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The layout of the new NorthPoint neighbourhood is driven in large part by the desire to structure a contiguous public realm, which is well integrated into the surrounding neighbourhoods. The streets, sidewalks, central park, and green fingers are designed to hold together as a single network, while providing formal and functional variety. The city block structure sets up an urban streetscape to create a hierarchy of uses, clarity of circulation, human scale and an animated public and pedestrian realm. Buildings exhibiting a diversity of architectural expression, establish a comfortable pedestrian scale common to all building types, framing streets and enlivening the sidewalks with entrances, life, and activity.

Design principles used to create the NorthPoint Master Plan emphasize a variety of scale and form to reflect a diversity of experience throughout the 45-acre site. Each parcel is intended to relate to its immediate surroundings as well as the larger context. The larger context is defined by overall image, legibility, cohesiveness, scale, character, connections, and movement. Local context determinants include orientation, solar exposure, parking, views to the surroundings and the central park, definition of unbuilt open spaces, public-private hierarchy, strategic location/program/opportunity, integration of multiple uses and interface with transit. This urban design framework builds on the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines and sets out the basic parameters, which will shape built form.

Attached are the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines: NorthPoint ("NorthPoint Guidelines"). These guidelines are based on the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines for the entire Eastern Cambridge area developed by the City of Cambridge and the ECaPs Committee. The North Point Design Guidelines reflect the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines, but are specific to the North Point area and provide additional illustration of design components that may be applicable to North Point.

These Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines: NorthPoint provide a framework for the design of a livable mixed-use community and will be provided to architects as NorthPoint buildings are designed. These guidelines will be provided to architects of each building or other public space as they are chosen to guide them in their design efforts. The guidelines represent a consensus of attitude regarding the development of the NorthPoint site as derived through several years of planning in East Cambridge by the City of Cambridge, the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines as well as the project specific permitting and community outreach processes for the NorthPoint site. In addition, these guidelines are consistent with the parameters of the Special Permit issued by the Cambridge Planning Board in March 2003.

It is understood that the application of these principles, including numerical guidelines, can vary with the context of specific building proposals in ways that, nevertheless, fully respect the policies’ intent. It is intended that proponents of projects and city staff, the Planning Board and the general public, where public review or approval is required, should be open to creative variations from the detailed provisions presented herein as long as the core values expressed are being served.

The attached guidelines consist of six components as described below. Architects and reviewers should refer to additional documents including: the Planning Board Special Permit for NorthPoint and the roadway Network Schematic Plan that will be submitted to the Planning Board for review and approval prior to the issuance of a building permit for the first building at the site. The Guidelines Text is based on the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines developed by the City of Cambridge. It provides the dimensional guidelines that should drive the design of buildings and other public spaces at NorthPoint.

The Exhibits are graphics that illustrate the concepts described in the Guidelines Text. The Guidelines Text is the controlling component of this guideline package and where there are discrepancies between the guidelines and Exhibits or Specific Block Guidelines, the Guidelines Text will rule.

Part 1: Urban Structure
This section outlines the overall layout of the masterplan and various urban design considerations that create a holistic vision for NorthPoint. The Urban Structure also highlights how the masterplan not only strengthens the connections to the surrounding neighborhoods and creates new green connections within the site.

Part 2: Built Form
The Built-Form section lays out design guidelines for the character of the urban fabric of NorthPoint in terms of scale, massing, ground floor articulation and architectural character.

Part 2: Public Realm
The team has developed a robust set of guidelines to decide the nature of different types of open spaces and streetscapes.

Part 4: Transportation and Public Transit Nodes
This section highlights how the urban design of NorthPoint enhances the user experience from both, green and orange line, T stops into the site. Moreover, it also outlines how the open space network facilitates the East-West bicycle and pedestrian connections.

Part 5: Specific Block Guidelines
The NorthPoint team has developed examples of how the guidelines are applied to each building block. These will be provided to each building architect and include approximate size, height and use of the buildings on each block, as well as recommended locations for pedestrian and vehicular entries. The Specific Block Guidelines also highlight the unique characteristics particular to each block of which architects should be aware. These may include items such as proximity to the Central Park, integration with the MBTA transit station or requirement for a connection to the Gilmore Bridge.

