



Edward Carmody <edward.carmody@boston.gov>

RE: Suffolk University IMPNF/PNF Submission - TASK FORCE COMMENT

1 message

Ernani DeAraujo

Fri, Oct 25, 2019 at 9:39 AM

To: Edward Carmody <edward.carmody@boston.gov>

Hi Eddie. I write this note in support of Suffolk University's proposal for the former Ames Boston hotel. Creating managed living space for university students is a very good use for this building and will have multiple benefits for the city of Boston including: relieving pressure on nearby residential housing; providing students with a safe, up-to-code, living experience; and preserving an architecturally impressive facade that might otherwise fall into disrepair. The Suffolk team has been very thoughtful around managing impacts with respect to transportation and tenants. In particular, the adaptation for student use should relieve some traffic congestion from the area and the concentration of students in the building should liven up the nearby streetscape and promote further investment in that area.

Finally, Suffolk University has been a good neighbor and partner for the neighborhood of East Boston and I believe will be a good neighbor to the surrounding area on Court Street.

Thank you for your consideration.

Ernani J. DeAraujo, Esq.

Vice President of Regulatory Affairs and General Counsel

East Boston Neighborhood Health Center

20 Maverick Square, 4th Floor

East Boston, MA 02128

Office:

Fax:

From: Edward Carmody [mailto:edward.carmody@boston.gov]

Sent: Friday, September 27, 2019 11:11 AM

To: Edward Carmody

Subject: Re: Please Review - Suffolk University IMPNF/PNF Submission

EXTERNAL Message From Edward Carmody with a return email address of edward.carmody@boston.gov

Harvey Leong
1 Avery Street
Unit 21A
Boston, MA 02111

September 30, 2019

Mr. Edward Carmody
BPDA

Subject: Support Letter for Suffolk University's One Court Residence Hall

As an active resident in the development of the Midtown Area, I have seen much change over the past 14 years. Through this period, I have developed a growing respect for the work that Suffolk University has done to be an active and very positive part of our community – especially in the development and operation of their dormitories.

I fully support the conversion of the Ames Hotel to a Residence Hall for Suffolk Students for the following reasons:

1. It will help ease the demand for rental housing in Midtown.
2. The Residence Hall will be a “controlled” environment and help to manage student activities – especially on weekends.
3. It will improve public safety of the immediate area.
4. As for alternative uses for the building, I am of the belief that this is not going to impact the hotel room supply, given the development of the many hotel projects. As for, affordable units in the Midtown/Chinatown area, I believe that this is not a suitable community site for affordable units. Note: I was a Board member of the Asian Community Development Corporation (ACDC) and led its Finance Committee for a period of time.

This is a rare opportunity for Suffolk University and for Boston's Midtown Community.

Sincerely,



October 2019

Edward Carmody
Project Assistant
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Suffolk University 1 Court Street Residence Hall

Dear Mr. Carmody,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed Suffolk University student residence hall at 1 Court Street. The project represents a unique opportunity that will allow Suffolk to increase on-campus housing for students.

The addition of approximately 280 student beds will have an immediate economic impact on all businesses in the downtown area. The increased foot traffic will also contribute to a more safe and vibrant pedestrian streetscape.

As a local business owner and/or operator we encourage you to act favorably on Suffolk's proposed residence hall. Local residents and area businesses alike will undoubtedly benefit. My below signature indicates my support for this great project.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Benjamin Curcio". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

275 Washington Street Corp.

275 Washington Street
Boston, Massachusetts 02108

October 10, 2019

Edward Carmody
Project Assistant
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Suffolk University 1 Court Street Residence Hall

Dear Mr. Carmody,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed Suffolk University student residence hall at 1 Court Street. As the owner of the Pi Alley Parking Garage Building, a neighbor of 1 Court Street, we are excited to see the addition of 280 student beds here. This will have an immediate economic impact in the entire Downtown Crossing neighborhood. We look forward to the increased foot traffic that will create a more vibrant and safer streetscape.

The project represents a unique opportunity that will allow Suffolk to increase on-campus housing for students and further the City's agenda of freeing up private units for Boston families. We believe that this project has the potential to be as successful as Suffolk's Modern Theater and 10 West Residence Halls.

We encourage you to act favorably on Suffolk's proposed residence hall. Residents and area businesses alike will undoubtedly benefit.

