



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

IRAM FAROOQ
Assistant City Manager for
Community Development

To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

SANDRA CLARKE
Deputy Director
Chief of Administration

Date: November 26, 2018

Re: Special Permit **PB #354, 87-101 CambridgePark Drive**

KHALIL MOGASSABI
Deputy Director
Chief of Planning

This memo contains an overview of the proposed project at 87-101 CambridgePark Drive, the special permits being requested, and related comments. Comments from the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department (TP&T) and Department of Public Works (DPW) are provided in separate memos.

Summary of Proposal

The proposed project is located on parcel 97 CambridgePark Drive. An existing two-story office and laboratory building built in 1985 and with a gross floor area (GFA) of 63,851 square feet is proposed to be retained. In front of the existing building, the applicant is proposing to construct a new 141,834 square-foot building for general office and technical office for research and development uses along with retail and consumer service establishment uses in the first floor, below grade parking for 247 cars, 48 long-term bicycle parking spaces, 22 short-term bicycle parking spaces, and 2 loading bays. The new five-story building will have 141,843 square feet of GFA. The proposal would reduce the number of surface parking spaces from 111 to 7 and create a multi-use pedestrian/bicycle path along the eastern side of the parcel to connect to the existing Fitchburg Path to the north.

Requested Special Permit

The site is located in the Office-2A (O-2A) zoning district as well as Alewife Overlay District 6 (AOD-6). The proposed project is seeking a Project Review Special Permit per Section 19.20 and Special Permits within AOD-6 for increased FAR per Section 20.95.1, increased building height per Section 20.95.2.6, and waiver of yard requirements per Section 20.95.34. It is not requested in the application, but the retail uses proposed in the first floor of the building will require a special permit per Section 20.94.1.

Since the project is located within the Flood Plain Overlay District, it also requires Special Permits per Section 20.73, which in turn requires review by the Conservation Commission. The Conservation Commission has held an initial hearing on this project for compliance with the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act and continued discussion to a future meeting. The applicable special permit findings are summarized on the following pages and applicable sections of the zoning are provided in an appendix.

Given the project's size, it is also subject to the Green Building Requirements in Section 22.20 and the Incentive Zoning Requirements in Section 11.202 (which require

contributions to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust). Because new parking facilities are created, it is subject to the requirements of the Parking and Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) Ordinance. City permits cannot be issued until the project has an approved PTDM Plan.

Requested Special Permits	Summarized Findings <i>(detailed zoning text in appendix)</i>
Project Review Special Permit (Section 19.20)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project will have no substantial adverse impact on city traffic within the study area, upon review of the traffic impact indicators analyzed in the Transportation Impact Study and mitigation efforts proposed. • The project is consistent with the urban design objectives of the City as set forth in Section 19.30.
Increase FAR, increase building height, and waiver of yard requirements in Alewife Overlay Districts (Sections 20.95.1, 20.95.2.6, 20.95.34)	<p>The project promotes the general interests of the larger commercial and residential neighborhood noted in Section 20.92 and is consistent with the goals, objectives and guidelines established in the Concord-Alewife Plan.</p> <p>For waiver of yard requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objectives of the Concord-Alewife Plan continue to be met. • The stormwater management objectives for the area continue to be met both on the site and as the site may be a part of a larger system for managing stormwater runoff. • The reduction or waiver of yard requirements provides for more efficient development of land; encourages or facilitates a more logical pattern of buildings, streets, parks and open space; or enhances the urban, pedestrian character of the area as envisioned in the Concord- Alewife Plan.
Construction in Flood Plain Overlay District (Section 20.73)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No encroachment of the floodway or displacement of water retention capacity is allowed unless fully offset. • Flood water systems shall not cause nuisance, hazard or detriment to site or abutters. • Development is consistent with zoning, area plans and guidelines, and applicable laws including Wetlands Protection Act. • Review by the City Engineer and Conservation Commission are required.
Modifications to permitted uses in base Office district in Alewife Overlay Districts (Section 20.94.1)	<p>For all uses listed in Section 4.35 (Retail and Consumer Service):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No individual establishment exceeds 10,000 sq. ft. in area. • Retail use is located on the first floor or basement of the building. • Total Gross Floor Area of retail uses does not exceed 10% of the total Gross Floor Area of the building. • The Planning Board may waive above limitations if the project promotes the general interests of the larger commercial and residential neighborhood noted in Section 20.92.
General special permit criteria (Section 10.43)	<p>Special permits will be normally granted if the zoning requirements are met, unless it is found not to be in the public interest due to one of the criteria enumerated in Section 10.43.</p>

Concord-Alewife Plan Goals for Triangle (intended to provide general guidance)

- Encourage more transit-oriented development. Allow higher density and height to take advantage of proximity to Alewife Station.
- Continue to allow commercial development to be focused in this area, while also encouraging housing close to the T station.
- Create a pleasant, walkable connection between Alewife Reservation and Fresh Pond Reservation consistent with the Alewife Reservation Master Plan and the Fresh Pond Master Plan.
- Create public access to the Alewife Reservation from Cambridgepark Drive.
- Reduce auto mode share within the Triangle.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian connections among the Minuteman Trail, Belmont Path, Linear Park, and a future pathway along the Watertown rail line.
- Improve signage and enhance access to the multiuse trail from Alewife Station.
- Encourage development of additional housing close to Alewife Station while continuing to support commercial development.

Concord-Alewife Design Guidelines – Areawide & Triangle (intended to provide general guidance)

- Break up large blocks into smaller blocks, of sizes similar to those in surrounding Cambridge neighborhoods.
- Vary the design of individual buildings to create an architecturally diverse district.
- Street level facades should include active uses such as frequent residential entrances with setbacks for stoops and porches; neighborhood-serving retail including shops, restaurants, cafes; services for public or commercial offices; and community spaces.
- Encourage awnings/ canopies to provide shelter and enliven ground-floor façades.
- Design residential buildings with individual units and front doors facing streets, including row-house units on the lower levels of multifamily residences.
- Design residential development to include a range of units of various sizes and with various numbers of bedrooms, including three or more bedrooms, with the overall goal of providing dwelling units for families with school age children.
- Utilize low impact development principles in building and site design.
- Use site design that preserves future rights-of-way identified in the Circulation Concept Plan.
- Improve existing streets to meet City standards, including streetscape improvements.
- Strengthen bicycle and pedestrian links to adjacent areas. Provide links that strengthen physical and visual connections to open space resources.
- Screen service areas from major streets.
- Parking below-grade is preferred. If above-grade parking is provided, it should be designed so that it is not visible from nearby residential neighborhoods, public streets and pathways; line structured parking with active uses (shops, cafes, lobbies) along important public ways.
- Design and locate lighting and signage in support of the district's pedestrian-friendly quality.
- Use site design to minimize shadows on other buildings or on public streets, open spaces, parks, and plazas.
- Create a pedestrian-friendly environment along Cambridgepark Drive.
- Provide small setbacks (5 to 15 feet) from the right-of-way for café seating, benches, or small open spaces.
- Provide pedestrian links that strengthen physical connections to Alewife Reservation
- Create building height / façade setbacks between 85' and 105'.
- Site new development to preserve right-of-way for future crossing of the railroad tracks to connect the Triangle and Quadrangle.

