



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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To: Planning Board
From: CDD Staff
Date: September 7, 2017
Re: **MIT Volpe Zoning Petition – Second Hearings**

This document contains information gathered in response to issues that were discussed at the prior set of public hearings on the MIT PUD-7 Zoning Petition, affecting the site of the Volpe Transportation Systems Center in Kendall Square.

This document is organized into three main parts:

1. **General Issues and Background** (pp. 2-12, including maps and charts). This section summarizes questions raised with regard to the zoning proposal at a conceptual level, and provides additional background information on the planning that occurred leading up to this proposal. (However, it aims not to duplicate background information that was provided in the prior CDD memo).
2. **Specific Issues Raised in Relation to Zoning Proposal** (pp. 13-28). This section summarizes comments made in relation to the specific provisions of the zoning proposal, organized by section of the proposed zoning text, with background information and potential approaches to modifying the proposal.
3. **Other Considerations Not Addressed Through Zoning** (pp. 29-30). This section notes topics that were raised for the petitioner to address, but as they relate to MIT in particular, they are not well suited to be incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance. However, these issues could be addressed through commitments made by mutual agreement between the City and the petitioner.

General Issues and Background

The following is a summary of issues that were raised relative to the zoning proposal at a conceptual level, mainly at the Planning Board hearing.

- Open space and density seem to be threshold issues to consider.
- Not averse to density, but needs to be a good planning rationale.
- This may be an appropriate location for height, but should be considered as a tradeoff for open space, smaller building footprints, and other public benefits.
- Kendall is an economic generator of city, perhaps the most appropriate place for the tallest, densest development.
- Since you can't make more land, more density and height can accommodate further growth.
- Understand that a certain amount of development is needed to support the planned construction of the new DOT building – explain how this factors in.
- Understand that the community benefits need to be supported by the development, therefore discussions of density can impact the amount of benefits that can be provided.
- How big are these sites, how much is buildable, and how much is allocated to the DOT site?
- Consider how open space in the area has changed since the ECaPS study, including Alexandria open space.
- Seems to be enormous need for housing in Kendall – people want to live near where they work.
- Provide information on new and existing affordable housing units in the area.

Background Information

Background information on these questions has been compiled into a set of maps and charts that are briefly described below.

Kendall Square (“K2”) Study Development Modeling – See graphic and chart on page 5

The previous memo commented on the goals of the K2 study and its recommendations for zoning measures that would promote street-level activation, sustainable design, innovation space for smaller companies, reduced parking and non-auto transportation improvements, and other community investments.

The K2 study also modeled development scenarios, both to study built form, massing, and open space options and to assess transportation impacts. The transportation impacts of projected development, both on auto traffic and on transit, were again revisited in 2015 as part of the Planning Board zoning petition. More recently, the Kendall Square Mobility Task Force considered these projections in articulating future priorities including Red Line improvements, multi-use path and potential future transit in the Grand Junction corridor, study of bus prioritization and routing improvements, and improved coordination of shuttles and ride-hailing services.

The attached graphic shows a model development scenario created for the core K2 study area, which includes the MIT-owned land in Kendall Square, the MXD District, and the Volpe site. The modeling took into account prevailing market-driven typologies for commercial and residential development. For example, the greatest demand for commercial development has been for large-floorplate buildings that have the flexibility to accommodate both laboratory and office functions. While the K2 study recommended guidelines to limit building bulk, especially at taller heights, it was acknowledged that viable commercial buildings would require relatively large footprints, and that there were a limited number of sites that could physically accommodate such buildings in the future.

The charts below the graphic summarize the approximate new buildout that would result from applying the K2 zoning recommendations in the three aforementioned parts of the study area as well as the development in those areas that has since been permitted or proposed. While there have been some slight changes, including the permitting of additional housing and graduate student residences in the MIT Kendall Square development, the development plans approved thus far remain largely consistent with the overall development amounts modeled in the K2 plan.

It should be noted that at the time of the K2 study, the concept of reconstructing the Volpe Center building elsewhere on its site had not yet been introduced, and so it is shown remaining in its current location. It is currently anticipated that the Volpe Center will be relocated to the northwest corner of the site, on a lot roughly 4 acres in size, though it is not certain what the exact boundaries will be.

Development Density (FAR) – See maps on pages 6-7

Some questions were raised regarding the density of development proposed in the petition. While the measure of Floor Area Ratio (FAR) is a convenient regulatory tool for assigning development rights to land within a zoning district, it is not always a perfect tool for assessing the intensity and scale of use, and is not useful in representing development patterns or urban character.

The two attached maps illustrate the approximate existing FAR of sites in Kendall Square in different ways. The first calculates FAR on a lot-by-lot basis, and the second calculates aggregate FAR for entire blocks, the way FAR is most often applied in large PUD projects. The lot-by-lot FAR shows a wide range of values, from at or near zero where a lot is occupied by parking or open space, to around 8 to 10 where larger buildings are situated on relatively small lots. The FAR by blocks map shows a closer range of values from around 3 to around 5, with some larger and smaller values, and a pattern that is higher in FAR near the core of Kendall and becomes gradually lower in areas that are farther away. Several blocks will increase in overall FAR after the completion of new development that has been permitted.

These maps provide some context but also illustrate some of the problems with using FAR as a meaningful assessment tool. First, because it is not a continuous value, a calculated FAR can vary widely based on how exact land boundaries are drawn even if the total amount of development or scale of buildings is the same. Also, since above-grade parking structures were not included in FAR for zoning purposes until a zoning change in 2001, some sites show an FAR of zero even though they contain large structures. This is an example of how FAR can be a useful regulatory tool, since it has discouraged the creation of new above-grade parking since that time, but makes it more difficult to use FAR as a consistent way to assess the visual impact of development.

Height – See maps on pages 8-9

Where the overall amount of development is controlled by FAR at an aggregate level, height restrictions can influence how that development is shaped within a parcel. The maps of current and proposed height restrictions illustrate two different types of approaches. The current zoning, based on the ECaPS plan, has a finely tailored set of “height bands” that prescriptively concentrate the highest-scale development along Broadway, ensuring that lower-scale buildings and open space would be located closer to Binney Street. The proposed height limits take a more flexible approach similar to that of surrounding districts, limiting the total amount of building mass above a certain height while allowing more options for how buildings might be arranged within the district. In general, the more flexible approach allows more opportunities for “tradeoffs” of height in exchange for open space and greater sky views, but it becomes more important to provide guidelines and criteria that can be used to assess the arrangement and shaping of building heights in the development review process. Specific issues related to height are discussed further in the following section.

Open Space – See chart and map on pages 10-11

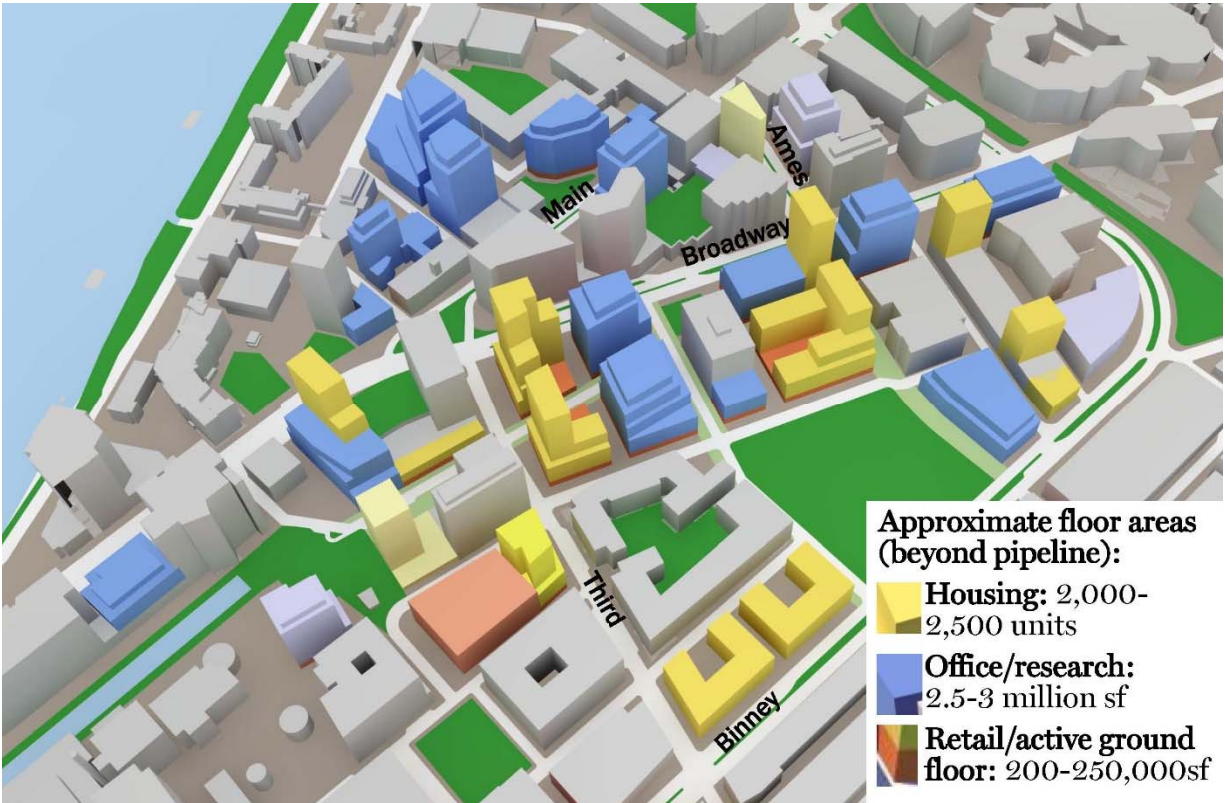
The incorporation of open space for the benefit of the public has been a requirement of major redevelopment projects throughout the city over many years. The chart summarizes the open space requirements for major redevelopment areas and the resulting amount of open space created. In some cases, the open space was created to be used by the public but remained under private ownership, while in other cases the open spaces became true public parks, either by conveyance to the city or by legal covenant guaranteeing public use. The amount of open space required is most typically around 15% or 20%, while the actual amounts created have been in the range of 10-20% for earlier projects and around 22%-27% in the case of more recent developments.

