



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

# PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

2015 OCT 28 AM 8:50  
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

## NOTICE OF PRELIMINARY DETERMINATION PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT PROPOSAL

Case Number:	303
Location of Premises:	84 Wadsworth Street; 36 Memorial Drive; 226-254 Main Street; 65 Wadsworth Street; 16 Hayward Street; Hayward Street; 264 Main Street; 292 Main Street; 1 Hayward Street; 8, 26, 28, 34, 42 and 46 Carleton Street; Carleton Street; 310, 322 and 336 Main Street; 65 Carleton Street; 5 and 21 Deacon Street; 40 Ames Street.
Zoning:	Residence C-3B, PUD-5 Overlay District, Mixed Use Residential (MXR) Overlay District.
Applicant:	Massachusetts Institute of Technology 238 Main Street, Cambridge, MA, 02142
Owner:	Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Application Date:	July 28, 2015
Date of Public Hearing:	September 8, 2015
Date of Determination:	September 8, 2015
Summary of Proposal:	Development Proposal for Planned Unit Development (PUD) on five building sites. Includes demolition of one existing building and construction of approximately 1,376,000 square feet of Gross Floor Area for a combination of commercial office/laboratory, retail, dormitory and academic uses, including a below-grade accessory parking facility for existing and new development, new publicly accessible open space, and associated public improvements. This application for South of Main ("SoMa") development is made in conjunction with an application for North of Main ("NoMa") development, case PB #302.
Determination:	<b>APPROVED, with conditions and requests for modification.</b>

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

For further information concerning this Preliminary Determination, please contact Liza Paden at 617-349-4647, or [lpaden@cambridgema.gov](mailto:lpaden@cambridgema.gov).

## **DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED**

### Application Documents and Supporting Material

1. Special Permit Application dated July 27, 2015 (received by the City on July 28, 2015) containing the following volumes: Planned Unit Development Special Permit Application (Development Proposal); Article 19 Project Review Special Permit Application; Graphics Package.
2. Slides from Presentation to Planning Board on September 8, 2015.

### Other Documents

3. Letter to the Planning Board from East Cambridge Planning Team, dated June 16, 2015.
4. Memo to the Planning Board from Katherine F. Watkins, City Engineer, dated September 1, 2015.
5. Memo to the Planning Board from Community Development Department Staff, dated September 2, 2015.
6. Memo to the Planning Board from Joseph E. Barr, Director of Traffic, Parking and Transportation, dated September 2, 2015.
7. Memo to the Planning Board from Charles Sullivan, Executive Director, Cambridge Historical Commission, dated September 3, 2015.
8. Letter to the Planning Board from Nicholas Fandetti, dated September 7, 2015.

## **APPLICATION SUMMARY**

The “SoMa” PUD application proposes redevelopment of five sites on the southern side of Main Street in Kendall Square. The sites are identified as “2” through “6” from east to west. Site “1” is included in a separate “NoMa” PUD application that has been assigned case PB #302.

- Site “2” proposes demolition of the existing Eastgate graduate student residential dormitory and construction of a new 200-foot tall building containing approximately 300,000 square feet of office uses and approximately 18,000 square feet of ground floor retail and active uses.
- Site “3” proposes construction of a 200-foot tall building on existing surface parking lots behind and attached to the existing Kendall (“Clocktower”) Building at 238 Main Street containing approximately 280,000 square feet of research, laboratory and technical office space (R&D) use and approximately 27,000 square feet of new and repositioned retail and

active uses. Approximately 69,219 square feet of office space currently located in the Kendall Building will be retained.