Area Planning and Zoning

The base zoning for the site is Office-2A (O-2A), which allows office and residential uses by right. The base zoning is modified by the Alewife Overlay District (AOD) zoning, which augments the base district zoning regulations in a way that allows greater density and more flexible dimensional requirements by special permit while imposing additional requirements and standards to respond to the unique issues identified in the Alewife area. It also allows ground-floor retail uses by special permit with limitations. This zoning regime of a more restrictive by-right zoning, which can be more permissive by special permit, was one of the results of the Concord-Alewife Rezoning that was recommended in the 2006 *Concord-Alewife Planning Study* (see below).

As with much of the Alewife area, part of the site is located within the Flood Plain Overlay District, which encompasses areas designated as Flood Hazard Zones A and AE on the Middlesex County Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Projects within this district require a Planning Board special permit, and must provide technical documentation to be reviewed by the City Engineer demonstrating that the site's ability to store and discharge flood waters will not be impacted.

Concord-Alewife Plan

The planning goals that underlie the current zoning in the area were established in the *Concord-Alewife Planning Study*, completed in 2006. In deciding special permits pursuant to the Alewife Overlay District (AOD) zoning, the key consideration for the Board will be the degree to which the proposal conforms to the Concord-Alewife plan.

The project site lies within the interior of the "Triangle" (classified on the Zoning Map as the "AOD-6" subdistrict), which includes the area north of the Fitchburg rail line and south of the Alewife Brook Reservation, which has mostly transitioned from industrial use to a mix of office, commercial research labs, and housing. This area has good access to public transit through the Red Line and regional bus service. The area has experienced a considerable amount of multi-family housing production in recent years, mostly through redevelopment of surface parking lots or low-scale commercial buildings. There have also been recent renovation and improvement projects to the larger-scale office and R&D buildings that were developed in the 1980s and 1990s, and some additional office/R&D space recently developed adjacent to this site at 35 Cambridgepark Drive.

Envision Cambridge Alewife District Plan and Climate Change Preparedness and Resiliency (CCPR) Plan

This site is also within the area of the new Alewife District Plan, which was part of the "Envision Cambridge" comprehensive planning process. That process involved CDD staff, planning and urban design consultants Utile, and an "Alewife Working Group" of community stakeholders. The final Alewife District Plan report was recently published and is available at envision.cambridgema.gov.

The key objective that has emerged through this process is to create an identity and sense of place for the whole Alewife District in the following ways:

- Better integrate the district with the rest of the city through new walking and biking paths, streets, and open spaces.
- Ensure that both new development and existing infrastructure, neighborhoods, and community resources are prepared for climate change, in particular the challenges of flooding and heat.
- Encourage forms of development, a mix of uses, and a range of improvements that will facilitate and encourage walking, biking, and transit use and reduce the growth of vehicular trips.
- Ensure that new development benefits the adjacent residential neighborhoods by introducing new amenities and services and creating neighborhood destinations.

Many of the goals of the recent Alewife Plan are shared with the Concord-Alewife planning study. However, the Alewife Plan has taken a closer look at some key issues to recommend more specific measures that will help achieve those goals. For example, as redevelopment has occurred in the area, it has been difficult to create active, pedestrian-friendly ground floors due to the need to elevate buildings to protect from future flood risks. The Alewife District Plan process has recommended urban design approaches that aim to optimize both of these objectives while continuing to promote the area's transition from a more suburban pattern of development to a more walkable, mixed-use environment.

Another key issue identified in the plan is that future growth in Alewife, particularly commercial growth, will require significant shifts in mobility patterns given the existing traffic congestion, lack of connections, and auto-oriented development patterns in the area. The plan recommends progressive mobility strategies to improve connectivity, promote sustainable modes of transportation, and reduce dependency on automobile travel, including lower maximum limitations on parking, enhanced parking and transportation demand management programs to discourage single-occupancy vehicle (SOV) trips, new infrastructure to promote walking and bicycling (supported in part by contributions from new development), and improved transit services.

The Alewife District Plan process has also identified some more targeted land use strategies for particular areas. In the "Triangle" area, the general strategy is to promote mixed-use, transit-oriented development, similar to the Concord-Alewife plan, but with more emphasis on improving pedestrian/bicycle connections and promoting retail and other street-activating uses on Cambridgepark Drive. Specific objectives include improving pedestrian and bicycle infrastructure on both streets and privately owned driveways, planting street trees and other streetscape improvements (i.e. generous sidewalks, streetwall buildings, shading), more contiguous planted open space in the interiors of blocks, and creating additional multi-use paths to the Alewife Brook Reservation.

Also relevant to the planning for this area is the City's ongoing Climate Change Preparedness and Resiliency (CCPR) effort, which has been closely coordinated with the Alewife planning process. The CCPR plan is being developed as a practical guide for the City to implement specific strategies in response to climate change threats, including increased heat as well as flooding from precipitation, sea level rise and storm surge. The plan focuses on four different themes: A Prepared Community, Adapted Buildings, Resilient Infrastructure, and Resilient Ecosystems.

Given the unique characteristics of the Alewife area, an early-phase “Alewife Preparedness Plan” and “Alewife Preparedness Handbook” were developed. The recommendations of this plan have been integrated into the Alewife planning process with the goal of producing a comprehensive set of zoning recommendations. For example, with regard to flood elevation, the plan recommends that new buildings “build” or “protect” to the projected 2070 10-year flood elevation, and are designed to “recover” from the projected 2070 100-year flood elevation. A Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force has also been meeting with the task of formulating zoning recommendations that can be advanced at a citywide level.

The [Alewife Preparedness Handbook](#) can also be viewed online from the CDD web page.

Infrastructure

The Concord-Alewife Plan and the more recent Alewife District Plan both identify desired infrastructure improvements to serve public goals. One major piece of infrastructure is a planned crossing of the railroad line from Cambridgepark Drive in the Triangle to Fawcett Street in the Quadrangle, which has been incorporated into the review of sites that abut the railroad. Other desired infrastructure improvements particular to the Triangle include enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connections to Alewife Brook Reservation and the Shopping Center district along Alewife Brook Parkway. Both plans also identify public open space as a goal, both to serve community-gathering functions and to assist in stormwater management. The AOD zoning provides mechanisms by which development rights and requirements can be shifted, pooled and transferred flexibly across sites to enable these public improvements, and the Alewife District Plan has recommended retaining and strengthening these types of incentives.

