



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

BRIAN MURPHY
Assistant City Manager for
Community Development

IRAM FAROOQ
Deputy Director for
Community Development

To: Planning Board
From: Jeff Roberts, Land Use and Zoning Planner
Date: January 13, 2015
Re: **HYM North Point Major Amendment – Second Hearing**

Background

On Tuesday, the Board will hold its second public hearing on a proposed Major Amendment to the North Point Planned Unit Development (PUD) Special Permit. Zoning requires two public hearings to be held on a Major Amendment to a PUD Special Permit before the Planning Board reaches a final decision.

North Point (now controlled by HYM Partnership) is the largest approved PUD in Cambridge, authorizing about 3 million square feet of residential development and 2 million square feet of commercial development over twenty building sites. The proposed amendments would not change the total amount or configuration of development, but would authorize the following specific changes to the plan:

- Reduction in total off-street parking, from about 4,900 spaces to about 3,800 spaces, with the ability to share parking between residential and commercial uses, and some parking devoted to retail uses.
- Increase in total retail uses (as a portion of allowed commercial development) from 150,000 square feet to 300,000 square feet.
- Allowance of a grocery store of up to 50,000 square feet.

After the first public hearing in August, the Planning Board voted a favorable Preliminary Determination on the Major Amendment (see attached), allowing the proposal to move to a second hearing. The developer also sought an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to allow parking for retail uses, which was adopted by the City Council in November.

Planning Board Actions

The following page summarizes the special permits being requested and the findings the Planning Board must make to grant the requested permits, and some brief commentary from CDD staff. The following additional information is attached:

- Memo from the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department (TPT) commenting on the proposed increase in retail and reduction in parking.
- Copy of the Planning Board's Preliminary Determination.
- Excerpts of zoning text applicable to the special permits and findings.

HYM North Point Major Amendment – Memo to Planning Board

Requested Special Permits	Summarized Findings (see appendix for zoning text excerpts)
Major Amendment to PUD Special Permit (Section 12.37)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposal conforms to general and specific development controls in the zoning ordinance; conforms to policy plans and guidelines for the area; has benefits to City that outweigh adverse effects. (See Section 12.35.3) • Proposal contains revisions to the Development Proposal required by the Planning Board. (See Preliminary Determination) • Planning Board approves increase in retail use to up to 300,000 square feet, grocery store exceeding 10,000 square feet, and parking for retail uses not to exceed one space per 2,000 square feet. (See Section 13.73.1)
Major Amendment to Project Review Special Permit (Section 19.20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Proposed amendment will not have substantial adverse impacts on traffic. (See TPT Memo) • Proposed amendment remains consistent with Citywide Urban Design Objectives. (See Section 19.30)
Reduction in Required Parking (Section 6.35.1)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lesser amount of parking will not cause excessive congestion, endanger public safety, substantially reduce parking availability for other uses or otherwise adversely impact the neighborhood; or will provide positive environmental or other benefits to the users of the lot and the neighborhood. (See Section 6.35.1 and TPT Memo)

CDD Staff Comments

The most significant considerations concern the transportation impacts of reducing parking supply and increasing retail use, which are addressed in the attached TPT memo.

Regarding the overall planning for the area, reducing reliance on automobile travel is consistent with the established objectives for North Point, and experience has shown that controlling the supply of parking is an effective way to further that goal. Also, increased retail activity is consistent with planning objectives for the area so long as it functions primarily to serve the project and the surrounding neighborhood, and not to compete with nearby districts or function as a regional retail center.

The proposal would not impact the design characteristics of the approved development plan. Individual buildings will continue to require design review approval from the Planning Board prior to construction.



