

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL

831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge MA 02139

617-349-6100

2022 MAR -1 PM 2:54

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

BZA Application Form

BZA Number: 163746

General Information

The undersigned hereby petitions the Board of Zoning Appeal for the following:

Special Permit: X

Variance:

Appeal:

PETITIONER: City of Cambridge C/O Michael Monestime

PETITIONER'S ADDRESS: 620 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: 84 Bishop Allen Dr., Cambridge, MA

TYPE OF OCCUPANCY: Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility, Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment not otherwise defined, Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Use **ZONING DISTRICT:** Business B Zone

REASON FOR PETITION:

/Change in Use/Occupancy/

DESCRIPTION OF PETITIONER'S PROPOSAL:

Starlight Square has been operating as an Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility, Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment not otherwise defined, and a Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Use. Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility in the Bus B zone requires a Special Permit, which is hereby requested. Previously, Starlight Square has been operating under an executive order suspending zoning enforcement during the COVID-19 emergency.

SECTIONS OF ZONING ORDINANCE CITED:

Article: 4.000 Section: 4.36 (Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishments).
Article: 4.000 Section: 4.36.D (Outdoor Entertainment & Recreation Facility).
Article: 10.000 Section: 10.40 (Special Permit).

Original
Signature(s):

Michael Monestime
(Petitioner (s) / Owner)

MICHAEL MONESTIME
(Print Name)

Address:

620 Mass. Ave. Suite 3, Cambridge, MA.

Tel. No.

6174487186

E-Mail Address:

mmonestime@centralsq.org

02139

Date: 2/24/22

BZA Application Form

DIMENSIONAL INFORMATION

Applicant: City of Cambridge

Present Use/Occupancy: Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility, Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment not otherwise defined, Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Use

Location: 84 Bishop Allen Dr., Cambridge, MA

Zone: Business B Zone
 Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility, Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment not otherwise defined, Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Use

Phone: 6174487186

Requested Use/Occupancy: Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility, Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment not otherwise defined, Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Use

		<u>Existing Conditions</u>	<u>Requested Conditions</u>	<u>Ordinance Requirements</u>	
<u>TOTAL GROSS FLOOR AREA:</u>		950	950	92,716	(max.)
<u>LOT AREA:</u>		33,715	33,715	0	(min.)
<u>RATIO OF GROSS FLOOR AREA TO LOT AREA: ²</u>		0.028	0.028	2.75	
<u>LOT AREA OF EACH DWELLING UNIT</u>		NA	NA	NA	
<u>SIZE OF LOT:</u>	WIDTH	180	180	None	
	DEPTH	171	171	None	
<u>SETBACKS IN FEET:</u>	FRONT	NA	NA	0	
	REAR	NA	NA	0	
	LEFT SIDE	NA	NA	0	
	RIGHT SIDE	NA	NA	0	
<u>SIZE OF BUILDING:</u>	HEIGHT	NA (Scaffolding is 18' high)	NA (Scaffolding is 18' high)	80 (45 degree setback at Bishop Allen)	
	WIDTH	NA	NA	NA	
<u>RATIO OF USABLE OPEN SPACE TO LOT AREA:</u>		0	0	0	
<u>NO. OF DWELLING UNITS:</u>		0	0	0	
<u>NO. OF PARKING SPACES:</u>		82	23	Special permit granting authority	
<u>NO. OF LOADING AREAS:</u>		0	0	0	
<u>DISTANCE TO NEAREST BLDG. ON SAME LOT</u>		NA	NA	0	

Describe where applicable, other occupancies on the same lot, the size of adjacent buildings on same lot, and type of construction proposed, e.g; wood frame, concrete, brick, steel, etc.:

BZA Application Form

SUPPORTING STATEMENT FOR A SPECIAL PERMIT

Please describe in complete detail how you meet each of the following criteria referring to the property and proposed changes or uses which are requested in your application. Attach sheets with additional information for special permits which have additional criteria, e.g.; fast food permits, comprehensive permits, etc., which must be met.

Granting the Special Permit requested for 84 Bishop Allen Dr , Cambridge, MA (location) would not be a detriment to the public interest because:

A) Requirements of the Ordinance can or will be met for the following reasons:

The Starlight Square initiative has demonstrated for a year and a half how essential outdoor civic space is to the public health of a community. This is especially important as the Port neighborhood is greatly underserved, having only 21% of the national urban average per capita. Since its opening in August 2020, Starlight Square has provided residents with a central location for essential services and experiences to transition outside. This includes everything from worship and out-of-school time education, to performance and food distribution. Other notable uses include: the first-ever Winter Farmers Market, Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School's senior prom, the Cambridge Public Health Department's Flu Clinic, the community memorial for Bob Moses, and the City of Cambridge's City Council Inauguration.

Starlight continues to address immediate public health concerns by providing an outdoor home for basic city functions and much-needed human connection. Given the nature of the COVID-19 virus, we knew early on that outside was the safest place for recovery. As variants continue to mutate, this remains true today. The proposed initiative not only addresses immediate and delayed public health and community harms, but also safeguards us all from them in the future.

Outdoor entertainment is one of the functions of Starlight Square for which a special permit is required in the Bus B zone.

B) Traffic generated or patterns of access or egress would not cause congestion hazard, or substantial change in established neighborhood character for the following reasons:

Starlight has operated for two years and the traffic generated and the patterns of access or egress have not caused congestion hazard or substantial change in established neighborhood character.

C) The continued operation of or the development of adjacent uses as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance would not be adversely affected by the nature of the proposed use for the following reasons:

Starlight's continued operation would enhance adjacent uses.

D) Nuisance or hazard would not 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 for the following reasons:

Starlight is designed to improve and support the health, safety, and welfare of the users and the citizens of the City by

providing an outdoor home for basic city functions and much-needed human connection.

- E) For other reasons, the proposed use would not impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district or otherwise derogate from the intent or purpose of this ordinance for the following reasons:

Starlight Square only enhances the cultural district by providing a truly unique and much needed public space for residents.

***If you have any questions as to whether you can establish all of the applicable legal requirements, you should consult with an attorney.**

March 11, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

My name is Yanka Petri. I live at 425 Massachusetts Avenue, Apt 208, in Central Square.

I am a strong supporter of Starlight receiving the special permit, because as a fellow Central Square resident, I know how impactful the events at Starlight have been to our community. The warm weather is about bringing the community together, and unique outdoor places like Starlight have allowed this to happen safely and positively. This permit will allow more community members to take part in this unique experience. After 2 years of living in a pandemic, we deserve in person interactions more than ever!! I feel safe attending events Starlight hosts, because of the team's constant efforts to bring entertainment in a safe, creative and welcoming environment.

I have attended countless concerts, events, game shows and screenings at Starlight the past couple of years. As a fairly new Cambridge resident, these events have helped me gain a better understanding of my new community, I've gained cultural enrichment, I've networked with local businesses and artists but most importantly, I felt welcomed and loved by everyone, from Starlight staff, to the event attendees, to the Central Sq BID workers, to the Popportunity vendors, I felt a sense of community that I had not felt in previous neighborhoods. I cannot imagine Central Square without Starlight any more, this place brings people and ideas together! Besides, if Starlight was not in Lot 5... we would be left with an empty parking lot. What's the fun in that!?

Starlight is living proof that cool outdoor events ARE NOT a thing of the past, and that in fact, they are in more demand than ever! The biggest challenge I faced this summer was missing out on cool performances happening at Starlight because they took place during my work hours, if we can allow Starlight to operate past traditional work hours, more community members, like myself, will be able to join more and more events.

As a Cambridge resident, I am asking that you grant Starlight permission to continue to operate on Lot 5 (an easily accessible and safe outdoor space) so we can continue to highlight what makes Cambridge so special, a diverse place for creative and unique opportunities!

**Thank you,
Yanka**

Pacheco, Maria

From: Isabella O'Connell <oconnellisabella@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, March 11, 2022 11:59 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Dear Zoning Board Members,

My name is Isabella O'Connell. I have lived at 65 Dana street for the past two years. I started working in Central Square in 2016 at the former ImprovBoston location at 40 Prospect and I now work full-time as a shared nanny on campus for Harvard staff. I am writing to express my support for Starlight Square's permit application for use of 84 Bishop Allen Drive. As a Cambridge resident and comedy producer, Starlight Square has been vital in providing performance opportunities and a space for artists to reconnect over the course of the pandemic. After the pandemic began and prior to my involvement with Starlight Square, I had only had access to running virtual comedy productions. Starlight has given me the chance to "unpause" my growth as a young, LGBT artist and producer from Cambridge. As a booker, I have been able to pass on that opportunity to other up-and-coming artists, particularly young women, performers of color, LGBT performers, and folks at intersections of those identities. These are talented artists who may be overlooked at venues that do not prioritize highlighting local talent like Starlight Square does, and that do not provide open opportunity for show-runners like myself who have relationships with under-represented communities of performers. The closure of performance spaces has greatly impacted the arts in Cambridge. Starlight Square attaining use of this lot will make a huge difference in connecting artists and ensuring the longevity of the various arts scenes in Cambridge.

Thank you,
Isabella O'Connell

Pacheco, Maria

From: Navarra R. Castle (Student) <NRC990@wildcats.jwu.edu>
Sent: Saturday, March 12, 2022 9:50 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: BZA-163746

Good Morning,

I am a resident of the Norfolk and Bishop Allen apartments directly across the street from Starlight Central Square. Now you may think the intentions for Starlight is doing good for the community while sharing the various cultures and talents that the city of Cambridge has to offer however it has negatively impacted those that actually live in the area. The loud music that can last all throughout the day going well into the night leaving us with difficulty wanting to relax and unwind. Imagine having company over and you can't even entertain due to the loud music that overpowers everything else that you try and listen to. It becomes a hassle wanting to watch tv when all you can hear is loud jazz music, hip hop music etc blaring through the speakers till 10pm. This has been going on for well over 2 years now and a better location needs to be created for this specific event. Not only is the music and entertainment a nuisance Starlight was built on which was once an open parking lot, this has taken valuable parking away from those who actually live in the area. No consideration was taken at all in how Starlight truly affects those that actually have to live with it day in and day out.

I truly hope the people that are truly impacted by this are heard and the proper actions are taken place. Starlight needs to be moved away from tight living quarters and taken else where.

Pacheco, Maria

From: Abbie Cohen <abbie.cohen24@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 2:27 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: Nina Berg
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal,

My name is Abbie Cohen and I was born and raised in Cambridge, MA and currently reside at 35 Magee St, Cambridge MA 02139 nearby Central Square and have been able to benefit from the amazing development, installation, and programming that Starlight Square has produced. I strongly support Starlight's special permit application.

Starlight has been a space of community, activity, joy, and connection with critical safety mechanisms in place during the past two years that forced separation, isolation, and fear as the global pandemic surged. That said, as the pandemic continues to wane (fingers crossed), Starlight should stay. I have attended numerous events, shopped at Popportunity, and had the amazing opportunity to teach yoga for free to the Cambridge community. I'd love to be able to continue to utilize the amazing community space Starlight Square has created when the Starlight special permit is approved.

Thank you,
Abbie

Pacheco, Maria

From: Michael James <michael1331james@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 14, 2022 6:09 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: CASE NO. BZA-163746

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal,

The following is a public comment for case number BZA-163746. I live directly overlooking the parking lot (Starlight) and I want to ask you for help to please protect us from the intrusive sound caused by operating an open air concert venue directly neighboring a densely populated area of 100+ residents.

The Starlight concert and entertainment venue is made of scaffolding and while it provides a visual boundary does nothing to stop noise from intruding into our home. Our homes are not soundproof and the scaffolding Starlight is made out of is not either. While participants can stay for a few hours and leave we have had to inadvertently attend every concert held and all other music events. The sound is so intrusive even with windows closed, earplugs, and noise canceling headphones and at the time of its operation was recurring all day everyday. It's so disruptive to our daily lives and pays no regard to residents' schedules. This has affected our rest, sleep, conversations over dinner, work, meetings, interviews, tests, ability to bring guests, health, times when we are mourning, amongst other parts of our lives that we are able to do in our safe space at home.

Immediately surrounding the parking lot are 6 apartment buildings: 30 Norfolk Street, 70 Bishop Allen, 51 Norfolk Street, 77 Bishop Allen, 46-48 Norfolk Street, 10 Essex st. Three of these apartments are affordable housing units for large families 4+ individuals with many young children via the Just a Start program. Dispersed between and next to these apartments are privately owned apartments/ condos. It's a mixed tenured community and it provides an amazing equal opportunity to everyone in the area to have access to a location and its resources that would otherwise be off limits to them. But for many in affordable housing it's impossible to move. I know we have tried. We did not choose to live in front of a concert venue but we cannot change that.

And by licensing starlight the city has exempted all buildings within 50 feet from the traditional Noise Control Ordinance that protects its residents health and has left us in an unlivable and inhumane condition. It's very confusing to understand why the residents living in this area would be exempt from enjoying that same right that states: "the people have a right to and should be ensured an environment free from excessive sound and vibration that may jeopardize their health or welfare or safety or degrade the quality of life" as noted by the Noise Control Ordinance. The difference between a day with events and without events is heaven and hell. No matter if we are sick, greving, spending time together, the events keep playing and it has been abusive to our mental health.

Some of the ways this has affected my and my family when Starlight was operational for Season 1 and Season 2:

- Food: We frequently are unable to hold a conversation during dinner and end dinner early from just the exhaustion of the music outside.
- Wellness/ Sleep: My parents who are older and work find it hard to sleep when they come back from their labor taxing jobs, unfortunately because they are seniors they really do have to rest more than usual and that has been hard for them. My parents also frequently have panic attacks yelling please make it stop.
- Work/ Study: I work and study from home currently. When music plays I usually have to end meetings early, it's difficult to focus, and my productivity drastically decreases. I can't really sleep early due to the backlog of assignments and late operation of events, so I also start work later than usual. It's also hard to take interviews and tests.
- Stress: We frequently have to close all our windows no matter the weather just to find some sort of escape but that doesn't help neither do earplugs or noise cancelling headphones. We cannot compete with concert grade speakers. It's so stressful not to be able to escape this.

- Going out: On many occasions we spend our time outside on the weekends and we are usually out early and come back in the evening exhausted but we are unable to rest. There have been times that I was so tired and the beats outside were constantly pounding that I felt like I was going mad
- Guests: We find it hard to invite people over and when we do have them we are unable to hold a conversation with them over the noise and all we do is just apologize about the sound

This is not an appropriate location for such an endeavor. Prior to the BZA meeting set for March 24th, there have never been any public meetings or any announcements of Starlight Season 1. Neither were there meetings or residential engagement for Season 2 extension either; they came as a complete surprise to my family and my immediate neighbors as well. Starlight's very own webpage still only mentions the original timeline that was meant only for one summer as a temporary intervention. Yet despite how repeatedly I tried to get the organizers to involve residents as well as receiving promises from the executive director at the BID that a residential survey would be sent out there has been no transparency or involvement. For a project so massive there is a complete lack of knowledge on resident sentiment.

I understand that this project is being pushed so positively by the city (I too love the arts and enjoy concerts) yet operating in this location has immense negative effects on some of the most vulnerable population in the city and I ask that you please help protect us by not granting continued use of the space for live entertainment.

Thank you for reading my comment,
Michael James



CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

E. Denise Simmons
City Councillor

Mayor
2008-2009
2016-2017

March 15, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: In Support of Starlight Square | 84 Bishop Allen Drive

To The Members of the Board of Zoning Appeal:

I am writing to express my strong support of Starlight Square, located at 84 Bishop Allen Drive, in its bid to receive a special permit to continue operating in Central Square.

Starlight is now a civic and cultural amenity that hosts many of the defining events in the City, from the high school's Senior Week programming and Prom, to last year's celebration of the life of Dr. Bob Moses, to this year's City Council Inauguration.

As a Central Square business owner, I have watched Starlight raise the profile of the Cultural District. As a lifelong resident, I have benefitted from how many services it was able to transition outside during the pandemic, such as the Farmers Market to voter registration, to the NAACP panel I participated in. As a member of the City Council, I see Starlight as a path forward in the City for equitable use of public space and a driver of vibrant, interesting events that bring renewed life into Central Square.

I trust the Central Square BID's leadership team and Board of Directors to continue stewarding this space, and I am aware that they are in communication with the neighbors who have commented on sound impact. I am more than happy to continue supporting those efforts, and I respectfully ask you to grant this permit so they, in partnership with the City of Cambridge, can continue to meet the needs of our residents as we recover collectively from the COVID-19 crisis. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

City Councillor E. Denise Simmons

Pacheco, Maria

From: Addie Warner <addie.warner@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 12:14 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Letter of Support for Starlight Square

Dear Ms. Pacheco,

My name is Addie Warner and I was born and raised in Cambridge, MA. As a Cantabrigian, and local, I have been able to benefit from the fantastic programming that Starlight Square has produced, and thus I **strongly wish to convey my support of Starlight's special permit application.**

Starlight Square has been a space of community and connection during a time that has made congregating difficult. Pandemic, or no pandemic: Starlight must stay.

I have attended various events, shopped the 'Popportunity', and had the wonderful privilege of attending yoga classes at no cost--all thanks to Starlight Square.

I ask that we, citizens of Cambridge, be able to continue to benefit from the unique and special community space Starlight Square offers us.

Please consider this in your review to approve Starlight Square's special permit.

With hope,

Addie Warner

Erik Sarno

88 Columbia St. APT 3
Cambridge, MA 02139
(845) 527-5355
erik@centralsq.org

15th March 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal

City of Cambridge Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

To Whom It May Concern,

As an active member of the Central Square community, and a prominent arts and entertainment professional, I am reaching out to you in support of Starlight Square.

The Port is my home. I live just two blocks from Lot 5. I cannot imagine the pandemic in Central Square without Starlight. It has been the only place to safely gather outdoors and enjoy all types of cultural programming. It has also created hundreds of paid opportunities for local artists who were displaced by the pandemic.

I began managing Starlight Square in May 2021. During each event, we closely monitored noise levels with two different decibel meters, always keeping our amplified sound below the legal limit. We never violated the City's noise ordinance, and we worked closely with the Cambridge Police Department to keep our attendees, performers, and neighbors safe.

Starlight Square is essential to the spirit and well-being of our community. I am hopeful that Starlight will carry on for Season 3, and beyond. Please consider permitting Lot 5 to continue our beloved community space.

Sincerely,

Erik Sarno

Pacheco, Maria

From: Evon Cairis <evoncairis1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 4:31 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square Horror for the tenants living nearby

Hello, I live opposite the theater. If I could afford to move, I would have moved. The sound coming from the performances is way beyond 30 decibels. I have been calling the police all summer long. I am an ill person and need to sleep sometimes during the day. Of course even will ear plugs and the windows shut in 90 degree weather I could not sleep. No one even monitored the noise level. City Hall told me to move if I did not like the situation. The police stopped going over to the theater. Some of the people who own cars can not fine parking spaces. The shoppers at H Mart also are disgusted with this set up. My telephone number is 617 945-0923 if you want more information. I am probably wasting my time with this email but I had to give it a try.

Pacheco, Maria

From: Evon Cairis <evoncairis1@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 15, 2022 4:21 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square #BZA-163746

I am probably wasting my time emailing your about how disturbing the Starlight square has been to the tenants of the building facing Lot 5 for many months of last summer

Pacheco, Maria

From: James Kaufman <jameskaufman@alum.mit.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, March 16, 2022 1:07 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: Anna K Swan
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

To the members of Board of Zoning Appeal,

My spouse Anna Swan and I strongly support the special permit application for Starlight to continue as an Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation facility.

We are delighted that what was a parking lot is now a place for people from diverse backgrounds to gather - one of the few outdoor spaces in the city designed for public events. The Square venue was an important life-line during the pandemic and has become critically important to Central Square and the larger Cambridge community as a hub for activity and interaction.

We attend and enjoy the offerings of the vendors, the concerts, stage performances and other programs presented in the Square. We've also observed that the Starlight Square staff has a track record of effective, positive collaboration with the city, neighbors, audiences, and presenters in managing noise, safety and parking challenges.

We look forward to enjoying Starlight Square programs in the future.

Thank You,
Jim Kaufman 617-894-0047
Anna Swan 617-894-0048
13 Perry Street, Cambridge, MA 02139

3/18/22

Samara Vise
177 River St. #2L
Cambridge, MA 02139
617-962-0022
samara.vise@gmail.com

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal,

My name is Samara Vise, and I live at 177 River St in Cambridge, MA. Born and raised in Cambridge, I consider myself lucky to be able to still live and work here in my 30s.

When the COVID-19 pandemic shut down all non-essential parts of life, many of us turned inward — literally, inside our houses. The socialization and entertainment void, which people tried to fill through connection on their phones and computers, was immense. As the temperatures warmed in the spring of 2020, people began to gather outside. Parks, the river, outside dining — these all became essential to maintain social connection in those early days.

When Starlight Square opened a few months later, the impact was immediate. Not only was this a safe, outdoor place for congregating, but it provided a fixed location for entertainment. Concerts, comedy, dance performance, poetry readings, yoga readings, graduations, day camp — all activities that at that time did not have an inside home. The looks on people's faces (yes, you could still see them smiling behind the masks) showed the deep gratitude everyone held for this space. I remember attending one of the early improve shows with my mom. It was so exciting. Something so familiar (a shared entertainment experience we had all missed) and yet also so new — outside! In the fresh air!

Sometimes it takes crisis to pause the status quo and help us realize what could be better. Did I ever imagine that a parking lot (which I sometimes used) could be transformed into a beautiful performing arts venue, one that is home to diverse programming that attracts elementary students to people my mother's age? Never. Now I can't imagine anything but Starlight Square there. Yes, the dangers of the pandemic and indoor congregation are subsiding. But the need for communal space, for entertainment, for the arts — has never been greater.

(P.S. — I now bike or walk to Hmart.)

In sum, I strongly support Starlight Square (84 Bishop Allen Drive) to receive a special permit extending their services and programming.

Thank you for your time,



Samara Vise

Pacheco, Maria

From: Alexandros Stefanakis <alexandros.stefanakis@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 17, 2022 6:07 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Support for Starlight Square

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Alexandros Stefanakis and I was raised in Cambridge, MA, and currently reside at 457 Mount Auburn Street. Open and welcoming community space is imperative to the lifeblood of the city and therefore **I strongly support Starlight's special permit application.**

It has been a space of community, activity, joy, and connection with critical safety mechanisms in place during the past two years that forced separation, isolation, and fear as the global pandemic surged. With or without a pandemic, Starlight should stay.

Look forward to seeing Starlight continue to shine!

Cheers,
Alexandros

Pacheco, Maria

From: Suzan Moustafa <suzanhanafy@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 11:12 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: case number: BZA-163746

Hello,

My name is Suzan and I live in front of Starlight. The noise is very disruptive for my day to day life and I get panic attacks from time to time especially when they are drumming and playing loud music. It has been worsening my health this past year.

Please make an effort to remove Starlight from central square.

Thank you,
Suzan

Pacheco, Maria

From: Diana Abbas <dabbas@bu.edu>
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 10:57 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Case number: BZA-163746

Hello,

My name is Diana Abbas. I am a resident in Central square and my apartment is right by starlight. Starlight has been a MAJOR disruptor in my life and has affected both my own mental health AND my family's mental health. The level of noise from the events and the disruption has made us hate our home, where we grew up. My mother, who suffers from anxiety, would get panic attacks with shows happening because she could never get peace or quiet in the house. I have cried countless hours over starlight.

I DO NOT support the continuation of starlight. I think it is an abomination to the square and extremely unfair to the residents in the area. How can we live in a world where this is normal? It is just not normal. It is torture. Please get me back my home, with its peace and quiet, and vote NO.

Thank you,
Diana

Diana Abbas, M.D. Candidate
BU School of Medicine Class of 2022
dabbas@bu.edu / (617) 821 0825
she/her/hers

Pacheco, Maria

From: Abdelfattah, Nouran <nouran_abdelfattah@g.harvard.edu>
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 10:50 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: case number: BZA-163746

Hello,

My name is Nouran and I am a resident of central square. My apartment faces the Hmart parking lot that has now been transformed into a theatre. I have called to make a complaint about this many times but never received a response. I think it's extremely unfair to the residents around the parking lot that a theatre has been built there. The music from the speakers is extremely loud and constant and goes on for more than 3 hours at a time. How are we supposed to think or do any work from home if there is constant loud music outside our door?! On Saturdays there is constant drumming making it impossible to relax on the weekend. It is extremely disruptive... our apartment is literally shaking from the noise downstairs, let alone the loud music that we can't even think from. Also their shows end very late... I am sure no one would want loud music playing outside their door while they are trying to study or eat or sleep. A place like this is meant for a downtown non-residential area.

I do not support the continuation of starlight as it is extremely disruptive to us as residents, please make an effort to help us with this.

Thank you,
Nouran

Nouran Abdelfattah
Ph.D. Candidate
Harvard Medical School

Pacheco, Maria

From: Wudie Fufa <wudiefufa@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 8:32 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight

Hi I live on 70 bishop Allen Dr next to starlight. I am writing to you to let you know that the noise that is coming from starlight is very loud and effective. When my kids come back from school they complain saying they can't focus and do there homework. Also, when I come back from work tired and I want to take a nap I can't because of how loud and distributive the noise is. Lastly it gives me and my kids a headache.

