



# BOSTON POLICE FOUNDATION

Back up Boston's Finest

August 2, 2013

Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

Subject: Support for Fisher College

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

On behalf of The Boston Police Foundation, I want to express our support for Fisher College's Institutional Master Plan. Fisher College has been a great neighbor to the Back Bay and contributes immensely to the betterment of our city, including our Foundation.

Our mission is to support the brave men and women of the Boston Police Department by funding vital youth and community outreach programs, health and safety initiatives, new equipment and technological capabilities. Fisher College has been an instrumental friend to our Foundation; its President, Dr. McGovern stepped up to fill the role of our Board Clerk, and the College continues to generously support our mission and our city with internship programs, donated office and meeting space, just to name a few.

We understand that Fisher College's IMP is critical to the school's growth and positive impact on the City of Boston and the Back Bay neighborhood. Fisher College students fill a variety of beneficial internship and work study roles throughout our community, especially to our City's nonprofit organizations.

We hope you will report favorably on Fisher College's IMP, as it would allow the College to continue growing its positive impact on the local community and community groups. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best regards,

*Robert J. Long*

Robert J. Long  
President  
Boston Police Foundation

The Boston Police Foundation is a 501(c)(3) organization  
11 Arlington Street, Boston, MA 02116

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Terry Neylon [neylont@hotmail.com]  
**Sent:** Friday, August 02, 2013 2:41 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Fisher College IMP

Attention: Katelyn Sullivan

Good afternoon Katelyn,

Please be advised I tried to send this e-mail yesterday and it came back to me.

The purpose of this brief message is to express my strong support for Fisher College and the future of the College as outlined in the Fisher College IMP currently under review by the BRA.

Who am I and what do I now about the process and or the local concerns. I served as Vice President and Dean of Students, Administration and Alumni at the New England College Of Optometry, 424 Beacon Street for twenty years. An integral part of my work load at the College was working directly with the local community for I was directly responsible for the planning of all capitol projects be they historic preservation, restoration, new construction or maintenance. Thus, I fully understand the meaning and purpose of proper planning, the need for review both internally and externally and the desire by all concerned to be heard.

Fisher College, more specifically the executive administration, has consistently demonstrated excellence in many facets of their planning efforts, be it their desire to offer quality education to all members of society, their willingness to adhere to the student housing concerns as set forth by the City of Boston and their desire to work with all concerned during a period of great economic change to improve the appearance of the Campus both internally and externally. I believe 1 Arlington Street is a clear example of the planning and community awareness on campus. The willingness on the part of the College administration to commit considerable funds to improve an old corner building, a building run down from years of neglect, and turn it into the beautifully restored and carefully gardened community asset. Fisher College is, and clearly demonstrates the true meaning of being a good neighbor.

I believe Fisher College is a great asset within the City of Boston, further, I believe the IMP is well done and should be approved.

I would be pleased to appear before any body to express my support and answer any questions one might have.

Respectfully submitted,

Dr. Terrance B. Neylon



69 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02108  
p: 617.723.8144 f: 617.723.8127  
info@friendsofthepublicgarden.org  
www.friendsofthepublicgarden.org

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August 2, 2013

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

The Friends of the Public Garden has read with concern about plans for Fisher College to greatly expand its campus on Beacon Street between Arlington and Berkeley Streets. We are concerned that the addition of 177 dormitory beds in this part of the Back Bay will pose a significant increase in pressure for the use of green space, with a large influx of students adjacent to the Public Garden. From the school's promotional materials, the Garden is clearly marketed as its front yard and recreational space.

The Public Garden is a botanical park with the sole purpose of providing for passive enjoyment. The Park Rangers currently deal with ball playing and other prohibited activities on a regular basis, and we fear that increasing the school population in the neighborhood by 61% will put more pressure on this fragile horticultural garden by an institution that is not able to provide outdoor recreational space for its student population. This is a residential area of the city, and does not have the capacity to offer the appropriate amenities of a college campus.

We urge you to take these concerns into consideration as you review Fisher College's plans.

Sincerely,

Anne Brooke  
President

cc: Mayor Thomas M. Menino  
Peter Meade, Director, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Howard Kassler, Chair, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay  
Michael P. Ross, Boston City Councillor  
Antonia Pollak, Park Commissioner, Boston Parks and Recreation Department

Caring for Boston's First Public Parks

Kyle Grenier  
104 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116

Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

July 25, 2013

Dear Katelyn,

I have been a resident of Beacon Street since 2003 when I began my affiliation with Fisher College as a student. From the moment I stumbled upon the quiet 118 Beacon St. address, I knew Fisher College was unlike other institutions. The demonstrated personalized commitment and dedication from the faculty, staff and administration is unlike any I have been witness to. However, the limitations of the physical infrastructure were a challenge then and are today. The proposed small and managed growth of the college will greatly improve the student experience and enhance its educational capacity.

Fisher College has not only made a difference in the lives of thousands of students over its 110 year legacy, but has enriched the communities of Boston and the neighborhood of the Back Bay. While I was a student at Fisher I worked for four years in the community at a local retail store; I can say that many of my friends did as well. Getting to know my neighbors through this experience is one of my fondest college memories. Now as a professional working at Fisher College, I can attest to the number of my students who work at local shops and restaurants in the Back Bay, Beacon Hill, Fenway, and North End neighborhoods. Fisher students are and have been a valued boost to the local economy. These students shop and dine as well as work and serve in area businesses.

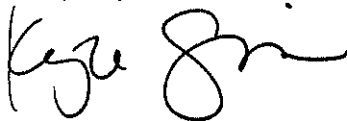
After graduating from Fisher College in 2007 with a Bachelor's degree in Management, I went on to work in human resources for the POLO Ralph Lauren Company. While working for Ralph Lauren, I reflected fondly on my days as a student living in the Back Bay and quickly realized that Boston should be my home. I currently serve as the Conduct Coordinator for Fisher College. In this professional role I serve as the primary disciplinarian for students who are found in violation of the Fisher College Student Code of Conduct, in addition to violations of both city ordinances and state and federal law. I can say with certainty that our students are held accountable for their actions and we have high standards. I can also attest to the rigor by which our students are sanctioned when necessary, resulting in a low rate of re-offense. I believe that an addition of outdoor space by way of the proposed roof deck project on the rear

of our 116 Beacon Street location will assist in the decline of neighborhood complaints of congregation on the Beacon Street sidewalks. As this space can be closely monitored and is inaccessible to the public, it will serve as a safe, unobtrusive space for our students to gather.

Throughout the years, Fisher College has been a great custodian to the historic buildings which we occupy and has taken great strides to ensure their outward beauty remains. We value our location in the world famous Back Bay neighborhood of Boston. Our grounds crew takes great pride ensuring that our grass is cut, our sidewalks are shoveled and swept and that our landscaping is carefully maintained. I believe the presence of our students, staff and campus security act as a natural buffer to crime and add to the general safety we all enjoy in the neighborhood. The vibrancy of our students adds positively to the feel of the Back Bay.

It is with these thoughts in mind, in addition to many more, that I strongly urge the Boston Redevelopment Authority to approve the Fisher College Institutional Master Plan. The Fisher IMP will afford future students to thrive while learning important lessons about living in the great community of the Back Bay.

Very respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kyle Grenier', written in a cursive style.

Kyle Grenier  
104 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116

August 2, 2013

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

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

My wife and I have lived in the Back Bay across from Fisher College for the past 15 years and we are both vehemently opposed to Fisher College's expansion plans. We are not alone, as everyone we come in contact with in the neighborhood feels that Fisher has not been a good neighbor and that their proposed expansion is totally unacceptable and poses even more problems for the area.

We are aware that expansion of an institution such as Fisher College is a forbidden use in a historic residential district like the Back Bay, and has been for over 30 years. The IMP represents a significant change to the zoning that has protected the residential district for the last 40 years. It will degrade the quality of life of its residents, as well as our property values. We rely on zoning in acquiring our properties. Changing it undermines the stability of our neighborhood. After all, this is an historic district and not a campus. People come from all over the world to enjoy it. We change the zoning rules at our own peril.

Our understanding is that the IMP will be in effect for 10 years, and will be renewed thereafter. Given Fisher's need to expand, how can we assume that the current proposal will satisfy their needs over the long term? And, what input would residents have in the amendment and renewal process?

Fisher College already exceeds the area's ability to function efficiently, burdening the neighborhood infrastructure and causing major traffic congestion for those trying to navigate through this historic area of the City. Our community is already taxed with limited space, and already burdened with old sewer, water and electrical systems. The planned expansion is without question, an unnecessary and unwarranted action.

We are opposed to any increase in the number of dormitory beds in this residential area. We have numerous concerns about the adequacy and safety of the buildings being proposed as dorms. A single building housing a small college is one thing, but purchasing several buildings on this residential street to house more students is, quite frankly, outrageous, and the BRA and the City both have a responsibility to serve the public they represent and ensure that this planned expansion is denied.

With respect to traffic congestion, noise and public safety, it has been frequently noted (and documented) that large Greyhound-size buses double park mid-block and sit idling for as long as 45-minutes to pick up and drop off Fisher students. It has caused major disruptions to traffic on Beacon Street and without question, represents a public hazard. We have had to call Fisher security more than 20 times in the past year to instruct them to stop these extremely noisy and double-parked vehicles from idling and polluting the environment. Despite Fisher's claims that their security team is always monitoring the street, we have yet to see them policing this situation. When called, they do exit Fisher buildings, but rarely are they on the scene to prevent this situation from occurring. The fact that they haven't dealt with this issue proactively is another cause for concern and another sign of either incompetence or sheer arrogance.

Delivery trucks also double-park daily, and some block access on Back Street when they leave their vehicles/trucks to make deliveries. I personally have had to sit behind these vehicles waiting to turn onto Arlington for an extending amount of time because the drivers have not been instructed properly. When approached, these delivery drivers could care less about respecting the needs of the community. Additionally, we have been advised that the proposed addition at the rear of 118 Beacon is in fact, a violation of architectural and zoning standards. The building is already larger than would be allowed today, and 2-story rear yard additions have not been approved on Back Street or in other alleys in the district.

To compound the traffic problem, students are picked up and dropped off all day long and often jaywalk across Beacon Street, expecting traffic to stop for them instead of going to the crosswalk. This again is another public hazard.

As you know, this is a residential neighborhood with young children walking to schools, but Beacon Street becomes almost impassable with students hanging out and smoking since they have nowhere else to turn. They throw their cigarettes, food containers, cans and other litter around the neighborhood -- usually picked up by Fisher staff and only on Fisher property. We have observed Fisher students leaving their trash on our steps and those of our neighbors on a repeated basis.

There seems to be quite a bit of arrogance on the part of the leadership of Fisher College as despite numerous complaints by residents, they turn a deaf ear to these problems. Even having raised these issues many times before, no real progress has been made and the problems seem to be getting worse, not better. You might expect Fisher to see the wisdom of offering to be good neighbors by contributing something back to the neighborhood, e.g. having students incentivized to clear the snow, helping the elderly across the street/snow banks, etc.--something beyond just those actions that benefit the College itself.

Fisher has been insular, selfish, and aloof in dealing with the residents of this community and it is no wonder that not one single resident wants the College to

expand any further. In fact, we would prefer that they seek to find another area in the City (or potentially outside the City) to fulfill their expansion plans.

We implore you to take the right action, to respect the desires of the residents of this community for which you serve, and to prevent this from going any further.

Thanks for your consideration.

Bob and Ellen Robbins  
121 Beacon Street



## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Robbins Bob [bob.robbins@catchpointpartners.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 03, 2013 9:19 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Fisher College

Ms. Sullivan,

It is early Saturday morning and again, despite the protests from the residents of this neighborhood, two large vehicles are again double-parked and idling on Beacon Street. There are available parking for these vehicles but they choose to double park. Despite calling and complaining these vehicles continue to idle and disrupt the neighborhood. It is unbelievable that they continue their outrageous behavior.

**BOB ROBBINS** MANAGING PARTNER  
545 Boylston St., 12th Floor,  
Boston, MA 02116  
Office: 1.617.933.5849  
Mobile: 1.617.529.8114  
[www.catchpointpartners.com](http://www.catchpointpartners.com)

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Tom Iannotti [thomasiannotti@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 03, 2013 2:55 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Fisher College Expansion Plan

Katelyn

I am not supportive of the Fisher College Expansion Plan.

