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Annotated September 11, 2018

Alison Steinfeld, Director

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BROOKLINE DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

333 Washington Street

Brookline, MA 02445

RE: Puddingstone at Chestnut Hill

Architectural Peer Review Report

(New text and excerpts from July 11, 2016 text is highlighted in red)

Dear Alison and Polly:

I'm writing to provide you with a Peer Review Report in accordance with the proposal I submitted dated June 1, 2016. This report is formatted substantially in alignment with the summary of services included in your Scope of Work document that was included in our agreement, but I hope you will contact me if there is any additional information that you require in your consideration of Puddingstone at Chestnut Hill.

1. Review of the Developer's Application, Plans, and Drawings (and other related documents)

Documents reviewed (comments on documents contained in Section 5 below):

- Puddingstone at Chestnut Hill Zoning Board of Appeals Comprehensive Permit Application dated April 7, 2016 (17-section binder includes numerous documents that may be referred to in this Peer Review).
- Drawing set dated April 7, 2016 (included are 18 civil engineering/survey drawings and 7 architectural drawings)
- Additional Stantec drawings including overall site plan; L-0001 Existing Tree Removal Plan; L-0302 Setbacks Plan; and Lowe Associates drawings A-4.1, 4.2, and 4.3 Building Sections.
- Puddingstone at Chestnut Hill, Zoning Board of Appeals Presentation dated May 9, 2016
- Four site/building sections
- Variety of existing condition site photos
- Variety of screen shots from 3-D computer model
- Several rendered site plans, including Pedestrian Circulation and Open Space Plan
- Letter from Linda Hamlin, Planning Board, to Mark Zuroff, ZBA, dated May 19, 2016
- Letter from David King, Preservation Commission, to Members of ZBA, dated June 1, 2016
- Letter from Paul Bell, Hancock Village Neighborhood Conservation District Commission, to ZBA, dated June 1, 2016
- Letter from Brona Simon, Massachusetts Historical Commission, to Paul Loether, National Park Service, Register of Historical Places, dated June 1, 2016
- Letter from Marcus Quigley, Conservation Commission, to Chairman Geller and members of ZBA, not dated.
- Letter from Peter Ditto, Department of Public Works, to Jesse Geller, ZBA, not dated.
- Numerous other exhibits describing design iterations over the course of working sessions.

(REFERENCE MATERIALS)

- Local 40B Review and Decision Guidelines published by MHP and Edith Netter, November 2005
- Handbook: Approach to Chapter 40B Design Reviews, prepared by The Cecil Group, Inc. for DHCD, MassDevelopment, MassHousig, and MHP, January, 2011

2. Initial Meeting at the site with the Developer's Design team and Representative of the Town

The development team conducted a site walkthrough, followed up with a meeting at Chestnut Hill Realty offices on the afternoon of June 30, 2016. Attending included Cliff Boehmer (Architectural Peer Reviewer), Alison Steinfeld (Brookline Department of Planning & Community Development), Maria Morelli (Brookline Department of Planning & Community Development), Marc Levin (Chestnut Hill Realty), Joseph Geller (Stantec), and Theo Kindermans (Stantec). One other representative from the Brookline Department of Planning & Community Development was present at the walkthrough. **This reviewer has not re-visited the site.**

During the walkthrough the developer presented some aspects of the team's design concepts, including the rough locations of the buildings, observation of puddingstone outcroppings and trees that would have to be removed in order to proceed with the development, locations of vehicular circulation paths, rough scale of structures relative to height of existing vegetation, etc. It was pointed out that the two level parking structure at the base of the proposed large structure was entered at grade in two different locations (i.e., no internal ramping). This is made possible by the difference in grade across the length of the building.

At the follow up meeting, there was discussion with the development team about having access to the computer model of the site and proposed project, and a meeting was set up for the morning of July 5 so that the Peer Reviewer and Maria Morelli could review the proposed design in greater detail. **No "live" review of the current model has taken place, however the proponent has provided numerous screen shots as the design has evolved.**

3. Conduct site visit and reconnaissance assessment of surrounding residential and nonresidential areas within one mile of the project site.

