

DRAFT MINUTES

BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, July 11th, 2017, starting in Room #900, Boston City Hall, and beginning at 5:22 p.m.

Members in attendance were: Michael Davis (Co-Vice-Chair); Linda Eastley, David Hacin, Andrea Leers, David Manfredi, William Rawn, and Kirk Sykes. Absent were Deneen Crosby, 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. Elizabeth Stifel, Michael Cannizzo, and Matt Martin 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 Saturday, July 1, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the June 6th, 2017 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the June 6th, 2017 BCDC Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. MD noted Paul McDonough's absence due to recovery from a medical condition, and asked that the Commissioners' wishes for a speedy recovery be recorded in the minutes and communicated to Paul. He further noted that the BCDC draft Garage Guidelines would be discussed briefly after the meeting to decide next steps.

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **87-93 West Broadway Project**. David Carlson (DAC) noted that the Proposed Project was at the corner of A Street and West Broadway, a significant intersection in South Boston, and near a number of reviewed Projects. The proposal was about 100,000 GSF [98,000 SF reported], just at the BCDC threshold, and review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the 87-93 West Broadway Project in the South Boston neighborhood.

The next item was a report from Review Committee on the **Boston University Goldman School of Dental Medicine Project**. DAC noted that this was a substantial rehabilitation of most of the existing building with a new addition to the side. The entire structure would be re-sheathed, so essentially it would appear as a new building. The total building would grow to about 120,000 SF, and the Proposed Project was a modification to the BU IMP; review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Boston University Goldman School of Dental Medicine

Project and associated amendment to the Boston University Medical Campus Institutional Master Plan at 100 East Newton Street in the South End neighborhood.

David Manfredi (DM) was recused from the next item. The next item was a report from Review Committee on the **Huntington [Theater] Residential Project**. DAC noted that this was a significant redevelopment and investment directly in the Huntington Theater, and the City supported some additional height here in exchange for preserving that cultural use. 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 proposed Huntington Residential Development Project at 252-264 Huntington Avenue, adjacent to the Huntington Theater, at the edge of the Fenway neighborhood.

DM returned. The next item was a report from Review Committee on the **95 St. Alphonsus Project**. DAC noted that this was a nearly as-of-right building proposal which had started initially as a tower similar to its neighbors. This is across St. Alphonsus from part of the Basilica Project, which the BCDC reviewed some time ago. At over 110,000 SF, the Project was over the BCDC threshold; review was recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed 95 St. Alphonsus Street residential project on St. Alphonsus and Tremont streets in the Roxbury neighborhood.

David Hacin (DH) arrived. DM was recused from the next item. The next item was a joint report from Design Committee on the **99 Sumner Street (Hodge Boiler Works) project NPC**. Doug Harr of the Cube3 Studio presented the modified design, noting first the major changes to Harborwalk and noting the garage entry was back on London Street Extension. He noted changes in the facade color to a warmer shade (neither gray nor red) and showed a series of elevations/sections. Then a series of views - from Sumner, from LoPresti Park, from the rear of Carlton Wharf, then back on Sumner looking west toward New Street. Ian Randy of the Copley Wolff Design Group showed the larger landscape context along the East Boston shoreline, noting parallel themes, and here, the living shoreline concept. He showed the site plan, noting the change in ground plane elevation and the extent of the garage. They made the Harborwalk more direct, while also creating more unique subspaces - the amphitheater, the 'point.' They pushed back the patio area atop the garage. He showed a series of views and sections focused on the pedestrian experience. Then details, precedents, and vignettes.

Andrea Leers (AL): Thank you, to all of you, for listening to us. Especially the garage door moving around the corner, and moving the patio back. It's now very inviting. Kirk Sykes (KS): I echo that; this is extremely inviting. It's evolved to be more open. Linda Eastley (LE): This site design has been streamlined, and made beautiful - it's a complex topographic problem to solve. AL: I appreciate the change in materials as well. With that, and hearing no public comment, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the newly revised schematic design for the 99 Sumner Street Project on the Hodge Boiler Works site in the East Boston neighborhood.

