

## MEMO

**To: Cambridge Planning Board**

**From: Transit Advisory Committee**

**Date: May 9, 2016**

**Re: Special Permit PB#302 and PD#303 MIT Kendall Square Redevelopment (NoMa/SoMa)**

The Cambridge Transit Advisory Committee (a group of Cambridge residents and representatives of institutions, businesses, and other stakeholders that was established to help guide the city on transit-related issues) has reviewed MIT's proposal and would like to submit the comments below for consideration by the Planning Board.

- We would like to voice our appreciation of MIT's commitment to provide in-kind support to improve public transit in Kendall Square.

- We acknowledge that no single development can be responsible for resolving the systemic problems that underlie the Red Line capacity issues. A significant concern is the proposed renovation to the Red Line headhouse, which represents a very generous in-kind payment but which we feel does not advance the main goals of the Transit Advisory Committee as referenced in the Cambridge Transit Strategic Plan. Specifically, an improved headhouse would not increase transit participation, improve the usability or efficiency of the system, or maximize transit's ability to serve all trips. Instead, we recommend requesting that MIT select at least 3 out of the 4 actions below to improve the efficiency of the Red Line and help achieve other transit improvement goals in the Kendall area.

1. Update and improve wayfinding, including at street level and below-ground (possibly including entry/exit zones painted on the platform that align with train doors).
2. Subsidize transit options for workers and residents in the NoMa/SoMa development. Along those lines, the proponent has suggested requiring tenants to adopt one of three subsidy options. We endorse the idea of fully-subsidized transit passes but recommend that all options also require employees and residents to be charged for parking at a market rate (on a monthly, if not daily, basis). In addition to those covered

under the PTDM plan, we suggest that these options be extended to tenants/employees/residents that are not part of the PTDM plan, as well.

3. Install and maintain highly-visible above-ground transit information real-time digital displays (to increase the usability of both the Red Line and the buses).
  4. Fully support innovative solutions to subsidize the net operating costs, if any, of new bus projects that serve Kendall Square, perhaps through a contribution to a City-managed transit improvement fund. One potential use of this fund may be for Cambridge to provide pilot matching funding of the initial net operating costs of new or improved bus services in the area, such as the Cambridge-endorsed, State-funded Green Line Extension delay mitigation service proposed to run between the Sullivan Square Orange Line station and Kenmore or Yawkey Way station in the Fenway via Lechmere Station and Kendall/MIT.
- We recommend that any requested mitigation measures be linked to key milestones, such as the opening of the first new parking areas, in order to ensure that transit in the affected area can best accommodate the new development.