

February 19, 2020

Brona Simon, Executive Director
Massachusetts Historical Commission
220 Morrissey Boulevard
Boston MA 02125

Re: Project Notification Form: Charles F. Hurley Building, Long Term Ground Lease

Dear Ms. Simon:

On behalf of Docomomo/US_New England, an organization focused on our modernist heritage, I am writing to question the demolition-focused premise of the Project Notification Form submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission on behalf of your sister agency, the Division of Capital Asset Management and Maintenance (DCAMM). We hope that there will be an opportunity for public comment on this matter, and that MHC will request that DCAMM reconsider their approach to this historic complex.

Although valuing the architecture of the recent past remains a controversial and incomplete process today, it is notable that 29 years ago, in 1991, the Massachusetts Historical Commission determined that the Health, Welfare, and Education Service Center (of which the Charles F. Hurley Building is a part) was eligible for listing on the National Register of Historic Places, for significance on the national level and also for exception G as a property that had achieved significance within the last fifty years (at the time).

Given MHC's prescient determination of eligibility for the HWESC (called the Boston Government Services Center in the DCAMM report), and also in light of the recommendation of the Boston Landmarks Commission in September of 1990 for "individual listing on the National Register and designation (exterior and selection interior) as a Boston Landmark" [per typed note on the BLC's Building Information Form, BOS.1618], it is striking that DCAMM's PNF seeks approval to develop a Request for Proposals that presents four different options predicated on partial or total demolition for the development of the Hurley Building portion of the site, without an alternative option emphasizing preservation of the Hurley Building as an integral part of this National-Register-eligible and Boston-Landmarks-recommended complex.

While we appreciate the expertise, research and thought invested by respected colleagues in preparing the *Boston Government Services Center: Lindemann-Hurley Preservation Report*, our organization must encourage MHC to question the fundamental, demolition-oriented assumptions of this PNF. We would welcome the opportunity for public comment on the Report and the PNF.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


Gary Wolf, FAIA, President
DOCOMOMO/US_NE

DOCOMOMO/US_New England

c/o Wolf Architects, Inc. 98 North Washington Street, Suite 304 Boston Massachusetts 02114