



52 NEW STREET / CAMBRIDGE, MA

VOLUME I - FORMS & NARRATIVE

9-10-2021



These forms are intended to demonstrate compliance with the provisions of the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO), Section 11.207 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance (CZO). Refer to the CZO for detailed provisions.

Project Address: 52 New Street
Applicant: Just A Start
Contact Name: Craig Nicholson
Contact Phone: 617-918-7540
Contact Email: craignicholson@justastart.org

FOR STAFF USE

Complete Submission Received on Date:

Design Review Submission

Note: Review Section 11.207 of the CZO carefully before submitting a design review package for an AHO project. This checklist and accompanying forms are intended only to assist in assembling and organizing application materials.

Narrative Volume (8.5"x11" portrait orientation)

Provided Forms:

- Design Review Submission Checklist (this form)
- Parcel Dimensional Form [Section 11.207.8(d)(xiii.)]
- Building Dimensional Form for each existing or proposed building on the site [Section 11.207.8(d)(xiii.)]
- Tenure and Affordability Summary [Section 11.207.3]
- Initial Development Budget [Section 11.207.8(d)(v.)]

Written Sections:

- Project Narrative [Section 11.207.8(d)(xiv.)]
- Design Statement [Section 11.207.8(d)(v.)]
- Description of Transportation Demand Management programs offered, if applicable [Section 11.207.6.5]
- Summary of Community Engagement Process [Section 11.207.8]

Graphics Volume (11"x17" landscape orientation)

- Context map [Section 11.207.8(d)(i.)]
- Context analysis [Section 11.207.8(d)(ii.)]
- Existing conditions site plan [Section 11.207.8(d)(iii.)]
- Proposed conditions site plan [Section 11.207.8(d)(iv.)]
- Floor plans of all new buildings and existing buildings to remain [Section 11.207.8(d)(vi.)]
- Elevations and cross-section drawings of all new buildings and existing buildings to remain [Section 11.207.8(d)(vii.)]
- Landscape plan [Section 11.207.8(d)(viii.)]
- Plans of parking and bicycle parking facilities [Section 11.207.8(d)(ix.)]
- Materials palette of proposed façade and landscape materials [Section 11.207.8(d)(x.)]
- Photographs of existing conditions [Section 11.207.8(d)(xi.)]
- Perspective views and renderings of proposed conditions [Section 11.207.8(d)(xii.)]
- Viewshed analysis and shadow studies [Section 11.207.8(d)(xv.)]

Note: Use attached "Graphics Checklist" to ensure that all necessary information is provided.

Other Submissions (as applicable)

- Green Building Requirements submission (if Section 22.20 of the CZO is applicable)
- Flood Plain submission (if Section 20.70 of the CZO is applicable)

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Parcel Information – Provide one form for the entire parcel

	Existing	District Zoning Standards	AHO Zoning Standards	Proposed
Base Zoning District(s)	Industry A-1			
Overlay Zoning District(s)	Affordable Housing Overlay			
Uses on Adjacent Lots	Mixed-use, Auto Services 77 Bay State: General Office / 67 Bay State: multi-family / 61 Bay State: General Office / 47-53 Bay State: Mixed-Use residential / 41 Bay State: Retail-Store / 23 Bay State: Clean – Manufacturing 22-48 New: Warehouse / 43 New: Retail-Store / 47 New: Auto Repair / 75-83 New: >8-Unit Apartment Danehy Fields – Open Space			
Lot Area, in sq. ft.	43,745	5,000	n/a	43,745
Lot Width, in feet	110	50	n/a	110
Number of Buildings	1	n/a	n/a	1
Existing to be demolished	1	n/a	n/a	1
Existing retained/moved/enlarged	n/a	n/a	n/a	0
New construction	n/a	n/a	n/a	1
Gross Floor Area (GFA), in sq. ft.	22,483	71,165	n/a	129,230
Floor Area Ratio (FAR)	0.51	1.63	n/a	1.82
Dwelling Units	0	71.2	n/a	107
Affordable Dwelling Units	0	15	n/a	107
Total Open Space, in sq. ft.¹	0	0	0	17,775
Private Open Space	0	0	0	9,919
Permeable Open Space	0	0	0	10,091
Open Space above Ground Story	0	0	0	3,133
Total Off-Street Parking Spaces	71	71	0	43
Provided on-site	71	n/a	n/a	43
Provided off-site ²	0	n/a	n/a	0
Long-Term Bicycle Parking Spaces	0	77	1:1 spots per du for the first 20, 1.05:1 after that (112)	112
Short-Term Bicycle Parking Spaces	10	8	0.1:1/du (10.7)	11
Provided on-site	10	n/a	n/a	12
Fund contribution ³	0	n/a	n/a	0
Public Bicycle Sharing Stations⁴	0	n/a	n/a	0
Provided on-site	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Provided off-site	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Loading Bays	1	n/a	none	1