The map shows new open space that has been created in association with development projects in Kendall Square since 2001. These include parcels conveyed to the city, as well as parks and plazas that have been created by developers as public amenities within their projects. Together, these spaces total about 8 to 9 acres. A key principle from the K2 study, and carried through the *Connect Kendall Square* framework study and Volpe Working Group Principles, is the importance of the Volpe site as the focus of an interlinked network of open space throughout the area.

Housing – See map on page 12

The K2 study projected that about 2,000-3,500 units of new housing could be created in the core of Kendall Square and in surrounding areas within walking distance. The map illustrates the locations and sizes of existing housing sites in Kendall Square, totaling about 2,000 dwelling units (over half of which were completed since 2001), and sites currently permitted or in construction, which are expected to raise that total to about 3,200 units. Within these existing and permitted residences are over 400 affordable units provided through inclusionary housing and similar requirements, which include about 50 middle-income units. MIT’s projections for the proposed zoning would result in about 4,600 total housing units, of which about 690 would be affordable. For context, the Riverside neighborhood has approximately 4,000 housing units and about 600-700 units with affordability protections.

K2 Advisory Committee Development Scenario (2012)



K2 Study Zoning Recommendations (2012) – Resulting Development

	MIT (PUD-5)	MXD District	Volpe (PUD-KS)**	TOTAL
Office/Research	Max. 1.0 million SF	Max. 600,000 SF	Max. 1.5 million SF	3.1 million SF
Residential	Min. 240,000 SF	Min. 400,000 SF	Min. 1.3 million SF	1.9 million SF
Retail/Active	TBD	TBD	TBD	TBD
TOTALS	1.2 million SF (+ retail/exempt)	1.0 million SF (+ retail/exempt)	2.8 million SF (+ retail/exempt)	5.0 million SF (+ retail/exempt)

** Figures based on 4.0 base FAR and counting inclusionary bonus for housing

Current Status of Permitted/Planned Development (2017)

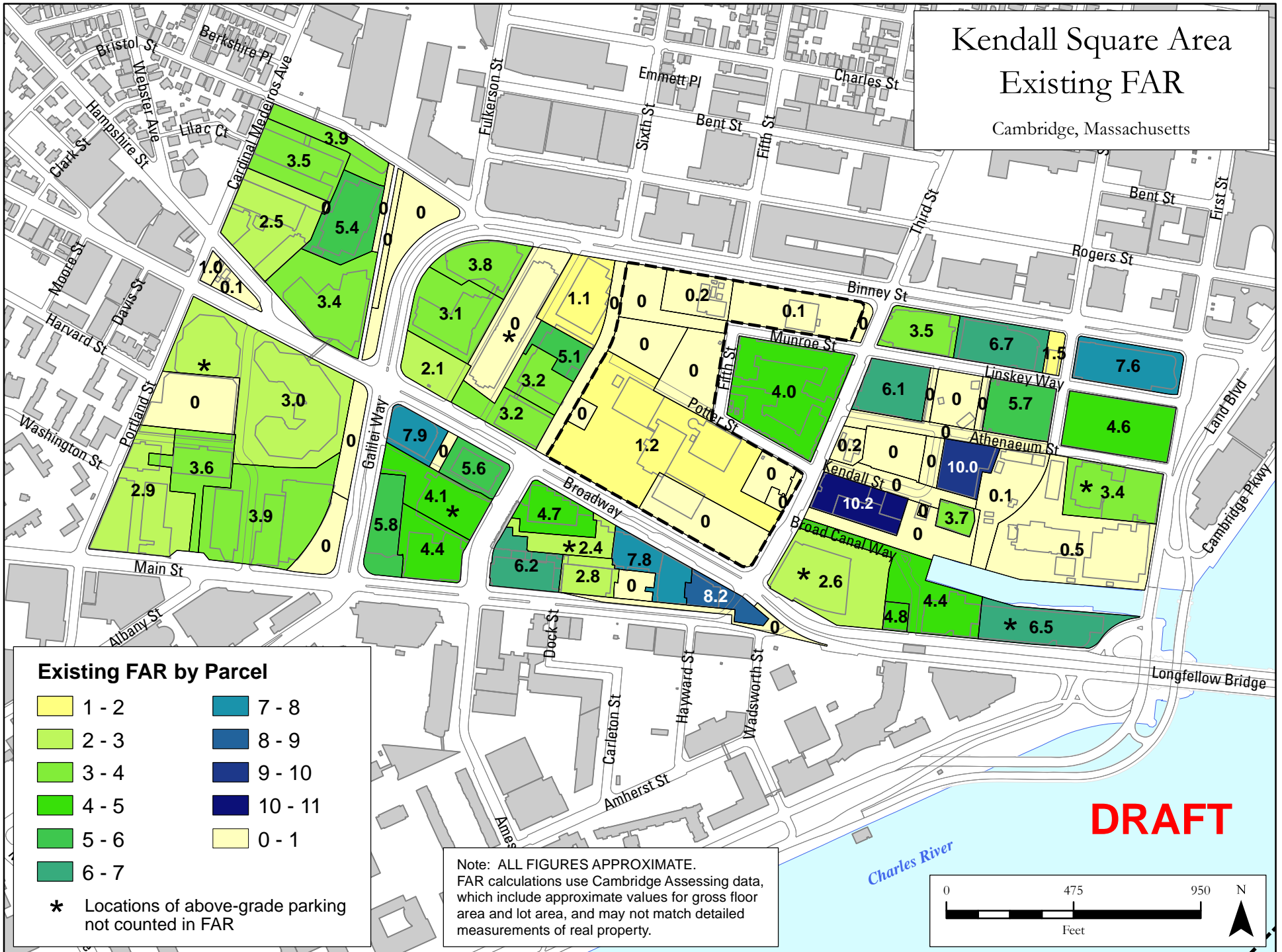
	MIT (Permitted)	MXD (Permitted)	Volpe (Proposed)	TOTAL
Office/Research	900,000 SF	600,000 SF	Max. 1.7 million SF	3.2 million SF
Residential	315,000 SF	400,000 SF	Min. 1.1 million SF	1.8 million SF
+Student Housing	+166,000 SF			+166,000 SF
Retail/Active	123,000 SF	19,000 SF	~70,000-140,000 SF	212,000-282,000 SF
TOTALS	1.5 million SF	1.0 million SF	2.9 million SF	5.4 million SF

