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MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board
From: Joseph E. Barr, Director 
Date: January 24, 2017
Re: Mass + Main Project (PB#321)

The Mass + Main project by Watermark Central Venture LLC, includes 285 units, 17,279 gross square feet (GSF) of retail space, and 95 below grade parking spaces, as well as 39 surface spaces at 65 Bishop Allen Drive. The Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department (TP&T) certified the Transportation Impact Study (TIS) on April 11, 2016 and submitted the Planning Board a memo dated November 9, 2016 with our initial comments.

TP&T has reviewed the applicant's updated materials dated January 5, 2017, which address issues raised at the November 15, 2016 Planning Board hearing and comments from City staff. TP&T has been working with the applicant to refine their proposed project and associated mitigation, and offers the Planning Board the following comments:

General:

As stated in TP&T's previous November 9, 2016 memo to the Planning Board, we believe the project is consistent with City goals for mixed-use, transit oriented development, and we believe new housing units and retail in Central Square will transform the site into an active and vibrant place that will link to and enhance Jill Brown Rhone Park/Lafayette Square.

Site Plan/Loading and Service Operations

The applicant has further reviewed the loading and service operations and TP&T also believes the plan will be functional. Some details, such as the sidewalk/pedestrian conditions behind Building B-1, need additional design review on topics such as sidewalk width, grading and materials. TP&T will continue to work with the applicant, the Department of Public Works (DPW), and the Community Development Department (CDD) during the final design review and building permit processes.

Municipal Parking Lot 6

The conceptual design for the Municipal Parking Lot 6 has continued to improve. TP&T will continue to work with the DPW and applicant on the easement through Municipal Lot 6. TP&T offers the Planning Board recommendations for conditions related to Lot 6 in the project's Planning Board Special Permit later in this memo under Transportation Mitigation.

Automobile Parking

The Project proposes 95 parking spaces located in the Building 1 underground garage and additional parking at the 65 Bishop Allen Drive surface parking lot (51 total spaces of which 39 parking spaces will serve the Mass + Main project and 12 parking spaces will serve the 47 Bishop Allen Drive project). Therefore, the Mass + Main project will be served by 134 parking spaces for 285 units (0.47 spaces /unit), however, the project will meet the minimum parking requirements laid out in the zoning for this location because it will provide at least three spaces for carsharing vehicles. The project has also committed to increase to a total of five carsharing parking spaces if demand exists. TP&T supports the parking plan with the following recommendations:

- To discourage auto ownership, residents should be required to pay market rate parking fees. Parking fees should also not be part of their monthly rent but should be shown as an additional, optional monthly cost.
- Visitors to residential units should be able to park at the 65 Bishop Allen Drive lot with the use of a visitor pass and if that lot is full, those visitors should also be permitted to park in the Building 1 underground garage, if spaces are available.
- Preferential parking spaces shall be provided for carpool/vanpools.
- The parking facilities should provide a minimum of two Electric Vehicle parking spaces (i.e. minimum one EV charging station with two charging plugs).
- The parking garage exit should be equipped with a visual warning device that is activated when vehicles are exiting the garage.

Bicycle Parking

TP&T has been working with the applicant on the project's proposed bicycle parking plan and we generally support the plan. We will continue to work with the applicant on the bicycle parking through the final design review and building permit process and recommend these conditions as part of the Project's Planning Board Special Permit:

- The project shall meet the City's minimum zoning requirement for long-term bicycle parking spaces.
- The applicant should consider providing power assist doors to enter/exit the bicycle room, which will make it more convenient for cyclists.
- The project shall provide a minimum of 30 short-term bike spaces (i.e. 15 racks) on the project's site and will contribute to the City's bicycle fund for a minimum of ten bicycle spaces (i.e., five racks) to meet the zoning required minimum of 40 short-term bicycle spaces.

Transportation Mitigation

To minimize the project's transportation impacts by encouraging sustainable modes of transportation, TP&T recommends that the project be required to implement the following Transportation Demand Management Measures (TDM), which are generally consistent with what has been required recently for similar residential projects:

Transportation Demand Management Measures (TDM)

For Residents

- A. The applicant shall make available at least three publicly available carshare parking spaces for vehicle-sharing companies. If demand dictates, additional carshare vehicle parking spaces should be added over time.

- B. Offer each adult member of each household (up to two) upon move-in a Charlie Card valued at the cost of 50% of a bus/subway pass (currently \$84.50 but subject to fare increases) for three consecutive months. This benefit will end after three months for the household and begins anew upon unit turnover.
- C. Offer each adult member of each household (up to two) upon move-in a one-year Gold-Level Hubway membership. This benefit will end after one year for the household and begins anew upon unit turnover.

