

1650 Commonwealth Avenue Development

1650 Commonwealth Avenue
Brighton, MA

Application for Small Project Review
Submitted to the

Boston Redevelopment Authority

"What makes the Aberdeen Section so unique is the successful integration here of the built environment with the area's geography. In order to get the best development had out a grid of streets before which all buildings were obliged to give up. In Aberdeen, to create a comfortable residential area that was through built, would, in my opinion, have appropriate and architecture of high or reasonable degree of integration."

"The structure built in Aberdeen in the 1980s or 1990s period, whether single houses or apartment buildings, were of a somewhat high quality."

Dr. William F. Marchione
Aberdeen Brighton Director

the Aberdeen 1650 Commonwealth Avenue Brighton Massachusetts

NOVEMBER 7, 2013 TISE DESIGN ASSOCIATES - 247 WALNUT STREET - NEWTON MASSACHUSETTS 02460 - 617.581.6601 - WWW.TISEDESIGN.COM Project 1 THE ABERDEEN - 1650 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE - BRIGHTON MASSACHUSETTS A 01

April __, 2014

Brian Golden
Acting Director
Boston Redevelopment Authority
1 City Hall Square, 9th Floor
Boston, MA 02201

Re: **1650 Commonwealth Avenue, Brighton / The Aberdeen**

Dear Mr. Golden,

On behalf of proponent 1650 Comm, LLC, I am pleased to submit the enclosed application for Small Project Review pursuant to Section 80E of the Boston Zoning Code. This submission describes a new-construction project proposed for 1650 Commonwealth Avenue in Boston's Brighton neighborhood, located at the intersection of Commonwealth Avenue and Mt. Hood Road.

The project, to be known as "The Aberdeen," will consist of a new, primarily residential, mixed-use building that will contain approximately 39 dwelling units. As the enclosed renderings indicate, the project will be distinguished by a striking, Art Deco-inspired design that will anchor this important corner.

We look forward to working with you on what we are confident will be the next great project for Brighton.

Very truly yours,

Donald W. Wiest

1650 COMMONWEALTH AVENUE

Brighton, Massachusetts

APPLICATION TO THE BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY Pursuant to Article 80 SPR of the Boston Zoning Code

Submitted by

Diamond Sinacori, LLC

For the

**1650 Comm LLC
231 West Canton Street, Suite One
Boston, Massachusetts 02116**

1. PROJECT SUMMARY

- 1.1 Project Team
- 1.2 Project Summary
- 1.3 Community Benefits

2. DETAILED PROJECT INFORMATION

- 2.1 Project Description
- 2.2 Project Financing and Developer Pro Forma
- 2.3 Proposed Project Program, Data and Dimensions
- 2.4 Urban Design Approach - Context, Massing, Materials & Other Design Issues
- 2.5 Traffic, Parking and Access
- 2.6 Anticipated Permits and Approvals

3. BOSTON ZONING CODE

- 3.1 Zoning Context
- 3.2 Zoning Compliance

4. URBAN DESIGN SUBMISSION: PHOTOGRAPHS AND PLANS

1. PROJECT SUMMARY

1.1 Project Team

Developer and Applicant

Diamond Sinacori, LLC: Developer
Merrill H. Diamond, Managing Partner
For the
1650 Comm, LLC, Owner and Applicant
231 West Canton Street, Suite One
Boston, MA 02116
Tel: 617.512.1027
Email: mdiamond@diamondsinacori.com

Legal Counsel

Donald W. Wiest
Dain, Torpy, Le Ray, Wiest & Garner, P.C.
129 South Street
Boston, MA 02111
Tel.: 617.542.4874
Fax: 617.542.4808
Email: dwiest@daintorpy.com

Architecture

Stephen E. Tise, AIA
Tise Design Associates, Inc.
246 Walnut Street
Newton, MA 02460
Tel: 617.581.6601
Email: setarch@aol.com

