

Regular Board Meeting
Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday March 16, 2022 at 5:30pm
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually via Zoom

Approved Meeting Minutes

Ellen Shore, CRA Operations Director, said that on February 15, 2022, Governor Baker signed into law a new session law which extends certain COVID-19 related measures. The new law, Chapter 22 of the Acts of 2022, includes an extension until July 15, 2022, of the remote meeting provisions of the Governor's March 12, 2020, Executive Order Suspending Certain Provisions of the Open Meeting Law. Tonight's CRA Board meeting is being held remotely in accordance with this new session law.

There will be opportunities for public comment at the start of this meeting and at the discretion of the chair. Ms. Shore explained the steps to take to provide public comment. Board meeting materials can be found on the CRA's next meeting webpage. This meeting is being recorded, including all video, audio, and QA messages

Call Roll

Chair Kathleen Born called the regular meeting of the CRA Board. A roll call of Board members and the Executive Director was taken.

Vice Chair Conrad Crawford - present
Treasurer Christopher Bator – absent, will be joining the meeting later
Asst. Treasurer Barry Zevin - present
Asst. Secretary Margaret Drury – present
Executive Director Tom Evans - present

Members of the CRA staff were also in attendance. Ms. Born stated that because this is a remote meeting, all votes will be taken by roll call and Mr. Evans will be repeating the response of each member present.

Public Comment

James Williamson said that he was curious about the CRA's interest in Walden Square and asked for the timing for that agenda item. Ms. Born said that she didn't expect this to come before the Board for at least an hour. She added that the conversation is about the easement that the CRA owns on the Walden Square property. Mr. William also expressed his frustration with the public transportation in the Rindge Commons area and asked if the CRA can help. He added that many people in the Rindge area aren't informed about the CRA's involvement.

Heather Hoffman said that she hopes that the CRA will do whatever it can to elevate the importance of not destroying Magazine Beach to Eversource and the Energy Facility Siting Board. They also need to hear that running even more connections along Third Street, which is already loaded and a permanent construction zone, is problematic. She stressed that Eversource's work not get in the way of extending the spur of the green line from Union Square to Porter Square. She asked the CRA to write a letter.

No other requests for public comment were offered.

A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to close public comment. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.

Chris Bator – absent

Kathy Born – yes

Conrad Crawford – yes

Margaret Drury - yes

Barry Zevin – yes
The motion carried.

Minutes

1. Motion: To accept the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Board on February 16, 2022

At 5:50 p.m., Mr. Bator joined the meeting.

No amendments or corrections were offered.

A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to accept the minutes and place them on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.

Chris Bator – yes

Kathy Born – yes

Conrad Crawford – yes

Margaret Drury - yes

Barry Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Communications

2. Written communications received since the publication of this meeting notice.

Mr. Evans explained that Ms. Hoffman was referencing a document that staff thought was important to add to the communications file because it was a subject in a previous Board meeting's public comment. Eversource's application to the state's Energy Facilities Siting Board for the substation project and all the transmission lines contains data regarding future demand and the electrical grid for the area. The application identifies the prospective commercial development in Kendall Square and Cambridge Crossing, which are causing the need for this station to be put into place. Mr. Evans expects to have a follow up conversation with Stephen Kaiser. There is also a lot of information about the line routing, which Ms. Hoffman referenced, which does impact rights-of-way across many parts of the city.

Ms. Born asked how long the permitting process with the Siting Board would take. Mr. Evans said that he has been told to expect it to take two years. He added that Eversource is hopeful it might go more quickly since there's already been a lot of community engagement about this project and the new substation location is in response to community concerns about their original proposal. However, there is still a lot of information that has to be digested. As Ms. Hoffman noted, one of the routes potentially affects some DCR property as the transmission line needs to cross the Charles River.

Ms. Born asked for more information about interference to the Green Line extension to Porter Square. There was a discussion about an existing substation and transmission lines running along the rail corridor. Mr. Evans said he would try to get a clearer understanding of what exists and what would be part of this proposal. Ms. Born spoke about Porter Square's future as a commuter rail stop.

A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to place the additional notice on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.

