

Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Campus Center

Board of Zoning Appeal Application

May 7, 2015



HARVARD
PLANNING & PROJECT MANAGEMENT



May 7, 2015

Mr. Ranjit Singanayagam, Commissioner
City of Cambridge Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

RE: The Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Campus Center Renovation
1350 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA

Dear Mr. Singanayagam:

Harvard University is seeking zoning relief to facilitate the renovation of the Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Campus Center (the former Holyoke Center) at Harvard University. The application describes alterations proposed for the basement, first, second, and tenth floors of the building. Dimensional variances are being sought for Floor Area Ratio for an addition of 0.1 FAR (7,512 square feet) and height for an addition of 3'-11" in a small area of the 10th floor representing 2% of the roof area. As a result of these two requests, it is also necessary that we seek zoning relief for alteration and expansion of a nonconforming building. In April 2015, the Cambridge Historical Commission granted this project a Certificate of Appropriateness as a project within the Harvard Square Conservation District.

Our team looks forward to presenting this project to the Board of Zoning Appeal at the public hearing scheduled for June 25, 2015.

If you have any questions or need any additional information prior to the hearing, please feel free to contact me at (617) 495-3630.

Sincerely,

Tanya Iatridis
Senior Director of University Planning

Enclosures

CC: Andrew Barnett, Hopkins Architects
Henry Moss, Bruner/Cott & Associates
Emily Mueller de Celis, Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates
Tom Lucey, Harvard University
Alexandra Offiong, Harvard University

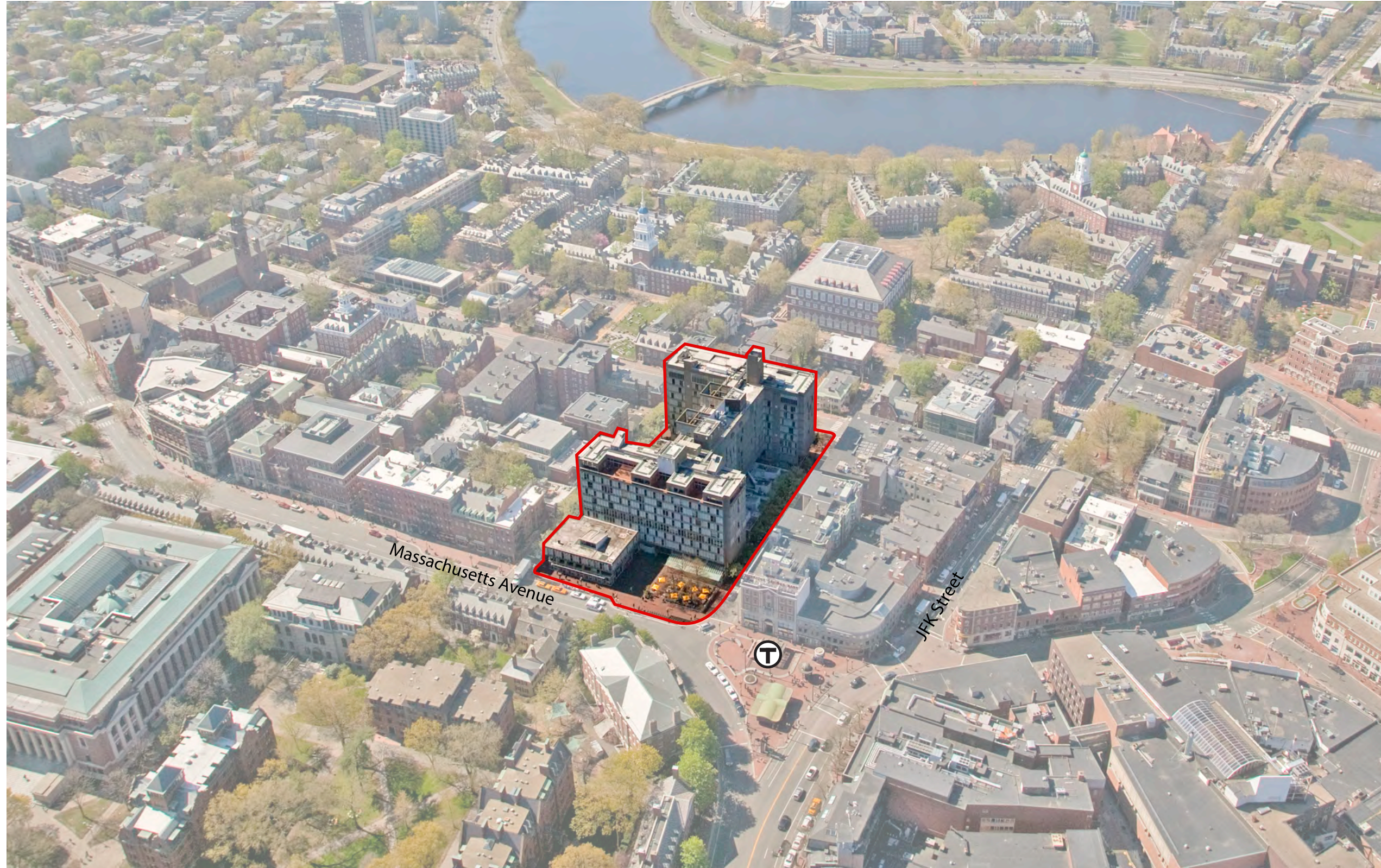
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Project Team

