

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

FROM: LINDA KOWALCKY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL SECTOR
MANAGEMENT
GERALD AUTLER, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER/PLANNER

SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING TO CONSIDER THE NORTHEASTERN
UNIVERSITY INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN AND THE
INTERDISCIPLINARY SCIENCE AND ENGINEERING BUILDING AS A
DEVELOPMENT IMPACT PROJECT

SUMMARY: This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA” or “Authority”) authorize the Director to: (1) issue an Adequacy Determination pursuant to Section 80D-5.4(c) of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”) approving the Northeastern University Institutional Master Plan (“Northeastern IMP”); (2) issue a Scoping Determination waiving further review pursuant to Article 80B-5.3(d) of the Code for the Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Building (“Proposed Project”); (3) issue a Certification of Compliance for Article 80 Large Project Review for the Proposed Project pursuant to Section 80B-6 of the Code; (4) issue Certifications of Consistency in connection with the proposed institutional projects in the Northeastern IMP pursuant to Section 80D-10 of the Code; (5) petition the Boston Zoning Commission to consider the Northeastern IMP and associated map amendment; and (6) execute any and all documents deemed necessary and appropriate relative to the Northeastern IMP and the Proposed Project, including, but not limited to, execution of a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, a Development Impact Plan Agreement, and a Cooperation Agreement.

INTRODUCTION

Northeastern University (“Northeastern” or the “Proponent” or the “University”) is seeking an Adequacy Determination approving its Institutional Master Plan (“Northeastern IMP”) and a Scoping Determination waiving further review for an Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Building proposed therein (“Proposed Project” or “ISEB Project”).

The Northeastern IMP describes eleven currently proposed institutional projects located within Northeastern University's Boston Campus. These proposed institutional projects include the following institutional uses: academic, research, dormitory, student life, recreation and athletics, parking, and accessory and support spaces.

The ISEB Project is an approximately 197,000 gross square foot building as defined by the code consisting of research and office space for new faculty, interdisciplinary research clusters and collaborative space, specialized teaching labs, classrooms, student space, and café open to the public with associated landscaping and construction of pedestrian track crossings that will span the MBTA Orange Line, Commuter Rail, and Amtrak tracks. The Proposed Project will be located on a portion of Northeastern's approximate 3.44 acre Columbus Lot surface parking area located south of the tracks, with an address at 805 Columbus Avenue between the Renaissance Park and the Columbus Garages. The ISEB will include six stories (excluding mechanical penthouse) with a height defined by the Code of approximately 87 feet, along with a pedestrian and light vehicle crossing over the public transit rail line.

On December 18, 2012, the Proponent filed an Institutional Master Plan Notification Form ("IMP/NF") proposing the Northeastern IMP. The Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA") issued a Scoping Determination pursuant to Section 80D-5.3 of the Code on April 23, 2013. On June 14, 2013, the Proponent filed an Institutional Master Plan in response to the BRA's Scoping Determination. On July 3, 2013 Northeastern submitted a Project Notification Form for the ISEB Project ("PNF") and on July 19, 2013 Northeastern filed additional information including Wind, Air Quality and Solar Glare Analysis. Together, these filings contain sufficient information about the Proposed Project to qualify for the provisions of Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code"), i.e. Scoping Determination Waiving Further Review.

Northeastern's transformation from a primarily commuter campus into an institution that draws students from across the country and around the world has caused an influx of undergraduate students into rental housing in the surrounding neighborhoods. This has impacted housing prices, quality of the housing stock, and neighborhood quality of life. Throughout the process of developing the Northeastern IMP, the BRA-appointed advisory Community Task Force made clear the desire for Northeastern to build more dormitory beds as part of the Northeastern IMP. The BRA supports the goal of creating roughly 1,000 new undergraduate beds during the term of the Northeastern IMP, and has obligated Northeastern to create 600 beds in the first five years of the term of the Northeastern IMP, i.e. five years following the date that the Northeastern IMP is made effective. The basic terms of the agreement are as follows:

- Northeastern University commits to create, or assist in the creation of, new housing for a minimum of 600 undergraduate students before five years of the term of the Northeastern IMP have elapsed.

