

Regular Board Meeting
Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday July 15, 2020 at 5:30pm
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually via Zoom

Approved Meeting Minutes

At 5:35 p.m., Alex Levering read the opening statements:

In response to the current COVID-19 situation, the Governor has suspended certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law allowing government bodies to meet using remote participation. In accordance with the Order, the CRA is holding this Board meeting virtually via Zoom Webinar, with the ability for the public to participate either through a computer, smart phone, or by calling in via a landline. In this Zoom Webinar format, all attendees, except panelists, will 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 stating your comment or question, you will be re-muted. Alternatively, you can use the QA function to type your question or comment and these will be read by the host during the public comment sessions. If you are calling in via a landline and have no access to computer or smart phone, you can call the CRA's main line at 617-492-6800, then press extension 11 to bypass all of the opening messages. Comments can also be emailed to planning@CambridgeRedevelopment.org.

The Board meeting materials can be found on the CRA's next meeting webpage. This meeting is being recorded by the CRA.

Call

Chair Kathleen Born called the virtual meeting. A roll call of Board members, and a confirmation that the meeting was audible, was taken. Treasurer Chris Bator will be arriving around 6:00pm.

Vice Chair Conrad Crawford - 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, Erica Schwarz, and Hema Kailasam were present as panelists. Ellen Shore was present as an attendee.

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

Public Comment

Heather Hoffman commented on the letter of agreement with MIT. She said that the name Loughery Way is not commonly known. She is concerned that the utility work being planned along the Sixth Street walkway will jeopardize the health of the trees. The trees have already taken a lot of abuse and there is more to come, including the loss of sunshine. There should be no unnecessary digging allowed.

Mark Boswell said he is commenting on behalf of Cambridge Bicycle Safety, a local bicycle infrastructure adversary group, regarding a document shown in a recent presentation on the MXD substation project describing the petition to amend Article 14 of the Cambridge zoning ordinance. He asked for clarification regarding

maintaining bicycle parking ratios but allowing modifications to the dimensional standards. He said that as cycling becomes increasing popular as a transportation alternative in Cambridge, it is important to have an adequate amount of good quality bike parking in new developments. There have also been warnings from the Cambridge Police Department about sharp increases in bicycle theft so secure parking is important. Ms. Born noted that Mr. Evans and Mr. Crawford are both avid cyclists and advocates. Mr. Evans said that the exact modifications are still being assessed. The goal is to provide easily accessible parking for both the commercial and residential components of the project. The current numbers and dimensional standards are straining available space. Discussions are occurring with Boston Properties and the CDD staff. This topic will be brought up later in tonight's agenda.

Jackie Jones, from the Transit Advisory Board, asked about keeping sidewalks and areas safe for pedestrians during construction as it is difficult to stay six feet apart when sidewalks are constricted. Ms. Evans said that there are active conversations among the CRA, Kendall Square Association, the City, Boston Properties, and MIT to reconfigure Main Street during the Covid time period. The goal is to allow for better social distancing with respect to walking and bike facilities while maintaining access for transit and construction vehicles. A proposal is forthcoming. Ms. Jones added that the shared streets project is a great method.

Bob Simha commented on the letter from MIT with respect to Potter Street, a private way. The condominium at 303 Third Street owns half of Potter Street, but has had little communication from MIT except for some reassurances. Abutters are concerned about the evolution of Potter Street and Fifth Street as the Volpe site is developed. MIT says it will engage with the CRA but has not shared details of its plans. Abutters should be included in such discussions. Ms. Born will take this up later in agenda item #2.

Cynthia Cook had technical difficulties with her audio. Ms. Levering suggested that she type in her comment or email planning@CambridgeRedevelopment.org or call the CRA main line.

There were no other requests to offer public comment and the public comment session was closed.

Minutes

1. Motion: To accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on June 17, 2020

There were no corrections or amendments.

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on June 17, 2020 and place them on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – yes

Ms. Drury – yes

Mr. Bator – absent

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Communications

2. Letter Agreement with MIT regarding ongoing design coordination between Parcel Two of the KSURP, the Volpe development, and the Sixth Street Walkway

Mr. Evans said that this agreement grew out of the desire to coordinate the connections to and through the Sixth Street walkway and bikeway. There is currently construction work underway at the northern end of the walkway to make a storm water connection from the GSA property into the storm water pipe that runs underneath Sixth Street. As that is happening, staff is being thoughtful about open space and future pedestrian circulation from Sixth Street to the revised security perimeter of the GSA property. Staff is looking at open space connections on both sides of the walkway, as well as integrating the circulation paths resulting from the Eversource project. MITIMCO attended the open house meeting so they are aware of the CRA design plans. Staff will continue reaching out. There is no information available from MITIMCO.

