

MINUTES FOR THE BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION JANUARY 02, 2024

This meeting was held virtually. A recording of this meeting is available upon request. Please reach out to bcdc@boston.gov for more information.

CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission (BCDC) was called to order by Chair Mimi Love at 5:00 PM on Tuesday, January 02, 2024.

ATTENDEES

The following members of the Boston Civic Design Commission were present: Chair Mimi Love, Co-Chair Linda Eastley, Commissioner Jonathan Evans, Commissioner David Hacin, Commissioner Anne-Marie Lubenau, Commissioner David Manfredi, Commissioner Catherine Morris, Commissioner William Rawn, Commissioner Laura Solano, Commissioner Kirk Sykes, Ex-officio member and BPDA Director of Design Diana Fernandez, and Ex-officio member and BPDA Director of Planning Aimee Chambers. Commissioner Shauna Gillies-Smith and Commissioner Mikyoung Kim were absent. The following BCDC staff were present: Executive Director of BCDC Kristina Ricco, Deputy Director of Urban Design Seth Riseman, and Urban Design Assistant Lizzie Turac. BPDA Staff, including Elizabeth Stifel, Alexa Pinard, and Meghan Richards, were present. A representative from the Boston Society of Architects was present.

APPROVAL OF MINUTES

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: TO ACCEPT THE MINUTES FOR THE DECEMBER 05, 2023 MEETING AND DECEMBER 19, 2023 SUBCOMMITTEE MEETING.

REPORT FROM EX-OFFICIO MEMBER AND DIRECTOR OF DESIGN DIANA FERNANDEZ

Ex-officio member and Deputy Chief of Design Diana Fernandez gave an informational presentation on the status of The Boston Design Vision.

REPORT FROM BPDA DESIGN REVIEW COMMITTEE

Executive Director Kristina Ricco gave a report from the BPDA Design Review Committee on the proposed project at 290 TREMONT STREET (PARCEL P-12 C), CHINATOWN, recommending the proposal for consideration by BCDC.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: TO REVIEW THE PROPOSED PROJECT AT 290 TREMONT STREET (PARCEL P-12 C), CHINATOWN.

Executive Director Kristina Ricco gave a report from the BPDA Design Review Committee on the proposed project at 180 WESTERN AVENUE, ALLSTON, recommending the proposal for consideration by BCDC.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: TO REVIEW THE PROPOSED PROJECT AT 180 WESTERN AVENUE, ALLSTON.

PRESENTATIONS FOR REVIEW AND PUBLIC TESTIMONY

475 DORCHESTER AVENUE, DORCHESTER (REFERRED FROM BCDC DESIGN SUBCOMMITTEE)

A presentation was given for the proposed project at 475 DORCHESTER AVENUE, DORCHESTER, associated with the 475-511 DORCHESTER AVENUE (ON THE DOT) MASTER PLAN by representatives of the proponent team, including Mark Rosenshein and Michael LeBlanc.

Commissioner Mimi Love and Commissioner Kirk Sykes were recused.

Discussion: Commissioners were generally supportive of the proposed project, and the discussion focused on elements of the proposed site plan, including the landscape and public realm along Dorchester Avenue.

There was no public testimony.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: TO RECOMMEND THAT THE BPDA BOARD APPROVE THE PROPOSED PROJECT AT 475 DORCHESTER AVENUE, DORCHESTER, UPON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE ARTICLE 80 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS WITH PROVISIO THAT BPDA DESIGN REVIEW STAFF FOCUS FURTHER DESIGN REVIEW ATTENTION ON LANDSCAPE AND PUBLIC REALM ELEMENTS.

135 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, DORCHESTER (REFERRED FROM BCDC DESIGN SUBCOMMITTEE)

A presentation was given for the proposed project at 135 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, DORCHESTER, by representatives of the proponent team, including Christine Song and Chris Jones. A brief summary of comments from the most recent BCDC Design Subcommittee meeting was given by BPDA Urban Designer Elizabeth Stifel.

Commissioner David Manfredi was recused.

Discussion: Commissioners were generally supportive of the proposed project, and the discussion focused on the proposed pedestrian bridge connecting the proposed building to an existing building on site and elements of the proposed site plan, including opportunities to “green” the proposed open space and the character of the proposed curbless street conditions.

