City of Boston BERDO Review Board
Public Meeting Minutes
Zoom Virtual Meeting
August 24, 2026, at 4:30 pm
[View recording here]

Board Members in Attendance: Jessica Boatright, Samira Ahmadi, Stephen Ellis, Hessann Farooqi, Lori Ferriss, and Gail Latimore.

Board Members not in Attendance: Councilor Brian Worrell

Staff Present: Hannah Payne, Diana Vasquez, Claudia Diezmartínez, PhD, and Zengel "Ziggy" Chin.

Others: Approximately eighteen (18) members of the public attended this meeting.

Call Meeting to Order

4:33 pm: A meeting of the Review Board for the Building Emissions Reduction and Disclosure Ordinance, hereafter referred to as BERDO, was called to order on August 24 at 4:33 pm. This meeting was held virtually.

Roll Call

4:34 pm: The following BERDO Review Board members were in attendance: Chair Jessica Boatright, Samira Ahmadi, Stephen Ellis, Hessann Farooqi, Lori Ferriss, and Gail Latimore.

The following Environment Department staff were in attendance: Hannah Payne, Diana Vasquez, Claudia Diezmartínez, PhD, and Zengel "Ziggy" Chin.

Others: Approximately eighteen (18) members of the public attended this meeting.

First Agenda Item: Notice of a Building Portfolio Modification from Harvard University

4:36 pm: D. Vasquez gave notice of a Building Portfolio modification from Harvard University to remove BERDO ID 107135, 107137, and 103589 from its Building Portfolio.

Second Agenda Item: Presentations from Equitable Emissions Investment Fund 2025 Application Cycle Finalists.

4:39 pm: Diana presented background information about the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund before the finalists' presentations.

4:43 pm: Madison Park Development Corporation presented their project: Decarbonizing Madison Botolph Affordable Housing Development.

4:56 pm: Board Q&A Session

- J. Boatright asked about the likelihood of MPDC securing LISC and other funding sources.
    - A. Rodriguez answered that uncertainty surrounds the exact funding amounts from Mass Save and LISC, leaving a current $90,000 surplus gap between projected costs and requested funds that could shift depending on final awards. While approval for a pre-development loan of up to $250,000 is expected pending lender consent, timing for the Climate Ready Housing Program announcement remains unknown. Securing the pre-development loan and EEIF funding will likely strengthen the project's positioning for Climate Ready Housing support and help complete the capital stack outside the GRRP scope.
- J. Boatright asked when MPDC would need to draw EEIF funding to stay on schedule.
    - A. Rodriguez answered that the final schedule depends on confirming the building's electrical load and receiving service change approval from the utility provider. Because the utility will likely require the work to occur during off-peak shoulder seasons, installation is expected in late 2026 or early 2027, with physical execution likely taking place in the spring.
- S. Ellis asked how MPDC calculated the estimated emissions reductions for the project and whether the projected emissions reductions per dollar use only funding from the EEIF.
    - A. Rodriguez explained that MPDC relied on Dominion Due Diligence Group to perform the ASHRAE Level 2 and Advanced Energy Audits, using the provided calculator to generate all baseline emissions estimates. Anticipated energy reductions will be distributed across the entire property rather than isolated to a single area. Further savings will be realized as the team executes the broader project scope, including in-unit improvements, mechanical and HVAC system upgrades, and Energy Recovery Ventilator (ERV) installations to enhance indoor air quality, with the resulting

emissions reductions shared across funding from this grant, the GRRP, and the Climate Ready Housing Program.

