

City of Boston BERDO Review Board
Public Meeting Minutes
Zoom Virtual Meeting
March 10, 2025, at 4:30 pm
[View recording here](#)

Board Members in Attendance: Jessica Boatright, Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata, Stephen Ellis, Hessann Farooqi, Lori Ferriss, Gail Latimore, Jack Nelson, and Reginald “Reggie” Stovell Jr.

Board Members not in Attendance: Rashida Boyd

Staff Present: Hannah Payne, Diana Vasquez, and Zengel “Ziggy” Chin.

Others: Approximately twenty-nine (29) members of the public attended this meeting.

Motion to Nominate Acting Chair

4:35 pm: Environment staff D. Vasquez led a vote for Acting Chair. Board Member J. Nelson made a motion to nominate Board Member S. Ellis to serve as Acting Chair. Board Member H. Farooqi seconded the motion. All Board Members in attendance (8) were in favor. The motion carried at 4:36 pm.

Call Meeting to Order

4:36 pm: A meeting of the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance, hereafter referred to as (BERDO), within the Air Pollution Control Commission, was called to order on March 10 at 4:37 pm. This meeting was held virtually.

Roll Call

4:38 pm: The following BERDO Review Board members were in attendance: Acting Chair Stephen Ellis, Jessica Boatright, Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata, Hessann Farooqi, Lori Ferriss, Gail Latimore, Jack Nelson, and Reginald “Reggie” Stovell Jr.

The following Environment Department staff were in attendance: Hannah Payne, Diana Vasquez, and Zengel “Ziggy” Chin.

Others: Approximately twenty-nine (29) members of the public attended this meeting.

First Agenda Item: Vote on Building Portfolio Applications

4:41 pm: Board Member G. Latimore recused herself.

4:42 pm: Z. Chin presented information and details about Codman Square NDC's Building Portfolio application.

4:43 pm: Board Q&A Session

- J. Boatright asked if any specific buildings in the Building Portfolio will need additional funding to meet the proposed emissions standards.
 - R. Shah answered that two buildings in the portfolio have secured funding from the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund. Codman Square NDC has also secured funding from other sources to replace gas stoves and install solar PV arrays throughout the buildings.
- R. Stovell asked how Codman Square NDC will verify the retrofits happen in the buildings.
 - R. Shah explained that the retrofits are being scheduled as part of the development pipeline to ensure the retrofits are being done.
 - D. Butler added that Codman Square NDC's grants undergo a vetting process, including certifications, inspections, and photos, to help ensure the work is being completed.
 - H. Payne added that the Building Portfolio's annual reporting will help enforce the proposed blended emissions standard if approved.

4:49 pm: Board Member H. Farooqi made a motion to approve Codman Square NDC's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member R. Stovell seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (7) voted in favor. The motion carried at 4:57 pm.

4:50 pm: Acting Chair S. Ellis left the meeting

4:55 pm: Environment staff D. Vasquez led a vote for Acting Chair. Councilor G. Coletta Zapata made a motion to nominate Board Member H. Farooqi to serve as Acting Chair. Board Member L. Ferriss seconded the motion. All Board Members in attendance (6) at the time were in favor. The motion carried at 4:56 pm.

4:57 pm: Z. Chin presented information and details about The Children's Hospital Building Portfolio application.

4:58 pm: Board Q&A Session

4:59 pm: Board Member G. Latimore rejoined the meeting.

- H. Farroqi asked if MATEP powers any buildings and if there are any details about the MATEP decarbonization strategy that the Children's Hospital can share.
 - B. Smith answered that MATEP powers all buildings and that MATEP is in the early stages of exploring its decarbonization strategy.
- R. Stovell asked about the scope of work the Children's Hospital plans to do to comply with the first emission standard in 2025.
 - B. Smith explained that the hospital has entered a virtual power purchase agreement to help them comply with emissions standards for the next five to ten years.
- H. Farooqi asked if there are any other challenges the Children's Hospital faces as it tries to achieve net zero for the Building Portfolio.
 - B. Smith explained that there is a lot of redundant equipment, and the hospital needs to stay in operation 24/7, so it is hard to balance maintenance with operations.

5:03 pm: Board Member S. Ellis rejoined the meeting.

5:03 pm: Councilor G. Coletta Zapata made a motion to approve The Children's Hospital's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member L. Ferriss seconded the motion. Seven (7) Board Members voted in favor. One (1) Board Member voted against. The motion carried at 5:05 pm.

5:05 pm: Z. Chin presented information and details about Stony Brook Condo Trust's Building Portfolio application.

