



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

COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTES ~

Wednesday, October 23, 2024

3:00 PM

Sullivan Chamber
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

The Neighborhood & Long Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts and Celebrations Committee will hold a public hearing on Wednesday, October 23, 2024 to hear specific ideas from neighborhood leaders about revisions to the Multifamily Housing Proposal.

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

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council’s Neighborhood & Long-Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts & Celebration Committee was held on Wednesday, October 23, 2024. The meeting was Called to Order at 3:00 p.m. by the Co-Chair, Councillor Zusy. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2022 adopted by Massachusetts General Assembly and approved by the Governor, this public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via Zoom.

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

- Councillor Azeem – Present/Remote
 - Councillor Nolan – Present/Remote
 - Councillor Siddiqui – Present/In Sullivan Chamber
 - Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Present/Remote
 - Councillor Zusy – Present/In Sullivan Chamber
- Present – 5. Quorum established.**

Co-Chair Councillor Zusy offered opening remarks and noted that the Call of the meeting was to hear specific ideas from neighborhood leaders about revisions to the Multifamily Housing Proposal. Also present at the meeting were Councillor Wilson, Councillor Toner, and Vice Mayor McGovern.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized individuals from neighborhood groups throughout the city to share their thoughts, concerns, and suggestions relative to the Multifamily Housing Proposal. Members of the neighborhood groups were both present in the Sullivan Chamber and remote via Zoom. Each member was given up to four minutes to speak.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized MaryJane Kornecki, representing Avon Hill, who offered comments that were relative to looking at the long-term plan when discussing zoning, and questioned what the overall vision is for the city and overall plan is for the neighborhoods.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Joel Bard, representing the Baldwin Neighborhood Council, who shared concerns about the proposed zoning in the Baldwin Neighborhood, noting that it is already significantly dense with only one recreational area. Joel Bard spoke in favor of preserving local businesses along Mass Ave.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Ann Tennis, representing Cambridge Highlands, who stressed the importance of moving slowly with this process to do it right and shared concerns about Cambridge being overbuilt with no more open space. Ann Tennis also shared concerns about traffic congestion.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Ned Codd, representing the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association, noted that he was here to represent the Board, but not speaking on behalf of the Cambridgeport neighborhood. Ned Codd stressed that we needed more housing, especially along the corridors, and of the importance of the City Council listening to the opinions of Cambridge residents as this proposal moves forward.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Ann Stewart, representing Alewife Quad, who shared concerns about traffic congestion and preserving open space.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Heather Hoffman representing the East Cambridge Planning Team and Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods, who shared frustrations about the City not using 40 Thorndike Street as a space to build affordable housing. In addition, Heather Hoffman offered comments regarding climate and people resilience and shared concerns about the impact of urban renewal, especially on the African American community.

Co-Chair Zusy shared that Doug Brown from the Fresh Pond Residents Alliance was unable to attend but provided comments to the Co-Chair to be read during the meeting. Co-Chair Zusy read his comments which shared concerns about setbacks (for fire safety) and the table of uses.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Suzanne Blier, representing the Harvard Square Neighborhood Association. Suzanne Blier provided a presentation in advance of the meeting which was included in the Agenda Packet. The presentation offered an overview of what the Harvard Square Neighborhood Association supports with the proposal while also sharing their concerns.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Richard Krushnic, representing the Inman Square Neighborhood Association (ISNA). He offered concerns about the zoning proposal and shared a proposal from the ISNA allowing upzoning only if inclusionary units were created, allowing for 4 stories everywhere and 6 stories along corridors, with 5' min. rear and side setbacks, permeable open space, and some review.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized John Pitkin, representing the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association. John Pitkin provided a presentation in advance of the meeting which was included in the Agenda Packet. The presentation offered a history of the neighborhood an overview of what the Mid Cambridge neighborhood currently looks like relative to housing units and multifamily housing. 60% of Mid-Cambridge housing is currently multifamily units.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Lawrence Atkins, representing the Riverside Neighborhood Association, who challenged the goals of the MFH proposal and questioned whether we wanted to create wealth or neighborhoods with community.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Nancy Ryan, representing the Port who shared concerns about rent not going down, cost of land going up, and private equity. She questioned the long-term benefits of Mass & Main to the Port.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Ruth Ryals, representing the Porter Square Neighborhood Association, who encouraged that development focus on Mass. Ave. and asked for green open space and setbacks. She voiced concern about the environmental impact of the MFH, supported current housing that already housed several families, and raised infrastructure issues.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Daniel Vlock, representing the newly formed West Cambridge Neighborhood Coalition. He explained that the Coalition was created because neighbors didn't think that the City considered the full impact of the bike lane roll out. They felt that they were informed and not consulted and asked for better City engagement going forward.

Co-Chair Zusy opened Public Comment.

Carolyn Magid, 71 Reed Street, Cambridge, MA, offered suggestions and shared concerns about the proposed zoning changes.

Helen Walker, 43 Linnaean Street, Cambridge, MA, offered suggestions and shared concerns about the proposed zoning changes.

Katiti Kironde, 11A Meacham Road, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about urban designs and development in neighborhoods.

Bernice Buresh, 140 Upland Road, Cambridge, MA, spoke in favor of hearing from different neighborhood groups.

Marilee Meyer, 10 Dana Street, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about the proposed zoning changes.

Marie Saccoccio, 55 Otis Street, Cambridge, MA, noted that different neighborhoods require different needs and shared concerns about the proposed zoning.

Betty Saccoccio, 55 Otis Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke against upzoning in Cambridge.

