

PLANNING BOARD
FOR THE
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

GENERAL HEARING
TUESDAY, MAY 2, 2023
6:30 p.m.

Remote Meeting
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Mary T. Flynn, Chair
Louis J. Bacci, Jr.
Steven A. Cohen
H Theodore Cohen
Hugh Russell
Tom Sieniewicz
Ashley Tan

Community Development Staff
Daniel Messplay
Swaathi Joseph
Erik Thorkildsen
Suzannah Bigolin
Adithi Moogoor



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P R O C E E D I N G S

* * * * *

(6:30 p.m.)

Sitting Members: Mary T. Flynn, Louis J. Bacci, Jr., Steven Cohen, H Theodore Cohen, Hugh Russell, Tom Sieniewicz, and Ashley Tan

MARY FLYNN: Good evening. Welcome to the May 2, 2023 meeting of the Cambridge Planning Board. My name is Mary Flynn, and I am the Chair.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of Chapter 2 in the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation at meetings of the Cambridge planning Board.

All Board members, applicants, and members of the public will state their name before speaking. All votes will be taken by roll call.

Members of the public will be kept on mute until it is time for public comment. I will give instructions for public comment at that time, and you can also find instructions on the City's webpage for remote Planning Board meetings.

1 This meeting is being video and audio recorded and
2 is being streamed live on the City of Cambridge online
3 meeting portal and on cable television Channel 22, within
4 Cambridge. There will also be a transcript of the
5 proceedings.

6 I'll start by asking Staff to take Board member
7 attendance and verify that all members are audible.

8 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Louis Bacci, are you present,
9 and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

10 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Present, visible, and
11 audible.

12 DANIEL MESSPLAY: H Theodore Cohen, are you
13 present, and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

14 H THEODORE COHEN: Present, visible, and audible.

15 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Steve Cohen, are you present,
16 and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

17 STEVEN A. COHEN: I am present, visible, and
18 audible.

19 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Tom Sieniewicz, are you present,
20 and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

21 TOM SIENIEWICZ: Present, visible, and audible.

22 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Hugh Russell, are you present,

1 and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

2 HUGH RUSSELL: Present, visible, and audible.

3 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Ashley Tan, are you present, and
4 is and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

5 ASHLEY TAN: Present, visible, and audible.

6 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Catherine Preston Connolly, are
7 you present, and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

8 [Pause]

9 Absent? Mary Flynn, are you present, and is the
10 meeting visible and audible to you?

11 MARY FLYNN: Present, visible, and audible.

12 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. That's seven members
13 present and one member absent, which constitutes a quorum.

14 MARY FLYNN: Great. Thank you, Daniel.

15 * * * * *

16 (6:32 p.m.)

17 Sitting Members: Mary T. Flynn, Louis J. Bacci, Jr., Steven
18 Cohen, H Theodore Cohen, Hugh Russell, Tom
19 Sieniewicz, and Ashley Tan

20 MARY FLYNN: The first item this evening is an
21 Update from the Community Development Department. I believe
22 Daniel is doing that, if you'd also introduce other Staff

1 who are present this evening.

2 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you, Chair Flynn. Daniel
3 Messplay here, Acting Director of the Zoning and Development
4 Division at the Community Development Department.

5 With me here this evening also from the Zoning and
6 Development Division we have Swaathi Joseph, our Zoning
7 Project Planner, and Adithi Moogoor, our Zoning and
8 Development Intern.

9 From the Community Planning Division, we're joined
10 by our two Urban Designers, Erik Thorkildsen and Suzannah
11 Bigolin. And we are also joined by Fabiola Alikpokou from
12 the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, who will be present
13 for the third item this evening when we talk about the
14 Design Update for PB-147.

15 Just a quick update: So tonight, we have a
16 continued public hearing for a townhouse modification at 6
17 Lilac Court. We will also have a Design Review session for
18 the Parcel V Triangle at Cambridge Crossing, and a Design
19 Update for 125 Broadway.

20 There is no meeting scheduled for next week, so we
21 will have a break on May 9, and then we will resume Planning
22 Board on May 16.

1 On May 16, we'll discuss the Charles Franklin et
2 al. Zoning Petition, and also have a Design Review session
3 for the first building and first open space of the Volpe
4 Redevelopment, which is exciting.

5 In the realm of Council hearings, there is an
6 Ordinance Committee hearing on the Craig Kelley et al.
7 Petition tomorrow at 3:00. As you recall, the Board
8 forwarded a report with no positive or negative
9 recommendation on that petition.

10 And the Franklin et al. Petition, which we'll be
11 discussing on May 16, there is an Ordinance Committee
12 hearing on May 24. And that concludes this CDD Update. So
13 I will turn it back to the Chair.

14 MARY FLYNN: Thanks very much, appreciate that,
15 Daniel. Are there any questions from members of the Board?
16 Didn't see any hands, okay. All right. Then we'll move on.

17 * * * * *

18 (6:34 p.m.)

19 Sitting Members: Mary T. Flynn, Louis J. Bacci, Jr., Steven
20 Cohen, H Theodore Cohen, Hugh Russell, Tom
21 Sieniewicz, and Ashley Tan

22 MARY FLYNN: The next item on the agenda is a

1 continued public hearing on case PB-009, an amendment to an
2 approved special permit for a townhouse development located
3 at 6 Lilac Court.

4 CDD Staff will begin by introducing the item. And
5 for that, we can go back again to Daniel.

6 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you, Chair Flynn. This
7 townhouse development was originally approved in 1980, and
8 it has been amended twice previously and as recently as
9 2020. The proposed alterations to this townhouse involve
10 filling in an existing mezzanine, extending a dormer and
11 modifying existing windows.

12 The townhouse provisions in the zoning ordinance
13 established that modifications after a town development has
14 been subdivided must be specifically enumerated in the
15 special permit decision. And these alterations were not.

16 Therefore, the Planning Board's action is to grant
17 or deny the requested amendment to the special permit upon
18 finding that the proposal meets the criteria for approval of
19 townhouses and multifamily dwellings in Section 10.474 of
20 the zoning ordinance, as well as City's General Special
21 Permit Criteria.

22 And a memo was provided by CDD Staff with comments

1 on the Zoning and Urban Design elements of the proposal, and
2 Staff are present to answer any questions the Board may
3 have.

4 MARY FLYNN: Great. Thank you, Daniel. Now for
5 the presentation. We'll turn to Alison Hammer, who is
6 representing the applicant. Ms. Hammer, you'll have up to
7 30 minutes to present. We hope you can be as concise as
8 possible, but we can certainly allow additional time at our
9 discretion.

10 If you would start by introducing yourself and any
11 other members of the team -- of your team who are present,
12 we'll turn it over to you to begin.

13 ALISON HAMMER: Thank you, Chair Flynn, members of
14 the Planning Board as well as the Staff who are here
15 tonight. My name is Alison Hammer, and I'm an architect
16 based in Newton, but previously for 20 years in Cambridge
17 until kids got in the way.

18 And I'm pleased to be presenting this project
19 tonight on behalf of my client Zi Wang and Leon Sun. And
20 they are here as well tonight.

21 And perhaps before I dive into the project itself,
22 I'll give Zi and Leon a quick chance to just introduce

1 themselves to the Board and the public.

2 LEON SUN: Good evening, Board members. My name
3 is Leon. Next to me is my wife Zi. We're the owners, co-
4 owners of 6 Lilac Court.

5 We both moved to the Cambridge area about 10 years
6 ago for graduate training and got married at the MIT Chapel.
7 For many years, we lived in student dorms in Cambridgeport,
8 and it was a dream come true to be property owners here in
9 Cambridge after graduation.

10 We're both first-generation immigrants, and
11 although I personally grew up in many countries, we both
12 loved the City of Cambridge so much that, you know, we
13 decided to stay here after graduation.

14 Since moving to Lilac Court in 2020, we have also
15 fallen in love with our Lilac Court community. Even in the
16 middle of the COVID pandemic, we were grateful to have very
17 generous neighbors who offered us advice, firewood for our
18 wood-burning stove and even helped me extricate my car when
19 I was stuck in the snow a couple winters ago.

20 We also feel very grateful because I know many of
21 our neighbors have written letters of support for our
22 renovation project, who also invited us to their homes and

1 shared their renovation plans and pitfalls -- sort of first-
2 time homeowners like us.

3 Our neighbors' kindness and generosity have really
4 encouraged us to embark on similar renovations project of
5 our own, to make it a more comforting and inviting place for
6 the next phase of our lives.

7 With that, I'll hand a virtual microphone back
8 over to Alison to tell you more about our plans.

9 ALISON HAMMER: Thank you, Leon and Zi. So as I'm
10 sure the Board is already familiar, the Board has already
11 familiarized themselves with this project -- 6 Lilac Court
12 is a townhouse that was originally permitted, as Daniel
13 mentioned, in 1980 as part of PB-9, a 24-unit townhouse
14 development.

15 It is one of the, you know, iconic Bell and
16 Fandetti Townhouses that we see sprinkled throughout
17 Cambridge. I think anybody who spends a lot of time in
18 Cambridge recognizes them immediately from their, you know,
19 unique massing and playful elevations and often beautiful,
20 lush garden settings.

21 I know as I lived around the corner from one for
22 many years, and it always just seemed like a very magical

1 place that I kind of coveted.

2 But as an architect, as I have worked with clients
3 including clients obviously who are in these townhouses:
4 While they have so many wonderful, unique characteristics,
5 there also are elements to the way they were built that are
6 not totally conducive to modern living, which is why many of
7 them do undergo fairly significant renovations.

8 In our case, we're actually looking to make a
9 relatively light renovation and relatively small
10 modifications to this house to improve its livability. And
11 I will touch on the elements that we are changing as we look
12 through the plans and elevations.

13 If we could go to the next slide?

14 So on this slide, we -- I just wanted to
15 familiarize you with the location on the left. You can see
16 the area plan with the lot 4-6 Lilac Court highlighted.

17 These are three simple, separated townhouses, each
18 on their own individual lot, as opposed to a condominium
19 structure.

20 And you can see the 6 Lilac Court plot on its own
21 on the rights. You can see it is -- there is quite a deep
22 front yard, as well as a rear yard, with the exception of a

1 2.12 section, long section -- foot-long section of rear
2 yard. Thank you.

3 That kind of jots in in that corner, which leads
4 to some of the nonconformities that require us to be here
5 for our special permit hearing, as well as just the
6 fundamental fact of making changes to this development.

