

**Back Bay/South End Gateway Project: Citizens Advisory Committee
Join Comment Letter on DPIR/DEIR (and Back Bay Station Renovation Design)**

DATE: Tuesday, April 18, 2017

TO: Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA)
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The Citizens Advisory Committee, convened to advise on the proposed air rights project over Boston's Back Bay Station, wants to begin by stressing the importance of the redevelopment of this site. Such redevelopment has the potential to revitalize a key gateway to the city, providing a dynamic public pedestrian realm that invites visitors and residents alike to utilize the area's public transit, shops, offices, and residences—or just to amble through. It could radically improve the current conditions (steeply graded sidewalks, an old garage, a largely-empty bus turnaround, poor way-finding to and within the station), especially when combined with the Proponent's planned renovation of Back Bay Station itself. At its best, the public-private partnership at this site could be an engine of economic growth while also bolstering the vital public purposes of the station. We are enthusiastic about the stated civic objectives of the projects and the anticipated overall improvements to the block; at the same time, precisely because the project area is so vital to the fabric of the neighborhoods that it knits together (Back Bay, South End, Bay Village), the CAC wishes to offer the following comments in order to contribute to the project's quality and fit for the area. So important a project merits scrutiny along with praise; this letter will offer both.

This letter will also note points of agreement and areas of diverse views within the CAC. For a few areas, it will suggest the need for further information, to be requested in a Preliminary Adequacy Determination (PAD) by the BPDA—leading to an FPIR supplement—or for a MEPA FEIR. The CAC has also found that, on a number of points, the project is inseparably bound up in the decision-making processes of various transit/transportation agencies; it will address these issues (and the overseeing agencies: MassDOT, the MBTA, and BTD) in this letter as well.

The letter is organized according to the following headings and sub-headings:

- I. Architecture & Design
 - a. Design Quality
 - b. Public Space
 - c. Shadow
 - d. Sustainability
 - e. Stuart St. Sky-bridge
- II. Affordable Housing
- III. MBTA-Related Issues
 - a. Ventilation
 - b. The #39 Bus
 - c. Station Renovation/Public Process
- IV. Potential Closure of I-90 Ramp [incl. comments for MassDOT]
- V. Streetscape [incl. comments for BTM]
 - a. Dartmouth St.
 - b. Bicycles
- VI. Phasing of Public Realm Improvements [incl. comments BTM]
- VII. Potential Mitigation for Permanent Impacts
- VIII. Construction Mitigation

I. ARCHITECTURE AND DESIGN

- **Design Quality:** Many members of the CAC very much like the architectural design of the proposed commercial building on Dartmouth Street, for its visual as well as wind-breaking effects. The CAC continues to feel that the two proposed residential buildings are somewhat more lacking in architectural definition thus far, and it joins the Boston Civic Design Commission in calling for design excellence throughout this important site. CAC members have also pointed out the jarring visual effect of leaving the Clarendon St side of the garage unscreened (unlike its rebuilt counterpart on Dartmouth St); they urge the Proponent to add screening on that side as part of its Garage East and/or Station East improvements.
- **Public Space:** The CAC also appreciates the revisions that were made between the PNF/ENF and DPIP/DEIR to add a new public plaza on Clarendon St., pushing back the proposed Station East building footprint. And it appreciates the revisions to the Station West design to add only one (rather than two) levels of retail, better preserve and highlight the original architecture of the station, and allow greater circulation space for foot traffic and public waiting areas within the station than in the initial proposal. It also regards the new indoor connector to Stuart St, the easier Orange Line access from Clarendon St., the significantly wider Dartmouth St. crosswalk connecting the Southwest Corridor Park to the Station, and the remediation of the crosswalk, sidewalks, and street alignment around Stanhope and Clarendon St, as major public advantages of the project.

- **Shadow:** Many members of the CAC appreciate the Proponent's efforts to stay within the shadow guidelines of the Stuart Street Planning Study, conservatively construed. Some members, however, remain concerned about the shadow impacts (illustrated by diagrams provided at the request of the Massachusetts Historic Commission) on historic resources in Copley Square, namely: Old South Church, 1873, designed by Charles Amos Cummings and Willard T. Sears; Trinity Church, 1877, by H. H. Richardson; the Boston Public Library McKim Building, 1895, by Charles Follen McKim; and the Fairmont Copley Plaza, 1912, by Henry Janeway Hardenbergh. In particular, the new morning shadow on the celebrated stained-glass windows of the two churches during the Christmas season suggests to some members the need for modification and/or mitigation.
- **Sustainability:** Currently, the Proponent's sustainability commitments for the site only meet the bar set by the Stuart Street Planning Study in the case of the office building (Garage West). Boston Properties has a past track record of responsible, sustainable building design, and the CAC shares this priority. Especially given a PDA wherein one or more proposed buildings may not be built for a decade, the CAC believes that the Proponent should be urged to look for continuing design innovations that allow it to improve the sustainability of each component of the project well beyond the minimum code requirements. The CAC does appreciate the Proponent's commitment to installing MERV 13 air filtration systems in the three proposed towers, especially in light of increased exposure to ultrafine particles at this highway-adjacent location.
- **Stuart St. Sky-bridge:** The DPIR includes a proposal that permission for a sky-bridge over Stuart St.—between 200 Clarendon St. and 40 Trinity Place—be included in the PDA Amendment. As this proposal has thus far seen only glancing public discussion, a majority of the CAC requests that this bridge be removed from the proposed PDA Amendment. If the Proponent wishes to construct this connector at a later date, that proposal deserves its own process of public scrutiny. Many CAC members share the concerns expressed by the BCDC and the BPDA about the tendency of sky-bridges to fracture the public realm by privatizing slices of air above the street. They agree that pedestrian activity at street level promotes safety and security and a lively neighborhood. One CAC member, however, argues that the public favors such aerial enclosed walkways both for convenience and for the protection they afford from inclement weather.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

- The Proponent has not yet outlined any firm plans in regard to meeting the affordable housing requirements of the city's Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP). The majority of the CAC agrees with and supports the general position outlined by the BPDA at the April 6th CAC meeting, which endorse on-site or nearby affordable housing for this project and the application of the Stuart Street Zoning requirements. The CAC recognizes that the BPDA and the Proponent will continue to have detailed conversations on this matter, and it wishes to be kept apprised of future developments. So far, we understand the following with respect to affordable housing at this site:

- The Stuart Street Zoning requirements (see Boston Zoning Code 48-6, Item 1), which require an additional 2.5% of market-rate units to be set aside for affordable housing above the standard IDP, should be in place for this project.
 - There is a great need for more affordable housing downtown; IBA and Tent City are local testaments to its importance, but also to the difficulty of constructing it in the present market. Alongside on-site units, some number of units could be allowed to be located in an agreed-upon location within $\frac{3}{4}$ of a mile of the site (rather than the typical $\frac{1}{2}$ mile radius required by the BPDA), depending on available locations at the time a final decision is made. This flexibility may better allow the affordable housing schedule to dovetail with the balance of the project schedule.
 - Rep. Byron Rushing noted a Newbury Street building that is currently operated as an affordable housing site but is in danger of becoming market rate. Such a location would be desirable for nearby off-site affordable housing, although the timing may not suit this project.
 - BPDA clarified that it would not endorse “buying out” the affordable housing quota for this project.
- For many CAC members, on-site affordable housing is strongly preferred.
 - On the other hand, one member noted that everything possible should be done to make this air-rights project feasible, including offering relief to the affordable housing quota.
 - In contrast, another member proposed the idea that additional, offsite affordable housing—pushing the total affordable units to 20.5%—should be included in the community benefits package.
 - Affordable housing required in the Inclusionary Development Fund (IDF) is an important City priority. Increasingly, it is also becoming clear that more inventory of “Workforce Housing” is needed. At least one member noted the importance of housing middle-income residents, and pushed for their inclusion in the project. Arguably, the IDF requirements already target middle-income Bostonians, since the rental limit for affordable units is at the level of a family of four making \$68,700, which is nearly double what the median Boston worker earns.

STATION-RELATED ISSUES [Incl. Comments for MBTA & MassDOT]

- **Ventilation:** The inferior air quality in Back Bay Station is one of the public’s most pressing concerns about the project site, and must be remedied. The CAC registers the critical importance of progress on this score to the success of the overall project. Any such solution must be continually operable for the comfort of station users and livable for nearby neighbors. The CAC notes that the MBTA is contractually committed to solving this problem, as a condition of the lease with Boston Properties, but we are concerned about the slow progress to date and the need for additional funds beyond the \$10 million committed. We also note the possibility that an adequate new system might require some ventilation capacity on the Station East site, and might therefore necessitate further cooperation from the Proponent with the MBTA. We urge the MBTA to advance its design sufficiently to determine, before the PDA Amendment, what further coordination with the Proponent might be necessary. Since the resolution of this key issue remains

murky, the CAC requests additional information as decisions are made, and asks that study of the possibility of venting up the side of Station East be included in any subsequent submission by the Proponent.

- **The #39 Bus:** The MBTA has made an initial determination that, when Station East is built, the #39 Bus will be relocated to terminate on St. James between Trinity Place and Dartmouth. Many CAC members are concerned about the distance of this stop from Back Bay Station from a way-finding and accessibility perspective, since many #39 riders currently disembark at the station to use MBTA and Amtrak services. There is also a history of specific agreements related to this particular bus line—which was originally installed as a form of mitigation—and the CAC wishes to ensure that public input is consulted on a potential route change, including among those who live further out along the bus line. Greater proximity of the relocated terminus to Copley Station is no advantage, since the bus stops there before continuing to Back Bay Station. A few members are content with the MBTA’s determination, but the majority of the CAC would like further information as to why St James is preferable to relocating the #39 terminus to Stuart St.

- **Station Renovation/Public Process:** Although the Station Renovation is not technically under the remit of the CAC, its design is integral to the success of the overall project and important to all stakeholders. Since our initial meeting, we have expressed the importance of more public involvement in this process. We appreciate the public meetings on the station design and ventilation so far, but we recommend convening an ongoing Station Advisory Group to participate in station oversight both during the renovation and once the capital projects are completed. Many concerns that have been raised in recent months are likely to have an ongoing dimension; these include:
 - Maintaining an affordable retail mix in the station
 - Accommodating existing businesses
 - Monitoring the improvement in the ventilation
 - An active public art program in the station
 - The placement and maintenance of the A. Philip Randolph statue
 - More tasteful advertising that does not obscure the station’s basic architecture
 - A program of events for the new public plaza
 - The coordination of public and private security, and the handling of any public safety threats that could prompt more limited access to the station.

All such matters would involve the Proponent (also now the station operator), station users, adjacent communities, and at times the MBTA. It would be useful and prudent to constitute the procedural scaffolding for gathering relevant public input at this renovation stage.

POTENTIAL CLOSURE OF I-90 RAMP [Incl. Comments for MassDOT]

- The fate of the Clarendon St. I-90 ramp is in the hands of MassDOT and the Federal Highway Administration, not the Proponent, so a degree of uncertainty persists.

However, a majority of the CAC remains adamant that a vehicular exit onto the busy section of Dartmouth St. between the Station and the Stuart St. corner would pose an unacceptable hazard for pedestrians and vehicles on that street, even given active management.

- Many members of the CAC, especially those from Bay Village and the South End, note that an exit only from Clarendon St. would also be unacceptable.
- The CAC agrees that—in light of these options—it is preferable to eliminate the Clarendon Street on-ramp to the Turnpike, enabling a Trinity Place exit from the Garage. It wishes to express that preference to MassDOT.
- In case the Clarendon St. I-90 ramp were to remain open, however, the CAC requests a briefing from BTDC and the Proponent on the proposed exit onto Dartmouth, including how the garage interfaces with bikes, pedestrians, etc. It would also ask to explore in detail any other garage exit options abandoned by the Proponent.

STREETSCAPE [Incl. Comments for BTDC]

- **Dartmouth St:** We anticipate continued review on sidewalk design and details. Everyone agrees that the new, very wide crosswalk across Dartmouth St. will constitute a major improvement for pedestrians. In regard to pedestrian flow in other directions on Dartmouth St., many CAC members appreciated the detailed pedestrian study offered by the Proponent, but others are also grateful for the attention BCDC has given to the sidewalks by requesting a model of the design. The CAC would find it helpful to see the model once it is completed and to be kept up-to-date with BCDC discussions. In particular, although the proposed design has been explained in detail as satisfying the Boston Transportation Department's "Complete Streets" guidelines, a number of CAC members are convinced that the section of Dartmouth Street between the station entry and Stuart Street as presented would be unsuccessful and overcrowded at peak hours. Other CAC members, in contrast, feel that the Proponent has demonstrated that the available sidewalk space would be adequate. We have continued to debate whether a six-foot furnishing zone—wide enough for trees in planters—is desirable or obstructive. The CAC would like to hear directly from the BTDC regarding the application of its guidelines to this specific location, recognizing that much depends upon the details. And it would welcome the official filing of the data from the Proponent's pedestrian study as part of any FPIR/FEIR.
- **Bicycles:** Several CAC members noted that the project has not proposed any public improvements to the flow of bicycle traffic around the site, despite proposing to provide substantial additional bicycle parking and a new Hubway station with Station East. We urge the BTDC to consider improvements to the bicycle lane infrastructure in the area, as bicyclists exit the Southwest Corridor Park, and to work with the Proponent to include such improvements in their TAPA for each of these four parcels where appropriate. A signature parcel such as this one ought to be thoroughly reflective of the principles espoused in the recently-published Go Boston 2030 report. Several CAC members have suggested deemphasizing cars on Dartmouth St. in favor of pedestrians and bicycles.

PHASING OF PUBLIC REALM IMPROVEMENTS [Incl. Comments for BTB & MBTA]

- The Proponent proposes a list of public improvements to the streetscape/pedestrian realm surrounding the site, linking each item to the development of one of the four parcels. In considering the site as a whole, however, the CAC feels strongly that it is not always sensible to link a certain improvement to one parcel alone. To facilitate the site's public functions, some improvements need to be undertaken with whichever of several parcels is developed first. We urge the following adjustments, making reference to the slides presented at CAC meeting #10 (3/29/17):

- **If Station East were to be developed before Garage East**, the following improvements should also be undertaken at that time:

- Reconfigured curb alignment & crosswalks at Clarendon & Stanhope
- Reduced & realigned garage drive width
- Improved grade at Clarendon & Stanhope
- Improved grade along garage façade

These improvements (all on slide #14) should also still be undertaken if Garage East were developed first. In other words, the pedestrian realm from the southern edge of the garage on the Clarendon side, to the southern edge of the garage drum on the Clarendon side, needs to be improved when whichever of Station East or Garage East is built first. The creation of a new public plaza and station entrance at the Clarendon St entrance, without any facilitation of the pedestrian path along Clarendon St to that plaza/entrance, would be a serious error.

- **If Garage West or Station East were to be developed before Station West**, the following improvements should also be undertaken at that time:

- Improved station entry plaza on Dartmouth St.
- Relocated & enlarged Dartmouth St. crosswalk
- New sidewalks, street trees, & street furniture on Dartmouth St.

These improvements (all on slide #17) should also still be undertaken if Station West were developed first. But the additional retail on the Station West site is relatively minor; if it were not built, but the much more substantial retail & office capacity of Garage West were added, it would be a major mistake not to widen the Dartmouth St. crosswalk and improve the station entry plaza at that time. The same improvements would need to be made if only Station East were built; although it is providing a through-block connector from the Clarendon St. side, it is still somewhat constricting foot traffic in that direction. And if Station East were built prior to Garage West, the new through-block connector to Stuart St. would not yet exist to help alleviate foot traffic, making improved pedestrian flow on Dartmouth St. all the more important.

- **If Station East were to be developed before Garage West**, substantial accommodation for bus riders to access the station would need to be worked out, providing adequate substitution for the following improvements (currently only linked to Garage West, on slide #12):

- New Station entrance from Stuart St
- New Through-block connector from Stuart St

- New Bus Pull-Off on Stuart
- New Accessible Drop-Off Lane on Stuart

If Station East is built, and the #39 bus is moved to St James St., how will wheelchair-using MBTA riders access Back Bay station? They would have to struggle up the unacceptable existing grade of Dartmouth St. The CAC is already concerned about the revised #39 bus route ending on St James rather than Stuart St., a block closer to the station. But with the through-block connector from Stuart not built, the path for riders would become even more tenuous. At a minimum, the Proponent would need to provide, linked to the development of Station East:

- A highly-visible outdoor elevator on Stuart St., on the west side of Trinity Place (next to the existing garage drum), to transport handicapped MBTA users to the level of the existing through-block connector.
- New bright lighting and signage for that through-block connector, along with any necessary fixes to make it accessible to wheelchair users.

Such mitigation may not be sufficient, however; the CAC would urge close scrutiny by the MBTA, and the vetting of any proposal by accessibility advocates.

- **If Garage West were built before Station East**, the new redundant elevator to the MBTA Orange Line should be built at that time. Currently this improvement is only linked to Station East (see slide #15). The Proponent has stated that its delivery at the time of Station East construction is a provision of its contract with the MBTA. But this means that, if built alongside Station East, the elevator ought to be regarded more as fulfillment of a contractual obligation than counted as a proffered 'public benefit'. It could be more fully considered in the latter light if delivered early, with Garage West. The CAC is confident that the MBTA would not object to such early delivery of the elevator. Furthermore, given the additional traffic driven to the site by Garage West, and the elevator's convenient location in relation to the proposed new Stuart St. through-block connector, there is a strong functional logic to delivering it when Garage West is built. If Station East were built first, the elevator should of course still be delivered at that time, per the Proponent's contractual obligation.
- In regard to all other improvements listed on the slides at CAC meeting #10 (3/29/17), we agree that they should be delivered with the various parcels as proposed.

POTENTIAL MITIGATION FOR PERMANENT IMPACTS

- As part of its contribution to the project, the CAC plans to develop mitigation recommendations for impacts of the project on nearby residents and businesses.
- This project is projected to place 5,000 additional people working and living on the site. We anticipate significant additional impact from extensive added park use, especially in Copley Square, the Southwest Corridor Park, and Frieda Garcia Park. To mitigate this additional impact, it may be desirable to establish an annual donation amount for funds earmarked for park maintenance. City parks often rely on private funding for maintenance; for example, the Heritage makes significant annual donations to the Friends of the Public Garden to offset additional use. A similar program could be arranged for

this project. The CAC will need time to discuss this and other mitigation programs as well as public benefits.

- One member proposed including opportunities for minority owned businesses in the station retail, similar to the program associated with the Simon Properties Copley Mall.
- One member emphasized the need for funding for capital improvements and programming in Copley Square.
- Several members recommended additional affordable housing as a potential community benefit.

CONSTRUCTION MITIGATION

- Whenever each parcel is developed, the Proponent will need to impose an effective construction management plan to minimize the impacts of traffic, trash, noise, fumes, etc.
- Because of the nature of the site, it will be especially important that access to the station from both Clarendon St. and Dartmouth St. is maintained to the greatest extent possible throughout construction, and that highly visible signage is provided for any local businesses obscured by scaffolding.

The above notes have sought to do justice to the project's complexity and to express the ongoing concerns and questions of the CAC, balanced against our enthusiasm for the improvement of this important public parcel. As we stated at the start, we believe that this public-private collaboration has the potential to result in a signature project of which the City, the Proponent, and local residents and businesses can all be justly proud. We are grateful for the attention of all the relevant public agencies and look forward to continuing to work with them and the Proponent as the project moves forward.

