ATTACHMENT A

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

BRIAN MURPHY
Assistant
City Manager for
Community Development

TO: Robert W. Healy, City Manager

FROM: Brian P. Murphy, Assistant City Manager for Community Development

RE: Awaiting Report 013-63 regarding a progress report on the non-zoning recommendations submitted by the Central Square Advisory Committee

DATE: June 19, 2013

The yearlong discussions at the Central Square Advisory Committee, 2011/2012 (C2 Committee), resulted in a series of zoning and non-zoning recommendations. Collectively, the recommendations are designed to achieve the vision and goals set forth by the C2 Committee and the preceding Red Ribbon Commission on the Delights and Concerns of Central Square.

Staff is currently working with the Planning Board to develop a Central Square zoning petition based on the zoning recommendations, which will be forwarded to the City Council upon completion. The non-zoning recommendations, listed below, are intended be implemented through the work programs of relevant City departments partnering with the Central Square Business Association, and local businesses and residents over the coming years. Based on scope and complexity, they span the range from short to long term actions. We will report back to the City Council periodically as these recommendations advance.

PUBLIC SPACE

1. **Improve existing public spaces through enhanced programming, improved adjacent uses, and physical improvements, if needed.**
   Key locations and initiatives

A. *Post Office sidewalk as an extension of City Hall Square:*

- City Hall lawn offers a wonderful public space for passive use, particularly in summer. There is potential to similarly activate the wide sidewalk space across Massachusetts Avenue, along the Post Office building, through creation of a parklet to make this a useable and recognizable space.

B. *Carl Barron Plaza:*

- Working with the Central Square Business Association (CSBA), businesses, and adjacent property owners, introduce more event programming, beginning with quickly- implemented smaller events and if appropriate, building toward larger events.

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- Consider redesign of Carl Barron Plaza to organize the space to better separate circulation from seating, create improved spaces for people to linger, and to accommodate the possibility of programming such as music performances and buskers.,
- Connect with adjacent property owner to tenant vacant space to a use that would help animate the plaza.

C. *Jill Brown-Rhone Park and Lafayette Square:*
- Introduce more active ground floor retail and residents near the park to take advantage of expanded programming opportunity.

D. *University Park Commons:*
- Enhance perception of public access through such means as removing perimeter fencing, adding programming for children, and continuing to host public and neighborhood events.
- Improve wayfinding and signage to connect it to Mass Ave.

E. *Massachusetts Avenue:*
- Enhance existing public spaces as noted above, create new public space interventions and introduce public art and performances to support the Central Square Cultural District and transform Massachusetts Avenue into a great street that serves as an important public space for Central Square.

2. Create new outdoor public spaces in conjunction with (re)development

Key locations and initiatives

A. *Small plazas/pocket parks*
- Create one or more pocket parks along Bishop Allen Drive through conversion of current city parking lots. Alternative program concepts for further exploration may include a pedestrian court connecting Bishop Allen and Massachusetts Avenue, passive lawn space, and/or children's play space.
- Create one to two small plazas along the north side of Massachusetts Avenue in conjunction with redevelopment projects. Emphasize opportunities for outdoor dining and seating, taking advantage of good access to direct sun.
- A near-term small plaza at Bishop Allen and Main, and a publicly accessible courtyard at the Novartis development.
- Create a pocket park at Green and Blanche Streets as part of any adjacent redevelopment. Ensure new development includes occupied ground floor spaces facing park.

B. *Western Avenue/River Street improvements*
- Proceed with planned improvements to Western Avenue/River Street park spaces, for coherence and usability.

C. *New connections in the Osborn Triangle*

- Incorporate green elements into any new street/access connection between Main and Mass Ave enabled by redevelopment. Consider incorporating ground floor retail, visible from Massachusetts Avenue and/or Main Street, as part of this connection. Consider opportunity for permanent or periodic pedestrian streets in the Osborn Triangle (e.g. portions of Front, State and/or Village Street).

