

David Hoicka

January 21, 1999

Robert W. Healy - City Manager
Cambridge City Hall
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: Affordable Housing on MBTA Air Rights in Porter Square Cambridge

Dear Mr. Healy,

Mayor Duehay suggested I connect with you regarding affordable housing on the MBTA Air Rights in Porter Square Cambridge. He asked me to prepare a report for City Council. I've called your office for an appointment.

You're undoubtedly aware that lack of affordable housing is a critical issue in Cambridge and the metropolitan Boston area.

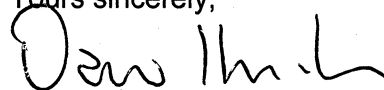
I have proposed using the air rights over the MBTA commuter rail lines in Porter Square for 100 to 200 units of non-profit permanent affordable family housing, to be built within existing zoning requirements. Excellent designs, together with high quality, innovative and economical construction methods, would create a national first for using air rights for affordable housing instead of luxury stores.

My affordable housing initiative has received considerable community support.

- about 900 signatures in support from people who live and work in Cambridge near Porter Square.
- My affordable housing referendum on the November 3, 1998 Cambridge ballot, prevailed by 7,437 to 1,511 votes, about 5 to 1. The success of this referendum has received some national attention.
- The City of Cambridge has expressed interest in the proposal, including the possibility of financing through the Affordable Housing Trust and Massachusetts Housing Finance Agency
- The City of Somerville (through Mayor, and now Congressman Capuano) has expressed interest in extending my affordable housing proposal from Cambridge into Somerville along the commuter rail line.
- The Cambridge Housing Authority, and Homeowners Rehab Inc, have expressed interest in constructing/managing the housing
- The MBTA has discussed transferring the air rights to a designee of the City of Cambridge.
- MIT has expressed interest in being involved in a national design competition.

Would you kindly contact me to set up a meeting to discuss this. I look forward to working with you on creating this non-profit permanent affordable housing in Cambridge, to help protect the many Cambridge families who are being squeezed out by the Cambridge real estate market, and make this happen.

Yours sincerely,



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cc. Cambridge City Council

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Consent Communication #16 ~~675~~

A communication was received from
David Hoicka, regarding Affordable
Housing on MBTA Air Rights in
Porter Square, Cambridge.

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In City Council January 25, 1999

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