Signature Page [update/reformat below as necessary]

1. Mr. Brendan Ahern, South End Business Alliance
2. Ms. Ann Beha, Boston Society of Architects
3. Dr. Kenzie Bok, Bay Village Neighborhood Association
4. Mr. Damien Chaviano, Urban Land Institute
5. Mr. Jim Cochener, The Salty Pig Restaurant, Coda Restaurant Group
6. Ms. Jacquelyn Cox-Crite, Tent City Resident
7. Mr. Jack Fitzgerald, Ellis South End Neighborhood Association

8. Ms. Susan Gilmore, Resident of Back Bay
9. Mr. Elliott Laffer, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay
10. Ms. Meg Mainzer-Cohen, Back Bay Association
11. Ms. Mayra Negrón-Rivera, Inquilinos Boricuas En Acción
12. Mr. Ted Pietras, South End Business Alliance
13. Mr. Russ Preston, Congress for the New Urbanism, New England Chapter
14. Mr. Patrick Sarkis, Back Bay Association
15. Ms. Jacquelin Yessian, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay

Elected Officials

Rep. Byron Rushing
Rep. Jay Livingstone
Sen. William Brownsberger
Sen. Joe Boncore
Councilor Josh Zakim
Councilor Bill Linehan
Councilor Annissa Essaibi-George
Councilor Michelle Wu
Councilor Michael Flaherty
Councilor Ayanna Pressley

Appendix:

Notes of Individual Organization Comments from April 13th CAC Meeting

1. *Ellis South End Neighborhood Association*
 - a. *Pedestrian flow around station*
 - b. *Interior of station*
 - c. *Location of statue*
 - d. *Flow of traffic onto Clarendon Street*
 - e. *No vehicle access onto Dartmouth Street (check)*
2. *Saint Botolph Neighborhood Association*
 - a. *Sidewalks*

- b. Public Benefits conversation*
 - c. Exhaust and Station design*
 - d. Ask for an FPIR*
- 3. Back Bay Association*
 - a. Since billions of dollars are invested in this area, it is important that this project move forward.*
 - b. Would not like to see a well-intended process end with an approved project that is not financed.*
 - c. The project addresses the tremendous needs of the site.*
 - d. Notes the DPIR studies demonstrate data that volunteers synthesize for the basis of decisions. For example, volunteers asking for wider sidewalks despite a report that notes the sidewalk as an "A" performance.*
 - e. Also concerned about removing trees from Dartmouth because trees are very important*
 - f. Recommends benefits for Copley Square.*
- 4. Byron Rushing*
 - a. Wants to agree on % of affordable housing and also put additional affordable housing in the Community Benefits Package.*
 - b. Concerned about the shadow. Supports the concerns for shadow on the facades of Old South. Old South made a case for serious change in view in light of the use of the space. Wants response and mitigation for the shadows.*
 - c. Buss Drop-off as close to the entrance to the Orange Line as possible. Notes that J.P has a whole set of requirements and sign-offs by the MBTA related to the 39 Bus.*
- 5. Boston Society of Architects*
 - a. Reviews projects with respect to the following:*
 - i. AIA 2030 Initiative – the design for sustainability only moderate, can be improved*
 - ii. Livable Cities Guidelines - safety accommodations for pedestrians. In this case the unique conditions need to be considered, as noted by BCDC.*
 - iii. Historic Resources – Seeks mitigation for adverse impacts on Copley Square, Trinity Church, Old South, BPL*
 - iv. Design Excellence -*
- 6. Tent City*
 - a. A. Philip Randolph statue – need to ensure its weight is well-supported if moved, and that it is well-maintained.*
 - b. Affordable Housing should be on-site.*
 - c. Asks how Tent City can stay on top of any improvements down the road related to construction*
 - d. 39 Bus location*
 - e. Affordable Retail, opportunities for minority-owned businesses.*
- 7. Bay Village Neighborhood Association*
 - a. Prioritize On-Site affordable Housing*
 - b. Should be affordable retail in station*
 - c. Thoughtful phasing of public benefits along with project is key.*
 - d. Copley Square has large homeless population; helping with housing is part of benefiting local area.*

- e. Need screen for Clarendon facade of the garage*
 - f. If the only exit from the garage were onto Clarendon, that would be utterly unacceptable to Bay Village. Nonetheless, the possible garage exit to Dartmouth would be a disaster for pedestrians.*
 - g. Encouraged by studies of pedestrian flow around the Station, but would love to hear from BTD; this needs to be a top priority.*
 - h. Ventilation – It's possible that adequate solutions may involve some action by the Proponent, i.e. the MBTA may realize they need the Proponent's cooperation to effectively vent on the Station East parcel.*
 - i. 39 Bus Location*
 - j. Encouraged by many of the improvements from initial PNF to DPIR, especially on Clarendon St. side.*
 - k. Nonetheless, the CAC has a public duty to scrutinize the project, not just be boosters.*
- 8. Congress on New Urbanism*
 - a. Seek good, walkable neighborhoods, the region catalytic for this area, has a duty to pleasant and open to all*
 - b. In favor of affordable housing, although heeds some reality*
 - c. Questions the need to rebuild so much parking on top of the train station. Is parking the highest and best use for the site.*
 - d. Strongly against an opening onto Dartmouth Street from the garage*
 - e. Architecture has not been discussed much. Design good that grows from local references. Suggest we further scrutinize. Important to give deference to the Back Bay Station.*
 - f. The station can/should reinforce community and act as a living room for the city.*
- 9. Urban Land Institute*
 - a. Feels good about the project, fits in line with the typology of projects ULI likes*
 - b. The design of the public realm is extremely important.*
 - c. The station is a big focal point.*
 - d. Exit onto Dartmouth Street is not idea,*
 - e. Advocates affordable housing. Open to other ideas like offsite middle income housing, work force housing*
 - f. 39 Bus location is important*
- 10. Neighborhood Association of Back Bay*
 - a. Agree with many/most of the comments*
 - b. Would like to see an FPIR or other document with supplemental information*
 - c. Interested in developing process for discussing Community Benefits*
 - d. Recommends the project provide mitigation for Copley Square Park to offset the increased use from 5,000 more people on this site*
 - e. The setback on Dartmouth Street, which is part of Stuart Street zoning, is important*
 - f. How will impacts be corrected/mitigated, especially wind and shadows*
- 11. South End Business Alliance*
 - a. Existing station is underutilized*
 - b. Looking forward to additional, new retail*
 - c. Likes the office building design, something different*
 - d. Public realm design is important.*
- 12. Salty Pig Restaurant*

- a. Supports the project
- b. Concerned with traffic, possible Dartmouth Street garage outlet, traffic already backs up to Columbus
- c. 39 Bus Stop location
- d. Affordable housing

13. Susan Gilmore, Back Bay resident/Prudential, emailed comments

- a. "I think it's important to stress the overwhelming support for this project and the enhancements it brings to this site which is at the nexus of the South End, Back Bay and Bay Village.
- b. Affordable Housing: "If this is a possible consideration, it would be helpful to have more information. That said, it may be too early in the process to identify specific sites for Affordable Housing. I agree that Affordable Housing is important and am comfortable if it is met either on-site or within the 1/4 mile radius. I would not want Affordable housing to negatively impact the financial viability of the project."
- c. Dartmouth St: "It seems to me that Dartmouth Street will go through major changes with respect to foot, bicycle and vehicular traffic and I agree it would be helpful to understand the comprehensive Dartmouth Street Plan and how these changes will be incorporated. [In regard to the streetscape] We are trying to balance the need for space with the desire for a furniture zone - space is important but I also think there is value in having trees on Dartmouth Street where appropriate.
- d. "When we saw the photos from each direction, it became clear that the face of the garage on Clarendon was not in keeping with the balance of the project. That said, if it is not part of the project, we would need to understand the cost of this work, the funding and the viability.

14. Mayra Negrón-Rivera, Inquilinos Boricuas en Accion, emailed comments:

- a. I want to emphasize the importance of creating Affordable Housing for The Back Bay/South End Gateway Project ON-SITE. As you know, IBA is a Community Development Corporation, with a portfolio of 521 affordable housing in the South End, Lower Roxbury and Hyde Park. We currently have 11,985 families on our waiting list, families in need of affordable housing. The need is there, but nowhere and impossible to develop such "affordable" units due to lack of affordable land/buildings available in this neighborhood and bordering areas. Most recently, IBA was designated for the Creation of Affordable Housing units, but we were unsuccessful to follow through due to the high acquisition cost in the area, competition from private developers on bidding process to acquire properties, making it difficult to develop properties in this area. I am in full support to have Affordable Housing Units ON-SITE for this project; and I encourage you all to support the Creation of Affordable Housing Units ON-SITE, to address this barrier

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damien chaviano
doitloop verified
 04/20/17 11:18AM EDT
 PHCQ-GIRO-OC7H-UJLF

Jackie yessian
doitloop verified
 04/19/17 11:54AM EDT
 RCM-FJVN-6YU-A7BF

Jim cochever
doitloop verified
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mayra negron-rivera dotloop verified
04/19/17 6:48PM EDT
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04/19/17 10:45AM EDT
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susan gilmore dotloop verified
04/18/17 4:28PM EDT
BCSQ-UGDO-LBOD-UYOS

ted pietras dotloop verified
04/18/17 4:43PM EDT
XOZB-XYLB-PJ8O-8FPI

Aaron Michlewitz dotloop verified
04/19/17 4:21PM EDT
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bill linehan dotloop verified
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Jay Livingstone dotloop verified
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HUFO-BJBL-U9AJ-MSVL

Josh Zakim dotloop verified
04/20/17 2:24PM EDT
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Michelle Wu dotloop verified
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Y7VR-UAQ7-3HBH-OQ11

William Bronberger dotloop verified
04/19/17 9:47PM EDT
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Scott Mustard dotloop verified
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elliott laffer dotloop verified
04/18/17 4:47PM EDT
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JOSH ZAKIM
BOSTON CITY COUNCILOR
DISTRICT 8

April 18, 2017

Michael Rooney, Project Assistant
Boston Planning and Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

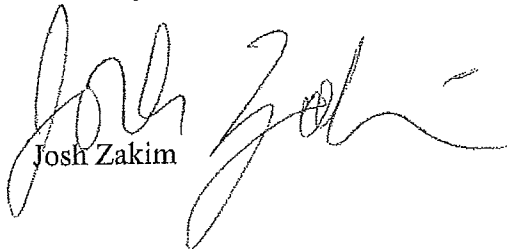
Dear Mr. Rooney,

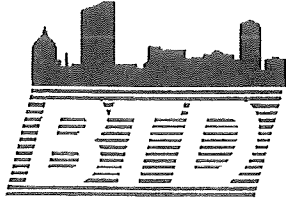
I am writing today to express some of my concerns with the current proposal for the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project as submitted by Boston Properties. While the proponents have thoughtfully addressed some of my earlier concerns surrounding the project's impacts on streets and sidewalks in the immediate area, I remain troubled by the hazard presented to pedestrians and motorists alike with the current plans for vehicular circulation into and out of the garage area. Given the sheer volume of large development projects currently underway or slated to begin in the near future in this area, I would like to see design improvements that offer a more holistic understanding of the multi-modal transportation demands within the neighborhood.

As this review process moves forward, I also want to ensure that sufficient affordable housing units and opportunities for homeownership are included as a part of this project. These elements will be crucial for increasing neighborhood stability and fostering civic life in our growing community.

I hope that you and your colleagues consider these issues as you review this project, and I look forward to seeing how this project evolves as the process continues. Please feel free to contact me at 617-635-4225 or josh.zakim@boston.gov with any questions.

Sincerely,


Josh Zakim



BOSTON
TRANSPORTATION
DEPARTMENT

ONE CITY HALL SQUARE • ROOM 721
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS 02201
617-635-4680 • FAX 617-635-4295

April 20, 2017

Brian Golden, Director
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

RE: Draft Project Impact Report: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

Dear Mr. Golden,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project ("the Project") Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR), which follows on the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) comment letter on the Project Notification Form (PNF). That comment letter focused on four overarching considerations:

1. Need for coordination with development projects proposed in the Stuart Street corridor which are in varying stages of design and construction.
2. Traffic impacts on local streets generated by the ramp closure alternative.
3. Recognition of excellent transit-access to the site and consideration of "shared" traveling options.
4. The creation of a public realm that is friendly for people walking or riding bikes.

BTD is pleased to note that the project team has overall met the spirit of these considerations, as well as many of the detailed requests in the previous letter, but notes below several places where we would encourage rethinking and/or more analysis. The ramp closure is something of an exception, as it has been clarified to be a Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) project and not something being promoted by the development team.

One overall request is that relevant mitigation be tied to whichever phase goes first. For example, the reconstruction of the crosswalk across Clarendon at Stanhope should be completed with whichever of Station East or Garage East is first.

BTD appreciates the proponent's overall commitment to much of the new Stuart Street zoning, even though it is in a planned development area (PDA) and therefore the zoning does not apply. One area that we unfortunately do not see, however, is the commitment to dedicate 0.5% of construction costs to some combinations of a transportation improvement fund or public realm improvement fund, in addition to the comments below.

Parking

On p. 4-93, the DPIR states that the project will continue to reserve 14 spaces for car-share vehicles, and will "work with each provider to provide more if demand warrants." BTD would like the proponent to describe how they will

MARTIN J. WALSH, Mayor

monitor demand and what will trigger more vehicles. BTB encourages the proponent to talk to car-share providers now and see if there is demand for more spaces at this time, and if there is, to provide those spaces.

The proponent proposes an additional bike-share station on Clarendon Street. As described in BTB's PNF letter, BTB would like the proponent to propose two stations. Currently, BTB would like to see one on Clarendon (as proposed) and a second in the general vicinity, located in coordination with BTB.

The City of Boston requests for all new developments to make 5% of the total number of parking spaces electric vehicle (EV) parking spaces, and for 15% to be EV ready, with conduit laid and appropriate electrical capacity. With 2,013 spaces, that is 101 EV spaces, and 302 EV-ready. The DPIR proposes retaining the current 6 EV spaces, with additional spaces when demand warrants, and makes no mention of making others EV-ready.

While BTB acknowledges that this project may be different than a new build as the garage is not being fully demolished, a number between 6 and 101 should be negotiated. The proponent proposed conducting an assessment of EV demand in the future; BTB encourages the proponent to conduct that analysis now to determine the correct number at build, in addition to a plan for how and on what frequency to conduct that analysis in the future, as well as what would trigger more EV spaces. Further, in order to reduce cost in the future, a large percentage of new spaces should be made EV-ready, and requisite electric capacity should be built in to the project.

The DPIR states that "All new monthly parking permits will be charged the full market-rate monthly rate". When parking is rented to an employer, will they be required to pass this on to the employee – ie required to implement unbundled parking? BTB would support this, or alternatively parking cash-out for employees who do not park at the facility.

Boston Bike Parking Guidelines requests 1 space per unit and 0.3 space per 1,000 square feet of commercial/retail development, which is 797 spaces (600 residential, plus 197 commercial/retail), whereas the DPIR proposes 480 spaces. BTB would suggest working towards the Guideline's parking ratios, but if that cannot be achieved, BTB suggests the proponent ensure that others can store their bikes in their units and offices, with policies such as the following:

- Explicitly allowing cyclists to enter all residential and commercial entry points with their bikes.
- Explicitly allowing cyclists to enter use all elevators with their bikes.
- Installing a way to store bikes in units/apartments, such as a wall-mounted bike rack.

Public Realm

BTB's PNF letter, based upon Boston's Complete Streets Guidelines, suggests a minimum pedestrian zone width of 12 feet in addition to furniture and frontage zones. BTB is pleased to see 15 foot pedestrian zones along Dartmouth and Clarendon Streets, but the DPIR shows an 11 foot pedestrian zone along Stuart Street. BTB notes that the proposed parking lane on Stuart Street is 12 feet wide, whereas BTB standard parking lanes are 7 to 8 feet wide. BTB proposes the proponent study making a skinnier parking lane and a wider pedestrian zone here.

BTB supports trees along Dartmouth Street, as these will create a more vibrant complete street for those exiting the station as well as for those walking along that corridor.

BTB's PNF comment letter requested a detailed public realm configuration of the Columbus Avenue – Clarendon Street intersection, and while the proponent describes the west side of Clarendon, BTB would like to see a public

realm improvement proposal for the triangle northeast of the intersection, south of the highway. Relatedly, the proponent should spell out the plan for the closed headhouse on that corner.

BTD would like to reemphasize the request in the PNF letter for a proposal to work on a joint Stuart Street streetscape plan with other developers in the corridor. This plan should contain a maintenance component.

The DPIR shows bollards in the new crosswalk across Dartmouth Street. These bollards should be spaced to allow those with disabilities and riding bikes easy access across the street. How far apart are the bollards in the DPIR plans?

The DPIR shows curb extensions on Dartmouth Street at the garage exit on Dartmouth in the base scheme. Curb extensions are to facilitate pedestrians crossing streets, and BTD would not suggest having them here.

Traffic Analysis and Operations

BTD would like to thank the proponent for working with other developers along Stuart Street to progress a design for that street that allows fewer through lanes and wider sidewalks. As the proponent is aware, one of those developments, Copley Place, is currently on hold. That project was going to reconstruct the intersection of Dartmouth and Stuart Streets. Because the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project is likely to go first, BTD would like to see a proposal from the proponents to complete this reconstruction with the Garage West phase if it has not been done already, with mitigation to be shifted elsewhere if it has already occurred.

Because of the project's impact on Trinity Place, especially by directing traffic northbound between Stuart and St. James Streets, BTD's PNF letter requested a public realm plan for Trinity Place and St. James Avenue, which shows how pedestrian flow, on-street parking, shuttle and tour bus parking, hotel pick-up and drop-off, and especially Copley Square event-staging can be managed. BTD would still like to see this analysis.

BTD has recently received Synchro files for the proponent's proposed signal changes, and will have comments on those at a later date.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM)

As mentioned in our PNF letter, BTD encourages the project to require commercial and retail tenants to subsidize transit and bike share membership for employees, as well as to bundle subsidized transit, bike share and car share membership for residents through residential leases, as well as for the first year of any condo sales.

The DPIR takes credit for showers and changing rooms for bicyclists in the LEED checklists, but does not spell that commitment out. The Boston Bike Parking Guidelines require one shower/changing facility for the first 40,000 square feet and an additional for each additional 80,000 square feet. That would be approximately 8 facilities. BTD would like to see the development's plan for implementing these changing facilities, including which will have showers, where they will be located, and how they will be accessed both from bike parking and from the rest of the development.

Transit

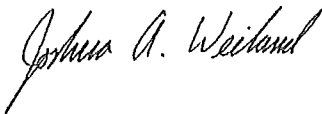
BTD notes that MassDOT will use the proponent's lease income to complete renovations and upgrades of Back Bay Station. BTD is very much in favor of MassDOT using these funds in this manner.

The transit capacity analysis was conducted on an hourly basis. Did the team look at peak 15-minute capacity?

The DPIR mentions that the plaza at Station East anticipates the rerouting of the MBTA's 39 bus. As the MBTA has not yet presented this change to the City or community, and the change is not certain: the proponent should develop a plan for what will occur if the 39 does not change its route.

The DPIR says that "new redundant elevators to Tracks 1/3 and 2 at the existing head house on the south side of Columbus Avenue may be provided". BTD supports the provision of these elevators if feasible, and would prefer that it occur with whichever phase is built first.

Sincerely,



Joshua A. Weiland

Transportation Planner

Boston Transportation Department

Cc: Vineet Gupta, Director of Policy and Planning
John DeBenedictis, Director of Engineering



Boston Disability Commission Advisory Board

BOSTON CITY HALL | ONE CITY HALL PLACE | 9th FLOOR | ROOM 967 | BOSTON MA, 02201
617.635.3682 | fax 617.635.2726 | TTY 617.635.2541 | www.cityofboston.gov/boardsandcommissions

March 6, 2017

ATTN: Michael Rooney
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

KRISTEN MCCOSH
Commissioner

RE: Back Bay/South End Gateway Draft Project Impact Report

Commission Members

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Chairperson (acting)

John Winske
Secretary

Marc (Moses) Mallard
Treasurer

Zary Amirhosseini

Kimyatta Campbell

Kyle Robidoux

Dear Mr. Rooney:

The mission of the Boston Disability Commission Advisory Board is to facilitate full and equal participation in all aspects of life by persons with disabilities in the City of Boston, including housing, employment, transportation, and civic life.

After reviewing the Draft Project Impact Report for Back Bay/South End Gateway project and listening to a presentation by the development team at our Advisory Board meeting on February 27th, 2017, we would like to express our unanimous opposition to allowing the accessible units required by the Boston Planning and Development Agency's Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) for this project to be built off-site.

The Advisory Board works hard every day to facilitate full and equal access to all aspects of community life for Boston's diverse residents and visitors, including those with physical, sensory, and other disabilities. As a Commission, we strongly feel that it sends a negative message to persons with disabilities that their housing needs are not equal to those without disabilities if the accessible units required by the IDP are allowed to be located off-site.

Should the project proceed as proposed, it will deny the opportunity for persons with disabilities to live in any and all parts of Boston, especially near major transportation hubs, such as those located adjacent to this project.

Additionally, we would like to express our opposition to the City's common practice of placing accessible IDP residential units off-site, and we ask the BDPA to consider this opposition in all development moving forward.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Carl Richardson
Acting Chairperson
Boston Disability Commission Advisory Board

BOSTON PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

April 18, 2017

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Anthony Ursillo

Peter Vanderwarker

Executive Director
Gregory J. Galer, Ph.D.

The Otis House
141 Cambridge Street
Boston, MA 02114
617.367.2458
bostonpreservation.org

Secretary Matthew A, Beaton
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114
Re: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project, EEA No. 15502

Mr. Michael Rooney
Boston Planning and Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201
via email: Michael.rooney@boston.gov
Re: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

Dear Secretary Beaton and Mr. Rooney,

The Boston Preservation Alliance is Boston's primary, non-profit advocacy organization that protects and promotes the use of historic buildings and landscapes in all of the city's neighborhoods. With 40 Organizational Members, 98 Corporate Members, and a reach of 35,000 friends and supporters we represent a diverse constituency advocating for the thoughtful evolution of the city and celebration of its unique character. We appreciate the opportunity to offer comments on projects that impact the historic character of the city.

The Alliance joins numerous voices from the Back Bay community, including from some of the city's most important historic sites, to express concern about the impact of the proposed Back Bay/South End Gateway Project. The site is located amidst some of the city's most prized historic neighborhoods and internationally-known historic buildings and spaces such as the Back Bay and the South End Landmark Districts and a block from Copley Square, Trinity Church, and Old South Church. Its visual and shadow impacts will forever alter these historic resources.

One of our main concerns for a project of this size in Boston is shadow impacts on historic resources. While we recognize that the DPIR concludes that the shadow impact on Copley Square is in compliance with established limits for new shadow on Copley Square Park itself, we urge the BPDA and MEPA to recognize that shadow impacts to historic buildings must be considered as well. Shadows are not simply an aesthetic or human comfort issue, though they are commonly discussed this way thus minimizing their effects. Data clearly demonstrate that shadows can have a significant detrimental impact on historic structures. The physical health of buildings can be

greatly compromised due to increased moisture retention (from reduced sunlight-induced drying) leading to weakened mortar, ice dams, biological growth, and rotted wood. When new construction suddenly puts a historic building in shadow, these effects can be permanent and expensive to mitigate in perpetuity- a responsibility which places additional burden on the stewards of Boston's historic treasures. The proposal places many historic buildings under shadow-induced threat.

