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## CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

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To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: March 2, 2022

Re: **PB-364, 80 First Street and 150 CambridgeSide Place Design Review**

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### Planning Board Action

The Planning Board's review of the building and landscape design is guided by the conditions of the special permit, which references the design standards specified in the Eastern Cambridge Planning Study dated October 2001, the guidance provided in the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines dated October 15, 2001, the East Cambridge Riverfront Plan dated May 1978, the East Cambridge Development Review Process and Guidelines dated June 1985, and the Cambridge Riverfront Plan dated Spring 2011. A summary of these guidance documents is included at the end of this memo.

This memo summarizes the key areas of focus for the components of the project under current review.

### Review Process

Since September 2021, staff has had numerous meetings with the developer team and the project architect to review various details of these buildings. The proposed designs for the phase two buildings reflect many of the suggestions made in these discussions.

### *PUD Urban Design Objectives and Guidelines*

In addition to the guidelines referenced above, design objectives and strategies specific to the site were developed as part of the PUD process. The objectives and guidelines most relevant to the review of the buildings are:

#### Ground level design and uses

- Support an active pedestrian-oriented public realm on First Street by creating a recognizable base, activated by retail and active uses.
- Set back new buildings on First Street by at least 10 feet.

#### Siting, Scale and Massing

- Create a rich and varied skyline along streets abutting the development parcel, a diversity of heights and massings is encouraged in buildings fronting on First Street, Cambridgeside Place, and Land Boulevard.
- Create separations between buildings on First Street.
- Building tops, including mechanical penthouses, are to contribute to a varied skyline.
- For buildings over 85' tall, provide 10 foot setbacks at approximately 65' and at approximately 135'.
- For buildings under 85' tall, provide a horizontal articulation at approximately 65' through means other than a setback.
- Step back rooftop mechanical penthouses by 15'.

- New buildings shall be spaced to preserve adequate light, air, and view corridors for the benefit of the East Cambridge neighborhood. Where possible, separate buildings by courtyards or other significant breaks. On First Street such breaks should be aligned with Spring and Hurley Streets to the extent possible.

#### Architectural Character

- Diverse and varied finishes and façade elements are encouraged, to contribute to the reading of individual buildings along the perimeter streets.

### **Urban Design Comments**

#### **Introduction**

As noted in the CDD memo for CambridgeSide Galleria's phase one buildings, the original design of the Galleria was a revolutionary achievement, bringing a strong urban sensibility to the creation of a vibrant retail center. It treated the building as an integral part of its urban context, framed the adjoining streets with streetwalls, created a retail galleria atrium to connect north/south between Canal Park and Charles Park, and eliminated surface parking.

The retail market has changed since CambridgeSide's original construction, de-emphasizing the large anchor stores traditionally associated with malls, and the demand for office/lab space continues to increase. In addition, the City has increasingly promoted street activation by retail and other publicly accessible uses, the creation of engaging streetwalls and ground level facades, and the construction of residential space. The ongoing transformation of the CambridgeSide Galleria responds to these changes, converting the third-floor space around the atrium to office space, reinforcing the urban block by constructing new taller buildings with more engaging facades at Cambridgeside's First Street, Land Boulevard, and Cambridgeside Place frontages, and activating them with ground floor retail.

The two buildings under review – 80 First Street and 150 CambridgeSide Place – will constitute CambridgeSide's second phase of construction under the PUD. Building on the precedent set by the first phase buildings, the new buildings will enhance First Street's character as a pedestrian-friendly retail-lined street, and will provide additional laboratory/office and residential space.

The project's Final Development Plan envisions an office/lab building at the southwestern corner of the project – at the "Best Buy" site, and a residential building in the middle of the project's First Street frontage – replacing the existing garage. The current proposed design reverses this, placing the residential building at the intersection of First Street and Cambridgeside Place, and the office/lab building in the central position. The new arrangement is preferable: more of the residential units will benefit from distant views and fewer will overlook the flat roof of the existing core mall building; the office/lab building will be adjacent to the office/lab building currently under construction at 60 First Street, reducing the impact of their mechanical systems on the residential building; and the residential tower's visibility at the corner of the site will emphasize the district's mixed-use character.

Improvements to the landscape of Lechmere Canal Park are also to be completed as part of the initial phase of construction, but will be reviewed at a later time.

In the applicant's several meetings with staff since the Planning Board's PUD-8 hearings at the end of 2020, the building's massing and façades were discussed and the applicant has responded with alternatives. The presentation in the March 1 hearing will include revisions that address some of the staff comments below.

