

**MINUTES OF THE CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL  
ORDINANCE COMMITTEE  
Tuesday, June 16, 2026, Recessed  
Reconvened, Tuesday, July 7, 2026**

**ORDINANCE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

Councillor McGovern, Chair  
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Chair  
Councillor Al-Zubi  
Vice Mayor Azeem  
Councillor Flaherty  
Councillor Nolan  
Councillor Simmons  
Councillor Zusy  
Mayor Siddiqui

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council's Ordinance Committee was held on Tuesday, June 16, 2026. The meeting was Called to Order at 3:00 p.m. by the Co-Chair, Councillor McGovern. Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation. This public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via Zoom.

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

Councillor Al-Zubi – Absent  
Vice Mayor Azeem – Present/Remote  
Councillor Flaherty – Present/In Sullivan Chamber  
Councillor McGovern – Present/In Sullivan Chamber  
Councillor Nolan – Present/In Sullivan Chamber  
Councillor Simmons – Absent\*  
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Present/In Sullivan Chamber  
Councillor Zusy – Present/In Sullivan Chamber  
Mayor Siddiqui – Absent

**Present – 6, Absent – 3. Quorum established.**

\*Councillor Simmons was present and remote at 3:26p.m.

Councillor McGovern offered opening remarks and noted that the Call of the meeting was on two City Council zoning petitions to amend Article 17.000 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map regarding active use requirements on North Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, including a special permit requirement for Formula Businesses on Cambridge Street. Present at the meeting were Assistant City Manager for Community Development, Melissa Peters, Director of Zoning and Development, Jeff Roberts, Senior Manager, Zoning and Development, Evan Spetrini, Director of Economic Development, Pardis Saffari, and City Solicitor, Megan Bayer.

Councillor McGovern recognized Melissa Peters for opening remarks. Evan Spetrini gave two presentations related to Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street. The presentations were provided in advance of the meeting and included in the Agenda Packet.

**Councillor McGovern opened public comment.**

Tom Evans, 255 Main Street, Cambridge, MA, shared support and concerns regarding Mass Ave.

Kevin Maguire, 88 Chandler Street, Cambridge, MA, shared support and concerns regarding Mass Ave.

Helen Walker, 43 Linnaean Street, Cambridge, MA, shared support and concerns regarding Mass Ave and Cambridge Street.

Susan Markowitz, 20 Oak Street, Cambridge, MA, shared support and encouraged stronger tree requirements.

Gueve Ataie, 1675 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA, shared support for more housing and shared concerns on design requirements.

Heather Hoffman, 213 Hurley Street, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns related to the rezoning planning process.

Patrick Magee, Cambridge, MA, shared support for the proposal and for active ground floor use.

Jason Alves, Cambridge, MA, shared support for the proposal and for active ground floor use.

Councillor McGovern shared that the Committee would discuss the petition on North Mass Ave first and then Cambridge Street.

Councillor McGovern recognized Vice Mayor Azeem, who acknowledged comments made during public comment regarding ground-floor retail. Vice Mayor Azeem questioned whether smaller development projects would be able to accommodate retail, bike parking, mailrooms, and other building needs, especially in flood areas. Jeff Roberts explained that every development site is different and that smaller buildings have a harder time fitting all of these requirements. He noted there are trade-offs between providing ground-floor housing and retail, and that commercial space can work better in flood prone areas. Vice Mayor Azeem also asked for clarification on bike parking requirements when commercial space is converted to housing. Jeff Roberts explained that the zoning includes flexibility and that the bike parking requirements are currently being reviewed. Vice Mayor Azeem said he supported reviewing the bike parking requirements but shared concerns about moving forward with the current petition.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Flaherty who had clarifying questions regarding the proposed zoning changes for North Mass Ave and Linear Park. Evan Spetrini explained that under the current zoning, buildings north of Linear Park can be built up to eight stories without

active ground-floor use. He added that under the proposed zoning, buildings up to four stories could be built without active use, while taller buildings would require it. Melissa Peters noted that developers may still choose to include active ground-floor uses even when they are not required. Councillor Flaherty also had clarifying questions regarding existing commercial properties and the proposed special permit. Evan Spetrini explained that the proposal would provide some flexibility for the location or size of the development, but would not eliminate the active-use requirement entirely.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who asked clarifying questions to better understand the proposed zoning changes for North Mass Ave and the options available for the Ordinance Committee to consider moving forward. Evan Spetrini provided an overview of the current zoning, the proposed changes, and the recommendations made by the Planning Board. He also provided an overview of the different approaches that could be considered and explained why staff are looking to maintain the current approach instead of creating additional exemptions for smaller development projects. Councillor Nolan also asked about the financial feasibility of ground-floor retail. Pardis Saffari responded by explaining how each development will vary depending on the location and the current market conditions. Councillor Nolan also shared concerns regarding bike parking requirements and setbacks near residential properties. Evan Spetrini explained that the petition does not propose changes to the existing setback requirements and provided a background on how the current setback standards work.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who shared his support for allowing flexibility for smaller development projects on North Mass Ave and shared that active ground floor uses should be required only where there existing ground floor retail. Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler shared that he was open to either exempting smaller projects from the active ground-floor use requirement or delaying the effective date of the proposed changes.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy who shared support for flexibility for smaller development projects on North Mass Ave and echoed concerns raised during public comment regarding current development projects. Councillor Zusy echoed comments similar to Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler related to exempting smaller projects or delaying the effective date. Councillor Zusy spoke in support of extending further down Mass Ave.

Councillor McGovern asked staff what additional direction they needed from the Ordinance Committee. Jeff Roberts shared that it would be helpful for staff to understand if the Committee supported the recommendations provided by the Planning Board, or if they would like to go in a different direction. Councillor McGovern pointed out that the Affordable Housing Overlay projects would be exempt from the proposed requirements.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Flaherty who spoke in opposition to the Planning Board's recommendation to maintain the existing North Mass Ave zoning. Councillor Flaherty spoke in support of extending the MAS-12A district further north to encourage additional active ground-floor uses and strengthen the commercial corridor. Councillor Flaherty provided suggestions related to the special permit process.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who asked if other options had been considered when looking at balancing housing and active ground-floor uses. Jeff Roberts explained that staff looked at different approaches and recommended the current proposal because they believe it would encourage active uses while still allow for housing. Councillor Nolan shared that she was open to different options and believed smaller development projects should be exempt if the Committee moves forward with expanding the active-use requirements. Councillor McGovern pointed out that any proposed changes should be considered with the City's housing goals. Councillor Nolan shared concerns about making it hard to build housing if active use requirements were expanded too largely. Councillor Nolan spoke in favor of the Committee having additional discussion related to the proposed changes.

