



**OWNERSHIP CERTIFICATE**

**Project Address:** 23 MAY ST/32 VINEYARD

**Application Date:** 3/14/19

This form is to be completed by the property owner, signed, and submitted with the Special Permit Application:

I hereby authorize the following Applicant: Senne Development, LLC  
at the following address: 33 Church St, Cambridge, MA 02138  
to apply for a special permit for:  
on premises located at: 23 May St/32 Vineyard St, Cambridge, MA  
for which the record title stands in the name of: 23 May St LLC  
whose address is: 46 Loreto Drive, Boxborough, MA 01719

by a deed duly recorded in the:

Registry of Deeds of County: Middlesex S Book: 71806 Page: 480

OR Registry District of the Land Court, Certificate No.: \_\_\_\_\_ Book: \_\_\_\_\_ Page: \_\_\_\_\_



Signature of Land Owner (If authorized Trustee, Officer or Agent, so identify)

To be completed by Notary Public:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, County of Middlesex

The above named Eduardo Pontoriero personally appeared before me,

on the month, day and year 3-14-19 and made oath that the above statement is true.

Notary: Kathleen Riley

My Commission expires: January 9, 2026



**FEE SCHEDULE**

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**Project Address:** 23 May St

**Application Date:** 3/19/19

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The Applicant must provide the full fee (by check or money order) with the Special Permit Application. Depending on the nature of the proposed project and the types of Special Permit being sought, the required fee is the larger of the following amounts:

- If the proposed project includes the creation of new or substantially rehabilitated floor area, or a change of use subject to Section 19.20, the fee is ten cents (\$0.10) per square foot of total proposed Gross Floor Area.
- If a Flood Plain Special Permit is being sought as part of the Application, the fee is one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00), unless the amount determined above is greater.
- In any case, the minimum fee is one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00).

**Fee Calculation**

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New or Substantially Rehabilitated Gross Floor Area (SF): 3,126 × \$0.10 = \$312.6

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Flood Plain Special Permit Enter \$1,000.00 if applicable: 0

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Other Special Permit Enter \$150.00 if no other fee is applicable: 0

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**TOTAL SPECIAL PERMIT FEE** Enter Larger of the Above Amounts: \$312.6

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**DIMENSIONAL FORM**

**Project Address:**

**Application Date:**

	<b>Existing</b>	<b>Allowed or Required (max/min)</b>	<b>Proposed</b>	<b>Permitted</b>
Lot Area (sq ft)				
Lot Width (ft)				
Total Gross Floor Area (sq ft)				
Residential Base				
Non-Residential Base				
Inclusionary Housing Bonus				
Total Floor Area Ratio				
Residential Base				
Non-Residential Base				
Inclusionary Housing Bonus				
Total Dwelling Units				
Base Units				
Inclusionary Bonus Units				
Base Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)				
Total Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)				
Building Height(s) (ft)				
Front Yard Setback (ft)				
Side Yard Setback (ft)				
Side Yard Setback (ft)				
Rear Yard Setback (ft)				
Open Space (% of Lot Area)				
Private Open Space				
Permeable Open Space				
Other Open Space (Specify)				
Off-Street Parking Spaces				
Long-Term Bicycle Parking				
Short-Term Bicycle Parking				
Loading Bays				

*Use space below and/or attached pages for additional notes:*

**23 MAY STREET & 32 VINEYARD**  
**[PID: 21090; PROPERTY ID: 256-34]**  
**NARRATIVE FOR SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION**

**General Narrative**

Existing Conditions: 23 May Street/32 Vineyard Street currently exists as a non-conforming two-family home sited at the corner of May Street and Vineyard Street. This existing gabled roof structure is 2.5 stories in height, situated on the high side of the site (with a grade change from north to south (Vineyard to 9-11 May Street) of over ten feet). The two-family currently has two primary entries/frontages facing May Street and the neighboring property (26-28 Vineyard Street). The building siting leaves an uncharacteristically large side yard, as the surrounding neighborhood is composed primarily of single family homes on small lots. The existing non-conforming two car parking area is entered from May street at the low end of the lot in close proximity to abutting 9-11 May Street.

