



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL

831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge MA 02139

617-349-6100

2022 JUN 28 PM 3:24
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

BZA Application Form

BZA Number: 180689

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 Use

ZONING DISTRICT: Business B Zone

REASON FOR PETITION:

/Change in Use/Occupancy/

DESCRIPTION OF PETITIONER'S PROPOSAL:

To extend the use previously granted in Case #163746 for Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility, Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment not otherwise defined, and a Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Use.

SECTIONS OF ZONING ORDINANCE CITED:

Article: 4.000 Section: 4.36 (Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishments).
Article: 4.000 Section: 4.36D (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, #3, CAMB., MA 02139

Tel. No.

6174487186

E-Mail Address:

mmonestime@centralsq.org

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

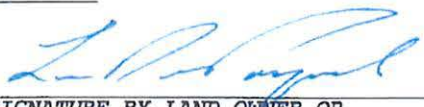
(OWNER)

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*

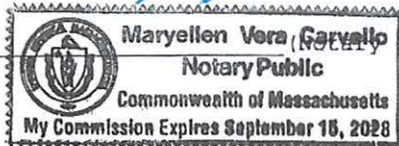
**Written evidence of Agent's standing to represent petitioner may be requested.*

Commonwealth of Massachusetts, County of Middlesex

The above-name Louis DePasquale personally appeared before me,
this 15th of March, 2008, and made oath that the above statement is true.


Notary

My commission expires _____



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

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.**

Date: _____

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 Use

Location: 84 Bishop Allen Dr., Cambridge, MA

Zone: Business B Zone

Phone: 6174487186

Requested Use/Occupancy: Outdoor Entertainment and Recreation Facility, Outdoor Retail or Consumer Service Establishment not otherwise defined, Temporary Outdoor Retail or Consumer 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>	<u>WIDTH</u>	180	180	None		
	<u>DEPTH</u>	171	171	None		
<u>SETBACKS IN FEET:</u>	<u>FRONT</u>	NA	NA	0		
	<u>REAR</u>	NA	NA	0		
	<u>LEFT SIDE</u>	NA	NA	0		
	<u>RIGHT SIDE</u>	NA	NA	0		
<u>SIZE OF BUILDING:</u>	<u>HEIGHT</u>	NA (Scaffolding is 18' high)	NA (Scaffolding is 18' high)	80 (45 degree setback at Bishop Allen)		
	<u>WIDTH</u>	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>		0	0	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.:

To the Directors of the Board of Zoning Appeal,

I am writing in regards to BZA-180689 in order to voice my strong support for the extension of the permit granted for the use of the lot at 84 Bishop Allen Dr. (a.k.a. "Starlight Square") for the purposes of outdoor entertainment, retail, and consumer services.

Starlight Square provides an immense benefit to the local community, far more than a few extra parking spaces would. Not only does it provide a space for local vendors and musicians to promote their businesses, but it greatly improves the quality of life for everyone living in the community.

Personally, walking past Starlight Square to find a Farmer's Market or concert that I hadn't expected to see has often been the highlight of my week. Having grown up in a car-dependent suburb of Los Angeles, I know firsthand how isolating and depressing a lack of walkable public spaces can be. The amount of easily accessible amenities in our community is something incredibly unique in this country, and Starlight Square is a huge part of that network of services.

So, I urge you: preserve our community's character, preserve the access to local vendors and musicians, preserve Starlight Square.

Respectfully,
Isaac Shure

Pacheco, Maria

From: Michael James <michael1331james@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, July 25, 2022 4:35 PM
To: Pacheco, Maria
Subject: CASE NO. BZA-180689

Dear Board of Zoning Appeal,

The following is a public comment for case number BZA-180689. 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.

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.

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. This makes our homes the sound barrier.

While there have been improvement due to the reduction of events this doesn't change the fact that during live concerts our homes are flooded with sound. The same sound heard outside is heard inside our homes and there is little escape other than leaving our apartments. This doesn't respect our schedules as sound can be played anytime of the day and is particularly played in the evening till 9pm.

There are also events that take up the entire weekend for example this coming weekend there is an event with live music that takes place starting 6pm Friday, all day Saturday, and all day Sunday. This gives us no chance to escape the noise as we take shelter in our home from the heat, or from being sick, generally rest, invite guest, and/or have conversations.

By licensing starlight the city has exempted all buildings within 50 feet from the traditional Noise Control Ordinance that protects its residents health. 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.

I once again urge you to protect the residents from excessive noise that intrudes into our homes.

Thank you,
Michael James

On Mon, Mar 14, 2022 at 6:08 PM Michael James <michael1331james@gmail.com> wrote:
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, greiving, 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



City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL

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

2 Bdl

BZA

POSTING NOTICE – PICK UP SHEET

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

Name: NINA BERG Date: 7/8/2022
(Print)

