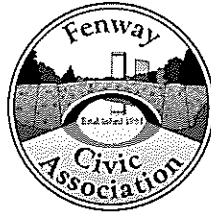


Simmons University 2019 IMP Projects Comments

Comment: Created Date	First Name	Last Name	Organization	Opinion	Comments
5/20/2019	Adam	Shulman	Resident	Neutral	<p>It is unclear what Simmons plans to do with their resident campus? They indicate they will consolidate all housing to main campus but provide no information on their plans for the resident campus. They need to be more clear and upfront on their long-term plans for their residential campus. There is a bus stop on Brookline Avenue at Pilgrim Road. Every winter, Simmons fails to assist in any removal of snow from the bus stop up to the curb. When requested, Simmons says it's up to the MBTA and City, not them, unlike Emmanuel College's stop across the street. Emmanuel clears snow to the curb and even permitted a bus shelter on the property, as Simmons should do. Simmons TDM measures are under par, which is partly why they have a poor SOV rate of 39% drive alone. They should have a much lower SOV rate (like 25%). Simmons needs to significantly increase their TDM options. They should increase T-pass subsidies to 100%. They should fund and install a Bluebikes station at their Residential campus area near Brookline Avenue/Pilgrim Road. Simmons should substantially increase their annual contributions to the Masco shuttle buses. Their current contribution is insignificant given the size of the proposed project. They should quadruple their contribution to Masco shuttles. The traffic study should determine what percentage of peak hour and mid-day traffic is caused by Simmons and ensure they are doing their fair share to address traffic congestion in the LMA/Fenway/Mission Hill area. Simmons should fund bus priority signals for Brookline Avenue/Fenway, Longwood Ave/Brookline Ave, Longwood Ave/Blackfan Street.</p>
5/31/2019	Edward	Orde		Support	<p>Seems like a reasonable expansion plan which should help lessen the demand for housing in the area which is already strained by multiple universities. I do think that the Living and Learning Center should be targeting LEED Gold as a minimum, it currently looks as though it will struggle to achieve LEED Silver. This building should be a high tech and environmentally friendly building given its location in a dense urban environment surrounded by medical facilities. I also noticed a lack of bike storage included in the plans for the Living and Learning Center with plans for only 15% of the bedspaces to have a spot for a bike. This is well below the USGBC recommendation of 30% of residents for residential developments plus 2.5% of visitors. This also doesn't meet the "City of Boston Off Street Bicycle Parking Requirements" as determined by the director of Boston Bikes at BTM which mandates a covered spot be provided for each residential unit and an exterior spot be provided for each 5 units. I'm sure dorms meet some exemptions from these rules however they still should be considered as good guidelines for the fact the entirety of the Simmons University campus is distinctly lacking adequate bike parking.</p>

Simmons University 2019 IMP Projects Comments

6/10/2019	Martin	O'Riordan	Berkshire Bank	Support	<p>My name is Martin O'Riordan and I am a member of the Simmons Task Force. As such I have reviewed the Simmons University Institutional Master Plan Notification Form (IMP). In general, I view the IMP to be a creative method to deal with the myriad changes occurring in higher education today. The City of Boston has become renowned as a vibrant setting with many colleges and universities offering a multitude of college experiences from small institution settings to behemoth universities. It is that variety of offerings that adds to the tapestry of higher education in Boston. As the school age population shrinks that diversity of higher educational opportunities is threatened. It is imperative that schools like Simmons are given an opportunity to survive and thrive. Otherwise we face the possibility that one monolithic university becomes the sole survivor with a one size fits all mentality. The loss to Boston and environs would be inestimable. Simmons has developed a viable strategy to remain independent and thriving. The current situation is not time to extract concessions. Simmons is not a for profit enterprise looking to make huge profits from its plans. It is a nonprofit looking to remain independent. It is essential Simmons limited assets are utilized to fulfill Simmons' needs. Not to fulfilling other needs, or wants, in the City of Boston or of particular individuals. The high quality on campus housing is the best way to ensure students remain in on campus housing during their undergraduate years. Questions have also arisen about graduate programs. Unfortunately, they are an essential part of today's higher education cash flows. As the college age cohort continues to shrink, it is essential that we give Simmons University the best opportunity to survive and remain a unique part of the fabric of Boston.</p>
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June 10th, 2019

