



NEIGHBORHOOD & LONG TERM PLANNING, PUBLIC FACILITIES, ARTS & CELEBRATION COMMITTEE

COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTES ~

Wednesday, January 8, 2025

1:00 PM

Sullivan Chamber
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

The Neighborhood & Long Term Planning Committee will hold a public hearing on best practices for urban planning Wednesday, January 8, 2025 from 1:00pm to 3:00pm. The meeting will feature MIT’s Chris Zegras Department Head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning and Professor of Mobility and Urban Planning and Jeff Levine, Associate Professor of the the Practice of Economic Development & Planning and Harvard’s Maurice Cox, the Emma Bloomberg Professor in Residence of Urban Planning and De

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Burhan Azeem	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Patricia Nolan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sumbul Siddiqui	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	1:27 PM
Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler	<input type="checkbox"/> Remote	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Catherine Zusy	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council’s Neighborhood & Long-Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts & Celebration Committee was held on Wednesday, January 8, 2025. The meeting was Called to Order at 1:00 p.m. by the Co-Chair, Councillor Zusy. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2022 adopted by Massachusetts General Assembly and approved by the Governor, this public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via Zoom.

At the request of the Co-Chair, Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

- Councillor Azeem – Present/Remote
- Councillor Nolan – Present/In Sullivan Chamber
- Councillor Siddiqui – Present/Remote*
- Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Present/Remote
- Councillor Zusy – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Present – 5. Quorum established.

*Councillor Siddiqui went from remote participation to in person at 1:27p.m.

Co-Chair Zusy offered opening remarks (Attachment A) and noted that the Call of the meeting was to discuss best practices for urban planning. Co-Chair Zusy introduced the three panelists that would be presenting at the meeting, which included MIT’s, Jeff Levine, AICP, Associate Professor of the Practice Economic Development and Planning, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, and Chris Zegras, Department Head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning and Professor of Mobility and Urban Planning, Department of Urban Studies and Planning, as well as a Cambridge resident. Co-Chair Zusy shared that from Harvard University, the Committee would be joined by Maurice Cox, Emma Bloomberg Professor in Residence of Urban Planning and Design, Harvard Graduate School of Design. Also present at the meeting were Mayor Simmons, Councillor Toner, and Councillor Wilson.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Chris Zegras who gave a summary and overview of the presentation titled “An “Insider’s” “Outside” perspective on Zoning Reform in Cambridge”. The presentation was provided in advance

of the meeting and included in the Agenda Packet. The presentation included topics such as “rational” planning, Envision Cambridge, and form based codes.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Jeff Levine who gave a presentation titled “Zoning Approaches for Housing Production”. The presentation was provided in advance of the meeting and included in the Agenda Packet. The presentation offered a review of redlining and regulatory redlining, zoning changes and housing, discretionary and nondiscretionary review, density versus dimensions, approaches to affordability, form-based code, and a case study review of recoding Portland, ME.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Maurice Cox who gave a presentation titled “Visualizing The Urban Life We Want: Notes From The Field” (Attachment B). The presentation was provided during the meeting, and copies of the presentation were made available to Committee members and the public. The presentation provided information on other communities which have made changes to zoning with the goal of providing more housing. Maurice Cox provided examples from New York, which included Brooklyn and the Bronx. Maurice Cox also provided a detailed overview of the Come Home Initiative which the City of Chicago implemented and of form based zoning in Detroit.

Co-Chair Zusy asked Maurice Cox if he could provide information on how zoning he introduced in Charlottesville, VA (focused on commercial corridors and adding ADUS by right) twenty years ago have played out. Maurice Cox said that it gave the community a variety of options. He noted that changes will happen slowly, with opportunities to adjust zoning changes.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Azeem who offered a detailed review of how the current proposed zoning changes and two petitions came to be. Councillor Azeem reviewed past proposals relative to zoning and housing changes and shared how they were not successful. Co-Chair Zusy thanked Councillor Azeem for the review and asked if any of the panelists wanted to respond or comment. Maurice Cox thanked Councillor Azeem for the review, which helped to explain why the current language is before the Ordinance Committee, and provided suggestions on ways the City could move forward. Jeff Levine stressed that if the City is going to allow additional height or density, make sure to get units out of it. He also said that if you move incrementally, you were less likely to face backlash. Chris Zegras shared that one challenge he sees is lack of connectivity to the proposal and *Envision Cambridge* and explained how a form-based code could be beneficial. He asked whether the market was responsible for delivering affordable housing.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Co-Chair Sobrinho-Wheeler who thanked Jeff Levine for highlighting the importance of units as they relate to height and density. Co-Chair Sobrinho-Wheeler asked how the inclusionary zoning requirements in Cambridge compare to the other communities that had been discussed during the presentations. Maurice Cox responded by pointing out that Cambridge has the national standard, with 20% inclusionary affordability for buildings that are ten units or more. Maurice Cox explained how Chicago is aiming for 30% or more inclusionary affordability with the assistance of subsidies and public incentives and shared how they are reaching higher numbers through targeted pilot projects. In addition, Maurice Cox noted that Chicago is reaching that 30% through an Economic Development Bond provided by the City. Jeff Levine shared information related to Portland, ME, pointing out that until 2020, Portland had a 10% inclusionary requirement which was easy for the market to support. Jeff Levine shared that in 2020, the 10% increased to 25% which made it very difficult to move projects forward without public subsidy.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Siddiqui who offered comments related to the process and purpose of creating the two zoning petitions and pointed out the different challenges of developing more housing, especially with the current housing crisis. Councillor Siddiqui explained that it has been shared by many people in the community that the City is moving too fast with zoning changes but added that ending exclusionary zoning and providing more affordable housing has been a conversation that has been happening for many years. Councillor Siddiqui asked the panelists for their perspective on the process and if the City is moving too fast with the proposed changes. Maurice Cox responded by pointing out that this process of ending exclusionary zoning did not start recently and believes that because conversations have been happening for a long time, the Council should be getting the ok from the public to act and implement. Maurice Cox added that building permits won't start rapidly producing because there are Ordinance changes, and highlighted how there will still be time to continue to educate the community as the process rolls out. Chris Zegas also responded by sharing

