



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

# PLANNING BOARD

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CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

## NOTICE OF DECISION

Case Number:	258
Address:	119-135 Harvey Street
Zoning:	Special District 2
Applicant:	Young Investments, LLC, 477 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138
Owner:	Young Investments, LLC, 477 Concord Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02138
Application Date:	March 7, 2011
Date of Planning Board Public Hearing:	May 3, 2011
Date of Planning Board Decision:	September 6, 2011
Date of Filing Planning Board Decision:	September 20, 2011
Application:	The Applicant seeks special permits to construct 20 units of housing and 29 accessory parking spaces pursuant to Sections 11.10 Townhouse Regulations and 17.23.1 Multifamily Use
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](mailto:lpaden@cambridgema.gov).

## **DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED**

### Application Documents and Supporting Material

Special Permit application filed with the City Clerk's Office, June 28, 2011, dimensional form, project narrative, ownership certificate, architectural plan set dated 3/7/11, consisting of building elevations and perspectives, typical floor plans, site photos, solar studies and cross sections; Preliminary landscape plan by Blair Hines Design Associates, dated 3/7/11.

Revised plans dated 6/22/11, containing landscaping, grading, elevations and floor plans as listed on the cover sheet A-0.

Revised plans dated 8/30/11, containing landscaping, grading, elevations and floor plans as listed on the cover sheet A-0.

Revised plans dated 9/2/11, containing landscaping L-1, grading L-02 and units 18-20 floor plans and elevations U-18-20.

Tree study by Blair Hines Design Associates, dated 3/31/11.

Preliminary Drainage Summary, dated 4/19/11

Leed Compliance Narrative, dated 3/30/11.

### Other Documents

Letter to the Planning Board from Charles Teauge, dated 4/28/11

Letter to the Planning Board from the Cambridge Bicycle and Pedestrian Committees, dated 4/29/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Michael O'Shea, et al, dated 5/1/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Lisa Gould, dated 5/3/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Jen Feinstein, dated 5/2/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Amelia Westmark, et al, dated 5/2/11

Email to the Planning Board from Richard Clarey, undated

Email to the Planning Board from Marcy Wasilewski, dated 4/27/11

Email to the Planning Board from Susan Miller-Havens, dated 4/27/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Terrance P. Morris, dated 6/22/11

Email to the Community Development Staff from the Planning Board dated 6/18/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Terrence P. Morris, dated 6/28/11, requesting an extension to be heard by the full board.

Report to the Historical Commission, from Charles M. Sullivan, Executive Director and Sarah L. Burks, Preservation Planner of the Cambridge Historical Commission dated 7/29/11

Development Team Response to the Planning Board comments, dated 7/29/11

Revised Special Permit submittal, dated 9/2/11; updated project description, updated dimensional form, plans and elevations: Sheet L-1; L-02; and U-18-20 dated 8/30/11

Submittal by C. Teague dated 9/6/11

Letter to the Planning Board from McNamara Buck, dated 9/5/11

Letter to Brian Murphy from Owen O’Riordon dated 8/4/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Mayor David P. Maher, dated 8/4/11

Petition from abutters to Harvey Street dated 7/19/11

Email to the Planning Board from Vicki Paret, dated 7/18/11

Email to the Planning Board from Catharine Hornby, dated 7/12/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Amelia Westmark, et al, dated 6/28/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Michael Jensen, dated 6/27/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Michael O’Shea, et al, dated 6/23/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Councilor Leland Chung, dated 8/25/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Amelia Westmark, et al, dated 9/1/11

Letter to the Planning Board from John Grant, et al, dated 8/31/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Lisa Gould, dated 9/1/11

Email to the Planning Board from Michael Hirsch, dated 9/2/11

Email to the Planning Board from Marc Feinstein, dated 9/2/11

Email to the Planning Board from Jennie Dapice, dated 9/2/11

Email to the Planning Board from McNamara Buck, dated 9/5/11

Email to the Planning Board from Steven Orzack, dated 9/2/11

Letter to the Planning Board from Richard Clarey, Chairman of the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee, dated 9/6/11

## **APPLICATION SUMMARY**

The Petitioner proposes to construct townhouse and multifamily residential buildings on a 53,035 square foot lot that is currently occupied by retail, office and light industrial uses in several buildings totaling 11,790 square feet. The proposed use consists of 20 units of housing totaling 34,313 square feet in 10 townhouse, multifamily, and single family buildings, and 29 parking spaces. An existing vacant house at 119 Harvey Street will be demolished and replaced by a new single family home, subject to approval by the Cambridge Historical Commission.

