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Lopez, Donna

From: Rosemary Booth <RosemaryBooth@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, September 21, 2015 2:21 PM
To: City Council
Cc: CDDat344; City Manager; Farooq, Iram; Rasmussen, Susanne; Lopez, Donna
Subject: concerns about Volpe site (PUD-KS) rezoning

Dear Mayor David P. Maher, Vice Mayor Dennis A. Benzan, and Members Dennis J. Carlone, Leland Cheung, Craig A. Kelley, Nadeem A. Mazen, Marc C. McGovern, E. Denise Simmons, and Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.:

As homeowners whose condo directly faces the Volpe site, we have serious concerns about several provisions of the Planning Board’s May 27 petition to amend the current PUD-KS zoning, which will soon expire. In addition, as Cambridge residents we are troubled by the rapid speed of the process for reaching decisions about extraordinary changes to our neighborhood.

We are aware that the Council may discuss refiling the rezoning petition at tonight’s meeting. Since we are unable to attend, we are sending you our concerns about rezoning details and about the process.

To start, we ask that the text of the PUD-KS rezoning be revised to:

- require that a significant contiguous public open space be included on the site; most design team and resident input to date has put that open space at the corner of Third Street and Broadway
- disallow any property of the federal government to be counted toward the public open space requirement
- require that building heights and placement allow abundant sunlight and open-sky exposure
- require that 20% or more of residential units be affordable by people of low- and moderate-income means

In addition, given the complexity of the Volpe/GSA “land swap”—unprecedented, not only in Cambridge, but anywhere in the U.S.!—we ask that as the City body charged with rezoning approval you relax the timeline in order to gather useful information in the two key areas of transportation infrastructure capacity and citywide planning.

For transportation, and with Longfellow Bridge reconstruction still closed in a Cambridge direction, we ask that you hold off on rezoning long enough to get results from the in-process MassDOT Kendall Square Mobility Task Force effort. This team and their consultants have been charged with producing information on current and future traffic flows, transit ridership, rail ridership, bike ridership, environment and land use, mobility and health impacts.

Secondly, we ask that you pause rezoning long enough to gather early feedback from the just-initiated citywide comprehensive planning process. Led by the Utile group, working with residents, this process will produce a vision for Cambridge as a whole, as well as policy, design goals, and actionable recommendations for each area of the city.

We ask that you take the prudent course and wait for this most relevant information on transportation and citywide planning data before finalizing rezoning of the Volpe site.

Thank you for your attention and help.

With best regards,
Rosemary Booth and Jerry O'Leary

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