

Regular Meeting
Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday, March 19 2014; 5:30 pm
Cambridge Police Station
125 Sixth Street
Community Room

Draft Meeting Minutes

Present: Kathleen Born (Chair), Margaret Drury (Vice-Chair), Barry Zevin, Conrad Crawford, Executive Redevelopment Officer Tom Evans, Iram Farooq (Deputy Director for Community Development), Taha Jennings (City Manager's Office), Chris Sheehan, Kevin Sheehan, John Hawkinson, Don Stastny, Stephen Kaiser, Heather Hoffman, Rosabella Alvarez-Calderon, Chris Colley

Public Comment

Steve Kaiser

Mr. Kaiser thanked Mr. Evans for always helping him solve his CRA related computer problems.

He noted that Thad Tercyak's articles on the history of the CRA are being posted in the Cambridge Civic Journal and that this is an opportunity to preserve the historical record of the CRA. The history stops in 1963- a key transition year. Up until this point, the Authority was doing mainly housing projects—1963 was the beginning of Kendall Square, reflecting a transition into industrial and commercial use. 1963 was also when the CRA was "done in" by the City Council who voted down Donnelly Field, Cambridgeport, and Riverside developments.

Mr. Kaiser thinks the March 26th event is an excellent initiative. He wanted to highlight two key issues relating to planning, architectural, and traffic problems. The first is Alewife/Fresh Pond, which he sees as a difficult to deal with area that already went through two unsuccessful earlier planning processes in 1999 and 2005. Mr. Kaiser urged the Authority to not leap right into this because it is so complicated and could represent "baptism by fire." The second key issue is the Courthouse. He noted that there could be a rapid solution to the problem, likely architectural, and urged the Board to offer any constructive thoughts they can think of.

Mr. Kaiser has been very unimpressed by the K2C2 planning process, particularly the lack of traffic or transit reports. "They just haven't done the work and they need to look at a lot more alternatives." Mr. Kaiser feels that the Authority has not gotten involved with this, which he sees as a good thing.

Speaking to the traffic item on the agenda, Mr. Kaiser noted that page 3 in the report gives a count of Monsignor O'Brien Highway at Land Boulevard, but that is the only mention of the intersection. He is happy that this was included, but confused why there is no further detail regarding this intersection. If traffic counts go down, is that because there is less traffic? Or is it because the traffic has been jammed up so no one is moving? As a result of this omission, he found FST's report to be inconclusive and not useful.

As a final note for the March 26 meeting, Mr. Kaiser suggested hiring a consultant to do a study of the Red Line and how to make it work better. Given the CRA's money in the bank and initiative, this would be something to consider and would help everyone along the Red Line.

Heather Hoffman

Ms. Hoffman noted that she lives a half block from Third Street and crosses it often. Regardless of what traffic counts say, she sees northbound and southbound traffic on Third Street that results in "parking lots." She did not feel the traffic counts align with her own personal experience. She noted that Cambridge has had an idea that if you pretend there aren't any cars, you don't have to deal with them, and that while gridlock is good for pedestrians, it's very bad for drivers.

Regarding signage, Ms. Hoffman voiced her desire for clear signage for the roof garden. She was unsure of where the new signs are going to be specifically, but feels that using the word ahead could be useful, particularly on the Main Street side. The signs by elevators are particularly confusing to Ms. Hoffman. She thinks it is particularly important to get this part right, especially for the "few shreds of roof garden remaining."

Ms. Hoffman expressed support for the CRA's proposed plan to "go out into the community." She cautioned that the Authority will have to deal with the reputation of the "rapacious" BRA as well as the history of the CRA, a history that the current staff and Board have nothing to do with. She was particularly hopeful about how this new approach could positively affect redevelopment of the Foundry.

Minutes

*Motion: To approve the minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA) on February 19, 2013 **

The minutes from last month's meeting were unavailable as the person who prepares them had a family emergency. February's minutes will be confirmed next meeting.