- H. Farooqi asked if MPDC has selected a contractor for the project already.
    - A. Rodriguez answered that MPDC has not yet selected contractors for either the solar installation or the primary building renovations. Solar partner Resonant Energy will recommend qualified vendors for the array, while staff is currently gathering cost estimates from past general contractors for the broader GRRP scope. Final contractor selection remains on hold until early spring 2027, following HUD's anticipated approval of the building's overall project scope.
- H. Farooqi asked for more information about MPDC policy on MWBE utilization.
    - A. Rodriguez answered that MPDC prioritizes engaging MBEs and WBEs across both small and large projects, primarily relying on diverse subcontractors for larger capital efforts. While no written internal procurement policy exists, the real estate development and asset management teams actively pursue these partnerships, as demonstrated by hiring a minority-owned general contractor and architect for a DTA expansion project in Roxbury. Despite navigation challenges and mixed past outcomes, leadership remains committed to maximizing capital allocation toward diverse firms wherever possible.

5:07 pm: Children's Services of Roxbury presented their project: Children's Services of Roxbury Electrification/HQ Renovation.

5:20 pm: Board Q&A Session

- S. Ahmadi asked for clarification on whether a portion of the projected emissions reductions comes from phase 2 of the project, when the solar PV is being installed.
    - D. Traggorth explained that the emissions reductions template estimates zero net electricity addition because the team plans to offset the added electrical load with a future rooftop solar project funded through upcoming grants. Consequently, the current savings calculation reflects only the elimination of 570,000 kBTU of natural gas, without factoring in grid electricity consumption.
- S. Ellis asked if the $27 million will cover the cost of the solar PV for the building.

    - D. Traggorth answered that Children's Services of Roxbury will need to seek additional funding for that part of the project.

- H. Farooqi asked if the contractor is going to be doing work aligning with the Boston Jobs Living Wage and Prevailing Wage Ordinance.

    - D. Traggorth answered that the team is partnering with Kaplan Construction and actively striving to meet Boston Resident Jobs Policy standards, despite not being legally required to do so for this interior tenant fit-out project. As part of this commitment, contract finalization is underway with a minority-owned HVAC subcontractor, ensuring that diversity and local workforce goals extend directly through to project subcontracts and site labor.

- L. Ferriss asked whether measures are being taken to help mitigate the loads on the new systems.

    - D. Traggorth answered that a masonry restoration supported by Boston CPA and new first-floor interior insulation are strengthening the building envelope alongside complete lighting and system upgrades. To ensure long-term operational success, an internal staff member is overseeing the process to transition into a permanent facilities leadership role, building in-house expertise for ongoing BERDO compliance and overall system management.

5:29 pm: Board Member Samira Ahmadi recused herself.

5:30 pm: Bridge Over Troubled Waters presented their project: 25 West Street.

5:43 pm: Board Q&A Session

- J. Boatright asked for more information about Bridge Over Troubled Waters MWBE utilization policy.

    - B. Nguyen answered that for municipal and state-funded projects, the organization enforces mandatory MWBE hiring targets in close coordination with the general contractor. These goals are established early in the planning process and monitored continuously through construction until final project closeout to guarantee full compliance.

- G. Latimore asked for more information about the heat pump installation part of the project.

- B. Nguyen explained that the requested funds will directly cover the hard costs for the heat pump water heater system, addressing recent project budget increases driven by rising mechanical, electrical, and plumbing expenses. Every dollar secured through grant funding directly reduces the organization's reliance on private fundraising, allowing those vital operational resources to be redirected toward youth programs and services.

5:51 pm: Chair J. Boatight recused herself and appointed Board Member S. Ellis interim chair.

5:51 pm: Planning Office for Urban Affairs presented their project: Dartmouth Hotel-Sargent Prince

