Agenda

- Planning process and product overview
- Emerging vision and strategies
- Getting into the strategies: key questions, tools, products
  - Public spaces
  - Walking streets
  - Mixed-income housing
  - Retail diversity
- Discussion
- Next steps
Major Plan Components

- Land Use – Development (uses, density, heights, setbacks)
- Urban Design
- Public Space
- Transportation
- Economic Development/Retail
Conduct analysis (land use, building form, urban design, public space, transportation)

Develop draft plan strategies for each area of analysis

Final plan and Recommendations (zoning and non-zoning)

Committee Review & Discussions

With Public Input

ZONING RECOMMENDATIONS

- zoning language developed by staff and consultants
- zoning petition for consideration and action at City Council and Planning Board
- shapes future development and creates mechanisms to leverage positive change through redevelopment
- guides public-private partnerships

VISION

- guide property owners
- guide project review
- create shared understanding of the future
- assist in marketing

MMENDATIONS

- implemented through redevelopment
- through public-private partnerships
- through state or grant funding
- through city budget
- through local business association or other non-profit
ECaPS Committee Recommendation:
Encourage retail on Third Street and Broadway to create active street life in Kendall Square.

Zoning Language:
13.13.1 (3) ...the first 50,000 square feet of retail ... shall not be counted toward the non-residential GFA limitations ...provided the GFA is located on the ground floor of a multistory building, fronts on and has a public entrance onto Third Street, Broadway, or a public park, and for each individual establishment the GFA does not exceed 10,000 square feet.
ECaPS Committee Recommendation:

Design Guidelines for Neighborhood Streets

- For residential uses, provide small setbacks (5 to 15 feet) for stoops, porches, and front gardens.
- Provide individual entrances to ground floor units along the street.
Central Square Improvements Committee, 1995

Plan Recommendation

Conceptual plan of proposed Carl Barron Plaza
Emerging vision

A destination for cultural life, retail choices and community gathering

Supporting plan strategies:

- Enhance ability of Central Square to support active civic life and dynamic cultural arts – especially in public spaces
- Connect Central Square with the larger community with a network of great walking streets and improved walking, biking and transit choices
- Preserve diversity of housing choices, community identity, the arts, retail and workplaces by adding mixed-income housing
- Maintain and expand retail diversity (type, price point, ethnicity…)

urban design/planning study for the central and kendall square area
Applying the strategies: managing change
**Strategy 1:** Enhance ability of Central Square to support active civic life and dynamic cultural arts – especially in **public spaces**

**KEY QUESTIONS**

- **Physical Space:** Does the design fit the intended range of activities and experiences?
- **Context:** Does adjacent land and building use/design support active use of the space?
- **Culture of use:** Is the space welcoming to all? Is it cared for?
- **What improvements are needed in each category?**
**Strategy 1:** Enhance ability of Central Square to support active civic life and dynamic cultural arts—especially in **public spaces**

**Jill Brown-Rhone Park:**
Versatile space, restaurants, business stewardship, programming, quality plantings and furniture all work together
**Strategy 1:** Enhance ability of Central Square to support active civic life and dynamic cultural arts – especially in **public spaces**

**Carl Barron Plaza:** Holmes building frontage and retail occupancy pose challenges. Space constraints limit programming. Plaza alive with pedestrians, transit connections.
**Strategy 1:** Enhance ability of Central Square to support active civic life and dynamic cultural arts – especially in **public spaces**

**Mass Ave sidewalks:** Subway and vaults below sidewalk limit street tree placement. Banks, CVS do little to enhance walking or activity. Heavy bus stop use. Street performer opportunity?
**Strategy 1:** Enhance ability of Central Square to support active civic life and dynamic cultural arts – especially in **public spaces**

**PRODUCTS**

- Illustrative plan showing vision for space, addressing its configuration, surfaces, facilities (seating, trees, public art etc.)
- Diagrams of vision for adjacent land use and design; design guidelines
**Strategy 2: Connect Central Square with the larger community with a network of great walking streets and improved walking, biking and transit choices**

**KEY QUESTIONS**

- **Street character:** How can buildings and streetscapes improve links to neighborhoods and destinations (Kendall, MIT, Harvard, Inman…)

- **Transportation choices:** How to balance transportation modes (walk, bike, transit, auto)?

- **Parking analysis:** Can we demonstrate a feasible solution accommodating redevelopment and successful retail?

- **What improvements are needed in each category?**
**Strategy 2:** Connect Central Square with the larger community with a network of great walking streets and improved walking, biking and transit choices

**Street character:**
- Parking and blank walls interrupt connections
- Sensitive transitions of building use and scale needed

Bishop Allen at Prospect

Green at Pearl
**Strategy 2:** Connect Central Square with the larger community with a network of **great walking streets** and improved walking, biking and transit choices

**Transportation choices:**
- Red Line’s 3rd busiest station
- 28 buses per hour
- America’s “most walkable city” – trend toward more walking, biking
**Strategy 2:** Connect Central Square with the larger community with a network of **great walking streets** and improved walking, biking and transit choices

**Parking:**
- Lots could be key mixed-use development opportunities, if ongoing parking needs addressed
- Retail intercept survey: 11% drive but 35% consider parking “very important” to where they shop

