

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

NOTICE OF DECISION

Case No: 212
Address: 380 Green Street
Zoning: Business A
Applicant/Owner: Church in Cambridge Inc.
Application Date: April 7, 2006
Date of Planning Board Public Hearing: May 2, 2006
Date of Planning Board Decision: May 2, 2006
Date of Filing Planning Board Decision: May 11, 2006

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OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Application: Special Permit to convert a portion of the nonresidential church to 4 units of housing. Section 5.28.2.

Decision: 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 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 Community Development Department and the City Clerk.

Authorized Representative of the Planning Board:

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

Application Documents Submitted

1. Special Permit Application containing ownership certificate, fee schedule, dimensional form, existing building photos, site plan, architectural plans and renderings undated.
2. Drawings undated, various scales: Mortgage Inspection Plan date 6/29/95; Existing Conditions Map, C-1 Site Plan, A-4 First Floor Plan, A-3 Second Floor Plan, A-10 Building Section, A-2A Elevations, and E-2B Elevations.

Other Materials Submitted

1. Letter to Beth Rubenstein, Assistant City Manager for Community Development from Ronnie Watson, Police Commissioner, dated 4/18/06.
2. Memo to Liza Paden, Community Development staff from Sergeant James Crowley, Administrative Section of the Police Department, dated 4/28/06
3. Amended Parking and Landscaping plans submitted 4/24/06.
4. Central Square Advisory Committee Report with comments from P. Bruckner.
5. Amended plans and parking layout dated 5/2/06.

Findings

Based on its review of the application documents, supplemental materials, and other documents submitted to the Board, the Central Square Advisory Committee Report, testimony taken at the public hearing and submitted in written form to the Board, and the review and consideration of the relevant special permit criteria, the Planning Board makes the following findings:

1. Conformance to the Criteria for Approval of a Special Permit for Conversion of a Nonresidential Structure to a Residential Use - Sections 5.28.25 and 5.28.27 (1) and (2)

a. The impact on residential neighbors of the new housing uses as it may affect privacy. The location and size of windows, screening elements, decks, entries, and other aspects of the design shall be reviewed to maintain reasonable levels of privacy of abutters where significant variations from the normally required dimensional standards for the district are granted.

The new residential units will abut the blank wall at the Police Station, as well as a three story commercial building and a three story residential building. No new doors or windows will be created in this building for this use.

b. The impact of increased numbers of dwelling units above that normally permitted in the district, on street parking, particularly in neighborhoods where off-street parking is limited.

The number of units proposed is fewer than allowed in the Business A district. The parking spaces being provided are greater than the number required for the four units and the remaining church uses.

c. The amount of open space may be reduced if the Board finds that full compliance cannot reasonably be expected given existing development on the lot and the provision of parking.

The applicant will provide the required open space, suitably landscaped for the occupants' use.

II. Conformance to General Special Permit Criteria - Section 10.43

A special permit will normally be granted where specific provisions of this Ordinance are met, except when the 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. The requirements of the Zoning Ordinance cannot be met.

With the issuance of this special permit the project will meet the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance.

b. Traffic and patterns of access and egress will not cause hazard or congestion or change in neighborhood character.

The traffic generated by the four additional residential units will not cause a hazard or congestion in the Central Square neighborhood, an area well served by public transportation and a supply of public parking spaces. The applicant has responded to concerns of the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department to maintain passage through the site from Pleasant Street to Western Avenue to prevent backing up onto either street to exit the site.

c. The operation or development of adjacent uses will not be adversely affected.

The conversion of the existing buildings will not change the neighborhood character, which is mixed use.

d. No nuisance or hazard will be created to the detriment of the health, safety and welfare of future residents or citizens of Cambridge.

The project will comply with the applicable health, safety, and building code requirements. No hazard or nuisance will be created as a result of the introduction of residential uses onto the site or the increase in the number of units above that permitted in the Business A district.

e. The use will not impair the integrity of the District or adjoining districts or otherwise derogate from the intent and purpose of this Ordinance.

The creation of housing on a site like this is consistent with the intent of the Zoning Ordinance, and especially with the creation of Section 5.28.2, which encourages the reuse of existing nonresidential buildings for housing in all zoning districts.

f. The new use or building construction is consistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30.

The new use is consistent with those objectives as set forth below.

(i) Section 19.31. A new project should be responsive to the existing or the anticipated pattern of development.

The new units are consistent with abutting uses, a mixture of residential, office and retail in residential buildings.

