



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

COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTES ~

Thursday, March 17, 2022

5:30 PM

Sullivan Chamber
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

The Neighborhood & Long-Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts & Celebration Committee will conduct a public hearing to discuss the appropriateness of laboratories in neighborhood retail districts.

Attendee Name	Present	Absent	Late	Arrived
Dennis J. Carlone	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Patricia Nolan	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Quinton Zondervan	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Marc C. McGovern	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Alanna Mallon	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

The Neighborhood and Long-Term Planning Committee held a public hearing on Thursday, March 17 2022 at 5:30pm to discuss the appropriateness of laboratories in neighborhood retail districts.

Councillor Carlone moved that the roll be called to indicate a quorum for this hearing. The roll was called and resulted as followed:

PRESENT: VICE MAYOR MALLON, COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN, COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN, COUNCILLOR CARLONE

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ABSENT: COUNCILLOR NOLAN

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AND A QUORUM WAS PRESENT WITH FOUR MEMBERS.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE:

Thank you, Madam Deputy Clerk. I should notice the obvious if you're looking at zoom, that I am not wearing green, and that's an omission. But my colleagues have are looking great in their green.

So we have our numbers are high. And today's discussion will focus on a memo that we prepared was actually written in 2021. And its concerns the topic that I listed technical offices for research and development, and laboratory and research facilities, their appropriateness or not in neighborhood retail districts. I have spoken to a number of people since this was written in March of 2021. So just under a year ago, March 27. We've had meetings. My staff and I have had meetings with community development, the Assessor's Office discussions with the health department, and it was noted that we should have a general discussion where all Councillors, city staff, neighborhood leaders, and developers of labs can come together and discuss this issue. I've not updated this memo since that time, because I

wanted to start out there. The memo has been distributed to the committee members. And Madam Deputy Clerk, is there a way for others to look it up? (**Attachment A**)

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: I'm sorry, I missed the question.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Memo that I've written and that you sent to members of the committee.

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: It is in the Open Meeting Portal Councillor.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you. Thank you very much. And you will see that what it is, and I'll go over it in the summary is basically setting standards for use that I think is not appropriate. There are some labs already on Cambridge Street. There's a lab developer who's bought a large site competing with affordable housing in my neighborhood at Linnaean and Mass Avenue. And there are other sites that are being looked at or being purchased almost monthly now. In these buffer areas or retail areas that in many cases split through a neighborhood, they are the living room of those neighborhoods. And we can talk about that today. So the meeting will be I will give an introduction on the memo, basically. And then we'll have a presentation by Community Development. They showed me this presentation last year. But it's a good update to show what will be effected so we can get a sense of the breath of this proposal. The health department Sam Lipson was going to join us I notice the Director of the Health Department, is here maybe in place of Sam, but we wanted to talk about health issues related to

SAM LIPSON, HEALTH DEPARTMENT: I am here, I am actually here.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Oh, Sam, good to see you. I knew you'd show up Sam. And the Assessor's department, the director Gail Willett and a right hand man, Andrew Johnson are here as well to discuss some issues that we brought up on, frankly, the value of labs versus offices, and even housing and I alluded to that earlier that if we want housing to be a priority in the City, which I believe every council member has said, and many neighborhoods have said it we have to look at our main streets in some ways those are the great opportunity that and the Quadrangle for housing. In my mind makes great sense to pursue. So I'm going to move on to the memo that I mentioned, and I'm just going to give an overview. I'm not expecting us to get into detail tonight, but if someone wishes, we can talk about that. I expect to get feedback tonight, and even after tonight. We will have another meeting on this subject with a refined proposal. This was a proposal to community

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: Excuse me, Councillor Carlone.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you.

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: We're going share that for you.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you, I'll go from the screen then. Okay. Thank you very much. So as you can see, this is a two page memo and those who don't know I have a background in zoning as an architect urban designer. I am not a zoning expert, but I know the pieces that go into zoning and the rationale. I wrote it out, quite frankly, to make it as easy as possible the translated into zoning if it were approved. It was sent to community development a year or so ago and they've worked on it. And we decided, as I said earlier, to have this discussion in the meeting. I'm going to read a little bit of it, but I won't read the whole thing. Zoning districts that allow technical offices for research and development, and laboratory and research facilities are found in the Cambridge zoning ordinance, article 4.30 table of use regulations. These technical facilities are presently allowed in 22 of this City's 34 base zoning districts, basically two thirds of all districts in the city as per 4.3 for office and laboratory use F and in most overlay districts and special districts. the only exceptions are our 12 residential districts. Now, one of the things

brought up in discussions with community development is technical offices and labs can be very different. And that perhaps this is too broad and we can get to that later. The interesting thing about this zone under 4.34 that is, local neighborhood retail districts is in addition to office and laboratory uses, you are allowed non-residential, you can do residential of course, but non-residential you can have an office of a physician, dentist, medical practitioner, accountant, attorney, nonmedical professional, real estate insurance, other agency office, general office use, bank trust or similar financial institutions. You can see right away these tend to be smaller operations. Yes, the office could be an office building but there's very few office buildings built in the BA zone for instance, business A in the city. Some are being converted and other cities they get converted into housing. Some of ours are now getting converted into labs. Most of those have benign impacts the surrounding communities compared to labs and research facilities.

Could you go up please? Madam Deputy Clerk. Unique characteristics. I'm going to specifically say labs and research facilities have unique characteristics. Some of them have 24 hour use on site. Some of them, most of them have high rooftop mechanical equipment that adds significant building height especially compared to low density housing neighborhoods, casting greater shadows, blocking sunlight. Noise and chemical loners sometimes are generated. There's a classic case of one of the first labs on Mass Avenue between Harvard and Central, people that I've become friendly with over the years, and loud booming mechanical equipment as it exchanges air in the middle of the night. Bright Lights, some of that has been corrected over the years, this has got to be about 20 years ago, it was built. And here's something I thought was interesting and these offices limited manufacturing is allowed on site up to 60% of the gross floor area. That leads to potentially extensive trucking and other supply processes. And more and more we see our labs especially in the mixed-use district center, larger former industrial districts, East Cambridge, North Point, Kendall Square, Cambridge Port, Alewife, pretty much covers that there are other little spots here and there. They are very large floor plates. They are not in many cases 20 foot wide, 30-foot wide sites or 100 feet deep. The scale can be out of proportion dramatically.

Now, in this proposal, I did say these uses can be harmful to public open space and low-density residential districts. There have been some questions about open space because let's say Alewife, the Quadrangle developer will develop open space next to their lab. And we want open space in Alewife. We again will tinker with the wording of this, but it's very valid in my mind that next to low density residential districts. It does not make sense.

We know labs are going to expand it is the hot use in Cambridge. The districts that I mentioned are heavily lab oriented. So that is why I'm focusing on that. The basic principle is, I wrote no technical office, but I'll repeat it now. But I realized that's up for question. No technical office or research and development, and laboratory and research facility shall be within 250 feet of a low-density residential district, or publicly owned open space. The reason 250 came up is neighborhoods have asked me to get involved with different developments occurring and trying to get them in scale, and modify them. We worked with Alexandria, and the Lynwood neighborhood, off the railroad tracks between East Cambridge and the Port. There I learned a lot, and I've done a lab at 620 Memorial Drive. I learned a lot between the two projects, a lot about what the nuisances are and how to correct them. At the old pipe location on Fulkerson and Binney, the building is setback over 250 feet. Two hundred and fifty feet happens to be a typical, thin dimension of a city block 200 feet, plus the public road 50 feet. So the notion is to have a buffer at a minimum of a block of other development, non-labs, let's say, and a road separating that from low density housing. And then I list where those areas are. It's basically all the low-density business A districts that are next to residential districts. And you can see that there were two other districts that were listed, but I couldn't find on the map. That's business A4 and whatever the other one was.