Following the site walkthrough and after-meeting at the Chestnut Hill Realty office, the Peer Reviewer walked through other sections of Hancock Village to gain a better understanding of the nearby context. The proposed development is set on the western most corner of Hancock Village, with the Village extending close to 2000 feet to the east and southeast. To the north, west, and southwest are extensive areas of wooded sanctuary space, both in Boston and in Brookline. Approximately ¼ mile to the northeast is the Baker School, and to the southeast a similar distance is a small commercial development (including Chestnut Hill Management offices) at the intersection of Independence Drive and VFW Parkway. Beyond the Parkway to the south, and the bounds of Hancock Village to the east and north are large tracts of predominantly single family homes on small to medium sized lots.

The immediate residential neighborhood is Hancock Village, reportedly the first and largest garden village housing development in the region. It built in 1946-1949 to house WWII veterans and their families. The original development was designed along "Garden Cities" ideals, at a very low density (approximately 10 families/acre) in order to maintain a very high percentage of shared "woodlands" areas throughout the substantial site. The topography is rolling, accentuated with significant puddingstone outcroppings. All of the buildings on the existing site are two story, low rise brick structures (some painted brick, most natural), connected into U-shaped townhouse clusters. Roof lines are typically relatively low-slope, shingles, with some gables breaking up the long aggregated structures. A few flat-roofed townhouses are introduced for visual interest. There are two brick vehicle parking structures located on two edges of the site, the concept being to strictly limit the number of cars that enter into the landscaped, pedestrian oriented "woodlands".

The U-shaped townhouse clusters are distributed across the site in a very deliberate pattern that create medium-scale, pedestrian-only entry courtyards on most street sides (Gerry Road, Sherman Road, Thornton

Road, VFW Parkway), as well as making “garden walls” with some of the townhouse clusters that protect the larger, backyard “woodland” spaces (mostly along Woodland Drive). The overall idea is to create a hierarchy

of open spaces, ranging from fully public areas along the streets that border and cut through the development, to semi-private courtyard areas where the public engages with apartment front doors, and then relatively private backyard patio areas accessed through the back doors of the units, all of which look out onto the relatively “wild” landscape of the woodlands. The townhouse cluster typology works particularly well for defining the open space hierarchy, as it also adapts to the rolling terrain from unit to unit across the length of the chain. The combination of the low scale structures, built of natural materials, weaving up and down and among the rock outcroppings is an ideal integration of buildings and the landscape. While the existing development was nominated for National Register status, MHC policy regarding nomination of privately held property precludes consideration if the nomination is not supported by the property owner.

The 5.5 acre, 20-sided site for the proposed new development has been carefully carved primarily out of the woodlands zone of the larger site that serves as extended backyard space for something like 15 of the existing buildings (depending upon how one counts “buildings”). It appears that the intention of the new site design is to allow existing residents to maintain the use of their patio areas. Also included in the project area are three of the existing townhouse structures, both entry and backyard sides of the buildings. Dominating a large area within the project site is a major puddingstone outcropping that protrudes up to 15 to 20 feet above grade. The logic of the site delineation appears to be limited to accommodating allowable setbacks to existing structures, collecting enough available space to allow the desired number of units, and using what seems to be the largest available area not occupied by buildings. There is mention in the application materials that part of the intent of the site design is to bring parking spaces closer to some of the units. Street frontage on the site is limited to the corner intersection of Sherman and Gerry Road, and includes the access to the new entry drive, but is predominantly occupied by facades of the three existing buildings that are included in the proposed development. **No change.**

4. Consult with the Applicant’s design team, as appropriate.

Planning staff and this peer reviewer have attended six working sessions since April of 2018. There has been no new model “drive-through” presented at the working sessions, although many iterations of design ideas for the large building were presented and discussed. Initial discussions centered on new footprint/site plan ideas for the large building. After those aspects were modified, discussions centered on the architecture of the large building. Very little discussion was dedicated to the three smaller buildings, largely because there has been very little proposed change in their design or placement on the site.

