



STAFF REPORT

Town of Wellesley – Planning Department

Application: PSI-25-04 - Project of Significant Impact Special Permit Application for Multifamily Residential Project

Subject Property: 592 Washington Street

Applicant: 592 Washington, LLC

Property Owner: 592 Washington, LLC

Date: January 23, 2026, for January 26, 2026, Planning Board Meeting

Staff Contact: Brad Downey, Interim Planning Director

APPLICATION OVERVIEW

The subject application is a Project of Signification Impact (“PSI”) Special Permit application for the construction of a multi-story, 19-unit, multifamily condominium of 38,670 sq. ft. on the east side of Washington Street, just south of Wellesley Square. 4 of the 19 units are to be affordable, to be located in the same building as the 15 market rate units.

According to the application, the project site has an area of 35,861 sq. ft. with frontage on Washington Street. The site is comprised of one (1) parcel, 592 Washington Street, located in the Wellesley Square Commercial District.

Staff notes that this parcel is listed as an MBTA Communities Act parcel, and a project on this site would proceed by-right were it to be constructed at the density promulgated under the MBTA Communities Act. However, as this application is made in conjunction with a request for a Wellesley Square Commercial District Special Permit for increased density under Zoning Bylaw Section 5.2 Area Regulations, and, if granted, the requested Special Permit would allow for a density greater than that allowed by the MBTA Communities Act, the applicant must complete the Project of Significant Impact permitting process.

A PSI special permit is required for any construction project (except for one-family or two-family dwellings) having an aggregate total of 1) newly constructed floor area of 10,000 or more square feet, or 2) renovated, altered and/or replacement floor area of 15,000 or more square feet in a building having 15,000 or more square feet of ground coverage to provide for a use which is different from the existing use.” Standard 1 is applicable to this project.

In accordance with Zoning Bylaw Section 5.6, the PSI application was referred to the Town’s Department of Public Works, Fire Department, Municipal Light Plant, and Select Board.

PSI REQUIREMENTS

As previously noted, the proposed development is subject to a PSI special permit based on the aggregate total of newly constructed floor area of 10,000 or more square feet. Per the Zoning

Bylaw, the Planning Board serves as the Special Permit Granting Authority for PSI special permits.

Section 5.6, *Project Approval*, of the Zoning Bylaw, requires the Applicant to “submit...a Municipal Systems Impact Analysis (MSIA), prepared by professional engineers registered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and identifying the impact of the Construction Project on water, sewer, storm drainage, electric, traffic, intersections, sidewalks and footways, building occupant life safety, refuse disposal and recycling.” The intent of the analysis by the Applicant, Review Departments, and the Planning Board being to “determine the impact on the Town's existing capital infrastructure in order to assess costs of providing or upgrading Town public facilities which will benefit a PSI.”

Provisions of Section 5.6 Project Approval, including the standards for approving a PSI, are attached as Attachment 3.

PSI REVIEWS

Project plans and information were transmitted to the Select Board, Department of Public Works Engineering Division, Fire Department and Municipal Light Plant. Reviews from the Town's reviewing departments are listed in Attachment 2 and have been provided to the Board. Summaries are set forth below.

Fire Department

On January 20, 2026, Deputy Chief Ian McMakin provided a memo to Planning Department staff with comments on the proposed project. They noted that the proposed access raises concerns regarding adequate emergency vehicle entry and maneuverability, as the layout does not appear to provide the clear routes and space necessary for fire department apparatus to operate effectively.

The memo also notes that applicants must comply with the Fire Chief's requirement for third party review as outlined in 527 CMR 1. The applicant is responsible for the third party Fire Protection Engineer (FPE) as determined by the Fire Chief and must compensate that vendor directly. The FPE represents the Department as our subject matter expert from the initial plan review to the final occupancy approval.

Municipal Light Plant

Planning Department Staff forwarded the PSI application materials to the Municipal Light Plant for comment. At this time, Planning Department Staff is still waiting on comment from the Municipal Light Plant.

Select Board

Planning Department Staff sent the Select Board Office the traffic impact assessment prepared by the Applicant's traffic consultant, Vanasse & Associates, Inc. The Town's Peer Review Consultant, Tighe & Bond, prepared a memo for Executive Director Meghan Jop on January 14,

2026. On January 20, 2026, Vanasse & Associates, Inc., provided a response to the Tighe & Bond memo.

The Planning Board has not yet received a report from the Select Board, who will be discussing the traffic reports and responses at their January 27, 2026, meeting.

Engineering

Planning Department Staff forwarded the PSI application materials to the Department of Public Works Engineering Division Staff for comment. At this time, Planning Department Staff is still waiting on comment from the Engineering Division.

PUBLIC COMMENTS

Planning Department staff has received public comments from two neighbors, who voiced concerns on pedestrian safety, noise and light pollution, and screening and landscaping.

STAFF COMMENTS

The Planning Board should reserve the right to make additional comments to the ZBA relative to Site Plan Review.

The Design Review Board reviewed the project at their regularly scheduled meeting on Wednesday, January 7, 2026, to discuss the criteria of the requested Special Permit for increased density. The Design Review Board reviewed the project again as part of the Project of Significant Impact review at their regularly scheduled meeting on January 21, 2026, where they voted unanimously to accept the project as presented with the following recommendations:

- Continue looking at the color of the building and windows as the project is further developed.
- Align the doors with the headers of the windows.
- Further consider the details of the walls and the ADA ramp in front of the building, as that plays a critical role in the massing of the building.
- Add a railing on the lawn atop the garage.
- Be considerate of delivery and drop-off access considering proximity to neighbors.
- Wherever there are projections on the elevations, consider how the windows can help articulate the vertical lines of the building.
- Add a header to the window at the front that doesn't have one.
- Consider extending the pedestrian path around the garden area.
- Add a balustrade over the front entry.

The status of the Design Review Board Review will not impact the Project of Significant Impact permit process.

PLANNING BOARD ACTION

Per the Zoning Bylaw, the Planning Board is not authorized to make a decision on the application until it has been referred to, reviewed, and approved by the PSI Review Departments. The Zoning Bylaw also indicates that the Planning Board shall grant a special permit provided the aforementioned minimum service standards are met.

As provided in the Zoning Bylaw, following the review of the Municipal Systems Impact Analysis (MSIA), the Applicant or the Planning Board may propose specific design alternatives and/or off-site Negotiated Improvements to municipal facilities to meet minimum service standards. The Planning Board is authorized to incorporate these design alternatives and improvements as conditions in special permit PSI approval. Based on a review of the application and plans, standard practices, and comments from the Review Departments, Staff strongly suggest that the Planning Board continue the application until its next meeting on February 9, 2026, as the Board has yet to receive memos from the Select Board, Fire Department, Municipal Light Plant, and Engineering, signing off on the project with their approval. Below are draft conditions the Board should consider imposing upon the issuance of a PSI Special permit:

1. The owner/developer shall construct all improvements in substantial accordance with the following plans and materials set forth in Attachment 1.
2. Modifications or material changes to the Project shall be presented to the Planning Board for review. The Planning Board shall determine whether such changes generate an intensification of use. If such changes generate an intensification of use, the owner/developer shall prepare and submit to the Planning Board a report or reports, prepared by engineers who meet the requirements of the Zoning Bylaw for preparation of Municipal Service Impact Analysis, showing whether the minimum service standards continue to be met. If any such report shows that one or more of the service standards are not met, based on additional impact generated by the Project owing to the material change or intensification of use, or if any required negotiated improvements or conditions cannot be completed, the owner/developer shall meet with the Planning Board to negotiate reasonable additional or alternative mitigation measures. This requirement shall not be interpreted as waiving any provision of the Project of Significant Impact process.
3. Prior to the issuance of Site Plan Review approval by the Zoning Board of Appeals, or the issuance of permits by the Building Department, the Department of Public Works shall confirm their approval of all planned work associated with the municipal water system, sewer system, storm drainage system, and refuse disposal system, both on and off-site. Prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the first residential unit within the project, the owner/developer shall submit to the Department of Public Works as-built plans for all applicable utilities and systems installed, and the Department of Public Works shall confirm that all work has been completed to the Department's satisfaction.
4. Prior to the issuance of Site Plan Review approval by the Zoning Board of Appeals, or the issuance of permits by the Building Department, the Select Board and the Fire Department shall confirm their approval of all traffic reports and responses and plans relating to traffic, circulation, and pedestrian safety and access.

