



HARVARD SQUARE PLACEMAKING

Out of Town News Kiosk
June 23, 2016

For the Neighborhood & Long-Term
Planning, Public Facilities, Arts, &
Celebration Committee

BACKGROUND

The City of Cambridge in cooperation with the Harvard Square Business Association, and Harvard University has been engaged in a public process to develop recommendations for the public open spaces in the heart of Harvard Square.

In fall 2013, the City hosted the first of three community workshops with initial consulting support from the Project for Public Spaces, a public placemaking practice based in NYC.

A broad representation of community members attended the workshop including residents, area business owners, neighborhood organization representatives, local interest groups, elected officials, and city staff.

The discussions addressed ideas for short-and-long-term improvements, programming, and also included discussion about the restoration and repurposing of the Out of Town News Kiosk.

PLACEMAKING EVALUATIONS BY SITE

1. Forbes Plaza/Holyoke Center
2. The Pit
3. Info Kiosk/Elevator/T
4. Out of Town News Kiosk
5. The Point
6. Harvard-Along Lehman Building
7. COOP –Brattle St.
8. Intersection JFK/Brattle St.



HARVARD SQUARE VISION PLAN

- After the first community meeting, a report was published summarizing the findings & recommendations (May 2014)
- Addressed key concepts for improving the public open spaces in Harvard Square
- Included general ideas to improve the activation and the use of the Out of Town News Kiosk and its function within the plaza



