

**Affordable Housing Trust**

April 30, 2026, 4:00 p.m.

Ackermann Room, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts

OR

[Webinar Registration - Zoom](#)

To participate in this meeting through the Zoom video meeting platform, please register using [this link](#) in advance of the meeting.

AGENDA

1. Review of Meeting Minutes
2. Update from the Housing Department
3. 12-14 Laurel Street: request from JAS for \$2,165,584 to assist with the construction of 4 affordable ownership units;
4. 37 Brookline Street/240 Broadway: request from Just A Start (JAS) for \$4,010,361 to assist with the construction of 30 affordable rental units;
5. 240 Broadway (Broadway Park): transmitting the Planning Board's Final Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Design Consultation;
6. Corcoran Park: transmitting the Planning Board's Final Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Design Consultation;
7. 2072 Massachusetts Avenue:tTransmitting the Planning Board's Final Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Design Consultation;
8. Adjournment

Members of the public can provide written comments to the Affordable Housing Trust by email sent to affordablehousingtrustcomment@cambridgema.gov, or by delivery to the Housing Department, by 5:00 p.m. the day before the meeting.

CAMBRIDGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
MEETING MINUTES

March 26, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

Conducted via Zoom and in person (City Hall, Ackermann Room)

Trustees Present in Person: Yi-An Huang, Chair; Teresa Cardosi, Elaine DeRosa, Krissandra Robinson, Susan Schlesinger, Jim Stockard, Elaine Thorne

Trustees Present via Zoom: Alyson Stein, Raffi Freeman

Staff Present: Chris Cotter, Director of Housing; Anna Dolmatch, Senior Manager for Homeownership; Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager for Housing Development; Janet Haines, Housing Development Planner; Alexis Turgeon, Housing Development Planner; Christine Yu, Associate Housing Development Planner; Antonia Finley, Homebuyer Coordinator, Lara Plaskon, Homeownership Program Associate

Others Present: Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, Councillor Catherine Zusy, Ahlam Ibrahim, Heather Hoffman, Hedjia Ali, Olivia Colina, Sue Reinert, Davis Bacon, Justin Saif

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. Mr. Cotter explained that this meeting of the Affordable Housing Trust is being held in a hybrid fashion pursuant to applicable requirements, and that all votes would be taken by roll call. He noted that there will be no public comment. He then confirmed via roll call that each remote participant could hear the meeting and was audible to others.

MEETING MINUTES

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of eight in favor and one absent (Mr. Freeman), it was voted to approve the minutes for the meeting of February 26, 2026.

HOUSING DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Five-Year Affordable Housing Trust Report: On March 18th, the City released a five-year report detailing Trust-funded affordable housing developments from Fiscal Year 2021 through Fiscal Year 2025. Trustees commended staff for organizing the news conference event and celebrating the work that the Trust does.

HomeBridge Program: There are currently 15 approved buyers actively looking for a home to purchase.

Corcoran Park: The second of two Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations was held on March 10th. The Cambridge Housing Authority submitted their application for state funding.

2072 Massachusetts Avenue: The second of two Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations was held on March 3rd.

240 Broadway (Broadway Park): The Planning Board Advisory Design Consultation was held on March 10th. Staff are reviewing a funding request and will bring it to an upcoming Trust meeting. Just A Start (JAS) submitted their application for state funding.

52 New Street: The construction of 52 New Street is complete, and residents will begin moving into the building in April.

87-101 Blanchard Road: Construction closing calls are underway.

28-30 Wendell Street: Homeowner's Rehab, Inc. (HRI) submitted their application for state funding.

1826 & 1840 Massachusetts Avenue: JAS is beginning the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) process soon for this project.

OTHER UPDATES

Incentive Zoning: The incentive zoning study is underway and is expected to be completed in the early fall. An incentive zoning contribution of \$1.3 million was received in March 2026.

Annual Housing Report: The Annual Housing Report regarding the impact of multi-family zoning is complete and has been shared with the City Council. The Neighborhood and Long-Term Planning Committee held a hearing on the topic on March 25 and will hold another meeting on April 7 at 3 p.m.

Trustees and staff discussed the results from the report. Mr. Cotter noted that the impact of multi-family zoning is still unknown, similar to how the effects of the AHO were not seen until a couple of years after its implementation. However, staff are seeing more activity regarding building permits.

NEW BUSINESS

Update on Redevelopment of 139 Bishop Allen Drive (Vail Court)

Ms. Arnaud provided an update to the Trust regarding the redevelopment of 139 Bishop Allen Drive, also known as Vail Court. Staff expect that affordable housing created at Vail Court will be developed under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). Under the AHO, the development could be built as high as twelve stories and could be allowed to have a non-residential space on the ground floor. There are no zoning-base limits on density.

The Trust is in the position to select a developer to build affordable housing, and will need to decide between a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) or a Request for Proposals (RFP), though an RFQ remains the recommended process. Staff informed the Trust that they need to consider whether or not they want to have a set preferences for specific income targets, tenure type, or population to be served in affordable housing here.

Since so much time has passed since the City and Trust last held a community meeting, staff recommend holding at least one community meeting to collect ideas and questions for the site to help review next steps with the community and help the Trust determine next steps. Staff propose holding it in May. A meeting in May followed by a discussion by the Trust would allow for issuing an RFQ in the late summer to select a an affordable housing developer later this year.

Ms. Schlesinger expressed the importance of assessing the developer's qualifications carefully and ensuring that there is enough open space for families given the need for family housing. In response to a question on whether the developer will need to come into this project with a design team, Trustees agreed that it would make sense for developers to apply for the RFQ with an architect identified as part of their team.

In response to a comment regarding the need to guide the community in terms of what feedback they should be providing, staff agreed that there will be some guiding questions. Ms. Arnaud commented that the feedback that the community provides could inform the Trust's review of selecting the developer. Mr. Stockard noted that staff should be prepared on how to handle the residential parking situation given that it is a common discussion topic at other affordable housing developments community meetings.

HomeBridge Program Request for Program Modification and Recapitalization

Ms. Dolmatch presented a request for program modifications and a recapitalization of the HomeBridge program. The Trust has committed more than \$32 million to this program since 2006. In November 2023, the Trust approved changes to increase the percentage of the market purchase price eligible to be funded by HomeBridge subsidy. Since that time, there has been a significant increase in HomeBridge applications. This can lead to some applicants competing against each other for homes on the market.

In response to current program and market conditions, staff are proposing a number of changes, including removing eligibility for non-Cambridge residents, making eligibility more need-based, and setting a minimum purchase capacity for approval, setting a maximum affordable price limit, and adjusting the approval time limits for applicants. These changes are intended to ensure that program capacity is being used most effectively given the high volume and complexity of applications while also continuing to assist with as many purchases as possible.

In addition to these changes, staff are requesting \$10,000,000 in funds to recapitalize the HomeBridge Program for households earning up to 100% Area Median Income. This is expected to serve approximately 20 households.

In response to a question regarding how many applicants are between 100% and 120% AMI, Ms. Dolmatch answered that there are currently three approved households in that range, and that their affordable purchase prices are approximately \$600,000. Mr. Stockard commented that it is important to assess the starting price of an affordable homeownership unit since the Trust may need to further subsidize it on resale through the Resale Fund.

Mayor Siddiqi commented that the Trust needs to think about the initial purpose of the HomeBridge Program and what the purpose is now. She advocated for the need to continue to benefit Cambridge residents the most.

Ms. Dolmatch noted that one of the benefits of the HomeBridge Program is that households are able to access homes in neighborhoods that the City hasn't historically built affordable housing in.

In response to a question about when these policies will take effect and whether changes will apply retroactively, Ms. Dolmatch answered that any changes approved by the Trust would apply to any new approvals issued after changes are approved.

In response to a question about whether there is a way to allow former Cambridge residents who were pushed out of the city to apply, Trustees and staff discussed the difficulty of having a policy for previous-Cambridge residents without considering fair housing concerns which generally discourage time-based residency provisions.

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of eight in favor and one absent (Mr. Freeman), it was:

VOTED: to approve the request for \$10,000,000 to recapitalize the HomeBridge Program and to approve the program policy changes except policy #2, as detailed in the memo provided.

Homeownership Resale Fund Recapitalization Request

Ms. Dolmatch presented a funding request for \$3,000,000 to increase the balance of the Homeownership Resale Fund. She noted that the fund has seen more costly repurchases following the recent change to the resale formula which increased prices for units now being sold by current homeowners, along with ongoing increases in rehab costs to prepare units for resales. Staff are seeing a larger number of units needing significant rehab work. While staff do not always exercise the City's purchase option for each unit, without additional funding, staff will be more constrained on when to exercise that right. The priority is to purchase units to preserve or deepen affordability of family-sized units which are rarely available.

In response to a question about what permanent subsidy means, Ms. Dolmatch answered that these are funds invested in a resale unit permanently to cover costs for rehab and/or lower the sales price to the next buyer.

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of eight in favor and one absent (Mr. Freeman), it was:

VOTED: to approve the request for \$3,000,000 to recapitalize the Homeownership Resale Fund, as detailed in the memo provided.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of eight in favor and one absent (Mr. Freeman), it was voted to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 30, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Materials:

- Agenda
- Minutes from the Trust's February 26, 2026 meeting
- Project Update
- Vail Court Update and Next Steps Memo 3.26.2026
- HomeBridge Program Modification and Recapitalization Memo 3.26.2026
- Homeownership Resale Fund Recapitalization Memo 3.26.2026

Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust

April 30, 2026

Status of Active Commitments

	Active Projects	Sponsor	Rental Units	Ownership Units	Status	Total Cost	Trust Commitment	Loan Amount Per Unit	Trust Approval Date
1.	HomeBridge program	Housing Dept.	<i>currently approved buyers:</i>	15	121 scattered site units purchased by first time buyers to-date. Trust approved expanded subsidy share in August 2023. Three units under agreement.	N/A	\$44,200,000	1-br: 50% sale 2-br: 60% sale 3-br: 65% sale	several, including most recent: March 2026
2.	Homeownership Resale Program	Housing Dept.	<i>currently active units:</i>	23	Re-purchase, rehab and re-sale of affordable homeownership units to new homebuyers. Three units under agreement with a new buyer.	N/A	\$16,000,000		several, including most recent: March 2026
3.	Vail Court (139 Bishop Allen)	TBD	TBD	TBD	Trust and City hosted public meeting in 2017 to hear from the community on affordable housing needs and ideas for the redevelopment of Vail Court but that process was put on hold while the litigation was pending. Now that the litigation has been settled, planning for next steps underway. Commuuty meeting scheduled for 5/20/26.	TBD	TBD	TBD	N/A
4.	2072 Mass. Ave.	Capstone Hope	74		Capstone/Hope purchased site in April 2018 and initially sought a comprehensive permit for an affordable housing development but withdrew their request at the September 2021 BZA hearing; they remain committed to creating affordable housing at this site and are proceeding under the AHO. AHO community meetings held on 10/9/24, 10/30/24 (repeat of first meeting), and 5/29/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 10/7/25 and 3/3/26. A request for additional Trust funding for construction will be brought to an upcoming meeting.	TBD	\$5,071,000	TBD	February 2018 and June 2021
5.	52 New Street	JAS	106		JAS purchased the site in early 2020 and completed the AHO process in early 2022. Construction began in December 2023 and is underway. JAS received more than 2,000 applications and is in the process of selecting residents. Lease-up expected to begin in April 2026. JAS accepting application for 1- and 2-BR units through 5/20/26.	\$90,359,816	\$18,025,390	\$170,051	October 2019, June 2021, and January 2022
6.	Broadway Park (240 Broadway)	JAS	16		In March 2021, the Trust approved funding to create 15 affordable homeownership units at this JAS-owned site. JAS began a community process but put the FTHB project on pause and is now planning to develop the site as rental housing in conjunction with 37 Brookline Street. JAS has applied for state funds for the scattered-site Broadway Park/Brookline St development. AHO community meetings held on 7/24/25, 9/18/25 (repeat of first meeting), and 11/6/25. First and only Planning Board Advisory Design Consultation held on 3/10/26. Request for funding is on Trust's April meeting agenda.	TBD	\$3,600,000	\$225,000	March 2021
7.	Jefferson Park Federal (45-60; 61-75; 77-92; 93-108; Jackson Circle; 1; 2-19, 21-42; 109-124; 1000	CHA	278		In September 2021, the Trust approved funding to assist with the comprehensive modernization of Jefferson Park Federal. The CHA completed the AHO process in early 2022 and began construction of Phase 1 in early 2024 and began Phase 2 in August 2025.	\$309,675,326	\$43,611,615	\$156,876	September 2021
8.	4 Mellen / 1627 Mass. Ave.	HRI	29		In January 2022, the Trust approved funding for the purchase of this property from Lesley University to create affordable housing. The Trust approved additional predevelopment funding in August 2022. HRI acquired the site in August 2022 and completed the AHO process in late 2023. State funding approved June 2024. HRI closed on construction on 5/16/25. Groundbreaking held on 6/17/25. Construction underway.	\$33,034,091	\$10,425,000	\$359,483	Janaury 2022, August 2022, and January 2024
9.	35 Cherry Street	JAS		10	In March 2022, City Council approved the disposition of this property to the Trust for creation of affordable homeownership housing. Transfer from MIT complete. After RFP, Just A Start selected as developer in October 2023. In the June 2025 meeting, Trust approved construction and permanent financing. All financing closed 12/10/2025. Construction underway.	\$8,352,000	\$7,734,000	\$773,400 (\$475,200 permanent)	March 2022, May 2024, June 2025

10.	49 Sixth Street	POAH	46		In October 2022, the Trust approved funding to assist in the conversion of a portion of the Sacred Heart church property to affordable housing. POAH has completed the AHO process. POAH is assembling remaining financing in advance of beginning construction in 2024. Increase of Trust funds request approved 3/6/24; increase of Trust funds approved at 8/1/24 meeting. POAH closed on construction on 6/16/25. Construction underway.	\$44,050,313	\$11,250,000	\$244,565	October 2022, March 2024, and August 2024
11.	37 Brookline Street	JAS	13		JAS acquired the site in July 2023 and held a meet and greet meeting on 4/25/24. AHO community meetings held 7/10/24 and 9/11/24. Design work is underway. Community meeting to update abutters on new design held on 4/16/26.	TBD	\$2,064,000	TBD	March 2023
12.	650 Concord Ave	Neville Communities Inc (NCI)	71		In May 2023, the Trust approved funding to assist with capital repairs at Neville Place, the affordable assisted living portion of its campus. Increase of Trust funds request approved 3/28/24. Neville closed on the refinancing of their existing mortgage and Trust funding in February 2025. The initial capital repairs underway include the replacement of the roof and the replacement of immediate building system components, including two HVAC chillers. Initial work complete.	\$5,670,500	\$5,670,500	\$79,866	May 2023 and March 2024
13.	28-30 Wendell Street	HRI	95		HRI purchased 30 Wendell Street from Lesley University on 11/30/23 and purchased 28 Wendell from Lesley on 6/7/24. An initial AHO meeting for the 30 Wendell site was held 2/14/24. HRI restarted the process with AHO community meetings for the combined sites held 6/20/24, 11/14/24, and 3/6/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 8/5/25 and 11/18/25. Trust approved funding for construction at its February 2026 meeting; HRI seeking to secure remaining financing needed to begin construction.	TBD	\$30,357,000	TBD	August 2023, March 2024, and February 2025, February 2026
14.	87-101 Blanchard Rd	B'nai B'rith	110		In March 2024, the Trust approved \$18,169,120 in funding to BBH for the new construction of 110 affordable rental units for seniors. BBH completed the AHO process on 6/18/24. State funding awarded in February 2025. Construction closing is underway.	TBD	\$18,169,120	\$165,174	August 2023 and March 2024
15.	Print Shop Condominiums	Print Shop Condominiums		24	In October 2023, the Trust approved up to \$3,000,000 to assist this all-affordable condominium building with building envelope repairs starting with the replacement of the roof. First phase of loan (up to \$820,000) closed 11/21/24. Roof replacement complete. Predevelopment work for second phase is ongoing.	TBD	\$3,000,000	TBD	October 2023
16.	102 Sherman St/Walden Square Apartments II	Winn	95		Trust approved funding for the construction of two new buildings containing 95 affordable rental units on a portion of the existing Walden Sq I site; Winn completed the AHO community process in Fall 2023 and presented the proposed to the Planning Board at the two Advisory Design Consultations on 3/12/24 and 7/2/24. Planning Board final design report issued on 8/1/2024 and accepted by Trust on 10/24/24. State funding award in July 2025. Beginning to prepare for a 2026 construction closing.	\$80,413,447	\$18,750,000	\$197,368	June 2024
17.	Rindge Commons South	JAS	77		JAS will be seeking the remaining financing needed to begin construction on the second phase of their two-phase Rindge Commons development which received a comprehensive permit in August 2020. The Trust approved funding of \$9,051,615 for the second phase, Rindge Commons South, at its September 2024 meeting.	TBD	\$9,051,615	\$117,553	September 2024
18.	1826 & 1840 Massachusetts Avenue	JAS	TBD		Trust approved funding for JAS to purchase two parking lots from Lesley University to develop into new affordable housing, as well as some predevelopment funding. Properties were acquired 11/26/24.	TBD	\$10,900,000	TBD	September 2024
19.	1, 3, 5 Frost Street & 20, 22, 28 Roseland Street/ Frost Terrace II	Capstone Hope Zahler	TBD		Trust approved funding for the development team behind Frost Terrace I Apartments to purchase six sites in Porter Square to develop a second affordable housing development, Frost Terrace II Apartments, as well as some predevelopment funding. Properties were acquired 12/13/24.	TBD	\$19,839,500	TBD	September 2024
20.	12-14 Laurel Street	JAS		4	Trust approved funding to assist with predevelopment activities related to the development of 12-14 Laurel Street. First AHO meeting held on 9/11/25. Predevelopment funding closed 1/12/26.	TBD	\$125,000	\$31,250	June 2025

21.	31-37 Mellen Street	CHA	TBD		Trust approved funding to assist with acquisition of 31-37 Mellen Street. Properties were acquired on 12/31/25.	TBD	\$9,800,000	TBD	September 2025
21.	Corcoran Park - Phase 1	CHA	67		Trust approved funding to assist with the construction of 67 rental units in this first phase. The CHA held AHO community meetings on 2/13/25 and 10/9/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 12/16/25 and 3/10/26.	TBD	\$14,405,000	\$215,000	September 2025
22.	(confidential until purchased)	CHA	TBD		Trust approved funding to assist with acquisition of new site.	TBD			December 2025
22.	(confidential until purchased)	CHA	TBD		Trust approved funding to assist with acquisition of new site.	TBD			December 2025
23.	16-28 Porter Street	CHA	TBD		Trust approved funding to assist with acquisition of 31-37 Mellen Street. Properties were acquired on 4/15/2026.	TBD	\$6,000,000	TBD	January 2026
24.	(confidential until purchased)	HRI	TBD		Trust approved funding to assist with acquisition of new site.	TBD			February 2026
			1,153	Total Units					

Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
Status of Active Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Developments

	AHO Development	Developer	AHO Status & Activity	Rental Units	Ownership Units	Development Status
1.	52 New Street	Just-A-Start Corporation	AHO Community meetings held on 2/25/21, 3/25/21, and 4/15/21. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 10/26/21 and 1/4/22. Final Planning Board report issued 1/20/22 and was transmitted to the Trust on 1/27/22.	106		AHO Process Complete; see above
2.	Jefferson Park Federal (45-60; 61-75; 77-92; 93-108; Jackson Circle; 1; 2-19, 21-42; 109-124; 1000 Jackson Place)	Cambridge Housing Authority	AHO Community meetings held on 3/2/21, 4/1/21, and 10/19/21. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held 11/9/21 and 2/15/22. Final Planning Board report issued 3/9/22 and transmitted to the Trust on 3/24/22.	278		AHO Process Complete; see above
3.	Walden Square II (102 Sherman Street)	WinnDevelopment Companies	AHO Community meetings held on 3/23/21, 4/13/21 and 5/27/21. Submission for first Planning Board Advisory Design Consultation was withdrawn by developer on 11/16/21. Design revised based on community comments. Community meetings held 2/23/22, 8/29/23 (rescheduled from 8/1/23) and 9/14/23. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held 3/12/24 and 7/2/24. Final Planning Board report issued 7/24/23 transmitted to the Trust on 8/1/24.	95		AHO Process Complete; see above
4.	49 6th Street	POAH & Urban Spaces	AHO Community meetings held on 7/27/21 and 11/3/21. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held 4/5/22 and 6/28/22. Planning Board report issued 7/14/22 and transmitted to the Trust on 8/4/2022.	46		AHO Process Complete; see above
6.	1627 Mass. Ave./4 Mellen	Homeowner's Rehab Inc	AHO community meetings held 9/15/22 and 3/15/23. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held 7/18/23 and 12/5/23. Final Planning Board report issued 12/20/23 and transmitted to the Trust on 1/25/2024.	29		AHO Process Complete; see above
7.	87-101 Blanchard Road	B'nai Brith Housing	AHO community meetings held 10/4/23 and 11/10/23. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held 1/23/24 and 6/4/24. Final Planning Board report issued 6/18/24 and transmitted to the Trust on 6/27/24.	110		AHO Process Complete; see above
8.	28-30 Wendell Street	Homeowner's Rehab Inc	First AHO community meeting held 2/14/24. HRI restarted the AHO community meeting to include 28 Wendell Street. AHO community meetings for combined sites held 6/20/24, 11/14/24, and 3/6/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 8/5/25 and 11/18/25. Final Planning Board report issued 12/11/25 and transmitted to the Trust on 1/22/26.	95		AHO Process Complete; see above
9.	35 Cherry Street	Just-A-Start Corporation	AHO community meetings held 5/15/24, 6/26/24, and 8/21/24.		10	AHO Process Complete; see above
10.	37 Brookline Street	Just-A-Start Corporation	AHO community meetings held 7/24/24 and 9/11/24.	13		AHO Process Complete; see above
11.	2072 Massachusetts Avenue	Capstone Communities	AHO community meetings held on 10/9/24, 10/30/24 (repeat of first meeting), and 5/29/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 10/7/25 and 3/3/26. Final Planning Board report issued 3/24/26 and transmitted to the Trust on 4/30/26.	74		AHO Process Complete; see above

12.	Corcoran Park - Phase 1	Cambridge Housing Authority	AHO community meetings held on 2/13/25 and 10/9/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 12/16/25 and 3/10/26. Final Planning Board report issued 3/31/26 and transmitted to the Trust on 4/30/26.	67		AHO Process Complete; see above
13.	71 Cherry Street	Cambridge Redevelopment Authority	First AHO community meeting held on 2/19/25.	TBD		AHO community meetings underway
14.	Broadway Park	Just-A-Start Corporation	AHO community meetings held on 7/24/25 and 11/6/25. First and only Planing Board Advisory Design Consultation held on 3/10/26. Final Planning Board report issued 4/6/26 and transmitted to the Trust on 4/30/26.	16		AHO Process Complete; see above
15.	12-14 Laurel Street	Just-A-Start Corporation	First AHO community meeting held on 9/11/25.		4	AHO community meetings underway
				943		Total Units

Status of Active Inclusionary Housing Developments

	Approved Active Projects	Developer	Status	Rental Units	Ownership Units	Applicable zoning
1.	40 Thorndike Street, Court House	Leggat/McCall	Covenant recorded 7/23/21. Building permit issued 3/2/21. Tenant selection underway.	48		All units are affordable
2.	121 Broadway	Boston Properties (BXP)	Covenant recorded 12/28/23. Building permit issued 3/21/24. Under construction.	102		MXD zoning - 20% Inclusionary + 5% Middle-Income
3.	8 Winter Street	S. Jafry	Covenant recorded 7/18/2024. Building permit issued. New ownership; reviewing application to amend building permit.	3		11.203 @ 20% of floor area

Under Development:

153

0

Completed Units:

1,231

215

All Units:

1,384

215

1,599

	Active Pipeline Projects	Developer	Status	Affordable Units	Market Units	Applicable zoning
1.	75 First Street	Urban Spaces	IHP plan approved; AHC recorded; building permit pending	16	90	11.203 @ 20% of floor area
2.	34 Wendell	ZRE	IHP plan approved; AHC recorded; building permit pending	8	43	11.203 @ 20% of floor area
3.	5 Craigie Circle	Rothman	IHP plan approved; AHC recorded; building permit pending	2	12	11.203 @ 20% of floor area
Current subsidy amount needed to create Affordable Dwelling Unit Net Floor Area for Inclusionary Housing not created pursuant to Section 11.203.3 (i):				\$534 / per square foot		last update: 1/23/2025

Incentive Zoning Contributions - FY2026

	Development	Contribution Amount	Rate	
1.	3 Alewife Park	\$216,710	\$ 33.34	balance after exempted GFA
2.	125 Cambridge Park Drive	\$1,292,292	\$ 33.34	
3.	290 Binney	\$14,023,037	\$ 33.34	
		\$15,532,039	Total FY2026	
		\$17,751,365	Total FY2025	
Current Incentive Zoning Housing Contribution Rate pursuant to Section 11.202 (b):		\$37.72 / per square foot		last update: 4/1/2026

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
From: Anna Dolmatch, Senior Manager for Homeownership
Christine Yu, Associate Housing Development Planner
Date: April 30, 2026
Re: 12-14 Laurel Street Permanent and Construction Funding Request

Just A Start (JAS) is requesting up to \$2,165,584 in construction and permanent financing to create four units of affordable ownership housing at 12-14 Laurel Street, located in the Cambridgeport neighborhood. The Trust has already provided \$125,000 in predevelopment funds, so this would bring the total Trust financing for this project to \$2,290,584.

As a reminder, this property is currently owned by a non-profit who has run it as low-cost communal housing for decades. The non-profit is dissolving and will transfer the property to JAS for \$1 with the conditions that it be redeveloped into affordable housing and that one elderly long-term resident is able to exercise his right to return once the construction is complete. All residents are expected to relocate by the end of May.

The existing building is in poor condition and will be demolished. Under the provisions of the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO), the project will create one fully accessible one-bedroom flat and three three-bedroom multi-floor units. All units will be restricted to households earning up to 80% Area Median Income (AMI). Each unit will have a separated entrance, individual storage in the basement, private deck space, and shared common green space in the rear. Staff have worked with the JAS team to ensure the units meet or exceed the Homeownership Unit Standards.

The total development budget is \$3,419,345, or \$854,836 per unit, similar to the construction numbers for 35 Cherry Street, the most recent homeownership development project. Hard costs are budgeted at \$497 per square foot and soft costs are budgeted at approximately \$183,000 per unit. Soft costs are higher than 35 Cherry Street's due to higher real estate taxes, relocation costs, and increased insurance premiums.

In addition to the requested Trust funding, other sources include \$210,000 in permanent financing from Federal Home Loan Bank's (FHLB) Affordable Housing Program, \$865,000 in construction financing from East Cambridge Savings Bank, and condo sales. Sales proceeds are estimated at \$918,000 or an average of \$306,000 per unit for the three three-bedroom units. The sales prices will not be set until the units are ready to be marketed, so the amount of sales proceeds may vary.

Uses	Amount	Per Unit
Hard Costs	2,366,702	591,675
A&E	201,500	50,375
Other Soft Costs	531,143	132,786
Reserves	20,000	5,000
Fee/OH	300,000	75,000
TOTAL	3,419,345	854,836

Sources	Amount	Per Unit
CAHT (Predev)	125,000	31,250
CAHT (Permanent)	2,165,584	541,396
Unit Sales	918,761	229,690
FHLB	210,000	52,500
Constr Loan	865,000	216,250
Constr Loan Repayment	-865,000	-216,250
TOTAL	3,419,345	854,836

The accessible one-bedroom unit will be owned by JAS and rented to the returning elderly resident. Once they vacate, the unit will be sold through the City's Resale Pool. The current estimated sales price for this unit is approximately \$250,000. However, the price will be set based on income limits, interest rates, and other inputs at the time the unit is available.

The sales proceeds from the three-bedroom units will be used to repay the construction loan. Any remaining sales proceeds will go to repay the Trust loan. Sales proceeds from the eventual sale of the one-bedroom unit will also be repaid to the Trust. While JAS owns the one-bedroom unit, any rental payments in excess of operating costs will also be repaid to the Trust.

We recommend structuring the financing as one loan with the requirement that the Trust is repaid all unit sales proceeds remaining after payment of JAS's 10% developer fee and the repayment of the private bank loan.

If Trust funding is approved, JAS is targeting a July 2026 closing as the FHLB funds must be used by June 2026. JAS has the option to ask for an extension of twelve months from FHLB if a commitment from the Trust is provided. They estimate starting construction in October 2026 and completion in early 2028. We anticipate that the Housing Department will manage the marketing and buyer selection process.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend that the Trust approve JAS's request for up to \$2,165,584 in permanent and construction funding, and the conversion of the existing \$125,000 predevelopment loan to permanent funding. This project will develop 12-14 Laurel Street into new and permanently affordable homes for four low-income families.

In preparing this request and recommendation, Housing Staff reviewed JAS's request with Raffi Freeman, Susan Schlesinger, and Jim Stockard, who agreed with Staff's recommendation to bring this request to the Trust for discussion.

As a condition of loan closing, the Borrower shall complete the following requirements, satisfactory to Lender in its sole discretion, satisfactory to Lender in its sole discretion:

1. Staff approval of design and development plan;
2. Staff approval of final development and operating budgets;
3. Firm written commitments from all funding sources, sufficient to complete transaction;
4. Environmental assessment and/or remediation plan;
5. Staff approval of buyer selection and marketing plan;
6. Staff approval of construction plans and specifications;
7. Submission of final construction bid and trade items from general contractor along with construction contract Borrower has entered into with contractor;
8. Zoning approval and permitting necessary to project;
9. Standard Trust terms and conditions, including:
 - All affordable units shall be subject to the Trust's affordable housing covenant to be signed at or prior to loan closing including the requirement for permanent affordability;
 - The term of the affordable housing covenant shall be ninety-nine (99) years from the date of the sale of the affordable units to the first eligible homeowner;
 - All units shall be restricted to households earning up to 80% AMI, as defined in the affordable housing covenant;
 - The loan shall be secured as a second mortgage loan of up to \$2,290,584, subordinate only to private bank financing on terms acceptable to Housing Staff;
 - The loan shall have an interest rate of 0%, or such other rate approved by Housing Staff;
 - The term of the loan shall be twenty-four (24) months;
 - The loan shall be subject to a penalty rate of 8% compounding annually, applicable upon violation of the affordable housing covenant;
 - Execution of all loan documents, including but not limited to the Loan and Security Agreement;
 - Upon completion of the project, the loan shall be partially repaid from all sales proceeds remaining after payment of the first mortgage loan, seller's reasonable closing costs, and the per-unit share of the developer fee outstanding at the time the unit is sold;
 - Upon sale of any unit approved by the Lender, the per-unit share of the remaining unpaid principal and interest will be forgiven and the loan partially released for that unit;
 - Borrower may retain ownership of one unit indefinitely for the purpose of providing affordable housing to an eligible resident as approved by Housing Staff. Upon termination of residency, this unit must be sold in accordance with a buyer selection plan approved by Housing Staff. If Borrower ownership of this unit extends beyond

the sale of all other units, the mortgage on the entire property may be released and the Borrower's unit's pro-rata share of the loan principal may be secured by a separate lien solely on the Borrower's unit;

- The loan shall provide for repayment of loan principal and interest from any rent collected on the Borrower's unit in excess of unit operating costs, including a reasonable management fee;
- Loan shall be non-recourse; and,
- Any reductions in project costs or increases in non-Trust funding sources shall be used to reduce the amount of the Trust commitment.

During the construction period, the Borrower shall comply with the following requirements:

- Notify Lender's Construction Manager of all construction meetings and copy on meeting minutes;
- Copy Lender on all change orders;
- Copy Lender on all funding requisitions to other sources; and,
- Submit requisitions in form acceptable to Lender.

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
From: Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager of Housing Development
Christine Yu, Associate Housing Planner
Date: April 30, 2026
Re: 37 Brookline Street and 240 Broadway (Broadway Park) – Construction Funding Request

Just A Start (JAS) is requesting up to \$3,990,875 in additional Trust funding to enable the construction of 30 affordable rental units at their scattered-site development at 37 Brookline Street and 240 Broadway (Broadway Park).

JAS is also requesting that the funding previously provided by the Trust for acquisition and predevelopment be converted to permanent financing at construction closing. As you may recall, the Trust provided \$1,700,000 in funding for the acquisition of 37 Brookline Street in 2023, along with \$111,111 in predevelopment funding for use at both sites. With this new Trust request, the total amount of permanent Trust financing requested for the consolidated Brookline/Broadway Park development will be \$5,801,986 or \$193,400 per unit.

JAS has long been looking to redevelop Broadway Park and plans to consolidate it with the development of 37 Brookline Street as combining the two sites into a single scattered-site rental project will make each development more financially feasible. 37 Brookline Street is a 6,582 square foot property in Cambridgeport, which was purchased by JAS in July 2023 from the estate of the late local artist, Peter Valentine. The Brookline Street property currently contains a vacant three-family building, which will be demolished and replaced with a new affordable five-story multi-family rental development containing 14 units.

Broadway Park is a 4,175 square foot surface parking lot on the corner of Broadway and Windsor Street and has served as a second parking lot for JAS staff and residents of the George Close building across the street. JAS plans to construct a new affordable six-story multi-family rental development containing 16 units.

Under the provisions of the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO), JAS will create a total of 30 rental units across both properties. The unit breakdown is as follows:

Unit Mix	37 Brookline	Broadway Park	Total
1 BRs	6	1	7
2 BRs	5	11	16
3 BRs	3	4	7
Total	14	16	30

All units will be affordable for households earning at or below 60% AMI, per the tax credit program requirements, with some units being more deeply affordable units for households earning at or below 30% AMI. Three units (one at 37 Brookline Street and two at Broadway Park) will be fully accessible. Both buildings are designed to meet Passive House and Enterprise Green Communities standards.

JAS completed the AHO community process for 37 Brookline Street in September 2024 and did not need to bring the proposal to the Planning Board for an Advisory Design Review Consultation as the project does not exceed the new thresholds which apply to AHO projects, following the 2025 multi-family zoning amendments. JAS completed the Broadway Park AHO community process in November 2025 and presented the proposal at the first and only required Planning Board Advisory Design Review Consultation on March 10, 2026. The Planning Board final report was issued on April 6, 2026, and is also being transmitted to the Trust as separate agenda item today.

While the Planning Board supported the creation of affordable housing at this site, their final report included a range of suggestions for continued design refinements, which they recommended JAS explore further prior to finalizing their design and seeking a building permit. Their comments were mostly focused on the building's exterior façade, such as revisiting the uses of color, materials, and façade articulation. They also shared comments on potential site and landscape improvements, specifically around the reconfiguration of the ground floor.

JAS is in the process of reviewing the recommendations and met with City staff — including those from the Housing Department, Community Development, and the Department of Public Works (DPW) — to share and receive feedback on potential changes. Additionally, JAS is in discussions with DPW regarding the issue of the street trees, which currently protrude over the Broadway Park site and would be impacted by construction.

Housing staff are encouraging JAS to consider the comments and to explore continued refinements as they work to finalize their designs and are recommending that the Trust delay acceptance of that report until we know more about how JAS can respond to the Board's comments.

DEVELOPMENT BUDGET:

The total development cost (TDC) for the combined sites is budgeted at \$24.9 million (\$12.5 million for 37 Brookline Street and \$12.4 million for Broadway Park). The TDC per unit (\$831,109), hard costs per square foot (\$409), and soft costs per unit (\$102,446) are lower than other recent new developments, reflecting the fact that these are smaller wood-framed buildings and there is no acquisition cost for one of the sites. JAS budgeted operating expenses at approximately \$14,400 per unit, which is in line with other recent developments.

JAS's anticipated total Trust funding for the consolidated development is \$5,801,986 (\$193,400 per unit), of which \$1,811,111 has been disbursed to date for acquisition and predevelopment. The City has also committed \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds to assist with predevelopment, of which \$480,514 has been disbursed to date. The total Trust/City funding will be \$6,301,986 or \$210,066 per unit.

In addition to local funding, other sources will include approximately \$6.0 million in 9% Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), \$2.0 million in State LIHTC, \$5.3 million in soft state funding, \$4.9 million in permanent debt, \$110,000 in Mass Save funding, and \$279,272 in Deferred Developer Fees.

The following table provides a summary of the development budget for 37 Brookline Street/Broadway Park compared to other recent projects of roughly similar scale:

	Project	240 Broadway	37 Brookline Street	37 Brookline St + Broadway	35 Cherry Street	4 Mellen / 1627 Mass Ave	49 6th Street	Rindge Commons North
	Budget Type + Date	Proposed Constr - Feb 2026	Proposed Constr - Feb 2026	Proposed Constr - Feb 2026	Constru Closing - Nov 2025	Constru Closing - Jun 2025	Constru Closing - Jun 2025	As Built - Feb 2024
	Total Units	16	14	30	10	29	46	24
	Total Bedrooms	35	25	60	24	55	91	38
Per Unit, BR, Sq Ft	TDC/Unit	774,438	895,876	831,109	840,200	1,110,401	968,227	755,521
	TDC/Unit w/o Acq	774,438	774,447	774,442	840,200	862,125	920,204	745,528
	CAHT & City/Unit	166,319	260,063	210,066	486,200	359,483	244,565	154,444
	TDC/BRs	354,029	501,690	415,554	350,083	585,484	489,434	477,171
	CAHT & City/BR	76,031	145,635	105,033	202,583	189,545	123,626	97,544
	Total HC/sq. ft.	382	446	409	447	483	513	421
USES	Acquisition	0	1,700,000	1,700,000	0	7,200,000	2,209,055	239,850
	Total Hard Costs	9,335,500	8,168,616	17,504,116	6,284,000	16,749,173	31,340,230	12,533,884
	Total Soft Costs	1,639,100	1,434,269	3,073,369	1,298,000	5,321,628	7,385,380	3,386,548
	Fee/OH + Reserves	1,416,400	1,239,373	2,655,773	820,000	2,930,830	3,603,792	1,972,230
	TOTAL USES	12,391,000	12,542,258	24,933,258	8,402,000	32,201,631	44,538,458	18,132,512
SOURCES	City/CAHT	2,661,100	3,640,886	6,301,986	4,862,000	10,425,000	11,250,000	3,706,658
	Debt	2,622,400	2,294,600	4,917,000	0	4,970,000	6,190,000	3,425,000
	EOHLC/State Soft	2,593,300	2,656,700	5,250,000	0	4,100,000	2,469,000	2,099,000
	Tax Credit Equity	4,306,700	3,768,300	8,075,000	0	11,487,021	14,706,492	7,775,066
	Def Fee/Eq	148,900	130,372	279,272	0	392,070	200,000	769,836
	Other Sources	58,600	51,400	110,000	3,540,000	827,540	9,722,966	356,952
	TOTAL SOURCES	12,391,000	12,542,258	24,933,258	8,402,000	32,201,631	44,538,458	18,132,512

NEXT STEPS:

JAS is working on addressing feedback from the Planning Board and potentially incorporating some of them into the final development plan. Once they evaluate all the suggestions, a formal update will be provided to City staff. JAS applied to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities for state funding in March 2026, and is waiting to hear whether they will receive state financing this year. They hope to have all required permitting and financing secured in time to begin construction in January 2027 with initial occupancy in summer 2028.

RECOMMENDATION:

The redevelopment plans for these two sites will result in 30 new high-quality, energy efficient affordable homes for low and moderate-income households.

Staff recommend that the Trust approve JAS's funding request for up to \$3,990,875 in new Trust permanent financing, and their request for combining the previously approved \$1,811,111 in short-term financing with the new permanent financing as a single permanent loan commitment of \$5,801,986.

In preparing this request and recommendation, Housing Staff reviewed JAS's request with Raffi Freeman, Susan Schlesinger, and Jim Stockard, who agreed with Staff's recommendation to bring this request to the Trust for discussion.

The loan commitment of up to \$5,801,986 in permanent funding shall be made contingent on the Trust's standard terms and conditions including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Staff approval of final design and development plans;
2. Staff approval of final development and operating budgets, including twenty (20) year operating proforma;
3. Firm written commitments from all funding sources, sufficient to complete transaction;
4. Environmental assessments and/or remediation plans;
5. Staff approval of tenant selection and marketing plan, which shall be consistent with the City's marketing preferences including but not limited to maximum preferences for Cambridge residents; the tenant selection plan will also include the City's demographics reporting requirements, as requested and in a form acceptable to Staff;
6. Staff approval of construction plans and specifications;
7. Submission of final construction bid and trade items from general contractor along with construction contract Borrower has entered into with contractor;
8. Zoning approval and permitting necessary to project;
9. The Trust's review, consideration, and acceptance of Planning Board final AHO advisory design review reports and any responses from JAS pursuant to the advisory design review;
10. Standard Trust terms and conditions, including:
 - All affordable units shall be subject to the Trust's affordable housing covenant to be signed at or prior to loan closing;
 - The term of the affordable housing covenant shall be the longest period allowable by law, or fifty (50) years or one year longer than the longest restriction on the property now or in the future, as approved by Staff;
 - All units shall be restricted to households earning at or below 80% AMI, as defined in the affordable housing covenant;
 - The loan shall be secured as a shared second mortgage loan of up to \$5,801,986, subordinate only to private first mortgage financing on terms acceptable to Staff;
 - The loan shall have an interest rate of 3% compounding annually, or such other rate approved by Staff;
 - The term of the loan shall be fifty (50) years;
 - The loan shall be subject to a penalty rate of 8% compounding annually; applicable upon violation of the affordability housing covenant;
 - Staff approval the terms of any sponsor loan, if applicable, including a requirement that any sponsor loan be subordinate to Trust funding and that the interest rate be no greater than the rate of the Trust financing, or such other rate approved by Staff;

- Execution of all loan documents, including but not limited to the Loan and Security Agreement;
- All principal and accrued interest shall be due and payable at the end of the term; however, the repayment date may be extended for an additional term upon approval by the Trust and extension of the affordability period;
- The loan shall provide for repayment of principal and interest from 50% of net cash flow from the development, or through other means, or other terms acceptable to Staff;
- Loan shall be non-recourse; and,
- Any reductions in project costs or increases in non-Trust funding sources shall be used to reduce the amount of the Trust commitment, as determined and approved by Staff.

During the construction period, the Borrower shall comply with the following requirements:

- Notify Lender's Construction Manager of all construction meetings and copy on meeting minutes;
- Copy Lender on all change orders;
- Copy Lender on all funding requisitions to other sources; and,
- Submit requisitions in form acceptable to Lender.

Following lease-up, the Borrower shall comply with the following requirements:

- Provide required demographic information per approved tenant selection plan; and,
- Project's as-built and operating budget; and,
- Provide data on the project's operating costs, upon request, in format acceptable to Housing Staff.

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
From: Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager of Housing Development
Christine Yu, Associate Housing Planner
Date: April 30, 2026
Re: 240 Broadway (Broadway Park) – Planning Board AHO Design Consultation Report

Just A Start (JAS) has been working with staff from the Housing Department (Housing) and the Community Development Department (CDD) on its 240 Broadway (Broadway Park) development, which will create a new six-story building containing 16 affordable rental units, to ensure the proposal met AHO zoning and other requirements. The project recently completed the advisory design review process with the Planning Board under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). This project was subject to only one Planning Board Advisory Consultation, which was held on March 10, 2026, because it exceeds the height limit of the underlying zoning district but does not meet the size threshold for a two-session review process.

The AHO requires that the results of the design review process be shared with the Affordable Housing Trust. The Planning Board report is attached and includes:

- Planning Board Final Report of AHO Design Consultation (4/6/2026), including:
 - CDD Staff Memo (3/4/2026); and,
 - DPW Staff Memo (3/5/2026).

As noted in the attached final report, the Planning Board expressed support for the creation of affordable housing at this location and supported the proposed project's height and inclusion of family-sized units. However, the Board also advised that the project could benefit from continued design consultation with City staff regarding certain aspects of the proposed development, particularly around the building façade. The following summarizes some of the specific recommendations, as described in more detail in the attached materials:

- Explore ways to refine building's exterior through revisiting approaches to façade articulation, façade materials, uses of colors, and window trim/proportions;
- Consider incorporating more residential features, such as mullions and window sills;

- Explore ways to improve appearance of building's proportions (e.g., top floor appears "added on" and bottom floor appears "squat");
- Work with the Department of Public Works to protect the existing street trees during construction;
- Explore ways to further improve the site layout and ground-floor experience, to the extent feasible, such as adding/orienting windows to offer resident views of adjacent park; adding landscaping; minimizing the visual impact of the transformer; increasing ground-floor fenestration and exterior doors where/if possible; and,
- Explore whether changes to the locations/layout of ground-floor uses would improve functionality and better activate the space.

Project Overview:

The development of Broadway Park involves the new construction of a six-story building. The site has been being used a second parking lot for JAS staff and residents of the George Close building across the street. The development proposal involves the creation of 16 affordable rental units, almost all of which will be family-sized. This project is permitted under the AHO. Under JAS's AHO submission, all units will be affordable to households earning at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI), with some units being more deeply affordable to those making at or below 30% AMI.

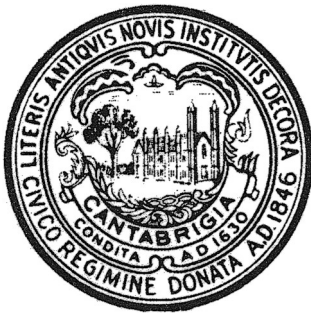
More information on JAS's proposed development, including the materials that JAS submitted to the Planning Board and presentation materials, can be seen on the Housing Department's Broadway Park project page at:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Housing/240broadwaybroadwaypark>.

Housing Department Recommendation:

All approvals of Trust funding for AHO projects are conditioned on the Trust's review and consideration of the final Planning Board report. Even after the Trust votes to accept the final Planning Board reports, Housing staff will continue to work with the AHO developers to ensure that all remaining design recommendations are considered and oftentimes able to be incorporated into the final development plans.

In the case of Broadway Park, the Planning Board's final report included more design recommendations for JAS to consider than we have seen in most other final reports. While we do not expect that JAS will necessarily be able to update their designs to address all of the Board's comments, we understand that JAS is in the process of reviewing the report and plans to meet with City staff to share their response to the Board's comments. Given this, Housing staff recommend that the Trust begin to review the attached report but wait to take a vote on accepting the report until Housing staff can bring back an update to the Trust on how JAS plans to respond to the items noted in the Planning Board's final report.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date:	April 6, 2026
Subject:	Final Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Consultation Procedure Compliance Certification
Project Location:	240 Broadway
Date of Planning Board Meeting:	March 10, 2026

Overview

The Planning Board (the “Board”) met on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, to review and comment on the design for 240 Broadway, a multifamily development by Just A Start (the “Developer”) under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in Section 11.207 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board reviewed a plan set submitted by the Developer dated February 10, 2026, as well as staff memos from the Community Development Department (CDD) and Department of Public Works (DPW), which are attached. This proposal is subject to a single-session Planning Board Advisory Consultation because it exceeds the height limit of the underlying zoning district but does not meet the size threshold for a two-session review process.

Proposal Description

Just A Start is proposing to build a new 6-story building with 16 affordable rental apartments at the corner of Broadway and Windsor Street. The 16 proposed units include four 3-bedroom, eleven 2-bedroom, and one 1-bedroom units, and will be restricted to households earning under 60% and in some cases under 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI). No off-street automobile parking spaces and 17 long-term bicycle parking spaces are proposed. The total gross floor area of the project is 24,675 square feet and the lot will include 577 square feet of open space. The site is in a Residence C-1 district, which permits up to 4 stories above grade generally and up to 6 stories above grade on sites with a lot area of at least 5,000 square feet for residential uses that meet inclusionary housing requirements. The lot area in this case is 4,675 square feet. Broadway is designated as an AHO Corridor. Up to 12 stories above grade are permitted for an AHO Project on an AHO Corridor.

Board Comments

Board members expressed support for the proposed housing program overall, specifically commending the inclusion of family-sized units. Board members also found the proposed height

and massing responded positively to the area context, complementing the other buildings that frame the intersection. Board members acknowledged that compliance with the Flood Resilience Standards in the Zoning Ordinance creates some design challenges on the ground floor but offered several suggestions to further enhance the design, which are detailed below.

Board members had several detailed criticisms of the design, mostly focused on the approach to building façades. As the proposal continues to develop, Board members urged the developer to focus on the following design improvements:

Site Design

- Use plantings and trellises more intentionally to soften the frontage and avoid creating a restaurant/bar-like appearance at the ground level.

Building Design

Design Expression, Materiality, and Color

- Façade articulation and materiality need more refinement and coherence.
- A tripartite approach may not be necessary, or could be simplified, pending further design exploration.
- Top floor appears “added on” and needs rethinking to relate to the rest of the building – too tall, color mismatch, fenestration not coherent with the rest of the building.
- Review the use of trim and vertical pilasters; trim draws the eye in conflicting directions and doesn’t match the upper levels.
- Consider providing a more residential character and approach through materials and details, e.g., add mullions, expressed sills, headers, and enhanced trim to awning windows.
- Consider incorporating paneling to visually enlarge perceived window openings and improve overall window proportions.
- Consider different façade colors, especially the beige middle section, and consider the relationship with the adjacent pink and purple neighboring buildings.

Ground-Floor Treatment, Streetscape, and Pedestrian Experience

- Improve the pedestrian experience around the building and provide a better relationship between the ground floor and public realm.
- Where feasible, add more transparency and doors at street level.
- Reorganize the ground floor plan to improve functionality and activate the space. Consider bringing more active spaces, such as the laundry room, to the exterior. Adding a street-facing door to the trash room would improve operations.

- Consider opportunities for better engagement with the adjacent park, e.g., additional windows and landscaping along the park-facing facade.
- Avoid making the transformer location the most prominent building entrance.
- The transformer door could incorporate subtle color or artwork.
- Consider increasing first floor height, or increase perceived height by moving material up the facade, to avoid a “squat” appearance.

Precedents and Contextual Relationship

- Revisit successful local precedents, such as 432 Norfolk St, that have a neutral palette, integrated trellises, and continuous planters.
- Respond more thoughtfully to context, including color relationships and scale transitions.

Construction Impacts

- Work with the Department of Public Works to protect existing street trees during construction.

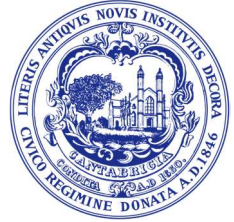
AHO Compliance Summary

This report certifies that the developer has completed the Advisory Design Consultation Process in order to comply with the procedure for development under the Affordable Housing overlay set forth in Section 11.207.8 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.

Submitted for the Planning Board,

Swaathi Joseph

Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Tom Sieniewicz, Chair.



To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: March 4, 2026

Re: Affordable Housing Overlay Design Consultation **AHO-11, 240 Broadway**

Overview

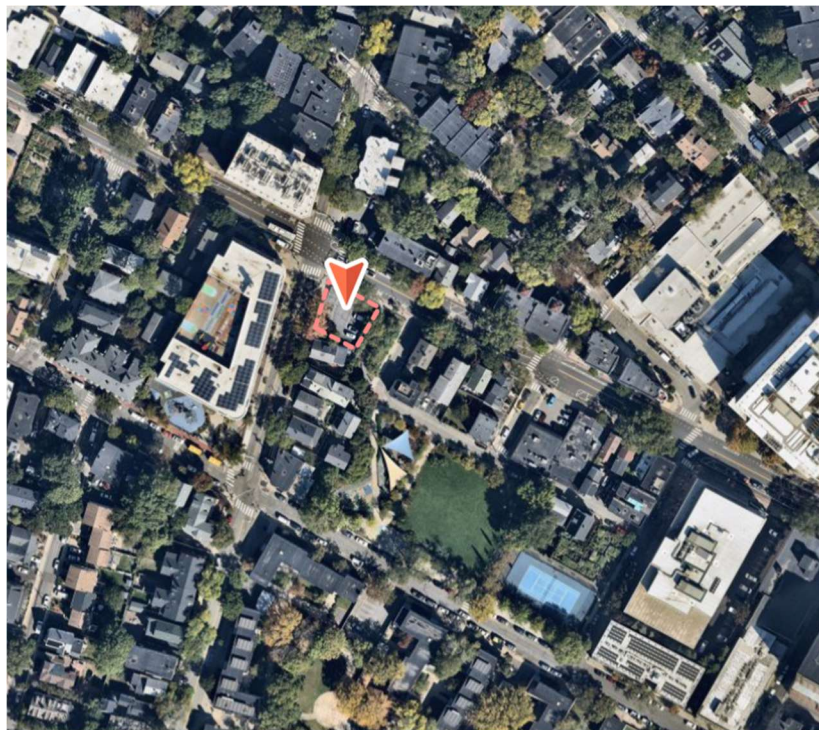
Submission Type:	Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Review
Applicant:	Just A Start
Zoning District(s):	Residence C-1; Affordable Housing Overlay, AHO Corridor
Proposal Summary:	Construction of a 6-story building to create 16 affordable rental units and amenities under the AHO.
Planning Board Action:	Review and comment on conformance with AHO Development Standards, City Development Guidelines for the proposal area, Design Guidelines for AHO, and Citywide Urban Design Objectives.
Memo Contents:	CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report
Other Staff Reports:	None

Zoning & Development Staff Report

Site & Zoning Context

Site Context

The site consists of a single parcel at the corner of Broadway and Windsor Street in The Port neighborhood. This site is within half a mile of both Kendall and Central Square MBTA Stations, as well as several bus stops. The Port is a high-density residential neighborhood with around seven thousand residents, bounded by Hampshire Street to the north, the Boston & Albany Railroad to the east, Prospect Street to the west, and Massachusetts Avenue to the south. The major commercial center and transit center of The Port lies in Central Square with the main commercial strip along the Massachusetts Avenue edge, while smaller commercial areas exist along Main Street, Prospect Street, and Hampshire Street. Most of The Port is residential in character. There is a nearby scattering of 1-2 story retail and restaurant uses, as well as 2-3 story residential uses. Kitty corner to the site is the former [George Close Company building](#). This 6-story brick building underwent a residential conversion in 1976. It was an example of an early adaptive reuse of a large industrial building and today houses 61 affordable and subsidized apartments operated by Just A Start. It was previously a candy manufacturing factory from 1910 to 1939 and a laboratory and medical equipment manufacturing facility from 1941 to 1971. Directly across Windsor Street from the site is the 4-story brick Fletcher-Maynard Academy building. On its eastern edge, the site directly abuts the [Greene-Rose Heritage Park](#) and connector Public Open Space. The site currently contains an asphalt surface parking lot.



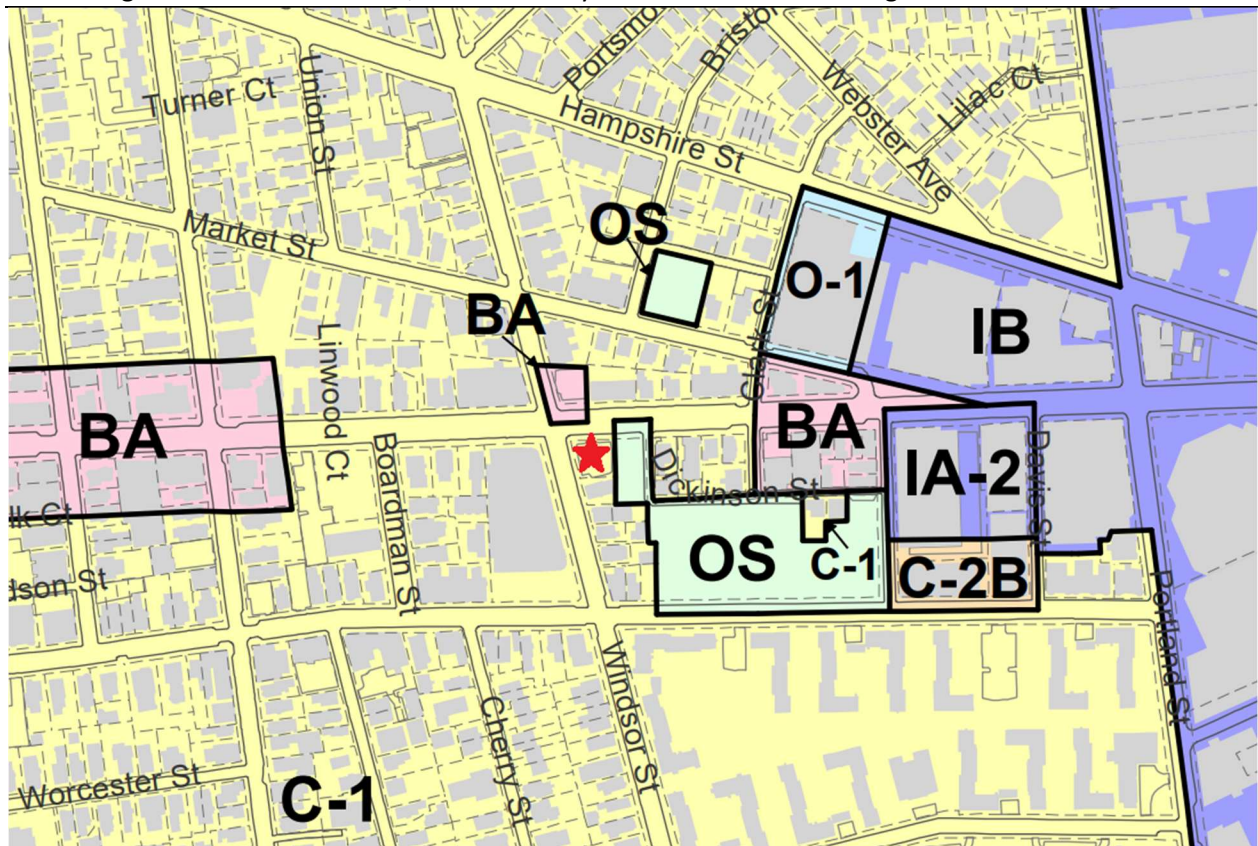
Context Map for 240 Broadway. Source: Nearmap Aerial Imagery, September 2025

Site Zoning

This site is a 4,675 square foot lot in the Residential C-1 zoning district and is located along an AHO Corridor, which further modifies the dimensional standards that would apply to an affordable development in a C-1 district. The proposed project GFA is 24,278 gross square feet. As the new construction is less than 25,000 square feet of gross floor area, several other standards and regulations do not apply to this proposal. These non-applicable regulations include, the AHO Building and Site Design Standards for New Development found in 11.207.7, the Building and Site Plan Requirements in 19.50, and the Green Building Requirements in 22.20.

Planning Board Advisory Consultation Process

The two-session non-binding Planning Board Advisory Design Consultation Procedure detailed in Section 19.40 of the Zoning Ordinance is not typically required for an AHO project of this size. However, per Zoning 11.207.8(b), “An AHO Project that exceeds the height limitations of the underlying district, inclusive of any additional height permissible under the Inclusionary Housing provisions of Section 11.203.5, but does not otherwise meet the size threshold for a Planning Board Advisory Consultation set forth in Section 19.47, shall nonetheless be subject to a Planning Board Advisory Consultation except that the developer may waive the preliminary design consultation and submit all required materials to be reviewed at a single final consultation session.” Although the underlying Residence C-1 district allows up to 6-stories, as the lot size is less than 5,000 square feet, the height for this lot is limited to no more than 4-stories. Therefore, the applicant is subject to the modified single session Planning Board Consultation Session.



Zoning Map. Source: Portion of 36" by 18" PDF Zoning Map prepared by CDD on February 9, 2026

Comments on Proposal

Project Description

Just A Start, a nonprofit (501(c)3) community development corporation, is proposing to build a new 6-story, approximately 67-foot tall building, with 16 affordable rental apartments at the intersection of Broadway and Windsor Street. The 16 proposed units include four 3-bedroom, eleven 2-bedroom, and one 1-bedroom, and will be restricted to households earning under 30% and 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI). There are no off-street automobile parking spaces. Additionally, 17 long-term bicycle parking spaces are proposed. The total gross floor area of the project is 24,675 square feet and will include 577 square feet of open space.

Consistency with AHO Development Standards

The AHO development standards applicable to this project are summarized in the table below.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Residence C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Use	Multifamily dwellings allowed.	The AHO Project includes multifamily dwellings.
Building Height & Stories Above Grade	AHO Developments on an AHO Corridor are allowed up to 12-stories, 140 feet.	The AHO Project is six-stories and 66' – 5 1/8" in height.
Yard Setbacks	AHO Dimensional Standards have no front yard and no side yard requirements.	- The AHO Project proposes two front yard setbacks of 2' – 10 3/4" on Broadway and 2' – 6 5/8" on Windsor Street. - It has a side yard of 2' adjacent to Broadway and a side yard of 5' – 6" adjacent to Windsor Street.
Open Space	Per Zoning 11.207.5.2.4(d), AHO Developments on "...lots consisting of five thousand (5,000) square feet or less in total lot area that directly abut a Public Open Space consisting of at least one thousand five hundred (1,500) square feet of area shall not have a minimum open space requirement under this Article."	- The AHO Project includes 577 square feet of open space, or 12%. - The AHO Project directly abuts the Greene-Rose Heritage Park and connector, a Public Open Space at least 1,500 square feet in area, and complies with the requirement for zero open space.
Parking and Bicycle Parking	- No minimum off-street parking for AHO Developments. - Bicycle parking is required per Article 6.100, but additional flexibility is provided for the location, quantity and type (long-term and short-term) of bicycle parking required.	The AHO Project includes a long-term bicycle parking room on the first floor with 17 spaces.
Environmental Design Standards	This AHO project is subject to the following Sustainable Development Standards: - Section 22.80: Flood Resilience - Section 22.90: Green Factor	Documentation demonstrating compliance with all relevant Sustainable Development Standards has been submitted to and certified by CDD and DPW staff.

Prior to submission of an application to the Planning Board for a Final Design Consultation, the project team met with City staff to review draft materials. Revisions were made to ensure substantial completeness of the final application materials. Staff note that the building height in feet is shown as 68'

- 11” on the building information table found on page 7 of Volume 1. Elsewhere in the Volume 1 narrative and in Volume 2 building section plan sheets, the height is shown as 66’ – 5 1/8”. Similar minor discrepancies exist for the proposed yard setbacks. All shown heights and yard setbacks comply with the applicable Zoning. The building information chart should be corrected prior to Building Permit. No other outstanding comments on zoning conformance remain.

CDD staff have confirmed the project has provided sufficient documentation to show compliance with Flood Resilience and Green Factor standards at this stage of review. See Urban Design staff memo for additional comments on alignment with the Citywide Urban Design Objectives.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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

Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change as anticipated in the <i>Resilient Cambridge</i> plan.	• Up-to-date projections of climate change impacts over the project's anticipated lifespan are incorporated • Flood Resilience Standard in Section 22.80 and the Green Factor Standard in Section 22.90 are met or exceeded • Use of strategies that have environmental co-benefits • Integrative approach to climate change resilience that accounts for the existing context and promotes the other design objectives of the area and the City
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Urban Design Staff Report

Urban Design Comments

The project's overall siting and massing strategy is a good response to the site and context. By transforming a surface parking lot into a corner anchoring building, the proposal makes a substantial positive contribution to the neighborhood fabric and public realm.

Consistency with Multifamily Design Guidelines

The design as proposed generally adheres to the applicable principles outlined in the Multifamily Design Guidelines:

- The building is appropriately sited to maintain the street wall on both streets and anchor the corner.
- Its vertical massing with repetitive facades articulates the public realm with an appropriately scaled urban presence.
- The building has a distinct base, middle, and top.
- Several streetscape improvements are incorporated into the design, which enhance walkability and the pedestrian environment.

Site Design

The project proposes several meaningful streetscape improvements, including removing the existing curb cut on Broadway, installing a new sidewalk with a brick edge treatment in its place, and setting the building back from both sidewalks. These interventions collectively enhance pedestrian circulation, strengthen the public realm, and contribute to a more coherent streetscape character. Within the setback area, new paving and planters are proposed to enhance the pedestrian realm, while additional space also provides a buffer for the existing street trees.

Recommendations

- The design team is encouraged to explore the potential to plant an additional street tree near the corner on Broadway, where an existing tree pit appears available, to further strengthen the streetscape and canopy continuity.
- The new paving at the street corner within the property lines could be chamfered to reflect the massing strategy of the building, reinforcing a cohesive design language between the architecture and the ground plane. Additionally, the placement of planters along the building edge should avoid locations directly opposite existing street trees to ensure that the sidewalk remains as open and unobstructed as possible.

Building Design

While the project successfully establishes a strong, anchoring presence at the corner and strives to respond to context, additional refinement of the building's façade articulation would help

strengthen its relationship with the public realm. Further study should consider how the building's façade expression and architectural detailing respond to the surrounding neighborhood.

Recommendations

- The overall façade composition benefits from a clear and orderly rhythm, and the introduction of varied window treatments, including window surrounds and accent panels, adds some definition and depth. However, the window-to-wall ratio is quite low at around 12% for each facade, which contributes to a heavy and uninviting appearance across all elevations.
 - Increasing window dimensions, both height and width, would improve the building's proportions and improve the visual rhythm. Incorporating additional secondary façade elements, such as articulated bays, and detailing such as mullions, expressed sills, headers, and enhanced trim, would enrich the façade's texture, helping to elevate the project's overall presence on the street and respond to the character of nearby buildings.
- The middle sections of both street facades are divided by thin, vertical trim elements intended to reference the character of nearby residential buildings. These elements, however, appear out of scale for a building of this size and do not fully align with the project's emerging architecture.
 - As an alternative, the introduction of projecting bays could provide additional interior benefits while meaningfully modulating the façades and contributing to a more robust approach to vertical articulation.
- The top floor has been set back slightly, enabling a clearer and more legible transition in materials between the fifth and sixth floors. Despite this, it continues to read as disproportionately tall, and the window openings appear undersized relative to the wall height, resulting in an unbalanced façade composition.
 - Consider strengthening the cornice at both the rooftop and the fifth floor and potentially raising the fifth floor cornice line to give it greater presence, similar to the proportions evident on the George Close Building. Alternatively, the upper level could benefit from more deliberate articulation or differentiation from the floors below, such as through a true mansard roof, or by introducing more varied massing or step-backs that visually reduce the perceived height.

Ground Floor / Pedestrian Zone

The ground floor has continued to improve since the project was first presented to staff. Window dimensions have increased, and the pergola and brick façade introduce additional texture while responding to the surrounding context. However, several refinements are recommended to strengthen the building's relationship with the public realm, create greater overall consistency with relevant urban design guidelines, and support a more pedestrian-friendly ground floor experience.

Recommendations

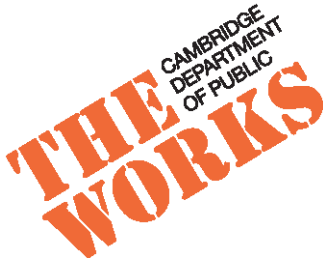
- Much of the ground floor frontage along both streets is occupied by utility and service functions, with only the small corner lobby qualifying as active. Staff recommends exploring strategies to expand the amount of frontage devoted to actively inhabited spaces, with particular attention to the Broadway elevation. Expanding active uses along the street edge would create a more welcoming public realm. Additionally, rearranging some of the ground floor uses, such as the trash room and bike room, may also present an opportunity to create a more spacious and functionally efficient entry experience for residents.
- Ground floor windows follow the façade rhythm established on upper floors, which reinforces a clear vertical alignment. However, the windows are very small, which negatively affects the building's relationship with the street. Increasing the amount of transparent ground floor glazing would significantly enhance visibility, natural light, and the overall sense of openness along the sidewalk. Areas to focus on include the entry/lobby, bike room, and other publicly visible ground floor spaces.
- The height of the ground floor appears quite squat in relation to the proportions of the overall massing. The application of materials on the façade further accentuates this effect, causing the ground floor to read even lower than it actually is. Increasing this perceived height would produce a more generous and civic-scaled ground floor presence, better aligned with the scale of the building and its surrounding context.
- The pergola concept has potential, but could be further developed to function more effectively as weather protection or as a more substantial architectural element. Along Broadway, the pergola could be raised to align with the height of the cornice above the transformer to create a clearer and more cohesive datum line. The proposed thin vertical supports appear visually delicate; replacing them with more substantial pilasters would provide better structural clarity and reinforce the architectural vocabulary of the ground floor.
- The ground floor façade would benefit from richer brick detailing, including recessed panels, pilasters, patterned coursing, and refined elements such as articulated sills and headers. These details can significantly enhance perceived façade depth and texture at the ground floor, where pedestrians experience the building most directly.
- The transformer door offers an opportunity to integrate a creative or artistic design feature, allowing what is typically a technical element to contribute positively to the streetscape. The application notes this as a possibility, and staff would continue to encourage exploration of this opportunity with the City's Arts and Cultural Planning Department.

Sustainable Design

The project is being designed to meet Passive House Standards, although it is not pursuing formal certification. The project will comply with the City's stretch energy code and will seek green building certification through Enterprise Green Communities (EGC).

Consistency with Citywide Urban Design Objectives

There are several areas noted above where improvements to the building design and ground floor experience would enhance the project's relationship with the surrounding neighborhood and create greater consistency with Citywide Urban Design objectives.



City of Cambridge Department of Public Works

John F. Nardone, Acting Commissioner

147 Hampshire Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
theworks@cambridgema.gov

Voice: 617 349 4800

TDD: 617 499 9924

March 5, 2026

TO: Planning Board

FROM: James Wilcox, PE
City Engineer

RE: 240 Broadway AHO Consultation

We are in receipt of the AHO Submission Documents for the project at 240 Broadway, dated February, 10, 2026.

The DPW supports the project and development of affordable housing in the City. With the understanding that the project will be subject to a thorough and complete engineering review at the time of the Building Permit Application, we anticipate continuing to work with the team. Comments on the documentation provided, related to our purview, are summarized below.

Just A Start has engaged with DPW and is working toward understanding and addressing items under our purview that we have noted will need to be addressed as the project advances. Specific to this location we are interested in more detailed understanding of how the project will address the items related to **Urban Canopy** and **Stormwater Management** as further outlined below.

Urban Canopy:

AHO Projects are not under the jurisdiction of the City's Tree Protection Ordinance. The City and specifically the Urban Forestry Division does, however, always advocate for the protection and maintenance of existing, mature, healthy trees as they are vital in maintaining the tree canopy.

The project identifies and notes that trees adjacent to the site, on both the Street frontage sides and the adjacent City Park, have canopies that extend well into the parcel. Exhibit on page 7 of Volume II of the submitted documents clearly illustrates the approximate span of the canopies into the parcel.

Trees located in the Public Right of Way are regulated under Massachusetts State Law Chapter 87, as Public Shade Trees. Impacts to the trees adjacent to the site under this jurisdiction shall be reviewed and coordinated with the Arborist under the provisions of that Law.

The Documentation and conversations with Just A Start both demonstrate that the team is aware of the project's potential impact on the canopy and root systems of these trees and is working with the City Arborist and a private Arborist to better understand these impacts.

We respectfully request that Just A Start and their Arborist continue to advance their understanding of any potential impacts to the street trees, canopy and root systems, and engage with the City Arborist.

Stormwater Management:

At time of Building Permit, the development will undergo Site Plan Review in our division. This will include detailed reviews of the proposed stormwater management system, plans for erosion and sedimentation control during construction and the plans for long term operation and maintenance of the system. The submitted narrative includes a mention of Stormwater management but does not provide specifics as to how the DPW Standards will be met on-site.

We respectfully request that Just A Start and their civil consultants provide additional information on how the project intends to meet the City Stormwater Standards on the site.

Sewer Flow and Mitigation:

The Narrative does not include any anticipated design sewer flows for the development but based on the proposed bedroom count the anticipated flow should not exceed the 15,000 gpd net increase in sewer flow that would trigger Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) mitigation.

Flood Resiliency:

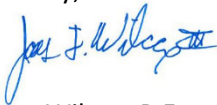
The DPW has reviewed and approved the projects Flood Resilience Compliance Confirmation Application, and our approval was included in the submitted documentation. The project meets the Flood Resiliency Standards as designed. The DPW will review the details as the project is advanced to confirm that the built design will continue to meet the Flood Resiliency Standards.

Public Right of Way:

DPW will review and evaluate all proposed work and impacts in the public right of way, as the design is developed. Connections to both public and private utilities as well as all proposed disruption in the public right of way shall be reviewed as part of the Building Permit and construction permit processes. As noted in the Application, the development will support, as needed, improvements to the public sidewalk, as needed, to obtain an accessible and comfortable sidewalk width for the project frontage.

We look forward to working with Just A Start and their team on this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns related to the comments or information provided above.

Sincerely,



James Wilcox, P.E.
City Engineer



**MEMORANDUM**

To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
From: Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager of Housing Development
Alexis Turgeon, Housing Development Planner
Date: April 30, 2026
Re: Corcoran Park – Phase I – Planning Board AHO Design Consultation Report

Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) has been working with staff from the Housing Department and the Community Development Department on the first phase of the Corcoran Park redevelopment at 8-12 May Street and 53 Lawn Street. The project includes the replacement of the 29 existing distressed public housing units with 67 new energy-efficient, climate resilient apartments in two new buildings that surround open space designed for active and passive recreation. The project recently completed the advisory design review process with the Planning Board under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). The two required Planning Board advisory design consultations were held on December 16, 2025 and March 10, 2026.

The proposed design was favorably received by the Planning Board. The report commended the CHA on its thorough community engagement process and responsiveness to staff and Planning Board member feedback, including the use of updated color palettes, revised roof lines, simplified courtyard design, screening of parking, and the creation of a welcoming entry plaza which improves the residential character of the project. The Planning Board offered suggestions for the development team to continue to explore, including increased refinement of the rooflines of Building B to further enhance its residential character and the addition of large growth trees along the Building A entry plaza. The Board also suggested evaluating the need for play areas and parking, including alternatives to surface parking, when the CHA begins designing the redevelopment's second phase.

The AHO requires that the results of the design review process be shared with the Affordable Housing Trust. The Planning Board report is attached and includes:

- Planning Board Final Report of AHO Design Consultation (3/31/2026), including:
 - CDD Staff Memo (3/4/2026);
- Planning Board Initial Report of AHO Design Consultation (1/5/2026), including:
 - CDD Staff Memo (12/9/2025); and,
 - DPW Staff Memo (12/9/2025).

Project Overview:

The first phase of the Corcoran Park redevelopment involves the new construction of a four-story building with a walkout basement containing 46 units (Building A) and a three-story building containing 21 units (Building B) on the northern portion of the Corcoran Park site under the provisions of the AHO. The Phase I site currently contains 29 distressed public housing units in need of replacement due to long-standing flooding and subsidence issues. Approximately seventy-five percent of the 67 newly created affordable rental units will be family-sized. All units will be affordable to households earning at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI), with some units being deeply affordable to those making at or below 30% AMI. This project is the beginning of a larger redevelopment which, in total, will include the replacement of all 153 public housing units at Corcoran Park with approximately 300 new energy-efficient, climate resilient apartments.

More information on the proposed development, including the presentation and materials submitted to the Planning Board, can be found on the Housing Department's Corcoran Park project page at:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Housing/corcoranpark>.

The Trust approved a commitment of \$14,405,000 to support the development of this project in November 2025. The development team has submitted an application for state funding and, if awarded, anticipates beginning construction by the end of 2026.

Housing Department Recommendation:

All approvals of Trust funding for AHO projects are conditioned on the Trust's review and consideration of the final Planning Board report. We recommend the Trust vote to accept this report to satisfy that condition of the Trust's funding commitment to this development.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: March 31, 2026

Subject: Final Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory
Design Consultation Procedure Compliance Certification

Project Location: 8-12 May Street & 53 Lawn Street

Date of Planning Board Meeting: March 10, 2026

Project Overview

The Planning Board (the “Board”) met on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, to review and comment on the revised design for 8-12 May Street, a multifamily development by the Cambridge Housing Authority (the “Developer”) under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in Section 11.207 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board reviewed a plan set submitted by the Developer dated February 10, 2026, as well as staff memos from the Community Development Department (CDD), which are attached. The Board held its first advisory consultation on December 16, 2025, and issued an initial report dated [January 5, 2025](#).

Board Comments

The Board was pleased with the improvements made to both buildings and the overall site design in response to staff and Planning Board comments and commended the developer for a thorough community engagement process. For Building A, Board members noted the updated color palette and appreciated the more welcoming entry plaza as a result of a parking reduction. For Building B, members highlighted that the revised facade, particularly the improved roofline, porches, windows, and vibrant colors conferred a more residential character. Regarding parking, while underground parking would have been preferred, the Board acknowledged the parking needs of the area and future residents, as well as the financial challenges associated with below-grade parking, and appreciated the screening of surface parking with vegetation, art, and fencing. With respect to open space, members were supportive of the simplified courtyard design with a larger lawn area, which improves usability, facilitates maintenance, and allows for larger root zones.

As the project progresses, the Board offers the following suggestions:

- As planning begins for Phase 2, the Board encourages the Developer to continue evaluating overall parking needs alongside other site design considerations, including exploring alternatives to surface parking where feasible.

- Consider adding large growth trees along Building A entry plaza to provide shade and enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Further refine the rooflines of Building B, as they remain too symmetrical and institutional in character.
- Ensure the design of play areas for Phase 2 accounts for the needs of Phase 1 to offset the loss of a play element within the courtyard.

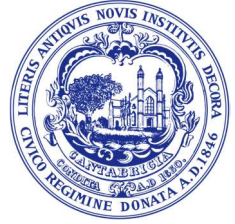
AHO Compliance Summary

This report certifies that the developer has completed the Advisory Design Consultation Process in order to comply with the procedure for development under the Affordable Housing overlay set forth in Section 11.207.8 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.

Submitted for the Planning Board,

Swaathi Joseph

Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Tom Sieniewicz, Chair.



To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: March 4, 2026

Re: Affordable Housing Overlay Design Consultation **AHO-10, 8-12 May Street & 53 Lawn Street**

Overview

Submission Type:	Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Review
Applicant:	Corcoran Park Phase 1 LLC
Zoning District(s):	Residence C-1
Proposal Summary:	Construction of 2 buildings to create 67 new rental units with 33 off-street parking spaces under the AHO.
Planning Board Action:	Review and comment on conformance with AHO Development Standards, City Development Guidelines for the proposal area, Design Guidelines for Multifamily Housing, and Citywide Urban Design Objectives.
Memo Contents:	CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report
Other Staff Reports:	None

Zoning & Development Staff Report

Overview

The Developer, Cambridge Housing Authority (or “CHA”) is proposing to demolish the existing townhouses to construct two new buildings with a total of 67 units and approximately 82,407 square feet of Gross Floor Area. Building A is 4 stories and 56 feet tall with a walkout basement, consisting of 46 affordable rental units and approximately 53,051 square feet of Gross Floor Area. Building B is 3 stories and 40 feet tall, consisting of 21 affordable rental units and approximately 29,356 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 578 to 1,247 square feet at 30% and 60% AMI. The buildings are sited around a courtyard — a communal open space designed for passive recreation. Bicycle parking will be provided with 42 long-term and 12 short-term spaces, supplemented by a 19-dock Bluebike station along Lawn Street to offset the remaining required spaces. Surface off-street parking is also provided for 33 vehicles.

Planning Board Comments from Initial Consultation Meeting

Board members were very supportive of several aspects of the proposal, including the thoughtful selection of colors and materials for Building A, the use of deep angled recesses to break down long facades, and the concept of the courtyard as an intergenerational space. Practical features such as in-unit laundry and the overall grading approach were also commended.

As the design advances, Board members encouraged the developer to further study the parking strategy massing, siting and for Building A to strengthen May Street frontage, reduce the visual impact of surface parking, and make the pedestrian entrance more prominent. For Building B, members suggested refining the facades to reinforce the residential character and further study the use of color and facade elements.

For site design, members recommended enlarging and improving usability of the courtyard, including consolidating pathways to create larger contiguous lawn areas, providing additional detail on playground design, and incorporating plantings to help stabilize slopes. The Board also emphasized prioritizing the preservation of mature trees whenever possible.

Staff Comments on Revised Submission

The City has received a revised application dated February 10, 2026, including updated forms and narrative volume, revised graphics, and a revised appendix volume with additional Green Factor and Green Building documentation.

CDD Staff has confirmed that the project has provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate compliance with Green Building and Green Factor standards at this stage of review. The Project intends to meet Green Building requirements by targeting Passive House certification. The minimum required Green Factor score is achieved through a combination of understory and canopy trees and low and high planting areas.

In the initial Zoning Memo on this proposal, CDD provided a summary of compliance with AHO standards. The revised submission presents several modifications, including a reduction in the number of off-street parking spaces from 36 to 33 and an increase in the number of short-term bicycle parking spaces from 8 to 12. Additionally, Building A fenestration facing May Street decreased from 23% to 20% and Building B fenestration facing May Street increased from 20% to 24%. Overall, the changes do not appear to impact zoning compliance.

Consistency with AHO Development Standards

The AHO development standards applicable to this project are summarized in the table below.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Use	Multifamily dwellings allowed.	The proposal includes two buildings of multifamily dwellings.
Building Height & Stories Above Grade	AHO Developments are allowed up to 9 stories and 100 feet above grade.	- Building A proposes 4 stories and 56 feet in height. - Building B proposes 3 stories and 40 feet in height.
Yard Setbacks	AHO Dimensional Standards have no Front and Side Yard requirements.	The parcel is a corner lot, so it contains two front yards and two side yards.
Open Space	An AHO project in the C-1 district has a total open space requirement of 30%, of which 50% (15% of the lot area) shall meet the requirements of Private Open Space and 50% shall meet the definition of Permeable Open Space.	The project proposes a total open space of 45% and meets the requirements for both Private and Permeable Open Space.
Parking and Bicycle Parking	- No minimum off-street parking is required for AHO Developments. - Bicycle parking is required per Article 6.100, but additional flexibility is provided for the location, quantity and type (long-term and short-term) of bicycle parking required.	- The project provides 33 on-site parking spaces. - The project requires a minimum of 70 long-term bicycle parking spaces and provides 42 spaces. An on-site 19-dock Bluebike station is provided to satisfy the remaining requirement. - The project requires a minimum of 7 short-term bicycle parking spaces and provides 12 spaces.
Site Design and Arrangement	- Front yards may be landscaped or hardscaped but cannot be used for off-street parking. - Pedestrian entrances shall be visible from the street.	The proposed project meets all the Site Design and Arrangement requirements.
Building Facades	Building facades facing public streets shall have a minimum percentage of 20% glazing.	The proposed project meets all the Building Facades requirements.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
	- Building facades must include projecting and/or recessed elements of at least two feet on an average interval of 40 linear feet along a Public Street, and 80 feet elsewhere. Such projecting or recessed elements do not apply to the lowest or highest Story Above Grade. - Facades of ground stories shall have expanses of no more than 25' with no windows or pedestrian entryways.	Building A proposes 20% glazing on the façade facing May Street. Building B proposes 20% glazing facing Lawn St and 24% facing May Street.
Ground Stories and Below Grade	Habitable spaces below grade must meet flood resilience standards.	DPW has reviewed the submitted documentation, and the project appears to comply with the City's Flood Resilience Standards per the FloodViewer 2025. Please see DPW memo dated 12/9/25 for more information.
Mechanical Equipment, Refuse Storage and Loading Areas	- Mechanical equipment shall be generally screened from view. - Rooftop mechanical equipment must be set back from the roof line equal to its height. - Screening for at grade equipment should use materials comparable in quality to the building's principal facades.	- Building A: rooftop mechanical equipment is concealed behind a 9.5' tall screen which has been set back 11' from the primary wall plane. - Building B: at-grade mechanical equipment is screened with painted anodized aluminum louvers. - The proposed transformer on the northwest corner of the lot is enclosed and screened with a 10' tall fence and planters. - Trash rooms are enclosed within the buildings.
Environmental Design Standards	This AHO project is subject to the following Sustainable Development Standards: - Section 22.20: Green Building - Section 22.80: Flood Resilience - Section 22.90: Green Factor	- Documentation showing compliance with Green Building and Green Factor Standards has been submitted and certified by CDD staff. - DPW has reviewed the submitted documentation, and the project appears to comply with the City's Flood Resilience Standards. Please see DPW memo dated 12/9/25 for more information.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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
Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change as anticipated in the <i>Resilient Cambridge</i> plan.	• Up-to-date projections of climate change impacts over the project's anticipated lifespan are incorporated • Flood Resilience Standard in Section 22.80 and the Green Factor Standard in Section 22.90 are met or exceeded • Use of strategies that have environmental co-benefits • Integrative approach to climate change resilience that accounts for the existing context and promotes the other design objectives of the area and the City

Urban Design Staff Report

Overview

The proposed project at Corcoran Park is intended as the first phase of a larger two-phase project. It will be sited on “Lot 1”, the highest portion of the existing Corcoran Park affordable housing complex, leaving the lower, more flood-prone portion of the site (“Lot 2”) for the second phase. The project proposes to replace four existing two-story buildings with two larger ones: a four-story bar-shaped building – Building A, approximately in the middle of the site, and a three-story U-shaped building – Building B in the southern portion of the site. The buildings will border May Street to the east and Lawn Street to the south, and together will enclose a shared courtyard. Building A is located on the steepest portion of the site. Its basement level is at the level of the shared courtyard, and its first floor is at the level of the parking lot that is proposed on its north side. Together the two buildings will increase the number of units on Lot 1 from the existing 29 to 67.

The Planning Board’s comments in the project’s first review on December 16, 2025 included:

- A suggestion to screen the parking lot from view from May Street, if possible, by adding a wing to Building A parallel to May Street, through which a vehicular passage would lead to the parking lot. The applicant team has found that the cost would be prohibitive due to fire separation requirements and would result in the loss of several parking spaces.
- A question as to whether under-building vehicular parking could be provided at the basement level of Building A. The applicant team believes that this would also be cost prohibitive.
- A question as to whether a taller development, with more residential units, had been considered. The applicant team had investigated greater height, but in deference to neighborhood opinion did not pursue it.

Since the first hearing, the project team has made numerous improvements to the project in response to Planning Board and staff comments.

- The landscape design of the courtyard has been simplified. It now emphasizes an open lawn with a perimeter path, shaded by trees. The play area that was included in the earlier scheme is proposed to be provided in Phase 2.
- Planting and fences have been added to screen the parking lot from May Street.
- The transformer enclosure has been moved from the western end of the parking lot to its north side, with the intent of allowing a pedestrian/bike connection to Fairview Avenue, which is aligned just to the west of the parking lot.
- The entrance of Building A has been revised, the porch at the entrance is less abstract and more welcoming than that of the previous version, and the lobby’s windows have been enlarged.
- The plaza in front of Building A’s entrance is larger (resulting in the loss of a few parking spaces) and is provided with benches.
- Horizontal mullions have been added to the windows, giving the building a more residential look.

- The color palette of both buildings has been brightened, including the use of different colors for the different segments of Building B in place of the previous version's grey.
- The facades of Building B have been improved, treating the building as a series of individual dwellings, instead of the more horizontally continuous original scheme.
- Building B's entry porches are larger and more welcoming, with sloped roofs that echo the building's roofscape and also the porches in the neighborhood context.

Urban Design Comments on Design Revisions

Site Plan

Connection to Fairview Avenue

- There is likely a pedestrian and bicyclist desire line between the site and Fairview Avenue via the adjacent parking lot. DOT recommends that the applicant work with the City to confirm site control and evaluate the feasibility of creating a walking- and biking-only connection in this location. This may require reorienting or relocating the transformer. The site plan should label this potential connection ("by others") to ensure the concept is memorialized for future phases. Avoid locating substantial plantings where they would block a potential future connection between Fairview Avenue and the parking lot.

May Street / Vineyard Street Intersection

- DOT believes the applicant should upgrade the existing unmarked crossings at May St./Vineyard St. to marked, accessible crosswalks on the north and/or south legs of the intersection. While the catch basin and hydrant present some design constraints, they appear addressable given the scale of the project. Marked crosswalks at this edge of the project site will provide accessible routes for residents and visitors to Vineyard St, Cushing St, and the rest of the neighborhood, including the Glacken Field/Fresh Pond area.
- The proposed widening of driveway curb cut to 20 feet may also not be feasible. The widening would encroach into the space needed for an accessible ramp. The existing driveway appears to already be non-compliant within the intersection, and DOT would not support expanding it further because it is located within—and offset inside—the intersection geometry. The proposed widening would newly obstruct the existing pedestrian right-of-way. DOT will work with the applicant on a final driveway design.

Lawn Street Mid-Block Crossing and Bluebikes Access

- The applicant proposes a mid-block crosswalk on Lawn Street at the location of the future Bluebikes station and site pathway. Unless this crossing will connect to a planned Phase 2 pedestrian path, DOT recommends removing the proposed crosswalk, as there is no clear pedestrian desire line at this location given the proximity of existing intersections.
- If the intent is to preserve the Phase 2 connection, DOT recommends deferring installation of the curb ramp and crosswalk markings to Phase 2, when the complementary walkway is constructed.

However, the Phase 1 site plan should continue to show the full future crossing and curb ramps to make the long-term intent clear but identifying it as a part of a future phase.

Parking Lot Design Considerations

- Parallel curb ramps connecting to the parking lot access aisles are likely to experience ponding during rain events, as the site slopes south toward May Street. DOT recommends reevaluating these ramp locations and grades.
- As noted above, the site plan should reference the potential future connection to Fairview Avenue and provide a transformer orientation that enables it.
- If possible, adjust the proposed grading in the western part of the parking lot so as to simplify the route from the trash room to the parking lot, and preserve the existing large Norway maple tree on its south side.
- Consider shading the parking lot with photovoltaic panel canopies if financially feasible.

Bluebikes Station

- During the Building Permit process, the applicant should provide a dimensioned Bluebikes station plan and complete the Bluebikes agreement with the DOT.
- DOT recommends that funding is provided for the proposed 19-dock station during the Building Permit process since it takes time to order and have it ready for installation prior to a Certificate of Occupancy.

Long-Term Bicycle Storage

- Ensure that the long-term bicycle storage room in Building A has direct, convenient, and step-free access from the May Street sidewalk. The current plan appears to indicate a ramp connection, but it is unclear at this scale whether the route is entirely step-free.

Building A's Entry Plaza

- Consider reducing the amount of paving in Building A's entry plaza, and increasing the amount of planting and benches. The plaza's pavement could be distinguished by material or joint pattern.
- If a different arrangement of short-term bike parking could be found for the entry plaza, additional benches could be provided along the planting edges at the east and west sides of the plaza.
- The "Art Fence" adjoining the entrance plaza (partially screening the parking lot from May Street) could be made more opaque, and consideration could be given to coordinating its design with that of the fence along May Street on the north side of the parking lot's curb cut.

Benches

- Additional benches could be located in the Courtyard, at Building A's south-side Community Room terrace, and facing the sidewalk at the perimeter of the site.

Western Side Yard

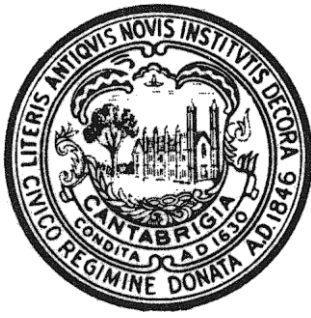
- A seating area could be developed in the western side yard, as a terminus of the east/west path through the courtyard, making use of this area's quieter, more "backyard" character.

Lawn and May Street frontages and sidewalks

- The project provides low planting in the front yards facing May and Lawn Streets. Consider developing it to more clearly delineate the perimeter of the site.
- Consider using plantings and adjustments to topography to further integrate the accessibility ramp and short-term bicycle parking into the site plan.
- Staff appreciates the possibility of having a mid-block crosswalk on Lawn Street that would link the path on the west side of Phase 1 with a corresponding path in Phase 2, but recommends that it be clearly indicated as merely a possible future feature. Staff would like the associated curb ramp to be moved east to align with the path along the west side of Building B.

Building Design

- Building B's entrance porches have been given a more welcoming design, and their gable shaped roofs create an appealing dialog with the building's roofscape. Consideration could be given to providing the porches with thicker, more substantial columns.
- Clarify where accessible units in Building A and Building B are located relative to parking for residents and support staff.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: January 5, 2026

Subject: Initial Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Consultation

Project Location: 8-12 May Street & 53 Lawn Street

Date of Planning Board Meeting: December 16, 2025

Overview

The Planning Board (the “Board”) met on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, to review and comment on the design for 8-12 May Street, a multifamily development by the Cambridge Housing Authority (the “Developer”) under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in Section 11.207 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board reviewed a plan set submitted by the Developer dated November 14, 2025, as well as staff memos from the Community Development Department (CDD) and Department of Public Works (DPW), which are attached.

Proposal Description

The Developer is proposing to demolish the existing structures to construct two new residential buildings consisting of 67 affordable rental units with approximately 82,407 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 578 to 1,247 square feet at 30% and 60% AMI. The project also includes resident amenities such as a communal courtyard with plantings, seating, play, grilling and picnic areas. Bicycle parking will be provided with 42 long-term and 8 short-term spaces, supplemented by a 19-stall Bluebikes station.

Board Comments

Board members commended several aspects about the proposal, praising the colors and materials selected for Building A as fun and thoughtful, and noting that Building B successfully conveys a more residential character. Members highlighted the effective use of deep recesses and angled elements that relate well to the surrounding neighborhood on both buildings as a strategy of breaking down the long building façades. They also appreciated the concept of the courtyard as an intergenerational space. The animation walk-through of the virtual model was appreciated as were practical features such as in-unit laundry and the well-executed grading.

A few Board members expressed that the overall design was not fully taking advantage of the site's potential, particularly in terms of siting and massing. They noted that the project could explore making building A higher to create opportunities for additional units and open space, relocate parking, potentially by tucking it under the building, strengthen the street presence by providing more façade along May Street, and preserve more trees.

As the proposal continues to develop, Board members urged the developer to focus on the following program and design elements:

Site Design

Courtyard and Open Space Design

- Members expressed concern that the courtyard is too small relative to the number of proposed families and encouraged exploring ways to enlarge and improve its usability.
- Several members noted that the courtyard is overly fragmented by pathways. Consider removing or consolidating some walkways to doors, particularly on the west side and central areas of the site to create larger lawn areas and opportunity to support informal activities and add plantings that help stabilize slopes.
- Provide more detail on the courtyard and playground design, thinking about how to make it a more engaging, active and livelier space for families.

Parking and Site Planning

- Members shared concerns about surface parking and encouraged further study of parking needs and layout to reduce its impact on the street experience. It was suggested exploring opportunities such as extending Building A in an L shape to provide more façade along May Street or putting parking below the building if feasible, or other ways to screen parking.
- Work with the City to explore the feasibility of creating a parking access to the site from Fairview Avenue.

Pedestrian access and circulation

- Make the pedestrian entrance to Building A more prominent and better connected to May Street to improve visibility and visitors' access.
- Consider widening the May Street sidewalk to enhance pedestrian comfort.
- Work with the City to explore the possibility of reducing the curb radius at the May Street/Lawn Street intersection to create a more pedestrian-friendly intersection.

Tree Preservation

- Prioritize the preservation of mature healthy trees throughout the site and explore if additional trees could be preserved.

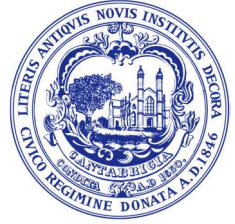
Building Design

- As discussed above, study the possibility of reshaping Building A into more of an L configuration, placing parking under the building, or another approach that would strengthen the May Street frontage and reduce the parking impact on the street experience.
- Some board members felt Building A looked office-like and encouraged improving its façade to read more as residential.
- Think further about how to engage the façades, especially the Lawn Street facades, by incorporating elements that create a neighborhood-scaled presence, similar to the porch rhythm found nearby.
- Consider applying the same vibrant and playful color palette used on Building A to Building B. One board member viewed the current tan tone as overly contrasting.
- Reconsider the shared balconies facing the courtyard on Building B.

Submitted for the Planning Board,

Swaathi Joseph

Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Mary Flynn, Chair.



To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: December 9, 2025

Re: Affordable Housing Overlay Design Consultation **AHO-10, 8-12 May Street & 53 Lawn Street**

Overview

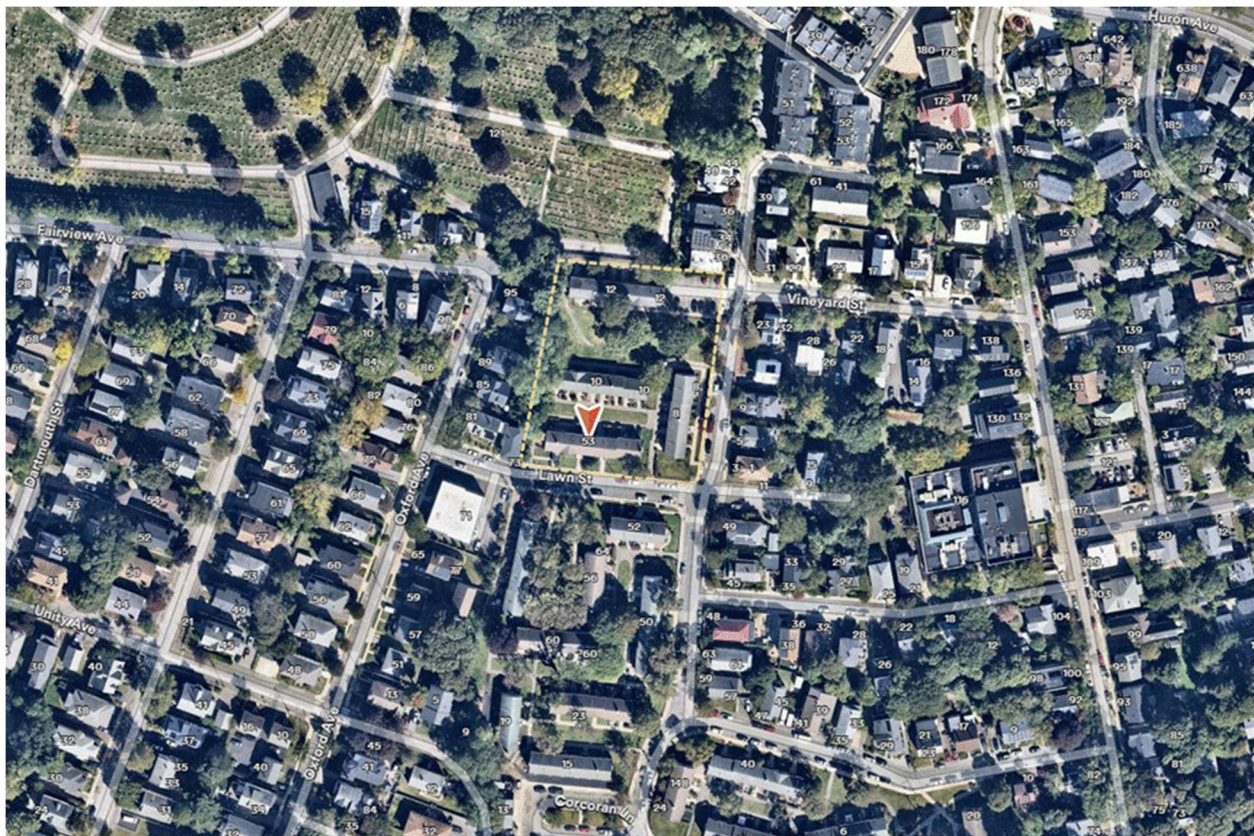
Submission Type:	Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Review
Applicant:	Corcoran Park Phase 1 LLC
Zoning District(s):	Residence C-1
Proposal Summary:	Construction of 2 buildings to create 67 new rental units with 36 off-street parking spaces under the AHO.
Planning Board Action:	Review and comment on conformance with AHO Development Standards, City Development Guidelines for the proposal area, Design Guidelines for Multifamily Housing, and Citywide Urban Design Objectives.
Memo Contents:	CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report
Other Staff Reports:	Department of Public Works (DPW), in separate document.

Zoning & Development Staff Report

Site & Zoning Context

Site Context

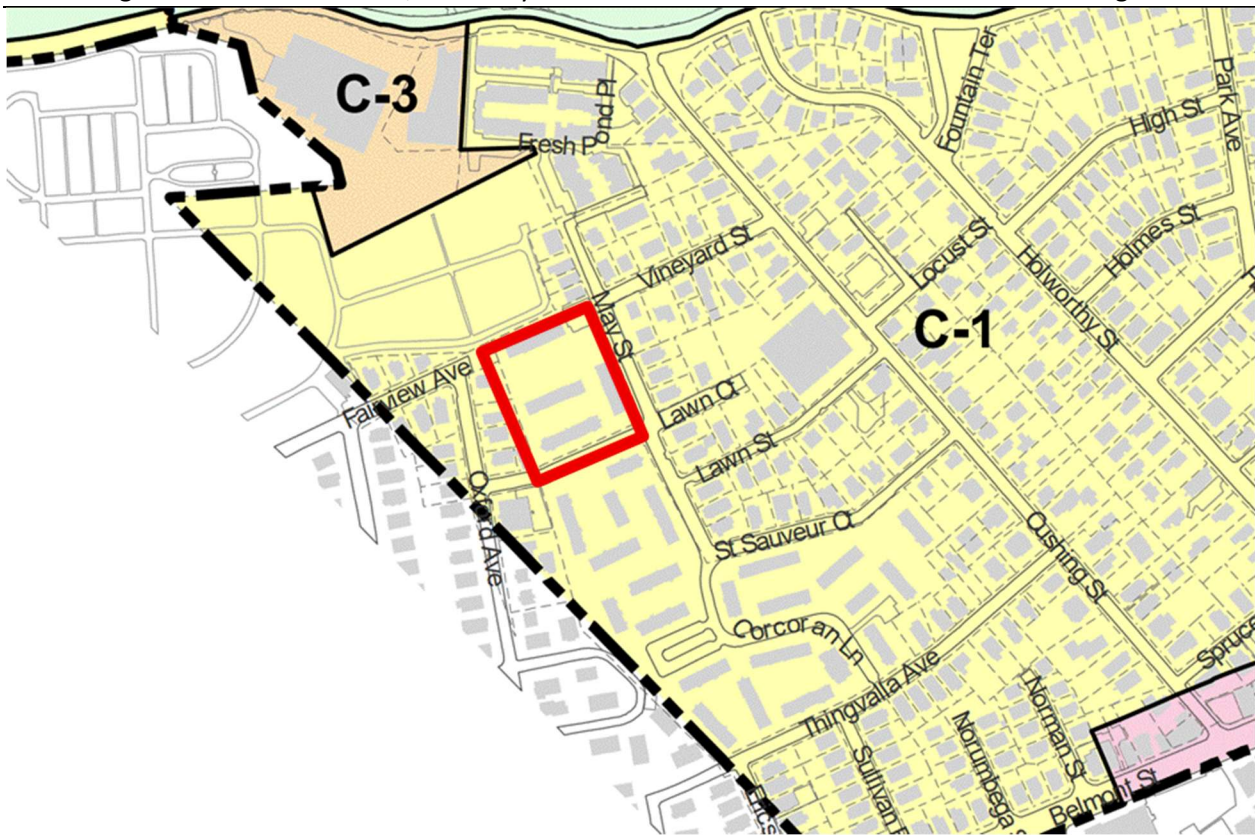
The site consists of a single parcel at the corner of May and Lawn Streets in the Strawberry Hill neighborhood, a few blocks south of Fresh Pond and just a few blocks north of the Watertown border and west of the Belmont border. Directly abutting the site to the north is the Belmont Cemetery. The surrounding neighborhood is comprised of mostly two to three-story wood-framed and brick residential buildings. The site currently contains four two-story row houses with 29 units and a surface parking lot for 14 vehicles.



Context Map for Corcoran Park Lot 1. Source: Nearmap Aerial Imagery, September 2025

Site Zoning

This site is located in the Residence C-1 zoning district and is being permitted under the Affordable Housing Overlay. The C-1 district has a 30% minimum Open Space requirement for residential uses, and under the AHO, no minimum front or side yard setback is required. Additionally, up to 9 stories and 100 feet of height is allowed. Because this AHO development exceeds 50,000 square feet, it is subject to the two-session Planning Board Advisory Consultation process.



Zoning Map. Source: Zoning Districts, City of Cambridge, February 2025

Comments on Proposal

Project Description

The applicant, Cambridge Housing Authority (or “CHA”) is proposing to demolish the existing townhouse buildings to construct two new buildings with a total of 67 units and approximately 82,407 square feet of Gross Floor Area. Building A is 4 stories and 56 feet tall with a basement, consisting of 46 affordable rental units and approximately 53,051 square feet of Gross Floor Area. Building B is 3 stories and 40 feet tall, consisting of 21 affordable rental units and approximately 29,356 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 578 to 1,247 square feet at 30% and 60% AMI. The project is designed around a courtyard — a communal open space with plantings, seating, play, grilling and picnic areas. Bicycle parking will be provided with 42 long-term and 8 short-term spaces, supplemented by a 19-stall Bluebike station along Lawn Street to offset the remaining required spaces.

Consistency with AHO Development Standards

The AHO development standards applicable to this project are summarized in the table below.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Use	Multifamily dwellings allowed	The proposal includes two buildings of multifamily dwellings.
Building Height & Stories Above Grade	AHO Developments are allowed up to 9 stories and 100 feet above grade	- Building A proposes 4 stories and 56 feet in height. - Building B proposes 3 stories and 40 feet in height.
Yard Setbacks	AHO Dimensional Standards have no Front and Side Yard requirements	The parcel is a corner lot, so it contains two front yards and two side yards.
Open Space	An AHO project in the C-1 district has a total open space requirement of 30%, of which 50% shall meet the requirements of Private Open Space and 50% shall meet the definition of Permeable Open Space	The project is proposing a total open space of 46% and meets the requirements for both Private and Permeable Open Space.
Parking and Bicycle Parking	- No minimum off-street parking for AHO Developments. - Bicycle parking is required per Article 6.100, but additional flexibility is provided for the location, quantity and type (long-term and short-term) of bicycle parking required.	- The project provides 36 on-site parking spaces. - The project requires a minimum of 70 long-term bicycle parking spaces and provides 42 spaces. An on-site 19-dock Bluebike station is provided to satisfy the remaining requirement. - The project requires a minimum of 7 short-term bicycle parking spaces and provides 7 spaces. An 8th non-compliant space is provided.
Site Design and Arrangement	- Front yards may be landscaped or hardscaped but cannot be used for off-street parking. - Pedestrian entrances shall be visible from the street. - Buildings with front facades in excess of 250' in length shall provide forecourts to break up massing.	The proposed project meets all the Site Design and Arrangement requirements.
Building Facades	- Building facades facing public streets shall have a minimum percentage of 20% glazing. - Building facades must include projecting and/or recessed elements of at least two feet on an average interval of 40 linear feet along a Public Street, and 80 feet elsewhere. Such projecting or recessed elements do	- The proposed project meets all the Building Facades requirements. - Building A proposes 23% glazing and building B proposes 20% glazing on both façades facing the public street.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
	not apply to the lowest or highest Story Above Grade. • Facades of ground stories shall have expanses of no more than 25' with no windows or pedestrian entryways.	
Ground Stories and Below Grade	• Habitable spaces below grade must meet flood resilience standards	• This project complies with the City's Flood Resilience Standards per the FloodViewer 2025
Mechanical Equipment, Refuse Storage and Loading Areas	• Mechanical equipment shall be generally screened from view. • Rooftop mechanical equipment must be set back from the roof line equal to its height. • Screening for at grade equipment should use materials comparable in quality to the building's principal facades.	• Building A: rooftop mechanical equipment is concealed behind a 9.5' tall screen which has been set back 11' from the primary wall plane. • Building B: at-grade mechanical equipment is shielded from view with screens. • The proposed transformer on the northwest corner of the lot is enclosed and screened with a 10' tall fence and planters. • Trash rooms are enclosed within the buildings. • There is no indication of materials to be used for mechanical equipment screening.
Environmental Design Standards	This AHO project is subject to the following Sustainable Development Standards: • Section 22.20: Green Building • Section 22.80: Flood Resilience • Section 22.90: Green Factor	• The project intends to meet Green Building Passive House and Enterprise Green Communities design certifications. A Green Building and Enterprise Green communities report will be required ahead of the final Planning Board Advisory Consultation. • This project complies with the City's Flood Resilience Standards per the FloodViewer 2025. • A draft Cool Score sheet and roof/landscape plans have been submitted. Complete documentation showing compliance with Green Factor Standards, including a landscape and architectural plan that show square footage of lawn and planting areas along with all other

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
		items contributing to the Cool Score will be required ahead of the final Planning Board Advisory Consultation.

Recommendations

The following is a summary of recommendations that may be considered for revised submission:

- Provide an indication of materials to be used for mechanical equipment screening, which should be of comparable quality to the materials used on the principal facades of the building.
- Consider shifting the short-term bicycle parking racks for Building B approximately six inches to the north to ensure at least three feet clear horizontal distance from the center point of the rack per the dimensional standards in Article 6.100. While the project currently provides the minimum requirement of seven short-term spaces, this adjustment would allow for an additional parking space.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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
Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change as anticipated in the <i>Resilient Cambridge</i> plan.	• Up-to-date projections of climate change impacts over the project's anticipated lifespan are incorporated • Flood Resilience Standard in Section 22.80 and the Green Factor Standard in Section 22.90 are met or exceeded • Use of strategies that have environmental co-benefits

	• Integrative approach to climate change resilience that accounts for the existing context and promotes the other design objectives of the area and the City
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Urban Design Staff Report

Urban Design Comments

The project's overall siting and massing strategy is a good response to the site and context. The bar shaped building (Building A) in the northern part of the site and the U shaped building (Building B) in the southern part of the site present their outward faces to May and Lawn Streets and work together to define a shared courtyard in the block interior. Much of the site's considerable slope (highest at the north and sloping down to Lawn Street at the south) is taken up by Building B, which is four stories tall on its north side and five on its south side. Building B is designed as townhouses, with separate entrances facing May and Lawn Streets. Building B's first floor is raised about 4' feet above the level of the Lawn Street sidewalk to bring it above the expected 2070 1% flood elevations. Handicapped access to its residential units is provided by a sloped switchback walkway near the intersection of May and Lawn Streets. A parking lot is proposed at the northern edge of the site. While other alternatives for its siting could have been considered, the proposed location minimizes its impact on neighbors.

Consistency with Multifamily Design Guidelines

The proposed design generally adheres to the applicable principles as outlined in the Multifamily Design Guidelines:

- Numerous new trees are proposed on the site.
- The project proposes additional curbside trees in the public sidewalks, which will improve the somewhat barren existing streetscapes of Lawn and May Streets.
- The shared courtyard will be a valuable asset for residents.
- The complex is divided into two buildings, breaking down its overall bulk in response to the scale of the neighborhood.
- Building massing responds to the heights of nearby buildings in the neighborhood.
- Trash/recycling rooms are provided inside the buildings.
- The individual entrances to Building B's row house units will help enliven the streets.
- The project provides a Bluebike station.
- Outdoor lighting will be dark sky friendly, with a relatively warm color temperature.

Site Design

The site plan has improved as the design has evolved throughout the design process. Front yard plantings and street trees will enrich the streetscape and help the project engage the public realm. The connectivity of the path system in the courtyard has been improved.

Recommendations

- Building Siting
 - To directly engage the adjoining streets by creating a more consistent streetwall and to enlarge the interior courtyard, consider reducing the front yard setbacks on May Street and

Lawn Street to depths more typical in the surrounding neighborhood, and consider more consistently aligning the May Street facades of Buildings A and B.

- Front Yard Design
 - Consider reflecting typical conditions in the neighborhood by more expressly delineating the outer edge of the site along the Lawn and May Street sidewalks, using elements such as hedges, a low curb at the inner edge of the sidewalk, low fences, etc.
- Site Amenities
 - Consider providing benches at the entrances to Buildings A and B.
 - The current design of the Play Area, consisting solely of three balance beam logs, feels limited and does not provide a compelling or engaging play experience. To better support active play and recreation, provide more varied equipment, including features for climbing and movement-based play. (See MFDG 2.2 Open Space and Landscape Design)
- Circulation:
 - To better align with the intent of the zoning ordinance that encourage street-oriented pedestrian access, consider reorienting Building A's lobby entrance toward May Street and adding a pedestrian path that directly connects to the street sidewalk, or at least adding a pedestrian path from the paved area north of the lobby directly to the May Street sidewalk. (Slightly relocate the short-term bicycle parking as needed).
 - Extend a north/south pedestrian walkway along the western side of Building A to provide a route from the parking lot to Building B's western walkways. (See MFDG 2.3 Multifamily Development on Large Sites)
 - There may likely be a pedestrian/bicyclist desire line between the parking lot and Fairview Avenue to the west of the site. Work with the city to determine the ownership and feasibility of creating a pathway connecting the site to Fairview Avenue through the parking lot area. This may require adjusting the location of the transformer.
 - Coordinate with the DOT and the DPW on the design of the curb cut into the parking lot, the design of the sidewalk as it crosses the driveway, and on the width of the curb cut and driveway.
 - If necessary, slightly widen the May and Lawn Street sidewalks so as to maintain 4' clear pedestrian width past tree planters.
 - Consider providing signage throughout the site to indicate accessible routes.
 - The southeast corner of the block has an atypically large radius curb. If possible, and in coordination with the Cambridge DOT and DPW, reduce its radius to create a more pedestrian-friendly intersection.
 - Make sure there is a good route from Building A's trash room to where the containers will be picked up.
- Trees and other plantings:
 - The planting plans should include genetically diverse species and seed sources whenever possible. Relying heavily on a single cultivar or clone limits ecological function and increases long-term risk.
 - From the species list provided, the applicant should design with the right plant in the right place. Species suitable for the site's hydrological conditions should be prioritized to assist

- with bio retention and the likely presence of soils that are typical near former lakes and low-lying areas.
- Species should be selected for future resilience, please refer to the City's Urban Forest Master Plan for guidance.
- Verify whether more of the existing trees could be retained. The trees around the western part of the north parking lot and the southernmost existing tree near Lawn Street might be possibilities.
- The locations and species of trees in poor condition and the species of trees proposed for removal should be clarified.
- Consider providing an additional tree near the southwestern part of the parking lot.
- If possible, provide additional screening for the parking lot from May Street and the neighboring house to the north (while maintaining sight lines).
- Bicycle parking
 - The project should locate short-term and long-term bike parking to support the site's users in the most convenient way.
 - Consider accommodating some of the provided long-term bicycle parking spaces within building B to adequately support residents in a more convenient way.
 - Consider distributing short-term bicycle parking more evenly throughout the site or adding more racks to improve accessibility given the length of the buildings and the number of pedestrian entrances.
 - The City's bicycle parking guidelines provide detailed recommendations on bicycle parking and city staff are available to assist and provide recommendations at any time, including during the building permit process.

Building Design

While the basic massing strategy of creating two buildings that work together to address the adjoining streets and frame an interior courtyard is successful, additional study could be made of both buildings' detailed massing and facade expression in relation to the public realm and to the characteristic features and typologies of the buildings in the surrounding neighborhood.

Recommendations

- Massing and Facades:
 - Consider simplifying the massing of Building A's north and south sides, for example: instead of using a saw-toothed plan configuration to achieve the 2' change in plane indicated by Zoning section 19.52.4, consider providing bay windows or other types of features mentioned in the zoning provision.
 - Consider revising Building A's south facade to respond to the east/west dimension of the courtyard framed by building B.
 - Consider more closely integrating the appearance of Building A's rooftop mechanical screening with the design of the building's facades.
 - Consider revising Building A's lobby facades to create a more welcoming sense of entry, more directly related to May Street, and to give the lobby a more residential character.

- Building B is conceived as a broad horizontal form which is broken up by large and deep vertical recesses. In response to the scale and character of the typical buildings of the neighborhood, consider revising its massing, facades, and roofline to give it a more rowhouse-like character, with, for example, a series of gables that respond to the identities of the individual units, emphasized by bay windows that extend for multiple floors.
- Consider locating Building B's heat pumps on the roof instead of at grade.
- Consider giving each of Building B's units its own porch or balcony on the courtyard, rather than sharing the ones at the courtyard's inside corners between two units.

Sustainable Design

The site plan provides ample open area for the use of residents, to address stormwater runoff, and to minimize the urban heat island effect.

Recommendations

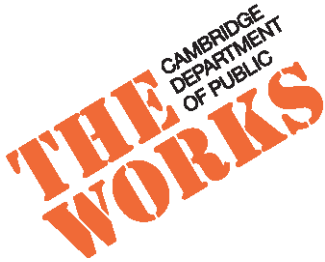
- Clarify whether the rooftop solar panels that are shown on the landscape plan, the perspectives and the elevations can be in the base building.

Consistency with City wide Urban Design Objectives

The project is generally consistent with the Citywide Urban Design Objectives, most importantly, it more than doubles the number of affordable residential units on the site and designs them in anticipation of the effects of climate change.

Recommendations

- See the recommendations above for potential improvements to the site plan and building massing and facade design that would enhance the project's relationship to the surrounding neighborhood.



City of Cambridge Department of Public Works

John F. Nardone, Acting Commissioner

147 Hampshire Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
theworks@cambridgema.gov

Voice: 617 349 4800

TDD: 617 499 9924

December 9, 2025

TO: Planning Board

FROM: James Wilcox, PE
City Engineer

RE: Corcoran Park Phase 1 AHO Submission

We are in receipt of the AHO Submission Documents for the project at 8-12 May Street and 53 Lawn Street, for Corcoran Park Phase 1, dated November 14, 2025.

The DPW supports the project and acknowledges that the CHA and their consultants have demonstrated a general understanding of our Department's requirements for development projects and have indicated a willingness to work with the DPW to meet the requirements and to address our concerns. With the understanding that the project will be subject to a thorough and complete engineering review at the time of the Building Permit Application, we anticipate continuing to work with the team. Comments on the submission, related to our purview, are summarized below.

Stormwater Management:

The development will be required to obtain a Stormwater Control Permit prior to the issuance of a Building Permit which will include a detailed review of the proposed stormwater management system, plans for erosion and sedimentation control during construction and the plans for long term operation and maintenance of the system. The submitted narrative includes an acknowledgement of the need for a Stormwater Control Permit and provides a general plan related to how the water quality and quantity Standards will be met.

Sewer Flow and Mitigation:

The Narrative does not include any anticipated design sewer flows for the Phase 1 development. Based on the bedroom count and with the understanding that there is existing housing stock on the site, we do not anticipate this phase of the project to exceed the 15,000 gpd net increase in sewer flow that would trigger Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) mitigation. The DPW will work with CHA to review the added bedroom count and net increase in flows and will need to make some considerations for the eventual Phase 2 project as we look to understand if I/I Mitigation will be triggered by the project at any point in the future.

Flood Resiliency:

The DPW had been working with the CHA to understand how the Long-term Flood Elevations, specifically those presented under the newly promulgated FloodViewer 2025 Map, would impact the parcel. The Submitted documentation includes discussion, site plans and elevations that appear to show compliance with the Flood Resiliency Zoning Standards. The buildings have been designed to establish

the habitable spaces above the 1% LTFE of elevation 43.3' CCB. Site grading, stairs and ramping are required to meet these standards, but will support the renovation providing housing that will be resilient to future projected flood events. The DPW will review the details as the project is advanced to confirm that the built design will continue to meet the Flood Resiliency Standards.

Urban Canopy:

AHO Projects are not under the jurisdiction of the City's Tree Protection Ordinance. The City and specifically the Urban Forestry Division does, however, always advocate for the protection and maintenance of existing, mature, healthy trees as they are vital in maintaining the tree canopy.

The Submission document includes narrative and graphics that present the existing trees on the project parcel and identifies which will be removed to support the project and also presents a proposed planting plan that looks to mitigate the canopy loss. The DPW would respectfully request that in addition to the number of trees being impacted and planted, that the size of the trees, in caliper inches, be included as well to allow for a better understanding of how well the proposed planting plan will address the loss of the existing trees and canopy.

Specific to Public Shade Trees, the DPW would note that all street trees located along the project frontage shall be maintained and protected during all construction activities. Also, we would ask that street trees be considered along all frontages as is allowed by the design standards and utility conflicts. Minimum sidewalk widths to meet accessibility requirements will need to be provided in addition to the width supporting new or existing trees.

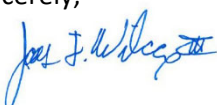
Public Right of Way:

DPW will review and evaluate all proposed work and impacts in the public right of way, as the design is developed. Connections to both public and private utilities as well as all proposed disruption in the public right of way shall be reviewed as part of the Building Permit and construction permit processes. As noted in the Application, the development will support, as needed, improvements to the public sidewalk, as needed, to obtain an accessible and comfortable sidewalk width for the project frontage.

In support of comments made by CAMDOT we also would support the CHA reviewing the abutting streets and sidewalks in conjunction with their reconfigured site to understand if there are new or changed desire lines for pedestrians that may warrant curb and crosswalk modifications and/or additions.

We look forward to working with the CHA, their team and other City Departments on this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns related to the comments or information provided above.

Sincerely,



James Wilcox, P.E.
City Engineer



**MEMORANDUM**

To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
From: Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager of Housing Development
Alexis Turgeon, Housing Development Planner
Date: April 30, 2026
Re: 2072 Massachusetts Avenue – Planning Board AHO Design Consultation Report

Capstone Communities and Hope Real Estate Enterprises have been working with staff from the Housing Department and the Community Development Department on their 2072 Massachusetts Avenue development, which will create a new twelve-story building containing 73 affordable rental units. The project recently completed the advisory design review process with the Planning Board under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). The two required Planning Board advisory design consultations were held on October 7, 2025, and March 3, 2026.

The proposed design was favorably received by the Planning Board. The report noted that Capstone Communities and Hope Real Estate Enterprises were responsive to staff and Planning Board member feedback, specifically regarding the rooftop mechanical setbacks, façade articulation and fenestration, quality interior spaces including exposure of wood construction materials, improved bicycle parking access, roof-deck open space, and plans for public art installation on the ground floor. The Planning Board offered other recommendations for the development team to continue exploring, including further refinement of the south facade, increased activation of ground floor, use of different color schemes and elements, and assessing the need for safety improvements to the space between the proposed building at 2072 Massachusetts Avenue and the adjacent Russell apartments through the potential use of gates and/or lighting. The Board also recommended that the team continue to work in coordination with City staff regarding the widening of Walden Street and on aligning the pedestrian experience with ongoing City planning work regarding Massachusetts Avenue redesigns.

The AHO requires that the results of the design review process be shared with the Affordable Housing Trust. The Planning Board report is attached and includes:

- Planning Board Final Report of AHO Design Consultation (3/24/2026), including:
 - CDD Staff Memo (2/25/2026);
- Planning Board Initial Report of AHO Design Consultation (10/28/2025), including:
 - CDD Staff Memo (9/30/2025); and,
 - DPW Staff Memo (9/25/2025).

Project Overview:

The development of 2072 Massachusetts Avenue involves the new construction of a twelve-story building under the provisions of the AHO. The site currently contains a small, vacant fast-food restaurant that will be demolished to make way for the development. The development proposal involves the creation of 73 affordable rental units, of which approximately seventy percent will be family-sized. All units will be affordable to households earning at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI), with some units being deeply affordable to those making at or below 30% AMI.

More information on the proposed development, including the presentation and materials submitted to the Planning Board, can be found on the Housing Department's 2072 Massachusetts Avenue project page at:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Housing/2072massave>.

Housing Department Recommendation:

Staff have received and are reviewing a Trust funding request from Capstone Communities and Hope Real Estate Enterprises to support the construction of this project. Staff expect to bring this request to an upcoming Trust meeting.

All approvals of Trust funding for AHO projects are conditioned on the Trust's review and consideration of the final Planning Board report. As the Trust has not yet considered the final funding request for this development, we recommend the Trust vote to accept this report and refer to this acceptance when reviewing the request for funding we expect to bring to the Trust at an upcoming meeting.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: March 24, 2026

Subject: Final Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory
Design Consultation Procedure Compliance Certification

Project Location: 2072 Massachusetts Avenue

Date of Planning Board Meeting: March 3, 2026

Project Overview

The Planning Board (the “Board”) met on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, to review and comment on the revised design for 2072 Massachusetts Avenue, a multifamily development by CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave LLC and CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave Tenant LLC (the “Developer”) under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in Section 11.207 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board reviewed a plan set submitted by the Developer dated February 5, 2026, as well as staff memos from the Community Development Department (CDD) and Department of Transportation (DOT), which are attached. The Board held its first advisory consultation on October 7, 2025, and issued an initial report dated [October 28, 2025](#).

