



Regular Board Meeting of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday, January 18, 2022 at 5:30 PM

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually via Zoom

APPROVED Meeting Minutes

Meeting Files

- [Agenda and Notice](#)
- [Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on December 14, 2022](#)
- [Packet of email communication received regarding 37 Brookline Street](#)
- [Monthly Staff Program Report](#)
- [Monthly Financial Report](#)
- [East Cambridge Tree Planting Program Memo](#)
- [Forward Fund Feasibility Study Grant Memo](#)

Presentations and Handouts

- [Additional correspondence regarding 37 Brookline Street](#)
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Opening Statement

At 5:35 p.m., Alexandra Levering, CRA Senior Project Manager, said that on July 16 2022, Governor Baker signed a law which extended provisions to the Open Meeting Law to March 31 2023. In accordance, tonight's CRA board meeting will be held remotely. There will be opportunities for public comment at the start of this meeting and at the discretion of the chair. To provide public comment, please press the raised hand icon at the bottom of your screen and you'll be called upon to speak. Once you are called on, please unmute yourself. Alternatively, you can use the QA tab to type a question or comment. If you are calling in via phone and would like to make a comment press star nine to raise your hand and once you're called on, star six to unmute yourself. Reading materials can be found in the CRA's next meeting webpage. This meeting is also being recorded and including all video, audio and chat messages.

Call Roll

Chair Kathleen Born called the regular meeting of 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 – absent, having technical difficulties

There is a quorum. CRA Executive Director, Thomas Evans, and other CRA staff members were also present. Ms. Born said that because this is a remote meeting, all votes will be taken by roll call and that Mr. Evans will repeat the responses.

Public Comment

Heather Hoffman said that she was pleased to see the tree planting contract for East Cambridge. East Cambridge can use many more trees. Green Cambridge certainly has a familiarity with the neighborhood. She said that she is

the host of their first farm, which was mentioned in Green Cambridge's response. She urged for outreach to various organizations, including houses of worship, posting at the library, and other things that don't necessarily happen with outreach in many neighborhoods.

Ms. Born said that Ms. Hoffman's farm is fantastic. Mr. Crawford said that it is a pleasant feature of the streetscape. He is optimistic by a parcel-by-parcel outreach approach.

No other requests for public comment were offered.

A motion was moved to close public comment. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.

Chris Bator – absent

Kathy Born – yes

Conrad Crawford – yes

Margaret Drury – absent

Barry Zevin - yes

The motion carried.

Minutes

1. Review of December 14, 2022 Minutes

No comments were offered.

A motion was moved by Mr. Crawford to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting on December 14, 2022. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.

Chris Bator – absent

Kathy Born – yes

Conrad Crawford – yes

Margaret Drury - absent

Barry Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Communications

2. Packet of email communication received regarding 37 Brookline Street

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

Ms. Born said that a packet of email communications regarding an arts center at 37 Brookline Street were posted.

Mr. Evans said that he received one additional correspondence today on the same topic.

Mr. Zevin said that he would like to see the attachments that are referenced in some of the communication. Mr. Evans said that the correspondence documents came to him in a shared folder that can be updated. However, he would get these to Mr. Zevin as they stand today. Among other things, Mr. Zevin said that he needed clarification of what is meant by an art center before commenting.

Mr. Bator joined the meeting.

A motion was moved by Mr. Crawford to place the correspondence on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.

Chris Bator – yes

Kathy Born – yes

Conrad Crawford – yes

Margaret Drury - absent

Barry Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Administration Items

4. Monthly Staff Program and Financial Report (Vangel / Kailasam)

Kyle Vangel, Director of Projects and Planning, summarized the staff report in the Board packet.

Mr. Zevin urged staff to get the live streams of the Blue Garage demolition as there's a lot to see. He also asked if there was any data on the removal of the Blue Garage's 1300 parking spaces. Mr. Vangel said that the CRA annual transportation report is in progress, which will include data on parking garage utilization. Mr. Evans said that parking has been arranged at Alexandria's surface lot, which is the original proposed Eversource location, in the garage at Alexandria's One Kendall Square, and a few other sites, although this did not account for all 1300 spaces.

Hema Kailasam, Director of Finance and Operations, summarized the financial report in the Board packet. She noted that the positive investment income number reflects that the income from dividends and interest overcame the loss of value in the stock portfolio. Expenses continue to be below the budgeted amounts. Over the course of December, more progress was made toward closing out the Bishop Allen project. She is hopeful that by March, there will be a final close-out of the project, which might also include the solar work. The solar materials have arrived and installation has started.

A motion was moved by Mr. Crawford to place the staff and financial reports on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.

Chris Bator – yes

Kathy Born – yes

Conrad Crawford – yes

Margaret Drury - absent

Barry Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Projects and Programs

5. East Cambridge Tree Planting Program

Cecelia Cobb, Project Planner, summarized the memo in the Board packet. Since the memo was written, she has contacted all of the references and received glowing reviews.

Mr. Evans noted that the motion in the memo was slightly updated from the one in the agenda because staff was still finalizing the procurement selection process when the agenda was initially posted.

Mr. Zevin said that employing young people is great and he hopes that this also includes education about the work. He would like more information regarding planting trees on private property as maintenance can be expensive and possibly problematic if the tree needs to be taken down years later. Ms. Cobb said that Green Cambridge has familiarity with these issues and introduced Steven Nutter, Green Cambridge Executive Director.

Mr. Nutter explained the collaboration process between Green Cambridge's "Canopy Crew" members, the homeowners, and the arborist. He can't speak to the long-term process because this is a new program. He added that a goal is to educate more people in urban forestry.

Mr. Zevin noted that a criterion in the proposal stated having a 10-foot radius around each new tree, which will be hard to find in East Cambridge. He also questioned whether this was big enough. Mr. Nutter said that he identified 255 locations with a 20-foot diameter within a 10-to-15-minute walking distance from the Blue garage. There is a selection of trees from DPW, that came out of the urban forest master plan, some of which have very narrow crowns. Mr. Nutter said that most of the trees have been planted on private property. He added that is important to work with property owners, which is a problem because many people rent. Mr. Nutter said that when the Canopy Crew program was piloted in fall 2018, they worked with DPW to plant on public property. Green Cambridge is working with the forestry department to make it easier for residents to understand who to call for tree plantings.

Mr. Crawford said that he is excited about this program.

A motion was moved by Mr. Crawford authorizing the Executive Director and Chair to enter into a professional services contract for an amount not to exceed seventy thousand dollars (\$70,000) with Green Cambridge for tree vendor services related to the planting of trees in the East Cambridge neighborhood. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.

Chris Bator – yes

Kathy Born – yes

Conrad Crawford – yes

Margaret Drury - absent

Barry Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

6. Forward Fund Feasibility Grant Opportunity

Ms. Kailasam and Ms. Levering summarized the memo in the Board packet. The goal of this grant is to provide funds for feasibility studies and hopefully create a pipeline of future capital improvement projects. These latter projects would be reviewed in the later part of the year and a budget amendment would be needed.

Ms. Kailasam noted that the review process will be done by CRA staff and the grant recipients will be reported to the Board.

Mr. Bator said that he is pleased to see the CRA continuing with this program as it is an essential part of the CRA's citywide mission.

Adjournment of the CRA Board meeting.

At 6:22 p.m., a motion was made by Mr. Crawford 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 - absent

Barry Zevin – yes

The motion carried.