



# ORDINANCE COMMITTEE

## COMMITTEE MEETING RECONVENED AND ADJOURNED

~ MINUTES ~

Thursday, December 19, 2024

5:30 PM

Sullivan Chamber  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 002139

The Ordinance Committee held a public hearing on two Multifamily Zoning Petitions on November 19, 2024. This public hearing was recessed and reconvened on December 4, 2024. It was again recessed. It reconvened and adjourned on December 19, 2024.

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Burhan Azeem	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marc C. McGovern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Patricia Nolan	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sumbul Siddiqui	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Paul F. Toner	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Ayesha M. Wilson	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Catherine Zusy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
E. Denise Simmons	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

### MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL ORDINANCE COMMITTEE

Tuesday, November 19, 2024, Recessed  
Reconvened, Wednesday, December 4, 2024, Recessed  
Reconvened, Thursday, December 19, 2024

### ORDINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- Councillor McGovern, Co-Chair
- Councillor Toner, Co- Chair
- Councillor Azeem
- Councillor Nolan
- Councillor Siddiqui
- Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler
- Councillor Wilson
- Councillor Zusy
- Mayor Simmons

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council’s Ordinance Committee was held on Tuesday, November 19, 2024. The meeting was Called to Order at 2:00 a.m. by the Co-Chair, Councillor Toner. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation. This public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via Zoom.

**At the request of the Chair, Deputy City Clerk Crane called the role.**

- Councillor Azeem – Absent\*
- Vice Mayor McGovern – Present/In Sullivan Chamber
- Councillor Nolan – Absent\*
- Councillor Siddiqui – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Present/In Sullivan Chamber  
Councillor Toner – Present/In Sullivan Chamber  
Councillor Wilson – Absent\*  
Councillor Zusy – Present/In Sullivan Chamber  
Mayor Simmons – Absent\*

**Present – 5, Absent – 4. Quorum established at 2:08p.m.**

\*Councillor Nolan was present in the Sullivan Chamber at 2:16p.m.

\*Councillor Wilson was present in the Sullivan Chamber at 2:25p.m.

\*Councillor Azeem was present and remote at 3:00p.m.

\*Mayor Simmons was present in the Sullivan Chamber at 4:05p.m.

The Co-Chair, Councillor Toner offered opening remarks and noted that the Call of this meeting is on two Multifamily Zoning Petitions by the Cambridge City Council and will consist of a presentation from City staff, Councillor questions, and discussion only. There will be no public comment. This meeting will be recessed and reconvene on Wednesday, December 4, 2024, at 2:30 p.m. The meeting on December 4, 2024, will be recessed and reconvene on Thursday, December 19, 2024, at 5:30 p.m. There will be public comment at the meeting on December 4, 2024, and on December 19, 2024. Further, two additional meetings are being planned. Present at the meeting was Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for the Community Development Department (CDD), Jeff Roberts, Director of Zoning and Development, Melissa Peters, Chief of Planning Strategy, Megan Bayer, City Solicitor, Chris Cotter, Housing Director, and Evan Spretini, Associate Zoning Planner.

Co-Chair Toner and Co-Chair McGovern both offered opening remarks regarding the Zoning Petition and shared the goal of the timeline of meetings regarding this topic. Co-Chair Toner shared that this meeting will be for CDD to give a presentation and help to answer the many questions that have been raised by residents. Co-Chair McGovern thanked staff for all their work to get to this point and the future work as this petition continues to move forward in additional Ordinance meetings.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Iram Farooq, who introduced City staff. Jeff Roberts and Melissa Peters gave a presentation titled “Citywide Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition”. The presentation was provided in advance of the meeting and included in the Agenda Packet. The presentation offered an overview of the background of the proposal, proposed zoning changes, housing projections, residential districts with a scenario comparison, squares and corridors with a scenario comparison, residential districts and square and corridor comparison, and process timeline. City staff responded to clarifying questions from Committee members that were brought forward during the presentation.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Nolan who had a clarifying question on packet page 26 regarding changes to the application of Institutional Use Regulations and asked if it is state or local law. Jeff Roberts pointed out that it is both and provided a review of how they both apply.

Co-Chair Toner had a clarifying question on packet page 27 and asked if the 75 feet would include mechanicals on the roof. Jeff Roberts explained that under the current zoning they would not be included in the height limit.

Co-Chair Toner had a clarifying question on packet page 37 and asked what the building code and fire regulations state about how close one building can be to another. Jeff Roberts explained that building and fire safety codes are different than the way zoning works, and provided examples on how building and fire codes would apply when developing residential property. Councillor Zusy and Councillor Nolan had follow-up questions regarding property lines and windows as it relates to building and fire code. Jeff Roberts shared additional information as he understands the process that the Fire Department and Inspectional Service go through when properties are being developed. Iram Farooq added that with these changes, the zoning would not change how much authority the Fire Department has. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler pointed out the amount of current residential buildings that do not meet setback standards. Co-Chair Toner indicated that it would be helpful to receive further clarification from the Fire Department about what safety issues may or may not arise with these suggestions.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Wilson who had a clarifying question on packet page 48 and asked if accessory apartments could be defined further. Jeff Roberts provided an overview of accessory apartments,

noting that they are like an in-law apartment or granny flat, with the idea of building a subordinate dwelling unit within the building. Jeff Roberts explained that new state law would allow an accessory unit to be attached or detached on the same lot.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Nolan who had clarifying questions on packet page 56 and determining redevelopment potential on current properties. Iram Farooq provided additional information regarding redevelopment potential and how it would relate to different types of parcels. In addition, Iram Farooq explained how CDD came up with the data and numbers presented on the slide. Councillor Nolan provided additional comments and shared concerns about the analysis.

