



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

HALL ANNEX, 57 INMAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02139

CASE NO.: PB #26
PREMISES: 115 Rindge Avenue Extension
ZONING DISTRICT: Office-2; Flood Plain Overlay District
PETITIONER: Cambridge Park One Limited Partnership
APPLICATION DATE: July 29, 1982
PUBLIC HEARING DATE: August 24, 1982
PETITION: Special Permit for Regulated Activities,
Flood Plain Overlay District
DATE OF PLANNING BOARD DECISION: September 7, 1982

The Petition

It is proposed to construct a 183,000 square foot office building with at-grade parking for 549 cars on two lots which lie within the flood plain of Alewife Brook as defined in the Zoning Ordinance. Existing structures would be demolished to permit the new construction.

Documents

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

1. Special Permit Application submitted July 25, 1982 and certified complete on July 29, 1982.
2. Site Plans and Elevations, numbered 1 to 13, variously scaled, indicating present site conditions, location of flood plain, building and parking lot layout, building design and measures to accommodate alterations to the flood plain.

Other Documentation

1. Letter to Planning Board from H. W. Moore, P.E., dated August 10, 1982, certifying that the proposal meets all requirements of the Flood Plain Overlay District regarding flood elevations and displacement.

2. Memorandum, undated, from Joel Sirkin, Hale and Dorr detailing the petitioner's conformance with the requirements of the Flood Plain Overlay District.

Public Hearing

Mr. Sam Altruder, representative for Spaulding and Slye Corporation, briefly described the nature of the proposed development and its place within a longer range development scheme which has yet to be firmly determined. Mr. Eduardo Catalano, architect, highlighted the principal design features of the building and its relationship to the site.

Mr. H. W. Moore, project engineer, reviewed the site improvements as they relate to the flood potential of the site. Detailed survey revealed that all but two small portions of the proposed parking lots lie above the compensatory flood elevation of 7.2 feet. Flood storage capacity on the building site and the parking lot sites will exceed capacity eliminated by a factor of four through the use of water retaining depressions surrounding catch basins in the development's three parking lots. The first habitable floor of the office building will be located above the 8 foot, Federal Flood Insurance established elevation.

Public Comments

A few questions addressed the specific details of the proposed building's size and design. Mr. Stuart Sanders, Mystic River Watershed Association, requested that future development options not preclude the possibility of reopening the Alewife Brook conduit which now runs underground through the easterly portion of the site.

No one spoke in favor or in opposition to the requested special permit.

Findings

After review of the documents submitted with the application, comments made at the public hearing, and discussion with the staff the Planning Board makes the following findings:

1. Displaced water retention capacity in the amount of 460 square feet will be replaced elsewhere on the affected lots or non-contiguous lots in the same ownership in an amount equal to approximately 1600 square feet.
2. The first habitable floor of the proposed office building will be at an elevation of 12.5 (mean sea level) which is above the 8 foot 100 year flood elevation established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency.

3. All flood retention systems are suitably designed and located so as not to cause any nuisance, hazard or detriment to occupants of the site or abutters. While the Planning Board encourages the use of site development features which will maximize the absorption of storm water runoff into the ground-water of the Alewife area the present proposals are acceptable alternatives given the development demands of the current building program and the limited lot area involved. Every effort should nevertheless be made to improve the quality of storm water leaving the site.
4. No encroachment of the Floodway shall occur and the 100 year flood elevation shall not be increased as a consequence of the proposed activities.
5. The proposed use is in harmony with the general purpose and intent of the zoning ordinance and those of the Alewife Revitalization, Alewife Urban Design Study, Phase II.
6. The use is permitted in the Office-2 zoning district and appears to conform to all requirements of that district and other applicable regulations.

Decision

After consideration of the findings detailed above, the Planning Board GRANTS a Special Permit to construct an office building and accessory parking in the Floodplain Overlay District as generally described in the documents detailed above. Significant alterations in the site plan, landscaping features, parking lot layout and grading, and proposed storm drainage systems shall require approval from the Planning Board.

In all storm drainage catch basins a capacity to separate grease and oil from surface run-off shall be incorporated and an adequate maintenance schedule shall be adhered to to ensure the continued functioning of such capacity.

Respectfully submitted,

For the Planning Board

Arthur C. Parris

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 and denied _____.

Date: _____
_____ City Clerk, City of Cambridge