

Regular Meeting
Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday, December 20, 2012; 5:30pm
Cambridge Police Station
125 Sixth Street
Community Room

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Present

Kathleen Born (Chair), Margaret Drury (Vice-Chair), Christopher Bator, Barry Zevin, Conrad Crawford, Acting Executive Director Susan Glazer, Counsel Jeffrey Mullan, Kathy Spiegelman, Brian Murphy, Kevin Sheehan and David Stewart of Boston Properties.

Call to Order: Kathleen Born, called the meeting to order.

Public Comment

The Chair opened the meeting for public comment, noting that a sign-up sheet for the general public had been provided. The attached materials were entered into the record.

Tom Stohlman

See Tom Stohlman comments (attached) regarding the bylaws and the outline of the Transition Report.

Heather Hoffman

Ms. Hoffman agreed with the previous speaker's comments, stating it is most important that CRA remain an independent body. She didn't want the Board to be another arm of the City doing development. She urged that the Board use the expertise of each of member to make better decisions than have been made in the past. The by-laws should define the Executive Director's position in a way that makes it very clear that the five Board members are the authority and that the Executive Director is to carry out the board's decisions for CRA. Poor decisions with respect to Kendall Square have been made in the past. The Board has the capability of being much better.

Minutes and Reports

1. **On a motion, it was unanimously:**

Voted: To waive reading the minutes and to approve the minutes of the most recent regularly scheduled meeting of the Authority held on November 14, 2012.

Communications

None.

Administrative Actions

Report on Trial Balance as of November 30, 2012; CD Schedule/All Cash; and Cash Flow 2012 was received.

On a motion, it was unanimously:

Voted: to accept Finance Committee Report on Trail Balance as of November 30, 2012; CD Schedule/All Cash Report; and Cash Flow 2012

Report from Acting Executive Director

Ms. Susan Glazer reported that she spent the past month working with a member of the City's finance staff to better understand the Redevelopment Authority's investments and how the board can use those most effectively. She said that she is almost current with bills that hadn't been paid in the past.

She contacted DHCD to find out the status of the vote on the amendment that the Board took in November. DHCD staff has reviewed those documents and has sent them to the Secretary for the Department of Housing and Community Development for signature. Ms. Glazer also forwarded a copy of the proposed CRA Bylaw changes to DHCD staff, who reviewed them and determined that they were very consistent with their recommendations and had no further comments.

Ms. Glazer updated the Board on public hearings coming before the City Council including the Forest City and MIT zoning petitions.

On a motion, it was unanimously:

Voted: To accept the Executive Director's Report

Report from the Ad Hoc Committee on Legal Review

Christopher Bator reported that the special counsel completed an initial review of all documents and has begun to conduct interviews of relevant subjects. Mr. Bator will update the board further in the next month or two.

On a motion, it was unanimously:

Voted: To accept the report of the Ad Hoc Committee on Legal Review

Boston Properties Update

Kevin Sheehan of Boston Properties noted that there were three things to discuss: the housing project on Ames Street; construction of the Cambridge Center expansion project connecting Three, Four and Five Cambridge Center; and the roof deck at One Cambridge Center.

1. Ames Street project

David Stewart from Boston Properties reported he is the project manager for the residential project at Cambridge Center. He presented views of Ames Street at the entrance to the parking garage, loading dock and a fire access route on Ames Street. Mr. Stewart explained that what Boston Properties is attempting to do with the residential building is create a complete street from Four Cambridge Center to the pedestrian pathway. He showed a ground floor plan of Ames Street as the design is today, with three interruptions of the pedestrian sidewalk. One of the goals is to consolidate those interruptions and create a better pedestrian experience. They have figured out a way to do that. About 8000 or 9000 square feet of prime floor retail space will be broken into two spaces to enliven the pedestrian environment. Above the ground floor would be a 250 foot tall residential building with roughly 250 to 300 units. The exact configuration of this and the number of units has not been determined. The site is predicated on reducing the width of the Ames Street right of way from 100 feet to 80 feet. He showed a plan of the roadway alignment with two 12 foot travel lanes, two bike lanes, two parking lanes, 12.5 feet of sidewalk on one side, and 17.5 feet on the other side.