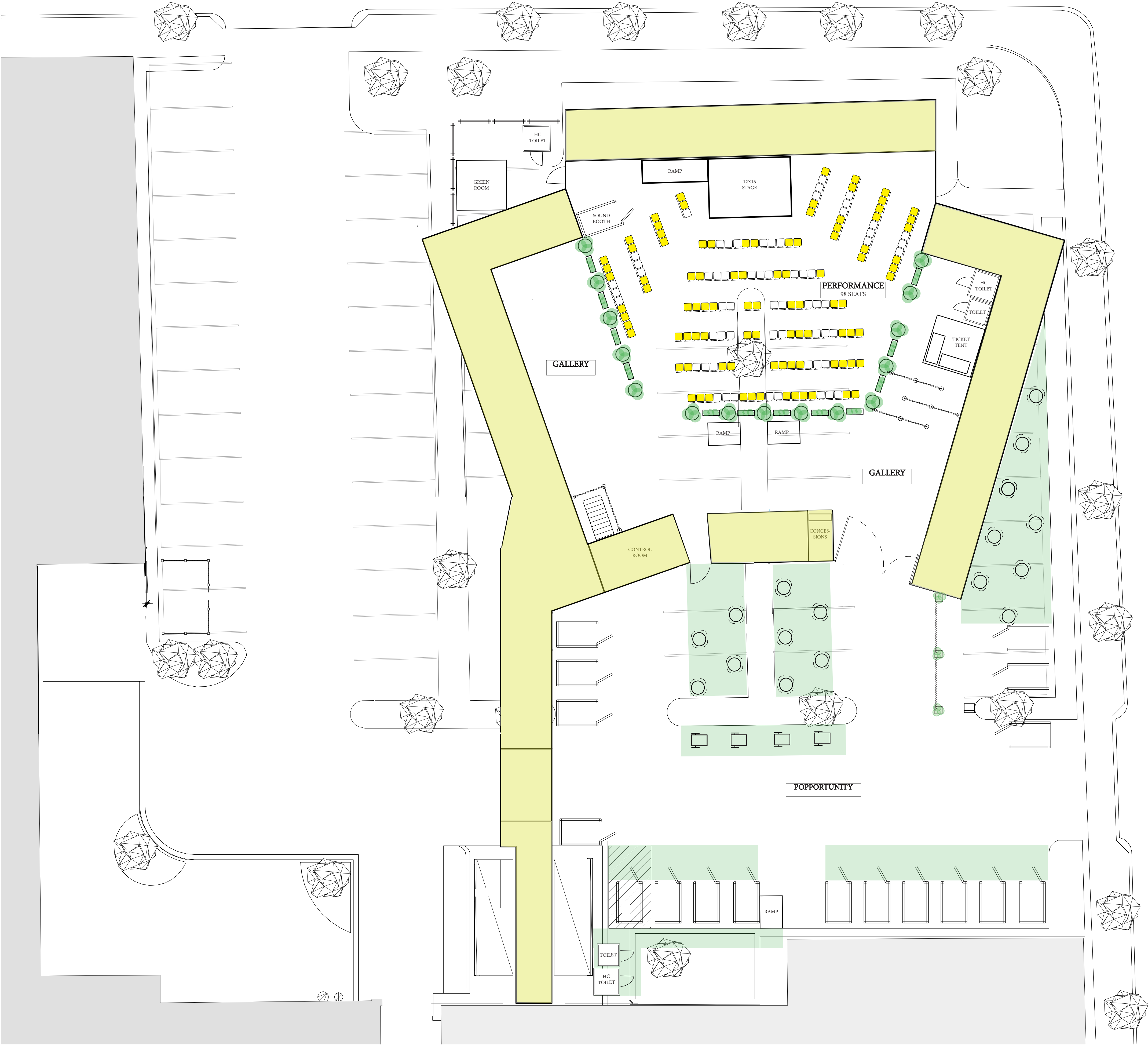
Address: 84 Bishop Allen Dr.

Case No. BZA-180689

Hearing Date: 7/28/22

Thank you,
Bza Members

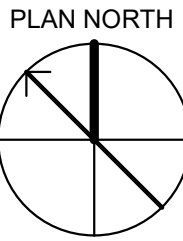
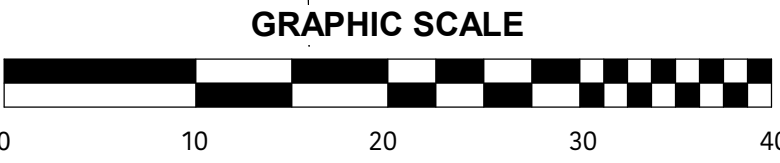
BISHOP ALLEN DRIVE



AREA OF
SCAFFOLDING & SCRIM
= 3,700 SF

AREA ENCLOSED BY
SCAFFOLDING & SCRIM
= 5,200

NORFOLK



110373

182 23

Ctf 110373Brink 682 Page 23

6442^B

SUBDIVISION PLAN OF LAND IN CAMBRIDGE

Edward Smith, City Engineer

January 23, 1963

Middlesex South Registry District
APR - 9 1964

APR - 9 1963

RECEIVED FOR REGISTRATION

11 O'CLOCK 0 M A M
Pd. #200

Pd. #2-00

MASSACHUSETTS (103.00 WIDE) AVE.

ESSEX

(31.00 WIDE)

ST

AUSTIN (49.00 wide) ST.

Arthur M. Jones et al.

Anna E. Holmes
et al.

Central Trust Co.
Trustee
L.C. No. 5920 Care.

— 25 —

(12.00 WIDE)

L/C. No. 12611^E

Cor t.

NORFOLK

(40.00 WIDE)

ST.

to 50,000 West of
Columbia St. - 1000 ft.
from Line of Mass. Ave.
covered by Granolithic
diorite