Edward Carmody
Project Assistant
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Via Email

Re: Simmons University Institutional Master Plan Notification Form

Dear Mr. Carmody

The Fenway Civic Association (FCA) is the Fenway neighborhood's oldest all-volunteer neighborhood group that accepts no public or developer funds. Founded in 1961, our mission is to promote a safe and vital neighborhood that serves the interest of its residents.

Upon review of Simmons University's (the Proponent's) Institutional Master Plan Notification Form (IMPNF) dated May 9, 2019, FCA offers the following comments:

FCA does not object to Simmons University's IMPNF filing. The proposed consolidation of their dormitory, athletic, and student life facilities to Simmons' main campus as part of a "Living and Learning Center"; repurposing part of their existing library for science faculties; recapitalizing academic buildings as part of an academic reorganization; and the ground leasing of the existing residential campus to fund these endeavors is reasonable. However, this is pursuant a thorough vetting and public process for the development ultimately proposed for these ground leased properties.

FCA does not oppose the proposed scale and configuration of the combined dormitory, athletic, and student life "Living and Learning Center", which is generally in accordance with Longwood Medical Area (LMA) guidelines. We believe whatever zoning relief Simmons will be required to seek for this project may be thoughtfully mitigated with the adequate creation of student housing, funding of public realm/open space improvements & maintenance, thoughtful design considerations, and community partnerships.

Student Housing

With regard to providing adequate student housing, the Fenway Civic Association formally requests that Simmons review both current and projected graduate student populations with Boston residency and adjust the size of its dormitory to accommodate this population. We believe insufficient study has been performed regarding graduate housing and believe projections must fulfill peak demand rather than face future shortfall. Each student who seeks but is not provided with on-campus housing competes

directly with a Fenway resident for housing. It is essential to maintaining the affordability of our neighborhood that adequate study and planning remove this competition.

Open Space

Associated with our concerns regarding consolidating the student population to the main campus, we request a careful review and design of campus open space to account for the entirety of the student population shifting into a higher density campus model. FCA strongly believes occupiable outdoor open space must be provided as part of the Living and Learning Center. The loss of common open space in the existing residential campus must be recaptured, if not exceeded in its new dormitory via roof deck, terraces, balconies, etc. to avoid overburdening public parkland shared with residents. We strongly suggest improvements to existing campus green spaces, streetscapes at the borders of campus, etc. to create sufficient year round outdoor recreational and gathering spaces for students.

Despite the best plans and effort to provide high quality open space on campus, FCA recognizes that there still will be an increased concentrated student use of the abutting Back Bay Fens. We therefore request that the Proponent engage in collaborative maintenance efforts with the Emerald Necklace Conservancy and Boston Parks Department for the portion of the Back Bay Fens abutting their property. Additionally, to curtail students from illegally smoking in public parks, we request that Simmons University consider creating year round indoor/outdoor designated smoking areas.

To help ameliorate the increased impact on the DCR parkway from the loss of open space on campus FCA requests that Simmons steward the street trees and the DCR medians opposite of the campus. We see an opportunity to enhance this landscape much the way Evans Way triangle was transformed by its adoption by MASCO.

Design/Environment

We request that the Proponent address the environmental issues of design including the consideration of bird safe glass, glare reduction, night lighting control, and seasonal wind patterns. These issues have been addressed in other developments in the neighborhood and seriously impact both quality of life and the environment. Please do not create a shiny box that kills birds, cooks/blinds us with glare, keeps us up at night, and neutralizes the value of open space by making it uncomfortably blustery to occupy.

