



Town of Brookline

Massachusetts

PLANNING BOARD

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To: Brookline Board of Appeals
From: Brookline Planning Board
Date: August 21, 2014
Subject: Construct a new pavilion with bleachers
Location: **186 Kent Street (Northeastern's Parsons Field)**

Atlas Sheet:	28	Case #:	2014-0042
Block:	128	Zoning:	T-5
Lot:	8-10	Lot Area (s.f.):	241,703

Board of Appeals Hearing: August 28, 2014 at 7:15 p.m.

BACKGROUND

7/24/14 – Planning Board meeting on the proposal for new bleachers at Parson's Field was continued. The applicant agreed to meet with Captain Gropman, Police Dept., and Todd Kirrane, Transportation Department, to discuss traffic and parking issues, including shuttle bus parking, traffic volumes on surrounding neighborhood streets, and usage of the field. Requested for the next Planning Board meeting was information on: vehicular site circulation, dimensions of the drives and parking spaces, and cross-sections of the bleachers. Board members commented that security lighting should be installed to lead people safely off the field, when the main lights are turned off, and more restrooms should be provided.

SITE AND NEIGHBORHOOD

Northeastern University's Parsons Field is a playing field. It currently has bleachers on the northern most edge of the field. The field is not only used by Northeastern but also by the Brookline sports teams. It is bordered on two sides by streets – Kent and Harrison, and on the other two sides by single- and two-family homes. Across Kent Street is a multi-family district. Across Harrison Street are single and two family homes that face directly onto the field.

APPLICANT'S PROPOSAL

The applicant, Northeastern University, is proposing to construct a pavilion, which will include 409 new seats and press boxes. It will be located in the southeastern corner of the field behind home plate. The existing 37 parking spaces will be replaced with 41 spaces, by relocating a storage area. Other upgrades to the field will include new netting to prevent balls from going on abutting properties (already done), and litter and noise control.

FINDINGS

Section 6.02 – Paragraph 1: Table of Off-Street Parking Regulations

Section 6.02.4.c – Off-Street Parking Space Regulations

Parking Requirements	Required	Proposed	Relief
Parking Spaces (for addt'l. seats)	102	4 addtl	Special Permit*

* A special permit may permit a modification to the parking requirement to allow reasonable development of non-profit educational uses. There are 37 parking spaces currently.

Section 8.02.1 and 2 – Alteration or Extension

A special permit is required to alter a pre-existing non-conforming structure and use.

Any Additional Relief Found Necessary by the Board of Appeals

PLANNING BOARD COMMENTS

The Planning Board supports the upgrades to Parsons Field by Northeastern University if stringent conditions are attached to protect the surrounding residences from negative impacts. The University has had several meetings with the neighborhood to discuss problems around games and field operations and has stated that they will continue to work with the neighborhood on addressing issues that arise. In the past, Northeastern has allowed Brookline High School to use its field for some practices and games, although use of locker rooms and other facilities were not allowed. However, without the football field markings, the Town's use has been markedly limited. An off-setting benefit that should be provided to the Town in return for the granting of substantial parking relief, should be allowing the Brookline schools greater access to the field and facilities. If conditions minimizing impacts from parking, traffic, noise, light and litter are met, the proposed pavilion would be an appropriate improvement to an existing sports facility and a benefit to the Town.

Therefore, the Planning Board recommends approval of the proposal and plans by Sasaki, dated 7/16/2014, subject to the following conditions:

1. Prior to issuance of a building permit, a final site plan, indicating the location of all seating, parking spaces, pedestrian entrances, lighting, netting, and trash receptacles, shall be submitted to the Assistant Director of Regulatory Planning for review and approval.
2. Prior to issuance of a building permit, a final landscaping plan, with particular attention given to the Kent Street side, and a fencing plan shall be submitted to the Assistant Director for Regulatory Planning for review and approval.
3. Prior to issuance of a building permit, final elevations of the pavilion showing the width of the third base side press box reduced by five feet (from 29' to 24') and indicating final design details, colors, materials and types of railings shall be submitted to the Assistant Director of Regulatory Planning for review and approval.
4. Prior to issuance of a building permit, a contact name and cell phone number shall be submitted to the Planning and Building Departments of the persons responsible for addressing complaints during games. The list shall be updated as needed.
5. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall agree in writing to notify the Town's Police Departments and Director of Transportation and Engineering when a major event is to take place at either the baseball or stadium fields so that NO PARKING signs on Harrison and Kent Square shall be posted. A major event is defined as an event sponsored by Northeastern University, at which 300 or more visitors are expected, and shall not include any events involving the Town of Brookline sporting teams. For all major events, the University agrees to provide shuttle buses from the campus, and to include with all notices and schedules of such events (website, mailings, newsletters, poster) that parking in at the field is very limited and information about public transportation and the offsite parking/shuttles. The University also agrees that any agreements with other parties for major events shall include the same requirements and that visiting teams shall be requested to post similar notices. At such Major Events, the University agrees to provide portable toilet facilities as appropriate for the estimated number of visitors.
6. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit a plan for the up-grade of baseball loudspeakers with new directional speakers focused downward and onto the field and so as to minimize sound transmission off the field. The University shall review the other loudspeakers on the field to ensure compliance with the Town's noise by-law.
7. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall agree in writing to make every

effort to keep noise levels down to an absolute minimum and shall abide by the noise restrictions set by the town. The use of Klaxon horns or other similar noisemaking devices shall be prohibited and such prohibitions shall be announced at the beginning of each event and enforced by the University through ejection from the field of users of such devices. The enforcement procedures shall also be announced at the beginning of each event. The use of whistles shall be by coaches and referees only. The University agrees that all agreements with other parties excluding the Town of Brookline, for use of the field, shall include all of the same requirements as described in this section.

8. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall adjust, shield and maintain the field lights so that no direct light or glare shines on any street or nearby property and ensure the adequacy of security lighting to lead people off the field when the main lights are extinguished. The lights shall be turned on and used only for the purpose of illuminating the field for sports and events. If activities cease before 9 PM on any day, the lights shall be turned off at the cessation of such activities rather than 9 PM.
9. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall agree in writing to be responsible for removing litter from the public ways abutting the field promptly after the close of each event.
10. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall agree in writing to allow the Brookline High School use of the field for inter-scholastic football games, including providing shelter for the players during half-time and the use of the locker room for the Thanksgiving day game. Further, the applicant will provide the necessary field markings to meet league regulations. The University agrees to continue to talk with the Town about other opportunities for the Town to use the field for structured play, at mutually convenient times.
11. Prior to the issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall show a revised netting plan as presented to the neighborhood on 7/17/14 which extends the height and length of the netting along the first and third base lines including a plan of new poles and up-dated netting in other areas to protect abutters.
12. Prior to issuance of a building permit, the applicant shall submit to the Building Commissioner to ensure conformance with the Board of Appeals decision: 1) a final site plan, stamped and signed by a registered engineer or land surveyor; 2) final building elevations, stamped and signed by a registered architect; and 3) written statements per condition numbers 4-5 and 7-10 above and 4) evidence that the Board of Appeals decision has been recorded at the Registry of Deeds.