Co-Chair Toner had a clarifying question on packet page 58 regarding current zoning and six stories. Melissa Peters affirmed that if developers did not do inclusionary, they would not get the six stories, and would go back to base zoning in that district.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who had a clarifying question on packet page 59 and asked if the 4,880 units would be distributed evenly though out the City. Melissa Peters explained that it is hard to say because there are different factors that would apply to each development and parcel size. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler shared that he would be interested in knowing which neighborhoods have more single-family housing and which have larger lot sizes. Co-Chair Toner pointed out that everything in this presentation is potential and at this point in the process nothing is a probability. Co-Chair McGovern agreed with comments made by Co-Chair Toner and noted that there are many variables that need to be determined, and that every neighborhood will be different. Iram Farooq shared that she and her team will work together to help people get a better sense of what is possible as the conversation continues to move forward. Councillor Siddiqui shared concerns that have been raised by residents regarding two family homes being converted into single family homes in their neighborhoods. Councillor Wilson reiterated that much of what is currently being discussed is hypothetical and not concrete information. Councillor Wilson shared concerns about goals for Envision Cambridge not being met. Melissa Peters affirmed that the information being shared is a planning analysis based on the current petition, and will not help meet the goal set by Envision Cambridge to have 7,000 units by 2030, and that projections could be met by 2035. Iram Farooq provided additional comments regarding Envision Cambridge and some of the challenges that have been faced.

**Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Wilson who made a motion to extend the meeting to 4:30p.m.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the role.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Absent

**Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Azeem who had clarifying questions on packet page 61 and underlying assumptions. Melissa Peters provided more feedback on the information presented on the slide regarding base zoning and the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance. Councillor Azeem shared his concerns about this approach. Chris Cotter provided additional information related to a 10-unit development approach. Iram Farooq shared that in analysis like this, it is important to consider what decisions people make based on base zoning and inclusionary. Co-Chair McGovern pointed out that this scenario would not address the concern of losing units for single family housing.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Wilson who shared during Melissa Peters review of the Squares and Corridors slide on packet page 68, that the current Central Square rezoning proposal is not supported by many of the residents in that community.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Zusy who shared that although this was not included in the Policy Order, she would like to see information on transitional zones as another possible place for development growth. Iram Farooq responded and shared that it is something her team can analyze but would need more information from the Council on what the vision would be in transitional zones.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair McGovern who pointed out that multifamily housing across the City would not be able to happen without these proposed changes.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Azeem who asked CDD when they would need the Committee to decide on a version so there is time to make amendments ahead of the deadline in February. Iram Farooq shared that it would be helpful to get any decisions and amendments by December to propose language and make changes.

**Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Siddiqui who made a motion to recess the meeting.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Absent

**Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent -1. Motion passed**

**The Ordinance Committee went into recess at approximately 4:33p.m.**

**On Wednesday, December 4, 2024, the Cambridge City Council’s Ordinance Committee that recessed on November 19, 2024, reconvened at 2:30p.m. by the Co-Chair, Councillor Toner.** Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation. This public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and remote participation via Zoom.

**At the request of the Co-Chair, Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Vice Mayor McGovern – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Nolan – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Siddiqui – Present/Remote

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Present/Remote

Councillor Toner – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Wilson – Absent

Councillor Zusy – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Mayor Simmons – Absent\*

**Present – 7, Absent – 2. Quorum established.**

\*Mayor Simmons was present in the Sullivan Chamber at 4:03p.m.

Co-Chair Toner offered opening remarks and noted that the Call of the meeting was to continue the public hearing that was recessed on November 19, 2024 and will only consist of public comment. This meeting will be recessed and reconvened on December 19, 2024. Further, two additional meetings have been scheduled for January 7, 2025 and January 16, 2025. Present at the meeting was Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for the Community Development Department, Chris Cotter, Housing Director, and Melissa Peters, Chief of Planning Strategy. Co-Chair Toner read a memo for the record from Councillor Wilson to the Ordinance Committee regarding her absence (Attachment A).

**Co-Chair Toner opened Public Comment. Each speaker was given two minutes.**

Conleigh Byers, 3 Sacramento Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Helen Walker, 43 Linnaean Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in favor of scenario #3 and #6 that have been proposed by CDD.

Carolyn Magid, 71 Reed Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in favor of changes suggested by the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition and asked the Committee to take them into consideration.

David Halperin, 14 Valentine Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Marilee Meyer, 10 Dana Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke against proposed zoning.

Julia Schlozman, 41 Walker Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Allan Sadun, 237 Elm Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Ethan Frank, 632 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Fiona Qu, 375 Broadway, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Bill McAvinney, 12 Douglass Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of the original proposal.

Andy Nash, 18 Worcester Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing and offered suggestions towards the proposed zoning.

Hannan Rhodes, 28 Ellsworth Avenue, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing and offered suggestions towards the proposed zoning.

Jessica Sheehan, 86 Plymouth Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of the original proposal and more housing.

Max Kaplan, 254 Upland Road, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of the original multifamily housing proposal.

Casey Szilagyi, 20 Child Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Mark Rifkin, 945 Memorial Drive, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Liz Byron, 21 Field Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke against the proposed zoning changes.

Fred Watts, 195 Binney Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily zoning.

Cathleen Higgins, 345 Norfolk Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

James Zall, 203 Pemberton Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Fernando Hidalgo, 79 Norfolk Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Carolyn Fuller, 12 Douglass Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Henry H. Wortis, 106 Berkshire Street, Cambridge, MA, Our Revolution Cambridge, spoke against the proposed zoning changes.

