



## Regular Board Meeting of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday, October 19, 2022 at 5:30 PM

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

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### APPROVED Meeting Minutes

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#### **MEETING FILES**

- [Agenda and Notice](#)
- [Draft Minutes of the September 21, 2022 Minutes](#)
- [September 27, 2022 Email from O.R. Simha regarding Silver Line transit planning for Kendall Square](#)
- [2021 Financial Audit](#)
- [Memo regarding RFP Selection for Information Technology Support Services](#)
- [Monthly Staff Report](#)
- [Financial Report as of August 31, 2022](#)
- [Draft Employee Handbook Revisions](#)
- [Memo regarding RFP Selection for Landscape Design and Civil Engineering](#)
- [KSURP Conceptual Streetscape Redesign Report](#)  
For a look at the highlights of this report and its appendices, please visit the report's [webpage here](#).
- [Draft CRA Strategic Plan Excerpt](#)

#### **PRESENTATIONS AND HANDOUTS**

- [Auditor Presentation of 2021 Audit](#)
- [Correspondence from Rhona Massie regarding Parcel 6](#)

#### **Opening Statement**

At 5:35 p.m., Ellen Shore, CRA Operations Director, said that on July 16, 2022, Governor Baker signed a law which extended the remote meeting provisions of the Open Meeting Law until March 31, 2023. In accordance, tonight's CRA board meeting is being held remotely. There will be opportunities for public comment at the start of this meeting and at the discretion of the chair. Ms. Shore explained the steps to provide public comment. Board meeting materials can be found on the CRA's next meeting webpage. This meeting is being recorded, including all video, audio, and QA 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  
Asst. Treasurer Barry Zevin - present  
Asst. Secretary Margaret Drury – present  
Executive Director Tom Evans - present

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 the Executive Director will repeat the responses.

#### **Public Comment**

Heather Hoffman noted the communication from Bob Simha regarding the Silver Line which relates to the planning for Broadway, Main Street, and Third Street. She said that Third Street is especially unpleasant to navigate by foot, car and probably bicycle. There are now more double-parked cars than ever. This speaks to the issue of using First Street, which has the potential to be just as bad with more and more bus service. She urged the CRA to weigh in on the issue. Lastly, regarding the presumed subject of the executive session, she said that if the CRA is selling Parcel Six to MIT, it should keep in mind that the community was shorted acres and acres of promised public parkland. This is the CRA's opportunity to make up for that in some way. She stated that MIT will survive.

Bob Simha seconded Ms. Hoffman's observations. He said that his letter reflects the concern of the community. There is a Silver Line study going on to the north of the area, but it terminates in Kendall Square, which is an example of a planning effort on the part of MassDOT to explore only one technology. There is another study looking at moving commuter trains on the Grand Junction tracks. The MBTA's proposed bus lines are also problematic. He added that the MBTA has run test bus lines through Third Street and this area all year. Buses are bumper to bumper with cars. This city has very limited capacity. Although the streets study that the CRA has with Sasaki is trying to make some rational development plan for this area, he hopes that the CRA takes some leadership, using the resources that it has in connection with the Grand Junction study, to ensure that all of the technologies which are being proposed or explored are orchestrated in a comprehensive way to result in a much better solution, not only for the Kendall Square area, but for the whole eastern part of Cambridge.

Mr. Evans said that the CRA transit study contract with WSP is not intrinsically related to the Silver Line. It is currently scoped to look at various rail options; it is not pursuing a bus corridor study. He summarized that Mr. Simha's email focused on the impacts of the MBTA's bus network redesign on the Third Street Silver Line. He added that possibly implied in Mr. Simha's comments is that notion that the Grand Junction rail corridor should be reconsidered as a bus corridor, as it had been proposed in the urban ring proposal many years ago. Although the CRA study will look at the original proposal from over a decade ago to potentially run commuter rail trains from Worcester to North Station using the Grand Junction, the study is not exploring that technology. It will be focusing on other types of high-capacity transit, such as EMU, DMU, or light rail vehicles in different track configurations.

No other requests for public comment were offered.

***A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to close public comment. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

## **Minutes**

### **1. Review of September 21, 2022 Minutes**

Mr. Evans noted the addition of the Board meeting documents' hyperlinks, which reduces the need to restate the words in those memos in the minutes. No amendments or other comments were offered.

***A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on September 21, 2022. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

## **Communications**

## **2. Email received on September 27th from Bob Simha regarding Silver Line transit planning for Kendall Square**

Ms. Born said that this was already discussed during Public Comment.