7 If you could go to the next slide, please? Thank
8 you.

9 Just to familiarize you, the current exterior of
10 the building -- as a little unit townhouse, there really
11 isn't much to speak of as far as side elevations, unless we
12 see the front side, the front elevation, which has a two-
13 story bay.

14 And on the rear, we see the tall window, which is
15 in a very, very high atrium space right now that kind of
16 currently stands at almost three stories, as well as the
17 existing dormer, which is just under nine feet long
18 currently that we are asking to extend the to 15'.

19 We can go to the next slide, please.

20 We also wanted to include some context photos from
21 the street, which I think they cleared that. As far as
22 viewing this project from the public ways, it is pretty hard

1 to see. It's really tucked back in there.

2 You can kind of just see a sliver of it from
3 Webster Avenue and, you know, from Bristol Street even in --
4 you know, this looks like a very, very early spring when
5 this photo was taken. You really can barely see it even
6 without leaves on the trees. So this is really a secluded
7 and tucked away vis-à-vis public views.

8 Next slide? Thank you.

9 I did want to just add a few photos of the
10 interior. Again, some members of the Board may be familiar
11 with these townhouses, though perhaps not everybody inside
12 of them. They are very narrow floor plate buildings and
13 quite small floor plates with small spaces.

14 And the rooms themselves actually have quite low
15 ceilings, so there are these kind of like dramatic,
16 multistory atria as well.

17 Another interesting design choice is the fact that
18 there are no interior walls. So every single room, every
19 bedroom, everything is open to each other. So, you know,
20 certainly part of this renovation is going to be just making
21 the space more usable and closing off walls and
22 reconfiguring windows, as well as infilling part of this

1 very high atrium, so it will still be a 1.5 story space, but
2 it won't be a, you know, 2.5 story space.

3 And hopefully my clients Zi and Leon will get an
4 extra bedroom to use as they move forward into the next
5 phase of their life.

6 Next slide, please? Thank you.

7 Here we have our Zoning Summary. You can see
8 under Item 2, existing proposed GFA, that we are just
9 infilling a section of GFA where there currently is.

10 Due to the definitions of mezzanine spaces and
11 two-story spaces and open spaces and enclosing spaces, but
12 since we're enclosing the space and adding a floor, we will
13 be making a small increase to the gross floor area.

14 But we will -- that will be under 10 percent of
15 the existing area of the house, and we are -- and the volume
16 addition will be very minimal, because it's just this -- you
17 know, six-foot dormer extension.

18 Next slide, please?

19 So as you can see from the floor plans, we are
20 obviously keeping most things in the existing locations. We
21 are adding a powder room with a window, and we are
22 increasing the window in the kitchen to get a little bit

1 more light and ventilation in there, as well as increasing
2 the size of the kitchen, which is even by Cambridge
3 standards quite small right now.

4 And we are looking to -- you can see in the plan
5 here and we'll see it more in the elevation -- we are going
6 to replace an assortment of windows with one large, double
7 sliding door.

8 Next slide, please?

9 As we move up to the kind of mezzanine and second
10 floor, as you can see, currently on the left there is an
11 area that is open to below that we would like to fill in, as
12 we are also adding interior partitions.

13 And as part of that project of infilling that
14 area, we would like to extend the existing dormer that is
15 just currently in the mezzanine area to give a little bit
16 more height and a portion of the new bedroom that we're
17 proposing, and to be able to add an egress window for lead
18 safety as well as, you know, light and ventilation in that
19 new space.

20 Next slide, please?

21 And on the top floor, the changes are pretty much
22 internal, other than some skylights.

1 Next slide? Thank you.

2 So you can start to see how these changes are
3 reflected in our elevations here. We are obviously adding a
4 skylight on the top. And you can see on the ground floor on
5 the left we're going from a small double-hung window to
6 side-by-side casements, as well as small awning window in
7 the new WC.

8 Next slide, please?

9 On the little, tiny bit of side elevation that we
10 do have, we're actually going to be removing a window,
11 because it would interfere with the new floor, where we are
12 looking to extend the mezzanine.

13 Next slide, please?

14 And in the rear, you can see where we are
15 extending that dormer, again, from currently just shy of 9'
16 to 15' and adding another side-by-side casement window
17 there, as well as removing the existing slider and the
18 existing double, two-story window with a four-panel glass
19 door, two of which are operable to give my clients -- to
20 really enhance the connection between indoor and outdoor,
21 which is certainly often a fundamental characteristic of
22 these townhouses; they have a beautiful, deep yard that they

1 like to enjoy, both visually and physically.

2 Next slide, please?

3 At the very end, I just wanted to drop in an
4 elevation. Again -- excuse me, a section just to underscore
5 what we're trying to do here. As you can see right now,
6 cutting through that area, it is all wide open. There's a
7 very tall window that goes almost all the way to the eave.
8 And, you know, every single room in the house can see out of
9 them.

10 And if we go to the next slide, you can see that
11 we will be looking to drop in the interior walls, continue
12 that mezzanine to create the new bedroom space, put the new
13 slider on the first floor and a new window on the second
14 floor.

15 As far as neighborhood outreach and support, as my
16 clients mentioned, they have a ton of support from their
17 neighbors. I believe there are eight letters of support in
18 the file.

19 Unfortunately, at our original hearing date, we
20 were surprised to receive a letter at the -- kind of at the
21 last minute, right before our hearing, which was ultimately
22 cancelled for weather related reasons, of an abutter who

1 took issue with the project, and if we can take a few
2 minutes to answer some of the items that he brought up in
3 his letter, I would appreciate it. You may want to refer
4 back to the presentation if we can bring that back up,
5 please.

6 MARY FLYNN: I don't know if that's available. I
7 think maybe what we should do is when we -- let's hear
8 public comment.

9 ALISON HAMMER: Okay.

10 MARY FLYNN: Because this is a hearing.

11 ALISON HAMMER: Yeah.

12 MARY FLYNN: So I'm going to go to public comment,
13 and then we will come back, and the Board will have some
14 questions, and we can also -- we can talk about the comments
15 at that point.

16 ALISON HAMMER: Okay, great.

17 MARY FLYNN: Okay?

18 ALISON HAMMER: Thank you.

19 MARY FLYNN: Sure, Alison.

20 So this is a public hearing. Any members of the
21 public who wish to speak should now click the button that
22 says, "Raise hand." If you're calling in by phone, you can

1 raise your hand by pressing *9.

2 As of 5:00 p.m. yesterday, the Board had
3 received written communications from Parviz Parvizi, Shu
4 Rhee, Joseph Guarino, Sarah Springer, Gilberto Russo, Lee
5 Gresham, Alexandra Baylor, Geoffrey Smith, and Lin Yang.

6 Written communications received after 5:00 p.m.
7 yesterday will be entered into the record. And I apologize
8 if I misspoke any of those names.

9 I'll now ask Staff to unmute the speakers one at a
10 time. You should begin by saying your name and address, and
11 Staff will then confirm that we can hear you. After that
12 you'll have up to three minutes to speak before I ask you to
13 wrap up. And Daniel, let's see. What have we got here?

14 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Looks like we do have a hand.
15 I'll just use this opportunity to just do a final call, if
16 anybody wishes to speak on the Lilac Court item to please
17 use the "Raise Hand" function.

18 It looks like our first speaker is Parviz Parvizi.
19 So Parviz, please unmute yourself and begin by giving your
20 name and address.

21 PARVIZ PARVIZI: Hi, good evening. This is Parviz
22 Parvizi from 33-35 Webster Avenue. I've lived in Cambridge

1 for close to 20 years. This is the first property I've
2 owned, and I'm in the process of building a long-planned
3 home on my property.

4 6 Lilac is 12 feet from my property and
5 nonconforming with respect to the 20' setback. The
6 petitioners propose to increase and intensify their
7 nonconformity.

8 Their Lilac Court neighbors are all to the side
9 and front of their property and are unaffected by the
10 proposed changes to the rear of 6 Lilac. Thus, Lilac Court
11 neighbors in fact have a vested interest in seeing the
12 Planning Board set a new precedent for violating
13 nonconforming rear setbacks, because they would gain
14 flexibility to pursue similar violations in the future.

15 By contrast, my property is negatively affected,
16 because it is to the rear of 6 Lilac. I respectfully ask
17 the Board to reject the special permit application, because
18 it detrimentally affects the privacy, air, light and safety
19 of the home I'm building.

20 The four elements of the application that I object
21 to are: first, the dormer extension massing introduces
22 massing that affects the air and light of the back yard of

1 my home. It consumes over 70 percent of the roof length,
2 which violates the Cambridge Design Guidelines for roof
3 dormers that limit dormers to half the length of the roof.

4 Second, the proposed additional dormer window
5 negatively affects my privacy and imposes light pollution.
6 The existing nonconforming window is already difficult. The
7 petitioners have previously used it to photograph my back
8 yard and distribute those photos publicly on numerous
9 occasions.

10 Third, the proposed 300 percent increase in the
11 rear sliding door that essentially turns it into a glass
12 wall will bring the activities of the interior of 6 Lilac
13 into the back yard and impose a privacy noise pollution and
14 air pollution and light pollution burden on my property.

15 And finally, without a sprinkler system being
16 installed, the proposed additional occupancy density, which
17 increases bedrooms by 50 percent, creates additional risk of
18 fire at 6 Lilac, which is 120 feet from the nearest public
19 road.

20 Customarily in our rear C-1 zoned neighborhood,
21 the rear setback violations that the petitioners seek would
22 require a variance, because their nonconformity is not

1 preexisting, since their home was built in 1980.

2 The rear setback violations the petitioners
3 propose are not necessary to the goal of gaining additional
4 interior space. For example, 21 Lilac has a similar layout
5 and received a special permit modification to convert their
6 internal lofted space into living area without putting in a
7 dormer extension or new window.

8 I shared my concerns over two months ago, and
9 petitioners have not engaged me to understand my concerns;
10 have not modified any aspect of their proposed plans.

11 I respectfully ask that the Board decline this
12 application, unless the petitioners modify it. Thank you.

13 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you.

14 Chair Flynn, that concludes the speakers on the
15 list, so I will turn it back to you.

16 CATHERINE PRESTON CONNOLLY: Okay. Thank you. So
17 that wraps up public comments, and we are going to move onto
18 Board discussion. Additional written comments may be
19 submitted for the record. To start off, do Board members
20 have questions for either the project team or for Staff?

21 I see none. Oh, now I do see one. Hugh?

22 HUGH RUSSELL: I'd be interested in hearing the

1 response that they were going -- wanted to make?

2 CATHERINE PRESTON CONNOLLY: Okay.

3 HUGH RUSSELL: The abutter?

4 CATHERINE PRESTON CONNOLLY: Very good. All
5 right. So Alison, can we go back to you for you to comment
6 on what's happening?