¹ Refer to Open Space provisions in Section 11.207.5.2.4 of the CZO.

² Refer to off-site parking provisions in 11.207.6.2 of the CZO.

³ Refer to Public Bicycle Parking Fund provisions in Section 6.104.2(b.) of the CZO.

⁴ Refer to Public Bicycle Sharing Station provisions in Section 11.207.6.4(d) of the CZO.

Attach additional calculations as necessary to explain any figures above.

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Building Information – Provide one form for each existing or proposed building

	Existing	District Zoning Standards	AHO Zoning Standards	Proposed
Building Designation (per plans)	52 New Street			
Type of Alteration Proposed	Demolition			
Building Use(s)	Fitness Center	Multiple Allowed Uses	Multi-family	Multi-family dwelling, Retail business
Ground Story Use(s)	Fitness Center	Multiple Allowed Uses	Active non-residential use	Retail, Residential Lobby
Gross Floor Area (GFA), in sq. ft.	22,483	71,165	n/a	129,230
Dwelling Units	0	71	n/a	107
Affordable Dwelling Units	0	15	100%	107
Stories Above Grade¹	2	n/a	6	6
Building Height, in ft.	40	45	70	70
Ground Story – floor-to-floor, in ft.	20	n/a	15	15
Building Setbacks, in ft.²				
Front Yard	188	0	0	3
Rear Yard	4	0	10	10
Left Side Yard	2	0	7.5	7.5
Right Side Yard	0	0	7.5	7.5
Distance to nearest building, in ft.	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
Building length along street, in ft.	107	n/a	n/a	90
Fenestration, as % of façade area facing public street or open space	n/a	n/a	>20%	29%
Ground Story only	n/a	n/a	>30%	35%
Where Ground-Story non-residential uses are proposed in a Business district:³				
Frontage, as % of total façade length	n/a	n/a	>50%	64%
Depth from facade, in feet	n/a	n/a	35	35-70

¹ Refer to Definitions in Article 2.000 of the CZO.

² Where the proposal is applying front yard setback standards per Section 11.207.5.2.3(b) of the CZO, attach an area plan identifying the four nearest pre-existing principal buildings that contain at least two Stories Above Grade and directly front the same side of the street as the AHO Project, and a table providing the front yard setbacks for each building and calculating the average of the four.

³ See Section 11.207.7.4(e) of the CZO.

Attach additional calculations as necessary to explain any figures above.

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Project Address: 52 New Street

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Tenure:

- Rental housing
- Homeownership housing

Unit Affordability Summary ¹

	Units at or Below 80% AMI	Units 80% to 100 %AMI	Total
# of Units:	97	10	107
% of Units:	90.6%	9.4%	100%

¹ Refer to Section 11.207.3 in Article 2.000 of the CZO

Unit Size Summary:

	0-bedrooms	1-bedrooms	2-bedrooms	3-bedrooms	4+bedrooms	Total
# of Units:		23	63	21		107
Average size range (sf):		612 sf avg (600 – 666 sf)	845 sf avg (800 – 910 sf)	1045 sf avg (1,010 – 1,115 sf)		852 sf avg

Please describe other anticipated affordability limitations, if applicable (voluntary):

97 apartments will be financed with Low Income Housing Tax Credits which will require 10% of the apartments (11 apartments) be reserved for incomes below 30% AMI and the bulk of the remaining units reserved for incomes below 60% AMI.

The workforce apartments will have a 100% AMI ceiling with target incomes equal to 90% AMI.

