

**TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
MARK MALONEY, DIRECTOR**

**FROM: SUSAN HARTNETT, DIRECTOR OF ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT
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HEATHER CAMPISANO, PROJECT MANAGER**

**SUBJECT: PUBLIC HEARING – NORTH POINT PROJECT
CHARLESTOWN**

**EXECUTIVE
SUMMARY:**

This memorandum requests, as a part of the scheduled Public Hearing concerning the North Point project, located in Charlestown, that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA” or “Authority”) authorize the Director to (1) issue a Preliminary Adequacy Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Article 80, Section 80B-5.4(c) and Section 80B-4.3 of the Boston Zoning Code (the “Code”); (2) issue a Certificate of Compliance under Section 80B-6 upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process; and (3) execute and deliver a Cooperation Agreement, a Development Impact Project Agreement, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and other such agreements including and related to uses and controls on development to ensure consistency with the Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan..

Project Site

The North Point project, proposed by the North Point Cambridge Land Company, LLC c/o Spaulding & Slye/Colliers (the “Developer”), calls for the redevelopment of approximately 45 acres of land into a vital mixed-use project. Approximately 85% of the site is located in Cambridge, approximately 12% is located in Somerville, and approximately 3% is located in the Charlestown neighborhood of Boston. The triangular-shaped, 43.7-acre parcel is bounded by Monsignor O’Brien Highway in Cambridge and/or private landowners to the south and west, Charlestown Avenue to the east, and the MBTA maintenance facility and commuter rails to the north (the “Project Site”).

The portion of the North Point project located in Boston is an approximately 1.5 acre parcel on the northeast corner of the Project Site. Due to the nature of the municipal boundaries, portions of two buildings (Buildings G and H) will be located in Boston.

Proposed Project

The Developer is proposing to redevelop the Project Site into a 5.3 million square foot mixed-use project including approximately 2,500 units of housing, 2,025,000 square feet of office/lab space, 75,000 square feet of retail space, 4,980 parking spaces and 10 acres of open space. A total of 20 buildings will be constructed and will range in height from 3 to 20 stories.

The Boston portion of the Project Site is slated to include portions of two buildings, containing research and office uses, and totaling approximately 325,000 square feet. Approximately 25,000 square feet of retail space will also be located within Boston, along with 430 parking spaces (the “Proposed Project”).

The North Point project will be divided into three phases, 1A, 1B and Full Build, and will be constructed over a period of 15 years. Construction will generally move from east to west beginning at the Gilmore Bridge. Buildings G and H will be developed in Phase 1B.

Article 80 Review

On May 1, 2002, the Developer filed a Letter of Intent. On May 22, 2002, a Project Notification Form (“PNF”) was filed. Notice of the receipt by the BRA of the PNF was published in the Boston Herald on May 23, 2002, which initiated a 30-day public comment period with a closing date of June 24, 2002. The Notice and the PNF were sent to the City’s public agencies pursuant to Section 80A-2 of the Code.

Pursuant to Section 80B-5.3 of the Code, a Scoping Session was held on June 4, 2002 with the City’s public agencies at which the Proposed Project was reviewed and discussed.

The Authority issued a Scoping Determination, pursuant to Section 80B-5 of the Code, in response to the PNF on July 29, 2002. The Proponent filed a Draft Project Impact Report (“DPIR”) for the Proposed Project on November 6, 2002, which initiated a 45-day public comment period with a closing date of December 23, 2002. The DPIR was sent to the City’s public agencies pursuant to Section 80A-2 of the Code. The Developer also filed a Response to Comments in June 2003, which responded to comment letters received on the DPIR.

The Developer has appeared before the Charlestown Neighborhood Council (the “CNC”) four times, and the group has given its approval of the overall master plan. Once design for the specific buildings begins, the Developer has agreed to appear before the CNC again to introduce the architectural team and receive additional feedback from the neighborhood. The Developer also anticipates meeting with the CNC at every significant stage of the development specific to Boston and the Gilmore Bridge connection.

On June 3, 2003, the Boston Civic Design Commission (“BCDC”) voted to approve the master plan concept of the North Point project. The Developer agreed to return to appear before BCDC when the designs of the two buildings located within Boston are further developed for its final approval. The final design, massing and appearance of the Proposed Project are expected to evolve, and will be subject to ongoing design review by the BRA under a regulatory agreement to be executed by the Director in the coming weeks, provided the recommended authorizations to execute are granted.

The Proposed Project constitutes a Development Impact Project (“DIP”) under Article 80B-7 of the Code requiring the public hearing before the Authority.

The Developer will work with the Boston Transportation Department to develop a Construction Management Plan and a Transportation Access Plan Agreement.

