

MEMORANDUM

APRIL 11, 2013

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 DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR
PLANNED DEVELOPMENT AREA NO. 90 REGARDING THE BARRY'S
CORNER RESIDENTIAL AND RETAIL COMMONS PROJECT
LOCATED IN ALLSTON-BRIGHTON

SUMMARY: This Memorandum requests authorization for Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA" or "Authority") to: (1) approve pursuant to Section 80C-5.4 of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code") the Development Plan for Planned Development Area No. 90 for the Barry's Corner Residential and Retail Commons Project (the "Development Plan"); (2) petition the Boston Zoning Commission for approval of the Development Plan and associated map amendment, deleting the designation "IMP," indicating an Institutional Master Plan Area overlay district and adding the designation "D," indicating a Planned Development Area overlay district; (3) issue a Scoping Determination waiving further review pursuant to Article 80B-5.3(d) of the Code for the Barry's Corner Residential and Retail Commons ("Proposed Project"); (4) issue a Certification of Compliance for Article 80 Large Project Review for the Proposed Project pursuant to Section 80B-6 of the Code; (5) issue a Certification of Consistency pursuant to Section 80C-8 of the Code; and (6) execute any and all documents deemed necessary and appropriate relative to the Development Plan and the Proposed Project, including, but not limited to, execution of a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan and a Cooperation Agreement.

INTRODUCTION

Barry's Corner, at the intersection of North Harvard Street and Western Avenue in Allston, is located in the heart of the North Allston/North Brighton neighborhood and at the western edge of Harvard University's developing Allston campus. It is also on the cusp of major change, as residents of the nearby Charlesview housing complex prepare to relocate to their new location further west on Western Avenue and as

Harvard plans its campus expansion in the area, including resuming construction on a major academic building.

During planning and discussion with the BRA about the future of the residential neighborhood, two priorities were among those most often voiced by Allston residents: additional housing and new services and amenities. To address these needs, Harvard University agreed to make a parcel of university land at Barry's Corner available for development of a housing and retail complex. The parcel, at the northwestern corner of the intersection of North Harvard Street and Western Avenue, is shown in Appendix A.

Harvard University ("Harvard" or the "University") issued a Request for Proposals ("RFP") to identify a developer for the project on March 20, 2012. The developer, Barry's Corner Property LLC, a Samuels & Associates entity ("Samuels" or the "Developer") was selected by a review team that included two members of the Harvard Allston Task Force.

DESCRIPTION OF PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND PROJECT

On January 22, 2013, Samuels and the President and Fellows of Harvard College (collectively, the "Proponent") submitted a Development Plan for a Planned Development Area Overlay District ("PDA Overlay District") containing approximately 2.03 acres of area located at the northwest corner of the intersection of North Harvard Street and Western Avenue in the Allston-Brighton Neighborhood District, currently with an address of 219 Western Avenue (the "Project Site"). Pursuant to Text Amendment No. 434 and Map Amendment No. 621, effective February 15, 2013, Planned Development Areas are permitted within the area that includes the Project Site.

The Developer filed a Project Notification Form ("PNF") on December 14, 2012 for the Barry's Corner Residential and Retail Commons Project ("Proposed Project"), an up to 350,000 square foot building consisting of approximately 325 residential rental units, up to 40,000 square feet of ground floor retail space and approximately 185 below-grade parking spaces and approximately 41 new on-street parking spaces within the PDA Overlay District.

The Proposed Project will involve (i) the demolition of the existing single story building located at the Project Site, and (ii) the construction of a new mixed-use building anticipated to comprise a total Gross Floor Area of up to 350,000 square feet, consisting of two residential building components, which share a single level podium with retail and residential amenity areas, and anticipated to contain (a) approximately 325 units of rental housing, (b) up to 40,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor, and (c) a below-grade parking garage anticipated to contain approximately 180 parking spaces. In response to questions from community residents about the adequacy of the parking supply, the Developer has committed to implement a managed parking system if

demand from residents of the Proposed Project exceeds supply. This system would mean more efficient utilization of the proposed garage floor area (through valet parking rather than self-parking) and would allow an additional 45 cars to park at peak times, increasing the total number of potential parking spaces in the garage to 225.

The Proposed Project will have a maximum height of 110 feet, a maximum Floor Area Ratio of 4.0, and a maximum Gross Floor Area of 350,000 square feet.

