

## Exhibit C

1. Comment Letters in Support of a Shorter Extension, and
2. General Comment Letters/Other Letters



Corey Zehngebot <corey.zehngebot@boston.gov>

---

## South End Urban Renewal

---

hhershfang@verizon.net <hhershfang@verizon.net>  
To: corey.zehngebot@boston.gov

Mon, Oct 26, 2015 at 5:08 PM

Dear Corey,

Your smarts, commitment and energy, among other of your considerable virtues, continue to impress me. As I noted earlier, pity that you -- and your boss -- were not there from the start and would be there indefinitely. As for what should be done now, I think yesterday's Boston Globe editorial fairly evaluates the current situation and suggests what I think a reasonable proposal.

Best,

Herb

---

On 10/23/15, Corey Zehngebot<corey.zehngebot@boston.gov> wrote:

Ron, Ben, Ann, and Herb:

I know you've been following our extension process carefully, and hope that Ron communicated to all of you the conversation he and I had at his home (October 7). I also was able to connect over the phone with Herb, and wanted to offer the same willingness to speak with whomever else.

I don't know if you heard the WBUR piece on Urban Renewal last week, but there was a clear pitch for the importance of preservation, a nuanced explanation of "blight," and a serious discussion of the reframing of urban renewal for today. You can listen at: <http://www.wbur.org/2015/10/15/boston-urban-renewal-west-end-exhibit>

Also, I know we've spoken at length a number of times, but this powerpoint very clearly lays out the need for the urban renewal extension and the rationale for a 10-year extension. What Ron and I also spoke about at some length was a 2-year protocol that addresses some of your concerns: namely, a commitment to reviewing the boundaries of the Urban Renewal Plan area in the South End, an inventory of Land Disposition Agreements (LDAs), and an improved and more transparent protocol for making modifications available to the public.

<http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/getattachment/70bb7cc7-38e7-4882-b79f-41db93148e5b>

I know that you may not be willing to offer wholesale support, but I do want again state that I have come to truly appreciate urban renewal as an important planning and development tool for the city. I hope you can see that there is some good that has and will continue to come from use of urban renewal tools with the proper checks and balances.

Have a great weekend,

Corey

---

On Tue, Oct 6, 2015 at 10:02 AM, Corey Zehngebot <corey.zehngebot@boston.gov> wrote:

I'm not sure what precisely is the best path forward. I know there had been some discussion of using the South End

Historical Library space? Haley House will not be suitable, unfortunately.

I also note that they have some information on their website, which I could maybe speak to in more detail. I do fear that it presents one particular view of urban renewal.

Perhaps you could suggest at time would could attract a significant quorum?

Thank you!

Corey

On Mon, Oct 5, 2015 at 8:24 PM, Siegel, Benjamin S <bsiegel@bu.edu> wrote:

Hi to all. I can't make it on wed pm and usually don't go to the Tuesday am meetings so best to plan without me.  
Ben

Sent from my iPod Ben Siegel

On Oct 5, 2015, at 4:26 PM, "hhershfang@verizon.net" <hhershfang@verizon.net> wrote:

Recall that a week from tomorrow is the scheduled SE Seniors discussion of the "Good Neighbors" book.

---

On 10/05/15, RONALD JOHNS<ron.johns@prodigy.net> wrote:

Corey & Betsy - In the interest of economy, I would suggest that Corey's time might be best spent on a Tuesday morning at South End Seniors. What do you all think? Ron

On Mon, 10/5/15, Corey Zehngebot corey.zehngebot@boston.gov> wrote:

Subject: South End Urban Renewal

To: "Ann Hershfang" annhershfang@gmail.com>, "Benjamin Siegel" bsiegel@bu.edu>, hhershfang@verizon.net, "Ronald Johns" ron.johns@prodigy.net>

Date: Monday, October 5, 2015, 11:27 AM

Herb, Ann, Ben, and

Ron:

I am personally reaching out to the four of you since I know you have been following the urban renewal extension with interest and have been engaged throughout the process.

Though we have scheduled some larger public meetings (there is one this evening at the New England Aquarium), I wanted to offer to return to the South End to meet with you and whomever else you would like.

I had been waiting to hear from Councilor Wu's office, but I think it prudent to just schedule something soon, so that we can continue the conversation. I also want to thank you for your kind persistence - it has helped me understand better the community concerns and make certain that the actions of the BRA are not misconstrued. As I have said repeatedly, I firmly believe that extending the South End urban renewal area is absolutely in the best interest of the community.