Chris Bator – yes

Kathy Born – yes

Conrad Crawford – yes

Margaret Drury - yes

Barry Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Administrative Items

3. Monthly Staff Report

Mr. Evans relayed the information in the staff report in the Board packet. Staff just learned that the governor extended the remote meeting provisions due to COVID through July of this year, which gives staff and the Board additional flexibility to continue holding remote meetings. Mr. Evans emphasized that there is a lot of design review coming up. He mentioned that he has had discussions regarding Memorial Drive near Kendall Square with respect to open space and transit in the area. He summarized the status of the CRA projects.

Mr. Zevin noted that he is aggravated by the MBTA headhouse progress, although it is not anything the CRA can control. Mr. Evans is disappointed that shutting down the station for months during the pandemic wasn't approved. At this time, the plan is to have an interim solution that uses the existing building as a temporary headhouse during weekends while a new headhouse is being built. The new design restarts an MBTA review process, which will take a while.

Hema Kailasam, Director of Finance and Operations, spoke about the financial portion of the staff report. As a result of the tumult in the market, the equities have had a rollercoaster ride, mostly to the downside. The portfolio has rebounded a bit. Ms. Kailasam said the net deficit of \$461,777 is due to the usual monthly spending and a loss in the equities.

Regarding Bishop Allen, 95% of the contract value has been paid to date. A large amount was paid in February, which will show in next month's report. Ms. Kailasam noted that a Bishop Allen project summary is included in the financial report. In addition, there is a budget report for the Bishop Allen building. Tenants are back in the building and rents are being collected. Ms. Kailasam said that one of the effects of the pandemic was a decrease in demand for meeting rooms so some meeting space was converted to tenant space. The variable income from meeting room rentals is now part of monthly expected office rent; the overall rental income is more than expected two years ago. The first electric bills are higher than anticipated, however. Doors left open for construction work in the December-January timeframe along with Eversource's rate hikes are assumed to be factors. The HVAC system is being recalibrated and fine-tuned for efficiency. For now, the tenants will be charged \$1.25/sf, which was the initial estimated cost.

Mr. Bator said that the CRA has a significant portfolio total, both in equities and in non-equities. The CRA is extraordinarily conservatively positioned, with 30% of its assets in equities, to survive in a volatile market, which this is. With the exception for minor circumstances, the CRA does not need to draw on its equity portfolio. The loss that Ms. Kailasam mentioned in her report should not be a cause to panic. Ms. Born added that the budget was adopted with certain assumptions which were not unusual to make at the time. Ms. Born emphasized that the CRA did not do anything to cause the deficit. Mr. Bator said that in today's world, the word deficit is understood not as an accounting term as Ms. Kailasam presented it. He asked that future reports include a footnote or definition to explain that term. As a reminder, Ms. Kailasam said that the CRA does not have large annual revenue flows since it depends on sales of development rights. In most years, operating revenues are relatively small with the primary source of income coming from the investments. For many recent months, the market was positive. That was not the case for the past month. Mr. Bator does not want the financial report to be misconstrued. Ms. Born said that when people hear the word deficit, they assume that an organization is not able to meet its obligations, which is not the case. Ms. Kailasam will add the footnotes in future reports.

Mr. Zevin said that as the City prods for a conversion to all electric, the energy use data for 99 Bishop Allen Drive should be tracked carefully and made available to the City as a case study. Mr. Evans said that the Foundry will be another case study. He noted that there is a conflict between historic preservation and masonry buildings, which uninsulated brick walls. This type of electric heating system prefers a very tight building envelope, so the boundaries of the system will be tested.

4. Auditor Contract Update

Motion: Authorizing the authorizing the Chair to enter up to a 3-year contract with Roselli, Clark, & Associates not to exceed \$55,500 to conduct financial audits of the CRA for fiscal years 2021-2023.

Ms. Kailasam said that staff recommends that the CRA continue with Roselli, Clark & Associates (RCA) for a three-year contract but that the lead partner is changed. She introduced Chad Clark from RCA.

Mr. Bator emphasized that staff's suggestion has nothing to do with Mr. Clark's or the firm's performance. The CRA has been happy and satisfied with the service, advice, and help that it has received as it has grown into a much more complicated and larger institution, both administratively and certainly financially. This is merely a skillful strategy to retain both the institutional knowledge of RCA as well as ensure some fresh perspective.