Ilan Levy, 148 Spring Street, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about the proposed zoning changes.

Matthew Schreiner, 26 Grozier Road, Cambridge, MA, spoke in favor of more affordable housing.

Stephen Cellucci, 32 Vineyard Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke on the importance of creating affordable housing for the most vulnerable.

Amy Waltz, 12 Blakeslee Street, Cambridge, MA, offered suggestions and shared concerns about the proposed zoning changes.

Larry Beeferman, 9 William Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke on the importance of creating and reaching goals related to affordable housing.

Shannon Finley, 10 Perry Street, Cambridge, MA, offered suggestions on building more affordable housing and commented on setbacks.

Anna Gosline, 163 Chestnut Street, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about zoning and about the impact large developments will have on neighborhoods.

Fred Meyer, 83 Hammond Street, Cambridge, MA, offered comments related to taxes and house values.

Co-Chair, Councillor Zusy made a motion to extend the meeting by ten minutes.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Azeem – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Siddiqui – Yes

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes

Councillor Zusy – Yes

Yes – 5. Motion passed.

Public Comment resumed.

Louise Venden, 10 Rogers Street, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about the proposed zoning changes.

Phyllis Bretholtz, 65 Antrim Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke on the importance of neighborhoods and quality of life.

Dan Totten, 54 Bishop Allen Drive, Cambridge, MA, shared frustrations that only neighborhood groups were invited to speak and not renters.

Kathy Watkins, 90 Fawcett Street, Cambridge, MA, shared concerns about the impact on low-income residents.

Jessica Sheehan pointed out that neighborhood leaders do not speak for everyone.

Lee Farris, Cambridge Residence Alliance, shared support for multifamily housing city wide and provided suggestions to the proposed zoning.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Azeem who shared his support for the zoning proposal and pointed out that there will most likely be compromises and amendments as it continues to move forward in the Ordinance Committee. Councillor Azeem spoke on the importance of ending exclusionary zoning and being able to help those who are being impacted by the housing crisis and pushed out of the City.

Co-Chair Zusy shared that the neighborhood leaders were invited because they have a lot of knowledge of their respected communities and wanted to give them the opportunity to share their comments regarding the proposal. Co-Chair Zusy shared that she was thankful for everyone who spoke during public comment.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Co-Chair Sobrinho-Wheeler who shared his appreciation for all of those who spoke at the meeting and noted that this topic has been in discussion for many years. Co-Chair Sobrinho-Wheeler shared he looks forward to having additional discussions and engagement on the proposal in the Ordinance Committee.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Siddiqui who thanked the Co-Chairs for organizing this meeting and added that many good points were brought forward by speakers, which can all be talking points and addressed in the upcoming Ordinance Committee meeting. Councillor Siddiqui noted the importance of making sure people have the correct information and pointed out that CDD has an email to receive emails and updates on the multifamily zoning in Cambridge. Councillor Siddiqui agreed with Councillor Azeem that there will be more conversations and amendments as this proposal is discussed in the Ordinance Committee.

Co-Chair Zusy provided information on upcoming events that will be discussing the Multifamily Zoning Proposal and will be an additional opportunity for people to ask questions and make comments.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Nolan who shared that she appreciated this meeting and shared it could be beneficial to arrange an additional meeting with other groups across the City to make sure that everyone is heard and invited to speak at the table. Councillor Nolan also recognized the importance of having neighborhood leaders invited to speak. Councillor Nolan shared that she looks forward to future conversations as the proposal moves forward.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Councillor Wilson who shared her appreciation for all those who have spoken at the meeting today around the issue of housing and affordable housing. Councillor Wilson shared how challenging it can be to reach the goal of making Cambridge more affordable in a proactive and intentional way. Councillor Wilson added that she agrees with comments from previous Committee members on gathering other groups to come together to speak and share their thoughts on the proposal.

Co-Chair Zusy recognized Vice Mayor McGovern who provided an overview of how the federal government determines who is considered middle class in Cambridge and shared the data for the median income in Cambridge. The Vice Mayor shared the challenges that are faced for those who will never be able to qualify for subsidized housing or are rent burden, pointing out why this proposal is important to providing affordable housing.

Co-Chair Zusy made a motion to extend the meeting by ten minutes.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll

Councillor Azeem – Absent

Councillor Nolan – Yes
Councillor Siddiqui – Yes
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler – Yes
Councillor Zusy – Yes

Yes – 4, No – 0, Absent – 1. Motion passed.

Co-Chair Zusy shared photos for informational purposes with the Committee. The photos were provided in advance of the meeting and included in the Agenda Packet. Co-Chair Zusy shared that these pictures were taken as possible development sites for housing in Cambridgeport, “transitional districts” identified in *Envision Cambridge*. She then read from page 40 of *Envision Cambridge* re Balancing Growth and Preservation: “This approach also values the existing historic resources of the city, preserving existing patterns of development and encouraging the preservation and reuse of existing structures where they are economically viable...”

With no further business, Co-Chair Zusy adjourned the meeting at 5:24p.m.

Attachment A – Updated picture slides with additional information.

Attachment B – Written communications.

Clerk’s Note: The City of Cambridge/22 City View records every City Council meeting and every City Council Committee meeting. This is a permanent record. The video for this meeting can be viewed at: https://cambridgema.granicus.com/player/clip/870?view_id=1&redirect=true

A communication was received from Councillor Zusy, transmitting photos for informational purposes.

A communication was received from Suzanne Blier, Harvard Square Neighborhood Association, transmitting a presentation relative to multifamily housing.