Urban Design

The Concord-Alewife Design Guidelines (2006) flow from a vision of a creating a “people-oriented sense of place” – a coherent walkable mixed-use neighborhood, well connected with its surroundings. The Alewife District Plan (2019) expands on this vision, providing more detailed recommendations. Key urban design considerations include fostering a pedestrian-friendly environment and vibrant public realm by creating active streets and outdoor gathering spaces, and reinforcing connections to nearby open spaces.

Proposed Project

In general, the proposal conforms to current zoning limitations and promotes many of the planning objectives of the area by promoting growth close to transit, improved pedestrian/bicycle infrastructure, and increased activity at the street level. The scale of the proposal, in terms of height and density, applies the limitations allowed by special permit in the AOD-6 district. The project is exceeding the minimum Article 6.000 requirements for off-street parking and bicycle parking.

The AOD-6 district allows, by special permit, relief from the “formula” requirements in base zoning, which often require greater separation between the building and the public realm, to favor a more urbanistic pattern of development. The front yard setback can be reduced to a minimum of 15 feet from

the lot line (or can be less, if the base zoning has a lower requirement) and must consist predominantly of green area or permeable open space. The proposal includes a range of setbacks, with the most generous setback on the east side to retain vehicular access to the existing building. The project exceeds the open space requirements of the district, meeting a ratio of 37.5% of the lot where 15% is required, and also meets the permeable area requirement of 25%.

The project has completed a Transportation Impact Study (TIS) and proposes public access improvements, transportation demand management (TDM) programs, and other measures to discourage additional automobile trips and encourage a more walkable, bike-friendly, and transit-oriented neighborhood. These topics are discussed in more detail in the TP&T memo. The PTDM plan has not yet been approved. Under the City's PTDM Ordinance, the project cannot be granted a permit from the Planning Board until the PTDM plan is approved.

The project is designed with most of the parking below-grade, which is generally encouraged citywide. The applicant has indicated that 101 out of the 247 spaces in the garage plus two surface parking spaces are for the existing 63,851 square-foot building, providing a total of 103 spaces (compared to 111 existing spaces) and a ratio of 1.6 spaces per 1,000 square feet. The additional 136 below-grade spaces and 5 surface parking spaces, totaling 143 spaces, are associated with the proposed new building. The minimum required parking ratio under current zoning is 0.95 spaces per 1,000 square feet for office/lab uses and 1.4 spaces per 1,000 square feet for retail uses, which totals to a minimum requirement of 137 spaces for the new building.

The Flood Plain Overlay District zoning requires technical review by the City Engineer and the Cambridge Conservation Commission to ensure that the development will not diminish the site's ability to accommodate the retention and flow of flood water. Approval is also conditioned on compliance with the Wetlands Protection Act, pursuant to which an Order of Conditions will be issued by the Conservation Commission. Per zoning requirements, the engineering report is included in the DPW memo along with comments from the City Engineer.

The proposed retail and consumer service establishment uses on the first floor of the building is consistent with the planning goals for the district and activates the street façade on Cambridgepark Drive, although it does require special permit approval because most retail uses are not allowed in the base zoning district. The new building is not proposed to have continuous retail along its entire Cambridgepark Drive frontage, but it would complement the ground-floor retail uses recently permitted by the Planning Board near the site at 36-54 CambridgePark Drive, 35 CambridgePark Drive and 125 CambridgePark Drive. It will be helpful to learn more about the Applicant's strategy to market that retail space and what types of retail uses might be anticipated. In addition, the Applicant could explore options to provide continuous retail frontage along CambridgePark Drive with retail uses on both sides of the main entrance to the new building to support the expanding residential and office uses in the area and to provide greater continuity among the various emerging retail spaces along the street.

Envision Alewife Zoning Recommendations

While this site is controlled by current zoning, including the current criteria for special permit approval, it is worthwhile to consider the zoning recommendations that are presented in the Alewife District Plan

and how the proposal relates to those recommendations. The following summarizes some key points, while the full set of zoning recommendations are presented on pages 156-163 of the Alewife District Plan report (find attached).

- **Flood Protection:** Design buildings to protect from projected 2070 10-year (10% annual probability) flood event, and to recover from projected 2070 100-year (1% annual probability) flood event. *(Alewife areawide standard based on CCPR planning)*

This standard is met by locating the ground floor (with retail and office uses) above the 10-year 2070 elevation. The engineering details for how flood risk will be managed for the below-grade garage space will be subject to DPW review. All recovery and mitigation strategies will be also subject to DPW review, in addition to other measures designed to meet current standards for stormwater management, utility service, and compensatory flood storage.

- **Heat Island Mitigation:** Design buildings to use green or white roofs, and employ landscaping and tree planting to mitigate urban heat island effect. *(Alewife areawide standard based on CCPR planning)*

The proposal includes a white roof across most of the roof area. Landscaping at the ground level occurs mostly around the edges of the building, with sidewalk tree plantings along the side that front the public street and the proposed multi-use path. The proposal involves the removal of several existing trees on the site, with some significant trees proposed to be transplanted to other locations. The project's Tree Study has been reviewed by DPW and specific comments are provided in their memo.

- **Other CCPR Recommendations.**

While specific CCPR measures continue to be studied, the applicant is encouraged to participate in the neighborhood resilience plan for the entire Triangle area. This is a proactive approach that aligns with the overall CCPR strategy of working with large landowners to participate in resiliency planning for the unique needs of their areas. The details of these planning efforts should be discussed further with CDD and DPW staff.

- **Transportation and Parking:** Remove minimum parking requirements, and limit parking to a maximum ratio of 0.8 space per 1,000 square feet for lab uses, 1.1 spaces per 1,000 square feet for office uses, and 1.5 spaces per 1,000 square feet for retail uses, while requiring enhanced Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs to reduce drive-alone mode shares. *(Alewife areawide standard)*

Parking is one of the more challenging issues to consider in implementing the Alewife Plan. Because the current zoning requires a minimum ratio of 0.95 space per 1,000 square feet, achieving the targeted maximum of 0.8 space per 1,000 square feet would require reducing the current minimum ratio. Considering only the proposed new building, the proposed parking ratio is slightly higher than the minimum requirement under current zoning.

