



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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To: Planning Board
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Re: Special Permit **PB #314, 35 Cambridgepark Drive**

This memo contains an overview of the proposed project at 35 Cambridgepark Drive, the special permit being requested, and related comments. Comments from the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department (TP&T) and Department of Public Works (DPW) are provided in separate memos.

Summary of Proposal

The applicant is proposing partial demolition of the existing three-story building and construction of two additional levels for technical office use for research and development (R&D), increasing the Gross Floor Area from about 137,635 square feet to about 184,815 square feet, with the addition of a small retail area of about 7,500 square feet in the first floor. The proposal also includes relocation of the outdoor mechanical and electrical equipment, landscape improvements, and minor modifications to the attached garage building, including a reduction in parking spaces from a total of 351 to 331.

Requested Special Permit

The site is located in the Office-2A (O-2A) zoning district as well as in an Alewife Overlay District (AOD-6). The proposed project is seeking Special Permits for increasing the FAR per Section 20.95.1, waiver of yard requirements per Section 20.95.34, and reduction in required open space per Section 20.96.3. The project is also located within the Flood Plain Overlay District and hence requires a Special Permit for development per Section 20.73. In addition, the project is seeking a Special Permit for alteration and enlargement of a pre-existing nonconforming structure per Section 8.22.2a. The project also requires review by the Conservation Commission for compliance with Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act.

Requested Special Permits	Summarized Findings <i>(see appendix for zoning text excerpts)</i>
<p>Increase FAR, waive yard requirements, and reduce required open space in Alewife Overlay Districts (Section 20.95.1, 20.95.34, 20.96.3)</p>	<p>The project promotes the general interests of the larger commercial and residential neighborhood noted in Section 20.92 and is consistent with the goals, objectives and guidelines established in the Concord-Alewife Plan (see following page).</p> <p>For waiver of yard requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The objectives of the Concord-Alewife Plan continue to be met. • The stormwater management objectives for the area continue to be met both on the site and as the site may be a part of a larger system for managing stormwater runoff. • The reduction or waiver of yard requirements provides for more efficient development of land; encourages or facilitates a more logical pattern of buildings, streets, parks and open space; or enhances the urban, pedestrian character of the area as envisioned in the Concord- Alewife Plan. <p>For reduction of required open space:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The urban design and stormwater management objectives as set forth in the Concord-Alewife Plan continue to be met.
<p>Alteration or enlargement of a pre-existing nonconforming structure (Section 8.22.2a)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The proposed change, extension, or alteration will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming use.
<p>Construction in Flood Plain Overlay District (Section 20.73)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No encroachment of the floodway or displacement of water retention capacity is allowed unless fully offset. • Flood water systems shall not cause nuisance, hazard or detriment to site or abutters. • Development is consistent with zoning, area plans and guidelines, and applicable laws including Wetlands Protection Act. • Review by the City Engineer and Conservation Commission are required. (See full criteria in appendix).
<p>General special permit criteria (Section 10.43)</p>	<p>Special permits will be normally granted if the zoning requirements are met, unless it is found not to be in the public interest due to one of the criteria enumerated in Section 10.43 (see appendix).</p>

Concord-Alewife Plan Goals for Triangle (intended to provide general guidance)

- Encourage more transit-oriented development. Allow higher density and height to take advantage of proximity to Alewife Station.
- Continue to allow commercial development to be focused in this area, while also encouraging housing close to the T station.
- Create a pleasant, walkable connection between Alewife Reservation and Fresh Pond Reservation consistent with the Alewife Reservation Master Plan and the Fresh Pond Master Plan.
- Create public access to the Alewife Reservation from Cambridgepark Drive.
- Reduce auto mode share within the Triangle.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian connections among the Minuteman Trail, Belmont Path, Linear Park, and a future pathway along the Watertown rail line.
- Improve signage and enhance access to the multiuse trail from Alewife Station.
- Encourage development of additional housing close to Alewife Station while continuing to support commercial development.

Concord-Alewife Design Guidelines – Areawide & Triangle (intended to provide general guidance)

