



WHITEHEAD INSTITUTE



**Cambridge Ordinance  
Committee Hearing**

**9 Cambridge Center**  
Cambridge, MA

March 03, 2015



Kendall Square Urban Renewal Project: parcels 1, 2, 3, 4  
Cambridge Center Project: parcels 2, 3, 4  
Urban Initiatives Project: parcel 4

U. S. Dept. of Transportation  
(Former NASA site)

Traction Power Substation

5 Cambridge Center

Parcel 1

Parcel 4

Parcel 2

Parcel 3



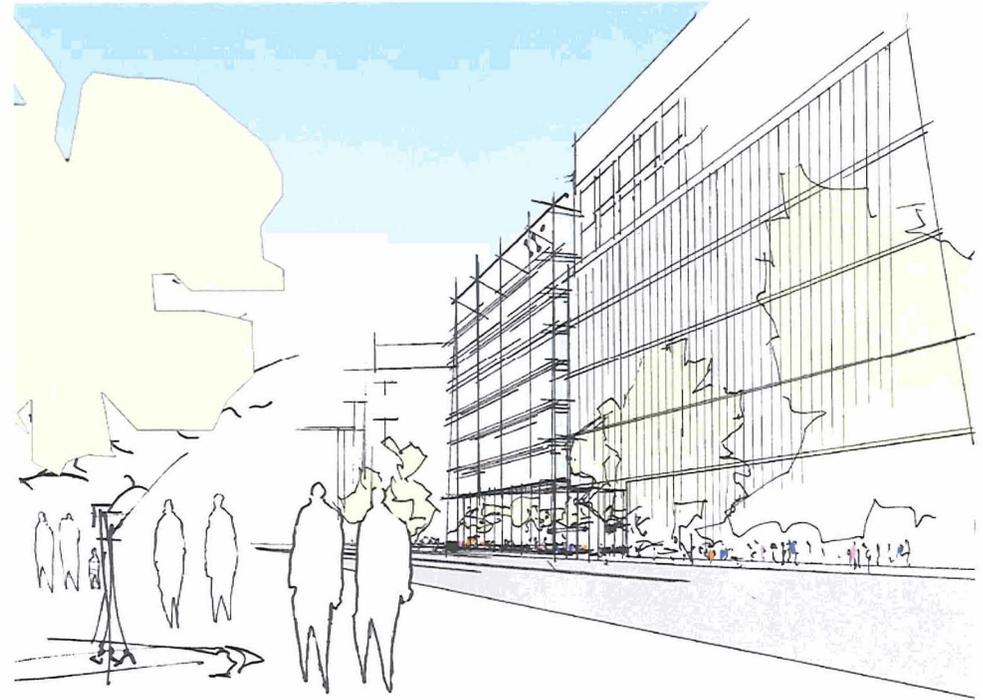
## Process

- ECPT Dialogue
- K2 Study
- Planning Board Review
- Design Review
- CRA Review
- City Council Vote
- MEPA

