C. C. 106

City of Cambridge

March 15, 2002

Dear Councillor:

You are hereby notified to attend a ***Special Meeting*** of the City Council for **Wednesday, April 3, 2002** at **6:00 p.m.** in the Sullivan Chamber.

By order of His Honor the Mayor.

Michael A. Sullivan
Mayor

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The purpose of this meeting is to hold a public hearing to consider the disposition of city property, to wit, a sub-surface easement located between 1720 and 1737 Cambridge Street for the purpose of construction of an underground pedestrian and service tunnel beneath Cambridge Street.

This meeting shall be subject to the Rules of the City Council as amended.

S

APTIL 3

10.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager *Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager*

February 25, 2002

To The Honorable, The City Council:

I herewith transmit the Planning Board report and recommendation regarding the grant of a sub-surface easement on Cambridge Street to Harvard University.

Additionally, I reiterate my recommendation contained in the report to the City Council transmitted on October 15, 2001.

Under City Ordinance 2.110.010, the "City Council shall hold a public hearing within six weeks of receipt of the...Planning Board report."

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment

795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD
CITY HALL ANNEX, 57 INMAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02139

February 20, 2002

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Subject: Disposition of Land in Cambridge Street to Harvard University for a Pedestrian and Service Tunnel Between Buildings at 1730 and 1737 Cambridge Street.

Recommendation. The Planning Board recommends granting of the requested easement beneath Cambridge Street, as detailed in the report of the City Manager transmitted to the Planning Board on December 13, 2001.

Findings.

The Planning Board finds that the transfer of an easement to Harvard University will fulfill the purpose of City Ordinance 2.110.010 – Disposition of City Property "to protect the citizens of Cambridge and to achieve land uses that best serve the City's public purpose" to the extent that the project, in its entirety, is implemented as presented in the City Manager's Report, including area-wide physical improvements and mitigation measures during the time of construction.

Toward a Sustainable Future: Cambridge Growth Policy Document, February 1993 provides some guidance as to how university growth and change should be shaped by city land use and other policies. The policy plan acknowledges the "generally positive influence of the institutions' presence in Cambridge..." but cautions that those positive impacts "... must be weighed against the potentially negative impacts...of continued institutional expansion that does not adequately consider the effects of such expansion on the larger community." Several of the seventy enumerated policies in the document suggest how that balancing might be managed.

It is recognized that the universities, like all businesses and institutions, must "...adapt and respond to changing circumstances to maintain their leadership positions in education...and research..." but in a manner that recognizes, responds to and coordinates with the city's policy goals (Policy 50). To accommodate that change, universities are encouraged to expand "...in those areas that historically have been occupied by such uses and to abutting areas that are reasonably suited to institutional expansion, as indicated by any institutional overlay district formally adopted by the City" (Policy 5). For the City,

the document urges that "reasonable densities...be permitted in their core campuses to forestall unnecessary expansion into both commercial districts and low-density residential neighborhoods" (Policy 6).

The new Harvard University buildings that are to be served by the proposed underground tunnel will both be located within the Residence C-3 zoning district. That district functions in part in the zoning ordinance as the "university campus" zone, regulating development at the core campuses of both Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The new building sites have been zoned Residence C-3 since 1961. Furthermore, the institutional nature of this area was reiterated in city land use policy with its incorporation into the Harvard, Radcliffe, Lesley Institutional Overlay District in 1981. For at least fifty years, through the adopted zoning ordinance, the City has identified the proposed building sites and the surrounding area as a place, in part, for higher density institutional development. Furthermore, the two existing buildings that the new development will replace have been used for university and academic purposes for more than two decades.

The growth policy document suggests that "the diversity of the city's development pattern is a major asset and should be fostered and protected." This very diversity "fosters the social and economic diversity that is one of Cambridge's enduring assets." The document does acknowledge that "the close proximity of a wide variety of uses and activities requires careful consideration of buffer and transition requirements." Cambridge Street in the vicinity of the proposed construction includes a mix of institutional activity and moderate density housing, which, it is hoped, will remain a permanent element of the character of this part of the city. Such a mixing of uses and activities continues to be citywide planning policy as illustrated by the adoption by the City Council of an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance (recommended by the Planning Board) to allow housing in the few industrial zoning districts that had prohibited residential uses. A major aspect of the comprehensive rezoning adopted citywide and for eastern Cambridge was the emphasis on an increased presence for housing in commercial neighborhoods.

