



Regular Board Meeting
Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday June 17, 5:30pm
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually via Zoom

APPROVED Meeting Minutes

At 5:34 p.m., Alex Levering read the opening statements:

In response to the current COVID-19 State of Emergency on March 12th, Governor Baker issued an Order suspending certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law. The Order allows government bodies subject to the law to meet using remote participation, without the presence of members of the general public, the chair, or a quorum of the public body in a physical location. In accordance with the Order, the CRA is holding this Board meeting virtually via Zoom Webinar, with the ability for the public to access and participate either through a computer, a smart phone, or by calling in via a landline. While we realize that the Zoom Webinar is more structured and formal than Zoom Meetings, there are various reasons why we have chosen this approach and your flexibility is appreciated.

In this format, all attendees, except panelists, will be have their videos suspended and be muted unless specifically unmuted by the host. There will be two opportunities for public comment - at the start of this meeting and also at the end of this meeting. To provide public comment, please press the "raise hand" icon at the bottom of your screen and you will be called upon to speak. Once you are called upon, you need to unmute yourself. After speaking you will then be re-muted by the host. Alternatively, you can use the QA function to type your question or comment. Comments will be read by the host during the public comment sessions. If you are calling in via the phone and have no access to computer or smart phone, you can call the CRA's main line at 617-492-6800, press extension 11, which is Ellen Shore's extension and she will relay your message to the host. Comments can also be emailed to planning@CambridgeRedevelopment.org. These will be relayed to host during the meeting.

The Board meeting materials can be found on the CRA's next meeting webpage. This meeting is being recorded by the CRA. If others are recording this meeting, please indicate this by raising your hand or via the QA function section.

Call

Chair Kathleen Born officially called the virtual meeting. A roll call of Board members, and a confirmation that the meeting was audible, was taken. Vice Chair Conrad Crawford had sent a note saying that he would be attending at 6pm.

Treasurer Chris Bator – present
Assistant Treasurer Barry Zevin - present
Assistant Secretary Margaret Drury – present

Ms. Born also identified CRA staff attendees with a roll call. Executive Director Tom Evans and staff members Alex Levering, Carlos Peralta, Ellen Shore, Erica Schwarz, and Hema Kailasam were present.

Because this is a remote meeting, all votes will be taken by roll call and responses will be repeated for the record by Tom Evans.

Public Comment

Heather Hoffman said that she is again voicing her issue with the MXD zoning proposal. The East Cambridge community is being asked to bear the entire burden of a problem created, not just in the MXD district, by development in the Kendall Square area. It is unfair to grant a huge amount of new development to fix a problem the community didn't create. Someone needs to ask what is necessary, in light of what has been learned in the past three "pandemic" months regarding the use of office space. She urged the CRA to consider their responsibility to the community.

Steve Kaiser had requested to comment but he had technical difficulties. Several attempts were made to connect with him. The alternatives for getting comments to the CRA Board and staff were restated. Ms. Born said that staff would continue to reach out to Mr. Kaiser.

There were no other requests to offer public comment.

Minutes

- 1. Motion: To accept the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board on May 4, 2020**
- 2. Motion: To accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on May 20, 2020**

Ms. Born said that she had a few changes to the minutes of the May 20th meeting.

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the Special Meeting of the Board on May 4, 2020 and the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on May 20, 2020. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – absent

Ms. Drury – yes

Mr. Bator – yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Communications

- 3. June 1, 2020 Letter from Whitehead Regarding Ames Place Open Space Concept Design**

Ms. Born moved a discussion of this to the related agenda item #8 which is the review of the Design Review meeting minutes.

- 4. Additional communications received since the publication of the June meeting notice.**

Ms. Shore mentioned the Thursday, June 25th, 5:00 PM, virtual open house meeting via Zoom to discuss the proposed MXD substation development plan.

There was a discussion about seeing the attendee list in webinar mode.

