

Andrew Farrar  
4 Lawrence Street,  
Cambridge, MA 02139

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Dear Cambridge City Council,

I am writing in support of the City Council petition initiated to extend for 1 block a BA-3 Commercial zone by our neighbors Kiril and Catherine Alexandrov who own 158 Western Avenue.

I am a former resident of 14 Kinnard and have lived in this neighborhood for 32 of the past 35 years.

I know the applicant Kiril Alexandrov personally, I coached his son in soccer, and I know him professionally, as he is a current client. I am also a customer. I love his Big Skinny Wallet product.

Twenty years ago I started a new toy company. We tried very hard to find space in Cambridge, but it was not possible. We moved to Woburn than Wilmington then Lawrence, and created many good paying, quiet assembly and customer service jobs, for many high school graduates, as well as college graduates. Only as a reconfigured and mature company were we able to move back to Cambridge.

Finding space is essential. Not just for hi-tech start ups, but other innovative start up companies, like HandsOnToys 20 years ago, and Kiril's consumer product business today. And this is very hard to do. Western Ave seems to be an ideal area for smart integration of right sized commercial accessible to its employees without overtaxing the area. It will also bring additional revenue to other Central Square based companies.

I am confident that Kiril's company will be a great neighbor, and without a doubt will act responsibly. The design, marketing and customer service work associated with his company will be non-disruptive and make the neighborhood safer with business day activity when many homeowners are away. And as a business, this use will reduce the stress of overnight parking that could be an issue if the property remains a multifamily residential structure.

Finding viable commercial space in Cambridge is next to impossible. If Cambridge wants to be a mecca for not just high-tech and bio-pharmaceutical, this is the kind of innovative approach that will serve Cambridge well, today, and into the future.

I humbly and heartily support the one block, even side, extension of a BA-3 commercial zone.

Respectfully submitted,

Andrew E. Farrar