

1

December 5th, 201

To: Cambridge City Council

RE: mitigation and distribution of funds received from EF

Dear City Council members,

The Charles River Conservancy (CRC) appreciates the opportunity to submit these written comments as I am unable to attend the meeting in person tonight.

As you know, the CRC is an 11-year-old non-profit organization whose mission is to support the stewardship and renewal of the urban Charles River Parklands. We have over 22,000 supporters and volunteers. The CRC's goal is to make the Parklands more active, attractive, and accessible to all.

The CRC's primary goal in this development project of EF is to ensure that the public receives benefits at least commensurate with those private benefits bestowed by public bodies. We hope that the Cambridge City Council will allocate the funds given by EF to the City of Cambridge to benefit the North Point Park area and thus also the Charles River Skatepark, for which the Conservancy has raised \$2.5m, and towards which the City of Cambridge has committed \$200,000.

One way to make both the skatepark and the North Point Park area a more attractive and safer place, is to allocate these funds towards providing lighting for and around the skatepark. Since the skatepark will be open to the public at all hours, to have lighting there will be a great advantage.

A good example for such lighting is the skatepark in Louisville Kentucky which is used around the clock, thus making the area safer for everybody. Together with lighting, funds should also be used to have round the clock cameras that monitor the activities at the skatepark. At some skateparks they have lights that are activated by push buttons as not to waste electricity when no light is needed. In other parks they have credit card activated lights at certain hours when mostly adults use the park.

When EF made the presentation to the East Cambridge Planning Team EF representatives offered to build tennis and basket ball courts adjacent to the skatepark. This promise played an important role in getting the support of the East Cambridge Planning Team. Paying for such courts is another good use for these funds EF has given the City of Cambridge. Courts further add to the athletic offerings for both the adjacent neighborhoods and for Cambridge citizens in general.

Another way, the funds provided by EF can help the North Point Park is to contribute towards the maintenance fund of the skatepark and its surroundings. The DCR has identified a third party operator.

We feel strongly that funds received from EF should benefit the North Point Park which includes the skatepark.

Mitigation funds, by the very name and definition should mitigate the impact of the project. In the case of the EF building, the bigger height of the new building for example will cast shadows on the skatepark.

But moving forward with determining the use of future mitigation funds, they should be used in the area of the projects, rather than for city wide and unspecified needs. I attended the meeting on August 29th of the Government Operations and Rules Committee, and there was much discussion to explore the appropriate use of mitigation funds further.

I hope you will, just as in the Alexandria case, have the surroundings and the abutting neighborhoods be the main beneficiaries,

Yours Truly,

Renata von Tscharnner

Renata von Tscharnner
Founder & President
Charles River Conservancy

CC

Cambridge Mayor David Maher
Cambridge Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis
Cambridge City Councillor Leland Cheung
Cambridge City Councillor Marjorie Decker
Cambridge City Councillor Craig Kelley
Cambridge City Councillor Kenneth Reeves
Cambridge City Councillor Sam Seidel
Cambridge City Councillor Denise Simmons
Cambridge City Councillor Timothy Toomey, Jr.
Cambridge City Councillor elect Minka vanBeuzekom
Robert Healy, Cambridge City Manager
Richard Rossi, Cambridge Deputy City Manager
Brian Murphy, Cambridge Assistant City Manager for Community Development
Jennifer Wright, Director of the Cambridge Conservation Commission
Roger Booth, Cambridge Community Development
Cara Seiderman, City of Cambridge
Barbara Broussard, East Cambridge Planning Team
John Pike, Conservation Law Foundation