I do want to discuss refinements to the protocol going forward, and also a path forward to look at the South End boundaries.

I could suggest some times, or perhaps you could tell me what works for you. I do have a window this Wednesday from 4-5:30 if that works. I already need to be in

the South End, so wanted to offer it up as a possibility,  
but of course am happy to find an alternate  
time.

Thank you for your engagement,  
Corey

--

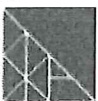
Corey  
Zehngebot, AIA AICP  
Senior Urban  
Designer + Architect [coreyzehngebot@boston.gov](mailto:coreyzehngebot@boston.gov)  
617.918.4310  
BRA/EDIC One City Hall  
Square | Boston, MA 02201  
[BostonRedevelopmentAuthority.org](http://BostonRedevelopmentAuthority.org)



**Corey Zehngebot, AIA AICP**  
*Senior Urban Designer + Architect*  
[coreyzehngebot@boston.gov](mailto:coreyzehngebot@boston.gov)  
617.918.4310

**BRA/EDIC**

One City Hall Square | Boston, MA 02201  
[BostonRedevelopmentAuthority.org](http://BostonRedevelopmentAuthority.org)



**Corey Zehngebot, AIA AICP**  
*Senior Urban Designer + Architect*  
[coreyzehngebot@boston.gov](mailto:coreyzehngebot@boston.gov)  
617.918.4310

**BRA/EDIC**

One City Hall Square | Boston, MA 02201  
[BostonRedevelopmentAuthority.org](http://BostonRedevelopmentAuthority.org)





## Design Review

John Benson  
Jack Glassman  
Dan Kovacevic  
Bill Lamb  
Mark Spaulding  
Heather Taylor  
Anne e Tecce

Charlestown Preservation Society Design Review Committee  
P. O. Box 290201  
Charlestown, MA 02129

Corey Zehngebot,  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201-1007

**Re: Boston Redevelopment Authority Urban Renewal Extension**

November 5, 2015

Dear Ms. Zehngebot,

I am writing in response to your request for comments on the proposed ten year extension of the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Urban Renewal mandate from the State. The Charlestown Preservation Society Design Review Committee, at our monthly meeting on October 19, did not reach a consensus to support or oppose the extension.

Generally, our concerns center on the belief that most of the Authority's Urban Renewal powers are no longer needed or could be handled elsewhere as necessary within the city government.

We believe that there is an inherent conflict of interest between the agencies's funding through the sale and leasing of properties and its planning responsibilities. Some times it appears that the BRA development arm strongly supports projects that are without planning preparation and that are incompatible with our neighborhood objectives and zoning regulations.

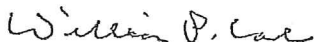
We very much support the Authority's planning and design review functions and need this support for ongoing design challenges in our community. For instance:

- Rutherford Avenue and Sullivan Square need further planning assistance. The Sullivan Square Disposition Study completed in December 2013 and managed by the BRA has been an invaluable guide to date for discussions about how to create an attractive and livable addition to our community. We would like to see that planning proceed to fruition. Publicly owned parcels in the area will need development management by a government entity.
- We would like to see comprehensive planning done for the large area (mostly owned by the MBTA) between Sullivan Square and the Mystic River, for the area extending from Sullivan Square to the Bunker Hill Community College, and for the Community College Parking lot adjacent to the Gilmore Bridge.
- Like all planning, this planning needs to be done in a transparent environment with significant public input.

- We would like to modify zoning regula ons to discourage insu ciently considered demoli on of proper es judged signi cant by the Boston Landmarks Commission as we have recently witnessed in the demoli on of two ~175 year old houses here. In these cases a demoli on permit should not be granted "as of right".
- We appreciate the Ar cle 80 Small Project Review func ons. Our planner is accessible and welcomes our design comments. But in cases provisionally approved by ISD "as of right" he and the design review sta are very much limited in following our Ar cle 62 Design Review Guidelines to looking at architectural surface treatments only. The Inspec onal Services Department should not be the sole interpreter of the guidelines.
- We would like to review the parking requirements that apply to single family dwellings to discourage curb cuts that take away public parking spaces and leave the ground oor levels of homes dominated by garage doors.
- We believe that the Owner/BRA Land Disposi on Agreements should be maintained. In one recent case an LDA has prevented development inconsistent with current zoning and our wish to maintain the scale of our neighborhood.