5:43 pm: Board Q&A Session

- G. Latimore asked what role Urban Edge Housing Corporation will play in the project since Nuestra CDC and Urban Edge have merged.
    - C. Quach explained that following the upcoming merger between Nuestra and Urban Edge, ownership of the managing entity will be shared between the Planning Office for Urban Affairs and Urban Edge. Under this structured ownership model, the Planning Office for Urban Affairs will retain a 75% managing interest, with Urban Edge holding the remaining 25%.
- H. Farooqi asked if the general contractor plans to pay a prevailing wage for the work associated with the project.
    - C. Quach answered that the work in this project is not subject to prevailing wages.
- S. Ellis asked for clarification on the funding distribution.
    - C. Quach answered that the project features a total development cost of approximately $70 million, supported by secured commitments of over $5 million from Historic Tax Credits (HTC) and $2.5 million from the City of Boston's Neighborhood Housing Trust. The team anticipates a decision this fall on a $1 million Climate Ready Housing request, supported by positive preliminary feedback from program reviewers. Additional funding is anchored by a joint 4% state tax credit application submitted during HTC's supportive housing round and an upcoming August application for further State Historic Tax Credits to expand existing allocations.

6:08 pm: Board Member Samira Ahmadi rejoined the meeting.

6:08 pm: Urban Edge Housing Corporation presented their project: The Energy Reduction Project at Theroch Apartments

6:19 pm: Board Q&A Session

- S. Ellis asked what the actual cost of the relocation from last year when the project was presented to the Review Board.
    - J. Brown answered that the initial relocation cost figures submitted last year were preliminary estimates, and expenses have risen as the project finalizes a contract with a relocation consultant. Except for the two largest properties, where on-site vacant units will accommodate temporary transfers, the remaining 14 buildings will require off-site master leases with local landlords to house displaced residents during construction. Despite the budget increase, management expects secured funding sources to absorb the higher costs, given the need to maintain resident stability throughout the renovation.
- G. Latimore asked for more information about the timing of tenant relocation.
    - J. Brown answered that formal resident relocation has not yet begun, though pre-planning efforts are underway with a project kickoff meeting scheduled with the relocation consultant for the end of this month. Urban Edge will then draft a comprehensive relocation plan, with the physical movement of residents set to take place about two months before construction begins.
- G. Latimore asked why the EEIF funds are being allocated towards soft costs instead of development costs.
    - J. Brown explained that Urban Edge strategically isolates incremental costs for specific decarbonization work to secure dedicated funding for energy-related soft costs. By shifting applicable hard costs into the main construction budget, the team maximizes eligible basis to generate additional Historic Tax Credits and equity, optimizing the capital stack across the entire development scope.
- H. Faorroqi asked for information about Urban Edge's equitable hiring practices.
    - J. Brown answered that this project is not subject to prevailing wage mandates, but because it receives City of Boston support, it must fully comply with Boston Resident Jobs Policy standards. In the active general

contractor bid package, the team escalated its diversity goals from an initial 30% MBE and 10% WBE baseline to 50% MBE and 10% WBE.

6:28 pm: Chair Jessica Boatright rejoined the meeting.

6:29 pm: D. Vasquez shared the Review Board's next steps.

6:30 pm: Review Board and BERDO Staff discussed the award amount for the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund.

Third Agenda Item: Approval of Meeting Minutes.

6:52 pm: The Review Board voted to approve the July 27 Meeting Minutes. Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Board Member Hessann Farooqi seconded the motion. Four (4) Board members voted in favor. Two (2) Board Members abstained. The motion carried at 6:53 pm.

Third Agenda Item: Administrative Updates

6:53 pm: Z. Chin shared the following updates:

The BERRDO team has received three Streamlined Short-Term Hardship Compliance Plans and two Building Portfolio submissions.

A reminder that September 1 is the deadline for Building Portfolios, Individual Compliance Schedules, Short-Term Hardship Compliance Plans, and Streamlined Short-Term Hardship Compliance Plans

The reporting deadline was on August 15. A quick reporting update so far: 73% of BERDO IDs have completed their reporting and third-party verification or have requested an extension.

BERDO Flex Measure Sprint Day was on August 18, and 13 consultations were held in total and helped building owners with topics related to reporting, flexibility measures, and general questions about BERDO.

The next Review Board meeting is scheduled for September 14.

Meeting Adjournment

7:00 pm: Board Member S. Ellis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Member S. Ellis seconded. All board members in attendance (6) voted in favor. The motion carried at 7:00 pm.