

**OFFERED BY COUNCILORS ED FLYNN, ERIN MURPHY, BREADON,
COLETTA ZAPATA, FERNANDES ANDERSON, FITZGERALD, MEJIA,
PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER, WORRELL AND LOUIJEUNE**



CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS TRANSPORTATION PLANNING WITHIN THE ARTICLE 80 DEVELOPMENT REVIEW PROCESS

- WHEREAS:** Adopted in 1996, Article 80 of the Boston Zoning Code is the regulatory process that dictates review of development proposals. This process is currently applicable for development projects that include at least 15 units of housing, or those greater than 20,000 square feet. In September of 2024, the city released its Article 80 Modernization Draft Action Plan; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Neighbors and civic groups throughout the city continue to highlight concerns on transportation planning within the Article 80 process - including developer requirements of contributions towards Bluebikes on-site, the City of Boston Planning Department and Boston Transportation Department (BTD) holding developers to internal parking guidelines instead of current neighborhood zoning regulations, and instances of bike-lane and road infrastructure changes that are not connected to an existing network. Moreover, residents continue to call attention to questions regarding whether the City of Boston maintains the ability to preclude future residents of an Article 80 development from obtaining a Resident Permit Parking sticker (RPP), as agreed upon in a specific public process; *and*
- WHEREAS:** Despite the City of Boston Streets Cabinet having announced in August of 2024 the addition of 100 new Bluebikes Stations and a 40% expansion throughout the city, the Planning Department and BTD continue to require developers to contribute tens of thousands of dollars in mitigation funding for Bluebikes in the Article 80 process. Neighbors continue to express that this one-time funding could be used on nearby and long-time public realm and pedestrian safety needs; *and*
- WHEREAS:** In South Boston, according to Article 68 of the Boston Zoning Code, the “South Boston Neighborhood District Off-Street Parking Requirements Residential and Related Uses” states that off-street parking for residential uses is 1.5 spaces per unit; however, the Planning Department recommends developers to follow BTD’s guidelines of 0.5 off-street parking spaces per unit on Article 80 projects.
- WHEREAS:** In recent years, in the midst of our current housing crisis, these parking guidelines continue to be requested after the fact on several projects, despite a number of productive community processes that resulted in good-faith compromises and agreements made by developers with the city to garner the support of neighbors

and abutters, relevant civic groups, and elected officials for much needed housing in our city. Meanwhile, residents continue to raise longtime concerns about our existing parking crisis, with the number of active parking permits far outpacing the number of public parking spaces; *and*

WHEREAS: In addition, transportation planning conducted through Article 80 review, and at times after the process through the Public Improvements Commission (PIC), has resulted in various stages of city approval for bike lanes to be built in front of these projects. However, a number of these bike lanes are to be placed along main streets, commercial roads, and high traffic corridors. Some have either specifically stated to not include bike lanes through a separate Planning Department and BTM planning process, such as on West Broadway in South Boston and the South Boston Transportation Action Plan, while others will lack any connection to a comprehensive network and end abruptly near dangerous intersections. Neighbors and small businesses continue to call for a wholly separate public process as it relates to bike lane infrastructure, with the opportunity to discuss alternative routes as part of a network, and not to be done ad hoc in front of large development projects with no masterplan; *and*

WHEREAS: A Transportation Access Plan Agreement (TAPA) is an agreement on Article 80 Large Development Projects that specifies commitments that will reduce a development's transportation impacts. These commitments can include subsidized MBTA pass programs to incentivize commuters, installing traffic signals, the electric vehicle readiness policy, etc; *and*

WHEREAS: The City's Residential Parking Permit Policy for new Article 80 apartment buildings remains unclear. For a number of years, development teams would relay to neighbors during the Article 80 process their intention for a particular rental project to be restricted from RPP stickers, with the address to be placed on a "no parking list" maintained by Office of the Parking Clerk, as a way to prevent exacerbating the existing parking issues in a community. In 2022, residents that moved into a new apartment building in Charlestown were unaware of this agreement, and subsequently had their residential parking permits revoked after a month. Residents continue to seek assurances and clarity on the city's ability to both maintain and enforce potential restrictions for Residential Parking Permits through Transportation Access Plan Agreements (TAPA); *and*

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the appropriate Committee of the Boston City Council holds a hearing to discuss parking, transportation and planning requirements with regard to Article 80 Projects in South Boston. Representatives from the Planning Department, Transportation Department, Public Improvements Commission as well as other relevant and interested parties shall be invited to attend.

Filed on: April 2, 2025