

Staff Report to the Board: October 18, 2023

Administrative Updates

The CRA is currently engaged in its hiring process for the Finance Manager position. The Finance Manager will work as part of the CRA's Operations and Finance team, report into the Director of Finance and Operations. Responsibilities of the Finance Manager will include supporting day-to-day financial operations within the organization, managing reconciliations and cash, and performing bookkeeping duties.

A few weeks ago, CRA staff learned of the passing of Robert Rowland over the summer. Mr. Rowland was the director of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority from 1964 until 1982. During this time, he led the effort to adopt the Kendall Square Urban Renewal plan and attract NASA's Electronic Research Center to Cambridge. Upon NASA's departure he negotiated the return of land to the CRA, facilitated the creation of the MXD District, and led the selection of the master developer for Parcels, 2, 3, and 4 of the KSURP. During his 19 years at the CRA, Mr. Roland also oversaw the Wellington-Harrington Urban Renewal Plan, a neighborhood revitalization project led by the Wellington-Harrington Citizen Committee.

Forward Calendar

- Foundry Advisory Committee Presentation
- Bishop Allen Project Close-Out
- Foundry Construction Contract and Tenant Discussions
- Grand Junction Transit Feasibility Study Update
- CRA Organizational DEI Plan Update

Project Updates

Rindge Connectivity Project Updates

The CRA recently conducted focus groups at 362, 364, and 402 Rindge Avenue as part of the CRA's Rindge Avenue Community Connectivity project. The CRA conducted one focus group in Amharic, facilitated by Engagement Coordinators, Hiwot Bekele and Asmait Tekle, and two English focus group meetings. The CRA is working to analyze the results of focus group feedback, and will look to host a community meeting to provide a comprehensive update on the project later in the fall.

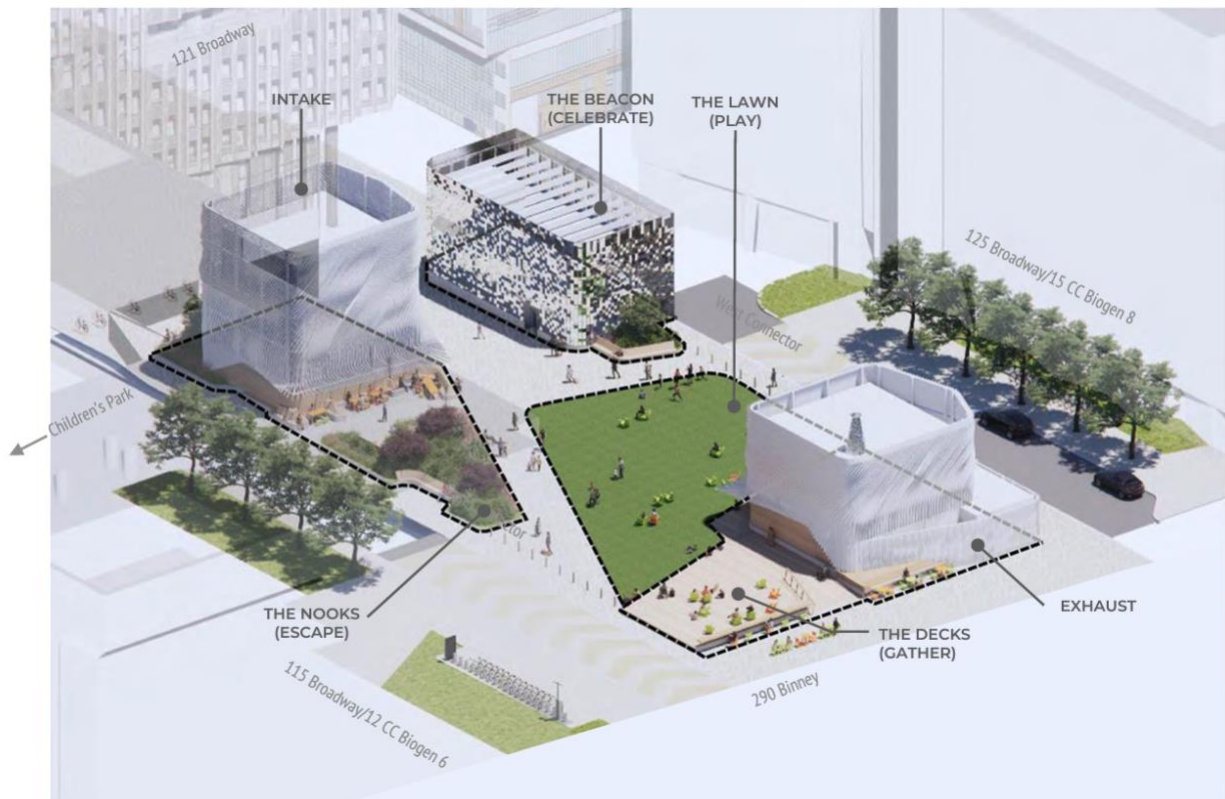


Forward Fund Application Updates

The CRA has received five complete Forward Fund Capital Infrastructure applications for the first round of grant review. The Selection Committee, made up of staff from City of Cambridge departments and the CRA, will discuss and award funds as applicable on October 19th. Staff look forward to providing an update to the CRA Board on awarded projects at the November board meeting. For consideration in the next round of Forward Fund Capital Infrastructure review, applications are due November 30th.

Center Plaza Project Updates

The future open space currently referred to as Center Plaza received a new round of feedback at the most recent CRA Design Review Committee meeting on October 4th. The design review meeting was attended by members of the CRA Board, as well as a member of the City of Cambridge's Planning Board and a CDD staff member. CRA staff are currently working with BXP to address and incorporate the comments received during this meeting. Schematic design for Center Plaza will next be reviewed by both the CRA Board and the Planning Board, in the late fall or early winter.



Danny Lewin Park

The Design Development (DD) process has commenced for Danny Lewin Park. CRA staff and BXP have identified a project budget not to exceed \$2,000,000. The CRA's contribution to the budget will be funded through the 145 Broadway Escrow Agreement Funding Reallocation, which was previously approved by the CRA Board. The CRA has received a cost estimate from BXP and is collaborating with Brightview, BXP, and Residence Inn to achieve the original design intent while staying within the project's budget. The Design Development phase is expected to conclude in early December.

Pioneer Way Re-Opened

The interior easement known as Pioneer Way, which traverses from Kendall Plaza to the exterior Pioneer Way behind 355 Main Street, has been recently reopened. Pioneer Way had previously been closed due to construction at the ground floor retail space at 325 Main Street. Construction in this space was halted due to changes in the project, necessitating the easement's reopening. CRA staff expect additional signage to be installed in the coming weeks that indicates the renewed public access.

Walden Square II Development

Over the past few months, CRA staff have met with WinnCompanies to discuss their open space and circulation plans as part of the Walden Square II Development project. Additionally, CRA staff also met with staff from CDD to discuss WinnCompanies' intended plans and understand the City's view of the project's urban design and how to proceed cohesively. On September 14, 2023, the CRA, along with CDD, participated in the project's second Affordable Housing Overlay community meeting. CRA staff anticipate that WinnCompanies will issue a draft submittal within the next few weeks in preparation for forthcoming Planning Board meetings under the procedures of the Affordable Housing Overlay ordinance.