The applicant would like to implement an incentive based program to reduce automobile use in the project which would enable them to employ a wide range of demand management strategies starting with the standard requirement for T-pass subsidies and Hubway membership and allowing them to phase out or alter such programs over time if after an initial five years, the residential development consistently for two consecutive years (starting with year 4 and 5) meets or improves upon the non-SOV mode share of 75% or better, as established in the certified Traffic Impact Study (TIS).

TP&T is open to this idea, but also concerned for various reasons, such as:

- *SOV mode split may go back up.*
- *Getting good survey data may be challenging.*
- *This has not been done in other projects and may set poor precedent.*

TP&T and the applicant have been working cooperatively to find a mutually agreed upon solution but in the event there is no agreement, the applicant has indicated that he will revert to TP&T's original recommendation.

- D. Provide air pumps and other bike tools, such as a "fix-it" stand in/near the bicycle storage areas.
- E. Join the Charles River Transportation Management Association (CRTMA).
- F. Charge parking separately from the residential rent, so that tenants recognize how much they pay for parking. The Permittee shall provide the summary of on-site parking fees to the TP&T. The Permittee shall provide written update to TP&T whenever the fees are changed.
- G. Either install a real-time multimodal transportation display screen to help people decide which mode to choose for each trip (transit, carshare vehicle, Hubway bike share, etc), or establish a transportation information center located in an area that is central, visible, convenient, and equally accessible to all residents and visitors. The center will feature information on:
 - a. Available pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the vicinity of the Project site
 - b. MBTA maps, schedules, and fares
 - c. Area shuttle map and schedule, if one exists
 - d. "Getting Around in Cambridge" map and other CitySmart materials (available at the Cambridge Community Development office)
 - e. Location of bicycle parking
 - f. Hubway regional bikeshare system
 - g. Carsharing
 - h. Ride-matching
 - i. Other pertinent transportation information
- H. Designate a transportation coordinator (TC) for the site to manage the TDM program. The TC will also oversee the marketing and promotion of transportation options to all residents at the site in a variety of ways:
 - a. Posting information in a prominent location in the building and on the Project's website, social media, and property newsletters.

- b. Responding to individual requests for information in person and via phone and email.
- c. Performing annual transportation surveys.
- I. Require the TC to compile and distribute up-to-date information explaining all transportation options to all new residents as part of their New Resident Packet. The packets will contain information on both the range of options available and any building manager programs to support the use of these options, and will include:
 - a. Available pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the vicinity of the Project site
 - b. MBTA maps, schedules, and fares
 - c. Area shuttle map and schedule, if one exists
 - d. "Getting Around in Cambridge" map and other CitySmart materials (available at the Cambridge Community Development Department office)
 - e. Location of bicycle parking
 - f. Hubway regional bikeshare system
 - g. Carsharing
 - h. Ride-matching
 - i. Other pertinent transportation information
- J. Require that the TC be on-site during a minimum of 2 hours per week and be available during other times to residents via email and telephone. Email and phone information for the TC will be posted in the transportation information center.
- K. Require that the TC will participate in any TC trainings offered by the City of Cambridge or local TMA.

For Retail Employees

- A. Provide 50% subsidy of MBTA monthly passes to full-time employees at retail businesses located in space over 1,000 square feet.
- B. Offer Hubway membership (minimum Gold Level) for employees that become Hubway members.
- C. Provide corporate membership paid by the employer at a local carshare company to allow employees to use a carshare vehicle for work-related trips during the day instead of needing to drive private vehicles to work.
- D. Provide membership in the Charles River TMA, to benefit from its emergency ride home, and ride-matching programs.

The applicant would like to implement an incentive based program to reduce automobile use in the project which would enable them to employ a wide range of demand management strategies starting with the standard Retail Employee TDM requirements above and allowing them to phase out or alter such programs over time if after an initial five years, the retail employee consistently for two consecutive years (starting with year 4 and 5) meets or improves upon the non-SOV mode share of 80% or better, as established in the certified Traffic Impact Study (TIS).

If appropriate TDM measures are not provided to retail employees it may cause an increase in SOV use.

For Retail Patrons

- A. Mount a real-time transportation information screen in in a permanent and central location to show arrival times and availability for nearby buses, trains, shuttles, Hubway bikes, and carshare vehicles, etc.

Transportation Infrastructure Improvements

- **Design and reconstruct Municipal Lot 6.**
 - Prior to the issuance of a Building Permit the easement, MOU, or other legal document providing access to Lot 6 shall be completed and signed.
 - The applicant shall design and reconstruct Municipal Lot 6 as part of the on-going discussions with TP+T and DPW. Construction will include mill and overlay, pavement markings/restriping, signage, landscaping, irrigation, lighting and other items as required by DPW and TP&T as needed, such as replacing the parking pay station. The applicant will reconstruct Lot 6 after the City has completed the construction of the storm water management Lot 6 project and after the applicant has completed using Lot 6 for construction staging purposes.