Councillor McGovern recognized Vice Mayor Azeem who agreed that there should be more discussion before deciding, noting that there are some Committee members who are not present at the meeting and that he would also have to leave by 5:00 p.m.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy for brief comments related to Cambridge Street zoning. Councillor Zusy shared support for the Planning Board's recommendations for Cambridge Street and shared concerns about lowering the active-use threshold. Councillor Zusy shared her support for maintaining space for trees and concerns about allowing wet lab use.

**Due to lack of quorum, the Ordinance Committee recessed at 4:56p.m.**

**On Tuesday, July 7, 2026, the Ordinance Committee of the Cambridge City Council that recessed on June 16, 2026, reconvened at 3:00 p.m. by the Co-Chair, Councillor McGovern.** Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation. This public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and remote participation via Zoom.

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

Councillor Al-Zubi – Absent

Vice Mayor Azeem – Present/Remote

Councillor Flaherty – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor McGovern – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Nolan – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Simmons – Absent\*

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

Councillor Zusy – Present/Remote

Mayor Siddiqui – Present/In Sullivan Chamber

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

\*Councillor Simmons was present and remote at 3:51p.m.

Councillor McGovern offered opening remarks and noted that the Call of the meeting was to continue the discussion on two City Council zoning petitions to amend Article 17.000 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance and Zoning Map regarding active use requirements on North Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, including a special permit requirement for Formula Businesses on Cambridge Street. Present at the meeting was Assistant City Manager for

Community Development, Melissa Peters, Director of Zoning and Development, Jeff Roberts, Senior Manager, Zoning and Development, Evan Spetrini, City Solicitor, Megan Bayer, and Assistant City Solicitor, Franz Lepionka.

Councillor McGovern provided a brief overview of the options the Committee has to move forward with the two zoning petitions.

Councillor McGovern recognized Melissa Peters and Jeff Roberts who provided an update relative to the two petitions based off of feedback that was heard from the previous hearing on June 16, 2025.

Councillor McGovern recognized Evan Spetrini who reviewed the “Mass Ave Alternatives” slide from the presentation. The presentation was included in the Agenda Packet and provided in advance of the meeting.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who shared that she was leaning more towards Alternative #2 and asked if language has been created for that specific recommendation. Evan Spetrini explained that the language draft was not available at this time but could be prepared and available at the City Council Summer meeting. Councillor Nolan asked staff what their recommendations were and if they preferred one option over another. Melissa Peters emphasized that the goal of this petition is to help balance housing with active ground floor use and that Alternative #1 and Alternative #2 would give more flexibility for smaller developments in the Porter-Linear Park area. Jeff Roberts agreed with Melissa Peters and noted that both Alternatives encourage active floor use. Councillor Nolan shared her support for Alternative #2, and Alternative #1 as her second choice, because both allow for flexibility while supporting active ground floor uses.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy who shared her support for Alternative #2 and allowing flexibility.

Councillor McGovern recognized Vice Mayor Azeem who questioned if small lots outside of Porter Square would be able to have active ground floor uses and other requirements of a development. Melissa Peters pointed out with the right planning and design it could still be feasible, but would have its challenges. Melissa Peters added that sections of the corridor are evaluated differently to balance housing and active uses. Vice Mayor Azeem asked if certain size lots, such as up to 5,000 square feet, would be able to have a six story building with active ground use, which Melissa Peters confirmed that it could. Vice Mayor Azeem shared he would support Alternative #1.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Flaherty who had clarifying questions related to Alternative #2 and asked if it would encourage smaller residential developments without active uses. Jeff Roberts explained that Alternative #2 would allow smaller developments to be exempt from active ground floor uses, while still requiring it for larger developments. Jeff Roberts added that Alternative #2 would recognize that retail space may not be economically feasible in all areas of the corridor, but still encourage active uses when it is feasible. Councillor Flaherty shared his support for Alternative #2, especially for the northern Mass Ave area.

Councillor McGovern expressed his strong support for having taller buildings along the major corridors to encourage more housing and that having smaller building heights would discourage housing developments. Councillor McGovern shared his support for Alternative #1. Melissa Peters pointed out that both Alternative #1 and #2 will allow buildings up to 12 stories, with Alternative #1 requiring active ground floor uses and Alternative #2 allowing more flexibility for active uses for smaller developments.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler who shared his support for Alternative #1 because it balances housing and active ground floor uses, adding that it will encourage retail in areas where it does not currently exist.

Councillor McGovern recognized Mayor Siddiqui who pointed out that there does not seem to be consensus among Committee members between Alternative #1 and #2, and asked staff whether they have a recommendation. Melissa Peter explained that both Alternatives are working towards the same goal of balancing housing and active ground floor uses, with Alternative #1 having stronger requirements for retail. Melissa Peters shared that staff preferred either of the Alternatives and did not have a preference between the two. Councillor McGovern suggested that the Committee vote on #1 or #2 to help provide directions for staff and to allow the petition to move forward, noting that additional amendments could be made at the full City Council meeting. Mayor Siddiqui agreed with Councillor McGovern's suggestion.

Councillor McGovern recognized Vice Mayor Azeem who shared his support for moving the zoning petition forward and that he supports Alternative #1. Vice Mayor Azeem noted that he was ready to make a motion to forward the Mass Ave Zoning Petition to the full City Council with a favorable recommendation and direct CDD to prepare Ordinance language based on Alternative #1.

Councillor McGovern shared he would come back to the motion after additional comments by Committee members.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Flaherty who suggested that future discussion related to the Mass Ave Zoning Petition could be discussed with potential amendments to the Multifamily Housing Zoning. Councillor Flaherty explained that if the City is encouraging more housing along the corridors, it may be beneficial to review the standards that are in place in residential neighborhoods. Councillor Flaherty restated his support for Alternative #2. Councillor Zusy agreed with comments made by Councillor Flaherty, adding that housing growth and taller building should happen along the corridors. Councillor Zusy shared her support for Alternative #1 if there were more discussion related to Multifamily Housing, adding that Alternative #1 would be a good balance of encouraging housing and opportunities for active uses. Councillor McGovern clarified that his support for taller buildings on major corridors was not tied to changes to Multifamily Housing. Vice Mayor Azeem agreed with Councillor McGovern.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who asked for clarification related to how Alternative #1 is different than the current zoning in the Porter Square area. Melissa Peters explained how PUDs would change in that area and with site specific developments. Councillor

Nolan noted that she would like to amend the motion by directing CDD to prepare Ordinance language based on Alternative #2 instead of Alternative #1.

