

Draft Landmark Designation Study Report
Kendall Square Landmark Group:
Kendall Square Building, 238 Main St.
J. L. Hammett (Rebecca's) Building, 264 Main St.
Suffolk Engraving (MIT Press) Building, 292 Main St.



The three adjacent buildings that comprise the Kendall Square Landmark Group represent Cambridge's industrial aspirations in the early 20th century. The Kendall Square Building was explicitly designed to be a landmark, and the Hammett and Suffolk buildings represent Cambridge's manufacturing, distribution, and industrial sectors. The ensemble they create is the only remnant of traditional streetscape and architecture in Kendall Square.

CHC staff believes that the Kendall Square Landmark Group is eligible for landmark designation under the criteria contained in the Ordinance. While the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has been a good steward of the buildings, the development pressures in the neighborhood could prove overwhelming. Loss of one of these buildings could critically diminish the others.

Development discussions in Kendall Square are currently at a critical stage. While MIT is willing to preserve the buildings, other agendas may differ. Staff recommends that the Commission limit its findings to a determination of eligibility for designation and continue its hearing to allow further discussion.

Charles M. Sullivan, Executive Director
Cambridge Historical Commission
July 10, 2012

Draft Landmark Designation Study Report

Kendall Square Landmark Group:

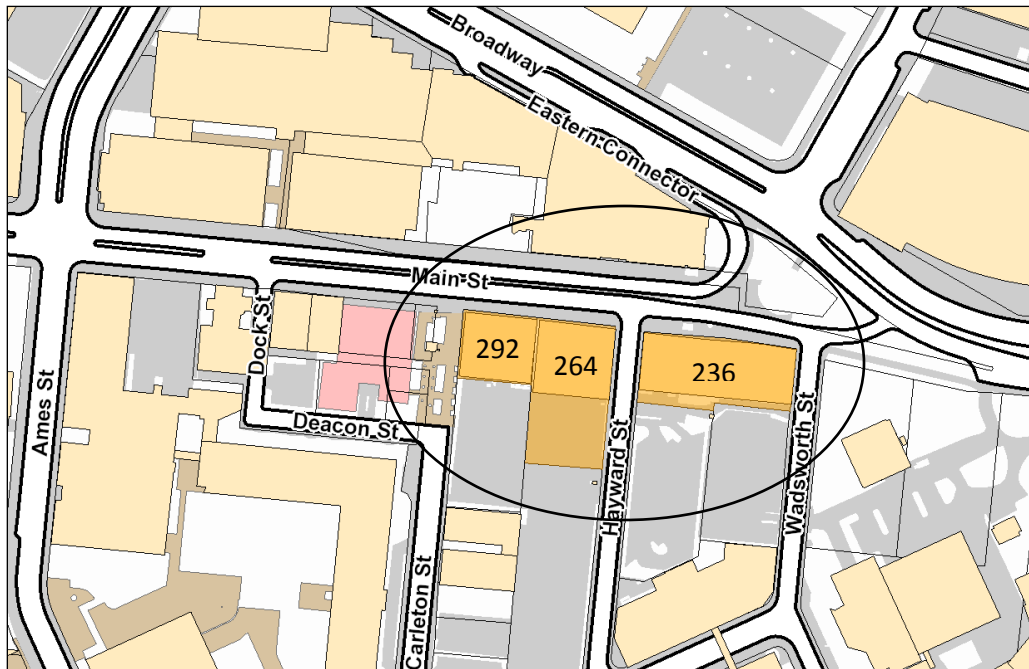
**Kendall Square Building, 238 Main St.
J. L. Hammett (Rebecca's) Building, 264 Main St.
Suffolk Engraving (MIT Press) Building, 292 Main St.**

I. Location and Planning Issues

A. Address and Parcel Information

The Kendall Square landmark group consists of three buildings occupying the south side of Main Street between Wadsworth and Carleton streets.

- The Kendall Square Building at 238 Main Street occupies Map/Lot 47/84. The lot contains 20,622 square feet (sf), while the five-story building has a gross floor area of 82,390 sf. The total assessed value for the land and buildings according to the assessor's online database is \$18,895,300.
- The J. L. Hammett (Rebecca's) Building at 264 Main Street occupies Map/Lot 48/107E. The lot contains 21,728 sf., while the two-story building has a gross floor area of 43,200 sf. The total assessed value for the land and buildings according to the assessor's online database is \$5,103,800.
- The Suffolk Engraving (MIT Press) Building at 292 Main Street occupies Map/Lot 48/124. The lot contains 9,922 sf, while the 7.75-story building has a gross floor area of 64,837 sf. The total assessed value for the land and buildings according to the assessor's online database is \$10,305,500.



238, 264 and 292 Main Street. Cambridge GIS Department

B. Ownership and Occupancy

All three buildings in the Kendall Square Landmark Group are owned by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Kendall and Hammett are managed by the MIT Investment Management Co. (MITIMCo) and Suffolk by MIT's Department of Facilities. Portions of the buildings are rented to office and retail tenants, but most are occupied by a variety of institute functions, including MITIMCo itself.

C. Zoning

All three lots are entirely within a Residence C-3B zoning district with a Mixed Use Residential (MXR) overlay. The base district allows for essentially all residential (including hotels by special permit) and many institutional uses, but no offices, laboratories, retail or industrial uses. The FAR limits vary depending on the use, with the base FAR set 3.0 or 4.0.¹ The height limit in this district is 120 feet, and there is a minimum requirement of 300 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit.



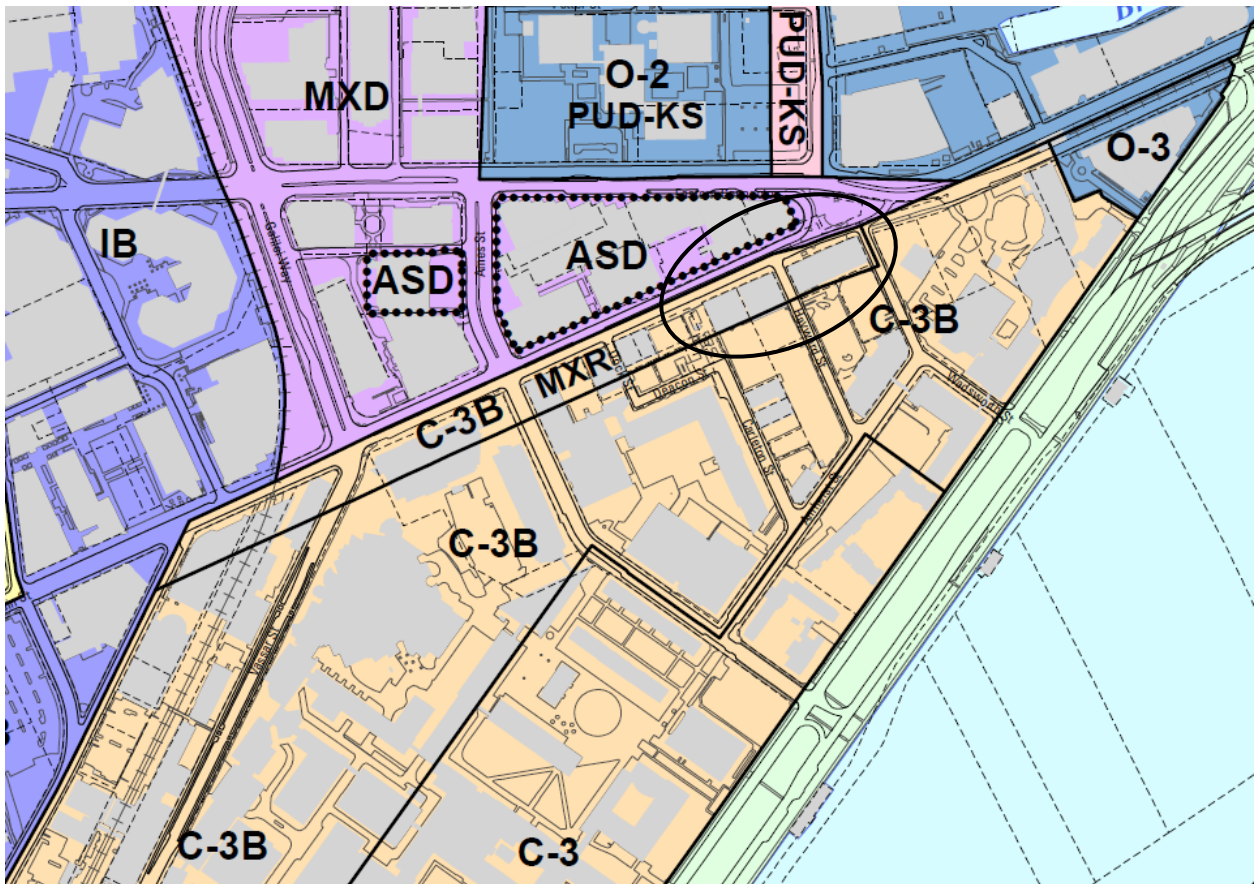
Kendall Square Landmark Group, seen from the west. CHC photo, July 2012

