

September 9, 2013

Mr. Steve Rich
Vice President, Finance
Fisher College
118 Beacon Street
Boston, MA 02216

Re: **Scoping Determination for proposed Fisher College Institutional Master Plan**

Dear Mr. Rich:

Please find enclosed the Scoping Determination for the proposed Fisher College Institutional Master Plan. The Scoping Determination describes information required by the Boston Redevelopment Authority in response to the Institutional Master Plan Notification Form, which was submitted under Article 80D of the Boston Zoning Code on June 4, 2013. Additional information may be required during the course of the review of the proposals.

If you have any questions regarding the Scoping Determination or the review process, please contact me at (617) 918-4425.

Sincerely,

Katelyn Sullivan
Project Manager

CC: Peter Meade, BRA
Kairos Shen, BRA
Linda Kowalcky, BRA
Shaina Aubourg, Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY

SCOPING DETERMINATION

FOR

**FISHER COLLEGE
INSTITUTIONAL MASTER PLAN**

PREAMBLE

On June 4, 2013, Fisher College (“Fisher”) submitted to the Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”) an Institutional Master Plan Notification Form (“IMPNF”) seeking approval of a 10-year Institutional Master Plan (“IMP”) with seven proposed projects that include converting or reconfiguring existing institutional and dormitory uses at 102 to 116, 131 and 133 Beacon Street to create 48 replacement beds; converting the 17,500 square foot building at 10/11 Arlington Street to institutional use; building a 2,500 square foot addition to the rear of 118 Beacon Street for student services and library with terrace; building a 2,000 square foot outdoor open terrace on the roof of the addition at the rear of 112-114 Beacon Street; and converting from residential use to dormitory use the buildings at 115, 139 and 141 Beacon Street.

The BRA will review the proposed IMP pursuant to Section 80D of the Boston Zoning Code (“Code”). As part of the BRA’s Article 80 review, Fisher is required to prepare and submit to the BRA a proposed IMP pursuant to Section 80D. The document must set forth in sufficient detail the planning framework of the institution and the cumulative impacts of the projects included in the IMP to allow the BRA to make a determination about the merits of the proposed IMP. The proposed IMP shall contain the information necessary to meet the specifications of Article 80 as well as any additional information requested below.

Copies of the IMPNF were made available to the public in both electric and hard copy format. A scoping session was held on June 24, 2013 with public agencies and a public meeting was held on June 26, 2013 at which the proposed IMP, as outlined in the IMPNF was presented. The Fisher College Task Force established by the BRA, met on January 22, 2013, May 30, 2013 and June 18, 2013. The 30 day comment period for the IMPNF was extended an additional 30 days at the request of the Task Force and community in order to have more time to review the document and submit comments. The comment deadline for the IMPNF was August 5, 2013. Comment letters are included in Appendix 1 (Comments from Elected Officials), Appendix 2 (Comments from Public Agencies) and Appendix 3 (Comments from the Public).

Based on review of the IMPNF, requests for additional data and related comments, as well as the scoping session and public meeting, the BRA hereby issues its written Scoping Determination (“Scope”) pursuant to Section 80D-5.3 the Code. Fisher is requested to respond to the specific elements outlined in this Scope. Written comments constitute an integral part of the Scoping Determination and should be responded to in the IMP or in another appropriate manner over the course of the review process. At

other points during the public review of the IMP, the BRA and other City agencies may require additional information to assist in the review of the Proposed IMP.

In addition to the specific submission requirements outlined in the sections below, the following general issues should be noted:

- The City of Boston views its academic institutions as important economic and cultural assets and as valuable partners in a wide range of public policy priorities. However, while the benefits of Boston's academic institutions are felt across the city and even regionally, nationally, and globally, the negative impacts are generally limited to the immediate neighborhood. This dictates that both the BRA and academic institutions work to carefully balance the goals of vibrant institutions and healthy neighborhoods.
- It is the City's policy to encourage colleges and universities to expand their on-campus housing facilities for their students so that there is a decreasing use of private housing market resources in Boston neighborhoods by students. However, each proposal is reviewed individually within the context of the institution's neighborhood.
- The IMP mechanism is intended to help City agencies and residents assess the cumulative impacts of institutional expansion, and to facilitate a process by which those impacts can be addressed comprehensively. The BRA recognizes Fisher's efforts to support the goals of the IMP mechanism by projecting its long-term needs and proposing a multi-phase program for addressing those needs.
- Since filing the IMPNF, the proposed projects of greatest concern to Fisher's residential abutters have been the proposed conversion of 115, 139 and 141 Beacon Street to dormitory use. In a letter dated August 13, 2013, Fisher has notified the BRA of their decision to not include these projects in the IMP. Fisher should memorialize this decision in the IMP. Fisher should respond to this Scoping Determination and comments letters where appropriate by confirming that these projects are not included in the IMP.
- The IMP should describe Fisher's current and future plan for addressing student behavior issues and avoiding adverse impacts stemming from student behavior.
- An Institutional Master Plan describes an institution's entire long-range development program. The plan gives the BRA and the community a context in which to evaluate all of the institution's proposed projects and their overall effect on the neighborhood. An Institutional Master Plan may propose projects that are not allowed as-of-right by the general zoning for the area.
- In January 2011, Mayor Menino adopted new guidelines for the PILOT program as recommended by the PILOT Task Force. The new guidelines call for voluntary payments based on an institution's tax-exempt property value. Participants in the program include institutions from the educational, medical, and cultural sectors that own property valued in excess of \$15 million. Each institution is eligible for a community benefits deduction generally limited to 50% of the PILOT contribution. The new guidelines also allow a deduction for any real estate taxes paid on property owned by the institution that is used for a tax-exempt purpose.

SUBMISSION REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE

FISHER COLLEGE IMP

The Scope requests information required by the BRA for its review of the proposed IMP in connection with the following:

1. Approval of the Fisher IMP pursuant to Article 80D and other applicable sections of the Code.
2. Recommendation to the Zoning Commission for approval of the Fisher IMP.

The Fisher IMP should be documented in a report of appropriate dimensions and in presentation materials which support the review and discussion of the IMP at public meetings. Thirty-five (35) hard copies of the full report should be submitted to the BRA, in addition to an electronic version in .pdf format. An additional thirty-five (35) hard copies of the document should be available for distribution to the Fisher Task Force, community groups, and other interested parties in support of the public review process. The IMP should include a copy of this Scoping Determination. The IMP should include the following elements.

1. MISSION AND OBJECTIVES

- **Organizational Mission and Objectives.** Define Fisher's institutional mission and objectives, and describe how the development contemplated or proposed in the IMP advances the stated mission and objectives. In particular, the IMP should address the following:
- **Major Programs and Initiatives.** Describe any major academic programs or initiatives that will drive academic and physical planning in the future. Included in the description should be current and future trends that are impacting Fisher and shaping program objectives.
- **Enrollment Rationale.** The IMP should explain the rationale behind Fisher's intentions to increase its enrollment given the competitive strategy outlined above. The explanation should address the concept of "right-sizing" the university and clarify the rationale behind intentions to further increase student population.

2. EXISTING PROPERTY AND USES

The IMP should present maps, tables, narratives, and site plans clearly providing the following information:

- **Owned and Leased Properties.** Provide an inventory of land, buildings, and other structures in the City of Boston owned or leased by Fisher as of the date of submission of the IMP, with the following information for each property:

- Illustrative site plans showing the footprints of each building and structure, together with roads, sidewalks, parking, and other significant improvements.
- Land and building uses.
- Building gross square footage and, when appropriate, number of dormitory beds or parking spaces.
- Building height in stories and, approximately, in feet, including mechanical penthouses.
- Age of structures
- Condition of structures
- A description of off-street loading, trash storage, and parking areas and facilities, including a statement of the approximate number of parking spaces in each area or facility.
- Tenure (owned or leased by Fisher).
- Proposed action (rehabilitation, disposition, demolition, replacement, change of use, or other) during the term of the IMP.
- Indication of temporary swing space facilities, where applicable.
- Existing building linkage payments, where applicable.