Mr. Clark appreciated the sentiment and said that he understands the perspective. He has enjoyed watching how the CRA has changed to the better over the last 10 years. Tony Roselli would be the best partner to replace him since he has the institutional knowledge of the CRA. He noted that an entirely fresh start is not needed, however. It is not a practice that's overly utilized in Massachusetts for a couple of reasons. Auditor rotation is not at all a requirement of governmental auditing. It is a requirement for publicly traded companies. The CRA has the option to choose any auditing firm. No rules would be broken if RCA was used for 30 years. Even partner rotation is actually something that doesn't happen a lot. He noted that the City of Cambridge has used the same person from KPMG for a while. Most of the big firms do not audit cities and towns anymore. Partner rotation is more difficult for smaller firms. He added that there are probably only five or six firms that are specialists in municipal auditing in the state which limits the pool of specialized accounting firms from which to choose. Mr. Clark said that he would assist Mr. Roselli if needed. He expects there to be several days of onsite work during the audit.

Mr. Bator said that although the CRA is not required by law to make the shift, he appreciates that RCA can accommodate this change. Mr. Bator said that it's appropriate for the CRA as a public entity, with public dollars, to be as scrupulous as possible.

Ms. Drury was pleased to hear that an auditor doesn't need to change every three or four years. Mr. Clark said auditing services falls under exempt services under Mass General Law. The procurement is not via a bid. The CRA can even pay more for services if a better product is expected.

A motion was moved by Mr. Bator authorizing the authorizing the Chair to enter up to a 3-year contract with Roselli, Clark, and Associates not to exceed \$55,500 to conduct financial audits of the CRA for fiscal years 2021-2023. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.

Chris Bator – yes

Kathy Born – yes

Conrad Crawford – yes

Margaret Drury - yes

Barry Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Mr. Clark brought up a question that he needs answered for this year's audit. When the CRA bought the Bishop Allen building, the cost basis for the building was entered as a fixed asset for the CRA. Any new construction will be added to the basis of the property. Mr. Clark is looking for a calculation that is reasonable regarding the cost of materials that got removed from the property when it was gutted. This number will reduce the original cost basis.

Mr. Bator asked for staff to come back to the Board with a recommendation on what is needed from the Board. In response to Mr. Evans, Mr. Clark said that KPMG and the City might not have the same issue with the Foundry since that building could be a fully depreciated asset with no net value if it has been owned for more than 20-30 years. Mr. Clark said that he doesn't need an exact number because he can work under the guidelines of materiality. Ms. Born suggested using the difference between the value of the real estate versus the value of the shell and core of the building. Mr. Clark said that when the building was purchased, an evaluation of the building was done but that report didn't break it out that way. The original vendor might have that information in their records and could provide that if requested by the CRA. Ms. Kailasam said that the architect supplied the shell value. The CRA consultant was James Blake who did an as-is for a **leased field**. Mr. Bator said that a further study can be requested if needed.

Projects and Programs

5. KSURP MXD Innovation Space Plan – Phase 2

Alex Levering, CRA Project Manager said that there are two parts to this presentation. The first part is the annual requirement for Boston Properties (BXP) to update the Board on the CIC space, which is the market rate innovation space, and the Link space, which is the below market-rate innovation space. The second part of the presentation will provide information on new innovation space that BXP is planning for the 325 Main Street building. She introduced Eric Mo, from BXP, and Alex Chung, from CIC.

Mr. Mo said that an update was skipped last year due to COVID. BXP is in compliance and continues to work towards full innovation space delivery for all of its projects. The three components of innovation space are associated with 145 Broadway, 325 Main Street, and the Broad Institute at 75 Ames Street. He showed a graphical overview of the required and planned innovation space delivery. To date, the 92,000 square feet encompasses all CIC space at 1CC (255 Main Street). The 17,000 square feet is The Link space on the eighth floor of 255 Main Street. In 2023, the plan is to add below-market space, via a Kendall Public Market, which will be a food-focused innovation space. In 2024, there will be a delivery of the remaining required below market-rate innovation space. This is delayed due to the MBTA headhouse which affects bringing the MIT-Coop back to 325 Main Street from 80 Broadway and 80 Broadway then serving as a support space for this public market. Mr. Mo showed the overall stacking plan for 255 Main Street, which has not changed.

