

From: hlieberman@gmail.com [mailto:hlieberman@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 3:13 PM
To: cambridge@lelandcheung.com
Subject: Please deny permit to Leggett renovation of E. Cambridge courthouse

Dear City of Cambridge,

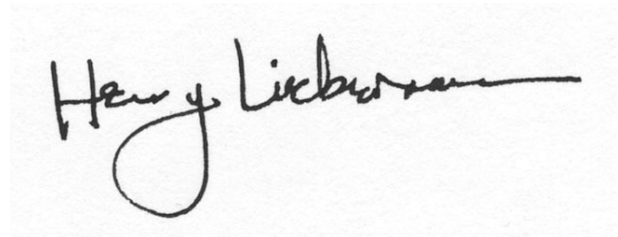
I reside at 9 Chauncy St., Cambridge in Harvard Square, but I was a resident of East Cambridge (Sciarappa at Charles) for 8 years, from 1996-2004. I join Mike Hawley and other neighbors in requesting a denial of permits for renovation to the East Cambridge Courthouse.

In addition to the considerations already mentioned, (inappropriateness of height, conversion from public to private use, congestion, parking, etc.) I think there is an important issue regarding the structural integrity of the neighborhood. People in East Cambridge know and appreciate that they have a residential neighborhood in the middle of commercial development; they don't object to that. But there's a big difference between having a stable residential neighborhood in that location, and feeling like your neighborhood is just warehousing real estate until the developers get around to grabbing it. It will always be the case that commercial development will "outbid" residential. The city needs to (and has for the 40 years I've lived in Cambridge) commit to the diversity of having residential neighborhoods near commercial areas. Otherwise we get areas that are windswept, deserted on nights and weekends, and congested on weekdays, as the area to the south is already becoming.

East Cambridge was born and is anchored around Bulfinch Plaza, a quiet and safe public haven. Residences are buffered from the noise and risks and crime that occur around the mall and transit lines. This development would break the boundary and cross the "line in the sand" that makes residents feel safe. Long term, East Cambridge has much older housing and housing in need of repairs or replacement and will need renovation and updating in coming years. The city will need neighbors' approval for residential projects, hopefully those that will be appropriate and sensitive to the neighborhood. I see many offices and storefronts in the area empty — maybe I'm wrong, but it seems to me Cambridge has a glut of office space right now.

Why pick a fight over this unnecessary and inappropriate development?

Best,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Henry Lieberman". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "H".

Henry Lieberman