



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: September 28, 2020

Re: Special Permit PB-364, CambridgeSide PUD (parcel address: 100 CambridgeSide Place, 60-68 and 106-108 First Street) and Special Permit PB-66 Amendment #22 (premises: First Street, Thorndike Way, Edwin Land Boulevard, Lechmere Canal Park)

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Submission Type: PUD Special Permit Application; PUD Special Permit Amendment

Applicant: New England Development (NED)

Zoning District(s): Business A (BA); PUD-4; PUD-8

Proposal Summary: Redevelop and expand the existing CambridgeSide property into a mixed-use center including residential, retail, office and laboratory buildings, in addition to maintaining the existing core mall.

Special Permits Requested: PUD-8 Special Permit (Section 13.102) and Project Review Special Permit (Section 19.20) *A summary of the applicable special permit findings is listed on the following page. Applicable sections of the zoning are provided in an appendix.*

Other City Permits Needed: Amended commercial parking facility permit

Planning Board Action (first hearing): Preliminary determination of approval (with requests for additional information or modification) or disapproval of PUD Development Proposal

Memo Contents: Summary of approval process. Review of area planning and zoning, comments on proposal addressing planning, zoning, and urban design.

Other City Staff Reports: Traffic, Parking and Transportation Dept. (TP+T), Department of Public Works (DPW), in separate documents.

PUD Review Process

This proposal seeks the amendment of an existing Planned Unit Development (PUD) special permit (PB-66) subject to PUD-4 regulations in addition to seeking a new PUD special permit (PB-364) subject to PUD-8 regulations. The requested amendment is discussed at the end of this memo.

The applicant has submitted a Development Proposal, which describes the overall development plan and demonstrates how it will meet the zoning requirements and other planning for the area. Following a public hearing, the Planning Board considers whether the Development Proposal is in general conformance with the zoning and with the City’s stated policies and plans for the area and makes a Preliminary Determination. If the Board approves the Development Proposal, the Applicant may proceed with the submission of a Final Development Plan. If the Board disapproves the Development Proposal, that constitutes denial of the PUD special permit.

A positive Preliminary Determination should include any requested additional information, further refinements, or changes to be incorporated into the Final Development Plan.

After holding a public hearing on the Final Development Plan, the Planning Board can make a final decision to grant or deny the PUD special permit along with any other requested special permits. The decision would include detailed conditions to govern how the development would proceed over time, since PUD projects are typically constructed in phases.

This proposal is also subject to the Project Review Special Permit requirements of Article 19.000, for which the Planning Board must make traffic impact and urban design findings. Because all of the requested Planning Board special permits will be decided at the same time, the Planning Board does not need to make the Project Review findings until the Final Development Plan phase. However, the Development Proposal phase is a good opportunity for the Board to pose questions and request information related to the traffic impacts and urban design characteristics of the proposal.

The following are summarized findings for a Preliminary Determination on a Development Proposal:

Requested Action	Summarized Findings (see appendix for zoning text excerpts)
Preliminary Approval of a PUD Development Proposal (Section 12.35.3)	The PUD Development Proposal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conforms with general PUD development controls and district development controls • Conforms with adopted policy plans or development guidelines for that portion of the city • Provides benefits to the city which outweigh its adverse effects, considering: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ quality of site design ○ traffic flow and safety ○ adequacy of utilities and other public works ○ impact on existing public facilities ○ potential fiscal impact

<p>Referenced Policy Plans in the PUD-8 District (Section 13.101)</p>	<p>To the extent reasonably practicable and subject to the provisions of Section 13.107.5 below, new buildings shall be generally consistent with the policy objectives set forth 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.</p>
<p>Objectives for PUD-8 Special Permit (Section 13.102.4)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Providing a mix of commercial, including research and technology, and residential uses, with particular emphasis on ground-floor retail along First Street, to encourage activity throughout the day and evening. • For residential uses, incorporating a diversity of dwelling unit sizes that are appealing and accessible to a variety of users, including families with children and households from a variety of socioeconomic backgrounds. • Improving the network of connections that integrate the PUD-8 District with the surrounding urban fabric of the East Cambridge neighborhood and the activity surrounding the East Cambridge Riverfront, and maintaining existing ground level pedestrian connections between Charles Park and Lechmere Canal Park, including interior connections with active retail uses. • Enhancing the existing network of high-quality streets, landscaping and open spaces, including significant space for public gathering and recreation, that serves the surrounding communities as well as the development on the site by encouraging and fostering a sense of community, civic engagement, social interaction, economic development, and environmental sustainability. • Integrating development with open space physically and functionally by means of building orientation, active frontages, location of building entrances, pedestrian linkages between major activity centers, enhanced landscaping and similar techniques. • Providing a strong street edge and active ground floors that animate streets and open spaces, including through the presence of Active Uses on the first-floor fronting on First Street and CambridgeSide Place. • Enhancing the architectural richness and diversity and aesthetic qualities of the PUD-8 District to complement and strengthen the architectural character of the district as it has evolved historically.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To the maximum extent practicable, promoting best practices for environmental sustainability in establishing design objectives for individual buildings and sites, in accordance with the City's ongoing planning efforts and current Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection standards. • Demonstrating a commitment to implementing a Transportation Demand Management and Mitigation Program consistent with the reduced parking mandated in this PUD zoning and the capacity limitations of the transportation network that serves the area, including roadways and public transportation systems. • Activating surrounding streets by incorporating Active Uses on the portion of the ground floors of new and renovated buildings immediately fronting on First Street, CambridgeSide Place and Lechmere Canal Park (excluding those areas of such ground floors utilized for lobbies, limited mechanical areas and/or entrances to parking and/or loading areas). • Strengthening pedestrian access from First Street to retail establishments and the Riverfront. • Demonstrating a commitment to implement programming for proximate Public Open Space.
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The complete set of findings for issuance of a special permit to be made at the public hearing on Final Development Plan are summarized below:

Requested Action	Summarized Findings (see appendix for zoning text excerpts)
Approval of a PUD Final Development Plan (Section 12.36.4)	<p>The PUD Final Development Plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Continues to conform to the criteria for approval of a Development Proposal. • Contains revisions to the Development Proposal in response to the Preliminary Determination.
Project Review Special Permit (Section 19.20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will have no substantial adverse impact on city traffic within the study area, upon review of the traffic impact indicators analyzed in the Transportation Impact Study and mitigation efforts proposed. • The project is consistent with the urban design objectives of the City as set forth in Section 19.30 (see below).
General special permit criteria (Section 10.43)	Special permits will be normally granted if the zoning requirements are met, unless it is found not to be in the public interest due to one of the criteria enumerated in Section 10.43.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives (summarized)

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition to lower-scale neighborhoods • Consistency with established streetscape • Compatibility with adjacent uses • Consideration of nearby historic buildings
Development should be pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, with a positive relationship to its surroundings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inhabited ground floor spaces • Discouraged ground-floor parking • Windows on ground floor • Orienting entries to pedestrian pathways • Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access
The building and site design should mitigate adverse environmental impacts of a development upon its neighbors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location/impact of mechanical equipment • Location/impact of loading and trash handling • Stormwater management • Shadow impacts • Retaining walls, if provided • Building scale and wall treatment • Outdoor lighting • Tree protection (requires plan approved by City Arborist)
Projects should not overburden the City infrastructure services, including neighborhood roads, city water supply system, and sewer system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water-conserving plumbing, stormwater management • Capacity/condition of water and wastewater service • Efficient design (LEED standards)
New construction should reinforce and enhance the complex urban aspects of Cambridge as it has developed historically.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional use focused on existing campuses • Mixed-use development (including retail) encouraged where allowed • Preservation of historic structures and environment • Provision of space for start-up companies, manufacturing activities
Expansion of the inventory of housing in the city is encouraged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing as a component of large, multi-building development • Affordable units exceeding zoning requirements, targeting units for middle-income families
Enhancement and expansion of open space amenities in the city should be incorporated into new development in the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly beneficial open space provided in large-parcel commercial development • Enhance/expand existing open space, complement existing pedestrian/bicycle networks • Provide wider range of activities

Area Planning and Zoning

Site Context

The 8.2 acre site is located at the northeastern corner of East Cambridge, nestled between Land Boulevard on the east, First Street on the west, and the intersection of Cambridge Street and Route 28 on the north (see Image 1). The large mixed-use Cambridge Crossing redevelopment area is to the north, and redeveloping Kendall Square is to the south. This area is characterized by newly-constructed residential and office buildings as well as hotels, the CambridgeSide shopping mall and smaller-scale neighborhood-serving retail, and former industrial buildings converted to residential, office and lab uses. It is also defined by its proximity to several significant open space resources, including Lechmere Canal Park, Charles Park, and the Charles River Reservation. Across First Street, the multi-parcel First Street PUD will add approximately 440,000 square feet of residential and non-residential uses.