Thank you for your considera on of these ma ers. We appreciate your solici ta on of public input and would like to be kept informed of your progress.

Sincerely,



William P. Lamb, Chair  
Charlestown Preserva on Society  
Design Review Commi ee

cc: Sal LaMa na, District City Councilor  
Ayanna Pressley, City Councilor at Large  
Tom McKay, Mayor's O ce of Neighborhood Services  
Ted Schwartzberg, Planner, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Tom Cunha, Charlestown Neighborhood Council



Corey Zehngebot <corey.zehngebot@boston.gov>

---

## Hi from Ivey St John

---

Ivey St John <gran.nie@comcast.net>  
To: Corey Zehngebot <Corey.Zehngebot@boston.gov>

Thu, Oct 1, 2015 at 7:32 PM

Good afternoon!

You made a very professional and effective presentation last evening.....I had the sense that you had done it quite often before! It was full of interesting information, much of which was familiar to many of us, but it is always helpful to hear a lot of it again. I was sorry I got frustrated with you last evening, and I would like to explain the circumstances driving that frustration.

The Charlestown Waterfront Coalition (CWC) and its predecessor, the Ad Hoc Coalition, have been advocates for the waterfront for over 30 years. For the last few, CWC has been tracking BRA revenue received from the Navy Yard. As the attached chart shows, from our perspective, it is a significant amount. There has been little return on that money to support concerns of the community.....the improvements which have been made to infrastructure, the fountain, the spray pool and the trees were initiated by the City or by outrage at decisions by Peter Meade. The revenue figures on the attached chart are incomplete for a reason. Getting the two and four percent income is easy, but getting the lease revenue figures from the BRA takes tremendous time and constant contacting. It is frustrating to the core that public information requires such a super-human effort.

I have met with Brain before on the topic of more revenue for upkeep, but BRA staff follow on that meeting was beyond frustrating. Now, The Waterfront Coalition Steering Committee would like to meet with Brian Goldman and appropriate BRA staff to discuss an annual set aside of NY revenue for the repair and upkeep of Shipyard Park and the various parcels of green space still owned by the BRA. Shipyard Park should look like City Square Park, with neat, low maintenance landscaping and regular care and watering. If that is to happen over time, a regular stream of revenue is essential.

Two of our Steering Committee members are travelling until October 14th. Any 5:00PM hour after October 15 would be much appreciated. I have attached the Steering Committee list of names.

Thank you very much, Corey. I appreciate very much your willingness to help.

With very best regards, Ivey  
617-241-8981

---

### 2 attachments

 2015 BRA Revenue.xlsx  
11K

 CWC Steering Committee 2015.doc  
31K





Corey Zehngebot <corey.zehngebot@boston.gov>

---

## BRA Urban Renewal Extension

---

Lydia Lowe <lydia@cpaboston.org>  
To: Corey Zehngebot <corey.zehngebot@boston.gov>  
Cc: Mary Knasas <mary.knasas@boston.gov>

Thu, Oct 29, 2015 at 4:32 PM

I know that you and Mike Christopher have a kind of thankless job and appreciate everything you have done to reach out and provide information.

On Thu, Oct 29, 2015 at 4:30 PM, Lydia Lowe <lydia@cpaboston.org> wrote:

Thanks again, Corey. I will submit a letter that acknowledges some of the important reasons to renew the plans at this time but also our concerns about planning and development and advocating for a shorter term renewal.

On Thu, Oct 29, 2015 at 4:24 PM, Corey Zehngebot <corey.zehngebot@boston.gov> wrote:

Lydia,

I have done my best to address those concerns, but know that there will be no perfect solution.

Again, and I quote: "I have come to understand that the primary issue is not the length of the extension, but a new strategy and protocol for accountability. To that end, we are working on a 2 year action plan to accompany the 10 year extension."

Boston, like other cities across the Commonwealth and throughout the country, continue - and with increasing popularity - to use the tools of urban renewal as a force for good. I do know that we have done the best we can to communicate that point throughout this process.

Thank you for your continued engagement!

Corey

On Thu, Oct 29, 2015 at 10:11 AM, Lydia Lowe <lydia@cpaboston.org> wrote:

Thanks for circling back, Corey. I really appreciate the information and will submit a comment letter. I do understand the need to renew the urban renewal plans for now, but can't support a ten-year renewal.

