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Mark Jaquith
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To the Cambridge City Council
January 14, 2013

In response to Committee Report Number 4:

Just three years ago this body ordained up-zoning of 11 acres in East Cambridge belonging to Alexandria Real Estate Equities Inc. increasing the value of their holdings here by perhaps up to one billion, with a b, over the next few decades. In exchange for this, a mitigation and community benefit package was negotiated by Alexandria, the city, and representatives of the East Cambridge neighborhood.

Many months were spent on this process. Hundreds, if not thousands, of hours were invested by me and my neighbors. The City of Cambridge hired David Dixon from Goody Clancy of the K2C2 study to facilitate the process.

Most of our time was spent on urban planning issues. Specifically, how to assure that the profits of the landowner could insure that our end of town developed into a place that made Cambridge a better place to live, work and walk the streets safely. One major chunk of that lies in getting the people who work in these huge new lab and office blocks actually get out and walk around a bit to liven the place up a bit and help out the local economy. As well as to mitigate the increased traffic, pollution, energy use, and density.

The western end of Binney Street has missed out on the renaissance of lower Third Street. We have new buildings here, but they're being built with parking that feeds directly into the buildings, and with the closed facilities allowed under this claw-back of a hard won community benefit.

The goal of this clause is to encourage activity and mixing among the employees here and the rest of the area.

I understand and respect the desire to keep employees collaborating and conversing about proprietary matters in a closed environment, but the decent thing to do would have been to start that conversation back up to find an outcome that we will all benefit from. Toward that end I volunteer my services.

We residents don't have the thousands of dollars to donate to your campaign chests that Alexandria, their attorneys and employees do. We only have our votes and voices. Please listen.

Thank You,