Thank you!

Pacheco, Maria

From: Dee <maytaurus17@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 12:09 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight

Good Afternoon

I am Cambridge resident and I live across the street from Star Light. Although it's a nice idea and it helps upcoming musicians and artistes to be known the music and level of noise is ridiculous!! It's way to loud and it's very disruptive.

I work and attend school online from home as many others do and trying to work and be on a conference call or zoom is very unprofessional even with headphones!! . Its hard to hear and concentrate on my work.

I don't think it was a good idea to add this particular event in the middle of the parking lot which is for shoppers to shop at hmart/ central sq. Instead the shoppers are parking in our residential area parking spaces because they can no longer park in the Designated parking lot that was built for hmart customers!!!

It's very frustrating to have to drive around the block several times looking for a parking space for 30 mins!! and then come home to listen to loud blaring music that lasts till 9pm and sometime beyond that time.

Sometimes these events draw the wrong crowd and this sometimes it's the cause of trouble of people hanging around.

I vote to have this event moved to a more open and secluded area where it's not near a residential area and that they have their own parking lot. I hope that you take all of these comments into consideration and think about the people that actually live in this area and what we have to deal with if this event continues at this location

Thank you for your time and consideration

Dawn Curry



CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

Quinton Y. Zondervan
City Councillor

To the members of the BZA:

I write in strong, enthusiastic support of Starlight Square and I urge you to approve the Special Permit requested in case BZA163746-2022 without delay.

In these challenging times, Starlight Square has been a lifeline for our community. My family and I have personally enjoyed many shows and events in the space including a beautiful celebration of life for Bob Moses, *Thurgood*, a play celebrating the life of Thurgood Marshall put on by the Central Square Theater, the Juneteenth celebration, Taste of Carnival, and even the 2021 City Council Inauguration. On the weekends, Popportunity events have created real economic opportunity for our city's young entrepreneurs and artists of color. I love stopping by on a warm Sunday afternoon because you never know who you might run into or what you might find to buy. These spaces have brought immense joy and there is truly something for everyone, with entry always free of charge. At this point, Starlight Square has become an indispensable part of our community.

I understand that abutting neighbors have raised concerns about the noise impact, and those concerns should be taken seriously. I appreciate the Central Square BID's responsiveness here, and their proposed changes will substantially improve conditions for the neighbors. They are also committed to an ongoing dialogue, which will be very important. While this seems like a good compromise, I do ask that you avoid placing any further restrictions on the live music events which are essential to Starlight's magic.

Any delay in this case would postpone Starlight Square's opening for the next season, at a time when most residents are clamoring for safe, fun social engagement. Please approve this application without delay or additional stipulations beyond what the BID has offered so we can have another awesome summer of programming in Central Square.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "QZ", written over a horizontal line.

Quinton Y. Zondervan
Cambridge City Councillor



These images from last summer show how important Starlight Square is to our community.

Top left: I spoke at the Juneteenth celebration.

Top right: Taste of Carnival, such a joy!

Bottom left: Several elected officials joined the students of Sunrise Cambridge at their rally for urgent climate action in Cambridge.

Bottom right: I'm pictured with Michael Monestime, former Executive Director of the Central Square BID, during a Sunday afternoon Popportunity event.

Pacheco, Maria

From: Luis Mejias <lmejias@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 1:49 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square

Hello!

I am writing to express my support to renew Starlight Square at the BZA.

Thanks!

Luis
18 Plymouth St, Cambridge, MA 02141

Pacheco, Maria

From: ELIJAH LEE-ROBINSON <23elee-robinson@cpsd.us>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 2:13 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: The Impact of Starlight

Hello, my name is Elijah and I wanted to share a little about my experience with Starlight Square and how important it was during a time of uncertainty and discouragement.

I took part in a group called Down With Design where we had a goal of creating a nurturing and supportive environment for students and trusted adults, during the pandemic. We came up with event's that centered students' voices and creativity, and through the challenges of gathering people and making sure we design the most comforting, fun space for our community, we were able to provide those feelings of connection we were missing out on for the past year.

Without Starlight Square offering their space to us for each of our events, and so many other groups in our Cambridge community, we would have missed out on that sense of community and togetherness that Cambridge is known for. That you can feel by simply walking down our vibrant streets. Without Starlight Square, I wouldn't have met so many people that later on, helped me achieve other personal goals of mine. Without this space, and the grind of meeting every week to decide how we were gonna top our last event, how we were gonna gather more youth, how we were gonna make it more enjoyable, I know the pandemic would've been harder for me mentally and socially then it already was.

So, I say thank you to Starlight, and all the amazing work they do and hopefully continue to do, and I hope you see and feel the impact the space has had in the same way.

Pacheco, Maria

From: Dan Totten <dantotten@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 1:09 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Approve Starlight!

Dear Members of the BZA:

I write as a neighbor urging your approval of Starlight Square.

What a wonderful thing Starlight Square has been for our neighborhood. This has been one of the only ways that our community has stayed socially connected through this pandemic. I love going over there and catching a show or even just to say hi to everyone who works so hard to make it a success.

Yes, I can hear the music from my open window. Sometimes it has even woken me up from a nap. But that minor inconvenience pales in comparison to the thousands of hours of joy that the space has brought to our neighborhood.

The compromises proposed by the BID are beyond reasonable. Please approve this without delay so that the show can go on!

Thanks,

Dan Totten
54 Bishop Allen Drive #2

Pacheco, Maria

From: Abeer Abu-Rubieh <aabu-rubieh@transitionhouse.org>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 12:45 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: BZA163746-2022-Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive.

To Whom it may concern,

I am contacting you in regards to Starlight Square's special permit.

Abeer Abu-Rubieh
170 Brookline Street
Affiliated with: Transition House and Brookline Lunch

I cannot emphasize Starlight's positive impact on our community enough.

2 years ago, we were all dealing with very similar feelings of fear, confusion and sadness. The pandemic took a toll on many--- and when it felt like there was no light, I found it at Starlight. During a time of isolation, I went out to Starlight, the feeling of loneliness went away. Seeing the community find some happiness within Starlight during a very dark and difficult time was comforting for mine and many others' mental health.

Even with lowering COVID cases and mask mandates being removed, I and many others still feel safer in open outdoor areas like Starlight as opposed to a closed space. This is why I believe Starlight warrants an extension--while we seem to be no longer in the height of the pandemic's destruction, we are still mentally trying to recover and in doing so, the city should provide a space where those who are still recovering are able enjoy activities that not only support their healing but also supporting small businesses/vendors that Starlight has provided since the beginning.

Please support Starlight Square and the necessary permit needed for them to provide a safe space to those who continue to need it.

All the best,
Abeer

--
Abeer Abu-Rubieh
Operations & Development
[Transition House, Inc.](#)
P.O. Box 392016
Cambridge, MA 02139
P: [617.354.2676](tel:617.354.2676) | Fax [617.868.1651](tel:617.868.1651)

Pacheco, Maria

From: Risa Mednick <risa.mednick@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 12:36 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: nina@centralsq.org; David W Hildum
Subject: In Support of Starlight Square's Special Permit

Dear Members of the BZA:

Timing is everything!

Starlight Square was envisioned well before COVID. Thankfully, its creators and partners leapt into action during the frightful early days of the pandemic to navigate its realization.

From the moment the scaffolding went up and the first fabulous scrimms were hung, Starlight has proven itself true to its vision. Throughout the pandemic, it's been a very special kind of social balm for creatives, social entrepreneurs, and community-minded souls. It's also "the bomb" of a successful venue for showcasing talent and ideas and community connections among people of all ages and backgrounds.

We've been Starlight supporters from the start and grateful audience members thrilled by theater, dance, music, and poetry from its stage. Two years on, we're still moved by the deeply resonant images surrounding Starlight every time we walk by.

Cambridge needs to continue to make space for Starlight Square because Starlight is a beacon — an unparalleled civic space in a city so lacking in places where everyone truly feels welcome. Starlight shines the spotlight on the good, the fun, the creative, the possible — the very hope for the future of our city.

Please support Starlight Square's request for a special permit to continue to operate on Lot 5 so our community can continue to help it thrive.

Sincerely,

Risa Mednick and David Hildum

20 Maple Ave, Unit C
Cambridge MA 02139
1.617.461.0532
risa.mednick@gmail.com
d.hildum@icloud.com

Pacheco, Maria

From: Bella Revett <isabellarevett@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 12:34 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Please approve Starlight Square without delay

Hello Maria,

I am emailing as a resident who lives 20 feet away from Starlight Square. I absolutely love living so close to Starlight and have been waiting for the programming to return! I have never heard the events run outside of approved hours and whilst some residents have expressed noise complaints, this is the least noisy city I have ever lived in. I am so very excited to have life return to the square and hope that approval will happen as soon as possible! I want this square to feel like a vibrant community again, even just sitting on my stoop listening to the performances has brought me and my neighbors so much joy in these difficult times.

Best,

Bella Revett
She/Her
443 280 7316
isabellarevett@gmail.com

Pacheco, Maria

From: Becca Schofield <beccascho@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 12:31 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: nina@centralsq.org
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive
Attachments: Schofield_Starlight Sq Support Letter_03242022.docx

Hello, I am submitting my letter of support for the extension of Starlight Square's special permit to operate at 84 Bishop Allen Drive.

I've attached my letter and copied the text below for the record, and thanks very much.

##

I am writing in strong support of the Starlight Square permit extension under consideration at the March 24th hearing. Starlight has been a place of refuge and community building throughout an isolating pandemic, and its positive contribution to the City goes above and beyond an alternative to indoor gatherings. There's no other space like it in Cambridge - it's an incredible opportunity for all residents (and visitors!) to connect with friends and neighbors, learn more about our City, and support local artists and nonprofit groups. I hope that the BZA will continue to support Starlight and provide craftspeople, food businesses, performers etc. with an opportunity to share their work.

I grew up in Cambridge, and currently live in the Riverside neighborhood – I have deep roots in this City and love re-connecting with elementary/high school friends, kids I babysat, old teammates, neighbors, and others who expand my awareness of community. I also work in the affordable housing field and advocate for more housing opportunities, rental subsidies, and zoning reform to make our neighborhoods more inclusive. Starlight is one of very few places where a broad range of folks, from all different demographics and backgrounds, can feel welcome and comfortable. While I hope we can create a more welcoming City through housing and more supportive housing-related policies, I am proud that Cambridge values this inclusive use of public space and extend (and eventually make permanent) the Starlight Square special permit.

I'd also like to share two of my Starlight Square experiences that have been impactful. First, Starlight provided a forum for my mother-in-law to start to sell her pottery to raise money for specific charities. Not only has it given her a space to grow her own business (now she sells online and in other pop-up locations), but it directly contributed to important social causes (educational initiatives, food security, etc.). Second, I attended a high school performance last school year. When classes moved to zoom, students lost an essential space to explore their creativity and gain confidence in public speaking. At Starlight, not only did Cambridge Rindge and Latin Students bravely perform monologues, but other high schoolers from around the country joined them on stage. This engagement with students from other states and backgrounds – especially when some couldn't even see their next-door neighbors – was an incredible opportunity that only Starlight could provide.

Please grant Starlight Square with a permit extension so our City can keep exploring and expanding this innovative model for supporting diverse small businesses, providing spaces for youth programming and engagement, and creating a low-cost venue for performing. I, along with many friends, co-workers, community advocates etc., have been impressed and inspired by Starlight's positive impact on our City.

Sincerely,

Becca Schofield
35 Magee St, Cambridge MA 02139

City of Cambridge, Board of Zoning Appeal

March 21, 2022

Re: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive (Case No. BZA 163746-2022)

To Members of the Board of Zoning Appeal,

I am writing in strong support of the Starlight Square permit extension under consideration at the March 24th hearing. This been a place of refuge and community building throughout an isolating pandemic, and its positive contribution to the City goes above and beyond an alternative to indoor gatherings. There's no other space like it in Cambridge. Starlight has been an incredible opportunity for all residents (and visitors!) to connect with friends and neighbors, learn more about our City, and support local artists and nonprofit groups. I hope that the BZA will continue to support Starlight and provide craftspeople, food businesses, performers etc. with an opportunity to share their work.

I grew up in Cambridge, and currently live in the Riverside neighborhood – I have deep roots in this City and love re-connecting with elementary/high school friends, kids I babysat, old teammates, neighbors, and others who expand my awareness of community. I also work in the affordable housing field and advocate for more housing opportunities, rental subsidies, and zoning reform to make our neighborhoods more inclusive. Starlight is one of very few places where a broad range of folks, from all different demographics and backgrounds, can feel welcome and comfortable. While I hope we can create a more welcoming City through housing and more supportive housing-related policies, I am proud that Cambridge values this inclusive use of public space and extend (and eventually make permanent) the Starlight Square special permit.

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Please grant Starlight Square with a permit extension so our City can keep exploring and expanding this innovative model for supporting diverse small businesses, providing spaces for youth programming and engagement, and creating a low-cost venue for performing. I, along with many friends, co-workers, community advocates etc., have been impressed and inspired by Starlight's positive impact on our City.

Sincerely,

Becca Schofield
35 Magee St
Cambridge MA 02139

Ben Lynch
9 Perry St.
Cambridge, MA. 02139

March 14, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
City of Cambridge
831 Mass Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

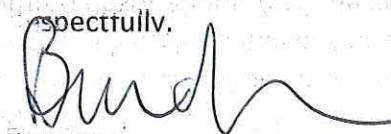
Re: Special Permit Application for Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Dr.; Case #BZA163746-2022

To the Board of Zoning Appeal:

This letter is written in support for Starlight Square's application for a Special Permit to continue its operation at 84 Bishop Allen Drive. My family and I have been residents of Cambridgeport since 1983, and, like many residents, have watched the evolution of businesses and public spaces in Central Square with great interest since then. Its mixture of small businesses, municipal services, restaurants and performance spaces, along with easy access for pedestrians, public transit users, and bicyclists, makes Central Square one of the City's most important commercial and cultural destinations. And the addition of Starlight Square makes it even more so.

Starlight Square has provided an incredibly valuable opportunity to residents and visitors alike during the pandemic: the chance to safely convene in an outdoor setting to shop for locally grown food, handmade products of artists and artisans, to enjoy musical programming, public discussions and ceremonial events. Starlight's inventive programming has knit together artists, farmers, performers, shoppers and curious passersby in a friendly and welcoming way at a time that we have needed it the most. It is one of those instances where you have to ask yourself, why did such a creative and inspired idea take so long to get here?

Starlight may have been originally conceived as a response to the feelings of isolation many have experienced over the last two years, but regardless the public health situation, it has surely proven itself as an important resource for the City that should be continued- a public space where all are welcome and which fits perfectly within a community and the space. Realistically, one has to balance the impacts on parking in Central Square, but I believe that this is a far more sensible and valuable use of the City's resources. I urge the Board to issue a Special Permit for its continued operation. Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully,

Ben Lynch

Friday, March 4, 2022

To Whom It May Concern,

I strongly feel that the Starlight venue should be given an extension. This is an amazing place where musicians and artists can perform and show their artistry. This is crucial during these times of hardship in our community and country.

My name is Guillermo Nojehowicz, and I m the Director of World Jazz Ensemble (WJE) and Percussion Ensemble at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, the public high school at Cambridge Public School. I've seen my music students perform there last summer and it was an unforgettable experience. The place and the location are just wonderful.

As a professional musician, I know how important it is to have venues like Starlight open and available to great music and art.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for any further information. Thank you.

Best regards,
Guillermo Nojehowicz

From: Guillermo Nojehowicz,
drummer, composer, educator
Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
Visual and Performing Arts
459 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02138
gnojehowicz@cpsd.us

www.elecomusic.com



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

BZA163746-2022

1 message

Gemma SHOOR <25ashoor@cpsd.us>

Wed, Mar 9, 2022 at 8:38 AM

To: Nina@centralsq.org, mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Hello,

My name is Gemma Shoor, I am a CRLS student and History Club member. I strongly support the special permit application for Starlight Square. Although I have never personally been, many of my community members speak very highly of Starlight Square and it seems like the perfect place to hold our junior prom. I believe Starlight warrants an extension because it would bring so much joy and love into the Cambridge Rindge and Latin community.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration,
Gemma Shoor and the CRLS History Club



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

1 message

Abbie Cohen <abbie.cohen24@gmail.com>

Mon, Mar 14, 2022 at 2:26 PM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Cc: Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal,

My name is Abbie Cohen and I was born and raised in Cambridge, MA and currently reside at [35 Magee St, Cambridge MA 02139](#) nearby Central Square and have been able to benefit from the amazing development, installation, and programming that Starlight Square has produced. I strongly support Starlight's special permit application.

Starlight has been a space of community, activity, joy, and connection with critical safety mechanisms in place during the past two years that forced separation, isolation, and fear as the global pandemic surged. That said, as the pandemic continues to wane (fingers crossed), Starlight should stay. I have attended numerous events, shopped at Popportunity, and had the amazing opportunity to teach yoga for free to the Cambridge community. I'd love to be able to continue to utilize the amazing community space Starlight Square has created when the Starlight special permit is approved.

Thank you,
Abbie

Monday, March 21,

To Whom it may concern,

I am contacting you in regards to Starlight Square's special permit.

Abeer Abu-Rubieh
170 Brookline Street
Affiliated with: Transition House and Brookline Lunch

I cannot emphasize Starlight's positive impact on our community enough.

2 years ago, we were all dealing with very similar feelings of fear, confusion and sadness. The pandemic took a toll on many---and when it felt like there was no light, I found it at Starlight. During a time of isolation, I went out to Starlight, the feeling of loneliness went away. Seeing the community find some happiness within Starlight during a very dark and difficult time was comforting for mine and many others' mental health.

Even with lowering COVID cases and mask mandates being removed, I and many others still feel safer in open outdoor areas like Starlight as opposed to a closed space. This is why I believe Starlight warrants an extension--while we seem to be no longer in the height of the pandemic's destruction, we are still mentally trying to recover and in doing so, the city should provide a space where those who are still recovering are able enjoy activities that not only support their healing but also supporting small businesses/vendors that Starlight has provided since the beginning.

Please support Starlight Square and the necessary permit needed for them to provide a safe space to those who continue to need it.

All the best,
Abeer



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Letter of Support for Starlight Square

1 message

Addie Warner <addie.warner@gmail.com>

Tue, Mar 15, 2022 at 12:14 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Dear Ms. Pacheco,

My name is Addie Warner and I was born and raised in Cambridge, MA. As a Cantabrigian, and local, I have been able to benefit from the fantastic programming that Starlight Square has produced, and thus **I strongly wish to convey my support of Starlight's special permit application.**

Starlight Square has been a space of community and connection during a time that has made congregating difficult. Pandemic, or no pandemic: Starlight must stay.

I have attended various events, shopped the 'Popportunity', and had the wonderful privilege of attending yoga classes at no cost--all thanks to Starlight Square.

I ask that we, citizens of Cambridge, be able to continue to benefit from the unique and special community space Starlight Square offers us.

Please consider this in your review to approve Starlight Square's special permit.

With hope,

Addie Warner



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Support for Starlight Square

1 message

Alexandros Stefanakis <alexandros.stefanakis@gmail.com>

Thu, Mar 17, 2022 at 6:06 PM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Alexandros Stefanakis and I was raised in Cambridge, MA, and currently reside at [457 Mount Auburn Street](#).

Open and welcoming community space is imperative to the lifeblood of the city and therefore **I strongly support Starlight's special permit application.**

It has been a space of community, activity, joy, and connection with critical safety mechanisms in place during the past two years that forced separation, isolation, and fear as the global pandemic surged. With or without a pandemic, Starlight should stay.

Look forward to seeing Starlight continue to shine!

Cheers,

Alexandros

City of Cambridge, Board of Zoning Appeal

March 21, 2022

Re: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive (Case No. BZA 163746-2022)

To Members of the Board of Zoning Appeal,

I am writing in strong support of the Starlight Square permit extension under consideration at the March 24th hearing. This been a place of refuge and community building throughout an isolating pandemic, and its positive contribution to the City goes above and beyond an alternative to indoor gatherings. There's no other space like it in Cambridge. Starlight has been an incredible opportunity for all residents (and visitors!) to connect with friends and neighbors, learn more about our City, and support local artists and nonprofit groups. I hope that the BZA will continue to support Starlight and provide craftspeople, food businesses, performers etc. with an opportunity to share their work.

I grew up in Cambridge, and currently live in the Riverside neighborhood – I have deep roots in this City and love re-connecting with elementary/high school friends, kids I babysat, old teammates, neighbors, and others who expand my awareness of community. I also work in the affordable housing field and advocate for more housing opportunities, rental subsidies, and zoning reform to make our neighborhoods more inclusive. Starlight is one of very few places where a broad range of folks, from all different demographics and backgrounds, can feel welcome and comfortable. While I hope we can create a more welcoming City through housing and more supportive housing-related policies, I am proud that Cambridge values this inclusive use of public space and extend (and eventually make permanent) the Starlight Square special permit.

I'd also like to share two of my Starlight Square experiences that have been impactful. First, Starlight provided a forum for my mother-in-law to start to sell her pottery to raise money for specific charities. Not only has it given her a space to grow her own business (now she sells online and in other pop-up locations), but it directly contributed to important social causes (educational initiatives, food security, etc.). Second, I attended a high school performance last school year. When classes moved to zoom, students lost an essential space to explore their creativity and gain confidence in public speaking. At Starlight, not only did Cambridge Rindge and Latin Students bravely perform monologues, but other high schoolers from around the country joined them on stage. This engagement with students from other states and backgrounds – especially when some couldn't even see their next-door neighbors – was an incredible opportunity that only Starlight could provide.

Please grant Starlight Square with a permit extension so our City can keep exploring and expanding this innovative model for supporting diverse small businesses, providing spaces for youth programming and engagement, and creating a low-cost venue for performing. I, along with many friends, co-workers, community advocates etc., have been impressed and inspired by Starlight's positive impact on our City.

Sincerely,

Becca Schofield
35 Magee St
Cambridge MA 02139

CNA
Cambridgeport
Neighborhood
Association

March 18, 2022

To the Board of Zoning Appeals,

As the board of the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association, we write to express our support for Starlight Square continuing to operate outdoors in Central Square. It has been a delight to watch this parking lot transform into a place where the community comes together, and we appreciate the wide variety of opportunities it has brought to the neighborhood. We've personally experienced everything from the farmer's market to Popportunity shopping to a Bollywood dance class, and we would love to see the space continue to be so well-utilized.

While some of these things might continue individually indoors somewhere, there is something special about a versatile outdoor space. We know that members of our community are still experiencing a wide variety of risk tolerance with regards to COVID, and outdoor space is still the only way that we can all come together. And even if there were no COVID at all, many of us will always appreciate the outdoors, fresh air, and the chance to be outside while close to home.

We are grateful for all the work and thoughtfulness that has already gone into creating Starlight Square, and we hope you will allow it to continue.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Bowie

President, for the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association Board

Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association, Inc.
Rebecca Bowie (President), Cathie Zusy (Treasurer), Brittany Butler (Co-Clerk),
Tien-Tien Chan (Co-Clerk), Valerie Bonds, Julia Halprin, Tonia Hicks



CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

E. Denise Simmons
City Councillor

Mayor
2008-2009
2016-2017

March 15, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: In Support of Starlight Square | 84 Bishop Allen Drive

To The Members of the Board of Zoning Appeal:

I am writing to express my strong support of Starlight Square, located at 84 Bishop Allen Drive, in its bid to receive a special permit to continue operating in Central Square.

Starlight is now a civic and cultural amenity that hosts many of the defining events in the City, from the high school's Senior Week programming and Prom, to last year's celebration of the life of Dr. Bob Moses, to this year's City Council Inauguration.

As a Central Square business owner, I have watched Starlight raise the profile of the Cultural District. As a lifelong resident, I have benefitted from how many services it was able to transition outside during the pandemic, such as the Farmers Market to voter registration, to the NAACP panel I participated in. As a member of the City Council, I see Starlight as a path forward in the City for equitable use of public space and a driver of vibrant, interesting events that bring renewed life into Central Square.

I trust the Central Square BID's leadership team and Board of Directors to continue stewarding this space, and I am aware that they are in communication with the neighbors who have commented on sound impact. I am more than happy to continue supporting those efforts, and I respectfully ask you to grant this permit so they, in partnership with the City of Cambridge, can continue to meet the needs of our residents as we recover collectively from the COVID-19 crisis. Thank you very much for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

City Councillor E. Denise Simmons



CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

Quinton Y. Zondervan
City Councillor

To the members of the BZA:

I write in strong, enthusiastic support of Starlight Square and I urge you to approve the Special Permit requested in case BZA163746-2022 without delay.

In these challenging times, Starlight Square has been a lifeline for our community. My family and I have personally enjoyed many shows and events in the space including a beautiful celebration of life for Bob Moses, *Thurgood*, a play celebrating the life of Thurgood Marshall put on by the Central Square Theater, the Juneteenth celebration, Taste of Carnival, and even the 2021 City Council Inauguration. On the weekends, Popportunity events have created real economic opportunity for our city's young entrepreneurs and artists of color. I love stopping by on a warm Sunday afternoon because you never know who you might run into or what you might find to buy. These spaces have brought immense joy and there is truly something for everyone, with entry always free of charge. At this point, Starlight Square has become an indispensable part of our community.