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<i>Landscape Architect</i>	Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc. (MVVA) 231 Concord Ave Cambridge, MA 02138	<i>Traffic Consulting</i>	Vanasse Hangen Brustlin 101 Walnut Street Watertown, MA 02472
<i>MEP Engineering</i> <i>FP Engineering</i> <i>Structural Engineering</i> <i>Civil Engineering</i> <i>Code Consulting</i> <i>Sustainable Design</i>	Arup Arup USA Inc 77 Water Street NY, NY 10005		

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Photography by Mark Flannery

 Smith Campus Center, circa 2012

I. PROJECT OVERVIEW

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A. Introduction

As a key part of its continuing efforts to improve the University’s Common Spaces, Harvard is undertaking a project to renovate portions of the Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Campus Center, formerly known as Holyoke Center and originally designed by Josep Lluís Sert. Recent Common Spaces initiatives have included the addition of comfortable seating in Harvard Yard and the transformation of the Science Plaza as a flexible outdoor gathering space.

“Common spaces are not amenities. They are necessary public elements of the university in its ancient role as a sacred space for ideas, where students, teachers, scholars, visitors, and staff gather informally, work together, relax, recharge, or spark one another in free and provocative exchange.”

Lizabeth Cohen, Dean of the Radcliffe Institute for Advanced Study;
Howard Mumford Jones Professor of American Studies
Mohsen Mostafavi, Dean of the Graduate School of Design;
Alexander and Victoria Wiley Professor of Design

The Smith Campus Center, currently contains approximately 328,000 SF (GFA) and the project will primarily involve renovations on the building’s first, second and tenth floors. Overall the project will demolish approximately 13,600 SF (GFA) and add net new floor area of approximately 7,500 SF (GFA). With its location just steps away from the T and Harvard Yard in the heart of Harvard Square, the Smith Campus Center will provide a welcoming and vibrant entrance to Harvard University for visitors and the Cambridge community. The renovated spaces will also create a dynamic new center of University life for Harvard affiliates.

The Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Center at Harvard University strives to:

- Promote a more integrated campus through the creation of indoor and outdoor gathering spaces that bring together all members of the Harvard community. The Smith Campus Center will be a University-wide destination for social, cultural, and intellectual life, welcoming undergraduate and graduate students, faculty and staff; affiliates of all of Harvard’s schools; and visitors to Harvard;
- Provide flexible, accessible, and sustainable spaces that permit a wide range of uses for all, including spaces for relaxation, places for eating and gathering, meeting spaces, study areas, and performance and display space for the arts;
- Establish a welcoming and vibrant entrance to Harvard University for visitors, current and prospective Harvard affiliates, and the Cambridge community; and
- Maintain food services open to the public throughout the first floor of the building that contribute to the continued vitality of Harvard Square;
- Develop the existing “one-stop” delivery of essential services for all Harvard affiliates;
- Work with the design of the existing building to restore and modify Sert’s architecture, and further contribute to the dynamic urban environment of Harvard Square and Cambridge.

