

# BOSTON

**Martin J. Walsh, Mayor**

May 7, 2018

Ms. Teresa Polhemus  
Boston Planning and Development Agency  
One City Hall Square  
Boston, MA 02201

RE: Allston Yards at 60 Everett Street

Dear Ms. Polhemus:

Boston Parks and Recreation Department (BPRD) has reviewed the PNF for the Allston Yards at 60 Everett Street, a mix of uses which includes 1050 residential units, and office and retail use.

The plans show open space in the form of roof top terraces as well as a "Community Green" that will be .5 acre in size. This passive use space will be privately owned and controlled rather than truly public. It will be anchored by a restaurant. It is not clear where the restaurant's handicapped and other parking, loading, trash facilities, etc. will be located in relation to the open space.

The proponent should clarify if pets are to be allowed in this development, as a project of this density can create a burden on the public realm unless pets are accommodated on site.

## **Needs Assessment**

Mayor Walsh endorsed the Trust for Public Land's "Ten Minute Campaign" to ensure that all residents live within a 10 minute walk of a public park. The attached map from the City's *Open Space Plan 2015-2021*, shows that the location of this project is beyond any park service area.

Nearby public parks such as Portsmouth Playground and Penniman Park are already in high demand and in need of improvement. The DCR parcel at Leo Birmingham Parkway is under consideration for housing, which could lead to a further deficit of public open space in the area.

*The project should address how it is addressing the public open space needs outlined in the City's Imagine Boston 2030, which includes the Open Space and Recreation Plan 2015-2021. The active recreation needs of this new population should be provided onsite or mitigated offsite so as not to impact already overburdened public parks.*

## **Impact Assessment**

This mixed use project will include 1050 residential units. The number of anticipated residents was not provided in the PNF, but can be roughly estimated at 1000 – 4000 residents, with additional users of the office, retail and restaurant space.



**Boston Parks and Recreation Department**

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This project includes a marginal amount of open space with no active recreation amenities. Residents will rely on existing public open space and impact an underserved neighborhood.

*The proponent should provide the maximum projected population of residents and other users. The proponent should also detail the open space acreage that is being provided. Streets, sidewalks, plazas and parking should be counted as public realm, not conflated with park land.*

*This assessment will inform the demand for park land for active recreation use at buildout, compared to the amount of open space to be provided by the project, the resulting impacts to existing public open space in the neighborhood, and the appropriate mitigation of this impact.*

### **Protection in Perpetuity**

The community green will be open to the public but privately owned. The provision of permanently protected public open space is critical to balance development in this neighborhood.

*Land that is provided as impact mitigation should be permanently protected through conservation restrictions or through transfer to public ownership. It may be privately managed.*

### **Mitigation**

The proponent has initially proposed \$15 million in transportation improvements and \$4 million for a community and public realm fund for neighborhood projects. However, this proposal does not include a strong commitment to public parks. There is an imbalance between the investment in traffic management and the investment in open space infrastructure.

The Allston neighborhood continues to increase in density, without a commensurate investment in public open space to balance the development, nor serve the existing community.

*BPRD respectfully requests that this development make a substantial contribution to the acquisition and creation of a new publicly owned park to serve the active recreational needs of the residents of this neighborhood. This contribution should be at a level commensurate with the impact of over 1000 new households which will otherwise rely on existing public open spaces.*

Thank you for your consideration of the above.

Sincerely,



Carrie Marsh, Executive Secretary  
Boston Parks and Recreation Commission

cc: Christopher Cook, Commissioner, BPRD  
Liza Meyer, Chief Landscape Architect, BPRD  
Jon Greeley, Director of Development Review, BPDA  
David Carlson, Deputy Director of Urban Design, BPDA  
Casey Hines, Project Manager, BPDA



