



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUSAN B. SCHLESINGER

*Assistant City Manager for
Community Development*

BETH RUBENSTEIN

*Deputy Director for
Community Development*

TO: Robert W. Healy, City Manager

FROM: ^{BV} Beth Rubenstein, Acting Assistant City Manager
for Community Development

DATE: October 20, 1998

RE: City Council Order #078, Report on publicity and changes to
Lafayette Square

In response to the above referenced order, I report the following:

The Lafayette Square reconstruction project is part of the reconstruction of Massachusetts Avenue from Main Street to Memorial Drive. The project includes the creation of a new public plaza area and a new roadway connection between Main Street and Sidney Street through the existing gasoline service station property. The service station has been acquired by the Massachusetts Highway Department (MHD) for this project. Land that is not needed for the new roadway connection provides the City with an opportunity to create a pleasant urban space for people to gather and rest. The new plaza will contain areas for seating and plantings, and for planned/programmed gatherings such as festivals and fairs.

The 75% construction documents for the roadway have been reviewed by MHD, and the City and its consultants are preparing construction documents for the 100% submittal to MHD. The 100% documents will be submitted to MHD this winter and the start of construction is anticipated to begin in Spring 2000. The conceptual landscape design for the Lafayette Square plaza is being finalized and will be discussed in a public meeting prior to the next MHD submittal.

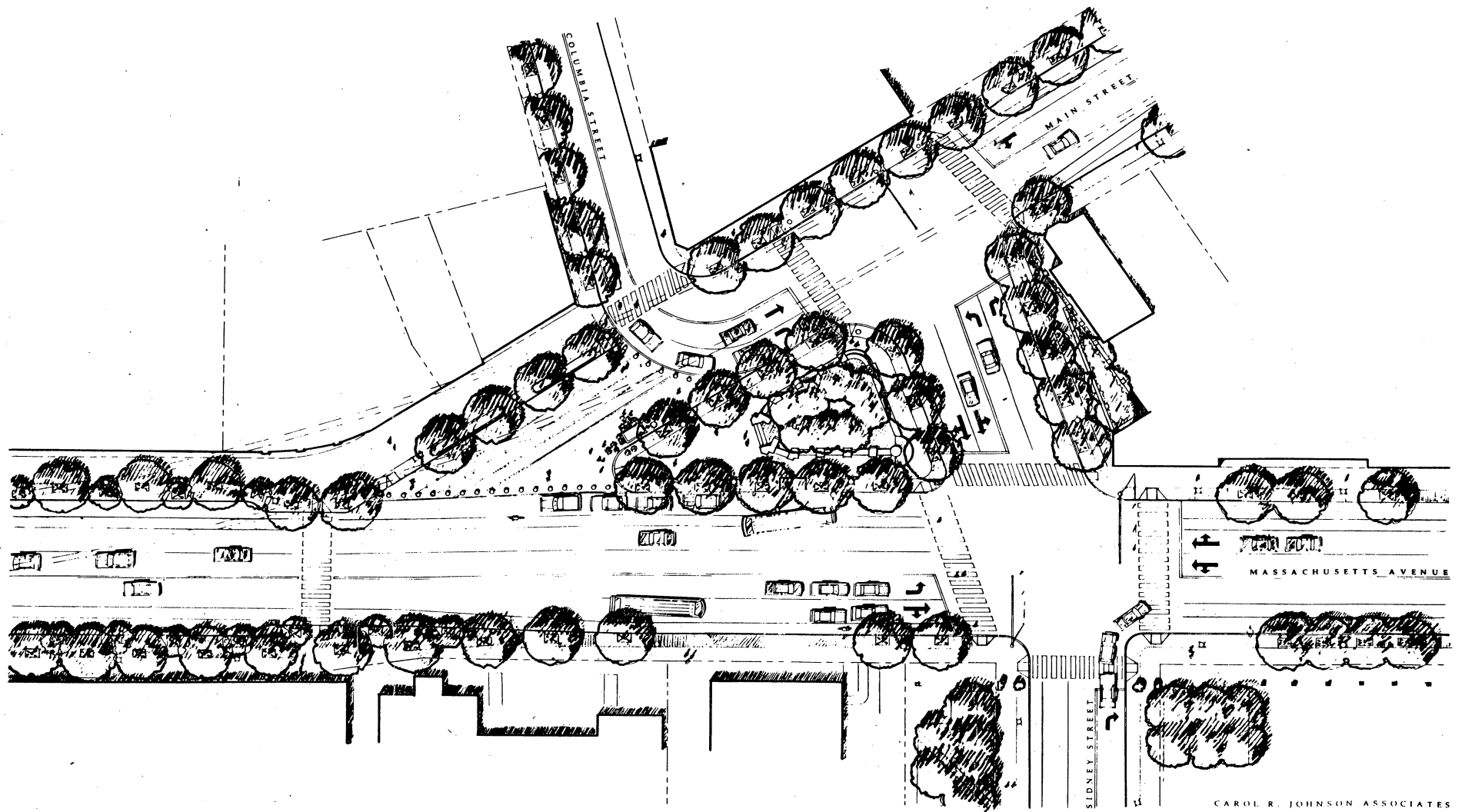
Good urban design is the first step in providing a place that is active and welcoming to the community. Design plans will be discussed with and reviewed by the appropriate City departments such as Fire, Police, Traffic, Parking & Transportation (TP&T), Public Works and the Historical Commission.