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Initial Development Budget (see Section 11.207.8 of CZO):

Anticipated Uses/Costs:	
Acquisition:	\$ 9,300,000
Construction/Hard Costs:	\$ 41,694,704
Other Costs/Soft Costs:	\$ 8,839,985
Developer Overhead:	\$ 1,835,060
Developer Fee:	\$ 1,835,060
Total Uses/Costs:	\$ 63,504,809

Anticipated Sources:	
Mortgage	\$ 14,700,000
LIHTC Equity	\$ 21,674,973
MA Low Income Tax Credits	\$ 5,850,000
DHCD (AHTF, HSF, CBH, CATNHP)	\$ 3,250,000
MassHousing WorkForce	\$ 1,000,000
Cambridge AHTF	\$ 16,450,000
Deferred Developer Fee	\$ 477,031
Cash from Operations	\$ 102,805
	\$
Total Sources:	\$ 63,504,809

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Graphics Checklist

Review Section 11.207 of the CZO for all submission requirements.

Make sure that submitted graphic materials include the following information, at a minimum, to verify compliance with applicable sections of the AHO:

All maps, plans and elevation drawings should include:

- Graphic scale
- North arrow / orientation

Context maps should include:

- Streets and pedestrian/bicycle routes leading to and from the site
- Distance to public facilities in vicinity, including transit
- Buildings and uses on adjacent sites
- Distance to off-site parking, where proposed

Site plans or landscape plans should include:

- Lot boundaries
- Adjacent streets (labeled) and dimensions of adjacent public sidewalks
- Building footprints with locations of entrances/exits, labeled areas of ground story uses, dimensioned façade lengths, setbacks, and distances to nearest buildings
- Natural and other landscape features including trees and plantings
- Open space, dimensioned and labeled by type (private, green area, permeable, publicly beneficial)
- Proposed locations of light fixtures, specifying type
- Locations, dimensions, and screening of all mechanical equipment located on-site, including all screening (*Section 11.207.7.5 of the CZO*)
- Pedestrian and bicycle travel routes, dimensioned
- Curb cuts, vehicular drives, off-street parking, loading and service facilities, dimensioned (*Section 6.50 of the CZO*)
- Pick-up/drop-off area(s), if project contains 20 units or more and no off-street parking spaces (*Section 11.207.6.1(b) of the CZO*)
- Features of adjacent lots and buildings that abut the project site

Building floor plans, elevations, and cross-sections should include:

- Dimensioned floor plans labeling the uses in each portion of the building
- Dimensions (length and depth) of articulation and breaks in the façade plane (*Sections 11.207.7.2(c) and 11.207.7.3(b) of the CZO*)
- Dimensions of fenestration on façades facing public streets and open spaces (*Section 11.207.7.3(a) of the CZO*)
- Length of separation between windows and entrances on the ground story (*Section 11.207.7.4(c) of the CZO*)
- Dimensions (length, height, and depth from façade) of non-residential uses and parking proposed on the ground story (*Section 11.207.7.4 of the CZO*)
- Rooftop plans, elevations, and perspective views showing the locations, dimensions, and screening of all mechanical equipment (*Section 11.207.7.5 of the CZO*)

52 New Street



Location

52 New Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Developer

Just-A-Start Corporation
1035 Cambridge Street, #12
Cambridge, MA 02141

Project Overview

52 New Street is an approximately 145,000 square feet multifamily building that includes 107 apartments of new mixed-income affordable housing, as well as a small ancillary commercial space.

The site, which is located in Neighborhood Nine, is a one acre parcel that is currently home to a small gym and an asphalt parking lot. It is located in a mixed-use and industrial neighborhood that is quickly evolving to a more residential character. The site is located next to Danehy Park, and close to Fresh Pond. It is also located near the entry point of Route 2, providing easy access to the Route 128 jobs corridor. Retail amenities such as Trader Joe's, Whole Foods, and CVS are within easy walking distance, and it is a short walk to the Alewife MBTA station. There are several bus stops on Concord Ave. within a tenth of a mile from the site.

The 107 apartments in the six-story project consist of 23 one-bedrooms, 63 two-bedrooms, and 21 three-bedrooms. The project was designed with families in mind, with over 75% of the homes family-sized. The majority of homes will be rented to households with incomes under 60% of area median income. In addition, eleven apartments in the project will be restricted to households at incomes of 30% AMI or below, and ten apartments will be designated as workforce units, restricted to households earning 100% AMI or below. Up to 20 apartments will be restricted to households with incomes under 80% of AMI.