The intent of the MXR Overlay District is “to modify base residential district regulations, where a substantial inventory of non-residential uses already exists, such that: (1) existing non residential activities, compatible with existing and future residential construction, may continue, (2) retail and consumer service uses that might serve as support for existing or future residential construction are permitted, and (3) future residential construction on suitable sites is not inhibited. The Overlay District is intended to facilitate a mixed use environment supportive of housing construction within the district in the future while permitting existing non residential activities to operate and adjust to

¹ “For purposes of calculating FAR and for no other purpose ... a Lot in the Residence C-3B district may contain non-contiguous parcels provided that all parcels are held in identical ownership, are all located within the Residence C-3B district of any abutting Business B district, and further provided that development on any contiguous portion of the lot does not exceed an FAR of 4.0.”

changing circumstances through limited expansion in built area in ways that will not negatively impact residential activities (Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, §20.20)”

The zoning map in the vicinity of the Kendall Square Landmark Group is quite complex. The C-3B district with MXR overlay applies to the south side of Main Street from Wadsworth to Albany streets. Adjoining areas of the M.I.T. campus are zoned C-3B or C-3, with no overlay. North of Main Street there several special-purpose districts that allow various combinations of office and laboratory uses.



Zoning Districts, City of Cambridge, Mass. Sept. 14, 2011 (detail) Cambridge GIS

D. Area Description

While Kendall Square proper is defined by the intersection of Broadway and Main Street, “Kendall Square” has become a much less specific denomination of a commercial, entertainment, research and academic district that extends from Main Street to Rogers Street and from the Charles River to Portland Street. The south side of Main Street contains the remaining pre-Depression buildings in the vicinity, all of which have been repurposed; behind them on Hayward and Carleton streets are mostly parking lots, shading toward the M.I.T. campus and the backs of buildings facing the river. Across Main Street are several buildings erected in the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area by Boston Properties in the 1980s, as well as the Broad Institute at the corner of Ames Street. North of Broadway, the Volpe Center occupies a superblock, while Third Street features a number of recent residential, commercial and research buildings.

The immediate context of the Kendall Square Landmark Group has changed little in recent years. Commercial buildings east of 238 Main Street were razed in the 1960s and remain open space

around M.I.T.'s Eastgate residence tower. West of 292 Main Street, the headhouse of the Kendall Square MBTA station replaced the F&T Restaurant in 1988; the balance of the site is a parking lot. The Cambridge Trust Co. has occupied a remodeled one-story 1927 warehouse at 326 Main Street since 1968. An 1894 fire house at 350 Main was converted to a hotel that opened in 2002. A seven-story reinforced concrete building at the corner of Ames Street, constructed for the Daggett Chocolate Co. in 1926, was repurposed as a laboratory by M.I.T. in 1963. Retail uses in the Landmark Group buildings are small and traditional, and include restaurants, a bookstore, a bank, and a florist.



Kendall Square from the southeast, June 3, 2011. CHC photo

The Kendall Square community has recently achieved critical mass and is becoming a vibrant urban neighborhood with housing, restaurants, and recreational opportunities. New laboratory and office construction by Boston Properties and Alexandria on Binney Street and by Novartis and Pfizer nearby demonstrate the irresistible appeal of proximity to MIT to science-based enterprises. The underutilized parcels adjacent to the Kendall Square Landmark Group present an opportunity to cement Cambridge's reputation for supporting cutting-edge science in an attractive urban environment and are an appropriate location for the uses and density of construction proposed.

E. Planning Issues

In 2009 the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, acting through the MIT Investment Management Company, proposed a major redevelopment of its properties on the south side of Main Street in Kendall Square to create an "innovation zone" that would allow construction of biotechnology laboratories, a more visible entrance to the east end of the campus and a more vibrant environment around the MBTA station.

MIT retained Elkus-Manfredi Architects to prepare an urban design plan, and after dozens of meetings with stakeholders submitted a rezoning petition in April 2011 for a 26-acre parcel bounded by Ames and Main streets and Memorial Drive, plus One Broadway (the former Badger Building) at the northeast corner of Third and Main streets. M.I.T.'s proposed PUD-5 district called for construction of about one million square feet of new gross floor area, a 3.8 FAR, and height limits ranging from 150' to 250'. The bulk of the space would be technical offices and laboratories, but the development would include 120,000 sf for housing and additional ground-floor retail space. Encouraged by the East Cambridge Planning Team, MIT envisioned razing the Suffolk building to create a public gathering space next to the MBTA entrance; this was intended to be a "new public crossroads" that would "have broad appeal as a desirable destination during and beyond the traditional workday by providing a critical mass of diverse restaurants, shops, entertainment and programming" (Proposed PUD-5 zoning amendment, §13.81). Most of the Hammett building would be demolished and the remainder integrated into a high-rise office/biotech building. After receiving significant feedback from the Planning Board, the City Council, and the public, MIT allowed its petition to expire to allow more time for community engagement.

