



**Town of Lexington**  
**PLANNING BOARD**

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**LIMITED SITE PLAN REVIEW DRAFT DECISION**

**THE COTTING SCHOOL – ATHLETIC ADDITION**

**453 CONCORD AVENUE**

Date of Application: August 21, 2019  
Date of Hearing: September 25, 2019  
October 30, 2019  
November 20, 2019  
December 4, 2019  
December 18, 2019

**Application & Development Parcel Information**

Applicant & Owner: The Cotting School  
453 Concord Avenue  
Lexington, MA 02420

Lead Designer: Activitas, Inc.  
70 Milton Street  
Dedham, MA 02026

Parcel Location & Street Address: Town Assessors' Map 10, Parcels 40, 41A, 42, 43, 46, 47  
and Map 11, Parcels 26B, 31, 33  
453 Concord Avenue

Parcel Area: 776,675 sf

Zoning District: RO – One Family Dwelling

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## PROJECT SUMMARY

This Application for Limited Site Plan Review in regards to the Cotting School's proposal to install a gymnasium addition attached to the existing school building and related site improvements. Per the Zoning Bylaw Chapter 135 Section 9.5.2.1 and Zoning Regulations Chapter 176 Section 9.4.1, the project would be subject to Major Site Plan Review as the proposed expansion of the structure exceeds 5,000 sf. However, per Zoning Bylaw Chapter 135 Section 9.5.6, the project is subject to the limited review requirements as it is a non-profit educational use protected under M.G.L Chapter 40A, Section 3.

The Cotting School has served the Boston area since its founding in 1893 with the goal "to enable students with special needs to achieve their highest learning potential and level of independence." The new addition, replacing the existing gymnasium, (approximately 25,355 sf) will include a regulation size high school basketball court, candlepin bowling lanes, a fitness center, a climbing wall, and new classroom space serving the visual and performing arts. It will be connected on two levels to the existing facility with accessible entrances at the upper and lower levels. Exterior improvements around and adjacent to the building include new ramps and walkways, paving of an existing gravel parking lot, installation of new subsurface stormwater detention/infiltration systems and associated infrastructure, and miscellaneous landscape improvements.

This addition is designed to augment the current curriculum. It is not intended to expand enrollment which typically ranges from 110-130 students. The existing gymnasium will be repurposed to expand the areas available for medical and other services that are already being provided to students on campus.

## MATERIALS SUBMITTED

1. Site Plan Review Application, filed with Town Clerk August 21, 2019; included the following items:
  - a. Memo
  - b. Design Standards Checklist
  - c. Site Development Standards Checklist
  - d. Major Site Plan Review Application (Form B)
  - e. Permission to Bill
  - f. Copy of Check for Application Fee - \$1,500
  - g. Copy of Deed
  - h. Abutter's Information
  - i. Construction Management Logistics Plan
  - j. Lighting Fixture Information
  - k. Plan Plans – final plan set noted below
2. Response to 9/25/19 SPR hearing Comments dated 27 November 2019; included the following items:
  - a. Response Memo

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Traffic Study Report

- c. Revised Plan Sheets (final approved plans noted below)
- Response to 12/04 Staff Comments
  - a. Memo
  - b. Letter from Billy C.
  - c. Revised Plan Sheets (final approved plans noted below)
4. The following is the final Plan Set with final dates of submission/revision and date and stamped by:
  - COVER; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review
  - EXISTING CONDITIONS SURVEY SHEET 1 OF 5; 8/23/18, stamped by Pamela Welch, PLS #36129
  - EXISTING CONDITIONS SURVEY SHEET 2 OF 5; 8/23/18, stamped by Pamela Welch, PLS #36129
  - EXISTING CONDITIONS SURVEY SHEET 3 OF 5; 8/23/18, stamped by Pamela Welch, PLS #36129
  - EXISTING CONDITIONS SURVEY SHEET 4 OF 5; 8/23/18, stamped by Pamela Welch, PLS #36129
  - EXISTING CONDITIONS SURVEY SHEET 5 OF 5; 8/23/18, stamped by Pamela Welch, PLS #36129
  - SB1.1 - SETBACK PLAN; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - C1.1 - SITE PREPARATION PLAN; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - C1.2 - CONSTRUCTION ACCESS PLAN; 11/26/19; Response to PB 9/25/19 Comments, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - C1.3 - SITE PREPARATION DETAILS; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - C2.1 - UTILITY PLAN - SHEET I; 10/02/19; Updated Outlet at Wetland, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - C2.2 - UTILITY PLAN - SHEET II; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - C2.3 - UTILITY DETAIL SHEET I; 9/24/19; Revised Detail #5, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - C2.4 - UTILITY DETAIL SHEET II; 10/02/19; Revised Detail #2, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - L1.1 - LAYOUT AND MATERIALS PLAN; 12/13/19; Response to 12/4/19 LSPR Comments, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - L1.2 - COURTYARD LAYOUT AND MATERIALS PLAN; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - L2.1 - GRADING PLAN; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - L2.2 - COURTYARD GRADING PLAN; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review, stamped by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
  - L3.1 - PLANTING PLAN; 11/26/19; Response to PB 9/25/19 Comments, stamped by Patrick Maguire, RLA #1159