The 3,000 square feet of commercial space located at the New Street frontage of the property will be marketed for occupancy by a community-serving commercial use. An additional 2,500 square feet in the building will be devoted to management offices, lobby space, and amenities for tenants. Parking for 43 cars and 112 long-term bike spaces will be provided.

Design Strategy

The building is designed to respond to the unique site conditions, including the long rectangular site footprint, the adjacency to Danehy Park and the front approach from New Street. The project also responds to the criteria of the AHO Guidelines. The design principles that have informed the building mass include breaking up the mass at the longer street edges, integrating into adjacent adjoining context, providing open/public landscaped areas, and working with the existing site topography.

The building is oriented to maximize solar orientation and the views and natural light from Danehy Fields. The ground level of the building is set back 6' at the front (New Street) side to create relief along the street edge. The building mass overhangs on levels 2-5 above, with an overall minimum setback of 3' from the property line. The entrance to the retail space faces New Street, thus providing connectivity for the public and neighbors. The glazed façade of the non-residential use on the first floor (with 35% transparency along New Street and 40% along Danehy Fields) in this area of the building will activate the street level and connect the entrance zone with the activities within.

The northeastern façade facing Danehy fields is designed to respond to the park with a landscaped entrance plaza. The façade is set back a minimum of 7'-6" along this side. The landscape will add to and enhance the public experience along the boundaries of the site with increased sidewalk width, canopy street trees and an expanded public realm at the building entry plaza. The entry plaza will be both an area for arrival and circulation as well as provide an outdoor amenity space for relaxation and waiting. Tiered landscaping, seat walls, and a variety of

perennials and shrubs in raised planters will create multiple kinds of outdoor spaces as well as a dialogue with the Fields.

Entrance to the parking garage and trash areas is tucked close to the southern edge of the property. The building is set back 20' at this side nearest to the street to allow for adequate room for vehicular circulation. The minimum setback for the southern property line is 7.5'.

Screening is planned for the parking garage as well as the rooftop mechanical equipment. Roof top equipment will be set back a minimum of 10' from the edge of the building and the screening will have at least 75% opacity. Bike Parking will also be screened. The proposed rear setback for the development is 10'.

The proposed height of the 6-story building is 70', in keeping with AHO guidelines for the base zoning of 45' with an active non-residential use on the first floor. The height of the ground story of the commercial (non-residential) portion of the building will be 15' to meet the requirements of the AHO guidelines. The massing strategy of the upper levels is manipulated to break up the mass and create a streetscape of smaller volumes rather than one big mass. The large windows at the upper levels are broken down to a residential scale, with solar shading and deep window jamb returns expressing the high thermal resistance of the building envelope, and adding scale and shadow to the facades. The stepped façade along the fields and sculpting of the building form at the rear and at the courtyards break down the mass further.

The materiality for the exterior of the building is intended to celebrate the history and context of the site. The building was conceptualized as a representation of the many strata that comprise the evolution of Cambridge and the project site, while maintaining a quality and durability appropriate for the mid-rise size of the building. The base of the building is proposed to be transparent along the active New Street and Fields edges, with a masonry component that protects the ground level program components from stormwaters. The upper levels of the building are proposed to be a dynamic mix of high-density fiber cement with metal and composite wood accents. The overall appearance is proposed to create transparency and variety, while at the same time creating a unified and cohesive presence for the building.

Community Outreach

Just-A-Start and RODE Architects have held three virtual community meetings related to our proposed development. Each meeting was coordinated with the City's Community Development Department to post the notice on the City's website and ensure that all abutters received their notices with adequate time ahead of the meetings. We also placed fliers around the neighborhood to further our outreach. Over 50 people participated in at least one of the meetings.

In the first meeting, JAS took the opportunity to introduce the community to Just-A-Start and our 53-year history in Cambridge, before discussing the context of the site from its relationship to other the surrounding properties. Additionally, the architecture team discussed the history of the area from its early days as a clay pit, through its use as a landfill and the ultimate development of Danehy Park as reference points for our direction on materiality and sustainability.

