



CRA Design Review Committee
Held Virtually on Zoom
Meeting Notes
Date: July 28, 2022

ATTENDEES

CRA Board: Kathleen Born, Barry Zevin

CRA Staff: Fabiola Alikpokou, Tom Evans

BXP: Rebecca Stoddard

Selbert Perkins Design: Jessica Finch

Best Dressed Sign: Meredith Kasabian, and Josh Luke

Public: Heather Hoffman

KENDALL URBAN PARK MURAL CONCEPTS AT GREEN GARAGE- 90 BROADWAY

PRESENTATION

Boston Properties presented on the Kendall Urban Park (UP) Mural Concepts at Green Garage- 90 Broadway, Parcel 4 of the Kendall Square Urban Redevelopment Plan. **See Attachment B**

COMMITTEE COMMENTS

Mr. Thorkildsen noted that he liked the design, and the updated version was an improvement from the original "look" design. He suggested more emphasis on the ground level entry, the vertical shaft, and lighting to illuminate at night. He wondered if the wings of the blue shape could be lowered to form a horizontal line with the base. He asked if the entryway could be enhanced by adding planting on the concrete grid on the right side and a tree in the green area of the space. Ms. Stoddard answered that she would bring it to the BXP landscape team. Mr. Evans noted that the CRA has been working with BXP on the landscaping and that the area is currently under construction. After construction, it will be improved with new landscaping and benches.

Mr. Zevin said he has never been a fan of camouflaging buildings in paint using the building as a canvas and that it seems like too much paint that's fighting the form of the building. He said he would rather have the existing painted ivy pattern on the circular column. He continued that he reads the up arrow as a missile or target and not as an arrow. He also noted that the problem that is not being addressed is how to get people up to the roof garden. However, to get people to go up, they have to look down at the pedestrian entrance. Ms. Stoddard suggested the problem could be resolved by adding an additional chevron, messaging, or arrow to the right column. Mr. Zevin said the first two

schemes with the chevron on the elevator shaft made sense, but he still doesn't understand the desire to paint a large stretch of the garage green. He shared an example of a Sol LeWitt work at MIT.

Mr. Evans asked if Ms. Stoddard could explain the chevron idea further. Ms. Stoddard said she thought the chevron could be extended down, and they would add more Urban Park brand signage and arrows at the street level to show the sign from afar. She also noted that they are working with a designer to look at vinyl or paint art on the ground to draw people to the pedestrian entrance. Ms. Stoddard shared that they would replace the scrim design to add more language directing people to the roof garden.

Mr. Zevin said the form of the design on the building appeared to be a broken circle, and the entrance is caught in one edge of the circle and doesn't give any sense of belonging to the elevator shaft. He said a solution might be cutting out the circle's left side to read as a swoop up. As presented, the arrow doesn't connect to the ground floor to signify the pedestrian entrance.

Mr. Thorkildsen noted that the goal of the super graphic is to indicate where to go. Therefore, he wished the garage was different. Perhaps including vegetation that climbs up the sides of the garage or a visible stair that ascends to the roof garden. He asked if the blue and red arrow that appeared to be a fighter jet had the right message. He continued by saying if the blue and red arrow is maintained, making the round column at the first and second-floor red or blue to make the arrow appear to start at the ground. Overall, he wanted to see the garage have a positive relationship with Broadway, focusing more on design than super graphics. Ms. Finch noted that the grid area at the street level entrance was not updated because it was not part of the mural scope. She said they would like to see the red and orange area more integrated. Mr. Luke said the intention of lines, shapes, and curve elements is to draw people in, and the arrow is like a keyhole to invite people to the roof garden.

