

# **PARK PLAZA**

## **URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT**

# **URBAN RENEWAL PLAN**

**BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**

**Amended May, 1977**

PARK PLAZA URBAN RENEWAL PROJECT  
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FINAL PROJECT REPORT  
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A. DESCRIPTION OF PROJECT

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1. Project Boundary Map

The Project Boundary is shown on Map No. 1, PROJECT BOUNDARY MAP.

2. Project Boundary Description

The Project Area is bounded and described as follows:

Beginning at the intersection of the southerly sideline of Beach Street and the easterly sideline of Knapp Street;

Thence running in a generally southerly direction along said easterly sideline of Knapp Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the centerline of Kneeland Street and the easterly sideline of Knapp Street extended thereto;

Thence turning and running in a generally westerly direction along the centerlines of Kneeland Street and Stuart Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the centerline of Stuart Street and the westerly sideline of Arlington Street;

Thence turning and running in a generally northerly direction along said westerly sideline of Arlington Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the westerly sideline of Arlington Street and the northerly sideline of Boylston Street;

Thence turning and running in a generally easterly direction along said northerly sideline of Boylston Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the northerly sideline of Boylston Street and the westerly sideline of Bumstead Court;

Thence turning and running in a generally southerly direction across Boylston Street along an extension of said westerly sideline of Bumstead Court to a point in the southerly sideline of Boylston Street;

Thence turning and running in a generally easterly direction along said southerly sideline of Boylston Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the easterly sideline of Washington Street and the southerly sideline of Boylston Street extended thereto;

Thence turning and running in a generally northerly direction along said easterly sideline of Washington Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the easterly sideline of Washington Street and the northerly sideline of Essex Street;

Thence turning and running in a generally easterly direction along said northerly sideline of Essex Street (past Harrison Avenue Extension) to a point, said point being the intersection of the northerly sideline of Essex Street and the easterly sideline of Harrison Avenue extended thereto;

Thence turning and running in a generally southerly direction along said easterly sideline of Harrison Avenue to a point, said point being the intersection of the easterly sideline of Harrison Avenue and the northerly property line of 19-25 Harrison Avenue extended thereto;

Thence turning and running in a generally westerly direction across Harrison Avenue along said extension of the northerly property line of 19-25 Harrison Avenue to a point in the westerly sideline of Harrison Avenue;

Thence turning and running in a generally southerly direction along said westerly sideline of Harrison Avenue to a point, said point being the intersection of the westerly sideline of Harrison Avenue and the northerly sideline of Beach Street;

Thence turning and running in a generally westerly direction along said northerly sideline of Beach Street to a point, said point being the intersection of the northerly sideline of Beach Street and the westerly property line of 27-39 Harrison Avenue;

Thence turning and running in a generally southerly direction across Beach Street along an extension of said westerly property line of 27-39 Harrison Avenue to a point in the southerly sideline of Beach Street;

Thence turning and running in a generally westerly direction along said southerly sideline of Beach Street to the point of beginning, said point being the intersection of the southerly sideline of Beach Street and the easterly sideline of Knapp Street;

Excluding, however, the structures at 19-25 Harrison Avenue and 27-39 Harrison Avenue.

As soon as construction begins on A-1, the Authority will immediately advertise for the redevelopment of Parcels D and E. Unless the Authority shall have selected a Developer for Parcels D and E within 3 years from the date of approval of this plan, Parcels D and E shall no longer be considered to be part of the Park Plaza Project Area.

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B. PLAN OBJECTIVES

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1. Basic Objectives

The basic objectives of the Park Plaza Urban Renewal Plan are:

- a. To provide a new "intown" residential community in the heart of the city.
- b. To provide a higher economic use to replace an existing under-utilized area.
- c. To eliminate blighted conditions.
- d. To increase the tax revenue by a more intensive development of the area.
- e. To prevent the haphazard redevelopment of this important sector of Boston which would occur through unplanned renewal based upon the present street layout and pattern of privately-owned parcels.

