

**Statement in Support and Project Impact Statement of
Polar Views LLC’s Application to City of Worcester Planning Board for Site Plan
Review Approval and Special Permits for Inclusionary Zoning Incentives for
Mixed-Use Eligible Development Project at 10 Grosvenor Street, Worcester, Massachusetts**

I. Background and Project Scope.

Polar Views LLC (“Polar Views”) is proposing to develop the property known and numbered as 10 Grosvenor Street, Worcester, Massachusetts,¹ which currently contains approximately 9,283 square feet of land with an approximately 2,264 square foot former church building located at the corners of Lamartine Street and Grosvenor Street (the “Property”).

The Property is split-zoned, being located within the Business, General 3.0 (“BG-3.0”) zoning district and the Residence, General 5 (“RG-5”), and is bounded by Lamartine Street to the north, Grosvenor Street to the east, the Worcester Inspectional Services Department building and residential properties to the south, and vacant properties and a parking area to the west.

Polar Views is seeking site plan review approval and special permits for inclusionary zoning incentives from the City of Worcester Planning Board (the “Board”), as more particularly described herein, in connection with the razing and removal of the existing building and construction and development of a 4-story approximately 19,052 square foot multifamily Eligible Development building (the “New Building”) with 12 units, 2 of which will be affordable rate units (i.e., 1 unit at 80% AMI, 1 unit at 60% AMI), and will contain 10 parking spaces and other related site improvements (the “Project”). The Project also includes the construction and/or installation of related site improvements at the Property, including, but not limited to, new sidewalks and walkways (i.e., existing sidewalks will be replaced and/or repaired as needed, new walkways will be provided on-locus to provide access to entry doors), curb cuts (along Lamartine Street and Grosvenor Street), landscaped open spaces and amenity areas (e.g., grab & go lounge, community room, solarium and roof deck), electric vehicle (EV) charging stations,² interior bicycle storage areas³ and other site features. The New Building will be located entirely within the RG-5 zoning district.

¹ 10 Grosvenor Street has a parcel identification of 05-014-0046A.

² 2 EV “ready” charging (i.e., conduit run) spaces will be designated for future electric vehicle parking.

³ A secure interior bicycle storage room will be provided that will accommodate 16 bikes.

II. Requirements for Site Plan Review Approval and Special Permits for Inclusionary Zoning Incentives.

The development of 5 or more dwelling units requires site plan review approval by the Board pursuant to Table 5.1 of Article V of the Zoning Ordinance. The New Building will contain 12 dwelling units, and, therefore, the Project requires site plan review approval by the Board.

Article IV, Section 7, Table 4.4 requires 2 parking spaces per dwelling unit. The Project will provide 12 dwelling units, requiring 24 parking spaces as a baseline requirement. However, Article VII, Section 6.A.i of the Zoning Ordinance provides that “Eligible Developments”⁴ are entitled to an increase in the maximum number of units permitted in the zoning district of an additional percentage equal to the percentage of affordable units plus five percent (5%) up to a maximum 15% in the RG-5. Further, Article VII, Section 6.A.ii.a entitle Eligible Developments to an additional “twenty-five percent (25%) bonus from the minimum parking requirements of this Ordinance provided that the applicant submits a Transportation Management Program (TMP) to the Planning Board and the TMP is maintained in accordance with any conditions imposed by the Planning Board, as a requirement of any Definitive Site Plan Approval”. With the 15% RG-5 entitlement the parking requirement is reduced to 21 parking spaces, and with the 25% reduction afforded to Eligible Developments, the parking requirement is further reduced to 16 parking spaces. Polar Views is applying for an Eligible Development special permit under Article VII, Section 6.A.ii.c for up to a 50% reduction of the 24-space baseline requirement which, if granted, would result in 12 parking spaces being required for the Project. Based on the foregoing and the 10 parking spaces proposed, the Project requires 6 parking spaces of relief, which Polar Views is requesting by virtue of the grant of a (i) special permit by the Planning Board for 4 parking spaces;⁵ and (ii) variance by the Zoning Board of Appeals for 2 parking spaces.