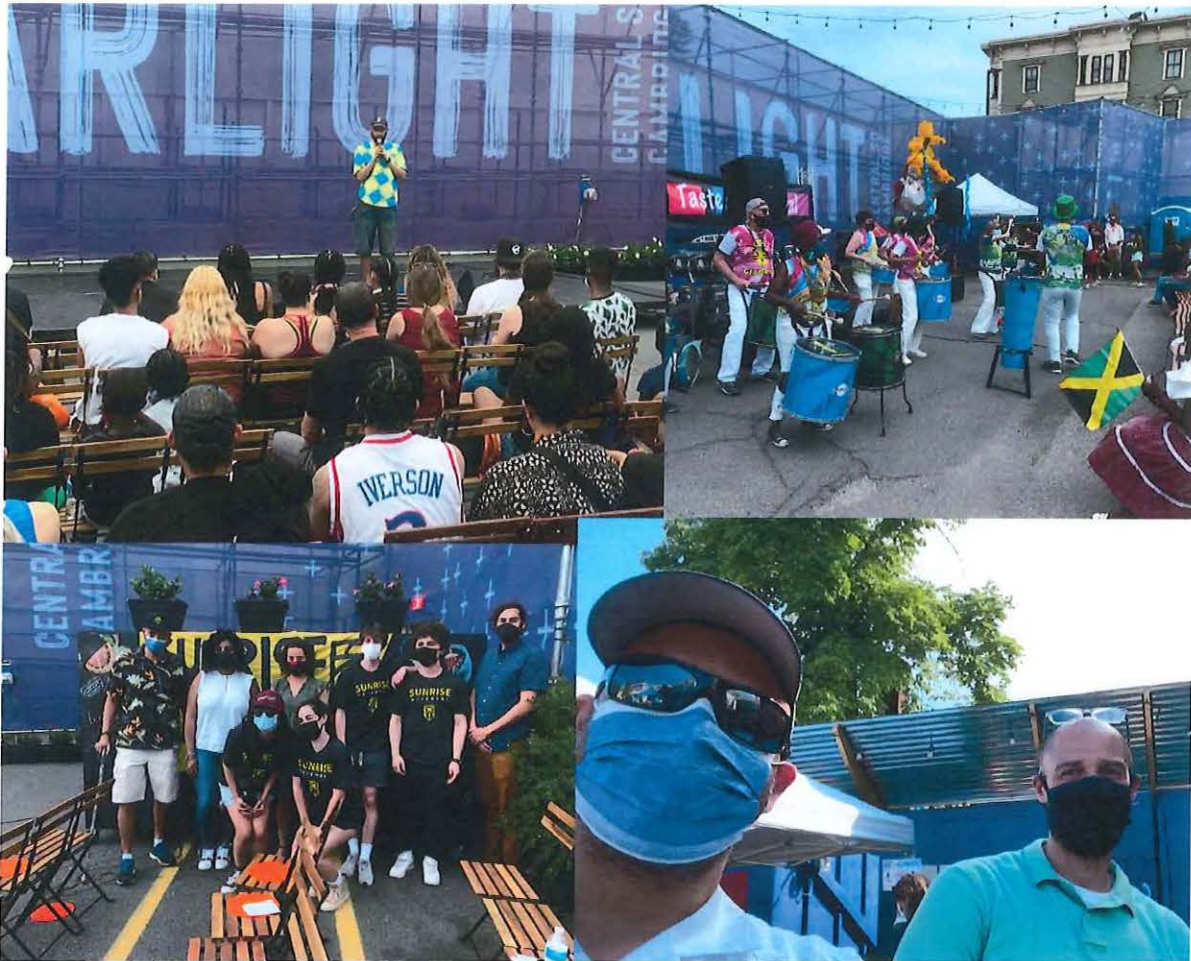
I understand that abutting neighbors have raised concerns about the noise impact, and those concerns should be taken seriously. I appreciate the Central Square BID's responsiveness here, and their proposed changes will substantially improve conditions for the neighbors. They are also committed to an ongoing dialogue, which will be very important. While this seems like a good compromise, I do ask that you avoid placing any further restrictions on the live music events which are essential to Starlight's magic.

Any delay in this case would postpone Starlight Square's opening for the next season, at a time when most residents are clamoring for safe, fun social engagement. Please approve this application without delay or additional stipulations beyond what the BID has offered so we can have another awesome summer of programming in Central Square.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "QY Zondervan".

Quinton Y. Zondervan
Cambridge City Councillor



These images from last summer show how important Starlight Square is to our community.

Top left: I spoke at the Juneteenth celebration.

Top right: Taste of Carnival, such a joy!

Bottom left: Several elected officials joined the students of Sunrise Cambridge at their rally for urgent climate action in Cambridge.

Bottom right: I'm pictured with Michael Monestime, former Executive Director of the Central Square BID, during a Sunday afternoon Poppportunity event.

From: Eric Grunebaum <eric.grunebaum@gmail.com>
Date: March 20, 2022 at 7:06:33 PM EDT
To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive, BZA163746-2022

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal,

I would like to express strong support for Starlight Square receiving an extension of its special permit.

I am a lifelong resident of Cambridge, I brought up two kids who attended CRLS and I have served on many formal and informal committees in Cambridge including Envision Cambridge and Net Zero. Professionally, I spent 20 years as a documentary filmmaker and believe strongly in the value of the arts in creating and enriching our community and building connections among diverse groups.

My last visit to Starlight was for the MLK/Many Helping Hands event and what a wonderful place Starlight is for our community to come together!

These connections can continue growing as we emerge from the pandemic, although it's far from clear that we are in fact emerging. Even so, there are long term negative impacts on our community and on mental health which will likely linger for many years after the pandemic which exposure to the arts can help address.

Thank you,
Eric

Eric Grunebaum, 98 Montgomery St., Cambridge, MA 02140, 617-304-5824

Cofounder, Director & Leadership Team, Friends of Jerry's Pond

Friends of Jerry's Pond Fund at Cambridge Community Foundation



March 15, 2022

OFFICE. (617) 492 2200
FAX. (617) 876 9775

Board of Zoning Appeal
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge MA 02139

130 Bishop Allen Drive
Cambridge, MA 02139

hmfh.com

Re: Case No. 163746-2022
Special Permit for Starlight Square

Dear Members of the BZA:

I am writing in support of a Special Permit for the continued operation of Starlight Square on the city parking lot at Bishop Allen Drive and Norfolk St. Operating during the past two years under an executive order, Starlight Square has demonstrated the value of outdoor entertainment and recreation within the Central Square Business and Cultural Districts. Managed by the Business Improvement District, Starlight has provided space to numerous Cambridge-based nonprofits as well as regular pop-up and farm markets that have maintained a level of cultural and commercial activity to help sustain business in Central Square during the pandemic.

But the true value of Starlight Square has been its success as an accessible incubator of small retail and entertainment businesses for which the cost and availability of traditional brick-and-mortar outlets present insurmountable barriers. Starlight represents that near perfect combination of public investment on public land to promote community-based initiatives that serve a broad base of community needs. During this operation of Starlight Square to date, the Central Square BID has demonstrated its ability to respond responsibly to neighborhood concerns and adjust programs and activities as appropriate.

I ask the Board to approve this Special Permit.

In full disclosure, I am a founding member of the CS BID Board of Directors. I am also a long-time resident of Mid-Cambridge and business owner in Central Square.

Very truly yours,

George Metzger
90 Antrim Street

Alexandra Gadawski, AIA
Alicia Crothers, AIA
Andrea Yoder, AIA
Ania Matteson
Arthur S. Duffy, AIA
Caitlin E. Osepchuk, AIA
Colin R. Dockrill, AIGA
Deborah A. Collins, AIA
Devin E. Canton, AIA
Erica Metzger
Gary Brock, AIA
George R. Metzger, AIA
James Liebman, AIA
John F. Miller, FAIA
Julie Darling, AIA
Justin Viglianti, AIA
Laura A. Wernick, FAIA
Liza Bouton
Lori Cowles, AIA
Matthew LaRue, AIA
Melissa A. Greene, AIA
Peter Rust, AIA
Philip S. Lewis, AIA
Robert P. Williams, AIA
Sara Rosenthal, AIA
Stephanie MacNeil, AIA
Suni Dillard, AIA
Tina Stanislaski, AIA
Tracey Clarke
Vassilios Valaes, AIA

C/CSBID/Starlight.SP.Reg.3.10.2022



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

1 message

Isabella O'Connell <oconnellisabella@gmail.com>

Fri, Mar 11, 2022 at 11:59 AM

To: Mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Dear Zoning Board Members,

My name is Isabella O'Connell. I have lived at [65 Dana street](#) for the past two years. I started working in Central Square in 2016 at the former ImprovBoston location at 40 Prospect and I now work full-time as a shared nanny on campus for Harvard staff. I am writing to express my support for Starlight Square's permit application for use of [84 Bishop Allen Drive](#). As a Cambridge resident and comedy producer, Starlight Square has been vital in providing performance opportunities and a space for artists to reconnect over the course of the pandemic. After the pandemic began and prior to my involvement with Starlight Square, I had only had access to running virtual comedy productions. Starlight has given me the chance to "unpause" my growth as a young, LGBT artist and producer from Cambridge. As a booker, I have been able to pass on that opportunity to other up-and-coming artists, particularly young women, performers of color, LGBT performers, and folks at intersections of those identities. These are talented artists who may be overlooked at venues that do not prioritize highlighting local talent like Starlight Square does, and that do not provide open opportunity for show-runners like myself who have relationships with under-represented communities of performers. The closure of performance spaces has greatly impacted the arts in Cambridge. Starlight Square attaining use of this lot will make a huge difference in connecting artists and ensuring the longevity of the various arts scenes in Cambridge.

Thank you,
Isabella O'Connell



Nina Berg <nina.e.berg@gmail.com>

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

1 message

James Kaufman <jameskaufman@alum.mit.edu>
To: "mpacheco@cambridgema.gov" <mpacheco@cambridgema.gov>
Cc: Anna K Swan <swan@bu.edu>

Wed, Mar 16, 2022 at 1:07 PM

To the members of Board of Zoning Appeal,

My spouse Anna Swan and I strongly support the special permit application for Starlight to continue as an Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation facility.

We are delighted that what was a parking lot is now a place for people from diverse backgrounds to gather - one of the few outdoor spaces in the city designed for public events. The Square venue was an important life-line during the pandemic and has become critically important to Central Square and the larger Cambridge community as a hub for activity and interaction.

We attend and enjoy the offerings of the vendors, the concerts, stage performances and other programs presented in the Square. We've also observed that the Starlight Square staff has a track record of effective, positive collaboration with the city, neighbors, audiences, and presenters in managing noise, safety and parking challenges.

We look forward to enjoying Starlight Square programs in the future.

Thank You,
Jim Kaufman 617-894-0047
Anna Swan 617-894-0048
[13 Perry Street, Cambridge, MA 02139](#)

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

1 message

Jonathan Berk <jonathan@patronicity.com>

Thu, Mar 10, 2022 at 10:39 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Dear Members of the Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

Thank you for the opportunity to write to you today to submit my strong support for Starlight Square to continue operating in its current space at [84 Bishop Allen Drive](#) in Cambridge beyond the expiration of the current State of Emergency.

As someone who's been involved both professionally and personally with hundreds of creative placemaking projects like Starlight Square across North America I've seen first hand the incredible, deep and long lasting impact that projects like this have on the communities they operate in. From alley spaces in Detroit and Kalamazoo, Michigan to vacant lots in Brockton and Ashland, Massachusetts turning often overlooked municipal spaces used for vehicles cut throughs or parking for a few cars into community hubs creates a new, vibrant and vital destination that allows the community to foster and thrive around it. The short term benefits of each of these spaces include driving foot traffic to commercial districts, serving local community groups as spaces to meet, spaces for public art and community performance and foster and grow a local small businesses ecosystem. These impacts are incredible on their own but the long term, less readily apparent, impacts in each case are where the true magic of placemaking happens. The new social bonds built within these spaces... The opportunity to more deeply engage and connect with your community and learn about your neighbors in a safe public setting... The long term trust of your neighbors, something we are so lacking in this country today... The [increase in civic engagement](#) fostered by the cocreation of these spaces... These are the real, deep, long term and often difficult to obtain benefits that you just cannot get any other way but allowing projects like Starlight Square to flourish in your community.

We've already seen the proven track record of thousands of Cambridge and Greater Boston residents and visitors coming together in Starlight Square. We've seen the dozens of local BIPOC businesses reach new customers, grow their consumer bases and even open their own stores in the neighborhood. We've seen the impacts of increased foot traffic in Central Square on even the coldest of New England winters days. Starlight Squares positive impacts on the community are just beginning... by allowing the community to continue to cocreate alongside the Central Square BID the sky is the limit and the opportunities to strengthen the bonds of the Cambridge community in this space are endless.

Thank you for the opportunity to write this letter of STRONG support for Starlight Square and for your time considering it's contents. I'd be happy to answer any additional questions you may have.

Best,
Jonathan Berk
Vice President of Patronicity
Boston Resident

Jonathan Berk
Vice President
Jonathan@patronicity.com
617-750-6008



patronicity.com



Want to unlock the power of your places and create more vibrant communities?

Meet us at **bench** and let's start a conversation.

[Read more](#)



From: Kabir Sen <mckabir@yahoo.com>
Date: March 20, 2022 at 10:26:06 PM EDT
To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

To whom it may concern,

Hello, my name is Kabir Sen and I live at 31 Bacon Road in Belmont. I grew up in Cambridge and perform regularly in town. As a long-time resident of Cambridge and as a music teacher for 23 years at the Shady Hill School in Cambridge, I am writing on behalf of the people in my community. I strongly support a special permit being granted to Starlight Square in Central Square. This program provides a very specific and critical need for the Cambridge community to engage, socialize and safely celebrate arts and culture in Cambridge. It allows people from all walks of life to have an experience together in an environment that feels safe for everyone. I cannot emphasize enough how important this is for people to have this outlet during these difficult times.

This program is top notch and the attention to detail, planning and professionalism is outstanding with this group of organizers. They also take care to curate a highly inclusive experience for all. I can personally attest to having a wonderful, positive experience when my band "Krush Faktory" played at Starlight last summer. In closing, I would like to say that these kind of events are what make Cambridge the vibrant cultural metropolis that it is. Let's grant a special permit to this organization so they can keep doing the great work and help us keep this community thriving.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Kabir Sen

(musician, producer, recording artist, music teacher)
(617)308-7964
kabir.sen@shs.org
mckabir@yahoo.com

CARU Associates LLC

Commercial Properties

March 20, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

RE: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive.

To Members of the Board of Zoning Appeal,

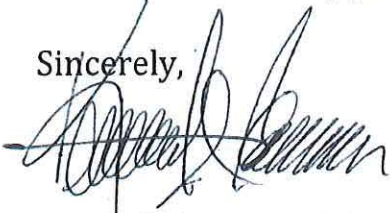
I am writing in support of a special permit for the continued operation of Starlight Square on Municipal Lot #5 at Bishop Allen Drive and Norfolk St.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Central Square BID, has worked in partnership with the City of Cambridge to build and successfully operate this space to the benefit of the residents and business owners of Central Square and wider Cambridge. It exemplifies the spirit of our district, a place where arts, culture, and small business intersect and symbiotically support one another.

As a third generational business owner in Cambridge and Central Square, I have seen Central Square weather many storms. Starlight has helped us through the pandemic, and we still need it as we continue to recover.

I ask the Board to approve this special permit.

Sincerely,



Kenneth S. Barron, Managing Partner and
Chairman of the Board of Directors, Central Square BID



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Board of Zoning Appeal

1 message

Liliana Jimenez <lilianajimenez25@gmail.com>

Wed, Mar 9, 2022 at 12:56 PM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov, Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

To whom it may concern,

My name is Liliana Jimenez, an instructor and performer from Rumba y Timbal Dance Studio ([7 Temple Street](#)). I am writing in support of Starlight Cambridge continuing and staying in their home and continuing the program for the community with their special permit application for [84 Bishop Allen Drive](#).

During covid, this program has helped me so much survive the massive loss of business I have incurred as an artist. In a safe outdoor environment, I was able to provide free classes to the community which in turn helped rebuild our studio slowly. We are still feeling the effects of the loss of business, so having this program continue will only help us and other artists thrive and continue to rebuild. People love to dance and having these free events to reconnect with people is super important now especially post covid!

Please let Starlight have this extension. This program has been nothing but amazing and supportive. Watching the community grow and reconnect is what makes this special and I think an important quality that Cambridge loves to promote and boast about!

If you have any questions or would like more feedback I am happy to provide!

Liliana Jimenez

From: Elizabeth Haley <ehaley00@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Mar 9, 2022 at 1:11 PM
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive
To: <mpacheco@cambridgema.gov>

Hello,

My name is Elizabeth Haley. I live and work in Cambridge, Ma. I am writing to share my support of Starlight Sq receiving a special permit for a third season.

Where do I even begin with how much I have enjoyed Starlight since it opened in 2020? In a time where being indoors to see a live performance wasn't an option, it provided that safe space. People from all walks of life could safely come together to see a Bollywood dance company, a Hip-Hop show or shop small from local artisans. There was even a high school prom! Starlight Square is truly a place unlike anywhere else.

I am grateful to live in a city where a space like this exists. I cherish the countless times my son and I walked there together this past summer, meeting friends, family and neighbors. There was always something cool happening at Starlight and the vibe was consistently positive and all inclusive.

The City of Cambridge is a better place because of Starlight Square and I can't wait to see what Season 3 has in store for us!

Thank you for your time.

Elizabeth Haley
27 Magnolia Ave #1
Cambridge, Ma 02138

Office Manager @ CARU Associates
620 Mass Ave
Cambridge, Ma

From: Luba Falk Feigenberg <luba.feigenberg@gmail.com>
Date: March 10, 2022 at 8:49:14 AM EST
To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

To the Board of Zoning Appeal,

I am writing to express my strong support of Case BZA163746-2022 to grant Starlight Square a special permit to operate for its third season of programming.

Starlight Square is a place of joy and community. In the past two years, I've frequented multiple events at Starlight, from the farmers market to Popportunity to music shows. All have bustled with energy and brought together residents, visitors, elected officials, and local business owners. Starlight have been a balm to the isolation of the pandemic.

To say Starlight warrants an extension is an understatement; Starlight should be a permanent fixture in Central Square. Places that build community are precious and Starlight Square is a gem. It is a space for people to come together and build community, to celebrate and mourn, and to support local small businesses, especially Black and woman owned entrepreneurs. Starlight adds enormous value to Central Square and to the entire city. Not extending a special permit would be a huge loss.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective. I look forward to celebrating many seasons of Starlight Square.

Sincerely,

Luba Falk Feigenberg
Cambridge resident
16 Fairmont Street



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Support for Starlight Square special permit

1 message

Marci Spector <marcibspecto@gmail.com>

Wed, Mar 9, 2022 at 7:03 PM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Hello,

I'm writing to express my strong support for Starlight Square's application for a special permit. I'm a 15-year+ resident of Cambridge, and my family and I believe that community-oriented, dedicated, safe public spaces for entertainment and events are vital. We took our kids to see the Bollywood event there and it was a wonderful experience! It was also hugely important --given COVID #s at the time-- to have this outdoor safe space for gatherings like these. My family and I hope that the City will grant this special permit and continue to give residents treasured opportunities like those hosted by Starlight Square thusfar!

Thank you,

Marci Spector

[34 Avon St, Cambridge, MA 02138](#)



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

1 message

Marlin Kann <marlinkann@gmail.com>

Sat, Mar 19, 2022 at 10:01 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Dear Board of Zoning Appeals,

My name is Marlin Kann, I am a teacher at CRLS, and a resident at [25 Hammond St.](#) in Cambridge, MA. I am so grateful for Starlight Square, personally, as well as for my students. During the remote pandemic times, our civic engagement club #HerVote became an important point of community for our students even though we were forced to become fully virtual. Starlight Square, 7 months after our isolation, was the site of our first live event during the Fall of 2020.

For #HerVote, Starlight Square was a point of organization and a confluence of community. For our club, Starlight was a place where we could hope to meet, and build community, empowerment, and life on a human scale. I remember during that first meeting, after 7 months of unexpected isolation, students were able to see each other, they laughed, and spent time together. Mr. Christopher Montero (a CRLS colleague) was also there, and for our group who had been meeting virtually, this was a wonderful moment of levity.

We also used Starlight Sq as a point of civic engagement as In the Fall of 2020, with the build up to the 2020 election and the commemoration of the centennial of the 19th Amendment, #HerVote was working with Harvard Radcliffe Institute to produce a record preserving the voices of women in 2020, as they responded to the question: Are you going to participate in the 2020 Election? In conjunction with the Schlesinger Library at Harvard Radcliffe, our collections were digitally preserved in conjunction with their Long 19 Web Portal.

#HerVote returned to Starlight, made our collections, had fun, our students dreamed big and through to host a forum inside Starlight =DD, we never did get inside, but maybe with your approval that could still happen. I am so very grateful for the community opportunity provided by Starlight Square, I strongly support Starlight's special permit application, so that this site may continue to exist and be a wonderful point of community and empowerment for Cambridge, and more specifically, the young people of CRLS.

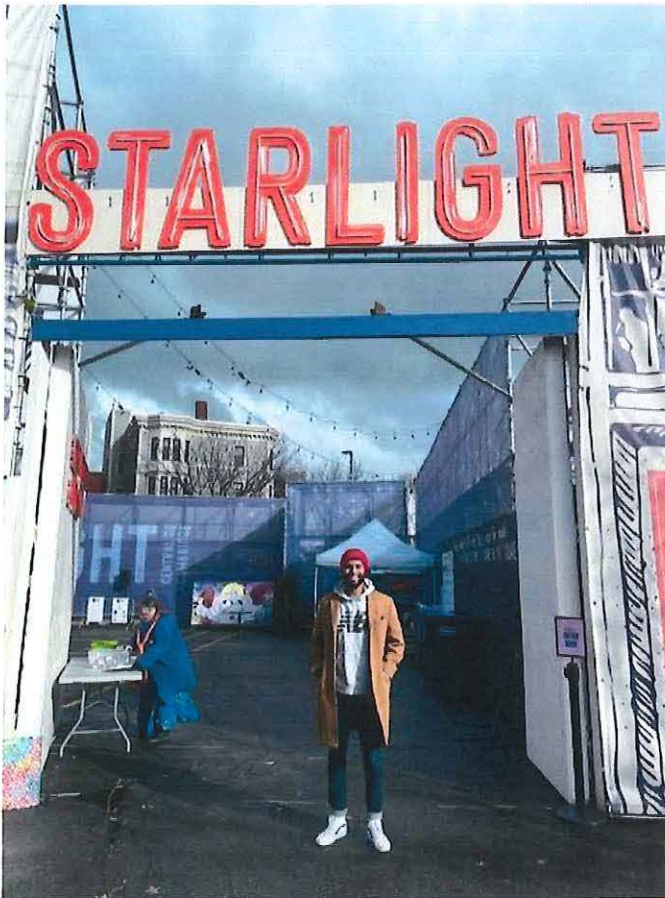
Thank you for your consideration,
Marlin Kann

From: Niko Emack <nbazelais@gmail.com>
Date: March 21, 2022 at 7:12:09 AM EDT
To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Good Morning,

My name is Niko Emack and I live at 341 Columbia Street. I'm a former staffer for Marc McGovern and a current member of My Brother's Keeper Cambridge. I'm writing to you today to express my strong support for Starlight Square receiving a special permit (# BZA163746-2022). Starlight has given a platform to so many diverse groups in Cambridge: small business owners, artists, political activists, and students. It's become the heart and soul of our Cambridge community and more specifically the Port neighborhood. Not continuing Starlight would be a huge mistake. The Romans had the Coliseum, Cambridge has Starlight! I look forward to another year of events and programming.

Best regards,
Niko Emack





Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

In Support of Starlight Square's Special Permit

1 message

Risa Mednick <risa.mednick@gmail.com>

Mon, Mar 21, 2022 at 12:36 PM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Cc: nina@centralsq.org, David W Hildum <d.hildum@icloud.com>

Dear Members of the BZA:

Timing is everything!

Starlight Square was envisioned well before COVID. Thankfully, its creators and partners leapt into action during the frightful early days of the pandemic to navigate its realization.

From the moment the scaffolding went up and the first fabulous scrims were hung, Starlight has proven itself true to its vision. Throughout the pandemic, it's been a very special kind of social balm for creatives, social entrepreneurs, and community-minded souls. It's also "the bomb" of a successful venue for showcasing talent and ideas and community connections among people of all ages and backgrounds.

We've been Starlight supporters from the start and grateful audience members thrilled by theater, dance, music, and poetry from its stage. Two years on, we're still moved by the deeply resonant images surrounding Starlight every time we walk by.

Cambridge needs to continue to make space for Starlight Square because Starlight is a beacon — an unparalleled civic space in a city so lacking in places where everyone truly feels welcome. Starlight shines the spotlight on the good, the fun, the creative, the possible — the very hope for the future of our city.

Please support Starlight Square's request for a special permit to continue to operate on Lot 5 so our community can continue to help it thrive.