And then we've had this discussion for some time about the county courthouse being converted, and parts of Harvard Square business B districts. And they're at least in this proposal, I said well, the courthouse is fundamentally what it's ever going to be it is and it's a mix building, including I believe the potential for

labs, but that's been approved. And Mass Avenue across from MIT to business B, it's a strange location, but an academic lab maybe so I send special permits there. And then I list the special permit requirements. The 250 feet from a low-density residential district, maximum building height of 65 feet. Majority mechanical is either below grade, which is happening in a few buildings in the city. In the garage levels are enclosed in a penthouse which is insulated on and on. One of the newer lab building says much of the equipment enclosed in a concrete roof. These things can happen. Cooling towers and generators to being in a roof well, then I go into some details which I won't bore you with. Fully enclosed loading dock deliveries limited to daytime basically. And you might question that but we have another proposal that we're preparing that will limit garbage pickup near residential areas. Not at five in the morning, which is now if it's in a business district, even if the area is predominantly residential. Garbage dumpsters are picked up at five in the morning, but that's another story. We'll get to that in the future. Providing window shades to block out nighttime light, and the exterior design broken down and scale to fit in. So that's the special permits that theoretically could be in Central Square. Now some of my fellow council members would like to limit it in Central Square. You might recall, the large housing tower in central square, we were told, well it could be a lab. And, and you will see in a moment that labs are worth a lot more than housing or office buildings and the profit range continues to get higher and higher. As of right districts can continue being labs, and they're pretty much where they're built already. East Cambridge, North Point, New Street, New Street allows labs. And as it becomes more residential, we might want to think that. And then miscellaneous locations for different districts Alewife quadrangle, The Port, Wellington Harrington. And then I mentioned another district that could not be found that was listed.

So lastly I'll say, overlay districts and special districts shall not be affected except by the basic principle of no technical office of research and development and laboratory and research facility shall be within 250 feet of a low density residential district. And I wrote here or publicly owned space. That might be existing publicly on space and a future modification.

So that is the overview. I know it's confusing, that's why I said I don't expect that we'll move on this tonight. I do want to add one other thing. The Assessor might have further information. One Charles Park is connected to One Rogers Street. That is the former IBM Lotus office building on First Street and Cambridgeside Drive, immediately south of the shopping complex, that now is adding labs 150 feet high, 185 feet high. We have, I believe all the labs we need and can protect our residential character and uses that we do need in the city. So that building, the former Lotus IBM building was sold little over a year ago for \$468 million dollars. It is being upgraded into a lab, and has already been sold to Alexandria as the lab for \$815 million dollars. Now clearly the construction costs money. I believe it's taking them six months I would bet most of it is mechanical. I don't know the details. My point is, labs are worth a great deal of money. And this is a document that will share in a scan.

So I'll leave it there. I think what we should do now is have Community Development, show their presentation, have the Health Department with us so we can ask some questions about health standards and BSL ratings, what they mean, what their developers required to do. Sam Lipson, we'll get into that. And then the Assessors Department. It's my belief that we have more labs per capita than any other city in the country. Not just the state, given our small size. As you all know, we have more people working in Cambridge than living in Cambridge, that is an unusual city in itself. So I'll stop there. I welcome Iram Farooq and I noticed that Mr. Roberts was here as well. Welcome.

IRAM FAROOG, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, Chair Carlone. Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for Community Development. I'll just start with introducing a whole host of staff who we have here today to participate in the discussion, and I'll just do it alphabetically by department. From the Assessing Department, we have Gail Willett and Andrew Johnson. From Community Development, we have Jeff Roberts, Pardis Saffari, Melissa Peters. the Law Department is represented by Megan Bayer. We have from the License Commission, Tyler Bubenik, who is in charge of regulating the noise ordinance or enforcing the noise ordinance. From Public Health we

have Sam Lipson. And we also have the City's consultant, Bob Reardon, previously our Assessor, on the call. We have a whole host of people, regardless of what topic may be of interest, because this is a fairly comprehensive area. And as you mentioned Chair it touches on many different aspects of the City's work. I am going to actually just because there are so many folks here and the committee might have questions, I'm going to quickly turn it over to Jeff Roberts. Just with one comment that from the material that was described, we actually focused this presentation, because of the call of the meeting was focused on neighborhood retail districts. We have really focused on those districts rather than looking at the other issues of the 250ft if somebody's industrial, or of this district. With that caveat, I'm going just turn it over to Jeff Roberts.

JEFF ROBERTS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Thank you, Iram, thank you to the Chair and the committee. I'm going to start with a screenshare. To get the slides going.

(ATTACHMENT B) That started, we can get right into it. I'll make an apology in advance, it seems like over the past week I've been having some lag issues with connections over video. So it's likely that you might see me freeze for five or 10 seconds, probably the most inopportune points of the presentation. I can only hope that I freeze with a funny face on or something so you can all enjoy that. And you know, the pattern has been that all I'll come back eventually. Please bear with me.

We put together a little bit of high level information on how commercial laboratory uses are regulated here in Cambridge and our zoning. So first of all, Councillor Carlone covered much of this. Commercial R&D falls under the office and laboratory use category in our zoning. It's under this heading of technical office. A couple of things to note, in addition to what Councillor Carlone mentioned, are actually kind of following up on some of the things that were mentioned. So technical office permits limited manufacturing as an accessory use. That's kind of what makes it different from other kinds of office, it assumes that as part of the activity that's going on there, there might be the creation of prototypes, small scale product manufacturing. The idea with this is that it's research and development. There's likely to be some products being created. But the point is that the principal use is not manufacturing. It's not meant to incorporate like manufacturing plants whose purpose is primarily to crank out products. The other point is that technical office, in this section of the zoning does not include academic research or other non-commercial research activities. Those are regulated in our institutional use category. So those would include our university research facilities.

I actually did some research because I was curious that into the history of our zoning for laboratory uses, and while there have been some changes in language over time. In concept, City's zoning regulations for lab commercial laboratories date back at least to the 1961 zoning ordinance. We've had kind of generally the same regulations for a long time. Technical office can encompass a pretty wide range of activities that fall under this broad umbrella of R&D. We're all familiar with and just, you know, heard a lot about the biological and pharmaceutical kinds of research that often referred to as life science R&D. That kind of activity has been a big part of the Cambridge economy for a long time. But technical office could also encompass other types of R&D, in both large and small scales, includes different types of engineering, something that's referred to as tough tech, which is a term that I really just learned in the process of putting together these notes, and I don't really fully understand, but includes a lot of emerging technology and sort of environmental or material science. It can include other kinds of medical research, not the kind of pharmaceutical types of research going on in a lot of places, but other kinds of medical research as well. And it could even include software development. So that kind of activity might look very much like any kind of typical office space, but could also fall under the category of R&D if it's actually developing products. R&D activities are found in a lot of commercial buildings around Cambridge. In some cases, pre-existing commercial buildings have been converted to R&D. So over on the left side, there is an example of a one-story warehouse that was converted not that long ago, that involved some more significant renovations to the exterior, including some of the mechanical equipment that was talked about earlier. The middle one Central Square, that's the rehab of an office building. And so in that case, you

don't see that much change on the outside. It's a different kind of R&D activity, then then is found in some of the other buildings. Around Kendall Square in particular you see a lot of examples of new purpose buildings for R&D use. In a lot of cases, those buildings are built to accommodate the life science R&D activity. In the example, the building on the right, one of the main tenants is actually Facebook, Meta I guess now, but the point is there's often a variety of different uses not always necessarily falling under that category of a biological resources. And we'll talk about that a little bit more later about how there might be differences in how a building is designed, and then how it's tenanted and used.

A few general notes about R&D, we have had it in Cambridge for a very long time. And it has been part of the Cambridge economy even sort of before it was cool. You know, Cambridge was a place where there was sort of a head start in a lot of these emerging technologies and businesses that have now grown significantly, both in Cambridge and nationally and internationally. In terms of the types of buildings where you find R&D, there's a lot of variety and building types. And a lot of what you find depends on what the needs are the particular R&D activity that's taking place. One of the things that seems consistent about commercial buildings, and commercial real estate for this purpose, is what real estate types referred to as core and shell space. So basically space where there's not a lot of stuff inside the building. And that's particularly attractive to lots of different kinds of R&D because it can allow the space to be customized in different ways to suit whatever the needs are of that particular operation. In terms of mechanical arrays, which we talked about, they tend to be necessary, mostly for biological research in order to meet regulatory requirements for air handling. They're not necessarily needed for all types of R&D. But we do see a lot of it because that's a big part of the R&D activity in Cambridge. And as I'm sure many have noticed, just from looking around or reading the news, and from the comments of Councillor Carlone, there is a lot of interest in R&D space right now, particularly for Life Science. That's both in new building construction and rehab of existing buildings. And part of that is that just in general, the demand for spaces is very high in that area. The vacancy rate is very low, meaning that there's a lot of competition and companies both large and small, are vying for space in a lot of different places. Also, some of the recent trends due to COVID 19, might be reflecting a shift in some office work to accommodate more telecommuting, and on the other hand R&D can't necessarily be done remotely. So there's a little bit of a shift in the balance, potentially because of that.

