

East Cambridge  
**ECPT**  
Planning Team

*A Neighborhood Organization for the Betterment of East Cambridge*

Louis DePasquale, City Manager  
City of Cambridge

Thomas Evans, Executive Director  
Cambridge Redevelopment Authority

City Council  
City of Cambridge

December 3, 2016

Re: Foundry Project, Kendall Square, Cambridge, MA

City Officials,

After a series of public meetings over the last 30 days between the East Cambridge Planning Team (ECPT) and representatives of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA), the City Council, and CIC/Graffito (the tentatively designated developer) on the topic of the Foundry project, the membership of ECPT (at its November 30, 2016 public meeting) voted unanimously in favor of the following:

- While we admire the proposed physical design/renovation plan of the Foundry proposed by the developer, it has become clear to the membership that the current level of public investment in the project does NOT allow the proposal to provide the level of dedicated public benefits contemplated in the letter and spirit of the underlying zoning and up-zoning negotiations with Alexandria Real Estate that originally yielded the grant of the Foundry.
- Given the option of continuing to explore the current proposal versus the option of significantly more public funding, and therefore support of additional public benefits in the building, the ECPT strongly supports the pursuit of a new proposal (with higher public funding) that accommodates a higher percentage of public uses - which are better informed by community input and historical community needs.

Recommendations:

- Reconstitute a Foundry Advisory Committee that includes adequate representation from bonafide neighborhood groups (including ECPT) to better define the goals, governance structures and operating model of the Foundry community center project, including research of comparable projects in other cities.

- Develop a rough financial model to allow the City and CRA to make binding financial commitments for the construction and operation of the Foundry, either under a totally public or public/private model that leverages some private investment, space rental and center management expertise toward achieving the defined programmatic goals of the Foundry.
- Re-write the Foundry RFP to be more appealing to multiple bidders, and prescriptive and clear regarding governance, funding, ownership & conceptual operating model, use programming/pricing policies, metrics of success, etc. as determined through the steps outlined above.

Few locations in the world represent a more promising opportunity for the genuine mixing of residents with professionals from area technology companies and educational institutions. The continuing rapid development of Kendall Square as a hub for bio-pharma and technology research and innovation, suggests a multitude of opportunities to engage local corporations, entrepreneurs, educators and artists to participate in STEAM programs at the Foundry. The challenge will be to develop an operating model that effectively attracts/facilitates these interactions. (The intense development of Kendall Square and East Cambridge has also yielded significant community benefit and impact mitigation funds from developers that could be used to help fund the Foundry project.)

ECPT appreciates the direct engagement of the CRA, CIC/Graffito and Councilors during the recent series of meetings to better understand the current proposal, the context and history of the Foundry RFP, and the options for going forward. The realization of a public use project (under either a totally public or public/private model) requires immense commitment of the parties to achieve a consensus driven result. ECPT stands ready to participate in this process and work toward the realization of a Foundry operating model that meets the core requirements of residents, the City administration and a developer/operator. Cambridge surely has the vision, know-how, public will and available funding to replicate any of a number of successful models of similar projects in other US cities. Given the uniqueness of the opportunity and the 50-year sublease that is contemplated under the Foundry RFP, it is worth the extra time and effort to get this right for the community.

Many thanks for your consideration.

The Board of the East Cambridge Planning Team

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Peter Crawley". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Peter Crawley, President