## FINDINGS

After review of the 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:

### 1. **General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit (10.43)**

The Planning Board finds that the project 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.*

With the relief being granted by this Special Permit the requirements of the Zoning Ordinance will have been met. The project meets the requirements of Special District 2. All of the dimensional and use requirements are satisfied, the parking provided is adequate, and the project design is sensitive to the existing streetscape. Residential unit styles vary with attention given to 3 bedroom units to encourage families.

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

No traffic congestion or hazard will be created.

*(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.*

Adjacent uses to the site which are predominately residential are not adversely affected by the proposed residential use. Throughout the permit process, the proponent and several abutters and neighbors have communicated and worked together in a cooperative manner to address potential concerns.

*(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.*

No nuisance or hazard will be created. Trash and recycling will be handled privately and located in a fenced in area.

*(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.*

The intent of Special District 2 is to encourage the conversion of commercial uses to residential uses in a form and density that is compatible with the adjacent neighborhood. This project is consistent with intent of the district and fits nicely into the neighborhood.

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

The Board finds that the proposed project is consistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30, as described below.

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

The townhouse buildings on Harvey Street consist of 3 single-family and 2 two-family homes consistent with the character of existing homes on the street. The heights of the buildings are consistent with the existing homes on Harvey Street. Each building on the street will have a different façade treatment in order to provide a distinctive look. Five of the units will include outdoor patio/yard space. The existing house at 119 Harvey Street will be replaced by a new single family home.

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

The project will feature pedestrian only walkways from the street into the interior as well as views through the site from Harvey Street to Linear Park. There will be 20 exterior bicycle parking spaces. The homes on Harvey Street will feature entrances facing the street and five of the units will include outdoor patio/yard space.

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

All of the structures on the site will meet the setback and height requirements of the zoning district. The project will include a fenced in area in the interior of the site for trash and recycling services, which will be handled privately. The proposed stormwater system is adequate. The new buildings will replace the existing lumber yard structures. The overall impervious area of the site will be reduced and there will be upgraded landscaping to reduce runoff.

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

The site currently has commercial uses. The project will redevelop the entire site to residential uses and be constructed at a lower density than allowed in the zoning district

but consistent with the surrounding neighborhood. The new residential use will not overburden City infrastructure services.

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

The seven units which will be located on Harvey Street will be constructed in three detached single family homes interspersed with 2 duplex homes. The heights of the buildings will be consistent with the existing homes on Harvey Street. Each building on the street will have a different façade treatment in order to provide a distinctive look and five of the units will include outdoor patio/yard space. The existing house at 119 Harvey Street will be replaced by a new single family home. The buildings in the rear of the site adjacent to Linear Park will include 2 two-unit townhouse buildings and 2 three-unit townhouse buildings as well as a 3 unit building in the northwest corner of the site with 2 duplexes and a flat.

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

The project features 20 new housing units in a district that is intended to encourage the conversion of commercial uses to residential uses.

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

Semi transparent fencing will be used where the project abuts Linear Park which is ideal for providing a level of privacy for residents while also enabling views into the park. The project is designed to enable views through the site from Harvey Street to Linear Park. The project will feature a common rear yard for residents adjacent to Linear Park. The 10 units in the duplex and townhouse buildings closest to Linear Park will include semi private backyards.

**2. Criteria for approval of Townhouse Development and Multifamily Dwellings (Section 10.47.4)**

The Board finds that the proposed development is consistent with criteria as set forth below:

- (1) Key features of the natural environment should be preserved to the maximum extent feasible. Tree removal should be minimized and other natural features of the site, such as slopes, should be maintained.*

Trees adjacent to the site in Linear Park will be protected from damage during site construction with the installation of a hay-bale siltation barrier. The total diameter of new trees planted on the site will exceed the total diameter of trees that will be removed.

- (2) *New buildings should be related sensitively to the existing built environment. The location, orientation and massing of structures in the development should avoid overwhelming the existing buildings in the vicinity of the development. Visual and functional disruptions should be avoided.*

The Board finds that the project fits well into the neighborhood and is sensitive to the streetscape. The heights of the buildings will be consistent with the existing homes on Harvey Street. Each building on the street will have a different façade treatment in order to provide a distinctive look.