7 ALISON HAMMER: Thank you so much. If we're able
8 to share the presentation again, so I can refer to those
9 slides as needed?

10 MARY FLYNN: Yeah, Swaathi, can we do that?

11 ALISON HAMMER: Thank you, Swaathi.

12 SWAATHI JOSEPH: Alison, can you give me the slide
13 number?

14 ALISON HAMMER: Yeah. We can start on Slide 2.
15 Thank you. So we are, of course, concerned about a neighbor
16 who is not happy with the proposed modifications to this
17 townhouse but it is our opinion that the modifications that
18 we are making are realistically quite minor and only --
19 really don't impinge in any serious way on Mr. Parvizi's
20 ability to use his future home in a reasonable and manner
21 very similar to how it would be prior to our proposed
22 renovation. Vis-à-vis his claim that the expanded dormer

1 introduces massing that inhibits his ability to enjoy light
2 and air in his back yard, you know, I would just point out
3 that we measure -- we estimate that there is about probably
4 a little bit more than 30' between the closest edge of our
5 proposed dormer and the closest edge of his proposed house.

6 First of all, this is quite a significant distance
7 as far as, you know, Cambridge neighbors go, and the amount
8 of space that we're adding is, again, very minor. We're
9 talking about a 6' extension to the dormer and -- which is,
10 again, going to be a very minimal addition of massing in
11 terms of making any significant change to light and air in
12 the -- in Mr. Parvizi's house or back yard.

13 It's also well below the ridgeline. We are not
14 increasing height. We are not going beyond the edges of the
15 house. We are really just taking an existing dormer, making
16 it a little bit longer, and adding a window for life safety
17 in that space.

18 He further claims that the window will violate the
19 privacy in our home -- in his home. If we can move briefly
20 to slide -- oh, and as long as we're on the slide, if I
21 could just -- I don't know, Swaathi, if you know where --
22 which lot Mr. Parvizi lives in, if you're able to just

1 highlight that. It's on Slide 2. It's the lot to the left
2 of the end of the walk, so up above. It's that lot,
3 correct.

4 And my understanding is that Mr. Parvizi Is
5 building a new house for himself in the rear of this lot,
6 which already has two houses in the front and is, I believe,
7 renovating and making additions to them, as well as building
8 a new house in the back about 21.5' from the rear lot line
9 of his -- of the lot.

10 So if we could go now to slides 11 and 12 briefly?

11 So -- yeah, so we actually -- I just wanted to
12 note that we are actually removing the window -- two windows
13 that are on the portion of 6 Lilac Court that are closest to
14 Mr. Parvizi's property, being the upper window here, and
15 then if we look at slide 12, we are going to also be
16 removing the window on the corner of the house again, which
17 are the parts of this townhome that are actually closest to
18 that tiny, 2' bit of rear lot line.

19 If we can jump back to Slide 6 for -- or Slide 5,
20 which is Number 6 right there with the interior photos?

21 Thank you.

22 If we look at the bottom left -- bottom right

1 photo, you can see those windows that we are going to be
2 removing. And we feel that those windows are windows that
3 actually perhaps do look a bit onto Mr. Parvizi's property
4 that we will be removing, as well as -- again -- putting
5 these internal walls into the building, so in fact many
6 fewer spaces will have views out of those rear windows and
7 into the rear yard.

8 If we want -- as far as the claims about the patio
9 door bringing noise and air pollution, it is -- there is
10 already a patio door.

11 And I don't see how it's -- we are getting a very
12 beautiful, high-end, well-engineered door that is not going
13 to allow additional sound transmission or anything like
14 that, and the clients already -- the owners of 6 Lilac Court
15 already have and utilize their back yard.

16 Having a different door back there is not going to
17 change in any way the fact that they are going to use their
18 back yard in a normal manner, as one does.

19 Plus, while we understand that it is a larger than
20 normal door, they want to make use of their views into their
21 beautiful back yard, which is surrounded on all sides by a
22 fence. So having a larger window here really just means

1 that they ultimately are going to look at their own back
2 yard and their own fence. It really doesn't give them any
3 type of intrusion into neighbors' private space, in our
4 opinion.

5 That said, we obviously do understand that Mr.
6 Parvizi is not happy with these modifications that we're
7 requesting. My clients are willing to commit to having
8 blinds installed on all their windows, as well as putting
9 plantings on their own property along their lot lines shared
10 with Mr. Parvizi, just to help with his concerns about
11 privacy.

12 To quickly answer also some of the kind of
13 procedural things that he brought up, I think in terms of
14 fire safety, as we go into our construction document phase,
15 hopefully following this meeting and any further
16 administrative things we need to deal with, we will
17 certainly follow the guidance of our co-consultants and the
18 Building Department. If sprinklers are required, we will
19 certainly put them in.

20 There -- as far as his question about the Dormer
21 Guidelines, we certainly do understand that we are over the
22 50 percent, which is one of the suggested guidelines in the

1 Cambridge Dormer Guideline.

2 But those are obviously Cambridge dormer
3 guidelines, and not Cambridge dormer laws, and they are --
4 we have met as many of them as is practical.

5 We believe that as an extremely narrow lot
6 townhouse, that it is to exceed the 50 percent rule --
7 guideline in this case is not an excessive ask. And
8 further, it is one that has been previously granted on
9 similar townhomes.

10 And we're, obviously, happy to respond to any
11 other concerns of the Board.

12 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you. Thank you very
13 much. That, I think provided a lot of additional
14 information for us, so great. Appreciate it.

15 So again, turning back to the Board, after that
16 further explanation, does anyone have questions? And if
17 not, we'll move on to comment.

18 Tom, do you have a question?

19 TOM SIENIEWICZ: Just a quick question. The
20 height of the proposed sliding doors seem to be larger than
21 -- taller than normal. Can you tell me what the dimensions
22 of those doors are?

1 ALISON HAMMER: Yes. Thank you for your question,
2 Tom. I definitely can. I just need to pull it up here in
3 front of me on my computer.

4 And so, the reason that we have a larger than
5 normal door there is because we will still have kind of a 2
6 -- a 1.5-story space there. We wanted to kind of make use
7 of that and add something that was going to be dramatic and
8 beautiful from inside and out and let in tons of light.

9 The dimension to that door in terms of height, I
10 believe, is nine-foot-nine-and-five-eighths is what I'm
11 getting from my drawings. So it's a little, you know,
12 taller than normal, but it's not 15 feet.

13 MARY FLYNN: Just to stay with the door for a
14 minute, my understanding from the way you described it is
15 that it's like the two middle doors that slide open, and
16 then the two other panels are permanent? They don't --

17 ALISON HAMMER: Exactly.

18 MARY FLYNN: Yeah. Okay.

19 ALISON HAMMER: That is correct. It's not one of
20 these retractable, fully disappearing walls where inside and
21 outside become one; no, it's a double slider with the two
22 outer panels fixed and the two inner panels operable.

1 MARY FLYNN: Okay, great. Thanks. All right.
2 Comments from the Board, then? Who would like to begin?
3 Probably would help to have one of the architects start off.
4 So I guess I'll -- Tom is smiling, so I guess I'll start
5 with him.

6 TOM SIENIEWICZ: Well, I certainly appreciate the
7 concerns of the neighbor. But I'll first start by the
8 modifications for the inside. I don't see that there's any
9 public interest in any of those details.

10 Do what you need to do on the inside of your
11 house. That's really none of a concern to the Planning
12 Board, except for information for how that might affect the
13 modifications to the exterior.

14 On the elevation that includes the water closet
15 and the modification to the window at the kitchen, I see no
16 reason why that isn't consistent with the special permits
17 and the townhouse permits that were granted in 1980.
18 They're modest modifications; make really no difference to
19 the sense of the permits.

20 On the rear of the building, of course, it's the
21 question about the door and the dormer. I understand -- I
22 worked with the Dormer Guidelines for, whatever, 20 years.

1 The length and the details outlined are, you know, the
2 City's best attempt to deal with every condition. But the
3 dormer's less than 15' long, which is another aspect of the
4 Dormer Guidelines.

5 So -- and it does allow for headroom in the room
6 that they're creating there. I think whether or not that
7 spills light, as I understand it it's kind of a right angle
8 to the abutting property is not clear to me.

9 I'm more interested in a series of large sliding
10 doors that are three feet higher than is conventional in a
11 sliding door, which should at about 6'8", and they're
12 described at 9'9", whether that makes a difference to the
13 neighbor in terms of the amount of light and the amount of
14 perceived invasion of privacy.

15 I think that the pollution argument relative to
16 air quality goes down, because the wood stove is being
17 removed.

18 But so it's really the light pollution, probably
19 from those glass doors that I need to understand, and
20 because they are significantly taller than conventional
21 sliding doors.

22 MARY FLYNN: All right. Thank you. Hugh, would

1 you like to go next?

2 HUGH RUSSELL: Sure. I think the proposed changes
3 are really not very significant in terms of privacy. They
4 are significant in terms of being able to use the new space.

5 Now, I live in a house that has three glass
6 sliding doors looking on a garden. And there's no light
7 pollution from those, because we close the blinds when it
8 gets dark, because we don't want other people looking in and
9 seeing us. So I think, you know, that's -- I just don't, I
10 think it's not a big deal, and we should support homeowners
11 who are trying to make their quirky houses more usable.

12 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you.

13 Ashley let's hear from you next. Ashley, you know
14 what? Ted beat you. Sorry. The hand went up and I didn't
15 see it. So let me go to Ted.

16 H THEODORE COHEN: Well, I quite agree with Hugh.
17 I'm surrounded on all sides by houses with windows you know
18 10 feet away from me, and I think this neighborhood is
19 wonderful the way it is morphing, and the way the houses are
20 changing and showing individuality.

21 These are very small houses, and to allow people
22 to enjoy them as they continue in their journey and life

1 together, you know, I think is wonderful. And I think this
2 will -- you know, Cambridge is a tight community.

3 And we are going to be, you know, next to our
4 neighbors. And hopefully we're all good neighbors with each
5 other. But it seems to me they're very minor changes that
6 will be very helpful for these people.

7 And I -- you know, I've heard the opponents memo
8 several times, and I just -- seeing the pictures, I just
9 don't see that it's really going to create any impact on
10 them, especially where the proponents have committed to
11 putting up blinds on the windows and doing some additional
12 planting in the yard.

13 MARY FLYNN: Yep.

14 H THEODORE COHEN: And I am -- and we have
15 approved similar modifications in the past in this
16 neighborhood. So I can't imagine not approving this.