Image 1: Aerial photograph of the area surrounding CambridgeSide dated March 9, 2020.

Site Zoning

The site is located in the Business A (BA) base zoning district and the PUD-4 and PUD-8 overlay zoning districts. BA allows a wide range of typical neighborhood business uses as well as institutional uses, multifamily dwellings, and hotels as-of-right. The BA development standards promote low-density development with 35 to 45-foot height limits, with setbacks and open space required for residential buildings but not commercial buildings. BA districts are primarily located in local commercial corridors, such as Cambridge Street and Third Street, or shopping centers throughout the city.

The site is also governed by two PUD Districts, PUD-4 and PUD-8, which modify the development standards of the base zoning. The PUD-4 overlay was used to direct the development of the CambridgeSide PUD approved by the Planning Board in 1987 (PB-66), which authorized the creation of the retail mall (formerly the “Galleria”), an office building to the south (now attached to the One Charles Park building, which was

separately permitted as PB-65), and a residential building to the east (later amended to a hotel use and now the Hotel Marlowe). This PUD has been amended many times, most recently in 2019 to convert approximately 140,000 square feet of retail space to general office use on the third floor of the mall.

Following a petition by New England Development to amend the Zoning Ordinance, the City Council adopted Ordinance #1415 in December 2019, which created a new PUD-8 District encompassing the mall site (but not containing the entire PB-66 Development Parcel). PUD-8 allows additional mixed-use development in addition to any rights previously granted under PUD-4 development controls in the areas where the PUD-8 District overlaps with the PUD-4 District. Effectively, the proposed zoning allows the addition of new commercial (office, laboratory, and/or retail) and residential development to the mall site within a detailed set of height limits. While the base zoning and the PUD-4 District zoning are still applicable, the language of the PUD-8 District is written in such a way as to primarily control new development on the site.

Summary of Area Planning Studies and Design Guidelines

The **East Cambridge Riverfront Plan (1978)** was the catalyst for redevelopment along the Charles River in the formerly industrial eastern part of the city and established the pattern for the area's redevelopment, integrating the project, the neighborhood, and the river. The "Triangle" east of First Street was envisioned as a regional shopping center surrounded by additional retail and hotels, with housing and offices nearby. Its open space network includes the Lechmere Canal, the mall's north/south atrium connecting the Canal's round basin to Charles Park, architectural streetwalls along First Street, CambridgeSide Place, and Land Boulevard, and passages or courtyards on First Street aligned with Spring and Hurley Streets.

The **East Cambridge Review Process and Development Guidelines (1985)** reiterate the importance of creating meaningful and useful public open spaces, and of designing buildings to strengthen the pattern of East Cambridge's streets and other open spaces. They recommend that the uses, scales, setbacks, bulk, height, landscaping, and screening of new structures complement and harmonize with adjoining streets, spaces, and buildings.

The **Eastern Cambridge Planning Study (ECaPS, 2001)** outlines a vision for future development in parts of Kendall Square, the North Point area near Lechmere, the East Cambridge residential neighborhood, and parts of the Wellington-Harrington and Port neighborhoods. The site of this proposed development is not in the ECaPS study area but it borders "Transition Area A," between First Street and the residential parts of East Cambridge. ECaPS envisioned making the area more active by increasing residential development and attracting neighborhood-serving uses such as restaurants, convenience retail, and entertainment. Some ECaPS goals that are relevant for the area along First Street include pedestrian and bicycle connections to the open space along the Charles River, more residential development, and supporting active commercial districts with ground floor retail. The "Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines" created during this process provide more detail on architectural scale and massing, architectural character, streets and sidewalks, connections, and street activating uses at ground floors, all directed toward creating a walkable urban environment.

The **Cambridge Riverfront Plan (2011)** built on the successful transformation of eastern Cambridge and noted that the area around CambridgeSide provides the potential for the most direct connections between the residential neighborhood of East Cambridge and the waterfront. It envisioned First Street as a walkable

retail corridor and acknowledged that a growing residential population and growth in business uses would increase the viability of that vision. The Cambridge Riverfront Plan also identified Charles Street and Thorndike Street as prominent east-west streets that serve as a conduit to the river, and promoted the idea of a new promenade along the face of the Museum of Science and its garage.

The **Envision Cambridge (2019)** comprehensive plan established city-wide planning goals and recommendations, designating this area as an “Evolving Mixed-Use District.” Envision Cambridge called for a balanced mix of development types that are sensitive to their context while still advancing the City’s goals in providing affordable housing, environmental resilience, cohesive urban form, and community wellbeing. It advocated for providing both commercial and residential development, as well as preserving and expanding the city’s open space network. In general, Envision Cambridge noted that the transformation of Evolving Mixed-Use Districts offers the potential not only to create great new neighborhoods, but also to preserve existing and thriving neighborhoods like East Cambridge.

Summary of PUD-8 Zoning – Section 13.100

Applicants are required to submit the following plans as part of both a Development Proposal and a subsequent Final Development Plan:

- Site Development;
- Building Massing;
- Parking and Loading;
- Connectivity;
- Open Space;
- Ground Floor and Activation;
- Housing;
- Phasing;
- Sustainability and Resiliency;
- Net Zero Narrative;
- Transportation;
- Environmental Comfort;
- Architectural Character;
- Comprehensive Signage and wayfinding; and
- Utilities.

In evaluating each of these plans, the Planning Board is guided by the following controls and the PUD-8 Special Permit Criteria, summarized in the above table.

Major Development Controls

Gross Floor Area (GFA). Net New GFA in the district is limited to 575,000 square feet, which is in addition to Existing GFA on the site. Existing GFA includes all GFA that currently exists on the lot(s), including above-ground structured parking facilities. Net New GFA is essentially the total proposed GFA less the Existing GFA.

Housing. At least 30% of the Net New GFA, or approximately 175,000 SF, must be for residential use. Construction of the residential development must commence prior to or simultaneous with the earlier to occur of (i) issuance of a final certificate of occupancy for more than 325,000 square feet of non-residential Net New GFA or (ii) issuance of a building permit for the second new building within the PUD-8 District. Inclusionary housing requirements must be met, with the required affordable housing percentage increased to 30% and 35% of the total dwelling unit net floor area must be devoted to middle income units. In addition, family-sized dwelling units must be provided that meet the specifications for affordable and middle-income units. There is no minimum lot area per dwelling unit for residential uses.

Active Uses. The portion of ground floors of new buildings in the PUD-8 District immediately fronting on First Street, CambridgeSide Place and Lechmere Canal Park should contain active uses, including retail uses listed in Sections 4.35 and 4.36 of the Zoning Ordinance and other uses approved by the Planning Board.

Open Space. At least 20% of the land area must be Public Open Space or Publicly Beneficial Open Space, though the requirement may be met within 1,000 feet of the boundaries of the PUD-8 District. If the open space requirement is satisfied outside of the PUD-8 District, then the applicant is required to demonstrate that they have historically contributed to, or committed to contributing to creating open space (e.g., through a financial contribution to, or development of, such Open Space). This requirement parallels the current requirement in the PUD-4 District, which was met during the original development of the CambridgeSide site.

Dimensional Requirements and Design Guidelines

Height. The maximum height is 85 feet. The Planning Board may allow increased heights ranging from 95 feet near the Lechmere Canal to 155 feet at the intersection of First Street and Charles Street through the PUD-8 Special Permit.

Setbacks. There are no setback requirements for most buildings; however, new buildings fronting on First Street must provide a setback of at least 10 feet to provide an ample sidewalk that allows for comfortable pedestrian circulation, as well as space for street furniture, bicycle parking, tree plantings and other streetscape features.

Building Massing Stepbacks. Buildings that exceed 85 feet in height shall provide a 10-foot stepback of the building façade at an elevation of approximately 65 feet and an additional 10-foot stepback at an elevation of approximately 135 feet in height (if applicable). Buildings within the PUD-8 District that do not exceed 85 feet in height are encouraged to provide a distinct horizontal articulation at approximately 65 feet through means other than a stepback (e.g., a significant change in material, projecting element of a cornice/shading device). All buildings must provide a minimum of 15-foot stepback of rooftop mechanical penthouses or mechanical screening.

Building Spacing. There are no minimum required distances between buildings, but new buildings should be separated by courtyards or other significant spaces to avoid long and unbroken building massing. Along First Street, such spatial breaks should be aligned with Spring and Hurley Streets as much as possible.