2. Planning Objectives

Planning objectives include the following:

- a. To provide a lively mixture of mutually reinforcing uses with emphasis on residential and daytime plus evening activity.
- b. To carefully integrate, as to scale and activity, the new development with the surrounding areas — especially in the relationship of the buildings and uses along Boylston Street to the adjacent Boston Common and Public Garden.
- c. To provide multilevel attractive and continuous pedestrian areas through the Project with maximum separation between vehicular

and pedestrian movements and convenient interfacing with other transportation modes (transit, taxi, auto, pedestrian).

- d. To eliminate excess and confusing roadways and replace them with an efficient, safe, and adequate new road system based on the overall proposed downtown traffic plan.

### **3. Building Design Objectives**

The general design objectives are:

- a. To create multi-use new structures, with the lower elements built close to the street lines so as to maintain the urban character.
- b. To build with materials whose color and scale relate well to the existing Boston architecture of Back Bay, Beacon Hill, and Bay Village.
- c. To create a new and pleasant environment within the public and semipublic areas to maximize the use of such areas and add a new dimension to the downtown commercial and entertainment areas.

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C. PROPOSED RENEWAL ACTIONS

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**1. Proposed Types of Renewal Actions**

The proposed types of renewal actions within the Project Area will consist of clearance and redevelopment activity and provision of public improvements, rights-of-way, and utility adjustments.

**2. Clearance and Redevelopment Activities**

Clearance and redevelopment activities include:

- a. The acquisition of real property;
- b. The relocation of the occupants thereof;
- c. The clearance of land and buildings;
- d. The installation, construction, and reconstruction of improvements;
- e. The disposition of land for uses in accordance with the land use and building requirements and other provisions of the Urban Renewal Plan; and
- f. Design review and enforcement of provisions of Land Disposition Agreements.

**3. Rehabilitation Activities**

There are no rehabilitation activities contemplated within the Project Area.

**4. Public Improvements**

Public improvements may include, as necessary, the abandonment, provision, improvement, extension, construction, reconstruction, and

installation of rights-of-way, streets, landscaped open spaces, new tree plantings, and public utilities, such as water, sewers, traffic and street lighting systems, and police and fire communications systems located in public rights-of-way, in order to carry out the objectives of the Urban Renewal Plan, substantially as described in the Park Plaza Final Supplemental Environmental Impact Report.

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D. PROPERTY TO BE ACQUIRED

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**1. Identification**

Properties to be acquired by the Boston Redevelopment Authority in Stage I (Disposition Parcels 1, 2, and 3), sometimes referred to in the aggregate as A, B, and C, of the Project Area are shown on Map No. 3, LAND ACQUISITION MAP, and identified on Map No. 5, OWNER-SHIP DATA MAP.

**2. Conditions for Stage II Acquisition**

Prior to any action by the Authority toward acquiring properties within Stage II the Authority shall provide security to the satisfaction of the Mayor pursuant to Chapters 79 and 121B of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended, shall submit to the City Council and the state for their approval plans for the design and financing of the proposed improvements within Stage II, which plans shall be in at least as much detail as those provided to the Council in respect to Stage I, and shall likewise comply with the Requirements of Chapter 79A of the Massachusetts General Laws, as amended.

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E. INTERIM USE OF ACQUIRED PROPERTY

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The Boston Redevelopment Authority may devote property acquired under the provisions of the Urban Renewal Plan to temporary use prior to the time such property is needed for development. Such uses may include, but are not limited to, project office facilities, relocation purposes, public transportation, or recreation, all in accordance with such standards, controls, and regulations as the Authority may deem appropriate. However, it is the intention of the Authority to proceed on a schedule of acquisition, relocation, and demolition which is directly related to the timing for commencement of construction and thereby to minimize the amount of land which could be utilized for interim uses. Such interim uses may not be continued more than six months beyond the completion of all demolition on the site without the approval of the Director of the Boston Redevelopment Authority. No interim use of any acquired parcel for parking shall be made except for

- (a) those parcels which at the time of adoption of the Plan are used for parking;
- (b) areas needed to provide parking for construction activities.

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F. LAND USE AND BUILDING REQUIREMENTS

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**1. Land Use Plan**

The use of land in the Project Area shall be in accordance with the permitted uses as shown on Map No. 6, LAND DISPOSAL MAP.