### **Relevant Design Objectives and Guidelines**

While the East Cambridge Riverfront Plan (1978), the East Cambridge Development Review Process and Guidelines (1985), and the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines (2001) were produced over a more than two decade period, their intentions are similar. They encourage building massing compatible with the multiple scales of the immediate and surrounding contexts, and the creation of a rich and enjoyable pedestrian realm. They encourage varied architecture; the provision of a clearly expressed base, middle, and top, differentiated by changes in material, fenestration, architectural detailing, stepbacks, or other elements; the provision of streetwalls; the reduction of the perceived heights of buildings and their mechanical penthouses; the articulation of long or tall buildings to avoid a monolithic appearance; varied rooflines to express the tops of buildings; and ground floor active uses to enhance the pedestrian realm. Streetscape elements including ground floor facades, trees, benches, signage, and lighting should be designed to support active pedestrian uses and to reinforce district's character and identity.

### **Overall Massing and Site Strategy**

Both buildings frame the adjoining streets with streetwalls, roughly 65' feet tall and compatible in height with the heights of existing buildings on First Street. They are set back from the property line as per zoning to create a wider sidewalk than currently exists. Above that level, the massing is stepped back on the First Street facades.

As laid out in the Final Development Plan, the North Pocket Park and the South Courtyard will separate the development's three buildings facing First Street. They will provide access and amenity to the general public, the adjoining retail spaces, and the residential building. Their designs are preliminary, pending further input from the project's Open Space and Retail Advisory Committee.

The three buildings share a single service yard at 80 First Street. At the rear (east side) of the Pocket Park and South Courtyard, four and five floor wings link the three buildings and accommodate loading and back-of-house functions on their first floors, partially separated from the public realm by retail space.

The city's ongoing First Street/Second Street Corridor Study is examining ways to improve bicycle and bus transportation in East Cambridge, including options for new bus lanes and separated bicycle lanes. Changes are not expected to the curbside edge of the site's First Street and CambridgeSide Place sidewalks, but their final designs should be deferred until after the results of the study are available.

Overall, the massing and scale of the buildings is consistent with the PUD approval. The following comments generally focus on more detailed aspects of the design.

### **150 Cambridgeside Place**

#### *Massing and Character*

As noted above, 150 CambridgeSide Place is set back from First Street by 10 feet, and is stepped back by 10 feet at the sixth-floor level. Most of the building's CambridgeSide Place frontage is also setback, providing a wider sidewalk than currently exists, but the upper floors on CambridgeSide Place rise directly above the plane of its streetwall. The building provides ground level retail space on both adjoining streets and on the South Courtyard to its north.

The building's narrow facade on First Street provides vertical emphasis at the southwest corner of the block. Its broad and relatively planar south façade contrasts with the elaborate three-dimensionality of the existing mall's façade on Cambridgeside Place, helping to emphasize by contrast the latter's public role as the entrance to the mall's atrium.

Together with 60 First Street at the northwest corner of the block, 150 CambridgeSide Place's brick facades will bookend the more unique metal and curtainwall office/laboratory building proposed at 80 First Street. The brickwork of the building's relatively traditional facades incorporates bond patterns and relief, strengthening its affinity with the phase one buildings. The strategy of creating a relatively quiet building that holds the corner of the site seems appropriate; ways to add visual interest to the building's sixth to ninth floors could be explored, however.

1. The window-to-wall ratio on the residential floors appears to be fairly low. Consideration could be given to increasing the size of the windows, or to incorporating additional detail at window heads, jambs, or sills that would give them greater emphasis.
2. The provision of balconies would add amenity to the units, a greater sense of residential scale in the façade design, and their organization could be used to create secondary façade motifs.
3. The podium and tower facades incorporate visually enlivening detail – brick relief and bond patterns, relief in spandrel panels, visors at windows, and mullion patterns. The overall effect of the First Street and CambridgeSide Place facades, however, seems perhaps excessively restrained given the prominence of the site. The facades could perhaps be strengthened by the judicious introduction of a larger figure.
  - a. Consideration could be given to modulating the tower portion of the west facing façade (above the sixth floor stepback) to create a more characteristic massing or surface expression, and to strengthen its vertical expression. Possibilities include the introduction of a multi-floor projecting bay (as had been included in an early scheme), grouping windows together to create a several floor tall figure, slightly recessing the northern portion, and a stronger expression of corner windows at the building's southwest corner.
  - b. To create more of a corner window effect on the prominent southwest corner, a narrower column could be considered.
  - c. In an early version of the design, the tower portion of the building's south facing façade had a subtle zigzag in plan, which created a distinction from the planar podium level façade without losing a familial relationship to it. Reintroducing this slightly folded motif could be reconsidered.
4. The step back at the sixth-floor level presents the opportunity to provide an outdoor terrace for the units that look onto it.