that the Council has done a lot of work and advocacy around this topic, and it will be important to continue the conversation as changes move forward. Chris Zegas said that visualizations would make it easier for the community and developers to understand zoning. Councillor Zusy noted that the City Solicitor had advised that once zoning is changed and buildings are permitted that developers will have the right to adhere to those changes.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Nolan who provided a summary of the background of the discussions around multifamily housing and an overview of some of the goals the City wants to reach with zoning changes. Councillor Nolan asked the panelists, from their experience, how affordability was ensured in the communities that were shared in the presentations. Maurice Cox shared that the City Council in Chicago passed this spring a \$1.2 billion, 5-year bond, of which \$250 million a year goes towards housing affordability, and explained how housing is subsidized through that bond, and how financial incentives that are in place will help to achieve goals. Chris Zegas agreed with comments made by Maurice Cox and stressed that if Cambridge wants to create a city that provides multiple income category households, there needs to be an investment. Jeff Levine shared that with a market that is strong like Cambridge, there may be additional requirements, such as a deed or land banking, to work towards affordability with a diverse income within households, especially in areas of the City that are more expensive.

**Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Toner who made a motion to extend the meeting to 3:15p.m.
Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Yes – 5. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Toner who asked for the panelist's opinions on the appropriate open space for small lots and setbacks in terms of housing and with site plan reviews, how the City can create a process that has meaningful input. Jeff Levine highlighted that having a review process instead of an approval process can make it easier for developers and the city and pointed out that clear standards can be beneficial during this step. Jeff Levine provided comments on open space and setbacks, noting that it's not about the percentage of that space, but what happens with that space. Maurice Cox provided additional comments related to open space and pointed out that because the Council is asking for it, you are stressing the value of open space in the community. Maurice Cox also noted the importance of acting on what is being envisioned and involving the community as the conversations continue.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Wilson who asked that if the Council were to slow down with this process, how would they engage more with the community, and if they were to go forward with the process, how would they assess and evaluate the changes. Maurice Cox explained that at this point, there would be no benefit from slowing down the process, but having it be a continuation of the process that has already been started with more community engagement, and provided examples of ways the conversations and process could continue, such as creating a form based code. Chris Zegas responded by providing examples of what the City could do if it were to take action now or hold off on changes to have a deeper process of community engagement that results in meaningful, actionable, form based code. Chris Zegas explained, as it relates to setbacks, that what happens in one part of the city should be different than what happens in another part of the city, due to visualizations and a better understanding of what fits best and where. Maurice Cox added how important it is to broaden and increase affordability and the range of people who can live in Cambridge.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Mayor Simmons who asked if what Maurice Cox was suggesting was for the City to take action on what is currently being proposed and continue with engagement, and what that engagement looks like. Maurice Cox clarified that it is a long process, and his suggestions are tools to help the City support to their ultimate goal.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Wilson who asked how to engage and evaluate the actual process. Jeff Levine responded by explaining it is important to share the design process for implementation, knowing that

there will possibly be another iteration of the zoning language, but to continue to go forward with a baseline. Jeff Levine offered the suggestion of reaching out to high school students to help create plans as one way of involving the community. Maurice Cox added that by implementation of this zoning, the city is creating a pilot period of implementation with opportunities to make changes.

Co-Chair Zusy asked the panelists what their thoughts were regarding increasing the Special Permit review from 50,000 square feet to 75,000 square feet or larger developments. Jeff Levine commented that the numbers are not too different, noting that once you have a Special Permit under Mass General Law it creates a process that makes it easier to delay a project, and it is something to consider because developers may not take the risk.

Co-Chair Zusy offered closing remarks and thanked the panelists and Councillors for their time and emphasized that this meeting will help advance the conversation of urban planning within the City.

**Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Nolan who made a motion to adjourn the meeting.
Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.**

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Yes – 5. Motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:19p.m.

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: https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/932?view_id=1&redirect=true

Attachment A – Opening remarks from Councillor Zusy

Attachment B – Presentation from Maurice Cox, titled “Visualizing The Urban Life We Want: Notes From The Field”

Attachment C – Communications from the public.

A communication was received from Jeff Levine, AICP, transmitting a presentation relative to urban planning.

A communication was received from Chris Zegras, Prof. Mobility and Urban Planning, MIT, transmitting a presentation related to zoning reform in Cambridge.

Attachment A

Councillor Zusy Opening Remarks

This meeting of the NLTP Committee is focused on our neighborhoods, on making our neighborhoods places we want to be.

We all agree on many things:

We need to build more housing for people of all economic levels—not just for the young or old, rich or poor, black or white, but for everyone. Currently we lack smaller units for young people to start out and for older residents to retire to. Currently, many older residents are living in larger houses, and if there were options, would move out, making way for growing families.

We also need more affordable housing because Cambridge is one of the most expensive cities in the country and as such both lower and middle class individuals and families require subsidized units.

So that is a given. We need to build more housing.

There is also consensus that to allow for this we must permit multifamily housing in all residential districts.

The question is: how to do this with due respect to neighborhoods and to those who live here already?

Over the past months, since I joined the Council in late September, we have heard from hundreds upon hundreds of residents about the Multifamily Housing Proposal before us.

Each has shared their love of the City. Many want to stay here but can't afford to and are eager for housing anywhere and everywhere with the hopes that they'll be able to rent an affordable inclusionary unit. Other homeowners, living along Cambridge's tree-lined streets, are fearful that allowing 4, 6, 9 or 13-story residential development, as of right, will result in teardown, tall buildings blocking sunlight and solar panels, the loss of old trees and open space. They are also worried about traffic and more competition for limited street parking places.

