

## MassDOT Air Rights Parcels 12-15 CAC Questions for Proponents

Samuels & Associates / Weiner Ventures team -- answers in bold  
Proponents for Parcels 12, 14, and 15  
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### Questions for All Proponents

1. What stage are you at in the development process?
  - a. Are there any remaining studies, scenario analyses, etc. that you need to undertake before moving forward?

**No, not for this designation process. In conjunction with being designated and the Article 80 process, we would perform additional studies.**

- b. Where does your proposal stand in terms of financing?

**Upon designation, we would move forward with project financing with third parties. Until designation, it is premature to do so. Our team, as part of our work to date, has internally performed detailed financial analysis which includes market-rate assumptions. The market is especially hospitable to financing of residential and retail specifically.**

- c. If you successfully pass through all development review requirements, are you confident that you will be able to break ground soon after?

**Yes, we are.**

- d. Does your project involve a phasing plan for development? If so, please describe.

**No, it does not.**

2. How has your proposal from 2008 been adapted to reflect updates in finances, proposed uses, design, or other specifications?

**Our proposal has been scaled down in height, massing, and square footage. The design has evolved and improved both aesthetically and functionally. The P14-15 portion of the project is now a mixed-use project of retail, hotel, and residential, whereas it was previously retail, office, and residential.**

3. What, if any, engineering study or other analysis did you undertake to determine the costs associated with and feasibility of air rights development for this particular parcel?

**Among other professionals, we have worked closely with our structural engineering firm (McNamara Salvia), our general contractor (Suffolk Construction), and our traffic engineer (Vanasse Hangen Brustlin). Our team is focused on building on as much terra firma as we can, and minimizing deck, ventilation, and construction issues, to keep the projects viable.**

4. Could you outline where your proposal encompasses air rights and where it utilizes terra firma? What percentage of the total project is over terra firma versus air rights? If applicable, please indicate how the breakdown varies by phase of development.

**The Parcel 15 development is approximately 75% on terra firma.**

**The Parcel 12 development is approximately 56% on terra firma.**

**The P15 development includes the 11,000 sf terra firma parcel that we own outright. We incorporate approximately 5,000 sf of the 12,000 sf comprising P15. Further, we span Cambria Street, maintaining today's unimpeded service access into and out of the Hynes Convention Center.**

**The P12 development includes approximately 36,000 sf of P12's 78,000 sf. Our entire development is on P12. P12 is not entirely "air" today; approximately 20,000 sf of P12 is terra firma, all of which we incorporate into our development, while adding 16,000 sf of decking.**

5. Is there a specific height or density you have determined that your project must reach in order to make air rights development financially feasible?

**No, there is not a specific height. For any project, including air rights development projects that carry certain substantial cost premiums versus non-air rights development projects, financial feasibility is a function of components that include but are not limited to height and density.**

6. Does your project cover the entire air rights parcel? If no, what portion of the turnpike remains exposed and where?

**We do not cover the entirety of any air rights parcels. On Parcel 12, the exposed area is essentially the western-most portion of the parcel that spans across the entire Turnpike. For Parcel 15, the uncovered area is essentially the 5K square-foot southeastern sliver running parallel to the Turnpike. The drawings / renderings that are included in our initial presentation to the CAC provide further specificity.**

7. In what ways, if at all, does your development proposal require control of parcels other

than the designated air rights parcels? Please identify with specificity any additional parcels and/or rights incorporated into your development proposal and discuss what agreements are in place to secure those parcels/rights.

**Fortunately, we do not require control of any parcels other than the designated air rights parcels. Further, we are the only developer competing for designation that owns any terra firma parcel that would be part of any development proposed. The parcel we own comprises a significant portion of our P15 development's footprint.**

8. How does your proposal accommodate/react to other developments planned in the area?

**We have paid careful attention to accommodating and reacting to what exists today and what may exist in the future. More specifically, among those items to which we have paid particular attention are the projects outlined in the BRA's "Massachusetts Avenue Corridor Development Projects" document as well as *A Civic Vision for Turnpike Air Rights* and its principles and guidelines.**

**We are particularly focused on providing a streetwall along Boylston Street that respects the scale of this portion of Boylston Street, including a significant setback for the tower element of the P15 development proposal.**

9. Have you undertaken any pedestrian, traffic, public transit, environmental or other impact studies for this project?

**No, not for this designation process. In conjunction with being designated and the Article 80 process, we would perform additional studies.**

- a. Please outline the findings, any recommendations, and proposed mitigation of that work, specifically noting how your project will ensure accessibility for all users.

