

December 11, 2019

Tim Czerwienski, AICP
Boston Planning & Development Agency
One City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

Re: Kenmore Square Shadow Study – Charles River Esplanade

Dear Tim,

The Esplanade Association has continued to work with Mark Development, LLC, to complete an analysis of the effect of newly-created shadows on areas of the historic Charles River Esplanade that will be caused by the development of the Kenmore Square Hotel project as it is currently designed. We appreciate the development team's efforts to provide additional information on several occasions to study this subject. We are pleased with the result of those conversations, which we will detail below.

Through our review of this project we were most concerned for the potential for harm to the green infrastructure on the Esplanade that relies on direct sunlight – our lawns, gardens, and especially the park's trees – and we highlighted for the development team our particular areas of concern. Of interest were 55 trees in the area of the Exercise Course and the Bowker Overpass, respectively, which will experience some new shadows with the proposed development.

The development team took a number of steps to share enough information for us to assess the potential impact on those 55 trees, which led us to better understand the expected on-going impact to the Esplanade's canopy. Further, the proponents familiarized themselves with the Esplanade Association's Lasting Esplanade Arbor Fund (L.E.A.F.) initiative, which began in 2018 and serves to secure the strength of the Esplanade tree canopy by planting hundreds of new trees and providing enhanced care to existing trees. These two important steps, much of which has taken place since our most recent letter dated November 13, 2019, served to clarify the project's impact on the Esplanade tree canopy and the cost of ongoing work designed to preserve the health of this precious natural resource.

The proponents and the Esplanade Association have agreed on a one-time donation of funds to the Lasting Esplanade Arbor Fund that will help us care for the trees most impacted by the Kenmore Square Hotel's shadows through preventative measures such as pruning, soil testing, and customized fertilization treatments based on test results. We believe this an appropriate course of action to ensure the lasting health of the trees in question and we thank the proponents for recognizing the importance of this issue.

We thank Mark Development for this support and the Boston Planning and Development Agency for providing us the opportunity to comment. We hope through the Esplanade Association's L.E.A.F. initiative that we can all work to keep the Esplanade's 1,700 trees healthy for our neighbors, visitors, and future guests of the Kenmore Square Hotel.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Nichols".

Michael J. Nichols
Executive Director, Esplanade Association