Gr. 0.7.9b

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

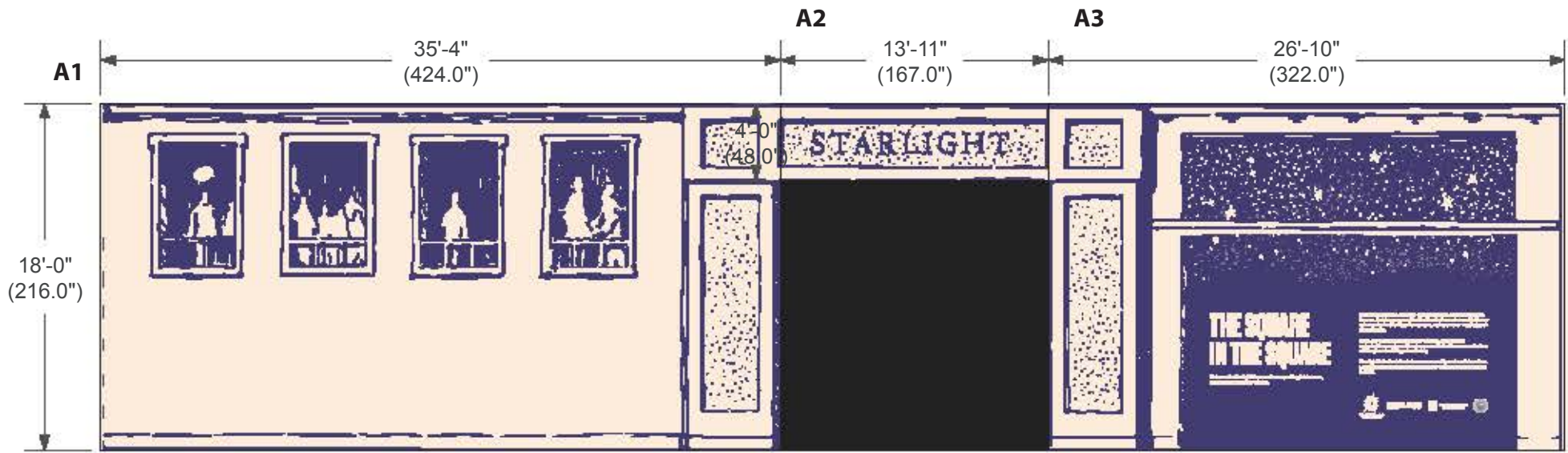
FEB. 6, 1968.

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

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

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



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.

**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.

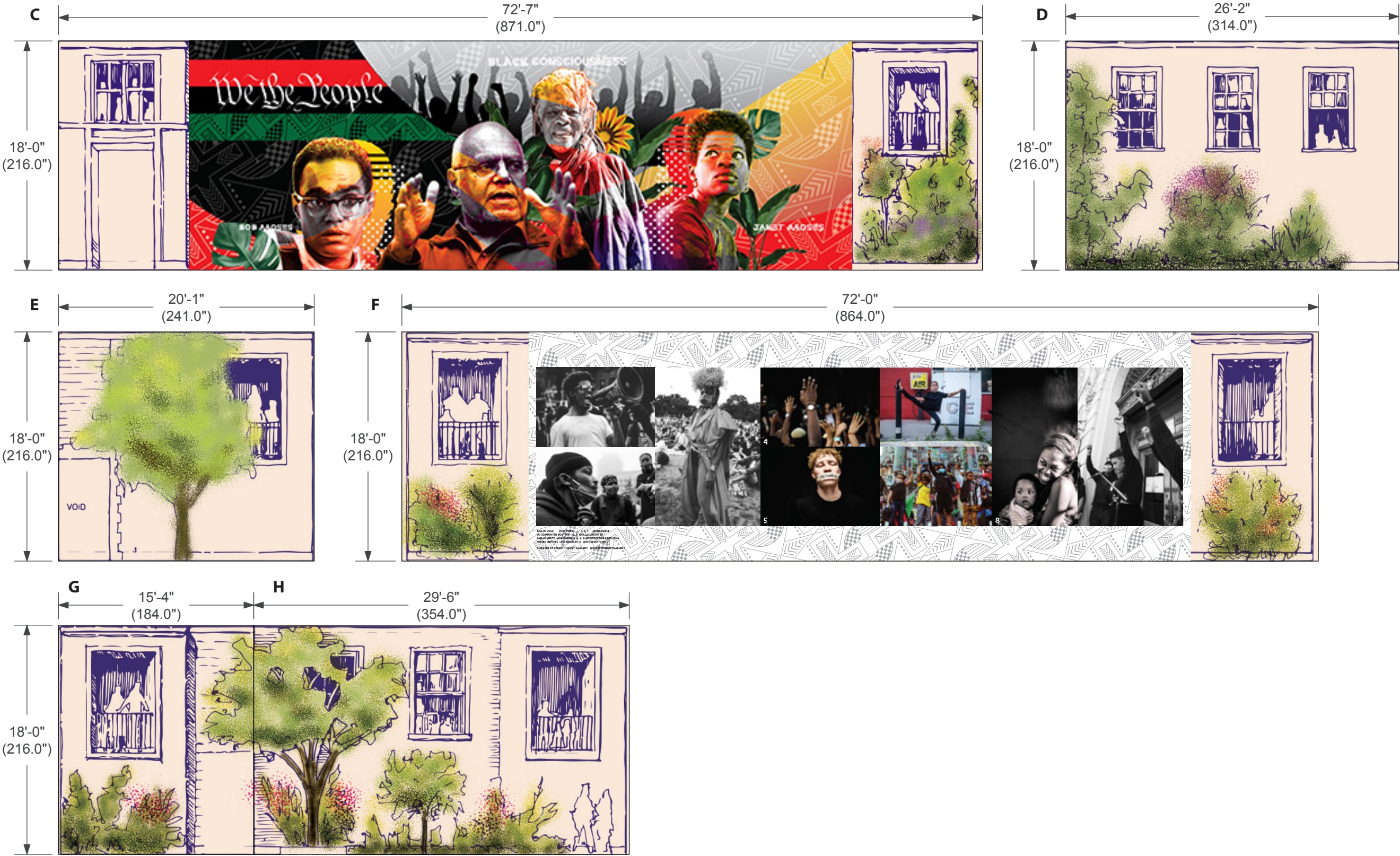
Revision #
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

Date: 07/23/2020
Scale: 1/8" = 1'0"
Drawing No.
MB1

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

Project Details:

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



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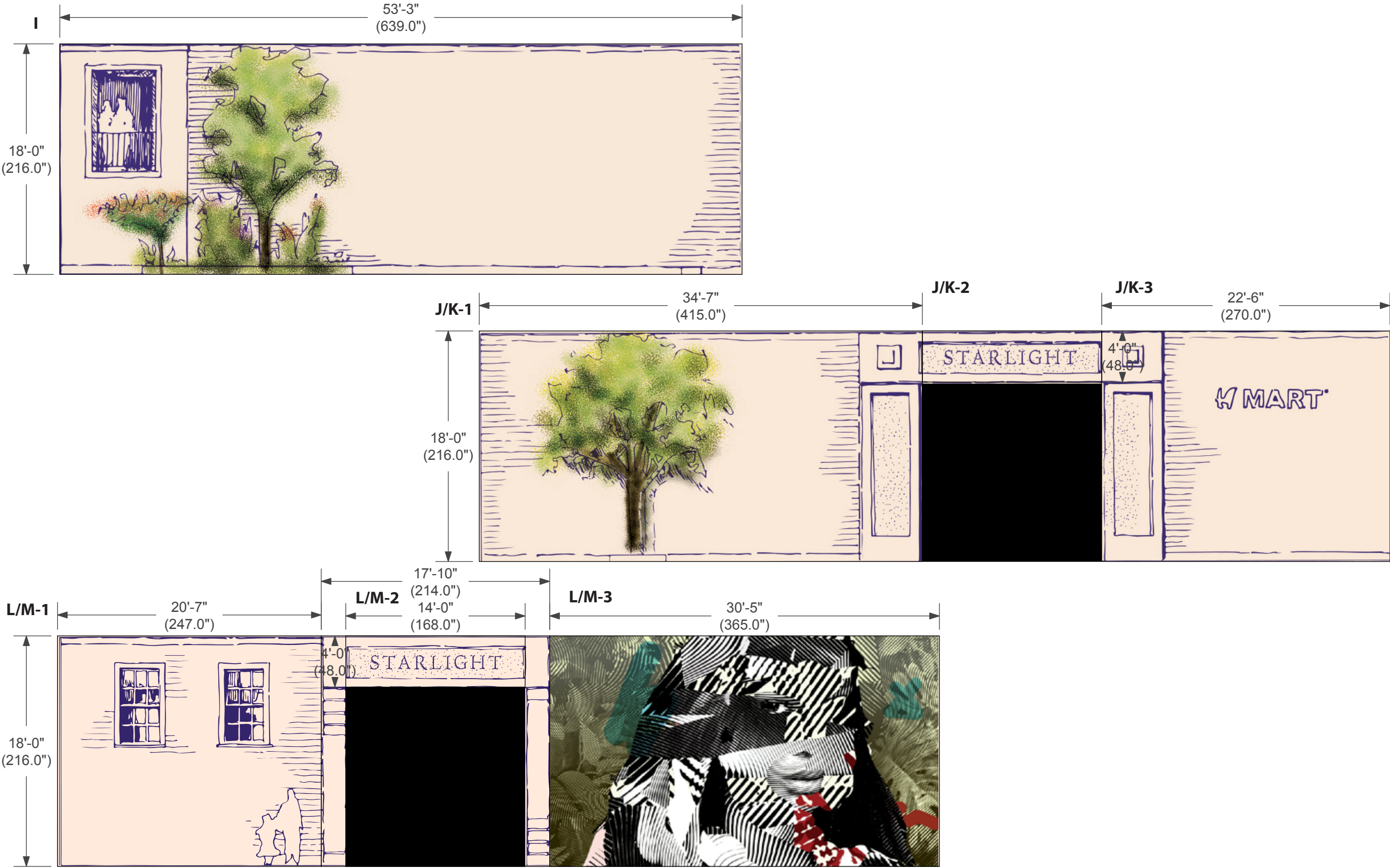
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BOSTON BUILDING WRAPS INC	
General Notes	
Client: Matt Boyes-Watson (Project Manager) Bow Market 617.852.8852 matt@boyeswatsonbaum.com COURTNEY SCHWABE Creative Director wearecontraire.com 484.639.4605 markboyeswatson markboyeswatson@gmail.com	
Project 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. MB2
Scale: 1/8"= 1'0"	

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

Project Details:

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



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

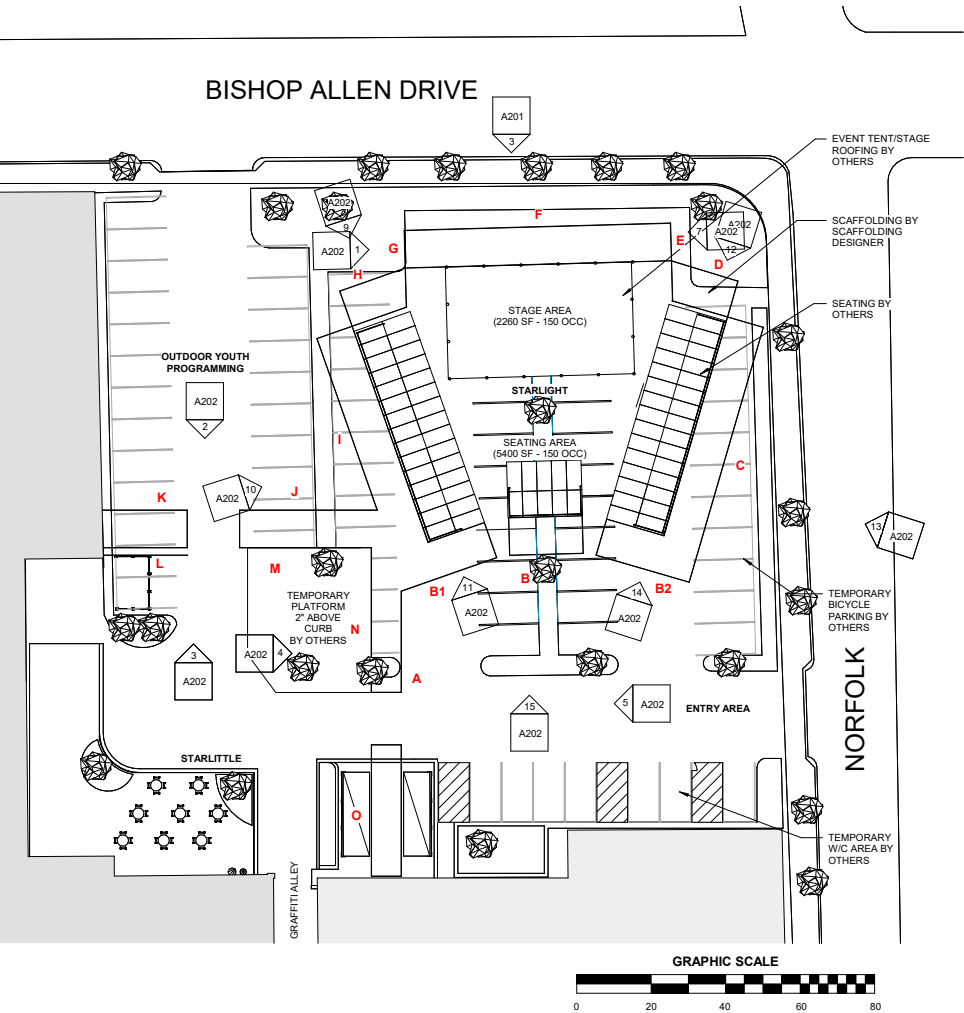
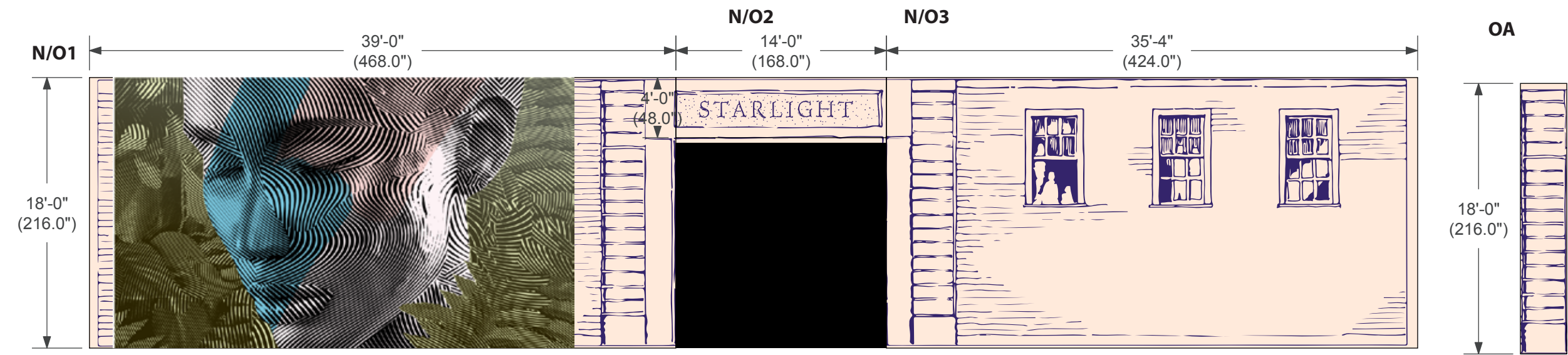
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Project Location: Municipal Lot 5 in Central Square The lot, at Bishop Allen Drive and Norfolk Street Cambridge, MA 02139	
Artist: Tony A.	
Revision # ① ② ③ ④ ⑤ ⑥ ⑦ ⑧ ⑨ ⑩	
Date: 07/23/2020	Drawing No.
Scale: 1/8"= 1'0"	MB3

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

Project Details:

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



BOSTON
BUILDING
WRAPS_{INC}

General Notes

Client:
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Bow Market
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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
Scale: 1/8" = 1'0"

Drawing No.
MB4

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.



Please find a link to the 63 letters of support submitted in support of Starlight original BZA hearing on March 24 here:

https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/1pmZm1hrg0gjKc_tIPD27tvAEhZzav2ms?usp=sharing

84 Bishop Allen Dr.

Petitioner

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

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

MICHAEL MONESTIME
620 MASS AVENUE – SUITE 3
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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Deputy,

Here are all of the CAD incidents for Starlight Square and [84 Bishop Allen Drive](#) from 5/20/22 through 7/23/22. There is only one noise complaint, and the notes indicate it was from a noisy scooter in the area (appears to be unrelated to Starlight).

22069513	07/19/2022 12:11:35	BISHOP ALLEN DR	UNWANTED PERSON
22067064	07/12/2022 16:38:17	BISHOP ALLEN DR	PARK & WALK
22066741	07/11/2022 17:54:38	BISHOP ALLEN DR	PARK & WALK
22066738	07/11/2022 17:48:13	BISHOP ALLEN DR	PARK & WALK
22063253	07/01/2022 21:58:20	BISHOP ALLEN DR	NOISE OTHER
22058086	06/17/2022 18:57:32	BISHOP ALLEN DR	PARK & WALK
22057078	06/15/2022 09:07:23	BISHOP ALLEN DR	PARK & WALK
22051745	05/31/2022 07:53:06	BISHOP ALLEN DR	DIRECTPATROL HI
22050265	05/26/2022 17:09:30	BISHOP ALLEN DR	UNWANTED PERSON

Thanks,

Sean

Sergeant Sean Norton

Crime Analysis Unit

Cambridge Police Department

125 Sixth Street

Cambridge, MA 02142

snorton@cambridgepolice.org

Desk: 617-349-9765

Cell: 617-999-4602



Monday, July 25, 2022

To: Board of Zoning Appeal

By way of introduction, my name is Luis Cotto and I'm the Executive Director of the Central Square BID. I started in February and was in the audience for the March 24th Board of Zoning Appeal hearing. I heard first-hand concerns of some abutters and participated in crafting the mitigation strategy we committed to. I am writing to testify that the BID has upheld its commitments to provide a safe place for the community to gather while being the least intrusive to our area as possible.