Mr. Crawford applauded the staff's vigilance when it comes to permeability across the walkway to the commercial district. He suggested that this principle be continued to the Fifth Street connection across Binney Street. In response to Ms. Born, Mr. Evans said that although Potter Street isn't mentioned specifically, there is a general idea that one will be able to walk from Third Street to Sixth Street through the Volpe site in several paths. In response to Mr. Zevin, Mr. Evans confirmed that he hasn't seen any mention of vehicular connections crossing the walkway.

Mr. Evans noted that Ms. Cook, who was having previous technical difficulties, was now requesting to comment. She is from Earth Energy USA and wanted to know how the Board felt about geothermal heating and cooling. Mr. Evans said the City explores whether geothermal is an option on all its construction projects. Because of Kendall Square's industrial legacy, removal of soil has been prohibitively expensive; this is the situation at the Foundry project. The density of Kendall Square poses problems for geothermal systems, so they are not being considered in the KSURP. Ms. Cook spoke about her company's product. Mr. Evans said that the CRA has received information about the product.

Chris Bator arrived at the meeting at 5:56 p.m.

3. Additional written communications received since the publication of this meeting notice.

There were no additional communications.

A motion was moved to place the communications on file by Ms. Drury. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Ms. Bator - yes

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – yes

Ms. Drury – yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Reports, Motions, and Discussion Items

4. Update: Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House Revitalization Strategy

Ms. Schwarz introduced the new Executive Director Kim Massenburg and Director of Finance Cory Haynes, who have both recently joined the Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House (MFNH). Ms. Schwarz said that the first phase of a feasibility study has been completed. A report from architect Studio G will be publicized after the legal and real estate financial structure for the project is determined. Ms. Schwarz, Dr. Massenburg, and Mr. Haynes are working on outreach to the Port community and beyond, as well as to MFNH program participants; this will be implemented soon. The real estate development consultants are further analyzing the development budgets and proformas to assess how the market and other CRA obligations impact the project budget. Once these are done, the architects will begin schematic design.

Dr. Massenburg spoke about the MFNH programming that has been occurring over the past three months during Covid. The MFNH provides a food pantry, a community enhancement team, and youth services to the local community and beyond. Throughout the entire time of Covid, the doors have remained open. Dr. Massenburg went into more specifics about each of the programs. She thanked Ms. Schwarz and the CRA for their support and expressed gratitude with the progress being made on all fronts. She spoke about her background and her goal to get the MFNH back up to par and to continue serving the community. MFNH exists to help families be self-sufficient. Mr. Haynes said that his first goal was stabilization. The expenses are under control and things are going in the right direction.

Ms. Drury was glad to hear the progress being made. Mr. Crawford said he can help with the pantry's bike deliveries. Mr. Bator said that the CRA Board is pleased and excited to be working with the MFNH. Ms. Born said that she is looking for a long collaboration. Mr. Evans added that there is a great vision for the project. Servicing the community during reconstruction will be the next challenge.

5. Presentation: Draft Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan Amendment

Looking at the summary in the board packet, Mr. Evans said that there are two topics in the urban renewal plan amendment. One goal is to adjust the urban renewal plan to match the Eversource plan so it aligns with many of the MXD conversations that have occurred over the past six months. The other topic is a focus on revising the name of the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan to the Kendall Square Urban Redevelopment Plan. The idea is to remove the “urban renewal” reference from the specific plan document as the agency moves forward in its next round of work. The urban renewal plan was a component of the nation’s urban renewal projects that launched in the 50s and 60s. Those projects, in cities throughout the US, had a disparate impact on people of color, particularly black neighborhoods, in the northeast and other parts of the country. While the CRA’s work as a redevelopment agency is important and community focused, its history has been associated with some rather troubling urban policies that had some direct racist implications as American cities evolved. Mr. Evans has not found direct impacts specific to the Kendall Square plan or other redevelopment plans that had urban renewal funding and neighborhood clearance components, partially because of Cambridge activism at the time. Once staff is back in the office, he would like to initiate a research project to go through the mostly offsite records, to fully understand the taking and relocation impacts on the residential neighborhoods in the 50s and 60s. If there is an amendment, it makes sense to change the name so that it better aligns with the work the CRA is doing today.

