

Staff Report to the Board: May 15, 2024

Personnel and Hiring Updates

The CRA is pleased to announce the hiring of Menatalla Mohamed and Abigail Glass as Summer Planning and Development Interns. Mena and Abby were chosen from an extremely competitive pool of 64 applicants for the internship. Mena is finishing her first year in the Master in City Planning program in the Department of Urban Studies and Planning at MIT. She previously worked at the Washington DC Economic Partnership and at Internews, an independent media development organization. Abby is finishing her first year in the Master in Urban Planning program at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. She previously worked at Google via Adecco. Mena and Abby will be supporting the CRA on a variety of current projects and long-term initiatives from late-May through mid-August.

The CRA is currently hiring for the new role of Communications Manager. The Communications Manager will fulfill an important role on our team, leading the organization's communication and outreach efforts and curating external messaging and media placement to ensure the public is aware of the CRA's activities and initiatives. Applications for the Communications Manager role are due on May 28 at 5:00 PM.

Forward Calendar

- 2023 Annual Transportation Report
- 2024 Mid-Year CRA Budget Amendment
- Grand Junction Transit Feasibility Study

Project Updates

CRA Temporary Office Relocation

To accommodate the CRA's growing staff and ensure our space is positioned to accommodate the CRA's permanent hybrid method of working, the CRA will be renovating its office space this spring. These renovations will accommodate more desks for permanent employees and interns, add additional meeting spaces, and include upgrades to carpeting and finishes. The renovation work will commence on May 17th and is planned to be completed by June 13th. While this work is ongoing, CRA staff will remain in The Link on the 8th Floor of 255 Main Street, but will be temporarily located on the other side of the floor, working out of available desk space.

LGBTQ+ History Event

CRA staff have collaborated with Mayor Denise Simmons, the Cambridge Museum of History, Cambridge Arts, and Boston Properties (BXP) to coordinate a three-exhibit series in the Kendall Public Lobby. Building on the success of the Black History Month event, an LGBTQ+ event will take place this month to commemorate 20 Years of Marriage Equality in Massachusetts. An exhibition showcasing 30 striking images by Marilyn Humphries will stand as a tribute to the bravery and perseverance of the LGBTQ+ community. The photographs capture the essence of love conquering adversity, and of the City of Cambridge proudly making significant strides in history. The unveiling of the LGBTQ+ exhibit in the Public Lobby will take place with an opening

event at 6 PM on Friday, May 17th, the twentieth anniversary of when the first legal same-sex marriage in the United States took place in Cambridge.

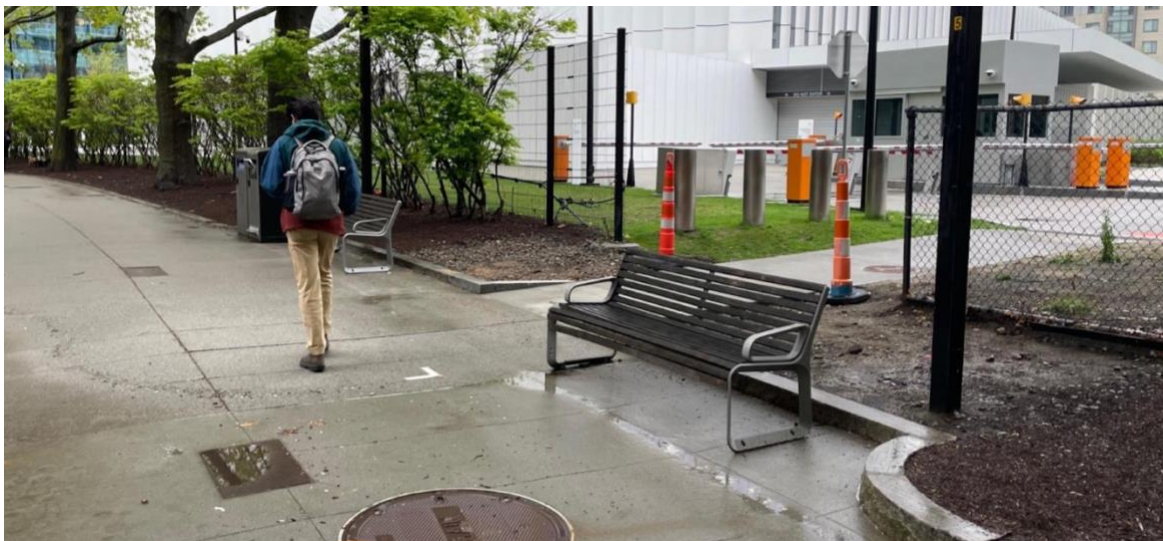
Grand Junction Park Tree Planting Celebration

On April 24th, the CRA hosted a Tree Planting Party at Grand Junction Park in collaboration with Green Cambridge and the KSA, with the objectives of planting seven new trees in the park and spreading awareness of Green Cambridge's tree planting efforts throughout East Cambridge. The event was well attended with over 60 attendees assisting in planting trees in the park. The event also featured a food truck, plants and bouquets for sale from Kendall Square Flower Shop, and live music from the local brass band Good Trouble. CRA staff were pleased with the turnout and are excited to kick off this year's planting season with a strong community event.



Path Between Potter Street and 6th Street Walkway Completed

MITIMCo finalized the purchase of the Volpe property in January of this year. Since then the CRA and MITIMCo have worked cooperatively to establish a short sidewalk segment to link Potter Street and the 6th Street Walkway. This connection marks the first direct connection between Parcels 1 and 2 of the KSURP in decades. The temporary sidewalk connection will be expanded in the future with the build out of the Volpe site and its circulation system.



Danny Lewin Park Construction Update

The CRA has been collaborating with Brightview, Turner, BXP, and Residence Inn to develop the schematic designs of Mikyoung Kim Design into construction documents that achieve the original design intent of the approved schematic design while adapting to evolving conditions and considering value engineering measures to control costs. The CRA developed an interim landscape for the Residence Inn patio space following notification from Residence Inn that it will not be proceeding with constructing a new patio at this time given market conditions. Last week, construction of the park renovations commenced with the placement of construction fencing and tree protection. It is anticipated that the renovations to Danny Lewin Park will be completed by early fall.