Except for the maximum heights, the Planning Board has the discretion to approve modifications to the development standards and arrive at an outcome that is appropriate to the site and conforms to the City's long-range vision for the area.

Parking Requirements

Minimum Parking. There are no minimum parking requirements. However, the Planning Board may outline some requirements appropriate for this PUD, and make a finding that the Final Development Plan provides adequate parking for the proposed residential uses.

Maximum Parking. Parking is limited to the following ratios for the following uses:

- Office: Maximum 0.9 spaces per 1,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area;
- Lab: Maximum 0.8 spaces per 1,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area;
- Retail: Maximum 5.0 spaces per 1,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area;
- Residential: Maximum of 1.0 space per dwelling unit.

Shared Parking. A study is required showing peak parking demand times for different uses; parking may be further reduced if shared parking can serve combined peak demands.

Loading requirements may be modified by the Planning Board in approving a PUD.

Bicycle Parking must be provided per citywide requirements (Section 6.100).

Sustainability and Environmental Requirements

Green Building Standards. New buildings must meet the requirements of Section 22.20 of the Zoning Ordinance, with particular attention paid to the following areas: energy and emissions; water management; cool roofs; monitoring; healthy living and working; transportation; flood resiliency; and site cooling strategies.

Noise from rooftop mechanicals must be mitigated using best practices. In addition to the Noise Ordinance requirements, no perceptible noise may be created at 100 feet from the development site, and acoustical reports must be completed prior to occupancy of a building.

Lighting. Lab buildings must install a Building Automation System (BAS) that is programmed to dim or turn lights off and to lower shades after 9:30 pm to reduce light pollution to the surrounding neighborhoods. Any PUD-8 Special Permit may contain additional conditions with respect to light mitigation for lab buildings.

Additional Commitments

While these are not reflected in the zoning, NED agreed to certain commitments upon the City Council's adoption of the PUD-8 zoning (set forth in a [Letter of Commitment](#)), summarized below (in addition to those provisions already mentioned above):

- Subsidy for innovation/start-up or non-profit office space;
- Local retail subsidy;
- Plan to recruit minority- and women-owned businesses as tenants;
- Contributions to the East End House totaling \$9,000,000;
- Contribution of \$1,000,000 to the City's Tree Replacement Fund;
- Annual contribution to the East Cambridge Scholarship Fund;
- Provision for a community meeting space on-site;

- Arts community support, including a \$500,000 contribution to the Cambridge Arts Initiative or other program identified by the City Council;
- Creation of an Open Space and Retail Advisory Committee that will help program open spaces within the District
- Provision for up to 2,500 square feet of space for affordable childcare;
- Project parking available to residents during snow emergencies;
- Charles River project with the Cambridge Public Schools;
- Free weekly rides on the Charles River for seniors during the summer;
- Function as a cooling oasis and shelter during extreme weather events;
- No fossil fuel connections within the living area of residential units;
- Coordination of a vehicle-free First Street Promenade;
- Contribution of any money remaining in the Transportation Funds after carrying out all Transportation Measures.

In addition to the PUD-8 requirements and commitments made by the owner at the time of rezoning, the development proposal is required to follow the standard review procedures for a Project Review Special Permit outlined in Section 19.20. These procedures require studies of transportation, utility, and environmental impacts, and additional mitigation may be required as a result of the findings of these studies.

Comments on PB-364 Development Proposal

Overview

Starting in early 2019 with the initiation of the PUD-8 rezoning petition, the Applicant has been engaged in ongoing review with staff on this Development Proposal. There have also been several past discussions with the Planning Board, the City Council, and the larger community, including a community engagement event conducted virtually due to COVID-19 restrictions.

The PUD-8 zoning was enacted with this particular development concept in mind, so the current Development Proposal before the Planning Board conforms to zoning requirements and does not substantially vary from the concept that was presented during the rezoning process and subsequent pre-application discussions.

Therefore, this memo focuses primarily on specific elements of the Development Proposal that the Board may wish to investigate more closely when making a Preliminary Determination, and which could be discussed further in the context of PUD special permit conditions that would govern the development if it is ultimately approved.

Development Program and Use Mix

The overall development program is to increase the total gross floor area (GFA) on the CambridgeSide mall site from a recorded 1,090,000 SF to about 1,665,000 SF, and to shift the balance of uses from predominantly destination retail to a greater amount of office/lab and some residential development. According to the Dimensional Form, retail GFA would decrease from about 677,000 SF to about 390,000 SF, office/lab use would increase from about 413,000 SF to about 1,100,000 SF, and approximately 175,000 SF of residential use would be added. The “core” part of the mall building would remain largely in its present condition (the third floor is currently being repurposed from retail to office use), and new development would be contained in buildings fronting First Street and Land Boulevard.

Some aspects of the development program could be clarified. For example, the existing above-grade parking garage is included in the Existing GFA calculation, per zoning. A chart on pages 2-4 of the Development Proposal narrative indicates that the existing garage has about 273,000 SF of GFA, but it is not indicated in the Dimensional Form whether that is included in the existing retail or office total. Also, the Dimensional Form does not distinguish between office use and lab use, which affects automobile and bicycle parking requirements (as discussed below). From the project plans, it appears that most of the new office/lab development anticipates laboratory uses. In addition, it is unclear how a shared space such as the mall connector is counted in the dimensional form, because it is shared by multiple uses and can partly be counted as Publicly Beneficial Open Space if it remains accessible to the general public.

Development Phasing

Phasing is a crucial aspect of the PUD process because it ensures that publicly beneficial aspects of the plan are closely tied to the economic drivers of development. The Phasing Plan in Volume II – Section 2.8 generally describes a two-phase plan consisting of the following elements:

Phase 1: Demolition of the retail anchor building at 20 CambridgeSide Place (Macy’s) and replacement with an office/lab building with corner retail; a partial demolition and addition to the existing building at 60 First Street (Sears) and conversion to office/lab use with ground-story retail; and improvements to Lechmere Canal Park.

Phase 2: Demolition of the above-grade parking garage at 80-90 First Street and replacement with an office and residential building with ground-story retail; demolition of the retail anchor building at 110 First Street (Best Buy) and replacement with an office/lab building with ground-story retail; and improvements to First Street.

It would be helpful if the Phasing Plan included a chart showing the proposed timeline for the project, including items such as total GFA and uses completed at each phase, timing of building design, sitework, permitting, delivery of housing, changes in parking supply, and construction start and completion. It would also be helpful to explain how buildings and streetscapes during the first phase will be protected or undisturbed during the second phase. In approving a Final Development Plan, it will be important for the Planning Board to approve the timing for the project as a whole and include conditions for the timing of completion of key project requirements.

Another key issue, raised by Planning Board members during the pre-application conference, is the timing of the residential component. The zoning allows the residential component to be included in any phase of development as long as its construction has commenced prior to or simultaneous with the earlier to occur of (i) issuance of a final certificate of occupancy for more than 325,000 square feet of non-residential Net New GFA or (ii) issuance of a building permit for the second new building within the PUD-8 District. The addition to the Sears building is not considered a “new building.” Because the Development Proposal does not include a phased tracking of “Net New” development, it is unclear whether the GFA threshold would be met at the completion of Phase 1, which would effectively require the housing construction to commence as the Phase 1 office/lab developments are completed. Because of the priority given to housing in the City’s planning policies, it is recommended that the residential component be undertaken as early in the project phasing as is feasible.

Site Development

The application generally describes how the Development Parcel is divided into distinct PUD-8 lots, streets, and open spaces and describes the uses and GFA of each site. A more complete and organized Development Program chart would be helpful to break down the development plan into its component parts with a full set of dimensional characteristics such as GFA by use(s), height, open space by type(s), and parking/bicycle parking/loading for each component, as well as the sequencing and phasing. It would also be helpful to have a plan showing ownership of the site and adjoining areas where work is proposed, project limit lines, and areas of design concern. Building heights from the centerline of First Street, Charles Street, and the Lechmere Canal, should also be provided to review the project’s conformance with Section 13.104.3(b) of the Zoning Ordinance.

Parking and Loading

The zoning for the PUD-8 District provides flexible parking requirements, giving the Planning Board the ability to approve a parking plan based on analysis provided in the Development Proposal along with

guidance from TP&T. No minimum parking is required for any land use, but the Planning Board must find that adequate parking will be provided for residential uses to avoid spillover parking onto residential streets. The zoning does set maximum accessory parking ratios for retail, office, lab, and residential uses, though it allows the Planning Board to waive those requirements. The purpose of limiting accessory parking, particularly for commercial uses, is to control the traffic impacts from development and encourage more sustainable modes of transportation. Based on the total development plan, the maximum ratios would allow a maximum of about 880-990 spaces for office/lab uses (depending on the actual mix of office and lab), 1,950 spaces for retail uses, and 200 spaces for residential uses.