Sincerely,

Risa Mednick and David Hildum

20 Maple Ave, Unit C
Cambridge MA 02139
1.617.461.0532
risa.mednick@gmail.com
d.hildum@icloud.com

3/18/22

Samara Vise
177 River St. #2L
Cambridge, MA 02139
617-962-0022
samara.vise@gmail.com

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal,

My name is Samara Vise, and I live at 177 River St in Cambridge, MA. Born and raised in Cambridge, I consider myself lucky to be able to still live and work here in my 30s.

When the COVID-19 pandemic shut down all non-essential parts of life, many of us turned inward — literally, inside our houses. The socialization and entertainment void, which people tried to fill through connection on their phones and computers, was immense. As the temperatures warmed in the spring of 2020, people began to gather outside. Parks, the river, outside dining — these all became essential to maintain social connection in those early days.

When Starlight Square opened a few months later, the impact was immediate. Not only was this a safe, outdoor place for congregating, but it provided a fixed location for entertainment. Concerts, comedy, dance performance, poetry readings, yoga readings, graduations, day camp — all activities that at that time did not have an inside home. The looks on people's faces (yes, you could still see them smiling behind the masks) showed the deep gratitude everyone held for this space. I remember attending one of the early improv shows with my mom. It was so exciting. Something so familiar (a shared entertainment experience we had all missed) and yet also so new — outside! In the fresh air!

Sometimes it takes crisis to pause the status quo and help us realize what could be better. Did I ever imagine that a parking lot (which I sometimes used) could be transformed into a beautiful performing arts venue, one that is home to diverse programming that attracts elementary students to people my mother's age? Never. Now I can't imagine anything but Starlight Square there. Yes, the dangers of the pandemic and indoor congregation are subsiding. But the need for communal space, for entertainment, for the arts — has never been greater.

(P.S. — I now bike or walk to Hmart.)

In sum, I strongly support Starlight Square (84 Bishop Allen Drive) to receive a special permit extending their services and programming.

Thank you for your time,



Samara Vise



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

1 message

Theresa McSorley <theresa.mcsorley23@gmail.com>

Mon, Mar 21, 2022 at 9:53 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Theresa McSorley and I live and work in Cambridge MA. My apartment is on Harvard St and I work on Prospect St, near Central Square. I do hope you will approve Starlight Square's special permit application. To turn a sad, unused parking lot into an area of social connection and creativity is something I believe we could use even more of around here. Cambridge is a very walkable city, even the coffee shop I work at gets a lot of local customers that live in the area. After being shorted social connections and events for 2 years because of COVID, everyone deserves a place where they can feel safe, happy, and not so alone. Starlight Square does this so well; they are outdoors so everyone can feel more comfortable about slowing the spread, the Square has ample space for a whole assortment of events, and the people running it seem to really have a lot of passion to curate wholesome experiences. I went to the farmers market at the square, where I could almost always take home my fresh produce sans plastic packaging (unlike the grocery stores in the area). I also went to a Drag show at Starlight last year and I had so much fun! It seems like the girls on stage had fun, too! I'm honestly not sure why the City wouldn't approve an increase in fun opportunities for their residents, but in case you are still on the fence, just think about how you felt in April/May 2020. We are all still reeling from that, and we all need to be together, now more than ever.

Thank you for your time,
Theresa McSorley

To the Board of Zoning Appeal regarding Starlight Square at 84 Bishop Allen Drive,

My name is Xia Rondeau and I am a born and raised Cantagridgean. **I'm writing now to express my support of a third season of Starlight Square in Central with an extension of the special use permit at 84 Bishop Allen Drive.** For full transparency, I do serve on the Starlight Steering Committee. I also was the Assistant General Manager for Starlight last summer. Regardless of these ties, as a Cambridge resident who has lived their entire life in the City, working in numerous cultural organizations that are not Starlight, it is one of the best civic spaces our great city has to offer.

I came across Starlight and the CSQBID through my work at Cambridge Community Television, where for the past 3 years I served as the Youth and Community Media Manager. I now work at Harvard Law School. Cambridge is my home. Cambridge is my world. There is nothing that means more to me than ensuring my city has an abundance of opportunities for boisterous, progressive, and beautiful cultural exchanges. These are what makes Cambridge, well, Cambridge. Without them, it wouldn't be Cambridge. **I've watched as gentrification has pushed numerous groups out of the City, especially in Central Square where I've lived the past 28 years learning and growing. The work of the CSQBID and Starlight are true beacons of hope and indicators that there is still so much work fighting for in the face of so much community loss with aggressive developers and real estate investors plucking up everything they can--everything that could, and should be, civic spaces.**

I realize having a public, open air performance space in the center of a densely populated area can be tough on residents. **That being said, the Starlight team and the CSQBID followed every single city ordinance placed on it and had nothing but the highest regard and respect for its neighbors.** I was there on the loudest nights: We were still under the decibels set by the city. We were communicative to performers that they must be respectful to our neighbors. Everyone worked together to ensure everyone was doing right by everyone--and if that wasn't/isn't the beauty of Starlight, I don't know what is. Sometimes in exchange for something great, some folks may be annoyed; however **I cannot be convinced that sounds of music, people, and community are so threatening as to close a critical space for the conservation of Cambridge culture. I cannot be convinced.**

To be clear, I'm writing this letter first and foremost as a resident of Central Square and Cambridge. Secondly I write this letter because I absolutely love and adore Starlight and everyone involved with it. **Nina Berg, Matthew Boyes-Watson, and Michael Monestime are trailblazers of contemporary civic space, design and creativity. Under their leadership and vision, they've created something brilliant that captures and amplifies the vibrancy and soul of Cambridge to a T. I firmly support the reissue of a special permit to extend the use of the Bishop Allen lot for Starlight because I firmly believe in the love and passion this team has for Cambridge.** I know that nothing means more to them.

With that, I appreciate your time and consideration for the extension of Starlight,

Xia Rondeau, 108 Inman St, Cambridge, MA, 02139

March 11, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

My name is Yanka Petri. I live at 425 Massachusetts Avenue, Apt 208, in Central Square.

I am a strong supporter of Starlight receiving the special permit, because as a fellow Central Square resident, I know how impactful the events at Starlight have been to our community. The warm weather is about bringing the community together, and unique outdoor places like Starlight have allowed this to happen safely and positively. This permit will allow more community members to take part in this unique experience. After 2 years of living in a pandemic, we deserve in person interactions more than ever!! I feel safe attending events Starlight hosts, because of the team's constant efforts to bring entertainment in a safe, creative and welcoming environment.

I have attended countless concerts, events, game shows and screenings at Starlight the past couple of years. As a fairly new Cambridge resident, these events have helped me gain a better understanding of my new community, I've gained cultural enrichment, I've networked with local businesses and artists but most importantly, I felt welcomed and loved by everyone, from Starlight staff, to the event attendees, to the Central Sq BID workers, to the Popportunity vendors, I felt a sense of community that I had not felt in previous neighborhoods. I cannot imagine Central Square without Starlight any more, this place brings people and ideas together! Besides, if Starlight was not in Lot 5... we would be left with an empty parking lot. What's the fun in that!?

Starlight is living proof that cool outdoor events ARE NOT a thing of the past, and that in fact, they are in more demand than ever! The biggest challenge I faced this summer was missing out on cool performances happening at Starlight because they took place during my work hours, if we can allow Starlight to operate past traditional work hours, more community members, like myself, will be able to join more and more events.

As a Cambridge resident, I am asking that you grant Starlight permission to continue to operate on Lot 5 (an easily accessible and safe outdoor space) so we can continue to highlight what makes Cambridge so special, a diverse place for creative and unique opportunities!

Thank you,
Yanka



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Save Starlight square

1 message

ELLA DRISCOLL <24edriscoll@cpsd.us>

Wed, Mar 9, 2022 at 8:30 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Good morning,

My name is Ella Driscoll and I am a 10th grader at CRLS. I am emailing to show strong support of the special permit application for Starlight Square, located at [84 Bishop Allen Drive](#). I believe Starlight square warrants an extension because it has significantly contributed to our community's educational and social needs. Starlight Square has made Central Square a fun community spot where people can enjoy modern theatre, creative art and dance, and community initiatives such as farmer's markets.

I truly hope you will consider extending Starlight Square's special permit.

Thank you for your time,
Ella Driscoll



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Helen Sullivan <hsullivan11@gmail.com>

Sun, Mar 6, 2022 at 8:11 PM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

March 7, 2022

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal:

My name is Helen Sullivan and I was born and raised in Cambridge and have been living here off and on since 1986. I am currently a homeowner in East Cambridge. I am writing this letter in support of Starlight Square ([84 Bishop Allen Drive](#)) receiving a special permit to extend services and programming. Starlight Square has been a wonderful addition to our community.

My family consists of a 12 year old, a nine year old, and a nine month old. Needless to say, the pandemic was a challenging time to keep kids healthy, engaged in their communities, and outside. Starlight Square provided a space for all of these things on numerous occasions for my family. In October 2020, when Halloween had been canceled, Starlight provided a space for my children to safely wear their costumes at the "Silly and Spooky Tales" event. Since then, my family has attended several other events at Starlight, including a Pride Month celebration and Improv Comedy. In fact, the Starlight Pride event was one of the first places I took my newborn baby last June.

In addition to providing activities for my family, I know that Starlight has also helped local businesses have a safe outdoor space to sell their products during the pandemic. My husband is a small business owner, and we have commented many times on how wonderful it is that Starlight provides this space to small businesses.

I am excited to see what the future holds for Starlight. I hope you grant them this permit.

Sincerely,

Helen Sullivan
hsullivan11@gmail.com
20 Palermo Street
Cambridge, MA
02141



Mar 21, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal

Re: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Dear Committee members,

I am writing to you as the Managing Director of ImprovBoston in strong support of establishing the Starlight Square venue for a third season, and hopefully many more to come, with an ongoing permit.

As a member of the Central Square community I have found Starlight Square to be an incredible joy. It's provided a home for artists and vendors to showcase their work, a place for citizens of Cambridge and the surrounding areas to come visit, shop, socialize, and participate in the arts. In the time of COVID, it provides a safe space for being together. Outside of COVID protocols, it's a lovely way to enjoy an afternoon or an evening outdoors, in a setting unique to Central Square.

As a business profoundly impacted by the coronavirus Starlight Square has also given ImprovBoston a place where we can perform and bring people together through laughter - something integral to our mission. Starlight Square has helped many artists pursue their work, and provided a place for patrons to participate in the theater. There is something remarkably beautiful about watching a show outside on a beautiful night, with a breeze blowing over you and the hum of the city in the background.

Please, help Starlight Square continue bringing joy to the Central Square district, and approve its permit for this season, and many more to come.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Josh Garneau".

Josh Garneau
He/Him/His
Managing Director
ImprovBoston

3/15/2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

I am writing in strong support of Starlight Square, located at 84 Bishop Allen Drive, receiving its special permit to continue operating in Central Square.

My name is Manoucheca Lord, and I am the Program Director of Poppportunity, an economic development initiative that runs Saturdays and Sundays at Starlight Square. I am also a resident of 812 Memorial Drive, Cambridge, MA and a proud alumna of Cambridge Public Schools.

Since 2020, Poppportunity has supported over 200 local entrepreneurs through our rotating pop-up shops, one-day carts, and community markets. Our participants are majority women of color, Cambridge residents, whose backgrounds span all corners of the globe: Mexico, Ethiopia, Haiti, and Iraq, to name a few of their home countries. Since its inception, Poppportunity has generated hundreds of thousands of dollars for our participants.

Over the last two years, we have worked closely with the Central Square BID team, including their Starlight staff, to maintain an inclusive, safe, and respectful environment. By extending Starlight's permit, my team will continue to be able to provide this economic opportunity to Cambridge residents, which not only encourages entrepreneurship city-wide, but also provides residents with a way to shop small and keep their dollars in the community.

Sincerely,
Manoucheca Lord

From: Nancy Ryan <nancyryan4@comcast.net>
Date: March 9, 2022 at 12:55:03 PM EST
To: "mpacheco@cambridgema.gov" <mpacheco@cambridgema.gov>
Subject: Starlight Square 2022

Dear Board of Zoning Appeals -- I write to urge you to authorize a permit for Starlight Square to continue to operate for its 3rd season. I live at 4 Ashburton Place, a block from Starlight Square -- I can hear its music on summer nights while sitting on my back porch, but I much prefer just being there to enjoy the programming, the neighbors and friends from all over Cambridge and especially during COVID-19, an outdoor gathering space. Starlight has provided a safe open-air opportunity to gather, shop and eat that has saved many of us from going crazy during this pandemic.

Having lived in Central Square for years, I can testify that Starlight has enriched every aspect of life here. Many of us have advocated for kiosk-type shopping opportunities for years to give small entrepreneurs a chance to sell their wares. At least one business that popped up there was able to transition to brick and mortar. I know that Starlight's magnet has drawn many people to nearby restaurants as well, enhancing their ability to survive during these challenging times.

The creation of Starlight seemed miraculous and now it seems necessary to life in Cambridge and especially in Central Square. There is every reason to keep it going -- it is well-managed and a tribute to a creative use of public space. Please grant the permit so we have it to look forward to as Spring comes upon us.

Sincerely,
Nancy Ryan, 4 Ashburton Place, Cambridge 02139

Nancy Ryan / she/her
nancyryan4@comcast.net
617-868-1334 (h)
617-642-5449 (c)
A Public Bank for the Public Good
www.masspublicbanking.org



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Save Starlight! - BZA163746-2022

1 message

PIPER ULLMANN <24pullmann@cpsd.us>

Wed, Mar 9, 2022 at 8:28 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Hi,

My name is Piper Ullmann and I am a 10th grader at CRLS. I love everything Starlight puts on such as the pop-up event for small businesses. I believe Starlight warrants an extension because it is so special for everyone in the Cambridge community.

Thanks,

Piper

--

Piper Ullmann
CRLS 2024

March 9, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

I am writing in strong support of Starlight Square, located at 84 Bishop Allen Drive, receiving its special permit to continue operating in Central Square.

Since opening in August 2020, Starlight Square not only provided our entire community with a safe, outdoor place to enjoy the arts, shop small, and obtain essential services, it also specifically held space for our young people when they were extremely isolated.

At the peak of COVID, no other space was able to support them like Starlight. When I convened a group of community partners and high school students to design monthly gatherings where students could safely connect with peers and caring adults, Starlight stepped up to host us. CRLS students came - they loved the innovative, inspiring, safe space. We met there monthly at the start of 2021, even in the middle of the winter with heat lamps and hand warmers, so we could be together. Since then, Starlight has hosted Senior Prom, senior week recitals, the highschool jazz band, the Triggered Project Covid Monologue, which featured students' and CRLS staff's sobering accounts of their last two years, and much, much more.

As a resident, I have enjoyed shows at Starlight. As a parent, I have appreciated the community-building the Starlight team has catalyzed. And, as a School Committee Member, I often hear from faculty and students who desire to have future events at Starlight. It is where they want to be.

Starlight embodies the best of Cambridge. It is a space and place where we come together in joy, for reflection, and to tend to the greater good. Please award Starlight their special permit, so that we can continue to support our students and their families. There is still an urgent need.

Sincerely,
Rachel Weinstein
60 Standish St.



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Save Starlight Square

1 message

SOPHIA ROBERTSON <24srobertson@cpsd.us>

Wed, Mar 9, 2022 at 8:28 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Good morning,

My name is Sophia Robertson and I am a 10th grader at Cambridge Rindge and Latin school. I am emailing to show strong support of the special permit application for Starlight Square, located at [84 Bishop Allen Drive](#). I've been spending time at Starlight Square since I was thirteen, and look forward to enjoying prom in the Square. Starlight brightens up Central Square and provides a safe, fun, and diverse community engagement spot.

On behalf of everyone at CRLS, I hope you will consider extending Starlight Square's special permit.

Thank you for your consideration,
Sophia Robertson



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight Square

1 message

ZOE MELLO ZDRAVESKI <22zmellozdraveski@cpsd.us>

Wed, Mar 9, 2022 at 8:30 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Cc: Kelton Aldridge <23kaldridge@cpsd.us>

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Hello,

I'm hoping to express my support of extending the Starlight in Central Square special permit.

Various community building events such as the senior prom, and the MDC performance were hosted there, and we hope that other events in the future such as junior prom and the history club KFCC event will be able to be hosted there as well.

Best,

Zoe, Audrey, Kelton, Jeremy



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight Square permit support - Case #BZA163746-2022

1 message

GRAY BITTKER <23gbittker@cpsd.us>

Wed, Mar 9, 2022 at 8:23 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Hello Board of Zoning Appeals,

I am Gray Bittker, a student at Cambridge Ringe and Latin high school at 459 Broadway, and I am writing to express my support for the special permit extension for Starlight Square. Starlight Square has played a very important role in our school community recently, hosting various events and helping our community remain connected throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason I am asking you to consider extending the special permit for this area, as failing to do so would prove greatly detrimental to CRLS and would force us to cancel many important events that students are looking forward to.

Thanks for your consideration, Gray Bittker



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

BZA163746-2022

1 message

Sally Peterson <sallystonepeterson@gmail.com>

Tue, Mar 8, 2022 at 8:12 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of extending the special permit for Starlight Square at [84 Bishop Allen Drive](#). I am the parent of two high school students and during the pandemic that space has been one of the only ways that high school students have been able to enjoy some of the typical high school rites of passage such as proms and dance recitals. The extension of the permit would allow this year's junior prom to happen.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sally Peterson
[23 Bellevue Ave.](#)
[Cambridge, MA 02140](#)
617-512-8697



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
SUMBUL SIDDIQUI

mayor@cambridgema.gov
Phone: 617-349-4321

3/8/22

Board of Zoning Appeals:

I am writing in strong support of the Central Square BID's application for a special permit to continue their award-winning work at Starlight Square on Municipal Lot #5.

In early March 2020, Michael and his team approached me about this project. Then, space in the city was at a premium and displacement was one of our biggest challenges. The BID's vision for Lot 5 was refreshing and creative. Once the pandemic hit, it became essential. Starlight quickly became the go-to venue for community services and experiences from the Flu Clinic and Farmers Market to cultural programming and economic development.

Over the last two years, I have held my office hours at Starlight; hosted a Bollywood night; attended incredible performances by our CRLS students; and was inaugurated there as a Councillor and Mayor this past January. Starlight has become an indispensable part of Cambridge.

I have been in close dialogue with the BID team about how Starlight can continue to serve the community and reduce any burden on abutters. I am more than happy to support any outreach or meditation needed.

I look forward to working in collaboration with the BID, City departments, and you to see Season 3 begin in time for the high school's senior programming.

Sincerely,

Mayor Siddiqui

Sincerely,

Sumbul Siddiqui, Mayor
City of Cambridge



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive (# BZA163746-2022)

Joseph Poirier <jpoirier20@gmail.com>
To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov
Cc: Lizzie Poirier <poirier.lizzie@gmail.com>
Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Sun, Mar 6, 2022 at 9:12 PM

Dear Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

Please accept this comment as a strong endorsement of Starlight Square receiving its special permit to continue operating in Central Square.

Starlight Square is a fantastic community resource and a tremendous use of public space in Central Square. I was born and raised in Central Square, and continue to visit or pass through nearly every day. Starlight Square is easily the best use of the Central Square parking lots I have experienced in my life - it has even improved the Central Square Farmers Market. The space and programming is safe, welcoming, accessible, and exciting, and it helps Central Square retain its regional draw as a hub of arts and culture. It is economically and socially important to Central.

Please award Starlight their special permit! They are a tremendous community asset.

Thanks,

Joseph Poirier
87-1/2 Sherman St
Cambridge, MA 02140

Pacheco, Maria

From: Azeem, Burhan
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 2:56 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: Klima, Nathan
Subject: BZA - Starlight Square

Hello Members of the BZA,

The Central Square BID has successfully and legally operated Starlight throughout the COVID-19 emergency.

The requested special permit will allow the continuation of the Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation part of the programming to continue. This programming buoyed the local arts and culture scene for the last two years, and provided safe space for events like the CRLS highschool prom, interfaith services, out-of-school time education programming, and much more. Starlight Square embodies the limitless possibilities when we prioritize people over parking.

Starlight wouldn't be Starlight without these uses.

I have been in direct communication with the Board and other city staff about ongoing efforts to reduce the impact on neighbors.

Burhan Azeem
City Councillor, Cambridge MA
617-349-4280 (office)
617-798-1140 (cell)

Sign up for my newsletter [here](#).

All emails linked to this address are subject to Public Records Law and may be made available to the public.

Pacheco, Maria

From: Klima, Nathan
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 2:54 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: Klima, Nathan
Subject: BZA - Starlight Square

Hello Members of the BZA,

The Central Square BID has successfully and legally operated Starlight throughout the COVID-19 emergency.

The requested special permit will allow the continuation of the Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation part of the programming to continue. This programming buoyed the local arts and culture scene for the last two years, and provided safe space for events like the CRLS highschool prom, interfaith services, out-of-school time education programming, and much more. Starlight Square embodies the limitless possibilities when we prioritize people over parking.

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Burhan Azeem
City Councillor, Cambridge MA
617-349-4280 (office)
617-798-1140 (cell)

Sign up for my newsletter [here](#).

All emails linked to this address are subject to Public Records Law and may be made available to the public.

Pacheco, Maria

From: Jacqui Cesario <jcesario@cpsd.us>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 3:12 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria; Nina Berg
Subject: "Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive"
Attachments: Prom 2021-111.jpg

Categories: Red Category

I am writing in hopes to persuade the Board of Zoning to extend the special permit to Starlight Square. I have been a teacher at CRLS for over 20 + years. For most of my experience here I have worked with various student student groups to instill a sense of community and belonging. Whether it was the senior class, my advising group or the CRLS Cheese Club I always tried to help students organize events and programming that shared their visions of what "community" felt and looked like. Starlight is the epitome of community.

Last year Starlight was instrumental in helping students feel a connection to the CRLS community during a time when the school , staff and students struggled to stay connected. They opened their doors to seniors and other groups in the school that longed to celebrate each other's success and achievement. They hosted traditional events that the class of 2020 had to miss. The class of 2021 was indeed very fortunate and grateful to have been hosted by Starlight for their senior prom.

Starlight was the safe place for students and staff to continue and carry on their most cherished traditions. These events help students transition from the end of the school year to the beginning of new "Adult Challenges." They graciously hosted our events and also provided jobs for students in the summer. Many of our students were also involved in programs at Starlight during the summer and throughout the school year. Some were even involved with the various pop up ventures in the marketplace.

In attendance at the prom in May there were 380 prom goers, teachers, school safety , Mayor Siddiqui and Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley. Some of the students had not seen their classmates or teachers in person for many months. Starlight gave them this wonderful opportunity to celebrate their achievement and reflect on their four years as a community in the school. This year the students would like to continue this tradition and will have the opportunity only if the Board of Zoning extends the special permit.

Starlight created a myriad of opportunities for the entire community. As I was adding the prom photos to the 2021 yearbook I couldn't help but feel grateful for the chance to actually meet some of the students I had been teaching on-line for most of the year. As I looked over the page I couldn't help but think , this is what community looks and feels like. In closing I urge you to give the extension of the special permit to Starlight your most serious consideration .

Sincerely,
Jacqueline Cesario

CAMBRIDGE
CARNIVAL



1992
25
2017

Cambridge Carnival International, Inc.

March 21, 2022

Cambridge Carnival International
144a Mount Auburn Street,
Cambridge, MA 02138

To the Board of Zoning Appeal,

Cambridge Carnival International is proud to extend its unwavering, and enthusiastic support of Starlight Square's special permit application at 84 Bishop Allen Drive. Cambridge Carnival International is a colorful and festive celebration that is rooted in African traditions, and since its inception in Cambridge nearly 29 years ago, has been a celebration of emancipation, freedom and expression. Our festival is home to members of the Caribbean diasporic community, and our annual celebration plays an important role in preserving Caribbean arts and culture in Central Square, Cambridge.

Starlight Square has played a special role in our journey as we have navigated operational changes, and as our planning committee adjusted to life during a global pandemic. Cambridge Carnival International has held its *Taste of Carnival* kickoff celebration at Starlight Square. This annual, family friendly event showcases Caribbean culture and pride and features cultural performances, arts & craft vendors, music, dancing, drumming, steel pan performances, and Caribbean storytelling as well as activities for children. Caribbean food was made available by Comfort Kitchen, the resident food vendor at Poppportunity. This was a much-needed opportunity for us, especially since the Cambridge Carnival was canceled in 2019 and was virtual in 2020.

Starlight Square, its mission and its programming has become such an integral part of the arts and culture in Cambridge. Since its inception, Starlight has provided a multitude of opportunities for artists, performers, vendors, craftsmen, and more. Starlight Square's location at 84 Bishop Allen Drive is unique and versatile and represents a movement forward for Central Square and its capacity for community gathering and arts programming. We hope that Cambridge will grant Starlight the appropriate permitting to continue to operate and serve the Cambridge community.

Sincerely,

Nicola A. Williams
President
Cambridge Carnival International, Inc.

P.O. Box 390468
Cambridge, MA 02138

Hello Members of the BZA,

The Central Square BID has successfully and legally operated Starlight throughout the COVID-19 emergency.

