BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL FOR THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

GENERAL HEARING

THURSDAY, OCTOBER 1, 2015 7:00 p.m. in Senior Center 806 Massachusetts Avenue Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Timothy Hughes, Acting Chair Brendan Sullivan, Member George S. Best, Associate Member Douglas Myers, Associate Member Jim Monteverde, Associate Member

Sean O'Grady, Zoning Specialist

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BZA-006869-2015 -- Continued Hearing 1350 Mass. Avenue President & Fellows of Harvard College C/O Tanya Iatridis, Harvard Planning

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PROCEEDINGS

(7:00 p.m.) (Sitting Members: Timothy Hughes, Brendan Sullivan, George S. Best, Douglas Myers, Jim Monteverde.)

TIMOTHY HUGHES: The Acting Chair will open the special meeting of the BZA and then we'll call case No. 006869.

Is there anyone here to be heard on that case? Don't all rush to the front.

There is no amplification system in the room tonight so if you are having trouble hearing, you should move -- well, there is that one, but not for us. But, you know, if you move forward if you're having trouble hearing, feel free to crowd right in.

TANYA IATRIDIS: Thank you for giving us an opportunity again to come to you to present some of our new proposed changes. As you know, we are here before you to request an FAR Variance in the alteration of an expansion of a non-conforming building. We have removed the height variance request at the tenth floor because we heard your concerns and have redesigned it not requiring the height variance. You have asked us to only focus on the welcome area, including the plaza, because of the all the concerns that were raised last meeting. I have to say we heard you loud and clear at the last meeting and Harvard asked our professional team; our landscape architects and architects to re-examine the welcome area and plaza and its interrelationship and to address the key concerns raised.

The design team has put an enormous effort and energy and thoughtfulness in

finding the best solution at this location. We have also had several constructive meetings with community members, and as a result of the process, the feedback and the work of the professionals we believe we have a better project and I want to thank you.

Now the plaza and the architecture of the welcome area are so interrelated and dovetailed together that these three firms have worked very closely together, and because of that interrelationship we want to start off the presentation by having the landscape architect begin with the changes of what we've done in the plaza. After that, we have a PowerPoint presentation. We'll have the architects talk about the changes if that's okay.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Sure.

TANYA IATRIDIS: I'd like to ask if we can just turn -- not all the lights off, just a few, two or three, if that's okay. Just so you can see better. Is that okay?

TIMOTHY HUGHES: I was okay before. But, you know, if that works for everybody else, that's fine with me.

TANYA IATRIDIS: Is it all right? TIMOTHY HUGHES: Anybody have any objections to the lighting as it exists right now?

(No Response.)

JAMES WILLIAMSON: Is it covered in the statute?

TANYA IATRIDIS: Okay, we're good. Okay, thank you. I'm going to turn this over to our landscape architect from Michael van Valkenburgh's office, Emily. And because Emily has a soft voice, we gave her a microphone.

EMILY MUELLER DECELIS: This was brought specifically for me. Good evening. As Tanya said, we had heard the critique. A lot of thoughtful suggestions were made. It made a huge impact on us, and we took them to heart and we are very excited to be presenting to you our revised proposal before the Forbes Plaza and the welcome area.

Just as a point of orientation, the upper drawing right here is our July 30th proposal and the lower drawing right here is our current proposal.

So what we heard from everyone last time we met, we had three main critiques for the plaza:

The first one was that the planter

right here was too large and obscured views out to the sidewalk.

Another critique that we heard was that the chess tables that were associated with that planter did not work as well as the existing conditions where the chess tables are more freestanding with the chairs.

We also heard that the interior part of the open plaza here was, although the desire was to have some flexibility in here, it was too flexible and it allowed for circulation and people filtering through and leaving too much in chance.

In terms of the architecture and the addition, we heard that the double height glass addition here was too monolithic and we also heard that the expansion into the plaza, the 11 feet into the plaza, was a detriment to the plaza itself and did not have the kind of connectivity that we had been aiming for. Essentially we -- this proposal has the overall dimensions here of 42 feet, but the planter itself reduced it to 30 feet and then additional 11 feet contributed to that.

The overall approach as well or the overall comments were that the plaza itself didn't have the kind of intimacy that you have out in there right now, as well as the new addition didn't have the kind of human scale that would contribute to the life of the plaza.

So taking all of those comments, we went back to the drawing board and revised our proposal. In terms of the plaza, what we did was we took the planter out. We are now proposing to plant five trees within the plaza. So adding a fifth tree within here. And in doing that, what that does is that it opened up enough space -- I'm sorry, I'm going to change to the other.... In doing that, what that does is that it opened up more space for seating. We also took the chess tables that were here and we are locating them in the center of the plaza underneath the canopy of the trees.

By introducing the trees on to the plaza, that helps to organize the space along with the permanent seating of the chess tables. So as people flow through within the space, there's a way to get around the area with fast, kind of more efficient way of kind of going down the sidewalk there or along in this area here.

In terms of the architecture, what

Andy has been doing is looking at the architecture here and studying the effect of moving the first floor back to have a better connected space in terms of the plaza and the architecture. What that also did was basically brought an opportunity to create -- occupy the space, the balcony above on the second floor. By animating the second floor people can overlook down into the plaza. So basically with the contribution of the trees in the space we've created intimacy within the plaza itself. And by breaking this facade in the plane and bringing the glass wall that's on the first floor back by seven feet, it also creates a space to sit in a sheltered environment here and breaks down the overall sort of monolithic nature of this volume here and introduces

that human scale that was a major critique of the building.

Ultimately -- sorry. And in comparison the 30 feet of space here then turns into 52 feet of space within the plaza. We also are still keeping the open doors in this area so that the flow of space when the weather is nice out still goes all the way back from the sidewalk all the way back to the core wall within the building.

Just as a summary the major design moves that we made in the landscape. We eliminated the planter. We brought the trees back into the plaza. We added a fifth tree into that configuration. We've created a better circulation path, clarified how people move through the space and we've also introduced outdoor seating underneath the new overhang.

Within the building there's a smaller first floor addition. Rather than extending out 11 feet, it now only extends out four feet into the plaza.

And on the second floor we've animated that volume by introducing occupiable space with the balcony.

So this is a plan of the revised design and I will walk you through that as well.

So, again, we've eliminated the planter in this area right here. That has allowed us to replant trees in this area, and we're -- rather than doing a four square grid that's existing right now in Forbes Plaza, we're doing a staggered grid which allows us to add a fifth tree. Underneath those trees we are locating the chess tables in this configuration here so that you have a choice of either sitting underneath the canopy of the trees or an open air right in this area here.

We are also extending seating down into here as we had proposed previously, but the most important part here is that the building alignment has changed. The dashed line here you can see, that's the overhang of the volume above, and this line here shows the extent of the first floor of the welcome area, the plaza, the outdoor plaza seating that happens here in this sheltered condition. And that goes along the whole facade along this area, all the way through to this area, too. The only area that doesn't step back is right in front of the arcade and that is to basically mark that arcade as a main

entrance into the building.

The interior remains similar to what it was before. It's an open space. There are no walls in here so that this is a large gathering space with many of the public services that we've been talking about.

The one area that by pushing the facade back which affects the program is the three ticket office, offices get reduced to two.

Let's see, to clarify the changes between July 30th and now, the thread line here represents the original alignment from July 30th and it's that extension into the plaza.

This is our current proposal, basically pushing back the wall along that area to create that -- or reclaim that space within the plaza.

This is the second floor that shows the new balcony right here. So as you walk into the building, you can take the stairs up to this level. This area of the welcome area remains open to the public. Now you can also go across the bridge onto this balcony. That's another bridge as well. So seating and tables are set up here so you can overlook the plaza.

So we've also put together this diagram to explain exactly the amount of square footage that is being enclosed by the current proposal. The existing -- I'm sorry. The existing square footage of the plaza right here is 6,900 square feet, and in July 30th we had proposed 5,250 square feet. Our current proposal here is 5,815 feet.

