



CITY OF SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS  
STRATEGIC PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT  
JOSEPH A. CURTATONE, MAYOR

**STAFF**

MADELEINE MASTERS, *PLANNING DIRECTOR*  
CHRISTOPHER DI IORIO, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*  
LORI MASSA, *PLANNER/ZONING ADMINISTRATOR*  
DAWN PEREIRA, *ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT*  
FREDERICK J. LUND, *SENIOR DRAFTSMAN*

**Case #:** ZBA 2005-76-R0508  
**Site:** 200 Inner belt Road  
**Date:** May 7, 2008  
**Recommendation:** Conditional Approval

---

**PLANNING STAFF REPORT**

---

**Applicant Name:** President and Fellow's of Harvard College  
**Applicant Address:** c/o Karen Sommerlad, UPO, 1350 Mass. Ave., Cambridge, MA 02138  
**Property Owner Name:** Fine Art Storage Partners  
**Property Owner Address:** 9600 Blackwell Road, STE 200, Rockville, MD 20850  
**Agent Name:** Key Point Partners, LP  
**Agent Address:** One Burlington Woods Drive, Burlington, MA 01803  
**Alderman:** Roche

Legal Notice: Applicant, President & Fellows of Harvard College, & Owner, Fine Art Storage Partners, seek revisions to Special Permit #2005-76 (SZO §5.3.8) in order to erect a mechanical penthouse on the roof and replace tinted glass with clear glass. Interior floor plans will also be reconfigured.

Zoning District/Ward: Industrial A / 3  
Zoning Approval Sought: Revision to SP 2005-76  
Date of Application: April 14, 2008  
Date(s) of Public Hearing: ZBA: May 7, 2008

---

**I. PROJECT DESCRIPTION**

The special permit 2005-76, granted on October 19, 2005, allowed the applicant to use the existing building as a wholesale storage facility to store artwork, replace and move a loading dock, and reduce the number of required parking spaces. The requested revision is to erect a mechanical penthouse on the roof and replace tinted glass with clear glass in select locations on the third floor.

The proposed revisions are shown on the plans and renderings stamped into OSPCD on May 5, 2008. Notices have been mailed to abutters and the case was advertised in the newspaper.

The applicant is proposing to fit-out approximately one half of the second, third and fourth floors of the existing building for art storage, a preservation laboratory, and offices for the Harvard University Art Museums.

### **Mechanicals:**

The proposed roof-top mechanical penthouse will measure approximately 30 feet by 30 feet and 15 feet in height. This will serve the second, third and fourth floors that Harvard currently occupies. The mechanicals will be set back 39 feet from the front roof edge of the building and at least 50 feet from all other roof edges. The applicant is proposing to paint the metal penthouse to match the other mechanical enclosures on the roof.

Staff notes that there is an existing substation penthouse toward the center of the roof that is of equal height to the proposed penthouse and the overall height of the building would not be affected. Painting of the penthouse, combined with the set backs, would sufficiently reduce the visual impact to the surrounding industrial area.

### **Windows:**

The applicant is proposing to replace thirty-one windows on the second floor of the building to correspond with interior renovations that will place an art conservation laboratory on that floor. The clear glass replacement is necessary for viewing art work in the laboratory with natural light. The applicant has responded to Staff design concerns regarding proportion and balance for the clear glass window placement in the most recent elevation.

## **II. FINDINGS**

Planning Staff finds that the proposed changes meet the requirements of a Special Permit including information supplied, compliance with standards, consistency with purposes, and site and area compatibility.

## **III. RECOMMENDATION**

Planning Staff recommends approval of the requested revision. The original conditions attached to the Special Permit may not apply to the current plans and Planning Staff recommends replacing them with the following conditions:

#	Condition	Timeframe for Compliance	Verified (initial)	Notes
1	The applicant has previously received approval to use the structure for arts storage and associated offices, replace and move a loading dock and reduce the number of required parking spaces. This approval is to allow the applicant to construct a 30 foot by 30 foot by 15 foot mechanicals penthouse and replace 31 blue tint windows on the second floor with clear glass based upon the following application materials and the plans submitted by the applicant and/or its contractor:	BP/CO	ISD	

	Date	Submission			
	September 26, 2005	Initial application and materials submitted to the City Clerk's Office			
	October 3, 2005	Plans submitted to the City Clerk's Office (SK1A-SK4)			
	April 14, 2008	Revision application submitted to the City Clerk's Office			
	May 5, 2008	Modified elevation submitted to OSPCD (Elevation A-3.1)			
	Any changes to the approved plans, elevations, or renderings must receive ZBA approval.				
2	Any plans for the modifications to the fire alarm and suppression systems need to be submitted to the Bureau for review and approval. Permits for both systems will have to be issued by Fire Prevention. The Board approves the granting of this special permit subject to the building being completed in accordance with plans filed and in accordance with the requirements of the Fire Prevention Bureau and fire safety code, and as evidenced by a Certificate of Compliance being granted prior to the issuance of an Occupancy Permit		CO	FIRE	
3	All mechanicals located outside the building must be baffled to be in conformance the City's Noise Ordinance.		CO	Plng	Architect must submit proof
4	At the completion of the applicant's lease term the blue tinted glass shall be reinstalled without requiring any revision to the Special Permit		Cont.	Plng.	
5	The Applicant shall contact Planning Staff at least five working days in advance of a request for a final sign-off on the building permit 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.	