



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA, 02139

2017 AUG 15 PM 1:28
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

NOTICE OF DECISION PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT

Case Number:	328
Address:	10 North Point Boulevard
Zoning:	North Point Residence District / PUD-6
Applicant:	EFEKTA Group Inc. 2 Education Circle, Cambridge, MA 02141
Owner:	Commonwealth of Massachusetts Department of Transportation / Department of Conservation and Recreation
Special Permit Application Date:	May 15, 2017
Date of First Public Hearing:	June 6, 2017
Date of Preliminary Determination:	June 6, 2017
Date of Second Public Hearing:	August 1, 2017
Date of Final Decision:	August 1, 2017
Date of Filing Planning Board Decision:	August 15, 2017
Application:	Development Proposal for Planned Unit Development (PUD) to construct a new building of 300,000 square feet containing student housing, educational, general office and retail uses, and 110 accessory above-grade structured parking spaces.
Decision:	GRANTED, with conditions.

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: Swaathi Joseph

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

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED

Application Documents

1. Special Permit/PUD Application dated May 15, 2017, including application forms, executive summary, technical studies/project impacts, consistency with special permit zoning criteria, urban design objectives narrative, summary of community outreach, certificate of receipt of plans (Volume 1), graphic materials (Volume 2), and appendix (Volume 3).
2. Slides from Presentation to Planning Board on June 6, 2017.
3. Final Development Plan Application dated July 24, 2017 including application forms, executive summary, technical studies/project impacts, consistency with special permit zoning criteria, urban design objectives narrative, summary of community outreach, certificate of receipt of plans (Volume 1), graphic materials (Volume 2), appendix (Volume 3), and supplement to final development plan application (Volume 4).
4. Slides from Presentation to Planning Board on August 1, 2017.

City of Cambridge Documents

5. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Katherine F. Watkins, City Engineer, dated May 31, 2017.
6. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Community Development Department Staff, dated June 1, 2017.
7. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Joseph E. Barr, Director of Traffic, Parking and Transportation, dated June 1, 2017.
8. Letter from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, dated May 19, 2017 to Massachusetts Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs with City of Cambridge Comments on Final Environmental Impact Report.
9. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department staff, dated July 25, 2017.
10. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Community Development Department staff, dated July 27, 2017.

Other Documents

11. Letter from East Cambridge Business Association, dated June 6, 2017.
12. Letter from City Councilor Timothy J. Toomey, Jr., dated June 6, 2017.

13. Copy of letter to Ben Lynch, Waterways Program Chief, Department of Environmental Protection from Deanna Moran, Environmental Planning Director, Conservation Law Foundation, dated July 28, 2017.
14. Letter to the Planning Board from Renata Von Tscharnner, President and Founder, Charles River Conservancy, dated August 1, 2017.

SUMMARY OF FINAL DEVELOPMENT PLAN

The Final Development Plan is to construct a twelve-story mixed-use building for the Hult International Business School and its affiliate EF Education First (collectively, “EF”) on an approximately one hundred twenty-five thousand (125,000) square-foot Development Parcel that is currently owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and used as a maintenance facility by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), and of which approximately twenty thousand (20,000) square feet will be subject to an easement in favor of the Commonwealth in order to permit its continued use by DCR in connection with a planned new maintenance facility. Although this land is included in the Development Parcel, the Commonwealth’s use and improvement of this easement area is not subject to local zoning.

The proposed building will contain approximately three hundred thousand (300,000) square feet of Gross Floor Area, with a first floor predominantly devoted to public uses, a portion of the upper floors devoted to office uses, and the remainder of occupied space devoted to student housing and accessory functions, including student dining facilities, student services and student administration. The project also includes a public open space that will be maintained and programmed by EF, offering multiple recreational amenities. Above-grade structured parking will be incorporated into the building to accommodate 110 parking spaces, and 264 long-term bicycle parking spaces will be provided in two exterior sheds in addition to the bike room in the building. Fifty-four short-term bicycle parking spaces will also be provided on site.

FINDINGS

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

1. Approval of Planned Unit Development (PUD) Final Development Plan (Section 12.36 and Section 13.70)

The Applicant submitted a Development Proposal on May 15, 2017 in accordance with the requirements of Article 12.000. The Planning Board approved the Development Proposal following a public hearing on June 6, 2017, and issued a Preliminary Determination approving the Development Proposal with requests for additional material to be included in the Final Development Plan. The Preliminary Determination was filed with the City Clerk on June 21, 2017. The Applicant submitted a Final Development Plan, containing a further refinement of the material provided in the Development Proposal and additional information as requested by the Planning Board, on July 24, 2017.

