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To: City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>, Bob Healy <rhealy@cambridgema.gov>

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Subject: MIT versus Sagewell Thermal Images - tonight's agenda

Dear City Councilors and City Manager,

I saw the City Manager's letter recommending that the city use the MIT thermal images rather than the Sagewell's thermal images.

The thermal images are a vivid method of showing homeowners why their energy bills are high and their living room is drafty. They are a proven effective way to persuade residents to add insulation or do other work to decrease our energy bills and carbon emissions.

As the president of HEET, I've researched thoroughly the differences between MIT and Sagewell thermal imaging programs, and am probably the only person who has viewed both programs in detail.

I'd like to make a few critical points:

- Sagewell has a staff of trained professionals who quickly answer any phone or email questions about privacy. Sagewell has perfected this so any concerns about privacy are quickly calmed. Arlington just did this work with Sagewell and had no problems with privacy. MIT won't offer that staff.
- When I talked to MIT, they wouldn't allow HEET or the city of Cambridge even to say the thermal images originated from MIT. They don't want to get enmeshed in the privacy concerns.
- MIT won't supply any free way for us to show the thermal images to residents. Sagewell will create a webpage and send the link to each homeowner that requests a report. The webpages include an individualized report, prioritizing what actions the resident should take and including the contact info for Mass Save and info about potential rebates.
- MIT will not create a password-protected website for each building so each building-owner is the only one who can see the thermal images. If you don't have this type of password-protection, you will get a vast number of very angry calls about privacy concerns. Sagewell will create a password-protected website for each building.

Cambridge can not provide all these services without a vast amount of funding and work.

Sagewell is not charging homeowners. The thermal images and accompanying individualized reports are free to homeowners. They will only charge a fee to owners of commercial sites and to landlords who want more than 1 building analyzed.

Sagewell has done this work in over 100,000 other buildings in Mass. It has pioneered this work and proven that it can significantly increase the requests for home energy assessments in a town. This can save money and energy for Cambridge during an economic downturn.

For these and other reasons, I strongly recommend you go with Sagewell. I run HEET, an award-winning grassroots nonprofit in Cambridge. I seek only to make Cambridge more energy efficient. I am receiving no payment of any kind from either Sagewell or MIT.

If you are uncomfortable with inviting a for-profit company into Cambridge, please just pass a resolution inviting any and all thermal imaging companies in to do this work.

I would be there this evening to talk on the issue but I'm sick. Please don't hesitate to call or email me with questions.

Thank you,

Audrey Schulman
President HEET
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