

**MEMORANDUM**

**DECEMBER 5, 2013**

**TO:** BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND  
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

**FROM:** KAIROS SHEN, CHIEF PLANNER  
PRATAAP PATROSE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR URBAN DESIGN  
JOHN DALZELL, SENIOR ARCHITECT, URBAN PLANNING  
DANA WHITESIDE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNITY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

**SUBJECT:** E+ (Energy Positive) GREEN BUILDING PROGRAM: 156-160  
HIGHLAND STREET IN ROXBURY

---

**SUMMARY:** This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) hereby re-adopts the tentative designation resolution of E+ Solutions, LLC (“Redeveloper”) as the Redeveloper of 156-160 Highland Street in Roxbury for the construction of two (2) buildings totaling four (4) residential condominium units of which one unit will be made affordable to a household earning at or below 80% of the area median income (“Proposed Project”) under the Mayor’s E+ Green Building Demonstration Program, with an expiration date of September 6, 2014.

---

**LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION**

The project site consists of approximately 9,133 square feet of vacant land and is located at 156-160 Highland Street in Roxbury (“Project Site”). The Project Site fronts on Highland Street and is generally east facing. The Project Site rises up from Highland Street and becoming generally flat. It is surrounded by residential uses including one and two family wood frame and brick buildings and brick row house buildings. The Project Site is zoned 3F-4000/2F-5000, as shown on Map 6D of the Boston Zoning Maps in the Roxbury Crossing District.

**BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

**Project Site:**

The Project Site is currently owned by the City of Boston (“City”) and has been identified as one of the three (3) sites under the Mayor’s E+ (Energy Positive) Green Building Demonstration Program (“E+ GB Program”) for future housing development. The City of Boston Public Facilities Commission (“PFC”) has voted to convey to the

Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) the three (3) vacant sites for redevelopment under the E+ Program. The three (3) selected sites include the Project Site, 226-232 Highland Street in Roxbury, and 64 Catherine Street in Jamaica Plain (the “E+ GB SITES”).

### **E+ Green Building Program:**

The E+ GB Program, directed by the City’s Department of Neighborhood Development (“DND”), Office of Environment & Energy Services, and the BRA, is purposed to advance industry practice and public awareness of very energy efficient deep green buildings and construct prototypes that can serve as models for future practice.

This initiative is in part supported by NSTAR Electric and Gas, US Green Building Council, National Grid, Massachusetts USGBC Chapter, and the Boston Society of Architects. An award for the best completed E+ GB Project will be provided after the construction completion.

Net Energy Positive buildings require very little energy for day to day operation and, on an annual basis, exceed those needs with onsite renewable energy sources. They are super insulated to reduce heating and cooling needs and use high efficiency equipment, lighting and appliances to minimize energy needs. Photo-voltaic panels generate electricity, solar thermal panels provide heated water and building energy management systems minimize loads and balance use. The buildings are grid connected drawing electricity when needed and supplying electricity when generating a surplus.

Green Buildings minimize the adverse social, environmental, and economical impacts of building construction and operation over the life of the building. They produce healthy indoor environments. Rapidly renewable, sustainably harvested and recycled building materials take less from the earth, low impact construction practices reduce site and area pollution, and minimal water use, clean fuel and renewable energy preserve natural resources. Finally, efficient locations and buildings reduce occupant costs, utilize existing infrastructure and increase local employment. Finally, walkable neighborhood locations with access to nearby public transit, area goods, community services, open spaces, and places to work reduce vehicle use.

### **PROPOSED PROJECT**

#### **Development Team:**

The development team consists of the following: E+ Solutions, LLC as the Redeveloper (“Redeveloper”); Ben Nickerson of Nickerson Design Services as the architect; Lauren Baumann of New Ecology, Inc. as the LEED consultant; Matt Rott and Peter Hubbe of CSG as the Energy Star Provider; Jeff Richards of Transformations, Inc. as Landscape

Architect; Bill McGowan of Keller Williams Realty, Inc as the Real Estate Broker. Architectural Renderings were provided by Bill Chow of Boston Architectural College.