Polar Views is also seeking certain waivers as specified herein. The Project will also require the submission of applications to the Worcester Zoning Board of Appeals for variances for noncompliance with minimum frontage, lot area and front and side yard setbacks, and a special permit for modification of landscaping and loading requirements.

III. Reasons for Definitive Site Plan Review Approval and Special Permits for Inclusionary Zoning Incentives.

⁴ An Eligible Development is defined in the Zoning Ordinance as “developments that include at least five percent (5%) of the units for the overall project with income restrictions at the sixty percent (60%) AMI limit.” The Project will have at least 5% of the units for the overall project with income restrictions at the 60% AMI limit, and, therefore, constitutes an Eligible Development.

⁵ This is in addition to the other 8 parking spaces of relief (3 by virtue of the 15% density bonus and 5 by virtue of the 25% bonus, totaling 12 parking spaces, which is the maximum 50% of the 24-space baseline requirement).

The Project satisfies the site plan review standards and special permit criteria as set forth in Article V, Section 5.B, Article II, Section 6.A.2 and Article VII, Section 6.A.ii.b of the Zoning Ordinance for the reasons stated herein:

1. Adequacy and arrangement of vehicular traffic access and circulation including intersections, road widths, pavement surfaces, dividers and traffic controls; Traffic flow and safety, including access, parking and loading areas (special permit criteria); Adequacy and arrangement of pedestrian traffic access and circulation, walkway structures, control of intersections with vehicular traffic and overall pedestrian convenience.

The proposed curb cuts and off-street parking will provide a safe, adequate and efficient layout and design for vehicular and pedestrian traffic, and propose suitable alignment with property lines, buildings, parking, access and walkways. The building design was developed such that the resident parking will be in close proximity to the lobby entrances of the New Building. The proposed parking and loading areas, drive aisles, curb cuts and building entrances will not cause any nuisance or hazard to vehicles or pedestrians within or off the Property, or line of sight hazards along nearby streets. The proposed drive aisles within the parking areas will provide sufficient widths and turning radii necessary for safe and efficient passenger vehicle travel.

As discussed below, the proposed parking will adequately serve the occupants of the New Building and will not have a material negative impact on the neighborhood with respect to parking. The proposed parking layout provides adequate ingress and egress to the parking areas by means of clearly defined access driveways, to provide the most safe, effective and efficient flow to and from the Property.

Emergency vehicles will be able to access the Property from the curb cuts along Grosvenor Street and Lamartine Street, or by parking on the adjoining streets. Safe, convenient and efficient pedestrian access to the New Building will be provided along accessible walkways and sidewalks. Loading will occur in close proximity to the New Building, and trash pick-up will occur next to the New Building. The proposed loading area will be in close proximity to the New Building and a safe distance from electric utility equipment and pedestrian walkways.

Proximity of the Project to public transit services (e.g., WRTA bus, MBTA commuter rail and Amtrak) and interior and exterior bicycle accommodations are expected to promote less reliance on automobiles as compared to other residential developments in the City in less transit-friendly locations. The Project will not result in a substantial increase in trip generation levels to and from the Property, and the minor traffic generated and patterns of access and egress will not cause congestion, hazard or a substantial change to the neighborhood character.

2. Location, arrangement, appearance and sufficiency of off-street parking and loading.

Table 4.4 of Article IV of the Zoning Ordinance provides minimum parking requirements for properties in the RG-5 zoning district based on use. Multifamily use requires 2 spaces per dwelling unit. However, Article VII, Section 6.A.ii.a of the Zoning Ordinance provides that Eligible Developments are entitled to an automatic 25% reduction from minimum parking requirements provided that a Transportation Management Program (TMP) is submitted to the Board.

As discussed above, based on the proposed 12 residential units and applying both the 15% density bonus and the 25% parking reduction entitlement under Article VII, the Project requires a minimum of 16 off-street parking spaces. The 50% special permit further reduces the requirement to 12 parking spaces. A total of 10 parking spaces are provided for the Project. The proposed parking space to unit ratio for the Project of 0.83, which ratio is high as compared to many other large-scale multifamily projects that have been approved in the area.