- Break up large blocks into smaller blocks, of sizes similar to those in surrounding Cambridge neighborhoods.
- Vary the design of individual buildings to create an architecturally diverse district.
- Street level facades should include active uses such as frequent residential entrances; neighborhood-serving retail; services for public or commercial offices; and community spaces.
- Encourage awnings/ canopies to provide shelter and enliven ground-floor façades.
- Utilize low impact development principles in building and site design.
- Use site design that preserves future rights-of-way identified in the Circulation Concept Plan.
- Improve existing streets to meet City standards, including streetscape improvements.
- Strengthen bicycle and pedestrian links to adjacent areas.
- Screen service areas from major streets.
- Parking below-grade is preferred. If above-grade parking is provided, it should be designed so that it is not visible from public streets and pathways; line structured parking with active uses along important public ways.
- Design and locate lighting and signage in support of the district's pedestrian-friendly quality.
- Use site design to minimize shadows on other buildings or on public streets, open spaces, parks, and plazas.
- Create a pedestrian-friendly environment along Cambridgepark Drive.
- Provide small setbacks (5 to 15 feet) from the right-of-way for café seating, benches, or small open spaces.
- Provide pedestrian links that strengthen physical connections to Alewife Reservation, consistent with its master plan.
- Create building height / façade setbacks between 85' and 105'.
- Site new development to preserve right-of-way for future crossing of the railroad tracks to connect the Triangle and Quadrangle.

Area Planning and Zoning

The base zoning for the site is Office-2A (O-2A), which allows professional office and residential uses by right. The base zoning is modified by the Alewife Overlay District (AOD) zoning, which augments the base district zoning regulations in a way that allows greater density and more flexible dimensional requirements by special permit while imposing additional requirements and standards to respond to the unique issues identified in the Alewife area. It also allows ground-floor retail uses by special permit, with limitations. This zoning regime of a more restrictive by-right zoning, which can be more permissive by special permit, was one of the results of the Concord-Alewife Rezoning that was recommended in the 2006 *Concord-Alewife Planning Study* (see below).

As with much of the Alewife area, part of the site is located within the Flood Plain Overlay District, which encompasses areas designated as Flood Hazard Zones A and AE on the Middlesex County Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRMs) issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Projects within this district require a Planning Board special permit. While the criteria for granting the special permit are meant to mitigate flood hazard in a fairly technical way, they also align with many of the environmental goals of the Concord-Alewife plan.

Concord-Alewife Plan

The planning goals that guide development in the area were established in the *Concord-Alewife Planning Study*, completed in 2006. In deciding special permits pursuant to the Alewife Overlay District (AOD) zoning, the key consideration for the Board will be the degree to which the proposal conforms to the Concord-Alewife plan. Attached to this memo is a selected set of materials from the Concord-Alewife report that are most relevant to consideration of a proposal in this area.

The 35 Cambridgepark Drive site lies within the interior of the “Triangle” (classified on the Zoning Map as the “AOD-6” subdistrict), which includes the area north of the Fitchburg rail line and south of the Alewife Brook Reservation, which has mostly transitioned from industrial use to a mix of office, commercial research labs, and housing. This area has good access to public transit through the Red Line and regional bus service. The area is currently experiencing a considerable amount of multi-family housing production, while there have also been recent renovation and improvement projects to the larger-scale office and R&D buildings that were developed in the 1980s and 1990s.

Future Development Goals

Some of the overall Concord-Alewife goals related to development are to promote a mix of housing and commercial uses throughout the area, to manage traffic demand by supporting walking, bicycling and public transportation as alternative modes of transportation, and to promote stormwater management through increased landscape and permeable area, as well as engineered interventions.

In the Triangle in particular, the planning goals strongly encourage transit-oriented development. The Triangle goals also support creation of public access to and between the natural reservation areas in the neighborhood and improved bicycle and pedestrian connections to the local and regional trail network.

Infrastructure

Another key component of the Concord-Alewife plan is desired infrastructure improvements to serve public goals. One major piece of infrastructure is a planned pedestrian/bicycle bridge providing a more direct connection between Cambridgepark Drive in the Triangle and Fawcett Street in the Quadrangle for better accessibility to Alewife Station. The city is currently undertaking a feasibility study for this bridge connection, which is now also considering the possibility of creating a new MBTA commuter rail station along the existing Fitchburg line, which could provide additional transit service to both the Triangle and the Quadrangle.

Other desired infrastructure improvements particular to the Triangle include enhanced bicycle and pedestrian connections to Alewife Brook Reservation and the Shopping Center district along Alewife Brook Parkway. In addition, the plan identifies public open space as a goal, both to serve community-gathering functions and to assist in stormwater management. The AOD zoning provides mechanisms by which development rights and requirements can be shifted, pooled and transferred flexibly across sites to enable these public improvements.

Urban Design

One of the main urban design objectives for development in the Concord-Alewife area is to create a coherent character and a sense of place with a built fabric and streetscape that enhances the bicycle and pedestrian environment. Key urban design considerations include fostering a pedestrian-friendly environment and vibrant public realm by creating active streets and outdoor gathering spaces, and reinforcing connections to nearby open spaces. Relevant design guidelines are summarized above and discussed further in this memo.

