



City of Cambridge

1.

IN CITY COUNCIL

December 22, 1997

COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
COUNCILLOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

ORDERED: That all items pending before the City Council and not acted upon by the end of the 1997 legislative session be placed in the files of the City Clerk without prejudice, subject to recall by any member, provided that those proposed ordinances which have been passed to a second reading, advertised and listed under "Unfinished Business," and further provided that any items pending in committee may, at the discretion of the committee, be forwarded to the next City Council.

In City Council December 22, 1997.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of eight members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

D. Margaret Drury

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

SUSAN B. SCHLESINGER

*Assistant City Manager for
Community Development*

ELIZABETH EPSTEIN

*Deputy Director for
Community Development*

To: Robert W. Healy, City Manager
From: Susan Schlesinger, Assistant City Manager for Community Development
Re: Council Order # 154
Date: September 17, 1997

The piece of property offered for sale by the B&M railroad through the Executive Office of Transportation and Construction (EOTC) is a parcel along the MBTA commuter train right-of-way at the foot of Creighton and Regent Streets. This parcel (see attached map) is approximately 580' long and 39' wide for most of its length, expanding to 50' wide at one end, for a total of 22,000 square feet. The parcel abuts the rail line on one long side, and private land and building edges on the other, with the ends of Creighton Street and Regent Street abutting the property. The right-of-first refusal on the property was presented by the B&M railroad through EOTC to the City of Cambridge according to the requirements of State law with a number of conditions (see attached 161C Agency Response Sheet):

1. The whole parcel had to be purchased
2. The price was not negotiable. The full price was \$8.50/sq. ft. x 22,000 sq. ft. = \$187,000.

The materials sent by EOTC to the City of Cambridge asked the City to indicate one of three options:

1. Firm Interest - The City wishes and is able to purchase the property of a transportation purpose
2. Interest - The City is unwilling or unable to purchase the property at this time, but would like to note a potential transportation use
3. No Interest - The City has no interest in the property

The EOTC letter, dated March 28, 1997, required a response by April 17, 1997.

Upon receipt of the material from EOTC, the Community Development Department asked its consultant for the Railroad Safety Crossings, Wallace, Floyd Associates if the parcel had any value to the possible pathway extension envisioned as a future step in the Railroad Safety project. That project, which at that time was on hold due to the funds for design not being released by EOTC, included a pathway alongside the tracks from Sherman Street to Alewife Brook Parkway. In order to create this pathway, the railroad would have to sell or grant easements for the length of the corridor from Sherman Street to this location for which there are currently no commitments from the railroad. After examining the lot being offered and visiting the site with CDD staff, the consultant determined that access across the parcel would be

of benefit to the City if the pathway was extended at some future time. The existing right-of-way along the track was considered adequate for the actual pathway. The City, through CDD, indicated to EOTC that it did have a transportation interest in the property (see attached "Attachment to 161C Response Sheet"). During this time, CDD staff held a number of discussions with the sole bidder for the property, Bart Bussink, about access across the property if the railroad pathway became a reality. The owner sent a letter to CDD (see attached letter of June 2, 1997 to Susanne Rasmussen from Bart Bussink) in which he agreed to work with the City on establishing multiple access points in the area across the parcel via an easement.

As noted above, the request for interest from EOTC stipulated transportation related uses as reasons for purchase of the property. However, the lot is clearly a difficult one to develop for housing given the dimensions, and its narrow layout and location along the tracks make it unsuitable for open space.

According to the City Engineer, both Creighton Street and Regent Street are technically dead end streets, insofar as the public way ends at the end of the street with no public way continuing. Creighton Street currently does end at the public right of way, while for many years automobiles using Regent Street have continued across the B&M property as well as property owned by DeMella Plumbing around to Porter Road. The developers of both of the properties which are crossed by those using Regent Street have agreed with Regent Street and Porter Road residents to continue this use of their property.

The City is committed to working with the residents of this area through the Creighton, Porter, Regent Neighbors Association to address the issues which have been raised by the recent residential development in that area. Attached is a letter indicating that commitment.