They also worry that, as conceived, this proposal won't produce the lower and middle income units that it intends to, but will instead inspire higher rents and higher property values and taxes—that it will displace the very residents it purports to support and will only benefit the developers and the wealthy who will be able to purchase the \$1.5 and \$2m units produced.

Today we are lucky enough to have 3 urban planners from Harvard and MIT who will share their experiences and expertise.

I have asked them 3 open-ended questions. (And I haven't heard their answers, so this will be new to me, too!)

1. What are some different approaches to providing more housing, for people of all economic levels, while preserving Cambridge's diversity and not destroying what we've got—our old trees, green open spaces, historical architecture and neighborhood scale?
2. How are other cities addressing this challenge? What models are there out there? And are cities phasing changes? How are they monitoring it and ultimately evaluating it?
3. Have you had a chance to look at our Multifamily Housing Proposal and how does it strike you? Do you think it will do the job?

Each presenter will have 12-15 minutes to speak. Then there will be open Q & A from Council members. Let's hold off on questions until each speaker has presented.

About our speakers:

Maurice Cox is the brand new Emma Bloomberg Professor in Residence of Urban Planning and Design at the Harvard Graduate School of Design. Prior to joining the GSD faculty, Cox was Director of Planning and Development for the City of Detroit between 2015-2019 and Commissioner of Planning and Development for the City of Chicago between 2019-2023. Earlier, he also served as a City Councillor and as Mayor in Charlottesville, VA. Maurice lives in Somerville, a stone's throw from Cambridge.

Chris Zegras, a Cambridgeport resident, is MIT's Professor of Mobility and Urban Planning and the current Department Head of Department of Urban Studies and Planning. He has taught planning methods and techniques, integrated land use-transportation planning, quantitative methods, and transportation finance. He has also co-taught urban planning and design studios in Beijing, Boston, Cartagena (Colombia), Guadalajara (Mexico), Mexico City, and Santiago de Chile.

Jeff Levine is an Associate Professor of the Practice of Economic Development & Planning at MIT. He has been involved with land use planning on the local and regional level for 25 years. His research interests are in the areas where public finance, private equity, and land use planning intersect, as well as how transportation, housing and sustainability interact in small- to mid-sized cities and regions. Currently he serves as President of the Northern New England chapter of the American Planning Association as well as the chair of the GrowSmart Maine Board of Directors.

Visualizing The Urban Life We Want:

Notes From The Field

Maurice Cox

Emma Bloomberg Professor in Residence of Urban Planning and Design
Harvard Graduate School of Design

About me

- **NEW RESIDENT!**
Homeowner in Somerville since October 2024
- City Councilmember, Charlottesville, VA 1996-2002
- Mayor, Charlottesville, VA 2002-2004
- Director of Planning and Development
City of Detroit between 2015-2019
- Commissioner of Planning and Development
City of Chicago between 2019-2023
- Emma Bloomberg Professor in Residence of
Urban Planning and Design
Harvard Graduate School of Design, since July 2024



<u>Mixed-Tape</u>	<u>Zoning</u>
<u>Form-Based</u>	<u>Code</u>
<u>Missing Middle</u>	<u>Gentle Density</u>
<u>Pattern Book</u>	<u>Housing Typologies</u>
<u>Design</u>	<u>Guidelines</u>
<u>Incremental</u>	<u>Development</u>
<u>Build-Out</u>	<u>Density Scenarios</u>
<u>Equitable</u>	<u>Transit-Oriented Development</u>

<u>Form-Based</u>	<u>Code</u>
<u>Missing Middle</u>	<u>Gentle Density</u>
<u>Pattern Book</u>	<u>Housing Typologies</u>
<u>Design</u>	<u>Guidelines</u>
<u>Incremental</u>	<u>Development</u>
<u>Build-Out</u>	<u>Density Scenarios</u>



By Vishaan Chakrabarti

Vishaan Chakrabarti is the founder of Practice for Architecture and Urbanism, a New York City architecture firm, and the former director of planning for Manhattan.

The New York Times

GIVE THE TIMES

OPINION
GUEST ESSAY

How to Make Room for One Million New Yorkers

In the remaining areas, we identified more than 1,700 acres of underutilized land: vacant lots, single-story retail buildings, parking lots and office buildings that could be converted to apartments.





THE SITE



BROOKLYN

STEP 1

For each lot, we calculated how much housing we could add without building any higher than nearby structures.

STEP 2

Take this single-story grocery store in the Crown Heights neighborhood of Brooklyn.



STEP 3

A mid-rise apartment complex built above a replacement grocery store could create 58 new housing units. The resulting structure wouldn't be any taller than the apartment complex next to it.



STEP 1

We also identified sites that could support smaller developments, like this vacant lot on the northern edge of the Bronx.



BRONX



STEP 2

Low-rise apartment buildings house many more people than single-family homes. If designed thoughtfully, they could become just as much a part of the urban fabric as the city's brownstones.