Additionally, recent changes in retail activities, such as the opening of Star Market and Comp USA, closing of the adjacent liquor store and commitment by the new owner to renovate the building and attract an active retail tenant for the first floor, will create a more active pedestrian center.

Safe pedestrian crossings will be provided across Massachusetts Avenue, Columbia Street, Main Street and the new connector road (see attached concept plan). The design for Lafayette Square was reviewed for pedestrian desire lines,

number of crossing opportunities, sight lines and wait time by the City's TP&T Department; Community Development Department (CDD); Rizzo Associates, a traffic consultant to the City; the Lafayette Square Committee, a committee formed in 1997 by CDD to recommend a final layout for the plaza design; and the Pedestrian Committee. The Lafayette Square design will allow more crossing opportunities across Massachusetts Avenue, including the construction of a new crosswalk on Massachusetts Avenue in front of Quest Diagnostics.

The design of Lafayette Square has been discussed with many neighborhood and business groups over the last three years. To address a division in the community over the design of the intersection, CDD formed the Lafayette Square Committee in 1997 to review two options for the configuration of Lafayette Square. This Committee met four times over a period of four months. While the Committee was not able to reach unanimous agreement on design of the intersection, a majority recommendation did result from the Committee's work and was forwarded to the City Manager and later incorporated into the construction documents for review by MHD. Information about Lafayette Square is now being published on the CDD web site. It was also distributed with information sent out to residents about the upcoming Traffic Calming Project for Columbia Street and has been featured in the Central Square Business Association's newsletter, the *Central Issue*. Additionally, over the next several months informational boards regarding the design and schedule for Lafayette Square improvements will be located at the Central Square Library, City Hall, Star Market and in a storefront in Lafayette Square.



CAROL R. JOHNSON ASSOCIATES
PLAZA SCHEME
MAY 1997



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS *LAFAYETTE SQUARE*



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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

November 16, 1998

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 9, regarding a report on publicity and changes to Lafayette Square, received from Acting Assistant City Manager for Community Development Beth Rubenstein.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment

Consent Agenda #2

5753 Col. 1

Relative to AW #9, regarding
a report on publicity and
changes to Lafayette Square.

In City Council November 16, 1998

CHARTER RIGHT

BY Councillor Davis

11/23/98

Report Accepted.

Placed on file