Ty Wilson, 55 Plymouth Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Gertrude Goodman, 1221 Cambridge Street, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about proposed changes.

Dan Phillips, 234 Broadway, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Emma Bouton, 59 Aberdeen Avenue, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Samuel Polzin, 31 Garfield Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Dan Totten, 54 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing and Councillor Wilson's proposal.

Christopher Knight, 7 Scott Street, spoke in favor of multifamily housing and shared concerns about the height of buildings.

Ned Codd, 301 Brookline Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily zoning proposal.

Valerie Bonds, 812 Memorial Drive, Cambridge, MA, spoke against proposed zoning changes.

Mary Jane Kornacki, 103 Avon Hill Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in favor of more housing and shared concerns about the zoning proposals.

Sorin Srinivasa, 77 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA, MIT Graduate Student Council, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Alan Peterson, 18 Haskell Street, Cambridge, MA, offered concerns and suggestions towards proposed zoning changes.

Arielle Lok, 77 Highland Road, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Lee Rosenthal, 1 Crawford Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Annabel Winterberg, 47 Meacham Road, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.

Glenna Wyman, 25 8<sup>th</sup> Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke against the zoning proposal.

**Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair McGovern who clarified that there is no reduction of the inclusionary zoning percentage.**

Suzanne Blier, 5 Fuller Place, Cambridge, MA, spoke in favor of multifamily housing and shared concerns about proposed zoning changes.

Jack Silversin, 103 Avon Hill Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of more housing and shared concerns about proposed zoning changes.

Ann Stewart, 25-31 Wheeler Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in favor of multifamily housing and shared concerns about proposed zoning changes.

Lee Farris, 269 Norfolk Street, Cambridge, MA, Cambridge Residence Alliance, spoke in support of multifamily housing and offered proposed changes.  
Jana Odette, 176 Larch Road, Cambridge, MA, spoke against proposed zoning changes.  
Alex Van Praagh, 66 Antrim Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of more housing and shared concerns about proposed zoning changes.  
Neil Miller, 425 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.  
Charleen Jue, 11 Hutchinson Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke against proposed zoning changes.  
Cynthia Hibbard, 23 Ellsworth Avenue, Cambridge, MA, offered comments that were in support of proposed zoning changes and offered suggestions towards changes.  
Colin Hill, 42 Avon Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in favor of affordable housing and shared concerns about proposed zoning changes.  
Daniel Mascoop, 37 Speridakis Terrace, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of the original proposed zoning changes.  
George Harris, 16 Leonard Avenue, Cambridge, MA, spoke against proposed zoning changes.  
John LaFreniere, 172 Larch Road, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of more housing and shared concerns about proposed zoning changes.  
Lawrence Adkins, 45 Hayes Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke against proposed zoning changes.  
Denise Haynes, 561 Putnam Avenue, Cambridge, MA, spoke against proposed zoning changes.

**Co-Chair Toner recognized Mayor Simmons who made a motion to extend the meeting to 5:15p.m.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes  
Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes  
Councillor Nolan – Yes  
Councillor Siddiqui – Yes  
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes  
Councillor Toner – Yes  
Councillor Wilson – Absent  
Councillor Zusy – Yes  
Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

**Public Comment resumed.**

David Hattis, 434 Franklin Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in favor of more market rate and affordable housing.  
Santhi Hariprasad, 2 Notre Dame Avenue, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.  
Ned Melanson, 163 Allston Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.  
Hallie Trial, 44 Hancock Street, Cambridge, MA, MIT Graduate Student Council, spoke in support of multifamily housing.  
Jane Bernstein, 12 Saville Street, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about the proposed zoning changes.  
Phyllis Bretholtz, 65 Antrim Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.  
Ruth Ryals, 115 Upland Road, Cambridge, MA, spoke in support of multifamily housing.  
Gordon Moore, 9 Rutland Street, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about the proposed zoning changes.  
Heather Hoffman, 213 Hurley Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke against the proposed zoning changes.  
Wig Zamore, 13 Highland Avenue, Somerville, MA, spoke against the proposed zoning changes.

**Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair McGovern who made a motion to close public comment.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Absent  
Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes  
Councillor Nolan – Yes  
Councillor Siddiqui – Yes  
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes  
Councillor Toner – Yes  
Councillor Wilson – Absent  
Councillor Zusy – Yes  
Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 7, No – 0, Absent – 2. Motion passed.**

Co-Chair Toner offered closing remarks and provided a brief overview of the planned proceedings for the upcoming Ordinance Committee hearings.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Councillor Nolan who had clarifying questions for CDD. Iram Farooq responded.

Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair McGovern who shared that there will be no public comment at the next meeting, December 19, 2024, and there will be public comment during the January 7, 2025 meeting.

**Co-Chair Toner recognized Co-Chair McGovern who made a motion to recess the meeting.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Absent

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 8, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

**The Ordinance Committee went into recess at 5:01p.m.**

**On Thursday, December 19, 2024, the Cambridge City Council's Ordinance Committee that recessed on December 4, 2024, reconvened at 5:30p.m. by the Co-Chair, Councillor McGovern.** Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation. This public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and remote participation via Zoom.

