

# Application for Small Project Review under Article 80E of the Boston Zoning Code 

3353 Washington Street Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts

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Submitted by:
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51 Amory Street
Boston, MA 02119

## 3353 Washington Street <br> Jamaica Plain, MA 02130

## Application for Small Project Review

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## A. Project Overview

## 1. Description of Proposed Project

3353 Washington LLC, an affiliate of Boston Community Ventures (the "Proponent") proposes to construct a new, approximately 46,690 square foot residential building with ground-floor retail space on a parcel of land located at the intersection of Washington and Green Streets in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood of Boston. The proposed project will include approximately 44 residential units, 24 surface parking spaces at the rear of the building, and associated landscaping improvements, as well as streetscape improvements along Washington and Green Streets (collectively, the foregoing comprises the "Proposed Project").

The new building will consist of four residential floors over a ground floor level to contain $2,000 \pm$ square feet of Gross Floor Area ${ }^{1}$ for retail uses. The surface parking area at the rear will be partially covered by the building, and screened from both streets by the ground floor building mass. (The northwesterly boundary of the Project is adjacent to a common drive area shared with an abutter.) The four floors above consist of three main residential floors, and a fourth residential floor with rooftop terraces set back from the street face, as well as high ceiling heights which permit the introduction of interior mezzanines. The mezzanine levels within these units result in what is considered for zoning purposes, a six story building, but the building appears as a five story building from the exterior.

The Proposed Project will include a ground floor bicycle storage room with space for approximately 20 bicycles for residents of the building, and tenant lobbies on both Green and Washington Streets, with the primary residential entrance on Green Street. The retail spaces will be accessible directly from Washington Street. Perspectives of the Proposed Project at Washington and Green Streets, along Washington Street, along Green Street and showing the interior parking area, as well as elevations of the Proposed Project, are included in this application as Figure 1, and proposed floor plans are included as Figure 3. A Project site plan is included as Figure 2. The streetscape improvements along Washington Street will include new street trees in the existing street tree locations.

The Proposed Project will have a mix of unit sizes. The second, third and fourth floors will contain approximately 30,370 square feet in the aggregate (approximately 10,122 square feet per floor) and a mix of one and two bedroom units (some of which will have outdoor pocket terraces), and the fifth floor, which will contain approximately 12,104 square feet (approximately 9,440 square feet plus approximately 2,664 square feet of mezzanines), will contain a mix of two and three bedroom units (some of which will have private terraces, a mezzanine level, and/or a rooftop deck). The Proposed Project is expected to comprise rental apartments. There will be an approximately 1,300 square foot rooftop deck for use by all building residents.

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## 2. Project Site and Existing Conditions

The site for the Proposed Project (the "Project Site") consists of five adjacent parcels of land owned by affiliates of the Proponent and comprising approximately 14,999 square feet, as shown on the survey included in this application as Figure 4. Three of the parcels front onto Washington Street and two of the parcels front onto Green Street, while the fifth is at the rear. The Project Site currently contains an outdated three-story wood frame building and a vacant and gutted brick warehouse building on one of the Washington Street parcels, with a small attached outbuilding of $800 \pm$ square feet that currently houses a hair salon. There is no existing parking at the Project Site. Photographs of the existing conditions at the Project Site are included in this application as Figure 5. There exists a small recessed alleyway between the warehouse structure and the wood frame building that is blocked from street view by a wooden stockade fence. The Green Street parcels hold another three story wood frame office building with two office storefronts.

As part of the Proposed Project, the existing buildings will be demolished and the five parcels combined into one. The three existing non-profit tenants, which comprise office uses, as well as the hair salon, have short-term occupancy agreements and will be assisted in their relocation by the Project sponsor, Boston Community Ventures, which owns other property in the area which could accommodate these tenants.