So in terms of the enclosed space this red line shows the area that is being enclosed by our current proposal. It's just over 1,000 square feet, but you can see also in breaking this up, you see that it's mostly all circulation and the area that is closest to kind of the heart of Forbes Plaza here is only about 245 square feet in this area. And the rest of the square footage is in this area. But really the point of this diagram, also, is not just about the numbers, but it's also about understanding how the layout of the square works. You know, this is really the heart of Forbes Plaza in this area. And in comparison we are basically restoring the same amount of square footage and adding more or activating these areas here to be gathering spaces

much like this one right there.

We're also introducing this area underneath the overhang. And in doing so, that helps to organize the circulation as you move throughout the plaza and move into the welcome area.

DOUGLAS MYERS: Would you mind going over one more time the area inside the heavy red line on the left-hand side that you've marked with square feet?

EMILY MUELLER DeCELIS: Sure.

So this area, that is the area that is part of the plaza that will be enclosed by the welcome, by the building.

So basically if you take that delineation that is the extent of the -- just over 1,000 square feet, and just to kind of cover the numbers again the -- this area here fits along basically where the Au Bon Pain extension is right now. That piece is 245 square feet. That's the additional four feet that we are proposing to move about.

Does that clarify?

DOUGLAS MYERS: Uh-huh.

EMILY MUELLER DeCELIS: As Tanya said, we've been meeting with many people from the community. We actually have already met previously with the representatives from the chess community, and we met with them again since July 30th and went over the kind of upgrades that we are doing from the existing chess tables to make them FIDE compliant which is basically the chess federation. And in looking at that kind of configuration in terms of what they require, we've located that the chess tables in this area, which

allows for the kind of

theatre-in-the-round, kind of condition here that people can gather around and see the spectacle of chess playing. We will continue to work with them on the details of the chairs to make sure that all of that is working and comfortable and that they're happy with the new chess tables.

So this is a perspective, just to orient you, this is from -- this view is from looking from Dunster Street north to the new Forbes Plaza, and the new trees are planted within here. We are proposing London planetrees. We have been working with a local nursery that we work with many projects over the years, and we're custom growing these trees. We have specified them to be eight inches in caliper which means that they'll be planted at about the height of 34 feet or so. So you'll have this instant impact for the -- of the space to make sure that that intimacy of gathering underneath the groves canopy does happen right upon the construction.

I'm going to hand this over to Andy and he's going to talk more about the architecture.

ANDY BARNETT: Working very much in conjunction with Emily, this whole thing has been a unified landscape and architectural design really. One of the things that we heard this summer was more variety of space. So we've really tried to think about that and how we can create that. More choice of space for the public, really. And I think that this prospectus starts to show what we're creating about this proposal which is to say that by pushing the first floor --

UNIDENTIFIED FEMALE: We're having a meeting right here. The Board is right behind this wall. We hear you instead of our own meeting. That's a potential violation of the open meeting law. Do we have any other options? Can this gentleman speak on the other side?

Thank you.

ATTORNEY JAMES RAFFERTY: Maybe with not using the microphone, I would stay right where you were.

ANDY BARNETT: So the idea really is -- the idea is to create more diversity and more variety of our central space by pushing the first floor back and by pulling the second floor forward creating this external covered public space at plaza level, which is part of the plaza, but then what it does for us is what we think is a real win/win which is to create a new balcony at the second floor level, public balcony, which overlooks directly the square and is in this relationship of the canopy of Emily's trees.

Secondly, we heard about a more human scale and less commerciality to the facade of the two-story facade that we had on July the 30th, and the idea is that by breaking the line of the second floor and the first floor each department becomes more human scale, it becomes less than a two-story architectural bulk with the empty space behind it, both of those floors and the second floor become activated public spaces.

We did actually look along -- we've

looked at a whole lot of options along the way, because we looked at whether we should bring this whole facade back to this line here, take it all the way up, and of course that gets us back to the notion of this two-story high bulky sort of more commercial, more massive facade. And it also means, which we looked at over and over again and we can't, if we move the facade back we can't accommodate the stair, that and loses the opportunity of the balcony which means we're back to the kind of idea of creating an empty space behind that facade instead of this space which is sort of full of people.

I mean, the other thing we thought very much about is this opportunity really was thinking about the relationship and the response to Sert's architecture which is to say that he has this whole character of composition which is about volumes pushing and pulling inside of the building and surfaces pulling forward and back. And so really we're actually going back, we're feeling the two-story simpler box just really wasn't as sensitive a reaction to Sert's architecture as this new volume which pushes out to different extent on both floor levels.

So this is the next view which we created which is looking -- you're standing with your back to the arcade lobby doors looking towards the Harvard T. You're looking underneath the canopy of Emily's trees, and you're looking along the frontage of that new occupied space, the first floor level with the second floor projecting bay above it. We also heard in the summer about the possible confusion between proper seating spaces and circulation, and people were saying you should make it clearer about how the circulation works so that when people do move in across the plaza interfering with people when actually you want to just sit rather than move across the plaza.

So what we tried to express in this drawing, really, is what we're creating spatially is that there's space underneath the overhang is absolutely not a circulation space because it's not continuous across the whole facade so you're not going to walk across that. It becomes a natural attractive space to sit and pause and watch life in the Forbes. Meanwhile Emily's tree canopy and the chess tables create this kind of outside room underneath the -- underneath the trees. And the space between that naturally becomes the space where you -- if you want to walk from west to east or east to west across, across Forbes as is shown in that drawing, a sort of natural gap. So the legibility of circulation and sitting spaces, occupiable spaces, is much, much improved.

At night the two-story box becomes two sort of single story boxes. You can see the way the jetting bay breaks the scale of the two-story box. It will be lit naturally and an inviting place to be at in the evening. The under sign will naturally light up that first floor new exterior space. And a second floor, that balcony you can see above is the occupied balcony either side of the double height entrance. So really, you know, that idea of bringing human scale and bringing people on to the elevation of the building, I think is a fundamentally different kind of proposal than the double story empty, double story box with empty space behind it that you had on July the 30th.

In coming up with the idea we looked to precedence in architectural psyche in the U.K., the two pictures on the top there are from the World Festival Hall which is London's cultural capital space over the Thames River.

This photograph below is taken from a building we did in a city in the east of England. And one of the things that's interesting about these two examples and precedence is they're both civic buildings. They're not commercial buildings. That one is a concert hall. The other is a city library and the exhibition space for the city on the east of England, a very windy, chilly environment. And both of these, then, buildings, though, do have restaurants as part of their kind of front door welcome.

And in the south of Festival Hall it has this projecting balcony. It's lit at night. It becomes this wonderful place of invitation public space to be at whether you're going to a concert or not frankly.

And at this building in Norwich this is a tall glazed facade. That second floor level we also did actually create a second floor balcony and there is a restaurant that serves it just to the right of this photograph, and it has become in that windy city a real attractive destination point for the public to sit on top. You can have your lunch. You can look out at activity across the square, and you can look inside the building activity inside. Both of those examples are really successful public civic destinations and they both obviously show quite similar parallels to what we're suggesting we do in this revised scheme.

There's two sketches that we did along the way between July the 30th and today, on the left you can see what we had on July the 30th. On the right is our revised proposal. I think the difference is, and hopefully improvements, are fairly readable in that drawing. First of all, the removal of Emily's planter which quite literally, physically, visibly in every way sort of extends public ground plane from Mass. Ave. all the way to the building. And then even behind that, that facade when those doors are open.

Secondly, the difference in reading between the two-story to simpler box, commercial box with space behind that facade versus the more sort of human and less commercial scale of these two separate floor levels, both are differently on two different planes. And most importantly the space on that facade is actually, again both first floor and second floor aligned with people and a little bit like these buildings. Actually, these buildings interestingly, they don't have signage telling you what sort of building it is. It's not some of these commercial building. It's just a building that is attracted to the public to go and be at, and I hope that's what we've achieved.

I think we've rethought it and thank you very much for making us do so.

TANYA IATRIDIS: Henry.

HENRY MOSS: So we made some changes. The Variance request for the height extension is gone. We heard you and made that change. And yet we're still before the Zoning Board asking for a Variance support having to do with area.