HARVARD SQUARE
VISION PLAN

MAY 2014

HARVARD
— SQUARE —

CAMBRIDGE SAVINGS BANK

ENHANCE THE IDENTITY

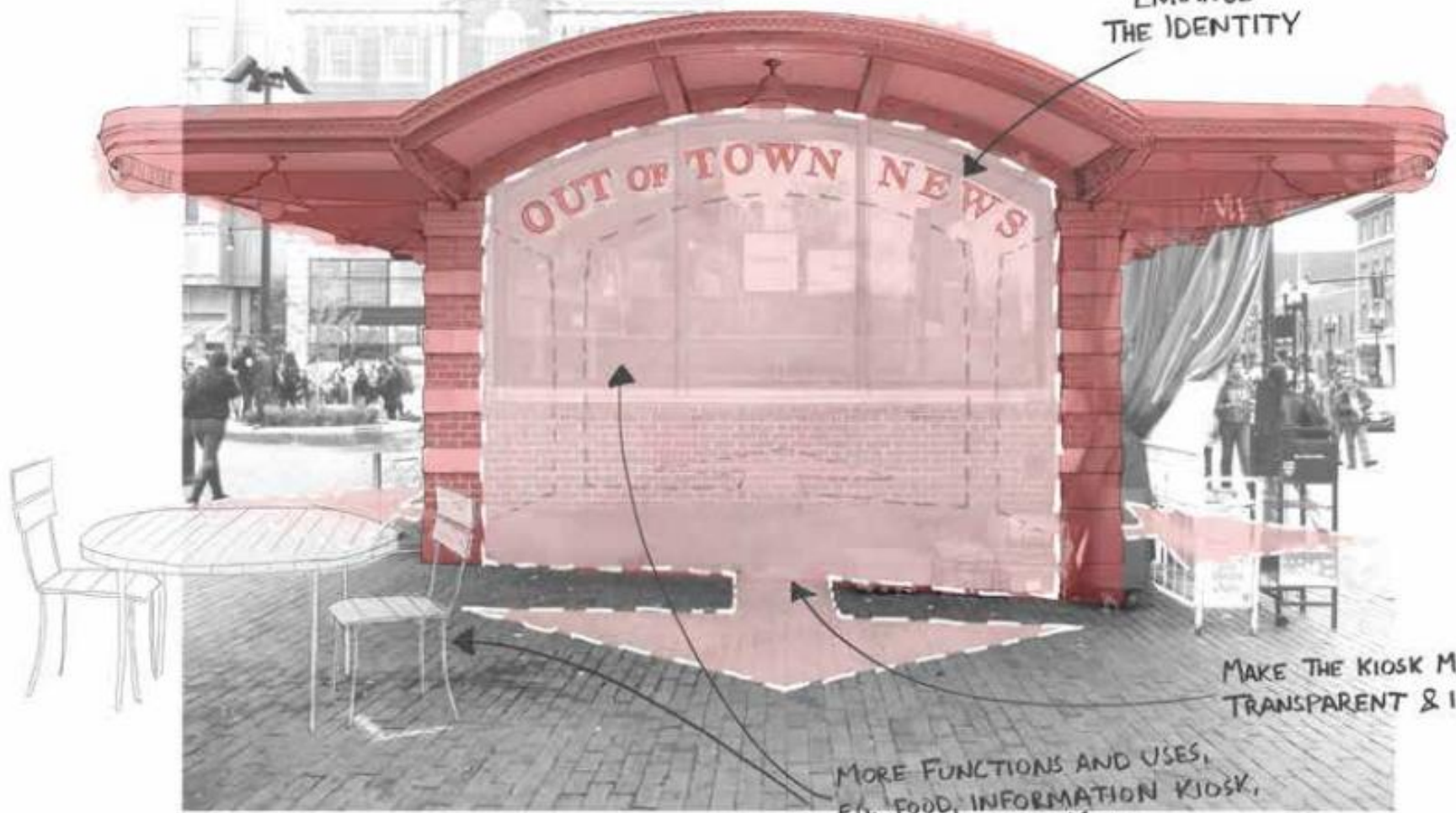
OUT OF TOWN NEWS

MAKE THE KIOSK MORE TRANSPARENT & INVITING

MORE FUNCTIONS AND USES, E.G. FOOD, INFORMATION KIOSK, OUTDOOR SEATING...

OUT OF TOWN NEWS KIOSK

Key Insights and Recommendations from the Community Process



GENERAL REACTIONS TO THE KIOSK

Community Feedback:

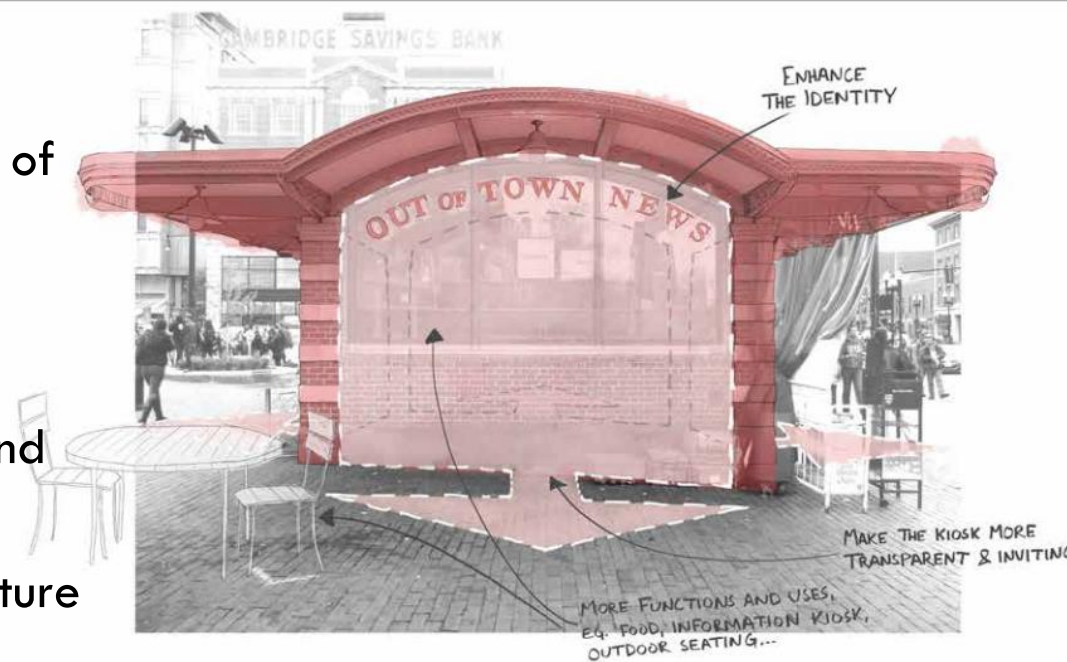
- An iconic building with historic appeal
- Low interest for engaging with the current use
- It is *the* meeting spot in Harvard Square & a great place for people-watching & public gatherings