Surveyor

James P. Toomey, P.L.S.
McKenzie Engineering Group, Inc.
150 Longwater Drive, Suite 101
Norwell, MA 02061
Tel: 781.792.3900, Ext. 215
Fax: 781.792.0333
Email: jtoomey@mckeng.com

(continued)

Construction Management

James Stukel
The Stukel Group, LLC
P.O. Box 590
Hopkinton, MA 01748
Tel: 617.308.8803
Email: jim@stukelgroup.com

Environmental Consultant

Thomas J. Nunno, PE, LSP, LEP
The Vertex Companies, Inc.
One Congress Street, 10th Floor
Boston, MA 02114
Tel: 617.830.7090
Email: tnunno@vertexeng.com

Geotechnical Engineer

TBD

1.2 Project Summary

The proposed project consists of the redevelopment of a 19,850 square foot site at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Mount Hood Road in the Brighton section of Boston, Massachusetts. The redevelopment encompasses the demolition of an existing gas station and constructing a new five-story building containing 39 residential units. There will be a small (approximately 2,600 square feet) retail space on the ground floor along with a lobby, a management office, a fitness center and storage areas for unit owners. There will be five income-restricted units in accordance with the Boston Redevelopment Authority's Inclusionary Development Program.

All vehicular traffic will enter and exit the building's parking area to and from Mount Hood Road. Parking will be both under the rear half of the building and in a parking lot bordering the south side of the site. The design of the project will be described in detail in later sections of this submission, but it could be characterized as a "between the wars" apartment building that takes its cues from other buildings in both Brighton and Brookline, Massachusetts.

The building is unique, but respectful of its neighborhood context and will complement the other buildings developed in Brighton by the developer. These include *The Waterworks at Chestnut Hill* and *1501 Commonwealth Avenue*, the latter now under construction. As is the case with both of these projects, the intention is to increase the amount of home ownership in Brighton.

1.3 Community Benefits

The proposed building will offer many public benefits to the host neighborhood and to the Brighton Section of Boston as a whole. These benefits include:

- A. Creating an attractive new residential building on the site of a former gas station.
- B. Creating 39 new residential units, inclusive of 5 income-restricted residential units and ground floor retail space to enliven the streetscape and the neighborhood.
- C. Committing to certain street improvements including street trees and creating parking along Commonwealth Avenue.
- D. Generating approximately \$250,000 in annual tax revenue for the City of Boston.
- E. Creating more than 140 construction jobs over the length of the proposed project, as well as permanent positions which will be necessary for building management and upkeep.
- F. Implementing the BUILDING A BUILDING program to create interest in area youth in a career in development, architecture and construction.
- G. Creating additional opportunities for homeownership in a part of the City that has long been the repository of student and senior rentals.
- H. Allocating money for the benefit of the host neighborhood for a use to be determined with the Boston Redevelopment Authority and the Brighton Allston Improvement Association (BAIA).

2. DETAILED PROJECT INFORMATION

2.1 Project Description

The Project Site includes 19,850 square feet of land area on one parcel being City of Boston Assessor's Parcel No. 2102015000 at the corner of Commonwealth Avenue and Mount Hood Road in the Brighton section of Boston.

The parcel has been used for a gas station for many years and is now in the process of being remediated by the Seller. The new building will be a welcome and appropriate use for an area that is largely residential in nature.

2.2 Project Financing and Developer Pro Forma

Diamond Sinacori, LLC is a Massachusetts limited liability company that has 35 years of experience in the development of residential real estate, both new construction and adaptive re-use and historic preservation. The firm is acting as the Developer for the ownership entity of the project, the 1650 Comm LLC.

Merrill H. Diamond is a founding partner of **Diamond/Sinacori, LLC**, and will manage the development of the project.