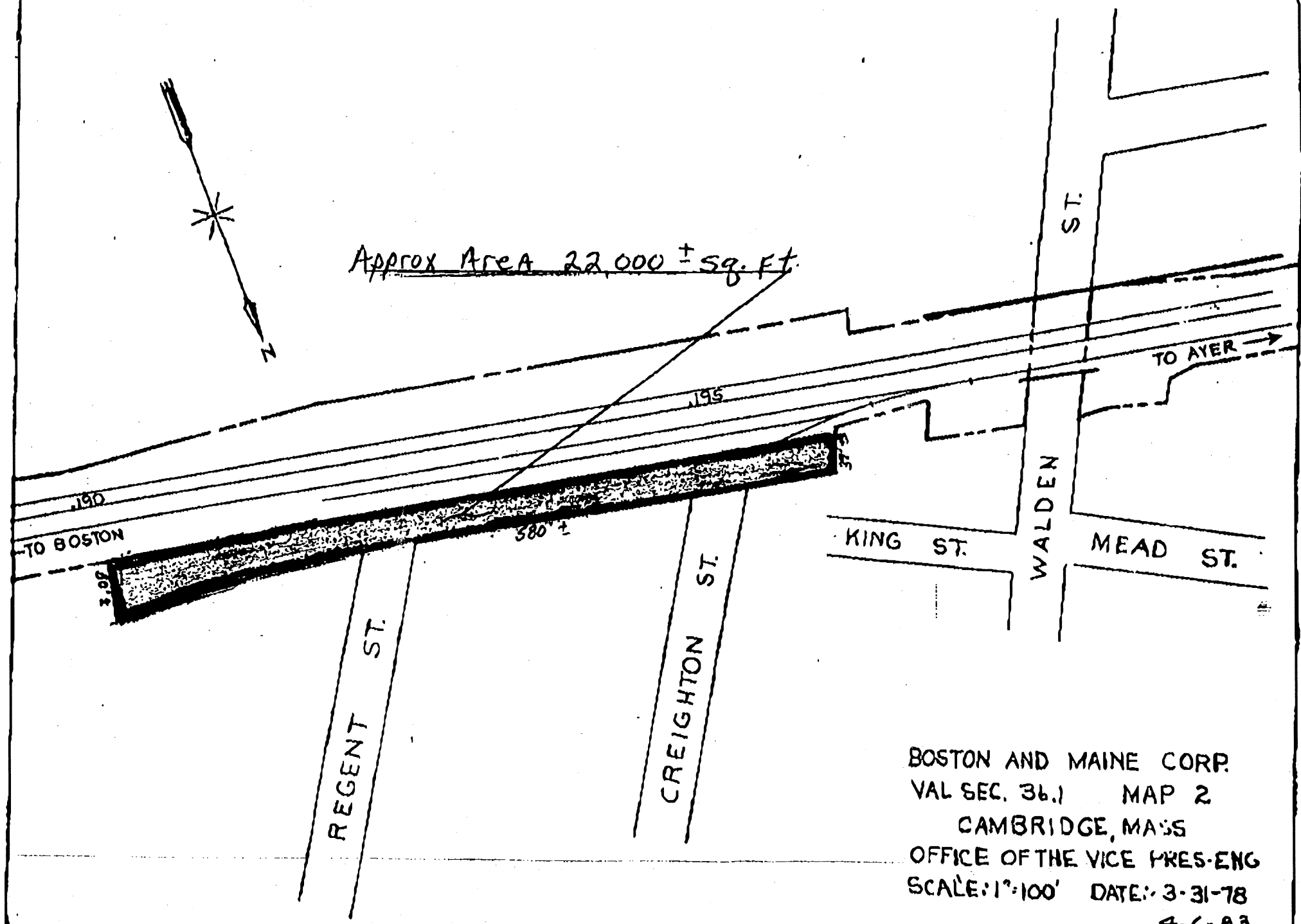


EXHIBIT A

file # 97C-06

BOSTON AND MAINE CORP.
VAL SEC. 36.1 MAP 2
CAMBRIDGE, MASS
OFFICE OF THE VICE PRES-ENG
SCALE: 1"=100' DATE: 3-31-78
4-6-83
5-25-83
6-28-83

161C AGENCY RESPONSE SHEET
NOTICE OF OFFERED RAILROAD PROPERTY

Please Respond By: Thursday, April 17, 1997

This sheet must be returned to: **Mannel S. Vieira**
Program Coordinator - Rail Division
Executive Office of Transportation
and Construction
Ten Park Plaza, Boston, MA 02116

OFFER NUMBER: 97C-06 CITY OR TOWN: Cambridge, MA

Please respond whether or not you have an interest in the property described on the attached "Fact Sheet". If no response is received by the date indicated above, it will be assumed that you have no interest in the property.

