



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

# PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

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FILED BY THE CITY CLERK  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

## NOTICE OF DECISION

Case Number:	257
Address:	75 Ames Street
Zoning:	Mixed Use Development District: Cambridge Center (MXD); Ames Street District
Applicant:	The Board Institute, Inc. 415 Main Street, Cambridge, MA 02142
Owner:	West Parcel Condominium 75-77 Ames Street, Cambridge, MA
Application Date:	October 11, 2022
Date of Planning Board Public Hearing:	October 25, 2022
Date of Planning Board Decision:	October 25, 2022
Date of Filing Planning Board Decision:	November 22, 2022

Application: Amendment to Special Permit Decision granted on May 3, 2011 for adding an additional 14,000 GFA for offices and meeting spaces on Floor M1 to the existing 250,000 GFA for a total of 264,000 GFA (5.6% increase) and approving the design pursuant to Project Review Special Permit (Section 19.20, but excluding 19.21.1, as per Section 14.32.4), with no other changes proposed.

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: Swaathi Joseph

For further information concerning this decision, please contact Swaathi Joseph at 617-349-4668, or [sjoseph@cambridgema.gov](mailto:sjoseph@cambridgema.gov).

## **DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED**

### Application Documents and Supporting Material

1. Special Permit Amendment Application dated 9/22/2022, containing *inter alia*, the Special Permit Cover Sheet, Dimensional Form, Ownership Certificate, Community Outreach Summary, Fee Schedule, Zoning Compliance Narrative, Redevelopment Entitlement Agreement and plan set titled Broad Institute – Stanley Building prepared by Ellenzweig.

### Other Documents

2. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Community Development Department staff, dated 10/19/2022.

## **APPLICATION SUMMARY**

The Planning Board previously granted a Project Review Special Permit in 2011. In 2015, the zoning was amended to explicitly permit the addition of 14,000 square feet of GFA as an internal modification at 75 Ames Street. The applicant now proposes to modify an existing mechanical space (M1) located one story above the 11<sup>th</sup> floor at this site. This space includes a new laboratory and office facility that increases the existing GFA by 14,000 square feet. Modifications to the building's exterior include the replacement of existing louvers with new windows on three facades. The Application additionally includes 16 new short-term bicycle parking spaces.

## FINDINGS

After review of the amendment Application Documents and other documents submitted to the Planning Board, testimony given at the public hearing, and review and consideration of the applicable requirements and criteria set forth in the Zoning Ordinance with regard to the relief being sought, the Planning Board makes the following Findings.

Development on the site is governed by the regulations of the Mixed Use Development District: Cambridge Center (MXD), set forth in Article 14.000 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. According to Section 19.22, the Project Review Special Permit is not generally applicable in the MXD District; however, the following is set forth in Section 14.32.4:

*... notwithstanding the provisions of Section 19.22(1), any development within the area designated on the Zoning Map as the “Ames Street District” utilizing the 2010 Additional GFA under Section 14.32.3(2) above shall be subject to the provisions of Section 19.20-Project Review Special Permit, with the exception of Section 19.21.1.*

The proposed development occurs within the “Ames Street District” and utilizes the referenced “2010 Additional GFA” as further modified in 2015, which is specified for non-residential use. Therefore, the proposed amendment is subject to the provisions of the Project Review Special Permit, excluding 19.21.1.

### 1. Project Review Special Permit (19.20), excluding 19.21.1

*(19.25.2) Urban Design Findings. The Planning Board shall grant the special permit only if it finds that the project is consistent with the urban design objectives of the city as set forth in Section 19.30. In making that determination the Board may be guided by or make reference to urban design guidelines or planning reports that may have been developed for specific areas of the city and shall apply the standards herein contained in a reasonable manner to nonprofit religious and educational organizations in light of the special circumstances applicable to nonprofit religious and educational activities.*

The Board finds that the proposed amendment is consistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30, by reference to the narrative set forth in the Special Permit Application.

*(19.31) New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.*

*(19.32) Development should be pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, with a positive relationship to its surroundings.*

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

*(19.34) Projects should not overburden the City infrastructure services, including neighborhood roads, city water supply system, and sewer system.*

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

*(19.36) Expansion of the inventory of housing in the city is encouraged.*

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

The proposed exterior changes are relatively minor and do not substantively change the urban design character of the existing project. These proposed minor changes will however have a positive impact on the public realm. Fewer mechanical louvers will be visible on the building façades, which improves the overall appearance of the project. The proposed new windows – glass, mullions, and metal panel – are designed to match the existing fenestration and will fill the existing façade openings. Additionally, the installation of 16 new short-term bicycle parking spaces will further enhance the public realm and bicycle infrastructure for the area.

2. General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit (10.43)

The Planning Board finds that the amendment meets the General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit, as set forth below.

*10.43 Criteria. Special permits will normally be granted where specific provisions of this Ordinance are met, except when 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) It appears that requirements of this Ordinance cannot or will not be met, or ...*

The proposed project meets the applicable zoning requirements in the MXD District, as they were amended in 2015. The approval by the Planning Board of an Infill Development Concept Plan (PB-315) in accordance with Section 14.32.2 of the Zoning Ordinance authorized an increase in the GFA of this site by 14,000 square feet.

*(b) traffic generated or patterns of access or egress would cause congestion, hazard, or substantial change in established neighborhood character, or ...*

Traffic patterns will not substantially change due to this minor increase in GFA.