Therefore, the very fact of the intermingling of institutional and residential activities in the area of the proposed development should be viewed in a positive light, but suggests that there must be careful attention paid to how any potential conflicts between those two uses can be minimized or prevented.

While the precise uses in the new buildings differ somewhat from those now in the existing ones on the sites to be connected by the tunnel in the easement area, the area of land occupied by institutional uses will not be expanding. Existing homes will remain and the academic activities already in the area will continue, at a somewhat increased intensity. It is the Board's finding that the potential of conflict between residential and institutional uses, once the significant short-term disruption of the actual construction has passed, will be substantially reduced from that which exists now and that the new building and site configuration, post construction, will provide a much improved environment for nearby residential living. Improvements to the public sidewalks, new

paving and street tree plantings, consolidation of loading away from existing residential neighbors, increased building setbacks at critical locations adjacent to apartment buildings, improved pedestrian circulation through the Harvard campus, added landscaping, and enhancement of the physical environment of existing historic resources are all significant changes that will benefit residential neighbors directly and all residents of Cambridge more indirectly.

Other land use policy objectives are served by the specific development plans that the proposed easement would facilitate. A major policy theme addressed in both the Citywide Rezoning Petition and the ECaPS Rezoning Petition was a desire to reduce the physical density of development in the city. Reductions in FAR and height in many districts, the rezoning of whole areas to less intense zoning district designations, and the requirement that above-ground parking structures be calculated as Gross Floor Area were elements in those Petitions addressing that objective.

The density permitted in the Residence C-3 district was not modified in those recent zoning petitions, for the policy reasons set forth above (Policy #6). However, in the spirit of those recent zoning changes, significant portions of the academic program of this proposal will be located in portions of the structures that will be entirely below grade, including those functions within the tunnel itself. In consequence the bulk of building visible to passersby will be reduced from that which would otherwise be the case, and which otherwise might be permitted in the zoning district.

Finally, it should be noted that the Planning Board, Board of Zoning Appeal and the Mid-Cambridge Conservation District have reviewed the project in the context of necessary formal zoning or other approvals. In each case, the relief sought has been granted after a series of public meetings and hearings that have extended over a period of five years.

In sum the Board finds that the "City's public purpose" as defined in its land use goals and objectives, and embodied in the regulations that shape land use in the city, will be facilitated by the tunnel that will be made possible by the granting to Harvard University of the easement under Cambridge Street.

Long-term, the benefits that would accrue to the Cambridge community generally and the near-by neighbors to this proposed project specifically are real and substantial:

*Loading facilities serving the buildings will be consolidated in one location, underground and away from residential abutters. The noise and other negative external impacts of that function will be significantly mitigated. The consolidation is made more workable by the use of the tunnel.

*A significant portion of the buildings' functions that would normally be constructed above ground will be located underground, reducing the bulk of building visible to the general public on the sites, consistent with city policy as reflected in the recently adopted Citywide Rezoning Petition. The tunnel facilitates this choice by allowing the two buildings to function as a whole.

*The tunnel makes it possible for the two buildings to be programmed as one with people and goods transported between the principal structures through the tunnel, providing safety and convenience to the users of the building and reducing the potential disruption such academic traffic might entail if it occurred above ground across the street.

*The public sidewalks will be improved over a large area well beyond the immediate vicinity of the two buildings, including the installation of a large number of street trees.

*Campus open spaces will be enhanced through landscaping that will replace existing paved loading and parking areas as well as improvement to the quality green spaces that exist now and will be preserved. While clearly part of the private university campus, such open spaces are widely enjoyed and appreciated by a wide cross section of Cambridge residents.

*A number of historic structures on the campus will be preserved and their setting enhanced as a result of the wider package of improvements to be made as part of the project.

While it cannot be said that all of these benefits are only possible with the construction of the tunnel, the tunnel would seem to make them more likely by allowing a careful coordination of the functioning of two otherwise separate buildings.

However, in the short-term it cannot be denied that there will be substantial inconvenience and disruption resulting from the actual construction of the buildings and the tunnel, which will be imposed principally on immediate abutters, but also on other residents of Cambridge to a lesser extent. An extensive list of concerns has been presented by the public in testimony before the Planning Board and before other Boards during the many years this project has been under discussion. The extent of disruption both physically and over time that will be a result of any tunnel construction is of grave concern to those residents. The Planning Board concurs that these concerns must be adequately addressed.

