


CITY OF CAMBRIDGE TRAFFIC, PARKING, + TRANSPORTATION

MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board

From: Joseph E. Barr, Director 

Date: March 21, 2022

Subject: 180 Fawcett Street, CCF Fawcett Street Properties LLC (PB#385)

CCF Fawcett Street Properties, LLC is seeking a Planning Board Special Permit for a proposed lab building located at 180 Fawcett Street (PB#385).

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department (TP+T) certified the Project's Transportation Impact Study (TIS) as complete and reliable on August 20, 2021, and we submitted a memo, dated December 1, 2021, to the Planning Board, with our comments and recommendations.

TP+T has reviewed the revised Planning Board Special Permit Application, dated February 24, 2022, and we now offer below our updated comments and recommendations on the 180 Fawcett Street project for your consideration.

1.0 Project Changes

The Applicant has reduced the building's size (from 58,456 square feet to 58,027 square feet). TP+T believes that this small change does not change the findings in the TIS.

The Applicant has also reduced the total number of off-street parking spaces (from 53 parking spaces to 46 parking spaces). The Project's transportation changes are highlighted below:

	Original Special Permit Application	Current Special Permit Application
Total GFA (sq ft)	58,456	58,027
Off-Street parking spaces	53 (.9 spaces/1,000 sf)	46 (0.8 spaces/1,000 sf)
Long-term bicycle spaces	14	14
Short-term bicycle spaces	8	8
Loading Bays	1	1

2.0 Automobile Parking

TP+T is pleased to see that the revised Planning Board Special Permit Application reflects our December 21, 2021 recommendation for parking. The Project is now consistent with the Alewife District Plan's recommended maximum parking ratio of 0.8 spaces per 1,000 sf for lab use.

We also continue to recommend that the Planning Board support this Project's Reduction in Parking under Section 6.35.1, for a 0.8 spaces per 1,000 sf parking ratio. The reduction in off-street parking spaces will discourage employees from driving-alone and will encourage commuting by sustainable forms of transportation, such as taking transit, walking, biking, and carpooling/vanpooling.

Lastly, as stated in our December 1, 2021 memo, TP+T continues to recommend that upon opening of a pedestrian/bicycle bridge over the commuter rail tracks, the developer/owner should consider whether a reduction beyond 46 total spaces is possible, based on actual utilization of the parking spaces and the sustainable transportation options available at that point in time.

3.0 Roadways and Circulation

The Applicant has been working with city staff on the Project's site plan, including a revised design for the Smith Place/Fawcett Street intersection to best accommodate the raised bicycle lanes and sidewalk ramps.

Sheet A-303.2 in the Graphic Material shows the Truck Movement Plan for the building, but it also shows the layout plan for the Smith Place/Fawcett Street intersection that TP+T generally supports. TP+T notes that the crosswalk alignment shown on Sheet A-205.2 is drawn a little differently, but we believe that these details can be addressed during the Building Permit review process, with the final site plan approved by the city staff prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

The Applicant/developer will also require pedestrian and bicycle access easements or agreements with the city for the sidewalks and bicycle facilities, including maintenance. An agreement on the nature and instruments to be used should be finalized and approved by the City prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

4.0 Curb cuts and Loading

TP+T continues to support the Project's proposed curb cut and loading plan, which will close one curb cut on Smith Place, and create two new curb cuts on Fawcett Street - an approximately 22-foot-wide curb cut for access to the below-grade parking, and an approximately 14-foot-wide curb cut for the loading area. The loading bay will accommodate a 40-foot-long truck (WB-40), which will meet the loading bay requirements for a project of this size.

5.0 Bicycle Parking

The Applicant continues to propose 14 long-term bicycle spaces inside the building. The access to the bicycle storage room has changed, from previously being located off Smith

Place to now being located off a path on the east side of the building off Fawcett Street. The path between the public right-of-way and bike room must be a minimum of 5-feet wide and well maintained as needed (i.e., cleared of snow and ice).

The Applicant continues to propose 8 short-term bicycle parking spaces to meet the short-term bicycle parking zoning requirement. The location of some of the short-term bicycle racks have moved from the previous Planning Board Special Permit Application but remain along the Smith Place side (west side) of the building and on the Project's property. TP+T will work with the Applicant on the final short-term bike parking locations prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.

6.0 PTDM Plan

The Project is subject to an approved Parking and Transportation Demand Management Plan (PTDM) by the City's PTDM Planning Officer.

7.0 Transportation Mitigation:

Based on the revised Planning Board Special Permit Application, TP+T provides the following recommendations for transportation mitigation to offset the project's transportation impacts.

Item#	Transportation Mitigation	Due Date
1	The Applicant shall provide a one-time \$5 per square foot contribution to the City toward the Alewife Pedestrian Bicycle Bridge or other Transportation Improvements in Alewife Area. (e.g., 58,027 sf x \$5/SF = \$290,135). This mitigation item was recommended in the Envision Cambridge Alewife District Plan for new development projects in the Alewife Area to contribute toward this long-term but needed project to connect the Quadrangle and Triangle to improve access within the district.	Prior to the issuance of the Building Permit.
2	Upon opening of a pedestrian bridge over the commuter rail tracks, the developer/owner will consider whether a reduction beyond 46 total spaces is possible, based on actual utilization of the parking spaces and sustainable transportation options available at that point in time. A reduction beyond 46 spaces will be discretionary by the developer/owner but the parking data and reasoning should be provided to TP+T. TP+T recommends that a reduction below 46 total spaces be permitted in the Special Permit by the Planning Board without the need for the developer/owner to go back to the Planning Board for an amendment.	Upon opening of a pedestrian bicycle bridge over the commuter rail tracks.
3	Contribute \$58,000 to the City toward planning, design and or installation of transportation improvements in the Alewife District, such as a potential new traffic signal at Concord Ave/Smith Place, and/or other transportation projects in the area. This item will help mitigate the LOS	Prior to the issuance of the Building Permit.

	<p>exceedance at the Concord Avenue/Smith Place intersection. The contribution is based approximately on \$1/sf and consistent with contributions from other projects in the area.</p>	
4	<p>Reconstruct Smith Place and Fawcett Street, adjacent to the Property, as approved by the City as necessary to align with the City's cross-section plans for Smith Place and Fawcett Street. This shall include sidewalks, separated bicycle facilities adjacent to the site, and street trees/landscaping. The final design shall be approved by the City prior to the issuance of a Building Permit and completed prior to issuance of an Occupancy Permit unless a later date is necessary and approved by the City because of reasonable construction conditions that lead to a delay in completion.</p> <p>The Property owner shall also be responsible for receiving approval for a maintenance plan from DPW, including sidewalks and separated bicycle lanes adjacent to the building.</p>	<p>Final design and public access and maintenance plan agreement to be approved by the City prior to the issuance of a Building Permit.</p> <p>Construction shall be complete prior to issuance of the first Occupancy Permit unless approved by TP+T due to unforeseen or reasonable delays</p>
5	<p>To align with recent requests from the City Council for electrical vehicle charging in development projects, the Project will install 14 electric vehicle spaces (or 25% of total number of spaces), whether through 7 dual-head Level 2 chargers or 14 individual Level 2 chargers.</p> <p>In addition, the project will ensure sufficient capacity in the electrical panel and transformer(s) to support future installation of chargers serving all total spaces.</p>	<p>25% of the total parking spaces to have EV charging prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit.</p>