



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

2021 AUG -3 PM 1:30
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

NOTICE OF DECISION

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| Case Number: | 371 |
| Address: | 269-301 Vassar Street |
| Zoning: | Special District 6 / Special District 11 / MIT Institutional Overlay District |
| Applicant: | Massachusetts Institute of Technology 77 Massachusetts Avenue, NW23-100, Cambridge, MA 02139 |
| Owner: | Massachusetts Institute of Technology 77 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139 |
| Application Date: | December 23, 2020 |
| Date of Planning Board Public Hearing: | February 16, 2021; June 22, 2021 |
| Date of Planning Board Decision: | June 22, 2021 |
| Date of Filing Planning Board Decision: | August 3, 2021 |
| Application: | Project Review Special Permit (Section 19.20), Special Permit to increase building height to 105 feet in SD-6 (Section 17.63.2(b)), Special Permit to increase building height above 100 feet in SD-11 (Section 17.203.2), Special Permit for reduction of required off-street parking (Section 6.35.1), and Special Permit for reduction of Green Roofs Requirement (Section 22.35.3) to construct two dormitory buildings totaling 328,050 square feet of graduate student housing including 690 beds, 345 long-term and 35 short-term bicycle parking spaces, and landscaped areas accessible to the building residents and general public. |
| 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 Swaathi Joseph at 617-349-4668, or sjoseph@cambridgema.gov.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED

Application Documents and Supporting Material

1. MIT West Campus Graduate Student Dormitory Planning Board Special Permit Special Permit Submission dated 12/17/2020, containing, *inter alia*, Volume One – Narrative Materials including, Special Permit Cover Sheet, Dimensional Form, Ownership Certificates, Community Outreach Summary, Project Narrative, Infrastructure Narratives, Noise Mitigation Narrative, Green Building Report, Transportation Access and Circulation Study prepared by Howard Stein Hudson, dated December 2020 and Tree Study; and Volume Two – Plans and Illustrations including plan set prepared by Kieran Timberlake, dated 12/17/2020.
2. Cambridge Neighborhood Association Letter; and Retail Study & Recommendation Letter from Graffito, dated 2/8/2021.
3. Presentation slides shown to the Planning Board on 2/16/2021.
4. Supplemental Materials Submission dated 5/14/2021, including responses to questions from the Planning Board, revised narrative materials and revised Volume Two – Plans and Illustrations including plan set prepared by Kieran Timberlake, dated 5/14/2021.
5. Supplemental Materials Submission dated 5/26/2021, including responses to questions from the Planning Board, revised narrative materials and revised Volume Two – Plans and Illustrations including plan set prepared by Kieran Timberlake, dated 5/25/2021.
6. Presentation slides shown to the Planning Board on 6/22/2021.

City of Cambridge Documents

7. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Katherine F. Watkins, City Engineer, Department of Public Works (DPW), dated 2/8/2021.
8. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Joseph E. Barr, Director, Traffic, Parking and Transportation (TP+T) Department, dated 2/9/2021.
9. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Community Development Department (CDD) staff, dated 2/10/2021.
10. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Community Development Department (CDD) staff, dated 6/15/2021.

Other Documents

11. Email communication to the Planning Board from Barry Abel, dated 2/15/2021.
12. Email communication to the Planning Board from Carol O'Hare, dated 2/16/2021.
13. Email communication to the Planning Board from O. Robert Simha, dated 2/16/2021.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The Applicant proposes to replace an existing surface parking lot and MIT police station building with two new graduate dormitory buildings consisting of approximately 328,050 square feet and 690 beds, and a new Central Plaza open space between the proposed dormitories. The development will also contain 345 long-term bicycle parking spaces and 35 short-term bicycle parking spaces. The site is located in the Special District 6 (SD-6) and Special District 11 (SD-11) zoning districts and the MIT Institutional Use Overlay district. The Applicant seeks a complete waiver of the minimum off-street parking requirements for this project; however, off-street parking spaces within the pooled parking facilities that exist to serve the entire MIT campus will be available to residents. The Applicant will seek a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeal for relief from yard setback requirements.