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

Mr. Evans said that a communication from Rhonda Massie regarding Parcel Six was received 15 minutes before tonight's meeting. This was forwarded to the Board. Mr. Evans said that the communication noted the concept of merging the park space in MIT's current plan, between the residential tower on Binney and the commercial building along Binney, with that of Parcel 6 to create a larger open space asset. This communication will be posted on tonight's Board meeting's webpage.

***A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to put the communication on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

## **Administration Items**

### **4. 2021 Financial Audit**

Hema Kailasam, Director of Finance and Operations, introduced Tony Roselli, the managing partner at Roselli, Clark & Associates. She thanked Ms. Shore for her efforts preparing the necessary documentation for the successful audit process.

Mr. Roselli, who had done the CRA audit after the CRA's turmoil in 2012, congratulated the agency on its accomplishments during the past decade. In his presentation he explained the audit process and requirements. He said that a clean opinion was given on the 2021 financials. There were no risks that rose to a level that would put the controls of the CRA in a vulnerable state. He said that the financial trends and net position of the CRA are very strong. The Board's mission to make the authority viable, relevant, and a productive asset to the City of Cambridge has been accomplished. A slide in his Powerpoint presentation showed a graph depicting the increase in the CRA's net position over the past decade. He discussed the CRA's pension program, which belongs to the City of Cambridge's contributory retirement system. This has a very strong portfolio and is managed very well. Although Massachusetts does not require funding of the CRA's OPEB (Other Postemployment Benefits, i.e., health insurance), it is an accumulating liability. Mr. Roselli suggested that the Board consider fully funding OPEB within a one-to-three-year period. Mr. Evans said that staff is exploring this advice.

Mr. Roselli stressed the continuing need to stay vigilant regarding network security. He added that GASB 87 now requires a calculation of all leases which, if material, might need to become part of the 2022 financial statement. He noted one finding in the cash reconciliations that is easily fixable by staff.

Ms. Born said that funding OPEB while the equity markets are weak seemed to be a wise decision. Mr. Zevin agreed. Mr. Kailasam confirmed that the CRA holds cyber fraud insurance coverage, but there is a limit. She stressed that in addition to having safeguards on the CRA bank accounts, most of the CRA cash is held in US Bank and managed by Morgan Stanley so there are many safety levels.

Mr. Evans said that if the CRA wanted to fully fund OPEB, the CRA OPEB Board would need to vote on making payments to the Group Insurance Commission (GIC) from this fund.

***A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to put the 2021 Financial Audit on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

**Kathy Born – yes**  
**Conrad Crawford – yes**  
**Margaret Drury - yes**  
**Barry Zevin – yes**  
**The motion carried.**

## **5. Information Technology Support Services**

Ms. Kailasam summarized the Board memo regarding the procurement for a 3-year contract for IT support services. After reviewing the four submissions, staff is recommending that the current vendor, the Tatsu Company, be selected. The Tatsu Company has been working with the CRA as a sole source contract because the needs of the CRA had been below that \$10,000 level.

***A motion was moved by Ms. Drury authorizing the Executive Director to enter into a three-year contract, with a single one-year extension option, with The Tatsu Company for comprehensive information technology support. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.***

**Chris Bator – absent**  
**Kathy Born – yes**  
**Conrad Crawford – yes**  
**Margaret Drury - yes**  
**Barry Zevin – yes**  
**The motion carried.**

## **6. Monthly Staff Report**

Mr. Evans summarized the Staff Report in the Board packet.

## **7. August Financial Report**

Ms. Kailasam summarized the highlights of the Financial Report in the Board packet. She said that the continuing volatile equity market has hurt income. August was the first month that rent was collected from the Foundry tenants. The personnel expenses are well within the budgeted amount as the agency is re-staffing. The big cash outflow was related to the CRA's contribution to the City for its share of the Foundry project. As of September, the Bishop Allen project is 99% closed-out. The overall CRA expenses are lower than budgeted. The Bishop Allen building is performing as expected. The expenses are low because everything is new. The only surprise is on the energy front which will hopefully have an offset once solar is installed. This installation is planned for later this year and will be activated next spring. The tenants are excited about the building.

## **8. Revisions to Employee Handbook / Personnel Policy**

Mr. Evans said that there are two areas of changes. The first one increases the allowable number of remote days from one to two. The original concept, after Covid, was to allow employees one remote day, and a second remote day upon request for a short period of time. To align the policy with what has become the practice here, as well as the practice in many other offices, including the City of Cambridge, the document is revised to allow two remote days and three days in the office.

The second change removes an antiquated holdover concept for a payout for unused accrued sick leave. As staff increases, this is a big liability, which had been mentioned in previous audits, although not in tonight's audit. This concept is also a disincentive for taking sick time, even when one should, because it is perceived as a loss of value to an employee. The payout also plays as an incentive to depart the CRA. The proposal is to eliminate this payout for sick-leave upon termination from the policy but provide current staff the ability to cash out half of their sick leave and get that payment.

