

Leland C. Webster, Ph.D.
15 Orkney Rd.
Brighton, MA 02135
Feb. 1, 2016

Mr. Phil D. Cohen
Project Manager
Boston Redevelopment Authority
phil.cohen@boston.gov

Re. Opposition to 89 Brighton Avenue development proposal

Dear Mr. Cohen:

I am opposed to the current development plan for 89 Brighton Ave. due to its excessive density and over-sized presence on Brighton Avenue. I also strongly oppose demolition of two architecturally contributing structures, particularly the demolition of the POP Allston Building (formerly the “Bicycle Building”), a handsome commercial building that has contributed positively to the streetscape for nearly a century. The POP Allston Building is not a derelict structure – quite to the contrary, it appears to have been over-built and is no doubt sturdier than many more recently constructed buildings of its type. Out of respect for the neighborhood, the developer should incorporate this attractive building into the overall plan (retaining not just the façade, but the entire structure).

For the project to be acceptable, I would like to see the plan adjusted to include the following:

- Preserve and rehabilitate the POP Allston Building - this effort should count toward Community Benefits;
- The number of housing units not to exceed 100;
- Retention of 69 parking spaces;
- The proposed 6th story along Brighton Ave. to be recessed by seven feet (the space can be used as terrace), so the 6th floor is not easily perceived from the street;
- Height along Linden Street not to exceed five stories or three stories along Gardner St. (as in the current plan);
- A larger setback;
 - The currently proposed 12 ft. wide sidewalk on Brighton Ave. (10 ft. on the street + two feet recessed into the building as a very narrow “arcade”) is insufficient for such a tall building along a busy street. The Brighton Ave. façade (its main surface) needs to be 13 feet from the curb (not counting the curb), with an additional four- to five-foot deep “arcade” — similar to what the POP Allston

Building has. Positioning the new building 13 feet from the curb (not counting the curb), and providing a four- to five-foot deep will allow for true, comfortable outdoor café seating, as the developer promised to the community. (Note: 13 ft. is the distance between the curb and the main facades of the bow-front buildings — therefore this distance should be repeated with respect to the proposed building as well; otherwise, there won't be enough room for decent, robust street trees.)

- The Linden Street sidewalk must be widened to 11 ft. (from 8 ft. in the current plan) to give street trees a chance, and to make pedestrian use more comfortable.

A properly designed and scaled development at this site – one that incorporates the POP Allston Building – would be a boon to the area, but as currently proposed, the plan is simply out of scale for the area, is destructive to the historical fabric of the streetscape, and will be a detriment to the neighborhood and to this stretch of Brighton Ave.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Leland C. Webster". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.