The project designers are London-based Hopkins Architects with Cambridge-based Bruner/Cott as executive architect. Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates is the project’s landscape architect. Construction is expected to begin in the spring of 2016 with the opening scheduled for the fall of 2018.



B. Key Program Areas

The key program areas proposed at the Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Campus Center are located on floor levels 1, 2, and 10, with a small area located on the building's mezzanine level. A summary of the key program areas is described below and the distribution of program areas is illustrated on the right.

Community Welcome Area - Floors 1, 2

Encompassing both indoor and outdoor space, the Community Welcome Area is a highly transparent space that serves as a gathering place for visitors to Harvard. This area is designed as one space and includes both a new Welcome Pavilion and the renovated Forbes Plaza. Uses in this space will enrich the visitor experience and include a two level café, indoor and outdoor seating and gathering areas, an Information Desk, indoor/outdoor chess playing, Harvard events information and ticketing services, and public restrooms.

Common Spaces - Floors 1, 2

Common Spaces integrated throughout the campus center provide a variety of indoor and outdoor gathering spaces supporting a wide range of uses.

Gathering/Collaborative/Meeting Space - Floors 2, 10

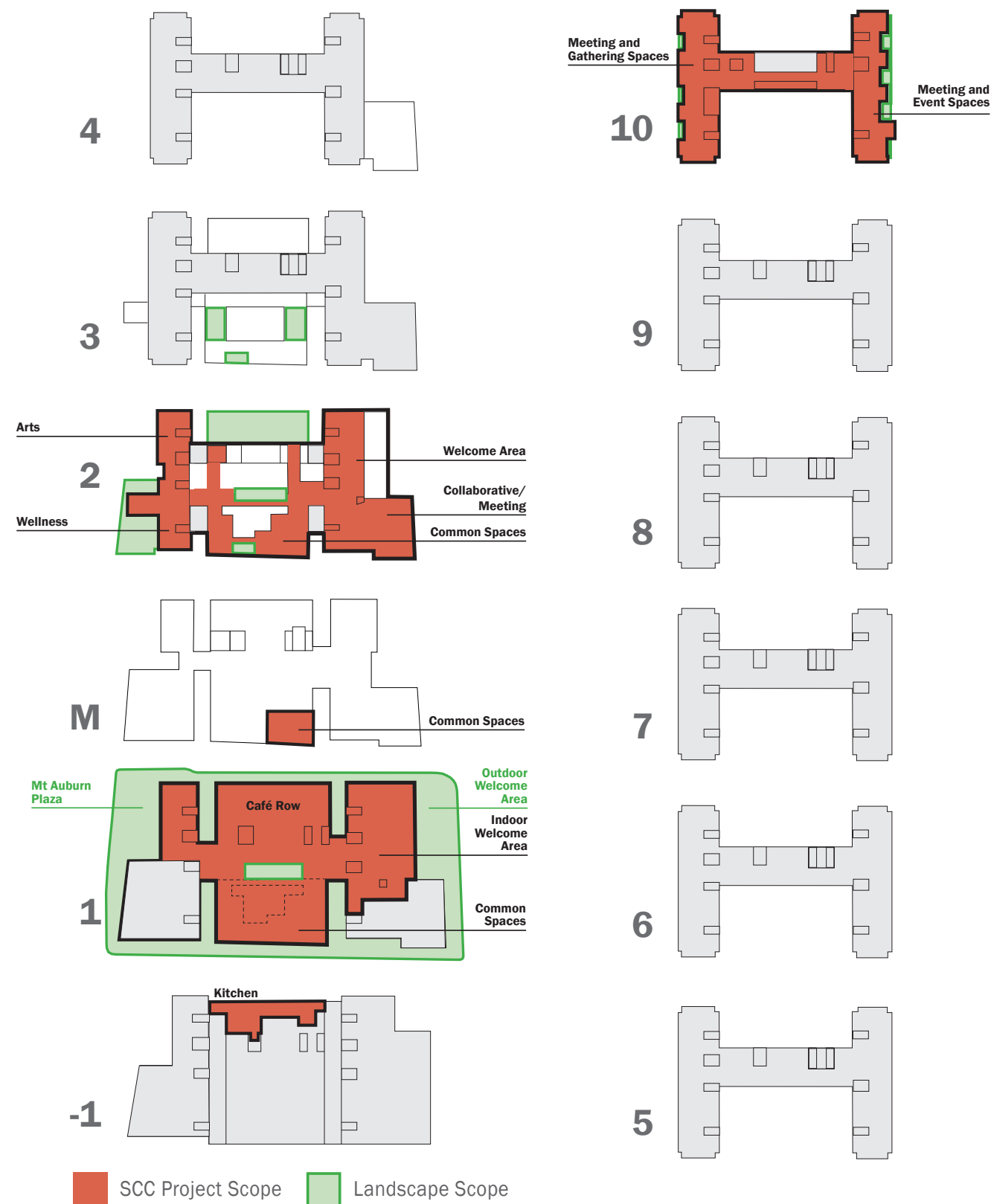
Spaces for use by Harvard affiliates including short-term shared use on the second floor, and a range of meeting and event spaces on the tenth floor.

