

City of Boston BERDO Review Board
Public Meeting Minutes
Zoom Virtual Meeting
September 8, 2025, at 4:30 pm
[View recording here](#)

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

Board Members not in Attendance: Councilor Gabriela Coletta Zapata

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

Others: Approximately seven (7) members of the public attended this meeting.

Call Meeting to Order

4:34 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 September 8 at 4:34 pm. This meeting was held virtually.

Roll Call

4:35 pm: The following BERDO Review Board members were in attendance: Chair Jessica Boatright, Stephen Ellis, Hessann Farooqi, Lori Ferriss, Gail Latimore, and Reginald “Reggie” Stovell Jr.

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

Others: Approximately seven (7) members of the public attended this meeting.

First Agenda Item: Vote on Flexibility Measure Application

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

4:39 pm: City staff presented staff comments.

4:40 pm: Board Q&A Session

- J. Boatright requested additional information regarding tenant engagement in apartment buildings located in Environmental Justice (EJ) communities.

- J. Silvey answered that currently, Donato Pizzuti is focusing on the preliminary steps of planning how to decarbonize the buildings in the portfolio. Currently, residents receive at least 24 hours' notice before any work inside their apartment and are notified of building-wide adjustments as information becomes available. For larger projects, they expect to develop additional approaches as needed; however, for now, this 24-hour minimum notice policy guides their communications.
- S. Ellis asked what future plans for tenant engagement Donato Pizzuti has.
 - J. Silvey explained that since no major changes are currently planned, the focus remains on more immediate improvements, such as insulation, rather than broader initiatives tied to environmental justice requirements. But they can provide more information if requested.
- H. Farooqi asked about plans to procure renewable energy for the buildings in the Building Portfolio.
 - J. Silvey answered that solar panels were considered early on as a possible energy source, both on rooftops and through off-site solar fields, but neither option has advanced into formal plans. Challenges include limited roof space, older urban buildings, and feasibility concerns, though these ideas remain under consideration as potential options.
- H. Farooqi asked, what factors is Donato Pizzuti considering when deciding which buildings to retrofit first.
 - J. Silvey answered that upgrade timing would likely prioritize buildings with higher vacancy rates to minimize tenant disruption and align with equipment lifecycles, such as replacing boilers when they reach the end of their useful life.
- G. Latimore requested additional information on why it is not feasible to replace the gas furnaces in the building.
 - J. Silvey explained that complete retrofits to replace boilers are not feasible in the short term due to piping complexity, tight spaces in older buildings, and major disruption. While conversion to electric boilers will be necessary to meet long-term renewable goals, it is a significant challenge within the next 5–10 years.
- G. Latimore asked if Donato Pizzuti has developed a roadmap to reduce their emissions.

- J. Silvey explained that Donato Pizzuti is taking an ad hoc approach, prioritizing short-term steps like replacing gas appliances with electric ones during routine upgrades, while recognizing that larger changes will require more detailed timelines in the future.

5:04 pm: Board Member S. Ellis made a motion to approve Donato Pizzuti's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions and requested that Donato Pizzuti provide additional information on tenant engagement in EJ communities regarding the decarbonization work that will take place in their buildings. Board Member R. Stovell seconded the motion. Five (5) board members voted in favor. One (1) board member abstained. The motion carried at 5:07 pm.

Second Agenda Item: Discussion and Update on 2025 Equitable Emissions Investment Fund Application Round

5:09 pm: D. Vasquez presented information about the potential finalist for the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund (the Fund).

5:19 pm: Board Q&A Session

- J. Boatright commented that she suggests inviting BMC and the Boys & Girls Club to create a balanced mix of projects, with some projects focusing on affordable housing and upgrades, and others on solar.
- L. Ferriss noted that comparing projects based on avoided emissions and cost per avoided emissions is challenging, as some estimates are derived from detailed expert modeling, while others rely on benchmarks. She cautions against taking the numbers too literally, seeing them more as relative indicators. She also appreciates the diversity of projects and the commitment to funding smaller initiatives, which is reflected in the top selections.
- S. Ellis commented that he values a diversity of projects, noting that last year's approvals focused mostly on decarbonization and solar, while this year includes more upgrades. He encouraged the Review Board to also consider programs and services in the future as unique opportunities.
- H. Farooqi requested information about the applicants who will be able to take advantage of the solar tax credits.
- G. Latimore asked if the City put a time limit on when awardees needed to use the money from the Fund.

- D. Vasquez suggests requiring grantees to spend funds within two years. This aligns with CPA's two-year standard, which also allows extensions if needed. If money hasn't been spent in that timeframe, it likely signals an issue and would be a good point for the Board to revisit the application.

5:54 pm: Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to invite Urban Edge Housing Corporation, Roxbury Tenants of Harvard, Allston Brighton CDC, Boston Medical Center, Morville House Apartments, and Boys & Girls Club of Dorchester to the September 29 hearing to present as the 2025 Equitable Emissions Investment Fund finalists. Board Member H. Farooqi seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (6) voted in favor. The motion carried at 6:01 pm.

Third Item: Approval of Meeting Minutes.

6:01 pm.: The Review Board voted to approve the [August 25 Meeting Minutes](#). Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Board Member S. Ellis seconded the motion. Four (4) board members voted in favor. Two (2) board members abstained. The motion carried at 6:05 pm.

Fourth Agenda Item: Administrative Updates

6:02 pm: Z. Chin shared the following updates:

The number of flexibility measures received by the BERDO Team.

The second public comment period for the proposed BERDO Regulations update closed, and the team received only one comment letter.

The BERDO team shared more information about BERDO Fest, which will bring together building owners with decarbonization experts.

The BERDO team proposed rescheduling the October 13 Review Board meeting for October 14, as Indigenous Peoples' Day falls on Monday.

The next meeting is scheduled for September 29, 2025.

Meeting Adjournment

6:11 pm: Board Member S. Ellis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Member G. Latimore seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (6) voted in favor. The motion carried at 6:12 pm.