As noted above, a meeting was set up for the Peer Reviewer and Maria Morelli to observe the computer model of the site and the proposed project on July 5. Attending were Cliff Boehmer, Maria Morelli, Joe Geller, Theo Kindermans, and two other Stantec employees who “ran” the model. Stantec has been building a computer model of the entire Hancock Village site for a number of years. It is reportedly topographically very accurate, and includes reasonably well detailed depictions of the existing buildings and site improvements. Elevations of the roadways that surround the site are also modeled, which makes it possible to depict, with a reasonable degree of accuracy, site lines from outside (and within) the perimeter of the site.

The development team presented a pre-prepared drive through of the proposed development, including up the entry drive, past the main entry of the large structure, and further into the site to the proposed traffic circle, with views of the three, low rise proposed buildings. Also included in the presentation was a drive around on perimeter roadways, with a wire-frame projection of the proposed large structure that followed the viewers around the site. The purpose of the projected image was to study the visual impact of the building from outside of the project area. As one might expect, views were alternatively blocked by the existing structures in the foreground, and then views opened up when able to look between the buildings. At some locations, for example, near the main entry drive, the building is very prominent.

The team also used the model to give the reviewers eye-level views from various locations within the site on request. Of particular interest were views from within the narrow spaces between existing low rise buildings and the new 6-story plus parking level structure (which at the entry point to the low parking level is planned to be 83 feet above grade tall). The group also “walked around” the three new low rise structures that are proposed to be tucked in backyard areas. Shadow impact studies were reviewed, with some discussion about the degree to which some existing mature trees may have a similar shadowing impact as the new tall building will. As the landscaping materials had not been modeled, it was not possible to test this possibility.

There was some discussion about initial ideas for alternative site plans that would better preserve the quality of the existing Hancock Village site planning concept. Most conversation was centered on the impact to the site of the large footprint of the proposed structure (approximately 650 feet measured on the outside of the “L”). A more compact footprint with a taller building was discussed, although the proponent pointed out that such a plan would result in the reduction of parking spaces. There was also talk of the need to accommodate the increased population who would have access and use of the woodland areas of the site (at least 500 people). *The idea of improving pedestrian and vehicular pathways within the development to facilitate connectivity within the site, as well as to amenities outside or at the edge of the boundaries of the site was examined. Alternative site plans were discussed that the proponent would be willing to adopt if the Gerry SP were approved.*

5. Provide an oral presentation to the ZBA within approximately one month of the notice to proceed. Said presentation shall include comments and preliminary recommendations on the following:
(the following comments will be presented to a ZBA meeting on July 18, 2016)

a. *Orientation of buildings in relation to each other, and to streets, parking areas, open space, and on-site amenities, and to solar access.*

Since the original 2016 plans, the location of the large structure has significantly changed. It is now placed at the southwest corner of the development, with street frontage on Sherman Road parallel to the Boston city line and around the corner where it fronts the Hoar Sanctuary. This relocation requires the demolition of three of the existing brick townhouse structures. The main resident entry to the structure is on the south side, essentially on the Boston line. There is a drop off area, some parking, and a swimming pool along the south elevation. Access to the structured parking happens off of Sherman on the west end elevation, as well as off of a driveway that runs parallel to the long axis of the building on the north elevation.

This same driveway leads to two new surface parking areas, and then continues to the east to the three other buildings that are included in the planned development. The three buildings appear to be essentially the same as what they were in the 2016 plans.

As noted above, the new buildings are located within the woodland areas to fit within setback limitations from existing structures. That is, *the four structures are placed on the site in areas that provide a suitable space for their required footprints (without demolition of any existing structures, which was avoided for economic reasons).* As far as orientation of the buildings to each other, given these design constraints, the new buildings are oriented in the only way that they could fit.