Historic preservation has been central to my practice as an architect, and a lot of it in the last decade has really centered on the buildings that we serve. Campus plan at Boston University Law School Tower, he was a teacher of mine, and his principles were basically what we were -- what we were inculcated with as students. And what's fascinating about this building and this location is that it's not embedded in a campus. That this assert as interfaced of a public space of a very different nature. And the building is also the largest, most complex, very significant building as a Cambridge -- Harvard Square Conservation District. So with it come a series of constraints which are inherent in the architecture. Some of it is dimensional and some of it has to do with the massing relationships between what we add and what is already there. So the discussion is not simply a matter of arithmetic, although the numbers that we've been going back and forth for we take very seriously

and we understand that you do as well.

This location is inescapably attractive as an arrival point for the thousands of people that come and go through Harvard Square. The -- and the five decades since this building was built, the pressures for new uses, conveniences, support in this particular location, not around the block, not on the other side, have increased many fold, far more than Sert was ever able to imagine or predict. And there have been changes, as you well know, to the plaza mostly in the 1980s, and some of these help. But today what we are -- I think what we're getting at, frankly, with the help of this process is as an interaction between the architecture and the plaza that is unprecedented, and it has to be right.

This is my comment about the arithmetic. This is not just the matter of a square foot here, a square foot there. This has got to be a beautiful, enclosed setting for an outdoor space and all of the activities that you've referred to in the last session. It has to be a piece of architecture that's orchestrated correctly in relation to Sert. This is not a trivial building and this is not a standard addition.

So you might then say so where is the hardship? Well, the hardship really comes from the immovable solution structurally and in terms of planning and in terms of the architectural components that Sert -- these are inherent in Sert's design in the north end of this building. Driveway wraps that come down and separate this area from everything to the back.

Speaking of backs, this piece of our program, our back is against the wall and the wall consists of concrete, concrete elevator shafts, concrete structure, concrete mechanical chases. We can't just keep pushing back. The program elements have to be coordinated and collected and brought to bear right where people come. The public areas of this building that have the most intense uses are absolutely located in this place. So we pushed this back as far as we can, and I think developed a good working relationship with the plaza more than it's ever begun to enjoy in the past.

So with those physical limitations that come with the building that are inescapable, we are left -- and with these -- the pressures of these new uses, something that has an actual -- an architecture that actually has to convey the comforts and the conveniences that are going to be inside while supporting the comforts on the exterior, that demands an increase in footprint. That's the hardship discussion.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you. THOMAS LUCEY: Hi. For the record, Tom Lucey with Harvard University. To finish up, I wanted to touch a little bit on the public benefits associated with the project. You're gonna see them. They're in the submittal on page 16.

Harvard University is very excited about them. Really they stem from a long ongoing public dialogue that we've had with Cambridge City Government, our neighbors in Harvard Square and around the city, and other Harvard Square Stakeholders.

Some of the ideas that you've seen, and you've seen that Emily and Andy have talked about, are really the manifestations of those ideas that have merged in the public dialogue in the last decade here or so in the square. I just want to touch on a couple of particular ones. Some of them aren't sexy, but they're real and they're real goals that the City has and that we share with them.

The first and foremost, the addition of public restrooms. And the key location out in front here. You know, I've been involved with the dialogue for the City of Cambridge for a long time. In fact, the City is trying to solve the issue of locating public restrooms in the key squares in the city: Harvard Square, Porter Square, Kendall, Central. This is gonna help to solve that problem in the city. By locating these public restrooms in a very visible and central location, Harvard Square, we're helping the city and ourselves along with that goal.

Another goal that emerged from the public dialogue that we constantly hear about is areas of seating that are unrestricted and unassociated with commercial entities. When people come to the square, they want an area to have a little bit of rest, a respite area. As you know right now, the seating in Forbes Plaza, 80 percent of those seats are reserved for patrons of Au Bon Pain. With this proposal, we're lifting that restriction and making all the seats in Forbes Plaza unrestricted, available to anyone. You don't have to buy anything. You can come and just sit and read a book. We're also carrying that concept to the interior of the building.

As you recall from our previous presentation, we're creating common spaces areas within the building. Right now the only real common space area in the building is the arcade. That consists of about 7,000 square feet. With these additional areas that we're creating in the building's interior, we're increasing that by 400 percent to 35,000 square feet. We're carrying that concept of unrestricted seating in there. You can come, you can sit, there's fireplaces in other areas that you can come and don't

have to buy anything to enjoy. So we're very pleased about that.

You'll also see in your submittal tonight that we carried our commitments that we discussed about that public access in the book as well. It talks about being open seven days a week, year round, early morning to late at night and including signage for the public that makes sure that they're aware that they're welcome in that space.

A couple of other quick ones that have already been talked about:

We're increasing bicycle parking significantly.

We're making Forbes Plaza, which is right now not accessible to people with disabilities. It will become accessible. And the chess tables, you've heard a lot about that, but we've heard a lot about that over the time with the concrete ones aren't considered the best.

With that, I think our presentation is over and, Mr. Chairman, I'll turn it back over to you.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thanks. Thanks. Questions from the Board? TANYA IATRIDIS: Turn on the

lights?

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Yes, sure. You want to bring the lights back up, the gentleman who helped us dim them.

Questions from the Board?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: No questions at this time, no.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Nothing?

DOUGLAS MYERS: I have one or two just directly relating to the

presentation. I realize that trees are not a favorite topic. This is really going to be brief.

Have -- do you feel that you've maximized the number of trees on the Forbes Plaza in a way that's appropriate for Forbes Plaza?

EMILY MUELLER DeCELIS: Yes, we do. In terms of the existing trees right now, there are four of them, and those are London trees. They're very specific in terms of their form. Adding this fifth one of London Planes, we feel that that will help increase the canopy with the kind of phototropic nature of those kind of trees.

DOUGLAS MYERS: Since you've eliminated the planters, are you planting the trees in a soil base? EMILY MUELLER DeCELIS: Yes.

DOUGLAS MYERS: Do you feel that that's sustainable on Forbes Plaza or are you going to make it so that it is sustainable?

EMILY MUELLER DeCELIS: We will make it so that it is sustainable. Right now the existing trees are sort of retrofitted to have painted on top of them, so the soil that's there isn't structural soil. So that's part of the reason that they are declining. There are others. But in terms of the detailing where these trees we are using structural -- design soils specifically for these kind of condition, structural soils. There will be irrigation. There's no irrigation there now. We'll be aiding aeration. There's none there now. So

we're using basically state-of-the-art technology for planting trees in a very tough public setting like this, but we are very confident that it will do the best they possibly can.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Anything else? DOUGLAS MYERS: Yes, the only thing I would say very briefly is that I was going to ask about the absence of any simulation that depicted the new entry as been altered since the July 30th proposal. And I see in the materials handed out tonight there is such a simulation. There was one in the previous proposal, it was omitted for whatever reason, and I want to take a look at it and I'll ask questions about it after the public has a chance to speak. And I'll, along the same lines, I -- the very handy page in the previous

proposal having to do with the seating plan which described the square footage, that has been corrected or that has been -- that was omitted in tonight's proposal, but it has been included in the book that we received tonight. So I will take a look at that in the course of the evening and I wanted to ask some questions about that later, too.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Okay. DOUGLAS MYERS: That's fine. TIMOTHY HUGHES: Any other questions from the Board?

JAMES MONTEVERDE: Just one. In looking at your documentation, this is the page 28 and 29, the existing and proposed on the ground floor. I just noticed, and I just want to ask what the difference is between the -- your programatic uses between Mass. Avenue and Mount Auburn. I noticed between existing and the proposed there was some exterior work done on the Mount Auburn Plaza.

TANYA IATRIDIS: Correct.

JAMES MONTEVERDE: But it didn't require any additional space to the Mount Auburn facade.

TANYA IATRIDIS: Correct.

JAMES MONTEVERDE: As a matter of fact, it seems to maintain, and I am assuming, am I correct that the original Sert facade or its original profile on Mount Auburn --

HENRY MOSS: Original profile.

TANYA IATRIDIS: Correct. Except for the extension of the arcade that comes up.

JIM MONTEVERDE: Oh, yes. I'm

sorry. Correct. Correct.

TANYA IATRIDIS: That's the change that has occurred. It has been relandscaped.

JIM MONTEVERDE: Correct. And then relandscaped?

TANYA IATRIDIS: Right.