Proposed Project: The proposal envisions two single-family homes on this corner lot at the intersection of May Street and Vineyard Street which is a Residence B zoning district. The existing non-conforming two-family shall be reduced in size, converted to a single family house. The structure will be modified as such to create a entry/frontage facing on and being known as 32 Vineyard Street. The Cambridge Historical Commission has administratively reviewed the proposal throughout its design processes and subsequently approved the partial reduction and roofline modification. A building permit application is under review with Inspectional Services. The second single family house shall be added to the 6,796 SF parcel thereafter, of similar massing and height, facing and being known as 23 May Street. The Cambridge City Council, and all other city departments, have recently reviewed and approved an application for a second curb cut for the site which allows each house in the proposal to have independent parking spaces and simultaneously organizes exterior open spaces, in keeping with the neighborhood fabric. The new curb cut also allows for the existing parking on May Street to be brought into conformance.

The lot's slender proportion and status as a corner lot is unusual in the neighborhood. The lot dimensions allow for two residential dwellings that are consistent with the character of the neighborhood. The proposal efforts to equalize the sizes of the houses and more comprehensively allocate the large amount of open space and landscaping the lot can accommodate. This site plan also preserves a number of large private trees along the May Street frontage and adds street and neighboring structure privacy screening by way of privets and arborvitaes and other small plantings.

The Zoning Ordinance (5.53) allows for more than one structure containing a principal residential use in a Residence B zoning district provided all portions of any structures are located no farther than seventy-five feet from any street line to which the lot abuts. All portions of both proposed structures are less than seventy-five feet from May Street, but because this is a corner lot, the structure furthest from Vineyard Street is in part more than seventy-five feet away. The planning board may issue a special permit as outlined in 5.53 paragraph 2 of the Ordinance so long as certain conditions for open space and otherwise are met.

**Compliance with Zoning**

The proposal is compliant with all applicable zoning dimensional requirements. The proposal needs planning board approval to meet the criteria required by 5.53 to allow a structure containing a principal residence farther than seventy-five feet from any property line, specifically Vineyard Street. The corner lot is approximately sixty feet deep measuring from May Street.

**Compliance with Criteria Specific to this Special Permit Application**

Pursuant to section 5.53 of the Ordinance, the Planning Board by Special Permit may allow more than one structure containing a principal use on a lot where a portion of all structures are not greater than (75) feet from any street to which the lot abuts when the following criteria are met. Application of each provision follows the provision in italics.

1. That development in the form of two or more structures on the lot will not significantly increase or may reduce the impact of the new constructions should it occur in a single structure;

*The proposed size and location of the two detached single family homes will reduce the impact of new construction because they will allow for continuous open spaces on all four sides of each structure enhancing view corridors and opportunities for natural light for both homes as well as immediate abutters, as opposed to a larger attached as of right two-family structure which would crowd the corner of May Street and Vineyard Street.*

2. That two or more structures may provide identifiable benefits beyond that provided should all construction be in a single structure. In making its findings the Board shall consider the impact of the new construction on the following:

a. The extent to which the preservation of a large contiguous open space in the rear of the lot or series of adjacent lots is achieved through the provision of a rear yard setback significantly greater than that required and through the dedication of that rear yard as Green Area, as defined in this Ordinance,

*The proposed detached units and the associated parking are sited to front somewhat independently from each other with one house orienting toward Vineyard Street and featuring a large open space to its side and rear, and the other house orienting toward May Street with it's own side and rear open spaces. The narrow shape of the corner lot does not currently have a large contiguous open space in the rear of the property but rather a large side yard, differing from the composition of the neighborhood.*

b. Incentives for the location of buildings and parking facilities in front half of a lot in a pattern compatible with the development pattern prevailing in the neighborhood,

*The proposal places the new structure in a location consistent with the siting of adjacent residences which front the street and are typically set back by 10 to 15 feet. Off street parking when provided is typically to the side of the house quite similarly to the site plan proposed.*

c. The extent to which two or more structures provides an enhanced living environment for residents on the lot,