- L3.2 - COURTYARD PLANTING PLAN; 11/26/19; Response to 9/25/19  
Comments, stamped by Patrick Maguire, RLA #1159
- L4.1 - DETAIL SHEET I; 12/13/19; Response to 12/4/19 LSPR Comments, stamped  
by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
- L4.2 - DETAIL SHEET I (II); 8/21/19; Site Plan Review, stamped by Megan  
Buczynski, PE #47392
- L5.1 - 489 CONCORD AVE DRIVE SITE PLAN - SHEET I; 12/13/19, stamped by  
Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
- L5.2 - 489 CONCORD AVE DRIVE SITE PLAN - SHEET II; 12/13/19, stamped by  
Patrick Maguire, RLA #1159
- P1.1 - PHOTOMETRIC PLAN; 9/25/19; Additional Exterior Door Lighting, stamped  
by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392
- A-1.1 - FIRST FLOOR PLAN; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review – for reference only, not  
stamped
- A-1.2 - SECOND FLOOR PLAN; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review - for reference only, not  
stamped
- A-1.3 - LOW ROOF PLAN; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review - for reference only, not  
stamped
- A-1.4 - OVERALL ROOF PLAN; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review - for reference only, not  
stamped
- A-2.1 - EXTERIOR ELEVATIONS; 8/21/19; Site Plan Review - for reference only,  
not stamped
- PP1.1 - PARKING PLAN; 12/13/19; Response to 12/4/19 LSPR Comments, stamped  
by Megan Buczynski, PE #47392

## FINDINGS

1. Zoning: The Cotting School owns nine (9) contiguous lots most of which have frontage along Concord Avenue. For this site plan approval, and for any future applications by the School regarding its Concord Avenue campus, all contiguous school-owned properties are to be considered as one lot for the purposes of dimensional standards.
2. Limited Site Plan Review: Under the Limited Site Plan Review Bylaw, uses protected under MGL Chapter 40A Section 3 ('Dover Amendment uses') – specifically educational, religious, and child care uses – are subject to reasonable regulations, through site plan review, of the following development standards: Bulk & Height of Structures; Yard Sizes & Setbacks; Lot Area; Open Space; Parking and; Building Coverage. The gymnasium project meets or exceeds these standards for an institutional use in the RO zoning district (see below).

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Applicable Permitted Limited Site Plan Review Standard	Lot Area MA	Yard Size	Setbacks		Bulk of Structure	Building Coverage	Height of Structure	
			Min. Side Yard in Feet	Min. Rear Yard in Feet			Max. Height in Stories	Max. Height in Feet
Required in the RO zone for institutions	30,000	30	Equal to building height	Equal to building height	0.25	N/A	2.5	40
Proposed	776,675	Approx. 40	Approx. 30	Approx. 40	0.20	11.3%	2	39.5

- a. Open Space: The entire Cotting School campus contains 776,675 square feet of land area. Almost a quarter of the lot (23.7%) will remain as open space much of which can be used as outdoor active and passive recreational space for the school community.
- b. Parking: There are currently 152 parking spaces on the Cotting School main (eastern) campus. In their original application submittal for Limited Site Plan Review dated August 21, 2019, Cotting School representatives calculated the parking demand for the proposed site plan using the standards set in Section 5.1.4 of the Lexington Zoning Bylaw. Those calculations reported an expected parking demand on the site of 191 spaces. However, the school is a multi-use facility with faculty, staff, parents and other educational and medical specialists coming and going throughout the day. Therefore, at the request of the Planning Board, a second parking demand and circulation study was done by Vanasse & Associates Inc. (Transportation Engineers & Planners) on November 12<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019 to determine the actual parking demand on a typical school day. The Vanasse study found that at some point during the day, 142 (or 95%) of the 152 available spaces were used. The report further found “that additional parking spaces are desired.”