Comments on Proposal

Overall Consistency with Planning and Zoning

The scale and use of the proposed project are consistent with the AOD zoning requirements, and the project is exceeding the minimum Article 6.000 requirements for parking and bicycle parking. The completed project will be approximately 184,815 square feet in Gross Floor Area (GFA), which nearly reaches the maximum FAR of 1.75 for non-residential uses that is allowed by special permit. The Project Review Special Permit requirements (Section 19.20) do not apply, as the additional GFA is less than 50,000 square feet. However, Planning Board approval is required for additional FAR exceeding 1.25, height exceeding 60 feet, and reduction in setbacks (with a minimum front setback of 15 feet) to assess whether such development is in accordance with the objectives of the Concord-Alewife Plan.

Open Space

The project is proposing Open Space area to be less than the required minimum of 15% of the lot area, which may be approved by the Planning Board if it is demonstrated that the urban design and stormwater management objectives set forth in the Concord-Alewife Plan are met, possibly through the use of innovative stormwater management techniques like green roofs. The Application (in an

engineering report pertaining to stormwater management and flood compensation) indicates that stormwater runoff from roof areas, ground level parking and plaza areas is expected be collected and routed to a detention/infiltration system, along with a bioswale. Otherwise, the Application has not identified innovative stormwater management techniques to meet the urban design and stormwater management objectives as set forth in the Concord-Alewife Plan.

The AOD regulations also require a minimum Permeable Area of 25% of the lot area, which may be waived as-of-right if the DPW water management standards are met. The engineering report provided in the Application indicates that those requirements are being considered, but no comment has been provided by DPW to the Planning Board thus far.

If the proposed realignment of the driveway on Cambridgepark Drive will result in a curb cut wider than 30 feet, the project will require a Special Permit from the Board of Zoning Appeal to exceed the maximum allowed curb cut width in Office district (per Section 6.43.3.b). The Planning Board is allowed to grant this special permit as per Section 10.45. Also, the AOD requirements prohibit parking between the public street and the front wall plane of the building. The proposed project seeks to retain two existing handicap-accessible parking spaces in this area, due to the infeasibility of providing accessible parking spaces in the garage, and seeks Planning Board approval for those spaces as an alteration to an existing non-conforming condition per Section 8.22.2a.

Retail Use

The Application does not make clear what type of retail use is proposed, though it appears that a restaurant or café use is favored given the proposal for outdoor seating. However, it should be noted that most retail uses are not allowed as-of-right in the district, and therefore the proposal may likely require Planning Board approval per Section 20.94.1. Given that the size of the space is 7,500 square feet, which is relatively large for most stand-alone retail establishments, it would be helpful to learn more about the Applicant's strategy to market that space and whether it may be subdivided.

Transportation

The project is not subject to the transportation impact standards of Section 19.20, because the additional GFA is just below the 50,000 square-foot threshold. Nevertheless, transportation is a key element of the Concord-Alewife Plan, whose objectives include public infrastructure improvements, transportation demand management (TDM) programs, and other measures to discourage additional automobile trips and encourage a more walkable, bikeable, and transit-oriented neighborhood, which is critical due to the existing traffic issues in the Alewife area. TP&T has suggested that a transportation analysis will be helpful in understanding how the project's transportation characteristics align with the goals in the Concord-Alewife Plan, and has provided specific comments in an accompanying memo.

Flood Plain Requirements

The Flood Plain Overlay District zoning requires technical review by the City Engineer and the Cambridge Conservation Commission to ensure that the development will not diminish the site's ability to accommodate the retention and flow of flood water. Approval is also conditioned on compliance with the Wetlands Protection Act, which potentially could include an Order of Conditions imposed by the

Conservation Commission and the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection. These requirements also dovetail with city standards for stormwater management, which are included as requirements in the AOD zoning. The Applicant has provided an engineering report, but at this time neither the City Engineer nor the Conservation Commission has provided comment to the Planning Board, and the Conservation Commission hearing has not been scheduled.

Urban Design

Prior to submittal of the Special Permit Application, Staff met with the Applicant to discuss the proposed project. Along with the key principles of the Concord-Alewife Plan and Design Guidelines, the site's prominent location, at a key intersection and opposite the Alewife T-station, was identified as being of critical importance to the character of the neighborhood.

The existing dark, low scale office building, which has minimal street presence, is proposed to be transformed by the addition of height and new facades. At the eastern end of the site, the informal loading area, mechanical equipment, transformer and fencing will be removed, with part of the building demolished to make way for additional open space and landscaping at the intersection of Cambridgepark Drive and Steel Place. These proposed landscape improvements have the potential to enhance the urban character of the area by creating a more activated and pedestrian-friendly frontage to the building. Though modest in scale, the addition of publicly accessible open space along Cambridgepark Drive is also consistent with the Concord-Alewife goals and will provide some visual and environmental benefit to the neighborhood, as well as opportunities for public seating and interaction.

