



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL

831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge MA 02139

617-349-6100

2025 APR 16 PM 2:34

BZA Application Form

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

BZA Number: 1160291

General Information

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

Special Permit: _____

Variance: X

Appeal: _____

PETITIONER: City of Cambridge C/O William Gilson

PETITIONER'S ADDRESS: 135 High Street, Acton, MA 01720

LOCATION OF PROPERTY: 59 First St., Cambridge, MA

TYPE OF OCCUPANCY: Parking Garage and Retail

ZONING DISTRICT: Business A and PUD-4B

REASON FOR PETITION:

/Sign/

DESCRIPTION OF PETITIONER'S PROPOSAL:

Installation of three outdoor banners to the First Street façade of the existing city-owned public parking garage. The banners are created by an artist and depict food and other items related to the First Street Market that is located within the garage. The banners are illustrative and no lettering, logos or other branding is included. The banners exceed the allowed size for wall signs and the total square footage allowed for signage for the use. One banner exceeds the 20-foot height limit for signage.

SECTIONS OF ZONING ORDINANCE CITED:

Article: 7.000 Section: 7.16.22.C (Wall Signs).

Article: 10.000 Section: 10.30 (Variance).

Original
Signature(s):

(Petitioner (s) / Owner)

William G. Gilson

(Print Name)

Address:

Tel. No.

E-Mail Address:

135 High Street Acton, MA 01720

978-761-6316

will@eatcambridge.com

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 Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139

State that I/We own the property located at 51-69 First Street,
which is the subject of this zoning application.

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

taking
*Pursuant to a ~~deed~~ duly recorded in the date April 13, 1982, Middlesex South
County Registry of Deeds at Book 14582, Page 496; or
Middlesex Registry District of Land Court, Certificate No. _____
Book _____ Page _____.



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 Yi-An Huang personally appeared before me,
this 14 of April, 2025, and made oath that the above statement is true.

My commission expires _____ Notary


- 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 VARIANCE**

EACH OF THE FOLLOWING REQUIREMENTS FOR A VARIANCE MUST BE ESTABLISHED AND SET FORTH IN COMPLETE DETAIL BY THE APPLICANT IN ACCORDANCE WITH MGL 40A, SECTION 10.

- A)** A literal enforcement of the provisions of this Ordinance would involve a substantial hardship, financial or otherwise, to the petitioner or appellant for the following reasons:

The purpose of the banners is to improve the outside appearance of the parking garage and to promote the food market at the ground story that was created as a public benefit by the developer of 40 Thorndike Street. The ground level of the garage has historically been very difficult to activate with public uses. Because of the scale of the garage and its overall appearance as a parking facility, smaller banners that conform to the sign ordinance would not be visible and would not adequately highlight the existence of this important community benefit within a small portion of this larger building.

- B)** The hardship is owing to the following circumstances relating to the soil conditions, shape or topography of such land or structures and especially affecting such land or structures but not affecting generally the zoning district in which it is located for the following reasons:

The location of the market in the ground level of a public parking garage makes it a unique condition in the neighborhood. Because no external improvements can be made directly to the façade of the garage, the addition of banners is necessary to improve the garage's appearance and to communicate the existence of a food-related use within the building.

- C)** **DESIRABLE RELIEF MAY BE GRANTED WITHOUT EITHER:**

- 1) Desirable relief may be granted without substantial detriment to the public good for the following reasons:

The proposal is supportive of the public good. The food market was established as a public benefit in association with the 40 Thorndike Street redevelopment project and the leasing of parking spaces in the garage to serve that use. The proposed banners are meant to support and enhance that publicly beneficial use.

- 2) Desirable relief may be granted without nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent or purpose of this Ordinance for the following reasons:

The proposed banners will positively support the purposes of Article 7.000 of the Zoning Ordinance. By improving the façade of a City-owned parking garage with artwork, they will preserve and enhance the appearance of the City. By supporting a public market use that was contributed as a public benefit, they will preserve and increase amenities of the City. Because the proposed banners are well designed and thoughtfully located with no illumination or excessive branding, they will control and reduce visual clutter and blight.

