

MINUTES
BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

The meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was held on Tuesday, May 2, 2023, and was held virtually via Zoom to ensure the safety of the public, staff members, and the BPDA Board Members during the COVID-19 pandemic, and beginning at 5:00 p.m. Members in attendance were Jonathan Evans, Shauna Gillies-Smith, Mikyoung Kim, Kathy Kottaridis, Mimi Love, Anne-Marie Lubenau, Catherine T. Morris, William Rawn, Laura Solano, and Kirk Sykes. Linda Eastley and David Manfredi were absent. Elizabeth Stifel, Executive Director of the Commission, was present. Representatives of the BSA attended. Adam Johnson, Patricia Cafferky, Meghan Richard, and Scott Slarsky were present for the BPDA.

The Chair, Mimi Love, announced that this was the meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission that meets the first Tuesday of every month and welcomed all persons interested in attending. She added thanks to the Commissioners for the contribution of their time to the betterment of the City and its Public Realm. This hearing was duly advertised in the BOSTON HERALD.

The first item was the approval of the April 4 Monthly Meeting Minutes, and the Design Committee Minutes from meetings on April 11, April 18, and April 25. A motion was made, seconded, and it was duly

VOTED: To approve the April BCDC Meeting Minutes.

Votes were passed for signature. The next item was a report from the Review Committee on the 18-22 Arboretum Road project. Review is recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed 18-22 Arboretum Road project in the Roslindale neighborhood.

The next Review Committee report was for the 22 Drydock Avenue project in the South Boston Waterfront. Review is recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed 22 Drydock Avenue project in the South Boston Waterfront neighborhood.

The final Review Committee report was for 1 Mystic Avenue in Charlestown. Review is recommended. It was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the Commission review the schematic design for the proposed 1 Mystic Avenue project in Charlestown.

The Commission moved into Votes of Recommendation for projects from Design Committee.

The first presentation was for **Fan Pier Parcel H in the South Boston Waterfront neighborhood**. The project was presented by David Nagahiro and Skip Burck..

David Hacin: The frames are well-sculpted. Use that language to shape the facade at the ground level. As a dog owner, this particular stretch is not dog-friendly, so I'm happy there's a dog station. Maybe it could be around the corner and not so front and center, but don't relegate them to hard surfaces.

Kirk Sykes: It's an attractive project. I like the notion that you're more dedicated to the pedestrian experience. Use pattern, chromatic change, etc. to signal conflicts. On the Harborshore edge, think about widening the paths between the planters. Second, hopefully the planting won't be too tall and will feel safe. Will there be opportunities to create more cloistered areas?

Jonathan Evans: I didn't realize the depth in the frames. The accent panels are a smart solution to the facade--does the attitude of the short facade tie together with the long panels?

David Nagahiro: They do.

Mimi Love: The entry drive is a lot more successful. The shading devices could respond more and could be less timid. Lastly, the glass wants to be very transparent.

David Nagahiro: The comments are all very helpful.

Skip Burck: Agreed, the process has been helpful.

Hearing no public comment, it was moved, seconded, and

VOTED: That the BCDC recommend approval for Fan Pier Parcel H. Shauna Gillies-Smith was recused.

The Commission moved to project presentations, the first being for **18-22 Arboretum Road in the Roslindale neighborhood**.

Dartagnan Brown of Embarc presented the project.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: This project is unique among projects we review because of its adjacency to the arboretum. You've referenced the industrial context, but there is a lot of residential context. I'd like to see how the materials you're proposing relate to the context. I also have questions about entrance to the building, and it'd be helpful to see the past massing strategies.

David Hacin: I appreciate how you're trying to break down the massing. I'd like to see some longer views to help understand the material strategy, especially as we move around the building.

Mikyong Kim: I'd love to better understand the design of the landscape. I'm having trouble corresponding the plan view to the perspective view. Maybe there could be perspectives more at eye level. The mass of the architecture is quite large—is there any way to have landscape and circulation that breaks that down?

Catherine Morris: What's the strategy for addressing the adjacency to the train tracks? I'd also be curious what was already on this site that is being replaced.

Kathy Kottaridis: Traffic on Washington Street can be challenging. How will circulation in and out of the site work? How will neighbors interface with the site you're creating?

Shauna Gillies-Smith: Is there a way to make that central space more than just a vehicular turnaround? When one pierces through to Lochdale, what is the streetscape and landscape character?

William Rawn: What's happening on the adjacent sites? What are the existing conditions? I wonder if a model would be helpful.