Now it does talk a little bit about zoning. So currently, technical office use is allowed in all of our commercial districts, as pointed out at the beginning. So those are the districts where you'd expect to find them around the City. Major commercial squares and corridors, as well as formerly industrial areas like around East Cambridge and Cambridge Port, North Point, Alewife. These users are not allowed in residential and open space districts, which are the districts that make up most of the city.

Just wanted to note some of the requirements that might be applicable under zoning to a technical office use, it will come into play if it exceeds certain thresholds. A project review special permit from the planning board might be required if it's development that exceeds 50,000 square feet. And that's a process that involves a transportation impact study and urban design review. A part of the focus of that review is mitigating impacts on surrounding uses, including visual and noise impacts from rooftop mechanical systems. And you know, the how mechanical switch systems are positioned and screened and designed are elements that are a big part of every review process that comes for project review.

Just a note that back in 2007, I think it was 2007, the City Council amended the zoning in business A and related districts, those of the neighborhood districts that we've been talking about. And that required the special project review special permit at 20,000 square feet. That's the threshold in those districts. So smaller developments have to undergo that level of review. And another type of project review applies more broadly to development of 25,000 square feet or more. That involves meeting a set of specific design-based requirements that are reviewed administratively at the staff level, and includes requirements for screening of mechanical equipment, as well as noise mitigation. I didn't put that on the put this on the

slide. But those developments are also subject to our green building requirements, which requires designed to a certain level of Green Building Standard, generally under the lead set of requirements, but possibly a passive house or other requirements. And not to dwell on this too much. But just worth pointing out that development that doesn't trigger that level of project review might still require special permits or some kind of zoning relief for many different reasons. It's not uncommon to see many developments that are less than 50,000 or 20,000 square feet coming before the planning board or the BZA depending on the location and the circumstances of the proposal.

So the call of this meeting was about neighborhood retail districts. And so we thought we'd point out some areas that generally fall into that category. Those are the business A family of districts, they include most of the areas that are in pink on this zoning map, which we kind of pointed out with arrows. Often these are areas that are characterized by a mix of commercial and residential buildings. And they often have some retail at the ground level, although the amount of retail can vary depending on what district it is. And one thing I think it's important to know is that while office and laboratory uses are all allowed in those areas, the zoning standards for commercial uses are very limiting. You wouldn't be allowed to build a large R&D building in one of those districts. The density limitations and the height limitations put more restrictions on the size of building that can be built without needing some sort of variance or zoning, other kinds of zoning relief. You could potentially in those districts build a small commercial building, or convert an existing commercial building to R&D if that were desirable. These are all things that are outside of my wheelhouse. But I did want to make note of the many regulations that apply to different types of laboratories. Cambridge, as many of you know, was one of the first cities to have local regulations for certain kinds of DNA research. And so Cambridge has a very active and robust process for regulating it, which Sam can talk more about later on. Those regulations are complemented by state regulations. I'm not an expert on those. But Cambridge also has a noise ordinance and that's separate from zoning. But it is reviewed at the permit level by ISD when exterior mechanical equipment is being installed. Tyler who's here from the License Commission is involved in enforcement. And again, can speak more about that as we move on with the hearing.

We tried to put together some additional information about where R&D uses are sort of located around the city. It's sort of a difficult exercise because there's not an exhaustive list. And as I talked about a little before, a lot of these R&D uses don't involve the type of activity that's subject to any special regulation. You might have a small kind of startup company that's just leasing space in any commercial building around the city and not necessarily attracting any attention to itself. It's hard to kind of pin those down. But we were able to pull together some information, particularly on the biological laboratories that come under Public Health Department review. That's supplemented by some land use data that comes mostly from the city's assessing database. And we pulled in a little bit of information from Planning Board cases where technical office use has been permitted.

You can see from the map with some rare exceptions, these are all located in the areas that are zoned for it. So not in the areas that are grey, which are the residents and open space districts. And they generally tend to be clustered in some of those former industrial areas of the city where higher density commercial development is allowed under our zoning. There are a few uses that that pop up in some of the higher density business districts like Central Square and Harvard Square, there aren't quite as many. There isn't one case in Harvard Square, I realized that was reason enough that it didn't make the map. But there was a permitted office lab building, which allowed a mix of office and lab uses. And really there's not many at all in the neighborhood business districts. This partly I think goes to what Councillor Carlone was saying before that a lot of the uses that the R&D uses that we've seen so far tend to like to have buildings that are larger with larger footprints. And those kinds of buildings are harder to develop in a neighborhood retail district, because it has smaller lot sizes. And again, the zoning restrictions are pretty limiting. We do know that some smaller R&D businesses might be taking up residence in existing commercial buildings in those areas. But again, you know, those are ones that aren't really that noticeable,

and they don't pop up in any of the datasets that we might be looking at. And this is just what I had sort of said before, it's just a kind of a recap of those general patterns, I won't go over it again.

So just to wrap up, we had a few zoning thoughts, since that really is the focus of this meeting. Also, zoning is what I do, so I can't help talking about it a little bit. So just some of the general themes of the discussion, you know, technical office, in the sense of zoning is fairly broad. In some cases, if a new buildings being built, you can get a sense of what kinds of uses it's being built for. But also in a lot of cases, the actual land use that's associated with a building depends not on the building itself, but on the tenants that end up occupying it after it's built, or after it's gone through some phase of its life. That's an issue, a similar issue that came up when we were talking about retail uses over the past couple of years with the with the City Council. You can build a space for a range of different uses, but you can always tell what type of business is going to be in there. And another point to emphasize is that we have a pretty robust project review requirements, but they only tend to come into play with the construction of larger buildings. And so often with smaller buildings, and with rehab projects, there's not as much of a review required, for better or worse. And so the point about mechanical systems, you know, that it's clear that there are a prominent part of buildings that are being built or outfitted for life science R&D, and a lot of that is driven by codes and regulations. And it's worth noting that just for just about any commercial building that's being built or being brought up to code, there's likely to be a need for some upgraded mechanical systems. So the mechanical systems can be an issue even beyond the R&D life science uses and can affect other kinds of buildings and other uses as well.

The Council were to discuss some alternative approaches to zoning for R&D, we tried to lay out a few different ways that it could be pursued. One set of approaches might be based on use regulations, either by changing the use regulations for technical office, as I think is suggested in the memo that was reviewed earlier. Or considering a more distinct definition for biological or life science R&D to try to separate the uses a little bit more. Again, the concern with those approaches might be that it wouldn't just affect building development, it would potentially impact any R&D company that's trying to lease space in an existing building. And like with a retail zoning, that additional regulation might be felt harder on smaller companies relative to the larger companies. And so another set of approaches might involve tailoring the project review requirements a little bit more finely, in those neighborhood business districts to try to cover the types of development or rehab that could have more impacts. So that might involve creating a different threshold for review of particular types of buildings or uses. It could, you know, involve putting more specific requirements in place. Some of the types of things that were mentioned in the early part of the meeting, that would help to control impacts from things like rooftop mechanicals. It could also be reviewed under a special permit procedure, in which case, there would need to be some thought to what the criteria would be for review, if there's additional criteria that would need to be applied, and what the outcomes of that might be. So that's, that's all and happy to answer any questions or engage in any discussion. Thanks.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you both for an excellent, more detailed presentation than I saw back last year. I am going to open it up to clarifying questions by any member on the committee first, then the full Council. But I do have a general question. Almost all your slides did not say the word lab. It said Life Science R&D. Are they all the same?

JEFFREY ROBERTS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Yeah, so I wasn't sure who was going to coordinate. Iram, do you want to start?

IRAM FAROOQ, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: I'm just going to be air traffic control. But since this is just about your presentation, please, we'll just leave it to Jeff.

JEFFREY ROBERTS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Thank you. Thank you to the chair. So yeah, under our zoning, we have this broad category of use which uses a lot of different words, technical office for research and development, laboratory and research facility. All of those words are kind of part of the same grouping of activities. I think we tend to talk about it as we use words interchangeably, you know, commercial lab, commercial R&D. I think I wanted to emphasize that what it means broadly in our zoning. What a lab means, it means that the activity that's taking place within it is research and development in nature.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: The answer is, yes, they're all interchangeable.