Mitigation and Public Benefits

- Revitalization of an underutilized land parcel;
- Contribution of \$1,615,500 in housing linkage and \$324,000 in jobs linkage;
- Establishing a pedestrian-friendly streetscape along Gilmore Bridge/Charlestown Avenue by incorporating retail uses along the bridge and by providing an opportunity for pedestrians to enter the Project Site at bridge level;
- Creation of a 5 ½ acre park within walking distance for Charlestown residents;
- A mixed-use development program that will promote the creation of a 24-hour neighborhood;
- Approximately 4,000 construction jobs and 6,500 permanent jobs;
- An annual tax payment of approximately \$3,000,000 to the City of Boston;
- Commitment to implement a Transportation Demand Management Program.

Development Impact Project (“DIP”) Exaction

The North Point project constitutes a DIP under Article 80B-7 of the Code. Based on the present plans, the North Point Land Company, LLC c/o Spaulding & Slye/Colliers will provide the Neighborhood Housing Trust payment contribution of approximately \$1,615,500 and a Neighborhood Jobs Trust payment contribution of \$324,000. These estimated linkage payments are calculated as follows:

Housing Linkage:

DIP Uses	325,000 square feet
Exclusion:	<u>- 100,000</u>
	225,000
	<u>x \$7.18 /square foot</u>
	\$1,615,500

Jobs Linkage:

DIP Uses	325,000 square feet
Exclusion	<u>-100,000</u>
	225,000
	<u>x \$1.44 /square foot</u>
	\$324,000

Current Zoning

The Project Area is located in a Local Industrial Subdistrict of the Charlestown Neighborhood District (Article 62 of the Boston Zoning Code). Office uses are allowed in such subdistricts and research and development uses and retail uses are conditionally allowed.

Given the preliminary design of the Proposed Project, the Developer will need to accomplish relief from current controls with regard to height, FAR, as well as confirming permissible uses. At the present time, the Developer is working with BRA staff to achieve such permanent zoning. Based upon discussions and presentations to date, and given the site location within the Charlestown Urban Renewal Area, it is anticipated that staff will appear again before this Board requesting the approval of, and petition to the Boston Zoning Commission for, an Urban Renewal Area Overlay District designation ("U* District") in order to establish such permanent zoning. While staff is finalizing its review of this issue, this is the approach being pursued as most appropriate given that the site is isolated away from the neighborhood, with little or no impacts.

It is recommended that the Director be authorized to execute and deliver such agreements or other documents entered into with the Developer as are necessary and appropriate to set forth the specific use and dimensional controls to be established through the U* District designation.

Recommendations

Approvals have been requested of the Authority pursuant to Article 80, Section 80B of the Code for the issuance of a Preliminary Adequacy Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Article 80, Section 80B-5.4(c) and Section 80B-4.3 of the Code, and for the issuance of a Certificate of Compliance under Section 80B-6 upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process. In accordance with Section 80B-5.4 (c) of the Code, the Authority may issue a Preliminary Adequacy Determination Waiving Further Review if the DPIR, together with any additional material and comments received by the BRA prior to the issuance of the Preliminary Adequacy Determination, adequately describes the impact of the Proposed Project and offers appropriate ways to mitigate such impacts.

Authority staff believes that the DPIR and additional materials and comments meet the criteria for the issuance of a Preliminary Adequacy Determination Waiving Further Review. It is therefore recommended that the Authority approve the North Point project and authorize the Director to (1) issue a Preliminary Adequacy Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Article 80, Section 80B-5.4(c) and Section 80B-4.3 of the Code; (2) issue a Certificate of Compliance under Section 80B-6 upon successful completion of the Article 80 review process; and (3) execute and deliver a Cooperation Agreement, a Development Impact Project Agreement, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan, and other such agreements including and related to uses and controls on development to ensure consistency with the Charlestown Urban Renewal Plan.

Appropriate votes follow:

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Preliminary Adequacy Determination under Section 80B-5.4(c) and Section 80B-4.3 of the Boston Zoning Code, which (i) finds that the Draft Project Impact Report adequately describes the potential impacts arising from the North Point project, and provides sufficient

mitigation measures to minimize these impacts, and (ii) waives further review of the North Point project under subsections 4 and 5 of Section 80B-5 of the Boston Zoning Code, subject to continuing design review by the Boston Redevelopment Authority; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Certification of Compliance for the North Point project upon the successful completion of all Article 80 processes; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to execute a Cooperation 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 North Point project, all upon terms and conditions determined to be in the best interests of the Boston Redevelopment Authority; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to execute a Development Impact Project Agreement for the North Point project in accordance with Article 80, Section 80B-7 of the Boston Zoning Code.