In essence, the Development Proposal will continue to use the existing below-grade parking as a commercial garage to serve the overall needs of the project, rather than provide dedicated accessory parking to any particular use. This approach was anticipated during the zoning petition review and is generally supported as a way to use parking efficiently, thus avoiding the need to create new parking. According to the Development Proposal, the total number of parking spaces on the site would be reduced from 2,490 to 1,695 on account of the demolition of the above-grade portion of the garage. The phasing of how the number of parking spaces will change over the course of the development plan should be explained in more detail. The memo from TP&T provides a more complete review of the parking analysis and overall Transportation Impact Study (TIS).

The proposed approach relies on proactive parking management, rather than controlled parking supply, to ensure that the City's transportation objectives are met. For instance, one strategy to reduce single-occupancy vehicle commuting is to ensure that the cost of parking is transparent to the user and not subsidized, so that commuters benefit financially by not driving alone every day. This strategy may be more effectively implemented in a commercial parking garage than an accessory parking facility, but still requires controls to prevent unintended outcomes. Another challenge will be balancing the demand from regular daily parking users, such as employees and residents, with the demand for hourly parking from retail patrons and visitors. Finally, it is important to ensure that residents have reasonable access to parking spaces when needed, so that they are not encouraged to seek alternatives such as on-street public parking.

Bicycle Parking

The zoning for the PUD-8 District requires bicycle parking in accordance with Section 6.100 of the Zoning Ordinance, though the requirements may be modified by the Planning Board through its approval of a Final Development Plan. Section 6.100 requires that when the total number of dwelling units or non-residential GFA on a lot is increased by more than 15%, bicycle parking must be provided for all uses on the lot. As a result, the amount of required bicycle parking is based on the total GFA of the development, not just the Net New GFA. The Development Proposal includes a total of 450 long-term spaces and 175 short-term spaces. It is difficult to fully evaluate the compliance with zoning because the dimensional form does not provide a full accounting of land uses (including the exact mix of office/lab use and distinctions between various types of retail) and required bicycle parking ratios. However, based on rough calculations, the minimum long-term bicycle parking requirement would be about 242-330 spaces for office/lab, 39-78 spaces for retail, and 209 spaces for residential; required short-term bicycle parking would be about 66 spaces for office/lab, 234-390 spaces for retail, and 20 spaces for residential. Therefore, it appears that the project would require more bicycle parking than proposed, particularly in the form of short-term spaces. In Volume II - Section 2.3, the Applicant notes that "an additional 15 bikes [will be] provided by the Blue Bikes

[sic] service." While staff supports a new, large station (i.e. a 23- or 27-dock station) added to the project area, Bluebikes stations do not count towards the zoning requirement for bicycle parking.

Because this is a mixed-use project that attracts different users at different times, it is possible that a shared bicycle parking plan that accommodates both long-term and short-term users within a smaller total supply would be appropriate. However, such a plan would require the applicant to request approval from the Planning Board to reduce the minimum amount of on-site long-term and short-term bicycle parking spaces. As part of this request, the applicant should study what the expected bicycle parking demand would be at any given time (similar to the analysis provided for auto parking) and how the bicycle parking would be managed to meet the needs of multiple user groups including residents, daily commuters, retail patrons, and other visitors.

Ground Floor Activation

One of the key goals of the PUD-8 zoning is the enhancement of the pedestrian experience. To this end, the ground floors of new buildings immediately fronting on First Street, CambridgeSide Place, and Lechmere Canal Park are required to contain "Active Uses," meaning any use listed in Sections 4.35 and 4.36 of the Zoning Ordinance or other uses as identified by the Planning Board. While the application meets this requirement in spirit, some details are still missing. For instance, Volume II – Section 2.6 proposes approximately 240,000 square feet of Ground Floor Active Use, but it does not indicate whether this number is inclusive of the current mall uses or is reflective of additional active uses. As mentioned in the earlier Development Program and Use Mix section of this memo, it is also unclear whether this number includes the mall connector and if that space can accurately be described as an active use. It would be helpful if the applicant provided some additional detail on the type of tenancy and programming of these spaces. Staff would also like to see more detail for the retail spaces next to garage ramps at 20 CambridgeSide Place, 80 First Street, and 90 First Street.

In the "Mitigation Matrix" on page 2-116 of Volume II, the applicant mentions that up to 2,500 square feet of retail space will be subsidized as below market rate for local entrepreneurs. Because such space is not called out on the plans, it is unclear if the applicant intends to provide one, 2,500-square foot space or to spread that area over multiple sites. Staff would prefer the latter option to give multiple businesses an opportunity to take advantage of this benefit. This is also applicable to the commitment to provide subsidized space for small businesses and non-profits.

Housing

Only one of the four buildings included in this development, 80-90 First Street, will include a residential use. However, between the inclusionary (i.e. low/moderate-income) and the middle-income units, a large number (approximately 130) and proportion (65%) of housing units will be affordable. To date, this is the largest number of affordable units provided in a mixed income development.

Since 80-90 First Street would be constructed in the second construction phase, there is limited information in the application with which staff can assess the residential component. Significant details still need to be provided by the applicant before staff can conduct a more thorough review and share final comments with the Planning Board. It is important that these issues be resolved with the issuance of a Special Permit and

prior to the inclusionary review (which occurs after the Special Permit is issued), in which the affordable units are designated. Based on the details that were provided, staff have the following comments:

Phasing – As mentioned earlier in the memo, the residential building is in the second phase of construction, which will significantly delay when these housing units would be available to tenants. At a minimum, the phasing needs to comply with the requirements of Section 13.104.1(d)(1), though staff would like to see the residential component delivered as soon as possible.

Gross and net floor area – 175,000 GFA is required for the residential component of the development, but the applicant anticipates that the dwelling unit net floor area will be approximately 130,000 square feet. It would be helpful to understand why 25% of the residential GFA will not be used to create housing units and what residential uses the applicant intends to provide instead.

Distribution of units by type - There has been no change to the distribution of units by size since the last proposal. An approximate number of units is listed (200) and an approximate number and size range is given for each unit type (micro, studio, junior one-bedroom, one-bedroom, two-bedroom and three-bedroom units).

Overall Distribution - Over 40% of the units are micro units or studios and approximately one-third are one-bedroom and junior one-bedroom units. A quarter of the units are two- and three-bedroom units, with three-bedroom units comprising only 10% of all residential units (16% are two-bedroom units and 10% three-bedrooms). There is a difference between the types of units which are more suited to the market and those that are preferable as affordable units. Smaller units may be more suitable for the market rate units, but larger units are preferable as affordable units. Since (65%) of the housing units will be affordable, it would be better to have a higher proportion of larger units than what is currently proposed.

Family-Sized Dwelling Units – Section 13.104.1(d)(4) requires that all Family Sized Dwelling Units be affordable. Family-Sized Dwelling Units are defined in Article 2.000 as units with three or more bedrooms and not less than 1,100 square feet of Dwelling Unit Net Floor Area. The applicant has proposed 20 Family Sized Dwelling Units. Applying the requirements of Section 11.203.3(g) to the estimated Dwelling Unit Net Floor Area of 130,000 square feet, the result is that at least seven Family-Sized Dwelling Units will be required as inclusionary units. The remaining Family-Sized Dwelling Units would be middle-income units. Since there is an overwhelming demand for inclusionary Family-Sized Dwelling Units, having more Family-Sized Dwelling Units in the inclusionary housing component is desirable.

Distribution of Affordable Units – The Development Proposal does not provide a breakdown of how many dwelling units are inclusionary, middle-income, and market rate, except for a description of the number of three-bedroom dwelling units. The applicant recognizes that distributing the remainder of the units proportionately among inclusionary and middle-income units may not meet the City's needs, as it would result in a large number of smaller affordable units, when there is a greater need for larger units for families. The Housing Division looks forward to coordinating with the applicant to determine the appropriate distribution of unit sizes when they are closer to construction of the residential component.

Unit description and information - The applicant proposes a range of square feet for each unit type, but does not specify what the size of these units will be. This makes it challenging to provide detailed comments on the plans for each unit type. In addition, the applicant does not provide a description for the difference between micro units and studio units, and one-bedroom units and junior one-bedroom units. It would be helpful if the applicant provided more specific floor plans for each unit type, as well as a detailed description of what amenities will be included in-unit and in the building's common spaces.