JEFFREY ROBERTS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Yeah, well, I think often we refer to lab as the type of facility or the type of building that it might be in. Or actually, it might not even be the type of building just the type of space within the building might be referred to as a lab. R&D is more of a general kind of statement of the type of business or the type of activity is taking place within it.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: All right, I will encourage any of my fellow Councillors on the Committee to raise their hands if they have any clarifying questions. I don't. I do see one, Vice Mayor, please.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA MALLON: Thank you, Mr. Chair, and through you. Thank you to CDD for the presentation. I just had a question. On page nine of your presentation, under Article 19 project review, it says that there's a project review special permit required from the planning board for anything from 20,000 square feet in BA1 BA2. I guess my question really is there's already there's a special permit that is required from the planning board for commercial spaces over 20,000 square feet in these particular zones. I guess I'm just confused as to why would we need an additional special permit for these lab uses if they're already having to go to the planning board, I just I'm wondering if somebody from CDD could just speak to that.

IRAM FAROOQ, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Through your chair I'll turn to Jeff to speak to that.

JEFFREY ROBERT, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Thanks. The threshold applies to development of 20,000 square feet or more. Which can actually be fairly big. You could potentially, I think the what was being suggested is if there's a concern about, say, a 10,000 square foot R&D use, or laboratory building, being contemplated in one of these districts, is that something that the Council would want to have undergo some level of review, that's sort of the suggestion. 20,000 square feet is pretty big, especially in a district that has an F A R 1. A 20,000 square foot building would have to be on a 20,000 square foot lot. And there aren't that many of those in those kind of smaller retail areas, but you might have a building that's smaller, that's either being, you know, converted, or is, you know, someone's contemplating building a new building that could, you know, go under that 20,000 threshold.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA MALLON: Thank you. And thank you through you, Mr. Chair. So, I mean, is there a value into saying for these, you know, low density, residential neighborhood retail districts going less than 20,000 square feet? Would that solve some of the concerns? Because I guess what I'm saying is, I understand the concern brought forward by Councillor Carlone, that lab space is so hot right now that it is going to crowd out all the other uses that we want, right? Housing being predominantly the one that we say all the time that we need, particularly in these zones. I'm just trying to figure out if there is maybe an easier way for us to get at what we're trying to do, which is to disincentivize lab space in every part of our city that currently allows it. So I didn't know Mr. Roberts, through you Mr. Chair, if there was a quicker fix, an easier fix that we could do here that might not be so complicated.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Well, it's not complicated to exclude something. That's how zoning is set up. And I'm happy to talk about different ways of doing that. But I don't know anybody that wants to live next to a lab and I know people who do, you might hear from some of them tonight. It's not a good neighbor. That's all I'll say. And I realized that it's big money in labs. And that's great if that's all you're interested in. And then you move out of the city because it's a nuisance to be near a lab. As I said I worked on Alexander is redesigned, and they've done an enormous amount of things to make it work with the existing neighborhood. And I listed what they did, basically, in this memo. And that's what I'm saying is you just raise the standards. I think it's interesting and I said in my last comment, I'll give it back to you. It's interesting that we can't differentiate against with labs, because I believe San Francisco does it. Labs, R&D, and life science. I think one of the other speakers will talk about this later one of the public speakers who's researched this. So yeah, it's complicated. That's why we're having this meeting. But thank you for your comments.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA MALLON: If I can just follow up on that because I did have a question. Is there a way CDD thinking about a way to differentiate? I think we've all I think most of us have gone out to Mr. Grilles facility out on Cambridge Street, which is in a BA, where there is research and development happening but it doesn't, you know, when I think labs, I think 35 to 45 foot mechanicals on the roof and air exchangers and, you know, a lot of going in and out and loading zones. I think that's very different than what I saw at that facility, which there is small R&D happening that is actually helping to helping some of the labs with what they need to do, right? And so how do we differentiate between what they're doing over at 325 Binney, which isn't in a BA. And what is happening on Cambridge Street right now. And, you know, I look forward to whoever's coming to talk about life sciences, labs, R&D, and maybe thinking about differentiating those because I think that that might be another way for us to get at this. And, again, I just want to I just want to say I think I understand where coming from because I think labs are very hot, we're never going to get more housing if labs are available and able to build and so that we do need some kind of protection. I'm just trying to figure out what the best protection is. I'll yield back because I see a whole bunch of other hands. But I'm sure I'll have more questions later. Thank you Mr. Chair.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: One thing I've thought of is that you count part of the mechanical height as a floor, and the building height. If it's 35 feet, you can only put up and it's high mechanicals, you can only put up two stories that would discourage it, they don't belong there. Council McGovern I believe is next. Councillor, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Thank you, Mr. Chair, I'm the Vice Mayor sort of stole my or got to it first. Towards the end there, I think, you know, as we certainly want to be careful of, as has been stated a few times that, you know, labs being so hot and being the biggest money producer that you don't want, we don't want to lose all available land and opportunity to labs. And so it's a good thing that we're having this conversation. However, there's all different types of labs, and it's not just about the physical space, right? It's what's going on inside that space. And I did tour I think it's 1035 Cambridge Street, I would have no problem living next to anything that I saw that was going on in that building. You know you're not talking about a noisy building, you're not talking about research that's being done that, you know, with safety concerns, health concerns, viruses or, anything like that. I think I think just as we go forward with this really getting down into more of the nuance, because there are differences. And so, I just think that's something that we really need to consider and not sort of, say, put all labs under one umbrella. And, you know, there's going to be some nuance in this that we're going to have to get down to. And if I missed this in the presentation through you, Mr. Chair, if I missed this in the presentation, I apologize. But why don't we get into more of that sort of I know that there are different categories of labs, right? There's like five or six I think, that are the types of labs that do different things. Why don't we break it down that specifically? Or could we? Because again, those things, those are all different levels of safety.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: We will be talking about that shortly with Sam Lipson and possibly his associates.

COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: But is that something we have to put in zoning or in our ordinance that there are different?

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Sam will explain that. It's some good information that I wasn't expecting.

COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: All right.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: We'll get there. So again, clarifying questions. I have Councillor Zondervan, followed by Councillor Toner.

COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Thank you Mr. Chair through you. And thanks for having this important discussion. As you know, I used to run a lab, I ran a lab for seven years, a couple of years in Cambridge, and a few years in Woburn. I have some experience with that. And then as you also know, I live across the street from a lab and down the street from 325. But I would like to reframe the conversation a little bit. I mean, I appreciate the curiosity about different biosafety levels and what's happening inside the building. But the reality is, that doesn't really impact the neighbors that much. And, you know, the mechanicals and the noise are certainly a concern. But in terms of a zoning conversation, I think we really want to be talking about where did the labs go? And where should the labs not go? Earlier somebody asked this question, but I didn't really get an answer. I did actually look into the zoning in some of our surrounding communities, and some of them do separately define a laboratory use. And I even drafted some language a couple of years ago for how we can do that in Cambridge. And I would like to reframe the conversation to say, where do we want to allow that particular use and not allow it elsewhere. Because as Vice Mayor and others have mentioned, the real question here is housing versus labs in some of these districts, particularly, you know, for example, on Cambridge Street, I think that's a real conflict where those are relatively low intensity laboratory type users that are that are going in there, but they're directly competing with potential housing. I think from a zoning perspective, we should be making a decision that way. Where did the labs go? Where did the housing go? I would love to get maybe a brief response from Mr. Roberts in terms of defining the laboratory use, specifically. And then specifying where we want to allow it. For example, we could say that laboratory specific uses only allowed in industrial zones, and then that would exclude the business districts from hosting that type of use.

JEFFREY ROBERTS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Sure, through the chair. Yeah, that's exactly what zoning is. You would I think that was one of the suggestions, or one of the possible approaches, at the end of our presentation. You could look at how to define these different how to define the uses differently. And to be clear about what kinds of laboratory R&D facilities are the types that we want to single out as uses that are different from other types of commercial R&D. And, yeah, and they can be regulated differently through the zoning ordinance, either by making them allowed or not allowed in some places or requiring a special permit in some places that those are all things that are within the general sort of the fundamental part of zoning.