BRONX





Kevin Daly Architects



Chicago Design Office



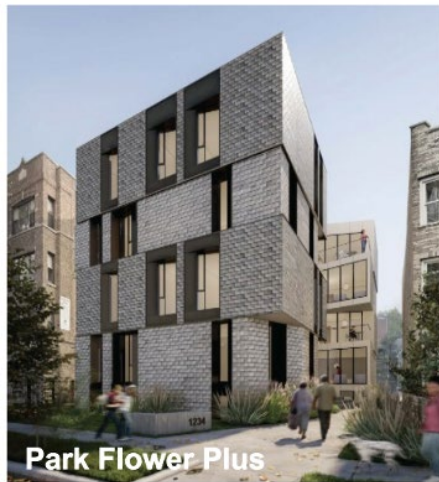
Howeler + Yoon



Future Firm



Civic Projects Architecture + Marlon Blackwell



Park Flower Plus



MOS Architects



Urban Lab + The Available City



NADAAA

THE COME HOME INITIATIVE

CITY OF CHICAGO
INVEST SOUTH/WEST
COME HOME INITIATIVE

MISSING MIDDLE INFILL HOUSING

SPONSORED BY



THE CHICAGO COMMUNITY TRUST
EQUITY • OPPORTUNITY • PROSPERITY

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

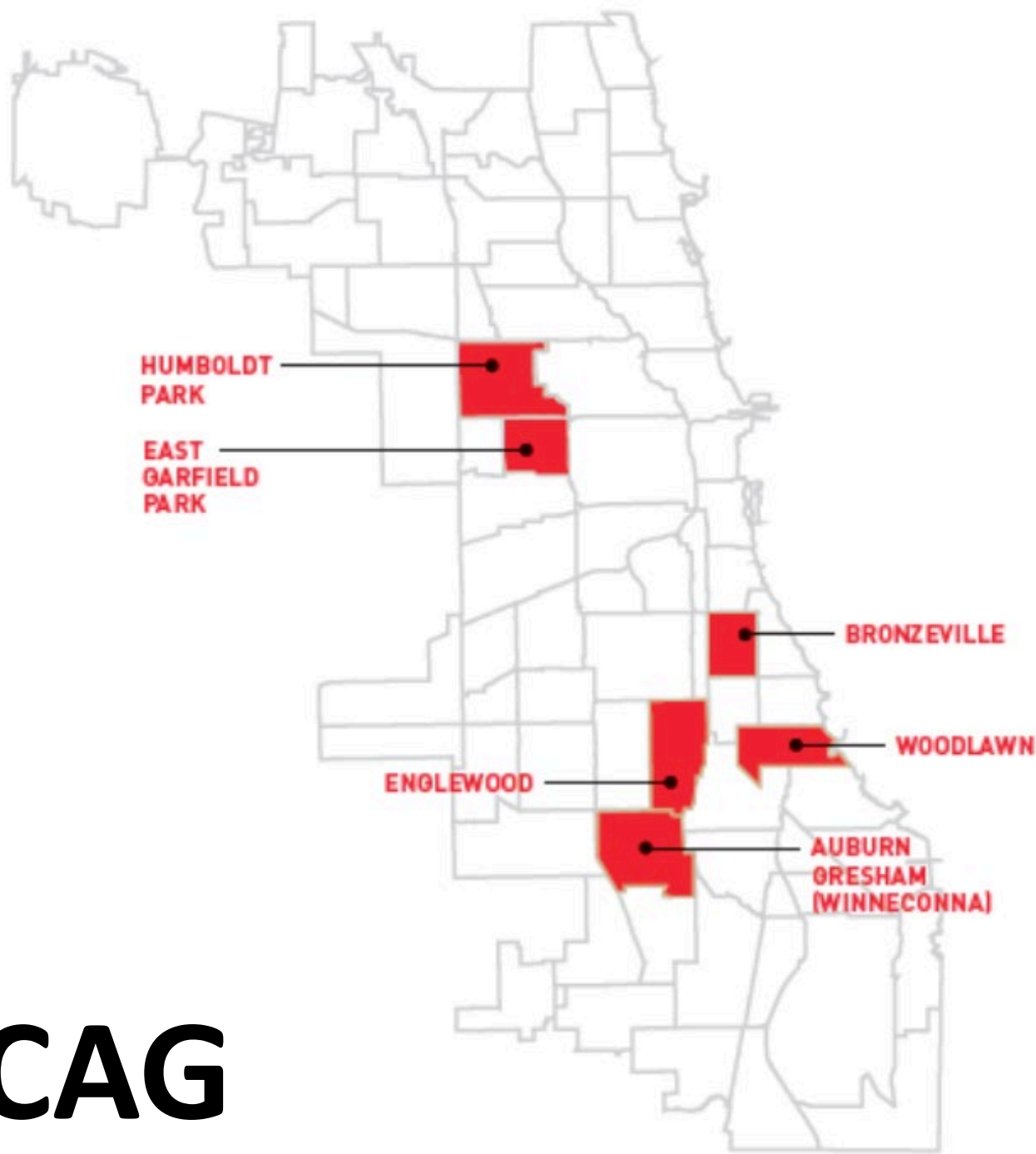


CHICAGO DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

CHICAGO ARCHITECTURE CENTER



CHICAGO



NEIGHBORHOOD #01
EAST GARFIELD PARK
EG

NEIGHBORHOOD #02
HUMBOLDT PARK
HP

NEIGHBORHOOD #03
AUBURN GRESHAM
AG

6 THE COME HOME PROJECT • IN-PROGRESS DRAFT • JULY 14, 2023

NEIGHBORHOOD #04
ENGLEWOOD
E

NEIGHBORHOOD #05
WOODLAWN
W

NEIGHBORHOOD #06
BRONZEVILLE
B

TARGET NEIGHBORHOODS

CHICAG

WOODLA

NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

WN



BRONZEVI

NEW RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT

LLE



INVEST-South/West – New Six Flat Types



nARCHITECTS



Kwong
Von Glinow



Park Fowler



Merge
Architects



NADAAA



Howeler + Yoon



DETRO

ZONING, Continued

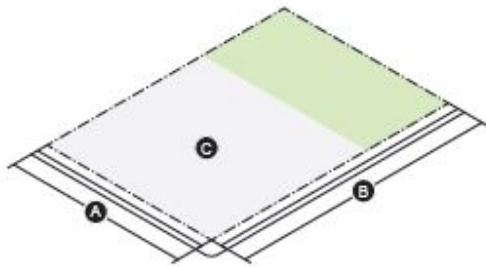
USE	REQUIREMENT
Motor vehicle filling station	Minimum Lot Area - various Minimum Lot Width - various Setbacks - various Maximum Height - 35 feet Maximum Lot Coverage - 40%
Religious institutions	Minimum Lot Area - 10,000 square feet Minimum Lot Width - 70 feet Front Setback - 20 feet Side Setback - Formula B Rear Setback - 30 feet Maximum Height - 35 feet
Single family dwellings; Religious residential facilities	Minimum Lot Area - 5,000 square feet Minimum Lot Width - 50 feet Front Setback - 20 feet Side Setback - 14 feet combined Rear Setback - 30 feet Maximum Height - 35 feet
Two family dwellings	Minimum Lot Area - 6,000 square feet Minimum Lot Width - 55 feet Front Setback - 20 feet Side Setback - Formula A Rear Setback - 30 feet Maximum Height - 35 feet
Townhouses	Minimum Lot Area - 7,000 square feet Minimum Lot Width - 70 feet Front Setback - 20 feet Side Setback - Formula A Rear Setback - 30 feet Maximum Height - 35 feet
All other residential and public, civic and institutional uses	Minimum Lot Area - 7,000 square feet Minimum Lot Width - 70 feet Front Setback - 20 feet Side Setback - Formula B Rear Setback - 30 feet Maximum Height - 35 feet