Pursuant to Section 12.36.4, the Board reaffirms the findings made in its Preliminary Determination and finds that the Final Development Plan remains in conformance with the evaluation criteria set forth in Section 12.35.3, as set forth below:

- (1) *The Development Proposal conforms with the General Development Controls set forth in Section 12.50, and the development controls set forth in the specific PUD district in which the project is located.*

As described on pages 50-57 of the Final Development Plan Special Permit Application Volume 1, the Final Development Plan conforms to the General Development Controls with regard to utilities, public infrastructure, landscaping, and environmental performance standards. As set forth on pages 12 and 50 of the Final Development Plan Special Permit Application Volume 1, the Development Parcel will contain approximately 125,000 square feet, with approximately 20,000 square feet of the Development Parcel subject to an easement for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts to access the planned maintenance facility, which is not subject to local zoning. In accordance with Section 13.74.2 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Development Parcel will therefore comply with the minimum parcel size requirement. No new roadways are proposed. All public works will be constructed in accordance with City standards. The landscaping will complement the public open space amenities in the vicinity and the proposed active and passive recreational features will provide a link between North Point Park and North Point Common. As described in the Final Development Plan Application, the project will comply with the Cambridge Noise Ordinance and will be designed to meet US Green Building Council LEED Version 4 Gold Standards, which exceeds the Green Building Requirements of Section 22.20 and advances the City's goals for sustainable development. The project has undergone review by the Secretary of Energy and Environmental Affairs under the Massachusetts Environmental Protection Act and will also undergo additional review by the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection subject to Chapter 91 of the Massachusetts General Laws.

As described on pages 52-56 of the Final Development Plan Special Permit Application Volume 1, the Final Development Plan conforms to the use, dimensional and other standards of the PUD-6 District in North Point. The proposed project is within the maximum FAR and height limitations and exceeds the minimum development parcel size. The project also exceeds the minimum requirements for open space and publicly accessible open space. Transportation Demand Management measures will be required to comply with the Parking and Transportation Demand Management Ordinance. The approved dimensional characteristics of the proposed project are set forth in Appendix I of this Special Permit Decision.

The PUD-6 regulations include two standards for which specific Planning Board approval is required in the case of the proposed project. First, a Planning Board Special Permit is required to allow a project to include 100% non-residential uses, which may be issued for projects where only one building is located within the Development Parcel. The Board finds that the proposed non-residential uses are appropriate given the nature of the single proposed building as an expansion of an institutional presence that has positively served the objectives of the district, and provides student housing to balance EF and Hult's existing classroom and office functions, and therefore approves the non-residential use of the site as proposed in the Final Development Plan.

Secondly, pursuant to Section 13.73.1, a written Planning Board determination is required to allow a retail establishment to exceed 10,000 square feet in floor area. The Planning Board finds that the proposed fitness center and café use occupying approximately 12,042 square feet is consistent with the intent of the district requirements and appropriate as it caters to public recreational needs and complements the proposed open space improvements in the area, and therefore approves the fitness center and café use as it is proposed in the Final Development Plan.

- (2) *The Development Proposal conforms with adopted policy plans or development guidelines for the portion of the city in which the PUD district is located.*

The Final Development Plan is consistent with the City's development plans for the area. The zoning for the PUD-6 district was developed in response to the recommendations of the Eastern Cambridge Planning Study to primarily encourage a transformation from its previously dominant industrial character to a mixed-use neighborhood with housing as a dominant use, while also including office development, limited amounts of retail, and new public open spaces. The Board finds that the Development Proposal advances the development of the area in a way that responds to this past planning, while also advancing the evolution of the EF institutional presence as enabled by the rezoning process for this area in 2010. The Board also finds that the proposal is generally consistent with the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines. The Board acknowledges that the proposed building's siting away from the street edge, above grade parking not screened with active building uses, and continuous principal façade massing deviates from some particular elements of the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines and citywide urban design objectives, but finds that the design approach remains generally consistent with the intent of the guidelines and is an acceptable response to the particulars of the proposed use, site and open space connections. The specific Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines are referenced further below in these Findings.

- (3) *The Development Proposal provides benefits to the city that outweigh its adverse effects. In making this determination the Planning Board shall consider the following:*

- (a) *The quality of the site design, including integration of a variety of land uses, building types, and densities; preservation of natural features; compatibility with adjacent land uses; provision and type of open space; provision of other amenities designed to benefit the general public*

The Final Development Plan demonstrates a thoughtful site design that is focused on linking the existing parks in the vicinity with new publicly beneficially open space exceeding the requirements of the PUD-6 zoning. The proposal will also include a mix of uses that complements the adjacent North Point development west of the Gilmore Bridge. The public amenities proposed in the ground floor of the proposed building will be beneficial to the occupants as well as the local community, encouraging an active lifestyle.

The pathways and landscaping surrounding the building are designed to appropriately integrate the various uses in the area, including the existing EF

buildings, the existing public park, the existing system of bicycle and pedestrian pathways connecting Cambridge and Charlestown and the North Point area outdoor recreational amenities in the vicinity.

The Final Development Plan, as described on pages 16-23 of Final Development Plan Special Permit Application Volume 1, will include substantial contributions to improve the public realm and to design and construct a flex field and multi-use path connections to existing pathways in the area.

(b) Traffic flow and safety

The proposed use will not negatively impact traffic flow or safety in the area. Based on evidence of transportation patterns to the current EF site, it is anticipated that a lower proportion of automobile trips will be made to this site compared to other office uses. The project will be designed to provide safe access, egress and circulation meeting City standards. Traffic impact findings are made further below in these Findings.

(c) Adequacy of utilities and other public works

According to the Final Development Plan, existing utilities and public infrastructure will be adequate to serve the proposed building. All connections to public infrastructure will be subject to review and approval by the appropriate City departments.

(d) Impact on existing public facilities within the city

The Development Proposal will not negatively impact any existing public facilities. Moreover, the proposed building will likely create positive impacts in the neighborhood with the proposed uses and activation of a site currently inaccessible to the public.

