



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: November 7, 2018

Re: **Special Permit PB #179, North Point (Cambridge Crossing) Parcel W
Design Update**

IRAM FAROOQ
*Assistant City Manager for
Community Development*

SANDRA CLARKE
*Deputy Director
Chief of Administration*

KHALIL MOGASSABI
*Deputy Director
Chief of Planning*

The Special Permit for the North Point Planned Unit Development (PUD) was originally granted by the Planning Board in 2003, and since that time has been modified several times through the PUD amendment process. The most recent major amendment (number 6) was granted by the Planning Board on July 26, 2016.

The schematic designs for the Parcel W retail buildings were approved by the Planning Board on June 27, 2017 subject to continuing review by staff, and an informational update was presented to the Board on December 19, 2017.

Recently, the Applicant has been preparing construction documents for Building Permit, and has subsequently submitted revised design materials that include the following changes:

- Modifications to the façade designs of both retail buildings arising from interior changes, HVAC revisions and tenant negotiations; and
- An increase in gross floor area (GFA) of 1,148 sf.

These changes are presented for the Board's review and approval. A summary of comments from staff is provided on the following page. Staff will continue to review refinements to the design prior to issuance of a building permit, and throughout the development phase.

Staff Comments on Revised Materials

- Staff anticipate that a series of comparison elevations and renderings will be presented at the Planning Board meeting as these were not included in the submission materials.

South Building

- The introduction of operable glass walls is supported as it will help activate the Common and the sidewalk.
- There is a reduction in transparency on the second floor of the south elevation, which should be further studied given the modest levels of transparency proposed on the ground floor.
- The location of mechanical louvers should be carefully considered. To the greatest extent possible, all kitchen exhaust should vent through the roof and not to the public realm.

North Building

- The introduction of operable glass walls facing the Common, plaza and North First Street is supported as this reduces the distinction between interior and exterior, and helps activate the public realm.
- Relocation of the electrical and utility rooms, and the mechanical well, to the northwest corner of the building is a concern. This change results in the entire corner being encased in spandrel glass or louvers, rather than transparent glass as was approved. This corner is quite important from a pedestrian's perspective as one is walking on North First Street, and there has not been a subsequent increase in transparency of the north elevation.
- The location of mechanical louvers should be carefully considered. To the greatest extent possible, all kitchen exhaust should vent through the roof and not to the public realm.

Additional GFA

- The Special Permit allows up to a 10% change in GFA on any site as part of the design review process. The additional GFA related to the canopy structures and revisions to the mechanicals is relatively minor and is less than 10% of the GFA approved for Parcel W.