Jonathan Kantar and R. Carter Scott are the principals of E+ Solutions, LLC. Jonathan Kantar is the principal of Sage Builders LLP and R. Carter Scott is the principal of Transformations, Inc. Both are builders and have extensive experience in the innovations and vision and are pragmatists in the competitively priced, super energy efficient, replicable homes in the Boston area. Sage Builders LLC is an award winning high-end residential design and building company specializing in sustainable, innovative solutions for renovations and additions. Transformations Inc. has demonstrated its leadership by building sustainable, price-competitive near net-zero and better homes. Having completed more than 50 installations since 2005, Transformations, Inc. is a leader in residential photo-voltaic systems in Massachusetts.

**Project Description:**

The proposed redevelopment includes two (2) buildings that are 2 ½ stories high. The Greek Revival design includes side-by-side duplex units; each is a three (3) bedroom, 2 ½ bath unit totaling 2,780 square feet of living space. The Carriage House design includes two stacked units; each is a two-bedroom, one bath unit. The upper unit is about 901 square feet while the lower unit is about 1,102 square feet. Each unit has one reserved parking space and all include exterior decks and/or patios, and separate front and rear entrances. The site includes storm water management and indigenous landscaping (the “Proposed Project”).

**Affordable Housing**

Unit no. 101 located in the Greek Revival duplex building will be an affordable unit and will be sold to a household earning less than or equal to 80% of the Area Median Income (“AMI”). The 2012 current BRA Inclusionary Development Policy Sales Price at or below 80% AMI for a three bedroom unit is \$226,100.

The Redeveloper will enter into an affordable housing covenant with the BRA ensuring that the Affordable Unit will be priced for households earning at or below 80% of the AMI. The affordable unit price will be adjusted per United States Department of Housing and Urban Development (“H.U.D.”) increase in Boston AMI. A deed restriction will be placed on the Affordable Unit to maintain affordability for a total of fifty (50) years (this includes thirty (30) years with the BRA option to extend for an additional period of twenty (20) years).

### **Financing:**

The total development costs have been estimated at \$1,078,000.00. The acquisition and construction financing are coming from Redeveloper's equity, a lending institution, BRA's IDP fund and a grant from the BRA. The Redeveloper will pay to the BRA 4% of the gross sale price of each of market rate unit and upon future resale of the market rate units, 2% of the gross sale price will be paid to the BRA. The BRA funds will be provided to the Redeveloper upon construction loan closing, execution of Land Disposition Agreement and Deed, and upon submission of requisitions for completed construction work.

### **Development Schedule:**

The construction of the Proposed Project is expected to commence in the spring and be completed within nine (9) months.

### **PROCESS**

On November 4, 2010, the City, acting by and through its PFC, voted to convey to the BRA in accordance with the provisions of Chapter 642 of the Acts of 1966, as amended, the E+ GB Sites in connection with their redevelopment.

On December 14, 2010, the following actions were approved by the BRA: (i) Authorization to establish a "demonstration project" under Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 121B, Section 46(f) for the E-Sites to redevelop the E+ Proposed Project; (ii) adoption of a "Demonstration Project Plan" for the E+ Proposed Project which grants the BRA authorization to acquire property for the E+ Proposed Project; (iii) that the Secretary be authorized to issue a Request for Proposals ("RFP") for the E+ Proposed Project for the design and redevelopment of the E-Sites; and (iv) authorization to accept a deed from the City and execute any other documents necessary and appropriate for the E-Proposed Project.

On March 14, 2011, the BRA issued the RFP seeking redevelopment teams that could demonstrate an integrated approach to green residential design and construction and produce replicable high performance residential green building prototypes. The RFP sought the very best design, engineering and construction professionals to propose new and innovative ideas and best practices to advance the industry.

On May 31, 2011, five (5) proposals were submitted in response to the RFP for the redevelopment of the Project Site. The proposals were evaluated with regard to green building outcomes, modeled energy performance, urban design, development team expertise and capacity and development feasibility based on the award criteria as outlined in the RFP.