A communication was received from John Pitkin, Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association, transmitting a presentation relative to multi family housing.

Fresh Pond Parkway

Present

Unedited photo of Fresh Pond Parkway looking toward Brattle St. from just below Huron Ave currently dangerous due to unchecked speeding and illegal trucking. The State Police have said of this stretch that "It's too dangerous to enforce."

Bicyclists currently use sidewalks -- many near misses.

Credit: Russell Windman



Fresh Pond Parkway

Dystopian Future

Same photo accurately edited to reflect likely consequences of proposed up-zoning changes which enable construction of six story apartments buildings in place of single family dwellings and require neither provided parking nor any set back from the property line.

Credit: Russell Windman



Fresh Pond Parkway

Optimistic Future

Slightly different point of view, envisioned by residents, puts this stretch on a traffic diet by reducing automobile traffic to two lanes which makes bike lanes possible.

Not shown is needed crosswalk and traffic table.

Credit: Russell Windman



Erwin, Nicole

Attachment B

From: hwalker434@rcn.com
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 2:52 AM
To: Azeem, Burhan; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; cathzusy@gmail.com; Simmons, Denise; City Manager
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: A Better "Multifamily Housing Citywide"

Dear Members of the Cambridge City Council and City Manager Huang,

I would like you to have a copy of my comments regarding the current proposal for Multifamily Housing Citywide, as delivered on October 23rd to the Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Committee.

With many thanks for your consideration,

Helen Walker

Massachusetts Registered Architect

43 Linnaean Street

Cambridge, MA 02138

Thank you for the opportunity to offer comment. You have heard before that I strongly support multifamily housing infill in all residential neighborhoods, but have asked to limit the 6-story buildings to major corridors like Massachusetts Avenue.

The question is *how best* we allow more housing. Six stories randomly distributed - according to where a lot emerges because someone graduates to assisted living - *is not as good as a plan*. Compare the Central Square Rezoning process, which involves intense community engagement, plus the city's planners actively using their professional expertise. The discussion is very different. A few quotes from the latest agenda packet (October 10, 2024):

- "Clear Consensus" to "Concentrate tallest heights along Massachusetts Avenue."
- "Transition zones are important to step down to and buffer surrounding neighborhoods."

- " "Respect the existing neighborhoods."
- "Respect Conservation District boundary and create a buffer zone."
- Plus *photos* to show that a tolerable building height is the same as the distance to the building across the street: *on a 25' wide street, that's a maximum 45' tall building.*

This is what residents favor and what the city's planners know *ought* to be done. Multifamily Housing Citywide needs to be revised to respond to the differing development patterns in neighborhoods and the different street widths.

Last week the Economic Innovation Group proposed that the federal government subsidize infrastructure, school expansion and transit improvements needed for such denser housing development - at \$10,000 per unit built. While this remains aspirational, it reminds us that *there will be serious costs* to the city that are not being considered...this, at a time of gathering financial constraint. *Please demand cost projections* for the expanded infrastructure and services, over the next 5-15 years, and factor these costs into budgetary planning starting now.

Finally, I ask Councillors to reverse the stealth increase of AHO tower height to 13 stories on any residential lot. This change was not agreed to through any community process (nor is it being publicized in any outreach materials). The community approved tiered heights responding to neighborhood context. Please revise Zoning Article 11.200 accordingly.

Thank you.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jessica Sheehan <jess.sheehan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 5:24 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Re: on the NLPT meeting and who speaks for residents

Oof, this is what I get for trying to participate during my own workday. It's *Wednesday*, of course, not Thursday, and my spoken comments can be read in full below. Sorry for the multiple emails!

Sincerely,
Jess

"Hi, my name is Jessica Sheehan, I live on Plymouth St. I've been a renter in Cambridge for over ten years, in several different neighborhoods. That's common for renters. We often don't have the housing security to stay in just one neighborhood long term, even if we'd like to, but we're no less residents of this city for it. Quite the opposite - renters make up about two thirds of Cambridge residents.

I think it's good to get different perspectives on any new proposal, but I do want to caution against treating any of the opinions expressed here today by neighborhood association leaders as being representative of the residents of those neighborhoods. Cambridge is diverse along so many dimensions - race, ethnicity, religion, age, languages spoken, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status, homeowner status, family status, immigration status. The makeup of the Council itself, chosen by a diverse electorate in widely publicized elections every two years, does reflect much of that diversity, but it's largely not reflected in the leadership of neighborhood associations.

I'm not blaming neighborhood associations for that - these are unpaid positions that people voluntarily take on because they care about their communities, and they can involve a lot of selfless work. Anyone stepping up to do that work should be appreciated for it, and absolutely may have unique and valuable perspectives to offer. I don't object to them or anyone really being asked to weigh in. I just don't want anyone to confuse what neighborhood association leaders think with what neighborhood residents think - they're not the same thing. Speakers from the Port and Cambridgeport neighborhood associations made a similar point themselves to begin their comments, which I really appreciate, and I hope the Council takes that into consideration.

Thank you."

On Wed, Oct 23, 2024 at 5:21 PM Jessica Sheehan <jess.sheehan@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Council,

Neighborhood association leaders are not meaningfully elected by neighborhood residents. Unlike city council races, most residents don't even know those elections take place! And who does know about and participate in them is neither random nor representative. Even with the best intentions of the associations, those elections are not and can't be run with the level of security or fairness that real municipal elections are.

