

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mendy Raskin <mendyraskin@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2025 3:26 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: 4+2 proposal - in favor

Dear City Council,

My name is Mendy Raskin and I am a member of the Jewish community in Cambridge. I urge City Council to move forward with the 4+2 proposal for multifamily housing. With rising rent costs and increasing displacement, it is crucial for the Council to end exclusionary zoning and allow for multifamily housing throughout Cambridge.

Personally, I live in Cambridge with my wife and 2 children. Approving this bill would allow myself and many other family's to grow their families without the stress of not being able to afford a place to live.

**Best,
Mendy Raskin**

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alexander Poulsen <alexanderjpoulsen@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2025 3:01 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: ATTN City Council Ordinance Committee: Multifamily housing zoning proposal

Hello,

I am a resident and homeowner in Cambridge on Broadway in between Central and Inman squares. I want to voice my support for the multifamily housing zoning proposal as it currently stands (largely). Specifically I support

- Multifamily housing throughout the city as of right
- Four story construction throughout the city as of right, with six stories possible if certain conditions are met
- Eliminating cumbersome requirements that make it difficult to build multifamily housing

Thank you,

Alexander Poulsen

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mussy Altein <mussyaltein@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2025 2:30 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Vote in support of 4+2 proposal for multifamily housing

Dear City Council,

My name is Mussy Altein and I am a member of the Jewish community in Cambridge, living on Pearl Street in Central Square. I urge the City Council to move forward with the 4+2 proposal for multifamily housing. With rising rent costs and increasing displacement, it is crucial for the Council to end exclusionary zoning and allow for multifamily housing throughout Cambridge

The current inflated costs of housing are driving so many people out of the city and we simply cannot afford the prices locally anymore.

Thank you!

Best,
Mussy Altein

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jo Quest-Neubert <jquestneubert@hotmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2025 1:33 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for the Multifamily Housing Ordinance

Dear Cambridge City Council members,

I'm a Cambridge resident living in Inman Square. I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed multifamily housing ordinance. Allowing for more multifamily housing fits within the city's Envision goals, and will allow Cambridge to help address our housing shortage. My family and I are fortunate and proud homeowners in a multi-unit building thanks to Cambridge's HomeBridge program. We know firsthand the importance and value of inclusionary housing, and the benefits of multifamily residences. Increasing density will allow us to embrace the diversity of our community as we expand our housing stock to meet the demands of our community. It is the important and brave work of the City Council in establishing and expanding inclusionary housing programs such as HomeBridge that has enabled my family to have a permanent home in our beloved city. Updating our zoning ordinances to allow for increased density and multifamily housing is essential for our city to meet the housing needs of the full range of its residents.

Please vote to end exclusionary zoning and allow for more housing throughout our community.

Sincerely,

Jo Quest-Neubert

1222 Cambridge St #1

Erwin, Nicole

From: Loren Rapport <lorenhrapport@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2025 10:48 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Cambridge Multi-family Housing Ordinance

Hello,

My name is Loren Rapport and I am a Cambridge resident (69 Harvey St). I am reaching out to offer my support for building more housing across Cambridge to increase affordability for all residents.

I urge City Council to end exclusionary zoning and pass the multifamily housing ordinance in its current form with no further amendments. Thank you for the tremendous work you have done on this.

Best,
Loren

--

Loren Rapport

(e) lorenhrapport@gmail.com
(t) 305-979-1078

Erwin, Nicole

From: Tyler Etzel <tyleretzel1@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2025 9:05 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily housing

Hi, I just wanted to urge you to pass this petition without additional amendments and without any delay!

I made some comments in-person, but wanted to make a defense for building more market rating housing in particular. There's understandable concern about this proposal eliminating "naturally affordable" housing, but I think this is misguided. Unfortunately, this is already happening, and is something I've actually experienced firsthand: I previously lived in [this property](#) with several roommates. When the landlord decided to sell, it got bought and converted into a luxury single family home. In our current economic system, the wealthy will pay an arbitrary amount to live here if they want to do so. The only thing we can control is whether it's in an additional unit on top of the existing housing stock (ideally), or taking away from the existing rental stock. If anything, we must build more market rate housing to prevent this sort of displacement.

-Tyler

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sophie Fisher <fisher.soph@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2025 7:36 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Vote YES on multi family housing without delay

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Sophie Fisher and I am a current Cambridge resident living in a multi-family building near Kendall square . I strongly support the six-story multifamily housing bill and urge you to end exclusionary zoning across our city.

Many of my friends are considering moving out of the city because they can no longer afford to stay. This isn't just about individual struggles – it's about preserving the diversity and vibrancy of our community. With one of the lowest vacancy rates in the area, we desperately need more housing options to help stabilize and ultimately lower rent prices.

The 4+2 multifamily housing ordinance is a crucial step toward addressing this crisis. I urge you to pass this bill without delay. As someone who benefits from living in multi-family housing, I know firsthand how valuable these developments are for our community.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Sophie Fisher

Erwin, Nicole

From: James Way <16jamesway@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 9, 2025 7:13 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Support 6 Stories Proposal with No Change

My name is Lan Zhang. I have lived in 16 James Way from Jan, 2019. I support the 6 stories proposal with no change. Cambridge needs more houses to support economic development. We welcome more people and more high technology companies move to Cambridge.

Thanks.

Lan

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carol Weinhaus <carol.weinhaus@outlook.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:12 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Citywide upzoning petition ignores fire & safety considerations

Dear City Council,

I strongly oppose the current upzoning proposal. Before the City Council approves the proposed upzoning, the City needs to give the public the costs for services and utilities, including those associated with fires and other disaster events. Emergency preparedness requirements need to be factored into this massive rezoning plan.

Given the current fires in California, I am very concerned. The City needs to report on what's required by the fire department (personnel, equipment, fire hydrants, and water supply) with the proposed upzoning. Years ago, there was a major fire in Kendall Square and the fire department had issues with the water supply. In the Los Angeles area fires, equipment, personal, and water are all lacking. The Los Angeles fire department has had to request police assistance to deal with widespread looting.

The City of Cambridge has failed to present the costs and department requirements for safety (fire and police), utilities (water/sewer, gas, electricity, communications) and other services (including trash disposal, roads, inspections, traffic congestion, parking) associated with massive increases multi-story buildings. The City is ignoring fire and safety considerations.

Regards,
Carol Weinhaus

Sent from [Outlook](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Neil Resnik <neil.resnik@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:06 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for Multi-family Zoning Reform

Hello Councillors,

I wanted to thank you for working on the Multifamily Housing Zoning reform, and to urge you to pass it. I am a resident of Cambridge and a constituent, and believe this is an opportunity to improve the city immeasurably and fight the cost of living crisis that the whole country faces, but especially Cambridge. I believe the more housing we can build in this city, the better, and believe it would also draw more businesses to the area. Thank you for the hard work you have done, and please work to pass the amendments.

Thank You,
Neil Resnik
4 Arlington St Apt 1
Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Pitman Lowenthal <susan.w.pitmanlowenthal@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:19 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Continuation of comments to oppose petitions to upzone

Dear councilors:

I write to complete my comments delivered today at the Jan 8 2025 ordinance meeting :
Thank-you for opportunity to comment:

This year 2025 is noteworthy for celebrating the 250th anniversary of the April battles of Lexington & Concord ie the anniversary of the American Revolution which began here in New England. Cambridge's historic streetscapes located in the A1 residential single family zoning district visually embody that historic heritage & legacy. The current plan called "up-zoning" which is, in fact, an attempt to eliminate what some people call "exclusionary zoning" by eliminating the A&B residential zones making all of Cambridge a single multi-family residential zone will potentially DESTROY this historic street scape which has remained relatively intact for 250 years.

Plunk a four-story structure in between these historic homes within the proposed multi-family zone on Brattle St, for example, and visualize what Cambridge will become . This historic neighborhood & surrounding streets will disappear as it currently exists and you, City Councilors, will be held accountable ...in the name of the "social Justice" goal of creating more housing units /affordable housing units .

There are ways to fix zoning districts while at the same time preserving historic neighborhoods but none have been incorporated in the current rules & regulations currently being proposed. Setbacks & lot coverage must be appropriate for different lot sizes in order to prevent destruction of Cambridge's irreplaceable historic streetscapes & heritage. A one size approach for the single multi-family residential zone currently being proposed is incompatible with the envision plan adopted in 2019.

An alternative for your consideration is to immediately enlist the Cambridge community development staff to build out maximum housing per the proposed regulations & setbacks for each neighborhood in order to "visualize" the impact these regulations could potentially have on each neighborhood in the City.

As the consultants recommended today during the neighborhood planning committee meeting, it is vitally important to get this right & not adopt a half-baked insufficiently constructed zoning proposal, particularly one that so few folks in Cambridge are even aware of .

Thank-you.

Beat regards,

Susan

Susan W Pitman Lowenthal

385 Huron Ave

6463343664 (mobile)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Beer, Linus <linusbeer@hks.harvard.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:43 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Zoning law update - allowing multifamily housing city-wide

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. I have lived in Cambridge for almost two years and am planning to stay with my wife and two kids. However, our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents like us to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Linus Beer

Linus Beer
MPP Candidate | McCloy Fellow | Class of 2025
Harvard Kennedy School
E: linusbeer@hks.harvard.edu



Erwin, Nicole

From: Michael Gidding <mgidding@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 8:55 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote YES on multifamily zoning reform petition

Hello City Council Members,

Cambridge's soaring housing costs are pushing out long-time residents, limited economic and racial diversity, and fueled the homelessness crisis. By ending exclusionary zoning and enabling buildings up to six stories, we can create more homes, both market-rate and permanently affordable through inclusionary zoning, while preserving our cherished neighborhood character. Our children, seniors, and newcomers alike deserve the opportunity to live in a vibrant, inclusive, and walkable city. Please act to embrace this essential housing reform now.

Thank you for your leadership and commitment to Cambridge.

Mike Gidding
Central Square Resident

Erwin, Nicole

From: L Byron <elizabethbyron@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 8:54 PM
To: City Clerk
Cc: carehousingcambridge@gmail.com
Subject: Follow-up from public comment- Multi Family Housing

Dear City Clerk,

I am writing to provide you with my full statement in opposition to the multi-family housing proposal, as tonight's 1 minute for comment was not sufficient.

According to US Sunpower, there are over 700 residential buildings in Cambridge with solar panels. The current proposal still does not have an amendment protecting these energy-efficient buildings.

Massachusetts General Laws Chapter 40A, Section 9B provides municipalities with the authority to protect solar access through zoning regulations.

You've asked the city solicitor to tell you, the council, what you can do legally to protect solar. Here is what you can do: adopt the state law AND create an amendment restricting the height of buildings.

Solar panel owners **do not want compensation from a developer** if their panels are in shadow. **We want Cambridge and the world to be carbon-neutral.**

Cambridge has a goal to be carbon neutral by 2050. You are moving backward and acting counter to this goal by allowing a proposal to be passed without noting its direct environmental impact.

As you approach your vote, pushing this proposal through without any solar protections is destructive to our community and the environment.

In addition, Listen to unbiased experts and at least include the following amendments to the proposal:

1. Make the new heights for C-1 zoning 40'. NOT 45'
2. Implement design oversight; remove "As of Right" building
3. Include clear protections for solar, restricting building height around homes that have solar.
4. Increase side and rear setbacks to greater than 10 feet.
5. Protect mature trees by maintaining that they can't be cut down. 44% of mature trees in Cambridge are on residential lots.

OR please consider letting the time run out, and starting over with a new proposal involving deep community engagement, analysis of data and options for zoning so that you can present a proposal that truly is going to result in more affordable housing while minimizing the environmental impact and upheaval of neighborhoods.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Liz Byron Loya
CARE Housing

Erwin, Nicole

From: Anne Sundaram <anne.sundaram@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 8:40 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: No to zoning changes

Hello Council Members and City Clerk,
The Sundaram Family votes no on radical upzoning. We feel that is a political agenda without an actual understanding of what you propose.

Cambridge Residents shouldn't pay the price for the corrupt interests of developers and others looking to maximize profits

Your exclusive viewpoint of excluding people from choosing what happens in their lives and communities is extremely dangerous. We are capable of addressing and adding value to the community. We are democratic society .

You should be ashamed of the environmental and economic crisis that you will create. This is discriminatory. You are attacking people's lifestyle because we don't agree with you.. Well, your thoughts and wants are not greater than the community at large. Everyone should have input.
Thank you,
Anne, and Anand Sundaram

[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Braden Gilleland <bhgillel@mit.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 8:30 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for more housing development

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Braden Gilleland, and I am a graduate student at MIT.

I am writing to express my support for increasing housing development in our city. The rents in Cambridge are rising too quickly, making it incredibly difficult for many of us – myself included – to live in the city in which we work.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more affordable for all.

Please pass this bill and avoid amendments that would water it down. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Thanks,

Braden Gilleland

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alejandro Paz <alepaz1comm2poem3@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 8:04 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multi-family housing

Hello,

I live at 9 Henry St, Cambridge, MA. I am messaging you to express my hope the council passes the proposed changes to zoning to allow for more multi family housing.

I currently live in the Cambridgeport Commons complex, and I witness first-hand how denser forms of housing enable many families to reside in a highly-desirable neighborhood at a more affordable price point than available through one-to-two story single family housing.

I hope the proposal passes swiftly and with no additional amendments.

Thank you,
Alejandro Paz

--

Alejandro Paz (he/him/his)

[Linkedin](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alex Clairmont <alexandra.s.clairmont@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:25 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Strong support for the Mutlifamily Zoning Petiton

Dear Councilmembers,

My name is Alex Clairmont, and for the past three years, I've lived at 295 Harvard Street. I'm also a survivor of domestic violence. I'm writing because housing policy is not only a matter of neighborhood character or even affordability: for some Cambridge residents, it's a matter of life and death.

For years, I was forced to stay in a household where my physical safety was in danger every day. Why? Because I knew that even with the various state and private programs supporting survivors, I would have extreme difficulty affording a safe apartment of my own.

I was lucky. I had a physics degree; I was eventually able to find an engineering job which payed enough for me to rent an apartment of my own. To get out. To get to safety.

Unfortunately, not every domestic violence survivor is so lucky. How many Cambridge residents are currently in the same position I was in three years ago? Scrimping and saving every penny they can? Hoping against hope they'll save enough to move out before it's too late?

Every penny we can bring down rent translates into lives saved. As such, I strongly support the 4 + 2 Mutlifamily Zoning proposal, and urge you to do the same.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Clairmont
295 Harvard St, Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jennie N <jnevin10@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:20 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Re: City Council Confirmation

Hi!! I had a technical issue with signing up to speak, could I please still participate? I would really like to speak if at all possible, it's my first time and I feel very passionately about this.

Thank you so much for your consideration,
Jennie

On Wed, Jan 8, 2025 at 6:59 PM City Clerk <no-reply@zoom.us> wrote:

evin,
for registering for City Council. You can find information about this webinar below.

ncil

ime Jan 8, 2025 04:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

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ancel your registration details, click [here](#). You can cancel your registration before Jan 8, 2025 04:00 PM.

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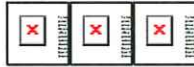
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Erwin, Nicole

From: Young Kim <ycknorris@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:18 PM
To: McGovern, Marc; Toner, Paul; Simmons, Denise; Azeem, Burhan; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: My Comment tonight at the Ordinance Committee Meeting

Honorable Co-Chairs, Members of the Ordinance Committee and City Clerk,

Young Kim, 17 Norris Street,

Most of the comments tonight addressed individual trees in a forest we carefully nurtured in the last one hundred years but I want to address the forest itself. We can't cut down trees everywhere because there is a critical need for buildable lots.

What is wrong with this amendment process is detailed in the letter I submitted to you which I beg you to read.

Thank you NLTP Committee for hosting a public hearing on best practices for urban planning today which should have been held back in 2020 when Councillor Nolan first introduced Policy Order to discuss elimination of exclusionary zoning.

One guest speaker said the City has to build trust for zoning amendments of this significance to be effective. But how could one trust the City when CDD projects only 70 new units by 2030 under current zoning? The Walden II Project alone will produce 95 units. City can build trust by first setting truthful measurable goals and then justify why we need as drastic amendments as these MFH Petitions. CDD's amendment language should include updated Housing Projections based on truthful, latest available, consistent and verifiable housing data and current Zoning Ordinance including the Affordable Housing Overlay provisions. I respectfully request that the Ordinance Committee schedule another meeting just to take comments when the report is transmitted to it.

Respectfully yours,

Young Kim

Erwin, Nicole

From: nonie valentine <nonie.valentine1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:14 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Upzoning ordinance

Nonie Valentine
Washington Ave.

As I weigh again the urgency of housing with **this** proposal, I am still against, even though I'm a renter hanging on by my fingernails. I don't find it context-sensitive, well-thought-out in planning terms, or real help for low-income housing.

If it's pushed through, I fear the *built reality* will bring backlash that will be hard for the city to self-correct in a smart way.

The original proposal set us on a learning process which means that with deepened engagement we can come up with a more nuanced approach grounded in solid planning principles.

Let's let the ordinance die a dignified death and tackle it anew with the help of the urban planners we heard from today.

Failing that, insist on:

- Design review.
- Increased setbacks. 20 ' front and back, more like 10' either side, with flexibility to be site specific, To save any trees, have room for scaffolding, or maintenance vehicles.
- *More* than 30% open space.

Thank you!

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: raryals <raryals@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 6:59 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily Housing Ordinance

I thought we were signed up to speak, but have not been called, so I am mailing my testimony in instead

Interestingly, when we moved to Cambridge nearly 40 years ago, we lived in a double triple-decker condo in Mid-Cambridge, with two affordable tenants. That was a pleasant and interesting experience for us. We moved to the Porter Square area for a little more room and outdoor space buying an 1890 three family house at an opportune time, where we renovated an historic 1890 house offering a home for us and two other moderately priced rentals.

We agree with the need to build more housing in Cambridge, particularly that which is affordable for young families and our elders.
This discussion is about where and how to make that happen.

We agree basically with the Policy Order adopted at The Ordinance Committee on Thursday, December 19, 2024, with these conditions:

- * Reduce the **base zoning** height limit from six stories to **four stories (less than 44 feet)**.
- * Establish a two-story **density bonus** for inclusionary developments so that **6-stories are only allowed if it is 20% INCLUSIONARY**.
- * Developments greater than four stories should require **a minimum lot size of 5,000 square feet**.
- * Please add a **contextual 7-foot side and a minimum 15-foot rear setback** along with the **10 ft front setback** requirement for all developments.
Children/everyone and the climate needs some outdoor space, and room to plant **much needed trees** and other plantings.
- * Ensure that buildings of five or six stories include **40% open space**, with at least **50% of that being permeable**.
- * Please add **a required (and binding) design review** to ensure contextual sensitivity to the neighboring buildings/ the neighborhood for any building over 4 stories.
- * Require an **in-depth review of this ordinance every 5 years** of the Multifamily Zoning Ordinance **with an annual update** presented to Council and the public.

Further, we would request CDD, the Law Department and the Historical Commission **turn your attention to the places where taller buildings can most naturally be accommodated,** on the corridors and in the Square, throughout the City. and rezone the corridors and squares. I am the President of PSNA/Porter Square Neighbors Association, and an Advisory Member of MAPS/Mass Ave Planning Study. We all welcome that discussion.

Thank you,
Ruth

--

Ruth Ryals
James Cornie
115 Upland Rd.
Cambridge, MA 02140
raryals@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Valerie Fontana Shulman <v.fontana.shulman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 6:43 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Comment on the Housing Ordinance Amendment

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to you as public comment takes place at this important Ordinance Committee meeting on the final amendment package. I want to thank you for working together on this important proposal and wish to urge you to keep the focus on creating the most housing overall and the most subsidized inclusionary housing. Zoning that will allow for more density and affordable housing in the city will create the conditions for Cambridge to continue to thrive into the future as a creative, innovative hub that celebrates human diversity.

Wishing your committee clarity and unity as you prepare for the vote on the 16th.

Sincerely,
Valerie Shulman
Florence Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Katherine Gross <kathmgross@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 6:36 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council; pattynolanz@gmail.com; Toner, Paul; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Zusy, Catherine
Subject: Radical Upzoning

To the City Councilors,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. This ordinance does a poor job of balancing different critical environmental issues along with equally critical affordable housing issues.. We urge Council to let the petition run out at its termination date in February.

At the very least, this radical proposal should be amended to include:

1. **Design review** by the City Manager and neighbors. That process is why Frost Terrace turned out to be as successful as it is. Frost Terrace residents are wonderful neighbors to us and the building is a fine addition to the Mass Ave streetscape down the block from us. We would be happy to see more developments like this, However, we have to note that the developers resisted neighborhood review, but now all parties appreciate its attractive urban design that fits with the neighborhood, unlike the original proposal.

2. **Setbacks** of 20' on the front and back and 10' on the side yards. Neither scaffolding or ladders will be available to work on building with a 5' setback.

3. **40% open space.** This is necessary for environmental reasons. We must protect what tree canopy we have and not create more heat sinks. Residents of all backgrounds and income levels deserve to be able to breathe, not be choked by traffic and experience some open space.

Until these considerations are included, this proposal is a destructive instrument to try to alleviate a housing crisis that exists far beyond Cambridge. I want to underline that we are happy for our community and neighborhood to play our part in increasing supply - as long as we make some effort to balance other extremely important priorities that directly affect the health and well being of Cambridge residents.

Thank you for considering this opinion

Katherine Gross
44 year resident of Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jessica Sheehan <jess.sheehan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 6:35 PM
To: City Council
Subject: rezoning, displacement, and NOAH

Dear Council,

I want to add a word about naturally occurring affordable housing, or NOAH. I've lived in NOAH in more than one Cambridge neighborhood, always with roommates. It wasn't very nice - I'm talking mice, ants, high heating costs due to a complete lack of insulation in the exterior, a large hole in my bedroom door at one place, and at another, occasional leaking from the roof when it rained too hard. My roommates and I collected that water in a bucket and jokingly referred to us as "roof tea" because of its color. But I was and still am grateful it existed, because I could afford it (barely), and it allowed me to live near my school, my job, and many of my friends. I'm not interested in killing NOAH where it exists.

The thing is, NOAH is **already** at high risk of redevelopment. You can already make a *lot* of money under current zoning redeveloping a 4 unit apartment building like one I lived in into 2 \$1 million condos. If an owner isn't doing that right now, it's not for lack of financial incentive. Whatever the actual reason is - maybe it's owner-occupied, or they're waiting out high interest rates, or their preferred contractor is tied up in other work, whatever - it's unlikely to be affected by this zoning change. If this passes, I expect the *rate or pace* of NOAH redevelopment to change little, if at all.

What *will* change if we pass 4+2 is what NOAH that is redeveloped can change into. Do we want it to become 1) a small number of very expensive homes, or 2) a larger number of less expensive homes, including some affordable homes if the site is large enough? I want the second one!

Sincerely,
Jess Sheehan
Plymouth St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jim Gray <james.h.gray@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 6:32 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; Jim Gray
Subject: Up-Zoning: Let proposal Expire, create deeper Community Engagement, Improve the Next Proposal

Jim Gray
2 Michael Way

Dear Councilors,

Today's Neighborhood & Long Term Planning Committee was very educational. I have greater empathy for councilors who have worked for years and years to push this issue forward, and a greater appreciation for the complexity of the issues.

Two takeaways:

1) create an expanded community engagement process to avoid blindsiding residents who have no clue about the impact of zoning changes (and the potential for political backlash), and perhaps to discover greater win-win approaches to creating affordable housing, 2) think critically & creatively about how to grow affordable housing in cambridge where **elastic demand** for housing is very strong.

To quote professor Maurice Cox: "Take the time to envision the urban life we want. Pacing is incredibly important." Let this proposal expire and improve the next one with broader, inclusive community engagement.

Sincerely,
Jim Gray

Erwin, Nicole

From: Melissa Berlin <melissashiraberlin@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 6:15 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily housing across Cambridge

Dear City Council,

My name is Melissa, and I live at 31 Line St. I'm writing to urge you to take bold action to allow 6-story apartments in every Cambridge neighborhood.

As a student and resident of Cambridge, I've experienced firsthand how the housing shortage affects our community. While I was fortunate to find an unusually affordable apartment, I know my situation is rare. My partner works in Cambridge, and we dream of buying a home here next year, but the prices make that feel impossible. Instead, we're facing the reality that we'll likely need to move to an outer suburb and buy a car for my partner's commute – exactly the kind of car-dependent sprawl that Cambridge should be helping to prevent.

What's particularly frustrating is that our apartment – which could house other students or residents with lower incomes – will stay off the market longer because people like us can't find homes to buy. This ripple effect of the housing shortage hurts everyone in our community.

I love Cambridge's career opportunities, vibrant local businesses, beautiful parks, and walkable neighborhoods. These are exactly the qualities that make people want to live here, and we shouldn't force people to choose between these amenities and affordable housing. Our current zoning makes it impossible to build enough homes to meet demand, driving up costs for everyone and perpetuating patterns of exclusion.

Research shows that building more housing helps control costs for everyone, even those who don't move into the new units. I urge you to support allowing multifamily housing in every neighborhood. This would help create hundreds of new homes, including much-needed inclusionary units while making our city more affordable and inclusive.

Thank you for your work on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Melissa

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carolyn Fuller <carolyn.fuller2018@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 6:06 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please Support Multifamily Housing Throughout Cambridge

Mayor Simmons and City Councilors,

My name is Carolyn Fuller. I live at 12 Douglass St. I'm here tonight in support of ending exclusionary zoning and allowing multifamily housing throughout Cambridge. I was in support of the original six-story multi-family housing bill but the current four-stories is a reasonable compromise.

Please pass this with no further amendments.

Carolyn Fuller
carolyn.fuller2018@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Maria Fong <mariafong@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:56 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Oppose 4+1 proposal January 8, 2025

Hello,

I am a resident at 238 garden St Cambridge MA 02138.

Please let the 4+2 ordinance expire because it will not help our current crisis of unaffordable housing. Instead, I urge you to support 3+3+3. More housing will not necessarily cause less displacement, in fact it may increase displacement due to teardowns. I believe we need more tenant protection like TOPA and rent control before we can increase housing in the proposal as it is now.

Best regards,

Maria

Erwin, Nicole

From: Eleanor Bragg <eabragg9@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:51 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily housing

Dear City Councillors,

Thank you for all of the important work you have been doing surrounding the two Multifamily Housing Zoning Petitions. This is a really exciting opportunity for Cambridge to encourage more multifamily housing at a time when we badly need it. I think we can all agree that we want to make living in Cambridge affordable for more of the people that give Cambridge its wonderful character, including seniors trying to stay here, people who work here, and young people who grew up here. Building more housing units and loosening zoning restrictions leads to lower rents for everyone, according to a lot of recent research on US cities such as Minneapolis. For that reason, I hope you will support the amendments proposed in the current petitions, including allowing up to 6-story multi-family homes to be built and removing other restrictive requirements such as parking minimums. Thank you for your time!

Eleanor Bragg
1210 Cambridge St, Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Fritz Mueller <fritzmuelleriii@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:50 PM
To: City Clerk; Toner, Paul; City Council
Subject: Input from Cambridge Resident re: Up-zoning

Hello,

I attended the neighborhood 9 meeting last night. Thank you Paul Toner and Denis Carlone for your informative input and over-all caring presence. Very much appreciated.

I would like to point out to the counselors that these plans are not taking into account enough the havoc that is being caused by the continue swelling of traffic due to these proposed changes.

We live on Bellis Circle which is at the center/nexus of much of the current and new construction and affordable housing in North Cambridge - Walden in front and Rindge (which backs up to our backyards across the railroad tracks) as well as the large building across the park on New Street.

This new housing is greatly effecting the space/tree canopy (they just clear cut all of the trees in the Ringe development) across from our backyards - so where there was once woods there is now only cement.

The larger concern is traffic - the traffic on Sherman at rush hour is now currently backed up to Garden, if not all the way to Harvard Square, as people use this corridor to go to exit the city to route 2 via Rindge. Now with even more housing on Rindge and New Street heading into Alewife - without traffic studies or consideration - there can only be more congestion.

Here on Bellis over the last 6-7 years we are in the direct line of noise/diesel fumes/pollution from the commuter rail, now increased idling traffic on Sherman and also the change in air traffic - as Logan directs all traffic directly over head here for runway 33L. It's not just traffic but air and noise pollution as well.

A triple assault!

In multiple neighborhood conversations we hear from each other that it's getting to be too much for the current residents/property owners/tax payers to bear. And is effecting our health and well-being.

As one blatant example of this haphazard and poorly orchestrated up-zoning approach to new construction - the large building currently being constructed on New Street is DIRECTLY up to the road with very little set back and now there will definitely be no room for bike lanes in an area and on a street that connects Fresh Pond and Danehy Park - WHAT ARE YOU THINKING!!!

Please be more aware, thoughtful and less fear and damage control oriented, or you will ruin the quality of life for all of Cambridge residents.

Thank you,
F Mueller - Bellis Circle

Erwin, Nicole

From: rosemous@rcn.com
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:48 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Cc: rosemous
Subject: Fwd: From the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies: New Projections Anticipate a Slowdown in Household Growth and Housing Demand -- How does this relate to the proposed MFH petition?

Cambridge Neighbors --

For those who haven't seen this notice, I am forwarding the projections below as to a nation-wide slowdown in household growth (& housing demand) just issued by the Harvard Joint Center for Housing Studies. How do these projections relate to the current controversies about upzoning in Cambridge? Along with an apparent slowdown in the development of lab space in metro Boston, how will these combined factors influence the critical housing needs in Cambridge that have fueled the MFH upzoning petition now before the City Council & multiple committees this winter? As to the reconfiguration of the upzoning ordinance, I will confine myself to one aspect of the affordable housing crisis: that is the apparent 'competition' for housing between younger people unable to afford housing in this city & its longer-term residents of varying incomes, ages & housing needs.

While the Harvard research below points to the aging 'out' of the housing market of boomers as one factor influencing the apparent slowdown in housing demand nationally, I am aware of another aspect of that same phenomenon that appears to be creating generational friction locally in Cambridge & elsewhere in the generally high-cost metro area. Indeed, an issue that I have not seen addressed directly almost anywhere is the conundrum of young families needing housing in the Boston area (where I just read the average/median(?) home price is \$900,000) VS. aging boomers who may be trying to move out of homes in which they have already raised their families. However, one aspect of this conundrum which has not received much attention is that these older persons may indeed find themselves with few realistic options into which to 'downsize.' This was exactly the situation that my husband & I faced in 2018: when we decided to leave our longtime family home in the Washington SQ. community. in Brookline. Living directly across the street from the elementary school that our son had attended, I felt that it was wrong for an older couple to continue to occupy that lovely old home which was better suited to the young family we once had been (i.e., when we bought this 'fixer-upper' in 1977). Yet when we actually began to explore our housing options, we discovered that trying to find a good alternative into which to downsize was really quite difficult (of course, it is even harder now). The result of a long, drawn-out search across several communities for an alternative (as we repeatedly lost out in the bidding process to those who bid even higher) eventually landed us right here on N. Mass. Ave.: directly opposite the now long-vacant Season to Taste storefront. Given the changes in the configuration of this corridor over the last three years (as well as in my own health status), this is not a place in which I would choose to grow old. Unfortunately, I see even fewer appealing (& affordable) alternatives elsewhere now than I did when we left our home of 41 years in 2018: for I was unaware as to how isolating it would feel to live in the hinterlands of N. Cambridge through the pandemic & my own experience of decreasing mobility.

Incidentally, one curiosity I have heard bandied about for years now within a local community group catering to older persons is the regular workshops they offer entitled 'Should I stay, or should I go?' This topic is geared to single women (many of them widows) living in larger houses in Cambridge but unable to find realistic alternatives to which to move. Too bad, I say: as some of the larger single-family homes could conceivably be reconfigured into co-housing experiments geared to younger people new to the metro area (who need both affordable housing & community). However, in order for such experimentation to proliferate, the older women tooling around in homes too big for them would have to find suitable alternatives. As we discovered leaving our home in 2018, this is not so easy to do!

Years ago, I heard NU economist, Barry Bluestone, discuss the coming competition for housing between boomers & their kids at a meeting at Brookline Town Hall. Bluestone seemed to feel that the answer was intergenerational sharing: i.e., he & his adult son amicably shared an old home on Trowbridge St. right here in Cambridge. However, if one scans the smattering of real estate ads in this dense city (& in nearby communities), it is just astonishing to see the prices affixed even to condos that may appear spanking new (but reside in triple-deckers not always up to snuff on the outside). Indeed, as housing prices have continued their steep rise over the past 4 years, realtors such as Movoto rarely advertise sizable (i.e., family-accommodating) units in Cambridge for under \$2 million. As to single-family homes, even relatively modest houses in good condition run up beyond the \$2 million mark (sometimes substantially). Furthermore, it astounds me even more to find ads for good-sized condos on streets such as Prospect & Pearl at similarly high prices: as earlier in my life (when we once rented a small house on Pearl), these were hardly considered 'upscale' neighborhoods. The truth is that 'gentrification' has overtaken much of the metro area: especially if one would like to find housing options that would allow for living within the recommended '15 minutes' of stores, transit & the general necessities of life.

In conclusion, I echo the sentiments of my fellow residents & community activists: i.e., Carolyn Shipley in decrying the environmental toll that the 'densification' of Cambridge's corridors & squares will produce for the moderate-income residents long settled on adjoining side streets (in the less affluent sections of this city); Young Kim for never failing to do detailed analysis of where the city's planners have fallen short in their own projections as to where the city is headed on a multiplicity of issues; and Suzanne Blier for suggesting that the City Council just 'pause' before it proceeds to enact the MFH petition as it is presently constituted.

Thanks for your consideration of my own comments as well as the attachment below!

Linda Moussouris
2440 Mass. Ave. #30

From: "Harvard Joint Center For Housing Studies" <jchs@harvard.edu>
To: "rosemous" <rosemous@rcn.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 11:05:14 AM
Subject: Housing Perspectives: New Projections Anticipate a Slowdown in Household Growth and Housing Demand

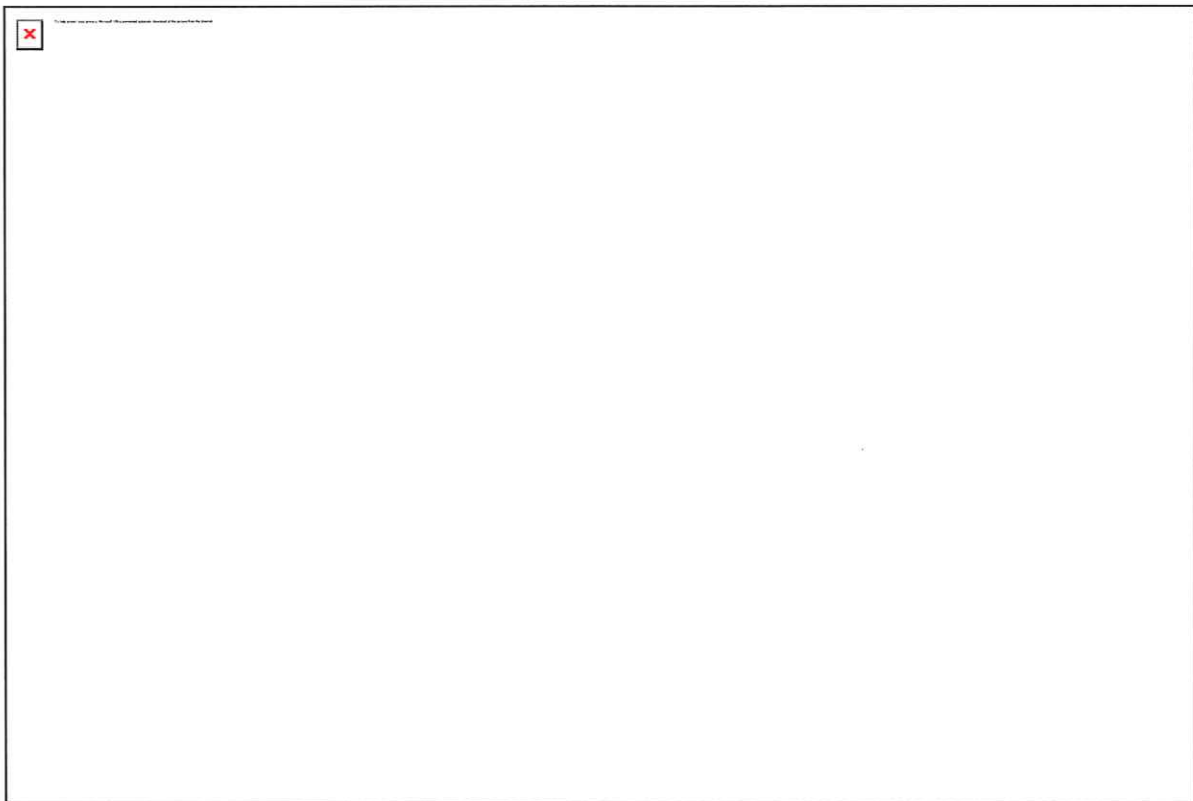


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NEW PROJECTIONS ANTICIPATE A SLOWDOWN IN HOUSEHOLD GROWTH AND HOUSING DEMAND



Monday, January 6, 2025

by [DANIEL MCCUE](#)

According to [the Center's new projections](#), the number of households in the US is expected to increase by 8.6 million, or approximately 860,000 per year between

2025 and 2035. This would be far less growth in the next ten years than in recent decades, including the sluggish 10.1 million households added in the wake of the Great Recession in the 2010s (**Figure 1**). The pace of growth is expected to slow between 2035 and 2045 to a gain of just 5.1 million households, which would be less growth than in any decade of the last 100 years.

Figure 1: The Pace of Household Growth is Projected to Slow



Source: JCHS tabulations of US Census Bureau Decennial Censuses and JCHS 2024 Household Projections.

Levels could be even lower depending on immigration. Indeed, the projections are based on a scenario where immigration levels remain similar to those of the past three decades, at approximately 870,000 per year in 2025–2035 (**Figure 2**). A low-immigration scenario, where net gains in population from immigration fall to roughly half of their historic average over the next ten years (422,000 per year in 2025–2035) results in an increase of 6.9 million households in 2025–2035 before falling to 3.2 million additional households, or just 320,000 per year in 2035–2045.

Figure 2: Immigration Projections Vary Widely, But the Main Series Assumes Levels Similar to Recent Decades



Note: Decadal annual averages shown as dotted lines.

Sources: JCHS tabulations of US Census Bureau, Population Estimates and 2023 National Population Projections

In addition to documenting the slowdown in household growth, the projections describe expected changes in household demographics, including how new households formed by younger generations will increase the racial and ethnic diversity of US households. One of the most significant trends, however, is the growth in the number of older adult households. With the oldest baby boomers turning 80 in 2026, the number of households headed by a person aged 80 or older will rise nearly 60 percent in the next ten years—an increase of nearly 6 million households (**Figure 3**). This will lead to an unprecedented number of older adult households, an extraordinary need for housing and services, and ever higher numbers of households lost each year from aging or mortality that will drive down net household growth.

Figure 3: Rapid Growth in Households Aged 80 and Over and in Middle Age Groups



Source: JCHS 2024 Household Projections – Main Series

Another implication will be lower demand for housing construction. Household growth is the single biggest source of demand for new housing, along with the need to replace older homes, meet the demand for second homes, and accommodate a normal level of vacancies in a larger housing market. The projected slowdown will reduce demand for new unit construction from the current rate of 1.4 million units per year to an average of 1.1 million units per year in 2025–2035 and to 800,000 units per year in 2035–2045 (**Figure 4**). In the low-immigration scenario, demand would support the construction of just 950,000 new units per year in 2025–2035 and 610,000 per year in 2035–2045. These levels are well below the 1.6 million to 2.1 million units built on average each year from the 1970s through the 2000s, and nearer to the 990,000-unit annual average from the 2010s, which was a historically low decade.

Figure 4: With Less Household Growth, Demand For New Housing Units is Projected to Decline



Notes: New Housing Units includes new units completed and manufactured homes shipped. Level for 2020-2023 is the average annual rate normalized to show a 10-year production level.

Sources: JCHS tabulations of 2024 Household projections and Census Bureau New Residential Construction and Manufactured Housing Surveys.

Actual construction levels in the future could exceed these estimates to the extent that new construction is needed to overcome an existing shortage of housing, which is estimated to be anywhere [from 1.5 million to 5.5 million units](#). If construction exceeds demand to make up for shortages in the next ten years, then actual construction levels could be higher than these projections. Beyond units needed to address the current shortfall, however, the underlying trend is for slowing demand for new units.

In sum, the projections detail a future in which the number of households grows far more slowly than previously experienced. The slowdown will be driven mainly by an increased number of older adult households that are lost or consolidated each year. Households will still form, many of them by a more diverse set of younger adults, but not enough to outweigh the rising number of households lost. The alternative scenarios show how immigration levels may temper the slowdown or accelerate it. Ultimately, less household growth will mean less demand for new housing construction, while aging of the population will put new demands on the housing stock.

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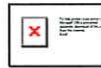
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Erwin, Nicole

From: Dave Halperin <halperin.dr@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:37 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Skipped in public comment tonight

Hi,

There was a weird zoom snafu when my turn was up when I was promoted to a panelist instead of prompted to unmute and then skipped. I have been waiting in the zoom and putting my hand up. I hope you can circle back to me.

Thank you,
David Halperin

Erwin, Nicole

From: Aaron Shakow <ashakow@post.harvard.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:32 PM
To: Catherine Hoffman
Cc: Wilson, Ayesha; Azeem, Burhan; cathie zusy; City Clerk; Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; McGovern, Marc; Patricia Nolan; Nolan, Patricia; Toner, Paul; Simmons, Denise; Siddiqui, Sumbul; sumbul siddiqui
Subject: Re: multi-family

To the Mayor and members of the City Council.

As a longtime Cambridge resident, I'm grateful for the principled support by many of you for a solution to the affordable housing crisis in our city. Since the repeal of rent control in 1994 Cambridge has seen an exodus of individuals and families who are not affluent enough to pay increasingly astronomical housing costs. The current attempt to address this problem by using the Council's zoning power is commendable.

That said, I have found the current process disappointing. As someone with a long-term investment in the community who is currently priced out of the real estate market, and also as an active member of a civic organization, I want to engage with the council debate. Yet, the scenarios that have been developed are very limited and seem to me unlikely to make a serious impact on access to affordable housing. Furthermore the process that produced the remaining two frameworks was hard to follow and ultimately alienating.

To some degree this complexity is an inevitable byproduct of using local zoning as a means to intervene in a statewide failure. But I worry that the mountain here has "labored and delivered a mouse" and moreover that this animal has only a few parents, which seems troubling given the high stakes.

I would therefore advocate that the Council let the current zoning expire and begin the discussion again with more attention to the needs of resource limited Cambridge residents, and the city's urgent problem of de-diversification.

Short of that I think the 3+ 3 proposal is less likely to lead to further deterioration of the affordable housing supply.

Respectfully,
Aaron Shakow
225 Walden St Apt 2R

On Wed, Jan 8, 2025 at 1:05 PM Catherine Hoffman <catherinebhoffman@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Councilors,

In these last months (for some, only weeks) we have been bombarded by a kind of mathematical tsunami . Even as someone who has participated in many groups including the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition, the proposals (6 with or without, 4+2, #+3, #+3+3) have been daunting and trying to explain them to others even more so. Some are so alienated and left out, that they prefer letting the zoning expire and begin again which would be fine.

What is the broad objective? To me, it is creating/maintaining housing and neighborhoods in Cambridge that are livable with increased access to those at the lower/lowest income. More housing for the sake of more housing to appeal to a “demographic with means” as a way to lower costs for others is not and never has been possible for this most dense city. Certainly, the unfair exclusionary zoning of 1-2 family’s needs to be lifted whether it will produce more housing or not (given the economics).

Beyond that, the lens should be livability and affordability for residents and families (of many definitions). The 4 +2 proposal is still a boon to developers which will negatively impact displacement especially of those in currently “naturally affordable” units. It will also negatively impact the densest (most economically mixed and affordable) neighborhoods by inviting new housing for a wealthier demographic and taxing the resources (open space, trees, light, parking, water, livability) of those living there now. The 3+3 is better. It mimics more of the neighborhood and is less likely to lead to tear downs for more expensive replacements.

Higher buildings belong on main thoroughfares and squares (especially those which don’t have them) with inclusionary units and vouchers to increase accessibility .

Please use a lens which enables Cambridge to serve its low-income residents and support our multi-generational, multi-peopled neighborhoods

Cathy Hoffman

67 Pleasant st.

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Lynne Reiss <ltreiss82@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:25 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: upzoning proposal

Lynne Reiss, 76 Oxford St. re: up-zoning proposal

I want to express my concerns about the proposal to eliminate design review and “right of appeal.” I understand that the goal is to prevent project delays due to complicated processes and law suits from neighbors. I see it another way.

I live next door to a lot that has been under development **since 2019**. It has been a construction site and an eyesore for 5 years. I did not pursue adverse possession when the developer’s survey revealed that a slice of the property that I had maintained for 41 years, and planted 3 trees on, belonged to the developer. I have endured the additional inconveniences of having a porta potty, storage pod and dumpster at the sidewalk and my property line. Construction inconvenience is expected – but for 5 years **after** approval? The current situation is that the property is now going to auction for non-payment.

The problem was NOT one of unreasonable delay. The developer submitted his *original* request on March 20, 2019. By Nov. 2019, the BZA had approved a *revised* plan (with permit issued Jan. 20)

Not all developers can be trusted to be do the right thing. Unintended consequences occur.

What makes us think that development will be *better* if we remove the guardrails & due process?

I am VERY concerned about what might happen in light of the rezoning proposals under consideration. Protections should be in place to encourage developers to be responsible.

I believe in appropriate guidelines and good problem solving. This is what good zoning and the board of zoning appeal is for. Modifications may be appropriate but elimination of due process is not.

Please do not eliminate zoning and rights of appeal. We need to build housing but we also need thoughtful planning and appropriate guardrails.

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you.

Lynne Reiss, 76 Oxford St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Fiona Qu <fionaqu.3@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:18 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily housing

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Fiona Qu and I live at 375 Broadway. I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. I am a graduate student and have experienced firsthand the rising rents and home prices that are making it difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue!

Best,
Fiona Qu

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kamakshi Sirisha Pathapati <kamakshi.sirisha@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:08 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Planning Board Comment
Subject: Vote YES for multi-family zoning

Dear Council Members,

My name is Kamakshi Pathapati, and I've had the privilege of calling Cambridge home for over 4 years. I'm reaching out to strongly urge you to vote **yes** in support of the new multifamily rezoning ordinance.

As a long-time resident and as someone planning to raise a family, I've witnessed the growing need for better-quality, fairly priced housing in our city. In particular, there's a shortage of housing options that meet the needs of young, growing families who want to stay here, enjoy Cambridge's vibrant community, and truly feel a sense of belonging.

In addition, much of the existing housing lacks updated amenities to support energy efficiency and sustainable living—an increasingly urgent concern.

By legalizing six-story multifamily housing and ending exclusionary zoning practices, this ordinance can make a meaningful impact. It will increase the housing inventory, provide more opportunities for people to remain in Cambridge, and help prevent displacement due to rising costs.

I firmly support this ordinance as a step forward in creating a more inclusive, sustainable, and equitable future for Cambridge. I urge you to take this critical step by voting **yes** to legalize six-story multifamily housing and reduce zoning restrictions.

Thank you for your attention and for working toward a Cambridge that everyone can call home.

Sincerely,
Kamakshi Pathapati

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dan Tenney <dgtenney3@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 5:04 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council; cc: Patricia Nolan; Toner, Paul; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Zusy, Catherine
Subject: This evening's meeting on Radical Up-Zoning

To the Council:

As a 45-year Cambridge resident, I am most concerned about the current up-zoning proposal. There are too many unresolved questions and issues. Its goal to create additional affordable and market-rate housing may have the effect of permanently damaging the physical character of the City and the qualities which currently make it an attractive place to live.

I urge the Council to let the petition run out at its termination date in February.

At the very least, this overly radical proposal should be amended to include:

1. **Design review** by the City Manager and neighbors. That process is why Frost Terrace turned so successfully. The developers resisted this review, but now everyone wants to claim credit for its appealing urban design meshing with the neighborhood, unlike the massive "box" design the originally proposed.
2. **Setbacks** of 20' on the front and back and 10' on the side yards. 5' side yards are un-buildable and unsafe for emergency or maintenance access, and preclude any daylighting of interior spaces.
3. **40% open space**. This is necessary for environmental reasons as well as aesthetics. The City needs to breathe, and residents of all incomes need outdoor space.

Housing availability and affordability are regional concerns, and cannot be solved by the City of Cambridge alone, and at the expense of its character and quality of life.

Thank you for considering these points,

Daniel Tenney
Washington Avenue

Erwin, Nicole

From: Asa Eckert-Erdheim <asa.eckert.erdheim@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:56 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support of multi family housing ordinance

Hello Cambridge City Council,

I cannot make the meeting tonight to speak about the multi family housing ordinance, so I'm sharing my support via email instead. As someone who has lived and worked in Cambridge for almost a decade, I absolutely love the city. However, as someone whose rent keeps going up and for whom buying has remained unattainable, I am afraid I will have to leave the city to find someplace that feels more stable. I know I am not alone in this, and more housing will help keep housing costs down for everyone, and specific low income units will help more people stay and come to this wonderful city. I am strongly against exclusionary zoning and believe that we need more housing for everyone to make Cambridge a better place.

Thank you,

Asa Eckert-Erdheim
35 Inman Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Stephen M <scmoss2922@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:52 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Ordinance Committee Meeting

Dear City Council Members,

I have already written in previously about my support for the rezoning efforts that will allow for more housing production in our city, but I wanted to write in again ahead of what will surely be an extremely contentious public meeting tonight. Tonight, you are going to see a small sample size of Cambridge voice their opinions on rezoning, and use those opinions to inform the final rezoning product.

But before you do, I'm asking you to keep in mind that this small sample size is highly unrepresentative of Cambridge. Public meetings like this one disproportionately favor the opinions of those who are older, whiter, wealthier, and more politically well connected than anyone else. Ask yourselves, who has time to spare on a Wednesday night to come down to city hall, or wait patiently by their computer to testify? Is it parents with young children, people working two jobs to cover their rent, young professionals, people experiencing homelessness? Or is it more likely wealthy retirees, parents with children who have long since left Cambridge, people who think their property values hinge on this vote?

Not all issues divide this way, but especially in the case of rezoning, the people who are disproportionately privileged by this political process are also those who are least likely to see direct benefits from its success. Whereas those of us who would most benefit from decreased red tape and increased housing production are too poor, young, and busy to participate to the same extent.

At my day job, I am an epidemiologist for the State, and part of that involves understanding how to unskew biases in data. And I would be happy to show that in this instance too, if demographic information were available about the sample size of Cambridge that comes to these meetings. But for tonight, I'll just ask you this: the most recent census data has the number of residents under 30 in Cambridge at 49%, and racial breakdowns including 56% white, 9% Black, and 20% Asian. Between the support and the opposition, ask yourself, which side looks more like Cambridge?

I hope you consider this when making your decisions tonight, and don't let an overly vocal and unrepresentative group win out.

Thank you,

Stephen Moss, MPH

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lynne Reiss <lreiss82@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:50 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: upzoning proposal

Dear City Counselors

I want to express my concerns about the proposal to eliminate design review and “right of appeal.” I understand that the goal is to prevent project delays due to complicated processes and lawsuits from neighbors. I see it another way.

I live next door to a lot that has been under development **since 2019**. It has been a construction site and an eyesore for 5 years. I did not pursue adverse possession when the developer’s survey revealed that a slice of the property that I had maintained for 41 years, and planted 3 trees on, belonged to the developer. I have endured the additional inconveniences of having a porta potty, storage pod and dumpster at the sidewalk and my property line. Construction inconvenience is expected – but for 5 years **after** approval? The current situation is that the property is now going to auction for non-payment.

Not all developers can be trusted to do the right thing. Unintended consequences occur.

What makes us think that development will be *better* if we remove the guardrails & due process?

I am VERY concerned about what might happen in light of the rezoning proposals under consideration. Protections should be in place to encourage developers to be responsible.

I believe in appropriate guidelines and good problem solving. This is what good zoning and the board of zoning appeal is for. Modifications may be appropriate but elimination of due process is not.

Please do not eliminate zoning and rights of appeal. We need to build housing but we also need thoughtful planning and appropriate guardrails.

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you,

Lynne Reiss

76 Oxford St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lee Farris <Lee@LeeFarris.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:48 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Huang, Yi-An
Subject: Residents Alliance opposes 4+2, supports 3+3+3 Multifamily proposal

Jan. 8, 2025

Dear Mayor, Councilors, and Manager,

I am writing for the Cambridge Residents Alliance. We oppose the 4+2 version of the multifamily zoning. We think it will increase housing challenges for lower-income and moderate-income residents and make Cambridge even more unaffordable for them. We want to end single- and two-family zoning in a way that does not harm lower- and moderate-income people. We agree with Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition which stated:

- **"We oppose the 4+2 multifamily zoning proposal.** The 4+2 proposal incentivizes and is likely to **lead to the construction of very expensive 4-story exclusively market-rate projects** with no Inclusionary units. It will not help the most housing cost-burdened lower-income people in Cambridge by strongly incentivizing Inclusionary units.
- The 4+2 proposal will **lead to displacement of lower and moderate income people** who now live in older "naturally occurring affordable housing," which will be demolished for new 4 story buildings."

We ask that the Council further discuss Councilor Wilson's proposal for 3 floors as of right, and 3 additional floors with 20% of all the units being Inclusionary, along with 3 more floors if all the units are 100% affordable housing- call it "3+3+3". It would include the other zoning changes like setbacks and 5000 minimum lot size for taller buildings that Councilors agreed to. This is a significant compromise compared to what CHJC had proposed before of using the existing C-1 zoning. When the Council discussed this proposal on Dec. 23, there had been no public presentation of this idea, and the Council did not have a chance to hear if residents supported it.

With Councilor Wilson's **3+3+3 proposal**, inclusionary buildings would be more profitable and more likely, because they would get a 3 floor advantage. **More buildings with Inclusionary units will be built**, so the housing overall will be more affordable.

Fewer buildings would be demolished, because it is less profitable for a 3 floor building to replace a functioning 2 floor building, so there will be **less displacement that causes harm to lower-income residents.**

The lower 3 floor height means that land prices will go up less, so **affordable housing developers can better compete for properties**, and the affordable units will cost less to produce.

We agree with CHJC that:

- "Separately from the zoning, but in the same timeframe, **we urge the Council to support a \$6 million municipal voucher program.** This would consist of a \$5 million/year voucher program allowing low-income households to access the new Inclusionary units, and a \$1 million/year tenant-based voucher program with a preference for immigrant families. Without these vouchers, people below 50% AMI will not be able to find housing in new or existing Inclusionary buildings. Funds could come from the general operating budget or the Harvard PILOT agreement.
- Looking ahead, we urge the City Council to focus on **establishing a mechanism to produce social housing and decommodify the housing stock.** Many cities have embraced social housing, and funding for a pilot was included in the recent state housing bill. Social housing will provide additional housing opportunities for low and moderate income people in mixed income developments. Please include funds for social housing in the upcoming budget."

In addition to those points, we **support any amendment to reduce the loss of housing due to downconversions**, where a 2 or 3 family becomes a single family. **Any changes in the new zoning should apply only to projects with at least 2 units, and should only apply when the number of units is increased.** This change would prevent tearing down a triple decker to replace it with 3 much larger units. It would also mean that a developer can not knock down any building and use the dimensions in the new zoning to build a large single family. This approach follows the solicitor saying it is legal to have different zoning for single family vs. multi-family. **Note- this issue was one of the clear cautions issued in today's NLTP hearing with planning experts.**

We continue to think that there should be **no reduction in project review requirements.** We agree with the many Planning Board members who think the removal of most review will be highly problematic for the new buildings' quality. We think the special permit project review threshold should remain at 50,000 SF— not 75,000 SF.

We agree with many Planning Board members who think their review of larger buildings is important to continue. Many of them suggested **review should start at 20,000 or 25,000 sq. ft.,** especially if the new building will be next to a 3 story building. We think **two community meetings should be required** for buildings that exceed 35' in height.

We ask for more creative Council discussion of how to address the issue of project review. As the planners in the the NLTP hearing stated, the concern is how to balance public input with the risk of litigation. As a possible approach, what if developers of projects below the special permit project review threshold were required to hold 1-2 public community meetings and to maintain a public webpage (such as CoUrbanize) where public input could be given. The advisory review meetings of CDD with the developer could take place on zoom without public comment; CDD staff would ask the developer to respond to the public comment in the meeting. The zoom recording would add transparency and accountability, and would create a public record that could be reviewed as the project progressed.

Lastly, we appreciate the 5,000 SF minimum lot change, in that it will likely lower the number of projects with no affordable inclusionary housing.

Sincerely,

Lee Farris, President
Cambridge Residents Alliance: *Working for a Livable, Affordable and Diverse Cambridge*
<https://www.cambridgeresidentsalliance.org/>

Erwin, Nicole

From: KerryAnn Lawlor <lawlor1219@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:42 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Increase Housing

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Kerry Lawlor

Erwin, Nicole

From: Patrick Ledwith <pledw15@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:41 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for rezoning bill

Dear city council,

I would like to express my support for the (amended) upzoning bill being discussed today. I want to express my strong desire for it to be passed as is, with minimal adjustments.

While I understand the necessity of the already agreed to amendments for compromise, I don't support any further significant changes which would lower the expected number of new units further. This includes a strong opposition to discretionary approval; we cannot enable lawsuits and delay tactics in the middle of a housing crisis.

Best,
Patrick Ledwith, Cambridge resident for 9 years

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jamie Mazzola <jamiemazzola7@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:31 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Citizen Support for New Zoning Ordinance

As a citizen of Cambridge, I support the new zoning ordinance to directly/indirectly enable the development more affordable housing options.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Merced Stratton <mercedstratton@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:17 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition Amendments to Multifamily Zoning Proposal

Dear Cambridge City Council,

My name is Merced Stratton and I am a Cambridge resident writing in support of the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition (CHJC)'s amendments to the multifamily zoning proposal. The cost of housing in Cambridge is a tremendous barrier and rising costs negatively impact current Cambridge residents who are priced out of their neighborhoods. As a recent graduate student, teacher, and artist, I believe that prioritizing affordable housing is vital to supporting the existing community and building the future for a diverse and vibrant Cambridge.

The current 4+2 zoning proposal puts lower and moderate income people at risk of displacement and fails to incentivize the creation of enough affordable housing to protect our Cambridge community members. Instead, I voice my support for the proposed 3+3+3 zoning proposal which will ensure the building of more inclusionary units. Please see CHJC's [letter to councillors](#) for details on their position.

Thank you for your time!

All the best,
Merced Stratton

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ed Abrams <abrams.ed@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:14 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: I oppose the Citywide up-zoning proposal

Dear Council,

As a resident of Cambridge, I STRONGLY urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. The current proposed ordinance raises too many unresolved questions and concerns about its potential impacts. We need to bring in independent experts to help design a plan that addresses our housing needs without compromising the environment, displacing low-income residents, demolishing existing homes, or fundamentally changing the character of our neighborhoods.

The current proposed ordinance will destroy the character and environment of the City of Cambridge. The proposal will allow for a huge reduction in green space and trees, as well as large increase in the amount of non-permeable surfaces. The result will be more flooding and an increase in the heat island effect. Why is the City Council ignoring the unintended negative consequences of the proposed ordinance?

I hope to hear from individual councilors regarding their responses to my concerns. This issue is my number one concern regarding the future of the City. My vote in the next election will hinge on the positions of each councillor.

I believe the Council should allow the current proposal to expire and revisit the issue with a fresh approach in the spring.

Sincerely,

Ed Abrams
80 Wendell Street
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Young Kim <ycknorris@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:10 PM
To: McGovern, Marc; Toner, Paul; Simmons, Denise; Azeem, Burhan; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: Huang, Yi-An; O'Riordan, Owen; Farooq, Iram; Planning Board Comment; Roberts, Jeffrey; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi; Warren, Dominic; Cotter, Chris
Subject: Multifamily Housing Petition

Honorable Co-Chairs and Members of the Ordinance Committee,

CDD has not yet reported back on the Multifamily Zoning Petitions amendments as required by POR 2024 #163, due by 1/16. Today's Ordinance Committee Meeting is not critical, and there is no immediate need to rush the process. CDD's report should include updated Housing Projections based on the latest available housing data and current Zoning Ordinance including the Affordable Housing Overlay provisions. The community should have time to review the amended Petitions and share their feedback before any deliberation takes place.

By CDD concluding that "Under current zoning, residential districts are estimated to produce approximately 70 new units by 2030" in Packet Page 75 of Ordinance Committee Hearing, November 19, 2024, Final Actions Packet ([Ref. 1](#)), the City has lost all credibility for the Multifamily Housing Petition. Just look at the Walden II Project that the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust recently approved construction funding. This project alone will provide 95 units of new family affordable housing exceeding the projected 2030 net new units by 2030. Why were AHO projects in the pipeline ([Ref. 2](#)) not included?

Zoning amendments of this far reaching impact must not have so many questionable actions by the City that seem to indicate City is rushing this process without established goals and metrics to measure the progress toward meeting them; urban planning, thorough analysis of housing needs and robust impact assessment.

On page 12 of Agenda Packet of the City Council Housing Committee August 21, 2024 ([Ref. 3](#)), CDD projected +/- 120 new units by 2030 according to their Citywide Multifamily Analysis. This raises many questions and that apparently were not addressed during subsequent meetings on the Multifamily Housing Petitions since August as outlined below. These must be answered before Ordinance Committee reports back to the City Council.

1. Does August Projection in Ref. 3 mean we could actually end up losing a net 120 units?
2. Why weren't the Housing Projections in Ref. 1 made available to the Planning Board and to the community for their 11/12/2024 and 11/19/24 meetings formally in their Agenda Packet?
3. Why weren't the Housing Projections in Ref. 1 included in the Agenda Packet in time to be reviewed by the Committee and community?
4. Why were Planning Board and Ordinance Committee meetings held on the same day on a major zoning amendments that will change the landscape of Cambridge?
5. Why wasn't there a round table discussion with subject matter experts who we have in abundance in our City? [Professor Forman gave a presentation](#) to the Housing Department on May 8th 2024

Cambridge Housing Committee Meeting and NLTP Committee will be holding a public hearing on "best practices for urban planning" today before the Ordinance Committee Meeting. We need to have a meeting with experts with all different perspectives.

6. Why can't CDD have a consistent housing development projection by 2030 under the current zoning and why were the AHO developments excluded in the projection?
7. Why did the City Council direct CDD to proceed with drafting amendments to the Petition based solely on the Ordinance Committee recommendations without waiting for the Planning Board report?

2030 Projections | Citywide Multifamily Analysis

The following projections are estimates:

1. Current Zoning

by 2030...

± 480
total units created

Resulting in...

± 120
net new units

Including...

± 10
affordable units

1%
Inclusionary

99%
Market-only

% of total projects

Thank you for your attention to this matter,
Young Kim
Norris Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Timothy O'Donnell <Timothy.Odonnell@umb.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:10 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.
Sent from [Mail](#) for Windows 10

Erwin, Nicole

From: cfzurn@comcast.net
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:09 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please Support Citywide Multifamily Zoning

Dear Cambridge City Councilors,

First, **thank you** for your hard work on preparing changes to Cambridge's zoning laws in order to support creating more housing—desperately needed—and, in particular, increasing both multifamily housing and subsidized low-income units. Compromise and reconsideration are hard work, and I am proud of the Council for combing both a commitment to laudatory pro-housing ideals for our city, with an inclusive democratic process that has been responsive to the diversity of opinions on this issue. Congratulations on getting to here.

Second, I write to **urge you to support** the current compromise proposal (4 story as of right, 6 story with 20% affordable, modest setbacks of 5 and 10 feet, etc.), and urge you to vote for it through to completion.

Please do not kick the can down the road—we need more housing asap in order to keep our city affordable for the diversity of people we want to keep and attract in the future.

And please keep the pro-housing ideals foremost in your sights by keeping the 'as of right' directives in the new zoning regulations—you well know that to lose these is to subject almost every concrete building plan put forward, to the personal whims of those with too much time, money, and lawyers at their disposal to get what they want, even if the public good be damned.

You already know all the talking points concerning the proposal, so I won't rehearse them here. I will simply add **my strong voice of support**—support from a single family home owner for a couple of decades in North Cambridge who wants to see more housing and more affordable housing, both throughout Cambridge and in my own neighborhood.

Sincerely,
Chris Zurn

--

Chris Zurn
6 Rindgefield St.
Cambridge, MA 02140
617-866-8961 (mobile)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Heather Hoffman <heather.m.hoffman.1957@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:09 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: today's Neighborhood & Long Term Planning etc. meeting

Is there a way to get a transcript of this meeting?

Heather

Erwin, Nicole

From: Thomas Hentschel <tomhent01@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:02 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; info@abettercambridge.org
Subject: Supporting Citywide multifamily zoning

Dear Council,

Thank you so much for working together on the citywide multifamily zoning proposal! I wanted to share my support for focusing on creating the most housing overall, which seems like the first step to combating the current housing crisis in Cambridge. Don't let the perfect be the enemy of the good.

Thank you,
Thomas

Erwin, Nicole

From: Christopher Cullen <christopher.scott.cullen@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:54 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: in support of citywide multifamily housing

please pass the ordinance!

thanks,
chris cullen

Erwin, Nicole

From: Daniel Mascoop <leinad112@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:53 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In Support of the Original Multi-Family Housing Petition and Some Proposed Amendments

To the City Council,

I'm writing in support of the original multi-family housing petition with some--but not all--of the proposed amendments.

Please reject amendments that serve simply to limit the opportunities for additional housing when lots are redeveloped, such as increasing the minimum lot size or decreasing the as-of-right building size to require special permits for smaller buildings. Also, please consider modifying the ratios of permeable and impermeable open space but reject amendments to increase the total proportion of open space, since concerns about flooding and permeability could be addressed in this way without impacting building size to as great of a degree. In addition, please continue to incentivize inclusionary housing, but please do not do so by making market-rate housing in reasonable in-context scales not economically viable. I believe the "4+2" amendment is a reasonable compromise for these competing concerns. Greater heights than 6 stories for inclusionary buildings also would be fantastic.

My reasons for supporting this are the same reasons that many others have offered and are understood: increasing housing supply helps limit the excessive increases in rent and housing costs (in addition to directly subsidizing inclusionary units) and it helps contribute to our climate change mitigation by allowing more people to live more sustainable lifestyles in Cambridge. In addition, even though this proposal is a radical change from the current zoning code, it only would allow development with dimensions that are completely in line with existing conditions in Cambridge. I'd be happy to discuss this further with you, if you wish.

Fundamentally, this is an effort to allow Cambridge to implement its values of supporting a truly inclusive and just society not just in rhetoric but in action. Our current zoning is leading us to a city where all but the wealthiest will require subsidized housing. We can live in that city, where we close the gates and say it's "full" with some acceptable, subsidized mix of incomes and be satisfied with our seemingly just city. But we know people suffer unnecessarily when we do that, whether elsewhere in our country or internationally, facing oppression, violence, or worsening natural disasters, without the resources and community we have. To address this, our city, along with the rest of the region, commonwealth, and country, must allow more private-sector housing production to provide a fundamental human necessity for all using an existing financially and politically feasible mechanism. There is no good reason why housing, which is artificially constrained by our local laws, should be the limiting factor in maintaining our current community or welcoming other Americans or immigrants, as we are seeing now in the effects of the housing shortage on out-migration from Massachusetts or the migrant crisis (or housing Afghan refugees, or so many other situations). It is clear people want to live here, because it's an economically and socially vibrant and safe place. We can make that a privilege excessively restricted to the wealthiest

and the luckiest, or we can take reasonable actions within our ability to offer this to more, such as passing this zoning petition.

Finally, I am writing to the City Council, because I am under the impression that the Council considers the numbers of emails (and public comments) it receives as an indication of general public sentiment. I want to note that over 23,000 people voted in the City Council elections. While this group excludes non-citizens and youth and many eligible voters choose to not vote, it is immeasurably more democratic and informative than any public comment session of 10s to 100s of residents or fora of self-declared neighborhood leaders. Election after election, Cambridge voters have voted for majorities of pro-housing candidates, and we know that housing is by far the most critical issue to Cambridge residents. These voters know they are electing councilors to pass measures that support housing production in Cambridge to address this crisis. I ask City Council to not give undue credence to emails or public comment, regardless of how the numbers and ratios of supporters and opposers pan out. Please use such fora as methods for learning new ideas or about issues that have not been recognized, but they are ineffective ways to measure public sentiment. The City Council itself is the most representative body of Cantabrigians that exists, and its current makeup exists because Cantabrigians support housing production.

Sincerely,

Daniel Mascoop
37 Speridakis Terrace, Cambridgeport

Erwin, Nicole

From: James Zall <james@jameszall.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:51 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Cambridge needs more multifamily housing! (Ordinance 1/8/2025)

Dear Members of the Ordinance Committee,

Last year's Resident Opinion poll reported that 66% of us named the high cost of market-rate housing as the #1 issue we want the City to work on. That response does *not* indicate that we're looking for more years of discussion, and certainly not for more decades of the same restrictive, exclusionary zoning that has delivered a persistent and damaging shortage of housing.

The Council has seen projections of what the next few years will bring if we continue with a zoning code designed to limit the size of residential buildings and the number of homes available. A comparison with projections based on the proposed amendments shows substantial improvement if we correct the direction of our zoning laws.

For decades, dispersed responsibility for zoning regulation have allowed some residents to expect (and receive) substantial de facto authority to control the numbers and characteristics of buildings and people in "their" neighborhoods. This is not a path to just or effective governance in a representational democracy.

The proposal you're now considering comes with more of the data, analysis and hearings that zoning-reform opponents have requested, as well as more effective provisions that pro-housing advocates have called for. Reform opponents have already gained amendments that reduce the number of residential lots to which these reforms will apply. And yet, they are not satisfied and are circulating more demands to keep our zoning restrictive and exclusionary.

I ask the Committee (and the Council) to yield no more ground on their goal of allowing more housing and less inequity. Please advance either the original (6) or the compromise (4+2) proposals as expeditiously as possible.

James Zall (homeowner)
203 Pemberton St
North Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Benjamin Lehmann <benvlehmann@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:50 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for zoning measure

Dear City Council members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Benjamin Lehmann

Erwin, Nicole

From: Estefania Lamas <c.estefania.lamas@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:50 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Young professional in support of multifamily housing ordinance

To the honorable Cambridge City Council,

First, I would like to thank you all for your service: I am a Cambridge resident of over 6 years residing in the Harvard Square neighborhood at 14 Remington St, Apt 201, Cambridge, 02138.

I am a young professional in the clean energy industry writing in support of building more housing across Cambridge to increase affordability for all residents. After hearing stories of countless friends, colleagues, young families, and elderly residents being priced out of our beloved, eclectic, and vibrant city: I urge City Council to end exclusionary zoning and pass the multifamily housing ordinance in its current form with no further amendments.

It would make a tremendous difference in the lives of residents young and old, and would be a dream for me and many others to be able to stay here through all stages of life.

I have enjoyed many of your efforts to grow an inclusive community, including the Cambridge Block Party. I greatly appreciate the services Cambridge provides to residents like weekend closures of Mem Drive and services for my neighbors and community like the Cambridge Senior Center and the programs from the Economic Opportunity and Development Department.

Thank you for the work you have done on increasing multifamily housing, and for considering residents of all ages who support increased housing.

Thank you,
C. Estefania Lamas-Hernandez

Erwin, Nicole

From: Timothy Zumbo <timothyzumbo@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:47 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; planningboardcomment@cambridge.gov
Subject: Supporting Cambridge Multi Family Bill

Dear City Council Members,

I hope this message finds you well. My name is Tim Zumbo, and I have lived in Cambridge for two years. I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed six-story multifamily housing ordinance currently before the City Council.

As someone who has experienced firsthand the challenges of finding housing in our city, I believe this ordinance is a vital step toward addressing the ongoing housing crisis in Cambridge. By legalizing six-story buildings across the city, we can build more housing inventory, offering more opportunities for people to live here and reduce the risk of displacement, which has already affected many of my friends and family living here longer than me.

I fully support ending current zoning restrictions and making it easier to build diverse housing options throughout Cambridge. This ordinance will not only increase the availability of affordable housing, but it will also foster greater inclusivity and diversity within our community. I urge you to adopt the multifamily housing ordinance as written and pass it into law.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Best,
Tim Zumbo

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hannan Rhodes <hannan@laminarcollective.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:45 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Vote yes on multifamily ordinance

My name is Hannan Rhodes and I am a resident of mid-Cambridge and hope to spend the rest of my life here. It is almost impossible to think I can in this market and economy even as a software engineer like myself. In large part due to artificially low housing supply in Cambridge.

Please vote yes on the proposed ordinance and to what is right for the citizens on Cambridge now and the future. It is what the people want.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Matthew Schreiner <matschr@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:45 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Four and more sories as of right

Dear City Council,

I'm glad to see proposals allow more housing in Cambridge, though density is high, many people want to live here. My concern is that we won't get any net gains in housing for poor and middle income households. I expect that many of the sites that would be redeveloped currently are older and lower rent.

If we replace a three-decker with three reasonably priced units, with, say, eight units in a four story building, we would get eight new expensive units, but lose the original three. Even if 20% of units are inclusionary, that would be one or two affordable units, still a net loss. At six stories and 12 units, property and construction costs would be going up, it's not clear that that brings us anything either.

In any case, there is a substantial population that wouldn't meet the 50% of AMI threshold for income, and given the insufficient availability of housing vouchers, we'd need city funding for those. The state bond bill is pointing at another way out, to build social housing. Yes, the City of Cambridge, using its borrowing ability to build housing owned by the city or some other public entity, to provide permanently affordable units, and maintaining a community not at the mercy of market forces.

Thank you,
Matthew Schreiner
26 Grozier Rd.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Candace Young <ecadnacyoung@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:44 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Cc: City Manager
Subject: Zoning

I listened to the forum this afternoon which was terrific and thank you for holding it and I am sure it has given you a lot to discuss in moving forward with that "bold action".

I took away a few things that I hope you incorporate into your thinking.

First and foremost is to have a vision of what Cambridge wants to be. Someone termed it "a version of ourselves"-do we know? They also made reference to an exercise that was spatially represented which would be so helpful in allowing citizens to visualize what the city sees as a great example of an affordable housing unit and how it would fit into an existing neighborhood. All we keep seeing are renditions of nightmare potentials.

The speakers reaction to the setback and open space guidelines was interesting because, as they point out, it needs context. They encouraged innovation and creativity. They also said they could not envision what 30% open space would look like. If they cannot envision this, assure yourselves that we, the citizens, cannot either. We just end up feeling that more is better when we should be asking what happens with that space and in that space?

They also pointed out that developers cannot see or decipher what the community wants. Again, we need to define what version of ourselves we want to be and define that for developers. If this is defined, there is less risk that developments will be objected to. We will know what to expect and it will fit into with how we want our city to look.

Lastly, they said you could take A bold action and implement it as a pilot program encompassed within a series of next steps. The emphasis on process and not just an ordinance.

Again, I applaud you for listening to the speakers and hope that the next "bold action" is something we can all support as part of an ongoing process.

Respectfully,
Candace Young
15 1/2 Shepard Street

I also want to point out that Councilor Nolan said that this effort has been worked on for 5 years "but citizens don't know that". I ask, whose fault is that? There was a lot of discussion today and support for citizen engagement-I think it should be a priority for communication. Each of you has your own way of communicating with those who sign up for your email but there should be a consistent way to communicate the priorities of the council and actions being discussed. It is not easy to wade through the detail information online-I have tried. Also many of the people working for the city cannot attend these meetings so if there was one place that showed the priorities and major citywide actions, perhaps we would all know the next time.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Annabel Winterberg <annabel.winterberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:41 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for Multifamily Zoning

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Annabel, I am a Cambridge employee and a renter on Meacham Road.

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Annabel

Erwin, Nicole

From: Richard Krushnic <rkrushnic@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:40 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Multifamily zoning

I sent a draft of the following by mistake about a half hour ago. Sorry, please replace with this corrected letter:

Of the remaining two options that are receiving considerable support in Council, 3+3+3 protects low and moderate-income households from the displacement that would be caused by 4+2 in Eastern Cambridge. 4 stories as of right encourages tearing down 3 deckers--the most affordable market-rate housing in the city--and replacing them with up to 9 units of much more expensive housing, and no affordable units. 4 stories as of right encourages this much more than 3 stories as of right.

Both 3+3+3 and 4+2 support inclusionary units, but 3+3 moreso, since anything above 3 stories must be inclusionary, instead of anything above 4 stories.

Both proposals defend the competitiveness of AHO development, by allowing the AHO go to 9 stories. I am a member of both the Cambridge Residents Alliance and the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition. Both organizations support 3+3+3, and both consider the potential harm to low and moderate-income households of 4+2 they would prefer the zoning to die, if 3+3+3 is not adopted.

CResA and I, in addition, support 5' side and rear setbacks, at least 50% permeable open space, and normal design review, in order to maintain a good quality of life in the city. open space.

In your efforts to do good, pay attention to the harm.

Erwin, Nicole

From: William Navarre <navarre.mit@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:32 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Re: PASS CAMBRIDGE UPZONING -- Ordinance Meeting Public Comment 1/8

[re-sending with the correct email address for the city clerk -- sorry!]

If density in Cambridge fails to provide affordability in the most direct sense, it should at the very least allow the rich to (voluntarily!) take up less space and allow for affordability somewhere else in the region.

I think it's right that I leave it to Cantabrigians to determine the exact form in which the ordinance now before City Council will pass, but I hope it passes in some form quickly, without endless delay and study, and I hope it provide for as much housing to go up in Cambridge as possible.

Our region, our environment, and the dreams of millions of Americans to one day live in a place as non-automobile-oriented as Cambridge -- or even as Medford, where I now reside -- cannot wait.

I think that building more densely will ultimately make Cambridge more affordable. Failing that, at least the luxury housing won't take up so much room, and there will be something left for the rest of us somewhere relatively conveniently nearby, T-accessible, etc.

Mandating that Cambridge's luxury housing be low density is a mandate that the rich must consume more land than they'd like, and it guarantees that communities like mine become gentrified more rapidly than they otherwise might.

I also think that Cambridge and its elected representatives should recognize that they are in a privileged location within our region and that many people throughout the region -- and throughout the whole of New England -- would consider the amenities available in Cambridge life-changing.

I fight hard in my own community to allow housing to go up, and I am proud of my city officials for doing what they can to welcome more people. But I recognize the reality that your community, due to its central location and vast amount of wealth, has the ability to do far more than mine could, and far more easily. Please take that into account as you consider this policy.

WILLIAM NAVARRE
108 MEDFORD ST #1B
MEDFORD, MA 02155

~~William Navarre

Erwin, Nicole

From: Richard Krushnic <rkrushnic@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:20 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Multifamily zoning

Of the remaining two options that are receiving considerable support in Council, Only 3+3+3 protects low and moderate-income households from the displacement that would be caused by 4+2 in Eastern Cambridge. 4 stories as of right encourages tearing down 3 deckers--the most affordable market-rate housing in the city--and replacing them with up to 9 units of much more expensive housing, and no affordable units. 4 stories as of right encourages this much more than 3 stories as of right.

Both 3+3+3 and 4+2 support inclusionary units, but 3+3 moreso, since anything above 3 units must be inclusionary, instead of anything above 4 units.

Both proposals defend the competitiveness of AHO development, by allowing the AHO go to 9 stories. I am a member of both the Cambridge Residents Alliance and the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition. Both organizations support 3+3+3, and both consider the potential harm to low and moderate-income households of 4+2 they would prefer the zoning to die, if 3+3+3 is not adopted.

CResA and I, in addition, support 5' side and rear setbacks, at least 50% permeable open space, and normal design review, in order to maintain a good quality of life in the city. open space.

In your efforts to do good, pay attention to the harm.

Whereas 4+2 1) encourages more tear downs to be replaced by 4 stories of up to 9 much more expensive units, with no affordable housing; and does nothing to protect the competitiveness of AHO developments.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Shell <susan.shell@bc.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:09 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition as currently proposed. Among the issues not adequately considered are 1) supplementary public transportation; 2) demographics. Is the increased housing to mainly favor young urban professionals (eg, recent grads of Harvard and MIT), or working class families with several children, or the elderly and disabled, or....? Plans as currently writ are likely to favor mainly the young, single, and able, with strong future economic prospects. If that is what we want our city to be like, it should be a clear and forthright decision -- not hidden behind "affordable housing" rhetoric. The question is: affordable to whom?. If this is not what the Council and residents of Cambridge indeed have in mind, more work is needed, on such issues as transportation, size of units, accessibility, etc. Otherwise Cambridge residents present and future will not be well served.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jean Murphy <ireland344@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:04 PM
To: City Clerk; City Manager; Nolan, Patricia; Toner, Paul; Zusy, Catherine; McGovern, Marc; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Wilson, Ayesha; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Simmons, Denise
Subject: Multi-Family Housing Zoning

I will not be able to take part on Wednesday. Here are some of my thoughts on the "proposed zoning" but I am hopeful that plans are not finalized and the council members will actually listen to the concerns of the residents that will be impacted by the changes. My understanding is Corcoran Park (near the Haggerty School) is on the list for redevelopment. Not only the residents being displaced, but architectural models show some buildings built up to six stories and limited parking. The residents were told once construction is concluded, they apply for units. But, unfortunately, they will be priced out. For the homes around the area will be losing out on sunlight and traffic will pick up. It is already a condensed area and at times cars travel above the speed limit and stop signs. With added residents and more cars, it will only increase.

It saddens me to see the changes that aren't always for the good strip this City of its unique character and replace empty storefronts that once housed family owned business and new apartment buildings where houses once stood just fit more people into a small space and the loss of community.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Paige Boehmcke <paige.boehmcke@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:01 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Fwd: In strong support of Citywide Multifamily Zoning proposal

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

From: Paige Boehmcke <paige.boehmcke@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Jan 8, 2025 at 2:45 PM
Subject: In strong support of Citywide Multifamily Zoning proposal
To: <council@cambridgema.gov>
Cc: <clerk@cambridgma.gov>

Dear Cambridge City Council,

Happy New Year! I hope this message finds you well. I am writing to express my strong support for the Citywide Multifamily Zoning proposal and to urge the Council to prioritize the creation of housing overall, including subsidized inclusionary housing.

My husband and I have been renting a basement apartment in Cambridge for the past four years. Despite our combined income of over \$200K—stemming from my role as a management consultant and my husband's position as a customer success manager—and our frugal financial decisions, we find ourselves unable to buy a home in this city. As a result, we've made the difficult choice to move out of Cambridge.

During my eight years in Boston—six of which have been in Cambridge—I have witnessed rents skyrocket, affecting not only the most vulnerable residents but also families like ours. This housing crisis is unjust and pushes many into precarious living situations, which is troubling and detrimental to our community.

I appreciate the Council's efforts to develop a compromise proposal to allow citywide multifamily zoning "as of right." While this compromise may not address every concern, it is a significant step toward improving housing affordability in Cambridge. I urge you to support the current proposal.

Thank you for your commitment to addressing the housing crisis. I look forward to seeing positive change in our community.

Best regards,

Paige Boehmcke
16 Shepard St Apt G, Cambridge (former address)
908-358-8517
paigeboehmcke@gmail.com

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Paige Boehmcke

www.paigeboehmcke.com

(908) 358-8517

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jessica Sheehan <jess.sheehan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:57 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: support for multifamily zoning proposal + thoughts on specific amendments

Dear Council,

I'm writing to ask you to advance the multifamily zoning proposal either in its original form or with some or all of the current compromise amendments. I'm wary of any new amendments which would seek to undermine the overall effectiveness of the proposal or of any of its main goals.

In particular, the introduction of any discretionary approval would open the door to litigation. Even the *threat* of lawsuits reduces the number of sites the proposal would apply to in practice, effectively preventing some developments from even being proposed. Where the threat doesn't kill housing outright, it still drives up costs that are then reflected in rents and home prices. Discretionary review is inherently inequitable, because the threat of litigation is unequal across the city and among different demographics. Who is likely to sue, or credibly threaten to sue, in order to block housing, and where do they live?

The answer is: **Well-off people are much more likely to sue, and they tend to live in the very areas of the city which our current exclusionary zoning keeps off-limits to most multifamily and affordable housing. To add discretionary review back in would be to replicate the existing exclusion, just with extra steps and more legal fees. I strongly believe that any effort to reintroduce special permit requirements must be rejected entirely.**

On the currently proposed compromise amendments:

- The change from 6 stories to 4+2 is reasonable, and in keeping with the original proposal's goal to significantly boost affordable home production through the inclusionary housing policy.
- I think the change from no side and rear setbacks to 5ft may cost us some housing. As someone who cares a lot about maximizing the number of homes this proposal is likely to yield, it's not a change I like or think is needed, but I understand it's important to others in the community and believe that compromises like this are a healthy part of the democratic process.
- The change to requiring a minimum lot size of 5000 sq ft for 5 and 6 story buildings would be significant, but I don't have a great handle on *how* significant. If it is intended to substantially restrict the number of sites large enough for developments to trigger inclusionary, or if the citywide distribution of sites that large means adopting this change would effectively block inclusionary development in some neighborhoods, then I would ask the Council to reduce the minimum lot size in order to avoid those effects. But if that's not the case, then this change strikes me as a major but workable concession.

I appreciate the tremendous amount of work this Council and City staff has put into getting this proposal where it is today. I know it hasn't been easy, and it's not done yet. **Thank you for taking up this difficult**

but vital work in earnest. It requires political courage to take real action to address our housing crisis, when the easier option would be to simply delay. Thank you.

Sincerely,
Jess Sheehan
Plymouth St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ian McGoldrick <ian.mcgoldrick.9@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:47 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily housing

To the City Council of Cambridge, Massachusetts,

My name is Ian McGoldrick, and I currently reside at 100 Memorial Drive in Cambridge, Massachusetts. My wife and I have lived in this apartment for the past 4 ½ years. I am writing to express my support for the proposed ordinance that would allow for more multi-family housing to be built in Cambridge, eliminate exclusionary zoning practices, support six-story multi-family developments across the city, and plan for the further growth and development of our community to accommodate young families.

I urge the City Council to adopt the proposed multi-family housing ordinance as written and to pass it into law without delay.

Currently, my wife and I can afford to live in Cambridge due to our fortunate upbringing in households that encouraged us to pursue higher education and enter careers that pay salaries capable of covering the high cost of rent in Cambridge. Despite this, we still share our two-bedroom, 800-square-foot apartment with another couple as roommates. The apartment has one bathroom, and our first child is due to arrive on or around January 17th. We are likely to remain in this apartment because it is the only option within our budget.

Although our building markets itself as luxury housing, the only true luxury is the view. The ceilings frequently leak water, the heating system is unreliable, there is no in-unit laundry, the communal laundry machines are often broken, and there is no dishwasher. The kitchen and bathroom feel like they are straight out of a 1952 dormitory catalog, and the single-pane windows allow constant drafts of cold air. We are fortunate that the building covers the heating bill—otherwise, we could not afford to live here during the colder months.

We have looked into purchasing a home in Cambridge, but any property with enough space to raise a family is likely out of our reach. The high cost of housing is negatively impacting Cambridge residents and creating an "opportunity cost" due to the lack of affordable options. While this cost may not be a visible line item in someone's budget, the toll on our community is real. Young families and professionals are being driven away from Cambridge and Massachusetts in general because they cannot afford to live here. This exodus is depriving our city of future generations, weakening our schools, public services, and community vibrancy.

In other communities around Massachusetts with exorbitant housing costs, we are seeing school systems becoming underfunded and property values declining due to the lack of demand from young families. Why would families want to move to a city where schools are defunded and the ageing population resists necessary investments in schools and services for the youth? While it is wonderful that our elderly neighbors are living longer, healthier lives and aging in place, this also limits housing availability for the next generation. As lifespans continue to increase, Cambridge must build more housing to support both environmental goals and the long-term economic and social health of our city.

My parents immigrated here from Ireland on a Donnelly Visa in 1990, and they were welcomed into this community of Greater Boston. I was born at Beth Israel in Boston and I grew up in Waltham and later Newton, Massachusetts—both in multi-family homes. This upbringing was formative for me and a wonderful way to grow up. Having other children as immediate neighbors made life easier for my parents and more fun for us as kids. It was simple for us to run downstairs and play, and our parents had peace of mind knowing there was a small community of both kids and adults looking out for us. Growing up in Multi-family housing was a blessing that taught me the value of living as a part of a wider community and better equipped me for life in this ever more isolated society. I now seek to live here in Cambridge among a community of passionate and dedicated neighbors who evidently care deeply about this community judging by all of the testimony these past months. Please allow me the opportunity to more permanently join this community with your votes tonight.

We need more multi-family housing in Cambridge to strengthen and enrich our community. I respectfully urge the Council to pass this ordinance without delay, support the 4+2 multifamily housing plan, and build housing for all.

Very respectfully,
Ian McGoldrick

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bonner-Weir, Susan <Susan.Bonner-Weir@joslin.harvard.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:45 PM
To: Azeem, Burhan; Nolan, Patricia; Simmons, Denise; Toner, Paul; McGovern, Marc; jsbrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk; Siddiqui, Sumbul
Subject: Oppose rezoning petition

As a longtime Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do to increase affordable housing without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Susan B Weir
2 Larchwood Dr
Cambridge

PLEASE NOTE: This message is intended for the use of the person to whom it is addressed. It may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient, your use of this message for any purpose is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please delete the message and notify the sender so that we may correct our records. See our web page at <http://www.bilh.org> for a full directory of Beth Israel Lahey Health sites, staff, services and career opportunities.

Erwin, Nicole

From: demian szyld <dszyld@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:37 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: in support of ending exclusionary zoning/allowing multifamily citywide

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Demian Szyld
68 Otis Street #2

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Shell <susan.shell@bc.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:36 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov; +ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov; +jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov; +amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition as currently proposed

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition as currently proposed. Among the issues not adequately considered are 1) supplementary public transportation; 2) demographics. Is the increased housing to mainly favor young urban professionals (eg, recent grads of Harvard and MIT), or working class families with several children, or the elderly and disabled, or....? Plans as currently writ are likely to favor mainly the young, single, and able, with strong future economic prospects. If that is what we want our city to be like, it should be a clear and forthright decision -- not hidden behind "affordable housing" rhetoric. The question is: affordable to whom?. If this is not what the Council and residents of Cambridge indeed have in mind, more work is needed, on such issues as transportation, size of units, accessibility, etc. Otherwise Cambridge residents present and future will not be well served.

Best, Susan Shell
Cambridge resident

Erwin, Nicole

From: Matthew Sutton <matthewfsutton@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:28 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Request - HALT ALL UPZONING proposals - Immediately- please read- time sensitive

Dear city counselors

I am writing to have you consider my opposition to UPZONING proposals that are being put forward by our city government. There simply is too much housing density in the city. Moreover not enough parking and traffic has been badly compromised by the presence of an increasing number of bike lanes. As the City are also offering daycare and access to public schools and the growing city indebtedness and looming financial strains cannot meet the demands. The issue of housing has significant secondary effects on the financial well-being of the city, which is beginning to buckle

In Summary. I STRONGLY OPPOSE - ALL UPZONING on the table and suggest we call the halt to this process immediately!

Given all the comments and controversy around the "up zoning", the responsible action is to pause and submit a better proposal, IMMEDIATELY!

If you won't, amend the current ordinance language to include:

- 1) Anything taller than base zoning requires a special permit or other design review or oversight. Require parking internal to all multi unit dwellings
- 2) Minimum 40% open space
- 3) Minimum 10' setbacks side and 20' setbacks rear

Sincerely

Matthew Sutton
Resident and tax payer - Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gary Dmytryk <dmytryk@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:26 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Lee Farris
Subject: Multi-family zoning proposal

Dear Councillors,

I am neither an expert in housing and zoning, nor do I aspire to be one, but as a civic-minded resident I have found it difficult to keep up with the variety of housing and zoning proposals in recent years. One of the recommendations of the Envision process was to incentivize development on the city's major corridors. As a resident of North Mass Ave I can tell you that a study group has been convened on this issue, which will probably recommend amending the zoning to allow taller buildings on North Mass Ave. This is an idea with broad support but it hasn't happened yet. Why is it taking so long?

Meanwhile, the Council is discussing other citywide multi-family zoning proposals that are sparking much disagreement among residents. I do not understand the rush to push these contentious proposals forward while the more broadly supported idea for development on our main corridors has still not resulted in new zoning.

Of the various multi-family zoning possibilities in front of the Council today, I hope you will choose to support the proposal which will most benefit our lower and middle income households, which seems to be the 3+3 idea, which aims to create more housing opportunities and cause less displacement for this group.

On a related matter, I believe that the design review process produces better projects and I would urge the Council to retain required design review for future buildings.

Thank you for your consideration,

Gary Dmytryk
2440 Mass Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: Louise Venden <lvenden@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:21 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Ordinance Committee Hearing
Attachments: Public Comment Ordinance Committee Meeting January 8.docx

Please include the attached comments on meeting minutes. I hope to make my comment today remotely..too cold.

--

Louise Venden
617-694-1389

You are either part of the solution or you are part of the problem.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Shelley Rieman <shelleyrieman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:22 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Cc: <cresa-ec@googlegroups.com> com
Subject: multi-family housing

Dear Councilors,

I just read Cathy Hoffman's excellent letter and I agree with her on all points. Neighborhood groups such as Cambridge Residents Alliance, Cambridgeport Neighborhood Assn., and CCC have spent hours and hours trying to understand and explain the variations and implications of the possible multi-family housing configurations. I'm sure groups in other parts of Cambridge have expended equal energy on this very important issue.

In my opinion, what's most important is equity and fairness. One and two-family new construction should not be permitted at all in any areas of Cambridge. And Cambridgeport, The Port, Riverside and East Cambridge should NOT be the neighborhoods where the majority of 6+ floors are built. Cambridge needs to fulfill our commitment to equal access to affordable housing for all of our citizens.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Shelley Rieman
201 Franklin St.

Public Comment Ordinance Committee Meeting January 8, 2025

Cambridge faces an ongoing critical shortage of middle income and affordable housing reflected in the 3 year decrease in households earning less than \$150,000 a year of 12% and a corresponding increase of 12% in households earning over \$150,000 a year. Mean incomes increased by 22% during that 3-year period.

Despite modifying zoning requirements, implementing the Affordable Housing Overlay ordinance, and dramatically reducing parking requirements, Cambridge continues to fall short of increasing housing units to meet the needs of city staff, retail and health care workers, small businesses, young people early in their careers and elderly trying to remain in their neighborhoods.

Land is limited, and developers face increased costs of both construction and financing. Average numbers of residential building permits issued have dropped by 47% from the 5 years 2015-2019 to the years 2020-2024. Some suggest that nothing can be done to alter the course of these changes. Clearly the aggressive steps taken by City leadership have not been enough. The 2024 Progress Report on Envision Housing goals set in 2016 showed that only 25% of the 12,500-unit goal had been met from 2018 through 2023 with only six more years to achieve that target.

The Multifamily Housing Zoning petition opens more neighborhoods to housing development, and adds more outreach requirements for developers and neighborhood review procedures like the Public Advisory Boards to ensure a balance between achieving desperately needed additional housing and retaining essential characteristics of individual neighborhoods.

Cambridge continues to tout its status as the most diverse city in the Commonwealth. In many ways it is, but excluding multifamily development in less dense, higher value neighborhoods has closed off opportunities for adding housing in well located places with nearby amenities. Diversifying neighborhoods includes allowing a broader range of people from different stages of their careers, different backgrounds and resources that will foster understanding and collaboration underpinning community.

With MFH zoning developers locate sites were effective outreach and planning will enable them to increase the numbers of units built to levels required to meet City housing goals and energize our robust diverse community.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Blacklow, Stephen Charles <stephen_blacklow@hms.harvard.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:19 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Zoning proposal comments

Dear Councilors,

I have been a Cambridge resident for more than 20 years, and I strongly oppose the 4 + 2 multifamily Zoning proposal. The 4 + 2 plan will not result in an increase in affordable housing stock for individuals or households of lower or moderate income. Instead, it will amplify the housing affordability crisis by stimulating the development of expensive, market-rate four-story housing units. It will result in the displacement of people who currently reside in older units that are affordable for conversion into unaffordable market-rate 4 story buildings, and line the pockets of developers rather than meet the city's goals of increasing the availability of inclusionary housing.

If the city's goal is truly to increase the number of inclusionary housing units, it should propose a plan that increases the number of affordable units by maximizing the incentives for creation of affordable units, not market-rate units. The city should also use its revenue to acquire property that can be used to support the construction of mixed or purely inclusionary residential housing, and/or develop a financial assistance program to enable people on the cusp to afford living in Cambridge.

An alternative proposal has been proposed by councilors Wilson, Sobrinho-Wheeler, Nolan, and Zusy as an alternative to 4 + 2. It would allow 3 floors by right, an additional 3 if 20% inclusionary, and a total of 9 floors if fully inclusionary. This proposal should be considered instead. It is also critical to maintain appropriate guardrails in the final legislation to ensure that construction is safe and as green as possible for long-term sustainability.

Sincerely,

Stephen Blacklow
16 Ash St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kathy Watkins <kathywatkins@mac.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 2:04 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Oppose 4+2 and ask for compromise

Dear City Councilors,

Although I support ending single family zoning, I oppose the current 4+2 proposal which will benefit the wealthy at the expense of the more rent burdened residents.

The current proposal will lead to even more displacement and gentrification by incentivizing teardowns of older housing in favor of new, very expensive units.

As a compromise I ask the council to revisit Councilor Wilson's proposal – the 3+3+3 which would give three floors as of right city-wide and an additional three floors with 20% of the units being inclusionary and three more floors if the building is 100% below market rent. This proposal would result in 95% of new units being built as what was originally proposed.

Separate from zoning but in the same time frame, I ask the council to prioritize a six-million-dollar tenant-based municipal voucher program. I also ask that the council include in the next budget funds for social housing or at least a study of social housing in Cambridge. It is vital that we institute a mechanism to de-commodify the housing stock and give tenants a chance to be substantially involved in the development and management of their housing. Simply depending on the so-called free market to lower rents is a fantasy no matter how much housing we build.

I see no reason to change our zoning if the result is more market rate housing that is out of reach of most of the people who will give public comment tonight and leaves out the most rent burdened.

Kathy Watkins
90 Fawcett St #511
02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Saira Prasanth <prasanth@saira@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:58 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Public comment on current multifamily zoning proposal
Attachments: Cambridge Multifamily Zoning Proposal Comment 1.8.25.docx

Dear Cambridge City Council members,

Please see below for my public comment on the multifamily zoning proposal being considered at today's Ordinance Committee hearing (1/8/2025), which I have also attached as a Word document.

My name is Saira Prasanth, and I am writing to express my opposition to the current version of the multifamily zoning proposal being considered by the Council today. I am a resident of Boston but contribute to organizing in Cambridge. I also study and work at Harvard University as a PhD student in Population Health Sciences, with a research focus in housing and environmental health. As such, I am aware of the urgent need to expand access to affordable housing for Cambridge residents. While ending exclusionary zoning is part of this need, this must be done in such a way that prioritizes rather than marginalizes low-income residents. The current multifamily zoning proposal, which would allow 4 stories as-of-right city-wide with 2 additional stories if 20% of all units are inclusionary, is insufficient to meet the needs of low-income and moderate-income Cambridge renters and would instead impose additional burdens on these households. Given our current commodified housing context, the 4+2 proposal would disproportionately incentivize the construction of very expensive, 4-story, exclusively market-rate developments and the demolition of existing affordable housing stock, adding to exorbitant rent costs and displacing low-income tenants. This would be entirely counterproductive to the Council's goal of reducing housing cost burden and securing stable housing for Cambridge residents.

For this reason, I urge the Council to reject the current multifamily zoning proposal and instead implement stronger incentives for development of inclusionary units, while ultimately working toward producing social housing and decommodifying the housing stock entirely. For instance, the package proposed by Councilor Wilson, and supported by the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition (CHJC), would allow 3 floors as-of-right, 3 additional floors with 20% inclusionary units, and 3 more floors for 100% affordable units. While immediate investment in sweeping inclusionary development and widespread social housing would be strongly preferable and truly advance housing justice, this 3+3+3 compromise would still be much more effective and less harmful than the current 4+2 version. The lower height would prompt development of more inclusionary units, less demolition of existing units, and better opportunities for affordable housing developers to compete for properties and produce affordable units. If the Council does not vote for this 3+3+3 proposal, I urge you to abandon the 4+2 proposal, which would do more harm than good, and instead develop a stronger inclusive process to end single- and two-family zoning, led by Cambridge residents who would be directly impacted by rent burden and displacement. Please stand in solidarity with leaders of the Cambridge NAACP, other organizations, and Cambridge residents to advance housing justice rather than perpetuate injustice.

In line with CHJC recommendations, I also urge the Council to support a \$6 million municipal voucher program to secure access to new inclusionary units for low-income households, funded either by the

general operating budget or the Harvard PILOT agreement. Housing is a human right, and the City of Cambridge has an opportunity to lead the way in putting this principle into practice. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Saira Prasanth
Boston, MA 02132

Dear Cambridge City Council members,

My name is Saira Prasanth, and I am writing to express my opposition to the current version of the multifamily zoning proposal being considered by the Council today. I am a resident of Boston but contribute to organizing in Cambridge. I also study and work at Harvard University as a PhD student in Population Health Sciences, with a research focus in housing and environmental health. As such, I am aware of the urgent need to expand access to affordable housing for Cambridge residents. While ending exclusionary zoning is part of this need, this must be done in such a way that prioritizes rather than marginalizes low-income residents. The current multifamily zoning proposal, which would allow 4 stories as-of-right city-wide with 2 additional stories if 20% of all units are inclusionary, is insufficient to meet the needs of low-income and moderate-income Cambridge renters and would instead impose additional burdens on these households. Given our current commodified housing context, the 4+2 proposal would disproportionately incentivize the construction of very expensive, 4-story, exclusively market-rate developments and the demolition of existing affordable housing stock, adding to exorbitant rent costs and displacing low-income tenants. This would be entirely counterproductive to the Council's goal of reducing housing cost burden and securing stable housing for Cambridge residents.

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Sincerely,
Saira Prasanth

Erwin, Nicole

From: Maddy Bowers <mlbowers@mit.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:59 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily housing ordinance

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for the 4+2 multifamily housing ordinance that would greatly increase housing development across Cambridge. Our city's extremely low vacancy rate and skyrocketing rents are making it increasingly difficult for residents to remain in the community they call home.

I urge you to approve this measure allowing six-story housing construction throughout Cambridge without additional amendments or restrictions. This policy would help address our severe housing shortage, create construction and maintenance jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. With 85-90% of Cambridge's buildings already not conforming to current zoning code, this update is long overdue.

Please vote yes on today's ordinance for multifamily housing without amendments or delay. The future affordability and vibrancy of Cambridge depend on your action today. Thank you for your consideration of this crucial issue.

Sincerely,
Maddy Bowers

Erwin, Nicole

From: Allison Smedberg <allison.smedberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:55 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support multifamily housing for Cambridge families

My husband and I just welcomed our first child into the world 2 days ago. I'm writing in from the hospital during this busy time because the high cost of housing is the #1 issue facing young families like ours in Cambridge. It's critical that we get rid of antiquated zoning laws and allow more multi family housing to be built. You have done great work crafting thoughtful policy and getting lots of community input. Please don't lose your nerve and water the proposal down at the last minute. Young families like ours are counting on you!

Best,
Allison Wilson
55 Plymouth St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Allan Sadun <aesadun@alum.mit.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:40 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily - NO FURTHER RESTRICTIONS!

Dear City Councillors,

Thank you for your patience and dedication in advancing pro-housing legislation. Cambridge rents are out of control and we desperately need as much new housing as we can get in order for so many of us to feel secure in our future here.

Please recall that in 2019, the Boston ZBA was plagued by a [bribery scandal](#). This is the sort of thing that happens when development is governed by discretionary approvals under unclear criteria.

Discretionary approvals means that people unfamiliar with the system will have no chance, while "fixers" and a few well-connected actors will control everything. That's potentially tolerable for large projects, where the developers have the resources to deal with unreasonable complaints and where the projects may genuinely have special planning needs, but it's completely intolerable for small projects where individual property owners are the applicants. It's also a huge corruption risk.

When California legalized ADUs many years ago, very few were built - because the process for building ADUs was byzantine, capricious, and municipally-dependent. Then they streamlined the process, creating consistent statewide criteria for approval - and now ADUs are such a booming industry in California that companies exist to sell prefabricated, pre-approved dwelling units. That's the power of nondiscretionary approvals - it's the only thing that actually works for small projects.

I am not happy about the many restrictions that have been imposed on the new multifamily proposal so far, including:

- Excluding new affordable housing from 70% of residential lots through the minimum-lot-size-for-inclusionary-bonus provision
- Requiring a special permit for projects over 75k sqft (remember that this is the sort of thing that killed 2072 Mass Ave in the AHOv1 era!)
- Adding mandatory side and rear setbacks, which will do almost nothing to enhance the overall liveability of housing (who even uses their tiny little strips of side yard?), but will rather DECREASE the liveability of housing by restricting bedroom and living room size and by taking open space AWAY from rear yards / larger courtyards.

Even **before** these restrictions, CDD projected that this multifamily initiative would **not** build enough housing to meet Cambridge's Envision goals. Still, I believe that with these restrictions, this has the potential to make a difference in Cambridge's housing crisis. Please, no more!

How many more people have to lose their future homes before we will be satisfied?

Best,
Allan Sadun

237 Elm St #1

Erwin, Nicole

From: Peter Hodge <pjhodge47@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:40 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Planning Board Comment
Subject: YES: Support Cambridge's Six-Story Multifamily Housing Ordinance

Dear Council Members,

My name is Peter Hodge, and I have lived in Cambridge for just over a year. While my time here has been relatively short, I already feel deeply connected to this community and hope to make Cambridge my permanent home.

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed six-story multifamily housing ordinance and to urge you to vote YES on this critical step toward building a more inclusive and sustainable city.

This ordinance represents an essential move toward ending exclusionary zoning practices that have limited housing availability and affordability for far too long. By legalizing six-story multifamily housing and reducing restrictive zoning, we can:

- Increase housing inventory to meet the growing demand.
- Enable more people to live in this vibrant and walkable city without fear of displacement.
- Foster a more inclusive community that reflects Cambridge's values.

Many of my friends and neighbors have faced displacement due to the housing shortage. I believe this ordinance is a significant opportunity to address that crisis and ensure that Cambridge remains a city for everyone.

Please vote in favor of adopting the multifamily housing ordinance as written and help make our city a place where more people can thrive.

Thank you for your leadership and for considering the needs of current and future Cambridge residents.

Sincerely,
Peter Hodge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Nicolas Birk <nicolaswilliam96@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:35 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily Housing Support

Dear City Council Members:

My name is Nick, and I have been a Cambridge resident for 2 years. I am currently a graduate student at Harvard School of Public Health. I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. Even when the local rents are within reach, the limited quantity of the inventory and the low quality in many of the units makes it difficult to find a place to live that meets tenants' needs.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Please pass this bill and avoid amendments that would water it down. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Nick

Erwin, Nicole

From: Abby Hill <abby.hill.28@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:34 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: support for multifamily housing

Hello Clerk and Council Members,

I am writing in support of the proposal to allow multifamily housing up to 6 stories throughout all of Cambridge. I am a Cambridge resident and have lived here for most of the past 14 years (in Cambridgeport, East Cambridge, and Mid Cambridge - plus a brief stint in Somerville). I am sad to see many of my friends move to the suburbs (sometimes with very long commutes by car) in order to be able to afford to buy a home, and I am disappointed to think that my family will probably need to do the same eventually. Cambridge is an amazing place to live, if you can afford it, and I would love to be able to stay here. I also wish that Cambridge was a place that teachers, nurses, childcare workers, food service workers, etc. could afford to live - those of us who can (at least for now) afford to live here benefit greatly from their work, and no one wants to live in a community where all the nurses have moved away because there's not enough housing.

I have heard complaints from some residents that increased housing density will increase traffic. I'm sure that some areas will be impacted in different ways, but if more people could live within walking distance to the T or within a short bus ride to their work, traffic would be decreased overall in the region. Making it possible for people to live close to where they work (and close to friends, restaurants, shops, neighborhood amenities, etc.) has a positive impact on the environment in addition to a positive impact on residents' quality of life.

I currently live on Trowbridge Street, near the library, and our neighborhood is a mix of 2 to 7 (at least) story buildings. Having some taller buildings does not detract from the neighborhood feel. On the contrary, I get very discouraged when I walk by a new building that is only 3 stories on a block that already has 4-5 story buildings, or by huge single family homes within easy walking distance to the T that are being renovated (unoccupied) for years when that land could be used to house several families if multifamily housing were allowed there.

Sincerely,
Abby Hill

Erwin, Nicole

From: Paula Cortes <paulavcortes@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:32 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Councillors,

I am a longtime Cambridge resident. I urge you to oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition. Yes, we need more housing, but at what cost? I attended the Ordinance Committee meeting where Councillors suggested changes that were bandied about without much time to consider whether they actually make sense. This is not the way to make policy and to rezone Cambridge. There are too many unresolved questions and issues, and the risk of unintended consequences is too great.

Please look at the photos and images of what this rezoning will do to our neighborhoods. It will destroy liveability in the City. Six story buildings (even 4 story buildings) will tower over their smaller neighbors. Five foot setbacks will not provide the open space we need for sunlight and for plants to grow. We will become a city of canyons and darkness because sunlight will not penetrate, trees will not have sufficient light and space to thrive. **No one wants to live in such an environment. Pausing this process**, allowing for independent professionals to guide us, will allow for a measured review of the housing stock and existing space we already have, and will create policies and zoning which everyone can live with. You can then be proud of what you accomplish.

PLEASE VOTE NO ON THIS PETITION. There is time to work toward policies which will produce housing without destroying our neighborhoods and our environment.

Sincerely,
Paula Cortes
25 Newell Street
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Will Wang <williamwang5041@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:30 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for zoning reform

Hi all,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Will Wang
23 Elm St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ottavio Siani <ottavio.siani@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:31 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote YES on multifamily zoning reform petition

Hi All!

I'm writing in support of the multifamily zoning reform petition. The lack of diverse and affordable housing in Cambridge has forced many of my friends to leave over the last 10 years. I ask you to vote Yes, so that future families have the opportunity to live near friends and relatives, regardless of their financial circumstances.

Best,

Ottavio

Erwin, Nicole

From: Noah Lewis <noahblewis@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:14 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for multi-family inclusionary zoning in Cambridge

Dear City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing units in our city.

Rents in Cambridge have become unbearable for the vast majority of those who would like to live in our amazing city. I have had the pleasure of living in Cambridge for six years and have watched many of my friends and neighbors move away due to rising costs. Cambridge needs more sponsored affordable housing as well as any housing that is cost effective to build to lower costs and maintain our vibrant and diverse community.

I urge you to approve the current zoning petition that would allow for higher-density zoning, including multi-family developments at scales that support inclusionary units, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, support people living more sustainably, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

I also hope you will keep in mind that, even when held at evening hours, the ability to attend public comment sessions of the City Council is a luxury. Many of the Cambridge residents that these increased housing proposals would help most may not have the time or resources to attend and voice their needs.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Noah Lewis
280 Harvard Street, Cambridge MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alice Marbach <alice.marbach@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:15 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily housing comment

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. I love Cambridge, having moved here two years ago. Many of my friends love it here too but think it's inevitable they'd have to move to the suburbs if they start a family, because rent is too expensive here, family housing is too few and buying is totally out of most people's price range.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely, Alice Marbach, 6 Dickinson Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bernice Buresh <b.buresh@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:14 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multi-Family Zoning Ordinance

Dear City Councillors and Members of the Ordinance Committee:

I strongly urge you to let the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition expire and start over with a plan that will truly result in more affordable, livable, environmentally sound housing. With the expertise available in this city, we have a golden opportunity to create something extraordinary and avoid the unintended consequences inherent in the current proposal.

In particular, it is a mystery to me as to why the city would cede much of its oversight and design review to developers and expect something wonderful to come from that. That does not strike me as a responsible way to proceed.

At a minimum, I concur with the following for new construction:

- 1) Anything taller than base zoning should require a special permit or other design review or oversight.
- 2) There needs to be a minimum 40% open space.
- 3) We need minimum 10' side setbacks and 20' setbacks in the rear.

Please go back to the drawing board on this to make sure the outcomes are positive for existing and new residents and are environmentally sound.

Erwin, Nicole

From: karenlme (null) <karenlme@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:12 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Up-Zoning

Begin forwarded message:

From: Karen Eton
Subject: Up-Zoning
Date: 1/8/2025

Subject: Up-Zoning in Historic Neighborhoods in the City of Cambridge
Date: 1/8/2025
To: citycouncil@cambridgema.gov
Cc: cityclerk@cambridgema.gov

Cambridge City Counselors MUST ABORT ALL Up-Zoning decisions IMMEDIATELY that you have created since election/re-election. You MUST LISTEN to the CITIZENS of Cambridge who elected you to your counselorships. That is what you are PAID to do with TAX DOLLARS (income which, interestingly, you recently raised for yourselves, as well as for the City Manager). You have been reflexively nodding your heads to citizrns' valid concerns and continuing to pursue your irresponsible plans. You have NOT even bothered to LISTEN to EXPERTS in URBAN PLANNING!

In yesterday's State Funeral for President James Earl Carter, Jr., it was noted that President Carter led an exemplary life and lived by the words, "May the works I have done speak for me." [9 Timothy 4; 6-8]. He strapped on a carpenter's belt for one week annually, beginning about 40 years ago (and continuing well into his nineties) and worked as a carpenter to raise a house for Habitat for Humanity. That is more powerful and productive than your Up-Zoning schemes. Joan Pickett would not have supported you, either.

Karen Eton at 34 Larchwood Drive, Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: ann stewart <ahstewart@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:11 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: no audio on granicus

don't know who to ask, but i can see video, just can't hear anything.

thanks if you've got any suggestions...

Erwin, Nicole

From: Nicolai Cauchy <savehuron@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:11 PM
To: City Council; Toner, Paul; Simmons, Denise; Siddiqui, Sumbul; McGovern, Marc; Azeem, Burhan; Zusy, Catherine; Nolan, Patricia; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Wilson, Ayesha; City Clerk
Subject: 2 photos justifying OPPOSITION to the Up-zoning
Attachments: 1000025018.jpg; 1000025019.jpg

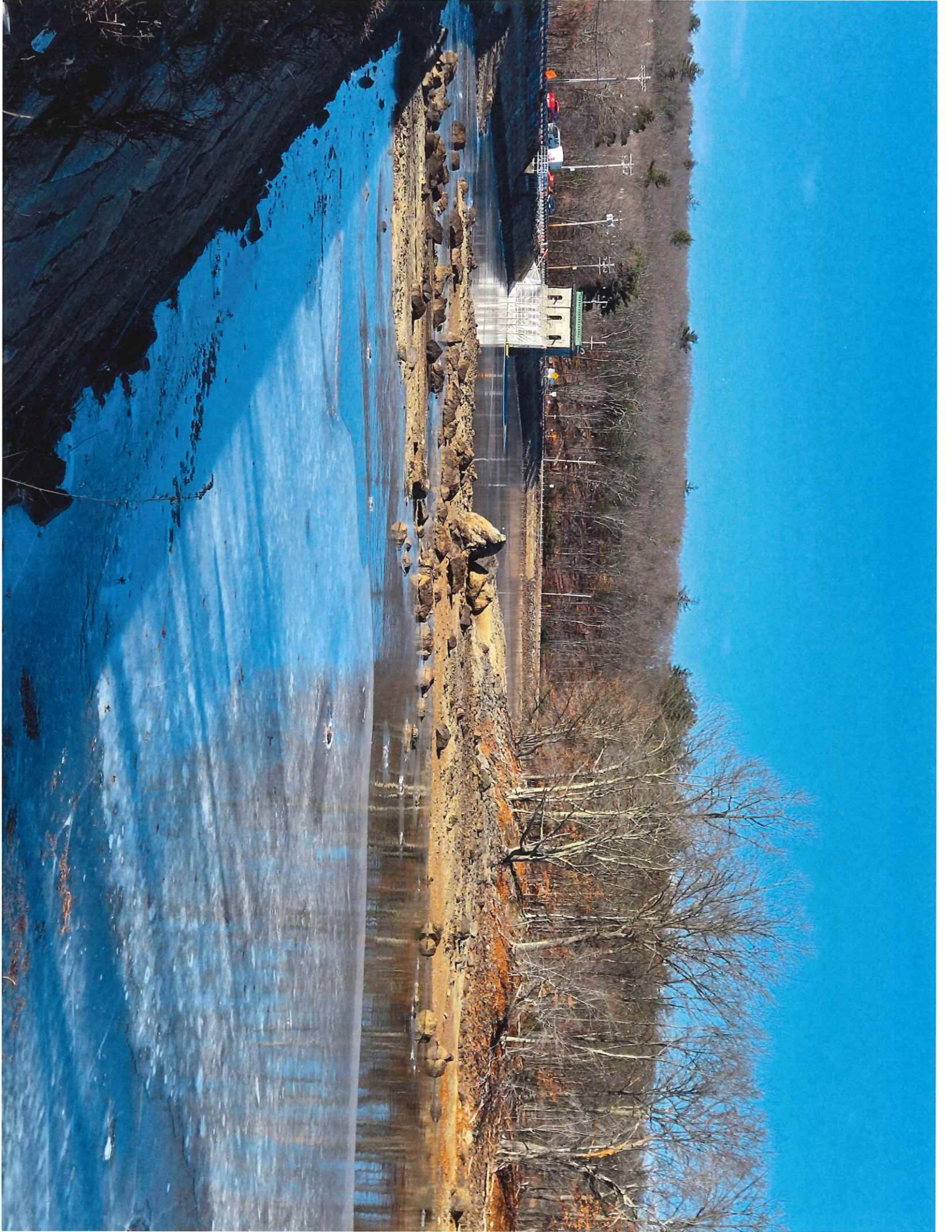
Dear Clerk, Aides, Councilors, and Mayor;

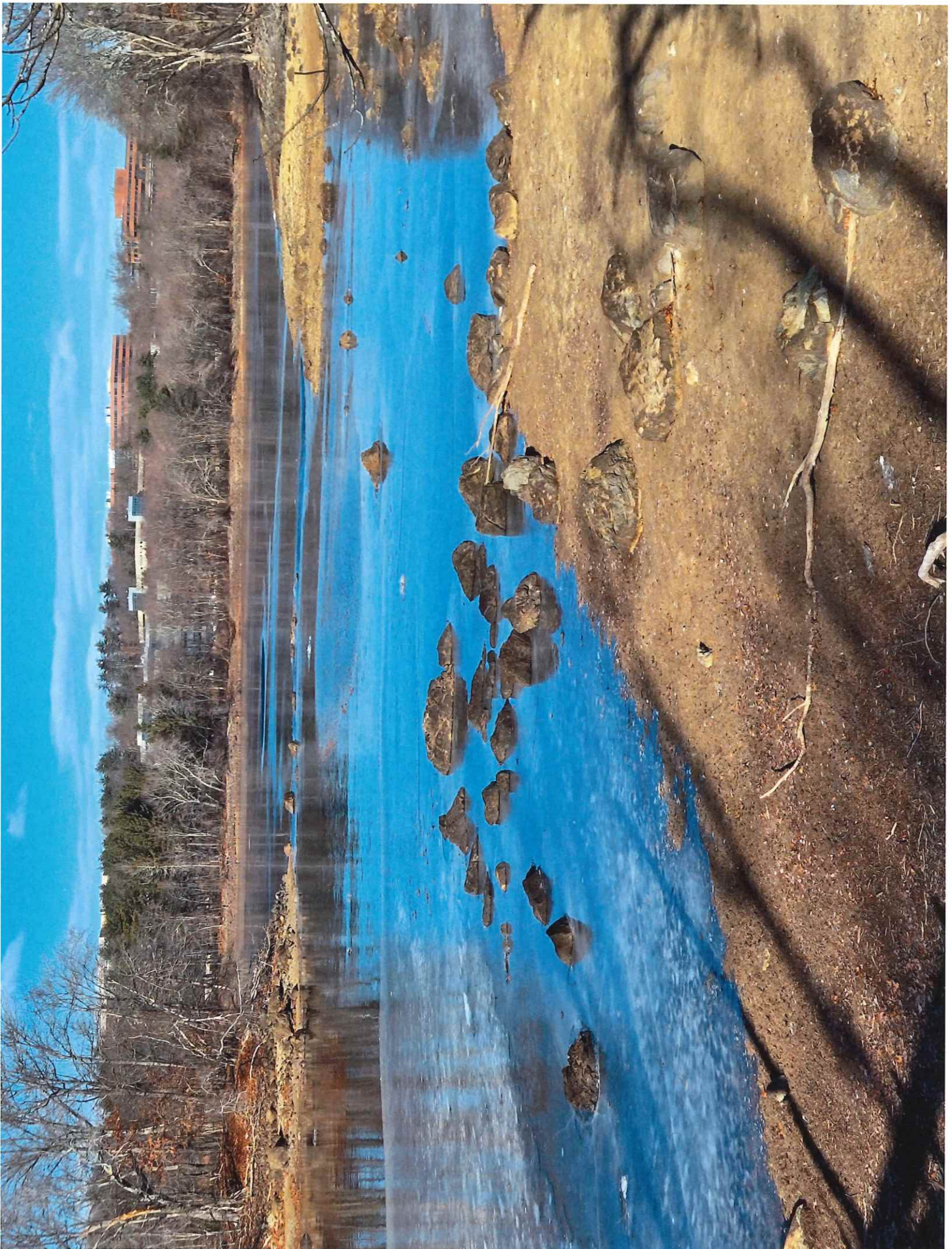
The two attached photos of our reservoir (taken this morning in Waltham) are a direct illustration of one reason for stopping all development in Cambridge, namely the enduring drought. In ordinary years, are reservoirs would have overflowed since the end of October or even earlier in the year ; currently they are about 15 ft below their full level which, in a shallow pond with low slopes as are our reservoirs, represents possibly up to 50% of the volume of available water. Adding to this, the vast surface area dramatically increases evaporation on sunny days, and on Windy days such as today, even in temperatures below freezing.

In light of the water restrictions that haven't placed by the state and even by our own City several of the past 10 years, I urge you to stop all development for the foreseeable future.

Sincerely again,

Nicolai Cauchy, 387 Huron ave.





Erwin, Nicole

From: Catherine Hoffman <catherinebhoffman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:05 PM
To: Wilson, Ayesha; Azeem, Burhan; cathie zusy; City Clerk; Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; McGovern, Marc; Patricia Nolan; Nolan, Patricia; Toner, Paul; Simmons, Denise; Siddiqui, Sumbul; sumbul siddiqui
Subject: multi-family

Dear Councilors,

In these last months (for some, only weeks) we have been bombarded by a kind of mathematical tsunami . Even as someone who has participated in many groups including the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition, the proposals (6 with or without, 4+2, #+3, #+3+3) have been daunting and trying to explain them to others even more so. Some are so alienated and left out, that they prefer letting the zoning expire and begin again which would be fine.

What is the broad objective? To me, it is creating/maintaining housing and neighborhoods in Cambridge that are livable with increased access to those at the lower/lowest income. More housing for the sake of more housing to appeal to a “demographic with means” as a way to lower costs for others is not and never has been possible for this most dense city. Certainly, the unfair exclusionary zoning of 1-2 family’s needs to be lifted whether it will produce more housing or not (given the economics).

Beyond that, the lens should be livability and affordability for residents and families (of many definitions). The 4 +2 proposal is still a boon to developers which will negatively impact displacement especially of those in currently “naturally affordable” units. It will also negatively impact the densest (most economically mixed and affordable) neighborhoods by inviting new housing for a wealthier demographic and taxing the resources (open space, trees, light, parking, water, livability) of those living there now. The 3+3 is better. It mimics more of the neighborhood and is less likely to lead to tear downs for more expensive replacements.

Higher buildings belong on main thoroughfares and squares (especially those which don’t have them) with inclusionary units and vouchers to increase accessibility .

Please use a lens which enables Cambridge to serve its low-income residents and support our multi-generational, multi-peopled neighborhoods

Cathy Hoffman
67 Pleasant st.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sonali Duggal <sonalid@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:05 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Multi family housing

Dear Members of the City Council,

I am writing as a resident of the Port neighborhood to express my strong support for the proposal to legalize multi-family housing citywide. Our neighborhood exemplifies the vibrant community that this proposal aims to foster. As a parent raising 3 kids here, I can attest that dense, diverse neighborhoods like ours are wonderful places for families to thrive.

The multi-family housing in our area has created a rich community where residents of different backgrounds and life stages live as neighbors. This diversity strengthens our neighborhood's character and makes Cambridge a better place to live. The proposed ordinance would help create more of these enriching communities across our city while addressing our critical housing needs.

Sincerely,

Sonali Duggal 79 Norfolk Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Karen Falb <karenfalb@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 1:03 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Please tonight look beyond the sides' possible taunts -

Please tonight look beyond the sides' possible taunts of power plays (to focus - the city certainly needs to maintain fair and respectful order.

There is a need to know what the city actually wants and should want as results: What is the goal? I hope it is to provide housing for more than students and single adults . i.e. middle class city staff including teachers families with children and for the older residents to have quality enough to remain in Cambridge which does not make Cambridge just a huge Alewife -

There are always the drawbacks of proposals that need to be considered before decision making. How much does the decision gain, and how much does it lose? There should be **no shame to those who fear the loss of sunlight, shade, views and good design - safety and parking.** Use common sense.

The Cambridge residents need to be listened to and really heard. We have too much of allowing hearings and not acting about advice. The Planning Board seemed this Monday to be a sham. The CDD doesn't know the neighborhoods. You need more objectivity.

Sincerely, Karen Falb 245 Brattle Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lizzie Baird <embaird2@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:51 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Supporting Cambridge Multifamily Housing

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. I feel that I myself am getting close to being priced out of the city, and I love living here.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Lizzie Baird
Forest Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Charlotte <cmcguinness@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:40 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: New Zoning ordinances

I am concerned that the new ordinances will primarily result in building McMansions and luxury apartments, since it will be up to builders what they want to construct. Langer taller buildings are not necessarily affordable.

The only way this will result in more affordable housing is that, by increasing the amount of expensive luxury housing, existing housing will be devalued. As an owner of existing housing, I am against such a plan.

If we want more affordable housing, that's what we should build. We might do this by providing tax benefits to builders, or subsidized mortgages. I think the process should be put on hold while we determine how to provide more affordable housing. The current plan will only benefit builders and damage the city.

Charlotte McGuinness

Erwin, Nicole

From: Andy N <anash18@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:38 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily housing

Dear Councilors,

I will be speaking tonight in opposition to the 4+2 proposal. The council should have ended exclusionary zoning without tying it to this rushed multifamily proposal. The proposal was elbowed to the top of the council's agenda by people who, rather than allowing the corridors and squares development to unfold, pushed the needs of high-income residents, who could afford market-rate housing, ahead of the most rent-burdened, low- and middle-income communities. For the many weeks since then, community members and some councilors have tried to mitigate the harm by proposing options that include some percent of semi-affordable units.

But even the latest 4+2 version privileges the wealthy because it incentivizes replacing current modest 2- and 3-story housing with taller market-rate development with only the possibility of inclusionary units. Have you asked the Port, Riverside and Cambridgeport if it helps us to add height and density so that we can absorb 80-100% wealthy people? I have listened to every meeting with public comment and don't remember anyone identifying as a Riverside resident.

Lest I be called a NIMBY, I'll note that my neighborhood HAS supported height and density for 100% affordable housing at 116 Norfolk Street. I urge you to walk away from this proposal of gentrification and refocus on creative solutions such as mixed-income social housing and AHO opportunities. Second best would be to move forward on Councilor Wilson's 3+3 option.

Thank you,
Andy Nash
18 Worcester Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Anna Shelton <annashelton407@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:28 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Anna Shelton and I have been living in Cambridge for 3 years now while attending grad school at Harvard.

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. Even when the local rents are within reach, the limited quantity of the inventory and the low quality in many of the units makes it difficult to find a place to live that meets tenants' needs.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Please pass this bill and avoid amendments that would water it down!!

Sincerely,
Anna Shelton

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lydia Thompson <ldthomps@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:18 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Fwd: Please vote to end exclusionary zoning

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

From: Lydia Thompson <ldthomps@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Jan 8, 2025 at 12:15 PM
Subject: Please vote to end exclusionary zoning
To: <council@cambridgema.gov>
Cc: <clerk@cambridgma.gov>

Dear City Council Members,

Thank you for all you do to serve our community. I'm writing to you before your meeting tonight to encourage you to end exclusionary zoning and support multifamily housing throughout the city through the Multifamily Housing Ordinance.

Thank you!
Lydia Thompson
Baldwin

Erwin, Nicole

From: Karan Arakotaram <karan.arakotaram@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:08 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote YES on multifamily zoning reform petition

Hi all,

This is a single issue topic for me and many others. A vote no on multifamily zoning reform is either disagreeing with data showing that increased housing supply reduces rents (or at the very least, limits rents from going up by as much as they would have otherwise) or being beholden to local interests who hide their NIMBYism behind arguments for neighborhood "character."

Please help keep Cambridge affordable, vibrant, and diverse. Vote YES!

Thanks,
Karan

Karan Arakotaram
(203) 668-7368

Erwin, Nicole

From: Andy Troska <atroska13@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:07 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote to support citywide upzoning!

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Andy and I have lived in the Cambridge area for seven of the past 10 years, and recently bought a condo here with my husband. I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Beyond the affordability- and accessibility-related benefits of upzoning, I firmly believe that increased density contributes positively to the vibrancy and diversity of a community. I'm more than willing to endure a bit of construction work and have less parking to live in a city that is growing and thriving rather than staying stuck in the past!

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Andy Troska
22 Cottage Park Ave #15
Cambridge, MA 02140
763-228-5047

Erwin, Nicole

From: Caputo, Natalie <ncaputo@g.harvard.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:48 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Strong Support for Cambridge Housing Bill

Dear City Council Members:

My name is Natalie Caputo. I have been a Cambridge resident for 1.5 years and am a second-year graduate student at Harvard. I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. Even when the local rents are within reach, the limited quantity of the inventory and the low quality in many of the units makes it difficult to find a place to live that meets tenants' needs.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Please pass this bill and avoid amendments that would water it down. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Natalie Caputo
Harvard University Virology PhD Program

Erwin, Nicole

From: James Sperling <sperlingjames@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:47 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: multi family zoning changes

To City Councillors

I am writing to express my distress at the pending multi family zoning ordinance change. The change seems like a rushed, one size fits all, approach which will have serious detrimental effects on numerous City neighborhoods. I regard the current proposal as simply irresponsible. I do not see why the City feels compelled to gallop into an ideological broad brush approach rather than to walk more slowly, using a phased approach that tests assumptions before doing harm.

Specifically:

- 1 - Arterial development - a sensible approach would be to up-zone most arterial streets, transit nodes, and plaza areas. These areas are already set up for greater density and offer the best locations for taller buildings and enhanced retail.
- 2 - Design review - The current absence of design review in large projects is simply foolish, setting up the prospect of sore thumb developments throughout the City. Any project with a height in excess of base zoning should be required to go through design review.
- 3 - Open space - The open space requirements should be proportionate to the density. As buildings get higher, open space should increase as well.
- 4 - Side Yards. The current proposal of 5' side yards and 10' rear yards is supremely stupid and does not even provide basic fire safety access or sufficient access for building repairs. At a bare minimum, the side yard requirement should be 10' and the rear yard 40'.
- 5 - Single family districts. The current one size fits all approach leads to the prospect of sore thumb boxes in contexts of historic house districts. This is simply irresponsibly bad judgment. If you want to loosen requirements so as to create more units, by all means make in law apartments as of right. Make extensions and rehabs easier. Permit multi-family use of existing buildings. But do not destroy the architectural heritage and cohesion that makes those neighborhoods so unique. The underlying principle of zoning changes should be "above all, do no harm". If the zoning changes elsewhere (as noted above) do not create additional housing, the City can always re-consider. But it is simply irresponsible for the City to do so at this point when we know the harm would be real without serious efforts or mechanisms to mitigate that damage.

In short, the effort to create more housing units is admirable but not when it is promoted in the blunt instrument, thoughtless manner now on the table. I cannot imagine ever voting for a councillor who votes for the current proposal without the changes noted above.

Jim Sperling
21 Bates St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Emma B <emmabouton703@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:46 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; info@abettercambridge.org
Subject: Supporting Citywide Multi-Family Zoning

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Emma Bouton and I live at 59 Aberdeen Ave in Cambridge. I strongly support ending exclusionary zoning and building more multi-family affordable housing in the city, and urge you to pass the compromise zoning ordinance into law without making additional concessions.

As a young renter, I struggle to imagine being able to continue living in Cambridge long-term and raise a family here without significantly more affordable housing being built. All across the city, people are struggling to pay skyrocketing rents and are getting pushed out of the place that they love. While this zoning change won't accomplish everything we need to stop this displacement, it's a major step in the right direction to ease the severe housing shortage and make living in Cambridge more accessible to people across income levels. Delaying taking action or making more concessions to a small number of vocal homeowners trying to uphold exclusionary zoning will only mean that more of the people who make Cambridge such a wonderful city – our teachers and care workers and young people – cannot afford to stay here.

Sincerely,
Emma Bouton

Erwin, Nicole

From: Itamar Turner-Trauring <itamar@itamarst.org>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:37 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Displacement from new construction won't be as bad as it seems, because of developers' financial incentives

I am writing in support of enabling multi-family housing and increasing height limits for new buildings across all of Cambridge. I don't think there should be a minimum lot size: there are parking lots in Cambridge that could be turned into at least some housing. And the taller the better, as long as it doesn't impact AHO developers. Finally, special permits just add cost, delays, and kill many projects before they even start; they're a bad idea.

But what about displacement from new construction? The thing about new construction is that it's *visible*. You see the displacement happening. But just because it's visible doesn't mean it's worse than the alternatives. There's a strong argument to be made that it's the least bad form of displacement, due to developers' financial incentives and the requirement for inclusionary units (even ignoring any potential for positive impacts from more market-rate housing).

Consider a real estate developer who wants to build a new apartment building. One of the big costs will be buying the property, and any existing building likely has no value to the developer; they're going to tear it down. And buying bigger buildings costs more than buying small buildings.

Let's look at an example, the city's assessment of two properties on the same block; this is useful because the city's valuation estimate that breaks the property's value into the cost of land and the cost of the building:

- [47 Tremont St](#) has a land area of 2934 square feet. It's a triple-decker. The land value estimate is \$738,000, and the building value estimate is \$1,475,000.
- [42 Tremont St](#) has a land area of 4920 square feet. It's a small single-family home. The land value estimate is \$887,000, and the building value estimate is \$747,000.

Looking at Zillow's estimates for property sales price, 47 Tremont St is \$2.2 million, and 42 Tremont St is \$1.7 million. So same ballpark. And that cost difference is all because of the larger building.

If you're a developer who wants to tear down a building and build a new 4 to 6 story building, which one will you buy? The 3000 square foot parcel of land, with triple-decker, that costs \$2.2 million, or the 5000 square foot parcel of land, with small single-family home, that costs \$1.7 million? Obviously you'll buy the latter: more land, cheaper, and smaller demolition cost. Which means one housing unit gets torn down, instead of three, not because of any good intentions on the part of the developer, but because that's how the financial math works out.

In short, the financial incentives for new building developers are to buy the smallest possible building on the largest possible plot of land; parking lots are ideal, but so are small houses with

large lots. Triple deckers, in contrast, are much less financially attractive. This financial incentive minimizes displacement because it minimizes how much housing gets torn down.

Even better, as per the CDD's estimates, every torn down building that gets rebuilt will on average add 4 inclusionary units. Even if only half as much will materialize, the incentive is to tear down as small-as-possible housing, and to add (on average across projects) probably just as many inclusionary units as those market place units that get torn down. On an individual building-specific case this doesn't help, but on a big-picture scale it does. And that's before you get to the new and much larger supply of market rate housing.

So yes, displacement from tear-downs is visible, but if we get larger buildings that's probably the best kind of displacement we can hope for: it's both minimized and mitigated.

In contrast, invisible displacement is a vastly bigger problem: virtually every rental unit keeps getting more expensive every single year. And when landlords keep raising rent across the whole city, there's no mitigation, unlike inclusionary units from new construction.

Please support building multi-family housing and taller buildings, with no lot size restrictions and no special permits, and in general try to do everything you can to encourage building more housing in Cambridge, and making it easier and cheaper to do so. It's not the only thing we need to be doing, but it is certainly part of the solution.

--

Itamar Turner-Trauring

Erwin, Nicole

From: Yoni Samlan <ysamlan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:36 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for Ending Exclusionary Zoning in Cambridge

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Yoni Samlan, and I own a unit in a two-family home in North Cambridge. I live here with my wife and our two children, ages 8 and 10, who attend Graham & Parks public school. We deeply value the diversity of Cambridge and see it as one of the city's greatest strengths.

I am writing to express my support for ending exclusionary zoning and adopting the multifamily housing ordinance. I urge the City Council to pass this ordinance without delay or additional amendments. By allowing more housing construction, including larger multifamily developments, we can take a significant step toward addressing the housing crisis in our community.

The lack of affordable housing options threatens the vibrant diversity that makes Cambridge such a unique and dynamic place to live. Increasing housing supply is a critical step to counter rising home prices and rents, ensuring that families, students, and workers can afford to remain part of this city. I want Cambridge to continue being a place where families like mine can thrive, and where people from all walks of life feel welcome and supported.

Please vote to pass this ordinance and move forward with legalizing multifamily housing across Cambridge. Your leadership is crucial in shaping a future where Cambridge remains inclusive and accessible for everyone.

Thank you for your hard work on this important issue.

Sincerely,
Yoni Samlan
15 Edmunds St, Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Tessa Green <tessadgreen@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:35 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily zoning ordinance

Hello,

I'm not going to be able to attend the public meeting today, but I just wanted to voice my support for the multifamily zoning ordinance. Cambridge has a housing crisis, and we don't need to make it worse by maintaining single family zones.

Best,
Tessa Green
75 Wendell St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Liliana Gheorghiu <lgheorghiu@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:28 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Oppose Citywide Up-zoning

Dear Council Members,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

With gratitude,

Liliana Gheorghiu

Erwin, Nicole

From: John Ravenal <jravenal@mindspring.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:26 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Cambridge Upzoning

Dear City Council,

Thank you for the work you do. I'm writing to express specific concerns about the upcoming proposal.

Firstly, I think it's clear that Cambridge needs more housing and more affordable housing. This is so, even acknowledging that Cambridge is one of the densest cities in the US and also has done very well with adding new housing.

However, the current upcoming plan is a blunt sledgehammer. It risks eroding the very quality that makes Cambridge desirable.

Please, at the very least:

- Increase the set backs on all four sides of new construction. This includes the front. Otherwise, you risk creating oppressive new buildings in areas where they don't have any relationship to the street, sidewalk, or surrounding houses except to overpower them.

- Include some sort of design review. Eliminating unnecessary bureaucracy is understandable. But please, at least have a qualified urban planner and/or architect outside of the vested party review each project and make some sort of binding response.

- Include distinctions between major roadways and more open spaces on the one hand--where larger, bulkier housing can be better accommodated—and small, narrow residential streets, where these kinds of up-zoned projects can permanently damage the nature of the urban fabric.

- Finally, address the obvious impact issues of increased housing on infrastructure—roadways and traffic, public transportation, parking, etc. at the same time as changing zoning laws—in other words: form a comprehensive plan.

Thank you for your consideration and again, for your hard work. Let's not destroy Cambridge while trying to improve it and make it more open and accessible!

Best, regards,
John Ravenal
Winslow Street
Cambridge MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Adelia Witt <adelia Witt@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:24 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for Housing

Hello,

I wanted to reach out to voice my support for the housing proposal. I moved to the Boston area in 2019 and absolutely love living in Cambridge. I think everyone should have the chance to live close to where they work. Cambridge's proximity to Boston allows many workers to easily ride public transit or ride a bike to work which can obviously improve quality of life.

Building more housing, especially affordable housing, can improve the quality of lives of many and I hope this will be passed.

Adelia Witt

Erwin, Nicole

From: Maggie Lacwasan <mlacwasan95@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:23 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please Approve Housing Development Measure

Dear City Council Members,

I work in Cambridge and I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Maggie Lacwasan

Erwin, Nicole

From: Neko S <nekoysmith@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:21 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Cambridge Housing Zoning

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including affordable multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Neko

Erwin, Nicole

From: Linda Pursley <lapursley18@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:17 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily housing ordinance

Dear Cambridge City Council members,

I'm a resident living for the past 25 years in North Cambridge. I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed multifamily housing ordinance. Allowing for more multi-family housing fits within the city's Envision goals, and will allow Cambridge to help address our housing shortage.

As my son grew and passed through the Cambridge Public Schools, I watched families of his classmates being "priced out" of Cambridge. In fact, today I could not afford to buy the first floor of a two-family where he grew up and we currently live, as the value has tripled in that time. Yes, it was a good investment for me, but as a Cambridge firefighter (with a Masters degree,) it is difficult for my son to find affordable housing in Cambridge.

Please vote to end exclusionary zoning and allow for more housing throughout our community, so our teachers, police, and firefighters can afford to reside in the city they proudly serve.

Thank you!

Linda Pursley

71 Rice Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dylan <dygottlieb@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:14 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Fwd: Writing in SUPPORT of the multifamily housing ordinance

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

From: Dylan <dygottlieb@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Jan 8, 2025 at 11:11 AM
Subject: Writing in SUPPORT of the multifamily housing ordinance
To: <council@cambridgema.gov>
Cc: <clerk@cambridgema.gov>

Hello,

My name is Dylan Gottlieb, and I live along with my family in the Baldwin area of Cambridge.

I am writing in heartfelt SUPPORT of the multifamily housing ordinance. Raising my two kids in Cambridge is an expensive, if not impossible, endeavour because of the high cost and limited availability of affordable housing. We need to build as many units as possible to ensure that we match our surging job growth with the housing to accommodate those workers--and to build rich, dense, diverse, and equitable neighborhoods for them and their families.

As an urban historian who is finishing a book about New York in the 1980s, I know first-hand what happens when a city's housing supply gets too scarce and expensive: the most vulnerable residents struggle to remain. When they are displaced, the invaluable social fabric of local communities is forever lost.

We shouldn't sacrifice housing justice and environmental sustainability to defend abstract ideas of "light" and "air"--mostly outdated notions dating to the century-old miasma theory of disease transmission. Nor should we prioritize "neighborhood character" over *neighbors* themselves, the very people that make a city worth living in! And we shouldn't defend wealthy homeowners' housing values over the future of Cambridge as a bustling, democratic, diverse, affordable city for residents of all backgrounds.

Thank you for your consideration of this important issue!

Best,
Dylan Gottlieb
Hammond St., Cambridge

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[Dylan Gottlieb](#)
914.629.6794

--

[Dylan Gottlieb](#)

914.629.6794

Erwin, Nicole

From: Haben Zaid <haben.zaid.t@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:12 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Public comment on Zoning

Dear City Council Members,

I am a Cambridge resident writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Haben Zaid

Erwin, Nicole

From: Virginia Pye <virginia@virginiapye.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:12 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Comment for City Council Meeting Today

Dear City Clerk,

I am writing to encourage the City Council not to rush this new ordinance. The current plan seems poorly thought out and needs more public input. Please pause and do not accept it. Cambridge is too unique and wonderful for us to rush to make drastic changes. Like many, I want more affordable housing, but not at the expense of losing what makes Cambridge Cambridge!

Given all the comments and controversy around the upzoning, the responsible and courageous action is to pause and submit a better proposal.

If you won't, please considering amending the current ordinance language to include:

- 1) Anything taller than base zoning requires a special permit or other design review or oversight.
- 2) Minimum 40% open space
- 3) Minimum 10' setbacks side and 20' setbacks rear

But again, please do not approve this ordinance!

With thank you for your service,

Virginia
48 Winslow St
Cambridge MA 02138

Virginia Pye
virginia@virginiapye.com



Erwin, Nicole

From: Carolyn Magid <cmagid@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:11 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support 3+3 or let the multifamily zoning lapse

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Councillors,

Low and moderate income people in Cambridge are most rent-cost burdened and most at risk of displacement. **The 4+2 zoning proposal does not help and will cause harm to these neighbors, and I urge you to oppose it. Its main benefit is to the very high income people who can afford the sky high rents in the new market rate units.**

I ask Council to reconsider and support the 3+3 proposal presented by Councillor Wilson, supported by Councillors Nolan, Sobrinho-Wheeler, and Zusy. It is not perfect, but it will lead to less new market-rate construction, fewer teardowns, and will provide more incentives to produce inclusionary units. Coupled with a 6 million dollar city housing voucher program, a significant number of low and moderate income residents will have affordable housing options.

The idea of ending exclusionary zoning is to address an issue of race and class injustice, but if we do it in ways that harm low income people and decrease the city's economic and racial diversity to benefit the rich, we don't have the right solution.

If you won't support 3+3, I urge you to let the zoning lapse and come back with a plan that centers the needs of low income residents and doesn't diminish our city's diversity.

Finally, a point about process. As someone who has tried to engage with this process since the beginning, I understand that it is a challenge to accommodate all the public comment. On the other hand, these issues are critical to how we develop as a city, and the public should be able to give you feedback on proposed zoning. It is my understanding that next week's Ordinance Committee meeting won't have public comment, but likely will have new amendments that the public has not had an opportunity to comment on. I urge you to publicize any new proposed amendments well in advance of the next Ordinance Committee meeting (so people can write to you about them) and to allow public comment about them at the meeting.

Best regards,
Carolyn Magid
71 Reed St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Maureen Whitehouse <experienceaxiom@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:08 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Toner, Paul
Subject: Input from Cambridge Resident re: up-zoning

Hello,

I attended the neighborhood 9 meeting last night. Thank you Paul Toner and Denis Carlone for your informative input and over-all caring presence. Very much appreciated.

I would like to point out to the counselors that these plans are not taking into account enough the havoc that is being caused by the continue swelling of traffic due to these proposed changes.

We live on Bellis Circle which is at the center/nexus of much of the current and new construction and affordable housing in North Cambridge - Walden in front and Rindge (which backs up to our backyards across the railroad tracks) as well as the large building across the park on New Street.

This new housing is greatly effecting the space/tree canopy (they just clear cut all of the trees in the Ringe development) across from our backyards - so where there was once woods there is now only cement.

The larger concern is traffic - the traffic on Sherman at rush hour is now currently backed up to Garden, if not all the way to Harvard Square, as people use this corridor to go to exit the city to route 2 via Rindge. Now with even more housing on Rindge and New Street heading into Alewife - without traffic studies or consideration - there can only be more congestion.

Here on Bellis over the last 6-7 years we are in the direct line of noise/diesel fumes/pollution from the commuter rail, now increased idling traffic on Sherman and also the change in air traffic - as Logan directs all traffic directly over head here for runway 33L. It's not just traffic but air and noise pollution as well.

A triple assault!

In multiple neighborhood conversations we hear from each other that it's getting to be too much for the current residents/property owners/tax payers to bear. And is effecting our health and well-being.

As one blatant example of this haphazard and poorly orchestrated up-zoning approach to new construction - the large building currently being constructed on New Street is DIRECTLY up to the road with very little set back and now there will definitely be no room for bike lanes in an area and on a street that connects Fresh Pond and Danehy Park - WHAT ARE YOU THINKING!!!

Please be more aware, thoughtful and less fear and damage control oriented, or you will ruin the quality of life for all of Cambridge residents.

Thank you,

Maureen Mueller

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sarah Stone <stonesarah1120@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 11:05 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for Multifamily Housing Reform

Dear City Councillors,

I am writing, once again, in support of the multifamily zoning reform proposal, as I've done several times over the last couple of months. I am sure that you're being inundated with emails discussing the details of the proposal, so I want to talk about something that I think about all the time - my "Roman Empire," if you will - which is how to build a good society. When I imagine a good society, I envision a population with residents of all ages, who can choose to live here for a season, or for life. I think about a vibrant, varied workforce, where biotech workers, scientists, and doctors live alongside teachers, small business owners, non-profit employees, and artists. And I think about cultural, racial, and economic diversity.

That is the vision that should guide us here in Cambridge, even if we may never achieve perfection. We know that this vision of a good society is rendered impossible by crippling housing costs. The multi-family zoning reform proposed, and the amendments that have been adopted so far, will result in many more homes and the preservation of what we love most about our city. If we miss the opportunity to use the tools at our city's disposal to take action, we allow Cambridge to continue to see a declining number of families and a bi-modal population of rich and very poor.

Two important aspects of building a good society are some that Cambridge already has: an engaged community and an at-large City Council elected by ranked choice voting. Any claim that this proposal is not well thought-out or hasn't been rigorously designed is ill-informed at best, and malicious at worst. The Council has heard out concerns and questions about this zoning reform and has incorporated the reasonable ones into amendments. In doing so, the

Council has fulfilled its duty to make compromises that serve a wide constituency. We should all be proud of that.

Please prevent superfluous amendments from being "poison pills" that water down - or nullify completely - the impact of the petition.

Thank you for your engagement so far in this critical work.

Warmly,
Sarah

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pia Chatterjee <piachatt@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:50 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Affordable housing policies

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. We need to do this to ensure retaining our diverse and very special Cambridge community, We want our neighbors to stay and teachers and others who work in the community to live here.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.
Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Pia Chatterjee
68 Otis St
Cambridge
Cambridge Health Alliance Emergency Medicine Physician

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sara Sime <saras2340@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:48 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Lower Rent for Cambridge!

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Sara Sime, and I've went to school in Cambridge and currently work out of the Broad and Harvard for the past 3 years. Despite working in Cambridge, I had to find housing in Somerville because Cambridge's rents were far out of reach. I am writing to strongly support the six-story multifamily housing bill and urge you to end exclusionary zoning.

As someone who would love to live closer to work and be part of the Cambridge community, I've watched with frustration as housing prices continue to climb. Many of my colleagues face the same challenge – we work in the area but are forced into long commutes because of the severe housing shortage. With one of the lowest vacancy rates in the area, Cambridge desperately needs more housing options to help make the city accessible to its workforce.

The 4+2 multifamily housing ordinance is a crucial step toward addressing this crisis. I urge you to pass this bill without delay so that people who work in and around Cambridge can actually afford to live here.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Sara Sime
saras2340@gmail.com | 775-742-0013

Erwin, Nicole

From: Adam Mitchell <amitchelldl@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:46 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Multi-family Zoning Ordinance Before the Council

Dear City Clerk:

I am writing to ask that the new Zoning Ordinance under review be modified to ensure the essential character of Cambridge be maintained while encouraging and allowing the construction of new housing. This new vision would allow taller and denser buildings on arterial roads such as Concord and Mass Ave and at major squares such as Porter, Harvard, Central, and Kendall, but maintain lower rise buildings in denser neighborhoods. Base zoning would allow 4 stories by right. I advocate for a streamlined approval process that does not allow individuals to prevent planning, design, and construction of new housing beyond the review that is required in the new zoning laws.

At minimum the new zoning should:

- 1) Require building projects taller than base zoning go through a review process to obtain a special permit or be subject to other design review or oversight unless in an area zoned for higher rise structures as noted above.
- 2) Maintain a minimum 40% open space
- 3) Maintain minimum 8' side setbacks and 20' rear setbacks

Respectfully,

Adam

--

Adam P. Mitchell, AIA LEED AP
48 Stearns St, Cambridge, MA 02138
617.694.4062

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Christopher Wyllie <christopher.j.wyllie@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:45 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily zoning

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Chris Wyllie and I live at 253 Norfolk Street.

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. Even when the local rents are within reach, the limited quantity of the inventory and the low quality in many of the units makes it difficult to find a place to live that meets tenants' needs.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Please pass this bill and avoid amendments that would water it down. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely, Chris Wyllie

Erwin, Nicole

From: Daniel Hidalgo <fdhidalgo@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:45 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Comment on Multifamily Housing Reform

Dear Council Members,

I am writing in support of the proposed zoning reform as a current member of the Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeals. From my experience serving on the Board, I have observed that a significant portion of our time is devoted to reviewing special permits and variances for minor home alterations that are ultimately approved with little controversy. Yet, these petitioners must invest thousands of dollars and wait months for resolution.

The proposed reform would benefit Cambridge homeowners by making common modifications, such as adding windows or relocating sheds, by-right improvements. This change would encourage residential investment while eliminating unnecessary bureaucratic hurdles. Based on our Board's consistent pattern of approving such requests—even in cases with neighbor objections—I believe this reform would maintain the character of improvements in Cambridge while substantially streamlining the process.

While I also strongly support the reform's provisions for expanded multifamily and affordable housing, I will focus my comments on the aspects I have directly observed through my Board service.

Sincerely,

F. Daniel Hidalgo 79 Norfolk Street

Member, Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeals

Erwin, Nicole

From: Poulos, Liz <epoulos@jd25.law.harvard.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:44 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: A Plea to End Exclusionary Housing

Dear City Council of Cambridge,

I am writing in support of legalizing multifamily zoning citywide. I am writing to plead for an end to exclusionary housing in Cambridge so that working people and students can continue to live here affordably and sustainably.

My name is Liz Poulos and I have been a resident of Cambridge for five years. While Ohio will always be my first home, when I moved to Cambridge to pursue my masters and legal studies it quickly became my adopted home. And while there are many things to boast about this great place to live, the availability of affordable housing is unfortunately not one of them.

The price of housing has gotten so immense that it challenges my desire to remain in the region after I graduate law school and pursue a public interest career because I can not rely on the availability of affordable housing for those with similar budgets as myself. As a Harvard graduate student, I am intimately familiar with how expensive housing in the vicinity of campus can be and how challenging of a financial burden this poses for students. Even with on-campus housing, the housing market for students is severely restricted and warped. It can feel a bit like a captured-market, because there are so few high-density affordable apartment options near campus that landlords are enabled to charge exorbitant rates for basic housing accommodations within walking distance to campus.

My experience is far from an anomaly; in fact, it is the norm. Excessively overpriced housing due to an artificially-restricted housing market -- a product of the current zoning situation in Cambridge-- is a price students are taught they need to pay, a cost many cannot afford. In the end, it discourages students from remaining in Cambridge after graduation, because the cost of housing is so outsized compared to other potential places to set down roots or start your career.

Indeed, the cost of this restricted housing is externalized not only on students by encouraging them to stay in the area after they graduate, but also working people across Cambridge who are faced with the decision to pay more for housing or leave entirely. This discourages working families from staying; this discourages students like myself from moving to Cambridge and studying at one of the city's many venerable academic institutions and eventually putting down roots here. Ultimately, this artificially restrictive zoning regime undermines the academic and professional institutions who depend upon working people and students to live affordably and sustainably in Cambridge and invest in the region.

An end to exclusionary housing would not only mean enabling students like myself to live and study comfortably in Cambridge without the excessive burden of a captive housing market, but it would also mean encouraging more students to study here and make it home. This would enable the city to continue to be the diverse and inclusive place it should be, welcoming not only to the well-off but working people as well who will benefit from true affordable housing made possible through a new unrestricted zoning plan. It will be pivotal for the future of Cambridge and the diversity of people like myself who call it home.

Thank you all for your work on this topic and for your consideration of my perspective on this matter!

Sincerely,

Liz Poulos
3 Langdon St., Apt. 2, Cambridge MA

Elizabeth Poulos

She/Her/Hers

Harvard Law School JD Candidate, Class of 2025

Harvard MTS in Religion, Ethics, and Politics, Class of 2022

[Presidential Public Service Fellow](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Max Kaplan <max.m.kaplan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:42 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Vote YES on the upzoning petition

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Max Kaplan
254 Upland Rd Apt 1

Erwin, Nicole

From: Elisabeth Werby <eawerby@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:42 AM
To: McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; dsimmons@cambridgema.govov; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Multi-story rezoning petition

I support multi family housing throughout the city and increasing density along corridors, in squares and in neighborhoods.

However, I urge you to oppose the current citywide multi story rezoning petition, to let it expire and to start again in the spring.

There are too many unresolved questions and incomplete analyses to move forward, The underlying belief that unrestrained growth and the market will solve our regional housing problem is a hoax, belied by increasing evidence to the contrary from Vancouver, Oregon, countless other cities--- and even East Cambridge.

We can increase density without the negative impacts of this proposal. Rather one size fits all approach that primarily benefits for-profit developers of luxury housing, we need a thoughtful planning process that rests on more careful analysis, addresses outstanding issues and balances the need for growth and for low and moderate income housing with attention to critical environmental concerns, protection of existing tenants, and respect for neighborhood character. -

Thank you,
Liz Werby
7 Wright St. #1

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ariella Katz <ariellapkatz@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:02 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for ending exclusionary zoning and building more homes

Dear City Council,

I write to express my strong support in favor of ending exclusionary zoning and making it possible to build more homes in Cambridge.

I have lived in Cambridge for four years and I love living in Cambridge. My husband and I had our auf-ruf wedding blessing ceremony in Temple Beth Shalom in the Port. I love living close to my Dad and Grandmother and to get to spend precious time with them as they get older. I feel lucky to live in Central Square close to the T in a building with an elevator my family can access. I would love to be able to buy a home and raise my kids here. But many of my friends have been forced to move -- as far as Providence and NY -- because a housing shortage makes rents so high. Walking around Central, I see people struggling with homelessness. I want Cambridge to be a vibrant, welcoming place for my family and for all.

Sincerely,
Ariella Katz Miller
425 Mass Ave., apt. 1803

Erwin, Nicole

From: Eilon Applbaum <eilonapplbaum@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:32 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily zoning

My name is Eilon

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Please pass this bill and avoid amendments that would water it down. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Eilon Applbaum
Phone: (617) 651-6397
[Eilon Applbaum | LinkedIn](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gregory Burd <greg@burd.me>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:24 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposition to multifamily zoning
Attachments: publickey - greg@burd.me - 0x29849296.asc; signature.asc

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Gregory Burd and I own and reside at 22 Highland Street. I have been a Cambridge resident and homeowner for over a decade and treasure this town's unique nature.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community infrastructure (water, sewage, power, internet) is dramatically out of date and unable to handle such an expansion. Our current traffic problems would only be compounded, especially now with our expanded bike lines reducing available lanes for cars. Commute times across a few miles can take upwards of an hour. The ratio of parking spots on public roads to drivers is already an issue and increasingly so due to recent removals of metered spots in and around Harvard Square. Our fire and police are not equipped to handle larger dwellings. In addition, our city is already a mishmash of half-lots and backyard dwellings. Allowing for buildings to expand beyond current footprints up to the edges of property will destroy the property value of adjacent dwellings. Allowing for taller buildings in any location would create shadows and wind tunnels that would harm daily life and reduce property values.

I urge you to reject the measure that would allow for more housing construction. Please reject this bill in its entirety, amendments that would water it down are insufficient.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

-greg

Erwin, Nicole

From: Cathleen Higgins <cahigg@hotmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:23 AM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Renters Matter-Strong support for multifamily housing zoning reforms

Dear Councillors,

I am writing in strong support of the multifamily zoning reforms to allow much needed housing to be built in all areas of the city. I am a longtime renter who cannot move (even though I would like to) if I want to stay in Cambridge.

While I would have been happy with 6 stories citywide, and believe greater density and height is environmentally responsible and Cambridge has the infrastructure for much more housing, I recognize the effort to address concerns in settling on 4 stories. Yes, there are passionate people on all sides currently debating and offering opinions on the best way forward for Cambridge, and many voices are trying to influence the outcome. I ask you to look for some scientific ways to measure what direction to take. Keep in mind that 2/3 of residents, in the recent city survey expressed that affordable housing both affordable and market-rate were their top concerns. This mirrors the fact that 2/3 of Cambridge is renter households. Which group, renters or homeowners, will benefit more, have less stress, experience more stability from these changes? I think with a clear conscience you can vote for these zoning reforms, ones that have teeth and are not further watered down, as resulting from the will of the people who consciously elected you to make these types of bold actions a reality, and to treat the housing affordability crisis with the urgency it deserves. Also, while the city and other groups held many outreach events and have published much info, there are strong supporters of these measures, who due to their not being plugged in to sources that offer this information, who are not aware they are happening. (just talked to 2 such young people last week!)

These zoning updates are decades overdue. We have already lost so many residents who cannot afford to stay, raise a family, remain near relatives. Thank you for engaging in this process and for taking on tough issues, positioning Cambridge to be a diverse, welcoming home to more people.

Thank you.

Cathy Higgins
345 Norfolk St
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kaleb <kaleb.abebe@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:12 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please support multifamily housing

Dear City Council Members,

Hello, my name is Kaleb Abebe, and I live at 42 Jefferson St, #3. I have lived in and around Cambridge for about 25 years and went to school here. I am writing to express my strong support for the multifamily housing proposal currently under consideration. For too long, restrictive zoning policies have limited housing options in Cambridge, making it difficult for many families to find affordable, high-quality homes near their workplaces.

This proposal is a crucial step towards addressing our housing crisis by allowing more multifamily housing and ending exclusionary zoning practices. By increasing the availability of affordable units and simplifying the development process, we can create a more inclusive and diverse community. I routinely hear from my peers about how impossible it is to find housing here, and this proposal can make a significant difference.

Please vote to pass multifamily housing and build housing for all. I urge City Council to adopt the multifamily housing ordinance as written and pass it into law to ensure that Cambridge remains a vibrant and accessible place for all its residents.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Kaleb Abebe

42 Jefferson St #3

Erwin, Nicole

From: Seymour Kellerman <seymourkellerman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:02 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Improve the upzoning proposal

Please improve the current upzoning ordinance language to include the following:

- * Anything taller than base zoning requires a special permit or other design review or oversight
- * Minimum 40% open space
- * Minimum 10' setbacks side and 20' setbacks rear

Thank you for your consideration.
Seymour Kellerman
Cogswell Avenue, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: ilan levy <ilan@genrealty.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:57 AM
To: Young Kim
Cc: Catherine Zusy; Blier, Suzanne; Carolyn; Lee Farris; Heather Hoffman; Robert Winters; michael rosenberg; Merry White; John Hanratty; Denise Jillson; Vickey Bestor; Federico Muchnik; Gordon Moore; City Clerk
Subject: Re: Urgent Request re City Can't take these kinds of questionable actions in a rush to pass MFH Petitions

I would remind everyone that councillors are supposed to **represent** us at large. Where is our representation, those who disagree with the proposal, and whom are they representing if they are not us? Who is the silent majority the councillors are always claiming to represent? And how do we know it even exists? Last but not least, the councillors are saying that if we speak up, they will not represent us, i.e., we often hear from City councillors that it is always the same people commenting and that these people stifle public comments. Therefore, we are silencing part of the Cambridge citizens, and hence, the councillors are representing these "oppressed" and silenced voices. Whatever we, the citizens, do, the councillors will find a way to make 'our' public comment irrelevant because they do not represent the majority, which our comments silenced and which they represent—a logic-defying logic.

We do not elect councillors based on the policies they will implement, which they do not promote during elections, but on the representation they will provide, i.e., do they represent our point of view? Unfortunately our City councilors think they have a policy mandate and forget they are our representatives. I suggest they stake their re-election on this up-zoning by running their campaign solely based on it. If they get the votes, they'll have a mandate to implement it. Can we finally have democracy in our city, or will we continue being content with role-playing it and allowing elected councillors to usurp power from us?

Ilan
East Cambridge citizen

""""
K-Lo is part of the BioMed East Cambridge Campus plan. BioMed purchased two more buildings from ARE in East Cambridge at the end of 2024. Whoever runs the K-Lo building, it is an integral part of the BioMed upzoning at 320 Charles, its west campus. I'm against any upzoning of 320 Charles, whatever the \$\$\$ benefit. It would destroy East Cambridge. BioMed Realty, please build as of right. Thanks.
""""

On Jan 8, 2025, at 09:12, Young Kim <ycknorris@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Councillor Cathie,

First, thank you, Suzanne, for giving me this vital information.

I don't know what happened. I thought I sent an email out but I can't find it in my sent box. I am running way behind in getting ready to report for my grandpa duties so I will be brief.

This is preposterous. I just signed up and I am 117th in line. No meetings were open to sign up for comments yesterday afternoon and you informed your followers at 9:20 'tomorrow's Ordinance Committee meeting, 1.8, 5-7pm will be all public comment re the Multifamily Housing Proposal. Sign up to speak here 10 minutes before the meeting: <https://cambridgema.iqm2.com/citizens/default.aspx?>." There is a strict guideline when the signup window opens.

Councillor Azeem shouldn't have sent an email to his followers only to inform them " This is a critical meeting. Please chime in. This is our opportunity to finally end exclusionary zoning after 3 terms of trying and we're at a crucial inflection point" and urging them to sign up.

This is beyond egregious. Please check with the City Solicitor to see if this is legal and have this meeting cancelled and reschedule following proper protocol.

It is NOT a critical meeting. CDD hasn't reported back yet on amendments called for by late filed Ordinance Committee PO on Dec 23!

The public has to be given time to read the reported amendments and voice their concerns following proper procedure. Until then, it can't be categorized as an inflection point! This is sheer inflammatory.

Thank you. I will be checking my email time to time so I would greatly appreciate it if you could let me know,

Young

On Wed, Jan 8, 2025 at 8:21 AM Blier, Suzanne <blier@fas.harvard.edu> wrote:

Dear Young,

Thank you for this information.

I am also very disturbed that Burhan Azeem yesterday sent out a letter urging people to "vote to finally end exclusionary zoning" saying nothing about the actual contents of this plan.

This is dishonest to the point of deceiving! Perhaps we can insist to night that Council follow his advice and simply end Exclusionary Zoning only. Take the win (which others including myself had been advocating for quite a time.

His letter reads:

Tomorrow, 1/8 at 5pm, public comment will be held on the multifamily housing ordinance. This is a critical meeting. Please chime in. This is our opportunity to finally end exclusionary zoning after 3 terms of trying and we're at a crucial inflection point.

We'd love to hear from you as we try to get this over the finish line. [Sign up](#) to speak tomorrow or email council@cambridgema.gov and cc clerk@cambridgema.gov with your comments!

From: Young Kim <ycknorris@gmail.com>

Date: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 at 8:10 AM

To: Blier, Suzanne <blier@fas.harvard.edu>, Carolyn <carolyn_shipley@yahoo.com>, Lee Farris <Lee@leefarris.net>, Heather Hoffman <heather.m.hoffman.1957@gmail.com>, ilan levy <ilan@genrealty.com>, Robert Winters <Robert@rwinters.com>, michael rosenberg <rosemous@rcn.com>, Merry White <corkela2@gmail.com>, John Hanratty <john@avon-hill.com>, Denise Jillson <djillson@harvardsquare.com>, Vickey Bestor <vickeybestor@gmail.com>, Federico Muchnik <federico.muchnik@gmail.com>

Subject: City Can't take these kinds of questionable actions in a rush to pass MFH Petitions

Dear All,

I wish you all a New Year filled with new Joys, Hopes, Discoveries and Adventures in good health.

I am reaching out to you once again to ask you to join me in sending a joint statement to City Manager Huang and Mayor Simmons and if there is no satisfactory action from the City, send it to the Boston Globe Letter to the Editor. United, we can be more effective.

Honorable Mayor and City Manager,

We the undersigned respectfully request that the zoning amendment process of the Multifamily Housing Petitions be immediately suspended until the following questions are answered. Zoning amendments of this far reaching impact must not have so many questionable actions by the City that seem to indicate City is rushing this process without established goals and metrics to measure the progress toward meeting them; due urban planning, thorough analysis of housing needs and robust impact assessment.

On page 12 of Agenda Packet of the City Council Housing Committee August 21, 2024 ([Ref. 1](#)), CDD projected +/- 120 new units by 2030 according to their Citywide Multifamily Analysis.

However, on Packet Page 75 of Ordinance Committee Hearing, November 19, 2024, Final Actions Packet ([Ref. 2](#)), CDD summarized their analysis as "Under current zoning, residential districts are estimated to produce approximately 70 new units by 2030."

This raises many questions that apparently were not addressed during subsequent meetings on the Multifamily Housing Petitions since August:

1. Does August Projection in Ref. 1 mean we could actually end up losing a net 120 units?
2. Why were the Housing Projections in Ref. 2 not made available to the Planning Board for their 11/12/2024 and 11/19/24 meetings?
3. Why were the Housing Projections in Ref. 2 not included in the Agenda Packet?
4. Why were Planning Board and Ordinance Committee meetings held on the same day on major zoning amendments that will change the landscape of Cambridge?
5. Why wasn't there a round table discussion with subject matter experts who we have in abundance in our City? [Professor Forman gave a presentation](#) to the Housing Department on May 8th 2024 Cambridge Housing Committee Meeting and NLTP Committee will be holding a public hearing on "best practices for urban planning" today before the Ordinance Committee Meeting. We need to have a meeting with experts with all different perspectives.
6. Why was Housing Projections in Ref. 2 included in the Agenda Packet only to be included in the Final Action?
7. Why can't CDD have a consistent housing development project by 2030 under the current zoning?
8. The Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust recently approved construction funding for the Walden II Project which means the developer is ready to start the construction as soon as they obtain building permits. The 95 units of new family affordable housing of this project alone exceeds the projected 2030 net new units by 2030. Why were AHO projects in the pipeline not counted ([Ref. 3](#))?
9. Why did the City Council direct CDD to proceed with drafting amendments to the Petition based solely on the Ordinance Committee recommendations without waiting for the Planning Board report?

<image.png>

Erwin, Nicole

From: Steven Rome <stevenrome42@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 10:00 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily housing ordinance

Hello,

I am a Cambridge resident in Ward 6, and I write to strongly support the multifamily housing ordinance and the end to exclusionary zoning. I am a legal aid practitioner helping defend low-income people against eviction, so I see the front lines of the housing crisis every day. We need denser housing to help fill the huge need for more affordable housing, and this ordinance is an important step in that direction. Denser housing helps everyone by attracting and supporting more businesses, making our communities greener, and expanding opportunities for all.

I will not vote for any city councillor who opposes this ordinance.

Moreover, I urge the Council to adopt more measures to ensure that Cambridge is providing *affordable* housing, rather than simply allowing market-rate renters and homeowners to make their home in Cambridge. The market on its own will not solve the housing crisis.

Thank you for your consideration,
Steven Rome

Erwin, Nicole

From: Elise Moore <emoorefa@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:50 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you so much,

Elise Moore

Erwin, Nicole

From: Vijeta Saini <vijetasaini24@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:40 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Strong support for Multifamily Housing Proposal and a More Inclusive Cambridge

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my support for the Multifamily Housing Proposal, which aims to increase housing development in Cambridge. This city has been my home for some time now, and I have worked hard to build a life and find a community where I feel I belong. As someone who moved here from another country, leaving behind family and lifelong friends in pursuit of a better future, this was not an easy journey. Building a new life in a new place is challenging enough, but the rising rents and housing prices make it feel almost impossible to stay, even after finding a sense of belonging.

Everyone deserves the security of housing near their work, but for many of us, that dream is slipping further away. Cambridge's long history of restrictive zoning policies has excluded too many people for too long, pushing families out and making it difficult to call this city home. The community I have finally found, after years of searching and sacrifice, feels fragile in the face of skyrocketing housing costs.

Housing is not just about buildings; it's about people, stability, and the chance to create meaningful connections. Approving the measure to allow more multifamily housing and higher-density zoning without additional concessions is a necessary step toward ensuring that Cambridge becomes a city where everyone—not just the privileged few—has a chance to live, work, and thrive. It's a step toward righting the wrongs of exclusionary policies that have shaped our past.

I urge you to act boldly and compassionately. This measure is more than a zoning change—it is a lifeline for families, workers, and individuals who want nothing more than to contribute to this vibrant community without fear of being priced out.

Thank you for working on this important issue!

Sincerely,
Vijeta Saini
East Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Allegra Moran <aem285@cornell.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:28 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support Zoning for Multifamily Housing

Hello,

I support the multifamily zoning petition. We need more housing in Cambridge!

Thanks,
Allegra

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ben Ouyang <ouyang.ben@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:17 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily zoning

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Ben Ouyang and I live at 1 Leighton St, Unit 1321.

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Ben

Erwin, Nicole

From: Wade Miller <wamiller94@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:12 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In Support of Multi-Family Housing Petition without Further Ammendments

Dear City Council,

I live at 2 Avon St. Apt 3 in Cambridge, and I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing units in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to afford housing.

I urge you to approve the current zoning petition that would allow for higher-density zoning, including multi-family developments at scales that support inclusionary units, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, support people living more sustainably, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Best,
Wade

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ausra Kubilius <ausmkub@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:03 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: better upzoning proposal needed

Dear City Officials,

Given the great Cambridge community concern around upzoning and resultant density problems, please act responsibly--plan/think more deeply and submit a better proposal.

Otherwise, at least begin to improve the current ordinance language to include the following:

- * Anything taller than base zoning requires a special permit or other design review or oversight;
- * Minimum 40% open space;
- * Minimum 10' setbacks side and 20' setbacks rear.

Thank you for your consideration.
A.M. Kubilius (Cogswell Ave)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Julie Ray <julie_ray@jsi.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 9:02 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a 30-year progressive Cambridge resident who cares about social and environmental justice for all, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and problems with the current proposed ordinance to create more housing--which as written, will benefit DEVELOPERS only, and not lower-income current and potential residents.

We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will not harm our environment, push out lower-income residents, demolish existing homes, and transform neighborhoods for the worse. Please let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,

Julie Ray
Walden St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Michael Weymouth <michaelsweymouth@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 8:32 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Re: Confirming participation in 1/8 ordinance meeting

Thank you!

On Wed, Jan 8, 2025, 8:09 AM City Clerk <cityclerk@cambridgema.gov> wrote:

Good morning,

I have changed your speaking status to remote. You are all set.

Paula

Paula M. Crane

Deputy City Clerk

City of Cambridge

From: Michael Weymouth <michaelsweymouth@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:27 PM
To: City Clerk <cityclerk@Cambridgema.gov>
Subject: Confirming participation in 1/8 ordinance meeting

Hi,

I signed up for public comment at the 1/8 ordinance meeting, and my spot is number 101 in line. However, I meant to sign up for virtual comment, and can't remember if I accidentally signed up for in-person comment. Can you switch my participation to virtual if this is the case?

Thanks!

Michael

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dorothy Africa <dorothy.africa@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 8:32 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Ordinance meeting Neighborhood Nine

I am a resident of Neighborhood Nine but cannot attend the Ordinance meeting tonight (Jan 8). I think it is vital that some provisions are made to preserve green space around new constructions, especially for housing units for families. Outdoor spaces are important for mental and physical health, are also mitigate climate extremes such as summer heat and winter winds. People's housing needs are not met with a roof alone. Dignity is as important as builders' profits.

Dorothy Africa, 159 Upland Rd.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Cory <susan.cory@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 8:14 AM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Cc: Patricia Nolan; Toner, Paul; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Zusy, Catherine
Subject: Today's meeting on Radical upzoning

To the City Councilors,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We urge Council to let the petition run out at its termination date in February.

At the very least, this radical proposal should be amended to include:

1. **Design review** by the City Manager and neighbors. That process is why Frost Terrace turned out to be as successful as it is. The developers resisted this review, but now everyone wants to claim credit for its appealing urban design meshing with the neighborhood, unlike the box design the developers initially started out with.

2. **Setbacks** of 20' on the front and back and 10' on the side yards. You can't fit scaffolding or ladders to service the buildings with a 5' setback.

3. **40% open space**. This is necessary for environmental reason if not aesthetics. We can't create more heat sinks in the city!

Until these considerations are included, this short-sighted proposal is a blunt instrument to try to alleviate a regional, if not a national problem of unaffordability.

Thank you for considering these points,

Susan Cory
Cambridge 40-year-architect and 27-year-resident

Erwin, Nicole

From: Karl Schmeckpeper <karl.schmeckpeper@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:53 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support housing, end exclusionary zoning

Dear City Council,

Please support ending exclusionary zoning and allowing for increasing the height of residential buildings city wide. Increasing the number of housing units that can be built by-right is the most effective way to increase housing supply and slow the rising rents.

We desperately need more housing. Too many of my friends have been forced to leave Cambridge because of the cost of rent. Building homes in Cambridge has a much lower environmental impact than building less efficient homes in the suburbs and forcing people to commute into the city. Additionally, it allows us to maintain our communities, rather than displacing friends and co-workers with the rising costs of rents.

Cambridge is at its best when we embrace density and diversity. Please zone for as much new housing as possible to decrease rents and to build a stronger and more vibrant Cambridge.

Thank you,
Karl Schmeckpeper
249 3rd Street, Cambridge MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Joshua Benedict <joshuacrbenedict@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:34 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Citywide Multifamily Housing

Hello, Council,

I don't need to tell you how critical the housing crisis is, both across the country and in Cambridge specifically. Personally, my rent for a single room in a triple decker takes up about 50% of my monthly income. Cambridge housing is some of the most expensive in a country that has itself seen astonishing levels of rent increases over the past few decades.

I admit I was disappointed to see that the 6-story build-by-right version of the amendment had been negotiated down, though I recognize that that's how these things always go and the 4+2 plan is better than the status quo by a country mile.

Improving housing affordability is absolutely necessary for Cambridge's continued success and growth, and the first step to doing that is increasing density and supply. This also, of course, has the added benefit of improving quality of life, letting more people live within a quick walk of T and bus stops and countless other intangible benefits of living closer together with one's neighbor's and amenities.

Passing this amendment would put Cambridge leaps and bounds ahead of almost every other city in America in this regard, and I hope the council does so.

Thank you for your hard work on this issue,
Joshua Benedict

Erwin, Nicole

From: Julia Schlozman <julia.schlozman@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:31 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support Upzoning!

Esteemed Councillors,

I write to ask you to support the upzoning proposal, which is a thoughtful and well-considered compromise that has the potential to allow the multifamily housing we so desperately need.

It's crucial that any final ordinance allow building to be as-of-right. Reviews add delay and cost, and can all too easily be weaponized by those who oppose development. The result is more expensive housing, or, if a project gets scrapped, no housing at all. We need homes built, and we need them now.

I also ask you to oppose any potential amendments regarding large setbacks or requirements for open space, which would result in smaller projects with less housing. Open space, especially large swathes of it, imposes an opportunity cost: every unit reduced is someone who can't live in Cambridge.

Thank you for your consideration, and for your support in keeping Cambridge the diverse city we love.

Sincerely,
Julia Schlozman
41 Walker Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sharon Stichter <sharonstichter@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:29 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: please pause upzoning proposal or amend to require permits for any height over 4 stories

Given all the comments and controversy around the upzoning, the responsible and courageous action is to pause and submit a better proposal.

If you won't, **please** amend the current ordinance language to include:

- 1) Anything taller than base zoning requires a special permit or other design review or oversight.
- 2) Minimum 40% open space
- 3) Minimum 10' setbacks side and 20' setbacks rear

Sharon Stichter
108 Walden Street
Cambridge MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Erin McHugh Saif <emchughsaif@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:26 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Please support affordable housing measures without additional concessions

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. The number of teachers, service workers, shop owners and workers, and childcare workers I know who can no longer afford to live near their work is staggering. These individuals are a critical fabric of our community and deserve a chance to live in the community they positively impact.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. We need to do the right thing and pass these reasonable housing improvements. Let's not let unproven fears dictate the city or the Council we are going to be. If this community can't lead on more affordable housing and provide families and workers with a fairer shot at housing, a basic need, then I am even more deeply worried for our city, state, and nation.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Erin McHugh Saif
Hurley Street, Cambridge
emchughsaif@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carvalho, Bruno <bcarvalh@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:22 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Council
Subject: In support of multifamily housing; thanks

Resending with less ambiguous subject line. Thanks!

De: Carvalho, Bruno <bcarvalh@fas.harvard.edu>
Enviado: segunda-feira, janeiro 6, 2025 1:32 PM
Para: council@cambridgema.gov <council@cambridgema.gov>
Cc: clerk@cambridgema.gov <clerk@cambridgema.gov>
Assunto: multifamily housing; thanks

Dear Councilors,

Happy new year!

I write as a homeowner at 56 Dana St. I recently became a U.S. citizen, and look forward to voting in our next elections. I am also a scholar specializing in urban issues, and think that we can no longer underestimate the negative consequences of decades of overly restrictive zoning. While our state's housing shortage is certainly an issue that Cambridge alone cannot solve, I believe that we should take a leading role.

Thank you for working towards the compromise version of this ordinance. I appreciate how you are all under various kinds of pressures from constituents, and ask that you please also consider those that are not your constituents (or not yet), but would greatly benefit from more housing in Cambridge. Please also think of those that want to stay, but are being priced out. Adding to our housing stock will help. I hope that you will adopt the ordinance!

With thanks,
Bruno

Erwin, Nicole

From: Anay Wadhera <anay1018@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:21 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Expressing support for increased housing development

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Anay, Gore St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Doug Cattie <doug.cattie@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 7:12 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Yes on city up zoning

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important matter.

Sincerely,

Doug Cattie
22 Cottage Park Ave, Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Chris Durbin <6sargentstreet@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 6:25 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily zoning

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Chris Durbin and I am the owner of a three family apartment at 6-8 Sargent Street that I rent to refugees that are legally resettled in the US.

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing, especially those that contribute to the city's vibrancy like refugees.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
/s/ Chris Durbin

Chris A. Durbin
6 Sargent Street, LLC

Erwin, Nicole

From: Molly Cohen <molly.s.cohen@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 6:04 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Fwd: Support for the Multifamily Housing Ordinance

See below -- I had a typo on your email last time. Thanks so much!

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

From: **Molly Cohen** <molly.s.cohen@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jan 7, 2025 at 5:18 PM
Subject: Support for the Multifamily Housing Ordinance
To: <council@cambridgema.gov>
Cc: <clerk@cambridgma.gov>

Dear Cambridge City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed multifamily housing ordinance. As a resident of Huron Village, I live in a neighborhood that is predominantly composed of single-family homes and duplexes. However, almost directly across the street from my house is a four-story apartment building that has been a part of this community for far, far longer than I've lived here.

This building has not disrupted the character of the neighborhood or caused any negative externalities. In fact, it has contributed positively to the diversity and vibrancy of our community. A family friend lived in that building when they first moved to Cambridge decades ago, and I am grateful it existed then to provide them with a place to call home. It brings me joy to see the building still standing today, continuing to serve as a home for others.

Cambridge is a wonderful place to live, and I believe we should create opportunities for more people to enjoy it. Allowing for more multifamily housing, like the four-story building near me, will help us address the housing shortage and ensure that Cambridge remains a welcoming city for all.

I urge the City Council to approve this ordinance and take a significant step toward a more equitable and sustainable housing future.

Thank you for your consideration.

Molly Cohen

292 Huron Ave.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alex Turner <aturner995@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 4:44 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Comment supporting the Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition

Dear Cambridge City Council (and its Ordinance Committee),

I am writing in strong support of both parts of the Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition, including the proposal to allow for six stories of housing city wide for all projects.

I feel incredibly lucky to be able to call Cambridge home. However, the intense housing crisis in Cambridge and surrounding areas is difficult to ignore. We all know that the cost of housing is a huge barrier to both residents being able to keep living here, and to potential residents being able to move here. Personally, I have many friends who would love to live in Cambridge, but who cannot afford the housing and so are forced to live farther away.

This affordability barrier not only harms those who are unable to live in Cambridge, and enjoy all of its unique benefits (including bicycle infrastructure!), but also harms Cambridge residents by limiting the diversity and vibrancy of our community. The moral imperative to allow for more room in Cambridge is further strengthened when the rights of many are under attack in other parts of the country.

Cambridge needs a large, ambitious change to its zoning rules to allow drastically more housing throughout the city. I'm excited to see that these proposals aim higher than simply abolishing single-family zoning, by allowing six stories city wide for all projects, significantly reducing or eliminating minimum lot sizes, reducing required setbacks, supporting mixed-use developments, etc. I am also pleased to see that this would reduce the number of projects that need zoning variances, although we should continue to iterate to ensure that any other obstacles to building more densely are reduced, e.g. minimizing the number of required permits.

Finally, **I would like to emphasize my support for allowing six stories citywide for all proposals.** While allowing four stories citywide would still be progress from the status quo, the more restrictive limits would significantly reduce many of the benefits of this ordinance. Even if we allowed for six stories for Inclusionary Zoning projects, this would still reduce the amount of new housing built, hurting affordability in the long run.

Thank you for all your efforts to improve the city.

Alex Turner
Cambridge resident

Erwin, Nicole

From: Julia Randall <julia.a.randall@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 3:27 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for the Multifamily Housing Ordinance

Dear Cambridge City Council members,

I'm a Cambridge resident. My current home is in North Cambridge and I grew up just outside of Central Square. I am writing to express my **STRONG** support for the proposed multifamily housing ordinance. Allowing for more multi-family housing fits within the city's Envision goals, and will allow Cambridge to help address our housing shortage.

Please vote to end exclusionary zoning and allow for more housing throughout our community.

Thank you,

Julia

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ajay Sonalkar <asonalkar@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:35 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support Multifamily Housing

Cambridge City Team,

I strongly support Multifamily housing as it will help provide much needed housing affordability in the city.

The crushing housing inflation has eroded my family saving and we find ourselves in a situation that we don't have sufficient funds to put on a down payment.

Providing quality (homes that don't require maintenance) and small homes (more affordable) will make it easier for us to invest in a home and provide a good foundation for our child who attends Cambridge Public Schools.

Ajay

Erwin, Nicole

From: Akshay Dharmavaram <akshaydharmavaram@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:34 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multi family housing

Dear City Council,

Our city is facing a critical shortage of affordable housing, and the impact is being felt by residents across all income levels. Rising rents and home prices are forcing people to leave the community or live in increasingly difficult conditions. It's clear we need to take bold action to address this issue.

I urge you to support policies that allow for the development of more housing, especially multi-family units and higher-density projects. Expanding housing options will not only provide relief to current residents but also attract new talent, support local businesses, and create jobs.

This is an opportunity to ensure our city remains a place where everyone can thrive, not just those who can afford the skyrocketing costs. I hope you'll make this a top priority.

Thank you for your leadership on this matter.

Sincerely,

Akshay

Erwin, Nicole

From: Geet Kalra <geetkalra90@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:17 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Yes on multi family housing

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing in strong support of today's 4+2 multifamily housing ordinance.

As someone who has spent the last 5 years here, first as a student at MIT and now as a renter(while also working at a Cambridge based company), I have watched Cambridge's housing crisis worsen year after year, with rising rents forcing out neighbors and friends while our extremely low vacancy rate offers little hope for those seeking affordable homes.

This ordinance, which would allow six-story developments throughout Cambridge, is a crucial step toward addressing our housing shortage. By passing this measure without amendments, you can help create more housing options, support local construction jobs, and ensure Cambridge remains a diverse, vibrant community accessible to people across income levels. Please vote yes on the multifamily housing ordinance today without amendments or delay. The time for action is now. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Geet Kalra

Erwin, Nicole

From: Christin M. Hong <christin.inbox1@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:15 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Planning Board Comment
Subject: I support increasing multifamily housing

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. I live in Somerville but work in Cambridge, and as a recent PhD graduate, I've seen and experienced the stress caused by these high rents. I've also heard many graduate students and postdocs discuss leaving the Boston area due to the high home prices.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Christin Hong, PhD

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ellen Kan <ellenkan@mit.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, January 8, 2025 12:09 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In support of housing development

Dear Cambridge City Council members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue!

Sincerely,
Ellen Kan
Hampshire Street

--

Ellen Kan (she/her)
Ph.D. Candidate
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
Dept. of Biological Engineering
ellenkan@mit.edu

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sam Polzin <sam.polzin@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:52 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Vote YES for Multifamily Housing Citywide
Attachments: Unifying_Upzoning_with_Affordable_Housing_Production_Strategies.pdf

Dear Council Members,

I strongly support the current proposal to end exclusionary zoning.

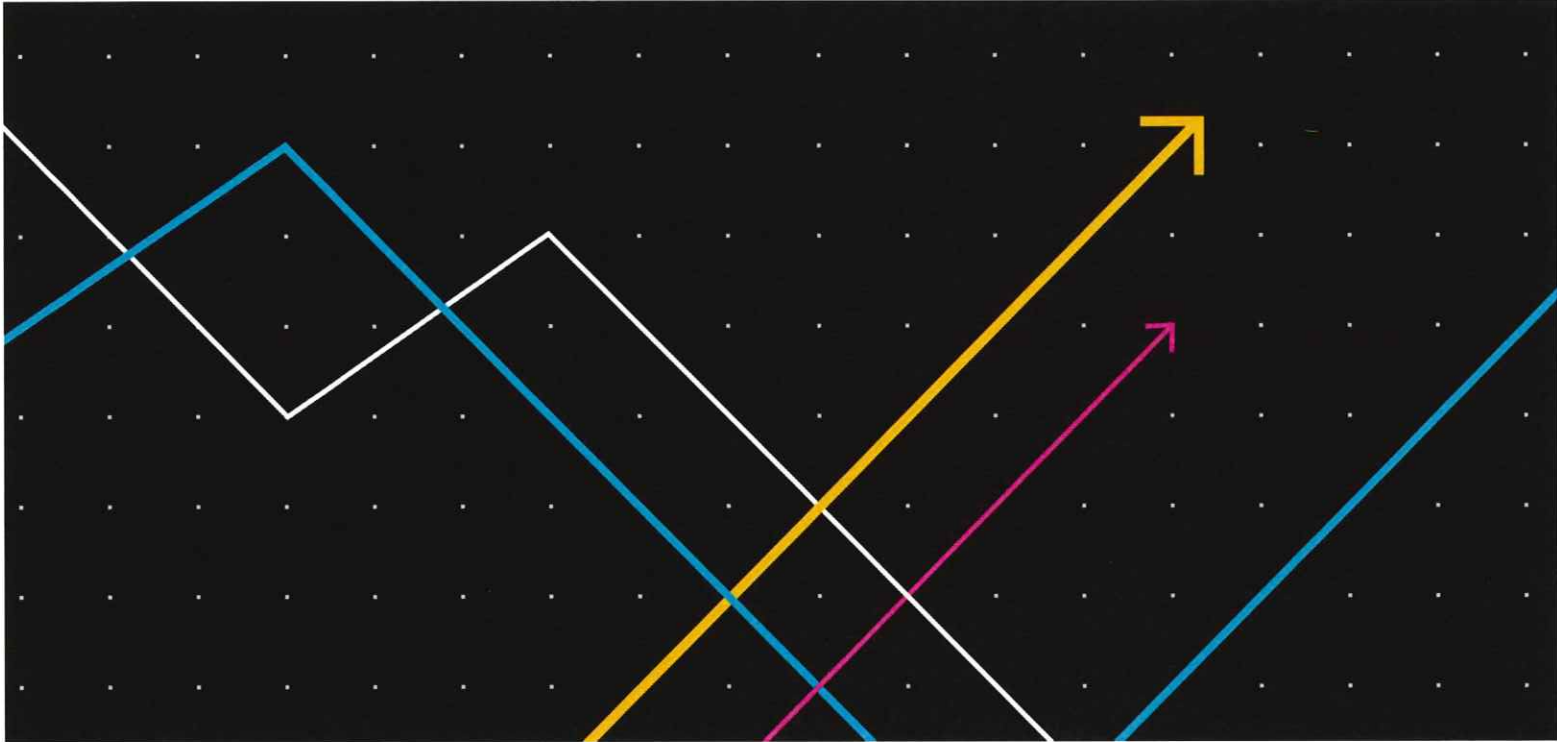
Specifically, the recent amendments arriving at a 4-story base height with 6-stories allowed for inclusionary housing are a commendable compromise. I appreciate the Council's willingness to try to navigate the wants and concerns of many different residents and city stakeholders.

As I have written previously, creating more homes for people who want to live in Cambridge is an undeniable good. Even if a portion of these new homes will be sold or rented at a price that is out of reach to some people, this upzoning will help serve as a release valve for the immense pressure that has built up across the city's housing market. There are other policy mechanisms that the Council can and should use to create more affordable, deed-restricted housing. This current proposal cannot be everything to everyone. I consider it a key first step.

Moreover, I worry that efforts to further amend the proposal will have a stifling effect on the amount of housing that could be created. For example, a 3+3 base height plus inclusionary plan has been suggested. This zoning would seem to favor more middle housing (e.g., townhomes, duplexes, triplexes and fourplexes) unless it is inclusionary. However, in cities like Portland, OR and Minneapolis, MN, zoning efforts to promote this middle housing have largely fallen flat, as most of their housing production has come from larger multifamily housing built at-scale (see the attached 2023 [report](#) by the Urban Institute).

We must recognize that we are not going to build our way out of this housing crisis through small changes or affordable housing programs alone. Bold change is needed, which will depend on private developers. We must better understand what they will build, and we cannot further hamstring future housing in Cambridge by wishing a few more inclusionary units into existence.

Thank you,
Sam Polzin
31 Garfield St



RESEARCH REPORT

Unifying Upzoning with Affordable Housing Production Strategies

Advancing Access to Housing in Washington State

Yonah Freemark, Rodrigo Garcia, Samuel Lieberman, and Annie Rosenow

December 2023



ABOUT THE URBAN INSTITUTE

The Urban Institute is a nonprofit research organization that provides data and evidence to help advance upward mobility and equity. We are a trusted source for changemakers who seek to strengthen decisionmaking, create inclusive economic growth, and improve the well-being of families and communities. For more than 50 years, Urban has delivered facts that inspire solutions—and this remains our charge today.

Contents

| | |
|---|-----------|
| Acknowledgments | iv |
| Executive Summary | v |
| Recommendations | v |
| Unifying Upzoning with Affordable Housing Production Strategies | 1 |
| Faced with Continued Population Growth and Housing Affordability Challenges, Washington Needs More Units | 2 |
| The Value of New Housing Construction | 3 |
| Some Puget Sound Communities Used Exclusionary Zoning to Stop Construction | 5 |
| Zoning Limits Are Difficult to Overcome for Subsidized Housing | 6 |
| Affordable Housing Funding Is Tight in Washington State | 7 |
| Substantial New Housing Construction Is Needed to Meet Demand | 8 |
| Washington State Advanced Housing Reforms in 2023 | 11 |
| Middle Housing Reforms Are Inadequate to Fully Address Housing Needs for People with Low Incomes | 13 |
| Take-up for Small-Scale Apartment Buildings Is Likely to be Small Compared to Zoning Allowances: Developers Want to Build Bigger | 14 |
| Explanations for Limited Small-Building Apartment Development | 18 |
| High-Density Upzoning Is More Effective in Generating Units, but Is Unlikely to Add Affordable Housing Quickly | 20 |
| Linking High-Density Upzoning with Public Investment to Support More Home Across Household Income Ranges | 22 |
| Recent Initiatives to Link Upzoning with Affordable Housing | 22 |
| Recommendations for Combining Upzoning with Investments in Affordable Housing | 23 |
| Notes | 27 |
| References | 32 |
| About the Authors | 34 |
| Statement of Independence | 35 |

Acknowledgments

This report was funded by a grant from Amazon. We are grateful to them and to all our funders, who make it possible for Urban to advance its mission.

The views expressed are those of the authors and should not be attributed to the Urban Institute, its trustees, or its funders. Funders do not determine research findings or the insights and recommendations of Urban experts. Further information on the Urban Institute's funding principles is available at urban.org/fundingprinciples.

We appreciate feedback from Arthur Acolin, Paul Inghram, Courtney Jones, and Christina Stacy as we revised this manuscript. We thank Lauren Lastowka for her detailed edits.

Executive Summary

The state of Washington estimates that the Puget Sound’s four counties need about 640,000 new homes by 2044 to meet population growth.¹ Of these new homes, about half must be affordable to households earning very low incomes, meaning 50 percent or less of the metropolitan area’s median income (AMI). How can Washington state encourage more housing in the Seattle region in a way that ensures adequate access for people who are unable to afford the costs of living in market-rate units? Given the high interest rates now faced by homeowners and investors and declining building nationwide, addressing this question is essential to ensuring the region can be affordable to as many future residents as possible.

In this report, we evaluate what historical data show about the region’s likelihood of achieving the housing growth that the state estimates is needed. We project that the Puget Sound will face a gap of about 140,000 units over the next 20 years. We show that a 2023 Washington state reform that enables the construction of “missing middle,” small-scale apartment buildings throughout the state is unlikely to generate the number of units needed; moreover, the buildings authorized are unlikely to be cost-effective for most subsidized housing. High-density upzoning could better align with demand, but alone, such upzoning will not fully address affordability needs.

Recommendations

Washington state could take a two-pronged approach to address its housing needs. The first approach is to enact large-scale upzoning. Large-scale upzoning is more likely than allowances for missing-middle housing to meet demand from both developers and residents because it can enable the construction of larger apartment buildings that already account for the majority of new housing-unit construction in the Puget Sound. These buildings can provide dwellings for a larger share of the housing market, ensure space for new subsidized units even in currently exclusionary communities, and contribute to providing the new construction supply that can reduce overall housing costs. Even with significant housing construction, however, the Puget Sound is likely to require additional measures to address regional housing needs at the low end of the market. As such, a second, connected approach is to considerably expand public investment in housing that is affordable for families with low and moderate incomes. These two approaches can be implemented simultaneously.

A successful state land-use policy could include the following:

- **Require localities to implement large-scale upzoning around transit and in regional centers.** This type of zoning change would mean encouraging the construction of apartment buildings with 50 or more units and five or more stories.
- **Allow developers of subsidized housing to circumvent local zoning regulations.** Developers building projects subsidized by the Low Income Housing Tax Credit typically can only make projects work if they are able to build large apartment complexes.

Even a high-density upzoning is unlikely to produce enough new housing in the short to medium term to ensure affordability for families with low incomes. Additional funding from the federal government is needed to help address this problem, but the state can play an important role as well. State legislators could consider integrating upzoning efforts with efforts to fund increased housing affordability. Such efforts could include the following:

- **Substantially expanding contributions to the state Housing Trust Fund, such as through the passage of a regional or statewide affordable housing tax levy.** We estimate that a \$1 billion annual investment could generate an additional roughly 67,000 housing units affordable to households with low incomes by 2044.
- **Promoting subsidized housing construction in small-scale apartment buildings.** Subsidized, prefabricated housing units could enable a fairer distribution of affordable housing, even in single-family housing neighborhoods.
- **Increasing the availability of publicly owned land for affordable housing.** Such land can reduce development costs and enable collaborative decisionmaking with neighborhood residents.

Unifying Upzoning with Affordable Housing Production Strategies

The Puget Sound—the metropolitan area encompassing Seattle and its suburbs—hosts a vibrant economy, has a beautiful climate, and has attracted hundreds of thousands of new residents in recent years.² But housing construction has not kept up with demand, increasing competition for an inadequate number of homes and reducing affordability (Freemark et al. 2023). One limitation is strict local zoning that inhibits building anything other than single-family homes. In response, the Washington state legislature passed House Bill 1110 (HB 1110) in spring 2023, requiring many cities to allow new small-scale apartment buildings on most residential land. This is a step forward. But it is not enough to address regional housing needs. First, it fails to account for the fact that developers likely will continue to prioritize investment in large structures, so a strategy focused only on small-scale buildings will not be sufficient. Second, it does not provide the subsidies necessary for developers to fill the gap between the cost of building and maintaining housing and the rents families with low and moderate incomes can afford.

The state of Washington estimates that the Puget Sound's four counties need about 640,000 new homes by 2044 to meet population growth.³ Of these new homes, about half must be affordable to households earning very low incomes, meaning 50 percent or less of the metropolitan area's median income (AMI). How can Washington state encourage more housing in the Seattle region in a way that ensures adequate access for people who are unable to afford the costs of living in market-rate units? Given the high interest rates now faced by homeowners and investors and declining building nationwide, addressing this question is essential to ensuring the region can be affordable to as many future residents as possible.

We evaluate what historical data show about the region's likelihood of achieving the housing growth that the state estimates is needed. We review recent state legislation, particularly HB 1110 and its requirement that localities allow small-scale apartment buildings ("missing middle" housing). We examine data on the impact of similar reforms implemented elsewhere and explore scholarship related to other types of zoning reform—particularly high-density upzoning—but note its limitations in generating affordable housing. We conclude by pointing to a variety of approaches that could spur housing construction. Our key contributions include the following:

- Based on recent construction trends, we project that the Puget Sound will face a gap of about 140,000 units over the next 20 years. Because of rising housing prices and limited funding for subsidies, the gap in housing affordable to families with low incomes will be even larger.
- Though HB 1110 is a step forward in combatting exclusionary zoning, we show that it is unlikely to generate the number of units needed, based on the experience of other localities implementing similar changes that have produced few new housing units. Moreover, the small-scale buildings the law authorizes are unlikely to be cost-effective for most subsidized housing.
- Evidence suggests that high-density upzoning could better align with demand and thus is likely more effective in encouraging building. But, alone, such upzoning will not fully address affordability needs. First, developers cannot profit from new housing affordable to families with low incomes, such as those who make less than half the median regional income. Developers cannot build affordable units unless public subsidies enable deals to “pencil out.” Second, new market-rate apartments are unlikely to become available quickly enough or at large enough volumes to allow “filtering” that massively reduces competition for supply and thus lowers the price of older housing units to levels affordable to families with low incomes.
- We show that \$1 billion in annual state housing subsidies—equivalent to about 1.5 percent of the state budget—could generate 67,000 cumulative affordable units by 2044, adding to those funded by existing sources. While federal action is needed to fully close the gap, an investment at this scale by the state would roughly double subsidized housing growth and contribute to relieving the region’s affordable housing needs. The effectiveness of these subsidies is dependent on zoning that enables large-scale buildings.

Washington state legislators have two interconnected opportunities to address the dual challenges of housing supply and affordability, particularly in the Puget Sound. To enable substantial new construction, legislators could consider large-scale upzoning, which would be more likely to meet demand from both developers and residents because it can enable the construction of larger apartment buildings that already account for the majority of new housing that is constructed in the Puget Sound. They could also allow subsidized housing developers to supersede local zoning requirements. To ensure adequate access to housing affordable to families with low incomes, legislators could pair zoning reforms with increasing direct funding allocations for subsidized housing.

Faced with Continued Population Growth and Housing Affordability Challenges, Washington Needs More Units

Seattle is one of the few high-cost municipalities that has rapidly added housing over the past several decades (Freemark 2022a). Nevertheless, overall housing growth in the Puget Sound region has been

inadequate. In the 2010s, the four-county metropolitan area added almost 600,000 residents—but only about 200,000 housing units. That is the fewest number of new homes completed in the region per decade at least since the 1970s—despite the Puget Sound having grown substantially in the years since (Freemark et al. 2023). One result of the limited number of housing units available is that a growing share of people living in the region are cost burdened—meaning they spend more than 30 percent of their incomes on rent. In King County alone, more than 150,000 households are cost burdened; these households are disproportionately people of color.⁴ Moreover, less than half of households in the broader metropolitan area can afford to purchase a median-priced home.⁵ Finding the means to add more housing units is essential to help address these challenges.

The Value of New Housing Construction

Housing construction can meet demand from people who need a new place to live (such as young adults) and people from other metropolitan areas who want to move in. New units—particularly those in high-cost metropolitan areas—are typically only affordable for people who have upper-middle or high incomes.⁶ Nevertheless, new units can also play an important role for people with low and moderate incomes because they reduce competition for housing across the market overall and they allow older units to “filter down” to those families (Mast 2023). This makes building new homes essential for the health of the housing market.

The United States has been underbuilding; housing growth has been declining since the 1970s.⁷ The rate of housing construction is the product of a confluence of factors: labor and material costs, land costs, and market demand are three major explanations (Gyourko 2009). Higher costs make financing new units difficult. Without demand from potential residents to buy or rent new homes, private developers are unlikely to invest. But housing supply is not just the product of *construction*; if the number of units declines due to existing apartments being combined into fewer units, a jurisdiction could experience reduced supply. (This does not appear to be occurring at a high rate in Seattle; see box 1.) In housing markets suffering from limited demand, units can also be lost because of disinvestment.

Local land-use regulations like zoning also influence construction rates. Areas with stricter land-use regulations are likely to have less housing construction than localities where rules make it easier to build (Mayer and Somerville 2000)—though there is substantial neighborhood-level variation (Jackson 2016). Stricter regulation, such as limitations on building anything other than single-family homes on larger lots, is associated with greater housing costs (Kok, Monkkonen, and Quigley 2014) and demographic segregation. Areas with stricter building laws tend to concentrate white people and

people with higher incomes, to the exclusion of others (Freemark, Lo, and Bronin 2023). Segregation of people by race and income results in poorer quality of life both for those who are excluded *and* those who live in exclusionary communities, thereby reducing regional prosperity (Acs et al. 2017).

Not all housing investment is undertaken purely by the private sector. A substantial share of new units—particularly multifamily buildings—is supported by federal programs like the Low Income Housing Tax Credit (LIHTC). LIHTC makes it possible to construct and renovate units affordable for people with low or moderate incomes, thus filling part of the gap created by the limits of private sector investment alone. This is particularly true for multifamily buildings; the LIHTC subsidized about a quarter of such units nationwide from 2000 to 2019.⁸ The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) also subsidizes some units through Housing Choice Vouchers, public housing support, and Section 8 project-based programs, plus provides grants through the HOME program, typically to make new LIHTC units affordable to lower-income families.⁹ The number of new federally subsidized units added in the region declined in the 2010s compared to the 2000s despite a growing population (Freemark 2022b). In King County, there were only 39 subsidized housing units for every 100 extremely low-income renter households in 2017.¹⁰ In the Puget Sound, there are also affordable housing programs supported by the city of Seattle and the state of Washington, among other public entities, which are also typically combined with LIHTC financing to cover the full costs of affordable housing projects.¹¹ And, of late, companies like Amazon (the funder of this report) and Microsoft have provided funding to support affordable housing to supplement public sources in the Puget Sound.¹²

BOX 1

To What Degree Are Conversions Resulting in Reduced Housing Availability?

One potential concern for housing availability is that owners are converting existing multifamily units into single-family homes, reducing the number of units. A recent review of over 70 years of New York City's records finds that mergers of multiple apartments into bigger units and conversions of multifamily housing stock into single-family homes have eliminated 104,000 units of housing in that city (Brodheim 2023).¹³ This research reveals that housing mergers and conversions can have a lasting impact on net supply reduction, thus contributing to housing affordability challenges.

We approximated this analysis in Seattle, finding less reason for concern. We estimate that between 1990 and 2022, Seattle lost 179 units from multifamily-to-single-family conversions and multifamily demolitions.¹⁴ We identified multifamily demolitions and conversions and determined the number of units developed on these parcels, thus finding the net unit loss. This does not factor in single-family consolidation (when multiple owner-occupied homes are demolished in favor of one larger owner-occupied home), and includes neither multifamily demolition/consolidation outside Seattle nor

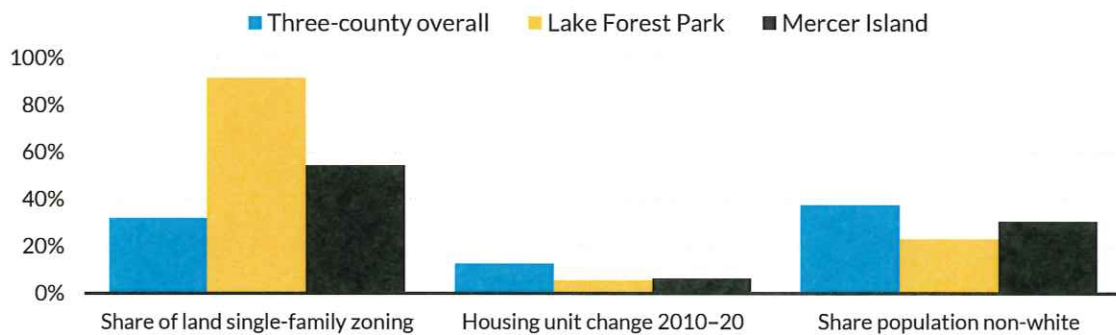
permitting data from before 1990. Although this may undercount the total impact of multifamily conversions and consolidations, within the scope of housing development over 30 years, the impact has likely been small. Nonetheless, legislation preventing or regulating these types of conversions could expand Seattle’s housing stock in the long run without using limited public funds.

Some Puget Sound Communities Used Exclusionary Zoning to Stop Construction

Some localities have leveraged zoning policy to prevent construction, particularly of apartment buildings. This has excluded people with low and moderate incomes, since they are less able to afford the costs of renting or owning a single-family home. Moreover, this exclusion has a racial and ethnic dimension. In 2022, for example, the median household income of white householders in the Seattle metropolitan area was almost 60 percent higher than that of Black householders—and white households were more than twice as likely to own homes.¹⁵ In this way, land-use policies have become a mechanism to prevent people with lower incomes and people of color from living in certain areas.

The links between local land-use policy, housing, and race play out locally. Consider two municipalities that we identified as having leveraged single-family zoning to prevent apartment construction: Lake Forest Park and Mercer Island (Freemark et al. 2023). Each municipality has far higher median housing values than the metropolitan area overall (Mercer Island’s are almost three times as high), and each has devoted most land to exclusively single-family home construction (figure 1)—at least prior to the passage of HB 1110 (which will take several years implement; see below).

FIGURE 1
Certain Puget Sound Municipalities Have Leveraged Exclusionary Zoning to Prevent Construction



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Source: Freemark et al. 2023.

Notes: Data for share of land single-family zoning is within a half mile of existing or planned bus rapid transit or rail stations. The three counties are King, Pierce, and Snohomish Counties.

The zoning policies each city implemented had consequences: each increased its housing stock by less than 6.5 percent between 2010 and 2020, despite the Puget Sound’s demand for housing. This was far below the regional increase of 13 percent. These jurisdictions have strong market demand for housing and have real-estate markets where new development could “pencil out”—but zoning rules have limited building. Moreover, while the region averages 29 subsidized housing units per 1,000 total units, Lake Forest Park and Mercer Island total 0 and 3, respectively, likely in part because it is difficult to find land zoned for multifamily apartment units in those communities. Each city has a population that has a considerably higher share of white residents than the region overall (figure 1).

Other Puget Sound towns and cities have deployed similar strategies to segregate and exclude. But it is worth noting that even before HB 1110, several communities already had zoning that enabled the construction of small-scale apartment buildings in previously single-family-only neighborhoods. Suburban cities like Bothell, Fife, Kent, Kirkland, and Puyallup, for example, enabled two- to four-unit buildings throughout much of their land area (Freemark et al. 2023).

Zoning Limits Are Difficult to Overcome for Subsidized Housing

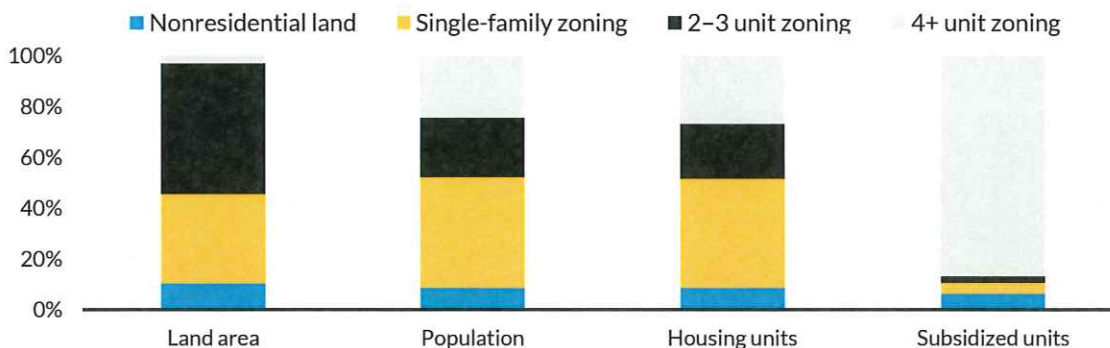
Zoning is a particular concern for investments in project-based affordable housing units, like those subsidized by LIHTC. LIHTC units are usually developed by private or nonprofit entities that must abide by local zoning laws—this encourages developers to identify sites for projects where they can build large multifamily buildings. As of 2013, only about 2 percent of LIHTC projects nationwide had fewer than 11 units, because of the cost efficiencies at play in building larger structures.¹⁶

In a recent study leveraging data from the National Housing Preservation Database, we offer concrete evidence for the limitations imposed by zoning on subsidized housing construction.¹⁷ We show that more than 90 percent of federally subsidized affordable housing near transit in the Puget Sound region is located on land currently zoned for buildings with four or more units; those are the only areas where the large buildings that constitute most LIHTC projects can be built (figure 2). But zoning on only about 5 percent of the region’s land currently allows such buildings to be constructed. This means that the subsidized affordable housing units are concentrated in an extremely small area.

FIGURE 2

Almost All Project-Based Subsidized Housing Is Located in Areas Zoned for Large Buildings

Share by zoning type, pre-zoning reform, in Puget Sound jurisdictions near transit stations



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Source: Author analysis of data from the US Census Bureau 2015–19 American Community Survey; the National Housing Preservation Database, <https://nhpd.preservationdatabase.org/>; and local Puget Sound zoning codes.

Notes: Parcels within a half mile of existing or planned fixed-guideway transit. Does not account for accessory dwelling units.

Locating new affordable housing units only in areas with multifamily zoning reinforces segregation of people by race and class. In associated research, we show that single-family zoning is associated with fewer renters and a higher concentration both of white people and people with higher incomes.¹⁸ Some states, such as Massachusetts, have attempted to address this problem by enabling subsidized housing developers to supersede local zoning requirements in cities where there are few affordable units.¹⁹

Affordable Housing Funding Is Tight in Washington State

Even if localities implement zoning that adequately accommodates subsidized housing projects, more subsidies would be needed in the state to support additional units. Existing programs, both from the state and particularly from the federal government, have failed to grow adequately to meet demand or population growth. Additional federal and state subsidies for development could help fill the gap.

During discussions related to the 2021 federal infrastructure law and the 2022 Inflation Reduction Act, advocates argued that the federal government should expand investment in affordable housing.²⁰ The idea was that federal support was necessary after years of inadequate growth in housing funding, since an estimated 6.8 million affordable housing units are needed in the United States for extremely low-income renters.²¹ The number of units financed through LIHTC remains below mid-2000s levels.²² Funding for the other major public subsidy program that supports new affordable housing—HOME—

has flatlined in recent decades (Jones 2021). Yet, Congress chose not to increase funding for affordable housing. This threatens the ability of developers to expand investment in affordable housing.

Washington has a Housing Trust Fund that is used to support affordable housing. In 2023, the state legislature raised the program's two-year funding to \$400 million, a 40 percent increase.²³ Since the fund's creation in 1986, it has supported about 60,000 housing units with \$1.5 billion (not inflation adjusted; many units were also financed with other sources, such as LIHTC). One challenge is that existing units need repair; circa 2015, the program's 387 supported properties had an estimated \$192 million in capital needs costs (Zillah et al. 2015). Another is the increasing cost of housing unit construction: new affordable units in the Puget Sound have cost up to \$480,000 per unit to build.²⁴

Local programs provide some support for affordable housing. The city of Seattle funds affordable housing through a housing tax levy. The levy successfully produced affordable units, preserving rental housing, financing operating costs, preventing homelessness, and encouraging homeownership. The levy, which was renewed in 2023, will provide \$970 million by 2030, of which \$707 million will fund the production or preservation of 3,516 units of affordable housing.²⁵ In part funded by the levy, the mayor's proposed 2024 City of Seattle budget, if passed, would include a \$335 million investment in affordable housing (compared to \$253 million in 2023).²⁶ In February 2023, Seattle residents voted to create the Seattle Social Housing Developer, a public development authority that will develop and maintain publicly owned, mixed-income housing, though its exact approach has yet to be determined. King County, finally, created an Affordable Housing Committee to coordinate affordable housing development efforts.²⁷

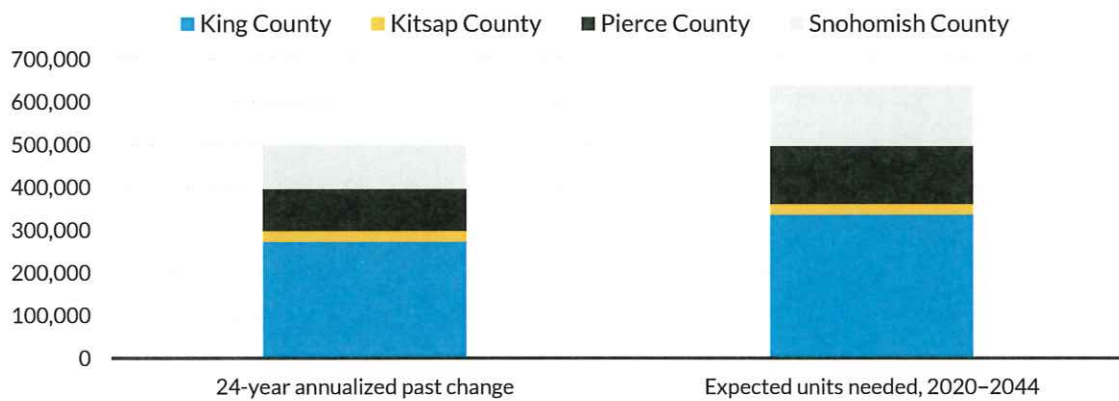
Despite these investments from state and local governments, more funding is necessary to fully fill the gap in public support for housing affordable to families with low incomes.²⁸ A typical new housing unit affordable to renters at 60 percent of AMI, equivalent to \$82,200 for a four-person household in Seattle in 2023, could require at least \$350,000 in public subsidy, including about \$200,000 in LIHTC financing.²⁹ This would include substantial contribution from the household through rent, equivalent to about \$2,000 a month in this case. A project that funds renters at higher levels of affordability—addressing the needs of households with lower incomes—would require substantially more subsidy.

Substantial New Housing Construction Is Needed to Meet Demand

To meet growing demand to live in Washington state, housing construction will likely need to accelerate to provide adequate housing. Using data on the number of housing units completed in the Puget Sound's four counties over the past two decades, we estimate that, if construction continues at the previous

rate, the region will add about 500,000 units by 2044, with most new units in King County (figure 3). This may be an optimistic estimate, since, as noted, the number of housing units completed regionally in the 2010s was lower than in the preceding decades. But, according to recent estimates from the Washington State Department of Commerce, the Puget Sound will need about 640,000 new housing units by 2044.³⁰ If demand remains at current levels, that could leave a gap of 140,000 housing units. If left unfilled, that could mean rising prices, more crowded housing, and residents having to move.

FIGURE 3
Puget Sound Counties Need About 140,000 More Housing Units than Were Built Over Past Decades
Recent housing construction compared to net new housing units estimated needed by 2044



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Source: Author analysis of data from 2000 and 2020 US Decennial Census and Washington Department of Commerce, “Updating GMA Housing Elements,” 2023, <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/planning-for-housing/updates-gma-housing-elements/>.

Notes: Based on “medium” population growth estimate of the state of Washington. The 24-year annualized past change is an estimate based on the change in number of housing units between 2000 and 2020.

Next, we evaluate the degree to which the Seattle region is likely to meet its *affordable* housing needs. We collect data from a variety of sources on the number of federally subsidized units completed in the region in recent decades. In figure 4, we estimate from that trend that roughly 47,000 LIHTC units and 27,000 HUD-subsidized units will be added to the region by 2044. (Note that many of the LIHTC units are *also* subsidized by HUD programs through Housing Choice Vouchers, meaning that we are likely double counting here; in addition, because many LIHTC unit contracts last only 30 years, many existing LIHTC units will need to use new funds to have their contracts renewed.) Without additional subsidy, LIHTC units are generally affordable at 60 percent of AMI.³¹ HUD subsidies typically ensure affordability for what the agency refers to as “extremely low income” households, which are households with incomes at 30 percent of AMI or lower, or \$41,100 for a four-person household in Seattle. In

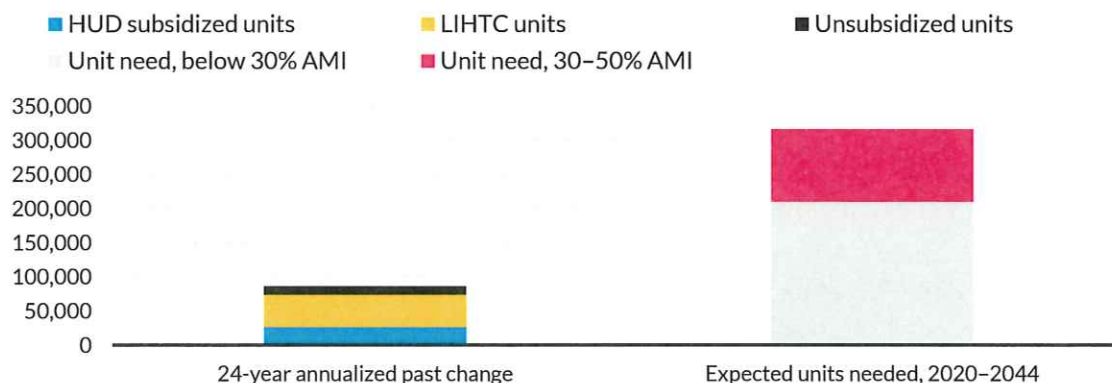
addition, we estimate that about 12,000 additional “naturally occurring” units affordable to households at 30 percent of AMI but unsubsidized by federal sources will become available by 2044.³² In total, this produces an optimistic estimate of about 86,000 new affordable units added across a variety of income ranges in the region by 2044. (Some units are likely to benefit from additional support from state and local subsidies, but as noted, these units will likely also receive LIHTC financing.)

Unfortunately, this estimate is much lower than what the state of Washington projects is necessary by 2044. The state expects that the Puget Sound needs about 210,000 units affordable at 30 percent of AMI and an additional 106,000 units affordable at 50 percent of AMI, which HUD refers to as “extremely low income” and “very low income,” respectively (figure 4). Because most new subsidized units are completed using LIHTC financing, they will not necessarily meet much of this need, since the additional housing demand is focused at the low end of the income spectrum. Overall, this comparison points to a large gap of at least 230,000 affordable units required across the metropolitan area in the coming decades. This gap is larger than the gap in housing units needed overall (figure 3). First, there is *already* a massive but unfilled demand for housing units affordable to families with low incomes. Second, the state estimates that existing housing will increase in cost more quickly than incomes will rise. The question for the Puget Sound is how it can overcome this major obstacle to housing affordability.

FIGURE 4

Based on Recent Trends, the Puget Sound Faces a Huge Gap in Affordable Housing Provision

Recent affordable housing construction, compared to new affordable housing units estimated needed by 2044



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Source: Author analysis of data from US Department of Housing and Urban Development, “Assisted Housing: National and Local,” 2023, <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/datasets/assthg.html#year2009-2022>; National Housing Preservation Database, 2023, <https://nhpd.preservationdatabase.org>; Erika Poethig, Liza Getsinger, Josh Leopold, Graham MacDonald, Lily Posey, Pamela Blumenthal, Reed Jordan, and Katza Abazajian, 2017, “Mapping America’s Rental Housing Crisis,” Washington, DC: Urban Institute, <https://apps.urban.org/features/rental-housing-crisis-map/>; Washington Department of Commerce, “Updating GMA Housing Elements,” 2023, <https://www.commerce.wa.gov/serving-communities/growth-management/growth-management-topics/planning-for-housing/updating-gma-housing-elements/>.

Notes: Based on “medium” population growth estimate of the state of Washington. 24-year annualized past change is an annualized estimate based on change in availability of LIHTC and HUD-subsidized units between 2004 and 2002, as well as an annualized estimate based on change in availability of units affordable to households with incomes below 30 percent of area median income from 2000 to 2010–2014. HUD-subsidized units include units subsidized through public housing, Housing Choice Voucher, Moderate Rehab, Project-Based Section 8, and several other project-based programs. Some LIHTC units are also subsidized by HUD supports. HUD = US Department of Housing and Urban Development. LIHTC = Low Income Housing Tax Credit.

Washington State Advanced Housing Reforms in 2023

Faced with housing shortages, states nationwide have accelerated passage of legislation to encourage or require localities to take action to rezone (Manji et al. 2023). These laws have been most prominently deployed in California, Massachusetts, and Oregon. In theory, they should override exclusionary land-use policies that some localities have implemented, increase overall housing construction, and make it feasible for more people to be able to live in the communities they desire by reducing housing costs.

In 2023, the Washington state legislature passed HB 1110, designed to allow small-scale apartment buildings in many areas previously zoned for only single-family housing.³³ This law requires the following:

- cities with fewer than 25,000 residents that are within a county's Urban Growth Area and in a county with a city of at least 275,000 residents allow at least two units per residential lot
- cities with at least 25,000 residents allow at least two units per residential lot or four units per lot if at least one unit is affordable (this is similar to an inclusionary zoning bonus; see Stacy et al. 2021) or if the lot is within a quarter mile of transit³⁴
- cities with more than 75,000 residents allow at least four units per residential lot or six units per lot if at least two units are affordable or if a lot is within a quarter mile of transit

The law requires that cities subject to its provisions allow a variety of “middle” housing types, though it does not specify how broad these allowances must be.³⁵ It removes parking requirements—which add to housing development costs—for projects located near transit (Shoup 2005). Additionally, cities must enact ordinances that ensure the development of “middle” housing is subject to similar permit and approval processes as those of single-family detached residences. The state Department of Commerce will draft model ordinances and regulations by January 2024 that apply to cities that do not take action to apply the new requirements. The state Department of Commerce will use \$4.5 million to create grants meant to support in the implementation of HB 1110.³⁶

HB 1110 enables cities to adopt alternative density plans that only apply the new density requirements to 75 percent of their primarily residential lots. These new density requirements must go into effect in the applicable cities within six months after a city's next comprehensive plan update (the state requires updates every 10 years). The next round of updates will happen between 2024 and 2027; counties in the Puget Sound must all update their plans by December 31, 2024.³⁷

HB 1110 builds on HB 1220, which the legislature passed in 2021. HB 1220 requires jurisdictions throughout the state to plan for housing available to households of all economic levels, based on state need estimates, which are then translated to the county and municipal level (these are the estimates used for figures 3 and 4).³⁸ Localities statewide are already adjusting their plans to leave more room for more apartments, in some cases near transit and in others in regional centers designated by the Puget Sound Regional Council and especially apt to absorb more density.³⁹

In 2023, Washington state legislators considered several other bills that would have required local-level land-use reforms, but most were not enacted (box 2).

BOX 2

Other Bills Considered During Washington State's 2023 Session

Senate Bill 5466 was the most ambitious of the bills the legislature considered but did not enact in 2023.⁴⁰ It promoted development around transit in two ways. First, as passed by the state senate, it would have required that localities raise floor area ratio (FAR) allowances. FAR is a measure of density, with higher numbers reflecting the potential for more housing construction; an FAR of 0.25 to 0.5 is common for a single-family neighborhood. But SB 5466 would have increased the required FAR to 3.0 for projects located within a half-mile walking distance of rail stations or 2.5 within a quarter-mile walk of bus rapid transit routes (these figures changed over the course of the bill's deliberation in the senate); 20 percent of units would have to be reserved for affordable housing. Developers would have been able to request this to be increased to a FAR of 4.5 if all units were affordable housing. SB 5466 would have increased housing densities more dramatically than HB 1110, since those FAR levels are much higher than the small-scale apartments allowed by the latter law—though SB 5466 would have affected a smaller amount of land. The bill would have combined those changes with the elimination of most minimum parking requirements. SB 5466 would have also initiated a grant program, to be managed by the state Department of Commerce and designed to help finance affordable housing near transit. However, the bill did not provide any funds to support the grant program.

State legislators considered several other bills. One bill, for example, would have simply reduced parking minimum requirements, an approach many jurisdictions are now taking.⁴¹ House Bill 1351/Senate Bill 5456 would have exempted residential or commercial developments from parking minimums if they are located within a half-mile walking distance from a transit stop that receives service every 15 minutes. Developments would also be exempt if fewer than 20 housing units or if one-fifth of the units was set aside for low-income, disabled, or elderly households.⁴²

Middle Housing Reforms Are Inadequate to Fully Address Housing Needs for People with Low Incomes

The passage of HB 1110 advanced zoning policy in Washington state. For the first time, it mandated that communities would have to accommodate small-scale apartment buildings. Research shows that apartments in smaller structures cost an average of 13 percent less than equivalent-sized units in single-family homes, with only half of the difference attributable to variation in the neighborhoods where the two housing types are built; this is true even for new units in cities like Minneapolis and Seattle (An et al. 2021; An et al. 2022). If Washington state could encourage high levels of construction of these types of projects, it might not only add to the housing supply—but also do so in a way that is more affordable than other types of new housing construction.

Recent optimistic estimates from the Puget Sound Regional Council indicate that HB 1110 could make room for 50,000 to 150,000 units regionwide over several decades, which could be an important contributor to overall housing growth.⁴³ Yet, given recent experience elsewhere, these estimates are very optimistic and HB 1110 alone is likely to be inadequate in generating the large number of new housing units that the Puget Sound needs in response to its continued growth. Based on our review of trends in other metropolitan areas, development of small-scale buildings could be limited because of narrow interest from developers for whom such structures are financially riskier and less cost-effective to build, and from households for whom replacing a single-family home with a small multifamily structure is unappealing. Other strategies, including upzoning for larger buildings and providing funds for affordable housing, may be necessary to complement the reform to encourage significant new construction and ensure that units are affordable to families with low and moderate incomes.

Take-up for Small-Scale Apartment Buildings Is Likely to be Small Compared to Zoning Allowances: Developers Want to Build Bigger

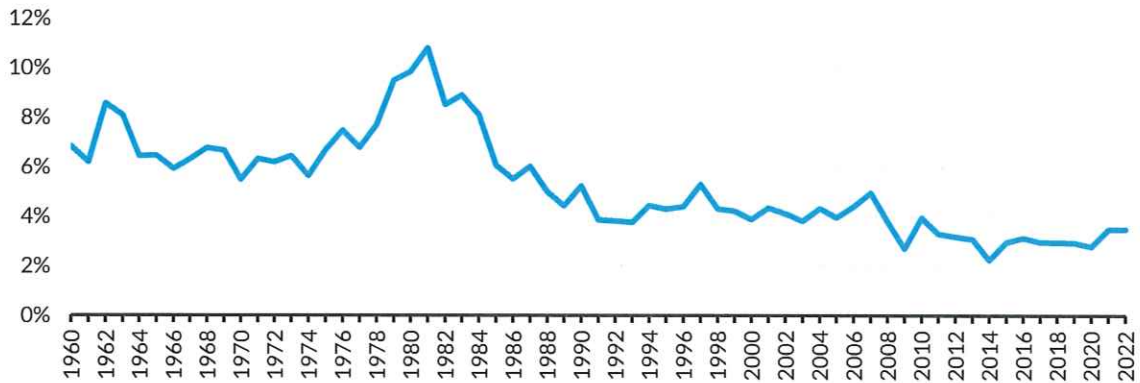
The movement to allow developers to construct small-scale apartment buildings has accelerated during a time when there is a dramatic decline in their construction. The explanations for this decline are multifarious. To some degree, the decline reflects land-use laws: Certainly, as cities and counties have banned the new construction of duplexes and triplexes in certain neighborhoods, developers have been unable to build them. But part of the explanation for limited small-scale apartment construction is likely also limited demand. If families have less interest in living in duplexes or triplexes than in either single-family homes or larger apartment buildings, they will pay less per square foot to do so—and developers will respond by building fewer of those types of buildings.

The recent history of small-scale apartment construction in the United States is thus important context for projecting the potential impact of HB 1110 and similar statewide reforms. Consider the share of US housing units permitted in buildings with two to four units in recent decades (figure 5). These types of buildings routinely accounted for more than 6 percent of national housing units in the 1960s, 1970s, and early 1980s. Yet this figure declined in the 1990s to about 4 percent; since the Great Recession, permitting rates for these buildings have declined further. The result is that in 2022, only 49,000 units in such buildings were completed, compared to 90,000 in 2004 and 145,000 in 1983—when the nation's population had 100 million fewer people.

FIGURE 5

Middle-Scale Housing Has Accounted for a Shrinking Share of the National Housing Stock

Share of all housing units permitted in buildings with two to four units, nationwide



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Source: The authors, based on US Census Building Permit Survey.

The decline illustrated in figure 5 could reflect changing zoning policy, but it may also reflect lack of interest from developers and homeowners. What seems clear is that the trend of declining investment in small-scale buildings has consequences for the development system. It likely reduces developer comfort with this type of building; they have become less familiar with their architectural and financing requirements. The question is whether Washington’s 2023 zoning reforms have changed these circumstances. Will allowances for more small-scale apartment buildings reverse the trend?

Recent evidence from Minneapolis; Portland, Oregon; and the state of California offers reasons to be skeptical—at least over the short term. In 2019, the Minneapolis City Council eliminated single-family zoning by allowing duplexes or triplexes citywide. This has hardly produced a barrage of applications to build such units; in 2022, just 33 such buildings were permitted. Only four were in zones previously reserved for single-family home construction. The city permitted more than 3,500 units in multifamily buildings in 2022.⁴⁴

Portland passed the Residential Infill Project zoning reform in 2020. This enabled construction of up to four units in single buildings (six units if affordable) on lots previously zoned for single-family housing; it applied to a majority of the city’s land (Cascadia Partners 2023).⁴⁵ The zoning reform limits the maximum FAR for new single-unit dwellings, but incentivizes developers to build multiple small-scale units through a FAR sliding scale: for every unit added on a lot, the allowed FAR increases. This, in essence, allows larger buildings—as long as they have multiple housing units contained within them. In the law’s first year, 271 housing units were permitted in small-scale apartment buildings in these zones.

While this is much more than the number of single-family units permitted in the same land area (102), it is a tiny share of the thousands of units permitted overall in the city in 2022, most of which were in large, multifamily apartment buildings.⁴⁶

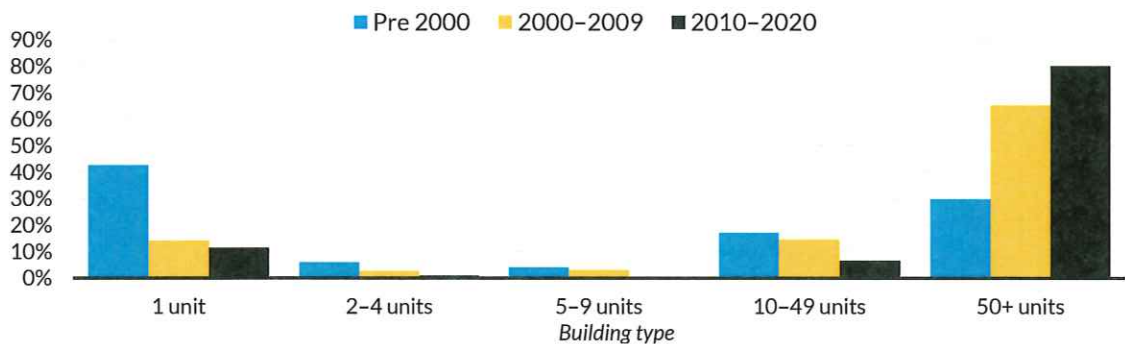
In California, the passage of Senate Bill 9 increased the zoning envelope in the state by about 700,000 now-buildable units, according to some estimates. The law allowed landowners statewide to split parcels and build up to two units per lot (meaning a parcel with a single-family home could essentially make room for four units, in some ways enabling changes similar to HB 1110). Yet, at least as of January 2023, the law had failed to produce many homes.⁴⁷ Los Angeles, the state's largest city, received only 211 applications under the law in 2022; the same year, it permitted more than 15,000 units in buildings with five or more units (it also permitted more than 6,000 accessory dwelling units, or ADUs). No other California jurisdiction reported more than 25 applications to use this new type of allowance in the same year.

Recent trends in the Puget Sound, moreover, do not suggest that construction of small-scale apartment buildings will expand to accommodate a large share of the housing market. In the period between 2010 and 2020, less than two percent of new units constructed near transit were located in buildings with two to four units (figure 6). Even fewer were located in buildings with five to nine units. This is despite the fact that, as noted, many suburban cities in the Puget Sound allowed small-scale apartment buildings with two or more units on much of their land area before the passage of HB 1110 (Freemark et al. 2023). These conditions suggest that even with state allowances for the construction of small-scale apartment buildings, there will not necessarily be a rush of investment in those types of structures.

FIGURE 6

Near Transit, Developers Want to Build Large-Scale Apartment Buildings

Share of all housing units permitted near transit, Seattle metropolitan area



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Source: Author analysis of data provided by First American Financial Corporation, 2022.

Notes: Data for parcels within a half mile of existing and planned fixed-guideway transit stations in the Puget Sound.

In spite of these trends, there is growing evidence that it is possible to leverage small-scale zoning changes and associated investments to densify neighborhoods that were previously occupied only by single-family homes. A 2019 reform in the city of Seattle enabled the addition of two ADUs on most lots—essentially increasing maximum lot occupancy from one dwelling unit to three—and reduced the difficulty of building them. This reform has been associated with a steady increase in construction. The city averaged 121 permitted detached ADUs annually between 2016 and 2019; this figure increased to 551 in 2022 (Welch et al. 2023). This is part of a regionwide trend of increased ADU construction.⁴⁸ This figure, however, pales in comparison to the almost 9,000 “regular” housing units the city permitted that year (of which more than 80 percent were in buildings with at least five units). And it is unclear whether small-scale buildings in the form of duplexes or quadplexes will attract interest similar to that of detached ADUs, which have the advantage of offering their occupants private outdoor space.

Despite the limitations that housing affordability programs like LIHTC impose on constructing small-scale buildings, some cities are piloting new approaches to subsidized structures. In Minneapolis, for example, the local public housing authority recently funded 84 subsidized units in 16 four- to six-unit buildings.⁴⁹ These units were built off-site and have been installed mostly in neighborhoods that were formerly zoned single-family only. This example of how subsidized housing can fit into small apartment complexes could be nationally relevant, though the number of units that could be supported in this fashion is likely to remain limited.

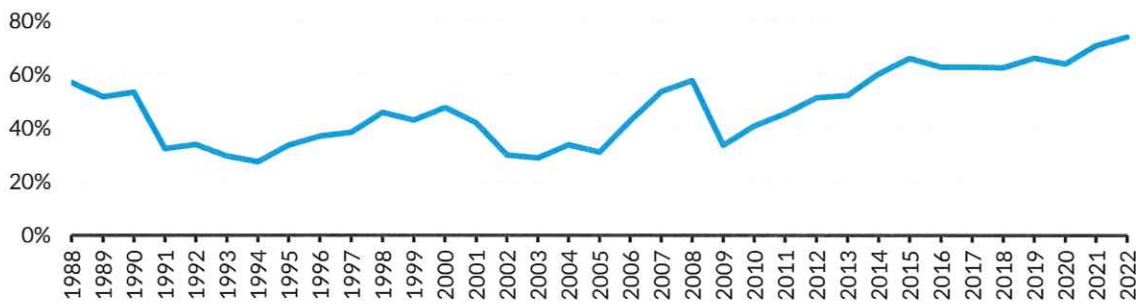
Generally, developers and the public seem to be interested in investing in, and living in, multifamily buildings. In the Seattle metropolitan area, the share of all housing permitted in multifamily buildings

has increased since the Great Recession, reaching 74 percent of permits in 2022 (figure 7). The vast majority of these units—especially in areas near transit—are in large multifamily apartment buildings with 50 or more apartments (figure 6). Though other US regions are experiencing a similar trend, Seattle stands out. For example, in 2022, 57 percent of building permits in the Dallas metropolitan area and 58 percent in the Phoenix metropolitan area were for units in multifamily buildings.

FIGURE 7

The Majority of New Housing Units in the Puget Sound Are in Multiunit Buildings

Share of all housing units permitted in buildings with more than 1 unit, Seattle metropolitan area



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Source: The authors, based on FRED Economic Data, “New Private Housing Units Authorized by Building Permits for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellview, WA,” St. Louis, MO: St. Louis Fed, accessed September 20, 2023, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/SEAT653BPPRIVSA>; FRED Economic Data, “New Private Housing Units Authorized by Building Permits: 1-Unit Structures for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellview, WA,” St. Louis, MO: St. Louis Fed, accessed September 20, 2023, <https://fred.stlouisfed.org/series/SEAT653BP1FHSA>.

Notes: Data for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue metropolitan area.

Allowances for small-scale apartment buildings likely will not be effective in producing some additional housing. Certain large cities at the center of the Puget Sound, like Bellevue and Seattle, reserve a large share of land for single-family homes (and ADUs), including near transit lines (Freemark et al. 2023). This will have to change in the context of HB 1110. These neighborhoods are likely to see more housing built following the implementation of the law, even if the number of units is small.

Explanations for Limited Small-Building Apartment Development

Localities have altered their zoning to encourage construction of small-scale apartment buildings, but, as we have seen, those projects remain relatively rare. Why is this the case? Using a series of in-depth interviews with stakeholders like developers and an examination of financial data, Parolek (2020) points to some explanations. Beyond single-family zoning, he identifies land-use regulations like minimum setback requirements, maximum allowed densities (often expressed in terms of dwellings per

acre), minimum lot size rules, and parking requirements as all contributing to the difficulty of constructing small-scale buildings. Requirements for multifamily buildings to include multiple staircases and elevators may also stand in the way of easy construction.⁵⁰

In other words, it may be that the reforms we profiled above are insufficiently broad to encompass all the land-use requirements limiting construction. For example, in Minneapolis, while the city allowed triplexes on all single-family lots, it required those new structures to fit into the same building “envelope” as single-family homes.⁵¹ Indeed, Alameldin and Garcia note that the slow uptake for California’s Senate Bill 9 may be the product of other locally imposed limitations, like height limits.⁵² Additional statewide reforms in California and Minneapolis, however, could help address these issues.

Parolek’s (2020) findings are also interesting in terms of their conclusions related to developer preferences. Some, he argues, avoid investing in such projects out of the fear that community members will oppose them. Developers may be less willing to invest time and resources in getting development plans approved by local organizations because of the probability of them getting blocked. Instead, developers gravitate toward large-scale projects because they have the capital to wait and tolerate the risk of neighborhood resistance. Alternatively, some choose smaller-scale projects, like ADUs, because they face less local opposition.⁵³ To make up the gap, some states like Michigan and Vermont have recently established dedicated “missing middle” housing funds to incentivize developers to build small-scale units.⁵⁴ These programs are relatively new and were initially funded by federal American Rescue Plan Funds; they have yet to be studied.

The financing of small-scale apartment buildings may pose a barrier to developers. In general, developers may see a greater return on investment by building large, single-family houses that maximize allowed FARs and that can be sold to homeowners. Research by An and colleagues (2021; 2022) finds that small-scale rental buildings are more financially risky than larger apartment buildings because of the higher loss that would result from vacancy; this could help explain why units in small-scale buildings are generally less valuable. Moreover, An and colleagues (2021) note that small-scale buildings lack the economies of scale in management and maintenance made possible by large apartment buildings, making them less appealing to potential landlords.

It is also possible that a lack of resident demand for small-scale apartment buildings makes constructing them more difficult, though more evidence is necessary to substantiate that claim. People who own single-family homes, for example, not be interested in adding additional units to their properties. A single-family home—because of the privacy and access to green space it affords—may be worth more than two or three apartment units on the same land, especially if that single-family home

can add an ADU, itself relatively private and with green space access. These conditions could impact developers' willingness to invest, but these possibilities remain little understood.

High-Density Upzoning Is More Effective in Generating Units, but Is Unlikely to Add Affordable Housing Quickly

If zoning reforms encouraging small-scale apartment buildings have not yet resulted in much new housing construction, the legalization of medium- and high-density housing may be more promising. Indeed, these types of projects—such as apartment buildings with 50 or more units spread across five or more stories—better meet the demand from developers because of the projects' cost effectiveness and because developers have years of experience constructing them. The additional units these sorts of high-density upzonings could produce, in theory, could allow older existing units to “filter down” to people with lesser means, which would increase housing affordability overall. But our examination of the scholarship on such reforms shows that speed at which these reforms are able to produce more housing and lower prices to levels affordable to families with low and moderate incomes remains in question.

Freemark (2023a) reviews the evidence thus far, looking at reforms promoting both small-scale and larger buildings. To summarize, upzonings likely have some effect in increasing construction and reducing increases in housing costs, but they do not always substantially increase affordability. Consider Stacy and colleagues' (2023) examination of the impacts of upzonings across many municipalities. They find that, following upzoning, there is on average a 0.8 percent, statistically significant increase in the number of housing units in a jurisdiction over the course of the three to nine years following a change (compared to jurisdictions without such changes). They also find a reduction in housing costs, though this finding is not statistically significant. They do not find statistically significant evidence that the reforms resulted in more units affordable to people with low incomes. These results are averaged across many jurisdictions, meaning that different reforms had different effects, but they suggest a positive, though not dramatic, increase in housing availability over time.

This evidence is somewhat disappointing in terms of its limited scale, but data from Auckland, São Paulo, and Zurich suggest that large-scale zoning reforms implemented in neighborhoods across large cities *can* have major effects on building (Anagol, Ferreira, and Rexer 2023; Büchler and Lutz 2021; Greenaway-McGrevy and Phillips 2022). In each city, a major upzoning was followed by large bouts of construction, accomplishing the aim of upzoning proponents. In all three cities, upzoning in specific

neighborhoods does not appear to have resulted in fewer units built elsewhere, meaning that the overall housing markets increased in size. Do these types of reforms outside the United States actually reduce rents and sales values, the ultimate goal? There is initial evidence that the Auckland reforms reduced rents for middle-income renters after housing construction (Greenaway-McGrevy 2023), suggesting that more housing following a large-scale reform likely does affect housing costs. What the Auckland rezoning did *not* do, however, was lead to a substantially higher number of available housing units affordable to families with low incomes.

In sum, upzonings likely have a positive effect on housing availability and affordability—but so far they have not been able to make housing more affordable at the low end of the market. This suggests two possibilities that are not mutually exclusive. First, it is possible that the upzonings implemented so far in the United States have been inadequately scaled and that a much larger upzoning similar to SB 5466 would have large effects on the housing market. Second, it seems likely that additional support or subsidies are needed to provide truly affordable units, whether or not they are publicly subsidized.

That said, to build most subsidized housing, zoning must allow large building construction; there may be some exceptions to this rule, such as in Minneapolis, but small-building subsidized projects remain rare. We noted that most subsidized affordable units in the Puget Sound are in zoning districts where buildings with four or more residential units can be constructed by right.⁵⁵ This isolates projects to a small portion of the region. (Such zoning limits do not appear to reduce overall subsidized construction; funds flow to neighborhoods where projects are allowed.) Subsidized housing units are more likely to be in some areas than others, and this perpetuates segregated housing patterns and inequitable access to the well-funded public services often available in the jurisdictions with the fewest affordable housing units.

HB 1110 will, to a small degree, reform the zoning policies that limit multifamily construction. Due to economies of scale in subsidized housing development, however, this remains unlikely to result in a fairer distribution of such units. This means that if state legislators intend to ensure a more equitable distribution of subsidized housing in the future, they likely need to ensure that more jurisdictions have enabled the construction of such large-scale complexes—or provide developers of subsidized housing the ability to ignore local zoning.

Linking High-Density Upzoning with Public Investment to Support More Home Across Household Income Ranges

We have demonstrated the limitations of existing policy related to housing availability and affordability in Washington state. HB 1110 will expand opportunities to create small-scale apartment buildings in areas previously zoned for single-family dwellings. While this is an important step, based on experience elsewhere, developers are unlikely to respond with massive new investment in such units. Making matters more complicated, current funds for subsidized housing are inadequate to meet the overall demand for such units in the Puget Sound and in other parts of the state. This suggests that, without new approaches, there is likely to be a continued housing accessibility and affordability deficit.

Recent Initiatives to Link Upzoning with Affordable Housing

In recent years, several advocacy and research groups have begun campaigns to expand the stock of affordable housing in the Puget Sound. Sound Communities—a nonprofit housing research group launched in 2018—released a detailed proposal supporting the creation of Housing Benefit Districts (HBDs) modeled after existing Washington State Transportation Benefit Districts. HBDs have not yet been passed by the state legislature (Sound Communities 2022). The concept for HBDs is relatively straightforward: Local governments would seek voter approval to use tax and bond revenue to buy land around transit stations from private owners and “land bank” it. Jurisdictions would then work with local residents to develop a long-term plan for the area, generally designed around increasing density to allow for more housing. These HBDs would then assist with the financing and development of mixed-income subsidized housing on this land (Sound Communities 2022).

Sound Communities' land banking strategy revolves around a two-tiered approach: after an HBD acquires and develops on some of the land, it would then sell that land at a discount to develop affordable housing in other parts of the community. Sound Communities modeled three HBD plans, each outlining a specific site for prospective development and potential budgets of \$38 to \$50 million to subsidize projects.⁵⁶ The model estimates that these investments could generate up to several thousand housing units for each site, a potentially large boost for local housing availability.

Sound Transit, the entity responsible for managing the region's rail system, is providing reduced-cost loans for affordable housing built around stations and dedicating land near stops for projects (Freemark 2023b). This approach can bolster transit ridership, while expanding the housing stock. This

work builds on a 2015 Washington state law that mandates that the agency plan for mixed-income communities near transit, in part through a minimum level of affordability near stations.⁵⁷

Work outside of Washington state may also be useful context. In 2022, California passed the Affordable Housing and High Road Jobs Act, or Assembly Bill 2011. The law will allow multifamily developments on previously commercially zoned sites, and will allow these projects to receive exemptions from California's Environmental Quality Act, thus speeding development. To go ahead, developers must ensure projects meet minimum wage and working condition requirements; at least 15 percent of development housing units must be affordable below the market rate.⁵⁸ This is a form of voluntary inclusionary zoning combined with increased allowed densities in areas where housing had previously been banned from being built.

Other approaches have not yet been enacted but point to the potential of combining upzoning policies with investments in affordable housing. In 2020, California legislators introduced Senate Bill 50,⁵⁹ which would have upzoned land within a half mile of high-quality public transit services by waiving density restrictions, eliminating parking requirements, and increasing allowed height limits.⁶⁰ The bill also would have integrated a voluntary inclusionary zoning element into the upzoning, requiring that the new developments it would have authorized dedicate 15 to 25 percent of their units to housing with guaranteed affordability over a long period.⁶¹ The bill also stipulated that residents of currently affordable housing would be able to remain in place by delaying legal implementation in communities at risk of gentrification by prohibiting the demolition of buildings currently occupied by renters.

Recommendations for Combining Upzoning with Investments in Affordable Housing

Washington state could take a two-pronged approach to address its housing needs. The first approach is to enact large-scale upzoning. Large-scale upzoning is more likely than allowances for missing-middle housing alone to meet demand from both developers and residents because it can enable the construction of larger apartment buildings that already account for the majority of new housing-unit construction in the Puget Sound. These buildings can provide dwellings for a larger share of the housing market, ensure space for new subsidized units even in currently exclusionary communities, and contribute to providing the new construction supply that can reduce overall housing costs. Even with significant housing construction, however, the Puget Sound is likely to require additional measures to address regional housing needs at the low end of the market. As such, a second, connected approach is

to considerably expand public investment in housing that is affordable for families with low and moderate incomes. These two approaches can be implemented simultaneously.

A successful state land-use policy could include the following:

- **Require localities to implement large-scale upzoning around transit and in regional centers.** Our research (Freemark et al. 2023) projects that regional high-density zoning near transit in the Puget Sound could make way for 50,000 additional units over ten years compared to the baseline—far more than a reform allowing small-scale apartment buildings. SB 5466, which did not pass in 2023, could be a model for this type of reform as it would have substantially increased the number of housing units that could be built under zoning rules in neighborhoods that are close to transit but that currently have relatively restrictive zoning, such as parts of Seattle’s Rainier Valley. This type of zoning change would mean encouraging the construction of apartment buildings with 50 or more units and five or more stories.
- **Allow developers of subsidized housing to circumvent local zoning regulations.** Developers building projects subsidized by LIHTC and other public programs typically can only make projects work if they are able to build large apartment complexes. This is why these projects concentrate in high-density zones, as we have shown. The state could allow developers that are advancing projects with guarantees of long-term affordability for households with low and moderate incomes to ignore local zoning and place their projects on the sites that best meet local housing needs, whatever the underlying land-use rules. This is the approach taken by states like Massachusetts.

Even a high-density upzoning, however, is unlikely to produce enough new housing in the short to medium term to ensure affordability for families with low incomes. Additional funding from the federal government is needed to help address this problem, but the state can play an important role as well. As such, state legislators could consider integrating upzoning efforts with efforts to fund increased housing affordability. One promising approach is to substantially expand state contributions to the state Housing Trust Fund,⁶² such as through the passage of a regional or statewide affordable housing tax levy. Other options to expand the Housing Trust Fund include developing tax-increment financing districts near transit or in regional centers whose revenues would be distributed to affordable housing projects.

We estimate that a \$1 billion annual investment into the state Housing Trust Fund could fill a large gap in the need for affordable housing in the Puget Sound. This amount is equivalent to about 1.5 percent of the state’s annual budget.⁶³ Such an investment, adjusted for inflation over the long term, could generate an additional roughly 67,000 housing units affordable to people at 60 percent of AMI over 24 years, based on current construction costs and without additional subsidy.⁶⁴ This would

effectively double the number of new affordable housing units being added in the Seattle region annually, and build on the increasing funding the state committed to in the 2023 session.

Our estimates suggest that, over the long term with a greater number of subsidized units, this approach of increasing contributions to the Housing Trust Fund for the purposes of funding new affordable housing construction would be less expensive than one that relies on vouchers for tenants to use in private-market buildings. Moreover, relying on vouchers without adding new affordable units may not be feasible given the tight housing market and limited number of private market units available, even with upzoning. A large share of voucher recipients is unable to use them because they face discrimination from private landlords (even though this is illegal in Washington state) or there are not enough units available to rent.⁶⁵

Several additional approaches could be effective in contributing to the affordable housing supply:

- **Promoting subsidized housing construction in small-scale apartment buildings.** Local housing authorities across Washington state could learn from Minneapolis’s example by building subsidized, prefabricated housing units in small buildings. These projects could enable a fairer distribution of affordable housing, even in single-family housing neighborhoods.
- **Implementing the HBD concept,** described above. HBDs would increase the availability of publicly owned land and reduce development costs substantially for affordable housing. Doing so would enable neighborhood residents to collaborate to set a course for how they would like to see their communities change over time while maximizing density near transit and encouraging affordable housing development.
- **Working to support Seattle’s new social housing program.** The Montgomery County, Maryland, Housing Opportunities Commission (HOC) provides an example of mixed-income, publicly developed housing succeeding in a US county. The HOC operates as both a public developer and a housing finance agency, with current bonding capacity for housing production of \$100 million. Its focus is on creating mixed-income projects through a low-interest revolving loan fund and it has several projects now underway.⁶⁶ The Seattle social housing developer’s prospects are unclear given that the organization is only now coming into being. But Washington state could support it and similar entities elsewhere in the state through direct funding for its affordable housing projects to supplement or replace other sources of subsidy, such as LIHTC.
- **Supporting investments through limited equity cooperatives.** Limited equity cooperatives are homeownership models in which residents purchase a share in a development and commit to reselling their share at a price determined by formula—an arrangement that maintains affordability at purchase and over the long term.⁶⁷ Much of the attention for limited equity cooperatives comes from the city level, with few efforts from the state level thus far.⁶⁸ The state of Washington can help cultivate these cooperatives by offering property tax breaks and

setting aside grant funding to help cover the cost of renovations or rehabilitations of older buildings.⁶⁹

These strategies offer many options for state legislators as they consider how to best advance the goal of increased housing availability and affordability in Washington. Combined with upzoning, approaches to support housing affordability could ensure that benefits meet the needs of Washington residents across the income spectrum.

Notes

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- ⁶Alexandria Quintana, “Most Americans Cannot Afford a New Construction Home,” *Knock*, October 28, 2021, <https://knock577896394.wpcomstaging.com/most-americans-cannot-afford-a-new-construction-home/>.
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- ¹³Rachel Holliday Smith, “NYC Lost 100K Homes in Apartment-to-House Conversions,” *The City*, August 24, 2023, <https://www.thecity.nyc/housing/2023/8/24/23843686/100k-apartments-lost-to-house-conversions>.
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- ¹⁵ White householders had a median household income of \$109,104, compared to \$68,770 for Black householders. US Census Bureau American Community Survey 2022, 1-year estimates, for Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA Metro Area; "Homeownership: Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA," *National Equity Atlas*, 2020, <https://nationalequityatlas.org/indicators/Homeownership?geo=03000000000042660>.
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Erwin, Nicole

From: Matthew Meizlish <matt.meizlish@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:49 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily zoning

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Matthew Meizlish and I live at 337 Western Ave.

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I am a physician and constantly see the effects of housing insecurity on my patients' health. Housing is fundamental to people's health and wellbeing, far more so than the health care and biotechnology that our city and greater region is famous for.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Matthew Meizlish, MD PhD

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lauren Luther <laureneluther@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:35 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: 1/8/25 - Multifamily ordinance comment

Hello,

I wanted to write in favor of the proposed multifamily zoning changes. I believe that the proposed changes are reasonable, thoughtful measures that support Cambridge's ability to grow and prosper into the future.

I have written the Council in the past about the intangible benefits that I see from the proposed changes. Today, I wanted to write a short email about another angle: why I believe that encouraging housing development is in the best fiscal interest of the city. In contrast to just a few years ago, we are seeing a significant downturn in demand for office and lab space (see the 20 story development at 40 Thorndike that was delivered last fall without office tenants). Residential demand, however, remains extremely strong with Redfin estimating that the average Cambridge property is only on the market for 21 days, which (along with the price appreciation of the past decade) indicates exceptional demand. Moreover, in 2024, we saw Boston face difficult choices about how to raise taxes in the face of declining commercial property values. As real property is the single largest source of Cambridge's revenues, it is prudent of Cambridge to encourage additional residential development that can help us in funding a wide range of high quality services - from urban forestry to affordable housing to libraries- for all of our residents. (Sidebar- I'm excited to see the new Japanese tree lilac, which the city planted in front of my apartment, bloom in the spring!)

I commend the Council for carefully evaluating and considering the proposed changes and encourage you to move forward with the changes as currently drafted.

Kind regards,

Lauren Luther
342 Hurley Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dave Halperin <halperin.dr@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:29 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support Multifamily Zoning

Dear Council,

I'd like to thank you, especially those of you I don't normally agree with for working in good faith on compromise amendments in the last ordinance meeting. I support the original proposal and would like to see the strongest possible pro-housing reform passed but 5 foot setbacks, 4 stories by right with a 2 story density bonus and restricting going to 6 stories on small lots are reasonable changes that I hope can assuage some of the fears of neighbors who are less supportive. I know nonetheless, that the council is hearing from many residents strongly opposing the proposal. Ending exclusionary zoning is the right thing to do, and that means dimensional standards that will allow apartments to be built throughout Cambridge and any version of that is ultimately going to be contentious. People are nervous about change. We can keep to the status quo where rent goes up or we can enact real change, as the proposed zoning, compromises included, would. The status quo is not working as the rent keeps going up and residents consistently cite housing costs as their number one issue. As we debate this friends and neighbors continue to be priced out. Opponents of the proposal claim things have been rushed but we've been talking about ending exclusionary zoning for years and this proposal has been in process since last spring. It's time to finally end these exclusionary policies and be the welcoming city that we aspire to be. Please continue to move the proposed zoning forward.

David Halperin
14 Valentine St. Unit 3

Erwin, Nicole

From: Devora Najjar <devoranajjar@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:08 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In Support of the Multi-Family Housing Petition without Further Amendments

Dear City Council,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing units in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to afford housing.

I urge you to approve the current zoning petition that would allow for higher-density zoning, including multi-family developments at scales that support inclusionary units, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, support people living more sustainably, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Devora Najjar
8A Sacramento St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Daphne Schlesinger <daphneschles@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:01 PM
To: City Council; City Council
Cc: City Clerk; City Clerk
Subject: In Support of Multifamily Zoning Petition in Cambridge

Dear City Council,

I am writing to thank the Cambridge City Council for their work on the important proposal for creating more housing in Cambridge. I'd like to express my deep support for the multifamily zoning petition as a long-time Cambridge resident. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to afford housing.

I urge you to approve the current zoning petition that would allow for higher-density zoning, including multi-family developments at scales that support inclusionary units, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, support people living more sustainably, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you again for your careful consideration.

Sincerely,

Daphne Schlesinger
Cambridge, MA
Neighborhood 9

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sarah Magidson <keepabrain@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:57 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please make Cambridge housing more affordable with more housing development

Dear city council members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. A couple years ago, my landlord jacked up my rent by nearly 20%, and it continues to rise unabated. Many in our city are experiencing similar or even more exorbitant increases. Even with my solid income as a software engineer, I'm not sure I can afford to buy a home here, and for many of my friends, that option is hopelessly out of reach, and just being able to live in this city that we love long-term is highly questionable. And of course many people are or are at risk of being unhoused altogether. This is a major problem that requires your urgent attention and efforts to fix.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.
Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Sarah Magidson
Highland Ave., Mid-Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Michael Weymouth <michaelsweymouth@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:41 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In support of the multifamily housing ordinance

To the Cambridge City Council,

My name is Michael Weymouth, and I'm a homeowner in East Cambridge. I am writing today in strong support of the multifamily housing ordinance under discussion today. While many of us would have preferred an outcome closer to the original proposal, which legalized across-the-board by-right development up to 6 stories, the amended ordinance before you today still represents a tremendous improvement over the status quo.

It may not need repeating, but I will do so anyway: our city (and more broadly the Commonwealth as a whole) faces a precipitous housing crisis. The symptoms of this disease are multifaceted: sky-high rents, predatory landlords and brokers, outdated housing stock, and at the most extreme end, homelessness. The success of Cambridge has always depended on attracting a diverse coalition of the world's brightest minds to live, learn, work, and play within our borders; yet today, we instead face an exodus of many who simply cannot afford to live here. We have to turn the tide.

This ordinance is an important step forward for our city, and a light to guide others. I urge you to pass it.

Thank you for your time.

Michael Weymouth

Erwin, Nicole

From: Thomas <tkresina@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:34 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please Support Multi-Family Zoning in Cambridge

Hello,

I am writing to express my support for multi-family zoning in Cambridge. Although I am working and am unable to attend daytime City Council meetings, I still wish to express my support as someone who worked in Cambridge and still enjoys the bike lanes and businesses on a weekly basis.

Housing in Cambridge (and the greater Boston area) is unattainable for many people. It requires that people make triple the average US salary to comfortably afford to live (spending less than 30% of income on rent). This is simply an unsustainable situation and deprives residents of the opportunity to live in a dense, urban area if there literally isn't any housing to support them.

This can be solved by allowing more housing—by allowing multi-family zoning city-wide. This is necessary and overdue.

I hope the City Council is able to take the first steps to rectify this situation and serve the needs of its constituents—not just a vocal and well-connected subsection.

Tomás Kresina

Erwin, Nicole

From: Andrew Wang <supdude.andy@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:25 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Unaffordable vs affordable housing

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing regarding our city's pressing need for increased housing development. As a concerned ex-resident forced out of the Cambridge neighborhood due to housing and rental prices, I've witnessed firsthand how escalating housing costs and limited availability are affecting our community members.

The proposed measure to expand housing construction, particularly through multi-family units and higher-density zoning, represents a crucial step toward addressing these challenges. By approving this measure without adding restrictive conditions, you can help create more housing options, stimulate local economic growth through construction jobs, and ensure our city remains livable for residents across all economic backgrounds.

I strongly encourage you to support this initiative as a meaningful solution to our housing crisis.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Andy Wang

Erwin, Nicole

From: vasikri@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:15 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily Housing Comments

[For the public record]

[While I am a member of the Cambridge Transportation Board these comments are my personal views and not intended to reflect the views of the CTB in any way.]

Dear City Leaders,

Thank you for taking the time to deliberate on this very important issue.

Our city has become unaffordable, and over the 22 years I've called Cambridge home many of my friends have left because they couldn't afford to live here any longer. I moved here when I was 27 years old and as my cohort became parents one by one they moved out to Somerville, then Arlington and then beyond. Friends with one child stayed longer than those with two. I remain only because I was in the fortunate position to buy rather than rent back in 2002 when I moved here. I remain in that same apartment even though I have a child now and really could use some extra space. She is only 9 now, but as she grows into a teenager perhaps I too will succumb to the lure of the 'burbs. I wish I could afford more space here in Cambridge but I don't see that happening in this lifetime.

There is no doubt in my mind that we need to address the housing crisis. I wonder if leaving it to the goodwill of developers is the way to do it though. On block after block here in Cambridgeport I have seen ornate building after building torn down to make room for as much box as a developer could possibly cram into the available space. Every time this happens our neighborhood loses character, but I'm OK with that *if it really does bring down housing costs*. I don't think it actually does. More housing doesn't directly mean lower housing cost, if it did then Hong Kong and Manhattan would be really inexpensive places to live. Housing doesn't simply follow the "law" of supply and demand, it is far more complex than that. What is more important is the kind of housing that is built, and who gets to decide what is being built on a given parcel of land.

Leaving the "what" to a developer who is in it for profit motives alone will clearly not solve the housing affordability problem. That's not what the free market does. Developers want to maximize their return per square foot of built-up space so they will build luxury condos. If we want to bring down housing prices then we have to prioritize affordable housing over luxury condos. I don't think the multifamily ordinance is strong enough in this regard. Lets prioritize organizations like Just-A-Start over private developers by heavily incentivizing those sorts of projects over two, three or four unit developments that are built for sale on the open market. We can do this by keeping strong restrictions on open-market sale development, while loosening the constraints for 100% affordable housing development.

For example if we make the rules so affordable developments can have twice or three times the square footage on a given lot vs open-market developments then companies like Just-A-Start can compete with the big money developers in a more equitable fashion. I think the existing rules are OK for open-market

development, and we could change them only for 100% affordable development. Why do open-market developments need the rules to be loosened? I'd be OK with living next to a 4 or 5 story building knowing that the folks who live there would otherwise be forced out of our city. On the other hand if it's four multi-million dollar units coming up in a space that currently would allow only two or three then that's not so palatable. Loosening the rules for open-market developments will make a difference to people who earn 5 million dollars vs ten million dollars, but that doesn't provide any assistance to regular folks. If we want to loosen the rules to improve affordability then a surgical cut loosening the rules for those developments alone would have a much better outcome than taking a shotgun to all rules for all development.

In addition lets not forget that more housing brings more people and more congestion. Some of the councilors in favor of more housing have also put the brakes on building out transportation infrastructure like bike and bus lanes. This seems incongruous to me. What's the endgame of having another 25,000 or 50,000 people calling Cambridge home but then not having improved mobility around our city? Doesn't that just end up choking our city? If you want to expand housing then also accelerate building out the infrastructure to support all the people you are inviting to live in our community. These two things go hand in hand and I have a hard time understanding how one could support more housing but then delay bike/bus lanes. If anything we need to double-down on expanding transportation infrastructure first and only then loosen housing regulations. Developers can build housing within a year, building infrastructure takes much longer and that's why it needs to be started in advance.

Thanks for your careful consideration of these issues.

Best Regards,
Vivek Sikri
Allston Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Safia Dziri <safiadziri18@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:13 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: End exclusionary zoning in Cambridge

Hi,

I have been a Cambridge resident for over three years. I believe that Cambridge urgently needs more housing. Rents are getting unbearably high and competition for housing is way too fierce. I have experienced both. I think the situation is untenable and something will need to give. We need to allow for more density to avoid pricing out our existing communities and lose the real essence of our great city: its people not its triple deckers and single family houses. Thank you for hearing me out.