On Thu, Oct 29, 2015 at 7:03 AM, Corey Zehngebot <corey.zehngebot@boston.gov> wrote:

Lydia,

Hope you are well - I wanted to circle back with you after the CMIP meeting I attended and presented at on October 6! As I mentioned, it would be great if you would consider submitting a comment letter. I do hope that you're willing to submit comments given your participation throughout this process. Just as we've recognized the importance of Chinatown's concerns, it is important that we hear from those whom we have repeatedly engaged in a thoughtful way. I am happy to connect by phone if you'd like to discuss further.

We have had an incredibly rigorous, comprehensive, and thoughtful process and this is an excellent example of the BRA's ongoing organizational transformation. We may not be perfect, but we have absolutely leveraged this process to indicate a commitment to doing things better and in a more transparent way.

To reiterate, I think the primary issue is not the length of the extension, but a new strategy and protocol for accountability. To that end, we are proposing a 2 year action plan (as part of our agreement with City Council and/or DHCD) to accompany the 10 year extension.

Highlights of that short term action plan may include:

1. Extending the life of [www.bostonurbanrenewal.org](http://www.bostonurbanrenewal.org) beyond this extension process as an information clearinghouse for urban renewal activities by the BRA. The public ought to have - at a minimum - access to the same information that the City Council receives.

2. An inventory of the land disposition agreements (LDAs). As I mentioned, these govern everything from affordable housing to open space and would be a significant blow if lost due to the plan expiration. We need to work with the state over the next couple of years to determine what, if anything, can be done to extend the life of these agreements independent of urban renewal. There is more information about these LDAs in the powerpoint link.

3. Area-specific actions. The South End would like to reconsider (smaller) boundaries for the plan area (something that can be done only once we have a better understanding of the LDAs which are sprinkled literally all over the South End), but as I noted, Charlestown is interested in enlarging their boundaries to include Sullivan Square. Either way, the BRA would revisit the boundaries in certain neighborhoods like the South End and Charlestown.

We're also exploring other measures, but if you have any specific suggestions, we would love to hear them! We are also working with DHCD to craft an agreement that gives the extension "teeth," - i.e. a mechanism to hold us to our promises embedded in a 2 year action plan.

I can't underscore the seriousness of this enough. This has truly been an open and authentic process, and I feel that the above represents a way forward that is in the best interest of the city and the people of Boston.

I'm including some links below, but I want to stress the most recent ppt in particular, which aims to answer the following questions in succinct a manner as possible:

1. Why do we still need urban renewal?
2. What is the rationale for seeking a 10-year extension?

(I'd also encourage you to listen to the WBUR Morning Edition piece!)

I'm always happy to discuss further, but I think that the good that has come out of urban renewal has been overwhelmingly positive, and that the BRA should continue to have access to urban renewal tools in their toolbox (just like other cities across the state and country). I hope that you embrace the idea of a better protocol for information access and oversight, but understand the importance of the 10 year extension.

Thank you,

Corey

Our Urban Renewal website: [www.bostonurbanrenewal.org](http://www.bostonurbanrenewal.org)

And the interactive map, in particular: <http://maps.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/UrbanRenewal/>

**And our most recent public meeting ppt** can be found here: <http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/getattachment/70bb7cc7-38e7-4882-b79f-41db93148e5b>

There's also been a lot of recent media:

<http://www.wbur.org/2015/10/15/boston-urban-renewal-west-end-exhibit>

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/editorials/2015/10/24/urbanrenewal/z8m2aDBrSYLMYPvqmbcolN/story.html>

<https://www.bostonglobe.com/opinion/2015/10/08/urban-renewal-bra-debate-goes-retro/mcGuiafRuEZAIES9Kx8PeI/story.html>

-





**Corey Zehngebot, AIA AICP**

*Senior Urban Designer + Architect*

coreyzehngebot@boston.gov

617.918.4310

**BRA/EDIC**

One City Hall Square | Boston, MA 02201

BostonRedevelopmentAuthority.org



**Corey Zehngebot, AIA AICP**

*Senior Urban Designer + Architect*

coreyzehngebot@boston.gov

617.918.4310

**BRA/EDIC**

One City Hall Square | Boston, MA 02201

BostonRedevelopmentAuthority.org



## 華人前進會

*Chinese Progressive Association*

28 Ash Street, Boston, MA 02111

Tel. (617) 357-4499 Fax (617) 357-9611 [www.cpaboston.org](http://www.cpaboston.org)