(e) Potential fiscal impacts

The Proposed Project will provide additional tax revenues to the City (as confirmed on page 49 of the Final Development Plan Application Volume 1). No negative fiscal impact is anticipated.

Pursuant to Section 12.36.4, the Board finds that the Final Development Plan contains the revisions and additional information required by the Planning Board in its Preliminary Determination, as described in detail in Volume 4 of the submitted Final Development Plan. The following is a brief summary of responses:

Site Planning and Design

- *In consultation with City staff, consider alternative design approaches in order to minimize the amount of paved area along North Point Boulevard.*

The updated plans and renderings show additional landscaping to soften the effect of paved surfaces and create a continuous visual experience along that frontage, better illustrating the combined visual effect of the proposed street, landscaping, and multi-use path as a whole. The Final Development Plan also showed an “Option B” that suggests removing the sidewalk along North Point Boulevard. City staff commented that such a deviation from the current typical street layout would not be supported, since it would be disruptive to remove the sidewalk in just this location, would result in unnecessary conflicts for pedestrians who wish to continue along the sidewalk instead of merging in with other users, and would create an awkward transition point at the MWRA parcel line. Moreover, if the sidewalk were removed and all pedestrian traffic and recreational users consolidated onto a single multi-use path, the City’s design standards would require a minimum path that is 14’ wide with 2’ buffers on either side. Once these dimensions are taken into account, there is no gain in terms of additional landscaping/greening. Given the information provided, the Board preferred “Option A” because it provides more plantings, texture and scale, which creates a richer pedestrian experience of the sidewalk.

- *Provide details of the proposed fence treatment around the multi-use field.*

The Final Development Plan shows a black metal, rail fence with a height of 3’6”. The Planning Board recommended continuing review of the fence treatment to ensure that the fencing does not create the impression that the public is unwelcome on the multi-use field, using design that provides for public accessibility from multiple directions with appropriate openings and signage to encourage public use.

- *Consider the arrangement of benches and flexible seating options, including movable outdoor furniture.*

A combination of moveable chairs and tables, and fixed benches will be provided.

- *Update context rendering to show the proposed retail at North Point.*

The revised materials show the updated site context with the recently approved changes to the layout of future retail uses at North Point.

Building Concept Design

- *Explore alternative sizes, shapes and architectural treatment of the exterior support column in the front façade.*

The proposed increase in diameter and precast architectural treatment for the circular column provides a better proportional relationship with the building and more visual interest.

- *Investigate alternative materials for the façade other than precast concrete.*

Per Volume 4 of the Final Development Plan, the applicant considered various façade materials through the design development process. The use of precast in two different colors and various finishes is proposed. The Board recognizes the difficulties associated with capturing the specific characteristics of materials in renderings and is satisfied with the response provided, subject to future review of an on-site wall assembly mock-up to better assess the visual impact of specific precast material choices.

- *Improve the design of the roof-top mechanical screen so as to completely screen all mechanicals, if possible.*

The proposal to paint all rooftop mechanical equipment the same accent color as the penthouse screening will help to mitigate the visual impacts of the equipment. However, the Board remained concerned about the visibility of equipment, and recommended further design review of the penthouse screening, noting that rooftop lighting conditions may have a significant impact on the screening ability of the perforated material.

- *Improve the visual character of the blank wall at the north corner of the building.*

A vertical strip of the accent material was added to the inner corner, which subtly adds visual interest without overwhelming the façade.

- *Explore using a similar façade treatment for both the internal elevations and the front elevations of the building, with an emphasis on doing more with publicly visible facades.*

The syncopated rhythm of window openings was applied to the internal building elevations to match the exterior.

- *Consider if there is adequate width of windows in the residential areas of the building, and provide an interior rendering of a dorm room.*

An interior rendering of a dorm room is provided in Volume 4 of the Final Development Plan, showing a window opening that provides adequate access to natural light, views, and ventilation.

- *Provide details of the roof terrace parapet/balustrade.*

Further information was provided to clarify the design intent for the parapet/balustrade. The Planning Board was satisfied with the proposed ornamental metal railing with vertical pickets that match the accent façade color.

Transportation

- *Provide details for reducing conflict between vehicles and bicycles near the garage entrance and bike sheds.*

The Final Development Plan includes details of the driveway and garage entrance with measures to reduce conflict, including audible signals to pedestrians and bikers when

vehicles are entering/exiting the building, safety lighting to ensure proper visibility at night, mirrors for drivers exiting the garage to see pedestrians and bikers on either side of the building, and bollards installed at the crosswalks to signal to pedestrians and bikers that the use is changing.

- *Consider potential conflicts between pedestrians accessing the building from the sidewalk and bicyclists on the multi-use path.*

Measures to reduce potential conflicts will include signage on either side of the driveway, a raised pavement treatment for the multi-use path over the driveway area, and bollards on either end of the multi-use path.

Sustainability

- *Consider seeking full LEED certification of the building.*

The Applicant commented that LEED certification was considered, but that given the institutional nature of the use, investing in the ongoing sustainability programs of the institution was viewed as a better use of resources than seeking certification.