Mr. Chung gave an update on CIC space. He spoke about CIC's mission that has remained constant since CIC opened. He highlighted its accomplishments and explained how CIC has met guidelines for the five requirements. He showed some pictures of the spaces. He emphasized that CIC is industry agnostic. CIC is happy to support the innovation and entrepreneur ecosystem.

TSNE was unavailable tonight so Mr. Mo spoke about the below market opportunity space. The Link survived the pandemic. They are mostly full with possibly three empty workstations currently. There are a number of subtenants at the Link. He gave a rundown of the types of spaces that exist. A floor plan showed 76% of the space is share resources - circulation, meeting rooms, instructional areas, and amenities. BXP hopes that the conference spaces become a bit more programmed and populated as things ramp up post pandemic.

Mr. Mo then discussed the proposal for a food hall/market for the innovation space that will be delivered in conjunction with 255 Main Street. This will be situated on the first floor of 325 Main Street. This space will function as a draw for hungry people and serve as a "living room" or an indoor version of the Kendall Plaza. BXP plans to preserve the amount of open contiguous space for indoor activities during inclement weather. The indoor space will have various programming such as salsa dancing or yoga. He showed a floor plan of the space. The vision is to build a retail presence in Kendall Square while preserving the publicly accessible area and pedestrian pass through to Pioneer Way, which connects the MBTA station and the Green Garage.

There will be a new dedicated tenant vestibule which will provide a Main Street entrance for the second level tenant. There will be a temporary MBTA entrance in 325 Main Street, while the headhouse is under construction. When that work is done, the MIT Coop will take that space, in addition to all of the basement space. BXP is partnering with Commonwealth Kitchen, which works with underrepresented groups and individuals that want to get into food entrepreneurship. When the food hall opens during Phase 1, a lot of it will be serviced from the Commonwealth Kitchen's central kitchen in Roxbury, facilitating a number of diverse vendor stalls. With the preparation of the food done elsewhere, the space for other programming is maximized. Once the MBTA headhouse is built and the MIT Coop moves out of 80 Broadway and into 325 Main Street, there will be an opportunity to build out a support space and a demonstration kitchen space at 80 Broadway that will support the operations of the food market at 325 Main Street. Commonwealth Kitchen currently operates a kiosk near the Kendall Square ice-skating rink. They also operate the food hall at the MIT student center. They have worked with a number of local entrepreneurs that have "graduated" from their system and have opened restaurants of their own in Cambridge and beyond.

Mr. Mo explained that the first floor would look similar to other public markets but on a smaller scale. The operations and the curation of the tenant mix will be driven primarily by Commonwealth Kitchen. Mr. Mo said that the second floor might have a food component. BXP is visioning this space more as an entertainment-recreational space. Ms. Born asked who the vendor would be on the outdoor terrace on the second floor. Mr. Mo said that he couldn't say but that the selected vendor will likely have a restaurant or bar component. They will know that the outdoor level two terrace needs to be as active as possible to draw folks up from Main Street on that intermediate

level up towards the roof garden. The logistics for people bringing food and/or alcohol purchased at one of the Commonwealth Kitchen vendors to the level two terrace has not been determined.

Mr. Evans noted that there is a public easement from the street up the stairs to the roof garden. That area will be required to be publicly accessible. Discussions would need to occur with ABC to see if alcohol can or cannot cross a public easement. There is going to be a public presence and allowance for public seating up on the terrace but it may not be the seating closest to the building. Mr. Zevin noted that if the elevator at the back of the food hall goes to the roof garden, providing direct access. Mr. Evans added that the elevator stops at the terrace level, too. Mr. Zevin said that this plan is remarkably close to what was there previously. He is concerned, however, that the Pioneer Way Extension will feel like a corridor if it is fronted by so much service space and so little active retail. He also questioned the two different versions of the second-floor lobby. He suggested to have as much transparency as possible, with some display space.