We also suggest investigating the resiliency of the building, potentially tying it into the LMA's micro grid. This planning prevents problems caused by energy failures that might otherwise dislocate students or create short term housing problems during subsequent building renovations.

Transportation

We ask the proponent coordinate with MASCO for potential student shuttle operations and request that the redesign of the service road adjacent the proposed Student Living and Learning Center address Uber/Lyft/Ride share traffic to/from campus. We additionally request Simmons to address bicycle parking/maintenance needs and the location of the campus BlueBikes station in a thoughtful manner to reduce the demand for automotive traffic where feasible.

Community Partnerships

Finally, FCA would like to suggest that Simmons University consider partnering with Fenway Community Center and Fenway Community Health Center on various topics and efforts where the University's expertise or resources could be most beneficial. These are neighborhood community service

organizations and institutional amenities with whom partnerships can greatly improve the quality of services and thus the quality of life for neighborhood residents.

FCA hopes these comments, concerns, and suggestions will be addressed and have been constructive as part of the Institutional Master Plan process.

Sincerely,

Timothy Horn, President
Matthew Brooks, Vice President

CC: Councilor Josh Zakim
Shanice Pimentel, Office of Neighborhood Services

Edward Carmody
Project Assistant
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

June 10, 2019

Re: Simmons University Institutional Master Plan Notification Form

Dear Mr. Carmody,

As a longtime resident and member of the IAG, I have a few comments to add to the planning phase for the new "Living and Learning Center" concept.

It is unfortunate that the realities of economics and modern academia seem to necessitate the divestment of the charming residential quarters enjoyed by decades of Simmons students and members of the public as well. The design and human scale of the brick dorms and spacious lawn reflect back to the creation of the Fenway neighborhood out of landfill and the founding of the nearby Emerald Necklace park system. Its future inevitable build-up will present a challenge to the historic dignity of that area that we will follow carefully.

That being said, I am in support of the plans presented in the IMPNF filing. Last week, I spoke with two young Simmons alums one evening in Ramler Park. We discussed the many changes afoot for the school and the campus. It was interesting that they both said what they liked about the residential campus when they were students was that it felt good to "escape" the academic campus and arrive "home" away from school in the Brookline Avenue dorms. It was a relief for them to separate the two. In redesigning the singular campus, it can't be over-emphasized that students will need an escape from school and each other. Any areas that can be designed with this in mind would serve everyone well.

In addition, one of the women wanted to make sure that the new building had a "green roof" garden area. I assured her it did. I am pleased this is part of the current plan, and it will need to be a major focus for students to be able to access a generous area of outdoor space all seasons of the year.

My own observation of students, often through encounters in Ramler Park or nearby places, is that no matter all the state-of-the art on campus amenities a school may offer, students often seek to go off campus instead. In terms of parks and open space, this creates an impact on the surrounding public spaces that open up a wider pallet of places to recreate. Simmons owes much to its founding along the newly created Back Bay Fens in the early 1900's. "Location location location" along the historic park has served the school well -- and vice versa. Simmons has consistently respected and assisted with the park across the way. With the concentration of students to be contained within a far smaller foot print, it is appropriate that Simmons' impact on its surroundings provide mitigation to the public realm that enhances it. There are many needs in the Back Bay Fens, the most prominent and costly that I see are the 1) maintenance of the multi-million dollar restoration of the Muddy River plantings just completed, and the 2) cutting, re-seeding, and ongoing maintenance of the overgrown invasive phragmites that have consumed park and river edge in the Back Bay Fens. Both of these efforts are huge undertakings for the City of Boston, with help from the Emerald Necklace Conservancy, that are germane to the care and enjoyment of the Back Bay Fens. I hope both of these entities will be considered for much needed funds towards work in these areas.

Relative to public open space, I encourage Simmons to set aside its own smoking areas so as not to burden the public spaces with this activity that will inevitably happen regardless of campus non-smoking restrictions.

Also relative to parks, as president of the Friends of Ramler Park, I appreciate the possibility this project may afford for assistance from Simmons' Library and Archives professionals to help with our organization's great need for archiving the 30+ years of documents related to Ramler Park.

