

DRAFT MINUTES

BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, August 5th, 2014, starting in the BRA Board Room, 9th Floor, Boston City Hall, and beginning at 5:21 p.m.

Members in attendance were: Michael Davis (Co-Vice-Chair); Deneen Crosby, Linda Eastley, David Hacin, Andrea Leers, David Manfredi, Paul McDonough (Co-Vice-Chair), Daniel St. Clair, and Kirk Sykes. Absent were: William Rawn and Lynn Wolff. Also present was David Carlson, Executive Director of the Commission. Representatives of the BSA were present.

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 Saturday, July 19, in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the July 8th, 2014 Meeting Minutes. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the July 8th, 2014 Boston Civic Design Commission Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. MD asked for a report from the Review Committee on the **610 Commonwealth Avenue Project**. David Carlson (DAC) reported that the Boston University 610 Commonwealth Project was one of the Projects studied in the most recent IMP recommendation, and as a result review is required based on a condition of that vote. The total SF was also over the threshold, at 145,000 SF, and the location was significant on Commonwealth Avenue. Review was recommended. A motion was made, seconded, and it was

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for 610 Commonwealth Avenue in the backdrop of the Institutional Master Plan for the Boston University Campus in the Allston-Brighton neighborhood.

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **MBTA Parcel U**. DAC noted that this was one of the Forest Hills parcels referenced in the recent review of The Commons project and followed guidelines developed for these parcels. At 190,000 SF, it was well over the BCDC threshold, and a vote to review was recommended. It was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Parcel U

(Forest Hills) Project on Hyde Park Avenue between Tollgate Cemetery and Ukraine Way in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood.

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Brighton Marine Veteran's Housing Project**. DAC reported that the proposed Brighton Marine Health Center Veterans' Mixed Income Housing Project, with a strong affordable component and mission, had the support of the community and approval for its demolition of some older structures from Landmarks. It was, at 114,000 SF, over the BCDC threshold and also on Commonwealth; review was recommended. It was duly moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Brighton Marine Health Center Veterans' Mixed Income Housing Project in the Allston/Brighton neighborhood.

The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the **Boston Landing PDA Change and C3 Office/Rink Project**. DAC reported that the Boston Landing PDA was changing to allow a residential site (which had been encouraged) and to allow flexibility in placement of the uses - prompted by the recent agreement with the Bruins. As a change in a Master Plan PDA approved by the BCDC, but also as a specific new Project within the PDA with over half a million SF in changes/new project, review was recommended. It was duly moved, seconded, then

VOTED: That the Commission review the modifications in the PDA Master Plan Amendment and the schematic design for the proposed Office/Rink Project on Parcel C3 within the Boston Landing PDA Master Plan area in the Allston/Brighton neighborhood.

The next item was a report from the Design Committee on the **99 Tremont Street NPC**. MD noted that issues had been studied, and relatively minor changes were suggested in the last Committee meeting for a return. Kirk Sykes (KS) agreed, noting he had at the last meeting as well. Doug Farrar (DF) of Cube3 Studio briefly presented the changes, which responded to Committee member suggestions on massing and color changes. MD asked whether the windows had changed, and DF showed that modification. KS: You've responded to the comments; we didn't want to design your building. It was then moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the 99 Tremont Street Residences Project NPC in the Oak Square area of the Brighton neighborhood.

KS left. The next item was a presentation of the **Boston University 610 Commonwealth Avenue (CILSE) Project**. Paul Rinaldi (PR) of Boston University introduced their team,

including Charlie Klee (CK) and Jim Collins (JC) of Payette. PR noted that, after discussions in approving the IMP, they saw an opportunity and amended the IMP; this was part of the studies reviewed, and they have jumped the gun a little. CK explained the CILSE program and size, running quickly through numbers, then showing the locus. CK: The Morse Auditorium is eligible to be landmarked, so we had to be sensitive. And the open space is a resource along Commonwealth Avenue. There is an existing parking lot, but BU is over-parked. The program had to accommodate a certain amount of researchers, so that meant about a 20,000 SF minimum floorplate. If we then just extruded a 100'x200' rectangle, that wouldn't be best for the site...we could erode or carve it. There is a larger scale along Commonwealth, but also a smaller scale of townhouses.... We think that this scheme is one of several that you discussed with BU last year; it helps a north-south [campus] link. The green is defined by another IMP building, the Communications building will be removed to reveal Cummington...that part is beyond the scope of the IMP. There is the idea of a lot of connectivity, so there are several entries and connections through. The landscape is not ordered, but blurred, with paving and landscaping moving in and out. We have a building that is transparent, but have a scale of entrance which mitigates, but also commands - a larger scale than is needed, an entry for Science, not just the building. The Morse green wall defines a green space which defines an entry. We want to keep the ivy; it's Boston Ivy on a precast wall. We see it as a vibrant part of the public realm.

