

Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Working Group Recommendations

– DRAFT

May 2018

Update: This draft contains comments submitted by members of the public and Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Working Group members. The document will be updated to respond to discussion at the July 24th, 2018 Working Group meeting and will also include additional content relating to the discussions over the course of the public process that informed the recommendations.

Vision

The Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Working Group envisions the Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza to be flexible and dynamic community assets that enhance the everyday life of Harvard Square, attract a broad range of people, and act as platforms for community gatherings, including civic, artistic, and social activities.



Commented [A1]: Change to July

Commented [A2]: The opening sentence describing what we envision should state that the “community” includes residents, students and visitors.

It should also make it clear that the Kiosk and Plaza should provide a welcoming introduction and gathering place for the community that focuses upon Harvard Square as a lens through which all can learn about and celebrate the entire City of Cambridge.

Commented [A3]: You are designing a space for public assembly with no public bathrooms. Are you sure this is a good idea?

The interior of the Kiosk would function as a flexible space accommodating temporary, community-serving uses that occupy the space intermittently during the span of a typical week. In addition to these uses, a daily Kiosk operation would feature news for perusal or sale and serve as a Visitor Information Center.



Depiction of activity around renovated Kiosk and reconstructed Plaza (Halverson Design Partnership)

Commented [A4]: I think the space should be less flexible within but more thematic so not too cluttered and easier to invest in better things if rooted to the space. I don't feel there should be much indoor seating or indoor performances given the small sizes but rather become the mini historical / cultural arts display, tourism wayfinding and news center. If there is seating, maybe around the perimeter so that space feels more open and spacious to host more of these micro-museum displays.

Commented [A5]: Add "and ongoing"

Commented [A6]: There should be a distinct Information Structure/Center (...) in Harvard Square, focused on tourist, historical, retail, and other information; separate from the Harvard Square Kiosk. This structure could, and should, be compatible with the Harvard Square Kiosk, but in fact, anchor to a broader range of programming, than the Kiosk, could ever hope to intelligibly provide.

Commented [A7]: Add "and incorporate local history information and/or displays"

Commented [A8]: Several observations are needed:

- A new Data Collection Program, which collects active visitor information.
- A Historical Literature Review, which fact-checks, and reviews publications, of, and about, the Harvard Square Area (a kind of Underwriter Laboratory certification of accuracy).
- A Retail Data Top 100 Questions Sheet – by Season:
 - Fall: September, October, November
 - Holiday and Winter Season: December, January, February
 - Spring: March, April, May
 - Summer: June, July, August
- These sheets, should be compatible with, and overlap with existing publicity, by the Harvard Square Business Association, Harvard Square Neighborhood Association, Tour Groups, and other appropriate entities; available both by on-line locations, and other relevant publicity channels.

Commented [A9]: Replace words following "accommodating" with:

"...permanent and temporary community uses. Permanent uses would feature a visitor information center with displays focused on Cambridge history and happenings and possible sales of books and brochures as well as a possible very limited newsstand. Temporary uses would occupy a portion of the interior space intermittently during the span of a typical week. This would include informal public seating for gatherings. The Plaza would also accommodate a range of temporary programming serving the community."

During periods with no active temporary use, the interior space would support the news and visitor information functions as well as acting as an informal public seating space. The Plaza would also accommodate a range of temporary, community-serving programming, and would function as a community resource for informal social seating and community gathering.

Background

The Harvard Square Kiosk was constructed in 1927-28 as a headhouse and entrance to the subway line below, replacing a larger headhouse built in 1912. During 1981-84, the Kiosk was disassembled, removed, and stored while most of the station below was demolished during construction work to extend the terminus of the Red Line from Harvard to Alewife. A new headhouse was constructed in its place, and in 1984, the Kiosk was reassembled with some modifications to accommodate its use as a newsstand, including exterior magazine racks and a projecting cashier's booth. Since then, the City of Cambridge, which owns the structure, has leased it to multiple businesses operating as Out of Town News. The newsstand was originally founded in 1954, occupying a succession of stands that accompanied the Kiosk in what was then a small traffic island. During the construction of the Red Line extension, the traffic island was also expanded into the larger Plaza that exists today.

Out of Town News is currently operated by Muckeys Corporation and sells a range of newspapers and magazines, as well as souvenirs



Kiosk, ca. 1938, functioning as headhouse (Boston Elevated Railway Collection, Cambridge Historical Commission)

and other items. The Plaza accommodates activities such as informal social gathering, impromptu performances, and chess playing. Supplementing regular City maintenance, the Harvard Square Business Association provides upkeep of the tables, chairs, and planters in the Plaza.

In 2013, the City collaborated with Harvard University and the Harvard Square Business Association to host the first of three community workshops with initial consulting support from Project for Public Spaces. These workshops addressed ideas for short- and long-term improvements and programming, and included discussion about the restoration and repurposing of the Kiosk. Ideas from the first workshop were documented in the May 2014 Harvard Square Vision Plan, and were later substantiated in the second and third community workshops. The Plan highlighted opportunities for the Kiosk and what it needed to promote activation in the Square including, more transparency, flexible use of space, better integration with the rest of the Plaza, more public engagement opportunities, and restoration of the historic structure. While some short-term ideas that came out of the community meetings have been

Commented [A10]: •Where will the pictured outside stools, chairs and possibly tables be stored if not left out during the winter?

- Different uses projected for the use inside the kiosk involve chairs and tables. I assume that both will be foldable and/or stackable, but where will they be stored when not in use? Sidewalls? Cabinets? Elsewhere?
- Will there be a need for storage closet or locker for janitorial supplies in the kiosk? If so where will it be located?
- Where will trash receptacles be placed in the Kiosk and piazza?
- Where will event participants in the kiosk hang coats and hats?

Commented [A11]: If you want community groups to use the kiosk in creative ways, you will need to make it super easy for them. If they have to pay to bring furniture out and then put it away, that will deter smaller groups. It could be that only businesses have the staff and the money to program the space the way you propose to configure it, which is not what I understand the intent to be.

Commented [A12]: The pictures in the brochure show furniture. Movable furniture will need to be stored, retrieved, locked up, etc. That seems problematic. I sent photos to Ted showing retractable wall-mounted bench seating commonly used in Oslo. Was this idea considered?

Commented [A13]: Change to: "During periods of both temporary and regular use, the interior space would address in part three key themes identified by Kiosk Working Group members and survey participants, namely: local history, news, information about local events and services, and visitor information functions as well as acting as an informal public gathering space"

Commented [A14]: Add: "In 2016 and 2017 community members, including members of the Harvard Square Neighborhood Association, advocated for a stronger public input and voice in the creative and decision-making process. Out of this effort the Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Working Group was formed." Also: "In parallel, the advocacy efforts of the community and the City Councillors led to a successful petition to landmark the historic Harvard Square Kiosk"

Commented [A15]: Integrative social media activity on the kiosk + time capsule as a part of engaging with millennials and the younger generation

Commented [A16]: Seems like too little emphasis on the kiosk as a resource/oasis for locals; also too little emphasis on opportunity to sell Cambridge-made keepsakes to support Cambridge initiatives (e.g. 3D printed models of local buildings made by Possible Project . . . revolving selection of postcards featuring artist views of the city . . . Art CSA sales, etc.).

implemented (i.e., placing loose tables and chairs in a portion of the Square as well as landscaping improvements), there was still not a clear vision for the Kiosk.