***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
Location: 55 First St., Cambridge, MA
Phone: 978-761-6316

Present Use/Occupancy: Parking Garage and Retail
Zone: Business A and PUD-4B
Requested Use/Occupancy: Parking Garage and Retail

		<u>Existing Conditions</u>	<u>Requested Conditions</u>	<u>Ordinance Requirements</u>	
<u>TOTAL GROSS FLOOR AREA:</u>		9000 (leased space for market use)	No change	n/a (leasable space limited by special permit PB-29)	(max.)
<u>LOT AREA:</u>		75,738	No change	N/A	(min.)
<u>RATIO OF GROSS FLOOR AREA TO LOT AREA: ²</u>		Approx 0.16 (Parking area not counted in GFA)	No change	max 2.0 (PUD-4B)	
<u>LOT AREA OF EACH DWELLING UNIT</u>		N/A	N/A	N/A	
<u>SIZE OF LOT:</u>	WIDTH	189	No change	N/A	
	DEPTH	400	No change	N/A	
<u>SETBACKS IN FEET:</u>	FRONT	0	no change	N/A	
	REAR	21	no change	N/A	
	LEFT SIDE	0	no change	N/A	
	RIGHT SIDE	0	no change	N/A	
<u>SIZE OF BUILDING:</u>	HEIGHT	66 (approx.)	no change	65 (per PUD zoning)	
	WIDTH	190	no change	N/A	
	LENGTH	280	no change	N/A	
<u>RATIO OF USABLE OPEN SPACE TO LOT AREA:</u>		N/A	N/A	N/A	
<u>NO. OF DWELLING UNITS:</u>		0	no change	N/A	
<u>NO. OF PARKING SPACES:</u>		1100 (approx.)	no change	N/A (principal parking use)	
<u>NO. OF LOADING AREAS:</u>		N/A	N/A	N/A	
<u>DISTANCE TO NEAREST BLDG. ON SAME LOT</u>		N/A	N/A	N/A	

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.:

N/A

1. SEE CAMBRIDGE ZONING ORDINANCE ARTICLE 5.000, SECTION 5.30 (DISTRICT OF DIMENSIONAL REGULATIONS).
2. TOTAL GROSS FLOOR AREA (INCLUDING BASEMENT 7'-0" IN HEIGHT AND ATTIC AREAS GREATER THAN 5') DIVIDED BY LOT AREA.
3. OPEN SPACE SHALL NOT INCLUDE PARKING AREAS, WALKWAYS OR DRIVEWAYS AND SHALL HAVE A MINIMUM DIMENSION OF 15'.



ROBERT AND JUDY LINDAMOOD

29 OTIS STREET

CAMBRIDGE, MA 02141

To Whom It May Concern:

First Street Cuisine LLC/DBA AMBA CAFE have shared with us the renderings of 3 scrim pieces of banner art on the facade of 59 First Street the First Street Garage.

We are supportive of the First Street Farmer's Market adding artwork to the exterior of the building of the First Street Garage to enhance the façade as we continue to see a livening up in the neighborhood.

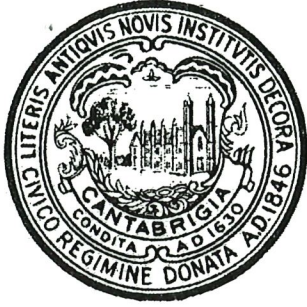
This space has been an eyesore for way too long and the redevelopment and upscaling of the property is appreciated by the neighborhood.

The artwork is done well and is perfect for a Farmer's Market area. Please approve this request!

Sincerely,

Robert Lindamood
Robert and Judy Lindamood

(617) 661-6865



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02139

SIGN CERTIFICATION APPLICATION

Please fill out this application to indicate the number, type, and dimensions of signage for your building. If you are unsure of the type of sign and/or allowable dimensions, please review the following pages of this application and Article 7.000 of the Zoning Ordinance. Please note the following additional requirements:

- **All signs must receive a permit from the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) before installation.** Community Development Department certification action does NOT constitute issuance of a permit or certification that all other code requirements have been met. **Do not contract for the fabrication** of a sign until all permits have been issued, including City Council approval if necessary, for signs in the public way.
- Any sign or portion of a sign extending more than six (6) inches into the public way/sidewalk must receive approval from the Cambridge City Council and a bond must be posted with the City Clerk. For questions or additional information, please contact cddzoning@cambridgema.gov.

APPLICANT INFORMATION

Applicant Name: SRP Sign Corporation

Phone: 617-623-6222

Email: adam@srpsigns.com

Sign Address: 59 First St Cambridge, MA

PROPOSED SIGN

Please fill out the information below and **attach a sketch of the proposed sign** to the application. Each proposed sign requires an individual form to be filled out. For further information on sign types, see the below page.

