

MEMORANDUM

FEBRUARY 14, 2013

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

FROM: LINDA KOWALCKY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR
MANAGEMENT
GERALD AUTLER, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER/PLANNER

SUBJECT: REQUEST FOR AUTHORIZATION TO ISSUE DETERMINATION
PURSUANT TO ARTICLE 80A-6 FOR SUFFOLK UNIVERSITY 20
SOMERSET STREET PROJECT

SUMMARY: This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA” or “Authority”) authorize the Director to: (1) issue a Determination Waiving Further Review regarding the 20 Somerset Street Academic Building project (“Proposed Project”) pursuant to Section 80A-6 of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”), subject to BRA design review; (2) issue a Certification of Compliance under Article 80 Large Project Review for the Proposed Project; (3) issue a Certification of Consistency in connection with the Proposed Project in the Suffolk University Institutional Master Plan; and (4) take all actions and execute all documents deemed necessary and appropriate relative to the Proposed Project, including, but not limited to, execution of a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, a Development Impact Project Agreements, and a Cooperation Agreement and any and all agreements or amendments deemed necessary and appropriate by the Director in connection with the Proposed Project.

INTRODUCTION

The 20 Somerset Street Academic Project (“Proposed Project”) was one of two Proposed Institutional Projects approved in the Suffolk University Institutional Master Plan (“Suffolk IMP”) by the Authority on June 24, 2008 and by the Boston Zoning Commission on July 23, 2008. The Authority approved the Proposed Project as a Development Impact Project following review under Article 80B of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”) at a public hearing on January 29, 2009 and authorized the Director to issue a Preliminary Adequacy Determination Waiving Further Review in connection with the Draft Project Impact Report.

Following internal review, Suffolk University (“Suffolk” or the “University”) is now preparing to move forward with the Proposed Project but with some changes in the intended use and design. Originally intended as a new home for the New England School of Art and Design, with about 400 seats for general classroom use, the project will instead house academic uses, such as: classrooms, offices, publically accessible gallery and exhibit spaces, cafeteria, and accessory and ancillary uses to the same (the “Revised Project”). It will allow for the complete relocation of all academic classroom seats (approximately 1,200) from the Donahue, Archer, Fenton, and Ridgeway buildings located within the residential area of Beacon Hill. The building will be of the same dimensions and building envelope as described in the DPIR.

PROJECT REVIEW

The Revised Project has been presented and discussed at two meetings of the Suffolk University Task Force. The BRA sponsored public meetings with the Suffolk University Task Force were held December 12, 2012 and February 11, 2013.

RECOMMENDATION

The BRA staff recommends that the Authority authorize the Director to: (1) issue a Determination Waiving Further Review for the Revised Project pursuant to Section 80A-6 of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”), approving the Notice of Project Change dated November 28, 2012, subject to BRA design review; (2) issue a Certification of Compliance with Article 80 Large Project Review for the Revised Project; (3) issue a Certification of Consistency in connection with the Revised Project in the Suffolk IMP; and (4) take all actions and execute all documents deemed necessary and appropriate relative to the Revised Project, including, but not limited to, execution of a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, a Development Impact Project Agreement, and a Cooperation Agreement and any and all agreements or amendments deemed necessary and appropriate by the Director in connection with the Revised Project.

Appropriate votes follow:

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Determination Waiving Further Review for the 20 Somerset Street Academic building (“Proposed Project”) pursuant to Section 80A-6 of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”), approving the Notice of Project Change dated November 28, 2012 (“NPC”), which finds that the NPC (i) adequately describes the potential impacts arising from the Proposed Project and does not result in any increased impacts; and (ii) waives further review of the Proposed Project; subject to continuing design review by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”); and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized, pursuant to the provisions of Section 80B-6 of the Code, to issue a Certification of Compliance for the Proposed Project upon completion of the Article 80B Large Project Review process and when the Director has determined that the Proposed Project complies with (a) the conditions of the Preliminary Adequacy Determination waiving further review, and (b) to the extent applicable, the following provisions of the Code: (i) Section 80B-8: Disclosure of Beneficial Interests; (ii) Section 80D-10: Institutional Master Plan Review: Certification of Consistency; and (iii) Article 28: Boston Civic Design Commission; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That, the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Certification of Consistency pursuant to Article 80D-10 of the Code with respect to the Proposed Project in the Suffolk University Institutional Master Plan (the "Suffolk IMP") when the Director finds that: (i) the Proposed Project (1) is described adequately in the Suffolk IMP; and (2) is consistent with such Suffolk IMP; and (ii) the Suffolk IMP (1) has been approved by the BRA and the Boston Zoning Commission in accordance with applicable provisions of Article 80D of the Code, Institutional Master Plan Review; and (2) is in compliance with the update requirements of Section 80D-7 and the renewal requirements of Section 80D-8; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the BRA hereby authorizes the Director to take all actions and execute all documents deemed necessary and appropriate by the Director in connection with the Proposed Project, including, without limitation, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, a Cooperation Agreement or a Development Impact Project Agreement, and any and all other agreements or amendments deemed necessary and appropriate by the Director in connection with the Proposed Project.