Dear Phil,

Thanks very much for chairing the meeting at the Parish last month on the proposed development at 1000 Boylston St.

As a resident of the Back Bay (corner of Marlborough and Mass Ave) I want to submit a record of my comments on the proposal to the city.

I can appreciate that the proposal reflects the following realities of Boston:

1) urban density in the Back Bay and the logistical reality that the only way to build is 'up'

2) aesthetic integration with the high spine

3) 'need' for additional housing, commercial, retail space

However, these realities, of which there are probably more, are not enough to overrule my objections to the project:

1) increases traffic in the area

2) contributes to 'canyonization' of Mass Ave/Boylston

3) primarily consists of luxury accommodation and retail

4) skyscraper and adjacent building blocks my roof deck view of the Christian Science Church

While I have a limited understanding of the history of development in the neighborhood as well as policies and procedures governing air rights, I would vastly prefer to see either lower buildings or none at all.

One of the things that happened when 888 Boylston was built in front of the Prudential was that the large open public space in front of the tower was removed. The new tower, while interesting, largely blocks views of the Prudential from Boylston. This is what would happen with 1000 Boylston as it would block cityscapes of Boston from the bridge over the Pike.

I ask you to imagine what those air rights over the Pike (including additional parcels along the Pike) would look like if they were covered with green space... a Greenway of the Back Bay/Fenway if you will. How awesome would that be?

This is really my main contention with the proposal, along with any further high-rise development in the area... it eliminates open space and does not return or offset it in any fashion. As I suggested in the meeting at the Parish, it would be a different story if there was a 'green offset' requirement. For example, if the developer is permitted to build this structure then they would have to commit to beautifying a nearby public space such as the long-neglected Charlesgate Park under the Bowker overpass.

To sum up, I would like to see future proposals regarding developments in Back Bay along the Pike include PUBLIC SPACE. There doesn't seem to be any reason why the Greenway downtown can't be a reference point for parcels covering the Pike... a balance of low-rise development and green space for residents to enjoy.

What I don't want to see is a forest of glass skyscrapers going up in the area. Think about it... what makes 1000 Boylston distinctively Bostonian in any way? That building could be in Dubai or Singapore, and having lived in the former and visited the latter I'm not eager for Boston to look like either.

Thanks for hearing me out.

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James Souza