Additional opportunities to enhance the pedestrian environment on Steel Place, including improvements to the sidewalk and street trees, reduction in the extent of paved surfaces, including possible alternate locations for the handicap parking, should be considered. The proposed sidewalk improvements on Cambridgepark Drive also require further review to ensure a direct line of travel for pedestrians is provided.

With regard to building massing, the strategy of breaking the building into two volumes separated by a centrally located notch is a worthy approach. The buildings transitions from a glass curtain wall closest to the T-station to a masonry framed facade at the western end. The glass corner anchors the intersection and creates a striking counterpoint to the heavier brick and concrete buildings nearby, while the masonry elements and color accents help to transition to the existing building fabric. Such an architectural approach has been used in a number of similar office/lab projects in Kendall Square to help mitigate building bulk. To further enhance the building's articulation, the depth of the notch should be clarified to ensure that the enough visual relief is provided, and other opportunities to further enliven the facades, such as additional cutouts, balconies and projections, should be investigated.

The proposed retail use, in concert with the aforementioned open space improvements, will also help to activate the corner of the building and create a more pedestrian-friendly public realm. The retail has ample transparency and despite the challenges associated with the existing structure, the architect has successfully achieved the appearance of greater height, and a finer grain and texture through clever

detailing of the building entries and storefronts. The office space, further to the west on the ground floor, poses some challenges in terms of maintaining privacy for workers and an active frontage. However, it is anticipated that the landscaped front setback will help to soften this edge.

While considering all of the site's street interfaces, staff feel that an opportunity also exists to improve the publicly visible façades of the garage, which are currently very unappealing and neglected. Given that this is the first building one sees when exiting the T station, strategies such as green walls, lighting, color and screening, should be explored. This would also help to advance some of the key principles of Concord-Alewife Design Guidelines.

The rooftop mechanicals are designed to be an integral component of the architecture of the building being completely screened by either metal panel or glass. The mechanicals also respond to the massing of the lower portion of the building, with the western half further setback from the principal façade to provide some variation in building height and roofline. A simpler treatment of corrugated metal panel is proposed for this section, which requires careful detailing to ensure an elegant design outcome is achieved.

Sustainable Design

In addition to the flood mitigation and stormwater requirements, the project is required to meet the current Green Building Requirements, which require the project to be designed to a LEED Silver level. Staff has reviewed the submitted green building materials with the Applicant's consultant and has found that the project is on track to fulfill the requirements.

As a result of the 2015 Net Zero Action Plan, the City is developing a proposal to increase the sustainable design standards for new buildings, with a particular focus on energy performance and enhanced commissioning. For this particular project, enhanced commissioning would be of particular benefit both to the city's sustainability goals and to the future homeowners of the building. The green building submission for the project does not include the enhanced commissioning credit, but the Applicant has agreed to consider expanding the scope of their independent commissioning to earn the credit. Staff recommends that all efforts be made to earn this credit in the building's final design. Since the project is employing a stormwater management plan, staff recommends that this project should also consider pursuing the credits for Stormwater Design – Quality Control and Stormwater Design – Quantity Control.

The Net Zero Action Plan also recommends that new buildings be "solar ready," meaning that the building includes rooftop space with maximum solar access (i.e., located to the south of any equipment that might cast a shadow) and designed to accommodate the future installation of solar energy equipment such as photovoltaic panels. While this is not required, staff highly recommends pursuing this objective. Also, the City is currently conducting a public process to develop a Climate Change Preparedness Plan to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts, which includes preparing for increased flooding over time and mitigating urban heat island effects.

Continuing Review

The following is a list of some key issues that staff recommends should be addressed further as the building and site designs advance. In addition to these considerations, it is expected that TP&T will continue to work with the Applicant to analyze and address transportation and parking issues, and that the Applicant will continue to discuss stormwater management, flood mitigation, and other related issues with DPW and the Conservation Commission. Additional comments from the Planning Board are welcome.

- The landscape plan prepared by SGA and the site plans prepared by VHB are inconsistent regarding the proposed open space layout in the front yard facing Steel Place. Both plans need to provide additional details, including site layout dimensions, materials notes, plant species and sizes, lighting, paving materials, open area and permeable area calculations, etc.
- Clarification regarding the rain gardens proposed along Cambridgepark Drive and associated stormwater management details.
- Further discussion of efforts to mitigate the proposed reduction in required open space, including exploration of passive roof gardens as innovative stormwater management technique to provide additional open space.
- Further exploration of ways to mitigate the reduction in permeable area, such as permeable pavement areas in the parking area to increase permeable area and reduce the extent of asphalt.
- Review of sidewalks and streetscape improvements proposed for Steel Place and Cambridgepark Drive.
- Improvements to the appearance of publicly visible facades of the garage.
- Clarification regarding the realignment of the existing curb cut on Cambridgepark Drive.