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Monica R. Lamboy, Interim Director
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MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board
From: Monica R. Lamboy, Interim Director 
Date: January 13, 2015
Re: NorthPoint Application for Amendments to PUD Development Plan and Project Review Special Permits (PB#179)

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department (TP&T) reviewed NorthPoint's Application for Amendments to PUD Development Plan and Project Review Special Permits, dated June 24, 2014, for Planning Board Special Permit #179. TP&T submitted comments to the Planning Board on August 19, 2014 (attached). Below is a summary of TP&T's August 19, 2014 memo along with additional comments and recommendations related to retail parking that were not discussed in the previous memo:

1. Reduction in parking from 4,980 spaces to 3,807 spaces.

TP&T supports the proposed parking reduction from a maximum of 4,980 spaces to a maximum of 3,807 spaces (not including 300 MBTA park and ride spaces) for the NorthPoint PUD (a reduction of 1,173 spaces). The parking spaces should be sufficient to meet NorthPoint's needs based on the parking ratios and mode share goals (i.e. percent driving, walking, bicycling and transit). Furthermore, parking utilization will be monitored by the City as part of the Applicants Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) plan (see Part 6 of this memo). TP&T supports the reduced parking cap as a way to more strongly mitigate potential traffic impacts of the project. If it is determined that additional parking is needed in the future, the Applicant can go back to the Planning Board to seek an Amendment.

2. Updated parking ratios.

TP&T supports the Applicant's proposed parking ratios shown below, which are also consistent with the Kendall Square – Central Square (K2C2) planning study.

- Office: Maximum 0.9 spaces/1,000 s.f.;
- Lab/R&D: Maximum 0.8 spaces/1,000 s.f.;
- Residential: Minimum 0.5 spaces/unit and maximum 1 space/unit, but not to exceed 0.75 spaces/unit upon completion of the development. (This will permit the Twenty/20 Apartments currently under construction on parcel N to not need a temporary surface parking lot on Parcels L and M);
- Hotel: Maximum 1 per 2 sleeping rooms; and,
- Retail: Maximum 0.5 spaces/1,000 s.f.

3. Shared Parking.

A detailed shared parking analysis dated March 24, 2014 was completed by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB), and was included in the Proponent's Application for Amendments to the PUD Development Plan

and Project Review Special Permit as Exhibit E. TP&T was comfortable with the level and quality of analysis and supports NorthPoint's shared parking plan with the following conditions:

- A. All land uses shall be permitted to use no more than the maximum parking ratios listed above at any one time (i.e. Office use shall have access to no more than 0.9 spaces/1,000 s.f.);
- B. NorthPoint shall accommodate parking for residents and visitors of residents in NorthPoint's off-street parking facilities (Visitors to residents shall be told where visitor parking is available);
- C. The Applicant should provide detailed parking reports to the City annually, as part of their PTDM monitoring requirement in a form approved by TP&T and CDD; and,
- D. Because NorthPoint will be built in phases over time, some parking facilities may be constructed before the buildings to which they will serve are constructed. Any parking spaces above the maximum parking ratios shall be made unavailable (i.e. physically inaccessible) until the buildings they will serve are constructed and occupied. This is a standard TP&T process.

4. Retail Parking.

NorthPoint is seeking an increase in retail square footage from 150,000 to 300,000 s.f., including a supermarket up to 50,000 s.f. They are also seeking a maximum of 0.5 parking spaces/1,000 s.f. for retail use. This would provide a maximum build-out of 150 retail parking spaces. TP&T believes some parking will be needed to support retail uses, and this amount of retail parking is low enough that it would not generate more trips than projected in the project's prior traffic studies. NorthPoint's overall parking reduction will also help off-set the potential traffic impacts of additional retail. Below are TP&T's comments:

- A. A maximum of 150 spaces should be allowed for retail use;
- B. As North Point is built-out, the retail parking spaces may be made available only up to 0.5 spaces/1,000 sf of retail use that is in existence at the time;
- C. Off-street retail parking should be located proximate to the Retail Square, as identified in the master plan;
- D. Off-street retail parking should have appropriate fees to support turnover of spaces, with fee structures to be determined during the PTDM process (see Point 6 below); and,
- E. TP&T has been in contact with the Applicant and both have a common goal of seeing on-street parking meters installed and enforced as soon as possible. TP&T will work with the Applicant to have an agreement regarding parking meters on NorthPoint streets, before North Point Boulevard is fully constructed.