- **Design and construct a raised cycle track on north/east side of Massachusetts Avenue between Sidney Street and Douglass Street including a protected intersection treatment, as feasible, at the northeast corner of Douglas Street.**

The City recently installed a separated bicycle lane on the north side of Massachusetts Avenue, between Sydney Street and Douglass Street, adjacent to the Project site, as a demonstration project. If the City determines that a separated bike lane should continue as a permanent condition and/or be re-constructed as a raised cycle track, the applicant will be required to design and construct such final preferred separated bicycle facility as approved by the City on the north side of Massachusetts Avenue between Sidney Street and Douglas Street.

If determined by the City that the separated bicycle lane should be a raised cycle track, the applicant shall design and construct the cycle track prior to issuance of the Occupancy Permit or according to a schedule approved by the City.

The scope of work for a raised cycle track is more specifically defined as including the following elements:

Surface Elements:

- Sidewalks – fully ADA compliant
- Cycle Track – asphalt – evaluate porous asphalt
- Resetting and replacing Granite curbing as necessary
- Roadway reconstruction – match existing street grade, possibly including minor reconstruction and grading changes.
- Planting areas and street trees, depending on available space.
- Evaluate and implement irrigation program, depending on extent of plantings.

Utility Elements:

- New catch basins, manholes and laterals. Infiltrating catch basins to be evaluated.
- Existing private utilities may have to be lowered, relocated or upgraded. These would not be at the expense of the applicant, but the applicant would need to coordinate their work.

The scope of work is expected to include standard sidewalk curb and drainage and standard ancillary work. If it is determined to be more significantly more complicated because of the Red Line tunnel, unexpected utility conflicts, or other unforeseen circumstances, then this requirement will need to be modified, potentially including identifying additional sources of funding. TP&T recommends changes should be permitted administratively upon mutual agreements between the applicant, DPW, TP&T and CDD.

The applicant shall be responsible for the maintenance of the cycle track such as clearing debris, snow removal, crack repairs, etc.

- **Central Square Red Line Station Stairway Feasibility Study.**

The applicant shall study the feasibility of widening the Red Line station entrance stairs on the north/east side Massachusetts Avenue closest to the Project site. The feasibility study should be completed prior to the issuance of the project's first Occupancy Permit and will include items such as the follows with a final scope mutually agreed upon between the applicant and TP&T:

- Field Survey
 - Civil Engineering
 - Review existing record information depicting subsurface utilities.
 - Review feasibility of 10" sanitary sewer and 24" storm drain relocation with Cambridge DPW (1 Meeting).
 - Review feasibility of 12" water main relocation with Cambridge Water Department (1 Meeting).
 - Review feasibility of private utility relocations with private utility companies (Electric, Telecom, Gas).
 - Provide preliminary utility relocation plan depicting limits of utility relocation scope.
 - Preliminary Structural Evaluation
 - Construction Manager Review of Constructability
- The applicant shall also ensure there is space on the public sidewalk in front of their site for a Hubway station in the future, in any work they may do regarding public street furniture, sidewalk cafes, trees or landscaping (51' in length x 6' width with 5' access aisle and adequate solar exposure for solar panel). In addition, to support the Hubway bike share system, which will provides a sustainable mode of public transportation for residents and their guests, and retail employees and patrons, the applicant should pay ongoing annual operations and maintenance fees to the City for a Hubway station in Central Square (up to a 23 dock station).
 - Contribute \$60,000 to the City towards the development of transit improvements in the Central Square area which may include studies, designs, infrastructure improvements and/or real-time transit screens at MBTA bus stops or elsewhere in Central Square. The contribution should be provided to the City prior to a Building Permit. Should the initial Red Line station stairway feasibility study noted above indicate that there is a realistic potential to expand the width of the stairways, some or all of these funds could be spent on further development of that improvement.

Monitoring Program

The Permittee shall include survey information for residents and retail uses in a form approved by the City. The information will provide monitoring of the residents' mode shares, auto ownership and use, and retail employees and patron mode shares, number of parking access cards issued for which locations and user types, peak daytime and nighttime utilization of vehicle and bicycle parking spaces by location and user type, resident and retail employee mode splits, and auto/bicycle ownership. Data should be collected through resident and retail employee surveys/questionnaires, and through observed and mechanical counts (including use of the garage access control equipment).

All surveys and counts shall be designed and conducted in a manner approved by CDD and approved before issuance of the first Certificate of Occupancy. Monitoring and surveying shall begin when the occupancy of the Project has reached ninety percent (90%) or within one year of the date of the first Certificate of Occupancy, whichever is sooner. If the Certificate of Occupancy is issued between September 1st and February 29th, the monitoring should take place during the months of September or October and be reported to the City no later than November 30th. If the Certificate of Occupancy is issued between March 1st and August 31st, monitoring should take place during the months of April or May and be reported to the City no later than June 30th. Reports should also be included and combined with the annual Urban Renewal Transportation Monitoring reports.