

MEMORANDUM

DECEMBER 5, 2013

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

FROM: HEATHER CAMPISANO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT
REVIEW
DAVID CARLSON, URBAN DESIGN
JOHN FITZGERALD, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

SUBJECT: HOTEL COMMONWEALTH, FENWAY

SUMMARY: This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) authorize the Director to: (1) issue a Scoping Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Boston Zoning Code (the “Code”) for the Hotel Commonwealth project (the “Proposed Project”); (2) issue a Certification of Compliance under Section 80B-6 of the Code for the Proposed Project upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process; and (3) execute and deliver a Cooperation Agreement, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and any and all other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary.

PROJECT SITE

The Proposed Project is an approximately half-acre parcel of land located at the corner of Kenmore Street and Newbury Street, facing the Massachusetts Turnpike. It is addressed 552-628 Newbury Street (also known as 565 Newbury Street). The Project Site is currently developed as a surface parking lot serving the Hotel Commonwealth at 500 Commonwealth Avenue (also known as 498 - 528 Commonwealth Avenue). The Project Site is directly bounded by Kenmore Street to the east; Newbury Street and the Massachusetts Turnpike to the south; a surface parking lot for 601 Newbury Street, an Art Institute of Boston property to the west; and Alley 939 and Hotel Commonwealth to the north.

Kenmore Hotel, LLC (the “Proponent”) is the developer of the Project Site pursuant to a 75 year long term Ground Lease dated December 20, 2012 and expiring December 19, 2087.

PROPOSED PROJECT

The Proposed Project includes the construction of one seven-story, approximately 65-foot tall building containing approximately 133,400 gross square feet including hotel guest rooms, event spaces, and multi-level parking. The Project will add 94 new guest rooms totaling approximately 53,000 square feet to the Hotel Commonwealth along with 24,000 square feet of function space. The three levels of parking on the Project's lower floors (one below grade, one at grade, and one above grade) will provide space for 216 vehicles.

The development team consists of the Proponent; ML Strategies as Development Consultant; Mintz, Levin, Cohn, Ferris, Glovsky and Popeo, P.C. as Legal Counsel; Group One Partners, Inc. as Executive Architect; Mortenson Development as Developer; Epsilon Associates, Inc. as Permitting Consultant; Nitsch Engineering as Civil Engineer, Transportation and Parking Consultant; Haley & Aldrich as Geotechnical Consultant; Vanderweil Engineers as MEP Engineer; and Columbia Construction as Construction Manager.

ARTICLE 80 REVIEW

On August 21, 2013, the Proponent filed a Letter of Intent in accordance with the BRA's policy on the provision of mitigation by development projects in Boston.

Eight individuals were appointed to the IAG and were invited to participate in the scoping session held on October 24, 2013. The IAG members were appointed through the nominations made by elected officials for the neighborhood, the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services, and BRA Staff.

The Proponent filed a Project Notification Form ("PNF") on October 8, 2013 which initiated a 30-day public comment period with a closing date of November 8, 2013, as mutually extended to November 15, 2013.

Pursuant to Section 80B-5.3 of the Code, a scoping session was held on October 24, 2013, with the City's public agencies during which the Proposed Project was reviewed and discussed. The Notice and the PNF were sent to the City's public agencies pursuant to Section 80A-2 of the Code. The BRA together with the Proponent conducted a public meeting at the Hotel Commonwealth in the Fenway on October 29, 2013, for the community's review and comments.

ZONING

The Site is governed by Article 27 of the Boston Zoning Code and falls within the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District. The proponent will seek dimensional relief concerning certain provisions of the Code.

PUBLIC BENEFITS

- Employment: Creates approximately 100 new construction jobs and 25 new permanent jobs to support the operations of the new hotel facility;
- Generate approximately \$1,030,000 in annual property taxes for the City of Boston; and
- Develop an underutilized parcel and add much need hotel rooms to a growing tourist destination area.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Approvals have been requested of the BRA pursuant to Article 80, Section 80B of the Code for the issuance of a Scoping Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Article 80, Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Code, and for the issuance of a Certification of Compliance under Section 80B-6 upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process. In accordance with Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Code, the Authority may issue a Scoping Determination Waiving Further Review if the PNF, together with any additional material and comments received by the BRA prior to the issuance of the Scoping Determination, adequately describe the impacts of the Proposed Project and offer appropriate mitigation of such impacts.

BRA staff believes that the PNF, project design changes, and accompanying mitigation commitments meet the criteria for the issuance of a Scoping Determination Waiving Further Review. It is therefore recommended that the BRA approve the Proposed Project and authorize the Director to: (1) issue a Scoping Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Article 80, Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Code; (2) issue a Certification of Compliance under Section 80B-6 upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process; and (3) execute and deliver a Cooperation Agreement, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and any and all other documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary.

Appropriate votes follow:

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Scoping Determination under Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code"), which (i) finds that the Project Notification Form ("PNF") adequately describes the potential impacts arising from the Hotel

Commonwealth project (the “Proposed Project”) and provides sufficient mitigation measures to minimize these impacts, and (ii) waives further review of the Proposed Project under subsections 4 and 5 of Section 80B-5 of the Code, subject to continuing design review by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”); and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue Certification of Compliance, pursuant to Section 80B-6 of the Code, for the Proposed Project, upon the successful completion of the Boston Zoning Code’s Article 80 process for the Proposed Project, subject to continuing design review by the BRA; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to execute a Cooperation Agreement, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and any and all other agreements and documents which the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Proposed Project, all upon terms and conditions determined to be in the best interests of the BRA.