

MEMORANDUM

JULY 16, 2013

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

**FROM:** HEATHER CAMPISANO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT  
REVIEW  
DANA WHITESIDE, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR COMMUNITY  
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT  
MICHAEL CANNIZZO, SENIOR ARCHITECT  
LANCE CAMPBELL, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** BLESSESD SACRAMENT CAMPUS REDEVELOPMENT PROJECT;  
NOTICE OF PROJECT CHANGE; NORBERT SCHOOL BUILDING  
PROJECT, JAMAICA PLAIN

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**SUMMARY:** This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”): (1) issue a Determination pursuant to Section 80A-6 of the City of Boston Zoning Code (the “Code”) on the Notice of Project Change for the development of the Norbert School Redevelopment project, located at 365 Centre Street in Jamaica Plain, which includes approximately twenty-one (21) residential rental units, two of which have been designated affordable, seventeen (17) parking spaces and related site improvements (the “Proposed Project”); (2) issue a Certification of Compliance in accordance with Section 80B-6 of the Code; and (3) authorize the Director to enter into an Amended and Restate Cooperation Agreement with Church Square Community Partners LLC, or related entity, an Affordable Rental Housing Agreement and Restriction, and a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan.

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**PROJECT SITE**

The Norbert School building is on the northeast corner of the Blessed Sacrament Campus which is located at 365 Centre Street in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston, and is bounded by Sunnyside Street to the north, Westerly Street to the east and Creighton Street to the west (“Project Site”). The Project Site contains approximately 3.1 acres, is surrounded primarily by residential housing and is located east of the Hyde Square Main Street Business Subdistrict. The Project Site is also situated approximately 0.25 mile from the Jackson Square MBTA station and the Stop & Shop shopping complex on Centre Street.

## **DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

The development team consists of the Norbert School Associates whose principals are Matt Kiefer, Nan Porter, Drew Leff, and George Cole as the owner/ developer (the “Developer”). The project architect is Kevin Deabler of RODE Architects of Boston, the project manager is Dave Traggorth of Traggorth Companies LLC, the historic consultant is Maureen Cavanaugh of Epsilon Associates, and the transportation consultant is Jane Howard of Howard/Stein-Hudson Associates.

## **BACKGROUND**

On November 16, 2006 the BRA voted to (1) issue a Scoping Determination pursuant to 80B-5.3(d) of the Boston Zoning code (the “Code”) for the Blessed Sacrament Campus Redevelopment Project (the “Blessed Sacrament Project”) in Jamaica Plain; (2) issue a Certification of Compliance under Section 80B-6 of the Code upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process; (3) petition the Zoning Commission of the City of Boston for approval of the map amendment to “Map 9B” in the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood District; and (4) execute and deliver a Cooperation Agreement, and a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and any and all other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary with respect to the Blessed Sacrament Project.

On January 4, 2007, the BRA issued a Scoping Determination waiving further review.

As approved the Blessed Sacrament Project consists of the adaptive reuse of five historic buildings and complementary new construction in order to create approximately 118 residential units of which 81 would be affordable, approximately 40,000 square feet of educational, retail and office use, 150 parking spaces, and one-acre of landscaped green space.

On December 14, 2006, the Zoning Commission of the City of Boston voted to approve the proposed map amendment to “Map 9B” in the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood District.

Since the BRA’s approval of the Blessed Sacrament Project in 2006, through difficult economic circumstances and limited funding for affordable housing, Church Square Community Partners LLC (“Church Square”) successfully financed, built, and occupied:

- The Creighton Condominiums, 16 for-sale homes affordable to families at or below 80% AMI;
- The Dona Betsaida Gutierrez Cooperative , 36 apartments and 7,500 square feet of retail, affordable to families at or below 60% AMI;

- The Sister Virginia Mulhern House, the conversion of the former rectory building into 28 Single Room Occupancy Units and one live-in respondent's unit managed by Pine Street Inn;
- The sale of the Cheverus Building to the Hyde Square Task Force for office space and youth programming; and
- One acre of open space serving the community and residents.

As part of the approved plan, COMPASS, a private non-profit school, intended to remain at the Norbert School building (the "Norbert"), a historic 14,865 three-story English Revival brick building at the corner of Westerly Street and Sunnyside Street. COMPASS was to execute a 99-year ground lease with Church Square for the use of Norbert and its parking spaces, and then lease additional space on the Project site for administrative uses. In 2009, COMPASS relocated to Dorchester, leaving the Norbert building vacant.

Norbert has remained vacant since that time and continues to deteriorate. The Developer proposes to rehabilitate the Norbert into up to 21 loft-style rental units including off street parking for 17 vehicles (the "Proposed Project") close to transit and intended to meet a strong need in Jamaica Plain for well-designed apartments. The Proposed Project is designed to conform to underlying zoning and will not require zoning relief, contingent upon the receipt of other necessary approvals.