We are particularly concerned about shadows this project will cast on Trinity Church and Old South Church. These historic sites, representing local, state, and national levels of significance, have for generations met the difficult challenge of generating resources to maintain and preserve their buildings, and have been important contributors to the cultural and civic life of the city. It is crucial that new, private, and profitable development not cause unnecessary harm to the historic fabric, setting, and experience of these character-defining elements of Boston. The sunlight which illuminates the world-class stained glass windows in both Trinity and Old South are essential elements of their design, significance, and draw to worshippers, tourists, and scholars. Permanently reducing the natural illumination intended by our nation's most storied and revered architects and designs is a major concern.

Not only will this extensive development cast harmful shadow on historic resources, we struggle to see how its design fits within the context of this architecturally significant neighborhood. Any new visual elements should enhance the character and quality of architecture here. New structures should not compete with, diminish, or distract from the historic character of the neighborhood as we feel the current design will. Boston should expect nothing short of world-class design that will be as valued by future generations as the Boston Public Library, Trinity Church, Old South Church, and others in the area are today. What about the current design is responsive to its historic context? Does this proposal contribute to the character and iconic nature of the Back Bay and South End? While Back Bay Station was bold and innovative in its day, today we see a host of issues in its design. Does the proposal remedy these faults with a scheme that is more than simply bold and novel?

Finally, we know all too well of the delicate balance between old and new in this area of the city and the many challenges and missteps that have occurred along the way, from foundation and groundwater issues causing damage to historic resources to wind challenges that we live with today. We urge both detailed review and appropriate precaution be taken as construction plans move forward. With the insertion of so much new development in this physically complex area there are many opportunities for unintended negative consequences. Our historic buildings do not survive simply because they are old and we leave them alone. Stewardship of the highest caliber is necessary, and that care falls upon all of us as we consider the insertion of new vibrancy to a very old city.

We therefore request that the BPDA require a detailed analysis from the proponent illustrating what alterations would be required of the current proposal in order to

BOSTON PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

eliminate or significantly reduce the amount of shadow cast on the historic resources and its visual impact, particularly from Copley Square. In order to weigh the benefits of this development with the consequences to the historic fabric of the neighborhood, it would be helpful to understand how the building(s) proposed might need to be shifted, reduced, or altered in design to influence the shade and visual impact. Additional renderings showing the views to the project from the pedestrian experience within Copley Square and other historic areas of the neighborhood would be beneficial to understanding the project's visual impact. We would also like a clear explanation of how the design team believes the proposal appropriately fits within the context of this most historic neighborhood.

While we wholeheartedly support the redevelopment and rejuvenation of Back Bay Station, we cannot sacrifice the city's most unique treasures in exchange. As Boston grows, we will continue to face these kinds of challenges and we must work together to determine the most appropriate solutions to preserve what makes our city special while embracing the vibrancy of new construction within Boston's unique historic context. We are hopeful that adjustments can be made in the proposal to accomplish the redevelopment's goals while protecting our irreplaceable historic fabric.

Thank you,



Greg Galer
Executive Director

CC:

Michael A. Cantalupa, Boston Properties
Michelle Wu, Boston City Council
Michael Flaherty, Boston City Council
Annissa Essaibi George, Boston City Council
Salvatore LaMattina, Boston City Council
Josh Zakim, Boston City Council
Rosanne Foley, Boston Landmarks Commission
Brona Simon, Massachusetts Historical Commission
Senator William Brownsberger
Representative Byron Rushing
Representative Jay Livingstone
Vicki Smith, Neighborhood Association of Back Bay
Reverend Dr. Samuel Lloyd, Trinity Church
Reverend Nancy Taylor, Old South Church
David Leonard, Boston Public Library
Kenzie Bok, Bay Village Neighborhood Association

BOSTON PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

April 20, 2017

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and
Environmental Affairs
Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary
Alex Strysky, Analyst, Alex.Strysky@state.ma.us
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

Boston Planning and Development Authority
Michael Rooney, Project
Manager, Michael.Rooney@boston.gov
Boston Redevelopment Authority
1 City Hall Square
Boston MA 02201

Comments:

EEA No. 15502 The Back Bay | South End Gateway Project
Article 80 Back Bay | South End Gateway Project Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR)

Dear Mr. Strysky and Mr. Rooney;

I am a Back Bay resident with a direct view to the project site from my home. I am a member of the Civic Advisory Committee and frequently travel by train and use the Orange Line, as well as the 39 bus. The Back Bay Station project has the potential to become a great asset for the City. We anticipate benefitting from the improved Back Bay Station and associated public realm improvements, as well as additional housing, retail, and office uses. The project is made possible by the allocation of this public site to the project, making it a public/private venture that sets a high bar for design. I am writing to you to express my concerns regarding the Back Bay |South End Gateway Draft Project Impact Report DPIR proposed by Boston Properties. The project should be further modified/developed to address concerns raised here, in the NABB letter, CAC letter, as well as other's comments. I anticipate continuing participation on the project and look for Final Project Impact Report (FPIR) or other document incorporating further development.

Recently enacted Stuart Street Zoning

The building design should meet all of the recently enacted Stuart Street Zoning provisions, including:

- Setback - The 25 foot setback from Dartmouth Street, which allows a view corridor on Dartmouth Street between the South End and Back Bay neighborhoods. The Back Bay Station is an important civic structure amidst three neighborhoods. The streetscape, including generous space between the building face and the curb are important to preserve the prominence of the entry, a gateway to Boston.
- Affordable Housing - The project has not yet to commit to the Stuart Street zoning requirement for 17.5% affordable housing. In addition, the CAC is considering proposing additional affordable housing in the public benefit package.
- Sustainability - The project has yet to commit to meeting the prescribed sustainability requirements of LEED Gold as a minimum. LEED platinum is the minimum recommended level for these times.
- Shadow - Although the shadow studies indicate that the buildings' shadow on Copley Square meets the zoning, no more than two hours of shadow any day, during prescribed times, shadows fall onto national historic landmarks – in particular, Trinity and Old South Church, YMCA, Boston Public Library. Shadows cover church windows during the Christmas season during normally scheduled church services. These should be avoided/mitigated.

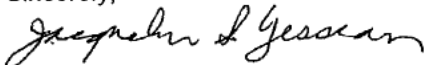
Environmental Impacts

- The project will add shadow, solar glare, pedestrian level wind, and traffic impacts that should be mitigated by the project. Specific, clear criteria should be developed to assist the developer and the public to evaluate the appropriate mitigation.
- Urban Bridge - The developer proposes a bridge across Stuart Street. The bridge is not part of the project, nor is it under consideration in the near future. This should be removed from the project. Urban bridges are contrary to street level pedestrian vitality, which is so important to a healthy neighborhood.
- Shadow on Copley Square

- The shadow studies indicate that the project shadows on Copley Square fall within the Stuart Street zoning, as noted. These hours leave the park in shadow midday during the winter. The park would be much more user friendly with sunshine in the winter. The criterion for accepting an adverse impact such winter shadows as this example, should not be as low as that “they are legal”, but should take account of the severity of the harm caused. Copley Square Park is already one of the most heavily used parks in the city. With the 5,000 additional people planned to occupy the new buildings, the demand will be significantly higher on a daily basis.
- Pedestrian Level Winds
 - Unpleasant wind is a major component of the microclimate in the area around Copley Square.
 - It is unclear if the mitigation measures proposed are optimum and if claims of wind reductions in the surrounding area are justified. Nor has a program been developed to evaluate the buildings once constructed to determine where and what type of additional mitigation will be needed.
- Public Realm Improvements
 - Perhaps most important for this project for the Back Bay is the lack of sufficient vision and development of the Dartmouth and Stuart Street sidewalks in the DPIR. Dartmouth Street sidewalk is the major entry to and from the Back Bay and South End. It is also the major connector between these two neighborhoods. To date the design shown is a plan book application of the Green Streets Guidelines developed by the Boston Transportation Department. These guidelines are excellent for specific applicable locations. Although they fall short for application for a gateway to the City and primary axis between two neighborhoods – the South End and the Back Bay. The sidewalks should be more generous in width. Street furniture designed specifically for this location will be more appropriate than 5 foot planters with street trees. The existing walk provides partial shelter for pedestrians. This sheltered space is proposed to be enclosed with no shelter provided in the new scheme.
 - The small open space to the east of the station is minimal in size and is confused with vehicular, service, pedestrian, and bicycle movement. The plan needs further thought and detail for safety and security and to create a place people can comfortably congregate.
- Parking Garage vehicular Circulation
 - Until MassDOT and U.S. Highway Administration determine the fate of the Clarendon Street access to the Mass Turnpike, many decisions must remain open. However, a majority of the CAC remains adamant that a vehicular exit (or entrance and exit) onto this section of Dartmouth Street would pose an unacceptably increased hazard for pedestrians and vehicles on Dartmouth Street, despite implementation of technical improvements, such as horns, lights, etc.
- 39 Bus Stop location
 - The current bus stop located on the site to the east of the Station serves as an accessible multimodal transportation link between train and bus services. The current location provides an accessible, enclosed connection between the MBTA Orange Line, the AMTRAK station, and the MBTA Bus system. An alternative bus stop location, if necessitated by the project, should work equally, such as on Stuart Street.
 - The DPIR site plan incorporates a potential bus stop with a direct, enclosed, accessible connection to the potential bus stop and the train station.

Thank you for your consideration of my comments.

Sincerely,



Jacquelin S. Yessian
160 Commonwealth Avenue, Unit 603
Boston, MA 02116

Cc: Mayor@boston.gov, Josh.Zakim@boston.gov, Bill.Linehan@boston.gov,
Byron.Rushing@mahouse.gov, Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov, William.Brownsberger@masenate.gov,



Boston Groundwater Trust

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April 10th, 2017

Michael Rooney, Project Manager
Boston Planning and Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201-1007

Subject: Back Bay/South End Gateway Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR) Comments

Dear Mr. Rooney:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the draft project impact report (DPIR) for the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project. The Boston Groundwater Trust was established by the Boston City Council to monitor groundwater levels in sections of Boston where the integrity of building foundations is threatened by low groundwater levels and to make recommendations for solving the problem. Therefore my comments are limited to groundwater related issues.

The project is located in the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) established under Article 32 of the Zoning Code. As stated in the DPIR, confirmed in a preliminary meeting, and at the scoping session for the Project Notification Form on May 11th, 2016, the project is proposed to be designed and constructed to comply with the requirements of Article 32.

The DPIR states that approximately three quarters of the Project Site is located on the Air Rights Development Parcel located over transportation facilities and infrastructure that are at an elevation below the desired groundwater recharge elevation. The DPIR also states that it may not be possible to infiltrate the first inch of runoff over the entire post-development impervious area. The DPIR states that Garage West Parcel, Garage East Parcel, and Station East Parcel will have clean runoff directed to a recharge system designed to infiltrate stormwater runoff in order to replenish groundwater. The DPIR states that the clean runoff from Station West Parcel will likely be directed to the existing MBTA storm drain systems below the existing station that ultimately discharges to Deer Island Waste Water Treatment Plant. To fully comply with the Article 32 zoning component of capturing the first inch of runoff the proponent should work with BWSC and the Trust to explore all possible types of recharge systems and methods of stormwater management.

As confirmed in a preliminary meeting and at the above referenced scoping session the GCOD requires both the installation of a recharge system and a demonstration that the project cannot cause a reduction in groundwater levels on site or on adjoining lots. In the case of the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project four separate parcels designated Garage West, Garage East, Station East, and Station West will all need to be addressed individually. As stated in the DPIR, the proposed construction of the four separate parcels will require various foundation types with construction of the four parcels occurring in different phases. As stated in the DPIR, the proponent will provide the BPDA, BWSC and the Boston Groundwater Trust a letter stamped by a professional engineer registered in Massachusetts that details how the GCOD criteria will be achieved for each individual Project Component prior to the issuance of a building permit in compliance with the requirements of PDA No. 2. This letter must also detail how each of the four parcels will meet the GCOD requirement for no reduction in groundwater levels on site or on adjoining lots.

The DPIR states that some local dewatering may be required during the construction processes and that the feasibility of recharging temporary dewatering effluent into the ground will be investigated during the design of the Project.

The DPIR states that performance criteria will be established for maintenance of groundwater levels during construction in the vicinity of the Project. In addition the DPIR also states that the contractor will be required to implement necessary steps during the work to not lower groundwater levels outside the limits of the Project Site and that geotechnical instrumentation will be installed and monitored before and during the foundation installation portion of the work to observe the performance of the adjacent buildings and structures.

The groundwater level data should be furnished to the Trust and the Agency on a weekly basis. In the event that groundwater levels drop below the observed pre-construction baseline levels during construction, provisions must be in place to halt construction and dewatering until the cause is found and remedied. I look forward to working with the proponents Engineer on reviewing the monitoring wells in the area to be read and reported. Reporting of the groundwater level data and provisions to halt construction and dewatering if groundwater levels outside the project site drop below baseline levels should mirror the plan developed by the projects Engineer for the 888 Boylston Street project.

I look forward to continuing to work with the proponent and the Agency to assure that this project can have only positive impacts on area groundwater levels.

Very truly yours,



Christian Simonelli
Executive Director

CC: Kathleen Pederson BRA,
Maura Zlody, BED

**Susan Prindle
140 Marlborough Street
Boston, MA 02116**

April 11, 2017

Massachusetts Energy and Environmental Affairs
Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs
c/o Alex Strycky, Analyst,
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

Boston Planning and Development Authority
Michael Rooney, Project Manager,
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Back Bay/South End Gateway project DPIR (EEA 15502)

Dear Mr. Rooney and Mr. Strycky,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Back Bay/South End Gateway project. While many of the goals of the project are laudable, there are outstanding issues that need to be resolved before such a significant alteration to the Back Bay's landscape is undertaken.

Summary of Major Concerns

- Inconsistency with Stuart Street Zoning
 - No firm commitment to meet the enhanced affordable housing requirement
 - Violation of 25' Dartmouth Street setback
 - Undesirable visual and street impact of proposed pedestrian bridges
 - Non-compliance with targets for sustainability
- Urban Design
 - Narrowing sidewalk may not provide enough pedestrian capacity
 - Proposed garage opening and loading dock has negative effect on Dartmouth Street
- Transportation Issues
 - Potential gridlock
 - Increased traffic impact on the neighborhood, especially the major crash point at Beacon with Berkeley Streets
- Environmental Issues
 - Wind Impact
 - Shadows
 - Solar Glare
- Phasing of mitigation measures

Inconsistency with Stuart Street Zoning

As one who was involved in the Stuart Street zoning change, I am particularly concerned that the proposed project violates its guidelines in several significant ways: First, there is no

commitment to 17.5% affordable housing requirement. This is a critical element of the Stuart Street guidelines, as it will not only enliven the area, but will reduce its transportation needs, enabling workers to live near their places of employment.

Second, the 25' Dartmouth Street setback, which is particularly important to the view and skyplane from Copley Square, is being violated. After the long and arduous negotiations that resulted in the adoption of the new zoning regulations for Stuart Street, it is extremely disheartening to believe that they will not be enforced in this case. The As of Right Alternative, which the developer seems to have discarded, seems a better fit. Despite the developer's assertions to the contrary, the wind studies do not identify any decrease in wind as a result of the alternative zoning compliant massing. (RWDI letter of 12/21/16, page 3: "These are additional minor design changes and the wind conditions at grade level are expected to be similar to the conditions predicted from the wind tunnel test.")

The proposed pedestrian bridges across Dartmouth, Stuart, and Trinity Place are inconsistent with the goal of enlivening the street that was an underpinning of the new zoning. I believe they should be removed from the proposed PDA.

The Stuart Street guidelines state that "Proposed Projects shall incorporate advanced sustainability methods and/or accreditation that achieve certifiable status at LEED Gold or net zero energy consumption or meets or exceeds comparable environmental standards in effect, as determined through Large Project Review." Although the Garage West proposal complies with this guideline, the residential buildings do not. A project of this density, which will inevitably have significant impacts on its surroundings should, I believe, be held to the Gold standard at minimum.

Urban Design

Public access and permeability of the site is key to preventing the creation of an impenetrable wall between the neighborhoods. The pedestrian connector from Stuart Street to the station is most important in this regard, and should be retained no matter what ramp alternative is adopted.

Because of the volume of pedestrian traffic to and from the station, the sidewalk capacity should be studied carefully. It may be necessary to reduce the width of the furnishing strip. I also believe the proposed garage opening and loading dock on Dartmouth are inappropriate and should be eliminated from the proposal because of potential conflict with pedestrian use.

While the expansion of the Clarendon Plaza is encouraging, I believe the developer should further investigate (by a grade change or some other delineation) separating the pedestrian and vehicle paths.

I hope the developer will be encouraged to screen the existing garage from view so that it integrates better with the design of the newer structures.

Transportation

It would be helpful if MASSDOT'S Interchange Modification Report were completed before the building design is finalized, since it seems impossible to adequately evaluate the impacts of the proposed alternatives without that information.

The transportation issues of the project are daunting. I urge the BPDA and BTDA to be particularly diligent in their analysis of this project. The possibility of gridlock in the area when the already permitted projects come on line seems very real and needs to be addressed. This is an ongoing concern for both the business and the residential communities. It is particularly worrisome during emergencies and the multiple special events that occur in our area, scenarios which has not been studied to date.

The residential portion of Back Bay unfortunately functions as a corridor between the Stuart Street area and Storrow Drive. According to Vision Zero statistics, the most dangerous choke point is at Beacon and Berkeley, where 27 accidents occurred between 2012 and 2016. Mass DOT (comment 4.19) has requested that the developers mitigate intersections with above average crash rates. I hope that this initiative will be pursued in relation to this project.

Commonwealth Avenue was identified as a potential truck route for the project. The BPDA and the developers should be aware that this would be a violation of a longstanding truck and bus restriction on Commonwealth Avenue between Arlington Street and Massachusetts Avenue, instituted because of the danger of vibration to the wood pilings that support buildings in the neighborhood. Alternate routes should be found.

Much of the transit demand in Back Bay comes from the western suburbs. Upgrading the Orange Line will not address this need. The Green Line is at capacity at rush hour now. Are there plans to upgrade the service to increase capacity? If not, can existing bus routes fill the gap until an upgrade is possible?

Environmental Protection

Wind continues to be a major concern in the area. Although I appreciate the efforts to install plantings around the offending buildings, I am not sure that they will survive in this environment, or provide adequate wind breaks if they do. The concept of wind screens may be a better and more permanent alternative, particularly in the area of the Hancock Tower. Followup onsite wind testing, as required by the Stuart Street guidelines, should be shared with the public.

Shadow studies show significant impacts, particularly on Trinity and Old South Church. These buildings are symbols of Boston, and deserve greater respect than to be overshadowed by new construction, particularly during the holidays. The developer should be asked to study massing that would further mitigate these impacts.

Solar glare is identified as a problem in several areas, but no mitigation is proposed, to wit: disturbing glare at Stuart and Dartmouth for 1-2 hours; Southwest Corridor Park two instances of disturbing glare for 1-2 hours; Mass Pike westbound, two instances of disturbing glare for 1-2 hours; disturbing glare at 100 Clarendon, Copley Place Tower, 40 Trinity, and 131 Dartmouth.

The developer does not seem to be taking responsibility for this problem. I believe he should be required to investigate alternative exterior materials that will not cause unreasonable glare. I note that the Hancock caused unanticipated glare along Blue Hill Avenue that is a real problem in the afternoons – let us not replicate this situation.

There is an ongoing effort to make the Charles River swimmable. The DPIR is not clear about whether there will be discharge into the Charles, and if so how it will be adequately purified so that it does not contribute to further pollution of the waterway.

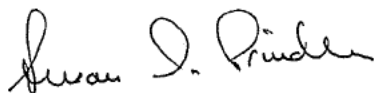
Mitigation

The phasing of the proposed mitigation should be adjusted to better reflect the impacts of the project. Since the greatest traffic impact is caused by the Garage West building, all traffic mitigation measures should be tied to that building, not delayed to a later phase of the project.

I believe that future mitigation should be dispersed to the areas most directly affected by the project, and that it should be discussed only after the Article 80 process is complete.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Susan D. Prindle

Cc: Bill.Linehan@boston.gov,
Josh.Zakim@boston.gov,
Byron.Rushing@mahouse.gov,
Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov,
William.Brownsberger@masenate.gov,
Lauren.Shurtleff.bra@boston.com





Gathered in 1669

OLD SOUTH CHURCH *in* BOSTON

A Congregation of the United Church of Christ

646 Boylston Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116
Tel: 617-536-1970 | Fax: 617-536-8061 | www.oldsouth.org

NANCY S. TAYLOR
Senior Minister

April 5, 2017

Mr Brian P. Golden
Director
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall – 9th Floor
Boston, MA, 02201

BRA

'17 APR 10 PM4:27:10

RE: The Back Bay/South End Gateway Project at MBTA Back Bay Station

Dear Mr. Golden,

I am writing today hoping that you will be of assistance in protecting our 1875 National Historic Landmark building, Old South Church in Boston, located near the Copley T Station.

We have recently been made aware that the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project at MBTA Back Bay Station will cast significant shadows both on our gracious outdoor Welcome Plaza on Boylston Street and on our building's stained glass windows during several months of the year. This is a serious concern. The shadows would alter the setting of our historic building.

Our stained glass windows are an enormously important feature. Gracing our Grand Sanctuary and our stone Chapel our windows are works of art in their own right. In addition, they serve a religious function in making the Christian story come alive in striking imagery. Not least, the windows are actually a critical source of light in both the Chapel and the Grand Sanctuary.