Communications

*1. "MBTA Role in the Cambridge Center Project" article from Cambridge Civic Journal forwarded to the Board by Thad Tercyak**

Ms. Born asked whether the process of gathering CRA history was still ongoing. Mr. Evans explained that Mr. Rowland and Tercyak are working together to determine how long of a story to tell. Mr. Evans will meet with Mr. Rowland next week to continue the history gathering process. Mr. Evans described it as a process of gathering raw materials, although he is unsure what the final deliverable will be. Ms. Born noted that CRA intern Ms. Alvarez-Calderon is "an architectural archaeologist," currently drafting a short history of the Authority's architectural history. Ms. Alvarez-Calderon explained how she was using a variety of resources to craft a history of the CRA in the context of broader development trends in the 20th century.

*2. Revised Notice from the Outdoor Advertising Board regarding electronic billboard permit**

Ms. Born noted that the Outdoor Advertising Board hearing has been postponed. Mr. Evans noted that the city has set a meeting with Clear Channel next week. Because the City Manager is away, a request was made that the hearing was delayed until more information was gathered.

Ms. Born questioned whether there had been clarification over who owns the land. Mr. Evans explained that while the MBTA believes they own the land, this is not universally agreed upon. This status can affect the legal implications of the process. While the CRA did initial research, the solicitor's office has been looking into it more deeply.

3. Correspondence from Carol O'Hare

Mr. Evans noted that there was an additional comment from Carol O'Hare regarding the same billboard. The letter was introduced to the record.

Reports, Motions and Discussion Items:

4. Discussion: East Cambridge Kendall Square Open Space Design Competition (Mr. Jennings)

Mr. Jennings explained that the City is undergoing an open space planning study for East Cambridge and Kendall Square. There are a number of parcels that will soon become available as new open space for a variety of reasons. One of the key takeaways of K2C2 was the need for a cohesive and well-programmed network of open spaces. To this end, the East Cambridge Open Space Planning Study Committee has been meeting since May to create a vision.

They are undertaking an Open Space Design Competition to help better envision new uses for open space and how to best network the sites. Don Stastny was hired to oversee this process. Mr. Stastny detailed his 35 year background overseeing and managing design competitions at a range of scales. He cited a number of past projects, including in Portland, OR, Washington, DC, and Austin, TX. He explained that the approach in Cambridge is to create a design competition process that will deliver four conceptual ideas for the network as well as an approach to how individual pieces of the network should tie together. When done, they should be able to hand over to a designer a document that says not only what sorts of uses should be employed, but how they should be connected to the larger context.

Mr. Stastny noted that the competition is reflective of a national trend of thinking about cities not only as a connection of buildings, but also as the spaces between. He does not know another city that has taken on this approach. Ms. Born asked for clarification about what the unique element of the approach was what the approach was; Mr. Stastny explained that it was the emphasis on the linkage between parks.

Mr. Stastny provided logistical details relating to the competition. He is currently working with a committee and City employees to define a problem statement. This requires an understanding of existing conditions, as well as aspirational thoughts on desired end goals. The competition will be launched in June, with three stages. Designs will come in around Thanksgiving, with the jury in December, and the results in January 2015.

Mr. Stastny is confident that they can create a unique design and planning process. He wants to find a real diversity of disciplines in the final teams, balancing technical expertise in traffic,

sustainability, etc. with participants in less traditional disciplines. Mr. Stastny and Mr. Jennings invited questions and comment and expressed a desire to stay in close contact with the CRA as they move forward through the process.

Mr. Crawford acknowledged the receptiveness of the project team to comments made through the K2C2 process and open space planning committee, even noting that comments made in a meeting the day before were reflected in Mr. Stastny's presentation. Mr. Crawford thinks that the generic framework will reflect the comprehensive nature of the problem. He thinks the process is becoming less opaque, and hopes to see more of a community conversation going forwards. He concluded by noting that addressing sustainability, transportation, and the built environment in one competition is exciting.

