



Ruthanne Fuller
Mayor

City of Newton, Massachusetts
Department of Planning and Development
1000 Commonwealth Avenue Newton, Massachusetts 02459

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

Barney Heath
Director

STAFF MEMORANDUM

Meeting Date: **Wednesday, February 23, 2022**

DATE: February 20, 2022

TO: Subcommittee for Riverside Design Consistency Review

FROM: Shubee Sikka, Urban Designer

SUBJECT: Additional Review Information

At its regularly scheduled meeting on January 12, 2022, Urban Design Commission appointed a **Subcommittee for Riverside Design and Plan Consistency Review**. The Subcommittee will make a recommendation to the full Urban Design Commission for final Determination.

The purpose of this memorandum is to provide the members of the Subcommittee and the public with technical information and planning analysis which may be useful in the review and decision-making process of the Subcommittee. 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 Subcommittee can take into consideration when discussing Riverside Design Consistency.

Dear Subcommittee Members,

The following is a brief discussion of the Riverside Design and Plan Consistency Review of Schematic Plans.

I. Roll Call

II. Regular Agenda

Riverside Design Consistency Review of Schematic Plans

Buildings 7-10 Design Consistency Review

The applicant has submitted Schematic Plans for review. The UDC, after review of such submission at a public meeting, is required to provide an opinion as to whether the Schematic

Plans are in full compliance with the Special Permit Plan Set and consistent with the Design Guidelines.

The Director of Planning and Development has requested input/assistance from peer review consultant, Form + Place. Please refer to Form + Place's memorandum (**Attachment A**) which provides a high-level commentary on the "consistency" of the project. Staff agrees with Form + Place's comments and recommendations regarding Buildings 7-10.

Staff seeks recommendation from the Subcommittee regarding all buildings. Below are staff observations:

The number of stories for each of these buildings is consistent with the Special Permit set but the applicant has not provided the exact height and total area for Buildings 7-10.

Buildings 7 and 8:

- Staff recommends enhancement of the East façade facing Grove Street and the North façade facing the station of building 7 and entrance to the "T" station as the design develops.
- As design progresses. staff recommends more detail be provided about the urban space between buildings 7 and 8.

Buildings 9 and 10:

- In addition to the drawings provided by the applicant, staff also encourages the Subcommittee to refer to Combined Main Street facades for buildings 9 and 10 complied by Form + Place (page 6 of Attachment A).
- Staff recommends further architectural articulation of both the towers which will help to decrease the verticality of the towers.
- Staff encourages the applicant to further study and include views/elevations for the four corners of buildings 1,2, 4, and 10 facing Research Square as the design develops.

Attachment:

Attachment A: Form + Place Memorandum

Documents/Submissions:

All the documents previously submitted about this project can be found at the following link:

<https://www.newtonma.gov/government/planning/development-review/high-interest-projects/riverside-special-permit-2020>

The agenda, staff memo, and packet documents for February 23 is posted at the above link.

Buildings 7-10 submission

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80654/637800122405161985>

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80656/637800122848204465>

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80658/637800124095458967>

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80660/637800124317180499>

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80662/637800124931261165>

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80666/637800125645359297>

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80664/637800125341311225>

Council Approved Documents

Council Order

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80101/637787158811970000>

Approved Design Guidelines

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80111/637787159126670000>

Approved Architectural Plans

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80105/637787158934470000>

Approved Civil Plan Set

<https://www.newtonma.gov/home/showpublisheddocument/80107/637787159002270000>