Best,
Safia Dziri

Erwin, Nicole

From: Quentin Smith <qsmith@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:08 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Exclusionary Zoning Reform

Dear Councillors,

I understand that tomorrow's Ordinance Committee meeting will be the last public comment before the multifamily housing zoning reform language is finalized.

I am writing to express my **strong** support for everything we can do to improve the availability of housing in our city. Our current exclusionary zoning regulations have drastically choked Cambridge's housing supply, and it's long past time to abandon them. Please vote in favor of zoning reform that allows large, multifamily buildings citywide. It's important that everyone who works in our city can live here, too.

Thanks,
--Quentin Smith
Plymouth St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jessie Wenning <jesswenn@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:07 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multi-Family Zoning Proposal

Dear Councillors,

I strongly oppose the current Multi-Family Zoning proposal before the Ordinance Committee. The purpose of ending exclusionary zoning is to create a more equitable city, but there is nothing equitable about making Cambridge even *more* unaffordable for low and moderate income people than it already is. The increase of base zoning to 4 stories will provide a big incentive to developers to construct new 4-story market-rate housing, displacing people who currently live in older “naturally occurring” affordable housing.

I have heard this proposal talked about as a compromise, but what is it a compromise between? The people who don't want their neighborhoods to change in height and density and those who want more housing built, no matter how expensive and exclusionary it is? That is a “compromise” that mainly benefits the privileged. It is not productive for our city, and you should not allow it.

In past meetings, I have urged you to consider the proposals by the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition (CHJC) aimed at creating genuinely affordable housing in Cambridge. The compromise I would support is the proposal made by Councillor Wilson, and supported by other councillors in the last Ordinance Committee; namely, zoning for 3 stories as of right, 3 more stories with 20% inclusionary units, and an additional 3 stories, if all the units are 100% affordable. Under these terms, more affordable housing will be built, less existing housing will be destroyed, so there will be less displacement, and land prices will go up less, so affordable housing developers can better compete for properties.

I urge you to reject the current zoning proposal and adopt Councillor Wilson's compromise, as described above. Or, develop a more inclusive process so we can come up with a better proposal to end single and two-family zoning in Cambridge.

Thank you,

Jessie Wenning
106 Kinnaird Street
Cambridge 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bright Mailosi <bmailosi@pih.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:01 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Appeal for Affordable Housing

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Bright Mailosi

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Joel B. Bard <JBard@k-plaw.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:57 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please allow the pending citywide upzoning petition to die - take NO action!

Dear Members of the City Council,

While I have not been able testify at any Council Committee (or Planning Board) meetings, I have been closely following the proposed Multifamily Housing zoning petition and the comments that have been submitted. Like everyone in Cambridge, I would support a plan that would amend our Zoning Ordinance to create more opportunities to develop multifamily housing, but I cannot support the current proposal which would enormously damage the character, environment, and fabric of our city. My conclusion is based on nearly 50 years as an involved Cambridge resident, and on a nearly half-century professional career as an attorney representing municipalities across Massachusetts. My area of concentration has been land use law, specifically zoning and related areas.

I have watched, listened to and read numerous extremely thoughtful statements articulating concerns about the many significant problems with and dangers of the proposal to allow six-story residential structures nearly everywhere in the city. I will only highlight here what I fear are the some of the greatest dangers opposed by the proposal, and some of the significant fallacies supporting this rezoning.

1- Cambridge does not have “exclusionary zoning” !!! The proponents’ use of that phrase may make for a good sound bite, but it is simply incorrect. That phrase is universally understood to describe zoning schemes that exist nationwide to allow only single-family houses (and occasionally two-families) on larger lots, from a half-acre to two acres. Cambridge has twelve zoning districts. Only three come close to fitting that description. Our other zoning districts allow densities that have resulted in our six-square-mile city being among the densest in the country. That density would not exist if we had “exclusionary zoning”.

2- The existing character of Cambridge should not be ignored or put at risk by a one-size-fits-all zoning code. Most of our neighborhood streets have a mix of one-, two-, three- or four-family houses, with larger multifamily buildings at corners. It is dense, but a comfortable mix. Allowing six-story buildings randomly throughout the city – double the height of their neighbors - will have a disastrous effect on the quality of life in the city. And, not incidentally, put an enormous strain on city infrastructure.

3- Some commentators point out that current zoning does not allow row houses. Let’s work on that amendment to the zoning ordinance. That is not rocket science; it is fundamental zoning. We know how to make these kinds of amendments. Three-and four-story row houses are very much part of the city’s fabric and provide significant density. Thoughtful density recognizes the needs and well-being of both the proposed new residents as well as those of the existing neighbors. Row houses do that.

4- In simple terms, the proposal is “bad planning”. In my decades of practicing, essentially, city-planning law, I have never seen a zoning scheme that would allow six-story structures to be

constructed anywhere in a municipality. This is not cutting edge. It is simply a bad idea. In addition, it may run afoul of a section of the state Zoning Act. The first paragraph of section 4 of G.L. c.40A, states: “ Any zoning ordinance or by-law which divides cities and towns into districts shall be uniform within the district for each class or kind of structures or uses permitted.” There is a very good argument that a zoning amendment that allows 6-story structures randomly throughout the city would fail that test.

5- The City of Minneapolis and the state of California were leaders when they essentially banned single-family zoning. Those are widely viewed as admirable models. The proposed Multifamily Housing proposal is in no way related or comparable to what California and Minneapolis (and others) have done.

6- Cambridge alone cannot solve the region’s housing crisis. We have long been leaders in providing significant amounts of affordable housing, in a variety of creative ways. There is nothing creative about this proposal. It is a blunt instrument. We will always have a long waiting list for low- and moderate-income housing. Recent changes in state law, the so-called MBTA Communities law and the newer statute requiring all municipalities to allow accessory dwelling units, are intended to make other cities and towns allow for more housing opportunities. Those laws alone will not close the gap in housing supply, but they signify a significant change in statewide thinking.

7- Finally, most importantly: **This proposal does not guarantee that any affordable housing will be built.** In fact, market conditions indicate that it will only result in a gold rush by developers looking to build six or nine units to be sold at ever-increasing market prices. Definitely not ten, because most developers do not want to “lose” money by building an affordable unit. Everybody loses! No affordable housing is built. Existing housing stock is demolished, housing stock that currently provides much of our housing which is affordable. Neighborhoods are disrupted for no good reason. And so on.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of these comments.

Joel Bard
51Wendell Street

Joel B. Bard, Esq.

KP | LAW

101 Arch Street, 12th Floor
Boston, MA 02110
617-654-1707
JBard@k-plaw.com
www.k-plaw.com

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Peter Zubiago <zubiagop129@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:56 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Rezoning Ordinance

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Peter Zubiago

Erwin, Nicole

From: Madeline Lee <lee.madeline.g@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:38 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposition to the 4+2 zoning proposal

Dear City Councilors,

I write to share comments on the current multifamily ("4+2") zoning proposal that will be discussed at the Ordinance Committee on January 8th. As a Cambridge resident for over five years, renter, and someone who works at a Cambridge community-based organization, I am concerned about the disproportionately negative impacts that the multifamily zoning proposal will have on low- and moderate-income residents.

While I understand the intent of the proposal is to eliminate exclusionary, single- and two-family zoning, the proposal also leads to incentives for selling, demolishing & rebuilding market-rate 4-story properties without any affordable/inclusionary housing requirements at higher land costs.

I support the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition's call for the council to focus on and consider a proposal that more heavily focuses on anti-displacement of low-income residents and increasing the proportion of potential inclusionary/affordable units, such as Councilor Wilson's proposal to allow 3 stories as of right and additional successive 3 story height bonuses for 20% inclusionary units and 100% affordable units. However, if this alternate proposal is not supported by the Council, it is worth rejecting any further iteration of the current zoning proposal and instead investing in an inclusive community process that generates broader awareness, and solicits feedback from those whose housing situations are likely to be the most impacted by the changes.

I value the energy and dedication within the city and community to create a more just, welcome, and livable place. I hope the Council will consider a path to ending exclusionary zoning that does a better job of supporting housing stability for low-income residents.

Thank you,

Madeline Lee
238 Garden St.

--

Madeline Lee
(440) 785-7054
lee.madeline.g@gmail.com
madelineleeart.com
pronouns: she/her/hers

Erwin, Nicole

From: Amira Valliani <amira.valliani@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:29 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote YES on multifamily zoning reform petition

Here's the revised email with those personal details added:

Subject: Support for Expanding Housing in Cambridge

Dear City Council Members,

As a homeowner who has lived in Cambridge for the past 10 years and a new parent, I am writing to express my strong support for policies that expand housing development in our city. Cambridge has been a wonderful place to call home, but I've seen firsthand how rising rents and home prices are making it increasingly difficult for families and individuals to afford living here.

The proposed measure to allow more housing construction—especially multi-family developments and higher-density zoning—without additional concessions is a vital step toward addressing our housing shortage. Expanding housing options will not only help ease affordability pressures but also foster a more inclusive and vibrant community for people of all income levels.

As someone deeply invested in Cambridge's future, I urge you to take bold action to ensure our city remains accessible to both current residents and the next generation of families.

Thank you for your attention to this critical issue and for your continued leadership.

Amira Valliani, Proud Resident of the Port

Erwin, Nicole

From: Rodrigo Estrada <restrada@jd26.law.harvard.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:26 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Legalize Multifamily Housing in Cambridge

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Rodrigo Estrada

JD Candidate | Class of 2026

Harvard Law School

P: (915) 443-0525 | W: samvidscholars.org

Erwin, Nicole

From: Arielle Herman <arielleherman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:27 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Increase Affordable Housing

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.
Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Arielle Herman

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jon C. Chen <jonc.chen@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:26 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Exclusionary zoning and multi family housing

I am a current resident that lives at 87 Amory St Apt 5, Cambridge, MA 02139.

I would like to write in support of 6+0 being the default policy, instead of 4+2. I think the ability to build more densely in Cambridge is critical towards preserving the city as a place that is safe and livable for all of its current and future inhabitants.

Artificially restricting housing supply only drives increased homelessness and housing scarcity, which is bad for Cambridge residents. I say this as a **homeowner** in Cambridge.

Best,
Jon Chen



Erwin, Nicole

From: Brandon Turner <turner.wfu@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:25 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily zoning

Dear Council,

I believe it is crucial for the long-term health of the city of Cambridge that there be legalization of construction which can accommodate at least 4 stories. There is a proposal to legalize citywide up to 4 stories at least. I think this should be advanced without further modification. I worry for this place I have come to love because of the understandable but flawed arguments which oppose this proposal.

Kind thanks,
Brandon Turner

(88 Plymouth Street, Cambridge, MA 02141)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Talia Weisberg <writer.at.heart415@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:17 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Rezoning law

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Talia Weisberg, I am a homeowner and Cambridge resident of 11 years. I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Talia Weisberg

Erwin, Nicole

From: David Hattis <davidwhattis@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:58 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: In Support of Multifamily Housing Proposal

Hello,

I wanted to write in support of the proposal to allow for multifamily housing throughout Cambridge. Since 1980 Cambridge has been adding three jobs for every new home. It is great to create jobs, but to create jobs without building enough new housing has enormous costs that fall on the renters in Cambridge. Each year existing tenants have to compete for housing with this growing pool of highly paid professionals that understandably want to live close to where they work. This proposal is a great way to build desperately needed market rate and affordable housing.

I don't think this proposal is radical. Through the Envision process we set a goal of building 12,500 homes by 2030. [According to CDD](#), we are on pace to build only 7,000 homes by 2030. That is an enormous shortfall. Even if we pass this proposal, we are still going to be short of our goal, but at least we will be closer.

It's also worth thinking about where we should be building housing. In recent years, much of our new housing has been concentrated in a couple places: Alewife, Cambridge Crossing, a couple large developments in east Cambridge, and one in Central square. It's great that we were able to identify areas like Cambridge Crossing and Alewife where we were able to build new high density transit oriented neighborhoods. However, there aren't very many areas like that remaining. To meet our current and future housing goals we are going to need to allow more housing in our existing neighborhoods and corridors.

For these reasons I hope you move this proposal forward without watering it down. I especially hope that you don't add any additional special permit requirements. By right development adds predictability and reduces litigation risk, which is very important for housing to actually get built in a reasonable time frame.

Thank you,

David Hattis
434 Franklin St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ned Codd <ned@coddssquad.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:58 PM
To: Carolyn
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager; Planning Board Comment; City Council
Subject: Re: [Cambridgeport] Multifamily Housing Zoning Proposal

Carolyn-

Respectfully, I don't think it's appropriate for you to rebut/fact check my email to the City Council in support of the Multifamily Housing Zoning Proposal.

I don't agree with your position on this manner, and I question some of your assertions. But I absolutely respect your right to voice your position. I would never respond to you in this manner.

My apologies to the City Council.

Thanks.

Ned Codd

On Tue, Jan 7, 2025, 6:19 PM Carolyn <carolyn_shipley@yahoo.com> wrote:

There is a lack of facts in your message to support your claims.

>Where is the data concerning people, especially young people leaving Massachusetts.?

>Where is the data that says: *that upzoning and increased housing supply are effective in ameliorating these problems?*

Many contributors to this discussion have said that rental units will be lost and replaced with expensive condos.

You state that you are concerned about *younger people, renters, and low and middle income people who work in Cambridge but struggle to afford housing here.*

Well, the proposed MFH plan states that there will be only 2 *affordable* units per each 10 units built under that plan. The income required to qualify for an affordable unit is \$96,696 up to \$145,044 per annum. That's a great salary and it seems likely that no newly graduated student and no low income person would qualify. The other 8 units out of the 10 will be rather expensive condos. The contractors have to make a profit after all.

It is not likely that many families will want to live in a condo with no green space around it for their children to play. The city has given no data regarding the number of housing units that can be built if these plans are adopted, nor if there will be any family size units. So, what will happen to the school population then?

Cambridge is not the only city where real estate prices are high. Again, you have given no data.

Carolyn

On Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 06:02:49 PM EST, Ned Codd <ned@coddssquad.com> wrote:

Dear City Councilors-

I support the Multifamily Zoning Proposal because I am very concerned about the housing shorting and affordability crisis that is facing the entire country. This crisis is particularly acute in Massachusetts, which is losing population, especially young people. The evidence clearly demonstrates that upzoning and increased housing supply are effective in ameliorating these problems.

Cambridge cannot solve the housing supply and affordability crisis on its own, but it definitely has a part to play, as expressed through the City-endorsed Envision Cambridge plan. As an older Cambridge resident who has owned a home here for over 20 years, I have benefited from all the advantages that living in Cambridge offers, as well as from a significant increase in home values resulting from exclusionary zoning and the housing shortage. As such, I feel it is important to consider a wide range of voices and concerns, including those of younger people, renters, and low and middle income people who work in Cambridge but struggle to afford housing here.

Nevertheless, I respect the concerns of those who are opposed to the Multifamily Zoning Proposal, and I think that their concerns should be taken seriously in the ordinance process. I am especially interested in Scenario #6, Four Story + Two Story Bonus Only for Inclusionary Zoning Projects, which is projected to produce as many affordable units, and nearly as many units overall, as the current proposal. At the same time, it would address some of the concerns that have been raised about height and affordability. However, I am strongly opposed to any proposal that would preserve exclusionary single-family zoning in any form, in any parts of Cambridge.

Furthermore, fear of change should absolutely not be an excuse to delay action, or conduct further study or analysis. I have seen lots of arguments that this process is being rushed, or we don't understand the effects well enough, or we need to start all over with a new process. This is nonsense. Cambridge has been talking about rezoning for years. The City's Envision Master Plan clearly endorses upzoning and increased housing supply. The City government undertook a thorough analysis of the projected impacts of several different zoning scenarios.

It is imperative that the City Council take action on this proposal, and pass a bold rezoning plan immediately. We don't know all the exact results of this change, but we do know the effects of doing nothing. We will continue to suffer from a housing shortage and out of control home prices. We will continue to see our friends priced out of Cambridge, like a member of the city's Planning Board. We will continue to see housing prices rise, and population and school enrollment drop.

Please approve a citywide multifamily housing proposal immediately. Thank you.

Ned Codd
301 Brookline Street

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Sienna Durbin <sdurbin710@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:55 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily zoning

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely, Sienna Durbin
22 Water St, Cambridge, MA 02141

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jessica Yang <jessica@jessicayang.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:50 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily zoning

Hello,

This issue is important enough to me that I am illicitly bypassing government internet censorship in China (where I'm visiting) to send this email again.

I have lived in Cambridge since moving to Massachusetts, in the same apartment for 9 years now. I want to be able to stay and have kids in this awesome city but the reality of the Cambridge housing market right now is that I will be priced out of this neighborhood I have grown to love sooner than later - and I am someone who makes well above the average MA income.

I hope the city council is listening because for so many years it has felt like nobody is.

Jessica Yang
Brookline St 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Maple Goh <maplegoh@pm.me>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:45 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Affordable Housing

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Maple and I work in Cambridge. I support building more housing across Cambridge to increase affordability for all residents. I urge City Council to end exclusionary zoning and pass the multifamily housing ordinance in its current form with no further amendments. Thank you for the work you have done on this.

Ngā mihi nui,
Maple Goh

Erwin, Nicole

From: Judy Somberg <judy.somberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:41 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: The 4+2 proposal needs to be improved

Dear City Councilors,

I appreciate that you have worked hard to address the problems with the originally proposed multi-family housing zoning changes, but the 4 +2 proposal will still result in naturally occurring affordable housing being replaced with market rate housing and will primarily benefit developers and wealthy folks from wherever.

The 3+3+3 proposal is a more reasonable proposal. If there is no agreement on that, then the council should start again and take the time to consider community input. Any of these proposals will change the city dramatically and do not need to be adopted immediately. We can and should do better.

Thank you for your consideration.

Judy Somberg
48 Antrim Street, Cambridge, MA 02139
[Judy.somberg@gmail.com](mailto:judy.somberg@gmail.com)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Amanda Chivil <aechivil@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:33 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Vote in favor of Multifamily Zoning Petitions

Dear Cambridge City Council:

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Amanda Chivil
77 Putnam Avenue Apt 1

Erwin, Nicole

From: Candace Young <thegroundup@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:29 PM
To: Burhan
Cc: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Re: Support multifamily housing!

I do not support this fast tracking, all encompassing and lack of urban planning proposal. I have sent several letters, all of which have gone unanswered by you.

Candace Young
15 1/2 Shepard Street

On Jan 7, 2025, at 4:54 PM, Burhan <burhan@burhanforcouncil.com> wrote:



Hello Candace,

Tomorrow, 1/8 at 5pm, public comment will be held on the multifamily housing ordinance. This is a critical meeting. Please chime in. This is our opportunity to finally end exclusionary zoning after 3 terms of trying and we're at a crucial inflection point.

We'd love to hear from you as we try to get this over the finish line. [Sign up](#) to speak tomorrow or email council@cambridgema.gov and cc clerk@cambridgema.gov with your

comments!

Best,
Burhan



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Cambridge, MA 02139-3884

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Santhi Hariprasad <santhi.hariprasad@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:29 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multi family housing proposal

Dear City Council,

I just wanted to share my support for the proposal to allow for multifamily housing city wide. I hope that you will vote in favor of it to address our housing shortage!

Thank you,
Santhi Hariprasad
2 Notre Dame Ave.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Robin Tan <rtan927@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:18 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multi family housing

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely, Robin Tan, Marney St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Michael Rozas <michael.rozas@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:18 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please support multifamily housing!

Hi!

My name is Michael Rozas and I am a homeowner in Mid Cambridge and have lived in this city for over 10 years both as a student and as an adult and parent. I am writing in support of multifamily housing to create more density and vibrancy in this city. Many parents of children at my daughter's elementary school are renters who struggle to find permanent affordable options for their families. These parents are professionals and creatives who were drawn to the progressive community Cambridge claims to offer. Let's keep up with this reputation and build for growth and inclusion.

Very best, Michael Rozas 56 Dana Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Emily Massey <emilyannamassey@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:13 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: In support of multifamily housing

Dear Council,

I'm writing as your constituent to register my support for the multifamily housing ordinance under discussion tomorrow. Please end exclusionary zoning in Cambridge!

Thank you,

Emily Massey
39 Magnolia Ave
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sean Hart <seanhart0328@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:12 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Vote yes on upzoning—do your jobs!

Members of council,

I am a Cambridge resident and am writing to implore you to do the jobs you were elected to do by vote yes on this proposal and restoring the original 6 stories proposal—maybe going even further. If you truly were doing 4+2 instead of a straight 6 to “maximize affordable homes” then you’d do something like 6+3 (or 4+5) for even more affordability. With this current framework, it sure seems like you are weaponizing “Affordability” to reduce home production.

All of the complaints made against this proposal are absurd: there has been a long process for comment, it won’t “hurt our infrastructure” and in fact will strengthen the quality of the average building, and the new popular complaint, “the tree canopy,” cannot seriously be a factor that outweighs more homes. This proposal is ambitious but needs to be more so. It is what we need to start reversing the trend of horrible rent prices. Vote yes on a generational proposal for this city.

Thank you,
Sean Hart

Erwin, Nicole

From: Paul Levenson <pslevenson1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 8:03 PM
To: Simmons, Denise
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: multi-story rezoning petition

Dear Councillor Simmons,

Yes, I am a long-term Cambridge resident; I was born at Mt. Auburn Hospital in 1942. I have lived here most of my adult life. I love this city. I embrace so many of the changes that have taken place here. Nonetheless, this multi-zoning ordinance really disturbs me.

I strongly urge you to oppose this citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you for your work as a councillor and for reconsidering this current rezoning petition.

Sincerely,

Paul Silin Levenson

Erwin, Nicole

From: Simon Kangoun <sbkangoun@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 7:46 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Cambridge

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Simon

—

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carol N. Weiss <cnweiss7@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 7:53 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kevin Grinberg <kevin@grinberg.ws>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 7:42 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multi-family housing

Dear Council Members:

Thirty-four years ago, my family had the fortune to immigrate to the United States from what was then the USSR (today, Ukraine). About 15 years ago, I made my way to Cambridge.

Both of those transitions, which have transformed my life, were contingent on finding a place to live - an apartment. Since that time I've been fortunate enough to buy a home here, and start a business.

Abundant housing is *the* critical ingredient to welcoming people into our community, and building more, and denser, housing is the only viable remedy to rising rents.

Cambridge is a desirable, wonderful place to live. We should do all we can to make it possible for more neighbors to join us - thereby improving both their lives and ours - by zoning and permitting more, and denser, housing across all income levels.

Best,
Kevin Grinberg

Erwin, Nicole

From: Marianne Ray <marianneray14@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 7:41 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for Increasing Housing Development in Cambridge

To whom it may concern,

I am writing to express my support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. I have lived in Cambridge for six years and truly love this vibrant, dynamic community. However, I am deeply disheartened by the reality that it would be difficult for me to ever afford to buy a home here due to rising rents and home prices.

I am also acutely aware that if I were to leave Cambridge, returning would be financially frustrating. I am fortunate to be paying rent at 2018 levels, but moving away would mean losing that stability, making it harder to reestablish myself here.

Our community is experiencing a housing crisis that is making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable options. I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Marianne

Erwin, Nicole

From: Margaret Ann Brady <margarb@bradydall.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 7:40 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Opposition to current multifamily zoning proposal

Dear Councilors,

I'm writing in opposition to the multifamily zoning proposal as it stands. The 4+2 proposal does not go far enough to prevent displacement, and to lead to housing that is affordable to Cambridge's vulnerable populations. It has the potential to lead to more development of market rate units by paving the path to construction of luxury 4-story buildings, and more destruction of neighborhoods.

I support the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition position, favoring the "3+3+3" version which will change the zoning to 3 floors as of right, and 3 additional floors with 20% inclusionary, along with 3 more floors for 100% affordable housing. If the Ordinance Committee does not go with this proposal, I urge the Committee to allow the proposal to lapse, so that the City can pursue a more thorough process to make zoning more equitable throughout the City, while also supporting a robust municipal housing voucher program, and pursuing strategies that decommodify housing, such as social housing and community land trust.

Thank you for consideration of these remarks.

Margaret Ann Brady
My pronouns are she, her, hers
7 Porter Park
Cambridge MA 02140
cell: 617 943 1470

Don't believe everything you think

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ben Howard <benrhoward@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 7:32 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: I support updated zoning for multifamily housing

I wanted to take a moment to express my support as a resident of the North Cambridge community for all four main goals of the citywide multifamily zoning proposal.

- I support allowing multifamily housing in all neighborhoods and districts in Cambridge.
- I support allowing residential buildings up to (and beyond) 6 stories in all neighborhoods and districts in Cambridge.
- I support the removal of onerous requirements for multifamily such as minimum lot sizes.
- I support the affordable housing overlay.

Increasing housing and affordable housing are existential issues for Cambridge. I am one of the fortunate few who can afford to own property in Cambridge, and I am seeing the results of the rapidly increasing price of housing as we lose what makes Cambridge special; our diversity. It's not just diversity of race and ethnicity, but diversity of people from all walks of life. When my children's school teachers cannot afford to live in the city they dedicate their careers to, we lose as a community. Our firefighters and police protect our communities, often putting their lives at risk for our safety, but we are pushing them out of the neighborhoods they serve.

Saving and promoting a diverse community is only part of the benefit of multifamily housing. Denser housing is climate friendly and a must if we are to have any hope of protecting Cambridge for centuries to come. Denser housing is a fiscally responsible approach to city planning as it increases value per acre which in turn increases tax revenues per acre while simultaneously decreasing costs as expenditures on city infrastructure do not scale as rapidly as increased tax revenue. Denser housing will even help with traffic as fewer people need to commute into and out of Cambridge on a daily basis when they can afford to live here. I am an example. I walk, bike, and ride the T to work and to shop because I am so close to so many of the wonderful opportunities available throughout Cambridge.

It is time for Cambridge to end exclusionary zoning and support vibrant, urban neighborhoods by advancing the citywide multifamily zoning proposal.

Thank you,

Ben R. Howard.

Erwin, Nicole

From: fordeca42@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 7:26 PM
To: chjc@cambridgehousingjustice.com
Cc: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: Upzoning proposals for Central Sq

Good Evening to all

I have been a resident of The Port/Area 4 neighborhood since the early 80s.
I am writing to voice my concerns over the upzoning of Central Sq.

We have all seen the changes to Central Sq that have happened during our lifetimes. Some for the good and some not so good.

Has a study be done to review the current occupancy of new/ recent housing that are vacant?
What is a reasonable percentage of "affordable housing"
Adding more people to an already congested neighborhood does not benefit existing residents. More people in a smaller area causes friction and fighting for limited resources (especially parking spaces)
Once again i will still hold to my stance of adding buildings with out parking spaces is a recipe for disaster and new residents will need somewhere to park their vehicles.

How does this impact our first responders? Fire, Police, EMT are they fully staffed to handle this influx of new residents. What is the impact to Cambridge & Mt. Auburn hospitals?
Eliminating parking lots for residents and visitors to Cambridge who support businesses & churches in Central Sq is dangerous. We already see what has happened to several businesses on the outskirts of Kendall Sq near Hampshire/Portland & Cardinal Mederios Avenues.
What are the affects of high rises blocking the sun and quality of life for current residents.
What is the impact of constant digging and jack hammering doing to the under structures of existing buildings & houses. How does this impact the already atrocious rat problem?
Can the water pressure handle all this upzoning with out a negative impact?
Cambridge is one of the most diverse cities within the Commonwealth we need to have more green spaces that benefit all and not just add more people into a smaller neighborhood in the city.
As i drive around the city regularly i have seen the uptick in new construction but yet i still wonder are these units fully occupied? (where it is at Alewife, Concord Ave, Fresh pond, Lechmere, East Cambridge, West, North & Central.
Lets find a way to repurpose existing office buildings that are currently vacant than to take away resources (eg. parking spaces) to benefit a few people.

There are beautiful murals painted around the city by local residents. How does this impact the art community?

Please hold off on voting for this Upzoning issue and reconsider further study on the impact to Central Sq.
As well as the elderly population.

thanks

Catherine Forde-Augustine
28 Suffolk Street, Cambridge 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jeremy Kaplan <jeremybkap@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 7:19 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Vote in Favor of Multi-family Housing

Dear City Council Members,

I strongly support the multi-family housing policies that you will consider tomorrow. Cambridge's housing supply is far too restricted right now, stifling the city. Expanding multi-family housing will give Cambridge lower rents, more economic security, additional patrons to local businesses, and a stronger community. The current measure is a strong proposal that would strengthen Cambridge and help alleviate its current housing crisis.

This is among my most important issues, so I urge you to approve higher-density zoning without any additional amendments or concessions. I love Cambridge and would love to raise a family here, but I don't want myself or my friends/loved ones to be priced out.

Thank you for your hard work on this vital issue.

Sincerely,
Jeremy Kaplan
Norfolk St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carole Stern <c28stern@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:56 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Abbie Cohen <abbie.cohen24@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:53 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for the Multifamily Housing Ordinance

Dear Cambridge City Council members,

I'm a Cambridge-born-and-raised, and current young professional living in Cambridgeport. I am writing to express my strong and unwavering support for the proposed multifamily housing ordinance. I have seen through my 3 decades of living in-and-around the Cambridge area how the city has become inaccessible for so many of my peers that I grew up with, and even as many of them want to return to the city to raise future Cambridge families, they are forced to move further out of the city because they cannot afford to live or buy in Cambridge. It's unfair and inequitable.

Allowing for more multi-family housing fits within Cambridge's Envision goals and can address the housing shortage. Finally, this housing ordinance will uphold the progressive values that Cambridge espouses and tangibly create a Cambridge that all people can call "home."

Please vote to end exclusionary zoning and allow for more housing throughout our community while also being a stand-out city within housing policy across the Commonwealth and the country.

Sincerely,

Abbie Cohen
35 Magee St
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Greg Fralish <gfralish@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:50 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In strong opposition to the rezoning petitions

Dear Cambridge City Council,

I've been resident in Cambridge for the past decade. I spent the first seven of those years renting in Cambridge and the last three as a homeowner. I live in North Cambridge with my family and my two children go to Cambridge Public Schools.

I'm writing to unfortunately express my strong opposition to both of the petitions for rezoning Cambridge. Fundamentally, I feel the stated rationale for what is wide scale deregulation is not sufficiently justified (are we really off track from Envision?); the potential benefits to costs of the new housing is unclear (will housing prices actually go up and not down? how can our small city really make a dent in the broader Boston market?), and the considerable risks are not mitigated by sufficient impact analysis (where will building occur? What is the impact on canopy? what is the recourse for impact to solar investments? or other injuries to neighbors/residents?, where will all the cars go? What is the real impact on infrastructure? etc etc). Adding to this is the CDD analysis which shows that the corridor development proposal would be much more impactful (in terms of numbers of units built) but this is not even on the table for a vote???

I hope the Council will reconsider voting on these petitions as is and consider the following changes: narrowing petition one to solely focus on removing single family and 2-family only zones allowing for multifamily housing everywhere in Cambridge. (This I DO SUPPORT as do nearly all residents.) I would also like to see other elements of petition one paused along with the whole of petition two, to allow for refocusing of the rezoning for corridor development which would be much more likely to have the desired effect of more housing in Cambridge with far fewer risks to Cambridge's residents.

Sincerely,

Greg

--

Greg Fralish, Ph.D.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Vikram Sambharya <vikramsam@live.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:50 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Renters for ending exclusionary zoning

Dear City Council,

Thank you for working hard to create the latest upzoning proposal. I'm a renter in new construction market-rate housing and I support the proposal for residential zoning reform. We need more four-story apartment buildings like mine to give Cambridge residents more choice and bargaining power in choosing housing. New market-rate housing can be affordable to middle income residents like me and we should legalize more of it.

Thank you for reading my comments.

Regards,
Vikram Sambharya
47 Bishop Allen Dr, Apt 306
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Suzanne Blier <suzanneblier@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:39 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: Peters, Melissa; City Manager; City Clerk
Subject: Housing Truths - the The Hard Facts

Honorable Cambridge City Councillors,

Before you vote on the proposed upzoning, it is important to know some of the background of the “housing crisis” here and elsewhere. You can read this as a blogpost [HERE](#). Or simply scroll down below the top image, where we provide some key highlights. A note: Blackstone which is mentioned below in June 2020 spent \$325 million to acquire rental property in East Cambridge – now ThE most expensive housing sector in the city. In short, the issues below are very germane here.

Housing Truths - the Hard Facts



Billionaire Blowback on Housing

How Concentrated Wealth
Disrupts Housing Markets and
Worsens the Housing Affordability Crisis

Institute for Policy Studies and
Popular Democracy

October 2024



Institute for
Policy Studies



POPULAR
DEMOCRACY



“You have created a situation where ordinary Americans aren’t bidding against other families, they’re bidding against the billionaires of America for these houses. And it’s driving up rents and it’s driving up home prices.” – U.S. Senator Jeff Merkley (Oregon)*

The 4-part image shown above features the covers of four remarkable recent studies on the hijacking of housing by greedy corporations and

individuals seeking to profit from it. Canada, Australia, and the U.S. are all being hit hard. We posted earlier a blog on **Crisis Capitalism and Housing**. Read it [HERE](#). Our new post looks at how this crisis was fostered and promoted in large part with an aim to push local communities such as ours to remove core zoning and other guardrails that have helped to keep our historic more naturally affordable housing in place.

We urge you to read all four of studies described here.

The three books featured here are available at local Cambridge area bookstores - and we encourage people to shop locally! One can also find them at local libraries and at the links below from Amazon.

Urban Planner, Patrick M. Condon's *Broken City: Land Speculation, Inequality and Urban Crisis* is available [HERE](#)

Economist Cameron K. Murray's *The Great Housing Hijack* is available on Amazon: [HERE](#)

Housing Expert, Carolyn Whitzman's *Home Truths: Fixing Canada's Housing Crisis* is available on Amazon [HERE](#)

The important 2024 report: "**Billionaire Blowback on Housing: How Concentrated Wealth Disrupts Housing Markets and Worsen the Housing Affordability Crisis**" by Ameer Chew, Chuck Collins, and Omar Ocampo is available for download as a PDF [HERE](#)

The Executive Summary of "Billionaire Blowback on Housing" Report reads as follows :

- **Predatory billionaire investors have bought up an unprecedented share of single-family homes, apartment buildings, and mobile home parks to extract more rents from already economically squeezed residents.**
- **For instance, Blackstone is the largest corporate landlord in the world, with over 300,000 residential units across the United States. Blackstone owns 149,000 multi-family apartment units, 63,000 single-family homes, 70 mobile home parks with 13,000 lots, and 144,300 beds of student housing in 205 properties. Blackstone also recently acquired 95,000 units of subsidized housing.**
- **Corporate landlords and their billionaire investors are targeting communities of color in particular with rent increases and high rates of eviction. Their actions exacerbate race, gender, and economic inequality, as displacement harms the most economically vulnerable people in our communities.**
- **In cities and communities across the country, homelessness is growing — but vacant homes actually outnumber unhoused people several times over.**
- **Nationwide there are 16 million vacant homes — that’s 28 vacant homes for every unhoused person.**
- **Wealthy investors are buying up properties but holding them vacant to profit from real estate appreciation. They make money not from rents, but from treating real estate as a luxury asset to park their wealth in.**
- **Billionaire investors are entering the short-term rental industry, removing a substantial portion of rental housing from the market.**

- For instance, in one Dallas council district, returning entire home short-term rentals to the housing market would make 62 percent more rental units available.
- Billionaire investors are helping skew new development towards being increasingly high-end.
- Although housing production has actually exceeded our nation's growth in households, new construction is increasingly unaffordable to low-income households.
- Nationally, we have sufficient and even an excess of housing for the wealthy, alongside not enough housing priced at rates affordable to low-income households in need
- Billionaire-owned private equity firms have entered the government-subsidized affordable housing sector.
- They receive tax breaks and public benefits to invest in affordable housing and exploit programs like the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit. But too often, they are not providing working-class families with dignified and truly affordable homes.
- Instead, they exploit their role as investors to profit from rent increases, eviction, and neglect, as well as from raising rents to market rate when affordability restrictions expire.
- Corporate landlords and billionaires are profiting from low-income tenants and mobile home residents by increasing rents while neglecting maintenance and repairs.
- Through algorithms and exorbitant rent hikes, corporate landlords are inflating rents to artificially higher prices.
- Rising rents are a primary driver of homelessness.
- Wealthy buyers are bidding up land and housing prices, inflaming gentrification and resulting in huge increases in the cost of housing.

- First-time homebuyers and people of color who have historically been excluded from the market are competing against billionaire private equity funds and wealthy buyers who make swift cash offers.
- Billionaires have influenced government housing policy, striving to give themselves tax breaks, oppose tenant protections, and expand their housing acquisitions even further, at the expense of the public, low-income residents, and communities of color.

This report also offers a list of things that local housing advocates should be doing instead:

- Lawmakers at the federal, state and local must act to defend our communities against the billionaire blowback in housing, starting with providing stronger protections and housing options for unsheltered people and low-income tenants.

A key system intervention is to expand the social housing sector: community-controlled or publicly owned housing that is outside the speculative market, such as quality public housing and other forms of nonprofit-owned housing. In our definition, social housing is:

- Permanently and truly affordable, prioritizing those with the lowest incomes most in need.
- Publicly owned or under democratic community control.
- Never resold for profit. For-profit investors are barred or severely restricted.
- We must tax the rich and regulate billionaires' harmful behaviors, while directing funds to this protected permanently and deeply affordable social housing sector.

- State and local policymakers do not have to wait for action from the federal government. They can protect residents in existing affordable housing and generate revenue for affordable housing through a number of interventions. These include:
- Protecting tenants from billionaire landlords and hyper-extractive gentrification and displacement.
- Ending the criminalization of the unhoused and establishing “Housing First” programs to rapidly provide permanently affordable and supportive housing to the unhoused, without prerequisites.
- Requiring ownership transparency so we know who is buying our neighborhoods.
- Limiting the corporate ownership of housing.
- Giving tenants the “first option to buy” apartments and mobile home parks when they come up for sale — and public funding and support structures to make these buy-outs possible.
- Taxing luxury real estate transactions (aka “mansion taxes”) and dedicating the funds to expanding the supply of non-profit and social housing.
- Controlling short-term rentals to protect the long-term rental housing market.
- Prohibiting keeping units vacant for long periods of time.
- Promoting public land banking, public banking, and using public pension funds to resource and finance social housing.
- Promoting the transfer of expiring affordable housing, property with tax liens or habitability violations, property owned by abusive corporate landlords, and other corporate-owned properties into the permanently affordable social housing sector — while keeping residents in place.

- Creating local Offices of Social Housing and Social Housing Development Authorities to support the above, with the input of tenant unions, unhoused people's organizations, and other impacted community members.

Also see the CCC blog post with key sources "[Housing Profits: Crisis Capitalism – the Cambridge Example](#)" (12.9.2024) [HERE](#) This post addresses the risks of Disaster Capitalism in Housing (money made from misery) and provides insights from others working on this.

Other Sources to Explore on this Topic include the following:
"Additional Building Won't Make City Housing More Affordable Says Fed Study" *Forbes* (8.3.2018) [HERE](#)

"Yimbys, Yombys, and California's Housing Crisis" *Fox and Hounds Daily* (3.20.2019)
[HERE](#)

"Zoning Reform Isn't a Silver Bullet for U.S. Housing" (*Bloomberg News* 1.31.2019)
[HERE](#)

*citation from "Billionaire Blowback"

Cordially,

Suzanne Blier

Erwin, Nicole

From: Joe Aunce <j.m.aunce@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:37 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In Support of Upzoning

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Joe Aunce
Cambridge Resident

Erwin, Nicole

From: Katherine McDaniel <kmcdaniel001@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:27 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In support of multifamily developments and denser zoning

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Katherine McDaniel, MD, MSc
176 Franklin St, Cambridge

Sent via [Superhuman iOS](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mark Steffen <mark.alan.steffen@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:23 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Comment for 1/8 City Council Ordinance Committee Meeting

Please vote in support of Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition - One.

Thanks,

Mark Steffen
Sharanya Iyer
120 Montgomery St #3

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carolyn <carolyn_shipley@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:20 PM
To: Ned Codd
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager; Planning Board Comment; City Council
Subject: Re: [Cambridgeport] Multifamily Housing Zoning Proposal

There is a lack of facts in your message to support your claims.

>Where is the data concerning people, especially young people leaving Massachusetts.?

>Where is the data that says: *that upzoning and increased housing supply are effective in ameliorating these problems?*

Many contributors to this discussion have said that rental units will be lost and replaced with expensive condos.

You state that you are concerned about *younger people, renters, and low and middle income people who work in Cambridge but struggle to afford housing here.*

Well, the proposed MFH plan states that there will be only 2 *affordable* units per each 10 units built under that plan. The income required to qualify for an affordable unit is \$96,696 up to \$145,044 per annum. That's a great salary and it seems likely that no newly graduated student and no low income person would qualify. The other 8 units out of the 10 will be rather expensive condos. The contractors have to make a profit after all.

It is not likely that many families will want to live in a condo with no green space around it for their children to play. The city has given no data regarding the number of housing units that can be built if these plans are adopted, nor if there will be any family size units. So, what will happen to the school population then?

Cambridge is not the only city where real estate prices are high. Again, you have given no data.

Carolyn

On Tuesday, December 3, 2024 at 06:02:49 PM EST, Ned Codd <ned@coddsquad.com> wrote:

Dear City Councilors-

I support the Multifamily Zoning Proposal because I am very concerned about the housing shorting and affordability crisis that is facing the entire country. This crisis is particularly acute in Massachusetts, which is losing population, especially young people. The evidence clearly demonstrates that upzoning and increased housing supply are effective in ameliorating these problems.

Cambridge cannot solve the housing supply and affordability crisis on its own, but it definitely has a part to play, as expressed through the City-endorsed Envision Cambridge plan. As an older Cambridge resident who has owned a home here for over 20 years, I have benefited from all the advantages that living in Cambridge offers, as well as from a significant increase in home values resulting from exclusionary zoning and the housing shortage. As such, I feel it is important to consider a wide range of voices and concerns, including those of younger people, renters, and low and middle income people who work in Cambridge but struggle to afford housing here.

Nevertheless, I respect the concerns of those who are opposed to the Multifamily Zoning Proposal, and I think that their concerns should be taken seriously in the ordinance process. I am especially interested in Scenario #6, Four Story + Two

Story Bonus Only for Inclusionary Zoning Projects, which is projected to produce as many affordable units, and nearly as many units overall, as the current proposal. At the same time, it would address some of the concerns that have been raised about height and affordability. However, I am strongly opposed to any proposal that would preserve exclusionary single-family zoning in any form, in any parts of Cambridge.

Furthermore, fear of change should absolutely not be an excuse to delay action, or conduct further study or analysis. I have seen lots of arguments that this process is being rushed, or we don't understand the effects well enough, or we need to start all over with a new process. This is nonsense. Cambridge has been talking about rezoning for years. The City's Envision Master Plan clearly endorses upzoning and increased housing supply. The City government undertook a thorough analysis of the projected impacts of several different zoning scenarios.

It is imperative that the City Council take action on this proposal, and pass a bold rezoning plan immediately. We don't know all the exact results of this change, but we do know the effects of doing nothing. We will continue to suffer from a housing shortage and out of control home prices. We will continue to see our friends priced out of Cambridge, like a member of the city's Planning Board. We will continue to see housing prices rise, and population and school enrollment drop.

Please approve a citywide multifamily housing proposal immediately. Thank you.

Ned Codd
301 Brookline Street

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Anne Collin <ac_collin@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:18 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote YES on multi family housing

Dear City Council Members,

As a 10-year Cambridge resident, I urge you to approve the measure that would allow more multi-family development and higher-density zoning. Yes the current measure has been watered down. But this would be the first step towards breaking this decades-long deadlock of not being able to build enough housing in Cambridge.

We're already seeing the effects of way-too-high housing prices on our community: restaurants unable to hire staff because they wouldn't be able to afford living nearby, shops closing down because there is not enough foot traffic/density of folks to make the rent worth it, university staff having to commute 2+ hours/day because they can't afford to live here, etc..

Please approve this measure, and allow Cambridge to start growing a vibrant community again!

Best,
Anne Collin

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mark Rifkin <mark.e.rifkin@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:17 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please end exclusionary zoning and allow 6 stories citywide

Dear City Councilors,

I wanted to send this email ahead of tomorrow's Ordinance Committee meeting on multifamily zoning. While I am disappointed that the current amendments will reduce the amount of housing we allow, I urge you to support the proposal in its current, compromise form. I also plan to comment tomorrow but may not be able to make it so emailing just in case.

I first want to talk about process. Over the past months, you've heard from a lot of the same people regarding this proposal, myself included. Most people don't know enough, care enough, or have enough time to send in comments about a topic as obscure as zoning. (Of course, as we know from city surveys, housing affordability is top of mind for most people — and zoning plays a big role in shaping that.)

I've heard some commenters suggest that the solution to that is more process, more engagement, and more delay. I disagree. There have been many meetings about this proposal, many community events, and many newspaper articles. But fundamentally, it's very difficult to get people to turn out to engage with local politics. That's why you've probably been getting a bunch of form letters from people opposing the project — groups with a particular agenda are incentivized to make it as easy as possible to push their opinion. But, whether those comments agree with my position, or whether they don't, that's not democracy. Democracy operates on the principle of one person, one vote. This isn't to say you shouldn't listen to public comment — I think it is a useful tool for gauging the interests and priorities of those most engaged with city politics. But you should value your own opinions and expertise, what you campaigned on, and who endorsed you, far more. After all, voters, the vast majority of whom are not public commenters, voted you into office.

Of the 69,849 registered voters in the city, 23,512 turned out to vote in the last council election. Incidentally, that low turnout is a problem, and I'm glad you're exploring moving to even-year elections to address it. Regardless, elections are the best way we have to gauge residents' views. When you hear from fifty or so people at public comment, that's about 0.2% of voters. To put it another way, if each of those 23,512 people were to provide one-minute public comment on this proposal, the meeting would last about 49 eight-hour workdays.

Moreover, the research on public process with respect to housing shows that those who show up or provide comment are far more likely to oppose new housing than support it, and socioeconomically advantaged on a variety of dimensions — whiter, maler, and more likely to be homeowners than renters ([BU Housing Politics Lab](#)). Please do take this into account when evaluating public comment.

All that said, I want to express, once again, my strong support for this proposal. Action on housing affordability is sorely needed, and many of you were elected with this as a key issue.

Over the past few weeks, I've been thinking a lot about what one commenter said a few weeks ago, which was something to the effect of "are 6 story buildings across the city the gift we want to give people 100 years from now?" This stuck with me for a few reasons. First, this zoning proposal will not create 6-story buildings across the city. It's not economical in general to replace a 3 or 4 story building that can be easily resold with a 6-story one. The reason allowing 6 story buildings is so important is that it makes it more economical to replace a one or two-story building with one that can provide far more housing. Letting one single-family homeowner sell their home to construct one six-story building could produce about 11-23 new housing units, including deed-

restricted affordable housing units under inclusionary zoning. Similar benefits exist for small multifamily buildings. Extending this out to the entire city, it quickly becomes apparent that you don't need every lot in the city to be a 6-story building in order to house a bunch of people. There's not infinite demand to live in Cambridge, so most lots won't be turned into 6-story buildings.

Second, I actually do think allowing more construction would be a gift to future residents. For one, the people living in those apartments would sure be grateful! They, and their children, would get to live in Cambridge, one of the most [opportunity-rich](#), walkable, inclusive, tree-covered, and beautiful cities in the country! Why should that chance be limited to those who can afford an apartment in our current housing shortage, or those who win the lottery for public housing? I want anyone who works here, from Harvard professors to baristas, to be able to find safe, high-quality housing that fits their needs within their budget. I don't see how we get there without allowing a lot more housing to be built.

Lastly, I think we need to exercise some humility and get away from trying to micromanage the built form of the city 100 years in the future. Cities change, and grow, and adapt, and we've seen what happens when outdated zoning policy limits how they can do so. Even if they had had the best intentions, politicians 100 years ago when the outlines of our current exclusionary zoning policy were adopted couldn't have possibly imagined the ways in which the city would change. The rigid restrictions adopted back then, which, as you know, were adopted with a mindset of racial and class exclusion, certainly not the best intentions, have forced us into a housing shortage in the present. While I hope our zoning regulations continue to change to meet the moment, ending exclusionary zoning is a vital first step in leaving that past behind. I hope you adopt this proposal to address the housing shortage in the present and to allow the city to grow and change in the future without the displacement and unaffordability we've seen result when outdated zoning policies are left in place.

Thank you so much for all your hard work on this issue.

Mark Rifkin
945 Memorial Drive

Erwin, Nicole

From: Cédric Viry <cedricviry@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:12 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please help us get more Cambridge Housing dev

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. We are all experiencing rising rents and home prices are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels. Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,
Cedric Viry
Cambridge Resident since 2017

Erwin, Nicole

From: charles@norrisonorris.com
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:11 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha
Cc: 'Diane C Norris'; cynthiasmithasla@gmail.com; City Clerk
Subject: Current Zoning Petition

To the City Council:

January 7, 2025

As a long term Cambridge resident, professional architect and urban planner, and community advocate, I encourage the Council to reject the current up-zoning petition by allowing the petition to expire, and follow up with an inclusive and proven public planning process, grounded in the adopted Envision Plan and reflecting lessons learned from the AHO overlay zoning experience.

Based on comments to date, most residents seem to thoroughly embrace the elimination of exclusionary zoning and advocate for the addition of affordable housing. There is no question that the historic zoning regulations can and should be improved to conform with current social equity and environmental concerns. However, through many months of discussion, comment and review of the current up-zoning petition, there has been no credible evidence provided that such radical zoning changes can plausibly add to either the stock or affordability of housing. To the contrary, comments from a myriad of experienced local urban planners, economists, and residential property owners indicate that the upzoning as proposed will continue to drive up both ownership and rental costs (which currently rank with the highest in the nation), without adding to the housing stock. The real estate market for new or renovated housing continues to be dominated by high end ownership and rentals, and there is no evidence that the up-zoning will reverse this trend without mandatory inclusion of affordable units.

Too many serious questions remain unanswered regarding negative up-zoning impacts on our community including climate sustainability, public safety, building codes, traffic and transit, and other critical public services. Collectively, over time, these negative impacts are likely to alter the diverse neighborhood character and quality of life that has attracted generations of residents, students and workers to our unique City of Cambridge.

Continuing concerns and questions regarding the up-zoning include but are not limited to the following:

1. Re-zoning by Petition Process and Public Accountability: The Council and City agencies have not been responsive to repeated questions that have been raised through many weeks of reviews and discussion. If it is the City's legal responsibility to consider such petitions as the current approach to upzoning as an alternative to inclusive planning, the process has failed again. Response to public comment and questions has been minimal to non-existent. Public inclusion has been limited based on an absence of public outreach and engagement. It has been left to neighborhood advocacy groups and residents to alert others to the sudden meetings and deadlines. As was the case with the immediate aftermath of the AHO overlay zoning, another predicted up-zoning petition followed quickly, and when it failed was followed by yet another more radical version. We can expect another petition each time some sector of the development community or perhaps the resident community is unhappy with the last petition. By contrast the Envision Process, which was a more proven and inclusive long term planning process seems all but set aside. Planning by petition is neither a sustainable or inclusionary way to plan our City's future.

2. A credible and transparent impact analysis of the effects of proposed zoning changes on differing neighborhoods and existing properties should precede any approval of zoning changes. In addition to quantifying the likely building consequences of proposed zoning changes, such an analysis needs to include infrastructure, social and economic impacts. The ongoing analysis of the upzoning impacts contains many highly debatable projections regarding increased density and housing affordability. After a summer of urban fire warnings combined with water shortages and higher temperatures, the impacts of increased density and lot coverage need to be considered public safety along with broader Cambridge sustainability initiatives. From an economic impact standpoint, proponent's models of building costs and affordability need to be recalibrated as interest rates have risen from lowest levels to normal building loan and mortgage rates since original affordability projections.
3. Increasing Affordable Housing Initiatives: In addition to monitoring of the successes and limitations of the results of the AHO zoning, The City should seriously consider other models for increasing and guaranteeing affordable housing that involve public and institutional investment in housing stock, as well as revised public policy on rental rates. Many innovative approaches are being tested nationally and internationally, (such as new forms of rent control) rather than simply assuming that private development is the only option. It is quite possible that combinations of public and private housing and infrastructure initiatives may be more effective in achieving the stated objectives of affordable and inclusionary housing. Regarding the AHO zoning concessions such as height and setback, further refinements should be considered in light of the allowable but alarming design results of several proposed projects such as Wendell Street.
4. By definition two-family housing units are multi-family units and may be appropriate for some smaller sites and denser neighborhoods. Even though eliminating exclusive two family zoning is needed, preserving and renewing two family and three family units in some high density neighborhoods (such as Riverside, Cambridgeport and East Cambridge) with smaller lot sizes and existing high density residential should be both allowed and encouraged under any new zoning and construction ordinances.
5. Allowing increased height and FAR, in many existing small lot/high density neighborhoods could reasonably be regarded as a property "taking", of existing air, open space, public safety, sunlight, solar panels, and ventilation rights of existing residences. This is particularly true for designated corridor up-zoning where shallow lots and back lot lines are adjacent to residential streets and the 9 storey heights will overwhelm neighbors. Limitation of such abutter impacts has been clearly addressed for many years in the permitting of new and renovated construction in Cambridge, particularly for the many non-conforming older structures. The new zoning would eliminate such protections for existing residences and could reasonable lead to legal challenges. For existing property owners, the impacts of reduced setbacks, increased height and shadows, reduced tree canopy, reduced daylighting, and altered ventilation are all measurable negative impacts based on new proposed as of right zoning and suspension of design review. It has also been noted that the new relaxed site requirements are in conflict with various mandatory State and National Building Codes. Building permits and codes enforcement would become the final determination of site development and FAR constraint. For example, reducing abutting side yard setbacks below current standards could result in required blank firewalls while also limiting fire fighting access to back yards.
6. Proportional public infrastructure changes are needed with projected increased density: If the projection of increased density and population actually were to occur, a parallel public response in proportionally increased public infrastructure would be needed. Included would be increases in public transportation, open space, public works infrastructure, climate resilience adaptation and expanded public facilities (such as schools, health care, libraries, community spaces, and markets). Such measures require both careful land-use planning and public funding, particularly in an already dense and built out City such as Cambridge.
7. Climate sustainability needs to be a higher priority in any re-zoning initiative: The City of Cambridge developed a Climate Resilience Plan in parallel with the Envision Plan, which has been widely praised instructive for other towns. While new construction can address some objectives of the sustainability plan in the long term, it seems that many aspects of the up-zoning have off-setting negative impacts including demolition waste, open space

loss, tree canopy loss, limitations on alternative energy, and potential development of vertical heat islands for higher rise corridor buildings with reflective glass exteriors.

The objectives of the zoning changes in terms of elimination of exclusionary zoning, increasing affordable housing, social equity and sustaining our diverse and vibrant community appear to be widely shared by Cambridge residents and property owners. There is also a sense that current zoning can and should be updated to be more efficient and equitable for all. The current zoning petition does not appear to this resident to improve the cost or quantity of affordable housing, and at the same time negatively effects the quality and character of our present neighborhoods.

For these reasons as a Cambridge resident I strongly urge the Council and City to let the petition expire, reject future zoning by petition initiatives, and initiate a community based update to the Envision Plan planning process including AHO review before proceeding with any further zoning changes.

Charley Norris

Charles R. Norris
446 Huron Avenue
Cambridge MA 02138

(617) 354-5801 (home)
(617) 699-7338 (mobile)
charles@norrisonorris.com

www.norrisonorris.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Brennan Waters <brennan.waters34@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:06 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Keep Cambridge Livable - Pass the Multi-Family Zoning Ordinance

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express support for the multi-family zoning ordinance. I've been living in Cambridge for 5 years and I really want to stay and raise a family. But even with a high salary the real estate prices are untenable. My girlfriend and I joke that the rarest sight in our neighborhood (Harvard Square) is a child.

It's not surprising that CPS has been combining schools as families are priced out of Cambridge and enrollment drops. Building more homes will give families and non-families more choices - e.g. a group of roommates that previously rented a house together may decide to move to a cheaper, newer apartment building, freeing up that house for a family.

Please pass the Multi-Family Zoning Ordinance - while I wish it was still six stories, it's an impressive compromise between different groups towards a more livable city.

Thank you for your hard work,
Brennan Waters
14 Remington St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Olivia Martin <oliviakmartin99@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 6:00 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Vote in Favor of Multi-family Housing

Dear City Council Members,

I strongly support the multi-family housing policies that you will vote to approve tomorrow. Cambridge's housing supply is far too restricted right now, stifling the city. Expanding multi-family housing will give Cambridge lower rents, more economic security, additional patrons to local businesses, and a stronger community.

The current measure is a strong proposal that would strengthen Cambridge and help alleviate its current housing crisis. As a Cambridge resident, I really care about this issue, and I urge you to approve higher-density zoning without any additional amendments or concessions.

Thank you for your hard work on this vital issue.

Sincerely,
Olivia Martin
348 Franklin St
Cambridge, MA 02139 (edited)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Saranesh Prembabu <sprembabu@g.harvard.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:58 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily Housing

My name is Saranesh Prembabu and I work in Cambridge. I support building more housing across Cambridge to increase affordability for all residents. I urge City Council to end exclusionary zoning and pass the multifamily housing ordinance in its current form with no further amendments. Thank you for the work you have done on this.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Bernstein <shocasa@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:56 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for the Multifamily Housing Ordinance

Dear Cambridge City Council members,

I'm a Cambridge resident living in mid-Cambridge area. I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed multifamily housing ordinance. Allowing for more multi-family housing fits within the city's Envision goals, and will allow Cambridge to help address our housing shortage.

Please vote to end exclusionary zoning and allow for more housing throughout our community.

Let's live up to our values as a city!

Thank you!

-Susan Bernstein

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sebastian Lourido <lourido@wi.mit.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:48 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing. As a tenured professor at MIT, I am particularly concerned about the impact limited housing is having on our ability to recruit talented scientists to our community.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Sebastian Lourido, Ph.D.
Associate Professor of Biology, MIT
Member, Whitehead Institute

Erwin, Nicole

From: Eric Leslie <ericleslie@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:46 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Jenny Chiang; City Clerk
Subject: Support for the Multifamily Housing Ordinance

Dear Cambridge City Council members,

I'm a Cambridge resident living in North Cambridge. I grew up near Porter Square and my father David Leslie was executive director of the Cambridge Civic Association in the early 90s.

My wife Dr. Jenny Chiang and I are writing to express our strong support for the proposed multifamily housing ordinance. Allowing for more multi-family housing fits within the city's Envision goals, and will allow Cambridge to help address our housing shortage. I grew up in this city and know all that it can offer when we are open and welcoming to all. I am a strong believer that we must not be a NIMBY city and that we can truly be a YIMBY city with this ordinance.

Please vote to end exclusionary zoning and allow for more housing throughout our community.

Thank you so much!

Eric Leslie and Jenny Chiang
1 Washburn Ter

Erwin, Nicole

From: Stephen Moss <scmoss2922@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:45 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Rezoning Ordinance

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Stephen Moss

Erwin, Nicole

From: Stephen Moss <scmoss2922@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:45 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Rezoning Ordinance

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Stephen Moss

Erwin, Nicole

From: Stephen Moss <scmoss2922@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:37 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Rezoning Ordinance

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for policies that would increase housing development in our city. Our community is experiencing rising rents and home prices that are making it increasingly difficult for residents to find affordable housing.

I urge you to approve the measure that would allow for more housing construction, including multi-family developments and higher-density zoning, without additional concessions. This would help ease our housing shortage, create jobs, and make our city more accessible to people of all income levels.

Thank you for considering this important issue.

Sincerely,

Stephen Moss

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lynne Hall <lynnehall43@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:42 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,
Lynne Hall
154 Auburn Street
Cambridge Ma 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sarah Block <sarahelizblock@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:41 PM
To: City Council; City Manager; City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily housing YES as soon as possible

Hi City Council:

Thank you so much for your 9-0 vote on the CSO yesterday. I am so happy. 🚲 🏠

Next up is multi-family housing and please pass that as soon as possible. I grew up in Cambridge and me and all of my friends lived in an apartment or multi-family house. It was always weird to me visiting a co-worker of one of my parents in places like Lexington or Haverhill or Canton where people lived in single family homes with yards. A bit spooky, not having your neighbors across the hall or downstairs. So *not* Cambridge.

My family owns a triple decker and were lucky to be able to buy it 50 years ago, due to rent control allowing them to save for it and they had rental units to help cover the mortgage. My parents have always provided homes at very reasonable below market rates for people. So many people I grew up with have had to leave Cambridge due to the high cost of housing and most of us remaining are only able to because our families bought something decades ago. It shouldn't be like this.

I really am hoping you pass one of the multi-family plans and am indifferent as to which one other than hoping for the proposal that is best for creating more homes for younger residents, low income families, affordable homes, and hopefully also for currently unhoused people. Please do what you can to make Cambridge, Cambridge with all the amazing people coming from around the world to work and study here be also able to live here too.

Keep up the good work!

Sarah Block
24 Shepard St, Cambridge, MA 02138
Resident since 1970 (except for ten years in Berkeley, CA the other people's republic)

Sarah Block (she/her)
617-642-8389

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jake Biderman <jakebiderman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:39 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Tomorrow's Vote on Housing Policy

Dear City Council Members,

I strongly support the pro-housing and pro-construction policies that have been put forth for your vote tomorrow. The lack of housing supply in Cambridge has raised rents, suppressed the economy, prevented inflow of potential neighbors, and crushed the ownership aspirations of young Cantabrigians.

If you approve the measure that allows multi-family developments and high-density zoning, we will have a better Cambridge tomorrow, five years from now, and ten years from now. More housing means more residents paying taxes and contributing to our community. It means Cambridge residents have to spend less in rent every month, so they have more disposable income to spend at local businesses, to give to charities, or to support their own families. It means a better Cambridge.

As someone concerned about the economy and the lack of community around the country, this is one of my most important issues. For these reasons, I urge you to approve higher-density zoning.

Thank you,
Jake Biderman
348 Franklin St
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mayank Ojha <mayank.ojha@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:25 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Planning Board Comment
Subject: Vote Yes for Cambridge's Multi-Family Rezoning Ordinance

Dear Council Members,

My name is Mayank Ojha, and I have proudly called Cambridge home for over a decade. As an Architect and Urbanist working as a Research Scientist at the MIT Urban Risk Lab, I focus on helping communities and local governments reduce risks from disasters and the impacts of climate change. This work has made me acutely aware of the critical role housing plays in building resilience.

The availability of safe, diverse, and affordable housing directly influences how quickly and effectively a community can recover from disasters or extreme weather events. For example, Vermont's lack of housing diversity and affordability severely hindered its recovery efforts after back-to-back floods, erasing years of progress in resiliency planning.

Like every complex system, cities must adapt and grow to meet the needs of their residents. That's why I strongly support Cambridge's proposed six-story multifamily housing ordinance. This rezoning effort is a vital step toward ending exclusionary zoning practices, expanding our housing inventory, and addressing the displacement and rising costs that are pricing many out of our city.

Legalizing six-story multifamily housing across Cambridge, while reducing zoning restrictions and incorporating affordable housing overlays, will:

- Create downward pressure on skyrocketing rents, making the city more accessible.
- Improve housing quality and resilience by enabling sustainable construction practices and modern building systems—an urgent need given the outdated nature of many existing single-family homes.
- Generate additional revenue for the city, which can be invested in risk mitigation and climate adaptation measures that benefit everyone.

I urge you to vote yes on this critical ordinance. It represents a meaningful step toward a more inclusive, resilient, and sustainable Cambridge. Thank you for your consideration and for championing a stronger future for our community.

Sincerely,
Mayank

Mayank Ojha
Research Associate | UrbanRISKLab
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

mayank.ojha@gmail.com
+1 617 803 4916

Erwin, Nicole

From: Chen, William <william_chen@g.harvard.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:25 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for more housing in Cambridge

My name is William Chen and I am a Cambridge resident. I support building more housing across Cambridge to increase affordability for all residents. I urge City Council to end exclusionary zoning and pass the multifamily housing ordinance in its current form with no further amendments.

Thank you for the work you have done on this.

William Chen

Erwin, Nicole

From: Nick Kamara <tn.kamara5@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:22 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Cambridge Multifamily Housing

Hello,

My name is Nick Kamara and I am a Cambridge resident. I am deeply concerned about the cost of living in Cambridge and Massachusetts in general. It is extremely prohibitive for young people to own property in the city and I would like to see young people have the same opportunity to build generational wealth as preceding generations did. I also believe denser housing provides more efficient use of our land and better opportunities for greener methods of transportation. I would also strongly support the implementation of more mixed use zoning laws to allow more mixed of commercial and residential properties. I believe this will allow for more small businesses to thrive in our city. I support building more housing across Cambridge to increase affordability for all residents. I urge City Council to end exclusionary zoning and pass the multifamily housing ordinance in its current form with no further amendments. Thank you for the work you have done on this.

Sincerely,

Nick Kamara
(207)-478-4917
Tn.Kamara5@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: S Reed <ssnreed@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:21 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Fwd: New Housing Ordinance--How to ensure you will get the right buyers?

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

From: S Reed <ssnreed@gmail.com>
Date: Tue, Jan 7, 2025 at 5:18 PM
Subject: New Housing Ordinance--How to ensure you will get the right buyers?
To: <clerk@cambridgma.gov>, <council@cambridgema.gov>

Dear Councilors:

While I like many of the changes you have made in crafting the ordinance, it is still unclear how you will ensure that only those people for whom you are constructing the units--those who cannot currently afford to purchase Cambridge real estate--will actually buy them. What will be the rules regarding who can qualify? Who can bid? Will you require that they now live in Cambridge, or have for 3-5 years?

How will you guaranty that foreign buyers, or large property buyers will not purchase the units? (Ten percent of the units in my condo building are owned by investors who live outside the U.S. and rent their units.)

How will you control the price of the units so they remain "affordable?" Will you require claw backs if it is found that the buyers did not fit your "affordable buyer" criteria?

Will these affordable condos be green? Will you require cool roofs and heat pumps?

All best,
Susan Reed
52 Garden St., #42
Cambridge, MA 02138

-

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kelsey Harris <kelsey.m.k.harris@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:15 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Pass the milktoast zoning update, please

tl;dr: Please pass the zoning update that re-legalizes bog-standard multifamily units with the current amendments (and no more further watering it down, thank you).

Speaking of bogs, last weekend I rented a car for the express purpose of visiting Cumberland Farms Important Bird Area (formerly a swamp and still kinda boggy). Near the field, I passed several (although not many) active housing developments. Every single one of them involved clearing dozens of mature trees for the house, garage, and driveway. Now, someone who wants to live in a 4-bedroom house in Halifax might not want to live in Cambridge even if they could afford to do so, but what about Stoughton? And do you think there are people in Stoughton who would live in Dedham? And who in Dedham would live in Brookline, Newton - or Cambridge?

