



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS
MAYOR'S OFFICE OF STRATEGIC PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
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Case #: PB 2014-06
Date: February 27, 2014
Recommendation: Conditional Approval

PLANNING STAFF REPORT

Site: 61 Medford Street

Applicant Name: Matthew Kochaba
Applicant Address: 14 Cambridge Center Cambridge, MA 02142
Property Owner Name: Tim Coskren
Property Owner Address: 205 Newbury St Framingham, MA 01701
Agent Name: Kris Salamon
Agent Address: 25 Birch Street Milford, MA 01757

Alderman: Maryann Heuston

Legal Notice: Applicant, Matthew Kochaba, and Owner, Tim Coskren, seek a Special Permit per SZO §5.3.8 to alter a previously approved site plan by adding site equipment including a generator. TOD 100 Zone. Ward 2.

Dates of Public Hearing: March 6, 2014

I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1. Subject Property: The subject property is a 101,059 square foot lot (2.32 acres) with a 72,000 square foot office and warehouse building currently occupied by Biogen. There have been two prior approvals for zoning relief. In 2010 they sought approval to remove to parking spaces and install a liquid nitrogen tank on a concrete pad. In 2011, they sought approval to add awnings over the loading docks and the liquid nitrogen tank. Both appeals were granted.



2. Proposal: The proposal is to remove 3 parking spaces and install a new site generator on a concrete pad. The generator will be fenced with chainlink and fiber mesh screening to match the existing fencing on site and have bollards surrounding it for protection. The equipment will be installed next to the liquid nitrogen tank. The site will still conform to the parking requirement.

3. Green Building Practices: None listed on the application.

4. Comments:

Wiring Inspection: The Wiring Inspector has been contacted but has not submitted comments at this time.

Ward Alderman: Alderman Heuston has been contacted but has not submitted comments at this time.

II. FINDINGS FOR SPECIAL PERMIT (SZO §5.3.8):

In order to grant a special permit, the SPGA must make certain findings and determinations as outlined in §5.1.4 of the SZO. This section of the report goes through §5.1.4 in detail.

1. Information Supplied: The Staff finds that the information provided by the Applicant conforms to the requirements of §5.1.2 of the SZO and allows for a comprehensive analysis of the project with respect to the required Special Permits.

2. Compliance with Standards: The Applicant must comply "with such criteria or standards as may be set forth in this Ordinance which refer to the granting of the requested special permit."

There are two previous Special Permit approvals for the property. In accordance with the SZO §5.3.8, a Special Permit is required to alter a previously approved site plan. This application would add a generator to the rear of the site. There is no parking relief necessary, the site still complies with its' parking requirement.

In considering a special permit under §5.3.8 of the SZO, Staff find that the alterations proposed would not be substantially more detrimental to the neighborhood than the existing structure.

6.5.G TOD. All new developments shall meet 18 development standards. The applicable standards are below.

14. Service Areas and Loading Spaces. Ground level mechanical equipment, utility and trash enclosures, loading docks and other utilitarian and service elements shall not abut the street edge(s) of the parcel and shall be visually and acoustically screened (sufficient to conform to the City's Noise Ordinance during operation). Access to these areas shall not interrupt pedestrian and sidewalk treatments. The SPGA may limit the hours of delivery so as to minimize any adverse impacts the service and loading aspects of proposed use may have on the surrounding neighborhood. Generally, loading times should take local traffic patterns into consideration.

The generator is ground level mechanical equipment. The generator will be screened with chainlink fence to match the existing fencing on site. The generator is at the back of the site and will not be visible from a public way.

3. Consistency with Purposes: The Applicant has to ensure that the project "is consistent with (1) the general purposes of this Ordinance as set forth in Article 1, and (2) the purposes, provisions, and specific

objectives applicable to the requested special permit which may be set forth elsewhere in this Ordinance, such as, but not limited to, those purposes at the beginning of the various Articles.”

