

City of Boston BERDO Review Board
Public Meeting Minutes
Zoom Virtual Meeting
October 14, 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, and Zengel “Ziggy” Chin.

Others: Approximately sixteen (16) members of the public attended this meeting.

Call Meeting to Order

4:38 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 October 14 at 4:35 pm. This meeting was held virtually.

Roll Call

4:36 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, and Zengel “Ziggy” Chin.

Others: Approximately sixteen (16) members of the public attended this meeting.

First Agenda Item: Vote on Building Portfolio Applications

4:41 pm: Z. Chin presented information and details about Tufts Medical Center’s Building Portfolio application.

4:42 pm: Z. Chin presented staff comments.

4:43 pm: Board Q&A Session

- S. Ellis asked how the buildings’ energy systems are connected and set up.
 - M. Keith explained that the buildings use a mix of electricity, gas, steam, and water, with some having independent meters and others sharing accounts. Because certain utilities, like steam, are shared and usage per building cannot be clearly separated, four of the five buildings were grouped into a

single campus application for reporting. As a result, this submission combines one stand-alone building with the broader campus application, which has already been approved.

- S. Ellis asked if the blended emissions standard would benefit Tufts Medical Center.
 - M. Keith answered that a Building Portfolio will be beneficial for long-term planning, and that the office square footage is minimal, so it will not have much effect on the blended emissions standard.
- H. Farooqi asked what challenges Tufts Medical Center anticipates in complying with BERDO.
 - M. Keith answered that in the near term, Tufts Medical Center is expected to remain below the blended emissions standard if approved, assuming current energy use stays consistent. Tufts is unlikely to exceed that threshold until around 2035, giving them time to plan strategies to reduce non-electric emissions. Fortunately, natural gas use is minimal, as most of their heating comes from steam. Tufts has also been in discussions with Vicinity about low-emission steam options to further reduce their carbon footprint.
- H. Farooqi requested that Tufts Medical Center share details about its hiring policies for projects.
- R. Stovell asked how Tufts Medical Center is going to comply with the 2035 emissions limits.
 - M Keith answered that compliance is not expected to be an issue between 2025 through 2034. Longer-term, Tufts could meet requirements through options like a solar power purchase agreement, renewable energy credits, or other approved methods for addressing electric emissions. Tufts has not acted yet because it is difficult to secure such contracts a decade in advance. From 2025 to 2029, Tufts is projected to remain well below the emissions standard, with 2030 being the first year Tufts may approach it. As that year nears, Tufts will reassess their energy use and, if needed, begin implementing compliance strategies to stay within limits.

4:55 pm: Board Member S. Ellis made a motion to approve Tufts Medical Center's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member G. Latimore seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (5) voted in favor. The motion carried at 4:55 pm.

4:56 pm: Chair J. Boatright recused herself and appointed Board Member S. Ellis interim chair.

4:56 pm: Z. Chin presented information and details about Nuestra Comunidad Development Corporation's Building Portfolio application.

4:57 pm: Z. Chin presented staff comments.

4:58 pm: Board Q&A Session

- G. Latimore asked what the building with storage is used for.
 - R. Shah said that the building is used as a maintenance shop within one of the apartment buildings.
- H. Farooqi asked what challenges Nuestra CDC anticipates in complying with BERDO.
 - R. Shah answered that funding the decarbonization projects will be the biggest challenge.

5:02 pm: Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve Nuestra CDC's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member R. Stovell seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (4) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:03 pm.

Second Agenda Item: Building Portfolio Hearing

5:04 pm: The public hearing was called to order.

5:05 pm: D. Vasquez presented information and details about Harvard University's Building Portfolio application.

5:06 pm: Chair J. Boatright rejoined the meeting.

5:06 pm: Harvard University presented information and details about their Pathway 2 Building Portfolio application.

5:31 pm: City staff presented staff comments.

5:33 pm: Board Q&A Session

- J. Boatright requested that Harvard include information about their MWBE utilization policy and compliance with the Boston Resident Job Policy in their emissions standard compliance plan.