Sign text: No Text

Sign type: Wall Sign

Area in square feet: 72.58

Dimensions: 13 H x 5.7 L

Placement height in feet: 13.6

Depth from façade: 1

Illumination: Natural (no illumination)

Sign frontage in feet: 122.8

Area of existing signs to remain: 0

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT CERTIFICATION FOR INTERNAL USE ONLY

Sign conforms to requirements of Article 7.000: No

Sign requires a variance from the Board of Zoning Appeals: Yes

Comments: The Inspectional Service Department has determined that the murals fall within the definition of a sign given they depict images of what can be purchased within the market. Therefore, the proposal for all three signs exceeds the total allowable area of signage based on the sign frontage in feet as determined by section 7.16.22 in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. If the total exterior signage, in addition to the existing signage, did not exceed the sign frontage in feet, it would be permissible without a v

Signature: Grant Perry
Digitally signed by Grant Perry
Date: 2025.04.08 11:41:31 -04'00'

CDD Representative

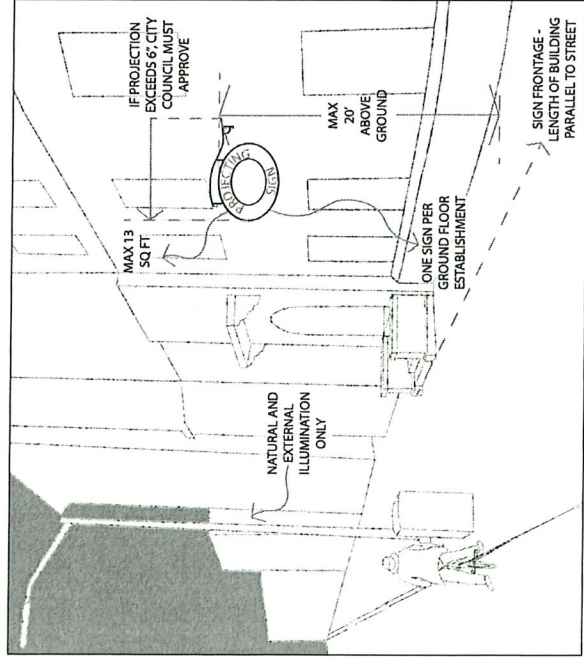
Date

OVERVIEW BY SIGN TYPE

Please note that this guide is intended to provide an overview of requirements by sign type. Sign shall mean and include any permanent or temporary structure, device, letter, words, model, banner, pennant, insignia, trade flag, or representation used as, or which is in the nature of, an advertisement, announcement, or direction and which is designed to be seen from the outside of a building. For further information on specific requirements, consult Article 7.000 of the Zoning Ordinance.

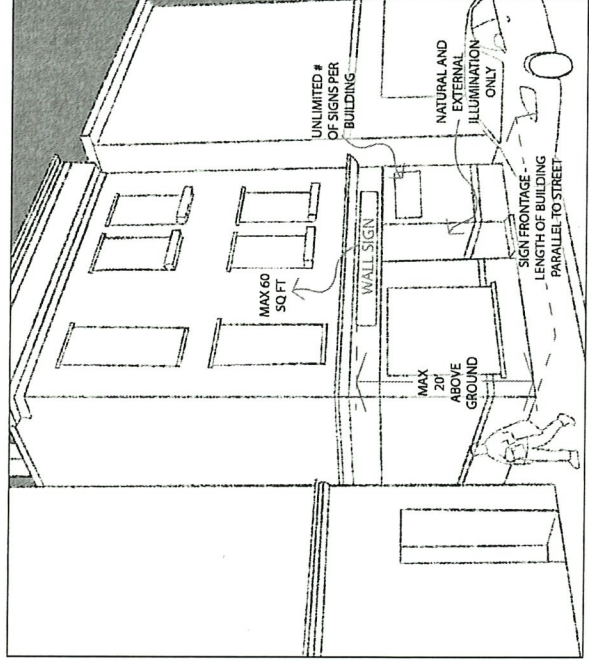
PROJECTING SIGN

A projecting sign is attached to and projects from a building face, including marquee, canopy, and awning mounted signs.



