



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

IRAM FAROOQ
Acting Assistant City
Manager for Community
Development

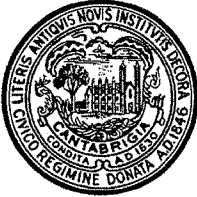
To: Planning Board
From: CDD and TPT Staff
Date: March 17, 2015
Re: **PB#294, 88 Ames Street – Final Deliberation and Decision**

Update

Following the March 3 public hearing, staff continued to work on the following two items as directed by the Board:

1. Finalize Transportation Demand Management mitigation measures recommended for inclusion in the conditions of a special permit decision.
2. Prepare a Draft Notice of Decision including findings and conditions as set forth by the Planning Board, excluding those related to traffic impacts.

The two attached documents present the results of these respective work items. Staff will be present to discuss at the March 24 meeting.




CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Traffic, Parking and Transportation
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Joseph Barr, Director
Brad Gerratt, Deputy Director

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MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board
From: Joseph Barr, Director 
Date: March 17, 2015
Re: 88 Ames Street Development (PB# 294)

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department (TP&T) submitted a memo dated November 26, 2014, to the Planning Board with comments on the 88 Ames Street Residences project.

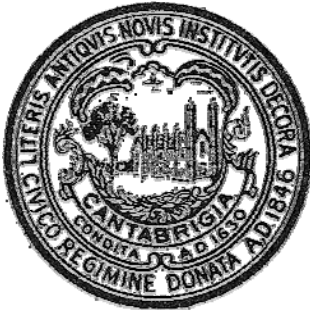
TP&T submitted a second letter to the Planning Board dated February 25, 2015 and at the March 3, 2015 Planning Board hearing, TP&T and CDD staff discussed the mitigation agreements made with Boston Properties and certain outstanding issues primarily related to residential transit pass subsidy. The Planning Board directed Boston Properties, TP&T, and the Community Development Department to work together to come to a final agreement.

TP&T is pleased to report to the Planning Board that TP&T and CDD have successfully reached an agreement with Boston Properties. The Applicant will implement the measures in TP&T's November 26, 2014 and February 25, 2015 memo with the following measures superseded, clarified or added:

- A. Each adult member of each household (up to 2) upon move-in will be offered a Charlie Card valued at the cost of a 50% bus/subway pass (currently \$75 but subject to fare increases) for 3 consecutive months. This benefit will end after 3 months for the household and begins anew upon unit turnover. This measure supersedes TP&T's previous memos and comments for the transit pass subsidy.
- B. Each adult member of each household (up to 2) upon move-in will be offered a 1-year Gold-Level Hubway membership. This benefit will end after one year for the household and begins anew upon unit turnover. This measure is an additional commitment by the Applicant.
- C. Contribute \$50,000 to the City for consultant services to assist in developing transit improvements in Kendall Square as part of MassDOT's Kendall Square Mobility Task Force. The Applicant has committed to this measure.
- D. Fund a regular-size Hubway station (which includes 3-years operating and maintenance expenses). This measure is an additional commitment by the Applicant.
- E. Install 2 electric charging stations at the East Garage. This measure is an additional commitment by the Applicant.

As discussed in TP&T's February 25, 2014 Planning Board memo, these are discrete steps toward encouraging the use of public transit and bicycling over single occupancy vehicle and supporting improvements to the transit system through development. TP&T thanks Boston Properties, CDD, and the Planning Board for working with us on this Project and looks forward to continuing to work on the 88 Ames Street Residences Project as it moves forward.

Cc: Iram Farooq, Jeff Roberts, Liza Paden, Susanne Rasmussen, Stuart Dash, Cara Seiderman, Stephanie Groll, CDD; Adam Shulman, TPT; Ben Lavery, Boston Properties Cambridge Center Residential LLC.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

DRAFT

DRAFT NOTICE OF DECISION

Case Number:	294
Address:	88 Ames Street
Zoning:	Mixed Use Development (MXD) District: Cambridge Center
Applicant:	BP Cambridge Center Residential LLC, an affiliate of Boston Properties 800 Boylston Street, Suite 1900, Boston, MA
Owner:	Ownership as set forth in Application Documents
Application Date:	November 18, 2014
Date of Planning Board Public Hearing:	December 2, 2014
Date of Planning Board Decision:	[TO BE ENTERED]
Date of Filing Planning Board Decision:	[TO BE ENTERED]
Application:	Project Review Special Permit pursuant to Section 19.20 of the Zoning Ordinance; Modification of Bicycle Parking Requirements pursuant to Section 6.108 of the Zoning Ordinance.
Decision:	[TO BE ENTERED]

Appeals, if any, shall be made pursuant to Section 17 of Massachusetts General Laws, Chapter 40A, and shall be filed within twenty (20) days after filing of the above referenced decision with the City Clerk. Copies of the complete decision and final plans, if applicable, are on file with the Community Development Department and the City Clerk.