As was conditioned in the March 24 meeting, we made significant programmatic adjustments this season. We carefully curated a season that limited drumming and live music, both of which were called out by neighbors. Some music nights emit no sound, like the silent disco party where the only music was piped through the headphones of guests. Similarly, we've had numerous dance performances where 100% of the sound was from pre-recorded music that we controlled, and measured far below the 80 db(A) limit stated in the [City of Cambridge Street Performance Ordinance](#).

Unlike past seasons, we had zero instances of people coming to Starlight to complain about the noise. I was contacted by Cambridge Arts once over the sound of loud drumming which was later identified to have come from a busking group on Mass Ave. Outside of this, there were no official complaints that we know of to the City with regards to Starlight. We created avenues for feedback directly to the BID, too, and received one comment, which we are working on addressing.

I do believe that we have come a long way since Season Two. I thank you for your time hearing our case. As an organization, we are committed to being an upstanding neighbor.

Culturally yours,

Luis

Erik Sarno

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

25th July 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, a neighbor on Columbia Street, and a leader in local arts and entertainment, I am reaching out to you in support of Starlight Square.

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

This year, we made significant improvements to lessen our impact on neighbors. We reduced our schedule to include live music only twice a week and reduced overall programming on the weekend. We reduced the number of speakers we use by 50%. We also hired a full-time A/V Manager, Kay Chung, who focuses on sound mitigation. Her testimony is also submitted on file.

As a result of these improvements and investments, we have not received any noise complaints to our staff during events this season. In addition to staff being available during every event, we have feedback forms posted around Starlight, among other forms of outreach, as enumerated in the petitioner's presentation.

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

Sincerely,

Erik Sarno

Dear Board of Zoning Appeals,

I am writing in strong support of the special permit application for Starlight Square. Starlight Square has been the center of Central Square for the Cambridge community to celebrate, showcase artworks, have meetings, and experience diverse cultures. Starlight Square has not only brought the community together but has also been providing opportunities to all ages, from youths to seniors, to express themselves in different art forms in a safe environment.

The Starlight Square's management team took the feedback from the last BZA meeting and we've been taking extensive measures to mitigate the noise for our abutted neighbors. As an A/V manager at Starlight Square, I measured noise levels throughout the venue as well as four different locations outside of the venue with a sound level meter. The table below shows the locations of each measurement as well as the sound sources we tested with. The measurements show that the sound emitted from the venue to the abutted neighbors was below the city's street performance noise ordinance which is 80dB. As a precaution not only we've reduced the number of speakers, we implemented a drum shield for live performances (reference the noise level difference from the provided table below). We also treated the sound in stage monitors by detecting certain frequencies that might've caused discomfort and reduced them in the system as a default setup.

As Starlight Square has become an essential part of the Cambridge community in the midst of the pandemic by bringing joy, compassion, love, and human connections, I hope it will be continued to be so for the rest of the season and in the future. Please consider extending the permit for the space to Starlight Square.

Sincerely,
Kay Chung

Starlight Noise Measurement (Noise Level in dB)

	Ambient	Pink noise @ -16.2 dB	Music @ 0 dB (Monitor @ -16.2 dB)	Live band w/ drum shield	Live band w/o drum shield
<i>Left side curb</i>	59	64	65	70	70
<i>Left side curb (across the street)</i>	62	62	63	70	70
<i>Back curb</i>	56	70	69	70	80
<i>Back curb (across the street)</i>	55	61	64	68	79

Monday, July 25, 2022

To Whom it May Concern:

My name is Heidi Martin and I have been involved in running the sound/lights for the Starlight Stage for the last 2 years. I believe it is an extremely valuable asset for the Central Square community.

As we all know, the pandemic changed everyones ability to perform and attend live performances. Starlight gave the community an outdoor venue that allowed for us to host safe, live performances of all kinds: dance recitals, plays, poetry, live music, roller skating, story telling, and much more. It gave the community a much needed event space to again begin to enjoy artists of all kinds, and engage in socialization while being Covid-safe.

Personally, I was unable to work for most of the pandemic, and Starlight provided me a space where I could begin to earn an income again, and continues to be a space that I enjoy coming to and running sound and lights.

Starlight truly is a special place where people of all ages, genders, races, and religions can come and feel welcome and enjoy free events. No one leaves without a smile on their face.

This year especially, we have taken great measures to ensure that we are operating within the sound ordinance. This includes reducing the amount of monitors, closely observing the sound limit, programming a more sensitive variety of performances, and sound-proofing our stage better.

I sincerely hope that Starlight is allowed to continue to support the community by providing a quality space for the community to gather and enjoy events of all kinds.

Best Regards,
Heidi Martin

Berhan Duncan
July 25, 2022

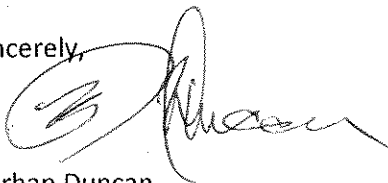
City of Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal:

My first experience with Starlight Square was a CRLS springtime DanceWorks production. The students had spent the semester choreographing their own pieces and learning each other's work. There was no possibility of a spring show indoors at CRLS due to the risk of the COVID-19 pandemic. After more than a year of quarantine that first show from DanceWorks felt like a magical opportunity. The performance was a major success and provided much needed light at the end of a most difficult school year.

