Phil Cohen, Project Manager <[Phil.Cohen@boston.gov](mailto:Phil.Cohen@boston.gov)>

Boston Planning & Development Agency

One City Hall Square

Boston, MA 02201

March 13, 2017

 RE: 1000 Boylston Street Project Notification Form (PNF)

Dear Mr. Cohen;

 I am writing to express my serious reservations about the proposed development for 1000 Boylston Street and to encourage you to cause this project to be address the following observations and questions:

1. Is it , indeed, “ necessary” and not just “ desirable" from the developer’s standpoint for this project to exceed the guidelines envisioned for this site by the Civic Vision for Turnpike Rights?  And can the developers  prove the point of ‘’necessity” in a truly convincing fashion? I understand that the  answer to that question is all about the money, and the developers  certainly deserve to earn a profit on this undertaking.  We, as citizens and as a municipality,  however, are in the position, with our approval authority, to ask how much they expect to make, and to question their projections if we disagree.  Our primary duty is not to their profit line,but to the public interest in what they wish to do.

2. If they are successful in mounting an argument based on ‘necessity’ (and not simply maximizing profits) would it be better to abandon the whole  idea of developing this parcel as opposed to developing it poorly.  Granted, the current site is not a thing of beauty now, but  it might be better to live with the site as is than with a building that too large and casts shadows on the neighborhood and, of most concern on the mall.

3.  1000 Boylston Street  it part of a bigger and emerging picture of a profound change in the  architectural  scale of Boston.  In aggregate,the changes that have occurred in the Back Bay in the past decade and those proposed point toward a  tipping in the direction of a  much more  ‘high-rise’ dominated city, and away from a congenial and carefully balanced mix of a few tall buildings scattered among those of a more human scale.   The precise  ’ tipping point,’  of course, is  a matter of opinion,  but these massive projects on the drawing boards today will permanently change the Boston that we all love, and, if this one and the next one and the one after that are all approved, the Boston we treasure will be lost and  we will be a smaller version of Manhattan.

4.  Finally, if these developments at whatever scale need to occur, I would strongly urge that the highest clean energy standards—much higher than LEED certifications as currently defined—be expected.  At the very least, we should be requiring all new buildings  be fully  designed to switch  to a clean energy future, which will likely mean  electric heat  produced by renewable resources and not fossil fuels.   The reliance on fracked natural gas, or oil, can only be considered a short term investment, because  those are the fuels that are strangling the city’s efforts to attain its GHG reduction goals—and strangling our planet.

Respectfully submitted,

Michael McCord

Board of Directors,

Neighborhood Association of Back Bay (NABB)

 Chair NABB Green Committee