The IMP represents a significant change to the zoning that has protected the residential district for the last 40 years. It will degrade the quality of life of its neighbors, as well as their property values. People rely on zoning in acquiring their properties. Changing it undermines the stability of the neighborhood and people's faith in government. This is an historic district, not a campus.

Boston has a great tradition of being a college town. But locating a college campus in the middle of a residential and historic district hardly seems appropriate. Allowing the college to expand in this location will only serve to make it more difficult for students and for residents to coexist. Take the right action now and avoid a bigger problem later.

Sincerely

Tom

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Don Geffen [geffe005@umn.edu]  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 03, 2013 5:09 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Fwd: Opposition to Fisher College's Expansion

----- Original Message -----

**Subject:** Opposition to Fisher College's Expansion  
**Date:** Sat, 03 Aug 2013 16:05:51 -0400  
**From:** Don Geffen <geffe005@umn.edu>  
**To:** @city of boston.gov, Don Geffen " <geffe005@umn.edu>

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

My wife and I join in the community's vigorous opposition to Fisher College's "Institutional Master Plan" [IMP]. Its ten year plan to increase the number of students in residence on the Arlington to Berkley block of Beacon Street by 60% as well as enrollment by an average of 28 students per year for ten years will have an extremely negative impact on this particular neighborhood of historic Back Bay and a negative impact on the surrounding neighborhood and parks. The conversion to dormitories of three rental buildings on the street that Fisher owns, cramming 129 students into what has been 36 small rental units, clearly diminishes the character of the block over this ten year period. If the college's expansion plans are approved and implemented against close to unanimous opposition by the community, what happens during the ten years that follow? Neighbors have already graphically testified to the negative impacts of having the current student population here. One likely scenario of greatly increasing the presence of students on the block is that it will slowly lead owners to seek residence elsewhere thereby providing Fisher with the opportunity to acquire more property for further expansion.

This brings us to the subject that the BRA must address before considering approving **any** expansion by Fisher College into the neighborhood. That is the prospect for a relative decline in the value of condominiums on this block should Fisher intensify its presence. Note that this IMP under consideration is not really an expansion but an intensification of Fisher's activities whereby the public streets and parks form an important part of the college's "campus." Even now, given Fisher College's large presence on this one block, the value of the condo we own is less than it would be absent the college and its students. Suppose we wish to sell our apartment sometime during the next few years and Fisher's IMP is approved. Don't we have to inform our broker and prospective buyers about the increasing presence of students surrounding us? All things otherwise being equal, any buyer, given the choice between our condo and one on another block, would chose the student free option. Shouldn't any buyer, planning on living here for more than a decade, worry that Fisher's intensification will only continue?

In essence, owners are paying a hidden (non federal tax deductible) tax should Fisher's IMP be approved. Since this diminished value of our property is accompanied by diminished quality of life, monetary compensation is not the proper remedy for this "taking." Rejecting the IMP and encouraging Fisher to find a real campus elsewhere is the only solution. Boston is one of America's loveliest cities and Back Bay one of Boston's loveliest neighborhoods. Appropriate development should do everything to increase the positive attributes of Back Bay not decrease them.

Thank you for considering our thoughts on this important matter.

Benita and Donald Geffen  
129 Beacon Street, Apt. 3

617 437 1717

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Sam Plimpton [sp@baupost.com]  
**Sent:** Saturday, August 03, 2013 4:39 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Fisher

Dear Katelyn:

This will reiterate my opposition to expansion of Fisher beds, academic, or admin space in our dense and historic residential neighborhood. Fisher and advisors have not responded with any plans to relocate, nor to requests for staging of those plans which the neighborhood might support. The students and resultant traffic and other impacts create service burdens that our alleys and streets can't handle. Please reject the imposition of increased impacts on our neighborhood.

Sincerely Yours

Sam Plimpton  
100 Beacon

Sent from my iPhone

On Aug 2, 2013, at 12:29 PM, "Sullivan, Katelyn"  
<[Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov)<mailto:Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov>> wrote:

REMINDER: The Fisher College IMPNF comment deadline is Monday, August 5, 2013. Please send your comments to the contact info below.

Thank you,  
Katelyn

Katelyn Sullivan

Project Manager

Boston Redevelopment Authority

One City Hall Square

Boston, MA 02201

P: 617-918-4425

[Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov)<mailto:Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov>

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Molly Mosier [mollymosier23@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 04, 2013 12:52 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Cc:** info  
**Subject:** Fisher College's Proposed Expansion

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

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

First of all, hope you are having a good Summer. The weather lately sure has been lovely.

Now to the main subject re: Fisher College's IMPNF:

The proposal represents a very different change to the zoning that has protected the residential area for the last 40 years. This area is an historic district, not a campus. The expansion of an institution such as Fisher College should not be allowed in the historic residential district and this has been the ruling for over 30 years. The proposed addition at the rear of 118 Beacon is a violation of architectural and zoning standards. I feel this project will degrade the quality of life and it undermines the stability of the neighborhood and our faith in the local government.

Fisher College is planning to take over tax-paying buildings - in lieu of paying taxes, we are wondering what type of payments will they make to the City? This particular block has more through traffic than any other in the neighborhood. Parking is already inadequate for the residents, let alone having more students here. Double-parking on Beacon Street during peak traffic hours is already a mess. Delivery capacity is inadequate - trucks use the Arlington Street off-ramp from Storrow Drive as well as Back Street, blocking neighbors and through traffic.

Just wondering - since Fisher College seems to have a need to expand and will probably do so again in the future - maybe a better solution to consider would be: To build the student dormitories in a nearby suburb (close to public transportation) where there would be more land to spread out and Fisher College could create their own style of architecture and design that may better fit their particular needs for their students.

Hope you will consider these points when you have your next meetings on the final important decisions. Thank you.

Best regards,

Molly Mosier  
Neighbor/NABB



August 5, 2013

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston City Hall, Ninth Floor  
One City Hall Place, Boston, MA 02201

**Re: Fisher College Institutional Master Plan – Compliance with the Architectural Requirements of the Back Bay Historic District**

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

A number of elements of the Fisher College properties have elements which are not in compliance with the historic district architectural standards administered by the Back Bay Architectural Commission. These matters need be corrected or resolved as part of any institutional master plan as compliance is a precondition to the issuance permits for construction, extension or change of use of the properties.

Notably these matters include but are not necessarily limited to the following elements:

1. There is no evidence of required Certificates of Appropriateness from the Back Bay Architectural Commission for the mechanical equipment including multiple kitchen exhaust ducts and both combined and split HVAC units installed and/or replaced on the roof of the one story rear addition to 102-114 Beacon Street known as the "mall" contrary to the published architectural guidelines, see Attachments A.
2. There is no evidence of a required Certificate of Appropriateness from the Back Bay Architectural Commission for the externally mounted security cameras and gooseneck lighting on the rear extension of 102-114 Beacon Street contrary to the published architectural guidelines, see Attachment B.
3. There is no evidence of required Certificates of Appropriateness from the Back Bay Architectural Commission for the installation of five HVAC compressor units mounted in the recessed infill addition of 1 Arlington Street abutting Beacon Street contrary to the published architectural guidelines, see Attachment C.
4. There is no evidence of a required Certificates of Appropriateness from the Back Bay Architectural Commission for the installation or replacement of the HVAC compressor unit mounted on the roof of the one story ell at the rear of 10/11 Arlington Street contrary to the published architectural guidelines, see Attachment D.
5. As noted previously there is no evidence of a required Certificates of Appropriateness for the Fisher College flag mounted on 1 Arlington Street, building permit, required Conditional Use Permit issued by the Board of Appeal, nor required Parks and Recreation Commission approval for installation of a school flag fronting on the Public Garden, see Attachment E.

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Sam Wallace

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*Office Administrator*

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan

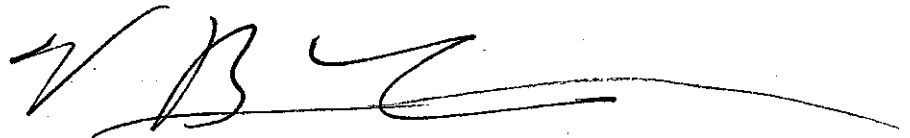
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6. There is no evidence of required Certificates of Appropriateness from the Back Bay Architectural Commission nor building permits or required conditional use permits for the multiple signs and signs exceeding the permitted size limit on 111 Beacon Street, 102 Beacon Street and 116 Beacon Street and for the signs located on 129 and 131 Beacon Street, see Attachment F.

As part of the scoping Fisher College should be required to provide a copy of all the Certificates of Appropriateness issued by the Back Bay Architectural Commission related to the several properties and a plan as to how the properties with non-permitted elements will be brought into compliance with the architectural standards of the district.

Sincerely,

The Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V. B. Castellani', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

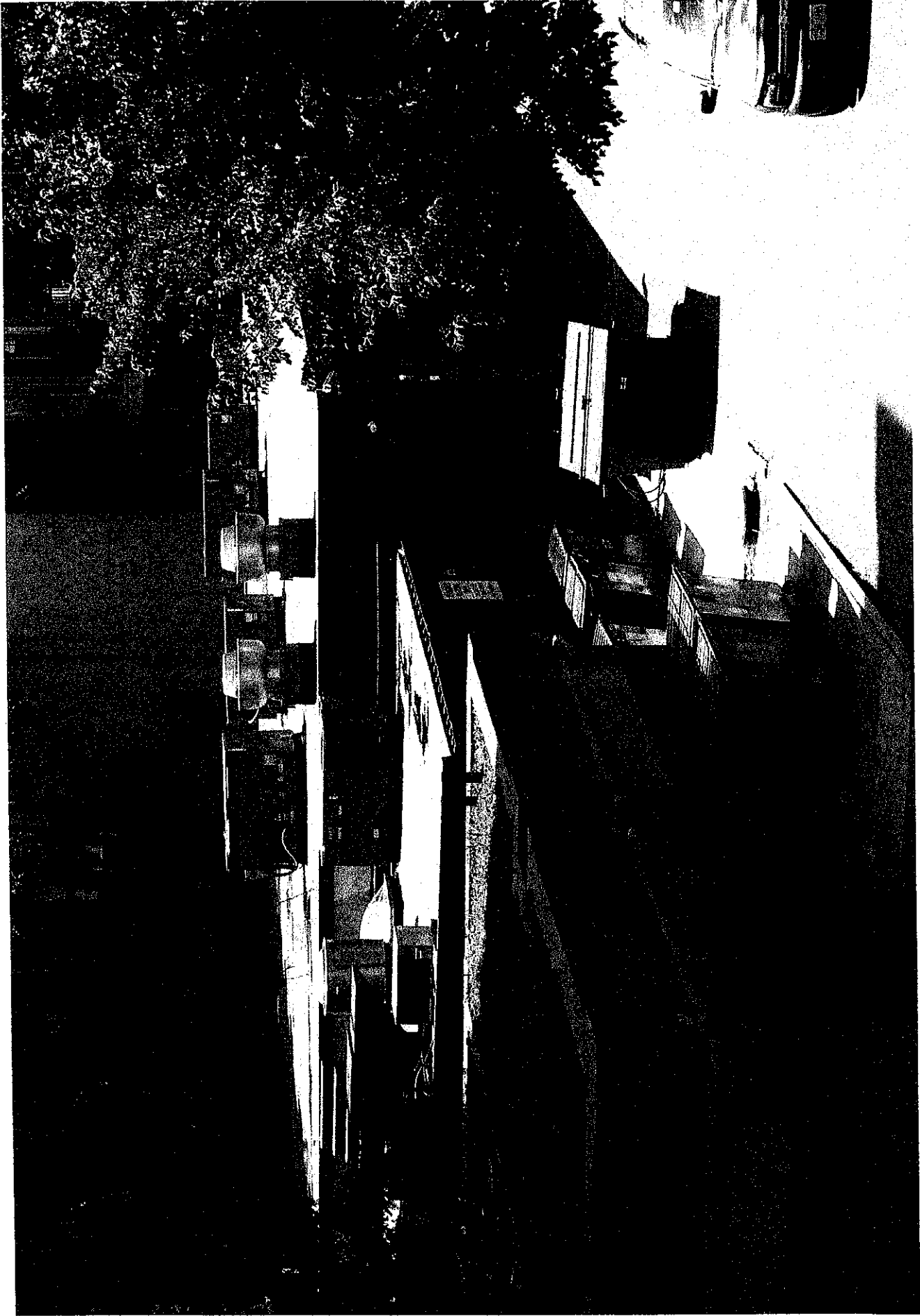
V. B. Castellani, Chair, Zoning Committee