I would also like to address Counselor Zusy's claim that, "More renters could have signed up to present," at this meeting that began at 3pm on a weekday. What do you think that start time does to the ratio of retirees vs currently working people? What do you think it does to the mix of speakers in terms of incomes or wealth? Who can carve a couple hours out of their day at 3pm on a Thursday? Many working people and young parents can't, and those who can are likely to be in more highly paid positions which allow for flexible schedules and/or remote work.

Again, I'm not objecting to the fact that this meeting happened. I think it's fine to ask neighborhood association leaders in particular what they think. But they are absolutely *not* speaking for the residents; they are speaking from their own perspectives, which may be meaningfully different than those of other residents. Two of the leaders recognized this explicitly themselves (those from the Port and Cambridgeport, two of our densest and most diverse neighborhoods), and it's to their credit that they did so.

I'll repeat my spoken comments below for context. Thank you for reading.

Sincerely,
Jess Sheehan
Plymouth St.

"housing security to stay in just one neighborhood long term, even if we'd like to, but we're no less residents of this city for it. Quite the opposite - renters make up about two thirds of Cambridge residents.

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Thank you."

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jessica Sheehan <jess.sheehan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 5:22 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: on the NLPT meeting and who speaks for residents

Dear Council,

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Thank you."

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carolyn Magid <cmagid@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 4:46 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: comments for Neighborhood and Long-term Planning...Meeting

Please accept these comments from my public comment at the Neighborhood and Long-term Planning meeting.

Carolyn Magid, 71 Reed Street

I understand that this meeting is looking at what amendments should be made to the currently proposed multifamily zoning.

I urge the Council to amend the zoning so that it **only applies to buildings over 9 units, which would mean that any new construction would be required to have 20% inclusionary units.**

Why does this amendment matter? Without it, zoning is providing new incentives to developers to tear down naturally occurring affordable housing and replace it with larger buildings where they can charge much higher rent. The CDD report anticipates these tear-downs. And as long as developers build 9 units or fewer, they don't even have to provide ANY inclusionary units. Why should we make it easier for developers to displace lower-income residents and not even be providing any new units for them?

These zoning changes are being presented as about remedying the racist and classist history of exclusionary zoning. That's a great goal, but if the proposed zoning accelerates the displacement of low-income people and people of color, **we are just replacing one racial and class injustice by another.**

If the zoning proposal is amended to apply ONLY to buildings over 9 units, that means that any new construction would have to have 20% inclusionary units. We won't be making it easier for 9 unit or fewer projects to displace residents and we will gain some inclusionary units.

However it is very important to say that even if we gain inclusionary units through this (amended) zoning, they will only be available to lower income people if the City develops and funds a substantial municipal voucher program. The voucher program presented by CDD is way too small and mostly targeted at people already in subsidized housing who lose income. Council should fast track development of a much more substantial municipal voucher program in tandem with multifamily zoning so that lower income people can access the new inclusionary units that are created if zoning passes.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Robert Camacho <musicamach@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 4:29 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager; Planning Board Comment
Subject: City-wide up-zoning petition
Attachments: 10-23-24 letter to CCC.docx

Please see the attached letter regarding the city-wide up zoning petition for the Council meetings, Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Committee on 10/23/24, as well as the Planning Board meeting for 11/12/24, as well as the Ordinance Committee meetings on 11/19/24 and 12/4/24.

Thank you,

Robert Camacho, Corporal Burns Road, Cambridge, MA

10/23/2024

To: Cambridge City Council, Cambridge City Clerk, City Manager

Re: City-wide up-zoning petition

Some Council members have apparently become housing agents for everyone in the world except for us fortunate enough to already live here. That trend will continue. Those unsuspecting new Cambridge citizens who end up finding themselves squeezed into whatever recklessly constructed, inappropriately suited buildings will, unfortunately, find no "Home, Sweet Home" there because once these sell – out – to – Real – Estate – Developer - interests councilors succeed in their initial plans to stuff as many people as possible into any ill-planned or no-planned, ever taller buildings, they will promptly forget about those people and then further misrepresent those they just squeezed into unstable housing to further seek out more victims to the Real Estate corporate interests these council members actually serve, because they certainly do not represent those of us who live here.

Pay heed to the fiasco now occurring on North Walden St. involving the Winn slab and tunnel project. The more these for - profit corporate interests get away with at the expense of those who rely on affordable housing, the worse it will be for all citizens of Cambridge. These same councilors who support city-wide upzoning will also support Winn in the North Walden St. fiasco.

Remember, these are the same councilors who at one point in time proposed 50 story buildings in Harvard Sq. Their cards are on the table for all to see. Also, have you noticed how little the topics of climate change and Global Warming are even deserving of mention by these councilors? There's no mention of that anymore, is there?

These councilors do not support actual citizens of Cambridge, nor will they serve new citizens of Cambridge because they serve only the Real Estate Developer business interests of corporate individuals who live safely out of state.

Robert Camacho, Corporal Burns Road, Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: karenlme (null) <karenlme@aol.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 3:20 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Neighborhood/Long-Term Planning, Public Facility, Art & Celebrate Committee, Multifamily Houses, UPZONING Proposal

Remember, the weight of the DOWNSIDES of building more housing per square foot of land [congestion meaning a denser population], too many kids in your schools that teachers will be unable to teach or manage] are borne at the LOCAL level and will thus be borne on YOUR shoulders.* The power to UPZONE lies with states, as well as their city councils and city managers who, with thoughtlessness and greed for themselves, their families, and their friends and neighbors, support UPZONING.