The large building’s longest footprint is parallel to three of the existing townhouse clusters, coming within 30 feet at the closest point, approximately 60 feet at the furthest. The expansive woodland space associated with six of the existing structures that form the perimeter of the large building is eliminated (although there likely remains adequate space for private patio space, although constrained by retaining walls in some cases). *No longer the case in current plan.*

The three, four unit structures are laid out to fit within site setback requirements from existing structures (that appears to be 30 feet), and have footprints that are set back from the lot lines distances ranging from around four feet to 16 feet. Similar to the large building, the smaller buildings are oriented the way they are because it is the only way they would fit on the site. And as the case with the large buildings, the three buildings’ placement eliminates the expansive woodland views for many of the existing townhouse units. In

addition, in a fourth woodland area, the proposed project includes the insertion of a 22-car, double-loaded parking lot. This also eliminates the existing woodland amenity. **Capacity of “inserted” parking area appears to be smaller in new plan.**

The large building’s direct engagement/orientation to the street is minimal. **Modified in new plan.** The shortest elevation of the building is set back from the street approximately 132 feet, with one of the existing townhouse structures in the intervening space. A long (approximately 450 feet) two-way driveway runs between the new structure and the long leg of an existing building. It connects the street with the upper level parking floor (135 spaces), the main entry to the building located on the inside corner of the L-shaped six to eight story structure, a new 15-car parking lot, the new 22-car parking lot, the lower level of the parking garage (148 spaces), a single-loaded 12-car parking area, a small traffic circle with an additional 8 parking spaces, and then the three new 4-unit structures (a total of 340 parking spaces). **The three new buildings, while squeezed between the existing historic structures, are sensibly oriented with their front doors facing the new drive lane.**

The provision of most of the parking within the footprint of the large building is generally considered to be more convenient for the residents of the building, and it is more costly to than surface parking. However, given the large proposed unit count of the development, it is the only option (there is not enough accessible site area available). The outdoor surface parking that takes up woodland area is also more convenient for the residents of nearby townhouse clusters, as compared with the original design concept of keeping car parking restricted to the site “neighborhood” perimeters.

So while the locations of the parking areas and driveways provide a convenience for the new residents and some of the existing, it effectively “re-oriens” a large percentage of the existing townhouse units that occupy the sector of Hancock Village that lies between Sherman Road and Gerry Road. What is now a private, backyard/woodland area will become more front-yard like, with as much or more public pedestrian and vehicular activity than the current semi-private front entry and courtyard spaces. Most of that sector’s existing unit orientation to open space is significantly diminished or eliminated, while the new buildings orientation is to the interiors of the backs of the existing structures, or looking out over their roofs. A large length of the new building is surrounded by retaining walls and/or steep grades, and only a very small percentage of the entry level engages the grade outside. Most of the possibility for direct engagement with open space from unit interiors along the perimeter of the large building appears to be taken up with interior parking spaces. As the large building is sited on a relatively high point, and is across the street from large preserved tracts of land, the upper level units will enjoy very good visual contact with open space.

The submitted site plans do not appear to indicate any new outdoor amenities (other than parking **and a proposed swimming pool**) that will be included in the proposed development of the four new structures. While the numerous residents will have access to existing amenities that are available at Hancock, the placement of the buildings take away what is arguably the most important existing amenity, the extensive woodland open space. One would expect to see the plans attempt to accommodate the large projected influx of people and vehicles in a way that would accentuate and enhance the appreciation of the existing richness of the project site, if it is not possible to fully preserve it. **The “Gerry SP” site plan would address most of the issues noted in this paragraph.**

Solar access to the large building is excellent on the longest elevation, as it is facing southwest. In fact, given the fact that there is very limited space to provide landscape shading on that elevation, it may be advisable to integrate shading structures into the façade design, particularly to control afternoon sun. Unfortunately, the main entry of the building will see very little sunlight, as it is located on the inside corner on the north side. **This is no longer the case, as the primary entry is on Sherman on the south side.** Given the elevation of the site, and the absence of surrounding tall building construction, the proposed structure is a good candidate for rooftop solar collectors (PV, solar hot water, or both).