Kirk Sykes: This rendering (*last slide in the presentation*) demonstrates the massing in relation to the arboretum and the adjacent triple-decker scale. How can you acknowledge those adjacencies a bit more? Can greening climb onto the building?

Laura Solano: The landscape needs some more thought in terms of adjacencies. The landscapes seem to be at different levels. I think that comfort in all of these places is extremely important.

Mimi Love: I look forward to the conversations in design committee. The snake massing creates a lot of pockets of space, but other commissioners have mentioned adjacencies, sound, etc. You have a huge opportunity with Arboretum Plaza, but it doesn't feel integrated to the proposal. Your entry pattern could be further developed as well.

Two members of the public spoke to suggest specific avenues of discussion regarding adjacency to the Arboretum and the integration of the.

The project will continue in design committee.

The next project presentation was for **22 Drydock Avenue in the South Boston Waterfront neighborhood**. Kirk Sykes was recused.

Scott Slarsky of the BPDA presented the design context of the project. Joe Mamayek of SGA presented the project.

Mikyong Kim: It would be helpful to have a shadow study. There's a lot of grade change—I'd like to see a diagram that gives us a sense of how you get to the front door, what's the accessible route, etc. It'd be good to understand programming as well. I would recommend sharing some massing options that demonstrate how you've looked at where the public realm is located.

Laura Solano: I need to hear more explanation of how the service area works in relation to the midblock passage. In section, think about whether or not some of the outdoor spaces can be combined to create a density of spaces.

William Rawn: You have a challenging site. The expression of the north side and the south side could be more closely linked.

Jonathan Evans: I agree with Bill. We need a couple of diagrams that explain the urban design agenda.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: I'd like to see a diagram explaining exactly what's happening and where on the ground plane.

Mimi Love: You've heard a lot of really good comments. How can you mediate between the necessary elevation changes and creating too much of a podium condition?

The project will continue in design committee.

The **One Mystic Avenue project** was the next presentation. Kirk Sykes was recused.

Patricia Cafferky and Meghan Richard of the BPDA introduced the planning and design context of the project. Don Wiest, Aeron Hodges, and Rob Adams presented the project.

David Hacin: The team has a lot of worthwhile goals and I am not opposed to height and density on this site. The region is exploding. I don't know how to proceed with the planning questions up in the air. We need guidance from the city.

Elizabeth Stifel: When we decide to bring a project to BCDC is a discussion from a lot of different departments. This project was brought to you with the understanding that you'll give high-level comments, then you'll see it later when the project develops.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: It'd be helpful to understand the height and density with respect to what the city envisions. How will changes that respond to future planning and visioning manifest? I'm also still struggling to understand what the project will feel like at the ground. I'm not seeing the "front porch" you're talking about.

Mikyoung Kim: I strongly agree with Commissioner Hacin. The planning context would really change the project and there is a conflict of information that I'm hearing. I'm not sure how our body can help this group.

Aeron Hodges: The public realm will not substantially change with the density.

Donald Wiest: We are hoping that the overall design strategy will not change that much, no matter where the density discussion ends up.

Jonathan Evans: We've commented on projects that don't comply with zoning before. We need to understand the context more, especially with the spaghetti of connections around it.

Mikyoung Kim: In Committee, we could look at the ground floor issues while the massing is being resolved. If that's the case, we need more information. We could review this from Slide 8's point of view.

Mimi Love: We're getting unprecedented clarity from the BPDA.

David Hacin: The proponent could bring us a version of the project that's at an 8 FAR and a 5 FAR.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: Expand the ground plane to be the base of the building. What decisions and strategies went into the organization of the components of the building?

Laura Solano: I would like to underline that we're not just looking at the front plaza, but the whole site plan. I'm eager to hear the surrounding design. This project won't sit in isolation forever.

Mimi Love: How can the connections across the street be more than just paint? More explanation about the Sherman Street connection is also necessary.

Anne-Marie Lubenau: We need more context in the plans.

William Rawn: Why isn't the proponent adding more parcels to the site, to start creating more of a community?

Several members of the project spoke to question the appropriateness of the program and density on this site, and to urge the project team to comply with the ongoing PLAN: Charlestown.

David Hacin: We should be very respectful of the ongoing planning efforts.

Mikyoung Kim: We need to see options at lower densities.

The project will continue in committee.

There being no further items for discussion, a motion was made to adjourn, and the meeting was duly adjourned at 7:45 p.m. The next regular meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission was scheduled for June 6, 2023. The recording of the May 2, 2023 Boston Civic Design Commission meeting was digitized and is available at the Boston Redevelopment Authority.