ZONING, Continued

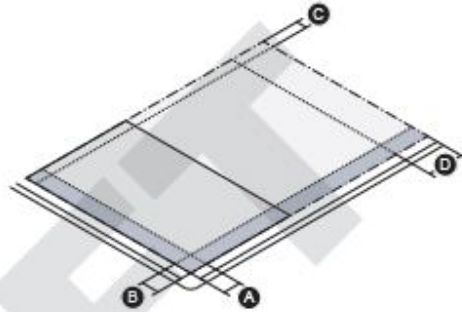
- Educational institution
- Fire or police station, post office, court house, and similar public building
- Governmental service agency
- Hospital or hospice
- Library
- Museum
- Neighborhood center, nonprofit
- Outdoor recreation facility
- Religious institution
- School, elementary, middle/junior high, or high
- Animal-grooming shop
- Art gallery
- Assembly hall
- Automated Teller Machine not accessory to another use on the same zoning lot, which is stand-alone, without drive-up or drive-through facilities
- Bake shop, retail
- Bank without drive-up or drive-through facilities
- Barber or beauty shop
- Business college or commercial trade school
- Cabaret, inside the Central Business District
- Customer service center without drive-up or drive-through facilities

(f) MID-RISE FLATS

1. Lot Standards (See Sec. 61-11-409 (b))



2. Building Placement (See Sec. 61-11-409 (c))

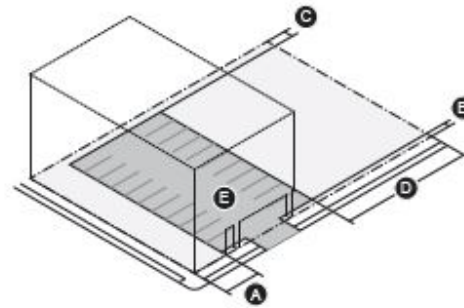


Frontage	
Required Street Frontage	A or B Street
Lot Dimensions	
A Width	50' min
B Depth	85' min
Lot Development	
C Building Coverage	no max

Building Setbacks			
A Primary Front Setback ¹	0' min	10' max	
Chrysler Service Dr.	25' min	35' max	
B Secondary Front Setback ¹	0' min	10' max	
C Side Setback		--	
A Street		0' min	
B or C Street		5' min	
D Rear Setback		20' min	

¹ See Sec. 61-11-409(c).4 Contextual Front Setbacks

3. Access/Parking (See Sec. 61-11-410)

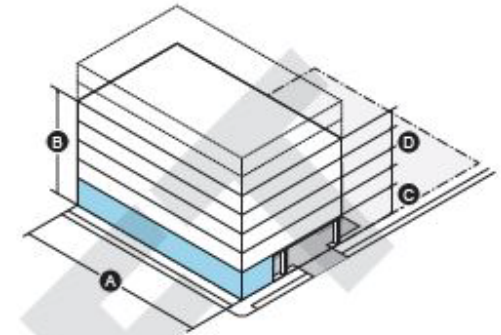


Parking Setbacks	
A Primary Front Setback	20' min
B Secondary Front Setback	20' min
C Side Setback	0' min
D Rear Setback	0' min
Parking Ratio	
E Parking Spaces	
Residential	0.5/DU min
Commercial and Other Uses	1.5/1000 sf min
Food and Beverage Service	1.5/500 sf min

Parking Access	
Abutting an Alley	Preferred
Primary Frontage	Not Allowed
Secondary Frontage	B or C Street Only
Vehicular Entrance Width	24' max

Perimeter Definition (See Sec. 61-11-411)	
Side & Rear Fencing or Hedge Row	Required where screening parking
Fence or Hedge Height	4' min 6' max

4. Building Standards (See Sec. 61-11-409 (d))



Massing		
Facade Build Out		80% min
A Width	30' min	200' max
B Number of Stories ²		7 max
Ground Story Height		14' min
Upper Story Height		10' min
Building Height, Feet		80' max

² See Sec. 61-11-409(d).7 Contextual Height and 61-11-409(d).8 Additional Story Allowance

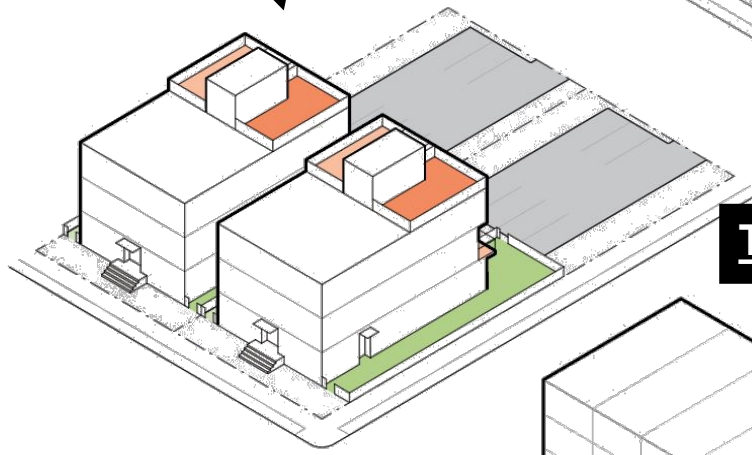
Fenestration		
C Ground Story Fenestration		--
Residential	20% min	70% max
Commercial		70% min
D Upper Story Fenestration	20% min	70% max
Blank Wall		20' max

