

To: The Planning Board
From: CDD Staff
Date: August 21, 2012
Re: Kendall Square Summary and Next Steps

As you know, one of the reasons for the Council's request for the K2C2 study was the desire for a comprehensive look to establish the vision and broad principles that would guide the consideration of any zoning changes at a district level (e.g. MIT, Forest City, and Novartis at the time).

The Kendall Square discussion at the July 7 Planning Board meeting brought to the Board the work of the Kendall Square Advisory Committee/Goody Clancy (K2 Committee) and CBT/East Cambridge Planning Team (CBT) and helped crystallize the areas of agreement and those where additional discussion is needed. It is our hope that the Board would confirm these principles that provide a framework to evaluate each of the PUDs going forward. This memo is an attempt to lay out these goals and areas of agreement as well as the biggest questions that pertain to core issues. We hope that this reflects the majority of the big picture issues that the Board would like to see addressed and also acknowledges that despite agreement on broad goals, there are many details that will need to be resolved when we get to the zoning consideration stage.

Kendall Square is a globally significant innovation cluster and an important economic engine for Cambridge. The K2 Committee and CBT both acknowledge that it is critical to increase capacity for the knowledge economy to continue to grow and flourish here. For the vitality of the district and to continue the ongoing transformation of the innovation district to an innovation community, both the K2 and CBT plans emphasize the following goals.

Enhance Public Realm /Open Space

All plans for Kendall Square propose knitting existing and future public spaces to create a 'pearl necklace' that forms an engaging series of diverse public spaces, both outdoor and indoor, that enhance the sense of place in Kendall Square and are accessible to all users.

Significant interventions include strengthening open space connections to the river, connections between Kendall Square and the surrounding residential neighborhoods, and the creation of a public space south of Main Street that connects MIT's 'infinite corridor' to Kendall Square and offers a gathering space fostering interaction between the university, research, and residential communities.

K2 Committee Approach:

1. The Kendall Square Plan, including the public open space plan, would be referenced in the zoning and special permit criteria. Each PUD proposal would be expected to include an open space plan showing how the proposal intended to meet the public space goals noted in the Plan and the Planning Board would refer to the Plan when evaluating the project.
2. Approximately 1/3 of the proposed Kendall Square Fund contribution (\$10/sq. ft.), which would apply to all future non-residential development in the Kendall Square PUDs, would support open space within the area, particularly programming and management.
3. In the coming months, CDD will be embarking on an Eastern Cambridge/Kendall Square Open Space Planning process to address the next level of detail of the area-wide public open space approach as well as the design of specific parks (Point Park and the future Rogers St Park, First/Binney St Triangle Park, and Galileo Galilei Way/Binney St Triangle Park). The process will be informed by the open space concepts created by the K2 Committee, CBT, and MIT and will rely on extensive public input, including a survey.

Related Questions:

1. Should the open space requirements in any of the districts be increased?

2. What requirements and guidelines should be put in place to ensure that new open space is accessible and inviting to the public at large?
3. Further study of nodes where the residential neighborhoods and the Kendall Square commercial development are in close proximity. Existing plans should be evaluated to ensure that they address the goal of a positive transition:
 - Broadway and Cardinal Medeiros Avenue
 - Met Pipe site adjacent to Ahern Field
 - Main St and Vassar St

Create Additional Housing in and around Kendall Square

The increased presence of residents along Third Street has been an important contributor to the activation experienced in Kendall Square in recent years. In order to continue this transformation, both the K2 and CBT plans emphasize the inclusion of housing and the creation of minimum housing requirements and phasing requirements for housing.

The two proposals are difficult to compare due to differing study areas, but opportunity locations for residential identified by both within the Kendall Square core are similar. The CBT plan in particular suggests that opportunities for increasing housing should be explored in transition areas between the Kendall Square core and adjacent neighborhoods. Also, the plans take somewhat different approaches to the phasing of housing.

K2 Committee Approach:

1. The proposal creates minimum housing requirements in 3 PUDs
 - PUD KS-1 (CRA/Boston Properties) – 600,000 max. commercial; 400,000 sf residential; Certificate of Occupancy for 200,000 sf residential currently permitted in the district must be obtained prior to Certificate of Occupancy for any commercial development
 - PUD KS-2 (US DOT-Volpe Site) – Maintain minimum 40% of housing required as part of any PUD project
 - PUD KS-3 (multiple owners) – Additional FAR of 0.5 may be used only for residential.
 - PUD KS-4 (MIT) – 200,000 sf min. residential
2. In districts with a minimum housing requirement – Certificate of occupancy for no more than 60% of the non-residential capacity would be granted until a Certificate of Occupancy for 100% of the required housing is obtained.
3. Middle Income Housing of diverse unit sizes would be required in buildings that exceed 250' in height.
4. Inclusionary housing and incentive zoning requirements would continue to apply.

