

1/27/14

Good evening, my name is Joseph Elder I am a lifelong resident of Cambridge. I am here to express my support for the policy order put forth by VICE MAYOR BENZAN and COUNCILLOR MAZEN regarding future use for the Foundry Building located at 101 Rogers street.

As a father of three daughters currently in the Cambridge school system, and a concerned citizen for all students there is no doubt that the counselors and the city should develop the Foundry building to support STEAM related initiatives.

With all do appreciation and respect, Cambridge is a wonderful place to work, and raise a family. This is due in large parts to the decisions made by the city counselors over the years. I have witnessed the growth of several youth centers geared towards making sure our youth have the opportunity to stay in good physical shape. Our high school has been transformed into one <sup>of</sup> the top high schools in the Commonwealth. Some students leave there to attend many of the top colleges across the country. Again, I want to thank the city for the role they play in help <sup>in</sup> making that happen.

For several years, the debate over what to do or how best to use this space has been debated. I hope that the time is now that a decision can be made and a plan implemented to go forth with converting the foundry <sup>into a</sup> substantial new space dedicated to mentorship, apprenticeship, scholarship, fabrication, expression, and training related to STEAM, Which stands for (Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts and Mathematics). This is <sup>a</sup> needed supplement for both our student and adult residents of Cmbridge.

There are many parents who can afford the extra tutoring and opportunities that more and more colleges and universities are considering when assessing

students for admissions. However, there are even more parents who can't afford those extras. These disparities only serve to widen the already wide achievement gap. That to me seems unfair and unnecessary when we with all of our resources have the chance to change and help level the playing field.

By supporting this order we will play a huge role in doing just that, changing and leveling the playing field. Not only will this happen for our youth, this facility and its programs should be available for adults within our community. Many of who don't have the opportunity or monies to further their skills in order to take advantage of the innovation economy that has long flourished in Cambridge

As stated in the order, related programs for youth and adult residents will provide the community with opportunities to participate in hands-on, experiential programs that will equip them with technical, professional, and academic skills needed to excel in the classroom and to participate ~~in the~~ as skilled productive workers.

I want to praise the city for what it has done and encourage it to do more, because more is needed. In order to continue to be city that attracts world-class businesses we need to be the city that provides top notch, first rate opportunities for our residents. I ask you to please support the order put forth by VICE MAYOR BENZAN and COUNCILLOR MAZEN to use the foundry building for STEAM related activities for the students and adults of Cambridge.