The requested special permit will allow the continuation of the Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation part of the programming to continue. This programming buoyed the local arts and culture scene for the last two years, and provided safe space for events like the CRLS highschool prom, interfaith services, out-of-school time education programming, and much more. Starlight Square embodies the limitless possibilities when we prioritize people over parking.

Starlight wouldn't be Starlight without these uses.

I have been in direct communication with the Board and other city staff about ongoing efforts to reduce the impact on neighbors.

Councillor Burhan Azeem



Nina Berg <nina.e.berg@gmail.com>

Approve Starlight!

1 message

Dan Totten <dantotten@gmail.com>

Mon, Mar 21, 2022 at 1:08 PM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina.e.berg@gmail.com

Dear Members of the BZA:

I write as a neighbor urging your approval of Starlight Square.

What a wonderful thing Starlight Square has been for our neighborhood. This has been one of the only ways that our community has stayed socially connected through this pandemic. I love going over there and catching a show or even just to say hi to everyone who works so hard to make it a success.

Yes, I can hear the music from my open window. Sometimes it has even woken me up from a nap. But that minor inconvenience pales in comparison to the thousands of hours of joy that the space has brought to our neighborhood.

The compromises proposed by the BID are beyond reasonable. Please approve this without delay so that the show can go on!

Thanks,

Dan Totten

[54 Bishop Allen Drive #2](#)

“Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive”

1 message

Jacqui Cesario <jcesario@cpsd.us>

Mon, Mar 21, 2022 at 3:11 PM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov, Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

I am writing in hopes to persuade the Board of Zoning to extend the special permit to Starlight Square. I have been a teacher at CRLS for over 20 + years. For most of my experience here I have worked with various student groups to instill a sense of community and belonging. Whether it was the senior class, my advising group or the CRLS Cheese Club I always tried to help students organize events and programming that shared their visions of what "community" felt and looked like. Starlight is the epitome of community.

Last year Starlight was instrumental in helping students feel a connection to the CRLS community during a time when the school, staff and students struggled to stay connected. They opened their doors to seniors and other groups in the school that longed to celebrate each other's success and achievement. They hosted traditional events that the class of 2020 had to miss. The class of 2021 was indeed very fortunate and grateful to have been hosted by Starlight for their senior prom.

Starlight was the safe place for students and staff to continue and carry on their most cherished traditions. These events help students transition from the end of the school year to the beginning of new "Adult Challenges." They graciously hosted our events and also provided jobs for students in the summer. Many of our students were also involved in programs at Starlight during the summer and throughout the school year. Some were even involved with the various pop up ventures in the marketplace.

In attendance at the prom in May there were 380 prom goers, teachers, school safety, Mayor Siddiqui and Congresswoman Ayanna Pressley. Some of the students had not seen their classmates or teachers in person for many months. Starlight gave them this wonderful opportunity to celebrate their achievement and reflect on their four years as a community in the school. This year the students would like to continue this tradition and will have the opportunity only if the Board of Zoning extends the special permit.

Starlight created a myriad of opportunities for the entire community. As I was adding the prom photos to the 2021 yearbook I couldn't help but feel grateful for the chance to actually meet some of the students I had been teaching on-line for most of the year. As I looked over the page I couldn't help but think, this is what community looks and feels like. In closing I urge you to give the extension of the special permit to Starlight your most serious consideration.

Sincerely,
Jacqueline Cesario



Prom 2021-111.jpg
1685K



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

The Impact of Starlight

1 message

ELIJAH LEE-ROBINSON <23elee-robinson@cpsd.us>

Mon, Mar 21, 2022 at 2:13 PM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Hello, my name is Elijah and I wanted to share a little about my experience with Starlight Square and how important it was during a time of uncertainty and discouragement.

I took part in a group called Down With Design where we had a goal of creating a nurturing and supportive environment for students and trusted adults, during the pandemic. We came up with event's that centered students' voices and creativity, and through the challenges of gathering people and making sure we design the most comforting, fun space for our community, we were able to provide those feelings of connection we were missing out on for the past year.

Without Starlight Square offering their space to us for each of our events, and so many other groups in our Cambridge community, we would have missed out on that sense of community and togetherness that Cambridge is known for. That you can feel by simply walking down our vibrant streets. Without Starlight Square, I wouldn't have met so many people that later on, helped me achieve other personal goals of mine. Without this space, and the grind of meeting every week to decide how we were gonna top our last event, how we were gonna gather more youth, how we were gonna make it more enjoyable, I know the pandemic would've been harder for me mentally and socially then it already was.

So, I say thank you to Starlight, and all the amazing work they do and hopefully continue to do, and I hope you see and feel the impact the space has had in the same way.



City of Cambridge

Executive Department

LOUIS A. DePASQUALE
City Manager

March 21, 2022

To the Members of the Board of Zoning Appeal:

I am writing to express my strong support of the Central Square Business Improvement District's ("BID") application for a special permit to continue their award-winning work at Starlight Square, which was established by the BID at the City-owned Municipal Lot #5 at 84 Bishop Allen Drive.

In June 2020, I exercised my executive authority to allow the BID's use of the City-owned Municipal Lot #5 for the creation of Starlight Square's outdoor recreational and entertainment programming as a safe, open space area during the COVID-19 pandemic. Since then, my office has worked in close collaboration with the BID to oversee its uses through license agreements with the City of Cambridge. Some of the activities that have taken place at Starlight Square are: Poppportunity - a weekly "pop-up" market featuring local, aspiring entrepreneurs and vendors; the Cambridge Teen Photography Workshop Reception; ImprovBoston - Sketch Comedy Shows; Central Square Theater Youth Underground Performances; Community Yoga Classes; the Cambridge LGBTQ+ Pride Month Celebration; The Black Matters Juneteenth Experience; Cambridge Community Television Local Music Showcase; Cambridge Rindge and Latin's Visual and Performing Arts Program Spring drama and Senior Prom; Friday Night Hype - the Cambridge School Department's Upper School enrichment program; and Cambridge Public Health Department Flu Clinics. The special permit now being requested by the BID will enable Starlight's recreational and entertainment programming and other important City events and activities to continue outside at the City's Municipal Lot #5.

This space has continued to prove to be an extremely important community space for our local art and culture organizations, and its continued use for this purpose will assist the City and its public health efforts to remain resilient against potential future COVID-19 variants. It has been a valuable resource during the COVID-19 Pandemic to have an outside place where people can gather safely for a variety of purposes, including arts and culture purposes. The City even used Starlight for the City Council inauguration during the Omicron surge when it was not safe to gather inside for that event. I see great value in Starlight's continued existence at this space to serve as an additional asset for the City as a whole to come together as a community for various events and gatherings. Thank you for your consideration of this application.

Very truly yours,

Louis A. DePasquale
City Manager





Pacheco, Maria

From: Marlin Kann <marlinkann@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, March 19, 2022 10:02 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Dear Board of Zoning Appeals,

My name is Marlin Kann, I am a teacher at CRLS, and a resident at 25 Hammond St. in Cambridge, MA. I am so grateful for Starlight Square, personally, as well as for my students. During the remote pandemic times, our civic engagement club #HerVote became an important point of community for our students even though we were forced to become fully virtual. Starlight Square, 7 months after our isolation, was the site of our first live event during the Fall of 2020.

For #HerVote, Starlight Square was a point of organization and a confluence of community. For our club, Starlight was a place where we could hope to meet, and build community, empowerment, and life on a human scale. I remember during that first meeting, after 7 months of unexpected isolation, students were able to see each other, they laughed, and spent time together. Mr. Christopher Montero (a CRLS colleague) was also there, and for our group who had been meeting virtually, this was a wonderful moment of levity.

We also used Starlight Sq as a point of civic engagement as In the Fall of 2020, with the build up to the 2020 election and the commemoration of the centennial of the 19th Amendment, #HerVote was working with Harvard Radcliffe Institute to produce a record preserving the voices of women in 2020, as they responded to the question: Are you going to participate in the 2020 Election? In conjunction with the Schlesinger Library at Harvard Radcliffe, our collections were digitally preserved in conjunction with their Long 19 Web Portal.

#HerVote returned to Starlight, made our collections, had fun, our students dreamed big and through to host a forum inside Starlight =DD, we never did get inside, but maybe with your approval that could still happen. I am so very grateful for the community opportunity provided by Starlight Square, I strongly support Starlight's special permit application, so that this site may continue to exist and be a wonderful point of community and empowerment for Cambridge, and more specifically, the young people of CRLS.

Thank you for your consideration,
Marlin Kann

Pacheco, Maria

From: Niko Emack <nbazelais@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 7:12 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Good Morning,

My name is Niko Emack and I live at 341 Columbia Street. I'm a former staffer for Marc McGovern and a current member of My Brother's Keeper Cambridge. I'm writing to you today to express my strong support for Starlight Square receiving a special permit (# BZA163746-2022). Starlight has given a platform to so many diverse groups in Cambridge: small business owners, artists, political activists, and students. It's become the heart and soul of our Cambridge community and more specifically the Port neighborhood. Not continuing Starlight would be a huge mistake. The Romans had the Coliseum, Cambridge has Starlight! I look forward to another year of events and programming.

Best regards,
Niko Emack



--
Nikolas H. Emack-Bazelais
617-645-7784
[@Niko E B](#)
[LinkedIn](#)

Pacheco, Maria

From: Kabir Sen <mckabir@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 10:26 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

To whom it may concern,

Hello, my name is Kabir Sen and I live at 31 Bacon Road in Belmont. I grew up in Cambridge and perform regularly in town. As a long-time resident of Cambridge and as a music teacher for 23 years at the Shady Hill School in Cambridge, I am writing on behalf of the people in my community. I strongly support a special permit being granted to starlight Square in Central Square. This program provides a very specific and critical need for the Cambridge community to engage, socialize and safely celebrate arts and culture in Cambridge. It allows people from all walks of life to have an experience together in an environment that feels safe for everyone. I cannot emphasize enough how important this is for people to have this outlet during these difficult times.

This program is top notch and the attention to detail, planning and professionalism is outstanding with this group of organizers. they also take care to curate a highly inclusive experience for all. I can personally attest to having a wonderful, positive experience when my band "Krush Faktory" played at Starlight last summer. In closing, I would like to say that these kind of events are what make Cambridge the vibrant cultural metropolis that it is. Let's grant a special permit to this organization so they can keep doing the great work and help us keep this community thriving.

Many thanks for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kabir Sen

(musician, producer, recording artist, music teacher)

(617)308-7964

kabir.sen@shs.org

mckabir@yahoo.com

Pacheco, Maria

From: Xia Rondeau <xiasrondeau@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 8:24 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: JIM BRAUDE; Kristine Rondeau; Lily Rondeau
Subject: Re: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive
Attachments: Board of Zoning Appeal.pdf

This letter is also attached to this email as a PDF.

To the Board of Zoning Appeal regarding Starlight Square at 84 Bishop Allen Drive,

My name is Xia Rondeau and I am a born and raised Cantagridgean. **I'm writing now to express my support of a third season of Starlight Square in Central with an extension of the special use permit at 84 Bishop Allen Drive.** For full transparency, I do serve on the Starlight Steering Committee. I also was the Assistant General Manager for Starlight last summer. Regardless of these ties, as a Cambridge resident who has lived their entire life in the City, working in numerous cultural organizations that are not Starlight, it is one of the best civic spaces our great city has to offer.

I came across Starlight and the CSQBID through my work at Cambridge Community Television, where for the past 3 years I served as the Youth and Community Media Manager. I now work at Harvard Law School. Cambridge is my home. Cambridge is my world. There is nothing that means more to me than ensuring my city has an abundance of opportunities for boisterous, progressive, and beautiful cultural exchanges. These are what makes Cambridge, well, Cambridge. Without them, it wouldn't be Cambridge. **I've watched as gentrification has pushed numerous groups out of the City, especially in Central Square where I've lived the past 28 years learning and growing. The work of the CSQBID and Starlight are true beacons of hope and indicators that there is still so much work fighting for in the face of so much community loss with aggressive developers and real estate investors plucking up everything they can--everything that could, and should be, civic spaces.**

I realize having a public, open air performance space in the center of a densely populated area can be tough on residents. **That being said, the Starlight team and the CSQBID followed every single city ordinance placed on it and had nothing but the highest regard and respect for its neighbors.** I was there on the loudest nights: We were still under the decibels set by the city. We were communicative to performers that they must be respectful to our neighbors. Everyone worked together to ensure everyone was doing right by everyone--and if that wasn't/isn't the beauty of Starlight, I don't know what is. Sometimes in exchange for something great, some folks may be annoyed; however **I cannot be convinced that sounds of music, people, and community are so threatening as to close a critical space for the conservation of Cambridge culture. I cannot be convinced.**

To be clear, I'm writing this letter first and foremost as a resident of Central Square and Cambridge. Secondly I write this letter because I absolutely love and adore Starlight and everyone involved with it. Nina Berg, Matthew Boyes-Watson, and Michael Monestime are trailblazers of contemporary civic space, design and creativity. Under their leadership and vision, they've created something brilliant that captures and amplifies the vibrancy and soul of Cambridge to a T. I firmly support the reissue of a special permit to extend the use of the Bishop Allen lot for Starlight because I firmly believe in the love and passion this team has for Cambridge. I know that nothing means more to them.

With that, I appreciate your time and consideration for the extension of Starlight,

Xia Rondeau, 108 Inman St, Cambridge, MA, 02139

Pacheco, Maria

From: Eric Grunebaum <eric.grunebaum@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 20, 2022 7:06 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive, BZA163746-2022

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal,

I would like to express strong support for Starlight Square receiving an extension of its special permit.

I am a lifelong resident of Cambridge, I brought up two kids who attended CRLS and I have served on many formal and informal committees in Cambridge including Envision Cambridge and Net Zero. Professionally, I spent 20 years as a documentary filmmaker and believe strongly in the value of the arts in creating and enriching our community and building connections among diverse groups.

My last visit to Starlight was for the MLK/Many Helping Hands event and what a wonderful place Starlight is for our community to come together!

These connections can continue growing as we emerge from the pandemic, although it's far from clear that we are in fact emerging. Even so, there are long term negative impacts on our community and on mental health which will likely linger for many years after the pandemic which exposure to the arts can help address.

Thank you,
Eric

Eric Grunebaum, 98 Montgomery St., Cambridge, MA 02140, 617-304-5824

Cofounder, Director & Leadership Team, *Friends of Jerry's Pond*

[Friends of Jerry's Pond Fund at Cambridge Community Foundation](#)

CARU Associates LLC

Commercial Properties

March 20, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

RE: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive.

To Members of the Board of Zoning Appeal,

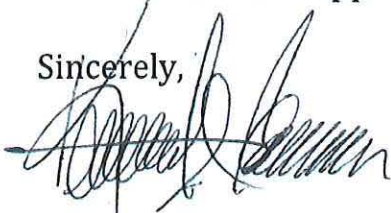
I am writing in support of a special permit for the continued operation of Starlight Square on Municipal Lot #5 at Bishop Allen Drive and Norfolk St.

Since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Central Square BID, has worked in partnership with the City of Cambridge to build and successfully operate this space to the benefit of the residents and business owners of Central Square and wider Cambridge. It exemplifies the spirit of our district, a place where arts, culture, and small business intersect and symbiotically support one another.

As a third generational business owner in Cambridge and Central Square, I have seen Central Square weather many storms. Starlight has helped us through the pandemic, and we still need it as we continue to recover.

I ask the Board to approve this special permit.

Sincerely,



Kenneth S. Barron, Managing Partner and
Chairman of the Board of Directors, Central Square BID

CNA
Cambridgeport
Neighborhood
Association

March 18, 2022

To the Board of Zoning Appeals,

As the board of the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association, we write to express our support for Starlight Square continuing to operate outdoors in Central Square. It has been a delight to watch this parking lot transform into a place where the community comes together, and we appreciate the wide variety of opportunities it has brought to the neighborhood. We've personally experienced everything from the farmer's market to Poppportunity shopping to a Bollywood dance class, and we would love to see the space continue to be so well-utilized.

While some of these things might continue individually indoors somewhere, there is something special about a versatile outdoor space. We know that members of our community are still experiencing a wide variety of risk tolerance with regards to COVID, and outdoor space is still the only way that we can all come together. And even if there were no COVID at all, many of us will always appreciate the outdoors, fresh air, and the chance to be outside while close to home.

We are grateful for all the work and thoughtfulness that has already gone into creating Starlight Square, and we hope you will allow it to continue.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Bowie

President, for the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association Board

Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association, Inc.
Rebecca Bowie (President), Cathie Zusy (Treasurer), Brittany Butler (Co-Clerk),
Tien-Tien Chan (Co-Clerk), Valerie Bonds, Julia Halprin, Tonia Hicks

Pacheco, Maria

From: Theresa McSorley <theresa.mcsorley23@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 9:53 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

To Whom it May Concern,

My name is Theresa McSorley and I live and work in Cambridge MA. My apartment is on Harvard St and I work on Prospect St, near Central Square. I do hope you will approve Starlight Square's special permit application. To turn a sad, unused parking lot into an area of social connection and creativity is something I believe we could use even more of around here. Cambridge is a very walkable city, even the coffee shop I work at gets a lot of local customers that live in the area. After being shorted social connections and events for 2 years because of COVID, everyone deserves a place where they can feel safe, happy, and not so alone. Starlight Square does this so well; they are outdoors so everyone can feel more comfortable about slowing the spread, the Square has ample space for a whole assortment of events, and the people running it seem to really have a lot of passion to curate wholesome experiences. I went to the farmers market at the square, where I could almost always take home my fresh produce sans plastic packaging (unlike the grocery stores in the area). I also went to a Drag show at Starlight last year and I had so much fun! It seems like the girls on stage had fun, too! I'm honestly not sure why the City wouldn't approve an increase in fun opportunities for their residents, but in case you are still on the fence, just think about how you felt in April/May 2020. We are all still reeling from that, and we all need to be together, now more than ever.

Thank you for your time,
Theresa McSorley



Mar 21, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal

Re: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Dear Committee members,

I am writing to you as the Managing Director of ImprovBoston in strong support of establishing the Starlight Square venue for a third season, and hopefully many more to come, with an ongoing permit.

As a member of the Central Square community I have found Starlight Square to be an incredible joy. It's provided a home for artists and vendors to showcase their work, a place for citizens of Cambridge and the surrounding areas to come visit, shop, socialize, and participate in the arts. In the time of COVID, it provides a safe space for being together. Outside of COVID protocols, it's a lovely way to enjoy an afternoon or an evening outdoors, in a setting unique to Central Square.

As a business profoundly impacted by the coronavirus Starlight Square has also given ImprovBoston a place where we can perform and bring people together through laughter - something integral to our mission. Starlight Square has helped many artists pursue their work, and provided a place for patrons to participate in the theater. There is something remarkably beautiful about watching a show outside on a beautiful night, with a breeze blowing over you and the hum of the city in the background.

Please, help Starlight Square continue bringing joy to the Central Square district, and approve its permit for this season, and many more to come.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Josh Garneau".

Josh Garneau
He/Him/His
Managing Director
ImprovBoston

Pacheco, Maria

From: Manouchecca Lord <manoucheccalord@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 11:15 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: Nina Berg
Subject: Starlight Letter of Support
Attachments: Poppportunity_Letter of Support.docx

Good morning,

I hope you are well and enjoyed your weekend. My name is Manouchecca Lord and I am attaching to this email my Starlight venue letter of support for you and the committee team to review.

Starlight venue has been a life changing experience not only for myself but the artist, vendors and community members. It is with high hopes that it continues to have the same impact for years to come.

Best,

Manouchecca

3/15/2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

I am writing in strong support of Starlight Square, located at 84 Bishop Allen Drive, receiving its special permit to continue operating in Central Square.

My name is Manoucheca Lord, and I am the Program Director of Poppportunity, an economic development initiative that runs Saturdays and Sundays at Starlight Square. I am also a resident of 812 Memorial Drive, Cambridge, MA and a proud alumna of Cambridge Public Schools.

Since 2020, Poppportunity has supported over 200 local entrepreneurs through our rotating pop-up shops, one-day carts, and community markets. Our participants are majority women of color, Cambridge residents, whose backgrounds span all corners of the globe: Mexico, Ethiopia, Haiti, and Iraq, to name a few of their home countries. Since its inception, Poppportunity has generated hundreds of thousands of dollars for our participants.

Over the last two years, we have worked closely with the Central Square BID team, including their Starlight staff, to maintain an inclusive, safe, and respectful environment. By extending Starlight's permit, my team will continue to be able to provide this economic opportunity to Cambridge residents, which not only encourages entrepreneurship city-wide, but also provides residents with a way to shop small and keep their dollars in the community.

Sincerely,
Manoucheca Lord

Pacheco, Maria

From: Kathleen Moore <kathleensmoore@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 6:20 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Theater BZA163746-2022

I write in support of Starlight Square and I urge you to approve the Special Permit requested in case BZA163746-2022.
I cannot imagine that there will be any delay.

Kathleen Moore

Kathleen Moore
9 Doane Street
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Dear Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeals,

The junior class would like to support the extension of CRLS's special permit with Starlight Square. As leaders of student government and juniors, we are offering our support for the continuation of the use of Starlight Square as a venue. In the past, this location has been used to hold the senior prom as well as the Danceworks spring performance. The Starlight venue has been invaluable to the Cambridge Community particularly the students of Cambridge Rindge & Latin School and we hope to extend that use for this years' CRLS junior prom.

We strongly believe that events at Starlight are crucial to bringing our community closer together. Following the pandemic, Starlight Square was utilized as a space for connection, performance, and community. Considering the fact that the Junior class lost so many of these opportunities, we would like you to allow them to continue their operations. We are continuously gathering support from our peers and supportive adults that want to continue Starlight's permit. We hope you give this your strongest consideration.

Best,

CRLS Student Government

Students Signed In Agreement:

Ishraaq Ahmed

Grace Clemente

EMAN ABDUREZAK

ADELINA ESCAMILLA-SALOMON

Alif Sheikh

Ling Fu

Irene Hill

Ellie Harmon

Pacheco, Maria

From: Bill McAvinney <bmcavinney@earthlink.net>
Sent: Monday, March 21, 2022 5:00 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Dr

Dear BZA Members,

Please, please make it possible for Starlight Square to continue. I'm a senior in my 70's who has lived 1 block away for 50 years now and Starlight Sq is literally the best improvement in our neighborhood during my time here. At a time when we were all being forced into isolation Starlight provided a space for many neighborhood activities in a safe space. Taking it away now would be a huge blow to our neighborhood.

Sincerely
Bill McAvinney,
12 Douglass St

March 20, 2022

Attn: Board of Zoning Appeal, Case # BZA163746-2022

My name is Jillian Girardin and I am the Executive Director of the Cambridge Hip-Hop Collective. I am writing this letter to support Starlight Square receiving a special permit to continue operating. As a community organizer and life-long resident of Cambridge, Starlight Square has been a gift to Central Square's small businesses and arts community.

The Cambridge Hip-Hop Collective is a non-profit community organization that hosts the Bridgeside Cypher, a hip-hop open mic event that has found a home at Starlight Square. Our outdoor hip-hop events feature local artists and musicians performing in an improvised, collaborative format. We initially operated under a street performer's permit. In 2020 however, permits were removed, and many performance venues began to close due to the pandemic. This significantly impacted the arts community. Creatives not only needed outdoor spaces but relied on them to survive and express themselves.

In 2021, The Bridgeside Cypher held five monthly events at Starlight Square. Our mission is "to build bridges between people of different backgrounds in our community through hip-hop." and last year's Starlight Square series perfectly demonstrated that. Our events at Starlight have become a uniquely diverse gathering of artists and attendees of various backgrounds, ethnicities, classes, ages, genders, and experience levels, all performing together.

The quality of our events has elevated from the marketing assistance, stage size, lighting, and audio support Central Square BID and Starlight Square provided us. These resources gave our events a consistent, concert-like atmosphere that many enjoyed. We also gained a broader audience at Starlight Square to many people who have never been exposed to hip-hop music. We feel that people in our community must hear the stories told within hip-hop in a step towards breaking down cultural barriers and inherent biases that contribute to systemic racism. The Central Sq. BID, Flagg Street Studio, and the Starlight Square staff are all outstanding! They always have smiles on their faces and have cultivated a welcoming, exciting space for the community when we need it most.

Starlight Square has not only made an impact on Cambridge Hip-Hop, but on every organization, business, and school that has either held an event or participated in, creating some sense of normalcy again. Please allow them to continue their future operations in helping our community thrive.

Starlight Square is essential to Central Square.

Sincerely,

Jillian Girardin
Cambridge Hip-Hop Collective



CAMBRIDGE
Community Foundation

March 21, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
City of Cambridge
Case#: BZA163746-2022, Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

To whom it may concern:

When we think of Starlight Square, we think of community. From the moment of its inception, we knew this innovative welcoming, community space would be a powerful community-based solution supporting artists, arts organizations and small businesses in the community during the pandemic, but it's also been a magnet for everyone, a place that truly feels like it belongs to community, lifting up the voices of our diverse community and giving neighbors space to connect and enjoy the creators who make Cambridge a culturally rich and vibrant city.