Reports, Motions, and Discussion Items

- 5. Update: Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House Revitalization Strategy**

Motion: Approving the amendment and extension of the MOU with the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House

Ms. Schwarz said that the project has reached a milestone. She introduced Sam Seidel, who is on the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House (MFNH) Board. Mr. Seidel said that his board approved the amendment via email last week. He thanked Mr. Evans and Ms. Schwarz for their hard work and commitment. He spoke highly of the new Executive Director, Kimberly Massenburg. He noted that some members are wary of building on the parking lot but they are keeping an open mind. Ms. Schwarz added that Ms. Massenburg was disappointed that she couldn't attend tonight's meeting due to a previous commitment.

Ms. Schwarz explained that the amendment is a result of many meetings, with architects Studio G and CRA real estate consultants Traggorth Companies and Stone Soup Collaborative, to evaluate a range of options as well as meetings with the MFNH Board and its staff to further understand their needs. Currently, there is inadequate space for MFNH organizational and program needs. Many housing models were considered, including ones with more affordable housing than what inclusionary zoning would provide, so that sufficient revenue would be generated to support the redevelopment of MFNH's space. The size of an addition and the amount of renovation on the historic house were evaluated against their costs. A site plan was also analyzed to determine the location of the housing, parking, and the addition.

Ms. Schwarz said the amendment is an agreement to study the scope as specified in Exhibit A, which is on the fourth page of the document in the Board packet. A condo project would bring in more revenue. Having a land lease or some control over ownership is still being considered. The MFNH might be a member of the condominium. There is a goal of having at least 30% of the units be affordable housing, having units with more bedrooms to support families with children, and parking spaces for the condos and two spaces for MFNH. Regarding the historic house, renovations would bring it up to code and provide first floor accessibility for their programs which would connect to the addition. The building's systems would be evaluated. No major work has been done on the building since the 80s. The MFNH space would increase to 11,000 square feet to house their current programs and offices and to provide flexibility for future uses.

The structure of the agreement appears on the first few pages of the document. In addition to continuing to study the scope in Exhibit A, there will be a community input plan. Work has already been done to draft the plan, and implementation will start in June. This will build on last year's outreach for feedback from abutters, Port residents, MFNH program participants, and other residents in Cambridge. There is a goal of signing a predevelopment agreement by the end of September, or early October, which would lock in a more specific scope for final project design, permitting, financing, cost estimates, and selecting a general contractor. The CRA is the project lead and is covering predevelopment costs until the new agreement is signed. Once the new agreement is signed, further investments and the associated budgeting or financing would be determined. The new agreement will outline the obligations of each party. If new information is uncovered such that this current scope cannot move forward, both parties can mutually agree to scale back or change the scope. Once the new agreement is signed, construction could start within 12-18 months and would then require another agreement for the duration of the project, ending when the condos are sold.

Mr. Zevin said that keeping the program elements in the old house seemed problematic. Ms. Schwarz said that there was a thorough consideration of alternatives. The house is historically intertwined with the organization and many people feel that it shouldn't be separated. Mr. Seidel added that MFNH is very aware of the physical constraints of the house. MFNH wants to invest in the house and activate the space while getting the kids' programs out of the basement. Mr. Evans said that he is holding off on sharing the design options being explored until a community outreach strategy is defined and implemented. Mr. Seidel also thanked Michael Tilford who is on the MFNH Board.

A motion to approve the amendment and extension of the MOU with the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House was moved. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Mr. Bator – yes

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – absent

Ms. Drury – yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

6. Presentation: Draft MXD Zoning Petition language required to facilitate the Alternative Electrical Substation Site

Ms. Levering said that the an MXD zoning amendment is needed to facilitate the MXD substation development plan. In addition, an amendment to the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan is also needed. Both documents were last approved in 2015 and were modified to have compatible language. The changes being discussed today will also be reflected in the KSURP amendment. Both plans will need to be approved by the Cambridge City Council.