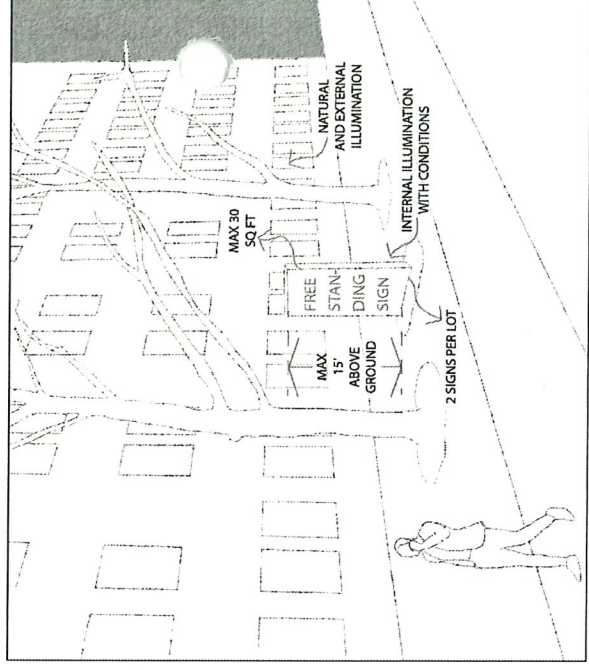
WALL SIGN

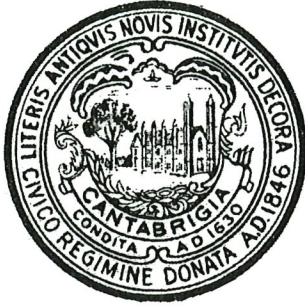
A wall sign is affixed so its exposed face and all sign area is parallel to the plane of the building.



FREESTANDING SIGN

A free standing sign is attached to or part of a self-supporting structure and is not attached to any other structure.





CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

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City Hall Annex, 344 Broadway, Cambridge, MA 02139

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Illumination: Natural (no illumination)

Sign frontage in feet: 122.8

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Digitally signed by Grant Perry
Date: 2025.04.08 11:42:55 -04'00'

CDD Representative

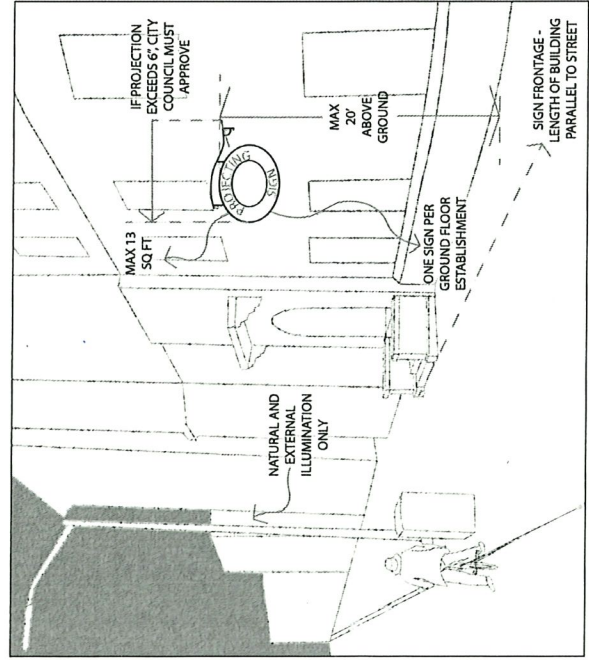
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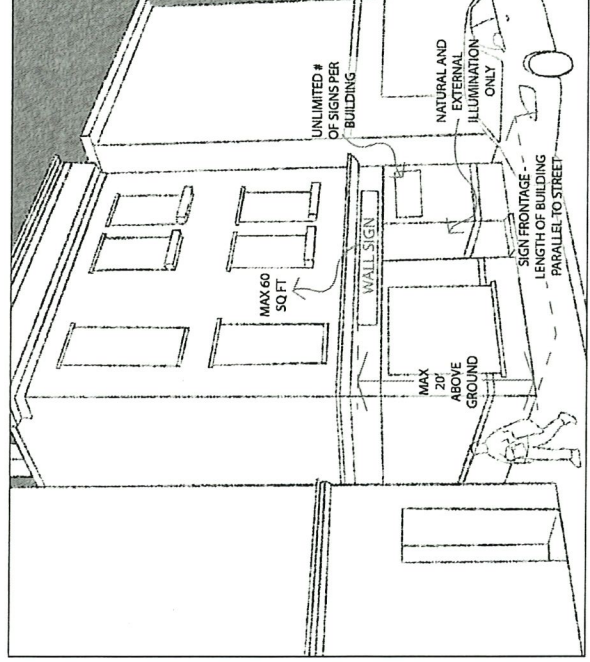
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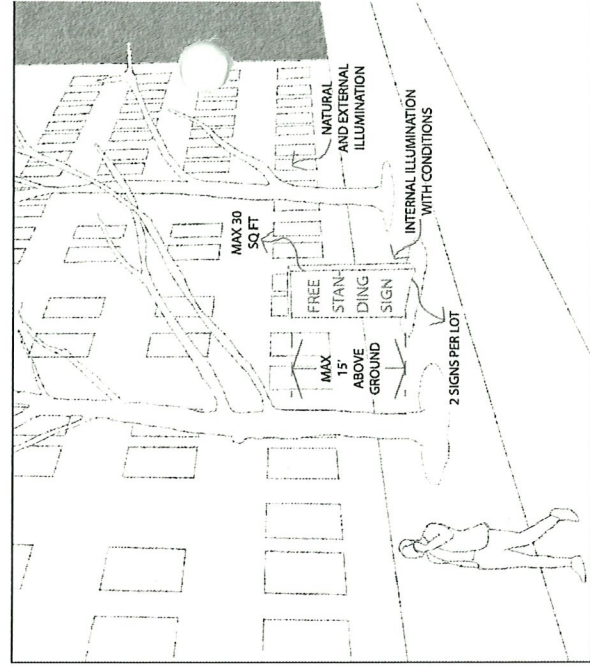
WALL SIGN