Use & Occupancy	
Outdoor Amenity Space	1/DU min

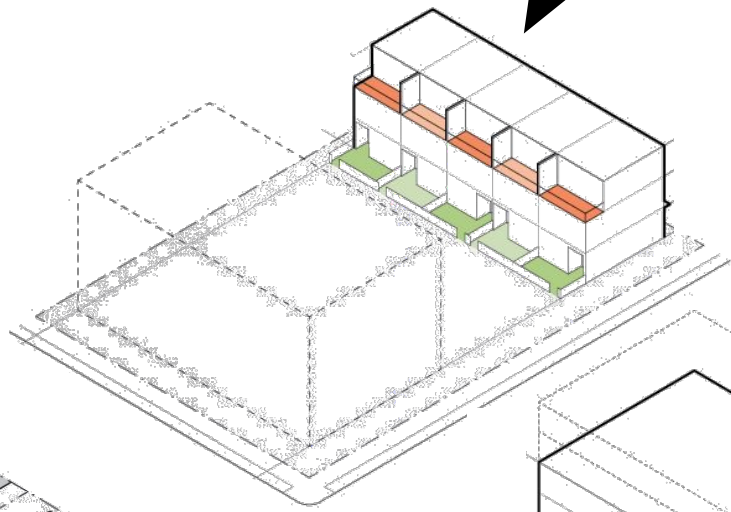
Brush Park
Form-Based Code
 Draft document