Mr. Evans commented that there have been a number of conversations about wayfinding and connectivity in East Cambridge. He asked whether designers in the competition would dive into specific issues or deal with broader, more conceptual questions. Mr. Jennings said that while the specific scope is to be determined, they are generally more concerned with the entire network. He said that the role wayfinding will play in the competition will be affected by how the competition's mission is defined, but agreed that it is an issue that comes up often. He added that they want to have a large public forum to help better inform competition participants and the jury to understand what the community desires.

Mr. Zevin expressed support for the competition format. He wondered if they have the necessary resources from the City to pull this off as it will require coordination from different city agencies like DPW.

Mr. Jennings noted the validity of Mr. Zevin's concern and explained that the City has been doing its due diligence in terms of communicating with affected agencies like DPW. One element of this is a period of technical review during the competition to insure that proposals are implementable. Mr. Stastny added that many affected properties are not public, but that there is a growing understanding amongst developers that open space and open space programming is a part of their tenant package.

Ms. Drury questioned who would be responsible for long-term programming of the spaces. Mr. Stastny acknowledged the importance of programming and offered three lessons he's learned in thirty years working with open space: activate edges, make flexible spaces, program heavily.

Ms. Born concluded the section by noting her support of the project and excitement for a design competition in Cambridge.

*5. Discussion: K2 MXD Rezoning Proposal (Ms. Farooq)**

Ms. Farooq provided an overview of the K2 process and the zoning changes that are emerging from it. She explained that the MIT PUD area went first and allowed CDD to better understand the expectations of the Planning Board and City Council. The Planning Board wants to address each PUD individually to promote a strong dialogue between all stakeholders. She described the goals of the K2 plan, which included emphasizing Kendall's innovation culture, mixing in live/work/play configurations, and promoting broader enjoyment of open spaces.

Ms. Farooq detailed the key elements of the K2 zoning proposals. These included:

- Retail
 - Mandating ground floor retail along key streets
- Housing
 - No more than 60% of allowable non-residential space can be built without a completed residential component
 - 25% of residential GFA above 250' height limit must be devoted to middle income housing
 - 8% of GFA devoted to "innovation housing" (micro units)
- Innovation space
 - 5% of all new non-residential GFA dedicated to startup innovation space, 50% of which does not count to floor area limit
- Community investment
 - \$10 per square foot payment on non-residential GFA to be dedicated to public open space, enhanced transit connections, and workforce readiness training.
- Sustainability requirements
 - LEED silver, energy tracking, and reporting requirement
 - Eliminate impediments to district energy
- Transportation
 - Enhanced TDM system
- Parking
 - Change from parking minimums to parking maximums
 - Emphasis on shared parking schemes

Ms. Farooq described zoning proposals related specifically to the MXD. The current recommendation is to increase capacity 1,000,000 square feet, a maximum of 600,000 of which can go to non-residential uses. She outlined the existing conditions in the MXD in terms of parcel ownership with the point being that zoning needs to consider the flexible needs of multiple owners.

Ms. Born asked for greater explanation of how the procedure for zoning revision would work.

Ms Farooq explained that there were a number of different approaches, but that generally a petition, potentially filed by Boston Properties, would be submitted to the Planning Board and then go through a public review process before reaching the City Council.

Ben Lavery from Boston Properties described BP's approach to the rezoning process, particularly their collaborative work with Sasaki, who has been contracted to do their master planning. He explained that there are a limited number of configurations for future development that BP could consider, but that they were emphasizing long-term flexibility. He identified the North Garage as a likely site for future development, as well as 11 Cambridge Center, 14 Cambridge Center, and 3 Cambridge Center. Lavery also noted that BP was investigating ways to improve open space and promote sustainability, and were confident that they would be in compliance with regulations. He was optimistic that they could bring an initial proposal to the CRA within the next month.

Ms. Born emphasized that tonight only represented the beginning of this process and that it would be a highly transparent process moving forward. She added that the CRA was committed to using potential revenue resulting from future development in the interest of the public good.

Ms. Hoffman expressed concern about resident involvement in the process, and voiced a desire for actual conversation rather than issuing testimony in a Planning Board meeting. Ms. Born suggested that CoUrbanize could be used to assist this process. Ms. Hoffman reported that she had heard skepticism from fellow community members regarding the validity of the platform as a method of collecting public opinion.

