

CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY – 56th ANNUAL REPORT

This has been a year of transition for the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority. In May new Board members were appointed and, with a full complement of members for the first time in several years, set to work immediately.

SIGNIFICANT ADMINISTRATIVE ACTIVITIES

Organization

Four new Board members were appointed in spring 2012 and met as a fully constituted Board on May 21, 2012. The Board elected a chair and other officers and organized several committees –Finance, Transition/Personnel, Design, and an “ad hoc” legal committee.

The CRA officers for 2012 are as follows:

Chair – Kathleen Born

Vice-chair – Margaret Drury

Treasurer – Christopher Bator

Assistant Treasurer – Conrad Crawford

Assistant Secretary– Barry Zevin

Amendment to the Urban Renewal Plan

On November 14, 2012, the Board voted to amend the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan to extend the Plan’s termination date from August 30, 2010 to August 30, 2020 and to provide a one-time expansion of the maximum gross floor area of 300,000 sq. ft. to accommodate the expansion of the Broad Institute (Parcel 3). This was considered a Minor Plan Amendment. The Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development agreed and approved the amendment in writing on December 24, 2012.

Transition of Personnel

After a special board meeting on September 27, long-time executive director, Joseph Tulimieri, resigned. The remaining two CRA staff also resigned, one just before the resignation of the executive director and the other shortly thereafter. The CRA requested that the City Manager provide interim staff assistance, and he asked Susan Glazer, Deputy Director for Community Development, to serve as acting executive director on an interim basis. With other city support staff she has continued to administer the operations and the work of the CRA while the Board determines the next steps for the CRA. Since she began, Ms. Glazer has carried out the responsibilities of the executive director including analyzing CRA finances and investment strategies, reducing office expenses, streamlining procedures, meeting with stakeholders, representing the interests of the CRA in day to day activities and presenting a monthly report to the Board at its meetings.

Hiring of a Transition Consultant

In September, the Board hired Kathy Spiegelman to study the role and responsibilities of a new executive director and best practices of various model of redevelopment authorities. The work included interviews with a variety of stakeholders, Cambridge government officials and redevelopment authority officials from other communities with particular focus on the independence of the authority. In December Ms. Spiegelman presented a report outline to the Board proposing that the Authority

remain an independent agency and that the Board hire a professional short term executive director or other professional to lead the preparation of a strategic plan.

Look Back Period and Report

In September, the CRA's outside counsel presented the Board with a report it commissioned shortly after it was appointed. The report focused on a period of time extending from the fall of 2009 through May of 2012, and concluded that during that time the CRA failed to obtain a quorum of its members. The report also concluded that certain votes taken by the CRA during that period were void for a lack of a quorum, and that other actions taken by the former executive director were not within the scope of his authority. The CRA has retained special counsel to more closely examine CRA records related to certain of the votes and other similar actions that the review concluded appeared to have been taken during the look back period. That review is ongoing.

KENDALL SQUARE URBAN RENEWAL AREA DATES (at least month and year) needed.

Completion of Microsoft new entrance

Microsoft completed the expansion of its offices and the construction of a new entrance at One Cambridge Center (Parcel 1). The entrance lobby includes a large digital display board and signage. A new blade sign was also installed on Main Street.

New building for Biogen Idec

As part of its consolidation of office and lab space as well as the return of its headquarters to Cambridge, Biogen Idec started construction of a 170,000 sq. ft. building at 17 Cambridge Center (Parcel 2). The first floor of the building will contain a fitness center and a 10,000 sq. ft. day care center.

Broad expansion – Ames Street

Construction continued for the 246,000 sq. ft. expansion of the Broad Institute research facility with 4,000 sq. ft. of retail space on the ground floor (Parcel 3). The Authority had approved preliminary design plans and the Planning Board approved a Special Permit on April 12, 2011.

Google Connector

Google showed its commitment to staying in Cambridge by requesting that its landlord, Boston Properties provide 42,000 sq. ft. of connecting construction between 3, 4, and 5 Cambridge Center to accommodate its business need for more open, collaborative workspace. A new ground floor public arcade will be created between 3 and 5 Cambridge Center. The arcade will contain entrances to these buildings as well as several retail spaces. A glass-walled two-story connector building on top of the East (Marriott) garage will link 4 and 5 Cambridge Center. The project will preserve approximately 25,000 sq. ft. of the 43,000 sq. ft. roof garden. The proposed reduction of the size of the garden generated many comments from the community. The City Council voted on March 19, 2012 to accept a reduction in the size of the public open space in return for an agreement from Boston Properties to extend the expiration of its public use from 20xx to 20xx. The newly appointed CRA Board considered the proposed project at subsequent public meetings and granted conditional design approval in August. The CRA agreed to convey an approximately 50,000 sq. ft. parcel of open space, located at Binney Street and Galileo Galilei Way, to the City to, in part, replace the open space lost from the roof garden. When that conveyance is completed, as a part of the entitlement process associated with the construction of the Connector, Boston Properties contributed \$2 million to the city to design and construct a park on this parcel.

Disposition of the Plaza Tract

In August, CRA completed the transfer of the 14,372 sq. ft. plaza on the north side of Main Street near the T station to Boston Properties. The disposition price was \$514,805.

Hubway

CRA signed an agreement with Alta Bicycle Share, Inc., the company designated to operate the Boston regional bike share program, to allow the location of a bike rack facility on Main Street near the entrance to One Cambridge Center. Other Hubway bike racks in the vicinity are located at the intersection of Broadway and Third Street, Vassar and Main Streets, Cambridgeside Galleria, and One Kendall.

Gateway Project

Land along Main Street was included in the first phase to a Gateway Project at the access to the Longfellow Bridge. The \$1.75 million earmark, secured by the Authority, has been incorporated into the MassDOT \$260 million project to rehabilitate the Longfellow Bridge.

Innovation Boulevard

The Innovation Boulevard is a linear open space project along Galileo Galilei Way from Main Street northward to Broadway, paralleling the railroad tracks. (The CRA has agreed to transfer the northern portion of the open space as partial replacement of open space lost to the development of the Google Connector.) A preliminary design was proposed and discussed at a public meeting in October 2012. The estimated cost was \$2.5 million. It was anticipated that a previously approved \$1 million federal grant would be used for this project; however, MassDOT has informed the CRA and the City that those funds have been repurposed for other highway projects. This parcel, however, will be part of the discussion of the East Cambridge Open Space Study that the Community Development Department is beginning.

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Glazer, Acting Executive Director
February ----, 2012

Exhibits: