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PUBLIC HEARING/WORKING SESSION MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 24, 2020

MEETING DATE: April 28, 2020

TO: Land Use Committee of the City Council

FROM: Barney S. Heath, Director of Planning and Development
Neil Cronin, Chief Planner for Current Planning

CC: Petitioner

In response to questions raised at the City Council public hearing, the Planning Department is providing the following information for the upcoming public hearing/working session. This information is supplemental to staff analysis previously provided at the Land Use Committee public hearing.

PETITIONS #26-20 & #27-20 — 355 and 399 Grove Street

Petition #26-20 for a change of zone to Mixed Use 3/Transit Oriented District for portions of land located at 355 Grove Street (currently zoned BU-2) and 399 Grove Street (currently zoned BU-5), also identified as Section 42, Block 11, Lots 3 and 4

Petition #27-20 for a SPECIAL PERMIT/SITE PLAN APPROVAL construct a mixed use, transit-oriented development of residential units, office, retail, personal services, restaurant, hotel, and related commercial uses not to exceed 1,025,000 square feet of gross floor area, with residential uses comprising not less than 60% of the total gross floor area with a residential density of not less than 800 square feet per unit with not less than 560 units nor more than 620 units with special permit relief and/or waivers as follows: a development of more than 20,000 square feet of gross floor area, building height of up to 170 feet, buildings up to 11 stories, Floor Area Ratio of up to 2.5, beneficial open space of not less than 15%, increase of height of certain buildings with the Grove Street Area Corridor (to the extent necessary), and reduction in setback from Grove Street for certain buildings within the Grove Street Corridor Area (to the extent necessary); waiver of the sustainable development design standards and placement of a retaining wall greater than 4 feet in height within a setback; for-profit educational use, retail sales of over 5,000 square feet, restaurant with more than 50 seats, personal service use of over 5,000 square feet, place of amusement, health club on ground floor, animal services, hotel, bank up to and over 5,000 square feet, theatre/hall, laboratory/research facility, parking facility, accessory, multi-level, parking facility, non-accessory, single level; reduction of the residential parking requirement to 1.25 stalls per unit, reduction of the overall parking requirement by 1/3, and waiver of

parking stalls not to exceed 685 stall; and waivers to the requirements of parking facilities containing more than five stalls; waiver of the number, size, type, location, and design requirements, all at 355 and 399 GROVE STREET on land known as Section 42, Block 11, Lots 3, 4 and 4A, containing approximately 13.05 acres of land in districts zoned Mixed Use 3 Transit Oriented (MU3), BU2 (a portion to be rezoned to MU3), BU5 (to be rezoned to MU3). Ref: Sec. 4.2.2.B, 4.2.3, 4.2.4, 4.2.4.A.4, 4.2.4.B.3, 4.2.4.G.2, 4.4.1, 5.1.4, 5.1.4.A, 5.1.4.C, 5.1.8.B.1, 5.1.8.B.2, 5.1.8.B.4, 5.1.8.B.6, 5.1.8.D.1, 5.1.8.D.2, 5.1.9.B, 5.1.10.A.1, 5.1.10.B.3, 5.1.10.B.5, 5.1.12, 5.1.12.B.4, 5.1.13, 5.2, 5.2.13, 5.4.2.B, 5.12, 6.4.29.C.5, 7.3.3, 7.3.5, 7.4 of the City of Newton Revised Zoning Ordinance, 2017. Additionally, as to infiltration and inflow mitigation, an abatement of the infiltration/inflow mitigation fee pursuant to Section 29-170 of the City of Newton Revised Zoning Ordinance, 2017.

The Land Use Committee (the "Committee") opened the public hearings on these petitions on January 28, 2020 and continued the public hearings on February 11, 2020, February 25, 2020, March 5, 2020, March 24, 2020, and April 7, 2020; both public hearings remain open. A tentative schedule for future Committee public hearings is included as an attachment to this report (**Attachment A)**. This memorandum is focused on the construction management of the so-called "Riverside Development" proposed for the subject parcels.

Background

The petitioners are requesting a change of zone for a portion of 355 Grove Street, currently the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (the "MBTA") rail yard, and all of 399 Grove Street, currently the Hotel Indigo, to the Mixed Use 3/Transit Oriented Zone (the "MU-3/TOD zone"). The petitioners are also seeking special permits to allow a ten-building development on site. The petitioners filed revised plans which result in a development of 582 dwelling units, 253,827 square feet of office space, of which 7,500 square feet will be dedicated to the MBTA, 150 hotel rooms, and 38,895 square feet of ground floor commercial space (the "Project").

Construction Phasing

In accordance with the MU-3/TOD zone, the petitioners submitted a Construction Management Plan (the "CMP") detailing the procedure and timeline of construction **(Attachment B)**. The Planning Department asked the Horsley Witten Group ("Horsley Witten") to review the CMP **(Attachment C)**. The CMP indicates the Project will be built in four years beginning in the second half of 2021 and be completed by the end of 2025. The CMP states that the "Enabling Phase" will involve clearing and leveling a portion of the MBTA's property behind Building 1 and other site work to ensure access to the transit station, and to allow for contractor parking at 399 Grove Street. The Planning Department suggests that the petitioners submit a site plan for this portion of the site. The garage within Buildings 9 and 10 will be constructed first, then the priority will be the structures and features adjacent to the transit station including, but not limited to Building 8, the transit plaza and the northern portion of Main Street. From there construction will proceed southward. Construction of the exit ramp and other off-site improvements are subject to the other jurisdictions such as the Massachusetts Department of Transportation ("MassDOT") as well as the Federal Highway Administration ("FHWA"). As noted in the CMP, these discussions are ongoing and a final Traffic Management Plan will be approved by MassDOT. The Planning Department suggests that the petitioner be required to submit that plan as part of the final CMP. The petitioner should also be required to finish construction of the exit ramp and other off-site improvements as well as the parking garage prior to receiving a certificate of occupancy for any

building, other the garage portions of Buildings 9 and 10.

Access

To limit construction traffic on local roads and to minimize impacts to adjacent neighborhoods, the petitioner is considering to either utilize Recreation Road or a temporary access via 399 Grove Street (the parcel improved with the hotel). Utilizing Recreation Road requires approval from MassDOT as well as FHWA while the access via 399 Grove Street would be subject to review and approval from the Department of Public Works. The Planning Department supports this effort, but suggests the petitioners provide more information as to when these options will be evaluated and when a final decision will be made. All construction deliveries will be required to access the site via the Route 128 corridor and the Grove Street interchange and not via local Newton or Wellesley roads; trucks will also be prohibited from stopping for extended periods on public roads. The petitioners should provide the approvals required and from which authority, necessary to start construction. Staff further suggests that these final approvals be documented in the final CMP to be reviewed and approved by the City of Newton prior to any construction related activities.

Parking

The CMP indicates that once the site has been prepared for construction, Buildings 9 and 10, which will contain most of the parking for the Project, will be constructed first. During this stage, commuter parking will be reduced to 450 parking stalls, where approximately 650 stalls are typically occupied. During this stage, commuters will be directed to park at Woodland Station or other nearby transit stations. The petitioners expect this stage of construction to require approximately 150 parking stalls for construction workers. These stalls will be available at the site of the hotel and at the southwest portion of the site behind Building 1. Once the garage is complete, the petitioners project construction parking to peak at 250 stalls which will be accommodated in the garage. Horsley Witten suggests that the petitioners provide a site plan(s) showing parking areas for construction workers, MBTA vehicles, and commuters while the garage is under construction. Horsley Witten also suggests that a photometric plan be included in the final CMP detailing the intensity of light during construction with attention to pedestrian access to the transit station.

Stormwater

Due to the size of the development parcel, the petitioners are required to file a Notice of Intent (the "NOI") with the Environmental Protection Agency (the "EPA") under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System. The NOI does not require review from the EPA, but the NOI will include a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (the "SWPPP") detailing erosion and sedimentation measures such as silt fences and hay bales. There is no work anticipated directly within wetland resource areas and work within the 100-foot wetland buffer zone is limited. However, the Planning Department suggests that the SWPPP be submitted to the City for review to ensure proper attention has been paid to those resource areas.

There is an existing 60-inch culvert traversing the site that discharges into the Charles River. The petitioners propose a connection from their drainage system to this culvert. Horsley Witten suggests that the petitioners install a flow measuring device in the culvert prior to site disturbance and that a sampling program be included in the final CMP to measure "at a minimum total suspended sediment (TSS) and total Phosphorus (TP)" discharging into the Charles River. Both the flow rates and the sampling program are necessary establish baselines for post-construction monitoring.

Contamination

Given its history, the site has been subject to hazardous materials with three reported releases to the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. The petitioners engaged Sanborn, Head & Associates, Inc. who stated that the construction will be managed in accordance with the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (the "MCP") using a detailed construction Release Abatement Measure (the "RAM") Plan. Horsley Witten suggests that the final RAM plan be prepared by a Licensed Site Professional and include several measures regarding soil and groundwater management, ambient air monitoring, and measures should additional contamination be found on site. The Final RAM Plan shall be reviewed and approved by the City prior to any construction related activities.

Any asbestos -containing waste will be managed in accordance with DEP's Solid Waste Management Regulations for "special waste" and a licensed waste management contractor will be retained to transport all debris to an approved disposal facility.

Noise

In accordance with the City of Newton Noise Ordinance, construction hours are proposed between the hours of 7:00 a.m. and 6:00 p.m. weekdays and from 7:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on Saturday. However, Section §20-23 of the City Ordinances governing construction states that construction cannot begin prior to 8:00 a.m. on Saturday; these hours also may not occur during holidays. Additionally, only the Mayor may grant waivers from the hours of construction. The Planning Department suggests that the petitioners revise the construction hours in the CMP. As suggested by Horsley Witten, the final CMP should include a baseline condition of the noise level.

The CMP states that blasting will be necessary to level a portion of the site behind Building 1 to accommodate parking for the MBTA. The petitioners estimate that this work will take approximately two months and will be restricted to daytime periods only during approved construction hours. The petitioners should provide more information as to the number of blasts during this period. Additionally, the petitioners should state whether blasting will be necessary on other portions of the site. The City Council, in conjunction with the Newton Fire Department and applicable State Laws, established blasting procedures for special permits, the Planning Department suggests that a condition requiring compliance with these procedures be included in the Council Order **(Attachment D)**.

The CMP also outlines mitigation measures to reduce noise from typical construction activities. These include requiring noise muffler systems on construction equipment, managing construction traffic, prohibiting excessive idling of construction equipment, and installing safety fencing to provide security as well as to minimize fugitive dust and construction noise. In addition, it is anticipated that concrete demolition debris as well as bedrock and large boulders will be hauled away rather than crushed on site to minimize disturbance.

Recommendations

The CMP suggests that the construction will take approximately four years and will be subject to several jurisdictions including the City of Newton. In addition to the on-site construction, the Project involves constructing a new exit ramp from Interstate 95 northbound, enhancements to Recreation Road, a roundabout at the entrance to Interstate 95 southbound, and improvements to Grove Street.

Given the duration and complexity of construction, the Planning Department suggests that the petitioner create and implement a Community Engagement Plan to disseminate construction-related

information to the Ward Four City Councilors, adjacent neighborhoods and their respective neighborhood organizations, local businesses, and to commuters. In conjunction with the Community Engagement Plan, the Planning Department suggests that the Council Order include a condition creating a construction Liaison Committee to enhance communication regarding construction to provide a forum to address construction-related nuisances. The Liaison Committee shall meet at least two months prior to the start of any site work associated with the construction activities related to these petitions, including the clearing of the land located on the MBTA's property outside of the development parcel.

Councilor Questions

The petitioners have been submitting answers to questions from City Councilors during the public hearings and via email. Additional Councilor questions as well as answers to comments from the Peer Review Team from the Public Hearing Memorandum, dated January 24, 2020 **(Attachment E)**.

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment A: Tentative Land Use Committee Schedule, dated April 24, 2020
Attachment B: Preliminary Construction Management Plan, dated April 14, 2020
Attachment C: Horsley Witten Peer Review Memo, dated April 23, 2020
Attachment D: Blasting Conditions for Special Permits
Attachment E: Petitioners' Reponses

Attachment A

TENTATIVE LAND USE COMMITTEE SCHEDULE

4.24.20

355 AND 399 GROVE STREET "RIVERSIDE"

*This schedule is tentative. The Land Use Committee is scheduled to meet on the below dates; however, the topics are subject to change.

Meeting Date	Topic	Description
4.28.20	Construction Management & Construction Phasing	Review of Construction and its Impacts
5.5.20	Grove Street Bike Lane	Discussion of the Options for Bicycle Facilities on Grove Street
5.12.20	Revised Project	Review of the revised Site Plans, Program, and Fiscal Impact
5.26.20	Design Guidelines & Signage	Guidelines that will regulate architecture of individual buildings as well as signage
6.2.20	Transportation	Review of Traffic Impacts, Shared Parking Analysis, and Transportation Demand Management Plan

Preliminary Construction Management Plan (CMP) (Updated 4/14/20)

This section describes the Project schedule and sequencing and identifies steps that will be taken during construction to minimize potential temporary environmental impacts related to the demolition and construction phase of the Project. More specifically, this section identifies the steps that will be taken to minimize impacts related to noise, air quality (dust), wetlands, water quality, and construction related traffic. Careful consideration has been given to developing plans to minimize construction phase impacts – specifically to pedestrian access and safety, potential impacts to the local neighborhoods, and protection of the Charles River Watershed.

Generally, measures to reduce construction period impacts include controlling erosion and sedimentation, controlling dust, machinery air emissions and noise, properly managing construction related truck traffic and protection of pedestrians. Additionally, a final CMP will be developed with input from the City of Newton Inspectional Services, Public Works and Planning Departments as well as the MBTA, MassDOT and other State agencies. Guided by considerable input from the selected general contractor, the CMP will include detailed information on construction activities, specific construction mitigation measures, and construction materials and access and staging plans to minimize impacts to patrons, abutters, and the local community. The CMP will define truck routes that will help in minimizing the impact of trucks on local streets. Barricades, walkways, lighting, and signage will be identified to address public safety throughout the construction period.

Overall, Project construction is expected to be completed in approximately 48 months. The Proponent estimates that the construction of the replacement parking garage will commence in Late 2021 and the full project will be completed in 2025.

This section also describes the Project's compliance with the EPA's National Pollution Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) General Permit Program for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Sites.

MU-3 (TOD) Zone Requirements

The following section identifies how this Preliminary Construction Management Plan specifically addresses the criteria established in the Newton Zoning Ordinance for the MU-3 Zone.

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Proposed Site Construction Phasing Schedule

The Project schedule and sequencing plan have been preliminarily planned and coordinated with existing MBTA facilities to minimize construction impacts and efficiently complete the proposed improvements. As noted above, careful attention must be paid to the construction sequencing of the site improvements and individual buildings due to the unique nature of the project site as an active MBTA commuter facility. The construction phase of the Project will proceed in a manner that protects the adjacent resource areas, minimizes site erosion, and provides safe working conditions for the contractor. The construction phases of the Project will likely proceed as follows:

- 1.0 Enabling Phase
  - Erosion control barriers will be installed prior to the start of construction along the down gradient limit of work line, and site security fencing will be installed, where appropriate, around the Project's working limits. In addition, security fencing and protective measures; lighting, signage, and overhead protection as deemed necessary will be provided along all pedestrian routes to maintain safe and efficient access for patrons and employees to all MBTA facilities.
  - The southern portion of the MBTA Maintenance Yard will be prepared for construction laydown including blasting of existing ledge
  - Adjustments will be made to the West Parking Area Hotel Indigo property vehicular access routes for construction and MBTA service vehicles.
  - Support posts for the green line catenary power system will be relocated to accommodate the project.
  - Permanent or temporary adjustments will be implemented to accommodate access to the MBTA station.
  - Existing utilities will be relocated and new utilities will be installed in the Main Street corridor in preparation for new building foundations
  - Interim adjustments will be made to the existing parking area to accommodate a minimum of 450 parking spaces as well as maintaining adequate space for bus, shuttle and other station dropoff activities

- 2.0 Garage Construction Phase
  - Contractor will prepare the location for the new parking garage and a portion of the development buildings. Bituminous pavement from the Project Site will be demolished and processed for re-use on-site as fill material.
  - Construction of a cast-in-place foundations of the parking garage and foundations for the adjacent buildings.
  - Placement of pre-cast concrete structural elements for the floors of the parking garage. Vertical construction of adjacent buildings.
  - Upon completion and Occupancy Permit for the garage, all parking will be relocated to the new garage
  - A temporary protected pedestrian route will be established from the garage to the station

- 3.0 Remainder of project construction
  - The remainder of the proposed development will continue construction, with a priority on completing structures and features adjacent to the station including but not limited to Building 8, the Transit Loop and the Northern portion of Main Street.
  - This remaining portion to work will continue to include:
    - Earthwork activities, which includes excavation and backfill to bring the Project Site up to proposed grades.
    - Installation of final utilities and continued building pad preparation.
    - Installation of curbing, pavement, and Project Site features including signage, fencing, guardrail, etc.
    - Building construction and completion of Project Site features.
    - Installation of landscaping.

The sequencing and progress of the construction of the buildings other than the MBTA garage will progress in one rolling phase beginning at the start of the garage construction. The order of commencement of each building is subject to further coordination with the MBTA.

Off-Site Roadway Improvements

As necessary to accommodate the progress of the work on the project site, off site improvements will progress generally as follows:

- Install temporary traffic control signs and erosion control measures.
- Remove existing features and perform clearing and grubbing activities.
- Relocate existing overhead wires.
- Begin box widening (bridge/underpass construction) and perform remaining utility work and drainage improvements.
- Install curbing, signal system mast arm foundations, and signal system conduit.
- Install pavement base course, sidewalks, landscaping, and site features such as guardrail.
- Cold plane existing roadway and place pavement overlay.
- Install signal system components and roadway striping.
- Remove traffic control signs and erosion control measures upon stabilization.

Throughout the course of the construction of these offsite improvements, efforts will be made to provide uninterrupted two-way traffic flow as well as maintaining safe routes for bicycles and pedestrians. This will be most challenging to accommodate if the box widening (bridge construction) requires the installation of a new abutment. The majority of this work is subject to further design, coordination and review by MassDOT as the construction document review process continues. A final Traffic Maintenance Plan will be developed and approved by MassDOT during this process.

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Impacts to Adjacent Neighborhoods

In order to limit the potential for any construction vehicle traffic on local roadways, it is anticipated that all contractors will be required to access the property primarily by means of the Route 128/Grove Street interchange. At this time, the Proponent is considering two options for construction access.

-Option 1: provides a new dedicated construction access from the existing Recreation Road. This option is intended to further limit the amount of construction traffic on Grove Street and is subject to MassDOT and FHWA approval.
-Option 2: the Project would provide a temporary secondary means of access through the Hotel Indigo property. Construction access via the Grove Street frontage will be limited and subject to approval by the City's transportation and public works departments.

All construction vehicles will be directed from the site to the I-95/128 interchange to use either I-95/128 or the Mass Pike/I-90 to limit and minimize disruption to the adjacent neighborhoods of Newton Lower Falls and Auburndale.

Limitations further detailed herein will be placed on construction hours, air quality/dust control, noise, and construction traffic.

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Interim Commuter Accommodations

The Proponent has and will continue to coordinate extensively with the MBTA to ensure that customer experience and safety is preserved during construction. The erection of the new garage to accommodate commuters will be the first step of construction. During this initial step, a minimum of 450 available parking spaces will be maintained within the existing lot, portions of the unimproved MBTA property, and potentially on the Hotel Indigo site. During this and subsequent stages of construction, a clear and safe access route for all vehicles to the parking areas and the station drop-off will be maintained. Additionally, safe and accessible pedestrian routes will be created and maintained from the parking, drop-off, bus berths, and Grove Street to access the station. Typically, the Riverside Station parking facility sees a peak demand of 650 vehicles. Additional parking capacity exists at the Woodland Station Garage, typically in excess of 200 spaces, which will accommodate any displaced commuters. The proponent is working with the MBTA and MassDOT on both an interim and permanent signage program to direct commuters on 128 to the stations that have available parking.

Upon interim completion of the garage building, the structure will be opened for commuters and a safe vehicular access route to the garage and a safe pedestrian route from the garage to the station will be maintained throughout the remainder of construction.

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Contractor Parking

During the initial stages of construction prior to the opening of the garage, approximately 150 construction workers will park on site. During this phase, we have allocated space for contractor parking on portions of the existing Hotel Indigo site and a presently unused portion of the MBTA Maintenance yard that will be cleared and leveled prior to the start of the garage construction. After the opening of the garage, construction parking will peak at about 250 vehicles. At that point there will be approximately 1,000 unused parking spaces available for construction workers in the garage in addition to the space in the MBTA maintenance yard. Until completion of the project at least 250 spaces will be available in the garage.

Construction Hours

Construction of the Project will conform to all local, state, and federal laws and employ reasonable means to minimize inconvenience to residents in the general area. Exterior construction of the Project will occur predominantly during daytime hours no earlier than 7:00 AM and no later than 6:00 PM on any weekday,

except for certain operations such as concrete finishing and emergency repairs. On Saturdays, exterior construction will occur no earlier than 7:00 AM and no later than 5:00 PM, with the same exceptions. The Building Inspector may allow longer hours of construction under special circumstances, if a written request is provided to the Building Inspector in advance (except in emergencies). There shall be no exterior construction on Sunday or any state or federal legal holiday except under unusual circumstances and with the consent of the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

Air Quality Emissions

Dust generated from earthwork and other construction activities will be controlled by spraying with water. If necessary, other dust suppression methods will be implemented to ensure minimization of the off-site transport of dust. There also will be regular sweeping of the pavement of adjacent roadway surfaces during the construction period to minimize the potential for vehicular traffic to kick up dust and particulate matter.

All contractors will be required to adhere to all applicable regulations regarding control of dust and emissions. This will include, but not be limited to, maintenance of all motor vehicles, machinery, and equipment associated with construction activities and proper fitting of equipment with mufflers or other regulatory-required emissions control devices. The Proponent will require that the machinery of the contractor hired and the machinery of other sub-contractors hired to perform site work will utilize Low Sulfur Diesel (LSD) fuel or Ultra-Low Sulfur Diesel (ULSD) fuel in off-road construction equipment.

The construction process typically involves operations that may introduce two main types of air emissions: dust and vehicle exhaust. Clearing of vegetation, earthwork, blasting/excavation, and demolition activities provide the potential for release of fugitive dust emissions. The use and operation of construction vehicles and equipment provides the potential for increases of motor vehicle engine emissions.
Blasting will be carried out in accordance with all federal, state, and local blasting permit practices. No perchlorate containing explosives will be utilized. The proposed blasting is anticipated to be limited to the initial enabling phase of the project and last approximately 2 months.

Dust will be controlled using wetting agents, as necessary, and the direct transfer of excavated soil into covered trucks will greatly diminish the potential for soil migration. If necessary, other dust suppression methods will be implemented to ensure minimization of the off-site transport of dust. There also will be regular sweeping of the pavement of adjacent roadway surfaces during the construction period to minimize the potential for vehicular traffic to kick up dust and particulate matter. Dust control and street cleaning will be components of the contractor's SWPPP under the EPA GCP.

The Proponent is aware of the Clean Construction Equipment Initiative actively promoted by the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) (engine retrofit program and/or use of low sulfur fuel). A number of construction managers and contractors already are participating in this program. To the greatest practical degree, the Proponent will seek to engage a contractor familiar with and participating in this program.

The Proponent will require the use of ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel exclusively in all diesel-powered construction equipment. Ultra-low sulfur diesel has a maximum sulfur content of 15 parts per million as opposed to low sulfur diesel fuel, which has a maximum sulfur content of 500 parts per million. In fact, by using ultra-low

sulfur diesel fuel, there is a 97 percent reduction in the sulfur content as compared to low sulfur diesel fuel. In addition, the Proponent will direct its contractor(s) to retrofit any diesel-powered non-road construction equipment rated 50 horsepower or above to be used for 30 or more days over the course of the Project with EPA-verified (or equivalent) emission control devices (e.g., oxidation catalysts or other comparable technologies).

The Proponent and its contractors will comply with state law (M.G.L. Chapter 90, Section 16A) and DEP regulations (310 CMR 7.11(1)(b)), which limit vehicle idling to no more than five minutes in most cases. There are exceptions for vehicles being serviced, vehicles making deliveries that need to keep their engines running, and vehicles that need to run their engines to operate accessories.

The Proponent will contractually require the construction contractors to adhere to all applicable regulations regarding control of dust and emissions. This will include, but not be limited to, maintenance of all motor vehicles, machinery, and equipment associated with construction activities and proper fitting of equipment with mufflers or other regulatory-required emissions control devices. No significant uncontrolled dust or air quality impacts are anticipated to be generated by construction activities.

Earthwork Activities

The development plan strives to minimize significant cut and fill to the extent possible. Site imported fill materials will primarily include structural materials to support the development. These materials include bituminous pavement, concrete pavement, and slab base sections and building structural fill. All disturbed undeveloped areas will receive six inches of topsoil and, at a minimum, will be planted with an appropriate seed mix.

The source of the import material has not yet been determined. This determination will occur during the construction/bidding process when the site contractor is selected. However, the Proponent and their consultants will produce Project specifications that define the parameters of the materials that can be used at the Project Site for both structural and non-structural needs.

Construction Noise

The Project will generate typical sound levels from construction activities, including foundation construction, truck movements, heavy equipment operations, blasting for ledge removal, and general construction activities. Construction activity associated with the Project may temporarily increase nearby sound levels due to the use of heavy machinery. Heavy machinery will be used intermittently throughout the Project's construction phases.

The Proponent will implement mitigation measures to reduce or minimize noise from construction activities. Specific mitigation measures may include:

- Construction equipment will be required to have installed and properly operating appropriate noise muffler systems and contractors will be required to maintain all original engine noise control equipment.

- All exterior construction activities, such as site excavation/grading and new building construction, will be managed and conducted in accordance with the City of Newton's requirements. Any necessary off-hour work will be minimized to the extent practicable.
- Appropriate traffic management techniques implemented during the construction period will mitigate roadway traffic noise impacts.
- Proper operation and maintenance, and prohibition of excessive idling of construction equipment engines will be implemented as required by DEP regulation 310 CMR 7.11.
- The Project Site will be surrounded by safety fencing to provide security, as well as to mitigate construction noise and fugitive dust.
- Work hours and relevant noise generating activities will be reviewed with the City of Newton prior to construction.
- Appropriate operational specifications and performance standards will be incorporated into the construction contract documents.

Limited ledge removal will be required during the site work phase of the Project. Blasting activities to remove rock and ledge will be restricted to daytime periods only during approved construction hours. All blasting will be conducted in accordance with applicable safety regulations and immediate residential abutters to the Project Site will be notified prior to any blasting activities. A typical rock blast produces a maximum sound level in the audible range of 94 dBA Lmax at 50 feet. The estimated instantaneous maximum (Lmax) sound levels at the nearest residential properties from blasting on the site are 69 to 84 dBA. These levels are similar to existing daytime sound levels at these same locations of 60 to 87 dBA Lmax. Therefore, blasting sound for brief periods during the day is not expected to create a noise nuisance condition to surrounding residential properties. Furthermore, all blasting activity will be done by a licensed blasting contractor in full compliance with all state and federal regulations for protecting residential areas.

Wetlands and Water Quality

During construction, the Project will include installation of redundant erosion and sedimentation controls to eliminate discharge of any sediment material into nearby wetland resource areas or off-site drainage systems. Site preparation activities, construction staging, and other requirements are described below. Additionally, a Stormwater Management Plan, as described in the Stormwater Management Report, has been developed to minimize impacts on nearby resource areas from construction activities, and long term operation of the Project.

There is no work anticipated directly within wetland resource areas. Work within the 100-foot wetland buffer zone is also limited and includes minor re-grading and restoration of open space to accommodate the roadway improvements and future connection to the DCR bike path. Erosion and sedimentation controls including silt fence and hay bales will be installed along appropriate downgrade portions of the perimeter of the excavated areas to prevent construction materials from contaminating the storm drainage system.

Site Preparation, Construction Staging and General Construction Requirements

The Project Site preparation and construction staging for the Project will include several important steps. The contractor will establish site trailers and staging areas to minimize impacts on natural resources. The site trailers and staging areas will provide a location for erosion control equipment and supplies, documentation related to the Project's local and State permits as well as NPDES compliance, and spill control equipment. It is expected that the staging area will be located on compacted gravel or a paved surface, which will reduce potential erosion. As previously noted, the vast majority of the site has been previously altered with predominately paved areas associated with commuter parking areas. As such, these areas will be far more manageable as compared to a previously undisturbed site.

The following are some general requirements related to construction vehicle fueling and storage:

- Any refueling of construction vehicles and equipment will take place outside of the 100-foot wetlands buffer zone or riverfront area and will not be conducted in proximity to temporary sedimentation basins or diversion swales.
- No on-site disposal of solid waste, including building materials, is allowed in the 100-foot buffer zone.
- No materials will be disposed of into the wetlands or existing or proposed drainage systems. All contractors, including concrete suppliers, painters and plasterers, will be informed that the cleaning of equipment is prohibited in areas where wash water will drain directly into wetlands or stormwater collection systems.
- The contractor will establish a water resource to supply a "water truck", or other means, to provide moisture for dust control and irrigation. Water will not be withdrawn from wetland areas.

Upon establishing the staging area, the contractor will then establish sedimentation and erosion controls as identified in the next section. Although specific construction and staging details have not been finalized, the Proponent will work with the Contractor to verify that materials staging and storage areas will be located to minimize impact to the surrounding neighborhood, pedestrian, and vehicular traffic. All staging and vehicular unloading is anticipated to occur on-site.

Sedimentation and Erosion Control

The Project will include implementation of erosion and sedimentation controls during each phase of construction through implementation of a Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP). The SWPPP will be adapted to fit the contractor's equipment, weather conditions, and specific construction activity. The following sedimentation and erosion control measures will be employed, as well as additional construction methods, in order to minimize impacts.

The program incorporates Best Management Practices (BMPs) specified in guidelines developed by the DEP and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Proper implementation of the erosion and sedimentation control program will:

- Minimize exposed soil areas through sequencing and temporary stabilization;

- Place structures to manage stormwater runoff and erosion; and
- Establish a permanent vegetative cover or other forms of stabilization as soon as practicable.

The structural and non-structural practices proposed for the Project comply with criteria contained in the NPDES General Permit for Discharges from Large and Small Construction Activities issued by the EPA. Non-structural practices include:

- Temporary Stabilization;
- Temporary Seeding;
- Permanent Seeding;
- Pavement Sweeping; and
- Dust Control.