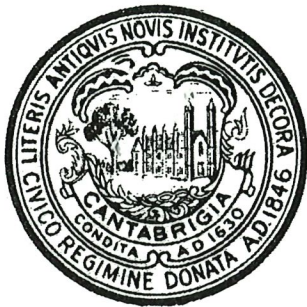
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Sign text: No Text

Sign type: Wall Sign

Area in square feet: 517.5

Dimensions: 45 H x 11.6 L

Placement height in feet: 59.3

Depth from façade: 1

Illumination: Natural (no illumination)

Sign frontage in feet: 122.8

Area of existing signs to remain: 0

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Digitally signed by
Grant Perry
Date: 2025.04.08
11:39:35 -04'00'

CDD Representative

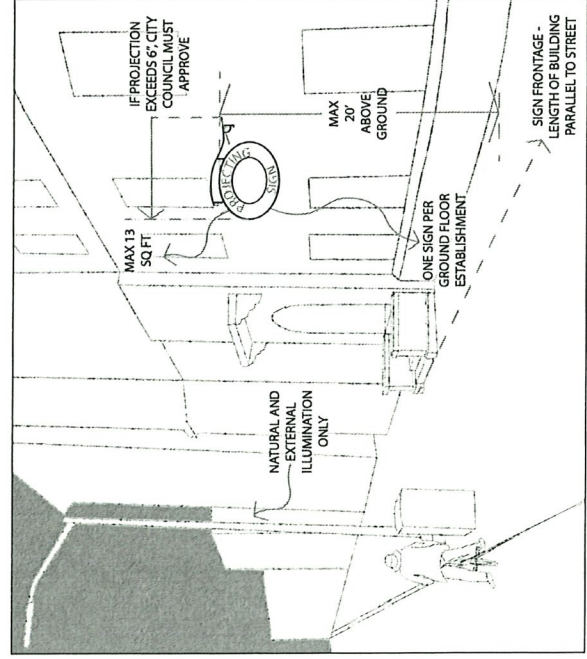
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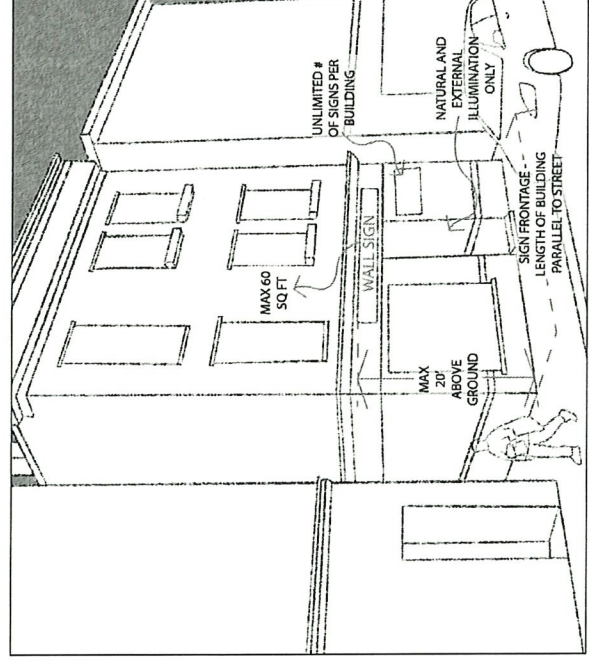
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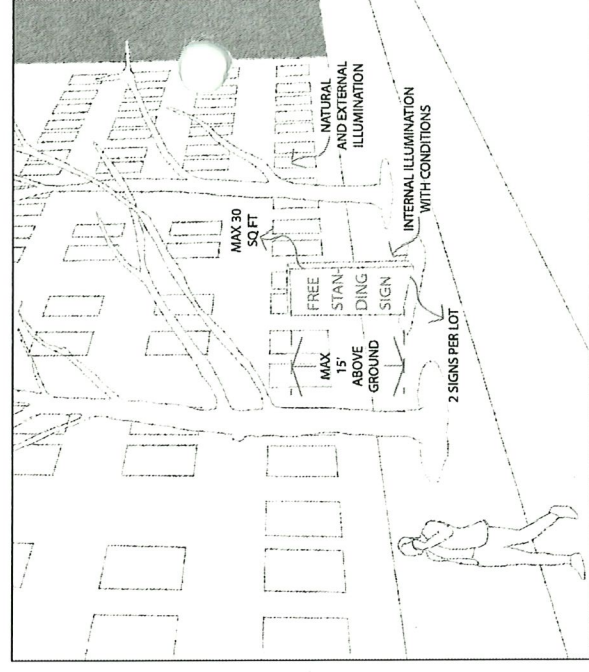
WALL SIGN