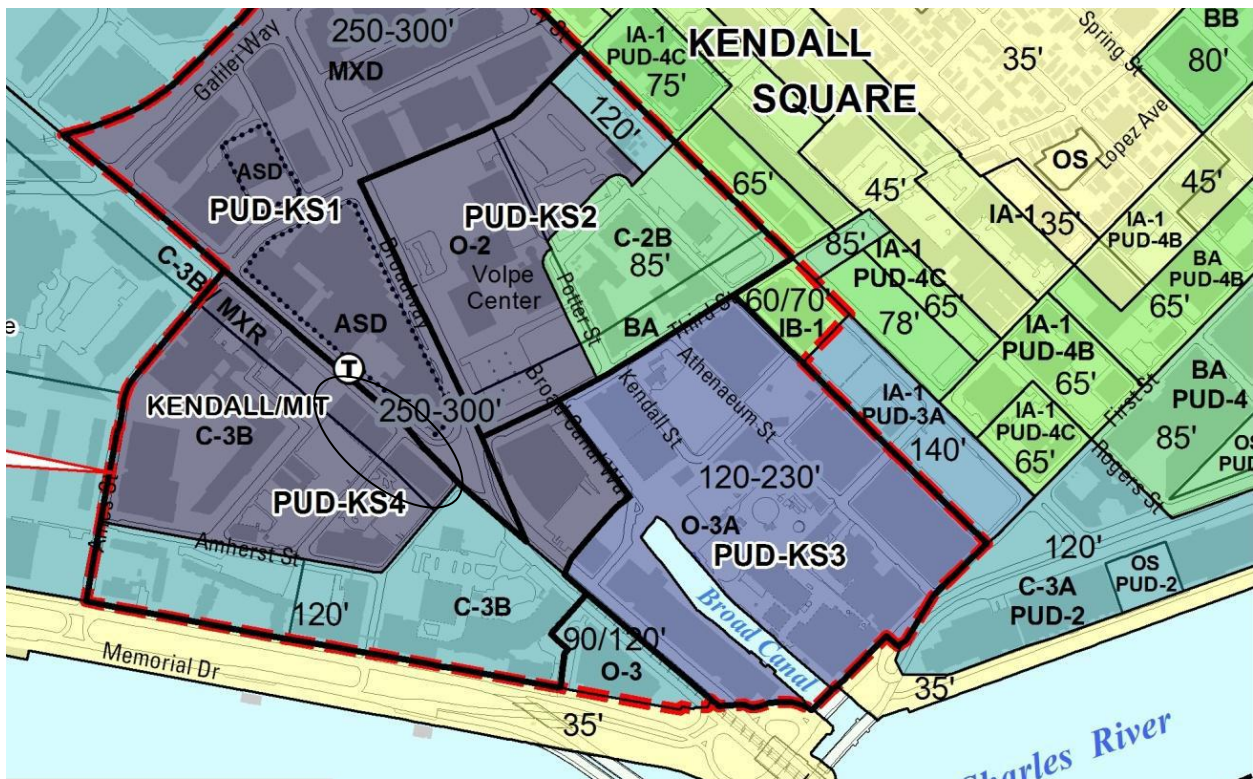


MIT initially proposed complete demolition of the Suffolk building and removal of all but the front four bays of the Hammett building to accommodate new construction and allow creation of a plaza around the MBTA headhouse. MITIMCo, *Enhancing Kendall Square*. July 12, 2011

On September 8, 2011 the Cambridge Historical Commission initiated a designation study for the Kendall Square Landmark Group, protecting the three buildings from unauthorized alterations for up to one year while the Commission formulated a recommendation to the City Council. While only 264 and 292 Main Street were threatened by the MIT proposal, the Commission included 236 Main Street in recognition of its importance to this ensemble of significant buildings and to protect the integrity of the historic streetscape.

Meanwhile, the Cambridge Community Development Department had established a planning process for Kendall Square and Central Square (called "K2C2") and retained Goody, Clancy & Associates to conduct a multidisciplinary planning study and provide urban design advice and peer review of zoning proposals. The City Manager appointed a twenty-member Kendall Square Advisory Committee, including neighborhood residents and representatives of property owners, businesses and institutions, which met intensively for more than a year to develop a vision of Kendall Square as "a dynamic public realm connecting diverse choices for living, working, learning, and playing to inspire continued success of Cambridge's sustainable, globally-significant innovation community" (*Kendall Square Plan: Summary of Zoning & Urban Design Recommendations*, Cambridge CDD,

June 27, 2012 (see <http://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Planning/K2C2.aspx>). The committee finalized its recommendations in June 2012. A full report is being prepared and will be released in late summer.



PUD-KS4 (MIT): *Base Zoning*: Residence C-3B; Office 3-A (as currently exists)

- Increase GFA permitted in the district to allow an additional 1,000,000 SF of GFA. This new GFA is available for commercial (non-academic, non-residential), academic, or residential uses.
- Increase GFA permitted in the district to require minimum 200,000 SF of housing in the district, with phasing requirements as per Kendall Sq Area-wide requirements
- Allow greater flexibility for academic uses, not subject to floor plate limits up to 120 feet.

Zoning recommendations from the K2C2 process: *Kendall Square Zoning Districts, with Proposed Zoning Height Limits*. City of Cambridge CDD, June 27, 2012

During the study period CHC staff participated in CDD meetings attended by Goody, Clancy and MIT. These were aimed at reconciling the interests of the city with those of the Institute, while taking into account concerns of the K2 committee and the community. In the course of these meetings, the city staff, supported by Goody Clancy and its retail consultant, came to the conclusion that the continued vitality of Kendall Square would be best served by retaining all the Landmark Group buildings and focusing retail activities along Main Street. CHC staff also attended many of the K2 meetings and a meeting of the East Cambridge Planning Team



Conceptual urban design plan retaining the Kendall Square Landmark Group, July 3, 2012. New construction is planned for sites 2, 3, and 6. Courtesy MITIMCo

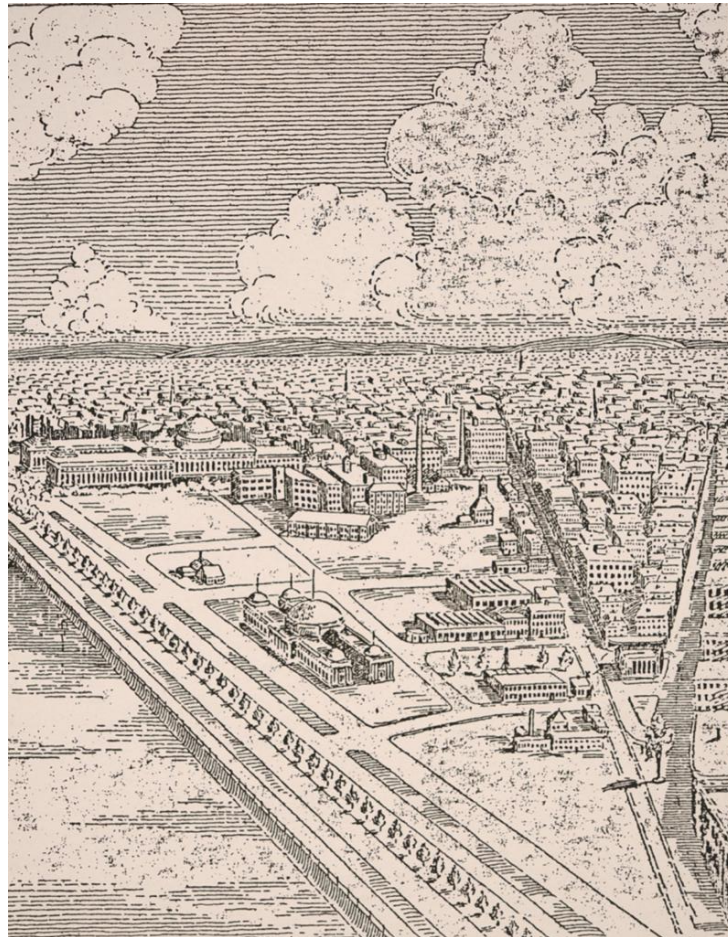
In an attempt to reconcile these potentially conflicting agendas, MIT directed its architect, David Manfredi, to prepare a conceptual study that demonstrates the possibility of adapting 264 and 292 Main Street for new purposes. In this scheme, 264 Main Street would be preserved essentially intact and the ground floor of 292 Main would be lowered to sidewalk level for better access to retail space. One bay of 292 would become the entrance lobby to a laboratory/office building in the center of the block, while the retail space would flow into the first floor of that building, and, for this idea to come into full fruition, into a new plaza created by relocating the station entrance. The feasibility of this idea is far from assured, however, as the relocation of the subway entrance depends on the participation of the MBTA and consent of other stakeholders.