Ms. Levering discussed the contents of the document found in the Board packet which listed proposed changes to parts of the zoning language of Article 14. Utilities that serve a region rather than just the MXD district would be allowed. The aggregate GFA would increase to add another 800,000 sq. ft. of commercial GFA. This additional 800,000 sq. ft. of commercial GFA is defined as “substation GFA” and is available for use only if an Eversource substation is located in the MXD district. The timing of the 400,000 sq. ft. of residential development is tied to the design and construction of any substation GFA. The substation is to be included in the Infill Development Concept Plan (IDCP), which needs to be approved by the CRA Board and the Planning Board. However, while the substation is to be included in the IDCP, it would be not be regulated via a special permit review. There is also a clarification of the definition of minor amendments and major amendments for the IDCP. The innovation space provisions would be lifted for substation GFA, essentially removing the ability for this new GFA to enable an additional density bonus. The existing innovation space would be locked in the MXD parcel; currently, it resides in the CIC and Link Kendall. Additional paragraphs are proposed to exempt the square footage of the substation from aggregate GFA. Also exempt would be up to 20,000 sq. ft. of educational or workforce training facilities, if services are provided to the general public and not to private users. The lot-by-lot land-use FAR would be removed for infill GFA specifically but the district’s overall development limitations would be maintained. The building height limitation would increase to 400 feet for a residential building and the 200-foot limit in the area that borders Binney Street would be removed. Buildings with facades less than 100 feet long would now require 40% of the façade to be allocated for active ground floor use. The commitment to allocate 20% of residential GFA to condos would be removed. However, the affordability requirements remain intact so the 400,000 sq. ft. residential development would still contain 20% inclusionary and 5% middle income units, all of which could be rentals. The minimum parking requirement for residential development would shrink from 0.4 to 0.25 spaces. Parking allocated for MXD users can be up to 2,000 feet outside of the district Bike parking ratios would remain the same but modifications to dimensional standards for larger projects would be allowed.

Ms. Levering noted that Mike Tilford, Melissa Schrock, and Ian Hatch from Boston Properties were present to answer questions. She also recognized that Vice Chair Conrad Crawford had joined the meeting. In response to Ms. Drury, Ms. Levering went into more detail about the bike parking. She explained that this modification only applies to buildings above 350,000 sq. ft., such as 135 Broadway. It would require 20% of the bike parking spaces to meet the generous dimensional standards of Section 6 of the City’s zoning ordinance but it gives dimensional flexibility for the additional bike parking, but only if 10% more spaces than required are provided. In other words, if at least 10% more spaces than required are provided, more dimensional flexibility is allowed on 80% of those spaces. Mr. Evans said that CDD is also reviewing these proposed zoning changes. He expects some changes in language but not in meaning. In response to Mr. Zevin, Mr. Evans said that he would ask Boston Properties for a test scenario regarding building height and shadows along Binney Street. In response to Ms. Born, Mr. Evans said that there have been daily discussions with many people at all levels in multiple organizations to determine what can be shown and discussed publicly. Mr. Zevin noted that comments on the coUrbanize website indicate that people expect more retail at this site than is likely to be feasible. Mr. Evans said that other uses such as an education lab facility are being discussed as alternative ground floor uses for this location.

After discussions with the City on the first draft of changes, and digesting feedback from the open house next week, Mr. Evans said that he expects a final version to come to the Board in July and then be submitted as a petition. Once the CRA submits the petition, it then goes into the City Council’s process. Any changes would come back to the CRA Board and the cycle could repeat. The goal would be to submit an amended petition by the fall to be considered before the end of the year. This timing is driven by Eversource and their state regulatory process. The CRA also needs to determine if the delivery of the housing component is delayed or runs forward as discussed a few months ago to meet the obligations of the zoning for 325 Main Street. Ms. Born said that if the petition is not successful, Eversource would move to the Fulkerson site or go to another site. Mr. Evans added

that a time extension could also be granted to revisit options but Eversource is under pressure to handle an increased electrical load as soon as possible. Ms. Born said that any delay would further delay the housing. Mr. Evans added that the substation infrastructure would run beneath the housing, so it needs to be understood before a housing proposal can move forward.

