

Erwin, Nicole

Attachment A

From: Ellen L <ellenleo@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 31, 2025 10:21 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Ellen Leopold
48 Hudson Place
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mlundber99 <mlundber99@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, October 31, 2025 10:10 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks.

I am concerned about the following problems with this proposal:

- It would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.
- It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.
- These plans also differ significantly from the decisions that working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself.
- The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Respectfully submitted,

Marlene Lundberg
4 CanalPark, #602
Cambridge, MA 02141

Erwin, Nicole

From: Merseth, Katherine K. <kay_merseth@harvard.edu>
Sent: Friday, October 31, 2025 9:54 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Please forgive my brevity and typos. Thanks Sent from iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Malcolm Bliss <malcolmdbliss@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 31, 2025 9:42 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Please support [exciting!] North Mass Ave & Cambridge St Zoning Petitions

Dear City Council / Ordinance Committee,

Thank you for overseeing development of zoning reforms and sensible plan for our city. I am so excited to be a part of a city that is really engaging residents and taking action on priorities. The envisioned density and transit orientation will support vibrant urban life, affordable housing, superior environmental footprint for our citizens, and more favorable long-term city finances.

Please do support North Mass Ave and Cambridge St Zoning Petitions.

Sincerely,

Malcolm D Bliss
127 Raymond Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carole Colsell <clew95@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 6:15 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes, as well as taking no account of the scale and character of the area. It will increase pollution and reduce green and open space, making Cambridge less livable and less healthy.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
[Carole Colsell
35 Wendell St
Cambridge 02138Your Name]
[Your Address or Neighborhood]

Erwin, Nicole

From: rosemous@rcn.com
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 6:11 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council; City Manager
Cc: rosemous
Subject: The Upzoning Petitions before the Ordinance Committee 10/30/25

To: The Ordinance Committee

As a concerned resident of N. Mass. Ave., I am writing to urge Committee members to vote NO on the two proposed upzoning petitions for Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street: which will allow for developments on these corridors rising up to 8, 12, 15, or 18 stories (depending on the location & incorporating AHO inclusion). Given what I have read of the copious online community dialogue, much of this redevelopment will not provide for parking or viable open or green space. For example, it appears that the Quick-Build reconfiguration now in place at my end of the N. Mass. Ave. corridor (Dudley-Alewife) is to be extended during the coming year clear down to Waterhouse. That reconfiguration allows for only two lanes of vehicular traffic & no metered parking. In keeping with the be incorporated into the design all the way down to Waterhouse. Thus, the redesign plans for the entire stretch of corridor from Harvard SQ. out to Alewife would make it near impossible for small businesses to receive deliveries without incurring fines for illegal parking. Already, local businesses are facing the prospects of escalating commercial tax rates resulting in higher rent costs. Consequently, too many local businesses may join Season to Taste (long vacant directly across from my building) & seek out another location or shut down entirely.

As to the side streets adjacent to the major corridors, many of them (e.g., Gold Star Rd. across from us) are packed tight with older 2- & 3-family structures -- which provide more of the naturally occurring affordable homes in this city. Besides increased prospects of teardowns & sales to developers, those who choose to stay on these side streets will be overwhelmed with demolition, redevelopment & the 'towerization' of corridors directly adjoining these small streets. Indeed, as 5- & 6-story older, brick apartment buildings in New York are rendered uninhabitable by the construction of new residential towers too close for comfort, how will the older (& flimsier) wood-frame buildings in Cambridge fare as redevelopment on the corridors proceeds apace. Such outcomes are even more likely on Cambridge St.: a so-called 'corridor' that is now just a congested 2-lane road with a still-intact vibrant commercial sector.

There are also real questions about the timing of these upzoning ordinances: given that this 1st swipe at them is occurring just before the upcoming City Council elections. This timing makes me question whether city officials are indeed resorting to underhanded tactics in order to ram through dramatic policy changes that will have long-lasting ramifications for the future of this historic city. The timing is also curious given that office vacancies in Kendall SQ. are rising (the economic engine of this city for decades, and universities have been hard hit by the depredations of the Trump administration -- i.e., attacking the whole of the US research complex, public health, and the higher education sector. Consequently, hospitals, biomedical laboratories & universities are reducing

staffing (especially researchers) at the same time that city officials are weighing commercial tax increases to cover existing budgetary needs.

Surely at a time like this, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative development of luxury housing towers that will place new demands on infrastructure (e.g., the already questionable sewerage problem at Alewife Brook) plus surely generate sizable heat island impacts & other negative environmental impacts. Moreover, the new allowable heights also supersede what the local review committees had agreed to (in previous deliberations) as well as actual 2025 city design guidelines. As a result, the 'towerization' of the corridors will make it virtually impossible for nearby homes to utilize solar panels, while AHO developers will also find it difficult to compete for affordable developments.

As we are confronting great uncertainty & quite possibly entering a financial downturn nationally — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor large-scale outside investors over the needs of local communities here in Cambridge. In conclusion, the City Council should pause on enactment of these ordinances until after the election, do careful reviews & reassessment of actual housing and commercial data, and thereby plan responsibly for sustainability and livability over the long haul in this historic university city.. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Thanks for your consideration --

Linda Moussouris
2440 Mass. Ave.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pat McCarthy <patm163@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 5:28 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pat McCarthy <patm163@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 5:25 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guideline Pat McCarthy
23 Chauncy St
Unit 1
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pat McCarthy <patm163@aol.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 4:50 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: No Upzoning

“Say NO to the proposed upzoning on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street rising up to 8, 12, 15, or 18 stories (possibly higher for AHO) without parking or viable open or green space. Too many local businesses and naturally more affordable homes will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury housing towers that will bring more heat island impacts. The new allowable heights and other details also supersede what the local review committees agreed to as well as our new 2025 city design guidelines and will make it virtually impossible for both nearby homes to use solar and AHO developers to compete for affordable developments. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge’s scale, character, and economic stability.

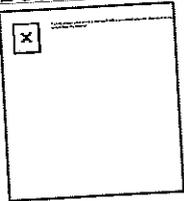
Erwin, Nicole

From: Jason Alves <baecamb@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 4:46 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Cambridge St Zoning Petition
Attachments: cambridge St zoning.pdf

Dear City Council
Please see attached letter from ECBA with questions, comments and concerns regarding the Cambridge St Zoning Petition
Would be happy to discuss this proposal with you all as you consider it.

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

Become a Member of the ECBA Today!





EAST CAMBRIDGE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

www.EastCambridgeBA.com

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Jason Alves
Executive Director
baecamb@gmail.com
Office (857) 242-6651

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Formaggio Kitchen

Stephen LaMaster
Vinfen

Mark Rogers
Rogers Properties Group

Tina Snyder
DivcoWest

Lynn Wahlquist
East Cambridge Savings Bank

October 30, 2025

Comments on the Cambridge Street Upzoning Petition

Dear Cambridge City Councillors:

As you consider the **Cambridge Street Upzoning Petition**, a transformative and impactful proposal that will shape the future of the Cambridge Street Small Business District, we ask that you take the necessary time to examine its pros and cons and consider ways to improve it.

Upzoning can be a healthy change, but the rezoning of a commercial corridor should, first and foremost, be about supporting the functionality and vitality of the commercial district. This petition follows a citywide Multifamily Housing upzoning focused on residential neighborhoods and housing production. While housing should be a welcome byproduct of this effort, the priorities of a healthy commercial and retail corridor must come first.

First, please take your time. There are likely ways to improve this proposal if we have time and engagement.

The *Our Cambridge Street Study* was an excellent and engaging process that produced concepts and recommendations with both similarities and differences to what is now before you. Many in the business community agree that greater density can support successful small businesses. We recognize that much of the building stock along Cambridge Street needs renovation, and that we should accommodate those efforts. However, incentivizing landlords to sell and tear down properties could displace many small businesses and fundamentally alter the character of what is truly a small business district. The business community is interested, but we also need to better understand the proposal.

Mass Ave and Cambridge Street are not the same, and the public processes for each have been fundamentally different. The Council consider a working group format for Cambridge Street to ensure the intended goals can be achieved.

Cambridge Street zoning was unexpectedly advanced ahead of Central Square, which had long been discussed as “next in line.” The City Council then decided to pair Cambridge Street with the Mass Ave Upzoning. Cambridge Street is a much different corridor, and there is concern that its unique context could be blurred by considering both petitions together. Furthermore, the process that led to the Mass Ave and Cambridge Street petitions was not equal. By all accounts, the Mass Ave Working Group engaged in far more in-depth discussion about actual zoning changes. The *Our Cambridge Street Study*, while excellent, did not include a working group format where back-and-forth dialogue could occur. Please do not mistake the two processes as equivalent when evaluating the scope of changes now being proposed.

This petition should be viewed as an opportunity to strengthen the commercial district first—not as an afterthought to creating more housing.

Currently, the petition requires ground-floor commercial only in buildings of eight stories or more. This does not guarantee a continuous retail streetscape. If developers choose to build six-story buildings, there is no requirement for commercial ground floors. To maintain a connected and vibrant commercial corridor, first-floor commercial should be required throughout the district. Does this zoning ensure the kind of cohesive, walkable commercial corridor that East Cambridge and Inman Square deserve?

We have already seen examples where well-intended requirements—such as bike parking standards designed for large-scale developments—have negatively affected smaller Cambridge Street parcels, resulting in the loss of promised retail spaces. These are the kinds of issues that should be examined and addressed as part of this petition. More discussion and engagement are needed, and I would be happy to share examples in greater detail.

Can we solve the streetscape issues that complicate doing business on Cambridge Street?

Everyone understands that the streetscape and curb uses in the commercial corridor are changing dramatically. In Inman Square, for example, the impact on local businesses could have been far worse if not for a few generous neighbors who allow parking and loading on their properties. In most cases, off-street loading is not feasible and would only undermine the viability of ground-floor commercial spaces. Can this petition—coupled with smart urban planning—help address these issues? Is more engagement needed to ensure that it does?

Can a PUD District, Overlay, or Special Permits help Inman Square's vitality?

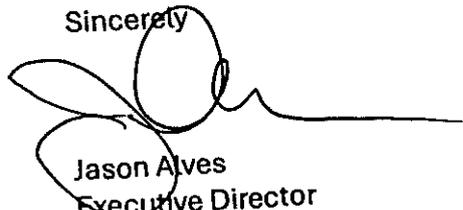
Porter Square proposes a PUD District that will help to plan for an manage more community benefits from the development. Is this something we should explore for the Cambridge Street petition. I fully build out Hampshire and Cambridge Street will increase the number of commercial opportunities. What else could redevelopment deliver for the Square if we plan accordingly.

These are just a few questions to consider as you begin your review of this petition.

We commend CDD for running an excellent *Our Cambridge Street Study*, which identified Cambridge Street as a corridor that bears the burden of needing to serve many purposes at once. However, our community would benefit from a deeper dive into this petition—one that works to solve some of the problems we've already seen in recent development along Cambridge Street.

We are excited about the people and opportunities that could be coming to Cambridge Street in the future, and we want to ensure that our small business community can thrive before, during, and after these changes.

Sincerely



Jason Alves
Executive Director
East Cambridge Business Association

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ellen Welling <ewelling1@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 3:47 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Ellen Welling
15 Mt Vernon St. Apt 2
Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dave Halperin <halperin.dr@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 3:14 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support Mass Ave and Cambridge St. zoning petitions

Dear Council,

Housing affordability continues to be the #1 issue for residents of the city. Many who have expressed skepticism at other efforts to zone for more housing have said we should actually be building on our corridors and squares. I believe we need an all of the above approach, and I am glad we're finally moving this piece forward. Not only does this address our housing crisis but building housing near high quality transportation corridors is important for reducing carbon emission, people who might live in these buildings will drive more in the counterfactual where they are not built. Additionally all these buildings will be built to passivhaus standards under our stretch energy code. More nearby residents will bring customers to business and keep our squares more vibrant, this is especially needed now, where local businesses must compete with online shopping and demand for brick and mortar retail is down. Finally, this is will build more affordable housing via inclusionary in addition to market rate supply.

I am particularly excited about the Mass Ave zoning, which I think is very strong and that corridor has many underutilized parcels. It does not make sense to continue to have 1 story retail on Mass Ave during a housing crisis. I find the Cambridge St. zoning to be weaker than I'd like. Six stories is already possible there after the multifamily zoning. Going above six requires expensive highrise codes and I believe much of the Cambridge St corridor does not get enough of a bonus on top of the six stories for a significant incentive to build there. If possible within the current process without refiling, I support efforts to strengthen this petition. If not, I don't want to let the perfect be the enemy of the good and both petitions can advance. Additionally, I hope we can monitor and circle relatively soon if

Thank you,
David Halperin
14 Valentine St. Unit 3

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kathleen Moore <kathleensmoore@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 2:54 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Strong Support for North Mass Ave and Cambridge Street Zoning Petitions

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my strong support for the North Mass Ave and Cambridge Street zoning petitions.

I was pleased that the Planning Board unanimously recommended these zoning changes at its October 21 meeting. These reforms will allow more housing by right along these two important corridors, which is essential for our community's future.

I appreciate that these recommendations from the CDD come after years of thoughtful community process, including many public meetings, as well as many months of meetings with a working group consisting of local community leaders for North Mass Ave and Porter Square. This extensive engagement demonstrates that these proposals have been carefully developed with substantial community input.

I strongly urge the Committee to vote in favor of recommending these zoning changes.

Kathleen Moore

9 Doane Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: thegroundup@comcast.net
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 2:09 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: upzoning

To City Council,

I am asking you to vote no on the proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street. I am asking this not because I am against building more buildings to house people but because when you review the presentation, it does not represent or respect the current community at all. Zoning changes should and will happen along Mass Ave. but it should be given more thought.

I reviewed the Planning Board presentation for the Mass Ave zoning petition and attended many of the community meetings regarding changes to Mass. Ave. I have attempted to stay on top of what changes are coming our way and agree with the Envision Plan to increase housing along the corridors and squares.

I live on Shepard Street, close to Mass Ave. and since I seldom drive, I experience Mass Ave as a pedestrian. As a pedestrian I can see and feel the community, the local businesses there should be an absolute priority to any changes made in this neighborhood.

When I see wording like "focus on creating a more attractive public realm and sense of place along Mass Ave. through greening, public artwork and more places to gather" I get somewhat hopeful but this is not what I see in the renderings or referred to in any other slides. Many of the buildings will not be required to have open space and those that do have "open space" will not have "green space". The renderings show green coming from street trees, always important but NOT enough. And why is the intention to improve "the public realm" and not the community, for the people who live there now and for all the people who you intend to live there in the future. The future children to grow up in this neighborhood need more.

I was also struck by the enthusiastic "Permitted uses remain generally the same—most residential and institutional uses, all office uses, and most retail uses." And then lists like "Food Halls and Food stands"

"Hotels"

"Craft retail, like breweries"

"night clubs"

Is this what is intended by an "attractive public realm"?

Who came up with this list? Are we trying to make Mass Ave a center for food halls and drinking??

There are so many vacant businesses along Mass Ave. now. How will this improve? Why force developers to have retail and office space if accommodations have not been made for the existing retail, restaurants and offices? Are we operating under the rule "if you build it they will come"?

I do not want to walk down Mass Ave and feel like I am in Kendall Square—is that what you are trying to achieve? At least Kendall Square has the benefit of many tech and biotech companies contributing to the beautification of the neighborhood. There is a stark difference as you walk down Mass Ave from Kendall Square to Central Square and you can feel the investment there. If Porter Square is to become a hub for housing, who will do the beautifying? How will it be maintained?

Again, I agree with the Envision Plan to increase housing in corridors and squares but this plan takes it too far. Vote no and rethink please.

Respectfully,
Candace Young
15 1/2 Shepard Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Elliott S. Bursack <ebursackster@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 1:52 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Elliott S. Bursack
51 Avon Hill St.
Cambridge, MA. 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Reena Freedman <doar5224@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 11:49 AM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Mass Ave Zoning Proposal

Esteemed City Council Members,

My name is Reena Freedman and my husband and I live in and own 42 Haskell Street in Cambridge. After following the Mass Ave Study progress and then attending the final Planning Board Meeting last week, I am reaching out to voice my deep concerns over the final recommendations in the Massachusetts Avenue Zoning Petition.

One of the reasons we settled in North Cambridge near Porter Square was the small town feel within a city. We are also cognizant of the need for increased affordable housing and access to housing for those who work in Cambridge. However, this petition goes well beyond what was communicated and asked for input from residents during the Mass Ave Study, and it will drastically change the region's traffic and parking, resources, small business life, landscape, and character.

The current petition asks for doubling residential building heights along Mass Ave (6 to 12 stories) and tripling the heights in Porter Square (6 to 18 stories). This is well beyond the level of change that was indicated during the resident input sessions during the planning study and the final summary of resident input. At the final community meeting, the summary indicated that architects/developers/market analysis input was generally not in favor of 12+ stories. The final proposal in zoning changes disregarded these inputs and shifted building heights to a maximum. When asked by Planning Board Members, the presenters of the zoning petition indicated that developers were interested in taller heights and the height decision was "more about planning vision and less about economics".

Revitalizing the areas of Porter Square and North Cambridge and increasing housing are important, but the consequences of changing zoning to allow for 12-18 story buildings will be detrimental to residential life:

- **Traffic Patterns:** Already it's become very hard to drive in and out of our North Cambridge neighborhood because of other restrictions (bus lane on North Mass Ave, the new "no left turn" entering Appleton St from Brattle St., no left turn option from Alewife Brook Parkway onto Rindge Ave). Increasing housing in Porter Square and along Mass Ave will increase traffic in those areas to a degree that it will be impossible to get around, and it will spill over to the secondary residential streets.
- **Small Businesses:** The presentation at the Planning Board Meeting indicated that the floor plans for ground floor businesses will bring in "big box store" retailers and reduce small businesses, dismissing them as not thriving already in the area. The root cause of small businesses not thriving is not that they don't exist but more likely high rent and changes to parking access for no residents along the corridor - not that people don't want them. In addition, the petition makes it possible that offices will occupy those ground-floor spaces, not retailers, which means residents have less access to meeting the increased demand for necessities. We have been proud that the

city has so many small businesses rather than larger corporate retailers that can be found in nearby suburban areas. This zoning change would make it much harder for them to survive.

- **Parking:** With parking already taken away from Mass Ave - and not yet remediated for the local businesses - adding this many possible units along the corridor will push right into the secondary streets of residential neighborhoods that already have tight parking. Are we to become an area where residents have to drive in circles to find parking blocks away or pay for off-street spots in order to live here? That is not why we settled in this area of Cambridge.
- **Town Character:** Walking around now and seeing most buildings at 2-3 stories, a shift to 12 and 18 stories as depicted in the proposal diagrams will completely change the character of Porter Square and North Cambridge. It would feel like living in the business district of Kendall Square, which is not why we chose this neighborhood.

Thank you for considering these comments in evaluating next steps for Porter Square and Mass Ave in North Cambridge.

Best,
Reena Freedman

Erwin, Nicole

From: John macomber <j.macomber@comcast.net>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 11:29 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

John R. Macomber
25 Buckingham St.
Cambridge 02138

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Young Kim <ycknorris@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 11:29 AM
To: McGovern, Marc; Simmons, Denise; Azeem, Burhan; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Defer decisions on Mass Ave & Cambridge Street Zoning Petitions

Dear Chairman McGovern, Members of Ordinance Committee, City Manager and City Clerk,

As much as I would have loved to deliver this comment in person, I am speaking remotely out of an abundance of caution, as I have tested positive for COVID.

When you approach retirement, **as I did in 2008**, it's a time of major decisions — setting your financial plan and your estate plan. The two go hand in hand. You wouldn't meet with your financial advisor armed only with your 2023 tax return, would you? Of course not. You'd bring your most recent earnings, current investments, and updated records — because the decisions you make will shape your future.

Nor would you divide your estate among your children one at a time, without understanding the total picture — how the assets fit together, what the tax implications are, or what legacy you intend to leave behind. Because if you ignore your lawyer's advice and rush to finalize your will in isolation, you leave your loved ones with a tangled mess to sort out later.

That, in essence, is what we risk doing now — advancing **two new upzoning petitions on top of the Affordable Housing Overlay, the Multifamily Housing Ordinance, and the elimination of accessory parking requirements already approved**, all without a comprehensive, updated understanding of how these overlapping changes interact. Each may have been well-intentioned, but taken together, they risk creating the kind of structural confusion — even dueling zoning amendments — that will burden the city for years to come.

Yes, there is a housing crisis, and yes, Cambridge must build. But we must build wisely — grounded in accurate data, current projections, and an honest accounting of infrastructure capacity, not on outdated assumptions or political expediency.

Just as responsible homeowners plan their estates with care, Cambridge must plan its future with foresight and balance.

Housing Done Right means:

-  Providing homes responsibly — through transparency, accountability, and neutral, fact-based analysis.
-  Protecting green space and solar access, aligning growth with our climate goals.
-  Preserving the historic character of a city founded in 1630.
-  Planning development with clear goals and respect for community livability.

And finally, because this is only the first of two meetings — with the second to be held **after the election** — I urge this Committee and the Council to take the politically courageous path: to pause, and allow the incoming Council — chosen by voters just days from now — to take up these petitions in the next term.

That act of restraint would not be a delay; it would be a leadership. It would honor both the democratic process and the trust residents have placed in this body to act wisely — not hastily — on decisions that will define Cambridge's future.

Respectfully yours,
Young Kim
Norris Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gordon Moore <hugmoore183@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 10:24 AM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Items 138 and 235 agenda items for Ordinance Committee Meeting

I am sorry that I am unable to attend the meeting but I want to include the following statement to the Committee

To the Ordinance Committee

From: Gordon Moore, 9 Rutland Street, Cambridge, Ma 02138

Date: October 30, 2025

Subject: A protest that the correct process of public comment on the Zoning Petition presentation to the Planning Board on October 21, 2025 regarding Massachusetts Avenue (CMA 2025 #235) has not been followed.

An extensive public engagement process with the affected neighborhoods was carried out over several years prior to the zoning petition presented to the Planning Board on October 21st. I attended many of these and reviewed the final report to the Community presented by the Community Development Department on April 10, 2025. https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Images/CDD/Planning/massaveplanningstudycambridgecommontoalewifebrook/MAPS_BOARDS_041125.pdf and followed up by the official final report released in May.

Community engagement was excellent and CDD is to be commended. However, it was misleading at the end. In all of the final presentations and chance for discussion, the proposed changes had been for base heights of 8 stories along Mass Ave with up to 11 stories with the incentive of affordable housing. This was summarized on page 81 of the final report in May, as follows:

Use Regulations: · *Prioritize Residential Mixed-Use Development:* » *Permit the greatest building heights for projects that incorporate multifamily housing, particularly those with non-residential ground-floor activation.*
Do not adjust existing height limits to developments that do not include residential components. · *Ground-Floor Activation Strategy:* » *Throughout the corridor: Encourage but do not require non-residential ground-floor uses.*

At the presentation to the Planning Board on October 21, with public comment, the Petition had changed materially and in ways that were a nEW to a number of us who had participated in the community engagement process. The petition was upped to a height of 12 stories with the incentive of ground floor stores. There is no mention of an incentive for affordable housing.

A number of us were surprised and felt mis-led. The petition **details** as proposed in the April and May public presentations, were for a lower maximum height of 11 stories and stated that affordable housing rather than ground floor retail use was the incentive.

I was unprepared for this change and many of my neighbors who had participated before May's final report didn't even realize there had been a change to conditions that had been extensively presented to us. Many didn't bother to attend the Planning Board Meeting, thinking that they had already seen what was to be proposed.

Moreover, the amount of time afforded to those that did attend the Planning Board was limited to two minutes even though the number signed up had not reached that required for reducing the allotted three minutes. I felt pushed and rushed. And there was virtually no way for me or my fellow citizens affected by these changes to express our views. Many with whom I have spoken after the meeting felt that a 12 story max and removing affordable housing were changes that should have engendered more discussion and community input. We were not given the chance to do so.

I am writing this protest because I believe the community input to the zoning petition was based on misleading information, which was then changed when we no longer had an adequate opportunity to provide input of our views to the CDD. The change had been inadequately presented to the many potential attendees who could have attended the Planning Board meeting.

This procedural deviation from appropriate community process in the Policy Zoning Petition is easily corrected. With appropriate notice, the CDD should convene another community meeting to provide citizens with an **adequate** opportunity to understand the final proposal and to question the rationale and appropriateness of the new changes. The official process can then proceed.

Thanks for your consideration.

Gordon Moore

617-966-7071

Hugmoore183@gmail.com

Gordon T. Moore MD, MPH (he/him/his)

Professor of Population Medicine, Harvard Medical

401 Park Drive, Suite 401, Boston, MA 02215

Gordon_moore@hphci.harvard.edu or Hugmoore183@gmail.com

Tel: 617-491-6278

Cellphone: [617-966-7071](tel:617-966-7071)

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Gordon T. Moore MD, MPH (he/him/his)

Professor of Population Medicine, Harvard Medical
401 Park Drive, Suite 401, Boston, MA 02215
Gordon_moore@hphci.harvard.edu or Hugmoore183@gmail.com
Tel: 617-491-6278
Cellphone: 617-966-7071

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gordon Moore <hugmoore183@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 9:10 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Fwd: Protesting the Process for the proposed zoning change to north Mass Ave
Attachments: Protest to City Solicitor.docx

To be recorded

Gordon T. Moore MD, MPH (he/him/his)
Professor of Population Medicine, Harvard Medical
401 Park Drive, Suite 401, Boston, MA 02215
Gordon_moore@hphci.harvard.edu or Hugmoore183@gmail.com
Tel: 617-491-6278
Cellphone: [617-966-7071](tel:617-966-7071)

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

From: **Gordon Moore** <hugmoore183@gmail.com>
Date: Wed, Oct 29, 2025, 12:39 PM
Subject: Protesting the Process for the proposed zoning change to north Mass Ave
To: <mbayer@cambridgema.gov>, <citysolicitor@cambridgema.gov>

To: City Solicitor, Cambridge, MA

From: Gordon Moore, 9 Rutland Street, Cambridge, Ma 02138

Date: October 30, 2025

Subject: A protest that the correct process of public comment on the Zoning Petition presentation to the Planning Board on October 21, 2025 regarding Massachusetts Avenue (CMA 2025 #235) has not been followed.

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/media/Images/CDD/Planning/massaveplanningstudycambridgecommontoalewifebrook/MAPS_BOARDS_041_125.pdf and followed up by the official final report released in May.

Community engagement was excellent and CDD is to be commended. However, it was misleading at the end. In all of the final presentations and chance for discussion, the proposed changes had been for base heights of 8 stories along Mass Ave with up to 11 stories with the incentive of affordable housing. This was summarized on page 81 of the final report in May, as follows:

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Moreover, the amount of time afforded to those that did attend the Planning Board was limited to two minutes even though the number signed up had not reached that required for reducing the allotted three minutes. I felt pushed and rushed. And there was virtually no way for me or my fellow citizens affected by these changes to express our views. Many with whom I have spoken after the meeting felt that a 12 story max and removing affordable housing were changes that should have engendered more discussion and community input. We were not given the chance to do so.

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with an **adequate** opportunity to understand the final proposal and to question the rationale and appropriateness of the new changes. The official process can then proceed.

Thanks for your consideration.

Gordon Moore

617-966-7071

Hugmoore183@gmail.com

Gordon T. Moore MD, MPH (he/him/his)
Professor of Population Medicine, Harvard Medical
401 Park Drive, Suite 401, Boston, MA 02215
Gordon_moore@hphci.harvard.edu or Hugmoore183@gmail.com
Tel: 617-491-6278
Cellphone: [617-966-7071](tel:617-966-7071)

To: City Solicitor, Cambridge, MA

From: Gordon Moore, 9 Rutland Street, Cambridge, Ma 02138

Date: October 30, 2025

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presented to us. Many didn't bother to attend the Planning Board Meeting, thinking that they had already seen what was to be proposed.

Moreover, the amount of time afforded to those that did attend the Planning Board was limited to two minutes even though the number signed up had not reached that required for reducing the allotted three minutes. I felt pushed and rushed. And there was virtually no way for me or my fellow citizens affected by these changes to express our views. Many with whom I have spoken after the meeting felt that a 12 story max and removing affordable housing were changes that should have engendered more discussion and community input. We were not given the chance to do so.

I am writing this protest because I believe the community input to the zoning petition was based on misleading information, which was then changed when we no longer had an adequate opportunity to provide input of our views to the CDD. The change had been inadequately presented to the many potential attendees who could have attended the Planning Board meeting.

This procedural deviation from appropriate community process in the Policy Zoning Petition is easily corrected. With appropriate notice, the CDD should convene another community meeting to provide citizens with an appropriate opportunity to understand the final proposal and to question the rationale and appropriateness of the new changes. The official process can then proceed.

Thanks for your consideration.

Gordon Moore

617-966-7071

Hugmoore183@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Aram Harrow <harrow@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 30, 2025 5:40 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote YES for more housing

Dear Cambridge City Council,

Thank you for your hard work you do on behalf of our city.

As you know, our high housing prices are a crushing burden on our residents, and the only realistic way out is to build more housing. Also, high housing prices are a sign that people really want to live in Cambridge and believe that living here is worth paying a lot for, either because of jobs, proximity to family, etc. So creating more housing creates a lot of benefit for people even apart from the reduction in housing prices.

Corridors like Mass Ave and Cambridge St are particularly good places for high density but really we should be letting people vote with their feet on where they want to live, and not making this choice for them with zoning restrictions.

Aram Harrow
Ellsworth Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hugh Warren <hugh.warren@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 10:21 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Hugh Warren
30 Reservoir Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jana Odette <jodette@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 9:59 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: letter re: Ordinance Committee meeting on Oct. 30, 2025

Dear Honorable City Councilors:

I urge you to **vote NO** on the proposed upzoning for Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street ***unless major changes are made.***

The increased heights will block solar access for nearby homes, drive up property assessments and raise taxes, possibly forcing out current residents on fixed incomes. The upzoning will also further displace both naturally affordable housing and small businesses. With office vacancies rising and universities downsizing, Cambridge does not need speculative luxury towers which likely will be acquired primarily by outside investors, raising housing costs and further exacerbating heat island impacts. Instead, the City should prioritize the use of city-owned land to create housing for *teachers, social workers, firefighters*, and other essential workers.

Otherwise, who benefits? INVESTORS, **not** RESIDENTS.

We are entering a financial downturn — this is not the time to enact drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. We risk ending up with vacant or unfinished developments as market conditions shift — a pattern already visible in parts of Cambridge.

The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability.

Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, affordability, and economic stability. *Or provide enough safeguards so that it will not do more harm than good.*

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jana Odette
176 Larch Road

Erwin, Nicole

From: Crystal Leslie <crystalaleslie@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 9:48 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Crystal Leslie
200 Lakeview Avenue
Cambridge MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Wayne Welke <wayne.welke@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 7:32 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Ordinance Committee Hearing, 10/30/2025

Dear Councilors -

I'm writing in strong support for the North Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street zoning petitions. Following years of community process and planning, it is now essential to approve these changes which will allow more housing by right along these two corridors.

I have been a resident of Cambridge and a homeowner here for over 55 years. I am also a retired architect, and significantly, my home is less than half a block from the business district on Massachusetts Avenue at Day and Dover Streets. I welcome the zoning changes that will allow housing to be built above these one story shops, which will add to the vitality of the shops as well as significantly improve the housing supply.

Unfortunately, the information circulated by the opposition resorts to NIMBY scare tactics and exaggerated photos to frighten poorly informed neighbors. Where were they in the very extensive community planning process?

Please vote to approve these zoning changes which the Planning Board unanimously recommended in their meeting last week.

~Wayne Welke

30 Dover Street - #3
Cambridge, MA 02140
welke@alum.mit.edu

Erwin, Nicole

From: Katherine Becker <k_becker2@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 6:30 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Resident of N.Cambridge rejecting proposed urban development in porter square and n.Cambridge

Dear City Council,

I am appalled at the proposal I received from a neighbor regarding building in porter square since zoning went into effect.

First, as a resident of Rindge Ave - I am angry that I am only now hearing about this.

Second- has the city done a traffic (or feasibility) study? While I usually take public transportation to work in Arlington- today I needed to drive b/c of an appointment. I sat on Rindge from the Peabody school to Alwife for FOURTY minutes!

