

Market Central Retail Plan – Staff Questions

Please provide answers to the following questions by January 14, 2022.

[Bob Flack responses in Blue Bold Type – 1/12/22 ver-2]

Retail Plan Comments:

- Who will be managing the vendors and trucks, including pulling all necessary City permits?
The 1st Season Market is proposed for September 2022 to coordinate with the opening of 5 new food tenants on Mass Ave. To ensure a successful event, we propose to a street closure of the end of Columbia St where vending is permitted, and pedestrians will have access to Market Central plazas and Lafayette Square (for non-vending activities). We will select an appropriate operator with assistance from the Central Square BID if this location proves to be feasible. Otherwise, the seasonal market will be in the City Parking Lot #6, subject to coordination and approval of the Parking and Traffic Department and DPW. By necessity, the operator for the City Lot venue will be different if that is the venue; see attached market plans.
 - How will the operator ensure that Cambridge businesses and artists get priority to vend?
While we agree these are preferable vendors, this goes beyond zoning requirements. We will work with CDD when the venue and operator is selected to set appropriate goals.
- What is the anticipated schedule of the market (e.g. quarterly, monthly)? Zoning requirements require a seasonal market, but no information was provided.
Initially annually, and if successful and a positive impact for the area and Market Central, we will hold events twice a year. All events will be subject to pandemic and public health assessments.
- Per the zoning, provide a narrative description of how you're encouraging local, independent retail and active street-level uses.
Despite extremely adverse market conditions, Twining Properties and Graffito have successfully leased 6 retail spaces on Massachusetts Avenue meeting the zoning requirements. The last vacant space on Mass Ave is leased to Crumbl Cookies subject to a formula business Special Permit. During this leasing period, DPW approved a plan for public access and Tenant use of the private plazas and Arcade. The layout balances pedestrian pathways through and around the site with adjacent retail uses that extend into outdoor patio areas; see attached Retail Program Space Diagrams and Outdoor Patio Plan.
Secondary retail locations will take more time, 4 spaces along Columbia Street and 2 smaller spaces in the Arcade. Spaces on Columbia St and Bishop Allen Drive orient to the neighborhood and will have lower financial thresholds appropriate for local services, dry goods, and across-the-street customers of the 907 Main Hotel.

- Per the zoning, provide a narrative description of how the development is reflective of the economic and cultural diversity of the Central Square neighborhood.

Current Tenants represent a diversity of price point and food service types. The remaining spaces, which are smaller or more affordable, will tend to be service and non-food oriented.

SPACE	TENANT	FULL-SERVICE DINING	SPECIALTY FOOD	QUICK SERVICE	PRICE POINT	STYLE
#1	Crumbl Cookies		✓	✓	\$	Cookies
#2	Vitality Bowls		✓	✓	\$	Health QSR, Acai Bowls, juice drinks
#3	Jaho Cafe		✓		\$\$	Cafe & wine bar
#4A	Si Cara Pizza	✓			\$\$	Italian, pizza
#4B	Sho-jo	✓			\$\$	Asian, Gastro Pub
#4C	Tea-do		✓		\$	Bubble tea shop
#5	Muku Ramen		✓		\$\$	Ramen shop

- Provide a table showing how the development meets the requirements of Sections 20.307.9(2) and 20.307.9(3).

20.307.9.2 The ground floor space in any such building frontage along Massachusetts Avenue or Main Street and extending 30 feet into such building (the "Building Frontage") shall be devoted to retail uses, except for spaces required for accessory uses and other building functions serving the other floors of such building which are typically located at the ground level, including without limitation lobby space, building security, access/egress, mailrooms, mechanical spaces and bicycle parking, which spaces shall be limited to thirty percent (30%) of the total Building Frontage.

20.307.9.3 A minimum of 25% of the retail space required pursuant to Section 20.307.9.2 above shall consist of Independent and Local Retailers. "Independent and Local Retailers" shall include any retail operator which does not own or operate more than 10 retail locations in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts with the same name and retail concept, such determination to be made as of the date of execution of a lease or commencement of ownership of or other right to occupy such retail space.

	SPACE AREA	LOCATION	REQ'D BY ZONING	PROVIDED	INDEPEND & LOCAL	COMMENTS
1 st 30' into building to be retail except for Building Accessory Uses			✓	✓		
Frontage limit to Building Accessory Uses			30%	30%		
% Minimum Retail Independent & Local Leased to Date			25%	75%		
Space #1 – Crumbl Cookies	1,500 sf	Mass Ave			✗	Subject to new Formula Business

	SPACE AREA	LOCATION	REQ'D BY ZONING	PROVIDED	INDEPEND & LOCAL	COMMENTS
						ordinance. 5 other Mass locations
Space #2 – Vitality Bowls	923 sf	Mass Ave			✗	1 other Mass location, lease signed before formula business ordinance
Space #3 – Jaho Cafe	1,500 sf	Mass Ave			✓	4 other Mass locations
Space #4A – Si Cara Pizza	1,500 sf	Mass Ave			✓	0 other Mass locations
Space #4B – Sho-jo	1,500 sf	Mass Ave			✓	1 other Mass location
Space #4C – Tea-do	1,324 sf	Arcade			✓	2 other Mass locations
Space #5 – Muku Ramen	1,297 sf	Mass Ave & Arcade			✓	1 other Mass location, different name
Space #6	462 sf	Arcade			[tbd]	
Space #7	784 sf	Arcade			[tbd]	
Space #8	804 sf	Columbia			[tbd]	
Space #9	1,075 sf	Columbia			[tbd]	
Space #10	857 sf	Columbia			[tbd]	
Space #11	1,128 sf	Bishop Allen & Columbia			[tbd]	

14,654 sf

- Please provide a project narrative (that includes the answer to the questions above) along with the plan drawings. Please show a plan using the canopy area as the space for the seasonal market.