FINDINGS

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

1. Project Review Special Permit (19.20)

(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.

While the Project requires a Project Review Special Permit (Section 19.20), it is below the threshold that requires a Traffic Impact Study (TIS) for a College or University, which is the creation of 150 new parking spaces or the relocation of 250 existing parking spaces or any combination thereof. The existing parking spaces that will be removed from the site will not be relocated, and campus parking needs will be served by modifying existing campus parking operations and by completing new facilities that have been previously permitted for other locations.

Though not required, the Applicant provided a summary of a Transportation Access and Circulation Study prepared by Howard Stein Hudson, Inc. to analyze transportation related impacts of the project. The report concluded that the project will not have a significant adverse impact on traffic operations or available parking supply within the campus. In its memorandum to the Planning Board dated February 9, 2021, TP&T supported the findings due to the fact that the project's anticipated parking demands can be met by using the available institutional pool.

(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.

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

The project is responsive to the existing pattern of development on the MIT campus as well as other buildings along the Vassar Street corridor. The proposed building massing

steps down towards the Central Plaza, providing an unobstructed viewshed from Fort Washington Park eastward towards Briggs Field and the Charles River. The proposed building materials allow for high levels of fenestration from the ground floor along the Vassar Street streetscape and Central Plaza. Incorporation of lightweight metal panel and transparent glass moments along the facade helps to lighten the feel of the primarily brick-clad building.

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

The project eliminates off-street vehicle parking and provides large amounts of bicycle parking. The raised cycle track along Vassar Street helps to create new separated bike facility connections to the site, which will further encourage cycling. The site will be improved with new sidewalks and curb extensions along the Vassar Street frontage, as well as a new planned open space between the two dormitory buildings which will encourage pedestrian activity and help to create a new connection to the future Grand Junction Path and Fort Washington Park.

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

The project is designed to minimize negative impacts on its surroundings and enhance the overall appearance of the existing streetscapes and open space. A rooftop mechanical penthouse will house the majority of building services and the massing of the penthouse enclosures have been integrated into the building massing approach and proposed façade materials; the Applicant confirmed at the public hearing that the mechanical enclosures will be a solid material and not mesh. Trash and recycling will be contained within the first-floor level away from the street facade to avoid noise, odor and visual impacts, and will be picked up and removed via the loading dock area. The project will utilize an underground stormwater management system, proprietary water quality management structures, use of porous pavements and installation of a partial green roof. The project will increase the pervious area of the lot with vegetated areas as well as pervious pavements promoting increased infiltration. As indicated in the shadow studies included in the application materials, dated December 17, 2020, the buildings will not have a significant impact on the use or enjoyment of any adjacent public spaces, including Fort Washington Park and the proposed Central Plaza. The mid-rise buildings will have no substantial impact on neighboring buildings, such as Simmons Hall to the northeast, many of which are generally the same or taller in height. The Tree Study shows that several smaller green ash trees will be removed to make room for the new Project. These trees will be replaced in-kind with approximately 375 caliper inches of new plantings along the rear of the buildings, within the Central Plaza, and along Vassar Street.

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

The project will meet all applicable standards for provision of public infrastructure. The project will be subject to Green Building requirements pursuant to Section 22.20 of the

Zoning Ordinance and the Applicant is seeking LEED Gold Certification under the LEED v4 BD+C Multifamily Midrise Program. The project will achieve the LEED Gold Certification through the exclusive use of Energy Star appliances, all-electric cooking facilities, LED lighting with occupancy and sensor controls, low U-value fenestration, and a high-performance building envelope that includes tight air-sealing with no thermal bridging.. The Applicant has also consulted with the Cambridge Water Department and has proposed improvements to ensure that water service can be provided to the site without adverse impacts on the municipal water system. The project is designed to include water-conserving plumbing features. DPW has provided comment to the Planning Board in a memorandum dated February 8, 2021 indicating that the project is expected to meet all DPW standards and recommending additional measures to mitigate and manage flood risk and removal of I/I at the Talbot Street Outfall. The Applicant will be required to obtain a stormwater control permit prior to the beginning of site work. The Applicant will continue to work with DPW staff on final designs and materials for the Vassar Street right-of-way improvements.

