

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

COVER SHEET

In accordance with the requirements of the City of Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, the undersigned hereby petitions the Planning Board for one or more Special Permits for the premises indicated below.

Parcel Address(s):	8 James Way	
Base Zoning District(s):	Res C-1	
Overlay Zoning District(s):	None	
Applicant Name:	Paul Blainey	
Applicant Address:	8 James Way	
Contact Information:	Damon Sidel, RA, AIA, NCARB	617-863-6491
	Name	Telephone #
	dsidel@mixdesigndevelop.com	
	Email Address	

Note that the Applicant is responsible for seeking all necessary special permits for the project. A special permit cannot be granted if it is not specifically requested in the Application.

List all requested special permit(s) (with reference to zoning section numbers):

Zoning Section	Requested Special Permit
5	5.30 District Dimensional Requirements
10	10.43 General Special Permit Criteria
11	11.15b Modifications to Dimensional Standards for Townhouse Development

Denote other City of Cambridge Board/Commission Review Needed:

☐ Board of Zoning Appeal (Variances) ☐ Conservation Commission ☐ Historical Commission

Denote applicable Committee Review and Public Outreach:

☐ Central Square Advisory Committee ☐ Harvard Square Advisory Committee ☐ Community Meeting(s)

Signature of Applicant	Date

DIMENSIONAL FORM

Project Address: 8 James Way

Date: 10/1/2024

	Existing	Allowed or Required (max/min)	Proposed	Permitted
Lot Area (sq ft)	3,285	5,000	3,285	
Lot Width (ft)	36	50	36	
Total Gross Floor Area (sq ft)	1,347	3,750	2,053	
Residential Base	1,347	3,750	2,053	
Non-Residential Base	0	n/a	0	
Inclusionary Housing Bonus	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Total Floor Area Ratio	0.41	0.75	0.63	
Residential Base	0.41	0.75	0.63	
Non-Residential Base	0	n/a	0	
Inclusionary Housing Bonus	n/a	n/a	0	
Total Dwelling Units	1	3	1	
Base Units	1	3	1	
Inclusionary Bonus Units	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Base Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)	3,285	n/a	3,285	
Total Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)	3,285	n/a	3,285	
Building Height(s) (ft)	26.8	35	35	
Front Yard Setback (ft)	22.9	11.9	22.9	
Side Yard Setback (ft)	3.7	8.6	3.7	
Side Yard Setback (ft)	0	8.6	0	
Rear Yard Setback (ft)	65.4	11.9	59.4	
Open Space (% of Lot Area)	66% (2,178sf)	30% (986sf)	61% (2,103sf)	
Private Open Space	34% (1,127sf)	15% (493sf)	34% (1,102sf)	
Permeable Open Space	66% (2,178sf)	15% (493sf)	61% (2,103sf)	
Other Open Space (Specify)	0	n/a	0	
Off-Street Parking Spaces	1	1	1	
Long-term Bicycle Parking Spaces	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Short-term Bicycle Parking Spaces	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Loading Bays	n/a	n/a	n/a	

Use space below and/or attached pages for additional notes:

OWNERSHIP CERTIFICATE

Project Address: 8 James Way

Date: 10/1/2024

To be completed by the Property Owner:

I hereby authorize the following Applicant: Damon Sidel, RA, AIA, NCARB
at the following address: 10 Grand View Ave., Somerville MA 02143
to apply for a special permit for: Paul Blainey & Christina Mork
on premises located at: 8 James Way, Cambridge, MA
for which the record title stands in the name of: Paul Blainey & Christina Mork
whose address is: 8 James Way, Cambridge, MA

by a deed duly recorded in the:

Registry of Deeds of County: Middlesex South Book: 59216 Page: 4443

OR Registry District of the Land Court,
Certificate No.:

Book:

Page:

Paul Blainey & Christina Mork
Signature of Property Owner (If authorized Trustee, Officer or Agent, so identify)

To be completed by Notary Public:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, County of Middlesex

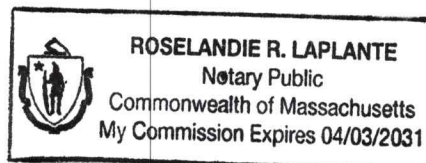
The above named Paul B + Christina M personally appeared before me,
on the month, day and year 10/3/2024 and made oath that the above statement is true

Notary:

R Laplante

My Commission expires:

04/03/2031



FEE SCHEDULE

Project Address: 8 James Way

Date: 10/1/2024

The Applicant must provide the full fee (by check made to City of Cambridge) with the Special Permit Application. The required fee is the larger of the following amounts:

- (a) The fee is ten cents (\$0.10) per square foot of total proposed Gross Floor Area noted in the Dimensional Form.
- (b) The fee is one thousand dollars (\$1,000.00) if Flood Plain Special Permit is sought as part of the Application and the amount determined above is less than \$1000.
- (c) The fee is one hundred fifty dollars (\$150.00) if the above amounts are less than \$150.

