

## MEMORANDUM

March 10, 2022

**TO:** **BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY**  
**D/B/A BOSTON PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT AGENCY (BPDA) \***  
AND BRIAN P. GOLDEN, DIRECTOR

**FROM:** MICHAEL CHRISTOPHER, DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT REVIEW  
CASEY A. HINES, DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF DEVELOPMENT REVIEW  
ALEXA PINARD, URBAN DESIGNER III  
LANCE CAMPBELL, SENIOR PROJECT MANAGER

**SUBJECT:** NORTH END CROSS STREET BOUTIQUE HOTEL, NORTH END

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**SUMMARY:** This Memorandum requests that the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA") d/b/a Boston Planning & Development Agency ("BPDA") authorize the Director to: (1) issue a Scoping Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code") for the North End Cross Street Boutique Hotel in the North End neighborhood of Boston (as further described below, the "Proposed Project"); (2) authorize the Director of the BPDA to issue a Certification of Compliance for the Proposed Project pursuant to Section 80B-6 of the Code, upon successful completion of the Article 80 Large Project Review; (3) authorize the Director of the BPDA to take any and all actions and execute any and all documents deemed necessary and appropriate by the Director in connection with the foregoing, including, without limitation, executing and delivering a Cooperation Agreement, all upon terms and conditions determined to be in the best interests of the BPDA.

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**PROJECT SITE**

The Project Site is composed of 11 parcels totaling approximately 13,364 square feet (sf), or 0.30 acres, on the northeastern edge of the Rose Kennedy Greenway.

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\*Effective October 20, 2016, the BRA commenced doing business as BPDA.

Fronting on the Cross Street Plaza, the Project Site is bordered by the intersection of Cross and Endicott Streets to the west, by the Cross Street Plaza space adjacent to Cross Street to the south, by a commercial retail building tenanted by a ground floor bank and a mixed-use building on Salem Street to the east, and by Morton Street to the north. The Project Site is presently occupied by surface-level parking, a vacant, boarded one-story structure previously used for commercial retail by a longstanding Italian grocer, and a second one-story structure that previously housed an Italian pastry shop now occupied as a woodworking shop, and a real estate sales agent office.

### **DEVELOPMENT TEAM**

The Development Team for the Proposed Project consists of:

<b>Proponent:</b>	<u>Cross Street Ventures, LLC</u> William Caulder
<b>Legal Counsel:</b>	<u>Hemenway &amp; Barnes, LLP</u> Johanna Schneider, Esq.
<b>Architect:</b>	<u>The Architectural Team</u> Michael Liu Michael Doherty
<b>Landscape Architect:</b>	<u>Copley Wolff Design Group</u> Sean Sanger
<b>Permitting Consultant:</b>	<u>Fort Point Associates, Inc. a Tetra Tech Company</u> Katie Moniz
<b>Neighborhood Outreach:</b>	Paul Passacantilli
<b>Civil Engineer:</b>	<u>Tetra Tech</u> Nate Cheal
<b>Transportation:</b>	<u>Vanasse &amp; Associates, Inc.</u> Jeffrey Dirk
<b>MEP Engineer:</b>	<u>Petersen Engineering, Inc.</u>

James Petersen

**LEED Consultant:**

Soden Sustainability Consulting  
Colleen Ryan Soden

**DESCRIPTION AND PROGRAM**

The Proposed Project proposes to demolish the existing surface parking area and 1-story commercial structures and replace them with a 5-story, approximately 69,613 square foot hotel, with approximately 134 rooms, two ground floor restaurants (one hotel-related and one privately operated) and a seasonal rooftop dining terrace. There will be no parking developed as part of the Proposed Project.

The Proposed Project will help to address Boston's growing hospitality demands by supplying needed hotel rooms at a gateway location to Boston's North End along the Greenway. To foster a visual and physical connection between the Greenway and Cuttillo Park, the Project provides a 1,328 square foot, two-story, open-air passageway at the ground and second level, aligned with the existing Cross Street crosswalk to the Greenway and the center of Cuttillo Park.

