

Samuel Plimpton  
100 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116

June 6, 2013

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston City Hall, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
One City Hall Place  
Boston, MA 02201

RE: Fisher College Institutional Master Plan Notification Form ("IMPNF")

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

I write to object to the IMPNF as presented at the 6/18/13 Task Force public meeting. The Fisher College impact on our neighborhood is already detrimental, without any of the increases contemplated in the IMPNF, as you heard repeatedly from all of the Task Force and from all of the neighbors present. Attached is an exhibit which details some of the impacts of the proposed IMPNF on the neighborhood:

- 61% increase in beds from 289 to 466 in our neighborhood
- 34% increase in students in our neighborhood
- Virtually no tax payments to Boston, versus a potential of over \$1,000,000 per year
- 500% population density increase as compared to a market residential use

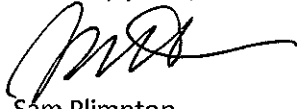
Our street is clogged with loitering students at all hours, visitors, faculty and staff (only 11% of employees live in Boston), delivery trucks, sports vans, and the city is burdened with the additional costs of servicing this dense population. It would be beneficial to the quality of life in our historic neighborhood were the H-3-65 current residential zoning strictly enforced. Fisher should be encouraged to make a long-term plan to relocate to an appropriate site that could revitalize a new neighborhood and provide the school with better facilities (parking, loading docks, outdoor space expansion capacity, housing, etc.). Permitting Fisher College to expand uses prohibited under H-3-65 residential zoning would diminish and degrade the quality and value of our neighborhood, and would reduce tax revenues from currently taxable properties.

Samuel Plimpton  
100 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116

June 6, 2013

I stand ready to work with Fisher on an appropriately timed relocation plan. Please reject this damaging IMP in the overall best interests of the neighborhood, and of the citizens of Boston.

Sincerely yours,



Sam Plimpton

Attachment: Density and Tax Analyses

cc: Mayor Thomas Menino  
Mr. Peter Meade, Director, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Mr. Gerald Autler, Senior Project Manager, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Mr. Howard Kassler, Chair, Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay  
Mr. Will Brownsberger, Massachusetts State Senate  
Mr. Jay Livingstone, Candidate, Massachusetts House of Representatives  
District Eight City Counselor Michael Ross  
City Counselor at Large Stephen Murphy  
City Counselor at Large John R. Connolly  
City Counselor at Large Ayanna Pressley  
City Counselor at Large Felix Arroyo  
Ms. Shaina Aubourg, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services  
Mr. William Young, Senior Preservation Planner, Back Bay Historic District  
Mr. Steve Young, Chair, Beacon Hill Civic Association  
Ms. Anne Brooke, President, Friends of the Public Garden  
Dr. Thomas McGovern, President, Fisher College  
Task Force members

Property	Assessed Land	Assessed Building	Assessed Total	Exm	Parcel s.f.	GFA
102-100 Beacon Street	\$1,784,121	\$2,949,813	\$4,733,934	E	4,950	16,5
104 Beacon Street	\$1,352,063	\$2,234,585	\$3,586,648	E	3,750	10,4
108 Beacon Street	\$2,163,790	\$3,576,143	\$5,739,933	E	6,000	15,8
106 Beacon Street	\$1,405,852	\$2,323,483	\$3,729,335	E	3,900	10,8
111 Beacon Street	\$561,800	\$1,178,200	\$1,740,000	E	2,464	8,5
112 Beacon Street	\$1,135,684	\$1,876,970	\$3,012,654	E	3,150	8,6
114 Beacon Street	\$1,081,895	\$1,788,072	\$2,869,967	E	3,000	8,6
115 Beacon Street	\$931,500	\$1,274,000	\$2,205,500	T	2,464	9,3
118 Beacon Street	\$2,163,790	\$3,848,143	\$6,011,933	E	6,000	21,6
116 Beacon Street	\$1,135,684	\$1,876,970	\$3,012,654	E	3,150	8,6
131 Beacon Street	\$1,238,100	\$1,932,400	\$3,170,500	E	2,795	10,3
133 Beacon Street	\$1,025,300	\$2,145,200	\$3,170,500	E	2,795	9,9
141 Beacon Street	\$668,900	\$1,145,100	\$1,814,000	T	2,464	8,2
139 Beacon Street	\$1,045,100	\$1,493,900	\$2,539,000	T	2,240	7,8
1 Arlington Street	\$1,439,200	\$1,166,300	\$2,605,500	E	4,351	11,9
10 Arlington Street	\$613,500	\$505,000	\$1,118,500	?	2,200	8,0
11 Arlington Street	\$727,900	\$699,100	\$1,427,000	?	2,750	10,2
Total 2013 assessment			\$52,487,558			total sella
2013 due if all taxed at residential rate (\$13.14)			\$689,687			
Tax on Taxable parcels \$			52,816			

**Not included:**(a)dorm on Stuart St. (b) It could not be determined where the School made a total of \$16:

**Notes:**

- Sellable area assumes at 70% of Gross Floor Area (GFA)
- Occupancy assumed at 2/1000 s.f. of sellable areas
- Value assumed at \$600 psf selling price
- Assessment data is for fiscal year 2013
- Tax rate is 2013 residential rate of \$13.14; not known if taxable rates were comm 0.01314
- Per Fisher filings- does not include staff or faculty load: 34 Faculty, 90 staff full time; 122 part time fa
- Institutional Plan submittal by Fisher to BRA on June 7 2013, requests 61% increase in Beds in neighbc

*Nicholas and Marjorie Greville, 61 Mount Vernon Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02108*

June 19, 2013

Re: Fisher College Institutional Master Plan

Katelyn Sullivan  
Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority, 9th Floor  
Boston City Hall  
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms Sullivan,

We would like to express our concern over the proposed Fisher College Institutional Master Plan that anticipates converting several Beacon and Arlington Street houses into college dormitories and offices.

Boston is well known for having a strong urban residential community. We feel it is important to protect the existing building stock and encourage home ownership. The transient character of college life detracts from the community development that is important to maintaining a safe and thriving neighborhood.

We have read the Neighborhood Association of Back Bay Executive Summary and Letter to you of June 7, 2013 and support their conclusion that a Fisher College expansion is not compatible with the goals of our community, and does not fit existing zoning criteria. We urge you to deny the permits for this expansion.

Sincerely yours,



Nicholas Greville



Marjorie Greville

cc. Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay

Joseph and Joan Patton  
120 Marlborough Street  
Boston, MA. 02116  
June 20, 2013

Katelyn Sullivan Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority - 9<sup>th</sup> Fl  
Boston City Hall  
Boston, MA.

RE: Fisher College Expansion

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

As long time residents of Back Bay, over 30 years, we are writing to oppose the proposed expansion of Fisher College.

As parents who remained and raised our children in the city at a time when many residents were fleeing all parts of Boston for the suburbs we recognize the importance of controlling development to ensure growth is allowed without losing the integrity of the area.

Educational institutions in the area of Back Bay already abound with Bay State College, Emerson College, The Commonwealth School, The Advent School, The Kingsley Montessori School, Cardinal Spellman School and The Winthrop School, as well as Fisher College just to name a few.

Educational facilities are important to keeping people interested in the city but should not be at the expense of the quality of life of those who live here. In this particular case there would be greatly increased foot traffic in a heavily used motor area, which is already dangerous for pedestrians and lead to further gridlock. It would also add pressure on our city facilities, i.e., fire department and water and sewer.

There is also the loss of real estate tax revenues placing an extra burden on those already burdened with supporting these and numerous other tax -free institutions.

In addition, as much as these educational institutions try the fact is that college students who move into dorms in the area do not care for the buildings and apartments where they live as much as those who have invested their savings to purchase their homes next door. We know, we have seen it happen again and again as time goes by there is a laxity in maintenance, dorm buildings are filled with bikes lined up against iron railings and along entranceways, and un-kept areas appear in front.

We have been a part of helping our area grow from the beginning – From the Clarendon Street Playground and to the restoration of the Esplanade and hope you will consider our concerns.



**Sullivan, Katelyn**

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**From:** Maria Salas [mariacsalas@mail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2013 12:40 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Cc:** office@marthacoakley.com  
**Subject:** Fisher Scholarships - Attorney General  
**Attachments:** Attachment: Fisher College Scholarships.pdf

To the BRA, Mayor, and Attorney General.

Please read the attached.

Fisher College is not a beneficial institution to Boston students. They prey on poor students and their families just like for-profit colleges. All of the information in the attached is from Department of Education filings.

MS

TO: Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority

FROM: Maria Christina Salas  
161 Beacon Street, Boston, MA 02116

DATE: June 23, 2013

RE: FISHER COLLEGE 'SCHOLARSHIPS'

**Background**

Fisher College does not participate in US News rankings of colleges and is not transparent about many outcomes of a Fisher education. However, independent research firms, like College Factual, analyze, grade and rank colleges based each school's US Department of Education filings.

Value for your Money – Massachusetts	Grade F-	ranked 55 out of 55 colleges
Value for your Money – Nationwide	Grade F-	ranked 1283 out of 1283 colleges
Student to Faculty Ratio	Grade D-	ranked 1440 out of 1803 colleges
Percentage of Full-time teachers	Grade F	ranked 1608 out of 1798 colleges
Expenditures per Student	Grade F+	ranked 1294 out of 1527 colleges
Student Loan Default Rate	Grade F	ranked 1438 out of 1559 colleges

For value, Fisher is not just ranked below average, or low, but dead last nationally. (Source of statistics: College Factual, Inc, 6/21/13, collegefactual.com/)

**Fisher 'Scholarships'**

Category	Grade	Rank
Value for your Money - Nationwide	F-	1283 of 1283
Value for your Money - CT NE MA NH RI VT	F+	16 of 114
Value for your Money - Mass. Massachusetts	F-	55 of 55
Student Body Gender		
Admissions Selectivity	B	516 of 1,774
Average Combined SAT Score (Math & Reading)	D-	1,029 of 1,447
Educational Resources		
Student to Faculty Ratio	D-	1,439 of 1,803
Percentage of Full-Time Teachers	F	1,608 of 1,798
Average Faculty Compensation	F-	906 of 1,170
Expenditures per Student	F+	1,294 of 1,527
Financial Resources		
freshman Freshman Retention Rate	F	114 of 144
graduation Graduation Rate	F-	206 of 414
graduation Graduation Rate (Bacc)	F	1126 of 1,319

Fisher College keeps claiming a strong public good they accomplish because they give scholarships to lots of Boston high school students. The reality is not nearly so rosy! The way the practice works is that a student is given a scholarship, say for \$5,000. The student and their family are obviously happy with this 'free' money. But they will never see that money. The reason is that the money never goes to the student, but instead goes right back to Fisher College as a credit against the student's tuition.

It is very similar to the 'rebate' promotions of car dealers. The sticker price is higher and the consumer is then attracted by a rebate check which then goes toward the purchase of the car. There is no difference between Fisher charging \$45,000 for tuition and giving a \$5,000 scholarship, or alternatively, charging \$40,000 for tuition. The net is exactly the same to both Fisher and the students.

Resident students at Fisher are currently charged \$44,780. This is significantly higher than the fees charged by schools that Fisher competes with for students. Even the for-profit Bay State College on Commonwealth Avenue charges far less at \$36,160. The Benjamin Franklin Institute of Technology on Berkeley Street costs \$28,390 for their bachelor's program and that price includes room, board, tuition, and all fees. BFIT's associates degree programs are even less. The Massachusetts School of Art and design is \$23,600 for tuition, room, board, and fees. Other state schools such as Bridgewater State and Salem State are even less expensive. For example, Framingham State costs only \$16,725, and that price includes tuition, their most expensive meal plan, their most expensive single room, and all fees.

Fisher's commuting students do no better. Fisher's commuting students pay annual tuition and fees of \$27,955. Commuting students at the University of Massachusetts in Boston, Mass Bay Community College, Bunker Hill Community College, and more than a dozen others pay less than \$12,000.

Even with such high fees, Fisher cuts their own costs by having no research faculty, no tenured faculty at all, few full-time faculty, large class sizes, and far less dorm space per student than most schools. Fisher students are paying a premium price for low-budget spending, hence Fisher's horrible grades by independent college research. College Factual ranks Fisher so low because even their 'net' cost is so much higher than comparable schools, more than \$100,000!

college factual				
	Total	Full Time	Part Time	Percent Full Time
Total of Instructional Employees	141	27	114	19.1%
Total of Those With Faculty Status	141	27	114	19.1%
Tenured Faculty				
Non-Tenured Faculty, on Tenure Track				
Not on Tenure Track / No Tenure System	141	27	114	19.1%
Without Faculty Status				
Graduate Assistants				

**Fewer Full-Time Teachers Than Most**  
 Fisher College's use of full-time instructors ranks among the nation's lowest, with only 19.1% of instructors teaching on a full-time basis.

In fact, the practice of private colleges enticing students with scholarships and federal grants, and then loading them up with student loans, is being prosecuted by attorney general offices across the country. It is a wonderful business model from the college's perspective. They give away money, which goes right back to them. As an accredited college, the students get some federal grant money, and the students and their parents take out loans to make up the difference. The school gets the full amount of their fees up front and takes no risk. If any students drop out, they are simply replaced by other students.

The practice is being prosecuted because it preys upon students and their parents, and especially on the poor. The drop-out rate at such private institutions is very high, and Fisher is no exception. Fisher College has a four year graduation rate of only 13%! The Fisher College student loan

default rate gets a grade of 'F' from College Factual, because Fisher students have among the highest default rates in the country.

Student loans are also a very special debt in that they survive bankruptcy. A student and their parents will never get away from these loans. They will be a burden on them for decades. When Fisher College talks about how generous they are to Boston high school students, it should be pointed out that the most generous way to treat Boston high school students is not to load them with debt, but to suggest that they instead consider schools that are priced much more competitively and not be enticed by the 'scholarship' from Fisher College.

college factual	
Total Estimated Degree Value of \$132,872	
A bachelor's degree at Fisher College will cost you about \$240,522 with no aid. This is based on an average sticker price of \$44,234 per year and an average of 5.4 years to graduate. Obtaining that same bachelor's degree at other colleges with similar quality rankings would cost you \$132,872.	
	<b>Amount</b>
Average Yearly Cost	\$44,234
Average Years to Graduate	5.4
Estimated Average Total Cost of Degree	\$240,522
Estimated Value of College Degree	\$132,872

**Value Depends on Net Price**

How much education you get for your money is entirely relative to how much you will ultimately pay for your degree at Fisher College. Most students will not pay the full sticker price and few students fit perfectly into 'averages'. However, to get a sense of how value for your educational dollar might vary based on individual circumstances, look at the table below to determine your likely cost of a bachelor's degree. Now compare this value metric for each college you are interested in.

Boston families need to be educated about the realities of a Fisher education: how expensive Fisher is compared to alternatives, how little Fisher spends on full-time teachers, how little Fisher spends on housing because they cram students into rooms, how few Fisher students graduate in four years, and how high the Fisher student loan default rate is.

Fisher should not get any applause for giving 'scholarship' money back to themselves. As the lowest ranked school in the country for value, with one of the lowest four year graduation rates, one of the highest student loan default rates, and one of the lowest in per-pupil spending, Fisher should be investigated by the Massachusetts Attorney-General, who is copied below.

Fisher should also not be allowed to expand their predatory practices by enlarging their school.

cc: Massachusetts Attorney-General Marsha Coakley



100 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston City Hall, 9<sup>th</sup> Floor  
One City Hall Place  
Boston, MA 02201

RE: Fisher College Institutional Master Plan Notification Form ("IMPNF")

Dear Katelyn:

I am writing to object to the proposed IMPNF submitted to the B.R.A. by Fisher College. I live on the block in question, and feel the college already creates very difficult impacts on our neighborhood, before any increase in density. The proposal increases the dorm beds in our block from 289 to 466 (61%) and the student count from 820 to 1100 (34%), and that is without accounting for resulting increases in staff, faculty, service/delivery vehicles, and visitors. The City has made great strides to work with local neighborhoods to preserve and enhance residential neighborhoods and parks. This IMPNF would create substantial negative impacts on residents, no tax dollars, and few benefits for allowing non-conforming dorm and institutional uses to expand in a historical residential zoned H-3-65 neighborhood.

Please encourage Fisher to withdraw the plan, and to work constructively with neighbors to craft a long-term exit plan from this historic residential neighborhood. That exit would produce tangible benefits in terms of reducing density, increasing taxes, noise reduction, traffic reduction, disturbance reduction, and lower demand for rubbish/water/sewer/power. Please do not damage our neighborhood by approving this plan.

Sincerely yours,



Wendy Shattuck

Cc:

Mayor Thomas Menino  
Mr. Peter Meade, Director, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Mr. Henry Lee, citizen  
Antonia Pollak, Commissioner, Boston Parks

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Tsai, Theodore [theodore.tsai@novartis.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, June 24, 2013 4:52 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Cc:** sherry.tsai@childrens.harvard.edu

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

We live at 129 Beacon and though we have a keen interest in Fisher College plans, we have been unable to attend your open meetings. I have written previously to the Back Bay Neighborhood Association and am writing directly to you as further documentation of our objection to the expansion plan.

The objections have been enumerated by the Back Bay Neighborhood Association and we support most of these points. From our perspective, the entire character of the neighborhood will be further changed with the proposed expansion – and adversely so. The current environment is already raucous with students hanging out, yelling at each other on or across the street, and with their already large numbers, causing congestion of the sidewalks and interfering with traffic on Beacon street as they jaywalk in the middle of the block. On weekend evenings, the situation is frequently worse, with a block party atmosphere, loud music, and double parked vehicles of students or their friends invading the block. All of this will only be exacerbated – and to an intolerable, unacceptable level, by increasing the number of resident students. Fisher college frequently double parks large tour buses on the block waiting for or dropping off students. This on a block that already is stressed by the large volume of traffic coming off of Storrow drive. I can't see how more such buses can be accommodated on this stretch of Beacon St. College events such as moving days, parent days, etc, eliminate parking, lead to more double parking and an incredible degree of sidewalk congestion and jaywalking that in turn leads to angry drivers sounding horns and even more noise.

