



June 26, 2019

**Cambridge Redevelopment Authority Purchase of 93-99 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge
M.G.L. c. 30B, § 16 Unique Property Description**

As part of its mission as an urban renewal authority under M.G.L. c. 121B to study, develop, and support urban renewal initiatives and, in particular, to manage the ramifications of urban renewal initiatives for all residents (particularly low-income families, small businesses, and community organizations), the CRA has determined to offer to purchase property at 93-99 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, MA 02319 to support the availability of sufficient and accessible space to provide vital social services to low-income residents.

Pursuant to M.G.L. c. 30B, § 16(e)(2), the CRA has determined that the advertising requirements of M.G.L. c. 30B, §16(a-d) will not benefit the CRA's interests because, as explained below, the property is of unique character and satisfies requirements not met by other properties in Cambridge.

The property at 93-99 Bishop Allen Drive is unique due to its ability to support vital services offered by the Cambridge-based community service sector to Cambridge residents:

- 100% of its tenants are community service organizations serving Cambridge residents or community members;
- Cambridge residents are familiar with the building's full community service organization make-up, thus making it easier for clients to find the site, and building legitimacy for nonprofits located there;
- The location's proximity to Central Square is itself a resource due to Central Square being a historical hub of activity for community organizations, many of which serve the same populations as the nonprofits currently occupying the building, but with different services;
- The building is of sufficient scale and utility to potential and existing community service organization tenants that it can be operated sustainably and prudently with a majority or totality of community service organization tenants. There are no other buildings potentially or currently for sale in Cambridge that are close to MBTA Rapid Transit that fit these characteristics. Rising real estate values in central Cambridge, and particularly in accessible locations like Harvard, Porter, or Kendall Squares, preclude development of the vast majority of properties as hubs for community service organizations.

The property provides other unique characteristics that are required by the community service organizations that currently or may in the future occupy it, in order for them to successfully provide social services. By way of illustrative, not exhaustive, examples, the following list outlines the particular value of the property to each current tenant (and, by extension, potential or future tenants offering similar or identical services):

Algebra Project & Young People's Project: school-based and after school programs

- (1) The Cambridge site largely serves Cambridge youth.
- (2) The organization needs to be in walking distance from clients or on public transit in order to serve a clientele that often do not have access to a car. Clients largely live in Cambridge within walking distance of the Bishop Allen site, or need to take public transit.

Boston Area Rape Crisis Center (BARCC): services for survivors of sexual violence

- (1) BARCC is required to have a location in Cambridge, as per the ongoing state contract that funds a significant portion of the services they provide. BARCC directly serves Cambridge residents and has done so for over 40 years;
- (2) BARCC requires a location close to major transit due to a significant percentage of clients who do not have access to cars. The location's proximity to the Red Line and Number 1 bus contribute heavily to the accessibility of BARCC's office for wide swaths of residents in Cambridge and beyond;
- (3) The mass transit access is of particular necessity to major local area hospitals that frequently send patients directly to BARCC;
- (4) BARCC's locations need to feel anonymous and secure for their clients. BARCC's location in a building that is fully occupied by other nonprofits contributes to the anonymity as a client may be entering the building for any number of nonprofit purposes. The building's location very close to bustling Mass Ave. adds another level of privacy and security; and
- (5) BARCC's space is handicapped accessible via a ramp externally and an elevator in the building, which is necessary for many of BARCC's clientele.

Cambridge Camping: summer programs for low-income, special needs Cambridge youth

- (1) Their organization must be located in Cambridge, due to their mission and the population they serve;
- (2) They must have a physically accessible building and be on transit, as their population often does not have access to a car; and
- (3) Their current Central Square location allows for, and results in parents dropping in to learn more; the location helps to further mission.

Cambridge Community Foundation (CCF): funding and other supports for local nonprofits

- (1) CCF must be located in Cambridge, as it only serves Cambridge nonprofits;
- (2) CCF requires a location close to many of the nonprofits it serves (many of whom are in Central Square), as well as to City government, who is a key partner; and
- (3) Being near public transit ensures access to their site by a range of stakeholders including grantees, funders, program and research partners and others.
- (4) Being located in the central part of the City demonstrates that they serve the entire City and allows them to fully do so.

Enroot: services to enable immigrant youth to achieve academic, career and personal success

- (1) The majority of their current participants are Cambridge residents, requiring a central Cambridge location.
- (2) Enroot serves youth who largely cannot drive or do not have access to a car, requiring a location near a public transit hub.
- (3) Their program is expanding to serve immigrant youth beyond Cambridge, making a location by a transit hub even more vital, in order to enable other youth to access their site.
- (4) Central Square is diverse ethnically and economically, more so than other parts of Cambridge, ensuring a level of comfort for their immigrant participants.

Next Step Fund: art and music therapy, mentorship and social engagement for youth with chronic illness and disease

- (1) The organization's clients require a handicapped accessible building. Their rental space is accessible via a ramp external to the building;
- (2) Their clients often do not have access to a car, and often have physical limitations, requiring a location very close to major transit; and
- (3) Their location in the heart of Central Square – with its vibrant street life, proximity to arts and proximity to retail that attracts youth – creates more incentive for youth to join their program, and a sense of connection between their programs and the larger community.

Sustainable Business Network (SBN): support for small, locally owned businesses

- (1) SBN requires proximity to clients; a significant percentage of clients are Cambridge-based small businesses located in commercial nodes, including in Central Square;
- (2) They host an annual community festival in Central Square, and require proximity to the event site.
- (3) They require a location close to mass transit and in a commercial node that is largely locally owned businesses in order to best meet their mission; and
- (4) Their very small budget precludes renting in other locations, but they can afford to rent in the existing location.