Councillor McGovern explained there were two motions on the floor, Vice Mayor Azeem's for Alternative #1 and Councillor Nolan's for Alternative #2. The Committee would have to act on Councillor Nolan's motion first, then Vice Mayor Azeem's motion.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Simmons who agreed that the Petition should move forward, noting that the issue is challenging, but it is important to not let the Petition expire. Councillor Simmons shared support for Alternative #1.

**Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who made a motion to forward the Mass Ave Zoning Petition to the full City Council with a favorable recommendation and direct CDD to prepare Ordinance language based on Alternative #2.**

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

Councillor Al-Zubi – Absent

Vice Mayor Azeem – No

Councillor Flaherty – Yes

Councillor McGovern – No

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Simmons – No

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – No

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Siddiqui – No

**Yes – 3, No – 5, Absent – 1. Motion failed.**

**Councillor McGovern recognized Vice Mayor Azeem who made a motion to forward the Mass Ave Zoning Petition to the full City Council with a favorable recommendation and direct CDD to prepare Ordinance language based on Alternative #1.**

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

Councillor Al-Zubi – Absent

Vice Mayor Azeem – Yes

Councillor Flaherty – No

Councillor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Simmons – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Siddiqui – Yes

**Yes – 7, No – 1, Absent – 1. Motion passed.**

Councillor McGovern noted that the Committee would now be discussing the Cambridge Street Petition and recognized Evan Spetrini to review the slide relative to proposed amendments to Cambridge Street.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Flaherty who asked if the original Cambridge Street Zoning Petition had support from members of that community, adding that he remembers neighborhood stakeholders supporting active ground floor retail along Cambridge Street. Melissa Peters provided a brief overview of previous versions of the petition related to height and active uses.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Zusy who shared her support for the proposed petition, adding that residents and business owners also supported requiring active ground floor uses above three stories.

Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who shared support for moving the Cambridge Street Petition forward and did not want the Petition to expire. Councillor Nolan pointed out that Cambridge Street is a big retail corridor and moving the Petition forward aligns with the City Council's goals of encouraging more active uses while also supporting more housing.

Councillor McGovern recognized Vice Mayor Azeem who offered the suggestion of only moving forward with the proposed language related to Lechmere and Webster/Windsor section of the zoning petition while letting the Cambridge Street language expire and be revisited in the future. Vice Mayor Azeem shared that the Committee could consider increasing the height to seven stories and requiring active ground floor uses above three stories in future conversations. Melissa Peters confirmed that it would be fine for the Committee to recommend that option. Vice Mayor Azeem moved to forward the Lechmere and Webster/Windsor portions of the proposed petition, requiring active ground-floor uses above three stories, to the full City Council with a favorable recommendation. Councillor Zusy shared her support for the motion and reiterated that she is not in favor of increasing building heights on Cambridge Street in a future proposal. Councillor Flaherty shared his support for the motion, noting that it would allow for the Committee to continue discussion on Cambridge Street. Councillor Nolan added that it would be important to move forward with the entire petition, and not just certain sections of the neighborhood.

**Councillor McGovern recognized Vice Mayor Azeem who made a motion to forward only the Lechmere and Webster/Windsor portions of the proposed Cambridge Street Zoning Petition to the full City Council with a favorable recommendation on the proposed petition on active ground-floor use above three stories.**

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

Councillor Al-Zubi – Absent

Vice Mayor Azeem – Yes

Councillor Flaherty – Yes

Councillor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Simmons – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Siddiqui – Yes

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



Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who made a motion to forward the Cambridge Street section of the Zoning Petition to the full City Council with a favorable recommendation based on the Planning Board's recommendation.

Councillor McGovern asked for clarification regarding comments made by Vice Mayor Azeem on increasing the height to seven stories, and if the Committee could move forward with that today. Megan Bayer explained that increasing to seven stories would be a substantial change to the Petition and would require a new petition. Vice Mayor Azeem shared he would not be in favor of Councillor Nolan's motion and would like to continue discussing Cambridge Street in a future petition. Councillor Zusy noted she preferred active uses above three stories but would support Councillor Nolan. Mayor Siddiqui shared support for Councillor Nolan's motion, adding that the Planning Board's recommendation would still meet with the City Council's goals. Councillor Flaherty asked how the Planning Board's recommendation was different from the proposed petition. Melissa Peters explained that the proposed petition requires active ground floor uses at a lower building height and summarized the options before the Committee related to the Cambridge Street section of the Petition. She added that either option would align with Council's goal of strengthening active ground floor use requirements.

**Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Nolan who made a motion to forward the Cambridge Street section of the Zoning Petition to the full City Council with a favorable recommendation based on the Planning Board's recommendation.**

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

Councillor Al-Zubi – Absent

Vice Mayor Azeem – No

Councillor Flaherty – Yes

Councillor McGovern – No

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Simmons – No

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – No

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Siddiqui – Yes

**Yes – 4, No – 4, Absent – 1. Motion failed**

**Councillor McGovern recognized Councillor Flaherty who made a motion to adjourn the meeting.**

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

Councillor Al-Zubi – Absent

Vice Mayor Azeem – Yes

Councillor Flaherty – Yes

Councillor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Simmons – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Mayor Siddiqui – Yes

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

**The Ordinance Committee adjourned at approximately 4:30p.m.**

**Attachment A** – Communications from the public.

**Clerk’s Note:** The City of Cambridge/22 City View records every City Council meeting and every City Council Committee meeting. The video for this meeting can be viewed at:

**[Jun 16, 2026 Ordinance Committee - Cambridge, MA](#)**

**[Jul 07, 2026 Ordinance Committee - Cambridge, MA](#)**

**From:** Richard Krushnic <rkrushnic@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 16, 2026 2:56 PM  
**To:** City Council; City Clerk; City Manager

To the Ordinance Committee:

**Cambridge St. zoning amendment recommendations**

No wet labs closer than 200 feet from a residential building higher than 3 stories.

10-foot step back above the 4<sup>th</sup> floor on the south side of Cambridge St.

Produce the temporary pocket in Milessa Peter's presentation, make the vacant land adjacent to Millers River Apartments a temporary pocket park until the CHA builds on it, and acquire one additional piece of land for one more pocket park.