5:06 pm: Board Q&A Session

- S. Ellis asked why Stony Brook Condo Trust is seeking a Building Portfolio with only two buildings with the same building use.
 - D. Carleton explained that one building in the portfolio significantly exceeds its emissions limit while the other remains below it, making the portfolio application a strategy to balance emissions across both. The primary focus for reduction is on energy conservation measures and upgrading the outdated boiler control system at one of the buildings, which has led to excessive gas consumption. A new system is set to be installed soon, and combined with the portfolio application; these upgrades are expected to bring both buildings below their emissions limit.

- R. Stovell asked if other upgrades will be done to the buildings.
 - D. Carleton answered that they are encouraging tenants to convert to Boston Community Choice Electric (BCCE), and after the upgrade, more upgrades might be needed.
- L. Ferriss asked if there is a timeline for switching from gas to electric.
 - D. Carleton answered that Stony Brook is focusing on reducing its emissions to meet the 2025 emissions standard. However, no concrete plan will be developed until 2030, when the next emissions standard will come into effect.
- H. Farrooqi asked if there are any additional challenges Stony Brook will face as they try to achieve net zero by 2050.
 - D. Carleton answered that the most significant challenge would be financing the upgrade to completely electric.

5:13 pm: Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve Stony Brook Condo Trust's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member S. Ellis seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (8) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:14 pm.

5:14 pm: Z. Chin presented information and details about NB Development Group's Building Portfolio application.

5:16 pm: Board Q&A Session

- R. Stovell asked how NB Development Group plans to comply with the emissions standard for the first compliance period.
 - E. Burns explained that NB Development Group has a high-level plan. The first step will be to tackle renewable energy supply and then electrify their infrastructure.
- L. Ferriss asked if NB Development Group has a specific strategy based on building use since the building portfolio is so diverse.
 - E. Burns answered that the plan is not specific based on building use but general overall, focusing on electrification.
- J. Boatright asked for more information about the buildings' ages and character.

- K. Craig explained that Boston Landing consists of a mix of new and old buildings. For example, one of their buildings is a single-story building of approximately 13,000 square feet whereas another building is large, mixed-use complex.

5:24 pm: Board Member J. Nelson made a motion to approve NB Development Group's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member L. Ferriss seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (8) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:25 pm.

5:25 pm: Z. Chin presented information and details about Urban Edge Housing Corporation's Building Portfolio application.

5:26 pm: Board Q&A Session

- R. Stovell asked how Urban Edge will meet the proposed emissions standard for the Building Portfolio.
 - R. Shah explained that efforts include leveraging LEAN applications for boiler replacements and efficiency improvements. For example, applications have been submitted for boiler replacements at two properties, with the latter also receiving upgrades such as LED lighting, air tightening for the building envelope, and Wi-Fi thermostat installations. A similar approach is being taken for another pair of properties, ensuring that energy efficiency measures are maximized wherever possible.
- G. Latimore asked if any energy efficiency work relies on Federal funding.
 - R. Shah answered that all the funding is from LEAN funding from the state.
- H. Farooqi asked what other challenges Urban Edge anticipates in achieving net zero by 2050.
 - R. Shah shared that the challenge will be financing projects if Urban Edge needs to seek out Federal funding.

5:29 pm: Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve Urban Edge Housing Corporation's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member R. Stovell seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (8) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:30 pm.

5:30 pm: D. Vasquez presented information and details about WinnCompanies' Building Portfolio application.

5:32 pm: Board Q&A

- H. Farooqi asked how WinnCompanies plans to do retrofits, given that the properties are in different neighborhoods.
 - R. Shah explained that the building owner had already planned how to upgrade the properties. The buildings will be part of the development pipeline over the next few years.
 - D. Butler added that there is no specific methodology but a property-by-property approach.
- J. Boatright asked if WinnCompanies relies on federal funding for the upgrades.
 - R. Shah shared that only one building relied on EPA funding. The other buildings rely on Mass Save LEAN funding.
- G. Latimore asked if WinnCompanies is encouraging their tenants to switch to BCCE and what percentage of tenants pay their own electricity bills.
 - D. Butler answered that the projects have a residential service component that does outreach to share opportunities and programs with tenants.
- H. Farooqi asked for a breakdown of the market-rate units versus subsidized units.
 - R. Shah answered that the majority of units are subsidized, and only a small percentage of the units in the Building Portfolio are market rate.
 - H. Farooqi asked the follow-up question if the majority of units are owner-occupied or rentals.
 - R. Shah answered that the majority are rental units.

5:38 pm: Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve WinnCompanies' Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member J. Boatright seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (8) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:39 pm.

5:39 pm: D. Vasquez presented information and details about Madison Park Development Corporation's Building Portfolio application.

5:40 pm: Board Q&A

- G. Latimore asked if any energy efficiency work relies on Federal funding.
 - A. Rodriguez answered that one property was granted a federal grant, but Madison Park is unsure if they will be able to utilize the funds.

