

## MEMORANDUM

JUNE 13, 2013

**TO:** BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND  
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

**FROM:** HEATHER CAMPISANO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT  
REVIEW  
DAVID CARLSON, URBAN DESIGN  
JOHN FITZGERALD, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** 1047 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE, ALLSTON

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**SUMMARY:** This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) authorize the Director to (1) issue a Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Article 80A-6 of the Boston Zoning Code (the “Code”) in connection with the Notice of Project Change for the 1047 Commonwealth Avenue project (“Revised Project”); (2) issue a Certification of Compliance under Section 80B-6 of the Code upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process for the Revised Project; and (3) execute and deliver a Cooperation Agreement, an Affordable Rental Housing Agreements, and a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and any and all other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Revised Project.

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### **PROJECT SITE**

The Revised Project will be located at 1047 Commonwealth Avenue in the Allston section of Boston, currently the site of a T-Mobile store and in the block bounded by Babcock, Gardner, and Alcorn Streets (the “Site”). The Site, which contains approximately 20,613 square feet, is located in the Allston-Brighton Neighborhood District and in the Community Commercial Sub-district and consists of approximately one half acre of land area with an existing 2-story structure of approximately 45,000 square feet which houses a retail use in a portion of the building.

### **PROPOSED PROJECT CHANGE**

1047 Commonwealth Avenue Ownership Trust (the “Proponent”) represented a joint venture created by and between Elan Sassoon, Michael Barsamian, Frank Estey, and Dennis Tarr. The Proposed Project was originally approved on April 29, 2008.

The Proposed Project, known at the time as “1047 Commonwealth Ave, Academy of Hair and Skin” originally included the reuse of the existing two-story building at 1047 Commonwealth Avenue and the construction of up to three (3) additional floors containing up to 45,000 square feet for attendant dormitory use. The original proposal was an approximately 90,000 square foot development.

The original program consisted of a beauty salon with a reception area and associated retail space at the street level. Other street level uses included offices devoted to the recruitment for the school, a student lounge, and classrooms. The second floor consisted of additional salon/clinic and retail space, management offices, an instructors’ lounge, a conference room and dormitory rooms. The dormitory space would be continued on the third through fifth floors providing accommodations for approximately one hundred seventy-eight (178) students. The basement would house five (5) additional classrooms, an auditorium, an esthetics clinic and retail area, a student café, and a photo studio.

Since the original proposal, the ownership team underwent changes with the departure of Mr. Elan Sassoon, who was both the name and appeal for the project as it had been envisioned. After careful consideration and analysis, the development team determined that a single room occupancy program designed for occupancy by graduate students and young professionals would be the optimal use at this location.

On March 22, 2013 the Proponent filed a Notice of Project Change (“NPC”) with the BRA to reflect the proposed changes in the use and makeup of the building. A 30-day comment period was initiated, followed by a one week extension, with the comment period ending on April 30, 2013. Throughout this comment period, the original Impact Advisory Group (“IAG”) was notified and received a copy of the NPC. Of the IAG members that responded, all were in support of the project. The Proponent met with the elected officials for the area, as well as the Allston Civic Association, from which they received unanimous support at their monthly community meeting.

The Revised Project will still include the adaptive reuse of the existing two-story building at 1047 Commonwealth Avenue. The Revised Project is akin to the prior approved use- that of a dormitory, which will now become a single room occupancy residential facility, maintaining the street wall continuity and the development/ addition of as many as four (4) additional floors containing up to 60,000 square feet.

The development program will consist of one (1) commercial space at street level and one hundred eighty-eight (188) residential units. The basement will house utilities and storage. There will be three types of units consisting of units at 316 square feet; at 340 square feet; and at 240 square feet. The layouts meet or exceed City of Boston Department of Neighborhood Development requirements for single room occupancy.

In total, the Project will include approximately 100,000 square feet of development. For comparative purposes, the modifications include one additional story and approximately 15,000 square feet from the original proposal.

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

The Proposed Project will comply with the affordable housing requirements as described in the Mayor's Executive Order for affordable housing, by providing 15% of the residential units as affordable rentals. The total amount of units deemed affordable would therefore be 23 units at 70% AMI.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

BRA staff believes that the NPC meets the criteria for the issuance of a Determination Waiving Further Review pursuant to Section 80A-6 of the Code. It is therefore recommended that the BRA authorize the Director to (1) issue a Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Article 80A-6 of the Code for the Revised Project; (2) issue a Certification of Compliance under Section 80B-6 upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process for the Revised Project; and (3) execute and deliver a Cooperation Agreement, an Affordable Rental Housing Agreement, and a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan and any and all other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Revised Project.

Appropriate votes follow:

**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Determination waiving further review pursuant to Section 80A-6 of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code"), which finds that the Notice of Project Change filed with the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA") on March 22, 2013 in connection with the 1047 Commonwealth Avenue project ("Revised Project") adequately describes the potential impacts arising from the Revised Project; and provides sufficient mitigation measures to minimize these impacts, subject to continuing design review by the BRA; and

### **FURTHER**

**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue Certification of Compliance for the Revised Project upon the successful completion of the Boston Zoning Code's Article 80 processes for the Revised Project, subject to continuing design review by the BRA; and

**FURTHER**

**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to execute a Cooperation Agreement, an Affordable Rental Housing Agreement, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and any and all other agreements and documents which the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Revised Project, all upon terms and conditions determined to be in the best interests of the BRA.