It is the City's obligation to those abutting neighbors that, should the easement be granted, any inconvenience or disruption be kept to an absolute minimum. In the actual design of the proposed underground facility, the design of construction techniques employed, the management systems employed to implement construction, and the monitoring that will accompany the construction, every detail must serve to shorten the length of time construction will be underway, to limit the extent of the area to be disrupted, and to minimize the noise, dust and other external impacts that will be felt by residents on abutting properties. The details of the mitigation package proposed in the report of the City Manager to the Planning Board clearly indicates that Harvard University and the City are fully committed to responding to those mitigation concerns. Testimony before the Board also suggests that the University is still exploring every

option available to reduce any disruption to residents and motorists, to protect the public safety, and to ensure the uninterrupted delivery of city services. Those explorations appear to be continuing.

On technical matters of design, sequencing of construction and mitigation techniques, the Planning Board must defer to the knowledge and advice of other experts; those technical details provide the most important opportunity to contain the disruption of construction to acceptable levels. A commitment to implement the entire package of area improvements outlined in the City Manager's report is a prerequisite to any grant of an easement.

A comprehensive mitigation plan is of course a fundamental requirement. A key element of such a plan is an adequate set of procedures that provides for the active participation of those residents immediately affected, in monitoring activities and identifying negative impacts. A standing committee of neighbors might be established as a knowledgeable forum to review progress, identify conflicts and air concerns. An ombudsman of sorts should be designated to receive comments and complaints and ensure that there is speedy resolution of any problems. Any designated contact person must have the authority to take corrective action; and there should be a telephone number to call at all times of the day or night to register complaints. The contact persons and their numbers should also be given to Inspectional Services and the Police Department. Finally, any grant of an easement must reserve to the City the right to use the street and its subsurface for any public need that may arise in the future.

Respectfully submitted for the Planning Board,

Larissa Brown, Chair

Consent Agenda #10

Planning Board
recommendation on granting
a sub-surface easement on
Cambridge Street to Harvard
University.

In City Council February 25, 2002

Referred to
Special City
Council Meeting
Scheduled for
April 3, 2002.

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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager *Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager*

December 17, 2001

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In accordance with City Ordinance 2.110.010, attached is a summary of the Community Meeting regarding the Pedestrian and Service Tunnel beneath Cambridge Street. Concurrently, I am submitting my report to the Planning Board and the City Clerk. The City Council received my preliminary report on October 15, 2001 and is now Calendar Item 10.

The process is now the Planning Board will hold a Public Hearing no sooner than 14 days after receipt of my report, and shall submit their recommendation to the City Manager for submission to the City Council. The City Council shall hold a public hearing within six weeks of the receipt of the City Manager's recommendation and the Planning Board report.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachments

795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139 Voice: 617.349.4300 Fax: 617.349.4307 TTY: 617.349.4242 Web: www.ci.cambridge.ma

CAMBRIDGE STREET PEDESTRIAN TUNNEL
COMMUNITY METING SUMMARY 12/11/01

In accordance with City Ordinance 2.110.010 the City Manager held a community meeting on December 11, 2001 in the Sullivan Chamber at 6:00 p.m. The following is a summary of that meeting:

- Approximately 50 members of the public were in attendance at the meeting. 16 persons spoke. (see attached)

- Mary Power of Harvard University opened with the brief history of the 5 year community process that this project has undergone, concluding that the "project became better" as a result of this process. Her presentation was followed vy a video and engineering presentation.

- Members of the public then spoke.

- John Pitkin , President Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association, William Craig, 14 Greenough Avenue, and Laura Roberts, 1715 Cambridge Street submitted written copies of their testimony which is attached. Also submitted is a letter from Charles Sullivan, Executive Director of the Historical Commission summarizing the involvement of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission review of the project and supporting the tunnel easement.

- 2 of the remaining 13 speakers spoke in favor of the granting of the easement.

- 11 Speakers were opposed citing disruption during the construction of the tunnel and their perception of lack of public benefit.

- The meeting concluded at 8:30 p.m.

Agenda # 1.

Calendar # 1
10/29/01
Tabled

12/17/01 -
Placed on File

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager *Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager*

October 15, 2001

To The Honorable, The City Council:

In accordance with City Ordinance Chapter 2.110 relative to disposition of City property, I am enclosing my preliminary report regarding an offer from Harvard University to purchase an easement below Cambridge Street that represents the conclusion for a 5-year process relating to the construction of the Center for Government and Institutional Studies project.

