

## MINUTES FOR THE BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION APRIL 16, 2024 SESSION A

*This meeting was held virtually. A recording of this meeting is available upon request.  
Please reach out to [bcdc@boston.gov](mailto:bcdc@boston.gov) for more information.*

### CALL TO ORDER

A meeting of the Boston Civic Design Commission (BCDC) Design Subcommittee was called to order by BPDA Deputy Director of Urban Design Seth Riseman at 5:05 PM on Tuesday, APRIL 16, 2024.

### ATTENDEES

The following members of the Boston Civic Design Commission were present: Co-Chair Mimi Love and Commissioners Jonathan Evans, Anne-Marie Lubenau, David Manfredi, and Laura Solano. The following members of the BPDA Staff were present: Deputy Director of Urban Design Seth Riseman.

### PRESENTATIONS FOR REVIEW AND PUBLIC TESTIMONY

#### "PARDEE SCHOOL" ASSOCIATED WITH BOSTON UNIVERSITY CHARLES RIVER CAMPUS TWO-YEAR IMP

Representatives of the proponent team, including Sonia Richards (Boston University), Ken Ryan (Boston University), Sean Gallagher (Diller Scofidio + Renfro), and Chris Donohue (Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates) presented the proposed project. Commissioners Love, and Solano recused themselves from the review. Commissioners Evans, Lubenau, and Manfredi participated in deliberations.

Discussion: Commissioners were generally supportive of the proposed project. Commissioners encouraged the proponent to study potential programmatic uses of the proposed open space and to consider "what makes this open space and this building of BU" as the proposal continues to be developed. Commissioners interrogated the proposed position of the building on the site. "To what extent does it exist in the round or in a field versus plugging into or building out that notch that exists in that corner? Right now, it's trying to do a little bit of both. At the next phase of development, we'll want to understand more about that relationship."

Public testimony was given by Pam Beale, Chair of the Boston University Community Task Force. Following discussion and opportunity for public testimony, there was consensus among the commissioners that the BOSTON UNIVERSITY CHARLES RIVER CAMPUS TWO-YEAR IMP should be returned to a future BCDC convening for review and final recommendation.

#### 500 HUNTINGTON AVENUE, MISSION HILL

Representatives of the proponent team, including Donald Johnson (Fallon Company), Chris Stoddard (Ennead Architects), Peter Schubert (Ennead Architects), Ethan Shaw (Ennead Architects), and Christian Lemon (Lemon Brooke) presented the proposed project. Commissioners Evans, Love, Lubenau, Manfredi, and Solano participated in deliberations.

Discussion: Commissioners expressed some residual concern for the overall scale of the proposed buildings and acknowledged "a fundamental tension, perhaps a little bit of awkwardness, created by

a building of this bulk on a site of this size.” “How do we create contextual cues for a building typology that has no neighbors here.” “Overall, the architecture resembles the architecture of a number of other similar projects in other parts of the city, and I think this is an architectural challenge. What makes this of its place?” Commissioners asked the proponent to continue study of the “base” of the building, in particular, the expression of the ground floor, which “feels small for the proportion of the building.” Commissioners also encouraged the proponent to study methods for further differentiating the two buildings from one another. Commissioners expressed appreciation for the proposed material palette's simplicity and the success of its reference to material palettes found in the surrounding context. Commissioners asked for modest refinement to the proposed open space along Huntington Avenue, suggesting a row of trees between the plaza area and lawn area to be supported by sunshade analysis.

Public testimony was given by Alison Pultinas.

Following discussion and opportunity for public testimony, there was consensus among the commissioners that the proposed project at 500 HUNTINGTON AVENUE, MISSION HILL, should be returned to a future BCDC convening for review and final recommendation.