HARVARD
— SQUARE —

KIOSK: VISION FOR IMPROVEMENT

- More transparent
- Flexible use of space
- Better integration with the rest of the Plaza
- More public engagement opportunities
- Incorporation of information and wayfinding for visitors
- Restoration of the historic structure







AMENITIES

Soften hardscapes with landscaping, planters, flowers, greenery & bring in pop up vendors



AMENITIES

Locate different types of moveable seating, tables, and umbrellas in key places & improve maintenance of area



PROGRAM & MANAGEMENT

Performances – both scheduled and spontaneous; fun lighting; arts displays & exhibits

Harvard Square Placemaking Public Process

Sept
2013

May
2014

Jan
2015

June
2015

1st Workshop

Harvard Square
Vision Plan

2nd Workshop

3rd Workshop:
Kiosk Restoration
& Concept



FURTHER REFINEMENT OF KIOSK CONCEPT

Community Workshops #2 & #3 helped with further refining a concept of use:

- Reclaim the public use of the building and promote better integration within the plaza
- Engage the community year-round through effective presentation, use, and experience
- Provide the best in local information
- The Kiosk and plaza should be able to support meet-ups, free time sitting, and immersion within the Square's culture & offerings



PLANNED EVENTS, SPONTANEOUS HAPPENINGS, A REGULAR DAY

Kiosk Programming Concepts:

- Seasonal variety of local community offerings
- Mix of public, nonprofit, and privately curated exhibits
- Emphasis on public engagement & place
- Collaborations with community partners



INFORMATION & WAYFINDING

Incorporating local information services & support:

- Harvard Square “Ambassadors”
- Informed & technology-enriched staff
- Mobile work setting
- Daily staff presence





HOW DO WE SERVE & ENGAGE A DIVERSE POPULATION?

Residents, students,
tourists/foreign visitors,
youth/teens, homeless,
university, local businesses,
international businesses,
street performers & artists

ADDITIONAL OUTREACH: HARVARD SQUARE TEEN SURVEY

- Worked with at Youth Intern through the Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program to develop an online survey instrument geared for Cambridge teens
- Received over 100 responses from Cambridge teenagers
- Teens responded to what extent they spend time in Harvard Square, and suggested ideas for improving the plaza and repurposing of the Kiosk





IN PROCESS & NEXT STEPS

Plaza Reconstruction
& Formation of Kiosk
Working Group

HARVARD SQUARE PLAZA RECONSTRUCTION

- Scheduled upgrades to the plaza including MBTA elevator, removal of information booth, and kiosk renovation
- Infrastructure challenges:
 - ADA accessibility
 - Utilities – water, sewer, & electric

Scope of Reconstruction:

- Plaza including the Pit, the Point, and the OOTN Kiosk
- FY16 City funded \$600,000 for the design of the Plaza and Kiosk
- FY17 & FY18 City funded \$4,000,000 for the reconstruction





0 10 20 40 SCALE: 1" = 10' - 0"