Part 6: Model Images and Renderings
This section consists of graphics that illustrate the NorthPoint model and artist’s renderings from different viewing perspectives.

Note: All exhibits and images in the Guidelines are illustrative examples only. Designs will be subject to detailed design review and approval by the Planning Board.
02
Built-Form
2.1 SCALE AND MASSING

- The layout of the NorthPoint neighborhood is driven in large part by the desire to structure contiguous public realm, which is also well integrated into with the surrounding neighborhoods.

- Orientation of buildings is suggested to take advantage of exposure to sun and views to the green spaces and surrounding attractions.

- Commercial buildings should void a continuous facade longer than 200’ without a visual break and residential buildings should avoid a continuous facade longer than 100’ without a visual break.

- In addition to the above limits, buildings should reflect a rhythm and variation appropriate to the urban context. For example, this can be achieved by expressing bay widths of 16 to 25 feet for residential buildings and 25 to 50 feet for mixed-use and retail buildings.

- Buildings should have a clearly expressed base, middle, and top. This may be achieved through a variety of materials, fenestration, architectural detailing, massing, or other elements. In order to achieve this, the following guidelines should be considered:
  - Buildings should have a carefully articulated base of one of two floors with a high level of transparency, lightness, and detail at the ground floors allowing views inward and outward;
  - A line of expression at the second floor is encouraged to humanize the scale of the buildings and create an intimate pedestrian experience. This should be achieved by means of material articulation or architectural detailing;
  - The mid-section of the building should consider light penetration, continuity and consistency of built mass while allowing for individual architectural detailing;
  - The base and middle should be built to the street line with courtyard openings and setbacks for cafes where appropriate;
  - Use variations in height and architectural elements such as parapets, cornices and other details to create interesting and varied roof lines and to clearly express the tops of buildings;
  - Emphasize corners using taller elements such as towers, turrets, and bays;
  - Taller buildings should be articulated to avoid a monolithic appearance and should emphasize vertically-oriented

![ILLUSTRATIVE OVERALL MASSING STRATEGY](EXHIBIT: 12 ILLUSTRATIVE OVERALL MASSING STRATEGY)
Development along streets should follow the below guidelines.*

2.1.2 PUBLIC STREETS

Build to line is a line that runs parallel to the property line at which construction of a building facade is to occur at NorthPoint. It is a suggested setback from the property line and varies from street to street and parcel by parcel and is intended to provide a generous sidewalk and public realm design along all NorthPoint streets. While no structural elements can be placed beyond the build to line, certain architectural elements and projections that maintain the spirit of the set back can be considered as a part of the design review. See “EXHIBIT: 13 BUILD-TO Line Diagram”

2.1.3 PARK EDGES

Build to line is the unifying elements of the public realm in the NorthPoint neighborhood. Buildings on parcels facing these open spaces are encouraged to maintain consistent massing and scale that is required for the success of these open spaces (a useful benchmark suggested in the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines is that the height of the principal facade of buildings surrounding a park should be no greater than 1/3 the width of the park. For additional height above this limit, buildings should be stepped back by at least ten feet from the principal facade)

• Greater height without setbacks may be appropriate at corners or in specific locations to create architectural variety

• The buildings must conform to overall district height limits in the zoning

• Locate buildings to minimize shadows on NorthPoint Common especially in the afternoon and, where feasible, on other open spaces

• Surround public parks with uses that create an active ground floor environment throughout the day and evening and increase safety for park users, such as:

• Buildings with individual units and front doors facing the street, including row house units on the lower levels of multi-family buildings. Where residential lobbies face the street, doors should generally be spaced no more than 75 feet apart.

• Shops, cafés and other public uses that enliven the parks are encouraged adjacent to open spaces

• For retail and office uses, build to the lot line or provide small setbacks (5 to 15 feet) from the right-of-way for café seating, benches, or small open spaces

2.1.4 ROOFTOPS

• The design of rooftops, including mechanical equipment and cellular installations, should be conceived as integral to the rest of the architecture of the building.

