



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: October 8, 2019

Re: Special Permit **PB #22, 16 James Way**

IRAM FAROOQ
*Assistant City Manager for
Community Development*

SANDRA CLARKE
*Deputy Director
Chief of Administration*

KHALIL MOGASSABI
*Deputy Director
Chief of Planning*

This memo contains an overview of the of the proposed project at 16 James Way, the special permits being requested, and related comments.

Summary of Proposal

The applicant is proposing to modify the existing townhouse with a conforming addition to the existing structure and to continue using it as a single family residence. As shown in the application documents, the existing section is connected to the proposed addition in the first floor, but not at the second and third floors.

Requested Special Permits

The project is located in the Residence C-1 District and was granted a Townhouse Special Permit in 1982 and two subsequent amendments (attached). The Applicant seeks a special permit for a modification to the plans not enumerated in the original special permit, per Section 11.15b of the Zoning Ordinance. Applicable sections of the zoning are provided in an appendix.

The proposal remains within the allowable gross floor area (GFA) for the Residence C-1 zone. The total GFA allowed on the lot is 3,659 square feet and this unit is proposed to be expanded from existing 1,258 square feet to 2,210 square feet with the addition. If the Planning Board grants the requested special permit amendment, the development will remain subject to zoning compliance review by the Inspectional Services Department.

Comments on Proposal

The site is located in the Residence C-1 District and was part of a 54-unit Cambridge Redevelopment Authority development in the Wellington-Harrington neighborhood. The development abuts the Grand Junction corridor to the east. The original special permit and amendments approved the site plan and arrangement of townhouse units, and includes conditions pertaining to tree protection, landscaping, perimeter fencing, parking, and vehicular circulation on the site.

The extension is designed to match the existing siding materials and color, and uses a similar window style. No new parking would be created, and the landscape treatment of the remaining open space on the site appears relatively unchanged.

Requested Special Permits	Summarized Findings <i>(see appendix for zoning text excerpts)</i>
Townhouses and multifamily dwellings (Section 10.47.4)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key features of natural landscape are preserved. • New buildings relate sensitively to existing built environment. • Open space provides visual benefits to abutters and passersby and functional benefits to occupants. • Parking, access and egress are safe and convenient. • Intrusion of onsite parking is minimized. • Services such as trash collection and utility boxes are convenient yet unobtrusive. <p>(See full text in appendix)</p>
General special permit criteria (Section 10.43)	<p>Special permits will be normally granted if the zoning requirements are met, unless it is found not to be in the public interest because the proposal would (unlike uses or development otherwise allowed in the district) either:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • not comply with the Zoning Ordinance; • cause traffic congestion, hazard, or substantial change in established character; • adversely affect the continued operation or development of adjacent uses; • create nuisance or hazard to the detriment of health, safety and/or welfare; • impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district or otherwise derogate from the intent and purpose of the Zoning Ordinance; or • be inconsistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30. <p>(See full text in appendix.)</p>

The proposed addition appears to meet all dimensional requirements of the district. Although it is characterized as an addition to the existing townhouse unit, it is a substantial increase compared to the existing building. The addition includes two bedrooms, one bathroom, a study, a “sitting area,” and a “wet bar” (which is presumed to include fixtures that could accommodate kitchen appliances in the future). It also contains a separate front entryway and landing, and is only connected to the existing unit by way of a door opening on the first floor (though no door is shown). The expanded features suggest a potential change from one-household occupancy to two-household occupancy. The zoning for the site would allow an additional dwelling unit, but would require an amendment to the special permit and additional off-street parking (or a special permit for relief from parking requirements).



