

Dr. Carolyn R. Swift 269 Harvard St. #13 Cambridge, MA 02139

November 8, 2000

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City Council
c/o City Clerk
City Hall
Cambridge, MA 02139

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CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to you now, as I wrote earlier in the discussion to the City Manager, to urge you to approve Central Square as a new location for the library.

The location of the current library is charming, but it is very difficult to reach without a car. In the periods in which I have been without a car recently at age 72, I was exhausted by trying to get there. Friends say that I should have used the branch, but branches lack the reference books, specialized magazines, and computers that I seek a main library.

The Prospect Street location has the advantage of being close to the largest number of people in Cambridge. It would also attract citizens from all over Cambridge to Central Square, thus benefiting the square. The location is easily accessible for everyone as it is only a block from the red line.

In addition, a new public building on Prospect St., surrounded by greenery, would add to the increasing beauty of Central Square, making it a place where more people would want to spend time, thus aiding business in Cambridge.

I want to take this opportunity to voice an uneasiness I have been hesitant to express in all this discussion. If I am wrong and attributing bad motives to good people, please forgive me. But I have wondered if the opposition to locating the library in Central Square lies for some people in the diversity of the population in this part of the city. Are people afraid that the homeless will seek refuge in a library that is so easily accessible? Are some people even afraid to come to the square because of its past reputation for being "seedy"? If so, locating the library on Prospect Street is the appropriate answer, pointing out that everyone deserves the delight of reading and that this wonderful, vibrant, diverse part of the city is a great place to spend time.

In discussions at the Senior Center, I find that many people seem simply to object to change. They say, "It's always been there; that's where it belongs." Fear of change is of course no reason to avoid it. The present library could be maintained as a well-equipped branch and thus be available to all who love it. But, please, give us a main library in the most densely populated section of the city.

Sincerely yours,

Carolyn R. Swift (hyn)

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Consent Communication #11

A communication was received from Dr. Carolyn R. Swift urging the approval of Central Square as the new location for the library.

In City Council November 20, 2000

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