

**Trolley Square Committee  
Community Meeting  
June 26, 2002, 7:30 PM  
Fitzgerald School Cafeteria  
70 Rindge Avenue**

**Attendance**

Committee Members

Tom Buffett  
John Danehy  
Eric Grunebaum  
Helen Kukuk  
George McCray  
Martha Older  
Ruthanne Rudel

Staff

Susan Glazer  
Stuart Dash  
Darcy Jameson  
Chris Cotter  
Iram Farooq

Architect/ Urban Design Consultant

Dennis Carlone

Members of the Public

34 people signed the attendance sheet

Stuart Dash began the meeting by giving an overview of the process thus far. He described how the City acquired the Trolley Square site from the MBTA, and how this led to the formation of the committee. He described the work the committee did during its first six months, discussing such potential uses as open space, retail, community space, and affordable housing. He then presented the Goals and Considerations Matrix that the committee had reviewed (available on the Trolley Square website). Dennis Carlone then presented the three design scenarios that the committee discussed (also available on the Trolley Square website).

During the public comment period, community members raised the following issues:

Parking/ Transportation

- There is a great deal of parking pressure in the neighborhood.
- Any development on the site could lead to traffic gridlock.
- The City should do a traffic study before developing the site.
- Residents wonder why part of Cameron Ave. is zoned for commercial parking.
- The businesses across the street from the site do not have sufficient parking.
- Some people perceive other developments in neighborhood as too dense and creating too much of a parking burden. 2525 Mass Ave. and a JAS development on Bolton St. were both perceived to create a parking burden.
- ZipCar or some other ride sharing component could be part of the development.
- There is a desire to create linkages to the bike path.

Housing

- Residents wonder who is eligible for affordable housing, and what the City's overall target is in terms of amount of affordable housing. [Darcy Jameson, Director of the City's Housing Department, described the income guidelines for affordable housing. She also noted that the City did give preference to Cambridge residents in its housing lottery system, and could

consider trying to give preference to neighborhood residents. She noted that there is not an exact target number for how much affordable housing the City will create, but rather that as long as there is a perceived need the City will continue to develop affordable units.]

- The City should explore the possibility of affordable ownership units (rather than rental).
- Some people feel that housing will not provide a true public benefit, but will only benefit those who receive units.
- One person expressed concern about family homelessness, and a desire for site to house very low-income families.
- Affordable housing may reduce the quality of the neighborhood.

### Open Space

- There is a desire for a gazebo or building for exhibits.
- A building with open space in front might feel private (and the public might hesitate to use the space).
- One person stated he liked design scenario three, because he felt that the open space in scenarios one and two would feel unpleasant.
- Some people would like to see a scenario that shows only open space on the site, because they feel this would eliminate parking problems.

### Retail

- Business should play a role in this process.
- There was an ad hoc committee that explored retail in the neighborhood in the recent past; the Trolley Square Committee should look at their recommendations.
- Retail draws people in.

### Urban Design

- The committee should evaluate the possibility of a design that goes straight along Mass Ave., and increases the amount of open space.
- Any redevelopment should incorporate the history of North Cambridge through artwork or exhibits.

### Misc.

- There is concern about environmental contaminants from brake linings (asbestos and PCBs). [Owen O'Riordan from DPW was cited as the contact person for information about the environmental testing of the site.]

Residents were then given an opportunity to note their priority issues related to this site redevelopment on a large copy of the matrix by using colored stickers. While not all of those in attendance participated in the exercise, those who did indicated that open space was the highest priority. A smaller number of participants indicated an interest in retail/ community space, affordable housing, and urban design quality.

At the end of the meeting, Mr. Dash reminded those in attendance that all committee meetings are open to the public, and that the next committee meeting will take place Thursday, July 25, at the North Cambridge Senior Center.