Authorized Representative of the Planning Board:

For further information concerning this decision, please contact Liza Paden at 617-349-4647, or lpaden@cambridgema.gov.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED

Application Documents and Supporting Material

1. **[TO BE COMPLETED]**

Other Documents

2. **[TO BE COMPLETED]**

SUMMARY OF APPLICATION

The Applicant proposes to construct a 250-foot residential building with up to 280 dwelling units, approximately 200,000 square feet of residential Gross Floor Area and up to 20,000 square feet of retail Gross Floor Area on a portion of Ames Street within the MXD Zoning District. Although projects in the MXD District are not typically subject to the Project Review Special Permit requirements, in this case it is required by the provisions of Section 14.32.4 of the Zoning Ordinance.

The Application also seeks a special permit to modify certain provisions of the bicycle parking requirements set forth in Section 6.100 of the Zoning Ordinance. The initial design required modifications to the requirements for layout (by providing racks that were set closer together than the standard requirements), location (by providing long-term spaces in a facility more than 200 feet from the entrance to the principal use), and access (by using an existing elevator that is slightly smaller than the required dimensions).

The Planning Board reviewed the project on December 2, 2014, heard public comment and comment from City staff, and made comments to the Applicant. On March 3, 2015, the Board reviewed the Applicant's responses along with some modifications and further detail on the project design, and again heard comments from the public and from City staff. One significant change is that the bicycle parking layout was modified to no longer require a modification to the zoning requirements, although a modification to the requirements for location and access would still be required.

FINDINGS

After review of the Application Documents and other documents submitted to the Planning Board, testimony given at the public hearing, and review and consideration of the applicable requirements and criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance with regard to the relief being sought, the Planning Board makes the following Findings:

1. Project Review Special Permit (Section 19.20)

In order to grant a Project Review Special Permit the Planning Board must make findings related to traffic impacts and urban design. In making traffic impact findings the Planning Board is guided by the following provisions in the Zoning Ordinance:

(19.25.1) Traffic Impact Findings. Where a Traffic Study is required as set forth in Section 19.24 (2) the Planning Board shall grant the special permit only if it finds that the project will have no substantial adverse impact on city traffic within the study area as analyzed in the Traffic Study. Substantial adverse impact on city traffic shall be measured by reference to the traffic impact indicators set forth in Section 19.25.11 below.

(19.25.11) Traffic Impact Indicators. In determining whether a proposal has substantial adverse impacts on city traffic the Planning Board shall apply the following indicators. When one or more of the indicators is exceeded, it will be indicative of potentially substantial adverse impact on city traffic. In making its findings, however, the Planning Board shall consider the mitigation efforts proposed, their anticipated effectiveness, and other supplemental information that identifies circumstances or actions that will result in a reduction in adverse traffic impacts. Such efforts and actions may include, but are not limited to, transportation demand management plans; roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities improvements; measures to reduce traffic on residential streets; and measures undertaken to improve safety for pedestrians and vehicles, particularly at intersections identified in the Traffic Study as having a history of high crash rates.

The indicators are: (1) Project vehicle trip generation weekdays and weekends for a twenty-four hour period and A. M. and P.M. peak vehicle trips generated; (2) Change in level of service at identified signalized intersections; (3) Increased volume of trips on residential streets; (4) Increase of length of vehicle queues at identified signalized intersections; and (5) Lack of sufficient pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The precise numerical values that will be deemed to indicate potentially substantial adverse impact for each of these indicators shall be adopted from time to time by the Planning Board in consultation with the TPTD, published and made available to all applicants.

