City of Cambridge

The Traffic and Transportation Committee conducted a public hearing on Wednesday, April 13, 1994 beginning at 7:16 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall.

Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Chair of the above referenced committee, convened the hearing and stated that the purpose of this date's proceedings was to discuss traffic related issues surrounding the proposed Stop & Shop project on Memorial Drive. Present at the hearing were: Councillor William H. Walsh, City Manager Robert W. Healy, Deputy Director of Traffic and Parking Lauren Preston, Director of the Environmental Program Elizabeth Epstein and Deputy City Clerk John E. Flynn.

To begin the discussion Councillor Myers noted that in general the neighborhood supports the construction of a store on the site but potential impacts of the project must be addressed. One of the key elements of such impacts would be truck and vehicular traffic on the surrounding neighborhood abutting the site.

At this time the Chair recognized the City Manager for an overview of where the project is and the outlook for a satisfactory conclusion.

City Manager Healy outlined to those assembled the Secretary of Environmental Affairs' preferred alternative and the conflict with the Metropolitan District Commission's (MDC) findings vis a vis truck traffic on Memorial Drive. He stated the belief that MDC or legislative relief would not be forthcoming and that other alternatives would need to be reviewed. He outlined the provisions of the purchase and sale agreement between the City and the Trustees of the Realty Trust with regards to Riverside Road as it related to truck traffic. He noted that the logistics of truck deliveries, etc. were in the domain of the Stop & Shop and not the City. He concluded by stating that he was present to solicit and listen to the collective ideas of those assembled in finding a resolution that is acceptable to all parties.

At this time the Committee heard from Mr. Preston with regard to Magazine Street traffic. He noted that the proposed layout of the site, not the site of the store, offered some increased traffic safety because of the reduction in the number of driveways entering and exiting the site. He also stated that the mechanized traffic signal on Magazine Street would add the our safety.

At the time the Committee heard from Liz Epstein for her assessment of the project. Ms. Epstein stated that she has been in discussions with regards to the

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traffic statistics and that there needs for issues to be prioritized. She stated that she would like to know the neighborhood assumptions behind the downsizing of the store. Do the assumptions include the elimination of functions within the store or only the site of the store. She also noted that there have been discussions on a Paratransit system to augment T service in the Cambridgeport area.

Upon completion of Ms. Epstein's comments, Councillor Myers provided the assembly with a handout entitled "Traffic Points of Concern" (A copy is attached). In outlining the statistics the Chair spoke of the assumptions that were used by Stop & Shop in the proposed Cambridge scenario. The scenario calls for an increase in pedestrian traffic where neighborhood residents would walk to and from the site. He further noted that the ITE statistics represented a worse case scenario.

At this time the Committee heard from Mr. Daniel Geer and Mr. Steve Kaiser for a presentation of alternative corridors that could be considered for this site. (A copy of the sketch is attached).

Mr. Kaiser noted that this proposal is in the very preliminary stage and has only been presented publicly once prior to this hearing. He also stated that both alternatives would require significant land takings since ownership of the parcels is privately held. He also stated that there exists the need for a reasonable compromise relative to the size of the trucks entering the site.

Upon conclusion of Mr. Kaiser's presentation he fielded several questions from the City Manager with regards to land taking costs, potential development plans by the landowners and the square footage involved in a taking. Mr. Kaiser could not provide any dollar estimates associated with these alternatives.

Mr. Stanislas A. Horowitz, 12A Florence Street, thanked Mr. Kaiser for his efforts and provided the Committee with a history of the Polaroid parcel and the recent purchase of approximately 8,000 square feet by Polaroid to the lot rectangular at a market price of one million.

At this time Councillor Myers opened the floor for public comments and inquiries.

Ms. Mary Shea inquired if it was possible for a route to be as follows: up Vassar Street to Brookline - one way Granite Street into Stop & Shop.

Mr. Preston in response stated that this will reverse the flow but would not allow for a bus route.

Mr. Horowitz inquired of the number of additional trucks to service the various functions in the Super Stop & Shop.

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The City Manager stated that the total number of deliveries has been calculated in the EIR - 181 v 172.

Councillor Myers also stated that the total number of trucks is the same as well as the number of large trucks.

Mr. Horowitz disagreed stating that the trailer size increases from 35′ to 48′ given the new layout of the site.