FIGURES REPRESENT NET NEW DEVELOPMENT FROM 2012 EXISTING/PERMITTED

ALL FIGURES APPROXIMATE

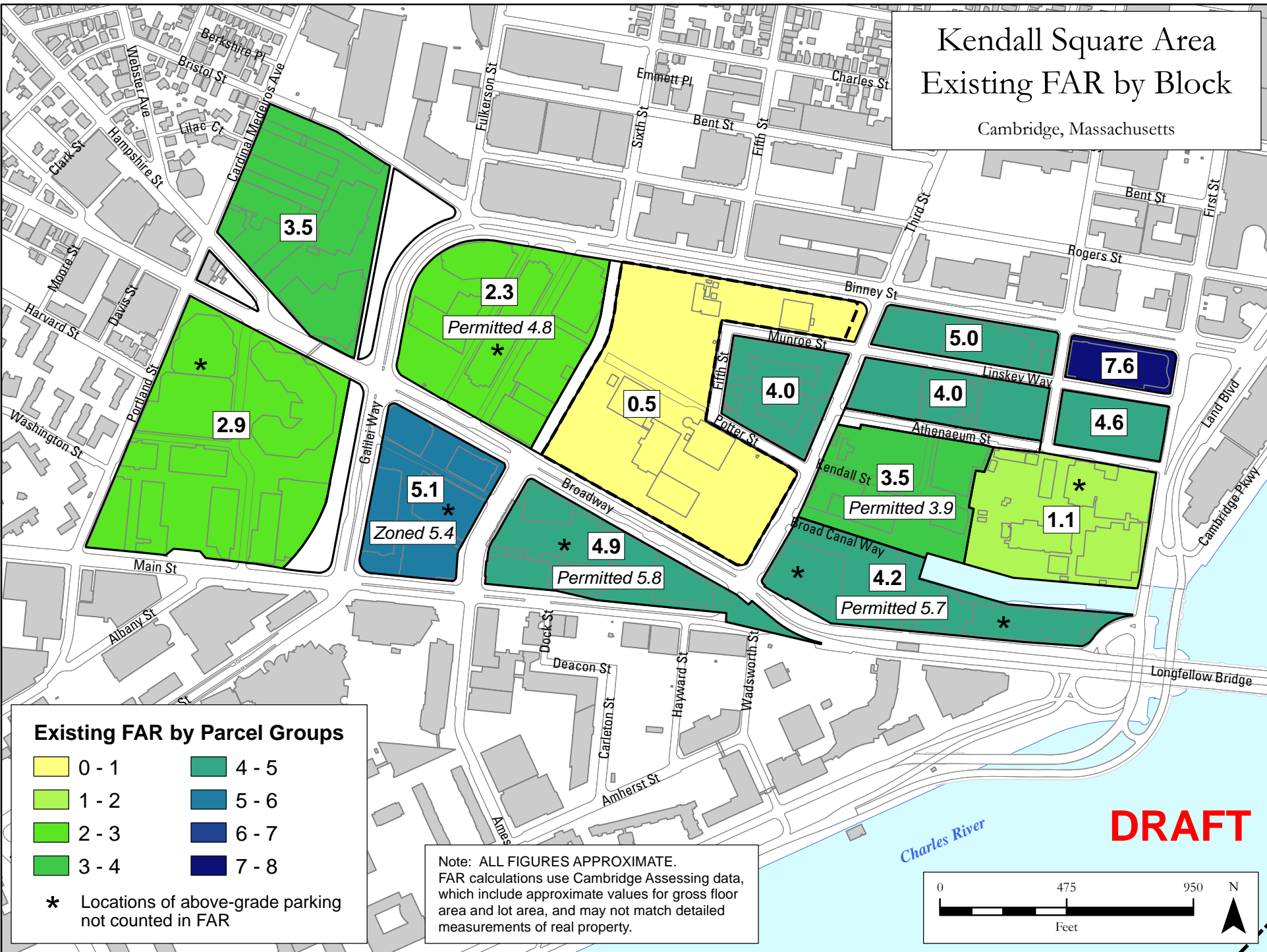
Kendall Square Area Existing FAR

Cambridge, Massachusetts



Kendall Square Area Existing FAR by Block

Cambridge, Massachusetts



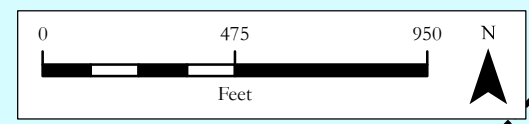
Existing FAR by Parcel Groups

0 - 1	4 - 5
1 - 2	5 - 6
2 - 3	6 - 7
3 - 4	7 - 8

* Locations of above-grade parking not counted in FAR

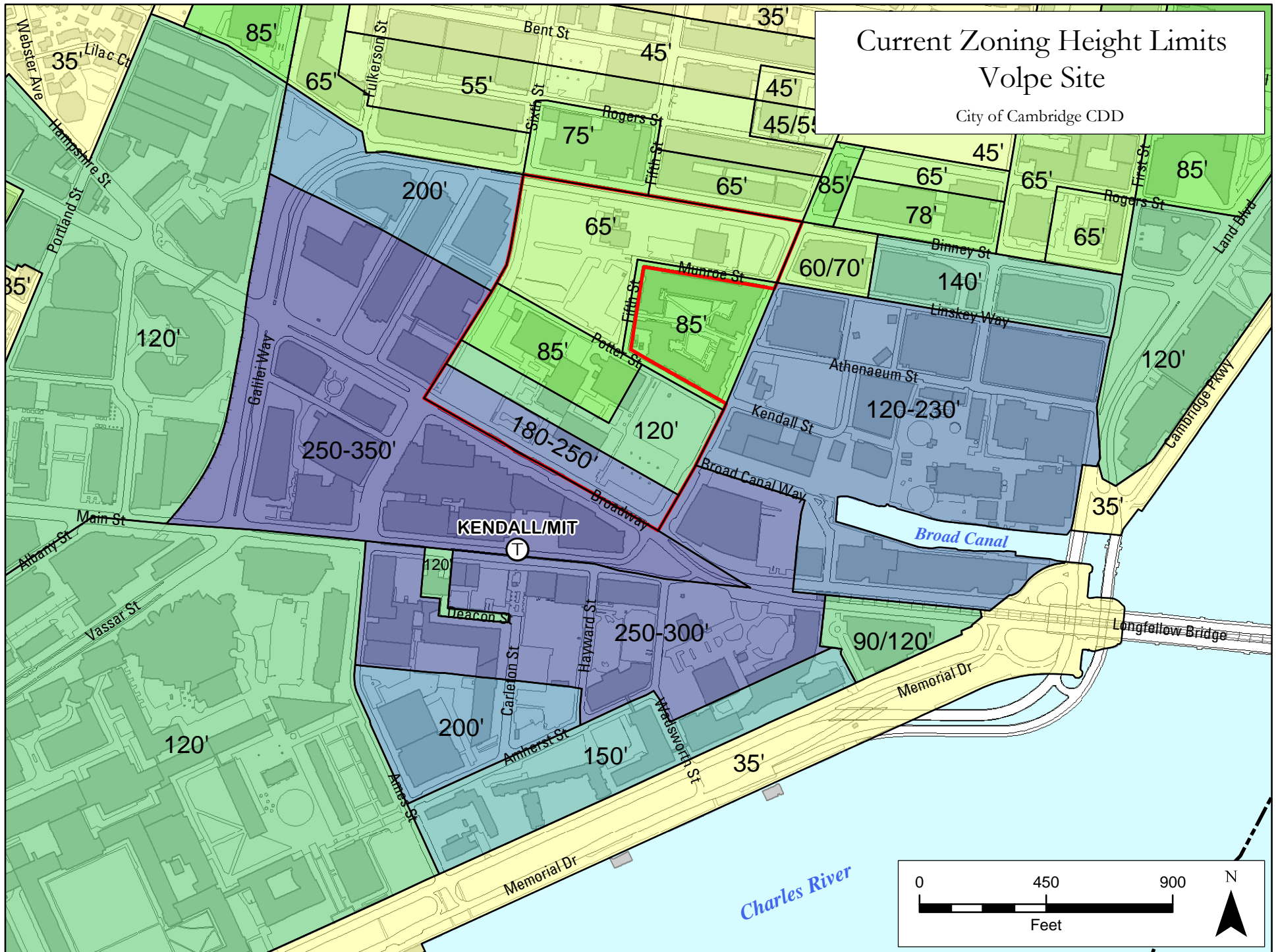
Note: ALL FIGURES APPROXIMATE.
FAR calculations use Cambridge Assessing data, which include approximate values for gross floor area and lot area, and may not match detailed measurements of real property.

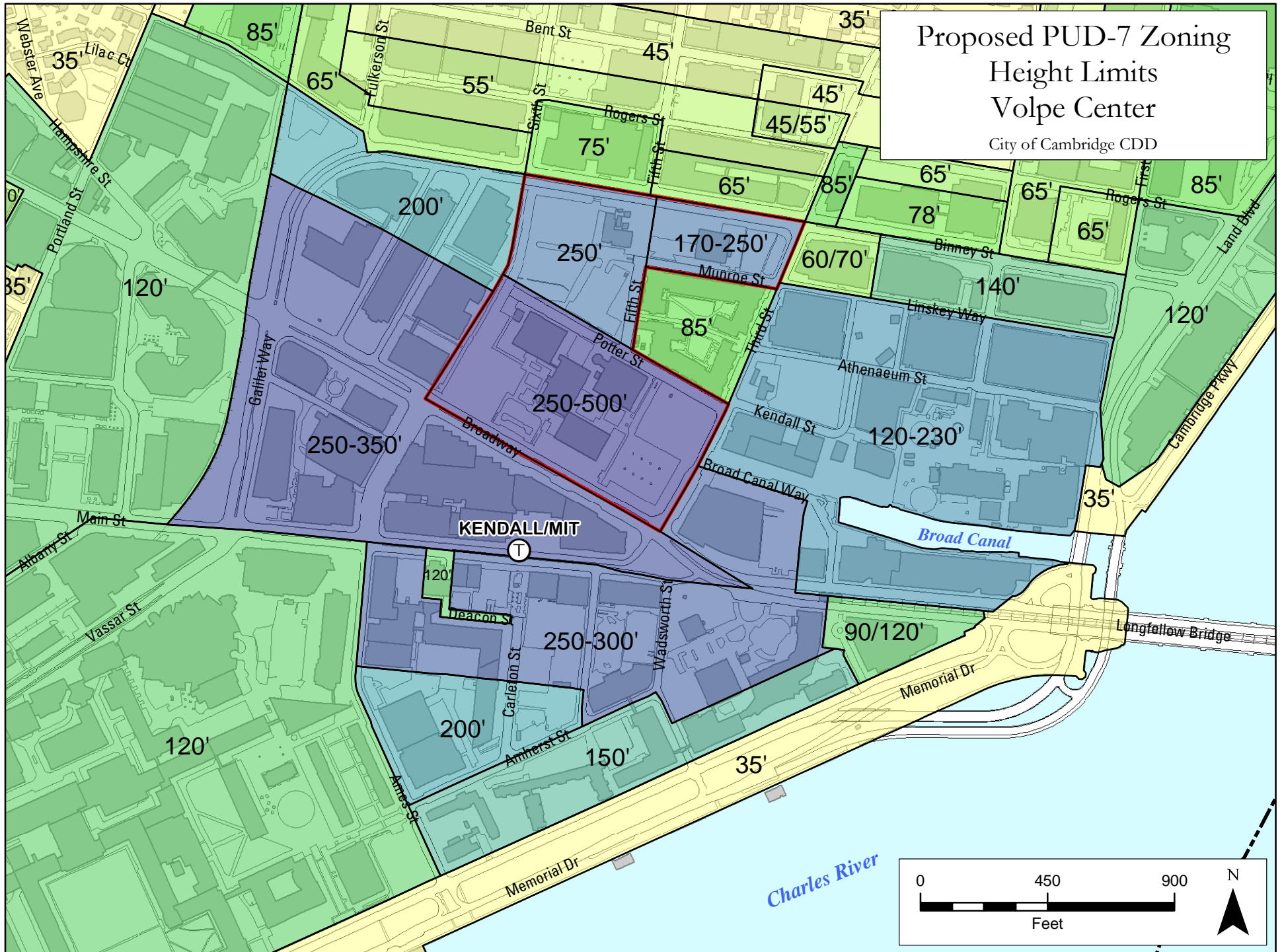
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Current Zoning Height Limits Volpe Site

