

Riley, Kate

From: Amy Stein <[REDACTED]>
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2020 5:06 PM
To: Riley, Kate; City Manager; Siddiqui, Sumbut; Mallon, Alanna; Carlone, Dennis; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Simmons, Denise; Toomey, Tim; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Zondervan, Quinton
Subject: Save Our Park

Dear Ms. Riley, Mr. DePasquale, Mayor Siddiqui, Vice Mayor Mallon, Councilors Carlone, McGovern, Nolan, Simmons, Sobrinho-Wheeler, Toomey and Zondervan;

Thank you for your consideration of my feedback below regarding the Tobin School Project.

IMAGINE a beautiful and newly renovated/redeveloped Tobin Montessori & Vassal Lane School Building - next to the beautiful Callahan Recreational Park.

IMAGINE the park open space remains whole and complete. See children running, shouting, and laughing. Watch as parents cheer on their child's baseball team, meeting other parents. Neighbors greet each other as they return from a quick food shop, walk their dogs, or head to the bus stop. See the amazing sunset? Get there early enough and you're rewarded with awe inspiring sunrise skies.

IMAGINE if the architects were given the challenge to

- design a building on the current campus?
- maintain the building's current footprint?
- limit footprint expansion by 20%? by 25%?

At the January 16 Community Meeting, many people spoke to the shared concern that once Green Space is taken away it will never come back. Sara Mae Berman, former school committee member and longtime Cambridge resident and advocate, reminded us that as far back as the 1960s, our city had less than a quarter of the nationally recommended amount of park space for its size.

Last week the US Environmental Protection Agency rolled back federal protection of waterways and wetlands, a move opposed by the agency's own science advisors. This roll back means millions of acres of wetlands are no longer protected from pollution and land fill. It is heartbreaking to consider this attack on our natural environment.

It is in this era of disregard for vegetation, trees, wildlife and people, that we consider the elimination of our park. Please save our park - for the sake of both our school and neighborhood communities. The park's recreational and social opportunities help us foster an appreciation and stewardship for our natural environment.

Doesn't it make sense to at least explore best options for maximizing the school's current 1.5-acre footprint and its surrounding 3-acre campus, separate from the park? Keep in mind that the current school was built to house upwards of 800 children.

It's time we stop treating our parks and open space as an expendable resource (to paraphrase Ms. Berman and John Pitkin).