Mr. Mo continued his presentation, outlining six goals for the space – an agent for change, good food fast, Kendall Square’s living room, hours of operations, a Cambridge feel, and inviting. BXP is still designing the layout blocking plan for the open space area, the vestibule area, and ways to keep the Pioneer Way corridor active. There will be a connection to the public lobby at 325 Main Street, which will have seating. BXP is envisioning four to six permanent stalls, as well as flexible mobile stalls that might not need as much infrastructure and can be moved to allow for programming, if needed. There will be a coffee bar hybrid which will extend the active hours of the space. He noted areas that are planned for back-of-house work.

The basement space at 80 Broadway, which is currently occupied by the MIT-Coop, will be delivered in 2024, mostly because of all the other items that are encumbering BXP from building out this space. The purpose of this space is to make the food entrepreneurs in the main food market independent of the centralized kitchen in Roxbury. There will be a production-teaching kitchen that will cook a lot of the food being served in the 325 Main Street market. This space will hold a lot of cold and dry storage and pre-function space. There is an opportunity with this space to create a demo kitchen for those entrepreneurs who want to engage with the community.

Mr. Mo’s presentation included a timeline. Construction of the space is planned to occur as soon as BXP receives a certificate of occupancy for 325 Main Street. Meanwhile, BXP is still pushing the MBTA headhouse along as that project is holding up the Coop moving back to 325 Main Street and the subsequent build-out of the support space at 80 Broadway. The Kendall roof garden is planned to be delivered by the end of April or early May. There will be a ribbon cutting, which will be open to the public.

Mr. Crawford said that it is important for this food market to support local farmers and be less corporate. He asked how BXP plans to accomplish that. Mr. Mo said that BXP is leaning on Commonwealth Kitchen to curate the right mix of entrepreneurs that are local to Cambridge. Mr. Evans noted that initial aspirations can sometimes fade. Although Commonwealth Kitchen has that in its mission, it needs to be understood how to successfully keep a local flavor.

Mr. Mo asked for a sense of the Board’s support regarding the vision of the plan but more importantly, for the acceptance of a delayed delivery of 80 Broadway space, which is a part of the required innovation space for 325 Main Street, given the circumstances with the MBTA. There was a discussion regarding a mechanism to codify this condition. If a certain timeframe is agreeable to the Board, Mr. Evans said that it might be possible to add this to the certificate of completion, similar to what is done when there are delayed capital improvements. The challenge is resolving the issue if the MBTA continues to be in the way. Mr. Evans said that the CRA needs to be thoughtful on how to protect GFA as there is exempt GFA that is tied to this. Mr. Evans said that a Board usually has a final building walkthrough, which would occur in May, before the certificate is awarded.

Ms. Drury said that it is worth the delay but is worried about a continued delay. Mr. Mo said that if the MIT-Coop is unable to move out, there is unused basement space at 325 Main Street that might be usable for temporary support space. However, this would require a lot of kitchen infrastructure to be installed and then torn out once the MBTA headhouse became available. Mr. Evans asked if Google would collaborate with the project and allow the use of their kitchen facilities. Mr. Mo would be surprised if Google’s security would allow this but said he will follow up. Mr. Zevin asked if Google or City government could get the MBTA to move on the project. Mr. Evans said that Google did make some noise in support of Plan A (the shutdown of the T during the pandemic) which was going to move forward but it didn’t because of another third party’s objection.

Mr. Evans summarized that there is general support as long the phased roll out can be institutionalized.

6. Walden Square Affordable Housing Proposal

Fabiola Alikpokou, CRA Project Planner, explained that the site located at Walden Square Road was once a CRA urban renewal development project in 1969. The project was then sold to Walden Square Apartment Companies in 1971 through a land disposition agreement. During that 1971 transaction, the CRA placed an easement on two tracts to secure permanent public circulation and open space on the site. Ms. Alikpokou showed a map of the two tract locations. In 1982, the CRA granted ownership of Tract 1, highlighted in purple, to the City of Cambridge, while retaining ownership of Tract 2, highlighted in green. The easements on both tracks presently remain as originally intended. A playground on Tract 2 is used by a daycare facility.