*The proposed location of the two houses provide for an enhanced living environment because the resultant exclusive use open space surrounding each home provides ample light, air, and privacy. The scale and siting of the separate structures is architecturally sensitive and consistent with the immediate neighborhood.*

d. Incentives to retain existing structures on a lot, particularly any structure determined to be a Preferably Preserved Significant Structure by the Cambridge Historical Commission,

*The proposed project includes the reuse of the existing structure with minor modifications that were presented to and approved administratively by the Staff of the Cambridge Historical Commission. The renovation of the existing structure preserves the roofline facing May Street and general massing of the structure.*

e. The opportunities presented to reduce the visual impact of parking from the public street and from adjacent lots,

*The required off street parking spaces provided along the sites side lot lines as far away from the street corner as allowed by the Ordinance. The proposed project also modifies the existing non-conforming parking, rendering it in compliance. Our proposal includes the maintenance/protection of several large existing private trees as well as the installation of new shrubs and low plantings to soften the visual impact from the parking spaces to both the street and neighboring structures.*

f. The increased opportunities to reduce the height and bulk as new construction is deeper into a lot or closer to structures on abutting lots.

*An attached structure, (large two family), positioned more to the center of the lot but conforming to the Ordinance, would be significantly larger in height and bulk than the proposed detached units blocking views, and light to abutters, especially considering the ten foot grade change parallel to May Street. The by-right single structure option would similarly create shared open space allocations that would not be in keeping with the intent of this ordinance and provide fewer opportunities for outdoor privacy for the residences of this parcel.*

#### **Compliance with General Special Permit Criteria (Section 10.43)**

Pursuant to section 10.43 of the Ordinance, Special Permits will normally be granted where provisions of this Ordinance are met (each application following each provision in italics), 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 good because:

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

*With the requested Special Permits, the Project will meet all requirements of the Ordinance.*

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

*No traffic or patterns of access or egress will cause congestion, hazard or substantial change in the neighborhood because the proposed residential use is consistent with the residential character of the existing neighborhood. The existing structure is currently used as a two-family home with two off-street parking spaces and the proposal will maintain the same number of spaces. 23 May Street's parking areas will be modified and brought into conformance, utilizing the existing curb cut. 32 Vineyard's parking area is adjacent to its structure (accessed off Vineyard St) by way of the new approved curb cut. The project allows for much contiguous green space on site.*

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 continued operation of adjacent uses will not be adversely affected by the proposed development. The existing site has two residential units. The proposal maintains two residential units.*

d) Nuisance or hazard would be created to the detriment of the health, safety and/or welfare of the occupants of the proposed use or the Citizens of the City or no nuisance or hazard will be created to the detriment of the health, safety of the Citizens of the City by the proposed use and valuable family style housing will be added to the existing housing stock.

*This Project is consistent with Cambridge's goals of health, safety and welfare as set forth in Section 19.30 (Citywide Urban Design Objectives) of the Ordinance to foster development which is responsive to the existing or anticipated patterns of development.*

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 Project will not impair the integrity of the district in which it is located or the adjacent districts. The Project will not derogate from the intent and purpose of the Ordinance. When complete the Project will be consistent with the residential character of the surrounding neighborhood.*

#### **B. 19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives**

1. Pursuant to Section 19.31 of the Ordinance, new projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development. Indicators include:

a) Heights and setbacks provide suitable transition to abutting or nearby residential zoning districts that are generally developed to low scale residential uses.

***The project is located in a residential district and the proposed use is consistent in size, scale and character of the surrounding residential uses.***

b) New buildings are designed and oriented on the lot so as to be consistent with the established streetscape on those streets on which the project lot abuts. Streetscape is meant to refer to the pattern of building setbacks and heights in relationship to public streets.

***The proposed renovation of the existing structure has been approved administratively by the Historical Commission. The proposed new house will have a similar size, style, and have similar features to the proposed renovated house. Both will have a gable roof and rectangular floor plate compatible with the neighborhood. The proposed second house will be aligned with the existing house with respect to front yard setback from May St.***

c) In mixed-use projects, uses are to be located carefully to respect context, e.g. retail should front onto a street, new housing should relate to any adjacent existing residential use etc.