City of Cambridge CDD





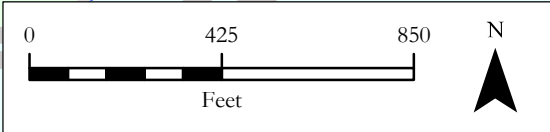
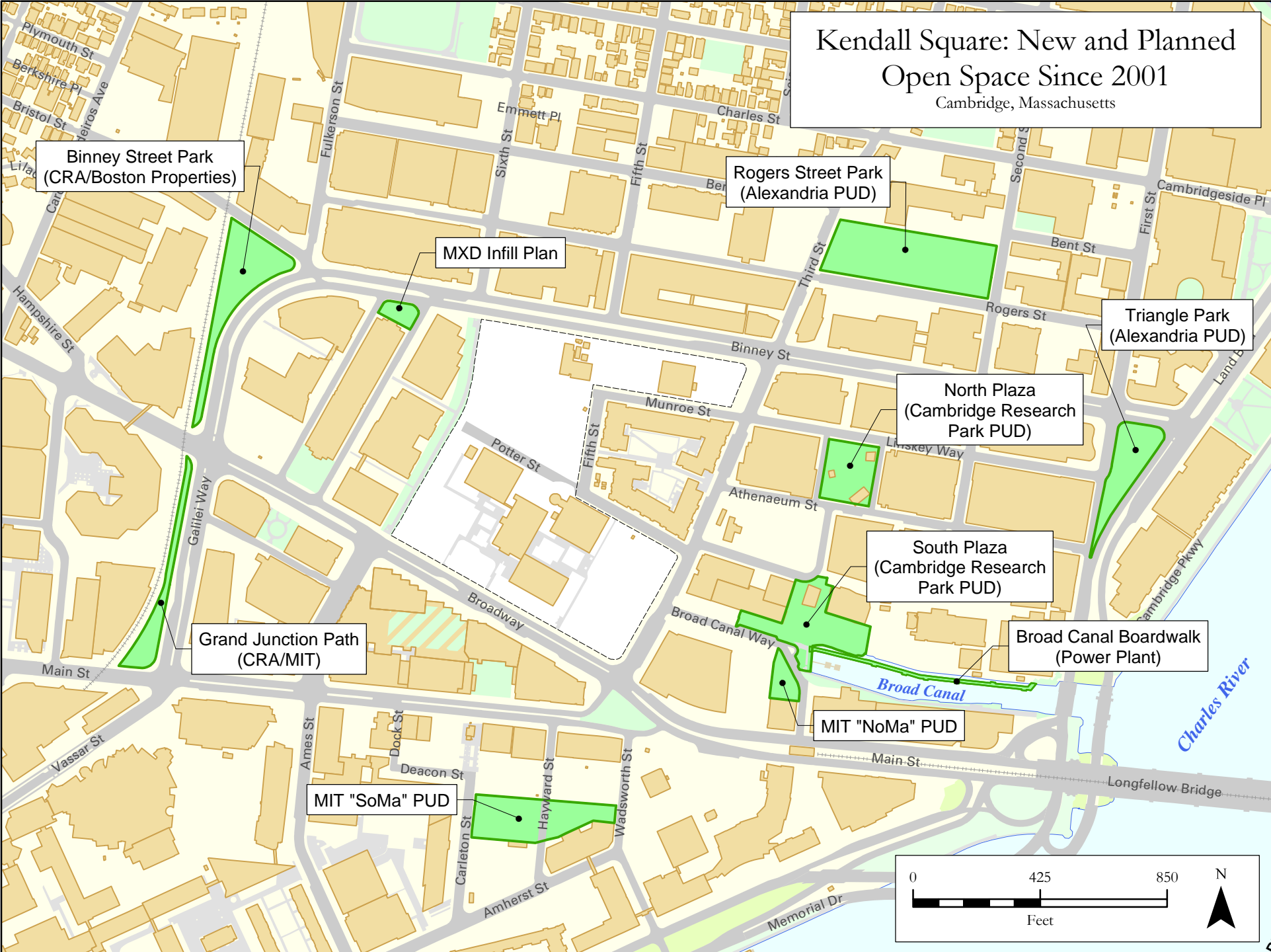
Comparison of Open Space Provided in Major Redevelopment Projects

Redevelopment Area	Permit Yr(s).	Zoning for Open Space	Type of Open Space Provided	Parcel Area (SF)	Provided OS (SF)	Provided OS (%)
Kendall Center (MXD District/KSURP)	1977/2017	Total of 15% publicly accessible in MXD; 100,000 SF public	Part conveyed to City, part owned by CRA, part public by covenant	1,013,000	156,000 *	16%
East Cambridge Riverfront PUDs (Aggregate)	1981-1997	15-25% open, PB may reduce if public OS provided or integrated	Public by conveyance to City	1,290,000	251,000 *	19%
University Park (CRDD District)	1987	100,000 SF publicly beneficial	Publicly beneficial, privately owned	1,014,000	107,000	11%
Cambridge Research Park PUD ("Kendall Square")	1999	15% open, PB may reduce if public OS provided or integrated	Publicly beneficial, privately owned	425,000	96,000	23%
North Point PUD	2003/2016	20% public, green or permeable; 2.5 acre public park	Part to be conveyed to City; part publicly beneficial, privately owned	1,977,000	479,000	24%
Alexandria Center PUD	2010	15% open, at least 2.3 acres conveyed to city	Public by conveyance to City	491,000	112,000	23%
MIT SoMa/NoMa PUDs	2015	Total of 15% publicly beneficial w/in PUD-5 district	Publicly beneficial, privately owned	460,000	126,000	27%
<i>Volpe Parcel (expected based on current PUD-7 zoning proposal)</i>	<i>N/A</i>	<i>Total of 25% publicly beneficial w/in PUD-5 district</i>	<i>Publicly beneficial</i>	<i>620,000 (+/-)**</i>	<i>155,000 min (+/-)**</i>	<i>25% min</i>

Note: ALL FIGURES APPROXIMATE. Based on area of Development Parcel, which does not include existing streets, but may include new streets created as a component of the development. In all cases, the area of provided open space is included in the Parcel Area. () In order to provide a consistent basis for comparison, these figures do not include public roof-level open spaces. (**) May vary depending on whether CRA Parcel is included in a future Development Parcel.*

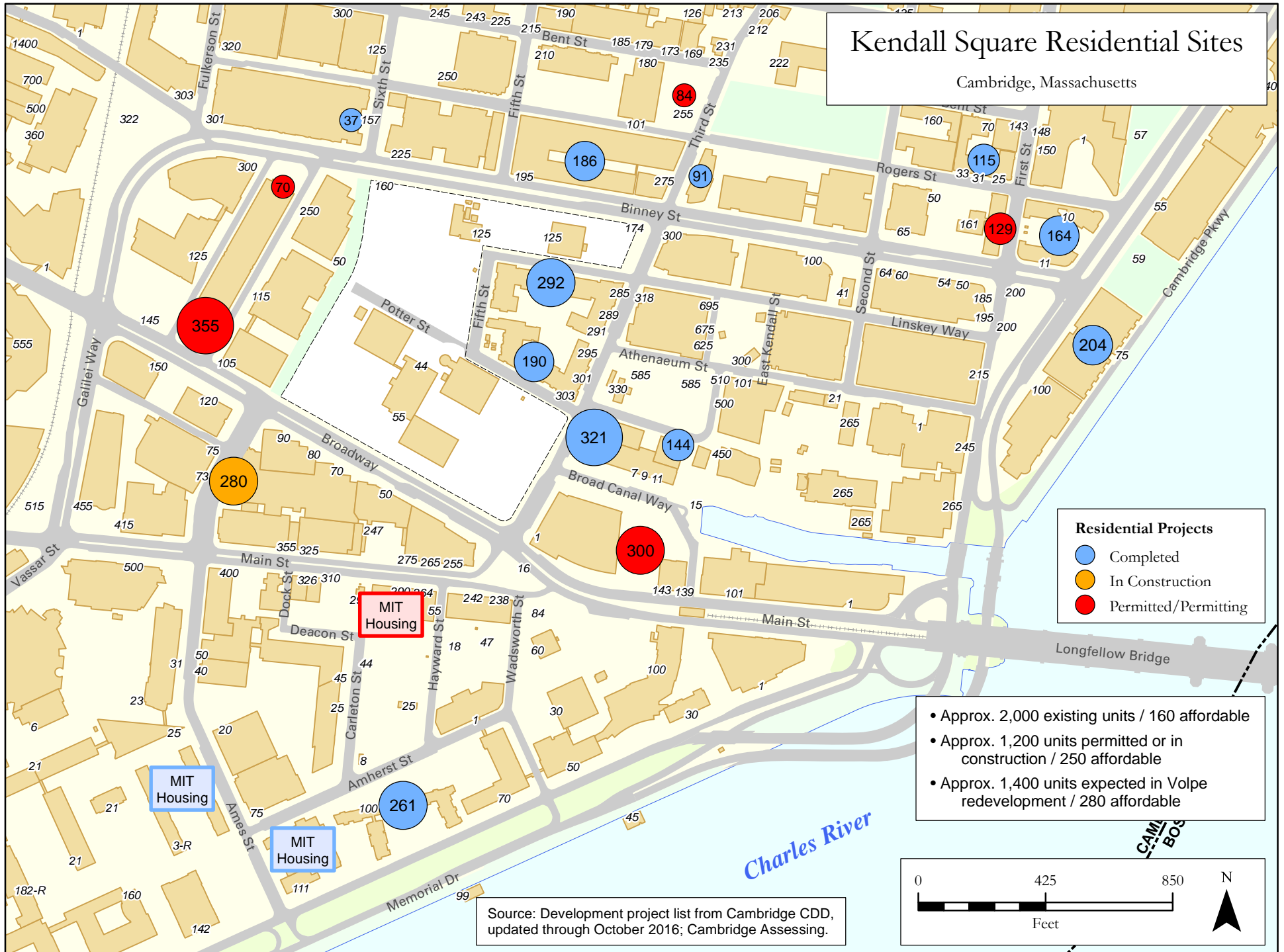
Kendall Square: New and Planned Open Space Since 2001

Cambridge, Massachusetts



Kendall Square Residential Sites

Cambridge, Massachusetts

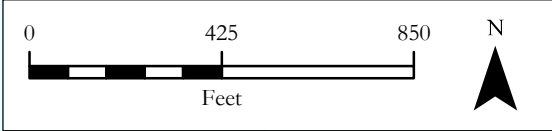


Residential Projects

- Completed
- In Construction
- Permitted/Permitting

- Approx. 2,000 existing units / 160 affordable
- Approx. 1,200 units permitted or in construction / 250 affordable
- Approx. 1,400 units expected in Volpe redevelopment / 280 affordable

Source: Development project list from Cambridge CDD, updated through October 2016; Cambridge Assessing.