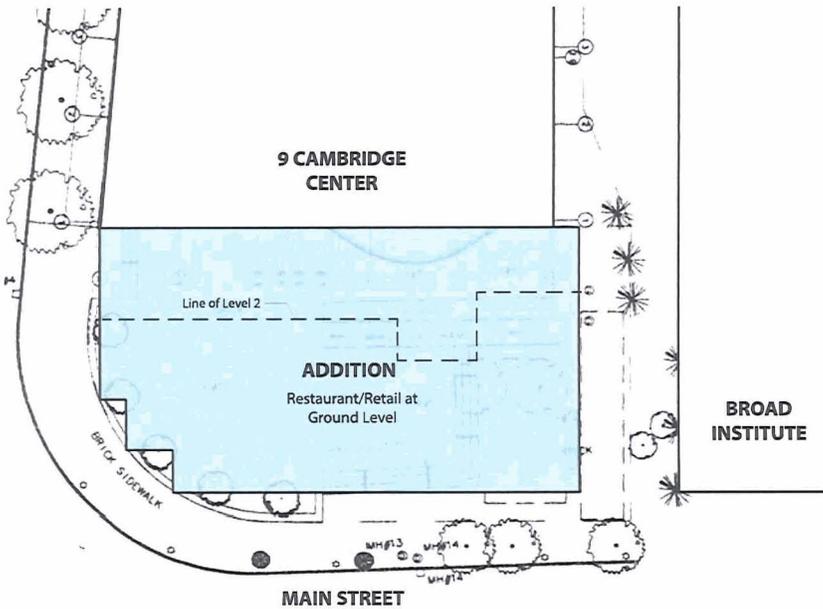




Existing Site Photo



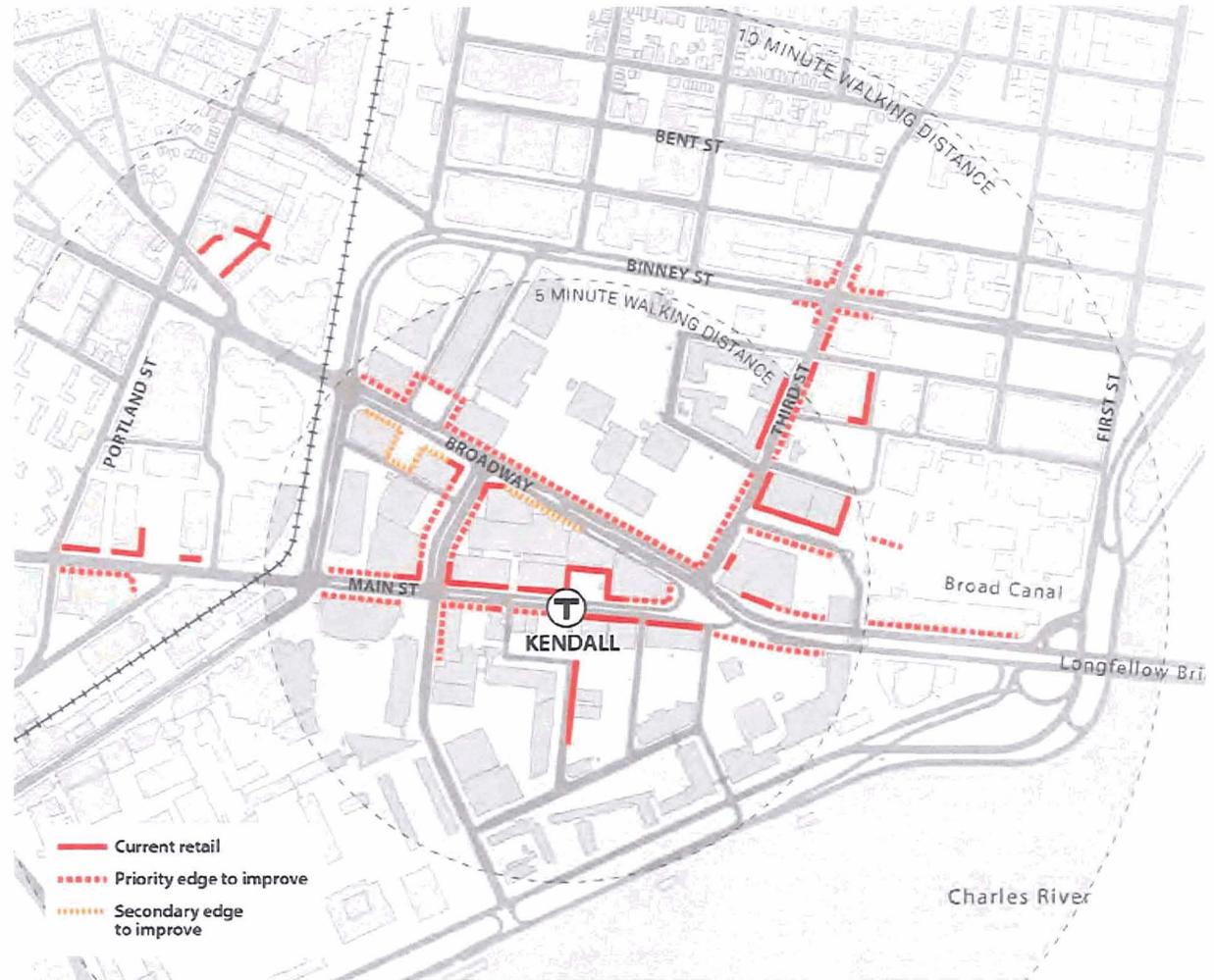
Proposed Perspective from Main St.