**2. Land Use and Building Requirements**

**a. General**

- (1) The use and development of land and improvements shall be in accordance with the requirements of this Section of the Plan.
- (2) The Boston Redevelopment Authority may subdivide disposition parcels as appropriate. In the event of subdivision, the permitted uses will be applicable to subparcels and parking requirements will be divided as appropriate.
- (3) The provisions of this Section shall apply to all disposition parcels unless specifically excepted.
- (4) Use controls as set forth in this Section shall be interpreted to permit supporting and ancillary uses which in the opinion of the Authority are reasonably associated with the primary use.

**b. Definitions**

**(1) Height**

The vertical distance of the highest point of the roof, excluding penthouses and roof structures, above the mean

grade of the sidewalk at the line of the street or streets on which the building abuts, or, in the case of a building not abutting on a street, above a given grade adjoining the building line, as more fully defined in the Zoning Code of the City of Boston as in effect on the date the Plan is approved by the Boston City Council.

(2) **Floor Area Ratio (F.A.R.)**

The ratio of the gross floor area above grade of a structure or group of structures to the total parcel area.

(3) **Arcade**

A substantial area of a building which is open to public access for right-of-way purposes.

(4) **Pedestrian Easement**

For the purpose of this Plan, "pedestrian easement" means the provision of public pedestrian access subject to reasonable regulations and security and does not mean the creation of a right-of-way in the technical sense.

c. **Building Requirements and Restrictions**

(1) **Landscaping and Screening**

All open areas must be suitably landscaped so as to provide a visually attractive environment.

(2) **Off-Street Loading**

NUMBER OF BAYS REQUIRED BY GROSS FLOOR  
AREA OF STRUCTURES

Gross Floor Area (in thousands of square feet)	Office and General Commercial		Retail and Wholesale	
	36' min.	25' min.	36' min.	25' min.
Under 15	0	0	0	0
15 to 50	1	0	1	0
50 — 100	1	0	1	1
100 — 250	1	1	2	0
250 — 400	2	0	2	1
400 — 550	2	1	2	2
550 — 700	2	2	3	1
700 — 850	3	1	3	2
850 — 1,000	3	2	3	3
1,000 — 1,150	3	3	4	2
1,150 — 1,300	4	2	4	3
over 1,300*				

\* one additional space of 25' minimum length has to be provided for every 150,000 square feet or fraction thereof, over 1,300,000; OR one space of 36' minimum length has to be provided for every 300,000 square feet over 1,300,000 PROVIDED that half of all spaces are 36' long or longer. Within this limitation 2 spaces 25 to 36 feet long are interchangeable with one space 36' or longer.

The above controls shall apply unless a developer or owner can demonstrate to the satisfaction of the Authority that the off-street loading needs of the property will be met adequately in other ways or that the lack of such loading facilities will not be detrimental to surrounding areas of the Project. Provision shall be made so that all movement of trucks for loading is accomplished within the site. Loading provisions that require a truck to back up into traffic to get in or out of a loading dock are expressly prohibited.

**d. Other On-Site Improvements**

All improvements on the land, including buildings, landscaped areas, and parking areas, shall be properly maintained, by the then owner, in good repair and in clean, sanitary, and attractive condition. Sufficient and suitable refuse and garbage storage and disposal facilities, including structural enclosures where appropriate, shall be provided and properly maintained by the then owner. Open storage of materials, equipment, or merchandise shall not be permitted in any section of the Project Area.

**e. Sign Control**

Signs within the Project Area shall be restricted to an identification of the use of and goods available on the premises. All signs must be suitably integrated with the architectural design of the structure which they identify. No signs or advertising shall be placed on the exterior facade on or above the floor level of the third floor of any structure. No sign shall project above the roof of the structure on which it is mounted. The size, design, location, and number of signs, the placement or replacement of any sign, or any exceptions to the above controls shall be subject to the approval of the Authority and any other body charged at the time with the control of outdoor advertising.

