

MINUTES
DESIGN COMMITTEE OF THE BOSTON CIVIC DESIGN COMMISSION

July 16, 2019

5:00pm, Room #937A, 9th Floor, Boston City Hall
Project: **One Kenmore Square (Kenmore Hotel)**, Fenway/Kenmore
Present: Commissioner Linda Eastley, Commissioner Eric Howler

DISCUSSION: At the initial project presentation on February 5, 2019, Commissioners asked for clarification on the building placement/location, program and plans for the pedestrian square, and further explanation of the pedestrian and vehicular changes to Kenmore Square. Representatives from Mark Development (owner), Speck & Associates (urban design), Stantec (traffic planner), RWDI (wind testing), Studio Gang (architect), Reed Hilderbrand (landscape architect) gave a presentation, beginning with a project overview, surrounding context, and public realm. The proposed redesign of Kenmore Square intersection shortens all pedestrian crossing distances and improves bicycle network safety.

The building interior was reconfigured because of the client's programmatic needs. There is no longer a central open core, but instead the lobby connects through the building and the top floor will be programmed for guests with a bar/lounge. To mitigate wind impacts, a glass canopy was added around the building exterior. Commissioners liked the canopy and the iconic design of the building. Regarding the public square, programming will remain flexible to accommodate future needs. Commissioners felt this square needs to feel more like a peninsula than an island surrounded by traffic and needs thoughtful program to be effectively draw the surrounding neighborhood.

The project team used a digital presentation and model of the master plan with adjacent architectural context to present their updates.

5:45pm, Room #933A
Project: **Allston Yards (60 Everett Street)**, Allston
Present: Commissioner Linda Eastley, Commissioner Eric Howler

DISCUSSION: New England Development, Stantec, Elkus Manfredi Architects, and Copley Wolff Design Group ("the project team") most recently gave project updates to the BCDC at the April monthly meeting. As a follow up to previous comments, the project team gave a high level summary of the master plan and included a list of critiques. This session focused in on the layout of Guest Street, the program of the proposed Community Green, and the overall public realm plan in context with the surrounding neighborhood. The Commissioners asked questions about the orientation of Guest Street; the connection was designed to increase the size of the park and Parcel A. Discussion followed, in which Commissioners appreciated the curved architectural gesture and views that the curved street will provide. Then, the project team presented plans, sections, and programmatic ideas of the green space which is envisioned to be full of trees and serve as a social lawn for the surrounding neighborhood. The public realm design will incorporate trees and pedestrian improvements to draw users from outside the site to the park. Commissioners found this approach to be successful.

The project team used a digital presentation and model of the master plan with adjacent architectural context to present their updates.

6:30pm, Room #937A

Project: **99 A Street**, South Boston

Present: Commissioner Linda Eastley, Commissioner Eric Howler

DISCUSSION: Designers from architects Elkus Manfredi and landscape architects CRJA represented the project team. They gave an overview of the project and summarized comments from the presentation on May 7, then showed before and after images of revisions. Major changes to the project now include massing step back along A and W 3rd Street, increased sidewalk dimension on A and W 2nd Street, relocated lobby to align with neighboring buildings, reduced size of mechanical penthouse, and added café for residential neighbors.

Commissioners were appreciative of the changes, particularly the setback massing that now feels in response to the surrounding residential scale, the addition of a café on W 3rd Street, and the relocated lobby. They continued to critique the visual impact of the mechanical penthouse; it should be reduced and/or better integrated to the design. A Street still seems tight, but the changes at the ground plane move in the correct direction.

The project team used a digital presentation and model of the master plan with adjacent architectural context to present their updates.