Resilience

As required by zoning, the Development Proposal includes a "Resiliency Plan" that is supposed to identify the best practices for supporting resilience as per the City's Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience Plan, clarify how it will serve nearby East Cambridge community-wide needs for emergency shelter during heat or storm emergencies in coordination with the Cambridge Climate Vulnerability Assessment dated February 2017, and have a comprehensive design approach that supports the City's Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience Plan. These topics are discussed in more detail in the DPW memo.

Sustainability and Net Zero Standards

The PUD-8 zoning, combined with the City's baseline sustainable design requirements for large projects, produce a long list of sustainability standards applicable to this development. At a high level, the Development Proposal provides a "Sustainability Plan" describing how the proposed development meets stated requirements. Specifically, the development is subject to the Green Building Requirements in Section 22.20 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance as amended in 2019, which requires projects of at least 50,000 square feet to be designed to meet a LEED Gold, Passive House, or Enterprise Green Communities standard. The Green Building Requirements also require a Net Zero Narrative that studies aspects of a project's energy performance and how it can be adapted in the future to neutralize greenhouse gas emissions.

Supplementary requirements in the PUD-8 zoning require each building design to incorporate the following:

- A greenhouse gas emissions analysis and will implement energy efficiency mitigation to achieve the maximum energy reductions possible to conserve building energy and reduce carbon/GHG emissions.
- Opportunities for potable water use reductions and the ability to enhance indigenous plantings in and around the development site.
- Functional Green Roofs, high-albedo "white" roofs, or a functionally equivalent roofing system.
- Meeting the requirements of the Cambridge Building Energy Use Disclosure Ordinance.
- Access to daylight to enhance the visual and thermal comfort of people living and working in the building.
- Options for multimodal transportation, including facilities for cyclists, and provision of infrastructure to support alternative energy vehicles.
- Measures to meet the city's standards to address projected future flooding impacts.
- Measures to reduce urban heat island effects and identify interior and exterior spaces in designated locations to act as cooling areas.

The Development Proposal takes the general approach of applying the required standards separately to each of the four project sites where new development is proposed. It demonstrates how each building will

meet the minimum Green Building Requirements by targeting LEED Gold certifiability, though it is not clear whether registration and certification will be pursued. Commercial buildings will generally employ measures such as an integrated design approach, insulation, and efficient equipment selection to meet Stretch Energy Code standards. The residential building will pursue non-fossil fuel systems and explore Passive House design standards. Because much of the detail is left to building-level design approaches, it will be important to conduct a more thorough Green Building Review during the design review of individual buildings.

Beyond the sustainability requirements above, the PUD-8 zoning requires a “Net Zero Plan” addressing issues including “enhanced commissioning for newly constructed or renovated office and lab buildings, opportunities for ground source and air source heat pumps, solar photovoltaics, solar hot water, bio-fuel emergency power fuel, battery storage, facilities electrification, airtightness and additional methods to eliminate fossil fuel usage, including in the context of relevant energy initiatives implemented through the City of Cambridge, and exploring participation, if available, in any program sponsored by the City of Cambridge for community renewable energy purchase.”

The Development Proposal states that the items listed in the Net Zero Plan requirement were considered, and provides some discussion of the potential for measures such as rooftop solar photovoltaics and building electrification in the future. However, there is little explanation of how these measures might be employed at the level of the PUD. The Green Building submission for the project identifies some of these items as measures that might be further explored as individual buildings are designed and developed.

Staff encourages greater focus on the following aspects of sustainable design as the development moves forward, either at a PUD level or as elements of design review for individual buildings:

- Envelope Commissioning for individual buildings.
- Additional points to Optimize Energy Performance credit in Energy and Atmosphere category.
- Water use reduction in labs beyond LEED.
- Principles of WELL certification criteria to complement LEED and address criteria for “Healthy Living and Working” (Paragraph 13.107.4(e) in the PUD-8 zoning).
- Green roof system or vegetative surfaces where feasible on building roof and on site.
- Focus on social equity in pursuit of additional Innovation credits.
- Opportunities for ground source and air source heat pumps, solar photovoltaics, solar hot water, bio-fuel emergency power fuel, battery storage, facilities electrification, airtightness and additional methods to eliminate fossil fuel usage.
- Participation in community renewable energy purchase programs.
- District steam heating options from nearby steam plant.
- Centralized heat pump for domestic hot water for the lab/office and residential.

Transportation

The Development Proposal is required to include a Transportation Impact Study (TIS) that accounts for the proposed scale and phasing of development and the limitations on system capacity to accommodate new vehicle, transit, and other trips; a Shared Parking Study that analyzes existing and anticipated parking demand for all uses in the development throughout the course of a typical day and week to consider

parking demands for different land uses that have peak parking demands at different times of day; a study of the impacts of increased demand on public transportation services in the East Cambridge area; a description of the development's relationship to future regional rail, bus (including paratransit, EZRide, etc.), pedestrian, bicycle and other transportation system connections in the area; and a Transportation Demand Management and Mitigation program describing measures to offset or mitigate the development's impacts on transportation systems, including measures linked to milestones, thresholds or performance standards. The project has a certified TIS and proposes public access improvements, transportation demand management (TDM) programs, and other measures to discourage additional automobile trips and encourage a more walkable, bike-friendly, and transit-oriented neighborhood. These topics are discussed in more detail in the TP&T memo.

Utilities

The Development Proposal is required to include an analysis of existing infrastructure to demonstrate that each building site will be adequately served by water, sewer, gas, and electric infrastructure capacity and description of infrastructure capacity improvements that will be implemented to support service to each building site. This is discussed in more detail in the DPW memo.

Urban Design Comments

The proposed CambridgeSide redevelopment generally maintains the key open space and connectivity elements that were first articulated in the *East Cambridge Riverfront Plan (1978)*. The project would especially enhance the public realm along First Street with active ground retail spaces and streetscape improvements. The proposal is also responsive to subsequent plans and development guidelines. The proposed increase in height and gross floor area will enable programmatic changes that are intended to revive commercial activity at this local and regional destination. The following urban design review comments include recommendations focused on building massing, building facades, connectivity, open space, architectural character, and other site elements within the proposed redevelopment.

Building Massing

While the building heights allowed by PUD-8 are greater than the heights conceived in CambridgeSide's original master plan, the intent of the plans and guidelines for the area are served by the project's emphasis on the importance of the area's streets and open spaces, its use of building massing and facades to frame them, and provision of activating ground floor uses.

The project's overall height strategy is appropriate to the urban context and conforms to the PUD-8 zoning. Tall buildings line First Street and Land Boulevard, while the flat-roofed interior of the block (the core mall building), the central portion of the south façade, and the curved north façade are preserved at their current heights.

On First Street, three buildings, varied in materials and character, but with roughly similar heights and approximately aligned streetwalls, provide an architectural frame for the street. They are separated from each other by two "pocket parks" open to First Street. The widths of their facades roughly correspond to the widths of the East Cambridge city blocks to the west, strengthening the project's fit with the texture of East Cambridge's urban fabric.

The northernmost of these buildings, 60 First Street, is a major renovation and addition to the existing former Sears building, and will be constructed in Phase 1. Two new leasable stories are added on top of the existing building, plus a two-story mechanical penthouse, and the entire building is given new facades. While the resulting height of the streetwall will be greater than that of the adjoining buildings, it will be similar to the heights of the buildings at the north end of First Street where it meets Cambridge Street; thus, the building seems in scale with the developing character of First Street as a primary urban street. Because 60 First Street retains the current setback of the Sears building's façade, the width of the existing, fairly narrow sidewalk remains as-is. Consideration could be given to setting back the renovated façade of 60 First Street to align with the facades of the middle and southernmost of the First Street buildings, but staff recognizes that there has been a programmatic design decision to use the existing structural footprint and building columns as a base for the additional levels above.

The middle and southernmost of the First Street buildings, numbers 80 & 90 and 110, replace the existing Upper Garage and Best Buy buildings, and will be constructed in Phase 2. Both are set back from the existing building line, creating a wider sidewalk, which seems appropriate for the increased residential density and for new retail that will line the street. More specificity on the depth of this proposed setback, both at ground level and at the streetwall level above, would be appropriate to the context of First Street and its redevelopment. The upper floors of both buildings are stepped back from the streetwall above 65', consistent with the PUD-8 zoning.