Also my daughter is often late to school at CRLS because the 83 bus cannot get down Rindge Ave.

Please respond with city meeting times I can attend to express my concerns in person.

Katherine Becker
67 Rindge Ave

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carol Lynn Alpert <cal10@icloud.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 4:56 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Don't rush into upzoning this drastically

Hello City Council,

We are appalled that you did away with height, setback, and greenspace standards in our modest multifamily neighborhoods in residential zone B, and that most of you took developer out-of-town money to fund your campaigns and influence your decisions. You used to value tree canopy and climate resiliency; now you've flipped 180. In 2016, Cambridge helped facilitate my residential solar install. Now, you're refusing to help protect it. I and many of my neighbors are not voting for a single one of you who advanced the upzoning without truly consulting the people who live in these neighborhoods or experts experienced in gradual integration of more affordable housing. The housing problem needs a regional solution; the burden shouldn't be so disproportionately on Cambridge taxpayers and homeowners; and especially not as a developer free-for-all without design review or consultation. You are wrecking our city.

Yes, more development belongs on the corridors where there is public transportation, but even that current proposal is too extreme - with little regard for integrating public life and open space and no regard for environmental balance. This is just another failure of democracy in the face of greed.

C L. Alpert
Strawberry Hill

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bernice Buresh <b.buresh@me.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 3:13 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Bernice Buresh
140 Upland Road
Cambridge MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ken Bowen <ken@desert-light.org>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 2:32 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Kenneth Bowen
112R Magazine St.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Joan Friebely <jfriebely@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 1:18 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Joan Friebely
51 Avon Hill St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Suzanne Blier <suzanneblier@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 10:41 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Clerk
Cc: Huang, Yi-An
Subject: Upzoning, Planning Board Discussion, and Where we Are Now.

Honorable Cambridge City Councillors,

I hope you have taken the time to listen to the recent Planning Board meeting on the Mass Ave. and Cambridge Street upzoning — including both public comments and the thoughtful questions raised by Planning Board Members, especially Dan Anderson and Chair Mary Flynn.

Here are several key points raised by the Planning Board members themselves:

Affordable Housing Impacts.

Planning Board Chair Mary Flynn noted that this plan, when combined with other current proposals, will likely *squeeze out* Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO) projects. The upzoning would give away key advantages that AHO developers now enjoy — such as greater height allowances, reduced open-space requirements, and elimination of opportunities for legal appeal.

A member of the public pointed out that future developments along Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street may include *no* “inclusionary” (20% affordable) units, since it is illegal to require them once such incentives are given away. The likely result: this upzoning will primarily benefit market-rate (luxury) developers and investors, driving up overall housing costs while reducing opportunities for new affordable units.

As Chair Flynn stated, her “*biggest fear*” is another Affordable Housing petition seeking an additional six stories.

“Open Space” Requirements.

We learned that “open space” under this proposal does not require actual green space — earth for trees or plants — but may include private porches accessible only to residents. “Open Space” may be redefined as “Publicly Beneficial Open Space,” meaning visually accessible, rather than “Public Open Space,” which must be publicly accessible. Moreover, there are *no open-space requirements* for buildings up to eight stories along Mass. Ave. and six stories along Cambridge Street.

Local Businesses.

There are no elements in the plan designed to encourage small, locally owned businesses over large national or international chains. Current zoning limits retail size to help sustain neighborhood businesses — an approach that has worked in Harvard Square, where HSNA and HSBA collaborated to cap interior space at roughly 1,500 square feet.

Our local merchants are already struggling under COVID-era losses and new city taxes. This upzoning would accelerate lease terminations and make it far less likely that new developments will accommodate the small, locally based enterprises that define our neighborhoods.

Misrepresentation of Public Process Decisions.

Several speakers noted that the final upzoning proposal goes far beyond what participants in the public outreach process had been told or agreed to. CDD staff member Jeff Roberts explained that city councillors had directed

staff to exceed the previously agreed-upon parameters. This undermines both the public process and the professional input that residents and board members were encouraged to provide.

Urban Planning Goals and Design Conflicts.

The Planning Board Chair observed that the city's many objectives now conflict with one another. Several elements of the proposed upzoning contradict Cambridge's own *2025 Multifamily Housing Design Guidelines* and *Envision Cambridge* recommendations — both of which call for increased corridor heights only when accompanied by measures that mitigate impacts on adjacent neighborhoods. The current plan fails to do this.

Financial Considerations.

Planning Board members asked for a comprehensive financial study to assess whether the proposal would *actually create affordability*. Others requested yearly updates on the state of housing, tree canopy impacts, and development outcomes. These are essential tools for responsible decision-making and have not yet been provided.

In Conclusion, I urge you to **vote NO** on the proposed upzoning for Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street—allowing 8-, 12-, 15-, or even 18-story buildings (potentially higher under AHO) — unless major changes are made.

The increased heights will block solar access for nearby homes, drive up property assessments and raise taxes that may force out current residents on fixed incomes. The upzoning will also further displace both naturally affordable housing and small businesses. With office vacancies rising and universities downsizing, Cambridge does not need speculative luxury towers which likely will be acquired primarily by outside investors, raising housing costs and further exacerbating heat island impacts. Who benefits? Investors not residents.

Instead, the City should prioritize the use of city-owned land to create housing for *teachers, social workers, firefighters*, and other essential workers.

We are entering a financial downturn — this is not the time to enact drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. Without restraint, we risk ending up with vacant or unfinished developments as market conditions shift — a pattern already visible in parts of Cambridge.

The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability.

Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, affordability, and economic stability. Or provide enough safeguards so that it will not do more harm than good.

Respectfully,
Suzanne Blier

5 Fuller Place

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan W. Paine <sgwpaine@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 10:26 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Susan W. Paine
90 Brattle Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ethan Frank <ethandf2@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 10:19 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Strong support for mass ave and cambridge street rezoning

To the ordinance committee,

The projections showed multifamily upzoning would only barely reach half of our housing production goals. The other half is corridors and squares so I'm glad to see the planning board fully recommend this petition. Hopefully we can do central square next.

Sincerely,
Ethan Frank
632 Mass Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: Elizabeth Greywolf <esgreywolf@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 10:13 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please say NO

PLEASE Say NO to the proposed upzoning on Mass. Avenue and Cambridge Street development rising up to 8, 12, 15, or 18 stories (possibly higher for AHO) without parking or viable open or green space. Too many local businesses will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury housing towers that will bring more heat island impacts. The proposed new allowable heights and other details also supersede what the local review committees agreed to, as well as our new 2025 city design guidelines and will make it virtually impossible for both nearby homes to use solar and AHO developers to compete for affordable developments.

We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please vote no on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Thank you for taking positive action for Cambridge residents!

Elizabeth Greywolf
17 Buena Vista Park, #1

Erwin, Nicole

From: William Bloomstein <wittcreate@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 9:37 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: NO to upzoning!

When I first learned of this, I couldn't believe it.

But it's real.

You want to wreck the character of Cambridge while handing millions in profits to developers.

All in the name of ... progress?

No No No.

Vote NO to the Upzoning.

William Bloomstein
16 Crescent Street
02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: hwalker434@rcn.com
Sent: Wednesday, October 29, 2025 12:38 AM
To: Azeem, Burhan; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Simmons, Denise; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine; City Manager
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Mass. Ave./ Cambridge Street Need Open Space and Trees

Mass. Ave./ Cambridge Street Need Open Space and Trees

Dear Members of the Ordinance Committee and City Manager Huang,

FY22 and FY23 budgets show \$350,000 for the Mass. Ave. Planning Study. Residents were asked if they wanted green space, benches, trees, and better shops. Meaningful questions were **not** put to residents regarding building heights. From Melissa Peters's letter of September 11, 2025, we understand that building heights were at the discretion of City Council.

Therefore let's focus on the green space and trees. What was the return on our massive outlay for public engagement? Why do we read that multifamily housing buildings without active ground floor uses, up to and including 8 stories along Mass. Ave. and 6 stories along Cambridge Street, have **NO OPEN SPACE REQUIREMENT WHATSOEVER**? This is not just no "green open space," this is no "open space." Who thinks this will yield desirable residences, beautiful streetscapes, or cooler streets? One Planning Board member commented that the result will be a "really crappy urban streetscape."

Remember that our Climate Resilience Zoning is supposed to mitigate heat islands through site and landscape design features like trees, shrubs and plantings.

During the MFHZ process, slides were shown of 4-story pre-WWII buildings on Linnaean Street, as an example of large multifamily buildings co-existing with private houses. These supposedly exemplary 4-story buildings **all have entry courtyards**.

Consider the April 2025 Draft Multifamily Housing Design Guidelines:

"Where possible in dense residential neighborhoods and on corridors, provide landscaped forecourts and inner courtyards to create transitional space between the public street and the building lobby, to provide light and air to unit interiors, and to enrich the site with plantings."

Under current zoning, buildings in Residence C-1A (6 stories/ 75 feet) and Residence C-2 (7 stories/ 85 feet) require 15% open space. Surely it is appropriate, for the well being of the residents and the benefit of the neighborhood, that there be some open space requirement.

I would like to emphasize that this is not some elite aesthetic preference. **Both sociological studies and crime prevention studies show that having residents look out on their common outdoor space, particularly an entry courtyard, makes residents more comfortable about their safety – they know who is coming and going in their building - AND it leads to lower crime rates.**

Please revise the zoning petitions to include a modest open space requirement for multifamily housing buildings along Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street that do not have active ground floor uses.

With many thanks for your consideration,

Helen Walker
43 Linnaean Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: arabella baldini <arabella2@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 9:07 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Marlene Clauss
124 Chestnut St
Cambridge. 02139
[Your Name, Your Address]

Sent from my iPhone

Purchasing Department Vendor Request Form

Choose ONE of the following: New Vendor

Requestor's Name: Bernice Taylor
Phone Number: 617-349-4253
Department: Clerk's Office
Date: November 12, 2025

Please fill out this section if changing existing vendor information:

Vendor #:
Reason for Change: Choose an item.

Please fill out this section if you wish to add a new vendor:

Classification: Outside Party
Persistence: One Time

Main Address:

Vendor Name 1: Jeane W. Anastas
Vendor Name 2:
Address Line 1: P.O. Box 366
Address Line 2:
City: Chesterfield
State: MA
Zip: 01012
Phone:
Fax:
Email:
Vendor TIN #:
Social Security Number:
Description of Services OR goods provided:

***Fill out page 2 ONLY IF the remit to address differs from the main address**

Erwin, Nicole

From: Amy Thompson <amythompson5557@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 5:51 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Amy Thompson, 57 Jay Street, Cambridge, MA 02139]

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carole Stern <c28stern@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 5:48 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bette K Davis <bkdavis@mit.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 5:16 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Bette Davis
395 Broadway, L5D
Cambridge, MA 02139

[Get Outlook for iOS](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Graham, William A. <wgraham@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 3:48 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Dear Members of the Cambridge City Council,

I write to ask that you please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning proposal for Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places. Even more shocking, and likely of equally negative impact on our city, is the absence of any requirement in the proposal of adequate offstreet parking, viable publicly accessible open space, or reasonable building setbacks. This proposal would displace more local businesses (or damage them severely, as up on Mass Ave this past year because of the elimination of so much metered parking there). Furthermore, it will surely end by allowing far more high-end rather than affordable new units to be built, making reasonably affordable homes even more out of reach for most persons. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this lamentable upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made earlier, which working groups had agreed to, and which circumvents open and fair public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines. Please avert approving of this ill-considered (and special-interest supported) up-zoning in our city.

Sincerely,

William Graham
68 Avon Hill St.
Cambridge MA 02140

[Get Outlook for iOS](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Robin Greeley <greeley.robin@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 2:10 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Vote NO on proposed upzoning on Mass Ave & Cambridge Street

Dear Members of the Cambridge City Council,

I respectfully urge you to **vote no** on the proposed upzoning along Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street. The current proposal would permit building heights of 8, 12, 15, or even 18 stories—and potentially higher under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO)—without requiring adequate parking or meaningful open and green space. Such changes would displace long-standing local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable housing options that are vital to the city's diversity and economic balance.

Given the rising number of office vacancies and the contraction in university staff and student populations, Cambridge does not face a shortage that justifies speculative luxury development. Instead, these projects would likely intensify the urban heat island effect, reduce livability, and undermine sustainability goals.

Moreover, the proposed allowable heights and related provisions would supersede the agreements made by local review committees and conflict with the recently adopted 2025 City Design Guidelines. These changes would also make it increasingly difficult for nearby residential properties to utilize solar energy and for AHO developers to compete effectively in creating affordable housing.

At a time of economic uncertainty and fiscal constraint, it is unwise to pursue sweeping zoning changes that prioritize outside investors over the long-term needs of Cambridge residents. The City should pause, carefully evaluate current housing and commercial data, and engage in a comprehensive, data-driven planning process that supports both sustainability and livability.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask that you **reject the proposed upzoning** in order to preserve Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Sincerely,

Robin Greeley

--
Robin Adele Greeley
21 Lee Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Paula Cortes <paulavcortes@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 1:49 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups agreed to, circumventing the public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Have you stood at the base of an 18 story building and looked up? It's a TALL building, totally inappropriate to our neighborhood streets in Cambridge!

Paula Cortes
25 Newell St, Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Brian O'Keeffe <brian@brianokeeffe.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 11:29 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote YES on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote **Yes** on the proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18, helping make Cambridge accessible to many more, and less limited to wealthy owners whose opposition is rooted in privilege, white supremacy, and keeping Cambridge exclusive. This proposal will grow local businesses and turbocharge affordable homes.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to stand up for people who work for a living who have been left out of the housing market in Cambridge for too long, opening opportunities for teachers, firefighters, nurses, and social workers to have the possibility of living in Cambridge.

I am a proud resident who loves living in Cambridge and know that, if I were looking to buy today, I would not be able to live where I do. I want others to have the opportunity to raise their families and enjoy the many benefits of living in the best city in America.

Respectfully,

Brian O'Keeffe
1643 Cambridge Street #76
Cambridge, MA 02138
617-863-7360

Erwin, Nicole

From: JEAN FARRINGTON <jffar@verizon.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 11:08 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: rachel delvecchio <rachdelv@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 10:16 AM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Comments on Proposed Zoning Changes

To Cambridge City Council -

I am a long-time resident of Cambridge and am not in support of the proposed City zoning changes regarding increased building heights. These proposed building heights will result in the following:

- **Increased traffic.** The extent of additional building space will increase the number of cars proportionally. Traffic only continues to increase in intensity and duration over time. With the implementation of the bus and bike lanes throughout the City, and along Mass Ave in particular, there is no time or space for additional cars. The City has not identified a strategy for mitigating this.

- **Increased air and noise pollution** from increased vehicles. Vehicles are the leading causes of air pollution in MA (MA DEP 2024). As of 2024, less than 13% of vehicles registered in MA are electric, and only 10% of new vehicles were electric in Q2 of 2025 (Alliance for Automotive Innovation 2025). There is no information indicating that percentage will increase in the near future. The City has not identified a strategy for mitigating this.

- **Increased parking challenges.** The City already voted in 2022 to eliminate parking requirements for new buildings. Developers have no incentive to provide parking, making living in or visiting those buildings a significant challenge and further cramping the limited existing side-street parking. The City has not identified a strategy for mitigating this.

- **Minimal to no affordable housing.** The City's proposal will certainly increase the number of units. However, the City has enacted prior zoning changes with the stated intent of increasing affordable housing, resulting in additional expensive housing instead (see North Cambridge neighborhood as an example of developers building luxury multi-unit homes that do not need to conform to any setback restrictions but are just one characteristic short of needing to require affordable housing). The City has not proposed any method, regulation, or requirement that would actually guarantee affordable housing.

- **Reduced open space.** Taller and more dense buildings will reduce open space both on the ground and in the sky. The City continues to mention the need for new development to be consistent with "the urban, architectural, and landscape character of the neighbor-hoods surrounding new affordable housing projects," and the need for "open space to enhance the lives of residents and the broader community by offering aesthetic and environmental benefits" (AHO 2020). The current proposal is in direct contrast to those goals. Taller buildings will reduce the visible sky and associated sunlight, resulting in a more closed-in, darker area that will be both less aesthetic and be more challenging to include vegetation and other natural features. The City has not addressed these negative impacts.

The City has not provided a cost-benefit analysis of their proposed zoning revisions such that it is clear how the negative impacts described above would be mitigated. In addition, the City has not provided information on possible alternatives to this plan that could be implemented to increase affordable housing with less harm to Cambridge residents.

Thanks,
Rachel DelVecchio
66 Clay St

Erwin, Nicole

From: plf245@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 10:05 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Peter Falb
Homeowner

Sent from AOL on Android

Erwin, Nicole

From: DEBORAH MASTERSON <chelsa24@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 10:02 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Deborah Masterson

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: howard saxner <hrsaxner@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 9:51 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Erwin, Nicole

From: brpfeiffer22@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 9:32 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

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Brian Pfeiffer

147 Brattle Street

Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Karen Eton <karenlme@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 9:26 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

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[Karen Eton, 34 Larchwood Drive, Cambridge]

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Louisa Kasdon <louisa.kasdon@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 9:14 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Erwin, Nicole

From: pam greenberg <pamgreenberg@hotmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 9:12 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: No to high rises in Porter

I am utterly opposed to high rises in Porter Square. It will change the neighborhood environment, increase congestion, and otherwise negatively impact the city. Already development has taken place in North Cambridge without seeming concern about how it affects actual people living there. I beg you, please vote NO!

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Crane, Gregory <Gregory.Crane@tufts.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 9:05 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025

Gregory Crane
177 Pemberton St.

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Stephanie Boye <stephanieboye921@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 8:43 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Stephanie Boyé
15A Lowell Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Maureen Whitehouse <maureenwhitehouse16@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 8:41 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Erwin, Nicole

From: Randy Blume <randy@tashmoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 8:40 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Randy Blume
173 Appleton Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Judith Bowman <bowman@jfbfamilyservices.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 28, 2025 8:37 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jane Tenenbaum <janetenenbaum00@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 26, 2025 8:29 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Jane Tenenbaum, 159 Concord Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: anne smith <smitha217@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, October 26, 2025 5:12 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Anne O Smith
130 Mt Auburn St #301
Cambridge, Ma 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ted McGlone <tedmcglone@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 26, 2025 2:51 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sharon Sears <sbsears@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, October 26, 2025 12:55 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Rosalind Michahelles <rosalind@dominick-jones.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 26, 2025 10:25 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

--
Rosalind Michahelles, 6 Hurlbut Street, Cambridge, MA 02138
617-491-3239
rosalind@dominick-jones.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jean Spera <jmspera@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, October 25, 2025 3:14 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design standards.

Sincerely,

Jean Spera
12 Sciarappa Street
Cambridge, MA 02141

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sharon Stichter <sharonstichter@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, October 25, 2025 9:45 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Upzoning proposal

PLEASE VOTE NO to the proposed up-zoning on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street, enabling up to 8, 12, 15, or 18 stories (possibly higher for AHO) without parking or viable open space. Too many local businesses and naturally affordable homes will be lost. Office vacancies are **rising** and universities **reducing staff and students**, Cambridge does **not need** more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this up-zoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Thank you. I am a 50-year Cambridge resident and a homeowner here.

Sharon Stichter

*Sharon Stichter
108 Walden Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02140*

Erwin, Nicole

From: Graham, William A. <wgraham@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Saturday, October 25, 2025 9:27 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

William Graham
68 Avon Hill St.

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Graham, William A. <wgraham@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Saturday, October 25, 2025 9:26 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Your Name, Your Address]

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Arti Pandey <artipande@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2025 11:37 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Arti Pandey
Broadway, Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: David Barry <dfbarry34@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2025 10:41 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote **NO** on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

David Barry
31 Linnaean St

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Eck, Diana L. <dianaeck@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2025 8:09 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Diana Eck, 55 Trowbridge Street, Cambridge 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan M. Carter <studiogirl1946@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2025 6:41 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

[Susan Carter 41 Holden St Cambridge 02138Your Name, Your Address]

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gillien Todd <gillien.todd@me.com>
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2025 6:31 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

Gillien Todd
136 Lakeview Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susana T. Arteta <sarteta@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2025 5:42 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Upzoning Proposals

Please say NO to the proposed upzoning on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street rising up to 8, 12, 15, or 18 stories (possibly higher for AHO) without parking or viable open space. Too many local businesses and naturally affordable homes will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

The housing market in Cambridge is on a downturn, having experienced the bursting of the housing bubble in the 80's and seeing how sale prices of apartments are declining as well as the occupancy rates of rentals, I fear we are heading for another housing and financial disaster.

We need to increase green spaces, not construct cement jungles. This goes against Cambridge's commitment to increase substantially the number of trees and to be a green city. It is important to increase green spaces and not construct cement/building tunnels that obstruct the night cooling as the summer temperatures keep rising. Rising day and night temperatures are a health hazard, endanger the lives of vulnerable populations and tax our electricity infrastructure. Parks and green spaces are an integral component of community and personal wellbeing. Please spend more funds instead to build more green spaces and plant trees.

Susana Arteta
Resident of Cambridge since 1982

Erwin, Nicole

From: Patrick Reilly <pmgreilly@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 24, 2025 10:45 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Please stop up-zoning

I beg you to stop promoting a policy of eliminating zoning in Cambridge. Zoning serves a purpose. You are going to fundamentally alter the appearance and character of the city. You have charged forward with a radical move that I, as a resident and taxpayer who pays attention to these things, didn't even see coming before this year. Are you asking the residents who own property in this city if they want this? I think the answer is no. I've never seen a survey. You are imposing changes on the people who live here because of your ideology and forcing extreme changes on people who live in Cambridge because they love the appearance and character of the city as it already is, and this is already a very densely populated community.

I think you need to start polling the community about what the people want. You are supposed to represent the people who live here, and I don't think we want the whole city to look like Kendall Square.

And I beg you to consider the residential taxpayers you represent. If you own property, it is not easy to just relocate. This is going to upend lives. I think your changes are cruel. Every 4-6 story building without setbacks that appears on a street of 2-3 story buildings that do have setbacks is going to deeply upset all the adjacent homeowners. It will evict renters who's buildings are demolished and cause great unhappiness to the people around it. I really think it's going to be heartbreaking for many people who are displaced or impacted by these buildings. Certainly it will ruin some people's lives. I think each of you should really consider your personal responsibility for the sadness you are going to create. Weigh that against the excited new renters, developers and owners you want to appeal to.

Sincerely,

Patrick Reilly

(Highlands Neighborhood)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jennifer Payette <petersonpayette@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2025 3:10 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Huang, Yi-An
Subject: Please reject Up-zoning

Dear City Councilors, City Clerk and City Manager,

I am opposed to Up-zoning in Cambridge! Please reject the Up-zoning legislation as it currently stands. This legislation is misguided. We can achieve adequate housing levels without making Cambridge into a city of 16-20 stories buildings, by right. Zoning was in place for a reason; to have thoughtful development that coincides with a livable Cambridge. Buildings taller than 6 to 8 stories anywhere in the city will change the whole character of Cambridge and will lead to an unlivable city. Porter square with the proposed 18-story buildings will have no light at ground level, unusable open space with no natural light, and will be a grim space to be. We are not Manhattan, and we should not be building as if we are.

Once again, this proposed zoning is contrary to the *Envision Cambridge* plan. *Envision* does not specify specific heights, it notes:

“Squares and Major Mixed-Use Corridors along Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street should grow at a **moderate, measured pace** that takes advantage of transit proximity and enhances their **unique character and sense of place.**” And,
“**Evolving Mixed-Use Districts**, such as Kendall Square, North Point/Cambridge Crossing, and Alewife, **should continue to accommodate the bulk of the city’s growth and change**, taking advantage of transit proximity, and positively transforming areas characterized by surface parking lots, automobile-oriented uses, and obsolete commercial buildings.”

The proposed additional housing units in tall towers will not make Cambridge affordable! They will result in high-end housing that will drive the middle class out...those that we are intending to help. Realtors resoundingly agree that developers are not here to make reasonably priced housing and it will result in housing for the wealthy, not young families or young professionals.

Please defeat the proposed zoning ordinance.

Jennifer Payette
28 Prentiss Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Cynthia Ellis <cynthiaell@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, October 23, 2025 8:54 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Cynthia Ellis
16 Highland Street

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sharon Sears <sbsears@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 4:10 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
11 Fayerweather Street
Cambridge 02138

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Christopher Barr <cbarr48@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 3:38 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Chris Barr
48 Russell St, Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan W. Paine <sgwpaine@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 10:25 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Susan W. Paine
90 Brattle

Erwin, Nicole

From: pamela cranna <pamcranna@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 10:24 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Pamela Cranna
55 Pemberton St., Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Joan Friebely <jfriebely@comcast.net>
Sent: Wednesday, October 22, 2025 4:46 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget

Respectfully,
Joan friebely
51 Avon hill st
Neighborhood 9

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: susan@susanlapides.com <susanlapidesphotography@gmail.com> on behalf of Susan Lapides <susan@susanlapides.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 9:15 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Susan Lapides
Huron Ave.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Catherine Ahearn <coahearn@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 9:09 PM
To: City Clerk; CDDat344
Subject: Ordinance Proposal Process

Hi there,

I would like to draft a proposed ordinance that is not zoning related. However, all of the resources I can find online are zoning-related. Can you please provide me with more information on how this process works? I have gathered that I would need to file a petition with the City Clerk and that other parts of the process may depend on the substance of the ordinance, but I'd really appreciate further guidance.

Sincerely,
Catherine Ahearn

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lois Josimovich <loiswrite@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 7:52 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote **NO** on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Lois Josimovich
Cambridge Highlands

Erwin, Nicole

From: Joyce Myers <jemyersmd@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 7:35 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
[Your Name]
[Your Address or Neighborhood]

Regards,

Joyce

序意寿

Joyce E Myers, MD
50 Buckingham St.
Cambridge, MA 02138
jemyersmd@comcast.net
609-468-6090(cell)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Cathy McCormick <delcormick@earthlink.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 5:46 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses. And I am not convinced that the yield of affordable units is worth throwing out all urban planning and design professional norms.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Let's not replicate the urban disasters that have been built in Kendall and the Seaport. Such sad squandering of opportunity: characterless concrete canyons!

And, the intersection of Walden and Mass Ave is already incredibly dangerous--I do not believe it can safely sustain an enormous building with little setbacks right in its corner. The site is toooooo small for this vision.

Respectfully,
Cathleen McCormick
9 King Street
North Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carole Colsell <clew95@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 5:42 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of Cambridge City Council and of the Planning Board,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Carole Colsell and Lewis Wurgaft
35 Wendell St. 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Molly Ready <mollyready@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 5:08 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Molly Ready
12 Tenney St. 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Frank Scibilia <scibilia@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 3:45 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

I am writing to express my opposition to the upzoning proposals for Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street.

We don't need buildings over 6-8 stories in these areas. It seems like every open area of Cambridge has been built out, and the only place left to go is up.

Why didn't we zone the Alewife area for tall buildings before all the recent construction? Why not add 10 stories above Whole Foods and Staples? Now even the turkeys are homeless.

I am also concerned about the lack of planning for parking and other infrastructure associated with the new construction in Cambridge.

Housing is a regional issue, and we should be working with other towns to address it regionally. The handful of units from up-zoning will have minimal impact on the regional shortage. We should be building where it's cheapest, not where it's most expensive.

More housing outside of Cambridge, even an hour away, will put downward pressure on prices in Cambridge. Let's find ways to add 3 or 4 units regionally for the cost of 2 in Cambridge.

It's hard to see how prices in Cambridge will drop if new above-median-price housing is built, and land values increase due to zoning. Let's find more creative, coherent approaches.

Thank you.

Frank Scibilia
62 Upland Road, Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Crystal Leslie <crystalaleslie@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 2:47 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Crystal Leslie
200 Lakeview Avenue
Cambridge
MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ben Wurgaft <ben.wurgaft@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 2:41 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Dear Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate existing homes. The real beneficiaries of this upzoning are the developers, not the citizens - current and future - of the City of Cambridge.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of the vacant tech and pharma offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.; just today I read news of the dramatically reduced number of new graduate students at Harvard. In other words, the City risks building for boom times during a fresh round of bust times.

Sincerely Yours,

Ben Wurgaft
North Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jack Silversin <jack@consultamicus.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 2:29 PM
To: City Clerk; City Manager; City Council; Planning Board Comment
Subject: Massive upzoning on Mass Ave - please say NO!
Importance: High

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Jack Silversin
103 Avon Hill St
Cambridge, MA. 02140
617-480-407

Erwin, Nicole

From: kelli <qeli@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 11:49 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
susan foster
75 fayette street, 02139

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Zachary Goldberg <zackgo@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 10:07 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote **NO** on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Zack Goldberg

118 Aberdeen Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: nonie valentine <nonie.valentine1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 8:51 AM
To: Planning Board Comment
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Amending zoning map

Dear Planning Board,

I write with my characteristic bluntness on upzoning, in this case about establishing new base zoning districts along Mass Ave.

It's a horror show. In theory I was fine with the idea of more inclusionary housing and tall buildings along the Mass Ave. corridor, but seeing the renderings, (if you support this it's always a good idea to keep renderings - even dressed up ones - away from the public because that's how people grasp the reality of what it'll be like) I now understand what a bad idea it is. We have made a religion of density, based on a myth of affordable housing. The housing that's being built right now is not doing much of anything for affordable units.

I walk to Porter Square all the time. It's already congested and to have an 18 story building where CVS is, without parking, would be absurd and dangerous. People are already crabby in the density we have, tension is growing everywhere for obvious local and national reasons, and that would be a congestion nightmare making everything worse. Porter Square is probably not considered a residential area but it is a neighborhood node and still on a human scale at present. No more. We're steadily going to be Manhattan and that's not going to go well with infrastructure pressure. Bye bye neighborhood flavor, bye bye green life which will probably be confined to roofs and pots and tiny tree wells. If we're lucky. And if anything survives. We'll need binoculars to see a living bird.

Demolition creates health and environmental problems. Tree roots are seriously harmed by the lack of setbacks on offer but we won't see effects for a while because it takes maybe two years for a larger tree to die. We'll see if any little ones survive.

This direction is not inevitable, it's a choice. Neighborhoods are on the verge of being a quaint artifact. Don't let this happen.

At a recent City Council candidates gathering in Cambridgeport, Councillor McGovern picked up on the disaffection people feel about upzoning, for the above reasons and more. He got up and actually shamed people for not being more enthusiastic about "all the new housing." It was craven.

Hard work has been done on this issue and I respect all of it. But the compromise is out of touch with what residents want, unless they want revenge against other parts of the city they consider richer or luckier. It might be time for developers to take a hit. Lower buildings, like 6 stories tops, along the corridors and squares, OK.

Sincerely,

Nonie Valentine
4 Washington Ave.

Erwin, Nicole

From: JEFFREY PETRUCELLY <jeffpat17@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 8:34 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and the need for sensibly planned affordable housing.

Respectfully,
Jeff Petrucelly
17 Kenwood street

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hugh Russell <hughadamsrussell@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 8:33 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning as proposed

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

In my 35 year term on the Planning Board we were able to guide and shape new development to fit into the fabric of the city. Recent changes have removed this protection. Increasing the permitted height and density on these corridors without adequate provisions for public review is very unwise.

The solution should include should include amendments to:

- Restore the Planning Board design review Special Permits for these new tall buildings.
- Require that parking studies be done to minimize spill-over effects into adjacent neighborhoods.

Respectfully,

Hugh Russell
1 Corliss Place

Erwin, Nicole

From: pwellons <pwellons@earthlink.net>
Sent: Tuesday, October 21, 2025 6:35 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: The two new City upzoning proposals

Councilor,

Please oppose the proposal to rezone Mass Avenue above Harvard Square.

Phil Wellons
651 Green Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Paul Barringer <pbchanges@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 11:51 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also cut down trees and remove greenspace around current buildings. This is bad for the environment, bad for residents and bad for people who want to live in an urban city that has a balance of small to medium buildings within a reasonable scale.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Paul Barringer
1 Russell St.
North Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Pat McCarthy <patm163@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 9:34 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO to upzoning

“Say NO to the proposed upzoning on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street rising up to 18 stories in some places without parking or setbacks. Too many local businesses and naturally affordable homes will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge’s scale, character, and economic stability.