Ms. Born said that the amendment is easy to understand. Mr. Evans said that there will be more work in the design process and the concept plan.

Ms. Born restated that public comment would be taken at the conclusion of the meeting.

7. Update: CRA COVID-19 Small Business Grant and Loan Programs

Motion: Approving revisions to the CRA Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant Program to be applicable to establishments throughout the East Cambridge and Kendall Square Zip Codes of 02141 and 02142

Mr. Peralta relayed the information found in his board packet document. At the April CRA Board meeting, the Board authorized staff to set up a grant program to provide immediate Covid-19 relief to small businesses in parts of East Cambridge and Kendall Square. These areas fell outside the City's grant program that offered CDBG funds. The CRA grant mirrored the City grant by providing relief for rent, mortgage payments, payroll, utility bills, and expired inventory. He spoke about the goals of the program and provided a breakdown of the types of businesses that applied for CRA grants and received them.

Nineteen applicants were ineligible for the CRA grant due to their location. The City's program was also oversubscribed. The City asked the CRA to expand its geographical area to all of East Cambridge and Kendall Square in the 02141 AND 02142 zip codes.

Ms. Kailasam gave an update of the CRA's Covid assistance Loan program. The intake ended on May 29. There were over 200 applications; 35 wanted the loan only, about 145 wanted both the City grant and the CRA loan, and the remaining applicants wanted the City grant only. Applications for the City grant only will be reviewed first. Concurrently, work is being done to create the loan documents for the borrowers, to create the servicing agreement with Cambridge Savings Bank, and to open an account at Cambridge Savings. The goal is to distribute loans in July.

The Mayor's Disaster Relief Fund (MDRF) has \$2 million, of which \$500,000 was provided by the City for grants only, with \$1.5 million being provided by the CRA for loans. The City is going to be oversubscribed on the grants so they asked the CRA to consider expanding the geography to all of the 02141 and 02142 zip codes and have businesses there apply for the CRA grants. Mr. Evans explained that the CRA Covid-19 Relief Grants targeted the blue zone, as shown on the map, which is outside of the City's MDRF grant program area. Since the City's grant program is oversubscribed and there are unspent funds remaining in the CRA grant program, the CRA could expand outside the blue zone into the area outlined by the yellow line on the map. Mr. Peralta said that the 19 ineligible applications would become eligible if the Board approves the motion. Although there are limited funds, Ms. Drury didn't like the restrictions based on certain zip codes. Mr. Evans said the City is trying to find a way to spread its resources as wide as possible and can do this more easily if the CRA can expand its geographic area. There was a discussion of the geographical zones and the Neighborhood Revitalization Strategy (NRS) area. The NRS funds need to be spent in a defined area, while the MDRF applies to the entire City. Mr. Bator confirmed that the CRA has contributed \$1.5 million for city-wide applicants.

Mr. Evans said that the business associations (KSA and the East Cambridge Business Association) have also approached the CRA for grants to support reopening promotions. Grants were originally not going to 501c organizations. Mr. Bator suggested that a proposal be brought to the Board.

In response to Ms. Born, Ms. Levering said that the map with zip codes was pulled from the Cambridge GIS. There was a discussion of zip codes of certain streets.

A motion to approve revisions to the CRA Small Business COVID-19 Relief Grant Program to be applicable to establishments throughout the East Cambridge and Kendall Square zip codes of 02141 and 02142 was made by Mr. Bator. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Mr. Bator – yes

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – yes

Ms. Drury – yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried unanimously.

8. Design Review Update

Motion: To accept the meeting notes of the Design Committee meetings of May 6, 2020 and June 3, 2020

At 6:57 PM, the Board took a 10-minute break. The meeting resumed at 7:10pm.

Ms. Levering summarized the topics of the May 6th meeting which included the design of the social stair and the digital wall in the 325 Main Street project, and the Marriott lobby wall, which has since come to the CRA Board but was referred for further review. Landworks also presented their design for the lawn area of Galaxy Park.