---

From: Lydia Lowe and Karen Chen, Co-Directors  
To: The Honorable Martin J. Walsh, Mayor of Boston  
John F. Barros, Chief of Economic Development  
Brian Golden, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Members of the Boston City Council  
Department of Housing and Community Development  
Re: Comments on Renewal of Boston's Urban Renewal Plans  
Date: October 30, 2015

We submit these comments on behalf of the Chinese Progressive Association, regarding the proposed ten-year renewal of 14 Urban Renewal Plans in Boston.

The Chinese Progressive Association (CPA) is a 38 year old grassroots organization based in Boston Chinatown and serving the Greater Boston Chinese community. We represent more than a thousand members and serve more than 3,000 individuals and families each year.

Throughout these 38 years, development issues and the stabilization of Chinatown's future have been a major concern for our members, as Chinatown has experienced the loss of hundreds of homes during earlier urban renewal, displacement due to highway and institutional expansion, and now evictions and economic displacement following 15 years of downtown luxury development.

Our staff and members have participated in several informational sessions offered by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) about the proposed renewal of the Urban Renewal Plans. We appreciated the BRA's efforts to provide information in a wide variety of settings and to respond to our questions and concerns. We understand that it is important to continue Land Disposition Agreements (LDA) covering a wide variety of uses, which are linked to the Urban Renewal Plans. We are encouraged to hear that the BRA is planning a comprehensive inventory of these LDAs, which is the first step toward defining an alternative mechanism for renewal of the agreements.

We also understand that there are contemporary uses of urban renewal powers that are important to a variety of projects, including eminent domain powers to establish site control, title clearance, and vertical discontinuances. These powers have helped to realize important public projects like the Bruce Bolling Building and the Whittier Street Health Center, and they have also been utilized in private development projects to which there have been significant community objections. Examples include the controversial taking and disposition of the Hayward Place parcel and the assembly of the Kensington Place parcel next to Chinatown, as well as the leasing of Yawkey Way to the Red Sox.

While most of these bad examples predated the current administration, our decades of experience with an unresponsive and unaccountable BRA make us convinced that we cannot rely only on the good will and commitments of a particular administration when it comes to protecting our community's right to remain and thrive. That is why we believe that the City Council and the Department of Housing and Community Development should approve only a short-term, three-year renewal of the Urban Renewal Plans in question, to provide time for the administration to plan for renewal of Land Disposition Agreements and for fundamental restructuring of city planning and development. We urge the BRA to center the goals of

these Urban Renewal Plans on the stabilization of working class neighborhoods and equity for communities of color.

The request to renew the Urban Renewal Plans brings into the spotlight Boston residents' deep sense of disenfranchisement when it comes to development decision-making in the city. While many of these issues are larger than the Urban Renewal Plans, this has become a critical moment for policy makers to take a stand for democratic and inclusive planning and development.

Therefore, before the City Council and DHCD agree to renew the Urban Renewal Plans for a three-year period, we urge the City of Boston and the BRA to immediately establish guidelines that provide for empowerment of democratic and inclusive resident associations or community boards, elected by neighborhood residents, as the central decision-makers in community planning and development and as core participants in downtown and citywide planning.

We are joined in this call by residents and organizations from diverse neighborhoods throughout the city, and hope that you will seize this important moment to advance democratic accountability to the people most affected by development decisions.

Thank you.

cc: Michael Christopher  
Corey Zehngbot  
Mary Knasas



## Chester Square Area Neighborhood Association

www.csana.wordpress.com

Nov 6, 2015

Mr. Brian Golden  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
1 City Hall Plaza  
Boston, MA 02201  
Attn: Corey Zehngebot

When it comes to extending Urban Renewal, Chester Square Area Neighborhood Association is conflicted. We do our best to represent a broad spectrum of people with very different needs and resources; and, lacking a plan, it's not at all clear who might be helped by extending Urban Renewal. On the other hand, we see daily hardships in the neighborhood and we're looking for partners in community-building.

The buildings on both sides of mine, and the row across the alley, are subsidized rentals. But hardworking folk who graduate from subsidized housing can't afford to live here. Nor can many of those who work here. On the next block, a building just sold for over \$6 million. Where is the housing for people in the middle?