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

The project is consistent with City policies to encourage institutional expansion within existing campus areas, as the site is located in an institutional use overlay district. Retail uses are not permitted in the district, but active pedestrian uses, such as lobby spaces, social spaces and entries, are provided at the ground level of the project. The project further enhances the public realm with the entry forecourt at street level and provides a connection to the proposed Grand Junction Path and the residential/institutional neighborhood to the northwest.

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

The dormitory project will expand campus housing facilities for the institution with 690 graduate beds. The replacement of the existing surface parking lot with additional student residences is also consistent with the City's objectives of housing university students on campus and reducing reliance on automobile trips.

(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 will be provided within a Central Plaza between the East and West buildings, and landscaped areas along Vassar Street. The Central Plaza provides a critical open space and pedestrian connection between Fort Washington Park, the Grand Junction Path, and Briggs Field to the east. The Central Plaza helps break down the massing of the buildings and provide animation and amenities for residents and the public. The extensive transparent ground floor frontage and provision of active student spaces along this edge will also engage the public and will have a positive impact on the pedestrian realm.

2. Special Permit for reduction of required parking (Section 6.35.1)

6.35.1 Reduction of Required Parking. Any minimum required amount of parking may be reduced only upon issuance of a special permit from the Board of Zoning Appeals. A special permit shall be granted only if the Board determines and cites evidence in its decision that the lesser amount of parking will not cause excessive congestion, endanger public safety, substantially reduce parking availability for other uses or otherwise adversely impact the neighborhood, or that such lesser amount of parking will provide positive environmental or other benefits to the users of the lot and the neighborhood, including specifically, among other benefits, assisting in the provision of affordable housing units. ...

As discussed earlier in these Findings, the Applicant seeks approval to reduce the amount of accessory parking provided on-site from 58 spaces to 0 spaces. Such relief is allowed by special permit pursuant to Section 6.35.1 and Section 10.45, which allows the Planning Board to grant special permits otherwise within the purview of the Board of Zoning Appeal for projects that are also subject to Planning Board special permit approval.

As mentioned earlier in these Findings, the Transportation Access and Circulation Study, reviewed and supported by TP+T in its memorandum to the Planning Board dated February 9, 2021, demonstrates that the proposed parking demand from the new graduate dormitories can be accommodated within the existing and future campus-wide parking supply. The existing parking supply has a capacity of approximately 1,150 spaces during peak demand and the projected demand from the Project is anticipated to be between 34 and 58 spaces. The current proposal to reduce parking for the proposed development is consistent with the city-wide goals to discourage driving and encourage other modes of transportation, and serves to reduce auto trip generation and thereby mitigate potential traffic impacts, as discussed earlier in these Findings. Hence the Board finds that there will be minimum impact on availability of parking and no other adverse impacts on the neighborhood. The Board also finds that the reduction in parking will be reasonable in light of the considerations set forth below.

... In making such a determination the Board shall also consider whether or not less off street parking is reasonable in light of the following:

- a. The availability of surplus off street parking in the vicinity of the use being served and/or the proximity of an MBTA transit station.*

The Project is within an area served by the MBTA Kendall/MIT and Central Red Line Stations and MBTA bus route stops serving Cambridge and surrounding towns. The Applicant will also make adequate off-street parking available to building employees and visitors within existing available parking facilities on the MIT campus.

- b. The availability of public or commercial parking facilities in the vicinity of the use being served provided the requirements of Section 6.23 are satisfied.*

There are several existing off-street parking facilities as part of the MIT institutional pool of parking spaces which are available in the vicinity of the Project.

- c. *Shared use of off street parking spaces serving other uses having peak user demands at different times, provided that no more than seventy-five (75) percent of the lesser minimum parking requirements for each use shall be satisfied with such shared spaces and that the requirements of Subsection 6.23 are satisfied.*

Shared use of off street parking spaces serving other uses has not been specifically proposed as part of this Project.