On September 14, 2011, at the Mayor's E+ Green Building Exhibit Reception at the McCormick Gallery, located at 320 Newbury Street, Boston, the development teams were selected. The sustainability and green building experts Nadav Mali, President BuildingGreen, and Stefan Behnisch, Behnisch Architekten assisted the BRA and DND in selecting the development teams and Design Innovation Awardees. The E+ Solutions, LLC was selected as the redeveloper of the Project Site.

On October 24, 2011, E+ Solutions, LLC and its development team presented their proposals to the Highland Park PRC for review and comments.

On December 15, 2011, the BRA approved the following items: (i) adopted the Tentative Designation Resolution of E+ Solutions, LLC (the "Tentative Designation") as the Redeveloper of 156 Highland Street ("Project Site") in Roxbury with an expiration date June 15, 2012; (ii) authorized the Director to enter into a Grant Agreement and to execute any and all documents necessary in connection with the Grant Agreement with the Redeveloper to provide a grant in the amount up to \$60,000 from the BRA's Inclusionary Development Fund to assist with the creation of the one affordable unit located on the Project Site; and (iii) authorized the Director to enter into a grant agreement with the Redeveloper in the amount of \$60,000 from the BRA to assist with the redevelopment of the four (4) residential units in the Project Site.

On March 12, 2012, the BRA, DND and the Highland Park Project Review Committee ("PRC") sponsored a public meeting to allow the community an opportunity to comment on the program and design of the Proposed Project. The meeting was held at the Hawthorn Youth Community Center at 9 Fulda Street, Roxbury. In a letter dated March 13, 2012 from the PRC, the PRC registered its supports for the Proposed Project.

On March 27, 2012, the Zoning Board of Appeals voted to approve the necessary variances for the Proposed Project, subject to continuing design review.

On April 23, 2012, the BRA, DND and the PRC sponsored a second public meeting to provide an update on the Proposed Project and to allow the community further opportunity to comment on the program and design of the Proposed Project. The meeting was held at the Hawthorn Youth Community Center at 9 Fulda Street, Roxbury.

On June 12, 2012, the BRA voted to extend the time period of the Tentative Designation for a period of sixty (60) days or until August 15, 2012 to allow time for the Redeveloper of the Project Site to meet all the conditions set forth in the Tentative Designation for the construction of the Proposed Project.

On August 9, 2012, the BRA voted to extend the Tentative Designation of the Redeveloper for a period of sixty (60) days or until October 7, 2012 to allow time for the

Redeveloper of the project site to work with the estate of abutting land owner to resolve issues associated with an antiquated shared access easement. On October 7, 2012, the Tentative Designation, as extended, expired in accordance with its terms.

### **DESIGNATION STATUS**

In a letter dated November 6, 2013, the Redeveloper requested that the BRA re-adopt the tentative designation resolution, subject to certain terms and conditions with an expiration date of September 6, 2014 to allow time to resolve a title issue relative to a shared passageway on the Project Site which has been complicated by the death of the of the abutting parcel owner and negotiations with the family members of the estate.

Since the Tentative Designation expired, the Redeveloper has completed the engineering and design development plans and is working on the final construction budget to be finalized by the lending institution. The Proposed Project has received approval from the Zoning Board of Appeal, subject to design approval. The Redeveloper is requesting additional time to continue to work on a resolution of the passageway title that has been complicated by the death of the abutting parcel owner.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

BRA staff is of the opinion that re-adoption of the Tentative Resolution is appropriate and that the Redeveloper will be able to complete satisfactorily all of the conditions set forth in the Tentative Designation by September 6, 2014. It is, therefore, recommended that BRA re-adopts the tentative designation resolution of the Redeveloper as the Redeveloper of the Project Site for a period of nine (9) months or until September 6, 2014 to meet the requirements set forth in the Tentative Designation for the Proposed Project.

Appropriate votes follow:

**VOTED:** That the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) hereby adopts the resolution entitled “Resolution of the Boston Redevelopment Authority Re: Tentative Designation of E+ Solutions, LLC as redeveloper (“Redeveloper”) of 156-160 Highland Street (“Project Site”) in Roxbury; and

### **FURTHER**

**VOTED:** That the tentative designation of E+ Solution as Redeveloper of the Project Site, shall automatically be rescinded without prejudice and without further action by the BRA Board if final designation has not been granted by September 6, 2014.