

Mr. Healy emphasized the need for the City to execute a long-term agreement with MIT to protect the City's tax base for the long-term. With its surprise purchase of Tech Square, MIT now owns 12% of the commercial tax base of the city. He pointed out that removal of this property from the tax rolls would be far more devastating to the City's economy than anything that Harvard could do or not do about its payment in lieu of taxes (PILOT).

Mr. Healy said that he thinks the idea of a master plan for the universities deserves more discussion. More certainty of outcome would benefit the city and the universities.

Councillor Davis said that her greatest concern is trying to make sure there are still thirteen neighborhoods in Cambridge one hundred years from now, that they have not been swallowed up by the universities.

Councillor Decker said that the City must become much more aggressive about demonstrating to the universities that they will pay a heavy price for not engaging in conversation with the City and for not acting responsibly with regard to the City's legitimate concerns. She does not agree that the City has to give the university a "quid pro quo" to induce the university to do what it ought to be doing anyway.

Mr. Maloney said that he cannot separate the planning issues from the financial issues. MIT's acquisition of 12% of the commercial tax base is the biggest threat to the health of this city.

Councillor Reeves noted the major problem with Harvard is finding the person with the power to make the decision for discussions.

Councillor Galluccio agreed that "finding the who is the whole issue." He also noted the effect on this issue of two-year Council terms and the recent rapid turnover of Harvard presidents.

Councillor Maher said that he sees the crux of the problem as reaching agreement among the members of the Council as to what their priorities are for the City's relationship with its universities.

Mayor Sullivan agreed that the City Council has to have a clear goal and a seat at the table. He, for example, does not care how much property MIT owns as long as it does not take it off the tax rolls. The issues are different for different universities. With regard to Lesley University, he hopes that there will continue to be street-level retail uses in the Porter Exchange building.

Ms. Rubenstein said that the review that Boston has of university land use with its master plan comes too early in the development process to be effective and the project review that Cambridge uses comes too late in the process. She said that she sees the goals for improving the planning process as follows:

- Better up front communication and honest information.
- Agreement that the taxable/nontaxable land issue must be on the table.
- More certainty in the end game for the university.
- Proceeding with an understanding that in this city there is precedent for reaching agreements with respect to difficult issues.

Mr. Rossi emphasized the need for the universities to be more honest and forthcoming in their communications with the City.

Ms. Miller then described the composite of an ideal relationship taken from the individual interviews with Council members before the meeting:

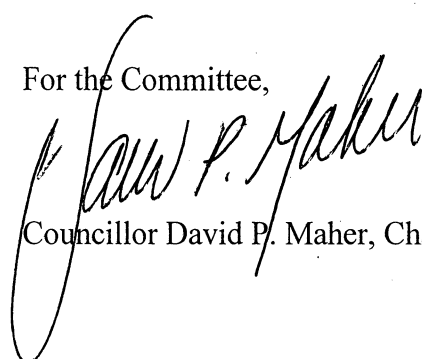
- Principled, fair and honest basis on which to benchmark the universities obligations to the City.
- Stable tax base.
- Predictability with flexibility (understanding of where the campuses will be and a moving away from the present reactive mode).
- Communication.
- Optimization of knowledge and resource sharing.
- A unified approach by the City.

The meeting then proceeded with a lengthy discussion of the many different roles and activities taken by the universities, and the positive and negative factors associated with the various roles.

It was agreed that the next meeting would be another facilitated meeting on Friday, April 5, 2002 beginning at 9:00 a.m. in the same location.

Councillor Maher thanked all those present for their attendance. The meeting was adjourned at 1:38 P.M.

For the Committee,


Councillor David P. Maher, Chair

City of Cambridge

UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

In City Council April 22, 2002

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Councillor David P. Maher, Chair
Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Vice Chair
Councillor Brian Murphy
Councillor E. Denise Simmons
Councillor Timothy J. Toomey

The University Relations Committee held a public hearing on March 26, 2002, beginning at 9:50 A.M. in the first floor conference room of the Water Treatment Facility, 250 Fresh Pond Parkway. The meeting was held for the purpose of a facilitated discussion among council members and senior staff about the nature of the current relationships between the City and the universities and goals for improving these relationships.

Present at the hearing were Councillor David P. Maher, Chair of the Committee, Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Vice Chair, Councillor Brian Murphy, Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Councillor Anthony Galluccio, Mayor Michael Sullivan, Councillor Marjorie C. Decker, Councillor Timothy J. Toomey, City Clerk D. Margaret Drury, Deputy City Clerk Donna Lopez and Council and Assistant Sandra Albano. Also present were Robert W. Healy, City Manager, Richard Rossi, Assistant to City Manager, Deputy City Manager, Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services, James Maloney, Assistant City Manager for Fiscal Affairs, Beth Rubenstein, Assistant City Manager for Community Development, Julia Bowdoin, and Roberta Miller, trainer and facilitator.

Councillor Maher convened the hearing and explained the purpose. He introduced Roberta Miller. Ms. Miller described the agenda for the day as encompassing discussion of the current situation, university activities within the city, what the characteristics of better relationships would be, and what process could lead to better relationships. She noted that this was an ambitious agenda for the available time and acknowledged that another meeting could be required for the Council to work through the whole agenda.

Ms. Miller reported that in her pre-meeting interviews with individual members of the Council, the City/university relationships were described as "tense, sad, festering, strained, different and full of misinformation." She also noted that the "city" in the term "city/university relationships" really involves many distinct entities and subgroups – neighbors, residents, organized neighborhoods/associations, city boards and commissions, the City Council and Mayor, the City Manager and administrative staff.

Ms. Miller then invited Mr. Healy to describe the university/city relationships from the vantage point of the City Manager and administrative staff.

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Committee Report #1

Committee Report from Councillor
David P. Maher, Chair of the
University Relations Committee,
for a meeting held on March 26,
2002 for the purpose of a facilitated
discussion among city council
members and senior staff about the
nature of the current relationships
between the City and the
universities and goals for
improving these relationships.

In City Council April 22, 2002

**REPORT ACCEPTED.
PLACED ON FILE.**