Erwin, Nicole

From: MARY SILBERMAN <mesilber@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 8:05 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Mary
Inman square

Erwin, Nicole

From: Monique Kahn <kahnm46@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 7:58 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Monique Kahn
Cambridge Highlands

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lucia Mudd <lucia.mudd@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 6:44 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Lucia Mudd
Lancaster Street
Porter Square Neighborhood

Erwin, Nicole

From: Beata Panagopoulos <beatapana@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 5:19 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Beata D. Panagopoulos
28 Maple Ave, #3
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Suzanne Hopkins <suzannebhopskins@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 4:55 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote **NO** on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Suzanne B Hopkins
Wendy L Wood
9 Corporal Burns Rd
02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gordon Moore <hugmoore183@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 4:51 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Mass Ave zoning proposal
Attachments: Planning Board Review Oct 21 2025.docx

FYI

--
Gordon T. Moore MD, MPH (he/him/his)
Professor of Population Medicine, Harvard Medical
401 Park Drive, Suite 401, Boston, MA 02215
Gordon_moore@hphci.harvard.edu or Hugmoore183@gmail.com
Tel: 617-491-6278
Cellphone: [617-966-7071](tel:617-966-7071)

Planning Board Presentation

October 21, 2025

From: Gordon Moore 9 Rutland St.

In response to the proposal to create 3 new zoning overlay districts to replace the Mass Ave Overlay District:

I. Design and dimensional proposal for buildings in the new overlay districts on Mass Ave:

1. The proposed step backs at the interface with C-1 neighborhoods (usually the rear of the building facing the neighborhood which are predominantly three story buildings) should start at 4 stories (the new base zoning), not at six stories (the height exception awarded a developer who puts in 20% affordable housing).
 - a. The reason is that to place the step back of 15 feet so high above the existing buildings that the 12 story building will not only overwhelm the residential abutters and they will face a huge blank wall far above their three story buildings. This smothers the residential neighbors in C-1 and will visually pin them in.
 - b. The criteria for the six story threshold for the first step back is inconsistent with the stated design guidance for the Planning Board Public Review as described in multiple sections of the zoning ordinance as follows:

'the area of special planning concern and on adjacent neighborhoods and shall further take account of the following considerations: scale, bulk, density, aesthetic qualities, land use, traffic impacts and other functional characteristics; parking and loading; and impact on public services and facilities'.

Further, in the special permit review instructions, the Planning Board is asked to:

19.25.2

Urban Design Findings. The Planning Board shall grant the special permit only if it finds that the project is consistent with the urban design objectives of the city as set forth in Section 19.30. In making that determination the Board may be guided by or make reference to urban design guidelines or planning reports that may have been developed for specific areas of the city and shall apply the standards herein contained in a reasonable manner to nonprofit religious and educational organizations in light of the special circumstances applicable to nonprofit religious and educational activities.

19.31

New projects should be responsive to the existing or anticipated pattern of development. Indicators include:

(1)

Heights and setbacks provide suitable transition to abutting or nearby residential zoning districts that are generally developed to low scale residential uses.

(2)

New buildings are designed and oriented on the lot so as to be consistent with the established streetscape on those streets on which the project lot abuts. Streetscape is meant to refer to the pattern of building setbacks and heights in relationship to public streets.

19.52 *Heights, and Setbacks and Building Façades.* The provisions of this Section 19.52 shall not apply to Special District 8.

- (1) For development on a lot abutting a lot in a residential zoning district having a more restrictive height limit, the cornice line of the principal wall plane facing the residential zoning district line shall not exceed

by more than twenty (20) feet at any point the maximum height permitted in the residential zoning district. Any portion of the building rising above the cornice line shall be located below a forty five (45) degree bulk control plane starting at ground level at the zoning district line, subject to the following provisions.

The bottom line of all zoning permissions requiring review of any sort is that the development specifications in the zoning should be consistent with design criteria to be used by the Planning Board in their determination of appropriateness, either in an advisory or mandatory review.

Rear elevations facing C-1 of six stories without façade relief is totally inconsistent with regard to the design criteria as stated in multiple spots in the zoning ordinance, including the criteria described in the newly passed Multifamily Residential Zoning. These buildings will dwarf their neighbors with no visual relief until far above where they live. Step backs should start at four stories in the zoning.

2, Under the new Neighborhood Multifamily zoning passed in January 2025, developers are given a 'right of no review' to extend the zoning height allowance (12 stories) of the new overlay district into C-1 by 25 additional feet if the developer owns the adjacent C-1 property. Thus, by right, a developer can build their 12 story building jutting 25 feet into C-1 without review. An adjacent neighbor (such as I am) would then face a 12 story building overlapping a significant part of their home without any recourse.

This extension of 25 feet into C-1 to a height of 12 stories will now penetrate into the residential neighborhood. Regardless of façade step backs, this 12 story height is inappropriate to the character and health of its abutters. Neighbors will be overwhelmed and their access to light and air shut off. For me, giving this permission without review guarantees development that will affect me, my family's, and other Cambridge residents' health (including renters), and wellbeing. It is inconsistent with the City's developmental design criteria and makes a mockery of the neighborhood character statements in the Envision Report. At the least there should be a special permit review in this circumstance to assess adherence to design issues that are essential to the health, wellbeing, and local character of abutting properties.

II. Infrastructure Issues:

There are two critical issues of infrastructure that I believe should be part of your Planning Review. In my opinion, your review should be contingent on explicit analysis of these two issues, either of which could impair the implementation of the zoning or even stop parts of it completely. These are the MBTA tunnel and electricity.

1. The MBTA tunnel runs along the sides and middle of Mass Ave between Harvard and Porter Squares. It is more to the west at the beginning and more to the east nearing Porter, where it is deeply buried. Before Linnaean, the tunnel is relatively shallow, built on loose rubble. I believe there is a strong possibility that buildings of 12 story height will require foundations that will affect the tunnel. Or vice versa. There should be an engineering study done before 12 story zoning is encouraged in that stretch.

2. I have investigated the electrical infrastructure to carry this proposed level of development. First, the north Cambridge electrical substation is already in a warning mode. And that is before Eversource knows about the development plans for the City. We barely averted an electrical supply disaster in Kendall Square. Eversource and the City must do forward planning to assure that the source capacity of electricity is ample to support this large and heavily electrified development.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Blier, Suzanne <blier@fas.harvard.edu>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 4:43 PM
To: Joseph, Swaathi; City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: On the new Proposed Cambridge Upzonings.

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and City Council,

I write urging you to deny the two upzoning proposals that are being brought before you, because individually and together this will mean widespread demolition, speculative investment, and the loss of long-time renters, small business tenants, and more affordable housing. As a city we are facing not only a loss of office leases, but also decreasing number of grad students and workers in our biotech and university settings. Why are we rushing into a large scale set of upzoning proposals before we have done the requisite studies of need.

This rushed plan, not only goes against the main guidelines of Envision in terms of heights and neighborhoods but also against the city's own 2025 design guidelines.

By contrast, **4- and 5-story buildings—like those in Paris, Brooklyn, or historic Cambridge**--create the most **livable urban scale**, offering sunlight, walkability, and community connection. The new zoning would erase that balance and canyonize our main corridors, replacing human-scaled neighborhoods with luxury towers (gobbled up by investors, many of which will remain empty).

Equally troubling, these rezonings **limit design review to the Planning Board** for only the largest of structures and come with **no legal avenue of appeal**. Only very large projects—those over roughly **20,000 square feet of nonresidential floor area**—require formal Planning Board design review, meaning many projects will proceed “as of right.” Residents and small business owners would have no recourse even when new construction threatens to displace or impact them. The timing is also deeply misguided: Cambridge already faces a **glut of empty offices** and **reduced housing demand** due to university and biotech cutbacks.

Cambridge's **Citywide Urban Design Guidelines (2025)** make clear that new development should *complement and enhance* the city's established character rather than replace it through sweeping upzoning. As the plan states, “each square and corridor segment has developed its own unique character over time, one that can and should be complemented and enhanced when opportunities arise....” (*Citywide Urban Design*, p. 42). The document repeatedly insists that *growth be measured and context-sensitive*, affirming that redevelopment “should accommodate greater densities than the surrounding neighborhoods” only where it “strengthens the mix of uses and incentivizes sustainable transportation choices” (*ibid.*, p. 46). This approach reflects a principle of **design review grounded in compatibility**—not density alone. Page 121 of *Shaping Our City 2025* underscores this: “The design of residential buildings is fundamental to Cambridge's rich and varied character.

New residential projects, particularly mid- and high-rise residential buildings, should be sensitive to existing neighborhood character and respect the privacy and quality of life of the residents of abutting properties... [and] enrich Cambridge's public realm through the arrangement, rhythm, and scale of elements such as structural bays, windows, entrances, roof shapes, dormers, and the detailed assemblage of materials.” The guidance is explicit that large developments must be *broken into smaller volumes* and employ “step backs, or

mansard, gambrel, hipped, or gable roof profiles to enclose habitable upper stories," so as to "enhance compatibility with the typical scale of Cambridge's residential neighborhoods" (*ibid.*, p. 121).

Cordially,

Suzanne Blier
5 Fuller Place

Erwin, Nicole

From: rosemous@rcn.com
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 4:37 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council; City Manager
Cc: rosemous; PSNA
Subject: Re: Upzoning initiatives before the Planning Board & City Council week of Oct. 20th

Concerning the 'upzoning' measure before the Planning Board on Oct. 21st:

At a City Council meeting last month, the only item in a large packet of materials that made it directly clear to me what the current Upzoning involves on N. Mass. Ave. (the street on which I live) is a map detailing that the Porter Sq. section on the corridor is rezoned to a potential 18 stories. Meanwhile, north of Porter the avenue is rezoned to a potential 12 stories (possibly more, according to Suzanne Blier) all the way out to Alewife Brook.

Born & raised in the far north of Manhattan, I believe that such a zoning scheme will result in the 'Manhattanization' of Cambridge. Yet how development on this scale along the corridors will mesh with the existing housing stock appears to be not much of a consideration to city officials. That is, forgotten in the current efforts to ease the Cambridge-Boston housing crisis is just how much of the current housing stock in Cambridge (& the metro area) consists of older 2- & 3- family homes -- i.e., many such structures clustered on the side streets perpendicular to Mass. Ave. For example, directly across the avenue from our building on N. Mass. Ave. is Gold Star Rd. with its aged 2- & 3- family houses packed close together. I wonder how the residents on this small street will fare if a 12-story building (or taller) is erected on the site of the vacant Season to Taste storefront? Moreover, what about the site a little further out on the corridor currently occupied by a 1-story child care center? Of course, redevelopment on this scale could only occur IF the owners of these buildings can succeed in buying up enough adjacent property to allow for the construction of such edifices. Nevertheless, having grown up on a street where there was not even a blade of grass -- though the buildings in our neighborhood were a mere 5-6 stories -- I am acutely aware of how tall buildings teetering over small ones can make for unsustainable living conditions. This occurred in our neighborhood when the extension of the Cross-Bronx Expressway clear across Manhattan (& out to the George Washington Bridge) allowed tall towers to be erected directly over the new construction. Even as a young person, I knew enough to hate those buildings so out of scale with the rest of the Heights.

Recently, a high school classmate reported to her fellow alums that the 20-story building in which she has lived for decades in mid-town Manhattan is NOT bearing up well as an even larger building is being constructed directly adjacent to her home. Moreover, last year in the NY Times, there was a story about an older 5-story apartment building nearby, whose foundations were undermined by the demolition undertaken for the construction of yet another behemoth (I believe that the smaller building became uninhabitable). Last week in the NYT, a residential skyscraper in Manhattan marketed to 'billionaires' was called out for

structural problems related to the concrete used in its construction. Surely this was not the 1st such incident of 'luxury' towers in Manhattan with major structural defects to be reported in the Times (which I read daily)..

Here in New England, we have our own examples of how critical infrastructure may be undermined by overdevelopment. For instance, a recent community publication from Cleveland Circle reported that international research on the proliferation of rats in many urban areas has actually been linked to climate change: that is, the rats proliferate as cities get hotter – which occurs with climate change AND increasing density. One of the examples of such a city (cited in the article) was in fact Boston. A 2nd New England example of the unforeseen impacts of development in aging cities is Portland, ME: late last month at the Newburyport Documentary Film Festival, a film was screened – “Unless Something goes Terribly Wrong” – about the herculean efforts in Portland of a small group of dedicated civil servants to battle aging infrastructure in order to keep Portland’s water clean. As we in Cambridge confront our own issues with sewage & Alewife Brook, the scale of the problems we face with our water systems (even older in metro Boston) is surely much greater than in this much smaller metro area to the north. In this discussion of infrastructure problems, I have not even addressed such questions as our electrical facilities nor the congestion on the N. Mass. Ave. corridor: coincidentally, I believe that the installation of Quick-Build on the corridor (Dudley-Alewife) has done nothing to address congestion; moreover, the addition of the protected bike lanes & dedicated bus lanes has (I believe) actually increased pollution along this stretch. Indeed, as single lanes of auto traffic go putt-putt-putting along (during multiple rush hours) spewing copious pollution clear out to Alewife Brook, the bike & bus lanes remain largely vacant (as do the sidewalks) hardly adding to the commercial vitality of the corridor.

In these tremendously uncertain times, when we who live in Massachusetts cannot rely on the federal government to support state & local efforts at community development, we need to tread carefully in the ‘improvements’ we pursue. Finally, given the blows that the biomedical sector -- on which the commercial base of the Cambridge economy is extremely reliant) -- sustained under the Trump administration, we must tread carefully in any new large-scale initiatives the city embraces. For example, this is not the time to inflict 23% increases in commercial taxes on the small businesses presently on our corridors -- as such initiatives may inflict on the commercial vitality of our city irreparable blows from which it may not readily recover. As in the current political climate & economic context in which we Americans find ourselves, there are few backstops at the local level if something goes wrong, we must indeed tread very carefully in policymaking & keep what checks are in place (i.e., Planning Board review) as the city goes forward with its urban planning & development agenda.

Thanks for your consideration –

Linda Moussouris
2440 Mass. Ave.

Sent from Outlook

From: portersquare@googlegroups.com <portersquare@googlegroups.com> **On Behalf Of** raryals
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 12:47 PM
To: Patricia Nolan <pattynolanz@gmail.com>
Cc: Paul Toner <paulftoner@gmail.com>; Kroon Peter <pbkroon@yahoo.com>; Gralla Preston <preston@gralla.com>; PSNA <portersquare@googlegroups.com>
Subject: Re: [Porter square] Fwd: City Council Meeting – September 15th, 2025

Thanks Patty!

Ruth Ryals
raryals@gmail.com

On Mon, Sep 15, 2025 at 12:31 PM Patricia Nolan <pattynolanz@gmail.com> wrote:

All:

The petitions are zoning petitions which will be referred to both the Council Ordinance Committee (a committee of the whole) AND to the Planning Board for review and input. At both those venues - ordinance and PB, the public will comment and be heard. The advantage of an ordinance meeting is that the only item on the agenda will be the zoning petition - so all comment and debate will be about that issue.

The timing for scheduling the meetings will depend on calendar - what else is scheduled - and availability of staff. - although there are limits - it has to be heard within a set number of days. - the petitions will start the process of debate this fall.

Hope that is helpful.

Patty

On Mon, Sep 15, 2025 at 12:23 PM raryals <raryals@gmail.com> wrote:

Paul, please outline when and where in this process residents can weigh in and be listened to.

Ruth

Ruth Ryals
raryals@gmail.com

On Mon, Sep 15, 2025 at 11:50 AM Paul Toner <paulftoner@gmail.com> wrote:

Just to be clear, the staff will be providing this report and recommended language. It will now go through the Ordinance Committee for further hearings and discussion and then a final vote of the council.

Paul Toner
Paulftoner@gmail.com

On Sep 15, 2025, at 7:25 AM, 'Peter Kroon' via Porter Square Neighbors Association <portersquare@googlegroups.com> wrote:

The shopping center is included in the proposed re-zoning, see map and inset map at the end of the CDD transmittal to the CM, but it is broken into three zonings MAS-6, MAS-12 and MAS-18.
<http://rwinters.com/council/091525M12.pdf>

On Monday, September 15, 2025 at 09:36:50 AM EDT, Preston Gralla <preston@gralla.com> wrote:

Does anyone know whether the new 18-story zoning proposed for Porter Square includes the shopping center? And what the Planned Unit Development (PUD) process is for approving 18-story developments is? Finally, do we know why Porter Square was targeted for 18-story buildings, but not the rest of the city -- or am I reading the proposal incorrectly?

--- Preston

On Mon, Sep 15, 2025 at 2:21 AM raryals <raryals@gmail.com> wrote:

Zoning changes for Mass Ave will be on the City Council Agenda Monday, Sept 14 at 5:30.

#12 ([CMA 2025 #235](#))

Ruth Ryals
raryals@gmail.com

----- Forwarded message -----
From: **Cambridge Review** <donotreply@wordpress.com>
Date: Sun, Sep 14, 2025 at 2:31 PM
Subject: City Council Meeting – September 15th, 2025
To: <raryals@gmail.com>

Meeting Link Highlights There are two agenda items that I'd like to highlight. CM are zoning petitions to updating the zoning of Cambridge Street and Massachusetts is the start of a fairly lengthy process to update the zoni...



City Council Meeting – September 15th, 2025



By Charles J. Franklin on September 14, 2025

[Meeting Link](#)

Highlights

There are two agenda items that I'd like to highlight. CMA #11 and #12 are zoning pe updating the zoning of Cambridge Street and Massachusetts Ave. This is the start of length process to update the zoning code.

City Manager's Agenda

Reports and Communications

- #1 ([CMA 2025 #224](#)) Recommendations of the Community Preservation Committee
- #2 ([CMA 2025 #225](#)) Update from the legal department on the deadlin charter change
- #3 ([CMA 2025 #226](#)) Recommendations from the Cambridge Election Commission regarding the assignment of police officers to the City's locations
- #5 ([CMA 2025 #228](#)) A report on the city efforts to address needle dis supplying Naloxone to the public Fund
- #7 ([CMA 2025 #230](#)) A report on potential parking issues and remedi eastern end of Broadway

- #8 ([CMA 2025 #231](#)) The Department of Transportation does not recon
advancing a public pod bike storage program
- #9 ([CMA 2025 #232](#)) The city is planing to start the pedestrianization of
Bow Street in the Spring
- #10 ([CMA 2025 #233](#)) The city has been engaged in conversations with
MBTA, MassDOT, and the about repurposing the long-abandoned MBTA
Harvard Square, but is not ready yet to take formal next steps.
- #11 ([CMA 2025 #234](#)) The city is submitting zoning petitions for Camb
for consideration by the city council
- #12 ([CMA 2025 #235](#)) The city is submitting zoning petitions for Mass.
consideration by the city council
- #13 ([CMA 2025 #236](#)) An interim report on demolition and building per
applications received following the adoption of the Multifamily Housing
Amendment on February 10th, 2025

Appropriations and Grants

- #4 ([CMA 2025 #227](#)) \$28,512 from the state 911 Department Emergen
Medical Dispatch grant so support quality assurance (call review) of th
emergency medical protocol
- #6 ([CMA 2025 #229](#)) \$1,703,731.64 transfer from the Opioid Settlement
Stabilization Fund to the Opioid Settlement Special Revenue

Policy Orders

Requests that the city...

- #1 ([POR 2025 #125](#)) provide an update on the discussions with the M
the potential appropriation for the tunnel feasibility
- #2 ([POR 2025 #126](#)) have the review current crisis prevention protoco
clearly define the role of mental health professionals
- #3 ([POR 2025 #127](#)) evaluate and implement ICE Encounter Guidance

- #4 (POR 2025 #128) provide an update on rodent control measures city
- #5 (POR 2025 #129) develop a policy for the timely release of body-worn footage

Charter Rights

- #1 (POR 2025 #117) distribute TDMD funds equally among the Central Business Improvement District (BID), the East Cambridge Business Association, the Harvard Square Business Association, and the Kendall Square Association

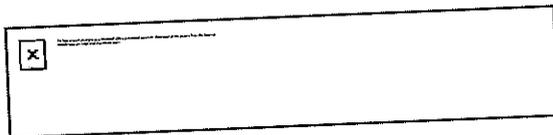
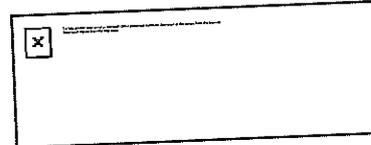
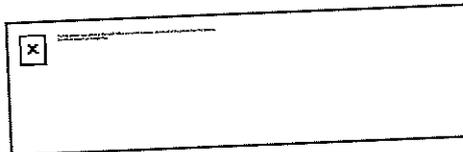
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--

Patricia Nolan
for council business:
pnolan@cambridgema.gov

Democracy dies without protection and participation

--

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Erwin, Nicole

From: Charles Hinds <chuckhinds@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 4:25 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Charles T. Hinds

207 Charles St, Cambridge, MA 02141

Erwin, Nicole

From: Elizabeth Van Ranst <elizabeth.vanranst@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 4:11 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Upzoning Proposals

Dear Councilors and Planning Board Members:

The current proposals for upzoning along Cambridge Street and Mass Ave. from the Common to Arlington would further the destruction of our city which now has, in many areas, mixed used development at a more sensible scale. The proposed canyonization of these two prime arteries would have many negative consequences were it to be implemented.

The consequences that I can think of include the following:

--Sunlight would be blocked from the buildings behind the towers which could lead to health issues and even increased heating costs without the sunshine to provide warmth in those buildings. The line of view from those houses would be blocked as well – no sight line to the sky.

--A reduction of green space which normally has positive consequences such as cleaner air, improved visual ambiance, and noise reduction. Too, this would mean the loss of natural habitats for other two- and four-footed inhabitants. Hence the loss of bird song and insect catchers (if, indeed, insects could live in this potentially sterile environment).

--Air pollution: the air would be dirtied by all the additional traffic generated by the new buildings and by the digging and other actions necessitated by the construction of new buildings.

--Noise pollution: the area would be noisier due to the increased traffic and construction, plus the loss of green space which dampens noise.

--Parking or sufficient parking would not be available for all those working or living in these towers; cars would head to the back streets in search of parking, thereby reducing it for neighbors who have been there for years.

--Construction noise and physical barricades would disrupt pedestrian and vehicular traffic as well as residential living, possibly for decades.

--The neighborhoods would not have any control over setbacks or the design and size of the new towers which would be destroying their neighborhoods.

--Existing businesses would be forced to close and local residents might be forced to leave by the disruption's making for an intolerable residential area.

--The current local, distinctive neighborhoods would be lost.

My sense is that the proposed development would not benefit the residents of Cambridge, not one iota. Please vote NO on the proposals to upzone these portions of Cambridge. Thank you for "hearing" me out.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Van Ranst
120 Foster Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Chris McElroy <cmcelroy52@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 3:52 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully
Christine McElroy
4 Morrison Ct, Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Chris McElroy <cmcelroy52@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 3:51 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Howard Bauchner
\$ Morrison Ct

Erwin, Nicole

From: Davies, Margery W. <Margery.Davies@tufts.edu>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 3:07 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: PLEASE VOTE FOR Resolution POR 2025 #149 and Resolution POR 2025 #150 at the October 20, 2025 City Council meeting

To the Cambridge City Council:

I am speaking on behalf of the Leadership Team of the Cambridge chapter of Mothers Out Front, an organization dedicated to building a livable and just climate future for all children.

Cambridge has been working hard to move away from reliance on fossil fuels, with the goal of achieving net zero emissions by 2050. We've invested in net zero schools, community solar, electric municipal vehicles, and adopted a fossil fuel-free building code and ambitious targets for decarbonizing large commercial buildings. We applaud this important work.

At the same time, however, we are burdened with aging gas infrastructure and spiraling costs for gas heat in our homes. A major portion of those rising costs comes from GSEP (the Gas System Enhancement Program) which guarantees a high rate of return for gas companies when they replace gas pipelines. A recent NPR [story](#) details the impact of this nationally.

As advocates for a cleaner, safer environment for all children, we are especially concerned that GSEP locks us into decades more of fossil fuel dependence, placing an unfair burden especially on the most vulnerable among us.

We hope you will vote for Council Resolution POR 2025 #149, which supports two bills before the Legislature, [H.3446](#) and [H.3564](#), that give municipalities more voice in gas company plans.

If these bills are adopted, city officials would have the right to review and comment in advance on the 54 proposed Eversource pipe replacement projects that extend into nearly every Cambridge neighborhood and will require digging up 10+ miles of city streets over the next 4 years. The city would be empowered to suggest less disruptive and costly approaches, where appropriate, and approaches that invest in green infrastructure rather than obsolete, polluting technology. Finally, gas companies would be prohibited from charging ratepayers for work that did not have adequate review by the municipality, ensuring a real and not a rubber-stamp role for cities and towns.

We also hope you will support Council Resolution POR 2025 #150, which calls on the Legislature to add municipal solar cap relief to Governor Healey's energy affordability bill, H.4144, thereby exempting municipal solar from the outdated regional limits and lifting the municipal cap. We would like to thank Cambridge's Chief Climate Officer Julie Wormser and Energy and Sustainability Project Manager Irina Sidorenko for testifying to this effect at the State House hearing on October 9, 2025.

Supporting all of this legislation is consistent with Cambridge's, as well as our State's, climate goals and builds the path to climate justice and a sustainable future.

Thank you,

Margery Davies, on behalf of the Mothers Out Front Cambridge Leadership Team

35 William Street, #1

Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hilary Bracken <hilary.bracken@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 2:15 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council, Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks.

This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully, Hilary McGhee
West Cambridge, 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Karen Eton <karenime@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 1:55 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts. Not only all the above, but one can't drive either way on Mass Ave as it is. How can you possibly think 18 story apartment buildings will make traffic and pollution, and Cambridge a better place to live or work?!

Respectfully,
Karen Eton
34 Larchwood Drive Cambridge
Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mary Jane Kornacki <amicusmjk@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 1:50 PM
To: City Manager; City Clerk; City Council; Planning Board Comment
Subject: Massive upzoning on Mass Ave - please say NO

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a **thorough analysis** of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Mary Jane Kornacki

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

Erwin, Nicole

From: S Ringler <sringle23@hotmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 12:39 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi; Planning Board Comment
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Dear Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

I urge you to say and vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street.

This zoning allows buildings up to 18 stories in some places without parking or setbacks. This proposal changes the character of our city WAY TOO MUCH. It is Manhattan come to Cambridge. It gets rid of walkable neighborhoods, small local businesses and kills trees - It creates bigger heat islands. It extends way too far off the "corridor" into neighborhoods. This is not the Cambridge I love. NO NO NO

Sincerely,
Susan Ringler
82 Kinnaird St. 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Belinda Rathbone <belindarathbone@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 12:32 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: up zoning

I am alarmed by the upzoning proposed that would allow 18-story buildings or even higher on Mass Ave between Harvard Square and the Arlington line. While I am in favor of affordable housing in principle, this is not the right way to go about it. Cambridge does not need more speculative luxury housing, without parking or setbacks or green space or oversight of any kind. Whose city is this anyway?

Please say NO to the Upzoning plan.
Sincerely,
Belinda Rathbone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jane Williams <19jmwiliams19@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 12:01 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
[Jane Williams
Mt. Auburn St.

Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Strang <susanstrang@msn.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 11:46 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Susan Strang
Larchwood Neighborhood
60 Fresh Pond Parkway

Erwin, Nicole

From: Abby Fechtman <abby.fechtman@icloud.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 11:21 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Abby Fechtman
East Cambridge
(Thorndike St up from the completely empty 40 Thorndike commercial space)

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: S D <stedoo@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 11:06 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Proposed Upzoning

I have been a resident of Cambridge for over 60 years, I am deeply dismayed over the proposed upzoning on Mass Ave. The new zoning would destroy the current neighborhoods. Please vote no on the proposal and represent the wishes of the people.

Say NO to the proposed upzoning on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street rising up to 18–20+ stories without parking or setbacks. Too many local businesses and natural affordable homes will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Sincerely,

Theresa Doo

7 Prentiss St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Patricia McGrath <mcgrath.patricia@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 11:06 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Patricia McGrath

Erwin, Nicole

From: Patricia McGrath <mcgrath.patricia@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 11:05 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
[Your Name]
[Your Address or Neighborhood]

Erwin, Nicole

From: Rebecca Pries <rebeccakpries@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 10:31 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Rebecca Pries
10 Longfellow Rd, Cambridge, MA 02138
616-223-7883

Erwin, Nicole

From: Marion Foster <maricolbmarion33@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 10:30 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

[Your Name] **Marion Foster**
[Your Address or Neighborhood] **66 Sherman Street, Cambridge 02140**

Erwin, Nicole

From: genevieve coyle <coyle.gs@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 10:10 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Upzoning in Cambridge

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

In addition, Cambridge needs to reevaluate their plans in view of the dramatically different financial reality facing Cambridge and Massachusetts. The reduction in research funding, foreign students and federal employment will have serious impact on Cambridge's finance. I have never seen so many for sale signs in my neighborhood. Sales are already noticeably slow. Rentals are available.

THE ONLY PEOPLE WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM THIS UPZONING ARE THE DEVELOPERS.

Respectfully,
Joseph and Genevieve Coyle
230 Lakeview Ave.
Cambridge 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Christine Tessier <cptessier12@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 9:47 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council, Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

With office vacancies rising and many commercial properties along Mass Ave that have been vacant for 5+ years; universities reducing staff and students, including Harvard; it is the wrong time to push forward on this matter. My neighborhood has seen two family housing upzoned to luxury condos. Rent caps are what is needed to protect low income and middle class renters. Furthermore, we are entering a financial downturn and outside investors should not receive favorable treatment. Again, I am asking you to vote NO on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Christine Tessier
Cambridge resident
Baldwin neighborhood

Erwin, Nicole

From: rtw windman.com <rtw@windman.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 9:42 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: in opposition to new up zoning

Please pass along to City Council and to Planning Board.

Please vote against the proposed upzoning of Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street. Creating structures of 18 stories without design review, without parking or setbacks will lead to the loss of local businesses and affordable homes. We have already seen the loss of long standing neighborhood businesses with thoughtless redesign of street parking. Cambridge doesn't need more speculative luxury towers. Vacancies in the commercial tax base are on the rise. Universities are being forced to reduce staff and students, The City should pause, review data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Labandibar <labandibar@me.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 9:33 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: I am a Baldwin neighborhood resident and I oppose up zoning Mass Ave

Dear Cambridge City Council,

Please vote no on up zoning to protect small businesses and the quality of life on Mass Ave. We NEED setbacks. We need to keep the character of our neighborhoods. You know that our small business owners will be deeply affected.

We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability.

Thank you,
Susan Labandibar
9A Forest Street
Cambridge, MA. 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Gilroy <gilroy.susan@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 9:05 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Concerned resident: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Although I am using the skeletons of a form letter, my concerns are all nicely summed in it. Questions about the environmental (by which I mean neighborhood character, quality of life, sustainability, etc.) of bigger and higher buildings is not explained. Legitimate kinds of alternative: abandoned buildings should be reclaimed first (these become an eyesore), as should the considerable number of empty buildings all over the city. The blight they represent could become a major source of community revitalization with the right retrofitting. Put the money and the effort there.

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

Who benefits? Why do I suspect it is not, in the end, the common folk "down below"?

I urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Susan Gilroy
Irving Terrace, Cambridge MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ruth Josimovich <ruth.josimovich@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 8:58 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi; Nolan, Patricia
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning (with my personal thoughts!!)

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council, Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks.

*This destroys the feeling of community and neighborliness that gives Cambridge its special feel.

*While I agree we need more affordable housing -- THIS IS NOT THE WAY TO GO!
I lived in NYC for 44 years & can tell you that 6-storey bldgs are the upper limit for friendliness & community engagement. High bldgs discourage friendly chat & support.

*There is also a safety component: ask our beloved Fire and Police Dep'ts whether they would prefer a rescue/emergency situation in a 3- or 6-storey bldg -- or an 18-storey massive apt block!

*In the case of a water or power outage, it is far more manageable to walk up/down a few flights of stairs with a gallon of water or a flashlight than it wd be to go up/down many flights! Maybe you are all able-bodied single people -- but for older people, a parent with children, someone who's sick, this is very difficult.

AS FAR AS I CAN SEE, THE ONLY PEOPLE THIS BENEFITS ARE DEVELOPERS AND IDEOLOGUES!

