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August 7, 2026

Via email: via email to Eva.Vaughan@mass.gov

MEPA Office

100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900

Boston, MA 02114

Attn: Eva Vaughan

RE: EEA File #17022; Single Environmental Impact Report, Resilient Moakley Park Project

Dear Ms. Vaughan,

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Resilient Moakley Park Project Single Environmental Impact Report submitted on behalf of the project proponent, the City of Boston Parks and Recreation Department.

Boston Harbor Now's mission is to ensure that Boston Harbor, its Waterfront, and Islands are accessible and inclusive, and that these special places are properly adapted to the risks of climate change. We advocate for climate resiliency measures that contribute to district-scale flood protection and improve ecosystem services, as well as waterfront activation that welcomes everyone, especially those who have been historically underserved. We accomplish our goals through a variety of initiatives - including through our role leading the Stone Living Lab in collaboration with UMass Boston - with the goal of realizing our Harborwalk 2.0 initiative to create a vibrant, welcoming, and resilient coastline along Boston's waterfront.

The City of Boston's proposed redesign of Moakley Park will transform one of Boston's largest waterfront green spaces into a resilient, inclusive landscape that protects adjacent communities from severe climate threats while expanding modern recreational amenities. The redesign merges a nature-based climate resilient berm with new parks, trails and ball fields, serving as a global model for urban climate adaptation. Boston Harbor Now strongly supports this project.

Moakley Park serves as the primary recreational area and community space for multiple neighborhoods in the region. There are 27 Environmental Justice (EJ) populations living within one mile of the project site, and 562 within five miles. Additionally, two Boston Housing Authority communities live directly behind the park with state housing also nearby.

Moakley Park is a priority flood pathway for the City and the region, with significant need for climate resilient adaptations. Already, king tides along Moakley Park cause road closures, flood playing fields, and threaten nearby homes, businesses, and critical infrastructure. Importantly, the redesign includes a landscape berm to address coastal flood protection and stormwater management in and around Moakley Park.

The proposed berm will be approximately 2,500 feet long, an average of 6 feet high, and approximately 50 feet wide at its base. The top of the berm will be an accessible pathway allowing users to enjoy new views of Boston Harbor, Carson Beach, and Moakley Park. Completion of this berm will not only protect Moakley Park, but also close critical flood pathways protecting an estimated 34,000 thousand people, as well as critical infrastructure and densely populated neighborhoods in flood pathways in South Boston, Dorchester, and Roxbury. We are also encouraged as the project will more than triple the existing tree canopy and create a new coastal landscape of plantings designed to tolerate saltwater inundation and adapt to future sea level rise, tidal flooding, and storm surge.

Boston Harbor Now has partnered with the City of Boston to facilitate significant community engagement around the entire project planning process through the Make Moakley Yours initiative. We deeply appreciate the extensive, ongoing community engagement that the City has been dedicated to. We also host over 20 events at Moakley Park each year, ranging from winter programming and public art installations to our Summer Nights series, providing free dinner and entertainment for 750+ community members. In 2026, so far we've run 6 cleanups, removing more than 300 pounds of trash. We collaborate with local organizations such as South Boston en Accion, ZNT Arts, and a Trike Called Funk to welcome people to the waterfront who face barriers to access.

The City's proposed redesign responds directly to the recreational needs and vulnerability analyses outlined in Climate Ready Boston (2016). Additionally, a resilient Moakley Park is a key strategy outlined in Imagine Boston 2030 (2017), Coastal Resilience Solutions for South Boston (2017), Resilient Boston Harbor (2018), and Coastal Resilience Solutions for Dorchester (2020).

In conclusion, the Resilient Moakley Park Project is a world-class proposal, helping improve accessible open space and coastal resilience at the City's largest waterfront park and one of the community's most threatened flood pathways. We support the proponent's desire to build a flood-resilient berm and climate adapted park to improve and protect Moakley Park as well as homes, businesses, infrastructure and human health and safety for now and in the future.

We are grateful for the opportunity to comment on this SEIR, and would be happy to answer any questions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kathy Abbott", with a stylized, flowing script.

Kathy Abbott
President & CEO