Another challenging issue is the replacement of the existing parking spaces for the existing building in addition to adding new spaces for the new building. The recent historical trend for development

along CambridgePark Drive is that even where lower parking ratios have been applied to new development, the parking for existing commercial buildings has largely been retained because of ongoing agreements with tenants or other building owners. As a result, parking ratios for existing commercial buildings have remained higher than typical ratios in other parts of the city, and it has remained difficult to control traffic generation.

A TDM program will be developed as part of the PTDM requirements in consultation with the City's PTDM Officer. Such programs will be considered by TP&T when commenting on the transportation impact and mitigation provisions that must be considered by the Planning Board per Article 19.000.

- **Building Massing:** Promote continuous frontage on public streets, but break up building lengths of longer than 200 feet by creating gaps at least 40 feet wide and deep. (*Alewife areawide standard*)

The proposed building frontage along Cambridgepark Drive, which is the only public street frontage of the project, is less than 200 feet.

- **Setbacks:** Establish “build-to” lines in order to promote an active street frontage, while locating green open space to the rear of buildings. (*Alewife areawide standard – applied according to the conditions of the particular street*)

The Envision Alewife standards attempt to establish a consistent condition for the streetscape as a whole, considering the building façade, landscaping, sidewalks, and roadway as part of an entire composition. However, current the zoning continues to impose a front setback of 15 feet. Within these constraints, the proposed building uses consistent setback dimensions to support the retail functions along part of Cambridgepark Drive to the south and green space to the west side, east side, and between the buildings.

Urban Design

The proposed design seems appropriate in its basic siting and massing:

1. The curved façade facing Cambridgepark Drive and the building's bulk will help frame Cambridgepark Drive.
2. The inclusion of ground floor retail will help activate the street.
3. The courtyard between the proposed and existing buildings will benefit the building's users.
4. The proposed multiuse path from Cambridgepark Drive to the Fitchburg Trail enhances pedestrian and bicycle connections to the Alewife Reservation.
5. The loading dock and vehicular entrance to the parking garage are discreetly located.
6. The façade modulations help to reduce the scale of the building.
7. Transformers and switchgear are located within the volume of the building.

Staff would like to suggest that as the project's design develops, its site and architectural design further contribute to the coherence and beauty of the Alewife Triangle, framing and activating Cambridgepark Drive, reinforcing its pedestrian scale, and contributing to the richness of the Triangle's landscape and its connection to the Alewife Reservation.

Site Plan:

1. To enhance the pedestrian experience on Cambridgepark Drive and within the site, consider:

- a. Reducing the amount of paving, including the amount of surface parking and (if possible) the width of the driveway.
 - b. Reviewing the building's front setback and reducing it to the 15' minimum across the full width of the site, both to improve the building's relationship with the street and to align with the façade of 35 Cambridgepark Drive.
 - c. Providing a more continuous streetwall on Cambridgepark Drive by angling the building's east façade in plan in response to the angle of 35 Cambridgepark Drive's west façade, thereby reducing the gap between the two buildings.
 - d. Creating a more consistent landscape scheme along the building's street frontage, and a stronger relationship between the building's first floor and the sidewalk by such means as:
 - i. Planting additional curbside street trees in the western part of the frontage and lengthening the existing tree wells.
 - ii. Bringing the building's ground floor façade closer to the street.
 - iii. Moving the areaway connected to the parking garage (currently at the west end of the south façade) to the west side of the building.
 - iv. Providing a low wall along the sidewalk at the toe of the landscaped berm on the western portion of the Cambridgepark Drive frontage.
 - e. Planting trees in the margin between the multiuse path and the driveway.
 - f. Where possible, providing more landscape plantings on the west side of the building.
2. To enhance the site's contribution to the connectivity of the area for pedestrians and bicyclists, the following could be considered:
- a. Widening the sidewalk along Cambridgepark Drive.
 - b. Better integrating the sloped ADA route to the building entrance with the rest of the landscape scheme.
 - c. Accommodating a pedestrian desire line to the building entrance from the west.
 - d. Providing an additional Bluebike station on the west side of the building.
 - e. Further coordinating the design of the sidewalk with the sidewalks and other pedestrian infrastructure at 35 and 125 Cambridgepark Drive.
 - f. Staff strongly supports the route for the Multipurpose Path that extends north through the adjoining MBTA property rather than the route through the existing building's loading area.
 - i. From Cambridgepark Drive to the crosswalk, the 13' wide path should be described and designed as a 13' path with 2' buffers on each side, to equal 17 feet total.
 - ii. From the crosswalk to the Fitchburg cut off, the proposed 8' wide asphalt path with crushed stone buffers does not meet City standards. The path should be a minimum of 10' wide with 2' buffers on each side composed of packed crushed stone.
 - iii. Preferably use permeable paving for the full length of the multipurpose path.

Architectural Design

1. Enrich the pedestrian experience on Cambridgepark Drive by the design of the building's ground floor façade and its provisions for street activating uses. Consider:

- a. Creating a stronger relationship between the retail space at the building's southeast corner and Cambridgepark Drive by moving its entrance from the side of the building to the front, and including a signage band and large operable windows.
 - b. Providing retail space (or other activating uses) in the southwestern portion of the ground floor frontage as well as the southeastern portion. Design options could consider providing external ramp access up to 22'-6" instead of 21'. As presented, the ADA access to the retail space is through the internal ramp in the lobby. It is unclear whether there will be a ADA lift near the internal stairs within the retail space.
 - c. Bringing the ground floor façade out to the plane of the upper floor façade to increase the building's spatial and programmatic engagement with the street.
 - d. Increasing the floor to floor height of the ground floor to increase the flexibility of use and to create a more inviting pedestrian experience.
 - e. Providing a canopy at the second floor level on the Cambridgepark Drive façade to enhance the pedestrian scale of the building and to strengthen the connection between the retail space and the street.
 - f. Articulating the ground floor façade into architectural bays to help define the ground floor uses, and to differentiate it from the office/lab uses above.
 - g. Reducing the breadth of the ground floor architectural bays to enhance the building's pedestrian scale.
 - h. Providing the ground tenant floor spaces with ventilation that will accommodate possible/future food uses.
 - i. Reducing the width of the lobby's street frontage to increase the frontage available for activating uses.
2. Adjust the design of the building's upper floor facades to more strongly frame Cambridgepark Drive as civic space, to respond to the open space on the adjoining property to the west, to create a sense of a durable building constructed of high-quality materials, and to respond to solar orientation:
- a. On the south façade, the proposed brick elements are narrow, giving the somewhat discordant effect of a horizontal ribbon window facade upon which thin vertical strips of brick have been overlaid. Consideration could be given to more consistent use of brick elements across the façade, and increasing the breadth of the brick panels. In addition, the arrangement of the window mullions, and the detailing of the brick areas could be further studied.
 - b. Consider swapping the façade treatments of the building's north and south sides to create a lower window/wall ratio on the south façade and a higher ratio facing the courtyard.
 - c. Consider providing a greater depth of façade relief on the south façade to take advantage of the effects of light and shadow on its curvature.
 - d. Consider using masonry instead of aluminum panels for the horizontal bands at the 2nd, 4th, and penthouse levels, and making the horizontal bands coplanar with the brick.
 - e. Consider providing sun shading devices for south facing glazed areas to enhance environmental performance.