From a shadow study produced by Boston Properties, the proposed buildings would plunge our Welcome Plaza and Stained Glass windows into shadow from the hours of 8:00am-10:00am for 12 weeks of the yearthis includes times during which we hold worship services. The period of shadowing will overlap with Advent and Christmas. This is particularly unfortunate because our most famous window depicts a beloved Christmas story (a multitude of the Heavenly Host appearing to the shepherds in the fields). This project will darken our outdoor Welcome Plaza and our windows, before and during worship services, for almost a quarter of the year, every year, forever. This is a major problem for us. This will adversely affect us permanently.

This adverse effect extends beyond our worshipping community. Hundreds of thousands of people a year visit our historic building and our sanctuary, which is free and open to the public seven days a week. This project will mean our building and grounds will appear less beautiful, less majestic, less awe inspiring—and will feel colder and look darker—for visitors, tourists, art students, a multitude of our regular building users, and worshippers.

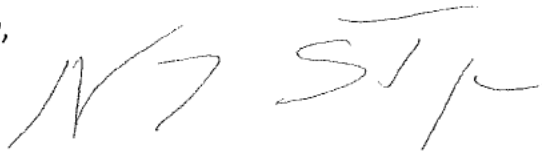
Old South Church in Boston works hard to be an excellent neighbor in Boston. We hosted healing services in the wake of the 2013 Marathon bombings and ministered to the city. We hosted and planned interfaith services on the occasion of the inaugurations of Governor Patrick and Mayor Walsh. We responded to the sudden closure of the bridge to Long Island and the resultant displacement of hundreds of homeless persons by co-founding Boston Warm, providing sanctuary and services to Boston's most vulnerable. As we near our 350th anniversary (in 2019) we are mindful of the history that we authored: baptizing Benjamin Franklin on the day he was born, hosting the Boston Tea Party in our former home (the Old South Meetinghouse), writing in 1700 the first anti-slavery tract on this soil, founding the YMCA in America, welcoming into membership the likes of Samuel Adams, William Dawes and the first published African American, Phillis Wheatley. When a 200-year old time capsule was unearthed recently from beneath the Massachusetts State House, several items related directly to our history (a Pine Tree Shilling minted by Old South founder John Hull; a nail from our Meetinghouse). I could go on. Today we work at the intersections of interfaith understanding, minister to the unhoused, and work with many organizational partners to play our part in ensuring that Boston is a great city. Nearly 350 years old we are still making history.

Of particular frustration to us in the matter at hand, is that Boston Properties did not reach out to us to inform us of the shadows. We learned of this situation two weeks ago from another source. Public comment will end in mere days. We fear that time is running out.

Will you look into our concerns? Should we direct our complaints elsewhere? Can we meet to discuss these matters? I can be reached at [REDACTED] or [REDACTED] (cell) or [REDACTED] (work).

Thank you in advance for your assistance in the present.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "N7 STP". The letters are stylized and connected.



BACK BAY / SOUTH END GATEWAY PROJECT

Open House Public Meeting

Boston Common Hotel & Conference Center, 40 Trinity Place

April 4, 2017 | 6:00PM - 8:00PM

PUBLIC COMMENT

~~Be~~ As part of The Green Committee of
The Neighborhood Assoc of Back Bay,
we strongly urge the project to
develop plans that advance a
net zero approach to energy.
No new pipelines for fracked gas that
commits us to fossil fuel instead of
renewable energy.

CONTACT INFORMATION

NAME: ~~Jacqueline~~ Royce, PhD

ADDRESS: 780 Boylston St 26I Boston 02199

EMAIL ADDRESS:
[REDACTED]



Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

Fwd: Back Bay Station Redevelopment

1 message

Lauren Shurtleff <lauren.shurtleff@boston.gov>

Wed, Apr 19, 2017 at 9:11 AM

To: Jonathan Greeley <jonathan.greeley@boston.gov>, Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

FYI

----- Forwarded message -----

From: Paul Johnson [REDACTED]

Date: Tue, Apr 18, 2017 at 23:05

Subject: Back Bay Station Redevelopment

To: [REDACTED] Lauren.Shurtleff@boston.gov

<Lauren.Shurtleff@boston.gov>

Hello Mike and Lauren,

For what it's worth, myself and several others in my camp would like a broader discussion to take place regarding public subsidies before the Back Bay Station project moves right along towards a B R A board vote.

Thank you Keir for taking the time to talk after the CAC meeting last week.

That said, there have been no definitive answers given to date that I know of, re the (9) public Subsidies identified the DPIR. Nor, to my knowledge has there been any full accounting of public subsidies granted or applied for at your North Station redevelopment project.

Seeing as it could be argued that you are effectively privatizing all residential property possibilities in addition to massive gross square footage for separate private uses proximate to two of the three primary transit hubs in the city of Boston, this should not be viewed as an unreasonable request from members of the public...

2) Will BPX be seeking Chapter 121A status for Back Bay Station project ?

The answer to the public that these are "hypothetical questions" at this stage of the game is a pretty weak one in my view. Once upon a time I worked at a Real Estate Investment Trust and the money guys could account for every last penny of costs/financing to their investors - long before any formal project proposal.

From your website:

"Boston Properties, a self-administered and self-managed real estate investment trust (REIT), is one of the largest owners, managers and developers of Class A office properties in the United States, with a significant presence in five markets: Boston, Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco and Washington, DC."

"Boston Properties is a fully integrated real estate investment trust that develops, redevelops, acquires, manages, operates and owns a diverse portfolio of primarily Class A office space totaling 47.7 million square feet and consisting of 164 office properties (including six properties under construction), five retail properties, four residential properties (including two properties under construction) and one hotel."

So then, your portfolio consists of roughly 50 Million sf of properties in Boston, LA, NYC, San Francisco and DC, your firm has been in business 47 years and you have 153 million publicly traded shares outstanding, but you're not sure what your financing package consists of for a 1.2 million sf foot mega project ?

How about this, we commence a genuine, transparent public discussion as to the "potential" cash outlay from the People of Boston, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and any federal monies you will seek for the Back Bay Station project.

If there's nothing to hide, what reason do you give for declining this discussion prior to the B R A board vote ?

Thank you for your consideration;

Sincerely,

Paul Johnson

Future Urban Solutions Group



--



Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

My Gateway Center observations

1 message

Peter Papesch [REDACTED]

Thu, Apr 6, 2017 at 12:52 PM

To: Michael.Rooney@boston.gov

Cc: [REDACTED], Jacquelin Yessian [REDACTED], Michael McCord

[REDACTED], "Jacqueline M. Royce" [REDACTED]

Hello, Mr. Rooney:

I am a retired architect-developer and educator, and a citizen of Boston. As such, I am very much concerned with mitigating climate change and global warming. As a consequence I have become a member of the NABB Green Committee and I also chair the BSA's Sustainability Education Committee.

Enormous projects like the Gateway Project which fail to be designed to meet Net Zero performance will for the life of the project effectively undermine any GHG emission targets which Boston espouses. If our mayor signs the Global Covenant of Mayors for Climate and Energy, and the Metro Mayors Climate Commitment, without requiring Net Zero performance of new projects, he and his administration are making a public statement that belies his official commitments to reduce or eliminate the city's GHG emissions. Thus it seems to fall upon the citizens of Boston to oppose this and any other non-Net Zero project in every way possible, and there are many ways to do that.

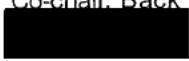
In fact, it is important to ask a fundamental question: does Boston and its economy really need all the new high-rise office and residential towers, especially since there is a very clear shortfall in affordable housing units for those residents who serve our economy at all its levels.

So much for big picture considerations.

Specific comments about the Gateway Project from a small-scale architect-developer are:

- although seemingly not overwhelming when viewed in the context of its high-rise neighbors, the project nevertheless accentuates the sense of human alienation because it is so far out of scale for the pedestrians as well as its residential and office neighbors. Given the design of 3 separate tall structures, did the designers consider what the occupants of the new towers will look down on? As example, the views from the upper levels of the new 888 Boylston building are a dismal collection of arid roof-tops sprinkled with mechanical equipment and little else - not a very inspiring vista, and one which presages the views from the Gateway Project towers. Could not the design team and their BPDA counterparts influence how the adjacent rooftops of lower buildings might be enhanced?
- coupled with the Gateway Project's uninspiring views is the glaring absence of non-anthropomorphic nature, i.e. green space. Vegetation helps soften the harsh lines of man-made structures while simultaneously providing at least a moderate amount of CO₂-absorption capability, not to mention its characteristic of reducing urban heat island effects;
- from an operational and long-term climate change mitigation viewpoint, and if the project needs to be built, it behooves both the designers and their BPCA counterparts to ensure that the building incorporates to the maximum extent possible the eventual switch-over from fossil fuel energy supplies to lighting/electrical, mechanical and heating systems which are entirely electricity-driven; this involves planning for the eventual - i.e. future - switch to a single AC converter to an all-DC system within each portion of the Gateway Center or even the entire Gateway Center; such a grid system can be planned to rely maximally on a low-voltage DC power supply network to all daily equipment used by the Gateway Center's occupants such as LED lighting, telecom equipment, portable power tools, and computers and their associated USB products. Such a design provision would also incorporate from the start an eventual further reduction in GHG emissions from the Gateway Center at much lower costs than would be required to retrofit the complex later for these same features.

Even at this late stage of the development process, the project still exists only in the form of drawings and models, and can readily be improved.

Peter Papesch, AIA
Chair, BSA Sustainability Education Committee
Co-chair, Back Bay Green Initiative




The Friends of Titus Sparrow Park, Inc.
800 Boylston St.
P.O. Box 990965
Boston, MA 02199

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April 19, 2017

Peter Paravalos
Director of Transit-Oriented Development, Design and Construction
Mass Department of Transportation
10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160
Boston MA 02116

Dear Mr. Paravalos,

The Friends of Titus Sparrow Park recently learned of MBTA's plans to modify the ventilation system for Back Bay Station. We are concerned about how such modifications could impact the environment around Titus Sparrow Park.

Our understanding is that the Clarendon Street vent stacks have not worked for years. We also have heard that future plans may include ventilating all of the smoke in the tunnel between Back Bay Station and Massachusetts Avenue through the West Newton Street vent stack and Carter Field. We understand this is being considered rather than repairing the Clarendon stacks right next to the station which were originally designed to dissipate much of the smoke before it entered the station. This smoke would be concentrated at Titus Sparrow Park, an area frequently used by many young children and gardeners, rather than the commercial area at Clarendon Street.

The Friends of Titus Sparrow Park is a citizen group that raises considerable funds to improve the plantings and provide activities at Titus Sparrow Park. We are an established 501c3 organization. More about The Friends of Titus Sparrow Park can be found on our website at: www.titussparrowpark.org.

We ask you to reconsider this approach. Before diverting fumes to a residential area, we request that an environmental impact study be performed. Additionally, we request presentation of your plans and up-to-date information for the Southwest Corridor Park Conservancy and South End neighbors.

We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,
Steven Sloan
President, Friends of Titus Sparrow Park



Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

Jonathan Greeley <jonathan.greeley@boston.gov>

Fri, Apr 21, 2017 at 6:25 AM

To: michael.rooney@boston.gov, Sara Myerson <sara.myerson@boston.gov>, lauren.shurtleff@boston.gov, Corey Zehngbot <corey.zehngbot@boston.gov>, david.carlson@boston.gov

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: nikki fortes [REDACTED]
Date: April 20, 2017 at 11:47:13 PM EDT
To: Jonathan.Greeley@boston.gov
Subject: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

20 April 2017
Boston Planning and Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

To Whom It May Concern:

Tent City is the 269 unit, mixed-income, housing development located directly across from the proposed Back Bay Development. We, the Resident Alliance, have noted some positive changes to the original project, and would ask the Boston Planning and Development Agency to consider the following issues related to Affordable Housing, Traffic/Parking, Jobs, the Environmental Impact and Construction.

Affordable Housing

We support and agree with the developer to create affordable housing. However, we ask that the developer ensure an equitable mix of potential residents. We are concerned about this because the gentrification and escalating cost of housing in the South End has made it almost impossible for some longtime residents to remain in the area. We are concerned that the creation of more high-end housing would only exacerbate this problem. It is our opinion that the current affordable housing commitment benefits upper middle class residents and does not reflect the median income of the majority of people in South End. An inequitable mix would put our traditionally multicultural and multi-class community even more at risk and will do nothing to contribute to the diverse urban fabric of the neighborhood. So, we ask that "affordable" housing be defined as something that is actually affordable for all of the middle class not just the upper middle class.

We would also like to request that the affordable housing be located on-site, and ask further that the affordable housing be distributed across the floors of the building, in the same proportion of unit sizes as the market rate units (proportions of studio, one bedroom, two bedroom, etc. units).

Open Space/Retail Space

We are in full support of having open space on the back side of the Station. We would like to see this public space/park be dedicated to a local citizen who has made significant contributions to our neighborhood.

We request that some retail space be set aside as affordable for use by minority-owned businesses and local non-profit organizations as a public benefit (some ideal vendors might be a Farmer's Market, Artists for Humanity or any other local nonprofits that serve youth and the community).

Traffic/Parking

Adding numerous apartment and condo units will put a strain on the already formidable and difficult conditions for parking in our neighborhood. Therefore, we agree and appreciate the offer to allow Tent City residents parking spaces in the garage to offset some of the inconvenience that will likely be created. We would like to further discuss this to solidify an agreement.

Jobs

We request that some of the new jobs created be given to Boston residents and that Tent City residents, especially teenagers, are actively recruited and hired. We also request that job openings at the Back Bay retail be posted at Tent City and in local free publications.

Environmental Impact

We request that the developers undertake a study that determines damages such as settling and cracking that may occur to Tent City property as a result of the construction of the project and cover costs of any such damage to Tent City property.

While we wish the solar glare and street-level wind impact studies had included Tent City (since we have a number of residents who are elderly and/or disabled and walking in high wind conditions can be difficult), we were happy to hear that a number of locations near Tent City experience better wind conditions and minimal solar glare with the creation of the new project.

We would like any information that can be provided regarding the increased demand on infrastructure (such as already over loaded transistors, and the increased demand on police, fire department, and schools).

Construction

Tent City Apartments are located so close to the proposed construction that Tent City residents ask that concerns related to the impact and safety issues be addressed. There are a number of residents and children with serious health concerns that will be impacted by the construction. Therefore, we request that the developers pay moving expenses within the Tent City Apartments for those Tent City residents with health issues that will make it impossible for them to live in the apartments that face the construction.

We request that the developers provide compensation to the Tent City Apartments for the anticipated decrease in people willing to rent apartments during construction. With the increase in noise, increase in dust and rodents, and the loss of quality of life caused by construction, we anticipate that it will be very difficult to rent apartments during the construction period which could last for years. Tent City should not bear the full burden of this impact.

Further, we request that the developers cover the increased cost of rodent control for the Tent City Apartments that is anticipated because of construction. Tent City should not have to bear the full burden of this impact.

We also request that the developers pay for additional police during the construction period to ensure the safety of residents in this already high traffic area, especially the safety of those most vulnerable --- children whose BPS buses stop in front of the construction site, caregivers and children in strollers, senior citizens and those living with disabilities for whom the construction poses particular risks. Due to the heavy pedestrian traffic and to protect the safety of Tent City residents, we request that the developers use horizontal safety nets of the kind now required in New York City to protect construction workers and pedestrians.

Thank you, in advance, for taking our requests into consideration.

Respectfully Submitted,
TENT CITY RESIDENT ALLIANCE

Nikki Fortes, President

cc: Mayor Marty Walsh
Mass DOT 10 Park Plaza, Suite 4160 Boston, MA 02116



Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

EEA No. 15502 The Back Bay / South End Gateway Project

1 message

Kristin C Field <[REDACTED]> Mon, Apr 17, 2017 at 6:18 PM
To: NABB Online <[REDACTED]>, alex.strysky@state.ma.us, michael.rooney@boston.gov, Jacquelin
<[REDACTED]>
Cc: Vicki Smith <[REDACTED]>

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary
Alex Strysky, Analyst, Alex.Strysky@state.ma.us

100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900 Boston MA 02114

Boston Planning and Development Authority
Michael Rooney, Project Manager Michael.Rooney@boston.gov

1 City Hall Square Boston MA 02201

Comments:

EEA No. 15502 The Back Bay / South End Gateway Project
Article 80 Back Bay | South End Gateway Project Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR)

Dear Mr. Strysky and Mr. Rooney;

After reading the NABB letter, I agree with their concerns. In particular, I am concerned that projects in Boston currently are notably lacking in protecting pedestrian and cyclists and also providing pleasant street furniture for the public to gather on wide walkways.

In addition, the development projects I have seen pay little attention to the fact that we already have too many vehicles on our city streets and generally find easy ways to provide parking within the project but dump cars out into the neighborhood willy nilly. Vision Zero is working to reduce fatalities from crashes to zero and adding more and more cars to our city is likely to defeat that goal.

Please find a way to make this project more pedestrian friendly. This is a walking city and we love it. Thank you.

Kristin C Field

333 Commonwealth Ave. Boston Ma. 02115



Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

Concerns About the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

1 message

Cilla Lavin <[REDACTED]>

Mon, Apr 17, 2017 at 3:57 PM

To: Alex.Stryisky@state.ma.us, Michael.Rooney@boston.gov

Cc: Mayor@boston.gov, Bill.Linehan@boston.gov, Josh.Zakim@boston.gov, Byron.Rushing@mahouse.gov,

Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov, William.Brownsberger@masenate.gov, [REDACTED]

william.brownsberger@masenate.gov, byron.rushing@mahouse.gov, jay.livingstone@mahouse.gov

April 17, 2017

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary

Alex Stryisky, Analyst

100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900

Boston MA 02114

Boston Planning and Development Authority

Michael Rooney, Project Manager

1 City Hall Square

Boston MA 02201

Comments:

EEA No. 15502 The Back Bay / South End Gateway Project

Article 80 Back Bay | South End Gateway Project Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR)

Dear Mr. Stryisky and Mr. Rooney;

I am a Back Bay resident. I am writing to you to express my concerns regarding the Back Bay/South End Gateway Draft Project Impact Report DPIR submitted by Boston Properties. The project has the potential to become a great asset for the City. We anticipate benefitting from the improved Back Bay Station and associated public realm improvements.

The project is made possible by the allocation of this public site to the project, which sets a high bar for the design in delivering substantial public benefits. However as the project is currently planned and configured it falls short in several key respects as shown below, including the creation of foreseeable adverse impacts as well as deficiencies in the benefits it should be expected to generate.

My major concerns have to do with Transportation, Urban Design and the extent of the compliance of the project with the Stuart Street Zoning Regulations.

Specifically:

- Inconsistency with Stuart Street Zoning
 - No commitment to meet affordable housing requirement
 - Dartmouth Street setback is ignored, which will impair the view and visibility of the sky from Copley Square

- Undesirable street impact of a proposed pedestrian bridge across Stuart Street
- Non-compliance of some buildings with targets for sustainability of new buildings
- Transportation Issues
 - Possibility of gridlock in the neighborhood as a result of the additional traffic generated by the project
 - Impact of the new traffic generated by the project on already major choke and crash points at the Beacon Street intersections with Berkeley and Clarendon Streets
- Urban Design
 - Capacity of narrower sidewalks on Dartmouth Street – will they be adequate for the peak hour crowds going to and from Back Bay station?
 - Proposed garage opening and loading dock on Dartmouth Street
- Wind is already a major concern in this area and it is unclear if the mitigation measures proposed are optimum and claims of wind reductions are justified
- Solar Glare – no mitigation has been proposed so far, although this has been identified as a problem for some locations

Moreover while the new shadows cast on Copley Square comply with Stuart Street Zoning, among other consequences they will darken the stained glass windows at Old South Church most noticeably during the Christmas season. The criterion for accepting an adverse impact such as this example should not be as low as that they are legal, but should take account of the severity of the harm caused. If zoning regulations can be relaxed on a case-by-case basis they should also be subject to tightening on a case-by-case basis, particularly when public property is being used.

The historical neighborhood of the Back Bay contains beautiful parks, iconic Boston buildings including Trinity Church, Old South Church, the Boston Public Library and many other historical buildings. This neighborhood is appreciated daily not just by residents and commuters, but also by many hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world. It's important we keep it accessible, safe, and offering a quality of life for everyone, both current and future residents, commuters and visitors.

Sincerely,

Priscilla Lavin

274 Beacon St.
Boston, MA 02116



Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

Back Bay Station/South End Gateway Project

2 messages

jacqueline royce [REDACTED]

Sun, Apr 16, 2017 at 5:15 PM

To: Alex.Strysky@state.ma.us, Michael.Rooney@boston.gov
 Cc: Mayor@boston.gov, Bill.Linehan@boston.gov, Josh.Zakim@boston.gov, "Rushing, Byron - Rep. (HOU)" <Byron.Rushing@mahouse.gov>, "Rep. Jay Livingstone" <Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov>, William Brownsberger <William.Brownsberger@masenate.gov>, [REDACTED]

TO: Alex Strysky, Analyst
 Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Michael Rooney, Project Manager
 Boston Planning and Development Authority

DATE: April 14, 2017

FROM: Jacqueline Royce, PhD
 Board of Directors
 Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay (NABB)
 and NABB Green Committee member

RE: Comments: EEA NO. 15502 The Back Bay/South End Gateway Project
 Article 80 Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR)

As a Back Bay resident with a background in City and Regional Planning, a close neighbor to the project, a frequent traveler on the commuter rail and the South West Corridor bicycle/walking path, and particularly as a NABB Green Committee member, I am concerned about the design and several issues proposed for the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project.