II. Context

Historically, the Kendall Square intersection was the bridgehead at the extreme eastern edge of a vast salt marsh, the point at which the West Boston (now Longfellow) Bridge touched land and the roads to the interior diverged. A network of canals paralleling the highways allowed entrepreneurs to dream of making Cambridge a port of entry, a status enacted by Congress in 1805 that gave Cambridgeport its name. While the Broad Canal was used for transportation as late as 1996, the coming of the railroad after the Civil War made the area attractive to manufacturing and warehousing. The Charles River Embankment Company began to construct a seawall and fill the flats behind it in 1890, work that was completed by the city in 1914. The completion of the subway in 1912 tied Kendall Square into the metropolitan transit system, and the arrival of M.I.T. in 1916 brought more attention to the area.

Greater Kendall Square developed in different ways. The area between Main Street and Broadway was a residential neighborhood with its own elementary school. Wharves along the Broad Canal served lumber yards, fuel dealers, and a gas works before falling mostly derelict by the mid 20th century. Beginning in the 1880s, large manufacturers of heavy machinery, bridge components, in-

dustrial fasteners, stamped metal products, and rubber goods settled north of the canal on cheap land served by railroad sidings. In the 1890s, the river front attracted manufacturers like The Athenaeum Press and Carter's Ink that found value in presenting an attractive face toward Boston. In the 1920s 'clean' industries such as confectioners, electronics manufacturers (Raytheon, General Radio) built substantial reinforced concrete factories on the newly-filled land between Main Street and Memorial Drive. By 1930 Cambridge was said to have become "as much of an industrial boom town as Akron, Ohio or Detroit, Michigan" (Stone, *History of Massachusetts Industries*, 773) Most of the 300 per cent gain in manufacturing in the previous ten years took place in new factories in the Kendall Square area.



Kendall Square ca. 1920, showing development sites between Main Street and Memorial Drive. CHC

After World War II some industrial buildings were converted to offices and research, but manufacturing continued into the 1960s. As establishments closed or relocated to other regions, MIT often purchased their facilities and either rented or repurposed them for education activities. In August 1965, the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority and the Cambridge City Council approved a plan for the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Area which involved development of the NASA Electronics Research Center on a 29-acre site north of Broadway and redevelopment of the adjacent triangle bounded by Broadway and Main Street for high density, tax-generating uses. Between 1966 and 1969 the CRA conveyed 14½ acres to NASA. Over this four-year period, approximately 110 businesses were relocated, all the existing buildings were razed, and the Broad Canal was partially filled. However, it was not until 1977 that zoning was put in place for the Cambridge Center development that Boston Properties began to implement in 1979, with Moshe Safdie & Associates as master planner and architect after 1980. Safdie designed both the Marriott Hotel and the Main

Street plaza (the latter in conjunction with Monacelli Associates). The Cambridge Center development has been criticized for the uniformity of its architecture, the lack of engagement of its buildings with the street, and the ineffective arrangement of retail activities. The Main Street plaza in particular was, until very recently, a sterile space that still offers no obvious access to the hotel, the Harvard Coop, or the adjacent food court.



Kendall Square Urban Renewal area, ca. 1965. CHC

III. Description of the Proposed Landmarks

The three buildings that comprise the Kendall Square Landmark Group occupy essentially all of their parcels, lot-line to lot-line along Main Street. While varying in style, material, and massing, they offer a traditional urban experience, including small-scale retail in the Kendall Square building and repurposed industrial structures in the Hammett and Suffolk buildings. In this respect they form an agreeable contrast to the modern buildings across Main Street, which are set back along wide sidewalks and around an empty plaza. Seen from the rear, however, they are isolated by parking lots that replaced a formerly dense industrial precinct.



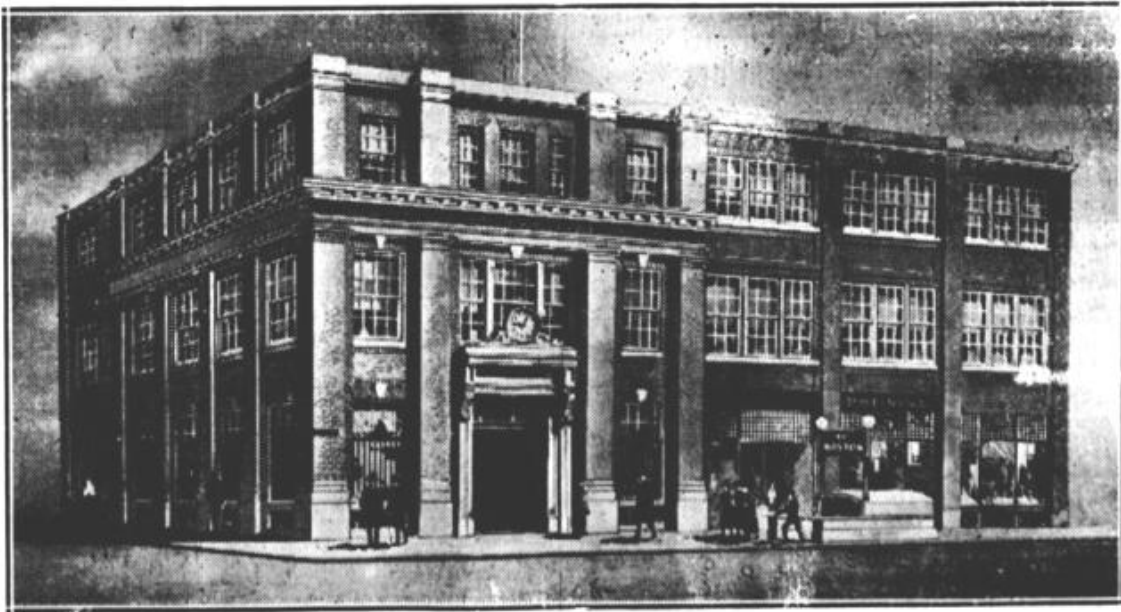
Suffolk, Hammett, and Kendall Square buildings, south elevations. CHC photo, July 2012

Kendall Square Building, 238 Main St. (1917-25).