Kiosk in 2016 (Cambridge Historical Commission)

In 2017, the City established the Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Working Group, composed of residents, business and property owners, representatives from local institutions, and subject matter experts, to create a vision for the future use, operation, and governance of the Kiosk and surrounding Plaza. The Working Group process has involved broad public input, including public meetings, surveys, and a Call for Ideas process, which have provided a wide range of ideas to inform the Working Group's discussions. Based on this community feedback, and with the support of City staff and three project consultants, Project for Public Spaces, Halvorson Design Partnership, and Touloukian Touloukian, Inc. the Working Group developed the recommendations captured in this document.

The City has appropriated \$8.6 million for the redesign and reconstruction of the Plaza,...

Commented [A17]: For that you could build and equip 3 or 4 mansions!

This an extravagant budget!

Especially for a result that is almost certain to be unsustainable financially
Optimistic estimate is to break event, downside is to cost quarter million a year
— middle of range would "only" cost us \$150,000/year.

I object to this project as presented.

Commented [A18]: During the one-year, or more, effective closure of the Harvard Square Plaza, there should be alternate provision, made for the operation of tourist, historical, retail, and other information resources; and organizations nearby, with clear, and adequate signage, and additional details, and provisions.

Commented [A19]: The taxi stand issue seemed to be absent from the documentation, but many people value the taxi stand and that point of view should be taken as seriously as the desire to retain the bike parking. Crossing the street to get a taxi is difficult for anyone with luggage or a disability.

Commented [A20]: Why is there a lack of water in any of the plans-- not "water features" which means maintaining a fountain in a short-lived cold New England season--but useful water for use in the kiosk itself. Without water this building is just a shell fit for groups and advertising by local businesses. It is owned by the city and is public space for private gain. I don't think that is appropriate.

Commented [A21]: •Provide a large screen picture of the kiosk on the piazza, which creates a backdrop for single or group photos.

- Imprint a map of Harvard Square on the piazza bricks.
- Sell piazza bricks to tourists, alumni, businesses, etc.
- Develop a contest to design trash containers for the kiosk and piazza.
- Provide signage in bricks at piazza crosswalks that point to destinations such as "River," "Campus Center" "Harvard Yard," "Central Square." Also, "Look left" or "right."
- Design a raised round platform for musical/ theatrical productions which require three or four performers.
- Place a raised concrete block at the rear of the circle and mark it "SOAP BOX." This will provide a place for a "Town Crier" to deliver his or her information on current events, and for local orators to sound off with their political views (Perhaps a set of instructions as to subjects and timing located nearby.)
- Will there be running water in the Kiosk? Need for a sink?
- Will there be a drinking fountain on the piazza? If so, consider one for visiting dogs.
- Signage should point to the nearest restrooms.

Commented [A22]: The kiosk was an a good place to make a quick purchase like a newspaper but without significant adjustment of traffic I'm not so sure how long I would sit around or hang out there. Maybe if it had more extensive plantings that provided some "buffer" between the traffic and re-imagined plaza to absorb some emissions, provide shade and help it feel like a welcome place for a respite, the plan for activities might work out fine.

Commented [A23]: Include water fountains

Commented [A24]: Provide phone charging areas (solar powered)

Commented [A25]: Extensible shade structures to be designed by Touloukian Touloukian and Halvorson for winter and extreme summer seasons so that effective round-the-year programming can take place, thus, activating the Kiosk and Square throughout. This would help us also get more operators interested in the RFI/RFP.

Commented [A26]: I'm writing with to suggest that additional shade trees be incorporated into the Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Project. The drawing itself looks hot, depicting people sitting in the red brick plaza with no vegetation. The umbrellas shown cannot match the scale of cooling and shelter that trees would provide. Additional shade trees would make the location more beautiful, livable, and more resilient to climate change.

to improve accessibility and enhance the flexibility of the space, and for the restoration and renovation of the Kiosk.

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Commented [A27]: •Steps behind MTA in picture will need handrails for us old folks.
•Entrances to Kiosk need to be wide enough and doors accessible by those in wheelchairs.
•Visual exhibits on top of storage cabinets in the kiosk appear to be too high to be seen by those in wheelchairs.
•What thoughts have been given to those with visual impairment? (large print?) Also hearing impaired? I am sure you will consult with the DHSP before the final design of kiosk, exhibits and piazza are approved.

Commented [A28]: The proposed plan restores the kiosk and declutters and renovates the plaza, but it does not seem iconic, other than the historic kiosk itself, which was one of the early catchwords that many people on the working group seemed to want. Is there no way to make the kiosk and plaza more distinctive?

Commented [A29]: •Locked doors on kiosk and an alarm system are a given, but sensitive stuff such as AV equipment, collected clothing, dry food, chairs, tables, and A&C materials will require cabinet locks, with strict control of keys and/or passwords.
•Are window blinds being considered? These will help with HVAC, but could also be operated manually or by remote control at night to prevent viewing the kiosk interior.
•How will outside furniture be secured day and night?

Commented [A30]: To begin with, there are questions about both the design of the two "entry" doors, and the nature of the treatment of the facade across the entire front of the building (facing The Coop.) These deserve more careful work and evaluation. This is likely to be a somewhat thorny issue, but there were several different options presented to the Working Group and there could be a clearer "move" suggested here, with which people might either agree, or disagree, and then perhaps debate. What will the facade consist of? French doors? Will there be the possibility of any "news racks" along the front, as there are now? I like this idea! These are a very satisfying visual element of the current appearance of the facade, and it would be nice to see this preserved in some way, perhaps with some well-designed flexible-retractable construction element.

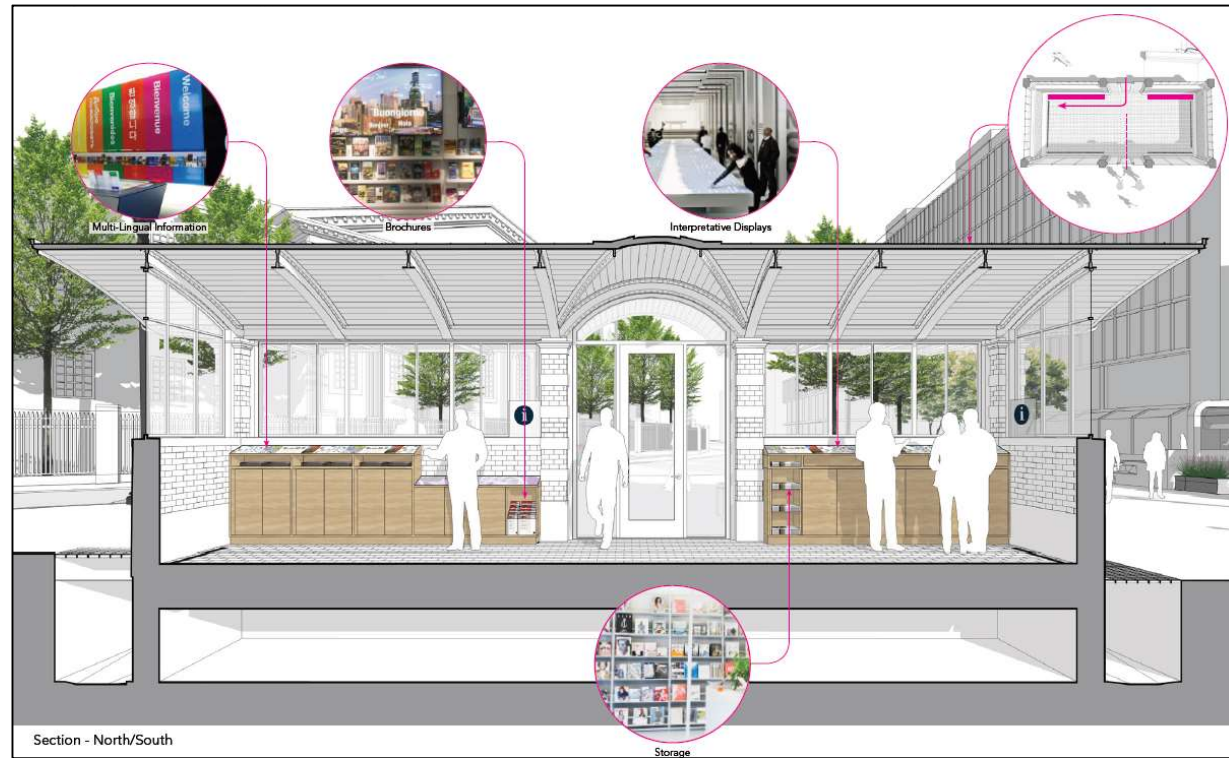
Commented [A31]: The material for windows on the Kiosk should be non-reflective, so as to prevent car and bicycle accidents nearby.