Special Permits to Increase FAR, Waive Yard Requirements, and Reduce Required Open Space in Alewife Overlay Districts

20.92 *General Purpose.* It is the purpose of this Section 20.90 to augment existing base district zoning regulations to respond to the unique problems and pressures for change in the Alewife area. The regulations contained in this Section 20.90 provide for more careful public scrutiny of future development proposals and provide an opportunity to shape the form and character of that development in ways that will benefit both individual property owners and the general interests of the larger commercial and residential neighborhood as a whole.

These regulations are intended to harness the opportunities presented with the redevelopment of private property in ways that will:

1. Encourage forms of development, mix of uses, and range of improvements that will facilitate and encourage walking, biking and transit use and reduce the growth of auto trips in an area already burdened with regional vehicular traffic passing through to other destinations in the metropolitan region;
2. Preserve and enhance the capacity to store floodwater, recharge groundwater and manage the collection and disposal of stormwater in ways that add to the quality and visual appeal of the built environment as well as to the quality of the water itself;
3. Minimize the negative impact of new development on the adjacent Cambridge Highlands residential neighborhood while introducing new amenities and services that will benefit the residents of that neighborhood;
4. Integrate the entire area through the creation of new pedestrian paths, roadways, green spaces and bridges that will facilitate movement within the several Districts and beyond to the Cambridge Highlands, North Cambridge and Neighborhood Nine neighborhoods and the Fresh Pond Reservation;
5. Introduce a significant component of residential living and support retail services to enhance the area's appeal for all persons who come to work, shop as well as live within the Districts; and
6. Create an identity and sense of place for the Alewife Districts that parallels the development of the historic urban centers that characterize much of Cambridge.

20.95.1 **Maximum Floor Area Ratio.** The maximum ratio of floor area to the lot area may be increased as set forth below, after the issuance of a special permit from the Planning Board.

5. Triangle District: 1.75 for non-residential uses; 2.0 for residential uses.

20.95.2 **Waiver of Yard Requirements.** The yard requirements of the applicable base or Overlay districts may be reduced or waived as set forth below:

1. Side and rear yard requirements of any applicable base zoning district may be waived, subject to the minimum requirements of Section 20.95.31 above, and front yards may be reduced to a minimum of fifteen (15) feet after the issuance of a special permit from the Planning Board.

3. The Planning Board shall consider the following in making its findings:
 - a. The objectives of the Concord-Alewife Plan continue to be met.
 - b. The stormwater management objectives for the area continue to be met both on the site and as the site may be a part of a larger system for managing stormwater runoff.
 - c. The reduction or waiver of yard requirements provides for more efficient development of land; encourages or facilitates a more logical pattern of buildings, streets, parks and open space; or enhances the urban, pedestrian character of the area as envisioned in the Concord- Alewife Plan.

20.96 *At Grade Open Space and Permeable Area Requirements.* Each lot shall be required to provide open space located at grade in the quantities set forth below. That open space may be any combination of Green Area, Permeable, Public, Publicly Beneficial, or Private open space as defined in Article 2.000.

In addition, each lot shall provide Permeable Area in quantities set forth below. Permeable Area shall be defined as that at-grade surface of a lot that is fully permeable to the infiltration of water to the soil below and whose subsurface permits the percolation of such surface water to the groundwater without interruption or diversion by any building, pavement, structure, or other manmade element with the exception of incidental utilities.

Nothing in these requirements shall prohibit the same portion of a lot from meeting both the Open Space and the Permeable Area requirements of this Section 20.96

20.96 .1 Quantity. The minimum ratio of Open Space and Permeable Area to the total area of the lot shall be fifteen (15) percent for Open Space and twenty-five (25) percent for Permeable Area. The Permeable Area requirement may be reduced as of right with the certification to the Superintendent by the City Engineer that the lot and the development upon it meet the Department of Public Works standards for water quality management and the retention/detention of the difference between the 2-year 24-hour pre-construction runoff hydrograph and the post-construction 25-year 24-hour runoff hydrograph as outlined in the publication Proposed Concord – Alewife Area Stormwater Management Guidelines, May 2006, Cambridge Department of Public Works, and upon a finding by the Planning Board pursuant to its review of an application under the provisions of Section 20.93.2, that such reduction advances the relevant purposes of this Section.

20.96.3 Reduction in Required Open Space. The Planning Board may allow by Special Permit the reduction of required Open Space, or permit such Open Space to be located other than at grade if the applicant can demonstrate that the urban design and stormwater management objectives as set forth in the Concord-Alewife Plan continue to be met, as for example through the use of innovative stormwater management techniques like green roofs.