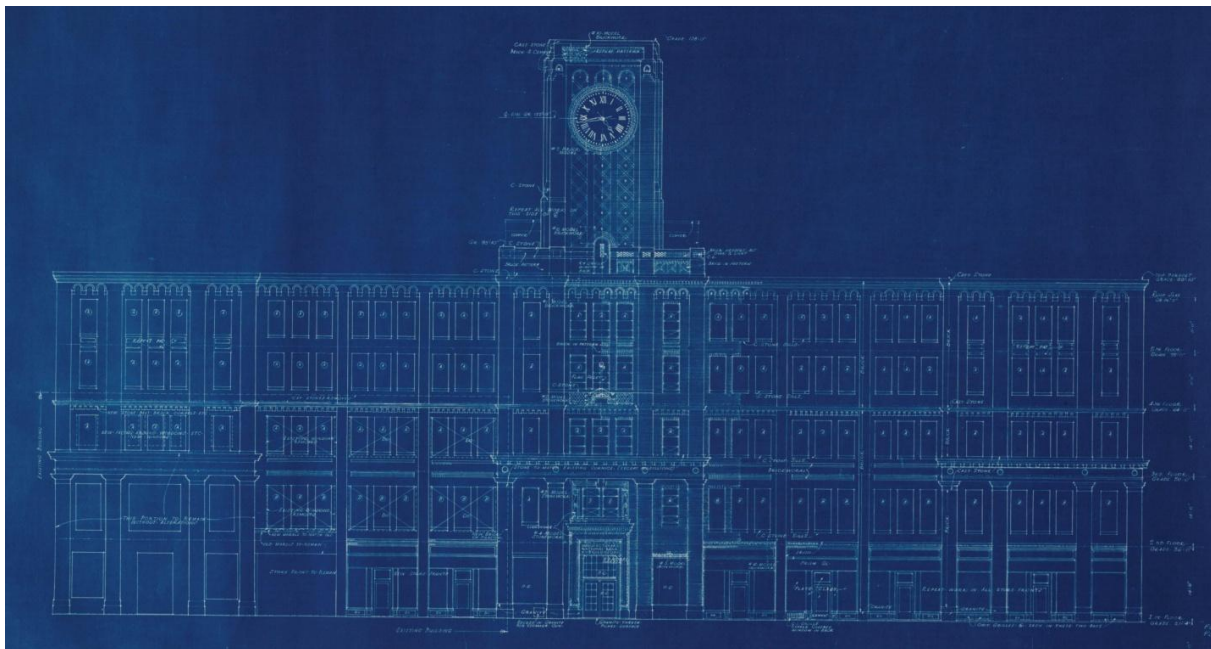
Kendall Square Building, 238 Main Street (1917-25). CHC photo, 2012

The Kendall Square Building was built for the Manufacturer's National Bank and constructed in two phases. The initial structure, clad in dark red brick and featuring a Neo-Classical cornice at the corner, three stories high and six bays wide along Main Street, was designed by Cambridge architect William L. Mowll and went up at the corner of Wadsworth Street in 1917. In 1925 the bank retained Boston architect Franklin E. Leland and expanded the building to the corner of Hayward Street, built it up to five stories, and added a monumental clock tower. While the reinforced concrete frame is structurally similar to many factory buildings of the period, Leland adopted Mowll's design vocabulary, duplicating the lower cornice at the Hayward Street corner and over the office entrance. The most distinctive feature of the building however, is the 135' clock tower, which at the time of construction was visible from miles around. This was an explicit gesture to draw attention to Kendall Square from Boston; the bank and the Manufacturers' Association were actively promoting Kendall Square as a prime location for industry, and the lighted clock tower was intended as a beacon to Boston firms seeking room to expand. The building also featured direct access to the Kendall Square station, and a tunnel to the Hayward Street garage ran through its basement.



Manufacturer's National Bank building, 222 Main Street. *Cambridge Tribune*, June 16, 1917

The Manufacturer's National Bank was founded by commercial interests in 1916, and the early shareholders included almost every industrial firm of note in Cambridge at the time. Its president, Timothy Good, served as mayor of Cambridge in 1914-15. In addition to a banking hall, the building originally contained retail stores on the ground floor and light manufacturing and offices above, while the fifth floor held a dining room, meeting hall, and the offices of the Kendall Square Manufacturers Association, a predecessor of the Cambridge Chamber of Commerce. In an age that believed in promotion, the bank and the association worked energetically to attract new businesses to Kendall Square. After the bank was absorbed by the Harvard Trust Company in 1925 the top floor was rented to tenants and the association met in the Suffolk building.



Kendall Square building, 238 Main Street. Front elevation, Franklin Leland, architect.
Massachusetts Archives, Department of Public Safety Collection.
Reproduction courtesy of MITIMCo

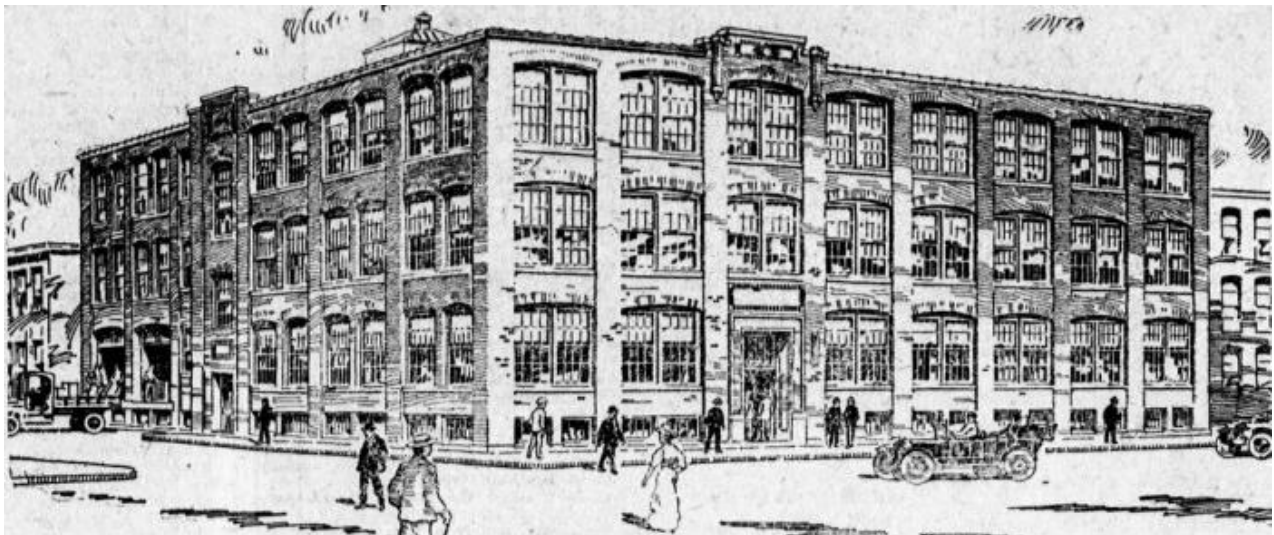
The Manufacturers Bank Realty Trust retained the Kendall Square Building when the banking firm was acquired by the Harvard Trust Co., and finally sold it in 1952 to a tenant, the Better Homes Club Plan, a trading stamp business which distributed premiums from this location. The Massachusetts Institute of Technology acquired the building in 1962.²

The Kendall Square building appears to be in excellent condition, having reroofed and fully pointed at a cost of \$1.3 million in 2010-11. However, the limestone trim has been inappropriately painted white rather than cleaned and repaired. While the windows have been replaced, their configuration is similar to those originally installed in the building (except that the Manufacturers' Bank had small-paned wood sash in their offices). Oddly, the off-white color of the windows is a better match for the limestone than the painted trim around them.

