



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

To: Planning Board and Board of Zoning Appeal

From: Central Square Advisory Committee

Date: June 30, 2022

Re: **544 Massachusetts Avenue (PB-381)**

IRAM FAROOQ
Assistant City Manager for
Community Development

SANDRA CLARKE
Deputy Director
Chief of Administration

KHALIL MOGASSABI
Deputy Director
Chief of Planning

Overview

The Central Square Advisory Committee (the "Committee") met on Wednesday, June 1, 2022 to discuss the special permit application by Central Square Redevelopment LLC for 544 Massachusetts Avenue. The meeting was conducted pursuant to the provisions of Section 20.300 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance in advance of the applicant's request for several special permits from the Planning Board as well as a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeal. Committee members present were Joel Altstein, Saffana Anwar, Chris Fort, Esther Hanig, and Robert Winters. After discussion, the Committee decided to forward a report to both boards with a positive recommendation.

Proposal Description

The applicant, Central Square Redevelopment LLC, proposes to renovate the existing building and construct a vertical addition. The proposal would result in a six-story building with 27 apartments and retail use at the ground story. No off-street parking is proposed.

Committee Comments

Members of the Committee thought that this was a good project and agreed that there was a need for studio and one-bedroom housing units in Central Square. They were also supportive of the applicant's request to waive the parking requirement and not provide any off-street parking for residents.

Committee members noted that providing a community room that could be used by community groups as a meeting space would be a benefit to Central Square. They suggested that the applicant work with an organization such as Third Sector New England to determine an adequate size for the community room and help program its use.

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Respectfully submitted for the Committee,

Sarah Scott

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