Fee Calculation

(a) Proposed Gross Floor Area (SF) in Dimensional Form:	× \$0.10 =	205.20
(b) Flood Plain Special Permit fee	:	1000.00
(c) Minimum Special Permit fee	:	150.00
SPECIAL PERMIT FEE	Enter Largest of (a), (b), and (c): 205.20	



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Date: 10/1/2024 rev.12/10/2024

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Project Plans and Illustrations

	Existing Condition Plan site survey
	Cambridge Block Map 39
A0.00	Cover w/ Drawing List
A0.01	Site Plans, Zoning Summary, Site Locus Map, Existing Conditions Photo
A0.02	Existing and Proposed 3D Massing Diagrams
A1.00	Basement Plans
A1.01	1st Floor Plans
A1.02	2nd Floor Plans
A1.03	3rd Floor Plans
A1.04	Proposed Roof Plan (Green Roof compliance information n/a)
A2.00	Existing Elevations
A2.01	Proposed Elevations w/ Proposed Materials

Project Overview

The design has two additions.

1. The first addition is a one story 4 ft deep by 18 ft wide kitchen extension on the rear of the house. This addition conforms to all zoning requirements and criteria for modifications to a townhouse development. Adjacent to this first addition, the design proposes adding a small patio to improve access from the dining room to the backyard.
2. The second addition is to rebuild the roof to add habitable area in the attic that will include a principal bedroom, a full bathroom, and a guest room that will function mostly as a home office.

The proposal would not make the site more nonconforming.

Compliance with Zoning

Addition #2 extends vertically the existing nonconforming side yard setback per 5.30 *District Dimensional Requirements*, but does not make the site more nonconforming. As a townhouse, the nonconformance is subject to 11.15b *that states*

For those modifications not so enumerated, or where the special permit fails to specifically enumerate allowed modifications, after issuance of a new special permit (a Major Amendment to the original special permit) by the Planning Board to allow the proposed modification(s).

The existing house is the end unit townhouse and has an open side yard. While the development generally requires 0 ft side yard setbacks as is typical with townhouses, this end unit has an open side yard. Since the property line runs at an angle to the side of the house, the setback varies from 7.7 ft to 3.7 ft, violating the 8.6 ft required. Rebuilding the roof higher extends this existing nonconformance, but does not make the site more nonconforming.

Compliance with Criteria / Guidelines Specific to Special Permits Sought

10.47.4 *Criteria for approval of Townhouses and Multifamily Dwellings. In reviewing applications for townhouse developments and multifamily dwelling, the special permit granting authority shall consider and address the following site plan criteria as applicable:*

1. *Key features of the natural landscape should be preserved to the maximum extent feasible. Tree removal should be minimized and other natural features of the site, such as slopes, should be maintained.
The modification proposes no significant changes to the landscape other than the construction of a building addition and a patio stepping down into the backyard. No trees will be removed and the applicant does not propose regrading the site.*
2. *New buildings should be related sensitively to the existing built environment. The location, orientation and massing of structures in the development should avoid overwhelming the*



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existing buildings in the vicinity of the development. Visual and functional disruptions should be avoided.

The proposed kitchen extension is modest in scale and is offset from the open side yard where the neighbor has open space as well. The extension will be only a bit taller than the existing 6 ft high privacy fence on the other side. Its solid walls will be clad with siding to match the existing building. The third floor addition is within the footprint of the building and implements a gambrel roof with dormers. A gambrel roof is in keeping with the vernacular of the area and retains an eave line above the second floor in keeping with all the two-story townhouses in the development. The dormers diverge from the City's "Design Guidelines for Roof Dormers" only in width in order to maximize roof area for photovoltaic panels. The proposed dormers are not quite 17 ft wide, exceeding the 15' - 0" / 50% maximum in the guideline by less than 2 ft.

3. *The location, arrangement, and landscaping of open space should provide some visual benefits to abutters and passersby as well as functional benefits to occupants of the development. The proposed expansions will reduce the open space in the private backyard very modestly, but meets all dimensional requirements of the district and does not impact open space that is visible from the public street.*
4. *Parking areas, internal roadways and access/egress points should be safe and convenient. The modifications propose no changes to the location of parking spaces and access / egress routes.*
5. *Parking area landscaping should minimize the intrusion of onsite parking so that it does not substantially detract from the use and enjoyment of either the proposed development or neighboring properties. The modification proposes no changes to the parking area landscaping.*
6. *Service facilities such as trash collection apparatus and utility boxes should be located so that they are convenient for residents, yet unobtrusive. The modifications propose no changes to the existing service facilities.*

Compliance with General Special Permit Criteria (Section 10.43)

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:

- A. *It appears that requirements of this Ordinance cannot or will not be met, or Upon granting of the requested Special Permit, it appears that the requirements of the Ordinance will be met.*

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- B. Traffic generated or patterns of access or egress would cause congestion, hazard, or substantial change in established neighborhood character, or
The proposed modification does not change the use as a single-family residence and will therefore not cause traffic congestion or hazard.*
- C. 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 existing residential use will not change and complies with allowed uses in this district and will not adversely affect adjacent uses that exist or are anticipated in the future.*
- D. 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 modification will not create nuisance or hazard and all development activity will be subject to applicable health and safety regulations.*
- E. 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
The proposed modification is an addition to the existing residential townhouse unit, a use that is consistent with the intent of the district.*
- F. The new use or building construction is inconsistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30.
The urban design objectives are generally supported in the proposal through consistency with the pattern of development in the area, minimal environmental impacts on abutters and minimal impact on City infrastructure. No trees will be moved, removed or replaced and any minor landscaping impacted by the construction will be renewed at the completion of the project.*

Urban Design Objective Narrative (Section 19.30)

See response above with respect to 10.43F.

Summary of Community Engagement

The Owners of 8 James Way have reached out to many of their neighbors and have letters of support from the owners of #2, #10, and #12. Their abutter at #6 does not live there and was not able to be reached.