

letter of support for former Quest site

John Hong <john@ssdarchitecture.com>

Sat 4/25/2015 11:28 AM

City Clerk Agenda

To: Lopez, Donna <dlopez@cambridgema.gov>; Paden, Liza <lpaden@cambridgema.gov>;

Cc: bob.flack@twiningproperties.com <bob.flack@twiningproperties.com>;

 1 attachment (73 KB)

SsD Twining-Normandy Redevelopment Support.pdf;

Dear Cambridge City Council members and Planning board,

Please find attached my letter of support for the redevelopment of the former Quest site. We wish for a productive meetings on 4/27 and 4/28. The contents of the PDF letter is pasted below:

Dear Members of Cambridge City Council and the Office of the City Clerk:

I am writing in full support for the redevelopment of the former Quest site by the Twining/Normandy team. I am a principal of the Central Square based architecture and urban design firm, SsD. We have been active architects and educators in Cambridge for over 12 years with many award winning projects in the area. Prior to being professionals, we were engaged students - In total we have been a part of the Central Square community for over 22 years and have witnessed the many positive changes in the area resulting from the partnering of the City, residents, businesses, and developers.

When we learned of the potential redevelopment of the Quest site we were elated: As a geographic nexus within our neighborhood, for years the site has been underutilized and has ironically stood out as a kind of 'dead zone.' Its location within an emerging and important intersection of urban, social, and cultural fabrics calls for the need for vibrancy, connection, and the right kind of density.

The proposed redevelopment offers much needed solutions to this issue. First of all it is a Transit Oriented proposal that not only brings housing and existing neighborhood businesses together into a walkable catchment area, but also leverages the many connections to public transportation. Therefore, the impact on automobile traffic will be minimized and will not need additional parking. Secondly, it offers public space in the form of a public market which will bring vibrant social activity to an area that has been confronted with what is basically a blank brick façade. (I will not go into details of how I was accosted in front of the Quest building 10 years ago because of its abandoned quality). Finally it will bring much needed 3 bedrooms and of course affordable housing to the area. In this light, I want to reiterate what many already know: that the project is offering an unprecedented stock of 17% affordable/moderate housing when 11.5% is required.

I hope we can all work out minor differences to gather around the bigger picture when evaluating this proposal and move forward with this well considered scheme.

Best Regards,

John Hong AIA, LEED AP

principal, SsD

30 March 2015

Dear Members of Cambridge City Council and the Office of the City Clerk:

I am writing in full support for the redevelopment of the former Quest site by the Twining/Normandy team. I am a principal of the Central Square based architecture and urban design firm, SsD. We have been active architects and educators in Cambridge for over 12 years with many award winning projects in the area. Prior to being professionals, we were engaged students - In total we have been a part of the Central Square community for over 22 years and have witnessed the many positive changes in the area resulting from the partnering of the City, residents, businesses, and developers.

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Best Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'John Hong', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

John Hong AIA, LEED AP
principal, SsD