Specific Issues Raised in Relation to Zoning Proposal

The following is a summary of issues raised at the initial set of hearings regarding specific elements of the zoning petition, along with background considerations to help inform the discussion of these issues, and possible approaches that could be taken to modify the zoning proposal. These are primarily organized by the order they appear in the zoning petition, with some consolidation.

Master Plan Area (13.91.1) / Minimum Development Parcel Size (13.93.2)

Issues Raised:

- Is it expected that the entire Volpe parcel (the CRA parcel may or may not be added) will be developed under one master plan?
- Does the Development Parcel include streets?

Considerations:

- A Development Parcel, under the zoning definition, includes lots (i.e., developable parcels of land), which are distinct from streets. While existing public streets are not included in a Development Parcel, sometimes a PUD involves the creation of new streets (public or private), which are considered to be included in the area of a Development Parcel.
- Current zoning (PUD-KS) requires the majority of land parcels held under common ownership to be designated as a single Development Parcel, thereby preventing the lot to be subdivided into smaller parcels.
- Proposed zoning (PUD-7) would allow a large development parcel to be permitted under a master plan be developed as a master plan (subject to continuing design approval of individual building sites), but not require it.

Potential Approaches:

- If it is a shared expectation that this zoning should result in a single development plan for the parcel, a Development Parcel could be required to contain all (or most) lots under common ownership as of the date of ordination, plus any additional lots whose owners may choose to have combined. This would guarantee that the entire parcel is reviewed and permitted as a single master development plan. Provisions related to Government Owned Lots, which may not be subject to zoning, would still need to be specified.

Master Plan Requirements (13.91.2) / Approval Criteria (13.91.3)

Issues Raised:

- Requirements do not include a sustainability plan that would focus on site-wide approaches such as district or shared energy systems, site stormwater management, &c., as well as approaches to be implemented on a building-by-building basis.
- Requirements do not include an architectural master plan describing overall design approaches that would create a cohesive sense of place and well-defined public spaces.
- In relation to the Volpe Working Group principles, the master plan approval criteria include references to connectivity & permeability, activation, and sustainability, but focus less on civic life, inclusiveness, comfort, and overall sense of place.

Considerations:

- The proposed zoning incorporates the sustainability requirements of the K2 study and refers to other sustainability measures. Sustainability has become an increasingly important component of development review, and best practices for energy use and climate resiliency continue to evolve as the city advances toward meeting “Net Zero Emissions” goals. Requiring a more holistic sustainability plan at the PUD approval stage may be a helpful way to address these issues more broadly.
- Approaches to architectural design are often discussed in design guidelines and at the PUD Master Plan level, as well as in the ongoing design review of individual buildings within a PUD, but not always explicitly required in zoning.
- Referring to the Volpe Working Group Planning Principles is a helpful way to guide the review process. Phrasing these principles as approval criteria is a stronger way to ensure that they are given the appropriate level of consideration in the review and permitting process.

Potential Approaches:

- Consolidate required submissions related to sustainability into a “Sustainability Plan” section that is required in a Development Proposal.
- Consider incorporating an “Architectural Character Plan” into a Development Proposal.
- Modify criteria for master plan approval to incorporate objectives related to civic life, inclusiveness, comfort, and overall sense of place, as well as architectural definition of streets, squares, and other open spaces.

Pre-Application Conference (13.91.5)

Issues Raised:

- The pre-application review should consider architectural character as well as arrangement of buildings and massing.

Considerations:

- The purpose of requiring a pre-application conference is so that the Planning Board may review and comment on different site planning options at an early stage of development. The formal PUD review stage can only reasonably consider one development proposal, given the amount of study required to be provided along with the submission. While the pre-application conference may be an early stage to discuss specific architectural approaches, it would not be unreasonable to discuss at a conceptual level.

Potential Approaches:

- Include architectural character as a concept-level topic to be discussed at a pre-application conference.

Uses Allowed in a PUD-7 District (13.92)

Issues Raised:

- Language seems to be unnecessarily long – references to other parts of ordinance don’t need to be repeated.

Considerations:

- It would reduce the length of the zoning text to simply refer to other sections of the ordinance when specifying allowed uses. However, referencing other sections of the ordinance can become problematic if those other sections are amended at some point in the future. Therefore, when specific uses are intended to be included or excluded, it helps preserve the intent of the zoning over time to be reasonably clear and explicit.

Potential Approaches:

- Simplify the language in some areas while still being explicit enough not to rely entirely on Section 4.30 in its current form. For instance, 13.92.3 could refer to “All Office and Laboratory uses, as listed in Section 4.34 of the Zoning Ordinance,” and Section 13.92.4 could refer to all retail and consumer service uses in Section 4.35, with the exception of those that are not included (in the current proposal, mortuaries, printing shops, and photographers studios are not included). Also, 13.92.7 may not need to list every subcategory of light manufacturing use.

Permitted Floor Area Ratio (13.93.1)

Issues Raised:

- What is the rationale for the proposed increase from current zoning? (Discussed in previous section)
- Confusion over what is included and excluded (floor area and land area) when calculating FAR.
- Discussion of whether or not to include Federal government parcel in calculating FAR.
- Uncertainty about impact of exemptions, such as balconies.

Considerations:

- Under PUD development controls, FAR is usually calculated by dividing the aggregate gross floor area (GFA) in the PUD to the area of the Development Parcel, which does not include existing streets, but might include new streets that are proposed to be created (see above).
- The topic of how to treat the replacement government facility (Volpe Center) in zoning calculations has been discussed frequently since the 2015 zoning proposal. At that time, the goal was to articulate the development limitations in a way that that would result in a predictable amount of development. The PUD-7 proposal takes a similar approach to limiting the aggregate FAR across the Development Parcel, but includes the expected size of the federal facility in the calculation so that the FAR limit more closely reflects that “actual” scale of development. Because it is still not known precisely how the parcel will be subdivided, excluding the Federal parcel from the Development Parcel for FAR purposes would make it more difficult to predict the amount of development that would result.
- Development limitations are useful to establish parameters for overall size, scale, and intensity of uses, but they can also be used strategically to “tilt the balance” in favor of development outcomes that are desired but might not be the most economically advantageous. That is the purpose of exemptions for retail, innovation space, and other uses that do not have the same real estate value as offices and laboratories in Kendall Square. Exemptions for balconies (and, potentially, other above-grade outdoor spaces) are intended to encourage those types of spaces because, under current zoning, they are counted as GFA and therefore are less likely to be built

since they would offset the potential for interior floor area. Typically, these types of exemptions are for uses and spaces that are ancillary to the main development and not likely to be a large proportion of the total floor area.

Potential Approaches:

- Make clear in the zoning text that FAR is calculated only on the Development Parcel area.
- Regardless of what types of floor area are included in the FAR calculation, it is recommended that FAR be calculated on the area of the Development Parcel as a whole, so that the resulting allowed floor area can be more accurately predicted. Alternatively, development could be limited by aggregate GFA, leaving out the added step of calculating based on FAR, provided it is mandatory that the entire Volpe parcel is included in the Development Parcel (with the option of including the CRA parcel) and permitted as a PUD master plan.
- Consider a cap on exempted GFA to avoid potential unintended consequences.

Limitations on Non-Residential Development (13.93.1.1)

Issues Raised:

- Why is 40% housing required, and not another proportion? Seems to be a substantive need for housing in Kendall. (Also see information above related to housing in Kendall Square.)

Considerations:

- The “60/40” ratio of new commercial to residential development is used in the current zoning for the site and was restated in the K2 study, not just for the Volpe site but for other areas such as the MXD District. The broad goal is to sustain growth in Kendall Square as the city’s dominant economic development district, while also leveraging the value of new commercial growth to significantly increase the amount of housing in the core of Kendall Square. Requiring 40% housing is one of the most significant and meaningful components of the proposed zoning, given how strongly the Kendall Square real estate market is oriented toward commercial uses.
- The 60/40 standard is a maximum/minimum – the zoning would allow more residential development if the amount of commercial development is equally reduced. However, the ratio is unlikely to change without a significant shift in economic conditions, given that the value of the commercial development would be supporting the project as a whole.
- It may be helpful not to focus on the 60/40 ratio but to separately consider the quantities of commercial and residential development that would be provided. The concern with reducing the allowed amount of commercial development is that it would produce less economic value, which could make the project infeasible or unable to support the desired public benefits. Additional residential development could be allowed without reducing allowed commercial development, but the site would need to be able to support such additional development.

Potential Approaches:

- A major change in land use mix could have significant impacts on the value and cost of a redevelopment project, and therefore should be discussed carefully with the understanding that it could impact the project’s feasibility or the level of public benefits that could be supported.
- Alternatively, flexibility could be considered to allow for additional housing – if it can be supported within the other dimensional limitations of the district (height, open space, &c.) –

without reducing the permitted amount of commercial development, thereby mitigating potential impacts on project feasibility and other public benefits.