The 152 parking spaces currently being used on the main (eastern) campus (and counted in the Vanasse study) do not include 35 additional spaces being proposed by the School to the west of the tennis courts at 489 Concord Avenue. While these additional spaces have been designed and partially built, they are currently the subject of an appeal before the Zoning Board of Appeals and cannot be used until this matter has been adequately resolved. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this limited site plan approval, the Planning Board considers that a total of 176 parking spaces (141 existing on-site plus 35 proposed on-site at 489 Concord Ave) will be functional on the campus (or temporarily off-campus) to meet the institution’s parking demand both

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Limited Site Plan Review Decision  
The Cotting School Athletic Complex Addition  
Concord Avenue, Lexington, MA  
December 18, 2019

during the construction period and after the new gymnasium is completed. School officials have agreed to this requirement and are in the process of making arrangements for “temporary” parking options to offset the parking demand during and potentially after construction.

3. Wetlands: Portions of the project site contain wetlands resource areas and buffers. The Applicant went before the Conservation Commission on multiple occasions concurrent with this Limited Site Plan Review. This site plan has received all of the necessary approvals from the Commission except for one relating to the proposed asphalt fire-access road to be located at the rear of the addition and one relating to widening the eastern main campus driveway to 20 feet with a 22-foot apron. This entrance is within the 200-foot Riverfront Area. Both of these issues came up as a result of changes requested during the site plan review process – after the Applicant had completed its initial reviews with the Conservation Commission.

Provided that the size of the fire-access road remains as it is shown on this site plan, the Planning Board leaves it up to the Fire Department, the Conservation Commission and the Cotting School to jointly determine the appropriate materials for it. Likewise, since the Fire Department requested the driveway widening, the Planning Board is comfortable allowing the Fire Department, the Conservation Commission and Cotting School officials to work out the final details for this entrance.

## CONDITIONS

### General Conditions:

1. The site shall be used primarily for educational purposes as defined by MGL, Chapter 40A Section 3.
2. Plantings shall be native to Middlesex County per the *Vascular Plants of Massachusetts: A County Checklist, latest edition* or as required by Conservation Commission.
3. On-site traffic circulation shall conform to the plan laid out in a memo from Vanasse and Associates dated November 27, 2019 that maintains the two lanes at the eastern main campus entrance to the school, but makes both lanes “one-way” into the site.
4. The two main campus driveways and the driveway for 497 Concord Avenue shall be 20 feet wide with a 22 foot wide apron. The eastern main campus driveway is within the 200-foot Riverfront Area and adjustments to the paving shall need approval by the Conservation Commission.
5. Landscape screening adjacent to the west side of 485 Concord Avenue shall meet the requirements of Section 135-5.3.7 of the Zoning Bylaw and the Planning Board requires supplemental planting so that the mature size of the plants have no gaps and screening is continuous. Alternatively, this screening may be on the abutter’s property with that abutter’s permission. Additional native plantings, not shown on the final approved site plan, may be permitted on Cotting School property provided they comply with Condition #2.
6. The Applicant desires a crosswalk across Concord Avenue connecting the Cotting campus to the Concord Avenue sidewalk. The Applicant will work with Department of

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Public Works to locate the crosswalk. The crosswalk shall be built at the Applicant's expense. The completion of the crosswalk is the Applicant's desire and as such the

completion or lack thereof shall not hold up any permits.

7. All crosswalks constructed by the Applicant shall be ADA-compliant.
8. Minor changes deemed necessary in the field by the Building Commissioner may be allowed. However, any substantial changes as determined by the Commissioner shall be approved by the Planning Board.
9. The Applicant shall endeavor to support a school speed zone on Concord Avenue. It is understood that the speed zone is determined by Massachusetts Department of Transportation and the Town of Lexington. This effort shall not hold up any permits or Certificates of Occupancy.
10. The large oak tree located at the entrance to 497 Concord Avenue shall be removed, after consultation with Lexington Tree Warden, to accommodate the required 20-foot wide driveway. If the result of this process is that the tree may not be removed, the Applicant must return to the Planning Board for approval of another viable option to ensure the safety of pedestrians and vehicles entering and exiting that driveway.