Mr. Evans continued speaking about the other changes. The urban renewal area that was formed in the 60s laid out its own land use controls. In its first amendment, the MXD district was created to promote mostly commercial and mixed-use development in the three blocks that were no longer owned by the federal government. It also created a new zoning layer, Article 14 of the Cambridge Zoning code. Whenever the plan changes, the MXD zoning language needs to change as well, and vice versa. There have been nine amendments to the plan that have involved land use changes of the MXD district. This would be the tenth change to the MXD district and the 11th change to the original Kendall plan.

Most of what is contained in the draft amendment is also contained in the MXD petition, which was discussed at last month’s Board meeting. There are eight main topics to accommodate 800,000 square feet of new commercial development, most of which is on Parcel 2 of the plan area. This raises the gross floor area to just over five million square feet. The different GFA controls noted throughout both the plan and the MXD zoning would all need to be modified to accommodate the 800,000 square feet. The housing requirement changes so that it is all tied to the first commercial building, rather than being delivered in two phases. Although this delays the initial delivery of the 200,000 square feet of housing that was tied to the 325 Main Street building, the full complement of housing would be completed sooner. The document would clearly state that the GFA for the substation is exempt so its location, which is already creating a financial challenge, would not negatively affect the commercial GFA. The height limits would be increased similarly to those specified in the MXD document proposal. The residential height limit would be 400 feet, which is 50 feet higher than what is currently allowed. The 200-foot height limit would be lifted so the entire project area would have a 250-foot height limit (which was the case until 2015). There is a slight modification to the active use or retail requirement to make it easier to put a residential lobby in a narrow residential building. The current requirement for over two thirds of the façade of a building to be active use would limit the amount of residential services on the ground floor of the planned building’s narrow façade along Broadway. The parking requirement for residential buildings would be reduced from 0.4 spaces per unit to 0.25, which seems to meet the market need in other buildings in the Kendall area. The existing high bike parking ratios and space requirements create a footprint that is difficult to achieve with the substation. The proposal would allow flexibility in meeting the dimensional standards and/or change the ratio of the number of spaces that are provided by allowing spaces to be shared between commercial and residential users. The bike parking at the Proto residential building is not being fully used. The Blue Bike sharing utilization within the project area is high. The last change extends the timeline of the plan to 2035. It is understood that the Eversource project will take time and the corresponding development within the plan area might not get underway immediately after the substation is completed. This date change ensures that the plan extends through the delivery of the last commercial building. According to the State, the first and last items of the proposed amendment make this a Major Plan Amendment. Therefore, the plan is subject to approvals by the City Council, MEPA, and the State DHCD.

In response to Ms. Drury, Mr. Evans agreed that the words “renewal” and “redevelopment” are very similar in their meaning. However, “urban renewal” as a national policy was tied to the idea of what was then called “slum clearance.” “Redevelopment” is a broader term for cities transitioning from industrial to residential or more intensive commercial uses. It’s not greenfield development and it’s not suburban expansion. It’s not creating new

land but reusing land in the urban environment. Urban renewal had evolved with a substantial amount of funding to clear out large tracts of land which negatively impacted low-income, ethnic, and black communities. “Renewal” is associated with a distrust of urban planning and government that didn’t represent the best interests of the community. Many decisions were made behind closed doors. Mr. Evans noted that James Baldwin called urban renewal “Negro Removal” when talking about the San Francisco area in the 60s. Mr. Evans added that in his previous work in San Francisco, plans were renamed as the agency attempted to reconcile its history by attempting to make some form of reparations to those communities that were impacted. By renaming the Kendall Square plan he is emphasizing that CRA work is focused intently on helping those communities that were disproportionately impacted by the federal programs of the past.

Ms. Drury suggested adding the word community to the plan’s name. Mr. Evans said that urban renewal plans adopted after 1996 are named Community Revitalization and Development Plans by the State. Mr. Crawford agreed that focusing on impacted communities in Cambridge as it relates to redevelopment is the right thing for the CRA to do, considering that racism and white supremacy are such wide ranging problems. The CRA should continue to invest in programs like the Link, push for inclusionary zoning, and maintain the integrity of the public realm so all who want to be in these places feel comfortable. Ms. Born said that this is a great start. She is excited about the process of a new plan. The renaming is a nice aspect. There was a discussion of the Riverview Plan. Mr. Evans read a comment by Ms. Hoffman stating that the removal of the industrial jobs in Kendall Square did impact the working-class communities.