Beacon St admittedly is not a quiet street but the level of noise and traffic should not be exacerbated by further increasing housing density and establishing what amounts to a commercial enterprise on a residential block.

Theodore Tsai

Theodore F Tsai MD MPH FIDSA  
Novartis Vaccines  
350 Massachusetts Ave  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
Landline: +1 617 871 8052  
Cell: +1 610 804 0988

June 25, 2013

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

[Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov)

I am writing to express my concern and absolute vote of NO to the proposed expansion of Fisher College. I purchased my condo at 109 Beacon St. Unit 5 in May of 2012. At the time, I was aware of the Fisher College presence but felt as a small college with a very small number of students in residence (with several housed on Stuart St.) that the charm and history of the Back Bay was not compromised. The proposal for expansion is completely inappropriate for the area and not fair to the current residents. The following facts have been disclosed:

- 1100 planned Fisher students on our block of Beacon Street.
- 4500 Square feet of new student services (café, etc.) on both sides of Beacon Street. Probably more in the future.
- Loss of property value - only people who don't mind living in a college quad will buy property on Beacon Street.
- Higher property taxes - Fisher buildings converted to dorms become tax exempt while demand on city services increases dramatically – water, sewer, fire, police, traffic, trash, etc.
- Parking will be much more difficult. More students, more teachers, more staff all parking in our neighborhood.
- More delivery trucks clogging traffic: more paper, books, food, laundry, Coke, pizzas with more student traffic (on foot and in cars) will significantly worsen the congestion and traffic noise

Not only is the infrastructure not in place to accommodate the expansion but the impact on tax revenue, etc. is real. As a mother with a son that attended Northeastern University and a daughter currently at Boston University, I understand the appeal of going to school in Boston. However, if we look at how both BU and NEU have expanded, it is well thought out and their expansions have enhanced their areas....they do not infringe on area residences and the feel of the campuses is exactly that...a campus. Fisher resides on a historic street next to the Public Garden...this area is not meant to be a bustling college campus! It needs to be preserved.

Please count myself and my children as three votes of complete disapproval.

Thank you,

Tracy Pesanelli

109 Beacon St. Unit 5

Boston, Mass. 02116

978-618-5538

June 25, 2013

Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
City of Boston  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

RE: Fisher IMP

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

My husband and I moved into 120 Beacon Street just over a decade ago and have chosen to remain in the city to raise our two daughters, ages 2 and 5 years old. When looking to buy our unit, we were initially hesitant to move next to Fisher College because we were made aware of the 2001 Fisher-related shooting. However, we fell in love with our building's central location (which directly abuts Fisher's building at 118 Beacon Street) and decided to take a chance. While Fisher has come a long way over the past decade, I am writing to express my family's strong opposition to Fisher College's IMP; in short, the block of Beacon Street between Arlington Street and Berkeley Street is not an appropriate location for Fisher College to expand its footprint.

As I started researching Fisher College's growth over the decades, I was emailed a copy of the City of Boston Board of Appeal's decision against Fisher College on July 1<sup>st</sup>, 1975 (Case #BZC-3337). This particular Fisher request dealt with 131 Beacon Street and Fisher College's objective "*to allow occupancy to be changed from dormitory to school classrooms in an Apartment House (H-5-70) district.*" The final ruling and subsequent appeal stated that, "*The Board finds that all the conditions required for granting a Conditional Use under Article 6, Section 6-3 of the Code have not been met. The Board also finds that [1] the specific site is not an appropriate location for such a use, [2] that the proposed use will adversely affect the neighborhood, [3] that a nuisance will be created by the use, [4] that there will be a serious hazard to vehicles and pedestrians. And [5] that adequate and appropriate facilities cannot be provided on this locus for the proper operation of the intended use.*"

Little has changed in the 38 years since Fisher's 1975 appeal was denied. However, after recently buying more Back Bay property on Arlington Street, Fisher College has miraculously been able to skirt the traditional zoning process and is now engaged in the opaque IMP process where straight-forward zoning criteria used to measure a proposal's impact, like those five criteria mentioned in the Board of Appeal's 1975 decision against Fisher, are not required. I feel that it is important for the BRA decision makers to hear directly from those who live in the neighborhood in order to realize how Fisher's day to day activities are already stretching the limits of what should be allowed to safely occur in a residential Back Bay neighborhood. If I were to use the Boston Board of Appeal's "conditions required for granting a Conditional Use" as my guide, then my conclusions would be exactly the same today as the Board of Appeal's conclusions in 1975. Let me elaborate:

**[1] The specific site is not an appropriate location for such a use**

As someone who abuts Fisher and witnesses the workings of the college on a daily basis, I believe that today, even before the proposed 177-bed expansion outlined in the IMP, the first block of Back Bay is

simply too small a footprint for any college to run a successful and rewarding educational endeavor. This is especially true given that Fisher College's room & board rate, at \$13,786 in 2012-2013, is comparable to institutions with enough *properly zoned* space to offer their city students significantly better facilities. NABB has written excellent letters to the BRA outlining the underlying zoning issues pertaining to Fisher College's current plan and I strongly agree with NABB's opposition and the reasoning behind it.

**[2] The proposed use will adversely affect the neighborhood**

I will elaborate below on a number of the IMP's adverse effects. But even in its present state Fisher College is testing the delicate balance between residential and student life, and *any* growth from its current state will adversely tip this scale. As mentioned in the IMP, Fisher College is looking to expand its enrollment by 280 students over a 10-year period. At its current pace, Fisher College appears to be trending far ahead of its projected 10-year growth rate. Is the current IMP, then, simply the beginning of Fisher's Back Bay expansion plans? When and on what city block will the growth stop?

**[3] A nuisance will be created by the use**

**(a) Smoking**

Smoking is currently a significant problem on Beacon Street. As students have nowhere to congregate in between classes, they are pushed onto the sidewalks in front of 102-118 Beacon Street. During most hours of the day students can be found eating, drinking and smoking on the sidewalks. The second hand smoke not only pollutes the air for those looking to pass by on the sidewalk, but it also billows up to the adjacent residential buildings. Many families like ours pass through this block of Beacon Street to bring our children to local schools on the flat of Beacon Hill or to the bus stop in front of the Hampshire House. Neighborhood children passing through are constantly subjected to second hand smoke, not to mention the negative images of "cool" young adults smoking. While Fisher College has a smoking policy in place, with punishment for those who break the rules, this policy appears to have been difficult to enforce. Fisher frequently cites the fact that the sidewalk is further than 25 feet from the Fisher buildings and, as such, they cannot stop students from smoking on the sidewalk. I would ask Fisher College why it is unable to adopt a smoke-free campus (as has been done by 1,100 colleges and universities across the nation and most recently by Boston's own Northeastern University beginning in Fall 2013)?

**(b) Noise**

Above and beyond general student commotion (yelling, music, etc.), the noise associated with delivery vehicles can be extremely disruptive. Specifically, Fisher College receives very early morning deliveries in front of 118 Beacon Street. One example of this is a Coca-Cola truck that frequently makes its delivery around 6:00am, despite the fact that truck traffic is legally restricted in our residential neighborhood between 11:00pm and 7:00am. After months of reassurance, my two young daughters now know that the loud booming sound made when the back door of the truck is raised and lowered is not thunder, though it still wakes them up without fail every day that a delivery occurs.

There is also a significant concern amongst neighbors regarding Fisher College's ability to rent out its unoccupied dorm space during the summer months when school is not in session. The

warmer weather, coupled with a transient summer group with little vested interest in the neighborhood, leads to significantly more noise in the summer. If Fisher is allowed to convert the residential buildings at 139 & 141 Beacon Street to dormitories, then the BRA should seriously consider making a clause that the buildings are for Fisher College's use and could not be subletted during the summer months to others looking for space. If these buildings, therefore, need to sit idle and not produce income for the College during the summer months, then that is a consequence that should be accepted.

**[4] There will be a serious hazard to vehicles and pedestrians**

**(a) Double Parking**

Double parking on both sides of Beacon Street is a serious hazard to vehicles and pedestrians. During the course of the day many vehicles can be seen double-parked outside of 116-118 Beacon Street. These vehicles include, but are not limited to, those of commuting students and faculty, delivery trucks of all sizes and mega buses transporting Fisher student-athletes.

Students and faculty who commute to school by car have very few parking options. For this reason, many are transported to and from school by someone who is forced to double-park on the block while waiting for their passenger. Often there are multiple cars double parked outside of 116-118 Beacon, many of which don't have their hazard lights blinking.

During the various sporting seasons Fisher College uses huge buses to transport its athletes to playing fields and practice facilities outside of the city. These buses frequently sit double-parked for 30 minutes at a time at 116-118 Beacon Street waiting for students to board. Fisher College officials will state that the school's policy doesn't allow for drivers to idle on Beacon Street for a significant amount of time, but we neighbors know this not to be true from firsthand experience.

Lastly, Fisher College receives multiple deliveries in front of the 116-118 Beacon Street throughout the course of the day. These large trucks also create a hazard for vehicles.

All of the double-parking mentioned above causes significant congestion on Beacon Street. The Beacon Street block between Arlington Street and Berkeley Street has some unique characteristics. On the Arlington Street side of the street is an off ramp from Storrow Drive and on the Berkeley Street side it is an on ramp to both directions of Storrow drive. This obviously increases the traffic flow on this block of Beacon Street and the heavy vehicular traffic makes this block even less favorable for Fisher College, which is looking to expand its presence on both sides of the block. The impact of just one car being double parked can delay the flow of traffic on this block substantially and this ripple effect is especially obvious during rush hour when idled cars stretch for blocks up Beacon Street toward the State House. My neighbor alerted our building to Mass DOT studies that point to an average daily traffic load on Beacon Street of over 16,000 vehicles, more than even Boylston Street, and a grade of "C" because of current traffic delays. This level of traffic delay is only a few seconds away from being a "D" or even "E." Given that we are already at unacceptable levels, an expansion by Fisher College on this block would undoubtedly put us over the edge.

**(b) Jaywalking**

Jaywalking is a significant safety concern and it is amazing, given the frequency with which it occurs, that no one has been seriously injured to date. Most of the Fisher College student foot traffic passes in and out of 116 Beacon Street. Unfortunately 116 Beacon Street is located in the middle of the block, far away from the cross walks that span either end of the block. Instead of utilizing the crosswalks, students frequently can be seen dashing across the street with little regard to oncoming traffic. Fisher College's IMP indicates that the school intends to convert the 139 & 141 Beacon Street buildings to dormitories. By having the new dormitories across the street from the cafeteria, student center and classrooms, even more students will be looking to traverse Beacon Street throughout the day. If the college is looking to add 86 beds in the new dorms on the south side of Beacon Street (43 beds in each dorm) and one assumes that each student will need to enter the cafeteria (on the north side) three times a day for meals, then the need for food alone will cause students to make **516 extra trips across our block of Beacon Street each day**. It also sounds as if Fisher College may look to add both a student center and a gym on the south side of Beacon Street, which would pull students living on the north side of the street across Beacon Street to these new facilities. Obviously jay walking is an extremely dangerous situation that should be addressed immediately.

**[5] Adequate and appropriate facilities cannot be provided on this locus for the proper operation of the intended use.**

**(a) Microdorms.**

As pointed out by my neighbor, Fisher College's new dorms proposed for 139 & 141 Beacon Street appear to be significantly smaller in size than those of other Boston colleges and even those on campus at present (180 sq ft/bed at Fisher vs. 365 sq ft/bed at Suffolk). If students cannot comfortably relax in their dorm rooms, then they will be spending more time in public areas. This could lead to larger groups of students congregating on the sidewalks, the Esplanade and the Boston Garden, which in turn could lead to negative behavior that may be deemed a "nuisance" to the neighborhood. I would ask the BRA to investigate the size of the dorms being proposed by Fisher in the IMP and have the college provide acceptable common areas where students can have a chance to be together while not upsetting their residential neighbors.

**(b) Lack of Loading Dock.**

It is difficult to comprehend how Fisher College could produce an IMP where it has designed an outdoor space behind 118 Beacon Street without even considering the creation of a loading dock somewhere on Back Street. I truly believe this fact alone illustrates how out of touch the college is regarding its true impact on the neighborhood, and frankly anyone who has to commute via Beacon Street.

Fisher College receives deliveries at all hours of the day. At present delivery trucks of all sizes can be seen loading and unloading on Beacon Street, on the off ramp from Storrow Drive next to 100 Beacon, and on Back Street. Because Fisher College utilizes parking on both sides of Back Street, the street is impassable when delivery trucks or athletic vans come to service the school.

Not only is this a nuisance for those looking to proceed up Back Street, but it is also a safety hazard for emergency vehicles. I would urge the BRA to require Fisher College to install a loading area that is up to current code – without disrupting traffic. I would also recommend that the BRA look into the safety issue being created at present by having parking (and/or an institutional dumpster) on both sides of Back Street.

As you and the BRA consider Fisher's IMP, I would ask that the BRA request that Fisher specifically address every potential problem mentioned in this letter. Thank you very much for your consideration and for the energy that you and the other BRA members are putting into a thorough and thoughtful review of the Fisher College IMP.

Best Regards,

Kate Shepherd  
120 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116



## Sullivan, Katelyn

---

**From:** kbell4us@yahoo.com  
**Sent:** Wednesday, June 26, 2013 11:18 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Re: REMINDER: Fisher College Public Meeting tonight at 6PM

Thanks for the note, I can't make the meeting tonight (out of town on business) but strongly oppose the expansion.

Sent via BlackBerry by AT&T

---

**From:** "Sullivan, Katelyn" <[Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov)>  
**Date:** Wed, 26 Jun 2013 11:07:21 -0400  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn <[Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov)>  
**Subject:** REMINDER: Fisher College Public Meeting tonight at 6PM

Greetings-

This is an email reminder that there will be a Public Meeting tonight regarding the recently filed Fisher College Institutional Master Plan Notification Form ("IMPNF") in Fisher College's Alumni Hall, 116 Beacon Street. Tonight's presentation will be similar to the presentation shown at the last Task Force meeting. Please see attached draft agenda. As you can see, when Fisher is finished with their presentation, we will go right into public questions and comments about their plan. If there are any questions please use the information below.

You can access an electronic copy of the IMPNF at  
<http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org/DevelopmentProjects/devprojects.asp?action=ViewProject&ProjectID=1568>.

Thank you,

Katelyn

Katelyn Sullivan  
Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201  
P: 617-918-4425  
[Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov)

Sandra Nanberg  
35 Marlborough st  
Boston, MA 02116

June 26, 2013

I am writing to voice my strong opposition to the Fisher College proposal to expand the number of students currently housed on Beacon Street between Arlington and Berkeley.

After listening to the presentation last week I feel that attempts to create more dormitory space are poorly thought out. With only 200 square feet of living space, the young people housed in the proposed dorms will naturally seek places large enough to congregate in groups. It makes sense that they will gravitate to the closest outdoor spaces, on Beacon Street and in the alley, creating noise and changing the quiet residential character of the neighborhood. Although a proposed "terrace" will be available to students at 118 Beacon, I fear that students will find it much easier to congregate just outside of their residence.

In addition to the noise I am concerned about public smoking (debris as well as air pollution) and about potential drug activity. During the past year I have returned home mid-day to find groups of young men with backpacks congregating in an area behind my garage which is obscured from view by protruding brick walls at either side. On one occasion the group quickly disbanded when I approached in my car and I found the keypad cover open. Another time the group stayed in place behind the garage. I felt unsafe and drove on, not returning to open the garage till later. At no time last year did I observe Fisher patrolling the alley.

I urge you to deny approval of the Fisher expansion and that you recommend that the college move from Beacon Street to an area where a real campus could provide a sense of college life including appropriate space for socialization and recreation for its' students. Surely Beacon Street is inadequate for such use.

Best regards,  
Sandra Nanberg



June 26, 2013

Ms. Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston City Hall, Ninth Floor  
One City Hall Place, Boston, MA 02201

**Re: Fisher College Institutional Master Plan Notification Form**

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

Cutting through the rhetoric I wish to reemphasize the Standards for Institutional Master Plan Review Approval defined in Section 80D-4 of the Code, specifically:

*".... The Boston Redevelopment Authority shall approve an Institutional Master Plan only if the Authority finds that: (a) the Institutional Master Plan conforms to the provisions of this Article; (b) the Institutional Master Plan conforms to the plan for the City as a whole; and (c) on balance, nothing in the Institutional Master Plan will be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare, weighing all the benefits and burdens." Emphasis added*

Zoning use item #16A "College or university granting degrees by authority of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts" is and has been for over thirty-five (35) years a **forbidden use** in the H-3-65 zoning of the residential section of the Back Bay Historic District. By definition a **forbidden use** does not "conform to the plan for the City as a whole." To the contrary the plan for the City as a whole envisions the exclusion of material extensions or intensifications of forbidden uses in the residential districts.

Separately and equally significant as documented by voluminous public verbal and written comment to date and other documentation and analysis the proposed extension of college use in the residentially zoned section of the Back Bay Historic District would indeed be "injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare."

Essentially each of the major elements of the referenced proposal is materially in conflict with the Standards for Institutional Master Plan Review Approval of Section 80D-4. The proposal should be withdrawn and fundamentally revised wholly outside the residential community before resubmittal.