Mr. Anthony Ameral, 19 Pleasant Street, expressed his support for the Stop & Shop project.

Ms. Susan Perry, Pleasant Street, inquired of the possibility of a land swap between Stop & Shop and MIT.

The City Manager stated that the City could not be involved in private real estate transactions citing Massachusetts General Laws.

Mr. Robert LaTremouille, 348 Franklin Street, stated his support for the zoning petition that was filed and not acted by the previous City Council. He further stated that Riverside Road should be leased and not sold.

Councillor Myers stated that given the facts that the City does not own the company nor the site that Stop & Shop is putting the City in a difficult position.

Mr. Horowitz commented on the impacts facing his neighborhood with increased vehicular traffic, potential gridlock, lack of adequate customer parking for a 78,000 sq. ft. building, and the additional non-Cambridge customers. He suggested that the Committee look at the 40,000 sq. ft. Waverly Star Market and see how successful it is. He further stated that the proposed project is just not good for the neighborhood.

Councillor Myers steered the discussion towards the impacts of truck and vehicular traffic on residential streets. Noting that truck traffic will impact Pleasant Street and vehicular traffic will impact Magazine Street.

Mr. Peter Valentine stated that no agreement could be reached until the parties start talking to one another. He was critical of Stop & Shop not being present at this hearing. He further stated that government should assure that a market remains in this neighborhood.

Councillor Myers inquired of those present what can be done to protect the neighborhood given the increase in traffic.

Mr. Kaiser in response stated the following actions:

1) No Right Turn - Memorial Drive onto Magazine at Peak Hours
2) Try to restrict - signal timing on Magazine Street and Putnam Avenue
3) Magazine Street - One Way from Granite Street to Memorial Drive

Mr. Preston commented on Mr. Kaiser's suggestion as follows:

1) Would require Police presence to enforce
2) Timing can be changed but individuals will look for alternate routes
3) Would be difficult to get into the site

Mr. Harowitz inquired that given the fact that the MDC has two months to respond and assume it says how would Stop & Shop trucks get in and out if trucks cannot use Memorial Drive?

At this time Councillor Myers passed out an additional handout entitled "Elements of a Solution" (A copy is attached). He further suggested the following:

1) Trucking hours: 9:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.
2) Restrictions: 4:45 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. - possible neighborhood sticker
3) Reduction in scale - 15%
4) Jitney service through the neighborhood
5) Crossing guards

Mr. Kaiser stated that for neighborhood use the restrictions could prove tricky and enforcement could be questionable.

Mr. Preston stated that the restriction policy would require a change in state law.

Councillor Myers stated that these options were being offered to build upon the reach a consensus and minimize the impacts on the residential streets.

Mr. Harowitz thanked Councillor Myers for the start and that this approximately the 30th meeting he has attended on this issue. He urged the City to play hardball with Stop & Shop.

Representative Alvin Thompson urged the City to go back to the table and not allow a repeat of the Fresh Pond closure.

Councillor Myers concluded the hearing by thanking the participants for their comments.

The hearing was adjourned at 9:29 p.m.