Mr. Zevin said that the complexity of this project should give the CRA more pause. He noted uncertainties in the financial, engineering, and regulatory components of the project. The deciding factor of whether this project should move forward or stop is not clear. Mr. Evans said that the owners of the land are closer to the technical analysis. Currently, the CRA is trying to provide another option for the City Council to consider for the Eversource substation. There are other hurdles outside the CRA’s jurisdiction (e.g., review by the State Energy Facilities Siting Board).

Mike Tilford from Boston Properties (BXP) said that he appreciates Mr. Zevin’s comment because it’s true. This is a fragile and atypical proposal. Sixteen months ago, a group met at DPW and were shown the issue of the substation at Fulkerson and asked for other possibilities. At that time, BXP was winding through the 2015 up-zoning but offered this proposal. BXP is nervous about the financial risk. There are also physical and legal complications. What is ultimately proposed, and hopefully acceptable, will not make all people happy, as that goal is unachievable. To Mr. Zevin’s points, Mr. Tilford is open to a waypoint marker. He said that there have been a substantial number of meetings, each of which revealed new considerations. All parties are conceptually trying. This is a public-private effort and if it’s not working for either party, the proposal can be withdrawn. BXP has received a preliminary pricing to relocate the parking and the substation which will be shared with CRA staff. He is confident that the 800,000 square foot number is justified by land economics.

There were no other comments from the Board. Ms. Born took comments from the public.

Ms. Levering read Bob Simha’s clarification on the name of the Riverview plan. She read Ms. Hoffman’s strong objections to rewarding Boston Properties with additional development rights in return for its help to solve a problem it was instrumental in creating while the local communities bear the burden from a problem they didn’t create. Ms. Levering read Jackie Jones’ statement applauding CRA’s efforts to acknowledge and change the plan name.

Mr. Evans clarified that there is no action to take tonight. He said that there are two documents that need CRA Board approval which will then be passed on to the City Council for review and comment and will then come back to the CRA Board.

6. Update: COVID Small Business Programs and Forward Fund Disbursement

Motion: To transfer \$5,000 from the CRA COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program to the COVID Small Business Loan Program and to return \$25,000 from the COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program to the Forward Fund program to support previous technical assistance grant recipient(s).

Mr. Peralta used a PowerPoint presentation. On June 17th, the CRA Board voted to extend the program area of the CRA Small Business Covid Relief Grant program. This allowed businesses in East Cambridge and certain areas in Cambridge that are located in the NRS area to apply for funds to help their small businesses during the pandemic. Seven additional applications were received. The application process is now closed. A total of \$129,827 has been awarded to 23 small businesses. He gave a breakdown of the grantees' zip code location, demographic, and business type. Mr. Peralta added that when the Board initially approved the Covid assistance grant, it also allowed previously approved Forward Fund awardees to use their remaining grant funds for immediate operations relief rather than for their Forward Fund project. Only two out of the seven outstanding Forward Fund awardees requested immediate relief, totaling \$17,500. The other awardees are continuing to work on their Forward Fund projects. The Dance Complex (TDC) has completed their feasibility project using a \$10,000 2019 Forward Fund Planning Grant. TDC is ready to proceed with the replacement of their chair lift and has submitted a letter, found in the Board packet, explaining their request for a Forward Fund capital infrastructure grant. Grants of this type are expected after a feasibility project is completed. Although the 2020 Forward Fund was halted due to the pandemic and its funds moved to the Covid Grants program, these funds were not completely exhausted. Mr. Peralta is requesting \$25,000 be moved back to the Forward Fund and allocated to TDC's lift project. Mr. Peralta introduced Peter DiMuro, the Executive Director of The Dance Complex who went into more detail of the project and spoke about the current and future programming of his organization.

In response to Mr. Bator, Mr. DiMuro said that TDC is resuming operations with safety precautions as well as some physical modifications to help with client circulation. He spoke about the programming and his outlook for increasing attendance going forward. Mr. Bator is supportive of the motion. Mr. Crawford is hopeful for the organization and the programming that TDC offers.