Proposed Site Plan

## K2 Study

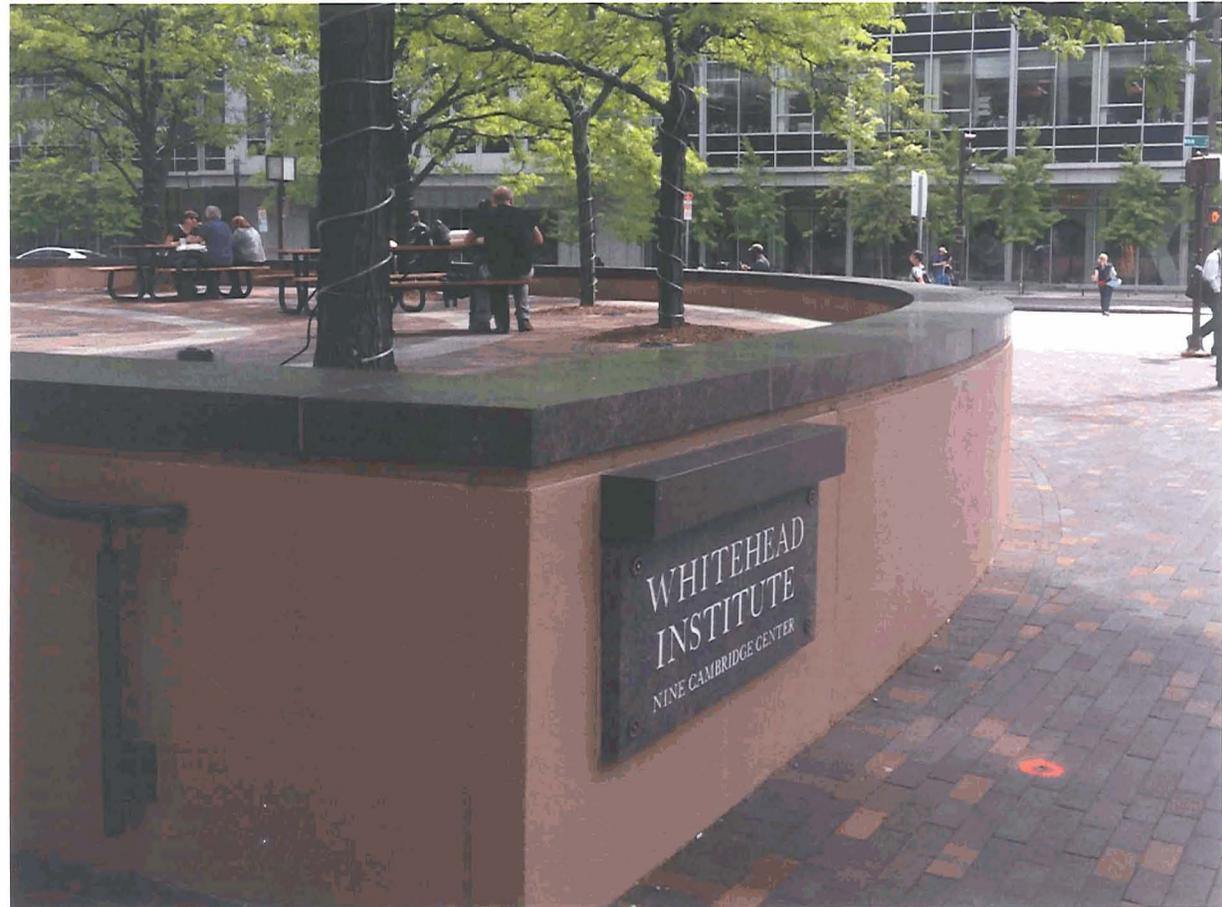
- Innovation Space
- K2/MIT Relationships
- Create Great Places
- Innovation/Economic Development
- Control Auto Traffic
- Engage Buildings and Pedestrians
- Emphasize How the Buildings Meet the Sidewalk
- Create an Interconnected Network of Open Spaces



