

MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board

From: Equity Residential

Date: September 22, 2015

Re: 249 Third Street – Supplemental Information and Updated Proposal

This memorandum responds to issues raised by the Planning Board at the August 18, 2015 hearing on the special permit application for the proposed project at 249 Third Street and related zoning relief for the properties at 195 Binney Street and 285/303 Third Street.

Project Design

General. The Project team has revisited the design of the proposal and made revisions to respond to the Board's feedback and suggestions. Attached hereto is a set of renderings reflecting proposed changes to the Project. The team has also submitted two materials boards for consideration by CDD staff and the Planning Board. Specific changes include the following:

- **Building entrance.** The new entrance has been broadened to relate with the interior lobby size. A solid canopy follows the new width of the entrance; the canopy uses metal and wood to create a warmer approach to the entrance along the sidewalk. An accent area of warm tone pavers was added to the approach to relate to the wood tones on the underside of the canopy.
- **Stoops.** The revised design narrows the steps and creates a more private outdoor space for the tenant. Planted areas have been added to continue the proposed planted areas along the façade of the building.
- **Decks.** Decks have been added to the West and South facing courtyard facades.
- **Window sills.** Brick soldier course sills have been added to the window detailing.
- **Building materials.** The dark metals have been replaced with off-white and light grey metal accents; the window frames are no longer black, but instead are now a light tan. In addition, the railings for the Juliet balconies have been changed to a lighter feel cable railing.
- **Building corner treatment.** The Southwest corner of the building at the 4th and 5th floor has been modified to now have a more consistent massing of masonry and metal panel.

- Street level improvements. The northeast corner at Bent and Third Street has been redesigned to have more masonry at the street level to differentiate it from the southeast retail corner.
- Sidewalks. The renderings now show elevated sidewalks at the Rogers Street curb cut and at the Rogers and Third Street intersection to correspond to the site plans submitted. These sidewalks comply with City of Cambridge standards.

Rear Yard Transformer. At the Board’s suggestion, Equity has investigated whether the above-grade transformer located in the rear yard could be placed underground to improve the appearance of the rear yard and provide more useable open space for residents. Citing complications of both City of Cambridge and private utility infrastructure in the immediate area, thus far, Eversource has been unwilling to grant permission for the transformer to be relocated below grade. Equity is fully committed to continuing its efforts to obtain such permission and if it cannot be achieved, will look into other, less obtrusive locations on site for placement of the transformer. Although it is ultimately up to Eversource where the transformer will be located, the attached renderings depict the Project with the transformer relocated out of the rear yard. Equity will keep CDD design staff apprised of its progress with Eversource and any alternative locations for the transformer.

Accessibility of Stoops. The Project features stoop entries to the two-story units along Third Street to enhance the building’s residential character and to emphasize its connection to the Bent Street residential neighborhood. As noted at the Planning Board meeting, Equity acknowledges that these stoops require relief from the Massachusetts Architectural Access Board (“MAAB”) accessibility requirements. The design team has successfully obtained MAAB variances for similar projects in the past and is optimistic that the Project is eligible for similar relief. Submitted herewith are photographs of stoops that MAAB has allowed on other projects.

Relationship to the Foundry

Design. Although the future use of the Foundry building is as yet unknown, throughout the design process, we have endeavored to be a respectful neighbor to the Foundry site. The building is pulled back from the rear property line and a significant landscaped buffer has been maintained. Submitted herewith is a rendering from the rear of the building showing the visual relationship with the Foundry.

Loading. It was noted at the August 18th hearing that the location of the Project loading area may impact future uses of the Foundry. As noted at the hearing, we deliberately designed all loading to be internal to the site so as to minimize traffic impacts on Rogers, Bent and Third Streets. For a project this size, we anticipate use of the loading area to be episodic and infrequent. Trash pickup will be 1-2 times/week. There will be approximately 80 moves (40 move-ins/40 move-outs) per year. The loading area will also be used for service/maintenance visits to the building, but we expect those to be on a sporadic basis.

Future Rogers Street Improvements. It is our understanding that it has not yet been established whether the Foundry will use Bent Street or Rogers Street for access. Equity is committed to working with the Planning Board and the CDD on the Foundry process, including in regard to any additional improvements to Rogers Street.

Affordable Housing

In response to comments from the Planning Board and members of the public, in addition to the 10 affordable units provided pursuant to the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance, the Project will now also include two (2) Middle Income Units, which will be available to households at 80-120% of Area Median Income (AMI). Accordingly, the new mix will be 72 market rate units, 2 middle income units, and 10 affordable units.

Unit Sizes

Per the Board’s request, following is information regarding the unit mix at the Project and across Equity’s Kendall Square portfolio.

<u>Unit Type</u>	249 Third St		285/303 Third Square*		195 Binney St		EQR Kendall Square Portfolio Summary	
	<u>Units</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Units</u>	<u>%</u>
Studio	28	33%	41	9%	15	8%	84	11%
One Bedroom	46	55%	220	47%	16	9%	282	38%
Two Bedroom	8	10%	182	39%	153	82%	343	46%
Three Bedroom	2	2%	28	6%	2	1%	32	4%
Total	84		471		186		741	

** Does not include the 11 Individually Owned Condo Units*

Notably, half the units across the portfolio are 2- and 3-bedroom units. Indeed, 82% of the units at 195 Binney Street are 2-bedroom units. In an effort to diversify the Kendall Square portfolio, the Project has smaller, more streamlined units, featuring a higher number of studio and one-bedroom units than Equity’s other properties in the area.

