

May 5, 2022

Dear Needham neighbor,

We would like to introduce ourselves as the new owners of the 9-acre site of the former Muzi Ford, Muzi Chevrolet, and Muzi Car Wash. An affiliate of The Bulfinch Companies, Inc., 557 Highland, LLC, purchased the property on December 15, 2021. Bulfinch is a third-generation real estate firm that dates back to 1936. We specialize in the acquisition, development, repositioning, and management of commercial properties. Bulfinch builds, buys, and redevelops real estate for the long term. We own a number of other properties in the Needham area, including 250 First Avenue (which we constructed in 1997, and was for many years our corporate headquarters), 144 Gould Street, 15–19 Crawford Street, 117 Kendrick Street, 75 Second Avenue and 100-124 Second Avenue, as well as several others.

As you probably know, the 2021 Needham Annual Town Meeting created the Highway Commercial 1 zoning district to permit new uses that would be beneficial to Needham. Following our due diligence, we have determined that the best use for this premier location is a combination of office, research and development, and life science uses with approximately 10,000 square feet of amenity retail/restaurant space. We have created a plan that incorporates these uses. In compliance with the newly approved zoning, we have applied to the Needham Planning Board to request Special Permits for such a project, to be known as the Needham Innovation Center.

We are proposing to redevelop the property into approximately 496,000 square feet of office, research and development, and life science uses. There will be two principal buildings; a 5-story building on the northerly portion of the site and a 3-story building on the southerly portion of the site, connected by a 2-story glass atrium with a green roof and outdoor deck. The Project also will include approximately 1,408 parking spaces located in one-level of below grade parking under the buildings, a separate stand-alone 6-level parking garage, and a small amount of surface parking. Significant areas of landscaped open space areas will be created on what is now an almost completely impervious site.

Along with the new buildings, we will undertake significant roadway improvements to improve traffic flow, as well as numerous safety enhancements in the area. These include widening Gould Street from Highland Avenue to north of the project site, signalizing the entrance to the project, signalizing the Gould and Central Avenue intersection, and installing bike lanes. Other public amenities will include a pickleball court, a perimeter jogging/walking path for the public (with a wooden bridge over the new stormwater pond), open space, connection to a potential future walking path on the MBTA rail spur north of the project site, and water feature at the entrance to Gould Street along Highland Avenue and at the site's northeast corner.

DISCOVER + DELIVER

You can find more information about the project and Special Permit application on the Town's website at: [http://www.needhamma.gov/5180/557-Highland-Ave-former-Muzi-site?ct=t\(EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_5_18_2021_14_31_COPY_01\)](http://www.needhamma.gov/5180/557-Highland-Ave-former-Muzi-site?ct=t(EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_5_18_2021_14_31_COPY_01)). You can also find recordings of the neighborhood Zoom meetings that were held on April 25, April 27 and May 4.

We are proud to propose this world-class, eco-friendly, LEED-certified office/life science project at the Highland Avenue gateway to Needham. We are confident that our project will generate hundreds of high paying jobs and over \$5 million in recurring annual additional real estate and personal property tax revenue. We are committed to incorporating best practices to address climate change and to reduce the project's carbon footprint during construction and over its lifetime, including rooftop solar arrays and the use of renewable energy. Our programs to promote the reuse and recycling of materials during construction and operation will exceed LEED standards. The buildings also will meet WELL Building and EnergyStar standards.

We will be hosting two additional ZOOM informational meetings for residents who want to learn more about our proposed development. They will be on Thursday, May 12 and Thursday, May 19 at 7:30 PM. Please use the following ZOOM info to attend the meeting:

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://zoom.us/j/97872407637?pwd=dGIHTeRDNUVrSXh3USStlYWQrWVFOUT09>

Meeting ID: 978 7240 7637

Passcode: 248004

One tap mobile

+13017158592,,97872407637#,,, *248004# US

We look forward to meeting you and discussing this exciting project in greater detail. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please feel free to see project details and to ask questions at our website: questions@557highland.com. Our project team will respond to you accordingly.

Robert



ROBERT A. SCHLAGER, CPM
President