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# CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

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To: Planning Board  
From: Central Square Advisory Committee  
Date: August 7, 2024  
Re: **425 Massachusetts Avenue (StretchMed)**

**IRAM FAROOQ**  
Assistant City Manager for  
Community Development

**SANDRA CLARKE**  
Deputy Director  
Chief of Administration

## Overview

The Central Square Advisory Committee (the "Committee") met on Wednesday, August 7, 2024 to discuss a pending special permit application by an Applicant proposing to open a formula business in a retail bay at 425 Massachusetts Avenue (Market Central). The meeting was conducted pursuant to the provisions of Section 20.50 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance in advance of the applicant's request for a special permit from the Planning Board (PB). Committee members present were Saffana Anwar, Christopher Fort, Melissa Greene, Esther Hanig, Tahir Kapoor, Kevin Grinberg, and Robert Winters. After discussion, the Committee decided to forward a report to the Planning Board with a positive recommendation, with 7 members present voting in favor.

## Proposal Description

The Applicant proposes to operate a Fitness Center in a previously unoccupied retail space at 425 Massachusetts Avenue, consisting of approximately 700ish square feet. While Fitness Centers are a use allowed as of-right by the Zoning Ordinance, the Applicant is a Formula Business and therefore needs a special permit from the Planning Board. New signage is proposed. In considering applications for Special Permits for Formula Businesses, the Planning Board shall find that the requirements of Section 20.305.4 are met. CSAC will review the application and prepare a recommendation to be submitted to the Planning Board.

## Recommendations

No public comments were received by CSAC. The Committee voted to forward a report to the Planning Board with a positive recommendation. CSAC members were supportive of the proposed retail use and raised no major concerns. The application materials included sample signage from other locations, including a blade sign and window signage, both of which are proposed for the 425 Mass Ave location. The Committee expressed no concerns with the design of the proposed signage. CSAC members agreed the proposed use would be a positive addition to the Market Central alley, citing its current inactivity.

Respectfully submitted for the Committee,

**Mason Wells**  
Community Development Department