² Ownership information here and elsewhere from Cambridge Assessors records.

J. L. Hammett Building, 264 Main St. (1915).

The Hammett building was designed in 1915 by Densmore & LeClear for the J.L. Hammett Co., one of America's largest providers of school furniture and supplies. It is a 3½-story building with brick bearing walls and wood and steel framing. It was designed as a warehouse and manufacturing facility, with the characteristics and load-bearing capacity typical of 19th century slow-burning mill construction. The exterior walls are punctuated with large windows on three sides. The building predated the use of steel lintels, and the window openings are capped by segmental or jack arches and have granite sills. The original 8+8 double-hung sash have been replaced with aluminum windows. The first floor is raised about 4' above grade, and smaller windows light the basement. Since 1987 the first floor and cellar have been devoted to retail uses; both Hammett and Suffolk share a ramp located between the two buildings leading to rear entrances; a second-floor connector that allowed Hammett to expand into the Suffolk building in 1923 has been removed. The upper floors contain offices occupied by various branches of the Institute.



J. L. Hammett building, architect's rendering. *Cambridge Chronicle*, May 13, 1916

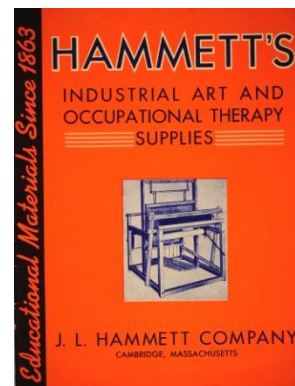
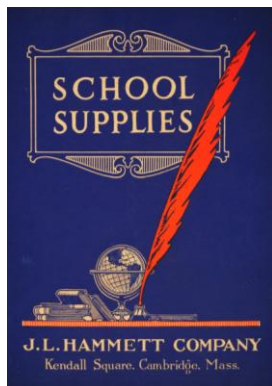


J. L. Hammett Co., 264 Main Street. Robert E. Smith collection, CHC. Photo 1953

The architects of the Hammett building, the Boston firm of Densmore & LeClear, practiced from 1916 until 1942. Edward Dana Densmore (1871-1926) was a graduate of Harvard's Lawrence Sci-

entific School who studied mechanical engineering at MIT; his partner, Gifford LeClear (d. 1931), graduated from Harvard in 1895; he was described as a “consulting engineer” in 1913 and lectured at the school of architecture there in 1914-1920. The firm’s practice included a substantial number of light manufacturing and office buildings, including the Ashton Valve Co. building at 161 First Street (1907) and a telephone exchange at 51 Inman Street (1911), but they were best known for commercial structures like Boston’s massive Park Square Office Building (1925).

The J. L. Hammett Co. was established in Boston in 1863. John L. Hammett (ca. 1831-1922) was a native of Rhode Island who later lived in Somerville. His school supply store was said to be the first in the U.S. The firm was incorporated after Hammett retired in 1895, and diversified into manufacturing and wholesale distribution before moving to Cambridge in 1915. By 1923, the company had a retail store in Boston and a distribution center in Brooklyn, and its catalogue listed over 3,000 items. The company manufactured blackboards and wooden school furniture in the Cambridge building, and one whole floor was devoted to making composition books. MIT acquired the building from Hammett when the firm relocated to Braintree in 1967.



J.L. Hammett Co. catalogues, 1927 and 1940. CHC

The Hammett building is the oldest and smallest of the three buildings comprising the Kendall Square Landmark Group. The east wall displays signs of settlement, but the repaired areas show no indication of recent movement. The building has been well maintained, and remains in good condition. Although the raised first floor is not advantageous for accessibility, the building has been successfully adapted for retail and restaurant uses. The exposed framing, large amounts of natural light, and simple materials endow the interior with an appealing character.



J.L. Hammett Building, 264 Main Street (1915). CHC photo, 2012.

Suffolk Engraving & Electrotyping Building, 292 Main St. (1920)

The Suffolk Engraving Building was designed by Boston architect John C. Spofford in 1920. The reinforced concrete structure contains six full floors above a half-level basement. The roof holds two large penthouses with north-facing skylights that have been roofed over. The exterior is unadorned except for a small cornice at the second floor level and a somewhat heavier cornice at the parapet. (The more elaborate dentilled cornice shown in the original elevations may have been omitted or removed at a later date.) The original industrial steel sash have been replaced with insulated windows, and the exterior concrete covered with a cementitious paint. In other respects the building retains its original form and character.

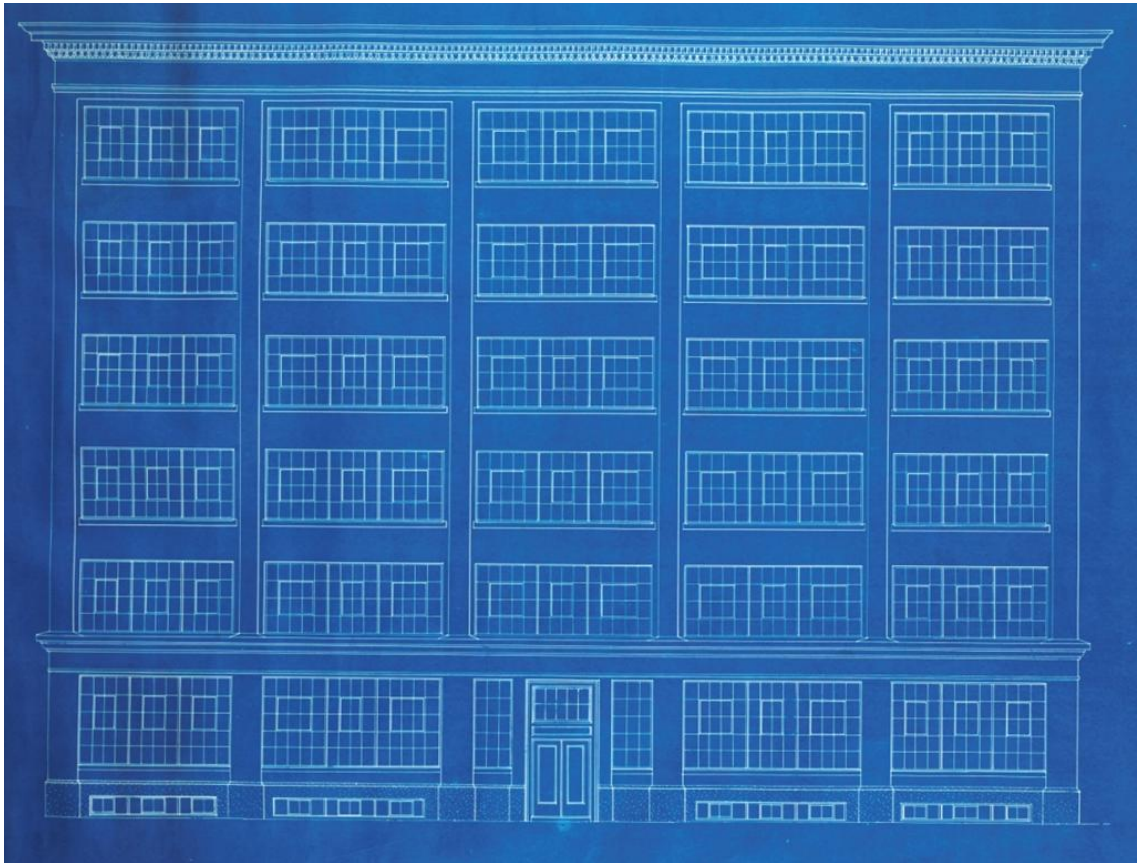
Suffolk had the building designed to meet some highly specific requirements. The company was engaged in preparing plates for printers, and valuable originals were always on hand. The first requirement was that the building be fireproof and highly secure, hence the use of reinforced concrete construction and wire-glass windows. A large vault and a standpipe system provided added security. The work involved “the art of producing printing plates having images formed in relief on a metal surface” (*Our Neighbors*, No. 30. The company performed wood, steel and copper engraving, zinc etching, photogravures, color separations, and half tone work. It employed advertising designers, artists, photographers, photo retouchers, engravers and other skilled tradespeople who required abundant natural light and adequate ventilation. A freight elevator was large enough to bring automobiles into the photo studio, and the penthouse provided north light for photography and color work. The Kendall Square site was advantageous because of its central location, with several nearby publishers and job printers.