Brush Park
Form-Based District
Building Types

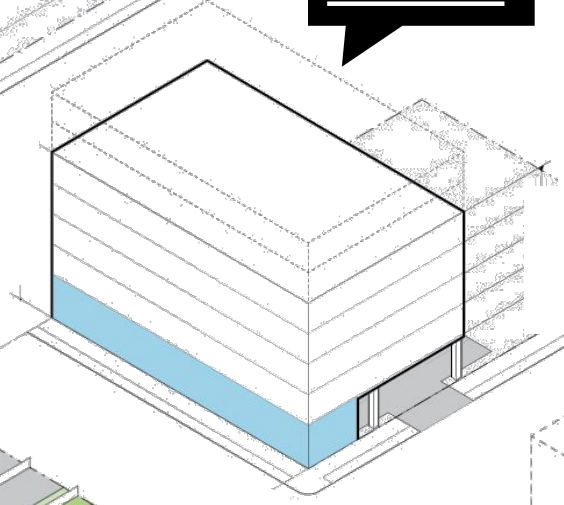
Multiplex



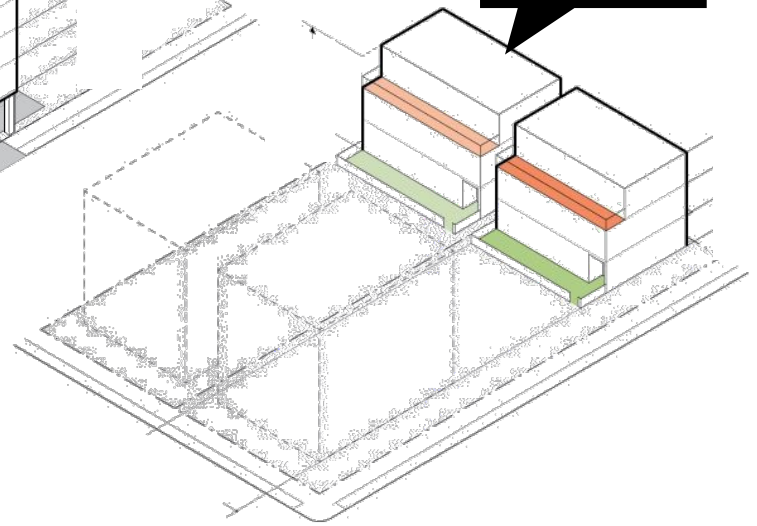
Mews



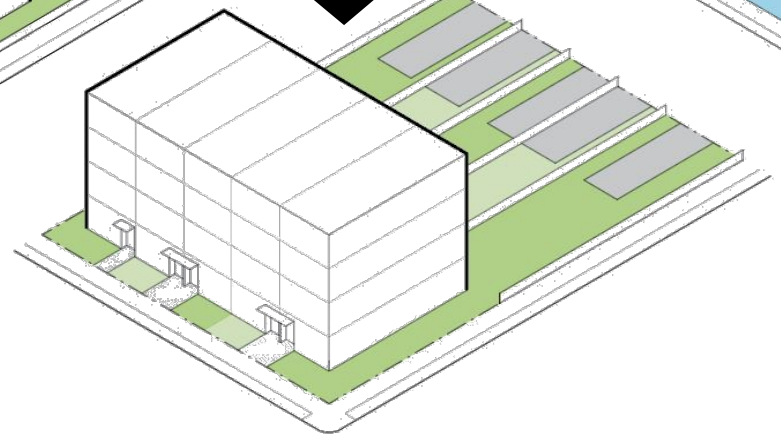
Mid-Rise

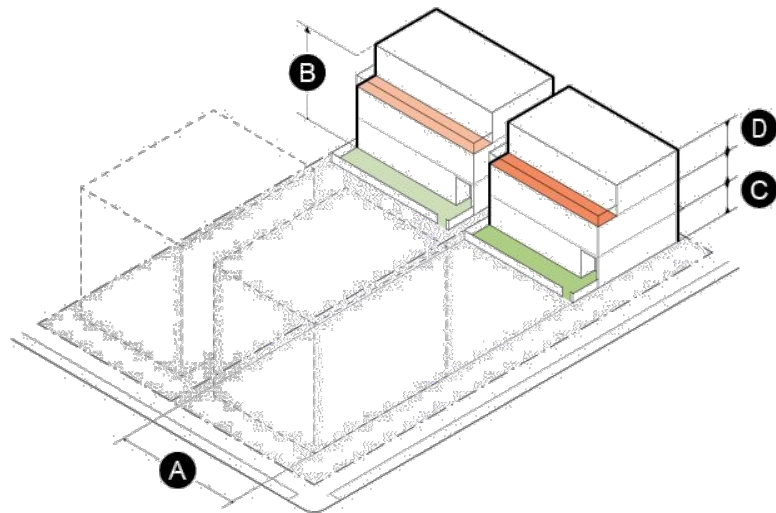
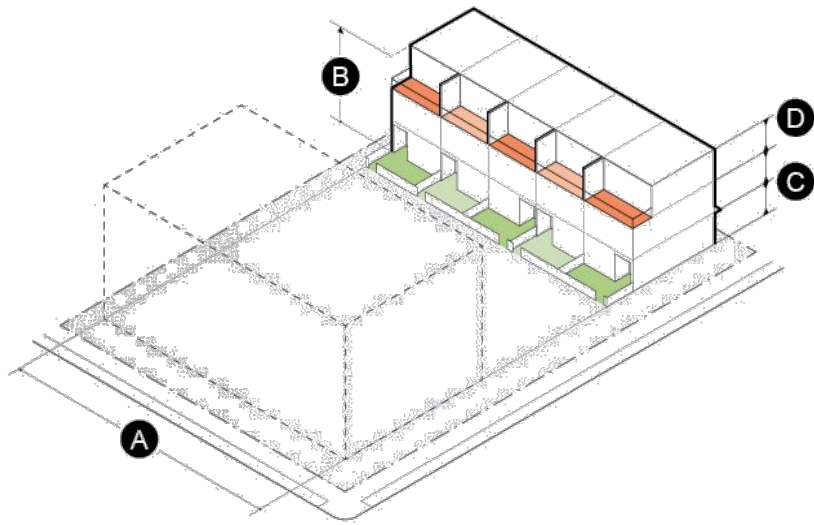


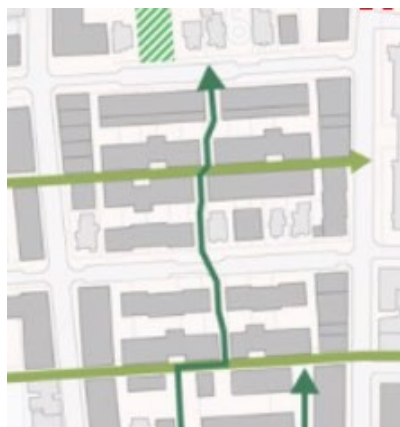
Carriage House



Townhouse







CITY MODERN AT BRUSH PARK



DETROIT

Visualizing The Urban Life We Want

Design according to your community's values

Expand the community's capacity to accept change

Encourage elected leaders to be visionary and think long term

Change the rules of development and offer new tools

Pace change and the community will make courageous choices

From: [Karen Falb](#)
To: [City Council](#); [City Clerk](#); [City Manager](#)
Subject: Fwd: Experts from MIT & Harvard Present Best Planning Practices Wednesday
Date: Friday, January 3, 2025 7:45:09 PM

The Neighborhood & Long term Planning Committee meeting - next Wednesday, January 8, 1-3pm

As a resident of Cambridge, I am sure I am not alone in hoping that all the City Councillors will make this meeting either in person or virtually.

Years ago in 1915, my Larchwood Neighborhood was designed by experts - first heads of Urban Planning at Harvard (Pray and Hubbard) - to be a community neighborhood - which we have been all these years. Don't "poo poo" this opportunity to learn more about good urban development and workable financing.

Thanks to City Councillor Cathie Zusy, we Cambridge residents know about this opportunity to learn more. We ask you to also take advantage of this meeting. - you need to keep up with good policy and governing.

Sincerely Karen Falb 245 Brattle Street.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Cathie Zusy City Councillor** <cathie@votezusy.org>
Date: Fri, Jan 3, 2025 at 7:09 PM
Subject: Experts from MIT & Harvard Present Best Planning Practices Wednesday
To: <karenfalb@gmail.com>

Logo



3 January 2025

NEW! Planning Experts from MIT & Harvard will Present Best Practices at Wednesday's Neighborhood & Longterm Planning Committee Meeting

Dear Fellow Cantabrigians,

Great news! A meeting of the Neighborhood & Longterm Planning Committee has come together and just in time. Next Wednesday, January 8, 1-3pm, urban planning experts from MIT and Harvard will share best practices for inspiring housing production. There will be no public comment at the meeting, though the public will have the opportunity to share testimony about the Multifamily Housing Proposal at the Ordinance Committee meeting that evening, 5-7pm.

You will be able to watch the meeting in person at City Hall or virtually [here](#).

Description:

The Neighborhood & Longterm Planning Committee will hold a public hearing on best practices for urban planning Wednesday, January 8 at 1pm to 3pm. The meeting will feature MIT's Chris Zegras Department Head of the Department of Urban Studies and Planning and Professor of Mobility and Urban Planning and Jeff Levine, Associate Professor of the the Practice of Economic Development and Planning and Harvard's Maurice Cox, the Emma Bloomberg Professor in Residence of Urban Planning and Design at the Graduate School of Design. There will be no public comment.

About the Speakers:

As City Councillor and then Mayor in Charlottesville, VA, [Maurice Cox](#) oversaw some major zoning changes. An architect and urban planner, he's also led design planning in Chicago and Detroit.

[Chris Zegras](#), a Cambridgeport resident, has taught planning methods and techniques, integrated land use-transportation planning, quantitative methods and transportation finance. He has also co-taught urban planning and design studios in Beijing, Boston, Cartagena (Colombia), Guadalajara (Mexico), Mexico City, and Santiago de Chile.