JIM MONTEVERDE: So can you just describe, again, please -- I know you've done it before, what's different then in your renovation plan, what drives you on the Mass. Avenue side --

TANYA IATRIDIS: Sure.

JIM MONTEVERDE: -- to need that additional square footage or move out from the facade when you were able to do your what renovations you wanted to do on Mount Auburn and not have to go beyond the building footprint? TANYA IATRIDIS: I can say some things.

HENRY MOSS: I can start with that.

TANYA IATRIDIS: You can start it, yes.

HENRY MOSS: It's a very important question. Nobody knows that the back of that building is there if they haven't been -- if they haven't -- of the hundreds of thousands of visitors to this building who don't have your familiarity, Mr. Monteverde, the back areas of the building are not immediately apparent. So that arrival pressure is what makes -- that's the reason I use the word inescapable. That's what makes the entrance area, the frontage of the building facing the plaza so significant.

And Sert, I think, recognized that from the start and always had designed it as an outdoor room. Could never, you could never get the uses to connect properly from the building back out to the plaza.

TANYA IATRIDIS: And the location of the T and in a lot of studies we've done in foot trafficking and the location across the yard, that is the center and that's why Sert put the plaza there. That's why -- how we activated that's in the last 40 years. This is a very significant location. It's convenient, and it is very accessible from the relationship to the T and the yard, and it is so different from the back. And when we interviewed people and did a bunch of studies, I mean that's where people ask "Can I have a map?" "Where's the

bathroom?" All that stuff happens right there. And we have that experience documented and have it for many, many years.

JAMES MONTEVERDE: Okay, thank you.

GEORGE BEST: So I just have some -- a question about signage. To be inclusive, it says Campus Center now. I typically wouldn't walk into a campus center.

TANYA IATRIDIS: I think the -- we haven't determined -- this was an artist drawing just saying Campus Center. The signage, we haven't fully developed it yet. It will have a cafe. It will be very welcoming. It would say "Open to the public." It would have -- our signage is going to be very welcoming. I think what you're seeing here is an artist just writing Campus Center. Nobody has determined the signage yet. So it is clearly going to be a very welcoming for the public and it is meant to be for the public, the front.

THOMAS LUCEY: We also wrote that in the commitments. We were speaking we have a signage package that members of the public will be made aware that they're invited in and accessible to them.

HENRY MOSS: Can I go back to Jim's question because I fear we didn't answer what you were asking, in that the program pressures for the back of that building are far less in terms of the numbers of uses that are coming together and the square footage requirements they have. Remember, the north end of the building wouldn't even have -- wouldn't even accept an Au Bon Pain. And with the expansion of the Au Bon Pain, it's still too crowded. So that's the crux of the argument. And when you try to move that -- those use pressures back into the building, you keep running into concrete.

JAMES MONTEVERDE: Thank you.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Any further questions from the Board before I open this up to public testimony?

(No Response.)

TIMOTHY HUGHES: All right, I'll open it up to public testimony.

Is there anyone wants to be heard on this subject? Identify yourself for the record.

JOHN HAWKINSON: I have a small question. John Hawkinson, 84 Mass. Ave.

In your proposal you note that the height variance request is removed and that the beacon projection is removed, but you don't actually speak to the beacon. So I would like to understand whether the beacon is still present without a height change or whether the beacon has been removed entirely?

Thank you.

ANDY BARNETT: We still want to use that.

ATTORNEY JAMES RAFFERTY: You need to address the Board and whether they would like you to answer the questions.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: I would like to hear the answer. Is that still going to be internally illuminated in such a way that it would provide that kind of beacon, and it's just not going to stick out? TANYA IATRIDIS: Yeah.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: And the beacon itself?

ANDY BARNETT: It's going to be recessed from the building.

TANYA IATRIDIS: Like that.

ANDY BARNETT: And it's dropped in height so it's level with

adjacent -- within the --

TANYA IATRIDIS: Right.

ANDY BARNETT: So we want to use that space. And it would still be lit but it's not projecting in that dynamic way.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: And that space does, is included? Some of that square footage is included in the relief?

TANYA IATRIDIS: No, because it's already FAR. It's counted as FAR.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: All right. So

all the relief is on the ground floor, second floor?

TANYA IATRIDIS: And some of the tenth floor, because it's mechanical converting into, into usable space.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Oh, I see. All right.

TANYA IATRIDIS: But that's not involved.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Okay, John?

JOHN HAWKINSON: Thank you.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Anyone else want to be heard on this matter. Can you identify yourself, please?

ALEX KEYS: My name is Alex Keys. I've been a chess player out at Forbes Plaza for 25 plus years and we've been to -- I've been to with some other chess players meetings with the planning

committee and we've talked with a number of the citizens, people that are involved in this, and while I can't claim to represent the chess players, I have talked to a lot of them and I am here. So in general the chess players are -- like the changes that have been proposed. As far as the chess tables specifically, most of the details that remain to be worked out, I'm sure we can work out in the continuing meetings that are scheduled. The one thing that came up a few times with the chess players, and it came up also in the meeting that I like to mention here just because it pertains to space usage in the square, is the question of space in and between around the chess tables because they do tend to draw spectators and a crowd and the tables are gonna be good

size. The FIDE or F-I-D-E recommendations are, you know, that's a good size table for everybody to use and so -- but we like the location in the middle, in the middle It's very nice to be the center of there. attention. And, you know, some under the trees and some out. But some people were wondering whether to create the right amount of space in between and around the tables, whether five tables in a row or maybe three tables and then sort of two tables T-ing on the end would be more, would work better. You know, one way -- it's just a different form of about the same amount of space, but because it's space in Forbes Plaza which is at a premium, I thought I would mention it here. But in general the chess players seem relatively satisfied with the new

plans.

Okay, thank you.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Just as a follow up to that, I know that in your very wise motion you will tie the relief, if we grant it to the plan as presented. I am less concerned about the rearranging of the deck chairs, if you will, and leave that aspect of it possibly flexible and not restrict it to the plan in front of us. That would be just a suggestion going forward.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Okay, remind me. BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Well, all of us will.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Anyone else? James.

JAMES WILLIAMSON: James

Williamson, 1000 -- I almost gave my address from 35 years ago. 17 Perry Street. Obama Oyango (phonetic) was my downstairs neighbor. 1000 Jackson Place, Cambridge.

This is fantastic, this plan. I love it. You know, I haven't had a chance to say that about something in Cambridge in almost, I think in 45 years. I mean, I'm really impressed with the incredible job that the architects, the landscape people have done and, you know, it's just -- I'm real happy to see that these changes have been made in the ways that they have.

I do want to -- well, first of all, if I may, I wanted to say thank you to the Board because had you all not, you know, been careful in your deliberation, in your scrutiny, and in your vigilance, and I think in your really impressive and conscientious attention to the public interest in this, we might not be here, and Harvard might not have had the welcome opportunity to offer to their design time the opportunity to make the changes that they've made. And so thank you.

And thank Harvard for responding and for opening up the changes that came from this, the team that -- I think they've done really a fantastic job.

If I may, I have just a couple little observations. I don't -- they're not, by no means are they meant to be, you know, show stoppers or anything like that. I think we're, from my point of view, we're passed the sort of let's see if we can tweak this and get it right before approval to how can we make this as successful as we can make it going forward. I do want to just say if I may just to say a couple of thank yous to some of the people who have helped make this Harvey Silverglate, Elsa Dorfman. happen. Harvey wrote a beautiful letter. It ended up in the Chronicle. Carol Perrault brought a scrutiny involving preservation. Marilee Meyer focussed on the corner that I think we should probably name the Marilee Meyer cubbyhole. It's over in the left-hand corner, where I don't think anybody was really thinking about what would happen over there by the bank. Paul Cronin, it moves me tremendously that Paul is here, that Paul's involved. His father owned the famous Cronins, you know, famous with the B generation, and everybody else

in the Harvard Square and whose father lost his business when the block was taken to do Holyoke Center to begin with. And I'm really impressed that Paul has taken an interest and been here.

Alex and the chess players and Bob Richards who to me represents Cambridge, the embodiment of what I like to think of as Cambridge working class integrity, who got up and said, after explaining a really great and important history and a disagreement with Harvard over the Sackler, said, "Harvard don't have all the answers." And thank God we got that and that everybody got involved, and I think made it such a much better result.