UPZONING, however, remains subject to the U.S. Constitution. Its validity was established by the 1926 Supreme Court case "Village of Euclid v. Ambler Realty Co." The Court ruled that "If they are not arbitrary or unreasonable, zoning ordinances are constitutional under the police power of local governments, as long as they have some relation to public health, safety, morals, or general welfare." "The Court inveighed against apartment houses." This means the Court spoke or wrote about apartment houses with GREAT HOSTILITY. "In residential areas zoned for SINGLE-FAMILY USE, the six-member majority wrote, "Very often the apartment house is a mere parasite, constructed in order to take advantage of the open spaces and attractive surroundings created BY the residential character of the district." They also "bring NOISE, TRAFFIC, BUSINESS, AND CARS; INTERFERE WITH THE CIRCULATION OF AIR; AND MONOPOLIZE THE SUN, UNTIL FINALLY, THE RESIDENTIAL CHARACTER OF THE DISTRICT [IS] "UTTERLY DESTROYED." "Under these circumstances, apartment houses, which in a different environment would be not only entirely UNobjectionable but highly desirable, come very near to being nuisances." In fact, it's emphasized that "So, Palo Alto gets all of the negatives, and only a tiny share of the benefits. Palo Alto has no incentive to build more housing." Zoning as per its current Cambridge City Council proposal, however, is an unreasonable plan as it contains no concern for the welfare or health or safety of its citizens (think COVID, which remains), has no concern for the morals of its citizens in its planning of tiny, shoddy-walled apartments that have windows that look into the next apartment building's windows on three sides, has unsafe, narrow streets that no vehicle wider than an amusement park-type car can drive upon with the building front door opening up to the curb (think NO AMBULANCES OR FIRE TRUCKS OR POLICEMEN), and noise, Noise, NOise, NOISE traveling from one building to the next via opened windows.

NOTE that "High-wage cities such as New York and Boston pay college graduates a lot more than medium-wage cities such as Cleveland and high-wage cities pay low-skill workers better, too, the premium" of this payment "is much less than that for highly-compensated individuals" - and NOT NEARLY ENOUGH "to cover the larger percentage of budget the low-skill workers pay for housing."

Please be THOUGHTFUL and STOP the insanity of a quick fix that CANNOT BE REVERSED for yourselves, your families, and your neighbors, friends, and citizens of the City of Cambridge. VOTE AGAINST any sort of Upzoning Proposal. George Washington and the other Fathers of our country would be appalled at your lack of caution and plans for UPZONING!

*The quotations and sentences were, often directly, taken from Harvard Magazine, November-December 2024, pp. 24-25.

Thank you.
Karen Eton
34 Larchwood Drive
Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: David Hattis <davidwhattis@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 10, 2024 10:31 AM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: In Support of More Housing in Central Square

Hello,

I wanted to write in support of the central square rezoning to allow for more housing in Central square. It's hard to think of a location that is more suitable for housing than central square. It has great transit access, it is in between Harvard and MIT, and it is quite close to the thousands of jobs in Kendall Square. More housing in Central square means more customers for local businesses, and more vibrancy overall. More housing also means more housing affordability, both due to the market rate units that will help absorb the demand that has been created by all the new tech and biotech jobs that have come to Cambridge, and due to the desperately needed inclusionary units. I would gladly accept more height in Central square to get more market rate and affordable homes. We are far behind our envision goals for new housing by 2030. Envision recommended 12,500 new homes be built in Cambridge by 2030. Between 2018 and today we've built 3,863 new homes according to the city's housing starts data. If that pace of roughly 47 homes per month continues until 2030, we'll be at around 6,800 new homes, well off from the city's goal of 12,500.

I hope that some AHO development can also go into central square as part of this process, but we have to keep in mind that there is limited local, state and federal money available for AHO developments. If public money funds an AHO development in central square, that will mean that money is not available for another AHO development elsewhere in Cambridge. So while we should continue to roll out the red carpet for 100% affordable developments, I trust the nonprofit affordable housing developers to make sensible decisions about where AHO developments are located. There is plenty of space in Central square and in Cambridge more generally for market rate as well as affordable housing.

Thank you,
David Hattis
434 Franklin St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Marisa O'Boyle <marisa.oboyle@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 10, 2024 8:43 AM
To: City Council; City Manager; City Clerk; Mayor
Subject: 2072 Mass Ave Capstone "feedback" meeting from neighbors

Dear Cambridge City Clerk, council and mayor,

I was very disappointed when I attempted to join the first meeting by the Developers meant to hear from the neighbors of the 2072 Mass Ave affordable housing Capstone project that the zoom link did not work. When I spoke with another neighbor, she also had the same problem. Seems that the only way that the Capstone developers gave us to join in from home did not work and there was no technical support. There was a broken link without any further information such as a meeting ID. I attempted several times from different computers, phones, browsers. It is very frustrating when developers say they want to collaborate with neighbors and then don't make the communication channels open. Attempting to contact them through their website, requires filling out forms and no direct contact as well.

Please, we need more information for the next time so that we can troubleshoot zoom issues unless an incomplete link was meant to cut back on community feedback. Clearly there's a lot of controls around feedback and contact. Can you please provide direct contact and more ways to join in the discussion for us neighbors next time and make sure it is known that many neighbors who could not physically join the meeting were left out of the discussion? I am feeling very frustrated because this is not the first go round trying to deal with these developers and they often say they're getting community feedback, but I have not been able to really give feedback.

Thank you!

Marisa Murphy O'Boyle, PhD
24 Walden St, Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sam Marder <sammarder@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 8, 2024 11:24 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please support more multifamily housing in Cambridge

Hi,

My name is Sam Marder and I live at 50 Rogers St, Apt 226.