3. Parklets

Parklets offer important short to medium-term opportunities for high-impact, low-investment public space involving business/property owner/organizational program partners on underutilized sidewalk areas. Possible locations include:

A. *Post Office plaza* (consider USPS and/or Cambridge Senior Center as partner). Coordinate with adjacent Hubway station.

B. *Carl Barron Plaza and/or Western Ave opposite the Plaza* (consider interactive information/arts theme including real-time transit information; with MIT Media Lab, CAC).

C. *Mass Ave opposite Norfolk Street* (consider Dance Complex, with dance/healthy play theme, as partner).

D. *Mass Ave opposite Jill Brown-Rhone Park* (consider Nora Theater, CCTV, Salvation Army, Forest City and/or Cambridge Fire Department as partner).

4. Indoor Public Spaces

A. *Indoor public gathering space*

- Encourage establishment of a 'Public Room' and/or public market in association with property redevelopment or adaptive reuse, esp. of a public building or parking lot. To ensure retail marketability and significant public use, locate the facility near areas of heavy pedestrian traffic such as the Red Line station. Prime locations to consider include: redevelopment sites of one acre or more. If on Naggar site, emphasize connection with pedestrian passage/court linking Massachusetts Avenue and Bishop Allen. If on Quest site, emphasize visibility/connection with Jill Brown-Rhone Park as well as portions of Massachusetts Avenue to the west.

B. *Central Square branch library*

- Consider an alternative location and focus for the Central Square branch library that is located on Massachusetts Ave and focuses on technology, art, and culture.

5. **Programming**
   A. *Farmers Market*
      - In the event of redevelopment of current city parking lot, accommodate the Central Square Farmer's Market at or near its current site (improved), Jill Brown-Rhone Park or other suitable location.

   B. *Partnerships*
      - Work with any interested business or organization to enable their assistance in programming appropriate use of public spaces. Assistance may include design, funding and management.

6. **Priority Streetscape and Active Edge Improvements**
   A. *Develop/adapt buildings to include active ground floor uses.*
   Key locations include the following
      - East side of Sidney Street at Lafayette Square (e.g. through replacement of the existing frame residential building. Retain historically/culturally significant structures).
      - One or both sides of Sidney Street from Mass Ave to and along University Park Commons.
      - City parking lot edges, and other large parking lot frontage along streets/sidewalks.

   B. *Consider installing street trees and/or ornamental plantings in planters* along Mass Ave between Prospect-Essex and Magazine-Pearl where below-grade obstructions prevent in-ground trees.

   C. *Install green "biowalls" or public art* where parking structure walls abut sidewalks, in particular along south-facing portions of the Green Street and Quest parking structures.

   D. *Encourage the use of technology-based ideas* for signage, wayfinding, and providing information for events and transit information.

RETAIL, CULTURAL AND NON-PROFIT DIVERSITY

1. **Promote the identity of Central Square and the Central Square Cultural District.**

2. **Encourage further engagement of cultural organizations, neighborhoods and other stakeholders, as well as businesses, in CSBA initiatives to expand capacity for and participation in Central Square management.**

3. **Encourage expression of creativity in the public realm.**

- Partner with CSBA, business and property owners to create interesting and fun public art that adds to the vibrancy of the Square.
- Administer an annual storefront award program to encourage and recognize creative storefront displays.

4. **Support the CSBA as it explores the feasibility of a Business Improvement District (BID) or other mechanism to enable sharing of resources and to expand management and funding capacity for initiatives such as marketing, cultural/community events, communications and tenanting support, fielding "ambassadors" in the Square, cleanliness, adding and maintaining plantings etc.**
    - Review the strengths and limitations of existing management services provided by the CSBA, City agencies and other stakeholders.
    - Define priority unmet needs
    - Determine whether a BID could effectively meet these.
    - If a BID is feasible, create a business plan for the organization in coordination with the CSBA, City agencies and other stakeholders including residents and businesses.
    - Identify interim opportunities to address any unmet management needs through expanded actions by the various stakeholders.

