

MEMO

To: Cambridge Planning Board
From: Cambridge Pedestrian Committees
Date: February 24, 2022
Re: PB387 36-64 Whittemore Avenue

We have reviewed the proponent's proposal and would like to submit the following comments for consideration by the Planning Board.

- We have concerns regarding connectivity for people accessing the site coming from the North (Arlington, etc.), e.g., down Massachusetts Ave to the site. There did not seem to be much focus on how people walking (or cycling) from that direction would be supported and would appreciate some attention to that aspect.
- We would like to see possible improvements to the surface parking lots, perhaps in the form of increased pedestrian crossings to the site, permeable or high albedo surfacing and increased tree cover to mitigate heat effects.
- We have concerns regarding the impacts of construction to surrounding neighborhoods and the Linear Park, especially with issues of the soil being disturbed and the possible closure of the paths during construction.
- We have concerns regarding the need for additional improvements to the multi-use paths, including Linear Park. We do appreciate the improvements to the path parallel to Alewife Brook Parkway. The multiuse paths in this area are extremely important in providing walking and bicycling access for all users. With this project, there will be an increased usage of these paths (which is a good thing), and we would like to see more attention to improvements that support the users and reduce conflicts. For example, at the intersection at the southwest corner of the football field, near Jerry's Pond, several paths converge, and we would like to see an expansion of the options for how to support all users in a safe way. There are several options for how this might be done, which may involve increased space, more direct path connections (especially from Linear Park to the Alewife T station), increased visibility, and better lighting. The details of this should be done as part of a more thorough design process evaluation overseen by City departments.
- We want to make sure that the paths feel safe and comfortable for people at all hours, including evenings and weekends. For example, decreasing the density of usage on some paths, may lead to a lack of 'eyes on the street'. We also want to make sure that there is good pedestrian lighting and appreciate the attention given to that in the proposal.