Use and Programming

The Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Working Group envisions that the Kiosk and Plaza would each accommodate regular daily uses while retaining sufficient flexibility to host temporary programming, as detailed in the following sections.

Daily Uses

A portion of the Kiosk would provide information to visitors...



Depiction of daily uses in Kiosk featuring visitor information and news (Touloukian Touloukian, Inc.)

Commented [A32]: We should expand the scope of the uses of the Kiosk and Plaza from Information, Sales, Advertising, and Events to also include History and Services.

Commented [A33]: Add after "uses": "year-round, with a focus on local history, tourism, and news..."

Commented [A34]: In addition to coordinating with the Smith Center, there is an enormous opportunity to provide navigation and visitor information to those entering or exiting the T if the foyer level just below the escalator/stairs were used to install a full wall mural completely across this space. It would greatly enhance the experience of arriving or departing Harvard Square on the T.

I know this means negotiating approval from the T. The T seems interested in including some paid advertisements on their head house. Perhaps this desire could be presented in a more design sensitive way (presented within the full mural wall) if advertisements were integrated with the plan for the kiosk and plaza.

Commented [A35]: I'd still love to see more interactive displays of news info with appropriate subtle branded info so doesn't look garish but rather tasteful info panels on local events such as book readings and talks, Cambridge forum talks, faculty papers, pop-up events in the Harvard Sq area, etc. These info panels can be outward facing ideally but can also reside as kiosk panels like Downtown Crossing does it or like clear glass. The definition of news can be expanded to feature what I listed in point #1. Please find links to images for ideas on news displays:

- <http://videofabrika.com/public/upload/gallery/04dbd216b6b327f184cb60897c86dd96.JPG> (love the iridescent glass feel)
- <https://i.pinimg.com/564x/8e/cf/d9/8ecfd9ba6dd84c8ed9371891c343ecf6.jpg> (all encompassing virtual spaces — like a potential holodeck to project a past or a future)
- <https://i.pinimg.com/564x/44/b9/9f/44b99fe088b726864f77094fa646c961.jpg> (yep, a means of interacting with the space or even if entering content from modules near solar-powered areas and projected into these glass to keep the glass clean without fingertips. Maybe people can "touch"/ interact without actually physically the screen?)
- https://segd.org/sites/default/files/styles/galleryformatter_slide/public/EGG_Macquarie_WayfindingMap.jpg?itok=3IC4A-ug (yeah, similar to the second link, I like the images there)
- <http://visual-invention.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/oled-banner3.jpg> (I like this for its 3-D potential to walk all around a historical display area)
- <http://retaildesignblog.net/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/TNT-Green-office-signage-system-by-Studio-Dumbar-04.jpg> (reminds me that entire walls can be set to poetry of the streets filled with the prose entered and captured here.)
- <https://drive.google.com/file/d/0B4odxLqNOWCTQ1ZqWkZzU0J4QURZMWNmRVZ4Rkp5UjAxOEVR/view?usp=sharing> (Illustration of a concept that is not as futuristic by MIT Media Lab friend and regular contributor to our Harvard Sq Kiosk plaza community meetings Peter Torpey)

Commented [A36]: Kiosk should provide tourism info year-round with both evergreen and seasonal events info. As a location brand position perspective, we should emphasize Harvard Sq's special niche as a Harvard college town and as a center of world-class research studies and cultural and intellectual thought leadership. I recommend we showcase research papers and provide event details on local talks from Harvard schools (e.g. Kennedy School, HBS, humanities and science depts, etc), Harvard bookstores, Cambridge Forum, etc.

Commented [A37]: The place (and placement) of MAPS is something to be given more careful consideration and possibly included in the design (as well as program.)

Commented [A38]: Social Services accessible information kiosk in the Harvard Square plaza area - this is very important to engage with the residents, community members. This kiosk can be a multi-purpose information kiosk /display which can have wayfinding, nearby business information, promotional offers, etc. For practical purposes, this kiosk can be considered part of the Harvard Square Kiosk and be managed by the operator.

Commented [A39]: We should seize the opportunity to make Harvard Square History, Information, Events, and Services truly inclusive. Greeters and Information displays should have accessible and easy to read/actionable information targeted at marginalized communities such as people with disabilities, LGBTQIA, homeless and low-income residents about services such as housing, food, career training, vocation and legal support. They could even just be as simple as listings of public events that City Offices hold and nearby local non-profits serving different causes in the Cambridge area.

Commented [A40]: We should also think about a website or a mobile app for the Harvard Square area information.

and would notify passersby of events in the area and provide pertinent updates about Cambridge community life. Greeters would provide guidance to visitors, assisting them with navigation, offering brochures on activities and amenities, and sharing historical information about the area. If feasible, they may also sell tickets for nearby events. The Kiosk would also feature a modest range of print news publications for perusal and/or sale, at a reduced scale from Out of Town News.

Commented [A41]: Add "and services." I suggest this because I would have liked to see pop-up clinics (in addition to voter reg) listed in the RFP, as these services serve Cambridge residents who truly need public support. Thus, the line, "It would provide pertinent updates about Cambridge," could also include, "and offices serving the public, such as the Multi-Service Center."

Commented [A42]: Add after "Cambridge": "history, current activities, offices serving the public, such as the Multi-Service Center, and"

Commented [A43]: Add "or other materials"

Commented [A44]: Replace "sharing" with "providing"

Commented [A45]: I'd like to add a line, "Greeters would also be knowledgeable of Cambridge services, such as local shelters, so as to refer homeless individuals to places where they can receive food and shelter. We simply can't ignore our large homeless population in the Square. They are members of the public and the Kiosk also serves them. It does not have to become a hub where water's distributed and so-forth (though it could), but it should be a beacon to the several shelters and service providers in Cambridge and elsewhere."

