



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

# PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

## SPECIAL PERMIT APPLICATION • COVER SHEET

In accordance with the requirements of the City of Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, the undersigned hereby petitions the Planning Board for one or more Special Permits for the premises indicated below.

Location of Premises: 698 Massachusetts Avenue

Zoning District: BB-CSQ

Applicant Name: Central Property Limited; by Atty Patrick Barrett

Applicant Address: 698 Mass Ave

Contact Information: 617 778 - 3521      jbrealtyllc@gmail.com      \_\_\_\_\_  
Telephone #      Email Address      Fax #

List all requested special permit(s) (with reference to zoning section numbers) below. *Note that the Applicant is responsible for seeking all necessary special permits for the project. A special permit cannot be granted if it is not specifically requested in the Application.*

20.304.5 (3)(b) Restricted Uses Financial Institutions  
20.304.5 (4) Formula Business District

List all submitted materials (include document titles and volume numbers where applicable) below.

Interior Plans  
Exterior Elevations  
Site Plan

Signature of Applicant: \_\_\_\_\_  
*[Handwritten Signature]*

For the Planning Board, this application has been received by the Community Development Department (CDD) on the date specified below:

Date \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of CDD Staff \_\_\_\_\_

Barrett Legal  
698 Massachusetts Avenue Narrative and Zoning Analysis

698 Massachusetts Avenue: Change of Use  
Special Permit Application Narrative

Prepared by Barrett Legal

09/01/2020

1. General Narrative:

The proposed site is currently the location of Rodney's Book Store and the new desired use is a financial institution. The tenant is Citizens Bank currently occupying a location directly across the street.

The site is within the BB-CSQ zoning district

2. Building Use and Area

The proposed change will occupy approximately three thousand square feet of space at the ground level where Rodney's Book Store currently occupies.

3. Requested Special Permits

- a. Article 20.304.5 (3)(B) Restricted Uses Financial Institutions
  - i. The applicant requests a special permit where the length of the store frontage is over 25' and will use more than 30% of the building frontage
- b. Article 20.304.5 (4) Formula Business District
  - i. The applicant requests a special permit where the business is a formula business

4. Response to Special Permit Criteria – (a)

- a. Article 10.43 Criteria. Special permits will normally be granted where specific provisions of this Ordinance are met, except when particulars of the location or use, not generally true of the district or of the uses permitted in it, would cause granting of such permit to be to the detriment of the public interest because:
  - i. *Applicant Response: The criteria will not be met. The linear footage is over the current threshold by approximately 2"*
- b. Traffic generated or patterns of access or egress would cause congestion, hazard, or substantial change in established neighborhood character, or
  - i. *Applicant Response: The traffic generated by the use will not further congest, create hazards, or create a substantial change in the established neighborhood.*

- c. *the continued operation of or the development of adjacent uses as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance would be adversely affected by the nature of the proposed use, or*
    - i. *Applicant Response: N/A*
  - d. *nuisance or hazard would be created to the detriment of the health, safety and/or*
    - i. *Applicant Response: The proposed use exists across the street and will propose no more use requirements than is currently present in the area. Further the footprint of the use is significantly redacted.*
  - e. *for other reasons, the proposed use would impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district, or otherwise derogate from the intent and purpose of this Ordinance, and*
    - i. *Applicant Response: The proposed use is within several feet of transit nodes, blue bikes, and is currently across the street from the proposed location.*
  - f. *the new use or building construction is inconsistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30.*
    - i. *Applicant Response: The project conforms to and follows the Urban Design Objectives set forth in 19.30.*
- 5. *Article 20.304.5 (3)(B) Restricted Uses Financial Institutions*
  - a. *Unless specifically waived upon the granting of a special permit by the Planning Board, no individual bank or financial institution (Section 4.34e) shall occupy more than twenty-five (25) feet of building frontage facing Massachusetts Avenue or Main Street, and no more than thirty percent (30%) of a lot's aggregate building frontage facing one or more public streets may be occupied by such uses.*
    - i. *Applicant Response: Citizen's Bank occupies the building across the street at 689 Massachusetts avenue. The current location is approximately twice the size of the proposed locus. The restrictive language currently in place anticipated and encourages a transition of this type which was seen last year when Santander moved into their new location at 599 Mass Ave. The overall goal of the Central Square Overlay language was not to restrict financial uses absolutely but to encourage smaller footprints and reduced overall presence in the square. This proposed change will fulfill that goal.*
- 6. *Response to Special Permit Criteria – (b)*
  - a. *Article 10.43 Criteria. Special permits will normally be granted where specific provisions of this Ordinance are met, except when particulars of the location or use, not generally true of the district or of the uses permitted in it, would cause granting of such permit to be to the detriment of the public interest because:*
  - b. *Applicant Response: The criteria will not be met. The proposed use is a Formula business as defined in Article 2.*
  - c. *Traffic generated or patterns of access or egress would cause congestion, hazard, or substantial change in established neighborhood character, or*



Barrett Legal

698 Massachusetts Avenue Narrative and Zoning Analysis

*in physical design and marketing that will distinguish the Central Square location from other locations of the Formula Business.*

- 1. The new proposed location is a much less prominent location and fits more into the retail pattern of the district.*