



Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

1/6/22

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

Kara Brewton, Planning Director

To: Waldo-Durgin Design Advisory Team

From: Planning Department

Date: January 6, 2022

Subject: Major Impact Project – Waldo-Durgin Mixed-Use Project

Location: 8-10 Waldo Street; 10-18 Pleasant Street, and 16 John Street

Atlas Sheet:	9	Case #:	N/A at this time
Block:	45	Zoning:	G-1.75 (CC), Waldo-Durgin Overlay District
Lots:	02-01, 01, 11	Lot Area:	±60,982sf

Project Description

Overview

The project includes 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 heart of the Coolidge Corner commercial area, directly behind the retail storefronts at the corner of Beacon Street and Harvard Street.

Hotel

The hotel is proposed to be 8-10 stories and include approximately 210 guest rooms, a restaurant/bar, fitness center, meeting spaces, and amenities for hotel guests. Primary access to hotel parking is provided through an entrance driveway coming off of John Street but also accessible through Waldo Street, a private way that connects to Pleasant Street. Loading for the hotel is proposed off of Waldo Street through an easement on 1292-1308 Beacon Street. Significant public realm improvements are proposed for Waldo Street and the vehicular/pedestrian circulation area in front of the hotel entrance. The Memorandum of Agreement relating to this proposal also includes a Special Permit condition that the applicant must agree to stating that the meeting space (currently proposed at 5,000 sf total) “*will be made*

available to the Town and Brookline community non-profits upon a cost reimbursement basis” and other minor conditions.

Residential Building

The residential building is proposed to be 14 stories and include 143 apartment units, of which 11 would be affordable and eligible for inclusion on the Town’s Subsidized Housing Inventory. The applicant is also making a \$3,275,000 payment to the Town’s Housing Trust Fund in lieu of providing 10 additional affordable units as described in the Memorandum of Agreement. Parking access for the building is provided in the same way as the hotel but pedestrian access is available both from an entrance on John Street and Waldo Street. The ground floor of the residential building would include a 1,000 sf café (accessed from Pleasant Street or Waldo Street) and a co-working space at the corner of John Street and Pleasant Street. An even larger co-working space is proposed on the second floor of the building, above the café and ground-floor co-working space. A total of 10,000 sf of co-working space is proposed. The Memorandum of Agreement contains several requirements related to the residential building. Notable requirements include: a minimum of 1,200 sf of retail or restaurant space on Pleasant Street, a maximum of 132 market-rate residential units, a minimum of 11 affordable units of which six must be one-bedroom units and 5 must be two-bedroom units. The Waldo-Durgin Overlay District (Section 5.06.4.k of the Zoning By-law) likewise requires a minimum of 1,200 sf of retail or restaurant space that is at least 30’ wide along Pleasant Street and restricts all uses on the ground floor along Pleasant Street to entertainment and recreation facilities, certain retail uses, restaurants, and offices.

Public Realm Improvements

The proposal includes several on-site and off-site public realm improvements, many of which are required by the Memorandum of Agreement. Such improvements include expanded sidewalks through and around the site, public seating at both the hotel and residential buildings, new landscaping and hardscaping, the installation of new public shade trees throughout the site, sponsorship of a Blue Bike station for two years, 25% concept design plans for bike and pedestrian improvements for segments of Harvard Street, John Street, and Pleasant Street, \$300,000 in funding for landscaping/irrigation improvements at the Coolidge Corner branch Public Library, and the conversion of the municipal parking lot at the corner of John Street and Pleasant Street into a pocket park.