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Temporary Programming

Intermittently throughout a typical week, the Kiosk would host a variety of functions of varying intensities that contribute to the vibrancy of Harvard Square. The range of programming in the Kiosk would celebrate community and creativity, promote civic engagement, highlight the historical legacy of the area,...

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Commented [A46]: Too much emphasis on performance, special events & activities. In fact many of the family/kid focused activities mentioned are better suited for different parts of the Square (both indoor and outdoor), where there is more space for movement and easier access to restrooms (including Church Street atrium space). Another example: performance related to history can be part of tours and lead people around the square and beyond to expose participants to broader area.
As proposed, the constant events and promotions will be likely to repel the everyday (some might say mundane) users of the kiosk/plaza area—those who use it as brief (but essential) respite and meeting spot. If there is a big kiddie class in progress, or, for that matter, a poetry reading or concert, it is unrealistic to think that the public can wander in easily to browse information or sit and rest in shade. The ability to take shelter under the overhang is essential, and the ability to wander inside should be retained.

Commented [A47]: Harvard Square is one of the most historic sites in the country. This was the original capital of the first permanent English colony that survived. It is the home of the oldest corporation and the oldest university in the United States. We are missing a huge opportunity to have a real history center in the place millions of people already come.

Commented [A48]: Keeping in view the landmark status of the Kiosk and the streets in the Harvard Square area forming the birth of the City of Cambridge, and the beginnings of the USA, the historic exhibits in the kiosk will be better served as a daily use.

Commented [A49]: Local history information to have a permanent exhibition/ display - with local history tours opportunities activated

Commented [A50]: As an example of what could be done, in Cambridge there are permanent display boards about Cambridge History in public spaces already. On Dawes Island between the Cambridge Common and Garden St, there are five permanent boards. With current technology, displays can be more engaging interactive and include lots more content in many formats that can be changed at will in very compact installations.

Also, for local history, we have a lot of local resources to draw upon—both organizations and individuals. For example, Fred Meyer is a resource who could be called upon to provide content. Cambridge Historical Society, Cambridge Historical Commission and local archives at the CPL have a wealth of information and history.

Commented [A51]: Design interactive screens to serve as public time capsule to both capture and display historical and personal collective memory archival system. Harvard Sq is more than a place from a dusty old history book but historical on a personal scale as a place to develop and reflect on personal memories there— perhaps, beginning as far back as high school or college years for some of us. Many of us have memories of beloved bygone places like Algiers cafe, Cafe Paradiso, upstairs in square soiree room, Rialto, etc.
Time capsule is metaphor for capturing the past into interactive kiosk displays that people can interact with the designs in the kiosk and enter personal memories or dreams and futuristic concepts that others can read while walking by. I imagined that people would sit in the outside seating and as they power their smart phones, they will have opportunity to collaborate with the people sitting beside them to share memories and thoughts with prompts to get to know their neighborhood people. I like the way that MIT Kendall Square T had those chimes that people could interact with from both sides of the inbound and outbound sides. They could play on their own or collaborate with the other people on the other side theoretically. I imagined the same idea for the kiosk in that it would display timecapsule entries for archiving and reflecting. It could ask all kinds of thought-provoking, fun, and informative questions from Harvard Square-related topics to more general human interest questions. We could ask questions like what is your favorite place for desserts in Harvard Square? Where did you like to visit in Harvard Square that is now long gone? Which children's books have you found inspiring and shaped who you are today? What makes a story timeless?

Commented [A52]: Kiosk should focus on historical displays of info with some permanent evergreen info that ties in nicely with tour guide info. We should include new rotating historical info and offer related activities tied to historical events and holidays (e.g. Think of NYC restaurants recreating the last supper that Martin Luther King was supposed to have on his last night on MLK day).

...support Cambridge businesses and organizations and Harvard Square festivals and activities, and contribute to making Harvard Square a more delightful, engaging place. ...

Commented [A53]: Add after “businesses”: nonprofits, and other...”

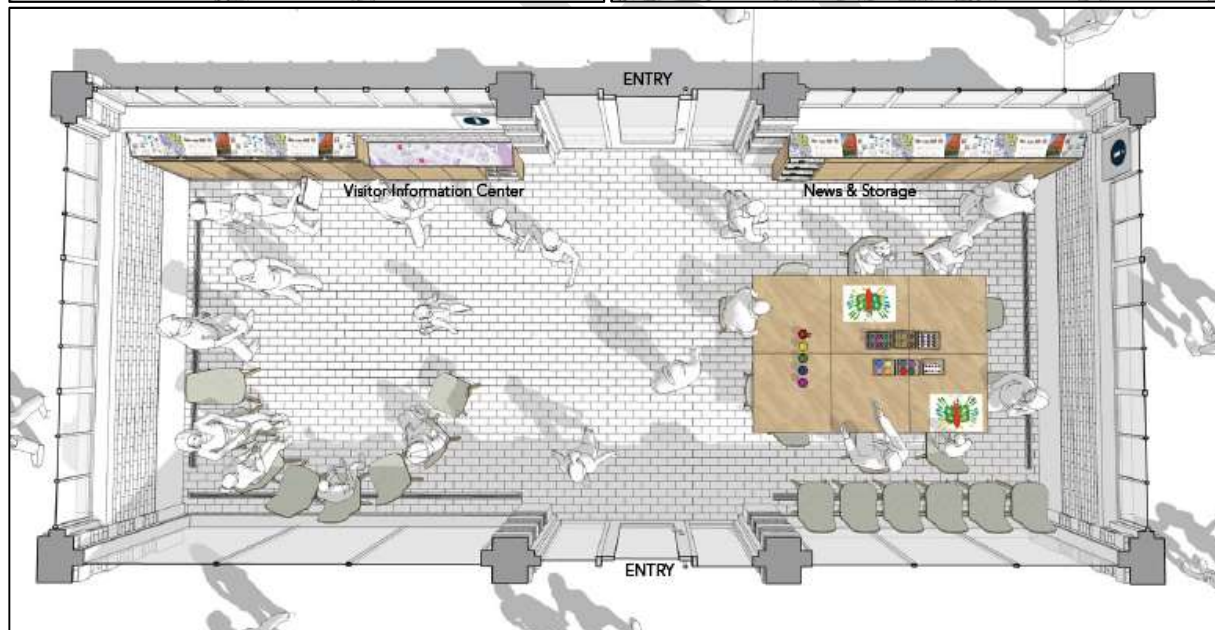
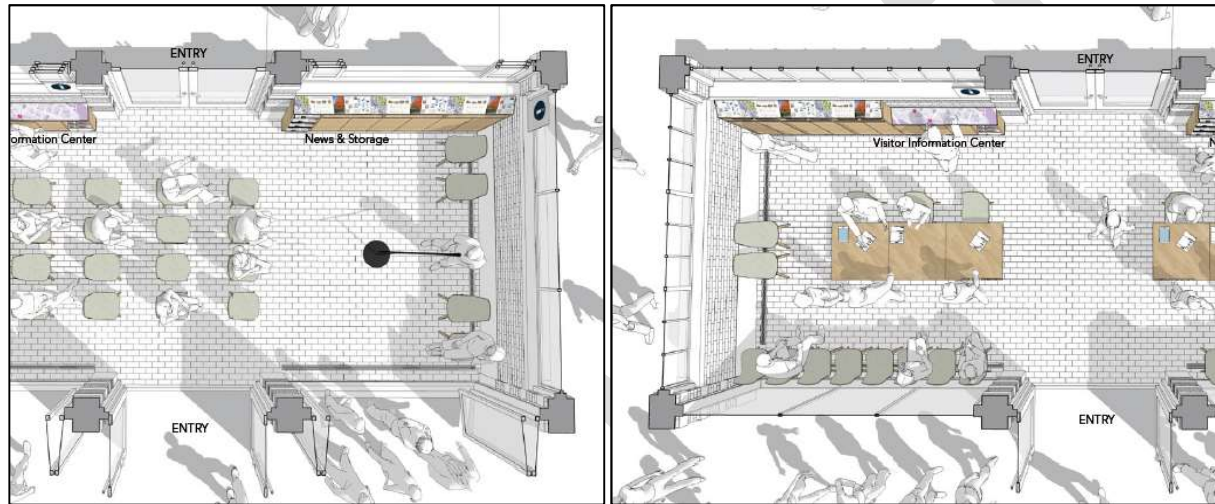
Commented [A54]: Change to “nonprofits and other organizations and Harvard Square festivals and activities, inform residents of city services such as housing, career training and legal support...” Add services catering to our lower-income populations and immigrants.