• Screening is encouraged to conceal rooftop mechanicals, and the screening should be in the same idiom as the rest of the architecture

• Rooftop mechanicals may be designed to stand out as machinery, in which case it needs to be carefully arranged to give a pleasing visual image

• It may be possible to use both techniques listed above

• To the extent possible, provisions should be made so that future cellular installations may be placed upon the building without detriment to the architecture, e.g. a blank wall of a mechanical screen may be conceived as such a location

• Rooftop mechanical equipment should be designed in accordance with the Cambridge Noise Ordinance, and attention should be given to the placement and shielding of mechanical equipment so as to reduce the noise experienced by receptors on other parcels.

proportions. This should be achieved by setting back the taller portions from the base and middle. Where appropriate the top sections of the buildings should be designed to emphasize variety within the development. This may include the use of, but not limited to, point towers;

• In design of tall buildings, consider the variety of vantage points from which they may be seen; and

• Consider legibility of the building top both by day and night, while demonstrating responsible use of lighting and energy consistent with sustainability and city requirements.

2.1.1 BUILD TO LINE

Development along streets should follow the below guidelines.*

• Set back portions of the building above 65 feet by at least 10 feet from the principal facade where possible. Where appropriate, design these setbacks to include balconies and rooftop terraces. See “EXHIBIT: 14 SETBACK DIAGRAM”

• Use architectural expression on any portion of the building above 65 feet to prevent continuous massing. Buildings should have a clearly expressed base, middle, and top. This may be achieved through changes in material, fenestration, architectural detailing, or other elements

• Setbacks may be allowed to accommodate street furniture, street trees, or generous sidewalks

• For low-rise residential uses, provide small setbacks (5 to 10 feet) for stoops, porches, and front gardens. Front stoops and porches may not be feasible while providing handicap accessibility. In such cases, the provision of small setbacks for front gardens and individual unit entries is highly encouraged

• For retail and office uses, build to the build to line or provide small setbacks (5 to 15 feet) for café seating, benches, or small open spaces

• For high-rise residential uses street-level facades should create a consistent street edge and include active uses such as: building amenity uses, lobbies and retail where applicable

• Driveway turnaround and vehicle drop-off facilities are strongly discouraged along public streets

• Locate loading docks on side streets or service alleys whenever possible, and away from residential areas and open spaces

• Corner articulation of buildings is encouraged

• To the extent that there is an existing urban context (such as for Building Vi), NorthPoint buildings should relate to the prevailing height of surrounding buildings, that are 65 feet or less, and establish a cornice line that respects the prevailing height of those surrounding buildings

• For additional height above the cornice line, provide a setback from the principal facade or appropriate architectural treatments that enhance the urban design objectives

*Additional guidelines for each street and the development that will occur along each street are described below in section 2.2.B
2.1.5 RESIDENTIAL MASSING AND ARTICULATION

1. Housing in Rotterdam

EXHIBIT: 15 TYPICAL RESIDENTIAL MASSING

EXHIBIT: 16 RESIDENTIAL MASSING PRECEDENT
2.1.6 COMMERCIAL MASSING AND ARTICULATION

EXHIBIT: 17 TYPICAL COMMERCIAL MASSING

EXHIBIT: 18 COMMERCIAL MASSING PRECEDENT

2. 50&60 Binney Street, Cambridge. Image Source: http://www.acks.com/50binney.shtml
2.1.7 STAND ALONE RETAIL BUILDING MASSING AND ARTICULATION

These are one or two story retail buildings located on parcels I, Q1 and W.

- One and two story stand-alone retail buildings are created to activate the public realm and also create a sense of human scale that will balance the scale of adjacent buildings.
- They should be shaped and oriented to enhance views and connections to NorthPoint Common and open spaces in Parcel I.