- d. *Age or other occupancy restrictions which are likely to result in a lower level of auto usage; and*

This development is specifically for graduate students and affiliates studying and working on the MIT campus, who have a lower overall level of auto usage and generate less parking demand than other residential uses.

- e. *Impact of the parking requirement on the physical environment of the affected lot or the adjacent lots including reduction in green space, destruction of significant existing trees and other vegetation, destruction of existing dwelling units, significant negative impact on the historic resources on the lot, impairment of the urban design objectives of the city as set forth in Section 19.30 of the Zoning Ordinance, or loss of pedestrian amenities along public ways.*

The reduction in parking is preferable because it prioritizes pedestrian, bicycle, and transit amenities and prevents the overbuilding of parking or additional surface parking, which positively impacts the urban design of the area.

- f. *The provision of required parking for developments containing affordable housing units, and especially for developments employing the increased FAR and Dwelling unit density provisions of Section 11.200, will increase the cost of the development, will require variance relief from other zoning requirements applicable to the development because of limitations of space on the lot, or will significantly diminish the environmental quality for all residents of the development.*

The Project contains dormitory housing for graduate students, so this section is not applicable.

3. Special Permit to increase building height in SD-6 (Section 17.63.2(b))

The Project seeks approval to increase a portion of the building height up to 180', which requires a special permit from the Planning Board in areas in close proximity to Fort Washington Park.

17.61 Scope. This Section 17.60 regulates development within the Special District 6 as shown on the Zoning Map of the City of Cambridge, as amended. Except as herein

provided in this Section 17.60, all requirements of and regulations applicable to the Residence C-3 District shall apply equally to the Special District 6.

17.63.2 Maximum Height. The maximum height permitted in the district shall be one hundred (100) feet except as permitted or further restricted below:

- a. In that portion of the district lying southwesterly of a line, which line is the southeasterly projection of a line one hundred feet northeasterly of and parallel to the southwesterly sideline of Reardon Street the maximum height shall be sixty (60) feet*
- b. The maximum height may be increased above one hundred (100) feet to a maximum of one hundred and eighty (180) feet in that portion of the district lying northeasterly of the line described in Paragraph a above and between the centerline of Vassar Street and the centerline of the main line railroad right of way after the issuance of a special permit by the Planning Board, provided that portions of buildings exceeding one hundred (100) feet but not exceeding one hundred and eighty (180) feet in height contain no more than 165,000 square feet of gross floor area, in total for the entire district.*
- c. In granting a special permit for additional height the Planning Board shall consider the following:*
 - a. The height of the other buildings or portions of buildings constructed in the district is reduced to significantly below the one hundred (100) foot height permitted as of right.*
 - b. In the vicinity of Fort Washington buildings are constructed below the one hundred (100) foot height permitted or green space is created so as to increase the views from Fort Washington across the MIT campus to the river and to the Boston skyline beyond.*
 - c. The view corridors along residential Cambridgeport streets, such as Erie and Pacific Streets, are uninterrupted by buildings, wherever possible.*
 - d. Green space is created in the district at grade where it can be visible to the general public.*

The buildings are distributed in the district so as to create a visual penetration as viewed from the residential Cambridgeport neighborhood to the MIT campus and to the River Beyond.

The building has been sensitively massed such that lower heights abut the proposed Central Plaza and the bulk of the building's height is located away from adjacent open spaces and Fort Washington Park. Therefore, the Board finds that the additional building height for the proposed development meets the applicable criteria.

4. Special Permit to increase building height in SD-11 (Section 17.203.2)

17.61 Scope. This Section 17.200 regulates development within the Special District 11 as shown on the Zoning Map of the City of Cambridge, as amended. Except as herein provided in this Section 17.200, all requirements of and regulations applicable to the Office 2 District shall apply equally to the Special District 11.

17.203.2 Building Height Limitations. The maximum height for permitted uses shall be eighty-five (85) feet and may be increased to one hundred (100) feet for all permitted uses excluding hotels and motels after the issuance of a special permit from the Planning Board.