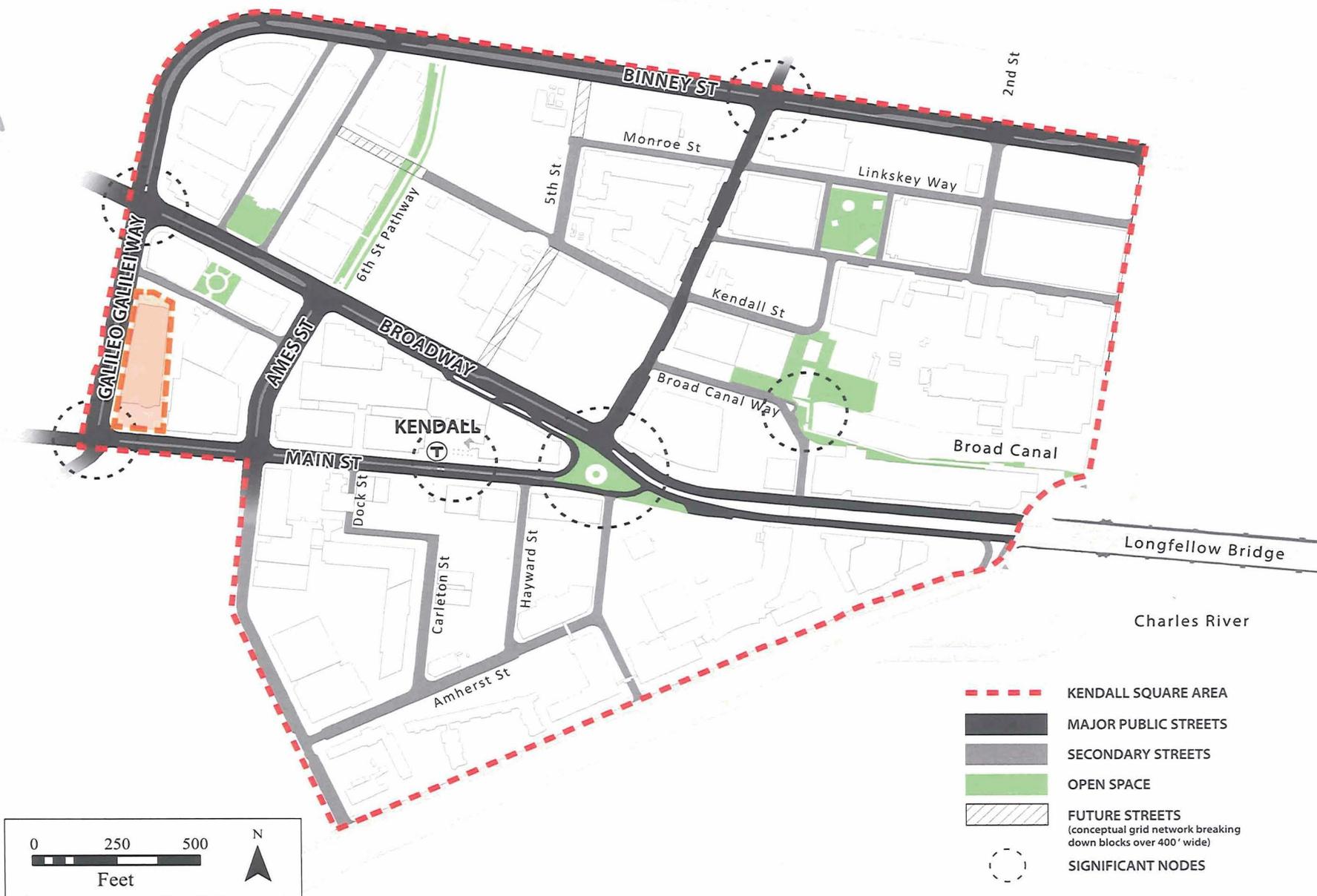
## Development Allowed vs. Proposed

### Height

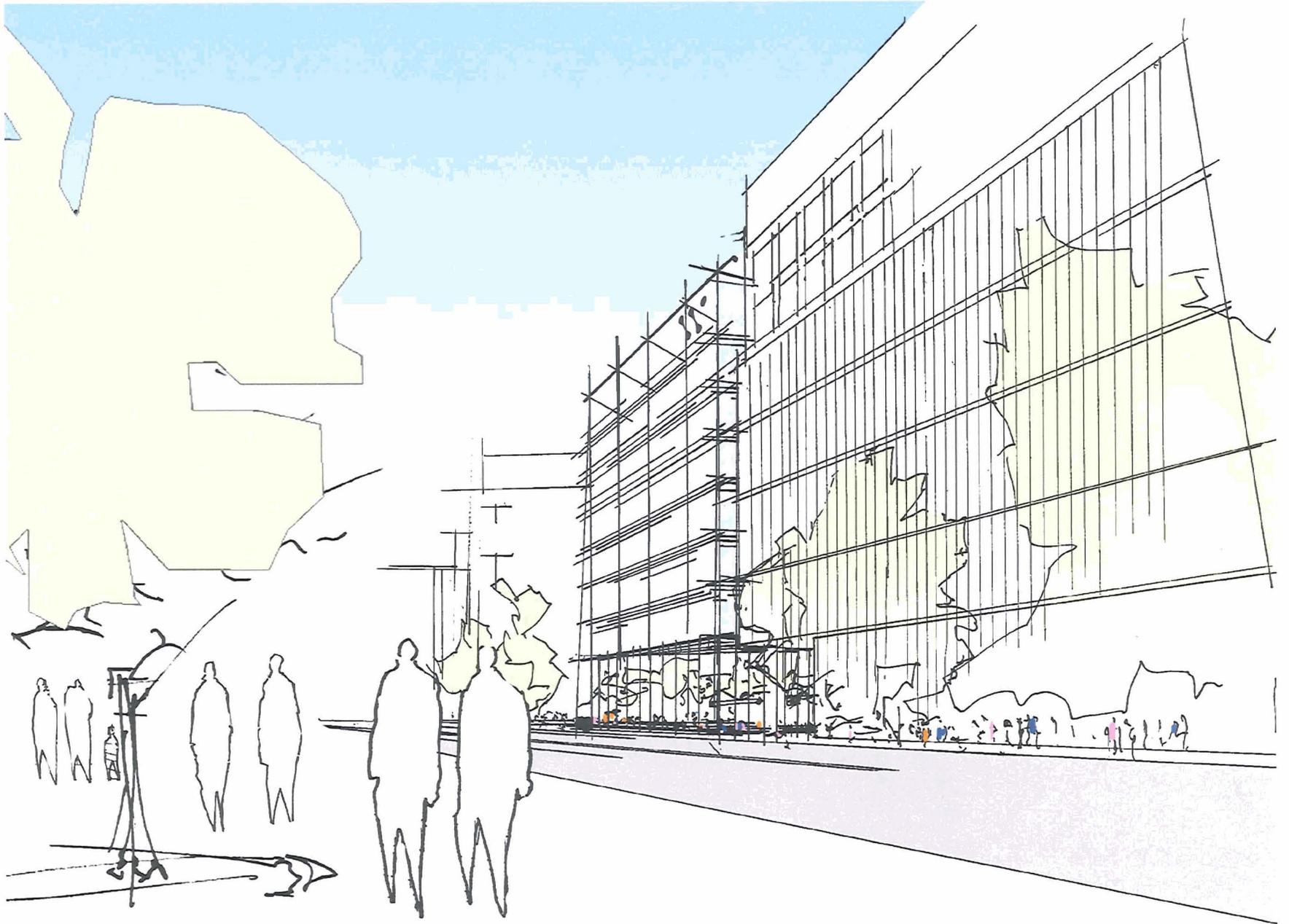
Allowed:	250'
Proposed:	120'