The rear façade of the South Courtyard steps back at second floor level. Above the stepback the façade is similar to that of the podium of the building's main mass.

5. Consideration could be given to making the roof at second floor level available as a roof terrace.
6. To further emphasize the courtyard as a unique space, consideration could be given to giving this façade a greater degree of independence in character or form from that of the adjoining podium.

The elevations and perspectives do not show through-wall vents for residential kitchens, bathrooms, and laundry.

7. As vents are often difficult to incorporate gracefully into façade design, staff's preference would be for these to occur at roof level. If not, care should be taken to ensure that they appear as deliberate components of the façade design.

#### *Ground Floor Design and Uses*

8. The building's ground floor frontage on CambridgeSide Place, First Street and the South Courtyard is dominated by retail shopfronts, with a high percentage of glazing. The location of the primary residential entrance on CambridgeSide Place seems appropriate. A secondary

residential entry will help activate the South Courtyard. More information on the design of the shopfront and residential entry facades would be helpful, including the design of mullion profiles, wall materials at columns, the appearance of columns behind shopfront glazing, the louvers in the horizontal sign zone, entry canopies, awnings, canopies, lighting, etc.

9. Staff recommends that at least the storefront glazing system be highly transparent. A visible light transmittance (VLT) of 70% or higher would enhance visibility/connectivity between the inside and out.
10. While it is premature to predict the needs of retail tenants, the provision of large openable shopfront windows and additional entrances on CambridgeSide Place and the South Courtyard should be considered.
11. Consideration could be given to providing a projecting canopy above the retail shopfronts, both to shelter pedestrians from precipitation and wind, and to create a visual separation between the highly glazed ground floor and the brick facades above.

### *Materials, Colors, and Details*

The use of brick will relate the building to the existing mall building, existing neighboring buildings, and to the phase one buildings currently in construction. The proposed brick is darker at the second to fifth floors and lighter and pinker above. Window mullions, sunshades, and spandrels are proposed as brownish grays. Staff understands from discussions in meetings that thin brick is proposed. High-transparency low-iron glass will be used at the ground floor. The mechanical penthouse will be metal clad with vertical panels of varying widths.

12. The building's colors vary in the different elevations and perspectives. In some it seems perhaps excessively somber, in others the brick seems excessively pink, and the grey/brown spandrels and the penthouse could perhaps be livelier.
13. Full depth brick could be considered, particularly for the second through fifth floors.
14. More information on glass transparency, reflectivity, and color would be helpful.
15. The building's north facing units will be exposed to noise from the 80 First Street's mechanical systems. Consideration could be given to incorporating sound isolating fenestration on 150 CambridgeSide Place's north façade.

### *Lighting*

The building's upper floors will not receive any exterior lighting. Ground floor entry and streetscape lighting will be concealed/shielded and dimmable.

16. Consideration could be given to providing catenary lighting at the South Courtyard.

### *Housing*

As required by zoning, sixty five percent of the dwelling unit net floor area of the building will be devoted to affordable housing, a combination of Inclusionary Housing (30%) and Middle-Income Units(35%), including all of the 20 proposed three bedroom units. It is projected that the final unit count will be 160-170 units. The unit mix was modified from the original based on conversations with the Housing Division, increasing the number of two-bedroom units and decreasing the number of studio units.

A proposed breakdown of unit by bedroom size is provided, but it is stated that it is subject to modifications as the design process continues. The final unit mix, should aim to maintain, at a minimum, the number of two- and three-bedroom units proposed (41 and 20 respectively) and no increase in the number of studio units proposed (27).

NOTE: The chart listing the number of proposed units by bedroom size differs from the narrative's account of the numbers of studio units: the chart lists 27 studio units, but the narrative says there will be between 35-45.

The Zoning requires that there will be 175,000 square feet of residential GFA. The proposal is for the dwelling unit net floor area to comprise approximately 122,000 square feet; thus, the dwelling units will make up 70% of the residential GFA. The applicant also proposed 5,500 square feet of amenities (lounges, work/study space, fitness/wellness space and 9,000 square feet for the lobby, bike storage, and storage space for tenants). More information on the remaining floor area not contained in the units, amenities, and lobby and storage space would be helpful.