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD

HALL ANNEX, 57 INMAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02139

Notice of Decision

(summary)

In reference to the petition of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority/Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation/Wellington-Harrington Housing Associates, Inc., for a Special Permit for Townhouse Development at 288-366 Portland Street, the petition has been GRANTED by the Planning Board with the following conditions:

1. The development is approved for sixty-two (62) townhouse units as shown on the revised site plan dated 1/5/82, except as modified below.
2. The petitioners shall continue to investigate possible alternatives for providing access to the units along the southern property line without damage to the existing stand of Linden's. The petitioner shall produce written assurance from a landscape architect or tree specialist that the proposed driveway and service line construction will not cause irreparable damage to the trees proposed to be retained.
3. The petitioners shall provide a detailed landscape plan of the entire site showing the location, size and types of trees, grass, ground cover and/or shrubs and any non-living durable landscape materials proposed. This plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Community Development Department prior to issuance of a building permit.
4. The perimeter fencing along the south, east and north boundary shall provide a safe and secure buffer from the adjacent non-residential uses. This fencing may be quality chainlink with vinyl coating of a neutral color such as green; use of higher quality fencing is encouraged and preferred. Where chainlink fencing is used a landscaped screen of vines, shrubs and/or coniferous trees shall be planted along the fencing so as to soften its effect.

5. Fencing along the Portland Street property line shall be either wooden, cast iron, or other fencing of comparable quality and shall not exceed a maximum height of three (3) feet. The maximum height of this fencing, within ten (10) feet of any driveway or curbcut, shall not exceed two (2) feet.
6. The fencing along proposed property lines within the development site shall be wooden, in general form as indicated in the submitted plans, and shall not exceed a maximum height of six (6) feet.
7. The width of the proposed drives shall be a minimum of twenty (20) feet.
8. All parallel parking along the proposed drives shall be restricted to one side to ensure safe and convenient access.
9. Revised Final Development Plans and documents shall be submitted to the Community Development Department reflecting all conditions of this Decision prior to the issuance of any building permit. The Community Development Department shall provide written certification that such plans comply with the conditions of this decision.
10. All of the preceding orders and all conditions claimed within this Special Permit may be assigned to Wellington-Harrington Housing Associates, Inc. and any succeeding owner of said property.

A copy of the complete decision and final plans have been filed with the office of the City Clerk on January 28, 1982. 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 filing of the complete decision.

Elizabeth R. McCarthy
Secretary to the Planning Board



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 57 INMAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02139

CASE NO.: PB #22
PREMISES: 288-366 Portland Street
ZONING DISTRICT: Residence C-1
PETITIONER: Cambridge Redevelopment Authority/Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation/Wellington-Harrington Housing Associates, Inc.
APPLICATION DATE: December 17, 1981
PUBLIC HEARING DATE: January 5, 1982
PETITION: Townhouse Special Permit for 71 dwelling units, Sections 11.10 and 4.26 of the Zoning Ordinance.
DATE OF PLANNING BOARD DECISION: January 5, 1982

APPLICATION

The following documents were submitted by the applicant in support of the petition.

1. Special Permit Application, Townhouse Development; Linden Park Homes, 288-366 Portland Street; Cambridge Redevelopment Authority; Joseph F. Tulumieri, authorized representative; submitted to the Community Development Department December 14, 1981.
2. Special Permit Application, Multi-family Development; Linden Park Homes; Cambridge Redevelopment Authority; Joseph F. Tulumieri, authorized representative; submitted to the Community Development Department December 14, 1981.
3. Three copies of plans and elevations drawn by R. D. Fanning Architects, Inc., Boston, MA 02108, dated December 14, 1981.
4. Three copies of revised plans and elevations drawn by R. D. Fanning Architect, Inc., Boston, MA 02108, dated January 5, 1982 and submitted at the January 5, 1982 public hearing.
5. Letter, dated January 5, 1982, from Richard D. Fanning, Architect outlining the revisions made to the original plans of December 14, 1981 as shown in the plans of January 5, 1982. Attached to the January 5, 1982 letter was a revised quantitative data sheet and six pages of floor plans of the various building types proposed.

The following additional documents were presented to the Planning Board for their consideration.

