



## WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE

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November 6, 2014

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council  
Cambridge City Hall  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: Whitehead Institute Expansion

Dear Mayor Maher, Vice-Mayor Benzan, and Councillors Carlone, Cheung, Kelley, Mazen, McGovern, Simmons and Toomey:

The Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research is pleased to submit a petition for rezoning of the portion of the MXD District in which our property is located, which would enable us to embark upon an expansion of the Whitehead's building to accommodate an increased research staff.

We have been in Kendall Square for three decades and have witnessed its evolution into a vibrant urban center—a tremendously positive change that parallels the extraordinary scientific progress we have been privileged to be part of. Kendall Square's success is due in no small part to the extensive planning and community work the City has engaged in. In preparing our petition, we have built on the framework of the K2 Study and previous rezonings in the area in which well-thought out planning goals and objectives for Kendall Square have been clearly set forth. In addition to that guidance, we have had extensive discussions with many interested parties. What became clear is that an addition located in the present plaza area at our front entrance would be preferable to adding additional floors on the existing footprint. This would allow us to bring the building to the street edge, add active street front activity and achieve the other goals and recommendations of the K2 Study. Additional background and details of our incorporation of the goals and recommendations of the K2 Study are provided in the enclosed summary.

We are excited to participate in the ongoing success story that is Kendall Square and as the public process for our petition commences we look forward to working with you, other officials and the neighborhood.

Very truly yours,

Martin A. Mullins  
Vice President

Enclosure: application fee

## Whitehead Zoning Petition

### Background.

The Whitehead Institute building at 9 Cambridge Center occupies a prominent position at the intersection of Main Street and Galileo Galilei Way, at the western end of the MXD zoning district. An addition to the rear of the building was added 20 years ago, but the main portion of the building, which faces Main Street, was designed and built more than 30 years ago and reflects the thinking of planners at that time. The building is set back from Main Street behind a plaza, a typical formulation from the era of urban renewal and office parks.

As Cambridge-based companies and institutions, Whitehead among them, have in the last few decades firmly established the City as a world-class innovation center, Kendall Square has also been changing as an urban area. From its modern-day origins in post-NASA urban renewal, the area has evolved towards a livelier, more mixed-use district with a vibrant urban character. This is not accidental. A series of planning studies and rezonings have taken place over the years to facilitate this evolution. Most recently, the K2C2 Planning Study undertook a lengthy and comprehensive examination of Kendall Square and in 2013 issued a Final Report calling for infill and densification in the MXD district. They proposed a set of policy goals and specific zoning recommendations, including a PUD to provide for an additional 1,000,000 square feet in the MXD District. It is expected that the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority or its designated developer will submit a zoning petition requesting such a PUD.

Meanwhile, although the 9 Cambridge Center building may have stood still, the research mission of the Whitehead Institute has not, and more space is needed to support an expansion of the Whitehead's research staff. That need creates an opportunity to dramatically improve and upgrade this prominent site on Main Street at the western approach to Kendall Square, with an infill addition at the Main Street façade that would effectively repair and strengthen the urban fabric in keeping with the planning goals enunciated in the K2 Study. Because the Whitehead proposal is small—60,000 square feet—and easily addressed in a standalone zoning amendment similar to several previous rezonings that have been adopted in the MXD District to allow various projects, it is not believed necessary to delay and address it in the larger and far more complex context of the contemplated PUD. Rather, we propose a change to the base zoning to authorize an additional 60,000 square feet pursuant to a Planning Board special permit, under which the policies and goals enunciated in the K2 Study would be implemented as they relate to the 9 Cambridge Center site.

### Fulfilled Planning Objectives.

Expansion of the Whitehead building to accommodate increased research staff is squarely on target with the K2 Study's enunciated goal of nurturing Kendall Square's innovation culture, including expanding the knowledge-based economy, fostering strong connections to MIT, especially for research, and supporting a vibrant environment for creative interaction.

