



May 18, 2005

Fenway Community Development Corporation
73 Hemenway Street, Boston, MA 02115
www.fenwaycdc.org, 617.267.4637

Mark McGowen
Boston Redevelopment Authority
One City Hall Square, Boston, MA 02201
617.918.4275, 617.742.7783 fax
mark.mcgowan.bra@ci.boston.ma.us

**“1330 Boylston Street,
Project Notification Form (PNF),
April? 2005”**

Dear Mark,

Thank you for allowing me to participate in the Impact Advisory Group (IAG) process.

The Fenway CDC is a neighborhood-based membership organization devoted to enhancing the stability, sustainability and diversity of the Fenway neighborhood of Boston by providing opportunities for all Fenway residents, particularly those of limited means, to thrive in the community. We accomplish this by developing affordable housing, linking neighbors with jobs and training opportunities, providing services to families and elders, and organizing residents to have a strong voice in their community's future.

The Fenway CDC believes that this proposal will enhance the Fenway neighborhood. We look forward to the process continuing under further review by the City, the IAG and the residents of the neighborhood.

We hope our comments will facilitate the planning process:

1. The current zoning for the Fenway is Article 66 of the Boston Zoning Code. This article is not available on-line at the BRA website, nor is it generally available in printed form. Please make every effort to make this document available.
2. *Page 1-8*: Please state clearly whether this is a “brownfields” site. *Page 5-58* seems to confirm that it is.
3. *Page 2-6*: The proposal seems to provide less than half of the open space required by the zoning. I would suggest that a series of private balconies projecting from the apartments in the Boylston/Jersey corner tower be added to augment the open space.
4. *Page 5-13*: Several calculation results yield wind level 4 (“uncomfortable for walking”). We hope that ongoing design will add mitigating features to reduce expected winds near the building. The additional balconies suggested above might serve as a first step toward this mitigation.

Our Vision:

Fenway CDC strives to lead and inspire our community to work together to enrich and sustain the Fenway neighborhood as one that welcomes diversity and includes housing for all incomes, economic opportunities for all residents, resident-oriented business, inviting open space, pedestrian-oriented streets, and a strong sense of community.



5. *Page 5-50:* The most recent readings from the nearby Boston Groundwater Trust (BGwT) wells should be included in future project filings. Generalized readings are of little help to project reviewers. We would like to see the localized readings and will look for the proponents to provide documentation demonstrating no net lowering of groundwater in the area. Conserving groundwater should be an objective of every project proposed for the Fenway (and other affected neighborhoods). To this end there must be disincentives for pumping groundwater into the storm sewer system. All building sump pumps should be equipped with meters to monitor the amount of groundwater that they pump. We believe that the Boston Water and Sewer Commission should begin preparations for billing for groundwater removed and will advocate that pumps on the project site be equipped with meters in anticipation of future BWSC monitoring of pumping volumes.
6. *Page 5-58:* We appreciate the inclusion of a LEED checklist of sustainable design measures anticipated at this early stage in the project's design. The expectation that 22 LEED points can be achieved at this early stage is encouraging, and we trust that subsequent refinements of the plan will build on this foundation. We will be very interested in seeing the proponent's revised LEED reports in subsequent submittals. We strongly recommend that the proponent to include the complete checklist for all LEED levels in its next filing in order to inform more fully the IAG's discussion of what additional measures can help the building achieve certification to at least the minimum LEED level.
7. The filing contains no commitments to community benefits. The community—and the city itself— is greatly in need of affordable housing to retain balance and diversity. Approximately 20% of currently available neighborhood housing is set aside as affordable to people earning less than 120% of the Area Median Income (AMI). New development that provides this level of affordability will not alter the character of the community. Our understanding is that 10% of the housing units on site will be made affordable¹ to those earning between 80% and 120% of the AMI. We further understand that the proponent will contribute to the City's Housing Trust Fund for an equivalent of another 10% of the housing units. In addition, we consider the proponent's support of the Fenway Community Health Center (FCHC) as a tenant in the office portion of this building to be an important community benefit. The CDC feels strongly that the proponent must specify a full measure of community benefits provided by a project before we can give our approval and support.
8. Does this project exceed the thresholds for providing linkage fees to the City? Please calculate and include the expected housing and workforce development linking payment in the next submittal.
9. The curb cut mid-block on Boylston Street to serve the Goodyear retail space has drawn negative comments from many sources. While the proposal is certainly an overall improvement over the present arrangement, it is not ideal. The proposed building may last for the next century; a compromised design should be avoided whenever possible. We urge the proponent to consider other options. One example we suggest you consider is the Goodyear service area could be located on the second parking deck below ground and the

¹ Affordable housing is housing that costs no more than 30% of a household's gross income.