**At the request of the Co-Chair, Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Vice Mayor McGovern – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Nolan – Present/Remote

Councillor Siddiqui – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Toner – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Wilson – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Zusy – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Mayor Simmons – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

**Present – 9. Quorum established.**

Co-Chair McGovern offered opening remarks and noted that the Call of the meeting was to hold a public hearing on two Multifamily Zoning Petitions by the Cambridge City Council and that it was a continuation of the recessed meeting from December 4, 2024. Co-Chair McGovern shared that there would be no public comment at this meeting. Present at the meeting were Megan Bayer, City Solicitor, Jeff Roberts, Director of Zoning and Development, Melissa Peters, Chief of Planning Strategy, and Chris Cotter, Housing Director. It was noted that Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for the Community Development Department (CDD) was present and remote via Zoom.

Co-Chair McGovern provided a brief overview of the goal of today's meeting and how the Committee will be moving forward at the two additional meetings scheduled for January 8, 2025 and January 16, 2025. Co-Chair McGovern added that Committee members would be introducing proposed amendments at tonight's meeting and explained that the proposed amendments that are voted favorably will be recommended to the full City Council in the form of a late Policy Order for the regularly scheduled City Council meeting on Monday, December 23, 2024.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Melissa Peters who offered comments related to the Multifamily Zoning Petitions and highlighted that the goal of CDD is to continue to provide as much analysis as possible to the City Council and the public.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Jeff Roberts who provided an overview of the discussion that was held during the December 17, 2024 Planning Board meeting on the topic of Multifamily Housing. Jeff Roberts shared that the Planning Board discussed both areas of agreement and concern during the meeting and provided a brief review of the highlights and concerns that were brought forward. Jeff Roberts pointed out that the Planning Board is expected to have a report for the City Council by the first Regular City Council meeting in January.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Siddiqui, who shared that along with her Co-Chair of the Housing Committee, Councillor Azeem, and Co-Chair of the Ordinance Committee, Councillor Toner, they have worked together to create proposed amendments to the Multifamily Zoning Petitions (Attachment B). Councillor Siddiqui added that these proposed amendments are the result of listening to the public, and compromising with each other and the public, which policy making is all about. Councillor Siddiqui provided a brief review of some of the proposed amendments and shared that there have been discussions with the Law Department and CDD regarding the language prior to this meeting. Councillor Siddiqui stressed that the goal of these petitions is to make it easier for Multifamily Housing to conform by removing barriers that currently exist.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Azeem and Co-Chair Toner for comments regarding the proposed amendments. Both Councillors echoed comments that were made by Councillor Siddiqui and pointed out that these amendments are a decent compromise that can bring everyone together to end exclusionary zoning, they believe these amendments addressed many of the concerns that have been raised by residents. It was also pointed out that there is still time to make additional amendments if necessary.

Co-Chair McGovern suggested that the Committee go through the proposed amendments one by one.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy who shared that the Planning Board had a very productive conversation. Councillor Zusy offered concerns about the two petitions, sharing that it was not a good proposal with many unanswered questions and has the potential to destroy neighborhoods. Councillor Zusy suggested the Council and the City work together to come up with a better way to accomplish more housing by slowing down and thinking more about the Envision Cambridge goals.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who pointed out that she is confident the City Council will reach goals and end up with zoning that is innovative. Councillor Nolan shared she was glad to see all of the engagement throughout the process.

Co-Chair McGovern offered comments on the process since it started earlier in the year and pointed out how the language has changed since the process began. Co-Chair McGovern shared his appreciation for people who have raised concerns and is glad to see the proposed amendments coming forward.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Wilson who shared her appreciation for the conversation, acknowledged staff for their hard work, and for all the feedback that has been received from the public.

Co-Chair McGovern reviewed the first proposed amendment and recognized Committee members for comments. Co-Chair Toner advised that he would be adding a fifth bullet point to the first proposed amendment. (Attachment C)

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who thanked the City and Councillors for working on the proposed amendments. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler shared his excitement for some of the proposed amendments and indicated that he was not in support of some of them, including the one that was just introduced by Co-Chair Toner. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler offered an amendment to the first amendment's fourth bullet point regarding 5,000 square feet minimum lot sizes for developers, which was then moved to the fourth proposed amendment.



Co-Chair McGovern recognized Mayor Simmons who asked for clarification on the process for tonight's meetings. Co-Chair McGovern explained that the purpose of tonight was to ask questions, which CDD may or may not be able to answer but can come back with responses at a future date. Co-Chair McGovern stressed that it is important to give direction to CDD and be confident in them that they will come back to the Committee and advise members what language will work and what language will not work.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy who explained why she was in favor of the six-story proposal and asked if the base height is lowered to four stories, would that create more opportunities for tear downs across the city. Melissa Peters responded that it would create less tear downs because there would be less capacity and less incentive for developers.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Azeem who provided additional comments on how this proposed language came to be. Councillor Azeem shared concerns towards bullet number five in the first proposed amendment and how it could affect housing in certain areas of the City. Melissa Peters provided additional comments that supported Councillor Azeem and provided examples of how bullet number five would interact with the other proposed amendments.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Wilson who asked for more information on base zoning and density bonus if base zoning were reduced. Melissa Peters explained that a three plus three would be very similar to a four plus two, with the difference of seeing less smaller scale developments. Councillor Wilson introduced amendments to proposed amendment number one, bullet number two and bullet number three.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Co-Chair Toner who explained why he brought forward bullet number five to proposed amendment number one (Attachment C). Co-Chair Toner had clarifying questions on the special permit process, to which Jeff Roberts was able to respond, noting that the process is to engage in urban design review to work toward improvements in the design when it's necessary.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who offered comments that were in support of Councillor Wilson's proposed amendments and why she was in favor.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Azeem who shared concerns about adding more requirements to zoning which may make it more challenging for development.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy who had a clarifying question regarding buildings that do not go through the Special Permit process. Melissa Peters explained that those developments would fall under the advisory review process, which is non-binding, but also create design guidelines to follow the zoning. Jeff Roberts provided additional information and explained how the proposal relates to current zoning.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Mayor Simmons who had clarifying questions on Councillor Wilson's proposed amendment to proposed amendment number one, bullets one and two. Melissa Peters responded and explained that three stories is not something that has been studied or analyzed by CDD and Councillor Azeem clarified why Councillor Wilson's proposed amendments would not work with proposed amendment number one bullets, three and four.