Cambridge Chronicle, Sept. 4, 1920



Suffolk Engraving & Electrotyping Building, 292 Main Street. CHC photo, July 2012



Suffolk Engraving & Electrotyping Building, 292 Main Street. Massachusetts Archives, Department of Public Safety Collection. CHC



Suffolk Engraving & Electrotyping Building, 292 Main Street. Architect's rendering. *Technique* 1923, p. 564.

The Suffolk Engraving & Electrotyping Company consolidated a number of firms dating back to 1876 and incorporated in 1900. When it purchased the property in 1916 the company was located in Boston and employed 150 hands. The photoengravers' union struck frequently, and Suffolk often advertised for replacements even after it moved to Cambridge in 1921. The firm entered bankruptcy in 1932.

WANTED
YOUNG LADY ARTISTS
 To learn halftone and three and four color re-etching and finishing. Strike on for forty-four hours, we work forty-eight.
Suffolk Engraving & Electrotyping Co.
 394 ATLANTIC AVE., CITY



Suffolk Engraving & Electrotyping Co. activities. Murray Printing Co.,
Our Neighbors at Kendall Square. Cambridge, 1922. CHC

Suffolk occupied four floors of the building initially and rented the remainder to industrial tenants. After Suffolk closed no single occupant dominated the building, which had 21 commercial and office tenants in 1944, including five printing firms. By the early 1970s it was mainly rented to the Nature Food Centers. The building went into foreclosure during the Depression, and was owned by the Haviland Realty Trust after 1945. MIT acquired the building in 1975.



Suffolk Engraving & Electrotyping building penthouses, 292 Main Street. CHC photo, 2012.

John C. Spofford (1854-1936), the architect, was a native of Maine who trained in the Boston office of Henry Preston and became a draftsman for Sturgis & Brigham. When Sturgis left the firm Spofford became a partner in Brigham & Spofford and remained so for twenty years. He practiced alone from 1892 until his death in 1936. Most of his work was in public buildings, including city halls in Bangor and Lewiston and additions to the Maine and Massachusetts state houses. The Suffolk building was his only Cambridge project.

The Suffolk building appears to be in good condition, although spalling concrete had to be repaired in 1937 and again in 1992, when an exterior insulation and finish system was installed. The reinforced concrete structural system with mushroom columns is comparable to that employed at the Necco (now Novartis) building on Massachusetts Avenue and other industrial structures of the period. Like the Hammett building, the first floor is a half-story above grade. The building could be adapted to contemporary needs by removing the first floor and reconstructing it at ground level, and removing the spandrels between the perimeter columns so that the openings can be adapted for lobby or storefront use. Ideally the windows should give the appearance of industrial sash and the cornice restored to its original appearance, if that can be determined. The penthouses are character-giving features and should remain in place.



Suffolk Engraving & Electrotyping building. CHC photo, July 2012

IV. Significance of the Properties

The three adjacent buildings that comprise the Kendall Square Landmark Group represent Cambridge's industrial aspirations in the early 20th century. The Kendall Square Building was explicitly designed to be a landmark office building, and the Hammett (Rebecca's) and Suffolk (MIT Press) buildings represent Cambridge's manufacturing, distribution, and industrial sectors. While the Hammett building represents 19th century light industrial construction, the Suffolk building typifies the heavier construction required by 20th century industry. The ensemble they create is the last remnant of traditional streetscape and architecture in Kendall Square. Loss of the Suffolk building would diminish the Hammett building to the point of irrelevancy.

All three buildings are significant for their architecture as well as for their associations with the industrial and commercial history of Cambridge. Their architects were well-known practitioners who designed theaters, office buildings, city halls, and statehouse expansions throughout the northeast. They recall a period when Cambridge was being compared with Detroit and becoming the second most important manufacturing city in Massachusetts. The physical remains of this industrial heritage are threatened throughout the city.

The Kendall Square Urban Renewal Project removed all the buildings between Main and Binney Streets in the 1970s. Construction of the Kendall Square Station headhouse required the removal of the F&T Restaurant in 1987, so that now the former Daggett Chocolate factory at 400 Main Street (1920), the Engine 7 firehouse (1894), and the Elijah Luke hay and grain warehouse at 145 Main Street (1874, a landmark since 1989) are the only other remaining early buildings between Portland Street and the Charles River.

V. Relationship to Criteria

A. Article III, Chapter 2.78.180 a.

The enabling ordinance for landmarks states:

The Historical Commission by majority vote may recommend for designation as a landmark any property within the City being or containing a place, structure, feature or object which it determines to be either (1) importantly associated with one or more historic persons or events, or with the broad architectural, aesthetic, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City or the Commonwealth or (2) historically or architecturally significant (in terms of its period, style, method of construction or association with a famous architect or builder) either by itself or in the context of a group of structures . . .

B. Relationship of Property to Criteria

The Kendall Square Landmark Group properties meet landmark criterion (1) for their important associations with the economic history of the City, representing commerce, manufacturing and warehousing, and printing and publishing. They reflect the evolution of Kendall Square from an isolated bridgehead to the epicenter of the city's development into the second largest industrial city in Massachusetts.

The properties also meet criterion (2) as significant examples of commercial and industrial architecture, and for their associations with the architects William Mowll, Franklin Leland, Densmore & LeClear, and John C. Spofford.

VI. Recommendations

A. Purpose of Designation

Article III, Chapter 2.78.140 states the purpose of landmark designation:

preserve, conserve and protect the beauty and heritage of the City and to improve the quality of its environment through identification, conservation and maintenance of ... sites and structures which constitute or reflect distinctive features of the architectural, cultural, political, economic or social history of the City; to resist and restrain environmental influences adverse to this purpose; [and] to foster appropriate use and wider public knowledge and appreciation of such ... structures.

B. Preservation Options

There are three options for preservation of the Kendall Square Landmark Group: a) designation under the landmark ordinance; b) donation of a preservation restriction; and c) a broad protocol between the Commission and the Institute similar to that entered into with Harvard University in 1986.