EXHIBIT: 19  SMALL RETAIL BUILDING MASSING PRECEDENT

3. 75 on Liberty Wharf, Boston. Image Source: http://75onlibertywharf.com/gallery/
2.2 STREET-LEVEL USES AND DESIGN

EXHIBIT 20 STREET LEVEL USE PLAN
2.2.1 RESIDENTIAL BLOCKS

Residential blocks are defined as blocks primarily lined with housing (shown on Exhibit 1 as Blocks A, B, D, LM, N, S, T, V). Residential blocks will include a variety of housing types such as lofts, townhouses and apartments. Corner retail will be allowed and even encouraged in some residential blocks, where appropriate.

Such residential blocks should follow the below guidelines.

• Street-level residential facades should create a consistent residential scale, with small setbacks for stoops, porches and front gardens; and/or retail, building amenity spaces and lobbies. Residential design is encouraged to have multiple entrances to the street.

• Wherever possible, buildings should be designed with individual units and front doors facing the street, including row house units on lower levels of multi-family dwellings; and/or residential lobbies with doors that face the street generally spaced no more than 75 feet apart.

• Blank walls should be avoided along all streets and pedestrian walkways

• Multiple windows at the ground level are encouraged to increase “eyes on the street”

• Courtyards and open spaces are should have maximum sun exposure

• Landscape of the courtyards should be considered as a part of the street experience.

• Buildings should have active residential frontage

• Ground floor frontage should generally be permeable and massing elements should be human scaled.

• Electrical transformers should be located either inside buildings or, if outside, with appropriate landscape screening.
Mixed-use blocks or commercial blocks are blocks that include housing and/or commercial uses, with a mix of active uses strongly encouraged on the ground floor. (Mixed-use Blocks may include C, I, JK, R and Q1 or as otherwise permitted pursuant to the Special Permit. Commercial Blocks are E/F, G, H, Q2, and U or as otherwise permitted pursuant to the Special Permit.)

New development on mixed-use or commercial blocks should follow with the below guidelines.

1. Street-level facades within the designated retail zone should include active uses such as:
   - Shops, restaurants, and cafes
   - Services for the public or for commercial offices such as fitness centers, cafeterias, daycare centers, etc.
   - Community spaces, such as exhibition or meeting space
   - Art exhibition space/display windows
   - Commercial lobbies and front doors
   - Numerous entrances along principal pedestrian routes are encouraged both for safety and to enhance the pedestrian environment

2. Office/ R&D uses are discouraged from occupying extensive ground-floor frontage. Where these uses do occur, they should occupy no more than 200 to 250 feet of continuous frontage along public streets

3. Ground floor frontage should generally be permeable, and massing elements and architectural details should be human scaled

4. Entrances should be located on public streets, and at or near corners wherever possible. Entrances should relate well to crosswalks and pathways that lead to bus stops and transit stations

5. Buildings should have a carefully articulated base of one or two floors with high level of transparency and lightness (30-50 percent transparent) at the ground floors allowing views inward and outward

6. Blank walls should be avoided along all public streets, courts, and pedestrian walkways

EXHIBIT 22 COMMERCIAL GROUND FLOOR PRECEDEANTS

1. 625 West Kendall Street, Cambridge. Image Source: CBT Photo
6. Boston Public Library: The Johnson Building, Boston Image Source: Deanship Purohit, CBT Architects
2.2.3 RETAIL BLOCKS

Retail blocks are intended to have a high volume of pedestrian traffic, and to support public activity throughout the day and evening. The amount and scale of retail uses will serve both the residents and tenants within NorthPoint. Retail uses will be concentrated in a retail zone designed to activate the area around the new Lechmere Station, North First Street into the heart of the project, and the area connecting the major open spaces. The goal is to apply these to North First Street and portions of NorthPoint Boulevard and North Street designated on approved Planning Board Exhibits. NorthPoint consists of two types of retail.

Ground Floor Retail: Retail that is usually on the ground floor of commercial or residential buildings. Blocks where retail is strongly encouraged include I, M, N, Q, R and V, and may include others such as Parcel JK pursuant to the Special Permit.

Stand Alone Retail Buildings: These are one or two story retail buildings located on parcels W and I.

Retail blocks should follow the below guidelines.