Board Comments

The Board was pleased with the improvements made to the project in response to both staff and Planning Board comments and commended the development team for a thoughtful design process focused on enhancing the neighborhood and the quality of life for future residents. Board members appreciated the increased setbacks for rooftop mechanical equipment, which significantly reduce its visibility from the ground. Other notable improvements include the quality of interior spaces with wood finishes, added articulation on the south facade, improved fenestration on the west facade, the inclusion of a mural facing Massachusetts Avenue, improved bicycle parking access, and the rooftop design approach shaped by community engagement. The Board was also pleased that rethinking the long-term bicycle parking layout allowed for the addition of an extra two-bedroom unit.

As the project progresses, the Board offers the following suggestions:

- Further refine the south facade, as it still reads as a single massing and overly flat.

- Explore additional strategies to maximize natural light and views for the lower-level units facing the Russel Apartments' blank brick wall, such as adjusting their layout and fenestration.
- While some members liked the use of warm colors on the facades, others encouraged exploring more expressive options such as red brick tones and/or painted mullions. The Board strongly recommended seeking an alternative to the grey color.
- Continue coordinating with City staff to ensure the ground floor design and pedestrian experience align with the ongoing Massachusetts Avenue redesign plan.
- Continue working with the City on the widening of Walden Street to align with City goals for pedestrian safety and overall streetscape design.
- Consider selecting large growth trees to be planted along the south edge of the site to improve the transition to the City's parking lot and align with the City's urban forestry priorities.
- Explore ways to improve safety along the alley between the building and the Russell Apartments, including the use of lighting and gates.
- Consider providing additional short-term bicycle parking near the lobby for guests and residents.
- To further activate Massachusetts Avenue, explore ways to promote active use and programming of the ground floor community room and expand art display opportunities by adding art to the ground-floor windows.

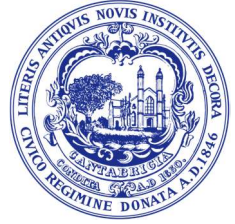
AHO Compliance Summary

This report certifies that the developer has completed the Advisory Design Consultation Process in order to comply with the procedure for development under the Affordable Housing overlay set forth in Section 11.207.8 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.

Submitted for the Planning Board,

Swaathi Joseph

Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Tom Sieniewicz, Chair.



To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: February 25, 2026

Re: Affordable Housing Overlay Design Consultation **AHO-9, 2072 Massachusetts Avenue**

Overview

Submission Type:	Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Review
Applicant:	CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave LLC and CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave Tenant LLC
Zoning District(s):	Business A-2/Residence C-1
Proposal Summary:	Construction of a 12-story building to create 73 affordable rental units and amenities under the AHO.
Planning Board Action:	Review and comment on conformance with AHO Development Standards, City Development Guidelines for the proposal area, Design Guidelines for Multifamily Housing, and Citywide Urban Design Objectives.
Memo Contents:	CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report
Other Staff Reports:	Department of Transportation (DOT) in separate document.

Zoning & Development Staff Report

Overview

The Developer, Capstone Communities LLC (or “Capstone”) and Hope Real Estate Enterprise LLC (or “Hope”), is proposing to demolish the existing single-story restaurant building to construct a new 12-story, 136-foot-tall residential building consisting of 73 affordable rental units and approximately 91,400 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include studios, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 667 to 1,042 square feet. The project also includes resident amenities such as a ground-floor community space and a rooftop outdoor terrace. Bicycle parking will be provided with 45 long-term and 1 short-term spaces, supplemented by contributions for a Public Bicycle Sharing Station and Public Bicycle Parking to offset the remaining required spaces.

Planning Board Comments from Initial Consultation Meeting

Board members were very supportive of the proposal and commended the Developer for adding a significant number of family-sized units and amenity spaces. The Board thought the proposed height was appropriate for the site, one of the major corridors in the city, well served by public transit and bicycle amenities. The Board generally supported the modern double stacked design and the choice of colors and materials, particularly the use of brick in context with the surrounding buildings and the use of mass timber as both a structural and aesthetic option. The terrace location with orientation toward the street and city skyline was also highlighted.

As the building design advances, Board members encouraged the Developer to consider increasing ground-floor height and transparency. They also suggested refining the elevations, particularly those facing the neighborhood, with greater attention to materials, fenestration, and recesses. The Board requested more detailed floor plans that align interior layouts with façade articulation and structural grids, as well as additional information to better understand feasibility and users experience of the proposed terrace space.

For site design, the Board asked for a contingency plan to protect the large mature tree on the abutting Russel Apartments lot and urged continued coordination with the City on public realm improvements, including Walden Street widening, loading/unloading and pickup/drop-off areas.

Staff Comments on Revised Submission

The City has received a revised application dated February 5, 2026, including updated forms and narrative volume, revised graphics, and a revised appendix volume with additional Green Factor and Green Building documentation.

CDD Staff have confirmed that the project has provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate compliance with Green Building and Green Factor standards at this stage of review. The Project intends to meet Green Building requirements by targeting Passive House certification. The minimum required Green Factor score is achieved through a combination of understory trees, high planting areas, a green roof area, and shaded areas.

In the initial Zoning Memo on this proposal, CDD provided a summary of compliance with AHO standards. The revised submission presents several modifications, including: increasing the eastern side yard setback from zero to five feet along the Russell Apartments property line; increasing the number of long-term bicycle parking spaces by one; incorporating planters along Massachusetts Avenue; and reducing façade glazing from 45 to 35% along Massachusetts Avenue and 40 to 34% along Walden Street.

CDD staff continue to note two items requiring additional clarification to confirm full compliance with AHO zoning standards.

- Bicycle Parking: Article 6.000 requires a minimum 3-foot horizontal clearance perpendicular to the length of the bicycle from the center point of each bicycle rack. Page 26 of the graphic volume shows enlarged bicycle parking plans indicating that the two racks arranged in alignment in the second-floor bicycle room and the proposed short-term rack may not meet this requirement. No dimensions are provided for the short-term space.
- Rooftop Mechanical equipment: Section 11.207 requires rooftop mechanical equipment to be set back from the principal wall plane by a distance equal to its height. While some of the equipment appears to be screened by a 10-foot-tall structure, it remains unclear whether the equipment is set back as required.

CDD staff has also observed that revisions to the east facade facing the Russell Apartments eliminated the previously proposed recessed and projecting elements. Building and Site Design Standards for AHO projects require building facades not facing the street to incorporate elements that project or recess by at least two feet, occurring at an average interval of 80 linear horizontal feet or less. As currently shown, the east facade does not clearly demonstrate compliance with this standard.

Consistency with AHO Development Standards

The AHO development standards applicable to this project are summarized in the table below.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Business A-2 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Use	• Multifamily dwellings allowed.	• The proposal includes multifamily dwellings and residence amenities on the ground floor and rooftop.
Building Height & Stories Above Grade	• Underlying District Dimensional Standards allow 6 stories, 75 feet. • AHO Developments are allowed up to 13 stories, 150 feet.	• The proposed project is 12 stories and 136 feet in height.
Yard Setbacks	• Underlying District Dimensional Standards have no Side and Rear Yard requirements. • AHO Dimensional Standards have no Front Yard requirements.	• The parcel is a corner lot, so it contains two front yards and two side yards. A 5-foot setback is provided for both side yards. • The project proposes a 6-inch front yard setback on both street fronts.
Open Space	• AHO Developments require 30% open space or meet the	• While no Open Space is required, the project includes an outdoor

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Business A-2 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
	underlying District Dimensional Standard, whichever is less. • A lot in a B-A2 has no open space requirement.	terrace at the 12th floor, planters along the Streets, and ornamental trees along the southern lot line.
Parking and Bicycle Parking	• No minimum off-street parking for AHO Developments. • Bicycle parking is required per Article 6.100, but additional flexibility is provided for the location, quantity and type (long-term and short-term) of bicycle parking required.	• The project provides two long-term bicycle parking rooms with a total of 45 parking spaces where 76 spaces would be required for a project of this size. The remaining required spaces will be satisfied through a Public Bicycle Sharing Station contribution of 25 docks. • One short-term bicycle space is provided on Massachusetts Avenue where 8 are required. A Public Bicycle Parking Contribution will offset the remaining required short-term spaces. • Some long- and the short-term bicycle parking spaces do not appear to meet the dimensional standards in Article 6.100.
Site Design and Arrangement	• Front yards may be landscaped or hardscaped but cannot be used for off-street parking. • Pedestrian entrances shall be visible from the street.	• The proposed project meets all the Site Design and Arrangement requirements.
Building Facades	• Building facades facing public streets shall have a minimum percentage of 20% glazing. • Building facades must include projecting and/or recessed elements of at least two feet on an average interval of 40 linear feet along a Public Street, and 80 feet elsewhere. Such projecting or recessed elements do not apply to the lowest or highest Story Above Grade. • Facades of ground stories shall have expanses of no more than 25' with no windows or pedestrian entryways.	• The proposed building consists of 35% transparency along Massachusetts Avenue and 34% along Walden Street. • Facade facing the Russell Apartments appear to not include any projecting and or/recessed elements of at least two feet on an average interval of 80 linear feet.
Mechanical Equipment, Refuse Storage	• Mechanical equipment shall be generally screened from view. Rooftop mechanical equipment	• Ground story mechanicals and refuse areas appear to be within the building itself. Some rooftop

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Business A-2 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
and Loading Areas	must be set back from the roof line equal to its height.	equipment appears to be screened by a 10-foot-tall screen, but it is unclear if the equipment is setback by a dimension equal to at least its height.
Environmental Design Standards	This AHO project is subject to the following Sustainable Development Standards: - Section 22.20: Green Building - Section 22.90: Green Factor	Documentation demonstrating compliance with all relevant Sustainable Development Standards has been submitted to and certified by CDD staff.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	- 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.	- 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.	- 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.	- 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.	- 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.	- 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.	• 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
Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change as anticipated in the <i>Resilient Cambridge</i> plan.	• Up-to-date projections of climate change impacts over the project's anticipated lifespan are incorporated • Flood Resilience Standard in Section 22.80 and the Green Factor Standard in Section 22.90 are met or exceeded • Use of strategies that have environmental co-benefits • Integrative approach to climate change resilience that accounts for the existing context and promotes the other design objectives of the area and the City.

Urban Design Staff Report

Overview

The project at 2072 Massachusetts Avenue proposes to replace the existing single-story commercial building with a 12-story building that will provide 73 affordable residential units. As noted in the memo to the Planning Board for the project's initial hearing on October 7, 2025, the design accords with the intent of Cambridge's Multifamily Design Guidelines, and will contribute to the developing character of Mass Ave. Subsequent to the initial Planning Board hearing, the project team met with staff to review the project's revised design, which incorporates numerous improvements, many of them in response to Planning Board and staff suggestions:

- To reduce the risk of damage to the existing tree at the neighboring Russell Apartment's rear patio, the side setback along the east side of the site has been increased to 5 feet.
- The design of the rooftop outdoor terrace has been developed, including the provision of a small play structure.
- The linear planter along the building's west side—along the Walden Street sidewalk, has been lengthened (still retaining five feet of clear sidewalk width), and an additional planter is provided on the building's north side, in front of the building's Community Room on Mass Ave.
- Improvements to the ground floor facades include greater height, more fenestration, and a lighter brick color. On the Walden Street facade, the transformer door and the adjoining person door are better integrated into the facade's overall composition.
- A placeholder for art is indicated on the ground floor north elevation, behind the existing bus stop shelter.
- The upper story facades have been coordinated with interior layouts, resolving discrepancies present in the earlier design.
- Additional glazing has been provided on the east facade, giving it a more residential appearance.
- A slightly warmer color palette has been adopted.
- The ground floor plan has been reorganized, creating clearer circulation patterns, providing windows to additional rooms and a more accessible route to the bicycle storage room.
- The ground floor bicycle storage room now has a door leading to the east setback, providing an alternate exit (and perhaps entrance) for bicyclists.
- The layout of the second-floor bicycle parking room has been improved.
- The design team will continue to work with DOT and DPW on changes to Walden Street and Mass Avenue.

Urban Design Comments on Design Revisions

Site Design

The changes to the site plan - principally the slightly wider setback on the building's east side, and the additional planters on the west and north sides – are improvements.

- Consideration could be given to planting columnar trees in the portion of the building's widened east setback adjoining the Russell Apartment Building's rear patio (with care to not negatively affect the existing tree on the Russell Building's property).
- Greater clarity on the use of the east side doorway to the bicycle storage room, and the route from it to the public street, would be helpful.
- Consider planting trees with a taller growth habit on the south side of the site, adjoining the city owned parking lot.

Building Design

The changes to the building's architecture noted above are mostly subtle improvements. The building's overall appearance is similar to that of the previous design: the residential stories consist of a group of vertical massing elements running from second floor level to the building's top, separated from each other by vertical reveals, yet unified with each other by a light-colored frame-like grid of double floor proportions that is infilled by panels and fenestration; the residential stories are supported by a ground story that combines brick wall and full height fenestration.

As in the previous design, one of the appealing features of the facades is the low window sills, located just above floor level, which contribute to a sense of light and openness in the residential units—creating almost the sense of an interior porch, and also place the window openings in dialog with the larger-scaled double-story areas framed by the light-colored facade grid.

It's hard to tell precisely from the renderings, but in some of them the grey infill panels in the residential stories appear to be very close to the plane of the light colored facade grid.

- To enrich the facades with more relief and shadow, consideration could be given to increasing the depth to which the grey infill panels are recessed back from the plane of the light-colored gridded frame elements.

The color scheme is warmer than that of the previous version, but remains quite subdued.

- Consideration could be given to incorporating more color, perhaps in the window mullions, which are very close to the color of the adjoining infill panels.

North Facade (facing Mass Ave):

In the previous design, the north (Mass Ave) facade consisted of a two-bay-wide eastern (left hand) portion, and a four-bay-wide western (right hand) portion, separated by a vertical reveal that was aligned over the solid wall to the east of the entrance door. In the current design the vertical reveal has been shifted west, almost to the middle of the facade. The eastern portion consists of two bays, each wider than in the previous version. To achieve this, the blank panels within the light-colored facade grid have been considerably widened. The western portion of the facade has been reduced to three bays wide. The vertical reveal between the eastern and western portions is now partially over the entrance door fenestration and partly over the solid wall to the east of it, creating a slightly awkward relation between the building's ground floor base and the residential tower above it.

- Consideration could be given to reverting to the two bay and four bay arrangement for the east and west portions of the facade, and relocating the vertical reveal so that it is east of the entrance fenestration.

In the previous design, the Mass Avenue entrance was recessed into the building, creating a deep sheltered outdoor area at the door. In the current design, the entrance doors and associated fenestration are close to the plane of the masonry facade.

- Consider recessing the building entrance enough to create a shallow sheltered area outside the doors.

West facade (facing Walden Street):

The locations of the reveals between the vertical massing elements of the residential stories have been coordinated with the interior layout. Note that the living room window of the northernmost one-bedroom unit on the west side of the building seems excessively narrow.

- Consideration could be given to widening it.

In the previous design, the northern of the two vertical reveals on the west facade had fenestration in it for the associated unit's living room.

- Consideration could be given to reinstating the fenestration, both to give more natural light to the living room and to enrich the facade.

East Facade (facing Russell Apartments):

Improvements include wider windows and reductions to the widths of the blank infill panels, the relocation of the vertical strip that divides the facade into an eastern and western portion closer to Mass Ave, and the elimination of the small punched windows that had been in that strip.

In contrast to the previous version, which stepped in plan, the east facade is now flat (or very close to flat).

- While this does not appear to be problematic, a change in plane at the two vertical strips – recessing them relative to the gridded portions of the facade - could be considered.

South Facade (facing the city parking lot)

The facade benefits from the simplification of the vertical strip that divides the facade into two portions.

- Consideration could be given to widening the windows, and to increasing the depth to which the infill panels are recessed.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: October 28, 2025

Subject: Initial Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Consultation

Project Location: 2072 Massachusetts Avenue

Date of Planning Board Meeting: October 7, 2025

Overview

The Planning Board (the “Board”) met on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, to review and comment on the design for 2072 Massachusetts Avenue, a multifamily development by CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave LLC and CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave Tenant LLC (the “Developer”) under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in Section 11.207 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board reviewed a plan set submitted by the Developer dated September 4, 2025, as well as staff memos from the Community Development Department (CDD) and Department of Public Works (DPW), which are attached.

Proposal Description

The Developer is proposing to demolish the existing structure to construct a new 12-story, 126-foot-tall residential building consisting of 73 affordable rental units with approximately 91,700 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include studios, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 500 to 1,159 square feet at 30% and 60% AMI. The project also includes resident amenities such as a ground-floor community space and a rooftop outdoor terrace. Bicycle parking will be provided with 44 long-term and 1 short-term spaces, supplemented by a financial contribution to offset the remaining required spaces.

Board Comments

Board members were very supportive of the proposal and commended the Developer for adding a significant number of family-sized units and amenity spaces. The Board thought the proposed height was appropriate for the site, in one of the major corridors in the city, well served by public transit and bicycle amenities. The Board generally supported the modern double stacked design and the choice of colors and materials, particularly the use of brick in context with the surrounding buildings and the use of mass timber as a structural and aesthetic option.

As the proposal continues to develop, Board members urged the developer to focus on the following program and design elements:

Site Design

- Board members encouraged the Developer to continue working with the City to provide loading/unloading and pick-up/drop-off areas for the project and present a streetscape design, ensuring consistency with the City's broader vision for the public realm. It was noted that Massachusetts Avenue may present additional challenges for these functions due to the presence of a bike lane and a bus stop and encouraged the applicant to account for these conditions as the design continues to develop.
- Continue coordination with City staff to ensure that proposed improvements along Walden Street are accurately represented and aligned with City's ongoing planning efforts. The Board also encourages continued discussion with staff to clarify timing and scope for these potential streetscape improvements and would like more detail on its phasing at the second hearing.
- Clarify the current arrangements for the use of the City owned parking lot on Walden Street adjacent to the site and provide an update on any options for using this site to alleviate concerns with project loading and drop-off /pick-up.
- Identify a contingency plan for the large tree on the abutting Russell Apartments lot in the event it dies or is severely damaged during construction.

Building Design

- Continue to refine the Massachusetts Avenue and Walden Street facades and present more details on materials, fenestration, and increased ground-floor transparency, showing how the building is more inviting and aligned with the Massachusetts Avenue Planning Study goals.
- Consider increasing the ground-floor height to enhance the sense of openness and visibility along the street frontage.
- Consider introducing additional façade recesses, potentially including balconies, particularly on the east elevation, to provide private open spaces, natural light and air for the apartments.
- Further develop the elevations facing the neighborhood to make the building more inviting from that perspective.
- Present a detailed layout plan for the terrace, demonstrating how residents will use this space. Include cross-sections illustrating rooftop plantings to clarify the feasibility of the proposed roof trees to provide shading.

- Provide examples or precedents that illustrate how roof gardens can function effectively for residents on upper floors of taller buildings.
- Evaluate the possibility of incorporating a basement or partial basement to accommodate bicycle parking and laundry facilities, allowing more active residential use on the ground floor and potentially additional dwelling units on the ground and rooftop.
- Consider eliminating the rooftop emergency generator to achieve a 100% fossil-fuel-free building and reclaim space for residential or amenity use.
- Maintain the proposed terrace location, with its orientation and views toward the street and city skyline.
- Present more detailed floor plans that align interior layouts with façade articulation and structural grids, clearly identifying accessible dwelling units.
- Improve access to the bicycle rooms, including the addition of a direct external entry at the rear of the building.
- Confirm that the number of laundry machines proposed is adequate to serve the total number of residential units and consider increasing the number of machines.

In addition to these topic areas, the Board supported comments made in the staff memos for the proposal and asked that they be considered to refine the project's design.

Submitted for the Planning Board,

Swaathi Joseph

Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Mary Flynn, Chair.



To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: September 30, 2025

Re: Affordable Housing Overlay Design Consultation **AHO-9, 2072 Massachusetts Avenue**

Overview

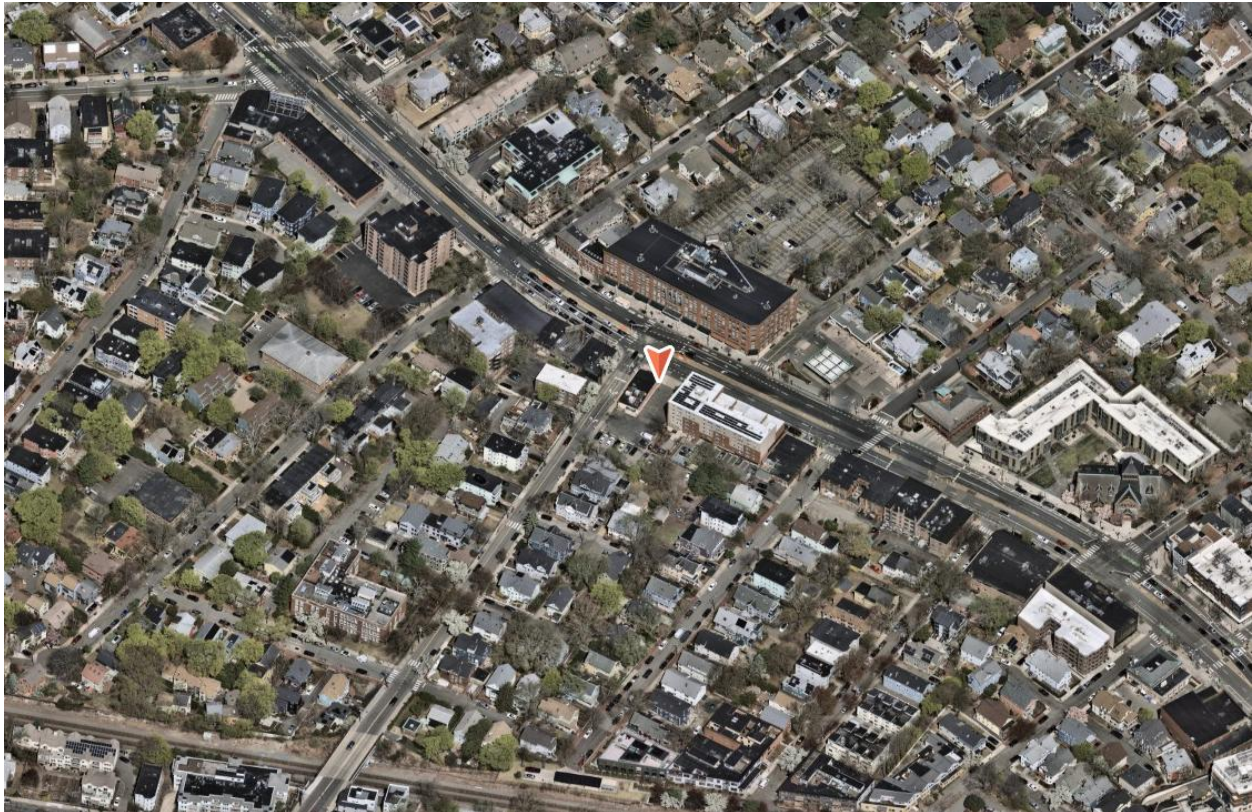
Submission Type:	Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Review
Applicant:	CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave LLC and CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave Tenant LLC
Zoning District(s):	Business A-2/Residence C-1
Proposal Summary:	Construction of a 12-story building to create 73 affordable rental units and amenities under the AHO.
Planning Board Action:	Review and comment on conformance with AHO Development Standards, City Development Guidelines for the proposal area, Design Guidelines for Multifamily Housing, and Citywide Urban Design Objectives.
Memo Contents:	CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report
Other Staff Reports:	Department of Public Works (DPW) Report in separate document.

Zoning & Development Staff Report

Site & Zoning Context

Site Context

The site consists of a single parcel at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Walden Street in the North Cambridge neighborhood, a few blocks north of Porter Station and just one block south of the Somerville border. Directly across Massachusetts Avenue stands the historic Henderson Carriage Building, and an MBTA bus stop shelter is located along the parcel's northeastern edge. The surrounding neighborhood features a diverse mix of uses, including commercial, mixed-use, office, and residential buildings of varying densities. Building types also range widely. Massachusetts Avenue is lined primarily with single-story commercial structures and mixed-use buildings up to eight stories in height, while Walden Street is predominantly 2½-story residential buildings. The site currently contains a one-story vacant building that most recently housed Darul Kabab, an Indian-Pakistani restaurant, along with a surface parking lot.



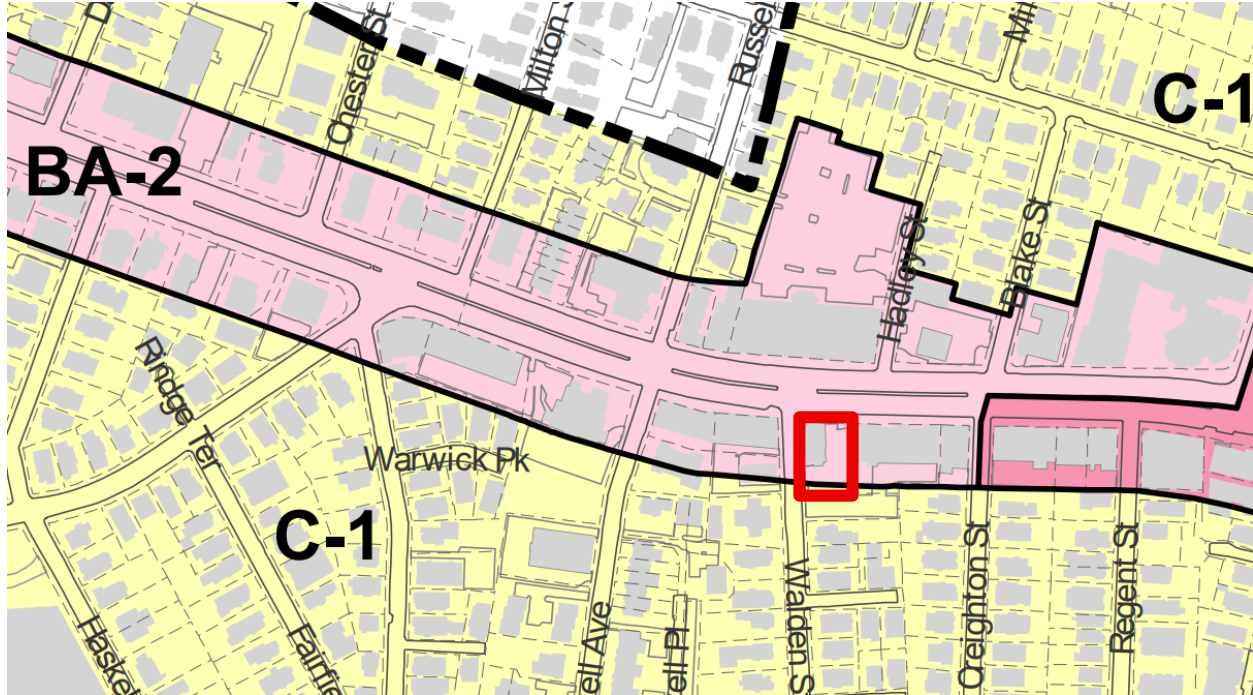
Context Map for 2072 Massachusetts Avenue. Source: Nearmap Aerial Imagery, April 2025

Site Zoning

This site spans two zoning districts, with the majority located in a Business A-2 (BA-2) district and a small rear portion situated in a Residence C-1 district. As a development carried under the AHO, per Section 11.207.5.1, the project may apply the zoning requirements of the district covering most of the lot to the entire parcel. Accordingly, the BA-2 district, which is the more permissive base zoning, is extended to

AHO Design Consultation AHO-9, 2072 Massachusetts Avenue – CDD Memo to Planning Board

the approximately 13-foot portion zoned C-1. The BA-2 district has no minimum Open Space or Side/Rear Setback requirements for residential uses, and under the AHO, no minimum front yard setback is required. Additionally, while base BA-2 zoning limits residential building height to 6 stories and 75 feet, the AHO allows up to 13 stories above grade and a maximum height of 150 feet. Because this AHO development exceeds 50,000 square feet, it is subject to the two-session Planning Board Advisory Consultation process.



Zoning Map. Source: Zoning Districts, City of Cambridge, February 2025

Comments on Proposal

Project Description

The applicants, Capstone Communities LLC (or “Capstone”) and Hope Real Estate Enterprise LLC or (“Hope”) are proposing to demolish the existing single-story restaurant building to construct a new 12-story, 126-foot-tall residential building consisting of 73 affordable rental units and approximately 91,700 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include studios, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 500 to 1,159 square feet at 30% and 60% AMI. The project also includes resident amenities such as a ground-floor community space and a rooftop outdoor terrace. Bicycle parking will be provided with 44 long-term and 1 short-term spaces, supplemented by a financial contribution to offset the remaining required spaces.

Consistency with AHO Development Standards

The AHO development standards applicable to this project are summarized in the table below.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Business A-2 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Use	• Multifamily dwellings allowed.	• The proposal includes multifamily dwellings and residence amenities on the ground floor and rooftop.
Building Height & Stories Above Grade	• Underlying District Dimensional Standards allow 6 stories, 75 feet • AHO Developments are allowed up to 13 stories, 150 feet.	• The proposed project is 12 stories and 126 feet in height.
Yard Setbacks	• Underlying District Dimensional Standards have no Side and Rear Yard requirements. • AHO Dimensional Standards have no Front Yard requirements.	• The parcel is a corner lot, so it contains two front yards and two side yards. A 5-foot setback is provided at its southern side yard and no setback to the east. • The project proposes a 6-inch front yard setback on both street fronts.
Open Space	• AHO Developments require 30% open space or meet the underlying District Dimensional Standard, whichever is less. • A lot in a B-A2 has no open space requirement.	• While no Open Space is required, the project includes an outdoor terrace at the 12th floor, planters along Walden Street, and ornamental trees along the southern lot line.
Parking and Bicycle Parking	• No minimum off-street parking for AHO Developments. • Bicycle parking is required per Article 6.100, but additional flexibility is provided for the location, quantity and type (long-term and short-term) of bicycle parking required.	• The project provides two long-term bicycle parking rooms with 44 parking spaces and one short-term space on Massachusetts Avenue. Under Article 6.100, 76 long-term bicycle parking spaces and 8 short-term spaces would be required for a project of this size. The remaining long and short-term spaces required will be satisfied through a Public Bicycle Sharing Station contribution. • Some long-term bicycle parking spaces do not appear to meet the dimensional standards in Article 6.100.
Site Design and Arrangement	• Front yards may be landscaped or hardscaped but cannot be used for off-street parking. • Pedestrian entrances shall be visible from the street. • Buildings with front facades in excess of 250' in length shall provide forecourts to break up massing.	• The proposed project meets all the Site Design and Arrangement requirements.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Business A-2 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Building Facades	- Building facades facing public streets shall have a minimum percentage of 20% glazing. - Building facades must include projecting and/or recessed elements of at least two feet on an average interval of 40 linear feet along a Public Street, and 80 feet elsewhere. Such projecting or recessed elements do not apply to the lowest or highest Story Above Grade. - Facades of ground stories shall have expanses of no more than 25' with no windows or pedestrian entryways.	The proposed building consists of 45% transparency along Massachusetts Avenue and 40% along Walden Street.
Mechanical Equipment, Refuse Storage and Loading Areas	Mechanical equipment shall be generally screened from view. Rooftop mechanical equipment must be set back from the roof line equal to its height.	Ground story mechanicals and refuse areas appear to be within the building itself. All rooftop equipment appears to be screened by a 10 feet high screen, but it is unclear if the equipment is setback by a dimension equal to at least its height.
Environmental Design Standards	This AHO project is subject to the following Sustainable Development Standards: - Section 22.20: Green Building - Section 22.90: Green Factor	- The Project intends to meet Green Building requirements by targeting Passive House certification. A Green Building Report will be required ahead of the final Planning Board Advisory Consultation. - A Cool Score sheet has been submitted but complete documentation showing compliance with Green Factor Standards will be required ahead of the final Planning Board Advisory Consultation.

Recommendations

The following is a summary of recommendations that may be considered for revised submission:

- Detail of long-term bicycle parking layout to confirm compliance with design standards in Article 6.100.
- Information about number of Public Bicycle Sharing Stations and docks to ensure compliance with AHO Bicycle Parking Standards.

- Further review of all rooftop mechanical equipment to ensure the screening requirements of the AHO design standards are met.

Transportation Comments

The Department of Transportation (DOT) staff has been working with the applicant and provided the following comments on the proposal:

- DOT is very supportive of the developer’s plan to pull back the building’s first floor in order to widen Walden Street as it approaches the intersection with Massachusetts Avenue. The revised curb line will accommodate two ten-foot lanes traveling north and one ten-foot lane traveling south. This is a significant improvement over current conditions and will improve the operation and safety for all road users.
- Further review the configuration of the northernmost racks in the ground-floor bicycle parking room to ensure that the access aisle is sufficient and racks are not blocked once bicycles are parked.
- Further review both bicycle parking rooms to ensure compliance with Bicycle Parking Guidelines for accessibility and improve circulation challenges, including providing more direct exterior access to the ground floor room, improving turns, and avoiding reliance on circulation through the trash room.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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
Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change as anticipated in the <i>Resilient Cambridge</i> plan.	• Up-to-date projections of climate change impacts over the project's anticipated lifespan are incorporated • Flood Resilience Standard in Section 22.80 and the Green Factor Standard in Section 22.90 are met or exceeded • Use of strategies that have environmental co-benefits • Integrative approach to climate change resilience that accounts for the existing context and promotes the other design objectives of the area and the City.

Urban Design Staff Report

Urban Design Comments

Consistency with Multifamily Design Guidelines

The design as proposed generally adheres to the applicable principles as outlined in the Multifamily Design Guidelines:

- The building is appropriately sited to maintain the streetwall on Massachusetts Avenue.
- Its vertical massing articulates the public realm by providing a visual target at the bend in Mass Avenue.
- Together with the Henderson Carriage Building on the opposite side of Mass Ave, it creates a gateway to the Porter Square area as one approaches it from the west.
- The building's distinct ground story base is constructed of appealingly textured materials and includes a large glazed area at the corner.

Site Design

The building fills most of the site, leaving little space for landscape improvements.

On its west side, the ground floor is set back from Walden Street. As part of improvements to Walden Street suggested by city staff, the curb and sidewalk will be relocated farther east from its current location, widening the currently constricted street. The sidewalk will be partially under the building's cantilevered upper floors. Underground utilities in the affected area may introduce complications, however; further investigations of subsurface conditions will be made.

New trees are provided along the parcel's south edge, between the building and the city-owned parking lot on Walden Street.

The project refrains from proposing improvements to the Mass Ave sidewalk and existing bus stop, as the sidewalk's revised design (expected as part of City-led improvements to Mass Ave) is still in process.

Recommendations

- Planters are shown against the building on the Walden Street sidewalk. Whether the resulting restrictions in sidewalk width (to approximately 5'-2" clear) is advisable should be evaluated.
- The applicant should continue to coordinate with city staff on changes to Walden Street and Mass Ave.

Building Design

The building's general concept a good response to the site: The division of its broad faces into two (or three) elements, separated by vertical grooves, emphasizes the building's verticality and breaks up its mass. The slight bend in the Mass Ave facade will create an appealing foreshortened view as one

approaches the building from either direction on Mass Ave. The brick ground floor facade will provide texture at the pedestrian level.

Recommendations

- Massing
 - Consider relocating the 12th story terrace (currently at the building's northwest corner) to the southwest corner, so as to accentuate the building's verticality at the intersection of Mass Ave and Walden Street, and to step down toward the neighborhood to the south.
- Facades
 - The earlier version of this project, dated October 27, 2020, with vertically striated light colored cladding, punched windows on the west and north facades, and more solid wall surface, was very successful. Consideration could be given to reinstating that aesthetic on at least some of the facades.
 - Consideration could be given to further breaking up the facades by using *both* the earlier wall and punched window expression and the current frame and infill expression, using one system in the northern portion of the mass and the other in the southern portion.
 - In the frame and infill system, consider differentiating the widths of the piers and the horizontal members.
 - Consider providing larger windows on the east facade.
 - Consider locating the east facade's vertical division farther north, so as to separate the northern Mass Ave facing component from the southern element that faces the interior of the block.
 - The lengths of blank ground story wall without openings may be excessive.
 - Careful treatment of doorways and other openings in the brick of the ground floor facades, and the contrast between the brick walls and the highly glazed Community Room at the northwest corner design of the ground floor facades will contribute to a rich pedestrian experience. (Sert's treatment of similar conditions in his office building at the intersection of Prospect Street and Bishop Allen Drive could be a useful reference.)
 - The locations of fenestration on the ground story Walden Street facade should be coordinated with the interior layout.
 - Whether sufficient access is provided to the transformer room should be evaluated. If a large door is required, it should be designed to complement the rest of the facade.
 - Consider alternative color palettes for the exterior.
 - The use of an exposed mass timber structural system will enrich the building's appearance. The ground floor structure is proposed to be steel frame, however. Can the steel be expressed in a way that complements the exposed mass timber?

- Plans
 - o Note that better coordination between the vertical notches in the west facade and the interior layouts would improve the unit configurations.

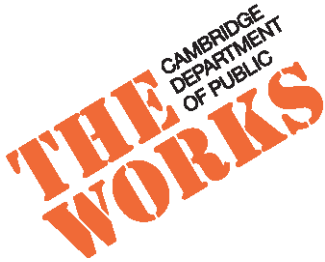
Sustainable Design

Recommendations

- The possibility of dedicating portions of the roof to green roof systems should be investigated.
- Clarify whether the seemingly high window to wall ratio on the west facade will meet passive house standards.

Consistency with City wide Urban Design Objectives

The project appears to meet the Citywide Urban Design Objectives.



City of Cambridge Department of Public Works

John F. Nardone, Acting Commissioner

147 Hampshire Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
theworks@cambridgema.gov

Voice: 617 349 4800

TDD: 617 499 9924

September 25, 2025

TO: Planning Board

FROM: James Wilcox, PE
City Engineer

RE: 2072 Massachusetts Ave AHO Submission

We are in receipt of the AHO Submission Documents for the project at 2072 Massachusetts Ave , dated September 4, 2025.

The DPW supports the project and acknowledges that the Development Team and their consultants have demonstrated a general understanding of our Department's requirements for development projects and have indicated a willingness to work with the DPW to meet the requirements and to address our concerns. With the understanding that the project will be subject to a thorough and complete engineering review at the time of the Building Permit Application, we anticipate continuing to work with the Applicant. Items discussed with the Development Team related to our purview are summarized below.

Stormwater Management:

The development will be required to obtain a Stormwater Control Permit prior to the issuance of a Building Permit which will include a detailed review of the proposed stormwater management system, plans for erosion and sedimentation control during construction and the plans for long term operation and maintenance of the system.

The submitted narrative includes an acknowledgement of some of the Stormwater Standards and some discussion related to how the Standards will be met. The Development Team and their consultants should review the City's Stormwater Control Permit Standards to confirm compliance with all water quality and quantity Standards. Methodology for calculating water quality mitigation, specifically Total Phosphorous removal, shall be consistent with methods and standards outlined in Appendix F of the Massachusetts MS4 General Permit. Final review and approval of the design will occur with the Building Permit.

Sewer Mitigation:

The development may trigger Inflow and Infiltration Mitigation if it increases the flow to the City's infrastructure by more than 15,000 gallons per day. The requirement is to mitigate the additional flow at a rate of 4:1. The proposed bedroom count has the design flow approaching this limit and should be evaluated by the development to clearly understand the net increase in flow to the City's system, as the program is finalized. Mitigation requirements, if triggered, will need to be agreed with the City and the Development Team prior to Building Permit.

Urban Canopy:

The submitted documentation notes that there are no trees on the parcel that are jurisdictional under the Tree Protection Ordinance. There is a tree on the abutting parcel that is immediately adjacent to the lot line and has the potential to be impacted by the construction. The Team has presented a Tree Protection Plan that outlines specific measures to be taken by the contractor to ensure that the tree is not adversely impacted by the project. The plan includes monitoring the tree for a full growing season after the completion of construction. The Urban Forestry Division agrees with this approach but would ask that in addition to the protections proposed that the arborist evaluate canopy impacts along with rootzone impacts.

Specific to Public Shade Trees, the DPW would note that all street trees located along the project frontage shall be maintained and protected during all construction activities. Also, we would ask that street trees be considered along all frontages as is allowed by the design standards and utility conflicts.

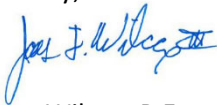
Public Right of Way:

DPW will review and evaluate all proposed work and impacts in the public right of way, as the design is developed. Connections to both public and private utilities as well as all proposed disruption in the public right of way shall be reviewed as part of the Building Permit and construction permit processes. As noted in the Application, the development will support, as needed, improvements to the public sidewalk, as needed, to obtain an accessible and comfortable sidewalk width for the project frontage.

The project proposes widening Walden Street for a portion of their frontage to support a second lane for turning movements. As this widening is supported by CAMDOT, DPW will work with the Development Team and CAMDOT on detailed review of plans for this work. The Team proactively engaged a survey consultant to establish the depth and sizes of some of the underground utilities that are in the vicinity of the proposed widening (curb relocation). Preliminary review indicates that widening is possible. Relevant City departments will work the team to progress plans for this work.