Commented [A55]: Replace “Harvard Square festivals and activities with “Cambridge festivals and activities”

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... Kiosk programming would include functions such as:

- Small performances (e.g., jazz trio, poetry reading, etc.) with sound flowing into the square
- Voter registration and other civic functions
- Art installations
- Interactive and/or family-oriented programming (e.g., arts and crafts, face painting, etc.)
- Collection of warm-weather clothing or food donations
- Small lecture or roundtable style events (e.g., book talks)
- Exhibits/installations on the history of the area
- Sampling/promotion of goods or services or engaging activities sponsored by a business or organization (e.g., learning calligraphy with Bob Slate Stationer)
- Other entertaining, educational, or festive activities



Examples of temporary Kiosk activities, from top left: performance; voter registration; family activities – storytelling with arts and crafts (Touloukian Touloukian, Inc.)

Commented [A56]: Add "Program digital and other displays in Kiosk and Kiosk Plaza"

Commented [A57]: Add "Resume workshops" and "Credit workshops". I am sure that CSB or another bank would be happy to help folks understand credit and so forth. I'm also sure that a local nonprofit would hold a pop-up resume clinic (I could even do it). I know you've just listed some examples, but please add one that might help a lower income person improve their lives.

Commented [A58]: I am imagining many days of passive or no programming, i.e. an art or historical exhibition that supplements the time of year or some other topic of particular interest. This is important in maintaining the plaza as a community space.(as well as being more peaceful) where the public decides what to make of the space.

Commented [A59]: Replace "face painting" with "historic reenactment"

Commented [A60]: Replace "collection of warm-weather clothing or food donations" with "information on social services"

Commented [A61]: Similarly, collection boxes for food/clothes are better located elsewhere—perhaps at the Smith Center where there will be 24-hour security & a system already in place for redistributing.

Commented [A62]: A specific, curriculum outline described, program, should be developed, covering the Harvard Square Area; involving an Annual Presentation Series, and an Individual Assessment Certification, for individuals participating. – There are probably at least 100 questions that a Certified Assessment Qualification, should address; as well as other additional information. Only such a regular procedure, can help to provide, a floor of information, by those who may be interested, and willing to volunteer, as CATW persons (Cambridge Ambassadors to The World); the term borrowed from the late, great, Ms. Olive Johnson.

Commented [A63]: There is no need to mention any specific business (i.e., Bob Slate); this is unnecessary, and might well understandably elicit "jealousy" or resentment from those not named, and should be avoided. Business-"neutral" descriptions of activities and programming options ought to be preferred.

Commented [A64]: Replace "sampling/promotion...." bullet with "Where feasible, sampling/promotion of goods or services or activities for local schools, non-profits, and business organizations (e.g., chocolate samples, poetry recitations, learning calligraphy)"

A portion of Kiosk programming may also generate revenue to help offset operational costs. This programming may include temporarily hosting a business that pays to use the space for promotional activities that contribute to the life of Harvard Square and/or financial self-sufficiency of the operation, such as giving away free samples of a product or operating a fun activity that relates to the offerings of the business. However, all activities in the Kiosk or Plaza would need to be fully open to the public, with no entrance fees.

Commented [A65]: Replace "business" with "group or business"

Commented [A66]: The focus should be on non-profits and community-based use.

Commented [A67]: Replace "activity that relates to the offerings of the business" with "or meaningful activity that relates to the work of this group"

Commented [A68]: Remove

The Plaza would function as a community resource for informal social seating and community gathering, and would also occasionally host temporary uses, such as the following:

- Performances (both impromptu and planned)
- Interactive installations (e.g., public piano, artistic sculptures/seating, etc.)
- Family-oriented activities (e.g., storytelling, face painting, etc.)
- Tabling for community groups
- Outdoor markets (e.g., selling books, crafts, produce, etc.)
- Other entertaining, educational, or festive activities

Commented [A69]: Replace "piano, artistic sculptures/seating" with "music"

Commented [A70]: I do wonder about "family activities" or any when this is essentially a traffic island with lots of cars and their exhaust going by on two sides.

Commented [A71]: Replace "tabling" with "spaces"

Commented [A72]: Replace "produce" with "food/produce"

Operation of activities in the Plaza would be coordinated so that they do not unnecessarily duplicate activities elsewhere in the square. Specifically, adjacent to the Plaza is Harvard University's Smith Campus Center, currently under renovation and scheduled to reopen in 2018. The Campus Center will include flexible indoor and outdoor gathering spaces, including space for exhibitions, events, performances, and food offerings. Programming in the Kiosk and Plaza should be operated to complement these activities.

Commented [A73]: This plaza is a small place and it is headed towards over-programming in a pass through triangle. This means people looking for passive space would have to compete for open space. It is also suggested that up to 10 events a week could be scheduled. This is too much.

Too much emphasis has been given this area like it is the only place left in Harvard Sq. We are forgetting about the impact of Smith Center, its availability and uses, and we are in danger of emulating its glass structure as a total area design. The kiosk is different. It should not be part of "gentrification". Some of the programming could go to Palmer Street redesign.

Please don't put all your shiny design hopes on one small piece of open space that people pass through. Your redesign could become an impediment to pedestrian uses in the middle of two busy streets.

Please cut back expectations. Or you will kill the golden goose.

Programming in the Plaza must not obstruct paths of heavy pedestrian flow, specifically the following: the path abutting the storefronts



Depiction of reconstructed Plaza (Halverson Design Partnership)

along the edge of the Plaza; the primary pedestrian paths flowing from the MBTA headhouse entrance, and the pathway north of the Kiosk connecting the crosswalk at the northeast of the Plaza and the crosswalk immediately to the west of the Kiosk.

Management and Operations

The City would hire an **operating entity** through a fair, transparent, and open bidding process to operate the Kiosk daily and execute temporary programming, consistent with the vision outlined in this document. These activities would include the following:

- Site maintenance, security, and cleaning (supplementing the services already provided by the City) of the Kiosk and **Plaza**
- Onsite staffing (executing daily uses and temporary programming – anticipating the possibility of staffing support from the Cambridge Office for Tourism)
- Offsite management (planning and scheduling events, marketing and promotion, financial management, etc.)

