



Mayor's Commission for Persons with Disabilities

Martin J. Walsh, Mayor

March 13th 2017

RE: 1000 Boylston Street, Boston, MA 02115
Project Notification Form
Boston Planning and Development Agency

The Disability Commission has reviewed the Project Notification Form that was submitted for 1000 Boylston Street in Back Bay. Since the proposed project is planned to be a vibrant destination area for housing and retail, I would like to encourage a scheme that allows full and equal participation of persons with disabilities through *ideal design which meets as well as exceeds compliance* with accessibility building code requirements. It is crucial that the site layout, buildings, open spaces, parking, and circulation routes be developed with access in mind.

Therefore, in order for my Commission to give its full support to this project, I would like to ask that the following accessibility issues be considered and/or explained:

- **Accessible Group 2 Units:**
 - We support the accessible Group 2 condominium units as part of proposed housing program.
 - Will the Inclusionary Development Program residential units be provided on-site? If not, please indicate the location of the off-site IDP units. We support on-site accessible Group 2 units to be part of the Inclusionary Development Policy.
 - We ask for more details on accessible Group 2 units, including the location, type and floor plans.
- **Accessible Parking:**
 - We support locating the proposed accessible parking on the closest accessible route to the parking vestibule/elevator lobby.
- **Accessible Sidewalks, Route and Entry:**
 - We request that the missing pedestrian ramp on Boylston Street (in front of 951-955 Boylston Street) be included in the proposed street improvements, to bring the crosswalk into compliance with MAAB 521 CMR Section 21: Curb Cuts and MAAB 521 CMR Section 22.8: Walkways.
 - Renderings show the use of unit pavers for a “welcome mat” feature in the pedestrian right-of-way. We support the use of cast-in-place concrete to ensure that the surface texture is smooth and continuous (minimize joints), for the ease of maintenance and wayfinding benefits.

▪ **Accessible Sidewalks, Route and Entry (Continued):**

- We request more information on any alternative means of improving the public realm, if the installation of tree pits along Boylston Street is not feasible.
- We look forward to continuing to work with the BDPA, Boston Transportation Department and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to discuss further proposed sidewalk improvements.

▪ **Community Benefits:**

- Is this project providing any funding or improvements to the surrounding neighborhood?
- We support the inclusion of ground-level accessible public open space, as part of the development design.
- What inclusion elements does this development provide for persons with disabilities in common social and open spaces?
- Are any restrooms planned for the common public spaces in the lobby or retail areas? If yes, will any be single-stall, accessible and designated as “Family” or “Companion” restrooms? If no, explain why not.

▪ **Wayfinding:**

- Do you have a Wayfinding Package to better understand wayfinding strategies within the scope of the proposed project?

▪ **Variances:**

- Do you anticipate filing for any variances with the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board? If so, please identify and explain.

Commission’s General Statement on Access:

The Mayor’s Commission for Persons with Disabilities supports barrier-free design and construction in all buildings throughout Boston, including renovation projects as well as new structures. We work with City departments and developers to ensure compliance with local, state, and federal building codes including Boston Complete Streets, Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (MGL, 521 CMR) and the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADAAG, 28 CFR). Designing or constructing structures that are non-compliant with these requirements is a violation of the law unless it can be demonstrated that it would be structurally infeasible to do so.

Priorities for accessibility other than building design and construction include: ensuring maintenance and upkeep of accessibility features; posting signage for way-finding; utilizing compliant barricades throughout construction; designating appropriate location and amount of accessible parking spaces; and removing barriers in existing buildings wherever “readily achievable” (*“easily accomplishable and able to be carried out without much difficulty or expense”*).

Proponents are encouraged to meet with Commission staff who are available for technical assistance and design review to help achieve accessibility compliance and to ensure that all buildings, sidewalks, parks, and open spaces are usable and welcoming to all of Boston’s diverse residents, including those with physical, sensory, intellectual, and communication disabilities.

Thank You.



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