



City of Cambridge Department of Public Works

Owen O'Riordan, Commissioner

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To: Richard C. Rossi
City Manager

From: Owen O'Riordan, Commissioner, DPW

Re: Council Order O-2, dated October 20, 2014 regarding Galaxy: Earth Sphere condition and restoration

City staff have coordinated with the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA) to understand the ownership of the Galaxy: Earth Sphere, the maintenance agreements and maintenance needs. CRA owns the Galaxy sculpture and is actively working with Boston Properties, the principal property owner, regarding the on-going maintenance. Additional information provided by the CRA is provided below.

OWNERSHIP AND MAINTENANCE ARRANGEMENT:

- The CRA owns the Galaxy Sculpture and a portion of the Point Park property. However the majority of Point Park where the Galaxy Sculpture sits is owned by Boston Properties.
- In September 1987, the CRA and Boston Properties entered into a maintenance and easement agreement for Point Park and the plaza under which Boston Properties is responsible for maintenance of the park, sculpture, and fountain. The CRA carries insurance for the artwork.

EXISTING CONDITIONS AND ISSUES:

- Bronze Globe: In good condition.
- Winter Steam Ring: The steam line from Third Street is broken and Veolia has not had much incentive to repair the line due to the loss of One Broadway as a steam customer. Veolia is currently working to provide the CRA a construction cost estimate for the re-connection, but said it is likely to be at minimum a six-figure number. The quote is anticipated to be received in the coming weeks.
- Summer Water Ring: The water ring and spouts are in good condition. The wind sensor designed to moderate the flow coming out of the spouts to reduce splash is broken. The fountain's flow is affected by leaf and other debris collecting in the fountain drain.
- Water Pool: Lights located inside the pool no longer function. See below.



- **Moon Ring:** The secondary ring of Moons contains internal spotlights designed to shine light through the pinholes to create a pattern on the pavement. These lights no longer work, and the wiring for all lighting is embedded into the concrete requiring significant work and expense to dismantle, excavate and repair. The electrical work would need to be undertaken in coordination with replacing the brick paving discussed below.
- **Bricks:** The bricks used as pavers are ½ depth facade bricks matching those used on One Cambridge Center. As they are not true pavers they heave and buckle easily with winter freeze-thaw cycles. The entire paved area needs to be removed and started over using more appropriate pavers. This requires excavation in order to set full depth pavers to the appropriate depth.
- **Granite Sets:** The circular granite installation around the fountain is in relatively good condition. As other work is undertaken in the plaza, these pieces will be reset and a few stones may be replaced.
- **Furniture:** The seating around the fountain is custom built with steel similar but not matching the material around the fountain. This seating is in adequate condition but does not meet current universal accessibility standards. Additional seating in Point Park is provided with wooden benches that have been resurfaced numerous times and are in need of an additional round of reconditioning.
- **Yew Shrubs:** The Shrubs have grown in thickly, and have the effect of reducing sight lines toward the Longfellow Bridge. The area beneath the yews have become attractive to rodents.
- **Locust Trees:** The trees have grown a tall canopy and have few lower branches allowing for a feeling of enclosure while preserving sight lines across the park and intersections.
- **Tree Uplights:** The uplights that are inset into the grass to light the Locust Trees are not functional due to a mixture of water damage to the lighting units and wiring breaks due to roots and rats.

REPAIR STATUS:

- During summer of 2010, over \$60,000 of repairs were made to the fountain including new pumps, control panel, mechanical and electrical equipment for the fountain. Limited repairs were made to the brick pavers during Spring 2011. Patching of the brick area has been undertaken over the past couple years using asphalt and concrete instead of resetting the brickwork awaiting a full resurfacing investment.
- In late 2013 Boston Properties and the CRA had coordinated plans to repair and improve the plaza conditions around the Galaxy Fountain. These plans included:
 - Replacing all the brick work with full depth pavers, matching those to be installed in the Main St. Streetscape project.
 - Replacing the lighting for the Globe Ring.
 - Removing the yew shrubs and replacing with lighter plant materials such as scrub grasses.
 - Removing inset lighting under the trees. Options for providing outlets for tree lighting were to be explored based on the condition of the lighting.
 - Replacing some of the wood benches with movable furniture in the plaza.
- These improvement plans for 2014 were put on hold at due to the construction timing to reconfigure the bus turnaround at the intersection of Broadway & Third Street, as part of



the Main Street Streetscape Project. If both projects were undertaken concurrently, pedestrian travel between the T Head House and Third Street would be severely limited. The timing of improvements of the Plaza will need to be coordinated with the ongoing Main Street Project in 2015.

PLANS FOR 2015 AND BEYOND:

- The CRA is actively participating in the design review process for the Connect Kendall Open Space Competition, in which Point Park is one of four open spaces the finalists are specifically focusing on. Boston Properties and the CRA may wait for final competition designs to be submitted before moving forward with additional design work or capital improvements. The competition will wrap up in February 2015. The winning plan will be used to guide the design/improvements to Point Park.
- The Galaxy Sculpture has been a popular topic of conversation among all four finalists and it is anticipated that the sculpture and its key elements will likely have a role in the design of many if not all of the finalists.
- Until the new design for Point Park is completed, the CRA will ensure that BP is fulfilling its maintenance responsibilities and the fountain portion of the Galaxy Sculpture continues to operate in the warm months as long as the current equipment continues to function.