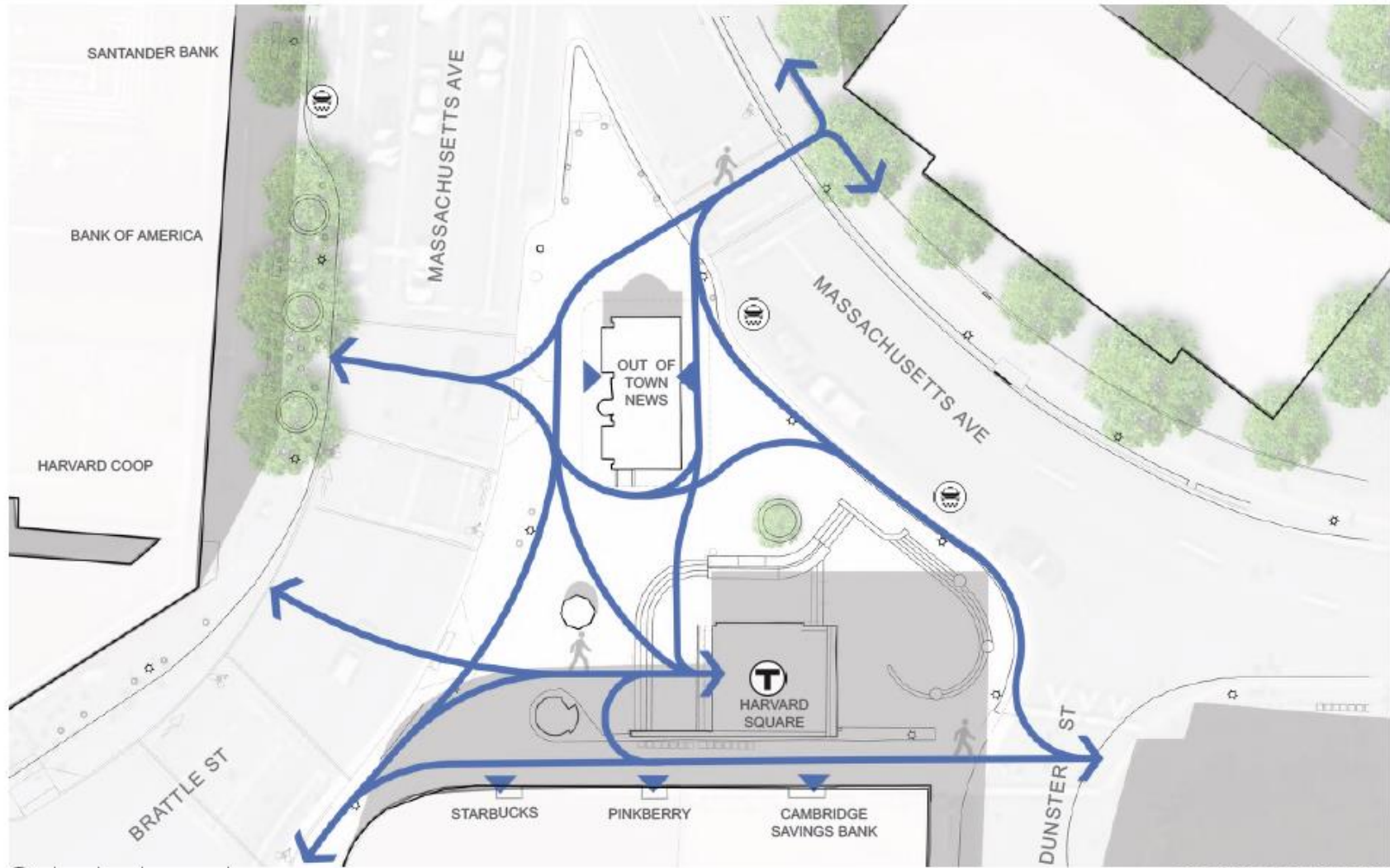
HARVARD SQUARE - CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
April 11, 2016

