



# LOWER FALLS IMPROVEMENT ASSOCIATION RIVERSIDE COMMITTEE

## **PRESENTATION TO THE LAND USE COMMITTEE**

**March 24, 2020**



# LFIA Riverside Committee







# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Design Guidelines

The Planning Department, working with Form + Place, drafted design guidelines intended to allow for flexibility.

No specific designs or even architectural styles are provided for any of the 10 proposed buildings.

As the Planning Department acknowledges, this is not the usual special permit process: greater controls and specificity would be required if this were a small project.

The guidelines are unobjectionable, but vague – calling for “high quality” materials and “consistency” and “integration” in design. What the development will look like is unknown.

Issue: No sense of what the project will look like and no public process for implementation of the guidelines.



# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Design Guidelines

### What's Needed

#### Before Filing of Building Permit Application:

- Community Liaison Committee meetings with Planning Department on design plans
- To-scale, photorealistic renderings of buildings proposed in the site plans showing multiple options for architectural elements, materials, plantings and signage from a pedestrian perspective at:
  - Grove St./1-95 overpass
  - Grove St. sidewalk in front of buildings 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7
  - Locations in Lower Falls
  - Charles River







# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Design Guidelines

### What's Needed Before Filing (cont.):

- Public UDC meeting before building permit application is filed:
  - Presentation of plans proposed to be included in building permit application
  - Public comment
  - UDC and Planning Department comments on plans shared with the public



# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Design Guidelines: Emphasize Residential Character

How Should Riverside Look?

Even though it is a mixed use development, it will be primarily residential.

It will exist between two residential neighborhoods – Auburndale and Lower Falls, as well as abut the Woodland Golf Course and the Charles River.

All design considerations should take into account this residential character. In addition to being “vibrant,” it needs to be a comfortable place to live.

The guidelines should preclude designs for the office and retail spaces that might be appropriate or even desirable in a commercial setting, but do not reflect that this project is, first and foremost, a new residential neighborhood.





# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Grove Street Design:

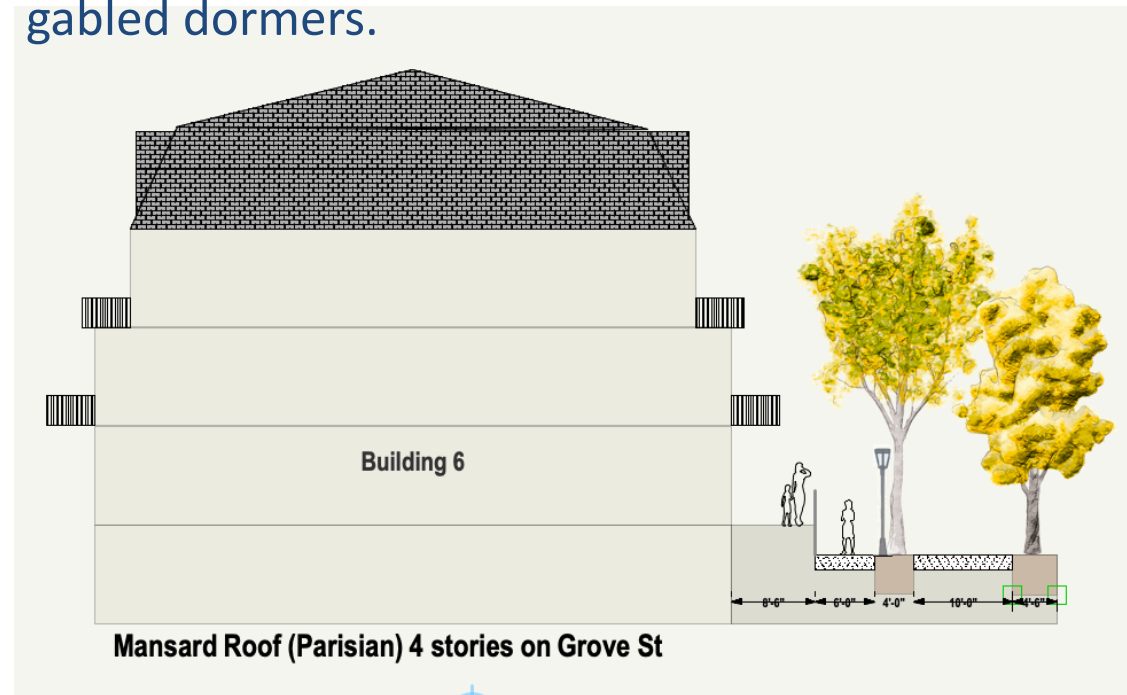
- Plantings and trees in setbacks, setbacks if possible
- Buildings with historic character – e.g., mansard roofs, old mills, Boston's South End
- Brick and/or stone, not vinyl clad
- Arched window heads
- Balconies
- Facade broken up to avoid 200 feet of monotony, yet with a consistent theme
- Buildings 5 and 6 – primary façade needed



# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Grove Street Design

- Plantings in setback and stepbacks to reduce perceived massing.
- Add a row of trees
- Add architectural features such as Mansard roofs with gabled dormers.







# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Grove Street Design

- brick/stone finishes
- arched window heads

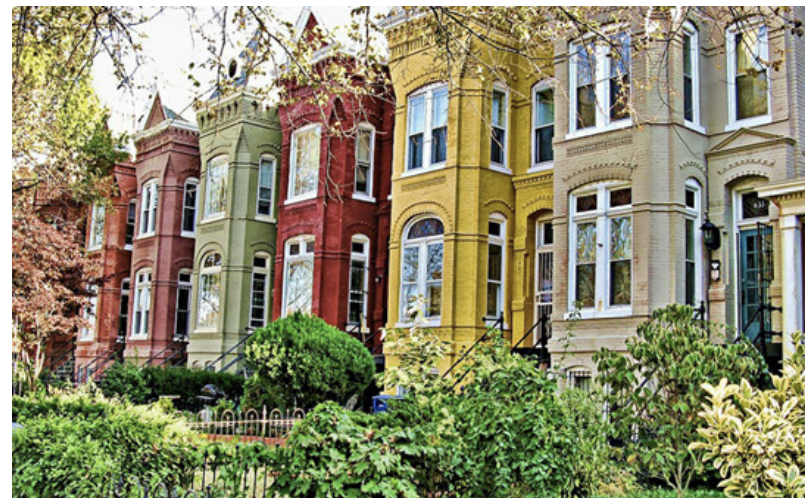




# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Grove Street Design

- Consistent but non-monotonous facades







# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Officer Tower Design

From Mark Development Design Guidelines (Jan. 2020):



