

May 18, 2015

Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council.

My name is Mark Roopenian and I am a principal of Normandy Real Estate Partners.

We, along with Twining Properties, filed the Mass and Main Zoning petition in November. Our goal has been to deliver mixed-income housing to this important intersection and help activate this area with new retail and new public realm. It was made clear to us that housing -- not office or lab -- was the strong priority for this community.

The City Council told us that we needed to deliver a substantial number of permanently affordable units as part of this proposal. This zoning requires 20 percent affordable and middle-income units and requires 10 percent 3 bedrooms. While it will be one of the most challenging deals if not the most challenging in my and Alex Twining's real estate career, we come to you with incredible pride in the "community" effort that went into molding this zoning.

We said we wanted to be good neighbors so we put our money where our mouth is to prove it.

The City Council and the community demanded the most of us. Affordable housing advocates set clear standards and told us to make sure this zoning responded to the critical community need of permanent affordable housing. I have not been here as long as

many of you but I do care deeply about Cambridge. The City Council and community made it very clear to us we had to do all we could to maintain economic diversity in this very special place called Central Square. We have gone as far as we can to do that. In the end we will be judged on the final product and we take that very seriously. On behalf of our whole team, want to thank the City Council for being very clear about their priority. We also want to thank City planning staff for spending so much time over the past 5 years thinking about Central Square and its future.

Most importantly we want to thank the community who attended countless meetings and weighed in relentlessly to help make this a better proposal. Every component of this proposal has improved significantly because of the community's willingness to speak out and participate. In the end that's what makes Cambridge and particularly Central Square so special.

My message is simple: thank you for your time and effort and willingness to be part of this process. We plan to be in Cambridge for a long time and we will continue to do our best to listen, respond and set the highest possible example of good neighbors to all of you.