

**From:** julie wasserman [ja\_wa\_bo@yahoo.com]  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 18, 2013 1:10 PM  
**To:** Lopez, Donna  
**Subject:** copy of statement read at Economic Development Committee 18-Jun-13

This statement was read at the Economic Development Committee meeting held at 11:00 on 18-June-2013 in the Sullivan Chamber.

Dear Members of the Committee:

In the support of the arts, Cambridge is rapidly losing ground to surrounding communities that are eagerly embracing the growing demand for music, art and performance spaces.

Somerville has utilized its old armory building as a community center for the arts, and the city is home to the Artisan's Asylum, a non-profit which offers a wide array of classes, equipment and working space for all kinds of creative endeavours.

The Arlington Cultural Council is a sponsor of the Arlington Center for the Arts, which provides space for a theater, galleries, music and art instruction, and summer camps.

Watertown has the Arsenal Center for the Arts, a gem of an institution which offers quality theater, workshop and arts instruction space. It is set to merge with another Watertown institution, the Children's Theater, on July 1.

These organizations were born of a shared commitment to community and the arts by individuals, municipalities, and business interests. Citizens want these cultural amenities. Businesses want these cultural amenities to help attract and retain employees who value the quality of life outside of work that the Boston metro area is so well known for. Local businesses also benefit by the vibrancy a thriving arts center brings to the city, as people travel from surrounding towns to take classes, attend performances, or utilize workshop space.

Cambridge is rapidly becoming a city where real estate is so limited and desirable that we may miss the opportunity for creating a permanent, thriving center for the arts as our neighboring towns have done. Please consider the value of the arts as cultural and educational as well as recreational amenities that serve to balance the city's strong commercial growth. Thank you.

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