**f. Parking**

All parking structures shall be designed so as to provide one entrance lane for each 300 parking spaces provided. Each entrance lane must have sufficient reservoir space to avoid vehicle back up onto public streets. All parking shall be enclosed unless otherwise indicated in Item 4 of this Section.

**g. Subway Facilities**

Provision shall be made by the redeveloper for connections to subway facilities in accordance with the Land Disposal Map, and disposition parcels may be subject to easements and other rights as appropriate therewith.

**h. Utilities**

The placement or replacement of all private and public utilities shall be underground, and disposition parcels may be subject to easements and other rights as appropriate in accordance with this requirement.

**i. Provisions for Handicapped Persons**

All new buildings and facilities in the Project Area shall be so designed that persons in wheelchairs can enter, travel about, and leave the building in a convenient manner without obstruction.

**3. Land Use**

The Project Area shall generally be devoted to residential, hotel, office, parking and commercial uses. Specific uses for each parcel are set forth in Item 4 of this Section. In each case, and unless specifically otherwise provided, designation of a particular use includes all accessory and ancillary uses customarily or reasonably incident to the use specified or the use on an adjoining parcel.

**4. Land Use and Building Requirements for Disposition Parcels\***

**PARCEL 1**

**Arlington/Hadassah Subparcel of Parcel 1**

**Permitted Uses**

Commercial, office, residential, hotel, entertainment, open space and cultural.

Parking permitted below grade only.

**Height**

85' maximum for 50' depth from property line along Boylston Street and 130' maximum on the remainder of the site.

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\* The specific parcels described in this section are shown by number on the Land Disposal Map (Map No. 6)

**Vehicular Access**

No curb cuts are permitted if access for servicing or parking is provided and is feasible at subgrade from either the Plaza or Hadassah/Charles subparcels. If no such access is feasible then the necessary access and servicing shall be provided from the Providence Street area and in accordance with the provisions of Section F.2.c.(2) of this Plan.

**Other Requirements**

Forty-five foot pedestrian, vehicular and utility easement along the Hadassah Way alignment.

Direct linkage of peripheral arcades to those included within redevelopment of abutting parcel.

Provide weather protected connection from development to the Arlington Street subway. This connection shall link the station to the arcade system required around the grade level periphery of the redeveloped buildings.

**Hadassah/Charles Subparcel of Parcel 1****Permitted Uses**

Commercial, residential, hotel, entertainment, open space and cultural.

Parking permitted below grade only.

**Height**

130' maximum for 75' depth from property line along Boylston Street to Hadassah Way and 155' maximum on remainder of site.

**Vehicular Access**

Possible hotel drop-off along or from Boylston Street or Hadassah Way. No additional curb cuts or access shall be permitted if adequate access for servicing or parking is provided at subgrade from other parcels. If no such access is provided, then the necessary access and servicing shall be provided from

Providence Street and/or Hadassah Way in accordance with the provisions of Section F.2.c.(2). All efforts shall be made to avoid any curb cut along Charles Street, although such action will be considered in the event it is the only feasible means of providing the necessary service.

## **PARCEL 2**

### **Park Square Subparcel of Parcel 2**

#### **Permitted Uses**

Commercial, residential, office, hotel, entertainment, open space, cultural and parking.

#### **Height**

300' maximum for residential use, 250' for office use, and 125' for parking.

#### **Vehicular Access**

If no access can be linked to and combined with abutting sub-parcels, then access to servicing shall be provided from Charles Street in accordance with the provisions of Section F.2.c.(2).

### **Church/Charles Subparcel of Parcel 2**

#### **Permitted Uses**

Commercial, residential, office, hotel, entertainment, open space, cultural and parking.

#### **Height**

125' maximum.

#### **Vehicular Access**

From Stuart and Charles Streets, but not within 40' of an intersection. Access to be linked and combined with abutting sub-parcel and Statler Hilton access and also with any subgrade service access serving the project area or a portion thereof.

**Other Requirements**

Every reasonable effort shall be made to include a car rental agency in the first floor of any redevelopment on this parcel.

**PARCEL 3****Charles/Tremont Subparcel of Parcel 3****Permitted Uses**

Commercial, residential, office, hotel, entertainment, open space, cultural and parking.