The proposed parking will adequately serve the occupants of the New Building, and will not have a material negative impact on the neighborhood with respect to on- or off-street parking. There will continue to be ample on-street parking on surrounding streets. The neighborhood is transit-oriented in nature (i.e., WRTA bus stations), and facilities at the Property will accommodate alternate means of transportation (e.g., bicycle storage). There exist amenities in close proximity to the Property and there is a nearby downtown employer hub.

The majority of the proposed parking spaces will be enclosed within the New Building, and are designed to reduce the amount of at-grade land devoted to parking and utilize parking areas more efficiently, which results in a more urban look and feel by not overwhelming the Property with surface parking. Less parking on the surface level allows for more areas that can be devoted to affordable units, open space, amenities and commercial space.

As noted above, the loading area will allow delivery and garbage trucks to safely enter the site.

3. Location, arrangement, size, design and general site compatibility of buildings, lighting and signs; Social, economic or community needs that are served by the proposal (special permit criteria); Neighborhood character and social structure; buildings, noise, glare (special permit criteria); Potential fiscal impact, including city services needed, tax base, and employment (special permit criteria).

The Project will dramatically enhance and improve the surrounding area and will improve the safety, efficiency, aesthetic appeal, design and quality of the site, which was underutilized as a former church and contains limited natural terrain features.

The kind, size, height and nature of the New Building and the proposed site improvements for the Project are consistent with buildings in this neighborhood (including, but not limited to, the size and height of the City's ISD building) in and around Polar Park and other neighborhoods within the City that have been developed for high rise multifamily use. The building façades will incorporate a contemporary approach with dynamic but efficient massing. Variations in exterior wall material depth and detailing will provide a rich texture and variation to the building exterior, bringing in natural tones. The New Building will provide other architecturally appealing features and massing and changing façade heights. The New Building will be accessible, with modern finishes, energy efficient appliances, state-of-the-art HVAC systems and large windows that will make the units comfortable, safe and reflective of modern design standards. The walkways, open spaces, balconies and roof deck will help activate outdoor common and recreational areas and improve connections within the site and surrounding areas. Except as otherwise provided herein, the New Building will comply with dimensional requirements as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance, including height and floor-to-area ratio.

The Project is functionally and aesthetically compatible with the surrounding municipal, commercial and residential properties in the neighborhood, which include a mix of City department, single, 2- and 3-family, multifamily, business and commercial uses. The Property was most recently occupied with underutilized religious use, and the proposed New Building and improvements to the site will have no greater impact on, adversely affect or be detrimental to adjoining premises or zones or the neighborhood. Based on the foregoing, the New Building and improvements to the Property in connection therewith will fit into the present character of the neighborhood, and granting this approval will promote an appropriate use of the site.

The Project use will not result in any increase in noise levels that would be noticeable at any abutting properties. The Project will neither create a nuisance, hazard, congestion or concerns pertaining to health, safety or general welfare, and there will not be substantial harm to the neighborhood or derogation from the intent of the Zoning Ordinance as a result of the Project.

Proposed new lighting will be modern in design, and will not have a deleterious effect on or cause a nuisance to neighboring properties or abutting streets. The proposed outdoor lighting will be adequate for safe and secure access to and from the New Building, walkways, sidewalks and the loading area. The proposed lighting will be arranged and have directional shields so as to minimize light from shining onto abutting properties and streets. Any new identification signage will be provided in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance.

The Project will improve the economic vitality of the neighborhood and surrounding areas by increasing the number of residents in the area who will patronize local businesses and economic centers in and around the neighborhood. The Project will create new construction jobs, sustain post-construction jobs, and will generate additional tax revenues and fees for the City.

4. Adequacy of stormwater and drainage facilities; Adequacy of utilities, water supply and sewerage disposal facilities and other public services (special permit criteria).

