

City of Cambridge Department of Public Works

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July 14, 2026

TO: Planning Board

FROM: James Wilcox, PE
City Engineer

RE: 9 & 25 Birch Street & 30-36 Bay State Road Special Permit Application

We are in receipt of the 9 & 25 Birch Street & 30-36 Bay State Road Documentation to support the Special Permit Application for the redevelopment dated June 5, 2026.

The submitted documents, supported by multiple meetings with the Applicant and their Civil Consultant, have provided the DPW with a good overview of the development. The Application demonstrates the teams general understanding of our Department's requirements and provides information to show how the project will be able to meet our standards.

With the understanding that the project will be subject to a thorough and complete engineering review at the time of the Building Permit Application, we anticipate continuing to work with the Applicant. Items discussed with the Development Team related to our purview are summarized below.

Stormwater Management:

The development will be required to obtain a Stormwater Control Permit from the DPW prior to the issuance of a Building Permit. This permit includes a detailed review of the proposed stormwater management system, plans for erosion and sedimentation control during construction and the plans for long term operation and maintenance of the system.

The Applicant has submitted draft plans and narrative for a proposed Stormwater Mitigation system that generally appears to meet the DPW Standards for the above-mentioned permit. The Stormwater Control Permit will need to be obtained prior to issuance of a building permit for the project.

Sewer Flow and Potential Mitigation:

The applicant submitted estimated daily sanitary sewer flow calculations for 105 bedrooms that show the development will not increase the flow to the City's infrastructure by more than the 15,000 gallons per day that would trigger Inflow and Infiltration Mitigation (I/I).

Any changes to the buildings program that increases the design flow should be considered against the Mitigation Flow trigger Volume. Mitigation requirements, if triggered, will need to be agreed with the City and the Development Team prior to Building Permit.

Urban Canopy:

The Development should be aware that any on-site trees that are greater than 6" in DBH are jurisdictional under the City's Tree Protection Ordinance. The documentation included approval of the submitted Tree Study, by Andrew Putnam, Superintendent of Urban Forestry & Landscapes. As the project advances, it should also consider any potential impacts to trees on abutting properties.

Specific to Public Shade Trees, the DPW would also note that all street trees located along the project frontage shall be maintained and protected during all construction activities. In addition, we support the project's proposal to add a street tree along the Birch Street frontage and encourage the Applicant to consider additional Street Tree Plantings to support the development of the Urban Canopy. Any Street Tree Planting's will need to be installed per City Standards. DPW can assist, as the project advances, in providing guidance on the potential Street Tree locations adjacent to the project that take into consideration accessibility requirements and potential utility and curb use conflicts.

Climate Resiliency:

Per the City's Zoning Bylaw Section 22.80, because the Project parcel(s) has "Long-Term Flood Elevations" (LTFEs) assigned and includes construction of a new structure, the Flood Resilience Standards will need to be met.

The project provided discussion and graphics outlining how the Standards will be met and obtained Flood Resilience Compliance Confirmation from the DPW as part of this Special Permit Application. Compliance Confirmation will need to be sought by the Applicant again in advance of Building Permit. Review of the Standards against the full architectural and civil site plans will confirm that project remains in compliance with the standards as the design is developed. Applicant should be aware that details on how the mechanical and electrical infrastructure in their designated spaces will be resilient to the 1% LTFE, will need to be provided.

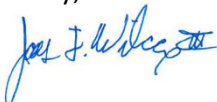
Public Right of Way:

DPW will review and evaluate all proposed work and impacts in the public right of way, as the design is developed. Connections to both public and private utilities as well as all proposed disruption in the public right of way shall be reviewed as part of the Building Permit and construction permit processes. Mitigation and requirements for surface reconstruction will be evaluated based on the construction impacts and conditions of the abutting road and sidewalks. The DPW will expect improvements to the public sidewalk, as needed, to obtain an accessible and comfortable sidewalk width for the project frontage. Roadway restoration from curb-to-curb is required to be detailed on the Civil Site Plan along the frontage of the property for projects that are proposing three or more utility excavations into the right-of-way.

As noted, the project will be subject to a thorough and complete engineering review at the time of the Building Permit Application.

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

Sincerely,



James Wilcox, P.E.
City Engineer