Co-Chair McGovern explained that the following votes would fall under the first proposed amendment which reads: That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the first Petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Map and Ordinance in Articles 2.000, 3.000, 4.000, 5.000, 6.000, 7.000, 8.000, 10.000, 11.000, 13.000, 14.000, 16.000, 17.000, 20.000, and 21.000 with the intent of:

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Wilson who made a motion that the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the first Petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Map and Ordinance in Articles 2.000,**

**3,000, 4,000, 5,000, 6,000, 7,000, 8,000, 10,000, 11,000, 13,000, 14,000, 16,000, 17,000, 20,000, and 21,000 with the intent of requiring to reduce the base zoning height limit from six stories to three stories.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – No

Vice Mayor McGovern – No

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – No

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – No

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – No

**Yes – 4, No – 5. Motion failed.**

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Siddiqui who made a motion that the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the first Petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Map and Ordinance in Articles 2,000, 3,000, 4,000, 5,000, 6,000, 7,000, 8,000, 10,000, 11,000, 13,000, 14,000, 16,000, 17,000, 20,000, and 21,000 with the intent of requiring to reduce the base zoning height limit from six stories to four stories.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Wilson who withdrew her proposed amendment to bullet number two.

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Siddiqui who made a motion that the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the first Petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Map and Ordinance in Articles 2,000, 3,000, 4,000, 5,000, 6,000, 7,000, 8,000, 10,000, 11,000, 13,000, 14,000, 16,000, 17,000, 20,000, and 21,000 with the intent of requiring establish a two-story density bonus for inclusionary developments.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Siddiqui who made a motion that the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community**

**Development Department (CDD) to update the first Petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Map and Ordinance in Articles 2.000, 3.000, 4.000, 5.000, 6.000, 7.000, 8.000, 10.000, 11.000, 13.000, 14.000, 16.000, 17.000, 20.000, and 21.000 with the intent of requiring to add back contextual five-foot side and rear setbacks for all developments, with the exception of townhouses.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes  
Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes  
Councillor Nolan – Yes  
Councillor Siddiqui – Yes  
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes  
Councillor Toner – Yes  
Councillor Wilson – Yes  
Councillor Zusy – Yes  
Mayor Simmons – Yes  
**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Siddiqui who made a motion that the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the first Petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Map and Ordinance in Articles 2.000, 3.000, 4.000, 5.000, 6.000, 7.000, 8.000, 10.000, 11.000, 13.000, 14.000, 16.000, 17.000, 20.000, and 21.000 with the intent of requiring a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet for developments greater than four stories.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes  
Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes  
Councillor Nolan – Yes  
Councillor Siddiqui – Yes  
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – No  
Councillor Toner – Yes  
Councillor Wilson – No  
Councillor Zusy – Yes  
Mayor Simmons – Yes  
**Yes – 7, No – 2. Motion passed.**

Co-Chair McGovern suggested that CDD conduct more research regarding the requirement of a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet.

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Toner who made a motion that the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the first Petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Map and Ordinance in Articles 2.000, 3.000, 4.000, 5.000, 6.000, 7.000, 8.000, 10.000, 11.000, 13.000, 14.000, 16.000, 17.000, 20.000, and 21.000 with the intent of requiring that any projects over 50,000 square feet go through the Special Permit process down from 75,000 square feet as proposed.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – No  
Vice Mayor McGovern – No  
Councillor Nolan – No  
Councillor Siddiqui – No  
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – No  
Councillor Toner – Yes  
Councillor Wilson – No  
Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – No

**Yes – 2, No – 7. Motion failed.**

As a result of the previous votes, the first proposed amendment reads as follows:

**That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the first Petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Map and Ordinance in Articles 2.000, 3.000, 4.000, 5.000, 6.000, 7.000, 8.000, 10.000, 11.000, 13.000, 14.000, 16.000, 17.000, 20.000, and 21.000 with the intent of:**

- 1. Reducing the base zoning height limit from six stories to four stories;**
- 2. Establishing a two-story density bonus for inclusionary developments;**
- 3. Adding back contextual 5-foot side and rear setbacks for all developments, with exceptions for townhouses;**
- 4. Requiring a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet for developments greater than four stories; and be it further**

Co-Chair McGovern shared that the Committee would now be discussing proposed amendment number two, which reads as follows:

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager is directed to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the second petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part Two) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance in Articles 5.000, 11.000, 15.000, 17.000, 19.000, and 20.000 with the intent of:

5. Mandating 30% open space, with at least 50% being permeable;
6. Ensuring the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) still scales with base zoning, allowing for heights of up to nine stories; and be it further

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who had clarifying questions regarding open space and if there was the possibility of increasing to 75% or 100% permeable. Jeff Roberts responded and shared how discussing open space can be confusing and provided examples of different definitions of open space in zoning. Jeff Roberts provided additional information to clarify questions and comments that were brought forward by Councillor Nolan relative to open space requirements in the petitions. Councillor Nolan shared that she would like, at some point, to propose that open space has at least 75% or more to be permeable.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Siddiqui who provided reasoning as to why she and the other Committee members brought this proposed amendment forward. Councillor Siddiqui shared that based off the discussion between Councillor Nolan and CDD, proposed amendment number two, bullet number five, could be withdrawn for future discussion.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy who asked CDD for clarification on what includes open space and shared concerns about tree canopy. Councillor Zusy noted what was discussed at the Planning Board meeting related to open space and shared she would like to introduce language in the future on open space.