PROJECT REVIEW

The Proposed Project and the Development Plan are subject to, respectively, Large Project Review pursuant to Section 80B of the Code and Planned Development Area Review subject to Section 80C of the Code. The Proposed Project is also subject to Article 37, Green Buildings, of the Code.

Moreover, the review of the Proposed Project is occurring in the context of ongoing discussion and review of a new Institutional Master Plan (“IMP”) for Harvard University. The evolving IMP will govern the development of key adjacent sites owned by Harvard University, as well as additional improvements to the public realm, pedestrian circulation, and transportation infrastructure.

The project has been discussed at Task Force meetings on:

- June 27, 2012
- July 11, 2012
- July 23, 2012
- August 22, 2012
- October 1, 2012
- November 7, 2012
- January 23, 2013
- February 6, 2013
- March 12, 2013
- April 1, 2013

PUBLIC BENEFITS

The Proposed Project is anticipated to create approximately 500 construction jobs in a variety of trades and approximately 250 permanent jobs. The Proposed Project will also bring increased tax revenue to the City by converting this now tax-exempt property to a taxable use.

The Proposed Project will include new retail space desired by local residents, extensive public realm improvements, and new open space, as well as transportation improvements that will mitigate the project's impacts while also providing mobility options for neighborhood residents and visitors. The 41 surface parking spaces will provide additional parking opportunities for visitors to Smith Field, the project will provide parking for car sharing services, and it will help locate car sharing, bicycle sharing, and other mobility options within close proximity to one another.

The Proposed Project will include onsite affordable housing units and/or financial contributions equivalent to approximately 42 affordable units, which will be governed by an Affordable Housing Agreement with the BRA, and will comply with the applicable Executive Orders of the Mayor of the City of Boston relative to the City's Inclusionary Development Policies.

The Proposed Project includes numerous public benefits that will help begin the transformation of Barry's Corner into a neighborhood center and will improve access to Smith Playground. Most notable are:

- Up to 40,000 square feet of new retail space.
- Market Square, an open space located on North Harvard Street, which will provide an outdoor community gathering place.
- Portal to the Park, an open space located on Western Ave and the new "Smith Field Drive" which will provide an outdoor community gathering place with views of Smith Field.
- "Smith Field Drive" open space located near the intersection of "Smith Field Drive" and "Grove Street" will be the location for a community summer movie and music series, sponsored by Samuels & Associates.
- North Harvard Street streetscape improvements.
- Western Avenue streetscape improvements.
- The creation of "Grove Street," a new road that will include 25 short term public parking spaces and site access for underground parking and retail tenants.
- The creation of "Smith Field Drive," a new pedestrian-friendly road which will enhance access to Smith Field and will include 16 short term public parking spaces and a bicycle lane.
- "Smith Field Drive" sidewalk on park side and re-grading of the park edge.
- Planting of trees along "Smith Field Drive" edge.

In addition to these project-based public benefits, the Harvard-Allston Task Force has expressed a desire for additional community benefits that can be implemented in parallel with the Barry's Corner Residential and Retail Commons. In previous conversations, the BRA committed to the Task Force that the community benefits associated with all projects on Harvard-owned land, including those carried out with a

development partner, should be determined as part of a comprehensive approach to community benefits associated with the University's new Institutional Master Plan. Public discussions leading to this comprehensive approach are scheduled to begin in April, 2013.

However, in recognition of the Task Force's current position, Harvard University, the Boston Redevelopment Authority, and Samuels and Associates have identified the following additional community benefits, all of which, subject to review and approval by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department, are anticipated to be delivered by the completion of the Proposed Project, anticipated to occur in the fall of 2015:

1. New entrances and seating areas designed to open the park visually and physically to the neighborhood. Based on conceptual designs presented by Samuels and Associates, these would include an entrance and a gathering space the intersection of Western Avenue and Smith Field Drive, as well as another entrance at the intersection of Grove Street and Smith Field Drive. These would provide entrances where there is currently no access, as well as seating and gathering spaces. In conjunction with other improvements to the eastern edge of Smith Playground, these will dramatically transform the community's ability to access the park and the relationship between the park and Barry's Corner. Design and budget to be developed through consultation with the Parks and Recreation Department.
2. Funding of up to \$50,000 for a master plan for Smith Playground in order to determine necessary capital investments to upgrade and/or reconfigure the parks component features. The master plan will be conducted by the Boston Parks Recreation Department.
3. Funding of up to \$50,000 for redesign of the tot lot, which is approaching the end of its life cycle. Funding from the project proponents will allow redesign to take place sooner than if it were funded through the city's Capital Plan. Redesign will be conducted by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department.
4. Any remaining funds after the completion of items #1-3 above will be contributed towards the cost of reconstructing the tot lot in Smith Playground, to be designed and constructed by the Boston Parks and Recreation Department.

