

ANNUAL Board Meeting
Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday, February 17, 2021 at 5:30pm
Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, this meeting was held virtually via Zoom

APPROVED Meeting Minutes

At 5:37 p.m., Alex Levering read the opening statement:

In response to the current COVID-19 situation, the Governor has suspended certain provisions of the Open Meeting Law allowing government bodies to meet using remote participation. In accordance with the Order, the CRA is holding this meeting via Zoom webinar. In a webinar format, all attendees, except panelists, will have their videos suspended and be muted unless specifically unmuted by the host. 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 “raise hand” icon at the bottom of your screen and you will be called upon to speak. Once you are called upon, you will need to press unmute. You may identify yourself but are not required to do so. After stating your comment or question, you will be re-muted. Alternatively, you can use the Q&A function to type a question or comment. If you are calling in via phone and have no access to a computer or smart phone, you can call the CRA’s main line at 617-492-6800, extension 11 to bypass the opening messages or you can email planning@CambridgeRedevelopment.org.

Board meeting materials can be found on the CRA’s next meeting webpage. This meeting is being recorded by the CRA, including all audio, video, and QA messages.

Call Roll

Chair Kathleen Born called the annual meeting. A roll call of Board members and a confirmation that the meeting was audible to them was taken by Mr. Evans.

Vice Chair Conrad Crawford – not present yet
Treasurer Christopher Bator – present and audible
Assistant Treasurer Barry Zevin – present and audible
Assistant Secretary Margaret Drury – not present yet

There is a quorum so the meeting will begin.

CRA staff members in attendance were Executive Director Tom Evans, Alex Levering, Carlos Peralta, Ellen Shore, Erica Schwarz, Hema Kailasam, and Fabiola Alikpokou.

As this is a remote meeting, all votes will be taken by roll call and responses will be repeated for the record by Mr. Evans.

Margaret Drury arrived to the meeting at 5:41p.m.

Public Comment

Elena Sokolow-Kaufman requested to enter public comment. Ms. Born said that the Board just received her communication, which has been entered into the record. Ms. Sokolow-Kaufman, Managing Director of the Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition (CNC), said that her communication summarizes the survey data collected from Cambridge nonprofits regarding the impact of the pandemic. This was the third survey in a series conducted during the pandemic. This survey was done in November and there were responses from over 80 Cambridge nonprofit leaders. The results show that many organizations are experiencing financial stress with decreased

revenues and greater expenses compared to last year. She outlined specifics that are stated in her report. She urged the CRA to consider nonprofits, in addition to small businesses, when discussing financial relief programs.

James Williamson requested to enter public comment. Ms. Born first replied to his in-chat question requesting an announcement of attendees since they are not seen by other attendees. Ms. Born said that under legal advisement, it is the right of the public to attend public meetings anonymously. Mr. Evans said that there are currently 11 attendees including staff. Mr. Williamson thanked Ms. Born for her explanation and fully endorsed the reasoning. He appreciated knowing the number of attendees and staff. He complemented the CRA on how it conducts its public meetings. He added that he was despaired by the overwhelming growth of the Kendall Square area. There is too much building. It needs to stop in order to maintain a livable Cambridge.

There were no other requests for public comment.

A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to close public comment. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Mr. Bator – yes

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – not present

Ms. Drury - yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Minutes

1. Motion: To accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on January 20, 2021

Mr. Evans said that Ms. Levering researched the housing inventory in Kendall Square, in response to a question that Bjorn Poonen had raised in his communication to the Board last month. The same geographical area was used for the interactive Kendall Development Map – from the northern end of the MIT campus through the Galleria shopping center, including the riverfront developments, but excluding Cambridge Crossing. Of the roughly 3000 units in this area, about 30% are condominiums based on the assessor's data. It isn't all rental. The new supply is coming in as additional rental.

In response to Ms. Born, Mr. Evans said that he thought the percentage for the City was 60% rental and 40% ownership. He was not certain if this included student housing.