Special Permit for Building Construction in Flood Plain Overlay District

20.73 *Applicability.* No structure or building shall be erected, constructed, expanded, substantially improved, or moved and no earth or other materials shall be dumped, filled, excavated, transferred or otherwise altered in the Flood Plain Overlay District unless a special permit is granted by the Planning Board.

20.74 *Procedure.* Application for a special permit shall be made on a form prescribed by the Board. In addition to the information required for the submittal, the applicant shall also present the following:

1. A detailed landscape plan drawn to a scale of one inch equals twenty (20) feet showing the elevation and design of flood water retention systems as required by applicable law;
2. Base flood elevation data, where the base flood elevation is not provided on the FIRM;
3. Certification and supporting documentation by a Massachusetts registered professional engineer demonstrating that such encroachment of the floodway as specified above in Subsection 20.73 shall not result in any increase in flood levels during the occurrence of the 100-year flood;
4. Such other technical information as necessary to permit the Planning Board to make the findings required in Section 20.75 below;
5. Description of the status of the proposal, pursuant to the requirements of the Massachusetts Wetlands Protection Act, before the Cambridge Conservation Commission, including any Order of Conditions or Determination of Applicability issued; and
6. Four (4) copies of all application materials.

20.74.1 Upon receipt of the application and development plans, the Planning Board shall transmit copies of the plans to the Conservation Commission and the City Engineer. Within forty-five (45) days of receipt of the plans, the Conservation Commission and the City Engineer shall review said plans and submit their respective reports and recommendations to the Planning Board. The Planning Board shall not render any decision on an application for a special permit for development in the Flood Plain Overlay District until said reports have been received and considered or until the forty-five (45) day period has expired without the receipt of such report, whichever is earlier.

20.75 *Criteria.* The Planning Board shall grant a Special Permit for development in the Flood Plain Overlay District if the Board finds that such development has met all of the following criteria in addition to other criteria specified in Section 10.43:

1. No filling or other encroachment shall be allowed in Zone A areas or in the floodway which would impair the ability of these Special Flood Hazard Areas to carry and discharge flood waters, except where such activity is fully offset by stream improvements such as, but not limited to, flood water retention systems as allowed by applicable law.

2. Displacement of water retention capacity at one location shall be replaced in equal volume at another location on the same lot, on an abutting lot in the same ownership, on a noncontiguous lot in the same ownership, or in accordance with the following requirements.
3. All flood water retention systems shall be suitably designed and located so as not to cause any nuisance, hazard, or detriment to the occupants of the site or abutters. The Planning Board may require screening, or landscaping of flood water retention systems to create a safe, healthful, and pleasing environment.
4. The proposed use shall comply in all respects with the provision of the underlying zoning district, provisions of the State Building Code, Wetlands Protection Act, and any other applicable laws.
5. Applicants for development in the Alewife area shall be familiar with area-specific and general city-wide land use plans and policy objectives (e.g. *Concord-Alewife Plan, A Report of the Concord Alewife Planning Study, November 2005; Toward a Sustainable Future, Cambridge Growth Policy, 1993, Update, 2007; Section 19.30 - Urban Design Objectives of this Zoning Ordinance*) and shall demonstrate how their plan meets the spirit and intent of such documents in conjunction with the requirements of this Section 20.70 - Flood Plain Overlay District and Section 20.90 – Alewife Overlay Districts 1-6.
6. The requirement of Section 20.74(3) has been met.

Special Permit for Alteration or Enlargement of a Pre-existing Nonconforming Structure

8.22.2 The following changes, extensions, or alterations of a pre-existing nonconforming structure or use may be granted in the following cases after the issuance of a special permit. Such a permit shall be granted only if the permit granting authority specified below finds that such change, extension, or alteration will not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing nonconforming use.

- a. In an Office, Business, or Industrial District the Board of Zoning Appeal may issue a special permit for the alteration or enlargement of a nonconforming structure, not otherwise permitted in Section 8.22.1 above, or the enlargement (but not the alteration) of a nonconforming use, provided any alteration or enlargement of such nonconforming use or structure is not further in violation of the dimensional requirements in Article 5.000 or the off street parking and loading requirements in Article 6.000 for the district in which such structure or use is located and provided such nonconforming structure or use not be increased in area or volume by more than twenty-five (25) percent since it first began to be nonconforming

