

MEMORANDUM

BOARD APPROVED

OCTOBER 11, 2018

**TO:** BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY  
 D/B/A BOSTON PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY\*  
 AND BRIAN P. GOLDEN, DIRECTOR

**FROM:** JONATHAN GREELEY, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT REVIEW  
 MICHAEL CHRISTOPHER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT  
 REVIEW/GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS  
 DAVID CARLSON, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR URBAN DESIGN  
 ALEXA PINARD, URBAN DESIGNER  
 MARY KNASAS, PLANNER  
 MICHAEL SINATRA, PROJECT MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** 150 KNEELAND ST, LEATHER DISTRICT

**SUMMARY:** This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA") d/b/a Boston Planning & Development Agency ("BPDA") authorize the Director to: (1) issue a Scoping Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Article 80, Large Project Review of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code") for the 150 Kneeland St project (the "Proposed Project"); (2) issue a Certification of Compliance under Section 80B-6 upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process; (3) execute and deliver a Cooperation Agreement, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan and any and all other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Proposed Project.

\* Effective October 20, 2016, the BRA commenced doing business as BPDA.

## **PROJECT SITE**

The Proposed Project is located on an approximately 4,824 square foot parcel (1.68 acres) at 150 Kneeland St in the Leather District neighborhood of Boston (the "Project Site"). The Project Site is currently composed of two (2) contiguous irregularly shaped parcels occupied by vacant commercial structures which are in disrepair and will be removed. The property was formerly used as a restaurant and night club, which presented a significant nuisance to the neighborhood, while subsequent neglect of the site has resulted in serious blight. The Project Site is bounded by Beach St to the north, South Station Connector to the south, Atlantic Ave and Utica St and Lincoln St to the west.

The Project Site is located within a short walking distance of South Station and several MBTA bus stops, serviced by the Red Line, multiple bus routes and the Silver Line.

## **DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

The development team includes:

Proponent/Developer: Hudson 150K Real Estate Trust (an affiliate of Hudson Group)  
Ori Ron, Noam Ron

Article 80

Permitting Consultant: Mitchell L. Fischman Consulting ("MLF" Consulting) LLC  
Mitch Fischman

Legal Counsel: Dain, Torpy, Le Ray, Wiest & Garner  
Donald Wiest

Architect: Rode Architects Inc.  
Kevin S. Deabler, Lucas Herringshaw, John Gilbert, Nick Ruggeri

Sustainable Consultant: Soden Sustainability Consulting  
Colleen Ryan Soden



Transportation Planner/  
Engineer: Howard Stein Hudson  
Brian J. Beisel, Thomas Tinlin

Civil Engineer: Howard Stein Hudson  
Rick Latini

Public Relations  
Consultant: Goldstein Pierce PR  
Wendy Pierce

Noise and Air  
Consultant: Tech Environmental, Inc.  
Marc C. Wallace

Wind Engineer: RWDI  
Jordan Gilmour



Geotechnical  
Engineer: Haley & Aldrich, Inc.  
Marya E. Gorczyca

Historic  
Resources  
Consultant: Tremont Preservation Services  
Leslie Donovan

MEP: Cosentini Associates  
Robert Leber

Environmental  
Consultant: EBI Consulting



## **DESCRIPTION AND PROGRAM**

The Project Site is a compact parcel with land area of approximately 4,824 square feet. The existing site is composed of two contiguous irregularly shaped parcels occupied by vacant commercial structures which are in disrepair and will be removed.

The new building will be a mid-rise tower housing a well-designed, top-quality hospitality facility. The Proposed Project will supply hotel rooms to the immediate South Station area. The proposed hotel will complement the mixed-use fabric of the historic Leather District while positioning the Kneeland Street development corridor as a modern urban thoroughfare with a vibrant pedestrian realm. The Proposed Project will generate public benefits including job creation, infrastructure upgrades, visual streetscape improvements, a new destination for locals and tourists, and a dramatic improvement on current conditions that will help spur additional investment in the area.

The new building will be contemporary in style, featuring facade, fenestration, and materiality elements that relate to the surrounding area. The Proposed Project is expected to be a 230 room hotel, twenty-one (21) stories high, with a height of approximately two hundred eighteen (218) feet, and efficient floor plates of approximately 4,320 square feet. The Proposed Project will contain approximately 96,500 gsf, with interior useable gross floor area of approximately 81,600 square feet. In addition to guest rooms it will include meeting spaces, publicly accessible food and beverage on the double height ground floor, and other amenities. There will be no parking associated with this project. Due to its close distance to South Station, the Proponent has estimated that the majority of guests would either walk or grab a taxi/Uber/car service to the site. There will be a pickup/drop off area for those who wish to arrive by car service.