Documents

1. Letter, dated January 7, 1982 from Lauren M. Preston, Traffic Engineer, Department of Traffic and Parking, summarizing his comments and suggested revisions to the plans.
2. Letter, dated January 5, 1982, from James Bentubo, Chairman of the Wellington-Harrington Citizens Committee, stating their endorsement and recommendation for approval of the special permit.
3. Staff review, dated December 30, 1981, summarizing the proposed development and major issues of concern.

PUBLIC HEARING

A public hearing was held, in accordance with the requirements of Chapter 40A, Section 11 of the MGL's, on January 5, 1982 in the Conference Room, Cambridge Community Development Department, 57 Inman Street.

Applicant

Mr. Joseph Youngworth, Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, introduced himself and Mr. James Bentubo, Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation, co-applicant in this development proposal. Mr. Bentubo explained the history of the recent rezoning of this parcel from an Industrial district to a Residence C-1 district and informed the Board that the Residence C-1A rezoning proposal which would have required a certain amount of low/moderate-income housing had not been passed by Council. A private agreement between the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority and Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation has been arranged to provide 20 to 30% low/moderate-income housing. Mr. Bentubo stated that the timing for completing the special permit review process was crucial based on funding requirements set up by HUD.

Robert Gunderson, attorney for the Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation, stated that they had submitted applications under both the multi-family and townhouse sections since at the time of filing they were uncertain as to which option they would choose. Mr. Gunderson requested that the application for multi-family housing be withdrawn at this time. Mr. Gunderson also informed the Board that he and Mr. Fanning, the project architect, had met with the Community Development staff to discuss the project and that he was submitting new plans with revisions as suggested by the staff at that earlier meeting.

Mr. Richard Fanning, project architect, presented the new plans and a revised data sheet reflecting all of the changes made. These changes included a reduction in the number of units from 71 to 62, an increase in lot widths from 20 feet to 23 feet, treatment of the units along Portland Street with bay windows and walks, and information as to proposed landscaping. Mr. Fanning also stated that the units will be

owned through a fee simple arrangement and are typical box type manufactured homes. The prices are expected to be approximately \$23 per square foot; this does not include land or service costs. In response to questions as to why the southern most drive wasn't moved to protect the existing stand of Linden trees, as suggested by the staff, Mr. Fanning stated that there are several reasons for leaving the drive as proposed. These are listed in a letter dated January 5, 1982, and include inconvenience to residents and drivers who might mistakenly enter the drive if it were aligned with York Place.

There were no questions or comments by citizens attending the hearing.

PLANNING BOARD FINDINGS

1. In accordance with the requirements of subsection 10.43 of the zoning ordinance criteria for the granting of a special permit, the Board finds that:
 - a. The proposal has no zoning violations.
 - b. Traffic generation and the pattern of access and egress will not cause congestion hazard or a substantial change in the neighborhood. To ensure that access and egress will be safe and convenient, the entrances should be a minimum of twenty (20) feet wide as suggested by the Traffic Department.
 - c. The proposed residential use is compatible with and will not adversely affect existing or allowed uses in the district. The proposed use reflects the wishes of the neighborhood and the City as mandated by the recent rezoning of this area from industrial to residential use.
 - d. The proposed development will provide substantial benefits to the future occupants of the development and the citizens of the City. The development offers housing opportunities to people of low- and moderate-income levels who otherwise cannot afford housing in the open market.
 - e. The proposed development conforms to the intent and purpose of the zoning ordinance for this district, as noted in paragraph c above.
 - f. The Board is concerned over the proposed landscaping and screening on the site, specifically with the lack of information submitted to date.
2. In accordance with subsection 10.474 of the zoning ordinance, criteria for approval of townhouses, the Board finds that:

- a. The only natural feature on the site is the stand of large Linden trees located on the southwestern edge along Portland Street. The Board finds this stand of Lindens to be a natural amenity worth preserving and protecting.
- b. The proposed buildings along Portland Street, as shown in the revised plans, dated January 5, 1982, reflect a sensitive awareness to the existing residences across Portland Street. The location, orientation and massing of all the townhouse units will allow and encourage the use of passive solar energy.
- c. The proposed open space is located and arranged so as to provide usable space to each individual occupant, as well as a visual benefit to those travelling along Portland Street.
- d. The proposed 62 parking spaces will be provided on-site in front of each respective unit. An additional 17 spaces will be located along one side of the proposed drives, parallel to the units. The Board finds the amount of parking sufficient but is concerned that the parallel parking arrangement of the excess spaces will severely restrict the maneuvering room of cars backing out onto the proposed drive.
- e. The petitioner states that trash pick-up will be by City agency or private company through a home ownership association, in which membership will be obligatory.

PLANNING BOARD DECISION

After consideration and review of the information and plans submitted by the applicant, discussion by the Board and staff, the Planning Board by a unanimous vote grants a special permit for the construction of sixty-two (62) townhouse units as detailed in the application and plans, as modified, with the following conditions:

1. The general location, size and number of buildings and other development features shall remain as indicated in the modified site plan, dated January 5, 1982, as filed with this decision dated January 1982, except as modified below.
2. The petitioners shall continue to investigate possible alternatives for providing access to the units along the southern property line without damage to the existing stand of Linden's. The petition shall produce written assurance from a landscape architect or tree specialist that the proposed driveway and service line construction will not cause irreparable damage to the trees proposed to be retained.
3. The petitioners shall provide a detailed landscape plan of the entire site showing the location, size and types of trees, grass, ground cover and/or shrubs and any non-living durable landscape materials proposed. This plan shall be submitted to and approved by the Community Development Department prior to issuance of a building permit.

4. The perimeter fencing along the south, east and north boundary shall provide a safe and secure buffer from the adjacent non-residential uses. This fencing may be quality chainlink with vinyl coating of a neutral color such as green; use of higher quality fencing is encouraged and preferred. Where chainlink fencing is used a landscaped screen of vines, shrubs and/or coniferous trees shall be planted along the fencing so as to soften its effect.
5. Fencing along the Portland Street property line shall be either wooden, cast iron, or other fencing of comparable quality and shall not exceed a maximum height of three (3) feet. The maximum height of this fencing, within ten (10) feet of any driveway or curbcut, shall not exceed two (2) feet.
6. The fencing along proposed property lines within the development site shall be wooden, in general form as indicated in the submitted plans, and shall not exceed a maximum height of six (6) feet.
7. The width of the proposed drives shall be a minimum of twenty (20) feet.
8. All parallel parking along the proposed drives shall be restricted to one side to ensure safe and convenient access.
9. Revised Final Development Plans and documents shall be submitted to the Community Development Department reflecting all conditions of this Decision prior to the issuance of any building permit. The Community Development Department shall provide written certification that such plans comply with the conditions of this decision.
10. All of the preceding orders and all conditions claimed within this Special Permit may be assigned to Wellington-Harrington Housing Associates, Inc. and any succeeding owner of said property.

Respectfully submitted,

For the Planning Board

Arthur C. Parris
Chairman

ATTEST: A true and correct copy of the decision filed with the Office of the City Clerk on _____, by _____, authorized representative of the Cambridge Planning Board.

Twenty days have elapsed since the date of filing this decision. No appeal has been filed _____.
Appeal filed and dismissed or denied _____.

Date: _____
City Clerk, City of Cambridge



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 57 INMAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02139

CASE NO: PB #22

PREMISES: 288-366 Portland Street

PETITIONER: Cambridge Redevelopment Authority/Wellington-Harrington
Development Corporation/Wellington-Harrington Housing
Associates, Inc.