After attending several meetings about the project last week as well as last year, I am particularly concerned that the Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR) submitted by Boston Properties, neglects the public good and human welfare, and commits Boston to long-term dependence on fossil fuels and obsolete pipeline infrastructure without substantially contributing to Boston's pledge to become carbon neutral by 2050.

I see many benefits to an improved Back Bay Station concourse, but other than long-overdue ventilation improvements, I heard of no planned improvements to the dark, unpleasant train platform experience. As I understand it, no funding is allocated to making the platform experience where you arrive or board the train a positive experience. No artwork or improved, modern lighting, or design was evident. This example characterizes the overall neglect of benefits to residents and visitors from all over the world. The social costs are not adequately included in the calculations of the project.

Other stark examples of social costs, are the disregard for such historic treasures as the precious windows of Old South Church and the narrowness of the proposed Dartmouth Street sidewalk where the design element shown was one poor skinny tree in a window-box type container.

My other concerns are with transportation, affordable housing, and urban design.

- The exterior design does not enhance the neighborhood or fit into the scale of existing buildings, destroys historic character, and offers an unsettling, off-balance, and unwelcome addition to the skyline. The buildings are **too tall** for **too small** building site.

- The buildings, apparently, do not go beyond LEED Silver or Gold, whereas projects in 2017 should reach platinum and beyond in order to take advantage of the possibility to lead the way to future sustainable buildings

- Have you considered any easy, best-practices, green infrastructure efforts e.g. rain gardens on Clarendon and vertical gardens in the MBTA Concourse?

- Will the project seriously reconsider bridging costs/benefits of clean energy alternatives?
- Can you consider wider setbacks on Dartmouth Street with more open space and greenery at sidewalk level to create an extension of South West Corridor?
- The transportation issues of gridlock and impact on new traffic generated by the project have not been adequately addressed
- Will you seriously reconsider the impact of increased private vehicles, pedestrian, train, bus, and bike traffic?
- I heard no discussion about low/middle income housing on site
- Have sufficient wind mitigation measures been addressed?

The bottom line is, in 2030 will this proposed building enhance or diminish the quality of life in our neighborhood and Boston overall and will this project become part of the problem or part of the solution for developing a resilient Boston and will it help meet the City's Climate Action goals?

Please take a generous, long-term view and do not permit developers to ignore the widespread concerns of the neighborhood. Boston can do better. I hope you will take every opportunity to make this Gateway project into a gateway to a net zero city by 2050 that could be a model for other cities around the world.

Sincerely,

Jacqueline Royce, PhD

cc: Mayor@boston.gov, Bill.Linehan@boston.gov, Josh.Zakim@boston.gov, Byron.Rushing@mahouse.gov, Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov, William.Brownsberger@masenate.gov, [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

Jacqueline Royce [REDACTED]

Sun, Apr 16, 2017 at 5:29 PM

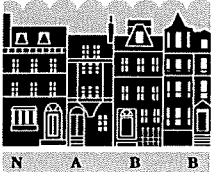
To: Alexander.Strysky@state.ma.us, Michael.Rooney@boston.gov

Cc: Mayor@boston.gov, Bill.Linehan@boston.gov, Josh.Zakim@boston.gov, "Rushing, Byron - Rep. (HOU)" <Byron.Rushing@mahouse.gov>, "Rep. Jay Livingstone" <Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov>, William Brownsberger <William.Brownsberger@masenate.gov>, [REDACTED] Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay
[REDACTED]

TO: Alexander Strysky, Analyst

[Quoted text hidden]

Neighborhood
Association of the
Back Bay



April 14, 2017

Officers:

Vicki C. Smith
Chairman
Susan Baker
Vice Chairman
Tracy Pesanelli
President
Sheri Olans Wright
Vice President
Vincent Tucci
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Rosanne Kumins
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Nancy Macchia
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Michael McCord
Tim Ian Mitchell
Roberta Orlandino
Faith Perkins
Margaret Pokorny
Jason Post
Susan Prindle
Martyn Roetter
Ellen Rooney
Deirdre Rosenberg
Jacqueline Royce
Steven Sayers
Susan Shafer
Peter Sherin
Barry Solar
Elaine Sullivan
Anne Swanson
Jack Wallace
Michael Weingarten
Marvin Wool
Jacquelin Yessian

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy
and Environmental Affairs

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary
Alex Strysky, Analyst,
Alex.Strysky@state.ma.us
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

Boston Planning and Development
Authority

Michael Rooney, Project Manager
Michael.Rooney@boston.gov
1 City Hall Square
Boston MA 02201

Comments:

EEA No. 15502 The Back Bay / South End Gateway Project
Article 80 Back Bay | South End Gateway Project Draft Project Impact Report
(DPIR)

Dear Mr. Strysky and Mr. Rooney;

Members of NABB have attended several meetings about this project and have reviewed key project documents. We have two representatives on the CAC. I am writing to you to express NABB's concerns regarding the Back Bay South End Gateway Draft Project Impact Report DPIR submitted by Boston Properties.

The project has the potential to invigorate a key site at the nexus of the Back Bay and South End neighborhoods while improving the experience of Back Bay Station. The developer has worked hard to design a project that can meet these goals, but there are still important outstanding issues and foreseeable negative impacts of the current proposal that need resolution.

We anticipate benefitting from the improved Back Bay Station and associated public realm improvements and welcome this initiative to build a better bridge between the Back Bay and South End neighborhoods.

The project is made possible by the allocation of this public site to the project, which sets a high bar for the design in delivering substantial public benefits. However as the project is currently planned and configured it falls short in several key respects as shown below, including the creation of foreseeable adverse impacts as well as deficiencies in the benefits it should be expected to generate.

NABB hopes to participate in refining these suggested improvements in subsequent public meetings, and we hope that the Final Project Impact Report (FPIR) will incorporate these improvements into the project.

Our major concerns have to do with Transportation, Urban Design, Groundwater, and the extent of the compliance of the project with the Stuart Street Zoning Regulations, and broadly the foreseeable adverse impacts on the public realm.

Perhaps most important for this project for the Back Bay is the lack of sufficient vision and development of the Dartmouth and Stuart Street sidewalks in the DPIR. Dartmouth Street sidewalk is the major entry to and from and a gateway between the Back Bay and South End neighborhoods. To date the design shown is a plan book application of the Green Streets Guidelines developed by the Boston Transportation Department. These guidelines are excellent for specific applicable locations, but they are inadequate for application to a unique gateway to the City and a primary axis between two neighborhoods – the South End and the Back Bay. The sidewalks should be more generous in width. Street furniture designed specifically for this location will be more appropriate than 5-foot planters with street trees. The existing walk provides partial shelter for pedestrians. No shelter is provided in the new scheme.

In addition the small open space to the east of the station is minimal in size and is complicated with vehicular, service, pedestrian, and bicycle movement. The plan needs further thought and detail for safety and security and to create a place where people can comfortably congregate.

More specifically:

- Inconsistency with Stuart Street Zoning
 - To date no commitment to meet the affordable housing requirement has been forthcoming - the developer should be specific about how the affordable housing obligation of this project will be met so that the neighborhood can comment about this important aspect of the project. NABB's position is in favor of on-site affordable housing as much as is feasible, while the "buy out" option for developers is unacceptable.
 - Dartmouth Street setback rule is ignored, which will impair the view and visibility of the sky from Copley Square and is an adverse impact on the public realm.
 - Some of the proposed buildings do not comply with targets for sustainability of new buildings. In these times, the most sustainable projects that can be constructed are essential for our future.

- Transportation Issues
 - The proposed garage exit onto Dartmouth poses a hazard to pedestrians, cyclists, and vehicles and must not be pursued. An alternative second means of egress should be developed in the event that the Federal Highway

Department determines to close the Clarendon Street ramp to the Turnpike. This should be included in the FPIR.

- The risk of gridlock in the neighborhood as a result of the additional traffic generated by this project and others in the pipeline has not been convincingly laid to rest.

Analysis of the impact of the consequences of the new traffic generated by the project on already major choke and crash points at the Beacon Street intersection with Berkeley Street has not yet been provided nor has specific mitigation been planned.

- Urban Design

- The narrowing of sidewalks on Dartmouth Street may not provide adequate, let alone generous, capacity for the peak hour crowds going to and from Back Bay station and between the South End and Back Bay neighborhoods
 - Meeting minimum requirements for sidewalk width defined for a Commercial District is not appropriate, given that this location is a unique Gateway area that should be generous in terms of capacity; moreover the planters and trees proposed for the furnishing zones along the sidewalks that restrict the space for pedestrians are unsuited to these locations, will be limited in their growth, and will be especially vulnerable to deterioration
- Proposed garage opening and loading dock on Dartmouth Street will create unacceptable risk and disruption to the interactions between vehicular traffic and pedestrians
- The street impact of a proposed pedestrian bridge across Stuart Street is highly undesirable, contrary to the longstanding written position taken by the Boston Civic Design Commission (BCDC) against cross-street pedestrian bridges, and another adverse impact on the public realm. The bridge detracts from the street life. Urban pedestrians bring vitality to the streets.

- Groundwater - The broad spread of low to very low existing groundwater readings suggests the existence of leaks into underground structures. In addition to those structures mentioned in the DPIR, defects in the applicant's existing buildings, sump pumps, foundation walls or retaining structures at the edge of the rail-bed tunnel may be contributing to the groundwater draw downs. If so, they should be required to be identified and eliminated. Since the surface of most of the existing site is previously developed without regard to storm water recharge, it appears that the applicant's goal that "recharge from the post development site shall approximate recharge from pre-development conditions" is quantitatively smaller than desirable. In light of the ample increase in developed floor area, a much stronger commitment to recharge volumes should be required.

- Wind is already a major concern in this area, and not infrequently dangerous conditions arise especially for more vulnerable individuals (small children and the

elderly). It is unclear if the mitigation measures proposed are optimum and claims of wind reductions are justified.

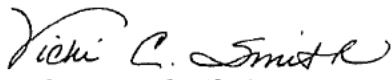
- Solar Glare – no mitigation has been proposed so far, although this has been identified as a problem for some locations

Moreover while the new shadows cast on Copley Square comply with Stuart Street Zoning, among other consequences for Trinity Church and the Boston Public Library they will darken the stained glass windows at Old South Church most noticeably during the Christmas season. The criterion for accepting an adverse impact such as this example should not be as low as that they are legal, but should take account of the severity of the harm caused. If zoning regulations can be relaxed on a case-by-case basis they should also be subject to tightening on a case-by-case basis, particularly when public property is used.

The historical neighborhood of the Back Bay contains beautiful parks, iconic Boston buildings including Trinity Church, Old South Church, the Boston Public Library and many other historical buildings. This neighborhood is appreciated daily not just by residents and commuters, but also by many hundreds of thousands of visitors from all over the world. It is a matter of the highest priority to keep it accessible and safe, and to offer a quality of life for everyone, both current and future residents, commuters and visitors. A similar priority and considerations apply to the South End, the other Boston neighborhood most intimately affected by this Gateway project.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Vicki C. Smith, Chair

Cc: Mayor@boston.gov, Bill.Linehan@boston.gov, Josh.Zakim@boston.gov,
Byron.Rushing@mahouse.gov, Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov,
William.Brownsberger@masenate.gov, [REDACTED]



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

April 18, 2017

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs
Attention: MEPA Office – Alex Strycky, MEPA #15502
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

RE: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project, MEPA #15502

Dear Secretary Beaton:

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) regularly reviews proposals deemed to have regional impacts. The Council reviews proposed projects for consistency with *MetroFuture*, the regional policy plan for the Boston metropolitan area, the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles, consistency with Complete Streets policies and design approaches, as well as impacts on the environment.

MAPC has a long-term interest in alleviating regional traffic and environmental impacts, consistent with the goals of *MetroFuture*. The Commonwealth also has established a mode shift goal of tripling the share of travel in Massachusetts by bicycling, transit and walking by 2030. Additionally, the Commonwealth has a statutory obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 25% from 1990 levels by 2020 and by 80% from 1990 levels by 2050. In May 2016, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court released a unanimous decision in *Kain vs. Massachusetts Department of Protection (DEP)* ordering the state's DEP to take additional measures to implement the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act. Specifically, the Court held that DEP must impose volumetric limits on the aggregate greenhouse gas emissions from certain types of sources and that these limits must decline on an annual basis. This recent ruling reasserts the state's obligation to meet these goals.

BP Hancock LLC (the Proponent) is proposing a mixed-use transit-oriented development (TOD), which includes four distinct air-rights parcels. When fully complete, the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project (the Project) will comprise up to approximately 1.26 million square feet (sf) of development, including a new office building (approximately 592,000 sf) with ground floor retail, two new residential buildings (approximately 600 units), and a retail expansion (approximately 62,000 sf) of the existing MBTA Back Bay/South End Station. No new parking is proposed as part of the Project as the existing 100 Clarendon Street Parking Garage capacity of 2,013 spaces is expected to meet demand.

The approximately 5.2-acre Project site is located primarily over active transportation infrastructure, including the I-90 Extension of the Massachusetts Turnpike, and the track and concourse levels of Back Bay Station. The Project is roughly bounded by Dartmouth Street to the west, Stuart Street and Trinity Place to the north, Trinity Place and Clarendon Street to the east, and the southern property line of Back Bay Station to the south. The Project is expected to generate just over 3,600 daily vehicle trips, with slightly over 380 and 370 vehicle trips being made during the morning and evening peak hours, respectively. A total of 6,097 daily transit trips, 603 of which will occur in the morning peak hour and 632 in the evening peak hour are projected.

This Project exemplifies the best aspects of TOD by developing high density housing, retail and office uses above and adjacent to a multi-modal transit hub served by multiple public transportation services, including MBTA Commuter Rail lines, the Orange Line, local bus routes, and AMTRAK. The Project's mix of residential, commercial and retail uses will benefit from excellent transit accessibility, resulting in a high proportion of transit-trips rather than vehicle-trips. We recognize that the projected preliminary trip generation estimates for this project include transit mode-shares of 51% for both office and retail related trips and 31% for residential trips.

Mitigation

The Proponent has provided a strong commitment to implement integrated multimodal mitigation measures to improve vehicular traffic operations and accommodate walking, bicycling and transit use by employees, residents, and visitors to the site. The Proponent also proposes creating a public realm that is friendly for pedestrians and bicyclists, in accordance with Complete Streets design approaches.

While the Proponent has assumed management responsibility for and committed to renovating the concourse of Back Bay Station, MAPC respectfully requests that the Proponent also consider commitments to improving MBTA services. These improvements could include a contribution to the purchase of new Orange Line cars, improved signalization along the Orange Line, or maintenance of the Southwest Corridor Park which culminates at the Project site. For example, a mitigation fund could be established by the Commonwealth and the City of Boston to support these types of improvements. There is precedent for such a transportation mitigation fee established through the MEPA process. One such precedent is the Wynn Casino's commitment to improving Orange Line service. Another is the recent Memorandum of Understanding under which Boston Properties will contribute a transit improvement fee to support MBTA service improvements for the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Project.

Parking

All vehicular parking for the Project will be accommodated on-site in the redeveloped garage at 100 Clarendon Street. The garage will provide up to the existing permitted capacity of 2,013 spaces, with up to 576 spaces permitted for public use. The Project will provide 0.4 spaces per residential unit, or up to 240 residential parking spaces (based on up to 600 units). MAPC applauds the Proponent for proposing no net new parking as part of the Project, as this will encourage the use of non-vehicular modes of transportation. However, it remains unclear to what extent the Project will displace current parkers at this facility and whether the Proponent will mitigate these impacts. We suggest these issues be addressed in the Final Environmental Impact Report/Final Project Impact Report (FEIR/FPIR).

I-90 On-Ramp

Located beneath the garage, the Project site contains a westbound on-ramp to I-90 which is accessed from Clarendon Street. The Draft Environmental Impact Report/Draft Project Impact Report (DEIR/DPIR) indicates that the Proponent is considering the elimination of this existing I-90 ramp. The closing of the I-90 ramp could have far reaching impacts on traffic distribution, both locally and regionally, as one of the primary purposes of ramps is to remove regional traffic from local streets. The Proponent should conduct a thorough alternatives analysis and continue their collaboration with MassDOT and the Boston Transportation Department (BTD) regarding the future plans for this ramp. Due to the regional impacts of such a decision, MAPC asks to be kept up-to-date on this planning process, as we may have valuable input regarding the final outcome.

Transportation Demand Management (TDM) Program

MAPC is pleased that the Proponent has committed to include a robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) program that includes a variety of measures to minimize automobile usage, parking demand, and project-related traffic impacts. These strategies include designating an on-site TDM Coordinator, joining A Better City Transportation Management Association (TMA), maintaining the existing electric vehicle charging stations, and agreeing to provide future stations if demand warrants, and working with car sharing services (e.g., ZipCar, Maven, Enterprise CarShare) to locate vehicles within the garage.

Bicycle Accommodations

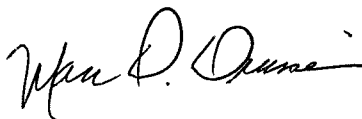
MAPC is pleased the Proponent has developed a bicycle parking program that will incorporate long and short-term bicycle accommodations within the garage and elsewhere within the Project site for employees, residents and visitors. Short-term, outdoor bicycle parking will be provided throughout the site, focused on locations near Back Bay Station and retail entrances. A new Hubway station is proposed on the Clarendon Street plaza near the station's entrance – this is very welcome given the intensive use of the Hubway station across Dartmouth Street from Back Bay Station. Long-term, covered and secure bicycle parking will be provided in four bike rooms located throughout the site. The four secure rooms will provide up to approximately 484 spaces for employees and residents of the Project.

Affordable Housing

While MAPC is pleased that this Project proposes to develop a significant amount of housing, the Proponent needs to clearly identify the affordable housing component for the estimated 600 residential units, and whether these units will be rental, homeownership, or a combination. We do recognize that the Proponent states that the housing will be in compliance with the applicable Inclusionary Development Policy of the City of Boston, but this needs to be further explained. This is not simply a residential issue; it will also have a direct environmental impact, as the residents of affordable units will own fewer cars and are likely to take more transit trips than market-rate residents.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this project.

Sincerely,



Marc D. Draisen
Executive Director

cc: Brian Golden, Boston Planning and Development Agency
Vineet Gupta, Boston Transportation Department
David Mohler, MassDOT



Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

Comments EEA No. 15502 The Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

1 message

Diana/Lee Humphrey [REDACTED] Tue, Apr 18, 2017 at 12:09 PM

Reply-To: Diana/Lee Humphrey [REDACTED]
 To: Alex.Stryisky@state.ma.us, "Michael.Rooney@boston.gov" <Michael.Rooney@boston.gov>
 Cc: Marty Walsh <mayor@boston.gov>, "bill.linehan@boston.gov" <bill.linehan@boston.gov>, Josh Zakim <josh.zakim@boston.gov>, Byron Rushing <byron.rushing@mahouse.gov>, "Livingstone Jay - Rep. (HOU)" <jay.livingstone@mahouse.gov>, Senator Will Brownsberger <william.brownsberger@masenate.gov>, [REDACTED] Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay
 [REDACTED] Michael McCord [REDACTED], Jacqueline Royce [REDACTED]
 [REDACTED] Mary Cerulli [REDACTED], Catherine Bordon [REDACTED]

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy
 and Environmental Affairs
 Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary
 Alex Stryisky, Analyst
 100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
 Boston, MA 02114

Boston Planning and Development Authority
 Michael Rooney, Project Manager
 1 City Hall Square
 Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mr. Stryisky and Mr. Rooney:

I am a Back Bay resident and I am joining others in writing to you to express my concerns about the Back Bay South End Gateway proposal submitted by Boston Properties. Although the project has the potential to be a substantial asset to the City, there are several areas which should be improved.

1. The principal source of its energy is natural gas, which will tie us to using this fossil fuel for 50 years, despite the City's efforts to reduce substantially the green house gas emissions over this same period. This doesn't seem to make a lot of sense. A much stronger emphasis should be given to the use of alternative green energy sources.
2. Traffic will probably increase in the neighborhood with the possibility of gridlock as a result.
3. Wind is already a concern in the area and it is not sure that the mitigation measures proposed will be adequate.
4. Particularly of concern are the shadows that the project will cast on the neighborhood and especially on the windows of the several churches in the area.

The Back Bay is a unique treasure and we must regard ourselves as stewards to preserve it and pass it on to future generations. Money should not be the dominant reason to go forward with projects.

Thank you,

G. Lee Humphrey
 169 Commonwealth Avenue
 Boston

Trinity Church
In the City of Boston
Copley Square
206 Clarendon Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02116-3722



April 13, 2017

BRA

'17 APR 14 PM 3:01:09

Boston Planning and Development Agency
One City Hall Plaza
Boston, MA 02120

Attention: Director

Re: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

Ladies and Gentlemen:

I am writing on behalf of Trinity Church to submit our comments regarding the pending Back Bay/South End Gateway Project Draft Project Impact Report ("DPIR"). As more particularly described in the attached analysis prepared by our architectural firm, Goody Clancy, we are very concerned about the issues of shadow and wind impacts of this development upon this irreplaceable architectural landmark, Boston Icon, and parish home for which we are fiduciaries. We are hopeful that this submission will lead to further study and redesign of the development so that these impacts may be eliminated. We stand ready with our team to participate constructively in the planning process going forward.

