

## MassDOT Air Rights Parcels 12-15 Citizens Advisory Committee Questions for Proponents

### Trinity Financial, Inc. responses for Parcels 12 and 13 (responses in bold)

1. What stage are you at in the development process?

**Trinity has completed conceptual design for both Parcels 12 and 13. Additionally, as the only respondent for Parcel 13, we have taken the opportunity to further vet the proposed project with City and State elected officials, community groups and residents, resulting in several letters of support. We have also advanced the financial feasibility of the project by securing a tenant, the Boston Architectural College, for a significant portion of the proposed building.**

a. Are there any remaining studies, scenario analyses, etc. that you need to undertake before moving forward?

**Not at this time. If we were to be designated as developer for either site we would undertake additional studies as required as part of the Article 80 review process.**

b. Where does your proposal stand in terms of financing?

**We have had preliminary conversations with parties interested in providing financing for the proposed projects. However, without a developer designation it is premature to entertain specific financing terms, etc. We are confident that upon designation and subsequent project approvals we will be able to successfully raise the needed financing to undertake the project.**

c. If you successfully pass through all development review requirements, are you confident that you will be able to break ground soon after?

**Yes, Trinity has successfully designed, financed and constructed similar mixed-use developments in the past and is positioned to do so here as well.**

d. Does your project involve a phasing plan for development? If so, please describe.

**No, the projects would not be phased. Our proposals for Parcel 12 and Parcel 13 are completely autonomous and do not require any cross subsidy. If designated for Parcel 13 that project would move forward on its on merits, likewise for Parcel 12.**

2. How has your proposal from 2008 been adapted to reflect updates in finances, proposed uses, design, or other specifications?

**For Parcel 12 we have not made any changes to the original proposal. We are open to working with the CAC and the larger community to modify the project as necessary to address concerns that may be raised.**

**For Parcel 13 we have reduced the overall height of the building to comply with the *Civic Vision* and existing zoning regulations. We have also modified the development program by reducing the number of private market housing units from 180 to 126. Additionally, we have added the Boston Architectural College as a major tenant in the building. The BAC would lease an additional 97 units of student housing as well as approximately 10,000 square feet of institutional space.**

3. What, if any, engineering study or analysis did you undertake to determine the costs associated with and feasibility of air rights development for this particular parcel?

**Recognizing that the cost of building a deck over the Mass Turnpike and the MBTA is an expensive proposition, our approach to designing and cost estimating the deck system for Parcels 12 and 13 included consulting with the subcontractors and consultants directly involved in, or privy to, the pricing and post mortem of Columbus Center as well as the design and pricing of the planned Turnpike Parcel 7 project.**

**The cost estimate is based on a schematic design prepared by our structural engineer, LeMessurier Consultants, that has been heavily vetted by our general contractor, Dimeo Construction Company, our geotechnical engineer, McPhail Associates, and foundation specialists, HUB Foundation.**

4. Could you outline where your proposal encompasses air rights and where it utilizes terra firma? What percentage of the total project is over terra firma versus air rights? If applicable, please indicate how the breakdown varies by phase of development.

**For Parcel 13 we are proposing a deck of approximately 13,000 square feet that would span the east bound lane of the Turnpike. This equals approximately 43% of the proposed project being built on air rights with the remaining 57% of the project being constructed on terra firma.**

**For Parcel 12 we are proposing a deck of approximately 15,500 square feet that would span the entirety of the Turnpike, the design also calls for an additional 18,000 square feet of decking over the west bound on ramp accessed from Massachusetts Avenue. This equals approximately 61% of the proposed project being built on air rights with the remaining 39% of the project being constructed on terra firma.**

5. Is there a specific height or density you have determined that your project must reach in order to make air rights development financially feasible?

**We have not determined a minimum height or density that the proposed projects must reach in order to achieve financial feasibility. We designed the proposed buildings with an eye towards the height and massing guidelines contained in the *Civic Vision* and other community development guidelines and worked to see if the uses contemplated in the document would allow for a financially feasible project. We have put forward proposals for both Parcel 12 and Parcel 13 that we believe meets this objective.**

6. Does your project cover the entire air rights parcel? If no what portion of the turnpike remains exposed and where?

**On Parcel 13, our proposed development covers the entire east bound lane of the Turnpike. The west bound lane would remain uncovered.**

**On Parcel 12, the proposed development would cover the entirety of the Turnpike on the edge of the parcel closest to Mass Ave. The balance of the air rights parcel (heading away from Mass Ave) would remain uncovered.**

7. In what ways, if at all, does your development proposal require control of parcels other than the designated air rights parcels? Please identify with specificity any additional parcels and/or rights incorporated into your development proposal and discuss what agreements are in place to secure those parcels/rights.