17 MARY FLYNN: All right, thank you. Lou?

18 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Yeah, I agree. The
19 modifications are very slight and make the livability
20 improved greatly.

21 And also to Ted's point, a very similar
22 modification has been done in the neighborhood. It's a

1 great little neighborhood -- my favorite neighborhood at
2 Halloween. They participate, and I think it should go
3 forward.

4 MARY FLYNN: All right. Thank you. Ashley?

5 ASHLEY TAN: No other comments. I agree that the
6 changes seem minor, and the lot is quite long and far from
7 even the opponents, although I understand their concerns.
8 So overall I don't think it's a huge effect.

9 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you. And Steve, did you
10 want to add anything?

11 STEVEN A. COHEN: There's very little that needs
12 to be made. You know, we live in a dense community here.
13 You know, I have neighbors right on top of me, as do many
14 others around.

15 I wish my neighbors lived half a mile away, but
16 they don't. You know, we have decided to live in a
17 community with that kind of pattern of neighbors and people.

18 And frankly, I think that the issues here are
19 relative to many, many, many other comparable issues in this
20 city. I think these issues are relatively minor. Something
21 -- that's my perspective.

22 MARY FLYNN: Okay. All right. Thank you.

1 Okay. So it sounds like in general the Board
2 members are supportive of the special permit. Tom does have
3 some concerns about the door height, but I think perhaps we
4 can put that into that Continuing Design Review, and if
5 you're comfortable with that?

6 TOM SIENIEWICZ: Madam Chair, I -- you know,
7 listening to my fellow Board members, I don't think that's
8 necessary. I mean, this -- the consensus around the Board
9 here is that these are fairly common --

10 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

11 TOM SIENIEWICZ: -- relationships across property
12 line in this city, and I appreciate that. So I'm happy to
13 --

14 MARY FLYNN: Okay.

15 TOM SIENIEWICZ: -- leave it the way it is.

16 MARY FLYNN: All right. Very good. Thank you.

17 All right. So in order to grant the special permit, we need
18 to make some findings, and we need to find that the proposal
19 meets the criteria of the Townhouse and Multifamily
20 Dwellings Section 10.47.4 of the Ordinance.

21 And not all of these items pertain to this
22 particular project, but the ones that are relevant there

1 are: Key features of the natural landscape are preserved,
2 new buildings relate sensitively to the existing built
3 environment, open space provides visual benefits to abutters
4 and pacify functional benefits to occupants.

5 And I think we all agree that the changes on the
6 exterior are fairly minimal, and that the renovation will
7 certainly make the living situation better for the owners,
8 and also, if the proponent is proposing to do additional
9 planting in the rear yard, so that would also help.

10 We also need to find in alteration of existing
11 nonconforming building façades section 8.22.2.c the changes,
12 extensions or alterations on a preexisting, nonconforming
13 structure will not be substantially more detrimental to the
14 neighborhood than the existing condition.

15 And I think based on all of our comments, we have
16 made it clear that these are, again, minor changes and don't
17 really change the context of the existing condition.

18 And then last, the General Special Permit Criteria
19 Section 10.43 -- and I won't go through those because you
20 all know them -- So does anyone have any difficulty meeting
21 any of those findings? Just raise your hands if you do.

22 Okay. Seeing no hands, then, there are a couple

1 of conditions in the Staff memo to be added into the
2 decision, including Continuing Design Review and
3 certification that conditions are met.

4 Are there any other conditions the Board would
5 like to include? Okay. Are there any other suggestions
6 from Staff at this point? No? Okay.

7 So is there a motion, then, to grant the requested
8 special permit with those conditions, which -- again, are in
9 the Staff memo, based on the Board's finding that applicable
10 Special Permit Criteria are met?

11 STEVEN A. COHEN: Steve so moved.

12 MARY FLYNN: Is there a --

13 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Second.

14 MARY FLYNN: Okay. So we have a first and second.
15 Daniel, could we have a roll call?

16 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Sure. Roll call on that motion:
17 Lou Bacci?

18 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Yes.

19 DANIEL MESSPLAY: H Theodore Cohen?

20 H THEODORE COHEN: Yes.

21 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Steve Cohen?

22 STEVEN A. COHEN: Yes.

1 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Tom Sieniewicz?

2 TOM SIENIEWICZ: Yes.

3 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Hugh Russell?

4 HUGH RUSSELL: Yes.

5 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Ashley Tan?

6 ASHLEY TAN: Yes.

7 DANIEL MESSPLAY: And Mary Flynn?

8 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

9 [All vote YES]

10 DANIEL MESSPLAY: That's all members voting in
11 favor.

12 MARY FLYNN: Very good. All right. Thank you,
13 Board members, for a concise discussion and now we'll move
14 on to the no item on the agenda.

15 Alison, thank you very much for your presentation.
16 Good luck moving forward with the project.

17 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Chair Flynn?

18 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

19 DANIEL MESSPLAY: I just wanted to double check.

20 MARY FLYNN: Oh, the extension.

21 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Yep. I think there's an
22 extension that we need to vote on.

1 MARY FLYNN: All right. That's right. You are
2 correct. I just didn't turn the page, I don't think.
3 Or I did turn it too quickly. Right. Yes. So I believe
4 that this has been discussed with the proponent. We need
5 some additional time to draft and file the decision. So
6 does the permittee agree to an extension of time to June 30,
7 2023 to file the decision?

8 ALISON HAMMER: On behalf of my clients, yes.

9 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you.

10 Is there a motion, then, to agree to an extension
11 of time to file the decision, the extension, going to June
12 20, 2023?

13 STEVEN A. COHEN: Steve so moved.

14 MARY FLYNN: Second?

15 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Louis second.

16 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you. Roll call vote?

17 DANIEL MESSPLAY: On that motion, Lou Bacci?

18 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Yes.

19 DANIEL MESSPLAY: H Theodore Cohen?

20 H THEODORE COHEN: Yes.

21 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Steve Cohen?

22 STEVEN A. COHEN: Yes.

1 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Tom Sieniewicz?

2 TOM SIENIEWICZ: Yes.

3 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Hugh Russell?

4 HUGH RUSSELL: Yes.

5 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Ashley Tan?

6 ASHLEY TAN: Yes.

7 DANIEL MESSPLAY: And Mary Flynn?

8 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

9 [All vote YES]

10 DANIEL MESSPLAY: That's all members voting in
11 favor.

12 MARY FLYNN: Okay. So now we're concluded. Thank
13 you, Daniel, for catching that.

14 ALISON HAMMER: Thank you all.

15 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. All right.

16 * * * * *

17 (7:19 p.m.)

18 Sitting Members: Mary T. Flynn, Louis J. Bacci, Jr., Steven
19 Cohen, H Theodore Cohen, Hugh Russell, and
20 Ashley Tan

21 MARY FLYNN: All right. We're going to move on
22 then to the next item on the agenda, which is a Design

1 Review for case PB-179, a previously approved Planned Unit
2 Development by DivcoWest, known as Cambridge Crossing. And
3 Daniel will begin by summarizing why this is before us.

4 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you, Chair Flynn. So this
5 PUD, which is familiar to us all by now, was granted in 2003
6 and has been amended several times since then.

7 There are over 20 building sites, several of which
8 are under construction. Each building site is subject to
9 Design Review and approval by the Planning Board.

10 This particular Triangle is part of Parcel V,
11 which was approved as a Phase 2 residential development,
12 located on part of the former Lechmere Station site east of
13 the First Street Extension. And on the approved Land Use
14 Plan for Cambridge Crossing, the Triangle is shown as an
15 open space with the retail use.

16 The applicant is seeking Design Review approval on
17 a temporary basis for the Triangle to consist wholly of open
18 space.

19 The Triangle is also the location of stormwater
20 infrastructure for the roadways that it abuts, and the
21 Board's action tonight is to approve the design of the
22 Triangle or to request additional information from the

1 applicant before proceeding.

2 And City Staff has met with the applicants to
3 discuss the proposed design. We've prepared a memo to the
4 Planning Board highlighting the zoning, Urban Design aspects
5 of the proposal, and Staff are present to answer any
6 questions the Board may have.

7 MARY FLYNN: Great. Thank you. All right.

8 Mark Johnson of DivcoWest is representing the
9 applicant this evening. Mr. Johnson, you have up to 30
10 minutes for your presentation, though we hope you will be as
11 concise as possible. If you would introduce the other
12 members of your project team as well and please begin.

13 JOHN RAPPAPORT: It's actually John Rappaport --

14 MARY FLYNN: Okay.

15 JOHN RAPPAPORT: -- instead of Mark tonight.

16 MARY FLYNN: All right. Thank you.

17 JOHN RAPPAPORT: So good evening. My name is John
18 Rappaport. I'm with the Development team DivcoWest. With
19 us here tonight is Michael Kluchman and Laura Castelli of
20 VHB, who serve as the Landscape Architect and Traffic
21 Engineer for the project; Paula Thompson of Beals and
22 Thomas, Civil Engineer; Ed LeFlore of CSL Consulting; and

1 Anthony Galluccio and Darren Baird, our legal team.

2 We're here tonight for the Design Review type of
3 Triangle, a small parcel bound by Monsignor O'Brien Highway,
4 Cambridge Street and First Street.

5 In 2016, the Planning Board approved the adjacent
6 roadways and sidewalks, as configured on the 40-scale
7 roadway plans.

8 In 2022, Mass DOT approved the design for
9 Monsignor O'Brien Highway state right of way layout that
10 abuts the Triangle to the north. So all of the roadways and
11 sidewalks surrounding the Triangle have already been
12 approved, which leaves the design of the land inside the
13 Triangle.

14 This slide shows the overall Master Planning of
15 Cambridge Crossing.

16 You will recall that as part of the land deal
17 between MBTA and DivcoWest, DivcoWest purchased the old
18 Lechmere Station parcel, called Parcel V, from the MBTA,
19 which was -- which provided the MBTA with additional
20 financing support for the GLX project.

21 Parcel V is a Phase 2 parcel that will not be
22 developed until we have completed Phase 1. In the meantime,

1 we are building the extension of First Street through Parcel
2 V, separating the Triangle from the rest of Parcel V.

3 DivcoWest would like to thank Cambridge City Staff
4 for their participation in the design of the Triangle. City
5 Staff suggested making the Triangle a pollinator meadow and
6 installing speakers that play birdsong of species native to
7 New England.

8 We thought this was an excellent idea, and
9 immediately scrapped our previous approach in favor of this
10 direction, which Michael will present in just a moment.

11 Next slide, please.

12 This slide now zooms into the triangle with First
13 Street on the left, Monsignor O'Brien Highway across the
14 top, and Cambridge Street along the bottom. As I mentioned
15 previously, the sidewalks, streets and cycle tracks have all
16 been previously approved by the Board and by Mass DOT and
17 for the most part are already constructed.

18 The proposed design that you will be reviewing
19 tonight is for the area within the Triangle.

20 Before we go through the Design Review slides, I'd
21 like to briefly update the Board on some of the progress to
22 date and programming coming up at Cambridge Crossing.

1 Next slide, please?

2 With the arrival of spring, the retail at
3 Cambridge Crossing is thriving. The slide shows the heart
4 of the retail strip along North First Street -- Tatte,
5 Lamplighter, Café Beatrice, Geppetto and the Lexington all
6 offer outdoor dining overlooking the park -- something you
7 can't get anywhere else in Cambridge.

8 Next slide, please?

9 We recently opened a residential building at
10 Parcel I called, "Park 151." The building is over half
11 leased, which further added to the vitality of Cambridge
12 Crossing. It's adding to the vitality of Cambridge
13 Crossing.

14 The two core and shell retail pavilions on Parcel
15 I are completed, and we're in the process of marketing and
16 leasing those to retail operators. The Parcel I open space,
17 including the event lawn, will open this summer.

18 We're waiting for the MBTA and City of Somerville
19 to open the community path to the west of Cambridge
20 Crossing. When they do, riders and walkers will have
21 continuous path from Somerville to the cul-de-sac at the
22 western edge of Cambridge Crossing through Parcel I to the

1 Common and to the Charles River Reservation.

2 Next slide, please?

3 I'm happy to report a milestone in the development
4 of Cambridge Crossing. Cambridge Crossing has enough
5 residential units to qualify as its own voting precinct
6 within the City of Cambridge. We worked with the Cambridge
7 Election Commission to provide free space for a polling
8 center in the last election and look forward to doing so
9 again in future elections.

10 Next slide, please.

11 DivcoWest was a proud sponsor to the HerStory
12 events that were held at Cambridge Crossing and at Cambridge
13 City Hall. This was a celebration of the Cambridge women
14 for whom the open spaces and streets were named at Cambridge
15 Crossing. DivcoWest commissioned artists in collaboration
16 with Artists for Humanity to paint the portraits, which have
17 been displayed in both locations.

18 Next slide, please.

19 As we look forward to the summer and fall,
20 DivcoWest is putting on a number of community events, all
21 free and open to the public.

22 In addition to our usual programming of CX Summer

1 Nights concerts and outdoor exercise on the Common, we will
2 be scheduling a ribbon-cutting event for the following
3 spaces and milestones: The event lawn and continuation of
4 the retail plaza on Parcel I, the Dawes Field between
5 Parcels E, F, and G, and the CX connection at the Community
6 Path.

7 And with that, I'll turn the presentation over to
8 Michael to present the landscape design for the Triangle.

9 MICHAEL KLUCHMAN: Thank you, John and Board
10 members.

11 So this slide shows the proposed condition in the
12 triangular space with the back sidewalk. The space is
13 designed with a pollinator meadow at the southeast corner
14 and southern portion of the site farthest away from
15 Monsignor O'Brien Highway traffic.

16 At the northern portion of the site there are
17 pollinator-friendly shrub and tree plantings creating a
18 buffer between Monsignor O'Brien Highway. Stabilized,
19 decomposed granite paths will be rendered through the space
20 with a smooth and sedulous stopping point in the middle.

21 There will be a fully independent sound system
22 with strategically placed speakers to play native New

1 England bird songs to listen to while walking through the
2 space and stopping at the swing.

3 The plan also shows locations for the proposed
4 site such as ash urns and trash and recycle and recyclables.

5 On the north side of the space there will be a
6 relocated Bluebikes Station, which was previously located
7 adjacent to the old Lechmere MBTA Station.

8 DivcoWest proposes to install the Bluebikes
9 station on the Triangle Road to complement the additional
10 Bluebikes station they have already installed within
11 Cambridge Crossing -- in Parcel M, in Parcel R, and those
12 that are planned for Parcel I.

13 Next slide, please.

14 This is a view looking northeast showing the
15 pollinator meadow in the foreground and the swing bench in
16 the middle of the space.

17 Next slide, please.

18 This is a view looking southeast showing the
19 Bluebikes station and the pollinator shrub planting in the
20 foreground.

21 Next slide, please. Thank you.

22 This plan shows the proposed plant material

1 palette for the space. All the perennials, grasses, shrubs
2 and trees proposed for the area within the back of sidewalk
3 have been selected for their value as pollinator supporters.
4 The range of plants providing their nectar are pollen
5 sources for flying pollinators and/or food sources for the
6 pollinators' larval state.

7 A range of bloom times have also been selected so
8 that the meadow and shrub plantings are a continuous source
9 of pollinator support throughout the growing season. In
10 addition, the selected plant material will also provide
11 attractive, colorful and fragrant display for human visitors
12 to the site.

13 Next slide, please.

14 This slide shows the proposed material palette for
15 the space. We are following the materials palette approved
16 by the Planning Board for Cambridge Crossing, including
17 trash, recycling cans, ash urns, decomposed granite, et
18 cetera, as well as the proposed swing bench, which I'll
19 explain more in the next slide, as the one on the slide from
20 this mill here has been recently discontinued by the
21 manufacturer.

22 Next slide, please.

1 This slide shows the alternate proposed swing
2 bench, which is available. It's very similar to this.
3 That's the end of that. Thank you.

4 JOHN RAPPAPORT: Lastly, we want to thank CDD
5 Staff for their memo. This was indeed a collaborative
6 effort, and we are comfortable with the ongoing review, with
7 respect to the various design issues that were brought up in
8 the memo. I will briefly cover each one.

9 So the first two are related to seating - 1A and
10 1B. 1A requests for additional bench; we're happy to
11 provide an additional bench; 1B requesting that we monitor
12 seating demand and provide additional seating as necessary
13 and we're absolutely happy to do that.

14 The second -- Number 2 about the buffer, if we
15 could actually go to the next slide, please? And there was
16 a request to add a buffer between the cycle track and the
17 green space. And we're happy to add the buffer. I just
18 want to make sure that we're understanding the request.

19 So on this slide, we're showing on the top what
20 the current plan provides. It's a 10'-wide planting bed,
21 and the trees are dimensioned kind of offset to the south.
22 So they are 6' from the edge of the cycle track and not

1 centered within the 10' width.

2 So we were debating internally as to how to
3 accommodate the buffer request, and whether that meant
4 additional paving, or if that was rather plant selection,
5 making sure that whatever plants are the understory ground
6 cover aren't kind of a stalky, woody plant that's going to
7 kind of lean out into the path seeking more sunlight.

8 So we're happy to work with Staff on developing a
9 plan there. If we could go backwards one? Actually -- so
10 Number 3 and 4 are both related to the nature sounds.

11 And we're open to ongoing review for the content
12 and the operations of the sound system. Happy to work with
13 City Staff and review with others as needed. So open to
14 both.

15 And if we could jump ahead two slides to 17,
16 please?

17 Oh, sorry, to 16. I apologize.

18 When we initiated the process, we thought there
19 may be a future condition which we would consider retail in
20 the Triangle. DivcoWest along with City Staff agreed that
21 this parcel is better suited for passive uses and natural
22 habitat, like the one we proposed tonight.

1 We do not anticipate a future condition in which
2 we would be coming back to the Board proposing retail on the
3 site.

4 So we are asking has that the portion of Parcel V,
5 the Triangle portion we reviewed, be the kind of final
6 Design Review, and if there are subsequent changes to this
7 area, we would come back to the Board and ask for an
8 additional Design Review and approval as part of that.

9 And that concludes our presentation. Thank you.
10 Mary, you might be on mute.

11 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. While we're on this
12 slide, I appreciate you clarifying that you're seeing this
13 open space as permanent. I'd like Daniel just to weigh in
14 on this, because I think his sense was that it was a minor
15 amendment.

16 And if that's the way you want to go, then I don't
17 know how that affects -- I mean, we can certainly do the
18 Design Review now, but you may have to come back for a minor
19 amendment anyway, I guess is what I'm thinking. But --

20 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thanks, Chair Flynn. Yeah, I
21 was a little confused. John, I don't know if you're able to
22 provide a little bit more information there. I mean, the

1 other thing that we could do -- this is a part of Parcel V,
2 and Parcel V would be subject to its own Design Review.

3 So what we could think about it is approving this
4 design tonight, and then when we get to the Design Review
5 for Parcel V, since this is Triangle is part of Parcel V, at
6 that --

7 MARY FLYNN: Mm-hm.

8 DANIEL MESSPLAY: -- we could sort of revisit this
9 design, and either set it in stone -- no pun intended -- or
10 determine if, you know, we wanted to maybe think about a
11 change at that time. Would that be agreeable?

12 JOHN RAPPAPORT: Yes. Yeah. And I think there's
13 actually precedent for that. I would look to -- Parcel I
14 was approved over a course of a few different Design Review
15 approvals. So we would be open to that.

16 Whatever Design Review approval we come back for,
17 the mixed-use development, we would include the Triangle and
18 revisit any design modifications, or just restate the
19 existing conditions.

20 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Great. All right. So this is
21 an item of General Business, but it's the Board's practice
22 to take public comment on Design Review for PUDs.

1 So let us see if there are any attendees wishing
2 to speak. If there are any members of the public who wish
3 to speak, you should now click the button that says, "Raise
4 hand." If you're calling in by phone, you can raise your
5 hand by pressing *9.

6 As of 5:00 p.m. yesterday, the Board had received
7 no written communications on this case. Written
8 communications received after 5:00 p.m. yesterday will be
9 entered into the record.

10 So I see at least one hand. So Daniel, I'll turn
11 it over to you.

12 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you, Chair Flynn. And
13 I'll just do one last call for any members of the public who
14 wish to speak on this item. It looks like our first speaker
15 is Heather Hoffman. So Heather, please unmute yourself and
16 begin by giving your name and address.

17 HEATHER HOFFMAN: Hi. Heather Hoffman, 213 Hurley
18 Street. I think that perhaps one reason you got no written
19 communications is that for reasons that escape me, they
20 didn't come talk to the neighborhood.

21 MARY FLYNN: Hm.

22 HEATHER HOFFMAN: So, you know, we tend not to

1 send letters when no one comes to talk to us.

2 Anyway, the one thing that struck me the most was
3 that I thought this parcel was supposed to be 10,000 square
4 feet and this is 20 percent smaller than that. So I'm kind
5 of curious as to why that changed, or perhaps my memory is
6 just bad. That's always a strong possibility.

