



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Community Development Department

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To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

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Chief of Administration

Date: June 11, 2024

Re: **PB #179, Cambridge Crossing (North Point) PUD Amendment 12 (Minor)**

Background

The North Point Planned Unit Development (PUD) is an approved 45-acre, 5+ million square foot development project planned to be built out through 2030. The Final Development Plan was first approved by the Planning Board in 2003 and has been modified several times through the PUD amendment process. The most recent minor amendment was granted by the Planning Board on September 20, 2022.

DivcoWest is currently seeking Minor Amendment approval for the following modifications:

- Reduce the minimum required off-street parking ratio in Parcel I (aka "Park 151") and Parcel R (aka "151 Morgan") from 0.5 spaces per dwelling unit to 0.3 spaces per dwelling unit.
- Allow users of 151 Morgan to utilize off-street parking spaces at Park 151.

This memo summarizes the key areas of focus associated with the requested minor amendment.

Criteria for Granting Minor Amendments

Per the general PUD provisions in Section 12.37 of the Zoning Ordinance, the Planning Board determines whether changes to the Final Development Plan may be approved as minor amendments. The following guidance is provided in zoning:

(12.37.2) Minor amendments are changes which do not alter the concept of the PUD in terms of density, floor area ratio, land usage, height, provision of open space, or the physical relationship of elements of the development. Minor amendments shall include, but not be limited to, small changes in the location of buildings, open space, or parking; or realignment of minor streets.

If the Board determines that the changes are minor, then the Board may approve the minor amendment on the affirmative vote of five Planning Board members.

Comments on Proposed Amendment

The requested amendment involves two distinct development sites within the Cambridge Crossing PUD – Parcel I and Parcel R:

- Parcel I is a fully constructed, mixed-use development consisting of 468 dwelling units and approximately 20,000 square feet of ground-story retail uses. The development also contains an off-street parking structure with 234 spaces.

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- Parcel R received Design Review approval by the Planning Board in 2022 but has not begun construction. Parcel R is planned to be a mixed-use development consisting of approximately 120 dwelling units and 20,000 square feet of ground-story retail uses. The approved design also includes an underground parking facility containing 60 off-street parking spaces.

The Cambridge Crossing special permit approval requires that the Permittee adhere to the overall Master Plan, which includes a minimum off-street parking ratio for residential uses of 0.5- spaces per dwelling unit for each building and an overall average of 0.75 spaces per dwelling unit for the entire project at full build-out. The requested amendment would require a minimum of 141 spaces for use by Parcel I residents, and 36 spaces for Parcel R residents. The remaining 57 spaces would be available to either building.

While the City Council amended zoning in 2022 to [eliminate minimum off-street parking citywide](#), minimum off-street parking requirements in special permits continue to be in effect unless specifically amended by the Planning Board. Condition #21.a of the Special Permit stipulates that the Permittee meet with City staff to discuss opportunities for smaller parking ratios and/or shared parking and report back to the Planning Board as appropriate.

The Traffic, Parking + Transportation Department reviewed the request by the Permittee and has prepared a memorandum dated June 5, 2024 which supports the requested Minor Amendment. TP+T states that while Parcel I is 95% occupied, at any given time there are approximately 80 unused spaces in Parcel I's garage. The memo notes that City transportation policy supports using existing, built off-street parking where possible instead of building new off-street parking spaces.

Should the Planning Board elect to make a determination that the requested amendment is a Minor Amendment and approve it, the following conditions of the PB-179 special permit would need to occur:

- Condition 22.a – will be updated to clarify that the updated off-street parking ratios for Parcel I and Parcel R apply in place of any conflicting standards from the recommendations of the memo from TP+T dated January 13, 2015.
- Appendix I – the Approved Development Program will be updated to reflect a reduced off-street parking ratio for Parcel I and Parcel R.
- Parcel R, which received Design Review approval from the Planning Board in 2022, will need to update its approved design to reflect the removal of off-street parking at this development site. Removal of the parking ramp access provides an opportunity to reassess the ground floor layout. In addition to improving bicycle parking access and the pedestrian crossing on East Street, it is also important to consider relocating the at-grade transformer and the unenclosed loading dock to a location within the building. This change would better align with citywide urban design objectives than the current configuration. Depending on the extent of the updates, CDD staff will determine whether the proposed changes will require a Design Update at the Planning Board or can be approved administratively.