Commercial Food Retail - Floor 1

Commercial food retail space includes street facing venues and those integrated within the Community Welcome Area and Common Spaces. The project will result in an increase in the building's existing commercial food services.

Arts and Wellness - Floor 2

A dedicated arts space and a wellness center (relocated from its current location in the arcade) for Harvard affiliates are planned in the south wing of level two.



*Building also includes sub-basement, which involves no project work.

C. Zoning Variance Requests

Harvard University is requesting three zoning variances from the requirements of the Business B Zoning District and Harvard Square Overlay District of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance to allow proposed alterations and additions to the Smith Campus Center building. The project will primarily involve renovations and selective reconstruction of the building's basement, first, second and tenth floors.

Variance 1:

FAR Request: 7,512 SF ≈ 0.1 FAR

(CZO 20.54.6 - Maximum Ratio of Floor Area to Lot Area (FAR) in Harvard Square Historic Overlay District)

To permit an increase in FAR by 0.1, representing 7,521 square feet of Gross Floor Area (GFA), a 2% increase in overall GFA. FAR to change from 4.38 to 4.48.

Variance 2:

Height Request: 3'-11" to 2% of roof area

(CZO 20.54.2, Building Height Limitations in the Harvard Square Overlay District)

To permit a slight increase in height (3'-11") above the existing 112' roof for one 600 square foot room, representing 2% of the total roof area. Height of this room to increase to 116'.