Mr. Diamond has been the recipient of numerous national awards for environmentally sensitive design, historic preservation, adaptive re-use, and creative business development. He has served as both a gubernatorial appointee to the Massachusetts Historical Commission and to the Senate Special Commission on Historic Preservation. Mr. Diamond is a recent member of the Board of Directors of Preservation Mass, the Commonwealth's statewide, non-profit preservation agency. In addition, Mr. Diamond has been named "Entrepreneur of the Year" by Arthur Young / "Venture Magazine;" "Merchant Builder of the Year" by the National Association of Homebuilders (NAHB), and one of "America's Most Valuable People" by "USA Today," the nation's national newspaper. He has been profiled in Jeffrey L. Seglin's book, America's New Breed of Entrepreneurs, and his development firm has twice been named "One of America's Fastest Growing Companies" by "Inc. Magazine."

Diamond Sinacori's recent private-sector real estate development projects include the following: *Stoneleigh*, the historic preservation and revitalization of the Old Norfolk County Jail in Dedham, Massachusetts into residential condominiums; *Kendall Crescent*, the adaptive-reuse, historic preservation, and new construction of the historic Public Works Complex, including the historic Sewell School and Old Town Barn in Brookline, Massachusetts into residential condominiums and office space; *The Waterworks at Chestnut Hill*, a 112 residential condominium complex and museum overlooking the Chestnut Hill Reservoir in Chestnut Hill, Massachusetts; and *The Shops at OCEAN'S GATE*, A 40,000 sf retail center that is the new "face" of the downtown in Marshfield, Massachusetts. The firm is currently developing *The Lancaster*, a new construction, 55 unit condominium development at 1501 Commonwealth Avenue and the historic *Wild-Sargent Estate* in Brookline, Massachusetts.

The firm has also done work in the public sector under the auspices of HUD's innovative HOPE VI program. In addition to working on the revitalization of a number of distressed communities across the country, Mr. Diamond is credited with creating and implementing "The Indianapolis Approach," a method of utilizing local disadvantaged contractors to construct HOPE VI developments -- thus turning HOPE VI construction dollars into an economic development generator to: a) build capacity for local businesses; b) create sustaining jobs; and c) keep most of the HOPE VI grant re-circulating within

the impacted community. Mr. Diamond has spoken at a number of national symposiums relative to this approach and his views on public and affordable housing have been widely published.

In the 35 years of developing residential real estate, the firm has never failed to obtain financing and close on a subject property after executing a Purchase & Sale Agreement with the Commonwealth, a city or town or with a private seller. Diamond Sinacori has strong working relationships with several major lenders in the Boston area and a proven track record of financial security. It is the intention of the firm to finance the development of 1650 Commonwealth Avenue using a combination of private equity and traditional lender financing.

* * *

A detailed Project Pro Forma is available for review by the Boston Redevelopment Authority upon request.

2.3 Anticipated Project Program and Dimensions

Lot Area (in square feet): 19,850 square feet.

Building Height/Stories: 75 feet from median grade on Commonwealth Avenue

Number of Residential Units: 39 units.

- A. 13 one-bedroom units
- B. 26 two-bedroom units
- C. 2 three-bedroom units
- D. Commercial Space: 2,600 square feet on the ground level.
- E. Total of Building Gross Area: 49,848 square feet.
- F. Floor Area Ratio: 2.5
- G. Parking Spaces: 35 at-grade parking spaces.

2.4 Urban Design Approach – Context, Massing, Materials, etc.

The proposed project will consist of a new six story, 49,000+ s.f. building containing 41 dwelling units ranging from 1 to 3 bedrooms in size. In addition, the ground floor of the building will contain both spaces accessory to the building's primary residential use, such as lobby, circulation, and

storage/disposal areas, and 2200 square feet of retail space, currently intended for a neighborhood style café. Parking for 35 vehicles is proposed to the rear of the building, and the spaces will either be under the building above or under a continuous carport. Two of the spaces will be designed for handicapped use, and all areas of the building will be fully accessible in accordance with MAAB requirements.