IRAM FAROOQ, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Mr. Chair, if I may I have one thing. Which is just around the question that the Vice Mayor and Councillor McGovern raised as well as touching on Councillor Zondervan's question a little bit. So as we've had this conversation a little bit internally, one of the thing sort of cautionary note that that comes up for us is that we really thin sliced retail in the city, and realized that later as retail evolved that we have to go back and you erase some of those distinctions in order to make it be more adaptable as things change. And while we've seen a lot of life science labs, we've seen them be stable for a while. I could certainly think back to

when I started working for the city, the thing that everybody that was happening everywhere was not actually as much life sciences labs, but these, I even forget what they were called. But they were like data centers, and these E commerce type places. And that was propagating throughout the city. And there was a different set of concerns and issues that were coming up around those. And that's what everyone was worried about in and then it switched to Life Sciences very early in my time here. So you know, there is likely some evolution over time, we could certainly design zoning for this moment in time, and it makes that folks will, will change it later. But it is important to keep in mind that currently, the definition encapsulates things like the engine or if we have lab central, or if we had Greentown Labs, or a version of that in Cambridge, those would all fall under the technical office umbrella right now. And some of those things, I think that we do want in parts of our city.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: I'll just respond and say we have more labs, whatever we call it, we have more than almost everybody else. Do we want it to take over the city? That's how I'm looking at this. Because it will. The values are so high, and it's already starting.

IRAM FAROOQ, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER FOR COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Most certainly Chair. I was just referring to the question about separating out life sciences, which we do think is one of the approaches.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: I'm all for. Yeah, I'm all for. But this is the only way we get there is listing all of them. I think it's very different from all the other uses in this section in the zoning, very different. And that's all I'm trying to highlight. Councillor Zondervan I'm sorry that you wish to add more information.

COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. Yes, I'll be very brief. I appreciate what Farooq was saying. I think that's exactly why we're suggesting, or at least I'm suggesting that really the laboratory use needs to be broken out from these other uses so that we can consign it to the appropriate areas of our city if we said, you know, this is really more of an industrial use, so it belongs in the industrial districts, but not anywhere else. You know, whereas something like Greentown Labs, those types of uses would be allowed in a business district. I think it is really important to make that distinction. On the biosafety level, I just want to briefly comment on that, that I ran up to a biosafety level three facility without any problems. And biosafety level four is like if you're working on Ebola or HIV. Nobody in the right mind is going to do that in the middle of a city. So really that conversation is mostly orthogonal. Really the issues around the use, which is the laboratories itself.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Yeah, Sam, he's our expert witness. The ratings just went down because you must have seen his notes. No, I know you know this. if it's alright Councillor, I'll move on to Councillor Toner. Councillor, you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR TONER: Thank you, Councillor Carlone. Just a couple of quick questions. One, and I don't know if Mr. Roberts is the right one. How many properties right now would possibly be caught in a pinch in this? You know, how many are operating like we mentioned, Mr. Grilles property where there's some lab space, would be caught if we change the zoning in this way?

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: It's interesting. It's got its permits.

COUNCILLOR TONER: I know there is some concern by people that own these properties that they would be impacted. I'm just asking, would they be impacted?

IRAM FAROOQ, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Through your chair. If that were to be the case, they would they depending on what the choices, the policy choices,

they could become non-conforming, which would impact their ability to make changes over time. I don't believe that we from CDD have that data. It's possible that the Assessing team might so I will turn to Ms. Willett to see if she has.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: And before you do that this happens in any zoning change. Some zoning says if you are what you are, as of a certain date, you can stay there. But after that date, there can be no more.

COUNCILLOR TONER: So just to add to my question, Mr. Chair, but I guess my you know, my concern is always impacting people who bought property with a particular expectation, and that they're, you know, that expectation may be changed. Now, I realize that may be legal, but I'm just trying to figure out how many people may be caught in that trap as we go forward. That's all just trying to get a number.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Well, we're talking about not just labs. That's my goal. But I was told I had a broaden it because that's what the zoning says. He is not a noxious lab, as I understand it. We can refine that and let Jeff Roberts respond. He has his hand up.

JEFFREY ROBERTS, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Thank you. I want to have a chance to respond. I had one of my freeze moments, and I'm not sure exactly what was covered. But to address the question, we don't have a number because I think as I was saying before, that a lot of that type of activity is taking place in general commercial buildings. They're not necessarily pinpointed as R&D buildings, but they're the general commercial buildings where a small company might say, oh there's space available here. You know there's 5000 square feet available, I can lease that and, you know, work on my startup here. We don't necessarily know when that's taking place. Because of the way zoning works, if the zoning were to change to say that that type of use is no longer allowed in that district, potentially a new tenant who wanted to go and seek space there might have difficulty doing that if they might be in violation of the zoning if a start-up company said hey, there's office space for rent, I can use that for my R&D business. But if it's no longer allowed under that zoning, then they wouldn't be able to do it. So that would be the potential concern. And again, we talked about this kind of concern a lot with retail businesses where you know, if a one type of retail moves out and another type of retail moves in, if the zoning is restrictive, it's going to impact that business that's trying to find space.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: If something's considered noxious and inappropriate, not reacting to that is a misjustice to the hundreds of people who bought a house or a condo next to it. You got to look at the numbers. And if it limits new construction that is more related to a plan for the city, more housing. I'd say that choice we can work on that, it's not this isn't the first time that something like zoning has changed.

COUNCILLOR TONER: Mr. Chair, I'm sorry. I'm not trying. I'm not trying to aggravate your cause, a debate on it. I just wanted to find out and get a sense of how many people will be caught in that I certainly don't want people living next living next to anything that's dangerous and noxious. And that was kind of one of the other things I just wanted to say is, you know, it's one thing if we're trying to address the nuisances or the health risks that we may be concerned about, which I'm looking forward to hearing from Sam, I haven't seen Sam in many, many years, hearing from him. But you know, are we are we seeking to be opposed to the purpose of the building? Or are we trying to address the potential nuisances? So that's where I'm coming from. And I will yield, I will yield there.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: I would say impacts is what makes sense to me to address it. I mean, we have again, we have more labs, you saw the map, than anybody else. we have, I believe I calculated, 10 times more labs, whatever definition that is, than Boston, per capita, for given our population and their population.

COUNCILLOR TONER: Right, I guess I'll make one last comment. I understand that. And I don't actually see that as an absolute negative.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: I'm saying that's enough. If you want to develop a full city and a full quadrangle. You got to look at other, how do you promote other uses right now? We're disincentivizing everything. And the impacts aren't great. It's a twofer. Do you have another comment Councillor?

COUNCILLOR TONER: No, I'm sure we'll have this conversation for a long time.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: I was going to have Sam going next, but somebody asked, I think it was Ms. Farooq, Ms. Willett a question. Or maybe it was Jeff.

IRAM FAROOQ, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: Chair I was just bumping the question to Gayle about how many properties might be impacted? Because it's not a number that we have at CDD. But the assessors might have some insight on that.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Keep in mind, I'm focusing on the streets even though the original memo was larger than that. Cambridge Street, Broadway, Mass Avenue, the main drags, those business districts. I'm going to go, Gayle if you don't mind, I'm going to go to Sam. And then we'll go to you and you can have all the time you want and need. Sam even though I know what you're going to say. Please explain it as you did to me. A lot of neighbors are interested in this, the BSL level. So maybe you can step back and tell us what that means and how it relates and any other health issues that might exist.

