

***Institutional Master Plan Amendment  
Notification Form***

**Fourth Amendment to Institutional Master Plan**

**NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY**

**BOSTON CAMPUS**

Submitted to:

**BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

Submitted by:

**NORTHEASTERN UNIVERSITY**  
360 Huntington Avenue  
Boston, MA 02115

November 10, 2010

## **INTRODUCTION**

Northeastern University (“Northeastern” or “the University”) submits this Institutional Master Plan Amendment Notification Form (“IMPANF”) to the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) pursuant to Section 80D of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”).

Northeastern filed a proposed Institutional Master Plan (“Original IMP”) with the BRA on February 22, 2000. The BRA approved the Original IMP on June 6, 2000. The Boston Zoning Commission (“Zoning Commission”) approved the Original IMP on June 28, 2000, effective July 13, 2000. The Original IMP has been amended by: (i) First Amendment to the Original IMP dated September 12, 2001 and effective December 27, 2001; (ii) Second Amendment to the Original IMP dated June 3, 2004 and effective September 9, 2004; and, (iii) Third Amendment to the Original IMP dated December 21, 2006 and effective February 2, 2007. The Original IMP with these three amendments is collectively referred to hereinafter as the “Amended IMP.” In addition, Northeastern has submitted to the BRA, by a separate Institutional Master Plan Notification Form, an application for renewal and extension of the approved Amended IMP until December 31, 2012.

This IMPANF seeks approval from the BRA of an amendment to the approved Amended IMP (which will constitute the Fourth Amendment thereto) for the addition of three Proposed Institutional Projects pursuant to the provisions of Section 80D-9.2(b) of the Code. Northeastern respectfully requests that this proposed amendment to the approved Amended IMP be reviewed by the BRA pursuant to the expedited review procedure set forth in Section 80D-9.2(a) of the Code, as further described in this IMPANF.

## **MISSION AND OBJECTIVES**

Founded in 1898, Northeastern University is a private urban research university located on both sides of Huntington Avenue on the edges of the Fenway, South End, Mission Hill and Roxbury neighborhoods of Boston. Northeastern has approximately 15,000 full-time undergraduate students.

The University’s mission is to educate students for a life of fulfillment and accomplishment, and to create and translate knowledge to meet global and societal needs.

Northeastern’s specific objectives, as reflected in the Approved IMP and further promoted by the Proposed Institutional Projects described in this IMP amendment, include:

- Development of superior academic facilities to serve the University’s increasingly sophisticated teaching environment;
- Development of superior research facilities to support the University’s growing research programs, including those in the fields of health, security and sustainability; and

- Consolidation of administrative and other non-academic uses, so as to maximize the availability of space and resources in the central campus area to better serve the University's academic priorities.

The numerous projects completed under the approved Amended IMP over the past ten years have substantially advanced these objectives, and the Proposed Institutional Projects included in this proposed IMPNF amendment will further advance these objectives.

Northeastern seeks a constructive, mutually-beneficial relationship with the communities surrounding its campus. The University has created and participated in numerous community benefits programs and activities, and is committed to continuing this involvement. The approved Amended IMP describes the University's community benefits plan and many of the specific programs Northeastern has initiated or participates in.

## **PROPOSED INSTITUTIONAL PROJECTS**

This IMPNF seeks approval from the BRA for the inclusion in the approved Amended IMP of three Proposed Institutional Projects, each of which is described below.

### **Lease of 140 The Fenway from Museum of Fine Arts**

Northeastern proposes to lease 99,698 square feet of Gross Floor Area as defined in the Code in the existing building located at 140 The Fenway, owned by the Museum of Fine Arts ("MFA"). The location of the building is shown on **Figure 1** attached. The leased premises will be used primarily for laboratory research and related faculty offices, and may be used for other university purposes such as office, classroom or similar uses, and accessory uses thereto. Northeastern has negotiated a lease with the MFA for an initial term of ten years, subject to the BRA's approval of this proposed amendment to the approved Amended IMP. The building at 140 The Fenway is five stories in height and was occupied by the Forsyth Dental Institute, which relocated in October, 2010. Interior renovations will be undertaken in the building, with an estimated cost of approximately \$4-6 Million. Construction will take approximately six months. The building is located in an Institutional Subdistrict within the Fenway Neighborhood District pursuant to Section 66-19 of the Code and Map 1Q of the Boston Zoning Maps. The proposed 140 Fenway Project will be a College or University Use, which use is allowed as of right in the Institutional Subdistrict, involves an area of less than 100,000 square feet in Gross Floor Area as defined by the Code, and the Project will not include uses defined as "High Impact Subuses" under Section 2A of the Code. Therefore, this Proposed Institutional Project is not subject to Large Project Review pursuant to Section 80B-2 of the Code and, accordingly, it qualifies for the expedited review procedure provided in Section 80D-9.2 of the Code.

