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June 20, 2024

Michelle Wu, Mayor  
1 City Hall Square  
Suite 550  
Boston, MA 02201-2043

Via email to: [michelle.wu@boston.gov](mailto:michelle.wu@boston.gov)

**Re: Advocating for Family Affordable Housing at 27-29 Hancock Street,  
Beacon Hill**

Dear Mayor Wu,

On behalf of the Beacon Hill Civic Association (“BHCA”), we are writing to reiterate our support for transforming 27-29 Hancock Street into a sustainable and inclusive affordable housing solution for families, with careful consideration of the best solution for all parties involved. Our previous letter to then-acting Mayor Kim Janey (dated May 20, 2021) highlighted the project’s potential to significantly enhance the quality of life for low and moderate-income families – a longstanding priority for Beacon Hill and the City of Boston.<sup>1</sup> Our longstanding commitment to enhancing the diversity and livability of our historic neighborhood remains steadfast.

**Background Recap**

The initiative to transform the 27-29 Hancock Street property into family affordable housing reflects the commitment of the developer of the 45 Temple Street Project, which began in 2015 and was completed in 2020.

**Advocating for Enhanced Public Involvement**

The BHCA encourages a comprehensive and transparent process for the 27-29 Hancock Street development, consistent with the successful process undertaken for the redevelopment of the West End Library. We believe that such a robust public process, including formal bids and proposals from leading developers and operators of affordable housing, is essential to the success of the 27-29 Hancock Street development. Importantly, such an approach will ensure much-needed equity and community involvement and result in higher quality and more suitable affordable family housing solutions.

**Concerns Regarding SROs and Proposal for Enhanced Family Oriented  
Housing Solutions**

In addition to advocating for a more robust public process, we want to reiterate our concerns, initially raised in 2021, regarding the Single Room Occupancy (SRO) housing model proposed for this development. The BHCA advocates for the development of larger, multi-room, affordable units that provide more optimal living conditions for families. We believe that with the right approach, the redevelopment of 27-29 Hancock Street can serve as a model for affordable family housing that truly meets the needs of its residents and neighbors.

<sup>1</sup>Advocacy for affordable family housing by BHCA dates back to its 2013 “Plan for the Neighborhood” and is most recently reflected in BHCA’s advocacy for affordable family housing over the new West End Library.

### **Request to The City of Boston**

The BHCA recognizes that funding affordable housing is a complex issue that involves balancing the financial feasibility of development with the need for affordability. This often requires multiple strategies, including leveraging public funds, implementing policies like Inclusionary Development and Linkage fees, and securing investments from private developers. These nuances should not prevent the creation of the optimal affordable housing solution for the residents of this future development. We request that the City work with state and local agencies and partners to identify the funding sources required to make family oriented affordable housing viable and sustainable.

The BHCA, is eager to see this project move forward and succeed and for 27-29 Hancock to become a thriving, affordable, family housing option for Beacon Hill and the City of Boston. We remain committed to working collaboratively with your office, the Boston Planning and Development Agency, and the residents of Beacon Hill.

Thank you for considering our perspective on the proposed development. We look forward to making significant strides together in improving our neighborhood and the lives of those seeking affordable housing solutions.

Very truly yours,



Joshua Leffler  
Chair



Colin Zick  
President

Cc: (via email)

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