



March 19, 2012

The Honorable Henrietta Davis, Mayor
The Honorable Denise Simmons, Vice Mayor
Councillor Leland Cheung
Councillor Marjorie Decker
Councillor Craig Kelley
Councillor David Maher
Councillor Ken Reeves
Councillor Tim Toomey, Jr.
Councillor Minka vanBeuzekom

Dear Mayor Davis and Councillors:

The Board of the East Cambridge Planning Team appreciates the open and sometimes lively dialog with Boston Properties and Google leading up to and following their presentation to our group last Wednesday. The Board, based on a majority vote, is pleased to support Boston Properties' revised proposal to create an urban campus for Google by connecting several of its existing buildings in Kendall Square. Reservations do remain about the swap of part of the existing roof garden at Cambridge Center for a commitment to fund a future park on Binney Street rather than expand the rooftop garden to the roof at Three Cambridge Center which, we have been informed, is not feasible for structural reasons so we urge you all to require a concrete timeframe from Boston Properties for building the housing, including meaningful penalties for failure to complete the housing,, delivering land and funding for the park, and ensuring ground floor retail is provided in the new residential building on Ames Street. We would also suggest some great signs on the sidewalks inviting people up to discover the secluded joys of the beautiful roof garden!

We ask the City to find matching funds for the proposed park on Binney Street, which would allow the creation of a truly remarkable common space knitting together the Wellington Harrington, Area 4, East Cambridge and Kendall Square neighborhoods. We believe Kendall Square will only achieve its true potential as a world-leading innovation center if it is a balanced and vibrant urban place where the most talented people on the planet want to live, work, and play, and the surrounding neighborhoods are an integral part of its vibrancy.

We thank the Council for your attention and hard work in reaching a better resolution in this matter and are excited to have Google as a neighbor as it puts down roots for the long-term, and appreciate its desire for more parks, homes and stores to balance the surge of commercial development that is currently underway in Kendall Square. More homes, stores, and parks for Kendall is a long-standing goal of the East Cambridge Planning Team and we are happy that this project is a step towards achieving it. We welcome Google's growth in Kendall Square and its example as a thoughtful leader in the community.

With all good wishes,

Barbara Broussard
President, East Cambridge Planning Team