



## Regular Board Meeting of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday, July 19, 2023 at 5:30 p.m.

Pursuit to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this public meeting was conducted in hybrid format with in-person and remote participation options.

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### APPROVED Meeting Minutes

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#### **Meeting Files**

- [Agenda and Notice](#)
- [APPROVED minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on June 21, 2023](#)
- [Staff Program Report](#)
- [Monthly Financial Report](#)
- [East Cambridge Tree Planting Update Memo](#)
  - [Presentation on the East Cambridge Tree Planting Program](#)
- [Kendall Square Signage Review Memo](#)
  - [Building Identification Signage Proposal for 105 Broadway](#)
  - [Parking Signage Proposal for Yellow Garage](#)
- [Memo regarding Danny Lewin Design Services](#)
- [Memo regarding Annual Transportation Report Contract](#)

#### **Presentations and Handouts**

- [Notice of Docket Entry - Rono v CRA](#)
  - [Monthly Financial Report \(Corrected 8.4.23\)](#)
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#### **Opening Statement**

At 5:30 p.m., Ellen Shore, CRA Operations Director, said that Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023, this public meeting will be conducted in hybrid format with in-person and remote participation options at the start of this meeting, and possibly at other times during the meeting, at the discretion of the chair. The meeting was also viewable live on Facebook by going to CRA's Facebook at [www.facebook.com/CambridgeCRA](http://www.facebook.com/CambridgeCRA). She then explained how to provide public comment. Comments on Facebook cannot be entered into public comment and cannot be responded to by the CRA. Reading materials can be found on the CRA's next meeting webpage. This meeting was recorded, including all video, audio, and QA messages.

#### **Call Roll**

Board 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, remote  
Treasurer Christopher Bator – will be joining remotely at 6p  
Asst. Treasurer Barry Zevin – present, remote  
Executive Director, Tom Evans – present, in-person

There was a quorum so the meeting proceeded. CRA staff members were also present. Ms. Born said that all votes will be taken by roll call and that Mr. Evans will repeat the responses.

## **Public Comment**

No public comments were offered.

## **Minutes**

### **1. Review of the Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on June 21, 2023**

There were no comments.

*A motion was moved by Ms. Born to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on June 21, 2023 and place them on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.*

*Chris Bator – absent*

*Kathy Born – yes*

*Conrad Crawford – yes*

*Barry Zevin – yes*

*The motion carried.*

## **Communications**

### **2. Written communications received since the publication of this meeting notice.**

Mr. Evans said a docket notice regarding the final closeout of the Rono vs. CRA case was received. This involved a five-foot strip of land. This has been filed and is also posted on the CRA website. Ms. Born added that this was a noncontentious transaction.

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

*Chris Bator – absent*

*Kathy Born – yes*

*Conrad Crawford – yes*

*Barry Zevin – yes*

*The motion carried.*

Mr. Zevin gave kudos to the judge for insisting on a proper description of the piece of land. Mr. Evans responded that this was the responsibility of the Rono party.

## **Administrative Actions**

### **3. Staff Program Report**

Mr. Vangel introduced the three newly hired staff members – Gardy Laurent (Director of Finance and Operations), Alex Cardelle (Project Manager), and Joshua Croom (Project Planner) – who were all in-person at the meeting and introduced themselves to the Board. Mr. Vangel said that he just received notice that the offer for the other project manager position was just accepted today.

Mr. Vangel summarized other items in the staff report. When discussing the Rindge Connectivity Project, he emphasized that this has been a successful outreach process and hopes it can be a model for future projects, whereby the CRA hires and compensates local residents to connect with their communities. Mr. Crawford gave kudos to the staff and the outreach success. He added that the effectiveness of this approach should be communicated to professional networks so that it will be repeated. In response to Ms. Born, Mr. Vangel confirmed that the Community Development Department (CDD) is aware of this project. He added that CDD is also piloting some similar types of community engagement, directly employing community residents. Best practices have been shared between CDD and the CRA.

