



SMART GROWTH AND REGIONAL COLLABORATION

November 19, 2015

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

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.

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. Amendment No. 10 proposes adding approximately 1,034,600 square feet of new development to the previously permitted KSURP area of approximately 3.3 million square feet. Specifically, the proposed development program will comprise 584,600 square feet of office, 50,000 square feet of retail, and 400,000 square feet of residential space (560 units). Of the 560 units, 15 percent will be provided at an affordable rate to low and moderate income households.

Vehicle Trips

The project will add an estimated 3,638 vehicle trips to the existing 13,714 average vehicle trips per day (AVDT),¹ yielding a total AVDT 17,352, approximately 10 percent lower than the previously projected total of 19,300 AVDT. The lower trip generation is attributed to the high proportion of alternative modes, including transit, walking and bicycling, by commuters, shoppers, visitors, and residents in Kendall Square.

Parking

The use of approximately 2,667 existing off-street parking spaces and proposed 740 spaces of new off-street parking spaces falls within the maximum off-street parking supply previously approved under Plan Amendment No. 3 (3,545 spaces). All new 740 parking spaces will be in structured parking. The Project will also provide approximately 802 long term bicycle spaces and 142 short term bicycle spaces, in accordance with the City's bicycle parking requirements.

Transportation Demand Management

The SEIR 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. The Proponent will continue to implement an annual Transportation Monitoring Program to assist in determining the effectiveness of TDM initiatives, traffic mitigation improvements, and parking program.

¹ Projected under Amendment No. 8.

Impact to MBTA Red Line Operations

The SEIR's transit operations analysis concluded that the potential impacts on Red Line operations as a result of the development proposed in Amendment No. 10 are minimal.² The SEIR's transit operations analysis determined:

- Future ridership with or without the Project can be accommodated for all but one segment, the morning peak hour inbound train entering Kendall Square/MIT station. With the Project, there would be an approximate two percent increase in passenger demand for this segment due to an estimated additional 181 transit trips. Without the Project, this segment would operate at just over capacity.
- The MBTA and Kendall/MIT station platform could accommodate future passenger demand with or without the Project under Level of Service D conditions (worst case scenario).

Kendall Square Transit Enhancement Program (KSTEP)

Understanding the need for improved Red Line reliability, capacity, and overall enhanced public transit services to the KSURP area, the Proponent and Redeveloper have advanced a Kendall Square Transit Enhancement Program (KSTEP). A public-private partnership, the KSTEP will address these anticipated transit issues through coordination with MassDOT, the MBTA, the City of Cambridge, and other stakeholders. Designed to enhance mobility around the KSURP area, the KSTEP will also include major transportation initiatives that will improve transit options and services. These initiatives may include a range of projects, programs, and services directed at improving and enhancing transit for people working, living, and visiting the Kendall Square area.

The Proponent has committed to enter into a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with MassDOT, MBTA, the Redeveloper, and the City of Cambridge, as a mechanism to implement the KSTEP. The Proponent will establish and maintain a Kendall Square Enhanced Transit Fund (KSETF) for the purpose of establishing funding priorities and allocations for identified transit improvement projects. As a transit mitigation measure, the Proponent will contribute an initial payment of \$6 million for transit improvements to the KSETF as a "fair share" contribution. The KSETF will also receive additional funding to be provided by the Redeveloper. Ultimately, the MOU process will lead to a program of mitigation measures the Proponent and Redeveloper will implement to improve the public transportation infrastructure and experience within the KSURP area.

The Proponent has committed to file the draft MOU with MEPA for review by July 1, 2016. This will follow the completion of the work of the MassDOT-led Kendall Square Mobility Task Force, on which both the Proponent and Redeveloper are active members. The key stakeholders will continue to work closely to refine the KSTEP and MOU by addressing additional details on potential sources of funds and on the range of transit mitigation projects and programs, which include:

- MBTA Red Line Kendall Station Improvements
- Kendall Station/Kendall Square Connection Enhancements
- MBTA Red Line Service Modernization and Improvements
- Long Range Feasibility Investigations

² Assuming operations are under the current MBTA schedule.

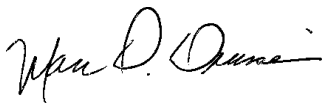
The development outlined in Amendment No. 10 has been designed to meet the continued demand for additional housing, office, and biotechnology manufacturing space along with ground floor retail to bring a mixed-use environment to the KSURP area. The KSTEP and MOU will ensure that improvements to public transportation will contribute to sustainable and smart growth development and that the Kendall Square area will continue to be well served by public transit.

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. As proposed, KSURP's Amendment No. 10 is highly likely to contribute to achieving and supporting all of these goals.

MAPC applauds the Proponent for developing a mitigation program focused on public transportation improvements, and for contributing funds to this effort. 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. The successful execution of the goals of the public-private partnership 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 reviewing the draft MOU when it is filed with MEPA in 2016.

Sincerely,



Marc D. Draisen
Executive Director

cc: Richard C. Rossi, City of Cambridge
Susanne Rasmussen, City of Cambridge
Sam Seidel, City of Cambridge
Joseph E. Barr, City of Cambridge
David Mohler, MassDOT