The process to seek and hire a Kiosk operator would start with a Request for Information (RFI), before proceeding to a Request for Proposals (RFP). In an effort to encourage a broad range of potential operators and seek the best outcome for the City, an RFI would enable interested parties to offer further considerations into the operations and feasibility of various aspects a scope proposed by the City. This process could also accommodate additional flexibility beyond what just an RFP could accomplish; based on the areas of core expertise and capacity of a responder, the RFI process may uncover information that would be useful in crafting the RFP scope and comparative evaluation criteria.

At the conclusion of the RFP process, the City would seek to select an operator; **criteria** to evaluate proposals may include:

- Capacity and experience necessary to plan and execute publicly accessible programming in the public realm
- Capacity and experience necessary to deliver visitor information in multiple formats
- Ability to form successful partnerships to leverage external capacity and in-kind resources
- Diverse programming schedule, offering frequent events, catering to a wide variety of people in the community, including visitors
- Programming schedule reflects goals as outlined in this document, including: celebrate community and creativity, promote civic engagement, increasing awareness of the history of the area, support Cambridge businesses and organizations and Harvard Square festivals and activities, and contribute to making Harvard Square a more delightful, engaging place
- Revenue-generating activities avoid over-branding and optimally align with the values of the City of Cambridge.
- Programming schedule complements City goals, engagement efforts, and programs (e.g., through voter registration, publicizing of events, promotion of **Harvard Square** and **Cambridge** as destinations, providing a platform for civic engagement, promoting **Cambridge** businesses, etc.)
- Visitor information strategy provides value for both visitors/tourists in Harvard Square and people who frequent the area; information and materials used fill key gaps in knowledge about navigation and about social and civic life
- Operations plan provides sufficient staffing coverage to accomplish the following:
 - Accommodates fluctuations in needs throughout the day, week, and year
 - Kiosk stays open and accessible to the public for majority of the day, ideally approaching Out of Town News' **hours of operation**

Commented [A74]: Seems like too much emphasis on operator as essentially an event programmer and not take a more holistic approach to the kiosk's day-to-day success and value to the broader community. Seems like well-paid staff of business association & tourism board should be doing a significant part of this out of their own budgets and not place all the financial burden on the kiosk.

Commented [A75]: Add: "Retain the Out of Town News sign as an ongoing part of the Kiosk structure."

Commented [A76]: Add: Water will be available for cleaning, plant watering, and other uses.

Commented [A77]: The operator should have experience in managing and activating a public space, effectively catering to, mindful about and inclusive of diverse communities such as people with disabilities, local artists, children, homeless, LGBTQIA, low-income sections, etc.

Commented [A78]: Management should be from an outside community source with ties to other organizations who could get training in business and retail and turn into a summer job by a student or organization.

Commented [A79]: The management of the Kiosk and Plaza should be done by an operator or group required to collaborate with city organizations and non-profits. It should not be one sole entity with a special interest. The Harvard Square property owners and businesses through the HSBA (and with some help from the City) has been a very active generous benefactor and steward of the area initiating many of the amenities benefitting users of the Plaza for many years. That said, management and staffing for our Kiosk and Plaza, repurposed by a city sponsored working group and at considerable city expense, must be handled by a manager whose mission is to represent and celebrate the entire city of Cambridge for residents, students and visitors alike.

Commented [A80]: The operator doesn't need to have Harvard Sq experience but knowledge of building college town community experiences even with international experiences like in similar cities like Cambridge, England is a plus.

Commented [A81]: I appreciate that the proposals should of course have Harvard Square at their heart. I would hope that whoever evaluates them does so with an understanding that similar, exceptional work has been accomplished in other cities throughout the world. Thus, prior experience with programming in Harvard Square shouldn't leverage certain proposals above others. Clearly the selected applicant should have done their homework, but there are certainly operators out there whose fresh ideas and accumulated knowledge would add immensely to the public experience of being a visitor, worker, or resident in our Square.

Commented [A82]: We should emphasize something like, "Success serving diverse populations through diverse programming".

HSQ is unique in that we serve so many different people of different walks of life. We really need an operator capable of connecting with someone from Sweden or Senegal, someone who lives below the poverty line and someone who took their private jet to get here, a family of sixteen and a gay couple with two dogs. Obviously, that last bit doesn't need to be in here. But we really need to emphasize with that programmatic flexibility a strong capability of understanding, embracing, and working with, diversity.

Commented [A83]: Remove

Commented [A84]: Add: "history, nonprofits, ..."

Commented [A85]: If the kiosk is dark from 10 pm on and not actively occupied very early every single day then there will be people sleeping under the eaves and even camping there. The news operation for all its faults has kept that problem mostly at bay. If the proposed operations don't start until 9 am or 10 am, you are going to have transient people living around the kiosk. That will make the Square less attractive to visitors.

Financial Sustainability [in development – to be modified based on 5/31 discussion]

The intention is that the operation of the Kiosk and Plaza would be financially self-sufficient and could draw from a range of potential revenue streams and in-kind resources to offset operational costs, such as:

- Selling tickets for walking tours, theater, concerts, and other local events
- Promotional activities for products, services, and nearby stores/restaurants (e.g., as providing samplings of products or dishes) and occasional sale of goods
- Sponsored activities (such as a fun activity or a concert series sponsored by a business)
- ...

Commented [A86]: We can also include ART theater on Brattle St, and other events in Boston (such as Boston Calling)

Commented [A87]: PLEASE NO COFFEE!!!

Commented [A88]: Rental Space: it would be quite offensive to those businesses paying market rents to see someone temporarily renting in the kiosk for below market rents, unless they were local artisans or very small independents, such as the kind who rent space at the various fairs. So this is something I would want to watch very carefully so that the space helps independent businesses and does not become dominated by the national chains. Same comments above as to the evolution of the programming decision process.

Commented [A89]: The sale of a limited number of well-curated items, in conjunction perhaps with the Office of Tourism, but consistent with the notion of avoiding an overly ambitious commercial "footprint," should be encouraged, in my view, and would help with revenue foregone from some of the less attractive options being considered here.

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[Cont.]

- Advertising (appropriately scaled)
- Interior displays with paid messages
- ATM in or around the Kiosk
- News sales at a modest scale

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Commented [A90]: Scale, style and advertiser/ brand are of course paramount, and seem to be the subject of much disagreement. Advertising boards atop the earlier kiosk were quite substantial, which seemed to be part of the style of that older (60's / 70's?) era, though they seem obtrusive now. It will be difficult to balance the revenue needs with the interests of style and taste.

So the early rounds of programming will have to be subject to more discussion between the operator and the advisory committee until a common approach can evolve, and all can feel comfortable (if not in complete agreement) with the outcome. It is difficult to pre-decide this -- parameters can be set as guidelines consistent with the general historic overlay district, but each opportunity will have to be considered as it arises.

As a local business owner, of course I am nervous about a national brand using their budgetary muscle to advertise prominently right in front of me. However, budgetarily it is difficult to ban them outright. Once again, the best initial process is for major decisions to be discussed more thoroughly; that is to say, the operator would initially have a little less independence in decision-making. Over time, however, the balance of the control would for efficiency sake transition more to the operator within advisory committee guidelines.

