

MEMORANDUM

**BOARD APPROVED**

MARCH 15, 2018

**TO:** **BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**D/B/A BOSTON PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (BPDA)\***  
AND BRIAN P. GOLDEN, DIRECTOR

**FROM:** JONATHAN GREELEY, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT REVIEW  
MICHAEL CHRISTOPHER, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT  
REVIEW/GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS  
TIM CZERWIENSKI, PROJECT MANAGER  
MICHAEL CANNIZZO, SENIOR ARCHITECT/URBAN DESIGNER  
CYNTHIA DORTA, URBAN DESIGNER  
CECILIA NARDI, SENIOR PLANNER

**SUBJECT:** 185-191 GENEVA AVENUE, DORCHESTER

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**SUMMARY:** This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA") d/b/a Boston Planning & Development Agency ("BPDA") authorize the Director to: (1) issue a Certification of Approval for the proposed development located at 185-191 Geneva Avenue in Dorchester (the "Proposed Project"), in accordance with Article 80E, Small Project Review, of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code"); (2) enter into an Affordable Rental Housing Restriction and Agreement in connection with the Proposed Project; and (3) enter into a Community Benefit Contribution Agreement and take any other actions and execute any other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Proposed Project.

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**PROJECT SITE**

The Proposed Project is located at 185-191 Geneva Avenue in Dorchester between Olney Street and the MBTA Fairmount Line tracks (the "Project Site"). The Project Site is comprised of two (2) parcels that combined are approximately 14,118 square

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\* Effective October 20, 2016, the BRA commenced doing business as BPDA.

feet of land. The Project Site currently includes a single one-family house which will be demolished.

The Project Site is located a short walking distance, about 200 feet, from the MBTA Four Corners/Geneva Commuter Rail Station and is served by the MBTA 19 bus route.

### **DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

Proponent: BT Geneva Development, LLC  
Hiep Chu

Architects: Davis Square Architects  
Clifford Boehner

Amy Bloom Architecture  
Amy Bloom

Civil Engineer/  
Landscape  
Architect: DeVellis Zrein, Inc.  
Imad A. Zrein

Legal Counsel: Law Office of Michael P. Welsh  
Michael P. Welsh

### **DESCRIPTION AND PROGRAM**

BT Development, LLC (the “Proponent”) proposes to construct a five (5)-story, approximately 56-foot tall, residential development totaling approximately 31,653 square feet. The Proposed Project will contain 27 rental units, including four (4) Inclusionary Development Policy Units (“IDP Units”). In addition, the development will have enclosed, at-grade parking for eight (8) vehicles, as well as a secure bicycle storage room.

The Proposed Project will include approximately 5,000 square feet of open space at the rear of the building, as well as a small community meeting room on the first floor.

As currently proposed, the 27 rental units will consist of 23 market-rate units and four (4) IDP Units. There will be a mix of nine (9) studio units, 12 one-bedroom units, five (5) two-bedroom units, and one (1) three-bedroom unit.

There are an estimated 40 construction jobs contributing to the Proposed Project. The estimated total development cost is approximately \$8,900,000.

## **PLANNING CONTEXT**

The Proposed Project is in the study area for the Fairmount Indigo Corridor Plan and the Four Corners/Geneva Avenue Station Area Plan, approved by the BRA Board on October 15, 2015. Among the key findings of the Four Corners/Geneva Avenue Station Area Plan were:

- Retain housing diversity and affordability
- Encourage multifamily development near the T station
- Connect a consistent sense of place from gateways to Main Streets districts
- Increase neighborhood walkability and bikeability
- Reinforce public realm to T station

## **ARTICLE 80 REVIEW PROCESS**

On January 31, 2018, the Proponent filed a Small Project Review Application with the BPDA for the Proposed Project, pursuant to Article 80E of the Code. The BPDA sponsored public meeting was held on February 27, 2018 at the Holland Community Center located at 85 Olney Street in Dorchester. The meeting was advertised in the *Bay State Banner* newspaper on February 15 and sent to the Dorchester email list. The BPDA comment period concluded on March 5, 2018.

## **ZONING**

The Project Site is situated within the Dorchester Neighborhood District and is governed by Article 65 of the Code. The Proposed Project will require zoning relief from the following: Additional Lot Area, Maximum Floor Area Ratio, Maximum Building Height, Minimum Useable Open Space, Minimum Side Yard, Minimum Rear Yard, and Insufficient Parking.

## **MITIGATION & COMMUNITY BENEFITS**

The Proponent has agreed to provide a \$10,000 contribution for mitigation and community benefits. The Proponent will continue to work with the BPDA and community members to determine specific projects and programs for these funds.

When the recipient(s) of the community benefit funds are determined, the Proponent will enter into a Community Benefit Contribution Agreement. The community benefits contribution payments shall be made to the BPDA upon issuance of the building permit by the City of Boston Inspectional Services Department ("ISD").

