



7.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager

Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

February 11, 2002

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In response to Awaiting Report Item No. 02-02, regarding a report on efforts to secure a grocery/food store at the site of the former Sage, Jr. store at Huron and Concord Avenues, Assistant City Manager for Community Development Beth Rubenstein reports the following:

The former Sage Jr. store is an "L" shaped retail space consisting of just under 3,000 square feet, with windows fronting on both Huron and Concord avenues. The store, which has been vacant since last spring, has a walk-in freezer and a full basement for storage. The space has only two dedicated parking spaces in the rear of the store near the loading area, which is a major drawback. On-street parking is limited and is shared with several other businesses in the neighborhood. Therefore, the market is largely dependent upon foot traffic. The small footprint makes it challenging for most of the smaller food markets, which generally need a minimum of 7,000 square feet and would prefer 15,000 square feet.

CDD staff have met with the realtor representing the property, and viewed the property and the immediate neighborhood. We also visited smaller, more specialized grocers near Harvard Square and in West Cambridge such as Broadway Market, Formaggio, the Fresh Pond Market, Evergood Market, and McKinnon's Market in Somerville. Phone calls were made to these stores and to Trader Joes's, DeLuca's, Savenor's, Wild Oats, Sessa's Market, Pace's, and Russo's. Most of the businesses contacted expressed no interest in locating a food market in the facility vacated by Sage Jr. The primary concern was the size of the store, and parking was another consideration.

In addition to contacting 13 grocery stores, staff has contacted 16 convenience stores. Three grocery stores and six convenience stores expressed some interest in knowing more of the details about the property and were referred to the realtor. Staff continues to work closely with the realtor to facilitate a food market at this location. We will keep the City Council apprised of any progress in re-leasing this retail space.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec

Consent Agenda #7

Awaiting Report Item
Number 01-02, regarding a
report on efforts to secure a
grocery/food store at the site
of the former Sage, Jr. store
at Huron and Concord
Avenues.

In City Council February 11, 2002

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