Sustainability

The Memorandum of Agreement requires that the applicant and the Town work in a “*voluntary partnership such that the development process of the Mixed Use Project will explore, pilot, and innovate sustainable practices from conceptual design through full occupancy.*” The Memorandum envisions a minimum of 4-5 meetings with the Town’s Sustainability Office. The applicant has, at this stage, met the requirements of this provision of the Memorandum of Agreement but full compliance with the provision will ultimately be assessed at the end of the permitting process. Elements of sustainable practices have already been scoped out and reviewed by the Town’s peer reviewer, Weston and Sampson with consultation from the Town’s Sustainability Director. In a memo from Weston and Sampson dated July 30, 2021, it is concluded:

“Based on EUI comparisons of the Major Impact Project’s baseline and proposed designs, the building proposed is very energy efficient, on the order of 32% overall better than the

current energy code. The building's design is substantially focused to achieving the goals of the Town, including a reduction of the utilization of fossil fuel systems, LEED certification targets, and renewable/alternative energy system utilization (solar PV and ground source heat pumps) to help conserve energy use, costs, and achieve environmental emissions reductions. Further improvements are recommended, but not required to achieve the goals of the Town."

After reviewing the Weston & Sampson reports and related information on August 11, 2021, Thomas Barrasso, the Town's Sustainability Director concluded that "...*the project is meeting the requirements that will make this an energy efficient project. It is my recommendation that the project move forward in the Planning Board process.*"

Zoning Information

The project site is located in the G-1.75 (CC) zoning district and in the Waldo-Durgin Overlay District. In many ways, the Waldo-Durgin Overlay District supersedes the requirements of the G-1.75 (CC) zoning district and the base zoning is generally moot in its application to this project. A zoning analysis has been provided by the applicant and staff believes the analysis to be correct. As the building and site design evolve, zoning compliance will be re-evaluated.

As a Major Impact Project (and as required by the Waldo-Durgin Overlay District), this project requires Design Review in accordance with Section 5.09 of the Zoning By-law. The Overlay District also requires Site Plan Review to be conducted by the Planning Board to:

"ensure that there is adequate provision of access for fire and service equipment; ensure adequate provision for utilities and storm water storage and drainage; ensure adequate provision of loading and passenger pick-up zones; ensure adequate provision of parking; minimize impacts on wetland resource areas; minimize storm water flow from the site; minimize soil erosion; minimize the threat of air and water pollution; minimize groundwater contamination from on-site disposal of hazardous substances; maximize pedestrian, bicycle and vehicle safety; screen parking, storage and outdoor service areas through landscaping or fencing; minimize headlight and other light intrusion; ensure compliance with the Brookline Zoning By-Laws; maximize property enhancement with sufficient landscaping, lighting, street furniture and other site amenities; minimize impacts on adjacent property associated with hours of operation, deliveries, noise, rubbish removal and storage."

Review of this project will therefore commence with a Design Advisory Team (DAT) appointed by the Planning Board. The DAT is charged with assisting the Planning Board in design review of the project and should use the Waldo-Durgin Overlay District Design Guidelines and the Community and Environmental Impact and Design Standards of Section 5.09.4 as guidance for the evaluation of this project. At the conclusion of the DAT's review, the DAT may submit a report to the Planning Board and Zoning Board of Appeals for consideration. The DAT should also familiarize itself with the Project commitments outlined in the Memorandum of Agreement. Subsequent to the DAT process, the applicant will return to the Planning Board for further Design Review and Site Plan Review (as described above).

Certain key provisions of the Waldo-Durgin Overlay District should be kept in mind during the DAT process as they may be affected by recommended design changes from DAT members. In no particular order of importance:

- The project must:
 - Include a minimum of 57,000 square feet of contiguous land.
 - Include a hotel component with at least 160 rooms.
 - Provide 12% open space. Open space in this context shall include contiguous landscaped areas that are at least 200 square feet in size, walkways open to the public that include planted containers, landscaped beds, and/or street trees.
 - Accommodate all parking underground.
 - Provide a retail or restaurant space at least 30' wide along Pleasant Street and a minimum of 1,200 square feet in floor space.
 - Include a Transportation Access Plan Agreement approved by the Director of Transportation as a condition of the Special Permit.
- The project may not:
 - Include more than 115,000 square feet of parking.
 - Exceed a floor area ratio of 6.0.
 - Exceed a maximum building height of 160' for portions of the building that are within 180' of Pleasant Street and 110' of John Street; otherwise the maximum building height is 125'.
 - Include more than 132 market-rate units.
 - Exceed 13 stories of habitable above-ground primarily residential use in the residential component of the project.
 - Exceed 10 stories of habitable above-ground space in the non-residential component of the project (the hotel).
 - Include above-ground portions of the building within 10' of the John Street property line.
 - Include any uses on the ground floor along Pleasant Street aside from entertainment and recreation facilities (Use 16), certain retail uses (Uses 29, 33, 33A), restaurants (Uses 30 and 34), and office (Use 35).
- The project may:
 - Provide more than one principal use per building.
 - Contain frontage related to residential use that exceeds the 40% maximum of Section 4.07, Use 6, provided that the applicant demonstrate that, 1) the location of residential and non-residential uses of the ground floor are appropriate given the transition between residential and commercial neighborhoods, and 2) the average frontage for the first floor is no more than 75% residential.

Process

The DAT should use the first meeting with the applicant to outline general areas of concern with the project and request specific additional information from the applicant. To the extent that these items have not already been submitted, staff recommends that the applicant provide all of the submission requirements listed in Section 5.09.3.c, restated here for convenience, over the course of the DAT process (the earlier the better):

- **Model** — An inexpensive study model or final presentation model at a minimum scale of 1 inch equals 20 feet showing the tract, abutting streets, proposed contours, proposed buildings, and the massing of abutting buildings.

- Drawing of Existing Conditions — A drawing showing the location, type, size, or dimension of existing trees, rock masses, and other natural features with designations as to which features will be retained. The location of existing public shade trees situated within the public right-of-way adjoining the subject property shall also be located on the drawing if any modification to the public sidewalk or a new or modified curb cut is proposed or required.
- Drawing of Proposal
 - Structure — A drawing including color and type of surface materials showing front and rear elevations, and side elevations where there are no adjoining buildings, and floor plans.
 - Landscaping — A drawing showing the location, dimensions, and arrangements of all open spaces and yards, including type and size of planting materials, color and type of surface materials, methods to be employed for screening, and proposed grades.
- Photographs — Photographs showing the proposed building site and surrounding properties, and of the model.
- Impact Statement — A statement by applicant with explanation of how each of the community and environmental impact and design standards is incorporated into the design of the proposed development. In cases, where construction is located within 50' of a public shade tree, the method that will be used to protect the tree during construction shall be submitted for review and approval of the Tree Warden. Where a particular standard is not applicable, a statement to that effect will suffice.
- Transportation Studies — Any required transportation studies must be prepared in accordance with the Transportation Access Plan Guidelines issued by the Transportation Department. An access Plan should include a transportation impact analysis and, as warranted, a proposed package of mitigation measures. Impact mitigation measures may include-but should not be limited to: construction management; traffic mitigation and encouragement of transit use; parking management; transit improvements; number and location of bicycle parking and storage facilities; parking and access for delivery and service vehicles, pedestrian amenities, and capital improvements.
 - Projects over 100,000 square feet of non-residential space or 100 residential units shall require the preparation of a Transportation Impact Study and an Access Plan Agreement.

Furthermore, Planning staff recommends that the applicant submit the following:

- A narrative explaining how the project design has considered and incorporated the elements of the Waldo-Durgin Overlay District Design Guidelines

Relevant Documents

Webpage regarding the Coolidge Corner Study Committee that produced the Memorandum of Agreement, Waldo-Durgin Overlay District, and Waldo-Durgin Overlay District Design Guidelines: <https://www.brooklinema.gov/1367/Coolidge-Corner-Study-Committee>

Memorandum of Agreement:

<https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/19159/MOA-FINAL-in-combined-reports?bidId=>

Waldo-Durgin Overlay District (starts on page 4 of document):

<https://brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/24265/April-2021-Addendum-to-11-13-2018-By-law?bidId=>

Waldo-Durgin Overlay District Design Guidelines:

<https://www.brooklinema.gov/DocumentCenter/View/18951/Waldo-Durgin-Design-Guidelines--3-20-19---as-approved-by-PB?bidId=>