

25 February 2014

Dear Planning Board Members:

Please do not approve the plans by the developer for 40 Thorndike Street.

1. The State released the building with the stipulation that any developer adhere to local zoning laws. The zoning for that site is 80 ft.
2. Buildings in Cambridge account for over 80% of carbon emissions. How can anyone in good conscience add to that percentage by adding more height to this non-conforming building? This building should be more in conformity with the 80 ft. allowance.
3. Encasing the building in glass sheathing will further destroy the environment. Such buildings heat up the night sky and heat up the environment surround the building causing harm to trees and other plant life on the street. Such buildings are on record as destroying nearby parks. If Cambridge claims to be a "tree city" how can the city justify allowing a building that would destroy trees? While it is universally seen as an ugly building, changing the skin to all glass will not be an improvement. We are stuck with an ugly building.
4. It is difficult to understand why the city on the one hand talks about environmental studies and flood prevention with regard to storm surges and floods by 2050 and on the other hand proposes the building of many more tall buildings in the CDD C2 and K2 reports which will be in these flood zones and will add to the environmental damage and potential for causing flooding. This schizophrenia is causing a lot of stress among the residents of this city and the proposal for 40 Thorndike St. will only add to the cause of future flooding and environment damage.
5. The developer proposes a ridiculously low number of parking spaces while stating that the offices in the building will house 2,000 workers. The City assumes everyone will take public transportation to work. Yet, that does not happen according to preliminary studies by independent traffic experts. The city has yet to do a proper transportation/traffic study and has no master plan for all of the tall buildings and new construction it proposes. One wonders if anyone making these decisions actually takes public transportation to work. If they do, they would know that people are squeezed like sardines in all the current MBTA vehicles. It is unrealistic of the developer to assume these 2000 employees will be able to use public transportation.

Please vote on the side of the residents of this city and turn down this current petition.

Thank you,
Carolyn Shipley