I live and work in Kendall Square. I love the neighborhood. I love being walking distance from the green line and the red line. I love walking to work every day. In my humble opinion, it's the best place to live in the whole Boston area.

But rents are simply too high and starter home prices are embarrassing. I'm planning on moving to Somerville next year not because I want to, but because I can't envision myself ever being able to afford to buy a home in Cambridge and so I need to start looking elsewhere.

More housing is great. Buildings up to 6 stories tall are great. Apartments taller than 6 stories are great too.

Please help me stay in Cambridge!

Sam

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pereira, Erika-Leigh on behalf of Zusy, Catherine
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 11:32 AM
To: Erwin, Nicole
Cc: cathzusy@gmail.com
Subject: Fw: Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Meeting 10/23
Attachments: MJ Kornacki remarks to N and LTPlan cmttee.docx

Cathie Zusy
Cambridge City Councillor
czusy@cambridgema.gov
617-349-7238

Erika Pereira
Council Aide
epereira@Cambridgema.gov
617-349-9429

Please note, all emails to and from this address are subject to a Freedom of Information request.

From: Mary Jane Kornacki <amicusmjk@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 6:25 PM
To: Zusy, Catherine <czusy@cambridgema.gov>
Cc: Pereira, Erika-Leigh <epereira@cambridgema.gov>
Subject: Re: Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Meeting 10/23

I arrived a bit out of breath from longer than expected walk to city hall this afternoon. If you can and want to enter the bullet points I had prepared, they are attached.

Thank you for the opportunity.

Mary Jane Kornacki

On Tue, Oct 22, 2024 at 9:46 AM Zusy, Catherine <czusy@cambridgema.gov> wrote:

Dear Neighborhood Leaders -

On behalf of Councillor Zusy, we look forward to your participation in the meeting tomorrow from 3-5. If you are connecting via zoom the link will be available in the open meeting portal approximately 10-15 minutes before the meeting begins.

Cathie Zusy
Cambridge City Councillor
czusy@cambridgema.gov

617-349-7238

Erika Pereira
Council Aide
epereira@Cambridgema.gov
617-349-9429

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--

Mary Jane Kornacki
103 Avon Hill St
Cambridge, MA 02140
617.354.7983 (h)
617.480.5778 (m)

- Thank you for the opportunity to speak.
- Esp grateful to address the **Neighborhood and Long Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts & Celebration Committee... which is a mouthful but important comment on the interconnectedness of various civic functions**
- First, we're asked to be constructive so I'll start by sharing that my husband and I did look at neighborhood nine through a new lens...where could greater density fit. Of course we saw things we hadn't. There's the easy pickings of Mass ave which can and should be 5 to 6 stories. The self storage building across from the new school on Concord Avenue – admittedly polluted but a great opportunity for a village type development with buildings of various heights, some social space, etc.
- Are there opportunities for building more housing in the areas I surveyed...absolutely
- That said...zoning is a lever that is part of a more comprehensive set of tools used by municipalities to meet needed and transparent goals. To be commenting on the intricacies of the current proposal is difficult because it only raises more questions in my mind. Our conversation today is putting the cart before the proverbial horse.
- What is the **long-term** plan for the city? What does this committee mean by long-range? 10 years or 50? Who can tell me that?
- What is the vision overall for the urban landscape? Who can tell me that? "Build more housing" doesn't come close to being a vision. People come to Cambridge historically bc of our universities, more recently for the boom in life science research and development, also for the neighborhoods that have unique characters and add to our rich diversity. With a vision and a long term plan, then the methods (zoning, funding, purchase of land, etc) to achieve it are modified and enacted
- What is the aim of this proposal? To lower costs of housing? I'm sorry but there is a catch-22 written into this DNA that will only raise the cost. This incents market rate housing. As those units replace smaller structures ...many likely to be what some call naturally occurring affordable housing...prices for units ...rent or sale will go up. That means other near by dwelling assessments go up. Land values go up. Opportunities for affordable housing go down. It's like shooting yourself in the foot.

- This is likely an unintended consequence ...that is why much more analysis of the likely impacts on displacement, land costs, permeable surfaces, green space, infrastructure needs must be done and publicly shared.
- Others have offered suggestions as to how this zoning proposal to increases density while preserving the essence of Cambridge can be modified. I suggest the best way to solve this knotty problem is to start at the very beginning with housing needs clarified, plans for urban design..such as where does more housing naturally fit? Where's the open space? Where are there stores? Shops? that meets those needs developed. Then fashion zoning to support that design turning into reality. Other cities do that. So should we.

Mary Jane Kornacki

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pereira, Erika-Leigh on behalf of Zusy, Catherine
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 11:32 AM
To: Erwin, Nicole
Cc: cathzusy@gmail.com
Subject: Fw: on the NLPT meeting and who speaks for residents

Cathie Zusy
Cambridge City Councillor
czusy@cambridgema.gov
617-349-7238

Erika Pereira
Council Aide
epereira@Cambridgema.gov
617-349-9429

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From: Jessica Sheehan <jess.sheehan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 5:24 PM
To: City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>
Cc: City Clerk <cityclerk@Cambridgema.gov>
Subject: Re: on the NLPT meeting and who speaks for residents

Oof, this is what I get for trying to participate during my own workday. It's *Wednesday*, of course, not Thursday, and my spoken comments can be read in full below. Sorry for the multiple emails!

Sincerely,
Jess

"Hi, my name is Jessica Sheehan, I live on Plymouth St. I've been a renter in Cambridge for over ten years, in several different neighborhoods. That's common for renters. We often don't have the housing security to stay in just one neighborhood long term, even if we'd like to, but we're no less residents of this city for it. Quite the opposite - renters make up about two thirds of Cambridge residents.