(ii) Section 19.32: Development should be pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, with positive relationship to its surroundings.

The Central Square location and proximity to the public transportation encourages the use of public transportation as well as bicycles by the student population served by the Church in Cambridge. The improvements in landscaping that will be provided will enhance the pedestrian environment abutting Western Avenue and Pleasant Street.

(iii) Section 19.33: The building and site design should mitigate adverse environmental impacts of a development upon its neighbors.

The exterior of the existing building will not be change or altered and not impact its neighbors.

(iv) Section 19.34: The project should not overburden the city infrastructure services, including neighborhood roads, city water supply system and sewer system.

Four units in the Central Square Business District will not overburden the City's infrastructure.

(v) Section 19.35: New construction should reinforce and enhance the complex urban aspects of Cambridge as it has developed historically.

The proposed conversion creates four units of housing through the reuse of the existing structure that has long been a physical part of the neighborhood.

(vi) Section 19.36: Expansion of the inventory of housing in the city is encouraged.

Four 3-bedroom units will be constructed and enhance the City supply of larger family-sized units.

(vii) Section 19.37: Enhancement and expansion of open space amenities in the city should be incorporated into new development in the city.

The scale and density of the buildings on the site as well as the available parking do not leave a significant amount of land for the provision of large-scale open space amenities. The applicant has expressed willingness to engage a landscape architect to make further improvement to the pedestrian landscape by reconfiguring the parking spaces within the lot.

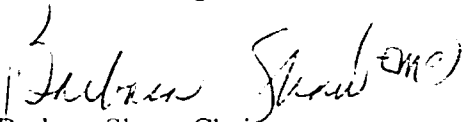
Decision

Based on a review of the application documents, comments made at the public hearing, the Central Square Advisory Committee Report and based on the above findings, the Planning Board **GRANTS** the requested Special Permit for Conversion – Section 5.28.2.

1. All use, building construction and site plan development shall be in substantial conformance with the plans and application documents submitted to the Planning Board as referenced above, as revised and updated on May 2, 2006. Appendix I summarizes the dimensional features of the Project as approved.
2. The project shall be subject to continuing design review by the Community Development Department (CDD) for coordination of the landscaping of the parking lot. Before issuance of the Building Permit for the project, the CDD shall certify to the Superintendent of Buildings that the final plans submitted to secure the Building Permit are consistent with and meet all conditions of this Permit.
3. All authorized development shall conform to the requirements of the City of Cambridge *Noise Control Ordinance*, Chapter 8.16 of the City Municipal Code.

Voting in the Affirmative to **GRANT** the Special Permit were B. Shaw, H. Russell, P. Winters, T. Anninger, T. Carpenter, J. Molinski, and A. Finlayson, associate member appointed by the Chair to act on this matter, constituting at least two thirds of the members of the Planning Board necessary to grant a Special Permit.

For the Planning Board


Barbara Shaw, Chair

A copy of this decision #212 shall be filed with the Office of the City Clerk. Appeals, if any, shall be made pursuant to Section 17, Chapter 40A, Massachusetts General Laws, and shall be filed within twenty (20) days after the date of such filing in the Office of the City Clerk.

ATTEST: A true and correct copy of the above decision filed with the Office of the City Clerk on May 11, 2006, by Elizabeth M. Paden, authorized representative of the Cambridge Planning Board. All plans referred to in the decision have been filed with the City Clerk on said date.

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

DATE:

City Clerk of Cambridge

Appendix I – Dimensional Form

Special Permit # 213 **Address:** 380 Green Street

	Allowed/Required	Existing	Proposed	Granted
Total FAR				
Residential	1.75		1.02	1.02
Non-Residential		1.92		
Inclusionary Bonus				
Total GFA in Sq. Ft.				
Residential	19,705		7,125	7,145
Non-Residential		11,474	4,329	4,329
Inclusionary Bonus				
Max. Height				
Range of heights	45	32	32	32
Lot Size	5,000	11,260	11,260	11,260
Lot area/du	600	2815	2815	2815
Total Dwelling Units				
Base units	12	0	4	4
Inclusionary units				
Min. Lot Width	50	47	47	47
Min. Yard Setbacks				
Front	18	27	27	27
Side, Left	15	0	0	0
Side, Right	15	4	4	4
Rear	18	40	40	40
Total % Open Space				
Usable	1689	200	1690	1690
Other				
Off Street Parking				
Min #	4	13	15	15
Max #	15			
Handicapped				
Bicycle Spaces	0	0	4	4
Loading Bays	0	0	0	0