SAM LIPSON, HEALTH DEPARTMENT: Oh, sure. I'd be happy to. In Cambridge, Councillor Zondervan mentioned BSL four. We don't allow them in Cambridge at all. So that's really off the table. There are four bio containment levels. Biosafety level one is considered the least strict and also the safest. And biosafety level four is the most strict and there's one in Boston that we all know about, they call it the National Emerging Infectious Diseases Laboratory or The Needle. Cambridge allows one, two and three. And that's been the case from long before I began working here. And sort of big picture we did, in fact, from through the work of the City Council and the community develop a set of rules back in the late 70s. And they were more sort of normalized in the early 80s. That kind of set the standard for oversight of biosafety in the US at the local level. And the reason the local level is so important is that Congress chose not to regulate biosafety at the federal level, and most states have not regulated at the state level. The kind of oversight we have here has been emulated by many communities in the area, and even across the country. We kind of have a long history on that. But as far as the biosafety levels up to three, we do have four BSL three laboratories that are very, very small, one of them is going offline soon. It's not a major factor compared to Boston. I think Boston may have between nine and twelve BSL three laboratories, they're more closely tied to the work of the Medical District. They tend to involve working with actual infectious agents that are capable of being pathogenic to people. If you look at Cambridge, the biotech sector, the private sector, which is most of what we have in Cambridge, doesn't have as much presence in those higher containment level environments. It's not really a big part of the biotech sector and what drives it. And in fact, even at the biosafety level two laboratory category, that work because of the technology behind recombinant DNA, and behind synthetic biology, that work has gotten quite safe. It's really quite a theoretically distant risk to anybody because they're not working with live infectious agents. The technology has allowed a lot of that work to go ahead without actually working with the original pathogen. I think Councillor Zondervan made a fair characterization that the real impacts of these large facilities, some of them are small, some are large, but it's really about the presence of the noise, if you happen to live right next to it, is even the light. Some of these buildings have lights on them that go through the night. And there are deliveries of materials, not necessarily a very high volume, hazardous materials like solvents and chemicals. But there are some and in a very tightly positioned building inside of like surrounded by residential and a couple of sides. I think people would notice those deliveries, it

would be something people would be aware of. But, yeah, we spent a good deal of time making sure that what the work that is going on is not only transparent, but it's being done safely. And even with that said, there's very little work that, under the worst of circumstances, would pose a really meaningful risk to the community. I think it's appropriate to look at those kinds of quality of life impacts. I think that's really what matters here. So that's sort of the preamble, I guess. But I'd be happy to answer any. There were a couple of questions that came up, maybe I could try to address them.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Please.

SAM LIPSON, HEALTH DEPARTMENT: One was, where are the labs? Where are the labs physically present in places that might be impacted by a change of zoning? And I can talk a little bit about that it's easier to share a spreadsheet I suppose. Then there was a category, the question around categories of labs, I think Councillor McGovern may have asked, what is the difference or overlapping definition between R&D and Bio Labs and that sort of thing. And I'd say the very simple series of nested definitions, right? R&D is the biggest circle. And then within that there may be laboratories that are doing biology, they could be doing chemistry, they could be doing mechanical or tech. And then even within that larger category of labs that are doing biology, not 100% of them are regulated. Some of them are doing work, which is not regulated, but I would say probably north of 90% are regulated here in Cambridge. So those are just sort of some quick, I hope clarifying terms.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you, Sam. Are there any questions for Sam? Or the health department? I don't see any hands. Ms. Willett in the Assessing Department has been helpful. We've had a preliminary discussion and although we only spoke last week, so they didn't have much time. Andrew Johnson and Gayle Willett are both here and they have some information that they could share. And that's one reason why said we'll go on and further discuss and refine this in this committee. Ms. Willett, you have the floor.

GAYLE WILLET, ASSESSING DIRECTOR: Thank you. Jeff actually has a slide you had given us a large list of items that you wanted Andrew and I were able to get some of that done. And mainly looking at the cost per or the value per square foot on different kinds of commercial uses. Jeff, I don't know if you can share that slide. Thanks. And so this is something that we were looking at. And something that was referenced earlier about, you know, what's the difference in the value per square foot? What are the counts within our database? I think to Councillor Toner's question before, it would be hard for us to determine who would potentially get pinched in this, we're essentially looking at things after they have happened. It'll be difficult for us to make that determination. But I think that the idea of what are the unintended consequences that could be created with this is a fair one? I know for me, and for our office, we're thinking about what is the future of office? What happens if people don't come into the office? What happens with the value of office space? And I feel like that kind of all plays into what could space be redeveloped to if it's office now? Could it be some kind of technical lab, some kind of AI lab, some kind of robotic lab, and thinking about what are the consequences with that. I think the other thing that when you talk to people in the lab sector, and talk to developers that so much of the appeal of these lab spaces is the clustering together of these. People generally don't want to be outside of these areas. They want to be around other lab people and other lab spaces. But it is the, you know, the Boston Globe had written an article a couple of years ago about the serendipity of running into someone on the street, or the serendipity of running into someone into at lunch. I think that that's the other piece of this that I do think about. People that work in these labs don't typically want to be outside of these areas. They want to be in areas with other people. And it's the closeness to MIT and the closeness to Harvard that is really very appealing to them.

ANDREW JOHNSON, ASSESSING DEPARTMENT: Briefly, I think the important thing was kind of breaking out that difference between East Cambridge and the rest of Cambridge. And then also what we

see is the difference between investment office and lab. There's a very healthy difference, lab is much more expensive than investment office. And so far investment offices holding on, it's moving with it, but we are seeing the office and office retail fall behind in terms of value and attractiveness. And I will say, to jump on with what Gayle said, things have really been focused in Kendall Square, but that is maybe we should acknowledge changing a little bit. I do remember when we couldn't get people to look at North Point, like that was too far away for anybody to even consider going out there. I think it is still the case that Kendall and MIT are where people would prefer to be as much as possible.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you. And just a quick question. This sheet is in the presentation that community development sent us.

IRAM FAROOQ, ASSISTANT CITY MANAGER OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT: It is not Chair, but we can provide it.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you. Thank you for the work. Only in a week's time. So next week, you'll have doubled the amount of buildings. No, I'm kidding. I'm kidding. Thank you very much. Any questions?

GAYLE WILLET, ASSESING DIRECTOR: I wouldn't be unhappy about that.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: You wouldn't be?

GAYLE WILLET, ASSESING DIRECTOR: I wouldn't be based on the price per square foot.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Well, that would be useful. We'll all talk soon. No other questions? Please, please.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA MALLON: Thank you, Mr. Chair through you. I just had a question. A quick question for assessing. And so if I'm looking at this, there are a total of 50 parcels that include lab space in the City of Cambridge. There's 38 in Kendall slash East Cambridge and the rest of Cambridge is 12.

ANDREW JOHNSON, ASSESING DEPARTMENT: I would say that these are buildings that are defined as lab. So as Jeff talked about whether there are buildings that have some lab space in a tenant, but the whole building wouldn't necessarily be defined as labs. This is based on the use codes that we report to the state and the use code goes with the entire building. And I also did not include some office condos, that I wasn't able to include because those are defined by the state in a certain way, and you have to go through them individually to be able to separate out which one what the specific use of spaces.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA MALLON: Thank you. And thank you through you Mr. Chair for clarifying that. I guess I think that's probably what Councillor Toner was alluding to earlier is that there are certain these 50 parcels that we know about, that are clearly defined as lab, but where are those places that are going to have an unintended consequence of being affected by any changes that we make? And we should certainly try to figure out where those are and make sure that we at least know what we are suggesting in a possible change. I thank you for clarifying. I'll yield back at this time Mr. Chair.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you. If no other Councillor has other questions, I believe we'll go to public comment, Madam.

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: Yes, at this point, there are nine public commenters. The first public commenter is Marie Saccoccio.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: And they will have how many minutes?

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: Three minutes.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Three minutes. Welcome, Maria. We look forward to your comments.

MARIA SACCOCCIO: Hi, this is Maria Saccoccio 55 Otis Street in Cambridge. Although I'm a lawyer, I actually have an undergraduate degree in science and one year postgraduate and I worked five years in laboratories. I'm very familiar and interested in this issue. I did some research and certainly looked at other jurisdictions, San Francisco notably, and I thought it was very clear in there. They call it the planning code. I don't think they call it the zoning code. But they define labs versus life science. And office obviously is different. And then I looked at their map of the zoning and where those would be allowed. They're allowed in light industrial and heavy industrial, despite whether it's BSL 1,2,3 or 4. And I thought that was interesting. Comparing Cambridge to San Francisco, San Francisco is definitely larger. It has a huge shoreline. And they seem to cluster the labs out on the shoreline. So not integrated in neighborhoods by any stretch. I live across the street from 271 Cambridge Street, which is now a lab. The mechanicals are monstrous. This particular entity was allowed to dig and kind of bury what I would call a room. And in so doing they actually ruined one of the original walls in East Cambridge that existed before our housing did. This was all done without any notice to anybody. This was zoned as office and because, Jeff Roberts at different meetings, I listened to him. He's asked over and over and he says, office in R&D and labs are all the same. So that's his reading. And that's CDD's position about our zoning. Originally, the zoning started and labs were allowed with offices were because it was a lab for a dentist, a lab for doctor's office. So that's how that kind of cluster happened. But we never progressed beyond that. I mean, our labs today are not the appendage to the dental office. I think we need strict definitions within our zoning. I think we have to relegate these labs to industrial. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you very much. Michael Grill is next. Michael you have three minutes, welcome.