3. **CAMPUS DEMOGRAPHICS AND EMPLOYMENT**

- **Student Population.** The IMP should provide a thorough explanation of past trends and future projections of the size and other characteristics of Fisher’s student body. These data should be referenced as appropriate in other sections, e.g. the Student Housing Plan should make clear the relationship between student population and student housing goals, including targets for percentage of students housed. The IMP should include, at a minimum, an explanation of past growth trends and an explanation of Fisher’s target student enrollments for five years and 10 years in the future. Include information on full-time and part-time Boston students as well as your online student population and trends projected for each.
- **Student Residence Locations.** Present data on the residence locations of students living in Fisher-owned dormitories as well as in other Boston-based housing, with a breakdown by level (undergraduate class, graduate students), Boston neighborhood and, to the degree possible, this information may be integrated with the Student Housing Plan, described below, if desired.
- **Employment.** Provide information on Fisher’s current employee population, disaggregated by faculty/staff, full-time/part-time, contract employees, Boston residents/non-residents, as well as projected employment over the term of the IMP.

4. **URBAN DESIGN AND PLANNING FRAMEWORK**

This section should discuss, at a minimum, the following:

- **Existing Context.** Describe Fisher’s place in the broader context of adjacent land uses and the surrounding neighborhoods. Reference any City policies or plans that shape the planning context for the area and for Fisher.
- **Facilities Needs.** Describe Fisher’s future facilities needs and goals for the term of the IMP and beyond, with reference to the requirements stated in the “Needs of the Institution” item in Section 80D-3 of the Boston Zoning Code.
- **Campus Vision and Identity.** Describe Fisher’s vision of its desired physical identity and, in general terms, strategies for achieving that identity. The IMP should include a diagram showing the location

of major activity centers and destinations, including both campus buildings and other major activity centers (e.g. residential clusters of off-campus student rentals and entertainment districts) in the adjacent areas and the major pedestrian routes connecting them.

- **Urban Design Guidelines and Objectives.** The IMP will need to address a number urban design related issues that arise from the proposed consolidation of the institution's facilities and the anticipated growth defined in its Strategic Plan. Please refer to the comment submitted by BRA Urban Design in Appendix II.
- **Open Space System and Public Realm.** Discuss existing public realm conditions (i.e. parks, pedestrian routes, streetscapes) in the vicinity of Fisher facilities, regardless of ownership. Discuss key urban design and public realm goals and objectives proposed by Fisher for the campus, with a focus on creating a high-quality interface between the campus and the surrounding neighborhoods and transit stations. Discuss potential impacts on the public realm resulting from Proposed Projects and any projected enrollment/employment increases.
- **Present a comprehensive campus signage plan for review.** Fisher should set up a meeting with BRA urban design staff to ensure compliance with the Boston Zoning Code. The signage plan should include an inventory of all existing signs, banners, flags and other graphics. Please refer to the BRA Urban Design comment letter in Appendix II.
- **Historic Resources and Preservation Plan.** Include a section in the IMP that provides detailed information about the historic resources in the area surrounding the campus so that they may be given consideration while the impacts of campus growth and change are assessed. This is of particular importance given the existing and potential future location of Fisher facilities within the Back Bay Historic District. Please refer to specific submission details in the BRA Urban Design comment letter located in Appendix II.

5. PROPOSED INSTITUTIONAL PROJECTS

- **Article 80D Requirements.** Pursuant to Article 80D, the IMP should provide the following information for each Proposed Project:
 - Site location and approximate building footprint.
 - Uses (specifying the principal subuses of each land area, building, or structure, such as classroom, laboratory, parking facility).
 - Square feet of gross floor area.
 - Square feet of gross floor area eliminated from existing buildings through demolition of existing facilities.
 - Floor area ratio.
 - Building height in stories and feet, including mechanical penthouses.
 - Parking areas or facilities to be provided in connection with Proposed Projects;
 - Any applicable urban renewal plans, land disposition agreements, or the like.
 - Current zoning of site.
 - Total project cost estimates.
 - Estimated development impact payments.
 - Approximate timetable for development of proposed institutional project, with the estimated month and year of construction start and construction completion for each.