The height of the building and its tight fit on the site will have significant impact on access to view of the open sky, as well as direct sunlight for all of the nearby existing low buildings, including two of the three structures

on the Sherman Road side (who will lose the least access to direct sunlight, but whose view of the open sky will be severely limited). This is evident from the shadow studies that the development team has performed, as well as from reviewing the site sections that show the relationship of the heights of the neighboring buildings. **With the relocation of the building to Sherman Street, major shadow impact is limited to the existing structure on the north side of the driveway, and the existing building at the southeast corner of the new building. Note that spacing from the new structure to the existing building to the north is increased in the new site plan (i.e., shadow impact is diminished).**

b. Function, use and adequacy of open space and landscaped areas.

This has been identified above as a serious issue: the new development is introducing a large number of new units and associated parking spaces with paved circulation paths, but is taking away existing options for the provision of open space and landscaped areas. The undertaking of the large scale proposed project creates the need to radically rethink how the interior woodlands are used, specifically, programming the spaces so that they work with the needs of the new population of residents who will have free range of the woodlands, and at the very least, visual access to the back sides of all of the existing units. As currently depicted on the site plans, the new circulation paths are vehicle oriented, and include no suggestions for how to handle pedestrian and bicycle passage through the site, possible connections with perimeter roadways, the creation of new passive or active recreation areas, etc. **This concern is largely addressed in the “Gerry SP” site plan that provides a strong connection through the site from the new structure to Independence Drive. By placing the building on a public way, much of the impact of introducing large numbers of new residents into the middle of the site is alleviated.** The Planting Plan predominantly shows an evergreen buffer, mixed with a few deciduous trees, on the south and east sides, that in a mature state might partially buffer views of the lowest levels of the new building. At the three smaller buildings, very little new planting is proposed around the outside of the buildings, as half of the building elevations do not have enough open space available on their site to support significant plantings. **No apparent change in the new plans.** The main entry drive indicates a walkway on one side, with a row of trees planted on each side. It is graded up towards the east in order to create access to the upper parking level, which creates the need to regrade and build retaining walls to make the transition in grade to the existing building to the north. Given the scale of the proposed development, the new primary entry to the middle of the site is understated, and provides minimal connectivity with the public roadway and sidewalks. **It is not clear from rendered site plan and perspective views what nature/scale of walkway is proposed along the entry drive on the north side of the building.** As such, particularly because it will be virtually in perpetual shadow of the tall building, it is uninviting and not the scale that one would expect for a project with this much impact. This is the pathway that both new and existing residents will use to access the sanctuary space and school that are within easy walking distance. The opportunity to use the existing landscape features (i.e., the major puddingstone outcropping) as part of the entry sequence is lost, as the puddingstone must be removed to make the platform for the base of the building.

c. Use and treatment of natural resources.

As stated above, in order to build the large building as currently conceived, an extremely large volume of puddingstone must be removed from the site in the zone of the building footprint. At the same time, to provide vehicular circulation and parking associated with all four new structures, most of the existing woodland area must be cleared and re-graded. In addition to destruction of the “natural” landscape, the Conservation Commission has expressed concern about construction activities having an adverse impact on wildlife residing in the adjacent Conservation Sanctuary. Their letter to the ZBA also expresses concern about controlling runoff that enters the stream within the Hoar Sanctuary. While not a “natural resource”, the site has important historic value that will seriously diminished with the construction of the proposed development. **While the new plan still necessitates the removal of ledge, the location of the building in the current plan is significantly superior to the previous proposal and makes better use of the site, i.e., better justifies the removal of the outcropping.**

d. Building design, massing and scale in relationship to the surrounding context and topography.