Commented [A91]: I hope billboards on top of the roof is off the table. Signs on top are not an original historical feature but an applied use after the fact. We have to guard against camouflaging the structural value of the kiosk. If there is a billboard, I hope it would be long and narrow in a good proportion on the MBTA side. But I hope nothing goes on the roof which is unique.

Commented [A92]: It has to be remembered that this is a landmark building and iconic structure identifying the square. The redesign of the plaza itself will be quite disorienting so it would be good to remember to respect the structure.

The plans presented so far at the kiosk working group have not been that enlightened. The fact that you are considering full-length digital glass on the long side of the kiosk is disappointing. It would read as a modern billboard and obscure the transparent nature of the building up Mass ave.

Commented [A93]: Limited # of paid Displays and presentations by local Cambridge businesses are appropriate but not restricted to members of any organization.

Strictly limited and controlled (not competing with local businesses e.g. airlines, MC/VISA, Apple/Microsoft) national sponsorships on a modestly sized rooftop sign announcing local events might be lucrative.

Commented [A94]: The interior and the exterior advertisement/information displays should not obstruct the translucent nature of the Kiosk (with windows, ref. 1938 image). To maintain its historic charm, we need to retain the chic and almost see-through character of the 1938 Harvard Square Kiosk.

Commented [A95]: I am a bit perplexed as to what this means, different from advertising or sampling.

Commented [A96]: In terms of revenue, "Interior displays with paid messages" is a troubling, and unnecessary -- albeit rather vague -- proposition. Advertising must be very carefully managed, and should be tastefully restrained, as happily suggested in other portions of this generally good draft document.

Commented [A97]: Unless this is one of those independent ones (that charge high fees to work at any bank), the plaza is surrounded within one block by every known brand of ATM. Interesting idea for revenue, but enough banks!

Commented [A98]: ATM in (or near) kiosk would be waste of precious space, just for the sake of grasping at a little extra revenue; the plaza is surrounded by ATMs.

Commented [A99]: ATM's are a bad idea. Let me repeat, ATM's are a bad idea. However, consoles for other activity could well make good sense. What about something where people could put on headphones and listen to music from 'Club 47' in "the Sixties"? Or examine aspects of Cambridge (or possibly even Harvard) history? Or "query" a database which would include and return information about genealogy, various ancestors, or important figures in the history of Cambridge?

Commented [A100]: Add after "news": "and other"

Commented [A101]: I feel strongly that if we can do it that it retain its news historical purpose and find a way to retain "Out of Town News" in the brand name since its presence there has become historical in its own right. In fact, I noticed a plaque about the OTN's history outside the door. Find a way to have them retain the news maintenance even if just small display and redirecting to a larger space for news elsewhere. Keep their sign somewhere prominent on the space to acknowledge their historical presence and for local memorabilia.

Governance & City Oversight

The City would manage a contract with a Kiosk operator. The contract would be structured to allow for sufficient flexibility on the part of an operator to manage a creative and dynamic schedule of programming and services, while ensuring that the City can apply appropriate limitations on activities, particularly on those that generate revenue. Revenue generating activities would not be allowed to generate too prominent of a presence or to overwhelm or dominate the essence of the place as a cherished hub of community.

The City Manager would appoint an **Advisory Committee**, representing a range of expertise, involving financial management, operations, arts and culture, and civic life, and will include Cambridge residents, as well as business and institutional representatives. The Advisory Committee would meet 2 to 3 times per year to review operations and finances of the Kiosk and Plaza, including the schedule and approach for programming, and would provide recommendations to the City Manager to help ensure the operation of the Kiosk and Plaza are consistent with the vision outlined in this document.

Commented [A102]: HSBA seems to want very badly to run the operation. If the City entertains that option, now or in the future, the HSBA should have NO representatives on the supervisory committee, including business owners. That's the only way to keep a proper balance. I strongly suggest that whoever gets the contract cannot sit on supervisory committee. In the case of the HSBA, that means business owners that are members of the HSBA, obviously. The business community is well organized and well funded. Harvard Square needs more engagement with and greater input from the surrounding residential communities.

Commented [A103]: City manager and Advisory committee must have clearly stated metrics for review and evaluation.

Commented [A104]: Replace "business and institutional" with "business, institutional, and neighborhood"

Commented [A105]: Non-profit representatives to also form part of the advisory committee

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Appendix: Sample Operator Financials

Amounts shown below represent estimates for expenses by category and for net operating income to an operator for each proposed activity. Estimates are based on research in consultation with entities including the Musicant Group (an interdisciplinary placemaking and public space management firm and sub consultant to Project for Public Spaces); area visitor information centers and ticket sales venues; and Outfront Media. Note: temporary vendors and/or markets were estimated to generate an average net operating income close to zero and were not listed below.

Expenses

Uses	Estimate
Offsite Management (\$40/hr; 0.5 full time equivalent)	(\$45,000)
Program Coordination & Execution (\$25/hr; 1.0 full time equivalent)	(\$50,000)
Onsite Kiosk Staffing - 15 hrs/day (\$16/hr; 2.7 full time equivalent)	(\$90,000)
Site Maintenance, Security, Cleaning, & Operational Support (\$16/hr; 0.75 full time equivalent)	(\$25,000)
30% Labor Inflater (health insurance, payroll taxes, etc.)	(\$65,000)
Programming (10 small-scale activities per week, average of \$150 per activity; 4 signature events per year, \$3,000 per event)	(\$90,000)
Marketing & Promotion	(\$10,000)
Capital Expenditures, Supplies, etc.	(\$10,000)
Maintenance Materials & Repairs	(\$10,000)
Misc. Expenses	(\$10,000)
Total	(\$405,000)

Commented [A106]: One staffer in kiosk is unrealistic but can be supplemented w/volunteers or other forms of borrowed human support