Thank you for your consideration of this submission.

Very truly yours,

Peter Lawrence, Senior Warden, on behalf of the
Vestry of Trinity Church Copley Square

April 13, 2017

Peter Lawrence
Senior Warden
Trinity Church in the City of Boston
206 Clarendon Street
Boston, MA 02116

Re: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

Dear Peter,

As the Principal-in-Charge of the architectural and preservation consultant team currently working on Trinity Church, I must call your attention to the alarming impact the proposed Back Bay/South End Gateway Project by Boston Properties (BP) will have on the church building. The concern is twofold, the known increase in shading the building and the unknown possibility of increased wind on areas of the church above the pedestrian level.

If built as currently designed, the office tower of the project will increase the shading on the west side of the church during the winter months. The BP team, reviewed the shading impacts in a meeting with Sarah Wilcox, Katharine Bachman and myself on Friday, April 7. According to the information presented, shading will occur for an 11 week duration from November 16 to February 1. The period of shadow will be as much as 60 minutes from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. During this season of the year, this is a very significant loss of possible sun on the building at the exact time of day it might most effectively melt snow, and warm and dry stone.

The west façade of Trinity Church is the most decorative and most vulnerable on the building. It is already suffering from increasing deterioration due to environmental impacts, as evidenced in the loss of detail at the statues. Many forces are at work, but any increase to moisture retention in and on the stone is a major concern, especially in the cold wet months of winter when the stone has limited opportunities for exposure to sun. Wet stone is vulnerable to the destructive forces of freeze thaw cycles and wet stone, even in winter, encourages bio-growth, which holds more moisture and creates even more damage.

Exacerbating the wear and tear on your building, a National Historic Landmark, is very costly for the Parish. The repair work beginning in April 2017 totals over \$11 million with a disproportionate 25% of this amount focusing on the west façade including the porch, the steps, the towers, and the upper façade and roof areas (which are all affected by the new shading). This is the same area that only 5 years ago, the Parish spent \$2 million on. Because of the deterioration, from water and wind impacts, several areas of original sculpture are now being considered for replacement, which will increase costs exponentially.

Operating costs for the Church may also increase because the shading could cause the temperature sensors in the narthex vestibules to indicate colder temperatures and trigger additional heating.

In addition to the shading, I am concerned about wind, which batters the building at all levels. The Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR) for the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project only addresses wind at the pedestrian level and claims there is no change around the base of Trinity Church. However, to ensure that wind impacts on Trinity Church will not increase, it is essential that Boston Properties complete an analysis of wind around the whole height of the building.

It is the upper areas of Trinity Church for which the preservation team is most concerned. We believe the wind impact on the building is increasing as weather becomes more violent and more and more high rise buildings are constructed in the near neighborhoods. Only this year, a heavy tower roof hatch, which had been in place for a century and which was bolted into the structure, was ripped from the building and crashed into a parked car, breaking the windshield.

The wear and tear from wind on the priceless and irreplaceable stained glass of the building has been documented for many years and was a major focus of restoration work from 2001 to 2005 at a cost to the Parish of over \$2 Million. An additional \$1 Million will be spent in 2017 to safeguard more windows.

Trinity Church is an irreplaceable monument. It is one of the most important architectural landmarks in the City of Boston and the nation, with international reach. The list of repairs are unending and expensive, but the Parish has responsibly carried this burden for 140 years. It is my opinion, as a preservation architect with over 30 years of experience, that if the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project is built as proposed the burden on the Parish will become heavier.

Sincerely,



Jean Carroon FAIA LEED Fellow

Principal – Design, Preservation and Sustainability

Xc: Trinity Church - Robert Cowden, Sarah Wilcox, Katharine Bachman

April 18, 2017

Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)
Attn: MEPA Office-EEA No. 15502
Alex Strysky, Alex.Strysky@state.ma.us
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

Boston Planning and Development Authority
Michael Rooney, Project Manager, Michael.Rooney@boston.gov
1 City Hall Square
Boston MA 02201

Comments:

**EEA No. 15502 The Back Bay / South End Gateway Project
Article 80 Back Bay | South End Gateway Project Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR)**

The DPIR, and subsequent public presentations, have answered a few of the many questions raised by the CAC and neighborhood residents, myself included. Nevertheless, it is difficult to focus on the proposed Gateway Towers because of the project's adverse impact on Back Bay Station and the surrounding streets and sidewalks. The project, as currently described will impact the daily life of residents and transit patrons, will reduce public safety, and will have a high cost to the MBTA, the City of Boston and the Commonwealth.

The EEA and BPDA will need to do its own analysis, since the "facts and figures" shown in the DPIR are highly suspect. People trying to get in and out of buses and taxis will be prevented from doing so by planters and bike parking at the curb. Existing openings to the Orange Line platform (and MBTA operations enclosures) cannot be counted as primary circulation. Dedicated waiting and seating space will block major circulation paths and become lethal tripping hazards in an evacuation. The list goes on.


This project should not be approved until the public is able to know the full cost to the City and The Commonwealth.

- The proposed work on the station will be performed as an up-front payment of the proponent's 99-year lease. How will subsequent updates to the station be financed?
- The DPIR states that the Developer wishes the site to be designated a "blighted open area." A full accounting of public funding and tax breaks is essential.

Here are important details to be considered:

- 1) Boston Properties proposes filling much of the existing circulation space with retail shops. In doing so, **the station will not be able to accommodate an increase in public transportation patronage that** the City will need for its economic survival. This is already-paid-for public space that should not be compromised for short-term return.
- 2) The project proposes to reduce the existing sidewalk space on Dartmouth, Stuart and Clarendon Streets. The resulting sidewalks will be insufficient to satisfy the needs of passers-by, transit, rail and bus riders, and the patrons of the proposed shops and development. Here again, space that has been constructed for active public use is to be privatized and the remaining sidewalks and streets will be less able to serve their intended function.
- 3) The project proposes removing the existing ventilation tower at the rear of Back Bay Station near Clarendon Street. This tower was designed to exhaust diesel fumes above sensitive receptors. The exhaust tower should only be removed at such time as a substitute exhaust shaft has been built and incorporated into the proposed residential tower.
- 4) Finally, the lease for this property requires that an adequate and effective solution be established for the #39 bus, which now connects with the station and lays over in the turnaround at the east entrance to Back Bay Station. This connection between one of the most active MBTA bus lines in the region and the Orange Line, Commuter Rail and Amtrak is essential, and is especially critical for people with disabilities. The layover flexibility provided in this off-street space is also imperative to keep return trips on time. The current proposal to relocate the #39 bus to St. James Street with no connection to Back Bay Station and no off-street layover is clearly a major degradation of public accommodation.

Back Bay Station was built to adapt and grow to serve the needs of the transit-riding public – those who come to work, to shop, to visit, to attend school and to otherwise enjoy and support Boston. Now is the time for the City and State to step up and assure the public interest will be preserved for the next 100 years.



Kenneth E. Kruckemeyer
12 Holyoke Street
Boston, MA 02116



THE UNIVERSITY CLUB OF BOSTON

April 18, 2017

Michael.Rooney@boston.gov

Michael Rooney, Project Manager
Boston Planning and Development Agency
One City Hall Sq., 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mr. Rooney,

On behalf of the University Club of Boston, I write in support of Boston Properties' proposed Back Bay South End Gateway Project.

Founded in 1891, the University Club has continuously operated and maintained a clubhouse in the city block directly to the south of what is now the Back Bay Garage since the mid-1920s. The club sold its main clubhouse at 40 Trinity Place in the 1950s, but retained the adjacent four-story athletic building with an entrance at 426 Stuart Street, which has remained the University Club's address through the present. The University Club operates its social and athletic programs in its owned building at 426 Stuart Street and in additional space it leases from Trinity Stuart at 40 Trinity Place.

Having operated in this location for nearly a century, our membership has seen this area of Back Bay evolve and change significantly over the years. With change comes the good and the bad. While serving needed parking demands over the years in the area, the above ground Back Bay Garage has stifled the pedestrian experience and urban context in the area bounded by Clarendon, Stuart and Dartmouth Streets, and the Mass Pike/rail line corridor. For this reason, we are excited about many of the changes and improvements proposed by Boston Properties as part of its large scale, mixed-use project. Key public benefits and neighborhood improvements from the club's perspective are as follows:

- 1. Significant upgrades to the Back Bay Station and to the surrounding streetscape.** The Station is one of Boston's primary front doors. Club employees (many of whom commute to work using the station), visitors and members interact with the station on a daily basis. From larger, more accessible and welcoming station entries on Dartmouth, Clarendon, and Stuart Streets, to a redesigned interior floorplan, to new retail opportunities, the project will provide a much more pleasant and efficient experience for station users.
- 2. Streetscape improvements and the redesign/reconstruction of the sidewalks around the perimeter of the project.** The existing pedestrian conditions are poor and this project will improve them dramatically. Of particular importance to the University Club is the increased sidewalk width and the removal of the garage speed ramp along Stuart Street. This change will dramatically improve the pedestrian and street level experience on Stuart Street from Dartmouth Street to the club's front door mid-block at 426 Stuart Street. Most people coming to and from the club are walking, so improvements to the pedestrian experience and safety are very important to our membership.



THE UNIVERSITY CLUB OF BOSTON


3. **A high-quality, well-designed, transit-oriented development.** This is a suitable location for increased density in the City, and better utilizes the site to bring new housing, jobs and economic activity to this area. Additional commercial and residential density near the club is important to its long-term viability as a social and athletic club.
4. **New retail opportunities.** The additional retail on top of Back Bay Station and on the ground floor along Dartmouth, Stuart and Clarendon Streets will provide a range of new options and generate activity in the neighborhood. This adds important vitality to the immediate area and enhances public safety as well, particularly in early morning and evening hours.
5. **Wind mitigation.** We are pleased to see that the project will improve existing windy conditions at the street level, particularly along Stuart Street where the club has its front door.

Throughout the course of its planning around the redevelopment of the Back Bay Station and the air-rights garage, representatives of Boston Properties have been communicating to and updating Club leadership and representatives about the redevelopment plans and schedule. The focus of those discussions has been on the club's concern that Boston Properties preserve and maintain the club's legal access to the rear of its building and property. The club controls specific easement rights to this area and its daily operation relies on vehicle and truck access for food and other deliveries, trash removal and short term on-site parking for members and staff. Maintaining access to the rear of the clubhouse during construction and in the final approved plan is critical to the club's operations. I am confident that we can work with Boston Properties and its project team to work out the details of an agreement to ensure and protect future access behind our property as well as a construction mitigation agreement to address concerns during the project's phased construction.

The Back Bay South End Gateway project is an important project for the Back Bay and has clear benefits to the immediate neighborhood where the University Club has operated for nearly a century. As a direct project abutter, we look forward to working closely with Boston Properties to ensure our building and access are protected from the first phase of construction through project completion. We also are very interested in being a part of the ongoing discussions around the potential closure of the Mass Pike Clarendon Street on-ramp behind our property.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


ON BEHALF OF JOHN BRAZILIAN

John Brazilian
President - University Club



April 17, 2017

Michael Rooney
Project Manager
Boston Planning & Development Agency
Room 900 One City Hall Square
Boston, MA

Re: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project Comment Letter

Dear Mr. Rooney:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Project Impact Report ("DPIR") relating to the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project. This letter is being submitted on behalf of the Ellis South End Neighborhood Association ("Ellis"). The Ellis works to preserve and enhance the quality of life in the neighborhood by bringing residents and businesses together in a variety of ways. The Association, a membership organization, was started in 1964 when a group of concerned neighbors felt the need for a community organization. Incorporated as a non-profit in 1982, the purpose of the Ellis today is to advocate for the neighborhood by providing a forum for discussing local and citywide issues, planning social activities and projects that build relationships among neighbors, creating an effective communication link with the City of Boston, and working to keep our neighbors informed of news and decisions that impact the community.

The Citizens Advisory Committee ("CAC") has met twelve times since April 2016. In addition, there have been two open meetings and one presentation concerning the station ventilation project. The CAC meetings were often spirited with vigorous discussion and debate throughout. Not unexpected due to the size and complexity of the project as it would be undertaken above and around a working transportation hub and the Massachusetts Turnpike with several other approved projects across the street either underway or awaiting construction. The views at the CAC meetings from the residential members did not always coincide - not surprisingly - with those representing neighborhood groups or business representatives. From the beginning, however, the co-chairs encouraged all CAC members to consider the submission of a joint letter reflecting those areas where there might be a consensus. Over the past two weeks, the CAC has worked to that end. We recognize that it is not always possible to reach a consensus across such a large group. While there may be a general

agreement on a particular issue, the how and the why may differ. The process worked. As we understand what will be included in the CAC comment letter, the Ellis believes it is important to acknowledge and respect the amount of time and effort invested by all of the participants as their views are pulled together in seeking consensus. The CAC letter is expected to contain the signature of all CAC members. Signing the letter should not be interpreted to mean that the Ellis is in total agreement with the contents. Rather, it reflects the importance we grant to the process and the need to help move consideration of the project by Boston Planning & Development Agency ("BPDA") forward. The Ellis reserved the right to submit its own letter highlighting those areas set out below considered most important to it.

Exit ramp for the garage onto Dartmouth Street: we recognize that the construction of this exit is contingent on the closure of the entrance ramp to the MASSPike as the project construction is envisioned with the closing of the existing entrance drum on Stuart Street. While many favor the closing of the entrance to the MASSPike, just as many are opposed to the construction of a new ramp onto Dartmouth Street. Although this possibility has been known throughout the life of the review process, there has been no presentation by the developer of how this would work. As you know, there have been prolonged discussions about the pedestrian circulation around the Back Bay Station questioning the developer's analysis in addition to a number of comments about the vehicle congestion all around the station. To now move the project forward without any substantive discussion about the potential exit onto Dartmouth Street would be ill-advised.

Closing of the entrance ramp to I-90: while this decision is not within the charter of the CAC and also outside of the responsibility of Boston Properties, it has certainly been at the forefront of discussion at every meeting. The pedestrian and vehicle flow around the Stanhope Street and Clarendon Street intersection is unsafe and cries out for improvement. Many would question the safety surrounding of the vehicles using the entrance ramp as they seek to merge with the on-going traffic of the MASSPike wondering how it could have been designed that way initially. As indicated above, creating a new garage exit onto Dartmouth Street is not acceptable.

Affordable housing: the Ellis is firmly supportive of the inclusion of affordable housing for all development projects. While having the units located in the residential building itself ("on-site") is oftentimes the preferred route, history has shown that such a result is not always obtained. The City of Boston and the developers have been able to come up with alternatives within the rules that are often criticized. On-site can even be extended for a one-half mile radius from the project. There has even been some discussion that the City would extend the radius as far as three-quarters of a mile to include Parcel P-12, an outdoor parking lot near the intersection of Tremont Street and Shawmut Avenue next to the Tufts New England Medical Garage. A project of up to 600 affordable units is now under discussion by BPDA. A development of that size would not solve the affordable housing shortage in Boston, but would be a small step towards a solution. In terms of the number of affordable units that Boston Properties would be required to include,

it should be held to the applicable requirement at the time it submitted the Project Notification Form rather than a requirement applicable to later submissions.

Location of the Number 39 bus: the CAC was informed that the management of the T preferred a re-design of the route to have a terminus at the corner of Boylston and Dartmouth Streets next to the main library with the closest bus stop to the Orange Line continuing at a stop on St. James Avenue. Part of the reason presented for this route re-location was its proximity to both the Orange and Green Lines. There has been no public input regarding that bus route and public officials on the CAC opposed a re-routing that did not adhere to agreements reached with the T back in the 1980's when the 39 bus route was implemented to mitigate the partial closure of what had been the Arborway via Huntington subway route. The terms of the agreement referenced have not been made available. It has been represented, however, that the bus route was to be maintained with a stop next to the Back Bay Station. Boston Properties has suggested that a new bus stop may be possible as part of a re-design of Stuart Street where the proposed entrance to the new commercial building would provide for a covered access approach to the station for the users of the 39 bus. Anyone who has witnessed the congestion and traffic back-ups on Clarendon, Berkeley and Stuart Streets created by the articulated buses coming out of the turnaround next to the garage exit know a solution is needed. But the solution should not be at odds with the convenience of the current users of the 39 bus.

Transportation needs of the 21st century: towards the end of the CAC meeting cycle, Mayor Walsh unveiled "Go Boston 2030", a City of Boston initiative that envisioned a bold transportation future for Boston for the next 5, 10, and 15 years. The plan strives for all Bostonians to have access to quality transportation that helps them reach jobs, education, health care, affordable housing, healthy food, culture and open space opportunities. Transportation options in every neighborhood should be accessible and safe. Because of the timing, there was little opportunity to discuss how this ambitious undertaking would be addressed by the developer. Reports out of Washington suggest more funding for transportation infrastructure improvements. It would be short-sighted not to ask the developer to address its plan to help Mayor Walsh accomplish the goals of "Go Boston 2030".

Project staging: the developer has been clear throughout the review process that certain parts would be undertaken in a logical fashion as the project progressed. We respect their planning and recognize that much of the planning would be difficult to re-schedule. It was the view of many CAC members that the Stanhope and Clarendon intersection along with the grading and elevation of the sidewalk at the I-90 entrance and the crosswalk from the station entrances on Dartmouth Street receive priority.

Honoring the memory of A. William Randolph: many long-time residents of the neighborhoods surrounding the project have expressed concern about the treatment to be afforded to his memory and those accomplishments during the hey-day of train travel as currently highlighted around the concourse. The re-design of the concourse should be done to maintain Mr. Randolph's legacy.

Ventilation and "The Blue Haze": the CAC was informed that design work for the first phase of the improvements to the ventilation system had been progressing with a public meeting scheduled for May 3, 2017, after the due date for comments on this project. Those who attended an earlier meeting where the T presented an overview of the ventilation issues were surprised to learn of the poor condition of the existing ventilation systems and the somewhat dismissive historical approach of the T in operating the system. The T has provided an overview of what it is planning in the two phases - while clearly the plan, if implemented, would be a very positive step, cooperation from AMTRAK must be obtained. Not always a simple task.


Re-location of the Harvard Vanguard Health Center and other tenants: the developer indicated early on that it was working with Harvard Vanguard and Eastern Bank to understand their space needs should they be displaced. Little more has been heard about these plans. Many users of the Harvard Vanguard Health Center would be severely impacted should it no longer be located in the same neighborhood.

The project, as a whole, with the comments from all constituencies considered and those that are realistic, implemented, would be a positive addition to the Back Bay and South End. Boston today is not the Boston of forty years ago when the elevated tracks cutting through Boston neighborhoods were removed and the Orange Line re-routed. Nor is it the Boston of the early 1980's when Back Bay Station was last re-modeled and improved. The Prudential and John Hancock buildings have been joined by other high-rise developments throughout the Back Bay and South End. Boston Properties has done a good job of presenting a project that is a huge challenge from an engineering standpoint. It has also sought to address comments that relate to the impact caused by other approved projects on adjacent parcels. Not an easy task. One would be hard-pressed to argue that the project would not continue to show Boston in the early 21st century in a positive light with the following advisory: respect the comments from those who truly care for the neighborhoods.

Very truly yours,

Betsy

Betsy Hall
President
The Ellis South End Neighborhood Association
2 Clarendon Street


www.ellisneighborhood.org



April 15, 2017

Director Brian Golden
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Plaza
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mr. Golden:

It has been a tremendous opportunity to participate in the planning processes that have resulted in the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project.

Many years of research, discussions, planning, community input and BPDA outreach led to this point. As you know, I was honored to be a participant in the Stuart Street planning process and participated in dozens of meetings related to the importance of this area to Boston, especially the Back Bay. This area is densely populated by business uses, and property owners have long-invested in the area that is home to some of Boston's largest employers. Members of the Back Bay Association have invested billions of dollars in the property located in and around the Stuart Street area. Throughout the planning/zoning process, the businesses of Back Bay stated, unequivocally, that a significant project at the Back Bay station site is a top priority for the business community. Why? The Back Bay station is a gateway to the entire neighborhood. Thousands of employees use the commuter rail and MBTA to get to work. Tourists and visitors from other states and countries traverse train platforms and arrive at the station... up until Boston Properties took over the management of the station, the condition was deplorable.

As commuters and visitors leave the building, they are met with the very visual definition of a "concrete jungle" featuring buildings and architecture that can only be described as blight. Especially, in direct contrast, the juxtaposition of Victorian architecture of the Back Bay and South End, one must question how this happened in the first place.

It is essential that Boston find new development sites, especially when so much of the South End and Back Bay contains architecturally protected areas. The Back Bay Association BBA has encouraged "smart growth" in the area along the center, the High Spine, featuring access to the MBTA and commuter-rail. This development is an important priority of all Back Bay businesses! The Gateway project will add an additional 1.26 million square feet and include an office building, two residential buildings and an additional floor of retail on top of the existing Back Bay Station. The project (really, four projects) will provide great transit oriented development opportunities for businesses seeking first class office space and a need to attract top talent, residents drawn to a downtown address at a convenient and central location, and new retail opportunities to benefit all station users and the surrounding communities.



The Project also solves a number of incredibly poor public realm conditions that currently exist and it improves connections through the site and to the adjacent neighborhoods. We will not dwell on the existing conditions, rather, we will focus on the numerous improvements included in the project.

