



TOWN OF NEEDHAM

TOWN HALL

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Office of the
TOWN MANAGER

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August 19, 2022

Ms. Beth Card, Secretary
Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900
Boston, MA 02114

RE: MEPA DEIR #16546
Highland Science Center, 557 Highland Avenue, Needham, MA

Dear Secretary Card:

We have reviewed the *Draft Environmental Impact Report*¹ (DEIR) prepared by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB) for review by the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) office for the proposed Highland Science Center in Needham, Massachusetts. The site is located at 557 Highland Avenue on the northeast corner of the intersection of Highland Avenue and Gould Street, and currently contains a Muzi Ford car dealership, Charles River Media Group and WCVB Channel 5. The site was recently part of a rezoning effort by the Town to allow for the development of up to ±880,000 square feet (SF) of office, research and development, and ancillary retail and service space.

As part of our review the Town has retained the services of Greenman-Pedersen Inc. (GPI) to evaluate the DEIR and supporting traffic analysis for consistency with the goals and studies prepared as part of the Town's rezoning, as well as for compliance with the MEPA Certificate issued on the *Environmental Notification Form* (ENF)², and the Massachusetts Department of Transportation (MassDOT) guidelines for traffic impact analysis and general engineering practice. The comments related to the DEIR as prepared by GPI are detailed in the attached letter from Rebecca L. Brown, Senior Project Manager, GPI, to Lee Newman, Director of Planning and Community Development, dated August 18, 2022 (copy attached). Said comments comprise the Town's formal response to the traffic component of the DEIR.

¹ Draft Environmental Impact Report, Highland Science Center, Needham Heights, Massachusetts; prepared by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB); July 2022.

² Environmental Notification Form, Highland Science Center, Needham Heights, Massachusetts; prepared by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB); March 2022.

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Thank you for the opportunity to provide the Town's thoughts on the above-noted DEIR. Should you have any questions or need additional information, please feel free to contact me at 781-455-7500.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kathleen King". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping "K" and "G".

Kathleen King
Acting Town Manager

cc: Select Board
Planning Board
Kate Fitzpatrick, Town Manager
Carys Lustig, Director of Public Works
Thomas Ryder, Town Engineer
Lee Newman, Director of Planning & Community Development