Starlight Square is an innovative and community-based solution, supporting artists, arts organizations, and small businesses. Starlight provides a safe space to gather where artists could perform and be paid. And thanks to the city and philanthropic support, all performances were free for the community to experience. The space has enabled local vendors to sell their creative products. In the Foundation's virtual event celebrating our arts sector and our city's resilience, the space's organizers noted that their holiday market brought in nearly \$100,000 of revenue for local vendors, creating the opportunity for vendor to "graduate" to a storefront on Massachusetts Ave or other commercial districts. Other vendors have grown to develop online shops, and participated in additional pop-up vending opportunities in Cambridge, and the Greater Boston area. Starlight Square also became a space for the community at large, allowing others to use the venue, experiencing the installations and pop-ups connected to the space.

The Cambridge Community Foundation and our donors have been proud supporters of Starlight Square since its first season, infusing over \$50,000 to lift up the community and our vibrant arts sector during difficult times. We've watched it grow since that time and know first-hand the value it brings to our community—artistically, economically, and in community building. The space enables local vendors to sell their creative products. Artists and arts organizations are supported for their performances. Nonprofits use the space to convene important conversations. In its second season, we provided support to bring more BIPOC artists and performances to Starlight Square, from established organizations like Jean Appolon Expressions, to newer ones such as the Nigerian Youth Organization of Boston, the Educators of Color Coalition, and Diablo Revolution. On Juneteenth, Starlight Square was a venue for the Cambridge Families of Color Coalition and the Black Matters Experience. On October 15, the Foundation convened its annual *CCF Salutes 150+ Nonprofits* celebration and *Imagined in Cambridge!* Social Innovation Award at Starlight Square.

PRESIDENT
Geeta Pradhan

BOARD OF DIRECTORS
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Michael Monestime

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Todd Sperry

Lorraine Thornhill

Katie Walker, *Trustee*



CAMBRIDGE
Community Foundation

This space is important to our multi-cultural artists, to our emerging entrepreneurs and makers, to our arts and cultural organizations and to our neighbors. It's a magical space for our community—one that truly feels 'of the community' and it deserves to see another season.

We look forward to the space continuing to serve community in the long term and urge you to give it permission to operate over the next few years, and also look at ways to make this amazing community asset a permanent feature in Cambridge.

Sincerely,

Geeta Pradhan
President,
Cambridge Community Foundation



City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL

831 Mass Avenue, Cambridge, MA.
(617) 349-6100

2 Bds

BZA

POSTING NOTICE – PICK UP SHEET

The undersigned picked up the notice board for the Board of Zoning Appeals Hearing.

Name: Michael Monestime Date: 3/10/22
(Print)

Address: 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Case No. BZA-163746

Hearing Date: 3/24/22

Thank you,
Bza Members

6442^B

SUBDIVISION PLAN OF LAND IN CAMBRIDGE

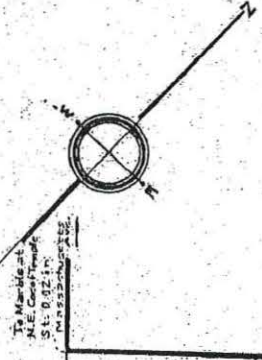
Edward Smith, City Engineer

January 23, 1963

Middlesex South Registry District
APR - 9 1963

RECEIVED FOR REGISTRATION

11 O'CLOCK P.M. A.M.
Pl. 42-00

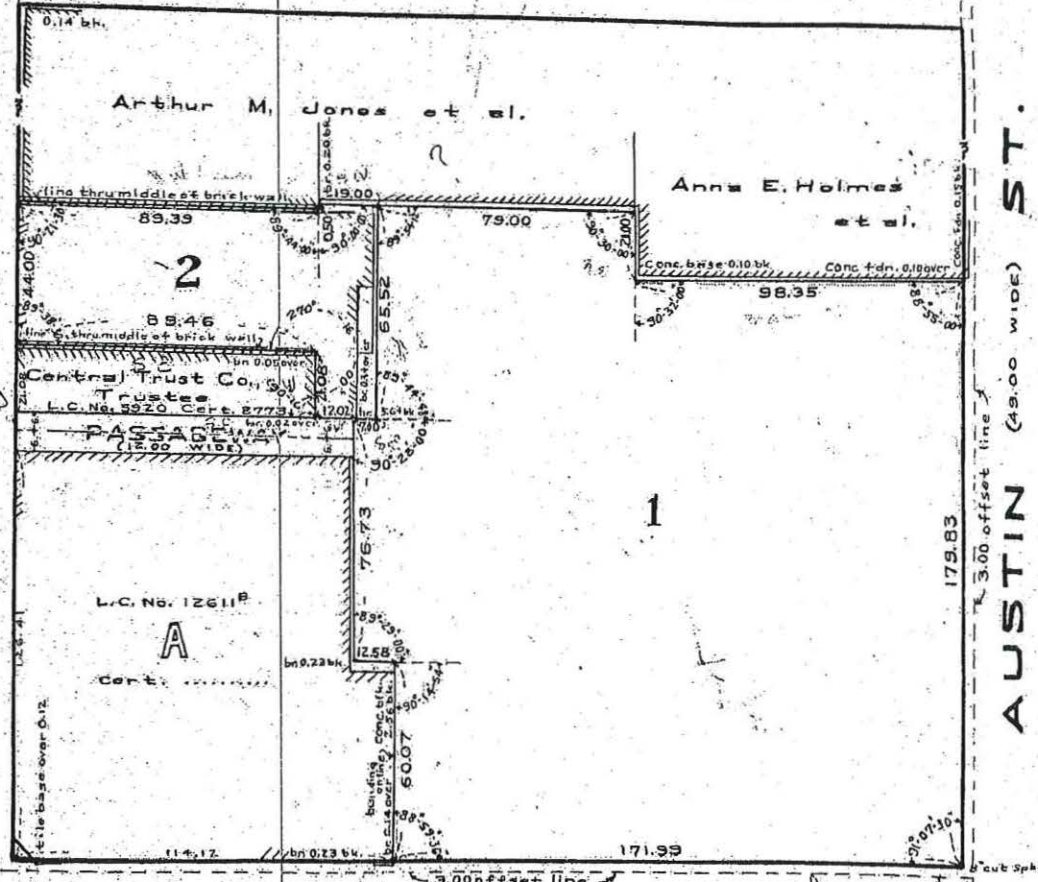


To Marked
A.E. Center
St. 0.0214
Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS (103.00 WIDE) AVE.

ESSEX (21.00 WIDE) ST.

AUSTIN (29.00 WIDE) ST.



NORFOLK (40.00 WIDE) ST.

As shown West of
Columb St. 1.62 bk.
From line of new
Subdiv. by Court
Order

Subdivision of Land
Shown on Plan 6442^A
Filed with Cert. of Title No. 8762
South Registry District of Middlesex County

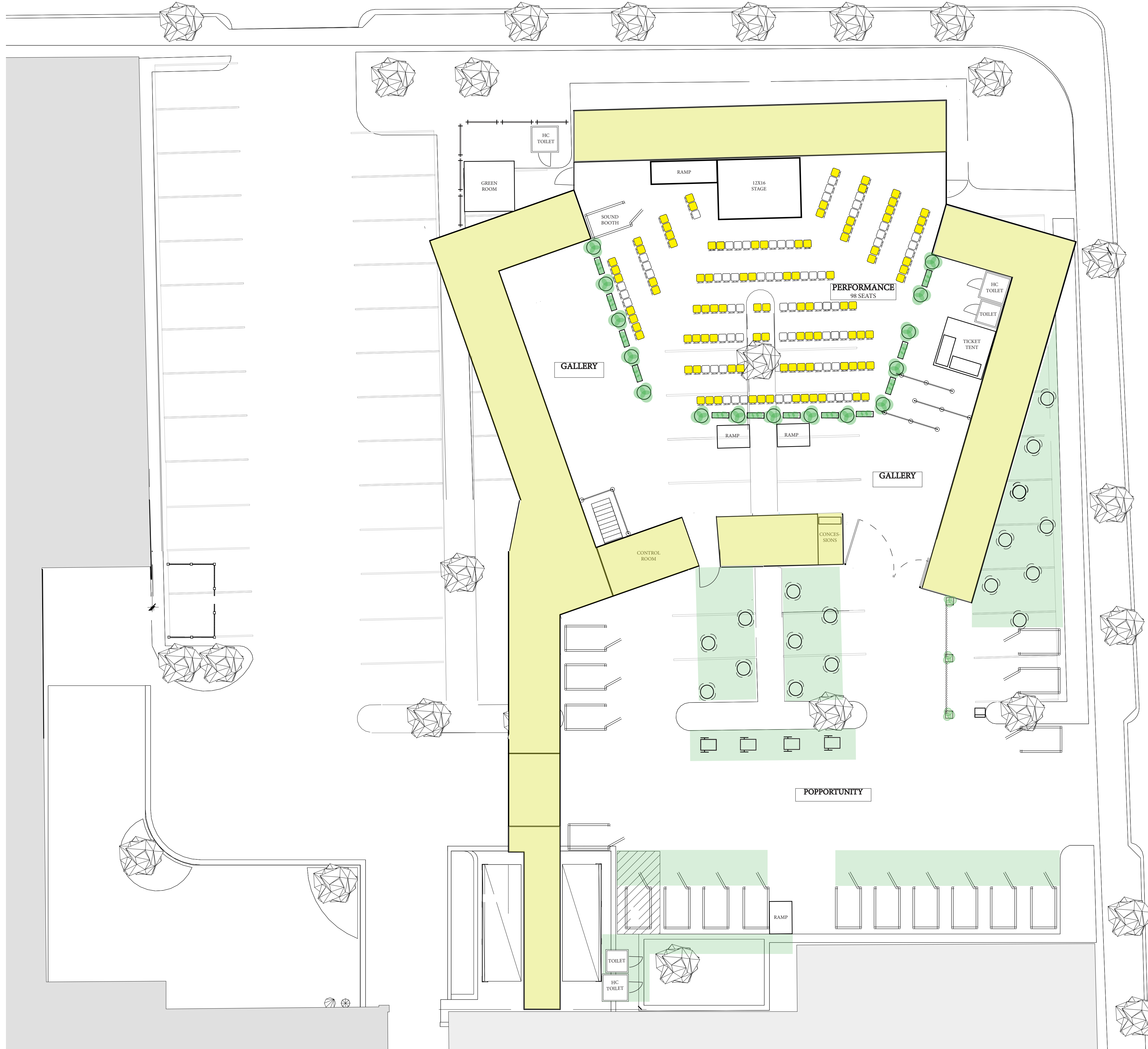
Separate certificates of title may be issued for land
shown hereon as Lots 1 & 2
By the Court.

FEB. 6, 1963

Margaret M. Daly
Recorder

Copy of part of plan
filed in
LAND REGISTRATION OFFICE
FEB. 6, 1963
Scale of this plan 40 feet to an inch
C. M. Anderson, Engineer for Court v.l.

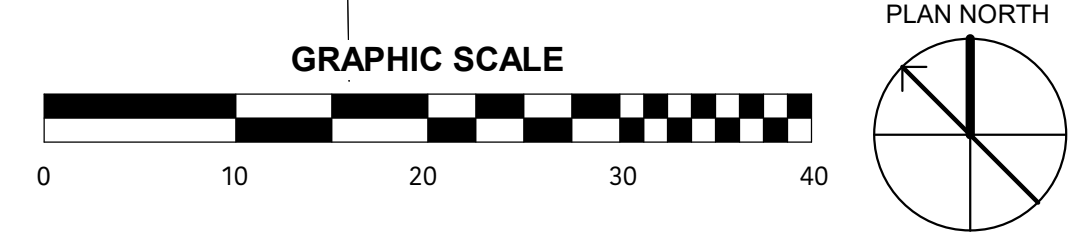
BISHOP ALLEN DRIVE



AREA OF
SCAFFOLDING & SCRIM
= 3,700 SF

AREA ENCLOSED BY
SCAFFOLDING & SCRIM
= 5,200

NORFOLK





CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Community Development Department

IRAM FAROOQ
Assistant City Manager for
Community Development

SANDRA CLARKE
Deputy Director
Chief of Administration

KHALIL MOGASSABI
Deputy Director
Chief of Planning

To: Board of Zoning Appeal
From: Central Square Advisory Committee
Date: March 22, 2022
Re: **Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive (BZA 163746)**

Overview

The Central Square Advisory Committee (the "Committee") met on Monday, March 14, 2022 to discuss the Special Permit Application for Starlight Square at 84 Bishop Allen Drive (BZA case 163746).

Starlight Square has been operating as an Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility, Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment not otherwise defined, and a Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Use. Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility in the Business B zone requires a Special Permit. Starlight Square has been operating under an executive order suspending zoning enforcement during the COVID-19 emergency.

The Committee decided to share a positive recommendation for granting the Special Permit with the Board of Zoning Appeal.

Proposal Description

The Central Square Business Improvement District (BID) on behalf of the City of Cambridge is seeking a Special Permit to allow Starlight Square to continue operating as an Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility, Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment not otherwise defined, and a Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Use.

Committee Comments

Michael Monestime, from the Board of Directors for the Central Square BID, presented the Starlight Square project, which has been in operation since August of 2020 and has been largely supported by the Cambridge community and the City of Cambridge. Future programming of events for Starlight Square will continue except for a reduction in evening programming and a reduction in speakers based on neighbors' requests.

Committee members expressed universal support for Starlight Square and emphatically endorsed the granting of the Special Permit being sought. They view Starlight Square as a locus of community activity and pride, a place for Cantabrigians to gather, and an opportunity for burgeoning entrepreneurs.

344 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139
Voice: 617 349-4600
Fax: 617 349-4669
TTY: 617 349-4621
www.cambridgema.gov

Committee members also voiced an interest in seeing more consistent programming throughout the day to curb periods of low or no activity. All the members think that the design of Starlight Square, including the scrim on the outside of the primary structure is attractive and engaging, and more visually appealing than a parking lot. The committee also emphasized their appreciation that a concept, such as Starlight, could be made into a reality and hopes to see it stay as a permanent “square within the Square.”

Respectfully submitted for the Committee,

Sarah Scott

Sarah Scott

Associate Zoning Planner

Community Development Department



CAMBRIDGE LICENSE COMMISSION

831 MASSACHUSETTS AVE, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

NICOLE MURATI FERRER
CHAIRPERSON | BOARD MEMBER

CHRISTINE A. ELOW
POLICE COMMISSIONER | BOARD MEMBER

GERARD E. MAHONEY
FIRE CHIEF | BOARD MEMBER

March 22, 2022

VIA EMAIL ONLY: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov;
brsullivan@Cambridgema.gov

Brendon Sullivan, Board of Appeals Vice Chair
Board of Zoning Appeals
Case No. BZA 163746

RE: Licensing Entertainment Venues or Events

Dear Vice Chair Sullivan:

This is to confirm that pursuant to the authority by which the Board of License Commissioners (the "Board") was created, Special Acts of 1919, c. 83, as amended by 1922, c. 95, and 1949, c. 84, the Board has the exclusive authority in the City of Cambridge to issue, regulate and condition certain licenses pursuant to various statutes including, but not limited to, entertainment licenses issued under G. L. c. 140, §§ 181 and 183A.

The Board issues two types of entertainment licenses – annual or one-day (which can be issued for multiple days). When the Board approves or denies an application for an entertainment license it considers various factors as set by state law. When the Board grants an entertainment license, it may place conditions on it, such as hours or type of entertainment allowed, in order to serve the public and protect the common good. In addition, pursuant to the authority conferred to the Board by the Special Acts, Noise Control Ordinance and state law, the Board may suspend, revoke or further condition an entertainment license, or issue fines for violations. There are various legal opinions from the City Solicitor on the issue of the Board's authority if you need additional information.

Please do not hesitate to contact me should you have additional questions. Thank you.

Very truly yours,

Nicole Murati Ferrer



CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

Alanna Mallon
Vice-Mayor

March 22, 2022

Constantine Alexander, Chair
Board of Zoning Appeals
831 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: Case No. BZA 163746-2022
84 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Chairman Alexander,

I write in strong support of Starlight Square's request for a Special Permit as outlined in case #BZA163746-2022.

Throughout the duration of the pandemic, Starlight Square became a multi-use haven for the City through its ability to adapt based on various needs. It has not only been a safe place to gather during the pandemic, but also a landing spot for free arts, economic development, and many other projects. Over the last two years Starlight has been the home of multiple plays, live music performances, CRLS senior prom, a flu vaccination clinic, several church services, and most recently the 2022 City Council inauguration. Popportunity, which hosts weekend pop up business spaces for local budding entrepreneurs and crafters, has provided invaluable economic development for BIPOC community members as an incubator for their businesses.

Starlight Square has seamlessly married the past with the present, by honoring the history of Cambridge and Central Square while embracing the possibilities of the future. I have continued to be amazed at the Central Square BID's vision that allowed a space originally intended for cars to be transformed into a space for people, and hope Starlight will serve as a model for other public spaces in the City moving forward. I have full faith in the Central Square BID's ability to work with its neighbors to reach a compromise on the noise levels and after reviewing the proposed changes from the BID, I see no reason why common ground cannot be reached.

It is my sincere hope that the BZA will approve this Special Permit and not delay the upcoming season of Starlight Square.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alanna Mallon". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "A" and a long, sweeping tail.

Alanna Mallon
Vice Mayor

Dear Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

My name is Cassie Chapados and I am writing to express my full support of the continued existence of Starlight Square at 84 Bishop Allen Drive. As both a resident of Cambridge and an employee of Central Square Theater I have seen the myriad ways that Starlight Square has helped to bring the Central Square (and Cambridge as a whole) community together and provide space for artists, educators, and community members to share their gifts with the world safely. When I joined the Starlight team in the spring of 2020, Starlight was one of the only options theater artists (as well as artists of all disciplines) had to showcase our art. Without the ability to gather indoors and with the significant loss of funds that came with canceling hundreds of performances we were stuck in a holding pattern. Without knowing when we could perform again we couldn't ask funders to help pay for new projects, and without that money we couldn't pay the hundreds of artists we employ. But Starlight gave us the chance to make art again, pay our artists, and join us more closely with the local community.

Even as we move into a world with less COVID regulations and less fear of what COVID might bring, there is still an immense need for Starlight. It is one of the only free performance spaces in Cambridge and Greater Boston. Often the cost of renting a space and all the equipment needed to perform in it prohibits artists of all kinds from being able to perform. Additionally, the free programming at Starlight allows all community members, whether or not they can normally afford to see live performances, the chance to experience the art being made in their community. This exposes us all to new ideas and brings us closer to our neighbors who we may have never known before. We are culturally poorer without Starlight Square, and the vibrancy it brings to Central Square is unmatched. There is nothing like walking through Central Square on a warm summer night hearing the cheers from a live concert, the laughter from a comedy show, or the rhythmic stomping of a hundred people dancing together.

I sincerely hope that you choose to extend Starlight Square's permit for another year so that we may continue to see the kind of community engagement and cultural programming that both seasons of Starlight have brought to Central Square and Cambridge at large. I know that if it is not extended it will be sorely missed and we will find a Starlight shaped hole in our community.

Sincerely,

Cassie Chapados

Pacheco, Maria

From: Nicole <lolasurbanvin@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 12:32 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Sq

Monday, March 21, 2022
Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

To Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

My name is Nicole Lyons. I am the owner of Lola's Urban Vintage, located at 541 Massachusetts Avenue. We are an abutting business to Municipal Lot #5. I am writing in strong support of Starlight Square, located at 84 Bishop Allen Drive, receiving its special permit to continue operating in Central Square.

I opened Lola's in 2021 after participating in Poppportunity, the small business program that started at Starlight. I see and believe in the benefit of locating arts and cultural events near small businesses, and there are so many in Central Square to support. Starlight regularly brings people from Cambridge and Greater Boston to the Square and underscores our neighborhood's identity as a Cultural District.

Please consider their application to continue programming.

Sincerely,
Nicole Lyons

Sent from my iPhone

Pacheco, Maria

From: keith mascoll <mascoll.keith@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 1:44 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: monestime.michael@gmail.com
Subject: In support of Starlight

Good afternoon,

My name is Keith Mascoll, and my family has been in Cambridge for over 100 years. My family came from Barbados to the central sq area many years ago. I am a proud product of the high school and live my life as a professional Actor! I am writing in support of giving Starlight the permit it needs to keep this wonderful space open. During the pandemic in 2020 Starlight Gave me the opportunity as a survivor of sexual abuse to have my work heard on that stage. It was the only arts space that fed the city. It is a powerful space that brings everyone together, but is true to the central sq roots to the history and presence of Black and Brown people in Cambridge. The richness that Starlight adds to a parking lot that was the gateway to drugs in the 90's is incredible. There is no place like it anywhere in the world. Starlight has earned the right to continue to give the city what it needs, a outdoor art community space that brings the city together to laugh, cry, dance and heal together!

Thank you
Keith Mascoll
SAG-AFTRA
www.triggered1.com

Strong support of Starlight receiving special permit
- Your name, address, and Cambridge affiliation, if any
- How Starlight has positively impacted you
- Why you believe Starlight warrants an extension

Pacheco, Maria

From: Hakyung Kay Chung <kaycsound@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 12:33 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Hakyung Chung
46 Pierce St
Malden, MA 02148

Dear Board of Zoning Appeals,

I am writing in strong support of the special permit application for Starlight Square. Even though I am currently not a Cambridge resident, Starlight Square has been the magnet for me to experience more Cambridge. Starlight Square has provided me with a sense of safe, belonging, and respect as a staff and a patron. Starlight Square has not only brought the community together but also provided opportunities to the youth generation to perform their potential as a performer, technician, or managing staff.

As one of the sound engineers who worked at Starlight Square in 2021, I have always monitored noise levels inside and out near residential places to respect neighbors as well as comply with the city's noise ordinance. And I will continue to have our team monitor closely and comply with the city's noise ordinance as a tech manager this year.

As Starlight Square was the center of the Cambridge community in the midst of pandemic to bring lots of laughter and excitement, I hope it will be continued to be so for Season 3. Please consider permitting the space to Starlight Square.

Sincerely,
Hakyung Chung

March 11, 2022
Board of Zoning Appeal Inspectional Services Department 831 Massachusetts Avenue Cambridge, MA 02139

Pacheco, Maria

From: Dee <maytaurus17@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 22, 2022 6:21 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Case# BZA - 163746 Starlight

Good Afternoon

I am Cambridge resident and I live across the street from Star Light. Although it's a nice idea and it helps upcoming musicians and artistes to be known the music and level of noise is ridiculous!! It's way to loud and it's very disruptive.

I work and attend school online from home as many others do and trying to work and be on a conference call or zoom is very unprofessional even with headphones!! . Its hard to hear and concentrate on my work.

I don't think it was a good idea to add this particular event in the middle of the parking lot which is for shoppers to shop at hmart/ central sq. Instead the shoppers are parking in our residential area parking spaces because they can no longer park in the Designated parking lot that was built for hmart customers!!!

It's very frustrating to have to drive around the block several times looking for a parking space for 30 mins!! and then come home to listen to loud blaring music that lasts till 9pm and sometime beyond that time.

Sometimes these events draw the wrong crowd and this sometimes it's the cause of trouble of people hanging around.

I vote to have this event moved to a more open and secluded area where it's not near a residential area and that they have their own parking lot. I hope that you take all of these comments into consideration and think about the people that actually live in this area and what we have to deal with if this event continues at this location

Thank you for your time and consideration

Pacheco, Maria

From: Ninawa Fashion <ninawa.fashion@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 5:18 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Case No.BZA-163746 / Supporting Starlight at 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Dear Zoning Board Members,

My name is Aelen and my small sustainable business is Ninawa Zero Waste Clothes. My sustainable business is based on upcycling existing textile material such as unwanted clothes, tablecloth, sheets, leftover fabric...etc . My business's mission is to reduce landfill and to replace plastic bags with upcycled and reusable tote bags.

I was one of the small business owners and vendors at popportunity in starlight. When I was walking around central square in November/2020, I saw the first time starlight and popportunity. I asked Manoucheca the manager of popportunity if it'd be possible to be a vendor, she immediately welcomed me and offered me a tent then a small popp. It was my first time being welcomed as a small sustainable business owner and to have an opportunity to grow my business. Since November/2020 until December/ 2021, I have been connecting to other business owners and creating business relations with many customers, also, I made and sold more than 350 upcycled and handmade tote bags, Doing Alteration in front my Popp, spreading awareness about reducing landfill and upcycling clothes.

I support giving permission to Starlight and popportunity because it is a place where I can have a popp and to grow my sustainable business.

Thanks for taking time to read my letter.

Aelen
Ninawa Zero Waste Clothes

Pacheco, Maria

From: ISHRAAQ AHMED <23iahmed@cpsd.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 9:41 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square Permit

Dear Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeals,

The junior class would like to support the extension of CRLS's special permit with Starlight Square. As leaders of student government and juniors, we are offering our support for the continuation of the use of Starlight Square as a venue. In the past, this location has been used to hold the senior prom as well as the Danceworks spring performance. The Starlight venue has been invaluable to the Cambridge Community particularly the students of Cambridge Rindge & Latin School and we hope to extend that use for this years' CRLS junior prom.

We strongly believe that events at Starlight are crucial to bringing our community closer together. Following the pandemic, Starlight Square was utilized as a space for connection, performance, and community. Considering the fact that the Junior class lost so many of these opportunities, we would like you to allow them to continue their operations. We are continuously gathering support from our peers and supportive adults that want to continue Starlight's permit. We hope you give this your strongest consideration.