We look forward to working with the Development Team and other City Departments on this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns related to the comments or information provided above.

Sincerely,



James Wilcox, P.E.
City Engineer



CAMBRIDGE AFFORDABLE HOUSING TRUST
MEETING MINUTES

March 26, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

Conducted via Zoom and in person (City Hall, Ackermann Room)

Trustees Present in Person: Yi-An Huang, Chair; Teresa Cardosi, Elaine DeRosa, Krissandra Robinson, Susan Schlesinger, Jim Stockard, Elaine Thorne

Trustees Present via Zoom: Alyson Stein, Raffi Freeman

Staff Present: Chris Cotter, Director of Housing; Anna Dolmatch, Senior Manager for Homeownership; Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager for Housing Development; Janet Haines, Housing Development Planner; Alexis Turgeon, Housing Development Planner; Christine Yu, Associate Housing Development Planner; Antonia Finley, Homebuyer Coordinator, Lara Plaskon, Homeownership Program Associate

Others Present: Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, Councillor Catherine Zusy, Ahlam Ibrahim, Heather Hoffman, Hedjia Ali, Olivia Colina, Sue Reinert, Davis Bacon, Justin Saif

The meeting was called to order at 4:02 p.m. Mr. Cotter explained that this meeting of the Affordable Housing Trust is being held in a hybrid fashion pursuant to applicable requirements, and that all votes would be taken by roll call. He noted that there will be no public comment. He then confirmed via roll call that each remote participant could hear the meeting and was audible to others.

MEETING MINUTES

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of eight in favor and one absent (Mr. Freeman), it was voted to approve the minutes for the meeting of February 26, 2026.

HOUSING DEPARTMENT UPDATE

Five-Year Affordable Housing Trust Report: On March 18th, the City released a five-year report detailing Trust-funded affordable housing developments from Fiscal Year 2021 through Fiscal Year 2025. Trustees commended staff for organizing the news conference event and celebrating the work that the Trust does.

HomeBridge Program: There are currently 15 approved buyers actively looking for a home to purchase.

Corcoran Park: The second of two Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations was held on March 10th. The Cambridge Housing Authority submitted their application for state funding.

2072 Massachusetts Avenue: The second of two Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations was held on March 3rd.

240 Broadway (Broadway Park): The Planning Board Advisory Design Consultation was held on March 10th. Staff are reviewing a funding request and will bring it to an upcoming Trust meeting. Just A Start (JAS) submitted their application for state funding.

52 New Street: The construction of 52 New Street is complete, and residents will begin moving into the building in April.

87-101 Blanchard Road: Construction closing calls are underway.

28-30 Wendell Street: Homeowner's Rehab, Inc. (HRI) submitted their application for state funding.

1826 & 1840 Massachusetts Avenue: JAS is beginning the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) process soon for this project.

OTHER UPDATES

Incentive Zoning: The incentive zoning study is underway and is expected to be completed in the early fall. An incentive zoning contribution of \$1.3 million was received in March 2026.

Annual Housing Report: The Annual Housing Report regarding the impact of multi-family zoning is complete and has been shared with the City Council. The Neighborhood and Long-Term Planning Committee held a hearing on the topic on March 25 and will hold another meeting on April 7 at 3 p.m.

Trustees and staff discussed the results from the report. Mr. Cotter noted that the impact of multi-family zoning is still unknown, similar to how the effects of the AHO were not seen until a couple of years after its implementation. However, staff are seeing more activity regarding building permits.

NEW BUSINESS

Update on Redevelopment of 139 Bishop Allen Drive (Vail Court)

Ms. Arnaud provided an update to the Trust regarding the redevelopment of 139 Bishop Allen Drive, also known as Vail Court. Staff expect that affordable housing created at Vail Court will be developed under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). Under the AHO, the development could be built as high as twelve stories and could be allowed to have a non-residential space on the ground floor. There are no zoning-base limits on density.

The Trust is in the position to select a developer to build affordable housing, and will need to decide between a Request for Qualifications (RFQ) or a Request for Proposals (RFP), though an RFQ remains the recommended process. Staff informed the Trust that they need to consider whether or not they want to have a set preferences for specific income targets, tenure type, or population to be served in affordable housing here.

Since so much time has passed since the City and Trust last held a community meeting, staff recommend holding at least one community meeting to collect ideas and questions for the site to help review next steps with the community and help the Trust determine next steps. Staff propose holding it in May. A meeting in May followed by a discussion by the Trust would allow for issuing an RFQ in the late summer to select a an affordable housing developer later this year.

Ms. Schlesinger expressed the importance of assessing the developer's qualifications carefully and ensuring that there is enough open space for families given the need for family housing. In response to a question on whether the developer will need to come into this project with a design team, Trustees agreed that it would make sense for developers to apply for the RFQ with an architect identified as part of their team.

In response to a comment regarding the need to guide the community in terms of what feedback they should be providing, staff agreed that there will be some guiding questions. Ms. Arnaud commented that the feedback that the community provides could inform the Trust's review of selecting the developer. Mr. Stockard noted that staff should be prepared on how to handle the residential parking situation given that it is a common discussion topic at other affordable housing developments community meetings.

HomeBridge Program Request for Program Modification and Recapitalization

Ms. Dolmatch presented a request for program modifications and a recapitalization of the HomeBridge program. The Trust has committed more than \$32 million to this program since 2006. In November 2023, the Trust approved changes to increase the percentage of the market purchase price eligible to be funded by HomeBridge subsidy. Since that time, there has been a significant increase in HomeBridge applications. This can lead to some applicants competing against each other for homes on the market.

In response to current program and market conditions, staff are proposing a number of changes, including removing eligibility for non-Cambridge residents, making eligibility more need-based, and setting a minimum purchase capacity for approval, setting a maximum affordable price limit, and adjusting the approval time limits for applicants. These changes are intended to ensure that program capacity is being used most effectively given the high volume and complexity of applications while also continuing to assist with as many purchases as possible.

In addition to these changes, staff are requesting \$10,000,000 in funds to recapitalize the HomeBridge Program for households earning up to 100% Area Median Income. This is expected to serve approximately 20 households.

In response to a question regarding how many applicants are between 100% and 120% AMI, Ms. Dolmatch answered that there are currently three approved households in that range, and that their affordable purchase prices are approximately \$600,000. Mr. Stockard commented that it is important to assess the starting price of an affordable homeownership unit since the Trust may need to further subsidize it on resale through the Resale Fund.

Mayor Siddiqi commented that the Trust needs to think about the initial purpose of the HomeBridge Program and what the purpose is now. She advocated for the need to continue to benefit Cambridge residents the most.

Ms. Dolmatch noted that one of the benefits of the HomeBridge Program is that households are able to access homes in neighborhoods that the City hasn't historically built affordable housing in.

In response to a question about when these policies will take effect and whether changes will apply retroactively, Ms. Dolmatch answered that any changes approved by the Trust would apply to any new approvals issued after changes are approved.

In response to a question about whether there is a way to allow former Cambridge residents who were pushed out of the city to apply, Trustees and staff discussed the difficulty of having a policy for previous-Cambridge residents without considering fair housing concerns which generally discourage time-based residency provisions.

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of eight in favor and one absent (Mr. Freeman), it was:

VOTED: to approve the request for \$10,000,000 to recapitalize the HomeBridge Program and to approve the program policy changes except policy #2, as detailed in the memo provided.

Homeownership Resale Fund Recapitalization Request

Ms. Dolmatch presented a funding request for \$3,000,000 to increase the balance of the Homeownership Resale Fund. She noted that the fund has seen more costly repurchases following the recent change to the resale formula which increased prices for units now being sold by current homeowners, along with ongoing increases in rehab costs to prepare units for resales. Staff are seeing a larger number of units needing significant rehab work. While staff do not always exercise the City's purchase option for each unit, without additional funding, staff will be more constrained on when to exercise that right. The priority is to purchase units to preserve or deepen affordability of family-sized units which are rarely available.

In response to a question about what permanent subsidy means, Ms. Dolmatch answered that these are funds invested in a resale unit permanently to cover costs for rehab and/or lower the sales price to the next buyer.

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of eight in favor and one absent (Mr. Freeman), it was:

VOTED: to approve the request for \$3,000,000 to recapitalize the Homeownership Resale Fund, as detailed in the memo provided.

ADJOURNMENT

Upon a motion moved, seconded, and approved by roll call of eight in favor and one absent (Mr. Freeman), it was voted to adjourn the meeting.

The meeting adjourned at 5:31 p.m.

The next meeting is scheduled for April 30, 2026 at 4:00 p.m.

Meeting Materials:

- Agenda
- Minutes from the Trust's February 26, 2026 meeting
- Project Update
- Vail Court Update and Next Steps Memo 3.26.2026
- HomeBridge Program Modification and Recapitalization Memo 3.26.2026
- Homeownership Resale Fund Recapitalization Memo 3.26.2026

Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust

April 30, 2026

Status of Active Commitments

	Active Projects	Sponsor	Rental Units	Ownership Units	Status	Total Cost	Trust Commitment	Loan Amount Per Unit	Trust Approval Date
1.	HomeBridge program	Housing Dept.	<i>currently approved buyers:</i>	15	121 scattered site units purchased by first time buyers to-date. Trust approved expanded subsidy share in August 2023. Three units under agreement.	N/A	\$44,200,000	1-br: 50% sale 2-br: 60% sale 3-br: 65% sale	several, including most recent: March 2026
2.	Homeownership Resale Program	Housing Dept.	<i>currently active units:</i>	23	Re-purchase, rehab and re-sale of affordable homeownership units to new homebuyers. Three units under agreement with a new buyer.	N/A	\$16,000,000		several, including most recent: March 2026
3.	Vail Court (139 Bishop Allen)	TBD	TBD	TBD	Trust and City hosted public meeting in 2017 to hear from the community on affordable housing needs and ideas for the redevelopment of Vail Court but that process was put on hold while the litigation was pending. Now that the litigation has been settled, planning for next steps underway. Commuuty meeting scheduled for 5/20/26.	TBD	TBD	TBD	N/A
4.	2072 Mass. Ave.	Capstone Hope	74		Capstone/Hope purchased site in April 2018 and initially sought a comprehensive permit for an affordable housing development but withdrew their request at the September 2021 BZA hearing; they remain committed to creating affordable housing at this site and are proceeding under the AHO. AHO community meetings held on 10/9/24, 10/30/24 (repeat of first meeting), and 5/29/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 10/7/25 and 3/3/26. A request for additional Trust funding for construction will be brought to an upcoming meeting.	TBD	\$5,071,000	TBD	February 2018 and June 2021
5.	52 New Street	JAS	106		JAS purchased the site in early 2020 and completed the AHO process in early 2022. Construction began in December 2023 and is underway. JAS received more than 2,000 applications and is in the process of selecting residents. Lease-up expected to begin in April 2026. JAS accepting application for 1- and 2-BR units through 5/20/26.	\$90,359,816	\$18,025,390	\$170,051	October 2019, June 2021, and January 2022
6.	Broadway Park (240 Broadway)	JAS	16		In March 2021, the Trust approved funding to create 15 affordable homeownership units at this JAS-owned site. JAS began a community process but put the FTHB project on pause and is now planning to develop the site as rental housing in conjunction with 37 Brookline Street. JAS has applied for state funds for the scattered-site Broadway Park/Brookline St development. AHO community meetings held on 7/24/25, 9/18/25 (repeat of first meeting), and 11/6/25. First and only Planning Board Advisory Design Consultation held on 3/10/26. Request for funding is on Trust's April meeting agenda.	TBD	\$3,600,000	\$225,000	March 2021
7.	Jefferson Park Federal (45-60; 61-75; 77-92; 93-108; Jackson Circle; 1; 2-19, 21-42; 109-124; 1000	CHA	278		In September 2021, the Trust approved funding to assist with the comprehensive modernization of Jefferson Park Federal. The CHA completed the AHO process in early 2022 and began construction of Phase 1 in early 2024 and began Phase 2 in August 2025.	\$309,675,326	\$43,611,615	\$156,876	September 2021
8.	4 Mellen / 1627 Mass. Ave.	HRI	29		In January 2022, the Trust approved funding for the purchase of this property from Lesley University to create affordable housing. The Trust approved additional predevelopment funding in August 2022. HRI acquired the site in August 2022 and completed the AHO process in late 2023. State funding approved June 2024. HRI closed on construction on 5/16/25. Groundbreaking held on 6/17/25. Construction underway.	\$33,034,091	\$10,425,000	\$359,483	Janaury 2022, August 2022, and January 2024
9.	35 Cherry Street	JAS		10	In March 2022, City Council approved the disposition of this property to the Trust for creation of affordable homeownership housing. Transfer from MIT complete. After RFP, Just A Start selected as developer in October 2023. In the June 2025 meeting, Trust approved construction and permanent financing. All financing closed 12/10/2025. Construction underway.	\$8,352,000	\$7,734,000	\$773,400 (\$475,200 permanent)	March 2022, May 2024, June 2025

10.	49 Sixth Street	POAH	46		In October 2022, the Trust approved funding to assist in the conversion of a portion of the Sacred Heart church property to affordable housing. POAH has completed the AHO process. POAH is assembling remaining financing in advance of beginning construction in 2024. Increase of Trust funds request approved 3/6/24; increase of Trust funds approved at 8/1/24 meeting. POAH closed on construction on 6/16/25. Construction underway.	\$44,050,313	\$11,250,000	\$244,565	October 2022, March 2024, and August 2024
11.	37 Brookline Street	JAS	13		JAS acquired the site in July 2023 and held a meet and greet meeting on 4/25/24. AHO community meetings held 7/10/24 and 9/11/24. Design work is underway. Community meeting to update abutters on new design held on 4/16/26.	TBD	\$2,064,000	TBD	March 2023
12.	650 Concord Ave	Neville Communities Inc (NCI)	71		In May 2023, the Trust approved funding to assist with capital repairs at Neville Place, the affordable assisted living portion of its campus. Increase of Trust funds request approved 3/28/24. Neville closed on the refinancing of their existing mortgage and Trust funding in February 2025. The initial capital repairs underway include the replacement of the roof and the replacement of immediate building system components, including two HVAC chillers. Initial work complete.	\$5,670,500	\$5,670,500	\$79,866	May 2023 and March 2024
13.	28-30 Wendell Street	HRI	95		HRI purchased 30 Wendell Street from Lesley University on 11/30/23 and purchased 28 Wendell from Lesley on 6/7/24. An initial AHO meeting for the 30 Wendell site was held 2/14/24. HRI restarted the process with AHO community meetings for the combined sites held 6/20/24, 11/14/24, and 3/6/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 8/5/25 and 11/18/25. Trust approved funding for construction at its February 2026 meeting; HRI seeking to secure remaining financing needed to begin construction.	TBD	\$30,357,000	TBD	August 2023, March 2024, and February 2025, February 2026
14.	87-101 Blanchard Rd	B'nai B'rith	110		In March 2024, the Trust approved \$18,169,120 in funding to BBH for the new construction of 110 affordable rental units for seniors. BBH completed the AHO process on 6/18/24. State funding awarded in February 2025. Construction closing is underway.	TBD	\$18,169,120	\$165,174	August 2023 and March 2024
15.	Print Shop Condominiums	Print Shop Condominiums		24	In October 2023, the Trust approved up to \$3,000,000 to assist this all-affordable condominium building with building envelope repairs starting with the replacement of the roof. First phase of loan (up to \$820,000) closed 11/21/24. Roof replacement complete. Predevelopment work for second phase is ongoing.	TBD	\$3,000,000	TBD	October 2023
16.	102 Sherman St/Walden Square Apartments II	Winn	95		Trust approved funding for the construction of two new buildings containing 95 affordable rental units on a portion of the existing Walden Sq I site; Winn completed the AHO community process in Fall 2023 and presented the proposed to the Planning Board at the two Advisory Design Consultations on 3/12/24 and 7/2/24. Planning Board final design report issued on 8/1/2024 and accepted by Trust on 10/24/24. State funding award in July 2025. Beginning to prepare for a 2026 construction closing.	\$80,413,447	\$18,750,000	\$197,368	June 2024
17.	Rindge Commons South	JAS	77		JAS will be seeking the remaining financing needed to begin construction on the second phase of their two-phase Rindge Commons development which received a comprehensive permit in August 2020. The Trust approved funding of \$9,051,615 for the second phase, Rindge Commons South, at its September 2024 meeting.	TBD	\$9,051,615	\$117,553	September 2024
18.	1826 & 1840 Massachusetts Avenue	JAS	TBD		Trust approved funding for JAS to purchase two parking lots from Lesley University to develop into new affordable housing, as well as some predevelopment funding. Properties were acquired 11/26/24.	TBD	\$10,900,000	TBD	September 2024
19.	1, 3, 5 Frost Street & 20, 22, 28 Roseland Street/ Frost Terrace II	Capstone Hope Zahler	TBD		Trust approved funding for the development team behind Frost Terrace I Apartments to purchase six sites in Porter Square to develop a second affordable housing development, Frost Terrace II Apartments, as well as some predevelopment funding. Properties were acquired 12/13/24.	TBD	\$19,839,500	TBD	September 2024
20.	12-14 Laurel Street	JAS		4	Trust approved funding to assist with predevelopment activities related to the development of 12-14 Laurel Street. First AHO meeting held on 9/11/25. Predevelopment funding closed 1/12/26.	TBD	\$125,000	\$31,250	June 2025

21.	31-37 Mellen Street	CHA	TBD		Trust approved funding to assist with acquisition of 31-37 Mellen Street. Properties were acquired on 12/31/25.	TBD	\$9,800,000	TBD	September 2025
21.	Corcoran Park - Phase 1	CHA	67		Trust approved funding to assist with the construction of 67 rental units in this first phase. The CHA held AHO community meetings on 2/13/25 and 10/9/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 12/16/25 and 3/10/26.	TBD	\$14,405,000	\$215,000	September 2025
22.	(confidential until purchased)	CHA	TBD		Trust approved funding to assist with acquisition of new site.	TBD			December 2025
22.	(confidential until purchased)	CHA	TBD		Trust approved funding to assist with acquisition of new site.	TBD			December 2025
23.	16-28 Porter Street	CHA	TBD		Trust approved funding to assist with acquisition of 31-37 Mellen Street. Properties were acquired on 4/15/2026.	TBD	\$6,000,000	TBD	January 2026
24.	(confidential until purchased)	HRI	TBD		Trust approved funding to assist with acquisition of new site.	TBD			February 2026
			1,153	Total Units					

Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
Status of Active Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Developments

	AHO Development	Developer	AHO Status & Activity	Rental Units	Ownership Units	Development Status
1.	52 New Street	Just-A-Start Corporation	AHO Community meetings held on 2/25/21, 3/25/21, and 4/15/21. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 10/26/21 and 1/4/22. Final Planning Board report issued 1/20/22 and was transmitted to the Trust on 1/27/22.	106		AHO Process Complete; see above
2.	Jefferson Park Federal (45-60; 61-75; 77-92; 93-108; Jackson Circle; 1; 2-19, 21-42; 109-124; 1000 Jackson Place)	Cambridge Housing Authority	AHO Community meetings held on 3/2/21, 4/1/21, and 10/19/21. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held 11/9/21 and 2/15/22. Final Planning Board report issued 3/9/22 and transmitted to the Trust on 3/24/22.	278		AHO Process Complete; see above
3.	Walden Square II (102 Sherman Street)	WinnDevelopment Companies	AHO Community meetings held on 3/23/21, 4/13/21 and 5/27/21. Submission for first Planning Board Advisory Design Consultation was withdrawn by developer on 11/16/21. Design revised based on community comments. Community meetings held 2/23/22, 8/29/23 (rescheduled from 8/1/23) and 9/14/23. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held 3/12/24 and 7/2/24. Final Planning Board report issued 7/24/23 transmitted to the Trust on 8/1/24.	95		AHO Process Complete; see above
4.	49 6th Street	POAH & Urban Spaces	AHO Community meetings held on 7/27/21 and 11/3/21. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held 4/5/22 and 6/28/22. Planning Board report issued 7/14/22 and transmitted to the Trust on 8/4/2022.	46		AHO Process Complete; see above
6.	1627 Mass. Ave./4 Mellen	Homeowner's Rehab Inc	AHO community meetings held 9/15/22 and 3/15/23. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held 7/18/23 and 12/5/23. Final Planning Board report issued 12/20/23 and transmitted to the Trust on 1/25/2024.	29		AHO Process Complete; see above
7.	87-101 Blanchard Road	B'nai Brith Housing	AHO community meetings held 10/4/23 and 11/10/23. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held 1/23/24 and 6/4/24. Final Planning Board report issued 6/18/24 and transmitted to the Trust on 6/27/24.	110		AHO Process Complete; see above
8.	28-30 Wendell Street	Homeowner's Rehab Inc	First AHO community meeting held 2/14/24. HRI restarted the AHO community meeting to include 28 Wendell Street. AHO community meetings for combined sites held 6/20/24, 11/14/24, and 3/6/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 8/5/25 and 11/18/25. Final Planning Board report issued 12/11/25 and transmitted to the Trust on 1/22/26.	95		AHO Process Complete; see above
9.	35 Cherry Street	Just-A-Start Corporation	AHO community meetings held 5/15/24, 6/26/24, and 8/21/24.		10	AHO Process Complete; see above
10.	37 Brookline Street	Just-A-Start Corporation	AHO community meetings held 7/24/24 and 9/11/24.	13		AHO Process Complete; see above
11.	2072 Massachusetts Avenue	Capstone Communities	AHO community meetings held on 10/9/24, 10/30/24 (repeat of first meeting), and 5/29/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 10/7/25 and 3/3/26. Final Planning Board report issued 3/24/26 and transmitted to the Trust on 4/30/26.	74		AHO Process Complete; see above

12.	Corcoran Park - Phase 1	Cambridge Housing Authority	AHO community meetings held on 2/13/25 and 10/9/25. Planning Board Advisory Design Consultations held on 12/16/25 and 3/10/26. Final Planning Board report issued 3/31/26 and transmitted to the Trust on 4/30/26.	67		AHO Process Complete; see above
13.	71 Cherry Street	Cambridge Redevelopment Authority	First AHO community meeting held on 2/19/25.	TBD		AHO community meetings underway
14.	Broadway Park	Just-A-Start Corporation	AHO community meetings held on 7/24/25 and 11/6/25. First and only Planing Board Advisory Design Consultation held on 3/10/26. Final Planning Board report issued 4/6/26 and transmitted to the Trust on 4/30/26.	16		AHO Process Complete; see above
15.	12-14 Laurel Street	Just-A-Start Corporation	First AHO community meeting held on 9/11/25.		4	AHO community meetings underway
				943		Total Units

Status of Active Inclusionary Housing Developments

	Approved Active Projects	Developer	Status	Rental Units	Ownership Units	Applicable zoning
1.	40 Thorndike Street, Court House	Leggat/McCall	Covenant recorded 7/23/21. Building permit issued 3/2/21. Tenant selection underway.	48		All units are affordable
2.	121 Broadway	Boston Properties (BXP)	Covenant recorded 12/28/23. Building permit issued 3/21/24. Under construction.	102		MXD zoning - 20% Inclusionary + 5% Middle-Income
3.	8 Winter Street	S. Jafry	Covenant recorded 7/18/2024. Building permit issued. New ownership; reviewing application to amend building permit.	3		11.203 @ 20% of floor area

Under Development:

153

0

Completed Units:

1,231

215

All Units:

1,384

215

1,599

	Active Pipeline Projects	Developer	Status	Affordable Units	Market Units	Applicable zoning
1.	75 First Street	Urban Spaces	IHP plan approved; AHC recorded; building permit pending	16	90	11.203 @ 20% of floor area
2.	34 Wendell	ZRE	IHP plan approved; AHC recorded; building permit pending	8	43	11.203 @ 20% of floor area
3.	5 Craigie Circle	Rothman	IHP plan approved; AHC recorded; building permit pending	2	12	11.203 @ 20% of floor area
Current subsidy amount needed to create Affordable Dwelling Unit Net Floor Area for Inclusionary Housing not created pursuant to Section 11.203.3 (i):				\$534 / per square foot		last update: 1/23/2025

Incentive Zoning Contributions - FY2026

	Development	Contribution Amount	Rate	
1.	3 Alewife Park	\$216,710	\$ 33.34	balance after exempted GFA
2.	125 Cambridge Park Drive	\$1,292,292	\$ 33.34	
3.	290 Binney	\$14,023,037	\$ 33.34	
		\$15,532,039	Total FY2026	
		\$17,751,365	Total FY2025	
Current Incentive Zoning Housing Contribution Rate pursuant to Section 11.202 (b):		\$37.72 / per square foot		last update: 4/1/2026

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
From: Anna Dolmatch, Senior Manager for Homeownership
Christine Yu, Associate Housing Development Planner
Date: April 30, 2026
Re: 12-14 Laurel Street Permanent and Construction Funding Request

Just A Start (JAS) is requesting up to \$2,165,584 in construction and permanent financing to create four units of affordable ownership housing at 12-14 Laurel Street, located in the Cambridgeport neighborhood. The Trust has already provided \$125,000 in predevelopment funds, so this would bring the total Trust financing for this project to \$2,290,584.

As a reminder, this property is currently owned by a non-profit who has run it as low-cost communal housing for decades. The non-profit is dissolving and will transfer the property to JAS for \$1 with the conditions that it be redeveloped into affordable housing and that one elderly long-term resident is able to exercise his right to return once the construction is complete. All residents are expected to relocate by the end of May.

The existing building is in poor condition and will be demolished. Under the provisions of the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO), the project will create one fully accessible one-bedroom flat and three three-bedroom multi-floor units. All units will be restricted to households earning up to 80% Area Median Income (AMI). Each unit will have a separated entrance, individual storage in the basement, private deck space, and shared common green space in the rear. Staff have worked with the JAS team to ensure the units meet or exceed the Homeownership Unit Standards.

The total development budget is \$3,419,345, or \$854,836 per unit, similar to the construction numbers for 35 Cherry Street, the most recent homeownership development project. Hard costs are budgeted at \$497 per square foot and soft costs are budgeted at approximately \$183,000 per unit. Soft costs are higher than 35 Cherry Street's due to higher real estate taxes, relocation costs, and increased insurance premiums.

In addition to the requested Trust funding, other sources include \$210,000 in permanent financing from Federal Home Loan Bank's (FHLB) Affordable Housing Program, \$865,000 in construction financing from East Cambridge Savings Bank, and condo sales. Sales proceeds are estimated at \$918,000 or an average of \$306,000 per unit for the three three-bedroom units. The sales prices will not be set until the units are ready to be marketed, so the amount of sales proceeds may vary.

Uses	Amount	Per Unit
Hard Costs	2,366,702	591,675
A&E	201,500	50,375
Other Soft Costs	531,143	132,786
Reserves	20,000	5,000
Fee/OH	300,000	75,000
TOTAL	3,419,345	854,836

Sources	Amount	Per Unit
CAHT (Predev)	125,000	31,250
CAHT (Permanent)	2,165,584	541,396
Unit Sales	918,761	229,690
FHLB	210,000	52,500
Constr Loan	865,000	216,250
Constr Loan Repayment	-865,000	-216,250
TOTAL	3,419,345	854,836

The accessible one-bedroom unit will be owned by JAS and rented to the returning elderly resident. Once they vacate, the unit will be sold through the City's Resale Pool. The current estimated sales price for this unit is approximately \$250,000. However, the price will be set based on income limits, interest rates, and other inputs at the time the unit is available.

The sales proceeds from the three-bedroom units will be used to repay the construction loan. Any remaining sales proceeds will go to repay the Trust loan. Sales proceeds from the eventual sale of the one-bedroom unit will also be repaid to the Trust. While JAS owns the one-bedroom unit, any rental payments in excess of operating costs will also be repaid to the Trust.

We recommend structuring the financing as one loan with the requirement that the Trust is repaid all unit sales proceeds remaining after payment of JAS's 10% developer fee and the repayment of the private bank loan.

If Trust funding is approved, JAS is targeting a July 2026 closing as the FHLB funds must be used by June 2026. JAS has the option to ask for an extension of twelve months from FHLB if a commitment from the Trust is provided. They estimate starting construction in October 2026 and completion in early 2028. We anticipate that the Housing Department will manage the marketing and buyer selection process.

RECOMMENDATION:

We recommend that the Trust approve JAS's request for up to \$2,165,584 in permanent and construction funding, and the conversion of the existing \$125,000 predevelopment loan to permanent funding. This project will develop 12-14 Laurel Street into new and permanently affordable homes for four low-income families.

In preparing this request and recommendation, Housing Staff reviewed JAS's request with Raffi Freeman, Susan Schlesinger, and Jim Stockard, who agreed with Staff's recommendation to bring this request to the Trust for discussion.

As a condition of loan closing, the Borrower shall complete the following requirements, satisfactory to Lender in its sole discretion, satisfactory to Lender in its sole discretion:

1. Staff approval of design and development plan;
2. Staff approval of final development and operating budgets;
3. Firm written commitments from all funding sources, sufficient to complete transaction;
4. Environmental assessment and/or remediation plan;
5. Staff approval of buyer selection and marketing plan;
6. Staff approval of construction plans and specifications;
7. Submission of final construction bid and trade items from general contractor along with construction contract Borrower has entered into with contractor;
8. Zoning approval and permitting necessary to project;
9. Standard Trust terms and conditions, including:
 - All affordable units shall be subject to the Trust's affordable housing covenant to be signed at or prior to loan closing including the requirement for permanent affordability;
 - The term of the affordable housing covenant shall be ninety-nine (99) years from the date of the sale of the affordable units to the first eligible homeowner;
 - All units shall be restricted to households earning up to 80% AMI, as defined in the affordable housing covenant;
 - The loan shall be secured as a second mortgage loan of up to \$2,290,584, subordinate only to private bank financing on terms acceptable to Housing Staff;
 - The loan shall have an interest rate of 0%, or such other rate approved by Housing Staff;
 - The term of the loan shall be twenty-four (24) months;
 - The loan shall be subject to a penalty rate of 8% compounding annually, applicable upon violation of the affordable housing covenant;
 - Execution of all loan documents, including but not limited to the Loan and Security Agreement;
 - Upon completion of the project, the loan shall be partially repaid from all sales proceeds remaining after payment of the first mortgage loan, seller's reasonable closing costs, and the per-unit share of the developer fee outstanding at the time the unit is sold;
 - Upon sale of any unit approved by the Lender, the per-unit share of the remaining unpaid principal and interest will be forgiven and the loan partially released for that unit;
 - Borrower may retain ownership of one unit indefinitely for the purpose of providing affordable housing to an eligible resident as approved by Housing Staff. Upon termination of residency, this unit must be sold in accordance with a buyer selection plan approved by Housing Staff. If Borrower ownership of this unit extends beyond

the sale of all other units, the mortgage on the entire property may be released and the Borrower's unit's pro-rata share of the loan principal may be secured by a separate lien solely on the Borrower's unit;

- The loan shall provide for repayment of loan principal and interest from any rent collected on the Borrower's unit in excess of unit operating costs, including a reasonable management fee;
- Loan shall be non-recourse; and,
- Any reductions in project costs or increases in non-Trust funding sources shall be used to reduce the amount of the Trust commitment.

During the construction period, the Borrower shall comply with the following requirements:

- Notify Lender's Construction Manager of all construction meetings and copy on meeting minutes;
- Copy Lender on all change orders;
- Copy Lender on all funding requisitions to other sources; and,
- Submit requisitions in form acceptable to Lender.

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
From: Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager of Housing Development
Christine Yu, Associate Housing Planner
Date: April 30, 2026
Re: 37 Brookline Street and 240 Broadway (Broadway Park) – Construction Funding Request

Just A Start (JAS) is requesting up to \$3,990,875 in additional Trust funding to enable the construction of 30 affordable rental units at their scattered-site development at 37 Brookline Street and 240 Broadway (Broadway Park).

JAS is also requesting that the funding previously provided by the Trust for acquisition and predevelopment be converted to permanent financing at construction closing. As you may recall, the Trust provided \$1,700,000 in funding for the acquisition of 37 Brookline Street in 2023, along with \$111,111 in predevelopment funding for use at both sites. With this new Trust request, the total amount of permanent Trust financing requested for the consolidated Brookline/Broadway Park development will be \$5,801,986 or \$193,400 per unit.

JAS has long been looking to redevelop Broadway Park and plans to consolidate it with the development of 37 Brookline Street as combining the two sites into a single scattered-site rental project will make each development more financially feasible. 37 Brookline Street is a 6,582 square foot property in Cambridgeport, which was purchased by JAS in July 2023 from the estate of the late local artist, Peter Valentine. The Brookline Street property currently contains a vacant three-family building, which will be demolished and replaced with a new affordable five-story multi-family rental development containing 14 units.

Broadway Park is a 4,175 square foot surface parking lot on the corner of Broadway and Windsor Street and has served as a second parking lot for JAS staff and residents of the George Close building across the street. JAS plans to construct a new affordable six-story multi-family rental development containing 16 units.

Under the provisions of the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO), JAS will create a total of 30 rental units across both properties. The unit breakdown is as follows:

Unit Mix	37 Brookline	Broadway Park	Total
1 BRs	6	1	7
2 BRs	5	11	16
3 BRs	3	4	7
Total	14	16	30

All units will be affordable for households earning at or below 60% AMI, per the tax credit program requirements, with some units being more deeply affordable units for households earning at or below 30% AMI. Three units (one at 37 Brookline Street and two at Broadway Park) will be fully accessible. Both buildings are designed to meet Passive House and Enterprise Green Communities standards.

JAS completed the AHO community process for 37 Brookline Street in September 2024 and did not need to bring the proposal to the Planning Board for an Advisory Design Review Consultation as the project does not exceed the new thresholds which apply to AHO projects, following the 2025 multi-family zoning amendments. JAS completed the Broadway Park AHO community process in November 2025 and presented the proposal at the first and only required Planning Board Advisory Design Review Consultation on March 10, 2026. The Planning Board final report was issued on April 6, 2026, and is also being transmitted to the Trust as separate agenda item today.

While the Planning Board supported the creation of affordable housing at this site, their final report included a range of suggestions for continued design refinements, which they recommended JAS explore further prior to finalizing their design and seeking a building permit. Their comments were mostly focused on the building's exterior façade, such as revisiting the uses of color, materials, and façade articulation. They also shared comments on potential site and landscape improvements, specifically around the reconfiguration of the ground floor.

JAS is in the process of reviewing the recommendations and met with City staff — including those from the Housing Department, Community Development, and the Department of Public Works (DPW) — to share and receive feedback on potential changes. Additionally, JAS is in discussions with DPW regarding the issue of the street trees, which currently protrude over the Broadway Park site and would be impacted by construction.

Housing staff are encouraging JAS to consider the comments and to explore continued refinements as they work to finalize their designs and are recommending that the Trust delay acceptance of that report until we know more about how JAS can respond to the Board's comments.

DEVELOPMENT BUDGET:

The total development cost (TDC) for the combined sites is budgeted at \$24.9 million (\$12.5 million for 37 Brookline Street and \$12.4 million for Broadway Park). The TDC per unit (\$831,109), hard costs per square foot (\$409), and soft costs per unit (\$102,446) are lower than other recent new developments, reflecting the fact that these are smaller wood-framed buildings and there is no acquisition cost for one of the sites. JAS budgeted operating expenses at approximately \$14,400 per unit, which is in line with other recent developments.

JAS's anticipated total Trust funding for the consolidated development is \$5,801,986 (\$193,400 per unit), of which \$1,811,111 has been disbursed to date for acquisition and predevelopment. The City has also committed \$500,000 in Community Development Block Grant funds to assist with predevelopment, of which \$480,514 has been disbursed to date. The total Trust/City funding will be \$6,301,986 or \$210,066 per unit.

In addition to local funding, other sources will include approximately \$6.0 million in 9% Federal Low Income Housing Tax Credits (LIHTC), \$2.0 million in State LIHTC, \$5.3 million in soft state funding, \$4.9 million in permanent debt, \$110,000 in Mass Save funding, and \$279,272 in Deferred Developer Fees.

The following table provides a summary of the development budget for 37 Brookline Street/Broadway Park compared to other recent projects of roughly similar scale:

	Project	240 Broadway	37 Brookline Street	37 Brookline St + Broadway	35 Cherry Street	4 Mellen / 1627 Mass Ave	49 6th Street	Rindge Commons North
	Budget Type + Date	Proposed Constr - Feb 2026	Proposed Constr - Feb 2026	Proposed Constr - Feb 2026	Constru Closing - Nov 2025	Constru Closing - Jun 2025	Constru Closing - Jun 2025	As Built - Feb 2024
	Total Units	16	14	30	10	29	46	24
	Total Bedrooms	35	25	60	24	55	91	38
Per Unit, BR, Sq Ft	TDC/Unit	774,438	895,876	831,109	840,200	1,110,401	968,227	755,521
	TDC/Unit w/o Acq	774,438	774,447	774,442	840,200	862,125	920,204	745,528
	CAHT & City/Unit	166,319	260,063	210,066	486,200	359,483	244,565	154,444
	TDC/BRs	354,029	501,690	415,554	350,083	585,484	489,434	477,171
	CAHT & City/BR	76,031	145,635	105,033	202,583	189,545	123,626	97,544
	Total HC/sq. ft.	382	446	409	447	483	513	421
USES	Acquisition	0	1,700,000	1,700,000	0	7,200,000	2,209,055	239,850
	Total Hard Costs	9,335,500	8,168,616	17,504,116	6,284,000	16,749,173	31,340,230	12,533,884
	Total Soft Costs	1,639,100	1,434,269	3,073,369	1,298,000	5,321,628	7,385,380	3,386,548
	Fee/OH + Reserves	1,416,400	1,239,373	2,655,773	820,000	2,930,830	3,603,792	1,972,230
	TOTAL USES	12,391,000	12,542,258	24,933,258	8,402,000	32,201,631	44,538,458	18,132,512
SOURCES	City/CAHT	2,661,100	3,640,886	6,301,986	4,862,000	10,425,000	11,250,000	3,706,658
	Debt	2,622,400	2,294,600	4,917,000	0	4,970,000	6,190,000	3,425,000
	EOHLC/State Soft	2,593,300	2,656,700	5,250,000	0	4,100,000	2,469,000	2,099,000
	Tax Credit Equity	4,306,700	3,768,300	8,075,000	0	11,487,021	14,706,492	7,775,066
	Def Fee/Eq	148,900	130,372	279,272	0	392,070	200,000	769,836
	Other Sources	58,600	51,400	110,000	3,540,000	827,540	9,722,966	356,952
	TOTAL SOURCES	12,391,000	12,542,258	24,933,258	8,402,000	32,201,631	44,538,458	18,132,512

NEXT STEPS:

JAS is working on addressing feedback from the Planning Board and potentially incorporating some of them into the final development plan. Once they evaluate all the suggestions, a formal update will be provided to City staff. JAS applied to the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities for state funding in March 2026, and is waiting to hear whether they will receive state financing this year. They hope to have all required permitting and financing secured in time to begin construction in January 2027 with initial occupancy in summer 2028.

RECOMMENDATION:

The redevelopment plans for these two sites will result in 30 new high-quality, energy efficient affordable homes for low and moderate-income households.

Staff recommend that the Trust approve JAS's funding request for up to \$3,990,875 in new Trust permanent financing, and their request for combining the previously approved \$1,811,111 in short-term financing with the new permanent financing as a single permanent loan commitment of \$5,801,986.

In preparing this request and recommendation, Housing Staff reviewed JAS's request with Raffi Freeman, Susan Schlesinger, and Jim Stockard, who agreed with Staff's recommendation to bring this request to the Trust for discussion.

The loan commitment of up to \$5,801,986 in permanent funding shall be made contingent on the Trust's standard terms and conditions including, but not limited to, the following:

1. Staff approval of final design and development plans;
2. Staff approval of final development and operating budgets, including twenty (20) year operating proforma;
3. Firm written commitments from all funding sources, sufficient to complete transaction;
4. Environmental assessments and/or remediation plans;
5. Staff approval of tenant selection and marketing plan, which shall be consistent with the City's marketing preferences including but not limited to maximum preferences for Cambridge residents; the tenant selection plan will also include the City's demographics reporting requirements, as requested and in a form acceptable to Staff;
6. Staff approval of construction plans and specifications;
7. Submission of final construction bid and trade items from general contractor along with construction contract Borrower has entered into with contractor;
8. Zoning approval and permitting necessary to project;
9. The Trust's review, consideration, and acceptance of Planning Board final AHO advisory design review reports and any responses from JAS pursuant to the advisory design review;
10. Standard Trust terms and conditions, including:
 - All affordable units shall be subject to the Trust's affordable housing covenant to be signed at or prior to loan closing;
 - The term of the affordable housing covenant shall be the longest period allowable by law, or fifty (50) years or one year longer than the longest restriction on the property now or in the future, as approved by Staff;
 - All units shall be restricted to households earning at or below 80% AMI, as defined in the affordable housing covenant;
 - The loan shall be secured as a shared second mortgage loan of up to \$5,801,986, subordinate only to private first mortgage financing on terms acceptable to Staff;
 - The loan shall have an interest rate of 3% compounding annually, or such other rate approved by Staff;
 - The term of the loan shall be fifty (50) years;
 - The loan shall be subject to a penalty rate of 8% compounding annually; applicable upon violation of the affordability housing covenant;
 - Staff approval the terms of any sponsor loan, if applicable, including a requirement that any sponsor loan be subordinate to Trust funding and that the interest rate be no greater than the rate of the Trust financing, or such other rate approved by Staff;

- Execution of all loan documents, including but not limited to the Loan and Security Agreement;
- All principal and accrued interest shall be due and payable at the end of the term; however, the repayment date may be extended for an additional term upon approval by the Trust and extension of the affordability period;
- The loan shall provide for repayment of principal and interest from 50% of net cash flow from the development, or through other means, or other terms acceptable to Staff;
- Loan shall be non-recourse; and,
- Any reductions in project costs or increases in non-Trust funding sources shall be used to reduce the amount of the Trust commitment, as determined and approved by Staff.