The opportunity to put a new face on the Whitehead building will also allow us to create one of Kendall Square's "great places" as called for in the K2 Study. The streetscape will be

transformed by bringing the building edge to the street line of Main Street, in line with its neighbors. The site is identified in the K2 Study as a “priority edge to improve” with retail. The proposed zoning would provide the retail incentive recommended in the K2 study (a GFA exemption for 5,000 sf per establishment) in order to activate the ground level. The proposal takes that approach further by also encouraging (and exempting) other publicly accessible features determined by the Planning Board. The result will be a lively walkable streetscape and enhanced opportunities for Kendall Square’s diverse communities to interact. And as noted in the K2 Study, this is an especially desirable achievement for a laboratory building.

We would require Planning Board design review under the Project Review Special Permit process. At present such review is only required for multifamily residential in the MXD District, but the K2 Study also recommends it for the PUD. Sustainability is also promoted by incorporating the Green Building standards of the Zoning Ordinance.

Because the existing building has adequate parking and loading and the T is only a block away, we propose not to provide additional parking or loading and accordingly would need to eliminate any parking and loading requirements with respect to the incremental space. We would of course apply the City’s new bicycle parking requirements to the incremental space.

The petition makes the same technical adjustment previously adopted within the immediately adjacent Ames Street District with respect to elimination of the MXD District lot-by-lot open space requirement, and also provides the Planning Board with discretion to determine the appropriate amount of open space to be provided.

Finally, the petition provides for Community Fund and Housing Incentive contributions.

## Zoning Petition

The undersigned hereby petitions the City Council of the City of Cambridge as follows:

1. To request that the City Council amend the Zoning Ordinance, Sections 14.32.1 and .2 to provide for an increment of 60,000 square feet of GFA to be allowed by special permit in a portion of the MXD District, by:

(A) deleting the language reading “three million, seventy three thousand (3,073,000)” wherever it appears in Sections 14.32.1 and 14.32.2(2) and replacing it in each instance with the following language: “three million, one hundred thirty three thousand (3,133,000)”;

(B) deleting the language reading “two million seven-hundred and seventy three thousand (2,773,000)” wherever it appears in Sections 14.32.1 and 14.32.2(2) and replacing it in each instance with the following language: “two million eight-hundred and thirty three thousand (2,833,000)”;

(C) deleting the figure “1,605,000” in Section 14.32.2(2) and replacing it with the figure “1,665,000”;

(D) adding the following immediately after the first sentence of Section 14.32.1:

“Sixty thousand (60,000) square feet of such aggregate GFA of 3,133,000 shall be allowable only by special permit pursuant to Section 14.72.”;

and

(E) adding the following as a new final sentence of Section 14.32.2(2):

“Development allowed by special permit under Section 14.72 shall be allocated to the increment of allowable GFA in the MXD District under two million, eight hundred and thirty three thousand (2,833,000) as authorized by the District Development Limitations of Section 14.32, and not to the increment between two million, eight hundred and thirty three thousand (2,833,000) and three million, one hundred thirty three thousand (3,133,000).”

2. To request that the City Council amend the Zoning Ordinance, Section 14.70 by retitling that Section “Special Provisions”, titling Section 14.71 “Special Provisions Applicable within the Ames Street District” and adding a new Section 14.72 reading as follows:

14.72 Special Provisions Applicable Outside the Ames Street District.

14.72.1 *Applicability.* The provisions set forth in this Section 14.72 shall apply solely within the portion of the MXD District consisting of lots fronting on Main Street that are not within the Ames Street District as such District is constituted as of October 1, 2014. Where this Section 14.72 specifies some



standards or makes some other requirement contrary to the standards or requirements set forth elsewhere in this Article 14.00 or in the Ordinance, the provisions of this Section 14.72 shall control.

14.72.2 *Purpose and Intent.* In furtherance of the intent provided in Section 14.12, and in response to the Kendall Square planning process, the purpose and intent of this Section 14.72 is to provide an incentive for improvements that will remedy a gap in the urban street edge, promote retail and other ground floor activity to increase public engagement, reduce parking utilization levels and enhance sustainability, and upgrade design to current standards, in keeping with Kendall Square's identity as a world-renowned research center and a vibrant neighborhood.