DM returned. The next item was a presentation of the **87-93 West Broadway Project**. Architect Doug Stefanov (DoS) set up while consultant Mitch Fischman (MF) introduced the Project team and welcomed the BCDC to the South Boston neighborhood. He noted the project locus and size, at 98,000 SF. MF: We've been in meetings with neighborhood groups for a few months; the Project is supportable. We are consistent with the height (70')

that's been recommended for the rezoning in this area. DoS started to present using a dim projector setting, saying it was as bright as it gets. He noted the location and context, and showed an access/parking diagram. DoS: We intend to use a parking machine which is useable by an operator via a fob. The machines operate in tandem, and can shuttle cars back to front, too. (Shows a ground level plan, noting the grade change across the site. Shows typical upper floors.) We are working on breaking up the building massing - note the split in the building at the entry going back to the corridor. We are using materials to differentiate the building massing, and accentuate the corner. (Shows views from West Broadway, elevations, and an elevational perspective.)

Monique Hall (MH), a landscape architect with the BSC Group, presented the landscaped site plan. MH: We are maintaining the sidewalks on Broadway, and adding trees planted in a tree trench. Along A Street, we are widening the sidewalks from 6 to 8' to give more breathing room. The building is also set back along Silver Street. We are doing a green roof for the roofscape to mitigate against heat gain and provide some water retention. There is a common area and eleven more private spaces; fencing is minimized. We are using low-growing sedum, with some grasses in deeper planters. DoS then summed up the presentation, and began showing some of his prior projects; MD suggested that he should not show those [not germane to the Project].

DM: This is an incredibly important site - it's on the pedestrian path to all the jobs in the Seaport. So I want to ask about the widths of the sidewalks on A Street and Broadway. DoS: 8' and 10'. DM: And the police station? DoS: That aligns with our building. We have set back the building to allow more space. DM: I'm glad you're holding the widths, and expanding them. I'm assuming the building overhangs the setback. DoS: Yes. DM: That's a great retail corner.... DoS notes the corner's treatment. DM: I appreciate that, but it seems an intrusion into the public realm. I would encourage you to find other ways, without that protrusion. This is a remarkable intersection, one of the most important in the area. LE: I echo those comments. I'd like to see more context...your neighbors, etc. You are pulling back, but then going back into the public realm. Your contextual diagrams should include pullbacks from the sidewalks on all sides. AL: I'm familiar with the site; many years ago we designed the Police Station. I would like to see for a couple of blocks around, including the Haul Road. On that side [of Broadway], there are a lot of buildings that are figural. The building is about the right size, but you should pull back. Look wider.... I can't help but look at the Flash Gordon units - and can't help but wonder if there isn't a better solution. And the units which face each other - that's minimal privacy. Play more with the massing within your general volume.

DH: I wonder if the seam between the two isn't an opportunity to differentiate more. Maybe align with the Police Station.... I'm familiar with the mechanical system, but I'm not sure you have enough space. How that traffic works is just a question.... A second thing: there are a number of glass box bays on the sides. A building like that on Mass Ave teaches us a caution - people started putting cardboard in the windows. There has to be an integral shading system. KS: I agree. The model is very helpful. Clearly the area has started to scale up. What will be useful are long views...the syncopation you want in a longer stretch, a few blocks. It will be very interesting what happens with the canopies. At the roof, there's the opportunity to fade, provide hedges...think of what you see from a distance. MD: Provide more clarity. There may be more critique once we see more context. We look forward to seeing more. And with that, and hearing no public comment, the 87-93 West Broadway Project was sent to Design Committee.

The next item was a presentation of the **Boston University Goldman School of Dental Medicine Project**. Michael Donovan introduced himself as the BU

Director of Real Estate and Facilities: The School of Dental Medicine is one of 16 schools, this one at the BU Medical Campus. This [Project] is the result of 8 years of search and thinking; we considered 8 sites, and came back home to this. This is mostly about right-sizing the School, and improving the student experience. We are expanding from 69 to 170 chairs. There's no research; the uses are clinical and academic. Chris Purdy (CP) and Dan Kinkead (DK) are here from SmithGroupJJR of Detroit; their firm specializes in dental schools. This is a significant corridor in the Harrison/Albany Plan. (Slides commence.) CP noted the locus and showed a series of context views up and down Albany and East Newton streets. DK: The original building was a 3-story TAC building that was then added onto - you can clearly see the flatness of the '70s addition. The building does not perform well.