During the construction period, the Borrower shall comply with the following requirements:

- Notify Lender's Construction Manager of all construction meetings and copy on meeting minutes;
- Copy Lender on all change orders;
- Copy Lender on all funding requisitions to other sources; and,
- Submit requisitions in form acceptable to Lender.

Following lease-up, the Borrower shall comply with the following requirements:

- Provide required demographic information per approved tenant selection plan; and,
- Project's as-built and operating budget; and,
- Provide data on the project's operating costs, upon request, in format acceptable to Housing Staff.

**MEMORANDUM**

To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
From: Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager of Housing Development
Christine Yu, Associate Housing Planner
Date: April 30, 2026
Re: 240 Broadway (Broadway Park) – Planning Board AHO Design Consultation Report

Just A Start (JAS) has been working with staff from the Housing Department (Housing) and the Community Development Department (CDD) on its 240 Broadway (Broadway Park) development, which will create a new six-story building containing 16 affordable rental units, to ensure the proposal met AHO zoning and other requirements. The project recently completed the advisory design review process with the Planning Board under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). This project was subject to only one Planning Board Advisory Consultation, which was held on March 10, 2026, because it exceeds the height limit of the underlying zoning district but does not meet the size threshold for a two-session review process.

The AHO requires that the results of the design review process be shared with the Affordable Housing Trust. The Planning Board report is attached and includes:

- Planning Board Final Report of AHO Design Consultation (4/6/2026), including:
 - CDD Staff Memo (3/4/2026); and,
 - DPW Staff Memo (3/5/2026).

As noted in the attached final report, the Planning Board expressed support for the creation of affordable housing at this location and supported the proposed project's height and inclusion of family-sized units. However, the Board also advised that the project could benefit from continued design consultation with City staff regarding certain aspects of the proposed development, particularly around the building façade. The following summarizes some of the specific recommendations, as described in more detail in the attached materials:

- Explore ways to refine building's exterior through revisiting approaches to façade articulation, façade materials, uses of colors, and window trim/proportions;
- Consider incorporating more residential features, such as mullions and window sills;

- Explore ways to improve appearance of building's proportions (e.g., top floor appears "added on" and bottom floor appears "squat");
- Work with the Department of Public Works to protect the existing street trees during construction;
- Explore ways to further improve the site layout and ground-floor experience, to the extent feasible, such as adding/orienting windows to offer resident views of adjacent park; adding landscaping; minimizing the visual impact of the transformer; increasing ground-floor fenestration and exterior doors where/if possible; and,
- Explore whether changes to the locations/layout of ground-floor uses would improve functionality and better activate the space.

Project Overview:

The development of Broadway Park involves the new construction of a six-story building. The site has been being used a second parking lot for JAS staff and residents of the George Close building across the street. The development proposal involves the creation of 16 affordable rental units, almost all of which will be family-sized. This project is permitted under the AHO. Under JAS's AHO submission, all units will be affordable to households earning at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI), with some units being more deeply affordable to those making at or below 30% AMI.

More information on JAS's proposed development, including the materials that JAS submitted to the Planning Board and presentation materials, can be seen on the Housing Department's Broadway Park project page at:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Housing/240broadwaybroadwaypark>.

Housing Department Recommendation:

All approvals of Trust funding for AHO projects are conditioned on the Trust's review and consideration of the final Planning Board report. Even after the Trust votes to accept the final Planning Board reports, Housing staff will continue to work with the AHO developers to ensure that all remaining design recommendations are considered and oftentimes able to be incorporated into the final development plans.

In the case of Broadway Park, the Planning Board's final report included more design recommendations for JAS to consider than we have seen in most other final reports. While we do not expect that JAS will necessarily be able to update their designs to address all of the Board's comments, we understand that JAS is in the process of reviewing the report and plans to meet with City staff to share their response to the Board's comments. Given this, Housing staff recommend that the Trust begin to review the attached report but wait to take a vote on accepting the report until Housing staff can bring back an update to the Trust on how JAS plans to respond to the items noted in the Planning Board's final report.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: April 6, 2026

Subject: Final Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory
Design Consultation Procedure Compliance Certification

Project Location: 240 Broadway

Date of Planning Board Meeting: March 10, 2026

Overview

The Planning Board (the “Board”) met on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, to review and comment on the design for 240 Broadway, a multifamily development by Just A Start (the “Developer”) under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in Section 11.207 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board reviewed a plan set submitted by the Developer dated February 10, 2026, as well as staff memos from the Community Development Department (CDD) and Department of Public Works (DPW), which are attached. This proposal is subject to a single-session Planning Board Advisory Consultation because it exceeds the height limit of the underlying zoning district but does not meet the size threshold for a two-session review process.

Proposal Description

Just A Start is proposing to build a new 6-story building with 16 affordable rental apartments at the corner of Broadway and Windsor Street. The 16 proposed units include four 3-bedroom, eleven 2-bedroom, and one 1-bedroom units, and will be restricted to households earning under 60% and in some cases under 30% of the Area Median Income (AMI). No off-street automobile parking spaces and 17 long-term bicycle parking spaces are proposed. The total gross floor area of the project is 24,675 square feet and the lot will include 577 square feet of open space. The site is in a Residence C-1 district, which permits up to 4 stories above grade generally and up to 6 stories above grade on sites with a lot area of at least 5,000 square feet for residential uses that meet inclusionary housing requirements. The lot area in this case is 4,675 square feet. Broadway is designated as an AHO Corridor. Up to 12 stories above grade are permitted for an AHO Project on an AHO Corridor.

Board Comments

Board members expressed support for the proposed housing program overall, specifically commending the inclusion of family-sized units. Board members also found the proposed height

and massing responded positively to the area context, complementing the other buildings that frame the intersection. Board members acknowledged that compliance with the Flood Resilience Standards in the Zoning Ordinance creates some design challenges on the ground floor but offered several suggestions to further enhance the design, which are detailed below.

Board members had several detailed criticisms of the design, mostly focused on the approach to building façades. As the proposal continues to develop, Board members urged the developer to focus on the following design improvements:

Site Design

- Use plantings and trellises more intentionally to soften the frontage and avoid creating a restaurant/bar-like appearance at the ground level.

Building Design

Design Expression, Materiality, and Color

- Façade articulation and materiality need more refinement and coherence.
- A tripartite approach may not be necessary, or could be simplified, pending further design exploration.
- Top floor appears “added on” and needs rethinking to relate to the rest of the building – too tall, color mismatch, fenestration not coherent with the rest of the building.
- Review the use of trim and vertical pilasters; trim draws the eye in conflicting directions and doesn’t match the upper levels.
- Consider providing a more residential character and approach through materials and details, e.g., add mullions, expressed sills, headers, and enhanced trim to awning windows.
- Consider incorporating paneling to visually enlarge perceived window openings and improve overall window proportions.
- Consider different façade colors, especially the beige middle section, and consider the relationship with the adjacent pink and purple neighboring buildings.

Ground-Floor Treatment, Streetscape, and Pedestrian Experience

- Improve the pedestrian experience around the building and provide a better relationship between the ground floor and public realm.
- Where feasible, add more transparency and doors at street level.
- Reorganize the ground floor plan to improve functionality and activate the space. Consider bringing more active spaces, such as the laundry room, to the exterior. Adding a street-facing door to the trash room would improve operations.

- Consider opportunities for better engagement with the adjacent park, e.g., additional windows and landscaping along the park-facing facade.
- Avoid making the transformer location the most prominent building entrance.
- The transformer door could incorporate subtle color or artwork.
- Consider increasing first floor height, or increase perceived height by moving material up the facade, to avoid a “squat” appearance.

Precedents and Contextual Relationship

- Revisit successful local precedents, such as 432 Norfolk St, that have a neutral palette, integrated trellises, and continuous planters.
- Respond more thoughtfully to context, including color relationships and scale transitions.

Construction Impacts

- Work with the Department of Public Works to protect existing street trees during construction.

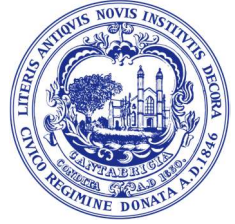
AHO Compliance Summary

This report certifies that the developer has completed the Advisory Design Consultation Process in order to comply with the procedure for development under the Affordable Housing overlay set forth in Section 11.207.8 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.

Submitted for the Planning Board,

Swaathi Joseph

Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Tom Sieniewicz, Chair.



To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: March 4, 2026

Re: Affordable Housing Overlay Design Consultation **AHO-11, 240 Broadway**

Overview

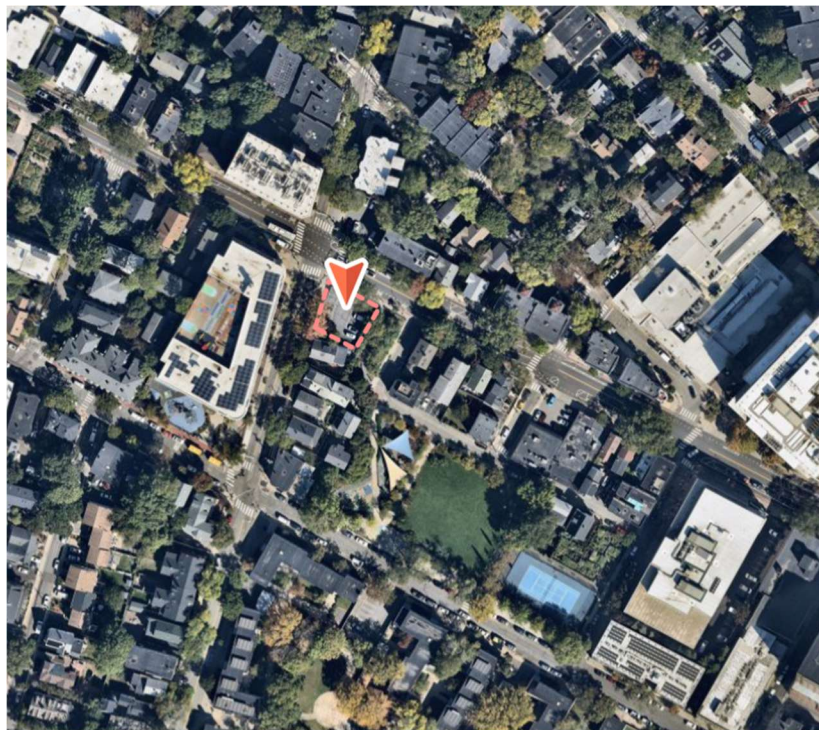
Submission Type:	Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Review
Applicant:	Just A Start
Zoning District(s):	Residence C-1; Affordable Housing Overlay, AHO Corridor
Proposal Summary:	Construction of a 6-story building to create 16 affordable rental units and amenities under the AHO.
Planning Board Action:	Review and comment on conformance with AHO Development Standards, City Development Guidelines for the proposal area, Design Guidelines for AHO, and Citywide Urban Design Objectives.
Memo Contents:	CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report
Other Staff Reports:	None

Zoning & Development Staff Report

Site & Zoning Context

Site Context

The site consists of a single parcel at the corner of Broadway and Windsor Street in The Port neighborhood. This site is within half a mile of both Kendall and Central Square MBTA Stations, as well as several bus stops. The Port is a high-density residential neighborhood with around seven thousand residents, bounded by Hampshire Street to the north, the Boston & Albany Railroad to the east, Prospect Street to the west, and Massachusetts Avenue to the south. The major commercial center and transit center of The Port lies in Central Square with the main commercial strip along the Massachusetts Avenue edge, while smaller commercial areas exist along Main Street, Prospect Street, and Hampshire Street. Most of The Port is residential in character. There is a nearby scattering of 1-2 story retail and restaurant uses, as well as 2-3 story residential uses. Kitty corner to the site is the former [George Close Company building](#). This 6-story brick building underwent a residential conversion in 1976. It was an example of an early adaptive reuse of a large industrial building and today houses 61 affordable and subsidized apartments operated by Just A Start. It was previously a candy manufacturing factory from 1910 to 1939 and a laboratory and medical equipment manufacturing facility from 1941 to 1971. Directly across Windsor Street from the site is the 4-story brick Fletcher-Maynard Academy building. On its eastern edge, the site directly abuts the [Greene-Rose Heritage Park](#) and connector Public Open Space. The site currently contains an asphalt surface parking lot.



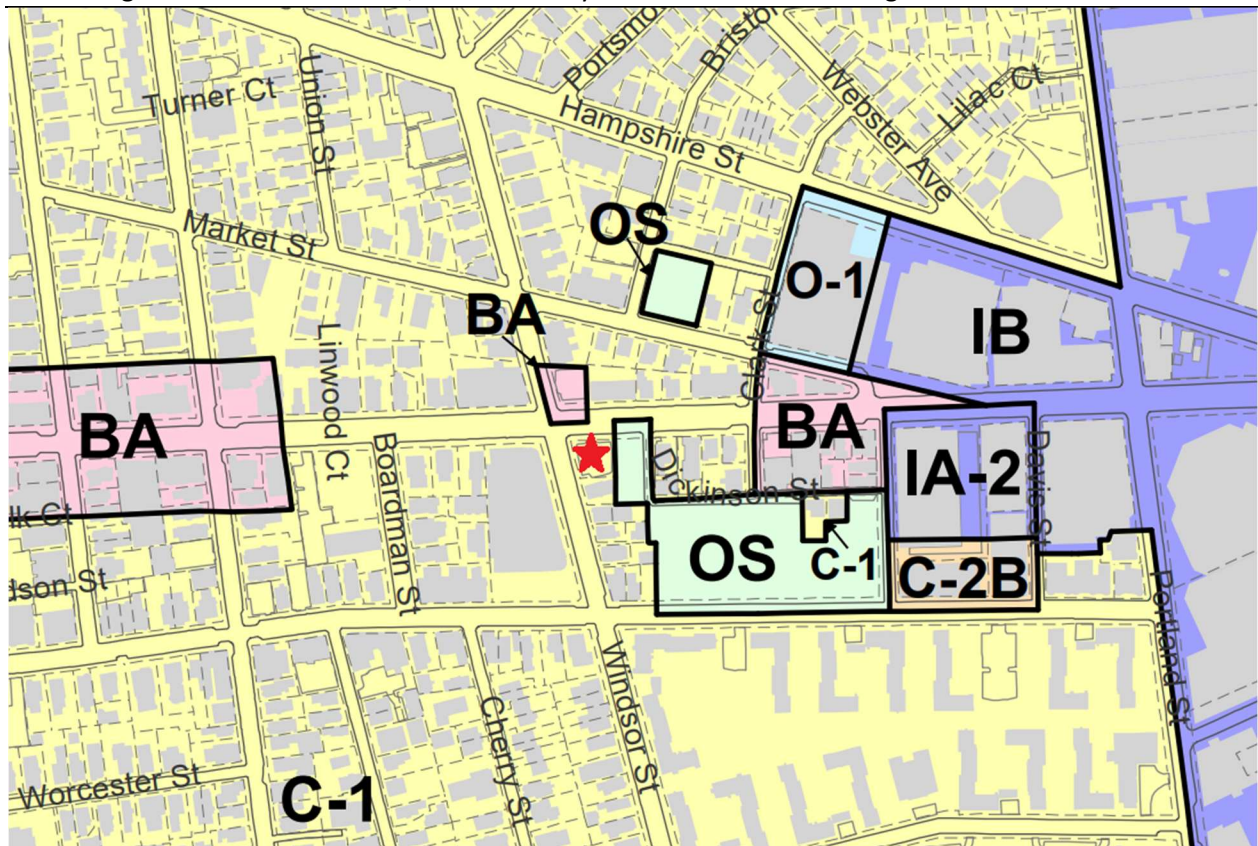
Context Map for 240 Broadway. Source: Nearmap Aerial Imagery, September 2025

Site Zoning

This site is a 4,675 square foot lot in the Residential C-1 zoning district and is located along an AHO Corridor, which further modifies the dimensional standards that would apply to an affordable development in a C-1 district. The proposed project GFA is 24,278 gross square feet. As the new construction is less than 25,000 square feet of gross floor area, several other standards and regulations do not apply to this proposal. These non-applicable regulations include, the AHO Building and Site Design Standards for New Development found in 11.207.7, the Building and Site Plan Requirements in 19.50, and the Green Building Requirements in 22.20.

Planning Board Advisory Consultation Process

The two-session non-binding Planning Board Advisory Design Consultation Procedure detailed in Section 19.40 of the Zoning Ordinance is not typically required for an AHO project of this size. However, per Zoning 11.207.8(b), “An AHO Project that exceeds the height limitations of the underlying district, inclusive of any additional height permissible under the Inclusionary Housing provisions of Section 11.203.5, but does not otherwise meet the size threshold for a Planning Board Advisory Consultation set forth in Section 19.47, shall nonetheless be subject to a Planning Board Advisory Consultation except that the developer may waive the preliminary design consultation and submit all required materials to be reviewed at a single final consultation session.” Although the underlying Residence C-1 district allows up to 6-stories, as the lot size is less than 5,000 square feet, the height for this lot is limited to no more than 4-stories. Therefore, the applicant is subject to the modified single session Planning Board Consultation Session.



Zoning Map. Source: Portion of 36" by 18" PDF Zoning Map prepared by CDD on February 9, 2026

Comments on Proposal

Project Description

Just A Start, a nonprofit (501(c)3) community development corporation, is proposing to build a new 6-story, approximately 67-foot tall building, with 16 affordable rental apartments at the intersection of Broadway and Windsor Street. The 16 proposed units include four 3-bedroom, eleven 2-bedroom, and one 1-bedroom, and will be restricted to households earning under 30% and 60% of the Area Median Income (AMI). There are no off-street automobile parking spaces. Additionally, 17 long-term bicycle parking spaces are proposed. The total gross floor area of the project is 24,675 square feet and will include 577 square feet of open space.

Consistency with AHO Development Standards

The AHO development standards applicable to this project are summarized in the table below.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Residence C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Use	Multifamily dwellings allowed.	The AHO Project includes multifamily dwellings.
Building Height & Stories Above Grade	AHO Developments on an AHO Corridor are allowed up to 12-stories, 140 feet.	The AHO Project is six-stories and 66' – 5 1/8" in height.
Yard Setbacks	AHO Dimensional Standards have no front yard and no side yard requirements.	- The AHO Project proposes two front yard setbacks of 2' – 10 3/4" on Broadway and 2' – 6 5/8" on Windsor Street. - It has a side yard of 2' adjacent to Broadway and a side yard of 5' – 6" adjacent to Windsor Street.
Open Space	Per Zoning 11.207.5.2.4(d), AHO Developments on "...lots consisting of five thousand (5,000) square feet or less in total lot area that directly abut a Public Open Space consisting of at least one thousand five hundred (1,500) square feet of area shall not have a minimum open space requirement under this Article."	- The AHO Project includes 577 square feet of open space, or 12%. - The AHO Project directly abuts the Greene-Rose Heritage Park and connector, a Public Open Space at least 1,500 square feet in area, and complies with the requirement for zero open space.
Parking and Bicycle Parking	- No minimum off-street parking for AHO Developments. - Bicycle parking is required per Article 6.100, but additional flexibility is provided for the location, quantity and type (long-term and short-term) of bicycle parking required.	The AHO Project includes a long-term bicycle parking room on the first floor with 17 spaces.
Environmental Design Standards	This AHO project is subject to the following Sustainable Development Standards: - Section 22.80: Flood Resilience - Section 22.90: Green Factor	Documentation demonstrating compliance with all relevant Sustainable Development Standards has been submitted to and certified by CDD and DPW staff.

Prior to submission of an application to the Planning Board for a Final Design Consultation, the project team met with City staff to review draft materials. Revisions were made to ensure substantial completeness of the final application materials. Staff note that the building height in feet is shown as 68'

- 11” on the building information table found on page 7 of Volume 1. Elsewhere in the Volume 1 narrative and in Volume 2 building section plan sheets, the height is shown as 66’ – 5 1/8”. Similar minor discrepancies exist for the proposed yard setbacks. All shown heights and yard setbacks comply with the applicable Zoning. The building information chart should be corrected prior to Building Permit. No other outstanding comments on zoning conformance remain.

CDD staff have confirmed the project has provided sufficient documentation to show compliance with Flood Resilience and Green Factor standards at this stage of review. See Urban Design staff memo for additional comments on alignment with the Citywide Urban Design Objectives.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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

Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change as anticipated in the <i>Resilient Cambridge</i> plan.	• Up-to-date projections of climate change impacts over the project's anticipated lifespan are incorporated • Flood Resilience Standard in Section 22.80 and the Green Factor Standard in Section 22.90 are met or exceeded • Use of strategies that have environmental co-benefits • Integrative approach to climate change resilience that accounts for the existing context and promotes the other design objectives of the area and the City
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Urban Design Staff Report

Urban Design Comments

The project's overall siting and massing strategy is a good response to the site and context. By transforming a surface parking lot into a corner anchoring building, the proposal makes a substantial positive contribution to the neighborhood fabric and public realm.

Consistency with Multifamily Design Guidelines

The design as proposed generally adheres to the applicable principles outlined in the Multifamily Design Guidelines:

- The building is appropriately sited to maintain the street wall on both streets and anchor the corner.
- Its vertical massing with repetitive facades articulates the public realm with an appropriately scaled urban presence.
- The building has a distinct base, middle, and top.
- Several streetscape improvements are incorporated into the design, which enhance walkability and the pedestrian environment.

Site Design

The project proposes several meaningful streetscape improvements, including removing the existing curb cut on Broadway, installing a new sidewalk with a brick edge treatment in its place, and setting the building back from both sidewalks. These interventions collectively enhance pedestrian circulation, strengthen the public realm, and contribute to a more coherent streetscape character. Within the setback area, new paving and planters are proposed to enhance the pedestrian realm, while additional space also provides a buffer for the existing street trees.

Recommendations

- The design team is encouraged to explore the potential to plant an additional street tree near the corner on Broadway, where an existing tree pit appears available, to further strengthen the streetscape and canopy continuity.
- The new paving at the street corner within the property lines could be chamfered to reflect the massing strategy of the building, reinforcing a cohesive design language between the architecture and the ground plane. Additionally, the placement of planters along the building edge should avoid locations directly opposite existing street trees to ensure that the sidewalk remains as open and unobstructed as possible.

Building Design

While the project successfully establishes a strong, anchoring presence at the corner and strives to respond to context, additional refinement of the building's façade articulation would help

strengthen its relationship with the public realm. Further study should consider how the building's façade expression and architectural detailing respond to the surrounding neighborhood.

Recommendations

- The overall façade composition benefits from a clear and orderly rhythm, and the introduction of varied window treatments, including window surrounds and accent panels, adds some definition and depth. However, the window-to-wall ratio is quite low at around 12% for each facade, which contributes to a heavy and uninviting appearance across all elevations.
 - Increasing window dimensions, both height and width, would improve the building's proportions and improve the visual rhythm. Incorporating additional secondary façade elements, such as articulated bays, and detailing such as mullions, expressed sills, headers, and enhanced trim, would enrich the façade's texture, helping to elevate the project's overall presence on the street and respond to the character of nearby buildings.
- The middle sections of both street facades are divided by thin, vertical trim elements intended to reference the character of nearby residential buildings. These elements, however, appear out of scale for a building of this size and do not fully align with the project's emerging architecture.
 - As an alternative, the introduction of projecting bays could provide additional interior benefits while meaningfully modulating the façades and contributing to a more robust approach to vertical articulation.
- The top floor has been set back slightly, enabling a clearer and more legible transition in materials between the fifth and sixth floors. Despite this, it continues to read as disproportionately tall, and the window openings appear undersized relative to the wall height, resulting in an unbalanced façade composition.
 - Consider strengthening the cornice at both the rooftop and the fifth floor and potentially raising the fifth floor cornice line to give it greater presence, similar to the proportions evident on the George Close Building. Alternatively, the upper level could benefit from more deliberate articulation or differentiation from the floors below, such as through a true mansard roof, or by introducing more varied massing or step-backs that visually reduce the perceived height.

Ground Floor / Pedestrian Zone

The ground floor has continued to improve since the project was first presented to staff. Window dimensions have increased, and the pergola and brick façade introduce additional texture while responding to the surrounding context. However, several refinements are recommended to strengthen the building's relationship with the public realm, create greater overall consistency with relevant urban design guidelines, and support a more pedestrian-friendly ground floor experience.

Recommendations

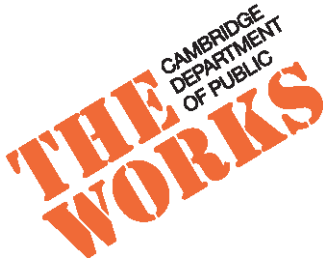
- Much of the ground floor frontage along both streets is occupied by utility and service functions, with only the small corner lobby qualifying as active. Staff recommends exploring strategies to expand the amount of frontage devoted to actively inhabited spaces, with particular attention to the Broadway elevation. Expanding active uses along the street edge would create a more welcoming public realm. Additionally, rearranging some of the ground floor uses, such as the trash room and bike room, may also present an opportunity to create a more spacious and functionally efficient entry experience for residents.
- Ground floor windows follow the façade rhythm established on upper floors, which reinforces a clear vertical alignment. However, the windows are very small, which negatively affects the building's relationship with the street. Increasing the amount of transparent ground floor glazing would significantly enhance visibility, natural light, and the overall sense of openness along the sidewalk. Areas to focus on include the entry/lobby, bike room, and other publicly visible ground floor spaces.
- The height of the ground floor appears quite squat in relation to the proportions of the overall massing. The application of materials on the façade further accentuates this effect, causing the ground floor to read even lower than it actually is. Increasing this perceived height would produce a more generous and civic-scaled ground floor presence, better aligned with the scale of the building and its surrounding context.
- The pergola concept has potential, but could be further developed to function more effectively as weather protection or as a more substantial architectural element. Along Broadway, the pergola could be raised to align with the height of the cornice above the transformer to create a clearer and more cohesive datum line. The proposed thin vertical supports appear visually delicate; replacing them with more substantial pilasters would provide better structural clarity and reinforce the architectural vocabulary of the ground floor.
- The ground floor façade would benefit from richer brick detailing, including recessed panels, pilasters, patterned coursing, and refined elements such as articulated sills and headers. These details can significantly enhance perceived façade depth and texture at the ground floor, where pedestrians experience the building most directly.
- The transformer door offers an opportunity to integrate a creative or artistic design feature, allowing what is typically a technical element to contribute positively to the streetscape. The application notes this as a possibility, and staff would continue to encourage exploration of this opportunity with the City's Arts and Cultural Planning Department.

Sustainable Design

The project is being designed to meet Passive House Standards, although it is not pursuing formal certification. The project will comply with the City's stretch energy code and will seek green building certification through Enterprise Green Communities (EGC).

Consistency with Citywide Urban Design Objectives

There are several areas noted above where improvements to the building design and ground floor experience would enhance the project's relationship with the surrounding neighborhood and create greater consistency with Citywide Urban Design objectives.



City of Cambridge Department of Public Works

John F. Nardone, Acting Commissioner

147 Hampshire Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
theworks@cambridgema.gov

Voice: 617 349 4800

TDD: 617 499 9924

March 5, 2026

TO: Planning Board

FROM: James Wilcox, PE
City Engineer

RE: 240 Broadway AHO Consultation

We are in receipt of the AHO Submission Documents for the project at 240 Broadway, dated February, 10, 2026.

The DPW supports the project and development of affordable housing in the City. With the understanding that the project will be subject to a thorough and complete engineering review at the time of the Building Permit Application, we anticipate continuing to work with the team. Comments on the documentation provided, related to our purview, are summarized below.

Just A Start has engaged with DPW and is working toward understanding and addressing items under our purview that we have noted will need to be addressed as the project advances. Specific to this location we are interested in more detailed understanding of how the project will address the items related to **Urban Canopy** and **Stormwater Management** as further outlined below.

Urban Canopy:

AHO Projects are not under the jurisdiction of the City's Tree Protection Ordinance. The City and specifically the Urban Forestry Division does, however, always advocate for the protection and maintenance of existing, mature, healthy trees as they are vital in maintaining the tree canopy.

The project identifies and notes that trees adjacent to the site, on both the Street frontage sides and the adjacent City Park, have canopies that extend well into the parcel. Exhibit on page 7 of Volume II of the submitted documents clearly illustrates the approximate span of the canopies into the parcel.

Trees located in the Public Right of Way are regulated under Massachusetts State Law Chapter 87, as Public Shade Trees. Impacts to the trees adjacent to the site under this jurisdiction shall be reviewed and coordinated with the Arborist under the provisions of that Law.

The Documentation and conversations with Just A Start both demonstrate that the team is aware of the project's potential impact on the canopy and root systems of these trees and is working with the City Arborist and a private Arborist to better understand these impacts.

We respectfully request that Just A Start and their Arborist continue to advance their understanding of any potential impacts to the street trees, canopy and root systems, and engage with the City Arborist.

Stormwater Management:

At time of Building Permit, the development will undergo Site Plan Review in our division. This will include detailed reviews of the proposed stormwater management system, plans for erosion and sedimentation control during construction and the plans for long term operation and maintenance of the system. The submitted narrative includes a mention of Stormwater management but does not provide specifics as to how the DPW Standards will be met on-site.

We respectfully request that Just A Start and their civil consultants provide additional information on how the project intends to meet the City Stormwater Standards on the site.

Sewer Flow and Mitigation:

The Narrative does not include any anticipated design sewer flows for the development but based on the proposed bedroom count the anticipated flow should not exceed the 15,000 gpd net increase in sewer flow that would trigger Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) mitigation.

Flood Resiliency:

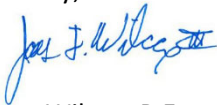
The DPW has reviewed and approved the projects Flood Resilience Compliance Confirmation Application, and our approval was included in the submitted documentation. The project meets the Flood Resiliency Standards as designed. The DPW will review the details as the project is advanced to confirm that the built design will continue to meet the Flood Resiliency Standards.

Public Right of Way:

DPW will review and evaluate all proposed work and impacts in the public right of way, as the design is developed. Connections to both public and private utilities as well as all proposed disruption in the public right of way shall be reviewed as part of the Building Permit and construction permit processes. As noted in the Application, the development will support, as needed, improvements to the public sidewalk, as needed, to obtain an accessible and comfortable sidewalk width for the project frontage.

We look forward to working with Just A Start and their team on this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns related to the comments or information provided above.

Sincerely,



James Wilcox, P.E.
City Engineer



**MEMORANDUM**

To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
From: Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager of Housing Development
Alexis Turgeon, Housing Development Planner
Date: April 30, 2026
Re: Corcoran Park – Phase I – Planning Board AHO Design Consultation Report

Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) has been working with staff from the Housing Department and the Community Development Department on the first phase of the Corcoran Park redevelopment at 8-12 May Street and 53 Lawn Street. The project includes the replacement of the 29 existing distressed public housing units with 67 new energy-efficient, climate resilient apartments in two new buildings that surround open space designed for active and passive recreation. The project recently completed the advisory design review process with the Planning Board under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). The two required Planning Board advisory design consultations were held on December 16, 2025 and March 10, 2026.

The proposed design was favorably received by the Planning Board. The report commended the CHA on its thorough community engagement process and responsiveness to staff and Planning Board member feedback, including the use of updated color palettes, revised roof lines, simplified courtyard design, screening of parking, and the creation of a welcoming entry plaza which improves the residential character of the project. The Planning Board offered suggestions for the development team to continue to explore, including increased refinement of the rooflines of Building B to further enhance its residential character and the addition of large growth trees along the Building A entry plaza. The Board also suggested evaluating the need for play areas and parking, including alternatives to surface parking, when the CHA begins designing the redevelopment's second phase.

The AHO requires that the results of the design review process be shared with the Affordable Housing Trust. The Planning Board report is attached and includes:

- Planning Board Final Report of AHO Design Consultation (3/31/2026), including:
 - CDD Staff Memo (3/4/2026);
- Planning Board Initial Report of AHO Design Consultation (1/5/2026), including:
 - CDD Staff Memo (12/9/2025); and,
 - DPW Staff Memo (12/9/2025).

Project Overview:

The first phase of the Corcoran Park redevelopment involves the new construction of a four-story building with a walkout basement containing 46 units (Building A) and a three-story building containing 21 units (Building B) on the northern portion of the Corcoran Park site under the provisions of the AHO. The Phase I site currently contains 29 distressed public housing units in need of replacement due to long-standing flooding and subsidence issues. Approximately seventy-five percent of the 67 newly created affordable rental units will be family-sized. All units will be affordable to households earning at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI), with some units being deeply affordable to those making at or below 30% AMI. This project is the beginning of a larger redevelopment which, in total, will include the replacement of all 153 public housing units at Corcoran Park with approximately 300 new energy-efficient, climate resilient apartments.

More information on the proposed development, including the presentation and materials submitted to the Planning Board, can be found on the Housing Department's Corcoran Park project page at:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Housing/corcoranpark>.

The Trust approved a commitment of \$14,405,000 to support the development of this project in November 2025. The development team has submitted an application for state funding and, if awarded, anticipates beginning construction by the end of 2026.

Housing Department Recommendation:

All approvals of Trust funding for AHO projects are conditioned on the Trust's review and consideration of the final Planning Board report. We recommend the Trust vote to accept this report to satisfy that condition of the Trust's funding commitment to this development.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: March 31, 2026

Subject: Final Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory
Design Consultation Procedure Compliance Certification

Project Location: 8-12 May Street & 53 Lawn Street

Date of Planning Board Meeting: March 10, 2026

Project Overview

The Planning Board (the “Board”) met on Tuesday, March 10, 2026, to review and comment on the revised design for 8-12 May Street, a multifamily development by the Cambridge Housing Authority (the “Developer”) under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in Section 11.207 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board reviewed a plan set submitted by the Developer dated February 10, 2026, as well as staff memos from the Community Development Department (CDD), which are attached. The Board held its first advisory consultation on December 16, 2025, and issued an initial report dated [January 5, 2025](#).

Board Comments

The Board was pleased with the improvements made to both buildings and the overall site design in response to staff and Planning Board comments and commended the developer for a thorough community engagement process. For Building A, Board members noted the updated color palette and appreciated the more welcoming entry plaza as a result of a parking reduction. For Building B, members highlighted that the revised facade, particularly the improved roofline, porches, windows, and vibrant colors conferred a more residential character. Regarding parking, while underground parking would have been preferred, the Board acknowledged the parking needs of the area and future residents, as well as the financial challenges associated with below-grade parking, and appreciated the screening of surface parking with vegetation, art, and fencing. With respect to open space, members were supportive of the simplified courtyard design with a larger lawn area, which improves usability, facilitates maintenance, and allows for larger root zones.

As the project progresses, the Board offers the following suggestions:

- As planning begins for Phase 2, the Board encourages the Developer to continue evaluating overall parking needs alongside other site design considerations, including exploring alternatives to surface parking where feasible.

- Consider adding large growth trees along Building A entry plaza to provide shade and enhance the pedestrian experience.
- Further refine the rooflines of Building B, as they remain too symmetrical and institutional in character.
- Ensure the design of play areas for Phase 2 accounts for the needs of Phase 1 to offset the loss of a play element within the courtyard.

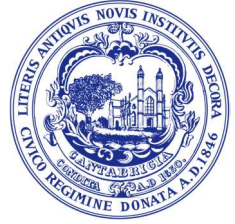
AHO Compliance Summary

This report certifies that the developer has completed the Advisory Design Consultation Process in order to comply with the procedure for development under the Affordable Housing overlay set forth in Section 11.207.8 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.

Submitted for the Planning Board,

Swaathi Joseph

Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Tom Sieniewicz, Chair.



To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: March 4, 2026

Re: Affordable Housing Overlay Design Consultation **AHO-10, 8-12 May Street & 53 Lawn Street**

Overview

Submission Type:	Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Review
Applicant:	Corcoran Park Phase 1 LLC
Zoning District(s):	Residence C-1
Proposal Summary:	Construction of 2 buildings to create 67 new rental units with 33 off-street parking spaces under the AHO.
Planning Board Action:	Review and comment on conformance with AHO Development Standards, City Development Guidelines for the proposal area, Design Guidelines for Multifamily Housing, and Citywide Urban Design Objectives.
Memo Contents:	CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report
Other Staff Reports:	None

Zoning & Development Staff Report

Overview

The Developer, Cambridge Housing Authority (or “CHA”) is proposing to demolish the existing townhouses to construct two new buildings with a total of 67 units and approximately 82,407 square feet of Gross Floor Area. Building A is 4 stories and 56 feet tall with a walkout basement, consisting of 46 affordable rental units and approximately 53,051 square feet of Gross Floor Area. Building B is 3 stories and 40 feet tall, consisting of 21 affordable rental units and approximately 29,356 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 578 to 1,247 square feet at 30% and 60% AMI. The buildings are sited around a courtyard — a communal open space designed for passive recreation. Bicycle parking will be provided with 42 long-term and 12 short-term spaces, supplemented by a 19-dock Bluebike station along Lawn Street to offset the remaining required spaces. Surface off-street parking is also provided for 33 vehicles.

Planning Board Comments from Initial Consultation Meeting

Board members were very supportive of several aspects of the proposal, including the thoughtful selection of colors and materials for Building A, the use of deep angled recesses to break down long facades, and the concept of the courtyard as an intergenerational space. Practical features such as in-unit laundry and the overall grading approach were also commended.

As the design advances, Board members encouraged the developer to further study the parking strategy massing, siting and for Building A to strengthen May Street frontage, reduce the visual impact of surface parking, and make the pedestrian entrance more prominent. For Building B, members suggested refining the facades to reinforce the residential character and further study the use of color and facade elements.

For site design, members recommended enlarging and improving usability of the courtyard, including consolidating pathways to create larger contiguous lawn areas, providing additional detail on playground design, and incorporating plantings to help stabilize slopes. The Board also emphasized prioritizing the preservation of mature trees whenever possible.

Staff Comments on Revised Submission

The City has received a revised application dated February 10, 2026, including updated forms and narrative volume, revised graphics, and a revised appendix volume with additional Green Factor and Green Building documentation.

CDD Staff has confirmed that the project has provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate compliance with Green Building and Green Factor standards at this stage of review. The Project intends to meet Green Building requirements by targeting Passive House certification. The minimum required Green Factor score is achieved through a combination of understory and canopy trees and low and high planting areas.

In the initial Zoning Memo on this proposal, CDD provided a summary of compliance with AHO standards. The revised submission presents several modifications, including a reduction in the number of off-street parking spaces from 36 to 33 and an increase in the number of short-term bicycle parking spaces from 8 to 12. Additionally, Building A fenestration facing May Street decreased from 23% to 20% and Building B fenestration facing May Street increased from 20% to 24%. Overall, the changes do not appear to impact zoning compliance.

Consistency with AHO Development Standards

The AHO development standards applicable to this project are summarized in the table below.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Use	Multifamily dwellings allowed.	The proposal includes two buildings of multifamily dwellings.
Building Height & Stories Above Grade	AHO Developments are allowed up to 9 stories and 100 feet above grade.	- Building A proposes 4 stories and 56 feet in height. - Building B proposes 3 stories and 40 feet in height.
Yard Setbacks	AHO Dimensional Standards have no Front and Side Yard requirements.	The parcel is a corner lot, so it contains two front yards and two side yards.
Open Space	An AHO project in the C-1 district has a total open space requirement of 30%, of which 50% (15% of the lot area) shall meet the requirements of Private Open Space and 50% shall meet the definition of Permeable Open Space.	The project proposes a total open space of 45% and meets the requirements for both Private and Permeable Open Space.
Parking and Bicycle Parking	- No minimum off-street parking is required for AHO Developments. - Bicycle parking is required per Article 6.100, but additional flexibility is provided for the location, quantity and type (long-term and short-term) of bicycle parking required.	- The project provides 33 on-site parking spaces. - The project requires a minimum of 70 long-term bicycle parking spaces and provides 42 spaces. An on-site 19-dock Bluebike station is provided to satisfy the remaining requirement. - The project requires a minimum of 7 short-term bicycle parking spaces and provides 12 spaces.
Site Design and Arrangement	- Front yards may be landscaped or hardscaped but cannot be used for off-street parking. - Pedestrian entrances shall be visible from the street.	The proposed project meets all the Site Design and Arrangement requirements.
Building Facades	Building facades facing public streets shall have a minimum percentage of 20% glazing.	The proposed project meets all the Building Facades requirements.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
	- Building facades must include projecting and/or recessed elements of at least two feet on an average interval of 40 linear feet along a Public Street, and 80 feet elsewhere. Such projecting or recessed elements do not apply to the lowest or highest Story Above Grade. - Facades of ground stories shall have expanses of no more than 25' with no windows or pedestrian entryways.	Building A proposes 20% glazing on the façade facing May Street. Building B proposes 20% glazing facing Lawn St and 24% facing May Street.
Ground Stories and Below Grade	Habitable spaces below grade must meet flood resilience standards.	DPW has reviewed the submitted documentation, and the project appears to comply with the City's Flood Resilience Standards per the FloodViewer 2025. Please see DPW memo dated 12/9/25 for more information.
Mechanical Equipment, Refuse Storage and Loading Areas	- Mechanical equipment shall be generally screened from view. - Rooftop mechanical equipment must be set back from the roof line equal to its height. - Screening for at grade equipment should use materials comparable in quality to the building's principal facades.	- Building A: rooftop mechanical equipment is concealed behind a 9.5' tall screen which has been set back 11' from the primary wall plane. - Building B: at-grade mechanical equipment is screened with painted anodized aluminum louvers. - The proposed transformer on the northwest corner of the lot is enclosed and screened with a 10' tall fence and planters. - Trash rooms are enclosed within the buildings.
Environmental Design Standards	This AHO project is subject to the following Sustainable Development Standards: - Section 22.20: Green Building - Section 22.80: Flood Resilience - Section 22.90: Green Factor	- Documentation showing compliance with Green Building and Green Factor Standards has been submitted and certified by CDD staff. - DPW has reviewed the submitted documentation, and the project appears to comply with the City's Flood Resilience Standards. Please see DPW memo dated 12/9/25 for more information.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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
Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change as anticipated in the <i>Resilient Cambridge</i> plan.	• Up-to-date projections of climate change impacts over the project's anticipated lifespan are incorporated • Flood Resilience Standard in Section 22.80 and the Green Factor Standard in Section 22.90 are met or exceeded • Use of strategies that have environmental co-benefits • Integrative approach to climate change resilience that accounts for the existing context and promotes the other design objectives of the area and the City

Urban Design Staff Report

Overview

The proposed project at Corcoran Park is intended as the first phase of a larger two-phase project. It will be sited on “Lot 1”, the highest portion of the existing Corcoran Park affordable housing complex, leaving the lower, more flood-prone portion of the site (“Lot 2”) for the second phase. The project proposes to replace four existing two-story buildings with two larger ones: a four-story bar-shaped building – Building A, approximately in the middle of the site, and a three-story U-shaped building – Building B in the southern portion of the site. The buildings will border May Street to the east and Lawn Street to the south, and together will enclose a shared courtyard. Building A is located on the steepest portion of the site. Its basement level is at the level of the shared courtyard, and its first floor is at the level of the parking lot that is proposed on its north side. Together the two buildings will increase the number of units on Lot 1 from the existing 29 to 67.