- f. Consider creating a stronger response on the west façade to the open space at 125 Cambridgepark Drive.
 - g. Consider deleting the fourth-floor level cornice on the south façade that extends toward the building’s southeast corner, or extending it around to the east facade.
3. Penthouse:
- a. Reduce the Penthouse’s visual bulk by such means as differentiating between “penthouse wall” and “screen wall”, or by using semi-transparent screening material or louvers.
 - b. Demonstrate how future tenant mechanical equipment can be accommodated within the allocated space without protruding above the screening.

Sustainability

The proposed development is subject to the Green Building Requirements in Section 22.20 of the Zoning Ordinance. A proposed amendment to this section has been advertised and reviewed in public hearings by the Planning Board and City Council, and if that amendment is adopted, this proposal will be subject to the new requirements. The amendment would require an increase in the minimum design standard using the LEED rating system from a “Silver” level to a “Gold” level. It would also require an enhanced commissioning program and the preparation of a “Net Zero Narrative” explaining the measures being taken to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions by improving energy efficiency and promoting renewable energy sources.

According to its Green Building submission, this project is currently proposed to achieve a LEED Silver standard, but in conversations with CDD staff, the project team indicated that they will investigate the feasibility of pursuing additional credits to achieve LEED Gold. The project team also submitted a Resiliency Narrative which outlined their efforts to implement sustainable and resilient measures to reduce GHG emissions and mitigate adverse impacts related to climate change.

Continuing Review

The following is a summary of issues that staff recommends should be further studied by the Applicant, either in preparing revised materials if the Planning Board continues the hearing to a future date, or as conditions for ongoing design review by staff if the Board decides to grant the special permit:

- Provide revised cover sheet and narrative to include the special permit to allow retail uses in the first floor as per Section 20.94.1
- Review of streetscape improvements and landscaping proposed for Cambridgepark Drive, including the design of the sidewalk, bicycle lane and crosswalks along Cambridgepark Drive, landscape plantings.
- Explore ways to mitigate the extent of hardscape.
- Review of design and details of the multi-use path.
- Review of location and size of shared bike stations.
- Further development of the building’s facades.
- Review of all exterior building materials, colors, and details, including a materials mock-up on the site prior to any exterior materials being ordered.

- Review of glass specifications: ground floor glazing and upper floor glazing.
- Review of exterior lighting.
- Review of noted Climate Change Preparedness & Resiliency items.
- Explore options for continuous retail frontage along CambridgePark Drive.
- Review of programming and marketing strategies for retail space.
- Provide detailed narrative on how the project design relates to the design guidelines.

MEMO

To: Cambridge Planning Board
From: Cambridge Pedestrian Committee
Date: November 21, 2019
Re: Special Permit PB #354, 97-101 CambridgePark Drive

We have reviewed the proponent's proposal and would like to submit the following comments for consideration by the Planning Board.

Network Connections and Walking Environment

We are pleased to see that the proponent is considering the additional connections for people walking (and bicycling) to and through this site. The proposal to create a path from CambridgePark Drive to the Fitchburg cutoff path is great, with the following notes.

- In this kind of situation, a fully shared used path makes more sense (not trying to squeeze pedestrians into a narrow walkway which they are unlikely to use)
- The path should be at least 10' wide beyond the crosswalk to the door of the building
- The path through the MBTA property works well, but we are not comfortable with a design that puts people walking into a driveway environment where vehicles, including large trucks will be navigating. It is also right at a curve, where drivers may not be expecting to see people. We would suggest relooking at that driveway design to incorporate a separated path if the path through the MBTA property does not come to fruition

Western Facade

We appreciate building designs with activation on all sides if possible. It was unclear what is happening on the western side of the building.

MEMO

To: Cambridge Planning Board
From: Cambridge Bicycle Committee
Date: November 13, 2019
Re: PB Application 354, 87-101 CambridgePark Drive

We have reviewed the proponent's proposal would like to submit the following comments for consideration by the Planning Board.

- We were very pleased to see the proposal for a path connecting people walking and bicycling from CambridgePark Drive to the Belmont/Fitchburg Path. The proposed option that utilizes the MBTA ROW is clearly the most desirable, although the path would be better at the wider width for the entire length.
 - While we understand that agreements are not yet in place to permit this alignment, we are concerned that the other option of depositing cyclists and pedestrians into a driveway and loading delivery area with no separation would be an unsafe zone. The path is not just for people bicycling, people would also be walking in this area. The driveway design should be re-evaluated if the better alignment does not come to fruition.
- The Bluebikes station is an excellent addition and should be larger
- The bicycle parking provisions look good; is it possible to have weather protection for the outside racks?
- For the Planning Board's consideration as mitigation it would be beneficial for the existing separated bicycle facility along the front of the building to be raised to sidewalk level, as the sidewalk will be reconstructed anyway.

Zoning Recommendations

The Alewife Planning Study recommends continuing a two-tiered zoning approach in this area, in which as-of-right zoning is consistent with existing patterns of development, and a special permit process allows redevelopment consistent with this plan’s recommendations. In general, as-of-right zoning treats existing allowed uses and densities as conforming. The special permit process allows increased density and height in exchange for meeting requirements set forth in this plan, including new streets and other key infrastructure, open space improvements, enhanced urban design, and transportation mitigation.

Areawide Recommendations

The following zoning recommendations would apply areawide for development proposals seeking density and height above base zoning.

Built form

In order to encourage a more desirable, urban pattern of development, the plan recommends the following built form standards:

- Maintain prevailing density limits in current zoning with bonuses for providing new roads, a pedestrian/bicycle bridge connecting the Quadrangle to the Triangle, and a linear open space, as identified in the plan.
- Adjust heights to accomplish the following: Promote desired residential and commercial building typologies.
 - Allow greater use of density bonuses for public space and infrastructure
 - Allow more flexibility to employ Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and density bonuses
 - Promote more private and public open space.
 - Account for higher ground floor elevations for flood protection.
 - Retain lower heights near existing residential neighborhoods.

Setback Requirements

Maximum Facade Length

Facade lengths restricted to 200 feet; for buildings where street frontages are more than 200 feet, a courtyard should be incorporated.