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553 First St Market Banners

DESIGN REVIEW FOR THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

12/17/2024

PURPOSE OF THE BANNERS

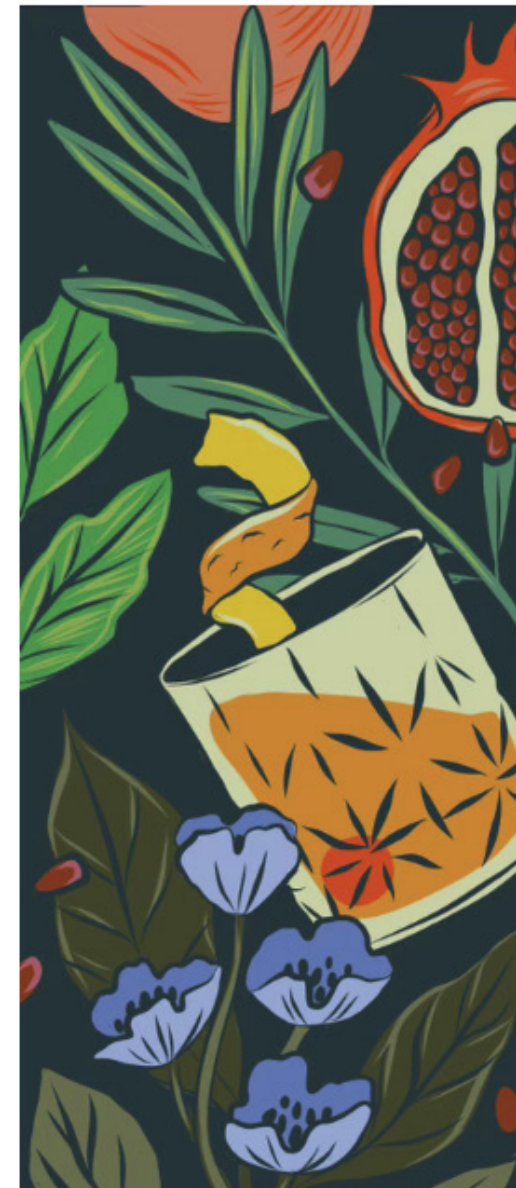
1. Install temporary and beautiful artwork to draw attention to the bustling neighborhood and First Street Market.
2. Give a taste of the range of community events at the space (farmers markets, food events, social happenings, etc.).
3. Further activate the area with a vibrant, artist-created design.