The Proposed Project is making a commitment to fund a total budget of \$500,000 toward these additional community benefits.

Throughout the community process associated with the Barry's Corner Residential and Retail Commons project, other potential community benefits have been discussed, including ideas for fitness and wellness programs with Harvard and Harvard Athletics. These, and other, potential future benefits will be included in the broader discussion regarding community benefits associated with the approval of Harvard's Institutional Master Plan.

The IMPNF submitted by Harvard in October of 2012 states that:

“As the approval process for the University’s Institutional Master Plan unfolds, Harvard will develop a coherent approach to community benefits associated with each project as it moves forward. Harvard’s hope is that a predetermined approach to community benefits will be established so that the City, Allston community and Harvard will clearly understand the contribution each project may make towards community benefits and, armed with the knowledge, foster a more comprehensive approach to community benefits than engaging in one-off discussions related to individual projects as they arise.”

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the foregoing, BRA staff recommends that the BRA: (1) approve pursuant to Section 80C-5.4 of the Code the Development Plan; (2) authorize the Director to: (a) petition the Boston Zoning Commission for approval of the Development Plan and associated map amendment, deleting the designation “IMP,” indicating an Institutional Master Plan Area overlay district and adding the designation “D,” indicating a Planned Development Area overlay district; (b) issue a Scoping Determination waiving further review pursuant to Article 80B-5.3(d) of the Code for the Barry’s Corner Residential and Retail Commons (“Proposed Project”); (c) issue a Certification of Compliance for Article 80 Large Project Review for the Proposed Project pursuant to Section 80B-6 of the Code; (d) issue a Certification of Consistency pursuant to Section 80C-8 of the Code; and (e) execute any and all documents deemed necessary and appropriate relative to the Proposed Project, including, but not limited to, execution of a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan and a Cooperation Agreement.

Appropriate votes follow:

VOTED: That in connection with the Development Plan for Planned Development Area No. 90, Allston-Brighton (the “Development Plan”), presented at a public hearing held at the offices of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) on April 11, 2013, and after consideration of evidence presented at, and in connection with the Development Plan regarding Barry’s Corner Residential and Retail Commons project, the BRA hereby finds that (i) the Development Plan is not for a location or Proposed Project for which Planned Development Areas (“PDAs”) are forbidden by the underlying zoning; (ii) the Proposed Project in the Development Plan complies with any provisions of the underlying zoning that establish use, dimensional , design, or other requirements for Proposed Projects in PDAs; (iii) the Development Plan complies with any provisions of the underlying zoning that establish planning and development criteria for PDAs; (iv) the

Development Plan conforms to the plan for the district, subdistrict, or similar geographic area in which the PDA is located, and to the general plan for the City as a whole; and (v) on balance, nothing in the Development Plan will be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare, weighing all the benefits and burdens; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That, pursuant to Article 80D of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”), the BRA hereby authorizes the Director to petition the Boston Zoning Commission for approval of the Development Plan and to amend “Map 7A/7B/7C/7D, Allston-Brighton Neighborhood District,” and “Map 7B/7D, Allston-Brighton Neighborhood District,” of the series of maps entitled “Zoning Districts City of Boston”, dated August 15, 1962, as amended, by deleting the designation “IMP,” indicating an Institutional Master Plan Area overlay district and adding the designation “D,” indicating a Planned Development Area to the property to be known as “Planned Development Area No. 90, Barry’s Corner Residential and Retail Commons”, all in substantial accord with that presented at the BRA public hearing on April 11, 2013; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Scoping Determination waiving the requirement to file and review a Draft Project Impact Report and Final Project Impact Report for the Proposed Project pursuant to Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Code, which Scoping Determination shall provide that the Project Notification Form (i) adequately describes the impacts of the Proposed Project, subject to further BRA design review, and (ii) include any conditions that the Director deems appropriate and necessary for the mitigation of such impacts; 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 completion of the Article 80B Large Project Review; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Certification of Consistency for the Proposed Project pursuant to Section 80C-8 of the Code, when appropriate; 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 Development Plan and the Proposed Project, including, without limitation, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and a Cooperation Agreement, and an Affordable Rental Housing Agreement.

Appendix A
Map of PDA and Project Site

Appendix B
Petition to Boston Zoning Commission