Ms. Drury noted that the word 'absence' is spelled incorrectly on page 4.

***A motion was moved by Ms. Drury approving the Revisions to the Employee Handbook adjusting hybrid work options and sick leave. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

## **Projects and Programs**

### **9. Rindge Multi-Use Pathway Landscape Architecture Selection**

Fabiola Alikpokou, CRA Senior Planner, summarized the memo in the Board packet. She said that after launching an RFP in July and evaluating respondent's proposals, staff recommends Copley Wolff Design Group, Inc. as the project's landscape designer, and Nitsch Engineering as the civil engineering consultant.

Mr. Zevin asked for clarification regarding whether the CRA is confident that once the working drawings were produced, the CRA could then proceed with the work. Mr. Evans explained that the first step is getting to a level of design to determine where the path wants to be and then draw that easement. Work with Just A Start will be needed to come up with a funding and development plan of that actual facility. Mr. Evans clarified that the procurement carries the design all the way through, but the contract will state key deliverable marker points.

Ms. Alikpokou said that the Just A Start ground breaking is Thursday October 20 at 1-3 p.m.

Mr. Evans added that Copley Wolff is also working with Just A Start on the first-phase landscape design which could present opportunities for enhanced coordination with that process.

Ms. Born noted that Lynn Wolf, one of the founders of the firm and a friend of hers, was active in both the Urban Land Institute and New England Women in Real Estate. She sadly passed away at a young age.

***A motion, was moved by Ms. Drury, authorizing the Chair to negotiate and enter into a contract with Copley and Wolff Design Group for design services related to the construction of a multi-use pathway over the future public easement area of the Rindge Commons Project. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - yes***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

### **10. Broadway, Main, and Third Conceptual Design Study**

Cecelia Cobb, CRA Planner, said the goal of the study was to develop a set of guiding concept designs for the streetscapes of Broadway, Main Street and Third Street within the boundaries of the KSURP area, and to provide more complete and consistent street facilities throughout the Kendall Square area. The report is now on the CRA website, in addition to a web page that highlights some of its key findings and some of the roadway conditions that exist on these three streets.

Staff is now in the process of sharing this study with the community and, specifically, with developers and city staff who might be involved in implementing these plans in the future. She noted that these are concept designs, and would need to be brought forward into 100% design before being sent out for construction. These are meant to gather community feedback and incorporate those needs and desires within the context of the City of Cambridge's plans to have a better split of modalities throughout the area, given the increasing density. She said that staff is very pleased with the results of the process and are excited to share them. There is no motion.

Mr. Zevin asked for clarification regarding the statement on page 23 regarding the width of the street being okay for pickup and drop off, but not for parking. Mr. Evans said that the fire department would only accept a more active parking behavior. The space between a parked car and the travel lane is narrower than the fire department would approve for the scale of development to come. However, an occupied vehicle could move out of the way.

Mr. Zevin noted that Option 1 is confusing because a shared right and through movement does not jive with a concurrent exclusive transit through movement. He is worried by the option for an exclusive transit through movement because it sends people onto Broadway who otherwise would have gone onto Main Street directly. He wonders if Broadway, Ames Street, and Galileo can support this. Ms. Cobb said that the appendix section of the report has a traffic study and a transit study. There are vehicles that would be channeled either to Broadway heading eastbound or westbound but there wasn't a large enough number of vehicles per day that were using that through option to have a significant impact on Broadway.

Mr. Zevin said that the only solution for Main Street is indeed the woonerf. However, he does not like the proposed implementation which gives a huge amount of space to sidewalk uses and narrows the street to the bare minimum. He showed a slide of a scalloped street edge that accommodates Metro buses in Arlington, Virginia, which has a density much like Kendall. It frees up the movements of the buses tremendously. He said that this is a better use of that extra space. Ms. Cobb said that the Main Street design has not been decided and that this idea can be included in future conversations.

Mr. Zevin noted that there is a tendency to reduce travel lanes to the bare minimum and if anything goes even slightly wrong, a bottleneck is sure to occur. Mr. Crawford said that he understood what Mr. Zevin expressed. Cambridge has had some pilots for shrinking lanes and there are major disruptions.

Mr. Evans noted that the MBTA bus plans were not known when the initial round of design was being done for Broadway, Third Street, and Main Street. A re-examination of Main Street will be necessary to accommodate more buses. The only route that seems to meet all the needs is a transit priority street versus an exclusive cycling facility for that one block.