Mr. Stewart noted that Boston Properties has hired FXFOWLE from New York, a firm with experience in dealing with development in tight spaces like this. He said that the land disposition process for 20 feet of Ames Street owned by the City that this design is predicated on would start soon.

Barry Zevin wanted to see variation in the façade, including balconies, questioned the operation and capacity of the loading dock and asked about the direction of incoming vehicles to the garage as well as how Boston Properties will maintain the operation of the existing buildings during construction. Mr. Stewart responded that it is still early in the design, but they are convinced that there is loading capacity. He also noted that they have been able to allow operation of the Broad Institute while the construction of that expansion has been going on.

Christopher Bator asked to have one version of a plan that shows the property lines to identify the land to be developed. Mr. Stewart used a plan to show the area, approximately 8,600 sq. ft.. Mr. Bator also asked about the disposition process and followed on Mr. Zevin's question about design review by asking about community input into the design process. He encouraged Boston Properties to consider an opportunity for the community to have input before the design was completed as well as keeping the CRA Board updated on design progress. Mr. Bator also wanted a timeline for what happens next. Mr. Stewart responded that if Boston Properties formerly enters the City's land disposition process in early January, that process will take 7 to 10 months. The design process will be approximately 9 to 10 months. Construction should begin in 2014. Finally, in response to a question about unit mix, Mr. Stewart said that they are still working on it, but there would be a variety of sizes and types with a large number of studios, one and two bedroom units. They are also looking at micro-units.

In response to a comment Mr. Stewart made about the 250' height of the building and that going to 300' would cause a delay, Conrad Crawford asked how much of a delay. Mr. Stewart said that they might be able to take advantage of the additional height (up to 300' proposed); they had hoped that the Kendall Square zoning would have been farther along by now, but they want to move while the market is good. Mr. Murphy commented that they would have a better idea of the zoning schedule once they knew the Ordinance Committee hearing schedule.

Kathleen Born asked about the height of the Broad building (250'). If the housing is taller, it will not compete with the bulkiness of the Broad and will look more elegant. However, Mr. Zevin was concerned about noise from equipment on the Broad rooftop and the view from a taller building.

Ms. Drury asked about what will happen when the fad of micro-units changes. Mr. Stewart said that units are modular so they can be combined. It costs more to build this way, but it is a protection for the future. Mr. Crawford was concerned with amenities for micro-housing. Mr. Stewart replied that the common space where people will gather will be in the central part of the building, meaning they will have to build larger and more diverse amenities at the base of the building.

2. Cambridge Center Project

The Cambridge Center expansion project is under construction with the foundation work now complete. Steel erection began on Main Street and will be completed by early January (3 – 5 Cambridge Center) and steel for the two story connection (4 and 5 Cambridge Center) will start soon. The majority of the work from that point through the end of the project (July) would be interior work. After the 3-5 Cambridge Center work, Google will start its interior work for the upper floors of the 4-5 Cambridge Center connector. The work in the spring will be on the interior public spaces, the arcade on Main Street and the exterior public area as well. Ms. Born asked if there will be a final design review, which Boston Properties felt would be a re-submission. Mr. Zevin asked if there was interest from potential retail tenants. Boston Properties replied that mostly food users had shown interest. Mr. Murphy suggested that they reach out to people, such as Jesse Baerkahn, who have been successful in getting local retail businesses. Boston Properties replied that they had.

3. Roof-deck Project

This is a roof deck overlooking the new Main Street plaza, situated on the roof the Marriott ballroom. The deck would be accessible from the third floor. Boston Properties has supported the idea as beneficial for the tenant (Microsoft) and for the building. They have reviewed the structural design and know that some of the existing mechanical equipment will have to be relocated. They are getting a plan that would show how the roof-deck might look from the public realm and will bring it to the next board meeting. The tenant wants to be able to use the deck next summer.

