

-----Original Message-----

From: Jay Wasserman [mailto:jayrwasdf@yahoo.com]  
Sent: Tuesday, April 02, 2013 10:19 PM  
To: City Council  
Cc: City Manager  
Subject: My support of the Kendall MIT re-zoning petition



I would like to comment on the MIT Kendall zoning petition. Although I am on the board of the East Cambridge Planning Team, I am writing only for myself.

For almost a year I have walked, talked and debated the good, the bad and the ugly of Kendall Square. I worked with our ECPT team developing an alternate plan to the K2C2, working with CBT.

This plan tried to go beyond the MIT, and look for the bigger issues and opportunities that lie within Kendall Square.

At the heart of it is the need for greater mixed use. Much of what has currently been built is too much suburban office park and not enough Cambridge. Although at first glance it may not seem so, the proper solution is greater density: greater density adding people and things to do. These are important points to address. So instead of fighting to stop the development, we called for more development, with large bonuses in adding housing, and retail of all type.

After several years of advocating for it, we're finally seeing a real change along Third Street. Instead of "it will never happen", the neighborhood finally got a developer that pushed a vision and now the square has a world class budding restaurant row.

When MIT approached us several years back, housing and retail was an after thought bolted on to their program. After years of talking and listening, they have come forward with a reasonable plan. It's not perfect, but none are. But, for the corner they're developing, it address many of our concerns and hopes for growth in Kendall.

At this point, I have two outstanding concerns:

1. Although they've presented many plans of long term retail, it's critical that the zoning includes written provisions. As we've seen, many of these important issues get lost over time. This is esp critical here, since as Steve Marsh commented to me: "I doubt I'll see this finished before I retire in about ten years". This is not a attack on the current people who seem to understand what we want, and how it really does help their development, but rather points to 10/15/20 years when newer people lose their way. At minimum this can be a good negotiating points when plans change in the future (as they are apt to do...)

2. This second point is less a MIT point, and more a point on other developers in Kendall. Housing is critical to grow the businesses (retail and high tech). The city must hold ALL developers to their promises and have them add housing to Kendall. The retail needs it. The high tech needs it. The neighborhood needs it. Transportation issues are helped by it, etc...

Thank you for your time.

Regards, Jay Wasserman  
34 Second Street