## **ARTICLE 80 REVIEW PROCESS**

On March 21, 2018, the Proponent filed a Letter of Intent ("LOI") in accordance with the BPDA's policy regarding Provision of Mitigation by Development Projects in Boston. On March 21, 2018, letters soliciting nominations for the Impact Advisory Group ("IAG") were delivered to local and state elected officials. On April 19, 2018, the IAG was finalized with seven (7) members.

The Proponent filed an Expanded Project Notification Form (“EPNF”) for the Proposed Project on June 25, 2018, which initiated a thirty-day (30) public comment period with a closing date of June 25, 2018. At the request of the development team, the community and the IAG, the comment period was extended until August 15, 2018 to allow more time for public input. Notice of the receipt of the EPNF by the BPDA was published in the Boston Herald on June 26, 2018. The notice and EPNF were sent to the City’s public agencies/departments and elected officials. Additionally, copies of the EPNF were sent to all IAG members.

The BPDA subsequently sponsored and held two (2) IAG meetings on July 17, 2018 and August 6, 2018 and one (1) general public meeting on July 11, 2018 at the Radian Building in the 5<sup>th</sup> floor conference room located at 120 Kingston St in Boston to solicit feedback and review the Proposed Project. The public meeting was advertised in the *Sampan*, *The World Journal* and *The Boston Guardian*.

Pursuant to Section 80B-5.3 of the Code, a Scoping Session was held on July 9, 2018 with the City’s public agencies and elected officials to review and discuss the Proposed Project.

In addition to the above mentioned meetings, the Proponent also conducted community outreach and attended a series of meetings before and during the Article 80 review process with their abutters, local elected officials, and the Leather District Neighborhood Association to discuss the Proposed Project and solicit feedback.

The Proponent also received a vote of approval from the Boston Civic Design Commission on October 2, 2018.

## **ZONING**

The Project Site is located in the Restricted Parking Overlay District and the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District, or GCOD, under Article 44 of the Code.

The Proposed Project will require zoning relief for the following: Height and Floor Area Ratio (FAR).

## MITIGATION & COMMUNITY BENEFITS

### *Community Benefits*

In addition to project related improvements such as sidewalk widening and repair, elimination of a blighted building and transportation/bike improvements. The Proponent has committed to a community benefits package totaling \$645,000, further detailed below:

1. Recipient: **Leather District Neighborhood**

Address: TBD

Use: The contribution will be used to fund the Project Place Neighborhood Cleanup

Amount: **(10-Year Commitment): \$100,000**

Timeline: First Payment Made: August 2018

\$10k/yr. over 10 years

2nd payment will be made available upon issuance of the building permit by the City of Boston Inspectional Services Department ("ISD")

2. Recipient: **Leather District Neighborhood Association (LDNA)**

Address: TBD

Use: The contribution will be used to fund the installation of security cameras in 3 to 4 strategic spots in the Leather District, in conjunction with the Leather District community and the Boston Police Department

Amount: **\$35,000**

Timeline: Funds will be made available upon issuance of the building permit by ISD.

3. Recipient: **City of Boston Public Works Department**

Address: Boston City Hall, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor

Use: The contribution will be used to fund sidewalk repairs in the Leather District neighborhood

Amount: **\$50,000**

Timeline: Funds will be made available upon issuance of the building permit by ISD.

4. Recipient: **Leather District Neighborhood**

Address: TBD

Use: Utica Street lighting, improvements & wall treatment. The contribution will be used to fund uniform lighting coordination with abutters as well as a potential wall treatment/mural on 210 Lincoln Street

Amount: **\$25,000**

Timeline: Funds will be made available upon issuance of the building permit by ISD.

5. Recipient: **Leather District Park/Greenway Conservancy**

Address: 185 Kneeland St, Boston, MA 02111

Use: The contribution will be used to fund capital improvements for a potential Greenway Conservancy takeover as well as up front, permanent upgrades

Amount: **\$50,000**

Timeline: Funds will be made available upon issuance of the building permit by ISD.

6. Recipient: **MassDOT/Reggie Wong Park**

Address: TBD

Use: The contribution will be used to fund temporary improvements & place making, in coordination with MassDOT and the LDNA

Amount: **\$25,000**

Timeline: Funds will be made available upon issuance of the building permit by ISD.