I think it's good to get different perspectives on any new proposal, but I do want to caution against treating any of the opinions expressed here today by neighborhood association leaders as being representative of the residents of those neighborhoods. Cambridge is diverse along so many dimensions - race, ethnicity, religion, age, languages spoken, sexual orientation, gender identity, economic status, homeowner status, family status, immigration status. The makeup of the Council itself, chosen by a

diverse electorate in widely publicized elections every two years, does reflect much of that diversity, but it's largely not reflected in the leadership of neighborhood associations.

I'm not blaming neighborhood associations for that - these are unpaid positions that people voluntarily take on because they care about their communities, and they can involve a lot of selfless work. Anyone stepping up to do that work should be appreciated for it, and absolutely may have unique and valuable perspectives to offer. I don't object to them or anyone really being asked to weigh in. I just don't want anyone to confuse what neighborhood association leaders think with what neighborhood residents think - they're not the same thing. Speakers from the Port and Cambridgeport neighborhood associations made a similar point themselves to begin their comments, which I really appreciate, and I hope the Council takes that into consideration.

Thank you."

On Wed, Oct 23, 2024 at 5:21 PM Jessica Sheehan <jess.sheehan@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Council,

Neighborhood association leaders are not meaningfully elected by neighborhood residents. Unlike city council races, most residents don't even know those elections take place! And who does know about and participate in them is neither random nor representative. Even with the best intentions of the associations, those elections are not and can't be run with the level of security or fairness that real municipal elections are.

I would also like to address Counselor Zusy's claim that, "More renters could have signed up to present," at this meeting that began at 3pm on a weekday. What do you think that start time does to the ratio of retirees vs currently working people? What do you think it does to the mix of speakers in terms of incomes or wealth? Who can carve a couple hours out of their day at 3pm on a Thursday? Many working people and young parents can't, and those who can are likely to be in more highly paid positions which allow for flexible schedules and/or remote work.

Again, I'm not objecting to the fact that this meeting happened. I think it's fine to ask neighborhood association leaders in particular what they think. But they are absolutely *not* speaking for the residents; they are speaking from their own perspectives, which may be meaningfully different than those of other residents. Two of the leaders recognized this explicitly themselves (those from the Port and Cambridgeport, two of our densest and most diverse neighborhoods), and it's to their credit that they did so.

I'll repeat my spoken comments below for context. Thank you for reading.

Sincerely,
Jess Sheehan
Plymouth St.

"housing security to stay in just one neighborhood long term, even if we'd like to, but we're no less residents of this city for it. Quite the opposite - renters make up about two thirds of Cambridge residents.

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Thank you."

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pereira, Erika-Leigh on behalf of Zusy, Catherine
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 11:32 AM
To: Erwin, Nicole
Cc: cathzusy@gmail.com
Subject: Fw: on the NLPT meeting and who speaks for residents

Cathie Zusy
Cambridge City Councillor
czusy@cambridgema.gov
617-349-7238

Erika Pereira
Council Aide
epereira@Cambridgema.gov
617-349-9429

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From: Jessica Sheehan <jess.sheehan@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 5:21 PM
To: City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>
Cc: City Clerk <cityclerk@Cambridgema.gov>
Subject: on the NLPT meeting and who speaks for residents

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Jess Sheehan
Plymouth St.

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Thank you."

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pereira, Erika-Leigh on behalf of Zusy, Catherine
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 11:33 AM
To: Erwin, Nicole
Cc: cathzusy@gmail.com
Subject: Fw: Significant Housing issues

Cathie Zusy
Cambridge City Councillor
czusy@cambridgema.gov
617-349-7238

Erika Pereira
Council Aide
epereira@Cambridgema.gov
617-349-9429

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From: HELEN ABRAHAM <helen.abraham@verizon.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 4:25 PM
To: City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>
Cc: City Manager <CityManager@CambridgeMA.GOV>
Subject: Significant Housing issues

City Council, City Manager, Housing Director, City Clerk:

I previously sent you an email regarding significant housing issues, including affordable housing. I continue to be mortified to hear about the city wide zoning bill being considered to allow building at ANY height: at 6 stories, 7.5 stories, or even higher.

I am 81 years old with difficult health issues including a long term lung illness, and a recent hip replacement. I have lived in Cambridge a long time. I keep hoping our city government, including the City Council, City Manager, Housing Director, and all those involved in taking care of these issues, will care about ALL parts of the city, ALL neighborhoods, and will make sure all of us are both FULLY AWARE of and EDUCATED regarding this issue (and other important issues) and FULLY SUPPORT it. What you want to jam through, really is an issue which DEEPLY AFFECTS all of us.

What is the big rush and push to jam through upzoning in all parts of the city where residents, neighbors, home owners, are deeply affected in so many ways? I understand there are No Limitations: no building design controls, loss of trees and green space, no

setbacks, and Loss of Many Other Requirements. What about parking? I understand the need for that has been removed for new building, denying that people need cars, creating a parking nightmare. Where are the **Infrastructure studies** of how our infrastructure will be effected, including our roads, utilities, traffic, parking, etc, tree canopy, green spaces (or lack thereof), potential water table issues, and FLOODING. Let us remember this change will bring us more problems related to climate change by jamming in high buildings in small spaces. This is an enormous change. Why are other parts of the city voting on requirements which will deeply affect my neighborhood, other neighborhoods? Which really don't effect them at all, just other neighborhoods. We do not need to have a one size, plan fits all.