And, I can tell you, any Council member who votes for this will never again get my vote and I will be actively working to make sure they are not re-elected.

KEEP CAMBRIDGE A LIVABLE, HEALTHY, AND NEIGHBORLY COMMUNITY!

Thank you for reading and considering my thoughts.

all best,
Ruth Josimovich (mid-Cambridge, but I walk and shop all through the city)

*Now, back to the pre-written message

This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts. Respectfully, [Your Name]
[Your Address or Neighborhood]

Sent from Gmail Mobile

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ann Sweeney <ann@annsweeney.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 8:54 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Cc: Ann Sweeney
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts. Continuing to allow random private development without a City-driven master plan and without assessing the real impact of changes is turning our once colorful and vibrant city into a soulless wasteland of big name businesses and empty storefronts. Please do better!

Sincerely yours,

Ann Sweeney
87 Lakeview Avenue

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lisa McManus <lisa.mcmanus@americastestkitchen.com>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 8:47 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Lisa McManus
17 Creighton Street
Cambridge
Lisaxmcmanus@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Olds, Jacqueline <jacqueline_olds@hms.harvard.edu>
Sent: Monday, October 20, 2025 8:13 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Vote NO on Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories in some contexts without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Jacqueline Olds
Neighborhood Nine

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lynn Shirey <lynnmshirey@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2025 10:09 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully
Lynn Shirey
32 Donnell St
Cambridge, MA 02138
Observatory Hill

Erwin, Nicole

From: LucieMK <luciemkdesign@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2025 8:17 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Lucie kasova
Porter Sq

Erwin, Nicole

From: gcsimmers <gcsimmers@comcast.net>
Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2025 5:10 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Upzoning on Mass Ave.

Dear City Councillors:

Please say NO to the proposed up zoning on Mass Ave and Cambridge Street rising up to 18-20+ stories without parking or setbacks. Too many local businesses and naturally affordable homes will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does not need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn —this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Guillemette Simmers
8 Alpine Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Peter Norris <peternorris1@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2025 9:38 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Peter Norris

1010 Memorial Drive

Erwin, Nicole

From: Daniel Vlock <daniel.vlock@alopexx.com>
Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2025 9:31 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Best Regards,

Daniel Vlock
50 Buckingham St.
West Cambridge Neighborhood Coalition
Email – wcnc02138@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

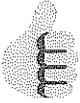
From: steve_fitzsimmons@comcast.net
Sent: Sunday, October 19, 2025 9:13 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Cc: City Manager
Subject: Please vote against the proposed upzoning proposal

Please vote NO to the proposed upzoning on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street rising up to 18–20+ stories without parking or setbacks. Many local businesses and naturally affordable homes will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Stephen Fitzsimmons
Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jesse W <jessewinder@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 4:13 PM
To: doinacontescu@gmail.com
Cc: Toner, Paul; City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk; suzanne@ccccoalition.org; dura.winder@gmail.com; kkironde@comcast.net; wcwinder@comcast.net
Subject: Re: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning
Attachments: Outlook-Title_Fac.png; Outlook-Title_Lin.png; Outlook-Title_Twi.png; Outlook-lte1v5ip



Jesse reacted via [Gmail](#)

On Sat, Oct 18, 2025, 12:41 AM Doina Contescu <doinacontescu@gmail.com> wrote:
Hi Paul,

Thank you for the response and the links. However, your attempt to minimize the scope with technical distinctions misses the fundamental point entirely.

Whether it's 8, 11, 12, 15, 18, or 20 stories is irrelevant -- ANY of these heights represents a catastrophic departure from Cambridge's human-scale character. The fact that you're parsing between different corridor maximums while dismissing my and other's concerns suggests you've lost sight of what you're supposed to be doing.

Your reliance on what a commercial property owner "indicated" they might do is not just deeply troubling but, at best, ridiculously naive. Since when do we base city policy on the casual assurances of developers and landlords? This is exactly the kind of uncritical closed-eyed faith in private interests that has destroyed the livability of countless American cities. You're not their business partner -- you're supposed to be MY representative, voting for my viewpoint.

I got my information through a group I DO trust: the Cambridge Citizens Coalition. And even if they are, let's say, exaggerating the height permissions for effect, they understand what many of us see clearly, while you apparently bury your head in the sand, if not getting chummy with the rich commercial interests: this upzoning scheme prioritizes developer profits over neighborhood preservation. Period.

Oh, and the 'community amenities' that are mentioned in the glossy proposals? Classic developer bait-and-switch tactics that invariably get scrapped once the permits are approved. You should know that the research shows developers win only about 40% of disputes when buyers sue over missing amenities, meaning the majority of cases always involve legitimate broken promises. And frankly no amenity is ever worth having to live with oppressive concrete and glass monstrosities instead of quaint village-like architecture.

Here's what I believe is not just unethical, but borderline corrupt -- if not outright criminal! Handing carte blanche zoning permissions to commercial interests while dismissing organized citizen opposition

represents good governance. Cambridge residents have made it clear through multiple forums and hearings that this upzoning is unwanted. Your job is to represent us, the citizens who live here, not to gaslight us into voting against our own interests while you carry water for developers.

Shame on you for abandoning the people who you SWORE to represent in favor of developer interests. This is a betrayal of your oath of office. Somebody should be ashamed of you, if you are not ashamed of yourself. Just, ugh.

Sincerely,
Doina
(and her husband, and other family, and several neighbors I have spoken to as well)

On 10/17/2025 9:39 PM, Toner, Paul wrote:

Hi Doina:

I am not sure where you are getting your information suggesting 18-20 stories.

The current proposal would allow 8 stories on Mass Ave as of right but up to 11 stories if they add first floor retail uses. The only place with greater heights proposed is the immediate Porter Square area which would allow 12 stories as of right but up to 18 stories if they provide a series of community amenities, retail and parking. The current owner of the Porter Square shopping center indicated at a recent meeting that they have no immediate intentions of such increased height and any future development would be a long way off due to long-term leases they have with several tenants.

On Cambridge Street the recommendations are for 6 stories as of right and up to 8 stories with ground floor retail. There is one block near Inman Square and the new Union Square T-Station that will allow 12-15 stories, and it is currently commercial office space.

You can read the full study and recommendations for Mass Ave here:

https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Images/CDD/Planning/massaveplanningstudycambridgecommontoalewifebrook/MAPS_BOARDS_041125.pdf

You can read the full Cambridge Street Study here: https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/CDD/Planning/Studies/CambridgeStreet/ourcambridgestreetplan_20230310.pdf

Sincerely,

Paul



Paul F. Toner
Cambridge City Councillor
Mobile: (617) 216-7305
Email: ptoner@cambridgema.gov
792 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02140
<https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/citycouncil>



From: Doina Contescu <doinacontescu@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:17 PM
To: City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>; Joseph, Swaathi <sjoseph@cambridgema.gov>;
City Clerk <cityclerk@Cambridgema.gov>
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Doina Contescu
59 Saviour St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: L Byron <elizabethbyron@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 3:23 PM
To: Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan
Cc: CARE Housing; Sara Nelson; Nolan, Patricia; Hayes, Patrick; Carlos Loya; Peters, Melissa; Roberts, Jeffrey; City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Re: Amendments to Zoning- Request to meet

Dear Cllr Siddiqui and Azeem,

Putting this email back at the top of your inbox. We assume you are busy campaigning while also maintaining your roles as councilors.

We request a meeting and a response.

Looking forward to working together,
Best,
Liz Byron

On Sat, Oct 11, 2025 at 2:29 PM L Byron <elizabethbyron@gmail.com> wrote:

Dear Cllr Siddiqui and Cllr Azeem,

As you know, the policy order to create zoning to protect solar was moved to the Housing Committee.

This is a policy order that we have presented on in multiple Health and Environment Committee meetings. In addition to the CDD's work on finding a compromise to this issue, we've also done extensive research. We would like to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss next steps on protecting the environment, supporting residents' investments, and creating affordable housing.

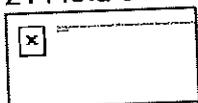
Please share with us your availability and we will work to ensure a representative from CARE Housing is available.

Sincerely,

Liz Byron

--

Liz Byron
21 Field St.



Erwin, Nicole

From: Jennifer Miles <jennifermilesdenney@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 12:24 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Jennifer Mies
Huron Village

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ted McGlone <tedmcglone@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 11:45 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
[Your Name]
[Your Address or Neighborhood]

Erwin, Nicole

From: M C <msafavid@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 10:36 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Vote no on upzoning.

Dear City officials,
I am writing today to request that you vote NO to the proposed upzoning on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street rising up to 18–20+ stories without parking or setbacks. Too many local businesses and affordable homes/apartments will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.
Thank you for your time.

Michael H. Collupy
22 Water St #1315
Cambridge, MA 02141

Erwin, Nicole

From: Barbara Rubel <barbararubel@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 9:17 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

I would support more housing as long as it is consistent with neighborhoods. Adding units does not have to ruin neighborhoods. Cambridge should contribute to regional solution to housing without destroying our city.

Thank you,

Barbara Rubel
21 Otis Street
Cambridge 02141

Erwin, Nicole

From: Deborah Valenze <dvalenze@barnard.edu>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 9:16 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Deborah Valenze
1 Shady Hill Square

Erwin, Nicole

From: B K <bkon02@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 8:39 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Please don't ruin this city for all of us.

Respectfully,
Beth Kon
Creighton St

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kon, Mark <mkon@bu.edu>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 8:00 AM
To: Simmons, Denise; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine
Cc: City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Re: strong concerns about mis-direction of Cambridge: Protection of Historic Neighborhoods

Dear Members of the Cambridge City Council,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed upzoning along Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street that would permit buildings of 18–20 or more stories without requirements for parking or setbacks. Such a change would have far-reaching and potentially damaging impacts on the scale, livability, and economic balance of our city.

The proposed heights and densities risk displacing long-standing local businesses and eliminating many of the naturally affordable housing units that sustain community diversity. With commercial office vacancies increasing and local universities reducing both staff and student populations, there is no demonstrated demand that would justify large-scale speculative construction. Cambridge is also facing economic uncertainty; this is not the time to incentivize high-risk development.

I urge the Council to pause these zoning changes and to undertake a comprehensive review based on current housing supply, economic trends, and sustainability goals. Thoughtful, data-driven planning—rather than reactive upzoning—will best protect the city’s scale, architectural character, and long-term economic health.

Please also refrain from confirming any new appointments to the Historical Commission or related bodies, since these may undermine our longstanding commitment to historic preservation in favor instead of unchecked development.

Our city’s heritage, livability and affordability are at stake at this time. I respectfully ask that you support the residents who value stewardship of our built and long-fought environment.

Thank you for your consideration and also for your hoped-for continued service to the residents of Cambridge.

Sincerely,

Mark Kon

872 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA

Mark A. Kon, Professor
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Boston University
Tel: 617-460-1232
Email: mkon@bu.edu
URL: <http://math.bu.edu/people/mkon>

On Jun 29, 2025, at 5:10 PM, Kon, Mark <mkon@bu.edu> wrote:

Dear Members of the City Council,

I am writing to express my deep concern about the rising number of demolition requests throughout Cambridge, and the troubling efforts to weaken Neighborhood Conservation Districts by replacing experienced preservation commissioners.

I urge you to support ****Policy Order #5****, which calls for transparency regarding the more than 100 pending demolition applications—many of which target viable, naturally affordable housing that contributes to the character and diversity of our neighborhoods.

Please also refrain from confirming any new appointments to the Historical Commission or related bodies that may undermine Cambridge's longstanding commitment to historic preservation in favor of unchecked development.

Our city's heritage, affordability, and livability are at stake. I respectfully ask that you stand with residents who value thoughtful stewardship of our built environment.

Thank you for your attention and service -

Sincerely,

Mark Kon

872 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA

Mark A. Kon, Professor
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Boston University
Tel: 617-460-1232
Email: mkon@bu.edu
URL: <http://math.bu.edu/people/mkon>

On Mar 31, 2025, at 8:02 AM, Kon, Mark <mkon@bu.edu> wrote:

Dear City Council members,

Please vote to support the following 3 items:

1. Maintain the Marsh-Half Crown District & preserve historic architecture.
2. Return Garden Street to 2-Way traffic (Option #4).
3. No more upzoning without a wholistic plan for Central and other areas.

Thank you for your attention to this.

Sincerely,

Mark Kon

872 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA

Mark A. Kon, Professor
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Boston University
Tel: 617-460-1232
Email: mkon@bu.edu
URL: <http://math.bu.edu/people/mkon>

On Mar 17, 2025, at 1:28 PM, Kon, Mark <mkon@bu.edu> wrote:

Subject: A need for more thoughtful Zoning

Dear City Council Members,

As a Cambridge resident, I urge you to approach changes to our squares and corridors with careful consideration, avoiding the missteps of recent massive relaxation of zoning. Zoning has had a purpose for many decades, and deciding that it is to a large extent 'unnecessary' based on disproven arguments is quite dangerous for the delicate fabric of our community. A one-size-fits-all approach does not work for Cambridge, and we must ensure that resident rights are not further eroded.

I strongly encourage you to prioritize the needs of the vast majority of Cambridge residents rather than cherry-picking sites for political expediency. The notion that simply increasing supply will resolve affordability concerns has been repeatedly disproven—let's not encourage yet another wave of luxury condos at the expense of our community's well-being.

Beyond housing, we must also acknowledge the true costs of unchecked development: infrastructure strain, rising property taxes, constant street closures and detours, and increasing utility costs. Thoughtful planning is essential to balancing growth with livability.

I urge the council to take a fact-based approach, plan responsibly, and put residents first. Cambridge deserves policies that serve the whole community, not just developers.

Sincerely,

Mark Kon
872 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA

Mark A. Kon, Professor
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Boston University
Tel: 617-460-1232
Email: mkon@bu.edu
URL: <http://math.bu.edu/people/mkon>

On Mar 3, 2025, at 8:00 AM, Kon, Mark <mkon@bu.edu> wrote:

From: Mark Kon

Subject: Opposition to Citywide Upzoning Petition

To the Members of the Cambridge City Council,

As a Cambridge resident, I urge you to take a careful view of our squares and corridors—not repeat past mistakes. Cambridge doesn't need another one-size-fits-all plan – and we definitely don't want further erosion of resident rights. Don't cherry-pick sites for political expediency. Instead, I strongly urge you to focus on the needs of the vast majority of Cambridge residents: not even more disproven 'supply-and-demand' claims. Don't ignore the costs: Infrastructure upgrades, rising property taxes, constant street closures and detours, and higher utility bills. I urge the council to look at the facts, plan smarter, and prioritize people.

One size does NOT fit all. Don't cherry pick to exclude sites like Central Square or River St). Be responsible: 5-6 stories is what Envision planners likely were exploring; Maintain design oversight and legal rights of abutters; Provide step downs to neighborhoods; Address specific city need: for apartments (not luxury condos). Include necessary green spaces, trees, and interior courtyards Require financial impact studies on infrastructure and resident cost increases; Require developers to pay a percent of this. See the graphs below from MAPC and problems in Vancouver. We are hearing concerns in

Cambridge already has with 20+ stories in Central Square and 18+ stories planned for Porter Square we will see a canyonization of the city.

Let's not make the same mistake in Cambridge as was made in Vancouver, of leaving out green spaces, trees, inner courtyards and more. As noted in this article: "Politicians are asking tower developers for fewer aesthetic features and community amenities. But residents lose, and prices still don't go down."

Sincerely,

Mark Kon
872 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA

Mark A. Kon, Professor
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Boston University
Tel: 617-460-1232
Email: mkon@bu.edu
URL: <http://math.bu.edu/people/mkon>

On Feb 9, 2025, at 8:00 AM, Kon, Mark <mkon@bu.edu> wrote:

To the Members of the Cambridge City Council,

As a Cambridge resident, I strongly urge you to oppose the citywide multi-story rezoning petition. The current proposal raises too many unresolved questions and concerns regarding its effectiveness in addressing our housing needs.

We need independent, professional guidance to develop a plan that truly expands housing without harming the environment, displacing lower-income residents, demolishing existing homes, or drastically altering neighborhoods. Given these significant issues, the Council should allow the current proposal to expire and take the time to craft a more thoughtful, community-driven approach in the spring.

In response to the regional and national housing shortage, developers and proponents of unrestricted densification have proposed a sweeping citywide rezoning plan. This plan would permit four-story buildings as of right, without zoning board or design oversight, in all parts of Cambridge. Market-rate and luxury condos and apartments could be built anywhere, with no review process.

This broad upzoning will do little to address the regional housing crisis, which requires hundreds of thousands of new units. Instead, it will encourage demolitions, evictions, and lease terminations while removing long-standing legal rights of residents. The proposal disregards environmental concerns, contradicts Cambridge's Envision Plan, and primarily benefits outside investors and developers.

The framing of this crisis echoes "disaster capitalism," where large investment groups exploit housing shortages to push deregulation, driving up costs for both renters and homeowners. Removing zoning protections under this pretext erodes local governance and resident protections.

Cambridge's zoning was originally designed to separate industrial and residential areas, establish commercial districts, and provide stability for neighborhoods across all income levels. Far from exclusionary, it has evolved to ensure equitable access and neighborhood protections. This radical citywide rezoning will accelerate gentrification and increase exclusivity, undermining the city's long-term commitment to balanced growth.

mkon@bu.edu
<http://math.bu.edu/people/mkon>

On Jan 25, 2025, at 8:00 AM, Kon, Mark <mkon@bu.edu> wrote:

To the Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

I am writing to express my concerns regarding the citywide upzoning petition and related proposals under consideration. While we strongly favor allowing this petition to expire in February and restarting the process with greater input from independent professionals, we believe that any zoning changes enacted must include critical amendments to balance housing needs with environmental, community, and equity concerns.

If this petition proceeds (preferably as a 3+3 proposal), we urge the Council to adopt the following changes:

1. **Corridors**: Limit structures taller than six stories to major corridors.
2. **Step Downs**: Require step-down transitions for tall buildings adjacent to residential neighborhoods.
3. **Accessory Dwelling Units and Additions**: Ensure these projects respect existing main building heights and scale.
4. **Setbacks and Open Space**: Revise current language to prevent zero green ground space.
 - Require 10-foot side/rear setbacks in A and B districts to protect mature trees and support environmental goals.
5. **Demolition Impact Fees**: Mandate a 10% project cost fee for demolitions to address environmental harm and infrastructure changes.

6. **Infrastructure Assessments**: Require an evaluation of infrastructure capacity (water, sewage, electricity, traffic) before issuing building permits.
7. **Transparency and Community Engagement**: Make building and addition plans at ISD available online and require at least two early meetings with neighbors, developers, and the Community Development Department (CDD).
8. **Legal Appeal Process**: Allow appeals in cases of fraud or significant non-compliance, supported by three or more councillors.

We recognize the regional and national housing crisis, but the citywide upzoning proposal, as it stands, does not align with Cambridge's needs or values. The proposal risks enabling housing development with little oversight, harming our environment and our beautiful city, which we have been creating, building and improving through many, many years of consistent effort.

In addition to these zoning concerns, I would like to address proposed changes to the City Charter:

- **4-Year Terms**: Four-year terms will not gain support from most residents, especially given the current upzoning process's reception.
- **Budget Authority**: Allowing a 10% overdraft on the City Manager's proposed budget is unlikely to find support amidst high spending concerns.

We suggest considering a more democratic framework for resident engagement. For example, a Resident Forum comprising seven elected representatives (two from West/North, Central/Mid, and East districts, plus one at-large representative) could provide input on key issues. Representatives could be elected via ranked-choice voting, with term limits and public meetings twice a year.

Finally, we advocate for district-based representation within the City Council to ensure equitable governance, with six district councillors and three at-large councillors. This approach would balance citywide needs while reducing campaign costs for district-only candidates.

Cambridge's zoning and governance must prioritize sustainable growth, environmental protection, and equitable housing access. I urge the Council to adopt these recommendations to build a future that benefits all residents.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Mark Kon
872 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA

Mark A. Kon, Professor
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Boston University
Tel: 617-460-1232
Email: mkon@bu.edu
URL: <http://math.bu.edu/people/mkon>

On Jan 6, 2025, at 3:49 PM, Kon, Mark <mkon@bu.edu> wrote:

Dear Members of the Cambridge City Council,

As a long-time and very concerned Cambridge resident, I would very strongly urge you to oppose the current proposed citywide multi-story rezoning petition. The current ordinance raises significant unresolved questions and concerns about its effectiveness in addressing our housing needs without causing unintended harm.

To ensure any rezoning achieves its intended goals without adverse effects, we need input from independent, professional urban planning experts. A thoughtfully drafted plan should prioritize creating affordable housing while protecting our environment, preserving existing homes, and maintaining the character of our neighborhoods. It is crucial to avoid displacing lower-income residents and further exacerbating the housing crisis.

I respectfully ask the Council to let the current proposal expire and initiate a new, inclusive planning process in the spring. This approach will allow for a comprehensive and balanced solution that reflects the needs of all Cambridge residents.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

Mark Kon
872 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA

Mark A. Kon, Professor
Department of Mathematics and Statistics
Boston University
Tel: 617-460-1232
Email: mkon@bu.edu
URL: <http://math.bu.edu/people/mkon>

Erwin, Nicole

From: Tom Goreau <goreau@globalcoral.org>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 6:59 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Subject: Bad planning causes rising ground water tables destroying homes in Cambridge!

Rising ground water tables are destroying historic homes here in Cambridge, and the new high rise zoning plan will make it much worse!

I have lived in Riverside for nearly 60 years, and can see new signs of rising groundwater tables in my home basement ever since new construction by Patrick Barrett next door caused increased flooding in our neighborhood.

This will become FAR worse with a planned 6 story building dumping 80 apartment loads of sewage into the ground IN MY BACK YARD, destroying property values of all residents of this historic block of Victorian houses!

Why is the Cambridge City Council keeping us in the dark about over-the-top deals with greedy outside developers done without public approval?

<https://insideclimatenews.org/news/12102025/climate-change-comes-for-the-house-of-the-seven-gables/>

Climate Change Comes for the House of the Seven Gables

At the edge of Salem's harbor, caretakers face a race against rising seas and intensifying storms to protect a landmark bound up in America's literary and colonial past.



By Ryan Krugman
October 12, 2025

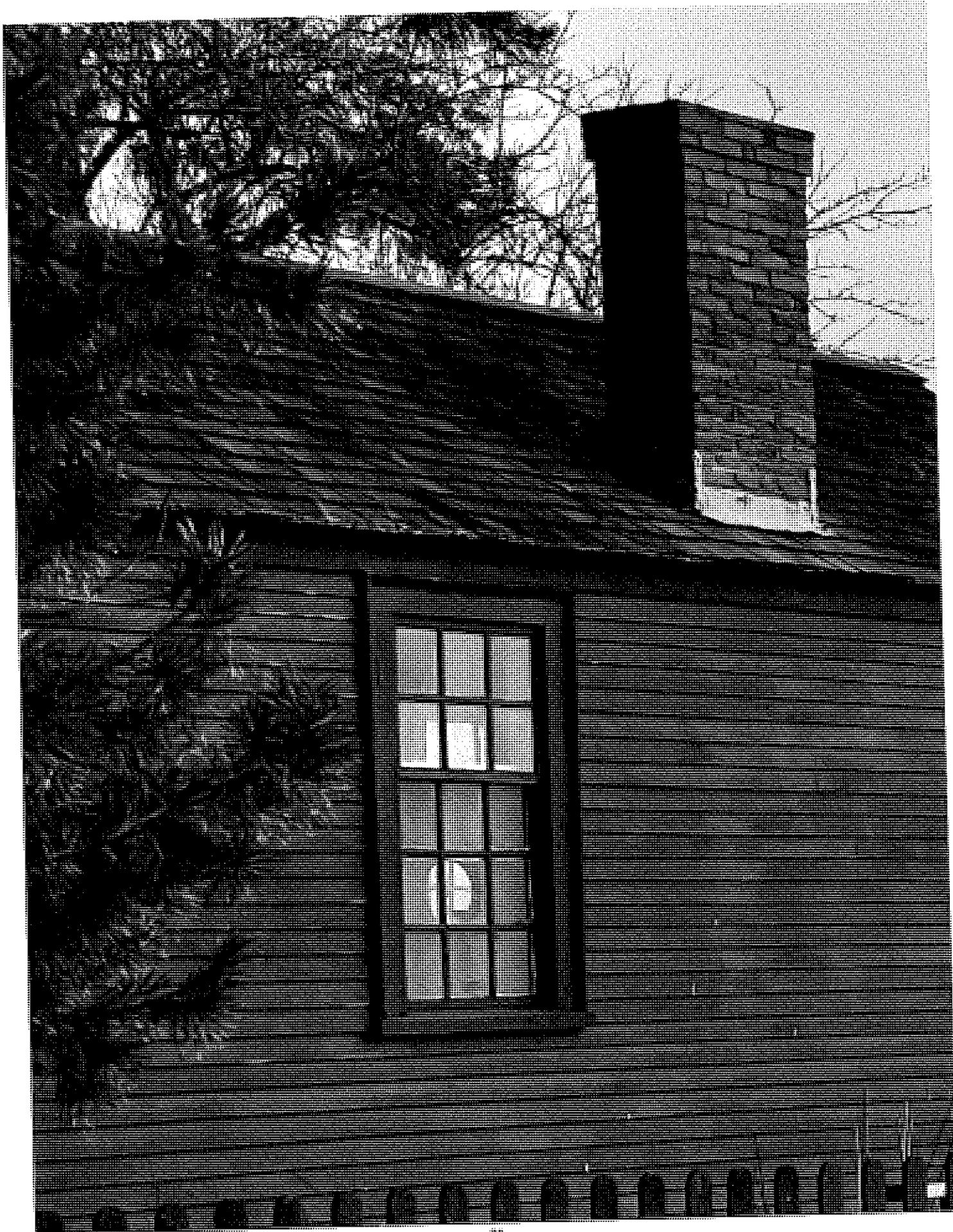
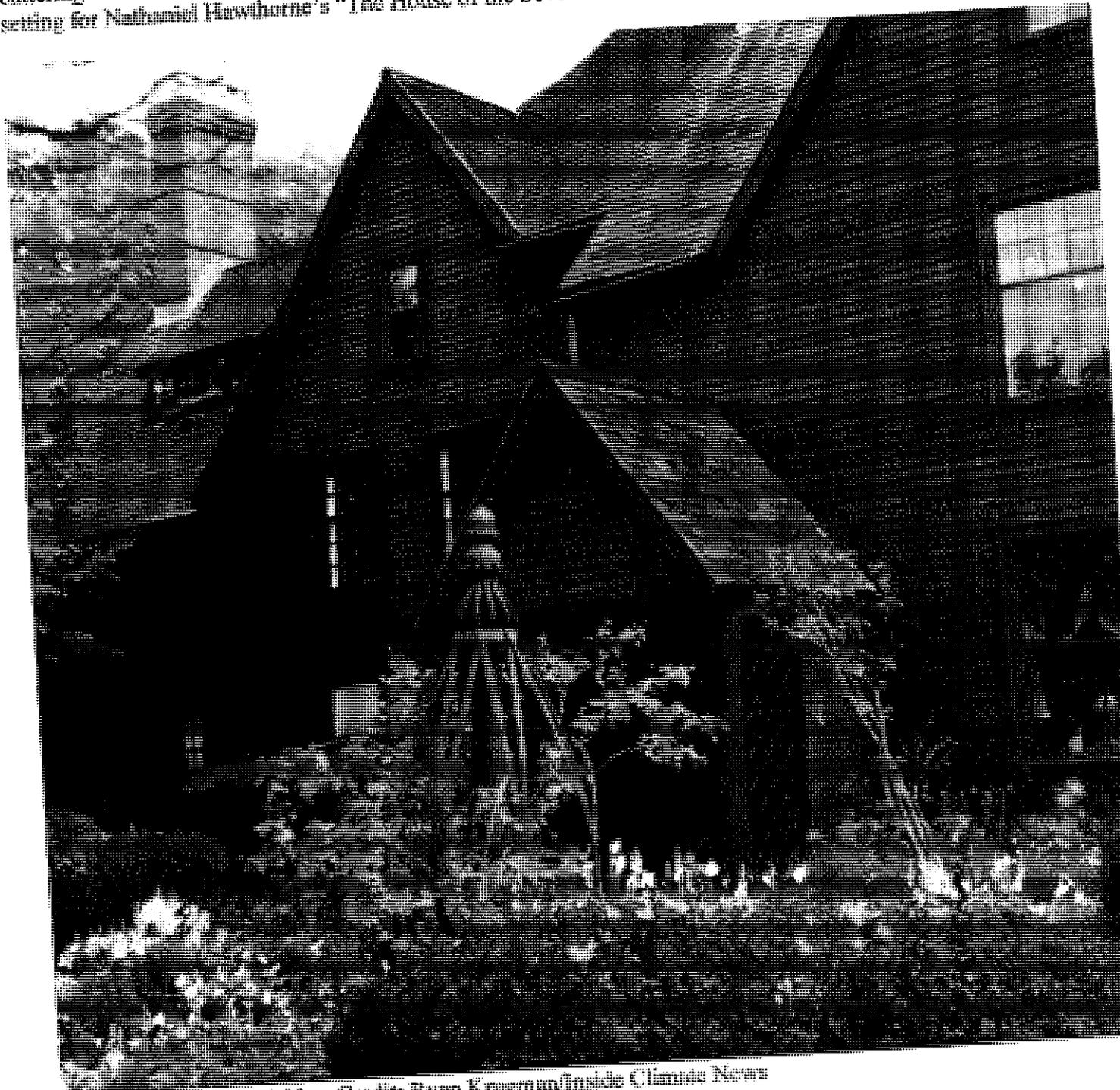


Photo of the Counting House during the 2024 Nor'easter. Credit: Paul Wright

SALEM, Mass.—Paul Wright leans over a 17th-century granite barrier and points at a faint watermark depicting Salem Harbor's daily rise and fall.

“On a normal day, high tides reach just four feet from the top of the seawall,” he says. “When there’s a big storm or king tide, that’s when it gets close to spilling over.”

That seawall is the first line of defense for one of America’s most storied homes, protecting it from centuries of battering New England storms. The colonial manse, the Turner-Ingersoll Mansion, is now best known as the setting for Nathaniel Hawthorne’s “The House of the Seven Gables.”



House of the Seven Gables. Credit: Ryan Krugman/Inside Climate News

Sixty years after the novel was published in 1851, the structure fell into disrepair until Caroline Emmerton, a philanthropist, restored it in the early 1900s as both a museum and immigrant settlement house.

By 1924, she had moved three colonial buildings onto the grounds, intent on preserving Salem's past. Strolling the property perched just above the harbor, Emmerton might have wondered if her legacy would endure. Would future generations care for Salem's past? Would the buildings she saved remain monuments, or fade into memory?

What she likely never could have foreseen was that the greatest threat to her legacy would not come from neglect, but a changing climate.

The encroachment of a warming sea and global warming-fueled storms are no longer distant threats—they are already reshaping Salem's waterfront. At the House of the Seven Gables, rising tides and creeping groundwater threaten to undo centuries of preservation work. Now, the same museum staff who care for Hawthorne's literary landmark and Emmerton's legacy are facing a new test: how to save history from the sea.

Wright is the director of preservation and maintenance at the House of the Seven Gables Settlement Association, known as The Gables, the nonprofit behind the historic property. He joined the staff in 2022, eager to launch decarbonization projects: tightening insulation, boosting energy efficiency and adding on-site renewables. But as climate impacts grew harder to ignore, resilience overtook efficiency as the more urgent demand.

Today, six historic structures stand on the site. Three of them are classified as First Period homes, built between 1625 and 1725, a rare architectural feat since only 350 First Period houses remain intact across the country.

