

Regular Board Meeting
Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday, October 17, 2018 5:30pm
Robert Healy Public Safety Center / Cambridge Police Station / Community Room
125 Sixth Street, Cambridge, MA

APPROVED Meeting Minutes

Before the Regular Board Meeting, a Design Review Committee meeting at the Police Station, 125 Sixth Street, Cambridge, was held to discuss the Infill Development Concept Plan amendment. Besides CRA representatives, there were attendees from Cambridge Community Development, Boston Properties, Lemon Brooke, Bank of America, and Cambridge Innovation Center.

Call

After the Design Review Committee meeting ended, Chair Kathleen Born called the regular Board meeting to order at 5:51 p.m. The meeting was recorded by the CRA and John Hawkinson. Other Board members present were Vice Chair Margaret Drury, Treasurer Christopher Bator, Assistant Treasurer Conrad Crawford, and Assistant Secretary Barry Zevin. Executive Director Tom Evans and other CRA staff members, Ellen Shore, Jason Zogg, Carlos Peralta, Alex Levering were also in attendance.

Public Comment

No requests for public comment were made.

The motion to close public comment was seconded and carried unanimously.

Minutes

1. Motion: To accept the minutes of the Regular CRA Board Meeting on September 12, 2018

There were no comments.

The motion to accept the minutes of the Regular Board meeting on September 12, 2018 and to place them on file carried unanimously.

2. Motion: To accept the minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Planning Board and CRA Board Meeting on October 2, 2018

In response to Ms. Born, Mr. Evans said that the minutes would be transmitted to CDD and the proponent.

Ms. Shore noted that some grammatical edits from Mr. Zevin were received and will be incorporated.

The motion to accept the minutes of the Joint Meeting of the Planning Board and CRA Board Meeting on October 2, 2018 and to place them on file carried unanimously.

Communications

3. October 3, 2018 Letter from the East Cambridge Planning Team regarding proposed Amendment to the Infill Development Concept Plan

Mr. Evans said that the letter was received at the October 3rd meeting, so it could not enter the CRA public record last month.

Mr. Zevin questioned the accuracy of the reasons listed in the letter. For instance, the proposed building height was actually 200 feet, not 250 feet. Mr. Evans added that the Binney Street proposal was in a zone that only allowed 200 feet.

The motion to place the letter on file carried unanimously.

Reports, Motions, and Discussion Items

4. 88 Ames Street Signage Updates:

a. Bank of America Schematic Signage Proposal (continued item)

Matthew Murphy, project manager for the new financial center, and Jason Parillo, of Back Bay Sign Company, presented their proposal for the signage package for the Bank of America and Merrill Lynch space within the Proto building at 88 Ames Street. The center will be on the second floor. The first floor will have an ATM and serve as a gateway to the second floor. Several design concept iterations have been made on the package with feedback from the CRA and the City.

Mr. Parillo spoke about the technical elements of the signage. A revised streetscape view showed the placement of the horizontal entrance wall sign, the blade sign, two interior window hanging signs, and decals on the front and on the door. There will also be a TV media screen on the north-facing wall. The wall sign has illuminated channel letters with a painted metal background. The blade sign has the same composition. The wall sign is six inches deep with decorative red metal behind the white panel. The flag sign will be mounted slightly above the wall sign. The two illuminated interior hanging signs are ten inches behind the glass. He showed some examples of content that could appear on the TV screen.

In response to past feedback from the CRA Board, Mr. Murphy noted that the vertical banners were eliminated. Although in-boarding of the wall sign was suggested, Mr. Murphy said that this would not provide sufficient visual attention to the storefront from a distance.

Mr. Zevin did not agree with Mr. Murphy and felt that the sign did not fit nicely. He would have liked Boston Properties to be present tonight because there are a number of different ways that signs are attached to this building – blade signs off of columns and off of mullions, banners that vary in heights and heights of attachment, signs inboard of the glass and now outboard of the glass. He was not happy that the sign obscures the glass. He wished that Boston Properties had established some rules to give more order to the entire package of signage facing the street.