Refusing to allow more homes to be built in Cambridge doesn't mean people suddenly don't need a place to live. Every unit that isn't built in Cambridge will be built *somewhere* - and that's more likely to be in greenfield areas far from urban centers. This not only directly causes more habitat loss and the destruction of many more mature trees than the equivalent number of multi-family units would in Cambridge, it *also* exacerbates climate change by forcing people to live fully car-dependent lives. All those developments? None of them even had sidewalks. They're going to be driving to everything, everywhere, for the rest of their lives, spewing carbon and particulates even if their cars are electric. Unless we built more in cities. (A better future is possible!)

And it's not 100% accurate to say every person will find a home being built for them somewhere. Just look at the skyrocketing numbers of homeless in the highest-cost states and cities in the country. Do you really think Montana has less per capita homelessness than Massachusetts because it has better social services? No: it's the cost of housing.

Also: I know you're getting a lot of NO emails. I won't deny there are very vocal opponents who are well-organized and well-connected to what is happening in Cambridge. Instead I will point out that housing costs is the top issue mentioned in the resident survey, and the anti-housing coalition has not received a majority of votes (and thus seats) in the past 3 elections, despite supporting enough candidates to do so if the voters wanted to see those views reflected on the council.

I'm sure you are all also familiar with Neighborhood Defenders about who shows up for planning and zoning discussions: "individuals who choose to participate hold overwhelmingly negative views of new housing—far more negative than their broader communities—and are socioeconomically advantaged on a variety of dimensions" [1]

I'd also like to point out the politics in a very similar city, and one close to where I grew up and could not afford to move back to after college: Berkeley, California.

"Despite 10 years of anger about the downtown plan, the dorms causing homeowners to sue the university, the opposition to the BART station developments, the bike lane saga on Hopkins Street, and the so-called "controversial" plan to eliminate single-family zoning (Missing Middle) — there's been no electoral backlash to the pro-housing side. Zero. Zip. Whether turnout's high or low, this uprising of voters mad about over-development has not materialized. Politicians who support these initiatives and stand firm on them have mostly been rewarded with election, re-election, and a city's changing culture around density." [2]

So, please pass the reform. We need more walkable, delightful, urban housing. The climate needs it. People struggling to make rent need it. People who've already been evicted need it. Even yuppie dinks need it to avoid pushing out everyone who isn't a yuppie dink.

The majority of Cambridge voters really are there with you.

-Kelsey Harris

currently 19 Cameron Ave

(a totally non-conforming multi-family building under current zoning)

previously 8 Newport Road

(a totally non-conforming multi-family building under current zoning)

[1] https://www.politicsofhousing.com/neighborhood_defenders/

[2] <https://darrellowens.substack.com/p/berkeleys-evolution-on-housing>

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lisa Camacho <lisacamacho26@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:04 PM
To: City Council; City Manager; City Clerk
Subject: CSOs and zoning
Attachments: Dear Councillors.docx

Dear Cambridge City Councillors -

There will be a Zoom meeting to discuss CSOs (Combined Sewer Overflows) on January 22. Cambridge recently had two of these in one week. Reducing the regional pollution Cambridge creates is a matter of huge importance. It is a crucial part of responsible city planning. In the push to rezone the City, I hope you understand and are accounting for how uncontrolled growth will exacerbate this problem. The City Council focus has been fixated on the rezoning effort for so long now, that I fear all the essential elements of responsible City planning except housing are being ignored. If you are not experts in urban development, here is a chance to turn to people who are knowledgeable in one of the crucial areas. (See below, including registration link.) I hope you will tune in on January 22, add to your knowledge base for guiding Cambridge, and bring re-zoning proposals within the guidelines of good governance. I have also attached what I sent you previously opposing the re-zoning proposal as currently written. I hope you review and consider it.

Sincerely,
Lisa Camacho
Cambridge, MA

*Combined Sewer Overflow (CSO) Update for the Charles River and Alewife Brook/Mystic River
Wednesday, Jan 22nd | 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM
Via Zoom*

On January 22, the Cities of Cambridge and Somerville and the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority (MWRA) will host a virtual public meeting about the current state of CSOs in the Charles and Mystic Rivers and their tributaries. Attend the meeting to show your support to end CSOs.

Here is the link to register.

https://cbi-org.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_sRA6FUmUQOiZSC-P8t0mIQ#/registration

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE
Thursday, January 16, 2025**

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 Thursday, January 16, 2025. The meeting was Called to Order at 3:00 p.m. by the Co-Chair, Vice Mayor 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, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via Zoom.

At the request of the Chair, City Clerk LeBlanc called the roll.

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

Present – , Absent – . Quorum established.

The Chair, Vice Mayor McGovern recognized City staff who gave a presentation. The Chair, Vice Mayor McGovern recognized Councillors and City staff for discussion.

On a motion made by _____, the Ordinance Committee voted favorably to amend by Multifamily Zoning Petition Part One, by substitution.

On a motion made by _____, the Ordinance Committee voted favorably to amend by Multifamily Zoning Petition Part Two, by substitution.

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On a motion made by _____, the Ordinance Committee voted favorably to amend by Multifamily Zoning Petition Part Two, by substitution.

Dear Councillors -

As the latest round of discussions on the Citywide Up-Zoning Petition moves forward, I've spent time looking into the impact this Plan would have for those of us who live, and those who want to live, in Cambridge.

We need more housing, and certainly more affordable housing. The "We" in my statement includes much more than Cambridge. Greater Boston has a housing shortage. Massachusetts has a housing shortage, as do other States in the Northeast and across the U.S. In fact, according to a 2022 World Economic Forum report, the housing crisis has become global (<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2022/06/how-to-fix-global-housing-crisis/>). After reading the Cambridge Up-Zoning Petition I'm left with the impression the drafters of the Petition are trying to solve the worldwide housing shortfall solely through using land within the confines of Cambridge.

The U.S. Census Bureau lists Cambridge, MA as being 7.10 sq mi. Of that, 6.40 sq mi is land, 0.71 is water. The elevation for Cambridge is 42 feet above sea level, at least for right now. Any chunk of land can support only so much infrastructure and human activity. Exceed that and it makes no difference what zoning laws there are, how much housing there is, or what kinds of structures zoning allows. The land and the weather will let us know the tipping point. This is already happening in Cambridge. We just don't seem to be paying attention.

In fact, the City can't keep up with conditions as they exist today. How will we manage the unchecked development programs that will arise if the Up-Zoning Petition passes? Just one example: Cambridge recently requested and received, yet again, a variance to state regulations for combined sewer overflows (CSOs) from Cambridge. Scroll toward the bottom of this site for a list showing the frequency of the City's releases:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/publicworks/combinedseweroverflowreporting>

It's more than time for a new approach to urban planning in Cambridge. The knowledge and resources are available. I'm sure you are familiar with some of them and are consulting them as you write new zoning ordinances. A number of federal government agencies (USEPA, NOAA, USGS, DoD and others) have cooperated to combine information essential for everything from urban planning to national defense. Example: The **National Sea Level Explorer** at the following site indicates Boston's sea level rise has been 6.8 inches since 1993. Does that impact Cambridge? Yes it does!

<https://sealevel.globalchange.gov/resources/2022-sea-level-rise-technical-report/>

More frequent and intense rain storms in Cambridge over the past few years are just a hint of what's to come. For the most up-to-date flood maps on Cambridge specifically, see the following site. The data there also allows for projecting out a number of decades to see the impact of climate change on the area.

<https://www.mass.gov/info-details/massachusetts-sea-level-rise-and-coastal-flooding-viewer>

Zillow now rates the risk factors of homes on the market for flood, fire, wind, air quality and heat for current conditions and for conditions projected out up to 30 years. On their site, I picked a home for sale at random (52 Garden Street) to look at the climate change feature, choosing heat. That home, or anything built in that area, needs to plan for the following:

"The number of days per year above 96° will increase by 114% over the next 30 years." (Zillow)

As Cambridge develops, denying or ignoring these and other factors in a quickly changing world spells disaster. Planning for a future Cambridge using old models and ways of thinking no longer works. Changing our thinking is hard! And no one can be an expert on everything, especially when change is happening more quickly than even the experts anticipated. Fortunately, the City recently hired a Chief Climate Officer. Now that Cambridge has this desperately needed resource, I trust that the City Council & Ordinance Committee are working very closely with Ms. Wormser to develop their zoning plan for the City.

The Cambridge Public Library has an enormous amount of information and resources to draw on. Here's just one title, published this year. It's available online via the Library web site (also in paper):

The Sustainable Urban Planning Handbook: A Thorough Guide to Urban Design for Architecture, Planning (eBook)

The land on which Cambridge sits just cannot absorb development in the unrestricted manner encouraged by the Up-Zoning Petition. Solving the lack of housing ***must be a regional effort***, although very few decision-makers in Cambridge appear interested in recognizing the fact.

On a Statewide level, the Executive Office of Housing and Livable Communities (EOHLC) understands the problem. Section 3A of the Zoning Act encompasses 177 cities and towns. The law requires multi-family

zoning for MBTA communities, distributing housing development over a wide area. Importantly, the zoning requirements in the Act recognize and make accommodation for the needs of four different types of communities within the MBTA jurisdiction. EOHLC has purposely constructed a plan that takes in not only current housing needs but also essential factors for sustainability now and into the future. The Zoning Act specifies distances from a transit hub, varying burdens on the four types of MBTA communities, and much more. Two statements in particular on the EOHLC web site illustrate to me the careful research and planning that has gone into designing the MBTA Communities Zoning Act:

"All communities served by the MBTA must zone to allow for multifamily housing as of right, with a greater obligation for communities with better access to transit stations."

"We can create new housing in walkable neighborhoods closer to transit. This is not just good housing policy, it is good climate and transportation policy."

Applying the MBTA Communities Act at the city level, it is analogous to zoning for taller, denser, multi-family housing along transit corridors, maintaining green infrastructure, while also preserving long-established residential neighborhoods.

The Cambridge Up-Zoning Petition may provide housing in the short run, but it is short-sighted and singularly focused on only one need - housing. Even within the lifetime of most of us, much of that housing would not be something people want to live in. Some of it may even become uninhabitable as increasingly intense storms and heat cause moldy, waterlogged homes and apartment buildings in formerly dry area that become flood zones in the coming decades.

It requires a fresh mindset to abandon old ways of urban planning. The Citywide Up-Zoning Petition now before the Ordinance Committee relies on outmoded thinking - the same old big buildings pushed to property line limits, no accommodation for the open space and trees that will help mitigate climate change, no City review of planning to comply with infrastructure needs, no adapting to changes made by cities and towns surrounding Cambridge. The Petition needs a serious re-write.

My concern is that Cambridge is heading down a path that allows uncontrolled building that will be more harmful than helpful in the long run. Few seem to understand that in a deep, profound way. Urban planning models need to change. The proposed zoning changes just repeat the same old mistakes. Please vastly re-write the Citywide Up-Zoning Petition to a document encompassing 21st century conditions.

Sincerely,

Lisa Camacho

24 Corporal Burns Rd.

Erwin, Nicole

From: cityclerksassociationofmass@googlegroups.com on behalf of Higgins, Lindsay <lhiggins@cityofwoburn.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:03 PM
To: cityclerksassociationofmass@googlegroups.com
Subject: Re: 2025 Fall Municipal Preliminary Date Poll
Attachments: 2025 Municipal Preliminary Date Survey.xlsx

Thank you all who responded to my survey request. Please see attached excel sheet that I compiled.

Regards,

Lindsay E. Higgins
Woburn City Clerk
lhiggins@cityofwoburn.com
(781) 897-5850

From: cityclerksassociationofmass@googlegroups.com <cityclerksassociationofmass@googlegroups.com> on behalf of Higgins, Lindsay <lhiggins@cityofwoburn.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:49 PM
To: cityclerksassociationofmass@googlegroups.com <cityclerksassociationofmass@googlegroups.com>
Subject: 2025 Fall Municipal Preliminary Date Poll

[**NOTICE:** This message originated outside of our organization -- **DO NOT CLICK** on links or open attachments unless you are sure the content is safe.]

Hello All,

I am in preparation of setting the fall preliminary date with my City Council and I was hoping to have some information from you all.

Would you please provide me the date of your fall preliminary for local municipal elections this year (if necessary)? If you have not set a date yet, what date you are leaning towards?

Thank you for your help and I will compile and send the answers around.

Lindsay E. Higgins
Woburn City Clerk
Woburn City Hall
10 Common Street
Woburn, Massachusetts 01801
Email: lhiggins@cityofwoburn.com
Tel: (781) 897-5850



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To view this discussion visit

<https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/cityclerksassociationofmass/SA1PR09MB893883E1830EE21AD5A5E4B1B1102%40SA1PR09MB8938.namprd09.prod.outlook.com>.

For more options, visit <https://groups.google.com/d/optout>.

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<https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/cityclerksassociationofmass/SA1PR09MB89386A5C5C1B67EA2936E4D6B1112%40SA1PR09MB8938.namprd09.prod.outlook.com>.

For more options, visit <https://groups.google.com/d/optout>.

2025 Municipal Preliminary Date Survey

1/7/2025

| Municipality | Preliminary Date | Tentative? | Row Labels | Count of Municipality |
|--------------|--------------------|------------|--------------------|-----------------------|
| Brockton | September 16, 2025 | | September 16, 2025 | 7 |
| Chelsea | September 23, 2025 | | September 23, 2025 | 3 |
| Everett | September 16, 2025 | | September 2, 2025 | 2 |
| Fitchburg | September 23, 2025 | | September 9, 2025 | 1 |
| Framingham | September 16, 2025 | | Grand Total | 13 |
| Haverhill | September 9, 2025 | | | |
| Lawrence | September 16, 2025 | | | |
| Marlborough | September 16, 2025 | Yes | | |
| Peabody | September 2, 2025 | | | |
| Salem | September 16, 2025 | Yes | | |
| Somerville | September 16, 2025 | | | |
| Westfield | September 23, 2025 | | | |
| Woburn | September 2, 2025 | Yes | | |

Erwin, Nicole

From: Richard Goldberg <rgoldberg170@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:02 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: City-wide rezoning
Attachments: Rezone 2025.docx

See attachment:

To: Cambridge City Council
From: Richard Goldberg, 170 Harvard St. 02139
Re: Rezoning
Date: January 7, 2025

The Council should not act to rezone the city, not because the city should not be rezoned to create more affordable housing but because the current plan before the Council will not accomplish what it purports to. Rather than creating a more affordable Cambridge it will only accelerate gentrification and destabilize existing neighborhoods that still offer affordable rents. In theory, rezoning for density throughout the city could encourage density in areas where standalone low density housing predominates. But what is more likely to occur is that buildings in the eastern part of the city adjacent to Kendall will be targeted. Razing existing housing to make room for more market-rate units will sacrifice the needs of existing tenants for the convenience of newcomers. Moreover, gentrification will only serve to accelerate rents for those not displaced but remaining in these neighborhoods. It is crucial to build 100% affordable housing, but not at the expense of destabilizing existing neighborhoods. Thank you.

Erwin, Nicole

From: katezamparelli@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 5:01 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Totally against MultiFamily Housing Ordinance

Our quality of life is getting worse and worse. When I look out my window I feel like 10,000 people are watching me. Neighbors are fighting with each other because there isn't any parking - - and if you think that cars are going away, think again. Traffic has never been worse in MA - - people WILL NOT GIVE UP THEIR CARS AND THEIR RIGHT TO DRIVE. Cambridge can not save the world at our own expense - - - start thinking of our mental health and of our inability to schedule doctor appointments because of overcrowding. Stop destroying our lives. Stop making Cambridge streets more and more unsafe. Wake up. Current residents want to smell the roses too - or at least be able to see the sky. Cambridge is becoming more and more of a depressing dump.

Put your efforts into reestablishing a workable transit system - let the outlying towns pick up some responsibility.

Please and Thank You.

Kate Zamparelli
7 Emmons Place

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ariana Olson <arianaolson419@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:58 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support citywide multifamily zoning

Councilors,

I'm writing a quick note to express my strong support for the current multifamily housing ordinance to be discussed at tomorrow's meeting. Thank you for all of your hard work to get to this point; I'm so excited about the prospect of more multifamily housing being built in Cambridge.

I love Cambridge, but I'm concerned about the high cost of housing. Building more market-rate and inclusive housing will help keep prices in check and encourage more low and middle income people to move here. Denser housing lets more people live closer to their jobs as well, which reduces car dependency. This ordinance could be a huge boon to the health of Cambridge's neighborhoods as a whole if the focus remains on allowing as much new housing as possible.

Cambridge has an opportunity to be a pro-housing leader and set an example for our neighbors. I urge you to do everything in your powers to create both more market rate and inclusive housing.

Thank you,
Ariana Olson
Cambridgeport

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ned Codd <ned@coddsquad.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:56 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Support for Multifamily Housing Zoning Proposal

Cambridge City Councilors-

I wanted to express my strong support for the Multifamily Housing Zoning Proposal. I also wanted to express my gratitude to all the City Councilors who voted to advance the amendments to the original zoning proposal on December 19, 2024.

The zoning rules that would result from the amended rezoning proposal would not be perfect, nor would they give advocates on any side of the issue exactly what they want out of the proposal. However, the amended rezoning proposal would enable significant increase in housing supply, including affordable housing, at the same time that it addresses most of the major issues about building height, setbacks, and inadequate incentive for building affordable housing that were raised with the original MFHZ proposal.

Just because we cannot know with absolute certainty all the outcomes of the Multifamily Housing Zoning Proposal, that should not be an excuse to delay action, or constantly call for further study and analysis. The City's Envision Master Plan clearly endorses upzoning and increased housing supply. The City government undertook a thorough analysis of the anticipated impacts of several different zoning scenarios. Cambridge's resident survey demonstrates that housing affordability is the top concern among city residents.

I know that the City Council has received many emails in opposition to the Multifamily Housing Rezoning Proposal. Those opinions should be recognized and respected, but many of the justifications for opposition -- inadequate infrastructure, impacts to trees and open space, lack of compromise, lack of process -- do not reflect the reality. What are real are the lack of housing, high housing costs, the social costs of the housing shortage, and the environmental costs of pushing development into suburban and rural areas.

It is imperative that the City Council take action on this proposal, and pass a serious rezoning plan before this proposal expires. We don't know all the exact results of this change, but we do know the effects of doing nothing. We will continue to suffer from a housing shortage and out of control home prices. We will continue to see our friends priced out of Cambridge. We will continue to see housing prices rise, and school enrollment drop.

Thank you very much.

Ned Codd
301 Brookline Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Eisenberg, Mark P.,MD <meisenberg@mgb.org>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:54 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Affordable housing bill

Dear Cambridge City Council,

We are Cambridge residents who support the building of more affordable housing units in our city. Our city is fast becoming out of reach as a place to live for people who have grown up in Cambridge or currently work for the city.

We don't want to live in a city with 2 extremes; those who reside in public housing and those in the upper 1% of income.

The current 4+2 proposal will not help alleviate the lack of affordable housing available in Cambridge. It will merely allow for developers to tear down 1 and 2 story residences and replace them with market rate 4-unit buildings.

Our feeling is that all new housing should be required to have affordable units in the building.

The 3+3+3 proposal by Councilor Wilson will do a much better job of increasing the stock of affordable housing in our city.

Yours,

Mark Eisenberg MD and Kristin Guyot JD
243 Concord Ave Unit 14

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Robert Camacho <musicamach@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:43 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

1/7/2025

To: Cambridge City Council, Cambridge City Clerk, City Manager

Re: City-wide up-zoning petition

Apparently, but not surprisingly, many Council members persist in acting as housing agents for everyone in the world except for the citizens of Cambridge.

This trend has continued, ad infinitum ad nauseum. New unsuspecting Cambridge citizens who end up finding themselves squeezed into whatever recklessly constructed, inappropriately suited buildings will, unfortunately, find no "Home, Sweet Home" here.

And that is because, once the sell outs to the Real Estate Developer interests councilors who succeeded in their initial plans to stuff as many people as possible into any ill-planned or no-planned buildings, those new Cambridge citizens will promptly be forgotten.

That will happen because most Councillors will be seeking out more victims for the Real Estate corporate interests the council members actually serve, because they certainly do not represent those of us who live here.

The fiasco now occurring on North Walden St. involving the Winn slab and tunnel project is proof of that. The same councilors who support city-wide upzoning will also support Winn in the North Walden St. area.

Even with Trump being sworn into the Presidency with mottos like "Drill, Baby Drill," I ask "Why are the supposed Council interests in climate change and Global Warming not even mentioned by these councilors?"

It is because these councilors do not support current citizens of Cambridge, nor will they serve new citizens of Cambridge because they serve only the Real Estate Developer business interests of corporate individuals who live safely out of state.

Robert Camacho, Corporal Burns Road, Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Agyeman, Julian <Julian.Agyeman@tufts.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:40 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Supporting Citywide Multifamily Zoning

Dear Council

As a resident of Cambridge for the past 25 years, I'd like to thank the Council for working together on citywide multifamily zoning and to urge you to keep the focus on creating the most housing overall and the most subsidized inclusionary housing.

We can, and must end exclusionary zoning!

Thanks

Julian

Julian Agyeman PhD FRSA, FRGS.
Professor of Urban and Environmental Policy and Planning,
Secondary Professor, Friedman School of Nutrition Science and Policy,
Fletcher Professor of Rhetoric and Debate,
Bromfield-Pearson Hall,
503 Boston Ave,
Tufts University,
Medford MA 02155
USA.

(+1) 617-627-3394

Pronouns: He-Him-His.

[Website](#) | [Wikipedia](#) | [Twitter](#) | [Journal](#) | [Publications](#)

Tufts University's Medford campus is located on colonized Wôpanâak (Wampanoag) and Massa-adchues-et (Massachusetts) traditional territory.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Rick Roth <rick@mirrorimage.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:35 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcGovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

I am a long time Cambridge resident and I love Cambridge. I raised my kids here, six of them attended Rindge.

I STRONGLY OPPOSE the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. I urge you to vote against it.

Please let this expire and start again in the Spring. While the intentions are perhaps good, there are too many loose ends and potential problems as currently written. I think as written we will see evictions, out of proportion housing that ruins neighborhoods, and environmental damage. Affordable housing is a great idea, I do not think this will at all work to create such housing.

I had a large business forced out of town by high prices, and I have kids that would like to live here that can't afford it. I understand affordable housing is a great idea. This is not the answer.

sincerely,
Rick Roth

--

Rick Roth

648 Green Street

Cambridge, MA 02139

cell 617 797 3215

Erwin, Nicole

From: Aaron Greiner <aaronbgreiner@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:30 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In support of multifamily housing ordinance

Hello,

I am writing to express my strong support for the proposed multifamily housing ordinance. This measure is a vital step toward addressing our community's housing affordability challenges while fostering more inclusive and vibrant neighborhoods. Expanding multifamily housing options not only increases access to affordable homes but also supports local businesses and reduces environmental impacts by promoting walkable, transit-friendly communities. I urge you to prioritize this ordinance as a means of creating a more equitable and sustainable Cambridge for all residents.

Best,
Aaron

—
Aaron Greiner
aarongreiner.com
(he/him)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Tom Hoff <t.hoff1313@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:25 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In Support of Multi-Family Compromise

Hello, I am writing in support of the multi-family compromise. I cannot stress enough the importance of this bill to people my age.

I grew up in Cambridge, and have chosen to live here in my adulthood. And I want to settle down here, but I have seen so many of my friends priced out of the city. **Housing costs are astronomical around here, and the only way to meet the demand is to increase the supply of housing.**

In particular, I've seen the diversity of Cambridge decline, at least among people in my age range. We pride ourselves on being a diverse city with many different kinds of people. But not allowing ample housing to be built is antithetical to this mission. Longtime residents, especially of color, get priced out.

And to be frank, I'd argue that many of the people advocating against this bill are the ones who love to brag to their friends about the diversity of Cambridge, and the diverse background of the kids at their child's school, for instance. So my question is this: **Do we want to be a city that preaches progressive ideals, or a city that actually practices them?**

If we let longtime residents who are not rich get priced out, we will lose the sense of community (and diversity) that makes this place so special. I cannot urge you to support this any more.

Thank you for reading and for your work for our great city.

Sincerely,

Tom Hoff
285 Third St.
Apt 825
Cambridge, MA 02142

Erwin, Nicole

From: Van Stee, Elena <evanstee@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:11 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for the multifamily housing ordinance

Hello,

My name is Elena van Stee, and I am a Cambridge resident. I'm writing to express my support for building more housing across Cambridge to increase affordability for all residents. As a graduate student, I know first-hand how difficult it is for students like me to find affordable housing.

Please end exclusionary zoning and pass the multifamily housing ordinance in its current form with no further amendments.

Thank you for the work you have done on this!

Sincerely,
Elena

Elena G. van Stee
www.elenavanstee.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Michael Hoff <hoffmichaelao@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:05 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In Support of the Multi-Family Compromise

I am writing in strong support of the compromise amendment package before the Ordinance Committee. Everyone in the city is aware we need to do something about housing, and I know how much work went into this compromise and I think it will move the ball forward in a meaningful way that will create opportunities for people to live in Cambridge. I grew up here and will be 30 later this year. Most of my friends I grew up with have had to leave, but a lot would come back if they could. And I'd like to stay too!! More options helps everyone and I will be proud to live in a place paving the way for progress on this issue that is the biggest problem my generation is facing.

Sincerely,
Michael Hoff
80 Fawcett St Unit 163

Erwin, Nicole

From: Nancy Wechsler <nanwec@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 4:02 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please reject or revise proposed multifamily zoning

Dear Councillors:

I am writing to ask you to reject or revise the proposed 4+2 multifamily zoning. Although I am a longtime homeowner, I know a number of low-income residents who are struggling to stay in Cambridge. You need to make sure that zoning changes don't harm and actually help low-income residents and that they don't make Cambridge less racially and economically diverse.

The 4+2 zoning will clearly benefit wealthier residents and potential residents at the expense of low-income residents. It is unlikely to produce affordable housing and is likely to displace low-income residents. I could support the 3+3 zoning proposed by Councillor Wilson (and supported by 3 other Council members) because it will lead to less displacement and more affordable housing.

I hope you will take my concerns seriously and center the needs of low-income residents in this zoning process.

Nancy Wechsler

155 Raymond St.

"We who believe in freedom can not rest until it comes"

from Ella's Song by Sweet Honey in the Rock, for Civil Rights activist Ella Baker

Erwin, Nicole

From: Raffi Freeman <raffim@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 3:49 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote YES on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillors,

Thank you for your hard work on the multifamily zoning proposal. I know it has been a long road with many public meetings and protracted process. I think the amendments that have been propose while not ideal, are reasonable in the spirit of compromise, and I look forward to the city council taking leadership for not just the city, but for the state and the nation, with a bold, progressive zoning reform here.

Looking forward to seeing this shepherded through the last final steps and passing soon! This is going to provided long-sought relief for city residents.

Thank you!

Raffi

Erwin, Nicole

From: Wendi Guraziu <wguraziu@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 3:41 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In support of multi-family housing

Hello Council,

My name is Wendi Guraziu. I used to live in Cambridge (and Boston, Brookline, and Somerville, depending on work/school), spending a total of 10 years in the area.

I am in support of the six-story multi-family housing bill and updating zoning to bring more affordable housing to Cambridge. I live in Chicago now, I recently left the Camberville/Boston area because I was bleeding too much money into rent. Over only 10 years, I witnessed the shocking increase in rent, and realized the increase was showing no signs of stopping.

I was one of the very lucky residents with a "stable" desk job. I feel for the many residents who are critical providers of services, hospitality, and culture for Cambridge, working jobs that are necessary to keep the city functioning and beautiful, who are unfortunately undervalued and underpaid.

- I had the opportunity to speak with the co-owner/co-founder of a very prominent bakery chain, who said it's a challenge to find bakers/baristas, simply because wages for those roles means the would-be employees are priced out of living near enough to Cambridge/Boston bakery locations.

- One of the assistant directors of my program at my university tried hard with her husband to bid for a house of their own. They eventually gave up and moved to Philadelphia. She was an asset to the community and a very sad loss for my program and our city.

Now I have joined the exodus. I am paying less for rent now for a 2-bedroom in the heart of downtown Chicago with my partner, than I was paying for the tiniest bedroom in a 4-bed/roommate apartment 35 minutes from downtown Boston on the red line (and that's if the red line was functioning).

This is the sentiment of many young people in the area who plan to leave because of the costs. [This reddit post](#) discusses it and [this WBUR article](#) discusses it (both links discuss Greater Boston in general).

Please don't put the desires of the (loud and) few over the needs of the many.

Thank you,

Wendi

Erwin, Nicole

From: Chris McElroy <cmcelroy52@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 3:38 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councilors and Officials,

With housing being such an important and long term issue, and you know that there is a lot of concern about all aspects of heights, demolitions, free rein to developers and investors for building, loss of green space, adequacy of infrastructure, and general dismay of lots of residents, why not slow this down. I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. Six stories by right all over Cambridge seems like a developer's dream. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you,

Chris McElroy

4 Morrison Ct, Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: andrea simpson <asimps224@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 3:34 PM
To: McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multi-story Rezoning Petition

Dear City Councillors:

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing, and the proposal is extremely divisive. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will create more housing without harming the environment, pushing out lower income residents, demolishing existing homes and transforming cherished neighborhoods for the worse. I believe it is possible to find a housing solution that will be more acceptable to a broader range of Cambridge residents. I urge you to let the current proposal expire and begin again in the spring. Let's get a better solution to the housing crisis!

Thank you for your consideration.

Andrea Simpson
2 Hutchinson Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Skip Schloming <schlomings@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 3:27 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: OPPOSE citywide upzoning

Dear Councilors,

My wife and I strongly oppose the proposed upzoning to allow six-story buildings anywhere in Cambridge (as we understand it).

As sociologists, we want to emphasize that six-story buildings will increase the local population density in every place they are located -- which will interfere with the ability of residents to develop strong personal relationships.

That density will mean more people passing each other everywhere in the vicinity of these buildings: hallways, sidewalks, streets, stores, etc., which will only increase anonymity as people pass more and more people every time they are out of their homes or apartments.

In contrast, the surest way to encourage relationships is to keep the scale of buildings limited and the population density down so that people spend more time in each relationship they have. That is why the historic homes in Cambridge as throughout New England are two-and-a-half and three-story homes with yard space around them.

Do we want Cambridge to move in the direction of a megacity of tall buildings? This proposal only moves in that direction.

Please turn it down or at the very least consider limiting such buildings to the few major corridors in the city.

Thank you for considering our concerns.

Skip Schloming and Lenore Monello Schloming

102-R Inman Street

Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Wentworth, Rand <randolph_wentworth@hks.harvard.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 3:21 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: Vote "No" on Zoning Overlay

Rand Wentworth
Harvard Faculty and President Emeritus of the Land Trust Alliance
19 Brown Street
randolph_wentworth@hks.harvard.edu

Dear Councilors:

I teach at the Harvard Kennedy School, but my first career was as a real estate developer – so I bring that perspective to the debate about the density and affordability of housing in Cambridge.

First, let's be clear about the problem we trying to solve? **Cambridge is already the 5th most dense city** compared to cities our size. I agree with the removal of exclusionary zoning to allow multi-family everywhere in the city. But I do not see how the people of Cambridge would benefit from allowing 4 or 6 story buildings everywhere in the city. That would result in a big increase in luxury housing and a big gift to developers. Let's hire a zoning consultant who could help us find a more nuanced approach to zoning -- like Minneapolis, Portland, Vancouver, and Toronto. Many cities encourage higher density near transit stops and along commercial corridors.

Our greatest need is to create more affordable housing, but **this proposal will not increase affordable housing**. Let's adopt bold incentives that encourage developers to build housing that is really affordable, not designed for people earning \$100-140,000. If this proposal passes, it is unlikely that housing prices or rental rates will go down. We need to redesign the regulations that define what is "affordable housing". Cambridge cannot do this by itself. We need a regional plan to provide affordable housing.

If we are redesigning our zoning, let's be sure to provide **greenspace close to home**. We need a policy that includes public set-backs and city-owned greenspace (community garden, nature playgrounds, connections to greenways, and the protection of mature trees on private land). Access to nature is a racial justice issue. We need to ensure that communities of color have the public health benefits of time in nature (which is associated with decreased Type 2 diabetes, obesity, anxiety, depression, and loneliness.) A study by the Center for American Progress found that Massachusetts was tied for last with Kentucky on access to nature for people of color.

As the Cambridge City Council, considers a new zoning plan, please continue the current policies on design review BZA, CHC or Planning Board, and remove "as of right" language taking away a resident's ability to

pursue legal action. Let's not rush into a misguided plan. This is a once-in-a-century chance to shape the character of Cambridge, and I encourage the Council to vote "no" and take the time to get it right.

Thank you.

Rand Wentworth
Harvard University

President Emeritus
Land Trust Alliance

Erwin, Nicole

From: A Robbart <arobbart@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 3:19 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Cambridge Zoning -- No on 4+2!

Councilors:

I oppose the current 4+2 zoning proposal because:

- It will encourage smaller buildings of 2, 3 story homes to be demolished to build "luxury" 4 story buildings. (And no inclusionary units.)
- People living in those homes will be displaced, with no protections (some of those homes have "naturally occurring affordable housing" -- landlords that rent below market-rate).
- It will drive up the cost of land, already quite high.
- It would create a disadvantage to the non-profit developers that build 100% affordable housing using the Affordable Housing Overlay.

Thank you for abandoning the initial proposal of 6 stories, by right, etc.. But this proposal creates similar problems for low and moderate income people. We don't need to upzone the whole city in such a way that hurts people, in order to change "exclusionary zoning". And, why would you change zoning so that it disadvantages the affordable housing builders?

There is another proposal, likely to be introduced in a later January meeting for 3 stories by right, with 3 additional if inclusionary, and 3 more if 100% affordable. I am more open to this, but want to see the final form.

But first, more regarding the 4 +2 proposal:

Some people in favor, think we need unlimited new market-rate housing in Cambridge, and that simply adding more units will lower the costs of all. I do not agree with this. It's clear that this is not a simple supply/demand problem. The demand here is so high, and the city is so small and already so dense, and, most important: we have such income inequality, that the "market" is never going to solve our affordability problem.

This proposal, like the previous one (6+2), and like the "Missing Middle" proposal of a few years ago, will be big giveaways to developers, and drive up land costs, without much benefit to the city.

Working to be sure that lower income people can remain here, through affordable housing (rent = 30% on income) and "inclusionary units", and vouchers, and other methods, is important to me. Developers building more market rate "luxury" housing here is not at all what we need.

Thank You,
Ann Robbart
55 Alpine St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Phebe Kiryk <pdkiryk@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 3:04 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; City Clerk; Zusy, Catherine
Subject: Representatives of City Government

Respectfully to Those Who Represent Me as a Citizen of Cambridge,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and unaddressed well-founded concerns remaining on the table around the current proposed ordinance to forge ahead and create more housing.

We need outside independent professionals who are experts in city planning, objective third party urban analysts, and external non-partisan representatives of long-term community well-being such as experts in green space, parking, noise control, and historic preservation to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. The Council must absolutely let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring. If this is not executed, the loss of confidence among citizens will be profound and undermine your future effectiveness.

This effort to push through zoning by those who are not in the professional business of city planning with a progressive, comprehensive, forward-thinking vision is unseemly and insulting. It departs from what I've been so proud to say about the high intellect and careful consideration of the governing boards of Cambridge for the past 23 years that we've lived here and raised our family.

Of particular concern and note: I've overheard young adults who live and work in Cambridge discussing their "certainty that "these days" the City of Cambridge governing bodies are corrupt, and are both being paid through the back door (ie: accepting bribes) by developers and contractors" and paying off other interests for their loyalty, as if this was a well-known fact. When I've interjected my dismay and protest to their views, they snicker at me for being old and uninformed. I have to assume you are dismayed too and this should shock you. I implore you to do whatever you need to do, to be visible to our young adults, include them and all non-developer voices, and to disabuse all of us of this depressing and dark view of the future of Cambridge.

You must not proceed with the current proposal.

Best,
Phebe Kiryk
22 Fresh Pond Lane

Erwin, Nicole

From: Louise Ambler <ltoddambler@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 2:41 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

So many issues are at stake that a fresh start should benefit us all.

Sincerely,

Louise T. Ambler

Erwin, Nicole

From: Patrick Reilly <pmgreilly@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 2:21 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: up-zoning residential neighborhoods

Dear Council members,

I honestly couldn't believe it when I first heard about this. It would destroy the aesthetic of Cambridge as well as the lives of homeowners who suddenly found developers building 4+ stories next door without setbacks. A 6 story building needs an elevator for goodness sake, and you would let anyone build that anywhere as a matter of right? You obviously don't care much about the people who own residential property in this city.

I'm outraged that any of you would even consider such a radical proposal.

There are three Cambridge residents of voting age in this house who will be watching carefully to see what position council members take on these issues.

Respectfully,

Patrick Reilly

75 Griswold St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Joe Antebi <joeantebi42@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 1:52 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Joseph Antebi
5 Dunstable Road
Cambridge MA 02138
joeantebi42@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kathleen Moore <kathleensmoore@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 1:29 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: End exclusionary zoning

Dear Members of the City Council,

I am writing once again to strongly urge you to adopt the proposed zoning change; this ordinance is a vital step toward addressing the housing crisis and ensuring our city remains inclusive, equitable, and vibrant.

I thank all of you who have worked so hard on and supported this zoning change, and I'm especially grateful that Councillors Toner and Nolan have engaged with the process and facilitated a compromise that meets so many people's values and vision for the City.

Kathleen Moore

On Tue, Dec 3, 2024 at 3:59 PM Kathleen Moore <kathleensmoore@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Members of the City Council,

I am writing to strongly urge you to adopt the proposed zoning change allowing six-story multifamily housing in Cambridge. This ordinance is a vital step toward addressing the housing crisis and ensuring our city remains inclusive, equitable, and vibrant.

As Jerusalem Demsas, a staff writer at *The Atlantic*, and a housing crisis expert has recently written (<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2024/11/democrat-states-population-stagnation/680641/>) local democracies have too often become "co conspirators in the anti-development aspirations of the very few, at the hefty expense of the many." Anti-growth policies, like exclusionary zoning, not only perpetuate housing shortages and inequities but also pose a significant threat to our national and local political landscape, and should deeply worry us as we contemplate the failures of democrats evidenced in the presidential election outcome.

Your action on multi-family housing is not just about housing policy—it's about the future of our democracy. For years, Democrats have assumed dominance in growing, economically vibrant regions without implementing the bold, effective policies needed to sustain that growth. As Demsas notes, this complacency has contributed to stagnation, driving people to vote with their feet by leaving expensive, exclusionary areas. The ripple effects of these failures are already being felt, with the biggest declines in Democrats' vote share from 2020 to 2024 occurring in the most populous and expensive counties. This threatens our party's viability and the electoral votes that states like Massachusetts contribute to national elections.

By adopting this ordinance, Cambridge can stand as a leader in reversing these trends. Expanding housing options signals that we are serious about tackling the cost-of-living crisis and retaining the people who make our communities dynamic and diverse.

Please vote to pass six-story multifamily housing with no amendments. The stakes are too high to delay action.

Thank you for your leadership on this crucial issue.

Sincerely,
Kathleen Moore

Erwin, Nicole

From: Andrea <acs005@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 12:22 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; Jessie Scanlon
Cc: City Clerk; Coolidge-Hill-community@googlegroups.com; suzanne@ccccoalition.org
Subject: Please Oppose the City-Wide Multi-Story Rezoning Petition

Dear Members of the City Council,

It is clear that there is a need and overwhelming support for more affordable housing in Cambridge. I too would love for Cambridge to have more affordable housing so our teachers, police officers, tradespeople, etc. can live in the communities where they work. But I don't believe the current proposal is going to achieve this and I believe your constituents are being misled. Many constituents chiming in at prior rezoning petition meetings believe your new zoning changes are going to significantly reduce the cost of housing and allow them to be able to remain in Cambridge. They look at initiatives in Austin and Minneapolis and assume that adding 4- to 6-story housing units anywhere in Cambridge will similarly bring housing costs down to a much more affordable level. But this simply is not true in a market like ours. I believe you owe it to your constituents to define in dollars what "affordable" housing will really look like under this proposal. What price per square foot are you looking to accomplish with these zoning changes? And do you have data to support this?

Homes in much or even most of West Cambridge sell for upwards of \$3-5 million. If a developer pays that much to acquire the land, he/she can only profit if they build 4 to 6 stories of luxury apartments and sell them for millions of dollars a piece. In order to maximize profits, developers will try to create as much square footage as possible and build on as big of a footprint as possible, now that very little setbacks are required. He/she will use the roof towards green space to claim as much of the lot as he/she can. Sure a \$2 million condo is more "affordable" than a \$3-5 million house, but this price point is not what your constituents are envisioning when supporting this initiative. At one of the December meetings, I heard from MIT students and young professionals excited at the prospect of truly affordable housing, but this proposal will not get them that.

Demand for housing in Cambridge is just too high to rely on market-based housing policies. The money from biotech, tech, and finance professionals in the Boston/Cambridge area is one driver. But beyond that, it's an international market, with wealthy investors from overseas buying housing for their students studying at our prestigious universities. It's not unlike NYC, where despite incredible population density, housing is far from affordable.

Your current zoning proposal is not going to reduce the cost of housing. In fact, it is likely going to drive property values up, as developers will be willing to pay a pretty penny for a lot on which they can flip luxury condos. And unfortunately, as people sell to

these developers, these new 4 to 6-story structures will eliminate yards, cast shadows, invite more traffic, require parking without the need to build it, and eventually change the entire character of the neighborhood. All without achieving the purpose of creating affordable housing, all just a boon for developers.

And as many other people noted, in pockets of Cambridge where real estate lots are less expensive, developers will be eliminating any naturally affordable housing and replacing it with these luxury buildings, again defeating the purpose of the initiative.

In my opinion, if the City really wants to add affordable housing and not just provide a giveaway to developers, it is going to need to subsidize housing to accomplish this goal. As I've written before, the current plan is window-dressing which is going to permanently harm the character and charm of Cambridge.

I urge you to let the petition run out at its termination date in February and start again in the spring to create a plan that actually adds truly affordable housing to the city and does so without destroying the character, history, and green space that makes this city so special. Adding more affordable housing does not need to be at the expense of this. A more thoughtful plan can achieve both goals in tandem. Your constituents deserve to see a plan that sets forth the real economics of new housing developments so constituents can ensure they bring about affordability. They deserve a plan that does not disregard every settled expectation with regards to setbacks, green space, and shadows.

A drastic change to zoning like the one proposed will do incredible and irreversible harm to this beautiful city without moving the needle on the affordable housing goal.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Kind regards,

Andrea & Ted Killory
151 Coolidge HI

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hunter Aldrich <hunteraldrich@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 12:21 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk

Dear City Councillors:

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you.

Hunter Aldrich
1 Field Street
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Clara Zou <zou.clara@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 12:21 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Planning Board Comment
Subject: Yes Vote: Multi Family Zoning Change (Cambridge)

To the Council,

My name is Clara Zou and I have lived in Cambridge for a year. My history with Cambridge goes back to my childhood when I would spend my summer visiting family. I am emailed to express my support for the six-story multi-family housing bill. I support ending exclusionary zoning and changes to build more housing across Cambridge. I am urging the City Council to adopt the multifamily housing ordinance as written and pass it into law.

This change will provide more inventory and housing options on the market and allow more people to live in this incredible city. I urge you to move forward with legalizing six stories across Cambridge while lessening restrictions on zoning. When my parents went to school here for their PhDs, they also faced restrictions and lived for a few years in their professor's home in order to pursue their education. This is a longstanding issue and I hope that you take stories like mine into consideration.

Very Best,
Clara Zou

Erwin, Nicole

From: Fred Watts <fred_watts@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 12:19 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Stop Exclusionary Zoning!

Dear City Council, Clerk, and City Manager,

I am a Cambridge resident, and I implore the city council to pass the multifamily housing ordinance with the strongest provisions for more housing. I endorse the original version of the ordinance, but I'm willing to accept its recent edits: compromise is a pillar of democracy, and the current version is still an improvement. However, any further watering-down wouldn't be compromise but surrender - a dereliction of duty.

You know the dire state of housing. You know the injustice of how we prosper from stakeholders who can never live here. You know that a little town of detached homes cannot long support great organizations employing thousands. And easing the clamps on only a few streets won't cut it. Our energy and prosperity is a line of credit that will run out unless we radically change the map.

The choice has been thrust upon you: do you want to live in one of the world's great intellectual, cultural, and economic hubs, or do you want *Leave it to Beaver*?

Personally, I left Mayfield. It would be a sad irony if I ended up where I started.

Sincerely,
Fred Watts

Erwin, Nicole

From: Vanessa Pinney <vpinney@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 12:16 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Planning Board Comment
Subject: Support the Six Story Multifamily Housing Ordinance

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Vanessa, and I have lived in Cambridge for two years. I am writing to express my strong support for the six-story multifamily housing ordinance currently under consideration.

This ordinance represents a crucial step toward ending exclusionary zoning and building more housing across Cambridge. By legalizing six-story buildings and reducing zoning restrictions, we can increase housing inventory, alleviate displacement pressures, and ensure that more people can afford to live and thrive in our great city.

Many of my friends have been forced to leave Cambridge due to limited housing options and rising costs. Adopting this ordinance as written will help create a more inclusive and sustainable future for our community.

I urge you to vote yes on this multifamily housing ordinance and help move Cambridge forward.

Thank you for your leadership and consideration. Sincerely,
Vanessa

Erwin, Nicole

From: Emily <zall.emily@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 12:16 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily zoning in Cambridge

I would really like to see Cambridge pass multi-family zoning. I am a software engineer who used to live in Cambridge but the cost of living has become very high and now me and most of my friends and colleagues are living elsewhere.

Erwin, Nicole

From: David Sullivan <davidesullivan77@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 12:13 PM
To: Ned Melanson; City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Re: "As of right" is a crucial piece of ending exclusionary zoning

Dear Councillors,

As another of those awful lawyers, I entirely agree with Ned, my esteemed Brother at the Bar. The problem is not so much the discretionary review by the Planning Board or the BZA, as the opportunity that creates for lengthy, multi-year court appeals -- and there is really no way to prevent that under the state Zoning Act if you get rid of "as of right" permitting. Cambridge needs more homes now, not 10 or 15 years from now. Recent data show that only 47 net new residential units came on market in Cambridge during 2024. As I have previously urged, please ordain the multifamily zoning with the previously proposed compromise amendments soon, and please do not require additional discretionary reviews. Thank you for your consideration.

David E. Sullivan
16 Notre Dame Ave., North Cambridge

On Tue, Jan 7, 2025 at 11:54 AM Ned Melanson <ned@melansonlawgroup.com> wrote:
Cambridge City Council,

There is debate as to whether larger buildings that comply with the proposed zoning changes should still be subject to a formal review process. I strongly urge you to keep the "as of right" language intact for all buildings, larger or smaller, in the ordinance. Subjecting larger complaint buildings to a review process, formal or informal, will dampen the intended effect of the proposed zoning changes--to build more multifamily housing in Cambridge in a reasonable timeframe.

I am a lawyer in Cambridge and went to law school in Boston. I know many lawyers in the area, and they are wonderful, intelligent people dedicated to their clients and their work. They will go to extreme lengths--within ethical and legal boundaries--to serve their clients. They will get creative. If you give the lawyers of Greater Boston an inch, they will find several feet of setback.

In other words, the Council might mean well by requiring some kind of review process for larger buildings, but the actual effect could go way past these intentions. Review processes can be exploited by clever lawyers to delay home construction. Of course, delay can mean death for many projects.

One example of this is in the renewable energy world. We face a climate crisis, yet many progressive states build almost no renewable energy infrastructure. Why? Weaponized environmental and zoning review processes. I want windmills, but not blocking my Nantucket view, or Vermont ski chalet vista, so I hire a Boston lawyer to gum up the review process and delay the project to death. End result? We rely on Texas, king of wind power, to make up for the progressive world's NIMBY slack.

The Council, in these proposed zoning changes, has already put significant guardrails around larger building construction: lots of 5,000 square feet or great and affordable unit requirements. These are the types of buildings we want built. Though my brothers and sister of the Bar might spite me for taking good business away from them, I urge you to keep the "as of right" language intact for all compliant building sizes.

Sincerely,
Ned Melanson
Melanson Law Group
163 Allston Street

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You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "ABC Steering" group. To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to abc-steering+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com.
To view this discussion visit <https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/abc-steering/CAOY6BBDk9uV4WD7e7-dNvHpM8ToLf6ut5xbLBDz4HujTc5BUpQ%40mail.gmail.com>.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carol Weinhaus <carol.weinhaus@outlook.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 12:04 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Council,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing.

A major issue is the impact on the infrastructure (gas, electricity, communications, water/sewer, and other utilities). For example, often large construction vehicles damage the roads and corresponding utilities beneath such as water/sewer. Cambridge has already experienced period of drought with increased household water bills associated with buying water outside the Cambridge system. Residents should be given clear numbers of the impact.

In addition, proposed zoning allows for destruction of trees and greenspace. Cambridge is not New York City or Philadelphia. The current zoning promotes treeless, sunless canyons.

We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Regards,

Carol Weinhaus

Erwin, Nicole

From: Virginia Mcvarish <vamcv@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 12:03 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Calvin Li <likoucalvinhao@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:59 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Planning Board Comment
Subject: Please Vote YES on Cambridge's New Multifamily Rezoning Ordinance

Dear City Council Members,

My name is Calvin Li, and I have been a homeowner in Cambridge for the better part of a decade. I am writing to express my strong support for the six-story multifamily housing bill and to urge you to vote yes to adopt the multifamily housing ordinance as written.

As someone who loves and values this community, I support ending exclusionary zoning and ensuring that we provide more housing across Cambridge. By legalizing six-story developments citywide and reducing cumbersome zoning restrictions, we can create a more vibrant and inclusive community. Increasing housing inventory will prevent displacement of long-time residents and friends and will offer new neighbors the opportunity to live, thrive, and contribute to our city.

Imagine an even richer and more exciting Cambridge—one that remains a center for arts, industry, and education. This is well within our reach if we embrace greater density. Furthermore, a more vibrant city often translates to increased housing values, signaling just how desirable Cambridge can be for people from all walks of life.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I strongly urge you to vote yes on the multifamily housing ordinance so that together we can shape the future of Cambridge as a diverse, welcoming, and flourishing city.

Sincerely,
Calvin Li

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ned Melanson <ned@melansonlawgroup.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:54 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: "As of right" is a crucial piece of ending exclusionary zoning

Cambridge City Council,

There is debate as to whether larger buildings that comply with the proposed zoning changes should still be subject to a formal review process. I strongly urge you to keep the "as of right" language intact for all buildings, larger or smaller, in the ordinance. Subjecting larger complaint buildings to a review process, formal or informal, will dampen the intended effect of the proposed zoning changes--to build more multifamily housing in Cambridge in a reasonable timeframe.

I am a lawyer in Cambridge and went to law school in Boston. I know many lawyers in the area, and they are wonderful, intelligent people dedicated to their clients and their work. They will go to extreme lengths--within ethical and legal boundaries--to serve their clients. They will get creative. If you give the lawyers of Greater Boston an inch, they will find several feet of setback.

In other words, the Council might mean well by requiring some kind of review process for larger buildings, but the actual effect could go way past these intentions. Review processes can be exploited by clever lawyers to delay home construction. Of course, delay can mean death for many projects.

One example of this is in the renewable energy world. We face a climate crisis, yet many progressive states build almost no renewable energy infrastructure. Why? Weaponized environmental and zoning review processes. I want windmills, but not blocking my Nantucket view, or Vermont ski chalet vista, so I hire a Boston lawyer to gum up the review process and delay the project to death. End result? We rely on Texas, king of wind power, to make up for the progressive world's NIMBY slack.

The Council, in these proposed zoning changes, has already put significant guardrails around larger building construction: lots of 5,000 square feet or great and affordable unit requirements. These are the types of buildings we want built. Though my brothers and sister of the Bar might spite me for taking good business away from them, I urge you to keep the "as of right" language intact for all compliant building sizes.

Sincerely,
Ned Melanson
Melanson Law Group
163 Allston Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dean Eckles <eckles@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:48 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Yes on liberalizing zoning

To the City Council,

I am writing to express my support for the proposed liberalization of zoning in Cambridge.

I have been living and working in Cambridge since 2015. My wife and I rent an apartment south of Central Square, and I work at MIT.

Cambridge downzoned much of the city in the 20th century, such that much of our existing housing is too dense to be built today. Cambridge should reverse this exclusionary zoning and allow more dense housing than it does today.

I am in full support of liberalizing residential and commercial zoning throughout Cambridge. Allowing for more housing construction by right will allow Cambridge to welcome and retain residents beyond people who are either exceptionally wealthy or living in subsidized housing.

I support the original ordinance to liberalize zoning, including allowing 6 stories by right. Let's not water down this important policy improvement.

Even as I write this comment, I want to encourage the council not to overweight the voices of the unrepresentative sample of constituents who write lots of emails and show up at public meetings. We had a robust, inclusive democratic process in our elections less than 18 months ago. Housing was a substantial issue in the election, and I would encourage the council to use the mandate from this process to improve land use through liberalizing zoning.

Sincerely,
Dean Eckles
124 Hamilton St, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Eldfors, Samuli <SELDFORS@mgh.harvard.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:40 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Strong Support for Citywide Upzoning to Combat the Climate Crisis

Dear Councillors,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to support the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. Higher-density housing is essential to addressing our housing crisis and combating the escalating climate crisis.

We have all witnessed the signs this year: unseasonal droughts and nearby forest fires poisoning our air with alarming frequency. The current pattern of sprawl and car dependency worsens these challenges by driving emissions and promoting unsustainable land use. Cambridge has a unique opportunity to enable sustainable growth, reduce emissions, and become a national leader in climate-conscious urban planning.

Higher-density housing near transit and existing infrastructure can significantly cut per-capita carbon emissions while providing desperately needed homes. By allowing more people to live close to jobs, schools, and public transportation, we can reduce car reliance and create a more inclusive, resilient community.

Letting this petition expire would be a failure to act in the face of urgent challenges. Delays only perpetuate the environmental harm and housing inequities created by our outdated zoning policies. I urge you to approve the rezoning petition and demonstrate Cambridge's commitment to sustainability, equity, and a livable future.

Sincerely,
Sam Eldfors

203 Concord Turnpike, #1312
Cambridge, MA 02140

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Erwin, Nicole

From: peggy white <pegbwhite@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:33 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for inclusionary housing proposal

I am writing as a West Cambridge owner of a three family house to ask you to please keep the focus on **creating the most housing** overall and the most subsidized inclusionary housing. I recognize the need for more affordable housing in areas that have been historically excluding lower income families. Thank you,
Margaret White

Erwin, Nicole

From: erin hayes <e.hayes.0913@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:19 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Re: Support for Multifamily Housing

Hi,

I support the multifamily zoning petition! The amendments address citizens' concerns while still allowing more homes to be built!

Best,
Erin Hayes

> On Dec 3, 2024, at 2:30 PM, erin hayes <e.hayes.0913@gmail.com> wrote:

>

> To whom it may concern,

>

> My name is Erin Hayes and currently work in Cambridge and have friends living in Cambridge. I am writing to express my support of the six-story multifamily housing bill. I believe that it is very important to expand zoning for six-story buildings in Cambridge in order to lower rent prices and make more housing available. Cambridge has one of the lowest vacancy apartment rates in the area, more housing is needed to accommodate those living here and those trying to move here. I urge you to move forward with legalizing six stories across Cambridge. Thank you!

>

> Best,

> Erin Hayes

Erwin, Nicole

From: Henry Morris <henrylewismorris@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:10 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Housing

Thank you for working together on the citywide multifamily zoning proposal. As a Cambridge resident, I hope you will continue to keep the focus on creating the most housing overall and the most subsidized inclusionary housing.

All the best,

Henry Morris
290 Prospect Unit 3
Cambridge MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bunanta, Susyrati <susyrati_bunanta@harvard.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:06 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: Please oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition

Members of the City Council,

As a Cambridge resident, I am asking you to oppose the proposed revisions to the zoning laws and push for a more comprehensive approach.

I don't believe that this proposal as currently written addresses the problem (like impact to the city infrastructure) and the ripple effects of this proposal, adequately.

- 1 The city infrastructure for this blanket zoning increase. Is there enough parking? Sewer and water capacity? Green Space?
2. Electrical infrastructure capacity - The newly adopted Specialized Stretch Energy Code becomes effective in Cambridge in summer 2023, stating all new construction and major renovations to buildings in the City will be required to be all-electric or wired to transition to all-electric in the future. These 6 stories building will require electric heating (?). Will the grid able to take this load? What is the exact impact on this? Will there be brown out on the rest of the neighbors? Will this be cleaner energy because in the winter the electric grid is not clean at all- the electricity is produced using fossil fuel at the source plus loss of efficiency from transmission. How will the city handle their own code. If air source heat pumps are proposed, what happens to the noise ordinance to the residential neighborhood?
3. Do not remove the review process. Each neighborhood is different with its own characters. The residents should have some input on how the neighborhood is being impacted. This should not be the decision of the developer who has no vested interest in the actual neighborhood.

We are actual residents and tax payers for over 40 years and have invested in our community and appreciate living in such a beautiful environment, we also believe it is our collective responsibility to steward this walkable and well-designed city. Thank you.

Yours,
Susy Bunanta
126 Coolidge Hill

Erwin, Nicole

From: Zachary Goldberg <zackgo@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 11:00 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Against radical upzoning

Dear Cambridge City Council,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,
Zack Goldberg

118 Aberdeen Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: Neil Miller <neilsmiller95@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:57 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for multi-family zoning - helping Cambridge families

Dear City Council,

I strongly support the proposal to end exclusionary zoning and legalize apartment buildings all around Cambridge.

My wife and I got married last summer, after living in Cambridge for four years. We moved away for a year, but now we moved back into the same neighborhood, into a newer building. We hope to stay in Cambridge long-term: my in-laws live nearby, my sister and nephew (soon to be two nephews!) are here too, and my wife's job.

To be able to stay long-term though, we'll probably need to move again. Of course, we'd like to become homeowners at some point, and hope to eventually move into a condo that we own. We also want to live in an accessible building -- so all of our family can visit us -- and one that doesn't have lead, like our first apartment, since we want to start our family here.

There are vanishingly few of these apartments in Cambridge right now, unfortunately. In Cambridgeport, our favorite neighborhood, the only development happening right now are single- or two-family downconversions that cost over \$1.5 million. I wrote about how the current "residence C" zoning contributes to that problem, in case you're interested.

<https://www.wickedlocal.com/story/cambridge-chronicle-tab/2022/02/02/letter-view-my-pearl-street-window/6643361001/>

We don't want to leave Cambridge. We also don't want to risk unhealthy situations for ourselves and our families, which much of the existing housing stock would do.

CDD projects that more than 3000 new homes could be created as a result of this zoning change. When you take your vote, think of those 3000 families, the joy and life they will bring to our community.

Sincerely,

Neil Miller

425 Mass Ave.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ginna Donovan <ginnadonovan@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:54 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: upzoning

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Ginna Donovan
1 Malcolm Rd.
Cambridge 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: eunice williams <euniceanastasia@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:41 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Erwin, Nicole

From: John Trever <johntrever@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:22 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Radical Up-zoning Proposal

Councillors,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Cordially,
John Trever
156 Richdale Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: Nella LaRosa-Waters <nella75@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:10 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillor - As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Erwin, Nicole

From: James Hutchison <cobra3327@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:06 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,

James M. Hutchison
88 Sparks Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Piret, Jacqueline <j.piret@northeastern.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:06 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillor - As Cambridge residents, we strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Jacqueline Piret
Joe Sullivan
79 Upland Rd
Cambridge MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Michal Regunberg <mregunberg@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 10:02 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely, Michal Regunberg, 449 Franklin Street

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Martin Braun <mjbraun4@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:59 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Supporting Citywide Multifamily Zoning

Hello,

I am writing to register my support for citywide multifamily zoning in Cambridge. Reducing restrictions on building multifamily housing is a critical component of addressing Cambridge's housing affordability crisis. Thank you all for working together on this issue.

Best,
Martin

Erwin, Nicole

From: Will Queen <willqueenphd@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:49 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for Citywide Multifamily Zoning

To the council,

Hi, I'm Will Queen - my wife and I live in Somerville and frequent Cambridge. I am writing to thank you for working on increasing housing supply, and express my support for the current amendment package for the Citywide Multifamily Zoning topic.

An increase in housing supply is desperately needed in this area, and zoning beauracracy has been its main blocker. By passing the amendment (to be clear - the one that allows 4 story by right, and 6 story under the specified conditions), Cambridge can provide more affordable housing, allow population growth to support local businesses, and set an example to neighboring towns.

I urge you to pass this amendment. Thank you,

Will

Erwin, Nicole

From: Steven Miller <semiller48@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:47 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for Continuation of Multifamily Housing Zoning Proposal

Dear Councillors:

I know that you have been studying this issue and this proposal for a long time. It is time to make some commitments. I am writing to express support for the current, much-amended and much compromised, Multifamily Housing Zoning Proposal, to urge you to pass it.

As amended, the Proposal addresses all of the previously raised complaints about height, setback, and incentives for including affordable housing. Of course, there is no way to know every detail about how this new law and regulations -- or any action by any public or private actor -- will affect every future development. But we can make pretty accurate general predictions. And those predictions, coming from a variety of sources, indicate that passage will move us towards our city's housing goals.

There are several important public process lessons that, I think, emerge from this lengthy and overly histrionic debate. The first lesson is that demanding that a public policy proposal be refined until it gets total support from everyone is simply a cover for those who are absolutely opposed to something to block it entirely by insisting that no compromises have been offered unless the result is total agreement with their demands. The second lesson is that we have to be explicit that, even in Cambridge, we can't have it all -- that everything, including doing nothing, has a cost and it's pure hypocrisy to claim to be in support of a goal but to oppose anything that would impose any trade-offs.

Thanks for all the work you're doing on this issue and I hope you all are now able to agree to move the proposals forward.

Steven E. Miller
92 Henry St.
[Movement Voter Project](#), volunteer
350 Mass

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jeanne Petropoulos <jnp14@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:38 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Upzoning

Dear City Council,

Best to really think through the rezoning options and how best to proceed. We shouldn't ruin the fabric of the city by creating canyons of high rise buildings to accommodate everyone who wants to live in Cambridge. When there is no room people find other solutions. Cambridge is not the only city/town in MA for those who must stay in this region. Also it is my understanding that these tall buildings need not have parking. A big mistake if this is true. I had thought the law was changed many years ago to require parking availability for any new construction. Going back on that law is a huge mistake since parking is such a trial for those who must find on street parking. Also how much of this rush is based on accommodating illegal immigrants? Already we have seen increases in property tax rates and real estate taxes; is this related to illegals??? Who is advocating for those who have lived in/supported Cambridge for many years!!!!??? Are we the forgotten ones???

As CCC suggested I also add: "As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring."

Thank you and let's make 2025 a Happy Year!

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ty Wilson <twilson2011@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 9:15 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please support multifamily housing

I'd like to strongly encourage the council to move forward with the current proposal to allow multifamily housing in all Cambridge neighborhoods.

Like two thirds of Cambridge residents I'm a renter. My family and I love it here in Cambridge, but we're always looking over our shoulder wondering if rents will continue growing and we'll be forced to leave. We have a proposal that could make a big impact, possibly even on the scale of what we see in Austin, TX - which is in the process of seeing falling rents due to more supply of multifamily housing!

Change can be scary and I'm sure you're hearing from some folks concerned about change or that have just heard about the proposal. Keep in mind that each year you do a survey, and each year you see the rising cost of housing at the top of the list of issues. Please don't let the loud voices of a proportionally small group of homeowners sway you from what most Cambridge residents want - policies that address the cost of housing!

You've been thoughtful and show your ability to compromise in a way that addresses concerns while still making a difference. Please continue in that spirit.

Thank you,
Ty Wilson
55 Plymouth St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Winifred Stopps <cloverstopps@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 7, 2025 7:54 AM
To: City Clerk
Cc: Hayes, Patrick; Nolan, Patricia
Subject: Ordinance Committee January 8 Meeting Written Comment

Dear City Clerk Diane LeBlanc:

Please circulate this letter to the members of the Ordinance Committee in advance of tomorrow's meeting and include in the committee report.

Thank you,
Winifred Stopps

Winifred Stopps, FAIA
9 Adams Terrace
Cambridge, MA 02138

To the members of the Ordinance Committee:

I am an architect living in Mid-Cambridge; I work with zoning every day. In the on-line discussions of the Council's current work to increase affordable housing in Cambridge, "zoning" has become synonymous with "exclusionary zoning" – which protects certain areas from intensive residential uses.

However, zoning began with concerns of life safety – how to prevent disease and fire. In this current planned zoning change, we do not want to increase the risk of fire to Cambridge residents. My Mid-Cambridge neighborhood is densely packed with flammable wood triple-deckers lined along narrow streets and extending into dead end terraces which are often choked with cars.

The most recent iteration of the zoning change would permit six-story buildings in all areas of Cambridge as long as two of the stories were affordable housing. However, six-story buildings should not be built on the narrow streets and dead-end courts of these densely packed residential neighborhoods where a fire in the new construction can easily spread to neighboring wood structures. A six story building is almost as high as a seven story high-rise. It has most of the same fire-fighting challenges as a high-rise – with none of the high-rise life safety features. There may be people on upper floors with limited mobility who depend on the elevator to exit; an elevator that cannot be used in case of fire. In order to effectively fight a fire in a six story building, the fire truck needs a wide street to set up and brace the vehicle in order to extend the ladders. A three or four story building is much easier to access and the inhabitants can exit via stairways.

Only four-story buildings should be built on narrow residential streets. However, much higher construction could be allowed along the broad main streets with good fire truck access. The comparison studies show that this approach would yield a similar amount of affordable housing.

I hope that Cambridge will not put the lives of Cambridge residents at risk with this new zoning change. Please limit new structures on narrow residential streets to four stories while allowing up to eight stories on the wider streets of transit corridors and squares.

Winifred Stopps, FAIA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Saj-nicole Joni <saj@camix.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 7:08 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a long time Cambridge resident (I've been a homeowner in Cambridge since 1980), I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

The planning board appears to have made a decision prior to the public forums and that the public forums have been well short of a discourse to refine what appears to be a pre-ordained decision.

Relative to the issue at hand, I think we can all agree this is a significant issue with the possibility of many nuances and unforeseen consequences. It would appear that the city should have a phased approach that allows everyone to learn, iterate and refine and come out at the end of the tunnel with a more thought through solution - rather than the one size fits all proposal currently being contemplated. Perhaps this entails enabling the first 5-10 of these types of developments in the next 12-18 months, focusing on large parcels of land that are currently not in use (i.e. a developer could purchase that land - former site of Matignon High School for example), and/or creating more limitations (setbacks, size, limiting height to the current height, eliminating certain areas that reflect the architectural uniqueness of the city...).