We also have a new form of blight. Last week, I didn't know what to tell my granddaughter about the zombie crapping in her park. This week, walking with neighborhood leaders on Massachusetts Ave, I struggled to imagine how we should respond to homeless encampments within view of \$400 a night hotel rooms. Every day, when I walk, I wonder why so much of the precious urban earth of "Lower Roxbury" is dedicated to vehicles that sit idle most of the time.

Where is BRA's vision for a healthy community? How can we support big changes without knowing where we're going?

At a late September Urban Renewal meeting at the Bolling Building, BRA showed a Powerpoint slide listing the dozens – maybe as many as a hundred - community meetings they had done. "Unfortunately, we didn't get the input we were looking for," they said. Their conclusion, after these many encounters, was that people don't understand the tools of Urban Renewal – so they proceeded to explain them once more. After which, a long-time Roxbury resident stood to report statistics on unemployment, academic failures, crime, and poverty. She then asked, "After fifty years of Urban Renewal, what has it done for us?"

The BRA tells us they have changed. Now they are talking to the community. If we go ahead with Urban Renewal, we're going to need BRA to do some really good listening, too. We need a vision for a healthy South End. Can BRA help us?

Carol Blair, President  
Chester Square Area Neighborhood Assn  
[info@chestersquareassociation.org](mailto:info@chestersquareassociation.org)

Cc: Tito Jackson, Michelle Wu, Ayanna Pressley, Michael Flaherty, Bill Linehan, Sam Chambers



Corey Zehngebot <corey.zehngebot@boston.gov>

---

## BRA+West End Museum Reception

---

Church, Elizabeth <EChurch@bphc.org>

Mon, Sep 28, 2015 at 12:27 PM

To: "Corey.Zehngebot@Boston.gov" <Corey.Zehngebot@boston.gov>

Corey:

I wanted to let you know how much of an impact last week's BRA + West End Museum Reception made on my personal understanding of the intersection of the urban renewal program and Boston—and the difficulties and challenges the BRA has to overcome this legacy.

I have attended several of the BRA urban renewal workshops around Boston in order to better understand the history of the program, why it needs to be continued, how it might be continued, hear the response of Boston's citizens – and for my own professional education: to learn how a city agency goes about re-branding an overwhelmingly negative program to a population as diverse as that of Boston.

During the South End, Roxbury, and Downtown workshops, I cycled through the agendas I brought with me: spectator, student, resident, and city employee. As I witnessed the outreach to an array of neighborhoods I gained respect for the BRA's campaign to get out the message, teach about the past, and set a tone for next steps. What struck me is that the attendees did not seem to get beyond 'the past'—either because they didn't want to, they did not have the faculties to do so, or just could not trust that urban renewal could ever be done for the common good. The associative power of the term 'urban renewal' may go all the way back to many of the attendee's American history lessons.

But , for me, something different happened at the West End Reception. When Brian Golden spoke of his own personal history, connected with the West End's former residents, and apologized on behalf of the city for the loss of their homes, their neighborhoods, and their cultural anchors—the negative association of the term 'urban renewal' had been trumped. His apology on behalf of the BRA paved the way for forgiveness.

Apologies and forgiveness are not often regarded as signs of strength and as such do not hold a prominent place in political strategy or agency outreach. But

Brian Golden's heartfelt words and desire to make amends to the West End was one of the most powerful public statements I have witnessed.

Good luck to you as the UR campaign progresses. And thanks for your work, I know I am better informed and potentially better prepared to do my own work here at BPHC!

Best regards,

Elizabeth



**Elizabeth Church, AIA LEED AP**

**Boston Public Health Commission**

Senior Project Manager | Architect

Capital Asset Management

1010 Massachusetts Ave

Boston, MA 02118

617 534 2481

[echurch@bphc.org](mailto:echurch@bphc.org)

[www.bphc.org](http://www.bphc.org)

October 30, 2015

The Honorable Martin J. Walsh  
Mayor of Boston  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

Honorable Mayor Walsh:

We represent a cross-section of community residents and organizations from different parts of the city, who continue to be committed to the principle of inclusive and equitable economic development as well as transparent and participatory decision-making.