EXISTING CONDITIONS

HALVORSON DESIGN
PARTNERSHIP

HARVARD SQUARE PLAZA RECONSTRUCTION

Existing Conditions

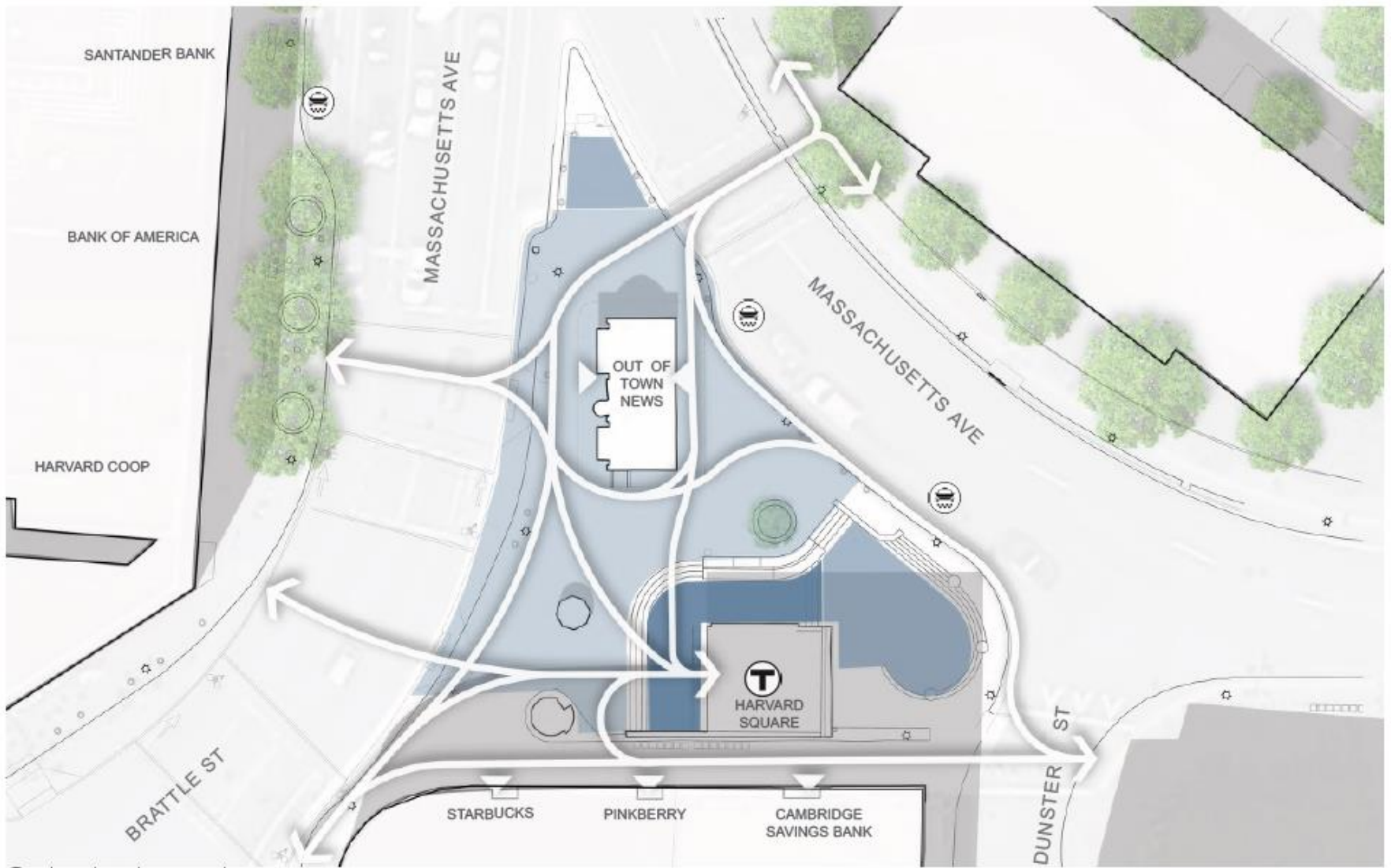


HARVARD SQUARE - CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
 April 11, 2018