### **INCLUSIONARY DEVELOPMENT COMMITMENT**

The Proposed Project is subject to the Inclusionary Development Policy, dated December 10, 2015 ("IDP"), and is located within Zone C, as defined by the IDP. The IDP requires that 13% of the total number of units within the development be designated as IDP units. In this case, four (4) units within the Proposed Project will be created as IDP rental units (the "IDP Units"), made affordable to households earning not more than 70% of the Area Median Income ("AMI"), as published by the BPDA and based upon data from the United States Department of Housing and Urban Development ("HUD").

The location of the IDP Units will be finalized in conjunction with BPDA staff and outlined in the Affordable Rental Housing Agreement and Restriction ("ARHAR"), and rents and income limits will be adjusted according to BPDA published maximum rents and income limits, as based on HUD AMIs, available at the time of the initial rental of the IDP Units. IDP Units must be comparable in size, design, and quality to the market rate units in the Proposed Project, cannot be stacked or concentrated on the same floors, and must be consistent in bedroom count with the entire Proposed Project.

The ARHAR must be executed along with, or prior to, the issuance of the Certification of Approval for the Proposed Project. The Proponent must also submit an Affirmative Marketing Plan (the "Plan") to the Boston Fair Housing Commission and the BPDA. Preference will be given to applicants who meet the following criteria, weighted in the order below:

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

Where a unit is built out for a specific disability (e.g., mobility or sensory), a preference will also be available to households with a person whose need matches the build out of the unit. The City of Boston Disabilities Commission may assist the BPDA in determining eligibility for such a preference.

The IDP Units will not be marketed prior to the submission and approval of the Plan. An affordability covenant will be placed on the IDP Units to maintain affordability for a total period of fifty (50) years (this includes thirty (30) years with a BPDA option to extend for an additional period of twenty (20) years). The household income of the renter and rent of any subsequent rental of the IDP Units during this fifty (50) year period must fall within the applicable income and rent limits for each IDP Unit. IDP Units may not be rented out by the developer prior to rental to an income eligible household, and the BPDA or its assigns or successors will monitor the ongoing affordability of the IDP Units.

As there is no partial unit payment required, the four (4) designated IDP Units satisfies fully the IDP requirements pursuant to the December 10, 2015 IDP.

## **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Proposed Project complies with the requirements set forth in Section 80E of the Code for Small Project Review. Therefore, BPDA staff recommends that the Director be authorized to: (1) issue a Certification of Approval for the Proposed Project; (2) enter into an ARHAR in connection with the Proposed Project; and (3) enter into a Community Benefit Contribution Agreement, and take any other action and execute any other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Proposed Project.

Appropriate votes follow:

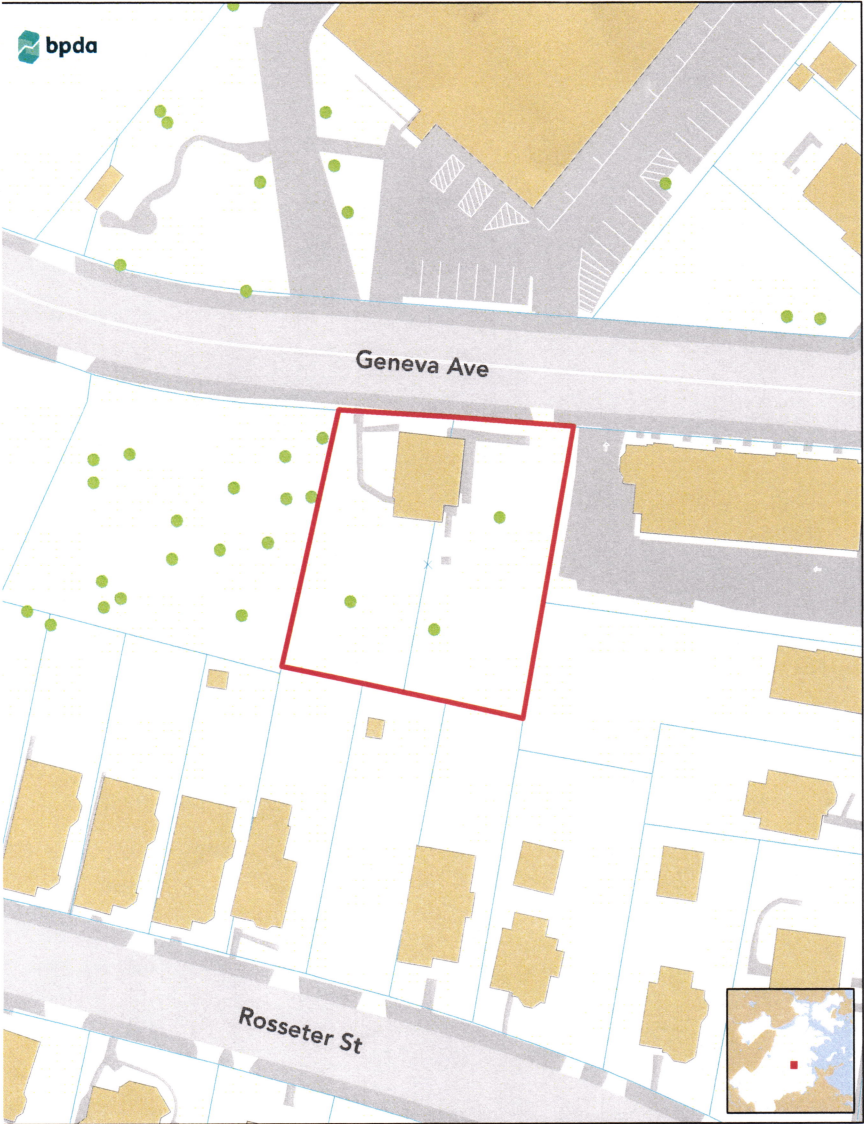
**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Certification of Approval pursuant to Section 80E-6 of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code"), approving the development consisting of a five-story residential building containing 27 condominium units at 185-191 Geneva Avenue in Dorchester (the "Proposed Project") in accordance with the requirements of Small Project Review, Article 80E, of the Code, subject to continuing design review by the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA"); and