*(c) the continued operation of or the development of adjacent uses as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance would be adversely affected by the nature of the proposed use, or ...*

Adjacent parcels include office, lab, research, hotel, retail, and parking uses. The addition of the proposed 14,000 square feet of laboratory and office facility uses further drives activity and supports the mixed use nature of the area.

- (d) nuisance or hazard would be created to the detriment of the health, safety and/or welfare of the occupant of the proposed use or the citizens of the City, or ...*

The newly proposed internal addition will be designed in conformance with the latest edition of the state building code and operated in compliance with all health and safety regulations of the City of Cambridge.

- (e) for other reasons, the proposed use would impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district, or otherwise derogate from the intent and purpose of this Ordinance, and ...*

The proposed use is consistent with the intent and purpose of the Mixed Use Development District as set forth in the Zoning Ordinance.

- (f) the new use or building construction is inconsistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30.*

The proposed building modifications are consistent with the Urban Design Objectives, as set forth above in these Findings.

## DECISION

Based on a review of the Application Documents, testimony given at the public hearing, and the above Findings, the Planning Board hereby GRANTS the requested amendment to a Special Permit subject to the following conditions and limitations. Hereinafter, for purposes of this Decision, the Permittee shall mean the Applicant for the requested Special Permit and any successor or successors in interest.

1. The project shall continue to be subject to the all Conditions set forth in the original Special Permit Decision (PB-257) dated May 3, 2011.
2. All use and building construction shall be in substantial conformance with the Special Permit Amendment Application dated 9/22/2022, plan set titled Broad Institute – Stanley Building prepared by Ellenzweig. Appendix I summarizes the dimensional features of the project as approved.
3. The project shall be subject to continuing design review by the Community Development Department (CDD). Before issuance of a Building Permit for the project, 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 Decision. As part of CDD’s administrative review of the project, and prior to any certification to the Superintendent of Buildings, CDD may present any design changes made subsequent to this Decision to the Planning Board for its review and comment.
4. The Permittee shall address the following comments through the continuing design review process set forth above. Each of the below items shall be subject to CDD review and approval of the final design details prior to issuance of a Building Permit:
  - a. Construction details.
  - b. Material samples of exterior features.
5. The Permittee shall be required to prepare and implement a Construction Management Program in accordance with Section 18.20 of the Zoning Ordinance, which shall be reviewed and certified by TP&T and DPW prior to issuance of a Building Permit for development authorized by this Special Permit.
6. All authorized development shall abide by all applicable City of Cambridge Ordinances, including the Noise Ordinance (Chapter 8.16 of the City Municipal Code).

Voting in the affirmative to GRANT the Special Permits were Planning Board Members Louis Bacci, Jr., Steven Cohen, Catherine Preston Connolly, Mary Flynn, Hugh Russell, and Associate Member Ashley Tan, appointed by the Chair to act on the case, constituting at least two thirds of the members of the Board, necessary to grant a special permit.

For the Planning Board,



Catherine Preston Connolly, Chair

A copy of this decision PB-257 Amendment 1 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 accurate copy of the above decision has been filed on November 22, 2022 with the Office of the City Clerk by Swaathi Joseph, duly authorized representative of the Planning Board. All plans referred to in the decision have been filed with the City Clerk on said date.

Twenty days have elapsed since the above decision was filed in the office of the City Clerk and:  
\_\_\_\_\_ no appeal has been filed; or

\_\_\_\_\_ an appeal has been filed within such twenty days.

The person exercising rights under a duly appealed special permit does so at risk that a court will reverse the permit and that any construction performed under the permit may be ordered undone. This certification shall in no event terminate or shorten the tolling, during the pendency of any appeals, of the periods provided under the second paragraph of G.L. c. 40A, §6.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, City Clerk

Appeal has been dismissed or denied.

Date: \_\_\_\_\_, City Clerk

**Appendix I: Approved Dimensional Chart**

	Existing	Allowed or Required	Proposed	Permitted
Lot Area (sq ft)	66,599	No minimum	66,599	No Change
Total GFA (sq ft)	250,000	See below (1)	264,000	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Residential Base	0	0	0	
Non-Residential Base	250,000	See below (1)	264,000	
Inclusionary Bonus	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Total FAR	3.76	See below (1)	3.96	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Residential Base	0	0	0	
Non-Residential Base	3.76	See below (1)	3.96	
Inclusionary Bonus	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Lot Width (ft)	Not applicable	No minimum	No change	No Change
Height (ft)	211.5	250 max	211.5	No Change
Front Setback (ft)	Not applicable	None required	No change	
Side Setback – Left (ft)	Not applicable	None required	No change	
Side Setback – Right (ft)	Not applicable	None required	No change	
Rear Setback (ft)	Not applicable	None required	No change	
Open Space (sq ft)	18,058	12,557 min (2)	18,058	No Change
Private Open Space	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Permeable Open Space	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	
Off-Street Parking Spaces	250	125 min	250	No Change
Handicapped Parking Spaces	16	Not applicable	No change	
Bicycle Spaces	168	Not applicable	No change	
Loading Bays	3	3	3	

(1) Allowed Gross Floor Area is determined cumulatively under the regulations of Section 14.30.

(2) Calculated for the lot as per the regulations of Section 14.40.