Mr. Vangel spoke about staff's community engagement beyond Kendall Square for Center Plaza which restarted this summer, as BXP and the Sasaki design team started advancing design concepts. A community-wide Zoom

meeting has been rescheduled from July 26 to August 9. Ms. Born said that the name “Center Plaza” sounded too corporate. Mr. Vangel said that this name was temporary.

With regards to the Forward Fund, Mr. Vangel said that the CRA just awarded two \$10,000 feasibility grants. These grants were offered earlier in the year. In addition to feasibility grants, the CRA allocated \$400,000, with up to \$100,000 per award, for nonprofits in Cambridge to make physical capital improvements to their buildings.

Mr. Crawford asked about the Galaxy Park planning process and if there have been overlapping concerns or opportunities with how that connects to the Third and Binney Street intersection. Mr. Evans said that the main issue is re-signaling the intersection so that there's only one lane heading towards Boston off of Broadway rather than the two lanes currently. An unresolved issue at this point is exactly what the alignment of Third Street southbound is going to be as a result of the Volpe project and potential bus lanes. The CRA planning does not include this aspect. It is only looking at the impacts across Broadway, which includes some lane and signal changes. Third Street is currently planned to be redesigned with a protected bike lane and a bus priority lane heading south. There are conversations with respect to restricting the lane going into Main Street around the CIC glass cube (old Microsoft entrance) to bus travel only, in tandem with the MBTA's new bus design. Those details are still being worked out with the MITIMCO-Volpe team and the City.

Mr. Zevin asked how the design team is dealing with the constraints of the site for Center Plaza as the public community may aspire to have trees, playgrounds, retail, and other things which probably are impossible there. Fabiola Alikpokou, CRA Senior Planner, said that staff have been honest and upfront with the public regarding the constraints of the site with requests for water features and trees. Retail is something the community wants to see. Staff meetings with CDD have discussed ways to increase greenery in the area.

At 6:00 p.m., treasurer Christopher Bator joined the meeting.

Mr. Crawford noted that the density of pedestrian traffic during rush hour at the intersection of Broadway and Third at Galaxy Park should be quantified, in addition to the bicycle traffic that comes through that intersection. He hopes that this was fully articulated by the pedestrians and biking community at the City's Joint Transportation Committee meeting.

#### **4. Monthly Financial Report**

Mr. Evans said that the Financial Report was prepared by Withum, which has been assisting staff with interim reporting and comptroller responsibilities since March. The newly hired Director of Finance and Operations will be taking on this reporting responsibility. At last month's Board meeting, the CRA yearly budget was revised to include the income and expenses for Bishop Allen and the Foundry. The top section of the financial dashboard on the first page shows the entire CRA financial statement of all activities. The amended budget included the anticipated income for the development rights from the Eversource project. He noted that this income is now expected in August. The first column shows the actuals through May, the next column shows the budget through May and the third column shows the overall budget. The slight deficiency in rental income is due to the Foundry's ongoing vacancy on the third floor. It was thought that a portion of the third floor would be rented by May, which is part of tonight's executive session discussion. Investment income has stayed on track. Some other expected revenue has yet to be collected. Expenses are lower than anticipated, primarily due to staff vacancies for four months.

The financial dashboard also shows the statement of activities for Bishop Allen and for the Foundry. The small table at the bottom of the page is an overall statement of the financial position which is showing a net decrease of position of about four and a half million dollars, most of which is the \$4 million commitment to the Foundry's construction payments made to the City. In June, an additional final payment of \$3.5 million was made to the City which isn't reflected in these as-of-May-31st reports.