The current zoning includes guidelines recommending an additional 4 feet added to the Cambridge St. sidewalk (allowing trees); and guidelines recommending trees in front of larger buildings. These non-binding guidelines should be made binding standards. This tree standard should apply to all residential buildings on the street in excess of three stories.

The requirement of first floor active use for buildings above three stories is good.

The following programs should be expanded significantly for independent small businesses on Cambridge St. for 6 years: Storefront Improvement Program, Reimbursement funding for exterior façade renovations and ADA accessibility upgrades, Small Business Enhancement Program, Retail Interior Accessibility Program, and Small Business E-Commerce Program.

Independent businesses displaced should be offered right of return to similar square footage. Few could afford to return, but they should be offered the opportunity.

Special permit project review should be required for all residential developments above three stories.

Amy residential tear down must be replaced by a residential building with at least one more unit than in the prior structure.

Thanks for your consideration,

Richard Krushnic

20 Oak Street

## Erwin, Nicole

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**From:** Jason Alves <baecamb@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 16, 2026 12:23 PM  
**To:** City Council; City Clerk  
**Subject:** Ordinance Comments 6-16

Dear Madam Mayor an Councillors

On behalf of the East Cambridge Business Association, I am writing to express our strong support for requiring active ground-floor commercial uses in redevelopment projects along Cambridge Street.

As an organization that often advocates for flexibility in development regulations, we do not make this recommendation lightly. However, we believe this requirement is essential to preserving the long-term vitality, continuity, and economic function of one of Cambridge's most important commercial corridors.

The redevelopment landscape on Cambridge Street has changed significantly. In the past, many larger projects required Special Permits or variances, creating opportunities for meaningful review and negotiation regarding ground-floor uses. As zoning barriers are reduced and parcel assemblage becomes more feasible, redevelopment is increasingly likely to occur by right. While this can accelerate housing production and investment, it also removes many of the mechanisms that previously helped ensure commercial activity remained part of the streetscape.

The concern is not the addition of housing. More residents living along Cambridge Street will benefit local businesses by increasing foot traffic, customers, and overall street activity. ECBA has consistently supported thoughtful increases in density. The concern is that, over time, redevelopment could permanently eliminate spaces where small businesses operate and where future businesses might locate.

Consider a block such as the one in Inman Square that today houses a diverse collection of small businesses, including Christina's Spice & Specialty Foods, Albertine Press, Embody School of Yoga, Date Wheel, and others. If a future redevelopment replaced multiple storefronts with residential units, parking, or inactive uses at the ground floor, the district would permanently lose numerous opportunities for local entrepreneurship and neighborhood-serving businesses. Requiring active commercial uses ensures that redevelopment contributes to the continuity of the business district rather than eroding it.

We also have a real-world example on Cambridge Street. The redevelopment of 950 Cambridge Street responded to the priorities of its era by creating office space and incorporating extensive ground-floor parking. While understandable at the time, the project removed multiple commercial and industrial spaces and created a substantial inactive gap in the streetscape. Today, that block remains one of the weakest stretches of the corridor, with persistent vacancies and limited pedestrian activity. The absence of active ground-floor uses has reduced the continuity that successful commercial districts depend upon and likely contributed to subsequent struggles for nearby retail spaces.

Our support for this requirement is not rooted in opposition to redevelopment. Cambridge Street needs investment, building modernization, and additional housing. Those are positive outcomes. The question

is whether redevelopment will also preserve opportunities for commerce, entrepreneurship, and street-level activity that make the corridor successful.

Establishing a ground-floor commercial requirement creates a clear expectation that Cambridge Street will remain a commercial corridor as it evolves. It removes the need to revisit this issue project by project and provides certainty for developers, residents, and businesses alike. In cases where active commercial space is genuinely impractical, developers would still have the opportunity to seek relief through the appropriate public process and demonstrate why an exception is warranted.

Cambridge has a limited number of commercial corridors. Housing can be built in many locations throughout the city, but opportunities for storefront businesses exist only in a relatively small number of places. Once those commercial spaces are lost, they are extraordinarily difficult to recreate.

For these reasons, ECBA strongly supports establishing an active ground-floor commercial requirement for redevelopment projects along Cambridge Street.

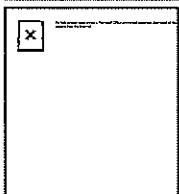
Sincerely,

Jason Alves  
Executive Director  
East Cambridge Business Association

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Jason Alves  
Executive Director  
East Cambridge Business Association  
544 Cambridge St, Cambridge MA 02141  
Office/Google Voice: (857)-242-6651  
[www.EastCambridgeBA.com](http://www.EastCambridgeBA.com)

Become a Member of the ECBA Today!



**Erwin, Nicole**

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**From:** Ethan Frank <ethandf2@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 15, 2026 3:47 PM  
**To:** City Council  
**Cc:** City Clerk  
**Subject:** Take caution with active use requirements

To the Ordinance Committee,

I like the idea of requiring active uses, but given the amount of empty storefronts in Central, I'm concerned that the requirement will only restrict development and lead to an underdeveloped streetscape regardless.

Sincerely,  
Ethan Frank

**Erwin, Nicole**

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**From:** Tess Hofmann <thofmann@cambridgeredevelopment.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 6, 2026 6:40 PM  
**To:** City Clerk  
**Cc:** Kyle Vangel; tevens  
**Subject:** Written Comment for July 7 Ordinance Committee Meeting  
**Attachments:** Ordinance Committee\_Active Use Rezoning Letter\_Signed.pdf

To the City Clerk's Office,

Attached please find a written comment from the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority regarding the North Mass Ave Active Use Zoning Petition. This item is on the agenda for the Ordinance Committee meeting tomorrow, July 7.

Thank you,

Tess Hofmann

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Tess Hofmann | She/Her/Hers | Senior Project Manager | Cambridge Redevelopment Authority  
255 Main Street, 8th Floor, Cambridge, MA 02142 | o: 617.492.6800 Ext. 16



Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139

City Council – Ordinance Committee  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, MA 02139

July 6, 2026

**Re: Active Use Zoning Petition – North Mass Ave**

To Mayor Siddiqui and Members of the Ordinance Committee,

Over the course of your deliberations on the Active Use Zoning Petition for North Mass Ave, we have appreciated the council's consideration of the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority's (CRA) planned housing development at 2326 Mass Ave. We believe that North Mass Ave is of a fundamentally different character than Cambridge Street, and that increasing housing density should be the top priority on this corridor as this will (1) add housing units that help address the local and regional housing affordability crisis, and (2) add additional customers on the corridor enhancing the viability of local retail.