Structural practices include:

- Erosion Control Barriers,
- Stabilized Construction Exits;
- Temporary Sediment Basins;
- Diversion Swales;
- Temporary Check Dams;
- Catch Basin Inlet Protection; and
- Dewatering Filters.

In addition, a hay bale/silt fence line will be installed along the down gradient slope at the limit of work line. The installation of this hay bale/silt fence line will provide erosion and sedimentation controls for the Project, and will define the limit of disturbance for the site contractor.

Pre-Construction Erosion Control

- Erosion control barriers (silt fences or hay bale dyke) will be installed prior to the start of construction. These barriers will remain in place until all tributary surfaces have been fully stabilized.
- The contractor will establish a staging area, outside the 100-foot wetland buffer zone and riverfront area, for the overnight storage of equipment and stockpiling of materials.
- In the staging area, the contractor will have a stockpile of materials required to control erosion on-site to be used to supplement or repair erosion control devices. These materials will include, but are not limited to, hay bales, silt fence, erosion control matting, and crushed stone.
- A temporary stone construction entrance is required to prevent tracking of silt, mud, etc, onto existing roads. The stone will be replaced regularly and, as needed, if silt-laden.
- The contractor is responsible for erosion control on the Site and will utilize erosion control measures where needed, regardless of whether the measures are specified on the construction plans or in supplemental plans prepared for the SWPPP.

General Erosion Control Measures

The most important aspects of controlling erosion and sedimentation are limiting the extent of disturbance, and limiting the size and length of the tributary drainage areas to the worksite and drainage structures. These fundamental principles will be the key factors in the contractor's control of erosion on the Project Site. If appropriate, the contractor will construct temporary diversion swales, settling basins, or use a settling tank. If additional drainage or erosion control measures are needed, they will be located in the upland, up-gradient from the hay bales and silt fences.

All disturbed surfaces will be stabilized a minimum of 14 days after construction in any portion of the Project Site has ceased or is temporarily halted, unless additional construction is intended to be initiated within 21 days.

The contractor is responsible for the maintenance and repair of all erosion control devices on-site. All erosion control devices will be regularly inspected. At no time will silt-laden water be allowed to enter sensitive areas (wetlands, streams, and drainage systems). Any runoff from disturbed surfaces will be directed through a sedimentation tank that will discharge by gravity to the existing on-site drainage system.

Soil Stabilization Specifications

All disturbed areas to remain open will be graded and stabilized with plantings, sod, grass, riprap, or other suitable material as shown or specified on the plans. A minimum of six inches of loam will be applied to all surfaces to be seeded. Loam will be uniformly applied, compacted, shaped, and smoothed prior to being seeded.

Seeding may be performed by hand, mechanical, or by tractor-mounted spreader. Hydroseeding or sod may also be used. Seeding before April 15, or after October 15, will be reapplied between these dates if a minimum germination of 90 percent of surface area coverage has not occurred, or if the surface has become unstable. Seed will be lightly raked into a depth of ¼-inch to one inch, with raking to be perpendicular to slope. Seeded areas will be mulched using seed-free straw, covering the area to a depth of one inch.

Utility Construction

The Proponent will construct utility trenches in a manner that will not direct runoff toward wetlands or to drainage system structures.

Drainage System

The following will be employed during construction activities in order to minimize impacts to the local drainage system:

- Inlet works shall be constructed to a point that will allow the stabilization of the area over the pipe, if the tributary drainage works are not to be immediately extended.

- Hay bale check dams shall be used on roadways to divert runoff onto stabilized areas.
- The drainage system will be installed from the downstream end up.
- Until tributary areas are stabilized, catch basin inlets will be filtered with a siltsack, or by placing filter fabric over catch basin grates and surrounding the grate with stone or sand bags. If intense rainfall is predicted before all tributary areas are stabilized, erosion control measures will be reinforced for the duration of the storm. Downstream areas will be inspected and any sediment removed at the end of the storm.
- Unfiltered water will not be allowed to enter pipes from unstabilized surfaces.
- Trench excavation will be limited to the minimum length required for daily pipe installation. All trenches will be backfilled as soon as possible. The ends of pipes will be closed nightly with plywood.
- Silt-laden waters should be intercepted prior to reaching catch basins. Any gross depositions of materials on paved surfaces will be removed.
- All paved areas shall be vacuum swept during the April-May period.
- Catch basins should be inspected monthly and cleaned in anticipation of the winter season in November and at the same time the roads are swept in the spring.

Maintenance of Erosion and Sedimentation Controls

Scheduled inspections and maintenance of erosion and sedimentation controls will be routinely performed by the Contractor and/or an Environmental Site Monitor to maintain the functional capacity of the stormwater system and to protect stormwater quality during construction. Sediment and erosion controls will be inspected within 12 hours following each storm event of 0.5-inch or greater. Immediate action will be taken to correct any failures that are observed and repairs and/or adjustments made promptly to any erosion and sedimentation control measures found to be inadequately performing. Silt sacks or hay bales will be installed in or around existing and new catch basins and a supply of replacement materials such as silt fence, hay bales, etc. necessary to make repairs or for first response in the event of an accidental release or failure, will be stored on-site. Catch basins in work areas will be cleaned when the sump becomes one-half full and accumulated sediment and debris should be removed from the site.

National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System

As previously discussed, the Project is subject to the provisions of the NPDES because the proposed development results in the disturbance of more than one acre of land. Prior to the start of construction, the property owner and/or general contractor must file a Notice of Intent (NOI) with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the NPDES General Permit for Construction Activities. The NOI will include a Storm Water Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP), largely consisting of the erosion and sedimentation control plan described herein. A SWPPP will be prepared by the general contractor prior to filing the NOI for the NPDES Phase II Stormwater General Permit. The general contractor is solely responsible for developing and implementing the SWPPP.

The SWPPP will be implemented during construction to comply with the requirements of the NPDES General Permit. The Project contractor will be responsible for implementing and maintaining all erosion and sedimentation control measures. Below are specific recording and inspection requirements:

NPDES Record Requirements

- A copy of the NPDES submittal and SWPPP must be kept on-site at all times during construction and will be made available to all interested parties.
- Records must be maintained pursuant to the permit for a period of three years from the date of stabilization of the Project Site as required. Stabilization occurs when the Project Site has over 70 percent vegetative growth and/or mechanical stabilization throughout.
- The detailed plans of completed work must be added to the NPDES and SWPPP information specified above as they become available.

NPDES Inspection Requirements

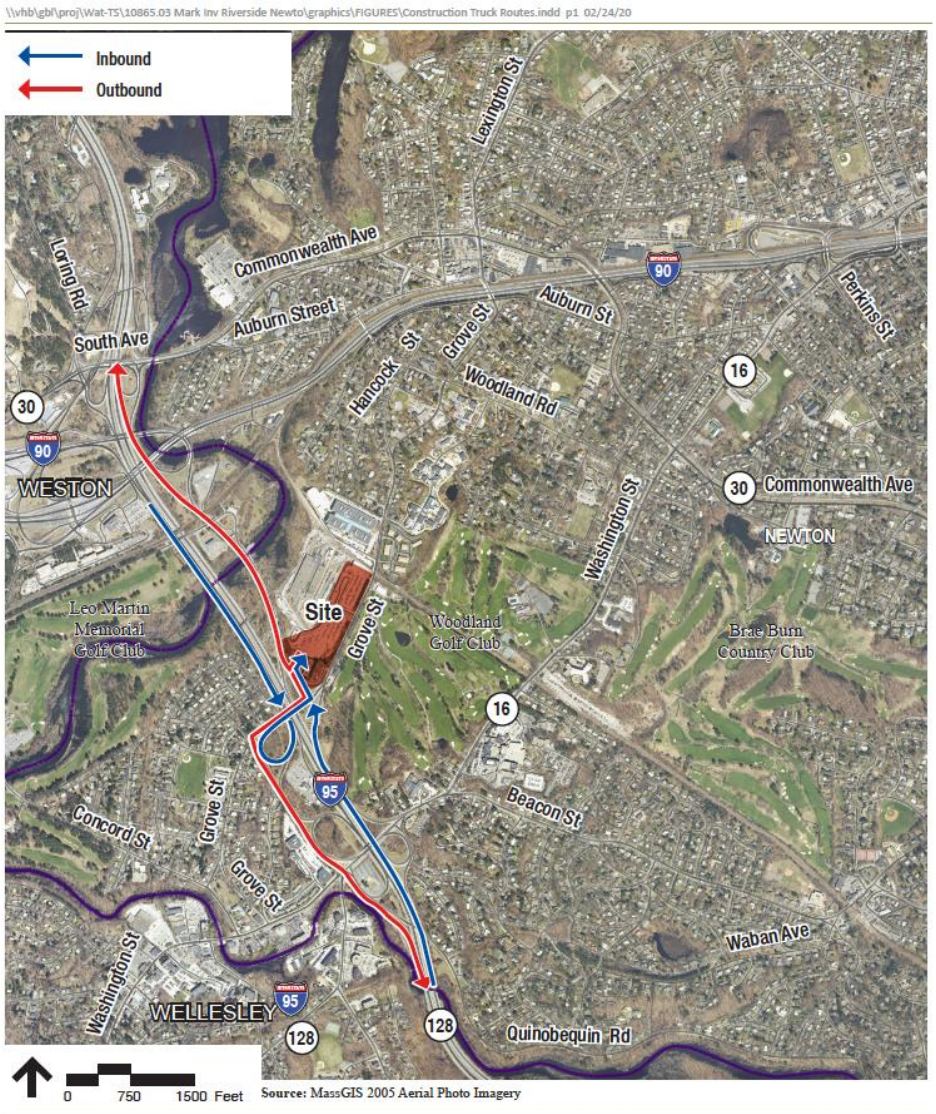
- All inspections will be conducted by qualified personnel who will produce written quantitative and qualitative reports on the construction methods, general condition of the Project Site, the condition of erosion control measures, and the status of the installation of drainage structures.
- Inspections are required during site alteration a minimum of one out of every seven days while surfaces are not stabilized.
- Inspections are required within 24 hours of storms which have 0.25-inches or greater of precipitation.
- Before/until the Project Site is fully stabilized, inspections will be conducted at monthly intervals for a period of one year.

Construction Traffic

The construction period will generate construction truck/vehicle traffic and construction employee traffic. The following is a summary of the expected impacts of construction truck traffic and the measures to be used to reduce any potentially negative impacts during the construction period.

Truck Access

The Proponent is committed to working with local and MBTA public officials to help ensure that appropriate traffic maintenance and protection measures are in place during construction. Designated routes for all associated construction truck traffic will be implemented. All construction deliveries will be required to access the project site via the Route 128 corridor and Grove Street interchange and not via local Newton or Wellesley



vhb

Figure 10.2
Construction Truck Route

The Station at Riverside
Newton, Massachusetts

roads.

The contractor will establish site construction trailers and staging areas to minimize impacts on traffic. Trucks will be required to wait in on-site staging/waiting areas and will be prohibited from stopping for extended durations on public roads, including Grove Street.

■

Traffic Maintenance

A pre-construction coordination meeting with the Proponent, General Contractor, and City will be scheduled to designate truck routes and coordinate operations for off-site work required for the construction of roadway and related utility improvements. Generally, the off-site construction will be performed during off-peak travel periods. All reasonable efforts will be made to maintain existing traffic patterns at all times. Full road closures and detours will be avoided to the maximum extent possible and will be limited to off-peak travel periods.

Demolition, Excavation and Construction Waste

While overall demolition activities are minimal, all construction and demolition debris will be handled, managed, and disposed of in accordance with applicable regulations, including the "Waste Bans" as applicable at local solid waste facilities in the Project Site area (effective July 1, 2006 solid waste facility management regulations at 310 CMR 19.017). In addition, solid waste/debris generated by the Project's construction activities will be managed and disposed of in accordance with DEP's Waste and Recycling Regulations and Standards (310 CMR 16.00 and 310 CMR 19.000). It is anticipated that a majority of the existing asphalt, brick, and concrete will be recycled and/or reused on-site, where feasible.

As mentioned above, the amount of demolition to occur is limited. It is anticipated that any concrete demolition debris will be removed and hauled away in the largest sections possible to minimize dust and disturbance. Bedrock and large boulders also will also be hauled away rather than crushed on site to minimize disturbance. To the extent possible, granular soils that are excavated will be reused as compacted backfill. Any geotechnically unsuitable soil, such as organic peat, will be disposed off-site at appropriate locations. During construction, there also will be solid waste generated by the various trades. These materials will be collected into dumpsters and hauled to licensed disposal facilities. To the extent feasible, separate containers or dumpsters will be provided to separate recyclable materials such as cardboard, paper, wood, and metals.

Any asbestos-containing waste material will be managed in accordance with DEP's Solid Waste Management Regulations (310 CMR 19.061) for "special waste." A licensed waste management contractor will be retained to transport all debris to an approved landfill/disposal facility or reclamation facility.

Horsley Witten Group
Sustainable Environmental Solutions
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MEMORANDUM

To: Neil Cronin, Jennifer Caira – City of Newton

From: Janet Carter Bernardo, PE and Bryan Massa, LSP – Horsley Witten Group, Inc.

Date: April 23, 2020

Re: Peer Review - Riverside Station: Preliminary Construction Management Plan

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This memorandum is a peer review of the Preliminary Construction Management Plan (CMP) prepared for the Riverside Station proposed development on Grove Street in Newton, Massachusetts. The Applicant is proposing to redevelop the existing Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) parking lot and Hotel Indigo located off Grove Street.

The proposed redevelopment includes the construction of ten mixed use buildings with roadways, parking areas, landscaping, stormwater management, and utility improvements. Construction is anticipated to begin in the fall of 2021 and completed in 2025.

The Applicant has provided a preliminary CMP, stating that a final CMP will be developed with input from the City of Newton Inspectional Services, Public Works and Planning Departments as well as the MBTA, Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) and other State agencies.

HW has reviewed the following documents:

- Preliminary Construction Management Plan (CMP) (Updated 4/14/20)

HW has the following comments and recommendations that may be considered for inclusion in the conditions of the Special Permit or in the development of the final CMP:

1. The Applicant's Licensed Site Professional (LSP) shall prepare a draft Release Abatement Measure (RAM) plan consistent with the Massachusetts Contingency Plan (MCP). The RAM will detail soil and groundwater management activities in addition to ambient air monitoring requirements. Prior to issuance to Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (MassDEP) the RAM should be provided to the City of Newton for review and approval.
2. The RAM shall require that an LSP or his/her designee be on site during all intrusive matters of land disturbance in areas where oil and/or hazardous material concentrations exceed the applicable Method 1 Standards documented in the MCP. Furthermore, if any modifications are made to the RAM, the City will be provided with the modified RAM as

well as all status reports prepared by the LSP during site construction for review and comment prior to submission to the MassDEP.