- Site “4” proposes construction of a 300-foot tall building on existing surface parking lots behind and adjacent to the existing buildings at 264-292 Main Street, involving the demolition of some existing smaller-scale buildings on Carleton Street. The new building will contain approximately 330,000 square feet of graduate student dormitory housing (replacing and enlarging the Eastgate tower to be demolished) and a 9,000 square-foot child care facility as well as 28,000 square feet of new retail or repositioned retail and active uses in adjacent existing buildings. The adjacent existing buildings to be retained also include approximately 96,640 square feet of academic uses.
- Site “5” proposes construction of a 250-foot tall building on existing surface parking lots at 310-336 Main Street, involving the demolition of some smaller-scale buildings. The new building will contain approximately 360,000 square feet of office space, approximately 20,000 square feet of retail on the ground floor, and approximately 65,000 square feet of institutional space devoted to the MIT Museum.
- Site “6” proposes construction of a 43-foot tall, approximately 6,600 square-foot office building on an existing paved area in front of existing loading bays for MIT academic facilities.

Each new building would contain ground-floor retail and active uses on the Main Street building frontages in accordance with the PUD-5 requirements. Main building entrances are also located on Main Street. Some active ground-floor frontages and building entrances are also proposed on the southern sides of each building.

New publicly accessible open space of over two acres is proposed to be added to the existing eight acres of publicly accessible open space in the PUD-5 district. The majority of the new open space will be within a single contiguous space on the southern side of building sites 3 and 4, connected by a pedestrian path that also connects behind site 2 to Main Street.

Parking for all new development (809 net new spaces) and replacement parking for the surface lots being redeveloped (685 replacement spaces), along with loading facilities, are proposed to be provided in a combination of below-grade garages, one located beneath site 2 and another connected facility located beneath sites 3, 4 and 5.

The proposal also includes reconstruction of the MBTA Red Line headhouse on the south side of Main Street, aligned with Carlton Street.

## 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.*

The Board finds that the Development Proposal is in conformance with the General Development Controls set forth in Section 12.50 and the development controls of the PUD-5 zoning district contained in Section 13.80 of the Zoning Ordinance. The Application Documents demonstrate compliance with the particular requirements set forth in the PUD-5 zoning adopted in 2013.

- (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.*

The zoning for the PUD-5 district was developed in response to the recommendations of the Kendall Square Study, which establishes goals and objectives for future redevelopment as well as a set of Kendall Square Design Guidelines to inform the review of new projects. The Board finds that the Development Proposal builds upon the work that occurred through the planning and rezoning process taking place from 2010 to 2013. The Board also finds that the proposal is generally consistent with the development guidelines established for the area, with the understanding that details will be fleshed out as the review process continues.

- (3) *The Development Proposal provides benefits to the city that outweigh its adverse effects.*

The Board finds that, on the whole, the proposed PUD will benefit the City by enabling redevelopment of underutilized parcels in the heart of a major economic, academic and creative center for Cambridge and the region, while also providing specific benefits to the City as outlined in the Kendall Square Study and incorporated into the PUD-5 zoning.

*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 Development Proposal includes a positive arrangement of uses on the site, with a commercial zone and academic zone tied together with publicly accessible open space as the basic design and structuring element, as well as retail and cultural space to activate the ground floors, and parking and loading located below grade.

*(b) Traffic flow and safety*

The Development Proposal includes a thorough transportation analysis that looks comprehensively at all forms of transportation. The project is subject to requirements that will limit or mitigate traffic impacts and the project is designed to provide safe access, egress and circulation meeting City standards. However, the Board acknowledges that the impact of new development on public transportation, the MBTA Red Line in particular, are a major concern that will need to be discussed further when reviewing transportation impacts pursuant to Article 19.000.

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

The Application Documents, testimony at the public hearing and memorandum from the City Engineer indicate that City requirements related to infrastructure are understood and will be met in the proposed new development.

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

The Development Proposal is not expected to result in any negative impact on existing public facilities. The proposal includes reconstruction of the MBTA headhouse and improvements along Main Street, the details of which will be investigated in further detail through the review process.

*(e) Potential fiscal impacts*

The Development Proposal is expected to result in positive fiscal impacts for the City, including increased tax revenue and contributions to public improvements and mitigation as required in the zoning for the district.

## **DETERMINATION**

Section 12.35.2 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that the Planning Board make a preliminary determination on a Development Proposal prior to holding a hearing to consider granting a special permit for a PUD Final Development Plan. The Planning Board may make a preliminary approval, potentially with conditions and subject to additional review and final approval of a special permit at a subsequent public hearing, or deny the application.

