

MINUTES
BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, February 7, 2023, 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 Linda Eastley, Jonathan Evans, David Hacin, Mimi Love, Andrea Leers, Anne-Marie Lubenau, David Manfredi, Bill Rawn, and Kirk Sykes. Absent were Deneen Crosby, Kathy Kottaridis, Mikyoung Kim, and Eric Howeler. Elizabeth Stifel, Executive Director of the Commission, was present. Representatives of the BSA attended. Adam Johnson was 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 January 3, Monthly Meeting Minutes, and the Design Committee Minutes from meetings on January 10, 17, 24, and 31. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the January 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31 BCDC Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the 155 North Beacon Street project. Review is recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed 155 North Beacon Street project in the Brighton neighborhood.

The next Review Committee report was for the Fan Pier Parcel H project. Review is recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed Fan Pier Parcel H project in the South Boston Waterfront neighborhood.

The Commission moved into Votes of Recommendation for projects from Design Committee. The first presentation was for **3390 Washington Street** in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood.

The project was present by Chris Tracy, David O'Sullivan, and Donny Garrity.

Mimi Love: The project team has definitely listened, but I think there is still more they can do, working with BPDA staff. The existing building is beautiful and simple, and they could take cues from that.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: I agree, I appreciate the evolution of the project but there are details that can still be worked out with staff.

Kirk Sykes: You've been responsive. I agree with Mimi and Anne-Marie.

Andrea Leers: I think the idea of unifying the new retail entry with the arcade using a similar canopy is a good idea. Use a common language for the columns. I do think the adjustments have been responsive and this is a good project.

One member of the Impact Advisory Group spoke in support of the project.

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

VOTED: That the BCDC recommend approval for 3390 Washington Street.

The next project was Olmsted Village. Jonathan Evans was recused.

Nick Schmidt, Senior Transportation Planner with the BPDA, presented an overview of the Agency's vision for the project's network design and the project's relation to PLAN: Mattapan.

Ian Kenney and Dave Andrews presented the project.

Linda Eastley: Continue to work with the BPDA on wind mitigation. I appreciate you thinking about that overhang, continue to think about how that space can be comfortable. Overall I appreciate your sense of sensitivity toward the site.

David Hacin: Great project.

David Manfredi: It's a really nice project, you've worked hard. I think what you're creating here is something that will work because of the accessibility of the paths.

Andrea Leers: I appreciate how you've worked to bring Brook House and Tree House closer to each other. Continue to work on that on the south side so there isn't quite the same jump in scale.

The motion was moved, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: That the Commission recommend approval of Omlstead Village.

The Commission moved to project presentations, the first being for 155 North Beacon Street in the Brighton neighborhood.

Matt Formicola presented the project.

David Manfredi: I'm seeing a lot of wall in the view along North Beacon Street. I'd like to see more activation on these buildings. The open space is very nice, but there needs to be more to activate the sidewalk. My favorite drawing is the "Proposed Project Massing" axon. When it gets translated to the color drawings, it gets more complicated. The black and white axon is simpler, it has a proportion of opening that corresponds to the massing, and there's diversity in the courtyard. When we went through the perspectives they started to overwhelm me.

David Hacin: I so agree with what David M. said. The organization of the site is well illustrated in the axon. The clarity of the stepped massings is confused by the façade treatments. One or two treatments might express the massing more clearly, making more evident the scheme. Think also about the context of the neighborhood.

Mimi Love: Is it lab space on the ground floor?

Matt Formicola: There is some amenity space.

Mimi Love: Where you have the lobby makes sense, but I don't know if it's legible to the street. Can it be somewhere more recognizable? I also have no sense of how you get into building one. What are the access patterns of the project?

Jonathan Evans: How does this plug into the neighborhood? I question the interiority of the lobby and interior courtyard. Seeing the plans with expanded context would be helpful.

Linda Eastley: I'd like to understand how these buildings come together. What is the experience of walking through these buildings together? Also, give us a better sense of context south of North Beacon Street. The third comment I have is about the penthouse, and the last comment I have is about the west side of the building.

Bill Rawn: The penthouse is an urban design issue. The ground floor facing the sidewalk is an urban design issue. At committee, we should address several of these issues.

Andrea Leers: Very good basic massing and open space strategy, but be more selective about the articulation of your facades.

The project will continue in design committee.

The next project presentation was for Fan Pier Parcel H in the South Boston Waterfront neighborhood.

Richard Martini, David Nagahiro, and Richard Burck presented the project.

David Hacin: This is an opportunity to soften and scale down that edge. I wonder if you explored schemes that more exuberantly expressed the water-side in relation to the others? I do like the

idea of a more open frame at the top. About the energy code: it's very glassy, I wonder how you're meeting code. Is there an opportunity for sunshading on the south façade to give the façade more expression? This is such an important building.

Mimi Love: I completely understand the opportunity of the water's edge that David H. is talking about. I do question the stacking of the balconies. I too like the frame but I wonder what it looks like if it follows the proportions of the floors. The ground level is smartly resolved but I do wonder about the drop-off.

Andrea Leers: Sometimes planning gets it right. I really like the approach to the envelope of the building. You've got three sides that have lots to look at, so maybe think of it as a three-sided building. On the ground plane, it feels as though your new native plant bed prevents a continuous path of travel. Think more about that. This is a beautiful start.

Linda Eastley: I love the crown, there's an aerodynamic lightness to it. There is a desire line across the site—does the native garden become part of that desire line, not something separate? I appreciate that the building is set back from the water, it gives you opportunities. I'd love to see some options that talk about the movement across the site, in relation to the park and the road. Maybe create a hierarchy.

David Hacin: Can you bring an elevation to subcommittee, rather than an aerial?

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 7:26 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for February 28, 2023. The recording of the March 6, 2023 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.