Andrea Leers (AL) and David Manfredi (DM) arrived. CK showed the program, noting the levels of activity anticipated in the administration and colloquia spaces. CK: The Morse space becomes animated with these uses, but is also an accessible route to the Morse itself. The mechanicals are on floors 2 and 3, above a more active ground floor; this allows the research to be elevated. So the air intake is down, and there is the exhaust and minimal equipment on the top. We are mindful of the visible rooftop HVAC on the 3-5 Cummington building. (Shows ground floor plan, then a research floor plan. Shows elevations.) MD: Is there a program connection to the elevations? There is some curtainwall exposed, vs. the ribs. CK: The general idea is that the building is transparent head-on, but has a shifting aspect as you approach it. In the notch (shows), that's glass, with a view down [out from] a short corridor. MD: The corner treatment? CK: There is a convening space there. The transparency comes from the inside and outside. There are views out, and daylight, for the workers. The views of the building, glass and ribs, we want to be back more to being part of the core campus - limestone, metal, glass; simpler materials, and not the brick of the later buildings. (Shows more elevations.) We have aggregated uses that don't need light or windows at the back [Cummington side] of the building. (Notes 'diaphanous' glass at the entry, and a smaller version at the rear. Shows views.) The inset pieces you see here might be copper, relating to the [Morse] dome.

David Hacin (DH): Could I see the ground floor plan? It's a very nice presentation. How many people work here? CK: About 500. DH: So, where do those 500 eat, grab a bite, etc.? ...Before you go into a retail map of the area, this seems like a large building, comparable to those in the Seaport, where food is available nearby but also in the building. I'm a little concerned about the sidewalk along Commonwealth, with the building sheer above that. When I see all you're doing to activate the building, the spaces (administration, etc. along Commonwealth) seem too private, the sidewalk too tight. I'd like to know more about the open space, and BU food service. The re-orienting of the green space is very convincing, but I'm unsure how the building interacts.

Linda Eastley (LE): If you're heading east, you don't have a glimpse of the Morse...perhaps you could shift the building back, which would help the Commonwealth sidewalk. The colloquium space...when the screens come down, the room is cut off, so I'm not convinced. The Morse space will be very much a slot, shadowed. The more space you can create along Commonwealth, the better...and, design for shade. AL: The way the building is organized is intelligent, beautiful. I like the facade idea - transparency and ribs, changing. But I agree with the comments from David and Linda...I think Morse was always freestanding. The space is too tight, it needs breathing room. It would be more comfortable if the building were pulled back, and it could be taller. Better both for the breathing space and the celebration of the Morse - as well as Commonwealth Avenue pedestrians. DM: I agree with Andrea's thoughts. It's a handsome building; the sculptural moves could be beautiful. I need to be convinced; I agree that the ground floor should engage with pedestrians. I'm fascinated by the move to floors 2 and 3, because it frees up the top. You're turning the building upside-down; I'd like to know how that works. But not now.... My issues are all around the streetscape, Commonwealth Avenue. There is not quite enough space. MD: Is there a difference in the ribs on the elevations? Bring info on the IMP to Committee. Paul McDonough (PM): Would there need to be any [BRA] action for Andrea's suggestion? Jamie Fay of Fort Point Associates: Yes, an IMP amendment. DH: I agree with the height. AL: Linda's comment - we have lost the view of the Morse, maybe we can recapture that. JC: We're happy to have the conversation with you in Committee. With that, the 610 Commonwealth Avenue CILSE project was sent to Design Committee.