There was a discussion about increasing the size of the horizontal sign to fill the space above the doorway. Mr. Murphy said that the two signs should not conflict with each other. Mr. Zevin suggested switching the heights of the signs so that the blade signs along the street are more consistent. Mr. Murphy said that there is also a fire beacon that needs to be taken into account.

Mr. Bator said that the CRA signage guidelines were created to avoid these design review discussions in regular meetings. Mr. Zevin said that this does not conform to the guidelines with respect to being respectful of the building's architecture. Mr. Zevin would like to revise the CRA guidelines so that a buildings' façades get more consideration with respect to signage.

Mr. Zogg suggested a Board approval with further reviews by staff. He also passed out a printed email from a citizen who was concerned about the lighting, especially on the second floor. As required in past signage approvals, a dimming feature should be a requirement and suggested that the Board consider an hour for lights to be turned off. Mr. Evans said that all of Ames should be addressed, including the Broad since there's now living space across from it. Suzannah Bigolin, from CDD, who was in attendance, did not think the City had a dimming ordinance.

Ms. Drury said that as retail grows in Kendall Square, the CRA may need to have some of the rules that Mr. Zevin mentioned and that uniformity should be asked of Boston Properties where appropriate. Mr. Bator noted that more conformity may not be as interesting.

Mr. Zogg said that content for the large TV screen, which will be facing Broadway, is not addressed in the KSURP signage guidelines. Examples of weather and time displays, as shown in the presentation, are considered appropriate. Mr. Murphy said that other content would be discussed in a future design review. Mr. Evans added that there was a similar scenario when Ambit moved into a Pioneer Way office and suggested that ideas formulated then could be the starting point. Although this is not a digital billboard, there are some state standards that are relative. Mr. Zevin had no issues with the signs that are inside Cambridge Trust but are extremely visible. These display a combination of information about weather, transit, and bank advertising. Mr. Evans said that the monitor's proximity to the glass classifies it as a sign. Mr. Evans said that there are rules regulating signage that's relative to on-premises activities.

Mr. Evans suggested a technical review by staff to coordinate blade sign heights and a content protocol for the screen. He will report back to the Board if there are any issues.

The motion approving the conceptual signage proposal for Bank of America at 88 Ames Street on Parcel 4 of the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area with the understanding that illumination will be dimmable and further review by staff was made.

A roll call was taken.

Mr. Bator - yes
Ms. Drury - yes
Ms. Born - yes
Mr. Crawford - yes
Mr. Zevin - no

The motion carried with one objection.

b. Blue Bottle Signage Proposal (new item)

Carrie Wolcott, the East Coast Blue Bottle project manager, spoke about her proposal for two blade signs on the corner of the building and on the front of the building, both attached to columns. The aluminum signs are not illuminated and are painted white with the Blue Bottle logo.

Mr. Zevin said that the attachment detail needs to be worked out since there's no 2x4 blocking (as shown) and the joint between the columns could be an issue. As discussed with Boston Properties, Ms. Willcoat said the plan is to remove the aluminum casing from the columns, to provide blocking, to attach the support to the blocking, to cut the aluminum to fit around it, concealing the attachment and the screws. Mr. Zevin said that he wouldn't mind seeing the screws. Mr. Zevin said that the one column has a camera and the other has a fire beacon which might be obstructed with the planned installation. Mr. Evans noted that the blade height is not the same as Bank of America's blade sign. There was a discussion of mullion versus column placement. Mr. Zevin suggested confirming that the Cava banner will have the screws exposed.

Mr. Evans explained that engineering drawings are part of the design guideline requirements that are approved administratively after the Board's approval.

The motion approving the conceptual signage proposal for Blue Bottle at 88 Ames Street on Parcel 4 of the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area including staff review of the anchored detailed carried unanimously.

Ms. Wolcott said that hours are typically 7am-7pm. Construction is scheduled to start in two weeks with an opening in February or March.

