

# Central Square Advisory Committee

Meeting Notes: 10 Essex Street

The Central Square Advisory Committee met on December 2, 2013 to review and comment on the Special Permit application for 10 Essex Street. The applicant is seeking a Special Permit for building height, setbacks and parking ratio of .5 (i.e. one space for every two units). The applicant is also applying for Special Permits to have the functional green roof exempted from the calculation of Gross Floor Area (GFA), and a reduction in Commercial Short Term Bicycle parking.

Mr. James Rafferty, representing Mr. Morris Naggar of 3MJ Associates presented the proposal and plan drawings. The applicant is proposing to construct a six-story, forty-six unit, multi-family building with ground floor retail and below grade parking. The property is located in a Business B Zoning District and is situated in the Central Square Overlay District. The site is used as a surface parking lot and part of a nearly 35,000 square foot lot that contains frontage on Massachusetts Avenue and Bishop Richard Allen Drive. Mr. Rafferty give and explanation of Special Permits required; the height max in this zoning district is 80' above 60' a Special Permit is required.

The following issues were discussed:

- What is the size and proposed use of the ground floor retail space; the retail is 3,500 square feet and it can be used as a standalone space or be included in the HMART retail space, HMART has certain options.
- Was there any consideration to providing an entrance from the municipal lot from Bishop Allen Drive; no this is being built as a standalone development, lot is owned by the City currently not ready to address the future of this parking lot.
- How will the trash be handled, will trash from HMART come through this development as well; only residential trash will be handled through building, it has not been determined if it will be handled by a private or public service.
- What are the unit distributions: 3-studios, 10-1 bedrooms, 8-1 bedrooms w/den, 11-2 bedrooms, 10-2 bedroom w/den, and 3-3 bedrooms.
- What are the rent ranges: Market
- Timeline: 18 months from permitting
- How many affordable units: 7
- Is there any mechanism to ensure that .5 parking ratio will work. A study of parking behavior at 23 Sidney Street supports the waiver for .5 parking spaces.
- K 2C2 Traffic Study not completed, this information is needed before any decision on parking reductions, Redline is at capacity.

- Douglas Street resident supports the parking reduction, fewer cars not more.
- Main Street resident/owner 60 residents live in units located at 897 Main Street all use bikes not cars. The .05 reduction request is reasonable – good example, supports public transportation with increased density.
- We must be visionary in our approach in reducing car culture, supports the reduction in parking request.
- Parking and land value should be shared, it becomes a win win.
- One-story retail key to building, hope that it is HMART, if it is a restaurant space will require venting.
- Incorporate overhang at entrance.
- Where you have slate integrate another color or different material, look at building on the corner and take it from there, the green seems a bit farfetched, modulation good, window scale good, design and massing right.
- Can this building achieve Net Zero emissions?
- Building being designed within current zoning sends a signal that it can be done; it is a great argument that the current zoning does not have to be changed.
- Encourage the developer to meet with the neighbors and neighborhood groups.
- Entrance to parking on Essex Street is dangerous.
- Consider merging with the City parking lot to have a more holistic approach.
- More affordable units should be tied to the waiver for the request of parking relief.
- Electric transformer wall possibly paint a mural more inviting.

#### Comments from CSAC members

- Need to work with the City, sidewalks are very narrow so attention should be paid to any poles and signs projecting from building so as not to impede passageway.
- Reduction of parking is good for this site.
- Trade off for not building parking should be more affordable units

- Good project within zoning, the numbers of affordable units are within the current laws as they apply today.