VBC/ssb

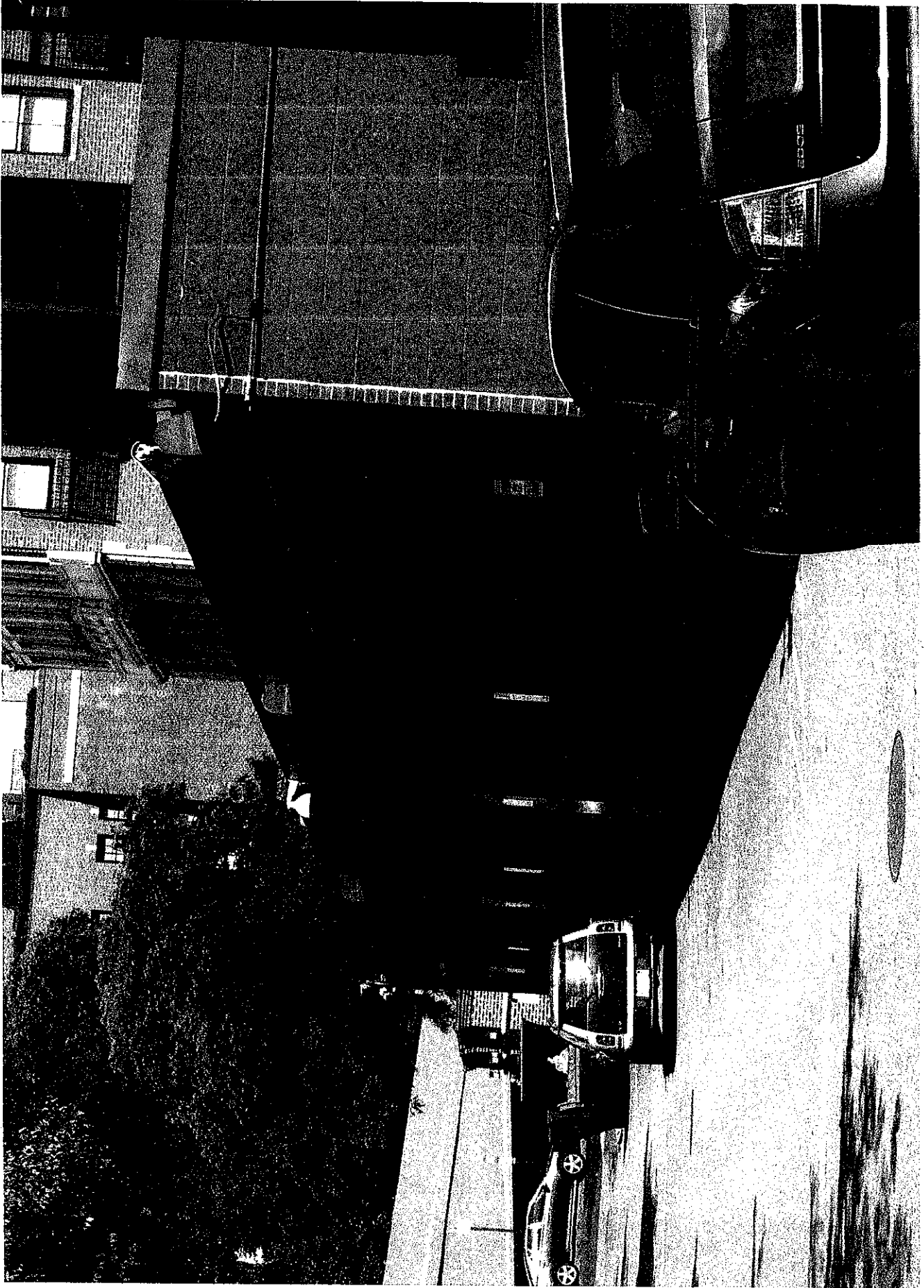
Encl

cc: Mr. Peter Meade, Director, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Ms. Linda Kowalcky, Deputy Director for Institutional Sector Management  
Mr. Jay Livingstone, Candidate, Massachusetts House of Representatives  
District Eight City Councilor Michael Ross  
Ms. Shaina Aubourg, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services  
Mr. William Young, The Environment Department  
Dr. Thomas McGovern, President, Fisher College

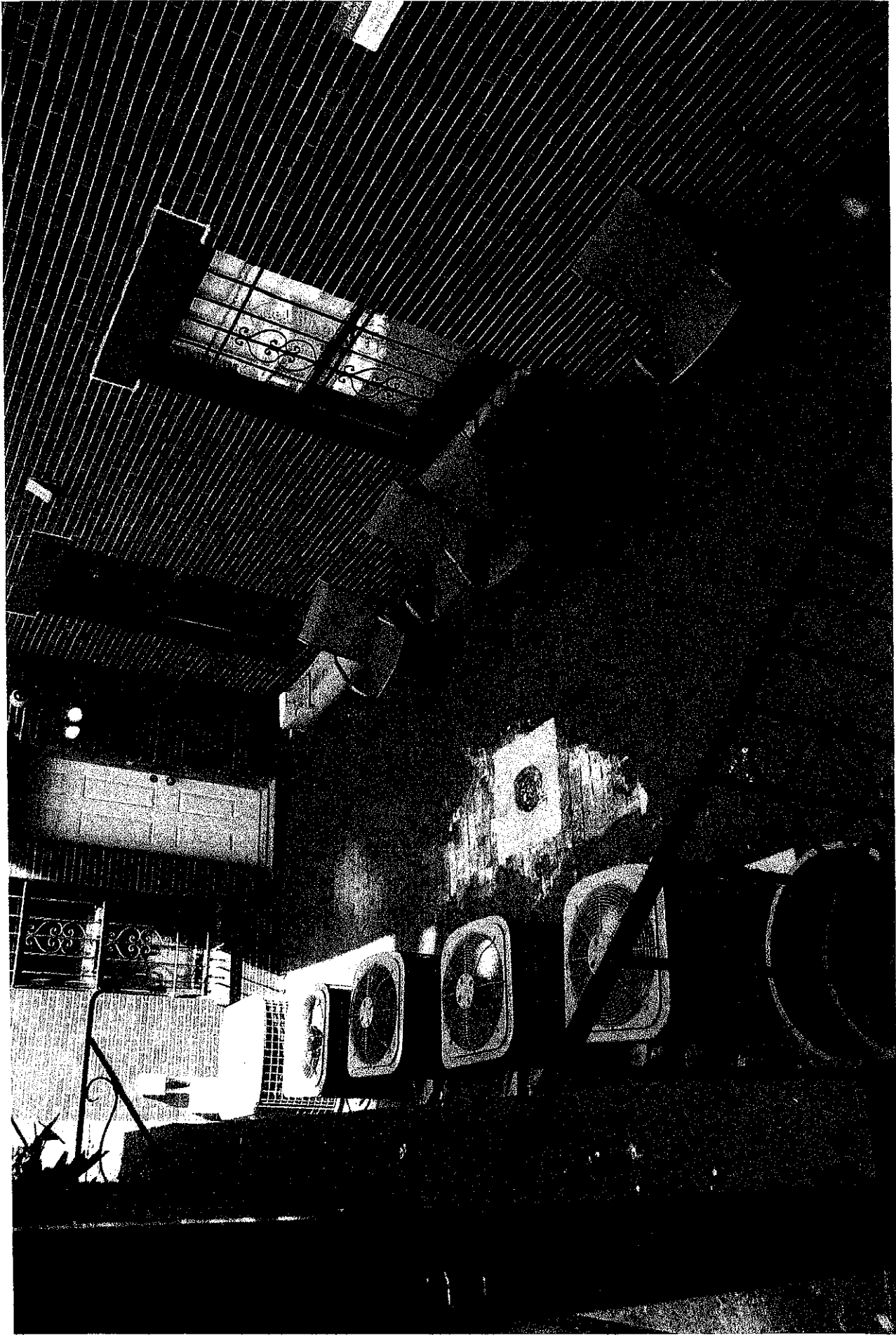




**ATTACHMENT A: 102-116 Beacon Street - Mechanical HVAC Equipments and Kitchen Exhaust Ducts Mounted on First Floor Roof of Rear Extension**