5. **Consider feasibility and impacts on businesses of expanding free, public wifi in Central Square.**

6. **Work with CSBA, Cambridge Arts Council (CAC), and property owners to expand opportunities for occupancy of temporarily vacant storefronts.**
    - Proactively work with owners of vacant spaces to suggest opportunities for installation of public art, temporary or "pop-up" retail, or other occupancy that contributes to the overall economic prosperity and character of the Square.
    - Establish convenient mechanisms to help temporarily fund insurance, utilities and/or related costs that may impede short-term occupancy.

7. **Support local businesses such as retail and restaurant businesses.**
    - Maintain and publicize an inventory of retail and office spaces, diverse in size, to help market spaces to potential new tenants, and to advise current tenants on opportunities for relocations.
    - Work with CSBA and City to recruit and match desired retailers for available space.
    - Encourage tourism through measures such as accommodations for parking tour buses.

CONNECTING PEOPLE TO THE SQUARE

1. **Create better walking environment.**
    - Widen sidewalks where widths are inadequate to accommodate pedestrian flow. Specifically, widen the Magazine Street sidewalk at Carl Barron Plaza and adjacent bus stops as much as possible without impeding bus operations.
    - Improve pedestrian street lighting to increase safe and convenient access to evening cultural and dining destinations.
    - In Osborne Triangle west of Windsor Street, encourage activity and sense of neighborhood around Jill Brown-Rhone Park and discourage the dominance of commercial uses that are not pedestrian-oriented in the area.
    - Break up large blocks in Osborne Triangle by creating pedestrian connections, covered or open, which enhance community connectivity e.g. Village Street extension, which would create a connection between Mass Ave and Main Street.

2. **Develop real-time transit information service.**
    - Work with the MBTA to introduce real-time transit information service signage at bus stops in and near Carl Barron Plaza and Red Line station entrances. This should include bus schedule information.
    - Collaborate with the CAC, MIT Media Lab and/or other partners as well as the MBTA to make information a signature experiential/identity element as well as a practical one.

3. **Coordinate among different transportation modes while discouraging automobile use.**
    - Enforce traffic ordinances to minimize conflict between vehicles, cyclists and pedestrians.
    - Monitor pedestrian and vehicle flow/conflict impacts of new development in critical locations, such as at Magazine Street and Mass Ave.
    - Review all signage at Mass Ave/Prospect/River/Western Ave to provide better guidance to vehicles.
    - Review parking meter/parking lot payment policies to provide consistency.
    - Evaluate adoption of technology-based payment solutions including credit card and pay by cellphone.

ENVIRONMENTAL

1. **Identify and eliminate policies that subsidize automobiles.**

2. **Add stormwater retention and infiltration infrastructure where appropriate to address flooding and water quality challenges.**
    - Create a stormwater facility near Jill Brown-Rhone Park, coordinated to accommodate associated development and/or public open space on-site.

- Utilize stormwater management measures e.g. rain gardens along streets where they can effectively aid stormwater management. Encourage adjacent property or business owners to help maintain rain gardens.
- Increase on-site retention and cleansing of stormwater in new development and adaptive reuse through encouragement of green roofs, cisterns, rain gardens and/or related strategies as appropriate.

MUNICIPAL PARKING LOTS

The land currently used for public parking lots is a unique public asset in Central Square.

1. **Redevelop public parking lots according to criteria that help advance the vision for the Square.**

   Priority public benefits to be considered for the parking lots and potential redevelopment of other public property in the area include one or all of the following:

   A. *Creative, new public space that fosters community and supports arts and programming* -- outdoor (e.g. plaza, park) or indoor (public room/gathering space, public market, possible uses such as relocated Central Square library).

   B. *Mixed income housing* – including a significant component affordable to middle income and low/moderate income residents, including 2-3 bedroom units designed for families.

   C. *Affordable retail and non-profit space* especially focused on arts and culture.

   D. *Other goals* indicated in the C2 plan.

   E. Redevelopment should *improve public edges* along streets and sidewalks and *enhance walkability and connections* between the Square and adjoining residential neighborhoods. Such redevelopment will require accommodation of short-term public parking either as part of the redevelopment on each site or evaluation of short-term public parking needed to support the Square based on creating a consolidated parking facility – below grade or above grade, faced with active edges at street level if this is needed to release the remaining lots for desired redevelopment. *Traffic impacts of such consolidation and optimal amount of parking spaces to be replaced must be evaluated* at the time such a solution is contemplated to match supply to need based on changing behavior over time.

MONITORING PUBLIC BENEFITS

1. **Create a mechanism to record, update, and monitor public benefits commitments by developers that is transparent and easily accessible to the public. Implement measures to monitor compliance and enforcement.**

2. **In considering alternative means of reaching a goal, for example creation of 'public' space in a new development, select the means that retains the most control for the City.**

TRAFFIC AND TRANSPORTATION

GENERAL			
CATEGORY	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	SCHEDULE (SHORT, MEDIUM, LONG-TERM, ON-GOING)
A. Character and Streetscape	1. Reduce Mass Ave character as a thoroughfare. 2. Need grand vision and cohesive design strategy. Need more trees/green - feels barren and unpleasant to walk. 3. Cars dominate – Central Sq should be a place, not a jumble of cars. 4. Streets parallel to Mass Ave shouldn't feel like alleyways.	1. When Mass Ave is reconstructed consider interventions such as reallocation of ROW to strengthen peds, bikes, and transit facilities. 2. Refer to Design Guidelines for additional information on street/sidewalk environment.	Long-Term Short – long term depending on pace of (re)development

CATEGORY	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	SCHEDULE (SHORT, MEDIUM, LONG-TERM, ON-GOING)
B. Conflicts among all modes	1. Can we separate the various transportation modes to enhance safety and improve flow?	1. When Mass Ave is reconstructed consider interventions such as reallocation of ROW to strengthen peds, bikes, and transit facilities.	Long-Term
C. Transit	1. Improve MBTA Red Line and bus transit capacity and frequency to continue to accommodate growth in Cambridge and the broader region. 2. Increase effectiveness of the bus network -- ridership, rider experience, and efficiency. Evaluate creating a bus depot. 3. People waiting for buses take up space on the sidewalks and reduce space available for open space and pedestrian circulation, especially at key pinch points. Decrease impact of buses and bus stops on public space and sidewalks. o Move stops off Mass Ave, move stops off Green/Magazine corner. o Bus only streets without cars. o Crowded sidewalk at bus stop waiting area by Convenience Store.	1. City, business association, residents and all stakeholders must advocate for continued MBTA systemwide infrastructure improvements, with special emphasis on enhancing Red Line capacity. 2. Based on preliminary evaluation, bus depot is not recommended. 3. Work with MBTA and property owners to have next bus info being displayed at the bus stops and/or in nearby stores. 4. Work on a study with the MBTA to look at routing, layover and stops changes for the Central Square buses. One goal would be to look at ways to reduce the crowding from people waiting for the bus at this location. The City is interested in having the route 70 and 70A buses extended to Kendall Square.	Ongoing/Long-term Short to medium-term Medium-term

