

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 57 INMAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02139

CAMBRIDGE MA
02139
3/9/90

Annexed

NOTICE OF DECISION

CASE NO.: PB #89

PREMISES: 7 Temple Street

ZONING DISTRICT: Business B, Office 3,
Central Square Overlay District

PETITIONER: Cambridge YWCA

APPLICATION DATE: October 30, 1989

DATE OF PUBLIC HEARING: November 21, 1989

PETITION: Special Permit under provisions of the Central Square Overlay District and other Sections of the Ordinance to permit additional height, additional floor area, and a waiver of setback requirements.

DATE OF THE PLANNING BOARD DECISION: January 16, 1990

DATE OF FILING THE DECISION: March 9, 1990

DECISION: APPROVED 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 the date of 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 office of Community Development and the City Clerk.

Elizabeth J. Malenfant
Authorized Representative to the Planning Board

3/9/90
Date

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APPLICATION

The following documents were submitted in support of the application

1. Application form and supplementary documents certified complete on October 30, 1989: narrative description, dimensional form, certification of ownership, traffic study, Central Square Advisory Committee report, and graphics.
2. Maps, plans, elevations, and cross sections entitled "Cambridge YWCA and Hotel, Cambridge, Mass."; Bruner/Cott, Architects; various scales; dated March 21, 1989, July 6, 1989, July 9, 1989, with revisions.

OTHER DOCUMENTS

1. Letter to Michael Rosenberg, from Hugh Russell, dated November 5, 1989, Re: YWCA Case - Determination of Conflict of Interest.
2. Letter to Robert W. Healy, City Manager, from Michael Rosenberg, Assistant City Manager for Community Development, dated November 7, 1989, RE: Determination of Conflict of Interest.
3. Letter to the Planning Board, from Arnold Ginsberg, Rink Realty Co., dated November 20, 1989, Re: YWCA and Unihab, Inc. application for Special Permit.

4. Letter to Paul Dietrich, from Lynn D'Ambrose, Executive Director, Cambridge Community Services, dated November 20, 1989, supporting the YWCA application.
5. Letter to the Planning Board, from Arnold Ginsberg, dated November 29, 1989, Re: YWCA and Unihab, Inc. application for Special Permit.
6. "Lodging Chains Sour on All-Suite Hotel", by Christopher Winans, Wall Street Journal. Tuesday, November 28, 1989, page B1.
7. Determination by Appointing Official Pursuant to Mass. General Laws, Chapter 268A, Section 19 b, from Robert W. Healy, City Manager, dated November 21, 1989.
8. Memo to the Planning Board from the Central Square Neighborhood Working Group, dated November 21, 1989, stating the reasons why the neighbors of the YWCA oppose the current development plan.
9. Letter to the Planning Board from Gwendolen Rono, Principal of Unihab, Inc., dated December 6, 1989, Re: the special permit application.
10. Letter to Paul Dietrich, from Moritz Elsaesser, Central Plaza Property Manager, dated December 21, 1989, expressing concern over the continuing use of the abutter's loading area.
11. Letter to Paul Dietrich, from Lauren Preston, Deputy Traffic Director, City of Cambridge, dated December 21, 1989, recommending approval of the application.
12. Letter to the Planning Board, from Molly Lovelock, Executive Director, YWCA, dated January 8, 1990, answering some Board members' questions.
13. Information from Lauren Preston, Traffic and Parking, received January 11, 1990, listing the addresses of parking stickers and permits for 7 Temple Street for 1990 and 1989.
14. Letter to the Planning Board from Elisabeth Flannery, dated January 16, 1990, Re: Proposed YWCA SRO's height and density.
15. Letter to the Planning Board from Elisabeth W. Flannery, et al, dated January 16, 1990, on proposed height and density.
16. Letter to the Planning Board from Representatives of the Neighborhood surrounding the YWCA, unsigned and undated.

Public Hearing

A public hearing was held on Tuesday, November 21, 1989. Representatives of the Cambridge YWCA, the development team and the architect were present to outline the proposed development program and the schematic architectural designs for the new hotel and single room occupancy units. The hotel use, which would use land leased from the "Y", would support the renovation of the existing single room occupancy facilities (with the help of additional subsidy monies) as well as allow initial upgrading of the "Y"'s physical plant. The new single room occupancy facilities are to be constructed as subsidy monies become available. In response to questions from the Board and the public the development team made the following responses:

- The number of employees on the site? 16-20 persons at any one time.
- The number of cars generated by the existing SRO's? 2-3 cars at a time.
- The hotel clientele? Individuals and groups attending business and academic seminars who would remain for extended periods (days to weeks) in addition to the more typical hotel patron staying only a day or two.
- Length of stay for existing SRO residents? Rooms can serve as transition housing with stays up to several months or as a permanent residence with a multi-year tenancy.
- Source of "Y" income in the future? Higher rents for SRO facilities, lower operating costs, United Way funding, fund raising, etc.
- Garbage handling? A compactor will be used, located within the building.
- How many tandem parking spaces? 20 tandem spaces using a hydraulic lift system.
- Cost of building program? \$1,000,000 to \$4,000,000 including the new SRO's. Extent of renovation will depend on available monies; "Y" Board is evaluating priorities now.

Those speaking in opposition, in general, made the following points:

- The density of the project is too great, with excessive height and too little setback, particularly from Temple Street.

- Parking is inadequate to serve the hotel and especially to accommodate "Y" activities and SRO residents.
- The project will generate excess traffic on Temple Street and Bishop Allen Drive.
- There is no guarantee that approval will lead to financial security for the "Y" and restoration of its facilities or its program services to the community.

Findings

1. All procedural requirements of Section 10.40 have been met with submission of a complete application and the holding of a public hearing on November 21, 1989.
2. The special permit relief requested is within the jurisdiction of the Planning Board.
 - a. Additional height, Section 11.304.2b, Central Square Overlay District.
 - b. Waiver of setback requirements, Section 11.304.2.c. Central Overlay District.
 - c. Additional height, Section 11.304.3.c, Central Square Overlay District.
 - d. Extension of less restrictive regulations, Section 3.321.
 - e. Waiver of parking and loading requirements, Section 11.304.6a and 6b, Central Square Overlay District.
 - f. Modifications of parking design requirements and screening, Sections 6.478 a and b and 6.47.
3. The Board finds that, in general, the compliance with the criteria for issuance of the special permits requested is accurately described in Section IV of the application. There, the development proposal and its impacts are accurately described and its conformance with the intent of the Central Square Overlay District and the particular special permits sought outlined. The Board specifically finds that the provision of affordable housing within the development program (improvements to the existing facilities and future provision of additional units) provides a very significant and vital public benefit which can best be advanced by the special permits granted by this Decision as intended by the applicable zoning regulations. In addition the additional height and waiver of setback requirements permit the preservation intact of the historic Main Building

of the YWCA while allowing redevelopment of other portions of the site for revenue producing purposes (which in turn make retention of the low and moderate income housing and the YWCA's social service functions more likely).

4. The additional height and density requested are clearly intended by the recently adopted Central Square Overlay District. The locations selected for the higher buildings and reduced setbacks are appropriate as a means to minimize the impact on the abutting residentially zoned neighborhood and the general public making use of the adjacent streets.

Nevertheless the Board finds that at its most visible location, from Temple Street, some modest shifting of the bulk at the upper levels of the Hotel is appropriate to reduce the perception of height as viewed from Temple Street.

5. Traffic was raised as a serious concern at the public hearing. All indications, from traffic projections for the hotel use, records of residential permits issued for the YWCA complex, to existing traffic patterns on the abutting streets, suggest that the Hotel use will have very modest impacts which are certainly within acceptable ranges and of a character which will not aggravate the City's serious peak hour traffic congestion. The Board does find it appropriate to impose reasonable conditions related to construction activity to eliminate conflict between these construction operations and the nearby residents, particularly as regards to noise and evening on-street parking.

DECISION

After review and due consideration of the information provided by the applicant in the application documents, comments made at the public hearing, and subsequent discussions by the Board and the staff, the Planning Board GRANTS all special permits requested after making the findings above, subject to the following conditions.

