

Foundry Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

October 8, 2021

8:00 - 9:30 am

In attendance from:

City of Cambridge construction team: Brendan Roy

CambridgeSeven Architects: Stefanie Greenfield, Justin Crane

CRA staff: Erica Schwarz, Kathryn Madden, Tom Evans

FAC Members: Mark Tang, Richard Thal, Jamie Sabino, Marie Saccoccio, Jason Slavick. Absent: Carole Sousa. One FAC seat is currently vacant and will be filled as the current selection process concludes.

Jukebox Update

The meeting started with an update from artist Elisa Hamilton regarding the Jukebox art project, which is part of the City of Cambridge's Percent for Art ordinance.

Elisa noted that the the vintage jukebox restoration is well underway, and stories from Cambridge residents are now being recorded with Loop Lab. The computer engineer is building the computer that will hold the digital stories. The mechanical engineer is creating an animation that will show as the stories play.

Elisa met with Cambridge Seven Architects to finalize some project details. She noted that this kind of collaboration allows for parties to learn from each other to create the best space at the Foundry.

The first three stories will be previewed at a special event on November 9th. Elisa had hoped to hold this in person but the City advised to hold it virtually due to COVID concerns. A link to the event was put in the chat.

Jason Slavick asked if FAC meetings may be in person soon or ever. Erica Schwarz noted that this is not yet known. CRA staff will be working in person at the CRA office starting in November, but there are other safety and access issues to consider for an in person public meeting. CRA staff will continue to monitor the situation and make determinations over time.

Construction Update

Brendan Roy of the City of Cambridge shared photos of the project's progress. He noted that the mechanical systems have been put in place, the new skylights are installed and most offices on the upper floors have drywall and door frames.

The Rogers Street raised intersection is nearly completed and creates a connection with Toomey Park. All windows have been installed. Metal panels are now being installed on the new addition and rooftop HVAC units, which will not be visible from the ground.

The project is on schedule to conclude by May 31, 2022. The only item which may not be done by then is the completion of Rogers Street itself. The City is still in conversation with Equity, who owns the adjacent building, about plans to finish Rogers Street. There will be a public grand opening in September 2022.

Marie Saccoccio asked what the scaffolding on the adjacent Verizon building is for and why there was so much soil dug up along the side of the Foundry. Verizon is doing major brick masonry repair to their building. Contaminated soil was removed on the east side of the building and is being replaced with clean soil.

Jason Slavick noted that the building is looking great. He asked if there was a design change from more glass to more drywall. While very early design conversations considered the possibility of more glass and visibility into the spaces on the first floor, both cost and the practical needs of the spaces precluded using glass. Stefanie Greenfield of Cambridge Seven added that there is glass along the hallway perimeter of the upper floors and glass inserts next to office doors.

There was a question about parking, particularly for larger events. There is no parking on site. There are handicapped accessible spots on the street near the entrances. The Foundry Consortium may choose to seek an arrangement with Verizon regarding using their lot on nights and weekends.

There was a question about if windows open. Justin Crane of Cambridge Seven noted that the windows do not open. This was intentional for energy efficiency and maximum air quality. The Foundry has very high quality air filters, and very strong circulation and ventilation, including a system that won't share air from one space with another. A system like this often provides better air quality than one that uses open windows for circulation.

Richard Thal asked about the City's MBW/WBE (Minority and Women Owned Business Enterprise) utilization on the project. Brendan noted that they typically assess that only at the end of a project but he can collect that data now from the contractor, WT Rich [that data is attached to these minutes].

There was a question about the offices in the Art Studio space. Those are reserved for Artists in Residence. Those offices open to a large Art Studio area, where there will be space for multiple other artists to work. The Art Studio area has a door that opens out onto the exterior yard.

Foundry Operations

Diana Navarrete-Rackauckas, the Foundry Consortium Executive Director, shared an update about her work with the Foundry Consortium's Board of Directors to prepare for the Foundry to open to the public in summer 2022.