- Housing should be a net addition to the stock of housing currently available to Northeastern students, i.e. not a conversion of master leased units.
- Housing shall be an addition to the city’s housing stock, i.e. shall not be created through the conversion or replacement of existing housing.
- Regardless of ownership, housing should operate with the same degree of supervision as Northeastern’s traditional dormitories, i.e.:
 - Resident Advisors in the same ratio.
 - Same disciplinary standards and rules.
- Northeastern is expected to make a good faith effort to fulfill this obligation. If for any reason, other than delay due to unusual or unanticipated regulatory restraints, legal challenges, force majeure or an Act of God, Northeastern fails to make adequate progress towards the creation and occupancy of the required housing during the specified time period, the BRA reserves the right to deny Northeastern Certifications of Consistency and Compliance to build or occupy other major campus projects, or to deny Northeastern the right to submit for review PNFs and IMPNFs for IMP Amendments or major campus projects.
- As described in the Institutional Master Plan and follow-up documentation, Northeastern has explored the potential of the Burke Street Parking Lot to accommodate the required 600 beds. However, the BRA views the Burke Street Parking Lot as only one possible location for some or all of the required beds. Northeastern’s obligation to build the required number of beds within the timeframe stated exists independently of its ability or inability to fulfill the entirety of its obligation on that site.

DEVELOPMENT IMPACT PROJECT EXACTIONS

Northeastern will pay Exactions in connection with the ISEB Project. The estimated Development Impact Project (“DIP”) square footage of the ISEB Project is 197,000 square feet, as defined by the Code. Based upon current plans for the ISEB Project, Northeastern will provide an estimated \$763,390.00 in housing linkage funds and an estimated \$152,290.00 in jobs linkage funds pursuant to the provisions of Section 80B-7 of the Code. These estimated linkage payments are calculated on a preliminary basis as follows:

Housing Linkage:	
DIP Uses	197,000 square feet
Minus 100,000 square feet	
Exclusion	<u>-100,000</u> square feet
	97,000 square feet
Housing DIP Rate	<u>x \$7.87</u> per square foot
	\$763,390

Jobs Linkage:	
DIP Uses	197,000 square feet
Minus 100,000 square feet	
Exclusion	<u>-100,000</u> square feet
	97,000 square feet
Jobs DIP Rate	<u>x \$1.57</u> per square foot
	\$152,290

PUBLIC BENEFITS

Following extensive consultation with the BRA-appointed Northeastern Task Force, the broader community, elected officials, and the BRA, Northeastern has committed to the following public benefits in association with the Northeastern IMP.

1. Northeastern/Neighborhood Partnership for Academic Success.

These benefits will extend to Boston Public Schools (“BPS”) students applying from homes in the zip codes 02115, 02118, 02119, 02120, 02130 and 02215.

- Beginning fall 2014, Northeastern will offer an additional 30 full-tuition, need-based scholarships to Boston Public Schools graduates, 20 in the specified zip codes and 10 citywide, in addition to continuation of 120 current full-tuition scholarships currently offered in Boston. Of the 120 existing scholarships, a minimum of 10 will be targeted to the specific zip codes.
- Beginning fall 2013, working with BPS guidance counselors and other administrators, Northeastern will host semiannual College Readiness events on campus for BPS students and their families from the four neighborhoods, to provide critical information needed to prepare and apply for college and for financial aid.
- Beginning fall 2014, BPS graduates from these neighborhoods applying to Foundation Year will receive priority in the admission process.
- Beginning spring 2015, BPS graduates not admitted directly to the undergraduate program or to Foundation Year can arrange with an admissions counselor for a transfer contract, guaranteeing transfer admission provided the student successfully hits a determined set of academic benchmarks at any accredited institution.
- Beginning fall 2014, Northeastern will negotiate transfer articulation agreements with Roxbury Community College and Bunker Hill Community College to provide another route for BPS graduates from these neighborhoods to enter Northeastern.
- Beginning fall 2014, Northeastern will provide financial aid covering 100% of demonstrated need for all enrolling BPS students from these neighborhoods.

- Estimated cost of financial aid is at least \$3.5 million annually based on current enrollment of BPS graduates from these neighborhoods and average financial need.
- Estimated cost of College Readiness Night is estimated to be \$5,000 per event for staff time and space. Two event per year for ten years totals \$100,000.

