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April 1, 2013

To the Honorable, Members of the Cambridge City Council:

I am writing on behalf of MIT's School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences (SHASS) to encourage you to approve the Institute's rezoning petition for 26 acres of its land in Kendall Square.

Several SHASS departments (Economics and Political Science, for example) are located in MIT's east campus area and will benefit tremendously from the new infusion of activity and vibrancy that will result from this proposal. We are particularly interested, as are all five MIT schools, in ensuring that our research and work is highly competitive in order to continue to attract top students, faculty and funding. I believe that the Kendall Square proposal can create an environment that is conducive to these objectives.

For example, the MIT Game Lab, a program of MIT SHASS Comparative Media Studies, explores the potential of play in the realms of entertainment to education, art to activism, science to socialization, and more. The MIT Game Lab explores new technologies of play by bringing together academics, students, and professionals from varied industries such as games, health care and finance to advance the role of research in game development. These kinds of robust connections between MIT researchers and local companies are what keep the Institute and Cambridge on the cutting edge of innovation, regardless of the field.

The vital mixed-use district being proposed in MIT's zoning petition will be good for SHASS. The potential new vibrancy and cross-fertilization that is ahead of us is breathtaking. Thank you for helping us to get there.

Sincerely,

Deborah Fitzgerald
Kenan Sahin Dean, School of Humanities, Arts, and Social Sciences
Professor of the History of Technology, Program in Science, Technology, and Society