



February 13, 2012

FFDJ, LLC
c/o Richard G. DiGirolamo Esq.
424 Broadway
Somerville, Massachusetts 02145

RE: Parking Memorandum for Proposed Wine Bar at 89 Holland Street, Somerville, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Jick:

Executive Summary

The project consists of re-developing a vacant retail space into a wine bar at 89 Holland Street, in close proximity to the Davis Square neighborhood of Somerville, Massachusetts; immediately adjacent to your existing business, Dave's Pasta. Based on information provided to us, eight (8) off-street parking spaces are required for the wine bar use; however, no off-street parking spaces are available at this new location.

Nevertheless, it is our professional opinion that the impact of your project on the surrounding parking supply is likely to be minimal. This opinion is based upon existing parking utilization data within 600 feet of the proposed establishment as well as parking utilization data for the larger Davis Square Central Business District. The results of this data collection confirm that the surrounding neighborhood does have reserve capacity in its parking supply to support the proposed project; an average of 80 empty parking spaces within 600 feet.

In addition, several other types of data suggest that the visitors traveling to the proposed wine bar will likely not need a parking space. One form of data collected is zip code data which helped determine where each visitor originated; this data suggests that the majority of customers that will visit the wine bar are likely to be local Somerville residents (60%), with most of those from the West Somerville area. A second form of data included determining which mode of transportation each visitor chose (e.g. Walk, Bike, Transit, Drive Alone, etc); this data suggests that the majority of customers (72%) that will visit the wine bar are likely to use a mode of transportation other than driving a car.

That being said, Fort Hill recommends that you consider offering discounted MBTA passes to your employees, to participate in the City's employee parking program, and to make your customers fully aware of the public transportation options that are available to them, especially through the use of your website.

Existing Conditions and Project Understanding

FFDJ, LLC has filed an application with the Somerville Zoning Board of Appeals to re-tenant a vacant retail space with a wine bar. There would be no change in floor area, with the existing space remaining the same size. The project is located at 89 Holland Street in a Neighborhood Business District (NB), between Irving Street and

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Simpson Avenue, and in close proximity to the vibrant Central Business District (CBD) known as Davis Square. Davis Square has multiple off-street municipal parking facilities as well as many on-street parking spaces. It is our understanding that the proposed project is applying for an eight (8) parking space variance per the Somerville Zoning Ordinance (SZO).

89 Holland Street

Parking Utilization

Fort Hill collected parking utilization data for all public parking spaces within 600 feet of the proposed project (roughly 2½ minute walk). The data collection effort included existing parking utilization data for three time periods; one weekend evening (Friday January 20, 2012) from 7-8 PM as well as from 8-9 PM, and one mid-week day evening (Wednesday January 18, 2012) from 5-6 PM. These dates and times were agreed to in advance by the City Traffic Engineer, and were deemed to be representative of typical peak weekday and peak weekend parking conditions for a business (such as the proposed) in this neighborhood. The area for this particular parking utilization study included Holland Street (from Wallace Street to Paulina Street), and the surrounding neighborhood including portions of Irving Street, Simpson Avenue, Jay Street, and Thorndike Street (Figure 1).

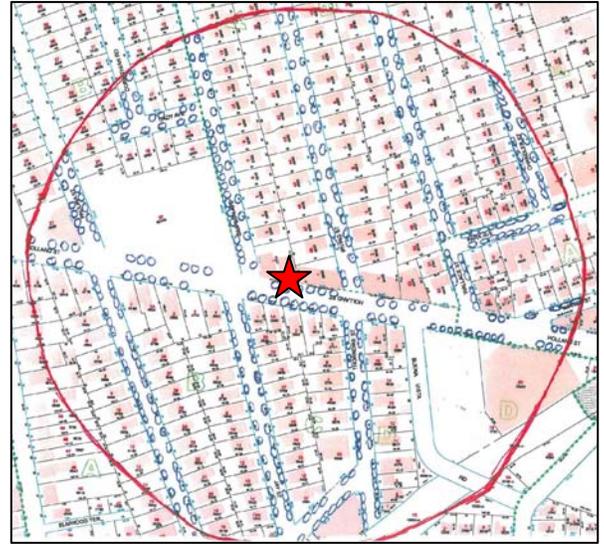


Figure 1 – 89 Holland Street, 600-foot Radius

The parking utilization data for this neighborhood indicates that there are approximately 441 public parking spaces within 600 feet of 89 Holland Street. During the times data was collected, the average parking availability on each occasion was 80 parking spaces, representing approximately 18% of the total available parking supply (Table 1). The amount of available parking spaces within 600 feet of the proposed project (during the times when customer demand is expected to be at its greatest) is 10 times more than the required amount of parking.