- The Stuart Street District will benefit greatly from the addition of three modern buildings designed by Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects and an additional floor of retail above the existing Back Bay Station, designed by Arrowstreet Architects. The bright, unique architecture characterized by undulating forms and dynamic façade treatments will bring a new vibrancy to the area and dramatically transform the monochromatic and monolithic concrete surfaces that currently dominate the area.
- The sidewalk and pedestrian experience will be transformed, as the project will regrade existing difficult sidewalk slopes and will reorient/relocate crosswalks on both Clarendon Street and Dartmouth Street. Bright, safe, internal connections will enable pedestrians to choose a covered route within the complex, while the experience on the adjacent city sidewalks will simultaneously become much more pleasant. The addition of new plantings around the area will provide shade on a sunny day while adding to the street's beautification.
- This location is ideal for a mixed use development, especially commercial office space and housing, since they create activity during different time periods, generating vitality in the neighborhood and maximizing the use of local retail opportunities, existing infrastructure, and transportation systems.
- The proposed bridge connections that will provide safe, publicly-accessible, and weather-protected pedestrian access from the Back Bay Station to both the 40 Trinity and 200 Clarendon Street buildings will provide a tremendous benefit to the area. Back Bay has a series of these internal connections, such as Copley Place connecting to the Prudential Center and through buildings, such as the Park Square building. These connections encourage pedestrian foot traffic, and will provide protected access to public transportation for additional users.

We note that the City of Boston has conducted numerous planning studies that provide a framework for the Gateway Project, including the Stuart Street Study, which was recently adopted by the City as zoning, and the Civic Vision for Air Rights, that outlines goals for projects over the Massachusetts Turnpike. The City of Boston and the Boston Planning and Development Agency may want to consider some form of relief from its Inclusionary Development Policy (IDP) for projects that offer extraordinary public benefits, such as the Gateway Project, especially as this project will invest significantly in improving Back Bay Station, creating new public station connections and dramatically improving the public realm. Air Rights projects, such as this one, have proven to be extraordinarily complicated, and, to date, none have been built, though many have been approved. Overall, we support the City of Boston's Inclusionary Development Policy, but do believe some consideration must be given to the added costs of complicated air rights projects that can have an impact on project feasibility and financing.



The Back Bay Association has closely monitored the discussion related to shadow in Boston and Copley Square. We believe that the Boston Planning and Development Agency, along with the Parks Department, have worked tirelessly to find a balanced approach in reviewing the shadow impacts of development projects. We believe that the shadows proposed by the Back Bay/Gateway Project have been minimized to the greatest extent possible, especially in Copley Square.

The City of Boston is most fortunate to have Boston Properties as one of its top investors in, not just real estate, but in the future of Boston. They have transformed so many areas of our City, most notably the Prudential Center, which has become one of the most dynamic multi-use centers in the country. They have been leaders in building sustainability, and have been active participants in the neighborhood and its progress and evolution. The company's investment in this project is laudable, and the City of Boston must do all it can to support this significant project and the benefits it will bring!

In conclusion, we support the Gateway Project as presented by Boston Properties, and encourage the Boston Planning & Development Agency to approve it.

Sincerely,

Meg Mainzer-Cohen
President
Back Bay Association



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Suite 200
Washington, D.C. 20036-4948

ULI Boston/New England

April 19, 2017

Brian Golden
Executive Director
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Plaza
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Mr. Golden,

This letter is written on behalf of the Boston District Council of the Urban Land Institute (“ULI Boston”), where I served in member capacity on the the Citizen’s Advisory Committee for the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project. By way of background, ULI is made up of over 38,000 members worldwide, and its mission is focused on providing leadership in the responsible use of land and in creating and sustaining thriving communities worldwide. Having sat through numerous presentations by the Developer and its team, ULI Boston has concluded that the redevelopment of this site and the adjacent Back Bay station are not only consistent with its mission but critical to connecting the urban fabric between the Back Bay and South End neighborhoods. This development is truly a “Gateway Project” and will take a highly underutilized area and transform it into a dynamic pedestrian location, inviting to all who intend to use the public transit, shops, offices and residences.

Design:

The neighborhoods (and the City) will benefit greatly from the new buildings being designed by Pelli Clarke Pelli Architects. The elegant design and undulating forms create a dramatic transformation to the skyline and a marked improvement to the existing buildings and the design characteristics of the area, particularly those being proposed on the Garage West Building, situated at the forefront of the site. The reworking of the interior of the station (Arrowstreet Architects), to be more amenable to commercial tenants coupled with the inclusion of an upper level of retail and the overall preservation of the station’s architecture could create a much more vibrant, pedestrian friendly public amenity. ULI would ask the Developer as part of their public benefits offering to consider screening the garage façade that is exposed on Clarendon Street.

Public Realm:

The inclusion of a new public plaza on Clarendon Street is a much-needed injection of energy to what is currently a very uninviting area. ULI Boston feels this area has the potential for programming/events that would benefit tenants and residents of the new buildings as well as the overall neighborhood. The creation of an interior connector taking foot traffic from the station directly onto Stuart Street will be a great way to further activate the Stuart Street sidewalks, and will dovetail nicely into future projects planned for the area. Furthermore, the consolidation of the entry points into the station coupled with the dramatic widening of the Dartmouth Street crosswalk between Copley and the Station will be a marked improvement for the current condition, which has pedestrians accessing both locations at various points on the street. ULI however, does feel strongly that the notion of creating a curb cut for vehicular traffic

on Dartmouth Street, will significantly hinder the project's ability to truly impact the public realm in this area.

Streetscape:

ULI Boston feels that the Developer's streetscape plans, consistent with BTB's "Complete Streets", which includes sizable furnishing zones and sizable pedestrian paths is both appropriate and necessary to make this key street more inviting, comfortable and safe for the overall public. Furthermore, while not the responsibility of the Developer, ULI Boston would encourage the City of Boston to use this opportunity to look at the entire stretch of Dartmouth Street between Columbus and Stuart Streets for further opportunities to improve the pedestrian experience. ULI Boston believes that both sides of Dartmouth Street (and traffic) would benefit from removing the metered parking and replacing it with wider sidewalks or potentially bicycle lanes.

Bicycles:

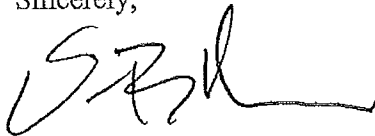
A reduction in the reliance solely on automobiles is integral to ULI's mission. As noted above, ULI Boston feels that this is the ideal opportunity for the City with the help of the Developer to further analyze opportunities to improve the limited bicycle lane infrastructure that exists today. The existing parking meters along Dartmouth Street create an ongoing impediment to both vehicular and foot traffic, disruptive to the overall feel of the area. Our hope is that this project will ultimately reflect those principles incorporate in the Go Boston 2030 report.

Affordable Housing:

ULI Boston, consistent with the other organizations represented on the CAC, would like to see as much affordable housing provided through the project as possible. That said, ULI Boston recognizes the challenges of constructability in today's market, particularly one that requires construction through the combination of air rights parcels. Therefore, ULI Boston would urge the Developer to consider additional affordable housing, and to do so would support a larger percentage of off-site units, and/or the inclusion of "middle income" units that would be provided for on site. ULI Boston believes that there is a tremendous shortage of housing options for "middle income" renters, those earning above 80% AMI, and would be supportive of inclusionary units that would provide opportunities for these households.

Thank you for inviting ULI Boston to participate in such an important discussion as the Back Bay/South End Gateway Impact Advisory Group.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be the initials 'SRH' followed by a long horizontal stroke.

April 18, 2017

To: Mr. Michael Rooney, Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA)
Mr. Alexander Strysky, MEPA Office, EEA

Dear Sirs,

As a member of the Back Bay/South End Gateway Project CAC, representing the Bay Village Neighborhood Association (BVNA), I was pleased to sign the joint CAC comment letter on the DPIR/DEIR for the project. I also fully support the comment letter submitted by BVNA President Sarah Herlihy. Both letters, I believe, reflect how community input can help ensure that a promising project takes its best possible shape. Despite the inevitable tensions of such a public process, I have been encouraged so far by the further information it has elucidated and by the thoughtful adjustments made by the Proponent between the PNF/ENF and the DPIR/DEIR. The public realm on the Clarendon St. side of the project has been particularly enhanced. I hope this trend of iterative and responsive improvement can continue as the project moves forward.

The CAC and BVNA letters convey my chief comments on the project. In this supplemental letter, I merely want to stress four further points that were not fully emphasized by the CAC and do not pertain particularly to Bay Village, but which I personally feel are important to register.

- 1) I want to stress that it is absolutely essential that the inclusionary development policy be satisfied with on-site affordable housing at this location. Boston only has the income-restricted units that it has because of efforts made by past generations. If we fail to put permanent affordable housing at a new downtown site like this, where 600 residential units are to be constructed, we will be failing as stewards of that tradition. Downtown affordable housing is important because of the access it affords to jobs and services; housing out at the margins of the city, where transit options are more limited, is not an adequate substitute. Furthermore, because the city's is AMI is derived from a census tract that includes wealthier suburbs, even the Inclusionary Development Policy doesn't really serve the poorest Bostonians. A family of four making \$68,700, at the 70% Area Median Income (AMI) cap for 2016, would in fact be earning much more than the majority of Boston workers. The fact that the IDP serves citizens with this earning power, however, means that it does not demand as deep a subsidy as other levels of affordable housing would. A family earning \$68,700, for example, would pay more than \$20,000 a year in rent for the affordable apartment. While not comparable to the rents Boston Properties could command for the apartment otherwise, this is well within the realm of feasible cross-subsidization. We are in the midst of a housing crisis in the Boston area, one that leaves a huge proportion of our citizens heavily rent-burdened; we cannot afford to make excuses for why a major project like this one should not do its part to help address that challenge. The affordable housing should be built on-site in the two proposed residential buildings.

The Proponent is benefiting from filing under the old IDP policy, and also from technically filing before the Stuart Street Zoning Code went into effect. However, since the development will require a PDA, that PDA can specify whatever level of affordable

housing provision is deemed appropriate. I believe that—in line with the zoning code recently generated by the Stuart Street Planning Study—asking the Proponent to designate an additional 2.5% of market rate units as affordable is a reasonable tradeoff for the increased density allowed in this area. Indeed, both the density allowances and the affordable housing requirement reflect our collective interest in constructing a vibrant and accessible urban hub for people from all walks of life. While the Proponent has made some of its buildings shorter than the maximum height under the Stuart Street Zoning, it has also disregarded the massing setbacks specified by that zoning, which allows for substantially more square footage. So it strikes me as entirely within reason for the City to require the additional 2.5% in affordable housing. I am open to allowing the flexibility for that extra requirement to be met by nearby offsite housing (within $\frac{3}{4}$ mile from the project site), rather than literally on-site.

- 2) The project has the potential to provide substantial public goods but also major private gains to the developer; this balance is reflected in the package of mitigations, community benefits, and public improvements being considered. If a substantial public subsidy were to be added, not currently under consideration by the CAC (such as a 121A agreement with the City of Boston), it would need to be justified by the addition of some substantial further public benefit. While 121A agreements are ‘tax stabilization’ measures, they tend to substantially decrease developers’ tax liability over the life of the agreement. This trend is reflected in the fact that the City usually sees sizable increases in tax receipts whenever these agreements expire.

I would not countenance a 121A agreement in exchange for the aforementioned move of requiring Stuart St. Zoning levels of on-site/near-site affordable housing. As explained above, I think such a move is entirely justified in the context of the current proposed development, considered without additional public subsidy. Nor do I think the site deserves to be granted 121A status because of ‘blight’; it sits in the middle of a prosperous area, and the decking has already been laid. I believe the Assessor should only even consider a 121A agreement here if something major about the project changes—i.e., if it were to hugely increase its affordable housing provision well above the Stuart Street levels. I feel the need to offer this view now because tax agreements are often reached between the city and developer without the substantive involvement of a body like the CAC, albeit still pursuant to a public process.

- 3) I have pushed the Proponent on the question of how it will mitigate the adverse health effects of ultrafine particles on the occupants of these three new, highway-adjacent buildings, and have been cheered by its commitment to install MERV 13 air filtration systems. I corresponded today with Doug Brugge, Professor of Public Health and Community Medicine at the Tufts University School of Medicine. He was lead author of a study (published last April at: <http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0160412016300940>) that demonstrated the adverse health effects of ultrafine particles on Boston residents living within 1500 feet of a highway. His comment to me was as follows:

“First of all, let me thank you for taking this issue up. It is wonderful when we learn that people who are not part of our core team are aware of and pushing this issue with near highway developers. Thanks. Second, with regard to your question, MERV 13 are good filters. We sometimes push for MERV 16, but I think it depends on the rest of the building design and how it affects infiltration of pollution from outside. Probably the buildings you are advocating for will have re-circulation of air, windows that do not open (so a tight building envelope) and air intakes on the roof or otherwise far from the traffic sources. In that case, I think MERV 13 would probably perform fine.”

I think the hypothetical description he offers probably does characterize the proposed office building at Garage West. But I imagine that more windows may be operable in the two residential towers (especially given the provision of some private balconies etc.). So I would urge the Proponent, as it fine-tunes the tower design, to consult with Professor Brugge’s team before determining what level of air filtration system to install. It may be that one or two of the buildings merit a slightly higher grade of filter, given design specifics. Professor Brugge can be reached at: doug.brugge@gmail.com.

I am not making a repeated point of this matter to inconvenience the Proponent. I sincerely believe that we will come to regard inadequate air filtration near major highways as similar to the old practice of running tap water through lead pipes: a slow way in which residents were exposed to poison without knowing any better. I think Boston Properties has a great opportunity to get out ahead of this issue, and that its commitment to MERV 13 filters is an excellent start. I would also urge MEPA and the BPDA to both familiarize themselves with these recent findings, and to raise ultrafine particle filtration issues for other future projects that fall under their respective oversights.

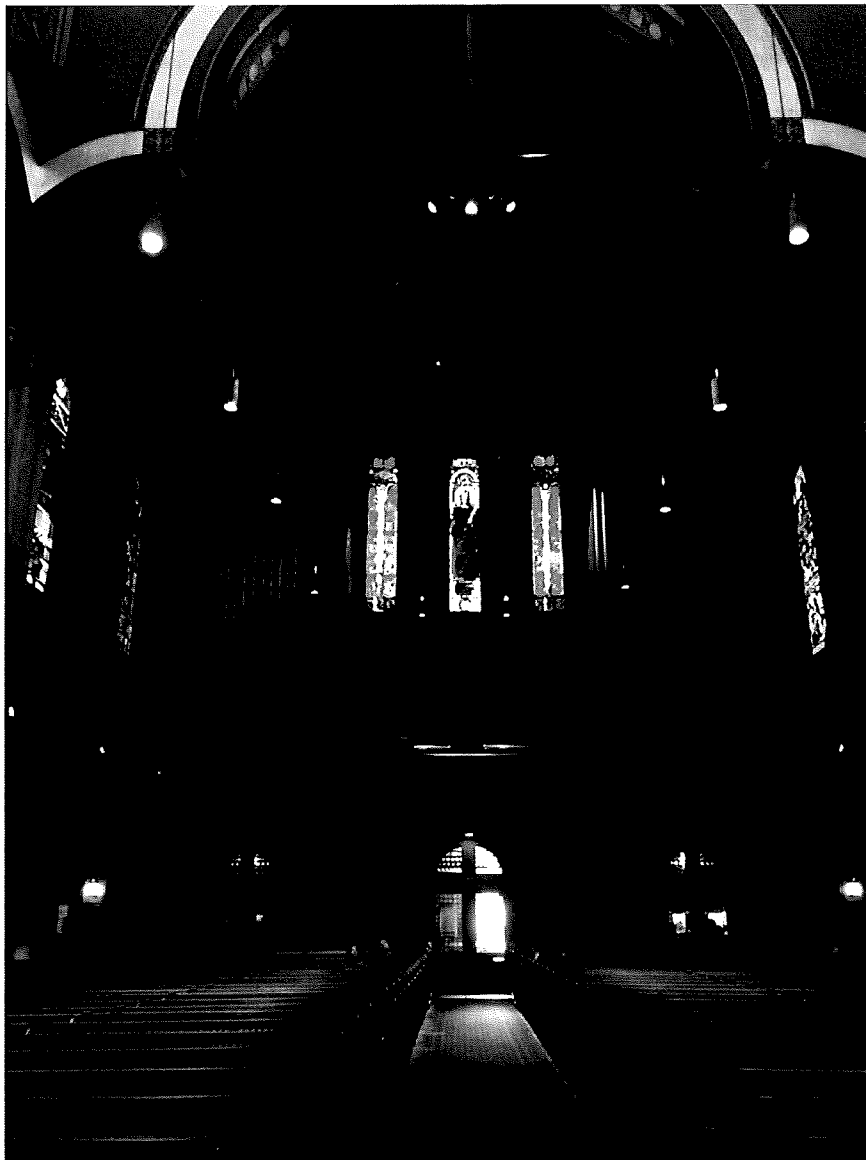
- 4) I would be remiss not to mention, as a parishioner of Trinity Church in Copley Square, my concern about new shadow across its western windows. These windows are not merely a source of light into the church; the Christ Preaching window, designed by John La Farge, is considered a masterpiece of the pioneering new methods in stained glass that made La Farge famous. The iridescent blues of its half-globes sparkle across the church and towards the altar in a way I can’t quite capture in a photograph, though on a recent sunny day I tried. On a shadowed day, by contrast, the figure of Christ fades into a muted background. I am personally in favor of urban density and recognize that this entails height at certain locations; I also appreciate that the additional shadow will fall across the church windows only in the winter. Still, 11 weeks of the year in which the 11:15AM service is newly shadowed from the west is not nothing, and it merits consideration. Similarly, I’m sure the attendees of the first morning service at Old South Church will notice the effects of the new shadow on their southern and eastern windows. Before such a step is taken, it is reasonable to discuss any possible modifications that could reduce these shadows, and to consider possible mitigation for the churches.

I have a multitude of other comments on the project (as has become clear in our CAC meetings!), but the others are all adequately reflected in the letters submitted by the CAC and by Sarah Herlihy of the BVNA. Thank you, once again, for attending to my remarks.

Sincerely,
Dr. P. MacKenzie Bok
CAC Member & BVNA Planning Co-Chair

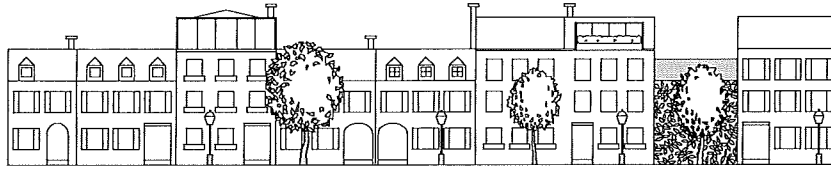
Photographic Appendix:

A. 'Christ Preaching' western windows of Trinity Church Boston



B. While out taking photos, I snapped this one as well; to reference a comment made in other letters, the Clarendon St. side of the garage cries out for screening!





BAY VILLAGE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION, INC.

April 18, 2017

Via Electronic Mail

Michael Rooney, Project Manager
michael.rooney@boston.gov
Boston Planning & Development
Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary
Alexander Stryisky, Analyst
Alex.Stryisky@state.ma.us
Massachusetts Executive Office of
Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

Re: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

Dear Messrs. Rooney, Beaton and Stryisky,

As a neighborhood adjacent to the proposed Back Bay/South End Gateway Project, the Bay Village Neighborhood Association (“BVNA”) is pleased to have had a representative on the Citizens Advisory Committee (“CAC”) for this major project.

The BVNA submits further comments to the CAC’s letter to underscore points of particular importance to Bay Village.

Clarendon Street Improvements

- **Plaza/Entrance:** We are pleased about the changes made to the air-rights project proposal from the PNF/ENF to the DPIR/DEIR with respect to the Clarendon-side Station entrance. Bay Village residents approach the Station from the Clarendon-side, making the proposed new public plaza in front of the Station East development critical to ensuring that all entrances provide an equally positive experience for residents.
- **Pedestrian Access:** Improved access to the Orange Line from the Clarendon-side, to be delivered with the building of Station East, will also be of great use to Bay Village residents. And we appreciate the move to remedy major flaws in the pedestrian realm around the

intersection of Stanhope and Clarendon Streets. We are also in favor of the redundant elevator to the Orange Line and would like to see the possible redundant elevators to Commuter Rail Tracks 1/3 and 2 move forward.

- **Phasing:** We join the CAC letter in urging that the repositioning of the Clarendon Street crosswalk to the south side of Stanhope Street and remediation of the Clarendon Street garage exit be undertaken with the first project built. Otherwise we will have a new public plaza and station entrance that remains hard and even dangerous to access from further north on that block of Clarendon. We also support the other public improvement phasing adjustments proposed by the CAC, regarding the earliest possible delivery of the extra-wide crosswalk at Dartmouth St, the redundant elevator to the Orange Line, and some substitute for the through-block connector to Stuart Street if Station East is built before Garage West.
- **Garage Screening:** The developer should be required to include attractive screening on the Clarendon Street side of the garage. The Proponent is adding such screening in its plans for the rebuilt Dartmouth Street side of the garage. The addition of the same or similar screening would signal the two “entrances” to the Station and improve the aesthetic appeal of the proposed project as it is viewed from Bay Village. Absent this improvement, the Clarendon-side of the garage would remain a stark concrete gash, marring the improvements promised on this side and the overall appeal of the two new residential towers that have been proposed.

