

East Cambridge



Planning Team

*A Neighborhood Organization for the Betterment of East Cambridge*

July 14, 2021

Cambridge Redevelopment Authority  
255 Main Street, 8th Floor  
Cambridge, MA 02142

**RE: MXD Substation Project**

Dear CRA Board Chair Born; Vice Chair Crawford; and Board Members Bator, Zevin, and Drury:

The proposal for the further development of the MXD prepared by Boston Properties makes an important contribution to the solution of energy requirements for the Kendall Area. We are grateful that this plan will permit Eversource to be able to supply energy without compromising the community's aspirations for using the site at Fulkerson Street for public purposes.

In our review of the current plan before you, however, we have spotted several concerns. We would like to share our observations and suggestions in the hope you will consider them going forward.

We note that there have been attempts to increase the usable open space above the sub-station between the residence and the office buildings. We regret, however, that the air intake structure has taken on an oversized role and now dominates the area as it looms over the approaches to this important open space. This space will serve the families in the 400 plus apartments that are to be built and the several thousand employees that will occupy the commercial buildings proposed. We ask that you have the architects come up with a friendlier solution that is less sculptural and menacing and meets the ventilation needs of the sub-station. We would prefer a more humane environment for the families that will depend on this open space as one of their few opportunities for a friendly and useful outdoor space.

Following from this issue is a question of how Boston Properties will provide support for the additional childcare needs of the new population they will introduce to the site. The current BIOGEN childcare operation, for example, has a generous green space, but we do not see how the future population of both residents and employees will be served with the required open space for childcare needy families.

If the project hopes to make the open space an animated and useful space, it seems important that the retail plan include, at least, a cafe in the residence building that would face onto the plaza. Having tables and chairs spread around without the opportunity to have some refreshment seems like an unfortunate oversight that should be remedied.

We were happy to see that the developer will make it possible for all adults to have free access to one of the bus services and partial support for the T. We would hope that you would seek to have the developer provide free access to the T to at least the residents on a continuing basis.

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**ECPT**  
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As this plan seeks to make public transportation a more central part of the service package for occupants, we note that the access to the current Red Line portal on at Carleton and Main Streets will probably be inadequate and we would urge you to have the transportation plan include the development of a new portal to the Red Line at Ames Street. This would be far more convenient to the occupants of this project. In addition, we note that there is no indication of the future transportation services along the Grand Junction adjacent to the project site. We believe that this will be an important asset to the transportation needs of the area that should be encouraged and supported by the developer and the CRA.

Very truly yours,



Charles T. Hinds  
President, ECPT