Table 1 – Parking Utilization (Within 600 Ft. of 89 Holland Street)

Description of Area	Parking Availability in the Vicinity of 89 Holland Street				Parking Utilization Summary		
	# Parking Spaces Available (Empty)				Total Number of On-street Parking Spaces	% Available	% Occupied
Portion of Street Located within 600' of project	Wednesday PM ¹	Friday A* PM ²	Friday B PM ³	Weekday PM AVG.			
Paulina Street*	5	5	7	5.7	14	40.5%	59.5%
Corinthian Road*	4	4	4	4.0	6	66.7%	33.3%
Cady Avenue	0	4	0	1.3	11	12.1%	87.9%
Simpson Avenue*	4	9	8	7.0	34	20.6%	79.4%
Irving Street*	10	9	15	11.3	35	32.4%	67.6%
Wallace Street*	7	9	9	8.3	39	21.4%	78.6%
Chandler Street	5	0	2	2.3	19	12.3%	87.7%
Park Avenue	3	0	5	2.7	19	14.0%	86.0%
Winter Street	0	0	0	0.0	4	0.0%	100.0%
Holland Street	5	16	5	8.7	57	15.2%	84.8%
Thorndike Street	8	10	5	7.7	33	23.2%	76.8%
Jay Street	7	6	3	5.3	34	15.7%	84.3%
Gorham Street	10	9	9	9.3	42	22.2%	77.8%
Buena Vista Parking Lot	7	7	6	6.7	94	7.1%	92.9%
Total	75	88.0	78	80.3	441	18.2%	81.8%

¹Note: Wednesday evening data collected 1-18-12 between 5 and 6 PM

²Note: Friday evening data collected 1-20-12 between 7 and 8 PM (*Data for that time period represents a proportional estimate of the number of empty spaces within 600 ft. radius based on data for that entire street)

³Note: Friday evening data collected 1-20-12 between 8 and 9 PM

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Geographic Distribution

In addition to the parking utilization data, data was also collected at Dave’s Pasta, the adjacent business you own. This data was collected during similar time periods as the parking utilization data to determine where patrons of Dave’s Pasta live (Data collected based on a survey asking which zip code a visitor was from). The results indicate that a majority of customers are Somerville residents (60%) with a majority of those living in the immediate vicinity of the project; 02144 zip code area (Figure 2). This data potentially suggests that most customers of the proposed wine bar will have the ability to walk, or if they do drive; they’ll have the ability to park on a street that provides resident permit parking. If they have a Somerville parking sticker, they’re also possibly going to choose a resident permit space versus a metered parking space. Further, it should be noted that 70% of customers were locally based, comprised of either Somerville or Cambridge residents.

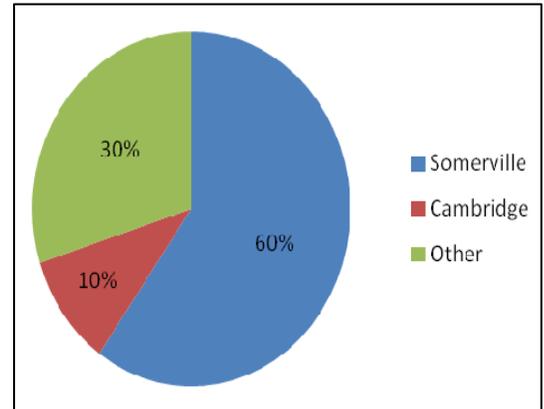


Figure 2 –Visitor Geographic Distribution (Dave’s Pasta)

Mode of Transportation

A second set of data was collected at Dave’s Pasta during similar time periods as the parking utilization data to determine if patrons visiting Dave’s Pasta were driving alone or using another mode of transportation (e.g. Walk, Bike, Train, Bus, Taxi, Carpool, etc). The results indicate that a majority (72%) of patrons used another mode, other than a single occupied vehicle to get to Dave’s Pasta (Table 2). This data illustrates that 42% of visitors to Dave’s Pasta walked and another 18% got their by train. This data, like the shared trip data (see below), suggests that the parking requirement may be overly conservative since a majority of customers do not need a parking space.