The proposed 140 Fenway Project will allow Northeastern to enhance and expand its educational programs as well as its contributions and commitment to the City of Boston, by adding an estimated 50 faculty members and an estimated 60 staff members at the leased premises. The planned renovations and interior finish improvements by the MFA and Northeastern will also create construction jobs.

## **Lease from Christian Science Church**

Northeastern currently leases approximately 70,000 sq. ft. of space at 101 Belvidere Street in the Christian Science Church complex. The space is used for “back office” operations, and is not used for educational purposes. This lease arrangement was entered into in 2008, subsequent to the third amendment to the approved Amended IMP, and has a term of five years. Northeastern proposes to separately lease up to approximately 16,000 sq. ft. of additional space for office purposes in the existing building at 177 Huntington Avenue, also a part of the Christian Science complex. Interior improvements to the leased space, with an estimated cost of less than \$1 Million, will take approximately six months to complete. The location of 177 Huntington Avenue is shown on **Figure 1** attached. Both buildings are located in the Christian Science Institutional Area within the Huntington Avenue/Prudential Center District, as shown on Boston Zoning Map 1D. Office uses like those conducted by Northeastern are allowed as of right in the entirety of the Huntington Avenue/Prudential Center District, pursuant to Section 41-17 of the Code. However, Northeastern’s use of this office space may be interpreted to be a College or University Use, which is a conditional use in this Zoning District. The uses proposed for the leased premises do not include classrooms or similar uses, and do not include “High Impact Subuses” as defined in the Code. Northeastern’s leased premises at the Christian Science Center, including both the premises already under lease and the proposed additional leased premises combined, do not meet the size threshold for Large Project Review under the Code. Accordingly, this Proposed Institutional Project qualifies for the expedited review procedure described in Section 80D-9.2(b) of the Code because it is not an exempt Proposed Institutional Project and is located within the Christian Science Institutional Area and the use category that most closely describes the project (office use) is designated in the underlying zoning as an allowed use. Further, while it is located outside of an Institutional District or Subdistrict, the Project’s dimensions and parking and loading spaces meet all the requirements of the underlying zoning applicable to the use category that most closely describes the project (office use).

Maintaining and expanding its leased space in the Christian Science Center will permit Northeastern to retain applicable back-office operations, and the many employees employed in those functions, within the City of Boston.

## **Lease from YMCA**

Northeastern has in the past leased classroom facilities at the YMCA located at 316 Huntington Avenue (see **Figure 1** attached). Northeastern proposes to lease additional classrooms, for a total of up to 19 classrooms having a total area of approximately 12,500 sq. ft. The leased space will be used only for classroom purposes, and will not include uses defined as “High Impact Subuses” under the Code. Interior improvements to the leased space, with an estimated cost of less than \$1 Million, will take approximately six months to complete. The YMCA building is located in an Institutional Subdistrict within the Fenway Neighborhood District as shown on Boston Zoning Map 1Q. This Proposed Institutional Project is not subject to Large Project Review, and qualifies for the expedited review procedure in Section 80D-9.2 of the Code. These lease arrangements have been, and will continue to be, of substantial benefit to the YMCA as well as to Northeastern, and will allow Northeastern to conduct more classes in its central campus area.

## **PROPOSED FUTURE PROJECT/ADDITIONAL STUDENT HOUSING**

Over the ten-year period of the approved Amended IMP, Northeastern has made substantial progress toward its goal of housing a higher proportion of its undergraduate students on campus. The 2000 Master Plan provided for completion of three additional dormitories (West Village Residence Halls B, C and E) as well as the Davenport Commons housing development, and identified two other potential future residential building sites. The University completed these four residential projects ahead of the schedule contemplated in the 2000 Master Plan, and Northeastern subsequently amended its IMP on three occasions to incorporate additional student housing projects (West Village Residence Halls F, G and H, and the International Village Residence Hall on former Parcel 18). Together, these projects have added over 3,500 on-campus student beds over the last ten years.