We followed up the introductory meeting with the unveiling of our initial building design concept. In this meeting we discussed how the size and shape of the building was influenced by the solar trajectory, the site’s interplay with the raised Danehy fields, and unusual dimensions of the lot.

Upon incorporating the feedback from our previous community meetings and presentations to the City Design Staff, a third community meeting was held to display a more detailed exterior of the building. This meeting also included additional details about how the building would relates to neighbors and residents on a human scale. We showed the pedestrian flow from the entry plaza into the arrival terrace and how that interacts with the street and Danehy Park.

From there, we continued into the building to highlight the resident amenities including a large community room with views of the park, a fitness studio, laundry rooms, and the outdoor areas on the 2nd and 5th floors. A typical 2-bedroom apartment was also shown to highlight our intent to create multi-function spaces that can function for home, work and school.

In addition to the virtual meetings, the project has a website that was used to share images, pose questions and function as the repository for questions and comments.

JAS also reached out to community leaders, city councilors, and community groups active in West Cambridge to share information regarding the development.

Development Timeline

The project will be completed in a single phase of construction.

Initial AHO Submission	September 2021
Planning Board Feedback	Fall 2021
Updated construction pricing	Fall 2021
OneStop Submission	January 2022
GC Selection	Spring 2022
Funding Awards	May 2022
Investor Selection	Summer 2022
Closing	November 2022
Construction Start	December 2022
Construction Completion	July 2024

Zoning / AHO Compliance

The project complies with the recently-passed Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO), and it is an as-of-right project under current zoning. The project will be the first affordable housing created under the AHO.

The ordinance lays out specific dimensional requirements based on the underlying zoning that must be met in order to qualify. 52 New Street is in the Industrial A-1 zone. Below are the specific examples of the proposed building’s compliance with the ordinance.

DIMENSIONAL

- Height: The base zoning allows for a height of 45'. As such, the AHO allows for a 6-story building with a maximum height 70' when the first floor contains an active non-residential use. Due to the commercial space on the New Street frontage, the building qualifies for a height of 70'. The proposed height of the building is 70'.
- Lot Size: There is no minimum lot size for AHO projects.
- Front Setback: The setback for yards is the least restrictive of either 15' or the setback allowed in the base zoning district. The base zoning allows for a 0' front setback thus establishing that as the required setback for the building. The proposed front setback is 3'.
- Side Setbacks: The side setbacks in the AHO are the least restrictive of either 7.5' or the setback allowed in the base zoning. The base zoning requires a 10' for residential uses. Therefore the AHO threshold of 7.5' is the applicable requirement. The proposed side yard setbacks are both 7.5'.
- Rear Setbacks: The rear setback in the AHO are the least restrictive of either 10' or the setback allowed in the base zoning. The base zoning requires a 10' for residential uses. Therefore the AHO threshold of 10' matches the base zoning is the applicable requirement. The proposed rear setbacks for the development is 10'.

DENSITY

- Floor Area Ratio: The base zoning allows for an FAR of 1.25 for a residential use. Since this exceeds 1.00, the maximum FAR is waived.
- Minimum Lot Area per Dwelling Unit: There is no minimum lot area per dwelling unit for AHO projects.

PARKING

- Car Parking: There is no minimum number of off-street parking spaces required under the AHO. However, for projects greater than 20 units, any project that does not achieve a 0.4 parking ratio will be subject to Transportation Demand Management measures. The proposed project has a parking ratio of 0.4. No further Transportation Demand Management measures are required. However, the project will conduct information sessions with residents to orient them to public transportation and cycling options proximate to the building.
- Bike Parking: The AHO does not provide any relief from the amount of bicycle parking required. The proposed project meets the City's bicycle parking requirements with 112 long term spaces and 16 short term spaces. No shared bike facilities will be provided.

OPEN SPACE & GREEN BUILDING

- Open Space: The AHO calls for a minimum percentage of 30% of the lot area be provided as open space unless the base zoning district allows for a less restrictive percentage. The IA zoning requires 0% open space. The project is proposing 32.8% open space.
- Environmental Design: The AHO maintains the requirements of Article 22 in the City's Zoning Ordinance. As such, the building has been design to Passive House standards and has received

the initial approval for Article 22 compliance. The site is located in Zone X on the FEMA Flood Insurance Rate Map and, consequently, not in the Flood Plain Overlay District.