***The project is residential only, appropriate for the context of the neighborhood.***

d) Where relevant, historical context are respected e.g. special consideration should be given to buildings or buildings that are preferably preserved on adjacent to the Site.

***There are no neighboring historic buildings that are preferably preserved on or adjacent to the site.***

2. Pursuant to Section 19.32 of the Ordinance, development should be pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, with a positive relationship to its surrounding. Indicators include :

(a) Ground floors, particularly where they face public streets, public parks, and publicly accessible pathways, consist of spaces that are actively inhabited by people, such as retail stores, consumer services businesses and restaurants where they are allowed, or general office, educational or residential uses and building lobbies. Windows and doors that normally serve such inhabited spaces are encouraged to be prominent aspect of the relevant building facades. Where a mix of activities are accommodated in the building, the more active uses are encouraged facing public streets, parks, and pathways.

In commercial districts, such active space consists of retail and consumer service stores and building lobbies that are oriented towards the street and encourage pedestrian activity on the sidewalk. However, in all cases such ground floor spaces should be occupied by uses (a) permitted in the zoning district within which the structure is located, and (c) compatible with the principal use for which the building is designed.

***The renovation of the existing structure will move the entrance/frontage to Vineyard Street and the new building at 23 May Street shall face May Street establishing themselves as prominent elements of the building facades. The existing two-family structure currently has 32 Vineyard Street's unit entrance facing the side yard of 26-28 Vineyard Street.***

(b) Covered parking on the lower floors of a building and on-grade open parking, particularly where located in front of a building, is discouraged where a building faces a public street or public park and publicly accessible pathways.

***Proposed parking will be facing public streets and adjacent to each structure, in keeping with the neighborhood fabric.***



(c) Ground floors should be generally 25-50% transparent. The greatest amount of glass would be expected for retail uses with lesser amount for office, institutional or residential use.

***The residential structures are designed with proportionate fenestration as established by neighboring structures.***

(d) Entries to buildings are located so as to ensure safe pedestrian movement across street, encourage walking as preferred mode of travel within the city and to encourage the use of public transit for employment and other trips. Relating building entries as directly as possible to crosswalks and to pathways that lead to bus stop and transit stations is encouraged; siting buildings on a lot and developing site plans that reinforce expected pedestrian pathways over the lot and through the district is also encouraged.

***Each structure is sited as such to allow for easy pedestrian access from pathways and driveways.***

(e) Pedestrians and bicyclists are able to access the site safely and conveniently; bicyclists should have, secure storage facilities conveniently located on-site and out of the weather. If bicycle parking is provided in a garage, special attention must be paid to providing safe access to the facilities from the outside.

***Interior bike racks shall be provided at the lower levels of each house, with easy access from the exterior.***

(f) Alternate means of serving this policy objective 19.32 through special building design, siting, or site design can be anticipated where the building form or use is distinctive such as freestanding parking structures, large institutional buildings such as churches and auditoriums, freestanding service buildings, power plants, athletic facilities, manufacturing plants, etc.

N/A

3) Pursuant to Section 19.33 of the Ordinance, the building and site design should mitigate adverse environmental impacts of the development upon its neighbors. Indicators include:

a) Mechanical equipment that is carefully designed, well organized or visually screened from its surroundings and is acoustically buffered from neighbors. Consideration is given to the size, complexity and appearance of the equipment, its proximity to residential areas, and its impact on the existing streetscape and skyline. The extent to which screening can bring order, lessen negative impacts and enhance the overall appearance of the equipment should be taken into account.

***The project's mechanical systems are designed and located to minimize negative impacts on its surroundings and enhance the overall appearance of the existing streetscape.***

b) Trash that is handled to avoid impacts (noise, odor, and visual quality) on neighbors e.g. the use of trash compactors or containment of all trash storage and handling within a building is encouraged.