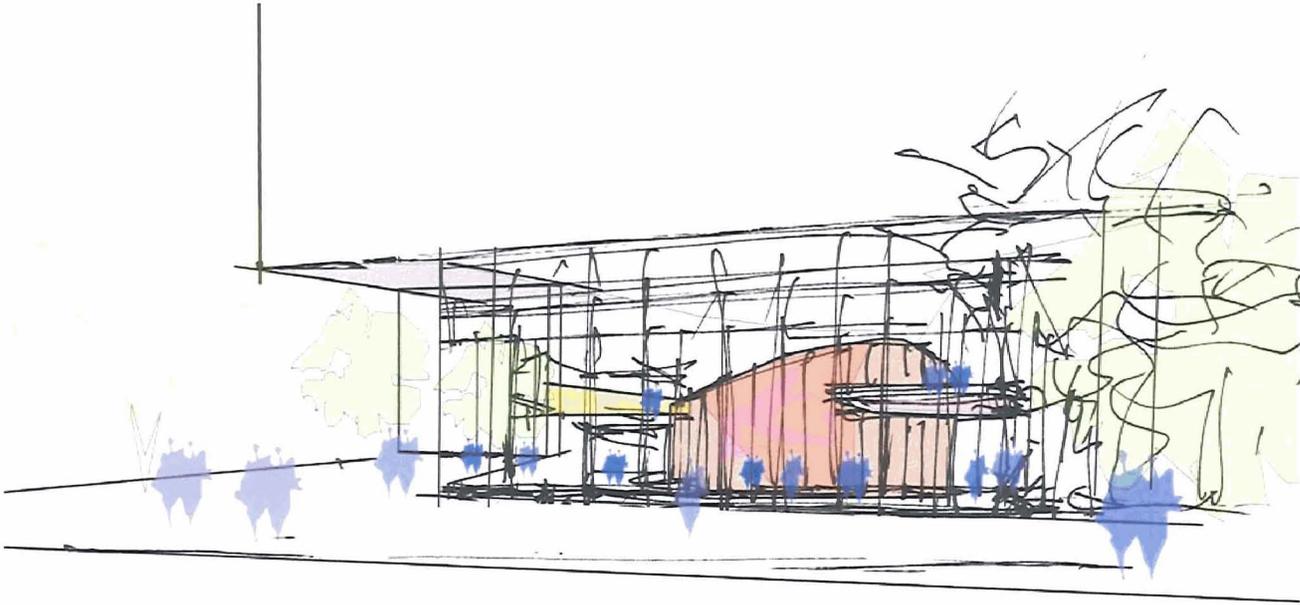




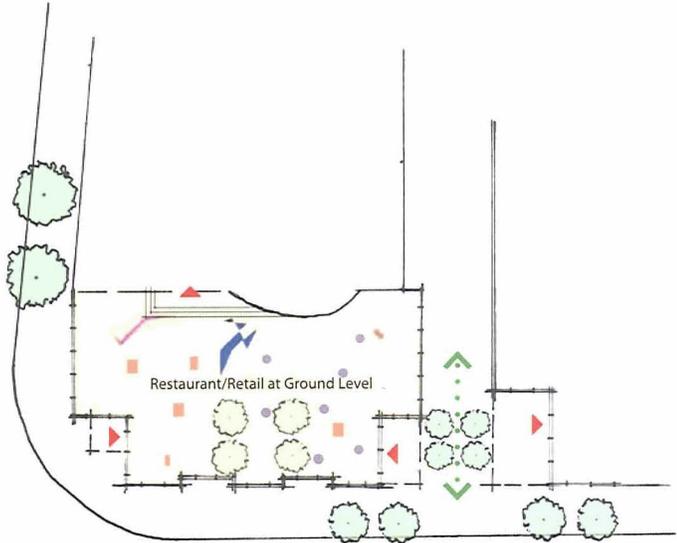








Proposed Perspective from Main St.



Lobby Plan Study



January 12, 2015

Vice-Mayor Dennis Benzan, Co-Chair  
Councillor Dennis Carlone, Co-Chair  
City of Cambridge Ordinance Committee  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Re: Whitehead Institute Zoning Change

Dear Mr. Benzan, Mr. Carlone :

On October 22, Dr. Martin Mullins, Vice President of the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research, Rick Kobus, of Tsoi Kobus Architects, and Rich McKinnon met with members of the East Cambridge Planning Team to discuss plans for what they feel is a much needed expansion of their building at 9 Cambridge Center. The building has been there since 1982, and is somewhat dated. What they plan is a 50,000 to 60,000 square foot addition to the existing building in front of the existing structure, where the open space and trees are now.