The Foundry Consortium is developing a maker space plan that will have a mix of staffing and trained volunteers to ensure public safety and access of maker spaces. The maker space plan will include a membership structure that will allow for maker spaces to be reserved by organizations as well as used the general public.

They are looking at creating several Artists in Residence who will start as an interdisciplinary group and help build the culture of the Foundry.

Diana has been meeting with various groups to understand who might be interested in using the Foundry. As she thinks about how to ensure a welcoming and inclusive culture, she has also talked with the City's STEAM Initiative which is developing a "Spaces of Belonging" training for nonprofit volunteers.

Future Governance/ Role of FAC

Erica presented a document on the screen (attached, with notes taken during the October 8th meeting).

Regarding the question of a Chair for the FAC, Jamie Sabino felt that it was not useful to have a Chair. Each person on the committee represents one (or more) concerns or skills that are relevant to the Foundry. A Chair may unintentionally bring bias to how the group is led.

Generally, regarding governance, the FAC should stay aware of changing needs as they are relevant to the Foundry. While the Foundry Consortium has to stay connected to reality and maintain its fiduciary responsibility, the FAC can also be more aspirational and think big – and bring those ideas to the Foundry Consortium.

Mark Tang and Marie Saccoccio expressed agreement that the FAC does not need a Chair.

A member of the public noted the importance of the FAC to help advance a welcoming environment and help build a network that is connected to the Foundry. Jamie agreed and noted that the Foundry should also value questions.

There was a comment from the public that there are benefits to having a Chair. That person can serve as a spokesperson and can conduct the new member orientation, set up meetings and represent the group in City Hall.

Diana Navarrete-Rackauckas noted that she was excited to take the executive director position in part because of the FAC and the structure in place to ensure accountability to the public, and ensure that the building lives up to the promises made and the investments from community members. She seconded the comment (in attached document) regarding seminars for FAC members – so that everyone has the same education to ensure accountability.

The meeting was adjourned at 9:30 am.

FOUNDRY PROJECT		
M/WBE Status Report		
10.18.21		
Goal: 10.4% Combined WBE/MBE		
CONTRACTOR	M/WBE	VALUE TOWARDS GOAL
Brennan Consulting	WBE	\$129,915.00
Annese Electrical	WBE	\$2,886,000.00
Melo's Rodbuster, Inc. (Subcontractor to JL Marshall)	WBE	\$129,252.00
Greenwood Industries	WBE	\$841,000.00
Aaxiom Concrete Sawing (Subcontractor to Select Demo Services)	WBE	\$135,000.00
Aaxiom Concrete Sawing (Subcontractor to W.T. Rich Co.)	WBE	\$107,942.00
Thompson Company Inc.	WBE	\$564,726.00
	TOTAL	\$4,793,835.00
	GMP	\$37,500,000.00
	M/WBE %	13%

**Foundry Advisory Committee
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Notes from Governance Discussion**

Governance

Should the FAC have a Chair?

General agreement by FAC members that the FAC does not need a chair or should not have a chair, and should continue to be staffed by the CRA

What should be included in the FAC orientation?

- Context – how we got to this point with project
- Prior meeting minutes, history of building, who is responsible for it
- How we got to where we are on the uses in the building – ended up with balance
- Seminars for all FAC members around real estate, nonprofits; to understand larger field/context and help FAC dream big, be innovative in its ideas (ex – what’s happening in other cities/countries);
- Get to know each new person, what they represent and why, experiences they bring
- Give space for questions; value questions; educate via questions

Anything else we should consider to ensure a welcoming environment?

- Consider what terms used (ex – STEAM – doesn’t connect to seniors)
- What communities are being served (or not); why; don’t shy away because it may be harder to serve one group – that may be more important
- Create culture that leads with questions – for FAC orientation and beyond

Role of FAC During Operations

FAC to receive annual report from Foundry Consortium with:

Data on:

Number and types of users
Number and types of programs
Vacancy rate
Income and expenses

And plans for the next year:

What will stay the same
What changes are in the works