CATEGORY	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	SCHEDULE (SHORT, MEDIUM, LONG-TERM, ON-GOING)
D. Support non-auto modes of transportation		1. Continue to improve bicycling infrastructure by moving towards an environment where bicycles and vehicles are on equal footing (with a specific focus on Mass Ave from Inman Street to Portland Street). 2. Continue to improve signage for both bikers and pedestrians. 3. Evaluate the feasibility of closing some side streets to vehicular traffic during high-congestion hours to encourage alternative bike routes and prevent neighborhood cut-throughs by automobiles.	
E. Enforcement	1. Roadway users do not travel carefully and cause conflicts. Among the issues: o motorists not yielding to pedestrians/bicyclists while turning; o motorists not yielding to peds at crosswalks; o motorists running red lights; motorists opening car doors; o pedestrians jaywalking; o cyclists not yielding to peds in crosswalks; o cyclists on sidewalk; o cyclists running red lights.	1. Stricter enforcement o of automobile moving violations. o ticket bicycles and peds at signals and unsignalized crosswalks. o ticket Jay walkers. 2. Combine enforcement with education via a variety of media. 3. Cars run red lights -- could be addressed with camera enforcement.	Ongoing

CATEGORY	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	SCHEDULE (SHORT, MEDIUM, LONG-TERM, ON-GOING)
F. Illegal parking	1. Illegal parking in general such as delivery trucks in bicycle lanes, non-residential parking in resident only areas at night.	1. Enforce at hot spots and evaluate problem areas for curb regulation changes. Examples include providing additional loading zones where warranted to prevent delivery trucks in bicycle lanes. Also work with businesses on delivery schedules and locations.	Short-Term and On-Going.
G. Trucks	1. Oil tankers are not compatible with Central Square character	1. River, Western, Pleasant, Mass Ave, and Main St are designated regional truck routes. City can not restrict trucks without State approval as part of a regional plan. City has been unsuccessful in finding alternate routes that will satisfy regional requirements.	
H. Non-MBTA transit	1. LMA shuttles loud and not energy efficient.	1. City has conveyed this concern to the Medical Area Scientific Community Organization (MASCO) which operates shuttles. New buses would be required to address noise concern.	
I. Signage	1. In general, the environment feels cluttered with too many signs and this creates confusion. In particular, the special signs installed at Mass/River/Western are confusing.	1. Review Central Sq signage and identify opportunities for reducing/improving signage. Note that many of the signs are there because of requests from the public and businesses who want them there.	Short to Medium-Term

LOCATION SPECIFIC			
LOCATION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	SCHEDULE
Massachusetts Avenue	1. Bicycling on Massachusetts Avenue is difficult due to o illegal parking in bicycle lanes o dooring o buses stopping in bicycle lanes rather than pulling to curb o trucks, buses and cars pulling into and out of the bicycle lanes 2. At Mass and Prospect peds conflict with right turning vehicles on Mass Ave east side crosswalk. 3. Route 1 bus too slow and too crowded.	1. Long-term reconstruction should create a separated bicycle facility/cycle track. 2. Increase enforcement of illegal parking in bike lanes. 3. Massachusetts Ave northside between Prospect and Temple Street - move HP spot to Temple and make the block a loading zone. 4. Mass Ave southside Inman to Temple make a loading zone 7am to 11am, relocate HP space.	Long-Term Short- Term
Pleasant Street @ Massachusetts Avenue	1. Pedestrians crossing at Pleasant Street/through cyclists on Massachusetts Avenue conflict with motorists coming from Inman Street to Pleasant. 2. Westbound stop line on Mass so far back that cars running the yellow conflict with the pedestrians crossing with the walk light.	1. Evaluate potential signal or crosswalk changes to reduce or eliminate conflict. 2. TP&T work is underway to add a signal head so that the stop bar for westbound Mass can be moved to Inman St. Eastbound bicycle lane to be marked through the Pleasant St intersection.	Short-Term

