

MEMORANDUM

DECEMBER 19, 2013

TO: BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY AND
JAMES TIERNEY, CHIEF OF STAFF

FROM: LINDA KOWALCKY, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF INSTITUTIONAL
SECTOR MANAGEMENT
KATELYN SULLIVAN, PROJECT MANAGER

SUBJECT: THIRD INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN AMENDMENT TO THE
EMERSON COLLEGE INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN AND 1-3
BOYLSTON PLACE PROJECT

SUMMARY: This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA or “Authority”) authorize the Director to: (1) issue an Adequacy Determination approving the Emerson College (“Emerson”) Third Institutional Master Plan Amendment (“Third IMP Amendment”); (2) issue a Scoping Determination waiving further review pursuant to Article 80B-5.3(d) of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”) for the 1-3 Boylston Place Project (“Proposed Project”); (3) issue a Certification of Compliance for Article 80 Large Project Review pursuant to Section 80B-6 of the Code; (4) issue a Certification of Consistency in connection with the Proposed Project pursuant to Section 80D-10 of the Code; (5) petition the Boston Zoning Commission to consider the Emerson IMP Amendment and associated map amendment; and (6) take any and all related actions and execute all documents deemed necessary and appropriate relative to the Emerson IMP Amendment and the Proposed Project, including, but not limited to, execution of a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan and a Cooperation Agreement.

INTRODUCTION

Emerson College (“Emerson” or the “Proponent”) filed an Institutional Master Plan with the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) on October 4, 2002. The BRA approved the Institutional Master Plan on December 5, 2002. The Zoning Commission approved the Institutional Master Plan on December 11, 2002. The Institutional Master Plan has been amended by the First Amendment to the Institutional Master Plan dated May 25, 2006 and effective July 19, 2006 and the Second Amendment to the Institutional Master Plan dated June 29, 2007 and effective September 26, 2007 (together, the “IMP”).

Emerson submitted an Institutional Master Plan Notification Form for a two-year extension of the IMP which was approved by the BRA Board on November 15, 2012.

On August 26, 2013, Emerson College submitted an Institutional Master Plan Notification Form for a Third Amendment to the IMP (“IMP/NF”) and Project Notification Form for the 1-3 Boylston Place Residence Hall Project (“PNF”) to the BRA for review. The IMP/NF and PNF describe the 1-3 Boylston Place Residence Hall Project. Emerson proposes to construct a dormitory for approximately 400 students that consists of approximately 89,900 square feet and a building height of 171 feet at 1-3 Boylston Place in the Midtown Cultural District. The IMP/NF also details the repair and restoration of 80 Boylston Street (The Little Building), the conversion of 122 and 124 Boylston Street (Walker Building) ground floor uses from retail space to a secondary dining facility and the upgrade of the HVAC system of 216 Tremont Street (Union Warren Savings Back Building) (“Proposed Institutional Projects”).

There was a public meeting held on September 3, 2013 where the IMP/NF and PNF were discussed. BRA staff held a Scoping Session with public agencies on September 12, 2013 to review the PNF and IMP/NF. The comment period for the IMP/NF ended on September 25, 2013. The comment period for the PNF ended on September 27, 2013. Comments were accepted until September 27, 2013. A Scoping Determination for the IMP/NF was issued by the BRA on September 30, 2013. In response to the Scoping Determination, Emerson submitted the Third Institutional Master Plan Amendment to the Emerson IMP (the “Third IMP Amendment”) on October 4, 2013. The comment period for the Third IMP Amendment was extended to December 12, 2013. A public meeting was held for the Third IMP Amendment on November 7, 2013.

DESCRIPTION OF 1-3 BOYLSTON PLACE

The 1-3 Boylston Place Residence Hall Project (“Proposed Project”) will provide housing for approximately 375- 400 students and consists of approximately 89,900 square feet, 18 stories and a building height of 171 feet at 1-3 Boylston Place in the Midtown Cultural District. Ground floor uses include an entrance lobby, a fast and casual dining option open to the public, laundry facilities, mail room, security and other support spaces. Emerson also proposes landscaping improvements to Boylston Place.

