



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

July 25, 2016

Matthew A. Beaton, Secretary  
Executive Office of Energy & Environmental Affairs  
Attention: MEPA Office – Paige Czepiga, MEPA #1891  
100 Cambridge Street, Suite 900  
Boston, MA 02114

RE: Kendall Square Urban Renewal Project Amendment No. 10, MEPA #1891 – Notice of Project Change

Dear Secretary Beaton:

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) regularly reviews proposals deemed to have regional impacts. The Council reviews proposed projects for consistency with *MetroFuture*, the regional policy plan for the Boston metropolitan area, the Commonwealth's Sustainable Development Principles, the GreenDOT initiative, consistency with Complete Streets policies and design approaches, as well as impacts on the environment.

#### Proposed Development Program

The Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (the Proponent) and Boston Properties (the Redeveloper) propose an Amendment No. 10 to the Kendall Square Urban Renewal Plan (KSURP), an area bounded by Main Street, the Grand Junction Railroad, Binney Street, and Third Street in Cambridge. The Notice of Project Change (NPC) outlines some modifications to the development program and building massing scheme, none of which trigger new MEPA review thresholds. The Proponent and Redeveloper propose increasing total new development by 90,600 square feet for a total of 1,125,200 square feet. Specifically, the proposed development program will comprise 675,200 square feet of office, 30,000 square feet of retail, and 420,000 square feet of residential space (560 units). From the previously submitted Supplemental Environmental Impact Report (SEIR), the program proposes to modestly increase the number of parking spaces from 740 to 809. With these proposed changes to the development program, an additional 82 daily vehicle trips are projected to be added to the roadway network, for a total of 3,720 daily vehicle trips.

#### Housing Program

A key program change since the SEIR includes modification of the housing program. The same number of affordable units are being proposed, but all home ownership and three-bedroom units will be realized in the first phase. MAPC is pleased the Proponent and Redeveloper have recognized and incorporated this more desirable residential development solution for the community.

#### Transportation Demand Management

The NPC maintains that an estimated 70 percent of trips accessing Kendall Square are transit, walking, bicycling, shuttle, and/or carpooling. To support this mode share, the Proponent and Redeveloper will implement a robust Transportation Demand Management (TDM) plan to reduce single occupancy vehicles along with an annual Transportation Monitoring Program.

Draft Memorandum of Understanding

The NPC contains a draft Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to be entered into by the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority, the City of Cambridge, the Massachusetts DOT, and the MBTA. The Redeveloper is a concurring party to the MOU. The draft MOU recognizes the critically important role access and mobility play to successful redevelopment and expansion. As a transit mitigation measure, the Redeveloper will contribute an initial payment of \$6 million for short and long range transit improvements as part of the Kendall Square Transit Enhancement Program (KSTEP). The MOU outlines measures to be taken regarding commitments and the process that will lead to identifying and coordinating specific measures to be developed and implemented over the next 15 years. These revisions will preserve, enhance, and expand transit access and mobility in the Kendall Square area.

MAPC has a long-term interest in alleviating regional traffic and environmental impacts, consistent with the goals of *MetroFuture*. The Commonwealth also has established a mode shift goal of tripling the share of travel in Massachusetts by bicycling, transit and walking by 2030. Additionally, the Commonwealth has a statutory obligation to reduce greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) by 25% from 1990 levels by 2020 and by 80% from 1990 levels by 2050. In May 2016, the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court released a unanimous decision in *Kain vs. Massachusetts Department of Protection (DEP)* ordering the state's DEP to take additional measures to implement the 2008 Global Warming Solutions Act. Specifically, the Court held that DEP must impose volumetric limits on the aggregate greenhouse gas emissions from certain types of sources and that these limits must decline on an annual basis. This recent ruling reasserts the state's obligation to meet these goals. As proposed, KSURP's Amendment No. 10 is highly likely to contribute to achieving and supporting all of these goals by investments to the public transit system (e.g.; improvements to the Kendall Station's transit infrastructure, Red Line service modernization and improvements).

MAPC applauds all parties for developing a transparent and accountable mitigation program focused on public transportation improvements, in addition to contributing funds to this effort. The MOU will ensure that improvements to public transportation will contribute to sustainable and smart growth development and that the Kendall Square area will continue to be well served by public transit.

Moving forward, it will be important to include these mitigation commitments in both the Secretary's Certificate and Section 61 Findings. For many years, MAPC has advocated for other project proponents to invest in MBTA capital projects and operations in order to mitigate negative impacts or increased demand on the transit system. This robust commitment is therefore a welcome breakthrough and sets an exceptional precedent. The effective execution of the goals of the public-private partnership outlined in the MOU will serve as a leading example for future development projects in other communities to follow.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on Kendall Square Urban Renewal Project Amendment No. 10. MAPC looks forward to the successful implementation of the MOU.

Sincerely,



Marc D. Draisen  
Executive Director

cc: Mayor E. Denise Simmons, City of Cambridge  
Richard C. Rossi, City of Cambridge  
Susanne Rasmussen, City of Cambridge  
Joseph E. Barr, City of Cambridge  
David Mohler, MassDOT