#### *Site Design*

As noted above, the design of the site's open space will be finalized with input from the Open Space and Retail Advisory Committee and the First/Second Street Corridor Study.

The First Street sidewalk will be widened to about 18' as per zoning, and paved with brick. The existing sidewalk trees on First Street will be preserved, and new ones added in gaps. Lengthened tree planting strips will be provided. The CambridgeSide Place sidewalk will also be widened for most of the building's frontage and new in-ground sidewalk trees will be planted.

17. More information regarding street furniture would be helpful.

The South Courtyard will give access to the residential building's secondary entrance, and to its long-term bicycle parking room. It is large enough to accommodate several uses: outdoor space for adjoining retail, sitting, and a small play area.

18. Benches with backs should be considered.

19. Alternative arrangements of paved and green areas could be considered, perhaps allowing more flexible use by providing larger contiguous areas of paving and of planting.

20. Staff encourages collaboration on the design and features of the play area.

21. More information on planting would be helpful.

22. Consideration could be given to providing additional short term bicycle parking spaces.

#### *Parking and Loading*

Long-term bicycle parking will be in secured rooms on the first, third, and fourth floors, accessed from Cambridgeside Place and the South Courtyard via an elevator. Loading will be from the shared service yard at the rear of 80 First Street.

23. The applicant should continue to work with staff on the design of the bicycle rooms and the location of short-term bicycle parking.

#### *Environmental impacts*

The wind study indicates that while most of First Street will have wind speeds suitable for sitting, they will be higher on the sidewalks adjoining the residential building

24. Consideration could be given to providing a canopy or awnings above the first-floor shopfronts to help shelter pedestrians.

Shadow impacts are primarily on the South Courtyard, which will be in shade most of the time, and on First Street in the morning.

Rooftop mechanical equipment will be designed, attenuated, and screened to minimize impacts on nearby buildings and public open spaces. Compliance with Cambridge's noise ordinance is anticipated for the combined effects of the three proposed buildings on First Street.

### *Mechanical*

The louvers in the penthouse will be located on its north side, towards the adjoining lab/office building, reducing their visual and acoustical impact on the public realm.

25. Consideration should be given to avoiding venting ground floor food service uses onto the street.

### *Sustainability*

The first floor will be located at 20.4' CCB, above the 2070 100-year precipitation and SLR/SS levels. Entrances or egress locations below the 2070 levels will be bulkheaded or raised. Energy efficient building systems and envelope will be provided, including a low E double glazed curtainwall. All residential systems will be electric. A fairly small area is designated as solar/green roof ready.

26. As Cambridgeside is located in one of Cambridge's largest urban heat island areas, consideration should be given to providing green roof at initial construction, to maximizing the area of green roof, and to taking advantage of opportunities for on-site power generation.

## **80 First Street**

### *Massing and Character*

The building is conceived as a rectilinear podium, elevated above the ground level pedestrian zone, that addresses First Street and roughly corresponds to the heights of many of the nearby existing buildings . It is surmounted by a curved element, similar in volume and façade design, but stepped back and curved away from the street as it approaches and slightly overhangs the South Courtyard. The glazed and recessed fifth floor intermediates between the podium and upper volume and provides an outdoor terrace. A partial tenth floor is further stepped back, and is visually integrated with the mechanical penthouse and screening.

27. Consideration could be given to giving the building's upper floors a less monolithic form without losing their fundamental affinity with the podium. Means could include an undulating shape in plan or changes in plane instead of the proposed single curve.
28. The southern end of the building overhangs the south pocket park, potentially giving the park an interesting spatial complexity, but also potentially being more intrusive than is desirable both to the park and the residential units that will face it. Consideration should be given to reducing the overhang and/or giving the overhanging portion of the building a lighter appearance.
29. Consideration could be given to further emphasizing the ground level pedestrian zone by creating a greater sense of separation between it and the second- to fourth-floor volume. Means could include the provision of a projecting canopy and/or the use of a different material for the ground level column covers.

The facades of the podium and the upper volume are composed of tall curtainwall windows, with a staggered mullion pattern. The individual glazing units are large. Intermediate mullions at floor and ceiling levels and in the centers of the windows are shown as "kiss mullions" - on the interior side of glass only.

30. Consideration could be given to introducing more mullions to the window system, perhaps creating a more complex staggered pattern.
31. The size of the individual glazing units and the visual effect of the interior-only "kiss mullions" is not completely clear; further review should be considered.

