Volpe Site – Built Form
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Principles (So Far)
Built Form in the Urban Environment
Comparative Buildings
Discussion

Volpe Site and Building Program
Discussion
Principles (so far) for Built Form
Character - two underlying themes:

A welcoming neighborhood:
Sense of Place, Integral to the city of Cambridge,
Pedestrian Friendly,
Live, Work, and Play

Innovation:
The district should be SPECIAL – something unique, a
destination, it should somehow not only encourage innovation
but also exemplify it
Comfort:

- Protection from the elements – shade, canopies
- Indoor/outdoor space – Galleria/Market Hall
- Minimize shading of open spaces, maintain views to sky
- Sense of protection, enclosure
- Pedestrian seating, sidewalk furniture
- Minimize wind at pedestrian level
Building Program should enhance Streets and Open Spaces:

- Retail - create double sided retail on bordering streets
- Residential - facing parks
- Family housing – near play areas

Fit with Existing Context:

- Sensitivity to scale and views from existing building
- Programmatic compatibility with existing buildings and streets
Volpe Working Group
Cambridge Community Development Department
Michael Dennis & Associates

Principles (so far)

Sense of Place
Active Streetscape
Comfort
Innovation
Built Form in the Urban Environment
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Continuity/Homogeneity vs. Uniqueness/Heterogeneity
Built Form in a Dense Urban Environment - Five Zones
Built Form in a Dense Urban Environment - Five Zones

Ground Plane

Pedestrian Frontage

Street Wall

Tower

Top
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Permeability
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The Public and Semi-Public Ground level
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Street Wall
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Street Wall – Projections and Recesses
Street Wall – Eyes on the Open Space
How can these elements of Built Form:

- Create a comfortable pedestrian experience?
- Define an enjoyable streetscape or square?
- Provide an appropriate amount of sunlight and sky?
- Complement the character of older buildings?
- Give an area a memorable character?
- Welcome diverse segments of the population?
- Make other positive contributions to the community?
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What approaches to built form are most desirable in the Kendall Square / Volpe context?

Where is it important to have active pedestrian frontage?

Where would different street wall approaches help to define a successful urban streetscape?

What principles should guide the arrangement of building heights within the site?

What is the desired image of building tops / skyline when viewed from a distance?