



St. James's  
Episcopal Church

*Not to be served,  
but to serve.*

RECEIVED  
2010 MAR -8 AM 11:13  
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

Date 3-4-2010

City Manager Robert W. Healy  
Cambridge City Council  
City Hall, 2nd Floor  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: St. James's Episcopal Church, 1991 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02140

Dear Manager Healy:

We are the Rector and Senior Warden representing St. James's Episcopal Church. It has come to our attention that the Cambridge City Council recently passed a resolution concerning the Church. We are writing to express a number of concerns about the resolution.

First, no one at the Church was aware that the Council was proposing, or voting on, a resolution concerning the Church. As active members of the Cambridge community, we would assume that the Church would receive notice, and an opportunity to discuss, any resolution that concerns the Church, or names the Church. It is most regrettable that the Church did not receive notice of this pending action.

Second, the resolution contains historical and factual inaccuracies that the Church could have corrected, had the Church known of the pending resolution. The resolution states that Community Preservation Act "funds have been allocated to St. James Church for historical preservation." There has been no recent allocation of funds to the Church. The last allocation was in 2007, and was used to help maintain the historic structure of the existing church.

The resolution also states that "The Council is concerned that CPA funds were used to help the church with its historic preservation making it a more desirable property to be developed by Oak Tree Development" The CPA funds were not used to make the Church a more desirable property for development. The funds were used for their intended purpose, to preserve the Church structure. That goal has been achieved.

The proposed transaction with Oaktree Development does not affect the existing Church. It will enable the Church to replace the old Parish House, whose demolition has been approved in principle by the City Historic Commission as of January 21, 2010, with a new Parish House. As we are sure you are aware, the Church is not wealthy, and lacks the means to maintain or upgrade the old Parish House. The transaction will allow the Church to upgrade the Parish House, which will enable the Church to improve its religious mission in Cambridge, and will also provide funds that will enable the Church to maintain the existing Church structure, in the manner discussed in the preservation agreements.

The Church has worked diligently with the state and the Cambridge Historical Commission to ensure that all its activities are consistent with the CPA agreements. These boards have had several open meetings concerning the project, at which the public has had opportunities to comment.

Finally, the resolution directs that Oaktree Development return CPA funds to the city. Oaktree has nothing to do with the CPA funds. The funds were received and expended by the Church for their intended purpose, long ago. The Church has complied with all its obligations under the CPA agreements.

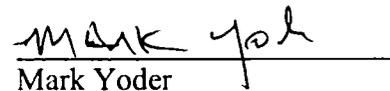
The Church respectfully requests that, in the future, if this or any other matter concerning the Church is brought before the City Council, the Council provide to the Church prior notice of the meeting and an opportunity to be heard.

Thank you.

Very Truly Yours,



The Rev. Holly Lyman Antolini



Mark Yoder



## CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION

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William B. King, *Chair*, Bruce A. Irving, *Vice Chair*, Charles M. Sullivan, *Executive Director*  
M. Wyllis Bibbins, Robert G. Crocker, Chandra Harrington, Frank Shirley, Jo M. Solet, *Members*  
Shary Page Berg, Joseph V. Ferrara, Susannah Barton Tobin, *Alternates*

March 5, 2010

To: Robert W. Healy,  
City Manager

From: Charles Sullivan,  
Executive Director

Re: St. James's Church CPA Grant: Calendar Item #2, March 1, 2010

The Cambridge Historical Commission awarded a \$50,000 Community Preservation Act grant to St. James's Church in 2006. When unforeseen conditions increased the project cost from \$289,000 to \$367,000, the CHC raised its grant to \$100,000. The Massachusetts Historical Commission also contributed \$50,000 to the project.

St. James's Church was built in 1888 and was listed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1983. It is considered to be one of the most significant church buildings in Cambridge, both for its architecture and its associations with the history of North Cambridge. However, the condition of the church in 2005 was marginal, and the belfry was identified as requiring emergency repairs to avert an imminent hazard to the public. From the Historical Commission's perspective, the CPA funds were used appropriately to arrest the deterioration of a significant feature of the church and to preserve the building for the benefit of the public. We see no grounds to request the return of the funds.

The CHC has voted to support the present project because it is expected to generate financial support to maintain St. James's historic church building. After extensive negotiations that led to significant changes to the design, the Commission approved the project subject to several conditions. For the project to proceed, the proponents must:

- Provide documentation of the proposed ownership structure and financial arrangements between the parties;
- Document the projected capital and operating needs of the historic church building; and
- Commit to provide adequate resources to meet these needs.

In addition, the CHC has required that the proponents must:

- Provide commitments that the garden will remain open to the public and in the ownership of St. James's parish;

- Provide a detailed landscape plan for CHC approval; and
- Gain CHC approval of the exterior features of the proposed building, including materials, fenestration, and arrangements for surface parking.

Finally, the Massachusetts Historical Commission has protected St. James's Church since 1987. Their preservation restriction requires that any alterations, new construction or demolition on the site conform to the Secretary of the Interior's Standards for Historic Buildings and be approved by MHC staff.

The Cambridge Historical Commission will continue its public hearing on the St. James-Oaktree project on April 1 at 6:00 PM at the Cambridge Citywide Senior Center at 806 Massachusetts Avenue.