



PLANNING BOARD MEETING

8 Winter Street Cambridge

Comprehensive Special Permit Presentation

Project: 23-unit multifamily residential development

District: CAM-6 Cambridge Street District

Date: June 2026



EAST ELEVATION

WEST ELEVATION



NORTH ELEVATION

SOUTH ELEVATION



SOUTH

WEST

EAST

NORTH



ORIENTATION

Project at a Glance

The proposal delivers new housing at a transit-transit-rich East Cambridge corner while remaining within CAM-6 height and story limits.

ADDRESS	8 Winter Street, Cambridge, MA 02141
USE	23-unit multifamily residential development
DISTRICT	CAM-6 Cambridge Street District
BUILDING SCALE	6 stories; 63.3 feet high
RESIDENTIAL GFA	24,819 square feet
MOBILITY	Zero off-street parking; bicycle- and transit-oriented design

SITE CONTEXT

A Transit-Oriented Corner Site

The 7,404-square-foot triangular parcel is bounded by Monsignor O'Brien Highway, Third Street, Winter Street, and a Street, and a private way.

- 01** Near MBTA bus service on O'Brien Highway and walking distance to the Lechmere Green Line Extension station.
- 02** Zero off-street parking supports a residential, transit-first transit-first development pattern.
- 03** Eliminating driveways reduces sidewalk and vehicle conflict at a prominent East Cambridge gateway corner.



ENTITLEMENT CONTEXT

Regulatory History Explains the Request

The application responds to a zoning transition that transition that occurred after the project had already advanced under prior approvals.

Key message: the requested relief arises from a good-faith, already-constructed foundation and a CAM-6 CAM-6 zoning change that occurred after work was underway.

Nov. 15, 2023	BZA decision and permit issued BZA decision issued and Building Permit #249600 granted under the prior BA zoning framework.
April 2025	Modification application filed Modification Application #1159211 submitted to address design refinements and related and related plan updates.
July 18, 2025	Foundation work completed Foundation completed and final waterproofing inspection passed before the later zoning transition.
Jan. 26, 2026	CAM-6 district adopted The CAM-6 Cambridge Street District replaced the prior BA zoning at the site.
Mar. 17, 2026	CDD Advisory Review held Community Development Department Advisory Review comments were incorporated into the Planning Board submission.

Limited Site-Plan Modifications Requested

The application seeks targeted relief tied to corner-lot geometry, grade change, facade articulation, and a foundation constructed before the CAM-6 zoning transition.

ZONING TOPIC	REQUEST	PLANNING RATIONALE
Front yard setbacks	Relief at O'Brien Highway and Third Street	Foundation limits and triangular corner corner geometry constrain the feasible feasible footprint.
Facade projections	Confirmation under CAM-6 projection standards	Limited projections support facade depth, depth, articulation, and residential character.
Ground-story height	Relief at lower corner corner condition	A 2.43-foot grade drop along O'Brien O'Brien Highway affects the measured measured ground-story condition.
Entrance location	Main entry on Third Third Street	Provides clearer, safer pedestrian access access than the arterial highway frontage. frontage.



FOCUS

The requests do not alter the core 23-unit housing program, six-story scale, bicycle parking bicycle parking commitment, open-space strategy, or sustainability measures.

ZONING COMPLIANCE

CAM-6 Compliance Is Broadly Met

The requested permit does not change the fundamental compliance posture of the development. It addresses unique site conditions around a largely compliant residential residential building program.

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PRINCIPAL CAM-6 STANDARDS DOCUMENTED AS MET OR EXCEEDED EXCEEDED

STANDARD	REQUIREMENT / BENCHMARK	PROPOSED CONDITION
Residential use	Multifamily residential permitted	23 residential units
Height and stories	75 feet / 6 stories maximum	63.3 feet / 6 stories
Building length	200 feet maximum	73'-2" longest dimension
Facade transparency	20% minimum	20% Third Street; 25% O'Brien Highway
Bicycle parking	24 long-term; 3 short-term	24 long-term; 4 short-term
Open space	CAM-6 open-space compliance	2,310 sq. ft. total; 23% of lot

KEY FINDING

Relief is targeted to site geometry, grade, and foundation conditions—not to conditions—not to the core housing, height, bicycle parking, or open-space open-space program.

PUBLIC REALM

Design Supports the Public Public Realm

The building frames the Third Street / O'Brien Highway / Highway / Winter Street intersection with a continuous continuous urban edge, articulated facades, and landscape landscape treatment at the sidewalk interface.

- 01** Masonry-pattern base grounds the building and creates a durable pedestrian-scale frontage.
- 02** Cement-board patterning, window rhythm, and recessed volumes break down the six-story mass.
- 03** Main residential entry on Third Street provides a clearer and clearer and safer pedestrian approach.
- 04** Service, trash, delivery, and drop-off activity are organized organized away from the busiest frontage.

