



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
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March 25, 2008

David Black
Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc.
99 High Street, 7th Floor
Boston, MA 02110-2354

RE: Residential Development at 70 Fawcett Street, New Boston Fund.

Dear David,

On March 5, 2008 we received your Transportation Impact Study (TIS) for the proposed residential development at 70 Fawcett Street by New Boston Fund. The proposed project consists of 260 residential units in a combination of apartments and condominium units and 286 parking spaces.

After city staff review, there are a few corrections that should be made before we certify the TIS. Please make the corrections and resubmit the pages to us for our review. Upon approval, we will require 3 bound copies of the TIS with the replaced pages.

- The mode splits listed on the Summary Sheet do not add up to 100% because the 65% Vehicle mode split is a combination of Drive Alone and Rideshare modes. To be consistent with Table 3.a, the Summary sheet should be corrected to include 54% Drive Alone. The 65% Vehicle mode share may be shown in parenthesis.
- Clarify in the Project Overview, pg. 2, what the proponent plans to do with the existing 140,249 s.f. structure and northern parking lot during and after construction of the proposed residential project.
- Page 27, Table 6.a.4 lists "Err" for the Concord Avenue/Smith Place intersection and should be corrected. If Synchro outputs provided an Err message, you should provide a footnote explaining why.
- Page 33, Table 6.b.5. Same issue as above.
- Required bicycle parking may not be claimed as TDM and should be taken out of the TDM section on Page 44, unless the proponent is proposing to do something above and beyond what zoning requires.
- Clarify on page 44 if the proposed car sharing vehicles are intended to be for tenants and condo owners only as stated or also available to the public, which is normally required by Zipcar when they consider a location for their cars.

- It is not clear in the site plan (Figure D.1) what the curb cut, roadway and sidewalk widths are and if the project proposes a sidewalk on both sides of the vehicle access road. Provide a 40-scale site plan of Figure D.1 with this information labeled.
- It is not clear if the area shown for bike storage in the parking garage is sufficient to meet city guidelines. Provide a 20-scale plan of the bicycle storage area including proposed bike rack layout and type of racks.
- Page 49 states that the area around the project is well served by multi-use/bicycle paths and bicycle lanes, however there is no figure that shows these multi-use/bicycle paths. The TIS should include a figure that shows the multi-use paths to verify this statement.
- The paragraph on Page 49 under Safe Pedestrian Facilities, states that the project site is “well connected to existing pedestrian facilities along all surrounding streets providing access to the proposed development.” This statement contradicts a comment on Page 42, which states, “Results from the gap study and yielding survey indicated that pedestrians crossing Concord Avenue at Fawcett Street or Smith Place rarely see an acceptable crossing gap during the peak hours and must wait for cars to come to a stop to cross the street.” Because it is difficult for pedestrians to cross Concord Avenue at Fawcett Street, which is the most direct pedestrian route to a bus stop, the statement that the site is well connected to existing pedestrian facilities along all streets is inaccurate.
- Page 49, first paragraph, last sentence typo (and elsewhere in the document), “stripped” should be “striped”.
- All figures that are formatted in landscape orientation should face the same direction so it is easier to read (See Figures 1.C - 2.C.4 compared to Figures 3.D.1 - 6.C.1).

Upon certification of your TIS, we look forward to working with you and the proponent on the next steps in development review. To assist in our discussions and help you prepare for the Planning Board hearing, we have the following comments and suggestions:

We believe that the key transportation issues for this project include: Access to the Alewife Station, Concord Avenue peak hour traffic congestion, limited gaps for pedestrians and vehicles to cross Concord Avenue, pedestrian access to the Fresh Pond Shopping Center and strong TDM measures.

- The TIS only stated that the plan *does not impact* the City’s proposed pedestrian and bicycle bridge and connection between the Quadrangle and MBTA Alewife red line station in the Triangle. We encourage you to discuss how the proponent will actively support creating the bridge, not “impacting” it. It is especially important to support the bridge because the project exceeded pedestrian and bicycle indicators and the traffic analysis indicated Vehicular LOS F at all study area intersections from the project site to the Alewife Station, which is why the bridge and better non-vehicle access to the Alewife Station is so critical.
- For your information, the City will be reconstructing Concord Avenue in 2008-2009 and is considering an option to make Concord Avenue one lane in each direction with left-turn lanes at all intersection in the Concord Avenue eastbound direction.
- We are concerned that your proposed vehicle access road in Figure D.1 does not fully meet the vision in the Concord-Alewife Plan. The basic idea about the east-west road was that it would be a new main street in the Quadrangle providing a connection for bikes and pedestrians in addition to autos and create a much needed connection between Alewife Brook Parkway all the way to the

Highlands (although the connection to the Highlands would be bike/pedestrian only). The road should therefore accommodate bike lanes and sidewalks with enough room for pedestrians and street trees as well as typical street furniture – benches, trash cans etc. The notion is that this street would provide an address for many of the parcels and retail establishments in the districts. Therefore, the design of the road should leave sufficient room to accommodate a road right of way that includes travel lanes, bike lanes, sidewalks and some modest setback between your building and the road ROW.

- Your Planning Board presentation should include a short and long-term plan for the east-west roadway between Fawcett Street and Wheeler Street, which at a minimum would have pedestrian access to the Fresh Pond Shopping Center.
- We believe that the proposed parking is too high and does not meet the City's policy to encourage sustainable modes of transportation, which reduces traffic congestion and air pollution.
- Your site plan did not include any short-term bicycle parking near building entrances as required by zoning. We also encourage you to not just meet the bicycle zoning standards, but exceed them, such as providing one bicycle space per unit.
- The proponent should consider stronger TDM measures such as, shuttle service for residents to the Alewife station and providing a one month transit pass to each adult resident of a new household.
- Finally, we believe that the proposed curb cut on Fawcett Street for "supplementary service access" will negatively impact the pedestrian conditions on Fawcett Street.

Finally, please call me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,



Susan Clippinger
Director

cc: Jerry Pucillo, New Boston Fund
Beth Rubenstein, CDD
Cara Seiderman, CDD
Liza Paden, CDD
Roger Boothe, CDD
Adam Shulman, TPT