

OFFERED BY COUNCILORS GABRIELA COLETTA, JOHN FITZGERALD, TANIA FERNANDES ANDERSON, BREADON, DURKAN, MEJIA, MURPHY, PEPÉN, SANTANA, WEBER, WORRELL, AND LOUIJEUNE



## CITY OF BOSTON IN CITY COUNCIL

### ORDER FOR A HEARING TO DISCUSS THE ONGOING MODERNIZATION OF ARTICLE 80 IN BOSTON'S ZONING CODE

**WHEREAS,** In 1996, the Boston Redevelopment Authority adopted Article 80 to provide clear guidelines for the development review process relating to large projects (adding more than 50,000 square feet), small projects (greater than 20,000 square feet), planned development areas (new overlay zoning districts for project areas larger than 1 acre), and institutional master plans (projects relating to academic and medical campuses); *and*

**WHEREAS,** Article 80 was adopted because the parameters of these unique projects rarely fit neatly within the existing zoning code and a more predictable review process was needed. The goal of Article 80 was to provide a “clear, predictable and unified requirements” for the review of large development projects which included timely reviews, rezoning, reinforcing zoning code protections and guaranteeing community groups a place at the table; *and*

**WHEREAS,** However, the current process lacks proper mechanisms to ensure the Article 80 process is conducted with a clear assessment of community needs and subsequent investment in affordable housing, workforce development, public realm improvements, open space and parks investments, and arts and culture; *and*

**WHEREAS,** Additionally, the solicitation of community feedback occurs during an open comment period, without intentionality to hear from historically marginalized and protected groups, or benchmarks of success for outreach per race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, homeownership or renter status, etc.; *and*

**WHEREAS,** The Boston Planning and Development Agency is currently undertaking a review and redesign of the Article 80 process through what they call “*Article 80 Modernization: Community Engagement and Development Review Operations Improvement*”. Both internal operations and community engagement are in the midst of being reviewed and ultimately reformed; *and*

**WHEREAS,** Although the modernization process is scheduled for completion January 2024, in the spirit of transparency, updates regarding the current status of the process should be made publicly available; *and*

**WHEREAS,** It is vital that the Article 80 process work effectively to extract proper mitigation and equitable community input as the City of Boston continues to evolve. As we work to modernize this process, transparency is key to ensuring we are utilizing the adequate mechanisms to address the systemic issues with the current process;  
**NOW, THEREFORE BE IT**

**ORDERED:** That the appropriate committee of the Boston City Council hold a hearing to discuss the modernization of the Article 80 process and that the Boston Planning and Development Agency, relevant stakeholders, and the public be invited to testify.

Filed on: January 24, 2024