Housing Provisions (13.93.1.2) / Residential Density (13.93.3)

Issues Raised:

- Concern about including hotel in residential – might be a need in the area, but feels semi-commercial, semi-residential, not fully comparable to residential.
- Concern about including dormitories – not sure if appropriate here, might lead to institutional encroachment.
- Is 20% is the best affordable percentage that can be reached? Standard was established for all projects, but mixed-use might do more – e.g., MXD infill development zoning raised to 25% affordable (20% low-moderate, 5% middle-income).
- Would like to have a way to support middle-income housing.
- Concern about locking in affordable housing requirement at current inclusionary level, need to be convinced of the need to do this.
- Why is the GSA building not subject to Incentive Housing (linkage fee)?

Considerations:

- Hotel uses are listed within a subcategory of residential use (“Transient Accommodations”), but are not usually treated the same way as housing when applying dimensional requirements. Hotel also does not necessarily promote the same policy goals as housing, though it may promote goals such as activation or enable other development options. However, because the economic value of a hotel use would not be on par with commercial offices and labs, hotel uses are less likely to be developed if they have to “compete” against office and lab space.
- Dormitories, unlike hotel, are more often treated the same way as housing when applying dimensional requirements, and are often viewed as promoting similar policy goals. However, they could be treated differently if the Council does not wish to encourage dormitory use in this district. In the recently created PUD-5 district for MIT land in Kendall Square, dormitories do not count toward meeting the minimum housing requirement, but have the same height allowances as residential uses and can be exempted entirely from FAR limitations south of Main Street.
- The current Inclusionary Housing requirement is based on a recent study that assessed the need for affordable housing and aimed to determine a requirement that could be broadly supportable by a range of residential project types. It is difficult to determine what would be supportable by this specific redevelopment, especially since new residential development is not likely to occur until many years in the future, when market conditions may be different. However, given the large amount of housing required, the affordable housing requirement would be one of the most important factors affecting the overall project cost.
- Middle-income housing was considered in the K2 study, which suggested an incentive-based approach to encourage middle-income housing in exchange for increased height. The PUD-5 zoning incorporates this height incentive, which MIT originally opted not to use, but later decided to include in the One Broadway residential development. The MXD zoning provides additional height but requires 5% of new housing to be middle-income. An overarching concern

with middle-income housing is whether there is enough demand in the rental market, given the availability of other options in the region for middle-income households. For owner-occupied units, the new inclusionary housing requirements capture middle-income households by making units available to households earning up to 100% of area median income.

- Along with middle-income housing, the Volpe Working Group stressed support for family-sized housing and family-friendly residential design and amenities. The new inclusionary housing requirements include provisions for family-sized affordable housing units, but the proposed zoning does not contain provisions that would incentivize family-sized market-rate units or other amenities such as common play areas and storage rooms.
- Projects that receive a special permit are not subject to subsequent zoning changes if they are developed as permitted. This is a legal standard but also has a practical purpose, since zoning changes would affect the costs associated with the project and thus could adversely impact the developer's ability to complete the project as permitted.
- Incentive zoning contributions are required for most non-residential uses but are not required for any kind of government buildings – local, state, or federal. In general, state and federal government buildings are not subject to local zoning requirements, so it is not clear if there would be any effect to requiring incentive zoning contributions for the replacement Volpe Center building.

Potential Approaches:

- Whether or not to include any hotel or dormitory uses within the required residential development depends on whether or not the Council decides that they are desired in a future redevelopment project. Those uses are not likely to be developed if they take away capacity for other non-residential development, primarily office/lab. Incentives could be considered (see below), if those uses are desired in the district.
- Other approaches might be considered that would provide flexibility for desired uses, such as additional residential development, including affordable, middle-income, and/or family-sized units, without imposing new requirements or reducing allowances for commercial office/lab development. Flexibility might include increased height, incentives for additional commercial development, allowing hotel use as a portion of the required housing (as currently proposed) or other creative options. Tailoring the right set of incentives would require discussing the relative priority of desired uses and the attractiveness of the incentives to the developer.
- A change that would significantly reduce the value of development (e.g., reducing allowed commercial office/lab development) or significantly increase the cost of development (e.g., increasing required affordable housing) would need to be considered carefully, with the understanding that it could impact the project's feasibility or the level of public benefits that could be supported.

Maximum Building Height (13.93.4)

Issues Raised:

- Explain how this compares to heights in previous zoning proposals.

- Concern about buildings up to 500 feet, and whether it is more appropriate to have one building with greater height, or multiple buildings at the same maximum height. There may be other ways to celebrate the site rather than a 500-foot building, such as a great civic space.
- Concern about identifying taller buildings as “iconic” – would prefer to focus on architectural beauty, especially at the tops of buildings.
- Concern about floorplate size at taller heights.
- Concern about mitigating and shielding rooftop mechanical penthouses.
- Criteria for reviewing impact of heights only considers building heights above 250 feet.

Considerations:

- The K2 study had recommended a consistent height limit of 250 feet for non-residential buildings in the core parts of Kendall Square, as was previously (and currently) the limit in the MXD district and the PUD-KS zoning (in limited portions). Subsequent discussions have focused on allowed heights for residential uses. The K2 study recommended that residential heights could be increased to 300 feet subject to limitations on horizontal dimensions and subject to middle-income housing requirements. The adopted MXD zoning amendment allows residential heights to 350 feet and requires middle-income units in all new housing. The 2015 Planning Board proposal for the Volpe area suggested that a single building up to 500 feet could be approved if it is a building of exceptional architectural quality, while acknowledging that this standard would be difficult to evaluate objectively and that people may have differing opinions.
- While there is a relationship between height and open space, to a great extent the size and quality of open space will be defined at the “streetwall” scale by creating well-defined, human-scaled spaces that are framed by the surrounding façades of the lower portion of buildings. Additional height may benefit open space if it allows for smaller floorplates and more articulation, leading to more open sky views and reduced shadow duration.
- The design guidelines in the K2 study recommended limiting the bulk of buildings above the “streetwall” height (up to about 120 feet, depending on the exact location) based on horizontal dimensions as well as floorplate area. For 250-foot (commercial) buildings the maximum guideline is a 175-foot horizontal dimension, allowing up to around a 30,000 square-foot floorplate. For a 300-foot (residential) building the maximum guideline is a 160-foot horizontal dimension for a rectangular floorplate building, or 90 feet by 90 feet in a square floorplate building, with floorplate sizes of roughly 10,000 square feet. These dimensions are similar to the tallest parts of the respective “Watermark” buildings, currently the tallest high-rise residential buildings in Kendall Square. The current proposal limits floorplate area to 15,000 square feet above 250 feet in height, but does not include controls to mitigate “slab-like” forms.
- The 2015 PUD-KS petition proposed an 85-foot height zone in the area directly around 303 Third Street and between that site and Binney Street. The current proposal allows additional height along Binney Street, which would allow for open space closer to Broadway. However, residential heights of up to 250 feet along Binney Street might impact views from the neighborhood unless the floorplate dimensions are controlled for portions that are taller than surrounding buildings.
- The current zoning, based on ECaPS, considers 120 feet as a “base” height and applies special criteria to approve portions above those heights. The proposed zoning considers 250 feet as a “base” height; however, as noted above, the K2 study and design guidelines suggest that buildings be treated differently above a “streetwall” height of around 120 feet. Because the

most effective way to assess impacts such as shadows, wind, light, and views is during the development master planning process, it may be simpler not to cite a specific height, and to simply apply these review criteria to the development plan as a whole.

Potential Approaches:

- There has been considerable discussion of the benefits and drawbacks of allowing a single exceptionally tall building that would serve as a distinctive landmark, or limiting heights such that multiple buildings would be built to the same elevation. This issue will need to be considered and decided by the City Council with the advice of the Planning Board.
- Include standards for the horizontal dimensions of building portions above the “streetwall” height, either in zoning or design guidelines, and apply those standards to buildings along Binney Street as well as in the more permissive areas closer to Broadway.
- Include step-back provisions, either in zoning or design guidelines, so that heights are compatible where new buildings interface with the existing 303 Third Street building.
- Consider applying the criteria for approval of building heights more generally to approval of a development master plan as a whole, without citing a specific height at which they become effective; alternatively, define a “streetwall” height closer to 120 feet that is intended to provide comfort and human scale to public spaces while mitigating bulk, shadow, and wind impacts created by the taller portions of buildings.

Open Space (13.94)

Issues Raised:

- More clearly define what counts as open space and what doesn’t.
- Make sure there is public access at all times – there is a need to avoid situations where open space is created, but fenced off.
- Explain the provision where up to 20% of required open space is allowed to be on the Federal government site.
- Concern about indoor community space counting toward open space.
- Many seem to favor having open space located at Third Street and Broadway. It would also be preferable to provide connections to the corner of Sixth Street and Binney Street.
- Will the Sixth Street walkway remain? Will be the character of the anticipated Fifth Street connection be more pedestrian-oriented or vehicular?
- Goal of family-friendly open space is important, currently there is little reason to bring kids to Kendall except skating rink.

Considerations:

- In the context of publicly-accessible open space, zoning defines two different types as follows:
 - *Open Space, Public. An area owned or controlled by the City of Cambridge or other public entity that is intended for public use, that is open to the sky and that is designed for either environmental, scenic, or recreation purposes. Public Open Space may include but is not limited to lawns, decorative plantings, interior walkways, abutting sidewalks,*

active and passive recreation areas, playgrounds, fountains, and public performance areas. Public Open Space shall not include rooftop areas, patios, balconies, parking lots, or driveways. Limited paved surfaces may be designed to accommodate occasional use by motor vehicles servicing the park facility. If the facility is not held in fee simple by the City of Cambridge or other public entity, the Public Open Space may be land remaining in private ownership but protected for public use by means of a permanent easement, conservation restriction, or other similar legal device acceptable to the City.