## 3. Project Proponent

The Proponent is a Massachusetts limited liability company established by Boston Community Ventures to undertake the Proposed Project. Boston Community Ventures, whose principal is Mordechai Levin, has extensive development experience in the Jamaica Plain neighborhood, having developed the Jamaica Plain Plaza retail complex as well as the nearby Stop and Shop supermarket building (in collaboration with the Jamaica Plain Neighborhood Development Corporation and Bromley-Heath Tenant Management Corporation) and the Martha Eliot Health Center. Affiliates of the Proponent have owned the subject property for many years.

## 4. Affordable Housing

The Proposed Project will comply with the City's Inclusionary Development Policy; six of the units at the Project will be designated as Affordable Units, with the unit mix and locations to be determined by City agencies.

## 5. Project Cost and Schedule

The Proposed Project is anticipated to cost approximately $\$ 18,000,000$. The construction period will be approximately 12 months, and pending receipt of all necessary public agency permits and approvals, construction is anticipated to begin in the first quarter of 2017.

## B. Project Design Principles

The Proposed Project has been designed to be both contextual and environmentallysensitive, as well as consistent with the Design Guidelines set forth in Article 55 of the Zoning Code, as follows:

* Building massing has been minimized by the use of full size windows, inset "pocket" balconies, and recessed rooftop terraces. The roof line has a variable height and orientation, and the top floor has a variety of different materials to soften the visual impact of the building and break up its perceived height from both pedestrian and vehicular perspectives.
* The building above the Washington Street sidewalk at elevations 12-15' feet will be cantilevered in order to allowing for a wider sidewalk and easier pedestrian passage, and provide a natural shelter for bus patrons. The building will also be set back from the Green Street property line to allow for a wider sidewalk along Green Street.
* The first floor has maximum fenestration to provide visually pleasing storefronts and streetscape, and enhance the street frontage.
* The building will incorporate "green technologies" by means of an insulated envelope and an internal rainwater runoff system through the use of a green roof and rain garden.
* The building will use existing curb cuts on Green Street for entrance to and egress from the surface parking area at the rear of the building. No existing on-street parking spaces will be affected by the Project.
* The parking area will include a loading zone for the retail spaces and residents and be located at the rear of the building. Two of the parking spaces will be reserved for the retail spaces and the remaining 22 shall be utilized for the residential units, for a .5/1 residential unit parking ratio.
* The building will have a dedicated bike room for locked, secure storage for $20 \pm$ bikes, encouraging an alternative to vehicular transportation.
* There will be a dedicated trash and recycle room off the main residential lobby, with coordinated trash and recycling pick-up.
* The building exterior will be covered with a variety of cladding materials and forms, including composite wood, metal and fiber-cement paneling. This reflects both the industrial character of the surrounding buildings as well as a modern design aesthetic. The colors of the cladding materials have been selected to help differentiate building sections and minimize the building massing. Additional screening and plantings will be utilized whenever possible.


## C. Development Team

## Proponent:

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A contractor for the Proposed Project has not yet been selected.

## D. Neighborhood and Zoning Context

The Project Site is located on the Washington Street commercial thoroughfare, as well as on Green Street, which takes on a residential character off of Washington Street. The Project Site is located within the Washington Street Local Industrial Sub-District, as established by Section 55-18 of the Boston Zoning Code (the "Zoning Code") and shown on Map 9B of the Boston Zoning Maps. The future use of the ground floor of the Proposed Project for retail uses is consistent with nearby properties along Washington Street, and the primarily residential character of the building, particularly along Green Street, is consistent with the residential neighborhoods in close proximity to the Project Site. Nearby non-residential uses include the

Area E-13 Police Station, as well as local supermarkets, restaurants, a café/bakery, a Pine Street Inn facility, and commercial businesses such as car service shops.

The dimensional information for the Proposed Project is as follows:
Lot Area: $14,999 \pm$ square feet
Building Area: $\quad 46,690 \pm$ square feet of Gross Floor Area
Floor Area Ratio: $3.10 \pm$
Building Height: $70 \pm$ feet
As previously described, the Proposed Project will include 24 parking spaces. The upper levels will be residential, offering single and multi-bedroom units.