Ms. Born asked Ms. Farooq to clarify expectations regarding potential retail tenants and their exemption from allowable GFA. Ms. Drury expressed concern that the residential component of the project would be left to the end of the development process. Mr. Zevin expressed a desire for more “interactive edges” on future buildings constructed in the MXD.

Members of the public offered concerns regarding the quality of open space that would result from continued development of the MXD and the consequences that new development could have on already strained transit infrastructure. Mr. Evans noted that the Green Line extension will affect bus links between Kendall and Union, a fact that warrants future study.

Ms. Born suggested the Board envision next steps for the process. Mr. Evans said that the Design Committee may be able to see conceptual massing studies as early as next week, and that the full Board would be able to discuss it after that.

Ms. Drury questioned the requirement to provide 8% micro units, a stipulation that Ms. Farooq said was required by the City Council.

*6. Report: Monthly Report to the Board of the Executive Redevelopment Officer (Mr. Evans) **

Mr. Evans detailed his efforts to expand the office staff to include an office manager and real estate consultant. He is creating a series of reports regarding procurement processes and working with Kevin Gookin to establish strong controls in response to the audit.

Mr. Evans then provided a series of updates on specific projects:

- **Strategic plan:** Currently in a digital and physical outreach phase. A series of initiatives have been selected to gather feedback about where to best focus energies.
- **CoUrbanize:** The site is up and running and one component of the effort to solicit public opinion.
- **Ames Street residential:** The current design is undergoing wind tunnel tests, which will lead to a decision on massing and the skin of the building. BP is beginning to deal with landscape issues along Ames Street as well as Pioneer Alley.
- **The Foundry:** The CRA’s potential role is coming into focus, and would likely focus on legal mechanisms for financing rather than a specific program. The City Council recently passed a unanimous vote to continue working with the CRA on this.
- **MXD Zoning:** The CRA is working with BP and Sasaki as they conduct their massing and design studies.

- **Grand Junction Railroad:** The project is active on multiple fronts. MIT issued an RFP for their section, and Mr. Evans has been talking to FST about getting the CRA component of the land to 100%. Mr. Crawford commented that there are limited decisions to be made given the constraints of the CRA's parcel. Mr. Zevin wondered if the open space changes will impact the possibility for a rail link to Brighton. Mr. Evans doesn't think so, as the CRA's section of the railroad poses the least amount of problems to accomplishing this objective.
- **Main Street Project:** Project is out to bid.
- **Marriott Rehabilitation:** Construction is almost complete.
- **Food Court:** Mr. Evans has only seen conceptual diagrams for the new food court. He will continue following up to see how this is proceeding.
- **75 Ames Street:** The Broad entrance sign is up, and the restaurant there is being called the Ames Street Deli.
- **Annual Report:** Mr. Evans and Ms. Born went through the version produced for last month and made minor revisions.

*7. Report: On the Financial Reports for January and February 2014 (Mr. Evans) **

Mr. Evans noted that two formats of financial reports were being submitted, reminding the Board and those present that the formatting is still a work in progress. February expenditures were low because many February checks were not processed until March.

Mr. Evans discussed potentially moving to quarterly reporting as a way of standardizing the system and presenting complete financials. Ms. Drury expressed concern about an absence of monthly financials—Mr. Evans clarified that quarterly financials would supplement monthly reports. Mr. Evans noted that going forward programmatic expenses will be disaggregated on a project-by-project basis by employee.

*8. Motion: To approve the Ninth Plan Amendment to the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan (Mr. Evans) **

Ms. Born explained that the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan (KSURP) amendment is a companion to the zoning amendment passed by the City Council to allow the Ames Housing Project. Mr. Evans explained the purpose of the amendment to be two-fold: first, to make changes so the language of the plan matched language of zoning changes, and second to change the plan to allow the Ames Street Housing Project.