LOCATION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	SCHEDULE
Mass @ Inman	Mass crossing at 26 sec feels too short, Inman crossing is twice as long.	Mass. Avenue is the major roadway and has longer green time than Inman Street which permits additional pedestrian crossing time of Inman Street. Time for pedestrian crossing of Mass. Avenue was extended in 2011 in coordination with the Senior Center, and currently provides more pedestrian crossing time than national standards require.	On-Going
Inman @ Bishop Allen Drive	Can we add a crosswalk for the people going to and from the Food Pantry?	This is not recommended. The addition of a crosswalk at this location would either eliminate the loading zone for the Food Pantry or eliminate 2 resident permit spaces depending on which side of the intersection it was placed on.	
Pleasant @ Western	This feels like a hazardous crosswalk, seems safer to jaywalk mid block.	Plan for improvement created through Western Ave planning process	Short-Term
Pleasant @ River		In DPW 5-year street reconstruction plan. Improvements will be evaluated and implemented as part of that plan.	
Temple Street	Pedestrian crosswalk east of Temple Street is difficult to see at night.	Highlight this issue to be addressed in lighting plan for Central Sq as part of the City's LED conversion.	

LOCATION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	SCHEDULE
Green Street @ River & Western	Awkward pedestrian crossing of River and Western on south side of intersection.	When construction is scheduled for the intersections, signal changes in combination with infrastructure changes will be possible to improve this intersection for pedestrians. Actual change would have to be designed.	Medium to Long-Term
Western Avenue @ Franklin Street	Lack of crosswalk on southern leg of Western Avenue at Franklin Street.	New crosswalk will be added as part of the City's Western Avenue reconstruction project.	Project underway
Green Street at Magazine Street	Motorists ignore stop sign and don't yield to pedestrians at this intersection.	It is extremely difficult to get all cars to stop at the stop sign at Green/Magazine when the signal at Green/River is green, given the short distance between the stop sign and the signal.	Medium to Long-Term
Green @ Magazine Street	Poor snow clearance at Green and Magazine for peds.	Work with DPW and property owners to improve snow clearance on sidewalk.	On-Going
Green @ Pearl	Crowded sidewalk at bus stop on Green Street at Pearl waiting for 70 and 70A.	The City will be working on a study with the MBTA to look at routing, layover and stops changes for the Central Square buses. One goal would be to look at ways to reduce the crowding from people waiting for the bus at this location. The City is interested in having the route 70 and 70A buses extended to Kendall Square.	Medium to Long-Term
Essex Street and Norfolk Street	Limited greenery and narrow sidewalks make unattractive pedestrian connections between Area 4 and Central Square	Work with the City Arborist to find additional appropriate locations for trees and other green elements to improve pedestrian environment	Short to Medium-term

LOCATION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	SCHEDULE
Essex Street and Bishop Allen Drive	Unattractive surface parking lots.	TP&T will work to improve asthetics in City Lots, which currently have Murals and landscaping.	Medium to Long-Term
Pearl Street @ Massachusetts Avenue	1. Pedestrian crossing Pearl/through cyclists conflict with left turning cars. 2. Vehicles cut through from Norfolk to Pearl. 3. So many things happening it is hard to know where to look. Can we ban left turn into Pearl?	No changes to this location have been identified. The traffic move from Norfolk to Pearl provides an option for residents crossing Central Square that is strongly supported. TP&T will review the crash history at this location.	
Pearl Street between Massachusetts Avenue and Franklin Street.	1. Narrow sidewalks and lack of shade on Pearl Street. 2. Poor pedestrian environment due to blank walls and limited ground floor activity.	Create new frontage at library	Long term
Pearl Street & Upper Brookline Street	1. Illegal parking on Pearl Street prior to loading zone blocks buses. 2. Loading activity on Brookline Street obstructs travel lane.	1. Create enforcement priority hot spots. 2. Review Green Street signage.	Short-Term
Brookline @ Mass	Ped crossing in the middle of the Brookline to Douglas conflicts w/vehicles.	The current location of the crosswalk has been found to be better than alternative locations which would either lead to higher levels of conflicts or the loss of highly used, short-term parking spaces in front of businesses.	
Unsignalized crosswalk by Salvation Army	Lack of yielding by motorists	Yield to peds sign has been placed in the center of the roadway. Salvation Army responsible for maintaining yield barrel.	On-Going