2. Northeastern IMP Advisory Council

Northeastern will convene an IMP Advisory Council to maintain regular and continuous dialogue and transparency with neighbors, address issues of concern as and when they arise, and explore new possibilities for community-university engagement. Estimated cost is approximately \$2,000 annually. It is anticipated that the IMP Advisory Council will meet quarterly.

3. Northeastern Neighborhood Center

Northeastern will create a Neighborhood Center, as both a focal point for community engagement programs and services and a portal for community enquiries into university procurement, employment, admissions, and financial aid. Northeastern has committed to paying the cost of buildout up to \$500,000, an estimated \$50,000 per year in operating costs, and the salaries of any staff.

4. On-Campus Business Siting

Northeastern will identify appropriate community-based businesses for on-campus opportunities, with the goal of integrating them into new or existing university buildings as well as designating them as preferred vendors in the university purchasing system.

5. Housing Impact Study

Northeastern will fund an update of the Housing Impact Study at or around the five-year term of the Northeastern IMP (timing to be discussed with the BRA and Task Force) in order to examine any changes in the impacts of Northeastern students in rental housing stock, particularly in light of the anticipated opening of over 1,000 new dormitory beds during the next five years (720 at GrandMarc and at least 600 as a result of the Northeastern IMP).

6. Carter Playground

Northeastern will commit to rebuilding and maintaining Carter Playground, enhanced by the long-term inclusion of the University's Camden parking lot, (approximately 2 acres appraised at \$8.9 million), into an expanded park at a cost

of up to \$15 million initially. The city will continue to regulate permitting and scheduling of the facilities.

7. Jobs and Procurement

- Northeastern will commit to increasing business with SLBEs to 20% of its discretionary spending and W/MBEs to 12% of discretionary spending within ten years.
- Northeastern will commit 30% of hard construction costs for the Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Building to MBEs and 10% to WBEs.
- For non-design project on ISEB, Northeastern will commit to the goal of hiring 51% Boston residents, not less than 35% minorities and 10% women, and further to establish a planning and oversight committee, including residents and elected officials, to help meet those goals.
- Northeastern will direct 30% of major design/construction spending in the Northeastern IMP to MBEs and 10% to WBEs.
- Northeastern will direct 10% of non-Northeastern IMP design/construction spending at Northeastern to W/MBEs within three years.
- Northeastern will pursue the goal of increasing Northeastern employees in the contiguous zip codes by 3-5% within three years.
- Northeastern will encourage Northeastern vendors to hire an additional 100 employees from the contiguous zip codes within three years.
- Northeastern will provide 10 employment training and education programs to community members per year.
- Northeastern will provide 10-15 three-month internship opportunities to community members per year.
- Northeastern will continue to hold job and vendor fairs, including events targeted specifically to SLBEs and W/MBEs.
- Northeastern will contribute \$2.5 million to establish an entrepreneurship fund to build local business capacity, with the guidance of a suitable financial institution such as Next Street Financial.

8. MBTA track crossing

Adjunct to the first IMP project on Columbus Avenue, Northeastern will create a landscaped crossing of the public transit rail line to better knit the Roxbury and Fenway communities and enhance access for persons with disabilities.

9. Affordable Housing

In addition, Northeastern will work with partners to identify, advance, and support affordable housing projects in the surrounding neighborhoods that can take advantage of Northeastern's housing linkage obligations.

PROJECT/IMP REVIEW

The Northeastern IMP is subject to Institutional Master Plan review pursuant to Section 80D of the Code. The Proposed Project is subject to Large Project Review pursuant to Section 80B of the Code. A portion of the Proposed Project is located within the Groundwater Conservation Overlay District ("GCOD") and is subject to Article 32 of the Code.

