



September 17, 2015

Mr. Richard C. Rossi
City Manager
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: Disposition of City owned land known as Coolidge Place

Dear City Manager Rossi,

On behalf of Normandy Real Estate Partners and Twining Properties, we respectfully request that the City of Cambridge make available for disposition approximately 1,042 square feet of City owned land known as Coolidge Place (as shown on Exhibit A) (hereinafter referred to as the “proposed disposition parcel”) in order to facilitate the development of approximately 234,000 square feet of housing with ground floor retail, which we agree will contain not less than 17 percent “Affordable” units and 3 percent “Middle Income” units for a combined 20 percent permanently and privately subsidized housing units.

The relocation of Coolidge Place to the western edge of the parcel and the addition of a new pedestrian passageway near the Columbia Street edge was shown throughout the public zoning process for the recently passed Mass and Main Residential Mixed Income Subdistrict zoning. These two proposed pedestrian passageways are strategically placed to provide increased permeability through the site and to encourage pedestrian and retail activity.

While there was widespread support around our concept of mixed income housing as opposed to office or lab, there was also significant public support for the additional public access point near the Columbia Street edge of our property, which is currently walled off by an existing Quest Diagnostics lab building. The new pedestrian access will connect the Lafayette Square Park to Bishop Allen Drive and extend the public realm along the Park. Our proposal also responds to the community and planning goal to “activate” this edge with new retail along Massachusetts Avenue and Columbia Street.

In addition to the housing, retail and the public realm, we were also asked by the Department of Public Works (DPW) to ensure the development supports the proposed stormwater storage tank in the City-owned lot adjacent to our property. Over the past 18 months, we have worked with DPW to understand the conceptual design of the storage tank and the utility connections required from the tank to the

existing drain line in Mass. Ave, which pass through a portion of our property. We are prepared to give the City both underground rights and access to our property for the utility connections, so that the stormwater tank project can proceed. We propose to install these pipes in advance of the City's stormwater tank project to ensure the construction is properly coordinated. We also have agreed to provide permanent rights of public access above grade, leaving the City with not one but two public connections between the City parking lot and Mass. Ave/Columbia Street.

We understand that the proposed disposition parcel will be made available only for the construction of housing with 20 percent permanently subsidized units and subject to the provision of a suitable replacement for the proposed disposition parcel as well as additional rights as described above.

Our goal has always been to execute a project that is line with the community and City planning vision for this critical intersection in Central Square.

We are aware that because of the low threshold of \$35,000.00 or above in value the City will comply with the MGL Chapter 30B public bidding requirements as well as with the requirements of Chapter 2.110 of the Cambridge Municipal Code, and will also need to conduct a street discontinuance process in connection with the disposition of the proposed disposition parcel.

In general, we believe that the City is left with far more public access as well as a mixed income housing development, new retail and expanded public realm and the infusion of new resident to Central Square who will not just work here but live, work and play here as well. It is our hope that the land disposition be structured in such a way that the conveyance is contingent upon the buyer notifying the City that it is proceeding with a housing project with no less than 20 percent permanently subsidized units and that necessary agreements, permits and approvals for such a project have been received prior to such notice.

This request marks a milestone in close to 3 years in work with the community getting to our proposal and we deeply appreciate the City Council, Planning Board, city staff and particularly the community for their support of this this mixed income and vision to activate the Mass, Main, and Columbia corner of Central Square.

Sincerely,



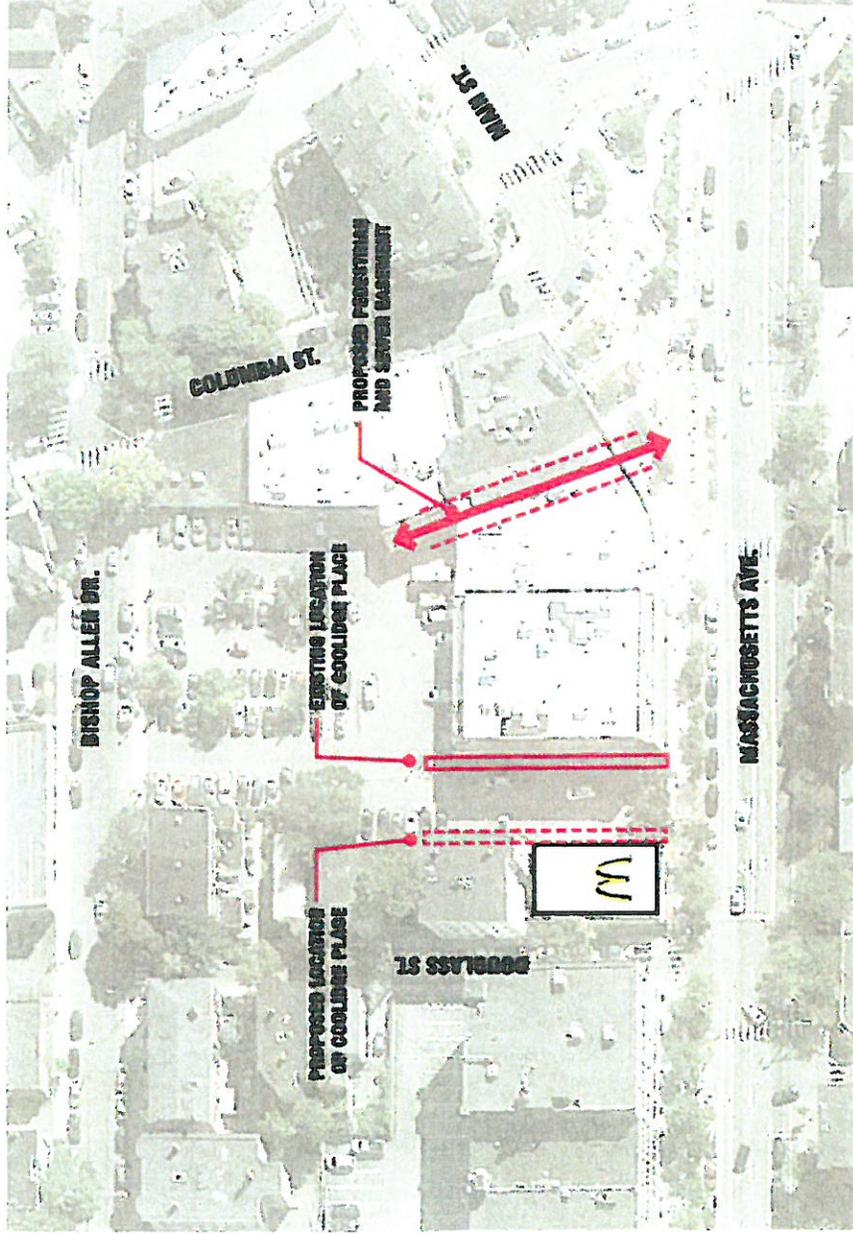
Alex Twining
Twining Properties



Mark Roopenian
Normandy Real Estate Partners

EXHIBIT A - COOLIDGE PLACE

AERIAL PLAN



Central Square
2015.06.30

 **NORMANDY**
REAL ESTATE PARTNERS | **[t] Twining Properties** **cbt**

NOT IN SCALE