The Board finds that a Transportation Impact Study (TIS) was conducted by the Applicant, certified as complete and reliable by the Traffic, Parking and Transportation (TP&T) Department, and included with the Application Documents. Following comments made by the Planning Board at the initial public hearing related to traffic and loading operations on the access drive, which the Applicant has designated “Pioneer Way,” the Applicant performed some additional analysis that was reviewed and accepted by TP&T prior to the continued public hearing. TP&T submitted written comments to the Planning Board dated November 26, 2014 and February 25, 2015, commenting on the TIS and other traffic-related considerations and recommending mitigating measures to be incorporated as conditions of any project approval.

[PLACEHOLDER FOR FINDINGS ON TRAFFIC IMPACT CRITERIA]

Furthermore, in making urban design findings the Planning Board is guided by the following provision in the Zoning Ordinance:

(19.25.2) Urban Design Findings. The Planning Board shall grant the special permit only if it finds that the project is consistent with the urban design objectives of the city as set forth in Section 19.30. In making that determination the Board may be guided by or make reference to urban design guidelines or planning reports that may have been developed for specific areas of the city and shall apply the standards herein contained in a reasonable manner to nonprofit religious and educational organizations in light of the special circumstances applicable to nonprofit religious and educational activities.

With reference to the narrative materials in the Application Documents and the Board's review of project plans and illustrations, the Board finds that the proposed project is consistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30, as set forth in detail below.

(19.31) New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.

The zoning for the MXD district anticipates and encourages residential use of about two hundred thousand 200,000 square feet, and recent zoning changes were adopted with the intent of facilitating residential use on this site. As described in the Application Documents, the specific location of the project is intended to transform an area currently used for service and loading activities into an active use that provides a more continuous active streetscape that complements and enhances the uses on either side. The scale and height of the project are consistent with surrounding development and future plans for the heart of Kendall Square area. The creation of a strong horizontal datum by setting back the tower from the street wall edge and recessing the fourth floor complies with the massing approaches recommended in the *Kendall Square Design Guidelines, 2013*. Such an approach successfully manages the impacts of the building's floorplate and height.

(19.32) Development should be pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, with a positive relationship to its surroundings.

As described in the Application Documents and reflected in the project plans (as revised), the project is designed with active uses on the ground floor, transparent facades and pedestrian-oriented entrances along the streetfront. Open space and landscaping are provided in key locations to make the area more attractive and usable for pedestrian and bicyclists. Loading and service areas are moved to the interior of the site, with access by way of an alleyway that is designed to allow shared use by pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles operating at safe speeds in a managed way. Decorative paving, overhead strand lighting and a purpose-built bicycle shed will be used to activate the alley and create a welcoming pedestrian environment. Bicycle facilities are provided with convenient access, as discussed further in these Findings. The Applicant will also undertake

reconstruction and improvements to the public street in accordance with a land disposition agreement with the City.

The proposed tower and base format breaks down the scale of the building and creates a strong street wall condition and pedestrian-scaled environment. Strongly demarcating the base, middle and top of the building also supports the urban design notion of creating streets for people and relates well to the scale of nearby buildings.

(19.33) The building and site design should mitigate adverse environmental impacts of a development upon its neighbors.

The Application Documents discuss potential impacts related to noise from mechanical equipment, trash collection and other servicing activities, stormwater, shadows and wind. In the Board's view, adequate measures are proposed to minimize and mitigate those potential impacts through the design of the building and other programmatic efforts. The rooftop mechanical equipment has been designed as part of the overall architectural composition. Most notably, the extension of vertical piers to the rooftop screening structure assists with enhancing the slender tower form.

A memorandum from the Department of Public Works dated November 26, 2014 indicates that the project appears to conform to applicable environmental standards and that certain elements will be subject to ongoing technical review by the City. Traffic impacts are also studied and discussed previously in these Findings.

(19.34) Projects should not overburden the City infrastructure services, including neighborhood roads, city water supply system, and sewer system.

The Application Documents discuss infrastructure systems and include documentation demonstrating compliance with the City's Green Building Requirements. A memorandum from the Department of Public Works dated November 26, 2014 indicates that the project appears to conform to applicable infrastructure standards and that certain elements will be subject to ongoing technical review by the City.

(19.35) New construction should reinforce and enhance the complex urban aspects of Cambridge as it has developed historically.