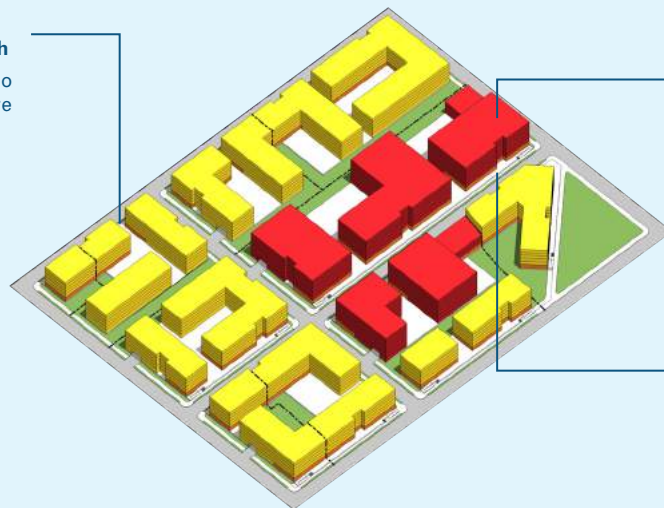
Side Setback

0 feet within the first 65 feet of the front lot line (required). 15 feet beyond 65 feet to the rear lot line (minimum).

Front Setback

Establish “build-to” lines for building frontages according to the street types defined on pages 130-131.

- Active Uses
- Commercial
- Residential



- Establish “build-to” lines for building frontages according to the street types defined in this plan. [Read more about “Quadrangle Street Types” on pages 130-131.](#)
- No required sideyard setback within the first 65 feet of the front lot line (recommendation does not apply to industrial buildings).
- Rear setbacks should be used to increase site permeability and reserve space for future green infrastructure.
- Increase open space requirement to at least 20% of the site
- Restrict facade lengths to 200 feet; for buildings where street frontages are more than 200 feet, a courtyard should be incorporated (does not apply to industrial buildings).
- Elevate first floors to the projected 2070 10-yr SLR/SS elevation. Accomplish this by: raising streets; providing elevated walkways; or using raised green yards with low retaining walls. Berms are discouraged.
- Encourage ground-floor retail or other active uses at key locations identified in this plan.
- Locate parking below first occupiable floor or covered by a landscaped deck and hidden from view from streets and open spaces.

Mobility

The following transportation standards aim to decrease automobile reliance and promote walking, bicycling, transit:

- Eliminate minimum parking requirements, except for residential development.
- Set low maximum parking ratios by use to prevent overbuilding of parking, reduce vehicle trip generation, and encourage multi-modal transportation.
- Require enhanced transportation demand management measures. [Read more about TDM recommendations on pages 127.](#)
- Allow pooled/shared parking and encourage in special permit criteria.
- Require all future commercial development to pay \$5 per square foot into a transportation improvement fund for the district.
- Locate driveway access and off-street parking on streets without elevated walkways or active ground floor use, where feasible.

Parking Requirements

Establish maximum parking requirements, as a way to limit the amount of permitted parking and reduce unnecessary parking inventory instituted by parking minimums.

Maximum Number of Parking Spaces	
Retail	maximum 1.5 per 1,000 SF
Office	maximum 1.1 per 1,000 SF
R&D	maximum 0.8 per 1,000 SF
Industrial	maximum 0.5 per 1,000 SF
Residential	maximum 0.75 per dwelling unit minimum .25 per dwelling unit

Flood Resilience and Urban Heat Island Reduction

The following resilience standards aim to mitigate impacts from future flood and heat-related climate change impacts:

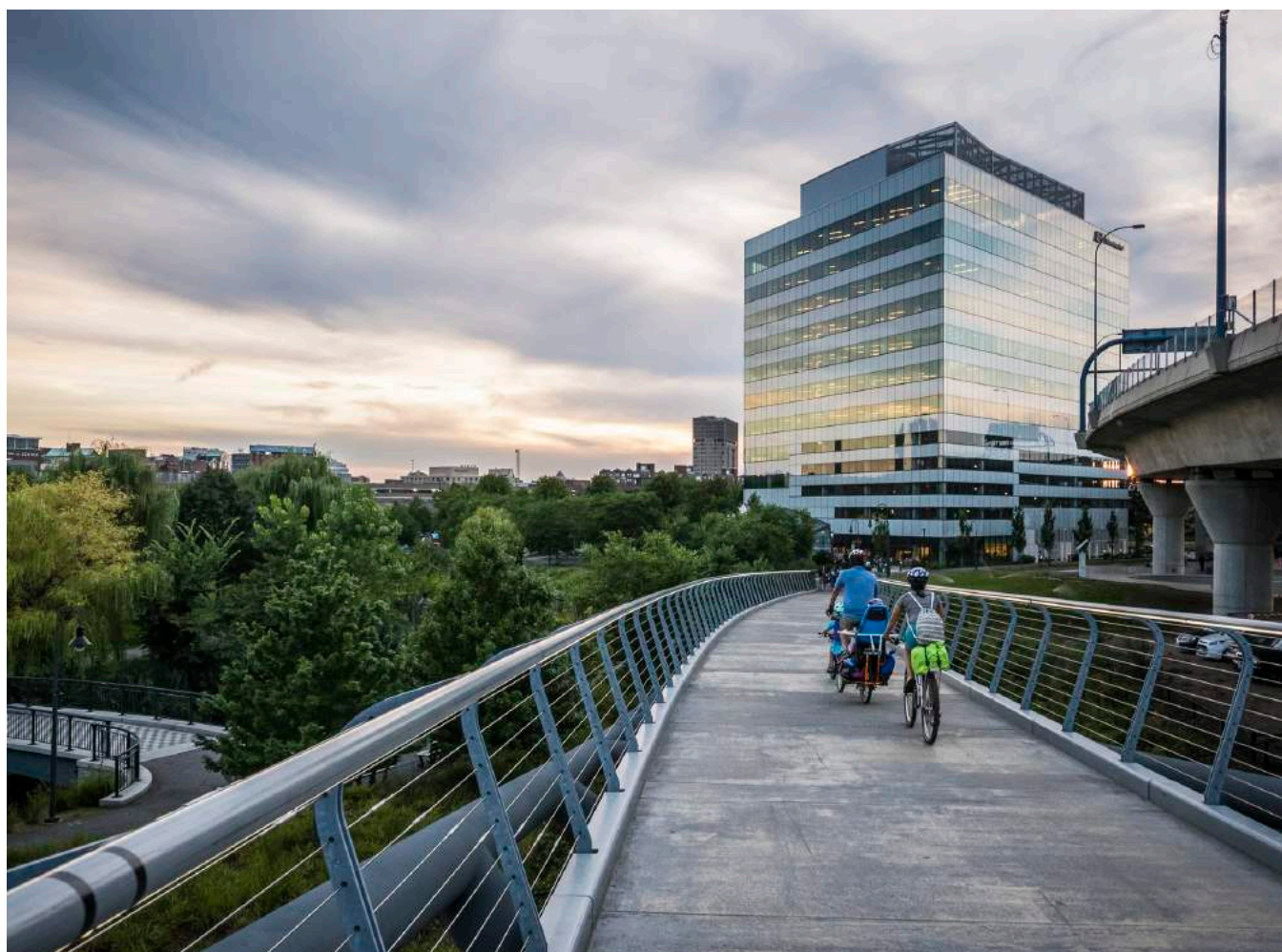
- Protect from anticipated 2070 10-yr (10% annual chance) SLR/SS elevation (i.e., first occupiable floors at this level)
 - First occupiable floors should be at or above this level
 - Elevate first floor no greater than 4 feet and provide additional flood protection as necessary to protect from the 2070 10-yr SLR/SS elevation.
- Recover from anticipated 2070 100-yr (1% annual chance) SLR/SS elevation
 - Locate occupiable residential use above this level
 - Elevate critical mechanical systems and building equipment above this level
 - Use water-safe or easily replaceable materials below this level

