Central and Kendall Square planning study  
Kendall Square Public Workshop, June 21, 2011  
Summary of public/stakeholder comments  

**Major topic areas** *(addressed below in further detail)*  
- Enhancing neighborhood identity and sense of place  
- Creating a more active and extensive public realm  
- Attaining the right mix of land use/activities  
- Sustaining Kendall’s innovation culture  
- Expanding the amount and range of housing  
- Expanding retail choices  
- Making Kendall a global leader in sustainability innovation and practice  
- Improving transportation choices  
- Ensuring plan implementation delivers effective results  

*Within each of these topic areas, predominant messages are indicated in boldface text.*

**Neighborhood Identity and Sense of Place**  
1. **Communicate better the many assets Kendall already has**  
   - Better wayfinding signage needed  
   - Decent existing selection of restaurants and other amenities is not apparent because they are dispersed, not conveying critical mass  
2. **Convey a stronger, more memorable sense of place**  
   - Create a recognized heart of the neighborhood through…  
     - Public spaces animated with programmed arts and civic events  
     - Critical mass of retail  
     - Mix of housing and jobs  
     - Attention to sense of arrival  
   - Need better sense of both the whole of Kendall Square, and the different areas within it  
   - Address the distinction of MIT and the larger Kendall Square. Should a plaza at MIT be the center of Kendall or one piece of it?  
   - Emphasize local character unique to the area  
   - Use electronic apps to enhance experience of Kendall
3. **Let innovation take a central role in identity**  
   - Cambridge is a living laboratory for MIT; thus innovation should be transparent in the lives of people in Cambridge and the region  
   - Bring work out of the lab and into the streets to share within and beyond the Kendall Square community  
   - Integrate corporate and university innovations  

4. **Identity should also include other aspects**  
   - An integrated, lively district  
   - Increased social diversity in terms of age, economic status etc.  
   - The fun and excitement of whimsy, randomness, chance  
   - Leadership in sustainability  

**Public Realm**  
1. **Emphasize human scale at the street**  
   - Buildings should meet the street and enliven sidewalks  

2. **Create/improve gathering spaces**  
   - Some more public/social, others more natural in character  
   - Enhance and make more useable the ice rink, Cambridge Center roof garden etc.  
   - Take this last opportunity to expand amount of public space. Existing public spaces are already heavily used; need more space to serve more people  
   - Incorporate interpretive, interactive display/communication of Kendall’s innovation culture and accomplishments  
   - Welcome the whole East Cambridge community  

3. **Improve connections to Charles River**  
   - Wayfinding, walkability, view corridors  

4. **Blur the boundaries between public and private space**  
   - Connect private courtyards, lobbies etc. with streets and parks as part of a larger integrated pedestrian network of access routes and gathering spaces  

**Land use and activities**  
1. **Land use should be mixed and diverse**  
2. **High density is important**  
3. **Emphasize amenities for people who work, study and live in/near Kendall**  
4. **Continue to add/improve choices in use/activity categories that already exist**  
   - i.e. retail, housing, jobs, transportation  
5. **Create more hang-out opportunities for people working nearby**  
   - i.e. more beer taps welcomed  
6. **Designate an organization with primary responsibility for cultural programming in Kendall**  
   - Business Improvement District or other entity
• World-class and “cool” cultural programming
• Constellation Center is welcomed but nearer-term actions are needed

**Innovation culture**
1. Maintain Kendall’s momentum as a globally significant innovation center
2. Create an “innovation ecosystem” enabling small and large companies to thrive together

**Housing**
1. Expand range of available housing choices
   • Unit price, size, style etc.
   • Geared to Kendall’s target workforce
   • Both family and non-family households
   • Greater quantity
   • Both within Kendall Square and beyond but within convenient travel distance
   • Use market-rate housing to subsidize below-market-rate housing
   • Enable more housing by changing zoning to accommodate more density and fewer cars
2. Locate housing to discourage driving
   • Convenient to walking, biking and/or transit access
   • Make coordinated transit service improvements
3. Design housing so that the presence of its inhabitants is felt on the street
   • Residential unit entrances, stoops, gardens etc.
   • Ground-floor retail supported in part by added residents
4. Design housing to be sensitive in scale/character to traditional neighborhood housing

**Retail**
1. Develop more economic diversity in the points of retail, dining
   • Including grocery, drugstore items
2. Attract more retail serving day-to-day needs, i.e. supermarket, drugstore

**Sustainability**
1. Kendall Square should be a model of sustainability innovation and practice
   • MIT is an innovation leader in this area – make it apparent to give MIT credit and share the ideas
   • Utilize visible evidence of sustainable strategies in practice, such as photovoltaics, wind turbines, green roofs
   • Set standards through ordinances; Chicago’s green roof policy can be a model

**Transportation**
1. Improve access to/from adjacent neighborhoods
Planning and Implementation processes
1. Support plan concepts and their implementation with sound demographics and economics