- **Rationale for Proposed Projects.** Discuss the rationale for the program and location of each Proposed Project in light of earlier discussions on mission, facilities needs, and campus planning objectives.
- **Building Uses.** For each Proposed Project, discuss the anticipated hours of each use, intensity of use by students, faculty, staff, and visitors, and the potential impact of these uses on pedestrian and student activity in the area around the site and more generally in the neighborhoods surrounding the Proposed Projects.
- **Carriage House Addition.** While the scale and exterior appearance of the Carriage House will be reviewed by the Back Bay Architectural Commission, additional information should be provided in the IMP which addresses the anticipated uses and access to the proposed roof and terrace. Please see BRA Urban Design comment in Appendix II.
- **College Terrace.** Additional information should be provided for the College Terrace with respect to access to the terrace from the building interior, adjacent uses, sightlines, and anticipated hours of use. Please see BRA Urban Design comment in Appendix II.

6. STUDENT HOUSING PLAN

Article 80D mandates that institutions submit a Student Housing Plan as part of the IMP. The IMP should address both the requirements set forth in Article 80D, which are reproduced below, and the additional requirements set forth in this section. Please also describe how Fisher arrived at its Student Housing Plan including examples of alternative student housing locations.

- **Article 80 Student Housing Plan Requirements.** Pursuant to Article 80D, the IMP should address the following:
 - The number of full-time undergraduate and graduate students living in housing facilities owned or operated by the Institution, including a breakdown by type of degree of program (undergraduate or graduate) and type of housing facility (dormitory, apartment, or cooperative housing facility).
 - The number of housing units owned or operated by the Institution, by type of housing facility (dormitory, apartment or cooperative housing facility).
 - Any housing requirements or restrictions the Institution places on its students (e.g. eligibility for on-campus housing, requirement to live on campus).
 - The process by which the Institution directs its students to housing facilities.
 - The Institution's short-term and long-term plans for housing its undergraduate and graduate students on-campus and off-campus.
 - Impacts of the Institution's student housing demand on housing supply and rental market rates in the surrounding neighborhoods, including those neighborhoods adjacent to the Institution's campus and other neighborhoods where the Institution's students are concentrated.
 - A plan for mitigating the impacts of the Institution's student housing demand on surrounding neighborhoods
 - Alternative student housing location analysis

7. TRANSPORTATION AND PARKING MANAGEMENT / MITIGATION PLAN

In addition to the submissions detailed in this Scope, Fisher should continue to work closely with the Boston Transportation Department (“BTD”) to outline an appropriate scope for studying and mitigating any transportation impacts of the proposed IMP and/or Proposed Projects. Fisher should set up a meeting with BTD to discuss IMP submission requirements and requested analysis.

