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# CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

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To: Board of Zoning Appeal  
From: Harvard Square Advisory Committee  
Date: May 15, 2024  
Re: **1 Brattle Square (Chip City)**

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

**SANDRA CLARKE**  
Deputy Director  
Chief of Administration

## Overview

The Harvard Square Advisory Committee (the “Committee”) met on Wednesday, May 15, 2024 to discuss a special permit application for Chip City locations at 1 Brattle Square. 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 Board of Zoning Appeal (BZA). Committee members present were Allison Crosbie, John DiGiovanni, Frank Kramer, Kari Kuelzer, Alexandra Offiong, and Matt Simitis (Chair). Absent was Lauren Curry, Jemel Derbali, Steven Ng, and Nicola Williams. After discussion, John DiGiovanni moved and Alexandra Offiong seconded the motion to forward a report to the BZA with a positive recommendation. Six (6) members present voting in favor and none (0) against.

## Proposal Description

The Applicant is proposing a formula business quick service food establishment in an approximately 715 square foot retail space on the ground floor of the 1 Brattle Square building in Harvard Square. The business is expected to sell baked goods, as well as ice cream and beverages. Fast Order/Quick-Service Food Establishments in the Harvard Square Overlay District require a special permit from the Board of Zoning Appeal (BZA) if they are considered a Formula Business. Chip City is a nationwide chain with approximately 38 locations that qualifies as a Formula Business. In considering applications for Special Permits for Fast Order or Quick-Service Food Establishments, the BZA shall find that in addition to other criteria specified in Zoning Section 10.40, that the requirements of Section 11.31(a)-(g) are also met. HSAC has reviewed the application and prepared this recommendation to be submitted to the BZA

## Public Comments

No public comment.

## Committee Comments

The Committee voted to recommend that the application be approved by the BZA and to transmit the below summary of comments:

- Alexandra Offiong –
  - Why is this applicant before HSAC? Is it just to be able to serve ice cream and drinks? Staff confirmed that because these new menu items would result in a different use classification a special permit was required.
- John DiGiovanni –

- Expressed frustration with the amount of time spent reviewing quick service formula businesses in Harvard Square.
- Supportive of the applicant providing outdoor seating in front of the business. The applicant likes the idea of outdoor seating and noted indoor seating space available at an inside banquet.
- Supportive of the applicant remaining open for as many hours as feasible and maintaining a lit store front during off hours to support street activity. The applicant initially plans to close around 10pm. Depending on the area and activity on the street, there might be interest in staying open until 11pm or midnight.

**Recommendation**

Members of the Committee were supportive of the applicant's proposal.

Respectfully submitted for the Committee,



**Mason Wells**

Community Development Department