***The trash/recycling storage and handling for the residence will be located away from the public view and handled to minimize odor through the use of covered trash receptacles. In compliance with the Ordinance, no refuse storage areas are located in the front yard setbacks.***

c) Loading Docks that are located and designed to minimize impacts (visual and operational) on neighbors.

N/A

d) Stormwater Best Management Practices and other measures to minimize runoff and improve water quality are implemented.

***A construction management plan has been prepared and submitted as part of the building permit application.***

e) Landscaped areas and required Green Area Open Space, in addition to serving as visual amenities, are employed to reduce the rate and volume of storm water runoff compared pre-development conditions.

***Proposed on site planting beds and the appropriately calculated/sized centrally located Cultec stormwater retention system shall mitigate all stormwater runoff as required by code.***

f) The structure is designed and sited to minimize shadow impacts on neighboring lots, especially shadows that would have a significant impact on the use and enjoyment of adjacent open space and shadows that might impact the operation of a Registered Solar System as defined in Section 22.60 of the Ordinance.

***The lot is situated on the northwestern corner of the block and the proposed house will largely cast shadows onto the same lot and public street.***

g) Changes to the grade across the lot are designed in ways to minimize the need for structural retaining walls close to the property line.

***The design calls for a retaining wall east of the existing building in one portion that deals with a significant existing grade change. The design proposes stairs into the landscape to traverse this sloped section for easier pedestrian access to open space areas than the existing grade conditions.***

h) Building Scale and wall treatment, including the provision of windows, are sensitive to existing residential uses on adjacent lots.

***The Project is designed to be congruous with the residential abutters in scale and fenestration and also implements addition privacy screening measures by way of planting of shrubs and trees along the property line. The proposed design also maintains the appropriate distances along the sensitive edges of the property similar to existing the existing building setback from May St.***

i) Outdoor lighting is designed to provide minimum lighting necessary to ensure adequate safety, night vision and comfort, while minimizing light pollution.

***Residential lighting at the building entries will provide safe lighting enhancing the visual landscape in the evenings.***

j) The creation of Tree Protection Plan that identifies important trees on the site, encourages their protection, or provides for adequate replacement of trees lost to development on the site.

***The trees along May St will be preserved through tree protection measures, many of which have already been installed onsite. The dying tree butting 26-28 Vineyard St was removed and will be replaced. See sheet L1, site planting plan.***

4) Pursuant to Section 19.34 of the Ordinance, projects should not overburden the City infrastructure services, including roads, city water supply system and sewer system.

a) The building and site design are designed to make use of water-conserving plumbing and minimize the amount of stormwater run-off through the use of best management practices for stormwater management.

***Water-conserving plumbing fixtures will be used in keeping with residential industry standards. A Cultec system and careful planting arrangements will mitigate stormwater runoff from the site.***

b) The capacity and condition of drinking water and wastewater infrastructure systems are shown to be adequate, or the steps necessary to bring them up to an acceptable level are identified.

***The existing structure contains two residential units, the new proposal does not modify this density and all systems will be addressed to comply.***

5) Pursuant to Section 19.35 of the Ordinance, new construction should reinforce and enhance the complex urban aspects of Cambridge as it has developed historically.

Indicators include:

a) New Educational institutional construction that is focused with the existing campuses.

*N/A*

b) Where institutional construction occurs in commercial areas, retail, consumer service enterprises, and other uses that are accessible to the general public are provided at the ground (or lower) floors of buildings. Where such uses are not suitable for programmatic reasons, institutional uses that encourage active pedestrian traffic to and from the site.

*N/A*

c) In large, multiple-building, non-institutional developments, a mix of uses, including publicly accessible retail activity, is provided where such uses are permitted and where the mix of uses extends the period of time the area remains active throughout the day.

*N/A*

d) Historic structures and environments are preserved.

***The existing structure shall be renovated and maintained on site. The design has been reviewed alongside the Cambridge Historic Commission's administrative staff.***

e) Preservation or provision of facilities for start-up companies and appropriately scaled manufacturing activities that provide a wide diversity of employment paths for Cambridge residents as a component of the development; however, activities heavily dependent on trucking for supply and distribution are not encouraged.