Best,
CRLS Student Government

Signed:
Ishraaq Ahmed
Grace Clemente
EMAN ABDUREZAK
ADELINA ESCAMILLA-SALOMON
Alif Sheikh
Ling Fu
Irene Hill
Ellie Harmon
Nina Berg

Pacheco, Maria

From: Corinne Espinoza <corinne.espinoza@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 23, 2022 9:43 PM
To: Singanayagam, Ranjit; Ratay, Olivia; Pacheco, Maria
Subject: In support of Starlight Square's Special Permit

Dear members of the BZA:

I write in support of the Special Permit for Starlight Square.

Starlight Square seemed to appear magically one day, offering an oasis during what may be the most dismal period of many people's lives. Starting in March 2020, all around Cambridge, people were suffering. Tens of thousands of people suddenly lost jobs and had no way to pay rent or put food on the table. Since then, we lost so many precious community members to violence and to the virus. The pandemic for some has been a period of isolation and reflection. For others, it has been tragedy upon tragedy.

Starlight Square was a medicine. A bright spot of music, of dance, of people, of life. Friendly eyes one could recognize above a mask. Neighbors, friends, elders, youth, people we hadn't seen in months (or years) gathered. At Starlight Square, small vendors who had otherwise been priced out of Cambridge were able to sell interesting and well-made products. Artists and musicians had a venue they could afford. Children and teens were able to perform in front of other humans. Non-profit staff were able to celebrate each other and acknowledge the hard times their communities had been through. Humans who were afraid and lonely and in danger had a safe way to have human interaction. A safe way to be queer joyfully (yay Drag Show!), to feel Nina Simone's powerful words wend their way on the wind, a safe way to be in community.

Starlight Square was a genius creation that didn't just magically appear, but rather was the long time effort developed by Nina Berg, Matthew Boyes-Watson, Michael Monestime and many others. It was ready to serve the community when it was most needed. It is still needed. Starlight Square events are affordable (often free) in a city where we have a large population of people who can't afford to partake in activities that cost money. The way Starlight Square is run is truly welcoming and truly cognizant of the diversity of our community. It's built for everyone, it's there for everyone.

For these reasons and so many more, I support Starlight Square's special permit request.

Sincerely,

Corinne Espinoza

Cambridge, MA



Cambridge GIS maps available online at: <https://www.cambridge.gov/gis>

FY 2022



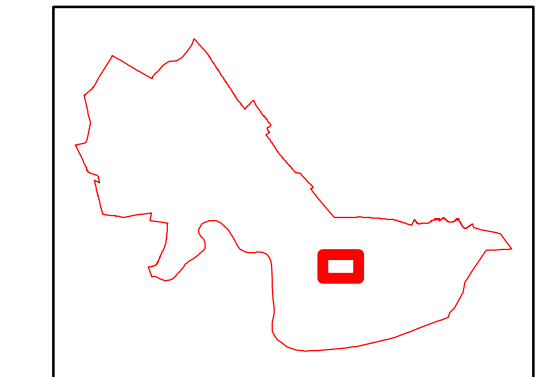
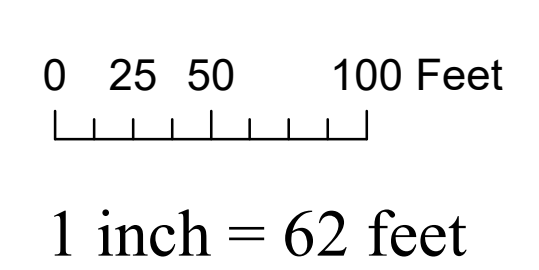
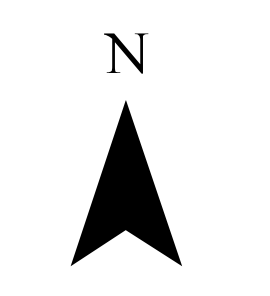
**City of Cambridge
Assessing Department**

795 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

- Buildings
- Water
- Sub-Parcel Line
- Easement
- Block Line
- Railway
- City Boundary

- 10 Lot Number
- 90 Block Number
- 10 Cam Street Number
- (125.0) Deed Dimension
- 100 Parcel size in Sq. Ft.
- 44.0LC Land Court Dimension
- 65.0 Survey Dimensions

DISCLAIMER:
All Real Property shown on this map was compiled from existing Assessor's Tax Maps dated 1920 to 2021 and maintained by the City Assessor's Office and the Department of Public Works. Subsequent maintenance has been completed using the City of Cambridge Geographic Information System (GIS). Parcels have not been created from survey, and map is suitable for assessing purposes only.
The City of Cambridge assumes no legal responsibility for information shown on this map.

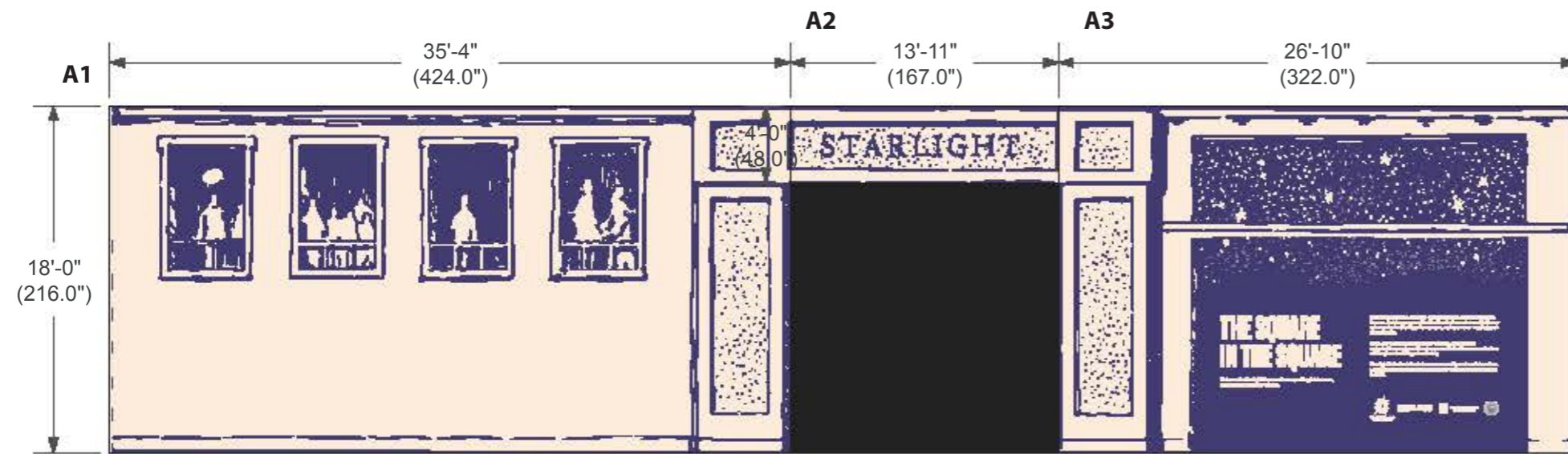


Parcel Block Map
90

Project: 0720_40 Central Square Bus. Improvement District - Starlight Square

Project Details:

- Mesh with 2" webbing and HD Grommets every 24" all around:



BOSTON WRAPS

General Notes

Client:

Matt Boyes-Watson (Project Manager)
Bow Market
617.852.8852
matt@boyeswatsonbaum.com

COURTNEY SCHWABE
Creative Director
wearecontraire.com
484.639.4605

markboyeswatson
markboyeswatson@gmail.com

Project Location:

Municipal Lot 5 in Central Square
The lot, at Bishop Allen Drive
and Norfolk Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Artist:

Tony A.

Revision

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Date: 07/23/2020

Drawing No.

Scale: 1/8" = 1'0"

MB1

Our current production and installation/delivery schedule is 10-14 business days after final approval of above graphics unless otherwise noted.

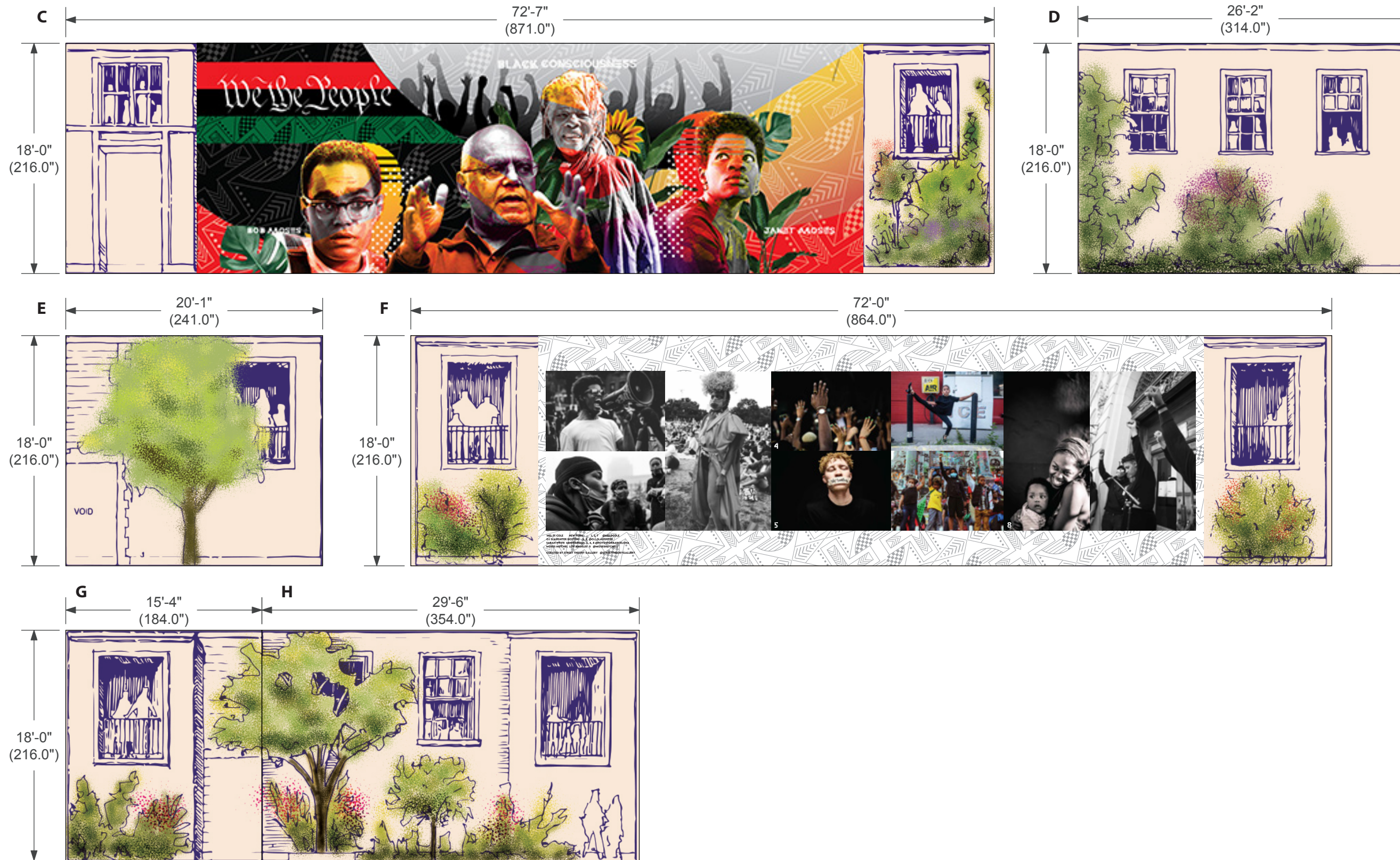
Boston Building Wraps Inc Right to Authorship Credit. Client and/or Commissioner, hereafter referred to as User, and Boston Building Wraps Inc. hereafter referred to as BBWInc. ,agree that when asked, User must properly identify BBWInc. as the creator of artwork for future reproduction. Both parties agree that authorization to proceed with project whether per written estimate or verbal authorization will act as User's naming of BBWInc.; as vendor for said services. User does not have a proactive duty to display BBWInc.'s name together with Work, but User may not seek to mislead others that Work was created by anyone other than BBWInc. User request of BBWInc. to create project relevant drawings, sketches and/or artwork includes only the final, deliverable art, and not any preliminary Work or sketches. In the event of Termination. Either party may terminate the contract at any time through written request. The User shall upon termination pay BBWInc. all unpaid amounts due for Services completed prior to notice of termination.

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**BOSTON
BUILDING
WRAPS**_{INC.}



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Artist:

Tony A.

Revision

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩

Date: 07/23/2020

Drawing No.

Scale: 1/8" = 1'0"

MB2

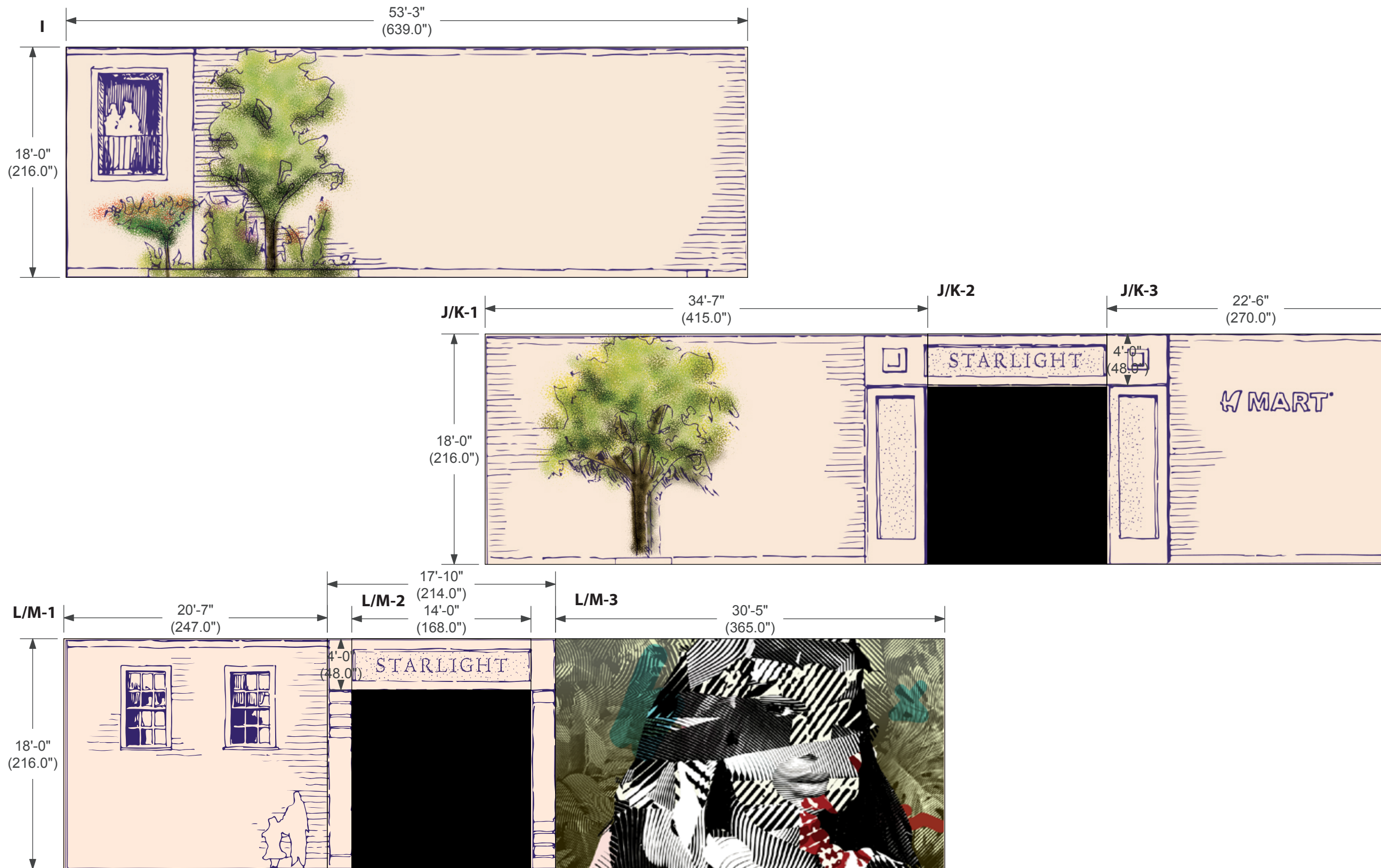
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Project Details:

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**BOSTON
BUILDING
WRAPS**_{INC.}

General Notes

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matt@boyeswatsonbaum.com

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Cambridge, MA 02139

Artist:

Tony A.

Revision

① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩

Date: 07/23/2020

Drawing No.

Scale: 1/8" = 1'0"

MB3

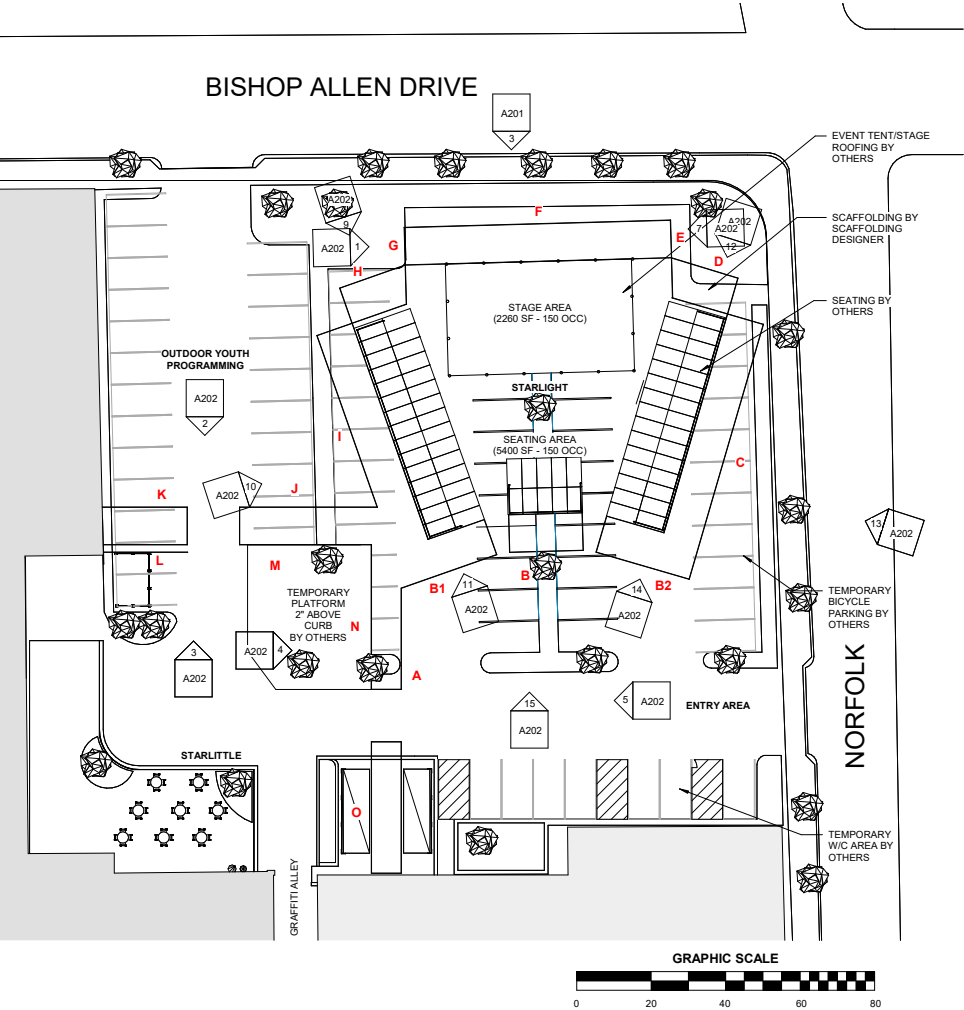
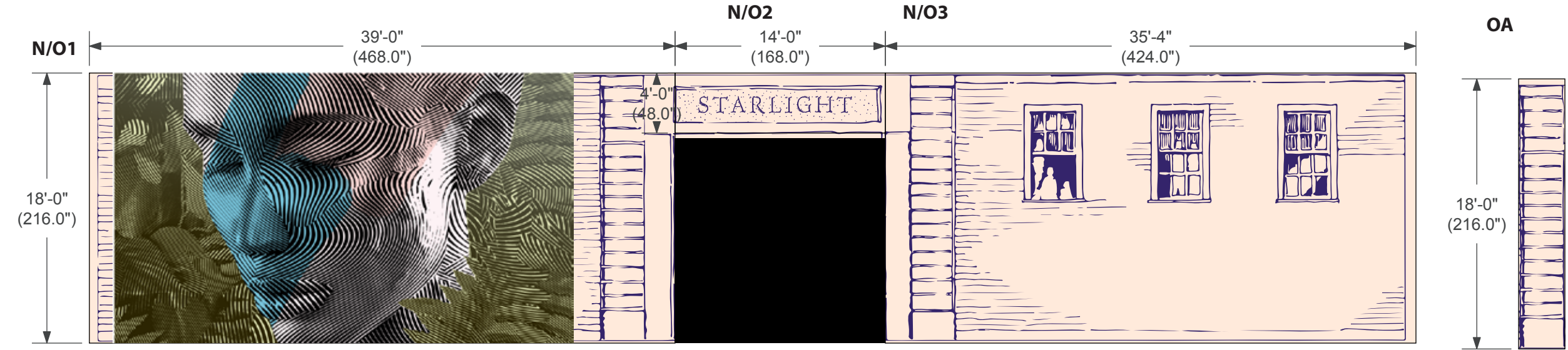
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Project Details:

- Mesh with 2" webbing and HD Grommets every 24" all around:



General Notes

Client:
 Matt Boyes-Watson (Project Manager)
 Bow Market
 617.852.8852
 matt@boyeswatsonbaum.com

 COURTNEY SCHWABE
 Creative Director
 wearecontraire.com
 484.639.4605

 markboyeswatson
 markboyeswatson@gmail.com

Project Location:
 Municipal Lot 5 in Central Square
 The lot, at Bishop Allen Drive
 and Norfolk Street
 Cambridge, MA 02139

Artist:
 Tony A.

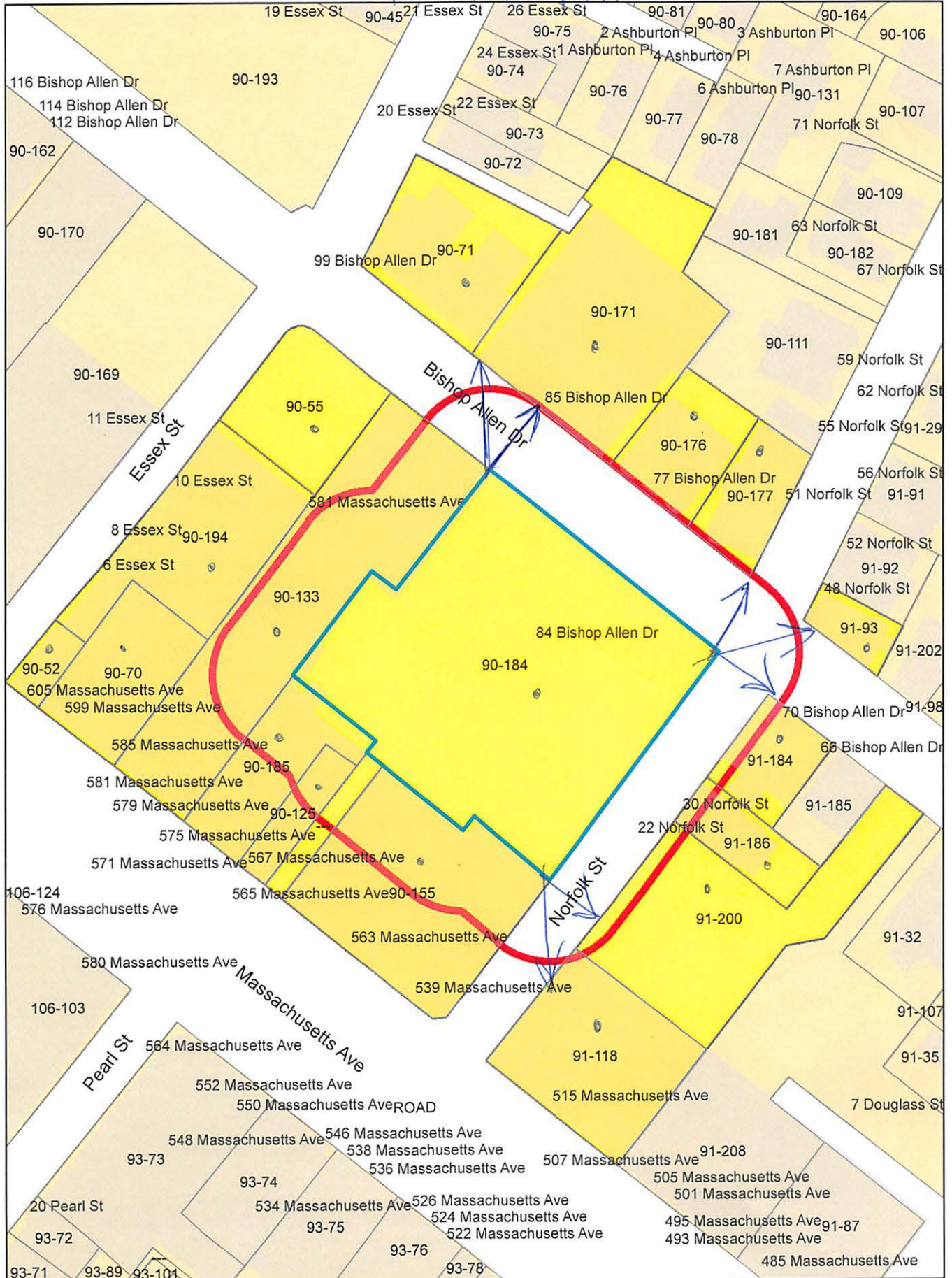
Revision #
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Date: 07/23/2020 **Drawing No.**
 Scale: 1/8" = 1'0" **MB4**

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84 Bishop Allen Dr.