The Planning Board’s comments in the project’s first review on December 16, 2025 included:

- A suggestion to screen the parking lot from view from May Street, if possible, by adding a wing to Building A parallel to May Street, through which a vehicular passage would lead to the parking lot. The applicant team has found that the cost would be prohibitive due to fire separation requirements and would result in the loss of several parking spaces.
- A question as to whether under-building vehicular parking could be provided at the basement level of Building A. The applicant team believes that this would also be cost prohibitive.
- A question as to whether a taller development, with more residential units, had been considered. The applicant team had investigated greater height, but in deference to neighborhood opinion did not pursue it.

Since the first hearing, the project team has made numerous improvements to the project in response to Planning Board and staff comments.

- The landscape design of the courtyard has been simplified. It now emphasizes an open lawn with a perimeter path, shaded by trees. The play area that was included in the earlier scheme is proposed to be provided in Phase 2.
- Planting and fences have been added to screen the parking lot from May Street.
- The transformer enclosure has been moved from the western end of the parking lot to its north side, with the intent of allowing a pedestrian/bike connection to Fairview Avenue, which is aligned just to the west of the parking lot.
- The entrance of Building A has been revised, the porch at the entrance is less abstract and more welcoming than that of the previous version, and the lobby’s windows have been enlarged.
- The plaza in front of Building A’s entrance is larger (resulting in the loss of a few parking spaces) and is provided with benches.
- Horizontal mullions have been added to the windows, giving the building a more residential look.

- The color palette of both buildings has been brightened, including the use of different colors for the different segments of Building B in place of the previous version's grey.
- The facades of Building B have been improved, treating the building as a series of individual dwellings, instead of the more horizontally continuous original scheme.
- Building B's entry porches are larger and more welcoming, with sloped roofs that echo the building's roofscape and also the porches in the neighborhood context.

Urban Design Comments on Design Revisions

Site Plan

Connection to Fairview Avenue

- There is likely a pedestrian and bicyclist desire line between the site and Fairview Avenue via the adjacent parking lot. DOT recommends that the applicant work with the City to confirm site control and evaluate the feasibility of creating a walking- and biking-only connection in this location. This may require reorienting or relocating the transformer. The site plan should label this potential connection ("by others") to ensure the concept is memorialized for future phases. Avoid locating substantial plantings where they would block a potential future connection between Fairview Avenue and the parking lot.

May Street / Vineyard Street Intersection

- DOT believes the applicant should upgrade the existing unmarked crossings at May St./Vineyard St. to marked, accessible crosswalks on the north and/or south legs of the intersection. While the catch basin and hydrant present some design constraints, they appear addressable given the scale of the project. Marked crosswalks at this edge of the project site will provide accessible routes for residents and visitors to Vineyard St, Cushing St, and the rest of the neighborhood, including the Glacken Field/Fresh Pond area.
- The proposed widening of driveway curb cut to 20 feet may also not be feasible. The widening would encroach into the space needed for an accessible ramp. The existing driveway appears to already be non-compliant within the intersection, and DOT would not support expanding it further because it is located within—and offset inside—the intersection geometry. The proposed widening would newly obstruct the existing pedestrian right-of-way. DOT will work with the applicant on a final driveway design.

Lawn Street Mid-Block Crossing and Bluebikes Access

- The applicant proposes a mid-block crosswalk on Lawn Street at the location of the future Bluebikes station and site pathway. Unless this crossing will connect to a planned Phase 2 pedestrian path, DOT recommends removing the proposed crosswalk, as there is no clear pedestrian desire line at this location given the proximity of existing intersections.
- If the intent is to preserve the Phase 2 connection, DOT recommends deferring installation of the curb ramp and crosswalk markings to Phase 2, when the complementary walkway is constructed.

However, the Phase 1 site plan should continue to show the full future crossing and curb ramps to make the long-term intent clear but identifying it as a part of a future phase.

Parking Lot Design Considerations

- Parallel curb ramps connecting to the parking lot access aisles are likely to experience ponding during rain events, as the site slopes south toward May Street. DOT recommends reevaluating these ramp locations and grades.
- As noted above, the site plan should reference the potential future connection to Fairview Avenue and provide a transformer orientation that enables it.
- If possible, adjust the proposed grading in the western part of the parking lot so as to simplify the route from the trash room to the parking lot, and preserve the existing large Norway maple tree on its south side.
- Consider shading the parking lot with photovoltaic panel canopies if financially feasible.

Bluebikes Station

- During the Building Permit process, the applicant should provide a dimensioned Bluebikes station plan and complete the Bluebikes agreement with the DOT.
- DOT recommends that funding is provided for the proposed 19-dock station during the Building Permit process since it takes time to order and have it ready for installation prior to a Certificate of Occupancy.

Long-Term Bicycle Storage

- Ensure that the long-term bicycle storage room in Building A has direct, convenient, and step-free access from the May Street sidewalk. The current plan appears to indicate a ramp connection, but it is unclear at this scale whether the route is entirely step-free.

Building A's Entry Plaza

- Consider reducing the amount of paving in Building A's entry plaza, and increasing the amount of planting and benches. The plaza's pavement could be distinguished by material or joint pattern.
- If a different arrangement of short-term bike parking could be found for the entry plaza, additional benches could be provided along the planting edges at the east and west sides of the plaza.
- The "Art Fence" adjoining the entrance plaza (partially screening the parking lot from May Street) could be made more opaque, and consideration could be given to coordinating its design with that of the fence along May Street on the north side of the parking lot's curb cut.

Benches

- Additional benches could be located in the Courtyard, at Building A's south-side Community Room terrace, and facing the sidewalk at the perimeter of the site.

Western Side Yard

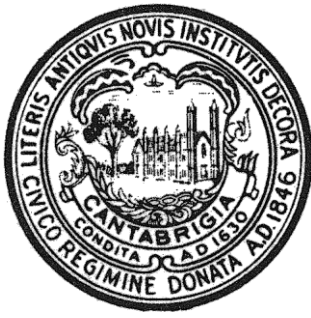
- A seating area could be developed in the western side yard, as a terminus of the east/west path through the courtyard, making use of this area's quieter, more "backyard" character.

Lawn and May Street frontages and sidewalks

- The project provides low planting in the front yards facing May and Lawn Streets. Consider developing it to more clearly delineate the perimeter of the site.
- Consider using plantings and adjustments to topography to further integrate the accessibility ramp and short-term bicycle parking into the site plan.
- Staff appreciates the possibility of having a mid-block crosswalk on Lawn Street that would link the path on the west side of Phase 1 with a corresponding path in Phase 2, but recommends that it be clearly indicated as merely a possible future feature. Staff would like the associated curb ramp to be moved east to align with the path along the west side of Building B.

Building Design

- Building B's entrance porches have been given a more welcoming design, and their gable shaped roofs create an appealing dialog with the building's roofscape. Consideration could be given to providing the porches with thicker, more substantial columns.
- Clarify where accessible units in Building A and Building B are located relative to parking for residents and support staff.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date:	January 5, 2026
Subject:	Initial Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Consultation
Project Location:	8-12 May Street & 53 Lawn Street
Date of Planning Board Meeting:	December 16, 2025

Overview

The Planning Board (the “Board”) met on Tuesday, December 16, 2025, to review and comment on the design for 8-12 May Street, a multifamily development by the Cambridge Housing Authority (the “Developer”) under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in Section 11.207 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board reviewed a plan set submitted by the Developer dated November 14, 2025, as well as staff memos from the Community Development Department (CDD) and Department of Public Works (DPW), which are attached.

Proposal Description

The Developer is proposing to demolish the existing structures to construct two new residential buildings consisting of 67 affordable rental units with approximately 82,407 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 578 to 1,247 square feet at 30% and 60% AMI. The project also includes resident amenities such as a communal courtyard with plantings, seating, play, grilling and picnic areas. Bicycle parking will be provided with 42 long-term and 8 short-term spaces, supplemented by a 19-stall Bluebikes station.

Board Comments

Board members commended several aspects about the proposal, praising the colors and materials selected for Building A as fun and thoughtful, and noting that Building B successfully conveys a more residential character. Members highlighted the effective use of deep recesses and angled elements that relate well to the surrounding neighborhood on both buildings as a strategy of breaking down the long building façades. They also appreciated the concept of the courtyard as an intergenerational space. The animation walk-through of the virtual model was appreciated as were practical features such as in-unit laundry and the well-executed grading.

A few Board members expressed that the overall design was not fully taking advantage of the site's potential, particularly in terms of siting and massing. They noted that the project could explore making building A higher to create opportunities for additional units and open space, relocate parking, potentially by tucking it under the building, strengthen the street presence by providing more façade along May Street, and preserve more trees.

As the proposal continues to develop, Board members urged the developer to focus on the following program and design elements:

Site Design

Courtyard and Open Space Design

- Members expressed concern that the courtyard is too small relative to the number of proposed families and encouraged exploring ways to enlarge and improve its usability.
- Several members noted that the courtyard is overly fragmented by pathways. Consider removing or consolidating some walkways to doors, particularly on the west side and central areas of the site to create larger lawn areas and opportunity to support informal activities and add plantings that help stabilize slopes.
- Provide more detail on the courtyard and playground design, thinking about how to make it a more engaging, active and livelier space for families.

Parking and Site Planning

- Members shared concerns about surface parking and encouraged further study of parking needs and layout to reduce its impact on the street experience. It was suggested exploring opportunities such as extending Building A in an L shape to provide more façade along May Street or putting parking below the building if feasible, or other ways to screen parking.
- Work with the City to explore the feasibility of creating a parking access to the site from Fairview Avenue.

Pedestrian access and circulation

- Make the pedestrian entrance to Building A more prominent and better connected to May Street to improve visibility and visitors' access.
- Consider widening the May Street sidewalk to enhance pedestrian comfort.
- Work with the City to explore the possibility of reducing the curb radius at the May Street/Lawn Street intersection to create a more pedestrian-friendly intersection.

Tree Preservation

- Prioritize the preservation of mature healthy trees throughout the site and explore if additional trees could be preserved.

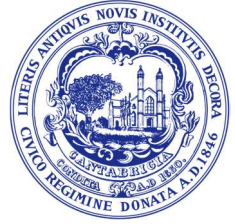
Building Design

- As discussed above, study the possibility of reshaping Building A into more of an L configuration, placing parking under the building, or another approach that would strengthen the May Street frontage and reduce the parking impact on the street experience.
- Some board members felt Building A looked office-like and encouraged improving its façade to read more as residential.
- Think further about how to engage the façades, especially the Lawn Street facades, by incorporating elements that create a neighborhood-scaled presence, similar to the porch rhythm found nearby.
- Consider applying the same vibrant and playful color palette used on Building A to Building B. One board member viewed the current tan tone as overly contrasting.
- Reconsider the shared balconies facing the courtyard on Building B.

Submitted for the Planning Board,

Swaathi Joseph

Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Mary Flynn, Chair.



To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: December 9, 2025

Re: Affordable Housing Overlay Design Consultation **AHO-10, 8-12 May Street & 53 Lawn Street**

Overview

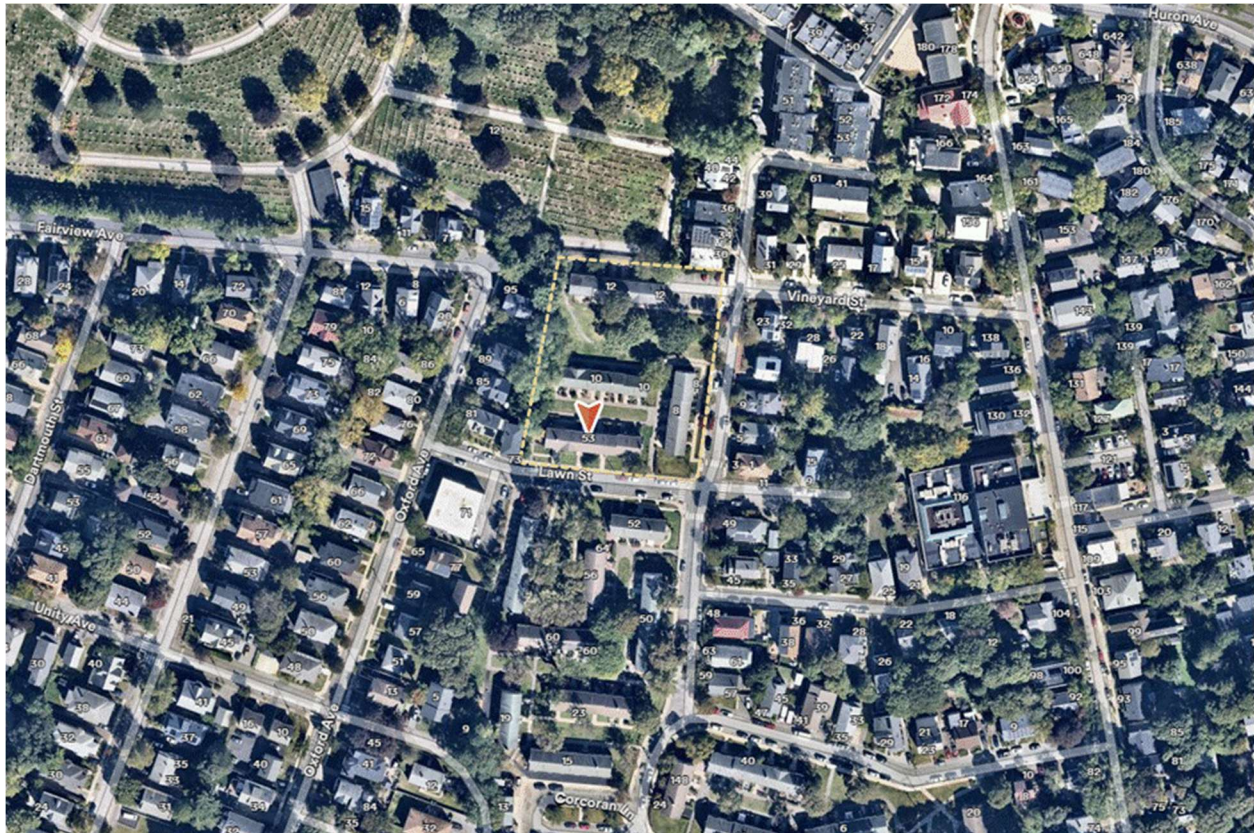
Submission Type:	Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Review
Applicant:	Corcoran Park Phase 1 LLC
Zoning District(s):	Residence C-1
Proposal Summary:	Construction of 2 buildings to create 67 new rental units with 36 off-street parking spaces under the AHO.
Planning Board Action:	Review and comment on conformance with AHO Development Standards, City Development Guidelines for the proposal area, Design Guidelines for Multifamily Housing, and Citywide Urban Design Objectives.
Memo Contents:	CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report
Other Staff Reports:	Department of Public Works (DPW), in separate document.

Zoning & Development Staff Report

Site & Zoning Context

Site Context

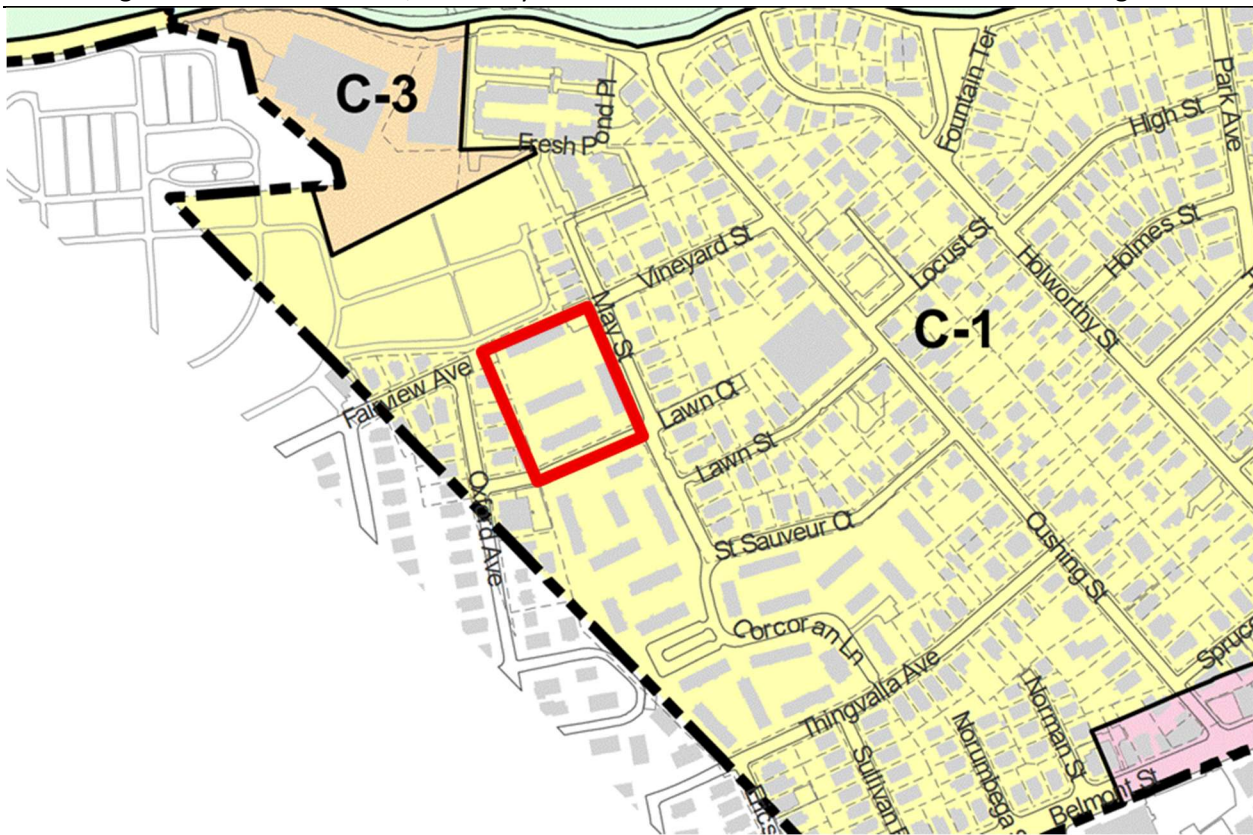
The site consists of a single parcel at the corner of May and Lawn Streets in the Strawberry Hill neighborhood, a few blocks south of Fresh Pond and just a few blocks north of the Watertown border and west of the Belmont border. Directly abutting the site to the north is the Belmont Cemetery. The surrounding neighborhood is comprised of mostly two to three-story wood-framed and brick residential buildings. The site currently contains four two-story row houses with 29 units and a surface parking lot for 14 vehicles.



Context Map for Corcoran Park Lot 1. Source: Nearmap Aerial Imagery, September 2025

Site Zoning

This site is located in the Residence C-1 zoning district and is being permitted under the Affordable Housing Overlay. The C-1 district has a 30% minimum Open Space requirement for residential uses, and under the AHO, no minimum front or side yard setback is required. Additionally, up to 9 stories and 100 feet of height is allowed. Because this AHO development exceeds 50,000 square feet, it is subject to the two-session Planning Board Advisory Consultation process.



Zoning Map. Source: Zoning Districts, City of Cambridge, February 2025

Comments on Proposal

Project Description

The applicant, Cambridge Housing Authority (or “CHA”) is proposing to demolish the existing townhouse buildings to construct two new buildings with a total of 67 units and approximately 82,407 square feet of Gross Floor Area. Building A is 4 stories and 56 feet tall with a basement, consisting of 46 affordable rental units and approximately 53,051 square feet of Gross Floor Area. Building B is 3 stories and 40 feet tall, consisting of 21 affordable rental units and approximately 29,356 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 578 to 1,247 square feet at 30% and 60% AMI. The project is designed around a courtyard — a communal open space with plantings, seating, play, grilling and picnic areas. Bicycle parking will be provided with 42 long-term and 8 short-term spaces, supplemented by a 19-stall Bluebike station along Lawn Street to offset the remaining required spaces.

Consistency with AHO Development Standards

The AHO development standards applicable to this project are summarized in the table below.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Use	• Multifamily dwellings allowed	• The proposal includes two buildings of multifamily dwellings.
Building Height & Stories Above Grade	• AHO Developments are allowed up to 9 stories and 100 feet above grade	• Building A proposes 4 stories and 56 feet in height. • Building B proposes 3 stories and 40 feet in height.
Yard Setbacks	• AHO Dimensional Standards have no Front and Side Yard requirements	• The parcel is a corner lot, so it contains two front yards and two side yards.
Open Space	• An AHO project in the C-1 district has a total open space requirement of 30%, of which 50% shall meet the requirements of Private Open Space and 50% shall meet the definition of Permeable Open Space	• The project is proposing a total open space of 46% and meets the requirements for both Private and Permeable Open Space.
Parking and Bicycle Parking	• No minimum off-street parking for AHO Developments. • Bicycle parking is required per Article 6.100, but additional flexibility is provided for the location, quantity and type (long-term and short-term) of bicycle parking required.	• The project provides 36 on-site parking spaces. • The project requires a minimum of 70 long-term bicycle parking spaces and provides 42 spaces. An on-site 19-dock Bluebike station is provided to satisfy the remaining requirement. • The project requires a minimum of 7 short-term bicycle parking spaces and provides 7 spaces. An 8th non-compliant space is provided.
Site Design and Arrangement	• Front yards may be landscaped or hardscaped but cannot be used for off-street parking. • Pedestrian entrances shall be visible from the street. • Buildings with front facades in excess of 250' in length shall provide forecourts to break up massing.	• The proposed project meets all the Site Design and Arrangement requirements.
Building Facades	• Building facades facing public streets shall have a minimum percentage of 20% glazing. • Building facades must include projecting and/or recessed elements of at least two feet on an average interval of 40 linear feet along a Public Street, and 80 feet elsewhere. Such projecting or recessed elements do	• The proposed project meets all the Building Facades requirements. • Building A proposes 23% glazing and building B proposes 20% glazing on both façades facing the public street.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
	not apply to the lowest or highest Story Above Grade. • Facades of ground stories shall have expanses of no more than 25' with no windows or pedestrian entryways.	
Ground Stories and Below Grade	• Habitable spaces below grade must meet flood resilience standards	• This project complies with the City's Flood Resilience Standards per the FloodViewer 2025
Mechanical Equipment, Refuse Storage and Loading Areas	• Mechanical equipment shall be generally screened from view. • Rooftop mechanical equipment must be set back from the roof line equal to its height. • Screening for at grade equipment should use materials comparable in quality to the building's principal facades.	• Building A: rooftop mechanical equipment is concealed behind a 9.5' tall screen which has been set back 11' from the primary wall plane. • Building B: at-grade mechanical equipment is shielded from view with screens. • The proposed transformer on the northwest corner of the lot is enclosed and screened with a 10' tall fence and planters. • Trash rooms are enclosed within the buildings. • There is no indication of materials to be used for mechanical equipment screening.
Environmental Design Standards	This AHO project is subject to the following Sustainable Development Standards: • Section 22.20: Green Building • Section 22.80: Flood Resilience • Section 22.90: Green Factor	• The project intends to meet Green Building Passive House and Enterprise Green Communities design certifications. A Green Building and Enterprise Green communities report will be required ahead of the final Planning Board Advisory Consultation. • This project complies with the City's Flood Resilience Standards per the FloodViewer 2025. • A draft Cool Score sheet and roof/landscape plans have been submitted. Complete documentation showing compliance with Green Factor Standards, including a landscape and architectural plan that show square footage of lawn and planting areas along with all other

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in C-1 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
		items contributing to the Cool Score will be required ahead of the final Planning Board Advisory Consultation.

Recommendations

The following is a summary of recommendations that may be considered for revised submission:

- Provide an indication of materials to be used for mechanical equipment screening, which should be of comparable quality to the materials used on the principal facades of the building.
- Consider shifting the short-term bicycle parking racks for Building B approximately six inches to the north to ensure at least three feet clear horizontal distance from the center point of the rack per the dimensional standards in Article 6.100. While the project currently provides the minimum requirement of seven short-term spaces, this adjustment would allow for an additional parking space.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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
Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change as anticipated in the <i>Resilient Cambridge</i> plan.	• Up-to-date projections of climate change impacts over the project's anticipated lifespan are incorporated • Flood Resilience Standard in Section 22.80 and the Green Factor Standard in Section 22.90 are met or exceeded • Use of strategies that have environmental co-benefits

	• Integrative approach to climate change resilience that accounts for the existing context and promotes the other design objectives of the area and the City
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Urban Design Staff Report

Urban Design Comments

The project's overall siting and massing strategy is a good response to the site and context. The bar shaped building (Building A) in the northern part of the site and the U shaped building (Building B) in the southern part of the site present their outward faces to May and Lawn Streets and work together to define a shared courtyard in the block interior. Much of the site's considerable slope (highest at the north and sloping down to Lawn Street at the south) is taken up by Building B, which is four stories tall on its north side and five on its south side. Building B is designed as townhouses, with separate entrances facing May and Lawn Streets. Building B's first floor is raised about 4' feet above the level of the Lawn Street sidewalk to bring it above the expected 2070 1% flood elevations. Handicapped access to its residential units is provided by a sloped switchback walkway near the intersection of May and Lawn Streets. A parking lot is proposed at the northern edge of the site. While other alternatives for its siting could have been considered, the proposed location minimizes its impact on neighbors.

Consistency with Multifamily Design Guidelines

The proposed design generally adheres to the applicable principles as outlined in the Multifamily Design Guidelines:

- Numerous new trees are proposed on the site.
- The project proposes additional curbside trees in the public sidewalks, which will improve the somewhat barren existing streetscapes of Lawn and May Streets.
- The shared courtyard will be a valuable asset for residents.
- The complex is divided into two buildings, breaking down its overall bulk in response to the scale of the neighborhood.
- Building massing responds to the heights of nearby buildings in the neighborhood.
- Trash/recycling rooms are provided inside the buildings.
- The individual entrances to Building B's row house units will help enliven the streets.
- The project provides a Bluebike station.
- Outdoor lighting will be dark sky friendly, with a relatively warm color temperature.

Site Design

The site plan has improved as the design has evolved throughout the design process. Front yard plantings and street trees will enrich the streetscape and help the project engage the public realm. The connectivity of the path system in the courtyard has been improved.

Recommendations

- Building Siting
 - To directly engage the adjoining streets by creating a more consistent streetwall and to enlarge the interior courtyard, consider reducing the front yard setbacks on May Street and

Lawn Street to depths more typical in the surrounding neighborhood, and consider more consistently aligning the May Street facades of Buildings A and B.

- Front Yard Design
 - Consider reflecting typical conditions in the neighborhood by more expressly delineating the outer edge of the site along the Lawn and May Street sidewalks, using elements such as hedges, a low curb at the inner edge of the sidewalk, low fences, etc.
- Site Amenities
 - Consider providing benches at the entrances to Buildings A and B.
 - The current design of the Play Area, consisting solely of three balance beam logs, feels limited and does not provide a compelling or engaging play experience. To better support active play and recreation, provide more varied equipment, including features for climbing and movement-based play. (See MFDG 2.2 Open Space and Landscape Design)
- Circulation:
 - To better align with the intent of the zoning ordinance that encourage street-oriented pedestrian access, consider reorienting Building A's lobby entrance toward May Street and adding a pedestrian path that directly connects to the street sidewalk, or at least adding a pedestrian path from the paved area north of the lobby directly to the May Street sidewalk. (Slightly relocate the short-term bicycle parking as needed).
 - Extend a north/south pedestrian walkway along the western side of Building A to provide a route from the parking lot to Building B's western walkways. (See MFDG 2.3 Multifamily Development on Large Sites)
 - There may likely be a pedestrian/bicyclist desire line between the parking lot and Fairview Avenue to the west of the site. Work with the city to determine the ownership and feasibility of creating a pathway connecting the site to Fairview Avenue through the parking lot area. This may require adjusting the location of the transformer.
 - Coordinate with the DOT and the DPW on the design of the curb cut into the parking lot, the design of the sidewalk as it crosses the driveway, and on the width of the curb cut and driveway.
 - If necessary, slightly widen the May and Lawn Street sidewalks so as to maintain 4' clear pedestrian width past tree planters.
 - Consider providing signage throughout the site to indicate accessible routes.
 - The southeast corner of the block has an atypically large radius curb. If possible, and in coordination with the Cambridge DOT and DPW, reduce its radius to create a more pedestrian-friendly intersection.
 - Make sure there is a good route from Building A's trash room to where the containers will be picked up.
- Trees and other plantings:
 - The planting plans should include genetically diverse species and seed sources whenever possible. Relying heavily on a single cultivar or clone limits ecological function and increases long-term risk.
 - From the species list provided, the applicant should design with the right plant in the right place. Species suitable for the site's hydrological conditions should be prioritized to assist

- with bio retention and the likely presence of soils that are typical near former lakes and low-lying areas.
- Species should be selected for future resilience, please refer to the City's Urban Forest Master Plan for guidance.
- Verify whether more of the existing trees could be retained. The trees around the western part of the north parking lot and the southernmost existing tree near Lawn Street might be possibilities.
- The locations and species of trees in poor condition and the species of trees proposed for removal should be clarified.
- Consider providing an additional tree near the southwestern part of the parking lot.
- If possible, provide additional screening for the parking lot from May Street and the neighboring house to the north (while maintaining sight lines).
- Bicycle parking
 - The project should locate short-term and long-term bike parking to support the site's users in the most convenient way.
 - Consider accommodating some of the provided long-term bicycle parking spaces within building B to adequately support residents in a more convenient way.
 - Consider distributing short-term bicycle parking more evenly throughout the site or adding more racks to improve accessibility given the length of the buildings and the number of pedestrian entrances.
 - The City's bicycle parking guidelines provide detailed recommendations on bicycle parking and city staff are available to assist and provide recommendations at any time, including during the building permit process.

Building Design

While the basic massing strategy of creating two buildings that work together to address the adjoining streets and frame an interior courtyard is successful, additional study could be made of both buildings' detailed massing and facade expression in relation to the public realm and to the characteristic features and typologies of the buildings in the surrounding neighborhood.

Recommendations

- Massing and Facades:
 - Consider simplifying the massing of Building A's north and south sides, for example: instead of using a saw-toothed plan configuration to achieve the 2' change in plane indicated by Zoning section 19.52.4, consider providing bay windows or other types of features mentioned in the zoning provision.
 - Consider revising Building A's south facade to respond to the east/west dimension of the courtyard framed by building B.
 - Consider more closely integrating the appearance of Building A's rooftop mechanical screening with the design of the building's facades.
 - Consider revising Building A's lobby facades to create a more welcoming sense of entry, more directly related to May Street, and to give the lobby a more residential character.

- Building B is conceived as a broad horizontal form which is broken up by large and deep vertical recesses. In response to the scale and character of the typical buildings of the neighborhood, consider revising its massing, facades, and roofline to give it a more rowhouse-like character, with, for example, a series of gables that respond to the identities of the individual units, emphasized by bay windows that extend for multiple floors.
- Consider locating Building B's heat pumps on the roof instead of at grade.
- Consider giving each of Building B's units its own porch or balcony on the courtyard, rather than sharing the ones at the courtyard's inside corners between two units.

Sustainable Design

The site plan provides ample open area for the use of residents, to address stormwater runoff, and to minimize the urban heat island effect.

Recommendations

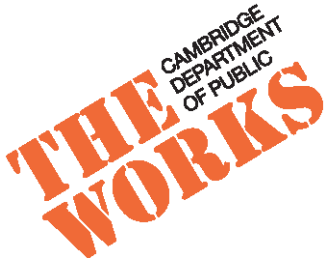
- Clarify whether the rooftop solar panels that are shown on the landscape plan, the perspectives and the elevations can be in the base building.

Consistency with City wide Urban Design Objectives

The project is generally consistent with the Citywide Urban Design Objectives, most importantly, it more than doubles the number of affordable residential units on the site and designs them in anticipation of the effects of climate change.

Recommendations

- See the recommendations above for potential improvements to the site plan and building massing and facade design that would enhance the project's relationship to the surrounding neighborhood.



City of Cambridge Department of Public Works

John F. Nardone, Acting Commissioner

147 Hampshire Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
theworks@cambridgema.gov

Voice: 617 349 4800

TDD: 617 499 9924

December 9, 2025

TO: Planning Board

FROM: James Wilcox, PE
City Engineer

RE: Corcoran Park Phase 1 AHO Submission

We are in receipt of the AHO Submission Documents for the project at 8-12 May Street and 53 Lawn Street, for Corcoran Park Phase 1 , dated November 14, 2025.

The DPW supports the project and acknowledges that the CHA and their consultants have demonstrated a general understanding of our Department's requirements for development projects and have indicated a willingness to work with the DPW to meet the requirements and to address our concerns. With the understanding that the project will be subject to a thorough and complete engineering review at the time of the Building Permit Application, we anticipate continuing to work with the team. Comments on the submission, related to our purview, are summarized below.

Stormwater Management:

The development will be required to obtain a Stormwater Control Permit prior to the issuance of a Building Permit which will include a detailed review of the proposed stormwater management system, plans for erosion and sedimentation control during construction and the plans for long term operation and maintenance of the system. The submitted narrative includes an acknowledgement of the need for a Stormwater Control Permit and provides a general plan related to how the water quality and quantity Standards will be met.

Sewer Flow and Mitigation:

The Narrative does not include any anticipated design sewer flows for the Phase 1 development. Based on the bedroom count and with the understanding that there is existing housing stock on the site, we do not anticipate this phase of the project to exceed the 15,000 gpd net increase in sewer flow that would trigger Inflow and Infiltration (I/I) mitigation. The DPW will work with CHA to review the added bedroom count and net increase in flows and will need to make some considerations for the eventual Phase 2 project as we look to understand if I/I Mitigation will be triggered by the project at any point in the future.

Flood Resiliency:

The DPW had been working with the CHA to understand how the Long-term Flood Elevations, specifically those presented under the newly promulgated FloodViewer 2025 Map, would impact the parcel. The Submitted documentation includes discussion, site plans and elevations that appear to show compliance with the Flood Resiliency Zoning Standards. The buildings have been designed to establish

the habitable spaces above the 1% LTFE of elevation 43.3' CCB. Site grading, stairs and ramping are required to meet these standards, but will support the renovation providing housing that will be resilient to future projected flood events. The DPW will review the details as the project is advanced to confirm that the built design will continue to meet the Flood Resiliency Standards.

Urban Canopy:

AHO Projects are not under the jurisdiction of the City's Tree Protection Ordinance. The City and specifically the Urban Forestry Division does, however, always advocate for the protection and maintenance of existing, mature, healthy trees as they are vital in maintaining the tree canopy.

The Submission document includes narrative and graphics that present the existing trees on the project parcel and identifies which will be removed to support the project and also presents a proposed planting plan that looks to mitigate the canopy loss. The DPW would respectfully request that in addition to the number of trees being impacted and planted, that the size of the trees, in caliper inches, be included as well to allow for a better understanding of how well the proposed planting plan will address the loss of the existing trees and canopy.

Specific to Public Shade Trees, the DPW would note that all street trees located along the project frontage shall be maintained and protected during all construction activities. Also, we would ask that street trees be considered along all frontages as is allowed by the design standards and utility conflicts. Minimum sidewalk widths to meet accessibility requirements will need to be provided in addition to the width supporting new or existing trees.

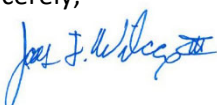
Public Right of Way:

DPW will review and evaluate all proposed work and impacts in the public right of way, as the design is developed. Connections to both public and private utilities as well as all proposed disruption in the public right of way shall be reviewed as part of the Building Permit and construction permit processes. As noted in the Application, the development will support, as needed, improvements to the public sidewalk, as needed, to obtain an accessible and comfortable sidewalk width for the project frontage.

In support of comments made by CAMDOT we also would support the CHA reviewing the abutting streets and sidewalks in conjunction with their reconfigured site to understand if there are new or changed desire lines for pedestrians that may warrant curb and crosswalk modifications and/or additions.

We look forward to working with the CHA, their team and other City Departments on this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns related to the comments or information provided above.

Sincerely,



James Wilcox, P.E.
City Engineer



**MEMORANDUM**

To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust
From: Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager of Housing Development
Alexis Turgeon, Housing Development Planner
Date: April 30, 2026
Re: 2072 Massachusetts Avenue – Planning Board AHO Design Consultation Report

Capstone Communities and Hope Real Estate Enterprises have been working with staff from the Housing Department and the Community Development Department on their 2072 Massachusetts Avenue development, which will create a new twelve-story building containing 73 affordable rental units. The project recently completed the advisory design review process with the Planning Board under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). The two required Planning Board advisory design consultations were held on October 7, 2025, and March 3, 2026.

The proposed design was favorably received by the Planning Board. The report noted that Capstone Communities and Hope Real Estate Enterprises were responsive to staff and Planning Board member feedback, specifically regarding the rooftop mechanical setbacks, façade articulation and fenestration, quality interior spaces including exposure of wood construction materials, improved bicycle parking access, roof-deck open space, and plans for public art installation on the ground floor. The Planning Board offered other recommendations for the development team to continue exploring, including further refinement of the south facade, increased activation of ground floor, use of different color schemes and elements, and assessing the need for safety improvements to the space between the proposed building at 2072 Massachusetts Avenue and the adjacent Russell apartments through the potential use of gates and/or lighting. The Board also recommended that the team continue to work in coordination with City staff regarding the widening of Walden Street and on aligning the pedestrian experience with ongoing City planning work regarding Massachusetts Avenue redesigns.

The AHO requires that the results of the design review process be shared with the Affordable Housing Trust. The Planning Board report is attached and includes:

- Planning Board Final Report of AHO Design Consultation (3/24/2026), including:
 - CDD Staff Memo (2/25/2026);
- Planning Board Initial Report of AHO Design Consultation (10/28/2025), including:
 - CDD Staff Memo (9/30/2025); and,
 - DPW Staff Memo (9/25/2025).

Project Overview:

The development of 2072 Massachusetts Avenue involves the new construction of a twelve-story building under the provisions of the AHO. The site currently contains a small, vacant fast-food restaurant that will be demolished to make way for the development. The development proposal involves the creation of 73 affordable rental units, of which approximately seventy percent will be family-sized. All units will be affordable to households earning at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI), with some units being deeply affordable to those making at or below 30% AMI.

More information on the proposed development, including the presentation and materials submitted to the Planning Board, can be found on the Housing Department's 2072 Massachusetts Avenue project page at:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Housing/2072massave>.

Housing Department Recommendation:

Staff have received and are reviewing a Trust funding request from Capstone Communities and Hope Real Estate Enterprises to support the construction of this project. Staff expect to bring this request to an upcoming Trust meeting.

All approvals of Trust funding for AHO projects are conditioned on the Trust's review and consideration of the final Planning Board report. As the Trust has not yet considered the final funding request for this development, we recommend the Trust vote to accept this report and refer to this acceptance when reviewing the request for funding we expect to bring to the Trust at an upcoming meeting.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: March 24, 2026

Subject: Final Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory
Design Consultation Procedure Compliance Certification

Project Location: 2072 Massachusetts Avenue

Date of Planning Board Meeting: March 3, 2026

Project Overview

The Planning Board (the “Board”) met on Tuesday, March 3, 2026, to review and comment on the revised design for 2072 Massachusetts Avenue, a multifamily development by CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave LLC and CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave Tenant LLC (the “Developer”) under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in Section 11.207 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board reviewed a plan set submitted by the Developer dated February 5, 2026, as well as staff memos from the Community Development Department (CDD) and Department of Transportation (DOT), which are attached. The Board held its first advisory consultation on October 7, 2025, and issued an initial report dated [October 28, 2025](#).