7. Recipient: **Leather District, Chinatown and City of Boston**

Use: Accommodation for people in need (fire/flood emergencies, evictions, medical care, immigration, etc.), in collaboration with the City's Office of Housing Stability and the participation of a Chinatown based non-profit

Amount: **(10-Year Commitment): \$360,000**

Timeline: Funds will be made available upon issuance Certificate of Occupancy and Use by ISD.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

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



BPDA staff believes that the EPNF, meets the criteria for the issuance of a Scoping Determination Waiving Further Review. It is therefore recommended that the BPDA approve the Proposed Project and authorize the Director to: (1) issue a Scoping Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Article 80, Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Code; (2) issue a Certification of Compliance under Section 80B-6 upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process; and (3) execute and deliver a Cooperation Agreement, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and any and all other agreements and documents upon terms and conditions deemed to be in the best interest of the BPDA.

Appropriate votes follow:

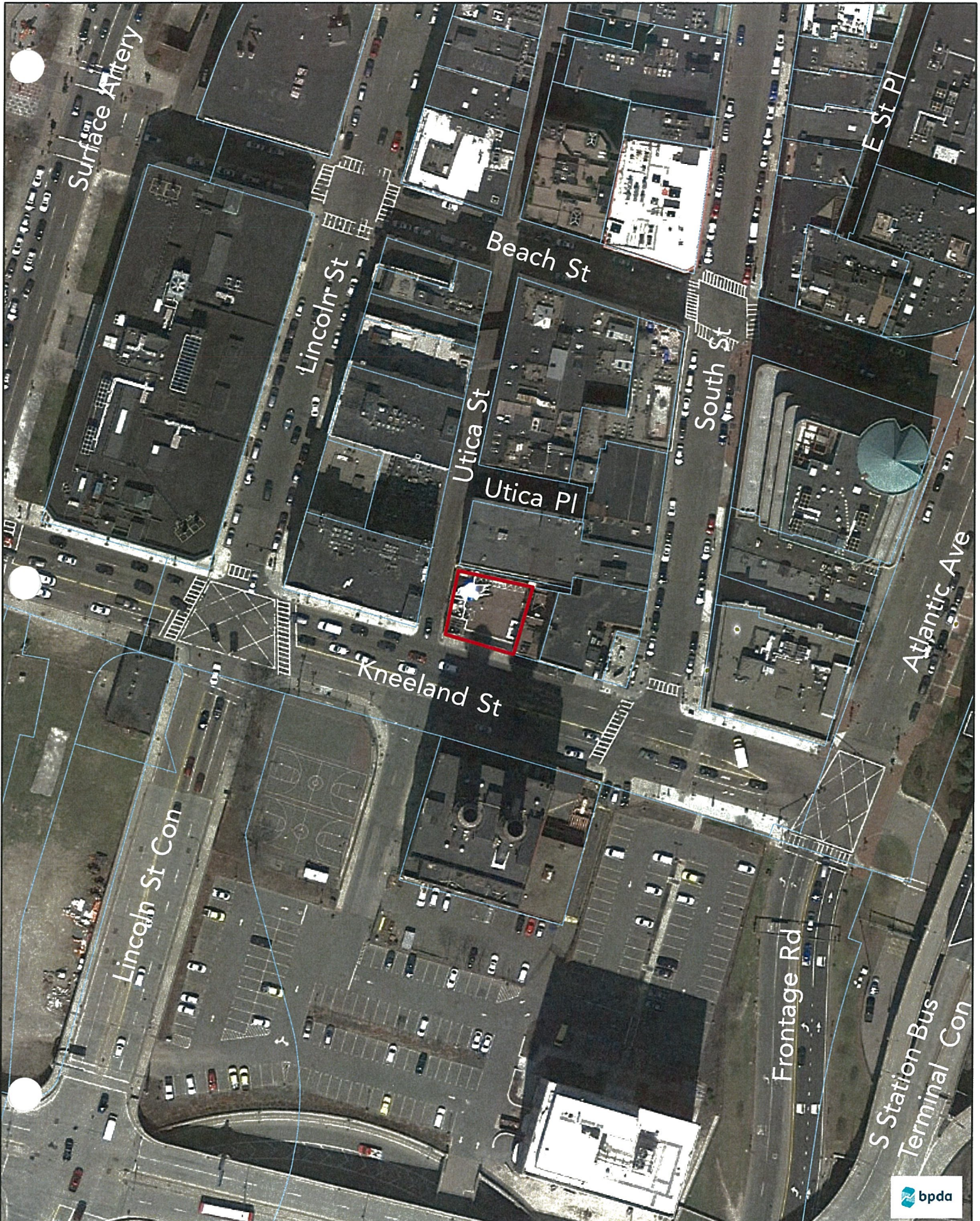
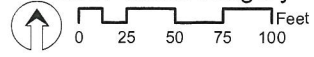
**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Scoping Determination under Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code"), which (i) finds that the Expanded Project Notification Form ("EPNF") adequately describes the potential impacts arising from the proposed 150 Kneeland St project (the "Proposed Project"), and provides sufficient mitigation measures to minimize these impacts, and (ii) waives further review of the Proposed Project under subsections 4 and 5 of Section 80B-5 of the Code, subject to continuing design review by the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA"); and