Topics in the June 3rd meeting included Mikyoung Kim Associates' conceptual designs for Ames Place Open Space (APOS). Ideas formed by the collaboration of stakeholders of Parcel 3 and feedback from the community will be incorporated into future schematic designs. Further studies are needed to understand the impact of making Ames Place one-way as well as acoustic research on active sports uses.

Ms. Levering referenced the letter from the Whitehead Institute regarding APOS and said that staff is working with the Whitehead representatives about their concerns.

Ms. Born said that she and Mr. Zevin participated in those design review meetings. In response to Ms. Drury, Ms. Levering said that materials for the design review meetings are posted on the CRA website similarly to how documents are posted for Board meetings. Ms. Born said that a main point of discussion regarding the social stairs had to do with benches versus no benches on the stairs. There was agreement that the benches shouldn't be removable, there should be some seating, and there would be further refinements based on that direction. Ms. Levering added that the use of stone rather than wood for the benches was also favored. There was also some discussion regarding a refined design for the electronic graphics that wrap around the corner of that wall. Mr. Evans expects the topic of wayfinding elements for the public realm elements of the project to be presented to the Board, possibly in July.

In response to Mr. Zevin, Ms. Levering said that there have been some small steps in moving the design of the headhouse forward. There are still questions about sprinklers, access, and maintenance which are getting resolved. There is a design review meeting scheduled with the MBTA and Boston Properties. Mr. Evans added said that staff has reached out to MIT about their SoMa project and the open space component.

The next design review meeting is tentatively scheduled for July 1st. Ms. Levering will confirm that the materials will be ready for that date. Ms. Born might have a conflict. Ms. Levering will coordinate the next meeting with Ms. Born.

The motion to accept the meeting notes of the Design Committee meetings of May 6, 2020 and June 3, 2020 was moved. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Mr. Bator – yes

Ms. Born – yes
Mr. Crawford – yes
Ms. Drury – yes
Mr. Zevin – yes
The motion carried unanimously.

9. Report: CRA OPEB FY 20/21 GASB 74/75 Disclosure Report

Ms. Kailasam said that the CRA has an OPEB (Other Post Employment Benefit) trust. The good news in the report is that, as of December 31, 2019, the actual size of the liabilities dropped by 17%, or \$38,000, over the 2018 level. This is primarily due to only a 1% rise in Medicare, rather than the projected 16%. Due to changes in the GASB 75 standard, the discount rate increased from 5% to 5.5%. The CRA has contributed \$7,000 annually to the trust fund since its inception. During the 2021 budget discussion, an evaluation will be made to determine whether that amount should remain or change. This completed report will be submitted to PERAC, the Public Employee Retirement Administration Commission.

There were no questions from the Board. In response to Ms. Born, Ms. Kailasam said that all organizations need to recognize this liability. There are companies actively getting this liability to zero so that their borrowing rates are more favorable. There is no requirement for it to be fully funded. Mr. Evans said that he thinks the City of Cambridge is looking to fully fund its OPEB within 5-10 years. Mr. Bator said that the CRA is following a best practice in its financial behavior.

10. Monthly Staff Report (Evans)

Mr. Evans touched on each of the topics listed in the staff report. Although the Link is officially reopening in July, staff will primarily continue to work remotely. There are occasions when staff need to go into the office or be at Kendall Square sites or the 93-99 Bishop Allen Drive building. There are some elements of remote work that are more challenging, especially Board meeting coordination. Mr. Evans spoke about the ongoing open planner position. The CRA is being audited remotely. Some of the physical CRA documents needed to be scanned and sent electronically to the auditor.

Modifications to the internal control policy are being reviewed by staff as well as Treasurer Mr. Bator and Asst. Treasurer Mr. Zevin. With increased staff capacity, some procedures will be changing. Disbursements through electronic means will be helpful and more efficient. Discussions will continue on the amendments to the MXD and the urban renewal plan. A refined signage package is still expected from Sweetgreens.