A double height frame overlays the curtainwall system and emphasizes the building's entrance.

32. Consideration could be given to giving the frame a thinner leading edge and a wood surface on its interior faces to recall the wood soffit on the underside of the cantilevered sixth floor.

### *Ground Floor Design and Uses*

The ground floor is a distinct horizontal zone, emphasizing the pedestrian scale of First Street. The majority of the ground floor frontage will accommodate retail/active uses and the lobby entrance. A 22-foot floor-to-floor dimension is provided.

33. Staff recommends that at least the storefront glazing system be highly transparent. A visible light transmittance (VLT) of 70% or higher would enhance visibility/connectivity between the inside and out.
34. The column covers between the retail shopfronts match those of the office/lab floors above. To emphasize the ground floor pedestrian zone, consideration could be given to giving them their own material or character.
35. Consideration should be given to providing retail spaces with large openable windows to the sidewalk and retractable awnings.

Retail space will also be provided at the side of the Pocket Park and a portion of its rear.

36. If possible, it would be preferable if the retail space at the rear of the Pocket Park could occupy more of the Park's width. Local artwork or design elements could also be considered as means to enliven the façade.

The perspectives show wood at some of the shopfronts, but not the elevations; it is not clear if they are part of the base building or tenant fitout.

37. As the design is further developed, consideration could be given to providing additional visual enrichment by the detailed design of the pedestrian level façades, including mullion profiles, louver designs, lighting, solid wall materials and column covers, etc.

The building's large service yard serves all three of the buildings on First Street, minimizing disruption to the pedestrian realm. Much of the northern portion of the First Street frontage will be occupied by the Mall's transformer and other back-of-house spaces, which need service doors; and the paired garage exit and service entries with their doors. Together, the back-of-house spaces, the service entrance, and the vehicular exit will occupy about 90 feet of the building's ground floor frontage.

38. Staff encourages design solutions to provide visual interest for pedestrians, including the provision of local artwork or other design elements. Consideration could be given to adding local artwork or design elements to the facades of the service/back-of-house spaces on First Street and in the Pocket Park.

### *Materials, Colors, and Details*

Low-iron glass is shown at the ground floor storefronts, and low E triple glazed fenestration at the upper floors.

39. More information should be provided on the transparency, reflectivity, and color of the proposed glass.
40. More information should be provided on the exterior soffit materials of the ground and fifth floors.
41. More information should be provided on the curtainwall mullion systems.
42. More information should be provided on first floor façade materials

### *Lighting*

Exterior lighting is concentrated on the first floor where downlights will illuminate the sign zone and the sidewalk and shielded lights will illuminate the lobby entrance. The soffit of the fifth-floor setback will be illuminated. Exterior lighting will be dimmable and will be adjusted though the night to minimize



disruption to surrounding areas. Light trespass from the building interior will be controlled in accord with zoning.

43. Consideration could be given to providing catenary lighting at the pocket park and the south courtyard.
44. Staff would prefer if the fifth-floor soffit lighting was subtle.

### *Site Design*

As at 150 Cambridgeside Place, the building's First Street sidewalk will be widened to approximately 18 feet from the curb, the existing street trees will be preserved and new ones will be provided in extended planting strips. The three existing curb cuts will be consolidated into a single one, approximately 30 feet wide, minimizing disruption to continuity of the sidewalk. The building's ground floor spaces will address the South Courtyard, discussed above, and the smaller Pocket Park at its north end.

45. The final design of the sidewalk, street furniture, etc., and of the Pocket Park, should be determined with the input of the Open Space and Retail Advisory Committee and the First/Second Street Corridor Study.
46. The materials, layout, plantings, lighting, and furnishing of the Pocket Park should be designed to give the space a welcoming character despite its small size, and to help draw the public to the adjoining retail spaces.

### *Loading and Parking*

The service area at 80 First Street will serve all three buildings on First Street. The truck entrance is in the northern portion of the building's First Street frontage, adjacent to the vehicular exit from the underground parking garage. Long-term bicycle parking will be in the underground parking garage levels, accessed from the South Courtyard via an elevator.

### *Environmental impacts*

Based on the application's wind study, conditions in the public areas around the building will be appropriate for sitting. Shadow impacts on the public realm will be primarily on First Street in the morning. Rooftop mechanical equipment will be designed, attenuated, and screened to minimize impacts on nearby buildings and public open spaces. Compliance with Cambridge's noise ordinance is anticipated for the combined effects of the three proposed buildings on First Street.