Affordable housing is personally a serious concern for me as well. However from my point of view, this bill is reckless and will eventually destroy our neighborhoods. I do believe Affordable Housing can be created without destroying our city, or parts of it. You CAN create Affordable Housing without getting rid of zoning restrictions, without having 6, 7, or higher story buildings.

Please DO NOT pass any city wide zoning that would run rough shod over the Cambridge neighborhoods, as changes like this would involve.

I hope you will seriously consider how you may affect ALL parts of the city with any changes you are considering. As I previously requested, please always reach out and FULLY educate Cambridge residents about these serious issues you are considering (for the next couple years if necessary) and gain our FULL SUPPORT

not just the support of the majority of City Council members, and interest groups which have a financial investment, etc. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely, Helen Abraham

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pereira, Erika-Leigh on behalf of Zusy, Catherine
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 11:34 AM
To: Erwin, Nicole
Cc: cathzusy@gmail.com
Subject: Fw: Tomorrow"s meeting

Cathie Zusy
Cambridge City Councillor
czusy@cambridgema.gov
617-349-7238

Erika Pereira
Council Aide
epereira@Cambridgema.gov
617-349-9429

Please note, all emails to and from this address are subject to a Freedom of Information request.

From: raryals <raryals@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 4:16 PM
To: raryals <raryals@gmail.com>; Zusy, Catherine <czusy@cambridgema.gov>
Subject: Re: Tomorrow"s meeting

Unfortunately, I did not get to use my last line!

My comments:

Thank you councillors and to the audience today. It is an honor to be asked to give our commentary, of which I am sure you will hear more!

Most of us in Neighborhood Nine and Porter Square Neighbors Association support the ending of exclusionary zoning and the promotion of multi-family housing throughout the city's neighborhoods.

I will forward suggestions of where I think we could most easily absorb and build larger buildings within our communities. As a start, since we at PSNA are very focused on Mass Ave and our businesses and housing there. Things that jump to my mind are to watch the recently announced closing of some businesses in MA, several of those possibly on the block are on Mass Ave, such as 7-ll and Walgreens.

There are other properties as likely candidates for development in the neighborhood, in the abstract, with deep and wide lots, and geographically isolated enough to prevent most of the shading from a 6-story

building onto nearby solar installations, and with land enough to plant trees and provide other green space.

However, my major issue with the zoning ordinance is with the elimination of set-backs and the absolute necessity for open space, for us, for the city, for the world.

I would like to point out that I live in a 3-family, as do most of the neighbors behind me, the multi-family housing of the last century. Many of the big single family houses across Upland were boarding houses after the war and during the depression when housing was scarce. They today often contain rented rooms, or full apartments, though they may be zoned single family. The last time I checked the records for this part of town, meaning N9, Baldwin, NC (speaking for PSNA) supplied a significant part of the rental units in Cambridge. This is not to mention numerous 6 or more story apartment houses in our neighborhoods.

So, we are not particularly afraid of doing our part this time around. However, we do not see the necessity of throwing out zoning completely or ignoring environmental necessities this time. We are better than that.

There are serious internal conflicts between this proposed zoning ordinance and Envision's recommendations (of which I was part) for the city's growth and with the city's own environmental goals, including the hiring of a new head for those serious efforts.

There are important infrastructure problems with the city's proposed densification and the status (and in the near future) of our electric grid, our water supply and sewage control. Please work to take infrastructure needs into account.

While we need more housing, we also need a livable city. We should approach any new zoning for market or AHO buildings with a look toward all of those concerns, requiring smart construction (not so much environmental and social damage) and requirements to build with environmentally friendly materials. We must require trees, greenery, and open space in all of our neighborhoods.

We are also not at all sure that the proposed zoning will have the desired effects. We suspect that properties will be purchased for market rate development which will only drive up rental and purchase costs for housing. Current tenants of near affordable housing may find their leases terminated, with no affordable replacement options, thus driven from Cambridge. There is a lot of pent up demand for market rate housing in Cambridge, and this proposal will unleash that demand.

In short, to those who say "would you prefer to have a roof over your head or a pretty tree?", I would say we deserve both, bread and roses.

Ruth Ryals
10/23/24

Ruth Ryals
raryals@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pereira, Erika-Leigh on behalf of Zusy, Catherine
Sent: Thursday, October 24, 2024 11:37 AM
To: Erwin, Nicole
Cc: cathzusy@gmail.com
Subject: Fw: New homes & Grocery stores - N<P

Cathie Zusy
Cambridge City Councillor
czusy@cambridgema.gov
617-349-7238

Erika Pereira
Council Aide
epereira@Cambridgema.gov
617-349-9429

Please note, all emails to and from this address are subject to a Freedom of Information request.

From: Ethan Frank <ethandf2@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 23, 2024 11:55 AM
To: Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan <jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov>; Zusy, Catherine <czusy@cambridgema.gov>
Subject: New homes & Grocery stores - N<P

Hello,

I'm looking forward to how more housing and more people means more financial support for mixed-use areas. When I was searching for my apartment, I made this map of grocery stores - and I struggled to find any in West Cambridge. As a young adult without access to a personal vehicle, this made the entire area off-limits if I wanted access to nearby, fresh food.



More people means a support base for local business. It doesn't have to be large chain stores, even mom-and-pop corner stores benefit from an increase in density. Having everything you need nearby is what gives Cambridge its character in my eyes.

This is why I am excited to legalize up to six story housing in all our neighborhoods.

Sincerely,
Ethan Frank
632 Mass Ave