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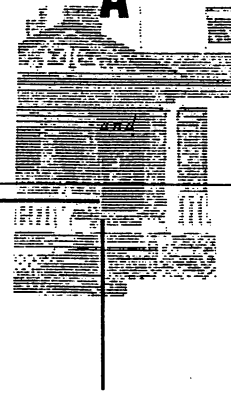
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*Supportive**Housing**and**Real**Estate*

SHARE Associates

a division of CASCAP, Inc.

Property Development,
Management and ConsultingBy Hand

February 11, 2000

Residents of the Bigelow Street Area
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Bigelow Street Neighbor,

Thank you for the letter from the Residents of the Bigelow Street Area that we received February 1st, following up on many of the issues and questions that were discussed at the December 3rd neighborhood meeting. We appreciate your listing what changes and assurances you would need for CASCAP to obtain your consideration and hopefully your support for our comprehensive permit request. We are pleased that CASCAP is able and willing to agree to the majority of the items listed.

Please rest assured that CASCAP has always intended that 8 Bigelow be developed through its Affordable Small Apartment Preservation (ASAP) Initiative. This program provides rental housing to individuals with incomes below 80% of median, and is not a supportive housing program. While individuals with annual incomes of up to \$33,450 will be eligible, the majority of individuals will have incomes below 50% of median or \$21,950. In deference your concern over the long term use of the property however, the permitting will limit the use to affordable housing. We will also have the affordability deed restrictions that will be required by our lenders.

CASCAP is also committed to providing quality property management. As well as regular maintenance and repair services, our property management department provides 24 hour coverage for emergency services. CASCAP will have a live in manager at Bigelow Street. Additionally, our tenant selection process is more in depth than is typical in the private market. We require, and will continue to require, that all prospective tenants provide two landlord references, personal or professional references, credit reference check and a criminal records check (CORI). He/she must also have an interview with CASCAP staff. Any applicant with a bad tenant history will not be accepted. We anticipate that at 8 Bigelow Street a slightly higher proportion of the tenants will be women and there will be a variety of ages represented. This has been our experience at our other properties.

After the December 3rd meeting, we reviewed our design in light of the concerns and input we received from the neighborhood. We have since substantially redesigned the proposed building, eliminating the third floor addition and the exterior staircase. All units will now be contained within the existing building envelope.

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CASCAP has always proposed decreasing the number of units from the existing six (6) self-contained units and seven (7) single room occupancies. While some neighbors have requested fewer than nine units citing concern for the project's density, CASCAP cannot further reduce the density beyond the nine rental units and the on-site manager's unit. We have, however, in the redesign of the building, reduced the size of some of the units and reduced the number of one-bedroom units from nine to seven.

Public records dating back to 1968 show that 8 Bigelow Street has rented up to fifteen rooms for a total of sixteen occupants when full. Occupancy has fluctuated over the years from fifteen to six tenants, with a typical occupancy of ten to thirteen tenants. With the exception of 1999, 1997-1994, 8 Bigelow St. occupancy has been ten individuals or more. Our renovation and management at 8 Bigelow St. will stabilize this tenancy, with nine rental units and the on site manager's unit.

We are increasing parking at 8 Bigelow Street by one additional space to two (2) parking spaces, while reducing the number of units at the building. We have sought to maintain as much open space as possible for landscaping in keeping with the Bigelow streetscape. As we mentioned in the December 3rd meeting, only 5% of CASCAP tenants have cars. Rather than pave the backyard with parking spaces that will not be used, we have requested that that the comprehensive permit require a review one year after the project is occupied to determine if an additional parking space is necessary. The review will be done by CASCAP in consultation with the neighborhood.

Some neighbors have suggested that we use the underutilized parking spaces at Harvard Place for 8 Bigelow Street residents or rent the spaces to local residents. CASCAP is not able to rent these out due to prior neighborhood commitments and zoning restrictions. As well, CASCAP cannot agree to prevent tenants from having visitor's parking permits, as this is their legal right. Given our experience at our other properties, we firmly believe CASCAP's renovation of 8 Bigelow Street into rental housing to people of limited means will have the least effect on parking than would any other property use. However, in deference to your request, CASCAP will agree to look at available spaces at Harvard Place and other CASCAP owned properties as potential "overflow" sites, if the need were to arise.