At the southeastern corner of the block, a single large building, 20 CambridgeSide, will replace the existing Macy's building in Phase 1. Its streetwall facades extend along the Land Boulevard and CambridgeSide Place sidewalks and meet in a smooth curve facing the intersection. Its relatively simple massing, holding the street edge and stepping back on its upper floors, is an appropriate response to the scale and importance of both Land Boulevard and Charles Park.

Connectivity

The project proposes improvements to the publicly accessible path system of the Canal Park and the sidewalks adjoining the site. It preserves the existing Galleria atrium and its connection between Lechmere Canal and Charles Park. A new "Mall Connector" is proposed between the mall's food court and First Street via a two-story storefront entrance at the 60 First Street building (former Sears).

Canal Park

The Canal Park open space is a focal point for CambridgeSide and all of East Cambridge. The path system around the Park is important for users traveling through the area as part of the Charles River Basin, as well as for access to the Park and the Mall as destinations. City staff look forward to working further with NED on details that would make the paths inviting and useable for all. Because improvements to Canal Park are included in Phase 1 of the Development Proposal, its design review should occur concurrently with the design review of 20 CambridgeSide Place and 60 First Street.

In evaluating the path system in Canal Park, it is important to consider all potential desire lines for people traveling on foot and by bike. ADA accessible routes should be checked throughout and improved if necessary. It is unclear why the area of work does not extend north to Monsignor O'Brien Highway (see Vol

II OSP.2), and why the wider area of work proposed in the central portion of the canal's north side does not extend east and west along the canal (see Vol II OSP.2).

The bicycle routes and long-term bicycle parking areas shown on Volume II's sheets CP.3 and CP.4, along with the locations of short-term bicycle parking and Bluebikes stations, should be further refined in collaboration with city staff. The proponent should work with the City to identify a suitable location for an additional large Bluebikes station. A more direct pedestrian connection and additional bicycle path between Monsignor O'Brien Highway and Canal Park through the green area west of Graves Landing should be considered.

Note that there are currently stairs where bicycle paths indicated on Vol II CP.3 ascend or descend slopes: on the axis of Thorndike at the west side of the basin, at the angled extension of Otis Street toward the basin, and at the northeast corner of the Land Boulevard bridge over the canal.

First Street

The wider sidewalk created by the setback of the 80-90 and 110 First Street buildings is consistent with the 1978 *East Cambridge Riverfront Plan's* open space network. The widened sidewalk will improve pedestrian flow and connectivity to Cambridge Crossing and Lechmere station, and will accommodate outdoor dining and other sidewalk uses, furthering the transformation of the area's open space network. However, many of the details of the final design and cross section of First Street are contingent upon the results of the as-yet unfinished First Street/Second Street transportation corridor study. That study will help to provide standards for sidewalk width as well as the locations of lighting, street furniture, and trees, which will inform the design process of CambridgeSide. The study will also consider potential needs for separated bicycle facilities, transit lanes, and transit stops.

60 First Street (former Sears)

A pedestrian passage, the "Mall Connector," is provided through the 60 First Street building to the mall's food court. Only about half of the Connector's sides are available for retail shopfronts (Vol. III 60F.10). There is some concern that it will lack the visual interest that one expects in a retail passage, and concern regarding the viability of retail in these locations.

Neither of the two pocket parks on First Street align directly opposite Hurley or Spring Streets, and neither connects through to the Galleria's Atrium. To help knit the proposed project more directly into the street and block pattern of East Cambridge, both in terms of spatial continuity and pedestrian desire lines, consideration could be given to adjusting the plan so that at least one of the pocket parks aligns with the corresponding street on the west side of First Street, and to creating a retail-lined pedestrian passage from one or both of the pocket parks through to the Atrium. In the current scheme, the size and arrangement of the First Street service yard precludes the extension of either of these potential pedestrian routes. Potential alternatives could be investigated, including designating the middle (80-90 First Street) building as commercial and the southernmost building as residential, so that the large loading area required for the commercial buildings could be moved to the north.

20 CambridgeSide Place (former Macy's)

The building has a large lobby, entered from CambridgeSide Place and extending around the curve to Land Boulevard. Consideration could be given to reducing the size of the lobby and increasing the amount of retail space along both Land Boulevard and CambridgeSide Place, including on the curved corner, both to provide visual interest and in response to pedestrian desire lines. If possible, the width and sidewalk radii of the curb cut at Land Boulevard, which appears to be about 40' wide, should be reduced.

Parking and Loading Entrances

A better overall understanding of the arrangement of the underground parking levels of the entire CambridgeSide project would inform discussion of the entrances and exits to and from vehicular parking shown on sheet CP.6.

As the project faces important city streets on three sides and a park on the fourth, and does not have a service alley internal to the block, the loading/service entrances cannot be completely hidden. Given this constraint, and the locations of the buildings they need to serve, the locations of the entrances seem appropriate. The service yard for the buildings along First Street is successfully hidden under and behind 80 & 90 First Street. At 20 CambridgeSide, the interior loading/service yard extends along a large portion of the building's Land Boulevard first floor façade. A reduction in its length would allow the introduction of street activating retail on Land Boulevard; see comments below in the Architectural Character section.

To prioritize a high-quality experience for pedestrians, vehicular curb cut widths and sidewalk radii should be minimized throughout the project. A separation between the curb cuts for the parking and service entrance on First Street could be considered. Details should be developed in coordination with city staff.

Open Space

The project makes numerous improvements to public open spaces around the CambridgeSide complex, including improvements to Canal Park's path system and plantings; additional street trees on the adjoining streets; a widened sidewalk on First Street; and additional public art. A more detailed description of proposed changes, including grading and slopes, any adaptations to flooding, locations and types of uses and activities that are anticipated, and an explanation of how improvements to properties outside the PUD-8 development parcel (see Vol II OSP.2) will be developed and administered would inform the discussion. It should be noted that Lechmere Canal Park is owned by the City (though it is maintained privately through a consortium of abutting property owners), and therefore all improvements will be subject to City approval. Also, because the open space connects to State-controlled public spaces, information should be provided in coordination with State agencies as well as abutting private property owners.

Lechmere Canal Park

The proposed design enlarges the "Great Lawn" and reduces the amount of paving, welcome changes as Cambridge makes efforts to reduce its urban heat island effect. Consideration could be given to extending the lawn farther north, to planting additional trees along its northern edge, and to eliminating or narrowing the curved path that divides the Great Lawn into an upper and a lower portion. A better understanding of the Great Lawn's proposed uses and of desire lines for people walking and cycling would inform the discussion of changes.

Improvements and changes to paving materials are proposed, notably a boardwalk that replaces packed gravel at the central portion of the Canal's north side. Further discussion of the locations of different kinds of paving, their extents, accessibility issues, and desire lines would be helpful. A commitment to keeping these paths clear of ice and snow is important. Currently, there is no accessible means of travel during the winter. Staff questions if it is possible to create an ADA-compliant connection from the water's edge at the path on the north side of the canal up to the Land Boulevard sidewalk.

A pavilion is proposed on the terrace on the north side of the Upper Canal (by Graves Landing). Note that there appear to be trees at the location of the pavilion, and that this area is beyond the scope of the tree study in Volume IV Appendix. A new set of broad steps is proposed from the terrace down to the walkway at the water's edge. An explanation of the thinking behind the pavilion and the steps would inform the discussion. Consideration could be given to providing low planting along the edge of the terrace, both to provide additional greenery and for continuity with the grass berm to the east and west of the terrace.

Integrating public art and lighting themes under the Land Boulevard bridge are positive outcomes of CambridgeSide's redevelopment. However, issues of glare and desired light levels from under the bridge and the redevelopment site should be taken into consideration. Staff recommend collaboration with local and regional partners including the Cambridge Arts Council and MassDOT to address lighting under the bridge. Sponsoring local design competitions for this public open space is encouraged.

Thorndike Way

Thorndike Way is a primary entrance to Canal Park and a primary route for people walking and bicycling between the residential areas of East Cambridge and the Charles River. The design should be well coordinated with city staff to ensure a welcoming and clear access route for all. Consideration should be given to providing aligned canopy trees along both sides of the space to create an inviting pedestrian extension of Thorndike Street from the residential area of East Cambridge into Canal Park.

First Street

First Street has an almost continuous line of curb-side street trees. Where possible, trees should be planted in the few remaining gaps, and efforts made to encourage healthy growth.

The proposed pocket parks on First Street should feel fully public; their character and uses should be readily understood. As shown, they are multi-functional, serving as forecourts for the residential buildings, areas for outdoor cafes and dining, quiet gardens, play areas, and access to bicycle parking areas. A clearer understanding of their roles as gathering spaces should be established as their amenities and visual character are developed. Active uses would be preferable for the full lengths of their north and south sides (at present one side of each of them is occupied by a lobby or other space serving the residences in the upper floors of 80-90 First Street). If the pocket parks remain closed at their eastern ends – i.e., if they cannot lead to pedestrian passages that connect eastward to the Galleria – it will be critical that their end facades be designed as positive visual terminations.

