

October 13, 2004

Mr. Michael Kineavy
Director
Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services
Room 708
One City Hall Plaza
Boston, MA 02201

Ms. Elaine Ullian
President and CEO
Boston Medical Center
One Boston Medical Center Place
Boston, MA 02118

Richard J. Towle, Senior Vice President
Office of The Senior V.P.
Boston University
One Sherborn Street
Boston, MA 02215

RE: National Biosafety Level 4 Laboratory

Dear Mr. Kineavy, Ms. Ullian, and Mr. Towle:

We ask your assistance with several very important issues and concerns related to the proposed National Biosafety Level 4 Laboratory (BSL-4) to be built by the consortium of Boston Medical Center/Boston University and to be located in Boston's South End. The South End is one of Boston's most historic and concentrated residential and commercial neighborhoods. Our Worcester Square Area Neighborhood Association (WSANA) represents that part of the South End community that physically abuts the proposed BSL-4 site.

As you can imagine, the topic of the BSL-4 proposal has been raised at many Worcester Square Area Neighborhood Association (WSANA) meetings. Most recently, on May 25, 2004 the entire agenda was dedicated to your proposal.

Questions were raised, concerns were voiced. The neighborhood is divisive on the proposal, with some residents for and some against. Some people are resigned to the lab being built without residents and local business owners having any say in the matter. Some individuals supported the proposal and expressed why they felt the benefits outweighed any risks associated with a BSL-4 facility. Some in attendance expressed their reservations and heartfelt opposition to having those kinds of risks located so close to home. Many others in attendance did not want to be hasty in a decision to vote either for or against the lab until we have all the facts and at this time, we do not have all of the facts.

The majority of those who attended this recent WSANA discussion agreed to presume that in this democratic society concerned citizens have a right to become informed and that an informed neighborhood voice will find an audience with our local government and institutional officials. Towards that end, the WSANA approved a motion to refrain from taking a formal vote on whether to support or oppose the BSL-4 facility at this time. That approved motion included a strong consensus to undertake a concerted effort with your financial assistance over the next several months to learn more facts about the

pros and cons of your proposal. Those facts will then be disseminated to the larger WSANA community, with a formal vote of the WSANA on your proposal to be scheduled for sometime later this year, probably in Fall 2004.

We ask your help in the following ways:

1. We understand that you have recently established a new Community Review Board and that you have selected 25 people to sit on this Board. Currently, the Board consists of just 3 people from the WSANA community. We request that you allow additional representatives from the WSANA to join the panel with equal voting rights and privileges for access to information.
2. The WSANA is in the process of establishing a BSL-4 Subcommittee with the names and contact information of members to be forwarded to you shortly. We request that you provide financial and technical resources to help this Subcommittee with its important tasks. At this time, we request: (a) \$25,000 for this Subcommittee to hire a professional consultant to serve as an independent source of technical information and counsel. As you may know, this request for the proponent to fund an independent and professional source of technical expertise on behalf of an abutting and concerned neighborhood is something that is now commonplace among projects of similar scope and size to your proposal; and (b) Funds as necessary to allow members of the Subcommittee to undertake site visits to the several other BSL-4 facilities currently in operation in North America, and to allow a site visit to your sister newly announced facility to be constructed at the University of Texas Medical Branch in Galveston, Texas. We believe that these site visits will provide a vitally important source of information regarding the pros and cons inherent with BSL-4 facilities.
3. The WSANA plans to “host” one or more forum panel discussion(s) to be held in a neighborhood auditorium. The panel(s) will consist of scientists and professionals who advocate the project and independent scientists and professionals who oppose the project. Resident homeowners and businesses will be allowed to ask questions and members of each side will provide answers. We request your concurrence to provide funds necessary to hold this event(s), including appropriate and reasonable costs to both obtain appropriate scientists and professionals, and to publicize notices and findings to the WSANA community.
4. Please provide us with twenty (20) copies of your most recent plan(s) for how Level 4 agents and materials will be transported to and from the proposed site. We acknowledge that final plans may not be ready at this time. In that event, we simply request that you forward any such plan(s) that may be currently under development in draft form. If you have no written documentation in this regard available at this time, we request being informed as such in lieu of receiving any written proposed plan(s).
5. Please provide us with twenty (20) copies of your most recent plan(s) for how public safety will be maintained at both the BSL-4 itself and for agents and materials transported to and from the proposed site. Again, we acknowledge that final plans may not be ready at this time. In that event, we simply request that you forward any such plan(s) that may be currently under development in draft form. If you have no written documentation in this regard available at this time, we request being informed as such in lieu of receiving any written proposed plan(s).
6. Please provide us with twenty (20) copies of your most recent plan(s) for how area residents and business employees would be notified of and evacuated in case of actual or potential airborne, wastewater, or human-carried release of possible harmful agents and/or materials. Again, we

acknowledge that final plans may not be ready at this time. In that event, we simply request that you forward any such plan(s) that may be currently under development in draft form. If you have no written documentation in this regard available at this time, we request being informed as such in lieu of receiving any written proposed plan(s).

7. Please provide us with twenty (20) copies of your most recent plan(s) for how the property values of area residents and business owners would be held-harmless and/or compensated in the event of any release and/or other catastrophic circumstance(s) that has the potential to severely and negatively impact neighboring property values. Again, we acknowledge that such plans may not be ready at this time. In that event, we simply request that you forward any such plan(s) that may be currently under development in draft form. If you have no written documentation in this regard available at this time, we request being informed as such in lieu of receiving any written proposed plan(s).

We want to believe our questions will be answered honestly. We want to believe that our safety and environmental concerns will be addressed in a manner that is heedful of our well-being. We want to believe that (if the lab is built) and an accident occurs our property values will be protected. We want to believe that the best interests of the residents and local business owners are as important as the financial impact that this project will have for the developer, builder, and ultimately the hospital.

The Worcester Square Area Neighborhood Association membership is committed to learning all we can about this project, the impact that it will have upon our neighborhood and our lives. We want our vote to be based on facts and not on hearsay.

Please help us achieve our goal. We would appreciate hearing back from you on the above requests no later than close of business on Friday July 16, 2004.

Sincerely,

Susan Hunt-Stevens
President
Worcester Square Neighborhood Association