Ms. Kailasam updated the Board on the CRA Loan Program which is part of the Mayor's Disaster Relief Fund (MDRF). The awards went out on July 6, all awardees have been notified and have received their documents. The program is almost fully subscribed. There will be one additional loan if tonight's motion is approved. 104 loans were awarded, with a total of \$1,497,500. A breakdown by business type shows that the targeted brick-and-mortar businesses were reached. A presentation slide showed a profile of the MDRF and the CRA loan awards as well as a demographic breakdown. Ms. Kailasam gave an overview of the process. Discussions about the loan process started in April. The application intake step kicked off in May. The committee met during the month of June to evaluate all the applicants. The funds were able to meet all the applications scoring a minimum evaluation criterion of 60. The funds are ready to be dispersed. An account has been set up with Cambridge Savings Bank (CSB). Ms. Kailasam will be working with CSB, who is ready to disperse the funds as the recipients return their completed documents. A heat map of businesses who received loans showed that the program is servicing a lot of Cambridge.

Mr. Peralta explained the Grant Fund reallocation proposal in the motion. He said that the Board approved to allocate the \$300,000 budgeted for the Forward Fund to the Small Business Relief Grant program. Of this amount, there is still \$122,673 remaining. Funds already disbursed include 23 small business relief grants (\$129,827), two Forward Fund operational relief grants (\$17,500), a proposed \$25,000 Forward Fund Grant to The Dance Complex, and a proposed \$5,000 shift to the CRA loan program to cover one last loan applicant.

The motion to transfer \$5,000 from the CRA COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program to the COVID Small Business Loan Program and to return \$25,000 from the COVID-19 Small Business Grant Program to the Forward Fund program to support previous technical assistance grant recipient(s) 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.

Mr. Evans said that a decision is needed on what to do with the remaining funds. In response to Mr. Bator, Mr. Evans said that the City is now shifting its staff energy into supporting the reopening process. Mr. Bator said that he would be open to proposals from CRA staff regarding the allocation of unspent funds to continue helping the

community during the pandemic. Mr. Bator expressed his appreciation of the staff's efforts. He asked for a general status of the businesses that have been given CRA support at the appropriate time. Mr. Crawford noted that only three childcare facilities were listed and wondered if this was an issue that the CRA could assess. Mr. Evans mentioned other nonprofit sectors where financial assistance programs haven't been as available. He added that the staff bandwidth was pushed to administer the grants and loans.

Mr. DiMuro thanked the CRA.

7. Foundry Project Update

Ms. Schwarz said that demolition and some enabling construction work at the Foundry has resumed. There is no date yet for the project to come before the Planning Board but it is expected to happen sometime in August. The City is now providing updates on the construction project on its own website. From this City page, people can sign up to get any updates. The CRA's Foundry page has a link to the City's Foundry construction page. Construction bid documents have been issued. Construction is now on schedule to be completed by December 2021, delayed a bit because of Covid. The Foundry Consortium (FC) Board finalized its executive search document and is now completing an outreach list. The Executive search committee will reconvene in August so the position can be marketed by late August or early September. The Foundry Advisory Committee (FAC) met virtually on July 10, 2020. The April meeting was canceled because of Covid. Ms. Schwarz showed a picture taken at the Foundry on July 9 from the edge of Rogers Street, at the Verizon property.

Ms. Schwarz shared the Foundry Performance Metrics document, which the FAC saw at their recent meeting. A few months ago, the CRA Board approved the lease terms, which will help support the lease that the CRA will have with the FC. The Performance Metrics Document focuses on the data the FC will need to collect so that the CRA, the FAC, the City, and the nonprofit itself can use to analyze how the Foundry is doing. Rather than requiring tight targets to be met, a decision was made to collect data for analysis. Every year, the FC will collect data and create a report based on the analysis of the collected data. They will also create an annual business plan that will build on the data analysis as well as include a budget and financial plan. The Foundry Performance Metrics Document outlines the data that is required in the annual report and assessment. Data will be collected from those who want to hold programs or events at the Foundry. A sample application form for a user is included in the Foundry Performance Metrics document so that the FC staff can incorporate these data collection points into their user policies. Section 2 will help to analyze the payment for use of space. The FC staff will need to create a policy that is very transparent and clear on who qualifies for free space, who qualifies for the low-cost space, and who is required to pay the full cost market rate space. She expects the FAC and City will want to review this pricing plan. The document also includes a sample post-rental evaluation form for other data collections and analysis.