The Project has organized its massing such that lower heights abut the proposed Central Plaza and taller heights are located away from open spaces and Fort Washington Park. The proposed massing helps to ensure a more context-sensitive design that helps to protect important public open spaces and viewsheds. Therefore, the Planning Board finds that the additional building height for the proposed development meets the applicable criteria.

5. Special Permit for reduction of green roofs requirement (Section 22.35.3)

22.35.2 Requirement.

(b) In the case of non-residential or mixed-use buildings in which at least half of the Gross Floor Area is devoted to one or more of the non-residential uses listed below (with reference to the Table of Use Regulations, Section 4.30 of this Zoning Ordinance), excluding any municipal buildings, at least 80% of the roof area of the building as measured in plan view, excluding those portions of the roof listed above, shall be devoted to Green Roof Area or Biosolar Green Roof Area:

- 1. Transportation, Communication & Utility Uses (Section 4.32);*
- 2. Educational Purposes (Section 4.33-b.);*
- 3. Noncommercial Research Facilities (Section 4.33-c.);*
- 4. Other Institutional Uses (Section 4.33-h.);*
- 5. Office and Laboratory Use (Section 4.34);*
- 6. Retail Business and Consumer Service Establishments (Section 4.35);*
- 7. Open Air or Drive In Retail & Service (Section 4.36);*
- 8. Light Industry, Wholesale Business and Storage (Section 4.37); or*
- 9. Heavy Industry (Section 4.38).*

22.35.3 Exemption. The Planning Board may grant a special permit to reduce the required Green Roof Area, Biosolar Green Roof Area, or Solar Energy System below the area required by Section 22.35.2, provided that each square foot so reduced be compensated by a unit price contribution to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust. This unit price shall be determined based on the average costs to design, install, and maintain green roofs and rooftop solar energy systems in Cambridge using actual cost figures to the extent possible, shall be subject to annual adjustment based on standard construction cost indices, and shall be calculated, and recalculated approximately every three years, by the Cambridge Community Development Department. All such funds contributed to the Trust shall be dedicated to the design and incorporation of Green Roof Area, Biosolar Green Roof Area, or Solar Energy Systems into new or existing affordable housing developments.

The Project includes 44,971 square feet of total roof area. After subtracting exempted area totaling 21,425 square feet of roof area for mechanical appurtenances and 1,462 square feet for resident terraces, there remains 22,084 square feet of roof area subject to the Green Roofs

Requirement. The Project proposes 49.5% of green roof area coverage, consisting of approximately 11,000 square feet, less than the 80% required. According to the Application, a substantial portion of the roof area is being designed to support photovoltaic Solar Energy Systems. Due to these efforts to increase the energy performance of the building and ensure safe and convenient building operations, and with consideration to the conditions set forth in the Zoning Ordinance and in this Special Permit to make a required contribution to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust, the Planning Board finds that the requested reduction in the required Green Roof Area for the Project may be granted.

6. General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit (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:

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

Upon granting of the requested special permits, and provided that necessary relief from yard requirements is granted by the Board of Zoning Appeal, it appears that the requirements of the Ordinance will be met. The project conforms to the use and dimensional requirements of the zoning district with the exception of yard requirements.

(c) 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, the traffic generated will not have any substantial impact on traffic patterns and thus will not create any new congestion, hazard, or change in neighborhood character. Systems of access and egress for pedestrians, bicycles and vehicles have been designed in consultation with TP&T.

(d) 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 dormitory use conforms to the allowed uses in this district, and hence will not adversely affect adjacent uses that exist or are anticipated in the future. The proposed project will be compatible with the use and scale of surrounding lots and will improve the streetscape as well as connections to other parts of the campus.

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

(f) 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 ...

Expansion of university uses within existing campus areas is consistent with long-standing City policies and objectives for institutional growth and supports the purpose of Special District 6, Special District 11 and the MIT Institutional Use Overlay District. The replacement of the surface parking area with graduate dormitory buildings of superior architectural quality will benefit the district as a whole.

