

MEMORANDUM

JUNE 13, 2013

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

FROM: HEATHER CAMPISANO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT
REVIEW
DAVID CARLSON, SENIOR ARCHITECT/URBAN DESIGNER

SUBJECT: 621 EAST FIRST STREET, SOUTH BOSTON

SUMMARY: This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) authorize the Director to: (1) issue a Certification of Approval for the proposed development located at 621 East First Street in South Boston (the “Proposed Project”) in accordance with Article 80E, Small Project Review of the Boston Zoning Code (the “Code”); (2) enter into an Affordable Housing Agreement in connection with the Proposed Project, and take any other action and execute any other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Proposed Project; and (3) in reference to BZC 31589, Gregg Donovan, 621 East First Street, South Boston, for 5 variances to change occupancy from garage to 28 dwelling units with parking, community center and barber shop, and erect a three story addition in the First Street Neighborhood Development Area (“NDA”), the BRA recommends **APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO**: that plans be submitted to the Authority for design review approval.

PROJECT SITE

The project site is located at 621 East First Street in South Boston and contains approximately 19,421 square feet of land area, which is currently improved by an approximately 11,000 square foot concrete structure and bounded by East First Street, Summer Street, East Second Street and M Street (the “Project Site”). The Project Site has been utilized for commercial purposes since at least the 1880s. Former uses at the Project Site include: office, warehousing, lamp manufacturing, an automobile garage, cotton cloth manufacturing and a machine shop. Since the late 1908s, the Project Site has been utilized for storage purposes only.

PROPOSED PROJECT

Gregg Donovan (the “Developer” or “Proponent”) proposes to change the occupancy of the existing concrete structure from garage with parking to twenty-eight (28) dwelling units, a community center and a barber shop. Modification to the existing structure includes a three-story addition, for a total of 43,870 square feet; the existing first floor and basement will be occupied by accessory parking for forty (40) vehicles, including twenty-five (25) spaces on the lower level and fifteen (15) spaces on the first floor. In addition to the parking, the first floor will also include an approximately 13,411 square foot community center, including a gymnasium, locker rooms, teen space, administrative space/reception, daycare and a wellness center. The second, third and fourth floors will include approximately 30,459 square feet of residential uses, including sixteen (16) one-bedrooms, ten (10) two-bedrooms and two (2) three-bedrooms (the “Proposed Project”).

The total development cost for the Proposed Project is approximately \$8,500,000.

DEVELOPMENT TEAM

The development team consists of:

Proponent: Gregg Donovan

Architect: Holly Darzen, LINEA 5, Inc.

Legal Counsel: George Morancy

ARTICLE 80 REVIEW

On October 5, 2011 the Developer filed an Application for Small Project Review in accordance with Article 80E of the Boston Zoning Code (the “Code”). At the request of the BRA, supplemental information has been filed in connection with the Proposed Project.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Four (4) units within the Proposed Project will be created as affordable housing (the “Affordable Units”). The Proposed Project is subject to the Inclusionary Development Policy, dated September 27, 2007 (“IPD”). Prices and income limits will be adjusted according to HUD at the time of the initial sale of the Affordable Units.

The Affordable Housing Agreement must be executed along with, or prior to, the issuance of the Certification of Approval for the Proposed Project. The Proponent must also submit an Affirmative Marketing Plan (the "Plan") for the Affordable Housing Agreement to the Boston Fair Housing Commission and the BRA, which shall be approved prior to the execution of the Affordable Housing Agreement. Preference will be given to applicants who meet the following criteria, weighted in the order below:

- (1) Boston resident; and
- (2) Household size (a minimum of one (1) person per bedroom); and
- (3) First time homebuyer (if applicable).

The Affordable Units will not be marketed prior to the submission and approval of the Plan. A deed restriction will be placed on the Affordable Units to maintain affordability for a total of fifty (50) years, this includes thirty (30) years with a BRA option to extend for an additional period of twenty (20) years. The household income of any subsequent leaser of the Affordable Units during this fifty (50) year period must fall within the applicable income limit for each Affordable Unit.

If the Proposed Project is financed as a rental project, the Affordable Units will be set at seventy percent (70%) of AMI.

ZONING

The Project Site is located in the First Street Neighborhood Development Area ("NDA") within the South Boston Neighborhood District. The Proposed Project will require zoning relief from the Board of Appeal with respect to the following: Off Street Parking: Design; Floor Area Ratio: Excessive; Useable Open Space: Insufficient; Front Yard: Insufficient; Rear Yard: Insufficient.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Proposed Project complies with the requirements set forth in Section 80E of the Code for Small Project Review. Therefore, staff recommends that the Director be authorized to: (1) issue a Certification of Approval for the proposed development of 621 East First Street in South Boston; (2) enter into an Affordable Housing Agreement, and take any other action and execute any other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the proposed 621 East First Street project; and (3) in reference to BZC 31589, Gregg Donovan, 621 East First Street, South Boston, for 5 variances to change occupancy from garage to 28 dwelling units with parking, community center and barber shop, and erect a three story addition in the First Street NDA, the Boston Redevelopment Authority recommends **APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO**: that plans be submitted to the Authority for design review approval.

Appropriate votes follow:

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Certification of Approval, confirming that the proposed project by Gregg Donovan to develop the 621 East First Street project in South Boston (the "Proposed Project") has complied with the requirements of Small Project Review, under Section 80E, of the Boston Zoning Code subject to continuing design review by the Boston Redevelopment Authority; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to enter into an Affordable Housing Agreement, and take any other action and execute any other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the proposed 621 East First Street project in South Boston; and

FURTHER

VOTED: In reference to BZC 31589, Gregg Donovan, 621 East First Street, South Boston, for 5 variances to change occupancy from garage to 28 dwelling units with parking, community center and barber shop, and erect a three story addition in the First Street NDA, the Boston Redevelopment Authority recommends **APPROVAL WITH PROVISIO**: that plans be submitted to the Authority for design review approval.