In conjunction with the development of the hotel, the Proposed Project will reconstruct Cross Street Plaza to transform the existing plaza layout into a pedestrian-focused space enlivened and softened with new site furnishings, flexible outdoor seating zones, and a diversity of robust planting areas. The new Cross Street Plaza will focus on the pedestrian and community experience while creating protected bicycle lane(s) and keeping vehicular traffic and loading/delivery service curbside on Cross Street. Five short-term loading spaces are created along Cross Street to be used for ride share pickup/drop off, valet operations, deliveries, trash pickup, and other service uses. This dedicated loading area along Cross Street is envisioned to support the local businesses along Salem Street between Cross and Prince Streets in addition to the Proposed Project.

The Applicant also proposes to work with the Department of Public Works and Boston Parks & Recreation Department (BPRD) to improve Morton Street to become a flush or tabled condition along the edge of Cuttillo Park. This improvement would involve raising the grade to create ADA-accessible access to the park. (Currently, there is no ADA-compliant access into the park from Morton Street.) The Applicant also proposes to repave the ends of Morton Street to

improve drainage flow toward existing catch basins and reduce flooding and ponding water from storm events.

The Proponent plans to commence construction of the Proposed Project in the Fall of 2022. The total development cost is approximately \$80 million.

### **ARTICLE 80 REVIEW PROCESS**

On October 30, 2020, in accordance with the BPDA's policy on mitigation as outlined in the Mayor's Executive Order Relative to the Provision of Mitigation by Development Projects, Fort Point Associates, Inc., on behalf of Cross Street Ventures LLC, submitted a Letter of Intent for the Proposed Project.

Letters soliciting nominations to the IAG for the proposed project were delivered to City Councilor Lydia Edwards, State Senator Joseph A. Boncore, and State Representative Aaron Michlewitz. Additional letters seeking recommendations were delivered to the Office of Neighborhood Services and the City Councilors at large.

State Senator Boncore responded with two (2) nominations, Representative Michlewitz responded with two (2), Councilor Edwards responded with two (2), Councilor Essaibi George responded with one (1) nomination, and the Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services responded with four (4) nominations. The BPDA nominated two (2) members. The remaining City Councilors at large did not respond with any nominations.

On February 12, 2021, the Proponent filed a Project Notification Form ("PNF") with the BPDA pursuant to Article 80B of the Code. A Scoping Session for City and State officials was held on March 8, 2021. An initial IAG meeting was held via Zoom on March 18, 2021. Additional IAG meetings were held by Zoom on September 30, 2021 and November 1, 2021. The meetings were posted on the BPDA website and notice was distributed to the BPDA North End neighborhood email list.

On April 7, 2021, October 7, 2021, and February 16, 2022, Public Meetings were held by Zoom. All Public Meetings were advertised in the Boston Herald and the Boston Bulletin and posted on the BPDA website and were distributed to the BPDA North End email list.

The Proponent presented to the North End/Waterfront Residents Association (NEWRA) on December 10, 2020 and December 9, 2021 and to the North End/Waterfront Neighborhood Council (NEWNC) on September 13 and October 12, 2021. In addition, the Proponent has had numerous meetings with City staff, elected officials, North End residents and business owners, and union representatives, including Boston's Local 26 Hospitality Workers Union and the Carpenters Union. The Proponent will continue to meet with neighbors and other interested parties.

## **ZONING**

The Project Site is located within the Community Commercial Subdistrict of the North End Neighborhood District. The Proposed Project will require conditional use permits for hotel use and first floor restaurant use and for building height pursuant to Article 54-18 of the Code, and variances for Floor Area Ratio (FAR), rear yard setback and restaurant use above the first floor (for rooftop dining). The Proposed Project will also require a Groundwater Conservation Overlay District (GCOD) permit.

## **MITIGATION AND PUBLIC BENEFITS**

### **MITIGATION**

The Proponent has worked closely with the IAG, BPDA, Public Works Department ("DPW"), Boston Parks & Recreation Department ("BRPD"), and Boston Transportation Department ("BTD") to identify transportation and public realm mitigation measures for this Proposed Project, which includes the following:

- Resurfacing of Morton Street from Endicott Street to the northern edge of Cutillo Park and from the southern edge of Cutillo Park to Salem Street to improve roadway surface conditions and existing drainage issues (subject to the approval from the Public Improvement Commission (PIC)).
- Improved vehicular circulation and enhanced, protected pedestrian zone on Cross Street Plaza and along adjacent Cross Street right-of-way, which reinforces planned Boston Transportation Department (BTD) dedicated bus and bike lane infrastructure on Cross Street.