5. MBTA Park and Ride Lot.

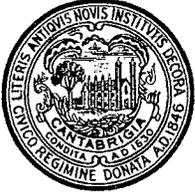
In the future, the City would like the MBTA park-and-ride lot to be eliminated or substantially reduced in size. With the completion of the Green Line Extension project, Lechmere will no longer be the terminus of the Green Line. TP&T is concerned that the parking will be used for purposes other than park-and-ride parking because it is not strictly enforced.

TP&T continues to urge NorthPoint to work with the MBTA to find alternate solutions that will result in the phasing out of the MBTA lot when the Green Line Extension is completed. Possible interim solutions include offering the MBTA revenue instead of the parking spaces, or to charging parking rates in the lot equal to rates charged elsewhere in NorthPoint, which could potentially reduce demand. TP&T recommends the following:

- A. The 300 MBTA parking spaces are for MBTA park and ride users only. The Applicant shall notify NorthPoint tenants that the parking does not serve NorthPoint (i.e. it is not additional ancillary parking for NorthPoint uses).
- B. Any reduction of spaces in the MBTA lot cannot be reallocated to serve other NorthPoint parking.

6. Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM).

The NorthPoint PTDM plan must be amended if retail parking is created.



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Brad Gerratt, Deputy Director

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MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board
From: Susan Clippinger, Director *as for SC*
Date: August 19, 2014
Re: NorthPoint Application for Amendments to PUD Development Plan and Project Review Special Permits

The Cambridge Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department (TP&T) reviewed NorthPoint's Application for Amendments to PUD Development Plan and Project Review Special Permits, dated June 24, 2014, for Planning Board Special Permit #179. We have the following comments:

1. Reduction in parking from 4,980 spaces to 3,807 spaces.

We had recommended that HYM evaluate if 4,980 parking spaces permitted for the NorthPoint project are needed given changes in travel patterns since the project was approved in 2003. Since 2003, automobile ownership in the City has been decreasing and non-automobile use, such as transit and bicycling, has been increasing. Constructing too many parking spaces causes an increase in auto use and ownership, traffic congestion, air pollution, environmental impacts, and could increase housing costs.

TP&T worked with NorthPoint, and based on updated parking ratios and a shared parking scenario, we support a parking reduction from a maximum of 4,980 spaces to a maximum of 3,807 spaces (not including 300 MBTA park and ride spaces) for the NorthPoint PUD (a reduction of 1,173 spaces).

2. Updated parking ratios.

When NorthPoint was originally permitted in 2003, the parking ratios reflected higher rates than are recommended by TP&T today reflecting increased use of transit, walking and bicycle instead of automobile use. The parking ratios in the NorthPoint PUD Application are consistent with the recommendations from the K2C2 planning study. We support the following parking ratios:

- Office: Maximum 0.9 spaces/1,000 sf.
- Lab/R&D: Maximum 0.8 spaces/1,000 sf
- Residential: Minimum 0.5 spaces/unit and maximum 1 space/unit, but not to exceed 0.75 spaces/unit upon completion of the development.
- Hotel: Maximum 1 per 2 sleeping rooms.

These new parking ratios reduced the parking supply by approximately 855 spaces.

3. Shared Parking.

We support shared parking between uses that have peak parking demands at different times of day, such as office/lab uses and residential uses. The shared parking reduces the parking supply by approximately 318 spaces.

4. Retail Parking

We are aware that NorthPoint is requesting a change in zoning for retail parking and will wait to hear what decisions are made.

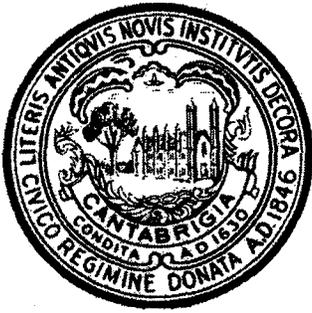
5. MBTA Park and Ride Lot

In the future, the City would like the MBTA park-and-ride lot to be eliminated or substantially reduced in size. NorthPoint will no longer be the end of the Green Line, the lot is not well managed and creates additional traffic in the area. We are concerned that the parking will be used for purposes other than park-and-ride parking. We continue to urge NorthPoint to work with the MBTA to find alternate solutions that will result in the phasing out of that MBTA lot when the Green Line Extension is completed. Possible interim solutions include offering the MBTA revenue instead of the parking spaces, or to charge parking rates in the lot equal to rates charged in NorthPoint.

