JURY REPORT STAGE II

To: Connect Kendall Square Open Space Competition Governance Group

From: Competition Coordinator on behalf of the Competition Jury

Date: October 14, 2014

The City of Cambridge received the eight Stage II Submittals on October 2, 2014. The following week, the Jury met for two days to review, discuss, and evaluate each submittal, interview the eight Teams, and determine the Teams to advance to Stage III of the Competition. This report records the decision of the Competition Jury and the process by which the decision was made.

Review of Stage II

The purpose of Stage II was for the Team Leaders to assemble complete Teams that are capable of creating an open space Framework Plan. The required submittal was a qualifications package, including resumes and examples of work, for the Team members that will fulfill the project approach proposed by the Team Leaders in Stage I. The Team Leaders and key members of their teams participated in an interview with the Jury. The interview was intended to aid the Jury in further understanding the Team's approach and the capabilities of each Team to present a comprehensive and innovative solution to the framework for the open space /public realm of Eastern Cambridge Kendall Square area.

Stage II Jury Process

The Jury received electronic copies of the submittals on October 3, 2014. They convened in Cambridge on October 6-7, 2014, to review the submittals and interview the Teams. The Jury interviewed five of the eight teams on Monday, the 6th, and concluded the day with a review and discussion of the presentations and submittals. The Jury interviewed the three remaining teams on Tuesday morning, and the afternoon was dedicated to discussion and evaluations. In a facilitated discussion, all Jurors spoke about each team prior to the group's deliberations and decision.

Jury's Stage II Recommendation

The Jury has selected the following four Teams to advance to Stage III. These Teams demonstrated professional qualifications and capacity necessary for superb performance of the required services. They presented experience and organization that was directly related to and in support of their clear and distinct approaches to the development of the Framework.

- Framework Cultural Placemaking
- Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc. Landscape Architects
- Richard Burck Associates, Inc.
- SITELAB urban studio

Jury Comments

Framework Cultural Placemaking

The team described a clear approach to the framework development through analysis of the environment, rethinking the streets, and activating the public realm. MKA would provide leadership on the analysis of the natural systems. Citing the importance of animating the community, the team described a strategy to bring art and ideas from inside the buildings out to the public realm where the public can see them—bring the Innovation Center to the street. They discussed the way play and games bring people—kids and grown ups—together, and showed project examples of how this strategy has worked in other projects. They acknowledged the need for hierarchy and intuitive wayfinding for a successful framework, and had a clear sense of the role of the four parks in making them into places instead of remnants.

Michael Van Valkenburgh Associates, Inc. Landscape Architects

The team was clear as to what the medium of landscape architecture could offer, describing landscape as introducing something to disrupt the stasis of Kendall Square—inventing moves that will add levels of richness that play off the intense formality of the area. Citing the need for more levity and playfulness, the team focused on the intersection of art and science and of children's play, engaging specialists in those areas. The team discussed student engagement and design as a form of research—layering complexity through play, water, and art. They addressed the incremental nature of implementation and the need to be flexible to the changing audience over time as well as diurnal and seasonal change. The team's examples of previous work were complex and supported their approach.

Richard Burck Associates, Inc.

The team described how formal diagramming and spatial data would come together to make a framework in an iterative process. Citing data as one piece of the puzzle, they described how data would be used to undergird their decisions and relate the water, economics, and connectivity. The spatial model could be used to analyze activity at different times, days and seasons to illuminate the demographics and identify current occupations of use. The team presented a clearly articulated point of view of the open space network's relationship to real estate valuation. Having engaged development expertise on their team, they described the intent to create open space that interacts with the edges and activates the ground level, creating a retail environment that is distinctly Kendall Square.

SITELAB urban studio

In emphasizing the hierarchy and legibility of streets, the team provided strongly held conviction of the nature of a framework. They described the framework plan as connective tissue—not designing the specific places, but the role of those places and setting the stage for those spaces to work together. However, the team also had an understanding of the four park spaces and the unique attributes and barriers associated with each. They demonstrated a great connection between art and technology with implemented projects, recognizing the challenges of programming and the need for community partners. The team acknowledged the bigger picture and discussed the adjacent neighborhoods and river. Their description of "seeding the narrative" showed their process and how they would work as a team.

Next Steps: Stage III

The four selected Teams will develop a planning and design framework for the project area. The frameworks must respond to the Planning and Design Goals and other specific criteria identified in the Competition Manual. The framework concepts and designs should explore the potential of private and public open space to function as contributing elements of a larger system. Stage III will include two mid-course reviews with the Technical Advisory Group, who will provide insight and comment on the feasibility of implementation in Cambridge. Time will also be provided for discussions with the ECKOS Study Committee. The submittal for Stage III will include a set of graphic boards and electronic record, and a presentation to the Jury.