The next item was a presentation of **MBTA Parcel U**. Stephen Chung (SC) of Urbanica presented the design, first noting the locus and parcel size (about 100'x1000'), then showing context photos. SC: There is residential across the street, and trees at the edge of the site. The BRA studied these sites with the community in 2008. We have 120 units, with community uses and spaces. (Notes grading, spaces behind on the access driveway, parking below grade, and pocket parks.) We thought we would have larger retail spaces, but there are no tenants here, and our partner TCB noted difficulties finding retail tenants nearby. So we have a smaller retail space, and a community space. But this is very close to the plan worked out in 2008. Our first principle was to retain trees at the edges. Second, to respect the scale of the neighborhood, stepping up toward the Station. Third, to provide landscaping, and pocket parks. Fourth, an anchor at the end of the project with the programmed retail and community space noted before. The townhouses have a rear garage entry, with a deck on top, instead of opening parking. (Shows plans, then an aerial perspective.) We had it stepping from 3, to 4, to 5 stories; the BRA suggested mixing it up a little. (Shows typical townhouse [3-4 stories] plans, then a ground level perspective, with a view of the townhouse facades and buffer zone.) We can't have stoops, for accessibility reasons. We are using fiber cement materials as a rainscreen system, and working with textures. The third phase is a rental building, appearing somewhat like aggregated townhouses. It'll be masonry or terra cotta, a little heavier, but related to the buildings to the left [sic].

Deneen Crosby (DC) arrived. Shauna Gillies (SG) of Ground Inc.: As Stephen noted, there are significant street trees. And grade change, about 8-10' from front to back. We are keeping the existing sidewalk, but recessing the building back, with pocket parks at locations (indicates)

here, here, here.... These are kept relatively level, but the [smaller] spaces between the buildings step down. These are parks with character - starting with a thick edge at the cemetery for a buffer, woods, and berries where we can. Second is the meadow. Third is the clearing, with planting at the edges and a play area in the center. Then, an extended [buffer] treatment at the entry to the rental building. There is a pairing of a stair and ramp between the buildings; one such pair occurs in each of the first two phases. (Shows precedent images.) SC: We have a computer model (opens the model).

LE: One question...from the spaces in the back, what is the height of the retaining wall? SC shows the rear using the model. SG: We should think about that. The Disabilities Commission wanted a sidewalk as a convenience to connect at the rear, but we have limited real estate. DC: I recall that the Southwest Corridor bike path extends to Ukraine Way...how can you connect via pathway to Ukraine Way? MD: Ukraine Way is just a bridge over the tracks; I'm not sure one *can* connect. SG noted what the scale of such a ramp would be. DC: It may not be possible. LE: I like how you've used sustainable goals, and parks with paths around the trees. DM: It's a terrific project - I see it's LEED silver - with very nice spaces. MD: This is a great project. There are residents nearby - this could be more dense, I hope it works [as shown]. The residences across the street are big, and go up a slope. DH: I would think we could approve this, and allow the BRA team to continue with details. It's a really solid neighborhood project. I move we approve. DC: Just address some issues about the back. MD: And if you came back in a month with 160 units, we'd like that. The motion was seconded, and it was

VOTED: That the Commission recommends approval of the schematic design for the proposed Parcel U (Forest Hills) Project on Hyde Park Avenue between Tollgate Cemetery and Ukraine Way in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood.

The next item was a presentation of the **Brighton Marine Health Center Veterans' Mixed Income Housing Project**. Chris Fleming (CF) of Winn Development introduced Michael Dwyer, president of Brighton Marine Health Center, Ed Bradford (EB) of The Architectural Team, and Andrew Lennard, their landscape architect. He noted the campus location, on Warren Street next to St. Elizabeth's and the High School. CF: Virtually the entire campus is leased to Stewart Health Care to provide medical services to veterans. There was a desire to use the rest of the site to provide more veteran services. The housing there hadn't been used for decades, so a new 100-unit building was conceived for veterans and their families.