- Any reduction of spaces in the MBTA lot cannot be reallocated to serve other NorthPoint parking.

6. PTDM

The NorthPoint PTDM plan must be amended if retail parking is created.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

2014 SEP 8 PM 4 33

**NOTICE OF PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION
FOR PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL**

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Case Number:	179 Amendment #4 (Major)
Location of Premises:	O'Brien Highway at First and East Streets in the North Point District and the MBTA Green Line Lechmere Station at Cambridge Street and O'Brien Highway
Zoning:	North Point Residence District / PUD-6 Residence C-2B District / PUD-4A
Applicant:	CJUF III Northpoint LLC (see below)
Owners:	CJUF III Northpoint LLC c/o HYM Investment Group, LLC One Congress Street, Boston MA 02114 Boston and Maine Corporation Iron Horse Park, North Billerica, MA 01862 Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority 10 Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116
Application Date:	June 24, 2014
Date of Planning Board Public Hearing:	August 19, 2012
Date of Planning Board Determination:	August 19, 2012
Summary of Proposal:	Major Amendment to Planned Unit Development Special Permit (Sections 13.70 and 13.50) and Project Review Special Permit (Section 19.20) to allow modifications in parking and use program.
Determination:	APPROVED, with conditions and requests for modification.

Copies of this Preliminary Determination and plans, if applicable, are on file with the Community Development Department and the City Clerk.

Authorized Representative of the Planning Board: Jeffrey C. Roberts JCR 9/8/14.

For further information concerning this Preliminary Determination, please contact Liza Paden at 617-349-4647, or lpaden@cambridgema.gov.

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED

Application Documents and Supporting Material

1. Application for Amendments to PUD Development Plan and Project Review Special Permit, dated June 24, 2014, including Application Forms, Detailed Narrative of Proposed Amendments, and Exhibits.

Other Documents

2. Preliminary Determination Findings Checklist submitted by Community Development Department.
3. Memo to the Planning Board from Susan Clippinger, Director of Traffic, Parking and Transportation, dated August 19, 2014.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The Application seeks a Major Amendment to Special Permit #179 first issued on March 11, 2003 and subsequently amended through Minor Amendments granted on March 6, 2007 and November 18, 2008 and a Major Amendment granted on November 16, 2012. The application represents a Development Proposal seeking a Preliminary Determination from the Planning Board in accordance with Sections 12.37 and 12.34 of the Zoning Ordinance.

One part of the Major Amendment Development Proposal seeks modifications to the parking characteristics of the previously approved Final Development Plan. The maximum number of off-street parking spaces in the Development Parcel would be reduced from 4,980, as currently permitted, to 3,807, exclusive of 300 spaces permitted for use by the MBTA. In order to accomplish this reduction, a special permit would be requested to reduce required parking below the minimum ratios set forth in the zoning ordinance (pursuant to Section 6.35.1), and a detailed set of maximum and minimum parking ratios would be applied to the Final Development Plan with some variation over the course of the phased development of individual portions of the development plan. Additionally, approval from the Planning Board is requested to permit the Development Parcel to be treated as a “shared parking district,” in which parking for individual uses may be provided at different sites within the Development Parcel and managed through the use of shared parking agreements.

The Major Amendment Development Proposal also seeks modifications to the approved program of uses to increase the maximum amount of Gross Floor Area that can be occupied by Retail and Consumer Service uses from a total of 150,000 square feet to 300,000 square feet, including a grocery store to occupy up to 50,000 square feet. The additional retail would be offset by a commensurate reduction in other commercial uses such that the total commercial Gross Floor Area would not be increased. The approval of retail Gross Floor Area exceeding 150,000 square feet and the approval of a single retail establishment exceeding 10,000 square feet require

explicit approval from the Planning Board pursuant to Section 13.73.1. However, the Major Amendment Proposal also seeks approval for off-street parking to serve those retail uses, up to a maximum ratio of 0.5 space per 1,000 square feet of retail gross floor area, which is explicitly prohibited pursuant to Section 13.73.1 and would require an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance to be enacted by the City Council.