It is the Planning Board’s Determination to **APPROVE** the Development Proposal and to authorize the Applicant to prepare a Final Development Plan to be submitted to the Board and reviewed at a future public hearing for possible granting of a special permit.

The Final Development Plan must respond to the specific comments set forth in memoranda provided to the Planning Board by the Community Development Department, Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department, Department of Public Works and Historical Commission, attached to this Preliminary Determination. The Board offers its comments on the following topics in addition to the comments set forth by City staff.

The comments provided in this Preliminary Determination are shared with those in the Board’s Preliminary Determination regarding the “NoMa” PUD Proposal (PB #302).

### Site Planning and Design

- Develop a more coordinated pedestrian and bicycle circulation plan between “SoMa” and “NoMa” and with the broader Kendall Square neighborhood. Consider a more direct connection from “SoMa” to “NoMa” area.
- Provide clearer differentiation between public and private streets, and how each street will function, to understand effectiveness of proposed open space connectivity.
- Explore opportunities to extend or connect the public realm and open space to existing open space areas such as Memorial Drive (including the median and river side), Point Park, and the open space around the Sloan School.
- Consider connections between Point Park and Wadsworth Street (recommended in Connect Kendall Square plan).
- Provide detail on the design of Wadsworth Street, which is an important pedestrian/bicycle connection, but also provides double-sided loading/service access in the development proposal.
- Provide detail on the separation between Building Site 2 and E53, which seems to create a “pinch point.”
- Provide additional details on underground garage layout and connections between buildings, with a particular focus on how the single loading ramp will service “SoMa” buildings 3, 4, and 5. Discuss in context of other nearby MIT facilities, including “NoMa” proposal.
- Discuss how pedestrian circulation will occur from parking and bicycle parking facilities into building entrances. Consider how flows of people could animate the open space.
- Provide a long view of open space at back of buildings.

### Building Concept Design

- The proposal’s architectural character, building massing, and relationship to the public realm was a concern to several Board members. Consider how the proposed urban design approach responds to the urban context and creates a high-quality urban environment, and contributes to the character and vitality of Kendall Square.
- Cantilevered spaces are a concern. Spaces with building overhangs are often unpleasant, and it would be helpful to provide examples of successful spaces.
- Discuss ways in which the buildings are trying to look different and ways in which they are similar.
- Consider the scale and design of new buildings in the context of existing buildings, including the historic buildings being preserved and the former fire station (Kendall Hotel).
- Consider use of color in building designs.
- Provide a view of buildings from the Longfellow Bridge.
- Provide additional cross-sectional views of buildings along Main Street to provide a sense of scale.
- Provide a rendering showing skyline changes from Boston.
- Show tops of buildings (including mechanical systems and screening) in images and renderings. Consider strategies to minimize exposure of mechanical systems.

### Transportation

- Red Line issues are a concern for several Board members. Discuss further in the Final Development Plan and Project Review phase.
- Provide additional details for the proposed T head-house relocation with a realistic depiction of what improvements are proposed.
- Consider improvements to other T head-houses and access on Main St.

### Sustainability

- Review how the proposal will respond to Net Zero efforts that will soon be implemented by the city.
- Discuss how energy performance goals will be met with such a large use of glass in building facades.

### Open Space and Retail Programming

- Provide an operations and programming plan to ensure that open space and retail programs will cater to diverse age groups and visitors.

### Housing

- Discuss affordability of the proposed residential units and consider including middle income residential units to serve a diverse population and workforce needs.
- Consider including three-bedroom units.

Voting in the affirmative to approve the Development Proposal were Planning Board Members Louis Bacci, Jr., H Theodore Cohen, Steven Cohen, Mary Flynn, Hugh Russell, and Associate Members Ahmed Nur and Thacher Tiffany, constituting at least two thirds of the members of the Board.

For the Planning Board,



H Theodore Cohen, Chair.

A copy of this Preliminary Determination PB #303 shall be filed with the Office of the City Clerk.