**Ground Floor Retail**
- At least 75% of the street frontage of the proposed retail in “EXHIBIT 10 CONCEPTUAL RETAIL PLAN” should be occupied by retail uses, including cafes and restaurants.
- Retail entrances should be located on public streets, or primary pedestrian uses and on corners wherever possible.
- Retail entrances should relate to crosswalks and pathways that lead to bus stops and transit stations.
- Retail within NorthPoint should be as transparent as possible to maximize visibility of street level uses.
- Ground floor facades should permit a clear view from the sidewalk to the interior space of the building (75% transparent surface is encouraged, and reflective glass is discouraged).
- Blank walls should be avoided along all public streets, courts, and pedestrian walkways.
- Create a horizontal change in plane as the building approaches the ground plane.
- Plan for tenant awnings or canopies that create a sense of enclosure over sidewalks and provide identity for tenants.
- Design the building to accommodate changes in retailers and retail store size over time. This may entail making the ground floor retail facade bay structure flexible, so that in the future retail spaces can be demised to include multiple bays or portions of a single bay.

1. Boylston Street, Boston. Image Source: PCA Photo
3. 2nd Street District, Austin. Image Source: http://pagethink.com/v/project-detail/2nd-Street-District-Master-Plan/a3/
• The design should seek the optimal balance between the architectural identity of the building and that of individual retailers. Where appropriate, provide a facade bay structure that relates to the architecture of the building while allowing for signage, storefront and architecture within each bay that provides an opportunity for the individual expression of each retail storefront.

• Signage and graphics create both retail identity and a lively streetscape. Base building design should consider tenant signage visually as well as structurally. Signage in multi-tenant buildings should be co-ordinated and incorporated into the building’s architecture.

Stand Alone Retail Buildings

• The architectural language of these buildings should be distinctive from the overall architecture of NorthPoint and should belong to and enhance the character of public realm.

• These structures should have interesting roofscape as they will be highly visible from majority of the buildings at NorthPoint.

• Ground floor and second floor terraces are encouraged to engage and activate the public realm.

• Design the building to accommodate changes in retailers and retail store size over time. This may entail making the ground floor retail facade bay structure flexible, so that in the future retail spaces can be demised to include multiple bays or portions of a single bay.

2.3 ARCHITECTURAL CHARACTER

Architectural composition should particularly emphasize a distinct identity for the building as well as for NorthPoint. This identity should be legible from adjacent streets and critical viewpoints, as well as within the overall Northpoint skyline when seen from a distance. Methods of creating a distinct architectural composition include use and proportioning of materials, colors and shapes that differ from those of adjacent buildings.

2.3.1 RESIDENTIAL

- Create varied architecture and avoid flat facades by using bays, balconies, porches, and other projecting elements.
- Maximize the number of windows facing public streets to increase safety.
- Where buildings are set back at upper stories, lower roofs may be used as balconies, balustrades, and gardens.
- Utilize architectural articulation such as, varied facade planes, changes in material, fenestration, architectural detailing, or other elements to break down the scale.

EXHIBIT: 25 RESIDENTIAL FACADES

2.3.2 COMMERCIAL

- Careful articulation of large commercial buildings is critical in establishing a human scale at NorthPoint.
- Create varied architecture and avoid flat facades by using recessed or projected entryways, bays, canopies, awnings, and other architectural elements.
- Vary the architecture of individual buildings to create architecturally diverse districts.
- Where buildings are set back at upper stories, lower roofs may be used as balconies, balustrades, and gardens.
- Utilize architectural articulation such as, varied facade planes, changes in material, fenestration, architectural detailing, or other elements to break down the scale.

2.3.3 LIGHTING

- Public Realm, multi-use path and exterior building lighting is an important consideration for the identity of the project and enhancing the retail, pedestrian, bicycle nighttime safety and neighborhood connectivity for NorthPoint.
- However, lighting design shall be respectful of its impact on surrounding context including the other residential buildings in NorthPoint and surrounding neighborhoods including East Cambridge.
2.4 ENVIRONMENTAL GUIDELINES (LEED PRINCIPLES)

Design buildings to use natural resources and energy resources efficiently in construction, maintenance, and long-term operation of the building. At the time of Planning Board building design review the proponent will submit materials demonstrating environmental sustainable design, including a LEED scorecard and an assessment of how the design capitalizes on the inherently environmentally sustainable features of Northpoint:

- Transit oriented development
- Development within the Boston/Cambridge urban core, rather than at the suburban periphery
- Site-wide approach to stormwater management consistent with best practices
- Energy efficient building envelope and system design

Compliance with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards is required. Investigation of other evolving energy efficiency standards is encouraged. Consider building designs with a view to future proofing to allow for additional energy efficiency measures at a later date, should there not be an opportunity to achieve those measures at the time of construction. For example, buildings should be designed with “solar ready” roof structure where possible, so that when photovoltaic technology has evolved it can be installed more easily.

Rooftop mechanical equipment should be sited and shielded to protect neighboring uses from excessive noise. Mechanical penthouses and vertical roof projections should be designed as part of each building composition.

Consider the net-zero principles adopted by the City of Cambridge and, where feasible, adapt building design to allow for future implementation.

WIND
The massing, articulation and orientation of the buildings in the masterplan considers best practice passive design approach to wind comfort. Detailed wind studies will be conducted with each building design review to meet the pedestrian wind comfort standards.

- Design new buildings and open spaces to mitigate negative wind impacts on streets and public spaces.
- Proponents should explain how proposals have been conceived with regard to prevailing winds and any strategies to avoid excessive wind impacts on pedestrians, to the extent practicable

CLIMATE RESILIENCY
The NorthPoint Master Plan has taken into account the need for climate resiliency by raising grade across the entire site approximately ten to twelve feet, so that much of NorthPoint will be above currently projected storm surge flood levels. Nonetheless, building designs should take climate resilience into account.
2.5 PARKING/SERVICE

While underground parking is preferable everywhere, if above ground parking is to be built it should be designed so as not to be visible from public streets or pathways, to the extent feasible. Above ground structured parking should be lined with active uses (shops, cafes, etc.) along major public streets, or with housing units along residential buildings.

- Locate vehicular parking entrances and loading docks on side streets and alleys and provide safe pedestrian access from public streets. Where it is necessary to locate them on the major streets, building design shall try to make them unobtrusive to the pedestrian movement and shall maintain the quality of public realm.
- All parking garages must provide direct pedestrian access to the street.
- The primary pedestrian exit/access to all garages serving non-residential uses should be to the street or a public area.
- Design and locate lighting fixtures in surface parking lots and garages to enhance safety while minimizing light spillover onto adjacent properties and neighborhoods.
- Each project undergoing design review by the Cambridge Planning Board shall submit for review by Cambridge Traffic Parking & Transportation a written plan describing how loading and material handling will be addressed through an update to the overall site-wide loading plan. The plan will address truck access, short term loading/drop-off, and hours of operation, trash/recycling removal and related operational issues. Operational issues addressed include discouraging large trucks if smaller vehicles can be used, scheduling truck deliveries for off-peak hours when feasible, and avoiding having service vehicles park in bicycle lanes. Load and Material Handling Plans shall be developed and approved by the City for each building.
- Parking and loading access are to be designed to provide safe sightlines and/or visual/audible warning systems for exiting vehicles in order to avoid conflicts between those vehicles and pedestrians on sidewalks.
- Loading docks shall be designed where feasible, to discourage trucks from backing into public streets from loading docks and, accommodate all truck movements on-site.
- Short and long-term bicycle parking shall be provided on each parcel that will at a minimum meet applicable city regulations. The design should recognize the benefits of making travel by bicycle easier by providing convenient bicycle parking.
EXHIBIT 29: INTEGRATION OF ABOVE GRADE PARKING ALONG MBTA TRACKS

1. Parking in Cambridge. Image Source: CBT Photograph
2. Parking in Cambridge. Image Source: CBT Photograph
5. Gehry’s Santa Monica Parking Garage, Santa Monica. Image Source: http://www.brookscarp.com/santa-monica-public-parking-structure
EXHIBIT 30  PROTECTED BIKE RACKS AND BIKE STATIONS

1. A Hubway Station in Cambridge. Image Source: Cambridgeday.com