- (3) *The location, arrangement, and landscaping of open space should provide some visual benefits to abutters and passerby as well as functional benefits to occupants of the development.*

Semi transparent fencing will be used where the project abuts Linear Park which is ideal for providing a level of privacy for residents while also enabling views into the park. Five of the seven units on Harvey Street will include outdoor patio/yard space. The project will feature a common rear yard for residents adjacent to Linear Park.

- (4) *Parking areas, internal roadways and access/egress points should be safe and convenient.*

The parking areas and internal roadways are appropriate for the site. There will be twenty covered vehicle parking spaces and two driveways for vehicle access from Harvey Street. The proposed internal roadways are well separated from pedestrian uses and there will be pedestrian only walkways from the street to the interior of the site.

- (5) *Parking area landscaping should minimize the intrusion of onsite parking so that it does not substantially detract from the use and enjoyment of either the proposed development or neighboring properties.*

The design for parking includes 20 covered spaces, which significantly minimizes the impact of onsite parking.

- (6) *Service facilities such as trash collection apparatus and utility boxes should be located so that they are convenient for residents, yet unobtrusive.*

The project will include three fenced in areas in the interior of the site for trash and recycling services, which will be handled privately.

## 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 Special Permits subject to the following conditions and limitations. Hereinafter, for purposes of this Decision, the Permittee shall mean the Applicant for the requested Special Permits and any successor or successors in interest.

1. All use, building construction, and site plan development shall be in substantial conformance with the revised Application Documents dated September 2, 2011, and all supplemental documents and information submitted by the Applicant to the Planning Board as referenced above. 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). Before issuance of each 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.
3. The permittee shall continue to work with neighbors on a detailed landscaping plan. Such plan shall be reviewed and approved by the CDD.
4. All authorized development shall abide by all applicable City of Cambridge Ordinances, including the Noise Ordinance (Chapter 8.16 of the City Municipal Code).
5. Throughout design development and construction, the project shall conform to the Green Building Requirements set forth in Section 22.20 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance.

Voting in the affirmative to GRANT the Special Permits were Planning Board Members H. Russell, T. Anninger, W. Tibbs, P. Winters, S. Winter, and T. Cohen, constituting at least two thirds of the members of the Board, necessary to grant a special permit.

For the Planning Board,



Hugh Russell, Chair

A copy of this decision #258 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 September 20, 2011, by Taha Jennings, 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 # 258**

**Address: 119-135 Harvey Street**

	Allowed/Required	Existing	Proposed	Granted
<b>Total FAR</b>				
<b>Residential</b>	.65	.22	.50	.50
<b>Non-Residential</b>	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a
<b>Inclusionary Bonus</b>	.84	n/a	.65	.65
<b>Total GFA in Sq. Ft.</b>				
<b>Residential</b>	34,472.75	1,142	26,517.5	26,517.5
<b>Non-Residential</b>		10,648	0	0
<b>Inclusionary Bonus</b>	44,815	n/a	34,472	34,472
<b>Max. Height</b>	40'	27'	39'-11"	39'-11"
<b>Range of heights</b>				
<b>Lot Size</b>	5,000	53,035	53,035	53,035
<b>Lot area/du</b>	1,800	n/a	2,651	2,651
<b>Total Dwelling Units</b>	29		20	20
<b>Base units</b>	23	1	16	16
<b>Inclusionary units</b>	3	0	2	2
<b>Min. Lot Width</b>	50	387.78'	387.78'	387.78'
<b>Min. Yard Setbacks</b>				
<b>Front</b>	15'/Ave (nlt 10')		10'+	10'+
<b>Side, Left</b>	7.5'/sum of 20'	0.5'	7.5'/sum of 20'	7.5'/sum of 20'
<b>Side, Right</b>	7.5'/sum of 20'	10.5'	7.5'/sum of 20'	7.5'/sum of 20'
<b>Rear</b>	25'/35'	0'	25'/35'	25'/35'
<b>Total % Open Space</b>	40% (21,214 sf)	3%	52.3% (27,758 sf)	52.3% (27,758 sf)
<b>Usable</b>	20% (10,607 sf)	n/s	38.3% (20,319 sf)	38.3% (20,319 sf)
<b>Other</b>				
<b>Off Street Parking</b>				
<b>Min #</b>	20		20	20
<b>Max #</b>				
<b>Handicapped</b>	1		1	1
<b>Bicycle Spaces</b>	2	0	14	14
<b>Loading Bays</b>	n/a	3	n/a	n/a