Related Questions:

1. Do the proposed requirements for minimum amount of housing result in the desired mix of uses?
2. Are the triggers for development of housing appropriate to create critical mass of housing while allowing reasonable flexibility to respond to market conditions?
3. What is the role of housing south of Main Street? Is an area-wide presence sufficient or is new housing specifically needed in this area?
4. Further study of potential residential opportunities outside of the Kendall study area. Evaluate existing zoning to determine current development opportunities. Potential future sites as noted in the CBT plan include:
 - Met Pipe Site
 - 1 Kendall Square
 - Surface parking at Third and Bent St
 - Advance Tire site at Broadway and Cardinal Medeiros

Increase Commercial Development Capacity within the Core Kendall Square Area

All plans for the area call for an increase in commercial density to allow research and related businesses to locate and grow in Kendall Square. The K2 and CBT plans result in similar amount of additional commercial GFA within the Kendall Square area, with CBT being slightly lower.

K2 Committee Approach:

1. The plan proposes increasing commercial density based on evaluation of potential development sites
 - PUD KS-1 (CRA/Boston Properties) – Allow up to 600,000 sf additional commercial capacity
 - PUD KS-2 (US DOT-Volpe Site) – Increase FAR from 3.0 to 4.0 (up to 60% of which may be commercial)
 - PUD KS-3 (multiple owners) – Along the Main Street edge, the proposal would allow an increase up to 10% of an existing PUD commercial GFA.
 - PUD KS-4 (MIT) – Up to 1,000,000 sf of the proposed new development capacity may be commercial

Related Questions:

1. Why is it important to reserve all sites with large floorplate potential for office/research use?
2. What are appropriate heights and floorplates for office/research (check section below)?

Animate the Ground Floors of Building using Retail and other Active Uses

All plans for the area emphasize the importance of retail and active ground floor uses to activate the area, particularly along major streets.

K2 Committee Approach:

1. Active ground floor uses would be encouraged throughout the district.
2. Ground floor retail would be required along Main St, Third St, Ames St between Broadway and Main, and Broadway.
3. if limited to retail, ground floor space along these streets would be exempt from counting towards the GFA limit.

Related Questions:

1. How much new retail can be supported in Kendall Square?
2. Are there additional locations where retail should be required?
3. Can guidelines be developed for active ground floors when retail is not provided?
4. Further study of the appropriateness of encouraging neighborhood-serving retail at nodes where the residential neighborhoods and the Kendall Square commercial development are in close proximity. Some locations noted in the CBT plan include:
 - Broadway and Cardinal Medeiros Avenue
 - Main St and Vassar St

Built Form/ Height and Bulk:

All plans for the Kendall Square area propose increase in development capacity in Kendall Square and to accommodate it, a related increase in permitted heights. Both K2 and CBT propose residential heights up to 300 ft. The approach to office and lab buildings is different.

Lab and office models, particularly in technology arenas demand large floorplates that facilitate interaction and multidisciplinary collaboration.

K2 Committee Approach:

1. The Plan proposes allowing commercial heights up to 250 ft.
2. Guidelines limit floorplate sizes above 85 feet height.
3. Limited connections between buildings are permitted to allow creation of large floorplates.

Related Questions:

1. What are the appropriate heights and floorplates for commercial development?
2. Should additional criteria be incorporated to evaluate shadow and other impacts?
3. What is an appropriate mechanism to ensure variation of scale and massing and breaking up of large blocks?

NEW DEVELOPMENT ENVISIONED UNDER PROPOSED SCENARIOS

	<i>K2 Plan</i>	<i>CBT Plan</i>
Land Area	117 acres	234 acres*
Residential	2 M sq. ft.	4.2 M sq. ft.
Commercial	3 M sq. ft.	2.7 M sq. ft.
Retail	500,000 sq. ft.	407,885 sq. ft.

***Note:** While the CBT Study Area is significantly larger than the K2 Study Area, the majority of the additional area is either built out (such as Tech Square and 1 Kendall Square) or previously permitted for development (such as Alexandria) and hence not included in the calculation of ‘New Development’. Potential office sites identified in the CBT plan are largely concentrated within the K2 Study Area, while the expanded Study Area accommodates potential residential sites adjacent to the nearby residential neighborhood edges.



CBT Study Area



CBT Potential Development Sites



K2 Study Area