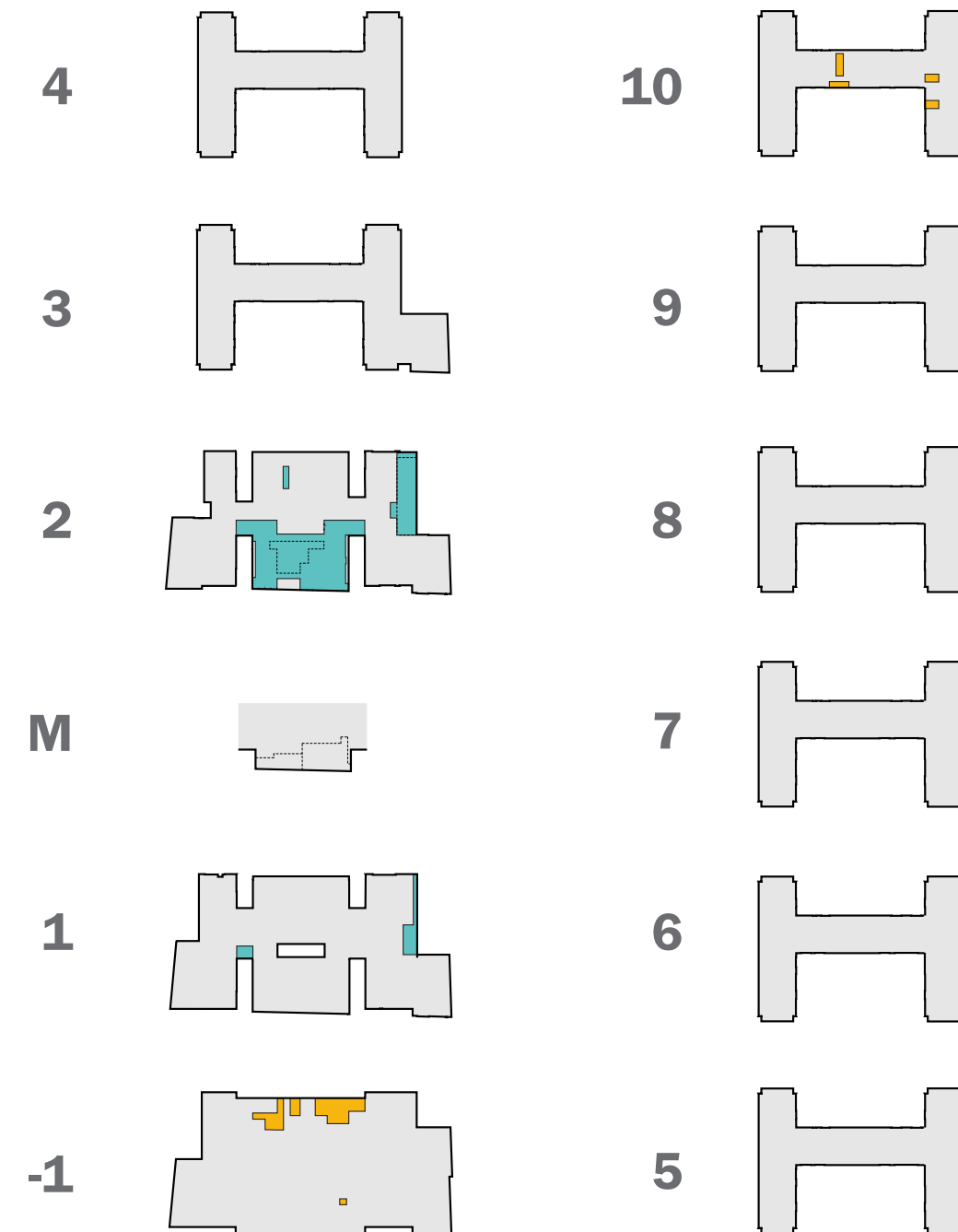
Variance 3:

Alteration and Expansion of a Nonconforming Structure

(CZO 8.22.3, Nonconformity)

As a result of the FAR and height requests, it is also necessary that the project seek zoning relief to allow a legally nonconforming structure to be altered and expanded by 2%.

AREAS OF NET NEW GROSS FLOOR AREA



■ Building Additions
■ Interior Conversions

*Building also includes sub-basement, which involves no project work.

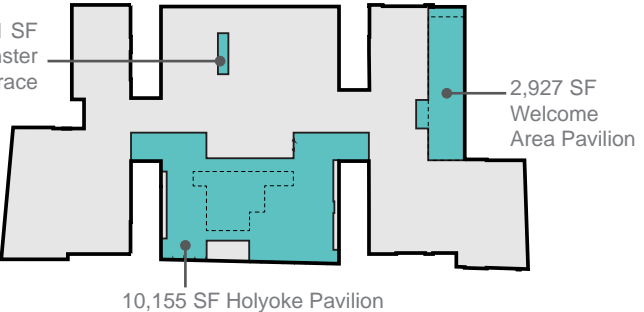
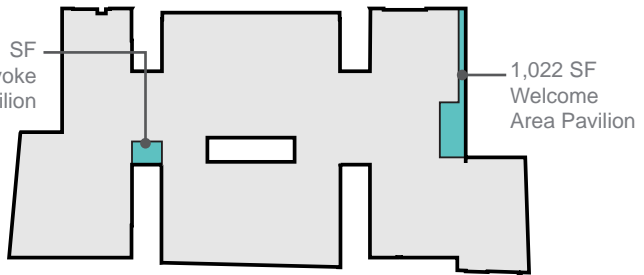
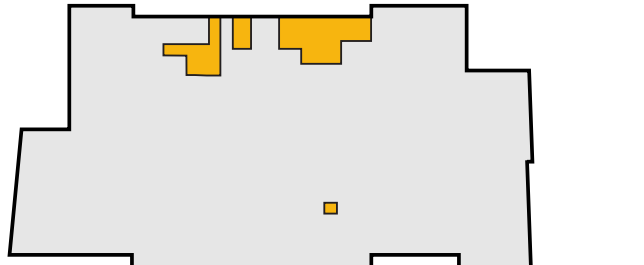
C. Zoning Variance Requests (continued)