- Creation of a dedicated loading zone and rideshare drop-off area along Cross Street to serve the nearby Salem/Cross Street small businesses.
- Participation in the A Better City (ABC) Transportation Management Association (TMA) to facilitate and encourage healthy transportation options for hospitality employees.
- Coordination with Boston Transportation Department (BTD) to identify additional locations, such as along North Washington Street, that may support increased resident overnight parking opportunities in the North End.
- An annual membership to a bike share service will be offered to employees who commute to work by bicycle a minimum of three (3) days per week.
- Contribution of \$75,000 for a Bluebikes station for the North End Neighborhood.
- Incorporation of numerous green building measures, making the Project LEED Gold certifiable.

## **PUBLIC BENEFITS**

In consultation with the IAG, the BPDA, BRPD, and local community groups, the Proposed Project includes the following community benefits commitments.

The Proponent shall make a one hundred-thousand-dollar (\$100,000.00), capital contribution to fund the Cutillo Park improvements, as the following describes:

1. Recipient: The Fund for the Parks and Recreation Department  
1010 Massachusetts Avenue  
Boston, MA 02118
2. Use: Cutillo Park Improvements located in the North End
3. Amount: One hundred-thousand-dollar \$100,000.00
4. Timeline: The \$100,000.00 contribution is due upon issuance of building permit for the Proposed Project.

- Long-term management/maintenance agreement with BRPD for stewardship of Cutillo Park
- Implementation of rodent control program on Morton and Cross Streets
- Installation of trash enclosure for existing area business trash receptacles on Morton Street
- Installation of lighting and security system on Morton Street
- Installation of trees, landscaping, and street furniture on Cross Street Plaza
- Provision of rooftop terrace space free of charge to neighborhood organizations for events
- Total contribution of \$50,000 to North End Against Drugs (NEAD), North End Athletic Association (NEAA), the Nazzaro Center, the Eliot School, Saint John School, the North End Performing Arts Center (NEMPAC).

## **RECOMMENDATION**

BPDA staff believes that the PNF adequately describes the Proposed Project's potential impacts, satisfying the criteria for the issuance of a Scoping Determination Waiving Further Review under Section 80B-5 of the Code. It is therefore recommended that the BPDA authorize the Director to: (1) issue a Scoping Determination waiving the requirement of further review pursuant to Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Code for the North End Cross Street Boutique Hotel Project in the North End neighborhood of Boston; (2) authorize the Director of the BPDA to issue a Certification of Compliance for the Proposed Project pursuant to Section 80B-6 of the Code, upon successful completion of the Article 80 Large Project Review; (3) authorize the Director of the BPDA to take any and all actions and execute any and all documents deemed necessary and appropriate by the Director in connection with the foregoing, including, without limitation, executing and delivering a Cooperation Agreement, all upon terms and conditions determined to be in the best interests of the BRA.

Appropriate votes follow:

**VOTED:** That the Director of the Boston Redevelopment Authority ("BRA") be, and hereby is, authorized to issue a Scoping Determination under Section 80B-5.3(d) of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Code") which (i) finds that the Project Notification Form ("PNF") submitted on February 12, 2021, adequately describes the potential impacts arising from the North End Cross Street Boutique Hotel Project in the North End neighborhood (the "Proposed Project"), and provides sufficient

mitigation measures to minimize these impacts; and (ii) waives further review of the Proposed Project under Section 80B-5 of the Code, subject to continuing design review by the BRA; and

**FURTHER**

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

**FURTHER**

**VOTED:** That the Director be, and hereby is, authorized to take any and all actions and execute any and all documents deemed necessary and appropriate by the Director in connection with the foregoing, including, without limitation, executing and delivering a Cooperation Agreement, all upon terms and conditions determined to be in the best interests of the BRA.