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## STAFF MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: **Wednesday, January 8, 2020**

DATE: January 2, 2020

TO: Urban Design Commission

FROM: Shubee Sikka, Urban Designer

**SUBJECT: Additional Review Information**

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The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the members of the Urban Design Commission (UDC) and the public with technical information and planning analysis which may be useful in the review and decision-making process of the UDC. The Department of Planning and Development's intention is to provide a balanced view of the issues with the information it has at the time of the application's review. Additional information may be presented at the meeting that the UDC can take into consideration when discussing Sign Permit or Fence Appeal applications.

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Dear UDC Members,

The following is a brief discussion of the sign permit applications that you should have received in your meeting packet and staff's recommendations for these items.

### **I. Roll Call**

### **II. Regular Agenda**

#### **Sign Permits**

##### ***1. 880 Walnut Street – The Farmacy Café***

**PROJECT DESCRIPTION:** The property located at 880 Walnut Street is within Business 2 zoning district. The applicant is proposing to install the following sign:

1. One wall mounted principal sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 15 sq. ft. of sign area on the western façade facing the parking lot and Walnut Street.

**TECHNICAL REVIEW:**

- The proposed principal sign appears to be consistent with the dimensional controls specified in §5.2.8. Per the Zoning Ordinance, one principal sign is allowed, which the applicant is not exceeding, and on this façade of 6 feet, the maximum size of the sign allowed is 18 sq. ft., which the applicant is also not exceeding.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the proposed principal sign.

## **2. 313 Washington Street – Awaken 180**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The property located at 313 Washington Street is within Business 1 zoning district. The applicant is proposing to install the following sign:

1. One wall mounted principal sign, internally illuminated, with approximately 11 sq. ft. of sign area on the southern façade facing Washington Street.

TECHNICAL REVIEW:

- The proposed principal sign appears to be consistent with the dimensional controls specified in §5.2.8. Per the Zoning Ordinance, one principal sign is allowed, which the applicant is not exceeding, and on this façade of 16 feet, the maximum size of the sign allowed is 48 sq. ft., which the applicant is also not exceeding.
- The applicant will bring the site plan to the UDC meeting on January 8<sup>th</sup>.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the proposed principal sign.

## **3. 200 Boylston Street, B104 – The Shade Store**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The property located at 200-220 Boylston Street is within a Business 4 district and has a comprehensive sign package authorized by a special permit via Board Order # 214-10(2). The applicant is proposing to install the following sign:

1. One wall mounted split principal sign, internally illuminated, with approximately 9 sq. ft. of sign area on the northwestern façade facing the parking lot.
2. One perpendicular split principal sign, internally illuminated, with approximately 5 sq. ft. of sign area on the northwestern façade facing the parking lot.

TECHNICAL REVIEW:

- Per the Zoning Ordinance in §5.2.8, *“In particular instances, due to the nature of the use of the premises, the architecture of the building, or its location with reference to the street, the total allowable sign area may be divided between two wall signs which together constitute the principal wall sign.”*
- Both the proposed principal signs appear to be consistent with the dimensional controls specified in §5.2.8. Per the Zoning Ordinance, one principal sign is allowed, which the applicant is not exceeding, and on this façade of 16 feet, the maximum size of the sign allowed is 48 sq. ft., which the applicant is also not exceeding.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of both the split principal signs as proposed.

#### **4. 200 Boylston Street – Serena & Lily**

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: The property located at 200-220 Boylston Street is within a Business 4 district and has a comprehensive sign package authorized by a special permit via Board Order # 214-10(2). The applicant is proposing to install the following sign:

1. One wall mounted principal sign, non-illuminated, with approximately 15 sq. ft. of sign area on the northern façade facing the side driveway.

TECHNICAL REVIEW:

- The proposed principal sign appears to be consistent with the dimensional controls specified in §5.2.8. Per the Zoning Ordinance, one principal sign is allowed, which the applicant is not exceeding, and on this façade of 66 feet, the maximum size of the sign allowed is 100 sq. ft., which the applicant is also not exceeding.

STAFF RECOMMENDATION: Staff recommends approval of the principal sign as proposed.

## **Design Review**

### **1. 16 Riverdale Avenue – Residences on the Charles**

The Petitioner is seeking a comprehensive permit to develop a mixed-use project on Riverdale Avenue in Nonantum. The Residences on the Charles is comprised of two mixed-use buildings ranging from one to five stories.

The new development will offer a more open design to enhance the neighborhood's connection to the Charles River. The development highlights include:

- 204 Rental Apartments (51 Affordable, 2 Live/Work)
- 17,782 Square Feet of Innovation Space
- 4,600 Square Feet of Retail Space
- 227 Parking Spaces
- Public Courtyard and Amenities

The developed property will include two buildings and a major courtyard:

- Building 1 – will sit on the northern part of the parcel, nearest the Charles River. Its front façade will align with Midland Avenue, which will be improved with parallel parking on the building side. Building 1 will include 182 apartments in a four-story, Type 5A wood-framed structure over a Type 1 Podium for parking and retail. Smaller one and two-story extensions project into the courtyard to reduce

apparent building scale. The five-story building is separated into two distinct wings, which are connected by a bridge. Entry to the linear public courtyard leading to the river is below this bridge. Building 1 is approximately 203,000 square feet, excluding the parking area, and includes 4,600 square feet of retail space.

- Building 2 – will sit on the southern tip of the site, at the corner of Midland Avenue and Los Angeles Street. Building 2 will have ground floor retail, second floor innovation space, and two upper levels housing 22 apartments. Parking is also located at the ground floor, with spaces both under the building as well as open to the air. Building 2 is approximately 42,420 square feet, excluding parking, and includes 17,782 square feet of innovation space.
- Courtyard – Aligned with Los Angeles Street, the new courtyard invites pedestrian entry into the complex under a “bridge” and into a space edged by retail and commercial uses. Retail amenities may include a small restaurant, beer garden, bicycle “loaner” and repair shop, artist live/work space, and canoe/kayak rentals. A community room for gathering and events may also be included. These new uses are intended to encourage neighbors to visit, engage in new activities, and connect with Forte Park west of the site. The plan proposes making a direct connection, through an existing fence, between Forte Park and the new development’s pedestrian paths.

At the request of the Planning Department, the petitioner has been asked to present the project proposal to the UDC for consideration. The Planning Department encourages the UDC to review the project with regards to, but not limited to, the following: the proposed site plan; the building’s design; bulk and massing; and relationship to context and the street.