

# Cambria Scotia Company

60 Temple Place – 2<sup>ND</sup> Floor

Boston, MA 02111

March 17, 2017

## Delivered by Hand

Boston Planning & Development Agency  
1 City Hall Square, Ninth Floor  
Boston, MA 02201  
Attn: Mr. Phil Cohen, Project Manager

## **RE: Comments on 1000 Boylston Street Project PNF (published January 2017)**

Dear Mr. Cohen:

Cambria-Scotia Company (C-S Co.) owns *The Hynes Auditorium Garage* building at 50 Dalton Street, which abuts the site of the proposed “1000 Boylston Street Project.” Our principals and representatives have been directly involved for many decades in planning for the immediate area, known as the “St. Cecilia Special Study Area.” We are grateful for the Citizens Advisory Committee and other forums sponsored by the Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA) to discuss this project. Thank you for offering us an opportunity to comment in writing.

## Overview

Our building includes a 500-space public parking garage, an entertainment venue, and three restaurants. For over half a century, these uses have capably served what is today the John B. Hynes Veterans Memorial Convention Center, the Boylston Street/Back Bay neighborhood, and the city at large. The public parking facility, in particular, has been a vital resource not just to the public auditorium, but to support shopping, restaurants, services, offices, and other business in the area.

Our most important comments at present are to urge the BPDA to study ways to ensure that the proposed 1000 Boylston Street Project will not harm us or our tenants, block visual and physical access to our parking garage, or unfairly limit future development of our property or its access to light and air. We have long shared the City of Boston’s interest in improving the neighborhood and the St. Cecilia Special Study Area, in particular. However, we are concerned that the proposed project could negatively impact long-standing successes in the area, especially our building’s support of visitors to the neighborhood and the Hynes Convention Center.

## Specific Comments

It is our understanding that the BPDA may recommend that the proponent of the 1000 Boylston Street Project prepare a Project Impact Report. If so, there will be future opportunities for C-S Co. to make written comments on the proposed project. While reserving our ability to identify other issues as we learn more, we have five major concerns:

1. Our long experience designing and operating parking facilities tells us that the approximately 140,000 square-foot / 303-car garage proposed for inclusion in the proposed project is excessive to serve the proposed residential uses. Overbuilding a garage at 1000 Boylston Street will lead to public parking there, sooner or later, which is harmful to our long-standing operations. Our main parking entrance and public signage face Dalton Street and are fewer than 100 feet from the

proposed parking entrance for 1000 Boylston Street. Limiting public access to Cambria Street also concerns us, because access to our lower garage is exclusively on that street. *The Hynes Auditorium Garage* has served the public effectively for decades, and we urge the BPDA to evaluate the proposed project in that light.

2. The 1000 Boylston Street Project would build a new tower directly along the westerly lot line of our property, with no apparent set back. This would prevent access to the westerly elevation of our existing building for maintenance, and effectively prevent C-S Co. from ever adding stories to our building, or redeveloping our property. We ask that the BPDA carefully consider this aspect of the proponent's requested zoning. Moreover, we request a formal analysis of fire separation distances required under the State Building Code, and any other applicable building regulations, and the proposed project's means of compliance.
3. As noted above, C-S Co. shares the City's interest in improving the neighborhood, including the fostering of new development. However, we are concerned that the configuration of the proposed project may not account sufficiently for existing neighborhood uses and character. Vehicles travelling to both C-S Co.'s property and the Hynes Convention Center commonly approach from the west using Boylston Street, so we are particularly interested in the effect of the proposed project upon those public views.
4. The intimate relationship between C-S Co.'s property and the site of the proposed project, requires joint planning for the proposed Planned Development Area (PDA). While we do not ourselves plan any substantial construction in the immediate future, C-S Co. has expended considerable resources over an extended period to explore future development opportunities for our property. We believe that all parties would be best served if the PDA were enlarged to subsume our property and lay out zoning controls for any future development there.
5. We appreciate the substantial engineering challenges presented by the proposed project, including by construction over the Massachusetts Turnpike. C-S Co. requests additional study of the methods and means of construction, so we may understand and help to devise mitigation for potential structural harm to C-S Co.'s property, as well as for interference with our operations. The scale of turnpike, live-rail, and construction work will be uniquely intense, and the estimated three-year duration of construction is unusually long, prompting us to seek more detailed information than might otherwise be expected for a smaller, terra firma project. As the abutter most affected, we hope to work directly with the proponent.

Thank you again for allowing us the opportunity to comment on the PNF. We stand ready to cooperate with the proponent and the BPDA on the 1000 Boylston Street Project

Sincerely



Michael W. Gery, Managing Partner  
Cambria-Scotia Company

cc: Jonathan Greeley, BPDA  
Lauren Shurtleff, BPDA