CambridgeSide Place

On Volume II's sheet OSP.2, it appears that additional street trees are proposed on CambridgeSide Place, which would enhance the street as a route between the residential area of East Cambridge and the Charles River. Staff understood from earlier meetings that in-ground trees are precluded in this location by underground utilities, so it would be helpful to understand how this issue has been resolved and whether it will require adjustment of utilities. In addition, consideration should be given to adding street trees in the gaps along this street.

Planting

A detailed planting plan showing the locations of specific species would be helpful. In general, in-ground plantings are preferred rather than "planter pots," as they provide greater open space and cooling benefits. Opportunities for additional trees, such as empty planters on the western and southern sides of the basin, should be identified. Note that the areas covered by the tree protection and removal plan in Volume IV's Appendix A do not match the area of work shown on OSP.2.

Tree plantings should adhere to the City's recommended soil standards:

- Small Trees (i.e. canopy spread 8' to 15' at maturity) = 400 cu ft of soil/tree
- Medium Trees (i.e. canopy spread 16' to 21' at maturity) = 600 cu ft of soil/tree
- Large Trees (i.e. canopy spread 25' to 30' at maturity) = 800 cu ft of soil/tree

Currently, the landscape materials plan only identifies generic shrub plantings. Where possible, shrubs that are over 2' tall at maturity should be used to maximize site cooling. Strategies to help mitigate the impacts of flooding on trees and other plantings should be considered.

Public Art and Activities

A more detailed explanation of how the public art, activities, and programming proposed for open spaces (Vol II OSP.3 to OSP.16 and Vol III CPk.12 to CPk.14) will be developed would be helpful. For instance, kayaks are shown at the water's edge at the north side of the Canal (Vol III OSP.10) but it is not clear if a kayak rental operation or landing site is proposed.

Lighting

Lighting should be designed to ensure sufficiently high levels to support safety and comfort for people walking, while using state-of-the-art fixtures to minimize glare and avoid undue light trespass. More information on the new "canal path lights" would be useful, per the Site Lighting Plan in Vol III CPk.4.

Environmental Comfort

Solar access and wind conditions are important factors to be considered in shaping the built environment at the CambridgeSide redevelopment site. Staff recommends that building forms and massing should be analyzed at earlier design stages to maximize environmental comfort for tenants and the public. For example, measures should be considered to mitigate wind discomfort in public spaces and excessive ambient temperature due to heat island effect. Strategies suggested include green roofs on buildings, increased tree canopy, reduced paving area, site green infrastructure, and high-SRI materials where

pavement is needed. Consideration could be given to treating the large flat roof of the existing mall core as a green roof, and possibly as an accessible terrace for the residential and commercial buildings that will overlook it, if the existing roof structure is able to accommodate the additional load without major modifications.

Based on recent discussion, the applicant stated that the wind study has resulted in some design modifications, which may include relocating or eliminating entries or the addition of canopies or other wind-screening measures but it is not clear if a full wind study analysis has been commissioned or not. Staff would like to get some idea on the potential locations of wind receptors around the site that would eventually support the design. Additional wind shelters as part of building facades could include a deeper entrance canopy at 80 & 90 First Street and 20 CambridgeSide, and a loggia at 60 First Street.

Staff also recommends that efforts be made to minimize unnecessary building light trespass from the interiors of the commercial buildings, especially those facing the neighboring residential context. Automatic light shutoffs with appropriate overrides, automatic blackout shades, or other means could be considered. If the light from the commercial buildings is intended to contribute to safe conditions for people walking in the Park and along the paths, that should be noted and designed to reduce negative environmental impacts including on nocturnal life. Reducing ambient noise levels resulting from mechanical equipment and high velocity fans and chimneys in lab buildings should also be taken into consideration.

Architectural Character

The *East Cambridge Development Review Process and Guidelines* (1985) stress that buildings should not be self-referential architectural statements. Instead, the buildings should be conceived as elements of a larger whole, compatible with the historic architecture of East Cambridge. The facades of the proposed buildings, especially 20 CambridgeSide Place and 60 First Street, are designed in the spirit of these recommendations. Their architecture seems to find an appropriate balance between form and a responsibility to frame the public realm. Staff appreciates the buildings' harmonious relationship with the area's 19th century industrial architecture, and the architect's study of their brick details, relief, shadow lines, mullion patterns, metal cladding systems, and penthouse enclosures. Staff finds those elements to be consistent with the Guidelines and in keeping with Eastern Cambridge's historical architecture. Detailed information on the window/wall ratios, curtainwall systems, cladding material and glass specifications for the different buildings will need to be considered at the design review phase for each building.

First Street

The ground floors of all three of the buildings on First Street include shopfronts that will contribute to an engaging and urbane streetscape. The storefronts provide transparent glazing and wide window wall openings, and are distinguished in design and proportion from the typical streetwall floors above, emphasizing the scale of the pedestrian zone. Above this level, the building's streetwall articulations are generally repetitive and relate to the simple and functional character of the area's 19th century industrial and warehouse buildings, including the brick industrial building on the opposite side of First Street, 160 First Street, and the Athenaeum Building. This architectural character appears to reinforce the continuity of the street as an active civic space. The varied façade and massing expressions of the upper floors also add variety and scale to the streetscape while maintaining an appropriate street space enclosure.

60 First Street (former Sears building)

The 60 First Street building is proposed to remain the same size in plan as the existing Sears Building, but to receive new facades and additional floors. The architects recently met with staff to review the design of its facades. The affinity between the building's proposed streetwall façades, with their brick detail, steel lintels, and fenestration patterns, and Cambridge's 19th century industrial architecture helps reinforce the unique character of East Cambridge.

At the ground floor, the depth of the shopfronts and their transparency will add visual interest for pedestrians. The proposed granite piers, however, appear to be heavy and uncharacteristically more monumental than needed relative to the industrial aesthetic quality of the facades above the second floor level. Consideration could be given, for example, to extending some elements of the upper-story brick and steel details downward to a granite that is kept at 30-36" high. Consideration should be given to maximizing engagement between the pedestrian street and ground floor retail spaces in the design of the storefronts by such means as folding or overhead door-style glazing systems.

On the First Street façade, the entrance to the Mall Connector is paired with the building's lobby entrance to create a two-bay double height entrance opening spanned by a deep beam. This presents a dichotomy of two adjoining equal sized entrances to pedestrians. Consideration could be given to treating the entrances in a way that clarifies their differences and relative importance.

While the diagonal bracing of the penthouse is quite assertive in elevation, the penthouse seems to be largely hidden from ground level views from First Street. The diagonals add an element of liveliness. Consideration could be given to giving the penthouse a lighter color, or to more transparency in the louver system or other materials that screen the mechanical equipment.

The curved element facing Canal Park continues the existing building's curved façade without replicating it, as though the older façade is modulated upward and given a lighter colored material in response to the new building's greater height. Distinguished in form and color from the building's brick mass, it mediates between the new masonry facades of 60 First street and the existing mall.

80 & 90 First Street (former upper Garage) and 110 First Street (former Best Buy)

The facades of the Phase 2 buildings along First Street – 80 & 90 First Street, and 110 First Street – have a distinct streetwall, extending up to about 65' and separated from their upper facades by a recessed horizontal zone. At 110 First Street, the edge of the canopy at the top of the recess aligns with the streetwall façade below, allowing the canopy to cap the streetwall zone at the building's base, and separate the building's set-back upper floors from it.

In contrast, the upper mass of 80 & 90 First Street, designated as residential, is set back from the streetwall façade below and separated from it by a continuous horizontal two-story tall recess. The recess gives the upper floors a heavy effect, as though the shadowy exposed underside of their mass is looming over the street. Consideration could be given to reducing the depth or height of the recess. The upper floors are U-shaped in plan, with an east-facing courtyard looking across the flat roof of the Galleria's existing three-story high core. Consideration could be given to creating a more vertical expression of the building's upper volume, or an upper-level courtyard open to First Street, to create a more varied upper massing along the street.

20 CambridgeSide Place (former Macy's)

The scale of the 20 CambridgeSide building, the overall repetitive character of its facade system, and the subtle variations introduced by details of wall material and fenestration seem appropriate to the scale of both Land Boulevard and CambridgeSide Place. The building contributes some landmark qualities to the context, including Charles Park. The architects met with staff to review the façade design recently. The architectural details expressed in the facades were appreciated. Staff suggested that some simplifications of details might be appropriate considering the building scale, and suggested some adjustments of window wall proportions and accentuation of the building corner.