As previously mentioned, personnel expenses are less than anticipated due to staff vacancies. Property management income expenses are on track. Professional services are less than budgeted, primarily due to the Margaret Fuller House design process being put on hold. With respect to redevelopment investments, the primary expenses are support to the Foundry Consortium, anticipated Forward Fund grants, and the easement acquisition in the Ringe Commons project. The pie chart shows that the Foundry and Bishop Allen projects compose a

majority of the expenses. Staff is working on improving the reporting structure for outstanding COVID loans, anticipated rental income for long-term leases, the Bishop Allen mortgage, and the OPEB liability.

Ms. Born asked about the anticipated proceeds from the sale of the development rights. Mr. Evans said that the requirement for payment comes when the building permit is issued. The project has been fully approved, fully designed, and staff has signed off on the construction documents. There are a few remaining design items being reviewed by parking and traffic and CDD. The project team anticipates having that permit in hand by the end of the summer. This income reflects the 121 Broadway residential project and the AstraZeneca building at 290 Binney Street. The second commercial building at 250 Binney Street is not anticipated this year.

Mr. Evans explained that the formula for the residential is approximately half of the formula for commercial buildings. The only other variance is that the escalation for residential is frozen a year earlier than the commercial. Mr. Evans clarified that there was a special one-off case for receiving money for the certificate of occupancy for the Proto residential building.

Mr. Evans added that the residential must be permitted at the same time or before the commercial building, as per the zoning. The residential permitting will probably be more streamlined. Commercial has more challenges due to loading and circulation which take more time to review.

Mr. Evans noted the Board's budget amendment last month would aggressively fund the CRA OPEB commitment to 50% once the funds from the sale of development rights were received.

## **Projects and Programs**

### **5. Presentation on the East Cambridge Tree Planting Program**

Fabiola Alikpokou, CRA Senior Planner, explained that to mitigate the tree loss on Parcel Two due to the Eversource substation project, the CRA contracted with Green Cambridge to plant at least 128 trees in East Cambridge, Wellington Harrington, and the Port. She said that the project started in March. She introduced Steven Nutter, Executive Director of Green Cambridge, who spoke about this project. Mr. Nutter introduced Austin Thoren and Daisy Kettle, members of Green Cambridge's Canopy Crew.

Mr. Nutter shared his presentation, which can be found on the CRA next-meeting webpage. Green Cambridge has identified 3,000 possible places to plant trees on private property, although some constraints exist. Fourteen trees have been planted to date. Two five-week plantings in the fall and in the spring will allow Green Cambridge to hit its mark. From the development site, there are 250 potential locations within a 15-minute walk. Outreach using postcards and door hangers have proven to be successful.

Ms. Born started a discussion about the tree species being selected.

Mr. Crawford is excited about this effort and the partnership with the City.

### **6. Kendall Square Signage Review**

Ms. Alikpokou explained that Boston Properties (BXP) has two signage proposals – the first is at 105 Broadway and the other is at the Yellow Garage on 75 Ames Street. She noted that because these two items were submitted by BXP, the design committee did not meet to review these. However, this does require a Board vote. She introduced Emily Ediger and Keir Evans from BXP.

Ms. Ediger, BXP Marketing Coordinator, spoke about the proposed signage for 105 Broadway. The existing monument sign in the front of this building, which was installed by Biogen, is being removed at a later date. BXP would like to install a replacement sign, consistent with other building signage on Broadway and Main Street. There will be two overhead signs, one facing the street level and one facing the MXD substation. Ms. Ediger spoke about the materiality, installation, and size of the signs. The signs will not be illuminated.

Keir Evans, BXP VP Development, spoken about the automated parking garage system ("space counter") sign for the Yellow Garage. He noted that BXP hopes to replicate this at the Green Garage and future garages in the MXD

North parcel to assist drivers with the flow of cars to garages. This issue comes out of a permitting requirement. BXP engaged TCS who installed a system inside the Yellow Garage. The system has red and green lights indicating filled or open spaces. The proposed sign would display parking availability before entering the garage. TCS is proposing an outside blade sign as this is more visible and keeps cars from going onto Ames Place if the garage is full. Keir Evans spoke about the size of the sign. Since the garage is open 24/7, the sign would also be on 24/7. Other garages with more visible entrances could have monument signs. He added that in the future, it is possible that an app-based system or other strategically placed monument signs showing garage availability could provide a more regional solution to the parking situation.