I will be scheduling a community meeting during the week of October 22, 2001 to gain additional information. The Planning Board will also hold a public hearing on this matter and make its recommendations to me, which I will transmit to the City Council. The City Council will then hold a public hearing on the proposed disposition.

This transmittal merely begins the comprehensive process.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec

795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139 Voice: 617.349.4300 Fax: 617.349.4307 TTY: 617.349.4242 Web: www.ci.cambridge.m

Consent Agenda #1

Preliminary report regarding an offer from Harvard University to purchase an easement below Cambridge Street that represents the conclusion of a 5-year process relating to the construction of the Center for Government and Institutional Studies project.

In City Council October 15, 2001

Charter Right
exercised by
Councillor Sullivan
In City Council
October 29, 2001
Tabled on motion of
Councillor Sullivan
In City Council
December 17, 2001
Placed on File
pursuant to Order #1

Speakers Sign In Sheet

P. 1

12/11/01 Community Meeting - Pedestrian Service Tw

Name	Address
William Craig	14 Greenough Ave
John Pitkin	18 Fayette St.
Roy Bercaw	474 Broadway
Conal Doyle	35 West St
Theda Skocpol	66 Huron Ave
Laura Roberts	1715 Cambridge St
Betty Collins	1716 Cambridge St
Brian Fee	25 Irving Terr
Nancy Young	43 Antrim St.
Elie Yarden	143 Pleasant St
James M. Williamson	17 Perry Street, Cambri
Stash Horowitz	Assn of Cgc Neighborhood
Rick Chinos	1709 Cambridge St,
David Osler	4 Irving Terrace
Karen Cam	165 Cambridge St

Speakers Sign In Sheet

Name	Address
SANFORD HIEBERMAN	1716 Cambridge St
Peter Voorlas	1716 Cambridge St

(1)

18 Fayette Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

TO: City Manager Robert Healy
City of Cambridge

FROM: John Pitkin
President, Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association

December 11, 2001

SUBJECT: Proposed Easement for Tunnel Under Cambridge Street by Harvard University for Center for Government and International Studies

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This proposed easement to build a shallow tunnel through a city-owned street is located in Mid-Cambridge. Although the site is near one end of our neighborhood, because of the street pattern, the likely effects are very much concentrated in Mid-Cambridge. Tonight's meeting to discuss the proposal is described as a "community meeting." This is the first Mid-Cambridge community meeting that has happened in City Hall in a long time. The Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association has done everything it could to publicize this meeting within the time we had, but I am afraid many affected residents may still be unaware of it. I would therefore respectfully request more advance notice and consultation with the Neighborhood Association on the date and location of the next community meeting you organize in our neighborhood.

I have asked Bill Craig, a resident of Greenough Avenue, who has many years' experience as a civil engineer to review and comment on the physical aspects of the easement based for the Neighborhood Association. I asked him to base his review on the information submitted in the University's application. My request does not mean that the Association has endorsed his comments. However, they will be submitted for consideration at a meeting of Mid-Cambridge residents on January 23, 2002, at 7:00 PM, at a location to be announced.

Neither Mr. Craig nor I will address the financial components of the proposal at this time, though the Association may choose to do so. The first issues that must be addressed are the physical and planning ones. Only if the physical and planning implications are found to be beneficial, or at least acceptable, to neighbors and the broader public, should the issue of price even be considered. The future of our city must not be put up for sale, even to Harvard University.

I will address two issues with the tunnel that are not addressed in the materials provided by the University, planning and the proposed closing of Prescott Street during construction.

There is no agreement between residents and the University on a plan for the transitional boundary area between the campus and residential Mid-Cambridge. As early as February 1999, the Neighborhood Association requested that the University work with residents to

formulate a mutually acceptable plan for the area before proceeding with the CGIS project. The Neighborhood Association subsequently proposed *Principles and Guidelines for Development for the Mid-Cambridge/Harvard Edge* (published in the May 2000 *M-C News*, see attachment). The University neither accepted these guidelines nor proposed a plan of its own but it did continue with the CGIS project and this proposed tunnel. When the Association's membership meets in January, we may wish to renew our request for an area plan. Abutters and other neighbors deserve assurances that the CGIS project is not just the first phase of a larger eastward expansion of the campus.

It is not reassuring that the proposal that the University is pursuing is to advance its own vision for the area in a piecemeal fashion. The tunnel would unite the two proposed buildings into an enclosed, segregated campus enclave.