We remain interested in an update on your long-term plans for restructuring the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and the vision of an economic development department that is part of the city structure, more transparent, predictable, and accountable to the neighborhoods, the people of Boston, the City Council, and the Mayor. At the same time, we recognize that some reforms may be structures and protocols that can be advanced in the short term, while others may require longer term and legislative reform.

The current debate over the question of renewing fourteen Urban Renewal Plans has focused attention on the public's frustrations with development decision-making and the need for structures and protocols for accountability to the city's residents.

The BRA's Urban Renewal team has made themselves available for numerous community meetings to discuss the contemporary uses of Urban Renewal powers, explaining that community-supported projects like affordable housing or community health centers often require exercise of the BRA's eminent domain powers for site assembly, title clearance or particular easements. We recognize that revised Urban Renewal Plans could incorporate important community goals and priorities, such as housing affordability and equity goals, and we understand that renewal of Land Disposition Agreements is an important concern.

On the other hand, we have witnessed how the use of these powers in support of the luxury development has led to pushing low income residents out of our neighborhoods. For example, the BRA took the Hayward Place site, a City-owned parcel, by eminent domain through a "blight" finding, designated it to Millennium Partners for a decade of surface parking in a sweetheart deal, then gave Millennium Partners a discount of more than \$9 million on its inclusionary development pay-out fees.

This example of the BRA's track record, particularly for working class neighborhoods and communities of color that are being pushed out of the city today, leaves us with grave concerns. This is why we propose that a short-term, three-year renewal of the Urban Renewal Plans be conditional upon the following measures to improve BRA accountability:

1. That equity goals be imbedded in the updated Urban Renewal Plans, including

- a. A requirement for an equity impact report to be part of the parcel conveyance process within the Urban Renewal Plan areas. This analysis could take into account various environmental, racial, and economic considerations, for example, that would help determine who benefits and who is burdened by the decisions.
  - b. A requirement that job standards, including local, minority and women hiring goals and family-sustaining wage and benefit requirements, similar to those voted by the Roxbury Master Plan Oversight Committee, be written into all Land Disposition Agreements for public parcels or properties within the Urban Renewal Plan areas.
  - c. The stabilization of working class neighborhoods should be written into the Urban Renewal Plan goals. Housing affordability, access to public transportation, family sustaining jobs, and the improved public and environmental health of working communities is paramount and should be included in goals.
2. Establishment and empowerment of a system of democratically elected and inclusive Community Boards.
- a. Community Boards must be democratically elected by verifiable residents of the neighborhood in a process to be developed by the community, which could be supported by the Office of Neighborhood Services and the Election Department.
  - b. According to the characteristics of each neighborhood, seats may be designated for renters, owners, language or ethnic groups, youth, etc., to ensure diversity and inclusion. To make inclusion a practical reality, the City must provide a budget for staffing support that is accountable to the Community Boards.
  - c. Community Boards will be subject to strict conflict of interest and open meeting laws. Their powers should include approval of the neighborhood master plan, and any variances or projects not conforming to the master plan should require Community Board approval.
  - d. Community Boards will be expected to seek planning input from local business owners, non-resident property owners, institutional, agency, and faith-based leaders or other neighborhood stakeholders, and may choose to create a broader Master Plan Committee for this purpose, with residents always having the majority voice.
  - e. Community Boards will share the power, along with the Mayor and district councilor, to appoint representatives to Impact Advisory Groups and other task forces, and in the future to send a representative to the City Planning Commission.

Finally, the launch of Imagine Boston 2030, the first comprehensive city planning effort in more than 50 years, is an important opportunity to put equity goals at the center of every aspect of city government, and we have already proposed that four principles guide this effort: 1) that racial equity and other equity goals be central to Imagine Boston 2030 with every City department held

responsible for work plans to reduce inequities; 2) that city planning and development be brought back under City jurisdiction with accountability to Boston residents; 3) that public resources be used only for the public good with a focus on standards for stable and sustainable neighborhoods; and 4) that the City create a system of inclusive, elected Community Boards, with neighborhood, downtown, and city-wide planning and development processes that are democratically accountable to the people who are affected. The completion of Imagine Boston 2030 should then shape the future of development in the city.

We request the opportunity to meet with you and your development and planning team to offer more detailed proposals and have further dialogue about an equitable vision for Boston's future.