[Jeff Levine](#) has been involved with land use planning on the local and regional level for 25 years. His research interests are in the areas where public finance, private equity, and land use planning intersect, as well as how transportation, housing and sustainability interact in small- to mid-sized cities and regions. Currently he serves as

President of the Northern New England chapter of the American Planning Association as well as the chair of the GrowSmart Maine Board of Directors.

Next week, you'll be able to sign up to speak at the January 8th Ordinance Committee meeting [here](#). Remember, it is always best to speak in person. If you can't, however, Zoom in or submit testimony to council@cambridgema.gov, cityclerk@cambridgema.gov, citymanager@cambridgema.gov, planningboardcomment@cambridgema.gov

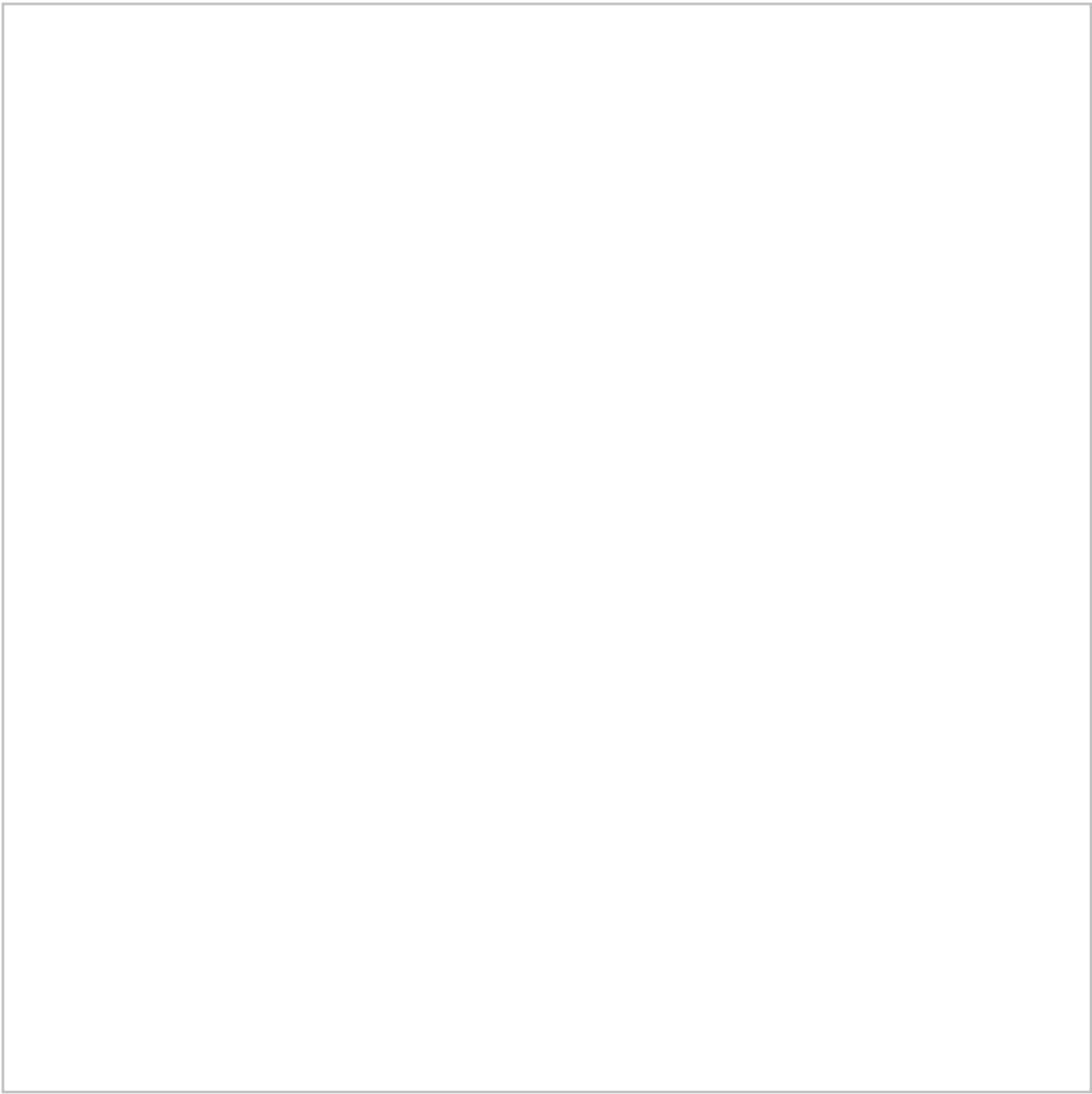
Thank you for your advocacy. Looking forward to hearing from the experts and from you next Wednesday!

Hopeful that this meeting and hearing will broaden the conversation...

Cathie Zusy

City Councillor and Co-chair, Neighborhood & Longterm Planning Committee

czusy@cambridgema.gov



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From: [Asha Daniere](#)
To: [City Council](#)
Cc: [City Clerk](#)
Subject: Heed the Advice from Professor Cox - Take bold action!
Date: Thursday, January 9, 2025 1:34:02 PM

I just watched the Neighbourhood and Long Term Planning Committee meeting and realized that many speakers at last night's Ordinance Committee meeting either misunderstood or misrepresented what was said by the experts.

Professor Cox (clearly the expert with the most **practical real world experience** amongst the group of very esteemed experts) strongly urged the Council to **take bold action**. He repeated multiple times that we must **move forward with the proposal and then stay engaged with the community to further shape outcomes as we learn**. We cannot predict every outcome in advance, but must take the first bold step of passing the legislation and then continue the work to refine the plan with input from the very talented folks at the city and with data we collect once the new rules are in play. He even offered to help devise the next steps! Take him up on the offer!

Please heed this wonderful and thoughtful advice from a clear expert whose heart and mind are in the right place- the creation of a more diverse and affordable Cambridge. Vote Yes on 4 plus 2 without any further modifications or delay.

Asha Daniere
Clinton St.

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