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

The project is consistent with the City's Urban Design Objectives as set forth in the 19.30 Findings above.

DECISION

Based on a review of the Application Documents, testimony given at the public hearing, 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 Application Documents and other supporting materials submitted to the Planning Board, and the additional Conditions of this Special Permit Decision. The project plans hereby approved by the Planning Board are the plan set titled MIT West Campus Graduate Student Dormitory Planning Board Special Permit Submission Volume Two – Plans and Illustrations prepared by Kieran Timberlake, dated 5/25/2021. 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. Food service and other retail uses, to the extent permitted by zoning, shall be authorized at the ground story of the building if the Permittee proposes to establish such uses in the future.
4. The Permittee shall address the following design comments through the continuing design review process set forth above. Each of the below items shall be provided to CDD and other departments, where applicable, for review and approval of the final design details:
 - a. Further consideration of opportunities to make the brick wall overhanging the main building entrance feel more welcoming and open.
 - b. Further consideration of the protruding brick wall along Vassar Street near the entrance to the west building to reduce the “blank wall” effect.
 - c. Further review of the rear façade and design of the long-term bicycle parking area in relation to visibility from the public realm and the Grand Junction Path, safety and security, and opportunities to enrich the design.
 - d. Updated plans and elevations clearly showing key dimensions, scale and north arrow; including mechanical penthouse plan, sections through the social courtyard, cross-roads plaza and building overhang.

- e. All external lighting, including conformance with technical guidelines recommended in the proposed Cambridge Outdoor Lighting Ordinance, with consideration given to facade lighting and tree up-lighting, and use of timers to minimize light trespass.
 - f. All proposed public realm, open space, streetscape improvements and landscape details, including seating, screening of the existing and any new transformers and fence details.
 - g. All building exterior materials, colors, and details.
 - h. Potential opportunities to improve projected building energy performance through envelope design or other measures.
 - i. Parking, bicycle parking, access and egress, especially the final curb cut width, Vassar Street crosswalks, pedestrian ramps, emergency vehicle access, and public parking and loading zone on Vassar Street, to be reviewed by TP+T.
 - j. Prior to the issuance of a Building Permit for the Project, the Applicant shall submit final designs for the proposed Central Plaza for review and approval by the Department of Public Works and TP+T.
 - k. At least six (6) months prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the Project, the Applicant shall submit a final signage and pavement marking plan for review and approval by TP+T.
5. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the Project, the Applicant shall record a public access easement for the Central Plaza. Such easement language shall be first reviewed and approved by the City of Cambridge Law Department.
6. Prior to the issuance of a Building Permit for the Project, the Applicant shall submit funding for the installation of a 27-dock Public Bicycle Sharing (Bluebikes) Station to the City.
7. Prior to issuance of a Building Permit, the Permittee shall confirm that the Building Permit Plans are in conformance with the submitted Tree Plan and/or the current Tree Protection Ordinance and shall submit a revised tree plan for review and approval by the Department of Public Works (DPW). The Permittee shall meet the requirements of the Tree Protection Ordinance by replanting larger-caliper trees on-site to the extent possible, and shall supplement the replanting by making a contribution to the tree fund only if the City Arborist determines that the amount of replacement planting on-site (in caliper-inches) has been reasonably maximized.
8. The requested reduction in required Green Roof Area is granted on the condition that the low-height mechanical enclosures on the lower portions of the building (labeled as “Mechanical Doghouse” in the Amended Submission plans dated May 25, 2021) shall be covered by solar photovoltaic installations (as indicated on the same plans) if they are not covered by Green Roof Area. The final amount of Green Roof Area required and provided shall be determined based on plans submitted to secure a Building Permit. In accordance with

22.35.3 of the Zoning Ordinance, each square foot of required Green Roof Area that is not provided shall be compensated by a unit price contribution to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust to be determined by CDD based on the average costs to design, install, and maintain green roofs in Cambridge.