CIRCULATION DIAGRAM
 HALVORSON DESIGN PARTNERSHIP

HARVARD SQUARE PLAZA RECONSTRUCTION

Circulation Diagram



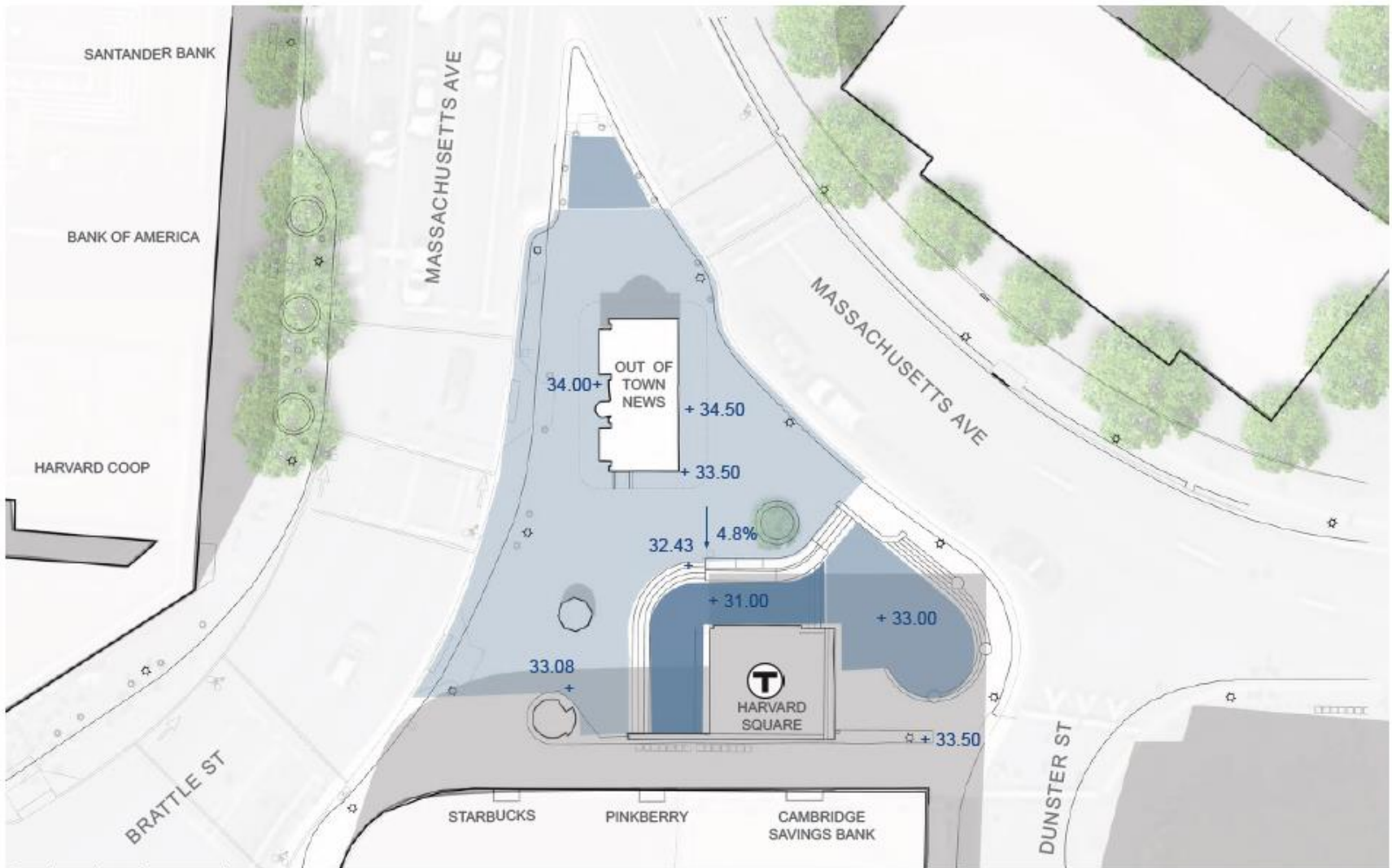
GATHERING AREA DIAGRAM

HALVORSON DESIGN PARTNERSHIP

HARVARD SQUARE - CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
April 11, 2016

HARVARD SQUARE PLAZA RECONSTRUCTION

Gathering Area Diagram



GATHERING AREA AND EXISTING ELEVATION DIAGRAM

HALVORSON DESIGN

SCALE: 1" = 10' - 0"
 HARVARD SQUARE - CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

HARVARD SQUARE PLAZA RECONSTRUCTION

Gathering Area & Existing Elevation

CREATION OF A KIOSK WORKING GROUP

To work on:

- Developing a framework for the continued governance, curatorship, programming, and maintenance of the Kiosk and Plaza.
- Working group composed would have diverse representation from stakeholder sectors.

Residents	3-4
Subject Matter Experts	2
University representative	1
Planning Board	1
Business/property owner/developer representatives (including the HSBA)	2-3
Total	9-11

QUESTIONS?

FOR MORE INFORMATION, CONTACT:
ELLEN KOKINDA
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT
EKOKINDA@CAMBRIDGEMA.GOV
617-349-4618

Harvard Square Placemaking webpage:

www.cambridgema.gov/cdd/projects/parks/hsquarepublicspace