- **Existing Conditions.** Provide a description of Fisher’s existing transportation and parking characteristics, including data on mode share for employees and students, parking spaces owned and operated by Fisher, and policies regarding student and employee parking, and existing transportation demand management (“TDM”) measures in place. Describe key pedestrian and bicycle safety problems in the vicinity of the campus that might reduce the number of Fisher employees and students willing to use alternatives to the automobile.
- **Proposed TDM Measures.** Describe additional TDM measures that are being considered for the IMP, particularly in light of the proposed reduction in on-campus parking supply.
- **Parking.** In light of the proposed removal of parking spaces and the scarcity of on-street parking in the vicinity of the campus, the IMP should examine the following issues related to Fisher’s current and future parking policies:
 - Describe the anticipated impact of projected enrollment and employment increases on parking demand and Fisher’s ability to meet that demand.
 - Document the number of employee and student parking permits that have been issued in recent years.
 - Document the parking supply in surrounding area, including paid parking and on-street, with information on parking restrictions in place.
- **Pedestrian Circulation Goals and Guidelines.** Provide a statement of goals and guidelines for pedestrian circulation in the vicinity of Fisher’s campus. It is understood that Fisher has neither the responsibility nor the ability to implement all the necessary improvements to the pedestrian systems in the vicinity of its campus. However, Fisher should work with City and state agencies, as well as neighboring institutions and other actors, to effect improvements to those systems, including but not limited to enhanced pedestrian pathways to and from the nearby MBTA stations. Such improvements are a critical element of any TDM measures on the part of Fisher and other area institutions. Proposals for specific improvements should be included in the IMP. Please see BRA Urban Design comment and the Boston Transportation Department’s comment both found in Appendix II.
- **Student Auto Ownership, Use, and Parking.** Describe Fisher’s current policies with regard to student ownership and use of automobiles, including the eligibility of students living in dormitories to obtain resident parking permits and any measures to enforce existing regulations.
- **Move-In/Move-Out Traffic Management Procedures.** Describe Fisher’s current procedures for managing traffic and parking impact generated by students moving into and out of dormitories, and any proposed changes to those procedures.
- **Bicycle Transportation.** The IMP should discuss the adequacy of Fisher’s existing bicycle storage facilities and the facilities to be included in any Proposed Projects.
- **Bus Traffic.** Document average bus traffic associated with Fisher events, functions, sporting events, etc.
- **Area site map.** The IMP should include a map of area sites that indicates parking inventory, closest EV charging area, transit and bus stops, as well as bike & care share locations.

- **Other Comments.** The IMP should respond to all other comments related to transportation included in the Appendixes.

8. ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

The City of Boston expects a high level of commitment to principles of sustainable development from all developers and institutions. Fisher will be expected to work with the BRA, the City of Boston Environment Department, and other entities as determined by the BRA to set and meet ambitious environmental sustainability goals in both the IMP and in the design of the Proposed Projects. The IMP should present as much information as possible on the topics below, with the understanding that not all of them may be relevant at the current time.

- **Sustainability Meeting.** Fisher will be expected to help organize one or more meetings on campus sustainability to discuss and shape its plans with the BRA and other key public agencies and organizations, with particular focus on the topics below.
- **Existing Sustainability Measures.** Document and describe Fisher's existing sustainability measures at the building and campus-wide level, including but not limited to energy, stormwater, solid waste, transportation, and infrastructure and utilities. Explain the administrative structure for making decisions about and promoting innovation in the area of building a sustainable campus. Describe any formal goals or principles that Fisher has adopted in the area of sustainability.
- **Potential Future Sustainability Programs and Plans.** Discuss additional sustainability initiatives that could be adopted in conjunction with this IMP or in the future.
- **Green Building.** All projects will be required to conform to the requirements of Article 37 of the Boston Zoning Code, when applicable. New campus buildings should achieve a superior level of performance in the areas of materials and resources (recycled content, construction waste management, local/regional materials), energy (energy performance, renewable energy), water management (water efficiency, stormwater management, graywater and stormwater recycling, etc.), indoor environmental quality, and other standard performance areas of high-performance or "green" buildings. Whenever possible, buildings should achieve a high level of certification through LEED or another appropriate system.
- **Water Use.** Future campus development should incorporate water use, conservation, and rainwater harvesting strategies at a campus level. New construction allows opportunities for storage systems to be installed for use by the new and adjacent buildings. Collected water can be used for flushing, HVAC make-up water, and irrigation.
- **Stormwater Retention/Treatment/Reuse and Groundwater Recharge.** Particular attention should be paid to the comments provided by the Boston Water and Sewer Commission and the Boston Groundwater Trust which are included in the Appendixes and incorporated herein by reference and made a part hereof.
- **Solid Waste.** Campus master planning should set the goal of reducing the level of solid waste generation in both the construction and operation of buildings.
- **Landscape and Natural Features.** A well-considered program of landscape design can not only create a high-quality aesthetic realm but can also enhance regional biodiversity, help mitigate air pollution, reduce heating and air conditioning costs and associated energy consumption, reduce water consumption, and reduce stormwater runoff and water pollution. Sustainability should be a primary consideration in the design of the campus open space system as a whole as well as the design of individual spaces.