Best,



Doug Sickler
Managing Director

Cc: John Nucci

October 11, 2019

Edward Carmody
Project Assistant
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Suffolk University 1 Court Street Residence Hall

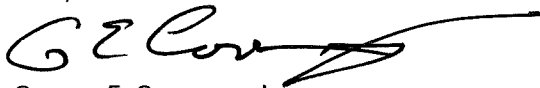
Dear Mr. Carmody,

I am writing to express my full support for the proposed Suffolk University student residence hall at 1 Court Street. The project represents a unique opportunity for the University to increase campus housing for their students in a university controlled setting, while freeing up housing units for families and residents.

Suffolk has been an important contributor to the transformation of Downtown Crossing. Renovations to the historic Modern Theatre and new student housing at 10 West and Modern Theatre Residence Hall has resulted in a safer and more vibrant pedestrian streetscape.

The University has consistently strived to be a good neighbor and strengthen community relations. We are proud to call Suffolk University our neighbor and partner and urge the approval of their plans as proposed.

Best,



George E. Coorssen, Jr.
Resident
151 Tremont St.
Boston, MA 02111



NEW ENGLAND CENTER
AND HOME FOR VETERANS

EDUCATION | SUPPORT | EMPLOYMENT | HOUSING

BRA

11 October 2019

Boston Redevelopment Authority, d/b/a
Boston Planning and Development Agency
One City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

19 OCT 11 PM 1:27:30

Dear Boston Planning and Development Agency,

The New England Center and Home for Veterans (NECHV) is writing to provide its strongest and most enthusiastic support of Suffolk University's proposed plan to create student housing at 1 Court Street Residence Hall. As a direct abutter to the property and community partner to the University; the NECHV welcomes the addition of a Suffolk University student residence and is confident that this use of Boston's historic Ames Building will enhance the downtown Boston neighborhood. The Center staff has extensively reviewed the 1 Court Street Residence Hall, Project Notification Form, and met with the University's President and leadership team onsite to discuss the future of our very special Court Street location. We could not be more pleased with the prospect of having Suffolk University as a close neighbor and strong partner.

NECHV is one of the nation's leading providers of supportive services to Veterans experiencing or at risk of homelessness. The Mission of the NECHV is to enable Veterans to achieve individual success and to live with dignity and independence. The Center lauds the efforts of Suffolk University to create additional student housing here in Boston. The increase in availability of student dormitories resulting from this project, will help to mitigate the existing shortage of available housing in Boston for the Veterans the NECHV serves. Veterans seeking appropriate housing here in Boston are many-time in direct competition for the same rental stock sought by college students. This proposal represents a strong WIN – WIN initiative for both University students and NECHV Veterans.

The NECHV's historic 17 Court Street building shares more than an adjoining structural wall with the Ames Building. Both building were designed by the architectural firm of Shepley, Rutan and Coolidge and helped define Boston's early 20th Century design character. The Center's newer 17 Court Street Building represents the architect's, and Boston's building's transition from masonry load-bearing structures to total steel structural frame building design. The two adjoining buildings are strong complements, and we are confident that the two missions and roles of the buildings now, will be equally complementary. The NECHV will work closely and collaboratively with Suffolk University.

I strongly encourage the Boston Planning and Development Agency to accept and approve Suffolk University's development plan for the 1 Court Street, Ames Building. The project will not only benefit its students and faculty, but the NECHV and the local community, as well. Thank you for your kind consideration of this letter. I am available at any time should you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at _____ or _____

Sincerely,

C. Andrew McCawley
President and Chief Executive Officer



*Neighbors
Helping
Neighbors*

74 Joy Street

Boston

MA 02114

617.227.1922

info@bhcivic.org

www.bhcivic.org

BY EMAIL AND FIRST CLASS MAIL

October 25, 2019

Edward Carmody
Project Assistant
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, Massachusetts 02201

Re: Suffolk University Institutional Master Plan/Project Notification Form – Comments of the Beacon Hill Civic Association

Dear Mr. Carmody:

Since 1922, the Beacon Hill Civic Association (“BHCA”) has strived to preserve and enhance the quality of residential life on Beacon Hill. In this regard, we very much appreciate the opportunity to provide comments to the Boston Planning & Development Agency on the proposed Institutional Master Plan (“IMP”) for Suffolk University (“Suffolk”) dated September 2019, as well as on Suffolk’s Project Notification Form (“PNF”) dated September 2019, concerning Suffolk’s proposal to convert the building currently occupied by the Ames Hotel at One Court Street into student residential housing (the “Project”).

