

Joseph Fantasia

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Date: January 26, 2014
To: The Planning Board; City of Cambridge
From: Joseph Fantasia; Resident of East Cambridge; family history of 83 years in the City.
RE: The Sullivan Courthouse- 40 Thorndike Street

You should reject outright the request for special permits for the above referenced project.

The problems with the existing building and the proposed Leggat McCall re-development plan are well documented by others. I want to take a different approach.

- The existing building has been for 40 years a monument to the corruption and shocking ineptitude of our Government agencies. Wrapped up in its new Leggat McCall glass “red ribbons” it will continue to be a symbol of the ugly governance that created it. Go to the top of the Prudential Tower or John Hancock and look at the East Cambridge skyline, visualize what the new project is going to look like. You will understand why this new building will be derided for the next 40 years. The architecture allowed in the City is a reflection of its character.
- Where is the hardship in denying the permits? The cost of this building has been amortized. The State has no investment in the structure. Leggat McCall has at stake its normal development risks for due diligence.
- If the Commonwealth had an ounce of integrity, it would accept responsibility for this poison filled mistake, take it down and return the land to the City; or, they could get rid of the jail, clean up the building and use it as a Court House. The neighborhood would live with this.
- If the Planning Board grants approval of these permits they will be the only citizens of Cambridge who are in favor of this re-development, and will present the State with a noxious windfall. This project presents a unique opportunity for the City planners to exercise moral fortitude and make a decision that will truly fix the problems from 1971-3.
- East Cambridge as a neighborhood is being smothered with development from North Point to Kendall Square. If you allow this project to proceed, it will clearly indicate that the future of the East Cambridge neighborhood as it has historically existed has been City planned for extinction.

Sincerely,

Joseph Fantasia