BANNER SIZES, DESIGNS AND LAYOUT PLAN

45' x 11' 6"
13oz Scrim
Hem and Grommet



BANNER DESIGN DETAIL VIEW





FIRST STREET STREET VIEW



FIRST STREET + SPRING STREET VIEW

ABOUT OUR ARTIST, JAIME LA JONES



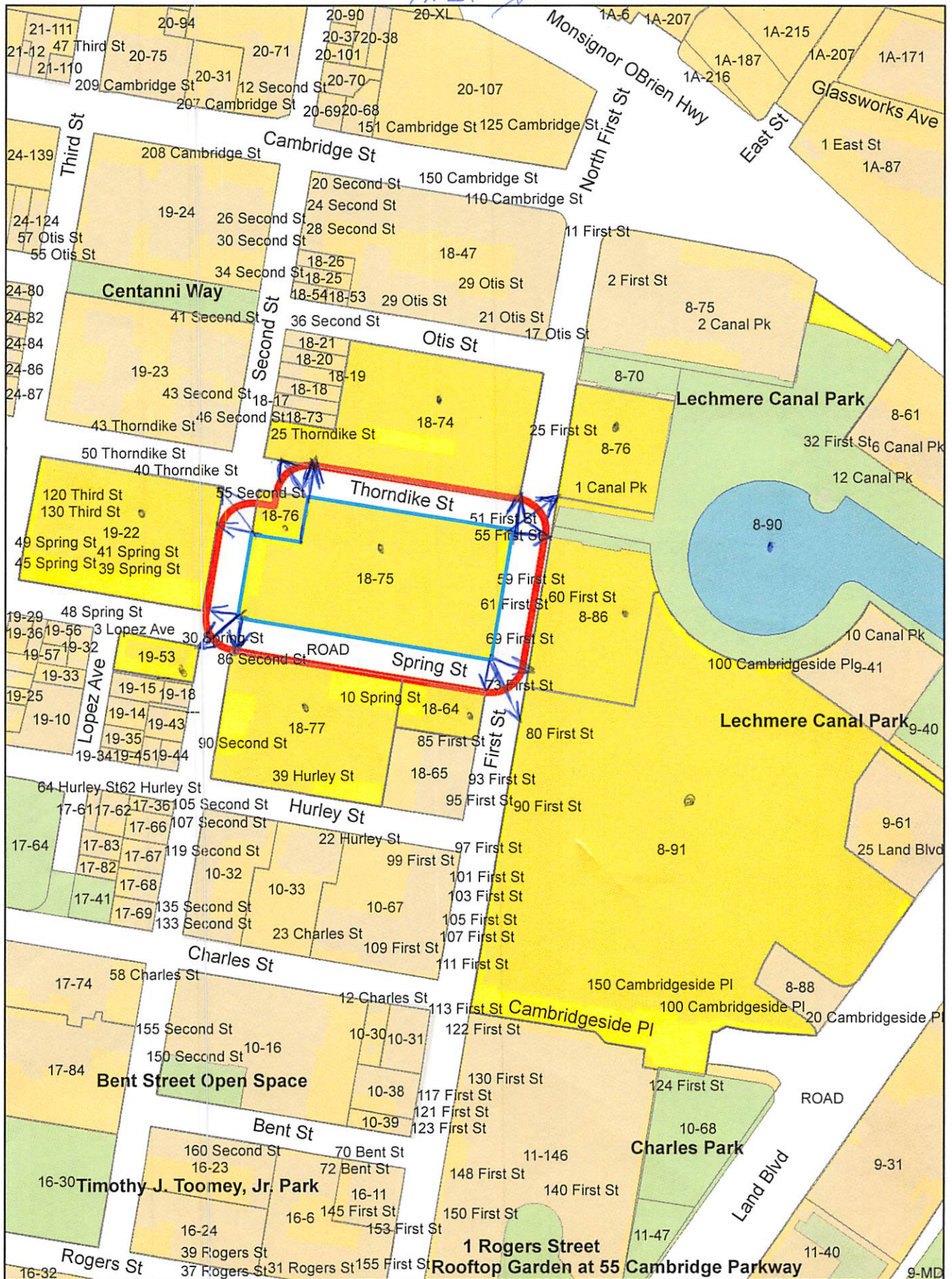
Jaime La Jones has delighted her clients and their patrons with stunning, impactful and “instagrammable” murals in and around New England and beyond since 2013. From homes to restaurants and commercial interior + exteriors, she approaches every project as an opportunity to truly transform her client’s space. Using her skill and expertise to both celebrate their unique story and harmonize with the existing environment/branding.

Aside from her regular clientele, Jaime frequently participates in local and national charity events donating artwork for auction or live mural painting.

A percentage of the proceeds from all of her art print sales are donated to her favorite charities and non-profit organizations.

THANK YOU

59 First St.



59 First St.

Petitioner
WILLIAM GILSON
135 HIGH STREET
ACTON, MA 01720

18-74
DAVENPORT OWNER (DE) LLC,
C/O OXFORD PROPERTIES GROUP
125 SUMMER ST. 12TH FL
BOSTON, MA 02110

18-76
GKA REALTY, LLC
P.O. BOX 341
WINCHESTER, MA 01890

8-86
NW CAMBRIDGE PROPERTY OWNER LLC,
C/O NORTHWOOD INVESTORS LLC,
PO BOX 2090
WARREN, MI 48090

18-77
ARE-MA REGION NO.55 EXCHANGE
HOLDING LLC
PO BOX 847
CARLSBAD, CA 92018

18-64
US PARCEL E LLC
111 FIRST ST
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02141

19-53
LIN, JUNG-ERH
36 SPRING ST UNIT 4
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02141

19-53
HUANG, ELLEN
30 SPRING ST UNIT 1
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02141