HAWTHORNE'S
BIRTHPLACE
COUNTING HOUSE
HOOPER HATHAWAY
HOUSE

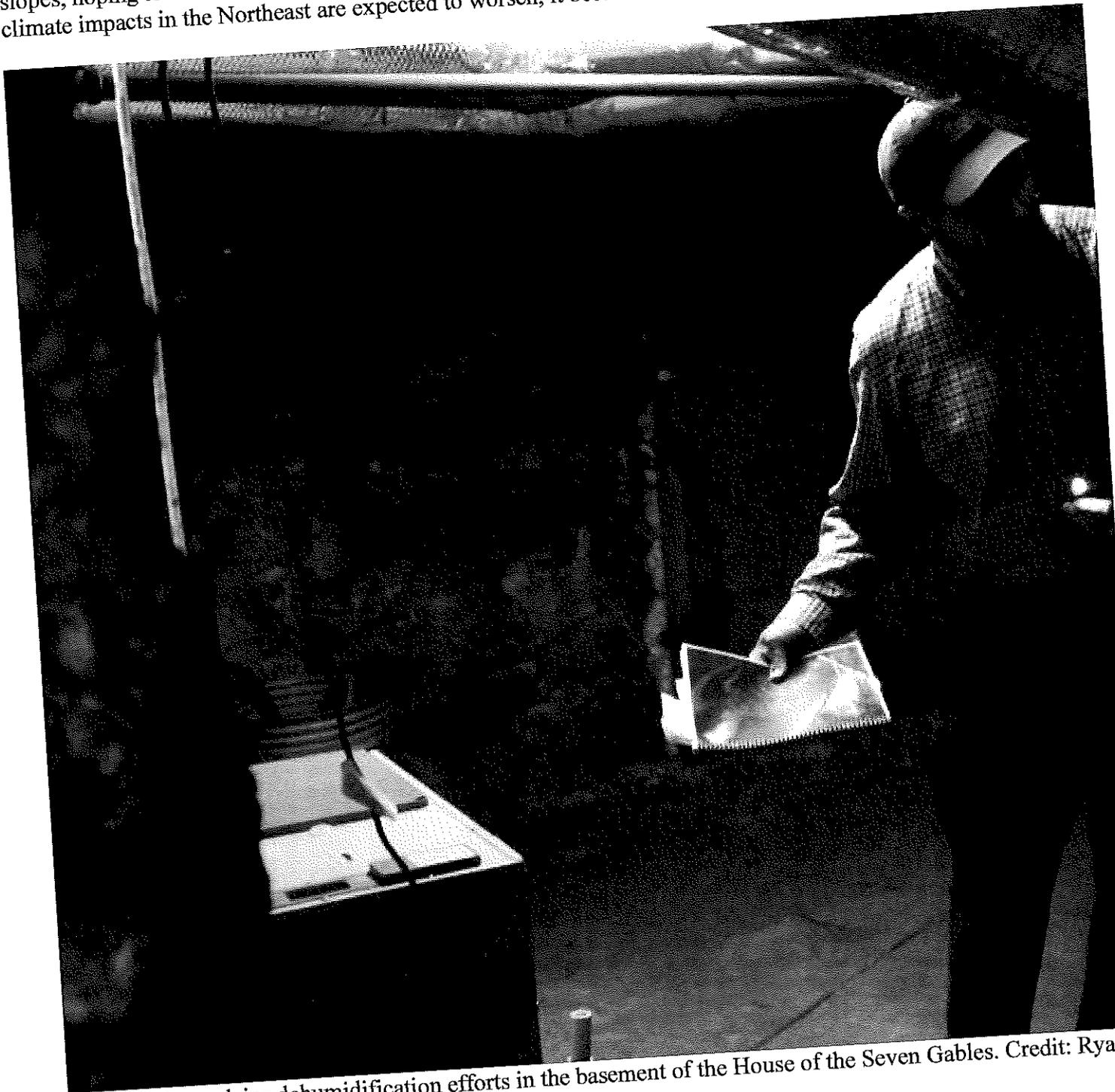
Sign leading to three historic homes. Credit: Ryan Kragman/Inside Climate News
Each building, along with the property's seawall, has endured generations of storms. Yet in a warming world, their limits are becoming painfully clear.

In 2019, a visitor suddenly sank knee-deep into the lawn. A small sinkhole had opened near the seawall. Only later did staff learn that salt water, seeping through during high tides, had been carrying away sediment, hollowing out the ground until it gave way.

"That was the first wake-up call," said Susan Baker, Curator of Collections of The Gables.

The second came in the form of a mold bloom. After a heavy rain in 2023, water seeped into the basement of Nathaniel Hawthorne's 1790 birthplace, relocated to the property in 1958. Unaware of the flooding, staff later discovered mold creeping across the basement, damaging furniture and books tied to Hawthorne's life.

Soon after these events, The Gables staff began shoring up defenses. High-end dehumidifiers and sump pumps were added when funds allowed. Wright fitted larger gutters onto the steep medieval-style roofs and regraded slopes, hoping to chase water away from the foundations. But as emissions continue unabated, meaning that climate impacts in the Northeast are expected to worsen, it became clear these remedies were only buying time.



Paul Wright explains dehumidification efforts in the basement of the House of the Seven Gables. Credit: Ryan Krugman/Inside Climate News

In 2022, the organization secured a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs to study the property's vulnerabilities and chart a long-term preservation plan.

With help from architects, engineers and Salem Sound experts, the team dug groundwater monitoring wells and conducted in-depth flood projections to better understand the properties' current and future vulnerabilities.

“The belief before research began was, we raise the seawall and we’ll be fine,” said Wright. But as research unfolded, the evidence pointed to a harsher reality—one no historic property owner wants to face.

Flooding, Mold and Pests

The Counting House, a small 1830s shack once used by merchants for business and now serving as a children’s education center, sits at the harbor’s edge. It lies within the Federal Emergency Management Agency’s VE—velocity and elevation—flood zone, the designation reserved for the most vulnerable coastlines.

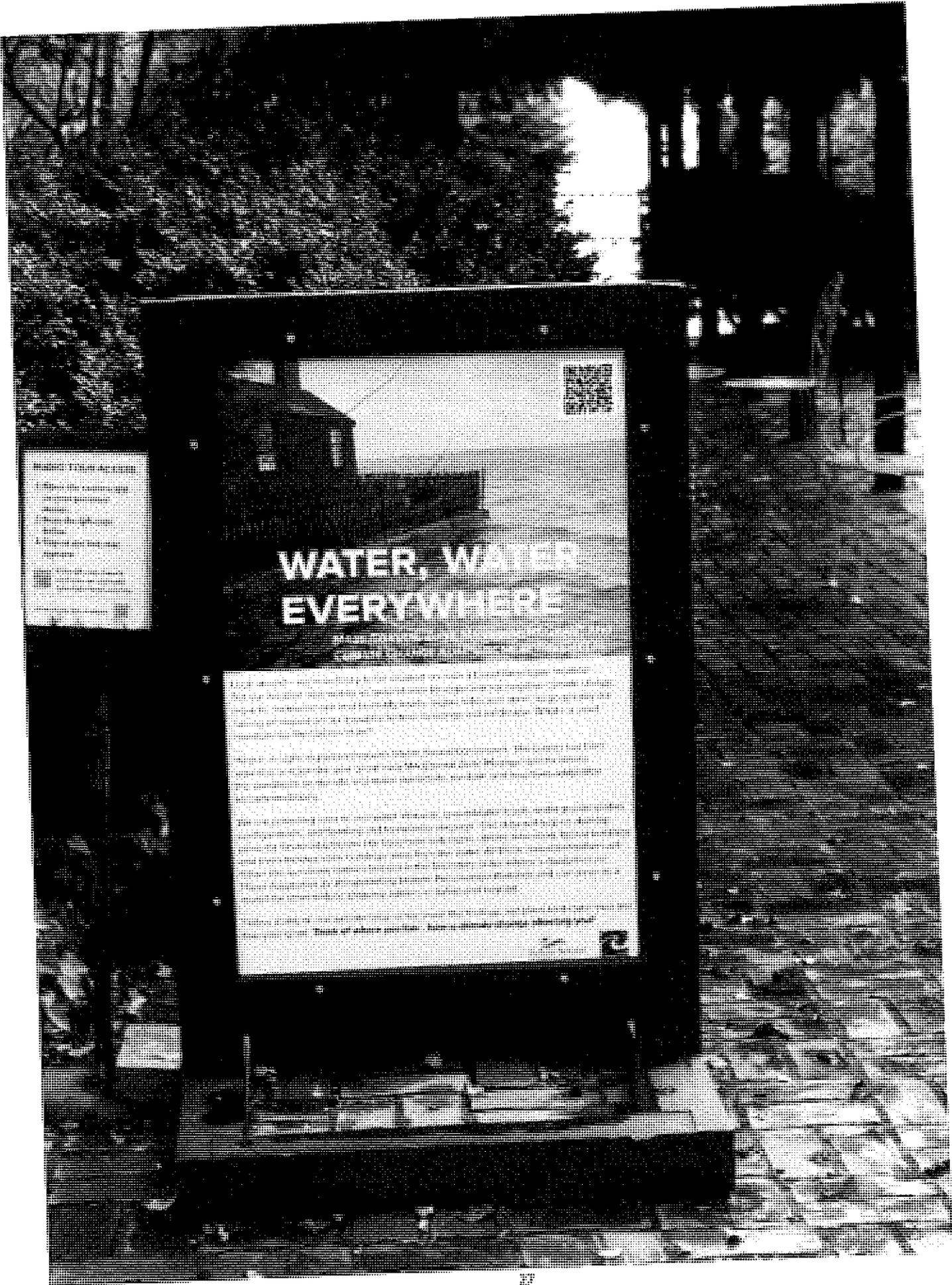
Wright watched as a Nor’easter barreled into Salem on a cold January day last year. It was his day off, but he came anyway—ready to move artifacts, shield equipment or throw up barriers if the sea broke through. Waves lapped over the stone wall outside the Counting House, and for a moment he feared this would be the storm that finally overwhelmed the property.

But the storm struck a few hours before high tide, pushing the worst of the surge north of Salem. The Gables was spared. A near miss, Wright thought.

“We’ve been really lucky that a once-in-a-hundred-year storm hasn’t hit yet,” Wright said, knocking on a 17th-century wood beam to ward off the specter of that happening. The staff is superstitious—an almost unavoidable trait in Salem. “A hurricane or Nor’easter that hits during high tide would be devastating.”

For now, most of the site sits outside FEMA floodplains. Projections show that reprieve won’t last. According to Massachusetts Coastal Zone Management, by 2050 three of the historic structures—the House of the Seven Gables, the Counting House and the Hooper-Hathaway House of 1682—are expected to flood once a year. By 2070, every structure except the Phippen House, a 1792 home now used as offices, will likely face annual or biannual flooding.

These models are based on probabilities and don’t account for the site’s hydrological defenses, according to Wright. Still, they indicate the entire southern half of the property could soon fall within FEMA’s highest-risk flood zone.



Product Information

Product Name: [Illegible]

Manufacturer: [Illegible]

Product Description: [Illegible]

Product Features: [Illegible]

Product Benefits: [Illegible]

Product Specifications: [Illegible]

Product Availability: [Illegible]

Product Contact: [Illegible]

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

[Illegible text block containing the main body of the advertisement, including a QR code in the top right corner and a small logo in the bottom right corner.]

sign to educate visitors on the property's climate vulnerabilities. Credit: Ryan Krugman/Inside Climate News
And water is rising from below as well as from the sea. On Salem's coast, groundwater is tidal; as sea levels rise, so does the water table. Today, high groundwater sits about four feet above sea level—reaching the base of the visitor center basement and reaching within inches of the foundations of each First Period home. By 2070, high groundwater could climb to 10 feet.

“At that point water will start coming up in bulk, introducing more humidity and even filling up the basements,” said Wright.

Moisture from above and below is already exacting a quiet toll. Mold blooms are now largely contained by dehumidifying efforts, leaving only minor impacts, but the region's warming, humid climate has opened the door to new threats.

Baker remembers one moment vividly. While re-designing the House of the Seven Gables' master bedroom in 2016, she and a colleague began peeling back the bed set. To their dismay, small holes appeared in the fabric: webbing clothes moths had slowly chewed through the 18th-century-style hangings draped around the bed—the most expensive item in the home at the time.

New England museums have largely escaped the insect infestations that plague collections in hotter, more humid parts of the country, according to Susan Pranger, adjunct professor at Boston Architectural College and author of a book on historic materials in a changing climate.

But beginning in the early 2000s, curators started finding webbing clothes moths, carpet beetles and other pests that devour animal-based fibers like wool, silk and leather, she said. Left unchecked, they can hollow out textiles or reduce rare artifacts to dust.

Each historic home on The Gables site is now deep-cleaned every two weeks to make sure not even a hair fallen from the head of an unsuspecting tourist is left for pests to feed on. “It's a constant battle,” said Baker.

For years, The Gables stewards hoped a higher, sturdier seawall would solve their hydrological challenges. But the defenses along the harbor are a patchwork of public and private seawalls—each built at different times, with different materials, and stand at uneven heights.

“If we were to raise our wall it would affect our neighbors,” Wright said. “Some of their seawalls are shorter, so water would be pushed onto their property and in all likelihood find its way back to ours.”

Without a coordinated citywide effort, any seawall upgrade would do little to protect the pieces of Salem's history found on the property.

Confronted with dire projections and dwindling faith in municipal action, The Gables staff reached a sobering conclusion: the historic structures would have to retreat from the coast.

The Final Move

In May, The Gables released a 50-year adaptation plan with funds from its Massachusetts state grant.

“The only way this is going to work is with state or federal funding,” Baker said. The estimated 45-year project will cost millions of dollars.

At its core, the plan details the relocation of five historic structures about 100 yards inland, onto what is now the property's parking lot. Had that space not been available, the process would have been far more complicated—requiring the purchase of new land and the possibility of moving the homes miles away, Wright said.

Salem's Famous House of the Seven Gables

Rising seas will put The Gables' historic buildings at risk of severe flooding. In an effort to preserve the site's history, the nonprofit plans to move each building to higher ground, away from the water, in a phased plan spanning the next 50 years.

CURRENT CAMPUS

PROPOSED COMPOSITION



Derby Street

Parking

Hardy Street

Turner Street

Derby Street

Hardy Street

- 1** Nathaniel Hawthorne Birthplace
- 2** Retire Beckett House
- 3** Seaman's Visitor Center
- 4** Seaside Gardens
- 5** Hooper-Hathaway House
- 6** Turner-Ingersoll Mansion
(a.k.a. The House of the Seven Gables)

“A structure being in its original location and form is vital for authenticity, but we are going to have to rethink how we value that,” said Pranger. “If we don’t move pieces of history now, then we’re just going to lose them forever.”

For Wright, retreat isn’t merely a compromise between accuracy and survival—it’s an opportunity. “We didn’t want to just raise the buildings because then they would just look like a bunch of old coastal shacks rather than a colonial revival property,” Wright said. Instead, by shifting the homes inland toward the street, the plan will help restore the historic feel of a neighborhood that draws millions of visitors each year to experience its maritime lore and the legacy of its witch trials.

The adaptation extends beyond relocation to historical reconstruction. Along the seawall, staff envision a dual-purpose garden where native plants will anchor the soil and soak up seawater seeping through the wall. Threaded through the landscape will be a walkway honoring the Naumkeag people, who fished along Salem’s shores for centuries before colonization.

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The timeline is daunting. The first building to move will be the Counting House, by 2030, followed by the Hooper-Hathaway House, Retire Beckett House and Nathaniel Hawthorne’s birthplace. Each step will be expensive and painstaking.

And then there is the House of the Seven Gables, a house that has passed from wealthy colonial merchants to immigrant families, entered the pages of a classic American tale and today opens its doors to hundreds of thousands of curious visitors each year. Of all the historic buildings on site, it is the only one still resting on its original foundation.

“It’s a one of a kind First-Period mansion foundation,” Wright said, descending worn wooden stairs. The air in the fieldstone basement is cool and dry, scrubbed of its usual dampness by two industrial dehumidifiers that fill the cellar with a low hum. The dehumidifiers protect an architectural jewel: a brick-arched chimney base from the 1670s—possibly the oldest of its kind in the country, Wright said with a trace of pride.

For now, the staff hopes that waterproofing measures will keep flooding at bay long enough for the house to remain in place until 2070, but its connection to the original foundation makes it both irreplaceable and invaluable.

When rising tides and creeping groundwater finally overtake the home, the staff plans to leave the foundation where it lies. Exposed for visitors to see, it will remain in the earth: a fragment of colonial history, an echo of Ennerton’s legacy and a solemn marker of the moment when climate change forced a home that withstood three centuries of life to retreat.

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Ryan Krugman

Fellow

Ryan Krugman is a recent graduate of St. Lawrence University where he majored in Environmental Studies and Sociology. He is currently a masters student at the Columbia Climate School focusing on climate change reporting and communications. Ryan plans to report on climate activism, adaptation and energy policy as an ICN fellow.

Thomas J. F. Goreau, PhD
President, Global Coral Reef Alliance
Chief Scientist, Biorock Technology Inc., Blue Regeneration SL
Technical Advisor, Blue Guardians Programme, SIDS DOCK
37 Pleasant Street, Cambridge, MA 02139
goreau@globalcoral.org
www.globalcoral.org
Phone: (1) 857-523-0807 (leave message)

Books:

Geotherapy: Innovative Methods of Soil Fertility Restoration, Carbon Sequestration, and Reversing CO2 Increase
<https://www.routledge.com/Geotherapy-Innovative-Methods-of-Soil-Fertility-Restoration-Carbon-Sequestration-and-Reversing-CO2-Increase/Goreau-Larson-Campe/p/book/9781466595392>

Innovative Methods of Marine Ecosystem Restoration
<https://www.taylorfrancis.com/books/oa-edit/10.1201/b14314/innovative-methods-marine-ecosystem-restoration-robert-kent-trench-thomas-goreau>

On the Nature of Things: The Scientific Photography of Fritz Goro

Geotherapy: Regenerating ecosystem services to reverse climate change

No one can change the past, everybody can change the future

It's much later than we think, especially if we don't think

Those with their heads in the sand will see the light when global warming and sea level rise wash the beach away

"When you run to the rocks, the rocks will be melting, when you run to the sea, the sea will be boiling", Peter Tosh, Jamaica's greatest song writer

"The Earth is not dying, she is being killed" U. Utah Phillips

"It is the responsibility of intellectuals to speak the truth and expose lies" Noam Chomsky

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hillma Denune <hdenune@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 6:37 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Hillma Denune
Cambridgeport

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hillma Denune <hdenune@yahoo.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 6:36 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

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Respectfully,
Hillma Denune
Cambridgeport

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jana Odette <jodette@comcast.net>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 12:44 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Jana Odette,
176 Larch Road

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Doina Contescu <doinacontescu@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 18, 2025 12:42 AM
To: Toner, Paul
Cc: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk; Suzanne; jessewinder@gmail.com; Dura Winder; Katiti Kironde; William Winder
Subject: Re: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Hi Paul,

Thank you for the response and the links. However, your attempt to minimize the scope with technical distinctions misses the fundamental point entirely.

Whether it's 8, 11, 12, 15, 18, or 20 stories is irrelevant -- ANY of these heights represents a catastrophic departure from Cambridge's human-scale character. The fact that you're parsing between different corridor maximums while dismissing my and other's concerns suggests you've lost sight of what you're supposed to be doing.

Your reliance on what a commercial property owner "indicated" they might do is not just deeply troubling but, at best, ridiculously naive. Since when do we base city policy on the casual assurances of developers and landlords? This is exactly the kind of uncritical closed-eyed faith in private interests that has destroyed the livability of countless American cities. You're not their business partner -- you're supposed to be MY representative, voting for my viewpoint.

I got my information through a group I DO trust: the Cambridge Citizens Coalition. And even if they are, let's say, exaggerating the height permissions for effect, they understand what many of us see clearly, while you apparently bury your head in the sand, if not getting chummy with the rich commercial interests: this upzoning scheme prioritizes developer profits over neighborhood preservation. Period.

Oh, and the 'community amenities' that are mentioned in the glossy proposals? Classic developer bait-and-switch tactics that invariably get scrapped once the permits are approved. You should know that the research shows developers win only about 40% of disputes when buyers sue over missing amenities, meaning the majority of cases always involve legitimate broken promises. And frankly no amenity is ever worth having to live with oppressive concrete and glass monstrosities instead of quaint village-like architecture.

Here's what I believe is not just unethical, but borderline corrupt -- if not outright criminal! Handing carte blanche zoning permissions to commercial interests while dismissing organized citizen opposition represents good governance. Cambridge residents have made it clear through multiple forums and hearings that this upzoning is unwanted. Your job is to represent us, the citizens who live here, not to gaslight us into voting against our own interests while you carry water for developers.

Shame on you for abandoning the people who you SWORE to represent in favor of developer interests. This is a betrayal of your oath of office. Somebody should be ashamed of you, if you are not ashamed of yourself. Just, ugh.

Sincerely,

Doina

(and her husband, and other family, and several neighbors I have spoken to as well)

On 10/17/2025 9:39 PM, Toner, Paul wrote:

Hi Doina:

I am not sure where you are getting your information suggesting 18-20 stories.

The current proposal would allow 8 stories on Mass Ave as of right but up to 11 stories if they add first floor retail uses. The only place with greater heights proposed is the immediate Porter Square area which would allow 12 stories as of right but up to 18 stories if they provide a series of community amenities, retail and parking. The current owner of the Porter Square shopping center indicated at a recent meeting that they have no immediate intentions of such increased height and any future development would be a long way off due to long-term leases they have with several tenants.

On Cambridge Street the recommendations are for 6 stories as of right and up to 8 stories with ground floor retail. There is one block near Inman Square and the new Union Square T-Station that will allow 12-15 stories, and it is currently commercial office space.

You can read the full study and recommendations for Mass Ave here:

https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Images/CDD/Planning/massaveplanningstudycambridgecommontoalewifebrook/MAPS_BOARDS_041125.pdf

You can read the full Cambridge Street Study here: https://www.cambridgema.gov/-/media/Files/CDD/Planning/Studies/CambridgeStreet/ourcambridgestreetplan_20230310.pdf

Sincerely,

Paul



Paul F. Toner

Cambridge City Councillor

Mobile: (617) 216-7305

Email: ptoner@cambridgema.gov

792 Massachusetts Avenue

Cambridge, MA 02140

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/Departments/citycouncil>



From: Doina Contescu <doinacontescu@gmail.com>

Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:17 PM

To: City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>; Joseph, Swaathi <sjoseph@cambridgema.gov>; City Clerk <cityclerk@Cambridgema.gov>

Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Doina Contescu
59 Saville St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Singer, Judith D. <judith_singer@harvard.edu>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 9:40 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; Joseph, Swaathi
Cc: Singer, Judith D.; Beth Gamse
Subject: Please say NO to upzoning on Mass Ave and Cambridge St.

Dear Cambridge Leaders:

Please say NO to the proposed upzoning on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street rising up to 18–20+ stories without parking or setbacks.

We have lived in Cambridge for over 40 years. Part of the city's appeal is its scale. Do we want to turn into Manhattan? We think not.

Too many local businesses and naturally affordable homes will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need any speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn, as the sectors that had been fueling growth both in investments and residents facing drastic retrenchment (biotech, biomedical research, university-based research/development, any federally funded research); consequently, this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. And the City cannot count on Harvard or MIT to bail the City out in this economic climate. This is a time of constraint. Not wanton development or blind faith that the City's ambitious—and expensive—plans will yield only net positive results for its citizens.

The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Judy Singer and Beth Gamse
14 Walker St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: JULIE VARGAS <julie.vargas@bfskinner.org>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 7:57 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Julie and Ernie Vargas

E. A. & Julie S. Vargas
11 Old Dee Rd.
Cambridge, MA 02138-4633

Erwin, Nicole

From: Elaine Morse <elainemorse@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 7:42 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Elaine S.Morse
95 Inman St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Fuzzy Dice <bappigna@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 7:11 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Up-zoning!

Dear Councillors, and other members of our City government,

It has come to the attention of Cambridge residents that the recent up-zoning has not satisfied those in our City who would like to change the nature of our neighborhoods forever! Their vision does not have to prevail, and we strongly oppose yet higher (>6 stories) buildings in Cambridge. Additionally, all affordable housing protections must be maintained. We do not want a city only for the wealthy!

Please vote AGAINST any further up-zoning in Cambridge.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Barbara Appignani and Steve Blacklow

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ogden, Suzanne <s.ogden@northeastern.edu>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 5:34 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote **NO** on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
23 Berkeley St. Cambridge

Suzanne

Erwin, Nicole

From: Diane C Norris <diane@charyknorris.net>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 5:18 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please consider the poor timing of this proposal in light of the government shutdown, ICE raids in MA, federal budget cuts, and massive layoffs.

Also please consider the tragedy of Lesley University overbuilding and the significant decline of students in this area. It is very fortunate that some of these sites can be affordable housing needed for the neighborhood, but it seems like this upzoning proposal prioritizes extensive hi-rise luxury housing instead. What is the status of the failed hotel on Beacon and Rosalind Street, a misguided project of an unsuitable costly site that is permanently closed before even opening??

Is the goal to tear down the Porter Square shopping center, Target complex, and maximize development there to 18+ stories?? The other Mass Ave areas of 12 stories would be is it twice the height of the Alewife housing projects in the Quad (i.e. Atmark and the Laurent) that don't have the challenges of displacing local businesses or adjacent dense housing as a context? Where are there sites large enough on Mass Ave or Cambridge St to accommodate this and the open space and infrastructure needed to be livable?

I walk, ride, or drive on this part of Mass Ave every single day and Cambridge Street often to get to Kendall and am very familiar with the existing conditions, an urban convergence of extensive construction, bike/pedestrian/bus/truck/auto traffic, existing dense multifamily housing stock, small commercial trying to survive, etc. There are several locations where vehicles are forced to stop in a driving lane (ambulance, delivery truck, schoolbus, 18-wheeler trucks on Mass ave, etc) since there is no where else to go.

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18-20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Diane Norris
446/448 Huron Avenue

Diane Charyk Norris
www.charyknorris.net

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jeffrey Baron <jnoelbaron@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 5:15 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Jeffrey N. Baron
174 Garden St, Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mlundber99 <mlundber99@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 4:50 PM
To: Joseph, Swaathi; City Council; City Clerk
Cc: Marlene Lundberg
Subject: CORRECTED. ***Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning ***

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Because I was opposed to AHO 2.0, I am even more opposed to the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Ave. and Cambridge St. Please do not permit buildings of 18–20+ stories which also lack adequate parking or setbacks. Cambridge can provide more housing without becoming Manhattan. I believe buildings like those proposed are more for the benefit of developers wanting to maximize profits than for the benefits of residents. Please vote NO on this proposal.

Here are three of the disadvantages for residents of such tall buildings:

- 1. Dependence on Elevators.** Elevators can break down or become unusable during an emergency. If you're living on the 15th or 20th floor, a malfunctioning elevator can become a serious issue, especially for elderly people, children, or anyone with mobility issues.
 - 2. Dangerous During Emergencies.** High-rise buildings can pose risks during emergencies like fires or earthquakes. They are also vulnerable to being attacked by planes, as happened on 9/11 in NYC. (I worked in 7 World Trade Center, which was hit and collapsed that day.) Evacuation from higher floors takes time, and using elevators in emergencies is often not possible.
 - 3. Reduced Connection to Nature.** In a high-rise, people can feel disconnected from nature, especially considering the small setbacks high rises often have. Unlike ground-floor apartments or independent houses where one can have a personal garden or patio, high-rise living often means giving up direct access to nature.
- Again, I ask that you vote NO on this proposal.

Respectfully,

Marlene H. Lundberg
4 Canal Park, 602
Cambridge, MA 02141

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mlundber99 <mlundber99@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 4:12 PM
To: Joseph, Swaathi; City Council; City Clerk
Cc: Marlene Lundberg
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Because I was opposed to AHO 2.0, I am even more opposed to the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Ave. and Cambridge St. Please do not permit buildings of 18–20+ stories which also lack adequate parking or setbacks. Cambridge can provide more housing without becoming Manhattan. I believe buildings like those proposed are more for the benefit of developers wanting to maximize profits than for the benefits of residents. Please vote NO on this proposal.

Here are two of the disadvantages for residents of such tall buildings:

1. Dependence on Elevators. Elevators can break down or become unusable during an emergency. If you're living on the 15th or 20th floor, a malfunctioning elevator can become a serious issue, especially for elderly people, children, or anyone with mobility issues.

2. Dangerous During Emergencies. High-rise buildings can pose risks during emergencies like fires or earthquakes. They are also vulnerable to being attacked by planes, as happened on 9/11 in NYC. (I worked in 7 World Trade Center, which was hit and collapsed that day.) Evacuation from higher floors takes time, and using elevators in emergencies is often not possible.

4. Reduced Connection to Nature. In a high-rise, people can feel disconnected from nature, especially considering the small setbacks high rises often have. Unlike ground-floor apartments or independent houses where one can have a personal garden or patio, high-rise living often means giving up direct access to nature.

Again, I ask that you vote NO on this proposal.

Respectfully,

Marlene H. Lundberg
4 Canal Park, 602
Cambridge, MA 02141

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dick Tonachel <dicktonachel@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 3:43 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Richard Tonachel
Richdale Ave, Porter Square

Erwin, Nicole

From: Caroline A Jones <cajones@mit.edu>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 3:29 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Cambridge is already one of the densest cities in Massachusetts. We need affordable housing of the type that makes our historic city so livable, like the apartment building my mom and dad lived in on Lexington Ave between Brattle and Huron – set back, dense, low-rise, shaded, and habitable!

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

There are many empty biolabs following the boom in speculation in that sector. We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in the area. The really out-of scale upzoning is not the answer.

Respectfully,

C.A. Jones – Larches neighborhood with family also living in Strawberry Hill
22 Meadow Way
Cambridge MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Angela Radan <angela_radan@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:33 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Angela Radan
66 Sacramento Street

Written on a mobile device. Please excuse typos.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Michael Grill <mgrill@fairlaneproperties.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 2:44 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Ordinance Committee - Cambridge Street Zoning Petition
Attachments: Michael Grill-432 Col. Condo Trust 101725 letter.pdf

For October 30th Ordinance Committee meeting.

Michael S. Grill
Fairlane Properties, Inc.
1035 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, MA 02141
(617) 725-1000 Tel
mgrill@fairlaneproperties.com
<http://www.linkedin.com/in/michaelgrillboston1>
www.fairlaneproperties.com

*432 Columbia Street Condominium Trust
c/o Fairlane Properties, Inc.
1035 Cambridge Street, Suite 21D
Cambridge, MA 02141*

Via Email Only

October 17, 2025

Ordinance Committee
City Council, City of Cambridge

RE: Cambridge Street Zoning Petition

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing as Chair of the 432 Columbia Street Condominium Trust, a 99,500 square foot office/tech building located at 1035 Cambridge Street. I am also Manager of Fairlane Columbia, LLC which owns a 61% interest in the condominium.

After a presentation by CDD staff at a recent East Cambridge Business Association meeting and an email exchange with Daniel Messplay, I am pleased to see that the City is using the conclusions of the Our Cambridge Street Study to guide the proposed changes to Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. As a building owner in the Webster Avenue/Columbia Street corridor, I am also pleased that the City has recognized the wisdom of allowing up to 12 stories in height in the CAM-12 district to accentuate the importance of the Webster Avenue/Cambridge Street intersection.

While the condominium owners at 1035 Cambridge Street have no interest in selling our units to a developer for a 12-story residential building at this time, the CAM-12 district will provide the buyer of the City's DPW parcel between Webster Avenue and Columbia Street with clear guidance to design additional housing at this important transportation and community node. The DPW parcel, once the City decides to sell its interest, will attract significant attention from local developers, because of its proximity to Inman Square shops, the Union Square T station and the Boynton Yards/Union Square developments.

While new development will increase the City's housing stock, the Council should work to ensure that Cambridge Street remains a vibrant retail district. The additional incentive to add active uses, which I hope the City narrows to retail or active community organizations, within 50 feet of Cambridge Street is also a positive attribute of these zoning changes. However, the requirement for 50 feet of active uses for all new development on Cambridge Street would further the City's desire to ensure the health of the Cambridge Street commercial district.

I encourage the Ordinance Committee to view this Cambridge Street Zoning Petition favorably.

Sincerely,


Michael Grill

Chair, 432 Columbia Street Condominium Trust
Manager, Fairlane Columbia, LLC

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bonner-Weir, Susan <Susan.Bonner-Weir@joslin.harvard.edu>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 2:40 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Thank you,
Susan B Weir
2Larchwood Dr.

