

BOSTON PRESERVATION ALLIANCE

February 14, 2019

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Gregory J. Galer, Ph.D.

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Mr. Brian Golden
Boston Planning and Development Agency
Boston City Hall
Boston, MA 02201

Re: 9 Chelsea Street on BPDA Agenda 2-14-19

Dear Mr. Golden:

I was shocked to find that the 9 Chelsea Street proposal in East Boston's Maverick Square is on the BPDA Agenda for approval at today's meeting. **I strongly urge this item be removed from the agenda until outstanding issues with the Boston Landmarks Commission (BLC) are resolved.**

This project has had a challenging relationship with BLC and the community since it emerged in early 2017, and I would argue that these challenges lay at the fault of the proponent who from the beginning has demonstrated a desire to subvert and aggressively outmaneuver the BLC. The BLC's charge is of significant community benefit and one that is in perfect alignment with the BPDA's stated mission: "In partnership with communities, the BPDA plans Boston's future while respecting its past."

Moving this project forward to review and likely approval at today's meeting signals that the BPDA condones this proponent's efforts to dismiss, minimize, and marginalize BLC's role and would be an appalling disregard for a sister agency's authority. This type of behavior is not consistent with the accountability and transparency of the "new BRA" under your leadership.

The proponent in this case has repeatedly demonstrated disregard for the historic aspects of their property and strong neighborhood desire to preserve some of the few historic elements left in Maverick Square and to look at the proposal and historic context holistically. The proponent has clearly utilized a strategy of project segregation: dismissing community support for additional height in exchange for saving two historic rowhouses on Maverick Street, pushing the limits of the BLC-imposed Demolition Delay by successfully petitioning the ZBA to overrule the BLC's decision, hastily demolishing those properties and now returning with a modified project that is larger than originally proposed. Furthermore, they now come for BPDA approval having never returned to BLC for discussion and resolution of the fact that the location of a Landmarked clock is on their property and in direct conflict with their proposal. If BLC determines that the Landmark should not be relocated, as they clearly indicated in the past, the project will need to be redesigned to incorporate the street clock and the community process begun again.

We vehemently and adamantly oppose the BPDA moving this project forward to a vote without requiring resolution with BLC. Please withdraw this item from the

agenda tonight. If this item is not removed we will take this as a signal of the BPDA's disregard for the process, the community's concerns, and the agency that is charged with protecting the historic aspects of our city.

Sincerely,



Greg Galer
Executive Director

CC:

Timothy Burke, BPDA Board
Carol Downs, BPDA Board
Michael Monahan, BPDA Board
Ted Landsmark, BPDA Board
Priscilla Rojas, BPDA Board
Chris Cook, Chief, Environment, Energy, and Open Space
Carl Spector, Commissioner, Environment Department
Rosanne Foley, Boston Landmarks Commission
Lynn Smiledge, Boston Landmarks Commission
Todd Satter, Boston Landmarks Commission
Dan Bailey, East Boston resident
Julia Burrell, East Boston resident
Tim Logan, Boston Globe