

Dec 6th, 2012
William Tuttle, Director
Office of Real Estate Development
Massachusetts Department of Transportation
State Transportation Building at Ten Park Plaza
Boston, MA 02116

Re: Developer Selection Parcel 9

Dear Bill,

I am writing this letter to express my strong support for the Blackstone Market proposal.

I feel that I must do so since the metrics of the selection process have changed, albeit, rather suddenly.

From the very beginning of this lengthy process the Advisory Committee was told a number of times by DOT lead person, Peter O'Connor, that "getting it right" was preeminently more important than financial considerations, as the size and scale of the project was small, while the historical, and community connection to that block, was huge.

The creation of the "Market District" area was fundamental in the AC thinking, and had been supported from the outset by both MDOT and BRA. Community support for the market district and the accommodation of Haymarket pushcart vendors has been clear.

The Blackstone Market proposal is a better choice to achieve a "Market District" than the Normandy Hotel. It is a natural solution. It fits.

The Hotel solution on the other hand is adequate and valid, but it does not have in my view, the same natural fit.

The noise and activity of a busy marketplace such as Haymarket, is in sharp contrast to the manicured environment of a higher level hotel.

The Haymarket Pushcart Association has clearly expressed its preference for the Blackstone proposal and listed the reasons for it.

Another major concern from the beginning of the process was the issue of heights and the views from the North End and the Greenway/Harbor areas.

What matured out of these many meetings was a consensus that a formula that would reduce the height along the Blackstone block, and increase the height on the North Street side would be a desirable solution to the conflict between heights / mass and financial considerations.

The Blackstone proposal utilizes this concept in a far superior manner. Its asymmetric heights allows a more pleasing view of the Blackstone block where the construction is lower, and presents a more interesting design with its higher, slimmer silhouette on the North Street side where the surrounding structures are taller.

The Hotel profile is a lot blockier and has a much smaller portion of the building permitting views of Blackstone and the old historic buildings.

From a 30 years plus Faneuil Hall Merchant perspective, we have all seen the change in focus, from the local visitor and the local merchant to the tourist and the souvenir, much to the displeasure of both the tourist and the local.

We are not anti visitor, quite to the contrary. The visitor is important to our businesses and we enjoy very much the variety of people from all around the world. I know from experience however, that the visitor, as much as the local, appreciated the market place feeling of the area, the fact that the wares and products were not targeted for the tourist / visitor. It made it truly a Boston experience.

There are many other locations where a hotel would do very well and be a welcome addition. Parcel 9 needs to be the bridge between Haymarket, Blackstone, Faneuil Hall and the North End / Waterfront communities.

In summary, although both proposals are very good, the Blackstone Market proposal is in my view superior, and should be the one selected for Parcel 9.

Respectfully,

Claudio Kraus, Ph.D.

Faneuil Hall Merchant Association