**Co-Chair McGovern made a motion to extend the meeting one hour.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Mayor Simmons who shared that with discussion from those involved with affordable housing development, the following language was suggested; It is critical to continue to support the development of 100% affordable housing development via the AHO and ensure six story buildings include 40% open space of which 50% is permeable to foster both affordability and sustainability and community-oriented design. Mayor Simmons pointed out how this language relates to keeping housing affordable and mindful of the

environment in Cambridge. Megan Bayer responded by explaining that this specific language would be a change to the fundamental character of the zoning petition, which would then require the petition to be refiled. Co-Chair McGovern suggested that the Committee could move forward with similar language that would not change the fundamental character. This proposed language, in addition to language suggested by Councillor Nolan, was moved for discussion to proposed amendment number four.

Co-Chair McGovern opened discussion for proposed amendment number two, bullet six.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Toner who offered an explanation as to why this proposed amendment was brought forward. Jeff Roberts pointed out how it would be helpful for the Committee to take a vote on this language to help make zoning clearer, especially with the AHO.

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Toner who made a motion That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the second petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part Two) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance in Articles 5.000, 11.000, 15.000, 17.000, 19.000, and 20.000 with the intent of ensuring the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) still scales with base zoning, allowing for heights of up to nine stories.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

As a result of the previous vote, the second proposed amendment reads as follows:

**That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the second petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part Two) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance in Articles 5.000, 11.000, 15.000, 17.000, 19.000, and 20.000 with the intent of:**

**5. Ensuring the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) still scales with base zoning, allowing for heights of up to nine stories.**

Co-Chair McGovern shared that the Committee would now be discussing proposed amendment number three, which read as follows:

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council that Zoning language be added with the intent of

6. Implementing a 3-year review of these provisions.

Co-Chair McGovern questioned whether a 3-year review would be reasonable or if there should be language in place similar to the AHO which requires a 5-year update with yearly reviews. Melissa Peters pointed out that three years may not be enough time to see major change, but a shorter time frame could also be beneficial for market rate development, sharing she would recommend the three years.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Wilson who questioned what the difference would be between a review and an update. Chris Cotter responded by sharing it is important for CDD to understand what is being looked for specifically in an update.

Co-Chair McGovern suggested that the Committee vote in favor of either a three-year review with no updates or a five-year review with yearly updates. Co-Chair McGovern recognized Co-Chair Toner and Councillor Azeem who offered comments that were in favor of a five-year review with yearly updates.

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Co-Chair Toner who made a motion that the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council that Zoning language be added with the intent to implement a regular five-year review of the Multifamily Zoning Ordinance with an annual update.**

**Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes  
 Councillor Nolan – Yes  
 Councillor Siddiqui – Yes  
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes  
 Councillor Toner – Yes  
 Councillor Wilson – Yes  
 Councillor Zusy – Yes  
 Mayor Simmons – Yes  
**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

As a result of the previous vote, the third proposed amendment reads as follows:

**That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council that Zoning language be added with the intent of**

**6. Implementing a regular 5-year review of the Multifamily Zoning Ordinance with an annual update.**

Co-Chair McGovern shared that the Committee would now be discussing proposed amendment number four, which reads as follows:

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council that The City Manager is further directed to collaborate with CDD and the Law Department to report back and bring forward any necessary separate zoning amendments or information about:

1. Rezoning the corridors and squares;
2. Exempting inclusionary housing projects from demolition delay requirements;
3. Proposing using Affordable Housing Trust funds or other external funding sources through the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority to subsidize inclusionary housing units, especially smaller projects (5-15 units);
4. Setting an average maximum unit size of 2,000 square feet per lot area for new construction;
5. What legal protections are provided in local and state law for solar panels?
  6. Requiring a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet for developments greater than four stories unless the development includes 50% affordable units. (Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler)
7. Ensure that buildings of five or six stories include 40% open space, with at least 50% being permeable; and a consideration of up to 75% permeability. (Mayor Simmons and Councillor Nolan)

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Mayor Simmons who made a motion that The City Manager is further directed to collaborate with CDD, the Law Department, and the Historic Commission to report back and bring forward any necessary separate zoning amendments or information about rezoning the corridors and squares.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes  
 Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes  
 Councillor Nolan – Yes  
 Councillor Siddiqui – Yes  
 Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes  
 Councillor Toner – Yes  
 Councillor Wilson – Yes  
 Councillor Zusy – Yes  
 Mayor Simmons – Yes  
**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Siddiqui who provided an overview of the proposed language in proposed amendment number four, bullet two. Melissa Peters and Chris Cotter had clarifying questions regarding the language. Megan Bayer pointed out that the Historical Commission should be added as a department for the City Manager to collaborate with as it relates to the impact of the language.