- *Open Space, Publicly Beneficial. A portion of a structure, a lot or other area of land associated with and adjacent to a building or group of buildings in relation to which it serves to provide light and air, or scenic, recreation, pedestrian amenity or similar purposes. Such space shall be customarily available or shall be readily visible to such occupants and visitors, though physically inaccessible, by being located and treated to enhance the amenity of the development through a general appearance of openness. Publicly beneficial open space shall include parks, plazas, lawns, landscaped areas, decorative plantings, and active and passive recreational areas. Publicly beneficial open space shall also include loggias, atriums, arcades and pedestrian ways listed and defined in Section 14.45. Streets, parking lots, driveways, service roads, loading areas, and areas normally inaccessible to pedestrian circulation beneath pedestrian bridges, decks, or shopping bridges shall not be counted in determining required publicly beneficial open space.*
- In discussing the 2015 zoning petition for this site, the Planning Board concluded that the focus of the open space requirement should be space that truly serves a civic function, whether as a gathering place, a recreational resource, or a connector among public spaces within the site and the area. “Publicly beneficial open space” is typically created in a PUD development where the land ownership is privately retained; however, there are also instances where “public open space” can be created by means of a covenant rather than by conveying land ownership (see last sentence of the definition). There may be many practical reasons why it would be appropriate for the property owner to retain land ownership in this case. Whichever definition is used, additional provisions in the zoning can clarify how public access and enjoyment of the provided open space will be guaranteed.
- The 2015 Planning Board petition also proposed that open space on a future Federal site might be allowed to serve some portion of the required open space. Because the Federal site cannot be controlled directly through zoning, the intention of this approach was to provide an incentive for the developer to advocate for open space on the Federal site to be integrated with the area as a whole and to serve the public as much as possible. The Council could choose many ways to define the open space requirement, including prohibiting any space on the Federal-controlled site being counted, but that may discourage the type of design that is desired for that space.
- It is rare, but not unprecedented, to include some indoor space as open space in special cases, such as publicly accessible atrium spaces or other quasi-enclosed areas that might not meet the strict definition of open space. In this case, the practical concern seems to be that a low-scale, stand-alone community center building would displace land area that would otherwise be used for open space or other buildings that are necessary to enable the development to occur. If the footprint of a stand-alone community-use building is not somehow incorporated into the required open space, the likely result is that it would be incorporated into another building to make more efficient use of land area.

- The 2015 Connect Kendall Square planning process stressed the importance of connections through the site and to the surrounding area. Some specific connections included from Broad Canal to the Sixth Street walkway, into the site from the “Galaxy Park” intersection, and along the axis of Fifth Street. These connections are shown in MIT’s example site plans but not referenced explicitly in the zoning. The Sixth Street walkway is controlled by the CRA, and mostly within an adjacent zoning district, and is planned to be improved in association with the MXD infill development plan.
- The Volpe Working Group Principles also stress the importance of creating a center for civic life within the site, a “heart of Kendall Square,” similar to provisions that were included in the 2015 PUD-KS proposal. This concept is not explicitly mentioned in the current PUD-7 proposal.

Potential Approaches:

- Either base the required open space on “Public Open Space,” clarifying that this could be achieved by a covenant to guarantee public access rather than conveyance of land, or base the requirement on “Publicly Beneficial Open Space” but require a covenant or other legal mechanism guaranteeing public access to key portions of the site.
- If desired, the calculation of required open space could specifically exclude land on the Federal government portion of the site, and required ratios may need to be adjusted. Alternatively, rather than a percentage ratio, a minimum area of open space (e.g., in acres) might be required to be located within the portion of the Development Parcel that is non-Federal land.
- The potential conflict between required open space and the footprint of a stand-alone community center building will need to be resolved, either by providing flexibility in the open space requirement or by allowing the community center to be located in a portion of another building. The preferred approach would depend on the relative priority of locating a community center within a stand-alone building.
- Zoning could be more explicit about the desired location of open space, either directly or indirectly, by shifting height limits to control where buildings are more likely to be sited. However, too many constraints could have unanticipated consequences that preclude otherwise desirable development outcomes. Another approach would be to include criteria for connecting open space to other public spaces and connections in the area, drawing on the Connect Kendall Square framework plan and Volpe Working Group principles.
- Include in the review and approval criteria that open space should create an identifiable civic center within Kendall Square, as suggested in the Volpe Working Group principles.

Parking and Loading Requirements (13.96)

Issues Raised:

- There is a need to minimize parking on-site to get beyond traffic problems. The proposed parking requirements seem high.
- All parking should be below grade except for on-street parking.

Considerations:

- The proposed parking requirements are based on the approach recommended in the K2 study. The key components of this approach are to limit parking by setting maximum ratios, rather

than minimum requirements, and to treat parking as a shared resource for the district rather than assigning parking to each individual land use. The ratios in the PUD-7 petition are mostly the same as those recommended in K2, with slight reductions in maximum office parking and minimum residential parking. While no study has been conducted to support lower ratios in zoning, the parking could be further reduced through the development plan review process according to studies that the developer would be required to prepare.

- The intent of the proposed zoning seems to be to allow surface parking only on-street, or on a temporary basis while other facilities are being constructed. However, it is not explicitly stated that surface parking is otherwise prohibited.

Potential Approaches:

- Different parking ratios could be considered, but there is currently no study to support alternate zoning proposals. A more detailed transportation study would be required for a development proposal, which could lead to further reductions through the review and permitting process.
- Add a statement clarifying that all parking shall be underground, except as otherwise provided for on-street parking and interim lots.

Traffic Mitigation Measures (13.97)

Issues Raised:

- There needs to be a better grasp on transportation issues in the area, particularly in discussing needs for transit.
- Want to hear more about the Grand Junction corridor as a potential way to connect people to Kendall Square from North Station and across the river.

Considerations:

- The K2 study considered a range of transportation issues, including traffic and transit service as well as accommodations for bicyclists, pedestrians, and other modes. Along with the transportation impact review and mitigation required of major projects and the parking recommendations noted above, the study recommended enhancing transportation demand management (TDM) programs, requiring contributions of funds for enhancing transit service, advocating for enhanced transit service between key nodes, and adding bicycle sharing service through the Hubway system. The PUD-7 proposal incorporates the recommendations of the study as they relate to transportation, including a contribution of \$5.00 per square foot of development that would go toward funding transit improvements.
- Transit has become a more significant component of transportation impact review in recent years, particularly for projects in Kendall Square. The 2015 Planning Board zoning petition for this site, in its final form, outlined a more robust transit study that would be required for a development plan.
- The work of the Kendall Square Mobility Task Force has continued to advance detailed thinking about priority transportation improvements in the area, including regional connections such as the Grand Junction corridor. This could be mentioned more explicitly in zoning as a regional connection that should be considered. However, it would be difficult to require any specific actions in zoning, because the corridor lies outside the district. Since MIT controls much of the corridor, commitments could be explored outside of the zoning (see discussion below).

Potential Approaches:

- Incorporate transit study requirements from 2015 proposal.
- Make note of regional connections, such as the Grand Junction, among the transportation issues to be studied and considerations for development plan approval.

Required Active Uses (13.910.1)

Issues Raised:

- Retail is very important to the plan as a way to serve the broader community, but it needs to serve higher-income and lower-income households (including graduate students and families).
- Affordable grocery and dining options are important to combat food insecurity.
- Consider more than 65% active use frontage.
- 5,000 square feet as a standard for small-scale retail seems too large – normally local retail is smaller, closer to 2,000-3,000 square feet or less.
- 10% of ground floor area for banks and financial institutions seems like a lot.
- Concern about including hotel lobby spaces in active use – some frontage limitation should be considered.
- There is a need for local, independent business, but also a mix, because independent does not always mean affordable.
- There is a need for retail that people can take their kids to.
- It is important to be welcoming, so that neighboring communities will feel that they can come to the site.
- Early childhood education spaces could be a good active ground floor use and might be exempt.
- Concern about changes in the overall retail environment affecting what will and won't be successful – accommodations have to be made for changes over time.

Considerations:

- The K2 study recommended a requirement/incentive approach where a minimum of 75% of building frontage on major streets would need to be retail or active use, while retail spaces of 5,000 square feet or less could be exempted from FAR calculations as an incentive. Further conversations in subsequent zoning and permitting processes have highlighted the importance of other factors, such as space for local and independent businesses, smaller-sized spaces and shared spaces for multiple retailers, different kinds of active uses, priority uses such as groceries and general merchandise, affordability of goods, and other priority locations for active uses, such as new park frontages as well as major streets.
- Achieving the desired qualities of retail at a fine grain is extremely difficult through zoning, which cannot dictate who the individual retailers will be, what specific products and services they offer, and what prices they might charge. It is difficult even at the development review stage, because retail tenants are not secured until projects are nearing the end of construction and may turn over frequently. Zoning can dictate (a) where active uses are required in a development, (b) how active uses may be incentivized through exemptions, and (c) what is the

framework of rules in which active uses can operate to ensure that they serve the stated goals, but also allow flexibility for turnover and adaptation over time.

- Non-zoning approaches can sometimes help advance the community’s goals (see discussion in the final section). For instance, in MIT’s Kendall Square initiative, MIT committed to a process for community involvement in the programming of active use spaces. It is not yet clear if the same approach would be employed in a future Volpe redevelopment.