PROJECT/IMP REVIEW

The Third IMP Amendment is subject to Institutional Master Plan review pursuant to Section 80D of the Boston Zoning Code (the “Code”). The Third IMP Amendment has been reviewed and discussed at two community meetings, including meetings of the Park Plaza CAC group which is the community group identified to advise Emerson and the BRA on the proposed Third IMP Amendment. Emerson has also meet with abutters and interested community members during the review process. Emerson has received

approvals from the Boston Civic Design Commission and the Boston Landmarks Commission. Emerson has also met with BRA Business Development staff to discuss retail opportunities in Boylston Place and around its campus.

RECOMMENDATION

Based on the foregoing, BRA staff recommends that the BRA: (1) issue an Adequacy Determination approving the Emerson College (“Emerson”) Third Institutional Master Plan Amendment (“Third IMP Amendment”); (2) issue a Scoping Determination waiving further review pursuant to Article 80B-5.3(d) of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”) for the 1-3 Boylston Place Project (“Proposed Project”); (3) issue a Certification of Compliance for Article 80 Large Project Review pursuant to Section 80B-6 of the Code; (4) issue a Certification of Consistency in connection with the Proposed Project pursuant to Section 80D-10 of the Code; (5) petition the Boston Zoning Commission to consider the Emerson IMP Amendment and associated map amendment; and (6) take any and all related actions and execute all documents deemed necessary and appropriate relative to the Emerson IMP Amendment and the Proposed Project, including, but not limited to, execution of a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan and a Cooperation Agreement.

An appropriate vote follows:

VOTED: That in connection with the Emerson College (“Emerson”) Third Institutional Master Plan Amendment (“Third IMP Amendment”) presented at a public hearing held pursuant to Section 80D-5.4 of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”) at the offices of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“Authority” or “BRA”) on December 5, 2013, and after consideration of evidence presented at, and in connection with, the proposed Emerson Third IMP Amendment, the BRA finds that: (a) the Emerson Third IMP Amendment complies with the Scoping Determination issued in connection with the Institutional Master Plan Notification Form; (b) the Emerson Third IMP Amendment conforms to the general plan for the City of Boston as a whole; and (d) on balance, nothing in the Emerson Third IMP Amendment will be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare, weighing all the benefits and burdens; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue an Adequacy Determination pursuant to Article 80D-5.4 of the Code approving the Emerson Third IMP Amendment; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Scoping Determination waiving the requirement to file and review a Draft Project Impact Report and Final Impact Report for the 1-3 Boylston Place Project (“Proposed Project”) pursuant to Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Code, which Scoping Determination shall provide that the **Project Notification Form** adequacy describes the impacts of the Proposed Project, subject to further BRA design review; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That, the Director be, and hereby is, authorized pursuant to the provisions of Section 80B-6 of the Code, to issue a Certification of Compliance for the Proposed Project upon completion of the Article 80B Large Project Review; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That, pursuant to Article 80D of the Code, the BRA hereby authorizes the Director to petition the Boston Zoning Commission for approval of the Emerson Third IMP Amendment and to amend “Map 1A, Midtown Cultural District” all in substantial accord with the and map amendment associated therewith presented to the BRA at its hearing on December 5, 2013; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That, the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to issue one or more Certifications of Consistency pursuant to Article 80D-10 of the Code when the Director finds that (a) the Proposed Projects are described adequately in the Emerson Third IMP Amendment and are consistent with the Third IMP Amendment, and (b) the Third IMP Amendment has been approved by the BRA and the Boston Zoning Commission in accordance with the applicable provisions of Article 80D, IMP Review; and

FURTHER

VOTED: That, the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to take any and all actions and execute any and all documents deemed necessary and appropriate by the Director in connection with the foregoing, including, without limitation, a Boston Residents Construction Employment Plan and a Cooperation Agreement.