5. Affordable Housing Site Improvement Grant Pilot Request for Just-A-Start Linwood Court Redevelopment

Mr. Evans said that there is no packet material for this item. In the beginning of 2018, a letter was received from Just-A-Start (JAS) requesting supplemental funding for the Squirrelwood project following up on the funding given to JAS for sprinklers in their consolidated project. After discussions with Board members and affordable housing affiliates, the creation of a pilot program to support affordable housing construction or enhancement seemed warranted. This could be a funding grant or a loan program for site work, landscaping, resiliency, etc. The Linwood Court project is in the former Wellington-Harrington Urban Renewal Project Area.

Liz Marsh, from JAS, gave a brief overview of the Squirrelwood project. It is a rehab and refinance of two existing sites – eight buildings at Linwood Court and two buildings at Squirrel Brand, which is across the street. The plan is to rehab the 65 existing units as well as build 23 new units at Linwood within two free-standing buildings and an addition to an existing building. There are currently bids out for general contractors and equity investors. The plan is to hopefully close in March. JAS has many funding sources including Mass Housing, DHCD, the City, and state historic tax credits, 13A preservation initiative, and workforce housing.

The request is for site improvement for the entire project, although most of the work is on the Linwood site as it's older and has underutilized space. Many short-term and long-term bike parking spaces are being added, as well as a gazebo, a small grilling area, and a small hardscaped outdoor area. This will be a quiet respite outdoor space, as desired by the tenants. Ms. Drury said that the CRA wants to help fund things that are not covered through other sources.

Mr. Evans said that the funding money would be in the form of a soft loan, rather than a grant. If the project is sold, there would be repayment. Responding to Mr. Crawford, Ms. Marsh said that this project has more site work planned than normal and includes an underground drainage system and utility upgrades. Mr. Crawford said that this is an opportunity for the CRA to support the aesthetic nature of affordable housing as urban livability is an important component.

Mr. Evans explained that there is no Board decision being requested at this point. A more formal proposal will be written up with Just-A-Start in the next few months which will come to the Board at that time.

Ms. Marsh said that the rebuilt park area will be on the Linwood site but it is an area for residents of both buildings. It will have a great community feeling. There was a discussion of the breakdown of the units with regards to the number of bedrooms.

Heather Hoffman, an East Cambridge resident, said that this is well-integrated into the neighborhood and doesn't call out that it is affordable housing. This is the way affordable housing should be built.

Mr. Bator emphasized that the Board wants to help but there is a need to make sure that these types of requests are consistent with the strategic plan of the CRA.

6. Report: 2017 Audit Report

Mr. Evans said that the audit in the packet is a draft. This year, more coordination was required with the Retirement System and the City. For various reasons, there has not been adequate time for a full review by the City. The auditor's time has also been taken up by a terminal illness in his family and he is not able to attend tonight's meeting. Although the audit is posted on the CRA website, the presentation by the auditor will happen in November. Formally, Mr. Evans said that the audit is not approved but rather accepted. Administratively, staff will

work to finalize the audit and send it to the City before the next board meeting so that the City can utilize the numbers for their 2018 CAFR reporting.

In response to Mr. Bator, Mr. Evans said that Mr. Clark wasn't planning to write a management letter. He does, however, want the CRA to move to a municipal accounting system that is better equipped to handle fund accounting than Quickbooks.

The motion to table any further discussion of the 2017 audit carried unanimously.

7. Update: Foundry Redevelopment Process

Mr. Evans requested to move to item #8 so that the topic can be discussed when Kathryn Madden arrives.

8. Report: Property Management Services

Mr. Peralta said that the three-year contract with Brightview expires at the end of December. A landscape property maintenance RFP, which included snow maintenance as and add-alternate, was posted in early September. The channels used for advertising are noted in Mr. Peralta's memo. Unfortunately, most firms were not taking new clients. Two proposals were received – Brightview and Cambridge Snow Management. The scope for the snow removal is smaller this year since the Porkchop was transferred to the City.