At the IAG meeting for the project, I mentioned the desire to ensure that Service Road is not allowed to become a commuter cut-through from Louis Pasteur to Palace Road. It seems that was assured by the plan.

With the high-rise being comprised of so much glass, I encourage careful design for details that do not allow the reflection of trees or sky or clouds that birds would mistake for reality and fly headlong into the glass. These details are doubly important within the lower floors where trees are more apt to be reflected in the glass. Please go overboard with design details to deter to bird strikes.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Fredericka Veikley
IAG member



Ed Carmody, Project Assistant
Boston Planning and Development Agency
City Hall, Boston, MA

June 10, 2019

Dear Ed,

On behalf of the 21 institutions of the Fenway Alliance and as Manager of the Fenway Cultural District, I am writing in vigorous support of Simmons University Master Plan and new development project. As you know, small colleges and universities in Massachusetts and around the country are struggling to compete with larger and often more well endowed schools. To remain competitive, these institutions that serve a critical mission of educating students who thrive in a smaller academic environment (and may not survive in larger more impersonal academic systems) need to be creative and innovative in development and financing in order to attract prospective students. We believe Simmons University has taken a community-friendly, creatively innovative approach to sustaining their mission to educate the next generation of women leaders. We recognize Simmons University's important role as *the only* private women's college in the City of Boston, and one of the few remaining in the country.

Simmons University's planning for these changes to its physical campus has been lengthy, thoughtful and comprehensive, beginning with a 2013 physical assessment study conducted by NBBJ and the establishment in 2015 of an internal steering committee. Simmons released its findings from this work in a lengthy report "Strategy 2022" in which the top priority that emerged was the need for new science facilities in keeping with today's state of the art standards for science education in academic settings. In 2019, Simmons filed its Institutional Master Plan with the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA).

In addition to Simmons' development of a new science center, The Living & Learning Center will allow for more beds (1,100) than the 1,036 that are currently on campus in alignment with Mayor Walsh's request for more students in Boston to live on college campuses to free up critically needed housing stock and provide better oversight of student populations. This Center will also include dining, an athletic center, wellness studios, and importantly in our social media-driven culture, places where students can casually congregate and socialize in person. It will create the look and experience of a true college campus for students.

The Fenway Alliance supports Simmons' "One Campus" design principles to 1) create a 24-7 campus with integrated academic, social and student life; 2) foster an active, safe and pedestrian friendly campus; 3) create a variety of uses with encourage wellness and social activity in the residential campus; 4) maximize the use of the campus open space; 5) improve the streetscape and pedestrian experience along Avenue Louis Pasteur and; 6) provide potential for increased housing supply in the area by locating more student housing on campus.

It should be noted that Simmons University has been a long term and active member of the Fenway Alliance, and has contributed readily to the place-making mission of the Fenway Cultural District—to create a vibrant, accessible-to-all neighborhood in Boston, particularly one so rich in cultural, academic, and environmental resources. Simmons University assists in the programmatic efforts of our hallmark festival Opening Our Doors in October—now going into its 18th year--by widely promoting this Day of free cultural experiences to all of its students, employers and larger community. This year, Simmons University is participating in the second annual Fenway Porchfest which is a partnership of the Fenway Alliance, Fenway Civic Association and Fenway CDC. Simmons will host a "porch"—its front steps for two musical performances on this Saturday. The festival from 12 pm to 4pm will feature over 80 musical performances in 36 sites. Simmons has been a regular supporter of the Alliance's TEDxFenway event, and our public art initiative Public by Design. Simmons University also maintains a key area in the newly development Justine Liff Park of Olmsted's historic Muddy River Park.

For all of the above reasons, we support Simmons University development plans, and are delighted that this important academic institution in the Fenway Cultural District is securing its future for generations of young women leaders to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly J. Brilliant". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned above the typed name.

Kelly Brilliant, Executive Director
The Fenway Alliance, Inc.