Open Space

- *Consider alternatives to synthetic turf for the multi-use field.*

A number of material options were considered, including both synthetic turf and natural grass. Given the community's interest in opportunities for active recreation, a synthetic turf field was chosen to maximize the hours of operation and ensure that the field is accessible throughout the year. Natural grass can be damaged easily and may be off limits during rain and snow.

- *Provide details of all public realm and landscape treatments.*

The Final Development Plan includes additional landscape details, including a planting list and materials notes.

2. Project Review Special Permit (Section 19.20)

(19.25.1) Traffic Impact Findings.

(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 Applicant submitted a Transportation Impact Study (TIS) for the proposed project to the Cambridge Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department (TP&T), which was certified as complete and reliable on May 12, 2017, as indicated in a memorandum from Joseph E. Barr, Director of Traffic, Parking and Transportation, dated June 1, 2017.

The TIS identified twelve instances where the Special Permit Transportation Criteria cited above were exceeded, including vehicular level of service exceedance on a residential street (the section of North Point Boulevard between East Street and Leighton Street) and pedestrian level of service exceedance at intersections of O'Brien Highway/Land Boulevard/Gilmore Bridge and O'Brien Highway/Museum Way, all of which are owned and operated by MassDOT and DCR. The Applicant has proposed the construction of multiuse path segments through the site, which will provide key connections to the system of public bicycle/pedestrian paths in the area. In addition, the project will include bicycle parking as required by zoning, and the Applicant will be required to amend the Parking and Transportation Demand Management Plan for EF's campus facilities, which will further reduce traffic-related impacts.

TP&T submitted a set of recommended mitigation measures in its memo dated July 25, 2017, which were agreed to by the Applicant to the extent reflected in this Decision. Overall, the proposed mitigation would support improvements to pedestrian and bicycle connections throughout the area, support the public bicycle sharing system (Hubway), and encourage safe and sustainable modes of travel including, walking, bicycling, and transit. Therefore, upon consideration of the characteristics of the project, the findings of the TIS, and the recommended mitigation agreed to by the Applicant, the Board finds that the project will not have substantial adverse impact on traffic within the study area.

(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.

The Board finds that the proposed project is consistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30, as described below, citing information presented on pages 60-67 of the Final Development Plan Application Volume 1.

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

The proposed use is compatible with other uses in the area. The proposed new EF building is proximate to the existing two EF buildings, which will remain in use, as well as an existing building in the area that will be renovated for use by EF. Nearby residential uses will not be negatively impacted and residents will benefit from the improvement and activation of the site. There are no adjacent historic buildings and the site does not contain significant existing structures. In addition to improved connectivity among public open spaces in the area, including the DCR North Point Park and North Point Common, the public realm will benefit from large scale landscape improvements on the development site.

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

The site design has been coordinated to strengthen and extend existing bicycle and pedestrian paths. The Applicant has agreed to construct the missing segment of the multi-use pedestrian and bicycle pathway along North Point Boulevard in front of the project site to connect with the existing pathways. Entries are oriented toward anticipated routes of pedestrian and bicycle movement. The base of the building on the sides facing the street and open space offers views into publicly accessible active areas, and provides visual interest to pedestrians. Bicycle facilities will include an indoor bicycle room located on the ground floor and outdoor bicycle sheds and racks, all easily accessible from the bicycle pathway. The landscape treatment, outdoor seating areas, active and passive recreational amenities, and a range of plantings provide an expanded pedestrian experience. The proposed design provides open space and landscaping that enhance the visual and environmental quality of the area for pedestrians.

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

The location and preliminary selection of mechanical equipment has been considered and addressed in the early stages of the design to mitigate aesthetic impacts. Rooftop equipment will be located within a mechanical penthouse or mostly concealed by a rooftop screen composed to complement the overall design of the building. The design of the screening, including its height and transparency, as well as any rooftop lighting, will be subject to ongoing review by City staff. According to the Noise Control narrative in the Final Development Plan, as the design for the project develops, the project's acoustical consultant will review equipment noise data and proposed screening techniques to confirm compliance with the City of Cambridge Noise Ordinance. Loading and unloading operations will be located within the building footprint, concealed from view, and their noise impact will be controlled. Service areas and parking access will be located away from primary pedestrian paths and will not be visible from the open space amenities. Trash storage and handling will be contained within the building and out of sight of pedestrians. Landscaped areas will serve as a visual amenity and contribute to the sustainability goals of the project, with incorporation of Stormwater Best Management Practices and reduced reliance on irrigation. The exact façade material treatments and landscape features will be subject to ongoing review by City staff.

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

The proposed project will be designed to be sustainable in its design and low-impact in its service needs, utilizing natural daylighting strategies, high-efficiency equipment and variable frequency drives for heating and cooling energy consumption reductions. As previously noted above in these Findings, the project will not adversely impact traffic in the area, and will moreover provide benefits to support pedestrian and bicycle travel. As indicated on pages 49-50 of the Final Development Plan Application Volume 1, existing infrastructure systems will be adequate to serve the proposed project. The project will be designed to meet strict Department of Public Works (DPW) stormwater standards applicable as per City of Cambridge Wastewater and Stormwater Drainage Use Regulations. DPW has provided comments to the Planning Board in a memorandum dated May 31, 2017 recommending additional measures to mitigate and manage flood risk. The LEED checklist and narrative provided on page 40 of the Final Development Plan Application indicate that the project will conform to the Green Building Requirements of Section 22.20 by being designed to a level of LEED Gold.