In Local Industrial Sub-Districts, bakeries, art galleries and local retail businesses are permitted as of right, as are certain service uses such as hair salons and office uses, subject to area limitations. Multi-family uses are not permitted as of right, and therefore, zoning relief will be required for the introduction of residential uses at the Project Site.

Additional zoning relief will be required, as follows:

* The Proposed Project will exceed the floor area ratio maximum of 1.0 and the building height limit of 35 feet.
* Although some of the units will have private decks and there will be a rooftop deck, the Proposed Project will require zoning relief with respect to usable open space/dwelling unit.
* Pursuant to Table J of Article 55 of the Zoning Code, the retail space would require 4 parking spaces, and the residential units would require a 1.5/unit parking ratio, or 66 additional parking spaces, for a total of 70 parking spaces. Because the Proposed Project will include 24 parking spaces, zoning relief for parking will be required.
* Because the Proposed Project is on such a small lot and the preponderance of the space will be utilized for residential uses, the Proposed Project will not include an interior loading bay, as required by the Zoning Code.

Therefore, the Proponent will seek multiple forms of zoning relief for the Project from the City's Board of Appeal.

## E. Traffic, Parking, Pedestrian, Vehicular, and Bike Access

The Project Site is bounded by Washington and Green Streets, and has two existing curb cuts on Green Street. The Project Site is also bounded by a common driveway that also serves a surface parking area owned by an abutter to the north. The existing curb cuts on Green Street will be retained in their existing locations and used to facilitate access to and from the parking area created as part of the Proposed Project. In the vicinity of the Project Site, Green Street runs two-way, with a parking lane on the same side of the street as the Project Site. None of the existing on-street parking will be affected by the Proposed Project.

The Project Site has excellent public transportation access. It is located within a 4 minute walk to the MBTA Orange Line station at Green Street and the \#42 MBTA bus stops in front of the building on Washington Street; that bus line runs between Forest Hills Station (a 15 minute walk away) and Dudley Station. In addition, six additional MBTA bus routes are in the area: No. 22 (running between Ashmont Station and Ruggles Station); No. 29 (running between Mattapan Station and Ruggles Station); No. 35 (running between Dedham Mall and Forest Hills Station); No. 38 (running between Woodward Road and Wren Street Forest Hills Station); No. 41 (running between Centre Street at Elliott Street and JFK/UMass Station); and No. 44 (running between Jackson Square Station and Ruggles Station). These transit opportunities will likely ensure a high percentage of transit trips emanating from the Proposed Project. The Project Site is readily accessible to the Southwest Corridor Greenway bike path, which terminates at Copley Square after traversing through the Jamaica Plain, Roxbury and South End neighborhoods.

* Parking - Off-street parking for the building will be located in a surface parking lot at the rear of the building, with access off of Green Street.
* Pedestrian Access - The Project Site is well-served by public sidewalks on both Washington and Green Streets. Pedestrians will be able to access the retail spaces directly off of their Washington Street entrances. Pedestrian access to the residential portion of the building will be through the primary residential lobby located on Green Street on the northwest portion of the Project Site, with a secondary residential entrance located on Washington Street on the southeast part of the Project Site. Residents using the parking area can gain access to the building through the secondary residential entrance, which also opens to the rear.
* Bicycle Accommodations - As previously noted, the Proposed Project will contain interior bicycle storage for $20 \pm$ bicycles, and the building's location near the MBTA Green Street stop and the Southwest Corridor Greenway bicycle path will further enhance the use of bicycles to access the Proposed Project.
* Loading - The parking area will include a loading area to be used by the retail businesses as well as residential occupants of the building.

In its review of the potential traffic impacts of the Proposed Project, Conley Associates, the transportation consultant to the Proponent, evaluated transportation conditions in the
area, including the anticipated traffic impacts from projects already approved by the BRA, such as the proposed mixed use commercial/residential development at 3200 Washington Street (which at approximately 100,000 square feet in size, will be considerably larger in scale), and the mixed-use building proposed for 3521-3529 Washington Street (which will also be considerably larger (approximately 186,250 square feet in size)).