The 325 Main Street project is restarting. The delay in combination with coordinating with the MBTA and the continuous review of the public realm improvements are all interrelated. Permitting is underway. The 325 Main project has a building permit for the vertical structure. The public improvements on the garage need their own permit. Staff is working with Boston Properties and the City to understand the impact of that permitting schedule. The public improvements should be delivered in tandem with the project but might need some flexibility as they relate to the headhouse. Mr. Evans spoke about new landscaping on the Grand Junction and the Sixth Street Walkway. More work is needed on the walkway and staff is conscious that this work should not interfere with pedestrian access. The Bishop Allen building project has required a great amount of staff effort to get ready for construction and ensure a smooth operator transition.

A final set of drawings for the Foundry are being reviewed and details are being resolved. The demolition was put on hold but is now back in operation. The project needs to go through a special permit process with the Planning Board but there is no date scheduled. There are some budgeting issues. Staff is looking at options for the CRA to take on the FF&E component (furniture, fixtures, and equipment). The Foundry Consortium is working on their staffing plan and the job description for the Executive Director. The goal is to have an Executive Director on board about a year before the building becomes operational, around the end of 2021. Ms. Schwarz corrected a typo in the report and noted that the next Foundry Advisory Committee (FAC) will be in the morning 8:00 -10:00 am. The date is scheduled for July 10th but she is waiting to get confirmation from the City. Mr. Evans added that the City has not opened all of its committees for business yet and a special request is needed to hold this meeting. The meeting scheduled for April was canceled.

In response to Ms. Born, Mr. Evans said that there has been a mix of people defining the FF&E requirements. Ms. Schwarz, along with consultants TSNE and Artisan's Asylum, have been informing the ground floor makerspace equipment components. Cambridge Seven then looked at the design implications on the buildings systems and to ensure these would fit. A number of people, including members of the FAC, have looked into the needs for the theater. The architect has heavily influenced some furniture designs related to the central community room and kitchen elements. The CRA has been involved in all aspects. In another response to Ms. Born, Mr. Evans said that some of the FF&E specifications are in the construction documents. The City has approached this project similarly to the process they use for schools, where furniture is not part of construction contract but is separately purchased by the purchasing department through the state procurement process. The City has spec'd out the "loose" furniture, such as tables, chairs, theater seating. There are other elements, like a scissor-lift, that are not included in these types of furnishings.

Ms. Born said that there will need to be a CRA Board vote to approve FF&E funding so the scope would need to be clearly defined. Mr. Evans said that procurement is being discussed. He added that operational start-up costs were anticipated in addition to the capital commitments to the City.

Mr. Evans spoke about the financial report. He noted that the Bishop Allen building accounts for the majority of expenses, followed by the Covid relief work (which falls under the Forward Fund) and then Transportation, due to the work on the report shown at the May Board meeting. There is a big team of consultants supporting CRA projects. Redevelopment investments reflect the disbursement of Covid relief funds. On the revenue side, the timing of the income from the Broad Institute is unclear as the building permit process has been affected by Covid. Ms. Kailasam added that the big hit in the first quarter on the investment portfolio has recouped to a break-even point.

Additional Public Comment

Heather Hoffman announced that a group of people in East Cambridge is looking at adding the neighborhood to the City's shared street program. A survey is being distributed to the neighborhood. Mr. Evans confirmed that he is interested in its progress as similar efforts are occurring in Kendall.

Other Business

The Board concluded all of the business set forth on the regular agenda therefore this meeting will be adjourned and will not need to reconvene after an Executive Session.

The motion to adjourn and enter into Executive Session to consider potential amendments to the Cambridge Center Development Agreement moved. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Mr. Bator – yes

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – yes

Ms. Drury – yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried unanimously.

Ms. Shore will send a private Zoom meeting invitation to the CRA Board and staff. Ms. Shore and Mr. Evans were unsuccessful at reaching Stephen Kaiser for his comments.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:48 PM.