- R. Stovell asked what projects Madison Park will undergo to comply with the emissions standards.
 - A. Rodriguez explained that one property is set for full electrification, while others are upgrading appliances to Energy Star models and replacing older low-flow fixtures with more water-efficient units. Solar panel installations are being considered where feasible, though most properties already have them. Additionally, adjustments and upgrades to building management systems are being made, particularly for centralized heating and cooling, to enhance efficiency and reduce overall energy consumption.
 - R. Stovell asked the follow-up question about whether all the units are income-restricted.
 - A. Rodriguez confirmed that all units are income-restricted.
- H. Farooqi asked about the contingency plan for the building that was relying on Federal funding to do the decarbonization work.
 - A. Rodriguez explained that refinancing is a less ideal option but may be considered to support the work. Initial estimates suggest the project scope is manageable through other means.

5:45 pm: Board Member R. Stovell made a motion to approve Madison Park Development Corporation's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member J. Boatright seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (8) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:46 pm.

5:47 pm: D. Vasquez presented information and details about Wentworth Institute of Technology's Building Portfolio application.

5:51 pm: Board Q&A

- G. Latimore asked how the community is engaged in the Wentworth Institutional master planning process and in understanding Wentworth's climate resiliency strategies.
 - D. Shepard answered that the campus maintains a strong relationship with its neighbors, emphasizing community engagement through a dedicated director and regular communication. As part of an environmental justice community, the Wentworth Task Force played a key role in the institutional master planning process, including extensive meetings and direct stakeholder engagement. Sustainability and resiliency efforts focus on

increasing green space, improving campus connectivity, expanding the tree canopy, and addressing community needs.

- J. Boatright asked how similar the EJ narrative submitted with the application is to Wentworth's Institutional Master Plan (IMP).
 - D. Shepard answered that they are well integrated. The institutional master plan sets ambitious goals for new construction, ensuring that demolished buildings will be replaced with net-zero structures, reducing emissions. The plan prioritizes energy efficiency, beginning with an engineering firm conducting a Level 2 energy audit to identify additional measures for existing buildings. The strategy first focuses on electrifying smaller, more affordable buildings before addressing larger, more complex structures like lab buildings and the student center. A major challenge lies in decarbonizing these larger buildings, as they are integral to the district energy system, which includes a capital-intensive CHP system. Over the next two years, a detailed emissions standard compliance plan will be developed to refine these strategies further.
- L. Ferriss asked how Wentworth is approaching decarbonization from a central utility perspective and what proportion of emissions reductions will come from the central plant versus individual buildings in the near and long term.
 - M. Bergeron explained that Wentworth has a study currently underway for the main campus, which includes 13 buildings, excluding the plant. The study focuses on electrifying the boilers, implementing a low-temperature heating system, and possibly purchasing green steam, with a preference for electric boilers, though the technology must be suitable. The aim is to eliminate the central steam district and address the gas boilers in the main plant. Additionally, the study will examine the cogeneration system in the main plant.
- H. Farooqi asked if Wentworth has labor standards for the work that follows Minority/Women-owned Business Enterprises (MWBE) practices.
 - D. Shepard shared that Wentworth approved a vendor diversity supplier policy in 2019. Since then, it has maintained a list of certified MWBE, veteran-owned, and women-owned construction firms, consultants, and operations support staff. This criterion is actively considered when projects are put out to bid, and the campus has a strong track record of successfully following through on this policy.

- H. Farroqi asked if Wentworth is on track to meet the commitments in the Institutional Master Plan.
 - D. Shepard answered that the plan is in the final stages of finalization, but the Vice President of Wentworth would know more about the progress.
- H. Farroqi asked if Wentworth had earmarked any monies from the Payment in Lieu of Taxes Program (PILOT) for climate action or environmental justice.
 - D. Shepard explained that Wentworth has contributed over \$8 million last year through various initiatives, including scholarships, early college programs, and community cleanups. The institution plays a key role in training students in architecture, construction, and engineering, focusing on decarbonization and climate resiliency through specialized programs. Wentworth also supports reducing local transportation emissions by providing MBTA subsidies for employees and managing Evansway Park for the city. Additionally, the campus encourages students and co-ops to work with local communities on environmental projects, such as LED retrofits and green space improvements, fostering a hands-on approach to addressing climate issues.
- G. Latimore asked if the forty-seven EV charging spaces are available to the general public or only to Wentworth staff.
 - D. Shepard answered the policy around access to the spaces is still in development as the construction is not finished yet.
- G. Laitmore asked for a link to the IMP.
- L. Ferriss asked if Wentworth considered the environmental impacts, particularly on air quality, of demolishing buildings as part of its compliance plan. Are there opportunities to support the community through deconstruction or providing materials?
 - D. Shepard shared that Since 2005, the campus has followed LEED-equivalent standards, incorporating construction indoor air quality management and waste management, with specific goals around construction and demolition (C&D) waste diversion. The IMP targets a 90% diversion rate, aiming to minimize landfill or incineration waste. The campus has also begun discussions with the Boston Building Resources Center to explore salvaging materials from construction projects. Additionally, a Co-Op student was tasked with developing a checklist for construction

projects to help contractors identify salvaged materials and inform their decisions.

