



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

BETH RUBENSTEIN

Acting Assistant City
Manager for Community
Development

TO: Robert W. Healy
City Manager

FROM: Beth Rubenstein, Acting Assistant City Manager
for Community Development *BR*

DATE: February 23, 1999

RE: Revised response to Council Order #034 dated 12/14/98:
Report on Hiring an Independent Traffic Engineer and a
Mediator to Work with East Cambridge Planning Team

This order and an initial response were discussed at the City Council meeting of January 25, 1999.

Since our last discussion with the Council, the Community Development Department (CDD) has met with the East Cambridge Planning Team (ECPT) to discuss changes in the project and the review of the proponent's traffic study conducted for the city by Rizzo Associates. The ECPT brought a number of questions and concerns to our attention, and as a result our consultant has agreed to look again at the traffic counts to assess their accuracy. A number of additional pieces of data have been requested of Lyme Properties and will be discussed with the ECPT and the Planning Board early in March. The next meeting of the ECPT and CDD has been scheduled for March 4.

The Planning Team has also requested that \$15,000 of East Cambridge Stabilization Funds be allocated to the ECPT for traffic consultation services, legal fees and other expenses, with \$5,000 allocated to each category. We have agreed to approve up to \$15,000 to be spent by the ECPT for traffic consultation services, consistent with the agreement between the city and the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) for expenditure of neighborhood stabilization funds. That agreement states that such funds can be spent for the following services:

- improvements to streets and sidewalks
- street lighting
- tree planting
- low interest home improvement loans or grants
- creation and/or improvement of outdoor recreational facilities and parks
- any other physical improvements to the East Cambridge neighborhood which the East Cambridge Planning Team approves.

Hiring of a traffic consultant by the ECPT appears to be consistent with these criteria and CDD will work with the Planning Team on the administration of these funds. It is less clear that allocating these funds to legal fees is consistent with the HUD agreement and the criteria listed above, so we do not recommend approval of this expenditure at this time. If the ECPT wants to propose other consultant services consistent with the criteria, CDD will be glad to review them.

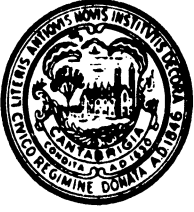
Several other factors are also providing opportunities for the public to comment on the future of the site, as follows:

The project is subject to the recently-adopted IPOP, which provides opportunities for public review and requires preparation and approval of a detailed traffic study and a determination of no adverse impact on city traffic.

The project is subject to review by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. The MEPA process provides several opportunities for written public comment, at the ENF, Draft, and Final Environmental Impact Report phases. Because the project area is located within 100 feet of the Broad Canal, the city's Conservation Commission has jurisdiction over administration of the Wetlands Protection Act within this area and also holds a public hearing.

In order to be built, the project will require a Chapter 91 Waterways license, which will be sought after the proponent has completed the MEPA process. DEP will hold a local public hearing on the license application.

Finally, a rezoning of the property has been proposed. This proposal, known as the Toomey/Born Amendment to East Cambridge PUD-3 is now under consideration, with the Council's Ordinance Committee scheduled to hear public comment on February 24, 1999.



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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

March 1, 1999

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 7, regarding a report on hiring an independent traffic engineer and a mediator/facilitator to work with the East Cambridge Planning Team, received from Acting Assistant City Manager for Community Development Beth Rubenstein.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment

Consent Agenda #4

S-145

Relative to AW #7, regarding a
report on hiring an independent
traffic engineer and a mediator/
facilitator to work with the
East Cambridge Planning Team.

In City Council March 1, 1999

Placed on file