EB presented the design, first noting the locus: There's an apartment building [The Regency] to the right, and a new 55-unit project under construction on the left. Four of the five buildings on our site are to be demolished (shows a photo). Building 3, on the left, will be retained. And Building 6, on the right, demolished; the brick wall and fence are to be retained, and an existing tree with that. (Shows another site photo, then area context photos, pointing out bays and cornices, and how they engage the sky. Shows a site plan, and Building 3, then the garage entry, and the courtyard space above with a southern orientation.) The existing curb cut is being

retained for site access. The interior leg of the building is lined with amenities fronting the courtyard, with a fitness center in the southeast corner. There is a single unit in Building 3. Half the parking is in the garage, half on the surface; we have pushed that back, so it doesn't impact the public realm from Commonwealth. (Shows an aerial view with their project and a massing of the adjacent project inserted, then a closer view of their building.) The architecture of the new building is inspired by the context, and by the campus itself, which is brick. The bays are oriented with views toward the street and the downtown Boston skyline. The angular bay can create a termination which is more contemporary and interesting, especially at the corners. (Shows closer views, looking into the courtyard, and then a view from the intersection.) The building is very visible, since the Regency is set so far back. So this edge of the building is articulated (notes cornice). (Shows floor plans, points out program elements, shows section.)

Andrew: Right now, the entry is between two brick piers. We will widen that. It's now an ess curve; we will straighten it. There is a paved drop-off area which is flat and accessible for events. And a clear separation at the rear between this parcel and the main Brighton Marine campus - including a buffer for the asphalt area. There is very little grade at the rear, it is fully accessible. We are saving the one large oak along the road, but there are more oaks to the north; if it is possible to retain them, they will help screen the new building. There is more visual interest on the top of the brick wall. In the courtyard, the arced path connects and helps to create spaces of varying character. We are thinking of echoing the brick piers as an expression of entry to the rear parking. MD: Questions or comments?

LE: I have a question about the intended demographics...you mentioned frisbees. CF: 80% mixed income and 20% market - we expect small families. There are interior play areas for small families, because there's not much space in the units. The courtyard outside is meant to be flexible, but also a safe area. LE: I wish the open space could be more bold - if the drop-off could be moved to the west, it would give more green flexibility. Andrew: We *did* have it that way, but the 1:1 ratio forced more spaces there. AL: From the street, the entry is uncertain. Another idea might be to give yourself a portico, visible from the street, signaling entry and drop-off. But the whole landscape would be more attractive. CF: The perception from the carriage road, is kind of the anti-Regency, which has parking in the front. We tucked it in the back. We have been trying to thread the [parking] needle with the neighborhood. DH: Despite the T stop there. CF: That argument doesn't work.

DH: I agree with Andrea and Linda. The house has to be in a green field, to give depth to your idea - and, it's better for your residents. If you could solve the parking - stackers, other devices? I like what you are doing with the cornices. I hope there's the budget to screen the mechanicals on top with an [integral] treatment. DC: The oak trees on the carriage road lined the street; they have been plucked one by one. If there were a way to keep more...? Daniel St. Clair (DS): I had the same concern. Do you need both cuts? MD: Did you look at shifting the massing back, so that the retained building doesn't get dwarfed? CF: On that, we run into problems with the high-rise code and 6-story construction. DH: I wonder if you could get to the parking garage via the Regency, and improve *that*. (Some discussion about options ensues.) CF: That would be a win-win-win. We haven't talked to them. DH: Are they a rental? It's an opportunity for them to re-brand, it may benefit them. Andrew commented on the notion of a portico vs. piers,

which might be effective. AL: Just enough to catch a glimpse. DH: Some of the comments require a parking resolution; it's not worth meeting (in Committee) without that. MD: We will send this to Committee, but we don't want to waste anyone's time - we will approve the project if it's impossible. With that, the Brighton Marine Veterans' Housing Project was sent to Design Committee.

DM was recused for the next item. The next item was a presentation of the **Boston Landing PDA Change and Parcel C3 Office/Rink Project**. Keith Craig (KC) of the New Balance Development Group introduced himself and Jay Rourke (also NBDG), and their team, including Dave Bannon from HYM and Mark Sardegna (MS) of Elkus/Manfredi. KC: The impetus of this Project was to create a sports headquarters for New Balance. This is the fourth project we've done in the area; we last saw you in 2012. The headquarters building was started a year ago (reprises program, open space). We are undertaking the full reconstruction of Life and Guest streets, the garage stair and elevator (and scrim) improvements, etc.... We have a commitment to do a new commuter rail station, a connection for North Allston. We have a deal with the Bruins to build a practice facility; we are taking it out of the sports complex and adding it to the office component. We purchased the Makepeace property, and there we propose residential, making this overall a true mixed-use project.