In response to Mr. Zevin, Ms. Schwarz said that the content of the forms is important but the format is not set.

Ms. Schwarz added that the FC board will be looking at this document tomorrow. Feedback from the FAC's Friday meeting will be incorporated into this document. The FAC suggested that a data requirement should be a summary of the FC's outreach activity, particularly to under-represented communities. They also want to collect demographic data (e.g., board or staff composition) on the organizations who are providing programs. They also requested that the reporting be more specific on which kinds of groups are getting each rental price.

Ms. Schwarz then gave some highlights of Cambridge Seven's PowerPoint presentation to the FAC on Friday. She noted that the paving on Rogers Street is designed to help attract people to the Foundry building, as well as the main entryway on Rogers and the building entrance from the yard. There will be covered bike storage and various seating elements in the yard. There will be a drop-off area along Rogers Street with a no-curb entry from the street. Ms. Schwarz said that the floor plans haven't changed. She noted that the floor plan showed furniture setups to give some idea of what might fit. She pointed out the main community hall (with rolling tables), maker spaces, performance space, artist-in-residence and artist workspaces, multipurpose rooms, mirrored dance/yoga space, demonstration kitchen, and small office for the FC. The second floor will have some FC office space, theater related spaces, a shared meeting room, and below market office space. The third floor is all office space. The exact locations of the office walls on the second and third floors will depend on the office tenants. Looking at another photo taken from the ground floor looking out, she noted that the final floor height of the ground floor will come up to the bottom of the wooden columns so the ground floor is level with Rogers Street. Several renderings

of the inside of the building were shown and certain features were noted. The first floor will have an exhibit on the women's labor movement and how the women who worked in this building organized and fought for better working conditions. She also showed renderings of the community hall, the demonstration kitchen/café, the dance studio, the woodworking workshop, the STEAM/STEM workshop, the performance space, and space for the City selected art project called the Juke Box.

Mr. Evans said that the Foundry is a fossil fuel-free facility and is trying to have a net zero profile. Although a ground source heat pumped system was considered, the building will use an air source heat pump system. In addition to the efforts at historic preservation, it will be an energy-efficient building.

Mr. Bator voiced his concern about designing a building for community and commercial use when a post pandemic world is unclear. He added that the success of the building depends on fully renting the commercial spaces and asked for assurance that the uncertainties are in the forefront of the planning for this building. Ms. Schwarz said that the MERV rating for air filtration system in the makerspaces will be a 14, which is similar to that of a hospital. The rest of the building is currently specified as MERV 8 and the architects are looking to increase that. There have been several conversations regarding the programming expectations but there are many unknowns. Very conservative numbers were used in the rent model. The FC is aware that there are many ways to meet the mission of the building which is a reason for steering away from absolute measures. A larger institution with multiple programs might be an alternative for the first years. There will be more conversations with the broker in the next month about marketing and the financial model. Mr. Evans agreed that the future office world is a bit speculative. The model does include vacancy expectations. Bator said that given the CRA's investment in the building, the Board needs to know sooner rather than later if there are any changes regarding commercial expectations.

8. Design Review Update

Motion: To accept the notes of the Design Review Committee meeting of July 8, 2020

Motion: To approve the conceptual design elements of the 325 Main Street Public Realm wayfinding program (social stair display and Roof Garden gate) in Parcel Four of Kendall Square, conditioned on further feasibility studies and graphic and content development in conjunction with a full wayfinding and art master plan.

Ms. Levering said that there are two conceptual design elements for 325 Main that have been under discussion by the design review committee. The first is a wayfinding display on the terracotta wall along the social stair that connects Main Street to the second-level terrace. The other is a security gate at the top of the terrace stairs which also functions as a wayfinding element as it will be seen from the plaza or on the second level terrace. These are being brought to the full Board tonight as they are both significant wayfinding features for the public. In addition, a decision will help Boston Properties understand the structural needs of these elements which can then be included in their 325 Main Street construction documents. Although there will be glimpses of the style and types of wayfinding and art that BXP is considering for the public realm area, these are still in progress so there is time to revisit and refine those graphics. BXP will be submitting an art and wayfinding master plan for the Board's review.

