



Emerald Necklace

CONSERVANCY

Connecting People and Parks and Conserving the Emerald Necklace

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Karen Mauney-Brodek, *President*

March 28, 2023

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Boston Planning & Development Agency: Zoning Commission
 Boston City Hall, 9th floor
 One City Hall Plaza
 Boston, MA 02201

Re: 305 Brookline Avenue Development Proposal (aka Longwood Place)

Dear BPDA Zoning Commission,

The Emerald Necklace Conservancy is in support of the needs of Simmons University, and their desire for a long-term plan, but maintain objections to the form and shape of the development in the PDA before you, 305 Brookline Avenue Development Proposal (aka Longwood Place), due to the anticipated shadow cast on the public parks of the Emerald Necklace, Boston's historic and essential park system.

As included in earlier statements (referenced below and attached) provided to the BPDA and the City of Boston, this proposal highlights the City's lack of systematic policy and guidance on development and shadow management for parks across the city.

[November 2022: Open Letter to Boston Planning & Development Agency concerning proposed development at 305 Brookline Avenue](#) (see attachment A)

[November 2022: Open Letter to Mayor Michelle Wu](#) (see attachment B)

Specifically, we are requesting the removal or amendment of the below language currently included in the documents under consideration:

"Any regulation, legislation, guideline, planning study or the like not in effect as of the date of the effective date of this Development Plan as adopted shall not have any effect on the right of this Project to cast the maximum shadows as analyzed in this Development Plan and its appendices, nor shall it have the effect of additional shadow related mitigation that has already been accounted for in both the design of this Project and the Parks endowment fund set forth above and herein..."

It has been stated that this PDA approval would not prevent project by project (building by building) review and subsequent approvals for height and mass, due to the authority of the BPDA and other city approvals. However, this wording implies that the BPDA may be prevented from doing that.

The Conservancy urges the BPDA Zoning Commission to reconsider the form of this project and protect the City's authority in shaping future planning, zoning

and project approvals. Protections for the public parks must be paramount. Over the last decade, Boston, Brookline and the Commonwealth along with many others supported a once-in-a-generation restoration project for the Emerald Necklace and Muddy River including plantings, paths and landscapes affected by this proposal. We are concerned that projects like Longwood Place, as currently envisioned, threaten to undermine key areas that the City and others have been working to restore and we need to ensure these parks and our communities thrive.

Additionally, the project proposal includes a provision of \$1 million to fund a shadow study and inform policy to address this serious need. It is crucial that this study be handled in an independent manner. It is not clear how this, if approved or funded, would be managed and how all parties, experts and the public can be engaged in this important process.

Thank you very much for your consideration and service to our City and our public parks.

Sincerely,



Karen Mauney-Brodek

Attachment A: [November 2022: Open Letter to Boston Planning & Development Agency concerning proposed development at 305 Brookline Avenue](#)

Attachment B: [November 2022: Open Letter to Mayor Michelle Wu](#)