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

The proposed building will locate publicly accessible active uses on the ground floor, including a public lobby with publicly accessible rest rooms, gym and a café. These uses will be highly transparent and welcoming to passersby and all users of the open space on the site. The ground floor spaces with public access will be designed with an indoor/outdoor character relative to outdoor open space and will extend gym functions to outdoors when the weather allows. The proposed project reinforces the pattern of more recent development in the neighborhood, which aims to encourage pedestrian and bicycle

travel with direct pathway connections to transit and other existing and planned amenities in the area.

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

While the dormitory use is not strictly defined as a residential use, it will contribute to the residential character of the neighborhood and indirectly support housing availability by housing students on campus. As noted further above in these Findings, the Board finds that the non-residential uses are appropriate given the nature of the single proposed building as an expansion of an existing use and the presence of other stand-alone residential uses in the area.

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

Publicly beneficial open space exceeding the zoning requirement will be provided, and recreational areas both inside and outside the building will provide Facilities of Public Accommodation and publicly accessible open space to meet state requirements. The open space will be designed and operated to be open and inviting to all users, without regard to their affiliation with Hult or EF. As indicated above, the gym with its rather transparent indoor/outdoor interface enhances the open space experience in and around the building. The active and passive recreational amenities, outdoor furniture and landscape treatments increase the range of activities available and will further enhance the open space network in the area. The project enhances the streetscape along North Point Boulevard with landscaped open space, improving the appearance and amenity of streetscape edges.

In making its findings with regard to urban design, the Board takes into consideration the Eastern Cambridge Planning Guidelines adopted by the City Council in 2001. The Board finds that the Final Development Plan is consistent with the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines. The guidelines applicable to the project, either in whole or in part, are considered below.

Goals (North Point)

- *Create a lively new mixed-use district with strong visual and pedestrian connections to East Cambridge. The new district should be a place to live, work, and enjoy a variety of parks and public spaces.*
- *Create a new east-west main street through the center of North Point, connecting East Cambridge with the future MDC Park*
- *Extend First Street into North Point to connect existing and new neighborhoods.*
- *Create a major new public park easily accessible from the relocated Lechmere T station, First Street, and O'Brien Highway.*
- *Create a new retail edge at the relocated Lechmere T station and at the intersection of First Street, Cambridge Street, and O'Brien Highway that will complement, not compete with, existing retail on Cambridge Street.*

The proposed project will contribute positively to the mix of uses in the area by supporting the expansion of an existing institution while supporting the surrounding public open space,

creating new recreational public open space, and adding a gym and a café as interior public space to activate the building edge. The project will also provide key connections in the bicycle and pedestrian route from the North Point residential area to the riverfront parklands.

Building Height and Orientation (Major public streets)

- *Set back any portion of the building above 65 feet by at least 10 feet from the principal facade.*
- *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. Setbacks used exclusively for ornamental landscaping are not permitted but may be allowed to accommodate street furniture, street trees, or generous sidewalks. Awnings and canopies are encouraged to provide shelter and enliven the ground floor facade.*
- *For residential uses, provide small setbacks (5 to 10 feet) for stoops, porches, and front gardens.*
- *Driveway turnaround and vehicle drop-off facilities are strongly discouraged along public streets.*
- *Locate loading docks on side streets or service alleys, and away from residential areas.*
- *In use, design, and entry, orient buildings towards corners.*

The proposed project is uniquely located in an area where it is surrounded by highway ramps and other utilitarian uses on three sides, with frontage on North Point Boulevard. The building's height, orientation and architectural character, are appropriate to its location. The project will conform to the overall district height limits and setback requirements and is designed with careful attention to the ground floor, where multiple public amenities will be located. The shape and location of the building is configured to maximize daylighting and views, and buffer the building from adjacent poor interfaces. The proposed gym, café, and lobby uses will support an active ground-floor environment adjacent to the existing multi-use path in the area.

Street-level Uses and Design (Mixed-use blocks)

- *Street-level facades should include active uses such as:*
 - Residential entrances
 - 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
- *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.*
- *Major 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.*
- *Transparent materials and interior lighting should be used to maximize visibility of street level uses. Ground floor facades should be at least 30 to 50 % transparent to permit a clear view from the sidewalk to the interior space of the building.*

- *Blank walls should be avoided along all streets and pedestrian walkways.*

The lobby and future ground floor retail are active uses that occupy the majority of the ground floor frontage with a high level of transparency. The main entrance and double-height lobby space create a strong focal point and are clearly visible from the sidewalk and multi-use path. In addition, the entrance has been aligned to relate well to the proposed raised crosswalk at the intersection of Museum Way and North Point Boulevard.

Scale and Massing

- *For new development sites, the block size should be similar to the existing East Cambridge blocks. An attempt should be made to reduce the distance that pedestrians have to walk to a crosswalk in order to safely cross the street.*
- *Buildings should avoid continuous massing longer than 100 feet facing residential streets and 200 feet facing mixed-use and retail streets. If massing extends beyond this length, it should be made permeable and visibly articulated as several smaller masses using different materials or colors, vertical breaks, bays, or other architectural elements.*
- *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 along residential streets and 25 to 50 feet along mixed-use and retail streets.*
- *Buildings should have a clearly expressed base, middle, and top. This may be achieved through changes in material, fenestration, architectural detailing, or other elements.*
- *Use variations in height and architectural elements such as parapets, cornices and other details to create interesting and varied rooflines 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: Taller buildings should be point towers instead of slabs, and should have smaller floor plates instead of larger floor plates.*

As described above, the proposed project is in a unique location within a mixed-use district and not within a typical urban block. The project scale and massing meet the zoning requirements, and the Board finds the scale, massing and architectural character to be appropriate to its location and consistent with the pattern of surrounding buildings.