Comments on the PNF for the One Court Street Residence Hall

The BHCA is very supportive of this Project, and applauds Suffolk’s efforts to increase the proportion of its students that live in university-managed residential housing that this Project will accomplish. We also believe that the Project’s location on Court Street is very appropriate, in that the new residence hall will be close to the location of Suffolk’s academic buildings, but will not result in Suffolk’s students crossing over residential Beacon Hill when travelling between the proposed residence hall on Court Street and classes.

Also, the location of the Project on Court Street near the intersection with Washington Street will help to continue the shift of the Suffolk campus away from residential Beacon Hill and towards the downtown area and along Tremont Street. It has been the BHCA’s long term objective to limit and reverse the displacement of families and other residents in Beacon Hill dwelling units and in limiting the noise and

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other nuisances associated with undergraduate students living in unsupervised housing. We believe that the development of the Project at One Court Street will help towards the accomplishment of this objective.

With respect to the particulars of the Project, in the PNF, Suffolk states that the Project “consists of converting the existing building from hotel use to student housing, providing students with suite-style rooms containing approximately 266 to 280 beds.” PNF at 1.4. Suffolk further states that the Project will help replace the supply of on-campus housing beds once the lease of 1047 Commonwealth Avenue residences [currently housing Suffolk students] terminates in May 2020.” PNF at 1.4. Suffolk notes that the “net change to the housing inventory will maintain the current ratio of FTE undergraduate students housed at approximately 30 percent.” PNF at 1.4.

In the PNF, Suffolk further states that the approximately 102,073 gross square foot building will primarily serve as student housing, with “support spaces for various student activities, campus meeting, and events.” PNF at 1.4.1. Suffolk proposes that the space include 114 student dorm rooms that would contain approximately 266 to 280 student beds. In addition, Suffolk proposes that the Project space include approximately 2,200 square feet of active ground floor space, including approximately 1512 square feet of retail/restaurant/café space, and approximately 708 square feet of student lounge space. PNF at 1.4.1. We have also been informed that Suffolk intends to use the entirety of the second floor of the building for conference space.

The BHCA believes that Suffolk should take this unique housing opportunity and use the Project space at One Court Street to maximize the number of residential student beds that can be included in the building. For example, we believe that the entirety of the second floor of the building should be used for student housing rooms, and not for conference space. Suffolk already has ample conference room space located in its nearby buildings, including 73 Tremont Street, 120 Tremont Street and 20 Somerset Street, among other locations

In addition, with respect to the first floor use, we believe that proposed use of approximately 1512 square feet of retail/restaurant/café space, and approximately 708 square feet of student lounge space, would be better utilized instead as student housing rooms. There is no great need for including the proposed retail/restaurant/café space in this building, particularly when there are already numerous restaurants and cafes in the immediate area, and inasmuch as the use of this space in the past for restaurant use has never been particularly successful. At a minimum, perhaps the space can be used for a small student-focused café, with the remaining space being dedicated to student housing use.

With respect to the proposed student lounge space on the first floor, we have been informed that Suffolk intends to include other lounge spaces on the certain of the various residential housing floors. As such, a better use of the proposed student lounge space on the first floor would be for additional student housing rooms. In addition, it appears that Suffolk is still exploring other potential uses of some of the space available on the third through fourteen floors of the Project building. We suggest that the space on these floors be maximized for use as student housing rooms where possible.

Also, during the recent public meeting of the Suffolk IMP Task Force, Suffolk noted that it was working closely with the New England Center and Home for Veterans (“NECHV”), located at 17 Court Street and immediately adjacent to the Project, as Suffolk proceeds forward with the Project. Immediately after the public meeting, there was a brief discussion among Suffolk and BHCA representatives concerning the

possible use and development of the Court Street-facing roof area of the NECHV building into an outdoor green space for use by students and veterans alike. We applaud this possible development of the currently unused roof area of the NECHV building as a great addition to the outdoor space in the downtown area.