Planning focus: improve sidewalk continuity, reduce conflicts, and strengthen the strengthen the corner as a civic-facing urban edge.



Renderings showing facade treatment, street edges, and adjacent building relationships

MOBILITY FRAMEWORK

Mobility Strategy Prioritizes People

The development is intentionally organized as a organized as a low-car, bicycle-supported, transit-oriented residential building.

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off-street vehicle parking spaces, reducing auto orientation and eliminating new curb-cut conflicts.

MOBILITY ELEMENT	PROPOSAL	PLANNING BENEFIT
Vehicle parking	Zero off-street spaces	Reduces auto-trip generation pressure and avoids additional driveway conflicts along constrained frontages.
Long-term bicycles	24 enclosed spaces	Meets the residential requirement and supports daily daily cycling for residents.
Short-term bicycles	4 exterior spaces	Exceeds the visitor requirement and locates convenient convenient bike access near the Third Street entry.
Transit access	MBTA bus and Lechmere Green Line nearby	Supports low-car household travel patterns in a transit-rich transit-rich East Cambridge location.
Service access	Lower-conflict frontage strategy	Keeps service, delivery, trash, and drop-off activity away away from the busiest arterial edge.

KEY FINDING

The mobility plan strengthens sidewalk safety while aligning the housing program with program with nearby transit and bicycle infrastructure.

Open Space and Sustainability Add Public Value



Proposed Landscape + Cool Factor Plan

Landscape edges, planting pockets, and passive-house building systems building systems convert a constrained corner parcel into a lower-impact residential infill project.

2,310

square feet of total open space, including 1,625 square feet of private residential open space and 685 square feet of permeable open space.

- 01 **Planting pockets and landscape edges** soften retaining-wall wall conditions and strengthen the sidewalk interface.
- 02 **Green Factor compliance** supports urban greening, heat-island mitigation, and storm water-sensitive site treatment.
- 03 **PHIUS-compliant envelope** uses continuous exterior insulation, triple-triple-glazed windows, and ERV ventilation.
- 04 **Green Building and flood-resilience coordination** support lower use, indoor air quality, and climate readiness.

Planning value: the proposal adds housing while advancing open-space, open-space, sustainability, and resilience objectives.

Section 19.30 Objectives Are Advanced

CONCLUSION The proposal aligns new housing, pedestrian orientation, climate performance, and performance, and contextual urban design at a constrained transit-rich corner.
corner.

Responsive development pattern	Six-story urban-scale housing	at a major corridor intersection within the CAM-6 district.	Cambridge urban character	Strong corner massing, massing, continuous street wall,	and contemporary contextual materials reinforce the corridor edge.
Pedestrian and bicycle friendliness	Zero parking, direct entry, sidewalk continuity,	and code-compliant bicycle facilities support low-car living.	Housing expansion	23 new residential units	contribute to housing supply, including Inclusionary Housing compliance.
Environmental mitigation	Passive-house envelope, screened equipment,	and no surface parking reduce operational and site impacts.	Open-space enhancement	Private, permeable, and landscaped spaces	soften constrained edges and support support Green Factor performance.
Infrastructure compatibility	Modest residential demand	is paired with coordinated water, sewer, sewer, and stormwater review.	Climate resilience	Green Factor, cool roof measures, flood-flood-resilience coordination,	and passive survivability support climate readiness.

KEY MESSAGE

The project advances the City’s housing, sustainability, public-realm, and resilience objectives.

Source: Applicant narrative and submitted submitted planning board materials, May May 2026.

REQUESTED ACTION

Request for Planning Board Board Approval

The applicant respectfully requests that the Planning Board Planning Board approve the limited site-plan modifications and find the project consistent with the the applicable special-permit and urban-design criteria. criteria.

BOARD ACTION REQUESTED

Authorize targeted relief so the 23-unit, unit, transit-oriented residential project may project may proceed.

§17.705.1.3

SITE PLAN
MODIFICATION

Find that the requested modifications are limited, site-specific, and responsive to documented physical constraints.

§17.707.2

CAM-6 STANDARDS

Confirm that the project remains broadly aligned with CAM-6 housing, height, mobility, open-space, and design objectives

§10.43

SPECIAL PERMIT
CRITERIA

Find that the proposal will not cause substantial detriment and supports orderly development, neighborhood compatibility, and public benefit

§19.30

URBAN DESIGN
OBJECTIVES

Recognize consistency with Citywide objectives for housing, walkability, sustainability, resilience, and Cambridge urban character

BASIS

Relief is necessitated by a pre-constructed foundation, constrained triangular corner-lot geometry, and sloping topography—not by a change in the core residential program.