We are concerned that developers that have no real vested interest in the city - most of them I assume do not live in Cambridge - have been consulted and are partially driving the recommendation. Similarly, I am surprised that the city has not required developers that have built commercial space to incorporate multi-use (including residential) into their plans and development. In some sense the city has created this problem by not requiring developers of the commercial properties to also be part of the housing solution as has been the case in many other cities (i.e. Battery Park in New York City under the auspices of the Battery Park Authority). Perhaps this is a better starting point for new large scale commercial development.

Once again, I appreciate the focus on increased housing but strongly urge the council to take a more measured approach. While originally from Oakland (CA), I have lived in Cambridge for over a decade and believe I speak for many that reside in my neighborhood and the city of Cambridge.

Please vote NO and do not approve the proposed revisions to the zoning laws. Instead, let's work together for a more suitable and comprehensive approach to solving the need for more housing.

Thank you,

Saj-nicole Joni
170 Coolidge Hill

Saj-nicole Joni, CEO Cambridge International Group Ltd.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jonathan Cohen <jonpcohen@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 6:13 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily zoning

I'm a resident of 22 Water St in East Cambridge.

I'm writing to express gratitude to the city council for coming to a compromise that addresses multiple stakeholders' concerns voiced over the past several years of this process. It is my sincere hope that the council will approve this measure in order to increase the availability of housing options. It is important to do so without introducing additional delays or barriers.

Thank you,
Jonathan Cohen

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bernice Buresh <b.buresh@me.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 6:12 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillor - As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Please go back to the drawing board on this to make sure the outcomes are positive for existing and new residents and environmentally sound.

Respectfully,

Bernice Buresh
140 Upland Road
Cambridge MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Karen Klein <kklein@brandeis.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 6:06 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

I am a longtime resident of Cambridge since 1990 and as a very senior citizen, age 88, have given up my car. As a result, I take UBER, LYFT, and sometimes have a regular driver. Not driving the vehicle I'm in gives me many opportunities to look at the Cambridge neighborhoods as my driver takes good care of the driving.

Cambridge neighborhoods are beautiful, varied, and show that those who own or rent their spaces care deeply about how the house exterior and property are kept. As my driver took me from West Cambridge into North Cambridge getting over into Somerville, I was delighted to see the lovely variations in the homes and the well kept yards or plantings, if there were any. Not all of these homes were mansions. Far from it, they were modest, sometimes two or three family buildings. What made them a neighborhood was the reasonably uniform height and more traditional designs of the houses to fit in with those already in the particular block for years. Not all the homes were alike. Far from it, but the shared dimensionality and height with minor variations and home design made these neighborhoods feel thoughtfully unified. There was a racial and economic mix in the different neighborhoods we went through—I knew this from knowing about these neighborhoods, not from observing the homes—and all had the same 'feel'.

Then the shock came. Down one block, I forget the name of the street, but many of you may recognize what I describe, I saw a single home, possibly an apartment building which stood out like a sore thumb. The building was, if I remember, about 6 stories. Its outer appearance was a modernest rectangle. If it had been designed and built in a neighborhood with more buildings like it, it would have been pleasing to see. But its placement among all the other homes was like the Ugly Duckling among Swans. This neighborhood, mind you, was not West Cambridge or other fancy places. It was all well-kept, but modest in size and additions to windows, paint color, etc. were similar with pleasing variations. What a shame, I thought, that this neighborhood where folks who obviously take pride in keeping their houses and small yards, if they have them, in good shape. Who on earth allowed this new building to happen?

I know I sound like an old fuddy-duddy. But I do believe that good city planners, urban designers, can find ways to integrate newer structures, add to old structures to increase our very needed housing stock. It just takes investment in city planning thoughtfully and not letting need drive hasty decisions, but also considering all the factors that make a cohesive neighborhood by design. To some of you that may seem a plea to exclude difference. It is not. All the residents may be of different races, ideologies, religions, ethnic origins, etc. But they can and do constitute a neighborhood. Let's make that as clear as we can through thoughtful, good design and advance planning. We now live in the age of Screens:TV, computer internet sites, etc. Outward appearance, from wherever you come, is important; we have become a visual culture.

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

With all best wishes, confidence in your combined good judgment, and my thanks,

Karen Klein

416 Mount Auburn

Erwin, Nicole

From: Eoin Lazaridis Power <elpower17@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 5:55 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for Citywide Multifamily Zoning

Dear Cambridge City Council,

I'm writing to communicate my strong support for the two Multifamily Zoning Petitions on the docket this Wednesday, and to express my thanks for the Council's work on the proposals to-date.

I was born and raised in the area and just moved back with my wife and a baby on the way. It was difficult to find an affordable option in Cambridge, so we experienced firsthand the challenges that stem from constraints on the housing supply. Significantly increasing the number of housing units that get built in Cambridge is the only way to ensure Cambridge will continue to flourish, and to ensure that families like mine can continue to call Cambridge home.

Thank you again for the work on the proposed zoning changes so far, and I look forward to seeing them enacted later this year. In the meantime, happy new year!

Regards,
Eoin Power
67 Ellery Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gordon Moore <hugmoore183@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 5:40 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Submitted for Ordinance Committee meeting on January 8,2025I
Attachments: Arguments about right of review final 1-8-25.docx

Comments for Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition Part One
Please include these in the Council materials for the
meeting. Thanks,
Gordon

To: Ordinance Committee Meeting about Multifamily citywide Neighborhood zoning petition on 1/8/25 at 5 PM

From Gordon Moore, 9 Rutland St.

Subject: Understanding the tradeoffs between as-of-right and required review of proposed citywide multifamily zoning changes in residential areas

- *I propose an amendment removing the as-of-right sections in Petition 1 and substituting “any development over base zoning of four floors in residential areas should be treated as a variance and require a special permit with binding review”.*

Reasons for an amendment to replace the proposed as-of-right permitting:

- Consistency: With all base zoning except the AHO overlay, it has been practice for decades to consider an exception to any of the criteria in the base ordinance to be a variance requiring a special permit.
- As of right, as initially proposed in association with the petition for six story development was redundant, since it was de facto awarded as a condition associated with the proposed change in base zoning. It would of course be as of right, as any zoning ordinance is intended to most efficiently do permitting. Now with four stories, as of right goes along with the four story base zoning. However, the additional two stories are now a very different matter. They are a departure, no matter how good or bad the reasoning is about the purported benefits, from the base requirements and therefore in zoning law should be considered a variance. To make it as of right will now make it a taking that was, in effect, rejected by the Council when it turned down the initial six story height proposal. In other words, as of right did fit with base zoning with the initial proposed six stories of residential housing but now as-of-right is a significant change, and doesn't fit, as applied to the two story bonus.
- But by allowing two additional stories beyond base as-of-right, the rights of affected citizens to have a just hearing of their concerns is taken away. Many proposed projects, small and large, may cause displacement, disruption, decreased property value, or other injury. The right to a fair and

just hearing is taken away. This is taxation without representation, a fundamental right in the USA. It should not be taken away in Cambridge.

- Over many years, special permitting has been a mechanism to bring developers and affected citizens together. The vast majority of these formal interactions in the Planning Board or Board of Zoning Appeal have led to improvements and acceptance by both parties.
- Cambridge residential areas are widely diverse at local levels. The Council has rejected a blanket six stories except in the special case of enhancing low income units. Still six stories is still six stories. Not all locations are appropriate. Building these in the right spot is necessary to facilitate appropriate urban design. Forcing inappropriate designs without review into neighborhoods will lead to a degradation in urban character, one of the goals of the Envision Report.

Responding to the arguments put forth by those who support keeping as-of-right

- There are two arguments that have been put forward as reasons not to require a mandatory review process. These are: first, requiring a review will discourage developers from choosing the two story inclusionary unit bonus, and second, that a side effect of the review process is that it will lead to legal actions against the City.
- The argument that a mandatory review would deter developers
 - Hearsay is that two or three developers have told Councilors that requiring a special permit type of review would stop developers from pursuing the two plus floors with affordable units.
 - I have been mulling over that assertion. I was thinking that most developers I know are profit motivated. Personally, I am a market guy and I have no problem with that thinking. My reflection is that if a developer can make a profit, they will do it. If it is a project that fits in its surroundings and makes a profit, a developer is going to make the calculation that it would sail through a review, since most do. In my modeling (see Appendix One for your review), the worst case assumption would reduce new units produced by 1.5% of the target of 12,500 units by 2030. This is a trivial reduction in units. So the advantage of as of right in producing more units is, at most, quite

small, especially when compared with the high level of anger among citizens for losing their right of review.

- Moreover, the developers who would be stopped by a review are most likely those who anticipate trouble and added costs in the review process. What projects are they? They would be the projects where the six stories don't fit well in the proposed location and where they would anticipate resistance.
- I agree that a review would deter them. BUT, aren't these exactly the developments that the city would want to be deterred? Where staying at four stories was the proper decision for all concerned? And do bad developers need to be protected from their mistakes and bad business judgment? Not in my book.
- I keep wondering why that kind of brake on bad projects isn't actually in the public's best interests. And that you would agree that the public interest is what you, and your fellow Councilors, do care about.
- The argument that mandatory review would lead to legal actions and suits against the City
 - This claim has been hearsay. I have seen no evidence describing such action nor any analysis about what its expected impact would be if it were to occur. I have asked the City Solicitor for any concrete examples of such a suit and its outcome (if the City won or lost. In the latter case, it would argue the suit was justifiable). The Solicitor responded by saying "Planning Board and BZA decisions are appealed periodically. You may search the public court records to find those cases." Councilors should request the evidence and its impact should be measured against the benefits of review as outlined earlier.
- My bottom line is that the four plus two option creates a material change in petition 1 with regard to the applicability of as-of-right, with the possibility of significant damages to affected residents who lose their right to a fair and just review. I believe that a review process is now more appropriate and the petition should be amended to remove as-of-right except as it naturally comes as part of the proposed new base zoning as proposed in the amended petition.

- **Proposal**

- I request that an amendment be proposed removing the as-of-right sections in Petition 1 and substituting **“any development over base zoning of four floors in height in residential areas should be treated as a variance and require a special permit with binding review”**.

Appendix One

Planning criteria for the issue of ‘as-of-right.

1. Modeling of how many housing units are lost by 2030 by reinstating right of review for the 2 story IZ bonus to six stories

- a. Insert the six residential scenarios by 2030 and compare 5 and 6.
- b. Comparison of 4 story ‘as of right’ with 4 +2 bonus with IZ with right of review.
 - i. According to CDD, there would be 590 units in additional housing if 4+2+ IZ were implemented as of right
 - ii. If 4+2+IZ were allowed only with binding review (special permitting or some equivalent), the worst case would be a loss of 590 units or 11% contribution to closing the shortfall. But this overstates the damage.
 - iii. However, we can model this, since it is obvious that review will let a large proportion of those through if developers work with the neighbors and propose sensible six story developments.
 1. Assume that the presence of a review process will deter 25% of developers from developing a 4+2+IZ plan
 - a. These would include a high proportion of questionable proposals, some of which would end up being inappropriate by urban design criteria and neighbor acceptance) and very angering and upsetting to affected abuters.
 - b. 25% of 590 = 148 drop out and their proposed units are lost
 2. 442 units are submitted by developers for review

- a. Assume that 80% are approved easily and without contention, because the developers have anticipated the contentious ones and stayed away because of the cost
 - b. $.8 \times 442 = 354$ units that are given permission to build.
 - c. 20% go to a disputed special permit review = 88
3. Of the 88 that are disputed and reviewed,
- a. $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ are settled for the developer = 29 units permitted
 - b. $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ are settled for the abutters = 0 units permitted
 - c. $1/3^{\text{rd}}$ go to more intense mediation
 - i. After negotiation, half those proposals are agreed between the parties, are settled, and 15 units are permitted.
 - ii. After negotiation, half are blocked from development and cannot agree terms
 - iii. The special review enables abutters and developer to present their point of view, suggest mediation, modify the proposal so that the process ends up with 50% going with the developer and 50% going with abutters. $50\% \times 29 = 15$ units are permitted.
 - 1. Of those 15 permitted, at most a “handful of court cases” might be lodged by angry residents adding up 2-3 over 6 years before 2030. This is discoverable and we could use actual special permits disputes to determine the percentage that led to court filings and revise my projection of at most two or three.
 - iv. 15 units would be denied from permitting.

4. 398 units are approved to develop under a required special permit for all proposals.
5. 590-398 =192 housing units are lost in the process.
6. Yes, this will add some time to the developers' process especially for the controversial ones, but it is a model process that can be seen as fair and just.
7. $192/5500 = 3.5\%$ **loss in makeup units to close the gap because of project review**
 - a. Or $192/12,500 = 1.5\%$ are lost from the 2030 target.

iv. The effect of "as of right" in neighborhoods is vanishingly small on the number of units likely to be built under the 4+2 model.

2. Estimating the Impact of 'as of right' on short-term social disruption and long term integration and community building.

1. Placing low income housing units side-by-side with middle and upper income renters and owners is a bold move to eliminate implicit red lining. It is a new model for Cambridge and nationally.
 - c. Barriers to success are short term anger, fear, displacement, lowered property value and disruption
 - d. Long term effects of hangovers of anger and division driving citizens apart rather than together in integration, neighborly behavior, community-building, caring, vibrancy, and interdependence.
2. Anger and resistance are sharply focused. 90% of resident anger is caused by absence of right of review. Residents are frightened of disruption, displacement, and immediate changes to the value and design characteristics of their neighborhoods. In change models, the opportunity to be heard, listened to, and to make your points is critical to acceptance and teamwork (Justice As Prelude to Teamwork.."- DelBecq). If people feel they have not been heard, they experience a change as unjust and unfair. Without right of review, residents will be angry over 'taxation without representation.'

The expansion of low income housing is feeling like the 'winner' right now and at the 12/23 council meeting. Removing right of review for this small number of additional units feels a bit punitive. This sets up long term competing and continued warfare or citizen apathy at a time when we need forgiveness and engagement, working together to make this new model work.

3. **The current proposal to make the add-on of 4+2+1Z 'as of right' adds a very small amount of housing for the maximum in anger and disruption, both short and long term.**

A draft for a Councilor to say at meeting on 1/8/25

These petitions are a historic 'win' for increasing affordable housing for low income Cambridge residents. For the first time, low income housing will sit side by side with middle and upper income renters and owners. The number of units created in this model may at first be a very small percentage of the target for the 2030 goal. However, the precedent this sets is huge. We Councilors should celebrate this achievement, as should every Cambridge citizen.

However, for a very small increment in housing units, the price being paid in anger and resentment among the very people these low income residents will live next to is inordinately large. And this anger is generated by a fear of buildings that might dwarf their neighbors, but mostly at the frustration of having their right taken away to a review of a change that raises fears of disruption, displacement, and encroachment being taken away. This is felt by many citizens to be 'taxation without representation.' It will make them resist this historic breakthrough and dash the hope of social integrity we need to make this new model work.

Fellow Councilors!!!! This is a time for the winners to offer conciliation not disregard. It wouldn't take much to make the two extra stories subject to an impartial review, to give neighbors a chance, at least, to feel that they have an opportunity to express their point-of-view and have it listened to.

Don't miss this opportunity to set this off on the right foot. Vote to amend the petitions to enable citizens being faced with a direct implementation of the two additional stories with inclusionary housing to be able to present their case and be heard in a process that is felt as fair and just.

I move that proposed additions to the base four story C-1 zoning (such as the two story bonus with inclusionary units) require a binding review through a mechanism such as special permits or an equivalent to be determined.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Abby Zanger <abby.zanger@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 5:38 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Representatives to the City Council,

As a Cambridge residents, We strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Just to add, we live next door to a property purchased by a foreign national who has built out to a three apartment "hotel" that at one point had 16 illegal (against zoning) Air B and B beds!!! She still rents rooms and is not in residence (against code). It's noisy!!! They have vastly expanded their asphalt surfaces (without permitting). It's just not beneficial to our environment or our city character. We do not want to see this happen all over Cambridge, pushing out low income renters, hurting our environment, and disrupting our peaceful enjoyment of our city. There must be better solutions. Allow this petition to lapse please.

Abby Zanger and Roy Tishler
207 Grove Street
Cambridge, MA

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Charles Merrill <cc_merrill@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 5:38 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
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Thank you,
Charles Merrill
540 Huron Ave
Cambridge Ma 02138
Get [Outlook for Android](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sandra Spanier <sspanier02138@outlook.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 5:34 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

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I appreciate the need for more multi-family housing citywide but this proposal is in effect for luxury housing with no affordable units added, instead it will lead to McMansions. This plan will make housing for everyone in Cambridge more expensive, not less. The Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely, Sandra Spanier

Erwin, Nicole

From: Rosengarten, Michael D <rosengar@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 5:32 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

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Michael Rosengarten
rosengar@fas.harvard.edu
104 Hancock Unit 6
Cambridge Ma 02139
617 650 5002

Erwin, Nicole

From: Elizabeth Phelps <liz.phelps@nyu.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 5:32 PM
To: City Clerk
Cc: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Subject: Re: [CoolidgeHill] Don't Let Developers Write the Zoning Laws

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Elizabeth Phelps
115 Coolidge Hill

On Mon, Jan 6, 2025 at 2:34 PM Jessie Scanlon <jessiehscanlon@gmail.com> wrote:

Members of the City Council,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We truly need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. I know that the council members supporting this petition believe that they are solving the housing problem in Cambridge. But I don't believe that the council has thought through the problem, and the ripple effects of this proposal, adequately.

I would like to remind the council members of their decision to improve bicycle safety by making Garden Street one-way. The decision came from the right place — a desire to make our streets safer for bicyclists. Ultimately, the change ended up having an unplanned and negative impact on overall safety, by pushing traffic to roads never intended to serve that number of cars. I commend the council for its recent decision to make Garden a two-way street again. It would be far more difficult, if not impossible, to undo the damage of the up-zoning petition were it to pass. I urge the council to let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring with the goal of developing a plan shaped by experts in urban planning.

This brings me to the second problem with the proposal: the powers so eagerly pushing for its passage are NOT urban planners. They are REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS. Their interest is NOT in making Cambridge a thriving city for its growing population. Their interest is in making money. Like the private equity firms who have made a bundle developing East Cambridge without solving the cities affordable housing challenges. They are not interested in solving housing issues in Cambridge.

I heard from neighbors who attended the previous meeting how bullying and belittling these “up-zone now” voices were. They made fun of people who expressed concern about tree canopy. They painted those who oppose the change as “people who want to keep their gated communities.” Who are these loud voices? Have they ever been to Cambridge? Because anyone who knows Cambridge, knows that Cambridge residents do not live in or want to live in gated communities. No one who wants to live in a gated community moves to Cambridge. We appreciate the bustle and diversity of our city. We are not afraid of density. What we do NOT like are wolves in sheep's clothing. And that is who the people behind the up-zoning proposal seem to be. They are big money interests who care about big money — not about

helping Cambridge grow in a way that is best for all of the city's residents. I urge you not to be side with the loudest voices. Think this through.

Best,

Jessie Scanlon
5 Coolidge Hill Rd

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You received this message because you are subscribed to the Google Groups "Coolidge Hill Community" group.

To unsubscribe from this group and stop receiving emails from it, send an email to coolidge-hill-community+unsubscribe@googlegroups.com.

To view this discussion visit <https://groups.google.com/d/msgid/coolidge-hill-community/F5A6C724-2FD9-424A-B2DE-9DD7BE291CA4%40gmail.com>.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Charles Merrill <cc_merrill@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 5:26 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Jim Gray <james.h.gray@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 5:19 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; Jim Gray
Subject: Up-zone with care for all (let this PO expire, and improve the next)
Attachments: Jim Gray Upzoning letter 1-6-2024.pdf

Hi all,

I cannot attend and comment tonight, so please see my thoughts below and attached.

Best Regards,

Jim

Jim Gray
2 Michael Way
Re: Multifamily Zoning
1/6/2024

Dear City Council,

Before making irreversible changes with a wide range of planned and unintended consequences, please consider the following.

1. If the goal is affordable housing, build affordable housing.
2. Focus on squares and corridors where public transportation exists.
3. Consider wider system impact: e.g., please fix the traffic issues before multiplying the problem.
4. Make small changes carefully when you are trying to create more housing by manipulating the market, which will have major impact on current residents and will inevitably include unintended consequences.
5. Consider more inclusive community processes to engage all stakeholders and perhaps discover more win-win approaches (e.g., the [Cortico.ai community listening](#) processes)

Sincerely

Jim Gray

Jim Gray
2 Michael Way
Re: Multifamily Zoning
1/6/2024

Dear City Council,

Before making irreversible changes with a wide range of planned and unintended consequences, please consider the following.

1. If the goal is affordable housing, build affordable housing.
2. Focus on squares and corridors where public transportation exists.
3. Consider wider system impact: e.g., please fix the traffic issues before multiplying the problem.
4. Make small changes carefully when you are trying to create more housing by manipulating the market, which will have major impact on current residents and will inevitably include unintended consequences.
5. Consider more inclusive community processes to engage all stakeholders and perhaps discover more win-win approaches (e.g., the Cortico.ai community listening processes)

Sincerely
Jim Gray

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alfred DIsidoro <ajdisidoro@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:54 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Al DIsidoro
69 Sixth Street
Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pat Sekler <m.p.sekler@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 5:35 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: NO to Citywide Upzoning Petition

I am not in favor of the current proposal for the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. It is far too simplistic.

Imagine, for instance, you have spent most of your life savings on owning a dwelling (still with a long-term mortgage) and have even made the effort to be up-to-date with the recommendations for coping with climate change and have installed, at considerable expense, sun collectors on your roof. You have been told that over time the expenditure will be more than compensated for. Now, suddenly, one tears down your neighbor's house that had been in scale with yours and a new building within five feet of your property goes up, taking away your sunshine, your privacy, your fresh air, and your sense of security in case of fire.

Cambridge, of all places, with its world-renowned schools of architecture, landscape architecture, planning, and urban design surely can do better in such a quality of life matter. People acquire properties not just for the square footage but for the surrounding ambiance. To have the ambiance suddenly changed by law would be the same as though a human partner, having taken marriage vows, a month later decided to change his or her vow. Would the quality of that marriage last? Or would it soon be in shambles. This is just what can occur in Cambridge. Slums don't just happen. They are built.

Respectfully submitted,
Patricia Sekler

Erwin, Nicole

From: Marilyn Frankenstein <Marilyn.Frankenstein@umb.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:49 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily zoning proposal before Council

Hello City Councillors:

I'm writing as a 40+ year home owner resident of Cambridge to support the position of the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition, also supported by Cambridge NAACP leaders in opposition to the multifamily zoning proposal before Council.

I agree with their analysis that the proposed zoning would incentivize more very expensive market-rate housing, displace low and moderate income residents, and provide insufficient incentives for producing affordable housing.

When rent control was abolished, Cambridge lost many people who added greatly to our diversity along many demographic lines, particularly economic. This was a shame and this proposal will increase that unfortunate decline. Many 4-story exclusively market-rate projects will be constructed, unaffordable to low wealth families.

Further, I support the Cambridge Housing Justice Coalition's proposal for a municipal voucher program that will enable low wealth households to be able to afford the inclusionary units. I would like to see my city come up with many programs to ensure we have mixed income housing throughout Cambridge.

Sincerely,
Marilyn Frankenstein

Erwin, Nicole

From: Judith Taylor <jlt99@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:44 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.
Pleeezzz slow downMUCH more needs to be done to address housing issues! VOTE NO

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Daniel Penrice <dpenrice@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:38 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Councillors:

Although, as the owner of a multi-family house in a neighborhood of multi-family houses in North Cambridge, I am in favor of the development of multi-family housing citywide, I strongly oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition. I urge you to let this proposal expire so that the city can begin developing a better researched, more carefully considered plan.

The current 4+2 proposal is a huge roll of the dice with the potential for serious adverse consequences completely antithetical to its stated purpose. The most likely consequence will be the demolition of existing “naturally occurring affordable housing” and its replacement by four-story, exclusively market-rate projects. This will likely result, as far as I can see, in the displacement of low- and middle-income residents of the city with no gains in terms of inclusionary development. Meanwhile, neighborhoods that are already crowded and/or overburdened with cars will see a diminishment of their quality of life in exchange for—what, exactly, besides more residential tax revenue for the City?

Given all of the tremendous uncertainties and risks attached to the current petition, I believe it is time to go back to the drawing board, bring in independent professionals, and draft an adequately researched and thought-out plan that will not threaten (to quote the words allegedly spoken by an American military officer in the Vietnam War) to destroy the village in order to save it.

Sincerely,

Daniel Penrice, 16 Rindgefield Street #2

Erwin, Nicole

From: btantony (null) <btantony@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:37 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Councilors,

I write concerning your meeting scheduled for January 8 regarding your city-wide upzoning petition. I have written before and have urged you to move away from what is the most radical upzoning plan in the country. Your proposal, while well-intentioned in some respects, would have the effect of depriving entire neighborhoods and their residents of any rights whatsoever with respect to infrastructure changes. No one denies the need for more housing in Massachusetts but the point is that your proposal won't make dent in the hundreds of thousand of units that Massachusetts needs for future housing needs for residents of all income strata. While Cambridge can try to do its share to increase affordable and low income housing - which from a government perspective should be a primary goal -- this proposal will not accomplish those goals but will deprive long time citizens of their rights and forever alter the character of Cambridge neighborhoods. And, as I have mentioned before, Cambridge is already the third densest city in the state and among the top ten most dense small cities in the country. And despite this density, we have managed to maintain some character in many neighborhoods in the city. Your upzoning of 6 stories anywhere anytime will dramatically change the character of our city.

There are numerous alternative proposals and compromises which have been put forth to counter the original radical proposal of 6 stories anywhere anytime with no setbacks and no other considerations. Personally, I support any proposal that would permit 3 or 4 stories on any side street with full vetting and neighborhood considerations. Most upzoning proposals in the country and even in other cities and towns in Massachusetts follow the 3 or 4 story model and also provide for setbacks, parking and other quality of life considerations. For example, look at the recent proposals from Lexington. There are several other proposals that have emerged from the current process as well. They deserve full vetting and thoughtful consideration by you and those who will be most affected. In a matter as serious as this, there must be compromise; the citizenry cannot feel as if it has been bull-dozed by its own government.

This proposal begs for compromise and consideration of alternative views from those who will be affected - the citizens of Cambridge and its neighborhoods.

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,

Barbara Anthony

Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: hwalker434@rcn.com
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:36 PM
To: Azeem, Burhan; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Simmons, Denise; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Manager
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition: PLEASE START OVER

Dear Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Paul Krugman's recent Substack posting emphasized the inappropriateness of persons with a certain standing and ability in one field claiming expertise in an unrelated field.

"In the academic world there's a familiar phenomenon sometimes called "great man's disease," in which a successful researcher in one field assumes that he (it's usually a "he") is so much smarter than experts in other fields that he doesn't need to pay attention to their research. Physicists make confident, deeply ignorant pronouncements about economics; economists make confident, deeply ignorant pronouncements about sociology."

Council's claim of expertise in urban design/ planning is an example of such inappropriateness. It is implicit in the strategy behind the Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition that Council can decree that Cambridge has no need for urban planning/ design. This flies in the face of the findings of the hundreds of thousands of dollars' worth of planning/ design studies that Council regularly commissions – all of which point to the need for close study and respect for existing built context, traffic and parking availability, infrastructure, services, climate mitigation needs.

Cambridge residents overwhelmingly support modifying zoning to allow multifamily housing to be developed in all residential districts. They do not support the plan for totally random development incentivized by the Multifamily Housing Zoning Petition. Please let the present petition expire. Please start again on a sound urban design/ planning basis.

With many thanks for your consideration,

Helen Walker
43 Linnaean Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alexander Felix <alexanderjfelix@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:26 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: Strong opposition to the proposed citywide multi-story rezoning

Dear Cambridge City Council Members,

As a Cambridge resident and homeowner, I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed citywide multi-story rezoning petition. While I understand the critical need to address housing challenges in our community, this proposal raises significant concerns that remain unresolved and could have lasting negative impacts on our neighborhoods.

First and foremost, the current proposal introduces a level of uncertainty that threatens the stability and value of our neighborhoods. Homeowners, many of whom have made substantial investments in their properties and communities, now face an unpredictable future regarding what could be built on their block. This uncertainty undermines confidence in the carefully structured and rigorous zoning processes that have been in place for years. As someone who has recently navigated the complex zoning process for my own home renovation, I am left questioning whether to abandon my plans and sell it to a developer, as the new proposal could dramatically alter the character and livability of my future neighborhood (which we've grown to love).

Moreover, the proposed ordinance appears to disproportionately benefit developers and other disinterested parties who may not live in or contribute to the community. By granting these entities significant latitude to build multi-story developments, the proposal risks transforming neighborhoods without adequately addressing critical concerns such as traffic congestion, parking availability, or the overall quality of life for existing residents. The lack of comprehensive planning to mitigate these impacts is deeply troubling.

Additionally, the proposal could inadvertently harm the very residents it purports to help. By allowing the demolition of existing homes to make way for larger developments, we risk pushing out lower-income residents and eroding the diverse and vibrant fabric of our community. Without robust safeguards, this initiative could exacerbate displacement and gentrification rather than providing meaningful solutions to housing affordability.

To ensure that any new zoning measures achieve their intended goals without causing undue harm, I urge the Council to engage independent outside professionals to draft a thoughtful, balanced plan. Such a plan should address housing needs while preserving our environment, protecting existing residents, and maintaining the character and integrity of our neighborhoods. This critical issue deserves a comprehensive and deliberate approach, not a rushed ordinance that raises more questions than it answers.

For these reasons, I strongly urge the Council to let the current proposal expire and abandon it altogether. Or at a minimum, revisit this important issue in the spring with a fresh perspective. Let us work together to create a housing strategy that truly reflects the values and needs of our community

without compromising the qualities that make Cambridge a great place to live and also takes into consideration the existing constituents and residents instead of developers.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

Alex Felix

Erwin, Nicole

From: Catalina Arboleda <catalarbol@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:21 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

This citywide rezoning petition will not increase affordable housing for those who truly need it. The plan as you have it right now, will allow more luxury housing (raising rents for other residents) and risks harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, and demolishing existing homes.

Please let the current proposal expire and start over in the Spring.

Best,
Catalina Arboleda
950 Mass. Ave. #413
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: James Kaufman <jameskaufman@alum.mit.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:18 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: VOTE NO ON CURRENT CITYWIDE UPZONING PROPOSAL

Dear Members of the Cambridge City Council.

I'm following the debate regarding 'upzoning' and agree that we need to provide more affordable housing.

However, I believe that the citywide multi-story rezoning petition is far too radical and will result in many negative, unanticipated outcomes. For example:

- Developers will be empowered to push lower and moderate-income residents out of their homes and demolish perfectly good homes.
- The environment will be degraded with less open space.
- Water, power and transportation services will be overly stressed and streets even more crowded with cars.
- Residents are terrified that their neighborhoods will be destroyed by these zoning changes.

Increasing housing in the main corridors is a good first step. Councilor Wilson's option is also preferable.

Respectfully,
Jim Kaufman
13 Perry Street, Cambridge
617-894-0047

Erwin, Nicole

From: Shannon Canavin <shannon.canavin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:15 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Continued work to expand multifamily housing

Good afternoon,

I'm writing to thank the Cambridge City Council for working together on the important proposal to expand multifamily housing. I urge you to keep the focus on creating the most housing overall and the most subsidized inclusionary housing. It is crucial that Cambridge continue to build more housing and reign in prices to what the average Cambridge resident can afford, rather than allowing the market to artificially rise so that only the wealthy can afford to live here. Our diverse population is what makes us a strong and vibrant community and we must ensure accessible housing costs to maintain that diversity.

With appreciation,
Shannon Canavin
182 Third St, Cambridge, MA 02141

--

Shannon Canavin (she/her/hers)
Artist Visa Services LLC
857-998-0219
NEW EMAIL ADDRESS: shannon.canavin@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pamela Enders <Pamela@drpamelaenders.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 4:14 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear everyone!

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Let's do this but let's do this RIGHT!

Thank you for your consideration.

Pamela Enders
Bob Weber
385 Broadway
Cambridge residents for 44+ years

Erwin, Nicole

From: Timothy Van Slyke <tvanslyke2@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 3:57 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: In Support of Mutli-Family Housing

Hello,

I'm a 6-year Cambridge resident, currently living in Cambridgeport, and I'm writing this email to voice my *enthusiastic* support for allowing multi-family homes to be built in our city. People want to live and work here and requiring Cambridge, which is served by rapid transit and extensive bus service, to keep its housing supply artificially spread out is simply a bad idea. This city wants to grow and disallowing density means that that growth has nowhere to go. People who would otherwise live here have to commute instead: that means more traffic, more pressure on daytime parking, more opportunities for car/pedestrian collisions. We have a very walkable city with excellent transit options that are only getting better with the MBTA bus network redesign and elimination of slow zones on the T. If we allow dense housing, then that will incentivise even better transit service. I personally don't own a car and largely commute by foot, bus, and the T. I want nothing more than for this city to be even more walkable, which is what I am so in favor of building multi-family housing.

That's all not even touching on the obvious affordability advantages of building multi-family homes. Like so many Cambridge residents, my fiance and I pay rent in order to live here. In fact, we recently moved from a larger, more-expensive apartment in Cambridge to where we live now in part because our rent was just getting way too high. There is a housing supply and affordability crisis in Greater Boston that needs to be addressed, and increasing density instead of codifying sprawl is a crucial first step.

Please vote in favor of allowing this city to build multi-family housing. Thank you.

Tim VanSlyke

Erwin, Nicole

From: loulie304 <loulie304@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 3:48 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillor - As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.
Sincerely, Mary Louise Kent, 2 Foster Place

Erwin, Nicole

From: Muireann Glenmullen <mglenmullen.dublon@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 3:37 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition which threatens the unique character of our city.

As a retired developer I can say that there were times when current zoning and Historical Commission reviews were annoying and the limitations hard to swallow. Nevertheless, we have a far more liveable, human-scale city as a result. Please let the current proposal expire and bring in independent, professional urban planners and architects to devise a scheme that allows for public input on design and aesthetic. After a century of careful planning we have a city that people enjoy living in. Part of that enjoyment comes from the respect shown to the historical character of the city. I understand from a visit to beautiful Charleston, South Carolina that hedge-funded developer cartels are also making all-out drives on that city too. Why these desirable cities? Because they're lovely and people want to live in them and because of that high profits can be realized. Riding on the backs of those needing affordable housing, these cartels play on liberal, generous-minded sentiments and relentlessly pressure to build in places like Charleston and Cambridge, ignoring history, atmosphere, and scale in the pursuit investor profit. After the profits are achieved, they'll be gone and we'll be left with a radically diminished city. Housing the less advantaged is not their interest, maximum profit is. While their schemes do yield some affordable homes, the chief beneficiaries of their schemes are their investors. The current petition threatens to destroy much of what makes Cambridge the unique city it is. Let's not destroy the atmosphere and character of our city by throwing up the monotonous, purely utilitarian cheapest-to-build structures you see in many of our cities where the lack of distinction means you might as well be anywhere.

Unlike the forced bicycle lane miasma that I understand is being rethought in a number of places and may be modified, once buildings go up there's virtually no chance they can be modified. It is important that Cambridge's new affordable housing be done well for current and future citizens.

Kind regards,
Muireann Glenmullen
4 Channing Circle

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Arielle Lok <arielle.lok@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:58 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for Multifamily Housing Ordinance

Hello City Council Members,

My name is Arielle Lok, and I have been proud and lucky to call Cambridge my home for the last two years. I deeply value this community and want to continue living here for as long as I can.

I am writing again to express my strong support for the proposed six-story multifamily housing ordinance. This measure is a critical step toward ending exclusionary zoning and ensuring that Cambridge remains a welcoming and vibrant city for everyone.

I urge the City Council to adopt the multifamily housing ordinance as written. Cambridge must continue to move forward, embracing thoughtful policies that address the housing crisis and create a more equitable future for all.

Thank you for your leadership on this critical issue.

Sincerely,
Arielle Lok
Cambridge Resident

Erwin, Nicole

From: Madeleine Holzer <mfholzer@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:54 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillor - As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

I believe that there should be multi-family zoning City-wide, but this multi-story rezoning petition is not a well-considered solution.

Thank you for your consideration.

Madeleine Holzer
60 Foster Street
Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alice T Friedman <afriedma@wellesley.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:49 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

We don't need more luxury housing and high-end developments in our neighborhoods

Alice T Friedman
6 Perry Street
Cambridge MA
02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Heddi Siebel <heddisiebel@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:44 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: NO to UPZONING

To the Cambridge City Council:

I wish you all a peaceful and productive New Year bringing health and peace to your families and homes—and our City.

While I am in support of improving our City by creating the much-needed multifamily housing, better public transportation, and pedestrian and bike safety, I am fully opposed to your current plans for Upzoning: it's transformative in a destructive way—both environmentally and socially. And, I am very concerned that this Upzoning action is bigger, more far-reaching and impactful than the City Council has indicated and that it should be re-investigated with professional advice and more community input.

This plan is distressing. It has the potential to destroy the very characteristics that make Cambridge neighborhoods great: diverse peoples who are caring neighbors, not anonymous residents; an integration of old and new architecture; a contrast between the open, leafy neighborhoods and denser, more urban development such as Kendall Square; and the historic streets that draw tourism and pique curiosity. We do need to create housing and perhaps there are neighborhoods where 4 or 6-story buildings could co-exist but it makes more sense to plan these carefully rather than open up development to a free-for-all in demolitions and unchecked buildings without design review. Taller residential buildings with no setbacks, no green space and no parking make more sense along the major corridors where the residents can walk to shop and access transportation. (What is wrong with Mass Ave? It is mostly lined with space-wasting old one-story businesses?)

I know I join others who write with these grievances, but I also want to share my more personal responses:

Noise and dirt: I have attended a number of the virtual open hearings on Upzoning. In one, a participant complained that putting families on the major thoroughfares was pushing them into dirty, noisy commercial areas, but this is false. New construction with appropriate insulation and window selection can make buildings quiet and private. I know this because my son lives in such a building on a busy intersection in Cambridgeport. Additionally, the City, with its investment in bike lanes—some better thought out than others—has been making progress towards its goal of transitioning to cleaner and quieter transportation electric and otherwise. If we look forward to connecting the dots in the future, noise and dirt are not issues.

History: A few years ago I attended a virtual campaign Q + A for City Council candidates. A question came up about Cambridge's historic preservation and one candidate responded that it should not prevent development. He then added with a typical cancel culture flourish, "Whose history is it anyway?" For good or bad, these are our histories: white men, Tories, and slavery... Rather than try to destroy and obliterate this history, we are smarter to teach it with the memory of buildings. I support our Cambridge history and think we need to remain vigilant in preserving it and integrating it into the local curriculum about place and the story of how our values (good and bad) and the capitalistic system shape our culture.

Collaboration: Lastly, I want to remind the Council that my working group received an award from the Cambridge City Council for the successful 2017 neighborhood citizen collaboration in the development of 253 Walden Street (the old Masse Hardware parking lot and warehouse) into a very successful 3-story multifamily building with parking and business potential. The lot was zoned for an as-of-right building. The original proposal was a blocky, brick structure with car parking on the street level as the first floor. The concept was dangerous as the intersection of Walden and Sherman has limited visibility and a lot of traffic; and its parking at street level was unwelcoming to the community streetscape. Our many years of working closely with the developer and the architect resulted in a multifamily structure that integrates beautifully into the scale and context of our neighborhood, respects its history, includes underground parking and provides rental housing for families as well as individuals. This collaboration, rather than the exclusion of neighborhood input, should be an example of what is possible in small-scale, intimate communities.

I urge you to abandon the current Upzoning plan. But begin again as a responsible City Council with more professional input for more thoughtful, informed and sensitive decision-making.

Thank you.

Respectfully,

Heddi Siebel
41 Stearns Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kris Ellis <krist_ellis@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:43 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Councilor,

As a resident of Cambridge for over 25 years, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, increasing traffic, and transforming neighborhoods. The impact of increased density on our utility system should also be considered and plans for addressing that made in conjunction with, not separate from, additional building. When not done, we end up with plans to build transformers next to schools as almost happened in East Cambridge. The Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you,
Kristin Ellis-Levy

Erwin, Nicole

From: NANCY HAUSMAN <nanah46@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:42 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Aysha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

As I watch various organizations and individuals try to bring facts and research against this petition, there is only one thing I can imagine is going on here: Follow the money. Common sense and the facts surrounding this grab, make me think that there is so much money and influence from developers that will accrue to councilors and others, that nothing else matters.

Nancy Hausman
201 Lexington Ave.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sarah Baker <sarahwbennett@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:41 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Asking for a NO vote on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to join the chorus of Cambridge neighbors who oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

As you have heard from many of our fellow residents, there are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to make such a sweeping change. Outside independent professionals can help draft a plan that will allow any zoning changes to spare our environment, prevent lower-income residents from being pushed out, and preserve existing homes that inform the character of our neighborhoods. I join my neighbors in asking that the Council let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

I look forward to constructive conversations taking all city residents' views into account and implore you to consider the long-term impacts that the ordinance could have on the community.

With sincere respect,
Sarah Baker
175 Coolidge Hill

Erwin, Nicole

From: Biemann, Hans-Peter /US <Hans-Peter.Biemann@sanofi.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:37 PM
To: McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Simmons, Denise; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; kabiemann@gmail.com
Subject: Cambridge rezoning petition

Dear Cambridge City Councilors,

During the Planning Board and Council discussions of the rezoning proposal, I heard brief references to “luxury” construction. This is the elephant in the room making the proposal anti-affordability.

I recently witnessed a developer bid up a 7000+ sqft-lot home and build it out to a lux \$1000/sqft level, and then getting his astronomical price in the marketplace. As a native of Cambridge, I was aghast at the astounding tactics and expense that the developer took to achieve his boondoggle. This involved legal/procedural bypassing of prior zoning limits on floor area. Now am bracing to see 1.5-2x building size expansion and luxury upgrading repeated in 100s of multi-family variations across Cambridge, with middle-income citizens shut out.

Allowing expanded market-rate footprints for 4, 5, 6, 7 unit dwellings everywhere will supercharge all valuations and replace properties that have potential for affordability with millions of sqft of luxury housing, only affordable by those earning 3-5x a teacher’s salary or more. Boston’s metropolitan area has a vast reservoir of wealthy buyers for these luxury homes.

The proposal should be modified to address this glaring issue, while establishing strong incentives for the needed affordable housing growth. So I urge the Council to let the existing proposal expire.

Sincerely,

Hans-Peter Biemann

12 Traill St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jessie Scanlon <jessiescanlon@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:34 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; Coolidge-Hill-community@googlegroups.com
Subject: Don't Let Developers Write the Zoning Laws

Members of the City Council,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We truly need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. I know that the council members supporting this petition believe that they are solving the housing problem in Cambridge. But I don't believe that the council has thought through the problem, and the ripple effects of this proposal, adequately.

I would like to remind the council members of their decision to improve bicycle safety by making Garden Street one-way. The decision came from the right place — a desire to make our streets safer for bicyclists. Ultimately, the change ended up having an unplanned and negative impact on overall safety, by pushing traffic to roads never intended to serve that number of cars. I commend the council for its recent decision to make Garden a two-way street again. It would be far more difficult, if not impossible, to undo the damage of the up-zoning petition were it to pass. I urge the council to let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring with the goal of developing a plan shaped by experts in urban planning.

This brings me to the second problem with the proposal: the powers so eagerly pushing for its passage are NOT urban planners. They are REAL ESTATE DEVELOPERS. Their interest is NOT in making Cambridge a thriving city for its growing population. Their interest is in making money. Like the private equity firms who have made a bundle developing East Cambridge without solving the cities affordable housing challenges. They are not interested in solving housing issues in Cambridge.

I heard from neighbors who attended the previous meeting how bullying and belittling these “up-zone now” voices were. They made fun of people who expressed concern about tree canopy. They painted those who oppose the change as “people who want to keep their gated communities.” Who are these loud voices? Have they ever been to Cambridge? Because anyone who knows Cambridge, knows that Cambridge residents do not live in or want to live in gated communities. No one who wants to live in a gated community moves to Cambridge. We appreciate the bustle and diversity of our city. We are not afraid of density. What we do NOT like are wolves in sheep's clothing. And that is who the people behind the up-zoning proposal seem to be. They are big money interests who care about big money — not about helping Cambridge grow in a way that is best for all of the city's residents. I urge you not to be side with the loudest voices. Think this through.

Best,

Jessie Scanlon
5 Coolidge Hill Rd

Erwin, Nicole

From: McDonald, Christie <cmcdonal@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:29 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillor - As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Christie McDonald
104 Hancock St #6
Cambridge, Ma 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: plf245@aol.com
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:20 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

A serious, real independent study should be carried out before radical upzoning is enacted. The study should focus on: 1) demographics; 2) environmental impact; 3) infrastructure; 4) economic impact: and, livability. These are all inter-related and I would be happy to discuss.

I have lived in Cambridge since September 1953 when I came as a student and I and my wife have lived in our house since 1973. Destroying neighborhoods to serve developers greed is not the right thing to do.

Sincerely,
Peter L. Falb

Erwin, Nicole

From: Russell Gee <russellfgee@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:16 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As 30 yr residents of the Baldwin School neighborhood we urge you to slow down and take a deep breath!

Change is indeed inevitable but this needs more thought and perhaps some outside help.

Thank you!

Russell F. Gee
52 Sacramento St
Cambridge, MA. 02138
M. 617-721-6815

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ilisa Hurowitz <ilisahurowitz@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:11 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillors,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. I have written before now and write again to express my deepest concern about the pending multifamily housing ordinance. I urge you to table the current proposal completely and to begin again with the benefit of more data, more deliberation, better communications, more community input, and more time and analysis to ensure that any proposal will accomplish intended outcomes without the current risk of irreparable damage to our community.

The risk of severe and irreparable damage stemming from unintended consequences of the current proposal is extremely and dangerously high. The absence of guardrails - even with the recent proposed amendments - reflects complete and stunning disregard for essential existing regulations, fundamental to our City, e.g., in areas that include zoning, design, open space, historic preservation, environmental protection. The elimination of robust neighbor dialogue and case-by-case input on specific developer plans flies in the face of currently valued City of Cambridge principles.

I've been doing my best to stay up-to-date with current proposals and proposed amendments. It is not easy. Many of my neighbors and Cambridge resident friends have not been aware of these issues. The proposals are too important with consequences far too serious for the Council to move forward at this time. Community dialogue must be robust, with greater Council effort to promote visibility around the issues.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. It is irresponsible to move forward absent outside independent counsel to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, destroying unique, historic spaces, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

Again, I urge the Council to allow the current proposal to expire and start over.

Thank you for your attention.

Ilisa Hurowitz
8 Appleton Terrace
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lora Farkas <lorafarkas@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:08 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: STOP Cambridge Zoning proposal

Dear Members of the City Council,

As a Cambridge resident of 33 years, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing.

We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan to create affordable housing that will NOT harm our environment by eliminating green space and trees on private property, push out current lower-income residents, demolish existing homes (even ones with historic value), and fracture neighborhoods by disrupting the streetscape scale and rhythm.

The Council should let the current proposal expire and begin fresh with more citizen input. Together, the Council and residents are the stewards of a beautiful and historic town that is already the tenth most densely populated city in the United States. Affordable housing is a regional issue and the solutions must be spread across a wider area to be sufficient. We can find creative ways to add housing without sacrificing all that makes the city the special home we love.

Please do not allow Cambridge to be destroyed by real estate developers eager to make a profit. We count on our government leaders to provide the guidelines that benefit the residents of the city.

Sincerely,
Lora Farkas

--

Lora Farkas
154 Coolidge Hill
Cambridge, MA 02138
617.413.8740 mobile
lora.farkas@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Stephanie Kestelman <stephaniekestelman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:05 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Citywide upzoning petition

I am a PhD student in economics at Harvard, and the literature suggests that upzoning at the scale proposed in Cambridge would increase the supply of middle-income housing, which in turn would moderate the increase in rents and condo prices. There is *no evidence* that the policy would lead to McMansions or the *exclusive* supply of luxury units. In fact, given the current zoning regime, luxury units and condos are the only things developers can safely put their money behind (unless they build 100% affordable with public funds). When nicer units are built, then the higher income renters can stop renting the best of the older units, in what constitutes a trickle-down effect. Many of the permits in Cambridge have been for renovations, which effectively remove the cheapest units from the market, and replace them with condos or luxury rentals. The new upzoning policy would greatly increase the supply of middle-income housing.

The push to require affordable housing would likely cap the number of new units. Income-restricted units are an administrative burden for properties, on top of bringing in reduced revenue. Developers may choose to not build at all if the cost of building with affordable units is high enough. If developers are willing to build at all, they will likely make the market-rate units in a building *larger or higher quality*, thus supplying fewer units than they would have otherwise.

I understand where the opposition is coming from, but I believe that the concerns are not wholly founded on facts. The opposition to the upzoning plan would rather delay policymaking on a vital issue than accept a less-than-perfect zoning proposal. 66% of residents are renters, and 50% of them spend over 30% of their income on rent.

I would be honored to help provide further analysis of the proposed upzoning plan. Please do not hesitate to reach out.

Best regards,
Stephanie Kestelman

Stephanie Kestelman

PhD Student — Harvard Economics
<https://skestelman.github.io>

Erwin, Nicole

From: wericks2002@gmail.com
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:03 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: supporting multifamily housing in Cambridge

Dear City Council,

For me, the shortage of homes in Cambridge is the most pressing issue facing our city. It has been for a while, and I'm so grateful to have leaders like you who are finally acting on the fact that a housing shortage is a policy choice, not some inevitability of market forces.

Thought we weren't raised here, my wife and I have lived here for decades as renters and eventually homeowners and Cambridge is the only home now teenage daughters have ever known. We feel really lucky to have been able to buy our home when we did, but the shortage of homes we face as a community has still had a big impact on our family. Our daughters have both lost good friends over the years whose families wanted to stay but couldn't afford it – sad for their friends' families of course, but also devastating for our daughters, and that's been hard to watch. We've lost good friends to faraway suburbs ourselves. And I worry about our daughters' ability to come back after college and raise families here themselves one day – we don't want to go anywhere, but I imagine we'll want to live close to them. So even as homeowners, the housing shortage might end up being the reason we leave someday. I'll bet there's a lot of people like me.

I don't know how many new homes at different price points we'd need to build in order to realize our collective aspiration to enable all our community's kids to live here as adults if they wished, but whatever that number is, that's the number we should be aiming for. And these kids are growing up fast! Making it possible to build more densely across all our neighborhoods is what will make that vision possible. Let's be brave and do that!

With gratitude,

Will Erickson
102 Reed St, North Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: kate cleary <kateocleary@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 2:00 PM
To: Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; McGovern, Marc; Simmons, Denise; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Rezoning multi story buildings- OPPOSE

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

I have been on a few of these calls where neighbors are requesting setbacks etc. As a DENSE community already, we need to think long and hard how things proceed with zoning. We cannot compare ourselves to Newton, which happened during a call that I was on in the past. Cambridge is a historic city- with the best of both worlds with an urban and suburban feel. Just because people want bigger and better does not mean we should be sacrificing our integrity, which seems to be the trend.

Please consider letting the current proposal expire and think LONG AND HARD how we want to proceed.

Thank you in advance,
Kate Cleary

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jean Berko Gleason <jean.berko.gleason@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:58 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the upzoning petition

I am a long time Cambridge resident. I've lived in my current house since 1959 and I love this city. Please oppose the destructive multi-story rezoning petition.

Let's get some expert professionals to work on a new plan that will not harm the environment, demolish existing homes, or drive out current residents while turning our neighborhoods into congested corridors.

I urge the council to let the current proposal expire. Let's start over in the spring with input from Cambridge residents and professionals in the field of urban planning

We appreciate your hard work and we also stand ready to be part of the process

Jean Berko Gleason
110 Larchwood Dr
617-230-0957

Erwin, Nicole

From: suzanne tamaryndesign.com <suzanne@tamaryndesign.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:51 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

PLEASE OPPOSE THIS CITY-WIDE MULTI-STORY REZONING petition!!

This current plan is a gift to developers and definitely they do not need more!!!!!!

As you can see, there is much opposition to passing this now. In addition, many residents are unaware that this is going on.

Work on this in the spring- and BEFORE THAT- please consider a PR PLAN so that many residents are aware of what this means.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Suzanne Watzman
25 Inman Place

Erwin, Nicole

From: Cetrulo, Lawrence <LCetrulo@cetllp.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:47 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; Kate E. Cetrulo (kcetrulo@gmail.com); Bjornlund, Kyle; Ellen Blumenthal (eb@blumenthalmd.com); Carol Birnbaum; Fred Eustis (fred@eustischair.com); Louisa McCall (Louisamccall@gmail.com); John & Consuelo Isaacson (jisaacson@imsearch.com); Lynn T. Cetrulo (lrcetrulo@gmail.com)
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillor - As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Respectfully Submitted
Larry and Lynn Cetrulo
46 Grozier Road

Get Outlook for

iOS<[https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://aka.ms/o0ukef__;!!GolgDdAAPFHvrrz0!elz1HsjsHQ8Hcs83QNI0olwFeDXbCeMC4zbV152e4-gfYcL1q2x03F8JOuSdliloAbcWUubHB7A4AXHEIebyF8X58\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__https://aka.ms/o0ukef__;!!GolgDdAAPFHvrrz0!elz1HsjsHQ8Hcs83QNI0olwFeDXbCeMC4zbV152e4-gfYcL1q2x03F8JOuSdliloAbcWUubHB7A4AXHEIebyF8X58$)>

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Erwin, Nicole

From: eunice williams <euniceanastasia@yahoo.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:43 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dagmar von Schwerin <dvonschwerin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:38 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I **strongly** urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing.

I know everyone wants to create more affordable housing but the urge to make progress has created a proposal that will have the opposite result. We need a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Neighborhood context ontext matters.

Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.
Please take time to do this right...once constructed, these buildings will be here to stay.

Dagmar von Schwerin
114 Hamilton Street
Cambridge 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Zonda Mercer <bbzonda@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:37 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mark Goodman <mdgoodman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:34 PM
To: McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; Simmons, Denise
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: citywide multi-story rezoning petition

Dear Cambridge City Councilors,

One of the heartening aspects of this otherwise dispiriting process has been the public comments of citizens with expertise in city planning, architecture, urban design and other relevant fields. Spokespeople for the various neighborhood associations have also been eloquent in representing their specific constituencies. While there is some evidence that these voices have been heard, the proposal still does not adequately address neighborhood concerns and many unresolved questions about costs and benefits as well as environmental impacts. In place of this ideologically-driven, top-down central planning being imposed on the city's neighborhoods and residents, a proposal should be created by people with both expertise and a diversity of viewpoints. I urge the Council to let the current proposal expire.

Sincerely,

Mark Goodman
78 Lake View Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carvalho, Bruno <bcarvalh@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:33 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: multifamily housing; thanks

Dear Councilors,

Happy new year!

I write as a homeowner at 56 Dana St. I recently became a U.S. citizen, and look forward to voting in our next elections. I am also a scholar specializing in urban issues, and think that we can no longer underestimate the negative consequences of decades of overly restrictive zoning. While our state's housing shortage is certainly an issue that Cambridge alone cannot solve, I believe that we should take a leading role.

Thank you for working towards the compromise version of this ordinance. I appreciate how you are all under various kinds of pressures from constituents, and ask that you please also consider those that are not your constituents (or not yet), but would greatly benefit from more housing in Cambridge. Please also think of those that want to stay, but are being priced out. Adding to our housing stock will help. I hope that you will adopt the ordinance!

With thanks,
Bruno

Erwin, Nicole

From: Steve Wineman <steven.wineman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:19 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please oppose 4+2 zoning / support 3+3+3 zoning, municipal voucher program, and social housing

Dear Councillors,

My name is Steve Wineman; I live at 26 McTernan Street. I am writing to urge you to oppose 4+2 zoning, and instead to support 3+3+3 along with municipal vouchers as well as creation of social housing which decomodifies the housing stock.

There are good reasons to believe that 4+2 multifamily zoning will incentivize the building of expensive 4 story market rate projects. The "+2" intended for inclusionary units could all too easily slip away. The result would minimally be virtually no addition of affordable housing units, and would likely result in displacement of low and moderate income tenants when their buildings are demolished to make way for lucrative 4 story buildings.

Please support instead the 3+3+3 zoning model, which reduces incentives to build market rate only housing, reduces the likelihood of displacement, and increases incentives for construction of inclusionary/affordable units.

In the long run, we can only solve the affordable housing crisis by treating housing as a social good rather than a means for profit. I know this from my own experience. I live at Park View Co-op, a limited equity housing cooperative which the city has helped to finance. Without this resource I could not possibly live in Cambridge. We need an exponential increase in this type of housing and other models which remove housing from the market.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Steve Wineman
26 McTernan St.

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This email communication is made possible by the labor of the people of the Congo, including thousands of children, mining cobalt for rechargeable lithium batteries in conditions tantamount to slavery. <https://www.npr.org/sections/goatsandsoda/2023/02/01/1152893248/red-cobalt-congo-drc-mining-siddharth-kara>

Erwin, Nicole

From: Piotr Mitros <piotr@mitros.org>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 1:01 PM
To: Bayer, Megan
Cc: LeBlanc, Diane; City Clerk; Crane, Paula; City Council
Subject: Re: FW: Zoning Change and Open Meetings

(Missed reply-all)

Confirmed. I am withdrawing the complaint.

However, I think the complaint would have been a valid one. Given the city is now aware of issues which prevented public participation at one meeting, it probably makes sense for the city to address them. The blatant issues could be addressed with minimal, straightforward changes to the Open Meetings Portal.

Best,
Piotr

On Mon, Jan 6, 2025 at 11:54 AM Bayer, Megan <mbayer@cambridgema.gov> wrote:

Dear Piotr Mitros,

The City Clerk forwarded your e-mail below. I am writing to confirm that you are withdrawing your December 26, 2024 Open Meeting Law Complaint concerning the City Council's December 23, 2024. Please respond to confirm that the Complaint is withdrawn.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Very truly yours,

Megan B. Bayer

City Solicitor

City of Cambridge Law Department

City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA 02139
Telephone: (617) 349-4121 Fax: (617) 349-4134

Email: mbayer@cambridgema.gov

Pronouns: she/her

From: Piotr Mitros <piotr@mitros.org>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 9:46 AM
To: City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>; City Clerk <cityclerk@Cambridgema.gov>; Crane, Paula <pcrane@cambridgema.gov>; LeBlanc, Diane <dleblanc@cambridgema.gov>
Subject: Re: Zoning Change and Open Meetings

Hi All,

A number of people (oddly, none from the City -- I would have expected the city clerk or city solicitor to reach out to me, aside from acknowledging this) asked me about this complaint. Indeed, I learned it was on the agenda for today, and the city solicitor's response, from a reporter who called me about it. The reporter walked through the likely set of events which led to Open Meetings being violated from the resident's perspective, but likely not from the City Solicitor's perspective. I think the top thing I learned was that although Open Meetings may have been violated, this was likely not a result of malicious intent, but rather, that there were likely cascading, interacting technical and organizational issues. Regardless of intent, this still had the effect of blocking people from public comment.

However, given that:

1. I do not think it makes sense for me to take this further, so you can consider the complaint dismissed from my perspective. I would prefer to resolve this amicably, and we don't need timelines, fines, etc. to do that.
2. I still do think these issues ought to be resolved, and that it is to all of your interest to resolve issues so there can be sensible civic participation.
 1. The present zoning proposal will have a significant impact on 100k+ people, and if this process goes in the way I think it will -- privatizing profits from increasing density while socializing costs on the taxpayer -- residents blindsided by this might react negatively.
 2. This is especially true as other parts of the city (the CPSD school administration, specifically) do intentionally violate Open Meetings.

I would consider taking the time to address these and making sure that everyone in the city knows what is going on, and has an opportunity to be heard about how their community will be impacted.

I list several simple issues below which, if resolved, would have allowed public comment for everyone who wanted it. It does not address the deeper lack of participatory process around this change (in my community, this zoning change will not work, whereas there are equivalent ones which would, and it looks like simple laziness that those discussions aren't being had).

Best,

Piotr

1) The public comment form has very specific requirements with regards to specifying the agenda item:

Agenda Item: *

Please refer to the specific agenda item that you wish to speak on. For example, Policy Order #5. Do not refer to the index number (ex: POR 2017 #276). Please contact the council office if you have any questions.

2) However, it was not possible for residents to have an agenda item, as the PDFs on the [Open Meeting Portal](#) were not updated with late orders until after the meeting. If you click "agenda packet" or "agenda summary," where you would expect to find this information, it's not there. There is apparently a separate HTML page which **is** updated, but no one I spoke with in my community was aware of it or found it before the meeting.

3) City councillors were under the false impression that the community had any sense of what happened at the Dec 19th meeting. Although this is an Open Meeting, that's not a safe assumption (especially considering that no minutes, newspaper articles, or similar were available before the Dec 23rd meeting). Adequate information for public participation should have been reasonably accessible under the Open Meetings Portal, including to people who weren't there on the 19th.

4) This public comment form isn't even available in advance, so residents necessarily need to debug these issues at the last possible moment.

This had the effect of excluding public participation at the Dec 23rd meeting.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ciara Glenmullen <cglenmullen@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:36 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Strong Opposition to citywide multi-story rezoning petition

Hello Cambridge City Councillors,
I am writing to strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. As a real estate developer in Cambridge I would personally benefit if it were to pass, but **I am strongly opposed** to it. As a born and raised Cantibridgian, I care deeply about the city and its long-term well-being, not short-term profits. I believe there are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. I urge Council to let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.
Sincerely,
Ciara Glenmullen

Erwin, Nicole

From: bonnie@danoski.com
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:23 PM
To: Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposing the current rezoning proposal - concerns about affordability

Dear Councilor Zusy,

As a Cambridge resident and landlord who wants more affordable housing, I oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition. While I appreciate the Council's efforts to revise the proposal, including reducing the affordable housing requirement threshold from 10 to 6 stories, the changes don't go far enough. I *am* grateful for the questions you raised about getting outside consultants and appreciate the work you're doing on the Neighborhood & Longterm Planning Committee and hope the rest of the councilors will see the value in that.

The core issue remains: allowing four-story buildings without any affordable housing requirements will primarily result in more luxury housing. As a landlord who maintains reasonable rents, I've watched nearby units command \$4,200 for subpar two-bedroom apartments. Without proper affordability requirements, this rezoning will accelerate such price escalation and/or lead to little increase in affordable housing. It will also create parking nightmares.

Instead of rushing this proposal, we should:

1. Prioritize non-profit housing cooperatives
2. Commission independent consultants to develop a comprehensive plan - like the work you're doing with
3. Require affordable units in any upzoning, even for smaller developments
4. Study the financial feasibility of these requirements
5. Study the consequences of such upzoning in other cities, including those outside the US, to better understand potential long-term effects.

Cambridge deserves a well-researched plan that creates truly affordable housing. Please vote no and let this proposal expire.

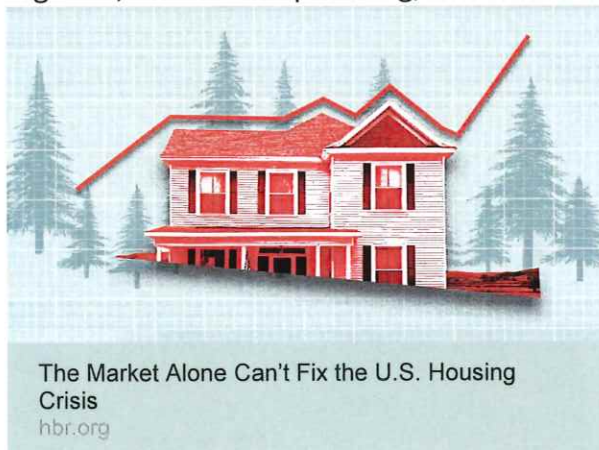
Best,
Bonnie Mioduchoski
15 Whitney Ave, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Cooke <susanmcooke@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:19 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Re: Cambridge Multi-Story Rezoning Petition

I failed to include any of the information I have reviewed with respect to the effect of upzoning on home prices and rents. Given the volume of material that you must review, here are two representative examples.

1. A recent HBS article which notes in the closing paragraph that “private actors, free to build, are still in the business of making money, not providing shelter for all”, and that “even under thoroughgoing zoning reform, they will still lack the incentives to build and rent out sufficient affordable housing”. Instead, it advocates a three-part program which includes stronger public governance of housing markets; local, regional, and federal planning; and social housing:



And here is a recent (short) blog regarding the effects of upzoning:
<https://www.betterbozemancoalition.org/commentary/debunking-the-myth>

Sent from my iPad

On Jan 5, 2025, at 10:27 PM, Susan Cooke <susanmcooke@gmail.com> wrote:

I have provided the City Council with previous emails expressing my concerns about the rezoning petition. As I understand it, another “compromise” version is being prepared that would provide for four story buildings as a matter of right across the entire city, with six stories allowed where a building includes affordable units (what “affordable” means is unclear), along with certain modifications to the setback and lot size requirements and a review every five years to determine the impact of the rezoning provisions.

I am very concerned that the latest version is another ill-considered attempt to impose upzoning on a substantial portion of Cambridge now zoned for one and two family housing without taking into account the effect of additional housing already being built along transit corridors, the adverse traffic and parking impacts associated with the newly allowed structures, the displacement of existing renters where developers opt for more upscale housing, and the detrimental environmental and aesthetic impacts associated with reduction or elimination of what residential green spaces we now have, not to mention the lack of input from urban planning experts in future developments and, most important, the desires of the citizens of Cambridge who elected the Council members without benefit of a thorough vetting of their plans to impose upzoning on our entire city.

You are not making a sausage. You should have undertaken an open and rigorous process, as would be expected at the state and federal level for major changes such as this, where draft and final reports identifying the positive and negative effects of such proposed changes are described and weighed and the most appropriate alternative is identified, and where a significant amount of time is provided for public input after dissemination of both the draft and final reports. An after-the-fact five year review that may be included in the “compromise” proposal is no substitute, particularly where urban planning input going forward is being jettisoned in favor of four to six story developments as a matter of right.

Finally, my review of how well upzoning measures have worked in other cities indicates that the results have been a mixed bag and not the uniform success story touted by some. Please think carefully before you act on a zoning change with such a profound impact upon the environment of our unique and beloved city.

Susan M. Cooke
A Cambridge Homeowner

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: bonnie@danoski.com
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:18 PM
To: Wilson, Ayesha
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposing the current rezoning proposal - concerns about affordability

Dear Councilor Wilson,

As a Cambridge resident and landlord, I oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition. While I appreciate the Council's efforts to revise the proposal, including reducing the affordable housing requirement threshold from 10 to 6 stories, the changes don't go far enough.

The core issue remains: allowing four-story buildings without any affordable housing requirements will primarily result in more luxury housing. As a landlord who maintains reasonable rents, I've watched nearby units command \$4,200 for subpar two-bedroom apartments. Without proper affordability requirements, this rezoning will accelerate such price escalation and/or lead to little increase in affordable housing. It will also create parking nightmares.