84 Bishop Allen Dr. } Petitioner
MICHAEL MONESTIME
620 MASS AVE - SUITE 3
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-176-177 / 91-184
BISHOP ALLEN APARTMENTS, LLC
C/O JUST A START CORP
243 BROADWAY
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

91-200-118
PARTEEN, LLC
C/O MINTZ LEVIN, COHN, FERRIS, GLOVSKY
ONE FINANCIAL CTR
ATTN: ALLAN CAGGIANO, ESQ
BOSTON, MA 02111

91-93
TAYLOR, SETH
48 NORFOLK ST
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138

90-52-70-194-133
3MJ ASSOCIATES LLC
585 MASSACHUSETTS AVE
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-55-184
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
C/O TRAFFIC & PARKING

90-155
NAGGAR REALTY LLC.
C/O 545-565 MASS AVE LLC
585 MASSACHUSETTS AVE
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-55-184
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
C/O NANCY GLOWA
CITY SOLICITOR

90-55-184
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
C/O LOUIS DEPASQUALE
CITY MANAGER

91-186
HOYLER NORFOLK LIMITED PARTNERSHIP
22 WHITNEY WOODS LANE
COHASSET, MA 02025-1500

90-185
575 MASS AVE LLC
585 MASSACHUSETTS AVE
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-125
KATIS, HARRY N, & VICTORIA KATIS,
TRUSTEE OF POTAMIA REALTY TRUST
720 MASS AVE
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

90-171
SAINT PAUL AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL
CHURCH, INC. &
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE TAX TITLE
39 BISHOP R.E ALLEN DR.
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139-3498

90-71
THE CAMBRIDGE REDEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY
255 MAIN ST
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02142



H MART

Orson Life Center
African Methodist Episcopal Church

STARLIGHT
CENTRAL SQ
CAMBRIDGE

We Be People

COMMUNITY TAKES
CENTER STAGE

BZA APPLICATION FORM - OWNERSHIP INFORMATION

To be completed by OWNER, signed before a notary and returned to The Secretary of the Board of Zoning Appeals.


I/We City of Cambridge _____
(OWNER)

Address: 795 Massachusetts Ave., Cambridge _____

State that I/We own the property located at 84 Bishop Allen Dr. _____,
which is the subject of this zoning application.

The record title of this property is in the name of the City of Cambridge _____

*Pursuant to a deed of duly recorded in the date 1/1/63 _____, Middlesex South
County Registry of Deeds at Book _____, Page _____; or
Middlesex Registry District of Land Court, Certificate No. 110373 _____
Book 682 _____ Page 23 _____; Document no. 389017



SIGNATURE BY LAND OWNER OR
AUTHORIZED TRUSTEE, OFFICER OR AGENT*

*Written evidence of Agent's standing to represent petitioner may be requested.

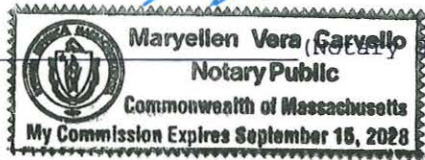
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, County of Middlesex _____

The above-name Louis DePasquale _____ personally appeared before me,
this 15th of March, 2022, and made oath that the above statement is true.



Notary

My commission expires _____ (Notary Seal).



• If ownership is not shown in recorded deed, e.g. if by court order, recent deed, or inheritance, please include documentation.

Pacheco, Maria

From: Joseph Poirier <jpoirier20@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 6, 2022 9:12 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: Lizzie Poirier
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive (# BZA163746-2022)

Dear Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

Please accept this comment as a strong endorsement of Starlight Square receiving its special permit to continue operating in Central Square.

Starlight Square is a fantastic community resource and a tremendous use of public space in Central Square. I was born and raised in Central Square, and continue to visit or pass through nearly every day. Starlight Square is easily the best use of the Central Square parking lots I have experienced in my life - it has even improved the Central Square Farmers Market. The space and programming is safe, welcoming, accessible, and exciting, and it helps Central Square retain its regional draw as a hub of arts and culture. It is economically and socially important to Central.

Please award Starlight their special permit! They are a tremendous community asset.

Thanks,

Joseph Poirier
87-1/2 Sherman St
Cambridge, MA 02140

Pacheco, Maria

From: Helen Sullivan <hsullivan11@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, March 6, 2022 8:11 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

March 7, 2022

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal:

My name is Helen Sullivan and I was born and raised in Cambridge and have been living here off and on since 1986. I am currently a homeowner in East Cambridge. I am writing this letter in support of Starlight Square (84 Bishop Allen Drive) receiving a special permit to extend services and programming. Starlight Square has been a wonderful addition to our community.

My family consists of a 12 year old, a nine year old, and a nine month old. Needless to say, the pandemic was a challenging time to keep kids healthy, engaged in their communities, and outside. Starlight Square provided a space for all of these things on numerous occasions for my family. In October 2020, when Halloween had been canceled, Starlight provided a space for my children to safely wear their costumes at the "Silly and Spooky Tales" event. Since then, my family has attended several other events at Starlight, including a Pride Month celebration and Improv Comedy. In fact, the Starlight Pride event was one of the first places I took my newborn baby last June.

In addition to providing activities for my family, I know that Starlight has also helped local businesses have a safe outdoor space to sell their products during the pandemic. My husband is a small business owner, and we have commented many times on how wonderful it is that Starlight provides this space to small businesses.

I am excited to see what the future holds for Starlight. I hope you grant them this permit.

Sincerely,

Helen Sullivan
hsullivan11@gmail.com
20 Palermo Street
Cambridge, MA
02141

Pacheco, Maria

From: Guillermo Nojehowicz <gnojehowicz@cpsd.us>
Sent: Friday, March 4, 2022 9:08 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight should be granted an extension!

To Whom It May Concern,

I strongly feel that the Starlight venue should be given an extension. This is an amazing place where musicians and artists can perform and show their artistry. This is crucial during these times of hardship in our community and country.

My name is Guillermo Nojehowicz, and I'm the Director of World Jazz Ensemble (WJE) and Percussion Ensemble at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, the public high school at Cambridge Public School. I've seen my music students perform there last summer and it was an unforgettable experience. The place and the location are just wonderful.

As a professional musician, I know how important it is to have venues like Starlight open and available to great music and art.

Please do not hesitate to contact me for any further information. Thank you.

Best regards,
Guillermo Nojehowicz

From: Guillermo Nojehowicz,
drummer, composer, educator
Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
Visual and Performing Arts
459 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02138
gnojehowicz@cpsd.us

www.elecomusic.com

Pacheco, Maria

From: Sally Peterson <sallystonepeterson@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 8:12 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: BZA163746-2022

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing in support of extending the special permit for Starlight Square at 84 Bishop Allen Drive. I am the parent of two high school students and during the pandemic that space has been one of the only ways that high school students have been able to enjoy some of the typical high school rites of passage such as proms and dance recitals. The extension of the permit would allow this year's junior prom to happen.

Thank you for your consideration,

Sally Peterson
23 Bellevue Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02140
617-512-8697



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
OFFICE OF THE MAYOR
SUMBUL SIDDIQUI

mayor@cambridgema.gov
Phone: 617-349-4321

3/8/22

Board of Zoning Appeals:

I am writing in strong support of the Central Square BID's application for a special permit to continue their award-winning work at Starlight Square on Municipal Lot #5.

In early March 2020, Michael and his team approached me about this project. Then, space in the city was at a premium and displacement was one of our biggest challenges. The BID's vision for Lot 5 was refreshing and creative. Once the pandemic hit, it became essential. Starlight quickly became the go-to venue for community services and experiences from the Flu Clinic and Farmers Market to cultural programming and economic development.

Over the last two years, I have held my office hours at Starlight; hosted a Bollywood night; attended incredible performances by our CRLS students; and was inaugurated there as a Councillor and Mayor this past January. Starlight has become an indispensable part of Cambridge.

I have been in close dialogue with the BID team about how Starlight can continue to serve the community and reduce any burden on abutters. I am more than happy to support any outreach or meditation needed.

I look forward to working in collaboration with the BID, City departments, and you to see Season 3 begin in time for the high school's senior programming.

Sincerely,

Mayor Siddiqui

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sumbul Siddiqui".

Sumbul Siddiqui, Mayor
City of Cambridge

Pacheco, Maria

From: Lauren Harder <laurenharder@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, March 8, 2022 9:50 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Support for Starlight Square BZA163746-2022

Hi Maria,

I live in Cambridge and want to express my support for the ongoing operations at Starlight Square. Since it's opening I have found Starlight to connect the community with local non profits and cultural organizations. I would love to see it's operations continue.

Thanks
Lauren Harder
111 Grozier

Pacheco, Maria

From: GRAY BITTKER <23gbittker@cpsd.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:23 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square permit support - Case #BZA163746-2022

Hello Board of Zoning Appeals,

I am Gray Bittker, a student at Cambridge Ringe and Latin high school at 459 Broadway, and I am writing to express my support for the special permit extension for Starlight Square. Starlight Square has played a very important role in our school community recently, hosting various events and helping our community remain connected throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. For this reason I am asking you to consider extending the special permit for this area, as failing to do so would prove greatly detrimental to CRLS and would force us to cancel many important events that students are looking forward to.

Thanks for your consideration, Gray Bittker

Pacheco, Maria

From: Gemma SHOOR <25ashoor@cpsd.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:28 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria; nina@centralsquare.org
Subject: BZA163746-2022

Hello,

My name is Gemma Shoor, I am a CRLS student and History Club member. I strongly support the special permit application for Starlight Square. Although I have never personally been, many of my community members speak very highly of Starlight Square and it seems like the perfect place to hold our junior prom. I believe Starlight warrants an extension because it would bring so much joy and love into the Cambridge Rindge and Latin community.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration,
Gemma Shoor and the CRLS History Club

Pacheco, Maria

From: SOPHIA ROBERTSON <24srobertson@cpsd.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:28 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Save Starlight Square

Good morning,

My name is Sophia Robertson and I am a 10th grader at Cambridge Rindge and Latin school. I am emailing to show strong support of thr special permit application for Starlight Square, located at 84 Bishop Allen Drive. I've been spending time at Starlight Square since I was thirteen, and look forward to enjoying prom in the Square. Starlight brightens up Central Square and provides a safe, fun, and diverse community engagement spot.

On behalf of everyone at CRLS, I hope you will consider extending Starlight Square's special permit.

Thank you for your consideration,
Sophia Robertson

Pacheco, Maria

From: PIPER ULLMANN <24pullmann@cpsd.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:29 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Save Starlight! - BZA163746-2022

Hi,

My name is Piper Ullmann and I am a 10th grader at CRLS. I love everything Starlight puts on such as the pop-up event for small businesses. I believe Starlight warrants an extension because it is so special for everyone in the Cambridge community.

Thanks,
Piper

--

Piper Ullmann
CRLS 2024

Pacheco, Maria

From: ZOE MELLO ZDRAVESKI <22zmellozdraveski@cpsd.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:30 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Cc: Kelton Aldridge
Subject: Starlight Square

Hello,

I'm hoping to express my support of extending the Starlight in Central Square special permit.

Various community building events such as the senior prom, and the MDC performance were hosted there, and we hope that other events in the future such as junior prom and the history club KFCC event will be able to be hosted there as well.

Best,

Zoe, Audrey, Kelton, Jeremy

Pacheco, Maria

From: ELLA DRISCOLL <24edriscoll@cpsd.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:31 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Save Starlight square

Good morning,

My name is Ella Driscoll and I am a 10th grader at CRLS. I am emailing to show strong support of the special permit application for Starlight Square, located at 84 Bishop Allen Drive. I believe Starlight square warrants an extension because it has significantly contributed to our community's educational and social needs. Starlight Square has made Central Square a fun community spot where people can enjoy modern theatre, creative art and dance, and community initiatives such as farmer's markets.

I truly hope you will consider extending Starlight Square's special permit.

Thank you for your time,
Ella Driscoll

Pacheco, Maria

From: MARIKA HOLLISTER <24mhollister@cpsd.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:32 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: BZA163746-2022

Hello,

I am writing in support of the special permit application for Starlight Square, located at 84 Bishop Allen Drive. Throughout my years living in Cambridge and attending the Cambridge Rindge and Latin school, Starlight Square has always been very prominent for special events, especially for hosting prom, and I am positive that it would be a huge loss for our school if this extension is not permitted. Last year, when the senior prom was nearly cancelled due to COVID, Starlight saved the day by providing an amazing place for the graduating class. I believe Starlight warrants an extension because it would continue to bring joy to the CRLS community, especially the Junior class.

Thank you,
Marika Hollister and the CRLS History Club
(459 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02138)

Pacheco, Maria

From: Gemma SHOOR <25ashoor@cpsd.us>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 8:38 AM
To: Nina@centralsq.org; Pacheco, Maria
Subject: BZA163746-2022

Hello,

My name is Gemma Shoor, I am a CRLS student and History Club member. I strongly support the special permit application for Starlight Square. Although I have never personally been, many of my community members speak very highly of Starlight Square and it seems like the perfect place to hold our junior prom. I believe Starlight warrants an extension because it would bring so much joy and love into the Cambridge Rindge and Latin community.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration,
Gemma Shoor and the CRLS History Club

Pacheco, Maria

From: Nancy Ryan <nancyryan4@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 12:55 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square 2022

Dear Board of Zoning Appeals -- I write to urge you to authorize a permit for Starlight Square to continue to operate for its 3rd season. I live at 4 Ashburton Place, a block from Starlight Square -- I can hear its music on summer nights while sitting on my back porch, but I much prefer just being there to enjoy the programming, the neighbors and friends from all over Cambridge and especially during COVID-19, an outdoor gathering space. Starlight has provided a safe open-air opportunity to gather, shop and eat that has saved many of us from going crazy during this pandemic.

Having lived in Central Square for years, I can testify that Starlight has enriched every aspect of life here. Many of us have advocated for kiosk-type shopping opportunities for years to give small entrepreneurs a chance to sell their wares. At least one business that popped up there was able to transition to brick and mortar. I know that Starlight's magnet has drawn many people to nearby restaurants as well, enhancing their ability to survive during these challenging times.

The creation of Starlight seemed miraculous and now it seems necessary to life in Cambridge and especially in Central Square. There is every reason to keep it going -- it is well-managed and a tribute to a creative use of public space. Please grant the permit so we have it to look forward to as Spring comes upon us.

Sincerely,
Nancy Ryan, 4 Ashburton Place, Cambridge 02139

Nancy Ryan / she/her
nancyryan4@comcast.net

617-868-1334 (h)

617-642-5449 (c)

A Public Bank for the Public Good

www.masspublicbanking.org

Pacheco, Maria

From: Liliana Jimenez <lilianajimenez25@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 12:57 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria; Nina Berg
Subject: Board of Zoning Appeal

To whom it may concern,

My name is Liliana Jimenez, an instructor and performer from Rumba y Timbal Dance Studio (7 Temple Street). I am writing in support of Starlight Cambridge continuing and staying in their home and continuing the program for the community with their special permit application for 84 Bishop Allen Drive.

During covid, this program has helped me so much survive the massive loss of business I have incurred as an artist. In a safe outdoor environment, I was able to provide free classes to the community which in turn helped rebuild our studio slowly. We are still feeling the effects of the loss of business, so having this program continue will only help us and other artists thrive and continue to rebuild. People love to dance and having these free events to reconnect with people is super important now especially post covid!

Please let Starlight have this extension. This program has been nothing but amazing and supportive. Watching the community grow and reconnect is what makes this special and I think an important quality that Cambridge loves to promote and boast about!

If you have any questions or would like more feedback I am happy to provide!

Liliana Jimenez

Pacheco, Maria

From: Elizabeth Haley <ehaley00@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 1:12 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Hello,

My name is Elizabeth Haley. I live and work in Cambridge, Ma. I am writing to share my support of Starlight Sq receiving a special permit for a third season.

Where do I even begin with how much I have enjoyed Starlight since it opened in 2020? In a time where being indoors to see a live performance wasn't an option, it provided that safe space. People from all walks of life could safely come together to see a Bollywood dance company, a Hip-Hop show or shop small from local artisans. There was even a high school prom! Starlight Square is truly a place unlike anywhere else.

I am grateful to live in a city where a space like this exists. I cherish the countless times my son and I walked there together this past summer, meeting friends, family and neighbors. There was always something cool happening at Starlight and the vibe was consistently positive and all inclusive.

The City of Cambridge is a better place because of Starlight Square and I can't wait to see what Season 3 has in store for us!

Thank you for your time.

Elizabeth Haley
27 Magnolia Ave #1
Cambridge, Ma 02138

Office Manager @ CARU Associates
620 Mass Ave
Cambridge, Ma

March 9, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
Inspectional Services Department
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

I am writing in strong support of Starlight Square, located at 84 Bishop Allen Drive, receiving its special permit to continue operating in Central Square.

Since opening in August 2020, Starlight Square not only provided our entire community with a safe, outdoor place to enjoy the arts, shop small, and obtain essential services, it also specifically held space for our young people when they were extremely isolated.

At the peak of COVID, no other space was able to support them like Starlight. When I convened a group of community partners and high school students to design monthly gatherings where students could safely connect with peers and caring adults, Starlight stepped up to host us. CRLS students came - they loved the innovative, inspiring, safe space. We met there monthly at the start of 2021, even in the middle of the winter with heat lamps and hand warmers, so we could be together. Since then, Starlight has hosted Senior Prom, senior week recitals, the highschool jazz band, the Triggered Project Covid Monologue, which featured students' and CRLS staff's sobering accounts of their last two years, and much, much more.

As a resident, I have enjoyed shows at Starlight. As a parent, I have appreciated the community-building the Starlight team has catalyzed. And, as a School Committee Member, I often hear from faculty and students who desire to have future events at Starlight. It is where they want to be.

Starlight embodies the best of Cambridge. It is a space and place where we come together in joy, for reflection, and to tend to the greater good. Please award Starlight their special permit, so that we can continue to support our students and their families. There is still an urgent need.

Sincerely,
Rachel Weinstein
60 Standish St.

Pacheco, Maria

From: Marci Spector <marcibspector@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, March 9, 2022 7:04 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Support for Starlight Square special permit

Hello,

I'm writing to express my strong support for Starlight Square's application for a special permit. I'm a 15-year+ resident of Cambridge, and my family and I believe that community-oriented, dedicated, safe public spaces for entertainment and events are vital. We took our kids to see the Bollywood event there and it was a wonderful experience! It was also hugely important -- given COVID #s at the time-- to have this outdoor safe space for gatherings like these. My family and I hope that the City will grant this special permit and continue to give residents treasured opportunities like those hosted by Starlight Square thusfar!

Thank you,

Marci Spector
34 Avon St, Cambridge, MA 02138

Pacheco, Maria

From: Luba Falk Feigenberg <luba.feigenberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 8:49 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

To the Board of Zoning Appeal,

I am writing to express my strong support of Case BZA163746-2022 to grant Starlight Square a special permit to operate for its third season of programming.

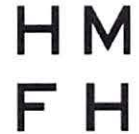
Starlight Square is a place of joy and community. In the past two years, I've frequented multiple events at Starlight, from the farmers market to Popportunity to music shows. All have bustled with energy and brought together residents, visitors, elected officials, and local business owners. Starlight have been a balm to the isolation of the pandemic.

To say Starlight warrants an extension is an understatement; Starlight should be a permanent fixture in Central Square. Places that build community are precious and Starlight Square is a gem. It is a space for people to come together and build community, to celebrate and mourn, and to support local small businesses, especially Black and woman owned entrepreneurs. Starlight adds enormous value to Central Square and to the entire city. Not extending a special permit would be a huge loss.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my perspective. I look forward to celebrating many seasons of Starlight Square.

Sincerely,

Luba Falk Feigenberg
Cambridge resident
16 Fairmont Street



March 15, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge MA 02139

OFFICE. (617) 492 2200
FAX. (617) 876 9775

130 Bishop Allen Drive
Cambridge, MA 02139

hmfh.com

Re: Case No. 163746-2022
Special Permit for Starlight Square

Dear Members of the BZA:

I am writing in support of a Special Permit for the continued operation of Starlight Square on the city parking lot at Bishop Allen Drive and Norfolk St. Operating during the past two years under an executive order, Starlight Square has demonstrated the value of outdoor entertainment and recreation within the Central Square Business and Cultural Districts. Managed by the Business Improvement District, Starlight has provided space to numerous Cambridge-based nonprofits as well as regular pop-up and farm markets that have maintained a level of cultural and commercial activity to help sustain business in Central Square during the pandemic.

But the true value of Starlight Square has been its success as an accessible incubator of small retail and entertainment businesses for which the cost and availability of traditional brick-and-mortar outlets present insurmountable barriers. Starlight represents that near perfect combination of public investment on public land to promote community-based initiatives that serve a broad base of community needs. During this operation of Starlight Square to date, the Central Square BID has demonstrated its ability to respond responsibly to neighborhood concerns and adjust programs and activities as appropriate.

I ask the Board to approve this Special Permit.

In full disclosure, I am a founding member of the CS BID Board of Directors. I am also a long-time resident of Mid-Cambridge and business owner in Central Square.

Very truly yours,

George Metzger
90 Antrim Street

C/CSBID/Starlight.SP.Req.3.10.2022

Alexandra Gadawski, AIA
Alicia Crothers, AIA
Andrea Yoder, AIA
Ania Matteson
Arthur S. Duffy, AIA
Caitlin E. Osepchuk, AIA
Colin R. Dockrill, AIGA
Deborah A. Collins, AIA
Devin E. Canton, AIA
Erica Metzger
Gary Brock, AIA
George R. Metzger, AIA
James Liebman, AIA
John F. Miller, FAIA
Julie Darling, AIA
Justin Viglianti, AIA
Laura A. Wernick, FAIA
Liza Bouton
Lori Cowles, AIA
Matthew LaRue, AIA
Melissa A. Greene, AIA
Peter Rust, AIA
Philip S. Lewis, AIA
Robert P. Williams, AIA
Sara Rosenthal, AIA
Stephanie MacNeil, AIA
Suni Dillard, AIA
Tina Stanislaski, AIA
Tracey Clarke
Vassilios Valaes, AIA

Pacheco, Maria

From: Jonathan Berk <jonathan@patronicity.com>
Sent: Thursday, March 10, 2022 10:39 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Dear Members of the Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

Thank you for the opportunity to write to you today to submit my strong support for Starlight Square to continue operating in its current space at 84 Bishop Allen Drive in Cambridge beyond the expiration of the current State of Emergency.

As someone who's been involved both professionally and personally with hundreds of creative placemaking projects like Starlight Square across North America I've seen first hand the incredible, deep and long lasting impact that projects like this have on the communities they operate in. From alley spaces in Detroit and Kalamazoo, Michigan to vacant lots in Brockton and Ashland, Massachusetts turning often overlooked municipal spaces used for vehicles cut throughs or parking for a few cars into community hubs creates a new, vibrant and vital destination that allows the community to foster and thrive around it. The short term benefits of each of these spaces include driving foot traffic to commercial districts, serving local community groups as spaces to meet, spaces for public art and community performance and foster and grow a local small businesses ecosystem. These impacts are incredible on their own but the long term, less readily apparent, impacts in each case are where the true magic of placemaking happens. The new social bonds built within these spaces... The opportunity to more deeply engage and connect with your community and learn about your neighbors in a safe public setting... The long term trust of your neighbors, something we are so lacking in this country today... The [increase in civic engagement](#) fostered by the cocreation of these spaces... These are the real, deep, long term and often difficult to obtain benefits that you just cannot get any other way but allowing projects like Starlight Square to flourish in your community.

We've already seen the proven track record of thousands of Cambridge and Greater Boston residents and visitors coming together in Starlight Square. We've seen the dozens of local BIPOC businesses reach new customers, grow their consumer bases and even open their own stores in the neighborhood. We've seen the impacts of increased foot traffic in Central Square on even the coldest of New England winters days. Starlight Squares positive impacts on the community are just beginning... by allowing the community to continue to cocreate alongside the Central Square BID the sky is the limit and the opportunities to strengthen the bonds of the Cambridge community in this space are endless.

Thank you for the opportunity to write this letter of STRONG support for Starlight Square and for your time considering it's contents. I'd be happy to answer any additional questions you may have.

Best,
Jonathan Berk
Vice President of Patronicity
Boston Resident

Jonathan Berk
Vice President
Jonathan@patronicity.com
617-750-6008



patronicity.com