Every effort should be made to retain the existing Saxon Theater. If the Saxon Theater should be acquired and demolished, a replacement facility of its kind shall be provided in the new development and the existing facade retained. Parking permitted below grade only.

**Height**

145' maximum except for:

- 100' maximum north of a line 50' south of and parallel to the southern boundary of Townsend Place and its projection, or if the development should directly abut the 2 Park Square building, the 100' height may be from the southern boundary of Townsend Place and its projection.
- Every effort shall be made to respect the 125' cornice line along Tremont Street.

**Vehicular Access**

From Allen's Alley, Stuart Street and Charles Street, but not within 40' of an intersection.

**Other Requirements**

Pedestrian easement along the Boylston Place/Warrenton Street alignment and with a minimum width of 45'.

A significant area of public open space which shall be designed in such a way to obviate any adverse environmental effects such

as constant shadowing. This space shall be contiguous with the Boylston Place/Warrenton Street easement and shall be connected by a pedestrian easement to New Charles Street.

Every effort shall be made to:

- (1) Investigate the possibility of coordinating construction with a utilities tunnel in Stuart Street which could include a common party wall and access through redevelopment basement.
- (2) Allow for possible subway easement along Stuart Street.
- (3) Make available a proportion of the available parking spaces to be constructed for evening use of theater patrons.
- (4) Make allowances for express and turnpike bus waiting areas abutting Stuart Street; should such buses be provided, pull-off space could be within the neckdown lane of Stuart Street.

#### **Piano Row/Boylston Place Subparcel of Parcel 3**

##### **Permitted Uses**

Commercial, residential, office, hotel, entertainment, open space and cultural.

##### **Height**

125' maximum north of a line parallel to and 140' from the Boylston Street property line. 35' maximum for remainder of parcel.

##### **Vehicular Access**

No curb cuts are permitted if access for servicing or parking is provided at subgrade from other parcels. If no such access is provided, then the necessary access and servicing shall be provided from Charles Street but not within 40' of an intersection and in accordance with the provisions of Section F.2.c.(2).

**Other Requirements**

45' pedestrian easement along the Boylston Place alignment.

**PARCEL 4**

In accordance with the requirements of the final approval of the Massachusetts Department of Community Affairs, dated November 23, 1976, an environmental impact report, including building mass, use and location study, will be prepared prior to commencement of development on Parcels 4 and 5.

**Permitted Uses**

Commercial, Residential, Office, Hotel, Entertainment, Open Space, and Cultural.

No parking required.

**Height**

No major structure above 125' at the corner of Boylston and Tremont Streets; 650' maximum on remainder of site.

**F.A.R.**

15.

(A bonus of up to 17 F.A.R. may be permitted if certain desired cultural facilities are provided in the development.)

**Vehicular Access**

From Washington and Stuart Streets, but not within 50' of any intersection.

**Other Requirements**

Pedestrian easements through Parcel 4 from Tremont Street to Washington Street and from the northeast and northwest corners to the center of Parcel 4.

Pedestrian connections to Boylston and Essex Subway Stations.

## **PARCEL 5**

### **Permitted Uses**

Commercial, Office, Residential, Hotel, Entertainment, and Parking.

### **Height**

450' maximum.

### **F.A.R.**

15.

### **Vehicular Access**

From Beach, Essex, and Knapp Streets and Harrison Avenue.

### **Other Requirements**

Pedestrian easement at grade along existing Beach Street r.o.w. within Parcel 5.

Pedestrian connections to Essex Subway Station.

## **PARCEL A**

Parcels A and B are not within the area for public acquisition. These controls apply to any redevelopment of these sites whether assembled by abutters or other parties. If Parcel A or B is subdivided or redeveloped in stages, the controls apply to any and all portions of the site. If the Colonial Theatre is to be demolished, a replacement facility of its kind must be provided in the new development or in a location acceptable to the Boston Redevelopment Authority.

### **Permitted Uses**

Commercial, Hotel, Office, Residential, Entertainment, Cultural, Open Space, and Parking.

### **Height**

300' maximum.