Sincerely,

  
V. B. Castellani, Chair Zoning Committee

VBC/mmc

cc: Mayor Thomas M Menino  
Mr. Peter Meade, Director, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
District Eight City Councilor Michael Ross  
Ms. Linda Kowalocky, Deputy Director for Institutional Sector Management  
Dr. Thomas McGovern, President, Fisher College

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Susan Prindle

Patricia Quinn

Ellen Rooney

Deirdre Rosenberg

Jacqueline Royce

Peter Sherin

Barry Solar

Anne Swanson

Jack Wallace

Sam Wallace

Steve Wintermeier

Marvin Wool

Jacquelin Yessian

Emily Gallup Fayen  
*Office Administrator*

## Sullivan, Katelyn

---

**From:** Larry.Blankstein@genzyme.com  
**Sent:** Thursday, June 27, 2013 7:42 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Fisher Expansion Plans

Dear Katelyn:

Thank you for doing an excellent job facilitating the meeting last night at Fisher College. It is not easy when you have so many people who want to comment on the proposal.

I live at 127 Beacon street for the past 10 years and I am aligned with all my neighbors strongly opposing the Fisher expansion plan. As you can tell from the discussion at all the meetings everyone who lives on Beacon Street between Arlington and Berkeley Street oppose this expansion. It will add an additional 177 students to the street. This will result in more noise after midnight, more drug use in our neighborhood, more traffic problems, etc. I do not believe Fisher will be able to mitigate any of these issues. They have not effectively dealt with these issues for the past 10 years that I have lived at 127 Beacon. I have no confidence they will be able to manage these issues with an additional 177 students on our street. We trust that your office will have a strong voice in opposing this expansion. As Boston is attempting to return neighborhoods to residential focus, the BRA should not support, in fact cannot, support this expansion. It makes no sense to expand a college in such a historic area. As indicated at the meeting, Emerson College realized having a vibrant campus in a residential part of the city did not make sense and moved to a non-residential area. We want Fisher to strongly consider this same strategy and look to move out of this very historic section of Boston. In talking to many of my neighbors, after the meeting last night, we are all in agreement that we oppose any plan that will increase the dorm space by even one student in our neighborhood.

Thank you,

Larry Blankstein PhD

Senior Director Clinical Development

Genzyme Corporation / Genzyme Center / 500 Kendall Street / Cambridge, MA 02142

P: 617-768-6635 / F: 617-768-6417 / M: 617-590- 1225/ [Larry.Blankstein@genzyme.com](mailto:Larry.Blankstein@genzyme.com)

  
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# STOP FISHER COLLEGE EXPANSION PLAN

## PETITION

### 180 Beacon Street Residents

NAME	UNIT #	SIGNATURE
Marcia Kamentzky	17G	Marcia Kamentzky
Altouvdra S. Watkins	5A	Altouvdra S. Watkins
Irene Taylor	16E	Irene Taylor
SAUL TOUSTER	16E	Saul Toster
Joshua Kim	8C	Joshua Kim
Stephanie Smith	1A	Stephanie Smith
Stephen A. Soderberg	14C	Stephen A. Soderberg
STEVE SODERBERG	14E	Steve Soderberg
Reed B. Martin	3-C	Reed B. Martin
Judith Solow		Judith Solow
Lewis Braverman	8-E	Lewis Braverman
Patrice Khatchadorian	7C	Patrice Khatchadorian
MONICA YEO	8C	Monica Yeo
Helen Siegel	7A	Helen Siegel
Tara H. Tawzer	11C	Tara H. Tawzer
Maureen Twomey	7G	Maureen Twomey
Marilyn Lilly	5-F	Marilyn Lilly
Lee Twomey	7G	Lee Twomey
Christine May	16F	Christine May
Susan Singer	2B	Susan J. Singer
Oliver & Phil Barber	66	Oliver J. Barber

# STOP FISHER COLLEGE EXPANSION PLAN

## PETITION

### 180 Beacon Street Residents

NAME	UNIT #	SIGNATURE
Ruth Abrams	15C	Ruth Abrams
MARY HARRINGTON	14D	Mary Harrington
Eileen BROWN	13E	Eileen Brown
George Mansour	3A	George Mansour
John J. Brown	18E	John J. Brown
SUSAN COHEN	106	Susan Cohen
Gerald Cohen	106	Gerald Cohen
Sandra Krakoff	12G	Sandra Krakoff
Baron L. Solar	4G	Baron L. Solar
John S. Foster	18AB	John S. Foster
Anne M. LaGriffe	16A	Anne M. LaGriffe
Paul W. Timnegan	1E	Paul W. Timnegan
Hertud Schradenberg	14B	Hertud Schradenberg
Alex M. Lafat	4C	Alex M. Lafat
William R. Watkins	5A	William R. Watkins
FRANCES DUFFLY	3F	FRANCES DUFFLY
Virginia Saunders	3B	Virginia Saunders
Lutz Brand	6D+E	Lutz Brand
Randa Jacobson	14A	Randa Jacobson
GEORGE JACOBSON	14A	George Jacobson
Ted Fox	15A	Ted Fox
Ann Higgins	7B	Ann Higgins



June 24, 2013

Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston, MA 02201

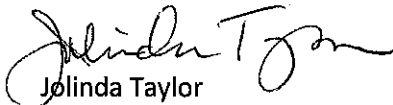
Dear Ms. Sullivan,

I am writing to express my opposition to the expansion of the Fisher College presence in Back Bay. My main objections are related to quality of life issues.

Fisher College already has a large, concentrated student body without a campus. There is no parking lot. As a result, the narrow sidewalks in front of the Fisher buildings are often crowded and blocked by congregating students who, naturally, want to chat with each other outside. The double-parked vehicles have no alternative when dropping off or picking up students. In addition, the first block of Beacon Street is a feeder block for City commuters turning right on Berkeley to go onto Storrow Drive East and West. Often there is gridlock due to the reduced number of lanes open to cars. It is not the fault of the students that there is no campus and that their buildings were never intended for use by a college. To expand the student population would compound these already well-known problems for students, pedestrians, and vehicular traffic in that block of Beacon Street.

Back Bay is a residential neighborhood. There are no large, concentrated institutions located in the neighborhood, and for good reasons. College students need space to play, talk and get out and about. Their hours are very different from their residential neighbors. The sheer quantity of people going in and out of the former townhouses is a sign of overwhelming the neighborhood. I understand Fisher has other campuses. Perhaps the administration should consider a satellite campus in Boston in a location with more open space, access to park lands, and a parking lot. Fisher students deserve a better campus experience.

Respectfully submitted,



Jolinda Taylor  
276 Marlborough Street #7  
Boston, MA 02116





## Sullivan, Katelyn

---

**From:** Kim & Charles Perkins [kymchuck@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 30, 2013 7:57 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Cc:** Mayor; Ross, Michael (City Council); Arroyo, Felix; Pressley, Ayanna; Connolly, John (City Council); Murphy, Stephen (Councilor); will@mywillbrownsberger.com; Meade, Peter; info@charlesforboston.com; danconley2013@gmail.com; cgrichie1@mac.com; rob@robconsalvo.com; will@willdorcena.com; info@billforboston.com; martinjwalsh02125@gmail.com; ccyancey@aol.com  
**Subject:** 111 Beacon Street Change of Use  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**TO:** Katelyn Sullivan  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
City of Boston  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

**From:** Kim and Charles Perkins  
109 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116  
[kymchuck@gmail.com](mailto:kymchuck@gmail.com)

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the change of use by Fisher College at 111 Beacon Street.

Once raised by residents at the June 26th meeting, Fisher acknowledged it is in fact changing the use of 111 Beacon Street, despite it not being documented in the IMP. This secrecy by Fisher violates the intent of the IMP. With that building across Beacon Street from dorms and other Fisher buildings, it is clearly a significant factor regarding the issues surfaced - jaywalking, congestion, noise - since student activity will increase significantly. If an athletic facility is constructed there, all of the above will increase. In addition, the use of the building would likely be extended to early morning and late in the evening so impact on residents would be very large.

I therefore request that Fisher stop work on their proposed athletic facility at 111 Beacon and not be permitted to make any change of use at 111 Beacon Street until an IMP is fully approved.

Michael Weingarten  
120 Beacon Street #4  
Boston, MA 02116  
mikew@signallake.com

July 1, 2013

## Fisher IMPNF: Economic Benefits for The City of Boston

This memo considers one of the central questions facing the BRA; namely, what are the economic benefits for the City of Boston if the BRA approves Fisher's Institutional Master Plan? Are these benefits sufficiently large (and superior to other options) that they more than offset the prospective damage to the Back Bay residential neighborhood?

Our conclusion is that ***the IMPNF, in which Fisher stays in Back Bay and expands its footprint there, is not nearly as attractive economically for the City compared to plans in which Fisher moves to other Boston neighborhoods in whole or in part. On every metric, the IMPNF fails decisively.***

This is because unlike some of the other local projects that the BRA is currently considering (e.g., Trinity Place and Copley Place), ***the Fisher IMPNF provides no major construction boost to the economy, does not add to Boston household income and does not add to property taxes.***

***The IMPNF also brings with it enormous potential damage to the Back Bay residential neighborhood.***

The strongest argument for the IMPNF is that it is needed to help an institution grow (Fisher), in an industry (higher education) that is important to the City of Boston. The problem with this argument is that we believe that ***Fisher, like Emerson before it, can only continue to grow if it moves to modern facilities with adequate space. It will have difficulty growing if it stays with a 100% Back Bay footprint.*** As an Emerson Vice President said a decade ago,

*"The completion of the relocation from Back Bay to midtown will provide Emerson with a larger, more efficient, fully accessible, safer, more cohesive and dramatically more up-to-date Boston campus than it had 10 years ago... the growth of the institution ... had already rendered a collection of charming brownstones and small apartment buildings obsolete."*

-- Source: E. Douglas Banks, "Emerson College tunes up for its Piano Row project," *Boston Business Journal*, October 20, 2003

To the extent that there is any risk to the Fisher 'brand' by moving, this can be managed via staged relocation.

***The answer for the BRA is obvious. It needs to require that Fisher seriously explore Move alternatives, in full and/or in part.***

### Recommendations

In its Scoping Determination The BRA should require Fisher to perform a detailed and rigorous quantitative analysis of the IMPNF's economic benefits for the City of Boston, versus alternative scenarios in which Fisher grows outside of the Back Bay residential district or relocates entirely.

Unless Fisher can clearly show that remaining in Back Bay is preferable to cases in which Fisher moves to another neighborhood, the BRA should reject the IMPNF in its entirety.

To facilitate BRA and public review, Fisher should provide the BRA and the public with live Excel workbooks showing all underlying assumptions and formulas.

## Detailed Discussion

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### Background Context

Since its creation in 1957, a basic function of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) has been to encourage “economic development... and workforce development” in the City of Boston, while also “respecting [Boston’s] past.” (source: <http://www.bostonredevelopmentauthority.org>)

This suggests that a critical element in evaluating the Fisher IMPNF needs to be the extent to which it provides substantial economic benefits to the City, so that this can be balanced against its potentially negative impact on the Back Bay historical residential district.

Interestingly, a review of the Fisher IMPNF revealed that despite the issue's obvious importance, the IMPNF never discusses economic benefits *for the City*. Instead, the IMPNF argues that Fisher needs zoning variances in order *for Fisher* to remain viable and to grow:

*In order to sustain its academic viability and maintain its long-term fiscal health, Fisher has concluded that it must continue to add to its undergraduate enrollment in the Day Program in Boston...*

*Fisher’s academic and financial goals are inextricably intertwined. In order to continue to attract the students it wants to educate, Fisher must invest in its curriculum, its faculty and its facilities. In order to sustain itself as a thriving and financially healthy organization, Fisher must generate the revenue that will guarantee a sound future. -- IMPNF, p. 8*

We therefore thought that we should conduct our own analysis, as a contribution to the Scoping Determination process.

### Methodology

We started by asking the question as to what a good economic benefit package would provide to the City. We think that there are 3 key metrics:

**1. Upgrading a declining neighborhood or materially improving a neighborhood:** Proper redevelopment can be a major contributor to the economic health of Boston. An excellent example is how BRA redevelopment efforts converted the Combat Zone/Theater District into a thriving area today (helped in part by Emerson’s move to the area). In this memo, we look at two specific measures of neighborhood improvement:

**1a. Increasing Property Taxes:** When communities are improved, this increases the assessed property base; and with it, increases City property taxes.

**1b. Growing Household-related spending:** To the extent that neighborhood redevelopment attracts households into Boston, this results in increased secondary spending on goods and services.

**2. Creating construction jobs.** One important issue for the BRA clearly is the extent to which new projects result in construction jobs – whether new construction or rehabs.

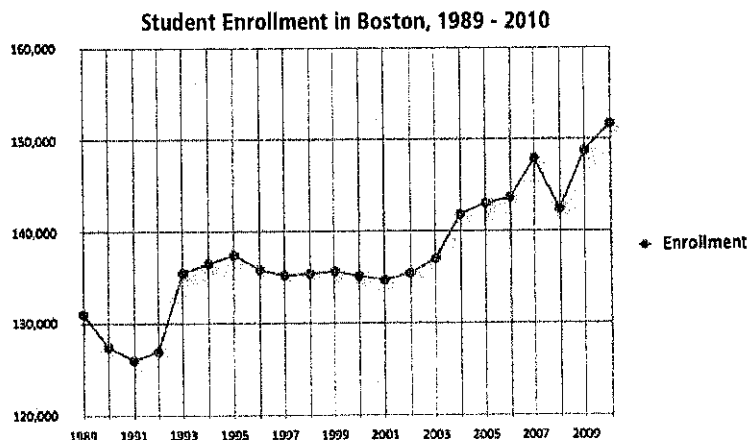
**3. Growing College-related employment and spending:** In contrast to construction jobs, which tend to be one-time or periodic events at any one site, the growth of institutional enterprises like colleges leads to permanent employment and spending (both primary spending by the enterprises themselves and secondary spending by employees or students).

In this context, the importance of the educational industry is highlighted in the BRA's *Educational Services Industry* study (July 2012), which states that education is one of the largest industries in Boston:

*Education is one of the larger industries in Boston, making up 7.6% of total employment in Boston in 2010. This ranks education 5th amongst the 20 major industrial sectors identified by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS). The education industry includes colleges, universities, secondary schools, and other education support services.*

*Today, Boston's education industry employs more than 50,000 people. The bulk of employment is within colleges and universities. Overall, the education industry employment has experienced very healthy job growth over the last decade. Since 2001, education industry employment in Boston has increased by nearly 13%. The industry actually increased employment from the 2001 economic recession, adding about 3,000 jobs by 2006. After the economic recession of 2008, employment increased by an additional 2,400 jobs.*

In addition to staff and direct college spending, *spending by students at colleges and universities* is a major economic benefit to the City. From the following BRA chart, there are now over 150,000 students in Boston, who patronize local facilities during the academic year.



Source: New England Board of Higher Education data from 1989 through 2007. University Accountability Ordinance data for 30 of the 35 colleges for 2008-2010 with counts for the other 5 colleges obtained from the web or phone calls.

### **Caveat: Spending Should be Within The City**

An important caveat is that to be a benefit to the City of Boston, *the above spending should be spent in the City itself*. We would argue that hiring employees, vendors or contractors who are located in the suburbs does not help the City economy substantially, since most of the money goes elsewhere.

In this context, we would like to know how much of Fisher's spending actually is spent within the City. Here are some indications that a number of its key vendors may be suburban, not City:

- in Fisher's latest IRS 990 filing, its largest outside vendors are located outside of Boston (Recillas in Lynn for electrical; Fuller in Danvers for plumbing).
- In its recent renovation of the Fisher Mall, Fisher used Eckert Associates from Watertown as architect and Connaughton Construction from Waltham for construction services.
- Two of Fisher's largest food/drink vendors, Sysco (Stoughton) and Coke (Needham Heights) are not located in Boston. Aramark, its food services provider, is located outside of Boston, although it may employ kitchen help who live in the City.
- On information and belief, most (although not all) of Fisher's higher salaried officers and staff live outside of the City

### **Other Considered (But Rejected) Metrics**

**Educating Boston students:** While educating local students clearly has a benefit for the City of Boston, it is unclear that in the absence of Fisher, the students who attend Fisher would fail to attend or graduate from other colleges. If Fisher wishes to make the argument that it teaches otherwise uneducable students, it will need to prove this 'last resort' proposition with evidence. We note, however, that state community colleges have a 100% acceptance rate, so any 'last resort' proposition would be dubious.

**Scholarships:** We considered including scholarships as an economic benefit, since Fisher discusses this in its IMPNF and its public meeting presentations ("Fisher College provided a total of \$2.3 million in scholarships last year to City of Boston students enrolled at Fisher. The average scholarship per Boston students was \$10,200." -- IMPNF, p. 38).

We believe, however, that this is inappropriate, since in recent years, colleges in general, and Fisher in particular, have been playing a game in which they increase the list price of education each year above the general inflation rate, and then discount the net price for price-constrained families – who still end up heavily in debt and with low graduation rates. This was eloquently discussed by Ann O'Hara at the June 26 meeting. It is reinforced by a review of statistics and rankings from CollegeFactual.com, which states that:

- Fisher is ranked dead last nationwide last out of 1,283 colleges on "Value for your Money," with a grade of F-. In New England, it is rated F+ (115 out of 141).
- For low income students, Fisher is rated in the Most Expensive category, with a net price of \$24,691 per year
- The average scholarship student ends up with \$38,154 in student loans (low income students have \$18,969 in loans).