And Pebble Gifford who as usual is late, but may show up and have something to say.

But, you know, to have the venerable Harvard Square defense fund, the former president involved in this in helping. She was actually the one who first brought a group of us around the table with representatives of Harvard to begin looking at this. And to, and to Harvard, to the representatives of Harvard, Tom, Tanya, and Giles who I barely met, and others who, you know, I think had to be nudged a little, but maybe they're taking orders from other places, too. And, but once this got kind of opened up, the result I think is just fantastic. It's not, I don't think it's up to me to decide some of the tricky questions that you have to address, having to do with hardship, but I think I can say with confidence the public -- is there detriment to the

public? I can say with confidence from my point of view, certainly, this is a great It's not detrimental to the public. plan. One thing that I did have a reservation about and I'll miss is the elevation of the greatest seating area. There is something nice about sitting at a somewhat elevated level. However, there's something on the other side that's being gained there which I have to acknowledge which is access. Not having to have a ramp which would take up space and the ability to move through this space without, you know, beleaguering the people sitting there which has been addressed in a very good way, I think is positive. The removal of the planter is huge. I welcome all those changes. I think the overhang is fantastic. And -- but I do want to

say, not withstanding Brendan's reservation, I had a conversation with Alex -- and I think Alex and I are chess players and people who aren't chess players would be sitting nearby are kind of on the same page on the how far into the seating area, the what I call the prong of five tables, extends. And I, you know, I don't know that this is something that has to be taken up in detail by yourselves tonight, but to consider adjustments in that configuration or -- and/or to build in flexibility so that if over time we're not all getting along happily in that shared space with chess players and crowds and the aggressive playing that sometimes can occur between chess players, they love to yell at each other seemingly when they

play, then there could be either some work on it now going forward or the wherewithal to make some beneficial changes later on. The only other thing I want to say and I'm sorry to go on --

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: That was four things ago. One other thing ago. Okay, in conclusion.

JAMES WILLIAMSON: Did I say four? The other remaining thing that I think is worth mentioning is there are going to be some questions during implementation to make this a success, and I think maybe Harvard could consider having a kind of advisory committee or more than one advisory committee on different issues like on construction scheduling, what to do during construction, relocation opportunities for the chess tables, for example, or access issues involving public access which of course is gonna be problematical, and then this chess table seating area issue. And so I do think there are, you know, there is an opportunity there to work on this going forward, and I invite Harvard to, you know, consider I think it will be in the interest of Harvard to have ways of doing that.

And just, I just want to say thank you. Thank you to everybody, the Board, Harvard, representatives of Harvard, and the people especially who got really deeply involved in this. And I have to say that I'm gonna say for the first time publicly to some people here, one of my ancestors was an early president of Harvard. I think he's rolling over in his grave right now trying to figure out what happened here and I think he's probably thinking it was a great result.

So anyway, thank you.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you.

Anybody else?

I'm Robyn ROBYN CULBERTSON: Hi. Culbertson, R-o-b-y-n C-u-l-b-e-r-t-s-o-n, executive director of the Cambridge office for tourism. I had a lot written down because I don't have a very good memory. The only thing really I want to thank you for is including restrooms from a tourism standpoint, we had -- last year we had over nine and a half million visitors to Cambridge. I'd say a good chunk of those go to see Harvard, and we don't have any public restrooms. So it's always been a question and it's wonderful to have

something like this offered that's accessible and convenient. And this, with the addition of what the City is building down in front of the common is -- I hate to get so excited about restrooms, but I On behalf of the visitors, I'm am. thrilled. And I think it's just a wonderful design of this space. It's accessible. It's inviting. It's going to be a center point for people when they land in Cambridge to have a place to go and see and they've got a little bit of Harvard I think it's wonderful.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Is there anyone else?

NADEEM MAZEN: Nadeem Mazen, 720 Massachusetts Avenue. N-a-d-e-e-m M-a-z-e-n.

I'll try to just be very brief and

thanks to the Board and thanks to Harvard. I hope all the stakeholders are happy with the process. To me, in my limited understanding of what's transpired, it just seems like city planning at its best. I hope that Harvard is as happy as James was, you know, with all the back and forth and I hope that this is a better plan from Harvard's perspective in terms of building costs and the cost of architecture and planning and the benefits that have been added to the public space for the entire community, but also for the Harvard community. So if indeed it's better for Harvard, if it's better for the City, and if it's to the Board's expectations, I just think it's been an exemplary process and one that should be a hallmark for other types of planning in the city. So I

couldn't be more pleased. And if James's speech sounded like a victory speech, I'm not one to defend James or otherwise, but --

JAMES WILLIAMSON: Go ahead.

NADEEM MAZEN: But maybe that's merited to be totally honest, outside of this room I don't think there's a lot of people that feel like their input always delivers a positive, iterative experience. It's really nice to see.

Thanks to the Board and everyone else.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you.

Anyone else?

MARILEE MEYER: Marilee Meyer, 10 Dana Street. I'm often outspoken on a lot of issues and people say oh, my God, her again. But I would really like to thank the BZA for, to reiterate what James was saying, that without you stopping and thinking, this project would have been basically rubber stamped, you know, go and just going along with the process. And there are a lot of us who are incredibly passionate about tweaking the design. And the cantilevered second story and the recessed first floor makes all the difference in keeping it or even making it a little bit more intimate than what I call the theatre lobby or the airport lobby look of the two-story glass. So, you gave me hope that there are some government entities that do -- are independent and do listen and talk amongst each other because you were gonna go through and then one or two people said no, wait a second, and you got turned

around because you considered. But I can't leave without making one little tweak and that is the beacon, the top, on the top. The big square that was projected and is now is recessed it still is not satisfying. It still is -- there's still a problem with that, but given the greater good, you know, I'll have to live with that. But that is one thing that is not successful.

So thanks.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you. Anyone else? In the back. Denise. DENISE JILLSON: Denise Jillson, Executive Director of the Harvard Square

Business Association. We're delighted and excuse me for being a little cheeky, it's a fine day in Cambridge when Denise and James agree. I'm delighted that he's delighted and thank you very much.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you. I saw another hand.

Heather Hoffman, HEATHER HOFFMAN: 213 Hurley Street. And I think this is probably a red letter day. We'll all get to say that, yes, we were there and heard all of this happiness from an unusual group of people. And I wanted to offer a quote that I heard, and I wish I had been able to hear the name of the person who was saying this because it's a landscape architect who said, "Open space is not a building waiting to happen." And I want to say that I'm really glad that Harvard figured that out. And I hope that many other people in Cambridge will figure that out, because open spaces are probably more important than anything else to the

continued life and health of our city.

Thank you.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you. Yes.

DAN FRAINE: Dan Fraine, F-r-a-i-n-e with the Cambridge Savings Bank. Very excited to see this project finally hopefully get going. I think it's what's great for tourism, is great for local businesses which will help the square to continue to thrive and continue to be a world class destination. And just like to thank everybody involved.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Yes.

JOHN DiGIOVANNI: Good evening. John DiGiovanni, D-i-G-i-o-v-a-n-n-i with Trinity Properties and I represent Trinity Properties also with the Harvard Square Business Association. So I have one objection. Which is calling the Mount Auburn side the back side. I don't think this building has a back side, right? I mean, it's a full city block. So and on a very serious note I would say that this piece, the most attractive piece is in addition to the public restrooms, having second floor space at Harvard Square where the public can go does not exist in Harvard Square. This is something that's extraordinary and I think Mr. Lucey mentioned about a decade worth of public meetings. And they happened in the late nineties and 2000 where the city had public planning process about Harvard Square, went out to CDD, and Harvard was involved and many of those formed this and have to do with the plaza and what is known as the out of town kiosk area. And

I'd like to say I think last time it wasn't clear, less seating in Harvard Square, there is in fact more outdoor public seating in Harvard Square in the last ten years. In addition, Mount Auburn Street, the city planning has added a sidewalk expansion on Mount Auburn Street. It would be 45 seats on Mount Auburn Street between JFK and Dunster Street. I think this is terrific. I think Harvard's responding to that and you cannot underestimate the idea of having public restrooms in Harvard Square. It's extraordinary. But I think the outdoor seating on Dunster Street and what is currently mechanical for this extraordinary urban space, I see that this building that did not engage itself with the urban fabric in Harvard Square,

that being transformed in this way and turning 7,000 square feet into public space into 35,000 square feet of public space I think is extraordinary. I don't think you could have a developer do that. I think you have a major stakeholder that I think is absolutely engaged. They're engaged on all sorts of levels in the last couple of decades in hearing. And I think this process has worked. There may be some, you know, design that some folks like here on this design versus the other. I think overall the benefits are extraordinary and there is -- I want to thank you as well and encourage you to improve this so that we can have public restrooms and these other amenities sooner rather than later.