As a brief review of the project, the CRA purchased 2326 Mass Ave (a 4,945 square-foot site) in August 2024, with the goal of building a mixed-income homeownership development, and released an RFP seeking a developer partner in November of last year. Ultimately, the CRA selected a proposal from Ascent Dev LLC, which offered a six-story building with 16 homeownership units, including three affordable units, and no active ground-floor use. The ground-floor of the design includes a three-bedroom affordable unit with direct private yard access. Under the current zoning, this design is allowed. However, under the proposed rezoning, the project would be imperiled.

The Active Use Petition for North Mass Ave presents several major complications for this project. The first complication is related to the ground-floor design for an elevator building on a small site. The active use requirement for 60% of the ground-floor within 50 feet of Mass Ave creates significant challenges for accommodating circulation and building systems, eliminates any shared lobby, and leaves no room for a ground-floor residential unit with yard access.



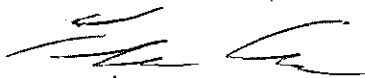
Another complication owes to the nature of the building as a homeownership product. The small condo association would be burdened with the financial precariousness of the retail market on this corridor. The first choice would be for the retail condo to be sold. In this case, the end-user would need to be financially established, and may be less likely to be a vibrant, pedestrian-friendly business. If no buyer is found, the condo association would be stuck with the administrative burden of managing the retail condo as a rental. These potential outcomes create a large risk for developers of homeownership buildings, as well as for future condo homeowners.

The CRA would support an exemption from the active use requirement for smaller lots or for smaller projects. A lot size exemption for lots of less than 5,000 square feet would help to encourage developments such as the proposed design at 2326 Mass Ave without sacrificing too much potential active-use frontage on the corridor. North Mass Ave is comprised of mostly larger lots, with lots of less than 5,000 square feet being among a handful (~12 lots) between Porter Square and the Linear Park. Alternatively, an exemption from the active use requirement for smaller projects, for example buildings of less than 25,000 square feet GFA, is another way of achieving relief for small projects which would be disproportionately burdened by the requirement. Either approach would address the CRA's concerns about ground-floor design constraints and would alleviate the risk to condo associations of small buildings.

Conversely, the CRA would discourage a special permit process for exemptions to the active use requirement. The uncertainty and expense that a special permit process introduces would operate to discourage development of small lots. The CRA hopes to see a more uniformly applicable solution that provides transparency for developers.

We would like to thank CDD staff for meeting with us to discuss this project. They have been immensely helpful in responding to our concerns and considering thoughtful alternatives.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Tom Evans', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Cambridge Redevelopment Authority  
Tom Evans, Executive Director

Description of proposed district boundaries based on the maps submitted with petition materials for the April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026 City Council Meeting:

### **Massachusetts Avenue Active Uses**

#### **MAS-12A District – Legal Description**

Create a Massachusetts Avenue-12A (MAS-12A) district on the Zoning Map of the City of Cambridge with the following boundaries:

Beginning at the northwesternmost point of the existing MAS-18/PUD-POR District where it meets the street centerline of Massachusetts Avenue, and proceeding in a southeasterly direction along the boundary of the MAS-18/PUD-POR District; thence continuing along the MAS-18/PUD-POR boundary to the intersection of the street centerline of Roseland Street; thence turning in an easterly direction and proceeding along the southern boundary of the MAS-18/PUD/POR District to the intersection of with the C-1 District boundary within the Roseland Street right-of-way; thence turning in a southerly direction and proceeding along the C-1 District boundary to the intersection with the southern boundary of the C-1 District and the northern boundary of the C-2A District; thence continuing in a southerly direction along the western boundary of the C-2A District to the intersection of the southern boundary of the C-2A District and the northern boundary of the C-3 District within the Everett Street right-of-way; thence turning in a westerly direction and proceeding along the boundary of the C-3 District to the intersection with the eastern boundary of the C-2 District within the Chauncy Street right-of-way; thence turning in a northerly direction along the eastern boundary of the C-2 District to the intersection with the southern boundary of the C-1 District; thence continuing in a northerly direction along the eastern boundary of the C-1 District to the intersection with the southern boundary of the C-2 District within the Linnaean Street right-of-way; thence continuing in a northerly direction and proceeding along the eastern boundary of the C-2 District to the intersection with the boundary of the C-1 District within the Lancaster Street right-of-way; thence continuing in a northerly direction along the eastern boundary of the C-1 District to the southern boundary of the C-2 District; thence turning in an easterly direction and proceeding along the boundary of the C-2 District to the intersection with the boundary of the C-1 District; thence continuing in a northerly direction along the eastern boundary of the C-1 District to the southern boundary of the C-1A District; thence continuing in a northerly direction and proceeding along the eastern boundary of the C-1A District to the southern boundary of the C-1 District; thence turning in a northwesterly direction and proceeding along the boundary of the C-1 District to the southern boundary of the OS District; thence turning in an easterly

direction along the southern boundary of the OS district to the intersection with the eastern boundary of the property located on Map 191, Lot 118; thence continuing in an easterly direction and proceeding along a line described as follows: a straight line connecting a point at the previously described intersection of the southern boundary of the OS district where it intersects with the eastern boundary of the property located on Map 191, Lot 118 and a point at the southwestern point of the OS District on the property located on Map 184, Lot RR4 where it intersects with the northwesternmost point of the property located on Map 184, Lot 155; thence continuing in an easterly direction along the northernmost boundary of the property located on Map 184, Lot 155 to the intersection with the Cameron Avenue right-of-way; thence continuing in an easterly direction and proceeding along a line described as follows: a straight line connecting a point at the intersection of the OS District on the property located on Map 184, Lot RR4, the property located on Map 184, Lot 155, and the Cameron Avenue right-of-way and a point located at the intersection of the Cameron Ave right-of-way, the property located on Map 183, Lot 128, and the westernmost point of the OS District boundary; thence continuing in an easterly direction and proceeding along the boundary of the OS District to the intersection with the boundary of the C-1 District; thence turning in a southwesterly direction and proceeding along the boundary of the C-1 District to the intersection with the northern boundary of the MAS-18/PUD-POR District within the Davenport Street right-of-way; thence turning in a southwesterly direction and proceeding along the boundary of the MAS-18/PUD-POR District to the point of beginning.

**Petition: To amend the Zoning Map and Article 17.000 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance as follows with the intent of strengthening active use requirements on North Mass Ave.**

### **Amendments to the Zoning Map.**

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See attached Zoning Map and descriptive text.