Table 2 – Mode of Transportation (Dave’s Pasta)

Mode Choice	#	%		
Car (Drive Alone)	33	25%	28%	Driving Alone
Carpool (Driver)	4	3%		
Carpool (Passenger)	2	2%		
Walk	61	46%	72%	Other
Bus	7	5%		
Train	24	18%		
Bike	1	1%		
Taxi	0	0%		
Other	0	0%		
Total	132	100%		

Data collected on 1/17/12, 1/18/12, 1/19/12 and 1/20/12 between 4:00PM and 7:00PM

Shared Trips

The third set of data collected at Dave’s Pasta was used to determine if patrons visiting the store were also visiting another nearby establishment during their trip. The results indicate that approximately 26% of the patrons were also traveling to at least one other nearby establishment. This data illustrates that the City’s parking requirement may be over estimating parking demand for each individual project because one customer may be visiting two or more establishments during the same trip to the surrounding neighborhood (including Davis Square), possibly only using one parking space for both trips.

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Even though the proposed project location is technically not part of Davis Square (in zoning terms), many residents consider Holland Street (particularly the southern end) part of Davis Square. Therefore, in addition to the data stated above for the neighborhood immediately surrounding 89 Holland Street, Fort Hill offers the following data for the entire square in further support that there is ample parking to accommodate the proposed use.

Davis Square

Parking Utilization

The core of Davis Square has a total of approximately 558 off-street parking spaces including metered, business permit, short-term, and accessible parking spaces (Figure 3). This total does not include taxi stand parking spaces or zip car parking spaces since they are not available to the public. Further, the total does not include on-street resident permit parking spaces, even though a 2008 Study¹ indicated that 43% of visitors to the Square are Somerville residents (Figure 4).



Figure 3 – Davis Square Parking

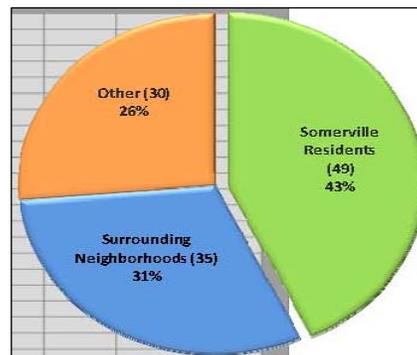


Figure 4 – Visitor Geographic Distribution (Davis Square)

Parking utilization data was collected in Davis Square in 2011 by Fort Hill Infrastructure Services (FHIS), in 2009 by FHIS, in 2008 by Tufts University students working under the direction of Mr. Mark Chase, and in 2005 by Traffic Solutions, LLC. All four data collection efforts determined that there is reserve capacity in Davis Square’s parking supply. The 2011, 2009, and 2005 data confirm that there is reserve parking capacity during the busiest hour between 8 and 9 PM (Figures 5, 6, and 7 respectively).

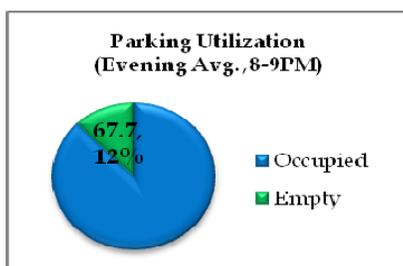


Figure 5 – Parking Utilization (Davis Square, 2011)

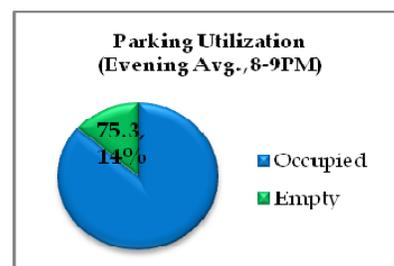


Figure 6 – Parking Utilization (Davis Square, 2009)

The 2011 data indicated that there were more than 67 parking spaces available during the evening peak hour between 8 and 9 PM. The 2009 data indicated that there were more than 75 parking spaces available during the

¹ 2008 Davis Square Parking Study – Mr. Mark Chase in conjunction with Tufts University

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same time of day. The hour between 8 and 9 PM was chosen because it has consistently been the busiest hour of any of the previous data collection efforts in Davis Square; day or night, weekday or weekend (Figure 7). Based on previous data collection efforts, it is very likely that more than 68 public parking spaces will be available during other times of day.