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

Erwin, Nicole

From: Robin Wolfe <rmac55@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 2:39 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Robin Wolfe
North Cambridge, MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Suzanne Watzman <watzman@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 2:26 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Suzanne Watzman
Mid-Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gale Hunt <galestuarthunt@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 2:21 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Gale and Terry Hunt
Larches Neighborhood

Erwin, Nicole

From: Tom Goreau <goreau@globalcoral.org>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 2:20 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Re: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Sending again correcting typo in address

From: Tom Goreau <goreau@globalcoral.org>
Date: Friday, October 17, 2025 at 14:16
To: CityCouncil@cambridgema.gov <CityCouncil@cambridgema.gov>, sjoseph@cambridgema.gov <sjoseph@cambridgema.gov>, cityclerk@cambridgema.gov <cityclerk@cambridgema.gov>
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote **NO** on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

I've lived here for nearly 60 years. Why are we being kept in the dark about over the top development schemes by predatory outside investors?

Respectfully,
Tom Goreau
37 Pleasant Street, Riverside, Cambridge, 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Tom Goreau <goreau@globalcoral.org>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 2:16 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

I've lived here for nearly 60 years. Why are we being kept in the dark about over the top development schemes by predatory outside investors?

Respectfully,
Tom Goreau
37 Peasant Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Anne Sundaram <anne.sundaram@verizon.net>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:43 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: No to proposed upzoning

idea:
"Say NO to the proposed upzoning on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street rising up to 18–20+ stories without parking or setbacks. Too many local businesses and naturally affordable homes will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Thank you,
Anne Sundaram
[Sent from the all new AOL app for iOS](#)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Catalina Arboleda <catalarbol@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:37 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please vote NO to the upzoning of Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street.

Please say NO to the proposed plan on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street to give permission for buildings up to 18–20+ stories without parking or setbacks. Too many local businesses and naturally affordable homes will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, it seems irresponsible to do this. We are likely entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Best,
Catalina
Sent by:

Catalina Arboleda, Ph.D
950 Mass. Ave. Apt 413
508-450-3868 (cell)
www.arboledaphd.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Doina Contescu <doinacontescu@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:18 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Doina Contescu
59 Saville St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: NANCY HAUSMAN <nanah46@aol.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:27 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
[Your Name]
[Your Address or Neighborhood]

Erwin, Nicole

From: patricia.armstrong@comcast.net
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:21 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: IMPORTANT - PLEASE VOTE NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning
Importance: High

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Patricia Armstrong

Orchard Street North Cambridge MA

Erwin, Nicole

From: Brian O'Neill <brian@crashandboom.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:08 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Dear Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Thank you,

Brian O'Neill / 7a Haskell St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Laney Bank <laney576@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:04 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Helene Bank
Putnam Ave, Riverside

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hadley, Shelagh <shadley@bu.edu>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:03 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please say NO to the following:

PLEASE say NO to the proposed upzoning on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street rising up to 18–20+ stories without parking or setbacks. Too many local businesses and naturally affordable homes will be lost. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability.

Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Thanks,

Shelagh Hadley, longtime resident and voter

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ginna Donovan <ginnadonovan@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 1:02 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Ginna Donovan
1 Malcolm Rd

Erwin, Nicole

From: Boehmer, Ulrike <boehmer@bu.edu>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 12:55 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Ulrike Boehmer
66 Sacramento Street

Written on a mobile device. Please excuse typos.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Annette LaMond <annettelamond@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 12:44 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. The city's existing infrastructure – utilities, roads, and DPW services – is nowhere near up to handling the proposed upzoning.

This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

I urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Annette LaMond

7 Riedesel Avenue

Erwin, Nicole

From: Phyllis Simpkins <phyllissimpkins52@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 12:37 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Upzoning proposals

As a 40 year resident of Cambridge, in the past 1-2 years I have become appalled at the way the City "blesses" the greedy developers, whose only concern is "HOW MUCH PROFIT CAN I MAKE? 18+ story luxury buildings with NO parking accomplishes the following: more cars, more traffic, more congestion, more fumes, less green space. Have you even seen the current traffic tie ups on Mass Ave. heading to Arlington each evening during rush hour? All these new luxury condo owners are not going to be riding their bikes! This won't make Cambridge more desirable and will push out small businesses and affordable single, 2 and 3 family homes which greatly contribute to neighborhoods and life in the city.

Yes, vacant labs and loss of govt. funding are serious concerns. But I have yet to see city govt. cut expenses in a serious way. We've lost hundreds and hundreds of parking spaces; has parking enforcement cut their workforce? This past year the city manager's office added several new administrative positions; has anyone asked how this has positively impacted services? Is the City still giving employees raises (some universities aren't); has it looked at greater cost sharing on medical benefits? The years of substantial increased budgets should have been reviewed and cut back years ago.

Cambridge is NOT New York City, nor is it Boston, with new luxury towers owned by some absentee owner but they remain empty. Please don't try to make Cambridge that.

Phyllis Simpkins
249 Huron Avenue

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Cetrulo, Lawrence <LCetrulo@cetllp.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 12:31 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Cc: Lynn T. Cetrulo; Carol Birnbaum; Ellen Blumenthal; Kate E. Cetrulo; Bjornlund, Kyle; Fred Eustis
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Larry Cetrulo
Lynn Cetrulo
46 Grozier Rd

Kate Cetrulo Bjornlund
Kyle Bjornlund
14 Holly Ave.

Lawrence G. Cetrulo, Esq

Of Counsel

Direct: 617-217-5210 Cell: 617-943-7710 | vCard
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Erwin, Nicole

From: bowman@jfbfamilyservices.com
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 12:03 PM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Judith Farris Bowman,
62 Buckingham Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 877-9188

Erwin, Nicole

From: LYNN TREVOR <lynn.trevor1@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 11:53 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Lin Trever
156 Richdale Ave, Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: John Trever <johntrever@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 11:50 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
John Trever
156 Richdale Ave, Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sue W. <clarewentworth@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 11:43 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Cc: Randolph Wentworth
Subject: Mass Ave/Cambridge St. proposed upzoning

Please VOTE NO on the proposed upzoning at Mass Ave and Cambridge Streets. We need to allow the soon-to-be elected new City Council to take a step back and reconsider what kind of city we all want — preferably within the context of the already adopted *Envision* plan, and taking into account the economic instability of this political season.

Thank you.

Sue & Rand Wentworth
19 Brown St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Joseph Moore <jrmoore3rd@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 11:37 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Joe Moore

.....
7 Riedesel Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Phillip Sego <phil@philsego.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 11:37 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,

Phillip Sego

Phillip Sego, phil@philsego.com
221 Norfolk Street, Cambridge MA 02139-1402 USA
Cell: +1-617-610-3054

Erwin, Nicole

From: Marjory Wunsch <marjory.wunsch@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, October 17, 2025 11:33 AM
To: City Council; Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk
Subject: Please Vote NO on the Mass. Ave and Cambridge Street Upzoning

Honorable Members of the Planning Board and Cambridge City Council,

Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 18–20+ stories without adequate parking or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes.

We urge the City to conduct a thorough analysis of commercial and housing needs in light of vacant offices in Kendall Square and reduced university housing demand due to federal budget cuts.

Respectfully,
Marjory Wunsch
78 Washington Avenue

Erwin, Nicole

From: Arti Pandey <artipande@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2025 5:47 PM
To: Joseph, Swaathi; City Clerk; City Council
Subject: No upzoning please

Dear City Officials,

Please reject the proposed upzoning along **Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street** that would allow **20-story buildings** with little setback or green space. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

This whole plan is definitely not well thought out. Do you not care any more about the character of the city we all live in together? Who speaks for historic preservation, who speaks for beauty? Can we not learn from the beautiful historic preservation of European cities? Must all that is historic, beautiful and delightful be put up for sale? Is money all that counts for you - you who are, after all, elected officials! This would be a big mistake - for the city and for your own future careers. Think carefully about what makes a 'livable' city.

Regards,
Arti Pandey
(resident of Cambridge)

Erwin, Nicole

From: John Trever <johntrever@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2025 4:18 PM
To: Joseph, Swaathi; City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: No more upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street

Councillors:

Please reject the proposed upzoning along **Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street** that would allow **20-story buildings** with little setback or green space. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please **vote no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

Cordially,
John Trever
156 Richdale Ave, Cambridge, MA 02140

Erwin, Nicole

From: Christine Tessier <cptessier12@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, October 13, 2025 1:59 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Upzoning

Please reject the proposed upzoning along **Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street** that would allow **20-story buildings** with little setback or green space. With office vacancies rising and universities reducing staff and students, Cambridge does **not** need more speculative luxury towers. We are entering a financial downturn — this is the wrong time to push drastic zoning changes that favor outside investors over local needs. The City should pause, review actual housing and commercial data, and plan responsibly for sustainability and livability. Please vote **no** on this upzoning to protect Cambridge's scale, character, and economic stability.

I live on a street that has been upzoned from two family houses to luxury condos. All this is doing is further turning a once vibrant city into a city of haves and have nots. You are not solving the problem of affordable housing. If you did something about rents, housing would be affordable for all, not just a minority of individuals and families who fit into certain categories. You continue to destroy the middle class.

Please stop this destruction of Cambridge.

Thank you.

Christine Tessier
Cambridge resident

Erwin, Nicole

From: L Byron <elizabethbyron@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, October 11, 2025 2:29 PM
To: Siddiqui, Sumbul; Azeem, Burhan
Cc: CARE Housing; Sara Nelson; Nolan, Patricia; Hayes, Patrick; Carlos Loya; Peters, Melissa; Roberts, Jeffrey; City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Amendments to Zoning- Request to meet

Dear Cllr Siddiqui and Cllr Azeem,

As you know, the policy order to create zoning to protect solar was moved to the Housing Committee.

This is a policy order that we have presented on in multiple Health and Environment Committee meetings. In addition to the CDD's work on finding a compromise to this issue, we've also done extensive research. We would like to meet with you at your earliest convenience to discuss next steps on protecting the environment, supporting residents' investments, and creating affordable housing.

Please share with us your availability and we will work to ensure a representative from CARE Housing is available.

Sincerely,

Liz Byron

--

Liz Byron
21 Field St.



Erwin, Nicole

From: Stickgold, Robert (BIDMC - Psychiatry) <rstickgo@bidmc.harvard.edu>
Sent: Wednesday, December 3, 2025 12:43 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Building heights

I am totally opposed to the proposal to increase building heights!

Bob Stickgold
Affective Computing
M.I.T Media Lab
617-233-3768

PLEASE NOTE: This message is intended for the use of the person to whom it is addressed. It may contain information that is privileged, confidential and exempt from disclosure under applicable law. If you are not the intended recipient, your use of this message for any purpose is strictly prohibited. If you have received this communication in error, please delete the message and notify the sender so that we may correct our records. See our web page at [https://urldefense.com/v3/__http://www.bilh.org__;!!GolgDdAAPFHvrrz0!c07ybdiTZByqNUI1qjCa4cHW0K3xNZfDwudSqX-cyQ5gvrKUBFxpPKy4wjulpVdIaC_m9drC7_UftdIJ8OnO5xvt4QS4s_Y\\$](https://urldefense.com/v3/__http://www.bilh.org__;!!GolgDdAAPFHvrrz0!c07ybdiTZByqNUI1qjCa4cHW0K3xNZfDwudSqX-cyQ5gvrKUBFxpPKy4wjulpVdIaC_m9drC7_UftdIJ8OnO5xvt4QS4s_Y$) for a full directory of Beth Israel Lahey Health sites, staff, services and career opportunities.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Stephen Jerome <stevejerome61@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, December 3, 2025 12:01 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; chjc@cambridgehousingjustice.com
Subject: Ordinance Committee Public hearing re: Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street corridors

re: Ordinance Committee public hearing on Mass. Ave. and Cambridge St. Corridors upzoning

Dear Chair McGovern and Councillors:

After attending your Committee's public hearing this evening, and not hearing the Chair or the Assistant City Manager answer Councillors Nolan and Zusy's questions about the lack of adequate public notice for this evening's public hearing, and why the City no longer meets with neighborhood associations to elicit their input at the beginning of planning initiatives, I respectfully ask the Chair and Council to let the ordinances expire, as Chair McGovern indicated that they may do.

What does it matter how long planning department staff have been laboring on the ordinances and how many "public hearings" have been held if serious aspects of the ordinance, such as the twelve story and higher heights on Cambridge Street and other locations were absent from the public process? Many of the stakeholders at tonight's hearing expressed that they feel let down by this lack of fair process and transparency.

Every thoughtful Cantabridgian understands there are myriad opportunities for appropriate development along these corridors, but after tonight's meeting, it is clearly in the public interest for the Committee to pause the direction this is going, and take a few steps back to make the necessary adjustments. This may require letting the ordinances expire and writing new petitions, but in the end, the result will be better for the City.

Yours truly,

Steve Jerome
2 Mt. Auburn St., 508
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Erwin, Nicole

From: Heather Hoffman <heather.m.hoffman.1957@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 8:26 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Peters, Melissa
Subject: upzoning--some questions you should get answers to

1. Has the law changed since we were told that inclusionary zoning requires compensation to developers so that it doesn't constitute an unconstitutional taking? How about the City's decision to settle the Arnold Circle litigation rather than go to trial on the argument that inclusionary zoning violates the repeal of rent control? Am I missing the way that this proposal does provide compensation to developers in return for requiring inclusionary dwelling units?
2. What requirements in the building code, elsewhere in the zoning ordinance, in safety requirements, in infrastructure requirements, in legal protections (such as unconstitutional takings) for existing solar installations, and anything else I should have put here if I knew more affect what can actually be built in the real world? What could we reasonably expect to happen?
3. Given that I think that this proposal would render inclusionary zoning unconstitutional (and I'm not alone in that), what about this proposal would actually bring about the promised affordability? I will note that the massive upzoning in February specifically did not have affordability as a stated purpose or rationale, no matter how much it was sold that way, but it did specifically aim to reduce yards, referred to in some circles as open space.
4. How big can a building be before it is likely to have to provide some ground level green space under the green factor zoning?
5. Have any studies been done on the likelihood of displacement of the small local businesses that the Council claims to care about and the community actually does care about?
6. Have any studies been done on the likelihood of displacement of current residents, especially those living in so-called naturally-occurring affordable housing?
7. How many actual lawsuits have been filed in the past ten years by abutters challenging discretionary zoning permits? How many have gotten past standing? How many have succeeded in changing the approved project?

More questions will probably occur to me right after I hit send, but that's it for now.

Heather Hoffman

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kathy Dalton <kathyldalton@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 6:56 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Comments at Ordinance Committee

I live at 6 Arlington Street and have lived in Porter square since 1975.

If these changes pass my neighborhood, including that thing called "character" will change. There will be more people around and it will be a bit harder for me to find a parking space, But: A wise friend once told me, "If you don't embrace change, you will become increasingly grumpy as you age."

I know—because Alice Wolf told me that there was a much more significant increase in cars in Cambridge—around 13%—when rent control ended and the city became more wealthy. That demographic change changed the character of my neighborhood much more than adding some taller buildings. I am willing to trade some convenience in parking to see more people housed.

Will this immediately provide all the needed housing for our unhoused neighbors? No.
Would I like to see a greater requirement for affordable units and units for older adults including those who want to downsize? Yes.
Am I concerned about the loss of linkage fees and community benefits we gain when we negotiate special permits? Yes.
Is the T fully poised for **great** transit dependent development? Not yet.

None of this stops me from believing that it is right for us, in these places where we can to provide more housing near transit to do so. We should do it in the best way possible to encourage more affordable and middle income housing and public spaces.
However, I would like to see a pause put on this to allow time to lend more weight to affordable housing.

In the long run I believe adding housing will increase the diversity and the vibrancy of our city and we will do the right thing by those who will become our neighbors.

Finally, My 66 unit building was built in 1904, the 104 units across from me in 1920. I can well imagine the hostility of the neighbors back then, I'm grateful our buildings are here and to have built a life, work, and family here in Cambridge.

Kathy

Erwin, Nicole

From: Michael Grill <mgrill@fairlaneproperties.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 6:54 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Cambridge Street Petition
Attachments: Michael Grill-432 Col. Condo Trust 101725 letter.pdf

Councilors, Since it has been about 45 days since I submitted the attached letter to a previous Ordinance Committee on October 17, 2025, I am submitting my letter again. I am listening to the 12/2 Ordinance Committee and I'm amazed at the opinions of many of tonight's speakers. I have been involved for many years at public hearings regarding the changed zoning along Cambridge Street. I believe that CDD has done a great job of outreach to the East Cambridge community. Best, Michael

Michael S. Grill
Fairlane Properties, Inc.
1035 Cambridge Street
Cambridge, MA 02141
(617) 725-1000 Tel
mgrill@fairlaneproperties.com
<http://www.linkedin.com/in/michaelgrillboston1>
www.fairlaneproperties.com

**432 Columbia Street Condominium Trust
c/o Fairlane Properties, Inc.
1035 Cambridge Street, Suite 21D
Cambridge, MA 02141**

Via Email Only

October 17, 2025

Ordinance Committee
City Council, City of Cambridge

RE: Cambridge Street Zoning Petition

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing as Chair of the 432 Columbia Street Condominium Trust, a 99,500 square foot office/tech building located at 1035 Cambridge Street. I am also Manager of Fairlane Columbia, LLC which owns a 61% interest in the condominium.

After a presentation by CDD staff at a recent East Cambridge Business Association meeting and an email exchange with Daniel Messplay, I am pleased to see that the City is using the conclusions of the Our Cambridge Street Study to guide the proposed changes to Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. As a building owner in the Webster Avenue/Columbia Street corridor, I am also pleased that the City has recognized the wisdom of allowing up to 12 stories in height in the CAM-12 district to accentuate the importance of the Webster Avenue/Cambridge Street intersection.

While the condominium owners at 1035 Cambridge Street have no interest in selling our units to a developer for a 12-story residential building at this time, the CAM-12 district will provide the buyer of the City's DPW parcel between Webster Avenue and Columbia Street with clear guidance to design additional housing at this important transportation and community node. The DPW parcel, once the City decides to sell its interest, will attract significant attention from local developers, because of its proximity to Inman Square shops, the Union Square T station and the Boynton Yards/Union Square developments.

While new development will increase the City's housing stock, the Council should work to ensure that Cambridge Street remains a vibrant retail district. The additional incentive to add active uses, which I hope the City narrows to retail or active community organizations, within 50 feet of Cambridge Street is also a positive attribute of these zoning changes. However, the requirement for 50 feet of active uses for all new development on Cambridge Street would further the City's desire to ensure the health of the Cambridge Street commercial district.

I encourage the Ordinance Committee to view this Cambridge Street Zoning Petition favorably.

Sincerely,


Michael Grill

Chair, 432 Columbia Street Condominium Trust
Manager, Fairlane Columbia, LLC

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sharmil Modi <sharmil@eastcambridge.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 6:27 PM
To: City Clerk
Cc: City Council
Subject: North Mass Ave. + Cambridge St. Zoning

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing in support of the 2 petitions to upzone North Mass Ave. and Cambridge St. for residential development.

IF we want more housing production in Cambridge, THEN I BELIEVE THE CORRIDORS ARE THE IDEAL PLACES TO DO IT.

HOWEVER, while I believe the proposed zoning changes by CDD are a step in the right direction, I have serious doubts that they will yield the intended outcome (i.e., 8-12 story residential buildings).

As with most impactful legislation, the devil is in the detail, and these 2 petitions are a case in point. In particular, I'd like to highlight the following:

1. 7-10 Stories = No Man's Land - as you know, the current building code requires a completely different - AND SIGNIFICANTLY MORE EXPENSIVE - type of construction (i.e., structural steel), foundation type, and building systems once a building exceeds 6 stories. Generally, IF a project pencils at 6 stories (AND MOST PROJECTS TODAY DO NOT), the increased per foot construction cost - AND RISK - to go higher is NOT SUFFICIENTLY OFFSET by the lower per foot land cost UNTIL YOU GET TO ~12 STORIES. Therefore, IT IS UNLIKELY THAT WE WILL SEE VERY MANY BUILDINGS OF 7-10 STORIES GET BUILT UNDER THE 2 PETITIONS AS CURRENTLY WRITTEN.
2. Building Stepbacks - the required FRONT AND REAR STEPBACKS of 10' once a building goes above 6 or 8 stories substantially INCREASES the construction cost and dramatically LOWERS the efficiency of the layouts. In other words, the stepbacks further decrease the likelihood of residential projects over 6 stories being built, ESPECIALLY ON SMALLER LOTS, OR ON LOTS OF SHALLOW DEPTHS.
3. Increased Open Space Requirements - these increased requirements above 6 stories, also increase the constraints/burdens on - and decrease the efficiency of - projects on tight sites, that are already very difficult to pencil.

To be clear, even if these 2 petitions are passed, the aforementioned 3 features, while well-intended, ARE TANTAMOUNT TO CAPPING RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT AT 6 STORIES ON THE CORRIDORS.

In conclusion, IF council is serious about increased housing density on the corridors, then this committee should pass these petitions to the full City Council, and City Council should swiftly send

them back to CDD to make the requisite adjustments that ****MAY**** finally bring higher density residential development on the corridors closer to penciling (and perhaps an eventual reality).

Sincerely,
Sharmil Modi
271 Cambridge Street

Sharmil Modi
+1.617.676.8969

Erwin, Nicole

From: Louise Venden <lvenden@outlook.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 6:08 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Statement to Ordinance Committee December 2, 2025
Attachments: Cambridge Street zoning.docx

Attached is my statement. I had was able to comment via zoom, but wanted to may have rushed a bit.

TO: Cambridge Ordinance Committee

12/2/25

From Louise Venden

10 Rogers St. #820
Cambridge 02142

DATE: 12/2/25

Cambridge has enacted a tsunami of zoning changes in the last 6 years and has yet to achieve the pace of home building needed to add thousands of units we need. Laws do not build housing, but City Planners think they should. The process of planning and building housing takes years. Creating neighborhoods takes decades.

Building towers of residences will increase the numbers of housing units but not build neighborhoods nor create constructive community engagement. Setting limits on height based on neighborhood scale would acknowledge the unique environmental and community assets of each neighborhood. Allowing housing projects at 8 x15 times the height, scale and density of adjacent properties not only disrupts neighborhoods but creates transportation and infrastructure challenges.

Dramatically increasing density and scale will make housing development more financially viable, but the cost of land and buildable sites will rise because developers of upscale housing can pay more, making it difficult for affordable housing developers to secure sites. Why not take a more conservative approach by lowering the proposed heights in most areas, allowing increased heights on a smaller segment of these corridors? Then Planners should evaluate if the law increases the development of middle and affordable housing.

Critical housing needs should be promoted by finding ways to provide more funding to accelerate AHO developments and evaluate ways to refine and implement Multifamily housing zoning without straining transportation, utilities, environment, and ability of neighborhoods to retain connections to each other and welcome new residents.

Erwin, Nicole

From: John Pitkin <john_pitkin@earthlink.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 5:52 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Ordinance Committee Hearing on Proposed Cambridge Street Upzoning

To the City Council:

I have serious concerns about the public process for the proposed upzoning of Cambridge Street. The proposed heights were NEVER presented at ANY of the public meetings the City held about Cambridge Street.

The increase in heights is not a small matter. This one change impacts EVERYTHING, from light, open space requirements, streetscape to parking needs and the need for design review. To change without the opportunity for informed review, discussion and comment by the affected neighborhoods would make a mockery of the City's own process and staff. Going forward, it would discourage community participation in future community processes. Why should residents participate if the only thing that matters is what a majority of the City Council mandates in the end?

This petition should be allowed to expire in January. It can then be resubmitted for action by the new Council. This would allow time for the needed community review, analysis and public discussion of the changes that are being proposed.

Thank you for your consideration,
--John Pitkin
18 Fayette Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Yixin Wang <yixinwzb@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 5:29 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Please Reconsider How to Add Tall buildings

Dear council members,

I am writing because I am worried about the proposal to allow 8 to 12-story buildings. I want more better housing. But this plan feels like putting too much density without process in places that already have many problems with traffic, safety, and limited transit. These areas are already very hard to move through, especially for cyclists and older pedestrians like myself.

Without a special-permit process, I am afraid the situation will become more dangerous. Delivery cars and ride-hail drivers already double-park all the time. The lanes are narrow, the intersections are confusing, and many cyclists have close calls. If much taller buildings are added by right, there will be more deliveries, more pickups, and more congestion. but no requirement for loading zones or other safety measures.

It does not feel balanced.

Lastly, removing the special-permit process takes away an important part of our democratic participation. Many of us who live here, especially older people, rely on this process to make our voices heard and to ask for safety improvements or environmental protections. If every process go away, our input becomes only advisory, and it can be ignored.

I hope the Council can find a way to add housing without making the streets more dangerous or putting more burden on the same neighborhoods again. A slower and more careful process, with real community involvement, would help a lot. Please consider postponing the decision so more residents can understand and discuss the changes.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,
Yixin Wang

Erwin, Nicole

From: Helen Zhao <helenzhao1234@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 5:05 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Request for Careful Review of Height Increases

I wanted to share my worries about the plan to allow 8 to 12-story buildings.

Already, delivery cars and ride-hail vehicles stop anywhere they like, blocking bike lanes and crosswalks. Cyclists must swerve into traffic, and older people like me have trouble crossing safely. If large buildings are added without any special review, I fear the street will become even more dangerous for everyone.

Removing the special-permit process makes it harder for people like me to speak up. These meetings are where we ask for safety improvements. If projects become automatic, I worry our input will not matter.

I want more better housing. I want to make sure the changes come with proper planning and community involvement.

Thank you for listening.

Sincerely,
Helen Zhao

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ovadia R Simha <simha@mit.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 5:02 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Ordinance Committee Meeting re Cambridge Street

Dear Members

I am asking you not to act on the proposal for rezoning of Cambridge Street as proposed by the submission you are now considering. It is inconsistent with your goals for encouraging more affordable housing, it is destructive to the fabric of the neighborhoods that Cambridge Street serves, it does not provide you with the real consequences of this proposal and its effects on the current residential population and retail and public services that would result from its passage.

In 2023 The East Cambridge Planning Team, reviewed an earlier draft of this proposal and we found that it lacked :

Any historical perspective of the street and the neighborhoods it serves

It did not reflect a needs assessment of the present population and the emerging population particularly with regard to the elderly and to young families

It offered no indication of the number of dwelling units and imputed population that would emerge from this proposal and the public services that would be required of the city

It did not measure the impact of this proposal on the existing traditional network of retail services owned and operated by members of the community

It did not reflect the potential displacement of current residents as a result of new development

It did not emphasize the encouragement of affordable housing versus market rate housing

It did not reflect the desire to encourage more housing ownership options for the existing and future population

It did not measure the impact on transportation needs that would be generated by a new population resulting from developments stimulated by this zoning proposal

It did not measure the public utility needs that would result from the developments that are being proposed including schools and open space needs

It did not have a genuine public engagement process that reached out to local institutions, churches, neighborhood associations and residents to gauge the impact of these proposals.

The one thing it did do, that is now threatened by the current proposal is to limit the height of residential buildings to six stories so that structures could be built on 5-1 state building

code that offers much lower construction costs for housing. The new 8 story heights plus that are encouraged in this proposal will require much more expensive building costs that

would result in much higher rents to the future developers.

The work on this plan is not finished . Do not rush to pass an ordinance that will cause many unintended negative consequences . It needs more work and more careful and more rational planning.

Thank you

O. Robert Simha

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ovadia R Simha <simha@mit.edu>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 4:44 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Proposed Zoning for Cambridge Street

Dear Members

I am writing to you to ask you not act on the proposal for rezoning of Cambridge Street as proposed by the submission you are now considering . It is inconsistent with your goals for encouraging more affordable housing, it is destructive to the fabric of the neighborhoods that Cambridge Street serves,It does not provide you with the real consequences of this proposal and its effects of the current residential population and retail and public services that would result from its passage.

In 2023 The East Cambridge Planning Team, reviewed an earlier draft of this proposal and we found that it lacked :

Any historical perspective of the street and the neighborhoods it serves It did not reflect a needs assessment of the present population and the emerging population particularly with regard to the elderly and to young families It offered no indication of the number of dwelling units and imputed population that would emerge from this proposal and the public services that would be required of the city It did not measure the impact of this proposal on the existing traditional network of retail services owned and operated by members of the community It did not reflect the potential displacement of current residents as a result of new development It did not emphasize the encouragement of affordable housing versus market rate housing It did not reflect the desire to encourage more ownership options for the existing and future population It did not measure the impact on transportation needs that would be generated by a new population resulting from developments stimulated by this zoning proposal It did not measure the public utility needs that would result from the developments that are being proposed including schools and open space needs It did not have a genuine public engagement process that reached out to local institutions, churches, neighborhood associations and residents to gauge the impact of these proposals

The one thing it did do that is now threatened by the Current proposal is to limit the height of residential buildings to six stories so that structures could be built on the state building code that offers much lower construction costs for housing. The new 8 story buildings that are encouraged in this proposal will require much more expensive building costs that would result in much higher rents to the future developers .

The work on this plan is not finished . Do not rush to pass an ordinance that will cause many unintended negative consequences . It needs more work and more careful and more rational planning.

Thankyou

O. Robert Simha

Erwin, Nicole

From: Catherine Hoffman <catherinebhoffman@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 4:21 PM
To: Wilson, Ayesha; Azeem, Burhan; cathie zusy; City Clerk; Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; McGovern, Marc; Patricia Nolan; Nolan, Patricia; Toner, Paul; Simmons, Denise; Siddiqui, Sumbul; sumbul siddiqui
Cc: 'CH JC'; 'CResABoard'
Subject: zoning petitions

On zoning petitions

Dear Councilors,

I am writing on a new topic of concern but one which is also connected to unintended circumstances. Rather than approve or deny these 2 zoning petitions before you tonight, I would urge you to enable more reflection by letting them expire and revisiting them after January.

The flurry of activity implementing the February 2025 multi-family zoning has already resulted in serious push back on many fronts. There will be units built, but they will not contribute to the desperate needs for affordability, distributing density to the single family wealthier zones, or increased community input and neighborhood livability.

While the Planning Board has voted unanimous adoption, I share their concerns
Mass Ave at Porter Square Concerns:

- Limited open space requirements for smaller buildings.
 - The potential for diminished incentives of the **Affordable Housing Overlay**, which currently allows 13 stories.
 - The risk that new ground-floor spaces could favor larger retail chains rather than local businesses.
- Cambridge Street attention:
- Open space standards for smaller projects.
 - Ways to ensure new retail spaces remain accessible to small, local businesses.
 - Whether the height bonuses are strong enough to truly incentivize mixed-use development.

Beyond their concerns, and in a time of fiscal conservatism, I want the Council to prioritize housing which is not driven developer's profits. There is no way that 100% or majority affordable housing can compete on the same ground with the higher land costs accompanying these proposed heightened "give-aways" to developers. We will end up with more and taller housing, more displacement and heavier burdens on residents. Instead let's build on the new interest with some funding possibilities for exploring social housing and CLTs which promises real affordability sustained by reinvesting in the housing not developers' pockets.

There is also a process reason to put this off. When these corridors were discussed, the current heights were not part of the proposal nor were the "as of right" guarantees. Residents should be allowed to speak on the real proposals and not just at this hasty meeting tonight. Earlier organized discussions about these kind of heights in Central Square with representations from the Port, Riverside, Cambridgeport, the NAACP, LBJ tenants, CHJC activists and more were met with resounding criticism. Shifting to Inman Sq and Porter Square without real scrutiny based on actual proposals is chilling.

If the majority of this Council votes to move forward with the 2 proposals which I hope you don't, essential modifications to the current proposal should include much lower heights as of right to allow affordable

proposals to compete, eliminating hotels as housing and also to allow neighborhood and small business input into very tall buildings which would affect all aspects of neighbors' lives.

It would be a good opening to this advent season when we have a lot of other people and places that need our attention to let these proposals expire.

Cathy Hoffman
Pleasant St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Bei Wang <beiwang@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 4:07 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Concerns about "as of right" heights and density dumping

Dear City Clerk,

I'm writing to express concern about the proposal allowing 8 to 12-story buildings as of right along Cambridge Street and Inman Square. I support adding housing, but this approach creates random density dumping into corridors that already face some of the city's highest cyclist conflict rates, the least transit support, and limited opportunity for community oversight.