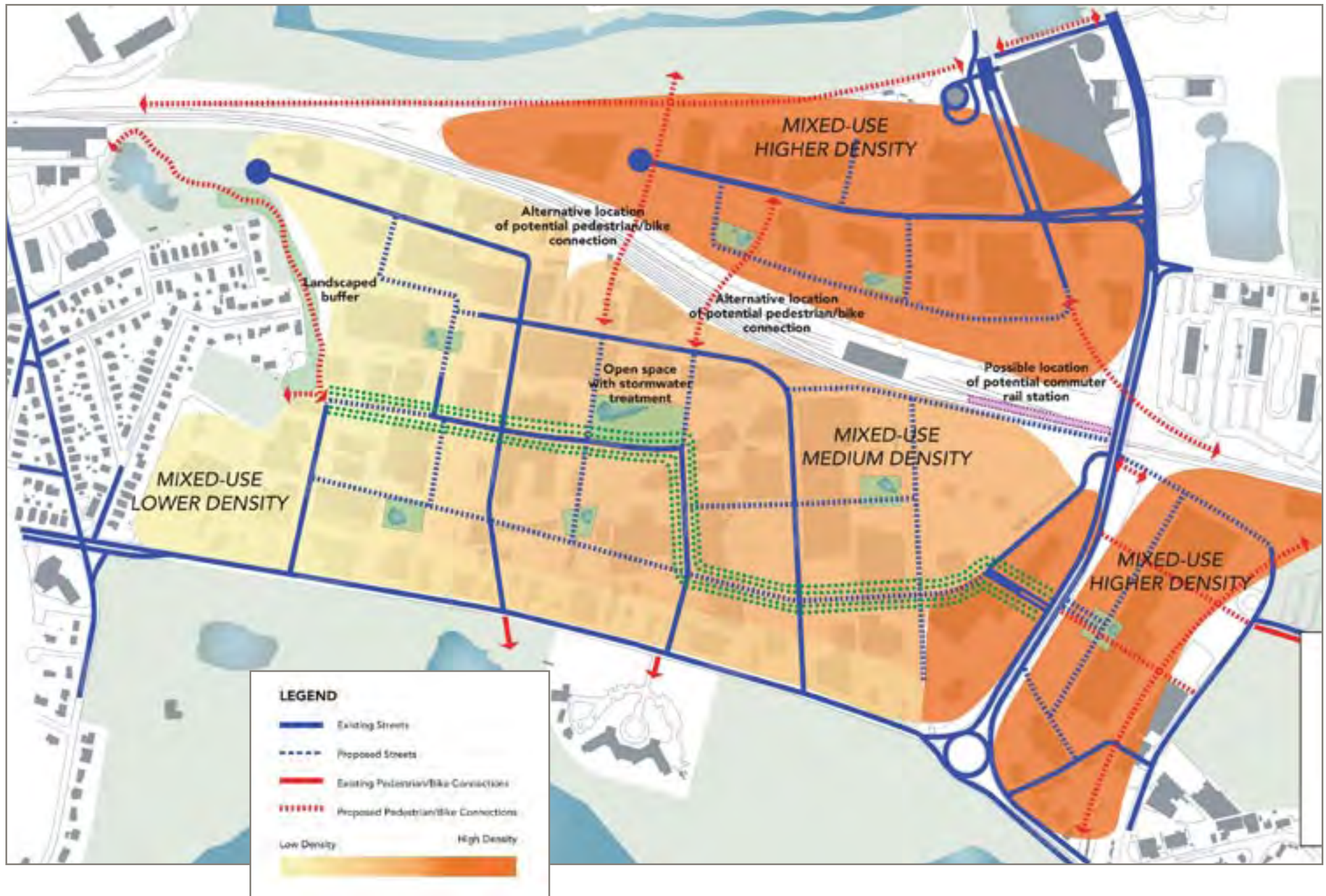
General Criteria for Issuance of a Special Permit

- 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:
- (a) It appears that requirements of this Ordinance cannot or will not be met, or
 - (b) traffic generated or patterns of access or egress would cause congestion, hazard, or substantial change in established neighborhood character, or
 - (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
 - (d) nuisance or hazard would be created to the detriment of the health, safety and/or welfare of the occupant of the proposed use or the citizens of the City, or
 - (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
 - (f) the new use or building construction is inconsistent with the Urban Design Objectives set forth in Section 19.30.

