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Project Manager

May 30, 2018

**VIA EMAIL**

BOSTON, MA

NEW YORK, NY

PRINCETON, NJ

SAN FRANCISCO, CA

WASHINGTON, D.C.

Raul Duverge  
Senior Project Manager  
Boston Planning & Development Agency  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

**Re: The Hub on Causeway (Formerly The Boston Garden Project) –  
Phase 3 Office Tower Component – Comment Letter Responses**

Dear Mr. Duverge:

As part of the Notice of Public Change (NPC) process, Boston Properties and Delaware North have received, via your office, many comment letters both in support of and in opposition to the updated design of the Office Tower component at The Hub on Causeway (formerly known as the Boston Garden Project).

Since the NPC was submitted we have held an IAG meeting combined with a public meeting as well as several commission and subcommittee meetings with the Boston Civic Design Commission (BCDC). Out of those meetings the design of the building has adjusted slightly from what was presented in the original NPC. Attached to this document you will find updated images of the current building design.

Below we have summarized the current building before the BPDA for a non-fundamental change.

S:\Development\Development Acquisitions\Boston Garden\Office Tower\Permitting\NPC\Comment Letters\Response Letter - NPC Comments.docx

**Project Description**

	121A Approval (2013)	NPC Submitted February 2018	Currently Proposed
Gross Floor Area ("GFA")	668,000 SF	Up to 651,500 SF	Up to 651,500 SF
Number of Stories (Occupiable Above the Podium)	22 Floors	24 Floors (includes occupiable roof deck at the mechanical penthouse level)	24 Floors (includes occupiable roof deck at the mechanical penthouse level)
Maximum Floor Plate Size	25,400 SF	Up to 35,500 SF (Tower Floors 8-14)	Up to 32,500 SF (Tower Floors 8-14)
Tower Floor Plate Bonus Under 121A	2,325 SF -121 SF (Allocated to Hotel Tower) 2,194 SF (Remaining) <b>27,594 SF Total Floor Plate Allowed</b>	Up to 27,500 SF (Tower floors 15-31)	Up to 27,500 SF (Tower floors 15-31)
Maximum Tower Height from Grade	420'	Up to 495'	Up to 510'

*Notes:*

- 1. Floor count assumes 8th floor, which is partially constructed as part of the Podium Component, as a new Office Tower floor*
- 2. Because there is an occupiable roof deck and associated indoor space on the mechanical level the penthouse is included in the height calculation. It was not included in the 2013 height calculation.*

The design of the Office Tower was modified during the BCDC process. Portions of the mid-rise section were recessed at the southwest and northeast corners allowing the industrial grid of the tower to continue down to the Podium Building. Additionally, the “porches” on the east side were relocated to the north. This has resulted in a slimmer appearance of the tower from the north and south (gateway view directions). The structural truss at the 31<sup>st</sup> floor that holds up the roof canopy has been modified to reflect the structural truss on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor of the podium, bringing additional continuity to the project components. The height has increased slightly as the mechanical system design has progressed. As noted above, due to the small indoor space at the roof deck level the mechanical penthouse is included in the height calculation although normally the mechanical level would be excluded.

Attached to this letter we have offered responses to the comment letters provided by members of the IAG and the community. Rather than directly comment on each letter, we have grouped the comments into themes and responded accordingly.

As always, please do not hesitate to reach out with any questions.

Sincerely,

Giuliana Di Mambro

## **The Hub on Causeway – Responses to Comment Letters**

**1. What is the purpose of the glass bump-outs/porches? Why are they needed given the three other roof decks?**

The clearer glass bump outs, which we have called porches, were designed to meet tenant demand for innovative and flexible work space. These porches will be delivered as unique, two story spaces where a tenant can create inter-floor connections or program the space as an amenity. Additionally, the porches have been designed with operable windows, and tenants have the option to create three-season or zero energy spaces within their offices, which provide a unique opportunity to get more fresh air into the space.

**2. How do the protrusions alter the wind conditions on the balconies and in the public realm at street level?**

The change in massing has a positive effect on the wind conditions surrounding the tower. As noted in the RWDI memo attached to the NPC, wind conditions on the HUB project itself, as well as in the surrounding public realm areas stays the same or improves. The new massing helps to mitigate windy conditions.

**3. The growth in square footage as compared to what was previously approved and what is allowed by zoning is confusing. Also, it seems like the volume of the building has grown. Please clarify.**

Allowable height and density on this site is dictated by the 121A Zoning for the entire project that was issued in December of 2013. That zoning allowed for an office tower of 668,000 square feet to be built. Each component of the project is subject to BPDA design review and approval. Prior designs of the office tower that were approved by the BDPA and the BCDC were smaller in size than the 121A allowable 668,000 square feet. The current design is still within the 121A approved square footage, though it does exceed the 121A approved height.