3. If additional contamination sources are identified, the Applicant will notify the City and will provide recommendations on additional soil and/or groundwater testing to confirm the presence or absence of hazardous materials. The Applicant will follow these recommendations or propose an alternate approach, acceptable to the City, to evaluate the presence or absence of hazardous materials.
4. If during construction Reportable Concentrations are detected at the site the Applicant shall provide a Release Notification to MassDEP based on contaminant concentrations above MCP standards. The Applicant will provide a plan and schedule to address the contaminated soil and/or groundwater for approval by the City prior to the commencement of any onsite remediation activities. If notification exemptions exist, the Applicant will provide the Town with adequate documentation for review and comment.
5. Air Quality monitoring will be conducted in the manner specified in the RAM Plan.
6. Site noise levels shall conform to the MassDEP's Division of Air Quality Control's Noise Policy. A baseline condition is advised to be taken prior to the commencement of any construction activities.
7. Traffic management plan shall be provided to the City for review and approval with signage and measures to establish safe pedestrian and vehicular movement for MBTA patrons and employees.
8. The truck hauling route will be approved by the City of Newton and designated truck entrance and exit lanes will be established to limit movement on Grove Street.
9. Applicant shall provide anticipated schedule of heavy truck traffic to City.
10. The Applicant shall remove large pieces of concrete, ledge, and boulders and will not operate a crushing machine on the site.
11. Dust will be controlled using wetting agents as necessary, and excavated soil will be directly transferred into covered trucks to diminish the potential for soil migration.
12. Regular sweeping of the pavement of adjacent roadway surfaces during the construction period to minimize the potential for vehicular traffic to kick up dust and particulate matter. At a minimum street sweeping to occur at the end of every day of construction activity. Street sweepings shall be managed consistent with MassDEP requirements
13. The Applicant will require the use of ultra-low-sulfur diesel fuel exclusively in all diesel-powered construction equipment. Ultra-low sulfur diesel has a maximum sulfur content of 15 parts per million as opposed to low sulfur diesel fuel, which has a maximum sulfur content of 500 parts per million.
14. Applicant shall document in the CMP how fueling of the construction equipment will occur.
15. Exterior construction of the Project will occur during daytime hours no earlier than 7:00 AM and no later than 6:00 PM on any weekday, except for certain operations such as concrete finishing and emergency repairs. On Saturdays, exterior construction will occur

no earlier than 7:00 AM and no later than 5:00 PM, with the same exceptions. There shall be no exterior construction on Sunday or any state or federal legal holiday except under unusual circumstances and with the consent of the Commissioner of Inspectional Services.

16. Applicant shall provide the City with the foot-candle specifications regarding the light intensity for the construction site as well as the pedestrian access to the MBTA station.
17. Applicant shall provide detailed construction sequencing regarding Infiltration System 101 located beneath the garage, including the final connection to the 60-inch culvert and the connection of the garage roof drain to Infiltration System 101.
18. Applicant has noted that blasting will occur during the initial phase and will last approximately 2 months. Will surveys be conducted of adjacent properties prior to construction? Blasting restrictions required by the MBTA, MassDOT, and City shall be provided in the final CMP.
19. Once off-site roadway improvements are finalized with MassDOT the final Traffic Maintenance Plan shall be provided to the City.
20. Final CMP shall include designated parking areas for construction personnel, MBTA vehicles, and minimum of 450 parking spaces for MBTA patrons.
21. Garage shall be first building constructed.
22. Erosion control barriers will be installed prior to any land disturbance with additional controls placed upgradient of the 60-inch culvert daylighting at Grove Street.
23. HW recommends that the 60-inch culvert be videoed pre-development and post-development to verify that the pipe is structurally sound and has no restrictions.
24. HW recommends that a flow measuring device be installed in the 60” culvert to obtain flow rates during dry conditions and during wet conditions, pre-development, at intervals during construction, and post-construction.
25. HW recommends that a sediment sampling program be included in the CMP to measure at a minimum total suspended sediment (TSS) and total Phosphorus (TP) discharging from the 60-inch culvert, pre-development, at intervals during construction, and post-construction.
26. The Spill Prevention, Control, and Countermeasure (SPCC) plan shall be included as part of the final CMP.
27. The Stormwater Pollution Prevention Plan (SWPPP) shall be included with the final CMP. The SWPPP is a living document and may require modifications during construction.
28. The SWPPP shall detail stormwater diversion methods to prevent sediment from entering the municipal system including the 60-inch culvert.
29. The SWPPP shall include inspection of sediment and erosion controls within 24 hours of storm events which have 0.25-inches or greater of precipitation

Dated: May 31, 2002

STANDARD BLASTING CONDITIONS
FOR
SPECIAL PERMIT/SITE PLAN APPROVALS

If blasting is to occur in connection with projects receiving Special Permit/Site Plan approvals that reference these Standard Blasting Conditions, dated May 31, 2002, then all blasting and drilling for the driveway, utility trenches, service trenches and/or structures, whenever, they are built, shall be carried out in accordance with federal, state and local blasting permit practices, and in accordance with the following conditions:

a. Selection of the Blasting Contractor

A blasting contractor, acceptable to both the Petitioner or his successors and assigns and the Newton Fire Department, shall be selected after review of the qualifications of such contractor by a qualified independent geotechnical blasting consultant who shall also be acceptable to both the Petitioner and or his successors and assigns and the Newton Fire Department.

b. Independent Blasting Consultant

An independent geotechnical-blasting consultant shall be selected and paid for by the Petitioner or his successors and assigns, subject to the approval of the Newton Fire Department. The consultant shall review the qualifications of the blasting contractor, and review the blasting plan prepared by the blasting contractor, check the calibration of the seismograph monitors, approve the location and installation of the seismograph monitors, and, if required by the Newton Fire Department, shall determine the blast limits throughout the blast period and shall consult with the Newton Fire Department on an as-needed basis throughout the blasting period.

c. Preblast Survey

A preblast survey shall be done in accordance with State law for the interior and exterior of all structures within 250 feet of the blast area.

d. Insurance Coverage

The blasting contractor shall carry $2 million in comprehensive liability insurance for damage to structures caused by underground explosion and collapse hazard. A certificate shall be submitted to the Newton Fire Department by the contractor documenting that the required coverage will be in force for the duration of the

blasting at the site. If there is a general contractor or developer associated with the blasting, each shall carry a minimum of $1 million of comprehensive liability insurance.

e. Blasting Limits

The State blasting limits shall be observed. However, if, based upon the recommendation of the independent blasting consultant, the Newton Fire Department feels that a lower limit is necessary to protect the site and the abutting residential neighbors, that lower limit shall be in effect.

f. Notification

Not less than 72 hours prior to the commencement of any period of blasting, the Petitioner or his successors and assigns shall send written notification to the immediate abutters within 200 feet of the blast area stating when the blasting period will begin. Such notification shall include an explanation of the warning procedures for blasting including soundings. The Petitioner or his successors and assigns shall send another letter notifying the same abutters that the blasting period has been completed.

Riverside Station

Response to Planning Comments Received through 03/19/20

April 1, 2020

DAVID M. SCHWARZ ARCHITECTS
vhb
HALVORSON Tighe&Bond STUDIO
NEW ECOLOGY Community-Based Sustainable Development
SANBORN HEAD
MARK DEVELOPMENT

Response to Comments

Number	Commenter (Alphabetical Order)
A	Planning Department Report 1/24
B	Planning Department Report 2/7
C	Planning Department Report 2/28
D	Neil Cronin e-mail 2/14
E	Planning Department Oral Councilor Questions 1/28 Hearing

Planning Department Report 1/24

Comment A.1

Along with these outside public spaces, the Planning Department recommends providing some interior public space related to the transit station. Such space could be used as a waiting area for either buses or trains with up to date transit information, arrival times and a public restroom, which would benefit commuters and residents.

Do you have an update on the MBTA space?

Response

Adjacent to the transit station entry, there will be two station-related components. To the left in Building 8 will be the MBTA station operations space, which includes a space for obtaining information and ticket vending. This space will ultimately be programmed by the MBTA, presumably the MBTA could post transit information, including arrival times, in this location. A public restroom could be included within the space, subject to approval by the MBTA. To the right in Building 7, there will be an enclosed bicycle storage area. By flanking the station entry with these two MBTA-related public uses, the entry will gain a feeling of activity and integration with the project and transit square.

Comment A.2

Further information regarding the management and programing of the open spaces is necessary to understand their impact with respect to placemaking.

Response

The management of the overall property will be handled by a 3rd party management company. The proponent will provide more information on programming and activation at the April 28th hearing

Comment A.3

The plans also indicate that bicycle facilities will extend across Interstate 95 to the proposed roundabout at the intersection of Grove Street, Asheville Road, and Quinobequin Road, but the plans do not state what type of infrastructure, i.e. bike lane, protected bike lane, or sharrow that these connections will take.

We received these graphics from Randy in a file entitled "19.11.04 Grove Street Sections (2)". I assume these will be finalized when the Grove Street bike lane is finalized.

Response

The proposed shared-use path will be provided along the entire site frontage, the Grove Street bridge, and extend to the roundabout/Asheville Road. The bike lane will be separated from the travel lanes along the site frontage and on the bridge, and be at the road's edge between the bridge and roundabout.

Comment A.4

The Planning Department recommends that the petitioner consider locations for incorporating art and incorporating the transit station into a placemaking strategy. More information is also needed to understand the flexibility regarding short-term and long-term approaches to retail.

Response

The proponent will consider locations for art as part of the programming and landscape design. The Transit Station is a significant destination. Its location at the northernmost portion of the site, separated from the parking, retail, office, residential, and hotel uses, will encourage foot traffic through the open spaces in the site and along Main Street. Perhaps the most important feature of placemaking is people. Presently, pedestrians make the daily trek up the poorly maintained and uninviting Grove Street sidewalk to make their way from the transit station to the existing Hotel Indigo. One could imagine that this existing foot traffic will increase substantially with the significant increase in destinations to the south and the addition of open spaces and wide, inviting sidewalks.

In terms of retail, this is an evolving discussion based on market conditions. We have complete flexibility from a design perspective to accommodate short-term users as well as long-term users but we are not in a position, especially in the current environment, to provide any further commitments.

Comment A.5

The petitioner should explore whether there is a need for community space and what sort of space would be complementary to nearby community spaces. The petitioner should also provide information as to the management and oversight the public spaces.

Response

In discussions with community members, there was a greater desire to focus mitigation funds from the project on a robust trail and park network as we have proposed. If that desire has changed the proponent is willing to revisit the conversation. As one would expect for a project of this scale, there will be on-site property management staff tasked with a variety of responsibilities including the management and oversight of public spaces. The proponent intends to manage these spaces to keep them clean, safe and well maintained. Additionally, the proponent has brought a consultant on to the project team to develop a plan to keep these spaces activated. The activation of these spaces will be executed collaboratively by the consultant's planning efforts and the proponent and the property management team.

Comment A.6

The petitioner should also consider including seating in the more active spaces for caregivers.

Response

It is the intent of the open space and landscape design to create a variety of seating options to encourage people to rest and stay within the open spaces.

Comment A.7

As such, the petitioner should withdraw the relief to reduce the front setback along Grove Street.

Response

The plan currently does not require this relief and it will be withdrawn as part of the Board Order.

Comment A.8

The Planning Department, however, recommends the petitioner make a significant effort to highlight the MBTA station and incorporate the station in the placemaking of the Project.

Response

The Riverside Station redevelopment has been planned and designed around the premise of the MBTA Station as the primary destination. As discussed in Comment A.4, its location will encourage pedestrians, bicyclists and others to traverse though the site to reach the destination. The station will be highlighted in several ways. First, a comprehensive wayfinding program will include clear direction to the MBTA parking and MBTA station through a series of vehicular-scale and pedestrian-scale signs. Second, by virtue of its linear spine orientation, Main Street terminates in the transit loop at the station. Even those who may not follow the signage in the site would most likely end up at the station by default. Finally, the station entry itself will be prominent and visible from Main Street and Grove Street. The wide entry to the station will include a noticeable canopy element that projects beyond building 7 over the sidewalk. This signage will be visible from Grove Street as well as from the northern segment of Main Street as it approaches the Plaza. It is worth pointing out that this is a top priority for the MBTA, which has design approval over the MBTA components. The MBTA has been clear that signage into the station and garage needs to be unmistakable.

Comment A.9

Has the NHC approved the demolition of the hotel?

Response

The demolition was approved by the NHC on 2/27/2020.

Comment A.10

Petitioner should appear before the Fair Housing Committee and reappear before UDC and the Commission on Disability

Response

The proponent reappeared before UDC on 3/11/2020 and will be going back to the UDC to review Design Guidelines and signage on 4/15/2020. The proponent is also scheduled to meet with Fair Housing Committee on April 1st. The proponent will schedule a follow-up meeting with the Commission on Disability once the Proponent and the MBTA have agreed on an accessible design for the station entrance.

Comment A.11

The peer review team suggests the Proponent provide more detail for review, prioritizing "required" elements in the overall context of the proposed project design and budget.

Response

This comment requires further context and clarification. The development team will reach out to the peer review team.

Comment A.12

The proposed shared-use path should be extended to Recreation Road, rather than ending at the bridge over the Charles River as currently proposed. We recommend a 14'-wide shared bicycle/pedestrian path on the northeast side of the road in order to provide two-way access for all users while ensuring separation from vehicular traffic entering and exiting the highway. This would still maintain sufficient right-of-way on the existing bridge structure for two 11' vehicular lanes.

Response

It is the intent of the design to extend the multi-use path beyond the Charles River all the way to Riverside Park. The revised design will eliminate the existing short hairpin onramp to I-95N/I-90, creating a 3-way T intersection with the MWRA facility access drive. The proponent is collaborating with DCR to extend a multi-use path along the MWRA driveway to connect to the Lasell Boathouse bridge. This will complete an important link of the Riverside Greenway, connecting the portions of Auburndale adjacent to the Boathouse to Riverside Park in Weston and subsequently to Lower Falls.

Comment A.13

The curb cut behind Building 1 that leads to the MBTA rail yard should be narrowed to improve safety for bicyclists and pedestrians using the shared-use path.

Response

This curbcut width proposed is necessary for the occasional delivery and removal of new trains to the yard. Although the wide curbcut is not ideal, it is a compromise to keep these deliveries from utilizing the roads in the development. If the deliveries were to occur through the development, the roads would need to be widened significantly and significant portions of landscaping would need to be removed. The proponent will work with MassDOT though design approval to explore any further roadway geometric changes to reduce the width of this curb cut.

Comment A.14

A two-way bike path is proposed on the west side of Grove Street, which transitions to standard one-way on-street bike lanes near the northern limits of the project. It is also unclear how the bike path connects to Riverside Center. The petitioner should provide more detailed information on the cross-section of Grove Street at this location, and how the bike lanes will transition to the existing condition north of the rail bridge.

Response

The northbound lane of the two-way bike path is intended to serve as convenient access to the MBTA station from Lower Falls and Recreation Road. It terminates at the transit green, where northbound bicyclists can then enter the site towards the MBTA station and other destinations within the development. Bicyclists traveling through to Auburndale will be directed to the one-way bike lane on the eastern side of Grove Street through wayfinding at the intersection of Grove Street and the Recreation

Road Extension. Both the southbound bike lane on the west side of Grove Street and the north bound lane on the east side of Grove Street transition to mixed traffic at the bridge and through the existing boulevard at Riverside Center.

Comment A.15

For northbound bicyclists using the two-way, off-street bicycle path on the west side of Grove Street, clear signage will be necessary at the curb cut between Building 6 and Building 7 to ensure that north-bound cyclists use the crosswalk to cross Grove St. and continue northbound in the on-street bicycle lane.

Response

Wayfinding signage will be located both at the intersection between buildings 6 and 7 as well as the intersection of Grove Street and Recreation Road to identify that the lane on the east side of Grove Street is the route for destinations north of the site. There will be a Rapid Reflectorized Flashing Beacon (RRFB) introduced at the proposed crosswalk north of the Grove Street site driveway providing connection between bicycle facilities on the east and west sides of Grove Street.