The project aims to improve the area by building new housing and public facilities and enhancing green spaces. Winn Companies (Winn), the current owner of Walden Square Apartments, is proposing an additional 96 units of affordable housing to be built on their apartment complex site. The development will be split between two buildings. Building A is proposed to have 54 units and be located over existing surface parking lots and a portion of the Tract 1 easement on the eastern side of the apartment complex. Building B is proposed to have 42 units located on Tract 2, where the CRA currently has an open space easement. To free up the space for Building B to be built on Tract Two, Winn is proposing an amendment to the open space easement which would allow the easement to be relocated elsewhere on the Walden Square Apartment site. Staff have met with CDD staff regarding the project.

Matthew Robayna, Senior Project Director at Winn, Sarah Ebaugh, the project's civil engineer from VHB, and Erik Bednarek, the landscape architect, presented to the Board. Mr. Robayna explained that this project is in a conceptual stage. He is looking for a swap of the open space easement on Tract 2 to another location on the site where there is significant open space. He explained where Walden Square is located, the current site make-up, the project team's composition, a description of Winn and the work they have done to date at Walden Square. The project is proceeding under the city's new affordable housing overlay process, and gave an overview of that process. He explained an early massing plan and a revised plan based on feedback received. There was a discussion about the number of parking spaces that will be available. He spoke about the architecture and floor plans for Buildings A and B. He showed renderings of the site. Mr. Robayna clarified that the CRA-held easement is where Winn would like to build Building B. The easement for open space would be maintained but moved to another open space location on the site.

Mr. Bednarek spoke about the existing circulation and the proposed improvements for the site. He spoke about the routes for pedestrians, bicycles, and vehicles. He then discussed the current open spaces on the site. A playground is currently on the proposed site for Building B. He said that the proposed plan includes better connections to the other larger open spaces as well as within the site. Other improvements will include plantings and upgrades to the basketball court. Parking lots will be improved. Bike parking will be spread throughout the site. He spoke about outside elements and signage. He noted the new playground that is about 47 feet long by 35 feet wide, or 30 feet wide on average. He showed which trees would be remaining, which are being removed, and which will be added. As many trees as possible will be preserved. He discussed improvements to each of the new courtyards. There was a discussion about the available amount of bike parking. He said that 97 spaces will be available with the combination of bike rooms, bike shelters, and bike racks. There will also be 19 BlueBikes added to the site. He showed pictures of outdoor furniture, LED dark sky compliant lighting, paving treatments, pergola structures at the various gateways to the site, activity areas, and plaza spaces.

Mr. Robayna said that he would be coming back to the Board in the coming months after feedback from more community meetings can be incorporated into the design.

Mr. Zevin said he was perplexed by what is being asked of the CRA Board. He said that the playground is be traded for a parking lot with a building on top of it. The open space is still limited on this site and the project is not adding more, although it will be enhanced. There was a discussion regarding the clearance over Walden Park Drive for building A for fire truck clearance. Mr. Zevin noted that the location and size of the pick-up and drop-off areas do not seem to be accommodating for delivery vendors. Moving the pedestrian path out to the property line

of Building A is a sensible design. He said the opening from Yerxa overpass is an improvement. He circled back to questioning the role of the CRA in this project.

Mr. Evans said that the objectives of the easements when they were created by the former CRA Board need to be understood. There could be a financial consideration for lifting the easement or it could be replaced with an easement in another area, or neither.

Mr. Robayna clarified that there is an older playground on the current easement that is used by a third-party day-care facility, and the space surrounding is not high-quality open space. Ms. Born emphasized that she is in support of building additional affordable housing but would like more information regarding the easement and the reason for its existence before the Board can decide. She agreed that the location is a good place for a substantial apartment building in a city that really needs affordable housing. She is pleased to see the open space improvements to the underpass and the grounds. She questioned the need for the CRA to be put in the position of gatekeeper on another easement location. Mr. Zevin agreed with Ms. Born.

Mr. Evans said that the easement over Tract 2 is an easement over private land, like a conservation easement. It is not a public easement, but rather a requirement that there be open space provided by the property for private use of the residents, and preservation of spaces open to the sky. At one time, the CRA owned the entire property, which was deeded to the Walden Square Development with these land controls to guarantee access through the site. That easement was given to the city. The open space easement was never given to the city for some unknown reason. The CRA could lift the easement with some consideration, or for some stated public purpose, and/or trading out over some potential land that doesn't currently have any protection at all.