A motion was made to accept the minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board on January 20, 2021. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Mr. Bator – yes

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – not present

Ms. Drury - yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Communications

- 2. January 13, 2021 Thank You Letter from the Nurtury regarding COVID-19 PPE Grant**
- 3. January 25, 2021 Letter from the East End House regarding COVID-19 PPE Grant**
- 4. February 1, 2021 Awaiting Report from Iram Farooq regarding COVID-19 Small Business Grant and Loan Support Programs**
- 5. February 1, 2021 Letter from Linden Park Neighbors regarding MXD Amendment and Fulkerson Land**
- 6. February 8, 2021 Letter from Residents of 303 Third St. regarding Volpe Development Proposal**
- 7. Other written communications received since the publication of the Annual Meeting notice**

Ms. Born said the first two communications are lovely thank you letters from the Nurture and East End House. She also relayed a story of a business owner in her neighborhood who had received a CRA Covid assistance loan and upon recognizing Ms. Born, thanked the CRA for the support which enabled the business to remain open.

Mr. Evans said that the third communication is a CDD response to an awaiting report that had raised concerns about the distribution of grants and loans to BIPOC- and women-owned businesses. He included it since the CRA loan was included in the data presented. Mr. Evans said that the grants being actively worked on now are the childcare Covid protection grants. The last few grant agreements were processed today. Mr. Peralta added that 17 organizations have received these grants, totaling \$81,000. There are still some funds available and a plan for those funds will come to the Board next month. He was surprised, however, that there weren't more requests.

Conrad Crawford joined the meeting at 6:02 p.m.

Ms. Born said that the letter from the Linden Park neighbors regarding the MXD amendment and Fulkerson speaks for itself.

The last letter is from residents of 303 Third Street regarding the Volpe development proposal. Ms. Born offered Mr. Simha the option to comment. Ms. Shore did not see that he was requesting to do so. [Later in the chat, Mr. Simha wrote that most of 303 Third Street condos are actually rentals held by the developer and he hopes that the CRA will support the concerns of the residents in the review process.] Mr. Evans noted that staff has been coordinating on a number of transportation issues around the site, as well as connectivity to the Sixth Street Walkway through the open space components of the plan as it was released in the fall. As yet, not much time has been spent on the special permit submission besides the traffic impact study, which the CRA consultants are reviewing to make sure that the same data for the streetscape work is being analyzed.

There was a late communication from Elena Sokolow-Kaufman which she spoke about in public comment.

There were no other communications.

A motion was made by Ms. Drury to close the communications portion of the agenda and put the communications on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Mr. Bator – yes

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – yes

Ms. Drury - yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried.

Annual Meeting / Election of Officers

Ms. Born said that she values the other members of the Board and the staff.

A motion was made by Ms. Drury to elect the slate of officers as:

Chair - Kathleen L. Born

Vice Chair - Conrad Crawford,

Treasurer - Christopher F. Bator

Assistant Treasurer - Barry Zevin

Assistant Secretary - Margaret Drury

A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Mr. Bator – yes

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

Ms. Drury - yes

The motion carried unanimously.

Reports, Motions, and Discussion Items

7. 2020 Annual Report

Ms. Born said that the report was stupendous. Ms. Drury said it was amazing to see how much the staff has accomplished. Mr. Bator said that he is proud and grateful of the staff's work, particularly considering the hurdles presented during Covid.

Mr. Evans said that putting the report together was a staff effort. It was an interesting year to review. He is proud of the document and the work it represents. This is the second time the cover has had a non-Kendall picture on the cover. As the CRA continues to grow, the citywide portfolio parallels the Kendall Square development and planning work. In response to Ms. Drury, the photographs were taken by staff unless they are credited in the picture's caption. Ms. Alipokou did most of the work on the graphic layout, while staff contributed the text.

