



Foundry Advisory Committee Meeting Notes

Friday, October 11, 2019, 8:00 – 10:00 am
99 Bishop Allen Drive, First Floor Board Room, Cambridge

FAC members in attendance: Marie Saccoccio, Mark Tang, Joyce Chen, Carole Sousa, Richard Thal, Jason Slavick; **Absent:** Jamie Sabino

CRA, City of Cambridge and others in Attendance: Tom Evans (CRA), Erica Schwarz (CRA), Kathryn Madden (CRA), Robert Garner (City of Cambridge), Stephanie Couch (Foundry Consortium/ LMIT), Betsy Boyle (LMIT), Stefanie Green (Cambridge Seven), Jennifer Mathews (City Manager's Office), Ron Mallis, Karin Keane, Fred Fantini, Kim Massenburg, Fabrizio Gentili, Elena Sokolow-Kaufman, Robert St. Lawrence, Betsy Bard, Joan Squeri, Carol Watkins, Kellyanne Mahoney Peggy Kutcher, Jeff Goldenson, Jean Appolon

Foundry Consortium Update

Stephanie Couch, Foundry Consortium Board Chair, shared that the Foundry Consortium Board of Directors has incorporated in Massachusetts. They are finalizing their application to the IRS for 501(c)(3) status. The initial board is 8 people; the bylaws allow up to 15 members. The small initial board allows the organization to fill remaining seats over time as new people become involved, to help ensure a representative and balanced board.

Board Member Kellyanne Mahoney noted that the Board held its first meeting in November, when they approved their bylaws, which includes a section noting that the Foundry Board must meet with the FAC at least one a year. She mentioned that the board wants to build a strong relationship with the FAC and seeks a joint meeting in coming months. Also at that first board meeting, the CRA updated the board on the progress of the building's design and construction process and shared that in coming months, the CRA and the Foundry Consortium will finalize the sublease that the Foundry Consortium will hold to operate the building.

Stephanie Couch added that the Foundry Consortium will be hiring an interim program assistant to help advance the work of the board in the months before an Executive Director is hired. That position is being paid for by Lemelson-MIT.

The program assistant will staff the board, conduct community outreach, and support fundraising and other pre-opening efforts. The new Executive Director is expected to start by September and will need to do some additional fundraising to cover staff time before the Foundry opens. Once the Foundry opens, funds set aside by the CRA will

support gaps in income during year one. In subsequent years, the Foundry will be self-sufficient, with income from office rents and community space supporting operations.

Jason Slavick asked what the relationship will be between the FAC, Foundry Consortium Board and the City. A discussion followed, noting that the FAC will continue to be to work in an advisory role on behalf of the CRA and the City, to ensure that the Foundry meets its mission. The Foundry Consortium's Board of Directors will oversee its Executive Director and ensure its budget is sound and supports the operations of its mission, as any nonprofit board would do. There will be an additional level of oversight by the FAC, and related reporting. The FAC and CRA will define metrics that the Foundry Consortium will report on. The metrics must provide information on how the organization is running, without being too onerous or demanding of staff time. The metrics and related reporting will be developed based on the Use Principles developed a year ago.

An additional suggested metric was the rate of staff turnover.

It was reiterated that the City owns the building, the CRA has a master lease for the building and the CRA will enter into a sublease with the Foundry Consortium. The Foundry Consortium will then lease the spaces in the foundry to users.

It was suggested that the annual FAC – FC meeting could be used to ensure clarity of goals. The first meeting won't happen until at least the summer, to give the Foundry Consortium board some time to get more established.

Stephanie Couch noted that progress is being seen and recognized in the City. The Foundry Consortium recently received a Visionary Award from the Chamber of Commerce, and that the City Manager spoke favorably about the progress the Foundry Consortium has made during a recent East Cambridge Business Association meeting.

CRA Oversight and Support

Short Term MOU with Foundry Consortium

The CRA is providing administrative support to the Foundry Consortium as it enters into a search for its first Executive Director. The CRA will pay for and hold the contract with an executive search firm, and will support personnel costs for the Executive Director between the date of their hiring and the opening day of the Foundry. The Foundry Consortium and CRA are now finalizing an MOU outlining these terms.

