

City of Boston BERDO Review Board
Public Meeting Minutes
Zoom Virtual Meeting
September 23, 2024, at 4:30 pm
[View recording here](#)

Board Members in Attendance: Rashida Boyd, Stephen Ellis, Hessann Farooqi, and Jack Nelson.

Board Members not in Attendance: Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapta, Lovette Jacobs, and Gail Latimore

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

Others: Approximately nineteen (19) members of the public attended this meeting.

Motion to Nominate Acting Chair

4:32 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 (4) at the time were in favor. The motion carried at 4:36 pm.

Call Meeting to Order

4:33 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 August 12 at 4:33 pm. This meeting was held virtually.

Roll Call

4:34 pm: The following BERDO Review Board members were in attendance: Acting Chair Stephen Ellis, Rashida Boyd, Hessann Farooqi, and Jack Nelson.

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

Others: Approximately nineteen (19) members of the public attended this meeting.

First Agenda Item: Vote on Building Portfolio Applications

4:36 pm: D. Vasquez presented information and details about WGBH’s Building Portfolio application.

4:38 pm: Board Q&A Session

- H. Farooqi asked why WGBH is seeking a building portfolio.
 - E. Floyd explained that one building in the portfolio has high emissions, and the portfolio will give WGBH more flexibility as they work to reduce emissions over the next 25 years.
- H. Farooqi asked if there are other challenges that WGBH anticipates as they try to meet the emissions standards.
 - E. Camp answered that not currently, and the Power Options is helping WGBH create a plan to reduce emissions.
- J. Nelson asked for confirmation if the blended emissions standard was calculated using the buildings' square feet percentage.
 - D. Vasquez confirmed that J. Nelson is correct about how the blended emissions standards are calculated.
- J. Nelson asked where WGBH's office space is in the building use type.
 - E. Floyd explained that neither building is mixed-use with office space.
 - S. Ellis reiterated J. Nelson's question about whether any buildings had a percentage of office space as a building use.
 - E. Floyd confirmed that the buildings are entirely assembly and technology, as reported.

4:43 pm: Board Member J. Nelson made a motion to approve WGBH's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member H. Farooqi seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (4) voted in favor. The motion carried at 4:44 pm.

4:44 pm: D. Vasquez presented information and details about the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum's Building Portfolio application.

4:45 pm: Board Q&A Session

- S. Ellis asked how the building portfolio application would benefit the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum.
 - M. Holland explained that the portfolio includes a new building and a historic building. The new building has utilities running through it, which

skews the historic building's emissions, and the portfolio will help spread the energy use across both buildings.

- H. Farooqi asked what challenges the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum anticipates with emissions reductions for the proposed portfolio.
 - M. Holland answered that being a historic landmark constrains what work can be done on and around the buildings.
 - H. Farooqi asked a follow-up question if the Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum has talked to the Landmarks Commission about potential repairs or upgrades to the buildings.
 - M. Holland explained that not yet, as for the next few years, the buildings will be in compliance with emissions standards. However, they are starting to look at longer-term planning for emissions reductions.

4:49 pm: Board Member H. Farooqi made a motion to approve Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member J. Nelson seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (4) voted in favor. The motion carried at 4:49 pm.

4:50 pm: Z. Chin presented information and details about Codman Square Health Center's Building Portfolio application.

4:51 pm: Board Q&A Session

- S. Ellis asked if it would benefit Codman Square Health Center to apply for a building portfolio and the reasoning for adding a building with a 2030 compliance year.
 - E. Floyd answered that after a cost analysis of the building portfolio for Codman Square Health Center, it showed that having a portfolio would save money in the long run.
- H. Farooqi asked if there are any challenges that Codman Square Health Center has in terms of emissions reduction.
 - E. Floyd said that she is unsure of any challenges for now.

4:53 pm: Board Member J. Nelson made a motion to approve Codman Square Health Centers's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member H. Farooqi seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (4) voted in favor. The motion carried at 4:53 pm.

4:54 pm: Z. Chin presented information and details about Pebblebrook Hotel Trust's Building Portfolio application.

4:55 pm: Board Q&A Session

- H. Farooqi asked why Pebblebrook Hotel Trust is seeking out a Building Portfolio
 - A. Wyczalkowski explained that with many hotels that need improvement, the portfolio will help Pebblebrook have the flexibility to focus on reducing their buildings' overall emissions.
- H. Farooqi asked if Pebblebrook Hotel Trust anticipates any challenges with reducing emissions for the next 25 years
 - A. Wyczalkowski answered that there might be a challenge with the Liberty Hotel since it is a historic building.
- S. Ellis asked how parking can affect emission standards.
 - D. Vasquez explained that fully enclosed parking can count towards BERDO gross floor area and the blended emission standard if it makes up at least 10% of the total gross floor area. Including parking in the calculated blended emission standard could lower the overall blended emission standard.

4:58 pm: Board Member H. Farooqi made a motion to approve Pebblebrook Hotel Trust's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member J. Nelson seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (4) voted in favor. The motion carried at 4:59 pm.

Second Agenda Item: Approval of Meeting Minutes.

4:59 pm: The Review Board voted on approving the [September 9 Meeting Minutes](#). Board Member H. Farooqi made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Board Member R. Boyd seconded the motion. All Board Members in attendance voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:00 pm.

Third Agenda Item: Administrative Updates

5:00 pm: Z. Chin shared the number of building portfolios and ICS applications. The City is still waiting to hear back from the long-term hardship compliance plan applicants regarding resubmissions. There have been three (3) submitted nominations for open seats on the board. An upcoming webinar will provide an overview of BERDO compliance for

condo associations on September 25. A webinar on October 2 will cover IRA clean energy tax incentives for building owners.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 15.

Fourth Agenda Item: Discussion on the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund Application Cycle 2024.

5:03 pm: The public hearing was called to order.

5:04 pm: D. Vasquez presents information about the finalists of the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund (the Fund).

5:06 pm: Board Q&A Session

- H. Farooqi asked if Fenway CDC has heard back on their funding proposal from LISC.
 - D. Vasquez answered that the City has not heard an update from Fenway CDC if they were awarded the funding.
- S. Ellis asked when the next cycle of the Fund will be open for applications.
 - D. Vasquez proposed that the Fund open in the spring of next year to avoid conflicts with other flexibility measure deadlines.

5:10 pm: Chair S. Ellis opened a public comment period.

- J. M asked in the Zoom Chat how they can learn more about BERDO.
 - H. Payne explained that he can send an email if he has any questions, and the correct staff member will get back to him.

5:14 pm: Chair S. Ellis closed a public comment period.

Meeting Adjournment

5:14 pm: Board Member R. Boyd made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Member J. Nelson seconded. All board members in attendance (4) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:15 pm.