The design and massing of the proposed structure is very much in keeping with Commonwealth Avenue. The proposed height aligns with the roofline of the adjacent structure at 1662 Commonwealth Avenue and then steps up from 4 to 5 and then 6 levels at the intersection of Mount Hood Street. These stepped levels on the Commonwealth Avenue façade house a series of private and public roof terraces. At the corner of Mount Hood Street, the design calls for a subtly illuminated stair tower clad in obscure channel glass and topped by a decorative roof pavilion. This particular block of Commonwealth Avenue is the highest point on the Avenue in Brighton and the intent is to distinguish 1650 as an iconic marker in a rapidly emerging neighborhood. The building will be detailed in brick, with large multi-paned corner windows that borrow from the nearby Parklake Apartments further out Commonwealth overlooking the reservoir.

The groundplane will consist of a series of terraced site walls that step down Commonwealth Avenue following the natural grade and providing accessible entry points into the first floor uses. Overhanging canopies will provide cover for both the building entry and the retail space. These will contain signage and downlighting to produce a dramatic and welcoming sidewalk experience at all hours. Glazing for the first floor will employ both clear and fret glass, depending on privacy requirements for the uses behind. Sections of floor to ceiling backlit fret glass will also frame the entrances to the main lobby and the adjacent retail space.

Access to the parking will be off Mount Hood Street with no curb cuts required on Commonwealth Avenue. In addition to the off-street parking mentioned above, there will be an enclosed bicycle room for exclusive use by the residents accessed off the driveway. Further consideration of the design of the corner of Commonwealth and Mt. Hood is the introduction of new signage for the project and the hotel located off Mt. Hood and to the rear of this project. A tasteful, traditional monument sign will be located at the apex of the corner to facilitate hotel identification by inbound traffic. Every aspect of the design, including signage, will be subject to BRA design review as the project evolves.

The structural system is being developed and will be a combination of wood frame and steel. Currently, mechanical systems will consist of air sourced heat pumps with individual roof mounted condensing units. The building will be designed to meet stretch code and to be LEED silver certifiable with highly developed thermal ratings and high efficiency, Energy Star fixtures and lighting. Low use plumbing fixtures will be utilized throughout and

recycling will be encouraged in centralized trash rooms on each floor and an enclosed trash room at grade.

2.5 Traffic, Parking and Access

The Proposed Project will provide 35 parking spaces on grade, some of which will be covered under the rear half of the building and the balance covered by a carport located along the south boundary of the site. All of the access and egress to and from the parking areas will be from a curb cut on Mount Hood Road. All loading and unloading activity will be either along the newly created parking spaces along Commonwealth Avenue or in the rear parking area of the building. Ample secure space for bicycle racks will be provided within the building's garage and it is the intention of the Developer to house one or more "Zip Cars" on site.

2.6 Anticipated Permits and Approvals

- | | |
|---|--|
| A. Boston Redevelopment Authority: | Article 80 Small Project Review
Affordable Housing Agreement |
| B. Boston Water & Sewer Commission: | Local Sewer & Water Tie-in and
Site Plan Approval |
| C. Boston Public Safety Commission,
Committee on Licenses: | Parking Garage Related Permits |
| D. Licensing Board / City of Boston: | Common Victualler License |
| E. Board of Appeal | Zoning Relief |
| F. Boston Inspectional Services
Department: | Building Permit
Construction Permit
Certificate of Occupancy
Food Service Health Permit
Food Safety Manager's License
Site Cleanliness License
Dumpster Placement Permit
Sidewalk Café Permit |

3. BOSTON ZONING CODE DATA

3.1 Zoning Context

Map 7A/7B/7C/7D of the Boston Zoning Maps indicates that the Site is located within a Multifamily Residential-1 (“MFR-1”) subdistrict established by Code Article 51, the Allston-Brighton Neighborhood District. Much of the Site is also located within the Commonwealth Avenue Greenbelt Protection Overlay District, or GPOD. Since the Project involves new construction of at least 20,000 square feet of gross floor area, as well as the creation of at least 15 new dwelling units, it is subject to the design review component of Article 80E of the Code, Small Project Review. Due to the Project’s location within a GPOD, it is further subject to Article 80E’s site plan review component.