1. The Final Plans for which a building permit is sought shall conform in general to the plans and documents submitted with the application as referenced above except as further modified by this decision. The Plans shall conform to the dimensional limitations detailed in Appendix I of this Decision.
2. The design shall continue to undergo binding design review through the Community development Department. All exterior architectural details, site development, landscaping and signage must receive approval through this review. The

Planning Board shall certify in writing to the Superintendent of Buildings that the Final Plans submitted for a building permit are in conformance with this decision and this Condition 2.

3. The development as authorized shall be continually maintained in conformance with the conditions of this Decision. Any modifications to the approved site plan, mix of uses, or approved architectural details as set out in the Final Building Permit Plans certified by the Planning Board to the Superintendent of Buildings as in conformance with the conditions of this permit, and as set out in this decision, shall require approval from the Planning Board unless said changes are specifically authorized by this Decision.
4. The permit premises shall be used for the following uses in the following amounts:

Hotel: A maximum of 69,741 square feet (a maximum of 96 units)

Existing Single Room Occupancy (SRO) facilities:
a minimum of 24,239 square feet

New Single Room Occupancy (SRO) facilities:
a minimum of 16,343 square feet permitted,
except as modified by Condition 5 below.

Community Center, day care center, administrative offices for the Cambridge YWCA: gross floor area remaining on site up to the maximum FAR of 3.71.

Any one of the following changes in the mix of uses as approved above shall be considered a Major Amendment requiring approval from the Planning Board as defined in Article 12.000 of the Zoning Ordinance:

- a. Any increase in the gross floor area devoted to hotel use.
- b. Reduction in the gross floor area devoted to existing SRO facilities exceeding fifteen percent (15%).
- c. Conversion of the authorized gross floor area devoted to the new SRO facilities to any other permitted use.
- d. Introduction of any other use not listed above.

All other use changes shall be considered minor amendments to the permit.

5. Nothing in this permit shall require the construction of the authorized gross floor area devoted to the new SRO facilities. However, failure to construct the authorized SRO facilities within 5 years after filing of this Special Permit shall require reauthorization of their construction as a Major Amendment to the Permit.
6. The permittee shall maintain at all times twenty percent (20%) of the total gross floor area of development, as constructed, as housing for low and moderate income persons as defined in Section 11.200 of the Zoning Ordinance or as may otherwise be defined by any federal, state or local assistance program employed which is designed to provide housing for low and moderate income persons (24,239 square feet of gross floor area without construction of the authorized gross floor area for new SRO facilities; 28,649 square feet if all authorized gross floor area is constructed on the site).

This requirement shall be in effect at all times that the constructed gross floor area on the permit site exceeds an FAR of 3.0 (111,450 square feet).

At the request of the Community Development Department the permittee shall certify to the Community Development Department on or before January 31 of each year that this Condition 6 has been met for the preceding calendar year. Said request shall be made no later than January 1 of the same year.

7. If at the time of application for the first occupancy permit for the hotel the authorized new SRO construction is not underway or a contract let for such construction, the site of the authorized SRO's shall be finished in permanent materials as publicly accessible open space or other open space accessory to activities customarily conducted within the Community Center, as may be approved by the Planning Board, consistent with plans for such an interim phase of construction which shall be submitted to the Planning Board and approved before issuance of any building permit for the hotel.

Said construction shall be completed before issuance of the permanent Certificate of Occupancy for the hotel.
8. It is in part the objective of this permit to facilitate the maintenance and upgrading of the Cambridge YWCA facility to ensure its continuation as a community serving organization. Therefore the following shall be required to achieve that objective:

- a. Any exterior alteration to the (main or original YWCA) building, including removal of exterior architectural detail, shall be reviewed and approved by the Cambridge Historical Commission.
- b. The Cambridge YWCA shall submit to the Planning Board before issuance of a building permit for the hotel a report which shall contain the following:
 - (1) An analysis of the physical condition of the existing facilities and the improvements necessary to bring them up to acceptable standards, to be prepared by a registered architect or engineer.
 - (2) A detailing of the improvements proposed to be made by the Cambridge YWCA to its facilities in the next five years, the likely costs for such improvements, sources of funds to support such improvements and the schedule of such improvements, or the phases in which they will be anticipated to be undertaken.
 - (3) The proposed improvement schedule shall indicate at a minimum the minimum exterior stabilization or renovation to be accomplished before issuance of the final occupancy permit for the hotel facility.