The motion authorizing the Chair and Executive Director to enter into a 3-year landscape services contract with Brightview for maintenance of CRA-owned open space sites in the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area carried unanimously.

The motion authorizing the Chair and Executive Director to enter into a 3-year snow removal contract with Cambridge Snow Management for snow clearance services along CRA-owned property in the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area carried unanimously.

Mr. Peralta will remind the City snow removal department that the City is now in charge of snow removal along the Porkchop parcel.

9. Staff Report

Mr. Evans said that the archivist company, King Information Services, will be archiving CRA in-office and offsite paper records. There are specific products that they recommend staff purchase for better filing. Ms. Levering has been leading the efforts on this project. Staff is reconfiguring the office space to coexist with the Opportunity Space on the eighth floor. Potential program operators for the Space are being interviewed next week. Staff is hoping to keep the corner location but have it tie into the larger shared space system.

The forward calendar will continue to have discussions regarding the Infill Development Concept Plan amendment, the Foundry letter agreement, a presentation by Boston Properties on their refined Innovation Space Plan, and the 2019 budget.

The Sixth Street Connector is almost open. There are some small items on the punch list. A big item, however, is that a traffic signal post is right in the way of the bike path. This was supposed to be removed by the Ames Street project but some parts are on back order. Opening just the pedestrian walk is being discussed with Boston Properties and the City. In response to Mr. Bator, Mr. Evans said that a formal opening is planned. Mr. Peralta said that the plaque dedicating the bike path to Kittie Knox, a bicycling activist, is not ready so there will be an opening in the spring with Councilor Simmons and others. When the Officer Loughrey pedestrian path is opened, the plan is to take pictures and promote that occasion via social media. Mr. Evans said that the landscape plan of the Connector was redone to be a xeriscape using a different planting palate that requires less irrigation and will be more sustainable.

The CRA successfully participated in Park(ing) Day and was able to show the Foundry model and drawings of the building. The participant stalls were oddly positioned between a Jersey barrier and an active lane of traffic on Main Street. Although interaction with the public was awkward, there were visitors.

The 145 Broadway curtain wall is nearly complete with just some minor adjustments underway. Staff is working with Boston Properties, the City and VHB for an early delivery of the streetscape designed by Alta to include a leading item of the cycle track design, which is actually a Phase II requirement. It makes more sense to move this up to Phase I than putting the street back to its original state and then redoing the work in Phase II. The work involves a slight change to the landscaping plans of the retail edge of the space but Mr. Evans said this would work better for a future retailer.

Last week, all staff members, except Ms. Shore, attended the fall ULI meeting in Boston. Ms. Levering and Mr. Evans put a lot of effort into Kendall tours.

The meeting moved back to agenda item #7.

7. Update: Foundry Redevelopment Process

Ms. Madden discussed the design process and the operations process. Cambridge 7 is working on the architectural feasibility study will most likely be issued to the City in January 2019. This is an important decision point regarding the capital cost of the building. Mr. Evans noted that the stucco building has been deemed as unsound so it needs to come down in any event and the size and dimensions of the addition are under discussion. Interviews for the CM-at-risk occurred today. Mr. Evans is on the committee. Five firms submitted and three were interviewed. The schedule is to get them on board by late October, early November. The selected firm will also weigh in on the costs and use their expertise with building strategies and ways to save money.

The CRA staff has been working with Lemelson-MIT, representing the Foundry Consortium (Operator) on a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) which will lay out the expectations and deliverables for both entities over the next year. The hope is to have a new nonprofit 501(c)3 in a year. The Foundry Consortium has done a great job with outreach with makerspace community and workforce groups. Their next focus is with the artist community. The Operator is participating in the design with Cambridge 7 Associates, the City, and the CRA. The Operator will be working out a staffing and business plan, program coordination, and scheduling, and a leasing strategy, and will work with the CRA on a property management strategy. The RFP for the property manager cannot be issued until the space and the architecture is better defined, and at the same time, the CM-at-risk needs input from this group.

