



A call to action to make Roslindale Boston's most walkable neighborhood.

February 25, 2019

BY ELECTRONIC MAIL ONLY (Bryan.Glascock@boston.gov)

Bryan Glascock
Boston Planning & Development Agency (BPDA)
Boston City Hall

RE: Support Letter - Additional Dwelling Units Citywide Zoning Amendment

Dear Mr. Glascock:

I write on behalf of WalkUP Roslindale to comment in support of the Additional Dwelling Units (ADU) Proposed Citywide Zoning Amendment currently under BPDA consideration.

WalkUP Roslindale supports the creation of ADUs in Roslindale and across the city. This proposed zoning amendment will allow for the creation of smaller, more affordable rental housing units in existing residences across Boston. In this time of rapidly rising rents, ADUs are a means to create new, more affordable housing in a cost-effective manner within an existing building's footprint without the additional costs of land acquisition and full-scale construction. The low-impact of ADU construction also importantly achieves many green building goals.

A benefit of ADUs is that they blend into existing neighborhoods and allow for a gradual and incremental increase in housing density. Families can build ADUs to allow loved ones to stay close together, particularly in the later years of life. ADUs can be an affordable housing option for graduate students or young couples. ADUs can also be an additional and sustainable source of income for a home's owner-occupants. Their potential uses are plentiful and beneficial to our neighborhood and city.

Indeed, ADUs are not a new idea. In Roslindale there are many houses that were adapted over the years to accommodate "in-law apartments" or "granny flats," to use two common terms for ADUs, for growing families. Some evolved into more formal multi-family unit buildings. Then, as now, there was a significant need for additional housing.

If we can present one critique of this proposed zoning amendment, it is disappointment that the amendment would confine ADUs to only an existing building rather than allowing for separate accessory structures on the property like carriage houses to be adaptively reused for housing. Many of those structures are costly to maintain and are in disrepair; Allowing them to be used as ADUs would, in addition to providing housing, also help to preserve the historic character of such buildings. We see no policy reason to limit the placement of ADUs in this fashion and hope the BPDA and City will re-consider this aspect now or in the near future.

WalkUP Roslindale has observed the successful pilot phase of ADU permitting in other neighborhoods. We are pleased to see the BPDA and City of Boston considering a citywide legalization of these units. We wholeheartedly support this proposed zoning amendment and respectfully request its approval by the BPDA and then the Boston Zoning Commission. If approved, we further request that the ADU permitting process be made as simple and streamlined as possible to ensure their rapid construction and availability. We also continue to note that increased density demands enhanced public transportation options in addition to better walkability and cycling infrastructure in our neighborhood and city. Thank you kindly for the opportunity to comment and your consideration.

Sincerely,



Robert Orthman, 31 Mendelssohn Street, #2

On behalf of the following members of the WalkUP Roslindale Steering Committee, including:

Ricardo R. Austrich, 843 South Street
Ben Bruno, 27 Colgate Road
Lucy Bullock-Sieger, 33 Brookdale Street
Steve Gag, 631 South Street
Liz Graham-Meredith, 6 Crandall Street
Matthew Lawlor, 15 Basto Terrace
Margaux Leonard, 35 Harding Road
Sarah Lee, 65 Cornell Street
Mandana Moshtaghi, 12 Arborough Road

Rebecca Phillips, 10 Tappan Street
Adam Rogoff, 28 Ashfield Street
Adam Rosi-Kessel, 36 Taft Hill Terrace
Rachele Rosi-Kessel, 36 Taft Hill Terrace
Mark Tedrow, 169 Sycamore Street, #1
Mark Theiss, 55 Prospect Avenue
Greg Tobin, 1 Sheldon Street
Nick Ward, 35 Harding Road
Alan Wright, 98 Birch Street

Cc: Timothy McCarthy, City Councilor – District 5
Andrea Campbell, City Councilor - District 4
Matt O'Malley, City Councilor - District 6
Michelle Wu, City Councilor – At-Large
Annissa Essaibi-George, City Councilor – At-Large
Michael Flaherty, City Councilor – At-Large
Althea Garrison, City Councilor – At-Large
Joseph Coppinger, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services - Roslindale

About WalkUP Roslindale:

WalkUP Roslindale, which takes its name from the international movement to foster “Walkable Urban Places,” is a collaborative group of residents dedicated to making 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 as means toward better personal and public health, safety, social capital, economic development, and environmental sustainability. We are led by a steering group of about 25 residents and have over 500 additional supporters. More information about WalkUP Roslindale and our initiatives can be found at walkuproslindale.org.