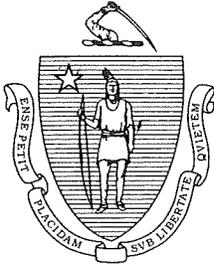
The addition will be seven floors, with mechanicals on the roof. The first two floors will be an open "urban living room" in which employees and the public can congregate, with a coffee shop, and perhaps a community room. We assume this is in lieu of the open space and setback requirements. To realize their plans, a zoning change will be necessary; the maximum limit of 300,000 square feet of research space in Kendall Square apparently has all been used.

Although no formal vote was taken and we saw no specific architectural renderings, most of those present seemed to think this plan was acceptable. Two are opposed to seeing the trees removed, and one objected to the removal of the peregrine falcons. All of us are pleased that high school students can participate in internship programs, and hope that scholarships will be provided for those who otherwise cannot afford the fees. We wish the Institute well as they continue their fundamental biomedical research.

With all good wishes,

Sincerely,

Barbara Broussard  
President, East Cambridge Planning Team



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

MASSACHUSETTS SENATE

2015 JAN 20 AM 11 22

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS.

Assistant Vice Chairman  
SENATE WAYS AND MEANS

EDUCATION

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND  
EMERGING TECHNOLOGIES

BILLS IN THE THIRD READING

SENATOR SAL DiDOMENICO

Middlesex and Suffolk District

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January 12, 2015

Vice Mayor Dennis Benzan, Co-Chairman  
Councillor Dennis Carlone, Co-Chairman  
Cambridge City Council, Ordinance Committee  
City Hall  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Co-Chairmen Benzan and Carlone:

I am writing in support of the Whitehead Institute zoning petition. Whitehead is requesting 60,000 square feet in order to expand their research capabilities. Whitehead has been located at Kendall Square since 1982, has been an excellent member of the community, and was one of the initial companies that decided to invest in Cambridge. In over thirty years of business Whitehead has become known as a leader in the Biotech industry and allowing their expansion will help to ensure that their high quality of work and research can continue.

Whitehead Institute is closely affiliated with MIT and is home to 17 principal investigators focused on programs such as cancer research, immunology, developmental biology, stem cell research, regenerative medicine, genetics, and genomics. Whitehead was named the top research institution in the world in molecular biology and genetics. By approving this special permit, and allowing the expansion of Whitehead, the institution will be able to have an even larger impact on the biotech field.

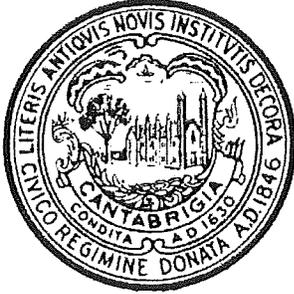
I hope that you will give your full consideration to the Whitehead Institute's zoning petition and grant them the much needed expansion. As always, if you need any further information, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Sal DiDomenico".

Senator Sal DiDomenico  
Middlesex & Suffolk

cc: Donna Lopez, City Clerk



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

**P L A N N I N G   B O A R D**

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date:	December 16, 2014
Subject:	Whitehead Institute Rezoning Petition
Recommendation:	The Planning Board recommends ADOPTION, with comments.

To the Honorable, the City Council,

The Planning Board heard the proposal by the Whitehead Institute for Biomedical Research to amend the zoning regulations of the MXD District to allow, by special permit, 60,000 square feet of additional Gross Floor Area to be added to the site. The Board also received written and oral comments from members of the public and Community Development Department staff.

The Board is generally supportive of the proposed rezoning. The Whitehead Institute has long been an integral part of the character and vitality of Kendall Square, contributing to the culture of scientific research shared by institutions and businesses in the area. Given the Whitehead's current need to expand its research operations, the Board believes it is in the City's interest and consistent with Cambridge's planning policies to allow such expansion to be accommodated within the current site.

Moreover, expanding capacity for the growth of office and laboratory uses is one of the objectives of the City's Kendall Square ("K2") Planning Study. Although the K2 study recommended a more substantial amount of new development throughout the MXD District, the Board believes that authorizing this specific expansion is appropriate at this time given the substantial time and effort that will be required to complete a larger rezoning. It should also be noted that this proposal will require further review and approvals by the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA), which oversees development throughout the MXD District, as well as the Planning Board (to grant special permits) and City Council (to amend the open space covenant for the plaza, as discussed below).

Within the smaller scope of the Whitehead's proposal, the zoning petition is in many ways consistent with the recommendations of the K2 study. However, the Board would like to note several items to be addressed by the City Council prior to taking a final vote on this petition.

Public Space

One of the most significant implications of the proposal is that the expansion would build on top of the existing plaza at the corner of Main Street and Galileo Galilei Way. Although this location is not specifically called out in the zoning text, the Board understands that it is the only feasible option because adding floors above the existing building would be prohibitively disruptive to the

current Whitehead operation. Construction on the plaza would require action by the City Council in addition to the zoning change because it is subject to a public use covenant.

