March 17, 2017

Phil Cohen, Project Manager

Boston Planning & Development Agency

One City Hall Square

Boston, MA 02201

RE: 1000 Boylston Street Project Notification Form (PNF)

Dear Mr. Cohen:

I am a resident of the Back Bay/Charlesgate neighborhood and a co-founder of the Charlesgate Alliance. I am writing regarding Weiner’s 1000 Boylston St. proposal, which I generally support, with the following reservations:

1.     This is a golden opportunity for the BPDA to push hard for the MassDOT to construct an eastbound on ramp to the Mass. Turnpike. This would help relieve congestion on the surrounding city streets as well as Storrow Drive. This would need to be a left lane onramp, and if you walk around the area you will see how easily this could be done. It’s time for the Mass Turnpike to be reconfigured to serve the interests of the City of Boston rather than just suburban car commuters. It’s also time for the City of Boston to flex its muscles and inform the MassDOT that the days of “controlled dispersal” are over.

2.     As a resident of the Charlesgate neighborhood, I am particularly concerned about Parcel 12. Earlier, my understanding was that the right to develop Parcel 15 was tied to the responsibility to develop Parcel 12. I think it was a mistake to sever the connections between these two parcels, and I worry that the Parcel 12 project will not be built without the “sweetener” of building rights for Parcel 15. Please work to restore this connection.

3.     These projects at Mass. Avenue and Boylston St. give us the opportunity to turn this area from a grim wasteland into one of the most vibrant parts of the city. I suggest that the BPDA consider how to make this area a destination rather than just a pass-through. Why not substitute some of the parking garage along Boylston St. with a movie theater? There used to be lots of movie theaters in the neighborhood and now there are none. There’s plenty of populations density there to support such a venture. The proximity to public transportation would make parking unnecessary. There are tens of thousands of people who live and work within walking distance of this area. I think this could be very successful, and that it would add a sense of vibrancy and  “destination” to this area.

Thanks very much for your attention.

Sincerely,

Heyward Parker James