

October 27, 2016

Dear Members of the Cambridge Historical Commission and Cambridge City Council:

I am writing in support of initiating a Landmark designation study for the Harvard Square Kiosk. By way of background, I am a recent Architecture graduate from the Harvard University Graduate School of Design, and am working in a local architecture firm. While I was a student at the Harvard GSD, I studied Participation in Planning and Development, as well as courses related to historic preservation.

I learned about the Harvard Square re-design process in June 2016. I noticed how very few of my colleagues, professors and students knew that this project was underway. Why was this the case? With Envision Cambridge underway, why were our architectural treasures not included in the participatory process?

This project has not received the attention so deserving of a project of such public importance and stature. Harvard Square is to Cambridge as Trafalgar Square is to London. It's the heart and soul of Cambridge, and Harvard University.

It's essential to do a deep study of the Harvard Square Kiosk for a few reasons:

### **1/Understand our Heritage**

The purpose of embarking on the Landmark Status for the Harvard Square Kiosk is not to insist that Harvard Square remain unchanged and static. The designation of a monument as a landmark represents a formal recognition that a structure is of immense public value and ensures that any redesign is carefully considered. We want to learn: what was the Kiosk like in the 30s? 40s? 50s? A deep understanding will inform the upgrades to Harvard Square Plaza, as well as appropriate uses for the structure.

### **2/Collaborate with our shared expertise**

The Landmark study towards Landmark designation is very exciting. We can unearth more about the famed architect, Clarence Blackall. We can stage exhibitions about the Kiosk. We can call upon the many voices who know the stories, histories and multiple faces of the Kiosk.

### **3/Set the stage for a participatory process in planning and preservation that will be a model for the United States and the World**

As the Kiosk is owned by the City of Cambridge, and is on public land, this is an immensely exciting opportunity for Cambridge to be a model city for preservation, collaboration and innovation. We have all the ingredients to be stewards for Harvard Square for the next generations. Let's make social justice, diversity and inclusion a priority for the Harvard Square Re-design.

Here is a link to the Petition to Landmark the Harvard Square Kiosk:

<https://www.change.org/p/cambridge-historical-commission-support-landmark-designation-for-the-harvard-square-kiosk>

Thank you so much for your consideration.

Best,

Caroline James

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