

Harvard Square Advisory Committee

c/o Cambridge Community Development Department

344 Broadway

Cambridge, MA 02139

617/349-4647

Case: Two Arrow Street

Applicant: President and Fellows of Harvard College, /co Carolee Hill, Harvard Real Estate.

Proposal and Zoning Issues: Board of Zoning Appeal Use Variance to convert ground floor space at Zero Arrow Street to a retail establishment (LOOKS) in the Office 3 district. (Zero Arrow Street is the building address used for the Planning Board Special Permit #180, Two Arrow Street is the retail space.)

Harvard Square Advisory Committee: January 4, 2016

Summary: Diane Gray from Harvard Planning presented the application materials in support of the use variance for a women's clothing store. This retailer, LOOKS, has been in Harvard Square and a Harvard University tenant for 40 years and is currently located in the Smith Campus Center which is about to undergo extension renovation. The ground floor façade of Two Arrow Street consists of large windows that lend themselves to merchandise displays as well as generous floor to ceiling heights, which make good retail spaces. The proposed space is approximately 1,100 square feet. The existing ground floor space has never been actively used or occupied, and is not connected to any of the interior office uses. Many letters (17) were submitted in support of the variance, no letters of opposition were submitted. The store hours are Monday to Saturday from 10 to 6 and on Sundays from 10 to 4. There are no anticipated conflicts with the theater use. Arrow Street contains a mixture of uses, office as well as retail.

HSAC comments: A motion was made and seconded to support the application for the use variance to allow the relocation of a long term retail establishment to the ground floor of the theater building. The Committee suggested that appropriate level, energy efficient lighting be utilized to animate the storefront during the evening. The windows should be used for displays and kept open into the store to preserve an active line of sight. The proposal meets the intent of the guidelines of the Harvard Square Overlay District. There is a need for preserving long term retailers in Harvard Square. There will be no changes to the building façade other than signage as allowed in Section 7.000. This particular area contains a mixture of uses including stores and restaurants and other customer service establishments.

All members in attendance supported the motion.

Committee Members in Attendance: John DiGiovanni, Lauren Curry, Kari Kuelzer, Frank Kramer, Allison Crosbie, Matt Simitis, and Gladys Gifford.

Respectfully submitted for the Committee,
Liza Paden, Community Development Department

