

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

**Board Members in Attendance:** Jessica Boatright, Stephen Ellis, Hessann Farooqi, Gail Latimore, and Reginald “Reggie” Stovell Jr.

**Board Members not in Attendance:** Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata and Lori Ferriss

**Staff Present:** Hannah Payne, Diana Vasquez, Simenesh Semine, Dr. Claudia Diezmartinez, and Zengel “Ziggy” Chin.

**Others:** Approximately three (3) members of the public attended this meeting.

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### **Call Meeting to Order**

**4:39 pm:** A meeting of the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance, hereafter referred to as (BERDO), under the Air Pollution Control Commission, was called to order on November 10 at 4:39 pm. This meeting was held virtually.

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### **Roll Call**

**4:40 pm:** The following BERDO Review Board members were in attendance: Chair Jessica Boatright, Stephen Ellis, Hessann Farooqi, Gail Latimore, and Reginald “Reggie” Stovell Jr.

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

**Others:** Approximately three (3) members of the public attended this meeting.

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### **First Agenda Item: Discussion and Vote on BERDO Procedures**

**4:43 pm:** Dr. C. Diezmartinez presented proposals to BERDO procedures.

**4:48 pm:** Board Member G. Latimore joined the meeting.

#### **4:48 pm: Board Q&A Session**

- S. Ellis expressed his support for delegating approval of Pathway 0 and Pathway 1 Building Portfolio applications to the Environment Department.
- H. Farooqi asked how board members would relay questions about Building Portfolio applications if the Environment Department has the power to approve them.

- H. Payne explained that because this approach would delegate authority, and because the Pathway 0 and Pathway 1 Building Portfolio applications are structured in the Regulations, the only basis for approval or denial would be whether the application is complete. The intention is for this to be a fully administrative process. Staff would inform the Review Board during regular meetings which applicants were approved or denied, but there would be no opportunity for questions by the Review Board before approval. That step is not required as the current regulations are written.
- G. Latimore expressed that she shared the concerns raised by Board Member H. Farroqi about the Board's ability and the public's ability to ask questions and weigh in. She shared concerns relating to environmental justice considerations.
  - C. Diezmartinez answered that the proposal is to have the Board delegate the approval of only Pathway 0 and Pathway 1 Building Portfolios. These are the simplest portfolios, i.e. not subject to the additional environmental justice review questions such as environmental justice maps or an emission standard compliance plan after two years of approval. The Board would still retain the authority to review and approve portfolios with an environmental justice priority, as well as Pathway 3 portfolios, which do not meet their eligibility criteria when they apply.
- R. Stovell asked how the Review Board would be involved in the approval process for Pathway 0 and Pathway 1 Building Portfolio applications if the Environment Department is delegated the authority to approve.
  - C. Diezmartinez explained that in many cases, the consultant who prepared the application or the building owner has attended the meeting where the Review Board votes on the application, but the building owner is not required to be present. If the Board were to delegate approval to the Environment Department, we would continue to review and approve or deny applications based on the eligibility criteria. These are the same criteria the Board uses to make its decisions. There would not be a touchpoint during the application process; instead, the Environment Department would communicate approvals or denials after they occur.
- S. Ellis proposed amending the Environment Department's proposal to include the following: First, they should update how we communicate administrative updates, specifically regarding which applications the City has received. Second, there should be a clear time period during which board members may ask questions about those applications that they learn about through administrative updates.

Third, there should be advance notice of the portfolios that are expected to be presented for approval at an upcoming board meeting.

**5:27 pm:** Chair J. Boatright made a motion to approve extending the application deadlines for the 2025 use of Building Portfolios, Individual Compliance Schedules, and Short-term Hardship Compliance Plans to September 1, 2026. Board Member H. Farooqi seconded the motion. All board members (5) in attendance voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:29 pm.

**5:30 pm:** Chair J. Boatright left the meeting and appointed Board Member S. Ellis as interim chair.

**5:31 pm:** Dr. C. Diezmartinez presented information on the solar exemption process.

**5:42 pm:** Board Q&A Session

- S. Ellis asked if the Environment Department has considered creating a similar model for all renewable energy submissions.
  - C. Diezmartinez explained that all BERDO IDs that use solar net metering credits approved under this exemption must still report those credits for each specific building. At this time, the City does not support portfolio-level reporting for renewable energy. The BERDO team would like to develop that capability, but we will not have the capacity to implement it next year. As a result, even with this exemption, an owner with multiple buildings would still need to report the solar net metering credits assigned to each BERDO ID. For example, if an owner allocates credits across three buildings, they must report the specific amount assigned to each one. This exemption does not resolve that issue, and we do not expect to have a near-term solution.

**5:46 pm:** H. Payne presented information on the streamlined Short-Term Hardship Compliance Plan application.

**6:01 pm:** Board Q&A Session

- S. Ellis asked whether the BERDO team has considered adding Healthcare to the list of building uses eligible for the streamlined Short-Term HCP.
  - H. Payne answered that most of the healthcare buildings in that category are large hospitals. The BERDO team is still working through the analysis, but the current understanding is that with the available flexibility, many of these hospitals will be able to comply.
- S. Ellis asked how the thresholds were for the eligibility set.

- H. Payne explained that the threshold of 50% of residents at or below 80% AMI matches that used in the Building Decarbonization Advisor Program. That level could be raised if needed, but it currently serves as the point at which a building aligns with deed-restricted affordable housing. For condos and cooperatives, the goal was to set a standard that was not overly restrictive. Condo prices in Boston are high, and these buildings face governance and administrative challenges, so the recommendation leans toward greater flexibility to help them participate in planning and compliance. The five-million-dollar gross revenue limit for small businesses and nonprofits follows the definition used by the Office of Economic Opportunity, which in turn reflects a federal standard.
- G. Latimore asked for clarification on what type of relief building owners would get under this streamlined Short-Term HCP.
  - H. Payne answered that the relief allows a building to remain at its current emissions level for three years. For example, if a multifamily building has an emissions intensity of 7 but its emission limit under BERDO is 4.1, it may remain at 7 during the period of the approved Hardship Compliance Plan.
- G. Latimore requested that previous applicants to the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund be prioritized for this application and that the Environmental Justice section be moved to the beginning of the application form.

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## **Second Agenda Item: Update and Discussion on BERDO Community Engagement**

**6:18 pm:** S. Semine presented information about the BERDO community engagement.

**6:32 pm:** Board Q&A Session

- S. Ellis asked if the panels from BERDO Fest were recorded.
  - S. Semine answered that they were not, and that was a piece of feedback the City heard from attendees as well.
- G. Latimore suggested creating an ambassador program to train residents and spread the word about BERDO.

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## **Third: Approval of Meeting Minutes**

This agenda item was continued to the next meeting.

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#### **Fourth Agenda Item: Administrative Updates**

**6:37 pm:** Z. Chin shared the following updates:

There is no meeting on November 24, and the December 8 meeting is the annual Tenants/Renters meeting.

Boston won the Local Leaders Award for the work on BERDO and the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund.

The next meeting is scheduled for December 8.

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#### **Meeting Adjournment**

**6:38 pm:** Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Member R. Stovell seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (4) voted in favor. The motion carried at 6:38 pm.