City of Boston BERDO Review Board
Public Meeting Minutes
Zoom Virtual Meeting
October 26, 2026, at 4:30 pm
View recording here

Board Members in Attendance: Jessica Boatright, Stephen Ellis, Camilo Esquivia-Zapata, Hessann Farooqi, Lori Ferriss, Gail Latimore, and Councilor Brian Worrell.

Board Members not in Attendance: Samira Ahmadi

Staff Present: Hannah Payne, Joy Jackson, Diana Vasquez, Claudia Diezmartínez, PhD, and Dylan Grant.

Others: Approximately five (5) members of the public attended this meeting.

Call Meeting to Order

4:34 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 October 26 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, Camilo Esquivia-Zapata, Hessann Farooqi, Lori Ferriss, and Gail Latimore.

The following Environment Department staff were in attendance: Hannah Payne, Joy Jackson, Diana Vasquez, Claudia Diezmartínez, PhD, and Dylan Grant.

Others: Approximately five (5) 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 Retals LLC's Pathway 1 Building Portfolio.

4:38 pm: City staff presented staff comments.

4:39 pm: Board Q&A Session

- H. Farooqi asked how the capital work in the building affects the tenants.
    - E. Larsen answered that the team is actively assembling building-specific capital investment and decarbonization plans, paying careful attention to the common operational divide between base building systems and multifamily tenant behaviors. Building on past tenant outreach and educational flyers led by Park Property Management Group, the upcoming decarbonization roadmaps will integrate continuous resident education alongside physical infrastructure upgrades.
- H. Farooqi asked if Retals LLC is informing their tenants about BCCE.
    - E. Larsen answered that Retals LLC has conducted feasibility studies on both deploying on-site renewable energy and educating tenants about clean power options, including BCCE. They are evaluating the costs and trade-offs of enrolling the base building electric accounts, while noting that rising electricity rates are making on-site rooftop solar increasingly viable from a capital investment perspective.
- G. Latimore asked if all the apartments are market-rate housing.
    - G. Cuscina confirmed that all the units are market-rate housing.

4:35 pm: Chair J. Boatright moved to approve Retals LLC's Building Portfolio application with standard conditions. Board Member G. Latimore seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (6) voted in favor. The motion carried at 4:44 pm.

Second Agenda Item: Update and Discussion on 2026 BERDO Annual Disclosure & Reporting

4:44 pm: D. Grant presented information and details about 2026 BERDO Annual Disclosure data.

4:47 pm: Councilor Brian Worrell joined the meeting.

4:51 pm: Board Q&A Session

- H. Farooqi asked if a building has an approved Individual Compliance Schedule (ICS) or Hardship Compliance Plan if that is reflected in the building's emission standard.
    - D. Grant explained that under an ICS, a building is exempt from the default square-foot emissions intensity standard and is instead regulated by a custom, absolute emissions cap. In reporting records, the standard

emissions compliance field remains blank, while the dedicated ICS compliance column reflects this target as a fixed total emissions value rather than an intensity metric.

4:52 pm: D. Grant presented a walkthrough of the BERDO Disclosure Map.

4:54 pm: Board Q&A Session

- S. Ellis asked how to intercept the colors of the dots that represent buildings on the map.
    - D. Grant answered that while emissions metrics are inherently interconnected, with high emissions intensity strongly correlating with non-compliance, users looking specifically for non-compliant properties should filter the "Emissions Compliance Status" field to "Action Needed." To manage visual complexity on the dashboard, it is recommended to narrow the view by filtering for specific building use types, compliance statuses, or reporting status before drilling into raw data for customized analysis.
- S. Ellis asked how building portfolios are being displayed on the map.
    - D. Grant answered that visualizing building portfolios on the map presents unique display challenges that the BERDO team is actively refining based on internal feedback. Currently, all BERDO IDs display a colored compliance status indicator, including those in an approved Building Portfolio.
- L. Ferriss asked if the BERDO map's data can be overlaid with other map layers from the City.
    - H. Payne answered that the BERDO team plans to collaborate with the Planning Department to explore integrating compliance and emissions data into citywide mapping tools. A primary technical challenge to resolve is data synchronization. While the current portal connects directly to Touchstone for real-time updates as data changes, external platforms like Analyze Boston host static snapshots. Aligning these differing update frequencies and dataset structures remains a key focus before full inter-agency data integration can occur.

5:04 pm: J. Jackson and H. Payne presented an update on BERDO Reporting and Emissions Compliance.