**FURTHER VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Certification of Compliance for the Proposed Project upon the successful completion of all Article 80 processes; and

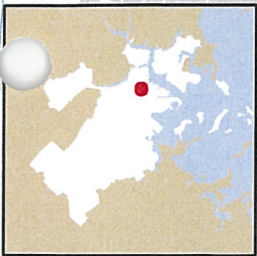
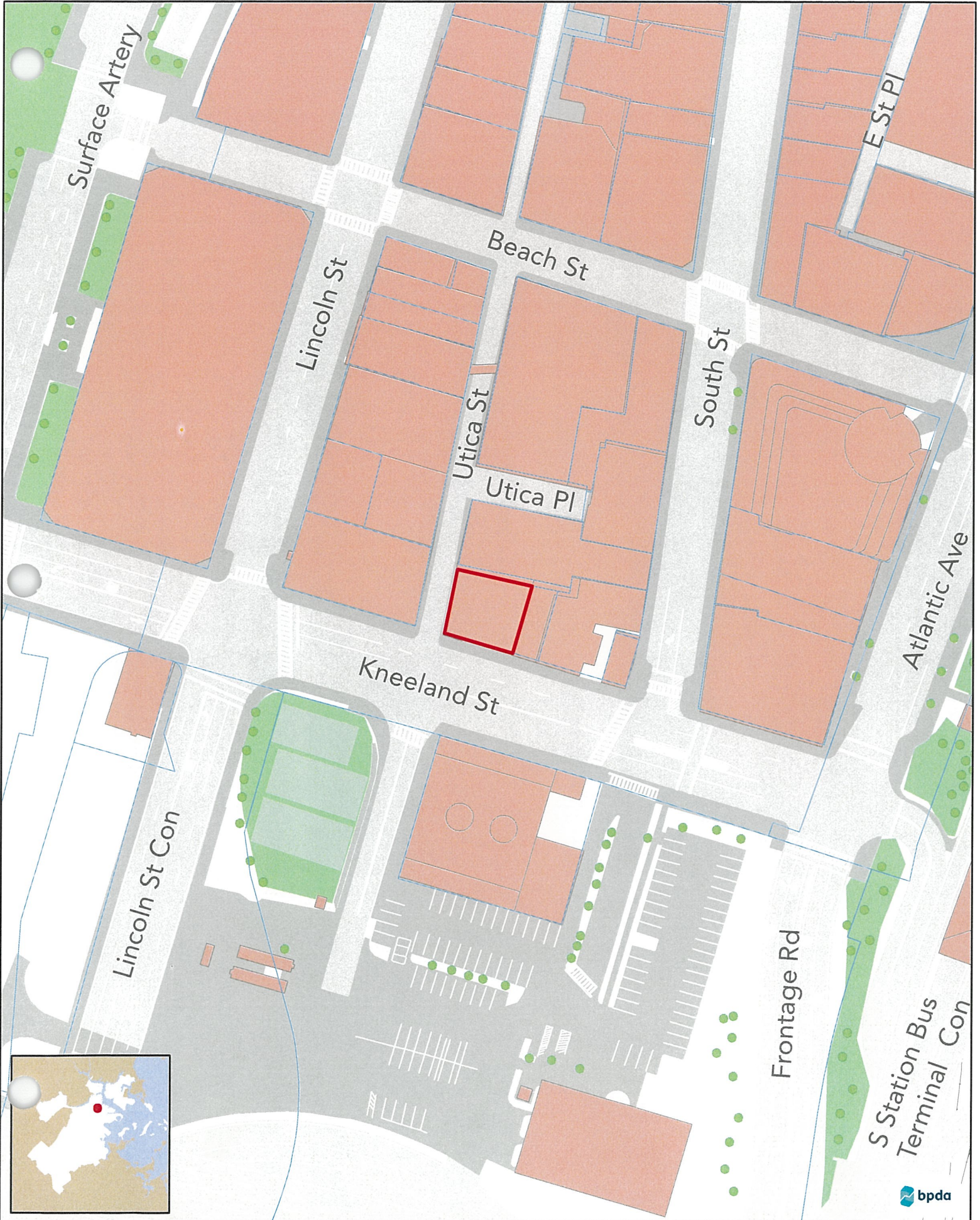
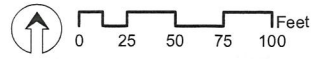
**FURTHER VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to execute a Cooperation Agreement, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and any and all other agreements and documents which the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Proposed Project, all upon terms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

# 150 Kneeland Street, Leather District

2017 aerial imagery



# 150 Kneeland Street, Leather District



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