We also note that state community colleges are far less expensive than Fisher, even after accounting for scholarships,

We therefore believe that the value of scholarships is not a true economic benefit.

## Quantifying the Metrics

Ideally, each of our economic metrics should be adjusted for how much a dollar of benefit results in a change in the City's gross domestic product.

Since certain factors are annual while others are one-time events, the analysis ideally should be in the form of a multi-year computation discounted at the City's cost of capital.

While the author is capable of doing such an analysis, we decided that this would be overkill for an initial memo on this subject – particularly since we believe that we can make our basic points without drowning readers in numbers and assumptions.

We recommend, however, that the BRA tell Fisher that it wants to see a comprehensive analysis, complete with Excel workbook in which every assumption is highlighted and every formula is accessible for review.

## Need to Compare Benefits to Potential Damages

As noted in NABB's June 26, 2013 letter to the BRA, the BRA's own standards for IMP review under Section 80-D4 requires that the BRA balance the economic benefits of the plan versus the potential damages to the community:

***"... The Boston Redevelopment Authority shall approve an Institutional Master Plan only if the Authority finds that: (a) the Institutional Master Plan conforms to the provisions of this Article; (b) the Institutional Master Plan conforms to the plan for the City as a whole; and (c) on balance, nothing in the Institutional Master Plan will be injurious to the neighborhood or otherwise detrimental to the public welfare, weighing all the benefits and burdens."*** (emphasis added)

In this particular case, the assessed value of the non-Fisher properties on the Beacon block between Arlington and Beacon and on Arlington between Beacon and Commonwealth is \$271 million. To the extent that approval of a Fisher IMP resulted in reduced property values (and with it, property taxes), this could represent a significant offset to the positive economic benefits; e.g., a 10% decline would cost homeowners \$27.1 million in lost property value.

Beyond the impact on immediate abutters, the BRA needs to consider the risk to the entire Back Bay historical district of overturning 35 years of zoning consistency that residential housing acquirers have counted on to preserve the value of their property investments.

Accordingly, ***the BRA needs to feel confident that the positive benefits of any Fisher IMP substantially outweigh the potentially large downside risks.*** The type of extraordinary zoning variance that Fisher is requesting should not be granted unless the BRA were to find that there were extraordinary upsides that justify approval.

***We suggest that an appropriate reward to risk ratio is on the order of 3-4 times, or \$81-\$108 million; or conversely, that a plan that only provides \$10-20M of benefits to the City is not worth the risk and upset to the community.***

## Need to Compare IMPNF Versus Other Cases

Finally, we would argue that the correct comparison is *not* the economic value of the IMPNF versus the downside risk. Instead it is the incremental economic value of the IMPNF versus the best alternative plan.

To illustrate, if the BRA were to find that the IMPNF case resulted in economic benefits of \$130 million and the downside risk was \$30 million, for a net benefit of +\$100 million, this might suggest that this is a good risk-adjusted return, and that the project should be approved.

However, if there were some Case B with an upside of \$120 million and downside risk of \$0M – for a net benefit of +\$120 million – Case B would be a better option.

**The basic point is clear. For the IMPNF to pass an economic benefits test, it must not simply result in a positive risk-adjusted return. It must be better than the tangible alternatives.**

## Case Definitions

Accordingly, in this memo, we look at two cases:

- The 'Stay' Case, in which we follow the Fisher IMPNF plan for the next decade through 2022-2023.
- An Emerson-type 'Move' Case, in which Fisher sells all of its property in the Back Bay to developers (who convert these properties into high end condos); and then uses the proceeds to buy and develop a campus in a new neighborhood.

We also note that there is one other possible case, which is a Suffolk-like 'Stay Put/Grow Elsewhere' case, in which all new growth comes from outside the neighborhood – perhaps with Fisher selling 115, 139, and 141 Beacon, as well as 10/11 Arlington to raise initial capital for the new growth locations.

We decided not to consider this option explicitly, since it is likely to yield a result that is between Stay and Move.

In the next several sections, we review the Stay and Move cases for each metric.

### 1. Neighborhood Upgrade

This metric is a clear win for the Move Case.

In the Stay case, given that the immediately abutting area already would be one of the most desirable neighborhoods in Boston (but for the negative impact of Fisher's presence), there arguably is no Neighborhood Upgrade benefit from further Fisher expansion.

In the Move case, just as Emerson's move from Back Bay helped improve Beacon Street property values and tax payments between Arlington and Clarendon, a 100% conversion of Fisher properties to residential condos would improve the abutting neighborhood's desirability significantly.

The results will be seen in improved property taxes and household spending:

- In the **Stay case**, three taxable properties (115, 139, 141 Beacon) would be removed from the tax rolls, which currently pay \$86,177 in property tax. 36 households also would be removed from the neighborhood. The net economic effect for this metric therefore is negative.

In the **Move case**, 190,301 square feet of Fisher properties currently valued at \$49,942,758 (which at residential rates would pay \$570,069 in property tax) would be sold and redeveloped as condos. As a guesstimate, if these properties were assessed at



\$1,000 per square foot, with 25% common area, this would result in a property assessment of \$143 million, and annual property tax of \$1.875 million. With respect to household income growth, the incoming residents would spend substantial sums in the City of Boston for goods and services.

## 2. Construction Jobs

This metric, too, is a clear win for the Move case, since it will result in approximately \$125 million of incremental construction cost versus the Stay case. This is due to the gut rehab of up to 450,000 square feet of space, versus partial rehabs of a few Fisher properties:

In the **Stay case**,

- Fisher would repurpose 10/11 Arlington, with up to \$3.3 million allocated for this (\$191.30 per square foot).<sup>2</sup> However, the IMPNF suggests that there will be no construction work here or at 1 Arlington:

*One Arlington will remain a mixed office and classroom building, while 10/11 Arlington Street will be used predominately as institutional office space. Moving these uses is not anticipated to require any construction. Rather Fisher prefers to repurpose existing rooms in order to maintain as much as possible, the original interiors of these fine buildings – IMPNF p. 33*

- Fisher would convert 115/139/141 Beacon into dorms, along with 4,225 square feet at 116 Beacon. The total square footage for these dorm conversions is 28,380. If we assume \$150 per square foot for these, the construction cost would be \$4.3 million.
- The 2,500 square foot 118 Beacon carriage house addition @ \$400 per square foot would add another \$1 million.
- *Total cost: \$5.3 million*

In the **Move case**,

- 190,301 square feet of Fisher properties would be gut rehabbed at \$300 per square foot, for a total cost of \$57 million.
- If Fisher were to buy 250,000 of commercial property and renovate these at \$300 per square foot, this would add an additional \$75 million.
- *Total cost: \$132 million.*

## 3. College Jobs and Spending

The answer here depends on which option will result in a larger Fisher college employing more staff and educating more students – remaining in the Back Bay with its unique ambience, or moving into larger and more modern facilities?

On numerous occasions, Fisher has argued that the Fisher 'brand' depends heavily on its presence in the Back Bay. From this perspective, the Move case therefore equates to death (at

---

<sup>1</sup> Against this, the commercial property that Fisher purchases would be removed from the tax rolls, but the assessment on a building that needs to be renovated presumably would be substantially lower than the increased residential taxes (even adjusting for the higher commercial tax rate).

<sup>2</sup> Fisher purchased 10/11 Arlington for \$11.7 million, and has allocated \$15 million total for the project – leaving \$3.3 million for renovation.

the extreme). However, Fisher has made other comments suggesting that this might not be entirely true:

- Fisher has pointed out in public meetings that without Fisher, a number of its students would not go to college. If so, then Fisher cannot say that its students only will attend the school if it is located in Back Bay – since by definition, they have no other choices.
- Fisher in the June 26 public meeting touted its three successful and growing satellite campuses. This, too, suggests that being in Back Bay is not a 100% necessity.

We also note that Fisher has a 60% acceptance rate, meaning that it rejects 40%. If moving from the Back Bay resulted in lower yield (at least temporarily), Fisher could offset this by accepting a higher percentage of students until it restored its reputation in a new location.

In addition, the Stay case brings with it important downsides. The first is that over time, the Stay case's inherent capacity constraints will exacerbate student quality-of-life issues – making the Back Bay 'brand' increasingly problematic as a basis upon which students will choose Fisher:

- Our separate Sustainability memo shows that Fisher, even if it obtains the IMPNF's requested zoning variance, will have half the non-dorm space per FTE,<sup>3</sup> compared to other local schools and national averages. Over time, this will get worse.
- Due to the lack of space in Back Bay, Fisher is being forced to propose the conversion of 115, 139 and 141 Beacon (as well as 116 Beacon repurposed space) into tiny micro-dorms for its students that are less than half of the national dorm median size.<sup>4</sup> Students are already complaining about bait and switch tactics, in which they see nice dorm rooms on the campus tours, and then live in much less desirable housing when they register. Arguably, cramming students into micro-dorms when they think they are moving into elegant townhouses will hurt the Fisher brand further:

---

*I am a first year student at Fisher College, I was excited to start my college education at Fisher seeing that this school was located on Beacon street one of the nicest streets that Boston has to offer. Yet, it was THE BIGGEST mistake I have ever made... lets talk about housing, the dorms are HORRIBLE! The buildings are old and nasty the walls look like they are about to fall on you . The bathrooms are not too nice and for all the money that we pay to come here it is just plain filthy! ... commuting might be your best option because, living here is not worth it! .... On the Campus tour they show you the biggest rooms making you think that the dorms are nice . NO THEY AREN'T its all a lie. They will show you the quads and the triples to get you all excited and happy, PSHH PLEASE don't fall for it*

---

*I am a fashion merchandising major here at Fisher college and I must say, I greatly dislike this school. The housing is horrible. The rooms are small, there is no air conditioning, there is stories of mice in rooms constantly, the bathrooms are gross. Worst of all, they show you the best dorms on the tour and trick you.*

---

[http://www.studentsreview.com/MA/FC\\_comments.html?page=2&type=&d\\_school=Fisher%20College](http://www.studentsreview.com/MA/FC_comments.html?page=2&type=&d_school=Fisher%20College)

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<sup>3</sup> Full time equivalent student

<sup>4</sup> See our separate memo on Micro-Dorms.

Beyond quality-of-life issues, if Fisher grows at recent historical growth rates rather than at the comparatively low 3% embedded in the IMPNF, Fisher will run out of capacity in Back Bay to grow:

- At the June 26 public meeting, Steve Rich, Fisher's EVP Finance, said that at the current time, Fisher is already at 100% capacity and will not be able to grow without zoning relief.
- Our Sustainability memo suggests that even *with* IMPNF approval, this is likely to occur well before 2023.

So from the standpoint of whether the Stay option will allow Fisher to grow, Steve Rich's own comments reinforce that this is not a workable long-term solution. At some point, Fisher will outgrow its footprint, and unless the BRA is willing to countenance endless attacks on the Back Bay residential district via progressive IMP revisions, some form of Move case is inevitable -- since this would provide Fisher with:

- Larger and more modern facilities
- A roadmap for future expansion without triggering strong community reaction.

This essentially is the conclusion that Emerson came to a decade ago (see quote on page 1).

***In conclusion, from the perspective of maximizing college size, Fisher will need to adopt the Move case at some point – so it should start on this NOW.***

***To the extent that Fisher truly believes that its survival requires remaining in Back Bay, it could reduce the short-term risk by keeping the current campus and moving all expansion elsewhere; or by moving in stages.***

## 4. Potential Damages

This is a clear victory for the Move case.

In the Stay case,

- There would be major potential damage to the \$271 million assessed property value for non-Fisher owners, if the local neighborhood becomes less attractive due to a large student population increase
- There would be major potential damage to the multi-billion dollar assessed property valuation of residential units in the overall Back Bay historical residential district, since prospective homeowners will no longer be able to rely on the protection of 35 years of zoning consistency.

In the Move case,

- Property values in the abutting blocks would be enhanced, as the blocks become some of the higher value residential properties in the City.
- There would be no damage to the broader Back Bay residential district, since the continuity of zoning precedents would be reaffirmed by the BRA and the City.

## Summary: Economic Benefits and Risks

The results suggest that on all dimensions, the Move case wins over the IMPNF Stay case, with superior economic benefits and no downside risk. The major risk is whether Fisher can survive outside of Back Bay. If so, a hybrid strategy could address this.

Metric	Winner	Rationale
1. Neighborhood Upgrade	Move case	Fisher moving from Back Bay will improve the neighborhood – increasing property tax collections and household spending in the City
2. Construction Jobs	Move case	Substantial rehabilitation of 400-450,000 square feet of space
3. College Jobs and Spending	Move case	Allows Fisher to continue to grow without constraints.
4. Potential Damages	Move case	No downside risk, possible upside

## Conclusions

The above analysis suggests that the IMP case is substantially less attractive to the City than the Move case. This is largely because unlike some of the other local projects that the BRA is currently considering (e.g., Trinity Place and Copley Place), the Fisher IMPNF provides no major construction boost to the economy, does not add to Boston household income and does not add to property taxes.

The strongest argument for the IMPNF is that this is needed to help an educational institution grow (Fisher), which is an industry that is important to the City of Boston. The problem with this argument is that we believe that Fisher, like Emerson before it, could actually grow more if it moved to new modern facilities with adequate space; and that any risk to the brand can be managed via staged relocation.

Against this, the IMP case brings with it non-trivial potential damage to the neighborhood, due to substantial increased student density in a very small geographic footprint; as well as permanent damage to 35 years of zoning consistency in the entire Back Bay.

The answer for the BRA is obvious. It needs to require that Fisher begin seriously exploring Move alternatives, in full and/or in part.

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Weingarten  
120 Beacon Street #4  
Boston, MA 02116

To: Katelyn Sullivan  
Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority

Cc: Mayor Thomas M. Menino; mayor@cityofboston.gov  
Shaina Augbourg; [Shaina.Aubourg@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Shaina.Aubourg@cityofboston.gov)  
State Representative-Elect Jay Livingstone; [livingstone.james@gmail.com](mailto:livingstone.james@gmail.com)  
State Senator Will Brownsberger; [willbrownsberger@gmail.com](mailto:willbrownsberger@gmail.com)  
District Attorney Daniel F Conley; [danconley2013@gmail.com](mailto:danconley2013@gmail.com)  
City Councilor Michael P. Ross; [Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov)  
Sarah Hinton; [Sarah.Hinton@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Sarah.Hinton@cityofboston.gov)  
City Councilor Felix Arroyo; [Felix.Arroyo@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Felix.Arroyo@cityofboston.gov)  
City Councilor Ayanna Pressley; [Ayanna.Pressley@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Ayanna.Pressley@cityofboston.gov)  
James Sutherland; [James.Sutherland@cityofboston.gov](mailto:James.Sutherland@cityofboston.gov)  
City Councilor John R. Connolly; [John.R.Connolly@cityofboston.gov](mailto:John.R.Connolly@cityofboston.gov)  
City Councilor Stephen J. Murphy; [Stephen.Murphy@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Stephen.Murphy@cityofboston.gov)  
Peter Meade, Director Boston Redevelopment Authority;  
[Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov)  
William Young, BBAC; [william.young@cityofboston.gov](mailto:william.young@cityofboston.gov)  
NABB [info@nabbonline.com](mailto:info@nabbonline.com)  
Mayoral Candidate John Barros; [johnfbarros@gmail.com](mailto:johnfbarros@gmail.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Charles Clemons; [info@charlesforboston.com](mailto:info@charlesforboston.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Rob Consalvo; [rob@robconsalvo.com](mailto:rob@robconsalvo.com)  
Mayoral Candidate William Dorcena; [will@willdorcena.com](mailto:will@willdorcena.com)  
Mayoral Candidate John G C Laing; [johnlaing@laingenterprises.com](mailto:johnlaing@laingenterprises.com)  
Mayoral Candidate David S Portnoy; [portnoy@barstoolsports.com](mailto:portnoy@barstoolsports.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Charlotte Golar Richie; [cgrichie1@mac.com](mailto:cgrichie1@mac.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Bill Waiczak; [info@billforboston.com](mailto:info@billforboston.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Martin J Walsh; [martinjwalsh02125@gmail.com](mailto:martinjwalsh02125@gmail.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Charles Calvin Yancey [ccyancey@aol.com](mailto:ccyancey@aol.com)

Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

July 2, 2013

Dear Katelyn;

As residents of Back Bay for over fifty years, we are completely opposed to the expansion plans of Fisher College IMPNF. We cannot believe that this subject is coming up for discussion at this time; over twenty years ago, the residences of the area placed a moratorium on expansion of any educational institution.

Fisher's plans to turn the first block of Beacon Street... closest to our famous Public Garden... into a college "campus" is not the way to preserve the current community character of the area. The unique characteristics which set this area apart from other areas will be destroyed by their plans. We have attended every BRA meeting on this subject and have been impressed by the unanimous negative response of Back Bay to the Fisher proposal.

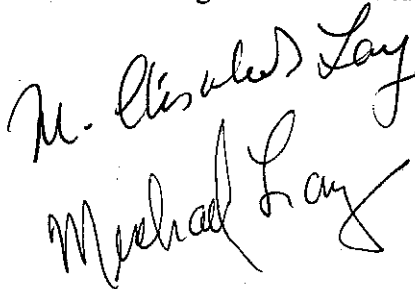
We trust that the BRA will recognize that no one in Back Bay is in favor of this expansion except for Fisher College itself.

To reiterate we are opposed to:

1. Converting 102 - 116 and 131 - 133 Beacon St. to 48 beds
2. Residential to dormitory use of buildings at 115 and 139 and 141 Beacon St.
3. A 2500 SF addition to 118 Beacon St. for student services/library.
4. A 2000 SF terrace at 112-114 Beacon St.
5. A 17,500 SF building at 10 and 11 Arlington St. to institutional.

