

Regular Meeting
Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

Wednesday, March 27, 2013; 5:30pm
Cambridge Police Station
125 Sixth Street
Community Room

DRAFT MEETING MINUTES

Present

Kathleen Born (Chair), Margaret Drury (Vice-Chair), Barry Zevin, Conrad Crawford, Acting Executive Director Susan Glazer, Counsel Jeffrey Mullan, Kathy Spiegelman (CRA transition consultant), Larry Bluestone (design review consultant)

Also present: Kevin Sheehan (Boston Properties); audience sign-in sheet attached

Call to Order: Kathleen Born, called the meeting to order (5:35).

Public Comment

Chair opened the meeting for public comment, noting sign-up sheet provided. Written materials related to comments to be attached and entered into record:

Stephen Kaiser

Kendall/Central Square planning-is a vital issue for CRA in the coming months; last Friday's City Council roundtable was interesting and revealed different views of the process. Mr. Kaiser urged the CRA board to engage with Planning Board to create a robust plan for the subject areas. Also expressed interest in special counsel report and timetable for when information would be available to public; concerns regarding MIT zoning proposal, and application of Article 7 to CRA business and projects underway. Urged CRA to resolve and move past problems.

The Chair closed public comment moved to regular business.

Acceptance of minutes:

Minutes for the February 27 meeting and the March 13 special meeting were approved.

Communications: None

Report on trial balance & cash flow(Susan Glazer)

Ms. Glazer presented financial information and updated the board on status of resources. Discussion of establishing board policy for investment of resources and opportunities to leverage equity to further CRA mission.

Board voted to approve report.

Acting Executive Director Report (Susan Glazer)

Ms. Glazer reported that there would be a joint CRA/Planning Board meeting on April 2 at 7 p.m., 344 Broadway. This will be an opportunity to discuss how CRA can work with the Planning Board and city staff to accomplish goals in Kendall Square and perhaps elsewhere. On April 17 the CRA will conduct a joint meeting with the City Council Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Committee. The CRA regular board meeting is scheduled for 5:30 p.m. and the joint meeting to begin at 6:30 p.m., here in the Police Department Community Room.

Ms. Glazer also noted (with reference to presence of Kevin Sheehan of Boston Properties to provide further detail) that Akamai is planning to modify its building sign and signage on Cambridge Center buildings will be changing from One Cambridge Center to actual street address. Also, Harvard Business School student working on a startup company will likely do market testing on Marriott plaza. New phone system now in CRA offices (wifi accessible) to reduce phone costs substantially; phone number is the same and there is voice mail.

Board discussed seasonal programming and Mr. Sheehan confirmed that they plan to have the farmers market operate this season; probably on the plaza as sidewalks will be under construction; maybe need to stagger programming of concerts and market.

Update on Boston Properties Activity (Kevin Sheehan, Boston Properties):

Mr. Sheehan reported that the Ames Street housing is still in the appraisal process with the City and that they are making the effort to speed up as best possible.

Design Review Committee Report (Larry Bluestone)

Minutes of meeting attached; Boston Properties took committee on tour of several projects with Microsoft deck primary focus. The outdoor roof deck (for Microsoft's use) is proposed for the low roof of 1 Cambridge Center overlooking the plaza. It will be visible from plaza/street so within CRA design review purview. Design has been revised based on committee discussion w/Microsoft representative and Mr. Sheehan and there will be further discussion and technical analysis.

Discussion of design revisions and different approaches to material choices. Board voted to authorize the Design Review Committee to finalize approval for Boston Properties to proceed with the deck after resolution of outstanding issues.

Discussion of Akamai sign modification. Board voted to approve the sign modification and conveyed encouragement for Akamai to open ground floor curtains to enhance visibility of computer center and thereby improve pedestrian streetscape experience.

Discussion of Boston Private Bank sign; board emphasized the general importance of high quality visuals in the design review process and subsequent confirmation that installations are consistent with approved applications.

Hiring of Redevelopment Officer

Board and Ms. Spiegelman discussed interviews held with two finalist candidates in March 13 special meeting, noting that CRA has been fortunate to have such qualified and engaged candidates. Board voted to offer the position to Thomas Evans and to enter contract negotiations, authorizing the personnel/transition committee (with Ms. Glazer and Attorney Mullan) to draft and finalize the employment contract with Mr. Evans.

The board also discussed next steps involving CRA's strategic planning process and the possibility of Kathryn Madden assisting in that process, given her extensive expertise in the area.

Requests for Proposals for Design Review Services and Property Management

Board discussed responses to both RFPs, including qualifications and experience of applicants.

Board voted to accept proposals for design review from architects Charles Redmon and Lawrence Bluestone within the structure of a "house doctor" contract.

Board tabled the motion to engage the services of Greenscape for property management so that a not-to-exceed figure could be determined for the contract.

Transportation Survey

Board discussed planning for the transportation survey, which has been done annually in May by Fay, Spofford & Thorndike (FST); CRA has ongoing contract but must specifically authorize the work.

Ms. Glazer confirmed that this work does not overlap anything done by the City of Cambridge and in fact, the City has come to rely on the study as a data source. Discussion of changing the scope and/or frequency of the work to reflect current needs, rather than continuing the study as connected to compliance terms of a past regulatory issue. Ms. Glazer also pointed out benefits of retaining categories of data collection for purposes of comparison to prior years. Board noted that the data proves that transportation demand management works; square footage has increased in CRA area but traffic volumes are down. Board voted to authorize Ms. Glazer to communicate with FST to allow the study work to move forward and discuss possible changes in scope.

Before ending the meeting, Ms. Born expressed gratitude for the efforts of Ms. Glazer, as she winds down CRA activity, and Ms. Spiegelman, as she transitions to a new position at Northeastern University. Meeting adjourned at 7:24.