Architectural Character (Commercial)

- *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.*

The Board finds the architectural character of the proposed building to complement the surrounding buildings and enhance the streetscape experience.

Environmental Guidelines

- *Design buildings to use natural resources and energy resources efficiently in construction, maintenance, and long-term operation of the building. Buildings on a lot should be sited to allow construction on adjacent lots to do the same. Compliance with Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) certification standards and other evolving environmental efficiency standards is encouraged.*
- *Rooftop mechanical equipment should be sited and shielded to protect neighboring uses from noise impacts.*

The project will comply with the Green Building requirements of Section 22.20 and is proposed to be designed to a LEED Gold standard, which exceeds the requirement in zoning and is consistent with the City's sustainable design goals. The Board refers to earlier Findings with regard to rooftop mechanical equipment and noise.

Parking

- *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. Above ground structured parking should be lined with active uses (shops, cafes, etc.) along major public streets, or with housing units along residential streets.*
- *Locate vehicular parking entrances on side streets and alleys and provide safe pedestrian access from public streets.*
- *All parking garages must provide direct pedestrian access to the street.*
- *The primary pedestrian exit/access to all garages serving nonresidential 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.*

The proposed location of above-grade structured parking within the proposed building and adjacent to the existing active highway ramp is consistent with the intent of these guidelines. The parking façade facing North Point Boulevard is treated as an integral component of the building design, which minimizes its visual presence.

Public Open Space

- *The provision of open space of diverse sizes and use is encouraged to enhance the public environment in the study area.*
- *The provision of interconnected series of open spaces is encouraged to provide connections to neighborhoods and to encourage pedestrian movement.*
- *In transition areas and neighborhoods, locate new open spaces to create linkages and connect to existing parks and open spaces, where possible.*

As previously described in these Findings, the project will enhance the open space amenities surrounding the site, and will provide key pedestrian and bicycle connections to on-site amenities and other public open space amenities in the area. All areas outside the building will be open to the public for use as public open space, particularly those that will be guaranteed as publicly accessible open space per state requirements.

Streets and Sidewalks

- *Use streetscape elements such as trees, benches, signage, and lighting to support active pedestrian uses and to reinforce the character and identity of each district.*
- *Design streets to encourage pedestrian and cycle activity, and to control vehicle speed in residential areas.*
- *Where appropriate, establish, preserve and highlight views from public streets and spaces to important civic landmarks such as the Charles River cable-stayed bridge and the clock tower in Kendall Square.*
- *In the design of new streets, provide sufficient pavement width to accommodate on-street parking where appropriate in order to provide short-term parking and to serve local retail.*
- *In the design of new streets, pathways, and parks, provide pedestrian-scale lighting to enhance pedestrian safety.*
- *Refer to the Cambridge Pedestrian Plan and the Cambridge Bicycle Plan for additional guidance on creating a safe and pleasant environment for pedestrians and bicyclists and for guidance on sidewalk width and street trees.*
- *Provide safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to future regional pathways (Grand Junction railroad, North Point path).*
- *Provide strong pedestrian, bicycle and visual connections to the Charles River and public parks through view corridors, signage, and/or art installations.*
- *Provide safe pedestrian and bicycle connections to existing and new bus stops and to transit stations including Kendall Square, Lechmere, Community College and North Station MBTA stations. In particular, direct access from the residential neighborhood south of Msgr. O'Brien Highway and Cambridge Street to the new T station, if relocated, is desirable.*
- *Improve pedestrian, and bicycle connections to the Charles River, particularly across First Street.*

The proposed project will include significant improvements to bicycle and pedestrian amenities, including key connections to support the system of multi-use pathways in the area and a raised crosswalk to calm traffic and improve pedestrian circulation safety at the intersection of North Point Boulevard and Museum Way.

Transportation

- *Preserve rights of way for future Urban Ring project.*
- *Integrate retail and other public activities with any new transit stations.*
- *Provide pedestrian crossings/phases at all major intersections.*
- *Provide bicycle lanes on major streets.*
- *Provide sheltered bicycle racks in all new commercial and multi-family residential buildings and in transit stations.*
- *Provide bicycle racks along the street in retail areas.*

The proposed project will be proximate to several transit stations and routes, will continue to implement transportation demand management measures such as shuttle service for employees, and will include significant improvements to bicycle and pedestrian transportation infrastructure as described above.

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 ...

Upon granting of the requested special permits, it appears that the requirements of the Ordinance will be met.

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

As discussed earlier in these Findings, based on a review of the certified Transportation Impact Study and with consideration of the proposed mitigation and other applicable requirements, the traffic generated will not create any new congestion, hazard, or change in neighborhood character. Patterns of access and egress have been designed in consultation with TP&T.

(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 building will complement the existing adjacent office buildings, will provide improvements to the adjacent public open space, and will have no adverse impact on the operation of other uses in the area. The proposed project will be compatible with the use and scale of surrounding lots and will improve the streetscape with landscape improvements.

