Dear Mr. Cohen,

As a Back Bay resident for 36 years, I’m writing to express my strong opposition to endorsing the 1000 Boylston Street Article 80 Project Notification Form (PNF) design proposed by Weiner Ventures.

The PNF states that the community ‘wants” this project. As a member of the Garden Club and the Neighborhood Association, I’ve reached the conclusion that “wants” is a huge exaggeration, if not an “alternative fact.” I know a lot of Back Bay residents, but I don’t know a single one who thinks that a project of this height and density is desirable in this location. This plan exceeds anything we envisioned for this site, as is clear from the Civic Vision for Turnpike Air Rights prepared by the BRA and guidelines prepared by the Citizens for Reasonable Turnpike Development and the community view for this part of the Back Bay.

In addition to their excessive size, the proposed towers are visually unappealing: two more bland yet overdesigned glass tubes, with visible parking and no green space at street level. (Will Boston *ever* build a tower as remarkable and inspiring as London’s iconic “Gherkin”? But even a “Gherkin” would be much too tall for Boylston Street.)

Even some developers are realizing that Boston is becoming oversaturated with “luxury” housing (The Copley Place luxury tower plan was recently, and sensibly, scrapped). Foreign investors and one-percenters may line up to pay cash for units as safe investments, but luxury housing does not help the average Bostonian, and the average Bostonian truly needs help to afford housing in our city's best neighborhoods.

Regarding the required Draft Project Impact Report (DPIR), I join many others in Back Bay who request the preparation of additional studies — complete with environmental impact reports for the following alternatives:

*A design based on the Weiner Samuels submission to MassDOT in 2013, the design the CAC reviewed when recommending the Samuels Weiner team for Parcels 12 & 15. In this design the Prudential site is undeveloped, except for a low-scale building or a park.*

*A design that meets the underlying zoning (no PDA) and does not request the City to cede air rights over streets or sidewalks.*

I’m also extremely concerned that the Commonwealth Avenue Mall and the Esplanade remain **at least** as sunny as the design in the 2013 Weiner Samuels RFP submission. The shadows cast by these towers are unacceptable. Wind studies need to be completed as well.

Energy efficiency and sustainable design are also important. Let’s aim for Gold or Platinum LEED certification, not Silver.

In accordance with the Go Boston 2030 Vision and Action Plan, which calls for more support for public transit and fewer cars in the city, let’s eliminate ALL of the parking for this site. Housing on this site would have a Walkscore in the high 90s, making it one of the top locations in the city for walkability and convenience — it’s right across the street from the Green Line and buses.

It is also across the street from our busy fire station. We need to reduce traffic congestion in this area, not add to it.

Please take the long-term view and do not permit the developers to ignore the design considerations imbedded in the Civic Vision. Please do not saddle our historic neighborhood with the negative, permanent impacts that these two monstrosities will cause.

 Respectfully,

Lauren Thomas