Mr. Evans reviewed the financials, which are a key element from the State's standpoint. The revenue comes to the CRA in chunks as projects become entitled which is why there is the five-year chart. There was not a balanced budget in 2020 because the income from the 325 Main Street project was realized in 2019. The Project Budget Analysis graph tracks the resources for the different projects. While most of the investments are going to citywide projects, staff time is split between both Kendall and citywide projects. There was a large outlay of money for the design work on the Foundry and the Bishop Allen building. The Covid-19 assistance grant project was folded into the Forward Fund category. The current assets include restricted funds for the Foundry and KSTEP projects. The 2021 priorities include the current five-year strategic planning process.

Mr. Bator was pleased to see that the report reflects the extent of the CRA's citywide activity. It is remarkable to see the difference in activity since this Board started in 2012. In response to Mr. Bator, Mr. Evans said that per the state's redevelopment and urban renewal guidelines that were amended in 2018, the report will be sent to the Mass. Department of Housing and Community Development, each City Councilor, and the City Manager. There will be a combination of printed copies and digital distribution. The City CDD department will also get a copy. Mr. Evans noted that distributing printed copies is difficult while the world is still isolating. Mr. Evans said that a printed copy will be sent to the CRA Board members.

Reading from the chat, Ms. Born said that Mr. Williamson also requested a hardcopy. Mr. Evans said that when it is printed, it will be sent to him. In response to another question of his, Mr. Evans explained the "Rindge Connectivity" 2021 priority. In the middle of 2018 to 2019, as Just-A-Start's project at Rindge was taking shape, the CRA was approached regarding open space on their site, as the CRA had provided funding to them for open space on a previous project. It was quickly realized that the open space issues for Rindge are not able to be addressed looking at one site. The general area includes a significant number of open spaces, but connecting them is challenging. Initial survey work was done to understand where opportunities might be. A community conversation process was being planned for the beginning of 2020 to get additional feedback beyond what was done in the City's Alewife planning process. The goal was to look at all the Rindge towers and the development between Rindge Ave. and the railroad tracks for opportunities to better connect those parcels to one another and to nearby open space resources, and to get around the railroad and highway infrastructure that impedes multimodal travel and open space connectivity. Due to Covid, the community conversations didn't happen but an initial technical report was created. The community process will occur in the spring of 2021. The Rindge Connectivity Plan is on the CRA website. Work is being done to design a separate webpage for the project.

There was a discussion about Point Park, renamed Galaxy Park, in reference to the iconic galaxy sculpture whose designer is Joe Davis, a professor at MIT. There have been some initial thoughts for redesigning the grassy area of the park toward the point of the park and how it might be affected by the new streetscape designs for Broadway and Main Street.

Ms. Born noted that there might be typographical or minor corrections.

A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to place the 2020 Annual Report on file. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Mr. Bator – yes

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – yes

Ms. Drury - yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried unanimously.

9. Foundry Construction Update

Brendan Roy, the construction project manager for the City of Cambridge, gave an update on the Foundry. A picture taken earlier this week, of the inside of the building, showed the massing of the grand opening from the Rogers Street entrance. At the end of the picture is Bent Street and the location of the theater. Steel is being put into the building to support the second and third floors. Four of the six wood trusses are getting restored. A picture of the third floor showed the open atrium in the middle. On the outside, the brick restoration is about 80-90% complete. Much of it is covered up so that work can continue through the winter. The masons are excelling at restoring the profile of the building. The Cambridge Historical Commission has seen the work. Mr. Roy noted that many of the window openings along Bent Street were reconstructed because they were either infilled or damaged over the years. The old addition was removed. The foundation has been poured for the new addition, which will be followed by steel installation. The substantial completion date that the contractor must meet is May 31, 2022, with final completion expected 90 days after that. There have been a few issues regarding existing conditions, most of which have been addressed.

Mr. Zevin said that it is an amazing transformation. Mr. Roy said that it was impressive seeing the disassembling of the building to get the concrete floor out. The demo team was terrific and understood what it takes to work inside an historic building. In response to Ms. Born, Mr. Brendon said that the floors have not been poured yet. Ms. Schwarz clarified that the picture in the CRA 2020 annual report is a picture of the old concrete floor before it was demolished. Ms. Born is happy to see that the building is looking more structurally sound compared to this summer. Mr. Roy explained that the steel ties into the timber and brick structure to reinforce it. This is a seismic requirement.

