

# **MEETING MINUTES**

## **CAPITAL CENTER COMMISSION**

**Thursday, July 12, 2007**

**12:00 Noon**

**First Floor Conference Room**

**30 Exchange Terrace**

**Providence, RI**

### **1. Roll Call**

**Chairman Gardner called the meeting to order at 12:10 PM. Members present included Leslie A. Gardner, Merlin DeConti, Christopher Thomas, Stanley Weiss, Phil Stone, Duncan Johnson, Steve Durkee and Robert Reichley. Members absent included Wilfrid L. Gates, Jr., Barry Fain, Carl Abelson, Jennifer Cookke, Gregory Benik, Councilman Terrence Hassett, and Councilwoman Josephine DiRuzzo.**

**Staff present included Deborah Melino-Wender.**

**Others present included Charles Meyers, Metropark; Tom Bovis and Doug Anderson, BCBSRI; John Boehnert, Partridge, Snow & Hahn; Mark Spaulding and Andrew Goetz, SMMA, Nick Iselin, Intercontinental Development; Brad Dimeo, Dimeo Construction.**

## **2. Minutes**

### **2.1 Approval of Commission Minutes of May 24, 2007**

**The motion was duly made, seconded and unanimously passed to approve the minutes of the Capital Center Commission meeting of May 24, 2007.**

### **2.2 Acceptance of Design Review Committee Minutes of May 8, 2007; May 15, 2007;**

**June 5, 2007, and June 19, 2007**

**The motion was duly made, seconded and unanimously passed to accept the minutes of the Design Review Committee meetings of May 8, 2007; May 15, 2007; June 5, 2007, and June 19, 2007.**

## **3. Report of the Executive Director**

**There was no report.**

## **4. DRC Appointment**

**Chairman Gardner explained that the appointment of Derek Bradford to the Design Review Committee expired on June 30, 2007. Mr. Bradford is very interested in continuing his work on the DRC and is fully supported by the DRC Chairman, Wil Gates.**

**The motion was duly made, seconded and unanimously passed to reappoint Derek Bradford to the Design Review Committee for a three year term expiring June 30, 2010.**

## **5. Parcel 2C: Design Presentation**

**Presenter: Mark Spaulding, SMMA (Symmes, Maini, & McKee Associates)**

**Chairman Gardner explained that Blue Cross/Blue Shield is looking to consolidate its operations in downtown into one headquarters building on Parcel 2C, the northern pad of the Intercontinental Development site. Blue Cross is proposing a 325,000 s.f. building which will house 1,100 – 1,200 employees.**

**Chairman Gardner noted that the design team of SMMA has met with the DRC five times since April 24th. Also, Wil Gates, David Spillane, our design consultant and the Executive Director met with the design team at their offices in Cambridge. The DRC is very pleased with the progress of the design to date and with the responsiveness of the design team.**

**Mr. Bovis gave a brief overview of the project. He noted that BCBSRI is looking to consolidate their operations into one building and that they have looked at over 40 sites, including some outside of the City. He noted that Parcel 2C has met their criteria.**

**Mr. Spaulding then presented the plans for the site. He reviewed the overall site and then the building design. He noted that the two long facades, north and south, are curved and that the east and west**

facades are shorter and narrower. He reviewed the relationship of the project to the State House and to the Parcel 2 courtyard area. Mr. Spaulding explained that the building height will be 200' to the roof plane and that there will be 13 occupied floors. At the rooftop, there will be a screen for the mechanicals and the height relates to the height of Tower A of the condominiums. He presented views of the project from Prospect Park and noted that the curves of the building help create and reinforce the view corridors. He noted that the north side of the building steps down and pointed out the transparency of the façade at the corner entrance.

Mr. Spaulding reviewed the requested deviations which will include (1) minimum and maximum height, building edges, use and parking. He noted that the massing has been reduced along Waterplace, and in order to accommodate the Blue Cross program, this has been traded for more height, which is still within the 200' zoning envelope. The edges have been pulled in to reinforce view corridors for the condominiums. With respect to use, BCBSRI will have a small employee cafeteria. This space will be a multifunctional room and will also be used for meetings. The cafeteria will seat 160 with tables, and 250 for meetings and training. He noted that a typical in-house cafeteria would seat one-third of the employees, which would be 400 for BCBSI, so this space is very undersized.

Mr. Weiss commented that the building design is beautiful. Mr. Durkee noted that the design has undergone significant

improvements since he viewed it at an early DRC workshop. He noted that the layering, with the precast behind the glass is an important detail to keep.

Chairman Gardner asked about the amount of the curve and usability of the space. Mr. Spaulding stated that this curved space is usable and that they are creating as much open office space along the north and south facades as possible. The private offices will be located at the east and west ends.

Mr. Spaulding also reviewed the loading area and explained the office uses along Park Row West.

Chairman Gardner reviewed the schedule for the public hearings in September.

## **6. FY '08 Budget Update**

Chairman Gardner updated the Commission members on the reduced funding from the State and discussions at the City Council level to eliminate the Commission's funding. She noted the efforts to date and that a Council meeting was being held next Wednesday on the budget.

## **7. New Business**

There was no new business.

## **8. Adjournment**

**The meeting was adjourned at 1:00 PM.**

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**Robert Reichley**

**Secretary**