(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 not create nuisance or hazard, and all development activity will adhere to applicable health and safety regulations.

(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 use is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance, including the intent and purpose of the district as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance. The zoning for the PUD-6 district encourage a transformation from its previously dominant industrial character to a mixed-use neighborhood with housing as a dominant use, while also including office development, limited amounts of retail, and new public open spaces.

The proposed use, which is allowed in the district, will complement adjacent uses and enhance public realm. Therefore, the proposed development fits with the existing and anticipated pattern of development in addition to enhancing the integrity of the district.

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

The Board finds the project to be consistent with the citywide urban design objectives, as set forth 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 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 Final Development Plan documents dated July 24, 2017, and all supplemental 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.
3. The Permittee shall address the following design comments through the continuing design review process set forth above. Each of the items below shall be subject to CDD review and approval of the final design details:
 - a. All proposed public realm, open space and streetscape improvements, including the detailed design of the multi-use field, fence treatments and pathways. As described in Condition 4 below, this review shall include approval of the final design of the multi-use path segment, improvements to the existing multi-use path segment along Education Street, and raised crosswalk across North Point Boulevard, and certification of the "path-ready" design of the northwest portion of the site.
 - b. Final selection of all landscape materials and types of outdoor furniture.
 - c. All exterior materials, colors, and details, which shall be reviewed using a materials mock-up of all wall assemblies, including rooftop screening elements, on the site. This review shall give particular attention to the selection and composition of precast concrete to be used on the building's exterior.
 - d. Review of potential cost-effective opportunities to improve the efficiency of the building through envelope design.
 - e. Rooftop HVAC and mechanical equipment screening and penthouse treatments, which shall be reviewed using a materials mock-up as described in Paragraph (c) above. This review shall give particular attention to lighting conditions, in order to ensure that the screening elements do not become too transparent and reveal the equipment intended to be screened.
 - f. Review of parking, bicycle parking, access and egress by the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department (TP&T).

- g. Review of stormwater management by the Department of Public Works (DPW).
 - 4. The Permittee shall be required to implement the following transportation improvements, as recommended by TP&T and subject to continuing review and certification by TP&T and CDD as set forth below:
 - a. As committed to in the Final Development Plan and the Final Environmental Impact Report (FEIR) approved by the Commonwealth for the project, the Permittee shall construct and maintain the missing segment of the multi-use path along North Point Boulevard in front of the project site. The path shall conform to the “Option A” layout illustrated in Volume 4 of the Final Development Plan, and shall be designed to meet current City standards. As part of the continuing design review process, the final multi-use path design shall be approved by CDD and TP&T prior to issuance of a building permit for development authorized by this special permit. Construction of the path shall be completed prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the project, exclusive of temporary certificates of occupancy for the purpose of interior fit-out and furnishing. While the intent is to complete the required improvements prior to use of the building, TP&T may authorize a later completion date, in writing and prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, upon finding that there have been unforeseen delays due to circumstances outside the control of the Permittee, or other reasonable delays, and that acceptable assurances have been provided to TP&T by the Permittee that the improvements will be completed as expeditiously as possible.
 - b. The Permittee shall reconfigure the end of the multi-use path along Education Street next to the MWRA facility to avoid the I-93/Route 1 highway ramp pillar and realign the crosswalk striping and pedestrian ramp to better connect to the existing path behind the building at 2 Education Circle. As part of the continuing design review process, the design of such improvements shall be approved by CDD and TP&T, and done in coordination with the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) prior to issuance of a building permit for development authorized by this special permit. Construction of this improvement as approved shall be completed prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the project, exclusive of temporary certificates of occupancy for the purpose of interior fit-out and furnishing. While the intent is to complete the required improvements prior to use of the building, TP&T may authorize a later completion date, in writing and prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, upon finding that there have been unforeseen delays due to circumstances outside the control of the Permittee, or other reasonable delays, and that acceptable assurances have been provided to TP&T by the Permittee that the improvements will be completed as expeditiously as possible.
 - c. The Permittee shall design, construct and maintain a new raised crosswalk across North Point Boulevard in the location illustrated in the Final Development Plan. This raised pedestrian crossing will help slow down traffic on North Point Boulevard as well as provide a safe and clear crossing for staff and students who will be walking between nearby EF facilities. The scope of this improvement will include the northwest crosswalk of the North Point Boulevard/Museum Way intersection only

and not the full intersection. As part of the continuing design review process, the raised crosswalk design shall be approved by CDD, TP&T, and DPW prior to issuance of a building permit for development authorized by this special permit. Construction of the raised crosswalk shall be completed prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy for the project, exclusive of temporary certificates of occupancy for the purpose of interior fit-out and furnishing. While the intent is to complete the required improvements prior to use of the building, TP&T may authorize a later completion date, in writing and prior to the issuance of a certificate of occupancy, upon finding that there have been unforeseen delays due to circumstances outside the control of the Permittee, or other reasonable delays, and that acceptable assurances have been provided to TP&T by the Permittee that the improvements will be completed as expeditiously as possible.