7 But I will be glad to see it be colorful. I'm
8 curious as to whether human visitors will be confined to the
9 paved pathways, or whether there will be actual grass or
10 something that we can walk on and enjoy the plantings.

11 And one comment that I would relay from someone
12 else is does recording of bird sounds mean that you are not
13 expecting this to attract any birds to sing themselves? And
14 so, I'd be curious to hear the answer to that.

15 Anyway, I will be happy to see some fences and
16 ugliness disappearing. And I hope that there will be plenty
17 of trees, and that they will be the biggest trees that you
18 can reasonably plant because as you well know, East
19 Cambridge keeps being deprived of more and more and more
20 open space and trees, and DivcoWest to its credit has
21 generally erred in the direction of more open space, rather
22 than less. And I truly appreciate that about how they've

1 been doing their development.

2 So anyway, thank you very much.

3 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you.

4 Chair Flynn, that concludes the speakers on the
5 list. So I'll turn it back to you.

6 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Very good. Well, perhaps we
7 can start -- John, if you could perhaps address some of the
8 questions, a couple of the questions that have been raised?

9 JOHN RAPPAPORT: Sure.

10 MARY FLYNN: Starting with the size of the parcel,
11 and then the other question about real birds. I know there
12 probably aren't very many real birds down there now, but
13 perhaps with song they will be attracted as opposed to
14 continuing to stay away. Anyway.

15 JOHN RAPPAPORT: Yeah, so I have the size of the
16 parcel, attraction of real birds, can pedestrians go off
17 path?

18 MARY FLYNN: Right. Mm-hm.

19 JOHN RAPPAPORT: And size of trees. So I'll do my
20 best at some, and then I'll let Michael chime in.

21 MARY FLYNN: Great.

22 JOHN RAPPAPORT: On the size of the Triangle

1 parcel, the parcel is still part of Parcel V. So the
2 overall size of Parcel V has not changed.

3 The Triangle and the sizing of the Triangle really
4 was dictated by the 40-scale roadway network and Mass DOT's
5 approval of First Street or MOB and the elements of MOB. So
6 whatever was kind of leftover of those two processes is the
7 palette that we have to work with.

8 On the birds, we -- my understanding is that we do
9 anticipate pollinators and birds to come here.

10 MARY FLYNN: Mm-hm.

11 JOHN RAPPAPORT: The plant selection is kind of
12 supportive of, you know, it has the types of vegetation that
13 birds would be attracted to and attract pollinators.

14 So I think the sound is not a replacement or in
15 any way trying to subvert birds to come to the site. And we
16 actually -- we have quite a few birds. If you walk through
17 the Common, we've got quite a variety of species.

18 On the size of trees -- actually on kind of being
19 able to go off path and size of trees, Michael if I could
20 ask you to chime in?

21 MICHAEL KLUCHMAN: You know this stuff a little
22 bit better. On the birdsong question, it's a very

1 interesting question. I know Planning Board Staff had
2 suggested the bird sound system, and we found a way to do
3 that. It is -- what we're working on is a very flexible
4 system, so I don't -- we can't find a precedent for exactly
5 this. We know there is, you know, seasonal things and
6 greenhouses that play bird sound, but so this is going to be
7 a unique thing.

8 So we have a very flexible system. So if we need
9 to alter the bird sound going forward or the timing, it's
10 all very flexible. So I think this is a little bit of an
11 experiment. It's a really interesting idea.

12 But yes, the idea is to have the pollinators and
13 the birds attracted to the plants, but also the pollinators
14 themselves. So we don't want to deter our birds. So it
15 would be an ongoing experiment that we can easily adjust and
16 play with our nature sounds and adjust which birds we're
17 playing. So we're very excited about seeing how this goes.

18 And then on the access to the meadow area, I think
19 maybe the Planning Board Staff can help us out a little bit.
20 We originally had lawn areas, and there was concern about
21 dogwalkers and other things and people actually accessing
22 that sort of use. And so, the idea of the meadow came up.

1 But it wouldn't be as attractive a space. It would be more
2 of like a pass-through space.

3 Again, we are making the best of it, but we're in
4 the middle of a traffic island, a very nice one. So we
5 don't expect it to be really a place to spend a lot of time,
6 but to pass through and really -- you know, have an
7 opportunity in an urban setting for really a diverse
8 pollinator garden is really the focus here.

9 That doesn't mean that these things are native
10 durable species in the meadow that could get trampled and,
11 you know, if somebody wants to jump on them, that's probably
12 fine, they'll bounce back. But it's not really designed as
13 a lawn.

14 And then on the tree sizes, in the -- surrounding
15 the Triangle, which has already been approved, there are a
16 number of -- I guess we have elms and London planetrees, 3,
17 3.5 caliper, which really the limitation on the sizes there
18 -- those are good sizes -- are the tree planting areas
19 themselves and what is available in the industry. So those
20 are larger size trees. They will be surrounding the
21 Triangle.

22 And then within the Triangle, we have a couple

1 redbud trees, which, again, are flowing trees, which support
2 pollinators that are 2 to 2.5 caliper, so good-size
3 flowering trees in the pollinator area itself, so I'll
4 respond to that question.

5 MARY FLYNN: Great. All right. Thank you very
6 much.

7 Do Board members have questions either for the
8 proponent or for the CDD Staff? There were a number of
9 points raised in the Staff memo, which Mr. Rappaport did
10 address, but you may have some follow-up thoughts. Yes,
11 Lou?

12 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Yeah, just a quick one to
13 the landscape architect. Is there any way we could get some
14 increased size on the perimeter trees, caliper size? Just
15 seems that they survive better. A lot of traffic, kids hang
16 on them. So the bigger they are when they go in, the more
17 luck we usually have with them surviving.

18 I understand the ornamentals; they come in a
19 smaller variety. There are smaller tree in the whole. But
20 it would be nice to increase the caliper size if we could.

21 But that's all I have, I think, everything else
22 aside: Perfect.

1 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you. Any other -- okay,
2 so I don't think people have questions, because we've
3 already asked that a couple times. Do other folks have
4 comments that they would like to make at this point?

5 No? Okay then, so I think you understand Lou's
6 comment about trees, and what Heather had said too.
7 Obviously the bigger the better within, you know, within the
8 constraints of the site. So I think that is an item for
9 continuing Design Review.

10 Since there aren't any questions or comments at
11 this point, I'm assuming that we're at a point where we want
12 to approve the design as presented. If I am --

13 I see some thumbs up or whatever. Yep. Okay.
14 Yeah, I think -- personally, I think it's quite lovely. I
15 think it's, you know, very different from what we have in
16 other parts of East Cambridge and throughout the city. And
17 I think it'll be a wonderful experiment to have that sound
18 system in.

19 So -- and I really do appreciate the fact that you
20 already agreed to add more seating because, you know, to
21 Heather's point, people like to have access. But I think
22 just having those seats available for people to really look

1 over the plantings and everything is going to be very, very
2 nice. I think people will really appreciate that.

3 So then, we're going to approve the design subject
4 to continuing Design Review by Staff, and certification that
5 if the design is in conformance with the approved plans
6 before they receive the building permit.

7 So is there, then, a motion to grant the -- to
8 approve, I'm sorry -- is there a motion to approve the
9 design for the Parcel 5 Triangle, this portion of it,
10 subject to continuing Design Review by Staff?

11 STEVEN A. COHEN: Steve so moved.

12 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Is there a second?

13 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Louis second.

14 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Could we have a roll call
15 vote, Daniel, please?

16 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Roll call on that motion: Lou
17 Bacci?

18 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Yes.

19 DANIEL MESSPLAY: H Theodore Cohen?

20 H THEODORE COHEN: Yes.

21 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Steve Cohen?

22 STEVEN A. COHEN: Yes.

1 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Tom Sieniewicz?

2 [Pause]

3 Absent. Hugh Russell?

4 HUGH RUSSELL: Yes.

5 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Ashley Tan?

6 ASHLEY TAN: Yes.

7 DANIEL MESSPLAY: And Mary Flynn?

8 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

9 [All vote YES]

10 DANIEL MESSPLAY: That's all members voting in
11 favor.

12 MARY FLYNN: Great. Well, thank you very much for
13 your presentation. The park really does look very, very
14 lovely. So we look forward to see it coming to life.

15 JOHN RAPPAPORT: Thank you for your time. Thank
16 you.

17 MICHAEL KLUCHMAN: Thanks, everyone. Goodnight.

18 MARY FLYNN: Goodnight.

19 * * * * *

20 (7:49 p.m.)

21 Sitting Members: Mary T. Flynn, Louis J. Bacci, Jr., Steven
22 Cohen, H Theodore Cohen, Hugh Russell, and

Ashley Tan

MARY FLYNN: And we have another item on the agenda, which is a Design Update on Case PB-147, a previously granted interim planning overlay permit for a technical office laboratory building at 125 Broadway, which was previously known as 15 Cambridge Center.

So Daniel, can you summarize why this is before us, please?

DANIEL MESSPLAY: Sure. Thank you, Chair Flynn. Just as a reminder, this permit was originally granted by the Board in 1999 to construct a 210,000 square-foot office and lab building in Kendall Square.

The permit approval documents require the Board to make findings consistent with the City's growth policies at the time, and included specific approval conditions that the plans remain in conformance with the Board's initial approval.

So this specific request was discussed at the Planning Board on November 1 of last year, at which time the Planning Board continued the hearing so that the applicant could incorporate comments and feedback from the Planning Board into a revised design.

1 The applicant has met with CDD and CRA Staff to
2 discuss the revised design and are now back to show the
3 updated design to the Planning Board.

4 And the Board's action is to conclude the Design
5 Update, leaving the design subject to continuing Staff
6 Review before issuance of a building permit, or to request
7 additional information for further review by the Planning
8 Board at a future meeting.

9 And I just want to quickly note we have City and
10 Urban Design Staff present here to answer questions. I
11 think we are also joined by Fabiola and Tom from the CRA, if
12 there are any questions about the CRA process as well.

13 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you. So the
14 presentation tonight is being handled by Erin Prestileo --

15 ERIN PRESTILEO: You said that right.

16 MARY FLYNN: -- Oh, I did? Good. Thank you --
17 SMMA. You'll have up to 30 minutes for your presentation,
18 other we hope you can be as concise as possible.