MS presented the design. He showed the property acquired and noted the rink location shift, using first the old plan and then the new one. He noted the extent of the current construction projects, including Guest Street and the headquarters building. MS: The train station is scheduled for Autumn of 2016; the headquarters building will open in Autumn of 2015; the C3 Office/Rink building will have skating by September of 2016. The new property allows more of the planned Hichborn connection. We are not showing any detail on the residential building tonight - we hope to pursue that next Fall. But we have a proposed massing, primarily perpendicular to the Pike, allowing porosity. (Shows initial planning for these changes.) We premise continuing the uses, with a retail lobby and amenity spaces. A spur off of Hichborn allows parking access and loading. With the proposed rink, it's all about leasing it as much of the day as possible. The office building will be about 120,000 Sf, its base animated by retail. The hotel nearby - we are going through its programming. The Sports Complex is being reprogrammed. That's the PDA status...

MS continued on to the Parcel C3 design, showing first a section diagram with uses color-coded.

He showed plans - the ground floor, including loading and parking; the separation of phases.

MS: We are re-doing the plaza at the corner. The parking is also below grade. (Notes the rink level, with 600 seats at the edge rising to the concourse level.) The Bruins have a very specific circulation with NO interface with anyone else. If one is coming for another [hockey] program, there are separate locker rooms and facilities. AL: How does the public arrive? MS: One floor up. They arrive at the concourse, and go down to the seats. There is a lobby for this use at the corner, in the street. (Shows the arrival point, and a view through the glazing. Goes through more plans, then wireframe views - from the NW, near the Pike; from the SE, in the air. Notes program interfaces. Shows colored views from similar angles, slightly different viewpoints.) Vertical circulation allows access not only to the garage, and ICE, but also the plaza level. The

building is a simple mass, with a simple curtainwall. We are splitting it in half, with terra cotta on Guest. We are still exploring glass types, but propose a simple glass above the rink, which *is* the show. Steve Woods (SW) of CRJA: We needed to revisit the plaza when C3 came on line. Before, it was thought of as merely a connection across to space at the headquarters. It could only be completed with this phase. There's a grade change, so an elevated terrace for a restaurant use, a generous accessible path along the side, and then a lawn space below, with lawn cribs. An accessible green space. (Shows precedent photos.) The plaza area is about 35'x50', the green area similar.

DH asked about the space between the buildings, and the BRA sense of the change. MS: It's new.... DAC: It hasn't formally been presented to the BRA, the BCDC is seeing it first. AL: We discussed at length the long HQ building, and then a series of office towers. And the separation between them, and the degree of the sense of air and space, green above. This is not the PDA we approved. We approved a plan with much more open space between. DS: I wonder if you can shift the program - take mass from the office, add together. AL: Or if the rink shifted its alignment.... DS: Or place/shift the office or rink elsewhere. DH: For me, what's changed is the green. I like the rink expression on the highway. But if the buildings could be two - it would relieve the sense of being very tight. The sense of that [past plan] is gone. DC: Light coming down...a sense of openness on the street. MD: The 2-story podium felt more equitable. This is a major change. DC: The other thing to address is Guest Street; it seems to be getting smaller. MS: The sidewalks are now a minimum of 16' - they haven't changed. AL: The arena access is very painful. It's a tiny lobby, a non-urban way of approaching the problem. MD: Are games played here? Or is it just a practice facility? MS: Collegiate games. Remember we are creating a car approach along the Hichborn alignment, so we need to create an inviting entry point. DH: In this particular plan, the C2 building seems to cramp C3. I wonder if the C2 mass could be distributed on the site, to C1 and C3. Maybe the facilities could connect more to each other. Create more of a sense of space. What you are building now is *exciting*. This is too, but the buildings are very close to each other. It feels *crowded*. With that, the Boston Landing Parcel C3 Office/Rink Project 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 8:04 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for September 2, 2014. The recording of the August 5, 2014 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.