Municipal parking lot on Bishop Allen Drive
**Strategy 2:** Connect Central Square with the larger community with a network of great walking streets and improved walking, biking and transit choices

**PRODUCTS**

- Land use and streetscape recommendations supporting walkability
  - Zoning: ground floor use, design
  - Non-zoning: encourage partnerships with developers, property and business owners etc.
- Transportation recommendations
- Parking lot redevelopment scenarios that are feasible from transportation, economic and land use perspectives
Strategy 3: Preserve diversity of housing choices, community identity, the arts, retail and workplaces by adding **mixed-income housing**

**KEY QUESTIONS**

- **Quantity**: Roughly how much housing do we want to add?
- **Scale and character**: How much housing comfortably fits?
- **Land use mix**: What is the right balance between housing, retail, office and other uses?
- **Feasibility**: How do economics influence development feasibility?
**Strategy 3:** Preserve diversity of housing choices, community identity, the arts, retail and workplaces by adding **mixed-income housing**

**Housing quantity considerations:**

- Its support for existing/additional retail
- What amount and variety of unit types would make a difference in housing choice?
- What amount would support nearby employers and minimize traffic impacts?
**Strategy 3:** Preserve diversity of housing choices, community identity, the arts, retail and workplaces by adding *mixed-income housing*

**Potential capacity:**

- Under existing zoning, and alternate height scenarios
- What envelope offers the right scale and character relationships with context?
Scale transition: DeWolfe Street
Scale transition: Tent City
**Strategy 3:** Preserve diversity of housing choices, community identity, the arts, retail and workplaces by adding **mixed-income housing**

**Land use mix:**

- **Parking:**
  - How much the housing market demands – given the walking, transit and biking options at hand
  - Can parking for housing also serve other uses at times?

- **Mix between housing, retail and other diverse uses (cultural, workplaces):**
  - Existing?
  - Desired?
**Strategy 3:** Preserve diversity of housing choices, community identity, the arts, retail and workplaces by adding **mixed-income housing**

**Development economics:**

- Feasibility analysis by partner W-ZHA: implications for…
  - Heights
  - Affordability mix
  - Use mix (how much retail?)
  - Parking ratios – given the high cost of below-grade parking
  - Public benefits, such as local/diverse retail, housing, streetscape/park improvements etc.

**Key factors include:**

- Land cost
- Housing price points
- Height impacts on costs for structure, “high-rise” life-safety code
- Mixed-use (i.e. ground floor retail)
- Parking ratio
- Parking format (below, on or above grade)
- Parking sharing
- Building efficiency
**Strategy 3:** Preserve diversity of housing choices, community identity, the arts, retail and workplaces by adding **mixed-income housing**

**PRODUCTS**

- Illustrative vision conveying desired qualities for redevelopment/reinvestment
- Rationale for leveraging future development to meet plan goals
- Zoning criteria for redevelopment addressing land use, building height and massing, use/design interaction with public realm, parking
- Basis for public-private partnerships enabling investment on key sites
Strategy 4: Maintain and expand retail diversity (type, price point, ethnicity…)

KEY QUESTIONS
- **Who uses Central Square?**
  Key messages from the customer intercept survey
- **Retail market analysis:** what’s here, what’s emerging
- **Design guidelines and incentives** promoting active, occupied, locally-oriented storefronts: review existing policy, explore alternatives
**Strategy 4: Maintain and expand retail diversity** (type, price point, ethnicity…)

**Customer intercept survey:**
- 43% were in Central for work or just came from work
- 52% arrived on foot; 22% via Red Line; 11% via car
- 18% came to shop, 13% came to dine, 7% for entertainment, 5% for city hall or post office
- Cafes, pharmacies, municipal services, grocery stores and banks are most patronized
- Over 80% want more apparel stores
- Strong desire for local retail

Retail area:
- Roughly 265,000sf existing
- Priority/near-term locations
- Additional desirable locations
- Unique challenge

Between Inman and Prospect
**Strategy 4:** Maintain and expand *retail diversity* (type, price point, ethnicity...)

**Retail market analysis:**
- 48,000 residents in trade area – well-scaled to retail floor area; 32% lack a car
- 19% households in trade area have children
- Many students: 6,000 in dorm, more off-campus
- Higher rents than Inman, Davis, Kendall; no critical mass for comparison goods

Retail area:
- Roughly 265,000sf existing
- Priority/near-term locations
- Additional desirable locations
- Unique challenge
Strategy 4: Maintain and expand retail diversity (type, price point, ethnicity…)

Promoting active, occupied, locally-oriented storefronts:

• Design guidelines
  – How to keep store windows transparent, interesting?
• Public/private partnership
  – Expand market base
  – Improving streetscape setting for retail
  – Encouraging locally-based businesses
  – Improving transportation access

Retail area:
• Roughly 265,000sf existing
• Priority/near-term locations
• Additional desirable locations
• Unique challenge

Mass Ave and Norfolk
Strategy 4: Maintain and expand retail diversity (type, price point, ethnicity…)

PRODUCTS

- Zoning guidelines and development incentives for retail meeting plan goals
- Management guidelines promoting good fit between retail and housing
Discussion