Ms. Born said that giving up an easement for providing affordable housing meets the stated public purpose consideration. Mr. Evans added that Building A will require the city to release its public access easement or allow it to be reconfigured through the site. Mr. Evans suggested a long-term proposal where the CRA owns a conservation easement on some other portion and gives that to the City. Ms. Born noted that the CRA has an obligation to provide 20,000 square feet of affordable home ownership in connection with the Eversource MXD project and asked if Winn had more space as a consideration to the lifting of the easement. Mr. Robayna said that Winn does not own any other property in Cambridge. There was a discussion of the open space around the site.

Ms. Born said that the Board and staff will continue to look into the project. Ms. Alikpokou will email the related legal documents to the Board, which are also on the website. Ms. Born said that more context regarding the land is important. Ms. Alikpokou will arrange a tour of the site.

Mr. Bator asked if the purpose of this presentation was to expose the Board to the general contours and nature of the proposal. Mr. Evans said that the purpose is to give the Board an understanding of the affordable housing project so that they could decide whether they would reconsider its current open space easement or whether Winn needs to modify their project. Mr. Evans said that it seems the project is worth the work needed to resolve the legal hurdle. At this time there is no detailed or a specific transaction proposal for the Board.

Mr. Robayna said that Winn is in the process of creating a comprehensive package for the Planning Board which will be fully reviewed by CDD. He said that the process with CDD has been positive and has provided constructive comments. Their feedback is being incorporated in the plan. Given the need for housing, Mr. Robayna feels that CDD wants these overlay projects to move forward. Mr. Zevin noted that it is less critical for this space to remain as open space because it is adjacent to a large playing field. Ms. Drury would like to think about the proposal as the CRA is a trustee to the land.

Mr. Robayna will arrange a site visit. The next presentation to the CRA Board will have a more detailed outline with more substantive information to consider.

Ms. Born is wary of the CRA being seen as the arbiter for each and every open space improvement in this project. She wants to avoid issues coming to the CRA because it traded its easement, allowing Building B to be built. She is interested in taking a serious look at whether the CRA can be helpful in providing a housing site on land that we currently have an easement on, but not go further than that. Mr. Evans noted that the plot is 11,000 square feet.

7. Rindge Commons Easement Concept

Mr. Evans said that this might be another project where an onsite visit would be helpful. For a few years, staff has been working on the concept of a Rindge Neighborhood Connectivity Plan, which the CRA published in 2020. He showed a map of the area of interest, which is part of the broader Alewife area. The conversation began with Just-A-Start's (JAS) Rindge Commons proposal. The CRA developed this plan to understand the contribution of open space on Rindge Commons to the broader circulation and open space needs in the area.

The area is currently a collection of parcels and owners. The plan describes connections that might be valuable for the district with regards to transit and open space. At present, passing through this area is not easy for pedestrians, cyclists, and automobiles. The vision plan looked for ways to connect current development as well as future redevelopments in the area. There is no guaranteed public circulation through the area although there have been some thoughts for reserving space as projects get developed for future public access. Mr. Evans listed various interruptions to connectivity.

Focusing back to the Rindge properties, staff looked at opportunities inside the Rindge site for connections now that would be a value to the property itself and could have a potential public value in the future. As this analysis was occurring, JAS approached the CRA to fill a funding gap in their Rindge Commons project. The idea is to exchange funding for some land easements on their property to preserve public access through their site, which would be a corridor between the two Rindge Tower properties and on the southern edge of their site. This would have more value if there is a connection along the railroad tracks. This area is currently blocked off by fencing and gravel space. Staff has been working with Gamble Associates on Phase 1 of a connectivity plan, designing the strip of land between the two parking lots. The next step, Phase 2, would connect this to the development on the western side of Fresh Pond Parkway, thus making a connection through what's mostly publicly owned land underneath the bridge and over to the Alewife Triangle. This creates an alternative pedestrian and bike route to the Alewife T-station and could be part of a pathway running along the north side of the Fitchburg commuter rail line.

