



April 30, 2008
Fenway Community Development Corporation
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Mr. Gerald Autler
Project Manager
Boston Redevelopment Authority
Room 910
One City Hall Square, Boston, MA 02210
617.918.4438
Gerald.Autler.BRA@cityofboston.gov

**Harvard University Institutional Master Plan (IMP) Notification Form,
Longwood Campus Institutional Master Plan,
approximately March 2008**

Dear Gerald,

I had been a member of the Impact Advisory Group (IAG) for this IMP during the January 2004 First Amendment filing. Unfortunately, there appears to have been no IAG process for this submittal.

Fenway CDC builds and preserves affordable housing and champions local projects that engage the entire Fenway community in protecting the neighborhood's economic and racial diversity as well as its long-term vibrancy.

Fenway CDC objects to the IMP Renewal. We urge to BRA Board to require Harvard University (Harvard Medical School, HMS) to begin a new process that will include community input. Despite attempts to contact you, Gerald, you have not identified when and where the filing was advertised. The filing has still not been made available to the public for review. My first notification about the filing was not until April 23rd. I still have not seen it. Who have they met with?

Stating that the filing does not include any notifications of new development projects is an insufficient reason to conduct a hasty and poorly run process. Having an IMP in place confers immense benefits upon the proponent – in this case HMS. Renewing this IMP would grant Harvard powerful and valuable development rights that will be carried into the future. The BRA recognizes this benefit to the Harvard by requiring regular IMP renewals.

Fenway CDC would have first liked to review the filing against the latest version of our **Urban Village Plan**¹. The Urban Village Plan is Fenway CDC's vision for the Fenway neighborhood's growth into the 21st century. The core of that vision is a smart-growth residential neighborhood in the heart of Boston that is welcoming to the broadest spectrum of residents.

The plan sets goals in five key areas: 1) a sufficient and varied housing supply, 2) access to public transportation and reducing vehicular traffic, 3) community-building facilities such as a community center, 4) a healthy business community serving local residents and visitors while providing employment opportunities and 5) open space and a responsible level of impact upon the

¹ The complete text of the current version of the Urban Village Plan White Paper can be found at the Fenway CDC web site, http://www.fenwaycdc.org/files/Urban%20Village%20Plan%2009-07_0.pdf.



environment. The first section of our comments on the filing would reflect our assessment of how the project would advance those goals.

1. **Housing:** Is Harvard pursuing any workforce housing initiatives like their recent purchases into the Trilogy project?
2. **Transportation:** What are the most recent Transit Demand Management (TDM) measures put in place? How many employees are participating in each program? What is the current vehicle parking count? What is the ratio of these spaces to the total usable square footage owned by Harvard? How does this value differ from the long-term objective of providing no more than 0.75 spaces per 1,000 square feet?
3. **Community-Building Facilities:** What local programs are they supporting? What types of outreach to the community? What service learning programs are they running? What types of community access to institutional resources do they allow?
4. **Business:** How many Boston residents work for HMS? How many Fenway residents? How many in the 02115 and 02215 zip codes?
5. **Open Space and the Environment:** What steps are being taken to “Green” the HMS campus? I understand that, “virtually all of their buildings are slated for renovation to bring them into line with Harvard’s overall sustainability goals”. What are those goals? Has a baseline carbon footprint for the campus been established, a campus climate sustainability plan such as the one put forth by University of California, Santa Barbara?

We hope that our following comments will facilitate the Article 80 development review and approval process:

1. *Description of Campus:* We have called for a more uniform and expanded description of institutional owned properties in IMP submissions². This section should list all parcels owned by the institution. This list should identify; 1) Parcel ID numbers and the City of Boston assessors listed address and description³, 2) Parcel owners⁴, 3) The lot size, 4) The current RE tax assessed on each non-exempt parcel⁵, 5) The City of Boston current assessed

² See the final appendix (pages printed in landscape orientation) of ‘Town, Gown History in the East Fens: The Residents’ View’ of Relations with Northeastern University’, Marc Laderman, self-published July 2005, for a descriptive beginning to such a list as applied to one particular institution. The list should also be made available on-line in spreadsheet format for verification.

http://www.fenwaycdc.org/files/TownGown_ebook.pdf. A partial list of HMS-owned parcels attached.

³ The address on record at the city may differ from the common address used. The institution should be working with the assessor’s office, including making parcel adjustment, to make the necessary changes to prevent confusion between the two lists.

⁴ In addition, a description of the ownership structure by which each entity of the institution that owns land should be included.

⁵ The institution can own land either taxable or tax-exempt.



land and building values, 6) IMP status⁶, 7) Gross square footage of the building, number of dormitory beds and number of parking spaces for each buildings on each parcel, 8) totals and subtotals for each field. In addition, the tax-exempt status of each parcel should be reviewed. Buildings currently listed as tax-exempt may be currently used in whole or in part for commercial purposed. The City of Boston assessor's office should review all parcels regularly. The IMP status of each parcel should be reviewed. Parcels not currently put towards institutional uses should be subject to the adjacent underlying zoning.

2. *Sparrs:* The intersection of Huntington and Longwood Avenues is a prominent point at an intersection of major arterial roads in the Fenway neighborhood. Too much of these arterials are now faced with blank institutional facades. Therefore, we expect this corner to go through extensive community review before any development is allowed there. HMS owns all six (6) the parcels in the 12,198 square foot triangular area detailed in the attachment using three (3) different names. Are any of them within the institutional overlay district? The community should carefully review adding any of these parcels to the district. We do not believe that simple ownership by HMS justifies adding a zoning overlay. Four (4) are exempt from paying property taxes and two (2) earned the City of Boston \$18.106 in 2007.
3. *Accessibility:* The lack of wheelchair accessibility around the HMS Quad campus has been reported for years. A person in a wheelchair cannot access Gordon Hall (the administration building) without going roundabout through a parking lot and in a side door of Building C. The only other way is to approach the school via the quad on Longwood Avenue and entering through the links. Is Harvard planning to provide alternative accessible routes into Gordon Hall? A wheelchair-bound person on Huntington Avenue has no direct access to the medical library. The lift that was installed years ago at #695 does not appear to be operational. If a wheelchair-bound person is down on the sunken (ten feet) plaza they cannot get into the library. The lift that was installed in 1999 to hoist people in need from the sunken plaza to the library's front door is also not functioning. Is Harvard planning to correct these deficiencies?

⁶ The institution can own land either subject to the underlying zoning or zoned as part of the IMP overlay. The City zoning maps should also be adjusted to reflect each parcel's IMP status at the time of each IMP approval.



Sincerely,

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

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

Enc:
Partial FY2007 Assessing On-Line HMS Owned Parcel Listing

Copy:

Via e-mail

Carl Nagy-Koechlin, Executive Director, Fenway CDC (Please insert a copy into the Fenway CDC June 2, 2008 board packet.)

Ruben Sanchez, MIT

Manuel Delgado, Board Member, Fenway CDC, Chair of Urban Village Committee, Fenway CDC

Romin Koebel, Fenway CDC, Urban Village Committee Member

City Councilor Michael Ross, District 8

Nicole Aubourg (Please post this letter to the fenwaycdc.org web site.)

Via fax

none