The FAC was interested in staying up to date about the executive director search. The advertising for the executive search firm is now on the CRA's Foundry webpage. The deadline for search firms to apply is January 16th.

The Foundry Consortium and CRA will share the draft job description for the Executive Director with FAC members and provide them with an opportunity to give feedback. Given the hiring timeline, this will happen in between FAC meetings.

Sublease between CRA and Foundry Consortium

The CRA and Foundry Consortium are starting to outline the terms for the long term lease that the CRA will hold with the Foundry Consortium. Erica distributed a draft list of potential terms for review, which is attached to these notes.

Comments related to the written draft lease terms included:

- Ensure that the market rate office uses can't creep into the community uses by requiring information on budget and program reports
- Ask for information that indicates that the building is meeting the mission to be a "center for creativity and collaboration"
- In addition to the burden of reporting on performance measures, we should also let the Foundry Consortium experiment with ideas that may not always succeed.
- We should have data to help ensure that there are active partnerships with local nonprofits and businesses and that the Foundry is not duplicative or competitive with existing programs
- Under the "corrective remedies" section, "inadequate performance" needs to be more clearly defined. Also, remedies should be the result of financial data and data on "users, programs and vacancy rates" (not just users and vacancy rates)
- Have reporting on outreach efforts be listed as its own category of reporting and require reporting on activities, but also outcomes to demonstrate effectiveness. "Innovation" often means or leads to exclusion, so responsiveness and engagement of populations who are otherwise often excluded is vital
- A useful metric may be the rate of staff turnover.
- Can we develop a baseline to measure performance against?

Additional comments included:

We should have shared language, a shared conceptual model of the different roles the players have in that model. One way to describe the role of the Foundry Consortium is as a curator of artists and programs, like a museum. It should be clear from the lease and other documents what the role and relationships should be between the Foundry Consortium Board and staff, Foundry Advisory Committee and CRA and City staff.

The Foundry Consortium will need to provide some level of reporting on performance measures so that the FAC, City and CRA can know that the mission is being met. It will be important to ensure those measures are effective while also not being overly burdensome for the nonprofit to produce. We need to find a balance so that compliance does not undermine creativity.

Perhaps we should ask the Foundry Consortium to develop its own assessment model.

Groups and individuals who seek to use space in the Foundry should have as little as possible interaction with the administrative process and burden of collecting data related to the performance measures.

The Foundry Consortium should be required to create and maintain a strategic plan that will help inform future plans and allow the FAC to know about, and respond to, any planned programmatic shifts.

How will we ensure that the building attracts well aligned office tenants who will pay market rate in order to financially support the community uses? Should those tenants be required to contribute to the first floor programming? Jason Slavick pointed out that the best tenants will be those who find that it is a privilege to rent at the Foundry and who will seek out that opportunity.

Erica noted that there will be a broker assisting in identifying suitable office tenants. Anyone who chooses to rent at the Foundry will need to feel that the mix of uses is a benefit and will be encouraged to participate; however it will not be a requirement to participate.

A question was asked about when and how the public would be notified that the Foundry is coming so that they can start making plans to use the space. Many organizations will need time to prepare.

It was noted that Art Place America analyzes the applications they receive from artist through the lens of this question: how does this application answer the question: What can we do together that we can't do separately.

The Foundry should tie together existing activities and should connect with neighborhood based groups who already are connected to populations. The Foundry needs to build relationships with these groups in order to get those populations' ideas into the building. Those populations are not represented at all of these community meetings and can't often attend a meeting on a weekday morning. The Foundry Consortium needs to go to them to learn about their interests in programming at the Foundry. Those relationships could also help create collaborations for fundraising.

Fabrizio Gentili noted that we are now in a chrysalis stage, turned into goo, but becoming a butterfly. It's just hard to see that's where we are.