DK: How do we add 42,000 SF to a tight site? We have stitched the elements together, and tried to make sense of the existing irrational window pattern. We are not increasing the mass dramatically, but it fits into a new massing pattern. The program begins to express itself via fenestration. CP: We are renovating about 2/3 of the building, and making about 2-3 big moves. There will be a new dedicated patient entry at the corner, then a student/faculty entry on East Newton. There's a simulated learning center. Floors 4, 5, and 6 are Group Practice Model floors, the new way of dental education. DK: The ground floor is 4' above the sidewalk. C showed the first floor, noting its programming and the 2-entry strategy. DK: Our steps are granite, with landscape woven in. Plants will be chosen for drought tolerance and maintainability.

AL: Is the area at the corner an addition? DK: No, just the steps. The porch canopy is an addition (shows view). We are working with Elizabeth on an 'urban monument sign,' and working on the scale. LE: Do you have a 'before and after? -Maybe in Committee. DK showed an East Newton view, pointing to the integration of the landscape. We're comparing access. DK showed an East Newton view, pointing out the integration of the campus landscape. He noted precedents, and remarked that transparency was being introduced. Bill Rawn (WR) asked about the [addition] space to the left. DK showed the West Court, and then a view from Albany Street. DK: The white material is terra cotta. We are improving the building insulation values 20x. We're using a phenolic wood grain at the windows to stretch their impact around the facade. DK noted the use of brick, and walked through slides of materials. AL: What is the second canopy? DK: It's a receiving area with a similar detail. DH: Why is it white? DK: The Dean has steered us toward that choice. AL: What is in the gray box? DK: A 140-seat auditorium. (Shows more materials, going around to the East Newton side.) LE asked about the 'stitched' area. DK: We've added to the old building, but this is literally where the two stitch together. (Shows another view, from Albany. CP shows an animation looking at the Project from a moving point of view.)

AL: This is a very interesting project, a design challenge. It works well for the program required. I think that the choice to bring it all together, to clad it as one building, is a good choice as well. The legibility of the original structure...it's clear that you're opening it up. But where is that original, as part of the composition? It feels better in black and white (the animation) - better than in brown and white (proposed material colors). That's my general sense. Legibility - the first building was actually a good building. I'd like to see it from some viewpoints. DH: That's an interesting comment. This was an excellent presentation. The problem is solved nicely in many ways. My issue is primarily materiality. I'm very aware of how this institutional district feels. You're attempting to de-institutionalize with your porch. But white buildings don't do well here; I'd like to understand better. How can it blend into the historic area more - not using red brick, just softening it a bit. KS: I agree, making it quieter could help the public realm. There's one of everything here, like the Level 4 Lab, which just landed. Toning it down may work. I love the porch, a great idea - I'd like to find a way to keep people there. Because the ones who linger may not be the ones you want. You want

a counterbalancing force to attract students, and others, on their way.

MD: I want to reinforce that. We've seen a lot on Albany. The part that really doesn't work is the loading dock on Albany, right at the corner. I understand the difficulty, but I want to push to see if there are other solutions.

LE: That's one of the pieces I wanted to talk about. Where do people come from when they enter, or go through? Is there a reason to go around the building? The classroom piece feels tacked on. My first impression was, I want the building to address the sidewalk. There are ways of bringing the building to the street - to promote activity, lingering. Can the porch come forward, be enclosed? A porch on the sidewalk. That corner (on East Newton) would really make a difference. WR: I want to compliment you on the completeness of your presentation. I have two questions. The exterior detail (diagram) page - I don't see those layers; I see an arbitrary application of Trespa panels. The white, which reminds of a building on Seaport Boulevard, and the arbitrariness of the horizontal panels, get in the way of the layering...I'm having trouble with the composition, together with the white. And the service yard doesn't really need to be on Albany. The white is just white, but the loading dock would be a shame, as a separation.