6:14 pm: Board Member S. Ellis made a motion to approve Wentworth Institute of Technology's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions, and Wentworth will follow up with the Environment Department with a link to the Institutional Master Plan, statistics on MWBE utilization in projects and accessibility to EV parking for the public. Board Member J. Nelson seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (8) voted in favor. The motion carried at 6:24 pm.

6:18 pm: Acting Chair Farooqi accepted a public comment from a member of the public.

- A. Pultinas asked for more details about the power plant, the sequence of demolition for the buildings discussed in the IMP, and how the City might support deconstruction efforts, especially given the limitations of the building materials co-op on Terrace Street.
 - D. Shepard explained that Wentworth is currently focused on near-term measures to maintain compliance and stay below emissions standards, as the district energy system is a large, complex, and capital-intensive system that will require more time to plan for significant changes. In the meantime, the campus will implement cost-effective energy efficiency measures, such as working with utilities on efficiency projects through the Mass Save incentives. Smaller buildings will be prioritized for electrification, while larger, more energy-intensive buildings connected to the power plant will be addressed as part of the ongoing planning process, with the campus remaining in good shape for the next several years.

6:25 pm: D. Vasquez presented information and details about Boston Medical Center (BMC)'s Building Portfolio application.

6:28 pm: Board Q&A

- G. Latimore commented that the EJ narrative from BMC lacks detail, and she will most likely request a hearing.
- S. Ellis asked what BMC will include about their EJ narrative at a hearing.
 - C. Pouliot answered that BMC will compile information about the different programs and platforms it supports and drives throughout the community.
- If the Building Portfolio is approved, S. Ellis asked if BMC will meet the 2025 emission standard.

- C. Pouliot answered that BMC is actively leveraging its community solar programs and energy efficiency improvements to drive sustainability initiatives. Negotiations are underway with Vicinity on their e-steam program, with plans to incorporate portions of the portfolio into this initiative. Additionally, solar projects are being evaluated, and decisions are being made on whether to use them for renewable energy credits (RECs) or integrate them into the clean power program for the community.
- S. Ellis asked for information about BMC's decarbonization plan for their central heating plant.
 - C. Pouliot answered that BMC is enhancing energy efficiency and resiliency through its cogeneration plant. As part of Phase 2 of its campus redevelopment plan, BMC is exploring high-efficiency technologies, including ground-source and geothermal heat pump systems and AI-driven building automation to optimize energy use. As New England's largest safety-net hospital with one of the busiest emergency and trauma centers, every dollar saved on energy is reinvested into patient care and community support.
- L. Ferriss asked if BMC will need to empty occupied spaces to complete energy transitions or updates.
 - C. Pouliet explained that BMC has extensively renovated most of its buildings within the past 10 to 15 years and strategically uses its existing space. With limited remaining property, planners are evaluating options for renovation or new construction. Over the past decade, the institution has reduced its footprint by selling space to the state and is now focused on maximizing the efficiency and utilization of its current facilities.

6:36 pm: Board Member S. Ellis made a motion to request a hearing for Boston Medical Center's Building Portfolio application. Acting Chair G. Latimore seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (8) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:28 pm.

Second Agenda Item: Discussion and Vote on Opening the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund for the 2025 Application Cycle.

6:37 pm: D. Vasquez presented details about the 2025 application cycle for the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund (the Fund).

6:40 pm: Acting Chair H. Farooqi continued the discussion and vote until the next Review Board meeting on March 24.

Third Agenda Item: Approval of Meeting Minutes.

6:46 pm: The Review Board voted on approving the [January 13 Meeting Minutes](#). Acting Chair H. Farooqi made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Board Member G. Latimore seconded the motion. Five (5) Board Members voted in favor. Three (3) Board Members abstained. The motion carried at 6:47 pm.

Fourth Agenda Item: Administrative Updates

6:43 pm: Z. Chin shared that there is a webinar on Wednesday, March 12, covering the launch of the reporting season for 2025.

The next meeting is scheduled for March 24.

Meeting Adjournment

6:43 pm: Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Member L. Ferris seconded. All board members in attendance (8) voted in favor. The motion carried at 6:43 pm.