



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

NOTICE OF DECISION

Case Number:	350
Address:	810 Main Street (804-830 Main Street)
Zoning:	Business B (BB)/ Central Square Overlay District
Applicant:	Cambridge Brands, Inc. c/o Johanna Schneider, Esq. Hemenway & Barnes, 75 State Street, Boston, MA 02109
Owner:	Cambridge Brands, Inc. 810 Main Street, Cambridge, MA 02139
Application Date:	July 25, 2019
Date of Planning Board Public Hearing:	September 10, 2019
Date of Planning Board Decision:	September 10, 2019
Date of Filing Planning Board Decision:	November 13, 2019
Application:	Special permit for building height exceeding 55 feet in the Central Square Overlay District (Section 20.304.2.2(a)) to construct an addition to the existing building, resulting in a net increase of 9,965 square feet in Gross Floor Area (GFA) consisting of a below-grade basement and three floors above grade.
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 Liza Paden at 617-349-4644, or lpaden@cambridgema.gov.

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OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

DOCUMENTS SUBMITTED

Application Documents and Supporting Material

1. Special Permit Application submitted on July 25, 2019, containing the Special Permit Cover Sheet, Dimensional Form, Ownership Certificate, Community Outreach Summary, Project Narrative, plan set titled Cambridge Brands, Inc prepared by GMA Architects & Engineers, dated 7/16/2019.
2. Presentation slides shown to Planning Board on 9/10/2019.

City of Cambridge Documents

3. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Katherine F. Watkins, City Engineer, Department of Public Works (DPW), dated 8/28/2019.
4. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Joseph E. Barr, Director, Traffic, Parking and Transportation (TP&T) Department, dated 9/3/2019.
5. Memorandum to the Planning Board from Community Development Department staff, dated 9/4/2019.

Other Documents

6. Letter to the Planning Board from the Central Square Advisory Committee, dated 5/8/19.

APPLICATION SUMMARY

The Applicant proposes to construct an addition to the existing building located on the parcel 804-830 Main Street to accommodate a utility vault and update the electrical system. The addition will result in a net increase of 9,965 square feet in GFA consisting of a below-grade basement and three floors above grade. The project will reduce the total number of off-street parking spaces from 125 to 100, though it will still conform to minimum parking requirements. All parking will be accommodated in the existing off-site private parking lots on Cherry Street and Columbia Street, which were previously designated accessory off-street parking for the existing use at 810 Main Street. The property is located in the Business B District within the Central Square Overlay District. The site is entirely within the Central Square National Register District and the existing building is a potentially contributing structure. The Applicant reviewed the proposal with staff at the Cambridge Historical Commission, who concluded that the project does not require a formal hearing by the Commission. The project requires variances from the Board of Zoning Appeal (BZA) to construct loading bays less than 50 feet in length, to exceed the maximum curb cut width, to increase the existing non-conforming GFA, and to expand the existing non-conforming use. The requested special permits are discussed in detail in the Findings below.

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. Special Permit for additional building height in Central Square Overlay District (Section 20.304.2.2(a))

20.304.2 Building Height Limitations. The maximum heights of buildings in the Central Square Overlay District shall be governed by the regulations of this Section 10.304.2; however, at locations where the base zoning district establishes a more restrictive height limitation, the more restrictive shall apply

2. *Special permit for Additional Height. Additional height may be permitted as follows:*
 - (a) *The maximum allowable height in the Central Square Overlay District may be increased up to eighty (80) feet upon issuance of a Special Permit by the Planning Board provided that those portions in excess of sixty (60) feet are set back from the street line at least ten (10) feet and that those portions are also set back from one or more forty-five degree (45°) bulk control planes beginning sixty (60) feet above any streetline in the district and rising over one or more lots at a forty-five degree (45°) angle.*

The proposed addition will be 65 feet in height to match the height of the existing building. The addition is located 75 feet from the streetline along Main Street and 41 feet from the streetline along State Street. Hence these requirements are met.

The Board finds that the standards for issuing a special permit in the Central Square Overlay District are met, as set forth below.

20.305 Standards for Issuance of Special Permits. In addition to the general standards for the issuance of a special permit found in Section 10.40 of the Zoning Ordinance, the special permit granting authority shall in addition make the following findings:

(1) The proposed development is consistent with the goals and objectives of the Central Square Action Plan:

- encourage responsible and orderly development;*
- strengthen the retail base to more completely serve the needs of the neighborhoods;*
- preserve the Square's cultural diversity;*
- create active people oriented spaces;*
- improve the physical, and visual environment;*
- provide retail establishments that serve people of diverse economic and social groups who live in the surrounding neighborhoods;*
- encourage the development of new mixed income housing; and*
- promote compatible retail adjacent to residential uses*

The Board finds the proposed expansion to be modest in scale. It will preserve an existing use that contributes to the economic diversity of the area and will help retain the last remaining candy manufacturing use within the city, which is a historically relevant industry. The use will continue to provide diverse job opportunities in the neighborhood.

(2) The building and site designs are consistent with "Urban Design Plan for Central Square" as outlined in the "Central Square Action Plan" and the "Central Square Development Guidelines";

The proposed addition will complement the existing structure in keeping with the geometry and rhythm. A key urban design concern in Central Square is the creation of active frontages to help animate the public realm. The existing building currently lacks ground floor activity, and due to the nature of the manufacturing being undertaken on site an active presence is not possible. Given these limitations, the Applicant has adopted other approaches to improve the visual appearance of the site. In addition to improving the existing manufacturing site, the proposed historic plaque, Main Street planters, and public art installation at the Cherry Street parking lot across the street will enhance the site and have a positive impact on the public realm.