- Require green or white roofs on areas not occupied by solar panels. Mechanical equipment must have a white roof or canopy and light-colored materials must be used for occupiable space.
- Plant shade trees at intervals of 20 to 30 feet, either on the public sidewalk or within raised green front yards.
- Incorporate other measures as recommended through Climate Change Preparedness and Resilience (CCPR) plan and Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force (CRZTF).
- Establish minimum permeable area per total lot area at 25%.

Public Improvements

Consistency with the Alewife District Plan would be a key criterion for granting of special permits. The following incentives to achieve public improvements, including new streets and open space, include:

- Retain density bonus for land conveyed to city for public use.
- Right-of-way easements reserved and/or transferred for new roads, a pedestrian/bicycle bridge connecting the Quadrangle to the Triangle, and linear open space as identified in the plan.



The North Bank Bridge, a pedestrian/bicycle bridge, connects Cambridge to Boston.

Elevated Walkways

One of the primary reasons for zoning reform in Alewife is the necessity to balance flood resilience standards with street activation and district walkability. This plan proposes the use of an elevated walkway to mitigate the negative impacts on the streetscape associated with elevating occupiable floors. Conditions for a publicly-accessible elevated walkway are as follows:

- Locate at level of building's first occupiable floor.
- Elevated walkways should be 12 feet wide.
- Access should be provided where elevated walkways meet parcel boundaries, plus additional stairs and accessible ramps required at a maximum of every 200 feet. Stairs and ramps are to be within the 12-foot width.

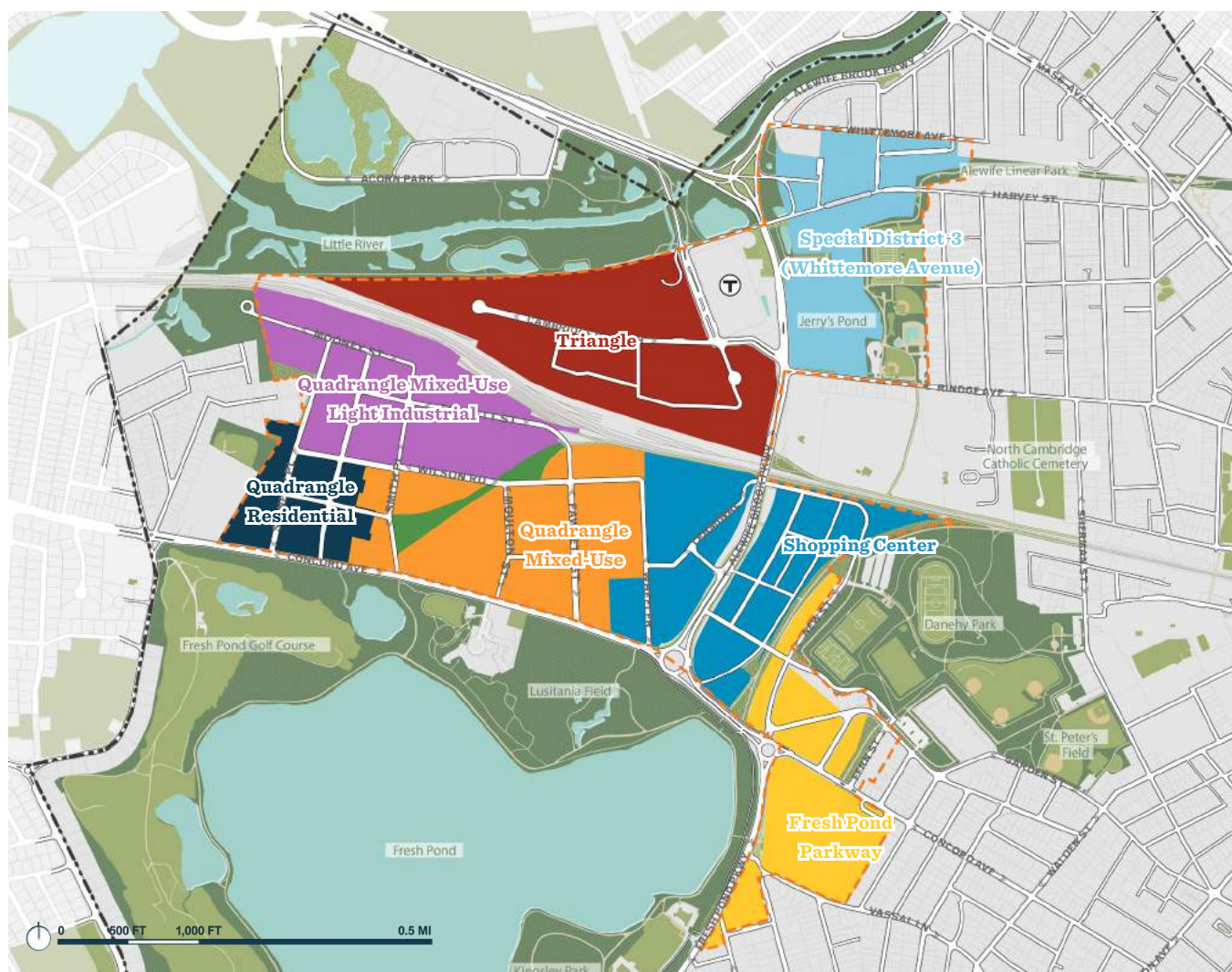
- Maintain a 5-foot minimum pedestrian passage zone.
- Where an elevated walkway exists on an adjacent site, align walking surfaces or provide smooth transition.
- Provide a 12-foot wide architectural canopy over elevated walkways with at least 12 feet clear headroom.
- No enclosed space may occupy the elevated walkway.
- Non-conditioned uses and parking are allowed below the elevated walkway.