5:16 pm: Board Q&A Session

- J. Boatright asked how the BERDO team announces the release of the annual Disclosure.
    - H. Payne answered that the map and disclosure updates have been shared via the BERDO newsletter and published on the BERDO website under the disclosure section. This release is a soft launch due to incomplete dataset coverage, noting that a broader, formal communications rollout is planned in several months once a more comprehensive data update is finalized.
- J. Boatright asked how the map will be updated as building owners continue to report.
    - H. Payne answered that while the interactive map dynamically reflects real-time compliance status through its direct connection to Touchstone, the datasets uploaded to Analyze Boston function as point-in-time snapshots. Because building owners can continue submitting information to achieve compliance on an ongoing basis, staff plan to publish an updated data release around December to reflect the reporting cycle better, acknowledging that static files will inherently lag behind live platform updates.
- S. Ellis asked if the Review Board will issue the Notice of Violation or if the Environment Department will do that on behalf of the Review Board.
    - H. Payne explained that under BERDO regulations, formal Notices of Violation must be authorized and issued by the Review Board. In practice, City staff manage the underlying administrative workflow and case documentation, bringing lists of non-compliant properties before the board to formally request authorization before initiating and serving violation notices.
- S. Ellis asked how the BERDO Team will handle the long process of issuing a Notice of Violation to building owners that will overlap with annual reporting.
    - H. Payne acknowledged the operational challenges involved in scaling up violation notices and is developing a streamlined workflow to manage the increased administrative burden. To prevent fragmented tracking across numerous rolling deadlines, the team plans to batch mailings on a set monthly cadence. While this expanded volume of formal notices represents a significant new workstream for the department, staff are optimistic that standardized, recurring schedules will keep the process manageable.

- C. Esquivia-Zapata asked if the fines will continue to accrue indefinitely until the building owner pays them.
    - H. Payne explained that if a building owner persistently ignores notices, refuses to pay accrued fines, and fails to achieve compliance after multiple warnings, the City retains the legal authority to escalate the matter to formal court enforcement. While legal action represents an extreme, last-resort measure that staff aims to avoid, it remains an established enforcement pathway under BERDO regulations and applicable Massachusetts General Law.
- G. Latimore asked what type of buildings have already paid ACPs.
    - J. Jackson answered that most individuals submitting invoice requests are condominium owners, along with a smaller number of large commercial property owners.
- G. Latimore asked if the BERDO team has looked into the rent registration process and if that process can help with enforcement with BERDO.
    - H. Payne answered that, while developing the enforcement framework and operationalizing the workflow, the BERDO team is coordinating with peer departments that handle enforcement and related functions, such as Treasury for fine collection. The team is tracking established municipal processes and plans to adapt best practices and lessons learned from these inter-departmental partners as the enforcement mechanism rolls out.

Third Agenda Item: Discussion and Vote on Extending Flexibility Measure Application Deadline

5:30 pm: H. Payne presented a proposal to extend the Building Portfolios, Individual Compliance Schedules, and Short-Term Hardship Compliance Plan deadline.

5:37 pm: Board Q&A Session

- S. Ellis asked for clarification on whether building owners would be able to use flexibility measures for their 2025 emissions compliance with the deadline extension.
    - H. Payne answered that immediate compliance remains required for 2025 emissions compliance, either by purchasing RECs or submitting ACPs. To maintain fairness for owners who have already complied and keep cycles on

schedule, the BERDO team will not grant retroactive waivers for 2025. This proposal is designed for 2026 emissions compliance.

5:46 pm: Board Member G. Latimore moved to approve extending the deadline to apply for Building Portfolios, Individual Compliance Schedules, Short-Term Hardship Compliance Plans, including a streamlined option, for 2026 emissions to May 1, 2027. Board Member S. Ellis seconded the motion. All board members in attendance (7) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:47 pm.

Fourth Item: Approval of Meeting Minutes.

5:47 pm: The Review Board voted to approve the October 13 Meeting Minutes. Board Member G. Latimore made a motion to approve the meeting minutes. Councilor B. Worrell seconded the motion. Four (4) board members voted in favor. Three (3) board members abstained. The motion carried at 5:48 pm.

Fifth Agenda Item: Administrative Updates

5:49 pm: D. Vasquez shared the following updates:

The BERDO Team has received no new resubmissions for flex measures.

A reminder that the BERDO Team released a new Workbook for Condos, and Co-ops will hold an in-person workshop on November 5.

The deadline to purchase qualifying Massachusetts Class I RECs through the MA Class I REC Connector Program for this year's emissions compliance is October 31.

The annual Review Board Tenants meeting will be held on December 7, 2026.

The next meeting is scheduled for November 9.

Meeting Adjournment

5:51 pm: Chair J. Ellis made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Board Member G. Latimore seconded. All board members in attendance (7) voted in favor. The motion carried at 5:52 pm.