW suggested comparing it to the prior design. JS briefly showed the ground floor program and plaza. LW had a question about the edge of the building, then the extent of the food court. MC: The second floor has multiple entries...the food court will be redone in conjunction with this. JS showed the second and third floor retail spaces, with mechanicals also on the third, as

well as access to the food court roof garden for office tenants. The upper floors are all typical, office. DS: The floorplate? JS: 24,500 SF. MC noted that they were re-looking at the landscape (shows earlier and current diagrams). MC: You will see this in Committee. In comparison to the previous plan, it's about 576 SF less.

LW: I like the entry as a jewel, like the Apple store. JS showed a series of line drawings, noting that the penthouse, constrained by the 33% rule, was carefully stacked. KS: I like a lot of the things you've done. The top is a neat counterpoint. DM: I would like to hear a little more - an exposition of the structure. I'm not sure I understand why you're doing a splayed column at the top, and especially at the bottom. MD: The previous conversation on this Project was in part based on views showing the relationship to the Prudential Tower. More views. DM: What is the dimension to the Pru tower? MC: About 150'. LW: More on the landscape. DS: It's great that you're doing the sustainability. With that, 888 Boylston 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 8:47 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for August 5, 2014. The recording of the July 8, 2014 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.