This plan conflicts with the Association's vision for the area. The neighborhood's plan calls instead for a transitional buffer of a mix of uses between the core campus of Harvard Yard and the predominantly residential neighborhood. It should not be taken for granted that the separation of academic and street activity in this location is a public benefit. In fact, it may be the opposite.

Second, the application mentions a temporary easement to close one block of Prescott Street for two years as part of the overall project, although this easement is not covered by the application and therefore not subject to City Council review. As a matter of public policy any closing of a residential street for as long as two years needs public review and a hearing of its own. I urge you to have the appropriate department conduct such a review and hearing before permission is granted to close Prescott Street for an extended period.

Principles and Guidelines for Development for the Mid-Cambridge/Harvard Edge

Comprehensive Planning

Principle: Institutions should produce comprehensive plans for their neighborhood edges with participation by all stakeholders, including university and other institutions; business; and residents, both owners and renters.

-Comprehensive plans should define the long term limits on expansion into the existing residential neighborhoods and serve as a definition of the neighborhood edge.

-Zoning expresses the maximum allowed building potential, not the optimal, or even desirable use.

-All planning should be based on compliance with existing and future zoning regulation without any variances and special permits.

-Historic, unique sites and structures that enhance the beauty of the institutional and residential neighborhood should be preserved.

-All long-term planning information that bears on a given neighborhood should be shared as early

as possible with the relevant group of residents and other stakeholders.

-Comprehensive plans should maintain a livable neighborhood sustaining its human scale.

-Comprehensive planning should eliminate piecemeal development.

-Each development project should be evaluated in the context of the cumulative impact of recent, proposed, and planned projects.

Involvement in Decision Making

Principle: Residents, businesses and institutions are stakeholders in development of project plans in their neighborhood and, therefore, should participate as equals in deliberations and decision making which have an impact on the neighborhood.

-'Stakeholders' include abutters and other affected community members.

-All stakeholders should have a voice in project plans, particularly those which have an impact on daily life and property such as schedule, timing, terms of construction, ongoing oversight, and mitigation measures.

-All stakeholders should be notified in a timely manner of all development proposals and plans for construction, alterations, or changes in property use which have an impact on the neighborhood, so that they may be part of the discussions and decision-making.

-Open meetings should be held to inform all stakeholders of proposed changes affecting the neighborhood.

Transition Areas

Principle: The nature and stability of the transition from institutional to residential use is particularly critical to retaining the human and architectural character of this edge.

-The term "transition area" is defined by the impacts of buildings and spaces on the neighborhood's quality of life. A transitional area is a mixed-use area lying between an institution's core campus and a predominantly residential neighborhood.

-A transitional area should serve as a buffer between the institution's intense uses and residential uses.

-Long-term plans affecting a transitional area should preserve the stability of residential uses in the transition area.

-The transition between the university and the neighborhood should be a permeable edge, including buildings and green space which are of the scale, architectural vocabulary, and massing of the neighboring residences.

-Harvard University should create a legal agreement to continue to observe the previously agreed upon limits to their acquisition of property in the neighborhood ("the red line").

Use

Principle: The uses of institutional buildings should be compatible with the residential quality of the neighborhood.

-Intensity of institutional use should decline as the university approaches its edge, easing the transition to the neighborhood.

-Intensive evening and weekend use of buildings should be planned and implemented to be sensitive to neighborhood impacts and preferably restricted to buildings that do not abut residences.

-There should be no loss of residential units to non-residential uses.

Density and Scale

Principle: Development should be compatible with and respect the scale and character of the residential areas adjacent to the university.

-Avoid "canyonization" of streets by new or renovated buildings by stepping back buildings.

-Create structures and open spaces that make people feel comfortable when they view, walk, or live in or near them.

-Streets, sidewalks, and setbacks to buildings should be designed and maintained in ways that promote neighborhood safety, sociability, and attractiveness.

-Any building which replaces an existing building should be sensitive to the scale and character of abutting residences and be preferably smaller than the building it replaces. If it is not smaller then it should "step" away from the residences.

-Buildings shuld be smaller of mass along the street and sidewalk and as they abut or face residential buildings.

Institutional-Community Partnership

Principle: Institutions and residents should be good neighbors to each other.

-Residents should have access to institutional buildings and facilities as appropriate.

Construction Mitigation

Principle: Construction should have minimal impact on the daily life of the neighborhood.

-Mitigation efforts should include noise, dust, dirt, vibration, traffic, parking, disruption, protection from damage to property, starting time and overtime, safety, and compensation for loss due to construction or accidents.

