



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Traffic, Parking and Transportation
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Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

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MEMORANDUM

To: Cambridge Planning Board
From: Sue Clippinger, Director 
Date: October 14, 2009
Re: St. James Church Renovation Project, 1991 Massachusetts Avenue

The Traffic, Parking & Transportation (TP&T) Department has reviewed the Transportation Impact Study (TIS) for the proposed St. James Renovation Project located at 1991 Massachusetts Avenue, by Oaktree Development. We certified the TIS as complete and reliable on August 28, 2009.

The proposed project consists of demolition of the Cambridge Car Wash facility at 2014 Massachusetts Avenue and development of 46 condominium units, 2,000 S.F. retail space, new Parish House, food pantry, classroom and office space. The project includes 64 vehicle parking spaces (60 below grade and 4 at-grade spaces), 32 indoor bicycle parking spaces and 10 outdoor short-term bicycle parking spaces.

The St. James Renovation project will generate a total of 186 daily trips, 13 AM and 27 PM peak hour vehicle trips. The residential component will generate most of the trips, 143 daily, 12 AM and 16 PM vehicle trips. The project will also generate 152 daily transit trips (11 AM/21 PM), 40 daily pedestrian trips (3 AM/5 PM), and 22 daily bicycle trips (1 AM/3 PM). The TIS indicated that no Planning Board Special Permit Transportation Criteria were exceeded (the full summary is attached).

The TP&T Department has the following comments and recommendations for this project:

1. We support the proposed curb line set back on Massachusetts Avenue to create 6 new short-term parking spaces. Currently there is no curbside parking on either the Beech Street or Massachusetts Avenue frontages. All day parking by residents, church employees and church program tenants will occur in the garage. The 6 new curb spaces on Massachusetts Avenue plus 4 at-grade spaces on-site will serve short-term parking needs which are not using the garage. Over time, church programs and uses may change, but the spaces will continue to accommodate those short-term parking needs.

Currently, all vehicular access to the church occurs on Beech Street in and out of their parking lot, which contains 18 spaces and accommodates a number of church activities including, preschool and after school programs, an orchestra, choirs, and a food pantry. The new short-term spaces on Massachusetts Avenue will help reduce vehicle trips on Beech Street by moving some short term parking from the current church lot to the new spaces on Massachusetts Avenue. The new residential housing will generate about 12 new AM and 16 new PM Peak hour trips. This is the current number of PM trips that currently occur on Tuesday when the food pantry is open.

2. We have requested the developer provide access to their garage on Beech Street because vehicles entering and leaving the garage going to/from Massachusetts Avenue can make a left or right at a signalized intersection versus an uncontrolled curb cut and median created for the fire station on Massachusetts Avenue. 50% of project trips use Beech Street from Elm Street, 25% from Massachusetts Avenue Southbound and 25% from Massachusetts Avenue Northbound. Garage access on Massachusetts Avenue would eliminate some or all of the 6 new proposed short-term parking spaces to accommodate driveway width and sight lines, and could adversely impact Beech Street and/or Massachusetts Avenue with vehicles stopping in the travel lanes.
3. We believe the 64 on-site parking spaces will be adequate to accommodate the site's parking demand, especially because the project is a quarter mile from the Porter and Davis Square transit stations. However, to minimize any risks of drop-off, pick-up or other parking activity blocking a travel lane, we recommend that at any time in the future after the Certificate of Occupancy is issued, if the Beech Street travel lanes or bike lane on Massachusetts Avenue are blocked by any property related activity, then the church should be obligated to complete the following items:
 - a. Modify the times of the activities that are creating parking and especially drop-off/pick up problems.
 - b. Provide sufficient staff to manage the use of the parking garage and short-term parking on Massachusetts Avenue.
 - c. Other actions as proposed by the proponent or city to eliminate the problem.
4. The Permittee shall develop full construction plans for the change in curb line along Massachusetts Avenue, with review and approval of the plans by TP&T, CDD, and DPW staff, before the first building permit is issued. The curb line changes should be completed prior to the issuance of the first Certificate of Occupancy.
5. To mitigate impacts created from construction of the project we recommend that in addition to any other requirements by the Cambridge Department of Public Works, the proponent should complete the following items prior to the project's first Occupancy Permit:
 - a. Massachusetts Avenue sidewalk should be reconstructed and compliant from Beech Street to the Fire Station with limits of work approved by DPW.
 - b. Beech Street sidewalk should be reconstructed and compliant from Massachusetts Avenue to the Kingdom Hall or to limits approved by DPW.
 - c. Wheel chair ramps at the northern corner of Massachusetts Avenue /Beech Street and its reciprocal ramp at the eastern corner should be compliant.
 - d. When seeking a curb cut for the new driveway, also include closure of the two existing curb cuts on Beech Street and two curb cuts on Massachusetts Avenue in front of car wash and constructing level sidewalk.
 - e. Because traffic counts were conducted in June a second set of traffic, pedestrian and bicycle counts should be provide one year after the issuance of the first Certificate of Occupancy, including driveway counts and a daily and peak hour parking utilization for the parking garage and short-term parking spaces.
6. Finally, to encourage new residents to use non-auto modes of transportation, we recommend the proponent implement the following Transportation Demand Management Measures:
 - a. Designate a Transportation Coordinator with responsibilities reviewed and approved by the city to oversee the parking and TDM measures.