MEDICAL ACADEMIC AND SCIENTIFIC COMMUNITY ORGANIZATION, INC.

PEOPLE | PLACES | PLANS | FUTURE

Member Institutions

June 10, 2019

- Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center
- Boston Children’s Hospital
- Brigham and Women’s Hospital
- Dana-Farber Cancer Institute
- Emmanuel College
- Harvard University
Harvard Medical School
Harvard School of Dental Medicine
Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health
- Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum
- Joslin Diabetes Center
- Judge Baker Children’s Center
- Massachusetts College of Art and Design
- Massachusetts College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences University
- Massachusetts Department of Mental Health
- Simmons University
- Temple Israel
- Wentworth Institute of Technology
- The Winsor School

Edward Carmody
Boston Planning and Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

RE: Simmons University Institutional Master Plan Project Notification Form (IMPNF)

Dear Mr. Carmody:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Simmons University IMPNF. We congratulate Simmons on their ambitious new plan for Simmons University, called One Simmons. This plan forms the foundation for the next century of Simmons as small college demographics continue to change and Simmons strategically plans for its future.

As described in the document, the Task Force Meeting and the LMA Forum meeting, the university plans Phase I projects beginning in the fall of 2019 to renovate its Lefavour Hall and the Main College Building to create a modern science facility and re-organized colleges within the university. This phase is self-financed and makes way for a subsequent phase in which the former Science Center will be vacated and demolished to create the new Living and Learning Center including approximately 1,100 beds to replace and expand Simmons’ existing facilities on the Residential Campus. Accommodating additional students on-campus is a continued positive trend both for the university and the nearby neighborhoods. The Science Center Replacement and the Living Learning Center Replacement will be financed by a long term land lease for its 6.6 acre Residential Campus. Until this is in place, some questions may not be answerable in the very short-term since the university does not yet have a development partner.

Associate Members

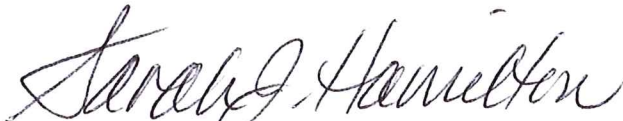
- Boston University Wheelock College of Education & Human Development
- Fenway Community Health Center
- Massachusetts Eye and Ear Infirmary
- Merck Research Laboratories

As the BPDA scopes the IMP, here are questions we have heard from the neighborhoods that would be helpful to address:

- Modern new residential and athletic facilities are long overdue. We look forward to seeing the design as well as shadow and wind studies modelled from the future Living and Learning Center, anticipated to be completed this summer.
- An IMP process typically results in a BPDA and Zoning Commission review and approval of a proposed project(s) and use, dimension and site approvals for other projects that have been described in an IMP. The Living and Learning Center is described as moving ahead once the existing Science Center is replaced and vacated, and is a project which requires the proceeds from the third party ground lease of the Residential Campus. Because of this potential uncertainty, the BPDA scope might require description of an interim condition in the event that Simmons does not immediately find a development partner to help advance the Living Learning Center. Under such a scenario, what uses would be contemplated to occur in the vacated Science Building and how will the impacts, if any, be considered and reviewed?
- Similarly, because the specifics of the Residential Campus redevelopment are not yet known it would be useful for the BPDA to provide scenarios to the community about how and when the city would require new filings and impact studies, new zoning petitions, and the institutional master plan amendment and Article 80 large project approval process that the city would require of Simmons and its third party developer. While even hypothetical scenarios may be premature to describe at the moment, and should be thought of in a post-2019 approval process for redevelopment after 2022, helping the community understand how these components fit together from a process point of view would further everyone's understanding and comfort level with the process at hand for the review of the IMP that will be submitted this summer.

We look forward to assisting you and Simmons in the planning and approval of their IMP.

Sincerely,



Sarah J. Hamilton
Vice President,
Area Planning and Development

Cc: Jeremy Solomon, Simmons