

Land Use Experts to Study Lincoln Square Site and Present Development Opportunities to Worcester City Council

Technical Assistance Panel Provides Expertise at No Cost to City

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

Boston, Mass. – (September 25, 2014) – A panel of local and state real estate experts, funded and staffed by [ULI Boston/New England](#) (Urban Land Institute) and [MassDevelopment](#), will study and evaluate four underused parcels in downtown Worcester for economic development and land use potential at no cost to the city.

The study group, known as a Technical Assistance Panel (TAP), will be welcomed by City Manager Edward M. Augustus on Tuesday **September 30** at **8 am** inside the Levi Lincoln Chamber in Worcester City Hall and present its findings to the City Council **that evening at 6 pm** in the Esther Howland Council Chamber.

The historic parcels are the former Worcester Boys Club, the Worcester Memorial Auditorium and the Old Court House. The panel will also examine uses for the Highland Street parking lot. The oldest section of the courthouse dates to 1843; the Boys Club and Auditorium were built in the 1930s. In 2009, Preservation Massachusetts placed those buildings on its list of most endangered historic resources in the Commonwealth.

As the decades have advanced through downtown Worcester, new buildings have replaced the courthouse and auditorium; the Boys Club was adapted to be a vocational school. Leaders in Worcester, however, have sought a coordinated development plan for the North Main Street Economic Development Strategy area

“Worcester is full of beautiful buildings that are in need of a second life and as the story of Worcester changes to meet the challenges of a new economy, we must always be looking for new and innovative ideas to repurpose and redesign our historic spaces and buildings,” said Mayor Joseph Petty.

The City has identified three essential questions for the TAP to evaluate:

1. What type of uses would be a good fit for the identified parcels?
2. How do we create connectivity between these parcels and the surrounding neighborhood?
3. How can the City encourage unique and sustainable development for these parcels?

TAPs provide objective, expert advice to municipal and community-based organizations on the feasibility, design, and/or implementation of development initiatives at no charge to the communities. The panel is made up of architects, urban planners, developers, and other real estate professionals who work with MassDevelopment or are members of the Boston District Council of the nonprofit Urban Land Institute.

Sarah Barnat, executive director for ULI Boston, said, “ULI members are thrilled to have the opportunity to provide insight and ideas to the city of Worcester as it considers downtown redevelopment options.”

“This is a vital gateway corridor for Worcester, and we’re looking for creative, modern redevelopment ideas,” City Manager Ed Augustus said. “I’m excited to see what the panel comes up with, as we look to build on tremendous momentum in the North Main Street area and continue toward our goal of creating a

bustling, 18-hours-a-day downtown.”

“Technical assistance panels are a valuable resource for cities and towns seeking to revitalize areas of their community,” said MassDevelopment President and CEO Marty Jones. “Worcester is one of MassDevelopment’s regional homes in the Commonwealth, and we look forward to the panel’s findings and recommendations.”

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About the Urban Land Institute:

The Urban Land Institute (www.uli.org) is a global nonprofit education and research institute supported by its members. Its mission is to provide leadership in the responsible use of land and in sustaining and creating thriving communities worldwide. Established in 1936, the Institute has nearly 33,000 members representing all aspects of land use and development disciplines. ULI's [Boston District Council](#) has over 1,100 members comprised of developers, architects, analysts and financiers.

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