### **Amendments to Article 17.000.**

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Amend Section 17.804.2.1 to read as follows:

- 17.804.2.1** ~~Additional Height for Ground Story Active Uses. The following limitations shall apply in addition to the Table of Height Limitations below: As set forth in the Table of Height Limitations, greater height shall be permitted for portions of buildings containing Residential Uses if the Ground Story is occupied by one or more Active Uses, as defined in Section 17.803.3, comprising at least 60% of the interior portion of the Ground Story that is within 50 feet of a Primary Street.~~
- (a) ~~On lots abutting one or more Primary Streets in a MAS-12A or MAS-18 district, residential uses shall be limited to 4 stories above grade and 45 feet above grade if the Ground Story is not occupied by one or more Active Uses, as defined in Section 17.803.3, comprising at least 60% of the interior portion of the Ground Story that is within 50 feet of a Primary Street.~~
  - (b) ~~On lots abutting one or more Primary Streets in a MAS-12 district, residential uses shall be limited to 8 stories above grade and 100 feet above grade if the Ground Story is not occupied by one or more Active Uses, as defined in Section 17.803.3, comprising at least 60% of the interior portion of the Ground Story that is within 50 feet of a Primary Street.~~
  - (c) ~~Upon granting a special permit, the Planning Board may approve modifications to the Active Use floor area and location standards in paragraphs (a) and (b) above to permit residential heights up to those set forth in the Table of Height Limitations if the Board finds that all of the following criteria are met in addition to those in Section 17.807.2 and may impose conditions to ensure ongoing conformance:~~
    - ~~(i) Active Uses shall be provided in a manner that generally meets the intent of the requirement to provide for reasonably continuous active ground floor frontage along the Primary Street, and~~
    - ~~(ii) the total floor area of required Active Uses is not substantially reduced, and~~
    - ~~(iii) the modifications directly respond to unique site-specific conditions that make the application of paragraphs (a) or (b) infeasible.~~
  - (d) ~~Lots that do not directly abut a Primary Street shall not be subject to the additional limitations of paragraphs (a) and (b) above; however, (i) within 50 feet of the street line of a Primary Street, the permitted residential heights shall not exceed the applicable limitations set forth in paragraphs (a) and (b) above, and (ii) the limitations set forth in paragraphs (a) and (b) above shall apply to the entire area of any lot that abuts a Primary Street on April 27, 2026, including any lots or portions of~~

[lots that are later subdivided so that they no longer abut a Primary Street.](#)

(e) [The additional limitations of this Section shall not apply to an AHO Project.](#)

Amend Section 17.804.3 to read as follows:

**17.804.3 Table of Height Limitations**

|                                                                                                                                          | <b>MAS-6</b>                                 | <b>MAS-12</b>                                 | <b>MAS-12A</b>                               | <b>MAS-18</b>                                |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| <b>Non-Residential Uses<br/>(Section 4.30 except 4.31 a-j. &amp; 4.33.a)</b>                                                             | 45 feet and 4 stories above grade            | 45 feet and 4 stories above grade             | 45 feet and 4 stories above grade            | 45 feet and 4 stories above grade            |
| <b>Non-Residential Uses<br/>(Section 4.30 except 4.31 a-j. &amp; 4.33.a) within the PUD-POR District</b>                                 | 55 feet and 5 stories above grade            | 55 feet and 5 stories above grade             | 55 feet and 5 stories above grade            | 55 feet and 5 stories above grade            |
| <b>Institutional Uses<br/>(Section 4.33) except Religious Purposes<br/>(Section 4.33.a) within an Institutional Use Overlay District</b> | 60 feet and 6 stories above grade            | 60 feet and 6 stories above grade             | 60 feet and 6 stories above grade            | 60 feet and 6 stories above grade            |
| <del><b>Residential Uses<br/>(Section 4.31 a-j.)</b></del>                                                                               | <del>75 feet and 6 stories above grade</del> | <del>100 feet and 8 stories above grade</del> | <del>45 feet and 4 stories above grade</del> | <del>45 feet and 4 stories above grade</del> |
| <b>Religious Purposes Uses<br/>(Section 4.33.a)</b>                                                                                      | 75 feet and 6 stories above grade            | 100 feet and 8 stories above grade            | 100 feet and 8 stories above grade           | 100 feet and 8 stories above grade           |
| <del><b>Residential Uses<br/>(Section 4.31 a-j.) with Ground-Story Active Uses (Section 17.803.3)</b></del>                              | 75 feet and 6 stories above grade            | 145 feet and 12 stories above grade           | 145 feet and 12 stories above grade          | 145 feet and 12 stories above grade          |
| <b>Residential Uses with a Porter Square PUD Special Permit (Section 17.808)</b>                                                         | 75 feet and 6 stories above grade            | 145 feet and 12 stories above grade           | 145 feet and 12 stories above grade          | 220 feet and 18 stories above grade          |

**Petition: To amend the Zoning Map and Article 17.000 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance as follows with the intent of strengthening active use requirements on North Mass Ave.**

**Amendments to the Zoning Map.**

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See attached Zoning Map and descriptive text.

**Amendments to Article 17.000.**

---

Amend Section 17.804.2.1 to read as follows:

- 17.804.2.1 Ground Story Active Uses.** The following limitations shall apply in addition to the Table of Height Limitations below:
- (a) On lots abutting one or more Primary Streets in a MAS-12A or MAS-18 district, residential uses shall be limited to 4 stories above grade and 45 feet above grade if the Ground Story is not occupied by one or more Active Uses, as defined in Section 17.803.3, comprising at least 60% of the interior portion of the Ground Story that is within 50 feet of a Primary Street.
  - (b) On lots abutting one or more Primary Streets in a MAS-12 district, residential uses shall be limited to 8 stories above grade and 100 feet above grade if the Ground Story is not occupied by one or more Active Uses, as defined in Section 17.803.3, comprising at least 60% of the interior portion of the Ground Story that is within 50 feet of a Primary Street.
  - (c) Upon granting a special permit, the Planning Board may approve modifications to the Active Use floor area and location standards in paragraphs (a) and (b) above to permit residential heights up to those set forth in the Table of Height Limitations if the Board finds that all of the following criteria are met in addition to those in Section 17.807.2 and may impose conditions to ensure ongoing conformance:
    - (i) Active Uses shall be provided in a manner that generally meets the intent of the requirement to provide for reasonably continuous active ground floor frontage along the Primary Street, and
    - (ii) the total floor area of required Active Uses is not substantially reduced, and
    - (iii) the modifications directly respond to unique site-specific conditions that make the application of paragraphs (a) or (b) infeasible.
  - (d) Lots that do not directly abut a Primary Street shall not be subject to the additional limitations of paragraphs (a) and (b) above; however, (i) within 50 feet of the street line of a Primary Street, the permitted residential heights shall not exceed the applicable limitations set forth in paragraphs (a) and (b) above, and (ii) the limitations set forth in paragraphs (a) and (b) above shall apply to the entire area of any lot that abuts a Primary Street on April 27, 2026, including any lots or portions of lots that are later subdivided so that they no longer abut a Primary Street.
  - (e) The additional limitations of this Section shall not apply to an AHO Project.

