



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date:	November 2, 2022
Subject:	Incentive Zoning Rate Study Petition
Recommendation:	The Planning Board recommends ADOPTION, with clarifying changes.

To the Honorable, the City Council,

On October 18, 2022, the Planning Board (the “Board”) held a public hearing to discuss a Zoning Petition (the “Petition”) by the City Council (the “Petitioner”) to amend Paragraph (d) of Section 11.202, “Incentive Zoning Requirements,” of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Cambridge. The amended text would read, in part: “The City shall initiate a reevaluation of the Housing Contribution Rate and any other aspect of these Incentive Zoning Provisions at an interval of no less than three (3) years from the time of the previous reevaluation.” Under current zoning, the reevaluation is initiated “at an interval of no less than three (3) years from the time the rate was last amended by the City Council.”

City Councillor Quinton Zondervan explained the purpose of the Petition. The Planning Board also received a memo from the City’s Community Development Department (CDD) in advance. Board members asked questions of Councillor Zondervan and CDD staff, and discussed the merits of the Petition. No members of the public offered comments. At the conclusion of the first hearing, the Board voted to send a positive recommendation.

Board members were generally supportive of the proposal. Members noted that the affordable housing crisis is acute, and it is important to get up-to-date information on a regular basis. Board members also noted that it provides the City Council with options on when to initiate a study but is not prescriptive.

For clarity, Board members recommended that “the time of the previous reevaluation” be amended to be more specific. The CDD memo suggests “the time when the previous reevaluation was received by the City Council” as a more specific timeframe.

The Planning Board voted with seven members in favor of transmitting the above report. One member was absent.

Respectfully submitted for the Planning Board,

Catherine Preston Connolly

Catherine Preston Connolly, Chair.