NAOMI STEPHEN: Michael grill please unmute yourself; you have the floor. Michael, you're unmuted please go ahead.

MICHAEL GRILL: (READING FROM ATTACHMENT C) My name is Michael Grill and I am President of Fairlane Properties, a commercial real estate company located at 1035 Cambridge Street, doing business in Greater Boston since 1997. Since 2008 I've been chairman of the condo trust that runs 1035 Cambridge, which is a 110,000 square foot building with over 30 office, R&D, technical and lab spaces. As the owner of several condo units I own the majority of the building. I'd like to share my concerns about removing technical R&D and lab uses from the business A zones. I'm going to focus my comments primarily on 1035 Cambridge. The property was the manufacturing home of Hyde Shoe Company from 1915 to 1985. And was zoned industrial B prior to 1999 when it was rezoned to business A. The business A zone in 1999 allowed as of right the uses allowed today. After Hyde Shoe the building was set up in 1988 with a \$1 million federal grant as a commercial condominium for commercial, office, research and development, and light industrial uses. It was meant to be an incubator for startups. Currently, our building includes biotech companies developing mRNA technologies, and 3D tissue mapping, R&D companies designing kitchen appliances, methane monitoring devices, 3D metal printing, and technical companies which include video game programs. Many of our tenants have Cambridge owners with employees that live nearby and don't drive to work. When considering removing R&D labs for business A districts I'd like to ask the committee to take a look at the current uses of existing properties in business A districts. I believe that 1035 is a good example of how not all labs and R&D spaces are alike, and that there should be more nuanced in any amendments, without outright bans on

these uses. 1035 Cambridge is not located in a low-density residential area, it does not have 24 hour activity, doesn't have 30 foot mechanicals on its roof, doesn't have extensive exhaust systems. While our current tenants may be grandfathered with zoning change, most would dash for the doors, since any expansion within 1035 or minor renovation would not be allowed. Obviously, no new lab technical R&D tenants would be allowed to lease space at 1035 if this zoning change was approved. In summary, most of the perceived issues with labs don't apply to 1035 Cambridge, which instead of being seen as a blight on our neighborhood, should be viewed as fulfilling the 1988 vision of an incubator for technical R&D uses. I believe that building these kind of spaces strengthen the local economy and provide the type of innovation you and I desire here in Cambridge. Thank you very much.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you. Next speaker is Mark Rogers.

NAOMI STEPHEN: Mark Rogers, please unmute yourself, you do have the floor. You are unmuted please go ahead.

MARK ROGERS: Good evening Councillors, City staff. Thank you for this opportunity to speak. Again. My name is Mark Rogers. I'm a long-term resident of East Cambridge, specifically a Cambridge Street resident. My family owns and manages a small portfolio of mixed-use properties along Cambridge Street. Additionally, I served as a board member on the East Cambridge Business Association, and I was a past member or board member of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority. And primarily, it looks like we've addressed this matter, is there needs to be some clarification between you know what I think we traditionally think of as the lab space versus R&D space. I think there's tremendous value in retrofitting some of the smaller buildings on Cambridge Street for R&D uses. Specifically ,incubator space, that some of these folks or small businesses quite frankly get boxed out of or can't afford to be in Kendall Square. I think that's tremendous value. I think there's actually a symbiotic relationship between these types of businesses. And as a board member of the Business Association, and as a resident, the folks that are working at these companies also frequent the restaurants during the day, when residents are not home, the small boutiques. I think there's tremendous value in having a mixed-use environment. Personally, I have not been affected by the new lab space at 271 Cambridge Street, the Hastings Tapley old building or the Middlesex Sheriff's building. I've met the developers, found them to be strong advocates of the community and members of the association. You know aesthetically, would I prefer that they maybe had some buffer on the mechanicals from, again as an aesthetic viewpoint, but I've never heard them. And I've actually seen their employees in the local restaurants. I think there is tremendous value there. In my last point, when I was a board member with the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority in the early 2000s, we actually had to bend the arm of Boston Properties in some of these developers to actually introduce housing, so we would have this symbiotic mixed-use atmosphere. Lastly, in conclusion, I feel that as it stands, let's not forget, Cambridge Street is a business district. There's pros and cons to living in a business district. I know that well. But I do feel that the pros outweigh the cons. I think Article Nine addresses the issues at hand. And I really don't see much need to change quite anything. Thank you very much for this opportunity to speak.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you. The next speaker is Jason Alves. Jason, you have the floor.

JASON ALVES: Hi, this is Jason Alves I'm the executive director of the East Cambridge Business Association, 544 Cambridge Street. Just wanted to thank everybody for their thoughtful comments and questions tonight. I think that the on this topic, I don't think that anybody will see the Business Association advocating for Kendall Square type sized laboratories along Cambridge street. But I think what we're hearing is that this wide range that falls under the R&D uses is there's a lot of beneficial things that are happening in there. And there are many that exist along Cambridge Street beyond some of the examples that we've heard tonight. We want to make sure that we're still this accessible place, we offer a different price point from Kendall Square. And I think the Council in the in the past has indicated that we

want these types of incubators, we've fitted into some of the zoning requirements in Boston Property zoning and MIT zoning. I think Cambridge Street continues to fulfill this and its own sort of natural not kind of conceived way that we've had to do in Kendall to make space for them. And we should be celebrating that. The other, I think we've heard a lot of questions about labs themselves. And do we have enough of them I guess, I just want to point out that the, in my KSA colleagues can probably speak to this more, but the only life in Kendall Square that we've seen over the past two years has been due to the lab uses and the fact that people will need to come into the office. I think having that variety has really, we should be calling out what that's done for the small businesses in Kendall Square, because those folks are the only bodies down there. So that doesn't even go on to mention some recent vaccine activities that we've been able to accomplish here in the City of Cambridge that really we should be celebrating. But again, Kendall Square can defend itself. I think we want to make sure that our small business community along Cambridge Street are the ones that are really being paid attention to in this in this process. And if one last sort of question to leave folks with but, can some of these problems or just by the nature of Cambridge Street and the size of the properties, will these just sort of work themselves out via a planning board special permit process because of restrictions on height, and then uses that go along with the size of these buildings? You know just making sure that we're identifying the problem before we go too far down the road here is this would be important. Thank you very much. And thanks, Rob. Good to see you. We've gotten so much of your attention here on Cambridge Street. Thank you for everyone's efforts.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you. Lee Farris is next. Lee, you have three minutes welcome.

NAOMI STEPHEN: Lee Farris has not joined the zoom. Heather Hoffman please go ahead. You have the floor.

HEATHER HOFFMAN: Hello, Heather Hoffman 213 Hurley Street. I was interested to hear the revisionist history about how we got residential development in Kendall Square. That's because the people in the neighborhood, including me, kept pounding on the City Council and on Boston Properties. And then it took a reconstituted Cambridge Redevelopment Authority that actually believed in forcing the housing for it to happen. With respect to labs in the neighborhoods, I will remind everyone, that the policy the City of Cambridge has to put housing everywhere. And the chair was absolutely correct. That labs are lousy neighbors. Yes, there are different types of labs, absolutely. But when you talk about the noise ordinance in Cambridge, tell me where it's ever enforced. Show me where someone actually listens to your complaint and does anything about it without a huge outcry. I've made I don't know how many complaints about noise. And I get nothing. People are told if it's loud on the sidewalk, too bad, so sad, you can't complain. Only people in their homes are allowed to complain over and over. We put the comfort and quiet enjoyment of our properties at the bottom of the priority of the City of Cambridge. And it's a shame. And I was so happy to hear about this inquiry, so that we would be forced to look at it. And we may decide that there were various types of labs that are perfectly decent neighbors. That's quite possible. But I can tell you that those 30-foot penthouses, mechanicals. Well take a look at some of the big apartment buildings. Oh, like maybe Zinc, where their permits say they have to shield all of the rooftop mechanicals and you tell me if that's been done. We don't enforce any of the things that are in the law in order to make this a decent place for people to live. And that is what we need to be looking at more broadly, but certainly, in this hearing, and in other similar hearings. Because the people who live here do count for something. And we should remember it. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you, Heather, for your comments. Marlene Lundberg is next. Welcome Marlene.