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Amend Section 17.804.3 to read as follows:

**17.804.3 Table of Height Limitations**

|                                                                                                                                                      | <b>MAS-6</b>                            | <b>MAS-12</b>                             | <b>MAS-12A</b>                            | <b>MAS-18</b>                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>Non-Residential Uses<br/>(Section 4.30 except<br/>4.31 a-j. &amp; 4.33.a)</b>                                                                     | 45 feet and<br>4 stories above<br>grade | 45 feet and<br>4 stories<br>above grade   | 45 feet and<br>4 stories<br>above grade   | 45 feet and<br>4 stories above<br>grade   |
| <b>Non-Residential Uses<br/>(Section 4.30 except<br/>4.31 a-j. &amp; 4.33.a) within<br/>the PUD-POR District</b>                                     | 55 feet and<br>5 stories above<br>grade | 55 feet and<br>5 stories<br>above grade   | 55 feet and<br>5 stories<br>above grade   | 55 feet and<br>5 stories above<br>grade   |
| <b>Institutional Uses<br/>(Section 4.33) except<br/>Religious Purposes<br/>(Section 4.33.a) within<br/>an Institutional Use<br/>Overlay District</b> | 60 feet and<br>6 stories above<br>grade | 60 feet and<br>6 stories<br>above grade   | 60 feet and<br>6 stories<br>above grade   | 60 feet and<br>6 stories above<br>grade   |
| <b>Religious Purposes<br/>Uses (Section 4.33.a)</b>                                                                                                  | 75 feet and<br>6 stories above<br>grade | 100 feet and<br>8 stories<br>above grade  | 100 feet and<br>8 stories<br>above grade  | 100 feet and<br>8 stories above<br>grade  |
| <b>Residential Uses<br/>(Section 4.31 a-j.)</b>                                                                                                      | 75 feet and<br>6 stories above<br>grade | 145 feet and<br>12 stories<br>above grade | 145 feet and<br>12 stories<br>above grade | 145 feet and<br>12 stories<br>above grade |
| <b>Residential Uses with a<br/>Porter Square PUD<br/>Special Permit (Section<br/>17.808)</b>                                                         | 75 feet and<br>6 stories above<br>grade | 145 feet and<br>12 stories<br>above grade | 145 feet and<br>12 stories<br>above grade | 220 feet and<br>18 stories<br>above grade |

Description of proposed district boundaries based on the maps submitted with petition materials for the April 27<sup>th</sup>, 2026 City Council Meeting:

### **Cambridge Street Active Uses**

#### **Business A (BA) District – Legal Description**

Create a Business A (BA) district on the Zoning Map of the City of Cambridge with the following boundaries:

Beginning at the northwesternmost point of the existing CAM-6/PUD-4A District where it meets the street centerline of Monsignor O'Brien Highway and the southern boundary of the SD-1 District, and proceeding along the western boundary of the CAM-6/PUD4A District in a southerly direction; thence continuing in a southerly direction along the western boundary of the CAM-6/PUD4A District to the intersection of the street centerline of Gore Street; thence turning in a southwesterly direction along the street centerline of Gore Street to the intersection of the street centerline of Third Street; thence turning in a northerly direction along the street centerline of Third Street to the intersection of the street centerline of Third Street and the northern boundary of the C-1 District; thence turning in a northwesterly direction and proceeding along the C-1 District boundary to the intersection of the street centerline of Monsignor O'Brien Highway and the southern boundary of the SD-1 District; thence turning in a southeasterly direction along the boundary of the SD-1 District to the point of beginning.



**Petition: To amend the Zoning Map and Article 17.000 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance as follows with the intent of strengthening active use requirements on Cambridge Street.**

### **Amendments to the Zoning Map.**

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See attached Zoning Map and descriptive text.

### **Amendments to Article 17.000.**

---

Amend Section 17.704.2.1 to read as follows:

- 17.704.2.1** ~~**Additional Height for Ground Story Active Uses.**~~ The following limitations shall apply in addition to the Table of Height Limitations below: As set forth in the Table of Height Limitations, greater height shall be permitted for portions of buildings containing Residential Uses if the Ground Story is occupied by one or more Active Uses, as defined in Section 17.703.3, comprising at least 60% of the interior portion of the Ground Story that is within 50 feet of a Primary Street.
- (a) On lots abutting one or more Primary Streets, residential uses shall be limited to 3 stories above grade and 35 feet above grade if the Ground Story is not occupied by one or more Active Uses, as defined in Section 17.703.3, comprising at least 60% of the interior portion of the Ground Story that is within 50 feet of a Primary Street.
- (b) Upon granting a special permit, the Planning Board may approve modifications to the Active Use floor area and location standards in paragraph (a) above to permit residential heights up to those set forth in the Table of Height Limitations if the Board finds that all of the following criteria are met in addition to those in Section 17.707.2 and may impose conditions to ensure ongoing conformance:
- (i) Active Uses shall be provided in a manner that generally meets the intent of the requirement to provide for reasonably continuous active ground floor frontage along the Primary Street, and
- (ii) the total floor area of required Active Uses is not substantially reduced, and
- (iii) the modifications directly respond to unique site-specific conditions that make the application of paragraph (a) infeasible.
- (c) Lots that do not directly abut a Primary Street shall not be subject to the additional limitations of paragraph (a) above; however, (i) within 50 feet of the street line of a Primary Street, the permitted residential heights shall not exceed the applicable limitations set forth in paragraph (a) above, and (ii) the limitations set forth in paragraph (a) above shall apply to the entire area of any lot that abuts a Primary Street on April 27, 2026, including any lots or portions of lots that are later subdivided so that they no longer abut a Primary Street.
- (d) The additional limitations of this Section shall not apply to an AHO Project.