FINDINGS

Based on a review of submitted Application materials and testimony given at the public hearing, the Board makes the following findings with reference to the criteria for preliminary approval of a Planned Unit Development Proposal as set forth in Article 12.000 of the Zoning Ordinance.

- (1) *The Development Proposal conforms with the General Development Controls set forth in Section 12.50, and the development controls set forth in the specific PUD district in which the project is located.*

Prior to final approval of the proposed modifications to the Final Development Plan, the following specific approvals are required:

- a special permit to reduce the minimum required parking ratios set forth in the Zoning Ordinance for the uses permitted in the Final Development Plan, pursuant to Section 6.35.1, which may be granted by the Planning Board contemporaneously with the requested Major Amendment pursuant to Section 10.45;
- a determination by the Planning Board that a total of 300,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area may be occupied by retail and consumer service establishments, pursuant to Section 13.73.1;
- a determination by the Planning Board that a single retail establishment, specifically a grocery store, may occupy up to 50,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area, pursuant to Section 13.73.1, Paragraph (i)
- an amendment to Section 13.73.1, Paragraph (ii) of the Zoning Ordinance, that would permit off street parking for retail uses in the North Point Residence District.

The Board finds that, on the whole, the proposed amendment remains consistent with the General Development Controls set forth in Section 12.50 and the development controls of the applicable PUD zoning districts. Aside from the requested changes to parking and retail uses, the Development Proposal is not substantially changed from the previously approved Final Development Plan. No changes to the Development Parcel size or composition, roadways, public infrastructure, landscaping, or total Gross Floor Area are proposed. All environmental standards currently applicable to the Final Development Plan will continue to be met.

- (2) *The Development Proposal conforms with adopted policy plans or development guidelines for the portion of the city in which the PUD district is located.*

With the proposed amendment, the Final Development Plan will remain consistent with the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines and the Eastern Cambridge Planning Study. In

general, the City is supportive of proposals to reduce the amount of vehicular parking to reflect the anticipated demand and to discourage unnecessary automobile traffic.

(3) *The Development Proposal provides benefits to the city that outweigh its adverse effects. In making this determination the Planning Board shall consider the following:*

(a) *The quality of the site design, including integration of a variety of land uses, building types, and densities; preservation of natural features; compatibility with adjacent land uses; provision and type of open space; provision of other amenities designed to benefit the general public*

The site design will not be modified as a result of the proposed Amendment, and will remain as previously approved.

(b) *Traffic flow and safety*

The Application Materials and other supporting information presented to the Planning Board indicate that the traffic impacts of the proposed modifications have been carefully studied and will continue to be discussed by the Planning Board prior to reaching a final decision on the current proposal. The Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department has expressed initial support for the proposed reduction in parking.

(c) *Adequacy of utilities and other public works*

No modifications to utilities or other public infrastructure are proposed, and all conditions for such infrastructure currently applicable to the Final Development Plan will continue to apply.

(d) *Impact on existing public facilities within the city*

Aside from issues mentioned above, no additional impact on other public facilities is anticipated from the proposed modifications.

(e) *Potential fiscal impacts*

The proposed modifications are not expected to result in negative fiscal impacts for the project or the City.

DETERMINATION

Section 12.35.2 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that the Planning Board make a preliminary determination with regard to a PUD application within twenty-one days of the first public hearing. The Planning Board may approve the Development Proposal, approve the Development Proposal with conditions, or deny the application for a special permit.

It is the Planning Board's Determination to **APPROVE** the Development Proposal for the requested Major Amendment, subject to the following requests and comments to be addressed in the preparation of a Final Development Plan.

