

MINUTES
BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, June 7, 2022, and was held virtually via Zoom to ensure the safety of the public, staff members, and the BPDA Board Members during the COVID-19 pandemic, and beginning at 5:00 p.m. Members in attendance were Deneen Crosby, Linda Eastley, Jonathan Evans, Eric Höweler, Mikyoung Kim, Kathy Kottaridis, William Rawn, David Hacin, and Kirk Sykes. Absent were Andrea Leers, Mimi Garza Love, David Manfredi, and Anne-Marie Lubenau. Elizabeth Stifel, Executive Director of the Commission, was present. Representatives of the BSA attended. Patricia Cafferky, Kenya Thompson, Caitlin Coppinger, Alexa Pinard, Matthew Martin, and Quinn Valcich 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 in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the May 3, 2022 Monthly Meeting Minutes, and the Design Committee Minutes from meetings on May 10, May 24, and May 31, 2022. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the May 3, May 10, May 24, and May 31, 2022 BCDC Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the Stanhope Hotel project. Review is recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Stanhope Hotel project in the Back Bay neighborhood.

The next Review Committee report was for the BHA Mary Ellen McCormack Redevelopment project. Review is recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Mary Ellen McCormack Redevelopment project in the South Boston neighborhood.

The Commission moved into Votes of Recommendation for projects from Design Committee. The first presentation was for **41 Berkeley**. Rob Clocker of Hacin + Associates presented the progress of the project through the Design Committee process, including changes to building height and relationship to the context.

William Rawn: Asks about vehicular access to Berkeley street.

Mikyoung Kim: I'm a big supporter of this project - I think it's come a long way.

Deneen: I think it's a nice project. Lighting will be important, as well as the lightness of the materials and evening uses. Buffering between uses will be good. The shuttles are only an occasional use, and should not be problematic. I support this project.

A motion was made, and it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the BCDC recommend approval for 41 Berkeley. David Hacin and Kirk Sykes were recused.

The next project was **400 Guest Street, Allston Yards**. Michael Giardina presented the project on behalf of the project team.

Linda Eastley: I commend the team for their work and creating a real street. I appreciate the added context of 119 Braintree. The cycle track area and breaking up that pavement area would benefit from a little bit more work. The treatment at Everett Street is also a huge improvement from the existing condition.

The motion was moved, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: That the Commission recommend approval of 400 Guest Street.

The Commission moved to project presentations, the first being for **Stanhope Hotel** in the Back Bay neighborhood. Elizabeth Stifel of the BPDA introduced the project. Harry Wheeler presented the project on behalf of the project team. Eric Howeler left the meeting.

Davin Hacin: I think we need to hear more about the City's plans and how this project interacts on the ground plane. Is there also an opportunity to have a ribbon of glass in the stair towers? This is a very difficult problem, and I think you have the bones of a good solution. But I would like to better understand the party-wall problems.

Elizabeth Stifel: We can also have someone from BTM come to speak to the aspects of the project related to the closing of Stanhope Street.

Kirk Sykes: Can you speak to vehicular uses, parking, and traffic for your project in design committee?

Linda Eastley: The reaction I have is that where you have the zipper between the existing and the new, at the third floor, it looks very planar. That seam is really important, and I'd like to talk about that more during subcommittee. There's a comfort on the front facade, but it's odd where it hits the party wall.

Bill Rawn: Can you investigate other ways to deal with the party walls? I'm concerned that a 30 story party wall becomes a really unpleasant addition to the neighborhood. It's the elephant in the room. The other thing I'd like to see is a better understanding of the bulk of this proposed building.

Jonathan Evans: Understanding more about the sculpting of the tower and how the tower meets the sky would be good during subcommittee.

DAvin Hacin: It's so helpful to see these projects in the context of other approved projects.

Kirk Sykes: How you address the party wall is going to be critical to this project.

Kathy Kottaridis: I would like to understand what guidance you've received from the Landmarks Commission, and how you're making restoration, or treatment choices, on the historic building.

Two members of the public spoke to give comments relating to concerns over adding fenestration to the party wall and a concern that the base of the building should not actually be considered historic or preserved.

The project will continue in design committee.

The next project presentation was for **Mary Ellen McCormack** in the South Boston neighborhood. BPDA urban designer Matthew Martin introduced the project. Drew Colbert (Winn Development) and Kishore Varanasi (CBT) presented on behalf of the project team.

David Hacin: I would suggest that given the scale of the development, we should break down the project. There should first be a conversation about the Site Plan, followed by the Landscape, and then the Architect should be last.

Mikyoung Kim: I'm in agreement, I think that's a good sequence, though swapping Landscape and Architecture, so landscape is revisited at the end would be helpful. 3 dimensions is also very important at this scale, so a 3d model we can be toured through.

Linda Eastley: I would like to understand the larger context - Moakley Park, Dorchester Bay City, etc. And then an understanding of Phase 1 v. Phase 2. I think zooming out would be very important to understand the connections, the road network, etc.

Kirk Sykes: They're large buildings, but they are adjacent to a large open space. I'd like to understand the ground plan more, and the streetscape.

Deneen Crosby: I agree that knowing more about the streetscape and making sure that both Phase 1 and Phase 2 are considered together will be very important.

Kathy Kottaridis: How do we explain continuity of housing built over generations? Can you tell us in committee more about some elements of the original housing that will remain as nods to the past.

Bill Rawn: I feel like there's an issue of 'is it neighborhood-like'? I think this needs to feel like a neighborhood, not a new development.

David Hacin: Seeing precedents of successful redevelopment projects of this kind would be incredibly helpful.

Kirk Sykes: I would like to understand the desire lines to Moakley Park, and how you cross that wide Boulevard.

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 [TIME] p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for July 12, 2022. The recording of the June 7, 2022 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.