Regarding your suggestion that CASCAP acquire an alternate site in a neighborhood with fewer social services agencies and supportive housing: we agree that the issue of neighborhood parity in siting supportive housing is important. No study of the changes in siting would be complete however, without looking at the historical role that single room occupancies have played. While publicly assisted social service programs in Central Square are often more visible than private single room occupancy housing, both types of housing have traditionally helped those with supportive service needs. In 1979, a study of Single Room Occupancies shows 206 rooms in the Bigelow, Clinton, Lee, and Inman Street neighborhood, without the inclusion of the YWCA or YMCA. Of these, 39 were located on Bigelow St. Today, only 31 SROs exist in this neighborhood, of which 7 SROs and 6 self-contained units are located at 8 Bigelow St.

We very much appreciate your thoughtful response to our meeting on December 3rd and your articulating the changes needed to gain your support. We especially appreciate your insight and understanding that good property management is the key to this project's success and acceptance. We stand behind our twenty-five year history providing quality housing, and would be glad to put you in contact with neighbors and abutters of other CASCAP properties.

We are scheduled for a presentation to the Planning Board on February 15th at 9:00p.m.-9:30p.m. at the Senior Center, 806 Massachusetts Ave., and have filed a request for a comprehensive permit that will be heard on March 9th, 2000. We would be happy to meet with any members of the neighborhood prior to the comprehensive permit meeting if there is an interest in meeting. Abutters will be receiving a formal notice from the Board of Zoning Appeals. CASCAP would invite any interested neighbors to attend these hearings. Of course, we welcome your support for the project, and hope that the changes in the design, and our willingness to formalize the terms stated above, will give you the reassurances needed to support CASCAP's comprehensive permit application. A list of the zoning variances requested is enclosed.

Please feel free to contact me at 234-2919 with any questions you may have. I will also follow up to members of the Residents of the Bigelow Street Area.

Sincerely,



Marcia Hannon
Consultant

Cc: Hon. Jarrett Barrios, Mass. House of Representatives
Cambridge City Councilors:

James Braude
Kathleen Born
Henrietta Davis
Marjorie Decker
Anthony Galluccio
David Maher
Kenneth Reeves
Michael Sullivan
Timothy Toomey

Christopher Cotter, Interim Director of Property Development, SHARE Assoc. (w/o encl.)

Michael Haran, Executive Director, CASCAP, Inc. (w/o encl.)

Elizabeth Sternberg, Cambridge Community Development Department

Beth Rubinstein, Cambridge Community Development Department

Enc.

EXHIBIT No. 2

List of Requested Exceptions to the Ordinances In Effect in the City of Cambridge For the Proposed Project at 8 Bigelow Street

CASCAP Realty, Inc. is in the process of assembling city, state and federal financing to develop and manage ten (10) affordable apartments for low income individuals at 8 Bigelow Street. The site is currently occupied by a two and one-half story residential building, which contains six (6) apartments and seven (7) lodging units. The new use will involve the rehabilitation of the existing multi-family dwelling to provide ten (10) apartments. The site is located in a C-1 use zone, and multi-family dwellings are a permitted use in that zone. In addition to affordable rental housing, CASCAP Realty will provide a driveway, two (2) parking spaces and a rack for five (5) bicycles. CASCAP Realty will substantially upgrade the (presently near) vacant and dilapidated building and will also make landscaping improvements. However, the proposed rehabilitation will not increase the exterior dimensions of the building or the floor area ratio within the building.

Zoning Exceptions Required

Based upon the plans submitted with this application and upon the Zoning Ordinance as amended through Ordinance No. 1227, the proposed project requires the following exceptions:

1. As indicated above, while no interior or exterior dimension of the building shall be increased, the building remains a nonconforming building under the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. Further, while the number of units in the building shall be decreased, since the present configuration of the building includes seven lodging units and six apartments, Section 5.26 of the Zoning Ordinance may be interpreted to mean that the proposed use of the building for ten apartments is an increase in the number of dwelling units in the building if only the existing six apartments in the building are counted as dwelling units under the Zoning Ordinance. In the event that Section 5.26 of the Zoning Ordinance is interpreted to mean that the proposed Project results in an increase in the number of dwelling units from six to ten apartments (and that the existing seven lodging units are not to be used in computing the present number of dwelling units in the building), then, in spite of the fact that the dimensions of the building are not being increased as a result of the proposed rehabilitation, Section 5.26 of the Zoning Ordinance requires that all dwelling units in the proposed Project satisfy the minimum lot area per dwelling unit, maximum floor area ratio, usable open space and off-street parking requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. If this is the correct interpretation of Section 5.26, then since the proposed Project shall not satisfy the requirements of minimum lot area and off-street parking required by the Zoning Ordinance, an exception from the provisions of this section is required.

2. Section 6.12 (b) of the Zoning Ordinance states that when the intensity of the use of any structure is increased through the addition of dwelling units, off-street parking shall be provided as required for such increase in intensity of use. As indicated above, although the present use of the building consists of six apartments and seven lodging units, for purposes of the

Zoning Ordinance only the six apartments are recognized as part of the present use in the building. Since the proposed use of the building as multi-family housing containing ten apartment units results in an increase in the number of dwelling units from six to ten, Section 6.12(b) requires that the additional four new units meet the off-street parking requirements of the Zoning Ordinance. As indicated above, the proposed Project shall include two off-street parking places. To the extent that this number of off-street parking spaces does not meet the requirements of Article 6 of the Zoning Ordinance, an exception from these requirements is requested.

3. Section 6.44.1 regulates that location and layout of off-street parking spaces. Subsection (a) prohibits off-street parking within ten feet of a wall containing windows in a residential structure. Subsection (b) prohibits parking within five feet of any side lot line. Since the proposed two off-street parking spaces as shown on the plan that accompanies this application do not satisfy these requirements of Section 6.44.1, an exception from these provisions is required. (Section 6.44.1 (g) authorizes the Board of Appeals by special permit to allow for modification of the above factors in the discretion of the Board.) (Section 6.35 of the Zoning Ordinance also authorizes the Board of Appeal by special permit to reduce the number of off-street parking spaces if the Board determines and cites evidence in its decision that a lesser number of parking will not cause excessive congestion in light of the additional considerations in Section 6.35.1-6.35.5.)

4. Section 6.42 regulates dimensions of parking spaces. Section 6.44 regulates the layout and setback requirements for off-street parking spaces. Section 6.47 requires screening of parking spaces. Section 6.48 requires landscaping to be installed around off-street parking spaces. Section 6.52 requires the submission of a parking plan. Section 6.55 requires a statement of certain information regarding the proposed land use as well as additional information to assist in determining the appropriate number of required off-street parking spaces. The plans for the Project contain relevant information which describes the location, layout and landscaping with regard to the proposed two off-street parking spaces. To the extent that the requirements of these sections of the ordinance are not met, exceptions are requested.

5. Section 8.22.2(c) regulates the alteration or enlargement of a pre-existing, non-conforming structure. As described above, the project involves the rehabilitation of the pre-existing, non-conforming multi-family dwelling on the site. Section 8.22.2(c) authorizes the Board of Zoning Appeal to grant a special permit for the alteration of the pre-existing, non-conforming structure, provided that the alteration is not further in violation of the dimensional requirements of Article 5 or the off-street loading and parking requirements of Article 6, and provided further that the non-conforming structure will not be increased in area or volume by more than twenty-five percent (25%). Since the alteration will require exceptions from the dimensional requirements of Article 5 and the off-street parking requirements of Article 6, an exception from Section 8.22.2 of the Zoning Ordinance is required.

6. To the extent that the Zoning Ordinance has either been amended or proposals to amend the Ordinance have been advertised for hearing but not yet adopted or acted upon, all subsequent to the adoption of Ordinance No. 1227, in the event that any such amendments or

proposed amendments contain provisions which would require the project to meet requirements not presently satisfied by the project, exceptions from any such provision(s) are requested.

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Consent Communi⁴¹cation #3 5

A communication was received
from Marcial Hannon, Consultant,
SHARE, transmitting a letter
to the REsidents of the Bigelow
Street area.

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In City Council March 6, 2000

PLACED ON FILE