Despite acknowledging that the existing plaza does not always feel welcoming to the public, the Board believes that this corner is an important location for public space, given the prominence of the intersection, its role as a “gateway” into the heart of Kendall Square, its interface with entrances to the MIT campus, and its southern exposure providing good access to sunlight. If the plaza is to be built on, it will be important to preserve high-quality space that is accessible and useful to the public at the ground level, even if that space might be covered, or partially or fully enclosed. It is expected that the property owner would explore best practices in the design and activation of that corner; for example, looking at examples of successful “winter gardens” and similar indoor/outdoor public spaces around the world. There is also the risk that an enclosed space would have more strictly limited access than an outdoor space, or would simply feel less accessible, and measures would need to be taken to mitigate that risk.

According to the zoning petition, the proposed expansion would require special permits from the Planning Board. Because issues concerning the quality, accessibility and usability of the ground-level space cannot be fully resolved through zoning, the Planning Board would be expected to scrutinize the design in detail during the special permit review phase. Characteristics such as the scale and height of the ground floor, façade design, means of access and activation strategies would need to be carefully considered to ensure that it meets the public’s expectations.

Other options that might be considered to mitigate changes to the existing plaza space include strengthening open space connections elsewhere around the block or introducing open space in new places such as the rooftop. The feasibility of such options would need to be explored by the property owner and the CRA, and discussed with the Planning Board and City Council during the review process.

#### Parking and Bicycle Parking

As reflected in the City’s recently adopted zoning policies for bicycle parking, an expansion of this scale should be required to provide enough bicycle parking to serve the entire Whitehead complex rather than just the new portion of the building. This is especially important in Kendall Square, where bicycling is a strong part of the work culture and there is a growing demand for bicycle parking spaces.

Regarding automobile parking, while the proposal to accommodate parking needs in existing facilities is consistent with the City’s planning goals, the petitioner will need to demonstrate to the City Council that the need can functionally be met.

#### Green Building Standards

As recommended in the K2 study, development authorized by new zoning in Kendall Square should be expected to meet the City’s Green Building Requirements at a level of LEED Gold or better, more than the citywide requirement of LEED Silver. The Board understands that it may

be complicated to apply the LEED standards in the case of an addition to an existing building, and it would not be reasonable to require the entire existing building to be retrofitted to meet LEED Gold standards. However, it is important to provide assurance that construction will strive to achieve the City's environmental goals to the extent feasible in the new portions of the building.

General Provisions on Public Benefits

The final section of the proposed zoning text (14.72.12, "Public Benefits") suggests that the development authorized by the proposed rezoning would be generally exempt from future requirements that might be included in future zoning changes. The Board does not see a compelling reason to grant such a general exemption in this case, as it would unnecessarily confuse development policies that the City Council might adopt in the future.

However, it is acknowledged that some recommended requirements in the K2 study might not be reasonable or beneficial to apply to a proposed expansion of this relatively modest size, such as requiring housing to be constructed as part of the project or requiring a small percentage of the office space to be available to small commercial enterprises. The Council may consider language that makes the intent clear regarding these provisions, but the Board would not suggest a generalized exemption as proposed. The petitioner would also have to be conscious of these issues at a future time if a broader rezoning of the MXD is considered.

Respectfully submitted for the Planning Board,



Hugh Russell, Chair.



**Lopez, Donna**

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**From:** Richard McKinnon [mckinnoncompany@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 02, 2015 7:46 PM  
**To:** Benzan, Dennis; Carlone, Dennis; dcarlone@carloneassociates.com  
**Cc:** Maher, David; Mazen, Nadeem; McGovern, Marc; Kelley, Craig; Cheung, Leland; Simmons, Denise; Toomey, Tim; Rosario-Perez, Pamela; Connolly, Michael; Lopez, Donna; Murphy, Brian  
**Subject:** FW: 15\_0205 Design Narrative\_DRAFT\_v4.docx Whitehead Petition  
**Attachments:** 15\_0205 Design Narrative\_DRAFT\_v4.docx; Untitled attachment 01082.txt

Dear Chairmen Benzan and Carlone,

I am pleased to submit a design narrative that I hope will add to your understanding of our thinking as to the Whitehead Petition. At the Ordinance hearing, Chairman Carlone asked for us to submit a narrative or further design. Whitehead is not able at this time to engage in another round of drawings at a detailed level. That is why I asked for the chance instead to submit a design narrative from our architects at Tsoi/ Kobus. That narrative is attached.

I had planned to speak at tonight's Council meeting under public testimony and submit this document to the Council along with my testimony. As we all know, Winter had her own plans.

I thought it best nonetheless to send these out so that you had them in advance of Thursday's further Ordinance hearing on Whitehead.