Conley Associates projects that the modal split for the Proposed Project will be such that a substantial proportion of the residents will travel by mass transit or walk/bike. Based upon the anticipated modal shares, Conley Associates is of the view that the Proposed Project will generate 12 vehicle trips during the weekday morning peak hour, 16 vehicle trips during the weekday afternoon peak hour, and 12 vehicle trips during the Saturday mid-day peak hour. As a result, the Proposed Project is not anticipated to have a material effect on traffic conditions in the area, nor affect the current LOS (level of service) at which the Washington Street/Green Street intersection is operating. In addition, Conley Associates is of the view that the 24 parking spaces proposed for the Proposed Project will be adequate to serve the proposed uses.

## F. Public Benefits

The Proposed Project will generate numerous public benefits, including the following:

* Construction Employment - The demolition of the existing buildings, construction of a new building, parking area and landscaping is expected to create approximately 40 construction period jobs.
* Permanent Employment - The inclusion of new, attractive retail spaces within the Proposed Project will create new transit-accessible or walk/bike-to-work employment opportunities.
* Site and Streetscape Improvements - A new building will improve the streetscape and close gaps in the street wall by replacing existing inefficient outdated buildings with new recessed full height storefronts, improved lighting through the addition of exterior lighting at the building's ground level, and increased sidewalk width along both Washington Street and Green Street, as well as new replacement trees in the existing street tree locations.
* Affordable Housing - The Proposed Project will include six on-site affordable housing units.
* Green Building - The building will incorporate the latest technologies in energy efficient claddings, insulation and lighting, and provide internal storm water runoff systems with green roofs and rain gardens. The Proponent's goal is for the building to be LEED Certifiable.
* New Transit-Oriented Housing Opportunities - The Proposed Project will result in the creation of attractive family-friendly units in close proximity to MBTA bus and
transit service as well as bike routes, attracting non car-dependent residents and supporting the City of Boston's smart growth goals.


## G. Anticipated Permits and Approvals

The Proposed Project is anticipated to require the following permits and approvals:

Agency:
Boston Redevelopment Authority
City of Boston Board of Appeal
City of Boston Landmarks Commission
City of Boston Public Improvement Commission

Boston Water and Sewer Commission
City of Boston Inspectional Services
Department

Permit/Approval:
Article 80E Small Project Review
Zoning relief
Article 85 Demolition Delay Review
Specific Repairs/Pedestrian Easement

Site Plan and related approvals
Building permit, certificate of occupancy

The Proposed Project is not expected to require review under the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) as it will not require any State permits, licenses or financing. As design proceeds, additional permits and approvals may prove necessary for the Proposed Project, and will be procured as necessary.

## H. Community Outreach and Public Review Process

The Proponent has met with numerous abutters, public officials and other stakeholders in anticipation of proceeding with the Proposed Project, including City Councilor Matt O'Malley, State Representative Elizabeth Malia, and the Union Avenue Neighborhood Association. In addition, the Proponent sponsored an evening meeting on February 29th, 2016 at the District 13 Police Street located across the street from the Project Site, to discuss the proposed Project. Invitations were sent by email to representatives of the Stonybrook Neighborhood Association, the Union Avenue Neighborhood Association, and the Washington Street Business Association.

The Proponent will continue to meet with interested parties to discuss the Proposed Project as part of the Article 80E Small Project Review process, and to ensure that the Proposed Project as finally designed is sympathetic to shared goals of energy efficient and environmentally-savvy design, and a design aesthetic that is both distinctive and contextual.

Figure 1

BUILDING ELEVATIONS, PERSPECTIVES, AND SCHEMATIC SECTION ALONG GREEN STREET AND WASHINGTON STREET








Figure 2
PROJECT SITE PLAN

Figure 2


Figure 3

FLOOR PLANS

Figure 3




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Figure 4

SURVEY OF PROJECT SITE

Figure 5

EXISTING CONDITIONS - AERIAL, BIRDSEYE, AND SITE PHOTOGRAPHS

Figure 5




[^0]:    ${ }^{1}$ Square footages set forth in this application are calculated per the Boston Zoning Code.

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