Comment A.16

For northbound bicyclists using the on-street bike lane, clear signage should be provided at the new signalized intersection on Grove Street to instruct bicyclists accessing the station to make a left turn at the signalized intersection, rather than the unsignalized crosswalk further north on Grove Street. If space allows, a left turn box for bicyclists should be provided at the signalized intersection to provide a safe space for cyclists to wait for an opportunity to make the left turn and improve visibility between turning cyclists and northbound through traffic.

Response

These comments will be considered and incorporated into the design to the extent allowed by MassDOT.

Comment A.17

At the intersection of Grove St. and the I-95 exit ramp, a pedestrian crosswalk is proposed, but the two-way bicycle path does not have a dedicated space for crossing. In order to provide safe and adequate space for both bicyclists and pedestrians, the bike path should continue across both the exit ramp and the right turn lane from Grove Street parallel to the pedestrian crosswalk, with sufficient space in the refuge island for both bicyclists and pedestrians making the two-stage crossing.

Response

These comments will be considered and incorporated into the design to the extent allowed by MassDOT.

Comment A.18

The two-way bicycle path on the northwest side of Grove Street is shown as continuing south/southwest over the bridge over I-95, but it terminates just on the far side of the bridge. The two-way bike path on the northwest side of Grove St. should be extended through the proposed roundabout at the Grove St./Quinobequin Rd. intersection, creating a safer connection to and from Lower Falls.

Response

This change will be incorporated in the design.

Comment A.19

Building 1 has no in-building bike room. This will encourage workers to drive to work, exacerbating traffic concerns.

Response

Bicycle facilities are a typically required amenity for all office and laboratory-use tenants. Building 1 is currently designed as a shell building and will ultimately be fit-out and configured for the tenants that lease the building. Depending on the user, its number of employees and its preferred location the bicycle storage room and any associated lockers and showers will be designed and located as part of the tenant fit-out. Additionally, there is a bike room in garage 10 that is not allocated to any specific use. It is expected that this could be used to accommodate a variety of users including visitors to Building 1.

Comment A.20

Building 2 (Hotel) has no bike parking. While guests may be unlikely to bring bicycles, many hotel workers may arrive by bike.

Response

Bike accommodations for hotel employees have been provided across the street in Building #10.

Comment A.21

Building 4 exterior access to bike room is from the middle of a long staircase/middle of the Amphitheater switchbacks.

Response

The access is from the amphitheater side and via the ramp system. This is considered by the proponent as preferable to the alternative of no direct exterior access.

Comment A.22

Building 7 + 8 bike room could be more accessible from Transit Square.

Response

This is a tradeoff for these buildings' retail and activation focus. The proponent prefers to prioritize sidewalk activation over accessibility to the bike room.

Comment A.23

Building 10 has two separate bike rooms. If one is intended to serve Building 9, please provide a diagram showing how to move from the bike room to the Building 9 residential lobby. In our opinion, this distance is too great and an additional bike room with a direct connection to the residential lobby of Building 9 should

be added underneath the parking garage speed ramp, which travels up to the second level adjacent to the back of Building 9.

Response

The proponent agrees that ideally the bike parking will be located in the building 9 lobby. For this reason, a bike room has been added to the revised plans, which will be submitted soon.

Comment A.24

The omission of a retail/restaurant space in Building 1 leaves only one ground floor retail space in Hotel Square. The architectural qualities / transparency of the office lobby in Building 1 will be important for creating an engaging pedestrian environment.

Response

Comment noted. The proponent agrees and will focus on the transparency and engagement of the ground floor of Building 1 during design.

Comment A.25

With the omission of the open space in front of Building 1, the small plaza remaining on the northeast corner of Road A and Main Street outside Building 10 now has an asymmetrical relationship to Hotel Square to the south. This small open space should be thoughtfully designed to complement the larger square and accommodate pedestrian traffic to/from a primary lobby for the central garage.

Response

Comment noted.

Comment A.26

The rendering looking east on Main Street at the corner of Building 10 shows some of the architectural challenges that this building must address at the ground level in order to contribute to a well-articulated pedestrian environment at this prominent location.

Response

Comment noted.

Comment A.27

Adding exterior entrances to the ground floor units in Building 3 will help to further activate the Hotel Green, improve the quality of the units themselves, and improve the pedestrian experience and sense of community.

Response

The proponent agrees that unit entries around the Hotel Green will create further activation and engage the landscape. For this reason, the plan has been revised to include 6 units with direct entries in Building 3 and an additional 4 units with direct entries in Building 4.

Comment A.28

Special design consideration – architectural detail, lighting, site elements, etc. – should be incorporated into the pedestrian mews between Buildings 2 and 3 in order to make this a pleasant space.

Response

Comment Noted.

Comment A.29

Building 3's architecture was discussed at length, including the above comments. The Proponent agreed to study alternative approaches to resolve the geometry of the tower element, two-story section of the Building fronting the hotel green, and 8-story residential massing.

Response

The resolution of the tower geometry will be part of the final building design.

Comment A.30

HW recommends additional clarification be provided regarding loading requirements for Buildings 2, 3, and 4. The intent for service and passenger loading appears to be from loading zones marked on-street within Hotel Square. Will additional provision for service loading be required, especially for the hotel (i.e. larger trucks, varying time of day, etc.) so as to not disrupt the character of Hotel Square?

Response

The on-street curb use in front of Buildings 2 and 3 are strictly loading and valet. The hotel does not include a large dining component and has on-site laundry, so it does not typically require large delivery vehicles.

Comment A.31

Safe pedestrian crossing from the center of Hotel Square to the north side of Main Street in front of Building 1 should be reviewed in conjunction with pedestrian desire lines and vehicle queuing from the intersection of Recreation Road and Main Street. A crosswalk from the green to the Building 1 corner and/or special paving or striping of the entire intersection of Main Street with Hotel Square may help vehicular and pedestrian circulation as well as help define sense of place at the west end of the site.

Response

The traffic signal at Main Street will be owned and operated by MassDOT. This portion of Main Street is part of the approach to that signal and will be subject to the final review and approval of MassDOT. To the extent MassDOT does not take issue with this proposed crossing during their design review, it will be added to the plan.

Comment A.32

What is the intent for ADA access from Grove Street to the Hotel Square via the stair between Buildings 3 and 4?

Response

A single-stop elevator will be included in Building 3, immediately adjacent to the stair. This elevator will provide an equally accessible route from Grove Street to the Hotel Green.

Comment A.33

The lower level ground floor of Building 4 contains the one remaining retail/restaurant space fronting on Hotel Square, and it is positioned well to enliven the expanded open space on the east side of the square with outdoor dining or activities. The rendering provided in this submission package does not depict the ground floor of Building 4 as having active, transparent storefronts and should be updated to reflect the revised plans.

Response

The Proponent agrees that the rendering does not accurately reflect the intent of the ground floor of Building 4. The commercial space was added to this corner to increase the activity of this corner and create a visual terminus for those entering the site from the main intersection. It is expected that this corner will have a storefront-style façade at the ground level, similar to the other buildings with retail space.

Comment A.34

The integration of a Go Bus lease on the ground floor plan raises the question as to whether regional buses are planned to be incorporated into the square, which would not seemingly be complimentary to the proposed outdoor dining and amenity space.

(HW) The Proponent clarified that Go Bus loading will take place within the Building 10 garage.

Response

The Go Bus space has been relocated to Building 10, opposite Building 1 on Road A. This was previously occupied by inactive space and will create a new pedestrian destination and activity on this sidewalk. The buses will berth inside the garage of Building 10 with convenient weather-protected access from the Go Bus space.

Comment A.35

While the three-level loggia element on the Main Street façade does provide some visual interest for the streetscape, pinching down the street section before opening it back up into Hotel Square, it does have the impact of screening sight lines to the retail space. Perhaps signage and lighting can be integrated into the loggia to help with visibility.

Response

Though the rendering shows a heavier, more opaque loggia structure, the current intent is to build something lightweight and transparent. To the extent that retail space is located within, it is expected that signage will be tastefully integrated into the loggia.

Comment A.36

Hotel Green appears to be designed to accommodate turning radius of GO Buses. This will make the space more vehicular-oriented and less pedestrian friendly.

(HW) The Proponent clarified that Go Bus loading will take place within the Building 10 garage. The Site Layout and Materials Plan and the Building 4 Level 1 Plan should be revised accordingly.

Response

The turning radius of the hotel green has been designed to accommodate box truck deliveries and emergency vehicles/fire apparatus.

Comment A.37

Remove the parallel parking wrapping Hotel Green, thus creating a larger and more inviting open space that can be shared by residents, hotel guests, and office workers. On-street parking is appropriate along the building edges, but the spaces along the open space in the center will be less heavily used and will therefore serve only to make the vehicle travel lanes seem wider and occupy space that could otherwise be devoted to usable open space.

(HW) The Proponent agreed to study removal of the parallel parking from the center of Hotel Square in order to widen the usable public space.

Response

This parking has been removed as noted and will be reflected in future plan revisions.

Comment A.38

Moving the GO Bus station to Hotel Green will make the service inconvenient for transit connections and could limit the use of the space and have a detrimental effect on its character (see above). If it must stay, the sidewalk area there seems insufficient and poorly designed for inter-city bus loading and unloading.

(HW) The Proponent clarified that Go Bus loading will take place within the Building 10 garage. The Site Layout and Materials Plan and the Building 4 Level 1 Plan should be revised accordingly.

Response

The Go Bus space has been relocated as noted and will be reflected in future plan revisions.

Comment A.39

Please clarify whether the knoll is proposed to be on the west or east side of the Amphitheater (shown both ways in different drawings).

Response

The knoll will be located on the west side of the loggia as originally planned.

Comment A.40

The Transit Square is the most appropriate location for the GO Bus station. If this is impossible, consider placing the GO Bus station in Building 1. Buses could enter the site by traveling north on the on-ramp and using the curb cut for the MBTA railyard, thus avoiding the need to turn around within the site. There is a proposed amenity space on the ground floor of Building 1 adjacent to the proposed MBTA office space, this could be repurposed as the GO Bus stop.

Response

The Go Bus station and bus berthing has all been relocated into Building 10. This is a similar location to the proposed Building 1 location but creates fewer conflicts and eases maneuvering.

Comment A.41

Consider swapping the position of the residential amenity and three residential units on the ground floor of Building 6 and providing these units with direct entries from the exterior. Currently these units are the only ground floor units facing Grove St. on this half of the site. As a result, they feel isolated.

Response

The proponent is considering direct entries for these units to create more Grove Street activity. While they may feel isolated in the context of buildings 6 and 7, they are a continuation of the on-street units in buildings 3, 4 and 5.

Comment A.42

The sidewalk along Grove St. should be made continuous along the site's frontage. The proposed small segment of sidewalk along Building 3 should be extended to connect with the rest of the sidewalk along this half of the site, and with the nearby reconfigured intersection.

Response

A sidewalk extends along the entirety of the project frontage from the newly configured intersection at Building 3 all the way to the northernmost limits of the project adjacent to Building 7.

Comment A.43

Seeks more information on the planting and hardscaping strategy of the public spaces

Response

Our strategy re: planting has a couple of objectives:

1. To create a robust planting plan that provides texture and color throughout the seasons.
2. To use a palette that is comprised of native and/or low water demand plants.
3. Is durable – plants that will thrive rather than just survive.
4. Creates a robust shade canopy.
5. Allow for clear sight lines not only between cars and people but also within the space itself to provide a feeling of safety.

In respects to the hardscape, the primary pedestrian circulation corridors will have a smooth cast in place concrete sidewalk with permeable 'furnishing' zone along the back of curb to collect rainwater, organize signs, light posts, and street furniture. In addition, café zones along buildings will receive a pedestrian scale unit paver to designate areas of congregation outside of the primary circulation zone. Other plazas and gathering areas will receive a combination of concrete paving and pedestrian unit pavers to give a rich texture and human scale to the open spaces. The unit pavers will be set on a stable base material and consists of smaller unit sizes such as 4"x8" with tight fitting joints (permeable pavers will have wider joints) to provide a small walking surface.

Comment A.44

Seeks more information on connections to off-site open spaces (i.e. a narrative or plans that show which connections will be made and what types of infrastructure is necessary to make the connections)

Response

The project is providing two groups/types of off-site connections. The first group consist of improvement along Recreation Road and Grove St. The first is a primary connection along Recreation Road as part of the main project. This connection will consist of a 10-12' wide multiuse path completely separated from vehicular traffic (except potentially the bridge across the Charles). This multiuse path will provide connections to the MWRA site (which will link to other trail networks), Riverside Park, and the currently proposed Pony Truss Trail work along the Charles River. Grove Street connections will receive improved pedestrian and bicycle connections (final design to be determined with City of Newton) which connect to the Recreation Road improvements, the proposed rotary and community beyond.

For the second group of improvements, the proponent is working with local stakeholders to provide additional off site connections which include design and construction of the Depot Tunnel and small portion of Pony Truss Trail, improved connection from Riverside Park to MWRA site, and a connection from Rec Road to the end of the existing abandoned railroad bridge. The project is also anticipating providing design documents for the accommodation of a multiuse path on the two railroad bridges which span I95. See attached plan.

Planning Department Report 2/7

Comment B.1

Suggests incorporating "pop-up" space in the project.

Response

Yes, this is something we intend to do.

Comment B.2

Consider reserving space to Newton-based businesses

Response

The development team will reach out to the planning department to get a clearer understanding of its thoughts on this matter.

Planning Department Report 2/28

Comment C.1

Suggests that Petitioner provide LEED checklist for review by Peer Reviewer

Response

The petitioner has prepared LEED checklists and they will be submitted for review.

Comment C.2

Suggests roof of the garage should be a candidate for solar installation

Response

This is something we are exploring; however, we do not own the garage and therefore the decision will ultimately be with the MBTA as to whether or not they would like to include solar panels. It is expected that regardless of the MBTA's decision to include solar at the time of initial construction, the garage will be designed and engineered to accommodate solar panels.

Comment C.3

Suggests MBTA consider allowing solar installations on its portion of the garage

Response

See above.

Comment C.4

Peer Reviewer suggests additional soil testing in the exact locations of the proposed infiltration chambers

Response

Additional soil testing has been completed in the exact location of the infiltration chambers to confirm infiltration and permeability rates.

Comment C.5

Peer Reviewer suggests petitioner consider implementing green infrastructure and Planning Department suggests revised plans showing type and location of this infrastructure

Response

VHB has described more fully these proposed measures in the March 5th hearing and its most recent response to the peer reviewer.

Comment C.6

Planning Department suggests the Release Abatement Measure Plan be included in the revised construction management plan

Response

The RAM plan will be filed shortly before the start of construction. The MCP requires response actions outlined in the RAM plan to be initiated within one year of filing the RAM [310 CMR 40.0443(5)].

The Release Abatement Measures (RAM) Plan is a document prepared in according with the MCP [310 CMR 0.0440] outlining the additional response actions supporting redevelopment at the site associated with RTN 3-10565 which has achieved a Permanent Solution. The RAM plan will be filed with DEP prior to the start of construction once the design has been completed. As part of preparing the RAM plan an evaluation per 310 CMR 40.0442(3) will be completed to ensure that the new structures would not prevent or impede the implementation of other potential future response actions which will include a site assessment, risk characterization and feasibility evaluation.