19-53
JAMPOL, RUSSELL PAUL
38 SPRING ST UNIT 5
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02141

19-53
LIN, ALICE & MARK TANG
32 SPRING ST - UNIT 2
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02141

8-76
1 CANAL OWNER LLC
10100 SANTA MONICA BLVD 15TH FLOOR
LOS ANGELES, CA 90067

19-22
40 THORNDIKE LLC
10 POST OFFICE SQ - 13TH FLOOR
BOSTON, MA 02109

8-90
CAMBRIDGE CITY OF COMM. DEV
57 INMAN ST
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

19-53
SILVA, SHARON DOMINIC SILVA
51 PRINCE ST APT 3
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

18-75
CAMBRIDGE CITY OF COMM. DEV.
C/O 40 THORNDIKE LLC
10 POST OFFICE SQ 13 FL
BOSTON, MA 02109

8-90 / 18-75
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
C/O MEGAN BAYER
CITY SOLICITOR

8-90 / 18-75
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
C/O CITY MANAGER'S OFFICE

8-91
CAMBRIDGESIDE PARTNERS LLC
10 STATE HOUSE SQUARE - 15TH FL.
HARVARD, CONN 06103



City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL

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

4 bds

BZA

POSTING NOTICE – PICK UP SHEET

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

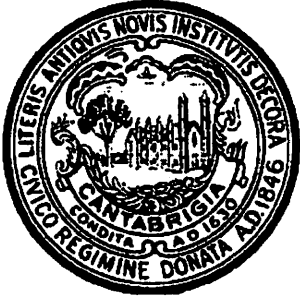
Name: Will Gilson Date: 4/24/25
(Print)

Address: 59 First St.

Case No. BZA-1160291

Hearing Date: 5/8/25

Thank you,
Bza Members



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

April 30, 2025

To: The Board of Zoning Appeal

From: The Planning Board

RE: BZA-1160291 59 First Street

The Planning Board reviewed this BZA application during a meeting on April 29, 2025 and decided to forward a positive recommendation to BZA.

The garage building was subject to a Planning Board special permit granted in 1985, and the public food market at the ground floor was established as a public benefit by the developer of the 40 Thorndike Street project, which was also subject to a Planning Board special permit granted in 2014.

The Board enthusiastically recommends granting the requested variance for the banners on the façade of the garage. The proposed banners will greatly improve the aesthetics of the existing building and align with the planning objectives for the area. The space at the ground floor of the garage has been historically difficult to program, and the public market was a strong community desire. The Board acknowledges the difficulty of attracting visitors to a public market within a large parking garage, and agrees that façade improvements are helpful to raise public awareness of this unique place. The design of the banners is attractive, and they contain no lettering or illumination so it does not have the negative qualities of excessive signage.

Pacheco, Maria

From: McKenna, Brooke
Sent: Friday, May 2, 2025 11:54 AM
To: Pacheco, Maria; Ratay, Olivia; Natola, Stephen; Lazzara, Jacob
Cc: Roberts, Jeffrey; Peters, Melissa
Subject: Letter of Support for graphic banners on the facade of the First Street Garage
Attachments: letter of Support 5.2.25.pdf

Hello-

Attached please find a letter of support for the BZA variance application for graphic banners on the facade of the First Street Garage, which is operated by the Cambridge Department of Transportation.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need anything further from me in support of this application.

Best,

Brooke McKenna, Commissioner
Cambridge Department of Transportation
City of Cambridge
O: 617-349-4723
Pronouns: she, her



Department of
Transportation



Brooke McKenna
Transportation Commissioner

May 2, 2025

To the Chair and Members of the Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal,

We write in strong support of the application for a variance from Article 7.000 of the Zoning Ordinance to install three graphic banners on the façade of the First Street Garage. The creation of a food market at the ground level of the garage was a crucial public benefit provided by the developer of the 40 Thorndike Street project as part of their lease of parking spaces within the garage to serve that project. The addition of banners is important to highlight the unique presence of a food market within the garage and to improve the garage's overall attractiveness along the street. Permanent exterior improvements to the garage are not feasible at this time, so the addition of removable banners is the City's preferred alternative.

The proposed banners were created by an artist who was commissioned as part of the community benefits package for the garage lease. We believe that the design of the proposed banners will improve the outward appearance of the garage façade and will help direct the general public to use the food market in the building. They will not contain any branding specific to the market's operator, and we believe they are appropriately scaled to the dimensions of the garage building.

We hope that the Board will make the necessary findings to grant the requested variance. Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Brooke McKenna", followed by a long horizontal line.

Brooke McKenna

Commissioner