Granting major height increases without a special-permit process raises three core issues:

1. It worsens safety on one of Cambridge's most dangerous corridors for cyclists and pedestrians
Cambridge Street and Inman Square already struggle with constant double-parking from delivery drivers, narrow lanes, irregular intersections, and heavy turning traffic. Adding large buildings by right will increase Uber/Lyft pickups, deliveries, and congestion. Without a special-permit process, the city cannot require loading zones, curb management, or any of the mitigations essential to cyclist and pedestrian safety.

2. It raises serious equity concerns by placing the heaviest burdens on already over-stressed neighborhoods
Wealthier low-density areas west of Harvard remain shielded from major height increases, while Cambridge Street and Inman, dense, transit-poor, and working-class, are asked to absorb large buildings without corresponding infrastructure investment. Fair growth requires balancing where height is placed, not concentrating impacts in the same neighborhoods repeatedly.

3. "As of right" sidesteps democratic process and removes necessary public oversight
Special permits are the city's primary mechanism for ensuring affordability, mobility improvements, environmental safeguards, and safety requirements. Converting these to advisory-only eliminates meaningful public input and reduces the Council's ability to shape outcomes in areas that urgently need thoughtful planning.

Cambridge can add housing without compromising cyclist safety, fairness, or democratic accountability. A more calibrated plan, one that includes mitigation requirements and respects neighborhood infrastructure limits, will deliver better results for everyone. At a minimum, please postpone the decision to allow more participation and discussion.

Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Bei Wang

Erwin, Nicole

From: Gordon Moore <hugmoore183@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 3:56 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: statement to the Ordinance Committee on the North Mass Ave Zoning Petition
Attachments: Ordinance committee 12-2.docx

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Gordon T. Moore MD, MPH (he/him/his)
Professor of Population Medicine, Harvard Medical
401 Park Drive, Suite 401, Boston, MA 02215
Gordon_moore@hphci.harvard.edu or Hugmoore183@gmail.com
Tel: 617-491-6278
Cellphone: [617-966-7071](tel:617-966-7071)

Gordon Moore

9 Rutland St

December 2, 2025

This North Mass Ave zoning petition has significantly and critically changed in character from the plan presented to and agreed by the community after an extensive, multiyear process of public engagement regarding the future of North Mass Ave. The final community meeting last April and the subsequent CDD final recommendations report in May emphasized linking the awarding of additional height to developers with their building affordable multifamily housing, particularly for middle income families, many of whom work in Cambridge but cannot afford to live here. This zoning petition has completely dropped that goal.

Let me read the relevant Zoning Principles from the CDD and community work as summarized on page 84 of the final report in May:

Use Regulations: · *Prioritize Residential Mixed-Use Development:* » Permit the greatest building heights for projects that incorporate multifamily housing, particularly those with non-residential ground-floor activation. » Do not adjust existing height limits to developments that do not include residential components. · *Ground-Floor Activation Strategy:* » Throughout the corridor: Encourage but do not require non-residential ground-floor uses.

This petition has reversed these zoning use recommendations. The goal of providing family affordability has been completely dropped from this petition. 1 and dozens, perhaps hundreds, of citizens participated actively in the long and deep process of community engagement leading up to and informing our goals for north Mass Ave. Most importantly, this petition changes what we community participants were led to believe -- that the additional height above base zoning would be incentivized to create affordable multifamily housing for middle income families who want to live here. This incentive is completely gone, replaced by the requirement for ground floor retail.

In addition, I claim that those of us in the extensive community group who participated have been misled in a way that has diminished our input into the required zoning petition process. The now false narrative of the final report left many of us reassured that the zoning petition would of course deliver what we discussed and CDD proposed. Public awareness of how the petition has changed from what we thought the result would be is non-existent, and because we weren't told of the significant change in what we believed as the result of our participation and work, we have a current petition process that has left us in the dark. As a community, we have not really had a chance to share our views. Even now neighbors do not appreciate that

they needed to come to the planning board and ordinance committee to stand up for the principles we had supported.

This zoning petition represents a significant change in the character of the zoning section of the community report as presented in April and published on the CDD website in last May. The goal of growth in exchange for affordability has been dropped. Legally, this ought to be an irregularity in the zoning petition process. It has robbed many of us in the neighborhood of the chance to engage with a still fundamental question. If not what CDD and we recommended, then how does the increase in housing along Mass Ave provide middle income affordability? At the least, there should be a public discussion of this most significant issue, given that what we believed would be happening is not in this petition. Our input has been stifled.

I request the Ordinance Committee to do this right. The changed plan should be presented and discussed in a public meeting. Citizens should hear why multifamily and middle income affordability have been dropped. And how this new zoning petition will deliver the middle income affordability relief we all want.

On October 30th, I described what I have related to you in a letter to the City Solicitor. I claimed what has happened to be an irregularity in the process of the petition. A month has passed and I have not received a response, not even an acknowledgment of my concern.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Wayne Welke <wayne.welke@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 2:40 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please Support North Mass Ave and Cambridge Street Zoning Reforms

Dear Councilors -

I'm writing once again in strong support for the North Mass. Ave. and Cambridge Street zoning petitions. The Community Development Department's recommendations come after years of community process and planning. It is now essential to finalize approval of these changes which will allow more housing by right along these two corridors.

I have been a resident of Cambridge and a homeowner here for over 55 years. Significantly, my home is less than half a block from the business district on Massachusetts Avenue at Day and Dover Streets. I welcome the proposed zoning changes that will allow housing to be built above these one story shops. These changes will have the benefit of adding to the vitality of the shops as well as significantly improving the housing supply.

Unfortunately, the information circulated by the opposition resorts to NIMBY scare tactics and exaggerated photos to frighten poorly informed neighbors, including fear mongering about "18 story towers." Why are these people opposed just for the sake of opposition? And where were they in the multi-year community planning process?

I urge you to please vote to give the final approval of the Ordinance Committee to these zoning changes, which the Planning Board has unanimously recommended.

~Wayne Welke

30 Dover Street - #3
Cambridge, MA 02140
welke@alum.mit.edu

Erwin, Nicole

From: Kathleen Moore <kathleensmoore@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 2:21 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Fwd: Strong Support for North Mass Ave and Cambridge Street Zoning Petitions

Dear City Council Members,

I am writing to express my continued strong support for the North Mass Ave and Cambridge Street zoning petitions.

I was pleased that the Planning Board unanimously recommended these zoning changes at its October 21 meeting. These reforms will allow more housing by right along these two important corridors, which is essential for our community's future.

I appreciate that these recommendations from the CDD come after years of thoughtful community process, including many public meetings, as well as many months of meetings with a working group consisting of local community leaders for North Mass Ave and Porter Square. This extensive engagement demonstrates that these proposals have been carefully developed with substantial community input.

I strongly urge the Committee to vote in favor of recommending these zoning changes.

Kathleen Moore

9 Doane Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: N Trivedi <ntrivedi00@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 1:48 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support North Mass Ave and Cambridge Street upzoning

Dear City Council:

I urge you to support the upzoning petitions on the agenda today for the Ordinance Committee.

I live in North Cambridge just off of Mass Ave, and was a resident member of the Mass Ave Planning Study Group. I fully support the recommendations for upzoning put forth (for Mass Ave and also Cambridge St).

The cost of housing is soaring, and allowing for upzoning on these corridors is a common sense solution. In addition, Massachusetts loses residents to other, low cost states every year, putting the economy in our state, region and City at risk.

I hope you will support these plans for upzoning.

Thank you,
Neheet Trivedi

Erwin, Nicole

From: Dave Halperin <halperin.dr@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 1:38 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Support Corridor Upzoning

Dear Council,

In February, this city council passed the largest citywide upzoning in the country. Many opponents said it was too far. We just had an election where many ran opposed to multi-family housing zoning passed in February in particular and zoning reform agenda under the passed several councils in particular. The results are in. None of the repeal slate candidates won. The A Better Cambridge slate of candidates got around 55% of #1, roughly the same as in 2023 despite having one fewer candidates on it and A Better Cambridge maintains a majority on the next city council. I believe it is clear that there was no backlash and a majority of the electorate favors bold action to address our housing shortage. This council and the next should continue the work.

I continue to be concerned that the corridor zoning petitions won't result as much as those of us supporting bold action on housing hope. If we want people to build taller, they need to have real economic incentives to do so. That means giving enough height above six stories to justify going to highrise codes. Upper floor setbacks, additional open space requirements, potential of running into a large project special permit are all headwinds to developers taking advantage of the new zoning when they can continue to build to six stories. Given how much rhetoric there has been in the past about how most of our housing growth should be on our corridors and squares, I find this ironic and unfortunate.

Nonetheless, these proposals have been through long processes and I think are unlikely to be significantly strengthened at this point, especially within the limits of what can be done without refileing. I welcome any friendly amendments the council can reach a deal on to further incentivize density on these corridors. Regardless, I hope these zoning proposals can get a positive recommendation out of committee tonight & be ordained as soon as possible. Certainly some projects would take advantage of this zoning even if it provides less incentive than I'd prefer and it is an improvement over the status quo. Once ordained, we can move on to other pressing housing priorities as well as monitor the impacts of this zoning with an eye towards adjusting course if needed.

Please advance these zoning proposals.

Thank you,
David Halperin
14 Valentine St. Unit 3

Erwin, Nicole

From: Neil Miller <neilmiller95@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 1:12 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Support vibrant neighborhoods (Cambridge St/N Mass Ave)

Hi! I'm writing in strong support of the North Mass Ave and Cambridge Street zoning petitions. Please vote to **advance them out of the Ordinance Committee** tonight and then **pass them in the coming weeks**.

These plans deliver real support for Cambridge's renters, small businesses, and everyone who lives in and visits our neighborhoods.

- **Small businesses** benefit when these corridors are allowed to evolve. Too many storefronts on Mass Ave or Cambridge St are vacant. More residents/visitors gives more customers, and redevelopment creates the retail spaces businesses are looking for today (smaller retail units; shared utilities; multi-purpose spaces like Jaho Coffee, a coffee shop and bar).
- **Affordability:** the number 1 resident concern in Cambridge is the cost and availability of market-rate housing. By building near job centers like Porter, Lechmere, and Kendall (and transit infrastructure convenient to those jobs) we can continue to add homes - helping existing residents move into new spots (inclusionary and market-rate), plus reducing competition from new folks moving into Cambridge. Some neighbors think there's "too much development" in residential-only neighborhoods; I personally disagree, but this plan will of course shift development to corridors instead.
- **City finances** are under pressure from the Trump admin's attacks; remaking some of those vacant spaces and old 1-story buildings will bump up property taxes and improve economic competitiveness.
- New development will also bring **neighborhood improvements**. The Mass Ave Planning Study highlighted that N. Mass Ave and Porter Square are urban heat islands - the existing built environment and streetscape is not sustainable or particularly livable, let's move into the 21st century

MAPS has been going on for almost three years. Our Cambridge St started 4+ years ago. In the meantime, housing costs, retail vacancies, and sustainability challenges haven't gotten better. This Council already decided to delay Central Sq's plan to bring these corridors forward. Let's prioritize action over endless plans.

Going forward, there's of course more we can and should do:

- continued mobility and transit improvements - like faster buses and safe bike/pedestrian infrastructure
- better pricing for parking so that we're smart about how we use limited street space
- proactive engagement to fill vacant storefronts, plus costs for owners who ignore their properties

These plans are a necessary first step. Let's pass these, then keep working.

Thank you! And happy Thanksgiving --

Neil Miller
Central Square

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ethan Frank <ethandf2@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 12:56 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; Nolan, Patricia; Azeem, Burhan; sumbulidd@gmail.com
Subject: Removing financial barriers to housing construction

To the Finance Committee and Housing Committee,

I would love to see housing permitting made easier. Especially if we have an excess of fees and requirements. I am curious what our developers say are the main pain points in the process.

Sincerely,
Ethan Frank

Erwin, Nicole

From: David Hattis <davidwhattis@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 12:17 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: In Support of North Mass Ave and Cambridge Street Rezoning

Hello,

I wanted to write in support of the proposal to allow for greater densities along Cambridge St and north Mass Ave.

As you all know, during the Cambridge Envision process we set a goal for 12,500 homes to be built by 2030. I think it's helpful to think of that goal in terms of the annual pace of homebuilding that it would have required. If you divide 12,500 by 12, the number of years between 2018 and 2030, you get 1,041, which is the number of homes that we would have had to build every year for 12 years in order to meet the Envision housing goal. The Envision web site shows that we have built 3,112 homes over the 7 years since Envision, which is an annual pace of 445 homes per year, less than half of what we need to in order to meet our Envision goal.

So we're far behind, and given the challenging interest rate environment we're in, we're only falling further behind. In 2025 according to the city's housing starts data, Cambridge permitted only 62 net new homes in 2025, which is the lowest number since 2009. So I support this effort to get more homes built in Cambridge so that we can get closer to meeting the Envision housing goal.

Thank you,
David Hattis
393 Broadway

Erwin, Nicole

From: Hunter Aldrich <hunteraldrich@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 12:12 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Cc: chjc@cambridgehousingjustice.com
Subject: Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street Zoning

Dear City Councilors:

I am extremely concerned about your upzoning proposal for Mass. Avenue and Cambridge Street. The proposed zoning changes will exacerbate the housing crisis for low-income residents. They will make our city increasingly over-crowded and densely populated and more profitable for developers at the exclusion of our residents. The proposed zoning will also violate your duty to provide transparent notice and discussion of zoning proposals to the residents of Cambridge. There was no public discussion pertaining to the proposed zoning heights of buildings or the as-of-right hotels on Cambridge Street and Massachusetts Avenue at any of the public meetings held regarding zoning in these areas.

The residents of the City of Cambridge do not need additional commercial buildings or hotels that cater to well-to-do people along Mass. Avenue and Cambridge Street or throughout Cambridge. We do not need additional people living in one of the densest cities for its size in the United States or additional cars along the roads creating horrendous traffic problems.

Long term, low-income residents who have been excluded from their housing by the building of market rate, luxury housing need affordable below-market housing. We all need the City Council to preserve open space and plant additional mature trees that will mitigate to some small degree against the negative impact and future repercussions of climate change. We need Councilors to keep developers and their buildings out of wetlands and environmentally sensitive areas of Cambridge.

To conclude, the proposed zoning petitions should be allowed to expire in January 2026 and taken up by the next City Council. Residents of Cambridge need City leaders who implement zoning changes that will benefit the current and future interests and well-being of the residents of this city, not the interests of the developers.

Thank you,

Hunter Aldrich
1 Field Street
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Marilee Meyer <mbm0044@aol.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 11:12 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager; Peters, Melissa; Roberts, Jeffrey
Subject: please postpone the corridor upzoning- ordinance.

Dear Councilors,

The election results must have been a pleasant surprise for you keeping your housing allies still intact. That means that any policy order or petition could be carried over to the new term without fear of losing the next vote. Please either let the petitions expire and take up later, or further amend and clarify details and other height distinctions for better scaled and equitable placement.

Don't consider the election as a mandate or blank check. Councilor Zusy's election to number 4 proves major concerns including less regulation making for easier development, while also encouraging **widespread demolition and eviction**, speculative investment, loss of small businesses and existing affordable housing. According to *Cambridge's Citywide Urban Design Guidelines (2025)*, "**The design of residential buildings is fundamental to Cambridge's rich and varied character.**" **Also at risk is the AHO itself.**

These new petitions are pushed by proponents who manage to LOOK like the allies of affordable housing and social justice while destroying the belief in regulation, public investment and democratic participation. They are actually helping developers "reshape cities into lifeless playgrounds of the super-rich". Depending on the free market, the call for more housing really means we need to allow developers to build what sells. **We don't need "ABUNDANT HOUSING", we need livable housing.**

The current petitions include perfectly plausible goals including:

- **Enhancing the public realm through good building and site design.**

The last point is still a step-child. The historical commission's jurisdiction has been diminished as has the Planning Board reviews. After multiple public meetings where general consensus was that no one wanted 12 stories, CDD presented language based on 6 and 8 stories on corridors. But Councilors dictated more height. The *Urban Design Guidelines* continue: "each square and corridor segment has developed its own unique character over time, one that can and should be complemented and enhanced when opportunities arise...." Older buildings **EACH have a human scale with open space, set-backs, step-back in massing, smaller scale windows, dormers, quality materials, open ground floors, landscaping, parking and/ or drop off- all now non-existent.**

Cars are not going away. People leave for work at 4:00 AM. Group housing, repurposing and focusing on AHO are re-gaining traction. There are too many caveats to understand regulated heights let alone the type, size, location and price levels current residents need.

It seems that both **ENVISION and the URBAN DESIGN GUIDELINES** need to be updated because Council is ignoring their recommendations.

12 stories is too tall everywhere. As-of-right and no design review are irresponsible, And "no open space is required" is inhumane. Review of projects need to begin at 4-6 stories- not wait for the combined properties wielding huge buildings dwarfing the neighborhoods. The more the city changes, the more important neighborhoods become in regional identity and heritage. More importantly, if you are going through the motions of a public process, LISTEN TO THAT PROCESS. The Council is not a city planning body, which overrode CDD on several occasions. We have no actual numbers or goals or reviews. HOW MANY OF THOSE ON YOUR UNVETTED 21,000 HOUSING LIST ARE GOING TO BE CANDIDATES FOR THESE MARKET RATE AND 20% INCLUSIONARY BUILDINGS WHICH ARE STILL BEYOND MANY DESERVING PEOPLE?

The dictate from the Chair of the Ordinance Committee, who high-jacked the petitions and sent them immediately to Ordinance to "get them on the schedule as quickly as possible", may not be as crucial in this moment. Labs are empty, luxury units are empty but being rented out under Air BNB. Construction has slowed, Materials are expensive.

The city has shirked responsibility **for identifying needs THEN supporting development of housing** that meets them. Failing to incorporate adopted design guidelines and impose a reasonable and efficient review process will continue to fuel controversy and limit opportunities to achieve our housing goals. This is siloed thinking at its most damaging.

You will continue to have the votes. Please postpone or let expire these two petitions which need more work to make functional, equitable and realistic. .

Thank you.

Sincerely,

Marilee Meyer

10 Dana St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Phyllis Bretholtz <pbretholtz@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 11:08 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Upzoning along Cambridge Street

Dear Councilors,

Please take no action on the zoning petition for Cambridge Street. Postpone the vote on this upzoning until the after the new year. Allow this petition to expire.

I have been a resident of Cambridge since 1964. I taught at CRLS for 29 years, have been an active member of the Arts Council, the Women's Commission, the Cambridge Residents Alliance, and one of the creators of the Inman Square Neighborhood Association. My commitment to Cambridge is long, wide and deep. And within the past two years I have begun to feel disenfranchised. While there have been many opportunities to contribute public comment on various issues, I now feel that these public hearings are pro forma. They are offered to make residents feel we have a way to contribute to decision making, but my experience in the past few years is that decisions have already been made and this is a complete sham.

Specifically, with regard to upzoning along Cambridge Street, there has been no community process that has contemplated these building heights.

The proposed upzonings would reduce or even eliminate the allowable height incentive to build 100 percent affordable housing. I feel that the city is open to the highest bidder, with little real consideration for affordable housing, for creating a sense of community, for protecting the tree canopy and green/open space, for design review, for real open space on new construction, for little to no consideration that by building more units without parking available,

increasing the bike lanes, reducing resident parking without considering that many new residents will bring in more cars impacting resident parking on our side streets, and the impact on so many small businesses that have already closed or are considering closing because there is no available parking, we have increased traffic jams, made travel around the city confusing at best, we are making Cambridge a less and less desirable and affordable place for young families - with an obvious impact on our schools.

Listen to the concerns expressed by the East Cambridge Business Association, the desire for social housing, some of the finest minds on how to create affordable housing. Do not sell us out to people with money to spare that increases Air B&B's, makes it difficult to create neighborhoods where residents, owners and renters alike, can walk around to markets, post offices, and drug stores, small cafes and small owner businesses, where it is hard to find any place in the city where artists can display their art work other than their homes on Open Studio days... We cannot build our way out of the housing crisis. We must be more creative and open to hearing what renters as well as owners have to say.

Thank you for listening to those of us who want a more open process around heights along our corridors and a more livable city. We did not choose to live in New York City for some obvious reasons, density being one of them.

Please allow the proposed upzoning along Cambridge Street to expire.

Thank you.

Phyllis Bretholtz

65 Antrim Street

pbretholtz@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ellen Cushman <ecushman@belmont-ma.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 10:59 AM
To: Gemme, Laura
Cc: Eileen Bernal; City Clerk; jbrazile@town.arlington.ma.us; brodrigue@bedfordma.gov; Kaitlin Wright; dfarias@newbedford-ma.gov; JRowe@lynma.gov; elections@springfieldcityhall.com
Subject: Re: Zoom Invite for Meeting - PRR

All,
I apologize for not being able to participate in the Zoom on the topic of issuing uncertified vital records; an emergency popped up and we all know how that goes. Juli Brazile (Arlington) has kindly summarized the Zoom discussion for me.

I had planned to share with you all that about a week ago I got a call from our State Senator Will Brownsberger about the latest Senate Bill to require removal of the SSN on death certificates issued to the public, so I took advantage. I explained the divide between Vitals and Public Records and Belmont's specific request that the two parties communicate directly to decide and issue instructions to all Clerks and RVRS that we can stand behind. Other Towns and Cities have also asked for this collaboration.

The two questions we all are asking:

1. Is the State or a City/Town required to issue an uncertified vital record in response to a public records request?
2. If yes, what is the proper form the uncertified vital record must take, such as adding a watermark, or disclaimer and which fields, if any fields should be redacted?

Senator Brownsberger offered to phone the Commissioner of Public Health, which he did, and returned an immediate reply to me. Will said that the Commissioner met with their General Counsel and they have asked RVRS to work with Public Records to prepare a supportable statement and a process (if required) and issue them to all State and Municipal parties. I have asked Will if he has an update but haven't yet heard back.

Ellen

Ellen O'Brien Cushman
Town Clerk
Town Hall, 455 Concord Ave
Belmont, MA 02478
617-993-2604
ecushman@belmont-ma.gov

On Mon, Nov 24, 2025 at 12:32 PM Gemme, Laura <lgemme@readingma.gov> wrote:

Tomorrow, November 25th at 9:30 AM

Thank you for joining in on the conversation

Laura Gemme is inviting you to a scheduled Zoom meeting.

Topic: Vital Public Records Requests

Time: Nov 25, 2025 09:30 AM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/85391183419?pwd=VotCrVpWzVB89bdjSjbJNx9pgaHymi.1>

Meeting ID: 853 9118 3419

Passcode: 301667

One tap mobile

+16465588656,,85391183419# US (New York)

+16465189805,,85391183419# US (New York)

Join instructions

<https://us06web.zoom.us/meetings/85391183419/invitations?signature=Tk8R5QS-eBnfsQpqAeE7Dvy612yEx6T00H0siaX7OfA>

Laura A Gemme, CMC /CMMC

Town Clerk

President Middlesex City and Town Clerks Association

Board of Registrar - Retirement Board

Chief Election Official - Justice of the Peace

Commissioner to Qualify - Notary

Burial Agent - Census Liaison

Chief Records Access Officer

Town of Reading

16 Lowell Street

Reading, MA 01867

(P) 781-942-6647

(C) 781-491-5215

(F) 781-942-9070

(W) <http://www.readingma.gov>

Town Hall Hours:

Monday, Wednesday and Thursday - 7:30 AM to 5:30 PM

Tuesday - 7:30 AM to 7:00 PM

Friday - CLOSED

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This email and all replies and attachments are subject to the Massachusetts Public Records Law (M.G.L. Ch. 66, § 10).

Erwin, Nicole

From: Geoff Wieting <geoffwieting@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 10:53 AM
To: City Council
Cc: City Manager
Subject: Vote on high-rise zoning

I'm writing to request that you postpone this vote. There are multiple neighborhoods where high-rises have been proposed, and I don't think the council has allotted enough time yet to hear from residents of these areas.

Thank you.

Geoffrey Wieting

Sent from Yahoo Mail for iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Markowitz <susanlmarkowitz@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 10:33 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Cc: Susan Markowitz
Subject: Cambridge Street upzoning

To the Cambridge City Council, City Manager and the Clerk,

I am writing about my opposition to the Cambridge Street upzoning. Mostly I am upset that there has not been a true public process to discuss these heights and get peoples' opinions and feelings. The new heights of 8 stories all along Cambridge St and 10 stories in Inman Square, 12 at Windsor/Webser and 15 at Lechmere will change the entire neighborhood. Inman Square is a vibrant community and 10 story buildings will change it completely.

There was a Cambridge Street Study a few years ago which recommended 6 stories as of right on Cambridge Street. Why is that not being listened to? I feel like, even in Cambridge, our government is making decisions for us. This is not good. We need to be heard. Postpone the vote and give us time to meet.

There are multiple amendments that need to be made and also require postponement. The AHO height incentive must be maintained, design review must be maintained, people have parking issues they want to discuss, etc., etc.

Please postpone this vote!

Thank you.
Susan Markowitz
20 Oak St
Cambridge, MA.

Erwin, Nicole

From: marie elena saccoccio <saccocciom@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 10:01 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager; Planning Board Comment; Roberts, Jeffrey; timothyflaherty@gmail.com; Bob (ovidia) Sinha; Hugh Russell; 'John Pitkin'; John Hanratty
Subject: Fw: Opposition to Largest Zoning Deregulation of Cambridge Street in over a Century -
Attachments: Thirteen Neighborhoods One City 1953 Under Joe Deguglielmo.pdf; Condon American City Canadian City Diagram.png

Councilors, Madame Mayor, City Manager:

I am resubmitting my prior missives to this body with the same criticism as I have shared in the past. Nothing has changed in terms of my positions other than now this Body is determining the placement and heights including 15 stories in what has been called Cambridge St/Lechmere/Cambridge Crossing. Which is it?? Has that even been decided?? Cambridge Crossing is across the highway and already pretty built up in height. The vacant lot that once was home to Lechmere Station is part of a PUD and was expected to be a hotel. That block seems to be somehow entirely dragged into an upzoning, though most of it is housing now, and to be sure will be demolished. Does Council know?? I also point out that there has been no discussion of remuneration or compensation to the small businesses on Cambridge Street? Does Council somehow expect small businesses to return after two years to spanking new, exorbitantly priced retail abode?? What of the rampant demolition that will take place on Cambridge Street?? Has Council considered this or does Council simply not care?? Has Council considered that the plan really is to increase housing but Cambridge Street is already home to active lab space, with our ordinance not even distinguishing between BSL 1, 2, or 3. To put it bluntly, as now written, our ordinance allows labs, despite level, wherever office or business is allowed as per our zoning. It never did distinguish and that dates back to a century ago when the dentist office or doctor office had its labs on the premises. At present one can reach out of a residential building window on Cambridge Street into the next building which is home to elaborate labs. One can lease lab space in a Cambridge Street building that is also home to preschool daycare.

When this was first presented to our Planning Board, Lou Bacci was still with us, I recall him literally throwing the plan in the air on a zoom, stating this is the end of Cambridge Street. We in East Cambridge needed him desperately on this issue.

I realize that this Committee will insist that there has been adequate and even elaborate outreach, but it truly has been pitiful whether or not you are weighing Envision or the Cambridge Street debacle. Most of the residents walked out of both. City employees from CDD glowed that they even had considerable input from Kendall Square and Unions Square residents. Really?? How long do they remain here as residents?? We had one rep from Envision actually mentioning Cambridge Boulevard. LOL The Cambridge Street Pittsburgh entity gave us a history of East Cambridge ethnic groups and left out Irish, Italian, Polish and Portuguese. LOL. We paid for that study???? The sticky post-its were pitiful at both events.

I know you are ready to just adopt this no matter what I present here. There really is no desperate rush other than you want this over with. Again, Cambridge Street is not Mass Ave. We never have

had the meetings or support that Mass Ave has been afforded. It is far more complex down here with our historic buildings, infiltration of labs; shy high rentals. Does anyone care about the impact on the actual Affordable Housing ordinance recently adopted?? No time to wait and see how that even works out. This horribly undermines the ability of Affordable Housing to compete, ever!

Respectfully submitted,
Marie Elena Saccoccio, Esquire
55 Otis Street
East Cambridge
BBO# 552854

----- Forwarded Message -----

From: marie elena saccoccio <saccoccio@yaho.com>
To: City Council <citycouncil@cambridgema.gov>; city manager <citymanager@cambridgema.gov>; City Clerk <cityclerk@cambridgema.gov>
Cc: Bob (ovidia) Sinha <simha@mit.edu>; Heather Hoffman <heather.m.hoffman.1957@gmail.com>; Suzanne Blier <blier@fas.harvard.edu>; Marilee Meyer <mbm0044@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, September 15, 2025 at 10:23:11 AM EDT
Subject: Opposition to Largest Zoning Deregulation of Cambridge Street in over a Century -

Madam Mayor, City Council, City Manager:

Thank you for weighing in on the largest zoning deregulation in over a century, specific to Cambridge Street. One Councilor appeared before the ECPT this past year and announced that no Councilor understands zoning, not one, and he is an attorney. Iram Farook appeared before ECPT the prior week and announced that CDD merely does what the Councilors tell them to do. I then informed Iram that this is Plan E. Council only answers to the City Manager who directs CDD. That is explicitly controlled by statute and a violation can lead to a jail sentence and removal from office.

Marie Elena Saccoccio, Esq.
4th generation East Cambridge

Sent from my iPhone

Begin forwarded message:

From: marie elena saccoccio <saccoccio@yaho.com>
Date: November 18, 2024 at 9:46:54 AM EST
To: Planning Board Comment <planningboardcomment@cambridgema.gov>, Swaathi Joseph <sjoseph@cambridgema.gov>
Subject: Opposition to Largest Zoning Deregulation in over a Century

Dear Planning Board Members:

I am resubmitting here my original comments to City Council in response to the proposed directive for the CDD to draft language to effectuate the most dramatic zoning changes in this century. While the present Council may think relegating the language to CDD somehow puts professional imprimatur on the plan, it simply does not. Loosening or upzoning will lead to higher rental rates and dramatic increase in widescale demolition on Cambridge Street. I use as an immediately accessible measure, RentCafe's most recent posting comparing the neighborhoods of Cambridge. Note, East Cambridge has the highest rents and note specifically East

Cambridge also has the loosest residential zoning restrictions in the city. You can measure the effect of loosening of zoning as recently as this week, neighborhood by neighborhood:

According to RentCafe, the average monthly rent for an apartment in Cambridge, MA is \$4,078 as of September 2024. This is significantly higher than the national average rent of \$1,739.

Here are some average rent prices for different neighborhoods in Cambridge, MA:

- East Cambridge: \$4,078
- Inman/Harrington: \$3,933
- MIT: \$3,897
- Area 4: \$3,751
- Cambridgeport: \$3,751
- North Cambridge: \$3,650
- Mid-Cambridge: \$3,512
- Riverside: \$3,512
- Agassiz: \$3,457
- Peabody: \$3,457
- Cambridge Highlands: \$3,268
- Strawberry Hill: \$3,268
- West Cambridge: \$3,268

Lost in all the discussion and remarkably so is the work of Patrick Condon, internationally noted urban planner, and father to former Councilor Mallon. He opines after an entire professional career in this area that loosening of zoning in the private sector leads to higher land value and has the disastrous effect on affordability. What you will be doing is creating wealth for the landowner, but only if landowner intends to sell. See his latest diagram and data attached to this email.

I am attaching here as well the Report of the City of Cambridge from 1953, a time when neighborhoods were assessed locally and individually, as to livability and health. A time when the City looked at local needs as for transit; roads; schools, libraries; playgrounds, churches, water; shopping; sewers, fire stations, police, hospitals etc. I see none of this with today's Council. Instead there is one agenda solely devoted to increasing density, devoid of health, privacy, history, environmental conservation; historic preservation etc.

