

112 Myrtle Street Rehabilitation Plan

Date: May 1, 2020

Zoning: H265

Dear Tom Clemens, Catherine Judge and Members of the Zoning Committee,

I am pleased to submit a comprehensive restoration and management plan for 112 Myrtle Street for your consideration. At over one century old, 112 Myrtle Street is a legally non-conforming structure built long before the inception of the City of Boston Zoning Code. As the new owners of a long neglected property, our plan is to create and operate one of the finest residential apartment buildings on Beacon Hill. We have engaged Meyer & Meyer Architects, winner of the Bullfinch Award for Historic Restoration, to help us oversee a meticulous restoration of the building's façade and complete renovation of the interior residential apartments. On February 19th, 2020 we held a very positive meeting with our neighbors at the construction site, where several neighbors expressed their thanks and encouragement to us for undertaking the redevelopment of this dilapidated building. At our subsequent meeting with the Beacon Hill Civic Association Zoning Committee, we heard certain concerns, particularly related to the handling of refuse removal. We listened carefully, sought advice and studied several options before arriving at what we believe is the best practice for the building and neighborhood. We also considered requests to organize a mess of telephone wires at the rear of the property and the possibility of making aesthetic improvements to Grove Square and are happy to do so. It is our dual goal to oversee an exquisite restoration of the exterior and interior of 112 Myrtle and to manage a well-run building leased to professionals who will care for the building and contribute to the fabric of the neighborhood. As neighbors, and members of the Civic Association, it is important to us to do the right thing for the building and the neighborhood.

Zoning

It is our intention to conduct a thoughtful and responsible restoration in harmony with the neighborhood and Zoning Code. From a zoning perspective, we have pursued a very conservative path. There is no proposed alteration to building mass. All work is to be performed inside the envelope of the existing historic structure. The existing use will remain unchanged, as 10 residential apartments. The only zoning relief sought is FAR, which is a legally preexisting condition. We seek to incorporate a de minimis amount of space from an obsolete mechanical room, adjacent to the living area of an existing apartment. (The new building mechanical systems are smaller and located within the units.) Utilizing this space enables us to increase the living area of the garden level apartment in furtherance of a Civic Association goal of creating more apartments suitably sized for families. Due to the location of the former mechanical room in the center of the basement level, it is inaccessible unless you pass through the living area of the garden apartment. As a result, this space is unsuitable for any purpose other than living area. This request allows us to build a larger and more attractive apartment and in no way detracts from the spirit of the Zoning Code, or the neighborhood.

The Renovation

Our construction program is comprehensive and calls for the elimination and replacement of all internal structure. All exterior work has been approved by the Beacon Hill Architectural Commission. The exterior façade will receive a full restoration of the metal façade and the entire building will be repointed. Inside, efficiencies in layout will allow for new floor through units more suitable to small families, couples and professionals. All units will receive new layouts. Kitchens will include stone counters, Wolf stoves and Subzero refrigerators. There will be dishwashers, disposals and laundry in every unit. Bathrooms will include marble and tile finishes with frameless glass showers.

The design includes six two bedroom, two bathroom apartments. We are converting the two existing first floor garden duplexes into one large garden floor through with private patio designed for family living. The two existing units on the top floor are being converted into a single spacious penthouse with private roof deck. Additional building amenities include a plan to add a vertical bike rack, not visible from a public way, just inside the existing exterior door leading to the rear patio steps. The attached rendering of the building's renovated façade demonstrates the great positive impact that this project will have on the beautification of Myrtle Street and Grove Square. Most importantly, these high quality apartments will provide excellent new homes for Beacon Hill residents.

Management

Once the building is completed, our first priority is to find well qualified couples, professionals and families to lease the newly completed residences for 12 month terms. We will seek respectful neighbors, who follow building and neighborhood rules and contribute to the quality of life on Beacon Hill. One of the most important issues to neighbors that emerged at our last meeting is the handling of refuse disposal. We have studied the issue carefully and sought advice from others on how best to handle trash storage and removal. We considered several options including internal and external storage areas. People with years of experience strongly advised us against creating an internal trash storage area as it creates odors, attracts insects and rodents and is ultimately impossible to keep clean and smelling fresh. Using an interior space in the basement is also infeasible for several other reasons. First, there is no common area access to the basement level as the unit entry door to the Garden Apartment is in the first floor hallway. Thus the only way to enter access the old mechanical room would be to enter through the garden apartment. Second, even if a Trash Room could be accessed from a common area, the trash barrels would then have to be hauled up 20 steps to the first floor hallway and then down an additional 6 steps to street level, only to be returned up 6 steps and down 20 steps back to the basement. Not only is this solution undesirable, but completely infeasible. We also examined the possibility of exterior storage in the rear patio. Everyone we consulted, strongly discouraged this idea as it inevitably leads to odors and an untenable rodent problems. Also, it would again involve hauling heavy barrels up and down 20 steps. The unchangeable historic characteristics of our architecture makes it impracticable and undesirable to store trash in the interior, or exterior of the building.

After evaluating all of the available options, we have determined that the best practice method of handling household trash is by strict adherence to the rules for putting out rubbish. This needs to

be strictly enforced and combined with regularly scheduled exterior cleanings directly following trash pick-up on Monday and Friday mornings. Accordingly, we will contract with our management company for exterior cleanings every week on Monday and Friday mornings after trash collection. Additionally, cleaning of all building common areas will be performed weekly on Wednesdays, which shall include the cleaning of the exterior front entry and removal of any debris from the exterior perimeter of the building. Thus, the exterior of 112 Myrtle Street will be cleaned and maintained three times a week, on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Enforcing resident compliance with trash rules is also an essential component of a successful program. To ensure such compliance, we shall include the attached provision in all leases, contractually obligating tenants to strictly adhere to the guidelines for when trash is to be put out and how. The Lease provision provides that tenants are legally responsible for reimbursing the Landlord for any and all fines attributed to them. This will incentivize tenants to follow the rules in order to avoid paying penalties.

Conclusion

Once again, we have two goals for 112 Myrtle Street. First, to complete an historically appropriate full renovation to a decrepit building situated prominently on the corner of Myrtle Street and Grove Square. Second, to provide exceptional management for the new residents of 112 Myrtle Street and its neighbors. Our success is predicated on improving the building and contributing positively to the fabric of the neighborhood. The revitalization of this building will be impactful to the beautification of Myrtle Street, Grove Square and Beacon Hill as a whole. The minor increase in interior living area, inside the existing envelope of the building is consistent with the intent and spirit of the building code and will enable us to complete the restoration of this building in a manner most beneficial to the neighborhood and to attract good tenants, including families. We respectfully request the Beacon Hill Civic Association to support our efforts to better this building and make a positive contribution to the life of this neighborhood in the form of a non-opposition letter.