As one good turn deserves another, I approached the Starlight when a group of students at CRLS asked if I could help them produce "A Chorus Line: Teen Edition." The process of working with the individuals behind the scenes at Starlight was very smooth. They are a professional and supportive mix of management and tech and made the production of the musical a dream come true for my students, many of whom (due to complications from COVID pandemic) were unable to participate in a musical for over two years. The musical was a sorely missed annual tradition in our community. Maybe it doesn't need explaining, participating in a high school musical is a major formative experience for many young people. We are still so grateful.

Aside from offering a safe venue for outside performances in this most uncertain time transmission-wise, Starlight has provided Cambridge and Central Square with a venue for upstarting entrepreneurs to promote their products and merchandise. One particularly exciting Sunday afternoon I even made my own personal fragrance after a brief tutorial from the business's young owner. Starlight has helped revitalize Central Square and they should be encouraged to continue operating.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Berhan Duncan', with a large, stylized initial 'B'.

Berhan Duncan
Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
Learning Community R Clerk

Friday, July 22, 2022

To Whom it May Concern:

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 continued use as a community space!**

Starlight has been a space of community, activity, joy, and connection. I have attended numerous events, shopped at Popportunity, and had the amazing opportunity to teach free yoga (one of many events without amplified sound) to the Cambridge community. I'd love to be able to continue to utilize the amazing community space Starlight Square developed and has effectively implemented.

Thank you,
Abbie

Monday, July 25, 2022

To Board of Zoning Appeal:

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 have had tremendous experiences as both an audience member and a performer in this wonderful venue. I cannot emphasize enough how important this is for people to have this outlet during these difficult times.

Sincerely,
Kabir Sen

Sunday, July 17, 2022

Hello Board of Zoning Appeal,

With the music scene being on hold since the start of Covid and the final closings of many entertainment venues, I find Starlight Square a refreshing inspirational event. Not only that, it is a summertime outdoor stage for all forms of entertainment that otherwise would not be available. It's a great start to rebuilding the musical world in Cambridge. I ask you to allow them to continue providing the people of Cambridge and visitors this wonderful stage...

Best,

Kevin O'Neil
978-2210-8738

Tuesday, July 19, 2022

To Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

My name is Knar Bedian, and I'm the Editor in Chief at Sound of Boston, a publication that covers the local music scene. I wanted to reach out to share some thoughts on the Starlight Square space, which I believe has provided a really wonderful opportunity for the local music scene. With COVID cases on the rise once again, outdoor spaces like Starlight not only allow local music to continue to be accessible to vulnerable people in our communities, but also help all people support artists in a safer way. The nature of free events also eliminates any financial barriers to attendance, which is especially important for encouraging the local community to come support artists with whom they may not yet be familiar.

As the Editor in Chief of Sound of Boston, I can confidently share that Cambridge and the surrounding Boston area is brimming with talented bands and musicians. I've written in NPR about how one of the major problems these artists face is a lack of accessible venues—spaces of the appropriate size for their fanbase and that are truly inclusive. This issue has pushed many of our local talent to leave our city for bigger cities. Starlight Square has helped to address this issue by creating another place for artists to perform and to find support from their local community. As one of the organizers of the Listen Local concert series at Starlight, I have heard positive feedback from both artists and attendees about the convenience of the location (T accessible), the benefits of an outdoor space, and the excitement of discovering new artists. Whereas some venues are pay-to-play and are lacking in inclusive, accessible approaches, Starlight is a space where up-and-coming acts can connect with an audience without great financial risk or issues of inaccessibility. The artists we have selected for our concert series have all been local performers, and many have specifically expressed gratitude about the opportunity to perform in the place that they grew up—in the heart of their neighborhood. I hope that Starlight continues to operate for the second half of the season, particularly as we see students return to Boston and begin to explore the neighborhood in search of local organizations to support and ways to get involved with the community.

Cheers,
Knar Bedian
72 Kirkland St, Apt 21
Cambridge, MA 02138

Editor in Chief
Sound of Boston
(she/her)



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight support

1 message

Liliana Jimenez <lilianajimenez25@gmail.com>

Mon, Jul 11, 2022 at 3:13 PM

To: Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>, Erik Sarno <erik@centralsq.org>

To Whom it may concern,

Starlight has been an incredible, thoughtful, and impactful addition to Central Square. People love the various events offered, the support for local businesses, and the encouragement of community building! Without Starlight, I know my business during COVID would have taken even more of a hit, and I am not sure I would have been able to continue my passion without it.

I think it is very important to continue this community building project, and rather we just come up with awesome innovative ways to address any little issues that may bother people. Personally I have never had an issue and walking by it so many times, I thoroughly enjoy the liveliness of it all and I am pretty sure the people in Central Square love it too! It would be a huge disappointment and hit on the local businesses if Starlight was to be discontinued.

Please let's work on solutions to continue to support a project that clearly helps grow Central Square in so many positive ways!

Liliana Jimenez
Instructor of Rumba y Timbal Dance Studio
857-869-1511



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: Popportunity - 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





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.

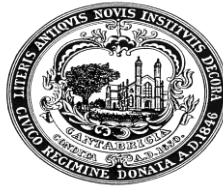
Sincerely,

Mayor Siddiqui

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sumbul Siddiqui", written in a cursive style.

Sumbul Siddiqui, Mayor
City of Cambridge



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.

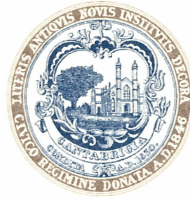
Starlight is now a civic and cultural amenity that hosts many of the defining events in the City, from the high school's Senior Week programming and Prom, to last year's celebration of the life of Dr. Bob Moses, to this year's City Council Inauguration.