**Neither the Parcel 12, nor the Parcel 13 proposals require any parcels in addition to the designated air rights parcels.**

8. How does your proposal accommodate/react to other developments in the planned area?

**Both the Parcel 12 and Parcel 13 proposals have been designed to comply with the *Civic Vision* in terms of height, density and use. Both proposals look to incorporate access to existing public transportation (MBTA bus on Parcel 12 and MBTA green line trolley on Parcel 13). Both proposals concentrate the tallest portions of the development at the Mass Ave and Boylston Street intersections, stepping down in height as they proceed into the Back Bay and Fenway neighborhoods. The Parcel 13 program provides both private market rental housing as well as student housing for the Boston Architectural College in response to the need for diverse housing stock in the area. Both proposals include active street level retail uses that will improve the pedestrian experience and extend the lively Boylston Street retail corridor. The proposed projects have been designed to coexist with existing buildings along Boylston Street, Newbury Street and Mass Ave as well as planned developments in the area.**

9. Have you undertaken any pedestrian, traffic, public transit, environmental or other impact studies for this project?

**No, we have not yet undertaken studies of this nature. However, we would study all of these items and more as part of the Article 80 review process were we to be designated as developer.**

- a. Please outline the findings, any recommendations, and proposed mitigation of that work, specifically noting how your project will ensure accessibility for all users.

**At this time we do not have any specific recommendations resulting from impact studies. However, we can commit to making sure that the proposed projects are accessible to all users. In the case of Parcel 13, we have also proposed to coordinate our construction such that the Hynes Convention Center green line station can be made accessible where it is not currently.**

- b. How does your proposal accommodate multi-modal transportation options?

**Our proposed development accommodates multi-modal transportation options by providing on-site parking for building residents, improved public transportation access for residents and the larger community, improved pedestrian experience along Boylston Street and Mass Ave. Additionally, at other developments Trinity has successfully included bike storage for residents and access to Zip Car rentals, options which we would be happy to explore here.**

10. How does your project enhance/reconfigure the public realm, in particular the pedestrian environment?

**The proposed development would enhance the pedestrian environment by filling in gaps along Boylston Street, Mass Ave and Newbury Street, integrating with existing retail establishments and extending the retail corridor along Boylston Street and crossing Mass Ave. Additionally, along Boylston Street we are proposing to create a pedestrian plaza that would allow access to the MBTA green line, provide landscaping, seating and other amenities to improve the pedestrian experience and activate a now vacant stretch with street level retail. Along Mass Ave we are proposing to create a pedestrian waiting area that is pulled off of the main sidewalk where people can wait for MBTA bus service without obstructing the travel of others passing through. The improved access to public transportation also includes the possibility of making the green line station handicapped accessible where it is not currently.**

- a. What new connections are established between the Back Bay and Fenway neighborhoods?

**The proposed Parcel 12 development will serve to connect the Back Bay and Fenway neighborhoods by constructing a building that spans the entirety of the Turnpike, creating street level presence along Boylston Street, turning the corner onto Mass Ave, continuing across the Turnpike and ending along Newbury Street. The entire street level will be activated with retail, enlivening street frontage that is currently vacant and encouraging pedestrian activity along its entire length.**

11. Does your proposal intend to seek out any public subsidies? More so, what size and type of subsidy do you intend to pursue? Please discuss the rationale.

**We anticipate that public infrastructure funds may be needed to fully incorporate the work contemplated in making the Hynes Convention Center green line station fully accessible. As the conversations with the MBTA are still at a preliminary stage we have not yet determined the amount of subsidy that may be needed.**

12. In what way does your proposal incorporate the Hynes Convention Center Green Line station and address the issue of accessibility for all users? Have you met with the MBTA to discuss this?

**Trinity's Parcel 13 proposal contemplates providing access to the MBTA green line by incorporating a public entrance into the station within the Boylston Street façade. Further, we have designed our building and the MBTA entrance with the thought that both stair and elevator access could be provided to the platforms below making the station 100% accessible. We have had several meetings with the MBTA discussing the general concept, wanting to make sure that the proposed design works with the needs of the MBTA. To date, conversations have been positive – the proposal is seen as a viable option to solving this problem. We have not discussed cost, schedule or responsibilities at this time. We remain committed to working with the MBTA should we be designated as developer for the Parcel 13 site.**