For the Whitehead Institute,

Rich McKinnon

-----Original Message-----

**From:** Richard McKinnon [mailto:mckinnoncompany@comcast.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 02, 2015 7:21 PM  
**To:** Richard McKinnon  
**Subject:** 15\_0205 Design Narrative\_DRAFT\_v4.docx

M E M O R A N D U M

Date 02/05/2015  
To Cambridge City Council  
From Andy Pecora, LEED BD+C  
Re Whitehead Institute Zoning Petition  
Design Narrative/Zoning Guidelines

In addressing the zoning implications for the Whitehead Institute proposed addition, our process began with the review of the K2 Final Report and K2 Design Guidelines. These important documents provide a clear framework for the future, based on detailed analysis and comprehensive planning efforts. The issues discussed within both of these documents are critical in creating a successful urban experience and provide a strong basis for design. The guidelines specifically establish a comprehensive strategy to address the desired character and spirit of the neighborhood. The specific items influencing our initial design are as follows:

- Environmental Quality
- Street Activity
- Universal Access
- Architectural Identity/Visual Interest
- Integrated Rooftops
- Retail/Mixed-use Ground Floors
- Open, public space

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Additionally, through the zoning petition process and initial talks with the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, we have received concerns regarding certain elements of the proposed conceptual design. Replacement of existing open space, response to the existing Broad Institute entrance, providing a varied retail experience, aesthetic character, and the creation of a truly public space are among a few of the considerations we will be investigating. The following narrative is directed at addressing and responding to these initial concerns.

**Replacement of Existing Open Space**

The Whitehead Institute addition is proposed for construction in front of their existing building, located at 9 Cambridge Center, on what is currently a raised outdoor plaza. The proposed building edge along Main Street will be pulled forward, in line and in context with its neighbors, to reinforce a cohesive street wall condition and positive pedestrian experience. The first two levels of the proposed

addition will be primarily dedicated to public functions, following guidelines related to "street activity" set forth in the K2 Design Guidelines. This newly designed "urban living room" will be more than just a lobby. It will instead provide the neighborhood with service/restaurant/retail opportunities aimed at supporting the Kendall Square users at different times of the day throughout the year. The objective of this space will be to foster an engaging street edge and create a vibrant public space, as well as to provide the Whitehead Institute with a new civic face and front entrance.

Visual transparency, universal access, and a diverse selection of retail/service uses are all paramount in creating a successful ground-level urban experience. New retail spaces located along the sidewalk edge will aim to engage pedestrians, while the existing food service operation will be extended and highlighted to help further animate the interior space. The strategic use of glazing will enable visual connections between exterior and interior zones, while taking advantage of a south-facing orientation that affords us the opportunity to create appealing spaces which can be activated throughout the year.

Additionally, this proposal is obligated to carefully respond to direct contextual cues. The location of the existing Broad Institute entrance and the adjacent existing green seating area is such a cue. In this instance, the building envelope may afford some amount of relief along the street edge to acknowledge these existing spaces. This response provides a very exciting opportunity to create an interesting, site-specific moment within a rather consistent street wall; a civic notch, a seating area within a great space.

The design of this space will reflect the objectives of being a welcoming and accessible destination within the Kendall Square neighborhood. The retail and interior spaces must be well lit, highly visible, inviting and comfortable. Necessary elevation changes to access the existing building (level 1 is roughly +4'-0" above grade) will occur further into the building, allowing the new ground floor to be directly accessible from the streetscape. The secured entry for the Institute's lobby functions will be located toward the rear of the space, such that a majority of the "urban living room" is accessible to the public. Overall, the objective is to generate a successful public moment within the neighborhood fabric, while simultaneously functioning as the Whitehead's Institutional "front porch."

### **Expression of Architecture**

The location for the proposed Whitehead Institute addition is also very prominent along the Kendall Square periphery. The site occupies the corner of Main Street and Galileo Galilei Way, acting as a significant node and gateway into the Kendall Square district. This highly visible site demands an architectural aesthetic that is interesting and expressive of the innovative activities occurring within, yet respectful of neighborhood context.

As previously stated, the ground-level expression should promote a welcoming and comfortable atmosphere, and be highly visible through the use of ground-level transparency. Proper proportioning and relation to human scale at the ground level are important strategies in providing a sense of comfort. Opportunities may be available to provide moments of engagement between the pedestrians and the building itself. For example, seating and interaction spaces could potentially be integrated into the building's facade, creating another level of engagement as a community destination.

As a gateway building, the proposed addition will need to be distinct and embracing. Appropriate selection of materials and formal expression will be key to achieving these intentions. By integrating the penthouse volume into the top of the building, additional height will be incorporated into the building facade along Main Street. Formally, this will help signify entrance and will forge a stronger connection to the adjacent street wall.

While striving to develop a sense of architectural diversity and interest within the district, the addition must also establish some relation with the original building and its neighbors. Contextual datum lines, both from the original building and adjacent structures, should be continued to produce a unified street wall experience. Furthermore, materials similar and/or complementary to those in the original building will help to integrate the addition with the existing structure in order to create a cohesive identity. They will also provide a warm offset to the principal material, which is expected to be glass.