5. All work regarding the municipal electric system, both on and off-site, shall be completed to the satisfaction of the Municipal Light Plant prior to the issuance of a Certificate of Occupancy for the first residential unit within the project.
6. Prior to the issuance of any permits from the Building Department and prior to the issuance of any and all Certificates of Occupancy for residential units within the project, the Planning Director shall be responsible for determining the compliance of the project, and any plans therefor, with the PSI special permit and these conditions. During the course of construction, the Planning Director shall have access to the project site with reasonable notice to the owner/developer.

ATTACHMENT 1

SUBMITTALS AND PLANS

1. Application Form for Review of a Project of Signification Impact prepared by 592 Washington, LLC, dated 11/24/2025
2. Project Narrative prepared by Dean Behrend, dated 11/24/2025
3. Transportation Impact Assessment prepared by Vanasse & Associates, Inc., dated November 2025
4. Memo from Jeffrey Dirk, P.E, PTOE, FITE, Managing Partner of Vanasse & Associates “Transportation Impact Evaluation” dated 11/24/2025
5. Memo from Jeffrey Dirk, P.E, PTOE, FITE, Managing Partner of Vanasse & Associates, Inc, “Re: Response to Transportation Peer Review” dated 1/20/2026
6. Municipal Systems Impact Analysis for 592 Washington Street, prepared by McKay Architects, dated 12/12/2025
 - a. Supplemental report prepared by MetroWest Engineering, Inc., dated 12/8/2025
7. Stormwater Report prepared by MetroWest Engineering, Inc., dated November 2025
8. L-1 Landscape Plan prepared by Steven G. Cosmos, dated 11/24/2025
9. The following plans and documents prepared by MetroWest Engineering, dated 11/24/2025
 - a. Cover Sheet
 - b. C1.0 Existing Conditions Site Plan
 - c. C2.0 Erosion & Sediment Control Plan
 - d. C3.0 Proposed Layout Plan
 - e. C4.0 Proposed Grading Plan (Ground Level)
 - f. C5.0 Proposed Drainage Plan (Ground Level)
 - g. C6.0 Proposed Site Plan (Ground Level)
 - h. C7.0 Locus Plan
 - i. C8.0 Details Plan
 - j. C8.1 Details Plan
10. The following plans and documents prepared by McKay Architects, dated 12/1/2025:
 - a. T-1.1 Renderings
 - b. T-1.2 Renderings
 - c. L-1.1 Architectural Site Plan, revised 12/29/2025
 - d. A-1.1 Garage Floor Plan, revised 12/29/2025
 - e. A-1.2 Ground Floor Plan
 - f. A-1.3 Second Floor Plan
 - g. A-1.4 Third Floor Plan
 - h. A-1.5 Roof Plan
 - i. A-2.1 Washington Street Elevation
 - j. A-2.2 North Facing Elevation
 - k. A-2.3 North-East Facing Elevation
 - l. A-2.4 Sout-West Facing Elevation
 - m. A-2.5 South-East Facing Elevation
 - n. A-2.6 South Facing Elevation
 - o. A-2.7 Over-All Elevations
 - p. A-2.8 Over-All Elevations
 - q. A-3.9 Building Sections A-A & B-B
 - r. A-3.10 Building Sections C-C & D-D
 - s. A-3.11 Site Sections, revised 12/29/2025

- t. A-1.1 Existing Images, revised 12/29/2025
- u. EX-1.1 Existing Site Plan
- v. Building Footprint
- w. Aerial View 01
- x. Aerial View 02
- y. Aerial Map
- z. Proposed Project Site
- aa. 3D Renderings

ATTACHMENT 2

REPORTS FROM
TOWN OF WELLESLEY DEPARTMENTS AND CONSULTANTS

1. Memorandum from Ian McMakin, Deputy Chief of Fire Prevention, Wellesley Fire Department, to Brad Downey “Re: 592 Washington Street, PSI-25-04” dated 1/20/2026
2. Memorandum from Alan T. Cloutier, PE, PTOE, Senior Traffic Engineer, Tighe & Bond (Town’s Traffic Peer Consultant) to Meghan C. Jop, AICP “Re: Transportation Peer Review – Proposed Multifamily Residential Development – 592 Washington Street (Route 16) Wellesley, Massachusetts” dated 1/14/2026

ATTACHMENT 3

PSI STANDARDS

Section 5.6 Project Approval of the Zoning Bylaw provides in part:

3. Special Permit for Projects of Significant Impact

In addition to Design Review and Site Plan Review in accordance with the preceding sections, Projects of Significant Impact (PSI), shall require a Special Permit issued by the Planning Board, as follows:

- a. The applicant shall submit to the Planning Board a Municipal Systems Impact Analysis (MSIA), prepared by professional engineers registered in the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and identifying the impact of the Construction Project on water, sewer, storm drainage, electric, traffic, intersections, sidewalks and footways, building occupant life safety, refuse disposal and recycling. The water, sewer, and storm drainage portions of the MSIA shall be prepared by engineers having expertise in civil engineering; the electric portion shall be prepared by engineers having expertise in electrical engineering; the traffic and pedestrian safety and bicycle safety portions shall be prepared by engineers having expertise in traffic and transportation engineering.
- b. The intent of the analysis is to determine the impact on the Town's existing capital infrastructure in order to assess costs of providing or upgrading Town public facilities which will benefit a PSI.
- c. The Municipal Systems Impact Analysis shall include:
 - i. Utility Capacity

including water, sewer, storm drain and electric distribution systems before construction and at expected occupancy date;
 - ii. Traffic

identification of existing traffic and anticipated traffic at time of full project occupancy at existing and proposed roadway segments and intersections, existing and proposed site connections to the street system, and streets bordering, supporting, and connecting the development including:

 - a) vehicle speed;
 - b) 85th percentile vehicle speed;
 - c) sight distances;
 - d) existing safety records including accident data;
 - e) description of existing traffic controls;
 - f) Annual Average Daily Traffic;
 - g) Average Daily Traffic
 - h) Peak-Hour Traffic (morning, afternoon and other peak(s));

- i) Peak-Hour Factor;
- j) Design Hourly Volume;
- k) K- Factor;
- l) Levels of Service (LOS);
- m) Project generated traffic and its distribution;
- n) Volume to Capacity Ratio;
- o) Average Delay;
- p) Average and 95th Percentile Queue Lengths;
- q) Roadways Impacted by Development Traffic;
- r) Delay and Gap Study (when deemed necessary by the Town's traffic engineering consultant); and
- s) Data Calibration.

Evaluations shall be made in accordance with the current MHD Design Guide, the elements listed above and standards adopted by the Board of Selectmen.

identification of roadways impacted by development traffic;

estimated traffic impacts of the proposed development in terms of the amount of morning and afternoon peak hour and total daily traffic generated by the development on streets bordering the development area; sight lines from access connections; proposed changes to traffic controls; and projected levels of service of intersections identified in item 3. above and at points of connection of the development area to the street system;

iii. Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

possible hazardous pedestrian and bicycle crossings; a detailed identification of gaps in the sidewalk network and identification of cracking, deterioration, heaving, sinking, shifting, patching and missing sections and intrusion or encroachment of vegetation and other obstructions into the sidewalk area within a walking distance of 600 feet from the development area and along walking routes to the nearest public transportation station(s) or boarding point(s) if such facilities exists within one mile of the development site; identification of sidewalk links or connections to surrounding neighborhoods. Pedestrian crosswalks, traffic control devices and traffic calming measures will be part of the safety analysis.

iv. Building Occupant Life Safety

identification of proposed use and occupancy and characteristics of the occupants, building contents, equipment and materials on site; identification of possible hazards and hazard scenarios and anticipated impact on municipal fire alarm systems. The Fire Chief may require a comprehensive emergency plan which shall include an evacuation plan.

v. Refuse Disposal and Recycling

anticipated impact on the Town's refuse disposal and recycling system.

- d. No decision shall be made by the Planning Board acting as Special Permit Granting Authority (SPGA) in connection with any properly completed application until it has been referred to, reviewed and approved by the four review departments (Department of Public Works for the water, sewer, storm drain, refuse and recycling elements; Municipal Light Plant for the electric element, Fire Department for fire alarm, fire protection and life safety element and the Board of Selectmen for the traffic and pedestrian safety element). The Board of Selectmen shall solicit the recommendations of the Chief of Police. The report of the Board of Selectmen to the Planning Board shall include the recommendations of the Chief of Police or verification that the Chief offered no comment. Review departments are not required to hold a public hearing for this purpose. Review departments may employ outside consultant assistance as deemed necessary.
- e. The Planning Board shall grant a special permit provided the following minimum service standards are met:
 - i. Water -

