



AYANNA PRESSLEY
BOSTON CITY COUNCILOR
AT-LARGE

July 13, 2015

Katelyn Sullivan
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

As an At-Large Boston City Councilor, I am writing to ask that the BRA Board defer any action on the Fisher College Institutional Master Plan until a Good Neighbor Agreement can be reached between the residents of the Back Bay and Fisher College.

Numerous residents have contacted my office over the last two years to highlight a variety of quality of life concerns within the Back Bay residential neighborhood. These concerns need to be addressed prior to any vote on whether Fisher College should be able to expand their footprint within the neighborhood. I've met with the leadership at Fisher College and support their educational mission. As such, I believe that both the residents and Fisher College are important components of the Back Bay neighborhood.

I am urging both Fisher College and the Neighborhood Association of Back Bay (NABB) to continue with the progress they have made in 2015 to outline and begin to address the ongoing quality of life concerns in a Good Neighbor Agreement. I call on both parties to meet in good faith – with the City continuing to act as an arbitrator – in order to complete a Good Neighbor Agreement before the start of Fisher College's Fall Semester on Tuesday, September 8, 2015. Additionally, a clear and on-going line of communication needs to be established amongst the Neighborhood Association of Back Bay, Fisher College, and the City of Boston in order to ameliorate any future concerns.

Sincerely,

Ayanna Pressley
At-Large Boston City Councilor



MICHAEL F. FLAHERTY
BOSTON CITY COUNCIL AT-LARGE

July 13, 2015

Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

It has been brought to my attention that Fisher College, due to its intention to expand in the Back Bay, has submitted an Institutional Master Plan for approval. I have heard from Back Bay residents who have expressed their concerns on quality of life issues that have been unresolved and even heightened over a significant period of time. The agreements that have come from discussions taken place in the "Good Neighbor Committee" – which is composed of City of Boston officials, Back Bay residents and Fisher College representatives – have not been sufficiently upheld. Therefore, I respectfully request the Boston Redevelopment Authority to postpone the approval of Fisher College's Institutional Master Plan.

There are colleges and universities throughout our city that have done an exemplary job in being a good neighbor, collaborating with residents in surrounding communities on their respective developments. Fisher College, on the other hand, has failed to resolve ongoing issues directly affecting such a close residential area. The institution has caused an array of problems, ranging from traffic and accessibility to trash disposal and sanitation issues. The aforementioned matters produce a negative image for Fisher College and have created a nuisance for the Back Bay residents. Before Fisher College acts on their tentative plans to expand, I urge the school to first address and resolve the existing problems. Until doing so, I will have strong reservations about Fisher College's proposal and will continue to stand with the Back Bay residents.

Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions or concerns.

Regards,


Michael F. Flaherty



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
STATE HOUSE, BOSTON 02133-1054

JAY D. LIVINGSTONE
STATE REPRESENTATIVE

8TH SUFFOLK DISTRICT

July 13, 2015

Katelyn Sullivan
Ms. Katelyn Sullivan
Boston Redevelopment Authority
Boston City Hall, 9th floor
One City Hall Place, Boston MA 02201

Re: *Fisher College Institutional Master Plan*

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

I am opposed to Fisher College's Institutional Master Plan. Fisher College first filed for its IMP in 2013. Since that time, I have worked with Fisher and the neighbors to find common ground to co-exist. I am disappointed at the lack of progress Fisher has made to date to address the many quality of life problems it creates for the neighborhood. Until it improves significantly, it should not receive any approval to expand its physical presence (including its occupancy of 10-11 Arlington Street) or increase the number of students it has on the block for its programs.

Since January 2015, the Mayor's Office has convened regular meetings between Fisher College and a working group of neighbors to try to resolve the persistent quality of life complaints often raised against Fisher, such as parking issues, particularly on Back Street, deliver and trash truck protocols, and student behavior issues, especially students littering the streets with cigarette butts. These meetings are continuing. Fisher's IMP process should be put on hold until a good neighbor agreement is finalized with the neighbors and Fisher lessens its impacts with its current footprint and student body size, which notably is in decline.

Fisher throughout this process too often has ignored the complaints raised and attacked the messengers. Most recently, Fisher officials have claimed that critics of the school's IMP – neighbors and longstanding members of the community – only object because of racist or class-based beliefs. Fisher has yet to apologize for its outlandish claims, which have no basis. Such actions only serve to further undermine its relationship with its neighbors.