Changes included the following:

- **Page 3:** Amendment of 3C to reflect permitted fast food restaurants inside and outside of the Ames Street sub district.
- **Page 5:** Restating total GFA as 3,302,100 to match the zoning ordinance and account for Broad Institute renovation not factored into Amendment 8 of the KSURP.
- **Page 6:** Introduction of the Ames Street sub district
- **Page 12:** Modification of language to match zoning ordinance, including lifting base minimum of open space, increasing maximum GFA, adding Ames Street sub district open space requirement, and reducing parking requirement.

Mr. Evans described the first three changes as logistical “clean-up” moves, while the fourth represented a more substantive change. He reiterated that the last change was a restatement of the amendment that went before the City Council in December. He noted that Boston Properties’ letter of intent will eventually be folded into an amendment on the land disposition agreement.

Ms. Born confirmed that voting for the amendment would not diminish CRA leverage in negotiation—Mr. Evans added that it actually legitimated the Board’s right to negotiation by providing a more accurate KSURP, and closed by stating that the next step for the Board would be confirm with the state that the modifications were a minor revision.

Motion: *To approve the Ninth Plan Amendment to the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan*

Vote: *Approved. All in favor.*

9. Report: Design Review Committee: Kendall Center Signage Review (Mr. Sheehan and Mr. Sheehan)

The presenters outlined the intent of the new signage to improve the way buildings interacted with the street and reflect the importance as a brand with international appeal. They explained that the three garages of Kendall Square are central in their design and intended strategy for pedestrian orientation. They described their proposal to brand the districts of Kendall Center with colors loosely corresponding to land uses, and then link this concept back to graphic elements on the garage and across the area to facilitate pedestrian and driver awareness. Signage would also provide tenant identification information. They displayed renderings of new wayfinding signs, introduced the concept of street addresses for buildings in Kendall Center, and showed how these addresses would be displayed on facades.

Ms. Drury expressed concern with diminished pedestrian safety in garages as a result of the new signage—while Ms. Born noted that this was an issue outside of the realm of signage, a brief discussion ensued regarding security in the garages. Mr. Zevin expressed concern that the proposed monument signs posed a public safety risk because of limited visibility and supported Ms. Hoffman’s earlier call for clear signage for the Roof Garden.

Mr. Evans commented on the need for collaboration with MIT and other stakeholders in order to create a cohesive signage program. He proposed using the Kendall Square Association as a conduit for this discussion. Mr. Sheehan (Boston Properties) agreed but emphasized the difference between tenant identification signage and wayfinding signage. Ms. Born expressed her satisfaction with the inclusive nature of the sign design process, and looks forward to moving the process further. Ms. Hoffman expressed her support for signage clearly stating that the roof garden is publicly accessible.

Motion: *To approve the schematic design for the Kendall Center Environmental Graphics and Wayfinding Signage conditioned on further review of the proposed monument kiosks.*

Vote: *Approved. All in favor.*

*10. Report: 2013 Traffic Count Program and Trip Generation Analysis (Mr. Evans)**

Mr. Evans noted that the data presented is part of a unique 20-year study, and that the current year's data would be the last to not reflect the closure of the Longfellow Bridge.

Mr. Evans noted that there have been slight upticks in traffic over the last five years, but this seemed to be largely pass-through traffic not related to development in Kendall Square. The rationale for this explanation is a continued mode split in surveys done by BP. Mr. Evans also noted that traffic counts oscillate based on a number of factors, and explained that given the lack of new development during the year, the increase in traffic must be the result of a different source. He added that despite recent increases in traffic, it still has not reached the level projected in the 1977 Environmental Impact Report.

Discussion ensued concerning the rate of utilization of existing garages in and around Kendall Square. Ms. Born asked Boston Properties to clarify their parking plans in the case of the Biogen Idec expansion discussed earlier—Boston Properties' Mr. Sheehan hypothesized that the expansion would require additional parking but at a lower rate and that the company is exploring more holistic ways to manage parking. Mr. Crawford, Mr. Zevin, and Mr. Evans discussed the possibility of a shared parking scheme. Ms. Farooq noted that any new development in the area would be subject to PTDM.