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 be "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.

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

CAMBRIDGE
CARNIVAL



25¹⁹⁹²
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 Popportunity. 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

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>

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

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

1 message

marcus johnson-smith <mjohnsonsmith@gmail.com>

Thu, Mar 24, 2022 at 8:22 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Letter of support for Starlight Square in Central

Marcus Johnson-Smith
[90 Fawcett St.](#)
[Cambridge, MA 02138](#)

With businesses at [701 Mt. Auburn St.](#) Cambridge, and a home business.

I support the ongoing extension of Starlight Sq. in Central. Starlight has given me, a lifelong resident, a platform to launch a new business venture of mine, Fresh Pond Tea, and allow me to have a business in my community. Starting a business is never easy and having a space to sell, meet customers, and share resources with other start up entrepreneurs is a true blessing. The space has had a positive impact for me not only as a seller but as a creative as well. I utilized the space last year to host my 10 year anniversary of another business I have, Kush Groove, and we were able to engage, entertain and connect with other members of the broader community, in a fun, and healthy celebration.

Please keep starlight active. It is a blessing for the community in all aspects.

Thank you.

--

Best, Marcus



Marcus Johnson-Smith
+1.857.237.8422
bit.ly/37k8OLr



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.



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

1 message

Hakyung Kay Chung <kaycsound@gmail.com>

Wed, Mar 23, 2022 at 9:33 AM

To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

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

page5image29158160

March 11, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal Inspectional Services Department [831 Massachusetts Avenue Cambridge, MA 02139](#)



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

In Support of Starlight Square BZA163746-2022

2 messages

Leah French <lfrench@cpsd.us>
To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov
Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Thu, Mar 24, 2022 at 3:21 PM

To the Board of Zoning Appeal,

I am writing to express my strong support for the special permit application for Starlight Square, located at [84 Bishop Allen Drive](#). My name is Leah Hamilton French. I am a Cambridge resident (160 Chestnut Street, Apt 6, Cambridge, MA 02139) and a theater arts teacher at Cambridge Street Upper School. I also teach theater arts after school at Cambridge Rindge and Latin School.

Throughout the pandemic, Starlight Square has provided an opportunity for Cantabrigians to gather for community arts events and other programs that bring the community together. It has also supported events for local students, such as hosting the CRLS Modern Dance Company performance and a performance of monologues by CRLS drama students. I believe this venue has become an important community and cultural hub and should be continued.

Specifically, I am working with CRLS students, led by two CRLS seniors, to produce a student-led production of the musical *A Chorus Line*, with performances on June 3, 4, and 5, 2022. Students were not able to perform in-person for the first 18 months of the pandemic, and due to restrictions on singing this fall, were not able to do a musical this year. We are applying to the Starlight Square programming committee to hold the performances there. Regardless of whether or not our programming application is accepted, continuing the use of Starlight Square as a performance venue would make it possible for Cambridge residents to come together for community arts and performance events. I believe such events are essential to our collective healing and recovery from the trauma of the past few years.

Thank you for considering my comments.

Respectfully,

Leah

Leah Hamilton French
she/her/hers
Theatre Arts, Cambridge Street Upper School

Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>
To: Leah French <lfrench@cpsd.us>

Fri, Mar 25, 2022 at 6:46 AM

Thank you, m'dear, for writing. I so appreciate you.

N.

[Quoted text hidden]

--

Nina Berg
Creative Director
Central Square Business Improvement District
www.centralsq.org



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](#)



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

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>

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



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

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

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

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

“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>

Starlight Stage/Board of Zoning Appeal

1 message

janet mores <mosezp@gmail.com>

Thu, Mar 24, 2022 at 6:59 PM

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

Cc: Zola Coleman <zolascoleman@gmail.com>

I am writing in support of the starlight's stage special permit at [84 Bishop Allen Drive](#). It was on the starlight stage that the community was able to celebrate the life and legacy of my husband, Bob Moses--a national treasure in the annals of our country's Civil Rights Movement of the 1960's. Our family's feelings of loss were assuaged by the outpouring of love that the community expressed. Starlight is a space where the community can celebrate a neighbor, and a national hero. Starlight is a life force in the community.

thank you,
Janet Moses



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". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Josh Garneau
He/Him/His
Managing Director
ImprovBoston



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Starlight Square, 84 Bishop Allen Drive

Helen Sullivan <hsullivan11@gmail.com>
To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov
Bcc: nina@centralsq.org

Sun, Mar 6, 2022 at 8:11 PM

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

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!

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



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



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>

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



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



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

Support for Starlight Square special permit

1 message

Marci Spector <marcibspecter@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](#)

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



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: 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

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,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Samara Vise". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Samara Vise

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

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,

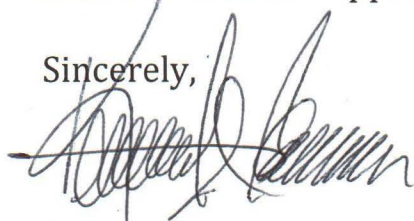
I am writing in support of a special permit for the continued operation of Starlight Square on Municipal Lot #5 at Bishop Allen Drive and Norfolk St.

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>

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



March 15, 2022

Board of Zoning Appeal
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge MA 02139

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

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

130 Bishop Allen Drive
Cambridge, MA 02139

hmfh.com

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



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](#)

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

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 Popportunity, 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, Popportunity 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, Popportunity 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: 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



Nina Berg <nina@centralsq.org>

BZA163746-2022

1 message

Sally Peterson <sallystonepeterson@gmail.com>
To: mpacheco@cambridgema.gov

Tue, Mar 8, 2022 at 8:12 AM

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



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>

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

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 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



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



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

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

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