



CITY OF BOSTON • MASSACHUSETTS

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR  
THOMAS M. MENINO

April 8, 2003

Jo Ann M. Gora  
Chancellor  
The University of Massachusetts Boston  
100 Morrissey Boulevard  
Boston, MA 02125-3393

Dear Chancellor Gora:

The University of Massachusetts Boston has been a source of great pride for our city because of the immeasurable contributions it has made to Boston's reputation as a world-class center of research and learning. The cultural resources and diversity of UMass-Boston also contribute enormously to the quality of life enjoyed by all Bostonians, particularly to its neighbors in Dorchester.

The plans to build on-campus housing, however, detract from these contributions by ignoring the people they will affect most. It strays from UMass-Boston's mission to provide a high-quality education to the residents of Boston and surrounding communities. This crucial mission has shaped the university's identity and has allowed thousands of Boston residents to take advantage of educational opportunities that would not otherwise be possible. Furthermore, despite overwhelming opposition from the community, the decision has been made to move forward with these plans, rendering any public process futile. It is inappropriate for UMass-Boston to have thrust a project of this magnitude on to the community without suitable interaction with its neighbors. Residents expect, need and rightfully deserve a more respectful attitude from the university.

Residents of the surrounding neighborhoods have genuine concerns, and there must be a more legitimate process in place for the university to address these issues. I appreciate the participation of the Community Liaison Group, but a real solution to this problem will require a more comprehensive, cooperative effort between UMass-Boston and its neighbors. As a start, an ex-officio member elected by the Columbia Savin Hill Civic Association should be appointed to the Board of Trustees. This appointment will ensure sufficient community involvement as you further explore these residential issues.

I want to thank you in advance for your support, and I look forward to our continued collaboration with the Dorchester community on this and other endeavors.

Sincerely,

Thomas M. Menino  
Mayor of Boston