Volume is not a standard zoning measurement and is not often calculated as part of building design metrics. The volume increases between the 2013 design and the current design are due to several factors. First, the total building square footage increased. Second, the floor heights increased to provide more natural light for better health and wellness of the building occupants and to accommodate a chilled beam heating and cooling system, which is more sustainable than traditional HVAC systems. Additionally, two of the floors in the office tower were raised to accommodate a 20' height for tenant specific programming. The table below should help clarify.

	<b>121A Zoning Allowance</b>	<b>2013 Approved Design</b>	<b>2016 Approved Design</b>	<b>2018 Proposed Design</b>
<b>Office Tower Square Footage</b>	668,000	521,000	581,000	651,500
<b>Office Tower Height (ft)</b>	N/A	480	508	Up to 510
<b>Office Tower Volume (ft<sup>3</sup>)</b>	N/A	7,111,000	9,214,000	9,772,000
<b>Total Complex Volume (ft<sup>3</sup>)</b>	N/A	24,667,000	25,949,000	25,506,000

*Notes:*

*The original 121A Zoning allowed a height of 420' to the highest occupiable floor. There was no limit to the height of the mechanical penthouse.*

*Office Tower Height is measured from grade, not from the top of the podium.*

*Heights are measured to top of structure (including mechanical penthouse), not top of highest occupiable floor.*

*Office Tower Volume does not include any portions of the podium upon which the tower sits.*

*Volume is not a metric measured in the design process. These numbers are approximate.*

**4. The traffic in the area seems really bad. Often it is totally gridlocked, especially during event traffic. The developer has previously proposed changes and they don't seem to be implemented.**

The event traffic management plan will be reviewed and updated after the Causeway Street improvements have been completed and the project is constructed and initial occupancy has occurred. The opening of the Causeway Street access to the North Station Garage will allow for event traffic to be directed to Beverly Street with the goal of reducing traffic volumes toward Keany Square (Causeway Street/N. Washington Street/Commercial Street).

In addition, we have participated in the Mobility Planning Study conducted by the city, and we are completing a portion of the Connect Historic Boston project on Causeway Street which involves rebuilding a significant portion of the street and completing the cycle track.

**5. The change in mass will make the wind worse for Strada 234 residents, especially on the 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> floor terraces.**

Based on recently conducted wind tunnel tests of the office tower there is no evidence that shows the wind conditions would be worse for the current tower design on the 7th and 10th floor terraces of Strada234. Moreover, recent tests showed that the wind comfort conditions improved at The Hub itself, and at grade level off-site locations, compared to tests that were done on the 2015 tower design. Therefore, it is likely that a similar trend can be expected at Strada234 in that the new tower design actually helps improve wind conditions.

**6. The shadows have increased as a result of the new design.**

Correct, as noted in the NPC there are small increases in shadows as a result of the new massing. The results of a comparative study are shown in the NPC and were presented to the IAG and the community.

**7. Was the project subject to BCDC review?**

Yes, the project was subject to BCDC review. We met with the full commission on March 6, 2018. We had two subcommittee meetings, one March 27<sup>th</sup> and one on April 10<sup>th</sup>. We obtained BCDC approval at the May 1<sup>st</sup> full commission meeting.

**8. Additional height is allowed in this zone. Why is the building not taller and thinner?**

The office tower will be built as the third phase of The Hub on Causeway development. As a result, the tower foundations are fixed, and they limit the building size and height. Additionally, tenants are demanding larger floor plates to accommodate changes in workspace design. We are trying to meet that demand.

**9. There is no relationship between the podium, the midsection, and the tower.**

The intent of the tower is to be part of a collection of buildings and product types at The Hub on Causeway. We intentionally did not want it to look like a uniform monolith. As we have progressed the design we have made some changes that we believe help unify the buildings even more. Specifically, we recessed the southwest and northeast corners of the mid-rise section and allowed the industrial grid of the upper tower to continue through down to the Podium Building. We also refined the truss at the top of the building to relate more closely to the structural truss in the podium.

**10. There is not enough parking proposed in the development.**

The Hub on Causeway project will add 546 new parking spaces to the existing North Station Garage. Approximately 211 of those spaces will be available to office tower users. Based on parking requirements that we see at our other properties we feel this is more than sufficient parking. Additionally, the garage will be managed to accommodate ebbs in flows in the parking population.

**11. There should be a community room with meeting space such as the Pilot house made available.**

There will be a community room located in the West Podium as part of The Hub on Causeway project. This will be open to individuals and groups in the community. It will be operated in a manner similar to The Forth Point Room which Boston Properties operates at its Atlantic Wharf development.

**12. How will construction traffic work, especially with the Charlestown Bridge under construction?**

The developer will continue to work with the Boston Transportation Department and make sure that the Construction Management Plan is up to date and coordinated with other projects in the area.



