



# City of Cambridge

18.

IN CITY COUNCIL

September 28, 1998

COUNCILLOR DAVIS  
COUNCILLOR BORN  
MAYOR DUEHAY  
VICE MAYOR GALLUCCIO  
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

RESOLVED: That the attached communication dated August 20, 1998 from HMFH Architects, Inc. regarding the Library site selection be forwarded to the City Manager and the City Council for their consideration.

In City Council September 28, 1998.  
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.  
Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Margaret Drury".

D. Margaret Drury  
City Clerk

HMFH Architects, Inc.  
130 Bishop Allen Drive  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
(617) 492-2200  
(617) 876-9775 FAX  
hmfhmail@hmfh.com

# 18

August 20, 1998

**HMFH**  
**Architects**

Councilor Henrietta Davis  
City Hall  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Re: Cambridge Library Site Selection

Dear Councilor Davis:

The City Council will soon vote on a new Main Library site. As you know, the planning for a new library has been in process for more than three years. I believe the completed work of the Library 21 Committee has been a model for open, thorough and intelligent discussion of a very controversial issue. I hope that the quality of the efforts to date and the many volunteer hours will result in nothing less than a thoroughly informed and visionary decision by the City Council.

As the civic and geographic heart of Cambridge, Central Square offers a location for a truly great civic and cultural institution, which will be easily accessible to all. I am very concerned that serious consideration of a Central Square location may be eliminated because it presents a challenging and complex development. All locations – even the Broadway site – will be difficult, complex and expensive. We need visionary leadership from the City Council to determine the best site for a library for the next century.

As with all development in Cambridge, both public and private, controversy will accompany this project wherever it is located. In fact, passionate opposition to expansion on the existing Broadway site led to the work of the Library 21 Committee and the recent site selection study. In addition, whether we wish to recognize it or not, the Broadway site currently houses three important civic institutions – the High School, the Library and the Library Park - each of which have important space needs to serve the citizens in the coming century.

Reports that the Central Square business community is opposed to the siting of the library in Central Square are premature. Until recently the Central Square businesses and property owners as a group have not been well informed of the site selection process and its findings. Understandably, the site consultant's initial approach to property owners with regard to acquisition of property for the library site, without presenting a citywide vision for the library and the potential benefits for all business and property owners in the Square, has met with negative reaction. The meeting of the Business Association on August 12 to inform the Central Square community about the opportunities and challenges that a Central Square location offers resulted in a strongly favorable consensus.

*Stephen Friedlaender, AIA*  
*George R. Metzger, AIA*  
*John F. Miller, AIA*

*Mario J. Torroella, AIA*  
*Steven L. Millington, AIA*

*Robert A. Juusola, AIA*  
*Philip S. Lewis, AIA*  
*Richard S. Oja, AIA*

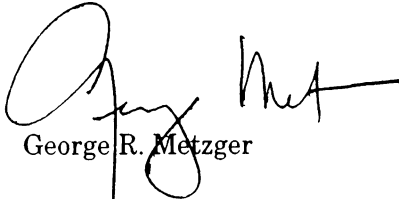
*Bob Pahl, AIA*  
*Laura A. Wernick, AIA*

Councilor Henrietta Davis  
August 20, 1998  
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I urge you to follow the site selection process through to its conclusion to determine the best site for the city's new library and not opt for the Broadway site merely because it exists or because of the difficulty of developing a new site. It would be a terrible waste of an excellent site selection process to merely give up and return to the existing site at this time. Consider carefully the Post Office, the Prospect/Bishop Allen Drive site and the two other Central Square sites favored in the Sasaki report. To do anything less at this time will only confirm the skeptics' view that this study has been a charade and certainly will not satisfy the opponents to expansion on the Broadway site. Let us have a little more of the vision that has brought us this far in the Library planning process and avoid anything less than a thorough conclusion to the process.

Very truly yours,



George R. Metzger

Principal, HMFH Architects, Inc.  
Resident, 90 Antrim Street, Cambridge  
Vice president, Central Square Business Association

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Consent Order #18

CM 450

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In City Council September 28, 1998

**ORDER ADOPTED**