- b. Provide an MBTA Bike Charlie Card, with equivalent value of a monthly Link pass to each adult member of a new household after the household has established residency. The Bike Charlie card will have the added benefit of allowing residents the ability to use the bike cage at Alewife Station.
- c. There is clear evidence of an increasing reliance on bicycling as a mode of transportation in Cambridge, with double the number of people bicycling in the past few years, and 65% of households having two or more bicycles. Therefore, we recommend an increase in the number of bicycle parking racks in the garage to the greatest extent possible, up to one rack per unit.
- d. Encourage car/vanpooling in coordination with MassRides, CRTMA or other private ride-matching organizations, such as GoLoco.org.
- e. Post in a centralized, visible, convenient and equally accessible area to all residents and visitors information including:
 - Available pedestrian and bicycle facilities in the vicinity of the project site.
 - MBTA maps, schedules, and fares.
 - “Getting Around in Cambridge” map (available at the Cambridge Community Development office).

Cc: Beth Rubenstein, CDD
Susanne Rasmussen, CDD
Roger Boothe, CDD
Les Barber, CDD
Liza Paden, CDD
Cara Seiderman, CDD
Adam Shulman, TPT
Gwendolen G. Noyes, Oaktree Development LLC

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Special Permit Transportation Impact Study (TIS)

Summary Sheet

Planning Board Permit Number: _____

Project Name: PROPOSED ST. JAMES RENOVATION PROJECT

Address: 1991 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA

Owner/Developer Name: Oaktree Development

Contact Person: Gwendolen Noyes

Contact Address: 129 Mount Auburn Street

Cambridge, MA 02138-5766

Contact Phone: 617-491-9700

ITE sq. ft.: 46 Residential Condominiums; 2,000 square feet retail

Zoning sq. ft.: _____

Land Use Type: Residential and Specialty Retail

Existing Parking Spaces: 18 Use: Church

New Parking Spaces: 64 Use: Residential (46), Church (18)

Date of Parking Registration Approval: _____

Trip Generation:	Daily	AM Peak Hour	PM Peak Hour
Total Trips	450	32	63
Vehicle	186	13	27
Transit	152	11	21
Pedestrian	40	3	5
Bicycle	22	1	3

Mode Split (person trips):
 (Residential) Vehicle: 45 %
 Transit: 34 %
 Pedestrian: 9 %
 Bicycle: 5 %
 Other: 7 %

Transportation Consultant: Vanasse and Associates, Inc.

Contact Name: Scott W. Thornton, P.E.

Phone: 978-474-8800

Date of Building Permit Approval: _____



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Special Permit Transportation Impact Study (TIS)

Planning Board Criteria Performance Summary
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Planning Board Permit Number: _____

Project Name: PROPOSED ST. JAMES RENOVATION PROJECT

Total Data Entries = 29 Total Number of Criteria Exceedences = 0

1. Project Vehicle Trip Generation

Weekday = 186 AM Peak Hour = 13 PM Peak Hour = 27

Meets Criteria? [Y/N]	Y/Y/Y
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2. Level of Service (LOS)

Intersection	A.M. Peak Hour			P.M. Peak Hour		
	Existing	With Project	Meets Criteria?	Existing	With Project	Meets Criteria?
Massachusetts Avenue at Beech Street	D	D	Y	D	D	Y
East Site Driveway at Beech Street	B	B	Y	B	B	Y

3. Traffic on Residential Streets

Street Segment	A.M. Peak Hour			P.M. Peak Hour		
	Existing Volume	With Project	Meets Criteria?	Existing Volume	With Project	Meets Criteria?
Beech Street; Massachusetts Avenue to Elm Street (Amount of Residential = 1/2 or more)	580	588	Y	667	673	Y
Massachusetts Avenue; Blake Street to Allen Street (Amount of Residential = 1/3 or less)	2,167	2,171	Y	2,241	2,242	Y

4. Lane Queue (for Signalized Intersections Critical Lane)

Intersection	No. of Lanes Analyzed	A.M. Peak Hour			P.M. Peak Hour		
		Existing	With Project	Meets Criteria?	Existing	With Project	Meets Criteria?
Massachusetts Avenue at Beech Street:	6						
Massachusetts Avenue EB LT/TH		17	18	Y	8	8	Y
Massachusetts Avenue EB TH		17	18	Y	8	8	Y
Massachusetts Avenue WB TH		12	12	Y	21	21	Y
Massachusetts Avenue WB TH/RT		12	12	Y	21	21	Y
Beech Street SB LT		8	8	Y	5	5	Y
Beech Street SB RT	7	7	Y	7	7	Y	



5. Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities (Pedestrian LOS)

Intersection	A.M. Peak Hour			P.M. Peak Hour		
	Existing PLOS	With Project	Meets Criteria?	Existing PLOS	With Project	Meets Criteria?
Massachusetts Avenue at Beech Street:	D	D	Y	D	D	Y

Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities (Safe Pedestrian and Bicycle Facilities)

Adjacent Street or Public Right-of-Way	Sidewalks or Walkways Present?	Meets Criteria?	Bicycle Facilities or Right-of-Ways Present?	Meets Criteria?
Massachusetts Avenue	Yes	Y	Yes	Y
Beech Street	Yes	Y	Yes	Y