Co-Chair McGovern asked for clarity from the motion makers if they wanted the proposed language in the fourth proposed amendment to come back as part of the zoning ordinance or if it is something that the City can come back with in time after discussion and analysis. Councillor Azeem explained that in the fourth proposed amendments, bullets one through four may have to be separate petitions based on what has been discussed and voted on already. Councillor Azeem suggested adding language that has been suggested by Committee members relative to different topics in the petitions to this proposed amendment. Councillor Siddiqui agreed that it would be beneficial to work towards the language that needs to be done now and come back at a later time to discuss additional language.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy who shared that she would be in favor of evaluating the impact regarding the proposal on tree canopy and open space overall and how the City might ease canopy loss with street design and new parks and more information on ADU's. Co-Chair McGovern suggested Councillor Zusy prepare language for the Committee to review after the current discussion on proposed amendment number four.

Co-Chair McGovern shared that the Committee would skip over proposed amendment number four, bullets two, three, and four, for future discussion in January.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who offered an amendment to proposed amendment number four, bullet number five, regarding solar panels. Megan Bayer pointed out it is important to be clear that this language is for residential properties.

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who made a motion that The City Manager is further directed to collaborate with CDD, the Law Department, and the Historic Commission to report back and bring forward any necessary separate zoning amendments or information about what legal protections can be provided in local and state law for solar systems on residential properties.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler for comments regarding his proposed amendment on requiring a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet for developments greater than four stories unless the development includes 50% affordable units. Megan Bayer shared that this language could be a change in the fundamental character of the petitions because inclusionary requirements are not addressed in either petition. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler pointed out that it is not an inclusionary requirement because it is not saying it is for all buildings, noting that there would be no minimum lot size if a building has 50% affordable housing.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Azeem who noted that with the proposed fourth amendment, the goal for this section was to just ask questions for the City to respond to in the future.

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who made a motion that The City Manager is further directed to collaborate with CDD, the Law Department, and the Historic Commission to report back and bring forward any necessary separate zoning amendments or information requiring a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet for developments greater than four stories unless the development includes 50% affordable units.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes  
Councillor Wilson – Yes  
Councillor Zusy – Yes  
Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Mayor Simmons and Councillor Nolan for comments regarding their proposed amendment to proposed amendment number four. Mayor Simmons asked CDD if this is a reasonable request for them to research. Melissa Peters explained that it could fall into a gray area that may need confirmation if it is within the scope of the petition but affirmed that CDD could study the impact as well.

**Co-Chair McGovern recognized Mayor Simmons who made a motion that The City Manager is further directed to collaborate with CDD, the Law Department, and the Historic Commission to report back and bring forward any necessary separate zoning amendments or information ensuring that buildings five or six stories include 40% open space, with at least 50% being permeable; and consideration of up to 75% permeability.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes  
Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes  
Councillor Nolan – Yes  
Councillor Siddiqui – Yes  
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes  
Councillor Toner – Yes  
Councillor Wilson – Yes  
Councillor Zusy – Yes  
Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

**Co-Chair McGovern made a motion to extend the meeting by thirty minutes.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes  
Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes  
Councillor Nolan – Yes  
Councillor Siddiqui – Yes  
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes  
Councillor Toner – Yes  
Councillor Wilson – Yes  
Councillor Zusy – Yes  
Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy who shared additional language she would like the City to review for consideration and why. Councillor Zusy shared the following language:

1. Evaluate the impact of this proposal on our tree canopy and open space overall. How will we mitigate canopy loss with streetscapes and new parks.
2. Evaluate how to make ADUs easier to build but have some review, for example, they should not be higher than the original structure and retain core subservience.
3. Add: new projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development. The indicators include height, and setbacks provide suitable transition to abutting or nearby residential zoning districts that are generally developed to low scale residential uses.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Azeem who shared that the first and third proposed language suggestions are not within the scope of what was being discussed and voted on tonight, pointing out that the language that was voted on was more technical for the proposed zoning. Councillor Zusy explained further why there was concern with tree canopy and open space, noting that 43% of trees are on private property. Melissa Peters pointed out that it would be challenging for CDD to provide information on tree canopy by the first meeting on January 8<sup>th</sup> and offered the recommendation that tree canopy is something that could be looked at as part of the five-year review.

Co-Chair McGovern pointed out that the proposed language regarding ADU's is something that should be looked at in the ADU Ordinance for a larger conversation. Jeff Roberts explained how the language in the



petition itself changes the zoning for ADU's. Co-Chair McGovern suggested that this language be discussed at a future date.

Co-Chair McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy who explained her third proposed amendment, noting that it was to help with consideration and design as the units are being built. Jeff Roberts explained how there is language in the Zoning Ordinance regarding the City's urban design objectives for zoning and what it entails and how the Planning Board plays a role in it. Councillor Zusy thanked Jeff Roberts for the clarification.

Co-Chair McGovern offered closing remarks and thanked everyone for their time and work towards reaching the goal of allowing Multifamily Housing city wide.

**Co-Chair McGovern made a motion to adjourn the meeting.**

**Deputy City Clerk Crane called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Vice Mayor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Toner – Yes

Councillor Wilson – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Simmons – Yes

**Yes – 9. Motion passed.**

**The meeting was adjourned at approximately 8:43p.m.**

**Attachment A** – Memo from Councillor Wilson regarding the December 4, 2024 meeting.

**Attachment B** – Councillor Siddiqui, Councillor Azeem, Councillor Toner proposed amendments to the Multifamily Zoning Petitions

**Attachment C** – Proposed amendment from Councillor Toner

**Attachment D** – Final proposed amendments recommended to the full City Council

**Attachment E** – Communications received from the public

**Clerk's Note:** The City of Cambridge/22 City View records every City Council meeting and every City Council Committee meeting. This is a permanent record. The video for this meeting can be viewed at:

**November 19, 2024**

[https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/902?view\\_id=1&redirect=true](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/902?view_id=1&redirect=true)