19 If you would please introduce your project team
20 and begin?

21 ERIN PRESTILEO: Sure. Thank you. Frist, I think
22 someone has their hand raised.

1 MARY FLYNN: I think he put it down. Did you have
2 -- yeah, I think it's down.

3 ERIN PRESTILEO: Perfect. Okay. So I want to
4 thank you all tonight to hear this project. We are before
5 you again this evening. My name is Erin Prestileo. I am a
6 civil engineer with SMMA. I am joined by Daniel Watts and
7 Steve Szramiak, also with SMMA. And let me see who's on
8 from Biogen tonight: Michael Murphy and Tom Choyce.

9 So we are working on a small but very important
10 project for Biogen. And I should start by saying that the
11 letter before you in this PowerPoint is a letter that you
12 should have received just about a month ago outlining a
13 number of things which I am going to overview tonight.

14 But like I said, we've been working on this small
15 but important project for Biogen since the fall of 2021
16 actually. It's a new oxygen tank and a replacement of an
17 existing carbon dioxide tank. These tanks will support
18 existing facilities and a process is in place at Building 8,
19 which is located at 125 Broadway in Cambridge.

20 The site is approximately 1.7 acres. The new
21 tanks and their associated equipment will occupy about 500
22 square feet, and it's proposed to be just up West Service

1 Drive.

2 If you could advance to the next slide. It maybe
3 the next. Keep going. Right.

4 So here's the locus. You'll see the site
5 highlighted in red there. The next slide will give an
6 aerial view.

7 Yep. So we'll see Biogen Building 8. And the
8 project location is accessed right off West Service Drive
9 between that drive and Galileo Galilei Way.

10 The collection of tanks and equipment will be
11 surrounded by fencing, and that's really what much of this
12 review has been focused on with the City. And the letter
13 that was just before you on the screen was submitted on
14 April that details al of the coordination, formal and
15 informal meetings we've had with the City, along with all of
16 the aesthetic study, the layout changes that have been made,
17 additional information provided to satisfy all questions,
18 comments, concerns that we are aware of to date.

19 Most recently, SMMA had a working session with
20 some of the members of the Board -- again, to review the
21 work to date, but also provide some really essential
22 background for the project and detail some of the specific

1 changes that we have made to alleviate concerns and address
2 comments again.

3 We're here before you this evening to really
4 outline the updated design, which was submitted to you in
5 early April.

6 We've presented, prepared a final fence design --
7 I think one that will first serve security to keep kind of
8 folks out of this area, but will also allow visual
9 transparency and increase security for those not in this
10 enclosure and for those passing by on an existing pedestrian
11 pathway right adjacent to it. So we understand this kind of
12 balance of these two.

13 We've provided an additional view, if you advance
14 this slide again. This is the plan, again. You'll see
15 we've been requested to produce an additional view -- I'm
16 sorry, one more slide -- of an additional view from this
17 pedestrian pathway looking east to the West Service Drive.
18 So that's the view from the bottom, just to get a better
19 sense -- give you and the City a better sense of what we're
20 proposing, and the type of impact that we're trying to
21 leave.

22 Advance again.

1 We've also presented a study of fencing precedent
2 in the area. So you'll see here -- again -- the project
3 area is in yellow, and then some precedents in the city
4 nearby of various types of fencing. You can see various
5 types of fencing has been implemented in this area.

6 And if you advance again, we also studied fencing
7 around these types of tanks in the area as well. And you'll
8 see that -- again -- various types of fencing has been
9 implemented to surround these similar tanks that we're
10 proposing for Biogen.

11 Daniel Watts is on the call. I just would like to
12 have him spend just a moment to talk about what we have
13 changed, and what we are now proposing this enclosure to be.

14 So Daniel, I don't know if you could spend just a
15 few moments and update the Board on where we're at right
16 now?

17 DANIEL WATTS: Sure. It might be best if we go
18 back to the image slides. Right there. Yes. Okay. So
19 there's two components to the enclosure.

20 One, as you see in the bottom image viewed from
21 the pedestrian path. There is a masonry block that is
22 acting as a firewall -- or a fire barrier I should say --

1 between these tanks and the louver that is on the adjacent
2 building.

3 This louver is predominantly aesthetic, but it
4 does have one opening up near the top. I believe it's an
5 exhaust fan for the loading dock area, which is just inside
6 the other side of the wall from this location. And I think
7 it is an exhaust fan. But nonetheless, codes and NFPA do
8 require that we separate any active louver from tanks of
9 this type.

10 These are CO2 and O2 -- oxygen and carbon dioxide.
11 So neither of the gases is (sic) flammable, but regardless
12 with, you know, tanks of this size, there is a requirement
13 for this kind of separation.

14 So the wall is fundamentally masonry block. And
15 what we are planning to do is clad it in a brick material
16 that is similar and plays off of the brick that is currently
17 to the existing building façade. Now, obviously, you know,
18 that brick has been there for a while. We will try and
19 match it as closely as we can. Whether or not it can match
20 exactly is always questionable with natural materials like
21 brick.

22 The fence portion, which is seen in both images,

1 has basically been tailored down a little bit from prior
2 submissions. Prior submissions I think we were looking at a
3 10' fence. We're now looking at bringing that down to 8'.
4 The expression of the security fence is by and large a
5 vertical baluster arrangement.

6 There are some posts at various frequencies and at
7 gate edges to reinforce the structure of the fence. But by
8 and large, these are 1" square steel vertical balusters
9 approximately 6' -- I'm sorry 6" on center or 4" to 5" on
10 center I believe is more accurate.

11 Previous iterations, we did have kind of a pineal
12 (sic/pineal?) or an arrowhead expression at the top of the
13 balusters that was asked to be removed I think at our last
14 meeting.

15 So we're looking at just steel posts or steel
16 balusters with chamfered edges. There are a couple of
17 horizontals in the expression. There's two up high --
18 approximately at 6'10" above grade, the other around 7'4"
19 above grade, and then there is a lower one that is about 5"
20 off, off of the slab.

21 We've chosen this expression because, as you saw
22 in the precedent, there are a number of similar examples --

1 not only on this property, but also in the neighborhood.

2 And we feel that this fence solution does give the
3 required amount of security that the tank vendor is looking
4 for to prevent people from getting inside the enclosure and
5 causing, you know, damage, or -- you know, operating with
6 malicious intent.

7 We feel that that it offers the right amount of
8 transparency so that it minimizes any opportunity for
9 somebody to get into the enclosure -- if they get into the
10 enclosure to not be observed, and also to enhance the
11 security and safety of people who are on the pathway
12 adjacent to this enclosure.

13 That's essentially, I think, the main points from
14 our last discussion.

15 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Are there any other comments
16 from your team before we move on, or does that conclude your
17 presentation?

18 DANIEL WATTS: I think the only thing I would add
19 is just the transparency -- again -- was something that was
20 of interest to several members of the Committee to highlight
21 the technology and just the -- you know, the function of the
22 tank enclosure just to celebrate the kind of and ultimately

1 nature of that. So that was one of the other elements.

2 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you. So the CDD Staff
3 has quickly reviewed this. They did not submit written
4 materials, but Erik Thorkildsen is here, and he has reviewed
5 the plans.

6 So Erik, perhaps you could just kind of summarize
7 from your perspective where we are from the last time? I
8 was not at the last hearing. I don't know if everybody else
9 was, but you could just give us your current perspective on
10 what's being proposed, that would be helpful.

11 ERIK THORKILDSEN: Sure. This is Erik
12 Thorkildsen, CDD. So yes, the applicant met with us to go
13 over the project and has done a lot to tune up the design of
14 the fence and the layout of the tanks previously. And we
15 thanked the applicant for all the efforts to kind of
16 continue through this somewhat long process.

17 The current design for the fence is much simple,
18 more transparent, no taller than it needs to be, and it
19 relates to other fences in the area, as you saw in the
20 presentation, including fences around gas enclosures.

21 The verticality of the bars relate to the
22 verticality of the things on the vaporizer part of equipment

1 that you see kind of in the middle of the view there, and to
2 the tanks themselves.

3 So it seems like a pretty -- you know, sensible
4 solution to how to provide the kind of safety of the
5 equipment that is needed. I imagine some minor tune-up on
6 some of the details, member dimensions, the vertical posts,
7 the way corners are tuned and so on. But basically, it
8 seems pretty good.

9 The -- however, in the previous hearing, Board
10 hearing, the Board also suggested that this site is maybe
11 kind of significant as a kind of visual terminus to the
12 pedestrian path that leads from the Alewife towards --
13 through the new proposed Central Plaza to this, and then
14 continues on down the path you see on the left in the upper
15 image.

16 But it's -- it could be a sort of visual target,
17 and is potentially an opportunity for art. And so, there's
18 been considerable discussion about what that might actually
19 be. But you can imagine art somehow integrated into the
20 actual design of the fence -- elements added to the fence.

21 Treatment of the tanks themselves: You know, the
22 Dorchester gas tanks were mentioned as an -- you know,

1 example of treating large tanks as sort of art
2 opportunities.

3 And in our internal discussions, and with the CRA
4 Board, there is a wide range of opinions and ideas on how
5 significant an impact art in this location might be likely
6 to have. And if there was to be some, what form it might
7 take.

8 And so, other ideas that came up that might be
9 worth thinking about were interpretive signage explaining
10 the function of the tanks, which could be interesting as
11 people go by them, historical information about area;
12 somehow, signs that are somehow attached to the fence or
13 even more integrated into it.

14 The steel-cut map of Harvard Square that's on the
15 JFK side of the Abbott Building was also mentioned as a way
16 of integrating something directly into the fence, rather
17 than applying it.

18 And then there's still the idea of some kind of
19 artistic painting of the tanks seems kind of appealing --
20 not necessary, but it might be fun. So I'm not really sure
21 -- I don't think we have a firm conclusion on all this, and
22 sort of wanted to see what you guys thought after seeing the

1 revised design.

2 If there is to be some kind of art component to
3 this, the CDD and the Cambridge Art Council would be really
4 happy to work to help kind of further its realization.

5 So thanks. I think that sort of summarizes our
6 thoughts. CRA members are also here and --

7 MARY FLYNN: Right.

8 ERIK THORKILDSEN: -- might want to, you -- they
9 may have complementary or contrasting thoughts on this. But
10 anyway, that sort of seemed what we thought, at least,
11 within the CDD. So thanks.

12 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you, Erik, very much.
13 Yes. Let's turn to the CRA. Tom and Fabiola, do either of
14 you have any comments you want to add at this point?

15 TOM CHOYCE: Thank you, Madam Chair. There's a
16 few things worth mentioning. One is we believe that the
17 SMMA and Biogen team have made a lot of revisions along the
18 way.

