



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Department of Planning and Development
Urban Design Commission

Telephone
(617) 796-1120
Telefax
(617) 796-1142
TDD/TTY
(617) 796-1089
www.newtonma.gov

Barney Heath
Director

DATE: March 30, 2021
TO: Neil Cronin, Chief Planner
FROM: Urban Design Commission
RE: 383-387 Boylston Street
CC: Land Use Committee of the City Council
Barney Heath, Director of Planning and Community Development
Jennifer Caira, Deputy Director
Michael Gleba, Senior Planner
Katie Whewell, Senior Planner
Petitioner

Section 22-80 of the Newton City Ordinances authorizes the Urban Design Commission to act in an advisory capacity on matters of urban design and beautification. At their regular meeting on February 10, 2021, the Newton Urban Design Commission reviewed the proposed project at 383-387 Boylston Street for design. The Urban Design Commission had the following comments and recommendations:

The Urban Design Commission (UDC) commented that the building fits nicely on the site. It is a nice breakdown of massing. It is a huge improvement as compared to existing conditions. The proposal is an appropriate solution for this site and UDC is looking forward to seeing more design development.

Site Plan, Circulation and Connectivity

- The UDC commented that the issue of having two fronts (Jackson and Boylston Streets) has been solved well by putting the lobby on the side and connecting the lobby to both the streets by a walkway.

Building Massing, Height and Architecture

- The UDC recommended to create a clear expression for the second entrance door on Boylston Street side, maybe a canopy above the door (like a main entrance). It was also recommended to make the square window above the door a little bigger to help get more daylight in the stairwell.

- The UDC recommended to provide deeper balconies so there is enough space to provide table and chairs, especially facing Jackson Street.
- The UDC commented that according to the Jackson Street elevation, the grade drops from west to east however, the project's wall appears to be at one level. It was recommended that the applicant investigate the level change again. It appears that the grade is on the same level with the street at the east side versus the west side.
- There was discussion about the materials. The applicant commented that they haven't finalized the materials yet. They would like to have contrast. The applicant commented that they would like to have a different material for the entry, maybe metal siding to give an accent to the entry. The applicant indicated they will be working more on the material choices.
- Based on changes with building code, the UDC recommended to investigate having 1 stairwell instead of 2.

Landscape, Streetscape and Public Open Space

- The UDC recommended to provide some street trees on Jackson Street side between the sidewalk and the curb.
- The UDC recommended to provide landscaping in front of the building along Jackson street. It will be good to provide landscaping next to the entries to the units if there is enough space.
- The UDC recommended to provide more landscape buffer on Boylston Street side, maybe a stone wall, more greenery. A pergola may also help to provide more separation from Boylston street.