The development does not anticipate any adverse effect on drainage patterns. The best management practices for stormwater are incorporated in the design of the Project, and will be adequate to manage stormwater runoff generated by the Project and to satisfy the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance, the Worcester Department of Public Works and Massachusetts Stormwater standards. Stormwater runoff collected on-site will be directed away from the New Building and discharged to the City's existing drainage system in Lamartine Street and Grosvenor Street via an underground connection. Deep-sump hooded catch basins and an isolator row within the subsurface infiltration system will provide 80% TSS removal for runoff from the access driveway and surface parking area. The majority of stormwater will be developed by the proposed roof top which is directly discharged into the subsurface infiltration basin. Post-development peak runoff rates will be mitigated by this subsurface infiltration basin.

New water and sewer connections, gas and electric service facilities and infrastructure will need to be provided for the New Building and the Project. However, such utility lines and infrastructure currently exist within Lamartine Street and Grosvenor Street and are readily available to be connected to any new utilities that are necessary for the Project.

5. Adequacy, type and arrangement of trees, shrubs and other landscaping elements in accordance with the Landscaping Design Standards set forth in Article V, Section 5(C); Adequacy of useable common property or open space.

The Project proposes to provide enhanced open space by way of landscape buffers that will contain a variety of aesthetically appealing and native trees, shrubs and other plantings not currently provided at the site. The landscape buffers will comply with the Zoning Ordinance, and will serve as a visual buffer between the site and adjoining properties and streets. All new trees will be Asian Long-Horned Beetle and Emerald Ash Borer compliant. Other open space amenity areas (e.g., grab & go lounge, community room, solarium and roof deck will also be provided throughout the site. The Project proposes to create ample common areas and open space amenity areas at the site as described herein that can be used by residents for outdoor leisure and/or passive recreation.

6. Protection of adjacent or neighboring properties against noise, glare, unsightliness or other objectionable features.

The Project use will not result in any increase in noise levels that would be noticeable at any abutting properties. The Project will neither create a nuisance, hazard, congestion or concerns pertaining to health, safety or general welfare, and there will not be substantial harm to the neighborhood or derogation from the intent of the Zoning Ordinance as a result of the Project.

The proposed lighting will be dark-sky compliant, will not exceed a color temperature of 3,000K, will be appropriately arranged with directional shields so as to minimize light from shining and/or spilling onto abutting properties and streets while maintaining pedestrian and vehicular safety, and will not have a deleterious effect on neighboring properties. Site lighting is designed to meet IESNA (Illuminating Engineering Society of North America) guidelines for security minimums within parking and pedestrian areas.

Trash receptacles will be stored within the ground floor and brought out to the loading/trash pick-up zone only on days scheduled for trash pick-up.

7. Adequacy of fire lanes and other emergency zones and the provisions of fire hydrants.

There is no special emergency zone noted on the plans. However, fire trucks and other emergency vehicles will be able to access the Property by parking within the access driveways on site and/or on multiple streets surrounding the site in close proximity to the New Building. The New Building will be serviced by existing municipal fire hydrants located within the sidewalk on Lamartine Street as well as one new hydrant along Lamartine Street. The New Building will utilize a fire suppression system with a direct connection to the water service main within Grosvenor Street. There is one new hydrant proposed as part of the new development.

8. Special attention to the adequacy of structures, roadways and landscaping in areas with susceptibility to ponding, flooding and/or erosion; Adequacy of erosion and sedimentation control measures to be utilized during and after construction; Impacts on the natural environment (special permit criteria).

There are no natural terrain features at the Property, and the Project will minimize, to the extent practicable, changes to the natural terrain as a result of the Project. The proposed drainage and site design layout of the Project improvements are designed to reduce any susceptibility of ponding, flooding and erosion. The Property is outside of the Floodplain and Water Resources

Protection Overlay Districts and ecologically sensitive areas, and there are no wetland resource areas on the Property. There will not be any negative impacts on the groundwater. During construction, appropriate measures will be taken for controlling erosion, sedimentation and pollution as set forth in the plans submitted. The premises will remain maintained upon completion of the construction phase.