- S. Ellis asked if Harvard would add the newly constructed buildings to their existing Building Portfolio.
 - P. Kelly-Jospeh confirmed that Harvard will add those buildings following the guidelines from the BERDO team.
- H. Farooqi asked for any information on how MATEP plans to decarbonize their power plant and how that will affect Harvard.
 - H. Henriksen explained that Harvard's Longwood campus holds a long-term energy contract with MATEP through 2051. While MATEP is privately owned, Harvard remains committed to meeting its BERDO emissions goals. The university has already achieved its 2025 targets, is on track for 2030, and is now concentrating on reaching the 2035 goals. Harvard continues to explore a range of strategies across both its district energy systems and its individual buildings to ensure long-term compliance and progress toward carbon reduction.
- H. Farooqi asked what challenges Harvard anticipates in reaching carbon neutrality by 2050.
 - H. Henriksen answered that Harvard is currently focused on meeting its 2035 decarbonization goals through detailed engineering studies across its buildings, aimed at improving energy efficiency, expanding heat recovery, and fully decarbonizing building systems. The university is also evaluating district energy solutions, particularly at the Allston facility. In addition, Harvard has begun exploring ground-source geothermal potential, conducting test wells this past summer to assess feasibility in areas where space allows. These ongoing efforts form the foundation of Harvard's compliance plan and demonstrate its commitment to meeting the 2035 emissions targets.
- G. Latimore asked for more information about the Living Building Challenge's inclusion imperative.
 - H. Henriksen answered that Harvard's approach centers on advancing environmental justice, with about 95% of its Boston neighborhoods classified as EJ areas. The university integrates equity and sustainability through participation in the Living Building Challenge, which includes the Just Label certification. This program requires partners to meet rigorous social and environmental responsibility standards. This certification emphasizes local sourcing, engagement with women- and minority-owned

businesses, and fair labor and equity policies. By requiring collaborators to hold this certification, Harvard ensures that its sustainability work aligns with both environmental and social justice goals.

5:45 pm: Chair J. Boatright opened a public comment period.

- A. Pultinas commented that as a MATEP customer, if Harvard University had any influence over MATEP's decarbonization efforts.

5:47 pm: Chair J. Boatright closed a public comment period.

5:47 pm: Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve Harvard University's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Chair J. Boatright seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (5) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:51 pm.

Third Agenda Item: Discussion on the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund Application Cycle 2025.

5:52 pm: D. Vasquez presents information about the finalists of the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund (the Fund).

4:55 pm: Board Q&A Session

- J. Boatright expressed her support of the City's recommendations for the Fund awards.
- S. Ellis asked whether City staff reached out to applicants to ask whether a lesser amount of funding would still work for their projects.
 - D. Vasquez confirmed that the City spoke with the applicants, and they would still be interested in the award.
- H. Farooqi voiced his support for the City's recommendations and also expressed his support for Urban Edge Housing's application.
- G. Latimore asked for the reasoning behind the City's funding recommendations.
 - D. Vasquez explained that Board members were split between supporting BMC's Power to the People project and Urban Edge's proposal. While three members recommended funding Urban Edge, its buildings were smaller and not covered under BERDO. Ultimately, staff leaned toward BMC's project, given its closer alignment with program goals and stronger overall interest,

though they acknowledged Urban Edge’s work as valuable. The decision could still be revisited if the board feels strongly about a different direction.

6:05 pm: Chair J. Boatright opened a public comment period.

6:05 pm: Chair J. Boatright closed a public comment period.

6:06 pm: Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve the award Allston Brighton CDC, Roxbury Tenants of Harvard, Boston Medical Center, and Boys & Girls Club of Dorchester grants from the Equitable Emissions Investment Fund. Board Member S. Ellis seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (5) voted in favor. The motion carried at 6:06 pm.

Fourth Item: Approval of Meeting Minutes

6:13 pm: The Review Board voted to approve the [September 29 Meeting Minutes](#). Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Board Member R. Stovell seconded the motion. Four (4) Board members voted in favor. One (1) Board member abstained. The motion carried at 6:13 pm.

Fifth Agenda Item: Administrative Updates

6:13 pm: Z. Chin shared the following updates:

The number of submissions and resubmissions of flexibility measure applications.

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

The BERDO team reviewed the agenda for the upcoming Review Board meeting.

The next meeting is scheduled for October 27, 2025.

Meeting Adjournment

6:17 pm: Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Member H. Farooqi seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (5) voted in favor. The motion carried at 6:18 pm.