FAR

FAR

The project calls for **the existing FAR of 4.38 to increase by 0.1, resulting in 7,512 SF of net new GFA** (Gross Floor Area). The new GFA is a combination of exterior building additions and interior space conversions. The new GFA will be partially offset by demolition, including the removal of the majority of the existing mezzanine level, and by newly created mechanical and other spaces exempted from the GFA calculation. The allowable FAR is 4.0 per CZO 20.54.6.

NET NEW GFA

<p>10th Floor</p>	<p>+554 SF</p>	 <p>116 SF projecting bay</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Projecting Bay At the tenth floor a small, transparent projecting bay becomes a civic gesture to the community, creating a new beacon and focal point at the roofline of the building. • Mechanical Conversions More efficient building systems have allowed mechanical space requirements to contract, freeing up excess space to be converted to campus center program space.
<p>2nd+ Mezz Floors</p>	<p>+5,971 SF</p>	 <p>211 SF Dunster Terrace 10,155 SF Holyoke Pavilion 2,927 SF Welcome Area Pavilion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dunster Street Pavilion Roof Terrace An unoccupied mechanical roofscape along Dunster Street is transformed to an exterior green roof that requires new GFA for circulation to provide accessibility. • Holyoke Street Pavilion The pavilion will be reconstructed in the same footprint with a new second floor to create a large open “living room” with transparent street frontage. • Welcome Area Pavilion At the second floor facing Massachusetts Avenue, a new, highly transparent, two-story Welcome Area Pavilion addition serves as a gathering place for visitors to Harvard for yearround use.
<p>1st Floor</p>	<p>-38 SF</p>	 <p>341 SF Holyoke Pavilion 1,022 SF Welcome Area Pavilion</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome Area Pavilion At the first floor facing Massachusetts Avenue, a new, highly transparent, two-story Welcome Area Pavilion addition serves as a gathering place for visitors to Harvard for yearround use. The exterior plaza is redesigned for better comfort, utility and accessibility for the Harvard and Cambridge community. • Holyoke Street Pavilion The pavilion will be reconstructed in the same footprint with a small infill addition.
<p>Basement</p>	<p>+1,592 SF</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underground Garage Conversions for Support Space Underground garage space currently exempted from GFA will be converted to back-of-house kitchen and support space necessary for the commercial food venues.