-There should be enforceable agreements between the owner responsible for development and the neighbors for mitigation efforts.

-Multiple construction projects should be planned and coordinated to minimize adverse neighborhood impacts. For example, the timing of projects should take into account ongoing and recent construction projects in the neighborhood so as not to overburden residents.

Design

Principle: New construction should be compatible with prevalent building materials and design in the immediate neighborhood.

-New construction should be based on excellent architectural design that places the building in the appropriate relationship to its surroundings. Renovation should be of such quality as to preserve or enhance existing architectural features. Additions should carry existing architectural themes.

-Development should proceed with a preference for materials and construction techniques which are environmentally responsible and support local businesses.

-Buildings should not turn their backs on their neighbors; designs should be consistently attractive on all sides.

-Buildings should be designed so that their use is compatible with their residential neighbors.

-New construction and renovation should be designed in a manner that is sympathetic to residential abutters' desire to preserve their quiet enjoyment.

-Placement of mechanical systems should take into account their visibility and impacts on the surrounding properties.

Preservation and Conservation

Principle: Existing wood frame and historic structures should be preserved on site, maintaining their scale and integrity

-Historic structures are valued by neighbors. Their preservation on site and restoration should be emphasized in any development projects.

-Buildings deemed to have "value" by the historic commission or that are otherwise especially important in their context should be preserved on site.

-If wood frame and historic structures must be disturbed, they should be relocated as close as possible to their original site.

Traffic and Parking

Principle: Streets should be quieter, less congested and safe, with no net loss of current residential parking.

-Each change in use, rehabilitation, expansion or new building should have pedestrian, traffic and parking studies performed for all development that has more than 50 occupants.

-Surface parking lots have value to abutters in providing open space and light to those properties. Developers of these lots should take into account and protect to the greatest extent possible these values. New and existing surface parking lots should be landscaped to enhance their environmental value.

Green Space

Principle: Green open space should be located to maximize neighborhood and institutional benefits

-Existing building sites and open spaces should be landscaped as appropriate to the site and surrounding neighborhood areas.

-Green space should be maintained in good condition.

-Trees on site should be preserved to the greatest extent possible.

-New trees, as well as bushes and other plants and flowers, should be planted as part of new development to buffer and enhance the attractiveness of buildings.

Open Space

Principle: Open space is desired in dense neighborhoods for the light and privacy it affords, and should be preserved and created.

Plazas and other open spaces should be preserved to enhance neighborhood quality of life.

December 11, 2001

Assessment and Analysis of the Proposed Report to the Cambridge City Council on the Proposed Sale and Grant of Easement dated October 5, 2001

prepared by
William C. Craig
14 Greenough Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139
Telephone 617-547-5831

Introduction

Harvard Center for Government and International Studies have prepared a Report to the Cambridge City Council for the proposed sale and grant of an underground easement for the construction of a tunnel across Cambridge Street connecting the new Center for Government and International Studies (CGIS) north and south buildings. The location is in the general area 1730 and 1737 Cambridge Street between Prescott Street and Sumner Road.

This assessment of the proposed easement application has been performed at the request of John Pitkin, President of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association (MCNA). We believe that this assessment will assist the City Manager and the City Council in the review of the easement application.

On December 10, 2001 the Mid-Cambridge Conservation District Commission (MCNCDC) approved the Harvard Construction Site Logistics and Mitigation Plan as it relates to construction mitigation.

The construction of a shallow tunnel across Cambridge Street at the intersection of Cambridge Street , Prescott Street, and Sumner Road will have a sever construction impacts on the neighbors in the area of the project and on the residents and businesses that frequent and use the streets in the area.

Summary:

The proposed tunnel between CGIS North and South Buildings will form a barrier to the future underground installation of water and sewer lines by the City and cable, telephone, electric, gas and data cables by utility companies. The proposed tunnel will start 2 feet below the road and extend 14 feet to its bottom. This is one of the vital underground corridors running east-west between Harvard Square and the Charles River. There is not enough room for any meaningful future development in the 2 foot space above the proposed tunnel. Future utilities will have to be routed around this underground obstacle.

The Harvard application for an easement for the construction of a tunnel across Cambridge Street using the cut and cover construction technique is not current day technology for underground

construction in a fully developed urban areas. Tunneling below existing foundations and utilities is the accepted method.