DATE OF PLANNING BOARD DECISION: January 5, 1982

DATE OF APPROVAL, MINOR MODIFICATIONS: March 30, 1982

Documents:

1. Site Plan #3, street no. x-1, dated 3/30/82, R. D. Fanning Architects Inc./Wellington-Harrington Development Corporation.
2. Roadway Construction Plan, dated February 1982, prepared by Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, Inc. Engineers, Boston, Mass.
3. Letter dated March 30, 1982 from Lauren M. Preston, Traffic Engineer, Department of Traffic and Parking summarizing his comments and suggested modifications to the revised plans.

Minor Modifications:

At a Planning Board meeting on March 30, 1982, the applicant sought permission from the Board to make minor modifications to their earlier approved Townhouse Special Permit (PB #22). These modifications include the following:

1. A reduction from 62 units to 54 units, and
2. Redesign of the street system within the site from three dead-end streets to a connecting street system.

Mr. Joseph Youngworth, CRA, presented the modified plans to the Board and explained that HUD subdivision requirements mandate a connecting street system and since the streets are to become public ways, City standards must be met. These standards require wider sidewalks, higher curbs and an increased radius at the Portland Street entrances.

The increased radius at the most southerly entrance results in the removal of another Linden tree. The original proposal removed two trees.

The reduction from 6² to 5⁷ units is being proposed by the Development Corporation in order to create a more pleasant living environment. The modified proposal eliminates the "barracks" like atmosphere created by rows of attached units.

There was some discussion as to whether a one-way or two-way street system would be most appropriate. Mr. Youngworth stated that the Traffic Department preferred a two-way system with no on-street parking. The Community Development Department indicated that a one-way system with parking on one side would be adequate. The Board determined that either system would be suitable since the streets serve only those within the site.

Findings:

The proposed modifications are minor and will not substantially alter the general design as approved on January 5, 1982.


Decision:

The Planning Board, by a unanimous vote, grants approval of the proposed modifications to the Linden Park Homes Development Plans (PB #22), by reducing the total number of townhouse units from 62 to 54 and redesigning of the roadway system within the site as illustrated in the revised site plans as submitted with the following condition:

- All conditions of the Special Permit issued on January 5, 1982 must be met, except condition number 1 which is superceded by this order.

Respectfully submitted,

For the Planning Board


Arthur C. Parris
Chairman



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 57 INMAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02139

Amendment to Decision and Certification

Case No: PB #22

Premises: 288-366 Portland Street

Date of Original Decision: January 5, 1982

Date of this Minor Modification: June 7, 1983

Requested Modifications and Certification:

1. The Applicants request permission to substitute a wood fence (consisting of solid boards stained an earthtone) for the required vinyl coated chainlink specified in Condition No. 4 of the original Decision. The wood fence would be substituted along the east boundary of the development site (bordering the railroad right of way) and, at the option of the developer/owner, would be substituted for the chainlink fence along the north and south boundaries of the development site.
2. The Applicants request permission to increase the setback for the unit on Lot No.32 from twenty-eight (28") feet to thirty-three (33') feet from the back of the public sidewalk (the front lot line) in order to provide more visual variety to the frontage of this duplex building.
3. The Applicants request approval to record with the Registry of Deeds and to file with the Land Court the final townhouse subdivision plan entitled, "Subdivision Plan, Linden Park Homes, Cambridge Massachusetts," prepared by Charles F. Arnold, R.L.S., dated September 14, 1982, and consisting of Sheets 1 and 2.
4. The Applicants request approval of the front yard, side yard and rear yard dimensions as shown on the plan entitled, "Linden Park Homes, Foundation Layout Plan," prepared by Fay, Spofford & Thorndike, Inc., Engineers, dated September, 1982, and revised March 15, 1983.

Findings:

The Board finds that the revised plans contain minor modifications and are generally consistent with the intent of the original site design and layout plan as approved by the Board on January 5, 1982.

Therefore, by a unanimous vote of five members, the Board hereby approves the requested minor modifications and certification.

For the Planning Board



Arthur C. Parris
Chairman