ECKOS Committee
May 29, 2013

East Cambridge/Kendall Square:

Inventing Places for People*
1960-present

*A Tip of the Hat to Karl Haglund:
Author of Inventing the Charles River

J. Roger Boothe
Director of Urban Design
Community Development Department
We invented the Charles River, and the industrial areas alongside it, over centuries of development and change.
We have been creating
Places to Walk
Places to Sit
Places to Play
Places for Quiet
Places with Water
Places with Art
Destinations
Landmarks
Connections

In the last few decades, we have been reinventing the industrial areas for a new set of uses, this time with Places for People
Now, our challenge in Kendall Square and East Cambridge is to take what we have done so far, and make it even better
East Cambridge/Kendall Square: *Inventing Places for People*  
1960-present

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**GETTING STARTED**  
1960-1980  
1. Cambridge Center/CRA  
2. East Cambridge Riverfront

**SPIN-OFF ENERGY**  
1990-2000  
3. North Point Begins  
4. Lyme PUD

**NEW MOMENTUM**  
2000-Present  
5. ECaPS/Alexandria  
6. MIT/K2C2
GETTING STARTED
1960-1980
1. Cambridge Center/CRA
2. East Cambridge Riverfront
1. “Cambridge Center”/Urban Renewal Plan
Note 3 Towers in 1970: Badger, DOT, EC Courthouse
Broadway and Main Streets, before Binney Connector
Key open spaces in MXD: Plaza at MBTA, 6th Street path, Rooftop, Point Park, Binney Street park (TBD), urban streetscape.
Kendall Sq MBTA plaza recently renovated by Boston Properties
6th Street car-free path an important connector
New entryway on Main with interior shopping arcade & passageway to elevator to rooftop plaza
Google expansion with c. 2/3 of rooftop plaza remaining
Point Park in need of renovation/rethinking
The open space at the curve in Binney Street (design/use TBD)
Urban streetscape: more pedestrian improvements coming, esp. Main and Broadway
Housing proposed on Ames would also improve streetscape, now dominated by parking garage.
2. East Cambridge Riverfront

Lechmere Canal Park “invention” at the heart of 9 acres of new parkland built in the 1980s
The East Cambridge Riverfront reinvented: mixed-use district with interconnected open space system (1979-2002)
Lechmere Canal Park

Front Park and riverfront

Charles Park

Centanni Way
SPIN-OFF ENERGY
1990-2000
3. North Point Begins
4. Lyme PUD
North Point starts with reclaiming the Lost Half Mile near the river
New open spaces in North Point: PUD on left and New Charles River Basin above
Zakim Bridge, 40 acres of new parkland, and new ped/bike bridge resulting from agreement settling Scheme Z lawsuit
Lyme Master Plan: development within a set of new streets and open spaces, totaling about 70,000 square feet (c. 1.6 acres)
LYME PUD plaza works in all seasons, makes important links
Broad Canal, walkway from 1982 on right, with recently completed walk and kayak concession
Watermark Phase II (under construction) will strengthen connection to Broad Canal
NEW MOMENTUM
2000-Present
5. ECaPS/Alexandria
6. MIT/K2C2
Encourage retail by not counting it as FAR
North Point urban design given stronger guidelines
Volpe open space requirement
“Transitions areas” buffer (later modified by Alexandria)
ECaPS Retail: housing with ground floor retail now connects to and enlivens the open space system
ECaPS plan had central park N-S, changed to E-W in approved PUD
HYM Plan for revised North Point PUD features new pedestrian connection to Orange Line
Image from ECaPS study, showing the 7 acre park at Volpe site, if designed to be on Binney Street—location and shape could vary
Current zoning, from ECaPS, would require c. 7 acres of open space should Volpe site be redeveloped
ECaPS envisioned height transitions, but not major open space
Alexandria PUD along Binney modified ECaPS by allowing more height & density in exchange for major open space additions
Alexandria design for Ariad along Binney, south of site for new 2-acre park, with pedestrian access
Rogers Street park site soon to be turned over to City
Triangle park site potential for more effective design/function
6. MIT and K2C2
Brain and Cognitive Sciences: opening under building for multi-use path
Widened sidewalk at Innovation Center building, and plaza at Sloan School at MIT, permitted 2007
Plaza at Koch Center for Cancer Research, wayfinding with view of dome
MIT Vision for open space in upcoming development
ACTIVE USES
A MIXTURE OF USES
BUILDING A LIVABLE COMMUNITY

POSSIBLE VIEW FROM BROAD CANAL
Decades of invention in one image
K2C2 Plan: showing vision for unified Kendall Square
K2 Steps: MIT PUD enacted, Planning Board studying MXD and Volpe recommendations from Committee
The ECKOS Committee

Coming up with a vision to make great spaces, well connected to each other and to the whole area