



A Call to Action to Make Roszie the Most Walkable Neighborhood in Boston

August 22, 2017

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY

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**RE: Comment Letter
Residential Project at 4281 Washington Street, Roslindale, MA**

Mr. Ruscito:

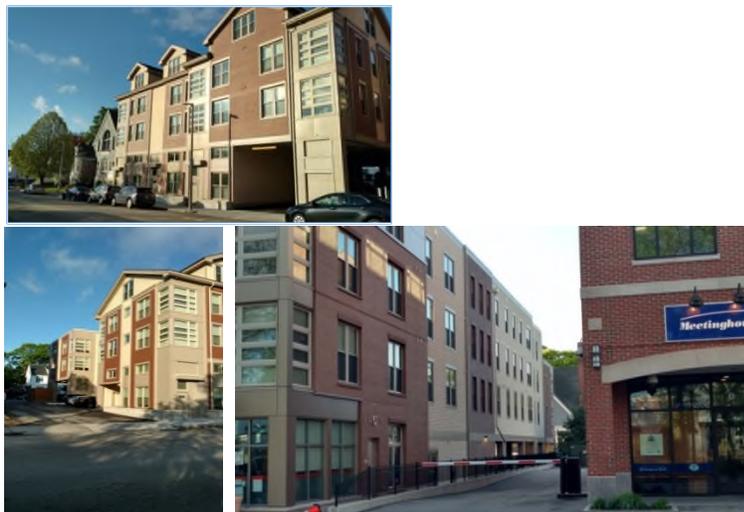
I write on behalf of WalkUP Roslindale to comment on the referenced residential project (the “**Project**”).

WalkUP Roslindale, which takes its name from the international movement to foster “Walkable Urban Places,” is a collaborative group of residents informally gathered to make Roslindale the most walkable neighborhood in Boston. We advocate for a dynamic, livable streetscape and we support positive changes to our public and private built environment that strengthen walkability and other forms of active mobility such as cycling as means toward better personal and public health, safety, social capital, economic development, and environmental sustainability. We are led by a steering group of twenty residents and have over 400 additional supporters. More information about WalkUP Roslindale and our initiatives can be found at www.walkuproslindale.org. We recognize that no single group of people can be said to speak for our entire neighborhood – instead, please take these comments as representing the collective, specific viewpoint of our steering group members (indicated below) and offering what we see as the analysis that results from our mission and principles.

The Project as recently approved by the Boston Board of Appeal (the “**Board**”) is for 12 residential units in a 4-story building with 12 accessory vehicle parking spaces, bicycle parking, and a lobby located on the ground floor and 4 units located on each of the 3 floors above. We understand that the Project obtained variances from the building height and off-street parking space standards applicable to the NS neighborhood shopping subdistrict zoning under the Roslindale Neighborhood District of the Boston Zoning Code and that the plans approved by the Board were the same as those shown to the community at a public meeting in May. We further understand that the Board granted zoning relief subject to design review by the Boston Planning & Development Agency (the “**BPDA**”).

In general, WalkUP Roslindale supports the Project's program and is happy to see that zoning relief was granted by the Board. However, we have reservations as to the design of the Project that we wish to raise with you and with the BPDA as part of the design review process. Our analysis and comments are as follows:

- In concept, the Proposed Project fits well within WalkUP Roslindale's principles. The location is directly in Roslindale Square, and thus walkable to its services, restaurants, shops, and transit options (both MBTA commuter rail and bus service), providing both a benefit to the new residents who will occupy these units and a new base of customers for businesses in the neighborhood, which benefits all Roslindale residents.
- However, the exterior design is lacking, especially on the Washington Street frontage, at least as conveyed in the single rendering provided with the Project plans. The elevation for this frontage appears more detailed and articulated than the rendering, so at a minimum, clarification is needed.
- We are also concerned about the close proximity of the garage entrance/exit to the sidewalk and would strongly recommend that a flashing/sounding sign be placed there to warn pedestrians that vehicles are exiting the garage.
- Finally, we offer the following strong suggestions to consider and come up with a revised exterior design for the Washington Street frontage along the lines shown in the following images, which are taken from the new Parkside on Adams mixed-use development at Cummins and Washington, the Washington-Beech redevelopment, and the under-construction Taft Hill Park project:





In addition to these examples, we would also like to highlight the design elements in the enclosed plans for a new building at 65 Green Street in Jamaica Plain, which shows images of the evolution of that design – the final image being the project as approved. **We believe all of these designs are better detailed and thought-through than the Proposed Project and WalkUP Roslindale asserts in the strongest possible terms that our neighborhood deserves a design for the Proposed Project at least as good as those projects.**

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We very much appreciate your careful consideration of our comments and would be happy to discuss any questions you may have on them.

Sincerely yours,



Matthew J. Lawlor

Resident @ 15 Basto Terrace, Roslindale, on behalf of the WalkUP Roslindale Steering Group

Ricardo Austrich, Resident @ 843 South Street, Roslindale
Rebecca Phillips, Resident @ 10 Tappan Street, Roslindale
Adam Rogoff, Resident @ 28 Ashfield Street, Roslindale
Lisa Beatman, Resident @ 180 Mount Hope Street, Roslindale
Robert Orthman, Resident @ 69 Walter Street, Roslindale
Steve Gag, Resident @ 631 South Street, Roslindale
Liz Graham-Meredith, Resident @ 6 Crandall Street, Roslindale
Mandana Moshtaghi, Resident @ 12 Arborough Road, Roslindale
Adam Rosi-Kessel, Resident @ 36 Taft Hill Terrace, Roslindale
Rachele Rosi-Kessel, Resident @ 36 Taft Hill Terrace, Roslindale
Mark Tedrow, Resident @ 169 Sycamore Street, Apt. 1, Roslindale
Greg Tobin, Resident @ 1 Sheldon Street, Roslindale
Alan Wright, Resident @ 98 Birch Street, Roslindale
Rick Yoder, Resident @ 180 Mount Hope Street, Roslindale

Copy to:

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Mr. Daniel Murphy, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services (daniel.m.murphy@boston.gov)
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