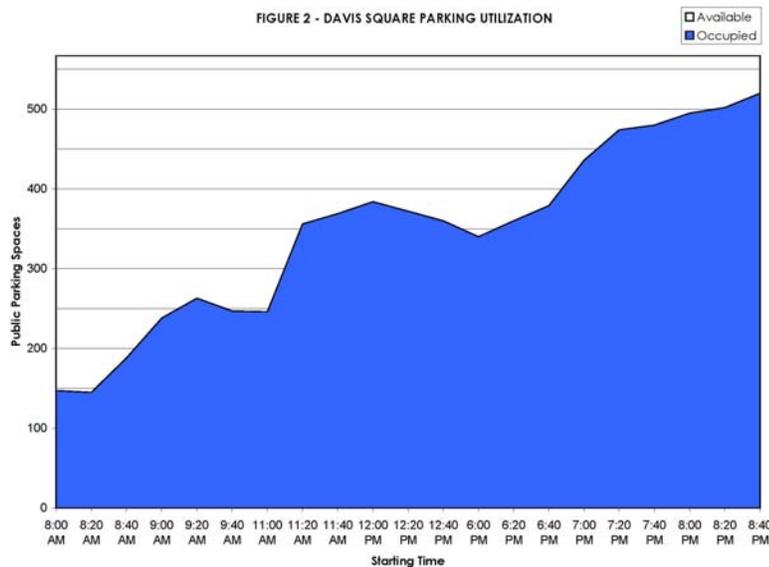


Figure 7 - Parking Utilization (Davis Square, 2005)

Traffic Engineering Standard Practices

The Institute of Transportation Engineers (ITE) Transportation and Land Use Development Manual (2nd Edition) includes three engineering terms used in the reduction of traffic generation related to proposed uses: Pass-by Trips, Diverted Trips, and Internal Trips.

Pass-by Trips is a term used in traffic engineering, which refers to intermediate stops on the way from an origin to a primary destination. Pass-by trips are not new trips on the roadway network. Diverted Trips is another traffic engineering term which refers to trips that are to or from a site that have been diverted from a route other than the one associated with the subject site. Internal Trips is a third term which refers to trips that both begin and end within a site. For instance, for mixed-use developments with uses such as office, residential, retail, restaurant and service uses, some of the trips being generated by one use may also be traveling to another use within the same site. It may be argued that Davis Square acts as a large mixed-use site with multiple shared trips within this Central Business District (CBD).

It is widely accepted that these factors help reduce the number of trips generated by a development. Instead of adding all of these discounts together, the Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) Office has determined that for those projects within its jurisdiction a 25% reduction for pass-by trips is an acceptable standard for use in traffic studies. The ITE Trip Generation Handbook indicates that this number may actually approach 40-50% in some cases.

We would extend this methodology (particularly for internal trips) to apply to the number of parking spaces required in a CBD as well. This particular CBD, Davis Square includes many types of uses that are indicative of shared trips. In all likelihood people visiting your business will also be visiting other businesses within Davis Square. As stated above, it is expected that a portion (approximately 26%) of the trips traveling to the proposed project at 89 Holland Street will likely be trips that have already visited another establishment in or near the Square.

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Similar Projects within the Neighborhood

It has been our experience that for those projects within the Davis Square area that fail to meet the parking requirements set forth in the SZO, and which can demonstrate negligible impacts on parking supply, potential impacts can be help offset by providing measures such as the following:

- installation of a bike ring(s);
- offering reduced rate MBTA passes to employees;
- helping provide for upgrades to the existing roadway and pedestrian network

Examples of some other similar projects unable to provide parking in compliance with the Zoning Ordinance are listed below. All of these projects obtained special permits or variances when they were demonstrated to have negligible impacts on parking and were required to implement appropriate measures to improve multi-modal conditions within the Square.

- Chipotle's Mexican Grill;
- Anna's Taqueria;
- Antonia's (now occupied by Boston Burger Co.);
- Diesel Café Expansion;
- The Blue Shirt Café Expansion; and
- The Foundry

Conclusion

It is our professional opinion that the impact of your project on the surrounding parking supply is likely to be minimal. This opinion is based upon existing parking utilization data within 600 feet of the proposed establishment as well as in Davis Square. The results of this data collection confirm that the surrounding neighborhood as well as the Square has reserve capacity to support the proposed project; an average of 80 empty parking spaces within 600 feet. This time period of the local data collection effort represents the busiest time of day and other times will likely present even more parking opportunities to potential customers. In addition, other data including mode of transportation chosen (Walk, Bike, Transit, etc), the percentage of customers that are likely to be Somerville residents, and shared trips, all suggest that potential customers will be local residents or visiting your business in addition to other businesses within the Davis Square neighborhood.

Should the Zoning Board be hesitant to grant approval, you may wish to volunteer providing a monetary contribution to promote non-motorized travel for items such as additional bicycle racks or pedestrian/bicycle signage. Or you may wish to contribute toward new parking technologies to improve parking efficiency in Davis Square. Mitigating any potential impacts on the surrounding neighborhood or the Square's parking supply will help support the overall efficiency and operations of the various transportation modes found in the area. In addition, you should offer discounted MBTA passes to your employees and you should inquire about utilizing the City's business permit parking program for your employees. This program is offered through the City's Traffic and Parking Department.

We hope that this parking memorandum meets your satisfaction. Should you have any questions regarding this memorandum, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Sincerely,

Todd M. Blake

Todd M. Blake

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