Sincerely

Michel & Elisabeth Lay  
239 Marlborough St.  
Boston, MA 02116  
elisabethlay@comcast.net

The image shows two handwritten signatures in black ink. The top signature is 'M. Elisabeth Lay' and the bottom signature is 'Michael Lay'. Both signatures are written in a cursive, flowing style.



July 2, 2013

Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
City of Boston  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

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Sam Wallace  
Steve Wintermeier  
Marvin Wool  
Jacquelin Yessian

Emily Gallup Fayen  
*Office Administrator*

**RE: FISHER COLLEGE IMP Opposition to 118 Beacon St. Addition**

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

The Architecture Committee of the Neighborhood Association of the Back Bay would like to go on record in opposition to Fisher College's proposal for a 25' high, two story rear yard addition at 118 Beacon Street. The proposal is inconsistent with the zoning requirements of the residential Back Bay, and with the guidelines and practices of the Back Bay Architectural Commission.

The building at 118 Beacon Street, which was constructed in 1907, currently exceeds the allowed Floor-to-Area Ratio (FAR), and is already significantly deeper than its neighbors at 116 and 120 Beacon (see Attachment 1). Since the Back Bay was rezoned in 1978, there has been a consistent effort to enforce a level playing field for developers and residents alike by enforcing the legal zoning restrictions. *In fact, there has been no instance in which NABB has supported or the Board of Appeal has allowed a substantial addition to a nonconforming property such as 118.*

*Further, the Back Bay Architectural Commission has never, since it gained review of the alleys in 1981, approved a rear yard addition over one story in height. The goal of the commission's Guidelines is to maintain the visibility of the original rear facades and the historic relationship between the original brownstones and small-scale accessory buildings, as well as to preserve the service function of the alleys.*

**In The Guidelines for the Residential District**, published in 1990 by the Back Bay Architectural Commission, there is a substantial section concerned with Rear Yards, which contains the following paragraphs:

*"PURPOSE These guidelines are designed to encourage alterations which facilitate the service function of the alleys while enhancing their residential character, to remove inappropriate additions, to restore historic or characteristic architectural features, to encourage landscaping, and to improve visual quality.*

*“DESIGN CRITERIA Removal or replacement of inappropriate structures is encouraged and shall be reviewed by the commission. Building alterations shall be consistent in scale, form, proportion, detail, material, and color with the characteristic architecture of the residential district. Alterations which compound or perpetuate inappropriate structures, or which remove historic features or landscaping are inappropriate.*

*“INAPPROPRIATE ADDITIONS Inappropriate additions include the following: additions more than one story in height, additions on top of existing additions or ells, freestanding accessory structures, stacked decks, carports, and canopies.”*

*“LANDSCAPING, FENCING AND PAVING The maintenance and addition of historic gardens and garden walls and the replacement of landscaping in rear yards and parking areas is encouraged...”*

NABB has consistently supported these guidelines, which allow for limited growth while protecting the historic character of the neighborhood as well as the privacy, light and air of neighboring buildings. Our committee believes that the proposed addition violates the guidelines in several ways:

*First*, the removal of the four existing parking spaces at 118 Beacon Street will compound, rather than alleviating, the traffic issues on the Arlington to Berkeley block of Back Street. Much of the congestion in that area is due to lack of adequate parking for faculty and staff, as well as lack of a loading area. Removing some of the few available off-street spaces that Fisher owns that block will only compound that problem. Therefore, *the addition will not facilitate the service function of Back Street.*

*Second*, adding additional institutional space will detract from, rather than enhance, the block's residential character, no matter how well designed it may be. The proposal includes a roof deck which will, it is stated, be used only for non-student college functions. However, part of Fisher's proposal is to convert the interior office space to dormitory use. If this occurs, it is not clear how the use of the deck would be affected.

*Third*, and most important, the proposed addition is *not consistent in scale, form and proportion with the characteristic architecture of the district.* The guidelines encourage maintenance and replacement of gardens and garden walls, which enhance the area's residential character. Where new structures have been approved (usually as a replacement for an existing structure), they have been limited to one story in height, consistent with the form of original carriage houses. The 25' foot high "carriage house" proposed by Fisher is in fact an extension of a proposed library and student center—an enlargement of the existing building—rather than an accessory structure. It is nearly twice the height of garages that have previously been approved for Back Street.

Finally, the illustration on page 28 of the Institutional Master Plan (reproduced as Attachment 2) indicates that part of the proposed structure will be below grade, raising the question of how neighboring buildings will be protected from lowered groundwater. The city and state have worked diligently to raise groundwater in this area, which has



traditionally been plagued by low levels due to drainage below the Storrow Drive tunnel. The proposed below grade excavation could endanger their good work.

The IMP states on page 25 that "the BBAC's comments have been incorporated into the proposed design for the addition." This comment is misleading, at best. Although there may have been a discussion with the staff, the Commission itself has not seen the proposal, much less commented on it. Even if zoning relief were granted by the Board of Appeal or the Institutional Master Plan, it seems unlikely that the Commission would approve it, given its inconsistency with the approved guidelines.

The Back Bay of the last forty years has been a success story for Boston and for its residents. The City agencies and the BRA have a history of upholding the strict zoning and architectural regulations that have so successfully preserved our district. We urge them to continue to do so.

Respectfully submitted,

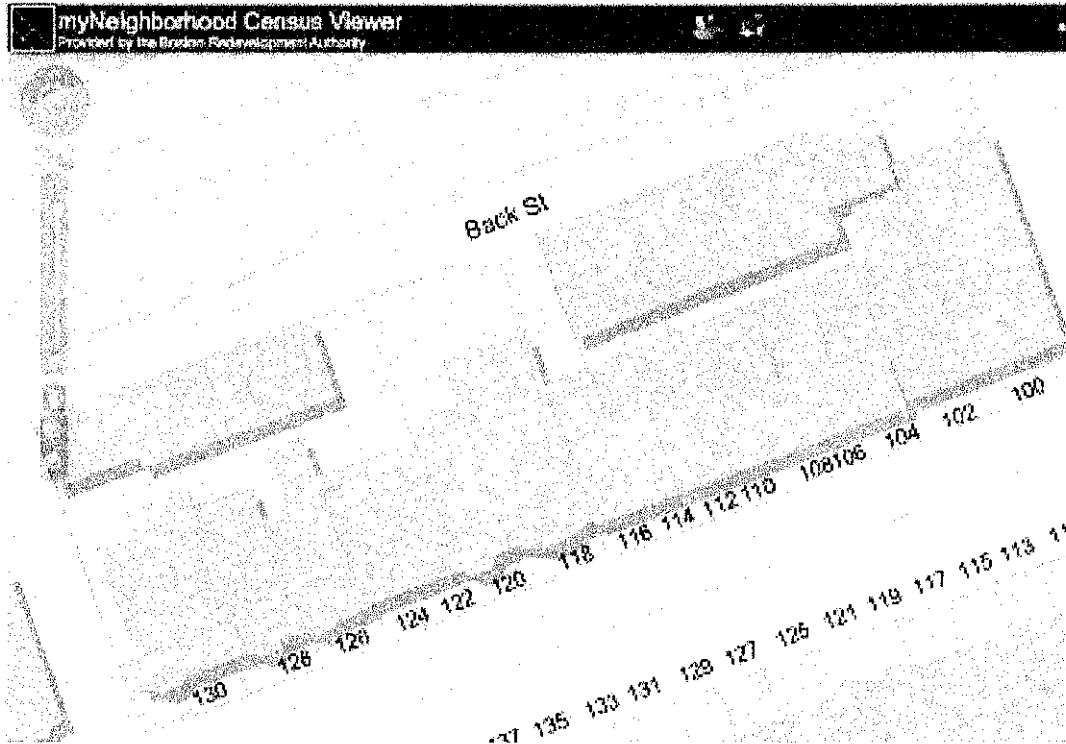


Susan Prindle  
Co-chairs, NABB Architecture Committee

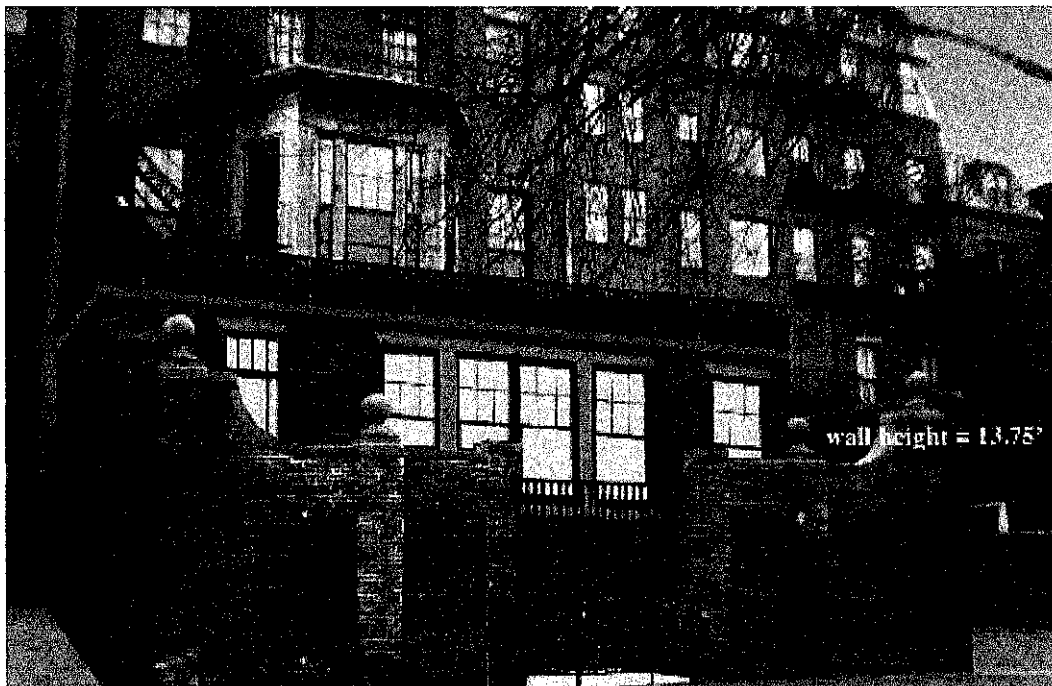
Jerome CooperKing

Cc: Mayor Thomas M Menino  
Mr. Peter Meade, Director, Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Linda Kowalcky, Deputy Director for Institutional Sector Management  
William Young, Senior Preservation Planner  
Mr. Will Brownsberger, Massachusetts State Senate  
Mr. Jay Livingstone, Massachusetts House of Representatives  
District Eight City Councilor Michael Ross  
City Councilor at Large Stephen Murphy  
City Councilor at Large John R Connolly  
City Councilor at Large Ayanna Pressley  
City Councilor at Large Felix Arroyo  
Ms. Shaina Aubourg, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services  
Dr. Thomas McGovern, President, Fisher College  
Steven Rich, VP of Finance, Fisher College  
Peter Gori, Consultant to Fisher College

## Attachment 1: Depth of 118 Beacon in relation to its neighbors



## Attachment 2: Proposed rear yard addition at 118 Beacon



## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Millie O'Connell [millieoconnell@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 02, 2013 2:24 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Fisher College Master Plan

My main concern about expanding the student population at Fisher College is the traffic/parking problem, most apparent when students move in and out. Because the location is at a major and complicated exit from Storrow Drive with its high volume of traffic, I fear for the effect this might have on the flow of traffic. Thank you.

Millie O'Connell  
259 Beacon Street #20  
Boston, MA 02116  
617-536-0395

29 June 2013

Dear Ms. Sullivan,  
RE: Fisher College  
Expansion Proposal

I have lived at 180 Beacon Street since 1977. Over the years our area has become a neighborhood with families and children. I sincerely feel that allowing Fisher College to expand would be very detrimental to this area.

There have been incidents in the past with students that has required the Boston Police Department's involvement.

Sincerely,  
Chris Gasey Janiff  
180 Beacon St  
Boston, MA 02116

Mrs. Francis W. Hatch

180 Beacon Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02116

Dear Sirs:

I am an owner of two apartments at 180 Beacon Street. I was horrified to hear that more students may be moving into this neighborhood. Do come and see how many there are already when classes are in session!!

Please do think of the residents in our formerly residential neighborhood before you allow this to happen.

My husband, the late Francis W. Hatch was well known when he was Minority leader in the House for several years. He would have been against this action. Enough students are already too many students. They walking down the street ~~already~~ <sup>now</sup>.

I plead with the Authority to disallow this invasion and I know some will seriously consider moving out and away.

Sincerely

Sarah W. Hatch

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Lynn Wegner [lynn.wegner@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 04, 2013 9:59 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Against Fisher Expansion Proposal

Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
Boston City Hall  
Boston, MA 02201

Dear Ms Sullivan,

As residents of the Back Bay, we are strongly opposed to the proposed expansion of Fisher College. We feel that it would be very detrimental to the neighborhood for all of the reasons that have already been stated at the last two meetings. At its current size, we have enjoyed having Fisher as a neighbor. However, any expansion would cause a great deal of neighborhood resentment toward Fisher.

There are sound reasons for rejecting the proposed expansion of Fisher College. We urge that the Boston Redevelopment Authority reject the proposed expansion plan.

Thank you,

Glen and Lynn Wegner  
1 Marlborough St, #1  
Boston, MA 02116

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Kristin C Field [kcf2@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 04, 2013 11:36 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Cc:** Lois Harvey; Linda Morgan  
**Subject:** Opposition letter re Fischer College Expansion

Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201  
June 30, 2013

Dear Ms. Sullivan,

I live at 333 Commonwealth Ave. and I am very very concerned about the current Fischer College IMPNF. These are my concerns:

- Beacon St. and all of the historic Back Bay is not a college campus and should not become one under any circumstances.

- Fischer College has been an unreliable neighbor and has made little effort to address the concerns of the close residents - particularly in the areas of smoking and noise, traffic congestion, and improper use of Back Street.

- There is no reason to suddenly believe that Fischer College will address the resident neighbors concerns simply because they wish to expand. In fact, I worry that if they are granted the ability to expand, they will revert to their historic lack of attention and concern for the area and neighbors.

- Concerns about the ability of the college to finance this adventure are serious. It means they must attract paying students and they must coddle them so they will remain at the school. They need the money. The representatives at the meeting of June 18 would not respond to questions about financial stability.

- I am concerned that this will set a precedent for other institutions that wish to locate in the Back Bay. Our neighborhood is for residential use, not institutional use.

I urge you to take the concerns of the close and not so close neighbors of the Back Bay seriously and refuse to approve of this plan.

Sincerely,

Kristin C. Field  
333 Commonwealth Ave.  
Boston, MA. 02115

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** jeanlifford@aol.com  
**Sent:** Friday, July 05, 2013 12:07 PM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Subject:** Fisher College

222 Marlborough Street  
Boston, MA 02116

Dear Ms. Sullivan:

As a long-term resident of Back Bay and a lifelong resident of Boston, I urge you to disallow Fisher College's expansion proposal on Beacon Street.

When my husband and I and young children first moved into Back Bay, many buildings housed transient occupants run by distant landlords who took little interest in property upkeep. However, with increasing numbers of families buying buildings or condominiums, the area, over the last few decades, has slowly become a more beautiful and safe residential neighborhood. And, it was with relief when Emerson College relocated so that former Emerson buildings are now home to long-term residents.

The Back Bay Association, my neighbors and my family take pride in helping the area become home to young families, retirees, and individuals who appreciate that Beacon Street, Marlborough Street, and Commonwealth Avenue offer a special combination of a residential neighborhood in an urban setting.

Allowing Fisher College to expand will be a major setback to the area and will discourage new families from moving in. And, it will cause a decrease in tax revenues at a time when Boston Schools need increased funding to meet twenty-first century standards.

Also, as an educator, I wonder whether Fisher College is becoming like many of the for-profit schools that charge high tuitions and attract mostly foreign students. Too many colleges have lost sight of their original purpose and now exist as money-making businesses but with major tax breaks not available to most other enterprises.

I hope the BRA has not lost sight of its original purpose and will refuse to allow Fisher College's expansion.

Sincerely,  
Jean Lifford



**Sullivan, Katelyn**

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**From:** Marie Small [mariewsmall@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 03, 2013 10:57 AM  
**To:** wchase@fisher.edu  
**Cc:** Sullivan, Katelyn; info@nabbonline.com  
**Subject:** blocked steps 109 Beacon

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Hello,  
I'm writing to let you know that Fisher students are currently congregating and sitting on the steps of our apt building which is blocking access. I doubt they mean any harm but this is the type of activity which is awkward and unsettling to residents.  
Thank you for directing them to an alternate location.  
Regards, Marie Small.

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Michael Weingarten  
120 Beacon Street #4  
Boston, MA 02116  
mikew@signallake.com

July 8, 2013

## 118 Beacon Addition

As a resident of the abutting 120 Beacon Street property, I am deeply concerned about Fisher's planned 118 Beacon addition, described as a "Carriage House Addition." I ask the BRA to reject *IMPNF Proposed Institutional Project 5*, for the following reasons:

**1. This is an egregious zoning violation.** Vic Castellani of NABB in his June 22, 2013 letter to the BRA has pointed out that 118 Beacon already has an FAR well in excess of allowed limits (3.46 versus a maximum of 3.00) and therefore is a non-conforming property. The proposed addition would take the FAR to 3.87. Sue Prindle and Jerome CooperKing of NABB's Architectural Committee pointed out in their letter of July 2, 2013 that there has never been a case in which a two-story rear addition in Back Bay has been approved – let alone an addition to a nonconforming property like 118 Beacon.