**FURTHER**

**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to execute an Affordable Rental Housing Agreement and Restriction for the creation of four (4) on-site Inclusionary Development Policy Units; and execute any other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Proposed Project; and

**FURTHER**

**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to execute a Community Benefit Contribution Agreement and execute any other agreements and documents that the Director deems appropriate and necessary in connection with the Proposed Project.









GREATER BOWDOIN/GENEVA NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION  
C/O 94 CLARKSON STREET  
DORCHESTER, MA 02125

February 20, 2018  
Tim Czerwienski  
Boston Planning and Development Agency  
Boston City Hall

RE: 185 – 191 Geneva Avenue, Dorchester, MA

Tim:

The Greater Bowdoin/Geneva Neighborhood Association (GBGNA) would like to go on record as supportive of the development being proposed at the above location. Hiep Chu, the developer, has attended four GBGNA meetings over the past year to discuss his project and the potential impact it will have on the surrounding neighborhood. Mr. Chu has done an incredible job conducting his due diligence with this community.

Our concerns for the most part have focused on traffic and parking. Mr. Chu has addressed these concerns. As a matter of fact, we have worked closely with him on getting an operational traffic light at the corner of Geneva and Olney. The MBTA bus stop has been repositioned to a location which was more suitable than right in front of his project. We will be working closely together in addressing drop off and pick up issues connected with the Gertrude Townsend Head Start building across the street from his project.

The neighborhood expects to be involved in any changes which might take place regarding the project as well as further discussions on the building's façade.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,



Davida Andelman  
Chairperson, GBGNA



Comment: Created Date	First Name	Last Name	Organization	Opinion	Comments
2/6/2018	Jason	Ksplan		Support	I support this project without changes.
2/12/2018	Iris	Du Pont	MBBA	Support	We have met several times with Hiep Chu and although the number of units is a few more than we'd like, our neighborhood association, Mt. Bowdoin Betterment Association, voted to support the project.
2/12/2018	Jenn	Cartee		Support	I am excited that this project is happening and the innovative use of a complicated site. We need more dense TOD projects like these throughout Dorchester, as quickly as possible, in order to expand the housing supply fast enough to stabilize escalating rent and homeownership costs. Obstacles to building projects like this must be removed if we are to avoid the gentrification nightmare of cities like San Francisco. Thank you for your proposal. That being said, I have two critiques in terms of density: * I understand the ADA compliant off street parking, but beyond that, there should be no other off street parking provided this close to transit. Those other 6 or 7 spaces could easily be either more communal space, or even better, another ADA first floor accessible studio. * I have a hard time "reading" your massing depictions because of the narrow expanse of illustrations like that on page 49. In general, however, I think you are in line with existing "perceived height." It is my understanding that for economies of scale in construction, 6 stories as opposed to 5 can easily pay for itself, that it is when you go past 6 stories that the costs really escalate, so that you might need to do either 6 or 9 to make the numbers work. If my layperson's understanding is accurate, I would urge you to consider going to six stories here. Why not create more of exactly the kind of housing product we need exactly where we need it on a site that can sustain it? Given the sharp slope of land behind it, it does not seem out of context to me. I will not be able to attend the meeting on the 27th but will continue to follow the project closely.
2/24/2018	Gwendolyn	Smith	elderly person	Neutral	Hello, will there be any low-income apartment available if so? When and were the application be available Thanks, Gwendolyn Smith