**December 4, 2024**

[https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/912?view\\_id=1&redirect=true](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/912?view_id=1&redirect=true)

**December 19, 2024**

[https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/925?view\\_id=1&redirect=true](https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/925?view_id=1&redirect=true)

**That the Council accept Multi Family Zoning Petition -Part 1, as presented in CMA 2024 #207, as a City Council Zoning Petition. CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR NOLAN IN COUNCIL SEPTEMBER 23, 2024**

**That the Council accept Multi Family Zoning Petition - Part 2, as presented in CMA 2024 #207, as a City Council Zoning Petition. CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR NOLAN IN COUNCIL SEPTEMBER 23, 2024**

## Today's absence

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**From** Wilson, Ayesha <amwilson@cambridgema.gov>

**Date** Wed 12/4/2024 2:30 PM

**To** Toner, Paul <ptoner@cambridgema.gov>; Paul Toner <paulftoner@gmail.com>

**Cc** McGovern, Marc <mmcGovern@cambridgema.gov>; Werner, Jacob <jwerner@cambridgema.gov>

Dear Ordinance Committee Chairs,

I am writing to inform you of my absence from this afternoon's Ordinance Committee due to a parental obligation.

I plan to review the committee report and footage of the hearing at the earliest opportunity. My legislative aide, Jake Werner, will be monitoring the hearing from City Hall for its duration.

Please include this letter of absence in the meeting record, and convey to our neighbors my gratitude for their participation in the civic process, and my regret for not being able to join them in person.

Thank you for your flexibility and understanding.

Sincerely,

Ayesha M. Wilson

**Councillor Azeem**  
**Councillor Siddiqui**  
**Councillor Toner**

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the first Petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Map and Ordinance in Articles 2.000, 3.000, 4.000, 5.000, 6.000, 7.000, 8.000, 10.000, 11.000, 13.000, 14.000, 16.000, 17.000, 20.000, and 21.000 with the intent of:

1. Reducing the base zoning height limit from six stories to four stories;
2. Establishing a two-story density bonus for inclusionary developments;
3. Adding back contextual 5-foot side and rear setbacks for all developments, with exceptions for townhouses;
4. Requiring a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet for developments greater than 4 stories; and be it further

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the second petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part Two) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance in Articles 5.000, 11.000, 15.000, 17.000, 19.000, and 20.000 with the intent of:

5. Mandating 30% open space, with at least 50% being permeable;
6. Ensuring the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) still scales with base zoning, allowing for heights of up to nine stories; and be it further

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council that Zoning language be added with the intent of

7. Implementing a 3-year review of these provisions;

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with CDD and the Law Department to report back and bring forward any necessary separate zoning amendments or information about:

1. Rezoning the corridors and squares;
2. Exempting inclusionary housing projects from demolition delay requirements;

3. Proposing using Affordable Housing Trust funds or other external funding sources through the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority to subsidize inclusionary housing units, especially smaller projects (5-15 units);
4. Setting an average maximum unit size of 2,000 square feet per lot area for new construction;
5. What legal protections are provided in local and state law for solar panels?

**Amendment proposed by Councillor Toner:**

Require that any project over 50,000 square feet go through the Special Permit process down from 75,000 as proposed

**Councillor Azeem**  
**Councillor Siddiqui**  
**Councillor Toner**

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the first Petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Map and Ordinance in Articles 2.000, 3.000, 4.000, 5.000, 6.000, 7.000, 8.000, 10.000, 11.000, 13.000, 14.000, 16.000, 17.000, 20.000, and 21.000 with the intent of:

1. Reducing the base zoning height limit from six stories to four stories;
2. Establishing a two-story density bonus for inclusionary developments;
3. Adding back contextual 5-foot side and rear setbacks for all developments, with exceptions for townhouses;
4. Requiring a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet for developments greater than four stories; and be it further

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with the Community Development Department (CDD) to update the second petition (Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part Two) and amend Residence C-1 Zoning in the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance in Articles 5.000, 11.000, 15.000, 17.000, 19.000, and 20.000 with the intent of:

5. Ensuring the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) still scales with base zoning, allowing for heights of up to nine stories; and be it further

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council that Zoning language be added with the intent of

6. Implementing a regular 5-year review of the Multifamily Zoning Ordinance with an annual update;

That the Ordinance Committee recommend to the full City Council to direct The City Manager to collaborate with CDD and the Law Department and Historic Commission to report back and bring forward any necessary separate zoning amendments or information about:

1. Rezoning the corridors and squares;
2. What legal protections can be provided in local and state law for solar systems on residential properties?

3. Requiring a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet for developments greater than four stories unless the development includes 50% affordable units
4. Ensure that buildings of five or six stories include 40% open space, with at least 50% being permeable; and a consideration of up to 75% permeability

**Other Considerations (for January 2025)**

1. Exempting inclusionary housing projects from demolition delay requirements;
2. Proposing using Affordable Housing Trust funds or other external funding sources through the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority to subsidize inclusionary housing units, especially smaller projects (5-15 units);
3. Setting an average maximum unit size of 2,000 square feet per lot area for new construction;

The following two considerations were added by Councillor Zusy, but on discussion will not be included as part of this language.

1. Evaluate the impact of this proposal on our tree canopy and open space overall.  
How will we mitigate canopy loss with streetscapes and new parks <MOVE TO 5 YEAR REVIEW
2. Add: new projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development. The indicators include height and setbacks provide suitable transition to abutting or nearby residential zoning districts that are generally developed to low scale residential uses.