14.72.3 *Special Permit.* Where improvements are proposed to be constructed on any lot within the portion of the MXD District fronting on Main Street that is not within the Ames Street District as such District is constituted as of October 1, 2014, and release of an open space covenant by the City will be necessary to accommodate such improvements, the Planning Board may grant a special permit allowing improvements containing incremental square footage of not more than 60,000 square feet of GFA within the limits of Section 14.32 in excess of the square footage of improvements located on such lot as of October 1, 2014. In granting such special permit, the Planning Board shall find the following:

- (1) The lot upon which such improvements are proposed contained, as of October 1, 2014, no portion of a building located so as to create a street edge along any part of the Main Street frontage of such lot; and the proposed improvements will remedy that condition by including the establishment of a street edge in keeping with the urban nature of the area, on at least a portion of the Main Street building façade.
- (2) The ground level of the proposed improvements fronting on Main Street will be designed to enhance public access and interaction.

14.72.4 *Retail and Consumer Services Uses.* If retail or consumer services uses are a part of any improvements authorized by special permit under this Section 14.72, the Gross Floor Area of any first floor or areas situated no more than one (1) floor below grade of such improvements devoted to such retail or consumer service uses shall be excluded from calculations of Gross Floor Area and FAR for all purposes of this Article 14.00 and the Ordinance, provided that the portion of any individual retail or consumer services use exceeding 5,000 square feet (or 10,000 square feet for a grocery, market or pharmacy retail use) shall be counted as Gross Floor Area for the purposes of calculating allowable FAR.

14.72.5 *Parking and Loading.* The improvements authorized by special permit under this Section 14.72 shall not require vehicle parking or loading facilities by reason of the incremental development authorized, and no additional parking spaces shall be provided by reason of improvements located on such lot beyond the number of parking spaces provided as of October 1, 2014.

14.72.6 *Bicycle Parking.* Additional bicycle parking shall be provided as required in Section 6.100 to the extent of the incremental development authorized by special permit under this Section 14.72, provided that any such spaces may be located anywhere on the lot or in such other location as the Planning Board may in its discretion approve.

14.72.7 *Open Space.* The Lot Open Space Requirements in Section 14.43 shall be inapplicable on any lot on which improvements are authorized by special permit under this Section 14.72, and the Planning Board may in its discretion waive any other open space requirement applicable to such lot under this Ordinance. Any ground floor publicly accessible feature, if so determined by the Planning Board, shall be excluded from calculations of Gross Floor Area and FAR for all purposes of this Article 14.00 and the Ordinance. The Planning Board may grant a special permit for improvements to be located within the area of the open space covenant that would need to be released by the City notwithstanding that such open space covenant may not have been released prior to issuance of such special permit.

14.72.8 *Sustainable Design and Development.* The incremental development authorized by special permit under this Section 14.72 shall comply with the green building requirements of Section 22.20, provided that the Planning Board may in its discretion vary or waive any such requirements.

14.72.9 *Project Review.* Incremental development authorized by special permit under this Section 14.72 shall be subject to project review by the Planning Board under the provisions of Section 19.20.

14.72.10 *Incentive for Housing Development.* The incremental development authorized by special permit under this Section 14.72 shall be considered an Incentive Project pursuant to Section 11.200.

14.72.11 *Contribution to Community Fund.* Upon issuance of a Final Certificate of Occupancy for the incremental development authorized by special permit under this Section 14.72, the permittee shall contribute to a Community Fund, established by the City Manager, an amount equal to \$10.00 multiplied by the number of square feet of new gross floor area for office and biotechnology manufacturing uses identified in Section 14.21.2 contained in such incremental development.

14.72.12 *Public Benefits.* The public benefits to be provided by a development for which a special permit may be granted under this Section 14.72, including those provided in Sections 14.72.10 and 14.72.11, shall be deemed to satisfy any future requirements for public benefits that may be adopted with respect to the MXD District or any portion thereof that may include any lot eligible for such special permit, including without limitation any other funding requirement or exaction, any requirements to provide innovation or other space or services, or any limitations relating to the progress or sequence of development of residential or other space, none of which shall apply thereto.

This zoning petition for amendment of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance is respectfully submitted by the following owner of land to be affected by the change, for consideration and adoption by the City Council in accordance with the provisions of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, Section 5.

WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE FOR BIOMEDICAL RESEARCH, INC.

By: Martin A. Mullins  
Martin A. Mullins  
Vice President