

Case: PB #100

Premises: 655-659 Concord Ave.

Petitioner: Speros Gogos

Application Date: September 21, 1992

Public Hearing: October 13, 1992

Petition: Multifamily Special Permit to construct 32 dwelling units in an Office 2 District, Section 4.26.

Date of Planning Board Decision: October 20, 1992

Decision Filing Date: January 11, 1993

Decision (summary): GRANTED with conditions

**CONDITIONS:**

1) CDD staff shall review and approve design modifications.

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2) CDD shall certify to Superintendent of Buildings that final plans are in conformance with this Decision (metal finish material on upper floors is to be eliminated).

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS  
**PLANNING BOARD**

CITY HALL ANNEX, 57 INMAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02139

NOTICE OF DECISION

Case No.: #100  
Premises: 655 - 659 Concord Avenue  
Zoning District: Office 2  
Owner: Speros Gogos  
Application Date: September 21, 1992  
Date of Public Hearing: October 13, 1992  
Petition: MultiFamily Special Permit to construct 32 dwelling units in an Office 2 District, Section 4.26.  
Date of Planning Board Decision: October 20, 1992  
Date of filing the Decision: January 11, 1993  
Decision (summary): GRANTED with conditions.

Appeals, if any, shall be made pursuant to Section 17 of Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, and shall be filed within twenty (20) days after the date of filing of the above referenced decision with the City Clerk.

Copies of the complete decision and final plans, if applicable, are on file with the office of Community Development and the City Clerk.

*Elizabeth J. Malesfant*  
Authorized Representative to the Planning Board

1/11/93  
Date

## DECISION

Case No.: #100  
Premises: 655 - 659 Concord Avenue  
Zoning District: Office 2  
Owner: Speros Gogos  
Application Date: September 21, 1992  
Date of Public Hearing: October 13, 1992  
Petition: MultiFamily Special Permit to construct 32 dwelling units in an Office 2, Section 4.26.  
Date of Planning Board Decision: October 20, 1992  
Date of filing the Decision: January 11, 1993

### Application

#### Documents Submitted

1. Special Permit Application dated September 21, 1992.
2. Letter to the Planning Board from Jai Singh Khalsa, dated September 14, 1992, requesting that the application fee for the Planning Board Special Permit be waived since a fee had already paid for the Board of Zoning Appeal Variance request.
3. Site plan, elevations, and floor plans, showing the proposed development, scale 1" = 16'0", drawing numbered Z-1, titled "Concord Arms Residences", Khalsa Design Inc., Architects, dated 6/8/92.

#### Other Documents Submitted

1. Board of Zoning Appeal Case #6520: 653 - 655 - 659 Concord Avenue Decision, dated September 21, 1992.
2. Letter to the Planning Board from Rosalyn Gerstein, 651 Concord Avenue, dated August 31, 1992, outlining her concerns regarding the proposal.
3. Letter to the Planning Board from Rosalyn Gerstein, 651 Concord Avenue, dated October 18, 1992.

### Public Hearing

A public hearing was held on October 13, 1992. Jai Singh Khalsa, the applicant's architect, outlined the variances which had been approved by the Board of Zoning Appeal on August 13, 1992. He also presented a model of the proposed building and described the site to the Board. During this presentation the Planning Board requested that more information regarding the site be provided: specifically, the heights of the abutting buildings on Concord Avenue and the type and location of trees on the lot. The Board asked that photographs be taken to illustrate the present character of development in the area.

The Board asked for a response to the letter from Rosalyn Gerstein, the abutter. Mr. Khalsa, responded to issues raised in that letter; he indicated that specifically with regard to the setbacks from Ms. Gerstein's property, the garage portion of the project is set back from the side lot line by 6 feet with Ms. Gerstein's house set back from the lot line an additional six feet.

Two people spoke in support of the application. No one spoke in opposition to the application.

At the general business meeting of October 20, 1992, Mr. Khalsa presented the photographs taken along Concord Avenue. They prompted some discussion of the heights of existing and future buildings, streetscape, existing uses and possible future uses in the area. The Planning Board reviewed the locations of existing trees on the site.

There was extensive discussion of proposed materials. The architect outlined the proposal: red brick at the front and portions of the side of the building, a drive-it like material above the brick to the top where a standing seam metal. The balconies will be open metal finish is proposed. There was concern expressed over the drive-it material; Mr. Khalsa suggested that the technology has improved greatly and is now more durable.

Rosalyn Gerstein, 651 Concord Avenue, expressed concern and interest in the trees on the property and the preservation of those trees, whether a construction fence is to be provided, the nature of the proposed permanent fence, and any impacts on the water table at the site.

The architect indicated that the side yards would be used exclusively by those first floor occupants abutting the yard space. This would limit the amount of activity and noise abutting Ms. Gerstein's property.

The architect also agreed with the Planning Board suggestion to reduce the drop off driveway width from eighteen feet to twelve feet.

The additional floor area proposed (as a result of the application of the open space bonus) was discussed. The architect reviewed the history of the project as presented to the Board of Zoning Appeal indicating that the building had been much larger in previous versions. He indicated that the building in its current dimensions is appropriately proportioned for the scale of the street and existing and future surrounding buildings. The number of units is less than allowed and the floor area proposed would allow development of larger, more reasonably sized units.