- a) Landmark designation as described herein is the most direct and effective way of preserving the buildings. The designation order can provide predictability by referencing appropriate alterations proposed by the owner, and by incorporating the guidelines for review described below. If the Commission so recommends, the City Council can enact the designation by a simple majority vote.
- b) Preservation restrictions are binding legal agreements between the owner and another party – in this case, the City of Cambridge through the Cambridge Historical Commission – that can incorporate the same proposals and guidelines as a landmark designation. Some owners consent to this approach because it entails a possible charitable deduction from taxable income on Federal returns, but this feature is unlikely to be meaningful to MIT. Preservation restrictions do not require a vote of the City Council.
- c) The historic preservation protocol between Harvard University and the Cambridge Historical Commission applies to several hundred university buildings listed on the National Register of Historic Places and essentially delegates review of exterior alterations to CHC staff. In case of disagreement the staff will refer the matter to the Commission, and if necessary to the Massachusetts Historical Commission. The Commission agreed that it would not seek to designate National Register-listed properties, but the demolition review ordinance remains in effect. Agreement on the protocol came after six years of intense discussion and a professional survey of all university buildings. While MIT has conducted such a survey and often reviews alterations with CHC staff, no formal agreement is in place.

Other historic preservation tools include the city's demolition review ordinance and the National Register of Historic Places. Demolition of these buildings or significant portions of them would trigger the Historical Commission's review under the demolition ordinance, Ch. 2.78 Article II, but this provides only a delay mechanism and is not as strong a protection as landmark designation. Listing on the National Register of Historic Places would protect the buildings only in the case of State- or Federally-funded, licensed or permitted activities. Finally, in 2005 and 2006 MIT offered to allow the Commission to review the design of replacement buildings in return for demolition

permit approval at 18-46 Hayward St. (Case D-1020) and 28 Carleton Street (Case D-1055). Both of these buildings were adjacent to the Kendall Square Landmark Group.

C. Staff Recommendation

CHC staff believes that the Kendall Square Landmark Group is eligible for landmark designation under the criteria contained in the Ordinance. While the Massachusetts Institute of Technology has been a good steward of these buildings, development pressures in the neighborhood could prove overwhelming. Loss of any one of the buildings could critically diminish the others and damage the traditional streetscape of Kendall Square.

Development discussions in Kendall Square are currently at a critical stage. While MIT has indicated its willingness to work with the Commission to preserve the buildings, other agendas may differ. Staff believes that the one-year time frame of a landmark designation study may impose artificial constraints on the process of resolving these issues, and recommends that on July 12 the Commission should find the Kendall Square Landmark Group eligible for landmark designation and continue its hearing to allow further discussion.

VII. Standards and Criteria

Under Article III, the Historical Commission is charged with reviewing any construction, demolition or alteration that affects the exterior architectural features (other than color) of a designated landmark. This section of the report describes exterior architectural features that are among the characteristics that led to consideration of the property as a landmark. Except as the order designating or amending the landmark may otherwise provide, the exterior architectural features described in this report should be preserved and/or enhanced in any proposed alteration or construction that affects those features of the landmark. The standards following in paragraphs A and B of this section provide guidelines for the treatment of the landmark described in this report.

A. General Standards and Criteria

Subject to review and approval of exterior architectural features under the terms of this report, the following standards shall apply:

1. Significant historic and architectural features of the landmark should be preserved.
2. Changes and additions to the landmark which have taken place over time are evidence of the history of the property. These changes may have acquired significance in their own right and, if so, that significance should be recognized and respected.
3. Deteriorated architectural features should be repaired rather than replaced.
4. When replacement of architectural features is necessary, it should be based on physical or documentary evidence.
5. New materials should, whenever possible, match the material being replaced in physical properties, design, color, texture, and appearance. The use of imitation replacement materials is generally discouraged.
6. The surface cleaning of a landmark should be done by the gentlest possible means. Sandblasting and other cleaning methods that damage exterior architectural features shall not be used.

7. Additions should not destroy significant exterior architectural features and should not be incongruous to the historic aspects, architectural significance, or distinct character of the landmark, neighborhood, and environment.
8. Additions should be designed in a way that, if they were to be removed in the future, the essential form and integrity of the landmark would be unimpaired.

B. Suggested Review Guidelines

1. Site Development

Both the city and the owner are anticipating substantial additional development on sites immediately adjacent to the Kendall Square Landmark Group, and these new structures are likely to be contiguous – and may actually incorporate – the designated buildings. The Commission will not exercise design review of the new structures, except to approve the features that connect the new and old buildings.

2. Alterations

a. Exterior surfaces

Masonry surfaces should be maintained in a manner consistent with the nature of the material and the architect's original design intent. Destructive cleaning methods should be avoided, and repairs should match the original materials in color, texture, and appearance. Masonry coatings, whether paint or clear sealants, are strongly discouraged and should be removed when appropriate. Cornices and trim should be retained or restored when appropriate to do so.

b. Fenestration

No original windows appear to remain in any of the buildings. Replacements should be maintained for their useful life, but when needing replacement should resemble the original windows in configuration and appearance.

c. Accessibility

The first floors of the Hammett and Suffolk buildings are a half-story above grade. Subject to review of exterior construction details, the Commission will not impede removal of those floors and their associated spandrels to promote accessibility and encourage further retail development.

d. Rooftop additions

The penthouses of the Suffolk building are important character-giving features and should be preserved. Subject to review of details, rooftop structures such as decks, awnings, planters and service facilities will be permitted as long as they are set back from the parapet so as not to appear part of the original building. Rooftop utilities must be located away from parapets to remain out of site from nearby viewpoints.

e. Signs

New signs that conform to current zoning provisions in effect will be exempt from CHC review

VIII. Proposed Order

ORDERED:

That the Kendall Square Landmark Group, comprised of the Kendall Square building, 236 Main Street, the Hammett Building, 264 Main Street, and the Suffolk Engraving building, 292 Main Street, be designated as protected landmarks pursuant to Chapter 2.78, Article III, Section 2.78.180 of the Code of the City of Cambridge, as recommended by vote of the Cambridge Historical Commission on xxxx xx, 2012. The premises so designated are the lots defined as Parcel 84 on Assessor's Map 47, Parcel 107 on Map 48, and Parcel 123 on Map 48 and the buildings thereon, these being premises described in deeds recorded in Book[658/Page 198], Book 11443/Page 194, and Book [845/Page 34] at the South Middlesex Registry of Deeds.³

This designation is justified by the properties' important architectural and historical associations with the economic history of the City, representing commerce, manufacturing, and printing, and for their associations with the architects William Mowl, Franklin Leland, Densmore & LeClear, and John C. Spofford.

The effect of this designation shall be that review by the Cambridge Historical Commission and the issuance of a Certificate of Appropriateness, Hardship or Non-Applicability shall be required before any construction activity can take place within the designated premises or any action can be taken affecting the appearance of the premises, that would in either case be visible from a public way. In making determinations, the Commission shall be guided by the terms of the final landmark designation report, dated xxxxxx xx, 2012, with respect to the designated premises, by Section VII, Standards and Criteria of said report, and by the applicable sections of Chapter 2.78, Article III, of the Cambridge Municipal Code.

³ Incorrect deed references from the Cambridge Assessors records to be confirmed at the Registry.