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Cambridge City Council
City Hall, 2nd Floor
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

2009 JUN 16 A 7:07

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

June 7, 2009

Dear Members of the City Council,

We want to express our very strong support of the overlay zoning proposal submitted by Lesley University which will allow them to bring the Art Institute of Boston to Porter Square on Mass Ave next to the T stop.

We are all residents of Neighborhood 9 and live just a few blocks from the property in question.

We feel that North Cambridge will be enriched by bringing in an art school of AIB's caliber. This section of Mass Avenue will be enlivened by having art students, teachers, projects and performances in evidence, day and night. It is no secret that this stretch of Mass Ave, from Harvard's newly moved Victorians to the Porter T stop, is currently pretty gritty. The Lesley-AIB development will go a long way toward making North Mass Ave the Boulevard it deserves to be.

The Lesley-AIB Art School belongs prominently on Mass Ave. The various alternatives proposed by some of the abutters, such as building behind the old Sears bldg, are not feasible, and are not going to happen.

The North Prospect Congregational Church, moved and restored to its original quiet elegance and relationship to the ground and the street, minus the disproportional later additions, will be more attractive, and certainly more useful to the community, than what is there now. The North Prospect Congregational Church is not functioning as a church or pre-school anymore; the congregation no longer exists and the pre-school is soon to be happily ensconced in a nearby neighborhood, while the Lesley-AIB proposal will bring the repositioned church back to life again.

We firmly believe that even the individuals who currently oppose the Lesley-AIB project, because they fear it will adversely affect their properties, or change a view or a patch of green they have grown to believe is their right to keep, will find their property values and lives improved by this new neighbor.

Much of the opposition to this project has taken on the tone of "no development, freeze everything in any way historic the way it is now, keep all open land undeveloped, no matter how unusable by the neighborhood currently". This is a questionable approach to zoning at any time, and highly inappropriate on Mass Ave, just blocks from a major T stop.

This process has now gone on for nearly 3 years, and Lesley has worked closely, and responsively, with the council, historical committee and neighbors (many of whom were on the study committee). It is time to let them get on with the design and building of what promises to be a great addition to Porter Square, our neighborhood, and Cambridge.

The Council must choose between the interests of the few (no matter how strongly expressed) and the greater community good. We think the Lesley-AIB project and the future growth of Lesley at Porter Square will make this part of Cambridge a much better place and we heartily welcome Lesley and AIB as neighbors.

Thank you very much for your attention to this letter, and for all of the time you have each given to consideration of this project.

Sincerely yours,

6/4/04	Mark Mark Rosenstein	129 Upland
"	Jody JODY RENOUF	129 UPLAND RD
"	Hayley Hayley Arnett	17 Buena Vista Park
"	Elizabeth ELIZABETH GREYWOLF	17 Buena Vista Pk #1, 02140
"	Margorie Margorie Thomsen	7 Buena Vista Pk
"	Katie Katie Peters	93 UPLAND RD
"	Richard Richard Simone	7 BUENA VISTA PARK
"	Elin Elin Evans	7 Buena Vista Park
"	Jeremy Jeremy Gordon	115 Upland Rd Apt. 2
"	Beth Beth Dee	131 Upland Rd, Camb.
"	John John Dee	" " " "
6/7/09	James James A. Cornie	115 Upland Rd "
6/7/09	Elizabeth Elizabeth Edward	10 Buena Vista Pk
"	Bailey Bailey Bishop	10 Buena Vista Pk
6/10/09	Amanda Amanda Hurd	114a Upland Rd

6/5/09 Mary Ann Serra
 6/5/09 Richard Manning
 6/11/09 Anne Kushma
 6/11/09 Sylvie Weston
 6/13/09 Virginia Stanford
 6/13/09 Jon Lupper

25 Washington Ave
25 Washington Avenue
37 Washington Ave
18 Bolton St.
17 Vincent St
116 upland Rd

Robert J. Mehri

175 Richdale, Unit 118
Linda Kogel " Unit 104

Sean
 Mason
 Margaret
 S. Blum
 DANER
 in Absence

175 Richdale #410
175 Richdale #414

~~175~~ Robert Cowherd

175 Richdale Ave #107

Gwen Frankfeldt

175 Richdale Ave #220

Sarah
 Morrow
Sarah Morrow

" #314

Kim Jones
Kim Jones

" #120

John W. Nelson
John Nelson

" #102

Maxine W. Nelson
Maxine Nelson

" #102

Sharon H. Haddad
Sharon Haddad

" #117

Bonnie Haddad

" #215

Robert K. Kogel

" #314

John MacDougall

" #209

JOHN MACDOUGALL