19 You know, initially the tanks were situated so
20 that they were -- the image isn't there anymore, but they
21 were side-by-side. And it was actually Sam Baglioni's
22 suggestion to line them up so that they would reduce the

1 visual impact.

2 We chamfered the corners, both corners of the
3 fence, so that it created better visual lines. We were
4 concerned about the -- you know, ability to hide behind the
5 fence from a pedestrian safety standpoint on both corners.
6 And so, they adapted the design for that.

7 And then also the transparency we felt was a sort
8 of honest view of what the building is doing as a lab
9 building, and rather than -- and this was actually something
10 that had come from our Board -- a different direction than
11 initial Staff direction, with something that was more
12 decorative.

13 So our -- and through our Design Review process
14 with the CRA Board, they wanted us to go into simpler,
15 transparent images like you have before you.

16 There was some discussion about public art. And
17 while there -- you know, when you're looking at this view
18 that is shown here by Biogen, it looks significant.

19 But relative to everything else going on in the
20 area, including the future Eversource Plaza and the much
21 larger infrastructure that's related to that, it seemed to
22 us to be worth focusing future public art efforts within the

1 public open space that's across the way as a kind of -- this
2 will make a larger move, and let this space just be what it
3 is, which is sort of an enclosure around an industrial
4 facility and focus the attention in that open space.

5 That's sort of the direction that we've been
6 thinking. And be happy to look at those opportunities when
7 the plaza -- the Eversource Plaza that's across the street -
8 - comes before the Planning Board -- I assume a couple
9 months as that schematic design gets completed by Boston
10 Properties.

11 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you. Appreciate that,
12 Tom. Board members, questions, comments? Yes, Lou?

13 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Yeah. I have a question.
14 At some point in our last meeting on this, we were talking
15 about the possibility of relocating this, instead of having
16 it be in front of this new residential building's entrance.
17 Being in the neighborhood, I wandered by this location, and
18 the basin -- the bollards and everything are already
19 constructed. I was curious how that got permitted?

20 So the discussion of relocating this was out no
21 matter what happened. I'm just curious how this happened.

22 MARY FLYNN: I don't know who is the appropriate

1 person to answer.

2 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Yeah, me either.

3 MARY FLYNN: Whether it's the proponent or Tom, or
4 anybody want to take a stab at it?

5 STEVE SZRAMIAK: So I think what transpired over
6 there on the site is because of the schedule -- the Blue
7 Garage demolition -- the contractor reached out to Biogen,
8 and they had known about this project in queue and mentioned
9 to them that the -- what the schedule was for the
10 demolition, and that they should probably try to, you know,
11 do any of the subsurface work prior to the site getting
12 congested. So Biogen reached out. And I think they worked
13 through their contractor.

14 And I think Tom or Michael can correct me, but
15 they did reach out to the City and the Building Inspector,
16 and I think they were able to get basically a slab permit to
17 move forward with that work, based on what was happening
18 across the way just because of the logistical issues they
19 were about to face if they were delayed.

20 And I think we did have an earlier discussion to
21 talk about trying to relocate the enclosure somewhere, you
22 know, up and down that pedestrian walkway.

1 But because of the access for the refilling
2 effort, we couldn't get too far from that kind of no-name
3 driveway, and then trying to get it onto Galileo didn't seem
4 like the right thing to try to -- you know, park a truck on
5 that road.

6 So there was some fill requirements and some
7 distances that we couldn't, you know, accommodate
8 unfortunately with the -- you know, pedestrian way so we
9 kind of had to land it where it's landing.

10 And it does also kind of connect back into the
11 building in that corner. Currently there are a couple tanks
12 within the loading dock. So logistically it made sense to
13 kind of, you know, anchor everything there.

14 So that's kind of where we're at today.

15 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: My question is really does
16 this require any signoff from the Planning Board?

17 TOM CHOICE: So I mean ISD did not contact us
18 related to that slab. The CRA had -- the Board had acted
19 upon the proposal for the tank in November of last year.
20 But, you know, ISD never -- had never -- this may not have
21 been something that was -- as a slab permit may not have
22 required a signoff by CDD or CRA, I don't know. But we

1 didn't hear from ISD beforehand.

2 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Yes. This has been in place
3 for several months. I talked to some of my friends in the
4 neighborhood. This has been in place for a long time. This
5 was done actually during the demolition work on this garage.

6 Just curious, you know, there was some discussion
7 about relocating this to a different location if possible
8 and so forth, but that was never going to be possible, and
9 that's kind of a waste of time for this Board. So I don't
10 know how you where we go from here, but I'm really curious
11 how this got permitted.

12 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Do you have any thoughts on
13 the solution for the location as it's been presented tonight
14 that you want to share with the Board, Lou, or do you want
15 to just hold off?

16 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: I mean, it's kind of -- as
17 we say, set in stone right now. The pads are already in
18 place, the bollards are in place. The only thing that
19 hasn't been built yet is the surrounding masonry.

20 MARY FLYNN: Right. So you're saying your
21 preference would be to have it in a completely different
22 location?

1 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: My preference would have been
2 not to have it in front of this residential building, yeah,
3 this a brand-new residential building with these tanks in
4 front of it. But it seems like that's what we're going to
5 get whether we like it or not, so.

6 I understand the transparency of the fence, I kind
7 of like that, but I also like the possibility of some
8 artwork or a possible green wall. We had talked about that.
9 I don't know how well that would stand up with the gas
10 deliveries. They kind of put a little cold air in the --
11 surrounding the tanks at the time of when they fill them and
12 purge them. So I don't know how that would work with the
13 planting, but.

14 Our hands are basically tied.

15 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Other thoughts on the proposed
16 solution?

17 Hugh, as the remaining architect of meeting this
18 evening, sorry to keep picking on you, but I -- again, I
19 wasn't at the last meeting. And so, what is your sense of
20 how this corresponds to what the Board asked for the last
21 time?

22 HUGH RUSSELL: I'd say this is kind of a tasteful

1 middle-of-the-road solution. And the proposal for the
2 screen wall -- and as I recollected originally was a kind of
3 inappropriate artistic screen that drew attention to itself.

4 So, you know, there's a lot of -- the CRA has
5 looked at this a lot, and I have great respect for the CRA
6 Board and Staff, and if this is the best we can get, then
7 this is the best we can get.

8 And so, I'm -- you know, it's, it's not the --
9 exactly where you'd like it, as Lou has said, but I don't
10 think that's something that can be easily changed. You,
11 these tanks connect to piping, the piping serves the
12 building. You have the tanks. It's just --

13 So they have done what they can to make it looking
14 sort of dignified, and I think that's okay.

15 MARY FLYNN: Mm-hm. All right. Thank you for
16 that. Thoughts from any other Board members? Okay. Seeing
17 none -- oh, Steve? Oh, and I see you're connecting to
18 audio. Do you have comments? Not sure he can hear us.

19 All right. Well, seeing no other comments at this
20 point, then, so the alternatives for action tonight are for
21 us to either conclude the Design Update and leaving the
22 design subject to continuing CDD Staff review prior to the

1 issuance of a building permit, or we can request additional
2 information for further review by the Planning Board at a
3 future meeting.

4 And since there aren't a lot of comments, other
5 than Lou's concern -- but as you said it's kind of set in
6 stone literally, it seems and then otherwise there's really
7 no other -- no other information the group needs, I think,
8 you know, it was stated earlier that as the plaza develops,
9 there might be an opportunity to relook at this site and
10 think about adding in some level of art that might be
11 appropriate, and I think that does make some sense.

12 I think -- yeah, personally I like the idea of the
13 tanks and the fence, but it would be nice to find a way to
14 incorporate, you know, something to make it a little bit
15 more distinctive. And I understand that there may be
16 problems with the green wall idea, but, you know, there are
17 very many creative things can be done with art.

18 So I would hope that as part of continuing Design
19 Review, that you folks would think about that, even if it
20 happens after the installation of the fence.

21 So do I have a motion, then, or final comments
22 from anybody? No? Okay. Is there a motion, then, to

1 conclude the Design Update, leaving the design subject the
2 continuing CDD Staff review before issuance of a building
3 permit?

4 HUGH RUSSELL: So moved.

5 MARY FLYNN: Hugh? Okay. Is there a second?

6 STEVEN A. COHEN: Second.

7 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. Okay. Could we have a
8 roll call vote, please?

9 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Sure. A roll call on that
10 motion: Lou Bacci?

11 LOUIS J. BACCI, JR.: Present.

12 DANIEL MESSPLAY: H Theodore Cohen?

13 H THEODORE COHEN: Yes.

14 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Steve Cohen?

15 STEVEN A. COHEN: Yes.

16 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Hugh Russell?

17 HUGH RUSSELL: Yes.

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Ashley Tan?

19 ASHLEY TAN: Yes.

20 DANIEL MESSPLAY: And Mary Flynn?

21 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

22 [All vote YES]

1 DANIEL MESSPLAY: That's five members voting in
2 favor, one member voting present.

3 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you very much. Well,
4 thanks to the proponents for your efforts to date. And, you
5 know, hopefully this will continue to evolve in some manner
6 over time.

7 I know the CRA has always been very, very good at
8 working with the Board, with our Board, in trying to come to
9 a resolution that makes everybody happy. So appreciate it.
10 Appreciate your time.

11 COLLECTIVE: Thank you.

12 MARY FLYNN: So that concludes the business on our
13 agenda this evening. Are there additional comments from
14 Staff or anything?

15 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Just a reminder that there's no
16 Planning Board meeting next week and we will resume on May
17 16.

18 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Very good. Board members have
19 any other comments before we adjourn? No? Okay. Well,
20 have a nice week, everyone, and the meeting is adjourned.
21 Goodnight, all.

22 COLLECTIVE: Goodnight.

[8:21 p.m. End of proceedings.]

E R R A T A S H E E T

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I have read the foregoing transcript of the Planning Board meeting, and except for any corrections or changes noted above, I hereby subscribe to the transcript as an accurate record of the proceedings.

Name

Date

CERTIFICATE

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Middlesex, ss.

I, Michele Dent, Notary Public in and for the
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify that the
above transcript is a true record, to the best of my
ability, of the proceedings.

I further certify that I am neither related to nor
employed by any of the parties in or counsel to this action,
nor am I financially interested in the outcome of this
action.

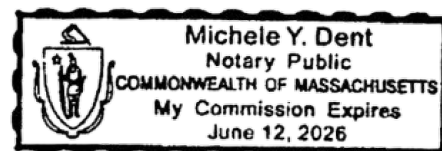
In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this
16th day of May, 2023.



Notary Public

My commission expires:

June 12, 2026



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