- (3) *The building and site designs adequately screen the parking provided and are sensitive to the contributing buildings in the vicinity;*

The proposed addition will result in removal of existing parking on the site and hence no new off-street parking spaces have to be screened. Efforts have been made to mitigate the impacts of the new loading area on Main Street with the addition of a landscape strip and ornamental fence, which will provide some buffering benefits to passersby. The loading area on State Street will also include an ornamental fence, which will have a positive visual impact.

- (4) *No National Register or contributing building is demolished or so altered as to terminate or preclude its designation as a National Register or contributing building; and*

- (5) *No National Register or contributing building has been demolished or altered so as to terminate or preclude its designation within the five (5) years preceding the application.*

The existing building is not listed in the National Register of Historic Places, but is located within the Central Square National Register District. A few buildings in the vicinity on Main Street are contributing buildings in the National Register of Historic Places. Staff from the Cambridge Historical Commission have reviewed the designs and the proposed expansion is not considered to be inappropriate to the architectural context of the neighborhood.

2. General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit (Section 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, or ...*

Upon granting of the requested special permits, it appears that the requirements of the Ordinance will be met.

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

The proposed expansion is not anticipated to cause particular congestion or hazard as there will be no changes in staffing. It will remove on-site parking and result in reduced truck trips with consolidated deliveries. All truck deliveries on Main Street will be

monitored and supervised by staff to promote public safety. A communication from TP&T dated September 3, 2019 indicates that the project is expected to have only minor vehicle traffic impact in the neighborhood.

- (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 ...*

The proposed non-residential use continuing at its current location will not have any significant additional adverse impact on adjacent uses that exist or are anticipated in the future.

- (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 proposed expansion of the existing use will not create nuisance or hazard, and all development activity will be subject to applicable health and safety regulations.

- (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 neighborhood has a mix of residential and non-residential uses. The existing candy manufacturing use has coexisted with a variety of different uses for over a century. The proposed modest expansion will not conflict with the existing and anticipated pattern of development.

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

The Board finds no inconsistency with the citywide urban design objectives. The urban design objectives are generally supported in the proposal through improved streetscape appearance and pedestrian amenity, consistency with the pattern of development in the area, minimal environmental impacts on abutters and minimal impact on City infrastructure. The proposal is found to be in general conformance with the development guidelines for the Central Square Overlay District.

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 Application Documents and other supporting materials submitted to the Planning Board, and the additional Conditions of this Special Permit Decision. The project plans hereby approved by the Planning Board are the plan set titled Cambridge Brands, Inc prepared by GMA Architects & Engineers, dated July 16, 2019. 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. 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. Selection of all exterior materials, colors, façade alterations and restoration details, which shall also be reviewed by the staff at Cambridge Historical Commission.
 - b. The landscape details, including planters and fencing.
 - c. Location of rooftop mechanical equipment, and materials and details of any necessary visual/acoustical screening.
4. To improve pedestrian safety crossing Main Street, the Permittee shall submit plans for a new crosswalk, ramps, and rectangular rapid flashing beacons for review and approval by Traffic, Parking and Transportation (TP&T) Department staff prior to issuance of a Building Permit. Such improvements shall be constructed or installed prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.
5. The Permittee shall submit a final Plant Traffic Operations Plan for review and approval by TP&T prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy.

6. To further mitigate transportation impacts, prior to issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy, the Permittee shall be required to become a Gold-Level Corporate partner with Bluebikes (or its successor Public Bicycle Sharing Service) and pay annual membership fees for employees that choose to become a member of such Public Bicycle Sharing Service.
7. 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 approve the requested special permits were Planning Board Members Louis Bacci, Jr., H Theodore Cohen, Steven Cohen, Catherine Preston Connolly, Tom Sieniewicz, Mary Flynn, and Hugh Russell, 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 #350 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 has been filed on November 13, 2019 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)	34,718	None	No Change	No Change
Lot Width (ft)	183.5	None	No Change	No Change
Total GFA (sq ft)	146,300	95,474	156,235	156,235 ¹
Residential Base	0	n/a	0	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Non-Residential Base	146,300	95,474	156,235	
Inclusionary Bonus	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Total FAR	4.21	2.75 / 4	4.5 ¹	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Residential Base	0	4.0	0	
Non-Residential Base	4.21	2.75	4.5	
Inclusionary Bonus	n/a	n/a	n/a	
Total Dwelling Units	0	n/a	0	0
Base Units	n/a	n/a	n/a	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Inclusionary Bonus Units	0	n/a	n/a	
Base Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)	0	n/a	n/a	
Total Lot Area / Unit (sq ft)	0	n/a	n/a	
Height (ft)	65	55	65	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Front Setbacks (ft)	0	0	No change	
Side Setback (ft)	0 & 0	0 & 0	No change	
Rear Setback (ft)	0	0	No change	
Open Space (% of Lot Area)	0	0	No change	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Private Open Space	0	0	No change	
Permeable Open Space	0	0	No change	
Off-Street Parking Spaces	125	79	100	100 ²
Long-Term Bicycle Parking	4	n/a	4	Consistent with Application Documents and applicable zoning requirements
Short-Term Bicycle Parking	0	n/a	8	
Loading Bays	5	n/a	4 ¹	

¹ With variance from BZA.

² Provided off-site, 39 spaces at Columbia Street parking lot and 61 spaces at Cherry Street lot.