1. The proposal for a "retail center" in the Final Development Plan, including a grocery store, will support the policy objectives for the area by providing more amenities and services to the nearby community and contributing to a more active urban environment. However, some amount of parking is likely needed to sustain such a retail plan. Given that the zoning does not allow parking for such uses, prior to approval of a Final Development Plan, the Applicant must either successfully petition the City Council to amend the zoning or modify the Final Development Plan to conform to the zoning requirements.
2. The final application must additionally seek a special permit pursuant to Section 6.35.1 for a reduction in the minimum parking required for the uses permitted in the Final Development Plan. While the Board is generally supportive of a reduction in parking, further consideration will be given to the exact limitations that should be imposed on the maximum and minimum number of parking spaces and the flexibility permitted as phased development occurs over time.

In order to address these points, the Applicant has requested and the Board has granted an extension of ninety (90) days to the time normally afforded to review and approval of a Final Development Plan for a PUD.

Voting in the affirmative to approve the Development Proposal were Planning Board Members H. Theodore Cohen, Steven Cohen, Hugh Russell, Steven Winter, Pamela Winters and Associate Members Catherine Preston Connolly and Ahmed Nur, appointed by the Chair to act on the case, constituting at least two thirds of the members of the Board.

For the Planning Board,

 (JOR)

Hugh Russell, Chair.

A copy of this Preliminary Determination #179 – Amendment #4 (Major) shall be filed with the Office of the City Clerk.

Approval of a PUD Final Development Plan

12.35.3 Approval of the Development Proposal shall be granted only upon determination by the Planning Board that the Development Proposal:

- (1) conforms with the General Development Controls set forth in Section 12.50, and the development controls set forth for the specific PUD district in which the project is located;
- (2) conforms with adopted policy plans or development guidelines for the portion of the city in which the PUD district is located;
- (3) provides benefits to the city which outweigh its adverse effects; in making this determination the Planning Board shall consider the following:
 - (a) quality of site design, including integration of a variety of land uses, building types, and densities; preservation of natural features; compatibility with adjacent land uses; provision and type of open space; provision of other amenities designed to benefit the general public;
 - (b) traffic flow and safety;
 - (c) adequacy of utilities and other public works;
 - (d) impact on existing public facilities within the city; and
 - (e) potential fiscal impact.

12.36.4 ... Approval of the Final Development Plan shall be granted only upon determination by the Planning Board that the Final Development Plan meets the evaluation criteria set forth in Section 12.35.3 and contains any revisions to the Development Proposal required by the Planning Board.

Specific Findings Regarding the PUD-6 (North Point) District

13.73.1 Special Provisions Related to Permitted Retail Uses.

The total Gross Floor Area for retail and consumer service establishments authorized by the Planning Board in all approved PUDs within that portion of the PUD in the North Point Residence District located west of Charlestown Avenue shall not exceed 75,000 square feet or 25,000 square feet for that portion of the PUD located east of Charlestown Avenue, unless a finding is made by the Planning Board that additional retail use will better serve the objectives of this Section 13.70 and the objectives of the Eastern Cambridge Plan. All retail and consumer services establishments shall be subject to the following limitations:

- (i) In no instance shall any individual retail or consumer service establishment exceed 10,000 gross square feet unless the Planning Board determines in writing that establishments of a greater size better support and serve the residents within the PUD district and better advance the policy objectives set forth in the Eastern Cambridge Plan and the guidance provided in the Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines.
- (ii) No off street parking is provided except that the Planning Board, in approving a Final Development Plan, may explicitly permit accessory off street parking not to exceed one space per two thousand (2,000) square feet of Gross Floor Area approved for retail and consumer service establishments, provided that mitigating measures are included to ensure that the goals of the district will be met.

(2) The initial 50,000 square feet of retail and consumer service establishments authorized in total in approved PUDs shall be exempt from any limitations as to non-residential Gross Floor Area as set forth in Section 13.73.1 above subject to the following limitations:

- (i) The GFA is located on the ground floor and fronts on and has a public entry onto a publicly accessible street.
- (ii) The establishment is located within the 500-radius described in Section 13.74.11 below.

Project Review Special Permit – Traffic Impact Findings

19.25.1 Traffic Impact Findings. Where a Traffic Study is required as set forth in Section 19.24 (3) above the Planning Board shall grant the special permit only if it finds that the project will have no substantial adverse impact on city traffic within the study area as analyzed in the Traffic Study. Substantial adverse impact on city traffic shall be measured by reference to the traffic impact indicators set forth in Section 19.25.11 below.