DM: Andrea's observation about the original building was good - it was quite handsome. There's a calmness about that building, that might help with the comments on this one. With that, and hearing no public comment, the BU Goldman School of Dental Medicine Project was sent to Design Committee.

DM was recused from the next item. The next item was a presentation of the **Huntington Residential Development Project** on the Huntington Theater site. While a huge context model was being set up, developer John Matteson (JM) noted that they acquired the whole site from Boston University. There was a question about saving the theater, and concern about other venues in the City. So we will, after completion, turn the ownership of the Theater over to the Theater Company, and we will build space which makes the theater ADA-compliant. BK Boley (BK) of Stantec presented the design, first noting that their Project design model had gone missing from the context model. He showed an aerial view, noting other buildings in the area of comparable height. BK: The tower got slightly higher as the inflections went in (and not out). (Shows context pictures, then a program envelope diagram.) Two buildings will be demolished. We took the program envelope [originally covering the entire site] and then flipped that program up; it got higher with the parking below grade. (Shows distanced views.) This is a tall building at a key intersection. Zach Pursley (ZP) of Stantec added more views, noting that these kinds of uses were encouraged in the Avenue of the Arts study. BK then showed the massing evolution of 'theater mask' themes, with the canted surfaces refracting light differently, a relationship to the theater. He showed more views, elevations, and then a zoom into the lower frame relationship with the theater. ZP noted the program relationship, and noted that Bruner/Cott was working on a Tax Act restoration of the Theater exterior.

BK: The frames started as a design element, but helped with the winds. The amenity space may be in the frame, or above in a separate frame. We are marking the concept of a stage with stripemarks moving out onto the sidewalk...John and Megan of Copley Wolff are working on that. (Shows more views, elevations, sections; shows the parcels.) We have loading off of the alley in back, which drops down 9 feet. There's enough room for a 30' box truck. (Shows the conjoined plan elements at the ground floor, and discusses the theater relationship on the first and second floors.) We haven't located the ceremonial stair yet. Jason Forney of Bruner/Cott: We are working all that out now. JM: The space can be used by the theater at other times; the existing theater has no breakout space. And there will be a connection to the restaurant planned on the second floor. This will be a rental building. BK then showed floor plans, with the cants on each side, and the rooftop deck (with great views).

DH: The plan is wonderful. I appreciate that nothing is built *over* the theater. My concern about the plan is for the street here. The whole block, in terms of drop-off, planning traffic, the turnaround, etc. needs to be considered. JM: If the parallel parking is eliminated, there will be room for that - that's the plan. DH: On the sidewalk treatment, I've developed a skepticism about sidewalk treatments that end. But I'm excited about the potential theater treatment. Maybe you could morph into the City sidewalks on either side, rather than abrupt ends. That would feel funny along the Avenue of the Arts. Megan: That's what happens now.... BK: We are working with the Avenue of the Arts guidelines, which do look at unifying. DH points back at their plan, with abrupt terminations.

WR: How the architecture has responded to civic policy is really nice. The wall at the end of the lobby blocks the view downtown; that seems really sad. It could be more open. BK: If it's eliminated, Chihuahuas will fly off the sidewalk. AL: What do you know about the property to the east, the townhouses? DH: There's a strong civic component here, that feels like an odd situation. AL: What would happen if it were acquired? BK: The restaurant might move up there, and we would adjust for better loading. AL: Continue, and hope that something works. You are really constrained here. I wonder if you might not look at the plane of the building...work hard to broaden [the public sidewalk], at least at the ground level. KS: When you remove the parking, could you build the sidewalk out? DH: You can urge BTM to consider this, but with this Project, you *really* need to reconsider this stretch of street. MD: When you look at a project like this, you look at commensurate public benefit. Certainly the theater is a part of that. But the public spaces are part of that value proposition. I want to see those conditions.

KS: The balcony on the second floor is a really important element. Like at the Envoy, it's an advertisement of activity. There's a triple high space, too. Activity and treatment of the whole site - this is good. DH: The tower itself is elegant and different. The black and white shown is not as much an issue. Understanding the views from the points shown in your diagram would be good. The white and black, light and dark curtainwall - if it were a little crisper, it would make the folding more clear.