9. Conformance of the site design with the purposes and intent of the Worcester Zoning Ordinance.

The Project complies with the design requirements of Article V, Section 5.B, Article IV, Section 7.A.3 and other applicable provisions of the Zoning Ordinance by providing sufficient off-street parking spaces necessary to accommodate the residents and occupants of the New Building. The proposed drive aisles within the parking area will provide sufficient widths and turning radii necessary to provide for safe and efficient travel for passenger vehicles. The proposed parking, walkways and landscaping-related improvements are arranged for safe and convenient access for motorists and pedestrians. Proposed new lighting will be modern in design, and will not have a deleterious effect on or cause a nuisance to neighboring properties or abutting streets. The Project will dramatically improve the aesthetic appeal, design and quality of the Property, which is highly visible to the public. The Project will improve the economic vitality of the neighborhood and surrounding areas by increasing the number of residents in the area who will patronize local businesses and economic centers in and around the neighborhood. The Project will create new construction jobs, sustain post construction jobs, and will generate additional tax revenues and fees for the City.

The Project is in conformance with the purposes and intent of the Zoning Ordinance as it will provide much-needed and in-demand affordable housing (including 8.3% of units at 60% AMI) to support the City's critical housing stock, which will promote the economic vitality of the neighborhood and the City. The Project is a development of a compatible land use that provides urban densities, is a redevelopment of a corner lot site that is highly underutilized, offers a design that provides an aesthetically pleasing environment for pedestrians that is accessible, compact, safe and inviting. The Project promotes compact, environmentally-responsible (e.g., EV charging stations, interior bicycle storage and other eco-friendly features), pedestrian friendly development that is physically and functionally integrated through site design and avoids over-dedication of land devoted to surface parking. Moreover, the Project will encourage the most appropriate use of the land in a manner that promotes economic development, general welfare, safety and the creation of housing of such type, size and cost suitable for meeting the current and future needs of the City. The Project protects natural resources as well as the architectural, scenic and aesthetic qualities of the community and protects against the uses of land which are incompatible with nearby uses, undue intensity of noise and danger and congestion in travel and transportation.

10. Conformance and compatibility of the site plan design with structures listed in the most recent State Register of Historic Places.

There are no existing structures at the Property nor is the Property listed on the National Register of Historic Places or the Massachusetts Cultural Resource Information System (MACRIS) database. The Project will continue to enhance the existing aesthetics and character of the neighborhood, and the Property, including the New Building, will be compatible with other historic and non-historic structures in the neighborhood.

11. Adequacy and impact on the regional transportation system.

The Project will not materially impact the regional transportation system as the neighborhood is transit-oriented nature (i.e., WRTA bus stations within walking distance will accommodate alternate means of transportation (e.g., bicycle storage, etc.). There exist amenities in close proximity to the site and there is a nearby access to the downtown employer hub. The Project will promote the bike- and walk-ability of the neighborhood as it will include indoor bicycle storage areas and there will be safer and more convenient access to the surrounding neighborhood.

12. Adequacy of plans and protective measures to ensure minimal risk of contamination to surface or groundwater.

The Property is outside of the Floodplain and Water Resources Protection Overlay Districts and ecologically sensitive areas, and there are no surface waters or wetland resource areas on the Property. The site is not located within the City of Worcester Combined Sewer System Area or the Commercial Area Revitalization District (CARD). A Notice of Intent Application will be submitted to the Worcester Conservation Commission under the Local Ordinance for work within 100 feet of a catch basin. There will be no storage of hazardous materials or substances at the Property. Based on the foregoing, plans and protective measures under the Project will ensure minimal risk of contamination to surface or groundwater.

IV. Waivers and Other Zoning Relief.

Polar Views seeks the following waivers and other zoning relief, to the extent applicable:

1. Plan requirement to show abutters within 300 feet of the Property; and
2. All other waivers and zoning relief that may be required.