Our Vision:

Fenway CDC strives to lead and inspire our community to work together to enrich and sustain the Fenway neighborhood as one that welcomes diversity and includes housing for all incomes, economic opportunities for all residents, resident-oriented business, inviting open space, pedestrian-oriented streets, and a strong sense of community.



area above it could have the slab removed to create a 20' high space. Access would be directly from the second parking deck. The Goodyear retail space is roughly 12,000 square feet, approximately 100' by 120'. It would displace 32 parking spaces on the second parking deck and require the removal of another 32 spaces on the top deck to accommodate the extra height. The 64 parking spaces could be recovered by additional excavation. Another 12,000 square feet of retail space would become available on grade level. Perhaps this found retail space could house the health center pharmacy. The earlier Goodyear retail service space at 667 Boylston Street in Copley Square didn't seem to require a curb cut. As a general note, we feel that urban sites require developers to revisit every assumption of conventional wisdom for retail-tenant requirements—which often represents a formulaic response based on experience in the suburbs—as the success of the Landmark Center has demonstrated.

10. The traffic generated by this project seems reasonable for the benefit it will deliver to the community. We appreciate the proponent's traffic-mitigation efforts and we hope that all avenues of improvement will be explored.
11. While the proponent has provided slightly more parking spaces than the reviewer has calculated as allowed by the zoning, the difference is minimal. Smart growth requires a limit to the parking supply to encourage public transportation use, pedestrian trips and shared vehicle use.
12. Building height, massing and floor-area-ratio (FAR) conform to current zoning for a planned development area (PDA) in this district.
13. Shadows are described as "*de minimus*". While a Latin description is undoubtedly appropriate, we will expect to see more thorough studies in subsequent filings.
14. The number and size of the retail spaces is critical to attracting a mix of businesses that will thrive and serve local residents. We suggest that the proponent carefully consider filling in the missing pieces of the local retail mix as it seeks tenants for these spaces; in this case, good business sense and community needs are closely aligned. Most notably, no retail bank branch is located within an easy walk of the West Fens residential area.
15. A talk with consultants reveals that gas service to the building will be metered for retail, office tenants and house loads. Metered gas service will not be offered to residential tenants. Residential tenants will therefore be supplied with electric appliances. Reviewers need information such as this first feature of the utility service. We strongly urge the proponent to provide this sort of information in future submittals.
16. Discussions with consultants reveal a discrepancy between information on page 6-8, which describe pad-mounted electrical-service equipment, and the statement on page 6-7, which suggests that a transformer vault will be provided. The statement on page 6-8 is correct; the statement on page 6-7 is incorrect. Contradictory information within a single filing needlessly complicates its review. When the proponent misses such errors, it raises the possibility that insufficient attention is being paid to the process. We do not believe this to be the case, but we strongly urge both to pay closer attention to the content of future filings.

Sincerely,

Our Vision:

Fenway CDC strives to lead and inspire our community to work together to enrich and sustain the Fenway neighborhood as one that welcomes diversity and includes housing for all incomes, economic opportunities for all residents, resident-oriented business, inviting open space, pedestrian-oriented streets, and a strong sense of community.



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be "Marc Laderman".

Marc Laderman
Board President, Fenway CDC
IAG Member
87 Gainsborough Street

Copy:

Via e-mail

Carl Koechlin, Executive Director, Fenway CDC
Walter Hunt, Board Member, Fenway CDC
Kristin Schneider, Board Member, Fenway CDC
Steve Wolf, Board Member, Fenway CDC
Mike Ross, Boston City Counselor
Byron Rushing, Massachusetts State Representative
Manuel Delgado, Wentworth Institute of Technology

Via mail

Kathy Greenough, Board Member, Fenway CDC

C:\Documents and Settings\Marc Laderman\My Documents\Fenway CDC\Project Letters\050518_1330BoylstonPNF.doc

Our Vision:

Fenway CDC strives to lead and inspire our community to work together to enrich and sustain the Fenway neighborhood as one that welcomes diversity and includes housing for all incomes, economic opportunities for all residents, resident-oriented business, inviting open space, pedestrian-oriented streets, and a strong sense of community.