



updated December 2023

BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION DESIGN REVIEW

The Boston Parks and Recreation Commission reviews development in close proximity to parks and parkways. The purpose is to ensure that development recognizes the amenity of open space; enhances the quality of the open space; and does not negatively impact it.

The “100’ Rule” The City of Boston’s Municipal Code Section 7-4.11 (the “100’ rule”) requires the approval of the Parks Commission for all buildings and structures that are constructed or altered within 100 feet of a park or parkway.

Applicability This code is typically applied to development within 100’ of parks and parkways owned by the State or the City that are publicly-owned and permanently-protected under *Article 97 of the Amendments to the State Constitution* as revised; and development that is adjacent to privately-owned property that is permanently-protected by a conservation restriction. The Parks Commission also reviews development that is adjacent to publicly-owned, publicly-accessible open spaces such as the Southwest Corridor, the Kennedy Greenway or MassPort Parks.

The Boston Planning and Development Agency’s online *Zoning Viewer* identifies parcels that require the review of the Parks Commission. The Inspectional Services Department’s permit system also automatically flags projects that require this review.

Questions? Contact the Executive Secretary, Boston Parks and Recreation Commission, 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, MA 02118, 617-635-4505, prc@boston.gov

Review Criteria The project review considers the criteria below:

- Context and adjacencies - edge conditions and interface with park frontages; compatibility of design and uses with adjacent park; site design and access; encroachments and privatization; grading and excavation; stormwater management; plant and tree removals; landscape design; roof decks and balconies; trash and loading; fencing and retaining walls; lighting; signage; etc.
- Site and building design including height, massing, setbacks, onsite open space, etc.
- Uses; density; size of units and households; accommodation of open space needs onsite
- Shadow and wind impacts
- Grading, drainage and stormwater control
- Removal of existing significant vegetation; tree preservation
- Design of onsite open space, landscaping and the public realm
- Construction management plan in relation to potential park impacts
- Accommodation of pet recreation and hygiene needs onsite
- Input gathered through community outreach efforts relevant to open space
- Mitigation of impacts and community contributions negotiated through Article 80

Application

Administrative Review Small scale projects and renovations may be reviewed administratively by staff. Please submit a survey, site plan, floor plans, elevations, renderings, and a landscape plan. A grading and drainage plan may also be requested.

Parks Commission Review Large scale projects require a hearing of the Parks Commission. Please submit the items listed below in a single electronic document to prc@boston.gov.

Plans

- Context plan showing relevant park or parkway
- Survey and existing conditions plan
- Site plan
- Grading, drainage and stormwater control plans
- Shadow and wind studies
- Floor plans, elevations and renderings that have been approved and stamped by the Director of Urban Design at the BPDA
- Plans showing vegetation removal and tree preservation
- Landscape plan showing onsite open space with locations and list of plant types
- Accommodation of pet recreation and hygiene needs onsite

Narrative

- Project context and adjacencies
- Building program including use, square feet, height, stories, number and size of units, whether rental or condominium, description of common space, etc.
- Building services including parking, loading, trash collection and disposal, etc.
- Location of utilities and ventilation systems
- Analysis of shadow and wind studies
- Description of how the project will address the open space needs for the neighborhood as defined in the *2023-2039 Open Space and Recreation Plan* which is available at <http://www.cityofboston.gov/Parks/openspace/>
- Projects that abut property under the jurisdiction of the MA Department of Conservation and Recreation should provide approval by the planning department of that agency.
- Evidence of community outreach, summary of input and documentation of support
- Commitments made for mitigation of impacts or community benefit contributions
- *Demolition and Construction Management Plan* This plan should include the following as applicable: demolition staging; demolition waste removal; construction staging (including cranes, heavy equipment, deliveries, truck routes, contractor parking, storage, etc.); construction waste removal; excavation and grading; driving of piles; foundation support; foundation footings and construction; groundwater management during construction and after; installation of a sheet pile wall system or retaining walls; erosion and sediment control; stormwater management; and construction noise and dust.

Timing of Review The final approval of the Parks Commission is granted after a project has been approved by all other agencies, in order to ensure that there are no further modifications.

Below is a typical timeframe for a project to be scheduled for a public hearing, though additional review time may be required given the specifics of a project. Once an application is received, staff will work directly with the proponent to ensure that issues of concern are resolved before a project is scheduled for a hearing.

During the Article 80 or ISD Permitting Process Contact the Executive Secretary of the Parks Commission to provide plans for the project in order to identify park related issues.

First Friday of the month After all other approvals are in place, an electronic copy of the application may be provided to prc@boston.gov. Proponents will be notified if additional materials are required to complete the review. Issues will be identified for resolution.

Second Friday of the month The final and complete application package is due. Incomplete, unresolved or insufficient information may defer the scheduling of a hearing.

Third Friday of the month Six hard copies of the application package should be provided to: Executive Secretary, Boston Parks Commission, 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, 3rd floor, Boston, MA 02118. The copies should be bound and be no larger than 8.5" x 11" or 11"x17" (do not submit full scale plans). A list of attendees to the hearing should be provided.

Last Monday of the month The Parks Commission typically meets on the last Monday of each month at 10:00am. The public hearings are currently held remotely. The proponent team should be prepared to make a 15 minute PowerPoint presentation and answer questions. An electronic copy of the final presentation is required for the record.

Questions? Contact the Executive Secretary, Boston Parks and Recreation Commission, 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, Boston, MA 02118, 617-635-4505, prc@boston.gov

**BOSTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION
APPLICATION FOR DESIGN REVIEW**

Municipal Code Section 7-4.11 requires the approval of the Boston Parks Commission for all buildings or structures that are constructed or altered within 100 feet of a park or parkway. Please submit this form to: Executive Secretary, Boston Parks and Recreation Commission, 1010 Massachusetts Avenue, 3rd floor, Boston, MA 02118, 617-635-4505, prc@boston.gov.

DATE: _____ ISD APPLICATION # _____

PROPERTY ADDRESS: _____

APPLICANT: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ PHONE: _____

PARK OR PARKWAY WITHIN 100': _____

PROJECT DESCRIPTION: _____

COMMUNITY OUTREACH: _____

STATUS OF APPROVALS:

BPDA Board Approval:

BPDA Design Approval:

Boston Civic Design Commission:

Zoning Board of Appeals:

Boston Transportation Department:

Public Improvement Commission:

Boston Landmarks Commission:

Boston Conservation Commission:

Boston Water and Sewer:

Other:

State:

MEPA: _____

DCR: _____

Chapter 91: _____

ACEC: _____

NPDES: _____

Other: _____