There shall be sufficient water capacity to meet the flow demands of the proposed use without causing municipal water flow characteristics off site to fall below the standards adopted by the Board of Public Works.
 - ii. Sewer -

There shall be sufficient sewer capacity to meet the flow demands of the proposed use without causing surcharge in those sewer lines which serve the project and consistent with the standards adopted by the Board of Public Works.
 - iii. Storm Drainage -

There shall be sufficient storm drainage capacity to meet the flow demands of the proposed development site without causing surcharge in those storm drainage lines which serve the project and consistent with the standards adopted by the Board of Public Works.
 - iv. Electric -

There shall be sufficient electrical capacity to meet the peak service demands of the proposed use without causing the service in adjacent areas to fall below the standards adopted by the Municipal Light Board.
 - v. Traffic, Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety

With respect to all signalized impacted intersections, and any unsignalized impacted intersections having 50 or more PH vehicle trips on any minor approach, there shall be no degradation in the overall level of service designation to a level below the level of “C” and, if an impacted intersection

is projected to operate at an overall level of service lower than “C” in a design year no-build alternative, then the proposed development shall not degrade the level of service designation below the projected design year no-build levels; and

With respect to unsignalized impacted intersections having fewer than 50 PH vehicle trips on any minor approach, the Applicant shall undertake an evaluation to identify any specific circumstances requiring further action or mitigation, which may be the subject of negotiated improvements at the discretion of the Planning Board. For purposes of clause 1 above, the “overall level of service” for an unsignalized impacted intersection shall be considered to be the worst of the individual levels of service for each of the minor movements.

Pedestrian and bicycle circulation shall be provided in accordance with recognized safety standards; provided in all cases sidewalks within a walking distance of 600 feet of the Project shall be provided and in addition sidewalk connections within such radius to surrounding neighborhoods and to public transportation shall be provided as required by the Special Permit Granting Authority in a safe and convenient condition and consistent with standards of the Massachusetts Highway Project Development and Design Guide.

vi. Fire Protection and Life Safety -

There shall be sufficient municipal fire alarm system capacity to meet the operating requirements of the proposed use under applicable codes, regulations and statutes enforced by the Fire Chief. There shall be off-site fire protection facilities serving the development site in the opinion of the Fire Chief meeting the needs of the project based on the intended use and occupancy including fire flow requirements, location of and access to fire hydrants and access for emergency vehicles. The Fire Chief may require a comprehensive emergency plan which shall include an evacuation plan satisfactory to the Fire Chief and meeting the specifications and standards adopted by the Fire Chief.

vii. Refuse Disposal System -

Refuse recycling and disposal systems, consistent with the standards adopted by the Board of Public Works, shall be provided.

- f. Following review of the Municipal Systems Analysis, applicants for PSI approval or the Planning Board may propose specific design alternatives and/or off-site Negotiated Improvements to municipal facilities to meet minimum service standards.
- g. The Planning Board is authorized to incorporate these design alternatives and improvements as conditions in special permit PSI approval.

- h. The applicant shall bear all of the costs of design work and construction of all Negotiated Improvements and shall be responsible for implementation of the Negotiated Improvements and special permit approval conditions. All work proposed to improve or upgrade Town utilities or facilities shall be done according to the specifications adopted by the Board of Public Works, except that electric work shall be done according to the specifications adopted by the Municipal Light Board. The applicant shall also bear the cost of review of plans and of periodic inspections of such work during construction.

Post development traffic counts may be required at the discretion of the Planning Board, at reasonable intervals over a period not to exceed twelve (12) months, and commencing no sooner than three months after commencement of Project operation. The purpose of this monitoring is to review the accuracy of PSI traffic projections. If at least two consecutive traffic counts no less than six months apart reflect that site-related daily traffic is more than 10 percent (10%) above the projected volume, then the Applicant shall undertake an evaluation to identify any specific circumstances requiring further action or mitigation. Should post development traffic counts, review of plans, mitigation proposals or any other peer review or related professional services be required, the Applicant shall bear the cost thereof.

- i. Upon the granting of a special permit by the Planning Board for a PSI the applicant is authorized to apply for Project Approval under the procedure in Section 5.6 for Major Construction Project Approval. Planning Board review of PSI application shall not substitute for Major Construction Project approval. No application shall be made for Major Construction Project approval for a PSI prior to the granting of a special permit by the Planning Board.