The project is located in an area of Cambridge prone to the urban heat island effect. The additional street trees provided in the sitework for the two buildings and their light-colored and green roofs will help to mitigate it.

### *Sustainability and Resilience*

The first floor will be located at 21.3 CCB, above the 2070 100-year precipitation and SLR/SS levels. Deployable barriers will be employed at the garage and loading/service entrance at First Street. The existing foundation and structure up to the second-floor level will be reused, reducing the embodied carbon from new construction. Energy efficient building systems and envelope, including a low E triple glazed curtainwall will be provided.

47. As Cambridgeside is located in one of Cambridge's largest urban heat islands, consideration should be given to maximizing the area of green roof. If possible, consideration should be given to also providing a light-colored or green roof on the flat roof of the adjoining core mall building.

### *Mechanical*

Building exhaust is on the east side of the penthouse, toward the core mall, minimizing its impact on First Street and the residential neighborhood to the west.

48. It would be preferable to ventilate any first-floor food service uses out to the roof rather than out onto the pedestrian realm.

### **Green Building Review**

#### *150 Cambridgeside Place*

- The 150 Cambridgeside Place project is subject to the City's current Green Building requirements that mandate meeting LEED Gold requirements. It is currently targeting LEED Gold, under LEED v4 BD+C: Core and Shell and meets the minimum requirement with 61 credit points. An additional 44 points have been designated as possible. The Green Building Report sufficiently demonstrates compliance with Article 22 requirements.
- The building is proposing to use water-source heat pumps and air-to-water heat pumps for heating and cooling. Consider using multi-use heat pumps 100% for peak loads including for DHW to achieve non carbon in day one.
- The design team is recommended to conduct a whole-building life-cycle analysis for the Project to demonstrate commitment to reducing environmental impacts including those of global warming, depletion of the ozone layer, and other concerns.

#### *80 First Street*

- The 80 First Street project is subject to the City's current Green Building requirements that mandate meeting the LEED Gold requirements. It is currently targeting LEED Gold, under LEED v4 BD+C: Core and Shell and meeting the minimum requirement with 63 credit points. An additional 41 points have been designated as possible points. The Green Building Report sufficiently demonstrates compliance with Article 22 requirements.
- The design team is pursuing a high level of electrification and for energy efficiency including the energy use reduction, using triple glazing, and proposing envelope commissioning.
- The building will use a modular 4-pipe air-to water heat pump and heat recovery system for 80 First St. However, this 'hybrid electrification' is not an entirely carbon free strategy. It will still use fossil fuel for its condensing gas boilers. Consider using single heat pumps that are sized for the peak load that does both heating and cooling and eliminate fossil fuel altogether at day one.
- The design team is recommended to conduct a whole-building life-cycle analysis for the Project to demonstrate commitment to reducing environmental impacts including those of global warming, depletion of the ozone layer, and other concerns.
- Staff recommend a heat pump system for domestic hot water generation and complete building electrification with no fossil fuel use.

### **Signage and Wayfinding**

- Potential locations for tenant signage are indicated on the enlarged first floor elevations of both buildings, a combination of blade signs and signs in the horizontal sign zone over the first floor fenestration. The final design will depend on the needs of tenants. Larger building address signage is shown over the lobby entries. The application does not address wayfinding signage, but if any is needed it could be developed as the sidewalk designs are finalized.

### **Engineering**

- Work proposed outside of project parcels - in roadway right-of-ways - shall be reviewed and evaluated as the project progresses. Mitigation and/or improvement limits shall consider impacts as a result of utility work as well as construction.
- Existing street trees shall remain and be protected, and all proposed trees shall be planted in accordance with the Urban Forestry Masterplan.

- The First Street Corridor, including the frontage of the entire Cambridgeside 2.0 Redevelopment project will be reimagined as part of a broader City planning process. Any construction in this right of way will be evaluated with respect to the design proposal and schedule of this planning process.

**Continuing Review:**

The following is a summary of issues that staff recommends should be further studied by the Applicant, either in preparing revised materials if the Planning Board continues the hearing to a future date, or as conditions for ongoing design review by staff if the Board decides to grant the special permit:

1. Review of all exterior materials, colors, and details, including a materials mockup for each building, by city staff and the Planning Board prior to any exterior materials being ordered.
2. Review of glass specifications.
3. Review of the detailed design of the ground floor facades.
4. Review of the First Street and Cambridgeside Place sidewalks, including trees, furniture, lighting, and other features, incorporating the results of the First/Second Street Corridor Study and the Open Space and Retail Advisory Committee.
5. Review of the design of the South Courtyard and the Pocket Park, including the design of play areas, also incorporating the results of those studies.
6. Review of retail tenanting by city staff and the Open Space and Retail Advisory Committee.
7. Review of tree species and planting standards by city staff.
8. Collaboration with city staff on sizes and configuration of residential units.
9. Collaboration with city staff on the design, location, and access routes to short- and long-term bicycle parking.