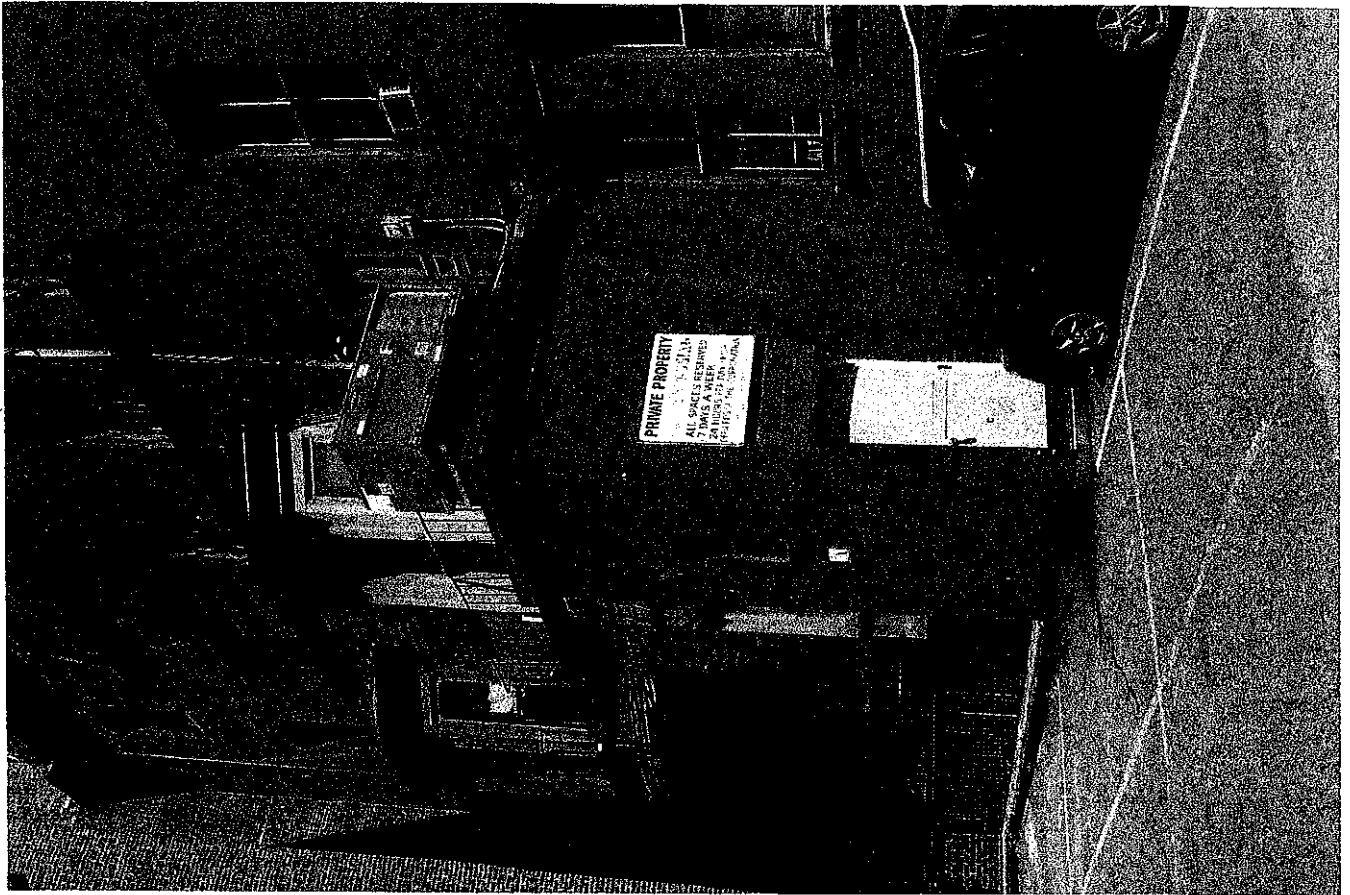


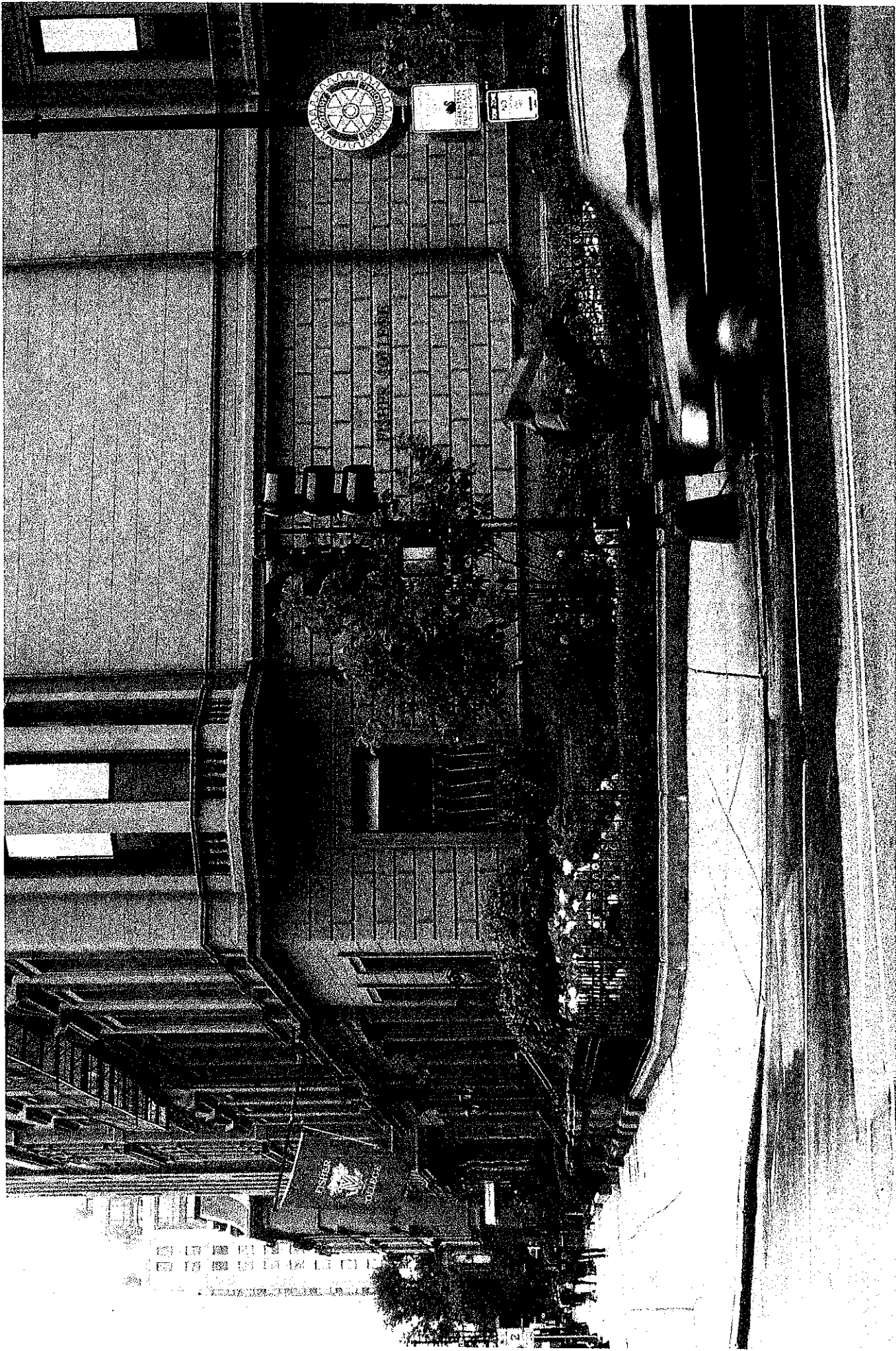
**ATTACHMENT B: 102-114 BEACON STREET - Unapproved Gooseneck Lights, Exterior Security Camera and Exposed Conduit**



**ATTACHMENT C: 1 ARLINGTON STREET - Five HVAC Compressors Installed at Ground Level at Abutting In-fill Property**

**ATTACHMENT D: 10/11 Arlington Street - Heat Pump  
Compressor Mounted on First Floor Roof of Rear Ell**





**ATTACHMENT E: 1 ARLINGTON STREET - Non-permitted Fisher College Flag installed without a required conditional use permit, certificate of appropriateness nor Parks and Recreational Department Approval for a flag fronting on the Public Garden**



**ATTACHMENT F: 111 Beacon Street - Multiple signs, signs more than 50% of the area permitted in non-residential zoning, failure to obtain a certificate of appropriateness from the Back Bay Architectural Commission**

August 4<sup>th</sup>, 2013

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

RE: College Terrace  
116 Beacon - Dorm Conversion / Administration

Dear Katelyn Sullivan.

*College Terrace*

Fisher College is absolutely correct that college students should have an outdoor social space. College students should also have recreation areas like swimming pools, tennis courts, a gymnasium, and a dance studio. Fisher College are themselves highlighting the problem of locating a college in a historic and residential Boston neighborhood. Just as putting tennis courts and a full-sized gymnasium on Beacon Street is impractical, so is installing a large college terrace.

Such a terrace would undoubtedly evolve as a popular social space for many college students in Boston even beyond Fisher College. It would be a wonderful venue for dances, concerts, and parties. It would also be a fantastic place to view and participate in all of the events that occur at the Hatch Shell and on the Esplanade. College students from all over Boston would undoubtedly congregate with Fisher friends and make Fisher a routine stopping off point for Hatch Shell events, particularly since it would be a wonderful way to avoid using portable toilets.

The terrace would become like Lansdowne Street, except without individual businesses to control admission and alcohol consumption and without the proper zoning. All students would have to do is 'bring their own' and the Fisher terrace turns into an outdoor bar and nightclub.

In response to a question about the college terrace at the Fisher public meeting on the IMP, Fisher College representative, Peter Gori, responded that the terrace "would not be open to guests" and would "close at dusk – earlier in the summer." These responses strain credulity to the extreme.

Fisher College does not currently screen for guests in any of its common areas. There is no key card access required to enter the student center building, nor are students or guests required to show any identification, even when going past the security guard desk. Is Peter Gori suggesting that there will be a new 24 hour guard at all entrances to the Fisher Terrace with identification cards suddenly required to be shown only at these doors? Would a guard really stop a guest or a student without identification?

Further, it is hard to imagine Fisher College turning down the pleas of students to be able to watch the Boston Pops 4<sup>th</sup> of July concert from the College Terrace. The Fisher College administration certainly enjoys the concert from their roof deck at 118 Beacon Street, so it is hard to imagine how Fisher College could argue against students using an otherwise empty college terrace overlooking the Hatch Shell.

But why would it stop with the 4<sup>th</sup> of July concert? Why not allow the use of the terrace whenever there is a Hatch Shell event, like all of the numerous concerts? Or the movies? How could Fisher College turn down the pleas of students to have an evening terrace event like a dance with a string quartet? How about a dance with a dj? How about a dance with a band? In short, how could Fisher College realistically fight the demands of students to use

the college terrace after dusk on every weekend? How could Fisher answer the parents who visit the terrace on an admissions tour and notice the lovely view of the Hatch Shell and the Esplanade? Do we really expect those parents to accept that the terrace closes at dusk, and earlier in the summer?

Inevitably, students and others, from the older to the underage, would also start to see the long grass median of Back Street as a complementary venue just below the Fisher deck. Even Fisher students would undoubtedly go back and forth from the terrace to Back Street in order to smoke cigarettes, since Peter Gori said that smoking would not be allowed on the deck. That means there would be routine student traffic back and forth between the deck and Back Street for smokers and their friends. Will there be yet another security guard down on Back Street checking ID's 24 hours a day?

It is also realistic to expect that students would go to Back Street to smoke things other than cigarettes. Back Street would undoubtedly soon see substantially more drug use than already occurs, plus the attendant drug dealing given the proximity of large numbers of college students gathering for social events. The effect on the neighborhood from noise, trash, traffic, and drug use would be dramatic. And that isn't hyperbole. Beacon Street is a residential area, not an entertainment district. And Fisher College is an educational institution not an entertainment business. Fisher is also an institution that has demonstrated a distinct lack of ability and interest in controlling smoking or drug use.

According to the advocacy group, Americans for Nonsmokers' Rights, more than 1180 colleges have instituted 100% smoking bans. Most of the remaining schools restrict smoking within 25 feet of all entrances. Fisher is one of the few colleges in the country without a smoking ban and without a restriction on smoking within 25 feet of all entrances. Instead, Fisher College faculty, staff, and administration themselves can be seen smoking on Beacon Street every day, not making use of a "designated smoking area" at the back of 116 Beacon Street.

If Fisher College faculty, staff, and administration don't follow Fisher College rules and smoke in the designated smoking area, why should we expect more of Fisher College students? Why should we suddenly expect more of an expanding Fisher College?

But more important is Fisher's complete lack of attention to drug use on Beacon Street.

Many Beacon Street neighbors have already written to the BRA to say that residents routinely see and smell pot smoking on the steps of Fisher dorms and in cars parked on Beacon Street. While we understand that this is the reality of young people, residents of Beacon Street see absolutely no effort on the part of Fisher College to diminish this behavior.

Fisher College often calls Beacon Street their "campus." If so, I have never heard of a college campus where campus security are permanently stationed inside. If guards were continuously walking up and down Beacon Street and Back Street, they would see what we as neighbors see. One resident from our building wrote to the BRA to say that she has lived on Beacon Street alongside Fisher College for 35 years and as a dog owner, she routinely walks outside at night. Not once in those 35 years has she ever seen a security guard patrolling outside at night. Not once.

It is certainly not that any of Fisher neighbors want to see Fisher students arrested or even punished. But it is inappropriate for Fisher College to ignore night time drug use on the steps of their buildings.



### ***116 Beacon Street - Conversion and Administration Exit***

In his letter of June 21, 2013 to the BRA, Michael Weingarten pointed out that Fisher College's IMP proposes a shockingly low average of 183 square feet per student in the newly proposed and repurposed dormitories. Michael compares this to a national median of 351 square feet according to the *College Housing Report*, and for a local comparison, shows that Suffolk allocates 365 square feet per student and Berklee School of Music allocates 358 square feet. Michael's conclusion is that as part of this IMP process, Fisher College should be required to reach the national median at a minimum. Space is an important point. Part of the reason that Fisher students impact Beacon Street so dramatically is not their fault. Their living space is too small.

The situation would only get worse if Fisher College is allowed to build such unconscionably small dorm rooms such as the 157 square feet per student Michael calculated is proposed for Fisher's 're-purposing' of their building at 116 Beacon Street according to data in the Fisher IMP. Again, this is less than half of the nation-wide average.

Fisher College also proposes to move their administration from 116 Beacon in favor of a new building, two blocks away on Arlington, between Marlborough Street and Commonwealth Avenue. That would essentially make Fisher administration an absentee landlord, who abandons Beacon Street and their offices at 116 and 118 Beacon to be instead overlooking the serenity of the Public Garden. That proposal should be flatly denied.

It is essential that Fisher administration stays on Beacon Street in order to see and experience everything that we do as neighbors. I am aware that many others on our street who live next to Fisher dorms wrote numerous letters to the BRA detailing their experiences, such as waking up to trash, cigarette butts, and vomit on their doorsteps. I can see why Fisher administration would not want to walk by such delights on the way to their offices and would instead like the solitude of offices overlooking one of America's finest public gardens. The proposed move of Fisher administration is insulting to all of Fisher's neighbors on Beacon Street. Fisher College administration needs to work where their students live. 116 Beacon Street should absolutely remain an administration building.

Numerous Boston colleges have started in residential neighborhoods and moved into more flexible spaces in order to grow. Bentley University moved to Waltham. Suffolk University expanded into other areas beyond Beacon Hill. Emerson moved from Back Bay into the theater district. Berklee College of Music moved from Newbury Street to the more open area of Massachusetts Avenue.