AGENCY RESPONDING TO THIS NOTICE: _____

STATEMENT OF INTEREST: (Please check one)

- ☐ **FIRM INTEREST:** We wish and are able to purchase the property described on the attached "FACT SHEET" for the following Transportation purposes.
- ☐ **INTEREST:** Although we are unable or unwilling to purchase at this time, we would like to note that this land has the following potential transportation use.
- ☐ **NO INTEREST:** We have no interest in acquiring the property described on the attached "FACT SHEET".

Address and signature of the person acting in this matter on behalf of the responding agency:

Address: _____

Signature: _____

Print Name: _____ Date: _____

ATTACHMENT
to
161C Agency Response Sheet
Notice of Offered Railroad Property

The City of Cambridge sees a future potential for an important transportation-related use for a portion of the Offered Railroad Property at the end of Regent and Creighton Streets in Cambridge. While the City of Cambridge does not wish to interfere with proposed development in the area, we are very interested in exploring options for obtaining an easement or through other means reserving the option for using a portion of the right-of-way for a future pedestrian/bicycle path connecting the Alewife MBTA Station and the Porter Square area.

The City has been working with the North Cambridge Railroad Safety Committee on a project to create safe pedestrian/bicyclists crossings of the MBTA's Fitchburg Division Commuter Rail Line and a linear pedestrian/bicycle path along the railroad corridor connecting the Alewife and Porter Square areas. Preliminary design has been completed and final design will begin shortly with funds provided in the 1996 Seaport Access Bond Bill. Construction funds are programmed in the current TIP for fiscal year 98/99.

The North Cambridge Railroad Safety Project includes a crossing located at Yerxa Road, a crossing between the Jefferson Park housing development and Danehy Park, and a crossing between Fresh Pond Apartments and the Fresh Pond Shopping Center, as well as a linear path from Alewife to Yerxa Road. A second phase of the project, not yet designed or funded, would extend the pedestrian/bicycle path into Porter Square. Connecting the path to either Creighton or Regent Street would be the most feasible way to reach Massachusetts Avenue/Porter Square because of the grade change between the railroad right-of-way at Porter Road. An easement providing a connection to either Regent or Creighton Street would provide a significant future benefit by creating a direct pedestrian and bicycle facility between two major multi-modal transportation facilities, shopping and residential districts.

June 2, 1997

Suzanne Rasmussen
Director of Environmental and Transportation Planning, City Of Cambridge
57 Inman Street
Cambridge Ma. 02139

Dear Suzanne,

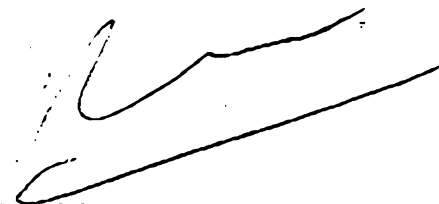
This is a letter to confirm the general agreements and understandings we arrived at during our May 29th meeting at your office.

The meeting in question primarily concerned creating access points between Regent Street, Creighton Street and Porter Road and the proposed bike path in the railroad right of way which runs along the far south edge of the parcel of land we will be buying from the Boston and Maine Corporation. Assuming that this bike path terminates at a parcel of MBTA land which exits solely onto Porter Road and lies approximately 100 ft. from Porter Square, and thus is not part of the parcel of land we are acquiring, we would have no problem with granting easements of reasonable width across our property at reasonable cost. In fact, if this scenario comes to pass we would view the path as a clear amenity to our properties. However, if your office is unable to secure this parcel of land and use it as the end point for the proposed path, we remain open to coming to a mutually satisfactory agreement regarding access easements across our land.

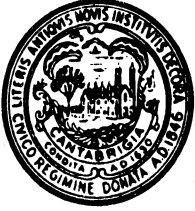
It was also agreed that should the bike path be built, the permitted uses of any land which remains between our property and the bike path will be limited to landscaping, a wood fence not to exceed four feet in height and a maximum of three minimally sized (no larger than five feet high, three feet deep and five feet long) storage sheds.

In addition I will make sure to convey to Mike and Joe DeMella that your office is also interested in an easement across the portion of the former railroad land which will belong to them. I will let them know that I view this path as a clear amenity for their property as well as our own.