Revenues

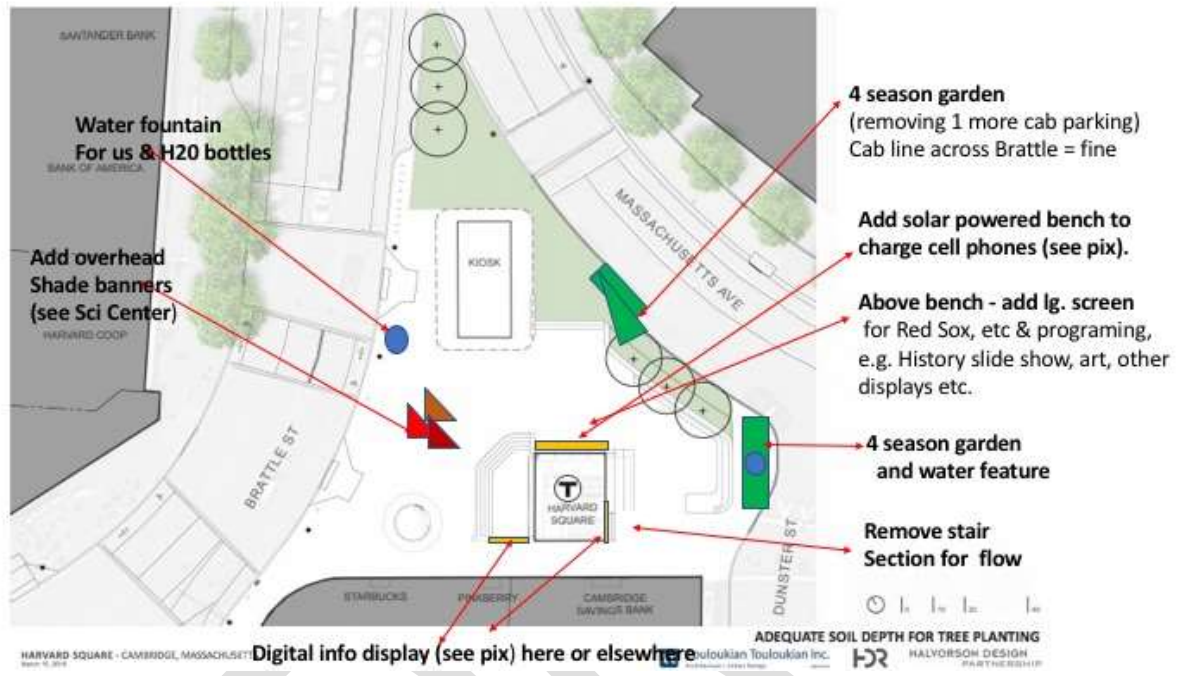
Sources	Low Estimate	High Estimate
Advertising	\$50,000	\$100,000
Interior Displays	\$20,000	\$40,000
Ticket Sales (commissions for tours, entertainment, museums, etc.)	\$10,000	\$75,000
Visitor Map (with advertisements from local businesses)	\$10,000	\$30,000
Promotions (25 to 60 sessions annually at \$1,000 revenue per session after permit costs)	\$25,000	\$60,000
Sponsorships (25-session weekly series of performances at \$2,500 to \$5,000 per session, minus \$400 per session for performer)	\$50,000	\$115,000
ATM in the Kiosk (1 or 2 machines)	\$10,000	\$25,000
Total	\$175,000	\$445,000

Image-Based Feedback on
Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza Working Group
Draft Recommendations

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Feedback Set #1

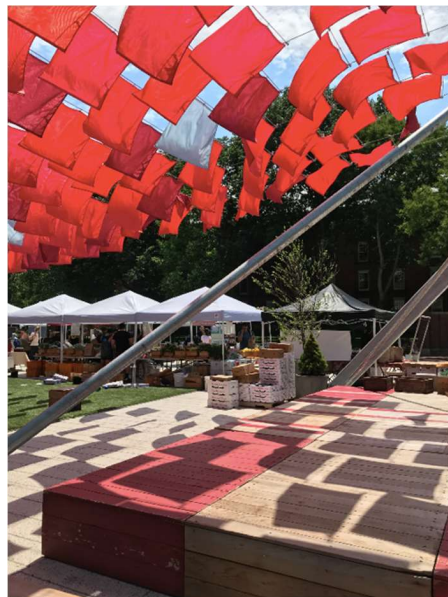
Harvard Square Plaza Changes - Proposed



1. Solar powered cell phone powering seat



2. interactive information displays in the Plaza



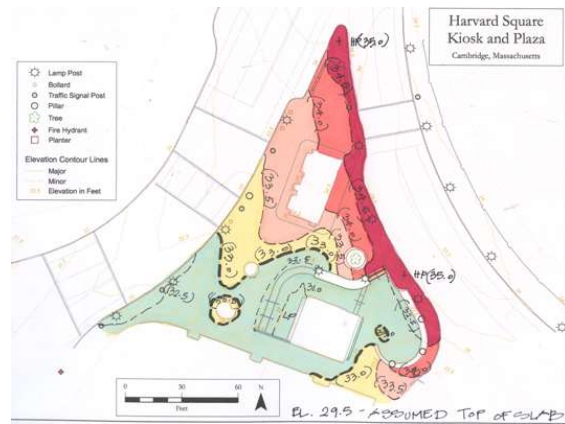
3. Innovative shade (this example from Harvard Science Center)

Feedback Set #2

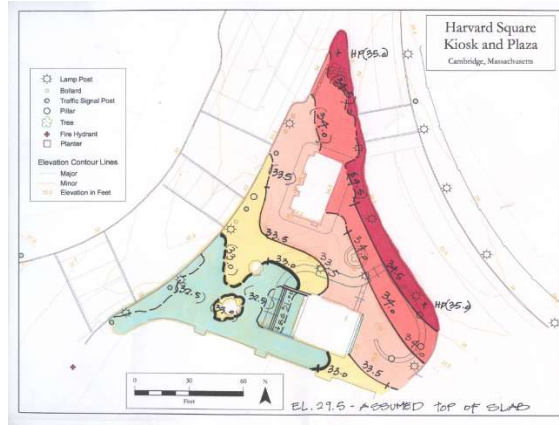
Over the past few months, I have been following the Harvard Square Kiosk and Plaza project. In addition to attending a number of task force meetings, I participated in the original 'Call for Ideas.' I have lived in the area since the early 80's and find myself in Harvard Square on an almost daily basis.

In taking a fresh look at the overall plaza and its various uses, there exists a wonderful opportunity to examine the overall grading of the plaza with the objective in mind to create environments conducive to the planting of shade trees (i.e. in addition to the 6 street trees that appear on the latest site plans).

Below are 3 diagrams that show: a) existing grades b) proposed grades and c) areas (shown in green) where shade trees could be planted as per prop. grading plan. The plan of proposed grades was prepared based on the following assumptions: 1. a minimum soil depth of 3'-6" above the station slab is favorable for tree planting and 2. the pit is brought up to the grade of the sidewalks adjoining it. The fourth image shows the possibility of introducing a bosque of trees, such as the one recently planted in front of the Smith Center in the approximate location of the existing 'pit', once the grades are adjusted here.



Existing Grades



Proposed Grades



Opportunities to Plant Trees with Proposed re-grading (Shown in green)



Potential Tree Planting Area with 'Pit' brought up to sidewalk level

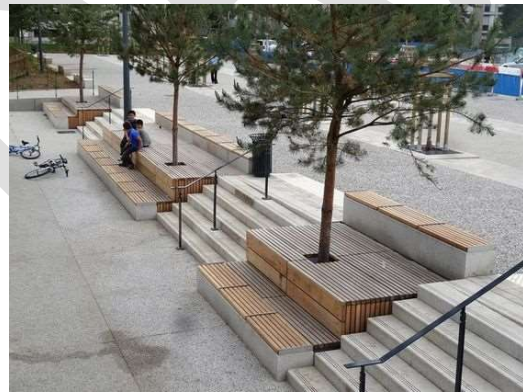
Walking across the plaza during last week's dog days of summer was a miserable experience and a reminder to think more seriously about introducing more shade in this 'heat island.' People in tour groups, street musicians, chess players as well as people just passing through could have all greatly benefitted from some refreshing shade. The temperature under the canopy of a tree is 15 degrees cooler,

on average. than the temperatures beyond - fifteen degrees would have made a significant difference to the people using the plaza last week! With the number of days with temperatures over 90 on the rise, trees will become an increasingly sought-after resource.

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Feedback Set #3

The outside of the kiosk can have flexible purposes with outside seating around perimeter to create border and sense of intimate inclusion. I suggest offering artistic canopy shelters in the winter partially for occasional outside events. Please see attached images for concepts I envisioned with perimeter seating around edge integrating trees.



Garden or more greenery with solar-powered tree like imagery like the image attached of the poppy flowers.