As Fisher officials often point out, it has the right to remain in its current buildings. This is true. It does not, however, have any right to expand its presence by occupying new buildings, adding dormitory space to existing buildings, or adding a roof deck. It should not receive any such

Committees:

Housing

Community Development and Small Business
State Administration and Regulatory Oversight
Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture

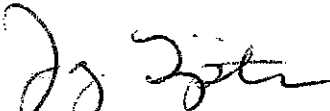
STATE HOUSE, ROOM 136

TEL. (617) 722-2396

Jay.Livingstone@MAhouse.gov

approvals until it significantly lessens its negative impact on its neighbors.

Best wishes,



Jay Livingstone



Boston City Council
Stephen J. Murphy
Councillor At-Large

July 13, 2015

Katelyn Sullivan
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

Despite months of negotiations and “good neighbor committee” discussions there still is a disconnect and unwillingness on the part of Fisher College to compromise and reach an appropriate resolution with its Back Bay neighbors. I urge the Boston Redevelopment Authority to reject Fisher College’s Institutional Master Plan (IMP) until the below concerns are addressed and alternatives to expansion in residential Back Bay are thoroughly examined.

Quality of life and safety for residents remain at the forefront of my concern. Fisher has failed to address smoking, noise, trash management, traffic and other disruptive student behaviors. These are typical problems when living in close proximity to college students; however Fisher has done little to mitigate these problems. A 50% expansion of the student body, as proposed in the IMP, would only exacerbate the existing problems. Residents have documented, in depth, many outstanding issues in letters and public comments during the IMP review process- these must also be addressed prior to Fisher’s IMP moving forward.

I, in addition to several of my colleagues, have strong reservations about Fisher College’s expansion within a residential neighborhood. I urge the BRA to encourage Fisher to seek a more appropriate, less residential zone of the neighborhood and city for expanding the school.

I urge the BRA to reject the Fisher College IMP at this time and until Fisher demonstrates a willingness to adequately address the innumerable concerns that its neighbors have respectfully presented. Fisher needs to focus on becoming an engaged neighbor before considering a possibility of expansion.

Sincerely,


Stephen J. Murphy



JOSH ZAKIM
BOSTON CITY COUNCILOR
DISTRICT 8

July 13, 2015

Katelyn Sullivan
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

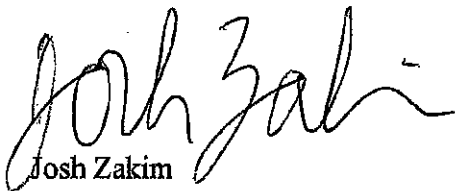
Since my first days as the Back Bay's City Councilor, both the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay and many individual residents have come to me with serious concerns about Fisher College's (Fisher) proposed expansion in the neighborhood. We have discussed a range of issues, from traffic, to student conduct, to zoning. Despite months of negotiations and "good neighbor committee" discussions, these issues remain unresolved - more disappointingly, there has been an unwillingness on the part of Fisher to compromise and reach an appropriate resolution with its Back Bay neighbors. Accordingly, I urge the Boston Redevelopment Authority to reject Fisher's Institutional Master Plan (IMP) until the below concerns are addressed and alternatives to expansion in residential Back Bay are thoroughly examined.

Quality of life and safety for residents remain at the forefront of my concern. Fisher has failed to address smoking, noise, trash management, traffic, and other disruptive student behaviors. All are typical problems when college students live in close proximity to residential neighbors, but Fisher has done little to mitigate these problems. For example, Fisher has regularly refused to enforce its non-smoking policy, while effective enforcement of such policies is commonplace at other colleges and universities throughout the city. Even more concerning is Fisher's continued use of its Back Street entrance as a loading dock for deliveries. Not only does the use of this area restrict emergency vehicle access on Back Street, but it also blocks a mode of egress from the building. This endangers Fisher's students and also Back Bay residents who may require emergency assistance. Such a practice is negligent on the part of Fisher's administration and symptomatic of its cynical attitude towards the neighborhood of which it is a part. Unfortunately, these are but two of the many examples of safety and quality of life issues that have been brought to the attention of my office, as well as Fisher's administration. Residents have documented, in depth, many other outstanding issues in letters and public comments during the IMP review process - these must also be addressed prior to Fisher's IMP moving forward.

