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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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BRIAN MURPHY  
Assistant City Manager for  
Community Development

To: Planning Board  
From: CDD Staff  
Date: July 29, 2014  
Re: **303 Third Street Parking Amendment**

Earlier in July, representatives of the owners of 303 Third Street and Alexandria Real Estate Equities appeared before the Board to outline a proposal to allow office users to share up to 200 unutilized parking spaces in the residential garage at 303 Third Street on a temporary basis (no more than 3 years) while Alexandria's surface parking lot is being redeveloped. When development is completed, the parking will be returned to the site in a new below-grade parking garage.

At the time, the Applicant (representing 303 Third Street owners) requested a Minor Amendment to their PUD special permit (PB #189) to permit this shared arrangement. However, because the PUD overlay zoning does not explicitly permit a reduction or sharing of residential parking below the required one-space-per-unit ratio, it was determined that in addition to amending the PUD special permit, a reduction in the minimum residential parking requirement for 303 Third Street should be sought pursuant to Section 6.35.1 of the Zoning Ordinance.

**Minor Amendment to PUD Special Permit**

In amending the PUD special permit, the Board must determine whether the request is a minor amendment provided the guidance below:

*Minor amendments are changes which do not alter the concept of the PUD in terms of density, floor area ratio, land usage, height, provision of open space, or the physical relationship of elements of the development. Minor amendments shall include, but not be limited to, small changes in the location of buildings, open space, or parking; or realignment of minor streets (Section 12.37.2).*

**Reduction of Required Parking**

To grant the reduction in required residential parking, the Board must find 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 (Section 6.35.1).*

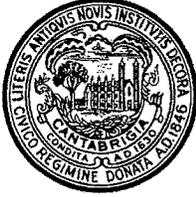
The guidance provided to the Board in making this finding is outlined on the following page.

**Considerations for Reduction of Required Parking (Section 6.35.1)**

*In making [its] 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 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.*
- (4) Age or other occupancy restrictions which are likely to result in a lower level of auto usage.*
- (5) Impact of the parking requirements 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 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.*

The Applicant has provided detailed information on the utilization of parking in the garage and the availability of excess parking. The Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department (TPT) has provided a written comment supporting the proposal, which the Board received at the prior meeting on this case (and is attached). Although the proposed arrangement can be described as “shared parking,” the analysis provided indicates that the full parking demand for both residents and office users will be satisfied (*i.e.*, serving the office use will not require residents to vacate spaces in the daytime). Therefore, the proposal is not likely to have any adverse impact on the general availability of parking in the neighborhood. Also, this proposal furthers the City’s overall goal for the area of making efficient use of existing structured parking spaces.



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Cambridge Planning Board  
**From:** Susan E. Clippinger, Director   
**Date:** July 8, 2014  
**Re:** PB#189 – 303 Third Street to allow temporary use of 200 parking spaces for relocated motor vehicles from PB#243 (50-60 Binney Street).

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The parking garage at the Third Square residential complex located at 285-303 Third Street has 482 units and 527 parking spaces (1.1 spaces/unit). The parking supply is significantly higher than parking demand. Recent car counts done by Equity Residential (Third Square) from March 21, 2014 to April 8, 2014 found the following:

- During the day (between 9:00 AM – 5:00 PM) at peak utilization there are 271 cars (256 empty spaces) and in the evening (between 5:00 PM – 11:30 PM) a peak utilization of 275 cars (252 empty spaces).

Alexandria Real Estate is seeking to lease 200 spaces during the day to accommodate employees in the Athenaeum Building displaced from the surface parking lot at 50/60 Binney Street due to construction. These employees peak use will be in the day when there are 256 available spaces at Third Square.

### Comments:

- The Cambridge Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department supports utilizing existing underutilized parking spaces for this temporary use.
- We encourage developers to investigate shared parking opportunities to use parking as efficiently as possible, especially for land uses that have peak parking demands at different times of the day, such as residential and office uses.
- The proposed shared parking plan will not cause adverse impacts on the neighborhood.
- The Third Square residential complex will continue to meet its residential parking needs.
- Of the 482 units at Third Square, which is 96% occupied, 65 resident parking permits have been issued in 2014 (0.13 Resident parking permit/unit) and of the cars with permits, 47 or 72% have parking passes at Third Square.

# EQR/ARE THIRD SQUARE PARKING PROPOSAL UTILIZING EXISTING GARAGE PARKING CAPACITY IN KENDALL SQUARE

Summary – Alexandria to lease 200 parking spaces at Third Square from EQR for a period not to exceed 33 months (July 2014 – Mar 2017). The 200 spaces will be used by Alexandria employees displaced from the surface lot at 50/60 Binney St due to construction.

Third Square Garage Car Counts					
Time of Day	Minimum		Average		Maximum
	Cars	Open Spots	Cars	Open Spots	Open Spots
5:00-9:00 AM	272	(255)	280	(247)	294 (233)
9:00-5:00 PM	166	(361)	197	(330)	271 (256)
5:00-11:30PM	185	(342)	230	(297)	275 (252)

*Car counts conducted over a three week period (3/31/2014 - 4/8/2014) between 5:00AM and 11:30PM, Monday-Friday.*

<b><u>Third Square Summary</u></b>	
<b>Total Apartment Units</b>	<b>471</b>
Occupancy Rate	96.1%
Apt. Parking Spaces	516
+ Condo Spaces	11
Total Parking Spaces	527
<b>Parking Ratio</b>	<b>1.1x</b>

*Since being developed in 2008, parking occupancy has averaged between 50-60% at Third Square*

## Residential/Office Parking Demand Profile Complimentary

Highest Demand  
Residential 5:00PM – 9:00AM  
Office 9:00AM – 5:00PM

Maximum Car Count  
294 cars (**233** Empty Spaces)  
  
Maximum Car Count (9AM-5PM)  
271 cars (**256** Empty Spaces)