Conrad Crawford asked about the Main Street facade of 1 Cambridge Center. Mr. Stewart said that they have been working with one particular vendor who has done a plan of the location of the 60' blank wall

between the entrance to the office building and the entrance to the MBTA, with the station below, where they could create small micro retail. They think they have identified the right operator and are working on the terms of the transaction. Mr. Crawford asked to see the plans when they are available.

Margaret Drury returned to the connector discussion to confirm the timing of the construction. Boston Properties would be finished in July with its work and then Google will begin their construction for the interior. Boston Properties said that the plans for Google will be done well in advance; the construction of the interiors will not start until the construction of the shell was complete. Ms. Drury asked to see plans for what the connector will look like from the outside. Mr. Stewart thought that would happen by February or March at the latest anticipating another design submission and review.

Transition Report Progress

In line with her transition report outline Kathy Spiegelman said that she intended to get a plan for transition to the Board by the end of the calendar year reflecting the Board's express desire to remain independent. Staffing going forward is in flux. Ms. Spiegelman is thinking about short, medium and long term actions: getting someone who would be dedicated full-time to do a strategic plan, build relationships and be available; deciding what the work plan would look like; and determining what the Board should be focusing their goals and agenda on. Ms. Spiegelman distributed the first draft of a job description to Board members with the intention to get it on-line. Ms. Spiegelman asked about the scope of CRA work and if the board wanted to be limited to Kendall Square. The board might also be an economic development voice. Starting to recruit for this position has some urgency. Mr. Mullan suggested that the Board might want someone who has the ability to deal with Washington, someone who is imaginative and thoughtful with revenue experience.

Christopher Bator questioned if the Board was limiting the type of person it can get because of the one year term. In response, Ms. Spiegelman said that the nature of the strategic plan is not yet known and the Board might not want to make a permanent commitment to somebody who may be the wrong fit. There are too many open issues to commit to a longer term. She thought many people would find the job interesting.

CRA Bylaws

Jeffrey Mullan said that it is important to update the 1982 bylaws, which are good but very old. The Board needs to use the bylaws. The second task is to change internal controls such as who can sign checks. The treasurer and the Executive Director are authorized to sign. Third is to look at procedures such as how the Board votes and allows the public to speak. Mr. Mullan recommends spending some time on the bylaws to get it right.

December 19, 2012

To the Members of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority,

I have the following comments on the proposed changes to the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority By-Laws:

Many of the changes bring the by-laws into the 21st Century with regards to gender references and are most welcome. The additional emphasis on the administrative capacity of the Executive Director is important and welcome given the recent history of that position.

I understand the need to streamline the check-signing process, but I am concerned that the major change in that area of the by-law, giving the Executive Director the authority to sign checks with no countersignature. The ability of the Executive Director to sign checks may have been abused in the past, even with the more stringent language of the existing By-law, and I would hope the Authority would not change that language to make it easier for unauthorized signing to occur.

The final paragraph repeats in somewhat stronger language what MGL 121B already encourages, that is, the use of City of Cambridge staff to help the Authority in its official duties. I hope it is not intended or used to discourage the Authority in exercising its statutory independence from City Government.

I have read the December 13, 2012 outline for Transition Report by Kathy Spiegelman. I still believe the most important goal of the Authority should be to determine whether there is a need for it to exist. This is stated in the introduction of the report, but the 11 goals following the introduction, only two: "Conduct an intensive strategic assessment and develop a mission statement with an eye toward a strategic plan." and "Identify major business for next 24-36 days" seem to help answer that question. The rest seem to concentrate on the how of being the CRA instead of the whether. I think this is putting the cart before the horse and ask the Authority to concentrate on the fundamental question first.

Thank you,

Tom Stohlman
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