Potential Approaches:

- Clarify the definition of “active use” with a range of possible uses and a framework of rules, such as the proportion that should be independent, the average size per establishment (with flexibility for concepts such as market halls, which might have multiple establishments sharing a space), certain types of priority uses that are required or preferred, and limitations where desired, such as hotel lobbies with retail included. Banks and office lobbies would be excluded.
- If the required minimum amount of active use frontage is 65% rather than 75%, consider whether other building frontages should have some active use requirements, such as park spaces or internal public connections.
- Incorporate criteria for the review of retail marketing and tenanting strategies as part of the development master plan approval process.
- Explore non-zoning commitments regarding the specific types of retailers who will be sought and the process for community involvement in ongoing retail and active use programming.

Environmental Comfort Issues, including Truck Traffic (13.99), Rooftop Mechanical Equipment Noise Mitigation (13.910.2) and Lighting

Issues Raised:

- Noise standards are difficult to apply.
- Lighting should be included.
- Mitigation of truck traffic impacts should apply to 303 Third Street.

Considerations:

- Noise is regulated by the municipal noise control ordinance, which is separate from zoning. However, the language in the petition has also been incorporated in recent years as a standard element of zoning for major redevelopment areas in Kendall Square. While zoning is an imperfect tool for controlling sound, incorporating more deliberate review of potential noise generators and their impacts at the development review stage is a way to mitigate potential future nuisances.
- Similarly, the City has recently considered a municipal lighting ordinance, which would set specific technical standards for the type and intensity of exterior light fixtures that could be installed. Future redevelopment within the district would become subject to the provisions of such an ordinance, if it were adopted. Amendments to the Zoning Ordinance were also proposed that would strengthen and clarify the Planning Board’s ability to review exterior lighting in development proposals, but those were not adopted.

- The language pertaining to truck traffic impacts is in the current PUD-KS zoning (which will continue to include 303 Third Street), and is intended to apply broadly to all residential developments that might be impacted by truck traffic on Binney Street.

Potential Approaches:

- Incorporate provisions for the review of noise and lighting, along with strategies to mitigate potential impacts and nuisance, as part of the development review process.
- Clarify that truck traffic impact mitigation extends to residential uses in adjacent districts as well.

Innovation Space (13.910.3)

Issues Raised:

- Concern that this may be promoting “elite co-working space” – consider subsidizing some seats, or an approach like LabCentral, focusing on a niche audience that’s not already served (not biotech).

Considerations:

- The requirements and incentives for “innovation space” – office space that would be reserved for smaller companies and individuals, with shorter and more flexible leases – were key recommendations of the K2 study meant to protect some of the “start-up” ecosystem in Kendall Square from being displaced by large corporate entities. Since then, permitted developments have most typically employed the “co-working” office model. However, there have been discussions of other models, such as shared fabrication space or “innovation retail” that might allow entrepreneurs to sell products and services. The “inclusiveness” principle articulated by the Volpe Working Group also makes reference to providing opportunities that reach beyond the existing Kendall Square business community.
- Like with retail, it can be very difficult to define the character of innovation businesses early in the zoning and development permitting process, because the tenanting of spaces does not occur until much later. However, there could be additional criteria incorporated into the Planning Board’s review to address the type and location of spaces within a development plan, and commitments could be explored outside the zoning with regard to the ongoing operation of innovation spaces.
- The K2 study anticipated that the requirement might be met in shared facilities. However, the proposed zoning allows the requirement to be met anywhere in the area, and it may be desirable to have some amount of new space created within the new development.

Potential Approaches:

- Include more explicit criteria for review of innovation space plans – incorporating Volpe Working Group inclusiveness principles.
- Consider commitments from the Petitioner with regard to issues that cannot be appropriately addressed through zoning or development review.

Sustainability (13.910.4)

Issues Raised:

- Sustainability measures do not seem to go very far, seem to include requirements that are already standard.
- Should be looking at sustainability in evaluating urban design guidelines.
- Clarify if the standards are the same for residential buildings and commercial buildings.
- Concern about the negative effects of glass facades – sustainability and aesthetics. (Discussed by the Petitioner’s representatives at the public hearing.)

Considerations:

- The K2 study recommends that all buildings be designed to a LEED Gold standard. In the current proposal, this would apply to both commercial and residential buildings. This LEED standard aligns with the short-term recommendations of the Net Zero Action Plan, which also recommends that buildings achieve an energy performance 22% below the ASHRAE 2007 benchmark – which is roughly equivalent to the energy “stretch code” requirements currently in effect for most large buildings. The Net Zero Action Plan targets a “net zero emissions” standard for new multifamily residential, office, and institutional buildings by 2025, and for new lab buildings by 2030. The petition notes that a sustainability narrative for a development proposal must address consistency with the Net Zero Action Plan and other ongoing efforts of the city.
- There are some specific design measures discussed in the Net Zero Action Plan, such as optimizing “solar ready” design and ensuring that new buildings are designed with the possibility of changing to renewable energy over time (“pathways to net zero”). These measures can be complicated to include in zoning requirements, so they have been more often incorporated as design guidelines that are discussed in the ongoing review process. Other sustainable design approaches are also being explored by the city, such as the Passivhaus standard and other passive design measures.
- As noted earlier, there are approaches to sustainability that may be best addressed at the master planning level, such as district energy approaches and natural stormwater management and resiliency features incorporated into the site, along with approaches to sustainable building design.

Potential Approaches:

- Incorporate site-level sustainability planning and approval criteria into the development review process (see above).
- Continue to incorporate best sustainability practices into design guidelines and ongoing review processes over the course of the project’s development, as well as into the criteria for master plan review and approval.

Contribution to Kendall Square Fund; Community Space Funding (13.910.5)

Issues Raised:

- The community center requires more explanation.
- Community outreach is important to get a sense of the whole neighborhood’s needs.

- What exactly will the proposed \$15 million contribution fund? Interior or exterior construction? Operations?
- Contribution to transit seems low.

Considerations:

- The proposed “community space” is the one element of the zoning proposal that is not directly linked to the K2 study recommendations. However, it fits in with many of the overarching goals of creating a more unified, dynamic district that brings together different segments of the community, and responds to conversations that have been had in recent years about how the Volpe site redevelopment has the potential to create a new “civic heart” to Kendall Square and surrounding neighborhoods, similar to the city’s other major squares.
- The zoning only specifies a funding commitment to construct a community space, but does not provide further explanation of what parameters would define that space, how it is intended to fit within a development plan for the site, and how it would be reviewed by the Planning Board in relation to other uses such as residences, commercial buildings, retail, and open space.
- There may be elements of a community space that will not be appropriate to incorporate into zoning provisions (see discussion in following section), and separate commitments may be explored.
- The K2 study recommends a funding commitment of \$10 per square foot of development to go toward shared open space programming, transit improvements, and workforce development. The proposed approach responds to the City’s ongoing discussions of funding commitments since the publication of the K2 study, dividing the funds evenly between the community fund (established by the City Council following the previous MIT Kendall Square zoning amendment for the distribution of funds to support a range of community needs) and transit. It is likely that the owner would assume responsibility to fund open space operations and programming if ownership of the land remains privately held.

Potential Approaches:

- Provide a clearer definition of community space and a framework for how it would fit within an overall development plan for the site, along with its intended purpose and criteria for review as a component of a development master plan.
- Consider additional commitments outside of the provisions of the Zoning Ordinance.

Other Considerations Not Addressed Through Zoning

Some of the issues raised at the hearing are not topics that can be addressed through zoning. The primary reason for this is that zoning can only regulate land use and development, and have to be applied regardless of who the owner or developer of the land might be. Therefore, issues that have been raised specifically because the petitioner and expected developer is MIT are not necessarily appropriate to incorporate into zoning provisions.

However, since the current zoning process assumes that the petitioner may provide public benefits in exchange for the development rights enabled by the zoning change, these issues can be discussed further in the context of commitments that are mutually agreed to by the petitioner and the City Council.

Grand Junction Corridor

The City has been engaged in planning for the future of the Grand Junction rail corridor for many years, including a current effort to continue development of a “rail-with-trail” pedestrian/bicycle greenway alongside the corridor, and a collaborative effort with the Massachusetts Department of Transportation to explore options for future transit service. Aside from the state, MIT is the largest landowner within and surrounding the corridor. However, zoning can only control development within the district, and the entire Grand Junction corridor lies outside the district that is proposed to be rezoned.

Graduate Student Housing

While it has been a longstanding goal of the city to encourage institutions to house its students on campus, a commitment to graduate student housing is not something that would typically be expected from any other developer. Therefore, incorporating a commitment to provide graduate student housing into zoning might be problematic, while a separate agreement between the City and MIT would be a more appropriate means to secure such a commitment.

Workforce Development

There is some ability within zoning to require funding commitments to public programs and services where the impact of development on the provision of those services has been studied, as is the case with affordable housing (in the Incentive Zoning provisions) and as was recommended for workforce development programs in the K2 study. However, more active participation in workforce development programs at an institutional level would need to be addressed through a commitment that is outside the normal scope of zoning.

Institutional Expansion

Since MIT is an institutional owner, though the proposed redevelopment focuses on non-institutional uses (aside from the replacement government building), some concerns were expressed about potential future expansion of institutional uses. This issue was also raised and discussed in the context of MIT’s approved Kendall Square redevelopment projects. While Cambridge cannot control institutional uses in commercial districts through zoning, there has been a precedent of establishing agreements with institutions that would create rules governing the future conversion of land from taxable to non-taxable uses, if it were to occur in the long term.

Community Center

As discussed at the end of the previous section, while there are important zoning questions regarding how a community space would be incorporated into a development plan and how it would relate to other uses on the site, zoning would not be an effective mechanism to establish agreements related to the operation and programming of that space. This issue could be treated in a similar way to open space and retail programming commitments that have been incorporated into past development agreements.