

5 Hollis St.
Cambridge, MA 02140

Jonathan S. Myers

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CAMBRIDGE MA.

The Honorable Cambridge City Council
City Hall
795 Mass Ave.
Cambridge MA 02139

To the Honorable Members of the City Council,

My warm wishes to all of you for a safe and happy holiday season.

Recent events involving MIT and the Tent City people have once again brought the issue of affordable housing and providing for the homeless to the forefront in our city.

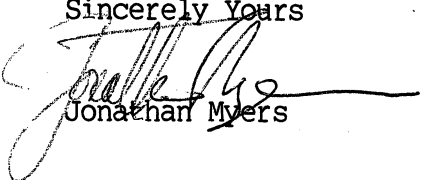
MIT's recent action in forcefully evicting the Tent City residents was a harsh act, which calls into question their commitment and sensitivity to the Cambridge community. It also calls into question their responsiveness to city leaders, coming on the heels of the City Council's request for negotiations between MIT and Tent City residents.

I commend the City Council for taking swift action in confronting MIT. Personally I would have also voted for the two tabled orders, but I respect Councillor Vellucci's strategic decision to leave these orders on the table for use at a later date. However, City Council should be prepared to pass these orders if MIT does not meet the needs of the community, including providing temporary and long-term housing. Unfortunately, MIT will not respond to gestures of goodwill and may respond best to pressure and city leveraging of the situation.

With regard to their proposed development of University Park, I believe that we should not proceed with the project until we are assured that MIT is doing all that it can to provide affordable housing to the neighborhood. In reviewing zoning packages, the CDD version seems too large, and would bring too much traffic into the neighborhood for too little benefit for the community. The scaled down zoning package presented by the Planning Board is a much more reasonable proposal. The Planning Board seems to have taken a leadership position in recognizing the central importance of the Simplex project and the depth with which development has infiltrated the city's neighborhoods.

Secondly, recent events also point to the need to build more affordable housing. That is, Councillor Vellucci housing that is affordable to people who don't have much money. In this regard linkage is essential. I urge you to move forward in consideration and passage of such a plan. People in the city are waiting for a comprehensive housing plan which grapples with development, and provides affordable housing. Linkage is a direct method to meet the needs of the community on both accounts.

Sincerely Yours


Jonathan Myers

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S-1741

Comm. from Jonathan S. Myers, 5 Hollis St., regarding recent events with MIT and the Tent City people and the issues of affordable housing and the homeless in the city.

In City Council,

December 21, 1987

Placed in File

Copies sent to the City Mgr.,
Licence Commission + Traffic Director
12/23/87