In response to Mr. Bator, Mr. Roy said that the City is confident in meeting the schedule for the opening. There was a setback due to Covid and the soil conditions but adjustments were made. There are some utility and road issues with Rogers Street but these would not affect the construction timeline.

Ms. Schwarz added that the Executive Director search kicked off on February 1. Within the past two weeks, there have been 13 resumés, many of which look very strong. It is a rolling process so applications are still being accepted. The notice and application are on various websites, including the CRA's and the Foundry Consortium's.

Staff is working on updating agreements regarding the Foundry. The CRA lease with the City described a Pre-Lease period which falls before the building opens. Due to the construction delays, the timeline for the Pre-Lease period needs to be amended. The Cooperation Agreement is being amended to include a list of FFE (fixtures, furniture, and equipment) describing the items included in WT Rich's construction contract for the base building and other items that the CRA will purchase. A form has also been proposed for the City to fill out to update the CRA on the money being spent as construction moves forward. Mr. Evans added that the Memorandum of Understanding with the Foundry Consortium (FC) will also be amended to update the timeline and activities that the CRA and FC will be carrying out before the building opens, such as engaging for the property management function. This agreement manages the CRA-FC relationship before a formal sublease is signed between the parties. Amendments to the MOU are expected to come to the Board in March or April.

In response to Ms. Born, Mr. Evans said that half of the newly constructed addition supports building functions, e.g., elevator, HVAC, and utilities. The office space occupies portions of the addition as well as the historic portions of the upper levels. Most of the new floor overlooking the atrium, is circulation or office space with the exception of the space on the second floor along Bent Street which is for the theater. The area on the east side of the second floor is planned to be the below-market, nonprofit-focused office space. Staff is gearing up a brokerage process to start seeking tenants. This will likely be running in full force within the next three months.

Delivering on a committed opening date is important when future tenants are leaving other spaces. Recruitment for office tenants can start now, although it is an unusual time regarding office space needs. Ms. Schwarz said that there have been some entities that have expressed interest in leasing office space and she is keeping a list for when the marketing materials are ready.

In response to Mr. Bator's question about meeting the expectations of the market-rate retail office portion of the building post-Covid, Ms. Schwarz said that the rent expectations in the initial modeling were very conservative. However, there is still uncertainty. There is hope that the uniqueness of the Foundry will be a draw. Mr. Evans said that there is some anxiety and expects to use the designated reserve in the first year.

Mr. Zevin said that the new park on Rogers Street could be an asset for the Foundry.

10. 99 Bishop Allen Project Update

Ms. Schwarz introduced GV Wattendorf, from the selected general contractor GVW. Mr. Wattendorf said that GVW is a family-owned construction company started in 1986, with 100 employees. They self-perform a lot of the architectural work but do subcontract most of the mechanical work. He named other people on the project. He thanked the Board for the opportunity.

Mr. Wattendorf explained that they mobilized two weeks ago. They met with the building department on Tuesday and were able to get into the building to remove a lot of the finishes (casework, doors, floor finishes that did not have asbestos). A building permit was filed on February 2. The DEP has been notified. A demolition permit was filed on February 11 and the abatement contractor filed for notification on February 25. Permits have also been filed for the plumber, and the HVAC and electrical contractors. CRA staff is trying to expedite the building permit process. Getting the demolition permit would allow four to six weeks before doing structural work in the basement. He highlighted other dates in the schedule – demo of the building interior on the February 22, building envelope work on March 17, work on exterior elements on April 22, a certificate of occupancy on September 13, followed by the move-in of FF&E and tenants.

Ms. Schwarz noted that a builder's risk insurance policy has replaced the general property insurance. Staff is planning a virtual ground breaking video or slide show to celebrate this moment.