Comment C.7

Seeks more information on connections to Charles River and trail networks including draft scopes of work, estimated costs, timelines, and wayfinding program

Response

We are actively working with Greenway Trail Network, DCR and the MBTA to further define the scope in order to refine our pricing and better understand the timing of events. As information becomes available, we will share that with the City.

Neil Cronin email 2/14

Comment D.1

Would like to see a graphic representation of how Grove Street will be divided (similar to as is shown on Sheet C-7.1 of the submitted plans) that stretches from the roundabout to the signalized intersection in front of Building 3.

Response

The team is working with the City staff to finalize the design and we will provide those drawings once clear direction has been agreed upon.

Comment D.2

Do you have a solid waste master plan?

Response

A solid waste master plan was included in the special permit filing. It has been updated for the revised plans and is attached.

Planning Department – Oral Councilor Questions from 1/28 Hearing

President Albright

Comment E.1

President Albright: How will pedestrians get through the transit plaza?

Response

The transit plaza includes continuous sidewalks on all 4 sides. Additionally, following the desire line from Main Street to the MBTA station, two crosswalks have been added to create a safe and clear route through the central plaza from Main Street to the MBTA Station.

Comment E.2

President Albright: Are you trying to replicate a different transit plaza? If so, what is it?

Response

The transit plaza is based on traditional paved squares that can be found across many urban cultures, most notably Italian and Hispanic. It is designed for versatility; the MBTA is given a clear path to move its buses, and the remainder is paved to accommodate a wide range of uses, with trees overhead to provide shade.

Comment E.3

President Albright: How will Buildings 5 and 6 present to Grove Street?

Response

Building 5's first-floor units will meet the Grove Street sidewalk with "front doors" and stoops to create a friendly, welcoming edge and opportunities for interaction between residents and passers-by. Because Grove Street slopes downward to the north, these stoops will vary in height to meet the grade of Grove Street.

Building 6, for its southern half, will have three residential units facing the sidewalk. At or near center, the main residential lobby will have a service entrance on the Grove Street side. Towards the north, the ground floor contains retail space intended for restaurant or café use. As the building approaches the Transit Square, a change in grade results in a split double sidewalk, the upper level of which is spill-out area for the retail space. This upper area, bounded by a balustrade, turns the corner to place a deep dining patio against the Transit Square.

Comment E.4

President Albright: Label the shadow study more clearly, the Councilor did not know which buildings were which.

Response

The Shadow Study will be revised for clarification.

Comment E.5

President Albright: How big is the hotel green? Can it be bigger?

Response

The Hotel Square is a very large space that reaches approximately 172 feet from building face to building face and it extends 215 from the edge of Main Street to Building 3. This space includes textured pavers, providing a woonerf condition for it's low-speed drop-off loop. This loop surrounds a green area that has been widened by 16 feet over the previous version by eliminating the parallel parking on the inner edge of the loop road. This green area is now approximately 64 feet by 164 feet, for an area of over 10,000 square feet, ideal for including a good sized play area. The play area will receive a low wrought-iron-style fence to keep children from wandering across the woonerf.

Comment E.6

President Albright: Is there a stage in the amphitheater? If so, will it be wired for sound?

Response

The amphitheater does not include a stage. Although it takes on an amphitheater-like arrangement in shape, performances are not the primary purpose of this space and could take place on the wide sidewalk at its base. Provisions for power will be provided in all public gathering spaces to allow the use of amplification. This will be provided to allow their flexibility of use.

Comment E.7

President Albright: How does the plan align with the Washington Street vision regarding building length?

Response

The Washington Street vision does not specifically address total building lengths. It only suggests that blocks should be less than ¼ mile in length.

The development team has designed the Riverside buildings to be a variety of lengths, actual and perceived. The longer buildings are demised in a variety of ways, so that some are broken up into what appear to be smaller buildings.

Comment E.8

President Albright: What are the ground floor uses along Grove Street?

Response

The ground floor uses along Grove Street will be residential in buildings 3, 4, 5 and portions of Building 6. The remainder of Building 6 and Building 7 will include retail.

Councilor Downs

Comment E.9

Councilor Downs: Concerning the hotel green, how useful is it to have parks surrounded by pavement?

Would it be more useful to have a one-way in, one-way out and shift the green space to abut sidewalk?

Response

The hotel green will have woonerf-style vehicular areas. The material will be unit pavers and the vehicular paths will be separated from the pedestrian and green areas by bollards and low fences, creating the feel of a continuous pedestrian environment and clear indication that cars are not the priority. In the current plan, there is no parking structure or other significant vehicular destination along this loop, so traffic volumes will be light. Because there is no terminal destination for vehicles, there is no possibility of a one-way pair as described; the vehicular path has to loop. The alternative, a single street with a cul-de-sac turnaround, is a suburban auto-era street type that is not in keeping with the goal of creating a walkable community.

Comment E.10

Councilor Downs: How far is the knoll from parked-or moving-cars?

How useful is this space since it is close to cars and their exhaust?

Response

The knoll is over 25 feet from cars. Cars will not be idling adjacent to the knoll so vehicular exhaust is not expected to be a major concern with its location.

Comment E.11

Councilor Downs: How will the transit plaza function for pedestrians and bicyclists?

Response

The transit plaza includes continuous sidewalks on all 4 sides. Additionally, following the desire line from Main Street to the MBTA station, two crosswalks have been added to create a safe and clear route through the central square from Main Street to the MBTA Station for bicyclists and pedestrians.

Comment E.12

Councilor Downs: How do you mix shuttles and private vehicles within the transit plaza?

Response

Shuttles will be routed through the garage and will only use the southern curb of the transit square for boarding and alighting. Private vehicles will be allowed to drop passengers at the western cub of the transit square; however, short-term parking will be provided in the garage at ground level for picking up and dropping off passengers. The other two curbs will be dedicated to the infrequent MBTA bus arrival. Because of this arrangement, it is expected that vehicular traffic in the square will be relatively light.

It is important to note that, while higher frequency bus service is certainly hoped for in the future, an MBTA bus typically arrives once every hour and ten minutes during peak periods. Even a doubling of service would still mean that you are far more likely to see a transit square that is free of buses than to see a bus picking up or discharging passengers.

Comment E.13

Councilor Downs: Last sentence of Planning memo, there is a word missing. It should read: "The Planning Department finds the Project to comply with this criterion".

Response

Response not required.

Comment E.14

Councilor Downs: Is there a direct connection to the Two Bridges trail from the site?

Response

Because the site does not directly abut the Two Bridges, a direct connection from the site through the MBTA property is not possible. However, an approach ramp parallel to Recreation Road is proposed as part of the proposed partnership arrangement with the DCR. The proponent will continue to work with the MBTA and DCR to obtain any necessary approvals or easements to allow for this approach to be as flat as possible and eliminate the need for significant switchbacks.

Comment E.15

Councilor Downs: Will there be street trees on both sides of Recreation Road?

Response

Street trees are currently proposed on Recreation Road separating the multi-use path from the vehicular roadway. They will also provide a visual cue that this is a route with a destination. Because Recreation Road and the space along its southern edge is in MassDOT right-of-way, it unlikely that additional trees in this space will be allowed.

Comment E.16

Councilor Downs: Seating areas should be provided throughout the site.

Response

The Project team concurs that seating areas are important and vital to the success of the open spaces and will include benches and seat-walls as well as other furniture where appropriate to encourage users to linger.

Councilor Gentile

Comment E.17

Councilor Gentile: Can the Planning Department provide a chart detailing the height of Buildings 3-7 and their setback from Grove Street?

Response

Planning Department to respond.

Comment E.18

Councilor Gentile: What are the Planning Department recommendations regarding building height along Grove Street concerning the relationship to building height to street width?

Response

Planning Department to respond.

Comment E.19

Councilor Gentile: The bike lane on the eastern side of Grove Street should be removed to allow for an improved setback along the western side.

Response

The proponent has provided the Planning Department with several potential options and arrangements for the bike lanes and it is the Planning Department's position that any viable option must include a bike lane on the eastern side for bicycles traveling from Lower Falls to Auburndale.

Comment E.20

Councilor Gentile: Can the southbound right turn only lane be removed in favor of a larger setback.

Response

The southbound right turn lane must remain to prevent the possibility of long queues backing up traffic towards the bridge and Riverside Center where there are insufficient sight lines.

Comment E.21

Councilor Gentile: What is required to allow the bike lane on the eastern side of Grove? How does the bike lane affect the west side of Grove Street?

Response

If the bike lane on the eastern side were to be deleted, the western curbline could shift up to 3 feet further from the buildings. Th shift is not the full width of the bike lane as MassDOT will require that a 2' shoulder be maintained on the eastern side if there is not a bike lane.

Comment E.22

Councilor Gentile: Will the buildings be broken down with demise lines?

Response

Yes, as noted in the Demise Line drawing in the Proponent's proposed Design Guidelines.

Comment E.23

Councilor Gentile: What does the term rowhouse mean?

Response

Rowhouses, sometimes called townhouses or brownstones, are buildings that look to be made up of an accretion of single-family houses connected by common sidewalls, similar to what can be found on Beacon Hill or in the Back Bay. In the context of this project, the term Rowhouse is used to describe a long façade that has been demised to create the appearance of such individual homes, breaking down its length and scale.

Councilor Bowman

Comment E.24

Councilor Bowman: Can the plan include a more desirable area for parents and children, safely separated from moving vehicles? The playground should also accommodate those with disabilities.

Response

A play space will be the central feature of the Hotel Green. Surrounded by a slow-speed, low volume, woonerf-type street, and further enclosed by a low wrought-iron-style fence, this playground will be exceptionally safe.

Comment E.25

Councilor Bowman: Will Building 1 be the tallest building in Newton?

Response

In terms of stories, Chestnut Hill Towers are the tallest in Newton at 16 stories. The buildings are 165 feet tall at their face including penthouse. When measured from Route 9, they are 180 feet tall. Although Building 1 includes far fewer stories than Chestnut Hill Towers, because there is a potential for lab use in the building, high floor-to-floor heights and a tall mechanical space is required to accommodate the mechanical systems for this use. As a result, it is slightly taller than Chestnut Hill Towers by 5 feet at 170 feet tall.

Comment E.26

Councilor Bowman: What is the required setback from Grove Street and what are the setbacks of the buildings along Grove Street?

Response

The required Grove Street setback is 25 feet. The building setbacks as proposed vary from 25.6 feet 27.5 feet.

Comment E.27

Councilor Bowman: Why is the southbound right turn only lane necessary?

Response

The southbound right turn lane must remain to prevent the possibility of long queues backing up traffic towards the bridge and Riverside Center where there are insufficient site lines.

Comment E.28

Councilor Bowman: concerned with pedestrian and bicycle access into the site. Someone needs to walk her through the plan.

Response

The pedestrian and bicycle access have been detailed as part of the Transportation-focused hearing and can be further described in the April Transportation-focused hearing.

Comment E.29

Councilor Bowman: The bike lane on the eastern side of Grove Street should be protected.

Response

An option for providing a protected lane on the eastern side has been created and will be presented. This option will require reducing the two-way path along the frontage of Building 6 to a one-way path.

Comment E.30

Councilor Bowman: Can the proponent construct the Two Bridges Trail?

Response

No, but the proponent is committed to funding the costs of the 100% design for improvements to the bridges and funding the construction of the access route on the northern approach.

Councilor Leary

Comment E.31

Councilor Leary: The bike lane on the eastern side of Grove Street should be protected.

Response

An option for providing a protected lane on the eastern side has been created and will be presented. This option will require reducing the two-way path along the frontage of Building 6 to become a one-way path.

Comment E.32

Councilor Leary: Can the hotel green be improved? Can it be pedestrian only or partially pedestrian only?

Response

Vehicular access through the hotel green is required for deliveries, move-ins, drop-offs, valet and most importantly ADA-accessibility so the vehicular access cannot be removed. Through the implementation of a woonerf-style curbless design, the space will clearly prioritize pedestrians and signal to vehicles that the primary purpose of the space is pedestrian use. The revised plan removes the parallel parking along the green.

Comment E.33

Councilor Leary: Are there other options for the transit plaza? It seems chaotic.

Response

The design of the transit plaza has been thoughtfully planned and coordinated in great detail with the MBTA, The proponent has advocated for this space to be as inviting as possible to people. Shuttles will be routed through the garage and will only use the southern curb of the transit square for boarding and alighting. Private vehicles will be allowed to drop passengers at the western curb of the transit square, however short-term parking will be provided in the garage at ground level for picking up and dropping off passengers. The other two curbs will be dedicated to the infrequent MBTA bus arrival. Because of this arrangement, it is expected that vehicular traffic in the square will be relatively light.

Comment E.34

Councilor Leary: Please provide more information on the northbound bike lane on the eastern side of Grove? Is it redundant, and if not, does it need to be protected?

Response

An option for providing a protected lane on the eastern side has been created and will be presented. This option will require reducing the two-way path along the frontage of Building 6 to a one-way path.

Comment E.35

Councilor Leary: The MBTA should state whether this petition prohibits future transit operations on site.

Response

The MBTA attended the Land Use hearing on February 25th and confirmed that the current plan does not prohibit future operations on the site. Furthermore, the plan has already considered potential operational improvements that can be made down the road such as additional bus accommodations and train storage.

Comment E.36

Councilor Leary: Have we considered retractable bollards for locations where we do not want vehicular access into the site?

Response

Retractable bollards are only appropriate for use in areas that generally prohibit vehicular traffic but frequently allow specific vehicles access. The function more like a mechanical access gate. There are not locations in the side where these will be appropriate. For the emergency access to Grove Street, removable not retractable bollards will be used. These bollards are removed by staff on the development as part of traffic diversions for shifts in MBTA operations. It is anticipated that police officer control of this intersection would be in place when emergency operations were in place at this driveway.

Comment E.37

Councilor Leary: Has the roof of the garage been considered for solar?

Response

Yes, we are discussing solar on the roof of the garage with the MBTA who will retain ownership of the entire garage once it is built.

Councilor Markiewicz

Comment E.38

Councilor Markiewicz: We need to understand more about the transit plaza.

Response

The design of the transit plaza has been thoughtfully planned and coordinated in great detail with the MBTA. The proponent has advocated for this space to be as inviting as possible to people. Shuttles will

be routed through the garage and will only use the southern curb of the transit square for boarding. Private vehicles will be allowed to drop passengers at the western cub of the transit square, however short-term parking will be provided in the garage at ground level for picking up and dropping off passengers. The other two curbs will be dedicated to the infrequent MBTA bus arrival. Because of this arrangement, it is expected that vehicular traffic in the square will be relatively light.

Comment E.39

Councilor Markiewicz: Do we need on-street parking along Main Street?

Response

Curbside parking along both flanks is a key feature of almost every successful main street in the US. There are many reasons for this fact, including the way that it benefits businesses, calms traffic, and protects the sidewalk, but it is more useful to stress that this project has been designed with a strategy of emulating successful places and not taking undue risks with unproven configurations.

Comment E.40

Councilor Markiewicz: What type of bollards will be installed at the emergency access driveways?

Response

Removable bollards will be used. These bollards are removed by staff on the development team as part of traffic diversions for shifts in MBTA operations.

Comment E.41

Councilor Markiewicz: Is the crosswalk on Grove Street safe?