The application does not address the traffic impacts on the intersection of Quincy and Cambridge Streets which is only about a few yards from the edge north of the proposed construction site. There will be severe traffic congestion as a direct result of the underground utility relocation and tunnel construction because of frequent travel lane shifting. The use of separate temporary bridges for each lane will delay traffic due to lane shifting, change in grade, and the curiosity factor. It is possible there will noise and impact vibration effects on Cambridge that may extend to some parts of Sumner Road and Prescott Street. Traffic will shift to Kirkland and Broadway to avoid the delays and this will shift impacts even more to the intersection at Quincy and Cambridge All of this work occurs in parallel with the demolition and site excavation and its associated impacts due to heavy truck traffic.

There is a high probability the there will be extended utility service interruptions during the construction phase of the tunnel due to the following;

1. Relocation of existing utilities and water lines
2. Rotation of the sewer line and the bypass
3. Excavation of under the utilities and hanging of these on the temporary bridges and pedestrian walkways.
4. Resupporting the utilities after construction of the tunnel and backing of soil around the tunnel
5. Freeze protection and differential settlement problems for the relocated water lines.

Conclusion:

Harvard is proposing , at great expense, to construct a shallow tunnel while imposing very large construction impacts on the community. The duration of the construction impact is about 22 months. It is suggested that if the City approves an easement, that only the tunneling method be used. This method should be used because it results in no construction impacts on neighbors and the use of Cambridge Street is largely unrestricted during the construction of the tunnel. In addition, tunneling will reduces the risk of service interruption of utilities to a very low level.

There is no public benefit.

- There are no public amenities in these buildings
- The only users are Harvard students, staff, and their guests
- Neighbors have never seen the shared loading dock as a benefit – as designed it will create too much traffic too close to a congested intersection. Harvard gains the economic benefit of consolidation.
- Harvard has stated repeatedly, at every hearing, that there will be no significant increase in pedestrian traffic. The numbers in the traffic study are miniscule compared with, for example, the student coming and going from the high school, crossing Cambridge St and Broadway

There is public harm.

In the short run...

- Cambridge Street will experience an extra 20 months of dirty, disruptive, noisy and potentially unsafe construction.
- The City will lose the benefits of sewer segregation on Cambridge Street.
- There is the risk of damage to utilities and surrounding buildings.

In the long run...

- The tunnel will create a barrier to future sub-surface work on Cambridge Street, making upgrading of service or running new service impossible or more expensive. The result will be higher costs for the city and its taxpayers or loss of service and value for property holders.

What kind of work?

- 50 years ago, we didn't know lead water pipes made you sick
- 25 years ago, we couldn't have predicted MWRA mandates to segregate water and sewer or deregulation of the telecommunications industry
- 10 years ago, no one expected that high speed digital communications would be the norm

It may be a new form of transmitting electricity, or providing power, or sending information, but that day will come, and it would be a travesty if there were huge "damn" across Cambridge Street.

The tunnel may "solve problems" – but they are all problems created by the University's voluntary decisions.

- Harvard has elected to change the use of these properties from research centers and technological support to the home of one of its largest academic departments.
- Harvard has elected to put two large, paired buildings on either side of a major artery.
- Harvard has elected to demolish two serviceable buildings: they are safe and sound and currently in use.
- Harvard has elected to fill the south site, adjacent to two large apartment/condominium buildings, making a loading dock unfeasible.
- Harvard has elected to include classrooms, increasing transient foot traffic to the site.

There is no objective, external pressing need to build these buildings on these sites. *The University has almost 200 acres in Cambridge, including a great deal of open space or other "under-performing" real estate assets. And there is no public benefit to be gained by subjecting the people who have to live with the construction period and then the buildings themselves to 20 months of construction in Cambridge Street and an ongoing complication to work in their neighborhood, to benefit the small number of Harvard staff and students who will use the tunnel.*

Laura Roberts 1715 Cambridge Street Cambridge

Cambridge Historical Commission

831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139
Telephone: 617 349 4683 Fax: 617 349 3116 TTY: 617 349 4621
E-mail: histcomm@ci.cambridge.ma.us URL: http://www.ci.cambridge.ma.us/~Historic

RECEIVED
2001 DEC -9 AM 9:26
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

William B. King, *Chair*, Allison M. Crump, *Vice Chair*, Charles M. Sullivan, *Executive Director*
M. Wyllis Bibbins, Suzanne R. Green, Helen F. Moulton, Frank Shirley, Jo M. Solet, *Members*
Jacob D. Albert, Bruce A. Irving, Jennifer Jones, *Alternates*

To: Robert Healy, City Manager

From: Charles Sullivan, Historical Commission CMS

Re: Consent Agenda #1 of October 15, 2001
(on a preliminary report regarding an offer from Harvard Univ. to purchase an easement below Cambridge Street that represents the conclusion of a 5-year process relating to the construction of the Center for Government and International Studies)

Date: December 6, 2001

As you will recall, the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District (NCD) Commission has been actively engaged in the review and approval of Harvard's proposed Center for Government and International Studies (CGIS; previously known as the Knafel Center) over the last two years. I am writing to provide a summary of the Commission's activities to date on this project and to transmit the Commission's recommendation on the tunnel easement offer to the City Council.