In response to Mr. Bator, Mr. Wattendorf said that the building permit is the current hold-up. An elevator contractor is also needed since no sub-bids were accepted. GVW, STA, STV DPM, and the CRA are working to resolve this. Several contractors have walked the site and expressed interest. He is hoping to receive bids and vet these companies to meet the budget and timeline of the project. The request to disable utilities has been submitted to Eversource and they are in this process with the telecom service as well.

In response to Ms. Born, Mr. Evans said that he has reached out to the building department and will stay in close contact with them. He noted that the Housing Authority is undergoing permitting for a public project as well. The building department is aware of the project and various departments has been informed through the design process of the plans for storm water management and fire protection. The City administration is aware of the importance of the project. Mr. Bator stressed the need for the Board to be informed of any impediments.

In response to Mr. Williamson's question in the chat regarding how organizations become tenants in the building, Ms. Born said that the tenants were all nonprofit organizations who were already tenants in the building before it was bought. Mr. Evans added that the term sheets have been renegotiated; the building will be fully occupied by the prior tenants once the renovation is completed.

11. Forward Fund 2021 Program

Mr. Peralta said that the Forward Fund program will be re-engaged in 2021. It was put on hold in 2020 and the 2020 allocated funds went towards Covid relief programs. As part of the 2021 budget which was approval by the Board in December, \$300,000 is allocated to the 2021 Forward Funds and \$200,000 will be used for a new relief programs that will be presented to the Board in the spring. Staff is in conversations with CDD regarding the new relief program. Of the \$300,000, \$200,000 will go towards Capital Infrastructure (CI) grants, with a maximum

individual grant amount of \$50,000; \$100,000 will go towards Technical Assistance (TA) grants, with a maximum individual grant of \$10,000.

Since face-to-face meetings will be difficult this year, staff will offer Zoom office hours where the community can sign up to discuss their projects or the application process. The selection committee, made up of City and CRA staff, will continue to select awardees for the CI grants, while just the CRA staff will select the awardees for the TA grants. There will be a different application form for each grant type. The TA grant application will be more streamlined. As a new addition to the TA grant, requests will be allowed to include information technology equipment to help organizations address the digital divide that exists in the community.

In response to Ms. Drury, Mr. Peralta said that organizations can only select one grant type. In the past, organizations could apply for the TA grant to help with feasibility studies or business plans that were necessary before applying for the larger CI grant. The TA grant will now also include requests for information technology. Mr. Peralta noticed that the sentence that mentions IT on page 2 should move from the capital infrastructure paragraph to the technical assistance paragraph. CI grants are open to all local 501c3 nonprofit organizations in the City that are able to complete an infrastructure project to improve their facility. This grant requires a 1:1 financial match.

Mr. Bator is pleased to see the continuation and development of the Forward Fund. It represents the flagship program of this Board to extend the wealth of Kendall citywide. He applauds the ongoing effort, vitality and the nimbleness to respond to the effects of the Covid pandemic. Mr. Crawford agreed with the breakdown of the TA grant to allow for 10 projects, and the CI grant allowing for four projects, assuming the maximum amounts are distributed. He hopes that a rollover of grants from one year to the next can be controlled to ease management of the program.

Ms. Born opened another opportunity for public comment.

Mr. Williamson likes the work on the Foundry and shared an image of Parisian arcades that look similar. Ms. Born directed Mr. Williamson to the rendering of the indoor space in the CRA annual report. He put his address in the chat and requested a hardcopy of the annual report. He also requested the link to the Rindge Connectivity technical study. Mr. Williamson spoke about the intensification of activity in Alewife with IQHQ purchasing 26 acres.

There was a discussion of website updates that are needed and being planned

Adjournment of CRA Board Meeting

A motion was moved by Ms. Drury to adjourn the meeting. A roll call was taken by Mr. Evans, upon which he repeated each member's vote.

Mr. Bator – yes

Ms. Born – yes

Mr. Crawford – yes

Ms. Drury - yes

Mr. Zevin – yes

The motion carried unanimously.

The meeting adjourned at 7:21pm