Construction Update

Bob Garner of the City's construction team shared that the Design Development drawings would be received by the City that same day (January 10th) from Cambridge Seven. The cost estimate from WT Rich is due January 31st. This data will be used for procurement documents for foundation and site work and the steel package.

Interior demolition and abatement is well underway. Bob Garner shared a stunning photograph showing light streaming into the building, after significant portions of interior

floors had been demolished. The City will share the photos so that the CRA can put them online.

The Transportation Inspection Report was received by the Transportation Department. The Cambridge Historic Commission (CHC) approved the design during their December 5th meeting. The project will only need to return to the CHC if there are significant changes. Cambridge Seven will continue to work with CHC staff as designs are finalized.

The City expects to submit an application to the Planning Department in late January and be heard in early March. The application will request several special permits or variances, including for size (the building exceeds 50,000 square feet), parking (the property will request to have no parking but may include 2-3 handicapped accessible spaces), yard size and dimension, and the performance use.

Verizon has been cooperative in allowing staging for the Foundry on its property.

The adjacent Equity residential development has been mentioning the Foundry in its marketing materials as a local amenity.

It is expected that construction will be completed in summer 2021.

Design Overview

Stefanie Greenfield of Cambridge Seven walked through the latest designs.

They are proposing that Rogers Street be one-way. The Traffic Department disagrees; this is an ongoing discussion.

The project seeks a permit to allow zero parking spaces, but plans to include 2 – 3 handicapped accessible spaces either on the site, or created on adjacent City streets.

It was suggested that shuttles be provided between the Foundry and nearby garages. The CRA and Foundry Consortium acknowledged that a wider strategy for helping residents throughout the City access the Foundry will be considered.

Stefanie noted that they will be working on some acknowledgement of the Foundry's history in industry and in the women's rights and workers' rights movements.

Stefanie reviewed the first floor plans, noting some improvements since they were last shared publicly. The first floor gender neutral bathrooms have floor to ceiling stalls and shared sinks. The second floor bathrooms remain separated by sex and are also accessible by the public. Adjacent to the first floor bathrooms, and in a location that is visible to Foundry Consortium staff, are publicly accessible lockers.

The jukebox art installation has a space by the entrance from the Yard. Cambridge Seven has coordinated with artist Elisa Hamilton on the design. The space will include plush furniture and walls to create a cozy, partially acoustically protected space.

The main entrance off Rogers Street has a lower ceiling that slopes up towards the dramatic full height atrium. The first floor walls are largely plywood and glass, while upper floors have glass walls to create acoustic privacy but visual connection and shared light.

There will also be a spray applied to the ceilings of some rooms to dampen sound. However the goal is not to remove all sound, as that would be unsettling, given the wide range of dynamic activities that will be happening simultaneously.

Stefanie showed exterior views, including the bronze variegated metal siding that will be used for the new addition to the building. A similar but perforated metal will be used as a modern design feature of the main entrance.

There were some questions asked:

Will any rooms allow for the users to be private?

Yes. The smaller multipurpose rooms will have blinds, allowing for privacy.

What will the visitor's experience be? Will there be a welcome desk? Wayfinding signs?

Yes. There will be a movable desk outside of the first floor operator office space where staff can sit and/or leave brochures or other informational materials.

There will also be wayfinding signage, but the architects have not yet reached that stage of design. Stephanie Couch noted that the Foundry Consortium had a firm create a user journey map pro bono, which is on the Foundry Consortium's website: CambridgeFoundry.org

Will there be a special sidewalk treatment to help lead people to the Foundry, since the building is somewhat hidden behind residential properties?

Sidewalk or road treatments to lead people to the Foundry is not currently part of the architect's scope, but the City is considering creating signage or other visual guide to help people find the Foundry from Third Street, and perhaps also from Rogers Park and/or other immediately adjacent sites.

What kind of seating will be in the multi-use performance space?

That space will have stepped platform seating that can be arranged in many configurations, and can be broken down and stored.

April Meeting Date

The next FAC meeting will be on April 17th as the standing date of April 10th is Good Friday.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:05.