The Planning Board shall certify to the Superintendent of Buildings that the requirements of this Condition 8 have been met, before issuance of the building permit for the hotel.

9. Before issuance of the first occupancy permit for the hotel the Cambridge YWCA shall submit a report to the Planning Board indicating the work which has been undertaken, and any revisions to the report previously submitted indicating future work to be undertaken. At a minimum, however, exterior stabilization work as outlined in the report required in Condition 6 shall have been completed or substantially underway before issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the hotel. The Planning Board shall certify to the Superintendent of Buildings that the requirements of this Condition 9 have been met.
10. As indicated in Condition 2 above the project shall continue to undergo design review by the Community Development Department. The design development of the hotel shall reduce the bulk of the building above 60 feet, particularly as viewed from Temple Street.

Such reduction may be accomplished by providing additional setbacks for the floors above 60 feet and/or reducing the

total gross floor area above 60 feet at strategic, highly visible locations (as at the corners).

In addition the Board shall require the use of high quality, durable materials in all areas of the building's exterior but in particular at the lower levels most visible to the general public. The Board recognizes the schematic nature of the application documents and will review more developed design development phases with the expectation that all building details will be more thoroughly analyzed and refined.

11. The permittee shall make a reasonable effort to limit construction activity on the site to weekdays between the hours of 8:00 a.m. and 5:00 p.m.

In addition the permittee shall prepare a construction management plan for the authorized construction such that (1) no existing on-street parking spaces shall be eliminated through the evening hours and (2) off-street parking shall be provided as necessary for all construction workers.

Voting to GRANT the permits were C. Cooper, D. Kennedy, A. Callaghan, A. Cohn, H. Russell, and P. Dietrich.

For the Planning Board,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "David Kennedy". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "David Kennedy, Vice Chairman".

David Kennedy, Vice Chairman

	AS-OF-RIGHT				Special Permit			
	In Central Square Overlay District		Allowed/Required		EXISTING		PROPOSED/GRANTED	
	Office-3	Business-B	Lot	Office-3	Business-B	Office-3	Business-B	Lot
Cambridge YWCA								
7 Temple Street								
Floor Area Ratio (Floor Area)	3.00	2.00	2.96	1.69	0.83	3.63	5.49	3.71
Maximum Height	106,695	3,170	109,865	59,997	1,307	128,922	8,708	137,630
Max. Angle Above Cornice Line	55	55	55	75	20	80	80	80
	45° Bulk Control Plane							
Min. Lot Size	5000	NA		35,565	1,585	35,565	1,585	37,150
Min Lot Area/D.U. (sq. feet)	300	300	300			1281		329
Max. No. D.U.	NA	NA	123	NA	NA	NA	NA	113
Min. lot width	50	NA		>50	NA	>50	NA	
Min Yard Setbacks (Front yards from center line of street)								
Front-Bishop Allen Drive	24.8	NA		33.0	NA	38.9	NA	
Front-Temple Street	21.5	12.1		36.9	26.9	34.9	22.9	
Side-Mass Ave.-1	NA	18.6		NA	0.0	NA	3.8	
Side-Inman St-1	16.3	10.1		11.9	14.0	6.0	11.9	
Side-Mass Ave-2	16.9	NA		64.1	NA	11.6	NA	
Side-Inman St.-2	9.9	NA		65.5	NA	37.6	NA	
Side-Mass Ave-3	10.8	NA		46.5	NA	46.5	NA	
Side-Inman St.-3	10.6	NA		49.7	NA	59.6	NA	
Rear	NA	NA		NA	NA	NA	NA	
Ratio Usable Open Space (Area)	10%	10%	10%			40.2%		15.3%
			3046.3			7161.5		4668
Off-Street Parking								
Min. No. Spaces			107			14		10 on grade
Max. No. Spaces-None								+54 under
No. Handicapped Spaces			5					5
Bicycle Spaces			11					11
No. Loading Bays			2					1