19.30 Citywide Urban Design Objectives [SUMMARIZED]

Objective	Indicators
New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transition to lower-scale neighborhoods • Consistency with established streetscape • Compatibility with adjacent uses • Consideration of nearby historic buildings
Development should be pedestrian and bicycle-friendly, with a positive relationship to its surroundings.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inhabited ground floor spaces • Discouraged ground-floor parking • Windows on ground floor • Orienting entries to pedestrian pathways • Safe and convenient bicycle and pedestrian access
The building and site design should mitigate adverse environmental impacts of a development upon its neighbors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Location/impact of mechanical equipment • Location/impact of loading and trash handling • Stormwater management • Shadow impacts • Retaining walls, if provided • Building scale and wall treatment • Outdoor lighting • Tree protection (requires plan approved by City Arborist)
Projects should not overburden the City infrastructure services, including neighborhood roads, city water supply system, and sewer system.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Water-conserving plumbing, stormwater management • Capacity/condition of water and wastewater service • Efficient design (LEED standards)
New construction should reinforce and enhance the complex urban aspects of Cambridge as it has developed historically.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Institutional use focused on existing campuses • Mixed-use development (including retail) encouraged where allowed • Preservation of historic structures and environment • Provision of space for start-up companies, manufacturing activities
Expansion of the inventory of housing in the city is encouraged.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housing as a component of large, multi-building development • Affordable units exceeding zoning requirements, targeting units for middle-income families
Enhancement and expansion of open space amenities in the city should be incorporated into new development in the city.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Publicly beneficial open space provided in large-parcel commercial development • Enhance/expand existing open space, complement existing pedestrian/bicycle networks • Provide wider range of activities

10 CONCEPT PLAN -



Goals: Areawide

Land Use and Density

- Support mixed-use development throughout the Study Area to create a vibrant urban environment.
- Encourage development that responds to transit proximity by allowing higher densities and taller heights closer to Alewife Station.
- Create incentives for cooperation among property owners to meet study goals, especially stormwater management and infrastructure goals.
- Create urban design guidelines that encourage future development and create a sense of place for Concord-Alewife.
- Create guidelines that encourage future development to be responsive to stormwater, open space, and transportation goals for the Study Area.

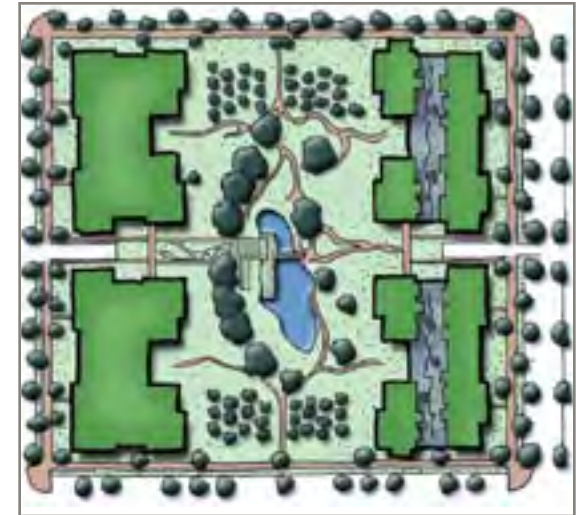
Infrastructure, Stormwater Management, and Open Space

- Encourage creation of some combination of large open spaces, smaller retention ponds, and neighborhood squares; use parks, street plantings, parking lots, and other open space to enhance stormwater retention and treatment.

- Ensure that new development and redevelopment increases permeability and utilizes principles of low-impact development to improve runoff quality and reduce runoff quantity.
- Apply best management practices and low impact development strategies to mitigate stormwater runoff.
- Improve connections between open space resources in and adjacent to the Study Area.

Traffic and Transportation

- Reduce anticipated auto-trip growth as compared to what is allowed under current zoning.
- Reduce auto mode share by employing measures such as:
 - improving access to transit,
 - designing a walkable and bike-friendly community,
 - improving the pedestrian environment, and
 - balancing provision of parking with transportation-demand management (TDM) goals.



Encourage site planning that incorporates low-impact development strategies to improve stormwater management in future development.

GOALS: AREAWIDE [continued] -

- Address safety issues on the periphery of the Study Area as well as within its interior.
- Provide for the possibility of consolidating existing surface parking into a structure as part of overall site improvements.

Housing

- Create a variety of housing opportunities that serve a diverse population of varying incomes, ages, and household sizes.
- Provide a mix of ownership and rental housing at all income levels.



These renderings and photos illustrate the desired future character of the mixed-use area.

Goals: The Triangle

- Encourage more transit-oriented development. Allow higher density and height to take advantage of proximity to Alewife Station.
- Continue to allow commercial development to be focused in this area, while also encouraging housing close to the T station.
- Create a pleasant, walkable connection between Alewife Reservation and Fresh Pond Reservation consistent with the Alewife Reservation Master Plan and the Fresh Pond Master Plan.
- Create public access to the Alewife Reservation from Cambridgepark Drive.
- Reduce auto mode share within the Triangle.
- Improve bicycle and pedestrian connections among the Minuteman Trail, Belmont Path, Linear Park, and a future pathway along the Watertown rail line.
- Improve signage and enhance access to the multiuse trail from Alewife Station.
- Encourage development of additional housing close to Alewife Station while continuing to support commercial development.

