Community Conversation on Volpe Site Development

ECPT Volpe Subcommittee*
Update to the City of Cambridge Volpe Working Group
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Process

• Conversation held April 26 at East End House on Spring Street

• Purpose = learn what neighborhood people would like to see in Kendall Square as Volpe site is developed

• World café model, ~3 dozen people, report-outs to large group

• Two main Qs:
  – How can Volpe development contribute to filling needs of East Cambridge neighborhoods?
  – What ideas for development to better East Cambridge, in four specific areas (mobility, open space & environment, “life on the street”, recreation & culture)?
Q1: High-level themes

Discussants would like to see:

• *Ample, sunlit open space*, including significant public square
• *Pedestrian connections*—access to site, walkability through it
• *Civic character* defines the site, including community/rec center
• Residents who will *build neighborhood*; retail to meet needs
• *Old-growth trees* saved, including 3rd St rows & mid-site grove
• *Transportation capacity* to match growth; fear congestion
• “Affordable” retail, dining, recreation opportunities
• *Water theme tie-in*; water features, access to river & river views
Q2: Examples of “specifics”

1. Movement and neighborhood connections
   – Keep the 6th St passageway; 5th St extension pedestrian-only
   – Connect site transportation infrastructure with Grand Junction RR

2. Open space and environment
   – Substantial public space that identifies K Square; permanent benefit
   – Keep the “spirit of oasis” there now—nature, gardens, trees

3. “Life on the street”
   – International models for pedestrian-friendly activity, year-round
   – Support small independent stores, especially local

4. Community recreation and culture
   – Y-type rec facility, with programming like Allston’s Harvard Ed Portal
   – Performance space that is managed and organized
Next steps

✓ Briefing to ECPT membership
✓ Hear and discuss 5/24 MITIMCo update
✓ Update Volpe Working Group

• Hold workshops with membership, “fill in the details”
• Engage with neighborhood groups; e.g., CResA, Wellington-Harrington, The Port/Area 4, abutters
• Talk with City officials, others
• Work with members to refine, revise ideas
• Present findings in relevant public forums