**We will ensure such accessibility.**

- b. How does your proposal accommodate multi-modal transportation options?

**Our proposal envisions and incorporates capability to provide its own or leverage existing options, including pedestrian, bicycle, public, and vehicular.**

10. How does your project enhance/reconfigure the public realm, in particular the pedestrian environment?

**Our projects enhance/reconfigure the public realm, including the pedestrian environment, because we would:**

- extend one of the City's most vibrant pedestrian experiences, by filling holes overlooking the highway and train tracks with buildings and by extending the street wall with continuous retail at the ground level
- maintain visual continuity along the south side of Boylston Street, and complement the buildings on the north side, by creating a podium matching the cornice heights of the Hynes and Berklee corners
- avoid a "canyon" effect along Boylston and minimize shading on the street and beyond, by orienting the tallest section of our proposed P15 building along a North-South axis and setting it back from the face of the street wall
- provide a safer pedestrian experience by adding hotel and residential units, which we anticipate, along with the street-level retail, will remain lit and active after hours.

- a. What new connections are established within and between the Back Bay and Fenway neighborhoods?

**The Fenway District begins at the southwest quadrant of the intersection of Massachusetts Avenue and Boylston Street.**

**Our proposed projects on Parcel 15 and especially on Parcel 12 will replace safety barriers and empty lots with new, retail-lined street walls along the south side of Boylston Street east of the Mass Ave intersection, along the entire west side of the Mass Ave bridge over the highway, and along the north side of Boylston Street, west of the intersection. This will seamlessly extend and strengthen the rich and lively pedestrian experience of the Back Bay neighborhood into the Fenway neighborhood.**

11. Does your proposal intend to seek out any public subsidies? More so, what size and type of subsidy do you intend to pursue? Please discuss the rationale.

**We have no current plans to do so.**

### **Questions for Parcels 12 and 13 Proponents**

1. In what way does your proposal incorporate the Hynes Convention Center Green Line station and address the issue of accessibility for all users? Have you met with the MBTA to discuss this?

**Our proposal for Parcel 12 is at a preliminary stage with considerable planning and engineering work yet to come. We are fully aware of the growing importance of the Hynes Convention Center Green line Station as an intermodal connector.**

**If designated, we expect to follow the models of numerous T stations that are successfully accommodated in downtown environments. More specifically, we will work closely with MBTA planners and related agencies to integrate in our development a covered bus stop and possibly an elevator link to the platform**

below for enhanced accessibility.

**Questions for Parcel 15 Proponents**

1. How important is the inclusion of Parcel 14 to your proposal?

**Maintaining the current unimpeded access to the Hynes Convention Center's service entrance / loading area down Cambria Street is critical to the functioning of the Hynes. With minor, if any, modifications to the Parcel 14 area, that access can be maintained and accommodated in our project design. Anything that interferes with the geometry necessary to accommodate the livery trucks servicing the Hynes would potentially affect the development and feasibility of our project.**

2. Have you worked with the Berklee College of Music to examine how your proposal would coexist with the goals and objectives stated in their Institutional Master Plan?

**We have had multiple conversations and meetings with Berklee prior to and upon our acquisition / ownership of the terra firma parcel that is incorporated into our P15 development. We have also reviewed the school's IMP/PNF. Our respective goals and objectives can certainly co-exist.**

3. Have you worked with the MCCA to ensure your proposed development does not have an adverse impact on operations at the Hynes Convention Center?

**We have met with the MCCA and our development does not impede their current service entrance / loading area on Cambria Street.**

4. What improvements to the pedestrian environment does your proposed development envision for the Dalton and Boylston Street intersections specifically?

**We believe this is an important corner and if the so-called "Pru parcel" were to become available, we could more effectively address potential improvements to what is already a signaled intersection.**

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