**Conditions Prior to Commencing Any Site Work:**

11. Before starting any site work, the Applicant must obtain approval from the Conservation Commission on all outstanding issues, including but not limited to, the fire-access road at the rear of the gymnasium and the widening the eastern main campus driveway entrance within the 200-foot Riverfront Area.

**Conditions Prior to Issuance of a Building Permit:**

12. Before a building permit for the athletic building is issued, if the 489-497 Concord Avenue parking lot and access road are not fully operational as approved by the Board of Appeals or any other body with legal jurisdiction, the Applicant must demonstrate to the Building Commissioner and the Planning Department that there is adequate parking off-site to account for the inability to use these on-site spaces.

**Conditions Prior to the Issuance of Any Certificates of Occupancy:**

13. Before a Certificate of Occupancy may be issued for the parking lot on 489-497 Concord Avenue may be issued, the Applicant must work with the Engineering Department to determine whether the utility pole or the box on the pole at the 497 Concord Avenue entrance needs to be relocated. If it is determined that anything needs to be changed in this location, that work shall be completed prior to the issuance of the certificate of occupancy.
14. A Certificate of Occupancy for the athletic building shall not be issued until the Fire Chief is satisfied with the emergency access on the north side of the building. If there are any changes determined by the Fire Department or the Conservation Commission to the surface or emergency access layout as shown on the approved plans, those changes shall not need Planning Board approval.

15. Before the final Certificate of Occupancy for the athletic building is issued, if the 489 Concord Avenue parking lot is not fully operational, the Applicant must demonstrate to the Building Commissioner and the Planning Department that there is adequate parking off-site to account for the inability to use these on-site spaces.

### RECORD OF VOTE

After closing the public hearing and deliberating on the matter, the Board voted, on a motion made by Mr. Hornig and seconded by Mr. Peters, 5 to 0 to **grant** with conditions the submitted application for Site Plan Review.

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To: Planning Board, Town of Lexington  
Re: Lexington Hills Subdivision, Special Permit Modification Request  
Date: January 31, 2017

At the request of the attorney for August Realty Trust, developer of the Lexington Hills Subdivision, a site visit was conducted on October 20, 2016 to review a proposal by the developer for relocation of the trail easement originally planned to run between lots 19 and 1 to provide access to the trail system on public lands abutting these parcels managed by the Department of Conservation and Recreation's Beaver Brook North Reservation. Present at this site visit were Mike Tabaczynski (Lexington Greenways Corridor Committee), David Fields (Town of Lexington Planning Department) and Donald J. Borenstein (Johnson & Borenstein, LLC). Alternative locations for the approved trail easement were reviewed and an alternate location on the easterly side of Lot 1 was selected.

A Pedestrian Easement Relocation Plan dated January 23, 2017 was subsequently prepared and submitted to the Planning Board for review and approval. This plan has been reviewed by Keith Ohmart and Mike Tabaczynski on behalf of the Greenways Corridor Committee and found to represent a satisfactory revision for the purposes of the originally approved trail easement.

Accordingly, it is our personal recommendation that this trail easement relocation be approved.

(Signed)

Keith Ohmart  
114 East Street  
Lexington, MA

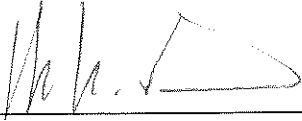
(Signed)

Mike Tabaczynski  
18 Hayes Lane  
Lexington, MA

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**RECORD OF VOTES**

Signatures of a majority of the Board,



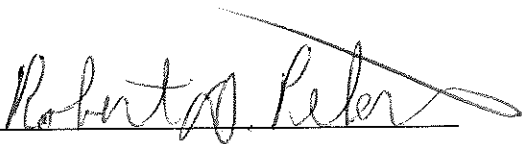
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Robert Creech, Chair



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Charles Hornig, Vice-Chair



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Robert Peters, Clerk



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Ginna Johnson



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Richard L. Canale

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