Fisher is attempting to fit a square peg into a round hole. They are attempting to expand and bring the typical full range of activities that a college offers into an historic neighborhood. Fisher proposes to do so by squeezing students into Beacon Street dorms and then have their administration themselves abandon Beacon Street.

The Fisher IMP is not a very good strategic plan for Boston. It is not a very good plan for Fisher's neighbors. And it is certainly not a very good plan for Fisher College students.

Thank you for your time.

Claude Cicchetti  
120 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116

Copies to:

Mayor Thomas M. Menino  
Boston City Hall  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201  
[mayor@cityofboston.gov](mailto:mayor@cityofboston.gov)

Peter Meade, Director  
Boston Redevelopment Authority:  
One City Hall Square, Boston, MA 02201  
[Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov)

City Councilor President Michael P. Ross  
[Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov)

City Councilor Felix Arroyo  
[Felix.Arroyo@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Felix.Arroyo@cityofboston.gov)

City Councilor Ayanna Pressley  
[Ayanna.Pressley@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Ayanna.Pressley@cityofboston.gov)

City Councilor John R. Connolly  
[John.R.Connolly@cityofboston.gov](mailto:John.R.Connolly@cityofboston.gov)

City Councilor Stephen J. Murphy  
[Stephen.Murphy@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Stephen.Murphy@cityofboston.gov)

Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay  
160 Commonwealth Avenue #L-8 Boston, Massachusetts 02116-2749  
[info@nabbonline.com](mailto:info@nabbonline.com)

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Susan Morris [susanmorrisuk@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 04, 2013 9:46 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Fw: Fisher College IMP

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

As a taxpayer in the city of Boston, which is heavily dependent on property taxes to support the government of the city and the programs and services for the citizens of Boston, I oppose the approval of a non compliance zoning for 10-11 Arlington Street. Changing a zoning compliance should always be for the greater good of a neighborhood. The Tellus Institute at 10-11 Arlington is a nonprofit office building. Fisher College proposes a mixed use college zoning which removes approximately \$150,000 annually from the tax base in Boston for at least the next ten years, forcing the city to raise property taxes to compensate for this "gift" to Fisher College. I could support such a change if Fisher had demonstrated, through the PILOT program that it added benefit to the community but the college does not participate in the PILOT program and in the proposed application listed such greater good projects such as the NABB Alley Rally (which is done by taxpayers in the Back Bay who don't assign a monetary value to it) and volunteering to help at the 4th of July on the Esplanade (when Fisher is not in session and thus doesn't have students to volunteer).

If the Tellus Institute were given to Fisher for tax free use, it would not be restored to a high standard like the privately owned buildings on Arlington Street have been which lowers property values on Arlington and upper Marlborough. Arlington, the Public Garden and Marlborough would have increased student use when students visit their professors and would likely suffer from the smoking, damage of private property, trash, debris and vomit seen on Beacon Street by the private property owners. In an unofficial survey, the number of airconditioners in windows both facing Beacon Street and Arlington Street increases when property is owned by Fisher, even though the Dean of Students at Fisher said the electrical service in her Fisher building is so antiquated that although the staff is allowed airconditioners, the students are not.

I oppose changing the use of the Tellus Institute through the BRA process because it would damage the city of Boston, the Back Bay Historic District, our property values and The Public Garden. Please deny this use.

Thank you,  
Susan W. Morris  
617 236-5160  
301 Berkeley Street, Apt. 6  
Boston,  
MA 02116

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Ines Capelli [ilcapelli@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 05, 2013 1:02 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** re: Fisher College IMP

Dear Ms. Sullivan, I am writing this note to oppose the approval of a non compliance zoning for 10-11 Arlington st. The change would not benefit for us resident and since the zoning is a residential area I do not see any good reason since no taxes will be paid by Fisher. Best regards. Ines Capelli

Denise L Faustman, MD, PhD  
100 Beacon Street, Unit 4B  
Boston, MASS 02116

August 4th, 2013

Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
9th floor, Boston City Hall  
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

I oppose Fisher College's proposed expansion plans. Fisher College is planning to roughly double the number of students living on the block of Beacon Street between Arlington and Berkeley by:

- \*Relocating students from a dorm in Bay Village
- \*Converting three historic Brownstones currently housing Boston residents to dorms
- \*Converting existing administrative and classroom space on Beacon St. to dorms
- \*Moving administrative offices and classrooms to Arlington Street
- \*Expanding 118 Beacon into what is currently Back St. parking

Fisher already exceeds the neighborhood's carrying capacity, strains city services, and causes major traffic congestion for thousands of Boston commuters. More than 16,000 vehicles use this block of Beacon Street daily according to DOT. Fisher frequently disrupts traffic, narrowing Beacon Street and causing backup that can extend all the way back to the state house as well as block egress from Storrow Drive. During the school year, the traffic impact extends to traffic jams on 93 north and 93 south as commuters try to exit Storrow Drive to frequently encounter large transport trucks blocking the right lane exit ramps with hours of food deliveries (Cisco, Coke, etc.) and trash pickups.

Large Greyhound-size buses also double park mid-block as long as 45 minutes to pick up and drop off Fisher students for every athletic practice and game, as well as orientation and other activities. Delivery trucks serving the cafeteria and vending machines double park daily. Commuting students are picked up and dropped off all day long. Students jaywalk day and night because the campus is on both sides of the street. Because students compete for scarce parking, workmen and other delivery trucks must double park.

This is an historic neighborhood with limited space and aging sewer, water, and electrical systems. Historic brownstones now house 80+ students creating an unsafe situation. Fisher parks 20+ vehicles on both sides of Back Street. There is no loading dock for deliveries, no room for additional staff or student parking. In fact, the Back Alley should be cleared of student/staff and teacher parking but instead is additionally and uniquely double-parked on both sides of the alley by staff precluding delivery trucks from unobstructed deliveries.

In regards to security/noise, neighbors have noticed increased drug use by students outside of Fisher's video cameras, spilling onto the adjacent parks and public spaces including the Fiedler Bridge, the Boston Public Garden, and further down Beacon Street. In good weather, there is often street noise late into the night.

This is a residential neighborhood with children walking to schools, the Esplanade Play space, and the Public Garden. In warm weather the sidewalk becomes almost impassable with students hanging out and smoking since they have nowhere else to go. They discard butts, food wrappers, cans and other litter around the neighborhood -- usually only picked up on Fisher property.

Equally remarkable to many of us is the fact that after a series of bustling and heated Boston meetings on this topic, the President of Fisher nor any board member has never made an appearance to explain their expansion demands. Instead Fisher is represented by a consulting group hired to pave the way to the expansion. This lack of interest of Fisher's senior leadership

in working with or even interacting with the neighborhood is perhaps even more revealing of school insincerity to be a reputable neighbor, member of the Boston community, or even the state of Massachusetts.

Lastly, it is worth noting that Fisher not only services the neighborhood and city poorly by contributing to traffic congestions and lack tax revenues by a non-profit status but also probably serves the student populations equally poorly. A quick glance at the national rankings of Fisher for student graduations, student job placements and the overwhelming debt taken on by these students places Fisher low on the levels of achievements. This is true for Fisher's rankings of higher education in the state of Massachusetts as well as on a national level. Ironically the high tuitions of these students are predominately paid for by federal loans that result in unacceptable high student loan default rates for their students. The revenues from these loans are being used in part for the real estate expansion to increase more student loan debt and loan defaults and poor job placements.

In short Fisher model of burdening the city with more conversion of city properties to nonprofit status, burdening the city with insurmountable city wide traffic congestion and burdening the student population with debt without education results in a failed model of higher education at the expense of tax payers and residents at the city of Boston and the state of Massachusetts.

Very truly yours,

Denise L Faustman

CC: NABB

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Sarah S. Smith [saras@msn.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 05, 2013 11:02 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Cc:** Ellen Robbins; info@nabbonline.com; Sarah S. Smith; Dave Lane  
**Subject:** RE: IMPNF - Fisher College

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**From:** [saras@msn.com](mailto:saras@msn.com)  
**To:** [saras@msn.com](mailto:saras@msn.com)  
**Subject:** IMPNF - Fisher College  
**Date:** Mon, 5 Aug 2013 05:50:59 -0400

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

I am reminded now of the August 5, 2013 deadline for responding to the BRA IMPNF. Having called and visited the Fisher College security desk twice in the last two weekends, they were informed that busses idling outside of 116/118 Beacon Street were illegal and were blocking the fire hydrant.

In the interest of the right to the peaceful enjoyment of one's home and, the property value of same, I will work very hard to frustrate any plans for the future expansion of the Fisher College campus.

For the most part, Fisher College students are oblivious to the fact that they live in a residential community and in a city that has quiet ordinances and traffic codes. During the school year, less so but out there during summer,

- sleepless nights
- littered front gardens and walkways
- pedestrian street crossing violations that interrupt traffic flow and prompt car horns
- idling bus pollution, bouncing basketballs, rolling skateboards
- 
- Limited parking availability worsened by some time Fisher College Only restricted parking permits
- Double parking & Fire hydrant obstruction (118 Beacon St)
- General raucous behavior, typical of any campus
- Carousing on private property stoops

Wafting through windows

- Cigarette smoke
- Loud vulgar language yelled back and forth across Beacon St during days and nights

These situations, unless prompted, are not monitored by a Fisher College campus police presence.

Over the course of many years, phone calls to the Fisher College Security Desk and to BPD District 4 usually go unheeded. Conversations with Rhonda Peroni and Sgt Callahan were not followed up.

Desperate for sleep, attempting to quell the noise, I have called and even, visited the Fisher College *Security* Desk in the middle of the night and, early am!

The prospect of being surrounded by an increased student population is untenable. The absence of ongoing '*security*' patrols around the city campus, out of doors, away from the indoors Security Desk, is unacceptable. Without 24/7 patrolling of alley ways, stoops and, sidewalks around the campus, neighbors are consistently disregarded as neighbors and as tax paying home owners.

As an educator, there was further disquietude at our last neighborhood meeting. Under discussion were the financial loan assistance programs available to students; and, the on average graduation success of Fisher College students. It seems that financial assistance and scholarship loans available to students are structured towards the eventual and long term hardship for several families who are unable to pay off loans. Also, according to a researched presentation, it takes a Fisher College student on average, 6 years to graduate. Is that possible? Lots of tuition money there! Only 13% who matriculate, receive Bachelor Degrees. This information, in and of itself, is worthy of a 60 Minutes or Dateline expose!

Thank you for the opportunity to attend neighborhood meetings with the BRA and Fisher College representatives.

I am against Fisher College expansion and see no positive aspect with regard to expanding the student population in the historic Back Bay of Boston!

Sincerely,

Sarah S. Smith  
125 Beacon Street - #5 (owner)  
Boston, MA 02116



Restoring and Enhancing  
The Charles River Esplanade  
Use It. Love It. Protect It.

August 5, 2013

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201



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Dear Ms. Sullivan,

The Esplanade Association is the friends group focused on restoring and enhancing the Charles River Esplanade. Our park shares many of the same challenges and opportunities that face other urban parks. With that in mind, we have reviewed the Institutional Master Plan from Fisher College and would like to submit several comments.

On balance we have found Fisher to be a helpful and welcome supporter of the Esplanade. The addition of additional residential students and the alteration of several buildings in the neighborhood to dormitories or institutional use raise a number of issues related to the parks in the area.

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. We urge you to consider these issues when reviewing Fisher College's IMP.

Sincerely,

Margo Newman  
Board Chair

Cc: Mayor Thomas Menino ; [mayor@cityofboston.gov](mailto:mayor@cityofboston.gov)  
Peter Meade, Director, Boston Redevelopment Association; [Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov)  
Howard Kassler, Chair, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay; [info@nabbonline.com](mailto:info@nabbonline.com)  
Michael Ross, Boston City Councilor ; [Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov)  
Jack Murray, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of conservation and Recreation; [Jack.Murray@state.ma.us](mailto:Jack.Murray@state.ma.us)

Dear Katelyn,

I am a Fisher Task Force Member, Trustee of 100 Beacon St. condominium association and direct neighbor of Fisher College.

If the BRA deems it appropriate, I respectfully request a 45 day extension of the comment period because direct talks are scheduled to start between key community stakeholders this week, which talks may well lead to an agreement between the parties. This meeting has been delayed due to summer scheduling conflicts.