- **Performance Standards and Indicators.** Over the long term, Fisher should commit not only to broad sustainability principles, but also to specific performance standards and a system of indicators and metrics to track performance.
- **Other Comments.** The IMP should respond to all other comments related to environmental protection and sustainability included in the Appendixes, with particular reference to comments submitted by BTD and the Boston Environment Department.

9. ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- **Workforce Development.** The BRA looks forward to working with Fisher to support the City's employment and workforce development goals. This IMP provides an opportunity for further discussion of measures to enhance educational opportunities for Boston residents and prepare Boston residents and students for employment. The IMP should provide the information described in the "Job Training Analysis" component of Section 80D-3 of the Boston Zoning Code.
- **Economic Development Goals and Strategies.** The City of Boston views its academic institutions as tremendous assets and as valuable partners in economic development. Fisher's ongoing evolution will provide additional opportunities for cooperation with the City on key economic development goals. The City looks forward to working with Fisher in the future to explore ways that Fisher's positive economic impacts can be increased.

10. COMMUNITY BENEFITS PLAN

- **Existing Community Benefits.** The IMP should discuss all community benefits currently provided by Fisher.
- **Future Community Benefits.** The BRA looks forward to working with Fisher, the Fisher Task Force, and Fisher's neighbors to explore appropriate community benefits to be associated with the IMP.

11. OTHER

- **Taxes and PILOTs.** In the context of the master planning process, Fisher should meet with the City's Assessor. Please see comment letter from the Assessing Department in Appendix I.
- **Public Notice.** Fisher will be responsible for preparing and publishing in one or more newspapers of general circulation in the City of Boston a Public Notice of the submission of the IMP to the BRA as required by Section 80A-2. This Notice shall be published within five (5) days after the receipt of the IMP by the BRA. In accordance with Article 80, public comments on the IMP shall be transmitted to the BRA within sixty (60) days of the publication of this notice. A sample form of the Public Notice is attached as Appendix 3. Following publication of the Public Notice, Fisher shall submit to the BRA a copy of the published Notice together with the date of publication.
- **Response to Comments.** Fisher is required to include a "Response to Comments" section in the IMP.

**APPENDIX I
COMMENTS FROM ELECTED OFFICIALS**

See attached PDF document:

Fisher College – IMPNF Comments PART 1

**APPENDIX II
COMMENTS FROM CITY PUBLIC AGENCIES**

See attached PDF document:

Fisher College – IMPNF Comments PART 1

**APPENDIX III
COMMENTS FROM THE PUBLIC**

See attached PDF documents:

- Fisher College – IMPNF Comments PART 1**
- Fisher College – IMPNF Comments PART 2**
- Fisher College – IMPNF Comments PART 3**
- Fisher College – IMPNF Comments PART 4**
- Fisher College – IMPNF Comments PART 5**
- Fisher College – IMPNF Comments PART 6**

**APPENDIX IV
EXAMPLE OF IMP PUBLIC NOTICE**

PUBLIC NOTICE

The Boston Redevelopment Authority (“BRA”), pursuant to Article 80 of the Boston Zoning Code, hereby gives notice that an Institutional Master Plan (“IMP”) was submitted by the NAME OF INSTITUTION, on MONTH, DAY, AND YEAR. The NAME OF INSTITUTION IMP describes currently proposed institutional projects on the NAME OF INSTITUTION campus. DESCRIPTION OF IMP / DPIR. Approvals are required of the BRA pursuant Article 80 for the issuance of an Adequacy Determination by the Director of the BRA for the approval of the IMP.

The IMP may be reviewed at the Office of the Secretary of the BRA, Boston City Hall, Boston, Massachusetts 02210 between 9:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m., Monday through Friday, except legal holidays. Copies may also be reviewed at LIBRARIES.

Public comments on the IMP including comments of public agencies, should be submitted to Ms. Katelyn Sullivan, Project Manager, BRA, at the address stated above or by email at Katelyn.Sullivan.bra@cityofboston.gov within sixty (60) days of this notice or by _____, 2013.

BOSTON REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
Brian Golden, Secretary