Ms. Levering introduced Eric Mo from BXP, Patricia Smirnoudis from Stantec, as well as Eric Thorkildsen from CDD. Mr. Mo described the social stair split-flap sign. He explained that the last design was a disintegrated, exploded digital screen that had an interesting form with flexibility of programming. However, after meetings with CRA, a split-flap option is being proposed, which is similar to the old-time train station boards in Europe. It is a giant pixel board that makes a clicking sound when the flippers change. These flippers can be letters, numbers, symbols, or colors, so it can be animated. The relative position of the sign in relation to the social stair has not been finalized. The sign would be flush with the terracotta wall. There is also a static sign on Main Street which wraps around the building corner near the split-flap sign. The branding plays on the word UP and will direct people to the perch and porch levels. The exact sizing of the static sign and its height placement have also not been finalized. He then showed a video of the split-flap sign. The sign could show train arrivals and departures in Kendall Station. In response to Mr. Evans, Mr. Mo said that the sign is meant to showcase the programming of all levels of the urban park. There is a site plan in the appendix of the presentation that has a full map of the proposed wayfinding signage.

Ms. Born said that this is the first time that three of the Board members have seen this presentation. She said that Ms. Levering has provided a synopsis of the design review committee's thoughts to which BXP has responded. Ms. Drury said that the stairs look really good. She is concerned about the legibility of the print on the wall, especially from an angle. Ms. Born said that this question came up at the design review committee meeting. Ms. Levering said that Oat Foundry, the fabricator, claims the sign is legible from 100 feet away. There was a discussion of the size and readability of the split flaps. Mr. Tilford said BXP likes this sign because it accomplishes two goals. It is a highly visible and dynamic sign that can convey what's happening up above in an inviting, novel way. There are other cheaper ways to get the message across. He added that BXP is looking for direction because design and procurement need to occur. It's tricky to integrate this into a terra cotta wall.

Mr. Zevin said that he wrote a letter to Mr. Evans and Ms. Born questioning the intentions of the sign's program. He has learned tonight that the plan is not as extensive as what he thought it might be. He added that the wayfinding in the area is so complex that the current transit screens in Kendall are barely able to display all the subtleties of the bus stops. He feels better about the sign if it is for the program on the roof garden and the related spaces. He thought a simpler video screen design would be better, however. He listed several technical difficulties that could arise with the glass, glare, heat, and the ability to make the sound audible through the glass. In response to Mr. Evans, Mr. Tilford said that the sign is serviceable from the front. Each split flap is a separate module. He stressed that the messaging will be informational and BXP will provide a programming plan, similar to what CIC did. There was a discussion about the height of the installation and whether the lower lines portion would be visible.

Ms. Born said that the design review committee and the Board are charged with making a good public space. Ms. Born will hold BXP's commitment to make the public realm better than when the project started. She does not want to micromanage as details are up to the owner. Mr. Tilford said that BXP wants to get people up to the park. Ms. Born requested that BXP rethink the word "perch;" the rooftop garden is a big park, not a perch.

Mr. Mo spoke about the truss-framed gate. The gate is about a foot taller than what the Board last saw, and is now more visible at the ground level and looks more like a gateway. There are structural implications that need to be engineered if this gate design is approved. The large infill panels will accordion towards the Marriott wall in the normal open condition during the daytime. The "UP" branding is part of the gate design and was recently relocated to sit completely above the truss and not conflict with it. There might be some additional changes to clearly connect the plaza and the park. At the design review meeting, there were comments regarding art on the gate which will be considered as part of the art master plan.

Ms. Drury said that she did not like the word "perch" either. Mr. Evans said that the "K" and "A" in the word "park" might go better with an angular truss. Mr. Mo and Ms. Smirnoudis said that trusses will look like the picture with the gusset plates and that the other renderings of it are simplified. In response to Ms. Born, Ms. Smirnoudis said that the posts on either end are fastened to the floor slab of the green garage. She also said that the gate is about 12-inches thick but it could change after working with the engineers. The length of the gate is 45 feet.

Mr. Evans reiterated that BXP needs to understand the Board's decision on the elements that apply to their structural design work regarding the truss and flipping sign. This is still time to discuss the wayfinding specifics and the signage naming. Ms. Born read the two motions. She emphasized the word "conceptual" in the second motion. Mr. Evans clarified that a plan for the location of art and wayfinding signage will be presented to Board at a later time.

Ms. Drury moved the two motions.