Response

The crosswalk at the northern end of Grove Street has been added to the plan at the direction of the City's Public Works Transportation Department. This crossing will include an actuated Rectangular Rapid Flash Beacon (RRFB) to signal to vehicles that a pedestrian or bicyclist intends to cross at this location. In addition, signage that is interactive and connected to the RRFB will be placed on the north side of the train trestle to allow advanced warning of a potential stop required ahead.

Comment E.42

Councilor Markiewicz: Can the petitioner construct all commitments rather than providing design funds for bike and pedestrian improvements?

Response

The petitioner has committed to fund all improvements which are either in its sole control or can be approved as part of the City Council process. The petitioner will use best efforts to construct the Charles

River Park Improvements but has come to an agreement with the Greenway Trails Group that if not, these funds will be made available.

Councilor Norton

Comment E.43

Councilor Norton: Was there consideration for community gardens in the plan?

Response

Community gardens are relatively land-intensive and were not considered as part of the open space uses.

Comment E.44

Councilor Norton: Could trees be installed to block noise and reduce air pollution?

Response

Frequently-spaced trees are proposed throughout all of the open spaces on site.

Councilor Krintzman

Comment E.45

Councilor Krintzman: Is there an alternate way to buffer the pedestrians along Main Street rather than two eight-foot wide parking lanes?

Response

As already stated, curbside parking along both flanks is a key feature of almost every successful main street in the US. There are many reasons for this fact, including the way that it benefits businesses, calms traffic, and protects the sidewalk, but it is more useful to stress that this project has been designed with a strategy of emulating successful places and not taking undue risks with unproven configurations.

Comment E.46

Councilor Krintzman: Protected path of travel from the garage to the awnings along Building 8.

Response

Awnings will be included along the frontage of building 8 to provide a weather-protected path for the majority of the route from the garage to the station

Councilor Kelley

Comment E.47

Councilor Kelley: How will the open spaces work?

Response

The open spaces are intended to work as a series of complementary 'moments' within the project. Each space shall serve multiple uses and each is slightly different depending on the date, time and location within the site and the adjacent building/transportation program. The Transit Square and Green complement one another: The Transit square is a commuting hub with public access to various modes of transportation and commuter interactions as its primary focus, while the Transit green provides a primarily softscape passive counterpoint. The amphitheater provides both spaces for quiet contemplation during the majority of the days, while also accommodating larger planned events for special use. The hotel green also acts as a dual use space. It is a plaza which supports the active use of the hotel and retail while providing a community open space/playspace at its center.

Comment E.48

Councilor Kelley: What are the connections to the River and what are their extents?

Response

The proponent will extend a two-way extension of Recreation Road and a multi-use path to Riverside Park. This park connects to the River through an existing network of trails and bridges. Additional expansions of this trail network are proposed including the improvement and reopening of the "Depot Tunnel" connection to Charles Street, the final link to the MWRA trail and Lasell Boathouse Bridge and the design of the improvement of the Two Bridges over 128.

Comment E.49

Councilor Kelley: Has the petitioner considered vertical green gardens? Rooftop gardens or rooftop solar?

Response

Vertical gardens/green walls tend to be difficult to create successfully outdoors in our climate. Generally, because the upper partial floors have been eliminated from the residential buildings, there is no rooftop access for residents to provide rooftop gardens. The roofs will be solar ready and we are discussing solar panels on top of the garage with the MBTA.

Comment E.50

Councilor Kelley: How will the pedestrian and bicyclist circulation work?

Response

The pedestrian and bicycle access will be addressed at the April 7th hearing, which will be focused on transportation.

Comment E.51

Councilor Kelley: How can the plan highlight the transit station?

Response

The Riverside Station redevelopment has been planned and designed around the premise of the MBTA Station as the primary destination. As discussed in Comment A.4, its location will encourage pedestrians, bicyclists and others to traverse though the site to reach the destination. The station will be highlighted in several ways. First, a comprehensive wayfinding program will include clear direction to the MBTA parking and MBTA station through a series of vehicular-scale and pedestrian-scale signage. Its location will not be a secret. Second, by virtue of its linear spine orientation, Main Street terminates in the transit loop at the station. Even those who may not follow the signage in the site would most likely end up at the station by default. Finally, the station entry itself will be prominent and visible from Main Street and Grove Street. The wide entry to the station will include a noticeable canopy element that projects beyond building 7 over the sidewalk. This canopy will include signage/identification that will be coordinated with the MBTA to ensure its location is unmistakable

Councilor Wright

Comment E.52

Councilor Wright: What percent of the beneficial open space is softscape versus hardscape?

Response

The percentage of soft vs hardscape varies within each of the open spaces, but as an average the ratio is approximately 50% hardscape and 50% softscape. The streetscapes with primary pedestrian sidewalks, street trees, permeable paving, benches, and planting beds will be predominantly hardscape with attention given to accommodating proper street tree soil volume through the use of raised tree beds and structural soil below the permeable pavers. Other spaces such as the amphitheater and transit green will be up to 66% percent softscape to accommodate a more passive use in these locations.

Comment E.53

Councilor Wright: Can the hotel green be shifted towards Building 4?

Response

The arrangement of the Hotel Green has been thoughtfully planned and located. The deep sidewalks between the vehicular lane and Building 4 are an important pedestrian space to preserve.

Comment E.54

Councilor Wright: The transit square needs to be looked at.

Response

The design of the transit plaza has been thoughtfully planned and coordinated in great detail with the MBTA. Although this is an ongoing discussion, the MBTA feels very comfortable with where we have landed at this point in the design. The proponent has advocated for this space to be as inviting as possible to people.

Councilor Greenberg

Comment E.55

Councilor Greenberg: Safety of green spaces surrounded by traffic.

Response

While there are vehicular lanes around the hotel green, as has been described, the priority of this space is pedestrian, and the vehicular use of this area would not be accurately described as traffic. The other green spaces are primarily bounded by buildings or pedestrian sidewalks.

Comment E.56

Councilor Greenberg: Can there be a safe space for kids?

Response

A play space will be the centerpiece of the hotel green.

Comment E.57

Councilor Greenberg: Can there be pedestrian only areas? Bike only areas?

Response

The areas that include vehicular access are necessary.

Riverside Station

Response to Comments

April 17, 2020

DAVID M. SCHWARZ ARCHITECTS
vhb
HALVORSON Tighe&Bond STUDIO
NEW ECOLOGY Community-Based Sustainable Development
SANBORN HEAD
SCHLESINGER AND BUCHBINDER, LLP ATTORNEYS AT LAW
MARK DEVELOPMENT

Response to Comments

Number	Commenter (Alphabetical Order)
A	Councilor Greenberg
B	Councilor Kelly
C	Councilor Laredo
D	Councilor Markiewicz

Councilor Greenberg

Comment A.1

Could the bike corral and storage area be moved to a safer location other than the center of the transportation loop?

Response

Based on concerns that were voiced through the Land Use process, we have relocated the bike corral and storage area from the center of the transportation loop to the ground floor of Building 7 in the area closest to the T station.

Comment A.2

Could there be pedestrian/bike only travel lanes through the complex?

Response

There are already ped-only trajectories in two places down the hillside—in the amphitheater and to the hotel square—and along the sides of the Transit Green, but to create more of them would mean turning one of the existing streets into a street without vehicles. This is not possible as all of the development's streets are needed to move cars and buses around. All trajectories that can be ped-only are already ped-only.

Comment A.3

Is there a possibility to share the parking spaces in the MBTA lot?

Response

The MBTA has been unwilling to share their parking spaces because they anticipate the need for more spaces than they have now to accommodate a growth in ridership from the development. However, the MBTA has accounted for in the lease the right to put those spaces into the shared parking in the event they determine there is not the anticipated demand.

Comment A.4

It would be important to have a pedestrian/bike, possibly shuttle, connection between the Riverside train/bus station and the Auburndale commuter rail station.

Response

While an improved pedestrian and bike connection from the site to Auburndale is challenging over existing roads due to various rights of way and land control constraints, an improved connection from the development to Auburndale will be created via the improvements to Recreation Road and the link to the MWRA trail. By making this connection, one could walk or bike from Lower Falls or the Riverside development down Recreation Road to the improved bridge over the Charles River at the Lasell Boathouse. From the Lasell Boathouse, bicyclists and pedestrians can enjoy a safe walk or ride down the residential Charles Street to

Auburn Street. The station is two short blocks down Auburn Street from Charles Street. In all, this route is almost entirely on protected paths or low traffic residential roads. The petitioner has included a shuttle from the development to Auburndale as a possible mitigation measure in the event trips exceed 110% of projections.

Comment A.5

Monetary penalties for exceeding acceptable trip counts similar to the TDM conditions in Northland's project.

Response

Monetary penalties for exceeding trip counts will not reduce trips to the development. The TDM package proposed includes measures aimed at reducing trips by encouraging residents, tenants and visitors to pursue alternate means of transportation.

Comment A.6

Could space be made for community gardens? Perhaps behind Building 1 and rooftops gardens?

Response

Community gardens are relatively land-intensive and are not being considered for the open spaces. The area behind Building 1 is owned by the MBTA and no longer part of the development parcel. The building rooftops cannot be made accessible to residents as doing so would require adding a partial story to a building to allow access.

Comment A.7

Implementation of noise reducing building components and/or landscaping to protect the neighborhoods of Lower Falls and the and the residents of Riverside along Rt 128.

Response

Buildings 1 and 2 would largely shield the neighborhoods of Lower Falls from any noise generated from within the site. These buildings (office and hotel) have no external balconies facing the highway and would act as a buffer.

Comment A.8

In regards to the amphitheater, it was stated that there is an area for stage performances at the top of the amphitheater next to the playground. If I am correct, the ground slopes down from that area making it difficult for folks who are seated below to view the stage. Usually, the stage would be at the bottom of an amphitheater.

Response

There has been discussion about a "movable" stage as part of the amphitheater design. If a stage is to be accommodated, it would be placed at the bottom of the amphitheater where there is ample space.

Comment A.9

I look forward to the details of the design and amenities of the Hotel green, the playground near the amphitheater, transit loop green and the transit green. A water feature would be a wonderful addition to this community.

Response

A revised proposal for the Hotel Green has been developed. Prominently featured in this area will be a safe fenced-in space for play, the amphitheater green is well developed and programmed with pockets of level areas and the "Jack and Jill" hill at its base, and the transit green is intended to be an open lawn area to allow for flexible use. A water feature is not currently envisioned in these spaces.

Comment A.10

I understand that buildings constructed with passive house standards must have simple lines to achieve a high performing thermal envelope, but I was wondering if faux facades with interesting materials and features could be used to add interest to the look of these buildings.

Response

The Passive House demand for simple building volumes is actually well in keeping with the aesthetic of this project thus far, which is inspired by simple New England building forms. While most contemporary projects tend to favor jaunty facades with many projecting and receding bays, that is not the approach taken here. To the degree that decorative features are proposed, they are mostly shallow façade articulations and attached balconies, neither of which should substantially impact a Passive House Strategy.

Comment A.11

I agree with President Albright's comments that as one travels down Grove street it appears that the buildings of this complex have their backs to the adjacent neighborhood.

Response

Buildings 7 and 6 have ground floor retail with glass storefront facing Grove Street, and Building 5 has stoops and doors. We agree that Building 3 would benefit from having a residential lobby entrance on Grove and Building 6 would benefit from having a residential through-lobby connecting Grove and Main Streets; we are investigating those items. While building 4 may not have entrances directly adjacent to Grove Street, its center courtyard is exposed to view from Grove Street.

Councilor Kelly

Comment B.1

What is "county drainage" (was a note on the PowerPoint presentation by the developer)?

Response

"County drainage" is a term used to describe stormwater collected from pavement that is conveyed directly to a landscape BMP (i.e., a roadside swale) without first being collected in a traditional closed drainage system. County drainage provides a means for sediment, debris and contaminant removal. The naming/terminology is derived from rural roadways where this method of stormwater management is more common. It is more difficult to create this condition in more developed areas like Newton where curbs and paved sidewalks are more typically required.

Comment B.2

Adding several more true Passive House buildings would be beneficial- exploring on how to incorporate the kinds of design features Robert Korff wants to be sure are possible for the aesthetic quality he seeks with details, materials, facade treatments etc. with the high performing thermal envelope and continuous insulation should be productive.

Response

The proponent agrees that more, true Passive House buildings would be beneficial environmentally, however some of the energy savings and air tightness measures come at a diminished "return" on cost if the return is measured in energy savings. The team feels it is better to set a higher energy performance baseline for all residential buildings by designing these using Passive House principles. The proponent has pushed three buildings beyond that baseline to Passive House certification. If the proponent were to commit to certify more Passive House buildings, it would have to come at the cost of the overall improved baseline. As a baseline all of our residential buildings will have high performing thermal envelopes with continuous insulation and a focus on air tightness, compartmentalization and energy performance. Because of this, in aggregate, a significant improvement in energy performance for the whole project will be achieved beyond simply designing to meet the Massachusetts Stretch Energy Code.

The proponent has agreed and committed to study all residential buildings for Passive House feasibility and certify three buildings. If it turns out through these studies that more buildings can be certified without a major increase in hard costs or at the expense of the overall project aesthetics, additional buildings will be considered. These studies will be conducted closer to the time of construction; therefore no further commitments of certification can be made at this time.

Comment B.3

Rooftop solar panels installed where possible vs. just "ready"- we are years away from making commitments possible by providers and incentives are currently reduced, but I hope a maximum of installed v. ready rooftops for solar will be done. I appreciate that Mark Development will continue to monitor the solar market.

Response

The proponent remains committed to installing solar if the market changes and is in discussions with the MBTA about solar panels on the roof of their garage

Comment B.4

**pursue negotiations with the T for using the parking garage roof for solar installation.*

Response

As has been discussed, the garage is now solely owned by the MBTA, who will ultimately have the decision as to whether or not they would like to install panels on the garage. However, the petitioner understands the importance to the community and is continuing to work with the MTBA to find a solution.

Comment B.5

Refinement of where green roofs and vertical walls will be located, and what the intention of those are (O2 production, visual appeal, community gardens, etc.).

Response

Successful use of vertical gardens and green walls are difficult in our climate. Generally, because the upper partial floors have been eliminated from the residential buildings, there is no rooftop access for residents to provide rooftop gardens and the visual appeal of green roofs will not be apparent as they are out of view. The residential roof areas will either be used for the outdoor units of the heat pumps, elevator overruns, generators, energy recovery units or reserved for future solar installations. Generally, there will not be meaningful rooftop space available for green roofs.

Comment B.6

Reduce the amount of untreated stormwater runoff that will be directed without treatment to water bodies (eg. Charles River).

Response

A comprehensive stormwater management system utilizing redundant BMPs have been designed to restore a more natural water cycle and protect surrounding natural resources. Presently, a significant amount of impervious area discharges directly to the Charles River basin with limited controls. In the future condition, the vast majority of annual rainfall events will be captured, treated and a significant portion will be infiltrated into the ground.

Comment B.7

What will the collected rainwater and greywater be used for in addition to landscape irrigation, any other uses?

Response

We anticipate the rainwater collection will be used solely for irrigation demands. The volume of water collected is insufficient for other uses. Greywater will not be collected and reused as the logistics of collecting greywater and reusing it for the residential buildings is cost prohibitive.

Comment B.8

With the reduction in density through the LFIA negotiations, I understand that overall open space and connectivity to trails and river has been reduced. I would like to see the previous commitments to Greenway connections upheld.

