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April 3, 2017

Secretary Matthew Beaton  
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs (EEA)  
100 Cambridge Street, Ste 900  
Boston, MA 02114

Re: Boston Harbor Now Testimony for Downtown Waterfront District Municipal Harbor Plan Public Hearing

Thank you for the opportunity to speak this evening. My name is Jill Horwood, Director of Waterfront Policy for Boston Harbor Now.

For four years, Boston Harbor Now has been an active member and contributor to the Downtown Waterfront District Municipal Harbor Plan Citizen's Advisory Group, both in our merged configuration, and as The Boston Harbor Association and the Boston Harbor Island Alliance.

The Downtown Waterfront District is widely recognized as Boston's gateway to the harbor. Rich in history and natural beauty, it is a central focal point for visitors and residents of our nearly-400-year-old coastal capital.

Early in the planning process, the then-Boston Redevelopment Authority released a draft public realm plan that was visionary and recognized the importance of this section of the waterfront. Similarly, the Imagine Boston 2030 draft waterfront plan proposes transformative public open space that showcases Boston's downtown waterfront and its connections with the Rose Kennedy Greenway and inland neighborhoods. The New England Aquarium and Wharf District Council also advanced exciting, creative proposals for increasing and connecting public open space from the Greenway to the harbor.

Unfortunately, the final version of the MHP left out the cohesive, vibrant visions described in these four plans. It also fell short on several of the goals originally articulated in the MHP's Request for Notice to Proceed. Here are some key examples:

- The MHP briefly mentions the Blueway concept but provides no real emphasis or specificity.
- It calls out the need for critical Harborwalk connections at the Coast Guard Building and at the Moakley Bridge, but doesn't address them with clear design concepts.
- The MHP does almost nothing to promote access to Boston Harbor, the Islands, and water transportation. Long Wharf continues to lack an intermodal destination ferry terminal that draws visitors from the Faneuil Hall Visitor Center through the Boston Harbor Islands Pavilion on the Greenway down to the water.
- We strongly support the thoughtfulness that went into the climate resilience section of the MHP. In order for it to be realized, the final MHP needs to identify an implementation mechanism and dedicated funding source.
- The scale of development proposed for the Harbor Garage and Hook Lobster sites is substantially greater than Chapter 91 would ordinarily allow. The offset funding—approximately \$20 million in the draft MHP now down to less than \$12 million—are nowhere near commensurate with the increase in development value being offered to the property owners.

In order to approve the Downtown Waterfront MHP, the State must determine that the public benefits far outweigh the public cost, are worthy of our City's primary gateway to Boston Harbor, and justify the suggested height and massing of both developments. We agree with the BPDA that the goal of the MHP should be to build a well-planned, inviting, and iconic waterfront. We do not believe that the MHP as written achieves this goal and ask that the State require that these improvements be made before the plan is approved.

The State review process should result in an approved MHP that is worthy of the significance of this district that leads down City Hall Plaza's Grand Staircase, through Faneuil Hall and Long Wharf and out to the Harbor Islands. We look forward to continuing to work with the BPDA and the State to achieve a truly great pedestrian-friendly waterfront that is economically and culturally vibrant, climate prepared, and welcoming to all.

We will provide more detail in our written comments. Thank you for your consideration.