An artistic rendering shows the grade-separated bicycle lane with elevated walkways within the Quadrangle.

Alewife Zoning Districts

The plan proposes seven zoning districts to align with the study's subdistricts. The Quadrangle subdistrict is broken down into three zoning districts: Mixed-Use Light Industrial, Residential, and Mixed-Use. The following section identifies specific zoning recommendation to achieve the goals identified in this plan for each subdistrict.



Subdistrict Development Objectives

Subdistrict	Development Objectives
<p>Quadrangle Residential Zone</p>	<p>Transition over time to mid-rise multifamily/townhouse residential development Taller multifamily developments along Concord Avenue Promote neighborhood supporting retail along Concord Avenue and Wilson Road. Public connections to Rafferty Park</p>
<p>Quadrangle Mixed-Use Light Industrial Zone</p>	<p>Light industrial at ground floors of commercial buildings with appropriate floor-to-ceiling heights (see Economy Recommendations on page 148) Light industrial “showroom” or retail component along Wilson Road and Smith Place Buffer Cambridge Highlands with lower density residential and vegetated buffer Elevate first floors and create a raised, continuous, publicly-accessible walkway with active ground floor space along Smith Place and Wilson Road</p>
<p>Quadrangle Mixed-Use Zone</p>	<p>Mix of commercial and residential development at current allowed density Elevate first floors and create a raised, continuous, publicly-accessible walkway with active ground floor space along Smith Place and Wilson Road Encourage commercial uses along Smith Place as a buffer between residential uses and truck traffic leading to the Mixed-Use Light Industrial Zone.</p>
<p>Triangle Zone</p>	<p>Mix of commercial and residential development at current allowed density Promote neighborhood supporting retail or active space along Cambridgepark Drive and Alewife Brook Parkway Allow building height up to 125 feet to take advantage of the proximity to the Alewife MBTA Station</p>
<p>Shopping Center Zone</p>	<p>Phased, mixed-use redevelopment at current allowed density, approximately 50-60% residential, 20-30% office, 10-20% retail Create an “Alewife Square” as a focal civic space for the entire district, with pedestrian/bicycle connections Create internal street grid and expand open space along Watertown Path Retain 45,000+ SF grocery store</p>
<p>Whittemore Avenue (Special District 3) Zone</p>	<p>Phased, mixed-use redevelopment at current allowed density, approximately 65% residential, 35% commercial Restore open space around Jerry’s Pond for public use and stormwater retention through private (non-city) investment Internal street grid and pedestrian/bicycle connections Additional height and density in exchange for restoration of open space around Jerry’s Pond</p>
<p>Fresh Pond Parkway Zone</p>	<p>Residential development, with ground-floor neighborhood supporting retail or active space along Fresh Pond Parkway and Concord Avenue Curb cuts are discouraged along Fresh Pond Parkway and Concord Avenue Allow modest additional height in exchange for public open space connections</p>

Current Alewife Overlay Zoning (FARs/Heights allowed by AOD Special Permit)

Subdistrict	AOD-1 (Quad NW)	AOD-2 (Quad NE)	AOD-3 (Quad SW)	AOD-4 (Quad SE)	AOD-5 (Shopping)	AOD-6 (Triangle)
Base Zoning	IB-2	IB-2	O-1	O-1	BA	O-2A
Res. FAR	1.50	1.50	2.00	2.00	2.001	2.00
Non-res. FAR	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.50	1.25 ¹	1.75
Res. Height	65'-80' ^{2,3}	85'-105' ²	65'-80' ^{2,3}	85'-105' ²	85'-105' ²	105'-125' ²
Non-res. Height	55' ³	70'	55' ³	70'	70'	85'

1 20%-50% residential required if GFA exceeds 100,000sf; first 225,000sf of non-residential must be retail.

2 Additional height only to accommodate FAR bonus for public improvements; additional limitations apply to taller floorplates.

3 Reduced to 35' within 100 linear feet of a residential or open space district; to 45' within 200 linear feet of a residential or open space district.

Note: All residential development eligible for 30% inclusionary housing density bonus.

Recommended Alewife Overlay Zoning (FARs/Heights allowed by AOD Special Permit except where noted)

Subdistrict	Quad-Residential	Quad-Light Industrial	Quad-Mixed Use	Shopping Center	Triangle
Base Zoning	O-1	IB-2	O-1	BA	O-2A
Res. FAR	2.0	1.50	2.00 ¹	2.00 ²	2.00
Non-res. FAR	1.5 ³	1.50 ⁴	1.50 ¹	1.25 ²	1.75
Res. Height⁵	65'	65' ⁶	85'	85'	125'
Non-res. Height⁵	55' ⁶	85' ⁶	85'	85'	85'

1 Mixed-use development allowed at residential FAR, but non-residential component must conform to non-residential FAR limit.

2 Subject to master plan approval for mixed-use development, approx. 50-60% residential, 20-30% office, 10-20% retail (including grocery store).

3 Residential standards applicable to institutional uses, artist studios, and ground-floor retail.

4 FAR exemption for light industry uses at ground story.

5 Heights calculated from 2070 "protect" flood elevation

6 Reduced to 35' within 100 linear feet of a residential or open space district; to 45' within 200 linear feet of a residential or open space district.

Note: All residential development eligible for 30% inclusionary housing density bonus.

Whittemore Avenue District (Special District 3)

	Current Zoning	Recommended Zoning
Maximum FAR	0.45	0.45 + bonus for public open space improvements
Maximum GFA in District	782,500 SF	782,500 SF + bonus for public open space improvements
Minimum Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit	2,500 SF/unit	May be reduced with Planning Board master plan special permit approval
Maximum Height	55' generally Step-down to 35' near public open space Increase to 70' near Alewife Brook Parkway	70' with Planning Board master plan special permit approval including public open space improvements ¹

¹ Heights calculated from 2070 “protect” flood elevation

Note: All residential development eligible for 30% inclusionary housing density bonus.

Fresh Pond Parkway (new overlay district)

	Current Zoning	Recommended Zoning
Base Districts	Res. B, Res. C-1, Res. C-1A, BA, IA-1	No change
Maximum FAR	Range: 0.75-1.75	2:1 GFA bonus by special permit for public open space connections and improvements
Maximum Height	Range: 35'-45'	Up to 10' additional height by special permit for public open space connections and improvements ¹

¹ Heights calculated from 2070 “protect” flood elevation

Note: All residential development eligible for 30% inclusionary housing density bonus.