Seen from Land Boulevard, the mechanical penthouse, with its two-story appearance, seems to overpower the building top. Appropriate architectural treatments to reduce its bulk were discussed, including raising the façade's parapet to contain the mechanical penthouse space (as was recently proposed in several projects in North Point). In consideration of the building's prominence on Land Boulevard, staff also felt that further articulation and emphasis at the building's corner might enhance its landmark qualities. The terraces at the step-backs could be considered as locations for plantings or green roofs (plantings are shown on the perspectives, but not on the plans).

A stronger distinction between the building's ground floor façade and the floors above it could be considered. The curved facade at the building's ground floor seems to be a natural place for an entrance, preferably to retail space that would activate the corner. There is concern that the loading/service area occupies such a large portion of the Land Boulevard ground floor façade. The treatment of the extensive ground level fenestration in that area will also need to be reviewed in greater detail.

Comprehensive Signage

The zoning for PUD-8 requires an applicant to provide the approximate number, type, and characteristics of signage to be installed within the District. The signage plan included in Volume II – Section 2.15 shows the locations of storefront-level signage but does not include a number or general area of signage, or any graphic standards that may be under consideration. The general approach appears to rely on tenants to determine their signage following the standards in Article 7.000 and request relief as necessary. It also appears to incorporate the existing "CS" signage program on the mall site, which received a variance from the BZA. Since the PUD zoning provides no broader relief from Article 7.000, this may be a reasonable approach; however, the Development Proposal does not explain an overall strategy for coordination of signage across the site. Also, it appears to show a storefront-type signage plan along Land Boulevard, where retail uses are not proposed, so it is not clear what type of signage is anticipated on that frontage.

The Development Proposal also provides a conceptual wayfinding signage plan showing the locations of signage and examples of what the signage could look like, but does not discuss what information would be included on such signs. As the Final Development Plan proceeds, it will be important to establish a process for review of the detailed content, design, and placement of wayfinding signs.

Comments on PB-66 Amendment

The findings for a PUD Minor Amendment are summarized below:

Requested Actions	Summarized Findings (see appendix for zoning text excerpts)
Minor Amendment to PUD Special Permit (Section 12.37.2)	The proposed amendment to the PUD do not alter the concept of the PUD in terms of density, floor area ratio, land usage, height, provision of open space, or the physical relationship of elements of the development.

The applicant is seeking a minor amendment to the existing PUD-4 Special Permit (PB-66) in addition to the PUD-8 Special Permit and the Project Review Special Permit. The purpose of this application is to establish what parts of the previously-approved development plan will not change and will remain subject to the conditions of PB-66. As a result, it is important for the applicant to more thoroughly identify how specific provisions of the PB-66 Final Development Plan will be altered by the new Final Development Plan.

The approach taken in the proposed Minor Amendment is to add provisions stating, in effect, “To the extent the provisions of the existing PUD-4 Special Permit, as they relate to the PUD-8 Development Parcel, conflict or are inconsistent with the PUD-8 Special Permit, the provisions of the PUD-8 Special Permit shall govern.” This language is very open-ended and does not specify what provisions of PB-66 need to be modified in order to enable development to proceed as proposed in PB-364. While it may seem tedious to sort out logistics at this phase, it will make it less difficult to resolve any future conflicts.

For instance, the Development Proposal for the new PUD special permit (PB-364) includes partial redevelopment of areas under PB-66. The proposed amendment does not clarify how much of the square footage of PB-66 is being proposed to be transferred to or shared with PB-364. Amendment 21 of PB-66 approved the following mix of uses for the total gross floor area (GFA). Clarification is needed if any changes are proposed to this table under the current amendment request.

Use Category	Approved Total Area of Use (square feet)
Retail	626,000 to 766,000
Hotel	152,877
Office	115,675 to 255,675

Amendment 18 of PB-66 authorized the use of parking spaces in the parking garage as a principal use. The Development Proposal for PB-364 includes replacement of above grade portion of the garage with new built area for mixed uses. The size of the garage is proposed to be reduced from 273,000 square feet to 135,000 square feet. The approved parking plan, and whether it would be governed by the conditions of PB-66, PB-364, or some combination, should be made clear.

The zoning anticipates that a Minor Amendment may be granted to sustain portions of the approved PB-66 Final Development Plan that are unaffected by the new PUD special permit. However, it would make the most sense to approve such a Minor Amendment, which requires a written determination by the Board, only after granting the new PUD special permit and after reviewing a detailed schedule of amendments to the PB-66 Special Permit.

Summary of Outstanding Issues

CDD staff have met with the project team on multiple occasions to discuss the proposal and provide comments. Staff are appreciative of the project team's efforts to shape this proposal, and look forward to continued collaboration as the project moves forward.

PUD approval is a multi-step process. In essence, the Planning Board's action at this stage is to determine whether the development plan, in concept, conforms to the PUD district zoning and the City's planning for the area. If so, the Board may request revisions to the development plan or additional information to be provided in a Final Development Plan. If a Final Development Plan is approved, then each individual building or phase of the project will be subject to additional design review procedures and mitigation requirements set forth in the conditions of the PUD special permit.

Below is a summary of some of the main issues raised earlier in this memo, organized into different stages of review.

PB-66 Minor Amendment Request

- Clarify whether any changes are proposed to the Approved Total Area of Use table in Amendment 21. This table has to be updated to reflect how much gross floor area of each category will remain subject to PB-66 and what will be controlled by PB-364;
- Clarify whether any of the PB-66 special permit conditions associated with the approval of the use of parking spaces in the parking garage as a principal use in Amendment 18 need to be modified;
- Provide a more detailed list of amendments to the conditions of PB-66 that are needed to enable the PB-364 development plan.

Final Development Plan for PB-364

- Revised Dimensional Form with a more detailed breakdown of development by use;
- Revised Phasing Plan including a project timeline and general scope of work at each phase (including creation/removal of parking spaces, loading bays, and bicycle parking spaces);
- Rationale for timing of the residential component;
- Revised Development Program chart with key development characteristics for each site;
- Ownership plan;
- Demonstration that the proposed building heights comply with Section 13.104.3(b) of the Zoning Ordinance;
- Explanation of how bicycle parking requirements are met, or a proposed alternative bicycle parking plan subject to Planning Board approval;
- Plan for activating the proposed "Mall Connector," and potential for another connection from First Street to the Galleria atrium aligned with Spring and/or Hurley Street(s);
- Better overall understanding of the arrangement of the underground parking levels of the entire CambridgeSide project, including location and size of entrances and exits.
- Details on the provision of Ground Floor Active Uses, including how the 240,000 square feet are accounted for, as well as expected tenancy and programming of these spaces;
- Details on the location of subsidized space for retail, small businesses, and non-profits and process for allocation;

- More detailed breakdown of housing units by type, size, and affordability, with consideration toward increasing the number of large affordable residential units;
- Additional details on the Open Space Plan including grading and slopes, any adaptations to flooding, anticipated programming of spaces, and transitions with abutting spaces outside the PUD-8 development parcel;
- Consideration of a more direct pedestrian connection and additional bicycle path between Monsignor O'Brien Highway and Canal Park through the green area west of Graves Landing;
- Description of overall strategy for coordination of signage across the site, including a detailed wayfinding signage plan.

Design Review

- Detailed Green Building Review submission for each building, including potential for incorporating measures listed in Net Zero Plan requirements in buildings or at a PUD level;
- Details of all building façades, fenestration, entrances/exits, and outdoor space;
- Design details of retail spaces, particularly where they abut parking garage ramps;
- Minimization of vehicular curb cut widths and sidewalk radii throughout the project as well as a separation between the curb cuts for the parking and service entrance on First Street;
- Canal Park design review to be submitted concurrent with the design review of 20 CambridgeSide Place and 60 First Street, with attention to circulation patterns, interface with abutting properties, intended uses and programming of space, planting plan, and lighting;
- 20 CambridgeSide Place - lobby reduction, increase in retail space, reduction in length of the loading/service area behind the Land Boulevard façade;
- Residential phase – Housing unit description and information including size, layout, floor plans, and amenities in-unit and in the building's common spaces;
- Final locations of bicycle parking and Bluebikes station(s);
- Completion of a First Street/Second Street transportation corridor study to provide standards for sidewalk width, the locations of lighting, street furniture, and trees, and potential for separated bicycle facilities, transit lanes, and transit stops.