BUILDING DESIGN STANDARDS

- Site Design: The AHO requires that building footprints that extend longer than 250' must have massing breaks so that the maximum length of unbroken façade is 150'. The longest unbroken façade on our proposed building is 125' with most facades spanning between 20' - 60'.
- Building Facade: At least 20% of the building facades facing a public street or public open space must be clear glass windows in order to comply with the AHO. The proposed building has 23% transparency along New Street and 29% facing Danehy Park.
- Ground Story: When the proposed building incorporates an active non-residential first floor use, the Ground Story must consist of at least 30% transparent glass windows. The proposed building has 35% glass along the New Street frontage and 40% facing Danehy Park.
- Mechanical Equipment: The mechanical equipment for the proposed building will be placed on the roof, set back and properly screened in conformance with Section 11.207.7.5(c).
- Trash: In accordance with Section 11.207.7.5(e), all trash for the building will be handled inside the building.

About Just-A-Start

Just-A-Start (JAS) is a 53-year-old community development corporation (501(c)(3)) dedicated to building the housing security and economic stability of low- to moderate-income people in Cambridge and nearby communities. Through innovative, comprehensive and integrated programs, JAS creates and preserves affordable housing, provides housing resources and services, offers education and workforce training for youth and adults, and builds community engagement.

JAS's vision is a better future for all of its constituents: a secure home, a sustaining career, and a connection to the community.

As part of its core mission, JAS develops and owns affordable apartments that allow low- to moderate income residents to live in Cambridge at rents that are within their means. JAS's portfolio of rental properties includes over 600 apartments across 41 properties, ranging in size from studios to 5-bedrooms. JAS also currently has approximately 230 units of new affordable and workforce housing units in its development pipeline.

Key Staff

Carl Nagy-Koechlin has served as Just-A-Start's Executive Director since July of 2019. Carl has over 30 years of community development and affordable housing experience. He most recently served as the executive director at Housing Solutions for Southeastern Mass. and at Fenway Community Development Corp. Under his leadership, these organizations created 400 apartments and homes in 15 affordable housing development projects; implemented and strengthened housing stabilization and homelessness prevention programs; and developed job training and placement programs that ensured strong career ladders and sustaining jobs for community residents.

Carl holds a Bachelor degree in Economics from the University of Massachusetts, Amherst, and a Master of City Planning from the Massachusetts Institute of Technology.

Noah Sawyer is the Director of Real Estate, managing their development team and its work in Cambridge and surrounding municipalities. Previously, Noah served as a senior project manager for The Community Builders, Inc. in its Boston office, where he led development teams for affordable and mixed-income real estate projects in New England. During his tenure, Noah oversaw the closing and construction of over 350 new apartments and led the master planning efforts, adding over 700 units to TCB's development pipeline. Noah also served as a project manager in The Community Builders' preservation group, managing the restructuring and renovation of over 1,000 units of distressed and at-risk affordable housing. He also served as a research associate at the Urban Institute in Washington, D.C., conducting research on housing finance and community development for federal, state and local government. Noah holds a Master's in Public Policy and Urban Planning from Harvard University, as well as a Bachelor's in Mathematics from Vassar College.

Craig Nicholson brings over 15 years of experience to the Just-A-Start team, where he is the Director of Real Estate Acquisitions. Since joining Just-A-Start, Craig has worked to close three LIHTC transactions ranging from 32 units to 273 units. Previously, Craig served as President and Founder of Nicholson Development, Inc. where he managed all aspects of the company and projects that ranged from tenant improvements to master planned developments throughout the eastern United States. Prior to launching his own company, Craig spent six years at The Nicholson Company as a Principal responsible for the finance, operations, legal, property and project management departments. Craig holds degrees in Business Administration, Psychology and Sociology from the University of California, Los Angeles.

Elizabeth Marsh is a Project Manager in the Real Estate department. Prior to joining Just-A-Start in May 2016, she was working in historic preservation consulting in North Carolina. At JAS, she has experience working on all aspects in the development of rental projects. She holds a J. D. from Duke University and a Master of Arts in historic preservation from the Savannah College of Art and Design.