9. All authorized development shall abide by all applicable City of Cambridge Ordinances, including the Noise Ordinance (Chapter 8.16 of the City Municipal Code).
10. Throughout design development and construction, the project shall conform to the Green Building Requirements set forth in Section 22.20 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. CDD shall certify that the applicable requirements are met prior to issuance of a building permit, and again prior to issuance of a certificate of occupancy, for development authorized by this special permit.
11. The Permittee shall be required to prepare and implement a Construction Management Program in accordance with Section 18.20 of the Zoning Ordinance, which shall be reviewed and certified by DPW prior to issuance of a Building Permit for development authorized by this Special Permit. Such a program shall include, in addition to the specific items required by said Section 18.20:
 - a. Identification of all work to take place in the public right of way including but not limited to potential impacts to existing public shade trees to be coordinated early in the design process with the City Arborist; and
 - b. A community outreach program including, at a minimum, the following elements:
 - i. An identified point of e-mail and telephone contact to respond to community questions and feedback throughout the construction process;
 - ii. A system for communicating ongoing project updates, which may include a web page, e-mail list, social media presence, direct outreach, and/or other measures; and
 - iii. One or more signs posted on-site, legible from the public way, providing the information above along with a brief description of the project, the amount of commercial space, an expected completion date, and a rendering of the street-facing elevations.
12. Prior to the final selection of colors and textures for façade materials, the Permittee shall erect a mock-up(s) of an exterior wall section, including rooftop screening elements, on or near the building site to be reviewed by CDD for comment. Members of the Planning Board shall be notified when the mock-up is erected and given an opportunity to view the materials and transmit any comments to CDD.
13. This Special Permit shall be conditioned on the granting of all necessary dimensional variances by the Board of Zoning Appeal.

Voting in the affirmative to grant the Special Permits were Planning Board Members Louis Bacci, Jr., H Theodore Cohen, Steven Cohen, Catherine Preston Connolly, Mary Flynn, and Hugh Russell, constituting at least two thirds of the members of the Board.

For the Planning Board,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Catherine Preston Connolly".

Catherine Preston Connolly, Chair.

A copy of this decision PB #371 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 correct copy of the above decision has been filed on August 3, 2021 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) | 765,106 | 5,000 | No Change | No Change |
| Total GFA (sq ft) | 1,118,831 | 2,102,877 | 1,431,972 | 1,431,972 ¹ |
| Residential Base | N/A | N/A | N/A | Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements |
| Non-Residential Base | N/A | N/A | N/A | |
| Inclusionary Bonus | N/A | N/A | N/A | |
| Total FAR | 1.51 | 1.75-3.0 | 1.87 | Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements |
| Residential Base | N/A | N/A | N/A | |
| Non-Residential Base | N/A | N/A | N/A | |
| Inclusionary Bonus | N/A | N/A | N/A | |
| Total Dwelling Units | N/A | N/A | N/A | N/A |
| 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) | >50 | 50 | No Change | No Change |
| Height (ft) | 28'; 0' | 85'/100'; 100'/180' | 100'; 105' | Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements |
| Front Setback (ft) | 38'; N/A | 73'2"; N/A | 37'-9"²; 35'-7" | |
| Side Setback – (ft) | N/A | N/A | N/A | |
| Side Setback – (ft) | 18'7"; N/A | 41'5"; N/A | 1'0"²; N/A | |
| Rear Setback (ft) | 16'-11"; N/A | 50'9"; N/A | 13'-8"²; 18'-6" | |
| Open Space (% of Lot Area) | N/A | N/A | N/A | 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 | 136 | 58 | 0 | 0³ |
| Long-Term Bicycle Parking | N/A | 345 | 345 | Consistent with Application Documents, and other applicable requirements |
| Short-Term Bicycle Parking | N/A | 35 | 35 | |
| Loading Bays | N/A | 4 | 2⁴ | |

¹ Approved demolition of 14,909 square feet of GFA and construction of 328,050 square feet of GFA.

² Subject to granting of a variance by the Board of Zoning Appeal.

³ Waiver per Section 6.35.1 of the Zoning Ordinance.

⁴ Two loading bays on-site; loading requirements aggregated for institutional uses per Section 6.74 of the Zoning Ordinance.