- d. The Permittee shall make three annual payments to the City of twenty-one thousand dollars (\$21,000) each (totaling \$63,000) toward the Hubway bicycle sharing system. These contributions will help support the operations, maintenance, and state of good repair of the Hubway bicycle sharing system and provide a sustainable alternative for traveling to and from the development instead of driving alone. The first of the three annual payments shall be provided prior to the issuance of the first certificate of occupancy for the project.
 - e. As illustrated in the Landscape Plan component of the Final Development Plan, the northern corner of the site near the bike sheds shall be designed to be “path ready,” meaning that it shall be designed to accommodate a potential future path connecting underneath the Gilmore Bridge to the Brian P. Murphy Staircase, which would provide a more direct pedestrian/bicycle connection to the MBTA Orange Line Community College station. Ongoing conformance with this condition shall be certified through the continuing design review process.
5. The Permittee’s ongoing compliance with the Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) Plan for the EF Campus Expansion Project, as amended and approved by the City of Cambridge PTDM Planning Officer on July 28, 2017, and as may be amended in the future in accordance with the PTDM Ordinance, shall be a condition of this Special Permit Decision.
 6. While not under the Planning Board’s direct jurisdiction, the Board believes it is important that Facilities of Public Accommodation and publicly accessible open space required under M.G.L. c.91, including the proposed outdoor multi-use playing field and sports track, passive-use spaces, and indoor fitness center and café, provide equal access to EF or Hult affiliates and the general public. For instance, if the hours of operation of spaces are limited, such limitations should not be waived to give priority to EF or Hult affiliates. Through the Chapter 91 licensing process, the Permittee shall work to ensure that this principle is reflected in any final agreements and enforcement procedures relating to the operation of Facilities of Public Accommodation and publicly accessible open space.

7. All authorized development shall abide by all applicable City of Cambridge Ordinances, including the Noise Ordinance (Chapter 8.16 of the City Municipal Code) and the Parking and Transportation Demand Management Ordinance.
8. Throughout design development and construction, all authorized development shall conform to the Green Building Requirements set forth in Section 22.20 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance as set forth in the Final Development Plan.

Voting in the affirmative to GRANT the Special Permits were Planning Board Members Steven Cohen, Catherine Preston Connolly, Hugh Russell, Tom Sieniewicz, and Associate Members Ahmed Nur and Thacher Tiffany, appointed by the Vice Chair to act on this case, constituting at least two thirds of the members of the Board, necessary to grant a special permit. Planning Board member Louis Bacci, Jr. abstained from voting.

For the Planning Board,



Catherine Preston Connolly, Vice Chair.

Pursuant to Section 12.36.4 of the City of Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, EFEKTA Group, Inc. agrees to the conditions attached to this Decision approving the granting of a PUD Special Permit for Case #328.



Martha Doyle
Authorized Representative, EFEKTA Group Inc.

A copy of this decision #328 shall be filed with the Office of the City Clerk. Appeals, if any, shall be made pursuant to Section 17, Chapter 40A, Massachusetts General Laws, and shall be filed within twenty (20) days after the date of such filing in the Office of the City Clerk.

ATTEST: A true and accurate copy of the above decision has been filed on August 15, 2017, with the Office of the City Clerk by Swaathi Joseph, duly authorized representative of the Planning Board. All plans referred to in the decision have been filed with the City Clerk on said date.

Twenty days have elapsed since the above decision was filed in the office of the City Clerk and:
_____ no appeal has been filed; or

_____ an appeal has been filed within such twenty days.

The person exercising rights under a duly appealed special permit does so at risk that a court will reverse the permit and that any construction performed under the permit may be ordered undone. This certification shall in no event terminate or shorten the tolling, during the pendency of any appeals, of the periods provided under the second paragraph of G.L. c. 40A, §6.

Date: _____, City Clerk

Appeal has been dismissed or denied.

Date: _____, City Clerk

Appendix I: Approved Dimensional Chart

	Existing	Allowed or Required	Proposed	Permitted
Lot Area (sq ft)	N/A	100,000 min	125,000	No Change
Total GFA (sq ft)	6,100	300,000 max	300,000	295,000
Residential Base	N/A	65% min	0	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Non-Residential Base	N/A	35% max ¹	300,000 ¹	
Inclusionary Bonus	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Total FAR	N/A	2.4 max	2.4	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Residential Base	N/A	65% min	0	
Non-Residential Base	N/A	35% max ¹	100% ¹	
Inclusionary Bonus	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Total Dwelling Units	N/A	0	0	0
Base Units	N/A	N/A	N/A	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Inclusionary Bonus Units	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Base Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Total Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Lot Width (ft)	N/A	N/A	N/A	No Change
Height (ft)	N/A	150 max	150 max	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Front Setback – South (ft)	N/A	None	N/A	
Front Setback – West (ft)	N/A	None	N/A	
Side Setback – North (ft)	N/A	None	N/A	
Side Setback – East (ft)	N/A	None	N/A	
Open Space (% of Lot Area)	N/A	20% min	57%	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Private Open Space	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Permeable Open Space	N/A	N/A	N/A	
Off-Street Parking Spaces	N/A	110-139	110	110
Long-Term Bicycle Spaces	N/A	264 min	264	Consistent with Application Documents, PTDM and other applicable requirements
Short-Term Bicycle Spaces	N/A	54 min	54	
Loading Bays	N/A	2	2	

¹ The Planning Board approves the 100% non-residential use of the site pursuant to Section 13.73.0.