Thanks,



Bart W. Bussink



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL. 349-4300
FAX. 349-4307



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

September 16, 1997

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager
Stephanie Smith
38 Porter Road

Ann Collette
50 Creighton Street

Carol Cohen
40 Porter Road

Darlene Bonislowski
23 Regent Street

Dear Ms. Smith, Ms. Collette, Ms. Cohen, Ms. Bonislowski, Co-Chairs of the Creighton, Porter, Regent Neighbors Association:

I have requested that Sue Clippinger, Director of the Department of Traffic, Parking & Transportation, and Stuart Dash, Director of Community Planning in the Community Development Department work with the Creighton, Porter, Regent Neighbors Association (CPR) to address the issues you outlined in your letter of August 27, 1997 and on your neighborhood walk of September 9, 1997. Additionally, I have asked that City departments give their full cooperation to CPR and Ms. Clippinger and Mr. Dash in their work with CPR.

In my preliminary discussions with Ms. Clippinger, she has indicated that she will direct the Traffic, Parking and Transportation staff to do a study to be completed by the end of October of the parking on all three streets related to the use by visitors to businesses along Massachusetts Avenue and the impact of new residential units. Mr. Dash will continue to work with both the neighborhood and the residents on issues concerning the developments in that area related to zoning and to the questions regarding the railroad property and the possibility of connections through that property to a possible future pathway along the MBTA line.

Please do not hesitate to contact either Ms. Clippinger (349-4717) or Mr. Dash (349-4640) if you have questions or additional comments.

Very truly yours,
Richard C. Rossi
Richard C. Rossi
Deputy City Manager

RCR/mec



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL 349-4300
FAX 349-4307



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

September 22, 1997

To the Honorable, the City Council:

As requested by the City Council in Council Order #68 of June 9, 1997, please find attached a summary list of my goals to be placed on the City Council calendar for quarterly discussion, along with the City Council's goals.

I look forward to a productive discussion on these goals.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

Attachment

SUMMARY OF CITY MANAGER'S 1997 - 1998 GOALS

Deliver high quality services. From workforce training and youth programs to permit applications and library services, continue to develop new or refine existing programs to best meet the needs of the Cambridge community. Develop a public information program to "get the word out" and include mechanisms to ensure programs are reflecting citizen's needs. Through close collaborative efforts, ensure the public health needs of the community are met. Continue development of strong partnerships with the School Department to meet the needs of children and families.

Maintain a high quality of life for the residents and businesses of Cambridge. Aggressively address issues such as graffiti, bicycles, trucks and traffic, trash pick up, park maintenance, street cleaning, flower and tree planting to maintain a safe and beautiful city.

Ensure public safety. Involve citizens and police in the formation of policing strategies and implement community oriented policing. Prevent and suppress fires. Provide emergency medical services and hazardous material incident mitigation. Contingency plan for disasters. Effectively manage the public right of ways for safe vehicular and non-vehicular use. Inspect buildings and food handling establishments.

Support the overall diversity of the City's population. Create and maintain affordable housing; provide housing related services to individuals and families in need. Increase the supply of affordable rental and ownership units. Provide case management for formerly rent control protected households. Provide services to homeless individuals/families and those at risk of homelessness. Continue to provide an array of strong human service programs in support of residents' needs.

Maintain a high functioning, diverse work force, reflective of the City's labor market. Deliver superior customer service. Provide training to provide needed skills and development in areas including management development, customer service, diversity, and technical/business skill development.

Ensure fiscal stability, through sound fiscal management, allowing the City to provide high quality services. Maintain a comfortable excess levy capacity, an unreserved fund balance equal to 8-10% of the City's budget, and an expenditure program that is measured through quantifiable goals and performance measures. Continue to recognize the importance of predictability and stability to the City's tax base. Foster a strong property tax base; support and enhance a healthy business climate.

Develop and implement a sound capital/infrastructure improvement program. Major initiatives include: the water treatment plant, open space rehabilitation, elementary school construction, sewer/street/sidewalk reconstruction and roadway improvements, technology enhancements, improvements to squares and major corridors, renovations to city buildings, and the removal of physical barriers.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL 349-4300
FAX 349-4307



18.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

September 22, 1997

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 29, regarding a report on issues surrounding Ceighton Street, Regent Street and the Porter Road area and the B&M Railroad property, received from Assistant City Manager for Community Development Susan Schlesinger.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachment

Consent Agenda #18

Cal 18
5-816

Relative to Awaiting Report Item Number
Twenty-nine, regarding a report on issues
surrounding Creighton Street, Regent
Street and the Porter Road area and the
B&M Railroad property.

December 22, 1997

PLACED ON FILE

pursuant to order #1

In City Council September 22, 1997

Charter Right was
exercised by

Councillor Triantafyllou

September 29, 1997

Tabled by

Councillor Triantafyllou