The Arcade is subject to a public access easement, and therefore, DPW’s approval. Designated patio areas for Retailers extend into the arcade as approved in the attached “Outdoor Patio Plan”. Given a minimum of 8’-0” for the public way, it is not feasible to have the Season Market in the Arcade.

- If the market is on the City sidewalk/parking lot, a discussion with Traffic and Parking is needed to confirm the current configuration would work for the flow of Lot #6, as well as emergency vehicle access requirements.

Understood and agreed

General Comments:

- For small businesses, shared public space might help with increased foot traffic. Will the canopy area/passthrough include only seating?

Each Tenant will submit plans to DPW because of the public passageway easement. We expect most will have tables and chairs depending on the available dimensions.

Bow Market sees increased foot traffic because the businesses are in close proximity and share a common exterior corridor and courtyard, that is used for seating and special events. There are 4-5 businesses here that share the covered “alley” or passthrough. Providing sidewalk businesses uses (such as seating or sidewalk sales) could increase business activity and a space to host events.

Conceptually agreed, however, DPW requires a 8'-0" minimum width for the pedestrian passageway.

- Are there any activity/events that could occur in the Central Alley when there is no outdoor dining?

Potentially, depending on the Tenants. As it stands, the "Patio Spaces" are important revenue sources for the Tenants. It seems unlikely they will forgo use of these areas which is embedded in Leases.

Are there any ideas for activation inside/in vacant storefronts?

Heat, ventilation, and life-safety systems are required for temporary uses. While it is possible to bring spaces up to a "vanilla box" condition, it is costly to undertake the upgrades without some leasing traction. We will re-evaluate later this year when the market conditions should respond to new retail on Mass Ave and at 907 Main Hotel across the street.

Moving forward:

- Check out outdoor markets in region (i.e. Somerville, Boston, Cambridge) to get ideas on potential operators. City staff cannot provide recommendations on one operator over another.

OK

- Jill Rhone-Brown Park (aka Lafayette Plaza) is a City-owned park and operated by the City. It cannot be used for seasonal markets.

Understood, but please review the proposal for closing Columbia St as a location for vending.

- **Please let us know if Market Central can present this proposal and provide a general retail update to the Central Square Advisory Committee and the Market Central Retail Committee. It can be convened as a joint session.** Potential Meeting date: February 2, 2022. This is the same meeting that your new tenant, Crumbl, will be presenting to the Central Square Advisory Committee.

I am on vacation in Miami on Feb 2 but can attend virtually. If possible, a later date would be better.

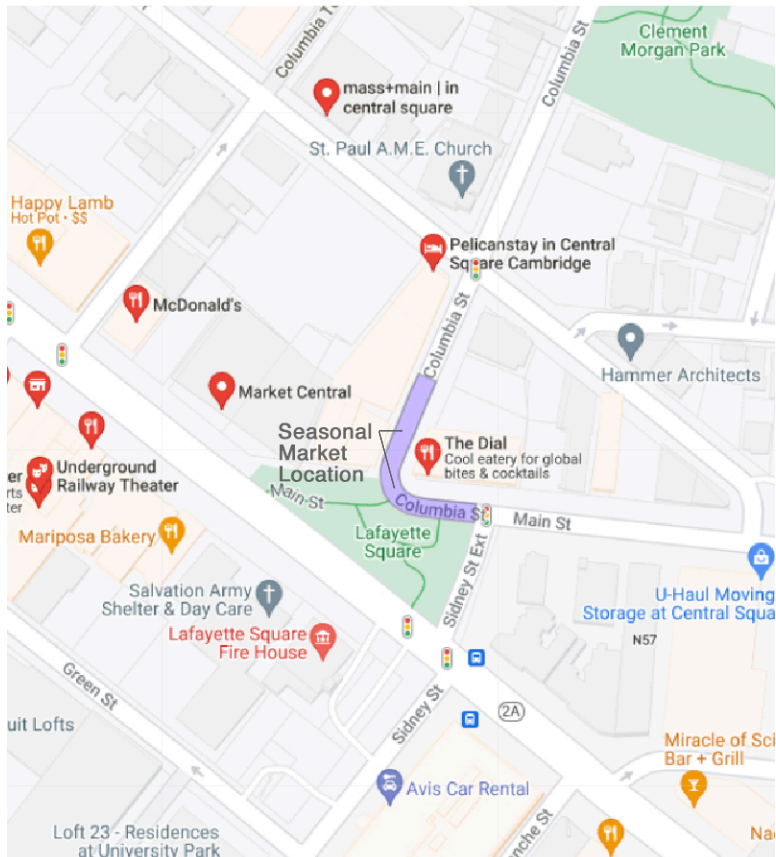


1 RETAIL PLAN A
1/8" = 1'-0"

REVISIONS #	DATE	DESCRIPTION
1		



MARKET CENTRAL RETAIL PLAN



Alternative Seasonal Market Location with Columbia St Closure