Sincerely,

Airport Relief Impact, Inc.  
Action for Regional Equity  
Alternatives for Community and  
Environment  
Black Economic Justice Institute  
Boston Student Advisory Council  
Boston Workers Alliance  
Bowdoin/Geneva Neighborhood Association  
Castle Square Tenants Organization  
Center for Economic Democracy  
Chinatown Resident Association  
Chinese Progressive Association  
City Life Vida Urbana  
Codman Square Neighborhood  
Development Corporation  
Dorchester/Roxbury Labor Committee  
Dorchester People for Peace  
Greater Four Corner Action Coalition

Fenway Community Development  
Corporation  
Future Boston  
Jobs Not Jails – Dorchester / Jamaica Plain /  
Roslindale Team  
Mass Alliance of HUD Tenants  
MassVOTE  
Neighbors United for a Better East Boston  
New England United for Justice  
Right to the City Boston  
South Boston en Accion  
Youth Organizers United for the Now  
Generation  
Benjamin Day  
Judith Roderick  
Mel King  
Suzanne Lee





Asian Community  
Development Corporation

November 2, 2015

From: Asian Community Development Corporation

To: The Honorable Martin J. Walsh, Mayor of Boston  
John F. Barros, Chief of Economic Development  
Brian Golden, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Members of the Boston City Council  
Department of Housing and Community Development

Asian Community Development Corporation (ACDC), a Chinatown-based community development corporation founded in 1987, has built affordable homes for nearly 1,000 residents in Boston's Chinatown and spearheaded various community planning initiatives that spur the deep and thoughtful engagement of Chinatown residents in shaping their neighborhood.

Since this summer, we have participated in a series of meetings held by the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) staff designed to gain support for the extension of the BRA's urban renewal powers for an additional ten years. ACDC commends the BRA's commitment to improve its organizational transparency and conduct an open process in seeking an extension of urban renewal. While ACDC recognizes that the Land Disposition Agreements (LDAs) undergirded by urban renewal authority are key to enforcing the affordability restrictions on many properties, we know that urban renewal powers are not the only means to provide and enforce affordability restrictions. We are also skeptical of promises that urban renewal powers will only be used for "good" causes henceforth since this relies on the good will of the administration. It is true that projects ACDC has completed, such as The Metropolitan, benefited from BRA's urban renewal tools, but that project only came to fruition as a result of persistent community objections and protests over the BRA's original plan to allow the New England Medical Center to build a large parking garage on the site.

For these reasons, ACDC supports a short-term, three-year extension of urban renewal powers to allow the City and the BRA time to build an inventory to track existing LDAs, to create powers to establish and enforce affordability restrictions outside the urban renewal framework, and to create tools and policies to manage and dispose of the real estate assets the BRA owns.

Sincerely,

Angie Liou  
Acting Executive Director



# BOSTON PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

November 24, 2015

## Board of Directors

Leigh Freudenheim  
Chair

Susan Park  
President

Patrick J. Ellard, Jr.  
Treasurer

Beatrice Nessen  
Secretary

Diana Pisciotta  
Vice Chair

Roger Tackeff  
Vice Chair

W. Lewis Barlow IV FAIA

William G. Barry AIA

Daniel Bluestone

Nick Brooks AIA

Ross Cameron

Frances Duffly

Minxie Fannin

Gill Fishman

Kay Flynn

Peter Goedecke

Carl Jay

Michael LeBlanc AIA

Drew Leff

David Nagahiro AIA

Peter Roth

Catharine Sullivan

Peter Vanderwerker

Rita Walsh

Andrew Zelermyer

## Executive Director

Gregory J. Galer, Ph.D.

Ms. Corey Zehngebot  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall, Ninth Floor  
Boston, MA 02201  
Via email: Corey.Zehngebot@boston.gov

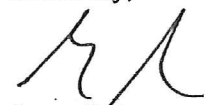
Dear Corey,

Thank you for being our guest at the Boston Preservation Alliance Board meeting on November 17 and presenting the BRA's plan to renew its Urban Renewal authority. Our Board appreciated the opportunity to engage with you directly to learn the details of a complex topic. We admire your continued energy and enthusiasm given how many presentations you have made on the topic and the skepticism you have likely regularly encountered.

While the Alliance Board greatly appreciates your efforts and exceptional presentation, they have chosen to remain neutral on the Urban Renewal reauthorization. The Alliance chooses not to weigh in either in support or in opposition at this time.

Thank You.

Sincerely,



Greg Galer

Executive Director