MARLENE LUNDBERG: Good evening, Marlene Lundberg of 4 Canal Park. This is the first I've come across this topic of limiting where labs would go. I bought here back in 2014, eight years ago, into a neighborhood that I thought was residential. There were two hotels and a shopping mall. Now I feel like

we are being overrun by labs. A brand new huge lab building is going to be put in the middle of the block on First Street at the mall. The huge former Lotus building has been purchased and that will be labs. The One Canal Park building has been purchased and will be labs, and what if they asked to raise the height on that building? North of me at Cambridge Crossing there were at least going to be four lab buildings, five if you go a bit further west. And I'm wondering why the rule of proposed rule or the previous rules have not limited labs next to high density housing. I've heard low density housing mentioned tonight. But high-density housing has even more people who will be exposed to the labs, the noise, the light, the deliveries, anything coming out of their so called smokestacks or whatever mechanicals. So I'm just expressing concern about this for my neighborhood. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you, Marlene. The next speaker is William Dines. Welcome William, you have three minutes.

WILLIAM DINES: Thank you, Councillor, and thank you for bringing this important issue to the general public. I live at 69 Otis Street and I really don't have any credentials in zoning or lab biotech, R&D type of oversight. I'm just speaking as a homeowner and somebody who just went through god awful experience at 271 Cambridge Street. I sit on the Study Committee for the East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District study group. And I work with those developers initially to approve significant changes that they made to the fenestration of the front of the building. And through correspondence with them, we question them on items such as light emission from the building, and mechanical noises, any additional mechanical type facilities that were going to be introduced to the redevelopment of that office space. And we were assured that nothing serious was going to happen either way, and they would take mitigating action to minimize any light emission from the building. And maybe six or nine months later, all of a sudden, we see very large mechanicals being installed on the roof of that building unshielding. Then we have massive phallic symbols hanging on the front of that building on the back of the building that I have to look at every day. Unshielded none of this. My biggest concern is there was no public involvement at all. All the City Council is there except for Mr. Toner was sent a letter by me last summer, I didn't get one, I got one response that one Councillor will look into it and get back to me and I never got any significant information back. I think there needs to be changes done to the zoning to force special permit hearings or something for different types of uses of these types of labs. I know there's all kinds of different types of labs, I worked in computer labs most of my adult profession. I'm retired now, so I don't have to do that. But I think one of the big concerns I have, especially along Cambridge Street, is conversion from existing office use to lab space as of right. And I don't believe that should be done. I think there should be special permit requirements and hearings for the general public to try to work out some of the solutions that these labs are doing to the residential portions of the neighborhood. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you, William. James Williamson is the next speaker. James, you have three minutes.

JAMES WILLIAMSON: So hi, yeah. Can you hear me?

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Yes, please go ahead.

JAMES WILLIAMSON: Thank you, James Williamson 1000 Jackson Place, soon to be demolished Jefferson Park in North Cambridge. So, I was had to was back and forth to another meeting. To the best of my understanding, here are a couple of comments and observations. The first is, it seems to me there are two main somewhat different ways of thinking about this problem. One is where you sit, where the various actors you can be a property owner, you may want to maximize your you know, you want to protect the value of your property, maybe make more money. If you are at the community, you may be much more concerned about the impact of the uses. If you're the city government, the city administration,

you want revenue. Of course, that's a bit simplistic, but I think that gets to the sort of the essence of the different interests that different entity parties have in this discussion. On the other, another dimension, another way to think about it is the difference between the uses, and forgoing for example, residential use for a lab use the interest we may have as a community and having a residential building instead of a lab building, versus the impact of the lab use, which the previous speaker just spoke about. mitigating and controlling and regulating that. Those are ways I'm sort of thinking about this problem. But what I didn't see, and there may have been these numbers, I saw the assessed valuation numbers, what I didn't see is that per square foot rental opportunity number. And, of course, they vary. But that is a huge factor. If you're a property owner, you're looking at that. It's \$150 a square foot for lab office, maybe it's \$180 now. But it's something quite different for a different use. To get those numbers in there, because that's going to be a factor for decisions that are being made by owners of property. The other the other thing I wanted to bring up is the location of keen interest to me is the corner of Brookline and Mass Ave where the Middle East is currently located. And that is in just a little corner there, which is in the BB District, which I think is technically not included in the in the scope of you know where the arrows were. But I think try to understand what the impact of these discussions may be on the Middle East, the opportunity for the owners of the Middle East, and the impact on the community of what those options and choices may be, should be included here. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you, James. Madam Deputy Clerk, are there any other people signed up?

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: There is no one else signed up, Councillor. If Lee Farris has come into the meeting, she would be the last public commenter.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: But she appears not to be here.

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: Okay, you're good then.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you. I move that we have a vote to close public comment.

YEA: COUNCILLOR CARLONE, VICE MAYOR ALANNA MALLON, COUNCILLOR
MCGOVERN,
COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN -4

ABSENT: COUNCILLOR NOLAN
-1

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: And public comment is closed at 7:21pm on the affirmative vote with four in favor.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you, Madam Clerk. I wanted to mention that both Councillor Nolan and Mayor Siddiqui had told us that they were not able to join us. I had a brief discussion with both. It's close to 7:30, which is the two-hour time. I'm happy to consider moving forward, and even extending. I see Councillor Zondervan has his hand up. Councillor you have the floor.

COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Mr. Chair. I really just wanted to touch on a couple of things that were brought up in an earlier discussion and public comment. Regarding to 271 Cambridge Street, I toured that building as I believe you have as well, and actually asked to be shown on to the roof and climbed up there. And I was astonished by the amount of mechanicals that were up there, even though the use itself is relatively minor in that in that building. So, you know, again, I think it is important that we classify this use properly in our zoning, and put it in the industrial districts and be done with it.

And if there are other uses that don't require such intense mechanicals, for example, then those will be fine. But if you're operating a lab, it should be in an industrial area not even in the business districts. And, you know, I particularly wanted to call out Central Square, I mean that sort of cultural district, do we really want to have that filled up with labs instead of cultural amenities? I don't believe so. So again, and then you know as it has been mentioned many times the housing issue where, again, these some of these uses do compete with housing. And because the land value is so high for labs use, housing tends to lose out. I hope that we can get to a place where we're properly classifying this use and putting it into industrial areas where it belongs. Thank you.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you. I'm happy to extend the meeting if we wish. I know we need more information. And some of the definitions that we talked about. This isn't going to be where we vote. We're going to keep it in Committee. But if people would like to have longer Q&A, I think we should extend. Okay. I see a hand up. Are going to extend?

VICE MAYOR ALANNA MALLON: No, I was actually going to say since we are going to have an additional conversation, perhaps a couple of conversations on this. I was just going to say we should just adjourn for now and come back and have another conversation at a later date.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Okay, Vice Mayor, I think that makes sense. But Councillor McGovern, were you going to say the same thing?

COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: I can't stay.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: I think I got the message. We have a couple minutes. Any other Councillors wish to say anything in addition? Okay, so I move, well I don't have to move to keep it in committee. Is that right?

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: No.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: I conclude this meeting then. I move that we adjourn the meeting.

YEA: COUNCILLOR CARONE, VICE MAYOR ALANNA MALLON, COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN, COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN
-4

ABSENT: COUNCILLOR NOLAN -1

PAULA CRANE, DEPUTY CITY CLERK: And the meeting is adjourned on the affirmative vote of four members at 7:25pm.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Thank you for all who came this was a good discussion. Again, I knew the memo was outdated. But I wanted to start there and clean it down to something that we can feel good about, and that includes existing businesses. We'll be doing some research in the next few weeks, and we'll present that at the meeting. Thank you very much. Good night, everyone.

VICE MAYOR ALANNA MALLON: Thank you. Good night.

COUNCILLOR CARLONE: Good night.

The City Clerk's Office received four written communications (ATTACHMENTS D-G).

A communication was received from Councillor Carlone, transmitting Proposed Cambridge Zoning Petition Outline Technical Offices for Research and Development, and Laboratory and Research Facilities.

A communication was received from Community Development Department Zoning for R and D Laboratories.

A communication was received from Michael Gill, regarding remarks.

A communication was received from Sharmil Modi, regarding Appropriateness of Laboratories.

A communication was received from Cambridge Chamber of Commerce.

A communication was received from East Cambridge Business Association.

A communication was received from Fairlane Properties.