Instead of rushing this proposal, we should:

1. Prioritize non-profit housing cooperatives
2. Commission independent consultants to develop a comprehensive plan
3. Require affordable units in any upzoning, even for smaller developments
4. Study the financial feasibility of these requirements
5. Study the consequences of such upzoning in other cities, including those outside the US, to better understand potential long-term effects.

Cambridge deserves a well-researched plan that creates truly affordable housing. Please vote no and let this proposal expire.

Best,
Bonnie Mioduchoski
15 Whitney Ave, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: bonnie@danoski.com
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:18 PM
To: Toner, Paul
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposing the current rezoning proposal - concerns about affordability

Dear Councilor Toner,

As a Cambridge resident and landlord, I oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition. While I appreciate the Council's efforts to revise the proposal, including reducing the affordable housing requirement threshold from 10 to 6 stories, the changes don't go far enough.

The core issue remains: allowing four-story buildings without any affordable housing requirements will primarily result in more luxury housing. As a landlord who maintains reasonable rents, I've watched nearby units command \$4,200 for subpar two-bedroom apartments. Without proper affordability requirements, this rezoning will accelerate such price escalation and/or lead to little increase in affordable housing. It will also create parking nightmares.

Instead of rushing this proposal, we should:

1. Prioritize non-profit housing cooperatives
2. Commission independent consultants to develop a comprehensive plan
3. Require affordable units in any upzoning, even for smaller developments
4. Study the financial feasibility of these requirements
5. Study the consequences of such upzoning in other cities, including those outside the US, to better understand potential long-term effects.

Cambridge deserves a well-researched plan that creates truly affordable housing. Please vote no and let this proposal expire.

Best,
Bonnie Mioduchoski
15 Whitney Ave, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: bonnie@danoski.com
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:17 PM
To: Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposing the current rezoning proposal - concerns about affordability

Dear Councilor Sobrinho-Wheeler,

As a Cambridge resident and landlord, I oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition. While I appreciate the Council's efforts to revise the proposal, including reducing the affordable housing requirement threshold from 10 to 6 stories, the changes don't go far enough.

The core issue remains: allowing four-story buildings without any affordable housing requirements will primarily result in more luxury housing. As a landlord who maintains reasonable rents, I've watched nearby units command \$4,200 for subpar two-bedroom apartments. Without proper affordability requirements, this rezoning will accelerate such price escalation and/or lead to little increase in affordable housing. It will also create parking nightmares.

Instead of rushing this proposal, we should:

1. Prioritize non-profit housing cooperatives
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4. Study the financial feasibility of these requirements
5. Study the consequences of such upzoning in other cities, including those outside the US, to better understand potential long-term effects.

Cambridge deserves a well-researched plan that creates truly affordable housing. Please vote no and let this proposal expire.

Best,
Bonnie Mioduchoski
15 Whitney Ave, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Elizabeth Gilmore <gilmore.eliz@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:16 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: Please Delay approval on Rezoning Petition

Dear City Councilor,

We ALL make mistakes and the intelligent thing to do at this point is to revisit the original Envision Plan. This should be followed by consultation with appropriate experts in the field of City Planning for an updated version. If, for example, you consider what a mess the Cambridge Public Schools are in vis a vis equitable distribution of students school-by-school, you will be reminded how even the BEST-intentioned plans go awry. Learn from your mistakes and pull back on making the central mistake of rushing into the current rezoning proposal. The wreckage it will create will be impossible to recover from.

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

Thank you for your consideration.
Elizabeth Gilmore

Erwin, Nicole

From: bonnie@danoski.com
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:15 PM
To: Azeem, Burhan
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposing the current rezoning proposal - concerns about affordability

Dear Councilor Bazeem,

As a Cambridge resident and landlord, I oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition. While I appreciate the Council's efforts to revise the proposal, including reducing the affordable housing requirement threshold from 10 to 6 stories, the changes don't go far enough.

The core issue remains: allowing four-story buildings without any affordable housing requirements will primarily result in more luxury housing. As a landlord who maintains reasonable rents, I've watched nearby units command \$4,200 for subpar two-bedroom apartments. Without proper affordability requirements, this rezoning will accelerate such price escalation and/or lead to little increase in affordable housing. It will also create parking nightmares.

Instead of rushing this proposal, we should:

1. Prioritize non-profit housing cooperatives
2. Commission independent consultants to develop a comprehensive plan
3. Require affordable units in any upzoning, even for smaller developments
4. Study the financial feasibility of these requirements
5. Study the consequences of such upzoning in other cities, including those outside the US, to better understand potential long-term effects.

Cambridge deserves a well-researched plan that creates truly affordable housing. Please vote no and let this proposal expire.

Best,
Bonnie Mioduchoski
15 Whitney Ave, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: bonnie@danoski.com
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:14 PM
To: Siddiqui, Sumbul
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposing the current rezoning proposal - concerns about affordability

Dear Councilor Siddiqui,

As a Cambridge resident and landlord, I oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition. While I appreciate the Council's efforts to revise the proposal, including reducing the affordable housing requirement threshold from 10 to 6 stories, the changes don't go far enough.

The core issue remains: allowing four-story buildings without any affordable housing requirements will primarily result in more luxury housing. As a landlord who maintains reasonable rents, I've watched nearby units command \$4,200 for subpar two-bedroom apartments. Without proper affordability requirements, this rezoning will accelerate such price escalation and/or lead to little increase in affordable housing.

Instead of rushing this proposal, we should:

1. Prioritize non-profit housing cooperatives
2. Commission independent consultants to develop a comprehensive plan
3. Require affordable units in any upzoning, even for smaller developments
4. Study the financial feasibility of these requirements
5. Study the consequences of such upzoning in other cities, including those outside the US, to better understand potential long-term effects.

Cambridge deserves a well-researched plan that creates truly affordable housing. Please vote no and let this proposal expire.

Best,
Bonnie Mioduchoski
15 Whitney Ave, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: bonnie@danoski.com
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:13 PM
To: Nolan, Patricia
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposing the current rezoning proposal - concerns about affordability

Dear Councilor Nolan,

As a Cambridge resident and landlord, I oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition. While I appreciate the Council's efforts to revise the proposal, including reducing the affordable housing requirement threshold from 10 to 6 stories, the changes don't go far enough.

The core issue remains: allowing four-story buildings without any affordable housing requirements will primarily result in more luxury housing. As a landlord who maintains reasonable rents, I've watched nearby units command \$4,200 for subpar two-bedroom apartments. Without proper affordability requirements, this rezoning will accelerate such price escalation and/or lead to little increase in affordable housing.

Instead of rushing this proposal, we should:

1. Prioritize non-profit housing cooperatives
2. Commission independent consultants to develop a comprehensive plan
3. Require affordable units in any upzoning, even for smaller developments
4. Study the financial feasibility of these requirements
5. Study the consequences of such upzoning in other cities, including those outside the US, to better understand potential long-term effects.

Cambridge deserves a well-researched plan that creates truly affordable housing. Please vote no and let this proposal expire.

Best,
Bonnie Mioduchoski
15 Whitney Ave, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: john gilmore <jadgilmore@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 12:03 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Councilors,

The City, at great expense, and with thousands of hours of work and extensive community involvement created the Envision Plan which describes itself "as a plan for the future of our city" and "as a roadmap to the year 2030, setting out a plan to promote inclusive and sustainable growth". Enactment of the up zoning petition now before the Council would toss out all that careful work and the resulting sensible blue print for growth in the city. It would replace it with a hastily drafted and sweeping zoning amendment with little input from the community or consultation with experts which would create an open season for the developers, harm our environment, push out lower-income residents, result in the demolishing of existing homes, and transform neighborhoods. The Council should vote against or let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

I have lived most of my life in Cambridge - in various neighborhoods including Oxford Street, on Linnaean Street, off Upland Road, on Huron Avenue and now on Reservoir Street. 'So I have witnessed many beneficial changes in the city over more than 70 years.

At considerable expense and with the the dedication and time of its citizens and the time and expertise of its employees, Envision Cambridge was created to plan for the future. As part of the planning process Envision Cambridge assembled 115 community members into 7 working groups. These groups included The Housing Working Group " to address issues specific to housing, including affordability, supply, production, universal design, homelessness, emergency housing, and housing health and safety..."

In performing their work and in reaching recommendations for the future these groups reached thousands of citizens through social media, surveys, public meetings, focus groups etc. The Housing Group summarized their conclusions in part as follows:

"A balanced approach to development looks to direct and channel growth to those locations and districts where change would have the most positive impact at the same time preserving neighborhoods with stable patterns of development and enhancing attributes that help achieve our overall community goals. The first step is to take stock of the different districts and neighborhoods of

Cambridge. The following taxonomy broadly characterizes different parts of the city based on present-day conditions and the potential for future change:

Residential Neighborhoods

should be areas of low expected growth, largely retaining their existing fabric while allowing for complementary infill development, consistent with broader city goals. More varied, mixed-use development may occur along secondary transportation corridors.

Squares and Major Mixed-Use Corridors along Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street should grow at a moderate, measured pace that takes advantage of transit proximity and enhances their unique character and sense of place.

Higher Education Institutional Areas should grow primarily within their traditional core campuses, with more substantial campus additions adjacent to mixed-use areas and scaling down adjacent to traditional residential neighborhoods.

Transition Areas should accommodate development of varying types that creates an intermediate sense of scale between adjacent activities and emphasizes the benefits of proximate land uses.

Evolving Mixed-Use Districts, such as Kendall Square, North Point/Cambridge Crossing, and Alewife, should continue to accommodate the bulk of the city's growth and change, taking advantage of transit proximity, and positively transforming areas characterized by surface parking lots, automobile-oriented uses, and obsolete commercial buildings.

Residential Neighborhoods

Cambridge has many thriving residential neighborhoods, each with a unique character. Envision Cambridge recognizes that development should happen much more slowly and incrementally in these areas, and that the essence of each neighborhood is unlikely

to change. Such stability is a good thing for the livability of the city... Focus development along major commercial corridors, in order to fill the gaps in the street wall, improve the public realm, provide small retail and community spaces, expand walkability, and increase density near transit stations. "

The up-zoning petition simply ignores this sensible plan for growth, will likely destroy the character of neighborhoods and pours an accelerant on the explosive development Cambridge has experienced in the last 10 years including thousands of apartments in Alewife and Northpoint. We need sensible and planned growth which is managed by the city and its residents and based on carefully crafted zoning amendments ,drafted in consultation with experts and citizens and not created or controlled by the developers.

Sincerely,

John Gilmore

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carol Fishman <carollfishman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 11:54 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I STRONGLY urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring. Thank you. Carol Fishman

Erwin, Nicole

From: Howard Rice <howardrice@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 11:36 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Cambridge City Councilors:

The majority of those who support the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition, including all but one of you, believe Cambridge needs more affordable housing throughout our city.

The majority of those who oppose the petition, including Cambridge residents and voters like me, believe the same thing.

This fundamental broad-based agreement is being obscured by a shabby, vitriolic debate in which many on both sides accuse those on the other of bias, ignorance, incompetence, greed, bad faith and some even more unbecoming motivations.

Facts, analyses and their implications are in dispute. So too are the questions that already have been and still need to be answered. Neither side is learning, or even open to learning, anything from the other.

No sound, comprehensive, broadly supported and long-lasting solutions to our affordable housing needs can possibly emerge from this current dysfunctional, unproductive partisan process.

Council approval of the current petition followed, as it inevitably will be, by political upheaval, more nasty unproductive rhetoric and years of bitter, expensive litigation will set our city back not move us forward.

Neither side will win, while those current and future Cambridge residents most in need of affordable housing will feel the full brunt of our collective failure.

Given this now completely predictable and foreseeable reality, letting the current petition expire and then restarting the process in the spring must be viewed as the wisest and most prudent path forward. I hope you will choose it.

Sincerely,

Howard Rice
28 Meadow Way

Erwin, Nicole

From: Annie Michaelis <anniemichaelis@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 10:51 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please support multi-family housing in Cambridge!!

Dear City Council,

I am writing in appreciation of your continued hard work to increase multifamily housing and end exclusionary zoning -- this is so important to keep Cambridge a vibrant city and allow young families like mine to live here.

I treasure Cambridge for its diversity and the evidence is clear that such diversity will not continue to be possible without more affordable housing in the city. There's also increasingly strong evidence that the best way to increase affordable housing is to increase the total number of houses available (including both affordable units and market-rate units).

I'm impressed with the compromises you all have come to on the multifamily housing ordinance, and I hope you hold firm and fully adopt the proposal without any further amendments to water it down. In full transparency, I would have been more happy with the original ordinance *without* the new limitations on lot size and height, but I recognize that the Council is working hard to address concerns and the current amendments are part of building the coalition.

In speaking with friends and neighbors, I hear a ton of support for multifamily housing and reducing the burdens of exclusionary zoning -- we are so eager to see this ordinance pass and to watching our community grow and thrive rather than shrink and calcify.

Thank you for your work,
Annie Michaelis
175 Richdale Avenue, unit 105
Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Holly Aldrich <hollyaldrich4@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 10:39 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Erwin, Nicole

From: V Chris Sacha <vcsacha@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 10:32 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily housing

Hello,

I am a resident of Cambridge who has lived here for 4 years in various multi-family homes. I also went to school in Cambridge for 4 years, and I love the area. It is beautiful and fun, and I love being able to bike anywhere I need to go, or take the T into downtown easily.

I support the change in zoning laws, as more great companies pop up in Cambridge and surrounding areas, bringing in people who also want to live within biking or T-commuting distances to work. Rents are increasing exorbitantly with such a low supply of apartments, and each time they are raised out of price range, the dreadful task of trying to move in a city with such little apartment supply takes place.

We need more housing, and more affordable housing, and we shouldn't shy away from it.

Best,
Chris

249 Pearl St
Cambridge MA
02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: David Sullivan <davidesullivan77@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 10:30 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please support compromise multifamily housing zoning

Dear Honorable Councillors,

Please support the multifamily housing zoning proposal, reflecting the proposed compromise amendments. This compromise proposal strikes the right balance between the paramount need for more homes of all kinds in our city (and region) and the concerns expressed by some residents. Like all compromises, it is imperfect, but it rightly continues our city's national leadership on housing issues. It also preserves the necessary advantage for 100% affordable housing builders, important to me and many others. Thank you for your hard work to bring us here, and please continue. Happy New Year to all!

David E. Sullivan
16 Notre Dame Ave., North Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Annette LaMond <annettelamond@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 10:20 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Please Vote NO on Citywide Upzoning Petition

Dear Councillors,

We urge you NOT to proceed with a citywide multistory zoning ordinance that is fraught with questions regarding environment costs, infrastructure pressures, and uncertainties about who will benefit versus who will lose. Rather than going forward with a proposal that has so many open questions, please pause and bring in outside planning professionals who can develop alternative plans that spell out costs and benefits. With more study of options, the people of Cambridge will be able to form a constructive consensus. The proposal before you is not supposed by consensus.

Sincerely,

Annette LaMond & Joe Moore
7 Riedesel Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hunter Aldrich <hunteraldrich@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 10:01 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Good morning,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,

Hunter Aldrich
Field Street
Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Andrew Ray <aray97817@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 9:27 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Multifamily Housing Ordinance

Mayor Simmons, Vice Mayor McGovern, and Counsellors Azeem, Nolan, Siddiqui, Sobrinho–Wheeler, Toner, Wilson, and Zusy:

I am writing to express my fervent support as a Cambridge resident and homeowner for passing the Multifamily Housing Ordinance "4+2" plan **without amendment**. It is vital for continued economic growth in Cambridge (and throughout Greater Boston) that housing be available for both those of us already here and the people we need to bring in to support our universities and businesses.

While I personally was finally able to pull together enough money to purchase a home here in Cambridge, for many years, I was uncertain whether I would be able to stay in the city given the ever-increasing housing prices, and I know many people who feel the same way still. As rents continue their meteoric rise and the cost for even a modest condo continue to climb through the stratosphere, we begin to run a serious risk that our service workers, nurses, and students will be unable to remain in the region, which will cause great disruption to the local economy.

Please pass this absolutely crucial zoning update **without amendment** to ensure that the people we need to keep our economy running can continue living in Cambridge.

Respectfully,
Andrew Ray
Cambridge resident & homeowner

Erwin, Nicole

From: Andrew S. <ams125@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 8:00 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for citywide multi-story rezoning proposal

Dear City Council Members,

As a long-time resident, renter, and voter in the City of Cambridge, I'm writing to urge you to support the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. I appreciate the work that many of you have done to make housing more abundant, giving ample consideration to concerns voiced by those who oppose development. It's time to move forward and start making housing much more available.

As a renter in the city whose rent has increased considerably, I'm deeply concerned about this issue and plan to vote based on how my elected representatives address it. According to a November 2024 survey, two thirds of Cambridge residents agree that providing both more "market" and "subsidized" housing is "extremely important" to them, and another 15% believe it is "very important": <https://www.cambridgema.gov/publications/documents/residentsurvey/2024residentsurveyresults>.

Opponents of development will always voice concerns of some sort, whether environmental, historic, or otherwise. These are reasonable concerns to hear out, but they have a track record over the decades of serving to block housing development to the point that we are now in an affordability crisis. We cannot continue to let this issue fester out of a misguided desire for further "review" and "consultation." Enough!

I urge you to support the multi-story re-zoning proposal and all other measures that will make housing -- both market rate and subsidized -- more abundant.

Many thanks for your good work.

Sincerely,

Andrew M. Solomon
3 Linnaean Street, Apt 42
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Moore, Claire <claire.moore@tufts.edu>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 7:18 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Council,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you,

Claire Moore
20 Meacham Road
Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Elissa Warner <eewarner88@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, January 6, 2025 6:22 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Toner, Paul; McGovern, Marc
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: up zoning objection to the current proposition for creating more affordable housing

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.”

We need more housing. Everyone agrees on that issue. How do we get there? Everyone has different ideas. You, as city councilors etc have the choice to ignore the opposing voices to your current plan or you can make the choice to respect other’s opinions even though we as different neighborhoods have no legal recourse.

**Elissa Warner
Cambridge resident of many different neighborhoods over the past 40 years**

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Cooke <susanmcooke@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 10:27 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Cambridge Multi-Story Rezoning Petition

I have provided the City Council with previous emails expressing my concerns about the rezoning petition. As I understand it, another “compromise” version is being prepared that would provide for four story buildings as a matter of right across the entire city, with six stories allowed where a building includes affordable units (what “affordable” means is unclear), along with certain modifications to the setback and lot size requirements and a review every five years to determine the impact of the rezoning provisions.

I am very concerned that the latest version is another ill-considered attempt to impose upzoning on a substantial portion of Cambridge now zoned for one and two family housing without taking into account the effect of additional housing already being built along transit corridors, the adverse traffic and parking impacts associated with the newly allowed structures, the displacement of existing renters where developers opt for more upscale housing, and the detrimental environmental and aesthetic impacts associated with reduction or elimination of what residential green spaces we now have, not to mention the lack of input from urban planning experts in future developments and, most important, the desires of the citizens of Cambridge who elected the Council members without benefit of a thorough vetting of their plans to impose upzoning on our entire city.

You are not making a sausage. You should have undertaken an open and rigorous process, as would be expected at the state and federal level for major changes such as this, where draft and final reports identifying the positive and negative effects of such proposed changes are described and weighed and the most appropriate alternative is identified, and where a significant amount of time is provided for public input after dissemination of both the draft and final reports. An after-the-fact five year review that may be included in the “compromise” proposal is no substitute, particularly where urban planning input going forward is being jettisoned in favor of four to six story developments as a matter of right.

Finally, my review of how well upzoning measures have worked in other cities indicates that the results have been a mixed bag and not the uniform success story touted by some. Please think carefully before you act on a zoning change with such a profound impact upon the environment of our unique and beloved city.

Susan M. Cooke
A Cambridge Homeowner

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Erica Yuen <erica.yuen1996@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 10:07 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: End exclusionary zoning NOW.

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to strongly urge you to pass the ordinance ending exclusionary zoning without further amendment or delay.

As a 10-year Cambridge resident renting out of Central Square and working in Cambridge, and a graduate of both undergraduate and graduate programs here, I have deep roots in this community. But those roots are being forcibly torn out by our housing catastrophe.

I hope to raise a family here in a stable home environment, start building home equity and plan to live here long term. However, that seems more and more impossible with the skyrocketing home prices.

Let me be crystal clear: The current market is actively destroying our community. Two-bedroom condos now demand \$1.5-2M with \$10,000 monthly payments - requiring either inherited wealth or stable top 1% income of \$500,000+. This is not just unsustainable - it is unconscionable.

The rental market is equally dire. In the past year alone, I have watched three friends - highly educated, hardworking professionals, some with young children - forced out of Cambridge by explosive rent increases. This mass exodus of families and professionals is decimating our community fabric.

Despite advanced degrees, lucrative careers, and aggressive saving, my partner and I may face the same fate. No amount of financial planning or career advancement can keep pace with these astronomical costs. The constant threat of displacement in the future has become my primary source of stress and anxiety.

I challenge you to answer: What future does Cambridge envision when even high-earning professionals cannot put down roots here? When young families live in perpetual fear of displacement? When small businesses and diverse communities - the very essence of Cambridge's vibrancy - are systematically priced out?

We need decisive action now. This isn't just about housing - it's about preserving the diverse, dynamic community that makes Cambridge special. The ordinance before you is a crucial step toward addressing this crisis.

I strongly encourage you to vote in favor of ending exclusionary zoning. Your immediate action on this vote will demonstrate whether you truly serve all Cambridge residents, or only the wealthy few.

I cannot emphasize this enough - **the Cambridge housing market is in crisis, and we need swift and decisive action to build affordable housing now without any further debate or delay.**

Thank you,
Erica Yuen

Erwin, Nicole

From: Emily Carolyn Goldsmith <ecgoldsmith@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 9:24 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support for multifamily housing

I am a Cambridge resident who has lived in Cambridge for over a decade as both a renter and now as a homeowner. I am writing in support of multifamily housing. I have seen many friends leave Cambridge as it has become increasingly unaffordable. My husband and I are raising our children here and are fortunate to own a home. We are concerned that it is no longer a place where young families can stay and support all efforts to increase housing units and affordability. I grew up in the Boston area in a multifamily unit and I'd like to see Cambridge have more of these housing units available.

Sincerely,
Emily Goldsmith
Allston Street, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Masato Kocberber <mkocberber@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 8:57 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support for compromise zoning ammendment

Dear council,

I am a Cambridge resident and I am writing to show my strong support for zoning up to 6 stories within residential parts of Cambridge.

I support the creation of more housing in order to help alleviate our housing crisis. I also support the creation of more modern housing that can meet the accessibility needs of our population in a way that continually renovating a 100 year old structure can't.

I want to share a story about who may live in these units. When my father retired, he wanted to move closer to his grand kids. He would have loved to move to Cambridge, but he has bad knees and elevator buildings are rare here. Luckily, he found a new construction elevator building near Coolidge Corner of the size that would be allowed with this zoning change.

Yes, the new construction units are expensive, but the residents are not the investor that the opponents of this zoning claim. Every other resident is a senior who moved from a Boston suburb, selling their single family to down size and move closer to their kids and grand kids who live in the city.

Allowing 4-6 story buildings is about allowing residents to remain in our neighborhoods even as they age and their needs grow, while also opening up more housing for the next generation to flourish here.

Thank you,
Masato Kocberber
Allston St, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: biba@igc.org
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 8:46 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please let the current multi-family upzoning petition expire and begin again in the spring

Dear City Councillors,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to *oppose the citywide multi-family upzoning petition as it currently stands*.

Although I support the goal of removing multi-family zoning restrictions throughout the city, there continues to be far too many unresolved questions and concerns with the current proposed ordinance. Please, this is too important to rush. I ask the council to allow the current proposal to expire and start again in the spring. Then, let's utilize the skills of independent, experienced housing and urban planning professionals to *help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do* without pushing out renters & lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, harming our vital tree canopy & environment, or transforming our neighborhoods into unrecognizable wind tunnels as now seen in parts of Austin, TX, Washington, DC, and our own Kendall Square.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

D. Biba

20 Newell St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dan Totten <dantotten@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 8:06 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: citywide re-zoning

Dear City Council,

I'm writing as someone who worked extensively throughout 2024 to help craft a zoning compromise. By the city's own projections, the CHJC proposal would result in 95% of net new units and a larger number of inclusionary units while dramatically reducing displacement. I remain open to the idea of a conditional upzoning that applies only to projects with inclusionary housing.

After many community discussions, I cannot support the 4+2 option. Attempting to address the injustice of single-family-only zoning by broadly upzoning the entire city for market-rate housing, including neighborhoods like Riverside and The Port, is a mistake. Changes to the base zoning in these denser areas exclusively benefit the wealthiest people while actively harming vulnerable communities. Upzoning must be conditional upon providing affordable housing. That's the only compromise I'm open to.

I am also deeply concerned by the rushed timeline. Pushing through amendments just days before the holidays left no room for meaningful public input. While I appreciate the council allowing comment on a late item, this process falls short of the transparency and deliberation our community deserves. The artificial deadline imposed by Chapter 40A is no excuse—new petitions can be filed at any time.

I appreciate Solicitor Glowa's memo that the letter of the open meeting law was adhered to, but the council has certainly been flirting with the spirit of that law.

Many of you were elected on pledges to prioritize our most vulnerable residents. I was proud to have worked on the AHO amendments, which legalized taller and denser buildings when they are 100% affordable. That policy demonstrated a clear commitment to equity. But now, this council is poised to undo that work by offering similar advantages to for-profit developers. Why move in this direction?

Finally, I am still thinking about the proposed concept of decreasing the inclusionary percentage from 20% to 10%. It seems like councillors have backed off, but I can't help but wonder whether the conversation will come right back as soon as some version of the zoning passes. I'd be foolish to think that it couldn't possibly happen, right?

I remain committed to working on a compromise that achieves nearly all the projected net new units, increases affordable housing, and minimizes displacement. However, the current proposal is unacceptable. I urge you to revisit the CHJC proposal and center equity and affordability in any zoning changes.

Sincerely,

Dan Totten
market renter in The Port
54 Bishop Allen Drive



Erwin, Nicole

From: Frank Solomon <solomon@mit.edu>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 8:01 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: the zoning proposal

Dear Council members

I cannot attend the Council meeting on January 8 because of a prior obligation.

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the zoning proposal presently under discussion - 4 stories by right, 6 stories if 20% of the units meet a means test.

The aims of zoning at this time in the city must be to preserve diversity — as judged by many parameters — in the city. For reasons made obvious by the Institute for Health and Recovery, this plan will profoundly suppress availability of affordable housing as judged by realistic assessments of demand and distribution of income levels.

I implore you to slow down and focus on the long term interests of the City, Sincerely, Frank Solomon.
71 Vassal Lane.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Christine Tessier <cptessier12@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 7:41 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Christine Tessier

Erwin, Nicole

From: rob_everts@igc.org
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 7:41 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Still NO to the citywide multi-story rezoning petition

Dear Councilors,

After reviewing the modest recent adjustments to this upzoning proposal, I remain firmly against it and urge you to vote no. There remain far too many unresolved issues and I ask you to just let the current proposal expire. Then we can start again in the spring, hopefully with the benefit of outside independent professionals to help achieve what we need it to achieve without pushing out lower-income residents, harming the environment, demolishing many more existing homes and transforming beyond recognition current neighborhoods. Surely, the council can do better than this.

Thank you for your consideration.

Rob Everts
20 Newell St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Paul Farrell <pfarrellcamb@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 6:59 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcGovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Citywide rezoning: make it harder to build high-square-footage luxury housing

The main concern I have with the development of housing in Cambridge is the replacement of existing buildings, or new construction, with large (3,000 SF+) single family houses. This is happening all over Strawberry Hill. Make it easier to build or renovate, but put limits on the easing of FAR and height etc if the house will exceed 3,000 sf per family.

Thanks,

Paul Farrell 63 Holworthy Street

pfarrellcamb@gmail.com

617-548-3900

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alex Riina <alex.riina@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 6:55 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Writing in support of multifamily housing

I support this proposal because it is a step in the right direction and a palatable compromise but I would support further work to dismantle our complex and restrictive zoning framework.

Alex Riina
19 Cameron Ave, Cambridge, MA 02140 which is in violation of so many current zoning laws that it'd be hard to list them all

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sue W. <clarewentworth@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 6:55 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

The petition is ill-conceived, rash, and profoundly divisive. As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan *that will do what we really need it to do* without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,
Sue Wentworth
19 Brown St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carolyn Fuller <carolyn.fuller2018@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 5:46 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please Support Multifamily Housing

Dear City Councilors,

For decades, exclusionary zoning has banned apartments on a third of Cambridge's land and made it very difficult to build them anywhere else in the city. As the Cambridge's job market has grown, more and more people are competing in a housing market that is frozen, causing rents to go through the roof. The high housing costs are driving up homelessness and driving people out of the city and often out of the state. My own son who was born and raised in Cambridge and works in Cambridge but he can't afford to live in Cambridge!

Please end exclusionary zoning and support the multifamily housing proposal. Please allow up to six-story apartments in every Cambridge neighborhood.

Carolyn Fuller
carolyn.fuller2018@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Isaac Frank <isaacfrank@brandeis.edu>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 5:28 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: multi family zoning proposal

To the city council,

I support the multi family zoning proposal. I am graduating soon and if I get a job in the area it would be nice to afford a home nearby.

Sincerely,
Isaac Frank

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dan Sprague <d.a.sprague@outlook.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 5:20 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: YES on city up zoning

Dear City Council,

This council as an aggregate was elected with a clear mandate from the *electorate* to work towards resolving the housing crisis in the city. You are the government of Cambridge — **not** a homeowners association. It is your job to govern for the betterment of the city. So far, the city has pursued policy that has succeeded in:

1. Making its residents poorer via exorbitant rents
2. Segregating residents based on wealth
3. Maintaining extremely low-quality housing stock
4. Splintering families, neighborhoods, and communities as those deemed economically unworthy are forced to move away

Cambridge is not a museum. Pass this reform which, at this point, is the least the city can do.

Thanks,
Daniel Sprague
22 Cottage Park Ave
Cambridge MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Tamar Zimmerman <tamarzimmerman@hotmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 5:10 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Aysha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: For Re-consideration of the Current Up-zoning Proposal

Dear Members of the Planning Board,

I am writing to support the expansion of affordable housing opportunities in Cambridge AND in support of a wise and well-informed plan to make that a reality.

I lived for 26 years at 18 Ware Street, a 4-story rental apartment building, and now own a home with my husband on Larchwood Drive. I worked for almost 40 years as a landscape architect on public projects, many in Cambridge. I know that the public process can be divisive. The demonization of current homeowners on one side, and the exaggerated computer renderings of future development fiascos on the other, are not helpful.

I believe it is possible to come up with a plan, and this must be done with professional input – including that of urban planners, architects, transportation professionals and landscape architects. We are planning not just for more housing, but for a livable city with functional circulation and services - and for climate resilience.

Allowing developers to make these decisions is an abdication of responsibility to ourselves and to the future of our city.

I've observed that new housing is currently being constructed in several locations, and that's heartening. Delays are often perceived as obstruction, but in this case I urge the Board to re-visit some earlier ideas (such as the Corridors and Squares,) take the time to include professionals in the process, and modify the plan based on best practices.

We have so much to gain by doing this right.

Thank you for your consideration,

Tamar Zimmerman
37 Larchwood Drive
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gerburg Wulf <wulfgerburg@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 3:59 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: No upzoning!

Dear City Councillors:

I am a Cambridge resident. I strongly encourage you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues surrounding the proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan to do what we need without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, or transforming neighborhoods. The council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Gerburg Wulf

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dominick Jones <dj@dominick-jones.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 3:48 PM
To: McGovern, Marc; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Simmons, Denise; City Clerk; Azeem, Burhan; Nolan, Patricia; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Subject: Oppose upzoning

We are landlords in a 4-unit frame house and are very worried to think that the City is abandoning its role in city planning to developers who have no interest but profit. I have no objection to profit, but as of right development is insane if we want to keep the City a place where people want to live. In particular, we feel threatened by the one size fits all evidence that we see springing up on Route 2. The day will come when the tech pressure is over, and there will be a flight from Cambridge which will have become merely a human inventory.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Patty Zerhusen <patty.zerhusen@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 3:41 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Rezoning

To the City Clerk:

"As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring."

Sincerely, Patty Zerhusen

[Patty Zerhusen](#)
Educator/Designer/Maker
617-501-1683



Erwin, Nicole

From: Nina Coslov <ninacoslov@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 3:35 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge voter/resident, I urge you to oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. The current plan benefits those who are not a part of our community (developers) and do not care about the changes and impacts these projects will have on the character, infrastructure and functioning of our city.

We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

Please, let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Nina Coslov
28 Meadow Way

Erwin, Nicole

From: Cynthia Broner <broner.cynthia@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 2:30 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Citywide upzoning: Please vote NO

I write to add my voice to the chorus strongly urging you, as members of the City Council, to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. While I support the goal of creating more housing in our city, too many issues and questions surround the proposed ordinance. The developers who are hungrily eyeing our neighborhoods care about profits, not about the livability of our city. I ask the Council to look to independent outside urban planners to help analyze how we can achieve our shared goal without demolishing existing homes and challenging our already challenged environment.

I live adjacent to the distinctively beautiful and serene Larches neighborhood. The installation of bike lanes already has transformed our historic area of West Cambridge, displacing the cars formerly accommodated on Brattle Street and moving them onto the side streets. I am distressed to imagine the further negative impact of the current proposal.

I ask Council to let the current proposal expire and start again to fully consider how we might best create additional housing in Cambridge without such drastic, misguided measures.

Cynthia Broner
246 Brattle Street, Unit 11, Cambridge 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Steve Sands <sandsmsteven@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 2:07 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: NewStartNeeded

Dear City councillors:

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you !

Steven Sands

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lynne Reiss <lreiss82@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 1:46 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

We need more housing for low and middle-class people but the current plans on the table will only create bigger problems. Thoughtful planning regarding environmental and neighborhood impact **at the front end** is vital.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,

Lynne Reiss
76 Oxford St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jenny Netzer <jennynetzer@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 12:14 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: In Support of Multifamily "Upzoning"

I am a long-time Cambridge homeowner in favor of proposed plans to allow construction of more multifamily housing everywhere in Cambridge. I would be supportive of amendments providing additional height and density for building that include affordable units, but not of amendments that impose additional restrictions on those seeking to build more multifamily housing. I have worked on affordable housing issues nationwide for over 30 years and I know that zoning restrictions are the single biggest obstacle to increasing the housing supply where it is most needed. I know that the proposed changes could affect the nature of my neighborhood but it's time for those of us who lucked into the housing market when prices were lower to make room for everyone else.

Jenny Netzer
57 Crescent Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hilary Bracken <hilary.bracken@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 11:40 AM
To: McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Simmons, Denise
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Zoning!

I have been a Cambridge resident since 1971...and am profoundly distressed by the proposed tall overlay, without regard to setbacks, parking needs, without respect to what Cambridge is. I very much support good low income housing and also wonder about the need for better regional transportation and I also wonder about the rumor that the bicycle lobby is in cahoots with the developers??? Could this be true?

I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Hilary McGhee

Erwin, Nicole

From: Niels Peetz-Larsen <n.peetzlarsen@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 9:59 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Letter from a Cambridge resident against rezoning petition

Dear Councillors,

I hope this email finds you enjoying a nice start to the year. I wanted to reach out and communicate my feelings about the rezoning petition.

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thanks so much.

**Best,
Niels Peetz-Larsen
105 Larchwood Drive
Cambridge, MA 02138**

Erwin, Nicole

From: Serena Wilkie Gifford <serenagifford@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 8:56 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Cambridge City Council,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you for your consideration,
Serena

Serena Wilkie Gifford
617 448 9099

Erwin, Nicole

From: Chad Bonney <chadbonney@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 8:00 AM
To: Charles Bonney
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Frustration with multistory rezoning process

Dear Council Member,

As a longtime Cambridge resident (and owner of a multi-family property), I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing.

The proposal as stands feels reckless and driven by an ideological build-at-any-cost mindset. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

We ARE adding affordable housing and the population of our city has grown materially (from 100k to 120k) since 2000. This is important context - this is not NIMBY-ism,

Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Regards
Charles Bonney
52 Foster Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: MARISA FRATINI <mfratini@aol.com>
Sent: Sunday, January 5, 2025 7:55 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Erwin, Nicole

From: suebell20@gmail.com
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 9:13 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; 'Susan Stewart'
Subject: Cambridge citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

Dear Council:

I am writing as a resident of Cambridge, owning a home in “The Larches”, a historic Cambridge neighborhood that is like all of the City, threatened by irresponsible decisions of the Council.

I am not alone in voicing concern over what seems to be an extremely short sighted and uninformed rush to wipe out zoning protections in all of Cambridge. These protections are not in place to prevent growth of more affordable, or even any more housing in the city, nor are they in place only to serve homeowners like me. They preserve a sense of place, of history, of healthy and verdant environments in which to live and prosper. Cambridge is a wonderful city with the benefit of both university, arts and business influences that feed us intellectually, scientifically, and personally.

To suggest a citywide change in zoning that would allow rampant and irresponsible building and stress on our infrastructure and services willfully ignores all that this brings to those in the community. Shame on those of you who are pushing this forward without the benefit of doing the research and creating thoughtful approaches to the goal of access to Cambridge. I do not recall that this sweeping and irresponsible act of governance was part of any of your campaigns – you would not likely be in your positions now if the citizens of Cambridge had any idea this was your agenda.

Please consider the injury to this community that any rash and expansive action such as that proposed would impart. It is not your right to make such disruptive and irreversible change to Cambridge and the lives of its residents.

Susan Stewart, JD LLM
62 Larchwood Drive
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: HELEN ABRAHAM <helen.abraham@verizon.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 8:18 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly request you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Again, I would very much appreciate your dropping this proposal. If you want to continue and try again, please get help in the spring, and be seriously responsive to the concerns of the people in our neighborhoods.

Thank you, Helen Abraham

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Julius Fister <jcfister@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 7:17 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Oppose Citywide Up-zoning

Dear Council Members-

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely-

Julius Fister

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lynn Shirey <lynnmshirey@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 5:29 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

In addition to our quality of life in general, parking, traffic, solar panels and trees will be compromised if this proposal goes through. I urge you to find other ways to reduce housing costs such as rent stabilization.

Sincerely,
Lynn Shirey
32 Donnell St, Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Rosalind Michahelles <rosalind@dominick-jones.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 5:21 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: NO on upzoning petition!

Dear Councillors ~~

A Cambridge resident for 35 years, I beg you to vote NO on the re-zoning petition. Destroying functional buildings, evicting those tenants, taking down trees in a higgledy-piggledy way driven by developers and not serious town planning is a mistake for the community.

Please let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Rosalind Michahelles, Hurlbut Street

--

Rosalind Michahelles
617-491-3239
rosalind@dominick-jones.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Laura Houlette <lhoulette@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 5:06 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Council Members,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,
Laura Houlette
11 Newman St
Cambridge, MA
01240

Erwin, Nicole

From: Andy Zucker <andyzucker@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 4:45 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Up-zoning is neither necessary nor desirable

It seems fine to me to allow multi-family housing anywhere in Cambridge. **Beyond that, I urge the Council to be thoughtful and resist pressures to take extreme measures, which are neither needed nor likely to succeed.**

The idea that Cambridge can be affordable to a great many more people is not backed up by research. Is San Francisco affordable? Or New York? We cannot build enough in Cambridge to meet demand. If we build excessively, transportation will be worse and open space per resident will decline.

The real housing bottleneck is not Cambridge. It is Milton, Lexington, Belmont, Arlington, Watertown and the other localities with smaller percentages of affordable housing than Cambridge.

It seems clear that a great deal of new housing will be built in Cambridge **without** any further upzoning. Let that happen but don't make it more difficult for residents to have a say in what gets built -- even though experience tells us that people want buildings to fit well in their neighborhood.

Andy Zucker
35 Winslow Street
Cambridge MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ethan Frank <ethandf2@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 3:58 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: The Planning Board's support for multifamily zoning

To the City Council,

The planning board is in strong support of the petition's goals, though some members have concerns. Here are the concerns from the report, showing which have been addressed by the amendments:

- Height (Resolved with 4 + 2 & minimum lot size)
- Setbacks (Resolved with 5' setbacks)
- Open space
- Development Review
- ~~Affordable Housing Overlay~~ (Resolved with 9 stories max height in neighborhoods)

If the planning board met to discuss the amended proposal, it wouldn't be unfair to say they strongly support it (with some mixed views on open space and special permit requirements). I'm in agreement with that view, and I'll reiterate my opinion that 30% open space is sufficient with the green score and tree protection ordinances, and 75,000 ft² is necessary to prevent the weaponization of special permits.

Sincerely,
Ethan Frank
632 Mass Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ryan Houlette <houlette@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 3:27 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the citywide upzoning petition

Dear Councillor,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will increase affordable housing without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, or allowing developers to run roughshod over the needs of our city. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,
Ryan Houlette
11 Newman St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alina Vrabioiu <alinavrabioiu@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 3:15 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Subject: Fwd: Upzoning
Attachments: image0.jpeg

Dear council members,

I am a Cambridge resident writing to you from Bucharest, Romania while visiting my parents. I urge you to think long and deeply about the implications of the proposed up zoning.

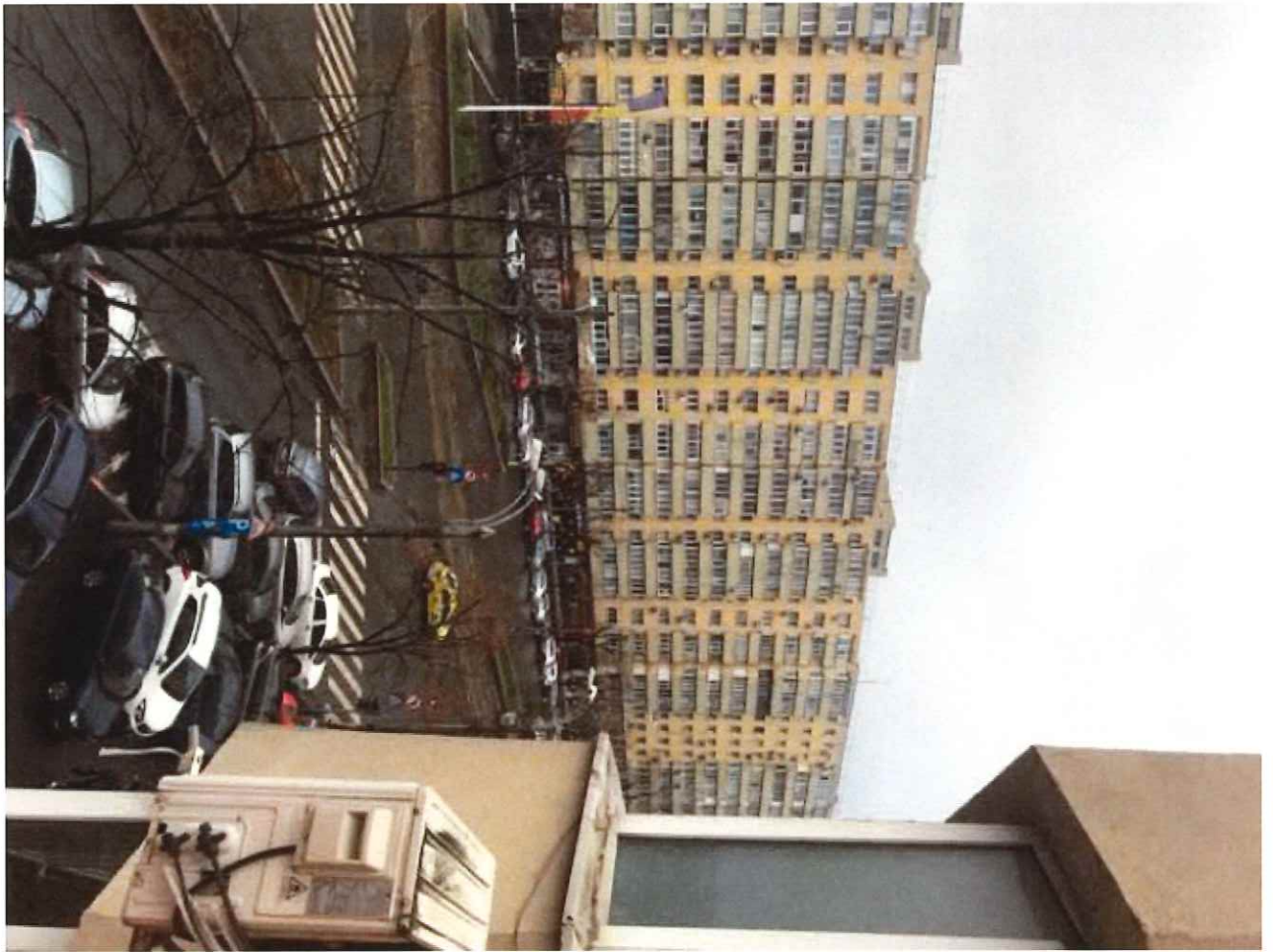
Bucharest used to be a beautiful city, the little Paris of the east. Houses and small buildings were demolished to make room for tall apartment buildings, as you see in the attached picture:

This is a city with incredibly good public transportation, but in the initial planing stage, 40 years ago, personal cars were not considered...so the only available parking is on the street and the side walk. You can see though that streets are very wide compared to the streets in Cambridge, allowing for such an arrangement. In the summer, the concrete radiates an incredible amount of heat, the outside thermometer routinely reads 45 degrees Celsius. Some people have gotten used to these temperatures, but the people who can afford to move have moved out of the city.

I grew up in these apartment buildings, but I had the privilege to be accepted as an undergrad to MIT on a 'full ride' (sort of, the package included a loan that took me a while to repay). I write to you not without compassion, but with an understanding that without good planing and consideration, a city character/uniqueness can be erased, and not to the bettering of its residents. Please preserve our unique neighborhoods! The future generations will thank you!

Alina Vrabioiu
76 Fresh Pond Lane
Cambridge MA 02138

Sent from my iPhone



Erwin, Nicole

From: rtw windman.com <rtw@windman.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 3:06 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposed to upzoning petition; please vote no

You are my elected representative and I implore you to reject the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

It is not well thought through and will create more problems than it may resolve, leaving Cambridge wounded and reduced.

Of course we need, as do all flourishing cities, to provide housing and that does mean building up, but we need to do it responsibly, logically and on appropriate sites.

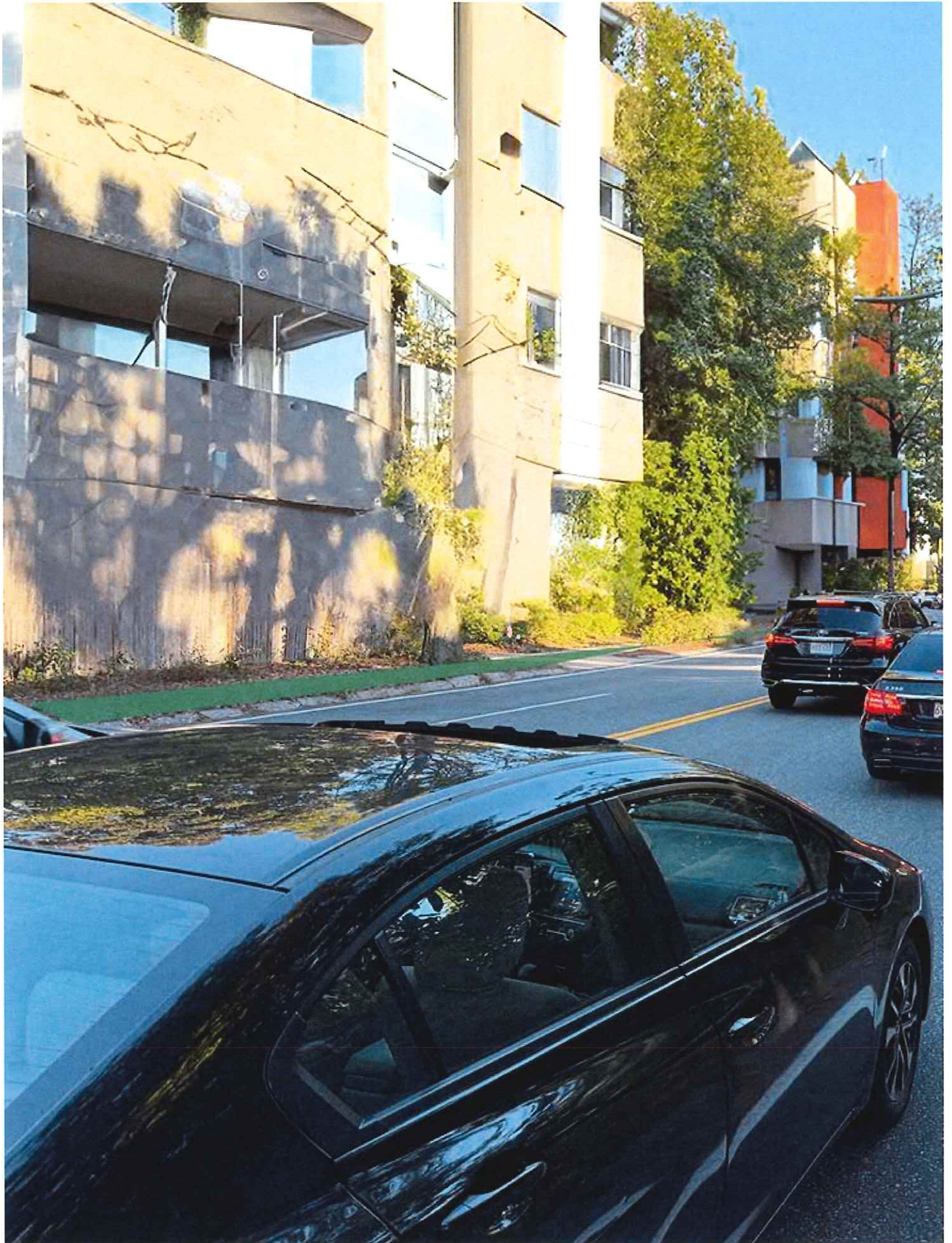
We need independent expertise that to help draft a plan that will do what we really need to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods into degraded corridors.

This would happen if six story multi family dwellings are permitted by right.

Cambridge neighborhood as it exists today.



Same photograph altered accurately to show six story structures with minimal setback permitted by right under new proposal.



The sweet smell of profits attracts developers with no stake in the welfare of the city and already many of us are receiving phone calls from these agents pressuring us to sell our homes to them. Imagine the feeding frenzy if radical up-zoning is approved.

Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you for your consideration,
Russell Windman

"When we try to pick out anything by itself we find it hitched to everything else in the Universe"--John Muir

=====

<https://www.windman.com>

Russ Windman
78 Fresh Pond Parkway
Cambridge MA
02138
617 413 5200

Erwin, Nicole

From: Michael Volles <mvolles2@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 3:02 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Opposed to upzoning

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

**-Mike Volles
76 Fresh Pond Ln**

Erwin, Nicole

From: Orwicz, Michael <michael.orwicz@uconn.edu>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 2:37 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; mmcgovern@cambridema.gov; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: City Council Zoning Initiative

Dear Cambridge City Councilor,

As a long-term resident of Cambridge, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are simply too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We clearly need outside ***independent professionals*** to help reconceptualize and draft a responsible and balanced plan that will do what our city really needs to do ***without damaging our*** environment, throwing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and forever transforming neighborhoods.

I wholeheartedly appeal to the Council to let the current proposal expire and to start over in the spring.

Sincerely,

Michael Orwicz

--

Dr. Michael R. Orwicz
21 Lee Street
Cambridge, MA. 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ruth Perry <rperry@mit.edu>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 2:23 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillor,

I am a longtime Cambridge resident, and I know we need more low-cost housing in this city. But I strongly urge you to oppose the wide open, carte blanche, unconsidered multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues involved in the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need independent and creative professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. The Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely yours,

Ruth Perry
Ann Fetter Friedlaender Professor of Humanities, Emeritus
MacVicar Faculty Fellow
14N-238
MIT
Cambridge, MA 02139
Sent from the traditional land of the Massachusett, Nipmuck, and Wampanoag people

Erwin, Nicole

From: Nancy Keeler <keeler.nancy@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 1:52 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Robert Camacho <musicamach@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 1:51 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

1/4/2025

Cambridge City Council, City Manager, City Clerk,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge the Council members to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are way too many unresolved questions and issues around the latest currently proposed ordinance to create more housing. In fact I consider the petition as it stands now to be amateurish. How many times has this proposal and other proposals generated by council members or city employees in thrall to the real estate development community been proposed, modified, re-modified, again re-modified, changed, withdrawn, and re-submitted constantly, to the point of absolute amateurism we now stand.

I find it incredibly ironic that in Cambridge, Massachusetts, the home of Harvard, MIT and numerous other universities and schools of higher learning, that if the council members making these endlessly changing proposals were still students and these endlessly changed petitions were term papers or theses, they would all FAIL.

It is more than painfully obvious that Cambridge desperately needs outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without further harming and devastating our environment, ejecting lower-income residents, needlessly demolishing existing homes, and harmfully transforming neighborhoods.

This council should let the currently inept and amateurish proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Robert Camacho, 24 Corporal Burns Rd. Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Felicia Brady-Lopez <fbrady24@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 1:22 PM
To: Felicia Brady-Lopez
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please oppose the multi-family rezoning petition

Dear City Council members,

I live at 158 Pleasant Street. I'm writing to strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition, let the current proposal expire, and start again in the spring.

There are unresolved issues around the current proposed ordinance. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we need it to do without pushing out lower-income residents, transforming neighborhoods, harming our environment, and demolishing existing homes.

I urge you to oppose the petition.

Thank you,

Felicia Brady-Lopez
617-794-8908

Erwin, Nicole

From: 7fish <sevenfish.ccb@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 1:15 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

I know this is a long shot and many of you have been voting for this type of rezoning. But we can do better. Please try again.

Thank you,
C. Barrett
44 Clarendon Avenue

Erwin, Nicole

From: Philip Trackman <phlptrack@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:41 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and destroying neighborhoods and what makes Cambridge a desirable place to live. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you for your attention.

Philip C Trackman
13 Ash Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: wsimmers <wsimmers@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:35 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

The current proposal is environmentally unsound. Without strict controls, Cambridge will head downhill. As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

William Simmers
8 Alpine Street
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: gcsimmers <gcsimmers@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:21 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,

Guillemette Simmers
8 Alpine Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: donald.giller@comcast.net
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:10 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Council Members:

As Cambridge residents at 177 Pemberton Street, Unit 4, we strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition that is before you. Too many unresolved questions and issues exist around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside, independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you.

--Pam and Don Giller

Erwin, Nicole

From: ANNE LESLIE <annelesl@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:09 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; City Clerk
Subject: Up-Zoning Petition

As a Cambridge resident of more than 40 years, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are many unresolved issues in connection with the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. I remain unconvinced that this measure solves the housing crisis for low income tenants or homeowners. It would appear to be a bonanza, however, for developers, which too often has been the case in Cambridge.

What is sorely needed here is a housing plan crafted by independent professionals that take into account, first of all, the city's climate crisis response and one that would prevent demolition of existing housing that could push out lower income residents. I'm concerned also about losing our tree cover, air quality. Cambridge has been a city unique for its close-knit neighborhood living. This proposal would virtually destroy those natural amenities. The Council should let this current proposal expire so that we can start over in the Spring with an independent review and with all voices heard and taken into account.

Anne Leslie
151 Fayerweather St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Donna <newborns1@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 11:57 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Councilor,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you for your attention to this very urgent matter,

Donna Karl
72 Montgomery Street

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pattie Maes <pattie@media.mit.edu>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 11:56 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; Patricia Maes
Subject: we urge you to oppose the rezoning petition

As 30 year Cambridge residents, we strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Patricia Maes & Karl Sims

7 Lowell St

Cambridge, MA 01238

Erwin, Nicole

From: Elizabeth Coxe <ecoxe@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 11:50 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

I totally support the following paragraph from the CCC which summarizes where we are so clearly. Please vote NO!
Thank you,
Elizabeth Coxe

"As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring."

Erwin, Nicole

From: Graham, William A. <wgraham@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 11:49 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Sirs/Mesdames;

I am a longtime Cambridge resident and am writing ahead of today's meetings to ask that you DO NOT approve the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. It is a clumsy, hasty, and misguided project that will not do what its proponents claim it will with regard to the actual housing needs of Cantabridgians who are currently being squeezed out of our city. I am appalled that no outside professionals have been involved in this clumsy and potentially disastrous proposal. This is especially unfortunate, as it will likely have only negative effects on lower-income citizens, existing housing, liveable neighborhoods, and our environment. The Council should act responsibly and sensibly and let the current proposal expire so that a new start on the problems that need solving can be made this coming spring.

Thank you,
William Graham
68 Avon Hill St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Stuart Gedal <sgedal@icloud.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 11:22 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Councillor:

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing.

We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

The Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Stuart Gedal
72 Montgomery Street
Longtime voter and home owner;
former VISTA (CityYear) tenant organizer and low-income housing consultant to community-based programs as staff of Urban Planning Aid, Inc., a federally-funded Urban Design Center based in Central Square.

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Tami Lieberman <tami@mit.edu>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 10:50 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote YES on upzoning petition

Dear council members,

As a resident of neighborhood nine, I urge you to vote FOR the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. This is an exciting and important piece of legislation for maintaining a middle class in Cambridge, and I believe it will be an important part of Cambridge's history.

Tami Lieberman

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hadley, Shelagh <shadley@bu.edu>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 10:36 AM
To: City Clerk; City Council; City Manager
Subject: Stop the rush to re-zone Cambridge

As a longtime Cambridge resident voter, I strongly urge the Council to oppose the current citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are still far too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. Why the rush?

We may need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what Cambridge really needs it to do – but without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming our neighborhoods.

Please oppose this senseless rush and let the current proposal expire, and start over again in the spring.

**Thank you,
Shelagh Hadley**

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bordeianou, Liliana G.,MD <LBORDEIANOU@mgh.harvard.edu>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 10:36 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please oppose the multi -story rezoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to **oppose** the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do, without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Liliana Bordeianou
78 Fresh Pond Lane

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Erwin, Nicole

From: steve_fitzsimmons@comcast.net
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 10:31 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; City Clerk
Subject: The citywide multi-story rezoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition as it is now written.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. Rather, such a plan should seek to achieve affordable housing goals but at the same time to avoid harming our environment, creating parking problems on many of our streets, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do, taking into account what has been learned about such zoning plans tried around the country over the past 75 years. Cambridge should not repeat the mistakes that have been made, and avoid the massive problems created by implement poorly thought-out plans.

The Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you,
Stephen Fitzsimmons
Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Meredith PL <m.peetzlarsen@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 10:18 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Email against rezoning

Dear Councillors,

I hope this email finds you enjoying a nice start to the year. I wanted to reach out and communicate my feelings about the rezoning petition.

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thanks so much.

**Best,
Meredith Peetz-Larsen
105 Larchwood Drive
Cambridge, MA 02138**

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bartholet, Elizabeth <ebarthol@law.harvard.edu>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 9:55 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Upzoning issues

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Elizabeth Bartholet, 10 Farwel Pl, Cambridge, MA 02138

Morris Wasserstein Prof. of Law, Emeritus
Harvard Law School
<https://bartholet.wpengine.com/>

Erwin, Nicole

From: pandelis karayorgis <pkarayorgis@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 9:31 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Pandelis Karayorgis
27 Valentine Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Danielle Jankowich <danigray1@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 8:47 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring. Further, I do not appreciate the underhanded and secretive manner in which the upzoning proposal has been handled. I would expect better of our elected officials.

Sincerely,
Danielle Jankowich

Erwin, Nicole

From: euphrates425 <blueglassfall@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 8:16 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you,
Lahra Tillman
Dudley street

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Deborah Kernochan <dkernochan@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 7:57 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Debbie Kernochan
she/her/hers

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ari Ofsevit <ari.ofsevit@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 7:56 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: Elena L. Glassman; City Clerk; P. Christopher Zegras
Subject: SUPPORT citywide multistory zoning

Dear councilors

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to SUPPORT the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. It is past the time for half-measures and baby steps; there is far more demand to live in Cambridge than housing supply (as shown by long wait lists for public housing) and "luxury housing" which we see built is a response to this demand, adding some supply (but not nearly enough).

If, as opponents of the rezoning petition support, we let this expire, we'll have years before we can continue adding the housing we need to add. Remember, of course, that this will not require anyone to demolish any structure, but only allow people who wish to to create more housing. Right now it's legal to build a single family residence nearly anywhere in the city, but quite difficult to build anything else.

I would urge you to spend half an hour watching this video from Justine Underhill, a city councilor in Falls Church, Virginia, and sharing it with other constituents. It shows quite clearly how, in places like Cambridge, building more housing will help housing affordability issues.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rQW4W1_SJmc

This is often a difficult concept to understand, and I found that this was one of the clearer explanations I've seen. While we may not be able to completely solve the regional issue on our own—we'll need a lot of help from surrounding communities for that—we can and must set an example.

Please SUPPORT the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

Thank you

Ari Ofsevit
5 Arcadia Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: James Bertram <jbertram@me.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 7:53 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear Cambridge City Councilors,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Respectfully

Jim Bertram
Owner, 27 Upland Rd

Erwin, Nicole

From: Joan Friebely <jfriebely@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 7:50 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Happy New Year, Joan Friebely

Erwin, Nicole

From: Heather Whittington <hwhittington68@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 7:26 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Alicia Ely Yamin <aliciaelyamin@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 7:09 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Alicia Yamin

Erwin, Nicole

From: David Kudan <davidkudan@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 1:10 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a longtime Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you for your consideration of this most vital issue.

David Kudan
26 Sacramento Street
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carol Waldo <carolmwaldo@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:31 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillor - As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you.

Carol Waldo and Ralph Robinson
North Cambridge

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Madeline Eiermann <madmann50@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 4, 2025 12:13 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

If this continues, you will pay at the ballot box

Madeline Eiermann.

Erwin, Nicole

From: OMAR ETON <oncologist@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 10:55 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: We oppose the multi-story rezoning petition.

As Cambridge residents, after hearing all the positions, it is natural for us to urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing.

Cambridge is blessed to be a great city which is both truly historic and socially progressive. Let's come up with a more elegant plan for which we can all be proud.

Indeed, a lot does need to be done to make this city more liveable and to feel like a true amalgamation of thriving happy communities. Such change should be tailored to each individual neighborhood, with oversight and careful planning. There should not be a rush to just erase what has worked for almost 400 years. There is something to be said about not rendering single family homes obsolete in some areas, but this concern has not been adequately addressed even while it is apparent that they are now endangered in the current plan.

The views of the taxpayers who own homes and who elected you should not be discounted in a democratic society. Brash broad-based simplistic action plans have unexpected consequences.

In the midst of rapid change, we need outside independent professionals to help draft plans that do not harm our environment, push out low-income residents, demolish existing homes, and risk so many neighborhoods that are already suffering from over-crowding.

Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

**Omar and Karen Eton
34 Larchwood Drive
Cambridge MA 02138**

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carolyn <carolyn_shipley@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 10:21 PM
To: City Council; City Manager; City Clerk; City Council; Simmons, Denise; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Toner, Paul; Nolan, Patricia; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Wilson, Ayesha; McGovern, Marc; Zusy, Catherine
Subject: Stop the unpopular Multi-story Rezoning Petition.

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

The lack of open space proposed and the trees that would be chopped down to build 6-story buildings will greatly reduce the city's tree canopy and contribute to environmental damage causing hotter temperatures due to the lack of shade and air pollution because there will not be enough trees to clean the air.

The City Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring (while we still have some trees).

**Respectfully yours,
Carolyn Shipley
15 Laurel Street**

Erwin, Nicole

From: Laney Bank <laney576@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 10:19 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thank you,

Helene Bank
Putnam Ave, Riverside

Erwin, Nicole

From: Greeley, Robin <robin.greeley@uconn.edu>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 10:16 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Regards,
Robin Greeley
21 Lee Street
no. 5
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Brian O'Neill <brian@crashandboom.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 9:50 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillors,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition.

There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing.

I am in favor of outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do, without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods.

The Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Thanks ,

Brian O'Neill
7a Haskell St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hugh Russell <hughadamsrussell@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 9:46 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillor - As a Cambridge resident, one of the founders of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association, and a former 35 year member of the Cambridge Planning Board, I strongly urge you to defer action on the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many as yet unresolved questions about the impacts of implementing the current proposals. Follow the Planning Board recommendation! We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. You should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Hugh Russell

Erwin, Nicole

From: David Mankins <d.p.mankins@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 9:45 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote YES on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, and home-owner, I am generally in favor of up-zoning throughout the city, but think that the preservation of green-spaces is also important -- where possible, apartment buildings should be set back from the street, with trees planted in front of them, for example.

Denser housing is of critical importance in addressing housing costs, environmental impact, and walkability.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Fritz Mueller <fritzmuelleriii@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 9:39 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

With utmost concern and best regards,
F Mueller
Bellis Circle
N Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Stephen Jerome <stevejerome61@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 9:31 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; +mmcgovern@cambridgema.gov; +pnolan@cambridgema.gov;
+ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov; +bazeem@cambridgema.gov;
+jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov; +ptoner@cambridgema.gov;
+amwilson@cambridgema.gov; +czusy@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Sincerely,

Steve Jerome

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gaylen Morgan <photongm@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 9:30 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; czusi@cambridgema.gov
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Up zoning

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

**Sincerely,
Gaylen Morgan**

Erwin, Nicole

From: Maureen Whitehouse <experienceaxiom@gmail.com> on behalf of Maureen Whitehouse <Maureen@experienceaxiom.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 9:28 PM
To: City Clerk
Cc: Zusy, Catherine
Subject: Fwd: Citywide multi-story rezoning opposition

Begin forwarded message:

From: Maureen Whitehouse <maureen@experienceaxiom.com>
Date: January 3, 2025 at 9:25:04 PM EST
To: dsimmons@cambridgema.gov, mmcGovern@cambridgema.gov, pnolan@cambridgema.gov, ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov, bazeem@cambridgema.gov, jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov, ptoner@cambridgema.gov, amwilson@cambridgema.gov
Subject: Fwd: Citywide multi-story rezoning opposition

Begin forwarded message:

From: Maureen Whitehouse <maureen@experienceaxiom.com>
Date: January 3, 2025 at 9:23:00 PM EST
To: Maureen Whitehouse <experienceaxiom@gmail.com>
Subject: Citywide multi-story rezoning opposition

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

Concerned Cambridge Taxpayer,

Maureen Mueller

Erwin, Nicole

From: Phillip Segó <phil@philsego.com>
Sent: Friday, January 3, 2025 7:39 PM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on citywide upzoning petition

Dear City Councillors.

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. There are too many unresolved questions and issues around the current proposed ordinance to create more housing. We need outside independent professionals to help draft a plan that will do what we really need it to do without harming our environment, pushing out lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, and transforming neighborhoods. Council should let the current proposal expire and start over in the spring.

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Phillip Segó, phil@philsego.com
221 Norfolk Street, Cambridge MA 02139-1402 USA
Cell: +1-617-610-3054
Whatsapp +16176103054
