

To the Cambridge Planning Board and Cambridge
Liz Paden (lpaden@cambridgema.gov)
(Cambridge Planning Board)
Council@cambridgema.gov
(Cambridge City Council)
Bmurphy@cambridgema.gov
(Head of Community Development)

Re: East Cambridge Courthouse Re-development at 40 Thorndike Street, Cambridge

Dear Cambridge Public Servants:

I have been a resident of Cambridge for the last 12 years, living at 101 Third Street. One of the only things that I don't like about the neighborhood and my experience here is the old Sullivan Courthouse (40 Thorndike). It's an atrocious building and it is shocking to me to now learn that a special permit was given to allow it to be built. It is not only an ugly building but the permit allowed it to be built to be 280 feet tall when the height restriction for the area was 80 feet. It's a large blemish in a charming, historic area of East Cambridge with beautiful brick buildings like the Bulfinch Building across the street. Further, the land was originally donated to the City for public use.

You are on the verge of magnifying the previous mistakes by approving a re-development plan for Leggat McCall that will simply put band-aids on the awful structure. The building in its current scale would never get approved today so why grandfather it in? The re-development of the building will ruin our neighborhood. Shouldn't we be working to better the community? Is this really the best that can be done? As a developer, you would think that Leggett McCall could not only be more creative but also more thorough and professional about analyzing the neighborhood and its infrastructure to do something that would benefit the community rather than ruin it. Is it all about money? Their website mentions re-purposing buildings to benefit communities. Their plan will not be good for East Cambridge.

I think it is wrong to permit the proposed re-development of 40 Thorndike as is currently planned. Please consider the neighborhood – **it really cannot handle the additional pressures on its infrastructure** – people, cars, parking, noise, as well as the glare and reflection from the glass structure that is proposed. Please deny the permitting of this project. If that is not in the cards, I would ask you and Leggat McCall to address the issues that are of concern to the people who already live and work in the neighborhood as they will be the ones to suffer.

Thank you for reviewing these concerns and I hope that they can be adequately addressed.



Maya K Bittar
February 10, 2014
101 Third Street, #4
Cambridge, MA 02141