



City of Cambridge
Department of Public Works

Katherine Watkins, Commissioner

147 Hampshire Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
theworks@cambridgema.gov

Voice: 617 349 4800

TDD: 617 499 9924

February 20, 2024

TO: Planning Board

FROM: James Wilcox, PE
City Engineer

RE: 815 Somerville Ave Special Permit

We are in receipt of the Special Permit Application for 815 Somerville Ave, dated December 22, 2023. We have reviewed the materials and have presented below some comments related to the interests of the Department of Public Works.

The Application makes note of the DPW Standards and requirements but will require additional information to support the project as it moves forward. Please see below discussion of items that DPW will be looking to better understand as the project advances.

Flood Resiliency Zoning Standards:

Per Section 22.80 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, the project will need to address the Flood Resiliency Standards. The project parcel has a 1% LTFE (Long Term Flood Elevation). The Application acknowledges the LTFE and the narrative provided does appear to indicate that the project will be able to meet the Flood Resiliency Standards. However, the Project has not formally applied for Flood Resiliency Compliance Confirmation, for the DPW to formally review the proposal to meet the Standards. This Confirmation is required at time of Special Permit Application and will be reconfirmed at Building Permit and again for As-Built Conditions.

Stormwater Management:

Under the City Land Disturbance Regulations, the Applicant will need to obtain a Stormwater Control Permit from the Department of Public Works, prior to the start of construction. The permit requirements cover the design standards and long-term operation and maintenance of a management system for the project site, as well as the construction phase erosion and sedimentation control plans.

The Application indicates that Stormwater Management was considered but was not achievable based on the reuse of the existing structure. While the DPW acknowledges that Stormwater Management can be challenging for existing buildings, a formal alternatives analysis will need to be submitted to the DPW as part of the projects Stormwater Control Permit if relief from the Standards is being requested. This request, via the Stormwater Control Permit, shall be submitted in advance of the Building Permit Application for consideration.

Public Infrastructure:

As the development progresses through the Building Permit process, we will review the site and utility design related to DPW standards and requirements. The DPW reserves the right to establish appropriate mitigation measures, related to impacts to public utility infrastructure and the public right of way (streets and sidewalks), throughout the process as the design presents the full scope of these impacts.

As the project is further advanced, DPW will work with the Applicant to ensure that the requirements noted above are addressed. Formal complete engineering review will be undertaken by the DPW at the time of the Building Permit Application, to confirm that all DPW Standards have been met.

We look forward to working the Applicant on this project. Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns related to the comments or information provided above.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "James Wilcox".

James Wilcox, PE
City Engineer