The tall building design, massing, and scale bear no relationship to the surrounding context. The new large building is an “object” building squeezed onto on a very small site for its size, while all of the existing structures are “fabric” buildings whose role is to shape outdoor space while providing shelter. At its tallest

point (close to the entry to the lower parking level), it is approximately 60 feet taller than the nearest existing structure (that is only about 40 feet away). The new building appears to be about 70 feet wide, compared with the existing that are under 30 feet wide. While the existing buildings are in many cases very long aggregated clusters of townhouses, they are designed to follow the topography of the site by stepping up and down along the length of the string. The new building is mostly built on a plinth that is created by demolishing large areas of puddingstone, and/or grading up to create the necessary large flat space. Existing buildings have at-grade, individual front and rear entries. The six residential floors of the new building are sited on top of a two story parking structure, with only a limited number of units with the potential to directly connect to grade. The extremely long building footprint creates extremely long double-loaded, mostly lightless corridors.

Moving the structure to the south and giving it a credible building site (as opposed to squeezing it in between 6 existing buildings), combined with giving it a legitimate front entry that addresses a street, is a major change in thinking that has greatly improved the perception of the building and its relationship to the public realm. There is significant articulation in the building footprint that effectively breaks down its scale, including five-story bays, particularly on the south façade. The sense of the height of the structure is mitigated through strong horizontal expression of base/middle/roof layers that are well-proportioned.

Façade materials as indicated on annotated elevations are high quality, and include dark colored textured large panel stone lower base, pre-cast or limestone banding, limestone panel upper base, white and red brick in the main body of the building, and fiber cement panels in the gable ends at the upper floor.

Access to most of the existing townhouse structures is from a pedestrian path that activates the outdoor space, while most access to the new structure will be from cars driving through the site to get to interior parking spaces. **New design features a prominent resident entry with some parking on the Sherman south elevation.** Windows are “punched” openings on the existing structures, large ganged openings and bays on the new structure. The developers do have the option of utilizing some similar cladding materials on the new structure, for example, creating a brick base.

The three smaller structures are significantly more similar in scale and form to the existing construction (i.e., pitched roofs on shorter buildings), but they will read as boxy massing (as compared with the courtyard-defining shapes of the existing). **Massing of the three buildings on current drawings is broken down by large and small gable-ended dormers at the roof level and change of materials in the façade elevations (brick and fiber cement siding).** Entry porches define entries. **Both the massing and material selection help to tie the buildings into the architecture of the existing townhouse structures. It is only the placement of the buildings on the site that is distinctly out of context.** The four-unit buildings, like the large building, are also built on landscape “plinths”, rather than adapting the design of the structure and access to it to the existing topography. The plinths do not appear to be large enough to provide individualized outdoor spaces for the 12 new units, even though they are all four-bedroom apartments, with presumably many children who would use the outdoor space.

e. Side and rear elevations visible from the public street, public areas and from the vantage point of nearby residential neighborhoods.

From many perspectives along the outside perimeter of the development, the existing low rise buildings at Hancock Village block the view of the new structure (this was demonstrated at the computer model “walkthrough” that the developer provided). **This is no longer the case with the new placement of the building on Sherman (and the demolition of the structures that formerly occupy the space on the street).** The long elevation on the south, as noted above, is well-articulated with large-scale movement in the building’s footprint. **On the north side that faces the existing development, significant change in the footprint is limited to a leg of the building on the east end that creates an “L.”** While very long, the body of the building is articulated with bays, gables and dormers, and layering across the building height to help control the perceived height. The building comes in and out of the view as one passes by the ends of the ring of structures. However, it is clear that from a greater distance in all directions, the building will be visible to the public (unless blocked by nearby landscaping materials or buildings). The structure will be perceived as a

marker or “beacon” for Hancock Village, and should be designed with that in mind. Its prominent visibility is probably the greatest argument for ensuring that the buildings and associated site plan enhance the value of the existing development and create a new vision for the overall neighborhood.

f. Pedestrian and vehicular circulation

As noted above, the new siting of the building helps to balance the “load” of new residents and their vehicles. This is discussed in detail above. As currently conceived, vehicular circulation dominates the new plan and no indications for accommodating large numbers of pedestrians and bicycles are included in the submitted documents. There is no narrative that describes the logic of the site plan and its programming beyond making the desired building and parking program physically fit within available open woodland space. Some traffic signaling upgrades are proposed, as is the change of direction of certain on site roadways to accommodate the new increased density of traffic.