As a direct neighbor and Trustee of 100 Beacon Street, I would like to comment on the current condition that needs to be addressed on Back Street behind Fisher College. I request that the City require the College to eliminate its parking on Back Street as a condition of continued use of the basement and rear space of their buildings for kitchen, meeting and classroom uses.

Back Street is a private street not under the City's jurisdiction. The City granted Fisher the right to use the space behind their buildings(not Back St.) and their basement for a kitchen and activity space for the College. The College is the only property to park cars on both sides of Back Street narrowing it down to one way traffic in back of their building. The delivery service required by its current use blocks all traffic on Back Street. not This creates a serious inconvenience to its neighbors, but is a safety issue for the entire block. The owners of each building maintain their piece of Back St. for the benefit of all traffic.

Back Street, more importantly, although private, is used by the public from the Kenmore Square direction to access the one-way traffic patterns of Arlington Street between Beacon St. and Commonwealth Ave., and between Arlington and Berkley along Beacon St, Marlborough St. and Commonwealth Ave. It is also used by the public when Storrow Drive is backed up. Thus, the current condition of parking on Back Street by the College needs to be addressed by the City before addressing future plans.

The benefit for the College and City by eliminating the parking will allow for convenient and safe drop off/pick up of students and delivery of goods and pick up of garbage without causing a safety situation on Back St., Mugar Way or Beacon St.

Very truly yours,  
Edward E. Zuker

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

I am a senior at Fisher College pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Management with a concentration in Fashion Merchandising. I am writing this letter in support of the Institutional Master Plan that Fisher College is undergoing. As a proud student and student employee of Fisher College I support any improvements or changes to Fisher College that will enhance the institution. As a resident of Fisher College for three years, Beacon Street has really become my home. This is where I've discovered myself, met lifelong friends, developed a career path, and overall changed my perspective on life. Fisher College is not just your average college; here we have our own small, close-knit community.

As a Resident Assistant and a highly involved student I am aware that our students contribute greatly to our city. I've participated in many community service projects around the area including cleaning up the esplanade and working in local soup kitchens. We also contribute to the economy, as my fellow students either work or shop within our area supporting local businesses, farmers markets, and the overall well-being of the local economy. I even know students who help out with the neighbors by baby sitting and dog walking! If there were more students living on our campus it would really only positively affect the economic status of the neighborhood because we would have more volunteers, workers, and shoppers.

This upcoming year will be my second year as an RA at Fisher College. As an RA, part of our job is monitoring all of the students and enforcing policies on not just students, but my friends. In my last year at Fisher College I had to deal with a very minimal amount of incidents on campus, and those students were held accountable for all of their actions immediately. I've always felt safe on campus, especially with the campus police desk monitoring everybody who comes in and all the cameras throughout the school.

One of the main reasons I chose to come to Fisher College was the location. As a fashion major I was sold on living blocks away from the greatest shopping areas. Now Boston feels like my home, my

community, my city. I work, I shop, I eat, I run and do everything in this small vicinity we call the Back Bay and I truly feel like a resident. Due to my experience I will likely reside in Boston after graduation as many of my friends have also done. I have never felt more at home than how I've felt in my couple of years at Fisher College, and I want what is best for the college and I believe approving the IMP is the best for Fisher, students and the City of Boston.

Sincerely,

Bronte Dearden

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Tony Morris [tony@morris-company.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 05, 2013 1:04 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Cc:** Info@nabbonline.com  
**Subject:** Fisher College IMP - Comments in Opposition

[copy of letter sent]

2 August 2013

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

RE: Opposition to Fisher College IMP

Ms. Sullivan:

I write to oppose the Fisher Institutional Master Plan (IMP) in total as a completely incompatible, inappropriate, and possibly unlawful use of the buildings, street, and neighborhood in Back Bay.

The section of Back Bay in which Fisher sits is a historic residential neighborhood for which a college campus, let alone any expansion of a college campus, is completely improper, degrades the quality of life of neighbors, degrades the surrounding property, adds a dangerous level of traffic to already crowded and heavily used streets, and erodes the City's tax base in an unwise and avoidable way.

Projects 1 (additional dorm beds); 2, 3, and 4 (conversion of existing rental units to dorms); 5 (carriage house addition); and 6 (College Terrace) add student and staff density, intensity of use, traffic, potential noise, and unsightliness that are not merely incompatible with the existing area, they are actually hostile to qualities of the neighborhood and the quality of life which taxpaying neighbors should be able to enjoy.

Project 7 (Tellus) also represents a continuing incompatible use of what could be highly valuable, tax producing residential property.

Project 1 and Projects 2, 3, and 4 – additional beds and the proposed conversion of 115, 139, and 141 Beacon to dormitories - are particularly egregious and improper proposed uses of property including the three buildings now currently on the tax rolls.

On the first block of Beacon, Fisher proposes to add 280 students to the roughly 820 using the area today (total 1100) including 177 new full time residents in addition to the 289 currently present (IMP p.19).

How can Beacon Street, Public Alley 421, and the adjacent streets absorb this increase in population, especially the new 177 full time residents, without unreasonable and unnecessary reductions in public and personal safety, security, health and cleanliness, and quiet enjoyment for the very high tax paying residential properties that are adjacent to the Fisher property?

- What will happen to the traffic in Public Alley 421 with 129 new full time student residents living on it?
- How will deliveries, trash pickup, ingress/egress, car traffic from this increase in population not disrupt and aggravate the existing conditions including vehicular and rodent traffic and noise?
  - o Will there be 0700 trash pickup with big compacting trucks cycling their systems?
- Where will the amenities be that will keep these 177 new residents from 'playing in the streets' any less than the current students play in the streets?
- Where is the outdoor space they can freely use?
- How close are the basic amenities including a convenience store, restaurants, dry cleaner, liquor store, etc.?
- 
- What will happen to the property values of the remaining private buildings on the first block of Beacon?
- What owner will be motivated to make substantial improvements or redevelopment of the remaining residential buildings on the first block of Beacon?
- What will happen to the property values (and tax base) of buildings on Alley 421 on the Marlborough Street side?

IMP says that residential students are not allowed to bring personal cars but that commuters are obliged to deal with the limited parking situation on Beacon and in the area. The Plan calls for substantial increases in both populations, thereby potentially aggravating traffic and parking.

- How is the ban on resident student cars enforced?
- How many infractions have there been discovered in 2013, 2012, 2011?
- How were they dealt with?
- In how many accidents have student pedestrians or student drivers been involved in in the last three years? What is the trend?
- Have students been personally injured by vehicles or injured others with vehicles?
- How will the vehicular access of the extra 280 students and 177 new residents affect existing conditions?
- What steps will Fisher take to keep an already difficult situation from getting worse, especially given the thousand or so possible DAILY jaywalking incidents calculated by a speaker at the last Fisher public hearing, should property use change?

If Fisher has a mission (other than absorbing cash borrowed by students to pay their high tuition fees and expenses), its wisest choice is to convert its high value real estate in Back Bay to cash (as Emerson did and as Suffolk is doing on Beacon Hill) and to invest that cash in a campus where the students could really benefit from residential life in a location that is compatible with student living. The first block of Beacon Street was never that location and is not now.

I thank you in advance for the BRA rejecting the Fisher IMP as incompatible, non-conforming, and improper use of the historic Back Bay residential neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Anthony P. Morris  
 301 Berkeley Street #6  
 Boston, MA 02116



Ms. Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston City Hall, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201  
August 2, 2013

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

Having lived at 120 Beacon Street for over 35 years, I have a long term perspective on Fisher College as well as the changes that have taken place in the Back Bay during that time. As a direct abutter, based on the College's current and past actions, I strongly oppose its IMP as well as any expansion in this location whatsoever. I respectfully request that the BRA ask Fisher to either withdraw the IMP or submit a new, totally revised version focusing on expansion opportunities in alternative sites in the city of Boston. An alternative location would advance the school's future plans benefitting both its students as well as preserving the residential integrity of the Back Bay. The current IMP accomplished neither.

#### **Why remedies are impossible at the current site**

Fisher's actions over the past twenty years have led me to conclude that it has already reached a tipping point causing major harm to and jeopardizing the health and safety of neighbors, pedestrians, drivers, and its own students. It's unwillingness to enter into serious conversations with the NABB or direct abutters has resulted in an unnecessarily acrimonious relationship. Moreover, Fisher has evidenced daily a disregard or utter ignorance of its effect on the environment, city, the neighborhood and its students. And, this lack of integrity in dealing with others such as the fiction of a loading dock in memo from the President's Office or Fisher's promise not to turn income producing buildings into a dorms (at the Lenox Hotel meeting) has given neighbors much more reason to be skeptical than trusting on any future Fisher representations or promises.

Unlike many town-gown conflicts, this is not a situation where students spill out from a campus into a neighborhood. There is no campus. Fisher's buildings are oddly configured, randomly spaced brownstones not fully renovated and ill suited for their current purposes. Students have little common space and virtually no on-site facilities for any activities which results in a unique and unfortunate tension with residents. There is no gym, auditorium, theater, art studio, outdoor athletic space or designated parking for students whatsoever. When they do what college students normally do: congregate smoking and blocking the space outside their classrooms, drink a little too much and get sick, smoke pot, hang out in large groups, get rowdy and scream loudly after sport events, they do so on public sidewalks and streets, in private entrances and gardens in the middle of a residential, family neighborhood.

#### **What it Means to Be a Residential Neighborhood**

As letters from the NABB and others have indicated, this is a neighborhood not zoned for commercial use or institutional expansion. And, in the past ten years since Emerson's exit to downtown to expand,



more families as well as retirees and recent graduates have moved onto this block and into the Back Bay.

In our condominium building alone, seven children, from five different families have come home from the hospital to live their entire lives at 120 Beacon St. until they found work and moved elsewhere. They range in age from 2-32 with one leaving for college this year and the youngest starting pre-school.

We, like many residents of the Back Bay, volunteer to support a wide variety of institutions and public spaces including schools, churches and synagogues, the Public Garden and the Esplanade in ways which enhance Boston for all its citizens and visitors. All of this has resulted in a vibrant, interesting and exciting community which attracts more residents demonstrably increasing the tax base necessary in a city where almost 50% of land is owned by non-profits.

Colleges which have chosen to expand have left the Back Bay. It has been an excellent decision. Emerson has thrived downtown and is now preparing for further expansion which it could never have done had it remained. Simmons Graduate School of Business has created a wonderful, energy efficient facility in the Fens. To choose to stay in the Back Bay is by necessity a decision not to expand—a reality for all institutions from which Fisher, for whatever reason, feels exempt, but should not be.

#### **Fisher's Recent, Troubled History**

Thirty five years ago, Fisher was a small two year women's college making very few demands on the city. Cars parked on one side of Back Street. Students arrived one year and departed the next. There were no summer sessions.

Sadly for all concerned, that changed dramatically when Fisher became co-ed and introduced its four (usually six) year B.A. program without adequate planning or facilities in place. There were no athletic programs for a much more active student body. There was noise and disruption at all hours of the day and night. As trustee of our building then, I wrote several letters to the President of Fisher lamenting the deteriorating conditions and outlining our concerns.

#### **The Shooting and its Aftermath**

The fact that in the early fall of 2001 there was a near riot on Beacon Street after a Fisher College dance was evacuated came, unfortunately, as no surprise. The police were already there trying to gain control of the situation when the shooting occurred. Afterwards, the entire block banded together to express outrage. Hearings were held at City Hall where I and several others testified about the numerous unaddressed issues leading up to the shooting. In a subsequent meeting at the Lenox Hotel, having to get neighbors' approval to refinance an income producing building, Fisher promised that the building would never be used as a dorm. Fisher, however, has "changed its mind" in the IMP.

**Fisher has expected total support services from the city and sacrifices from the neighborhood but has given very little back in return.**

**Lack of Contributions to the City (See PILOT attachment for further details)**

In spite of the mayor's request and its recent financial health, Fisher is one of very few private non-profit colleges in the City which has not made a single PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) contribution. It expects taxpayers to provide police, fire protection, street maintenance and repair, sewer and water, all without contributing a single penny in cash.