For the BRA to grant this extraordinary zoning relief would create a terrible precedent in Back Bay, with other property owners arguing "if Fisher can get this, why can't we?"

**2. This is an egregious violation of BBAC guidelines.** In addition to zoning approvals, exterior changes to buildings in the Back Bay Residential District must receive a Certificate of Acceptability from the Back Bay Architectural Commission (BBAC).

As noted in the July 2 NABB letter to the BRA, the BBAC Guidelines clearly indicate that the 118 Beacon addition would violate several elements of the section on "Rear Yards:"

- The two-story 118 Beacon addition<sup>1</sup> unambiguously violates the guideline that **"inappropriate additions include... additions more than one story in height."**
- Given that the building's FAR is already substantially greater than other buildings in the neighborhood, a Carriage House addition violates the "Design Criteria" guideline that **"alterations which compound or perpetuate inappropriate structures... are inappropriate."**

*Building alterations shall be consistent in scale, form, proportion, detail, material, and color with the characteristic architecture of the residential district. Alterations which compound or perpetuate inappropriate structures, or which remove historic features or landscaping are inappropriate.*

- The addition does nothing to **"facilitate the service function of the alleys while enhancing their residential character."** Instead, it removes 5 parking spaces and reinforces the institutional character of 118 versus the residential character of the neighborhood.
- Filling in a rear yard or parking area violates the "Landscaping, Fencing and Paving" guideline that **"the maintenance and addition of historic gardens and garden walls and the replacement of landscaping in rear yards and parking areas is encouraged.** Rear yards and parking courts may be walled or fenced in brick, wrought iron, or vertical board painted an appropriate color." Eliminating the Carriage house enclosure area rather than maintaining it with a walled-in area is a substantial violation of this guideline.

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<sup>1</sup> The IMPNF refers to "a two-story addition at the basement and first floor levels" (*IMPNF p. 25*).

**3. There potentially are major groundwater and abutter damage problems.** At the governmental agency scoping meeting on June 24, 2013, it was noted that the pilings under 118 Beacon were found to be deficient in 1910. We therefore are concerned that building the carriage house addition could result in damaging abutters' groundwater levels and/or damage to our building at 120 Beacon.

To consider this project going forward, the BRA needs to require that a groundwater study as well as a physical impact study of the project must be undertaken, both with respect to 118 Beacon but also to the abutting properties (120-130 Beacon, to the west of 118; and 100-116 Beacon to the east).

**4. Even Fisher says that this is not that important a project.** Excluding IMP Project 5, Fisher would still have 190,000 square feet of space. A 2,500 square foot addition is only a 1.3% increment, which suggests that it is not critical for Fisher to get this space.

Fisher itself describes the addition as one of "two small additions" (IMPNF p. 1; the other addition being the Fisher Mall Student Terrace). Fisher can't have it both ways. If it is just a small addition, Fisher can't argue that getting this variance is critical.

Fisher is simply being greedy here. It wants an additional 2,500 square feet of free space that once constructed would be worth \$1000 per square foot, for a total value of \$2.5 million.

**5. The terrace addition is not needed.** In the same spirit, we do not see why Fisher needs a terrace on the top of the 118 extension. In the IMPNF, there is a cursory mention of the terrace in the plan, but with no information whatsoever regarding what it would be used for or why it is needed:

*A two-story addition at the basement and first floor levels within the area's remnant walls will provide library and office space for such student services as the Tutoring Center, Student Advisory Services, Career Services, and others, and an outdoor terrace at the first floor level. IMPNF p. 25*

Arguably, if the outdoor terrace were so important, Fisher would have included some elaboration about its function/purpose.

In his public meeting presentations, Peter Gori (perhaps recognizing that the IMPNF failed to provide any reason for the terrace) emphasized that the terrace only would be used for a few college events a year and would not be used by students.

If this is the explanation, we again question why the terrace is needed. For those few college events, Fisher could simply use:

- The proposed Student Terrace on the Fisher Mall building, or
- The roof deck on 118 Beacon, which has been used for July 4 parties for many years and which is equipped with 20 chairs/bench seats and several tables.<sup>2</sup>

In sum, Fisher doesn't need the extra terrace.

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<sup>2</sup> We note that the furniture on the roof has only recently been installed, leading to concerns about who uses the roof deck, with what restrictions and at what times. In any discussion of terrace usage, appropriate roof deck restrictions need to be included.

### Fisher 118 Beacon Roof Deck



**5. The building addition will be a highly intrusive addition for abutters with respect to sunlight and views.** We are concerned that the proposed building addition would obscure our views and sunlight at 120 Beacon even more than 118 Beacon does today.

118 Beacon already extends by 21 feet 8 inches beyond the 120 Beacon building line. While this substantially obscures our view of the Hatch Shell area of the Esplanade, at least the property owners were aware of this when they purchased their units.

If this new 'second addition' is approved, a 25 foot high terrace with an additional 3-4 foot railing for the terrace will further obscure the views from the ground terrace, the second floor and the third floors, with partial obstruction of the view from the fourth floor. This can be seen in the photos below.

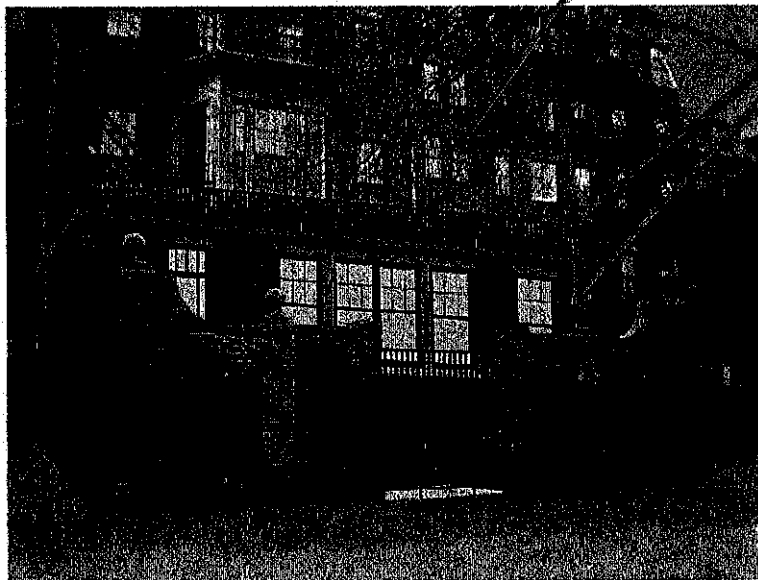
With respect to sunlight, our neighbor Claude Cicchetti, who owns the ground floor unit 1B, has already written eloquently about how his unit will lose much of its sunlight if the addition is built.

**Current Actual Photo: See visibility of 120 Beacon 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Story Windows**



120 Beacon 4<sup>th</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>  
and 2<sup>nd</sup> story  
windows

**Fisher Proposed Addition: No Visibility for 120 Beacon 3<sup>rd</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> story windows;  
obscured 4<sup>th</sup> story Window**



120 Beacon  
4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
windows

New Obstruction

**6. The Terrace will be a highly intrusive addition for abutters with respect to noise and privacy.** For property owners at 120 Beacon, one of the primary reasons why we purchased our units was the opportunity to have a beautiful waterside Beacon view with substantial privacy. In our case, we don't even have window shades, because there has been no need for them.

If the terrace is built, this will change drastically, particularly for the lower floors. The following photo from our window at 120 Beacon Unit 4 shows the nature of the problem. Looking down from our window, we can see much of the proposed terrace area – which means that they can see us. Again, the problem is much worse for floors 1-3. Even if Fisher is telling us the truth that the building only will be used a few times a year, there still will be maintenance people and police on the deck regularly – who will be able to look in on us.

**View of the Proposed Terrace Area from 120 Beacon #4  
(Grey area on the Right is the Existing 20 Foot 118 Beacon Extension)**



In a convoluted manner, Fisher in the IMPNF actually agrees with us. When it discusses the Student Terrace on the Fisher Mall building, one of its touted 'positive' points is that "the sight line to the terrace from the 120 Beacon Street building will be obscured by the Carriage Area addition proposed at 118 Beacon Street." (Fisher IMPNF p. 26). So we are being told not to worry about seeing the proposed Student Terrace at 114 Beacon, because the 118 Terrace will obscure our view!

The potential noise from terrace events (when they occur) could be major. Looking at Boston Fire Department rules, at standing capacity, it is legal to have 5 square feet per person, with space left for exits. So if 25% of a 1250 square foot terrace were used for aisles with 938 square feet for standees, capacity would be 188 people. This would represent a major noise problem.

Our concerns about noise are not simply theoretical. Our building neighbor Claude Cicchetti in Unit 1B has a ground floor level terrace. Some years ago, he allowed his then-recent college graduate son to use the unit. We had multiple experiences with loud noise coming from parties (with only 10-20 people), which disturbed us on the 4<sup>th</sup> floor of the building to the point where even when we closed our windows, we were disturbed by objectionable noise levels. In our case, we were able to resolve the issue by contacting Claude directly, but our experience with Fisher on the Beacon Street side makes us concerned about what would happen if there were a party on a building that at 25 feet higher than Claude's terrace would be much closer to our windows and could have many more people present.

Again, if this were something that was absolutely vital to Fisher's future, it might be appropriate for the BRA to vote in favor of economics over the rights of someone like me who has lived at 120 Beacon for 35 years relying on Back Bay zoning protection. But in this case, as already noted, Fisher has no stated need for this terrace. So the balancing of the merits should be in our favor, not Fisher's.

**7. Fisher's vague reassurances about the terrace fly in the face of underlying imperatives.** Given the fact that Fisher's stated reasons for the 118 Terrace do not make sense to us, we wonder if there is a hidden agenda at work.

In particular, we wonder if over time, Fisher plans to use the 118 Terrace as additional student space but is being intentionally misleading about this in the IMPNF, where it only refers to "an outdoor terrace at the first floor level" without a specified function.

Our concern regarding Fisher's intentions is based on the fact that over time, we believe that 118 Beacon will be used primarily for student rather than office purposes. As the IMPNF says about the Carriage House addition, this will be used for "library and office space for such student services as the Tutoring Center, Student Advisory Services, Career Services, and others" (IMPNF, p. 25). And the whole point of buying 1 Arlington and then 10/11 Arlington has been to move non-student functions away from the Beacon block.

If so, it is natural that students using the other student facilities at 118 will wish to use the terrace there – rather than walking downstairs to Beacon Street, then walking over to the Fisher Mall entrance at 116 Beacon and then going to the Mall roof.

It also makes sense to us that as Fisher student enrollment expands, a single 2,500 Student Terrace at the Fisher Mall will not provide sufficient space, so that Fisher will want to repurpose the 118 terrace.

In sum, the only purpose for the 118 Terrace that makes sense is for it to be used long-term as a second Student Terrace in a student-oriented 118 Beacon building.

We think this is why the IMPNF states no purpose for the 118 Terrace. To our mind, the omission is not an accident. By being intentionally vague, there presumably will be no BRA restrictions to get in the way of repurposing when Fisher is ready to make the change.

The BRA therefore should be much tougher on Fisher regarding its plans for the 118 Terrace, asking why the terrace is needed and how the abutters can be reassured that this won't become a second student terrace long-term. It also should ask why the terrace is needed at all, if it will only be used a few times a year.

**8. Before the BRA makes any decisions about the addition, it needs to think about the alternative possible use of this space as a loading zone.** Given Fisher's need to come up with a better loading dock and pickup area solution behind 116, no decision of 118 Beacon should be made until and unless Fisher comes up with a viable solution for truck, garbage and van/bus parking. This is because the space in question (which is located next to what Fisher calls its 'loading dock' at 116 Beacon) may be needed for logistical solutions.

**Conclusions and Recommendations**

Given that the abutters

- Have invested large amounts of personal net worth in these valuable waterside Beacon residential properties
- With explicit consideration to the views and privacy that they were purchasing
- And in good faith that these would be protected by zoning rules,

It is unfair that Fisher now be able to change the rules for a small addition that is not critical to its overall plan. Fisher likes to say that it prides itself on being a good neighbor, but its stance here is anything but neighborly.

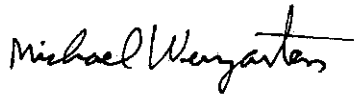
The BRA therefore should require Fisher to explain in detail why it needs this building and why the proposed usages for the 2,500 square feet addition cannot easily be relocated elsewhere in Fisher's 190,000 square feet of space. The BRA should ask Fisher why, if it characterizes the building as one of "two small additions," it is so important to Fisher that abutter rights and 35 years of zoning precedent should be overturned.

With respect to the terrace; the BRA should require Fisher to explain why it can't use other facilities for its occasional campus events; and why its proposed 'few times a year' usage should be allowed to harm abutters 365 days a year.

In sum, this is a clear case in which the balance of economic and historical rights clearly favors the latter. Fisher can prosper without the Carriage House addition. It just is asking the BRA for everything it can think of. The BRA should respond by saying no.

\* \* \* \* \*

Respectfully submitted,



Michael Weingarten  
120 Beacon Street #4  
Boston, MA 02116

To: Katelyn Sullivan  
Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority

Cc: Mayor Thomas M. Menino; [mayor@cityofboston.gov](mailto:mayor@cityofboston.gov)  
Shaina Augbourg; [Shaina.Aubourg@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Shaina.Aubourg@cityofboston.gov)  
State Representative-Elect Jay Livingstone; [livingstone.james@gmail.com](mailto:livingstone.james@gmail.com)  
State Senator Will Brownsberger; [willbrownsberger@gmail.com](mailto:willbrownsberger@gmail.com)  
District Attorney Daniel F Conley; [danconley2013@gmail.com](mailto:danconley2013@gmail.com)  
City Councilor Michael P. Ross; [Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov)



Sarah Hinton; Sarah.Hinton@cityofboston.gov  
City Councilor Felix Arroyo; Felix.Arroyo@cityofboston.gov  
City Councilor Ayanna Pressley; Ayanna.Pressley@cityofboston.gov  
James Sutherland; James.Sutherland@cityofboston.gov  
City Councilor John R. Connolly; John.R.Connolly@cityofboston.gov  
City Councilor Stephen J. Murphy; Stephen.Murphy@cityofboston.gov  
Peter Meade, Director Boston Redevelopment Authority;  
Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov  
William Young, BBAC; william.young@cityofboston.gov  
NABB info@nabbonline.com  
Mayoral Candidate John Barros; johnfbarros@gmail.com  
Mayoral Candidate Charles Clemons; info@charlesforboston.com  
Mayoral Candidate Rob Consalvo; rob@robconsalvo.com  
Mayoral Candidate William Dorcena; will@willdorcena.com  
Mayoral Candidate John G C Laing; johnlaing@laingenterprises.com  
Mayoral Candidate David S Portnoy; portnoy@barstoolsports.com  
Mayoral Candidate Charlotte Golar Richie; cgrichie1@mac.com  
Mayoral Candidate Bill Walczak; info@billforboston.com  
Mayoral Candidate Martin J Walsh; martinjwalsh02125@gmail.com  
Mayoral Candidate Charles Calvin Yancey ccyancey@aol.com

**Sullivan, Katelyn**

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**From:** Martyn Roetter [mroetter@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, July 08, 2013 10:56 AM  
**To:** Meade, Peter; Mayor; Ross, Michael (City Council); Arroyo, Felix; Connolly, John (City Council); Murphy, Stephen (Councilor); will@mywillbrownsberger.com; NABB; Pressley, Ayanna; Sullivan, Katelyn; tom@jaylivingstone.com  
**Subject:** Fisher IMP

## **Additional and Updated Comments on Fisher College IMP**

### **Introduction**

I would like to update and reinforce my earlier comments and recommendation about this plan based on additional information of which I have become aware regarding the financial prospects and challenges for the College and its ability to provide competitive facilities for its students within its footprint in the Back Bay.

### **Recommendation**

Additional information makes it clear that it is in Fisher College's as well as in the Back Bay neighborhood's interest to have the IMP terminated or withdrawn NOW from consideration by the BRA. There should be no further investment of money, time and human resources on any of our parts, including the BRA's, in trying to paper over the yawning gaps in an unworkable plan (or in less elegant words put lipstick on the face of a pig).

Fisher College would be well advised to devote its time and resources to finding and pursuing an alternative path forward (i.e. a different location for its expansion) before it is too late. Fisher should stop spending its money on real estate and traffic consultants focused on sections of Beacon and Back Streets and wasting the time and energy of its own staff in the pursuit of an impossible dream that will inevitably turn into a nightmare for everybody concerned.

### **Financial Risks, Dubious Benefits, and Certain Harm**

The need for Fisher College to grow to achieve financial sustainability is undeniable. A sizable proportion of the funds it expects or hopes to receive to achieve sustainability will have to come from various student Government grant and loan programs. The outcomes of these programs in terms of default and graduation rates are coming under increased scrutiny and giving rise to justified concerns about whether or to what extent they actually benefit the students who receive them. The financial model which Fisher College is using must be fraught with significant risks and dubious benefits or outcomes. The absence of financial information in the IMP is troublesome since without such information it is impossible to identify and assess all the risks that may be involved and the capability of Fisher College to implement its plans even if they were approved.

Whatever steps Fisher College may try to take to cope with the impact of adding 177 student residents in the Arlington-Berkeley block of Beacon Street the physical dimensions of this area cannot be altered. The incidence of traffic congestion and extent of the disruptions to the ebb and flow of daily life and activities will become increasingly intolerable as the number of resident students increases. In addition the impact of the construction and renovation work associated with the implementation over time of Fisher College's plans has not been addressed. The presence of contractors and their vehicles and materials to implement a series of projects makes it likely that the area would also have to endure being a construction site for an unspecified period of time. We all know from experience how unlikely it is that such projects will be accomplished on time or within budget.

