



Community Conversation on Volpe Site Development

ECPT Volpe Subcommittee*

Update to the City of Cambridge Volpe Working Group

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Process

- Conversation held April 26 at East End House on Spring Street
- Purpose = learn what neighborhood people would like to see in Kendall Square as Volpe site is developed
- World café model, ~3 dozen people, report-outs to large group
- Two main Qs:
 - How can Volpe development contribute to filling needs of East Cambridge neighborhoods?
 - What ideas for development to better East Cambridge, in four specific areas (mobility, open space & environment, “life on the street”, recreation & culture)?

Q1: High-level themes

Discussants would like to see:

- *Ample, sunlit open space*, including significant public square
- *Pedestrian connections*—access to site, walkability through it
- *Civic character* defines the site, including community/rec center
- Residents who will *build neighborhood*; retail to meet needs
- *Old-growth trees* saved, including 3rd St rows & mid-site grove
- *Transportation capacity* to match growth; fear congestion
- “*Affordable*” retail, dining, recreation opportunities
- *Water theme tie-in*; water features, access to river & river views

Q2: Examples of “specifics”

1. Movement and neighborhood connections
 - Keep the 6th St passageway; 5th St extension pedestrian-only
 - Connect site transportation infrastructure with Grand Junction RR
2. Open space and environment
 - Substantial public space that identifies K Square; permanent benefit
 - Keep the “spirit of oasis” there now—nature, gardens, trees
3. “Life on the street”
 - International models for pedestrian-friendly activity, year-round
 - Support small independent stores, especially local
4. Community recreation and culture
 - Y-type rec facility, with programming like Allston’s Harvard Ed Portal
 - Performance space that is managed and organized

Next steps

- ✓ Briefing to ECPT membership
- ✓ Hear and discuss 5/24 MITIMCo update
- ✓ Update Volpe Working Group
- Hold workshops with membership, “fill in the details”
- Engage with neighborhood groups; e.g., CResA, Wellington-Harrington, The Port/Area 4, abutters
- Talk with City officials, others
- Work with members to refine, revise ideas
- Present findings in relevant public forums