



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

DEVELOPMENT CONSULTATION PROCEDURE CERTIFICATE OF COMPLIANCE

IRAM FAROOQ

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Community Development

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Chief of Administration

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Deputy Director
Chief of Planning

Small Project Review: _____

Large Project Review: _____X_____

1. Applicant: 55 Spinelli Place, LLC - 38 Pequossette Road, Belmont MA 02478
2. Owner: 55 Spinelli Place, LLC - 38 Pequossette Road, Belmont MA 02478
3. Area of Special Planning Concern: H Sq__ C Sq__ BB-1/2__
N. Mass Ave.__ Parkway__ Other: Alewife Overlay District 1_____
4. Location of Project: 55 Spinelli Place, Cambridge, MA 02138
5. Base Zoning District: Industry B-2 (IB-2)
6. Type of Development:
 - a. New Building: Yes
 - b. Other new structure: -
 - c. Other exterior alteration increasing gross floor area by 100 square feet or more (1,000 sq ft in the Parkway Overlay District): -
 - d. Construction of five or more parking spaces (ten in the Parkway Overlay District): -
 - e. Erection of a sign: -
 - f. Other alterations facing a street not otherwise excluded: -

7. Brief Description of the Project:

An approximately 17,094 square foot 3-story lab and technical office building. This is an infill development on the site of an existing surface parking lot. The proposal shares the site with an existing 2-story office and lab building. There is a proposed reduction in parking from 141 to 129 spaces, increased permeable and open space, and the planting of an additional 18 trees.

8. Date Completed Materials Submitted: November 9, 2021
9. Materials Submitted:
 - a. Written Description: "55 Spinelli Pl – Plans and Zoning Analysis"

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- b. Plan Set: “Project 21-060 55 Spinelli Place New Lab,” prepared by Margolis and Fishman Architects and Planners, November 9, 2021 and including sheets entitled “Neighborhood Context – Ariel View,” “Proposed Site Plan – Ariel View,” Existing Site – Open Space,” “Proposed Site – Open Space,” “Proposed Floor Plans,” “Proposed South and East Elevations,” “Proposed North and West Elevations,” “Zoning Analysis,” and “Dimensional Form.”
- c. Graphic information: site plan X cross sections floor plans X elevations X other

10. Date of Development Consultation: December 1, 2021

11. Presentation and Comments:

Jonathan Lavash of Jonathan Lavash Project Management, LLC presented on behalf of the applicant for a new 3-story lab and technical office building. Also present and answering questions at the meeting were owner Joe Sultan, facility manager David Last, project architects Bill Ajemian and Ron Margolish of Margolis and Fishman Architects and Planners, and Attorney Johana Schneider.

Staff Comments and Questions

Zoning:

City Zoning Staff noted possible conformance issues that will need additional review from the Inspectional Services Department prior to the issuance of any building permits.

- Plans submitted by the applicant, show parking areas within the front and side yard areas. This does not appear to comply with zoning sections 20.95.32.1 and 20.95.32.2, which require yards to consist of green area or permeable open space that is not devoted to vehicular uses.
- Additional information may be required from the applicant to determine if proposed bike parking meets the design requirements in Zoning.
- Additional information may be required to determine the open space percentages on site.
- The existing site is subject to PTDM and may require an amendment.

Urban Design:

- Is bike parking fully compliant? More trees would be great. Is there a gap between penthouse screen wall and the roof? Concern about light trespass both from interior of the building but also from ground-level parking - should look at sensors/timers/shields. Penthouse screen wall - can it have a stronger relationship to the building facade itself? Materials look really dark on the screen; but not sure what materials those are. Ground-level columns, what are they and will they be

protected from cars? Building is pretty simple and not a lot going on in terms of facade moves, but brick pier at corner has two projecting canopies - can we add a third one above the third floor windows?

- Response: Bike parking - we have a bike room. Reduced off-street parking. Did a tree study and will save significant trees. Mechanical equipment will be on dunnage, so want to fully screen by raising the screen. Brick is lighter but graphic issue. Metal panel system to match similar nearby.
- Can we move the transformer to the west side of the building instead of its front?
- Can the dumpster be relocated to the hatched area on the ground floor of the parking area?

Public Comments/Questions

Mike Nakagawa:

- Flood zone and climate resiliency; how does the proposal respond to this? It appears that the transformer is located at ground level.
- Has been an asphalt desert for a while - adding greenery is a benefit.
- Lab use - like the idea of more affordable lab space for start-ups. This area was supposed to be light industrial use, because low barrier to entry jobs are being chased out from lab demand.

Patricia Amoroso

- AC Units - concern over noise from mechanical equipment
- Refuse areas - noise from that?
- How many windows would be facing the properties?
- Concern over vibration during construction and potential damage to property.
- Lighting and light pollution/spillage onto neighboring properties
- Trees - opportunity to add more trees instead of just 18?

Joe Amoroso

- Will there be a barrier? Existing one that separates residential and commercial areas and want that to remain.
- More greenery is better.

John Chun

- Concern over height of rooftop mechanicals - blocking light and adding shadow.
- Building is too big and close to residential properties.
- Noise from rooftop mechanicals.

Applicant Responses

- Transformer: proposing 4' high portable barriers during predicted rainstorm events.
- Use: Need the use to make the project viable. Electing for a smaller building to keep it more affordable for tenants. Lab use is permitted by zoning.
- Dumpster Noise: Will consolidate refuse collection so that we can control pick-up times.
- Rooftop Screening & Noise: Did an acoustical report on the mechanicals, and designed the rooftop screen based on that. Ended up doing all 4 sides of the roof instead of just two, which is what was recommended. Equipment is brand new and is built to be quiet.
- Construction impacts: we'll do an initial survey and monitor as things go along.
- Lighting: Need to think carefully about this and be compassionate in our approach, but also be mindful of security needs for the building.
- Shadow: Because the building is short and position of sun, won't be many shadow impacts if at all.
- Policy Order: Zoning Petition going through the review process. There will be a hearing of the Ordinance Committee and Planning Board to evaluate the Petition. Councillors have noted in discussion that it's targeted more at larger-scale lab development.
- Trees: Big fan of new trees, and canopy is underserved. Will look at opportunity to add more trees.

Follow-up Questions/Comments

Mike Nakagawa

- Green roofs ordinance? Net zero? No mention of Alewife District Plan, so discouraged that existing zoning is the justification for the lab use. Disappointed that City staff glossed over the Alewife District Plan and focused on site details.

John Chun:

- Not clear on the drawings where the height is measured from - does the red brick tower factor into that? Would you consider shades over the windows to minimize light trespass?

The applicant has complied with the requirements of Section 19.40 of the Zoning Ordinance by participating in the Development Consultation Procedure.

Date: 12/15/2021

Community Development Department staff person:

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mason Wells". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mason" and the last name "Wells" clearly distinguishable.

Mason Wells, Associate Zoning Planner