Also, in 2008, during the IMP process at that time, Suffolk represented that its goal was to be able to house 50% of its undergraduate students eligible for Suffolk housing within ten years, 60% of its undergraduate students eligible for Suffolk housing within fifteen years and 70% of its undergraduate students eligible for Suffolk housing within twenty (20) years. Suffolk still has a long way to go to achieve that goal, and we believe that the proposed new residence hall at One Court Street will help in heading Suffolk in that direction. In light of these goals, the BHCA believes that Suffolk should maximize the number of student housing rooms that will be included in the Project building as noted above.

Comments on the Proposed IMP

The BHCA supports Suffolk's proposed IMP. We do, however, have several suggested comments. In the IMP, Suffolk states that in the 2008 IMP, it committed to a target of housing 50% of its students by 2018. IMP at 8.4. Suffolk further states that for the 2020 IMP, it will "renew its commitment to this target." IMP at 4.3.2 and 8.4. We believe that it is important for Suffolk to renew its original commitment made in 2008, as noted above, and that it seek to house 60% of its undergraduate students by 2025 and 70% of its undergraduate students by 2030. In this regard, as part of this IMP, we believe that Suffolk should outline a strategy for achieving the goal of housing 70% of its undergraduate students by 2030, including possible locations for such housing and methods that might be utilized to achieve this goal, including partnering with other schools and private developers.

In the proposed IMP, Suffolk states that it currently uses City of Boston-owned athletic facilities near the airport in East Boston under a lease for baseball, softball and soccer. IMP at 3.3. Suffolk further states that it anticipates renewing the lease with the City at the end of its term, and that "[no] additional off-campus athletic facility needs have been identified at this time. IMP at 3.3. We believe that Suffolk should seek additional athletic facilities during the 10 year period of this IMP.

In this regard, the BHCA believes that as part of the IMP, Suffolk should outline a strategy for achieving the goal of obtaining a NCAA Division 3 regulation basketball court facility in a location other than Beacon Hill, where it currently has a basketball court, either by entering into an agreement with the City of Boston to use one of its municipally-owned basketball court facilities, or explore partnering with another academic institution to share their basketball court facility, or build a new athletic facility that would contain such a basketball court facility, perhaps at the City of Boston-owned athletic facilities near the airport in East Boston.

Under its 2008 agreement with the BHCA, Suffolk agreed to vacate its existing academic building on Ridgeway Lane on Beacon Hill, which currently houses a NCAA Division 3 regulation basketball court facility, at such a time as when Suffolk obtains the use of another NCAA Division 3 regulation basketball court facility. The BHCA believes that Suffolk should endeavor to locate an existing, or to construct a NCAA Division 3 regulation basketball court facility at some other location, so that the Ridgeway Lane building can be put to a better use, ideally one with a public purpose, such as a public school or affordable housing.

Edward Carmody
October 25, 2019
Page 4

Thank you for your consideration of these comments from the BHCA concerning Suffolk's PNF for the One Court Street Residence Hall and the IMP.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Eve Waterfall". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "E" and "W".

Eve Waterfall
Chair

cc: John Nucci, Suffolk University
Senator Joseph Boncore
Senator Sal DiDemenico
Representative Jay Livingstone
Representative Aaron Michlewitz
Councilor Josh Zakim
Councilor Edward Flynn
Councilor Michael Flaherty
Councilor Michelle Wu
Councilor Annissa Essaibi-George
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David Nagahiro AIA

Diana Pisciotta

Anthony Ursillo CFA

Peter Vanderwarker

Executive Director

Gregory J. Galer, Ph.D.

October 25, 2019

Mr. Edward Carmody
Boston Planning and Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201
Re: One Court Street, Suffolk University

Dear Mr. Carmody

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 39 Organizational Members, 143 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 has met with leadership at Suffolk University to discuss the conversion of One Court Street, also known as the Ames Building, to student dormitories. As a Boston Landmark, this building is both incredibly historic and a prominent architectural statement in the heart of downtown Boston. It is crucial that any modifications to this building be sensitive and appropriate. Through our conversation it is clear that Suffolk recognizes and plans to honor the history and be good stewards of this building. We are confident that Suffolk's intentions for the project, guided by the Boston Landmarks Commission, will result in a successful transition of use and a more vibrant streetscape for pedestrians.