The project enhances the district by adding desired residential uses into the current mix of office, hotel and other commercial uses. Moreover, the zoning and recent City planning for the district anticipates and specifically encourages a residential use of this size, scale and form on this particular site. Buildings over 200 feet are anticipated to have a growing presence in Kendall Square. The project has been designed with this in mind and particular attention has been given to the architectural character of the tower form, which will be visible from several vantage points. Much of the tower's architectural interest is achieved through the vertical expression of piers and columns, which vary depending on views, access to light and proximity to the other buildings. This creates a delicate framing

structure across each facade and successfully accentuates the vertical character of the tower. The combination of transparency and neutral colored precast concrete materials also produces a pleasing contrast to the more monumental brick buildings in the surrounding area. It is expected that the project will have a distinct identity and help to define the heart of Kendall Square.

Following the first public hearing, minor refinements were made to the architectural character of the building, including changes to the residential entry canopy, fourth floor roof fascia, soffit and planters. These refinements helped to create additional warmth at the street edge and a noticeable residential feel, which is more consistent with the complex mixed-use character of the building and Kendall Square.

(19.36) Expansion of the inventory of housing in the city is encouraged.

The project will provide new housing where housing has been identified as a priority in area planning. It will also provide affordable housing units pursuant to the Inclusionary Housing requirements. While the Board would encourage the provision of some three-bedroom units suitable for families with children in accordance with citywide objectives, the Board understands the Applicant's contention that the particulars of this project in terms of its location and design will make it more appealing to smaller households.

(19.37) Enhancement and expansion of open space amenities in the city should be incorporated into new development in the city.

The new building and associated Ames Street reconstruction will result in new open spaces along Ames Street to the north and south of the site. Those will provide passive use amenities to pedestrians and bicyclists and will complement adjacent retail uses. The Board has reviewed and approved the conceptual design of those spaces, which will be subject to further detailed design review by City staff.

2. Modification of Bicycle Parking Requirements (Section 6.108)

In approving modifications to the bicycle parking requirements set forth in Section 6.100 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Board is guided by the zoning text set forth below:

6.108.3 Findings and Approval. Upon granting a special permit to modify any requirements of this Section 6.100, the Planning Board shall make a general determination that the proposal is consistent with the purpose of this Section 6.100 and that the Bicycle Parking Plan proposes a quantity, design and arrangement of bicycle parking that will serve bicycle users in a way that is sufficiently comparable, given the circumstances of the specific project, to the bicycle parking that would be required under the regulations of this Section 6.100. The Planning Board shall also make specific determinations applicable to the modifications being sought as set forth below:

- a. Where an alternative design or layout of Bicycle Parking Spaces is proposed, the Planning Board shall determine that such design or layout shall be durable and convenient for the users whom it is intended to serve. Where new technologies are proposed, the Board may require that the Applicant demonstrate such technologies for review by City staff.*
- b. Where modifications to the location or quantity of bicycle parking is proposed, the Planning Board shall determine that the Bicycle Parking Plan will satisfactorily serve the needs of all expected users, based on quantitative and/or qualitative evidence provided by the Applicant. Such a modification may be appropriate for a campus master plan or other large development site within which bicycle parking is planned comprehensively across an area instead of on a specific site-by-site basis.*

The Board has also received comments from the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department on the proposed Bicycle Parking Plan in memoranda dated November 26, 2014 and February 25, 2015.

The purpose of the bicycle parking requirements, which are in support of the City’s general planning goal of promoting bicycling as an attractive alternative to automobile-oriented modes of travel, is to ensure that bicycle parking facilities are safe, convenient and easily usable by a broad range of people. The Board finds that the Bicycle Parking Plan, as proposed in the revised Application Documents submitted February 4, 2015, meets the purpose by providing a secure, conveniently accessed long-term bicycle parking facility for residents as well as short-term bicycle parking distributed across the site in locations that are convenient to building entrances.

With regard to specific modifications that are being sought, the Planning Board finds that the revised Application Documents dated February 4, 2015 propose a long-term bicycle parking layout that conforms to zoning requirements and therefore no modification is needed. The proposed modification to access requirements is to allow the use of an existing elevator with interior dimensions of seventy-nine and a half inches (79.5”) by fifty one and a half inches (51.5”) instead of the zoning standard of eighty inches (80”) by fifty-four inches (54”). The proposed modification to location requirements is to locate the long-term bicycle parking facility more than the zoning standard of two hundred feet (200’) from the primary building entrance.