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Amend Section 17.704.3 to read as follows:

**17.704.3 Table of Height Limitations.**

|                                                                                                                                | <b>CAM-6</b>                            | <b>CAM-10</b>                             | <b>CAM-12</b>                             |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>Non-Residential Uses<br/>(Section 4.30 except 4.31<br/>a-j., 4.33.b.7 &amp; 4.33.a)</b>                                     | 35 feet and 3<br>stories above<br>grade | 45 feet and 4<br>stories above<br>grade   | 35 feet and 3<br>stories above<br>grade   |
| <b>Dormitory Uses (Section<br/>4.33.b.7)</b>                                                                                   | 45 feet and 4<br>stories above<br>grade | 45 feet and 4<br>stories above<br>grade   | 45 feet and 4<br>stories above<br>grade   |
| <b>Residential Uses<br/>(<del>Section 4.31 a-j.</del>) &amp;<br/>Religious Purposes Uses<br/>(Section 4.33.a)</b>              | 75 feet and 6<br>stories above<br>grade | 75 feet and 6<br>stories above<br>grade   | 75 feet and 6<br>stories above<br>grade   |
| <b>Residential Uses<br/>(<del>Section 4.31 a-j.</del>) with<br/>Ground-Story Active<br/>Uses (<del>Section 17.703.3</del>)</b> | 75 feet and 6<br>stories above<br>grade | 120 feet and 10<br>stories above<br>grade | 145 feet and<br>12 stories above<br>grade |

## Formula Business Special Permit

### **Amendments to Article 17.000.**

---

Create a new Section 17.703.4 to read as follows:

- 17.703.4      Formula Businesses.** A Formula Business as defined in this Ordinance may be established in a Cambridge Street District only after the issuance of a special permit from the Planning Board. In reviewing an application the Planning Board shall take the following into consideration:
- (a)            The extent to which the design of the proposal reflects, amplifies, and strengthens the established historical character of existing buildings and store fronts on Cambridge Street.
  - (b)            The extent to which the particulars of the building or storefront design is varied from the formula or standard design of the chain in order to reflect the unique character and conditions of Cambridge Street generally or the specific location in particular.
  - (c)            The extent to which the standard elements of the enterprise as they define it as a Formula Business are modified to respect and provide unique expressions of Cambridge Street history and traditions as well as innovation in physical design and marketing that will distinguish the Cambridge Street location from other locations of the Formula Business.

**Petition: To amend the Zoning Map and Article 17.000 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance as follows with the intent of strengthening active use requirements on Cambridge Street.**

**Amendments to the Zoning Map.**

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See attached Zoning Map and descriptive text.

**Amendments to Article 17.000.**

---

Amend Section 17.704.2.1 to read as follows:

- 17.704.2.1 Ground Story Active Uses.** The following limitations shall apply in addition to the Table of Height Limitations below:
- (a) On lots abutting one or more Primary Streets in a CAM-10 or CAM-12 district, residential uses shall be limited to 3 stories above grade and 35 feet above grade if the Ground Story is not occupied by one or more Active Uses, as defined in Section 17.703.3, comprising at least 60% of the interior portion of the Ground Story that is within 50 feet of a Primary Street.
  - (b) Upon granting a special permit, the Planning Board may approve modifications to the Active Use floor area and location standards in paragraph (a) above to permit residential heights up to those set forth in the Table of Height Limitations if the Board finds that all of the following criteria are met in addition to those in Section 17.707.2 and may impose conditions to ensure ongoing conformance:
    - (i) Active Uses shall be provided in a manner that generally meets the intent of the requirement to provide for reasonably continuous active ground floor frontage along the Primary Street, and
    - (ii) the total floor area of required Active Uses is not substantially reduced, and
    - (iii) the modifications directly respond to unique site-specific conditions that make the application of paragraph (a) infeasible.
  - (c) Lots that do not directly abut a Primary Street shall not be subject to the additional limitations of paragraph (a) above; however, (i) within 50 feet of the street line of a Primary Street, the permitted residential heights shall not exceed the applicable limitations set forth in paragraph (a) above, and (ii) the limitations set forth in paragraph (a) above shall apply to the entire area of any lot that abuts a Primary Street on April 27, 2026, including any lots or portions of lots that are later subdivided so that they no longer abut a Primary Street.
  - (d) The additional limitations of this Section shall not apply to an AHO Project.

---

Amend Section 17.704.3 to read as follows:

**17.704.3 Table of Height Limitations.**

|                                                                                                | <b>CAM-6</b>                            | <b>CAM-10</b>                             | <b>CAM-12</b>                             |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------|
| <b>Non-Residential Uses<br/>(Section 4.30 except<br/>4.31 a-j., 4.33.b.7 &amp;<br/>4.33.a)</b> | 35 feet and 3<br>stories above<br>grade | 45 feet and 4<br>stories above<br>grade   | 35 feet and 3<br>stories above<br>grade   |
| <b>Dormitory Uses<br/>(Section 4.33.b.7)</b>                                                   | 45 feet and 4<br>stories above<br>grade | 45 feet and 4<br>stories above<br>grade   | 45 feet and 4<br>stories above<br>grade   |
| <b>Religious Purposes<br/>Uses (Section 4.33.a)</b>                                            | 75 feet and 6<br>stories above<br>grade | 75 feet and 6<br>stories above<br>grade   | 75 feet and 6<br>stories above<br>grade   |
| <b>Residential Uses<br/>(Section 4.31 a-j.)</b>                                                | 75 feet and 6<br>stories above<br>grade | 120 feet and 10<br>stories above<br>grade | 145 feet and<br>12 stories above<br>grade |



## Formula Business Special Permit

### **Amendments to Article 17.000.**

---

Create a new Section 17.703.4 to read as follows:

- 17.703.4      Formula Businesses.** A Formula Business as defined in this Ordinance may be established in a Cambridge Street District only after the issuance of a special permit from the Planning Board. In reviewing an application the Planning Board shall take the following into consideration:
- (a)            The extent to which the design of the proposal reflects, amplifies, and strengthens the established historical character of existing buildings and store fronts on Cambridge Street.
  - (b)            The extent to which the particulars of the building or storefront design is varied from the formula or standard design of the chain in order to reflect the unique character and conditions of Cambridge Street generally or the specific location in particular.
  - (c)            The extent to which the standard elements of the enterprise as they define it as a Formula Business are modified to respect and provide unique expressions of Cambridge Street history and traditions as well as innovation in physical design and marketing that will distinguish the Cambridge Street location from other locations of the Formula Business.