**Appendix: Relevant Design Guidelines**

*Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines, 2001*

1. Street-level Uses and Design

Retail blocks are intended to have a high volume of pedestrian traffic, and to support public activity throughout the day and evening.

- a. At least 75 percent of the street frontage should be occupied by retail uses, including cafes and restaurants.
- b. Major entrances should be located on public streets, and on corners wherever possible. Entrances should relate to crosswalks and pathways that lead to bus stops and transit stations.
- c. Transparent materials and interior lighting should be used to maximize visibility of street level uses. Ground floor facades should be at least 50 to 75 percent transparent surface to permit a clear view from the sidewalk to the interior space of the building.
- d. Blank walls should be avoided along all streets and pedestrian walkways.

2. Building Height and Orientation

Major Public Streets

- a. Set back any portion of the building above 65 feet by at least 10 feet from the principal facade.
- b. For retail and office uses, build to the lot line or provide small setbacks (5 to 15 feet) from the right-of-way for café seating, benches, or small open spaces. Setbacks used exclusively for ornamental landscaping are not permitted but may be allowed to accommodate street furniture, street trees, or generous sidewalks. Awnings and canopies are encouraged to provide shelter and enliven the ground floor facade.

- c. For residential uses, provide small setbacks (5 to 10 feet) for stoops, porches, and front gardens.
- d. Driveway turnaround and vehicle drop-off facilities are strongly discouraged along public streets.
- e. Locate loading docks on side streets or service alleys, and away from residential areas.
- f. In use, design, and entry, orient buildings towards corners.

#### Park Edges

- a. The height of the principal façade of buildings surrounding a park should be no greater than 1/3 the width of the park. For additional height above this limit, buildings should be stepped back by at least ten feet from the principal facade. Greater height without setbacks may, however, be appropriate at corners or in specific locations to create architectural variety.
- b. Locate buildings to minimize shadows on the park, especially in the afternoon.
- c. Surround public parks with uses that create an active environment throughout the day and evening and increase safety for park users, such as: –
  - Buildings should be designed with individual units and front doors facing the street, including row house units on the lower levels of multi-family buildings.
  - Shops, cafés and other public uses that enliven the street.

#### Other Streets

- a. If the prevailing height of surrounding buildings is 65 feet or less, establish a cornice line that matches the prevailing height of surrounding buildings. For additional height above the cornice line, provide a setback of at least 10 feet from the principal façade. I
- b. For retail and office uses, build to the lot line or provide small setbacks (5 to 15 feet) from the right-of-way for café seating, benches, or small open spaces. Setbacks used exclusively for ornamental landscaping are not permitted.

### 3. Scale and Massing

- a. Buildings should avoid continuous massing longer than 200 feet facing mixed-use and retail streets. If massing extends beyond this length, it should be made permeable and visibly articulated as several smaller masses using different materials or colors, vertical breaks, bays, or other architectural elements.
- b. Buildings should reflect a rhythm and variation appropriate to the urban context. E.g., this can be achieved by expressing bay widths of 25 to 50 feet along mixed-use and retail streets
- c. Buildings should have a clearly expressed base, middle, and top. This may be achieved through changes in material, fenestration, architectural detailing, or other elements.
- d. Use variations in height and architectural elements such as parapets, cornices and other details to create interesting and varied rooflines and to clearly express the tops of buildings.
- e. Emphasize corners using taller elements such as towers, turrets, and bays
- f. Taller buildings should be articulated to avoid a monolithic appearance: Taller buildings should be point towers instead of slabs, and should have smaller floor plates instead of larger floor plates.

### 4. Architectural Character - Commercial

- a. Create varied architecture and avoid flat facades by using recessed or projected entryways, bays, canopies, awnings, and other architectural elements.
- b. Vary the architecture of individual buildings to create architecturally diverse districts.
- c. Where buildings are set back at upper stories, lower roofs may be used as balconies, balustrades, and gardens.

5. Parking
  - a. Locate vehicular parking entrances on side streets and alleys and provide safe pedestrian access from public streets.
  - b. All parking garages must provide direct pedestrian access to the street.
  - c. The primary pedestrian exit/access to all garages serving nonresidential uses should be to the street or a public area.
  - d. Design and locate lighting fixtures in surface parking lots and garages to enhance safety while minimizing light spillover onto adjacent properties.

