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PTO Quietly Determined to Open in Silicon Valley

Amy Miller [All Articles](#)

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Inventors, executives, and intellectual property lawyers gathered in Santa Clara on Thursday to hear U.S. Patent and Trademark Office director David Kappos talk about the possibility of opening a satellite office in Silicon Valley.

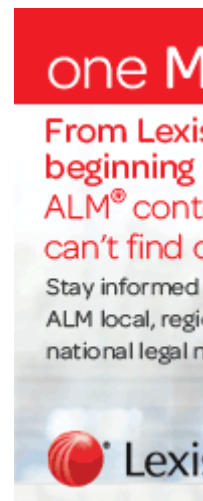
They heard from Congress members, local politicians and speakers such as Henry “Hank” Nothaft, president of Tessera Technologies Inc., about the pros and cons of opening a patent office here.

But one group of was conspicuously absent from the town hall meeting, hosted by the Joint Venture and the Silicon Valley Leadership Group: journalists. The event, held at Applied Materials’ headquarters, was closed to the media.

“Why would you exclude the press from this?” said Neil Smith, an IP partner at Ropers Majeski Kohn & Bentley, who attended the event. “He didn’t say anything untoward or particularly controversial. I didn’t hear anything they would want to keep away from the press.”

Attendees were asked to submit questions for Kappos, and Smith said he asked why the press wasn’t welcome, but he didn’t get an answer.

They did hear from Kappos about why the region is an ideal location for a satellite office, from the abundance of IP practitioners to the number of colleges and universities in the region, said Rajiv Patel, an IP partner at Fenwick & West who attended the event. A satellite office is already in the works in Detroit.



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Kappos and the other speakers also talked about the challenges of opening an office, such as getting funding because Congress diverts fees paid to the patent office. Then there's the high cost of real estate in Silicon Valley to deal with.

"But they were resolute," Patel said. "They appeared to be resolved to work together to bring an office to the region. They seemed very determined to do it."

This article originally appeared in [The Recorder's Legal Pad](#) blog

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