LOCATION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	SCHEDULE
Columbia Street & Lafayette Square	1. Very long crossing of Sidney Street extension for pedestrians. 2. Lack of yielding at Columbia Street and Lafayette Square. Desire for street space for special events. Main St bike lane leads to bikes in Lafayette Square, conflicting with park users.	1. Would need to rebuild. 2. Install biycle box and mark left turn movement for bicycles on Main Street westbound onto Sidney St. Extension.	Long-Term Short to Medium-Term
Main Street & Front Street & Windsor Street	1. Windsor Street sidewalk is narrow. 2. Lack of pedestrian connection between Main Street and Massachusetts Avenue from Windsor Street to Sidney Street extension.	1. Novartis project will improve walkability of Windsor Street. 2. Design guidelines to encourage connection – implemented via project review	Ongoing Short term
Albany Street & Portland Street	The intersection is awkward for all users and has a poor connection to the railroad crossing to Vassar Street.	New design(approved by the City) will be implemented as part of the 610-650 Main Street development project.	Ongoing
Green St Garage	Green St garage is not popular with motorists and is sub-optimal in its connection to the street and public realm.	Consider full range of options including: o Tear it down to accommodate other possible uses needed to streamline bus operations or other amenities for Central Sq. o Enlarge to consolidate parking for Central Sq – this poses structural issues and may require demolition and reconstruction; traffic impacts on Green St will also need to be evaluated	Long-Term

LOCATION	ISSUE	RECOMMENDATION	SCHEDULE
Blanche St	Unattractive pedestrian environment	Design guidelines for streets and sidewalks and potential future development on adjacent parcels	Short-term

Lopez, Donna ATTACHMENT B

From: marthahoffmann@comcast.net
Sent: Thursday, July 25, 2013 12:23 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Cc: Kelley, Craig (home)
Subject: Central Square planning meeting

As a result of a recent email from Craig Kelly regarding the upcoming July 30th meeting on Central Square, I offer the following thoughts:

Recently, I have been in touch with two City employees regarding outdoor dining practices in Central Square. After several conversations, I learned that my concern/complaint was legitimate, but nothing is going to be done about it. The problem began because of the practice of the Asgard and Sidney Hotel (or whatever its new name is) to expand their outdoor seating so much that it was nearly impossible for pedestrians to pass on the sidewalk. The first person in the City suggested that I speak directly to the owner of the Asgard, which I didn't think was appropriate. The second person got someone to evaluate the situation and found that, indeed, my complaint was valid. There is supposed to be a 48" sidewalk clearance; these two restaurants have reduced that amount to less than 24", and they seem to be creeping farther out every day, making it difficult to walk down the street. The City inspector has concluded that the barricades need to be changed, but they aren't going to address this until next year! Therefore, these restaurants are allowed to violate the regulations for outdoor dining, and that's the way it will be, at least until 2014.

I think that we need to look very closely at how the outdoor dining situation is addressed/policed. I realize that the City wants to attract business, but it is now happening at the expense of pedestrians. I hope that you will be able to give this issue some thought at next week's meeting.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Lopez, Donna ATTACHMENT C

From: Jacquelyn Fahey Sandell [jfaheysandell@yahoo.com]
Sent: Friday, July 26, 2013 5:32 PM
To: <Craig@CraigKelley.org>
Cc: Lopez, Donna
Subject: Re: Tuesday, 30 July Central Square non-zoning discussion C2

Thank you for your email, Craig. Is traffic considered a non-zoning issue? Ever since they widened the sidewalk on Prospect, the rush hour traffic and later has been unbearable to get through. Are there studies looking at this impact? I will unfortunately not be able to attend the meeting.
Sincerely,
Jacqui Fahey Sandell
8 Clinton St

Sent from my iPhone

On Jul 25, 2013, at 8:46 PM, "Craig Kelley" <craigkelley62@verizon.net> wrote:

Folks:

The **City Council's Neighborhood & Long Term Planning Committee** will discuss the C2 Committee's **non-zoning** recommendations and potential options to make the neighborhood safer and more family-friendly at 5 PM on Tuesday, July 30 at City Hall. If you can't make this meeting, you can still email the City Clerk your thoughts at **DLopez@Cambridgema.gov.**

This particular discussion is about non-zoning aspects of Central Square and, based on the wide variety of comments I got in response to my email about benches, figuring out how to manage benches is going to be as important and difficult a part of planning for such a large, varied and important public space as anything else. This meeting will be about more than just benches, but I increasingly think that 'solving' our bench challenges is going to be a very important part of what a future Central Square might look like. I just finished a bike trip to Erie, PA and then (mostly) up to Lake George, NY and I saw all sorts of beautiful benches in parks along the Erie Canal, in downtown Buffalo and in rural hamlets all along the way. They looked wonderful but, other than me resting my weary legs, I never saw anyone actually on any of them and that is, for Central Square at least, where the issues seem to appear (along with their use as *ad hoc* bike racks). Some folks are looking for places to stop as they walk through the square, others don't want to wait for a bus standing up all the time and still others worry that a number of benches seem to attract behavior they, or their children, find to range from the uncomfortable to the physically threatening. Some people want more benches, others want specific benches removed completely. I don't have the perfect answer, but I am sure we'll wind up doing something and your sharing your thoughts, about benches, trees, bike parking, outdoor dining, noise, lighting and anything else 'non-zoning' during this planning process can only help the final product be better.

And below is some info from the City on the actual Central Square non-zoning planning process itself.

I've also posted this email on my blog if you want to have a more public conversation via the internet.

Thanks a lot.

Craig

For reference, a council order response that consolidates the C2 non-zoning recommendations is available at
http://www2.cambridgema.gov/CityOfCambridge_Content/documents/C2ProgressNonZoning.doc

* Please feel free to forward this notice to others who might be interested.
* Please note that all official Planning Board meeting notices come from Liza Paden at CDD and official City Council meeting notices come from the City Clerk's office. This email is a courtesy notice to those who have signed up for the K2C2 mailing list and is not intended to meet legal notice requirements for these meetings.

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Lopez, Donna ATTACHMENT D

From: Jeff Keating [jeffrey.keating@gmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, July 27, 2013 1:28 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: C2 Non-Zoning Recommendations

City Councilors,

Much of what is in the C2 non-zoning recommendations appears thoughtful and worthy of your consideration. That said, there are two issues which I take disagreement with.

The first is the stated goal to discourage automobile use. It's unclear to me what this means exactly, but it seems to be part of a broader hostility to cars on the part of the city. I can't take public transportation to work, I can't ride my bike to work, I can't walk to work - and even if I could, I have two kids that need to be dropped off and picked up. Unfortunately, my car is my only feasible option. There are many residents like myself for which a car equals mobility and economic opportunity. When someone says 'we want more people to bike or to walk', I ask each of you to please think carefully about the residents that that excludes: the disabled, the elderly, families, those who don't have the luxury of living close to their jobs, etc.

My second issue is that there seems to be no mention or discussion about how to address the large number of habitual alcoholics in the square. This really is the key reason why people avoid or don't feel comfortable in the square. At a minimum, why is there no discussion about restricting or eliminating sales of nips or single-serving alcohol containers? Why is there no discussion about enforcing existing regulations so that liquor stores aren't selling alcohol to obviously intoxicated people? Why is there no discussion about the role the CASPAR shelter has in this problem? It's pretty obvious: only wet-shelter in Eastern Mass. + close proximity to cheap alcohol = a lot of problem alcoholics. Some part of that equation must be addressed if we want the square to be a more welcoming place. I would also note that when these habitual alcoholics aren't in the square, they're loitering in residential areas.

Sincerely,

Jeff Keating
3 Percy Place 02139