### Findings

1. The Planning Board considers residential use a desirable one along Concord Avenue. The present proposal would advance that objective in a significant way. As this proposal will possibly be the first residential structure to be constructed it is important that the building establish a high standard of quality that can guide subsequent residential development.
2. The proposed building is consistent in scale with the newer commercial structures which have been built in the past decade under the current Office 2 District and Parkway Overlay District regulations. While out of scale with immediately abutting properties, Concord Avenue's frontage can be expected to evolve over time to more closely resemble this building in scale and massing. The building conforms to the requirements of the Parkway Overlay District and, with the variances granted by the Board of Zoning Appeal, conforms to the requirements of the Office 2 District.
3. The development will provide significant green space on the lot for the benefit of residents of the building as well as for the benefit of the general public. The applicant shall be required to save many of the large existing trees to the rear of the site and the large maple tree at the front of the site. The Board encourages the permittee to also save the 20" willow tree identified through the field survey which will be located within the area proposed to be filled close to the building foundation.
4. All parking will be located underground and not visible to the general public. The proposed drop off entry drive will be reduced from 18' to 12', thus reducing further the impact of auto use on the site.
5. The materials proposed for the building are generally acceptable to the Board. The introduction of the metal material at the top of the building, however, was of concern. The applicant is encouraged to explore simplification of the materials used, employing building detail rather than change of material to provide interest and variety. Alternatives to the metal finish on the upper floors should be proposed.

6. The Planning Board does not waive the application fee. That fee is intended to support administration of the application by the Planning Board and the Community Development Department staff which must take place regardless of any payment made to the Board of Zoning appeal for the required variances.

### Decision

After review of the application documents, testimony given at the public hearing, comments from the staff, and other information generally known by members of the Board, the Planning Board GRANTS the MultiFamily Special Permit as outlined in the application documents subject to the following conditions:

1. Final plans submitted to the Superintendent of Buildings for a building permit shall be in general conformance with the application plans referenced above except as they may be further modified by the following conditions. All dimensional aspects of those final plans shall conform to the dimensional limits outlined in Appendix I, as previously approved by the Board of Zoning Appeal.
2. Design modifications shall be subject to review and Approval by the Community Development Department. The Department shall certify to the Superintendent of Buildings that the final plans referenced in Condition #1 above are in conformance with all requirements of this Decision. The permittee shall substantially or completely eliminate the proposed metal finish material at the upper floors of the building consistent with comments made in Finding #5 above. Any final design which is not consistent with this Condition #2 shall require approval from the Planning Board before issuance of any building permit.
3. Every effort shall be made to permanently preserve the trees that currently exist on the lot. The large maple in the front of the lot shall be retained as shall the pine tree to the rear of the lot and other large trees along the rear property line. Those trees shall be suitably protected during construction to prevent injury. The permittee shall make every effort to preserve permanently the 20" willow tree located within the proposed fill area, adjacent to the underground parking structure to the rear of the building.
4. The driveway intended to permit passengers to be dropped off at the front door shall be reduced in width from eighteen feet to twelve feet.
5. The proposed permanent fence shall be modified in its first two segments such that the infill portion shall be opaque, with the objective of reducing the glare from automobile headlights that might be visible from the adjacent property.

6. There shall be maintained a construction fence surrounding the site at all times during the construction of the improvements on the site.

Voting to GRANT the Permit were: P. Dietrich, H. Russell, A. Cohn, A. Callaghan, H. Salemme, and V. Mathias. Voting to DENY the Permit was C. Mieth.

For the Planning Board,

*Paul E Dietrich (M)*

Paul Dietrich, Chairman

A copy of this decision shall be filed with the Office of the City Clerk. Appeals is any shall be made pursuant to Section 17, Chapter 40A, Massachusetts General Laws and shall be filed within twenty (20) days of such filing in the Office of the City Clerk.

ATTEST: A true and correct copy of the decision filed with the Office of the City Clerk on January 11, 1993 by Elizabeth J. Malenfant, authorized representative of the Cambridge Planning Board. All plans referenced in the decision have likewise been filed with the City Clerk on such date.

Twenty (20) days have elapsed since the filing of this decision. No Appeal has been filed.

City Clerk, City of Cambridge

Date

Dimensional Form

	<u>Allowed/Required</u>	<u>Existing</u>	<u>Proposed</u>	<u>Granted</u>
Floor Area Ratio (Floor Area)	2 (40,068)	0 ( 0 )	2.2 (44,000)	2.2 (44,000)
Max. Height	85	0	67	67
Max. Angle Above Cornice Line	60	0	60	60
Min. Lot Size	5,000	20,034	20,034	
Min. Lot Area per d.u.	600	0	626	
Max. No. d. u.	33	0	32	
Min. lot width	50	84	84	
Min. yard setbacks				
Front	26.5	0	26.5	
Side L	49	0	20	20
R	49	0	25	25
Rear	26.5	0	27 - 44	
Ratio Usable Open Space (Area)	15% (6010 )	100% ( )	50% (10,017)	( )
Off-Street Parking Minimum No. Spaces	32	0	32	
Maximum No. Spaces				
No. Handicapped Spaces	0	0	0	
Bicycle Spaces	16	0	16	
No. Loading Bays	0	0	0	