Station Renovation

- **Circulation:** We appreciate the increased circulation and waiting space inside the station as compared to the original renovation proposal. Many Bay Village residents walk through the station on a daily basis, and are eager to ensure that there is ample room to do so without conflicting with commuters.
- **Visual Elements:** Bay Village also appreciates the move in the DPIR/DEIR to modify the Station West design to better accentuate the historic Station building even while adding retail. The Proponent’s expressed desire to pursue more tasteful advertising options that do less to obscure the Station architecture is laudable. Despite the proposed improvements, it is important that the Station retain a public character (rather than be made to feel like a mall), with all advertising required to be secondary to way-finding. In addition, opportunities should be sought to integrate public art into the Station.

- **Retail:** Bay Village wants to express its support for an affordable Station retail mix, accessible to station users from all walks of life. We also encourage the Proponent to find an accessible anchor tenant for its largest new ground-floor commercial space, such as a general merchandise retailer (Target etc.). Finally, we urge the Proponent to ensure that long-time commercial tenants of the site (Eastern Bank, Harvard Vanguard, etc.) are either re-accommodated on-site or able to find an agreeable local alternative.
- **Ventilation:** Bay Village shares the view that fixing the ventilation of Back Bay Station is an absolutely critical public purpose, for which the MBTA is responsible but in which the Proponent should assist however necessary to ensure success.

On-Ramp Closure & Traffic

Bay Village is aware that MassDOT is considering closing the Clarendon Street on-ramp to I-90. If the ramp is left open, the Proponent proposes to open a garage exit onto Dartmouth Street to replace the demolished exit drum. Bay Village agrees with the CAC that such a garage exit would have a substantial negative effect on that busy pedestrian block of Dartmouth. On the other hand, a single garage exit onto Clarendon alone would be unacceptable to Bay Village, as it would funnel all garage traffic towards the Clarendon/Columbus intersection and then to the Arlington Street I-90 Ramp. Bay Village is encouraged to see that, if the Clarendon Street ramp is closed and the second garage exit can instead be opened from Trinity Place, a substantial amount of traffic would head for I-90 West via the Huntington Ave entrance ramp rather than Arlington Street. This alternative is preferred by Bay Village.

However, Bay Village is still concerned about additional burdens placed on the Arlington Street ramp. In particular, we remain concerned that drivers leaving the site will come down Clarendon, turn left on Columbus, then turn right on Isabella to cut to the I-90 ramp (or head towards I-93) and avoid the long and crowded light at the intersection of Arlington, Columbus, and Stuart. Increased traffic on this route would place an unsustainable burden on residential Isabella Street, and also further endangers pedestrians in the unsafe crosswalk across Arlington Street that connects Isabella Street to Melrose Street

We understand that the traffic study in the DPIP projects that much of the increased traffic for the Park Square intersection at Arlington Street will occur irrespective of this project, and as a result of background growth in Boston. Bay Village urges the Boston Transportation Department to take the Proponent's data into account as it considers not only signal

mitigation at the major intersection, but also traffic-calming measures for the Arlington/Isabella junction.

The data does show a ***project-related*** increase in delays to cars coming down Columbus St and trying to turn right on Arlington in the Evening Peak Hour: from 462.2 seconds (2023 No-Build Base) to 528.9 seconds (2023 Build Base), or from 528.9 seconds (2023 No-Build Alternate) to 593.4 seconds (2023 Build Alternate). While the service level remains 'F', those are queuing increases of +66.7 seconds or +64.5 seconds, respectively, due to the project; we expect this increased minute of wait time to directly result in drivers diverting down Isabella Street. Given this finding, we urge the Proponent to mitigate this adverse result by providing resources to improve the pedestrian crossing and driver merging at Arlington & Isabella, potentially through signalization.

Construction Access

Throughout construction of any of the four air-rights parcels and during the Station renovation, it is critical to Bay Village that access to the Station from Clarendon Street be maintained.

#39 Bus

We note that the new proposed terminus for the #39 Bus would be four blocks further away from Bay Village than the Clarendon Street bus turnaround. We agree with the CAC that this relocation merits reconsideration by the MBTA. And in the event that Station East is built before Garage West, adequate connection from the #39 Bus to the Station, absent the new through-block connector to Stuart Street, needs to be treated as a major concern.

Affordable Housing

The BVNA is in favor of on-site affordable housing at this important transit-accessible site in the heart of downtown, at the higher levels specified by the Stuart Street Zoning (Boston Zoning Code 48-6, Item 1). We wish to see its spirit of the Stuart Street Planning Study honored in the PDA in this regard; we also support more housing opportunities for low and moderate-income families downtown.

Conclusion

Again, we are grateful to the Proponent for the many improvements they made in the DPIR to address our prior concerns, and for their informative presentation to Bay Village residents on Monday, March 27. We think of the Station area first and foremost as a pedestrian realm, and we are heartened to see aspects of the proposed project that could make

this part of the city more convenient and enjoyable from that perspective. The lion's share of our comments above are focused on ensuring that the on-foot experience of the Gateway parcels and surrounding area is as smooth, pleasant, and well-connected as possible.

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

/s/ Sarah B. Herlihy

Sarah B. Herlihy, BVNA President
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]

cc: The Honorable Martin J. Walsh (mayor@boston.gov and samuel.chambers@boston.gov)
Councilor Annissa Essaibi-George
Councilor Michelle Wu
Councilor Michael Flaherty
Councilor Ayanna Pressley
Councilor Bill Linehan
Representative Aaron Michlewitz
Senator Joe Boncore
Mr. James A. Kersten, MassDOT, james.a.kersten@state.ma.us
Mr. Peter Paravalos, MBTA, pparavalos@mbta.com
Mr. Mark Boyle, MBTA, MBoyle@mbta.com
Mr. Vineet Gupta, BTD, vineet.gupta@boston.gov
Ms. Lauren Shurtleff, BPDA, lauren.shurtleff@boston.gov
Ms. Melissa Schrock, Boston Properties,
[REDACTED]
Mr. Michael Cantalupa, Boston Properties,
[REDACTED]



Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

EEA No. 15502 The Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

1 message

Mary McAvity Cerulli [REDACTED]

Tue, Apr 18, 2017 at 9:13 PM

To: Michael.Rooney@boston.gov, Alexander.Stryisky@state.ma.us

Cc: mayor@boston.gov, josh.zakim@boston.gov

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
Boston Planning and Development Authority
and Environmental Affairs Michael Rooney, Project Manager
Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary 1 City Hall Square
Alex Stryisky, Analyst Boston, MA 02201
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

Dear Mr. Stryisky and Mr. Rooney:

I have lived in Back Bay since 1990 and raised three daughters here. I helped to start Cerulli Associates, Inc. with my husband Kurt Cerulli in 1992. Cerulli Associates currently employs 100 people, 55 work at 699 Boylston Street in the Back Bay. I have several concerns about the Back Bay South End Gateway proposal submitted by Boston Properties. The project has the potential to be a substantial asset to the City. However, several areas should be improved.

1. The principal source of its energy is natural gas, which will tie us to using this fossil fuel for 50 years, despite the City's efforts to reduce substantially the green house gas emissions over this same period. A much stronger emphasis should be given to the use of alternative green energy sources if Massachusetts wants to be a leader in reducing its carbon emissions and reach its Global Warming Solutions Act goals.
2. There does not seem to be plans for affordable apartments. This is not right given Boston's lack of affordable housing. We need diversity to thrive.
3. The project will cast on the neighborhood and especially on the windows of the several churches in the area.
4. Wind is already a concern in the area and it is not sure that the mitigation measures proposed will be adequate.

The Back Bay is a unique treasure and we must regard ourselves as stewards to preserve it and pass it on to future generations. Money should not be the dominant reason to go forward with projects.

Thank you for helping Boston Properties to develop a vision to that respects the character of Back Bay and includes sustainable energy, better design, and inclusion of a wider range of socio-economic families.

Mary McAvity Cerulli
[REDACTED]

"Our decision about energy will test the character of the American people and the ability of the President and the Congress to govern this Nation. This difficult effort will be the moral equivalent of war." President Jimmy Carter

**Susan Prindle
140 Marlborough Street
Boston, MA 02116**

April 11, 2017

Massachusetts Energy and Environmental Affairs
Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs
c/o Alex Strycky, Analyst,
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston MA 02114

Boston Planning and Development Authority
Michael Rooney, Project Manager,
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Back Bay/South End Gateway project DPIR (EEA 15502)

Dear Mr. Rooney and Mr. Strycky,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Back Bay/South End Gateway project. While many of the goals of the project are laudable, there are outstanding issues that need to be resolved before such a significant alteration to the Back Bay's landscape is undertaken.

Summary of Major Concerns

- Inconsistency with Stuart Street Zoning
 - No firm commitment to meet the enhanced affordable housing requirement
 - Violation of 25' Dartmouth Street setback
 - Undesirable visual and street impact of proposed pedestrian bridges
 - Non-compliance with targets for sustainability
- Urban Design
 - Narrowing sidewalk may not provide enough pedestrian capacity
 - Proposed garage opening and loading dock has negative effect on Dartmouth Street
- Transportation Issues
 - Potential gridlock
 - Increased traffic impact on the neighborhood, especially the major crash point at Beacon with Berkeley Streets
- Environmental Issues
 - Wind Impact
 - Shadows
 - Solar Glare
- Phasing of mitigation measures

Inconsistency with Stuart Street Zoning

As one who was involved in the Stuart Street zoning change, I am particularly concerned that the proposed project violates its guidelines in several significant ways: First, there is no

commitment to 17.5% affordable housing requirement. This is a critical element of the Stuart Street guidelines, as it will not only enliven the area, but will reduce its transportation needs, enabling workers to live near their places of employment.

Second, the 25' Dartmouth Street setback, which is particularly important to the view and skyplane from Copley Square, is being violated. After the long and arduous negotiations that resulted in the adoption of the new zoning regulations for Stuart Street, it is extremely disheartening to believe that they will not be enforced in this case. The As of Right Alternative, which the developer seems to have discarded, seems a better fit. Despite the developer's assertions to the contrary, the wind studies do not identify any decrease in wind as a result of the alternative zoning compliant massing. (RWDI letter of 12/21/16, page 3: "These are additional minor design changes and the wind conditions at grade level are expected to be similar to the conditions predicted from the wind tunnel test.")

The proposed pedestrian bridges across Dartmouth, Stuart, and Trinity Place are inconsistent with the goal of enlivening the street that was an underpinning of the new zoning. I believe they should be removed from the proposed PDA.

The Stuart Street guidelines state that "Proposed Projects shall incorporate advanced sustainability methods and/or accreditation that achieve certifiable status at LEED Gold or net zero energy consumption or meets or exceeds comparable environmental standards in effect, as determined through Large Project Review." Although the Garage West proposal complies with this guideline, the residential buildings do not. A project of this density, which will inevitably have significant impacts on its surroundings should, I believe, be held to the Gold standard at minimum.

Urban Design

Public access and permeability of the site is key to preventing the creation of an impenetrable wall between the neighborhoods. The pedestrian connector from Stuart Street to the station is most important in this regard, and should be retained no matter what ramp alternative is adopted.

Because of the volume of pedestrian traffic to and from the station, the sidewalk capacity should be studied carefully. It may be necessary to reduce the width of the furnishing strip. I also believe the proposed garage opening and loading dock on Dartmouth are inappropriate and should be eliminated from the proposal because of potential conflict with pedestrian use.

While the expansion of the Clarendon Plaza is encouraging, I believe the developer should further investigate (by a grade change or some other delineation) separating the pedestrian and vehicle paths.

I hope the developer will be encouraged to screen the existing garage from view so that it integrates better with the design of the newer structures.

Transportation

It would be helpful if MASSDOT'S Interchange Modification Report were completed before the building design is finalized, since it seems impossible to adequately evaluate the impacts of the proposed alternatives without that information.

The transportation issues of the project are daunting. I urge the BPDA and BTD to be particularly diligent in their analysis of this project. The possibility of gridlock in the area when the already permitted projects come on line seems very real and needs to be addressed. This is an ongoing concern for both the business and the residential communities. It is particularly worrisome during emergencies and the multiple special events that occur in our area, scenarios which has not been studied to date.

The residential portion of Back Bay unfortunately functions as a corridor between the Stuart Street area and Storrow Drive. According to Vision Zero statistics, the most dangerous choke point is at Beacon and Berkeley, where 27 accidents occurred between 2012 and 2016. Mass DOT (comment 4.19) has requested that the developers mitigate intersections with above average crash rates. I hope that this initiative will be pursued in relation to this project.

Commonwealth Avenue was identified as a potential truck route for the project. The BPDA and the developers should be aware that this would be a violation of a longstanding truck and bus restriction on Commonwealth Avenue between Arlington Street and Massachusetts Avenue, instituted because of the danger of vibration to the wood pilings that support buildings in the neighborhood. Alternate routes should be found.

Much of the transit demand in Back Bay comes from the western suburbs. Upgrading the Orange Line will not address this need. The Green Line is at capacity at rush hour now. Are there plans to upgrade the service to increase capacity? If not, can existing bus routes fill the gap until an upgrade is possible?

Environmental Protection

Wind continues to be a major concern in the area. Although I appreciate the efforts to install plantings around the offending buildings, I am not sure that they will survive in this environment, or provide adequate wind breaks if they do. The concept of wind screens may be a better and more permanent alternative, particularly in the area of the Hancock Tower. Followup onsite wind testing, as required by the Stuart Street guidelines, should be shared with the public.

Shadow studies show significant impacts, particularly on Trinity and Old South Church. These buildings are symbols of Boston, and deserve greater respect than to be overshadowed by new construction, particularly during the holidays. The developer should be asked to study massing that would further mitigate these impacts.

Solar glare is identified as a problem in several areas, but no mitigation is proposed, to wit: disturbing glare at Stuart and Dartmouth for 1-2 hours; Southwest Corridor Park two instances of disturbing glare for 1-2 hours; Mass Pike westbound, two instances of disturbing glare for 1-2 hours; disturbing glare at 100 Clarendon, Copley Place Tower, 40 Trinity, and 131 Dartmouth.

The developer does not seem to be taking responsibility for this problem. I believe he should be required to investigate alternative exterior materials that will not cause unreasonable glare. I note that the Hancock caused unanticipated glare along Blue Hill Avenue that is a real problem in the afternoons – let us not replicate this situation.

There is an ongoing effort to make the Charles River swimmable. The DPIR is not clear about whether there will be discharge into the Charles, and if so how it will be adequately purified so that it does not contribute to further pollution of the waterway.

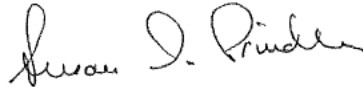
Mitigation

The phasing of the proposed mitigation should be adjusted to better reflect the impacts of the project. Since the greatest traffic impact is caused by the Garage West building, all traffic mitigation measures should be tied to that building, not delayed to a later phase of the project.

I believe that future mitigation should be dispersed to the areas most directly affected by the project, and that it should be discussed only after the Article 80 process is complete.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,



Susan D. Prindle

Cc: Bill.Linehan@boston.gov,
Josh.Zakim@boston.gov,
Byron.Rushing@mahouse.gov,
Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov,
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Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

Gateway Project

1 message

Michael McCord [REDACTED]

Sat, Apr 15, 2017 at 6:37 PM

To: Michael.Rooney@boston.gov, Alex.Stryisky@state.ma.us

Cc: Mayor@boston.gov, Bill.Linehan@boston.gov, Josh.Zakim@boston.gov, Byron.Rushing@mahouse.gov, "Jay D. Livingstone" <Jay.Livingstone@mahouse.gov>, Will Brownsberger <William.Brownsberger@masenate.gov>, [REDACTED]

April 15, 2017

Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary

Alex Stryisky, Analyst, Alex.Stryisky@state.ma.us

100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900

Boston MA 02114

Boston Planning and Development Authority

Michael Rooney, Project Manager,

Michael.Rooney@boston.gov

1 City Hall Square

Boston MA 02201

Comments:

EEA No. 15502 The Back Bay / South End Gateway Project

Article 80 Back Bay | South End Gateway Project Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR)

Dear Mr. Stryisky and Mr. Rooney;

As a Boston resident for 45 years and as Chair of The NABB Green Committee, I am writing to express my very deep concerns regarding the Back Bay |South End Gateway Draft Project Impact Report DPIR submitted by Boston Properties. While the project has the potential to become a great asset for the City, there are features of the current plan that need substantially to be improved. I know you have heard from others about issues of urban design, building mass, transportation, streetscape, wind and solar glare, and the horrible prospect of this project darkening an important

window in Old South Church. These, if they unfold as the current plans would have them unfold, will become blights on the neighborhood and city will last for decades into the future. Now, in this planning phase, these long lasting errors can be avoided.

As Chair of the Green Committee, I want to highlight another set of concerns—those that have to do with the very long term impact of this massive construction on the city's critically important goals for reducing Global Warming. The Mayor has pledged to guide Boston to a carbon neutral status by 2050 in all sectors. Each new building has to get us there and in fact, must be functioning at a far higher level of energy efficiency and carbon neutrality than any existing building to offset the inefficiencies of the past. It is not enough to ask if new buildings are meeting the highest levels of LEED requirements (and these buildings, as currently proposed, aren't even attaining platinum ratings); they must go beyond this still too low bar.

The future of clean energy will be energy delivered over the electric grid, not through pipelines. Our infrastructures and our buildings, going forward, should all be prepared for this conversion. I would respectfully suggest that all new construction in the city should be required to meet this future reality and all new construction, if not now heated and cooled by electricity, should be required to be designed for that conversation to happen rapidly and at minimal cost. We cannot be designing anymore for buildings that will be too costly to upgrade in the future. And more foreword thinking would be to require all new construction to be heated and cooled by electricity right now because the (unpaid for) Green House Gas costs of continued fossil fuel use are unimaginably dear.

Related to this, of course, is the plan of National Grid to install a new intermediate pressure fracked gas pipeline under Boston's streets and sidewalks—ostensibly to service all this new construction, but quite likely as a longer term plan to transport fracked gas to tanker stations north of the city for export. That, too must be stopped, and requiring that these projects be free of fracked gas for heating and cooling is an important first step. Of course, the developers will say it is too expensive, but a warmed planet, let alone a submersed Back Bay, will also have some costs that if not for them, then for their children.

Please do what you can to stop this madness.

Sincerely yours,

Michael McCord

70 West Cedar Street,



Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

Gateway Project

1 message

Carolyn Arrington [REDACTED]
To: michael.rooney@boston.gov, Lauren.Shurtleff@boston.gov

Wed, Apr 12, 2017 at 9:11 PM

Please read my comments concerning the proposed BackBay/SouthEnd Gateway Project:

As a resident of Back Bay, an active member of the Old South Church, a representative to the board for the Friends of Copley Square and a member of the Neighborhood Association of Back Bay, I write to state my opposition to the proposed BackBay/SouthEnd Gateway Project. I certainly recognize that the city needs to encourage development as a way to create jobs, build housing, and raise revenue; however, it is short sighted to do this at the expense of the city's historic and architectural integrity. I submit to you that this project is indeed at the expense of the unique character of the city of Boston.

My particular objection has to do with the shadowing affect these structures will have on the important and historic buildings in Copley Square as well as over the park area. Trinity Church, considered one of the finest examples of Romanesque architecture in the world with its important Tiffany windows, the Boston Public Library's historic McKim building which in fact houses one of the most extensive collections of rare books in the nation, and the New Old South Church, an example of Northern Italian Ruskinian Gothic architecture situated at the corner of Dartmouth and Boylston Street. If this project proceeds, it will shadow (based on the studies as submitted by the developer) Old South's garden and plaza, the south and east facing facades of the building and the important stained glass windows they hold for 12 weeks of the year during service hours and during Advent and Christmas (busiest time of the church calendar) forever. The windows light the majestic main sanctuary as will as our stone chapel; in fact, the most significant window, the east facing window over the pulpit depicts the story of the shepherds and magi being led by the star to Bethlehem.

There is a quid pro quo factor in the awarding of development projects in the city. In this case, as I understand it, the city stands to gain a rehab of Back Bay Station. Well, Old South Church is a 350 year-old institution (as of 2019) out of which came the Boston Tea Party, the first anti-slavery tract in the nation (1700), the founding of The YMCA, leadership in women's rights, and so many other worthy causes. Benjamin Franklin was baptized here, Samuel Adams and William Dawes were members, as was Phillis Wheatley, the first published African American in our country. Old South Church is open to the public seven days a week and thousands of visitors, tourists, art students and worshippers come through our doors every year. When our city suffered the Marathon bombing in 2013, Old South ministered to the city, hosting healing services. When the Long Island bridge closure caused the displacement of so many homeless people, Old South opened the Boston Warm center, and it continues to minister to the homeless. When governor Patrick and Mayor Walsh were inaugurated, Old South Church planned and hosted interfaith services celebrating these civic events. I submit these are Old South's quid pro quo, although we never considered them as such.

I appreciate that Boston needs to grow and develop but not at the expense of our unique character or our historic buildings.

Thoughtfully submitted,

Carolyn Arrington



Michael Rooney <michael.rooney@boston.gov>

Project Comment Submission: Back Bay/South End Gateway Project

1 message

no-reply@boston.gov <no-reply@boston.gov>

Tue, Apr 18, 2017 at 8:42 AM

To: BRAWebContent@cityofboston.gov, michael.rooney@boston.gov

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Comments: This is a horrible project!!!! Just what we do NOT need on the edge of the Back Bay! Think of the shadows this structure will cause in the Public Garden, the Boston Common, and throughout the Back Bay! Arrggghhh! I cannot believe the city is serious about this project! Kill it now before you waste any more time and money on it!

PMContact: michael.rooney@boston.gov