It is physically impossible to build facilities for students in this area that can match the space and amenities available at other colleges with which Fisher has to compete to attract students. Students' experiences will also suffer from the increasing resentment at their very presence they will encounter from Back Bay residents because of the degradation in the quality of life resulting from their sheer numbers, no matter how careful and respectful they are collectively and individually.

## **The Alternative Path for Fisher College**

It would be the height of irresponsibility not only towards the neighborhood but also towards its future students for Fisher College to continue to pursue its IMP. It also makes no sense for the BRA to let Fisher College continue along a path that has already been clearly revealed to be a disaster in waiting.

Property in the Back Bay is at a premium. It is inconceivable that Fisher College should be unable to receive a good price for its properties (or its new properties if it wishes to retain its status quo in Back Bay). The College should then be able to find another growing neighborhood for its expansion in Boston. This location would be better and more suitable for its future students and would enhance the life and vibrancy of the neighborhood around it, for example Fort Point or the Innovation Center, in contrast to the harm that would be inflicted on Back Bay if the IMP is implemented as proposed. An ancillary benefit of an alternative location for Fisher College would be an increase in the tax base in Back Bay to deliver additional revenues to the City of Boston from properties that would no longer be tax exempt.

The sooner Fisher College redirects and devotes all its efforts to the goal of finding a new location for its expansion the better, especially in light of its current lease arrangement for 55 beds on Stuart Street. This lease runs out in 2016 with

no guarantee of renewal. Hence the need to find residential space outside Back Bay to accommodate all Fisher's students even assuming its enrolment stays constant is rapidly becoming urgent.

Sincerely,

--  
Martyn Roetter

144 Beacon Street  
Boston, MA 02116-1449  
USA

tel: +1 617 820-5205

fax: +1 617 820-5223

cell: +1 617 216 1988

Skype ID: martynroetter

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** audrey foster [audsf2@gmail.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, July 09, 2013 8:59 PM  
**To:** Mayor; Ross, Michael (City Council); Arroyo, Felix; Pressley, Ayanna; Connolly, John (City Council); Murphy, Stephen (Councilor); will@mywillbrownsberger.com; Meade, Peter; Sullivan, Katelyn; info@charlesforboston.com; danconley2013@gmail.com; cgrichie1@mac.com; rob@robconsalvo.com; will@willdorcena.com; info@billforboston.com; martinjwalsh02125@gmail.com; ccyancey@aol.com  
**Cc:** James C Foster; audrey foster  
**Subject:** DENY FISHER COLLEGE GROWTH PLAN

I am writing to express strong opposition to the Fisher College growth plan and ask the Boston Redevelopment Agency (BRA) to deny Fisher's request. The Back Bay is one of the most historic and well-preserved residential neighborhoods in America. We cannot permit Back Bay to become a student quad for 1100 Fisher students. The Neighborhood Association of Back Bay (NABB) has taken a strong stand against Fisher expansion. NABB has detailed numerous zoning laws Fisher will violate that have been in force for over 40 years specifically to keep Back Bay residential. The residents have maintained the integrity of these historic buildings very well. If property values decrease while noise, congestion and vandalism increase, owners will sell. Who will be willing to buy property in the middle of college dorms and how will they maintain that historic property? The character of this area of Boston will irreversibly change.

1. Fisher students have a poor record as neighbors: noise, litter, drunkenness, vandalism and more. The high student population will cause exponentially more noise, more trash, more smoking, more mischief, and greater numbers of students coming home late from bars and just hanging out like all young people do. There are many examples: a mother pushing a stroller who couldn't pass by because a crowd of students blocked the sidewalk; my elderly neighbor couldn't get up our stairs because a group of students hanging out on the stairs wouldn't let her through. There are four elementary schools and at least three playgrounds within a few blocks of Fisher College. Fisher expansion should not be permitted in a residential neighborhood.
2. There is already a parking shortage in Back Bay; the parking problem will be far worse if Fisher is allowed to grow. Students, teachers and staff will all require more parking, further impacting the neighborhood.
3. Fisher plans new dorms and student services on both sides of Beacon Street. Those will clearly impact traffic flow in Back Bay and into other parts of the city. Arlington and Berkeley Streets are major city arteries with entrance/exit to Storrow Drive. Double-parked Fisher delivery trucks are already a frequent problem both morning and evening since Fisher has no warehouse or loading-dock. Traffic backs up on Beacon Street to the State House and on Berkeley to Columbus. Storrow backs up in both directions. More students require more paper, books, laundry, food, trash removal, and maintenance combined with more student traffic on foot and in cars. The congestion and traffic noise will be exponentially worse in a historic, residential neighborhood.
4. A local realtor has stated and the NABB has validated that Back Bay property values and Boston tax revenues will significantly decrease unless Fisher is stopped. Further, NABB detailed an additional, large tax revenue loss if Fisher buildings become tax-exempt dorms, even while demand for city services like water, sewage, trash removal, traffic lights and police protection will increase. Boston residents should not be subsidizing Fisher growth plans.

5. Housing students in a neighborhood where they cannot feel free to be young doesn't serve students well either. An on-line search shows Fisher students already rate Fisher dorms as poor. Crowding more students into sub-standard dorms amongst angry residents is wrong for students, residents, and for Boston. Fisher has options; they could grow on Boylston Street, for example, without changing Back Bay as a residential neighborhood. Emerson, Suffolk, Simmons, and Bay State have all developed growth plans in Boston without destroying the neighborhood.

Fisher's growth plan is entirely self-serving and violates years of zoning law. It is wrong for Boston and for students, and therefore must be denied.

Back Bay Resident:  
Audrey S. Foster  
134 Beacon Street, PH  
Boston, MA 02116

## Sullivan, Katelyn

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**From:** Michael Weingarten [mikew@signallake.com]  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 11, 2013 9:34 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Cc:** Aubourg, Shaina; Ross, Michael (City Council); Arroyo, Felix; Pressley, Ayanna; Connolly, John (City Council); Murphy, Stephen (Councilor); will@mywillbrownsberger.com; johnfbarros@gmail.com; info@charlesforboston.com; danconley2013@gmail.com; john@connollyforboston.com; rob@robconsalve.com; will@willdorcena.com; mikerossboston@yahoo.com; johnlaing@laingenterprises.com; portnoy@barstoolssports.com; cgrichie@mac.com; info@billforboston.com; martinjwalsh02125@gmail.com; ccyanney@aol.com; info@nabbonlone.com; Meade, Peter; James.livingstone@gmail.com; Hinton, Sarah; Sutherland, James; Committee to Elect Michael J. Nichols; Josh Zakim  
**Subject:** Comments on the Fisher IMPNF: The Fisher Mall  
**Attachments:** mall\_071113.pdf

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow Up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Katelyn,

Please find attached a memo regarding Fisher IMP Proposed Project 6, which relates to a terrace addition on the Fisher Mall building at the rear of 112-114 Beacon.

We have several concerns about the Mall relative to the IMPNF:

**1. Rather than building a terrace, Fisher needs to repurpose the Mall to deal with its traffic problem:** *By building the Mall on Back Street, Fisher took a large alleyway-facing space whose natural purpose is facilitating deliveries and vehicle parking, and repurposed it in a manner that left Fisher without off-curb loading. As a result, Fisher vendors regularly park illegally on the streets, contributing to traffic congestion.*

*This issue needs to be addressed in the IMPNF process, with BRA approval for any of Fisher's Institutional Projects 1-7 contingent (in part) on addressing the loading problem. We believe that the only way to provide off-curb space consistent with Boston Transportation Department standards is to dismantle part of the Mall building and/or the adjacent 102 Beacon rear extension. If there is no mall, the question of a terrace becomes moot.*

**2. Fisher needs to fix an eyesore at variance with Back Bay architectural norms:** *The current Mall, relying on grandfathered protection, is an ugly industrial-park-like structure that would never be allowed today by the Back Bay Architectural Commission.*

*Before allowing what Fisher calls "an attractive ... well-landscaped outdoor gathering and sitting space... with brick elements in keeping with the well-designed and appointed terraces elsewhere on Back Street," Fisher should be required to renovate the building exterior in a manner consistent with Back Bay architectural norms. It is the height of arrogance for Fisher to build a "well designed and appointed terrace" on top of a building with exposed cinderblock sides.*

**3. Adding a large terrace on top of a set of buildings with a 3.26 FAR is inappropriate (the normal allowed limit is 3.00).** *We don't believe that additional usable space should be added, since this terrace will be used for hours a day by large numbers of students and staff. There are already enough people shoehorned into these buildings.*

**4. The potential capacity of the terrace is unacceptable to abutters.** Based on Boston Fire Department regulations, the terrace could accommodate 300 people on a standing basis, and over 100 on a sitting basis. This would create unacceptable noise and crowd control problems, and is unfair to abutters, who purchased their properties with a reasonable expectation of quiet and privacy on the Charles River-facing side.

**5. The 2,500 square foot terrace inevitably will expand to the entire roof area.** If the terrace is popular, it will need to grow as student population increases. The result will be a 2.4 times increase in potential issues related to noise, smoke, etc.

**6. Fisher may need to correct non-grandfathered violations of BBAC guidelines.** We believe that Fisher at these properties may have violated BBAC restrictions against rooftop mechanical equipment installed on lower roofs. We count 13 roof additions, most of which do not appear to have grandfathered protection. The BRA in its Scoping Determination should require Fisher to provide documentation regarding these additions and take corrective action if needed.

-----  
Please confirm receipt of this memo.

Regards,  
Michael



Michael Weingarten  
120 Beacon Street #4  
Boston, MA 02116

July 11, 2013

## Rethinking The Fisher Mall

This memo focuses on the Fisher Mall, a large one-story extension behind 104-114 Beacon facing on Back Street ('the Mall'), as well as the adjacent smaller extension behind 102 Beacon.

In *IMPNF Proposed Institutional Project 6*, Fisher proposes to add a 2,500 square foot College Terrace on the Mall roof – leaving the underlying structure unchanged.

We have several concerns about the Mall relative to the IMPNF:

**1. Rather than building a terrace, Fisher needs to repurpose the Mall to deal with its traffic problem:** By building the Mall on Back Street, Fisher took a large alleyway-facing space whose natural purpose is facilitating deliveries and vehicle parking, and repurposed it in a manner that left Fisher without off-curb loading. As a result, Fisher vendors regularly park illegally on the streets, contributing to traffic congestion.

This issue needs to be addressed in the IMPNF process, with BRA approval for any of Fisher's Institutional Projects 1-7 contingent (in part) on addressing the loading problem. We believe that the only way to provide off-curb space consistent with Boston Transportation Department standards is to dismantle part of the Mall building and/or the adjacent 102 Beacon rear extension. If there is no mall, the question of a terrace becomes moot.

**2. Fisher needs to fix an eyesore at variance with Back Bay architectural norms:** The current Mall, relying on grandfathered protection, is an ugly industrial-park-like structure that would never be allowed today by the Back Bay Architectural Commission.

Before allowing what Fisher calls "an attractive ... well-landscaped outdoor gathering and sitting space... with brick elements in keeping with the well-designed and appointed terraces elsewhere on Back Street," Fisher should be required to renovate the building exterior in a manner consistent with Back Bay architectural norms. It is the height of arrogance for Fisher to build a "well designed and appointed terrace" on top of a building with exposed cinderblock sides.

**3. Adding a large terrace on top of a set of buildings with a 3.26 FAR is inappropriate (the normal allowed limit is 3.00).** We don't believe that additional usable space should be added, since this terrace will be used for hours a day by large numbers of students and staff. There are already enough people shoehorned into these buildings.

**4. The potential capacity of the terrace is unacceptable to abutters.** Based on Boston Fire Department regulations, the terrace could accommodate 300 people on a standing basis, and over 100 on a sitting basis. This would create unacceptable noise and crowd control problems, and is unfair to abutters, who purchased their properties with a reasonable expectation of quiet and privacy on the Charles River-facing side.

**5. The 2,500 square foot terrace inevitably will expand to the entire roof area.** If the terrace is popular, it will need to grow as student population increases. The result will be a 2.4 times increase in potential issues related to noise, smoke, etc.

**6. Fisher may need to correct non-grandfathered violations of BBAC guidelines.** We believe that Fisher at these properties may have violated BBAC restrictions against rooftop mechanical equipment installed on lower roofs. We count 13 roof additions, most of which do not appear to have grandfathered protection. The BRA in its Scoping Determination should require Fisher to provide documentation regarding these additions and take corrective action if needed.

# Detailed Discussion

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## Issue 1: Lack of off-curb loading docks

***Our greatest single concern is that the IMPNF fails to deal with a critical need for a growing Fisher student population; namely, the lack of off-curb loading docks for trucks and buses.*** This was addressed in detail in our Traffic memo.

Looking at the Fisher properties, it is clear that the Mall, which takes up a 40' x 150' space along Back Street, is a logical place for off-curb loading. This is why service alleyways like Back Street were created – to provide for rear-building deliveries.

**Rear of Fisher Buildings Showing Mall Exterior  
Abutting on Back Street**



Therefore, the BRA needs to require that Fisher, as a condition for IMP approval *for any of its Proposed Institutional Projects 1-7*, develop alternatives in which it repurposes some portion of the Mall for loading docks and logistical support.

It may be that Fisher cannot come up with a responsive plan that it considers economically feasible. The Mall currently houses Fisher's kitchen, dining room, auditorium and student center space. Without the Mall, we don't know where Fisher could locate these facilities. On the other hand that is Fisher's problem to solve if it wishes to grow in Back Bay; and it reinforces the

community's point that Fisher needs to consider solutions that involve moving out of the neighborhood.

To the extent that some portion of the Mall is repurposed for off-curb loading docks, this could make the issue of a Student Terrace moot, since there may no longer be a structure at the rear of 112-114 Beacon on which a terrace could be built.

## Issue 2: Need for an architectural makeover

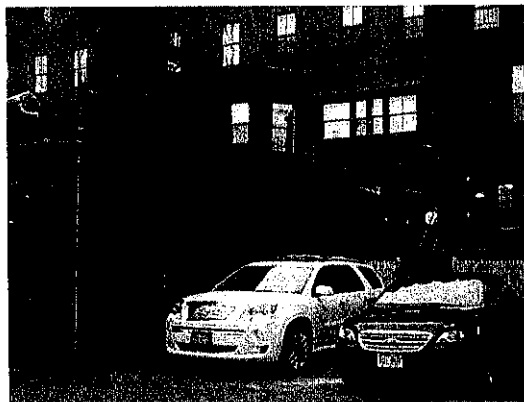
***If the BRA allows the Mall to remain, it should require exterior renovation as a condition for IMP approval.*** Compared to the well-executed parking garages at 128-132 Beacon and at 100 Beacon, the Mall building pictured above, along with the shed-like structure at the rear of 102 Beacon pictured below, are ugly industrial park type structures that are embarrassments to the block. We particularly object to the cinderblock walls and the permanent outside storage of dumpsters (instead of rolling them outside on pickup days). These facilities are not in keeping with Fisher's professed reverence for maintaining the standards of the neighborhood:

*Fisher's contribution to the urban quality of its street and neighborhood is to maintain all of its facilities to a very high standard, and to undertake meticulous preservation and renovations of its buildings. Fisher takes pride in its stewardship of all the buildings it owns by maintaining their historic and architectural importance and in the careful choice of external materials when undertaking capital improvements. – Fisher IMPNF p. 46*

**Rear of 102 and 104 Beacon (and side of the Mall Building)  
With Black Cinder Block Walls**



**Red Cinder Block Wall Facing Rear of 116 Beacon**



**Red Cinder Block Wall at rear of 116 Beacon (Entry to the Mall)**



As a condition for IMP approval, the BRA should require that the Mall facade is renovated to BBAC standards.

**Issue 3: These buildings are already overbuilt**

The maximum allowed Back Bay FAR (floor area ratio (FAR) is 3.00. In contrast, the Fisher buildings from 102-114 Beacon have an FAR of 3.26, or 10% over the limit. If the proposed terrace space were included, the FAR for these properties would rise to 3.36.

**102-114 Beacon Street Gross Square Feet and FAR**

Property		GFA	Lot Area	FAR
102	Beacon Street	21,179	4,950	4.28
104	Beacon Street	11,100	3,750	2.96
106	Beacon Street	11,610	3,900	2.98
108/110	Beacon Street	18,619	6,000	3.10
112	Beacon Street	9,253	3,150	2.94
114	Beacon Street	8,938	3,000	2.98
	<b>Total</b>	<b>80,699</b>	<b>24,750</b>	<b>3.26</b>

We understand that outdoor terraces do not count in FAR computations (a point that is emphasized in the IMPNF).<sup>1</sup> However, in most cases roof decks are rarely used by owners (perhaps a few hours a month) and typically only have only a few users at a time. Here, the Student Terrace is intended to be used for hours each day, and potentially by a large number of students and staff, since it “will be accessed directly from the major student activities spaces in the Mall below:”

*Fisher proposes to create an outdoor terrace ... to provide an outdoor social space where all members of the Fisher community can sit and socialize. The College Terrace fulfills a critical unmet need of the*

<sup>1</sup> “This proposed terrace does not add any FAR to the Mall as it is unenclosed usable open space.” – IMPNF p. 26

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cityofboston.gov/Images\\_Documents/Place%20of%20Assembly%20Application%20and%20Requirements\\_to\\_m3-33879.pdf](http://www.cityofboston.gov/Images_Documents/Place%20of%20Assembly%20Application%20and%20Requirements_to_m3-33879.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> We recognize that the ability to use the entire 6,000 square feet area may be limited by the 6 mechanical

*College as Fisher currently has no outdoor space where its students, staff and faculty can sit in a casual environment with tables and chairs and enjoy each others company... The location of the terrace is appropriate since it will be accessed directly from the major student activities spaces in the Mall below..." – IMPNF p. 26*

Accordingly, we believe that the Terrace will be used as a highly trafficked 'room' at Fisher, and on this basis, the impact on effective FAR should be taken into account. The Terrace should be rejected, because the density of use for these properties already is too high.