*N/A*

6) Pursuant to Section 19.36 of the Ordinance, expansion of the inventory of housing in the City is encouraged.

Indicators include

a) Housing is a component of any large, multiple building commercial development. Where such development abuts residential zoning districts substantially developed to low-scale residential uses, placement of housing within the development such that it acts as a transition/buffer between uses within and without the development.

*N/A*

b) Where housing is constructed, providing affordable units exceeding that mandated by the Ordinance. Targeting larger family-sized middle income units is encouraged.

***The Project proposes to have two single-family houses suitable for family housing in keeping with the context of the neighborhood.***

7) Pursuant to Section 19.37 of the Ordinance, enhancement and expansion of open space amenities in the city should be incorporated into new development in the city.

Indicators include:

a) On large-parcel commercial development, publicly beneficial open space is provided.

N/A

b) Open space facilities are designed to enhance or expand existing facilities or to expand networks of pedestrian and bicycle movement within the vicinity of the development.

N/A

c) A wider range of open space activities than presently found abutting area is provided.

***The range of open space activities will remain unchanged however organized for exclusive use of each unit, therefore creating more usable open space for the inhabitants.***

#### **IV. CONCLUSION**

As described above, the Project is contextually appropriate for the site and surroundings providing appropriate family friendly housing. Additionally the siting of the new proposed residential structure, as well as the renovation of the existing structure, will preserve many significant landscape features and provide more desirable and useable open space between the proposed houses than if a single two-family structure were to be created, concentrating the bulk of the footprint at the corner of Vineyard and May. Even though the site is on a corner lot and does not have a rear yard, the project will continue to provide contiguous open space along the street frontage with exception of the driveways. The proposal also provides ample open space between the proposed houses, creating private outdoors spaces for the future residents to enjoy. The proposed project's parking arrangement will be in keeping with the neighborhood, directly adjacent to each structure, minimizing the open space impacts and preventing traversing over the open space to enter the new homes. This arrangement is better suited for detached single family houses and further reduces the impact of the development. Accordingly, for the reasons set forth in this application, the Applicant respectfully requests that the Board find that the Project satisfies all applicable requirements of the Ordinance in connection with the granting of the requested Special Permit.

23 May Street, LLC  
33 Church Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138

March 19th, 2019

Planning Board  
City of Cambridge  
344 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02139

RE: Summary of Public Outreach for the 23 May Street / 32 Vineyard Street Project

Dear Planning Board Members,

Our Development Team is comprised of:

William Senné, President & Owner of Senné Development LLC  
Jess Tones, Senior Project Manager of Senné Development LLC  
Nicholas Faillace, Construction Manager of Senné Development LLC  
Milton Yu, Project Architect of Peter Quinn Architects LLC

The Development Team for the aforementioned Project, on behalf of our client 23 May Street LLC, hosted a public meeting on Wednesday March 13th, 2019 between 6:00PM and 8:00PM. We delivered notice of the meetings at least two weeks prior to the meeting, to all of the abutters listed by the City Clerk's Office within the required radius of the property. Our purpose was to present and discuss our plans, overall design, and establish an open line of communication between the Development Team and interested parties regarding the project. The host location for the meeting was the Development Team's office at 32 Prospect Street Cambridge, MA. The office is HC accessible and easily reachable by public transportation.

The meeting was attended by two neighbors (the attendance list is attached). The neighbors generally expressed approval and enthusiasm for the development. We did not receive any negative feedback and some aspects of the design that received positive feedback include:

- The overall size and low-intensity of the development.
- The overall appearance and architectural style of the houses.
- The overall approach to site design.
- The quality of the landscape improvements including the preservation of a number of large private trees.

We offered to meet individually with any abutter who could not attend the meeting and did in fact meet with one non-abutter but interested party at a subsequent time. Further to this outreach, we have previously obtained a Special Permit from the City Council for a curb cut. As part of that process, we met individually with abutters and obtained three letters in support of that curb cut, describing for them the project, with the first letter being received in early December of 2018. The immediate neighborhood has been supportive of the project and we feel we have appropriately designed to receive that support.

Sincerely,



William Senné