Ms. Born said that the renderings are misleading as they show big buildings all along Main Street. The street design should consider the one-block area near the large crosswalk as a public space. There is a plaza, a roof garden, and a food court on one side. On the other side is a major MIT open space and the MIT museum. There is also a major passageway through the Marriott hotel leading to the Volpe site. This is a major public space that also happens to have a lightly traveled street going through it. A "street place" seems to be the right label for this area. This area should be recognized as the major public square in Cambridge.

Ms. Born asked who will take these thoughts back to the Community Development Department (CDD). Mr. Evans expects this to come up during the bus line conversations with CDD next week. Ms. Born asked if the Kendall Square Association (KSA) and MIT will be realizing this potential? Mr. Evans said that he and Ben Lavery of MIT have been talking about the shared street concept for Main Street. Mr. Evans will talk with the KSA's new Executive Director.

## **11. Update on CRA Strategic Plan**

Kathryn Madden, CRA Strategic Planner, said that tonight's goal is to continue discussing the strategic plan. At last month's Board meeting, the vision and the mission chapters were discussed. This draft plan now contains chapters for the introduction, vision, mission statement, context, and external activities. The plan compiles many Board discussions, individual interviews, conversations with staff, and conversations with the Strategic Advisory Group. Ms. Madden emphasized that this has been a work in progress for close to two years and is still a work in progress.

She listed some key questions for discussion before the plan can be completed:

- How does the CRA balance its stewardship role in Kendall Square versus taking on new projects?
- How does the CRA decide and set priorities for new projects?
- What is the intake process and due diligence for new projects?
- How does the CRA balance being nimble versus being strategic?

- What is the ability of the CRA to scale up and add capacity for handling its many ambitions?
- What is the role of partnerships?
- Will the CRA focus on many small projects or a few big projects?
- Should the CRA conserve funds for unforeseen crises?

Mr. Evans said that this draft incorporated the comments that were made during the September Board meeting discussion of the mission and the vision.

Ms. Drury said that there is a need for small and big development projects. Ms. Born said that the CRA should do projects that are meaningful and fill a gap that cannot be filled within the model of other nonprofits in the city. Ms. Madden reviewed the strategic priorities on pages 11 and 12 of the report. Ms. Drury liked that land trusts were included in the creative development opportunities paragraph.

Mr. Zevin suggested adding, to the climate change section, that the CRA should be lobbying regional players to try to prevent the worst outcomes of climate change. Mr. Crawford agreed. Ms. Born said that the CRA has the most clout if advocacy can be directly related to CRA projects or to the CRA's center of interest. Mr. Evans said that this can be an item for discussion with the KSA. There was a discussion about potential overtopping of dams and sustainability in the modern era. Ms. Born suggested using the phrase "advocacy for regional climate change mitigation" rather than "lobbying" Mr. Zevin said that supporting regional mitigation for rising sea levels is key. Mr. Evans said that mitigation for rain saturation is also important, especially if the tide is up. Ms. Born suggested the term "weather events".

Mr. Crawford was pleased with the process and the resulting stewardship section.

Ms. Madden said that the next discussions will focus on the internal operations and financial sections of the document as they are key to how the CRA will make decisions regarding new projects. She agreed with Mr. Crawford in that stewardship is central to CRA's work and that adding projects depends on staff capacity,

Ms. Born said that the documents should highlight the CRA's focus on creating and saving open spaces for the good of the public. This has been a focus of this CRA Board since it was seated. Mr. Zevin appreciated that the document mentioned the need to conserve what is already good. Ms. Madden asked the Board to send her comments or corrections. Ms. Born said that although she feels the professional tone of the document is appropriate, she would like to see a bit more passion or aspiration regarding open spaces. Ms. Madden suggested doing this via captions when the illustrations are added.

As for the next steps, Ms. Madden said that the Strategic Advisory Group is meeting on November 4 to discuss this public document. She asked the Board to attend if available. For the next Board meeting, the goal is to discuss the final chapters - Internal Operations; Financial Considerations; and Learning, Growth and Engagement. After this, Ms. Madden would incorporate any comments and then add graphics (such as maps and illustrations). She hopes that the document would be completed by the end of the year.

### **Other Business**

At 8:04 p.m., Ms. Born said that the Board had concluded all of the business on its regular agenda so it would not be reconvening in an open session after the executive session. The topic is a discussion related to Parcel Six within the Kendall Square Urban Redevelopment Plan. The Executive Session will start at 8:15 p.m. Mr. Evans will send a unique Zoom link to the Board members and staff.

***A motion was made to enter into Executive Session to consider terms of a potential real estate transaction with MITIMCO related to Parcel Six of the KSURP. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans and each member's vote was repeated.***

***Chris Bator – absent***

***Kathy Born – yes***

***Conrad Crawford – yes***

***Margaret Drury - absent***

***Barry Zevin – yes***

***The motion carried.***

**Adjournment of CRA Board Meeting**