Equity further notes that, in its experience across markets, it has found that larger units (e.g., 3-bedroom units) tend to be rented by roommate groups, rather than by families. This internal data suggests that providing more large units does not increase the likelihood of families in residence at a building.

Parking Cost

As discussed in detail in our earlier permit submissions, the Project will be built on what is currently an open air parking lot where some residents of Equity’s property at 195 Binney Street park. Those parking spaces will be relocated to the existing garage at 195 Binney Street, with any overflow parking demand to be met at the garage at 285/303 Third Street. Equity is sensitive to the fact that the rental fee for the garage spaces is greater than the fee it currently charges residents for parking at the surface lot at 249 Third Street. Therefore, for any tenants

of 195 Binney Street who currently park at 249 Third Street, Equity will guarantee that, for the duration of their leasehold, they will continue to pay the same rate (\$150/month) for parking as they currently pay for parking at 249 Third Street (with periodic adjustments for inflation as are already made in due course).

Bicycle Parking

Following the August 18th hearing, Equity performed a bicycle parking audit at 195 Binney and 285/303 Third Street. Counts were taken 6 times a day, between the hours of 5 am and 11 pm on weekdays, and between 10 am and 6 pm on weekends. The data from the audit is below:

Property	Bike Parking Location	Type of Parking	Cost	Units	Total Bike Spaces	Average Occupied Spaces	Average Occupancy	Maximum Occupied Spaces	Occupied Spaces/Unit
285/303 Third Square	Secure Garage	Indoor Bike Rack	Free	482	240	151	63%	170	31%
195 Binney Street	Indoor Parking	Indoor Bike Rack	Free	186	104	87	84%	101	47%

The foregoing data indicate that there is ample bike parking at 285/303 Third Square to meet resident demand, without the need for additional bike parking at this time. Because 195 Binney appears to be close to capacity, Equity is looking into solutions for adding more bike parking for that building. To that end, Equity has reached out to two bike rack providers – Saris and Dero – to advise as to how to optimize the onsite bike storage. Going forward, Equity will undertake periodic monitoring of bike storage capacity and demand to ensure that there is adequate bike parking for all residents who need it.

Equity also proposes to make improvements to the bike storage areas within both 285/303 Third and 195 Binney to make these areas more user-friendly. Such improvements may include upgrading the storage racks and adding “fixit” stations where residents can work on their bikes. Equity will continue to work with CDD and TP&T staff regarding the scope and details of these improvements.

249 Third Street
Supplemental Planning Board Packet
September 22, 2015







Updated Rendering - Corner of Third Street and Rogers Street





Updated Rendering - Corner of Third Street and Bent Street





Updated Rendering - Bent Street





Updated Rendering - Rogers Street





Updated Rendering - Entry Stoops - Plants at Stoops





Updated Rendering - From Park



Updated Rendering - From Park at Dusk





Updated Rendering - Entry - Deeper Canopy





Pergola at Rear



Residences at 249 Third Street

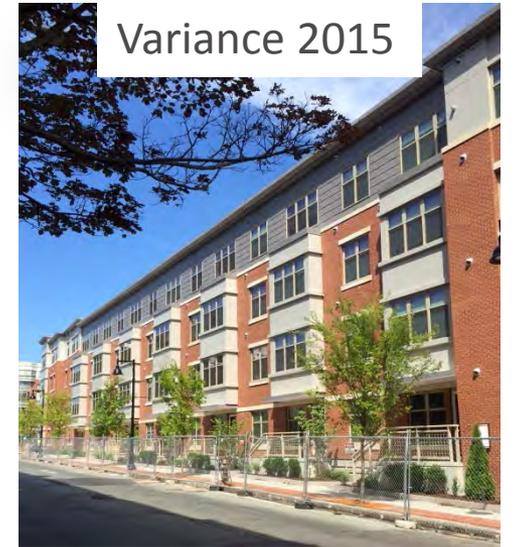
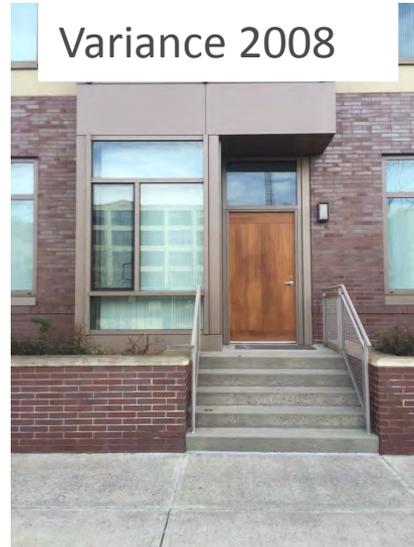
East Cambridge, MA

FIRST FLOOR PLAN



09/22/15

STOOP PRECEDENTS



249 THIRD STREET