Public testimony was given by Jake Wachman.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: TO RECOMMEND THAT THE BPDA BOARD APPROVE THE PROPOSED PROJECT AT 135 MORRISSEY BOULEVARD, DORCHESTER, UPON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE ARTICLE 80 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS WITH PROVISOS: THAT BPDA DESIGN REVIEW STAFF FOCUS FURTHER DESIGN REVIEW ATTENTION ON ASPECTS OF THE SITE PLAN, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO OPPORTUNITIES TO FURTHER “GREEN” OPEN SPACE ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROPOSED PROJECT SPECIFICALLY ADDRESSING THE CHARACTER OF THE PLAZA AND CURBLESS STREET

CONDITIONS, THE MATERIAL RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE PLAZA AND THE BUILDING, AND THE PROPOSED PEDESTRIAN BRIDGE ACKNOWLEDGING THE LIMITED CIRCUMSTANCES OF SUPPORT FOR PEDESTRIAN BRIDGES GENERALLY AND; THAT THE PROPOSED PROJECT RETURN TO A FUTURE CONVENING OF A BCDC MEETING FOR A PROJECT UPDATE.

103 NORTH BEACON STREET, BRIGHTON (REFERRED FROM BCDC DESIGN SUBCOMMITTEE)

A presentation was given for the proposed project at 103 NORTH BEACON STREET, BRIGHTON, by a representative of the proponent team, Phil Casey. BPDA comments to the proponent team were presented by BPDA Deputy Director of Urban Design Seth Riseman.

Commissioner Kirk Sykes was recused.

Discussion: Commissioners were generally supportive of the proposed project, and the discussion focused on the relationship between the proposed building massing and the configuration of the proposed public realm along North Beacon Street.

There was no public testimony.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: TO RECOMMEND THAT THE BPDA BOARD APPROVE THE PROPOSED PROJECT AT 103 NORTH BEACON STREET, BRIGHTON, UPON SUCCESSFUL COMPLETION OF THE ARTICLE 80 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS WITH PROVISOS: THAT BPDA DESIGN REVIEW STAFF FOCUS FURTHER DESIGN REVIEW ATTENTION ON ELEMENTS OF THE SITE PLAN, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO BUILDING SETBACK AND PUBLIC REALM CONFIGURATION ALONG NORTH BEACON STREET, HIERARCHY AND LOCATION OF BUILDING ENTRANCES ON ALL ELEVATIONS, AND ARCHITECTURAL EXPRESSION OF GROUND FLOOR RETAIL USES PARTICULARLY ALONG NORTH BEACON STREET AND; THAT THE PROPOSED PROJECT RETURN TO A FUTURE CONVENING OF BCDC FOR A PROJECT UPDATE.

290 TREMONT STREET (PARCEL P12-C), CHINATOWN (INTRODUCTION)

A presentation was given for the proposed project at 290 TREMONT STREET (PARCEL P12-C), CHINATOWN, by representatives of the proponent team, including David Valecillos, Aeron Hodges, Cesare Cascella, and Peter Munkenbeck. A summary of the planning context guiding BPDA review of the proposed project given by Ex-officio member and Director of Planning Aimee Chambers.

Commissioner Kirk Sykes was recused.

Discussion: Commissioners were generally supportive of the proposed building massing and architectural expression, however, expressed concern for elements of the proposed site plan, including landscape, public access to Washington Street, and relationship to the service alley associated with adjacent property currently operating as a hotel.

There was no public testimony.

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: TO REMAND THE PROPOSED PROJECT AT 290 TREMONT STREET (PARCEL P12-C), CHINATOWN, TO FURTHER REVIEW AT THE BCDC DESIGN SUBCOMMITTEE.

180 WESTERN AVENUE, ALLSTON (INTRODUCTION)

A presentation was given for the proposed project at 180 WESTERN AVENUE by representatives of the proponent team, including Emily Paparella and Doug Jones. A summary of the planning context guiding BPDA review of the proposed project given by Ex-officio member and Director of Planning Aimee Chambers. BPDA comments to the proponent team were presented by BPDA Deputy Director of Urban Design Seth Riseman.

Commissioner Manfredi and Commissioner Rawn were recused.

Discussion: Commissioners were generally supportive of the proposed building massing and architectural expression and requested more information about the proposed project and surrounding context along North Harvard Street and Bertram Street.

Public testimony was given by Paula Alexander and a participant identified as "SP"

On a motion duly made and seconded, it was

VOTED: TO REMAND THE PROPOSED PROJECT AT 180 WESTERN AVENUE, ALLSTON, TO FURTHER REVIEW AT THE BCDC DESIGN SUBCOMMITTEE.

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Executive Director Kristina Ricco noted that the annual BCDC Appreciation Event would be scheduled for a date to be determined in January and that a virtual public meeting of BCDC would be scheduled for January 23, 2024, to review the Mayor's Executive Order to Streamline the Approval of Affordable Housing.

ADJOURNMENT

At the conclusion of presentations for review and public testimony, on a motion made and seconded, it was unanimously VOTED: TO ADJOURN at 9:12 PM.