### **NOTICE OF PROJECT CHANGE**

On October 15, 2012, the Current Developer filed a Notice of Project Change ("NPC") for the Blessed Sacrament Campus Redevelopment in Jamaica Plain).

On November 1, 2012, the BRA hosted a community meeting at the James W. Hennigan School, in the cafeteria located at 200 Heath Street, Jamaica Plain. The meeting was advertised in the Jamaica Plain Gazette.

The NPC calls for the rehabilitation of the Norbert School Building into approximately twenty-one (21) loft-style rental units within the restored building structure, including off-street parking for 17 vehicles. The unit mix will consist of approximately six (6) one-bedroom units and eighteen (15) studio units. The residential units range in size from approximately five hundred fifty (500) square feet to seven hundred (700) square feet.

Among the units mentioned above there will be a total of two (2) affordable housing units designated in connection with this element of the overall Blessed Sacrament Campus.

The Developer plans to begin the construction of the Proposed Project in September of 2013 with an estimated March 2014 completion date and a total development cost of approximately \$3,700,000.

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

Two (2) units will be created as affordable housing (the “Affordable Units”). The two (2) Affordable Rental Units, will be affordable to households earning seventy percent (70%) and below of the area median income (“AMI”).

The locations, sizes, and sales prices of the Affordable Units are as follows:

Unit Number	Bedrooms	Square Footage	Location of Affordable Unit	Percent of Median Income	Rental Price
1A	Studio	500	1 <sup>st</sup> Floor	70% AMI	\$1,024
2F	Studio	500	2 <sup>nd</sup> Floor	70% AMI	\$1,024

\*To be adjusted in accordance with increases in HUD area median incomes.

The Developer will enter into an Affordable Rental Housing Agreement and Restriction (“ARHA”) with the BRA for the Affordable Units. The ARHA must be executed along with, or prior to, issuance of a Certification of Compliance. The Developer will submit an Affirmative Marketing Plan (the “Plan”) to the Boston Fair Housing Commission and the BRA, which shall be approved along with the execution of the ARHA. Preference for the Affordable units will be given to applicants who meet the following criteria, weighted in the order below:

- (1) Boston resident;
- (2) Household size (a minimum of one (1) person per bedroom); and

The Affordable Units will not be marketed prior to the submission and approval of the Plan. A deed restriction will be placed on the Affordable Units to maintain affordability for a total period of fifty (50) years (this includes thirty (30) years with a BRA option to extend for an additional period of twenty (20) years).

## ZONING

The Proposed Project is “As of Right” and therefore no zoning relief is required.

## RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends that the Director be authorized to: (1) issue a Determination pursuant to Section 80A-6 of the City of Boston Zoning Code (the “Code”) on the Notice of Project Change for the development of the Norbert School Redevelopment project, located at 365 Centre Street in Jamaica Plain, which includes approximately twenty-one (21) residential rental units, two of which have been designated affordable, seventeen (17) parking spaces and related site improvements (the “Proposed Project”); (2) issue a Certification of Compliance in accordance with Section 80B-6 of the Code; and (3) authorize the Director to enter into an Amended and Restate Cooperation Agreement with Church Square Community Partners LLC, or related entity, an Affordable Rental Housing Agreement and Restriction, and a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan.

Appropriate votes follow:

**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Determination pursuant to Section 80A-6 of the Boston Zoning Code (the “Code”) on the Notice of Project Change (“NPC”) for the development of the Norbert School Redevelopment project, located at 365 Centre Street in Jamaica Plain, which includes approximately twenty-one (21) residential rental units, two of which have been designated affordable, seventeen (17) parking spaces and related site improvements (the “Proposed Project”) provided that no such Determination will issue unless and until the execution and recording of a Declaration of Restrictive Covenants running in favor of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston restricting use of the Church Unit of the Blessed Sacrament Campus which has been approved by the parties to the purchase and sale agreement for the Master Church Unit; and.

## **FURTHER**

**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Certification of Compliance for the Proposed Project, provided that no such Certification will issue unless and until the execution and recording of a Declaration of Restrictive Covenants running in favor of the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston restricting use of the Church Unit of the Blessed Sacrament Campus which has been approved by the parties to the purchase and sale agreement for the Master Church Unit; and

**FURTHER**

**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to enter into (i) an Amended and Restated Cooperation Agreement with Church Square Community Partners LLC, or related entity; (ii) a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan; (iii) an Affordable Rental Housing Agreement and Restriction; and (iv) any and all other agreements and document that the Director deems necessary and appropriate, in his sole discretion, in connection with the NPC and the Proposed Project.