I have strong reservations about Fisher College's expansion within a residential neighborhood. I urge the BRA to encourage Fisher to seek out more appropriate, less residential zones of the neighborhood and city for growing the school. Fisher has had enough trouble being a good neighbor with its current student population - a 50% expansion of the student body, as proposed in the IMP, would only exacerbate the existing problems. For years Fisher's administration has failed to engage effectively with its neighbors - those most directly impacted by its daily activities. When an institution is present in a residential neighborhood, it is crucial for the lines of communication to be open, honest, and productive to ensure the best experience for students and residents. In addition to Fisher having minimal neighborhood engagement, Back Bay residents have recently faced outright hostility from Fisher representatives in the form of egregiously false claims of discrimination and racism. To my knowledge, Fisher has yet to issue a public apology and little has been done to re-establish a collaborative rapport.

I respect Fisher's right to stay in the Back Bay. Nevertheless, Fisher's approach to achieving this goal is backwards. Instead of treating the neighborhood in which it resides as a partner and stakeholder, it has communicated and interacted with the residential Back Bay as though it were the enemy. Again, I urge the BRA to reject the Fisher College IMP at this time and until Fisher demonstrates a willingness to adequately address the myriad concerns that its neighbors have respectfully presented. Fisher needs to focus on becoming a good neighbor at its current size before it considers the possibility of expansion.

Sincerely,



Josh Zakim

Cc: Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services
Ayanna Pressley - City Councilor At-Large
Michael Flaherty - City Councilor At-Large
Michelle Wu - City Councilor At-Large
Stephen Murphy - City Councilor At-Large
Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay



MICHELLE WU
BOSTON CITY COUNCIL

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan
Boston Redevelopment Authority
Boston City Hall, Ninth Floor
One City Hall Square

July 10, 2015

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

I am writing you regarding the Fisher College Institutional Master Plan. Though I am an advocate for higher learning and education, I have to object to Fisher College's plan and resent statements made by the college to long standing members of the community.

Many neighbors have contacted my office and have expressed their concerns with the plan. It is the sentiment of the community that this plan will be detrimental to the area. In addition to the increase in population density the project will escalate traffic not only during construction but throughout the developments' existence as delivery and garbage collecting trucks will have to frequently come around as well as noise complaints from students.

These concerns brought by the community are focused on the impact of their quality of life and are not directed nor based on someone's race, gender, or ethnicity. The people of Back Bay care for their community and are simply exercising their right of speech to advocate for their neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Michelle Wu
Boston City Councilor
At Large

July 9, 2015

Katelyn Sullivan
Boston Redevelopment Authority
City Hall
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

We are writing to you as members of the Task Force established as part of the process for the filing of an institutional master plan (IMP) by Fisher College in Back Bay. The role of the Task Force is to be an advisory body to both the institution (Fisher College) and the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA).

Over the past two years we have spent a significant amount of time observing the public process required for Fisher College to present its plan to expand in Back Bay. This included public meetings scattered throughout this time frame as well as Fisher's efforts to initiate a positive relationship with the neighborhood affected by their plan.


Fisher's first public presentation two years ago was met with virtually unanimous public disapproval. After having two years to modify it, Fisher has still not found any public constituency for the expansion as presented. Of greater concern is the neighborhood's deepening concern about Fisher that has developed during this period of time.

Consequently, we offer the following recommendations:

*Fisher either withdraws its current IMP and starts over again to develop an IMP by working with the neighborhood to create a constituency for its expansion.

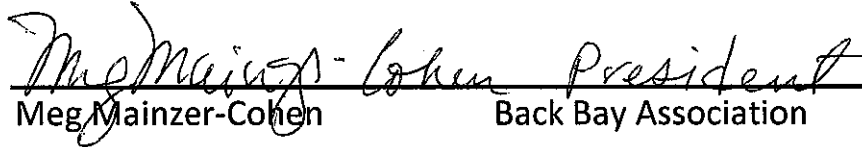
*Or Fisher suspends its IMP for 1-2 years with the goal of making the status quo work so well in the neighborhood that the community is encouraged to move forward with the college to consider a revised IMP.