In areas where the Planning Board determines that area-specific traffic guidelines have been established in the Ordinance, the Board recognizes written agreements between project proponents and the City dealing with transportation mitigation strategies.

19.25.11 Traffic Impact Indicators. In determining whether a proposal has substantial adverse impacts on city traffic the Planning Board shall apply the following indicators. When one or more of the indicators is exceeded, it will be indicative of potentially substantial adverse impact on city traffic. In making its findings, however, the Planning Board shall consider the mitigation efforts proposed, their anticipated effectiveness, and other supplemental information that identifies circumstances or actions that will result in a reduction in adverse traffic impacts. Such efforts and actions may include, but are not limited to, transportation demand management plans; roadway, bicycle and pedestrian facilities improvements; measures to reduce traffic on residential streets; and measures undertaken to improve safety for pedestrians and vehicles, particularly at intersections identified in the Traffic Study as having a history of high crash rates.

The indicators are: (1) Project vehicle trip generation weekdays and weekends for a twenty-four hour period and A. M. and P.M. peak vehicle trips generated; (2) Change in level of service at identified signalized intersections; (3) Increased volume of trips on residential streets; (4) Increase of length of vehicle queues at identified signalized intersections; and (5) Lack of sufficient pedestrian and bicycle facilities. The precise numerical values that will be deemed to indicate potentially substantial adverse impact for each of these indicators shall be adopted from time to time by the Planning Board in consultation with the TPTD, published and made available to all applicants.

Project Review Special Permit – Urban Design Findings

19.25.2 Urban Design Findings. The Planning Board shall grant the special permit only if it finds that the project is consistent with the urban design objectives of the city as set forth in Section 19.30. In making that determination the Board may be guided by or make reference to urban design guidelines or planning reports that may have been developed for specific areas of the city and shall apply the standards herein contained in a reasonable manner to nonprofit religious and educational organizations in light of the special circumstances applicable to nonprofit religious and educational activities.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives

The following urban design objectives are intended to provide guidance to property owners and the general public as to the city's policies with regard to the form and character desirable for new development in the city. It is understood that application of these principles can vary with the context of specific building proposals in ways that, nevertheless, fully respect the policies' intent. It is intended that proponents of projects, and city staff, the Planning Board and the general public, where public review or approval is required, should be open to creative variations from the detailed provisions presented in this Section as long as the core values expressed are being served. A project need not meet all the objectives of this Section 19.30 where this Section serves as the basis for issuance of a special permit. Rather the permit granting authority shall find that on balance the objectives of the city are being served. Nor shall a project subject to special permit review be required to conform to the Required Building and Site Plan Requirements set forth in Section 19.50.

Further indicators of conformance with these policy objectives shall be found in planning documents and plans developed for specific areas of the city or the city as a whole, to the extent that they are not inconsistent with the objectives set forth in this Section 19.30. These documents include the *Harvard Square Development Guidelines*, the *Central Square Action Plan*, the *Central Square Development Guidelines*, the *North Massachusetts Avenue Urban Design Guidelines Handbook*, the *University Park at MIT Urban Design Guidelines*, the *North Point Policy Plan and Design Guidelines*, the *Cambridge Institutional Growth Management Plan*, the *East Cambridge Riverfront Plan*, the *Eastern Cambridge Plan*, the *Eastern Cambridge Design Guidelines*, the *Alewife Revitalization, Alewife Urban Design Study Phase II* and its Draft update of 1991, and *Toward a Sustainable Future: Cambridge Growth Policy Document*.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition to lower-scale neighborhoods • Consistency with established streetscape • Compatibility with adjacent uses • Consideration of nearby historic buildings
Development should be pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, with a positive relationship to its surroundings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inhabited ground floor spaces • Discouraged ground-floor parking • Windows on ground floor • Orienting entries to pedestrian pathways • Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access
The building and site design should mitigate adverse environmental impacts of a development upon its neighbors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location/impact of mechanical equipment • Location/impact of loading and trash handling • Stormwater management • Shadow impacts • Retaining walls, if provided • Building scale and wall treatment • Outdoor lighting • Tree protection (requires plan approved by City Arborist)
Projects should not overburden the City infrastructure services, including neighborhood roads, city water supply system, and sewer system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water-conserving plumbing, stormwater management • Capacity/condition of water and wastewater service • Efficient design (LEED standards)
New construction should reinforce and enhance the complex urban aspects of Cambridge as it has developed historically.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional use focused on existing campuses • Mixed-use development (including retail) encouraged where allowed • Preservation of historic structures and environment • Provision of space for start-up companies, manufacturing activities
Expansion of the inventory of housing in the city is encouraged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing as a component of large, multi-building development • Affordable units exceeding zoning requirements, targeting units for middle-income families
Enhancement and expansion of open space amenities in the city should be incorporated into new development in the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly beneficial open space provided in large-parcel commercial development • Enhance/expand existing open space, complement existing pedestrian/bicycle networks • Provide wider range of activities

