

MEMORANDUM

MAY 16, 2013

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
PETER MEADE, DIRECTOR

FROM: HEATHER CAMPISANO, DEPUTY DIRECTOR FOR DEVELOPMENT
REVIEW
CASEY A. HINES, PROJECT MANAGER

SUBJECT: MERANO PROJECT, BULFINCH TRIANGLE – AMENDMENT OF
DEMONSTRATION PROJECT; ORDER OF TAKING

SUMMARY: This Memorandum seeks (1) authorization to amend the “demonstration project” adopted pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 121B, Section 46(f) for the Merano Project in the Bulfinch Triangle area of Boston, to acquire approximately 100 s.f. of land owned by the city of Boston (the “City Parcel”); (2) authorization for the Director to adopt an Order of Taking for the City Parcel and execute a Deed conveying the City Parcel to Boston Development Group (the “Proponent”) or its designee; and (3) authorization for the Director to execute any and all documents necessary in connection with the amended Demonstration Project Plan.

BACKGROUND/ PROJECT SITE

The site for the Merano Project is located in the Bulfinch Triangle area of Boston. It is bounded by Causeway Street, Beverly Street, Valenti Way, and land owned by an affiliate of the Proponent, and consists of Parcel 1B, owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Transportation (“MassDOT”), the successor to the Massachusetts Turnpike Authority, and so-called Parcel 1C, owned by an affiliate of the Proponent. The Proponent’s title research has found that a small portion of the site, with a total area of approximately 100 square feet, is currently owned by the city of Boston.

PROJECT HISTORY

On July 19, 2007, the BRA voted authorization to establish a “demonstration project” and demonstration project plan pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 121B, Section 46(f) for the acquisition of certain parcels of land containing approximately 17,000 square feet owned by the City. Since that time, more extensive title work has

been completed and it has been established that the City owns only 100 square feet of land in the project area.

The Proponent filed a Project Notification Form (“PNF”) on June 27, 2008 for approximately 463,000 square feet of new construction that included approximately 190,000 square feet of hotel uses split between a short-term and an extended stay hotel, approximately 206,000 square feet of office space, approximately 10,000 square feet of retail space on the ground floor, approximately 13,000 square feet of restaurant space on the ground floor, and approximately 93 double-stacked parking spaces and approximately 17 single parking spaces for a total of approximately 203 vehicles to be located on the second floor of the development, served by valet (the “Original Project”).

On August 12, 2008, the BRA voted to authorize the Director to issue a Scoping Determination Waiving Further Review, which was issued on September 23, 2008. Due to the economic downturn, the Original Project was never built.

PROPOSED PROJECT

On October 4, 2011, the Proponent filed a Notice of Project Change (“NPC”) proposing the following changes to the Original Project:

- Reduction to one hotel instead of two
- Reduction in the number of hotel keys from 274 to 210
- Replacement of the office space with residential apartments
- Elimination of the mechanical stackers resulting in an additional level of parking, and a reduction in the number of spaces from 226 to 184
- Decrease in the project site area from 54,900 square feet to 52,360 due to the elimination of the 86-88 Washington Street parcel (defined in the PNF as the Limone Parcel).

Taking into account minor adjustments to the Project’s design and program that the Applicant has made during ongoing Authority Design Review, the Merano is now proposed to be a mixed-use development comprising approximately 484,000 square feet of GFA, including approximately 244,000 square feet of residential apartments (231 units), an approximately 219 key hotel of approximately 143,000 square feet, and approximately 9,000 square feet of restaurant and/or retail space. Approximately 173 parking spaces will be provided in two levels of above grade parking (the “Proposed Project”).

On February 16, 2012, the BRA voted authorization to issue a Determination on the NPC.

REQUESTED AUTHORITY ACTION

In order to clear title to the City Parcel, the Developer has requested that the Authority: (1) amend the “demonstration project” to acquire the City Parcel; and (2) adopt an Order of Taking for the City Parcel and execute a Deed conveying the City Parcel to the Proponent or its designee.

RECOMMENDATION

It is recommended that the Authority (i) amend the “demonstration project” adopted pursuant to Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 121B, Section 46(f) for the Merano Project in the Bulfinch Triangle area of Boston to acquire the City Parcel; (2) adopt an Order of Taking for the City Parcel and execute a Deed conveying the City Parcel to the Proponent or its designee; and (3) authorize the Director to execute any and all documents necessary in connection with the amended Demonstration Project Plan and the Order of Taking.

Appropriate votes follow:

VOTED: That the Boston Redevelopment Authority (the “Authority”) amend the Merano Demonstration Project Plan as approved by the Authority on July 19, 2007, for the acquisition of approximately 100 square feet of land owned by the city of Boston (the “City Parcel”); and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Authority hereby adopts the resolution that states “BE IT RESOLVED by the Boston Redevelopment Authority that an ORDER OF TAKING dated May 16, 2013 relating to a certain parcel of land on Causeway Street containing approximately 100 square feet in the Bulfinch Triangle, Boston, Suffolk County, Commonwealth of Massachusetts” be executed and made a permanent part of these proceedings, a copy of which the Secretary shall cause to be recorded in the Office of the Registry of Deeds for the County of Suffolk”; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to execute a deed and any and all documents necessary and appropriate in connection with the amended Demonstration Project Plan and the Order of Taking.