g. Integration of buildings and site, including but not limited to preservation of existing tree cover

Also discussed in detail above. In order to develop the site as drawn, extensive site demolition and regrading must take place, and the site will be cleared of virtually all mature tree growth (as depicted on the Existing Trees plan that was submitted by the developer). Opportunities for tying the development into to the significant existing landscape elements (most importantly the Puddingstone) are not taken advantage of. Nor is there any indication that the existing buildings that are left in place are programmatically linked (beyond being renovated in their existing use and configuration). The new placement of the large structure adequately ties the building into a meaningful context, i.e., Sherman Road. Greater spacing from existing buildings to the north help to mitigate the impact of the structure. The three smaller buildings, in and of themselves, are appropriate for the site. Their placement precludes an important opportunity to create better connectivity across the site from Sherman to Independence Drive.

h. Exterior materials

The exterior materials noted in the application are typical for this construction type (that appears to be fire-treated wood frame residential floors on top of a parking basement/podium). Included are brick and fiber cement siding, vinyl or aluminum clad windows, and PVC trim. Given the prominent presence of the building as discussed above--and the exposure of the building given the elevation of the site and the height of the building--thought should be given to the use of a higher grade of cladding materials (perhaps masonry with insulated metal panel siding system). Proposed materials are higher quality than what is found on most contemporary multi-family buildings.

i. Energy efficiency

Not really possible to tell in any level of detail from submitted materials. Brookline has adopted the Stretch Code, which will ensure a relatively high level of sustainability, at least from an operating perspective. No change.

j. Exterior lighting

A lighting plan was submitted with the application materials. It indicates overall illumination within the all of the spaces that are taken up by vehicular and pedestrian circulation, as well as areas of the formerly open woodland spaces where development occurs (for example, in the new 22-space parking area between the wings of one of the U-shaped configuration of existing structures). There are images of decorative light fixtures included on the Lighting Plan sheet that indicate a “historic” look to the site lighting fixtures, and a slightly more contemporary look at the Decorative Entry Lights. As has been expressed numerous times in this Peer Review document, the nature of the existing outdoor spaces will radically change with the implementation of what is proposed. Large scale area lighting of the woodland areas, illumination from passing vehicles, as well as the light that will emanate from the new structures, are some of the factors that will transform the site. This reviewer is not aware of a new lighting plan.

k. Proposed landscape elements, planting materials, and planting design

As noted previously, landscaping that is indicated on the submitted Planting Plan indicates an attempt to provide linear screening of the lower levels of the large building. The building is too tall, and on too small of a site, to include deciduous screening of the sunny elevations. A similar approach to screening is included at the

smaller buildings where there is space on the built up landscape “plinth”. **No revised planting plan has been reviewed (however there are some landscape materials indicated on a rendered site plan).**

l. Feasibility of incorporating environmental and energy performance standards in the design, construction and operation of the buildings, such as standards required for LEED certification

Very little detail is provided as far as the developer’s sustainability goals. Mentioned in the application is a commitment to “include elements of green design and use. Much of the development will be constructed with wood, a more sustainable alternative to other building materials such as steel and concrete.” Also noted is that the high-efficiency heating and cooling systems as well as Energy Star appliances and energy efficient light fixtures will be incorporated into the project. As mentioned above, Brookline is a Stretch Code Community, which has very high energy saving standards. The large building will be subject to an energy modelling requirement that can be of great help in determining the most energy efficient mechanical systems and building envelope that is possible with a particular building configuration. **No change.**

m. Any other design-related considerations identified by the consultant in the course of its review

- Floor plans include enlarged typical unit floor plans in addition to “fit plans” that box out the gross square footage of the units within the proposed overall footprint of the building. It is not possible to review conformance with most code requirements at any level of detail at this stage of development of the documents (for example, accessibility, egress, fire ratings, etc.). **Fit plans do not indicate locations/types of proposed Group 2 accessible units. Note that all units in elevator-fed buildings must be at a minimum, Group 1 units. This reviewer has not seen any revised detailed floor plans.**
- It is possible that the Fire Department will have concerns about access to all elevations of the large buildings, placement of fire hydrants within the project site, etc. **Placement of new building will provide better access to the building’s perimeter than the previous design.**

