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Cambridge Planning Board
c/o Community Development Department
344 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: 180 Fawcett Street (PB-385) – Request for Extension

Dear Chair Flynn and Members of the Board:

On March 29, 2022, this Board granted a special permit for a proposed life science development located at 180 Fawcett Street. Pursuant to Section 10.46 of the City of Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, this permit will lapse if construction has not commenced within two years of its grant, unless the Board finds good cause to extend. I write to respectfully request that the Board extend PB-385 for an additional two years.

As this Board is aware, in early 2022, the City Council issued a moratorium on laboratory development in the Alewife District, prohibiting all lab projects until December 31, 2023 or such earlier time as new zoning was adopted for the District. The City took the position that during the pendency of the moratorium, ISD could not issue building permits for any lab project in Alewife, regardless of whether it had been granted a special permit. The new Alewife District Zoning was adopted in September 2023, thereby ending the moratorium; thus, as a practical matter, this project could not have commenced before that time.

Since the moratorium ended in September, the owner has been taking steps toward applying for a building permit. The current development and construction climate is challenging, to say the least. Covid-19 pandemic conditions created significant obstacles with respect to the construction materials supply chain and labor market, many of which have persisted despite the waning of the pandemic. More recently, the well-publicized

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volatility of the capital markets has presented additional hurdles with respect to the availability of construction financing. While the owner is committed to moving forward with this project, more time is needed to make this a feasible undertaking.

We hope the Board will agree that the foregoing factors constitute good cause for a 2-year extension of PB-385. We look forward to discussing this request in person at the next available Planning Board meeting.

Very truly yours,



Johanna Schneider