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Mayor Michelle Wu
1 City Hall Square
Boston, MA 02201

November 8, 2022

Dear Mayor Wu,

The Friends of the Public Garden has been an essential partner with the City for over 50 years to renew, care for, and protect the Boston Common, Public Garden, and Commonwealth Avenue Mall. One of our primary functions as partners and advocates is to protect our parks from the loss of sunlight caused by nearby development, which negatively impacts the health of the living landscape as well as the people enjoying them. We have learned through the growth of Downtown over the past three decades that we can have both development and healthy protected parks, while conforming to State shadow laws protecting the Common and Garden.

We work closely with our partner park advocates throughout the City on a variety of issues of common interest, and given our long history of addressing this issue in the Downtown parks, we understand the implications for parkland everywhere. New shadows on public parks is bad public policy. These past three years have shown us how valuable greenspace is for people's physical and mental health.

It has come to our attention that the proposed development at 305 Brookline Avenue will cast significant shadows on the Emerald Necklace. The dates of concern, which are the dates that the shadow laws for the Common and Garden address, are March 21, June 21, September 21, and December 21. In March there is a large new shadow on the Riverway and parkland from 8am-10am. In June there is small new shadow on the Riverway, and after 6pm there are new shadows on the parkland. In September there is a large area of new shadow on the Riverway and parkland in the morning and again in the evening. In December new shadow is cast on the Riverway and parkland starting at 8:15 and increasing until 10:30, then diminishing by noon.

We urge the City to abide by the guidelines for Longwood Medical Area development that were adhered to for the last Simmons campus proposal, which resulted in protection of nearby parkland while allowing development to occur.

The Friends has created a sunshine model that demonstrates that significant new development is possible Downtown while protecting existing sunshine in the Common and Garden. This model can be applied anywhere in the City, to balance protection and development. As the City inevitably grows, sunshine protection for our irreplaceable greenspaces should be a priority.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Vizza
President

Cc: Chief of Environment, Energy, and Open Space Mariama White-Hammond
Parks Commissioner Ryan Woods
Chief of Planning Arthur Jemison (BPDA)
Deputy Chief of Urban Design Diana Fernandez (BPDA)
City Councilor Kenzie Bok
City Councilor Tania Fernandez Anderson
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