We would like to bring attention to one element that remains to be resolved. Though we understand Suffolk's need to brand their building and provide wayfinding for students and guests, we hesitate to embrace the standard vertical blade signs as proposed and that mark many Suffolk buildings. The scale and location of these signs might obstruct the architectural expression and character of the building's design and we urge the execution of signage to be deferent to the historic building at all times. We encourage all other options for signage to be explored.

Otherwise, the Alliance fully supports this project and Suffolk's stewardship of the historic Ames Building at One Court Street.

Sincerely,



Greg Galer
Executive Director

CC:

Rosanne Foley, Boston Landmarks Commission
Brona Simon, Massachusetts Historical Commission
John Nucci, Suffolk University

BOSTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS



EAST BOSTON HIGH SCHOOL

PHILLIP R. BRANGIFORTE
HEADMASTER

Dear Mr. Carmody,

I would like to offer my wholehearted support of Suffolk University plans as outlined in both their recent Institutional Master Plan Notification Form (IMPNF) and One Court Street Project Notification Form (PNF). The university has shown great sensitivity and generosity to both East Boston High School (EBHS) and the East Boston Community at-large.

The partnership with EBHS at Memorial Stadium in East Boston has proven to be entirely positive and productive for the high school, the community, and the university and its students. I urge the city to encourage continuation of the arrangement.

The proposed One Court Street Residence Hall will provide much-needed university-sponsored student housing which will result in more East Boston students coming out of private apartments, thereby freeing up valuable units for families and East Boston residents.

We are proud to call Suffolk University our partner and urge approval of the university's plans as proposed.

Sincerely,

Phillip R. Brangiforte
Hadmaster

October 2019

Edward Carmody
Project Assistant
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Suffolk University 1 Court Street Residence Hall

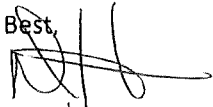
Dear Mr. Carmody,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed Suffolk University student residence hall at 1 Court Street. The project represents a unique opportunity that will allow Suffolk to increase on-campus housing for students.

The addition of approximately 280 student beds will have an immediate economic impact on all businesses in the downtown area. The increased foot traffic will also contribute to a more safe and vibrant pedestrian streetscape.

As a local business owner and/or operator we encourage you to act favorably on Suffolk's proposed residence hall. Local residents and area businesses alike will undoubtedly benefit. My below signature indicates my support for this great project.

Best,



Douglas Haigh
Pearle Vision owner/OD

October 2019

Edward Carmody
Project Assistant
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Suffolk University 1 Court Street Residence Hall

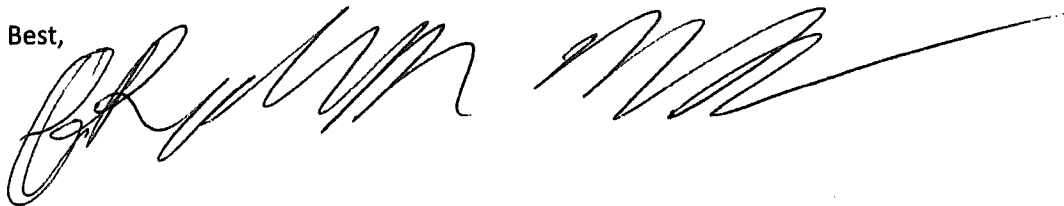
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As a local business owner and/or operator we encourage you to act favorably on Suffolk's proposed residence hall. Local residents and area businesses alike will undoubtedly benefit. My below signature indicates my support for this great project.

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert Myers". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Robert MYERS
CEO, CO-OWNER
Boyaroo

October 2019

Edward Carmody
Project Assistant
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Suffolk University 1 Court Street Residence Hall

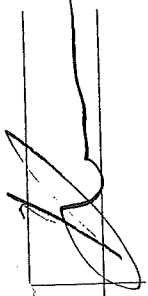
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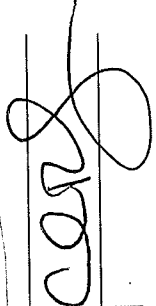
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Best,

Bank of America	6 Tremont St.	KEVIN KAKOU Relationship Mgr	
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Dunkin' Donuts	100 City Hall Plaza	Srijona Balami Manager	
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Metro Credit Union	100 City Hall Plaza	Carlos Rodriguez Branch Manager	
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Great Taste	100 City Hall Square	Maria	
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