Ms. Born loved this idea. Mr. Evans summarized that this puts down some initial stakes in creating broader connections through the neighborhood. These are just things along the edge of the JAS parcel but could be part of a broader network of connectivity. Ms. Born said that it would be nice if the easement cut across in a more direct fashion. There was a discussion of options.

Mr. Bator asked Mr. Evans for a recommendation. As a Board member, he would find it more helpful if presentations to the Board include options and staff recommendations. Ms. Born said that Mr. Evans is asking the Board if this concept is worth continued staff time. Mr. Zevin said that the proposal seems worth doing as it is modest but effective infrastructure improvement. Mr. Crawford said that having clarity and support from the Board is helpful to Mr. Evans as he discusses the concept with the City.

Mr. Evans recommended that the CRA starts negotiations with JAS for an easement that is approximately the area that looks like the orange J in his presentation for a price of about \$500,000-\$600,000. JAS shared its appraisal with Mr. Evans of about \$200 per square foot. The width might vary. There are no documents defining that easement or another land consideration. There is value per the Rindge planning process to reserve this space for public access.

Mr. Bator agreed that this should be further pursued. Ms. Drury asked for a motion. Mr. Evans suggested a motion authorizing the Executive Director to begin negotiating with Just-A-Start for a public access easement across a portion of their Rindge Commons property agreement for open space and pedestrian connectivity. Ms. Born, however, was not comfortable voting on that motion tonight. She would like an onsite walkthrough of the site. Mr. Bator said that there is a sense of the Board to pursue this with the conditions that there needs to be further conversations as it gets developed.

Mr. Evans needs to understand JAS's timing. He imagines the decision will be needed quickly as they are looking to close their financing in the next couple months. Ms. Born said that \$600,000 is a considerable amount of money and while this has possibilities, she would like to know more.

8. Foundry Operations Update

Mr. Evans said that Erica Schwarz, CRA Project Director, has an update on a draft of the Foundry Consortium Sublease agreement, thought the final document is not ready.

Ms. Schwarz said that the memo in the Board packet contains many bullet points that summarize the draft sublease. The Foundry Consortium is now reviewing this document with their attorney and staff is waiting for their response. This has taken a long time because of the complicated nature of the Foundry. The topic would need to come back to the Board for a vote on the final lease.

Mr. Bator asked Ms. Schwarz to highlight the most important bullet points. Ms. Schwarz explained that there are three areas - the office space, the community reservation space, and the common area. The community reservation space is the makerspaces, the art spaces, and the meeting rooms that any nonprofit can reserve. The CRA will be leasing the office space and collecting that income. The CRA will review and approve an annual budget from the Foundry Consortium. The CRA will work with the FC on what it will cost to run the building. The CRA will pay FC a management fee. The FC will use that management fee, in combination with any income that they bring in from renting the community use space, to run and manage the entire building. The FC can only make minor decorative improvements. Anything else needs CRA approval. All income derived from the Foundry needs to support the Foundry and cannot go towards other projects.

Mr. Evans said that little has changed from what was written in the demonstration plan. The slight change of course in the term sheet, executed a year ago, is that the CRA would control the commercial space leasing. This provided the CRA financial control and offloaded the FC's staff responsibility at that time. The FC, not the CRA, is in charge of deciding who gets to use the space. The CRA will ensure that the building is being used in alignment with the mission. The FC Executor Director and her staff will be making the day-to-day management decisions on who is using the Foundry. Ms. Schwarz added that there are four job openings under the FC Executive Director, who is also researching reservation systems.

Mr. Evans said that a Board vote is not being requested tonight. The 30-page draft document has not been redlined yet. It was created with CRA attorney Jeff Mullan. The FC's attorney is reviewing the document. Mr. Evans said that the memo in the packet contains the bullet points of each of the sections of the sublease. She hopes to have the document for review by next month.

Ms. Schwarz said that she will post some pictures of the building to the presentation section of the next-meeting webpage.

A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to adjourn the meeting. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.

Chris Bator – yes

Kathy Born – yes

Conrad Crawford – yes

Margaret Drury - yes

Barry Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

The meeting ended at 9:39 p.m.