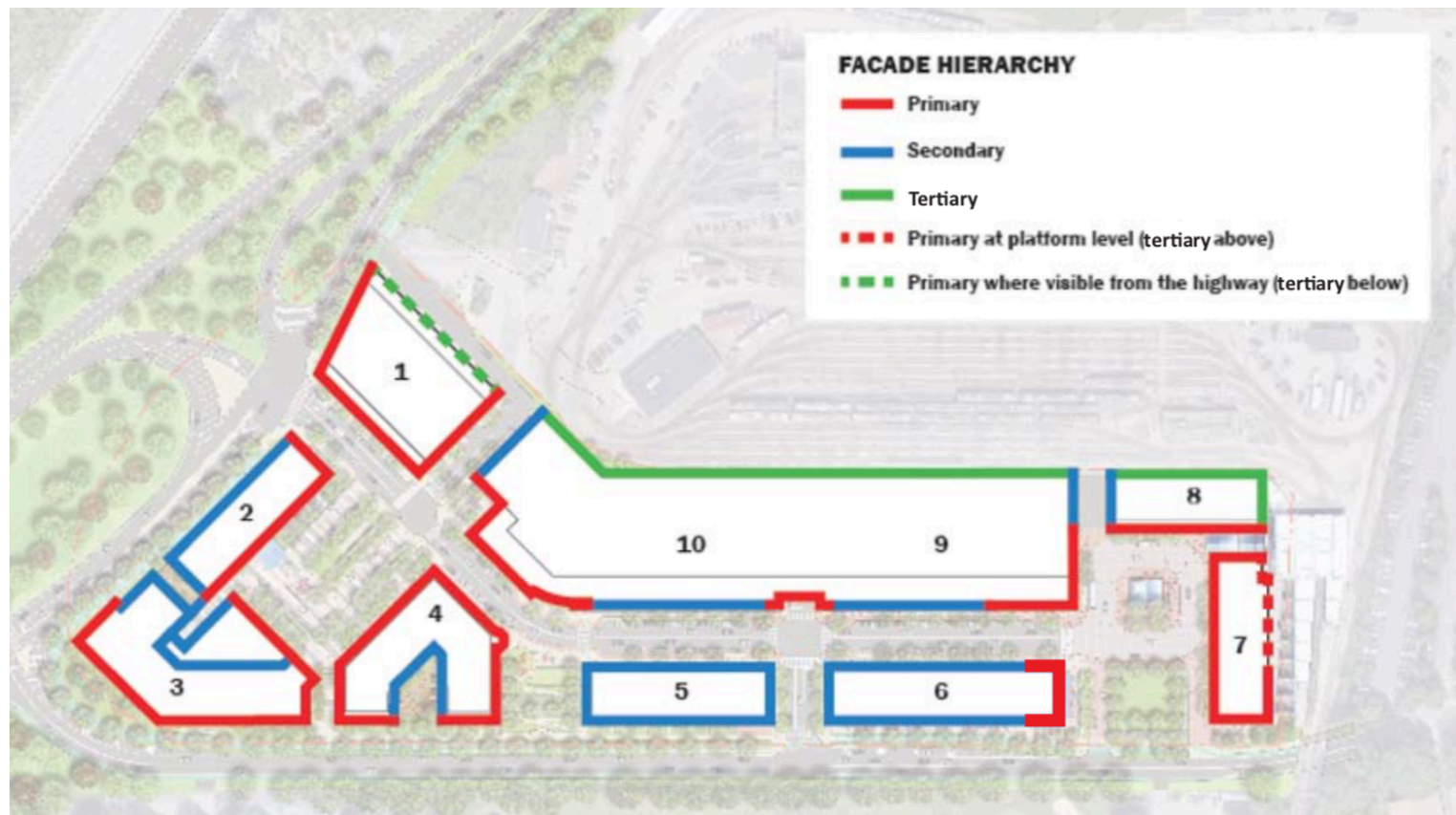
Least preferred



Better

## Grove Street Design

Buildings 5 and 6 – primary façade needed – large, highly visible buildings on Grove Street

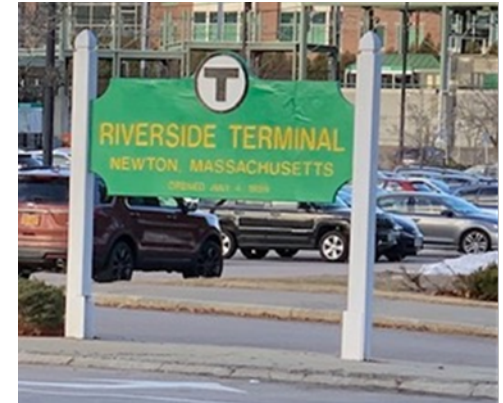




# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Signage – Generally

- Lighting :
  - Minimize internal illumination; prefer “halo”
  - Maximize indirectly lit
  - No neon
  - All internal illumination off between 11 PM and 7 AM
- Support: no freestanding sign except wayfinding (to be static, no advertisements)
- Support: no sandwich signs
- Leasing signage : same limitations as Newton sign ordinance







# LFIA Riverside Committee

No skirting sign restrictions by placing signage inside, behind plate glass windows; must be prohibited in tenant leases





# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Grove Street Signage

Consistent style, indirectly lit only





# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Signage – Office Tower & Hotel

1. Maximum size 100sf, not the proposed 250sf (hotel) or 300sf (office)
2. No rooftop, including on mechanical structures
3. Continuous - no moving, blinking, flashing
4. Lighting – halo or non-exposed exterior.
  - off between 11 PM and 7 AM
  - or 30 min before opening to 30 min after closing

**Need specific proposals to be evaluated at later date**





# LFIA Riverside Committee

## Wayfinding Signage

- As unobtrusive as possible, while still being functional
- Particularly at roundabout, must be consistent with character of Lower Falls: we are first and foremost a residential neighborhood—not a highway access point
- Ensure left turn prohibition into site from Grove Street is clearly indicated at Grove Street/Ramp signal
- Signage in the site and garage indicating no overflow parking in Lower Falls or Auburndale.
- Signage restricting delivery vehicles on Grove Street



# LFIA Riverside Committee

Thanks to the Land Use Committee for your attention to our input

Thanks to Mark Development for a collaborative approach to working on the details of this project.

Thanks to Lower Falls and Auburndale communities and others for continuing comments, contributions and suggestions