Elizabeth Stifel of the BPDA: Staff have asked to have both architectural teams work on the entry sequence. LE: We need to know how the drop-off and sidewalk play out, how the dimensions work. Alison Pultinas: In the '40s, Child's Restaurant here had very elaborate outdoor seating, before the underpass. The townhouse buildings (and restaurant) are by an architect from New York City - who designed the restaurant at Coney Island, which has been restored. You could bring back some of that history - widen the sidewalk, shorten the tower. With that, the Huntington Residential Development Project was sent to Design Committee.

DM returned. The next item was a presentation of the **95 St. Alphonsus Project**. Developer Ralph Cole (RC) introduced the project, noting a number of early community meetings, and apologizing for his casual attire. We came in initially (to the BRA) with a vision of a 20+-story tower. We assessed with the neighborhood the art of the possible, and ultimately came up with an as-of-right Project, with no dimensional variances. We have done that, and we will be subdividing the property into two lots, both under the control of Wingate. Architect Hans Strauch (HDS) noted his Cornellian past and presented the design, first noting the location along St. Alphonsus, pointing out the property, the Basilica campus across the street, Worthington Street, and the existing Wingate Tremont Street property with its '60s tower and low structured garage. He showed the planned elevation along St. Alphonsus, and the plan. HDS: The owner wanted the entry in the middle [courtyard], but they are changing tack, and moving to a stronger expression on St. Alphonsus. (Shows

views from St. Alphonsus. Compares to the existing plan.) We are looking at improving the connection, and traffic at the corner, even though the total amount of cars is reduced. This will be two stories concrete, five stories stick-built, brick and metal. The garage levels are not connected; again, this is a net reduction. We are looking at a different way of handling the offices and amenity space with the drop-off. The service area has to stay - it's working for the existing building, too.

LE: You're working with the BPDA. Is this scheme the existing [PNF] scheme? HDS: Yes. DH: If you were working on the garage, etc., and the drop-off were on St. Alphonsus, you could provide a green amenity space, a courtyard, of value to both buildings. There's a *lot* of paving. LE: You need a drop-off for the existing building, but can that move or be reduced? DH: It's an opportunity. RC: That point has been raised in the last 2-3 weeks; we are definitely looking at that. KS: There are too many curb cuts. There's a way to enhance this, that hasn't occurred in the history of the site. Maybe treat St. Alphonsus better, and ramp down from the turnaround. This building sits proud of the other two buildings.... HDS: We have accented the corner (notes the adjacency, and points out the condition across the street). DH: It would be helpful to have a model. That's a weird condition, but the corner may relate to other things.

AL: I would like to challenge the idea of an as-of-right project. A slim tower would provide more open space, rather than a building (and courtyard) completely in shade. DH: I agree with you, but I have worked in the neighborhood for a while and I *totally* understand the position they're in. RC: There was the issue of the Worthington proposal by our neighbors. We have *committed* to the community to do an as-of-right project. AL: Maybe there's a way to avoid all this going around. Look at other ways, within your limitations. KS: Look at South Huntington. They have tried to minimize curb cuts. These buildings are big, blocky - look at precedents. Look at St. Alphonsus, not a project solved in your lot lines - think about it in its bigger context. DM: There's just so many curb cuts. It doesn't address the street. Changing the front door is just the first step. Maybe working on the loading dock is a way of unlocking the program. There are so *many* constraints. DH: Studies of an as-of-right condition would help educate us as to why this was the logical outcome of that discussion. What the constraints were that led here. AL: The building should address St. Alphonsus. The rest follows from that. Alison Pultinas: There was one comment in a community meeting last night, from a Worthington Street resident, who wanted height. But not in any other [meetings]. With that, the 95 St. Alphonsus Project was sent to Design Committee.

There being no further items for formal discussion, a motion was made to adjourn, and the meeting was duly adjourned at 8:22 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for August 1st, 2017. The recording of the July 11th, 2017 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

Commissioners briefly discussed draft garage guidelines and suggested a follow-up to simplify the guidelines with a small working group in the future, date to be determined.