#### **Issue 4: The terrace capacity is unacceptable to abutters**

The Boston Fire Department allows 5 square feet per person standing (less room for exits) and 15 square feet per person for seating areas.<sup>2</sup> If we assume 25% for exit space, the total roof capacity of a 2,500 square foot terrace would be 312 students (standing) and 104 (seated).

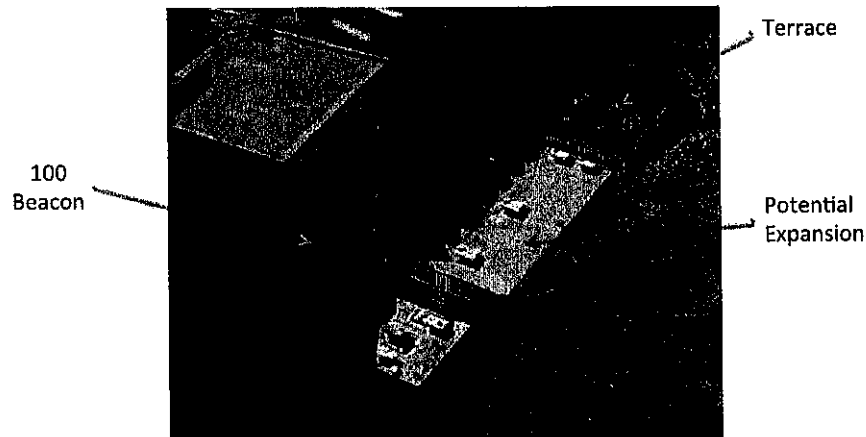
This concentration would create major noise and crowd control problems, and is unfair to abutters, who purchased their properties without the expectation that Back Street would house large outdoor student populations. Changing the rules now is inappropriate.

#### **Issue 5: Longer term, the terrace inevitably will expand to the entire roof area**

If the terrace is popular, it will need to grow as student population increases. This leads to an obvious issue regarding Fisher's intentions for the remainder of the 6,000 square foot roof.

This concern is reinforced by the fact that while the Student Terrace area only represents 42% of the Fisher Mall roof area, the school is looking for fencing approval along the entire 6,000 square foot roof perimeter.

**Fisher Mall Aerial Photo Showing Fencing around the entire Mall Roof**



<sup>2</sup> [http://www.cityofboston.gov/Images\\_Documents/Place%20of%20Assembly%20Application%20and%20Requirements\\_tm3-33879.pdf](http://www.cityofboston.gov/Images_Documents/Place%20of%20Assembly%20Application%20and%20Requirements_tm3-33879.pdf)

If Fisher some day seeks to expand the terrace by up to 2.4 times to use most or all of the 6,000 square foot roof area,<sup>3</sup> this will greatly increase the potential for upsetting abutters with noise and other problems:

- If the terrace is expanded to 6,000 square feet, capacity would be 900 students (standing) and 300 (seated).
- Such an expansion also would bring the Terrace much closer to the residential units at 100 Beacon.

We anticipate that in response, Fisher will say that it would need a revision of the IMPNF before any expansion (so that abutters need not worry). However, if the BRA approves the current IMP, Fisher would have every reason to believe that an extension would be obtainable when needed.

## Issue 6: Need to review potential BBAC guideline violations

A final issue is the need to review and possibly correct what may be as many as 13 non-grandfathered violations of Back Bay Architectural Commission guidelines at the Mall and 202 Beacon.

### BBAC Guidelines

According to BBAC guidelines, which apply to post-1983 Back Bay residential district exterior changes, "persons contemplating any exterior work must obtain approval from the commission prior to commencing work." The approval is in the form of a Certificate of Authenticity (COA).

With respect to roof mechanical equipment, all additions are supposed to be placed on the uppermost roof **of the main building**, not on the addition roof; and they should be grouped in the center of the roof, not at the edges where they are visible from the street:

**ROOFTOP MECHANICAL EQUIPMENT** *All mechanical systems should be located on the uppermost roof to minimize their visibility, and shall be incorporated within new volumetric additions. Equipment should be the smallest available, and should be grouped near the center of the roof and mounted as close to the roof as possible. Compliance with noise regulations is required. Exterior ductwork and conduit are inappropriate. – BBAC Guidelines*

Skylights are acceptable under some circumstances, but only with BBAC approval:

**SKYLIGHTS** *New skylights may be allowed if they have a or traditional mullioned shape and are minimally visible from street level. Skylights or roof windows in 1 mansard roof not appropriate. (errors in original PDF)*

### Investigating the number of roof additions

Based on these guidelines, we took photos of the Fisher Mall and 102 Beacon roofs (from the elevation of the Fielder bridge), with a goal of assessing:

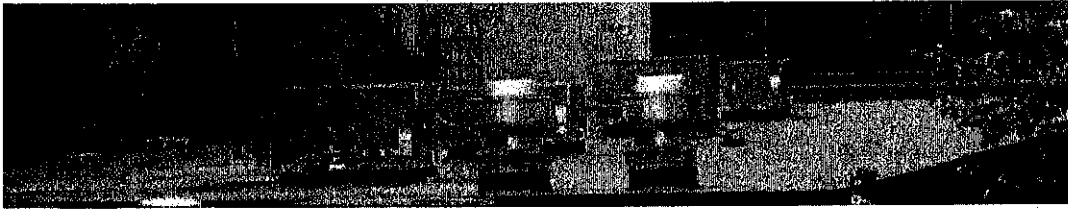
- How many pieces of roof mechanical equipment and/or skylights are there?
- Do the roof additions appear to be less than 30 years old?

Looking first at the Fisher Mall, there are 6 pieces of mechanical equipment; 4 HVAC units and 2 exhaust stacks. All of the units are clearly less than 30 years old.

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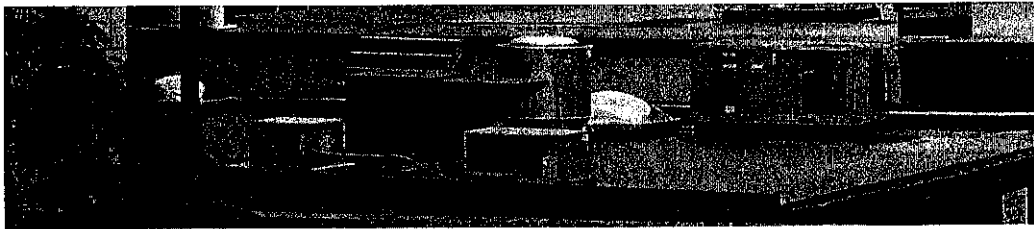
<sup>3</sup> We recognize that the ability to use the entire 6,000 square feet area may be limited by the 6 mechanical additions on the roof (see Issue 6). To the extent that these have valid Certificates of Appropriateness, these can be moved to the center rear to maximize the footprint for an expanded terrace.

**Fisher Mall Roof  
Showing 4 HVAC systems and 2 Exhaust Stacks**



Looking next at 102 Beacon, there are 7 roof additions: 3 HVAC systems with substantial exposed wiring for the two small units in front), 2 skylights, 1 exhaust and 1 liquid container/water tower. Of these, the only addition that may pre-date 1983 is the large black exhaust.

**102 Beacon Roof  
Showing 7 roof additions**



In total, therefore, there are 13 additions on the two roofs: 7 HVAC systems, 3 exhausts, 2 skylights and 1 liquid container. Of these only one exhaust is possibly pre-1983.

**Roof Addition Legal Compliance**

In theory, the only units that could receive COAs would be the skylights and HVAC replacements for pre-1983 grandfathered units. Post-1983 lower roof mechanical additions would be in violation and should not receive COAs.

To test the issue, we investigated the permit status of the two exhaust ducts at the edge of the Fisher Mall (visible in the photo below)

**Page 29 IMPNF Photo**



Exhaust Vents at  
Edge of Roof

Based on a review of the attached permit application,

- The application clearly is referring to the ducts in question. The inspection application improperly lists 118 Beacon as the building location and fails to include any information about the rear extension. However, the listed reason for the ducts is to "cut 2 roof top fans... to duct/ draft range hood in kitchen area of school cafeteria." Since the kitchen is located at the left of the Mail building (where exhaust ducts are located), this corroborates that the page 29 ducts are the same as those listed in the permit.
- The ducts were installed in 2003 and therefore do not have grandfathered protection. This is reinforced by the fact that since the roof is being cut twice, the ducts are not replacements for earlier units.
- As new roof mechanical additions on a lower roof, and as ducts that are visible from the street and are not grouped in the center of the roof, they violate BBAC guidelines.

### Fisher 2003 Permit Application for Exhaust Ducts

PARCEL # 2574

APPLICANT MUST USE TYPEWRITER IN FILLING IN THIS APPLICATION

City of Boston  
INSPECTION SERVICES DEPARTMENT  
0922

Certified Street Number  
118 Beacon St  
6255

Street Numbering Tappanac.

Application to the Commissioner for Permit for Alterations, Repairs or Change of Occupancy

Location, 118 Beacon Street, District, Boston, Ward, 05  
Name of owner, Fisher, College, Address, 118 Beacon St, No. 118  
Name of architect or engineer, Address, No. 118  
Material of building, Stone, Style of roof, Flat, Construction of roof, Shingles  
Size of building, feet front, 50, feet rear, 40, feet deep, 80, No. of stories, 3  
No. of feet in height from sidewalk to highest point of roof, 20, Material of foundation, Stone  
Thickness of external walls, Party walls

Description of Present Building

LEGAL OCCUPANCY OR USE (Applicant is not to fill in this box)  
College 590/1961

Front stairs, X, Back stairs, X, Fire escape, X, Con. balconies, Any other?  
Is building equipped with automatic sprinkler system?  
Type of construction, Collapse, Group occupancy?  
Building to be occupied for, College, after alteration

Description of Proposed Extension

IF EXTENDED ON ANY SIDE OR VERTICALLY

Size of extension, No. of feet long, No. of feet wide, No. of feet high above sidewalk  
No. of stories high, Style of roof, Material of roofing, Foundation  
Of what material will the extension be built, Type of construction  
How will the extension be occupied?

GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED WORK AND ITS LOCATION.  
(ALL STRUCTURAL, MECHANICAL, ELECTRICAL, ETC., SHALL BE INCLUDED)

Duct 2 roof top fans, install 2- 24" x 24" roof curbs. Install 2- 300CFM roof fans to duct/draft range hood in kitchen area of school cafeteria. Install 5' duct on unit to connect to range hood

\*MASS DEP'S DISPOSAL LAW\*  
MGL Ch. 864, § 6A, 6B, 6C, 6D  
Will work result in any debris?  
Yes  No  Initials

GROUND WATER SURVEY  
Shall be for exterior wall, yes  no  Foundation: yes  no  Basement Area: yes  no

Estimated Cost, \$ 12,000.00  
Owner's Phone 781-340-3040

Date, 08/29/03

The facts I have set forth above in this application and accompanying plans are a true statement to the best of my knowledge and belief.

Signature of Owner (Required)  
Richard P. Gagner, Jr.  
Type Name of Person Signing, Richard P. Gagner, Jr.  
(Address), 26 Oak Bluff Rd., Sagamore Beach

Signature of Licensed Tradesperson  
Richard P. Gagner, Jr.  
Type Name of Person Signing, Richard P. Gagner, Jr.  
(Address), 119 County Club Wy., Kingston, MA

Address, 26 Oak Bluff Rd., (Name of Contractor)  
Lic. No. 060622, Class, CS, (Address), 119 County Club Wy.  
My license expires, 02/24/05, Kingston, MA

Phone, 781-340-3040, Phone, 781-340-3040



To double-check on the legal status of these ducts, we asked the BBAC if it had ever received a COA application; and if so, how it was resolved. Sue Prindle of NABB advised us that she spoke to William Young at the BBAC, who said that the records were being digitized and were not available. We also asked Peter Gori (representing Fisher) about the issue, who said that he would follow up but has not gotten back to us.

Our conclusion, therefore, is that these exhaust stacks appear to be in violation of BBAC guidelines. We are skeptical that Fisher ever applied for a BBAC Certificate of Appropriateness. It is more likely that Fisher's contractor simply asked for an inspectional certificate without going to the BBAC for a COA (where the project would have been rejected).

FYI, this is not a minor issue, since these exhaust stacks are used to vent Fisher's kitchen facilities and are therefore vital to Fisher operations.

This also raises a question regarding the COA status of the 11 other roof additions. If the exhaust stacks do not have a COA, we suspect that this is true for many of the 11 other roof additions.

### **Fisher Awareness of This Issue**

Fisher's awareness that it may have violated BBAC guidelines is supported by the way in which the IMPNF obscured these and other roof additions in at least two photos.

While the photo of the current building on page 29 does show the two exhaust vents (from a low elevation that obscures other roof additions),

- The photo on page 30 hides the vents behind hedges
- The aerial mockup of the new terrace on page 31 has Photoshopped the vents out of the picture entirely.

### **IMPNF Page 30: Obscuring the Exhaust Vents Behind Hedges**



**IMPNF Page 31: Photoshopping Out the Vents Entirely**



FYI, in the page 31 photo, 4 of 7 roof additions on 102 Beacon also have been removed; the four remaining HVAC units on the Mall roof may be the same unit replicated four times and the front one on the right has been moved, presumably from the area to be used for the Student Terrace.

**Recommendation**

The BRA in its Scoping Determination should require Fisher to provide documentation regarding these additions and take corrective action if needed.

\* \* \* \* \*

Respectfully submitted,

Michael Weingarten  
120 Beacon Street #4  
Boston, MA 02116

To: Katelyn Sullivan  
Project Manager  
Boston Redevelopment Authority

Cc: Mayor Thomas M. Menino; [mayor@cityofboston.gov](mailto:mayor@cityofboston.gov)  
Shaina Augbourg; [Shaina.Aubourg@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Shaina.Aubourg@cityofboston.gov)  
State Representative-Elect Jay Livingstone; [livingstone.james@gmail.com](mailto:livingstone.james@gmail.com)  
State Senator Will Brownsberger; [willbrownsberger@gmail.com](mailto:willbrownsberger@gmail.com)  
District Attorney Daniel F Conley; [danconley2013@gmail.com](mailto:danconley2013@gmail.com)  
City Councilor Michael P. Ross; [Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Michael.Ross@cityofboston.gov)  
Sarah Hinton; [Sarah.Hinton@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Sarah.Hinton@cityofboston.gov)  
City Councilor Felix Arroyo; [Felix.Arroyo@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Felix.Arroyo@cityofboston.gov)  
City Councilor Ayanna Pressley; [Ayanna.Pressley@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Ayanna.Pressley@cityofboston.gov)  
James Sutherland; [James.Sutherland@cityofboston.gov](mailto:James.Sutherland@cityofboston.gov)

City Councilor John R. Connolly; [John.R.Connolly@cityofboston.gov](mailto:John.R.Connolly@cityofboston.gov)  
City Councilor Stephen J. Murphy; [Stephen.Murphy@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Stephen.Murphy@cityofboston.gov)  
Peter Meade, Director Boston Redevelopment Authority;  
[Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov](mailto:Peter.Meade.bra@cityofboston.gov)  
William Young, BBAC; [william.young@cityofboston.gov](mailto:william.young@cityofboston.gov)  
NABB [info@nabbonline.com](mailto:info@nabbonline.com)  
Mayoral Candidate John Barros; [johnfbarros@gmail.com](mailto:johnfbarros@gmail.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Charles Clemons; [info@charlesforboston.com](mailto:info@charlesforboston.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Rob Consalvo; [rob@robconsalvo.com](mailto:rob@robconsalvo.com)  
Mayoral Candidate William Dorcena; [will@willdorcena.com](mailto:will@willdorcena.com)  
Mayoral Candidate John G C Laing; [johnlaing@laingenterprises.com](mailto:johnlaing@laingenterprises.com)  
Mayoral Candidate David S Portnoy; [portnoy@barstoolsports.com](mailto:portnoy@barstoolsports.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Charlotte Golar Richie; [cgrichie1@mac.com](mailto:cgrichie1@mac.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Bill Walczak; [info@billforboston.com](mailto:info@billforboston.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Martin J Walsh; [martinjwalsh02125@gmail.com](mailto:martinjwalsh02125@gmail.com)  
Mayoral Candidate Charles Calvin Yancey; [ccyancey@aol.com](mailto:ccyancey@aol.com)

City Council Candidate Michael Nichols; [nicholsforboston@gmail.com](mailto:nicholsforboston@gmail.com)  
City Council Candidate Josh Zakim; [josh@joshzakim.com](mailto:josh@joshzakim.com)

## Sullivan, Katelyn

---

**From:** Kay Nagle [kaynagle@verizon.net]  
**Sent:** Friday, July 12, 2013 9:54 AM  
**To:** Sullivan, Katelyn  
**Cc:** info@nabbonline.com  
**Subject:** Fisher College Expansion

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

To Ms. Sullivan,

As a property owner in Back Bay, I have to add my voice to those of many opposing the proposed expansion of Fisher College. Back Bay's historic residential district is not only a treasure to Boston but is one of the foremost residential districts in the country – and an often visited neighborhood for tourists from around the world. It is not a college campus or dormitory quad. Surely the city's building authorities will seek to protect the quality of this historic landmark neighborhood.

Regards,  
Kay W. Nagle  
186 Commonwealth Ave.