Mr. Kaiser described research he had done at the intersection of O'Brien Highway and Land Boulevard and attributed traffic at the intersection to rerouting of automobiles as a result of the Big Dig.

The report will be forwarded to the state, for further discussion in relation to rezoning of the MXD.

11. Discussion: Annual Performance Review of the Executive Redevelopment Officer (All Board Members)

Ms. Born noted the unique nature of public reviews and invited the Board and members of the public to discuss Mr. Evans' performance. Each member of the Board expressed their happiness with Mr. Evans' professional and personal attributes. Mr. Evans was roundly praised for his approachability, dedication, knowledge, and tact. Members of the audience, including Ms. Farooq, Mr. Hawkinson, Mr. Kaiser, and Ms. Hoffman reiterated and expanded upon the Board's praise of Mr. Evans.

Motion: To authorize the Executive Committee to negotiate an employment agreement with Tom Evans for the position of CRA Executive Director.

Vote: Approved. All in favor.

*12. Motion: To authorize the Chair and the Executive Redevelopment Officer, pending a final building walk-through, to issue a Certificate of Substantial Completion for the Broad Expansion at 75 Ames Street. (Mr. Evans)**

Mr. Evans explained that construction at 75 Ames Street was nearing completion, and that the procedure at this point is to enter into an escrow agreement and deem that the project is officially complete, pending completion of items on a checklist. Mr. Evans noted that a walkthrough would take place to look at things that are on check list, and that the emphasis would be on items in the public realm.

Motion: *To authorize the Chair and the Executive Redevelopment Officer, pending a final building walk-through, to issue a Certificate of Substantial Completion for the Broad Expansion at 75 Ames Street.*

Vote: *Approved. All in favor.*

*13. Motion: To authorize the Chair and the Executive Redevelopment Officer to execute the Second Amendment of the Point Park Maintenance and Easement Agreement to facilitate the construction of the Third Street connection to Main Street. (Mr. Evans)**

Mr., Evans explained that the amendment allows Boston Properties to be able to enter into an easement agreement with the City to reconfigure Third and Main. Because BP has an agreement to maintain that property, the CRA needs to release them from this obligation before they can proceed with the City. They can't enter into this easement with the City until released by the CRA because they can't agree to maintain something that doesn't exist.

Motion: *To authorize the Chair and the Executive Redevelopment Officer to execute the Second Amendment of the Point Park Maintenance and Easement Agreement to facilitate the construction of the Third Street connection to Main Street.*

Vote: *Approved. All in favor.*

*14. Motion: To authorize the Executive Redevelopment Officer to enter into a contract with Harnum Industries to relocate the Octahedron sculpture for storage in Cambridge (Mr. Evans)**

Mr. Evans explained that the Octahedron has been in Methuen for storage, but will now be temporarily placed on the Pork Chop parcel until dispose of it properly or find it a new home.

Mr. Zevin asked if we have any additional information about the sculpture. Mr. Evans explained that while the CRA has not received the relevant files from storage yet, they do know that in 2010 when the Kendall Plaza was rehabilitated the sculpture was placed at 75 Ames Street, before moving to its current home in Methuen. Its current storage facility is in foreclosure, hence the need to move it in an expedited fashion.

Mr. Evans explained the extenuating circumstances relating to moving the sculpture. The estimated cost to bring it to Kendall Square is approximately \$5,000. The people storing it want a call after the meeting to discuss when and where they can move it. Mr. Evans noted that the CRA can't dispose of anything over \$1,000 and that the Octahedron is insured at over \$1,000.

A brief discussion ensued concerning the materials of the sculpture and potential alternative uses for it. Mr. Evans that while long-term solutions are needed, the current motion pertains to a short-term fix.

Motion: *To authorize the Executive Redevelopment Officer to enter into a contract with Harnum Industries to relocate the Octahedron sculpture for storage in Cambridge, MA.*

Vote: *Approved. All in favor.*

Motion: *To adjourn (9:25)*

Vote: *Approved. All in favor.*