Mr. Zevin noted that the drawings are missing a critical dimension - the distance from the bottom of the sign to the pavement. The sign appears likely to be hit by a truck. Keir Evans said that the sign is inboard of the bollards and the curb line in front of the garage. However, Mr. Zevin pointed out that according to the rendering, this was not so. Mr. Zevin said that he wouldn't trust bollards to keep a truck from backing up at an angle. Keir Evans said that he would get Mr. Zevin the dimensions. He added that raising the sign would also help with visibility.

Mr. Crawford suggested looking at the building at the end of Binney Street at Athenaeum, which has a blade sign that goes out from a loading dock with heavy street traffic.

Mr. Zevin started a discussion of the light system being used to monitor the spaces. He thought the 105 Broadway sign looked nice.

Mr. Zevin asked if the Green Garage sign is remaining or being replaced with something that uses the same color palette as the Urban Park signage on Main Street. Ms. Ediger said that it will be replaced. She added that the blade sign and the vehicular entry sign are going to be updated; they are in production.

There were no further questions or comments.

***A motion was moved by Mr. Crawford approving the building identification signage for 105 Broadway, KSURP Parcel Two and approving the real-time parking information sign on the Yellow Garage on Ames Place, KSURP Parcel Three. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – yes***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

In response to Tom Evans, Keir Evans said that the parking information sign should be installed by the end of the year. BXP plans to come back to the Board for a similar proposal for the Green Garage.

## **7. Danny Lewin Landscape Design Services**

Ms. Alikpokou said that staff is in the process of completing the Danny Lewin project. Staff would like to extend the contract to bring the project to completion. The amendment does not require project budget changes.

Tom Evans said that according to state procurement and contracting law, any contract longer than three years needs approval of the governing body.

***A motion was moved by Mr. Bator authorizing the Executive Director to extend the design services contract with MikYoung Kim Design to align with the revised construction timeline for Danny Lewin Park. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – yes***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

## **8. Annual Transportation Report Contracting**

Cecelia Cobb, CRA Project Planner, summarized the memo in the Board packet. This is coming back to the Board to modify the motion that was approved at last month's June Board meeting. After more consideration, staff would like the Board to authorize a one-year contract extension for data collection and reporting with the current consultant, VHB. While this extension is in effect, the CRA will simultaneously begin an RFP process for a new consultant for the 2024 report.

Ms. Born said that she is a fan of the work that VHB has done, especially the interactive nature of their report. Mr. Zevin agreed.

***An amended motion was moved by Mr. Zevin to authorize the Executive Director to initiate an RFP process for consultant selection for future transportation reports, and also authorizing the Executive Director to extend the contract with VHB for one additional year of data collection and reporting. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – yes***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

### **Other Business**

At 6:55 p.m. Ms. Born said that the Board will enter into Executive Session to discuss real estate negotiations regarding office space within the Foundry. Having a discussion about potential leasing in a public meeting could be detrimental for the financial interests of the CRA. Since the Board has concluded all the business set forth on the regular agenda, it would not be reconvening in an open session after the executive session.

Mr. Evans said that although the agenda says that the next meeting is in September, an August meeting is likely. There was a discussion about having this be a regular meeting or a shorter special meeting.

***A motion was moved by Mr. Bator to enter into Executive Session to consider potential lease terms for the Third Floor of the Foundry Building at 101 Rogers Street. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans.***

***Chris Bator – yes***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

Ms. Shore will send a unique Zoom link to Mr. Bator and Mr. Zevin. The Executive Session will convene at 7:10 p.m.