Thank you for your time.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you. Yes sir.

KEN TAYLOR: Ken Taylor, 23 Berkeley Street. I'm an architect. I'm an urban planner. I had the good fortune of sitting in on the early review meetings that Harvard staged when they were first taking this to the public, and I felt my first reaction to this project was that it's a wonderful concept. The way it was realized wasn't perhaps totally satisfactory, and in fact, along the way there have been a number of stages. It's been a little bumpy, and I think it was -- I didn't really get comfortable with the project until it got to the BZA. And frankly, the BZA raised the questions which it did, which triggered the changes that have occurred that are an enormous

improvement. I mean, it was always good, but it's even better now. So I have to say that I'm very supportive of the project. I echo Marilee Meyer's comment about the beacon.

Harvard has a tradition of wonderfully lit spires on the houses and belfries, Memorial Chapel and Memorial Hall, and they're unique. And I think Holyoke Center deserves the same thing. I think a lighted conference room is not the answer to it, and I hope the BZA in the future will come back and consider the possibility of a beacon that might either exceed height or -- I don't think it would add necessarily to the FAR, but I think this is a wonderful project and perhaps it can be even better, or but it will be the way it is now. But you support it as well as the public that I've heard support it tonight.

Thank you.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you. Anyone else? Yes, sir.

BOB RICHARDS: My name is Bob Richards and I live at 395 Broadway in Cambridge. And I just wanted to say thank you. We weren't heard in the past -- not on this project, but on other projects and I just want to say thank you very much. Thank you, Tanya, for all you've done for allowing an openness to those of us citizens who use the plaza and who use Harvard Square all the time and are very cognizant of what happens around that place. And I guess everybody came together and that was really good. It doesn't always happen. None of us are 100 percent happy with everything, but we all have to learn to make compromises, and I believe we all did that.

Thank you.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you.

Anyone else before I close public testimony? Yes, sir.

BERTIL JEN-CHRONBERG: Good evening. My name is Bertil Jen-Chronberg. TIMOTHY HUGHES: You're going to

have to spell that.

BERTIL JEN-CHRONBERG:

B-e-r-t-i-l. Last name

J-e-n-C-h-r-o-n-b-e-r-g. My situation is interesting. I'm a citizen of the square, meaning I live on 37 Hawthorne Street towards the old district just behind the square. So the square is my living. And I have a business on the square, also had

Beat Brasserie. It is a restaurant. Because better to my business and also as an effect of living around the square. Short story, when I renovate my house, I have the house was designed with the thought of -- renovated on Hawthorne Street was designed made by Gropius, G-r-o-p-i-u-s. And Raymond was the architect for Gropius House. And so when I renovate this house to what we doing now is work is take building 15-years-old, respect the thought the architect was a movement like Sert was a bit filling and bring that to the 21st century. You need to have help. I have help as Eleanor was old and I bring on board and saying what I'm doing with my house. The Board at the time was fabulous and I accept the modification to bring this house to the

21st century. I see from Harvard the same process now where we have the luck to have the student of Sert to have understand what is beyond this project to bring on the 21st century, the respect of orientation and form to a very important front. Sert, and also the flow of the building and how people move to bring that with new thought and new technology. Ι think all this debate, it's fabulous. I think modification need to be made. We need also to respect and honor the work of an architect to have just not a thought to create something for himself, but to pass and grow from what Sert was doing at the start, and I think it's an agreeable project. I think to push the glass like we did, that's a mistake. That's personal. But in generally I think this

building, this project from Harvard and university open to the public to normally university closed, it's fantastic and thank you for the bathroom. It saved my restaurant.

Thanks.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you.

Is there anyone else that wants to be heard on this matter?

PEBBLE GIFFORD: I'll be very brief. I think it's a win/win for Harvard and the community. And I think it's going to be a very successful project on the exterior. I didn't get involved on the interior, but from what I see it looks great.

Thank you.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Okay, there are two new letters in the file since the last time we had a meeting. One was from James Williamson who spoke so I won't outline that one.

JAMES WILLIAMSON: I apologize for the prose in that e-mail.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Okay.

And the other one is from Hugh Russell from One Corliss Place in Cambridge, identifying himself as someone who actually worked for Mr. Sert and is glowingly in favor of the project.

With that, I'll close public testimony. I'll open this for discussion by Board members.

And these were all in favor, you don't need any rebuttal, that's right, never mind. Did you have any rebuttal?

> TANYA IATRIDIS: Thank you. TIMOTHY HUGHES: We're hearing a

lot of thank yous tonight.

Okay. Comments?

Well, my only BRENDAN SULLIVAN: comment would be, you know, the importance of the building of the location. If you go to the presentation folder, the page 16 and 17 really outlines it quite well. And the unrestricted public restrooms which I think are for anybody who has traveled to a foreign country and in unfamiliar territory, the first thing we sort of look for are the visitors' cards in identifying where the public restrooms are. So I think that is absolutely huge here. I think that the business owners obviously welcome that. So I think that benefit alone going from nine fixtures to twelve is a huge A-plus.

The updated signage for way finding

is a plus. I suspect probably on the Mount Auburn side which we may call the B side, John, rather than the back side. But the B side, just as important probably to direct people to where they are also.

And that the 34 percent increase in the total number of indoor and outdoor seating is a huge benefit.

The public transit information display, again, for somebody who has traveled and looks for the next bus, the next train, not to bore you with details, but anyhow, in 2014 the total number of visitors to the Boston/Cambridge area numbered 18,250,000, from the bureau of tourism. We heard tonight that in excess of nine million came to Cambridge. That the Harvard station embarks over seven million people annually. And that there are 13 MBTA bus routes that service Harvard Square every single day. Busses arrive 779 times every workday, 618 times every Saturday, and 416 times every Sunday. So the, there was an enormous amount of people. Totals 257,000 bus trips annually that go through Harvard Square.

So, and I bring this up because I think that this building, this location is such an absolute pivotal point in Cambridge. It's a crossroads. It's a gathering place and it's a landmark. And I think that we should make it worthy of such. And I think that this project, all of the components of it does that.

That would be my comment.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you. George?

GEORGE BEST: Well, I'm -- I like the addition or the modification, especially the second floor level because it provides a bit of intimacy for people that want to be out of the fray but still observe the square. I also like the fact that it doesn't look like Logan Airport, and it's sort of, you know, it's -- it is inviting now.

And it does -- adding the tree is huge for me, because I like the greenery outside. I think it gives more of an option for people now in this new format to sort of mill around, be, if you will, conversational with each other. And, also, I like the fact that it, the -- there's two levels to that second level. I can't get over the modification on the second level. And the lighting underneath the canopy of that sort of brings you, that's more welcoming than a wall of glass. That's just how I feel.

> TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thank you. Doug?

DOUGLAS MYERS: I don't want to disturb the very pleasant atmosphere of mutual felicitation that pervades the room, but I -- and, but I would like to ask some questions. Not that they are hostile or adverse. They are not, but they are questions on my mind. They specifically relate to the project. And I would nonetheless before, even though it seems that already the history of this proposal is being written in black and white, before in any event, the last I is dotted and the last T is crossed, I would

like to ask questions that are probing and to which I think are worth discussing at least in my point of view. They will not be long. They only concern two subjects; the overhang and the entryway.

And you can direct them to whoever should be the proper -- the best person to give an answer.

JAMES WILLIAMSON: Sorry, the overhang and?

DOUGLAS MYERS: The entryway. The front entrance to the center.

TANYA IATRIDIS: Sure.

