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WALDO-DURGIN DESIGN ADVISORY TEAM MINUTES By Zoom Event January 27, 2022 – 6:30 p.m.

Members Present: Linda Hamlin, Blair Hines, Andrea Brue, Elton Elperin, Anne Meyers, Carlos Ridruejo, Greg Zurlo, Linda Pehlke, Lauren Bernard

Staff Present: Victor Panak

Linda Hamlin opened the meeting.

1) APPLICANT'S PRELIMINARY PRESENTATION ON THE FOLLOWING PROPOSAL:

8-10 Waldo Street - The project involves the demolition of all existing buildings on the three subject lots and construction of a 151,000 sf hotel, a 214,000 sf residential building with ground-floor retail, and a 115,000 sf underground parking garage. The hotel would be located on the 8-10 Waldo Street property, the residential building would be located on the 10-18 Pleasant Street property, and the underground parking garage would span both properties. The subject properties are located in the Coolidge Corner commercial area, directly behind the retail storefronts at the corner of Beacon Street and Harvard Street. Precinct 8

Victor Panak discussed the role of the DAT and briefly introduced the project.

Ms. Hamlin discussed the role of the DAT and the topics that the DAT can discuss and opine on.

Jennifer Dopazo Gilbert (attorney) introduced herself and the applicant team. She reviewed the zoning history of the site and provided a brief overview of the proposal.

Gary Johnson (architect) and Joseph Geller (landscape architect) provided the DAT with a presentation of the preliminary plans for the project.

Ms. Hamlin asked members of the DAT to provide very brief initial reactions and any specific requests for additional information/materials. She requested that the applicant provide views of the buildings at-grade.

Ms. Brue requested elevations of the proposed buildings with references to the neighborhood context.

Mr. Zurlo said he is surprised by the scale of the building but understands that the proposal is complying with the requirements of the overlay district approved by Town Meeting. Mr. Zurlo noted how high-rise buildings are often seen as edifices to non-users, which then serve as icons that reflect a place and time in a community. He requested more examinations of what the building would look like from a distance (several blocks up/down Harvard Street and Beacon Street. He also asked for additional detail on the mechanical equipment and rooftop stair towers.

While the curves of the Hotel building may or may not be the right solution, Mr. Zurlo said he appreciated its unique identity and character.

Ms. Pehlke asked about the access to the co-working space and café – whether the public needs to enter the residential building to access them. She also expressed concern with the rooftop trellis above the residential building. She also said she doesn't like the curving of the hotel building. She expressed skepticism about pedestrian circulation within the interior of the site with so much vehicular circulation. She noted that she liked the idea of utilizing stoops and individual entries on the John St. side. She sees the 3 lane driveway on John St. as a problem.

Ms. Bernard said that she feels that the residential building should reflect the materiality of the John Street Apartments rather than Pelham Hall. She also said she likes the trellis at the top of the residential building but feels that it draws the viewer's eye too much. She requested dimensional details on the width of interior circulation lanes, sidewalks, etc.

Mr. Ridruejo encouraged the applicant to further examine the building's relationship with north-south orientation and sunlight access to push sustainability and design elements. He particularly asked for the applicant to explore ways of providing additional sunlight or liveliness to the interior courtyards.

Mr. Hines commended the team on their preliminary presentation and encouraged them to maintain their coherence in design.

Mr. Elperin felt that the residential building stands out too much while the hotel building is too subtle. He said he thought the facades were much too active, with too much breaking of the façade planes, and might prefer a residential building with a flat façade. He appreciated the dramatic appearance of the roof structures with solar array, but felt they need a calm base building to contrast with. He favored more permanent, substantial materials, such as brick and stone. He felt that hotel lobby should have more presence, when viewed from John Street, and disliked the appearance of mirrored glass. He thought the radiused corners of the hotel might be fine, and appreciated the depth of the window openings, but wished that the fenestration was not offset.

Ms. Meyers said she appreciates the curved façade of the hotel and looks forward to seeing more of the design.

Ms. Hamlin felt that the residential building is too busy and could be simplified. She felt positively about the curved hotel façade. She also said that she likes the trellis above the residential building.

Ms. Brue asked if the design team had considered how the hotel would interact with the S.S. Pierce building in Coolidge Corner.

Ms. Bernard emphasized that the hotel lobby needs to draw the pedestrian's eye and said she would love to see something other than mirrored glass.

Mr. Zurlo expressed agreement with other comments concerned with the busy-ness of the residential building.

Public Comments

Peter Deffebach (1247 Beacon Street) said he thinks the proposal looks great and wishes that the buildings should have been built a few years earlier.

Susie Roberts (69 Green Street) said she likes the hotel and hopes it will look classy and elegant. She also felt that the residential building is overly "loud". She asked the applicant to more closely consider the effects of winter conditions on sustainability and to more intensely emphasize outdoor spaces.

The meeting was adjourned.