Reduction of Parking Requirements

6.35.1 Reduction of Required Parking. Any minimum required amount of parking may be reduced only upon issuance of a special permit from the Board of Zoning Appeals. A special permit shall be granted only if the Board determines and cites evidence in its decision that the lesser amount of parking will not cause excessive congestion, endanger public safety, substantially reduce parking availability for other uses or otherwise adversely impact the neighborhood, or that such lesser amount of parking will provide positive environmental or other benefits to the users of the lot and the neighborhood, including specifically, among other benefits, assisting in the provision of affordable housing units. In making such a determination the Board shall also consider whether or not less off street parking is reasonable in light of the following:

- (1) The availability of surplus off street parking in the vicinity of the use being served and/or the proximity of an MBTA transit station.
- (2) The availability of public or commercial parking facilities in the vicinity of the use being served provided the requirements of Section 6.23 are satisfied.
- (3) Shared use of off street parking spaces serving other uses having peak user demands at different times, provided that no more than seventy-five (75) percent of the lesser minimum parking requirements for each use shall be satisfied with such shared spaces and that the requirements of Subsection 6.23 are satisfied.

Example: Office and Theatre uses with peak user demands at different times. Office requires a minimum of one hundred and fifty (150) spaces and the theatre requires a minimum of one hundred (100). Seventy-five (75) percent of the lesser minimum requirement is seventy-five (75) (75% of 100). Therefore seventy-five (75) spaces can be shared but twenty-five (25) (100-25) would still be required, making the total amount or required parking for both uses (150 + 25) one hundred and seventy-five (175).

- (4) Age or other occupancy restrictions which are likely to result in a lower level of auto usage; and
- (5) Impact of the parking requirement on the physical environment of the affected lot or the adjacent lots including reduction in green space, destruction of significant existing trees and other vegetation, destruction of existing dwelling units, significant negative impact on the historic resources on the lot, impairment of the urban design objectives of the city as set forth in Section 19.30 of the Zoning Ordinance, or loss of pedestrian amenities along public ways.
- (6) The provision of required parking for developments containing affordable housing units, and especially for developments employing the increased FAR and Dwelling unit density provisions of Section 11.200, will increase the cost of the development, will require variance relief from other zoning requirements applicable to the development because of limitations of space on the lot, or will significantly diminish the environmental quality for all residents of the development.

General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit

10.43 *Criteria.* Special permits will normally be granted where specific provisions of this Ordinance are met, except when particulars of the location or use, not generally true of the district or of the uses permitted in it, would cause granting of such permit to be to the detriment of the public interest because:

- (a) It appears that requirements of this Ordinance cannot or will not be met, or
- (b) traffic generated or patterns of access or egress would cause congestion, hazard, or substantial change in established neighborhood character, or
- (c) the continued operation of or the development of adjacent uses as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance would be adversely affected by the nature of the proposed use, or
- (d) nuisance or hazard would 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, or
- (e) for other reasons, the proposed use would impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district, or otherwise derogate from the intent and purpose of this Ordinance, and
- (f) the new use or building construction is inconsistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30.