Ms. Born asked if the intention is to add more signage to the grid area with the vertical concrete near the entrance. Ms. Stoddard answered no. Ms. Born said it was essential to have something eye-catching that points to the elevator and recommended something near the hedge. Ms. Stoddard said they are currently working on wayfinding signage and will continue to look at options. Ms. Born said she is okay with the overall concept but wondered if the garage is painted or has a piece of art applied to it. She also isn't sure about the rationale for painting only the right side, not the left. Mr. Zevin suggested keeping the three green colors and removing the arrows. Ms. Born said she prefers the second design with a smaller arrow in the middle and wondered if the painting could end in front of the blade sign. Ms. Finch said they continued painting further to the right to cover an existing damaged sign, and Ms. Stoddard added it was also to enhance the blade sign blade.

Mr. Thorkildsen said he also liked the second design and suggested painting the column below the arrow blue or red to extend it. He also noted that the issue the design is trying to solve is how to access the roof garden. He continued, saying that the current design was downplaying where to access the door instead of focusing on the entire garage. He recommended a less prominent design on the building and instead to provide more emphasis on the elevator shaft under the building where to access the door.

Ms. Born added that the overall design was also about decoration, a trend throughout Kendall Square and that the current design provides a sense of place to the area. Therefore, she appreciated the large scale of the design as decorative and Wayfinding. However, she wanted to ensure the decorative graphics actually worked for Wayfinding.

Ms. Finch said she appreciated the Sol LeWitt floor example and that the idea of showing something three-dimensional in a flat plane was one way the designers played with the geometry of the existing building.

Ms. Born asked about the process of moving the project forward. Mr. Evans commented that the project landed in a gray zone between signage and Wayfinding. Therefore, they have to focus on the art aspect of the project. Ms. Born suggested an additional design review meeting to discuss the update to the design.

Ms. Born asked the designers and Ms. Stoddard if they could take the feedback, modify the design, and provide additional alternatives. Ms. Stoddard answered they would discuss it with the team and look at other options to present. However, she wants to be conscious of timing and implementation. Ms. Born suggested showing a rendering with views from across Broadway to see how the graphics look from afar. Ms. Finch said they would work on renderings with different perspectives.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

A public member noted that it was necessary for the design and signage to show the ultimate destination and how to get there. They also stated that the second design was better because it had less complicated shapes.

Attachment B

Kendall Urban Park Mural Concepts at Green Garage- 90 Broadway Presentation



July 11, 2022

Kendall UP Mural at Green Garage

Jessica, et al.,

Thank you for the opportunity to revise our designs for this project.

In this revision, we wanted to maintain our central message, which is to encourage people to look up. In this era where we're often looking down at our phones, scrolling and focusing on things happening elsewhere, the act of looking up and appreciating the aesthetics of our built environments can bring us back into the present moment and orient us towards the real and exciting happenings taking place in our own neighborhoods, like the fun new Green Garage roof garden!

For these designs, we were inspired by the history of Cambridge as a center of counterculture and intellectual design innovation. In our research on the city's mid-century design aesthetic, we were inspired by the architecture of the Design Research store (which has similarities to the architecture of the Green Garage) and the Marimekko line that they carried. The iconic patterns and bold use of color and line in the Marimekko designs have a similar aesthetic to the Sol LeWitt collection at the Mass MOCA, which we recently revisited. The combination of these influences, along with the "look up" message, spurred us to create designs that incorporate vibrant color blocks encircling an arrow with a skylike keyhole opening—a portal to the wondrous garden on the roof.

We were also inspired by the mural's location in Kendall Sq. near MIT, one of the world's most technologically pioneering locales. The keyhole sky at the center of the mural evokes the exploratory, forward-thinking vision of the scientists and thinkers in the area, whose work is ushering us into unknown potential.

We hope this is enough information to convey what we have in mind for these designs. Please remember that there is no way to render what the actual painted mural will look like through a computer mockup. The painting will have more life and dimension than we can achieve here.

Thanks again!
-Meredith & Josh



Green Garage: Exterior Mural Concept (1)



Green Garage: Exterior Mural Concept (2)