Fisher's "contributions in kind" are questionable at best, particularly without further data. Its program for Boston students, which is outlined without any information on the outcome, appears to be primarily a marketing and recruitment strategy to increase enrollment by Boston students. "Financial aid" seems to be a "discount" price to ensure that a large number of students pay tuition and obtain government loans then paid to Fisher. There is no information provided on graduation, placement or student debt burdens. Other universities in the city offer full scholarships to Boston high school students which pay full tuition, room and board, and provide for the purchase of necessary supplies.

Fisher students volunteer to get work experience at non-profits enhancing their own resumes, as is common among college students. As an item for which Fisher takes full monetary credit (as an in-kind contribution) of \$200,000 it strains credibility.

#### **Sacrifice of Quality of Life by Abutters and Neighbors (See parking attachment)**

Fisher's presence in the Back Bay in an already densely developed neighborhood places additional burdens of congestion, noise, trash, and far higher density than on any other block. Already, even at night, the supply of parking spaces is half of what is needed by residents. There is a degradation of property and quality of life as well as day to day frustrations and annoyances. None of these is mitigated in any way by Fisher's minimal claimed benefits.

#### **Opposition to Each and Every Project Proposed in the IMP**

I also would specifically oppose all of the following projects in the IMP for following reasons:

1. Converting its buildings on Beacon Street from institutional use to dorms not only destroys one of the most historic interiors in the Back Bay (at 118) but also takes Administration offices from the block to where students spend far less time. (Project 1) The balcony at 118 also collapsed in the past as the result of lack of maintenance.
2. Converting 115, 139, and 141 from rental units to dorms also violates the Mayor's stated policy of supporting Boston households rather than dorms for potential, not current students. It would also take \$86,000 off the tax rolls. (Projects 2, 3, &4)
3. Building additions at 118 and 112 are objectionable on multiple levels:
  - a. Building out in a forbidden area to be used (or rented out) without the necessity of a liquor license for the prime purpose of parties in the evening in a residential neighborhood is outrageous on every level.
  - b. Building out at 112 for an "outdoor" space which could only be used less than six months of the year at a time when neighbors would be most affected by the noise, accomplishes little to improve students' lives and much to disturb neighbors'.

- c. In this same space behind 112-118 there is currently proposed: a student center which would be built out, a loading zone, room for parking two vans, room for the four cars currently parked in the other bay, a large recycling area, and storage for bikes. Obviously, this is impossible.
- d. Moreover, all though many of these buildings are rented out to other institutions in the summer, most have no air conditioning, and lack other full renovations.

No proposed space has activities that would engage students or give them outdoor space of their own.( Already, at 120 we have had students jumping on the roof at 5:00 a.m. in the morning. )

Students need space of their own and physical outlets. Other nearby universities in Boston provide fabulous facilities: ice skating rinks, tennis courts, fully equipped gyms, basketball courts, fields for baseball and soccer, dance studios. Fisher's full tuition is not inexpensive. At \$40,000+ per year, should the demographics change at all, Fisher's micro dorms with no air conditioning, little common space, no athletic facilities without busing, and no state of the art spaces may have trouble competing with other local educational options.

In the current IMP neighbors would have students loitering on the front sidewalks smoking, "invitees" on the back deck drinking and partying at private events, and students "hanging out and unengaged" on another back deck. Meanwhile, there would be no loading zone, no parking for vans, four less parking spaces, and general chaos on Back and Beacon Streets. But, still there would be no facilities for student activities or dorms up to current standards.

Fisher has not been a good neighbor. It has benefited but not valued all that the city provides and how much neighbors have tolerated without much complaint. It deserves no "special consideration" or the right to expand when other colleges respected the zoning in place and sought other alternatives.

The amount of construction and change on the block would be major should Fisher move. But, should Fisher wish to expand, it is the only choice. And, in the long term by far the best solution for all involved. I urge the BRA to use its considerable knowledge and interest in developing all areas of the city, to help Fisher find acceptable alternatives beyond the Back Bay for their future expansion.

Respectfully,

Vicki C. Smith

## **PARKING AND CONGESTION CAUSED BY FISHER COLLEGE**

For many Back Bay residents Fisher College now, without any increase in students, ensures the worst of all parking and driving scenarios. Both a large number of day students taking up most all metered parking and being picked up and dropped off every week-day and a large number of boarding students means that not just on "move-in" day but before and after every holiday break including week-ends, there are cars and vans parked and double parked on Beacon Street between Arlington and Berkley while students move in and out everything that they plan to take away for the holidays. Moreover, no one in the City can use any of those spaces for most of Labor Day – a fairly significant burden for others who may be moving in or out, taking children of their own off to college, or having guests – not to mention visitors.

### **FISHER'S INCREDIBLY HIGH CURRENT PARKING BURDEN ON THE BACK BAY**

Fisher currently has 23 spaces on Back Street with another 2 vans parked in a Bay and another 4 parked in spaces that the IMP would eliminate. Those spaces are filled almost every day and virtually every week-end by Fisher staff. And, they are monitored very efficiently by Fisher security. In fact, it seems to be one their most important functions.

Fisher's need for extra parking now is so great that it has taken to routinely "buying" up to 20 spaces from the City from 8:00 -6:00 and occasionally, the entire block, not just for "moving in" days but for special events, and any work they are having done, ensuring that they cannot be used anyone else in the Back Bay.

There is no parking provided whatsoever for students including the more than 300 day students. There is also no parking for their parents, visitors, and the vast cadre of services needed to supply a college. These include the buses used for athletic practices as well as events, the semi trucks supplying food, the largest sized Coke trucks, and the vast number of workers' trucks and vans that all of these historic buildings need (elevator, electrical, plumbing). There are 43 metered spaces on the block which ideally, without Fisher's monopolization of almost 30 on a daily basis, would be used by:

- Residents who are dropping off or picking up in front on their residences
- Workmen working in much for the Back Bay without metered parking
- Greater Boston residents (and many families) who want to visit the Public Garden to ride the Swan Boats or bike on the Esplanade bike path
- Delivery trucks (Fed Ex, UPS, Peapod) making deliveries for residents and students
- Visitors to the city

Day students tie up most of these spaces from 9:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m. on each week-day. The difference when Fisher is on break is dramatic and visible immediately to anyone who lives there.

This tying up of all of the parking on a block that has up to 16,000 vehicles daily (before the Longfellow Bridge three year repair began) means then, that everyone else has to double park: the buses, the vans, those picking up and dropping off Fisher students, every delivery truck. The street then becomes

incredibly dangerous as cyclists try to navigate, students dart out mid-block behind buses, and cars have to swerve around large vehicles to turn right onto Storrow Drive.

### **QUESTIONS TO BE ADDRESSED BY THE TRAFFIC STUDY**

Therefore as part of the parking study I would respectfully ask the BRA as part of the scoping determination to ascertain:

1. How many permits has Fisher requested from the City in the past 12 months for parking spaces for the entire day? What is the total number of spaces that were then excluded from any other use but Fisher's during the year?
2. How many students use commercial parking as the Fisher memo indicates?
3. Do we have records from the Boston Common Garage (the only commercial facility nearby)?
4. What would be the average cost per week for commuting students?
5. If at \$18.00 for three hours four day a week (or \$1.512.00 per year) does Fisher subsidize those costs particularly for those student who receive financial aid?
6. How many boarding students use the Boston Common garage for the year?
7. Are any Fisher students living in dorms eligible for resident parking stickers?
8. Do any faculty receive additional incentives to park in the Boston Common Garage?
9. How many students buy MBTA passes weekly? Monthly?
10. How many faculty buy MBTA passes weekly? Monthly?

## ❖ **PILOT Contributions (Payments in Lieu of Taxes) of lack thereof**

Fisher like many non-profit schools in greater Boston relies on the City to provide fire and police protection, road construction and maintenance, snow removal, street cleaning, sidewalk repair and maintenance of an historic and aging infrastructure.

For these services, unlike most non-profit schools in Boston, Fisher makes no voluntary dollar payment whatsoever. Berklee College of Music, Emerson, Simmons, Wentworth Institute of Technology, Suffolk, Northeastern, BU and Tufts all make dollar donations as well as supplying significant other benefits to their students, neighborhoods and the city's quality of life.

A report on the use of PILOTs contends that "PILOT contributions should be based on the value of the real estate owned by an institution... reflecting the size and quality of the real estate holding."

Using that criteria, Fisher's no PILOT contribution, coupled with its ownership of some of the most expensive property in the City which would, if converted to residences, add probably close to a \$1,000,000 to the City revenues is highly significant and makes its unwillingness to contribute that much more concerning. It should not in any way be rewarded for taking a "free ride" at taxpayers' expense. Fisher pays nothing for all of the municipal services it uses daily. Any implication that it would be willing to "contribute" only if it is allowed to change all zoning and residential precedent in the neighborhood is even more abhorrent.

Moreover:

1. Fisher took \$33,000 of property taxes off the tax rolls by purchasing the Butera School of Art Building at 113 Beacon Street without changing the zoning to reflect the change of status to a degree granting institution.
2. Fisher's IMP would take other three Beacon Street buildings, currently income producing and taxpaying properties, and convert them into dorms for future students.
3. Fisher's impact on adjacent streets because it lacks adequate facilities (including a loading dock) is far greater than any normal use by residents. Semi trailer food delivery on the Storrow Drive egress, the Greyhound sized buses parked for long periods on Beacon Street, the continual drop off and pick up of commuter students, students smoking and blocking pedestrian passage, as well as the double parking throughout the neighborhood create dangerous driving and walking environments. Residents have documented many of these instances with photographs. (See Michael Weingarten's comments on traffic.)

Furthermore, this high usage results in dramatically more wear and tear on sidewalks and streets creating potholes as well as other unsafe conditions. The cigarette butts and trash, picked up on Fisher property, but not abutters' negatively impacts everyone

..

#### CONTRIBUTIONS IN KIND -- HOW BENEFICIAL ?

Instead of making any tax donations, Fisher provides general data on what it contributes in kind to the community. Given, the demands it places on the city and neighborhood, I'd request that the BRA ask for far more detailed analysis focusing on Fisher's claims which total more than \$1.5 million. In particular, clarification and analysis is needed to adequately evaluate:

THE DIVERSITY INITIATIVE (A misnomer if 53% are non-minority?)

PROGRAM FOR BOSTON STUDENTS – Fisher's estimated Value: \$1,000,000

This program, according to Fisher, provides discounts "financial scholarships" for 176 day students. Of those 101 receive institutional aid 76 are minorities, apparently 100 are not.

1. Further data on this program is needed to make any assessment of the actual impact and whether or not it is a benefit to Boston students, their families or the city at large. I would reference my earlier letter requesting information on graduation, default and, placement for these students specifically. The Department of Education data indicates that only 13% of all first time, full-time, B.A. candidates at Fisher College graduate in four years. Unless a large proportion of students successfully transfer, graduate, obtain employment and are not burdened by excessive student debt this is not an advantage. (So far Fisher has been, in spite of several requests, unwilling to release this information to the public.)
2. A full response with complete data from the Department of Education to Ann O'Hara's letter to the BRA is also requested. In addition, Fisher should supply charts that quantify how this student population would be impacted by any change in the student loan rates, and how Fisher would be affected by the loss of Federal dollars should its programs be put at risk by its high default rate. (In 2010 Fisher's default rate for Pell grants which go to the neediest students was 35.3%)

CULTURAL SERVICES \$75,000

In terms of cultural services provided, given the vast range of options in Boston at the BPL, and other Boston institutions, how many neighbors attend Fisher events? In 35 years I have never seen one publicized.

#### CHARITY AND VOLUNTEER \$200,000

Fortunately, this generation volunteers at an amazing level. How many students volunteer for how many hours? Can we have a list of exactly how many functions Fisher has held for non-profit groups? Would Fisher compare their philanthropic activities with other non-profit schools in the city to give us some understanding of where they stand comparatively?

As members of a city and community it is expected that every student and every school in some way contribute. Doing so should not result in an extra \$200,000 benefit claim to the community unless the schools can demonstrate that they contribute in tangible ways dramatically more than other institutions.