Like many other institutions, the University's endowment and ability to finance capital projects have been affected by the dramatic downturn in the economy and the upheavals in the financial markets. The University's careful and thorough assessment of its finances has led to the conclusion that the only prudent, fiscally responsible course at this time is for the University to suspend its major building projects and focus resources on its core mission of teaching and research. As a result, construction of the Proposed Institutional Project identified as Residence Hall K in the Third Amendment to the approved Amended IMP was placed on hold.

In recognition of the University's commitment to construct 600 additional student beds, Northeastern has entered into a letter of intent with the YMCA of Greater Boston, Inc. ("YMCA") and Phoenix Property Company, which provides for the development and construction by Phoenix of a project that will create 720 beds of student housing ("Residential Project") to be occupied by Northeastern students under University oversight. The Residential Project will be constructed on a portion of the property currently owned by the YMCA and Huntington Affordable Housing Limited Partnership (the unit owners of the Greater Boston YMCA Condominium) located on St. Botolph Street adjacent to Northeastern's campus. Northeastern will have an exclusive option to purchase the Residential Project after its completion. Northeastern will seek approval to include the Residential Project in its IMP in a separate amendment to the approved Amended IMP. A letter of intent has been filed with the BRA to commence the review process for the Residential Project under the Large Project Review procedure provided in Article 80B of the Code.

## **ZONING RELIEF / REQUESTED APPROVALS**

The only Proposed Institutional Projects requested to be added to the Approved IMP in this amendment involve the use by Northeastern of space leased from third parties, as described above. Since Northeastern is not proposing to acquire any additional property in connection with these projects, the University is not requesting that any additional land be added to its Institutional Master Plan Area as shown on Boston Zoning Map 1Q.

As indicated above, the three Proposed Institutional Projects described above qualify for the expedited review procedure in Section 80D-9.2 of the Code. No other changes to the Approved IMP are proposed in this amendment. Accordingly, Northeastern respectfully requests that the BRA waive the requirement of a Scoping Determination

with respect to this proposed amendment to the approved Amended IMP, and that, following public notice and comment and a public hearing as required by the Code, the BRA issue an Adequacy Determination approving the three Proposed Institutional Projects as described herein.

If the BRA issues an Adequacy Determination approving this IMPNF, this IMPNF shall constitute the Fourth Amendment to Northeastern's approved Amended IMP, and the Proposed Institutional Projects described herein shall be deemed approved and in compliance with the use, dimensional and other regulations of the Code, and upon request the BRA will issue a Certification of Consistency for each such project in accordance with Section 80D-10 of the Code. In accordance with Section 80D-6 of the Code, approval by the Zoning Commission of this amendment to the approved Amended IMP shall not be required because this proposed amendment meets the requirements for expedited review as provided in Section 80D-9.2 and does not add additional land to the Institutional Master Plan Area as shown on Boston Zoning Map 1Q.

In addition to the Proposed Institutional Projects described above, from time to time during the term of the approved Amended IMP, Northeastern University may lease other properties located outside of the Master Plan Area as shown on Boston Zoning Map 1Q. Use by Northeastern of such leased properties for University-related uses will not require an amendment to this IMP, and shall be deemed to comply with this IMP, as long as the use category of underlying zoning which most closely describes the use of such properties is either allowed as-of-right by underlying zoning or is allowed by zoning relief obtained by the property owner. This will give Northeastern University the needed flexibility in meeting its space needs. When Northeastern University leases such space, it will provide written notification to the BRA. Further, Northeastern University will update its list of leased space in the IMP by including such leased space in the next amendment to the IMP.

Further, the Proposed Institutional Projects proposed by Northeastern are located within the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District, governed by Article 32 of the Code. If any of the Proposed Institutional Projects are subject to the requirements of Article 32 of the Code, Northeastern will incorporate systems into the Proposed Institutional Projects as required by Article 32 in order to meet the groundwater conservation standards set forth in said Article. In such case Northeastern will obtain a written determination from the Boston Water and Sewer Commission as to whether said standards are met. Northeastern will provide a copy of this letter to the BRA and the Boston Groundwater Trust prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Consistency. Accordingly, Northeastern will not be required to obtain a conditional use permit from the Board of Appeal for the Proposed Institutional Projects set forth in this IMPNF.

Upon approval of this IMPNF, all College or University Uses within Northeastern's Institutional Master Plan Area, and all College or University Uses in leased space as described in this IMPNF, shall be deemed to be allowed for all purposes and shall be deemed in compliance with all use, dimensional, parking and loading requirements set forth in the Code, including special purpose overlay districts established pursuant to Section 3-1A or any other Section of the Code.