Since October, 1999, the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission has held 11 public hearings in which over 100 hours of public testimony and debate were presented. In August, 2000, the Commission comprehensively approved a significantly-modified project that met the Commission's primary objectives for architectural quality and compatibility with neighborhood character. The Commission has continued to meet to fine-tune elements of the project related to details of material and design, as well as mitigating construction impacts on neighbors.

Review of the Center for Government and International Studies constituted the largest and most complex project brought to the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission in its 16-year history. The City Council commended the Commission for its hard work and the successful outcome of this challenging process in October, 2000.

The Mid Cambridge NCD Commission's decision is presented in a series of findings and motions which resulted in the issuance of Certificates of Appropriateness for the three major properties contained in the project. These Certificates of Appropriateness, all of which contain specific conditions for compliance, form a binding agreement with Harvard on the manner in which the CGIS project may be constructed. Integral to these approvals is the construction of a tunnel connecting the two halves of the CGIS under Cambridge Street.

In finding the CGIS project to be appropriate "both in relation to the land area upon which the structure is situated and to structures in the vicinity" [2.78.220, Camb. City Code] and to comply with the General Objectives of the Mid Cambridge order (section IV., A.), the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission specifically considered the efficiencies of access and design the tunnel connection would yield. These include:

* eliminating a second loading dock from the CGIS/South building;
* concentrating loading activity in an underground loading dock at the CGIS/North building; and
* reducing pedestrian crossings on Cambridge Street by encouraging internal communication between the two halves of the CGIS by the center's users and the public.

The tunnel has facilitated the following goals which the hearing process revealed to be critically important to both the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission and the public:

* reducing the overall size and mass of the project by bifurcating it onto two sites on opposite sides of Cambridge Street (the original concept was for a single, larger structure on the north side of Cambridge Street);
* concentrating service activities on the north side of Cambridge Street away from the large, privately-owned residential apartment blocks at 1716 Cambridge Street (Foxcroft Manor), 84 Prescott Street (Bromley Court), and 85-95 Prescott Street; and
* enhancing pedestrian safety by providing alternative means of accessing the buildings without exiting to Cambridge Street.

The Mid Cambridge NCD Commission found these arguments for including the tunnel below Cambridge Street to be compelling and critical to the success of the overall design.

On an administrative level, failure to develop the tunnel component of the CGIS project will result in design modifications, require additional reviews by the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission, and create time delays. On a practical level, the effect would most likely be to eliminate some of the public benefits that accrue to the abutters: loading areas would need to be developed in the CGIS/South building, thereby increasing traffic and service activity on that site, to the detriment of its residential neighbors.

For these reasons, and in consideration of the many hours of effort the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission has dedicated to the fair and thorough review of this project, and on behalf of the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission, I respectfully urge the City Council to favorably consider the tunnel easement offer and to engage in whatever negotiation may be necessary to achieve the sale of the easement. Thank you.

cc: John Moos, Chair, MCNCDC
Sally Zimmerman, CHC

Consent Agenda #17

Summary of the Community Meeting held by the City Manager regarding the Pedestrian and Service Tunnel beneath Cambridge Street.

In City Council December 17, 2001

Referred to Calendar Item #10 on motion of Councillor Reeves. Councillors Toomey and Sullivan recorded in negative.

CCM-101

City of Cambridge

O-1.

IN CITY COUNCIL

December 17, 2001

MAYOR GALLUCCIO
COUNCILLOR BORN
COUNCILLOR BRAUDE
COUNCILLOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DECKER
VICE MAYOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

ORDERED: That all items pending before the City Council and not acted upon by the end of the 2001 Legislative Session be placed in the files of the City Clerk without prejudice, subject to recall by any members, 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 17, 2001.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.
Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

S-92

Special meeting
easement location between
1720 and 1737 Comb. St.

April 3, 2002