For the Committee

Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Chair

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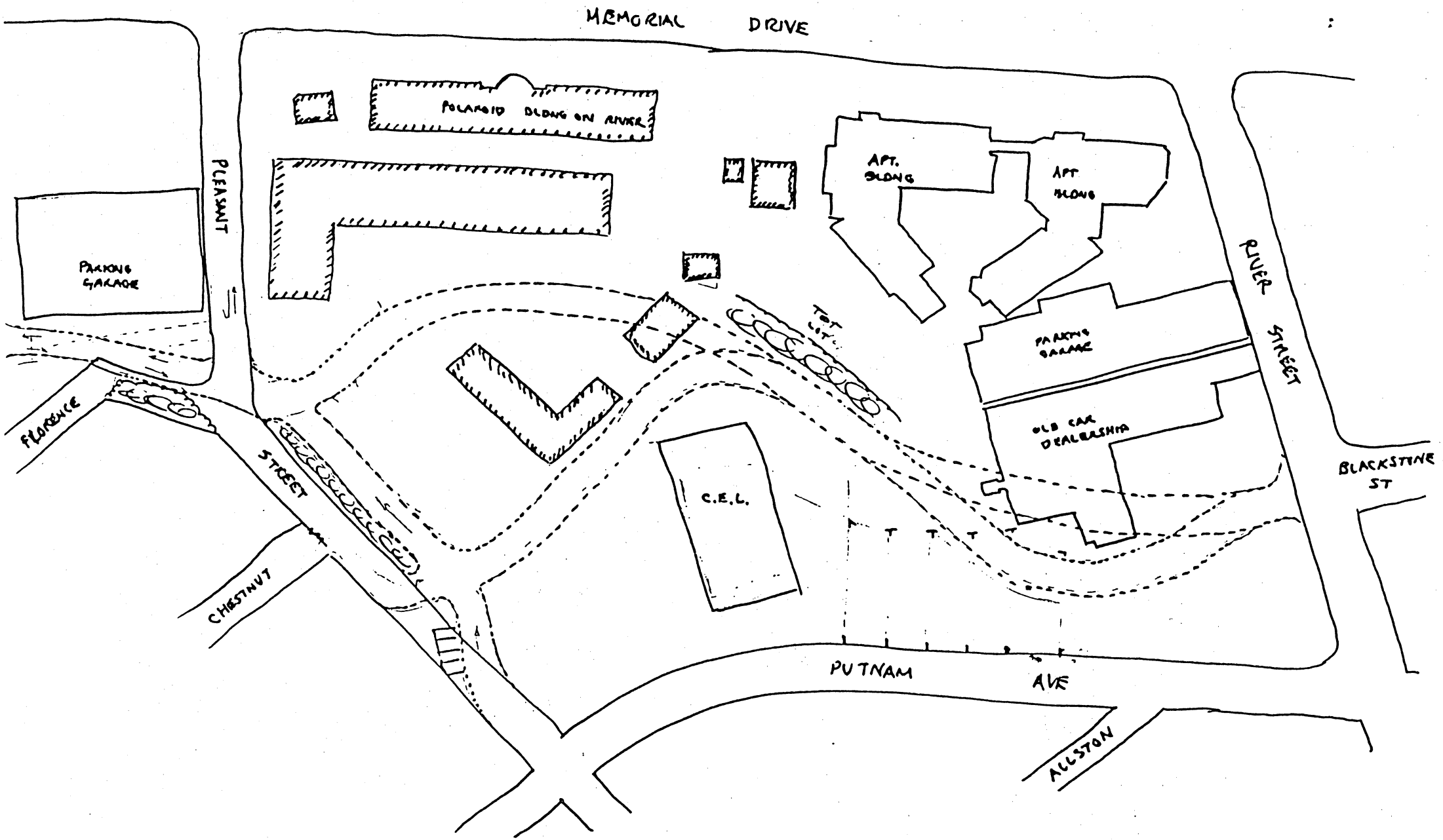
Traffic Points of Concern

Trip Generation(Vehicle Trips)

	Existing Plaza	Proposed (Camb Scenario)	ITE
Weekday Evening Peak	*522*	*566*	*797*
Saturday Midday Peak	*450*	*814*	*1179*
Weekday Daily Total	*5,696*	*6,890*	*9,640*
Saturday Daily Total	*4,980*	*9,400*	*13,620*

Magazine St Traffic	**1993**	**1998 No-Build**	**1998Build**
Weekday Evening	*336*	*374 +12%*	*418 +26%*
Saturday Midday	*280*	*311 +12%*	*447 +58*


MEMORIAL DRIVE
POLAROID BLDNG ON RIVER
APT. BLDNG
APT BLDNG
PARKING GARAGE
PLEASANT
PARKING GARAGE
OLD CAR DEALERSHIP
RIVER STREET
FLORENCE
STREET
CHESTNUT
C.E.L.
PUTNAM AVE
ALLSTON
BLACKSTONE ST

Elements of A Solution

-Truck restrictions
Trucking hours

-Magazine St.
restriction during peak hour for neighborhood use

-slight reduction in scale

-jitney service through neighborhood

-crossing guards during school time

Committee Report #2 S' 09

A comm was received from John E. Flynn transmitting a report from Jonathasn Myer Chair of the Traffic and Transportation Committee for a heaing held on 4/13/94 re: traffic Stop & Shop on Mem Drive.

IN City Council April 25, 1994

Report accepted
Placed on file

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