Board Comments

The Board was pleased with the improvements made to the project in response to both staff and Planning Board comments and commended the development team for a thoughtful design process focused on enhancing the neighborhood and the quality of life for future residents. Board members appreciated the increased setbacks for rooftop mechanical equipment, which significantly reduce its visibility from the ground. Other notable improvements include the quality of interior spaces with wood finishes, added articulation on the south facade, improved fenestration on the west facade, the inclusion of a mural facing Massachusetts Avenue, improved bicycle parking access, and the rooftop design approach shaped by community engagement. The Board was also pleased that rethinking the long-term bicycle parking layout allowed for the addition of an extra two-bedroom unit.

As the project progresses, the Board offers the following suggestions:

- Further refine the south facade, as it still reads as a single massing and overly flat.

- Explore additional strategies to maximize natural light and views for the lower-level units facing the Russel Apartments' blank brick wall, such as adjusting their layout and fenestration.
- While some members liked the use of warm colors on the facades, others encouraged exploring more expressive options such as red brick tones and/or painted mullions. The Board strongly recommended seeking an alternative to the grey color.
- Continue coordinating with City staff to ensure the ground floor design and pedestrian experience align with the ongoing Massachusetts Avenue redesign plan.
- Continue working with the City on the widening of Walden Street to align with City goals for pedestrian safety and overall streetscape design.
- Consider selecting large growth trees to be planted along the south edge of the site to improve the transition to the City's parking lot and align with the City's urban forestry priorities.
- Explore ways to improve safety along the alley between the building and the Russell Apartments, including the use of lighting and gates.
- Consider providing additional short-term bicycle parking near the lobby for guests and residents.
- To further activate Massachusetts Avenue, explore ways to promote active use and programming of the ground floor community room and expand art display opportunities by adding art to the ground-floor windows.

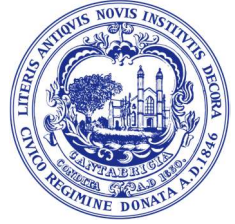
AHO Compliance Summary

This report certifies that the developer has completed the Advisory Design Consultation Process in order to comply with the procedure for development under the Affordable Housing overlay set forth in Section 11.207.8 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.

Submitted for the Planning Board,

Swaathi Joseph

Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Tom Sieniewicz, Chair.



To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: February 25, 2026

Re: Affordable Housing Overlay Design Consultation **AHO-9, 2072 Massachusetts Avenue**

Overview

Submission Type:	Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Review
Applicant:	CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave LLC and CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave Tenant LLC
Zoning District(s):	Business A-2/Residence C-1
Proposal Summary:	Construction of a 12-story building to create 73 affordable rental units and amenities under the AHO.
Planning Board Action:	Review and comment on conformance with AHO Development Standards, City Development Guidelines for the proposal area, Design Guidelines for Multifamily Housing, and Citywide Urban Design Objectives.
Memo Contents:	CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report
Other Staff Reports:	Department of Transportation (DOT) in separate document.

Zoning & Development Staff Report

Overview

The Developer, Capstone Communities LLC (or “Capstone”) and Hope Real Estate Enterprise LLC (or “Hope”), is proposing to demolish the existing single-story restaurant building to construct a new 12-story, 136-foot-tall residential building consisting of 73 affordable rental units and approximately 91,400 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include studios, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 667 to 1,042 square feet. The project also includes resident amenities such as a ground-floor community space and a rooftop outdoor terrace. Bicycle parking will be provided with 45 long-term and 1 short-term spaces, supplemented by contributions for a Public Bicycle Sharing Station and Public Bicycle Parking to offset the remaining required spaces.

Planning Board Comments from Initial Consultation Meeting

Board members were very supportive of the proposal and commended the Developer for adding a significant number of family-sized units and amenity spaces. The Board thought the proposed height was appropriate for the site, one of the major corridors in the city, well served by public transit and bicycle amenities. The Board generally supported the modern double stacked design and the choice of colors and materials, particularly the use of brick in context with the surrounding buildings and the use of mass timber as both a structural and aesthetic option. The terrace location with orientation toward the street and city skyline was also highlighted.

As the building design advances, Board members encouraged the Developer to consider increasing ground-floor height and transparency. They also suggested refining the elevations, particularly those facing the neighborhood, with greater attention to materials, fenestration, and recesses. The Board requested more detailed floor plans that align interior layouts with façade articulation and structural grids, as well as additional information to better understand feasibility and users experience of the proposed terrace space.

For site design, the Board asked for a contingency plan to protect the large mature tree on the abutting Russel Apartments lot and urged continued coordination with the City on public realm improvements, including Walden Street widening, loading/unloading and pickup/drop-off areas.

Staff Comments on Revised Submission

The City has received a revised application dated February 5, 2026, including updated forms and narrative volume, revised graphics, and a revised appendix volume with additional Green Factor and Green Building documentation.

CDD Staff have confirmed that the project has provided sufficient documentation to demonstrate compliance with Green Building and Green Factor standards at this stage of review. The Project intends to meet Green Building requirements by targeting Passive House certification. The minimum required Green Factor score is achieved through a combination of understory trees, high planting areas, a green roof area, and shaded areas.

In the initial Zoning Memo on this proposal, CDD provided a summary of compliance with AHO standards. The revised submission presents several modifications, including: increasing the eastern side yard setback from zero to five feet along the Russell Apartments property line; increasing the number of long-term bicycle parking spaces by one; incorporating planters along Massachusetts Avenue; and reducing façade glazing from 45 to 35% along Massachusetts Avenue and 40 to 34% along Walden Street.

CDD staff continue to note two items requiring additional clarification to confirm full compliance with AHO zoning standards.

- Bicycle Parking: Article 6.000 requires a minimum 3-foot horizontal clearance perpendicular to the length of the bicycle from the center point of each bicycle rack. Page 26 of the graphic volume shows enlarged bicycle parking plans indicating that the two racks arranged in alignment in the second-floor bicycle room and the proposed short-term rack may not meet this requirement. No dimensions are provided for the short-term space.
- Rooftop Mechanical equipment: Section 11.207 requires rooftop mechanical equipment to be set back from the principal wall plane by a distance equal to its height. While some of the equipment appears to be screened by a 10-foot-tall structure, it remains unclear whether the equipment is set back as required.

CDD staff has also observed that revisions to the east facade facing the Russell Apartments eliminated the previously proposed recessed and projecting elements. Building and Site Design Standards for AHO projects require building facades not facing the street to incorporate elements that project or recess by at least two feet, occurring at an average interval of 80 linear horizontal feet or less. As currently shown, the east facade does not clearly demonstrate compliance with this standard.

Consistency with AHO Development Standards

The AHO development standards applicable to this project are summarized in the table below.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Business A-2 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Use	• Multifamily dwellings allowed.	• The proposal includes multifamily dwellings and residence amenities on the ground floor and rooftop.
Building Height & Stories Above Grade	• Underlying District Dimensional Standards allow 6 stories, 75 feet. • AHO Developments are allowed up to 13 stories, 150 feet.	• The proposed project is 12 stories and 136 feet in height.
Yard Setbacks	• Underlying District Dimensional Standards have no Side and Rear Yard requirements. • AHO Dimensional Standards have no Front Yard requirements.	• The parcel is a corner lot, so it contains two front yards and two side yards. A 5-foot setback is provided for both side yards. • The project proposes a 6-inch front yard setback on both street fronts.
Open Space	• AHO Developments require 30% open space or meet the	• While no Open Space is required, the project includes an outdoor

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Business A-2 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
	underlying District Dimensional Standard, whichever is less. • A lot in a B-A2 has no open space requirement.	terrace at the 12th floor, planters along the Streets, and ornamental trees along the southern lot line.
Parking and Bicycle Parking	• No minimum off-street parking for AHO Developments. • Bicycle parking is required per Article 6.100, but additional flexibility is provided for the location, quantity and type (long-term and short-term) of bicycle parking required.	• The project provides two long-term bicycle parking rooms with a total of 45 parking spaces where 76 spaces would be required for a project of this size. The remaining required spaces will be satisfied through a Public Bicycle Sharing Station contribution of 25 docks. • One short-term bicycle space is provided on Massachusetts Avenue where 8 are required. A Public Bicycle Parking Contribution will offset the remaining required short-term spaces. • Some long- and the short-term bicycle parking spaces do not appear to meet the dimensional standards in Article 6.100.
Site Design and Arrangement	• Front yards may be landscaped or hardscaped but cannot be used for off-street parking. • Pedestrian entrances shall be visible from the street.	• The proposed project meets all the Site Design and Arrangement requirements.
Building Facades	• Building facades facing public streets shall have a minimum percentage of 20% glazing. • Building facades must include projecting and/or recessed elements of at least two feet on an average interval of 40 linear feet along a Public Street, and 80 feet elsewhere. Such projecting or recessed elements do not apply to the lowest or highest Story Above Grade. • Facades of ground stories shall have expanses of no more than 25' with no windows or pedestrian entryways.	• The proposed building consists of 35% transparency along Massachusetts Avenue and 34% along Walden Street. • Facade facing the Russell Apartments appear to not include any projecting and or/recessed elements of at least two feet on an average interval of 80 linear feet.
Mechanical Equipment, Refuse Storage	• Mechanical equipment shall be generally screened from view. Rooftop mechanical equipment	• Ground story mechanicals and refuse areas appear to be within the building itself. Some rooftop

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Business A-2 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
and Loading Areas	must be set back from the roof line equal to its height.	equipment appears to be screened by a 10-foot-tall screen, but it is unclear if the equipment is setback by a dimension equal to at least its height.
Environmental Design Standards	This AHO project is subject to the following Sustainable Development Standards: - Section 22.20: Green Building - Section 22.90: Green Factor	Documentation demonstrating compliance with all relevant Sustainable Development Standards has been submitted to and certified by CDD staff.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	- 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.	- 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.	- 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.	- 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.	- 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.	- 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.	• 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
Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change as anticipated in the <i>Resilient Cambridge</i> plan.	• Up-to-date projections of climate change impacts over the project's anticipated lifespan are incorporated • Flood Resilience Standard in Section 22.80 and the Green Factor Standard in Section 22.90 are met or exceeded • Use of strategies that have environmental co-benefits • Integrative approach to climate change resilience that accounts for the existing context and promotes the other design objectives of the area and the City.

Urban Design Staff Report

Overview

The project at 2072 Massachusetts Avenue proposes to replace the existing single-story commercial building with a 12-story building that will provide 73 affordable residential units. As noted in the memo to the Planning Board for the project's initial hearing on October 7, 2025, the design accords with the intent of Cambridge's Multifamily Design Guidelines, and will contribute to the developing character of Mass Ave. Subsequent to the initial Planning Board hearing, the project team met with staff to review the project's revised design, which incorporates numerous improvements, many of them in response to Planning Board and staff suggestions:

- To reduce the risk of damage to the existing tree at the neighboring Russell Apartment's rear patio, the side setback along the east side of the site has been increased to 5 feet.
- The design of the rooftop outdoor terrace has been developed, including the provision of a small play structure.
- The linear planter along the building's west side—along the Walden Street sidewalk, has been lengthened (still retaining five feet of clear sidewalk width), and an additional planter is provided on the building's north side, in front of the building's Community Room on Mass Ave.
- Improvements to the ground floor facades include greater height, more fenestration, and a lighter brick color. On the Walden Street facade, the transformer door and the adjoining person door are better integrated into the facade's overall composition.
- A placeholder for art is indicated on the ground floor north elevation, behind the existing bus stop shelter.
- The upper story facades have been coordinated with interior layouts, resolving discrepancies present in the earlier design.
- Additional glazing has been provided on the east facade, giving it a more residential appearance.
- A slightly warmer color palette has been adopted.
- The ground floor plan has been reorganized, creating clearer circulation patterns, providing windows to additional rooms and a more accessible route to the bicycle storage room.
- The ground floor bicycle storage room now has a door leading to the east setback, providing an alternate exit (and perhaps entrance) for bicyclists.
- The layout of the second-floor bicycle parking room has been improved.
- The design team will continue to work with DOT and DPW on changes to Walden Street and Mass Avenue.

Urban Design Comments on Design Revisions

Site Design

The changes to the site plan - principally the slightly wider setback on the building's east side, and the additional planters on the west and north sides – are improvements.

- Consideration could be given to planting columnar trees in the portion of the building's widened east setback adjoining the Russell Apartment Building's rear patio (with care to not negatively affect the existing tree on the Russell Building's property).
- Greater clarity on the use of the east side doorway to the bicycle storage room, and the route from it to the public street, would be helpful.
- Consider planting trees with a taller growth habit on the south side of the site, adjoining the city owned parking lot.

Building Design

The changes to the building's architecture noted above are mostly subtle improvements. The building's overall appearance is similar to that of the previous design: the residential stories consist of a group of vertical massing elements running from second floor level to the building's top, separated from each other by vertical reveals, yet unified with each other by a light-colored frame-like grid of double floor proportions that is infilled by panels and fenestration; the residential stories are supported by a ground story that combines brick wall and full height fenestration.

As in the previous design, one of the appealing features of the facades is the low window sills, located just above floor level, which contribute to a sense of light and openness in the residential units—creating almost the sense of an interior porch, and also place the window openings in dialog with the larger-scaled double-story areas framed by the light-colored facade grid.

It's hard to tell precisely from the renderings, but in some of them the grey infill panels in the residential stories appear to be very close to the plane of the light colored facade grid.

- To enrich the facades with more relief and shadow, consideration could be given to increasing the depth to which the grey infill panels are recessed back from the plane of the light-colored gridded frame elements.

The color scheme is warmer than that of the previous version, but remains quite subdued.

- Consideration could be given to incorporating more color, perhaps in the window mullions, which are very close to the color of the adjoining infill panels.

North Facade (facing Mass Ave):

In the previous design, the north (Mass Ave) facade consisted of a two-bay-wide eastern (left hand) portion, and a four-bay-wide western (right hand) portion, separated by a vertical reveal that was aligned over the solid wall to the east of the entrance door. In the current design the vertical reveal has been shifted west, almost to the middle of the facade. The eastern portion consists of two bays, each wider than in the previous version. To achieve this, the blank panels within the light-colored facade grid have been considerably widened. The western portion of the facade has been reduced to three bays wide. The vertical reveal between the eastern and western portions is now partially over the entrance door fenestration and partly over the solid wall to the east of it, creating a slightly awkward relation between the building's ground floor base and the residential tower above it.

- Consideration could be given to reverting to the two bay and four bay arrangement for the east and west portions of the facade, and relocating the vertical reveal so that it is east of the entrance fenestration.

In the previous design, the Mass Avenue entrance was recessed into the building, creating a deep sheltered outdoor area at the door. In the current design, the entrance doors and associated fenestration are close to the plane of the masonry facade.

- Consider recessing the building entrance enough to create a shallow sheltered area outside the doors.

West facade (facing Walden Street):

The locations of the reveals between the vertical massing elements of the residential stories have been coordinated with the interior layout. Note that the living room window of the northernmost one-bedroom unit on the west side of the building seems excessively narrow.

- Consideration could be given to widening it.

In the previous design, the northern of the two vertical reveals on the west facade had fenestration in it for the associated unit's living room.

- Consideration could be given to reinstating the fenestration, both to give more natural light to the living room and to enrich the facade.

East Facade (facing Russell Apartments):

Improvements include wider windows and reductions to the widths of the blank infill panels, the relocation of the vertical strip that divides the facade into an eastern and western portion closer to Mass Ave, and the elimination of the small punched windows that had been in that strip.

In contrast to the previous version, which stepped in plan, the east facade is now flat (or very close to flat).

- While this does not appear to be problematic, a change in plane at the two vertical strips – recessing them relative to the gridded portions of the facade - could be considered.

South Facade (facing the city parking lot)

The facade benefits from the simplification of the vertical strip that divides the facade into two portions.

- Consideration could be given to widening the windows, and to increasing the depth to which the infill panels are recessed.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: October 28, 2025

Subject: Initial Report of Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Consultation

Project Location: 2072 Massachusetts Avenue

Date of Planning Board Meeting: October 7, 2025

Overview

The Planning Board (the “Board”) met on Tuesday, October 7, 2025, to review and comment on the design for 2072 Massachusetts Avenue, a multifamily development by CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave LLC and CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave Tenant LLC (the “Developer”) under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) in Section 11.207 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Board reviewed a plan set submitted by the Developer dated September 4, 2025, as well as staff memos from the Community Development Department (CDD) and Department of Public Works (DPW), which are attached.

Proposal Description

The Developer is proposing to demolish the existing structure to construct a new 12-story, 126-foot-tall residential building consisting of 73 affordable rental units with approximately 91,700 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include studios, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 500 to 1,159 square feet at 30% and 60% AMI. The project also includes resident amenities such as a ground-floor community space and a rooftop outdoor terrace. Bicycle parking will be provided with 44 long-term and 1 short-term spaces, supplemented by a financial contribution to offset the remaining required spaces.

Board Comments

Board members were very supportive of the proposal and commended the Developer for adding a significant number of family-sized units and amenity spaces. The Board thought the proposed height was appropriate for the site, in one of the major corridors in the city, well served by public transit and bicycle amenities. The Board generally supported the modern double stacked design and the choice of colors and materials, particularly the use of brick in context with the surrounding buildings and the use of mass timber as a structural and aesthetic option.

As the proposal continues to develop, Board members urged the developer to focus on the following program and design elements:

Site Design

- Board members encouraged the Developer to continue working with the City to provide loading/unloading and pick-up/drop-off areas for the project and present a streetscape design, ensuring consistency with the City's broader vision for the public realm. It was noted that Massachusetts Avenue may present additional challenges for these functions due to the presence of a bike lane and a bus stop and encouraged the applicant to account for these conditions as the design continues to develop.
- Continue coordination with City staff to ensure that proposed improvements along Walden Street are accurately represented and aligned with City's ongoing planning efforts. The Board also encourages continued discussion with staff to clarify timing and scope for these potential streetscape improvements and would like more detail on its phasing at the second hearing.
- Clarify the current arrangements for the use of the City owned parking lot on Walden Street adjacent to the site and provide an update on any options for using this site to alleviate concerns with project loading and drop-off /pick-up.
- Identify a contingency plan for the large tree on the abutting Russell Apartments lot in the event it dies or is severely damaged during construction.

Building Design

- Continue to refine the Massachusetts Avenue and Walden Street facades and present more details on materials, fenestration, and increased ground-floor transparency, showing how the building is more inviting and aligned with the Massachusetts Avenue Planning Study goals.
- Consider increasing the ground-floor height to enhance the sense of openness and visibility along the street frontage.
- Consider introducing additional façade recesses, potentially including balconies, particularly on the east elevation, to provide private open spaces, natural light and air for the apartments.
- Further develop the elevations facing the neighborhood to make the building more inviting from that perspective.
- Present a detailed layout plan for the terrace, demonstrating how residents will use this space. Include cross-sections illustrating rooftop plantings to clarify the feasibility of the proposed roof trees to provide shading.

- Provide examples or precedents that illustrate how roof gardens can function effectively for residents on upper floors of taller buildings.
- Evaluate the possibility of incorporating a basement or partial basement to accommodate bicycle parking and laundry facilities, allowing more active residential use on the ground floor and potentially additional dwelling units on the ground and rooftop.
- Consider eliminating the rooftop emergency generator to achieve a 100% fossil-fuel-free building and reclaim space for residential or amenity use.
- Maintain the proposed terrace location, with its orientation and views toward the street and city skyline.
- Present more detailed floor plans that align interior layouts with façade articulation and structural grids, clearly identifying accessible dwelling units.
- Improve access to the bicycle rooms, including the addition of a direct external entry at the rear of the building.
- Confirm that the number of laundry machines proposed is adequate to serve the total number of residential units and consider increasing the number of machines.

In addition to these topic areas, the Board supported comments made in the staff memos for the proposal and asked that they be considered to refine the project's design.

Submitted for the Planning Board,

Swaathi Joseph

Representative to the Planning Board, authorized by Mary Flynn, Chair.



To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: September 30, 2025

Re: Affordable Housing Overlay Design Consultation **AHO-9, 2072 Massachusetts Avenue**

Overview

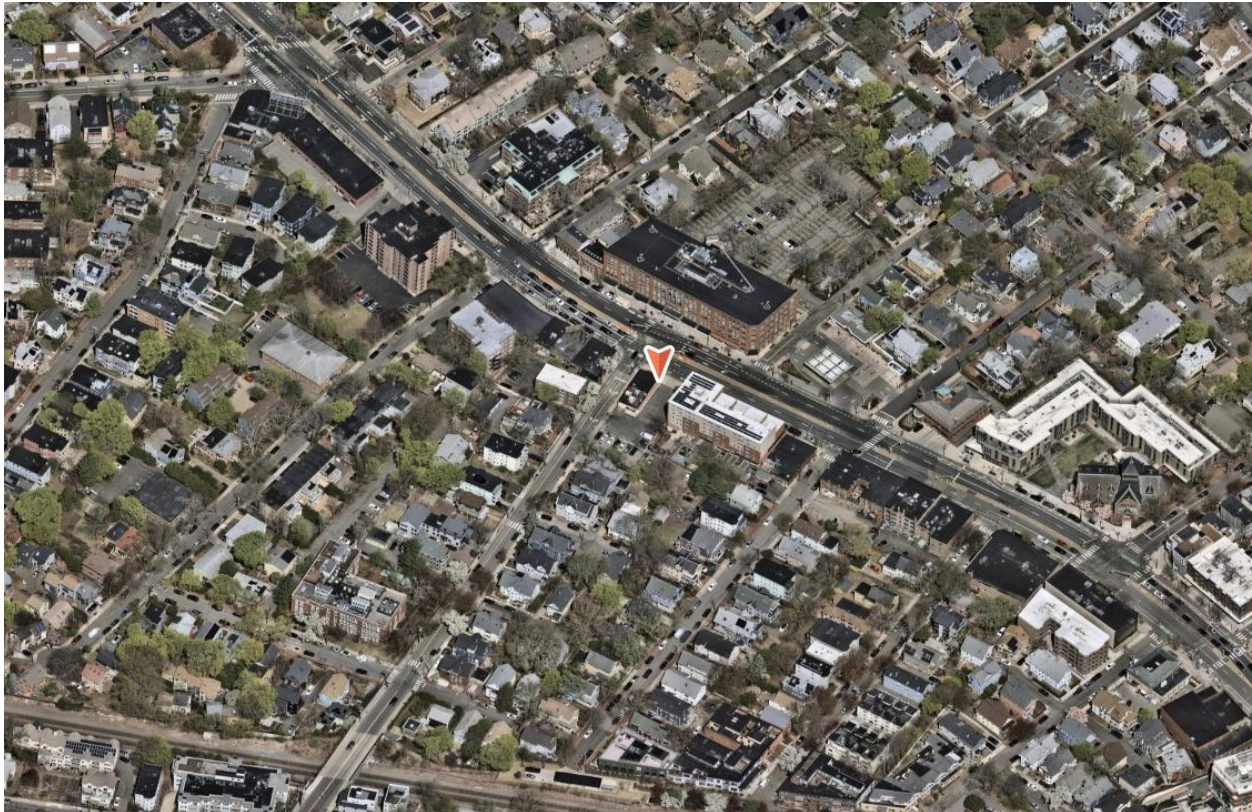
Submission Type:	Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) Advisory Design Review
Applicant:	CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave LLC and CC HRE 2072 Mass Ave Tenant LLC
Zoning District(s):	Business A-2/Residence C-1
Proposal Summary:	Construction of a 12-story building to create 73 affordable rental units and amenities under the AHO.
Planning Board Action:	Review and comment on conformance with AHO Development Standards, City Development Guidelines for the proposal area, Design Guidelines for Multifamily Housing, and Citywide Urban Design Objectives.
Memo Contents:	CDD Zoning Report & Urban Design Report
Other Staff Reports:	Department of Public Works (DPW) Report in separate document.

Zoning & Development Staff Report

Site & Zoning Context

Site Context

The site consists of a single parcel at the corner of Massachusetts Avenue and Walden Street in the North Cambridge neighborhood, a few blocks north of Porter Station and just one block south of the Somerville border. Directly across Massachusetts Avenue stands the historic Henderson Carriage Building, and an MBTA bus stop shelter is located along the parcel's northeastern edge. The surrounding neighborhood features a diverse mix of uses, including commercial, mixed-use, office, and residential buildings of varying densities. Building types also range widely. Massachusetts Avenue is lined primarily with single-story commercial structures and mixed-use buildings up to eight stories in height, while Walden Street is predominantly 2½-story residential buildings. The site currently contains a one-story vacant building that most recently housed Darul Kabab, an Indian-Pakistani restaurant, along with a surface parking lot.



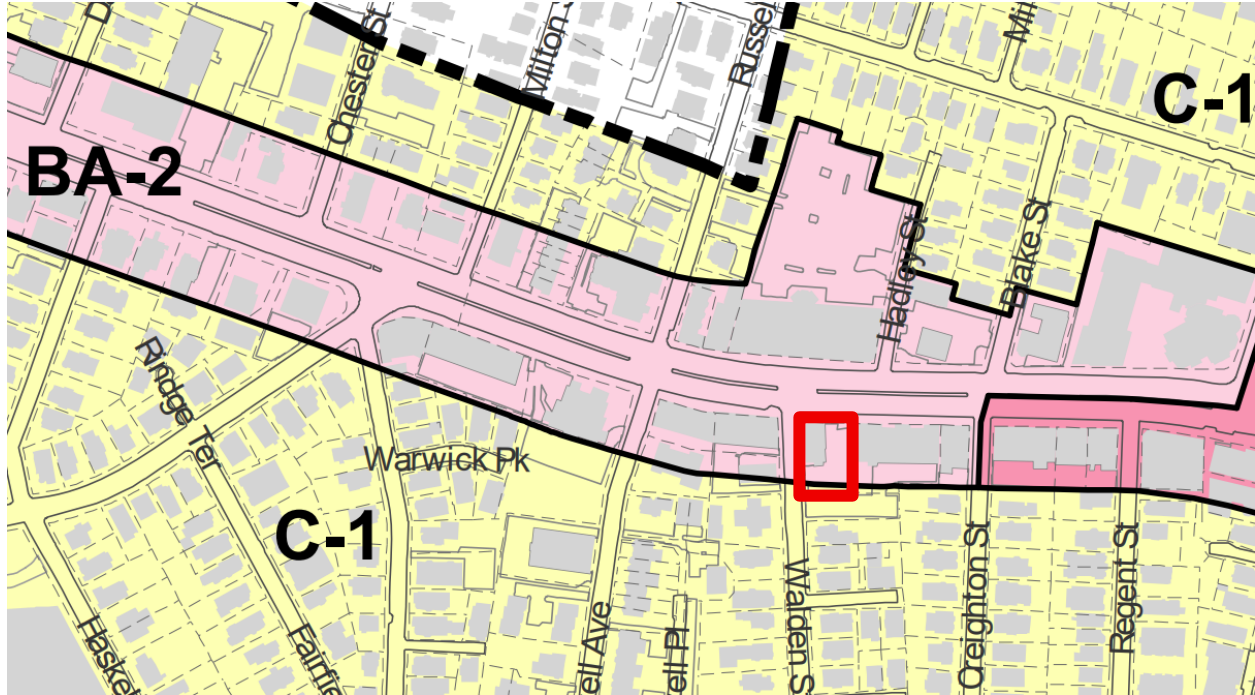
Context Map for 2072 Massachusetts Avenue. Source: Nearmap Aerial Imagery, April 2025

Site Zoning

This site spans two zoning districts, with the majority located in a Business A-2 (BA-2) district and a small rear portion situated in a Residence C-1 district. As a development carried under the AHO, per Section 11.207.5.1, the project may apply the zoning requirements of the district covering most of the lot to the entire parcel. Accordingly, the BA-2 district, which is the more permissive base zoning, is extended to

AHO Design Consultation AHO-9, 2072 Massachusetts Avenue – CDD Memo to Planning Board

the approximately 13-foot portion zoned C-1. The BA-2 district has no minimum Open Space or Side/Rear Setback requirements for residential uses, and under the AHO, no minimum front yard setback is required. Additionally, while base BA-2 zoning limits residential building height to 6 stories and 75 feet, the AHO allows up to 13 stories above grade and a maximum height of 150 feet. Because this AHO development exceeds 50,000 square feet, it is subject to the two-session Planning Board Advisory Consultation process.



Zoning Map. Source: Zoning Districts, City of Cambridge, February 2025

Comments on Proposal

Project Description

The applicants, Capstone Communities LLC (or “Capstone”) and Hope Real Estate Enterprise LLC or (“Hope”) are proposing to demolish the existing single-story restaurant building to construct a new 12-story, 126-foot-tall residential building consisting of 73 affordable rental units and approximately 91,700 square feet of Gross Floor Area. The unit mix will include studios, one-, two-, and three-bedroom apartments ranging in size from 500 to 1,159 square feet at 30% and 60% AMI. The project also includes resident amenities such as a ground-floor community space and a rooftop outdoor terrace. Bicycle parking will be provided with 44 long-term and 1 short-term spaces, supplemented by a financial contribution to offset the remaining required spaces.

Consistency with AHO Development Standards

The AHO development standards applicable to this project are summarized in the table below.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Business A-2 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Use	• Multifamily dwellings allowed.	• The proposal includes multifamily dwellings and residence amenities on the ground floor and rooftop.
Building Height & Stories Above Grade	• Underlying District Dimensional Standards allow 6 stories, 75 feet • AHO Developments are allowed up to 13 stories, 150 feet.	• The proposed project is 12 stories and 126 feet in height.
Yard Setbacks	• Underlying District Dimensional Standards have no Side and Rear Yard requirements. • AHO Dimensional Standards have no Front Yard requirements.	• The parcel is a corner lot, so it contains two front yards and two side yards. A 5-foot setback is provided at its southern side yard and no setback to the east. • The project proposes a 6-inch front yard setback on both street fronts.
Open Space	• AHO Developments require 30% open space or meet the underlying District Dimensional Standard, whichever is less. • A lot in a B-A2 has no open space requirement.	• While no Open Space is required, the project includes an outdoor terrace at the 12th floor, planters along Walden Street, and ornamental trees along the southern lot line.
Parking and Bicycle Parking	• No minimum off-street parking for AHO Developments. • Bicycle parking is required per Article 6.100, but additional flexibility is provided for the location, quantity and type (long-term and short-term) of bicycle parking required.	• The project provides two long-term bicycle parking rooms with 44 parking spaces and one short-term space on Massachusetts Avenue. Under Article 6.100, 76 long-term bicycle parking spaces and 8 short-term spaces would be required for a project of this size. The remaining long and short-term spaces required will be satisfied through a Public Bicycle Sharing Station contribution. • Some long-term bicycle parking spaces do not appear to meet the dimensional standards in Article 6.100.
Site Design and Arrangement	• Front yards may be landscaped or hardscaped but cannot be used for off-street parking. • Pedestrian entrances shall be visible from the street. • Buildings with front facades in excess of 250' in length shall provide forecourts to break up massing.	• The proposed project meets all the Site Design and Arrangement requirements.

Development Standard	Requirements for AHO Project in Business A-2 Zoning District	Summary of Compliance
Building Facades	• Building facades facing public streets shall have a minimum percentage of 20% glazing. • Building facades must include projecting and/or recessed elements of at least two feet on an average interval of 40 linear feet along a Public Street, and 80 feet elsewhere. Such projecting or recessed elements do not apply to the lowest or highest Story Above Grade. • Facades of ground stories shall have expanses of no more than 25' with no windows or pedestrian entryways.	• The proposed building consists of 45% transparency along Massachusetts Avenue and 40% along Walden Street.
Mechanical Equipment, Refuse Storage and Loading Areas	• Mechanical equipment shall be generally screened from view. Rooftop mechanical equipment must be set back from the roof line equal to its height.	• Ground story mechanicals and refuse areas appear to be within the building itself. All rooftop equipment appears to be screened by a 10 feet high screen, but it is unclear if the equipment is setback by a dimension equal to at least its height.
Environmental Design Standards	This AHO project is subject to the following Sustainable Development Standards: • Section 22.20: Green Building • Section 22.90: Green Factor	• The Project intends to meet Green Building requirements by targeting Passive House certification. A Green Building Report will be required ahead of the final Planning Board Advisory Consultation. • A Cool Score sheet has been submitted but complete documentation showing compliance with Green Factor Standards will be required ahead of the final Planning Board Advisory Consultation.

Recommendations

The following is a summary of recommendations that may be considered for revised submission:

- Detail of long-term bicycle parking layout to confirm compliance with design standards in Article 6.100.
- Information about number of Public Bicycle Sharing Stations and docks to ensure compliance with AHO Bicycle Parking Standards.

- Further review of all rooftop mechanical equipment to ensure the screening requirements of the AHO design standards are met.

Transportation Comments

The Department of Transportation (DOT) staff has been working with the applicant and provided the following comments on the proposal:

- DOT is very supportive of the developer’s plan to pull back the building’s first floor in order to widen Walden Street as it approaches the intersection with Massachusetts Avenue. The revised curb line will accommodate two ten-foot lanes traveling north and one ten-foot lane traveling south. This is a significant improvement over current conditions and will improve the operation and safety for all road users.
- Further review the configuration of the northernmost racks in the ground-floor bicycle parking room to ensure that the access aisle is sufficient and racks are not blocked once bicycles are parked.
- Further review both bicycle parking rooms to ensure compliance with Bicycle Parking Guidelines for accessibility and improve circulation challenges, including providing more direct exterior access to the ground floor room, improving turns, and avoiding reliance on circulation through the trash room.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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.	• 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
Development should be resilient to the effects of climate change as anticipated in the <i>Resilient Cambridge</i> plan.	• Up-to-date projections of climate change impacts over the project's anticipated lifespan are incorporated • Flood Resilience Standard in Section 22.80 and the Green Factor Standard in Section 22.90 are met or exceeded • Use of strategies that have environmental co-benefits • Integrative approach to climate change resilience that accounts for the existing context and promotes the other design objectives of the area and the City.

Urban Design Staff Report

Urban Design Comments

Consistency with Multifamily Design Guidelines

The design as proposed generally adheres to the applicable principles as outlined in the Multifamily Design Guidelines:

- The building is appropriately sited to maintain the streetwall on Massachusetts Avenue.
- Its vertical massing articulates the public realm by providing a visual target at the bend in Mass Avenue.
- Together with the Henderson Carriage Building on the opposite side of Mass Ave, it creates a gateway to the Porter Square area as one approaches it from the west.
- The building's distinct ground story base is constructed of appealingly textured materials and includes a large glazed area at the corner.

Site Design

The building fills most of the site, leaving little space for landscape improvements.

On its west side, the ground floor is set back from Walden Street. As part of improvements to Walden Street suggested by city staff, the curb and sidewalk will be relocated farther east from its current location, widening the currently constricted street. The sidewalk will be partially under the building's cantilevered upper floors. Underground utilities in the affected area may introduce complications, however; further investigations of subsurface conditions will be made.

New trees are provided along the parcel's south edge, between the building and the city-owned parking lot on Walden Street.

The project refrains from proposing improvements to the Mass Ave sidewalk and existing bus stop, as the sidewalk's revised design (expected as part of City-led improvements to Mass Ave) is still in process.

Recommendations

- Planters are shown against the building on the Walden Street sidewalk. Whether the resulting restrictions in sidewalk width (to approximately 5'-2" clear) is advisable should be evaluated.
- The applicant should continue to coordinate with city staff on changes to Walden Street and Mass Ave.

Building Design

The building's general concept a good response to the site: The division of its broad faces into two (or three) elements, separated by vertical grooves, emphasizes the building's verticality and breaks up its mass. The slight bend in the Mass Ave facade will create an appealing foreshortened view as one

approaches the building from either direction on Mass Ave. The brick ground floor facade will provide texture at the pedestrian level.

Recommendations

- Massing
 - Consider relocating the 12th story terrace (currently at the building's northwest corner) to the southwest corner, so as to accentuate the building's verticality at the intersection of Mass Ave and Walden Street, and to step down toward the neighborhood to the south.
- Facades
 - The earlier version of this project, dated October 27, 2020, with vertically striated light colored cladding, punched windows on the west and north facades, and more solid wall surface, was very successful. Consideration could be given to reinstating that aesthetic on at least some of the facades.
 - Consideration could be given to further breaking up the facades by using *both* the earlier wall and punched window expression and the current frame and infill expression, using one system in the northern portion of the mass and the other in the southern portion.
 - In the frame and infill system, consider differentiating the widths of the piers and the horizontal members.
 - Consider providing larger windows on the east facade.
 - Consider locating the east facade's vertical division farther north, so as to separate the northern Mass Ave facing component from the southern element that faces the interior of the block.
 - The lengths of blank ground story wall without openings may be excessive.
 - Careful treatment of doorways and other openings in the brick of the ground floor facades, and the contrast between the brick walls and the highly glazed Community Room at the northwest corner design of the ground floor facades will contribute to a rich pedestrian experience. (Sert's treatment of similar conditions in his office building at the intersection of Prospect Street and Bishop Allen Drive could be a useful reference.)
 - The locations of fenestration on the ground story Walden Street facade should be coordinated with the interior layout.
 - Whether sufficient access is provided to the transformer room should be evaluated. If a large door is required, it should be designed to complement the rest of the facade.
 - Consider alternative color palettes for the exterior.
 - The use of an exposed mass timber structural system will enrich the building's appearance. The ground floor structure is proposed to be steel frame, however. Can the steel be expressed in a way that complements the exposed mass timber?

- Plans
 - Note that better coordination between the vertical notches in the west facade and the interior layouts would improve the unit configurations.

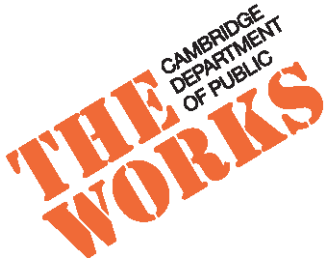
Sustainable Design

Recommendations

- The possibility of dedicating portions of the roof to green roof systems should be investigated.
- Clarify whether the seemingly high window to wall ratio on the west facade will meet passive house standards.

Consistency with City wide Urban Design Objectives

The project appears to meet the Citywide Urban Design Objectives.



City of Cambridge Department of Public Works

John F. Nardone, Acting Commissioner

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September 25, 2025

TO: Planning Board

FROM: James Wilcox, PE
City Engineer

RE: 2072 Massachusetts Ave AHO Submission

We are in receipt of the AHO Submission Documents for the project at 2072 Massachusetts Ave , dated September 4, 2025.

The DPW supports the project and acknowledges that the Development Team and their consultants have demonstrated a general understanding of our Department's requirements for development projects and have indicated a willingness to work with the DPW to meet the requirements and to address our concerns. With the understanding that the project will be subject to a thorough and complete engineering review at the time of the Building Permit Application, we anticipate continuing to work with the Applicant. Items discussed with the Development Team related to our purview are summarized below.

Stormwater Management:

The development will be required to obtain a Stormwater Control Permit prior to the issuance of a Building Permit which will include a detailed review of the proposed stormwater management system, plans for erosion and sedimentation control during construction and the plans for long term operation and maintenance of the system.

The submitted narrative includes an acknowledgement of some of the Stormwater Standards and some discussion related to how the Standards will be met. The Development Team and their consultants should review the City's Stormwater Control Permit Standards to confirm compliance with all water quality and quantity Standards. Methodology for calculating water quality mitigation, specifically Total Phosphorous removal, shall be consistent with methods and standards outlined in Appendix F of the Massachusetts MS4 General Permit. Final review and approval of the design will occur with the Building Permit.

Sewer Mitigation:

The development may trigger Inflow and Infiltration Mitigation if it increases the flow to the City's infrastructure by more than 15,000 gallons per day. The requirement is to mitigate the additional flow at a rate of 4:1. The proposed bedroom count has the design flow approaching this limit and should be evaluated by the development to clearly understand the net increase in flow to the City's system, as the program is finalized. Mitigation requirements, if triggered, will need to be agreed with the City and the Development Team prior to Building Permit.

Urban Canopy:

The submitted documentation notes that there are no trees on the parcel that are jurisdictional under the Tree Protection Ordinance. There is a tree on the abutting parcel that is immediately adjacent to the lot line and has the potential to be impacted by the construction. The Team has presented a Tree Protection Plan that outlines specific measures to be taken by the contractor to ensure that the tree is not adversely impacted by the project. The plan includes monitoring the tree for a full growing season after the completion of construction. The Urban Forestry Division agrees with this approach but would ask that in addition to the protections proposed that the arborist evaluate canopy impacts along with rootzone impacts.

Specific to Public Shade Trees, the DPW would note that all street trees located along the project frontage shall be maintained and protected during all construction activities. Also, we would ask that street trees be considered along all frontages as is allowed by the design standards and utility conflicts.

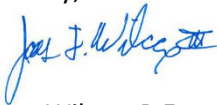
Public Right of Way:

DPW will review and evaluate all proposed work and impacts in the public right of way, as the design is developed. Connections to both public and private utilities as well as all proposed disruption in the public right of way shall be reviewed as part of the Building Permit and construction permit processes. As noted in the Application, the development will support, as needed, improvements to the public sidewalk, as needed, to obtain an accessible and comfortable sidewalk width for the project frontage.

The project proposes widening Walden Street for a portion of their frontage to support a second lane for turning movements. As this widening is supported by CAMDOT, DPW will work with the Development Team and CAMDOT on detailed review of plans for this work. The Team proactively engaged a survey consultant to establish the depth and sizes of some of the underground utilities that are in the vicinity of the proposed widening (curb relocation). Preliminary review indicates that widening is possible. Relevant City departments will work the team to progress plans for this work.

We look forward to working with the Development Team and other City Departments on this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns related to the comments or information provided above.

Sincerely,



James Wilcox, P.E.
City Engineer