Mr. Bator said that in these types of decisions, he relies heavily on the voices of the design review committees and hearing the technical questions being asked. He asked if the design review committee was supportive of the conceptual designs. Ms. Born said that this is a conceptual design so further refinements could arise in the design development review. Mr. Zevin wasn't convinced that a gate of such dimension can be stabilized by bolting it to slabs; some of the vertical supports might need to become trusses. He also suggested some options for the split-flap sign and noted some other issues with the elevation as much of it will be blocked by people standing.

Ms. Born is supportive of the notion of a retractable gate that is suspended from the truss overhead. The actual look of the truss will come out in the final design. The social stair, the graphic design, and the gate are unusual and an important part of the placemaking that was desired. In response to Mr. Bator, Mr. Zevin said that he wanted to hear the opinions of the other Board members. In response to Mr. Bator, Mr. Evans said that the vote can be removed but that BXP needs some certainty in order move forward in their planning for building the structures that will house these concepts. He added that the gate has been in front of the design review committee for five months. Ms. Drury said that the gate has improved since its original version and she thought this version was fine. Mr. Crawford said that the gate looks rigid and he encourages further design for a more engaging and public gesture of the materials and topology. He is hesitant about the term “perch.” Legibility of the split-flap sign should be further explored. He still has questions on the concepts but he supports the need to secure the space, the need to make the wall more interesting and imbue the space with character. He would not have voted “no” regardless of this ambivalence. There was a discussion of the role of the design review committee. Mr. Evans said that CDD did not want the design review committee to become a legislative body because of their relationship with the Planning Board. The design review committee has been an advisory component and a sounding board. Mr. Bator said that the design review committee should be significantly satisfied before it comes to the full Board, particularly for a vote. He hopes that the sense of the board from tonight’s discussion is clear enough for the architects and designers to move forward. Ms. Born said that BXP doesn’t want to invest in a design path if the concepts are unfavorable. Mr. Tilford said that he is grateful to the design review committee process and the dialogue in developing the park. However, there is a substantial amount of coordination and procurement needed after a design is blessed. The contractors note that they won’t hit the completion date if they don’t begin. If the conversations continue, it will be too late to effectuate what the committee decides upon. Mr. Tilford said that there needs to be a way to close the park which has to be near the point of access. CDD wanted a gate that’s not a gate so the design is more of a threshold. Mr. Zevin suggested that the structural engineers keep the design as simple as possible and encouraged testing some real messages on various sign configurations. Mr. Tilford agreed that this would be useful. Ms. Born added the design review committee meeting was a very constructive meeting. Mr. Tilford said that he is grateful for the design review venue as it allows for an open and public process where ideas can be explored freely.

The motion to accept the notes of the Design Review Committee meeting of July 8, 2020 was put to a vote. 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.

There was a discussion regarding the wording of the second motion wording. It was agreed that it was the sense of the Board that Boston Properties should continue to develop these designs. The actual motion was withdrawn.

9. Monthly Staff and Quarterly Financial Report

Mr. Evans stated that an offer for the project planner position has been accepted but since that person is currently employed, their name cannot be made public just yet. A remote onboarding process will start in August. He confirmed the topics for upcoming board meetings. Foundation work on 325 Main Street is underway. The steel for the building is expected to start going up by August. Conversations with the City have occurred to expand pedestrian space on the street due Covid social distancing expectations and constraints due to construction. Similarly, pedestrian detours are being created around the Turner construction work in the Sixth Street walkway. And lastly, due to the work planned for the roof garden, CRA and Boston Properties arranged a community plant give-away. The food truck program was closed due to the low demand for lunch during the pandemic. All deposits were refunded to the enrolled trucks. With respect to work on the Bishop Allen project, staff is working on final tenant design items for the office spaces and relocation planning. Following State procurement rules, an RFP was issued to solicit temporary space. The building’s new property manager, Third Sector New England, who also operates the Link, has been assisting with tenant relationships. Their contract will be busy for the next six months until the building is under construction, which will be a quieter time until the tenants are back in the new building late next summer.

Ms. Kailasam said that there was a recovery of the Q1 unrealized losses on the investment. The investment account shows the \$2 million payment to the City for the Foundry design. Expenses were in line with budget expectations.

Additional Public Comment

There were no requests to comment.

Other Business

At 9:11 p.m., Ms. Born noted that the Board has 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 lease agreement for the Foundry at 101 Rogers Street 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.

Ms. Shore will send a private Zoom meeting invitation to the board and staff.

The Executive session will start at 9:30 p.m.