The Board finds that with the proposed modifications, the Bicycle Parking Plan will continue to satisfactorily meet the needs of all expected users, given that the long-term bicycle parking facility will be conveniently accessible both through a ground floor entrance and by way of the existing parking garage adjacent to the proposed building, and given that the existing access elevator is only slightly smaller than the required dimension and therefore will still accommodate most bicycles.

3. General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit (Section 10.43)

The Planning Board finds that the project meets the General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit, as set forth below.

10.43 Criteria. Special permits will normally be granted where specific provisions of this Ordinance are met, except when particulars of the location or use, not generally true of the district or of the uses permitted in it, would cause granting of such permit to be to the detriment of the public interest because:

(a) It appears that requirements of this Ordinance cannot or will not be met, or ...

The proposed residential building meets the zoning requirements of the district as well as other applicable citywide development standards.

(b) traffic generated or patterns of access or egress would cause congestion, hazard, or substantial change in established neighborhood character, or ...

As discussed above in these Findings, the project as it is proposed will not result in adverse traffic impacts.

(c) the continued operation of or the development of adjacent uses as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance would be adversely affected by the nature of the proposed use, or ...

The proposed residential use is anticipated in the zoning for the district and will not impair the development or operation of adjacent uses.

(d) nuisance or hazard would be created to the detriment of the health, safety and/or welfare of the occupant of the proposed use or the citizens of the City, or ...

The proposed project will conform to all applicable health and safety codes and requirements, and will not cause any nuisance or hazard as proposed.

(e) for other reasons, the proposed use would impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district, or otherwise derogate from the intent and purpose of this Ordinance, and ...

The proposed residential project is consistent with anticipated development patterns in the district and the City's broader planning for the area.

(f) the new use or building construction is inconsistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30.

The proposal is consistent with the City's Urban Design Objectives, as discussed further above in these Findings.

DECISION

Based on a review of the Application Documents, testimony given at the public hearings, and the above Findings, the Planning Board hereby **[GRANTS OR DENIES]** the requested Special Permits subject to the following conditions and limitations. Hereinafter, for purposes of this Decision, the Permittee shall mean the Applicant for the requested Special Permits and any successor or successors in interest.

1. All use, building construction, and site plan development shall be in substantial conformance with the Application Documents dated November 18, 2014, and all supplemental Application Documents and information submitted by the Applicant to the Planning Board as referenced above. Appendix I summarizes the dimensional features of the project as approved.
2. The project shall be subject to continuing design review by the Community Development Department (CDD). Before issuance of each Building Permit for the project, CDD shall certify to the Superintendent of Buildings that the final plans submitted to secure the Building Permit are consistent with and meet all conditions of this Decision. As part of CDD's administrative review of the project, and prior to any certification to the Superintendent of Buildings, CDD may present any design changes made subsequent to this Decision to the Planning Board for its review and comment.

The following design elements shall be explicitly subject to continuing review and approval by CDD staff:

- a. Selection and arrangement of façade materials, colors and finishes
 - b. Selection and placement of plantings, street furniture, public art and interactive media installations in ground-level open spaces
 - c. Paving materials, furniture and screening elements used along Pioneer Way
 - d. Selection and arrangement of bicycle parking racks
 - e. Features intended to mitigate undesirable wind
 - f. Final mix of units
3. All authorized development shall abide by all applicable City of Cambridge Ordinances, including the Noise Ordinance (Chapter 8.16 of the City Municipal Code).
 4. Throughout design development and construction, the project shall conform to the Green Building Requirements set forth in Section 22.20 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. Certification of compliance by Community Development Department staff shall be required prior to issuance of a Building Permit and again prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
 5. The Permittee shall be required to prepare and implement a Construction Management Program in accordance with Section 18.20 of the Zoning Ordinance.
 6. **[PLACEHOLDER FOR FINAL TRAFFIC, PARKING AND TRANSPORTATION CONDITIONS]**

7. Prior to issuance of a Building Permit and again after the building's exterior is substantially complete, the Permittee shall conduct analysis of wind conditions on the public open space at the top of the Kendall Center East Garage to determine whether undesirable wind impacts have been created by the proposed building that affect the comfort of open space users. The conclusions of such analysis shall be reviewed and accepted by Community Development Department staff prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy. If the analysis concludes that undesirable impacts have been created, the Permittee shall commit to mitigate such impacts in a manner consistent with the recommendations of the wind consultant. The wind mitigation strategy shall be subject to final review and approval by Community Development Department staff.

[DECISION TO BE ENTERED]