The Foundry Advisory Committee (FAC) members have expertise to help with facilities management and leasing discussions. In the MOA, the CRA would provide real estate and staffing proformas through an engagement with Columbia Real Estate Services. The FAC will also be helpful determining tenant principles, a reporting system, and language for sublease agreements. There was a discussion about the process for public art installation within the building being formulated this fall through January, which the Cambridge Arts Council is leading. This needs to be synced with the architecture.

Mr. Evans added that the MOA will include an operational support funding component to Lemelson-MIT, on behalf of the Consortium. The advance would come out of the two-million-dollar reserve to help with capacity building. Regarding scheduling, Ms. Madden added that once the feasibility study is out, a community meeting would be held, and the project would come before the historical commission, the Planning Board, BZA, as well as the City Council to appropriate funds. Mr. Evans said that, so far, the City has appropriated six million dollars to the project per the Disposition Agreement from two years ago. When the Demonstration Plan was amended, the Council acted to commit a larger fund to the project but they have to go through a budget year appropriation. The goal is to have a better understanding of the cost at that time. Since Mr. Evans expects this to happen in January, the 2018 budgeted CRA funds for the Foundry will be carried into 2019.

In response to Ms. Born, Mr. Evans said that he expects the property manager to be an entity rather than a single person. In response to Mr. Crawford, Ms. Madden said that the 501(c)3 should exist by October 2019. Betsy

Boyle from Lemelson-MIT said that until that entity exists, Lemelson-MIT could hire an entity on behalf of the Consortium and any contract would be transferred to the 501(c)3.

10. Quarterly Financial Update and 2018 Budget Revision

Mr. Evans said that he recently met with the Treasurer and Assistant Treasurer regarding the revisions although this is usually done in the middle of the year. With respect to the operating revenue, work is not being done on the Windsor Street project so the CRA will not be receiving CPA funds, nor spending them, resulting in a decrease in expenses in the Capital Improvements line item. There might be some additional development rights proceeds received this year from the Broad Institute. The terms have been agreed to and the lawyers are working on the legal property development agreement for their 14,000 square feet additional space within the envelope of their building, which involves converting a portion of their mechanical M1 floor into offices. Another change to the 2018 budget is re-adjusting the reimbursement from Veolia for rebuilding portions of the Grand Junction Park.

There are also minor increases and decreases within the budget in the marketing, insurance, and office equipment line items. There is an increased furniture budget due to items specified by the archivist and office reconfiguration on the 8th floor. Although the goal is to keep the sum total of each section of the budget unchanged, there is an increase in the telecommunications section. There is a new item for Errors and Omissions insurance (account number 6234) based on advice from our insurance agent. Per the Board's votes in past meetings, there is a shift from Planning and Policy line item in the Professional Services category into the Transportation Planning and Marketing Graphic Design accounts. Mr. Evans noted the new Forward Fund subaccounts per the auditor's request to track expenses for each year separately. Next month, a 2019 budget will be brought to the Board.

A motion to approve revisions to the 2018 CRA budget was made and seconded. A roll call was taken.

Mr. Bator – yes
Ms. Drury - yes
Ms. Born - yes
Mr. Crawford - yes
Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried unanimously.

At 7:41 p.m., the Board concluded all of the business set forth on the regular agenda. CRA attorney, Jeffrey Mullan was in attendance. Mr. Evans suggested adjourning to Executive Session, getting a report from the parties in the room, and then asking the parties to leave while the Board continues the conversation.

Ms. Born called for a motion for the Board to convene in executive session for the purpose of discussing a potential property transaction for the purpose of developing below market rate housing which if done in public session could have a detrimental effect on the CRA. The Board would not reconvene in open session.

A roll call was taken.

Bator – yes
Drury - yes
Born - yes
Crawford - yes
Zevin – yes

The Board convened to Executive Session at 7:49.