DOUGLAS MYERS: So as I understand it, the overhang is going to protrude a total of eleven feet? Or seven feet from the edge of the building in front of what is the Au Bon Pain premises? Seven feet will be an overhang. I would like to know what is the above ground height of that overhang, of that cantilevered part of the overhang?

ANDY BARNETT: About ten foot, six?

HENRY MOSS: That's right.

ANDY BARNETT: I think it was ten foot, six.

DOUGLAS MYERS: So it will be higher than the present Au Bon Pain canopy?

TANYA IATRIDIS: Yes.

ANDY BARNETT: Yeah, it aligns with some of Sert's concrete bounds behind it.

DOUGLAS MYERS: I regard that as a favorable answer because I was -- it wasn't clear in the absence of the simulation. TANYA IATRIDIS: You're right.

DOUGLAS MYERS: And as best as I could grapple with the plans, I wasn't clear at all about the above ground height, and I'm glad to hear that it's noticeably higher. And this will get to my next questions.

Given that there will be a protruding overhang of seven feet and although at ten feet high, that may tend to -- I wanted to ask you whether you had considered that in the absence of lighting, of adequate nighttime lighting, especially that type of a projecting overhang might create the risk of gloomy, cave-like atmosphere that would not be attractive to the public? Did that -- because cantilevered spaces sometimes have that effect.

ANDY BARNETT: I think its proportions would have to be -- I mean, I agree. You know, I mean particularly on modernist buildings if, you know, the overhang is too much, it would be a gloomy environment. But I think it would have to be dramatically different if it's taller than it is lined. I think it would be a very human-scaled attractive space. I mean, it's not that different from that precedent I showed you of the hall in London which is just, you know, it's a human scale space. It's something that actually I think I'm pretty confident be happy to be, sitting underneath.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Can I follow up with a question?

DOUGLAS MYERS: Sure. TIMOTHY HUGHES: Would it be lighted even during hours when the building wasn't open?

TANYA IATRIDIS: Sure, absolutely. TIMOTHY HUGHES: So it would shed light on the plaza? TANYA IATRIDIS: Absolutely, yes.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Would that make it less of a --

DOUGLAS MYERS: I think that's a plus because cantilevered places that are dark can sometimes be a, can be -- attract undesirable activities. And I think -- I'm not an architect, but I think that's not an obscure comment about cantilevered places. They have that tendency.

HENRY MOSS: You're absolutely right. But we have a 17-foot long cantilever at the BU Law School and the addition to Sert's Law School Tower. And some of that is lit from underneath in order to deal with the question that you ask. And this will not be cave-like. This is so much more open and glazed continuously underneath. But you're particularly correct in terms of things like the Ritz in London which is a cave-like north facing logia system and arcade.

DOUGLAS MYERS: I saw this that the surface of the overhang was white in some of the simulations. Will that be its color?

HENRY MOSS: It will be a light, metal a kind of grey.

DOUGLAS MYERS: Looked white.

HENRY MOSS: You're right, we need to make sure that it is also lit.

ANDY BARNETT: I think the other thing that we haven't talked about this evening because it's inside, but it's actually quite important is that absolutely this spaces you refer to, they tend to be cantilevers looking overhanging a solid space at the rear of that cantilever. Whereas, what we've done is, which we didn't talk about, is there's another balcony on the other side and there's a glazed wall which still has the sliding doors in good weather. So it's not like you'll look into something dark. There's another balcony on the other side.

DOUGLAS MYERS: And when you say the other side, again, I notice on the simulation, will the -- what will be -- on the other -- as I'm holding the simulation toward you, on the left side of the entrance of the proposed entrance as you depict it, will there be a cantilever there or is that a solid wall?

TANYA IATRIDIS: Yes.

DOUGLAS MYERS: That will also be a cantilevered?

TANYA IATRIDIS: Yes.

DOUGLAS MYERS: You haven't mentioned the use of that -- of the second of the balcony part of the, that's about the overhang. What will be the use of that interior space?

TANYA IATRIDIS: I can explain that. Can you go to the plan of the second floor? Right.

You're talking about this piece right here. This is a double height, so that's the entrance. This here is a room, a multipurpose room, that we'll have meetings. And right here in this is a collaborative area that is for the stakeholders; the students, and staff and faculty. So this will be used by them when they come into this room.

DOUGLAS MYERS: That will not be open to the public?

TANYA IATRIDIS: Right. Because you can get from here to here. It is a double height, correct. So all of this is -- and then also access to the multipurpose room for community meetings as we use it right now, downstairs. The information office.

DOUGLAS MYERS: And then the second area of questions that I have concerns the entrance. And as I understand the plans, the entry vestibule will extend to the original 11-foot extension line of your July 30th proposal. I also understand the approximate dimensions of the entry vestibule as it juts out from the plane of the wall behind it to be approximately seven feet in width and about 20 and a half feet in length. Now that's my interpolation, but I take it that's fairly close.

So that coming down -- the vestibule, the overhang in front of the Au Bon Pain premises will be about 62 feet in length. And then it will -- there will be the jut out seven feet.

HENRY MOSS: It will return.

DOUGLAS MYERS: And then go back seven feet and then continue on the other side of the area below where the student and function room places are inside.

What was it that you felt -- why was

it that you felt the entryway had to protrude into Forbes Plaza at that point? And I say this -- I'm not going to hold anything back here. I'm not going to save a counter-punch the way a trial lawyer would, because I will just say this question is not an idle question, I think, because on your original plans of July 30th, the entrance was recessed. It did not jut out from the plane of your building exterior wall. So you recessed it. So on that date you felt it was compatible with what you were trying to do to have a recessed entrance, yet a recess was two and a half feet. Again, by my interpolation. And yet tonight we have an entrance that's going to jut out an additional seven feet and consume, occupy, an additional 150, 140 to 150 square feet.

What is your thinking about that? HENRY MOSS: I could start to answer and then Andy I think you can really take it farther.

TANYA IATRIDIS: Does this slide help?

HENRY MOSS: It does help.

Both the indentation from the July 30th and this protrusion in a way is marking the arcade entrance from people who are paying attention to 20 other things at the same time. The original -- the indentation in the summer presentation that we showed you was also related to the fact that the facade, the whole facade came out much farther. So as we start to move these things back in, having taken the ground plane in seven feet, it's so much of an interruption to the flow all the way across of the interior of the welcome area that it becomes problematic.

Andy, what have I missed? ANDY BARNETT: Yeah, I mean the drawing that was up there, any of the three-dimensional drawings that we --

TANYA IATRIDIS: Should I put it back?

ANDY BARNETT: Sure.

-- that we've shown you that were taken from the very complex three-dimensional accurate model so we can move through the space in our office.

TANYA IATRIDIS: This one? ANDY BARNETT: Yeah, that one's fine.

We've done an awful lot of work at looking at exactly that point, really, and

what happens as Henry alluded to, is the one thing that we can't really do behind this facade, is remove the concrete columns. I mean, they're there to stay. Quite obviously they're back there in that drawing. And we look to whether that facade, as well as the whole thing moving back, whether that should move back because it always has been this feedback. And we talked to people about a design, that the arcade and the entrance should be clearly demarked. And it should be a major civic building on a major square. And it should be visibly obvious for everybody where that entrance is without Without it -- without a sign. it. It should tell you where the main entrance We felt we should demark it. is. If we push it back, the whole facade moves back.

Then I think it's only like two or three feet to Sert's columns which means it's a primary entrance to the building, there's just not enough physical space to go into the doors and enter the building.

The other thing that we -- so we pushed it out rather than in at that point. And the other thing we really liked about that is because we created that occupiable space on the first floor, and people talked about differentiating between seating space and circulation, no one is, no one is gonna walk across the front face of the building because the protruding lobby stops that being a route. It makes those two spaces much more static spaces which will be not disturbed by circulation. So we felt it gave us a number of good solutions, really, to the

issue without creating congestion inside, immediately inside the lobby.

HENRY MOSS: And two other items on that topic. One is that we also reviewed these distinctions with Charlie Sullivan. And his concern was not to have a facade that was without a significant interruption in relation to the arcade. In terms of taking more space from the plaza, the space it's taking is circulation space in any case. It's enclosing that. It's not as if it's displacing other, more benign uses that people pushing strollers.