*East Cambridge Development Review Process and Guidelines, 1985*

1. Height
  - a. Height and bulk of buildings should be configured to minimize visual dominance, shadows, and undesirable wind impacts.
  - b. Limit building height around the canal, especially at the northern edges of the shopping crescent. The crescent must contain the Lechmere Canal spatially as well as sunlight.
  - c. Building planes facing or generally oriented toward the riverfront open space must be stepped back to minimize the shadows that are cast on the open space system.
  - d. A coordinated system of expressive building tops is encouraged and should become an integral part of the design concept.
2. Scale
  - a. Relate to human dimensions and provide a sense of intimacy in all aspects of design.
3. Massing
  - a. New development should extend the East Cambridge grid pattern.
  - b. Break down typical building massing to relate to the historic character and mass of 19th century Cambridge; and to prevent a monolithic appearance.
  - c. Maximize sunlight available to Lechmere Canal.
  - d. Avoid the creation of alleyways along property lines visible from any public view.
4. Streetwalls and Setbacks
  - a. Maintain existing streetwalls. This may be accomplished by principal front wall plane setbacks and cornice lines, which are consistent with existing buildings on the same block or neighboring blocks.
5. Silhouette
  - a. Tall buildings should be shaped to be increasingly slender and broken down in scale toward the top.
  - b. Buildings should be of a tripartite architectural configuration consisting of base/middle/expressive top.
  - c. Buildings must provide animated silhouettes that enliven views from the open space system, and surrounding areas.
6. Details
  - a. Development bordering the public domain must be rich in architectural details, pay special attention to the ground plane and Silhouette, and incorporate appropriate imagery depending on location
  - b. Overall form and individual elevations must be designed to emphasize human scale and presence through the use of properly proportioned features.

7. Materials

- a. New buildings should be mainly faced with an authentic New England water-struck brick, with elegant highlights and subtle embellishments of granite and limestone.
- b. A granite base treatment (to match that used at Lechmere Canal) is needed to relate to the public open space system and thoroughfares.
- c. Use limestone or granite string courses, lintels, sills and trim to soften and refine the brick facades. Flemish bond or American bond with headers every 6 or 7 courses is recommended.
- d. Use the highest quality of materials at the pedestrian level of all buildings.

8. Awnings

- a. Provide lateral-arm awnings, color coordinated with adjacent development.

9. Transparency of Ground Floor Spaces

- a. Maximize visibility and transparency through ground floor retail.
- b. All tenant improvements visible from public open spaces and thoroughfares are subject to design review as part of the PUD process.

10. Balconies

- a. Provide human-scaled balconies at appropriate locations overlooking the public open space systems. Balconies must be detailed so that they are inviting, highly useable and relate directly to the character of the adjoining open space.

11. Penthouse

- a. All mechanical penthouse and other projections should be architecturally integrated within the overall form and individual elevations of the building.

12. Color

- a. Use warm and inviting color in all buildings.

13. Windows

- a. Use operable windows and traditional masonry openings and articulated fenestration.
- b. Avoid strip windows.

14. Art

- a. Individual works of art and their settings must work together in a harmonious, subtle way.
- b. Artists should work on basic architectural elements of the building instead of individual free-standing objects.

15. Signs

- a. Signs should be designed to fit well on the buildings, to be legible but not overpowering, and to complement other elements applied to buildings, such as awnings, canopies, or artwork.

*East Cambridge Riverfront Plan, 1978*

1. Principles

- a. Create a functionally diverse and active urban focus with the Canal and surrounding development.
- b. Create a strong and inviting pedestrian environment around the Canal

- c. Encourage development along the western edge that provides a compatible and sensitive physical interface with District 4 – especially the residential community
2. Use
  - a. Reinforce existing commercial activity along First Street with additional commercial establishments.
3. Scale
  - a. Limit height and bulk of buildings to minimize their shading and visual dominance
  - b. Limit building height around southern and western edge of the canal
4. Form
  - a. Enlarge and strengthen the Canal, redefining its edges and reducing the vertical distance between water level and abutting land.
  - b. Arrange new development so that it respects the First-Sixth Street grid.
  - c. Orient new development to interrelate activities in the Canal area and Bulfinch Courthouse area.
5. Design Details
  - a. Encourage development around the canal that is colorful in details and rich in open space amenities.