TOTAL +7,512 SF

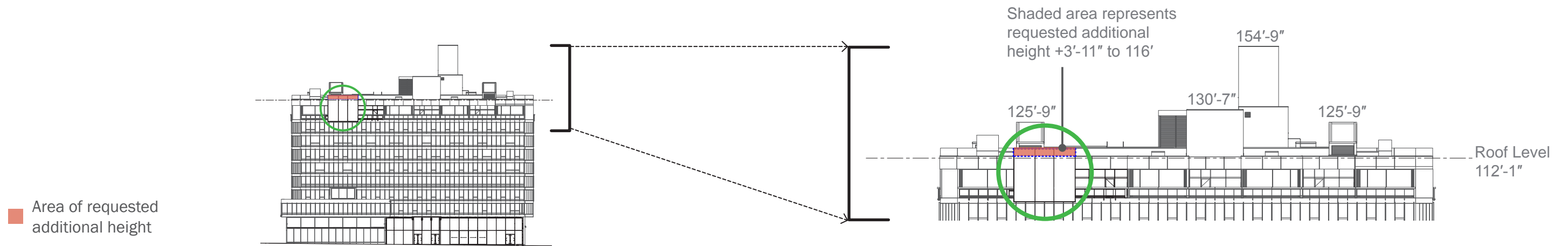
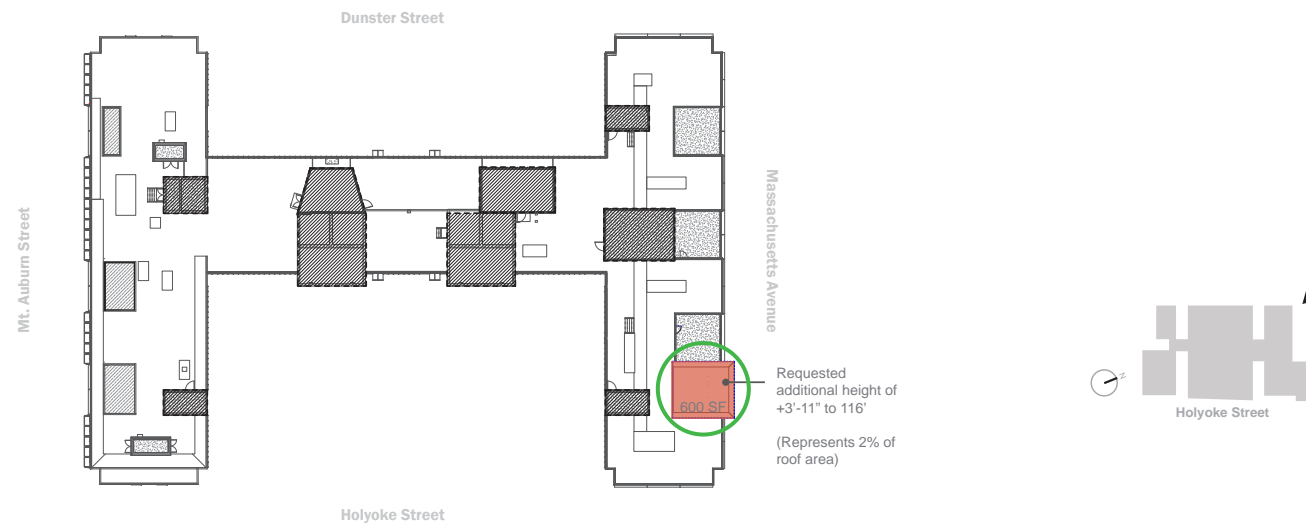
■ Building Additions
■ Interior Conversions

C. Zoning Variance Requests (continued)

Height

Height

The new tenth floor glazed projecting bay facing Massachusetts Avenue **will be slightly taller (+3'-11") than the existing 112'-1" roofline at 116'**. The allowable height is 60' as-of-right, 80' with a special permit per CZO 20.54.2. This slight height increase will only affect one 600 SF room, representing 2% of the total roof area. This minimal increase will be located among the building's other taller rooftop elements which range from 125' to 154' in height. The transparent bay will form a compositional relationship with the existing roof monitors and the Welcome Pavilion and serve as a civic gesture to Harvard Square, creating a new beacon and focal point at the roofline of the building.



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A. Project Concept

The comprehensive enhancements to the overall site and the basement, first, second and tenth floors of the Richard A. and Susan F. Smith Campus Center are based on the following key design objectives and strategies.

Key Design Objectives

- *Respect Sert's original architecture.*
The campus center project values and responds to the planning and design principles established by Sert for the building and further enhances the design of the building.
- *Engage the building with the vibrancy of Harvard Square.*
The proposed changes to the building ensure that the building further contributes to the dynamic urban environment of Harvard Square.
- *Meet the program requirements.*
The campus center meets the program requirements and enhances Harvard's efforts to improve common spaces to ensure that Harvard's physical spaces foster intellectual, cultural, and social experiences.

Key Design Strategies

- Counteract the piecemeal changes to the building, through a comprehensive design approach.
- Activate the street level and maximize transparency.
- Enhance connectivity and circulation on the first and second floors.
- Integrate and improve daylight and landscape.
- Capitalize and reinforce Sert's pavilion strategy.
- Emphasize the vertical hierarchy of the facades by distributing the campus center program at the base and top of the building.
- Strengthen community.

B. Site Plan: Existing