Recommendations/questions for future consideration:

- Given impact from large building scale and accommodation of significant increase in Hancock Village population, can alternative site plans be studied for concentration of dense development on the street edge(s) as opposed to within woodland area of site? This would provide an option that minimizes vehicular intrusion into the core amenity of the existing development—usable open space. **This change is incorporated into the new design.**
- Alternatively, does it make sense to diminish the footprint of the building by increasing the height of the main structure, keeping it internal to the site, but preserving the massive existing puddingstone outcropping to integrate the new high rise structure with the site (work with the “Puddingstone” moniker)? Would the cost increase—if it is in fact a cost increase at the time of developing the drawings—be offset by the diminution of site demolition costs and speed of erection of steel frame construction? Can the existing peripheral parking structures be expanded to compensate for the diminished footprint if the building is a high rise with a diminished footprint? **This reviewer is not aware of any change in the proposed height of buildings from previous proposal.**
- Is there a 2-building scheme that has a strong street presence, but still brings some density deeper into the site? Create interesting landscape connections between the two mid-sized structures, perhaps retaining large stretches of the puddingstone outcropping? **Single building remains the proposal, but building footprint is more effectively articulated.**
- Consideration should be given to demolishing a limited number of existing structures to create a “real” site for the tall building, most likely with increased street frontage. **This was done.**
- If existing structures are left as part of the project, can they be re-programmed to better integrate with the tall building that they are extremely close to (another strategy for integrating the project into the existing site)? Use the existing buildings to create a forecourt entry sequence to the project? **There is only one remaining building that is very close to the proposed structure (at the southeast corner).**
- Can the three, four-unit buildings be eliminated to reduce impact on the existing development and providing access to more open space for the new residents of Hancock Village? **This concept is illustrated in the “Gerry SP” concept.**

- Are there any concerns with overuse of the trails in sensitive areas of the nearby conservation areas that the developer could address? (for example, improvement of trails to accommodate use by more people) **No change.**
- Bicycle circulation through the site and storage at all buildings should be thought out and integrated into the plan. **No change.**
- Given the large number of parking spaces on the site, is it possible to pave “overflow” spaces with grow-through pavers? Should an overall reduction in parking ratio be considered to cut down on paved area and the need for an extensive building footprint? Can a concentration of Zip Cars justify a reduction in parking ratio? **No change.**
- In the existing plan or reduced building footprint, can access to one of the parking levels be moved to Sherman Road? **One level of parking is off the north-south leg of Sherman Road.**
- How will trash be handled on the site? **No change.**
- Given the scale of the proposed development, a Construction Management Plan should be submitted for review. **No change.**
- Will the developer be responsible for Town road damage resulting from extensive heavy trucking? **No change.**
- Given that the project borders on Boston, is it subject to Boston’s Article 80 zoning review process? **Developer has indicated that Boston review will be limited to BWSC approval.**

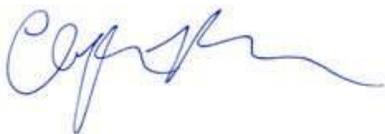
n. Techniques to mitigate visual impact

Given the elevation of the proposed site, along with the overall length and height of the building and the limited buffer areas to support large-scale plantings, there are very few strategies available for mitigating the visual impact of the building above the first few floors (particularly from a distance). **Given the high visibility of the proposed structure from a long distance, great care should be taken in the design of the roof areas to ensure visually pleasing screening of rooftop mechanical equipment.**

I hope you will contact me to discuss this memo in detail, or to talk about issues that I have failed to cover. I look forward to seeing you at the ZBA hearing this coming evening, July 18.

Thank you very much.

Sincerely,



Clifford Boehmer, AIA