Because the Site is located at the intersection of two streets, it is a corner lot. The definition of “lot line, front” in Code Article 2A provides in pertinent part that “The owner of a lot abutting on two or more streets may designate as the front lot line whichever of the two widest streets he chooses.” The Proponent designates Commonwealth Avenue as the Project’s front lot line.

In addition, Code Section 51-57.5 provides that, “If a Lot abuts on more than one Street, the requirements for Front Yards shall apply along every Street Line except as otherwise provided in this Section 51-57. The Front Yard requirements of this Article, and not the Side Yard requirements, shall apply to that part of a side Lot line which is also a Street Line extending more than one hundred (100) feet from the intersection of such line with another Street.” According, the relevant front yard setback applies at the Site’s lot lines along both Commonwealth Avenue and Mt. Hood Road.

Finally, note that, while the maximum building height generally applicable within the MFR subdistricts is 35 feet, Footnote 9 to Table D (Residential Subdistricts Dimensional Regulations) provides that “In a Multifamily Residential Subdistrict, for any Proposed Project on a Lot fronting on Commonwealth Avenue, the maximum Building Height shall be fifty-five (55) feet.”

3.2 Zoning Compliance

Use:

The Project’s primary use as a multifamily residential building is allowed within the MFR-1 subdistrict. The proposed ground-level commercial use of a restaurant or retail shop is forbidden within this subdistrict, and will require a variance. In addition, the Project proposes to replace the longstanding sign on the side wall of the adjacent building located at 1660-1662 Commonwealth Avenue, which advertises the nearby Best Western University Hotel, with a monument sign at the corner of the Site at the intersection of Commonwealth

Avenue and Mt. Hood Road. This element of the Project will also require a variance.

Project Dimensions:

The applicable zoning requirements and the approximate dimensions of the anticipated, as-built zoning characteristics of the Proposed Project are as follows:

Dimensional Zoning Category	Min. Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit	Add'l Lot Area per D.U.	Min. Lot Width	Min. Lot Frontage	Max FAR
Required Condition	4,000 for 1 st 3 units	1,000	40'	40'	1.0
Proposed Condition	Lot area = 19,850 sf	440 sf/D.U.	195'	167'	2.5
Relief Required?	No	Yes	No	No	Yes

Dimensional Zoning Category	Max. Building Ht. (stories/ft.)	Min. Usable Open Space per D.U.	Min. Front Yard	Min. Side Yard	Min. Rear Yard	Rear Yard Occup. By Access. Bldgs.
Required Condition	55'/3 stories	200'	20'/Existing Bldg. Alignment	10'	20'	25%
Proposed Condition	75'/6 stories	Total of 2,000'	Determined via BRA Design Review	5'	12'	100%
Relief Required?	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Parking and Loading:

Pursuant to Table J to Article 51, residential uses must supply off-street parking spaces at a ratio of 1.75 spaces per dwelling unit for 1-9 units, and 2.0 spaces for 10 or more units. Parking is required for affordable units at a ratio of 0.7 spaces per

unit. Pursuant to Table K, a project comprising more than 15,000 square feet of gross floor area must provide one loading bay.

The Project will supply a total of 35 parking spaces. It will not incorporate a loading bay.

4. URBAN DESIGN SUBMISSION: PHOTOS & PLANS

Exhibit 1:	Certified Site Plan
Exhibit 2:	Aerial view of site
Exhibit 3:	Ground Floor Plan
Exhibit 4:	Floors 2-4
Exhibit 5:	Floor 5
Exhibit 6:	Floor 6
Exhibit 7:	Front Elevation
Exhibit 8:	Building Section