The proposal is consistent with the general purposes of the Ordinance as set forth under §1.2, which includes, but is not limited to promoting the health, safety, and welfare of the inhabitants of the City of Somerville.

The proposal is consistent with the purpose of the district, which is, “to encourage mixed-use transit-oriented development with well-designed pedestrian access near transit connections and commercial squares...Therefore, the TODs are designed to be responsive to changing market conditions while maintaining high standards for building design and construction.”

4. Site and Area Compatibility: The Applicant has to ensure that the project "(i)s designed in a manner that is compatible with the characteristics of the built and unbuilt surrounding area, including land uses.”

The property is located in the southernmost part of Somerville and near the Cambridge line. There is a cluster of old warehouse/industrial buildings. The property is southeast of Boynton Yards and southwest of the Inner Belt and Brickbottom neighborhood. The area has little neighborhood definition. The largest neighborhood destination is Twin City Plaza, just south of the site, which is partially in Cambridge. There is a small residential pocket of multi-family homes west of the site.

The generator is at the back of the site and will be screened. It will only be visible from the railroad tracks and residents of higher floors of 9 Medford Street.

III. RECOMMENDATION

Special Permit under §5.3.8

Based on the materials submitted by the Applicant, the above findings and subject to the following conditions, the Planning Staff recommends **CONDITIONAL APPROVAL** of the requested **SPECIAL PERMIT**.

The recommendation is based upon a technical analysis by Planning Staff of the application material based upon the required findings of the Somerville Zoning Ordinance, and is based only upon information submitted prior to the public hearing. This report may be revised or updated with new recommendations, findings and/or conditions based upon additional information provided to the Planning Staff during the public hearing process.

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes								
1	Approval is for a Special Permit per SZO §5.3.8 to alter a previously approved site plan by adding site equipment including a generator. This approval is based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the Applicant:	BP/CO	ISD/ Plng.									
	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Date (Stamp Date)</th> <th>Submission</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>January 23, 2014</td> <td>Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(February 26, 2014) January 21, 2014</td> <td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Civil Site Plan)</td> </tr> <tr> <td>(February 26, 2014) December 23, 2013</td> <td>Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Electrical Power Plan)</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>				Date (Stamp Date)	Submission	January 23, 2014	Initial application submitted to the City Clerk's Office	(February 26, 2014) January 21, 2014	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Civil Site Plan)	(February 26, 2014) December 23, 2013	Modified plans submitted to OSPCD (Electrical Power Plan)
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Any changes to the approved site plan that are not <i>de minimis</i> must receive SPGA approval.												
Construction Impacts												
2	The Applicant shall at his expense replace any existing equipment (including, but not limited to street sign poles, signs, traffic signal poles, traffic signal equipment, wheel chair ramps, granite curbing, etc) and the entire sidewalk immediately abutting the subject property if damaged as a result of construction activity. All new sidewalks and driveways must be constructed to DPW standard.	CO	DPW									
3	All construction materials and equipment must be stored onsite. If occupancy of the street layout is required, such occupancy must be in conformance with the requirements of the Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices and the prior approval of the Traffic and Parking Department must be obtained.	During Construction	T&P									
Design												
4	The Applicant will screen the generator with fencing.	CO	Plng.									
Miscellaneous												
5	The Applicant, its successors and/or assigns, shall be responsible for maintenance of both the building and all on-site amenities, including landscaping, fencing, lighting, parking areas and storm water systems, ensuring they are clean, well kept and in good and safe working order.	Cont.	ISD									
Public Safety												
6	The Applicant or Owner shall meet the Fire Prevention Bureau's requirements.	CO	FP									
Final Sign-Off												
7	The Applicant shall contact Planning Staff at least five working days in advance of a request for a final inspection by Inspectional Services to ensure the proposal was constructed in accordance with the plans and information submitted and the conditions attached to this approval.	Final sign off	Plng.									