Whatever the next step for this IMP, the development of a partnership between the neighborhood and Fisher based on trust should be fundamental to its acceptability.



Sam Duncan

Gibson Museum



Meg Mainzer-Cohen

Back Bay Association




Tani Marinovich

Esplanade Association



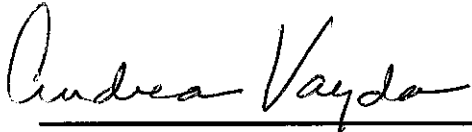
Peter Sherin

Neighborhood Association of Back Bay



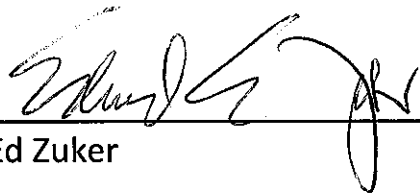
Ben Starr

Beacon Hill Civic Association



Andrea Vayda

resident



Ed Zuker

resident

After consultation with Ms. Katelyn Sullivan, the BRA Project Manager for the Fisher College IMP, concerning a statement during the public comment period, the Task Force has submitted these recommendations with not more than two members working together at any time to prepare or sign this document.



Katelyn Sullivan <katelyn.sullivan@boston.gov>

Fisher College Comment1 message

Tani Marinovich <TMarinovich@esplanadeassociation.org>

Tue, Jul 14, 2015 at 2:29 PM

To: Katelyn Sullivan <katelyn.sullivan@boston.gov>, "Josh.Zakim@boston.gov" <Josh.Zakim@boston.gov>, "carol.sanchez@state.ma.us" <carol.sanchez@state.ma.us>, "mayor@cityofboston.gov" <mayor@cityofboston.gov>

One City Hall Square

Boston, MA 02201

Dear Katelyn,

As a representative of the IMP committee for the Fisher College IMP I would like to express my concerns as it relates to the Esplanade.

The Esplanade Association focuses on making life better along the 3-mile stretch of parkland from the Museum of Science to the BU Bridge. We undertake capital improvement projects, provide professional horticultural care, free exercise and camp programs and advocate on issues that impact the park. It is from this perspective that we comment on Fisher's Institutional Master Plan.

Green spaces are a rare and cherished asset in an urban environment. Indeed, Boston has many wonderful museums, restaurants, libraries and schools, but Boston is also a great city outdoors because of its parks. Parks provide a place to walk along a winding path, sit on a bench beneath a tree, read books, daydream, exercise, escape the concrete and enjoy the proximity to nature. The parks are designed as a critical amenity to urban life, not as substitutes for college athletic facilities.

In order for parks to thrive, community members need to understand the value of parks and how to both enjoy them and care for them. In the Back Bay, we are blessed with many long-term residents who do exactly that, but our experience is that short-term residents tend to be less connected. With Fisher's proposed influx of additional temporary residents, our concern is that they understand and respect the appropriate use and need for care and stewardship of the urban parks in the area, including the historic Commonwealth Avenue Mall, the Public Garden and the Esplanade. We also support the concerns voiced by the Friends of the Public Garden about the specific impact on the Public Garden, a botanical garden designed for passive enjoyment. It is the responsibility of Fisher College both to consider the potential impact of an increased student presence on those spaces and to educate its student body on the value of and need for proper stewardship of those spaces.

In addition, we have specific concerns about the present inappropriate and unapproved mechanical structures currently installed along Back Street. These structures are visible from a key entrance to the park, an entrance used by most of the annual 3 million visitors to the Esplanade. Our efforts to improve the park visitor experience are made much more difficult by unapproved actions such as this. We also have


concern over the design and impact of the proposed terrace in that same area. Back Street should not be treated as an alley; changes and structures in that area should consider the impact of people coming to and enjoying the Esplanade.

We urge you to consider the importance of these issues to the neighborhood residents -- and the extended constituency of the millions of workers and visitors who use and love the parks in the area --when reviewing Fisher's IMP.

Sincerely,

Tani Marinovich

Executive Director

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376 Boylston Street, Suite 503

Boston, MA 02116

617-227-0365 ext 106

617-905-7542 cell

Cc: Mayor Martin Walsh; mayor@cityofboston.gov

Josh Zakim, Boston City Councilor; Josh.Zakim@boston.gov

Carol Sanchez, Commissioner MA DCR; carol.sanchez@state.ma.us