DOUGLAS MYERS: How was it -- I certainly understand the necessity to have the entrance be clear and appealing and something that is attractive to people, but in weighing these factors how did you decide that the protrusion should be seven feet? Why not eight, why not four?

HENRY MOSS: Well, a code minimum for the double swinging doors is seven feet.

DOUGLAS MYERS: Okay.

HENRY MOSS: That's basically it. ANDY BARNETT: And it also allows us to just make the staircase at the second floor balcony just work. Again, before we hit Sert's columns, there's just enough space to get that staircase in to that second floor balcony.

DOUGLAS MYERS: No further questions.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Thanks, Doug. Jim, comments? JAMES MONTEVERDE: Yes. Thank you for all of your work since July, you and your team, and thanks for listening to our comments and responding. And thank you to the public for all your comments and having responded to them. So thank you very much.

I think the work, the revisions in the plaza are very, very nice. Much nicer than before. Very welcoming, very public. Really marvelous. All of the proposed renovations within the walls, really very exciting. Can't wait to see it. Very nice.

And I appreciate all of the benefits that are listed restrooms and everything else. I appreciate them as well.

I, at the moment can't get myself to accept the need for the additional space in front of the building that takes some bit out of the plaza. I do understand and respect and thank you for having backed off from what it was before, and I do see and appreciate the massing manipulation to let the massing come out on the second floor and receding the first floor. But it doesn't let me settle in my heart that that's enough of a hardship factor of site, etcetera, a reason to grant for that particular piece of the Variance.

Oh, I do want to thank you also for the beacon up top for being able to come to a solution that not needing the added height and the extension. I could forego the beacon and be a very happy person, but I don't think that's what we're voting on.

So I just -- I'm stuck with the extension into the plaza. And I thank you for all the explanation. I understand and I believe the hardship's inside the building, the structure, the concrete and interior space, but I don't -- I can't support that at the moment.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Okay, thanks for your comments, Jim.

As the Chair, I don't want to -- I do not want -- I am not in favor of making a motion and going to a vote until it's clear what's going to happen. Because if it's going to get voted down, I think that after all your hard work you should be given a chance to revisit it again in spite of the fact that, you know, we've already spent eight hours on this, you know, in sessions.

So I will go on record as saying I'm in favor of the project as it exists. I think Brendan is.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: I concur.

GEORGE BEST: I think George is. TIMOTHY HUGHES: So, Doug, I really --

DOUGLAS MYERS: So the onus is on me.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: It is. I'm sorry.

DOUGLAS MYERS: That's fine. I accept the responsibility. Earlier I was afraid of losing my medal by asking some critical questions. I'm satisfied with the answers, and I just want to say that I am satisfied with the hard architectural thought that went into this project. And I think and Jim would know the last time I was extremely vocal in not, in wanting to yield as little as the open space in Forbes Plaza as possible. But I -- and I had a third point here where I was going to actually propose an alternative as to how more space could be conceded to the plaza, but I don't want to do that. Ι don't want to even voice a proposal that I had in mind about what to do, because in the course of your answering my questions I became satisfied that you have given this very serious thought, the right kind of thought, and that if I could come up with a proposal that in my view would be exceedingly fair, let us say, and that it would concede 950 -- reduce the plaza by 950 feet, I don't want to introduce that at this point. I think it would be a great misfortune for this project to go down the drain because I have some kind of fastidious misgivings about it or because I really think at this point that I want to venture to make a specific redesign

suggestion. I don't want to do that. And I do want to repeat something I said earlier, I regret that perhaps I have seemed at times too businesslike in not wanting to indulge in congratulations, statements of appreciation. I hardly ever mentioned the second floor and the public space and everything you've done, it's just not the nature of these proceedings to hand out accolades. The nature is we focus on the controversy and we try to sharpen that focus and get as close as we can to the real issues. I'm satisfied that we've done it, and I'm satisfied that I should vote for it.

TIMOTHY HUGHES: Okay.

DOUGLAS MYERS: That's a long answer, Tim. I had to get there.

The Chair moves that the Variance for the increased FAR on non-conforming structure at 1350 Mass. Ave. be granted.

A literal enforcement of the provisions of this Ordinance would involve a substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the petitioner in that it would prevent a highly decentralized Harvard University from transforming the Smith Campus Center into a welcoming, vibrant, and modern campus hub for visitors, current and perspective Harvard affiliates, and the Cambridge community as a whole just steps away from the Harvard Square MBTA station and the traditional campus center of Harvard Yard.

The hardship is owing to the following circumstances, relating to the soil conditions, shape or topography of such land of structures, and especially affecting such land or structures but not affecting generally the Zoning District in which it is located for the following reasons:

As a result of topographical changes around this unique site, the existing building has various ground floor levels that do not align or connect, creating barriers to accessibility, permeability, and the creation of larger consolidated spaces. For example, the vehicular ramps of the basement are located directly south of the proposed welcome area creating a barrier to expansion to the south.

Desirable relief may be granted without either substantial detriment to the public good for the following reasons: The requested relief enables a transformational improvement of the public realm at this site. And response to feedback on the number of public forums, including the City of Cambridge's Harvard Square place making workshops, community open houses, and from the Harvard Square Business Association and Harvard affiliates, the Smith Campus Center program and design have been tailored to ensure that the building engages the vibrancy of Harvard Square and meets the needs of Harvard affiliates, visitors, and the Cambridge community.

The project calls for improved and expanded seating areas, food venues, and visitor services that are welcoming to all.

The areas of the building available and open to the public will significantly increase through this project, Forbes Plaza will be redesigned to include comfortable seating. The chess tables and new plantings are inviting and allow for flexible outdoor usage for performances and public art.

The Chair would note that the loss of some 1,085 outdoor square feet of outdoor space, most of which is for circulation purposes, would be offset by substantial public access to indoor space, including public restrooms -- an increase in public restrooms.

The relief may be granted without nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the Ordinance for the following reasons:

The Smith Campus Center will not create any significant detriment. The

project calls a continuation of the building's institutional commercial uses. It will continue to serve Harvard University population along with visitors in the Cambridge community as it does today during the same general time timeframe from early morning to late night.

The proposed project calls for no adverse impacts in terms of traffic or shadows. And the project was designed to provide significant public benefits.

Therefore, requested relief does not nullify or substantially derogate from the intent or purpose of the Ordinance.

The Variance would be granted on the conditions that the work be carried out and that the future governance of the Smith Campus Center would happen according to the project documents submitted and dated October 1, 2015, in both eleven-and-a-half by seventeen and a supplemental presentation document which has a couple of other aspects to it that aren't in these original documents, in an eight-and-a-half by eleven format which will be dated and initialed by the Chair.

Accepting that the final arrangements for the chess tables can be flexible as long as the number of tables and the standards determining the size of the tables be adhered to as outlined in the documents. And if the final naming of the building is to include the words "Campus Center," that ample signage would clearly indicate that the public is welcome.

Did I miss anything?

All those in favor of granting the Variance on those grounds?

(Show of hands.) TIMOTHY HUGHES: That's four in favor.

(Hughes, Sullivan, Best, Myers.)
TIMOTHY HUGHES: Opposed?
JAMES MONTEVERDE: Opposed.
TIMOTHY HUGHES: The Variance is
granted.

TANYA IATRIDIS: Thank you. (Whereupon, at 8:45 p.m., the Board of Zoning Appeals

Adjourned.)

* * * * *

ERRATA SHEET AND SIGNATURE INSTRUCTIONS

The original transcript and Errata Sheet has been delivered to Inspectional Services Department.

INSTRUCTIONS

After reading this volume of the Zoning Board of Appeals transcript, note any change or correction and the reason therefor on this sheet. Sign and date this Errata Sheet.

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I have read the foregoing transcript of the Zoning Board of Appeals, and except for any corrections or changes noted above, I hereby subscribe to the transcript as an accurate record of the statement(s) made by me.

CERTIFICATE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS BRISTOL, SS.

I, Catherine Lawson Zelinski, a Certified Shorthand Reporter, the undersigned Notary Public, certify:

That the hearing herein before set forth is a true and accurate record of the proceedings.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 9th day of October, 2015. Catherine L. Zelinski Notary Public Certified Shorthand Reporter License No. 147703

My Commission Expires: April 29, 2022

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