#### BACK STREET (\$10,000)

Fisher, which has 23 parking spaces on both sides of Back Street as well as vans in a bay numbers, paints and cleans its property. As an owner of a Back Bay parking space, they do not paint, clean, remove snow or trash from Fisher students from my and anyone else's parking spaces, although until I called the President they did, without permission, use my space for short term parking. As their Back Street parking has dramatically expanded narrowing passage to less than 11 feet which forces all trucks : UPS, Fed Ex, movers (who tried to get onto Storrow), and the City garbage trucks to pass very slowly, it has proved detrimental rather than beneficial to other Back Street abutters. Fisher also closes down Back Street, taking it over on Labor Day for a picnic for new students and making it difficult for other residents to access their spaces.

#### SECURITY/ FISHER POLICE ON THE BLOCK

Fisher has Security officers some of whom are very courteous, others are not. Fisher security are not called often, because many concerns of residents are conflicts of interest for Fisher: idling buses, double parked delivery trucks, students out of sight of security cameras.( Only once before 7:00 a.m. on a Saturday morning did I see an officer checking on a bus taking a female athletic team to the airport.) At other times, buses have sat for over 40 minutes, idling for at least 10, on Beacon Street at rush hour. No Fisher personnel have ever appeared.



As a dog owner, I have for the past 35 years been out most nights and early mornings. I have never seen a security guard at night. In the past year, students have been smoking pot in residential entryways, in cars parked on Beacon Street, in the Public Garden, on the Fiedler Bridge. And, as I mentioned at the first meeting, there is reason for concern that there is drug dealing. Residents don't call Fisher because traditionally the initial response has always been "Prove its Fisher students."

And, complaints, like mine at the meeting, may or may not be registered but do not seem to be followed up on. What is the policy of Fisher towards students smoking cigarettes and/or pot on the sidewalks of a residential family neighborhood, on the Fiedler Bridge as school children go the Playspace, and on the corner of the Beacon/Arlington section of the Public Garden?

And, if the response as it was in the memo to abutters this winter, that anyone can smoke on a public sidewalk, there really is no benefit to having security who have no interest in protecting the neighborhood.

August 5, 2013

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan  
Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms. Sullivan

We are writing to express our opposition both specifically to Fisher College's plans to expand their dormitory footprint on the first block of Beacon Street as well as their master plan more broadly. The expanded dormitory capacity would exacerbate what is already an untenable student population on the first block. Fisher's master plan to expand the school is completely out of keeping with the residential character of the neighborhood.

We are concerned about Fisher's expansion – as parents of a 5-year-old girl, as members of the Back Bay community who has helped our block evolve in a positive direction, and a human being who cares about families who have not benefited from the same advantages as we have. There are several reasons for my opposition:

*1. Fisher is using the Back Bay to market false hope to optimistic, disadvantaged families:*

Although Fisher poses as institution that is helping to forward human development and social mobility, all evidence indicates that it is capitalizing on naiveté (of families and the Back Bay community) to maximize profits. We have recently learned that the school is:

- Fisher is saddling earnest families with huge debt loads that they are not able to pay, while we understand that they provide only 13% of their students the BA degree that would enable them to repay their loans and work toward the lifestyle that they experienced during their brief time in the Back Bay.
- Fisher is using the appeal of our historic neighborhood in the Back Bay to bamboozle hardworking families into thinking that, by taking on an inappropriate level of debt, they will offer their children the opportunity to achieve a lifestyle consistent with the one that they see in Fisher's glossy marketing brochures. Fisher's students suffer a 19% default rate on their loans vs. 7.3% for the state of Massachusetts. Even worse, student loans have no statute of limitations, so these debt burdens endure long after these students have left the school with or without a degree (the overwhelming majority of them without).

*2. The leadership's true colors are already clear, even now at the stage when most leaders would be working hard to create a positive impression.*

- The leaders have been high-handed and secretive; they are only now going public with their plans after another significant purchase
- To claim that these buildings were bought to compensate for buildings sold in the 1970s is just preposterous. They are not “returning Fisher to its prior baseline physical capacity” (as they state in their proposal), they are attempting to execute a huge expansion in an inappropriate location.
- The Fisher President never shows up at any meetings.
- The Fisher team had not even thought to assess the possible impact of adding more dense dormitory-style lodging on the fragile infrastructure of this historic community.
- Publishing notices in the Boston Herald only is cynical and disingenuous.

3. *Fisher seems unwilling and/or unable to control their students:*

- Students are frequently found lounging on the private property of residents, smoking cigarettes and marijuana, and leaving trash on steps and in gardens.
- Large numbers of students often run across the streets, shout, and even throw balls – endangering themselves as well as drivers on this major thoroughfare.
- Fisher has continually promised to provide adequate security and/ or supervision, and these promises have never been kept.
- The idling school buses double parked in front of the school cause traffic problems and endanger drivers on Beacon Street.
- The students set a poor example for the children that the rest of the community is working hard to raise. In our building alone, there are four children that are watching and learning from their neighbors.

4. Fisher’s vision is not consistent with the infrastructure or values of the Back Bay community.

- The additional student population would represent a very substantial increase in the overall population of the block and a significant shift in its composition, which is inappropriate even as it stands today).<sup>1</sup>
- This type of development would be inconsistent with stated position of community organizations against intensive institutional development in residential neighborhood.
- An expansion could pose a significant burden on this block’s fragile infrastructure.

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<sup>1</sup> By my count, there are approximately 28 non-Fisher buildings on the block. Our building has 14 residents in it. If we assume that’s in line with the rest of the street, the additional 300 students that Fisher wants to add to its enrollment would represent roughly ¾ of the entire non-Fisher population of the block. If the block were already at a tipping point, this additional population would shove it over the edge.

Given all of this, it is our strong view that we shouldn't view Fisher's recently-expressed openness to potentially backing away from their dormitory expansion plan is necessary but not sufficient. By pushing so hard, far, and fast, they have now forced us to do our homework and understand the core nature of this institution. We can now see that Fisher has had an unsustainable presence on the first block even before they purchased the Butera building, the building on the corner of Arlington & Beacon, and the Tellus building. They should no longer be allowed to continue marketing the Back Bay as a way to entice students to mortgage their futures -- and should start to begin the search for a more appropriate campus location.

Respectfully yours,

Evie and Erik Black Dykema  
121 Beacon Street, Unit 6  
Boston, MA 02116  
(617)283-6185

August 5, 2013

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201



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Dear Ms. Sullivan,

The Esplanade Association is the friends group focused on restoring and enhancing the Charles River Esplanade. Our park shares many of the same challenges and opportunities that face other urban parks. With that in mind, we have reviewed the Institutional Master Plan from Fisher College and would like to submit several comments.

On balance we have found Fisher to be a helpful and welcome supporter of the Esplanade. The addition of additional residential students and the alteration of several buildings in the neighborhood to dormitories or institutional use raise a number of issues related to the parks in the area.

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. We urge you to consider these issues when reviewing Fisher College's IMP.

Sincerely,

Margo Newman  
Board Chair

Cc: Mayor Thomas Menino ; [mayor@cityofboston.gov](mailto:mayor@cityofboston.gov)  
Peter Meade, Director, Boston Redevelopment Association; [Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov)  
Howard Kassler, Chair, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay; [info@nabonline.com](mailto:info@nabonline.com)  
Michael Ross, Boston City Councilor ; [Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov)  
Jack Murray, Commissioner, Massachusetts Department of conservation and Recreation; [Jack.Murray@state.ma.us](mailto:Jack.Murray@state.ma.us)

August 5, 2013

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan  
Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston City Hall, Ninth Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

I'm writing to voice my concern about, and opposition to the proposed expansion of Fisher College in the Back Bay. Fisher College's folly and arrogance are clearly detailed in its proposed expansion and its proposed institutional master plan. A few examples:  
For many years Fisher has ignored regulations that established under the Zoning Code for the city of Boston.

- Non-conforming use of buildings in the residential neighborhood,
- Expansion of use without zoning relief,

Requirements of the Inspectional Service Department:

- Improper maintenance of dumpsters that exacerbates the proliferation of rats in the alleys,
- Change of use without going through ISD, and

Guidelines of the Back Bay Architectural Commission:

- Additions of more than one-story in height are inappropriate.

All these and more have been carefully and fully detailed in numerous letters you have received from the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay.

It seems to me that the best course of action for Fisher College is to follow the example of Emerson College and expand outside of the Back Bay residential neighborhood. Fisher has already stated that it must continue to grow and add students in order to maintain its viability as a degree-granting college, and continue to add students in order to maintain its fiscal health, and that it is never likely to be able to meet the full demand for student beds.

Sincerely,  
Frances Lessin Duffly  
180 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay [info@nabbonline.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, August 05, 2013 4:42 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** FW: Thoughts on Fisher and to Fisher

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** William Wallace <[samwallace1421@gmail.com](mailto:samwallace1421@gmail.com)>  
**Date:** August 5, 2013, 4:29:59 PM EDT  
**To:** "[nabb@info.online.com](mailto:nabb@info.online.com)" <[nabb@info.online.com](mailto:nabb@info.online.com)>  
**Subject:** Thoughts on Fisher and to Fisher

Over the years we had thought of Fisher as a fine school. But having lived both on the Hill and BackBay for most of my years, one could surely notice the changes.

- A. The number of students loitering.
- B. They are on the steps, blocking side walks etc.
- C. The tremendous number of bicycles, little motor bikes and motor cycles.
- D. The double parking, blocking traffic, j-walking.
- E. The great number of moving vans and U Halls making it difficult to pass.
- F. How many parking permits have been issued to Fisher addresses ? Do we have these numbers. It is difficult for Taxpayers to find a parking space.
- G. The smoke from cigarettes and Joints making it difficult and unpleasant to pass.

Fisher College compares themselves to Suffolk and Emerson. Suffolk is on the back side of the Hill and Emerson had not caused nearly as many problems. Both have certainly made their locations better for the students and new neighborhoods.

I spoke with the Johnson Building on the corner of Beacon and Fairfield. They are wonderful neighbors and only have 4 full time employees.

Of concerns is the merger and possible sale of the NE School of Optometry and the Church of Scientology and the land in between them. Andy might have some info on the Scientology Building.

Surely Fisher has inconvenienced all of their neighbors and brought a diminution of property values, peace and quiet and quality of life to all that surround Fisher.

Fisher should relocate and a new campus would be best for all involved.

Respectfully Yours

Sam Wallace

Jonathan Lally  
102 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116

Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Boston, MA 02201

August 1, 2013

Dear Katelyn,

I am writing in support of the IMP Fisher College has submitted. I moved to Beacon Street six years ago when I married the Director of Housing and Residential Life at Fisher College. As you can imagine I was hesitant at first moving onto a college campus along with my two young daughters, however today I can't imagine having made a different decision.

I expected many adjustments moving back into a college environment with a family as I had attended a large university for my undergraduate degree and a private institution for my Master's degree. However, I can say without a doubt that I've never experienced a calmer collegiate residential environment. Of course there are some late night phone calls due to an emergency or staff question that my wife receives, but that comes with the territory. I can attest to the fact that the majority of the students are committed to their goal and are respectful and responsible citizens of the Back Bay and those that are not are held accountable for their actions.

I also had the chance to attend an IMP meeting held at Fisher College and it surprised me to hear the neighbors discussing issues on Beacon Street and the fact that they relate all of these issues with Fisher students. I feel as if anything that occurs on the public street has been attributed to Fisher College students. I have witnessed my wife respond to many calls in which the issue can be attributed to hotel guests at 113 Beacon, cab driver altercations with tourists and non student incidents from bar patrons who park at meters in front of the College. I also listened to many neighbor complaints regarding Fisher delivery vehicles and athletic busses double parked on Beacon Street. However, I can also attest to the numerous neighbor related double parked vehicles such as Pea Pod, Dry Cleaning, Furniture delivery, linen delivery, landscaping and contractors. I'm certain that Fisher can and will address issues related to it's operations, but feel it will be a disservice to its students if the IMP is not passed based on the above claims.

In an environment when many colleges and universities are experiencing low enrollment Fisher is experiencing record enrollment. I feel that this is due to the personalized attention from faculty, staff and administration that I have experienced first hand. Fisher College has been in its current location for over 70 years and in those years it has contributed greatly to the neighborhood and city. Fisher is an institution in the Back Bay and I'm happy that it has made an impact on my family. My children are excited about education and community service and I can't say that would be the case without our affiliation with Fisher College.

Therefore, I respectfully request that the BRA approve the Fisher College IMP.

Respectfully,

Jonathan Lally  
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