Response

The original commitment was a $6.0 million contribution to the efforts of the Riverside Greenway Working Group. The scope was not defined, but the petitioner envisioned being able to repair the two rail bridges with those additional funds.

Comment B.9

Electricity and solar as the energy sources (for heat and cooking) in residential and common areas. Provide information and education to tenants about upping to 100% renewable option.

Response

Presently, the City has a commendable standard of a default power supply of 62% from renewable sources. The proponent is committed to sustainability and to the extent possible will encourage tenants to enroll in the 100% renewable option.

Comment B.10

Plant selection can help with both noise and pollution mitigation, including vertical green walls. Drought tolerant where applicable (some may be the opposite: liking "wet feet" when closer to the river eg.), native species preferred for environmental sustainability goals.

Response

The design team has a long experience of plant selection in urban and town settings in New England. All species will be chosen with a preference towards native species or low maintenance plants that will thrive rather than simply survive. An essential component to success includes adequate soil volume for root systems for large shade trees, appropriate planting soil components, and proper drainage (both surface and subsurface). An equal objective will be to provide a rich and diverse plant palette which provides wildlife habitat and seasonal interest.

Green walls and/or green screens will be studied as an alternative/supplement to natural plantings in specific locations, keeping in mind our New England climate and high maintenance.

Comment B.11

Shuttle to commuter rail in Auburndale provides yet another transit-oriented option beyond the Green line subway.

Response

The petitioner agrees that a shuttle to Auburndale would be a great additional transit-oriented option for the development, however it would come at a significant upfront cost. As such, the petitioner has proposed this as a potential measure in the event trips exceed 110% of projections.

Councilor Laredo

Comment C.1

How many workers will be on site during construction and where they will park?

Response

During the initial stage of construction, prior to the opening of the garage, approximately 150 construction workers will park on site. During this phase, we have allocated portions of the existing Hotel Indigo site and a presently unused portion of the MBTA Maintenance yard that will be cleared and leveled prior to the start of the garage construction. These areas are sufficient to handle construction parking at this initial stage. After the opening of the garage, construction parking will peak at about 250 vehicles. At that point there will be approximately 1,000 unused parking spaces available for construction workers in the garage in addition to the space in the MBTA maintenance yard. During phase 2 of construction at least 250 spaces will be available in the garage until that phase is complete.

Councilor Markiewicz

Comment D.1

The request for consideration for signalization of the Grove St. / Woodland Street intersection was deemed to meet the warrants for signalization per VHB. Can you please specify which warrant(s) was used and what the statistics in support of that determination are? The expectation is that traffic counts would be based on post Riverside completion, but it would be useful to understand if interim phases were considered as construction activity will also bring traffic albeit only during the construction timeline. Since other signalization will be provided, can you provide the same information for those intersections regarding warrants used and statistics used to make the determination?

Response

On March 20, 2020 VHB submitted a memorandum to the City outlining a traffic signal warrant evaluation that was conducted at the intersection of Grove Street and Woodland Road. As outlined in the memorandum the signal warrant evaluation was conducted three ways, reviewing 2020 existing traffic conditions, reviewing 2029 No-Build Conditions, and assuming that the Riverside project were in place, 2029 Build conditions. The evaluation focused on the three primary volume warrants that is typical for assessing the need of and warrants for traffic signalization:

- Eight-Hour volume warrant
- Four-Hour volume warrant
- Peak-Hour volume warrant

If any of the warrants were to be met during any of the periods reviewed, justification for a traffic signal could be made. As outlined in the memorandum, the intersection does not meet any of the signal warrants for the three conditions evaluated, including the future 2029 Build condition.

In addition to the three warrants described above, there are six other traffic signal warrants outlined in the Manual of Uniform Traffic Control (MUTCD). While none of the six additional warrants are met at this intersection, the warrants are listed below with the reasoning why they do not apply at this location:

- Warrant 4 (Pedestrian Volume) – This warrant is not applicable as the current number of pedestrian crossings at this location does not meet the minimum number of crossings required to meet any of the cases for Warrant 4. The minimum threshold to meet this warrant is 107 people crossing per hour for four hours or 133 people crossing per hour for one hour. It is not anticipated that this warrant will be met in the future either as the total number of pedestrian crossings would need to more than double over four hours to meet Warrant 4, which is not anticipated due to the Riverside redevelopment.
- Warrant 5 (School Crossing) – While the intersection is close to the Williams Elementary School, this warrant is not applicable as there are currently adequate gaps in the traffic stream during the period when schoolchildren are crossing due to the all-way stop control nature of the intersection.
- Warrant 6 (Coordinated Signal System) – This warrant is not applicable as neither Grove Street nor Woodland Road currently contain an adjacent signalized intersection within 1,000 feet that could become part of a coordinated traffic signal system.

- Warrant 7 (Crash Experience) – Warrant 7 is satisfied when five collisions correctable by signalization occur over the most recent 12 months. A review of crash data determines that this warrant is not applicable as only one crash occurred at the study area intersection in 2017, the most recent full crash data is available from the Massachusetts Department of Transportation.
- Warrant 8 (Roadway Network) – This warrant is not applicable as the study intersection is not the common intersection of two major routes.
- Warrant 9 (Intersection Near a Grade Crossing) – This warrant is not applicable as the intersection is not near an active grade crossing.

Comment D.2

Continuing with intersections, Hancock at Woodland is a major path to Williams. One block south on Hancock is the main entrance for walkers. There are also bus stops for South and Brown at Woodland/Williams. The roads and intersections involved here are frequent cut throughs for traffic looking to jump from the 128/90 intersection over to the Pike entrance (Exit 16) on Washington St.

Response

Review of the peak hour traffic volumes at the Woodland Road/Hancock Street intersection versus the Grove Street/Woodland Road intersection suggests that the Woodland/Hancock location sees significantly less peak hour traffic than the Grove/Woodland intersection (68% less during both the AM and PM Peak hours). With this in mind, meeting traffic signal warrants at this location is extremely unlikey.

Comment D.3

Where is the TDM? Will MD agree to institute financial contributions to mitigate costs and other impacts caused if the TDM is not successful or if traffic counts exceed projected numbers provided in MD's traffic studies and associated peer reviews?

Response

The TDM was submitted on December 9th 2019. At the request of the Planning Department, a follow-up TDM memo was provided on January 14th, 2020, addressing options for further mitigation in the event traffic counts exceed 110%. One of the measures would be to fund up to $750,000 in additional public transit subsidies to mitigate traffic.

Comment D.4

Who will pay for the proposed traffic roundabout for the southbound access to 128, plus any new sidewalks, crosswalks, traffic signalization? Assuming it is MD, is it contemplated that all cost will be borne by MD or is there a limit at which point MD will seek assistance in funding and if so, who would that source of funding be?

Response

All of the off-site traffic mitigation measures are a project cost and the proponent will be responsible for the funding.

Comment D.5

With respect to the aforementioned "roundabout" and other infrastructural costs for roads, traffic signals etc, will MD agree to bear all costs regardless of amount in order to comply with the plans provided as part of this petition? Will cost challenges for the aforementioned have an impact on other contributions for public spaces, for example, improvements to Charles River access, the Greenway or bike lanes?

Response

All of the off-site traffic mitigation measures are a project cost and the proponent will be responsible for funding. This will not impact the commitments to other project mitigation measures.

Comment D.6

How will protected bike lanes be made "protected"? Does the protection mechanism apply to all parts of the bike lanes be they east - west and north - south? Can you specify the different types of protection if applicable and whether this has been subject to peer review?

Response

The bike facilities are being reviewed and discussed with the City of Newton. Under the two scenarios being discussed, both plans account for a completely protected bike facility on the "project side" of Grove Street and the connection from the development to the proposed Riverside Park along Recreation Road. These protected facilities are either a) raised cycletracks at sidewalk level that have a planted buffer between cyclist and road or b) have a paver/tactile material buffer between cyclist and pedestrian. The bicycle facilities along Grove Street over the I95 will be protected by a raised median. The only portion of the bicycle facilities that will be at roadway grade will have a painted/spatial buffer and limited to the commuter bike traffic heading NE from Newton Lower Falls to Auburndale. Further discussion is required on the "golf course" proposed bike lane.

Comment D.7

Can you explain how each of the different types of traffic will be managed as directed to and within the garage? Is there a parking management plan that we would put in summary form in the Council Order conditions?

Response

Traffic within the site and garage will be managed through a variety of wayfinding signage both static and dynamic as well as parking management staff. Generally, this management will be required at peak hours and during events such as Red Sox games. The garage is flexible in that all entrances will allow access to all portions of the garage.

When entering the site, office users and residents will be directed towards the garage entrance at the southern end of Building 10 at Road A near Building 1. MBTA users will be directed to the central garage entrance in Building 9. Should queuing occur entering at either location, either dynamic signage or parking staff will direct users to the alternate entrance.

When exiting the site, users exiting towards the highway end of the site will be encouraged to use the Building 10 egress to reduce traffic on site and on Main Street. Those headed towards the north will be encouraged to

use the Building 9 egress. Should congestion either on site or in the garage occur, either dynamic signage or parkin staff will direct users to the more efficient route.

On game days, generally daily commuters and office tenants will be exiting while Red Sox fans arrive. Red Sox customers will be directed to enter at the Building 9 entrance while exiting office tenants will be directed to exit via Building 10. This will reduce the potential for conflicts of left turns entering the garage crossing the path of those who are exiting. Traffic at the Building 9 entrance will be managed by parking staff on all game days.

Comment D.8

Can you develop a parking plan with Alexandria Real Estate, the owner of the Riverside Center complex? There may be opportunities to increase capacity using less space that would then be available for future development in support of potential urban rail and related projects?

Response

The petitioner has reached out to Alexandria to better understand the new ownerships' plan for the property and any synergies that might exist between the two properties. Given that the adjacent property is an office use, as opposed to the residential use, the demand peaks of the two properties are similar only creating a downtime at night, when the office park is empty and the residents and hotel guests are the only remaining cars in the new development. Therefore, it is hard to envision an opportunity to create capacity using less space in order to free up land for the urban rail or other related projects.

Comment D.9

Can the MBTA and developer clarify the amount of parking spaces that will be available for commuters during the construction phases. Will there be more or less spaces than available today at any point, if so, when and how many. If there is to be a variable amount available between the start and finish can you provide an approximation of how many spaces available against a pro forma timeline? In the event spaces are reduced at some point, what mitigation processes would be in place to prevent traffic and parking problems in the adjacent neighborhoods?

Response

Currently there are 958 parking spaces available with an average peak demand of 650 spaces. During construction, there will be a minimum of 450 parking spaces available to commuters. To handle the shortfall, the MBTA has been willing to allow for the detour of parkers to Woodland Station which typically has an excess capacity of over 200 spaces. A robust signage package will need to be installed in order to educate users of this option. This condition is anticipated to last only for the first 15 months of the project construction. As part of the CMP the petitioner is willing to discuss enforcement within the neighborhood in the event a problem exists.

Comment D.10

How will you work with the abutting neighborhoods to resolve traffic and parking problems that may occur at various times, the expectation is that there be real time assistance (in addition to a traffic enforcement response by the City)

Response

The project TDM Manager is being designated as the person that anyone from the community should contact should there be any ancillary traffic and parking issues, on site or in the abutting neighborhoods. Once fully built, the petitioner feels that the parking problem that has existed in the past will be resolved through the mixed-use nature of the project and the corresponding shared parking program. As noted above, if neighborhood parking proves to be a problem the petitioner will commit to implementing a traffic enforcement plan.

Comment D.11

I would like to see/understand how traffic would flow on any given day given drops offs and Buses in the station area while garage and street traffic are also going on. The question is about trying to understand if queueing would likely occur and how that will that be managed. For example: would there be personnel directing traffic, signals or nothing at all? Has the Fire Dept. reviewed circulation and agreed to whatever plans/controls are proposed?

Response

Based on the extensive analysis and planning that has gone into this project, as well as very conservative assumptions regarding project traffic generation, operations at access driveways, internal intersections, and the transit loop is expected to operate well. While there will certainly be some queueing at critical intersections during peak hour conditions, the analysis shows that the queues will be fairly well managed. The expectation for the transit loop is that there is adequate space for the buses, shuttles, and for the public to drop a passenger. For passenger pick-up, there will be spaces provided in the garage for that purpose. No passenger vehicles will be allowed to sit in the transit loop while waiting for a passenger. The area will be well signed regarding the intended operation. While the expectation is that no personnel will be needed on a regular basis to enforce or supplement traffic operations and parking, the TDM manager who will be present on site will monitor the activities and should personnel be needed for any reason, they will be provided to ensure quality operations.

Comment D.12

With respect to the role of Riverside and the logistical impact of the implementation of "Urban Rail", specifically where would additional platform(s), equipment and other physical requirements be placed and what is the unused capacity in that area today or what are the plans to repurpose that capacity if necessary?

Response

As we understand it, there are presently no plans for the implementation of Urban Rail at Riverside Station so any analysis of this is purely speculative. The maintenance yard and maintenance building are located between the Worcester Line spur rail and the development parcel. Any relocation of the maintenance yard and maintenance building would certainly be cost prohibitive. Because there is no feasible way to relocate the maintenance yard, any Urban Rail facilities would be restricted to the spur rail itself and the development parcel will be of no benefit to any such construction as construction would need to occur on the adjacent office park.

Comment D.13

Will MD commit to designing adequate space for Urban Rail access or reserve space contemplating a station at grade for the Urban rail trains as well as enabling access from the adjacent site (Riverside Office Park). I realize that MD does not control the MBTA plans for urban rail or other transit initiatives but the community would like to understand the extent to which this is going to be possible if and when the T/DOT develops a plan and what contingencies or allowances may be contemplated so expansion will not be precluded in the future.

Response

See response D.12. The development parcel will not play a role in any future of urban rail.

Comment D.14

It would be helpful to get as complete a vision as possible from the MBTA/DOT with respect to Urban Rail and the role of Riverside in future plans.

Response

The MBTA will be at the Land Use hearing on April 7th, at which time we are expecting to hear of any future plans that have been contemplated to date. To date, our understanding that plans (or a vision) to connect Urban Rail to Riverside Station are limited.

Comment D.15

The Council does not have a copy of the lease and amendments between DOT/MBTA and Normandy/MD - it would be helpful to see and understand the details in these documents. Can you provide copies?

Response

The petitioner is willing to provide the original executed lease, however the MBTA has a policy that they do not release any unexecuted documents while negotiations are underway.

Comment D.16

Will Riverside experience increased demand for parking or service when the Allston Interchange project is undertaken and if so, can this be accommodated using the planned extant/planned facilities or will more capacity be needed? Are changes to the proposed plan likely even this is still an unknown at this point? If unknown, when can we expect to see a plan and attendant mitigation?

Response

It is our understanding the MassDOT and the MBTA have been in coordination regarding the long-term Allston Multi-modal project and bridge reconstruction projects along I-90 and Greenline expansion plans. As has been stated, the MBTA has significant plans for expansion of the Greenline services along the corridor. Planning to include increase of ridership due to general growth and long-term construction activities have been factored into the planning. The Allston Multi-modal plans are expected to begin later this year while their construction of the proposed project likely would not begin until 2021. Green line expansion activities continue to progress in parallel to the project.

As has been discussed in previous responses, the current parking count is approximately 65% of capacity. In the event the parking demand exceeds this number through either the new development or further transit improvements in other locations, there is the ability to increase the number of parking spaces through a managed valet system. This is a strategy that has been discussed and will be part of the parking management plan with the MBTA.