The Northeastern IMP and the Proposed Project have been reviewed and discussed at multiple community meetings. Task Force meetings were held on the following dates:

- April 25, 2012
- May 22, 2012
- June 21, 2012
- July 19, 2012
- August 16, 2012
- September 20, 2012
- October 18, 2012
- December 20, 2012
- January 28, 2013
- February 12, 2013
- March 28, 2013
- May 21, 2013
- June 11, 2013
- July 11, 2013
- August 1, 2013
- August 13, 2013
- August 27, 2013
- September 17, 2013

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the foregoing, BRA staff recommends that the BRA: (1) issue an Adequacy Determination approving the Northeastern Institutional Master Plan ("Northeastern IMP") pursuant to Section 80D-5.4 of the Code; (2) issue a Scoping Determination waiving further review pursuant to Article 80B-5.3(d) of the Code for the

Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Project (“Proposed Project”); (3) issue a Certification of Compliance for Article 80 Large Project Review for the Proposed Project pursuant to Section 80B-6 of the Code; (4) issue Certifications of Consistency in connection with the proposed institutional project in the Northeastern IMP pursuant to Section 80D-10 of the Code; (5) petition the Boston Zoning Commission to consider the Northeastern IMP and associated map amendment; and (6) execute any and all documents deemed necessary and appropriate relative to the Northeastern IMP and the Proposed Project, including, but not limited to, execution of a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, a Development Impact Plan Agreement, and a Cooperation Agreement.

Appropriate votes follow:

VOTED: That in connection with the Northeastern University Institutional Master Plan (“Northeastern IMP”) presented at a public hearing held pursuant to Section 80D of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”) at the offices of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“Authority” or “BRA”) on November 14, 2013, and after consideration of evidence presented at the November 14, 2013 public hearing, and in connection with, the proposed Northeastern Institutional Master Plan (“Northeastern IMP”), the BRA finds that: (a) the Northeastern IMP complies with the Scoping Determination issued by the BRA on April 23, 2013 pursuant to Section 80D-5.3 of the Code; (b) the Northeastern IMP conforms to the provisions of Article 80D of the Code; (c) the Northeastern IMP conforms to the general plan for the City of Boston as a whole; and (d) on balance, nothing in the Northeastern IMP will be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare, weighing all the benefits and burdens; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue an Adequacy Determination, pursuant to Article 80D-5.4 of the Code, approving the Northeastern IMP; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to petition the Boston Zoning Commission to approve the Northeastern IMP and amend “Map 6A/6B/6C, Roxbury Neighborhood District” and “Map 1Q, Fenway Neighborhood District”, in substantial accord with the Northeastern IMP presented to the BRA at its public hearing on November 14, 2013; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Scoping Determination waiving further review pursuant to Article 80B-5.3(d) of the Code for the Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Building (“Proposed Project”) as described in the Interdisciplinary Science and Engineering Building Project Notification Form submitted to the BRA on July 3, 2013 (“PNF”) and the Northeastern IMP, which Scoping Determination shall provide that the PNF and additional information submitted to the BRA on July 19, 2013 (i) adequately describe the impacts of the Proposed Project, subject to further BRA design review, and (ii) include any conditions that the Director deems necessary for the mitigation of such impacts; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the BRA hereby finds and determines that the Proposed Project conforms to the general plan for the City of Boston as a whole, and that nothing in such Proposed Project will be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to execute a Development Impact Project Agreement for the Proposed Project in accordance with Section 80B-7 of the Code; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized, pursuant to the provisions of Section 80B-6 of the Code, to issue a Certification of Compliance for the Proposed Project upon the successful completion of all Article 80 processes for the Proposed Project; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized, pursuant to the provisions of Section 80D-10 of the Code, to issue Certifications of Consistency with respect to the proposed institutional projects set forth in the Northeastern IMP when the Director finds that: (a) the Proposed Institutional Project is adequately described in the Northeastern IMP; (b) the Proposed Institutional Project is consistent with the Northeastern IMP; (c) the Northeastern IMP has been approved by the BRA and the Boston Zoning Commission in accordance with applicable provisions of Article 80D of the Code, Institutional Master Plan Review; and (d) the Northeastern IMP is in compliance with the update requirements of Section 80D-7 of the Code and with the renewal requirements of Section 80D-8 of the Code; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to execute any and all documents deemed necessary and appropriate by the Director in connection with the Northeastern IMP and the Proposed Project, including, without limitation, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan and a Cooperation Agreement, all upon terms and conditions determined by the Director to be in the best interest of the BRA.