<https://x.com/pmcondon2/status/1831099374648406100>

Respectfully submitted and tired of all this,

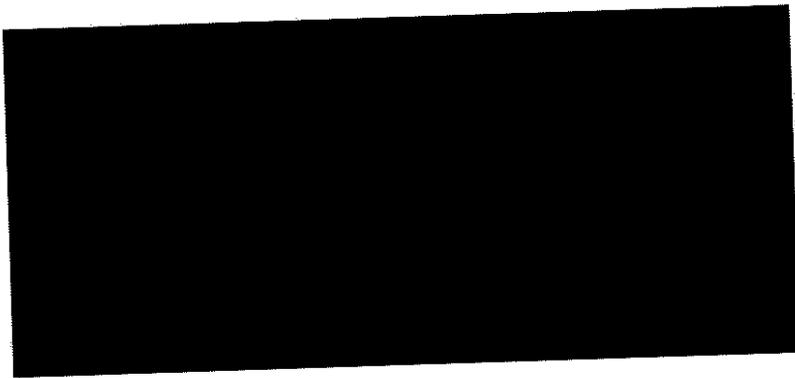
Marie Elena Saccoccio, Esquire
55 Otis Street
Cambridge, MA 02141
BBO#: 552854

Council Members and City Manager:

Nice to keep in mind whenever a zoning petition is before you. All we have seen are petitions that remove health, safety, privacy from the equation is if they have no role whatsoever. Truth is those are the constitutional underpinnings relied upon by the United States Supreme Court in ruling on all zoning. Zoning was truly born from the slums and removing more and more controls returns us to a dangerous path.

The proposed relief from zoning restrictions truly returns us to pre-zoning era when slums were the norm, and health, safety and privacy were never the consideration. This is a good read of how and why zoning actually developed.

Slums are how the free market houses the poor



Slums are how the free market houses the poor

Cameron Murray

Comparing depression era housing policy to today

I am sure that many reading this will think "but that is not what we are planning." To really assess the plan in front of you it is essential that you consider the real basis for zoning and what it was created to protect against. The Proposed Plan in front of you essentially removes protections and restrictions of zoning and oversight from city departments that your residents once enjoyed. Somehow, setbacks, or height or FAR restrictions or even parking are no longer on the table. All that matters is density. And, the projects anticipated will mean that others in the neighborhood don't matter either. Again and again, at the many presentations I here Millers River, promoted as the gold standard, with no notation that it is really elder housing and was built for that.

The zoning changes being presented now seek to warehouse people, as if they are widgets, devoid of appreciation of privacy, and space, history or architecture, while shaming and punishing homeowners who had the means and audacity to actually buy a home with a yard. We all realize that more housing is in the plans for this city. That is not even the controversy. It is about exemption of all restrictions that are based on health, general welfare, and even historical and architectural context.

Please do not recommend that our city go down this rabbit hole. While CDD leads with their goal to ZONE EQUITABLY WESTERN AND EASTERN NEIGHBORHOODS, the truth is East Cambridge will be the sacrificial lamb in all this. Cambridge Street is not Mass Ave and can never be that. The survey ordered and paid for under CM DePasquale was an awful waste of money. Most engaging were from Union Square and Kendall Square. Most longtime residents, including me, saw it for what it was - an awful waste of money replete with blatant errors to the point that I refused to submit to the survey.

It has taken a hundred years for some sections of the city built pre zoning to begin to recover from catastrophic development. Why would you try to repeat this?? Here is a link to the first public health trial in the country brought by residents of East Cambridge against Squire's.
[https://www.google.com/books/edition/The Official Record of the State Board o/3FMFZC62xOAC?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=squire%27s+public+health+east+cambridge+slaughterhouse&pg=PA473&printsec=frontcover](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_Official_Record_of_the_State_Board_o/3FMFZC62xOAC?hl=en&gbpv=1&dq=squire%27s+public+health+east+cambridge+slaughterhouse&pg=PA473&printsec=frontcover)

Respectfully Submitted,
Marie Elena Saccoccio, Esquire
55 Otis Street
Cambridge, MA 02141
BBO#552854

1339

THIRTEEN

NEIGHBORHOODS:

ONE CITY

analysis of Cambridge residential areas · Cambridge Planning Board · 1953

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THIRTEEN NEIGHBORHOODS: ONE CITY

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I PURPOSE OF THIS REPORT

Extent of Residential Area of Cambridge

Cambridge has about 6.2 square miles of area, excluding water areas. Most of this is occupied by factories, colleges, business centers and public open spaces, such as cemeteries and recreation areas, so that only about 2.7 square miles are devoted to predominantly residential use, including residential streets. In this 2.7 square miles approximately 112,000 persons are concentrated, making up about 29,000 family groups.

Subdivisions of Residential Area

For various practical purposes it has long been necessary to divide the residential area of Cambridge and its population into smaller segments than the City total. This has been done by various agencies for statistical, administrative, and political purposes. Thus, the City is divided into census tracts, parish districts, school districts, wards and precincts, and other subdivisions. In only a few instances do the boundaries of these areas coincide.

In addition to these paper subdivisions, the residential areas of the City are geographically divided by natural and man-made barriers of a physical nature. These include railroad lines, major traffic arteries, and non-residential land such as areas of factories, stores, universities, and open space. Geographical distance between parts of the City further effectively separates residential districts.

The residential areas of the City are further characterized by less tangible but nonetheless real social and economic groupings. These are reflected to some extent in physical form, such as prevalent types of housing. Thus, for example, it is possible to divide the City into areas of high-class single family homes, areas of two and three family homes, areas of rooming houses and apartments, and areas of dilapidated tenements.

Neighborhoods for City Planning Purposes

None of the present divisions of Cambridge residential areas has been found suitable to serve city planning purposes, which embrace many specialized fields in a comprehensive view of the City. After considerable study the neighborhood unit principle was found to offer the best method of dividing Cambridge residential areas into workable sections for city planning purposes. As city planning includes within its scope the location of all major physical features of residential

areas - dwelling structures, system of streets, traffic routes, parking areas, shopping centers, schools, libraries, health centers, recreational areas, churches, social agencies, youth and welfare centers, and others - this analysis of residential areas should be of interest also to the various official and private agencies providing these facilities.

This report briefly describes the neighborhood unit principle and shows how it has been applied to Cambridge. Data on each proposed neighborhood and on other existing subdivisions of the City are included for easy reference. The planning and organizational activities which have already been carried on at the neighborhood level are summarized, and the potentialities for revitalization of civic life on neighborhood principles are outlined.

II C R E D I T S

Assistance on this Study

Many individuals and organizations contributed data for this study. The Planning Board is particularly indebted to the following: Dr. Edward O'Rourke and Miss Edna Skelley of the Cambridge Health Department; Miss Mabel M. Brown, Executive Secretary, Cambridge Tuberculosis and Health Association; Mr. Thomas J. Hartnett, Chairman, Cambridge Election Commission; Miss Elizabeth E. Barry, Cambridge Visiting Nurses Association; and Miss Jane Coogan, Statistician, Catholic School Bureau.

III THE NEIGHBORHOOD THEORY

Definition of the Physical Neighborhood

Credit for the development of the neighborhood unit principle in city planning is due to Clarence A. Perry and his associates, whose ideas on the subject were first published in 1929 in the monograph "The Neighborhood Unit" in Neighborhood and Community Planning, Volume 7, The Regional Plan of New York and its Environs, 1929. The monograph was later summarized by Perry in Chapter 3 of Housing for the Machine Age, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1939. A selected bibliography on the growth of the neighborhood principle is contained in The Neighborhood Unit Plan - Its Spread and Acceptance, James Dahir, Russell Sage Foundation, New York, 1947.

The neighborhood unit is a scheme for the organization of the community life of families. In Perry's own words, it is based on the following six principles:

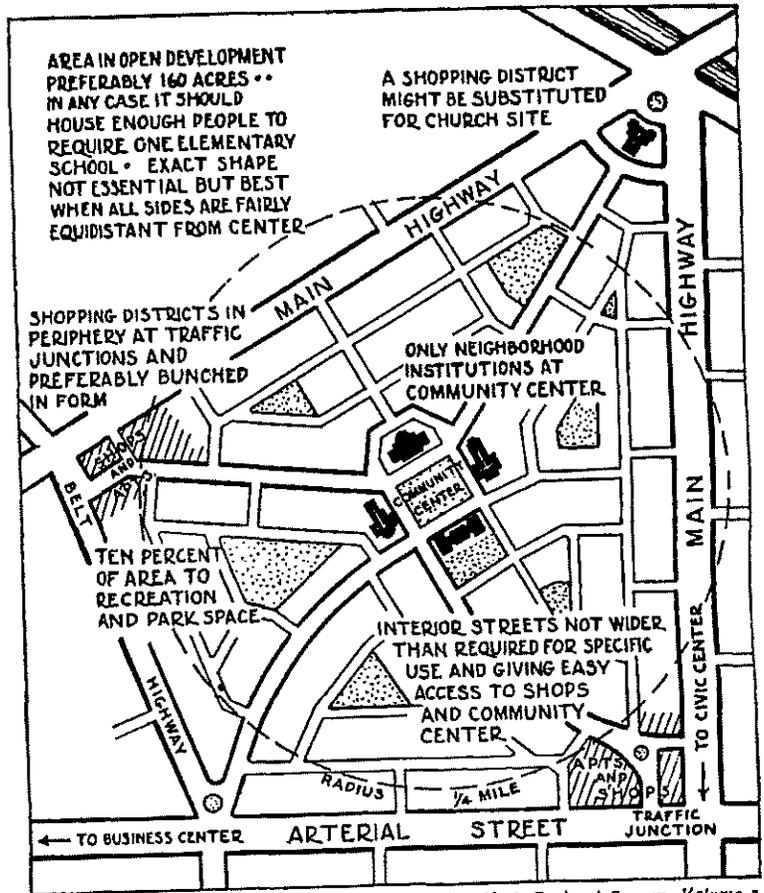
- "1) Size: A residential unit development should provide housing for that population for which one elementary school is ordinarily required, its actual area depending upon its population density.
- "2) Boundaries. The unit should be bounded on all sides by arterial streets, sufficiently wide to facilitate its by-passing, instead of penetration, by through traffic.
- "3) Open Spaces. A system of small parks and recreation spaces, planned to meet the needs of the particular neighborhood, should be provided.
- "4) Institution Sites. Sites for the school and other institutions having service spheres coinciding with the limits of the unit should be suitably grouped about a central point, or common.
- "5) Local Shops. One or more shopping districts, adequate for the population to be served, should be laid out in the circumference of the unit, preferably at traffic junctions and adjacent to similar districts or adjoining neighborhoods.
- "6) Internal Street System. The unit should be provided with a special street system, each highway being proportioned to its probable traffic load, and the street net as a whole being designed to facilitate circulation within the unit and to discourage its use by through traffic."

* * * * *

right: ILLUSTRATION 1: AN IDEAL NEIGHBORHOOD COMPARED TO A NEIGHBORHOOD OF CAMBRIDGE: Perry's ideal neighborhood contains 6,000 persons and about 1,500 homes on an area of 160 acres. It is composed primarily of single family houses with an average density of about 37.5 persons per acre. Ten per cent of the land area, or approximately 16 acres, are devoted to public recreational and park space.

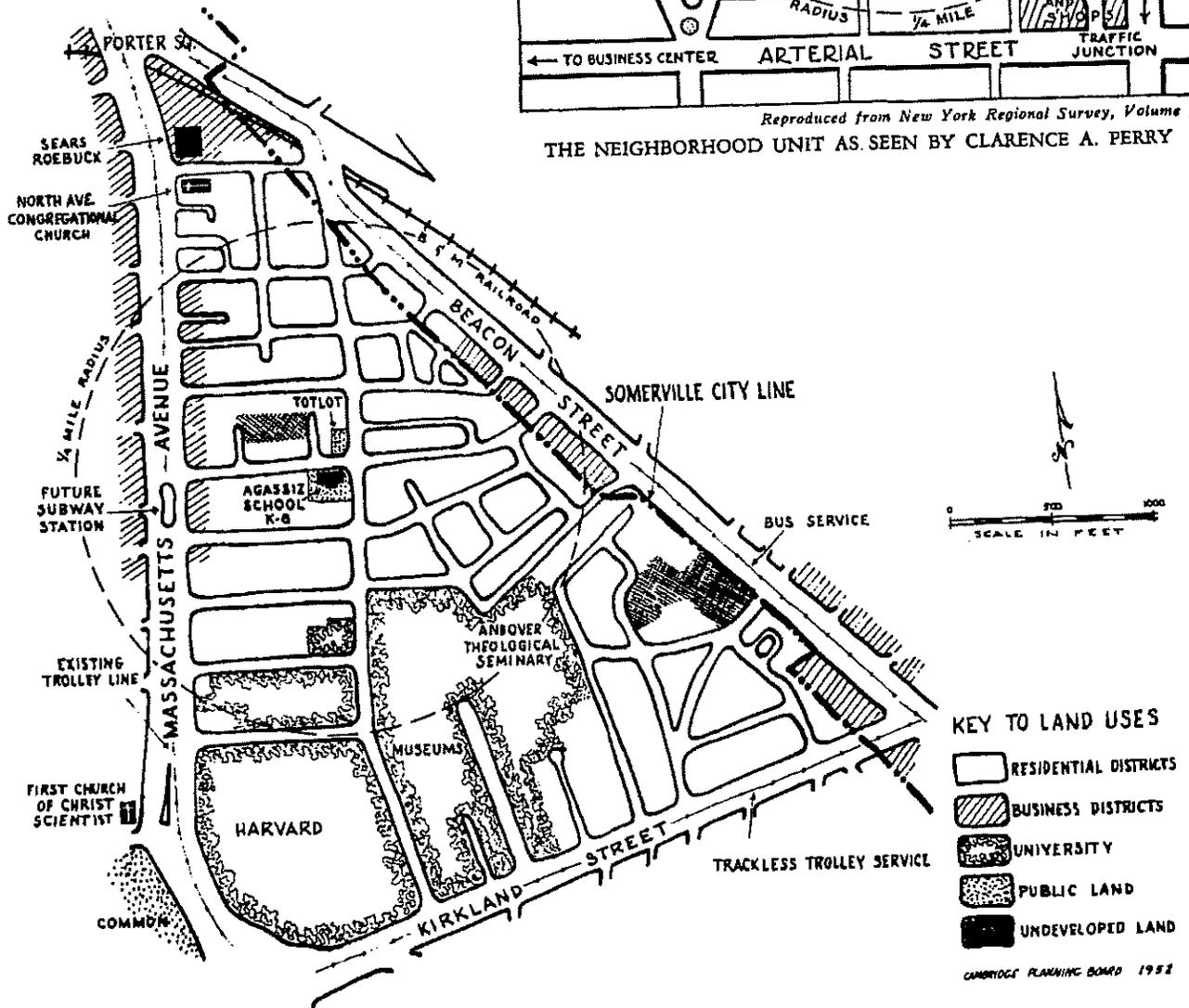
Neighborhood 8 in Cambridge contains about 5,353 persons and about 1,800 homes. Its area is 168 acres. It is thus roughly comparable in population and size to Perry's ideal. Its population is housed one-, two-, and multi-family houses at an average density of about 37 persons per acre. It is clearly bounded by main traffic streets with transportation routes and shopping facilities at the periphery.

In many respects the neighborhood as it exists today falls short of Perry's ideal. Although its residential area is much more crowded, less than one-half of one per cent of its area is devoted to public park and recreational space. Only seven-tenths of an acre of land are devoted to this use. The local street pattern is so laid out that there is no direct connection between part of the neighborhood adjacent to Kirkland Street and the remainder. The Cambridge and Somerville boundary does not correspond with the logical neighborhood boundaries. Classified by the Planning Board as a conservation area, protective measures are needed to preserve and improve the neighborhood's residential character.



Reproduced from New York Regional Survey, Volume 7

THE NEIGHBORHOOD UNIT AS SEEN BY CLARENCE A. PERRY



Associational Advantages of the Neighborhood

From the foregoing definition it can be seen that the neighborhood is essentially a residential grouping of suitable size and layout to favor the day-to-day activities of mothers and children. An elementary school, play spaces, and stores are provided within easy walking distance of every home. The local street system is laid out to keep the points of crossing of vehicles and pedestrians at a minimum. All those influences which detract from safe, healthful, and attractive environment for family living are deliberately excluded. Heavy automobile and truck traffic, trucking terminals, factories, and other undesirable influences that bring noise, fumes, smoke, danger or unsightliness are barred.

In each neighborhood the elementary school is the most important public building. Aside from the street and public utility system it represents the largest investment of public funds. For several hours each day for five days a week, ten months of the year, it hums with child activity. For the rest of the time it is all too often closed and deserted, as it has not been planned for any use except that of a school. Through proper design and operation, however, many of the rooms of a modern school - the auditorium, the gymnasium, the cafeteria, the shops, the arts and crafts rooms, and the health clinic - can be made to serve all age groups in the neighborhood. The school is so planned that these facilities are grouped in wings that can be operated when the rest of the school is closed. Other needed neighborhood facilities may also be included, including a branch library, a swimming pool, a recreation area and park, and possibly meeting rooms and administrative offices. Thus, the one-purpose school and its grounds can be transformed into a multi-purpose neighborhood center. This center could provide headquarters for the educational, health, recreational, and social activities of all age groups. It would not be closed a large part of the time but would have something going on every day of the week every month of the year.

Just as the arrangement of homes on the neighborhood principle is designed to favor family life in creating healthful surroundings, so such a neighborhood center could be designed to favor civic and associational activities by providing meeting rooms, play spaces, and other useful facilities. It is not difficult to foresee what effect such a center could have on local group activities. Social clubs, civic groups, parents' associations, athletic teams, hobby classes, and many other group activities would be stimulated. Creative outlets would be available for the leisure-time activities of young and old. Newcomers to the neighborhood would find it easier to become adjusted because of more groups to join and more opportunities to meet people. Just as a child feels he "belongs" in a happy home, so the family group could "belong" in a neighborhood with a vigorous associational life. Civic awareness, democratic participation, and local pride could develop real meaning for every home.

The neighborhood unit principle consequently offers a method of building up residential cells of such vitality that they are capable of resisting within themselves the forces of physical decay and social disorganization that are common to urban areas.

IV NEIGHBORHOODS OF CAMBRIDGE

Division of Cambridge into Neighborhoods

Map 1 shows the residential areas of Cambridge divided into thirteen neighborhoods. This division has been evolved after several years of study. Major geographical divisions between residential areas, such as railroad lines, heavy traffic streams, and non-residential land uses, were considered of first importance. The various existing subdivisions of the City which encourage associational life and group loyalties, such as school districts, parish districts, and wards, were taken into account. Other administrative statistical and service areas, such as census tracts and public health nurses' districts, were also considered. Attention was paid to the intangible but nonetheless real local loyalties that exist in various sections of the City, and local place names were adopted for neighborhood names wherever suitable. In the course of the study various agencies and individuals familiar with the residential structure of the City were consulted.

The table following page 23 sets forth comparable statistical data on the thirteen neighborhoods.

Clearly defined boundaries are given to each neighborhood for statistical and descriptive purposes although in actuality there are frequently no clear-cut dividing lines. The "center of gravity" of a neighborhood is more important than its boundaries. In the ideal neighborhood (see Illustration 1) the complex of public buildings and open spaces constitutes a powerful center of gravity which provides a physical and symbolic focus for local civic life. In some Cambridge neighborhoods the beginnings of such a center are visible in the form of school or public open space accessible to all parts of the area. In other neighborhoods, however, there is no existing physical organization of streets or public buildings that points to a "natural" neighborhood center.

In the neighborhood groupings no attempt has been made to draw neighborhood boundaries so that they include homogeneous social, economic, or ethnic groups. Democratic participation in civic life can best begin at the neighborhood level.

The organization of Cambridge residential areas on the neighborhood unit principle does not, of course, provide a complete analysis of the City for all planning purposes. There are other functional planning areas which have a commercial, industrial, or institutional focus, which overlap neighborhood lines. Among the more important non-residential functional planning areas are the following: the Central Square business district, Harvard Square business district, Harvard University, the West Cambridge industrial area, and the Kendall Square industrial area.

Limitations in Applying the Neighborhood Principle

The neighborhood unit principle cannot be applied to the residential areas of an old city like Cambridge without many practical compromises and modifications forced by existing conditions. Following are some of the major departures from principles made necessary by conditions in Cambridge, which are similar to limitations in other built-up urban areas:

- 1) LOCAL SERVICE AREAS OFTEN DO NOT COINCIDE WITH NEIGHBORHOOD UNITS. The most economic and efficient service areas for many public facilities such as schools, branch libraries, and health clinics do not always automatically coincide with logical neighborhood boundaries. Because of the compactness of Cambridge branch libraries are best provided in a few key locations serving several neighborhoods and adjacent to major shopping centers. Similar consolidation is desirable in some cases for local health clinics. Cambridge Highlands (Neighborhood 12) will never be large enough to justify an elementary school.
- 2) NEIGHBORHOOD SIZE VARIES. Logical geographical boundaries between residential areas do not always separate the City into districts of approximately uniform population sufficient to support one elementary school. Thus the largest neighborhood in Cambridge has about 16,000 people and the smallest about 500 people. (see table on page 24).
- 3) THERE ARE THREE SCHOOL SYSTEMS. Of the 14,000 elementary school children in Cambridge, 55% go to public school, 40% to parochial school and 5% to private school. Consequently the local public school is not the center of interest for all children and all parents. Because of this divided educational system the public school is a less effective force for neighborhood unity, and the area of homes necessary to support a public school is considerably larger than would be the case if there were only one school system.
- 4) ALL THROUGH TRAFFIC CANNOT BE DIVERTED AROUND CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOODS. The street system in the ideal neighborhood is so laid out that only local traffic is permitted in the residential area and all through traffic is diverted on the boundary streets. The street system of Cambridge, however, has so developed that main streets are not always properly located to form neighborhood boundary streets. Many streets passing through neighborhoods are especially wide and offer direct routes

across the City. The main arteries do not have capacity to handle all City and metropolitan through traffic, so that much through traffic filters through local residential streets. Consequently many residential neighborhoods are split into smaller sections by heavy streams of through traffic. Proposed superhighways, such as the Concord Pike Extension and the Belt Expressway, can be expected to divert a large part of this traffic if their locations and access points are properly planned in relation to residential neighborhoods. Even with these superhighways, however, many main streets that now pass through neighborhoods, such as Brattle Street, Huron Avenue, Cambridge Street, and Broadway, will still carry heavy traffic loads.

5) MUNICIPAL BOUNDARIES ARBITRARILY DIVIDE RESIDENTIAL AREAS. Municipal boundary lines are so laid out that they run through many residential blocks in an illogical fashion. Areas of homes that would be unified according to their physical layout are divided into arbitrary political and administrative service districts. Since local civic life and municipal services form the focus of citizen interest and loyalty, municipal boundaries have been used as neighborhood boundaries, although in some cases they do not form logical boundaries in a physical sense.

For many of its services and activities the Cambridge family naturally looks outside of its neighborhood. The family automobile and a convenient public transportation system extend its geographical range. The public high schools serve the community as a whole. Church loyalties by and large do not correspond with neighborhood boundaries. Shopping, employment, amusement, cultural, and higher educational needs are met on a City and metropolitan pattern.

In spite of these limitations, however, the neighborhood unit principle fills an important local need for the organization of residential land use, service facilities, and associational and civic life in logical groupings within the City as a whole.

Some Cambridge Neighborhoods

Of the thirteen neighborhoods of Cambridge, the following most clearly demonstrate neighborhood unit principles in their present physical form: East Cambridge (Neighborhood 1); Strawberry Hill (Neighborhood 13); and the Agassiz School District (Neighborhood 8). Each of these neighborhoods has clearly defined geographical boundaries. The service areas of the public schools correspond closely to "natural" neighborhood boundaries. The local public schools are suitably located to form the beginnings of neighborhood centers. Local shopping facilities are close at hand.

In their existing condition other neighborhoods of the City are less satisfactory from an ideal point of view. North Cambridge (Neighborhood 11), for example, is a residential area which has a distinct identity of its own but yet is made up of many heterogeneous elements. Physically it is split by Massachusetts Avenue and by the Arlington

Branch of the Boston and Maine Railroad into various residential subgroupings. It is served by two Roman Catholic elementary schools and a French Canadian Catholic elementary school in addition to the public school system.

One of the least homogeneous neighborhoods of Cambridge is Neighborhood 10, the largest in total area. It is divided by Huron Avenue, Brattle Street, Fresh Pond Parkway, Mount Auburn Street and other main traffic ways. It contains several residential groupings at a "sub-neighborhood" level with a clear identity of their own. These include Larchwood, The Marsh, and Coolidge Hill. St. Peter's Parochial School and various private schools are strong competitors to the local public school system.

Cambridge Highlands (Neighborhood 12) is a special case. A small isolated residential section of Cambridge, its growth is restricted by nearby industrial land unsuitable for residence. It will never be large enough to support its own public elementary school.

Another special case is Neighborhood 2, which includes only M.I.T., related residential facilities, and nearby industrial blocks. This section of the City has, however, a clear identity unrelated to any residential area and with prominent geographical boundaries. Harvard and Radcliffe, on the other hand, cannot be separated by a hard and fast line from nearby residential areas.

V CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOODS IN PRACTICE

Neighborhood Plans

The division of residential Cambridge into neighborhood units has already proved of value for its primary purpose: the preparation of plans for the protection and improvement of residential areas. Two neighborhood plans were published by the Planning Board in 1952: Plan for the Strawberry Hill Neighborhood and Plan for Cambridge Highlands (see Illustration 2, page 12). Neighborhood surveys have been begun in other neighborhoods as the preliminary step to the preparation of neighborhood plans. The neighborhood concept has been applied in the consideration of sites for new elementary schools by the Advisory Committee on the School Building Program (see Illustration 3, page 14).

Organizational Campaigns

Cambridge neighborhoods have been used by the Cambridge Tuberculosis and Health Association as the basis for recruiting voluntary personnel and for X-ray surveys to discover and prevent tuberculosis. Voluntary first-aid and nursing personnel for civil defense have been also recruited on a neighborhood basis.

11

The neighborhood concept has also been of help to Welcome Wagon Incorporated in defining areas of the City served by this organization. Three service areas have been adopted which include groups of neighborhoods related to the three major shopping centers of Central Square, Harvard Square, and North Cambridge.

The neighborhood concept is especially useful for organizational drives because the clearly defined boundaries of each neighborhood can be more easily grasped by volunteer workers than the more complicated boundaries of other divisions of the City, such as census tracts or wards. The general physical and, in some cases, civic homogeneity of the residential neighborhoods also aids in the stimulation of local interest and the recruitment of local personnel.

Coincidence of Other City Divisions with Neighborhoods

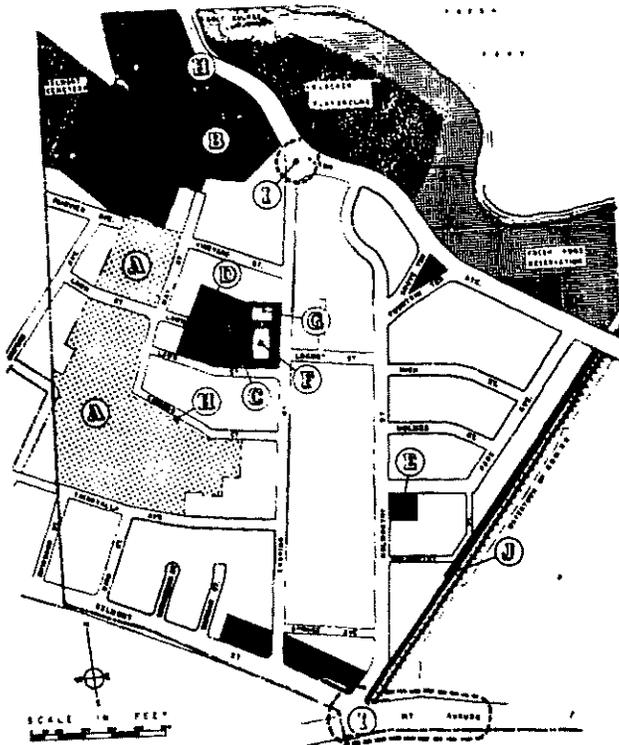
As has been previously described, one of the major objectives of the neighborhood unit principle is to strengthen democratic associational and civic life. In order to reinforce this objective, it would be desirable if all existing subdivisions of the City that shape associational life and focus local loyalties were modified to conform with the neighborhood pattern. Public school districts, for example, could be altered to coincide with neighborhood boundaries as part of a program of school improvement. Political wards likewise might be changed to correspond with the boundaries of neighborhoods or groups of neighborhoods. To facilitate statistical comparisons census tract boundaries could be altered so that tracts correspond with neighborhoods or several tracts make up one neighborhood. The latter condition is now substantially the case in East Cambridge where Census Tracts 1, 2, and 3 virtually coincide with Neighborhood 1.

Naturally all service areas cannot be made to coincide with neighborhoods, and the concept must be considered with practical common sense in relation to each individual service or facility. The coordination on the neighborhood principle of the many overlapping and specialized areas into which the residential parts of the City are now divided would, however, be a big step toward the organization of residential areas on a logical basis. Such coordination on a social and administrative basis would parallel and strengthen the efforts of city planning to organize residential areas on a physical basis.

Neighborhood Centers

As discussed in ~~Page 111: THE NEIGHBORHOOD THEORY~~, an activities center is essential to the development of civic and associational life in the neighborhood. In its recommendations for new public elementary schools,

PLAN FOR THE STRAWBERRY HILL NEIGHBORHOOD



LEGEND

EXISTING LAND USE

- NO CHANGE PROPOSED
- RESIDENCE: [White box]
 - OPEN SPACE: [Green box]
 - BUSINESS: [Hatched box]
- RES. '1 1/2' x '2'-1/2' DISTRICTS
RECREATIONAL AREAS, SCHOOL YARDS
WATER RESERVATION
CAMPTERS
BUSINESS '1/2' DISTRICT

SUGGESTED LAND USES

- RESIDENCE: [Dotted box]
 - DEVELOPED OPEN SPACE: [Dark green box]
- A CORPUSCULUM PARK
B RECREATIONAL AREA, SCHOOL YARDS
C PEOPLES RESERVATION
D IMPROVEMENT OF MIDDLEBURY SCHOOL YARD
E IMPROVEMENT OF MIDDLEBURY SCHOOL YARD
F TOTLOT

SUGGESTED IMPROVEMENTS TO PUBLIC BUILDINGS

- F HEALTH CLINIC, MIDDLEBURY SCHOOL
- G SYM & RECREATION CENTER, MIDDLEBURY SCHOOL

SUGGESTED STREET IMPROVEMENTS

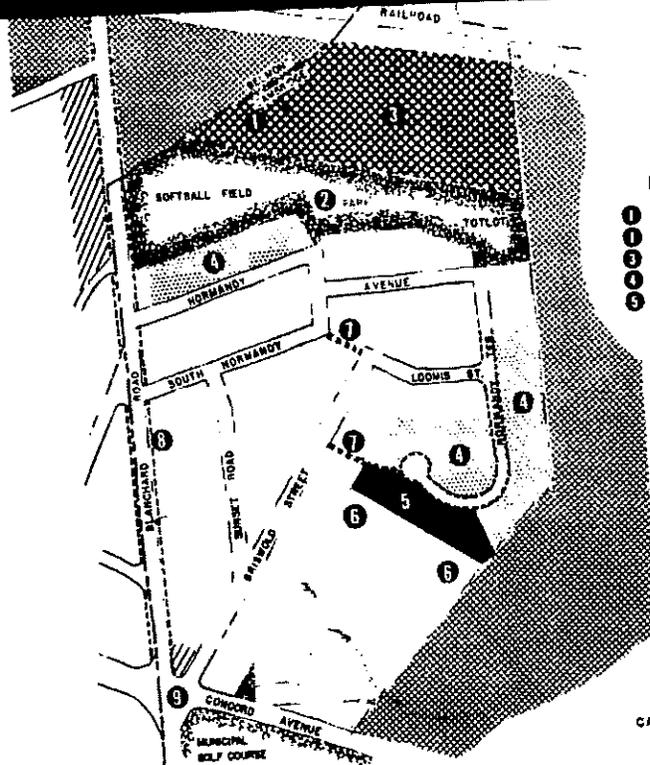
- H STREET WIDENING: CORNER OF E MARCH AVE.
- I BRICKLAYER IMPROVEMENT: MARCH CORNER ST. AT BARNES-BARNES

MAINTENANCE & IMPROVEMENT OF PRIVATE PROPERTY

- J IMPROVEMENT OF FENCE DISTANCE
- K SIDEWALK IMPROVEMENT
- L IMPROVEMENT OF STRUCTURES & YARDS
- M LANDSCAPING ALONG RAILROAD

CAMBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD 1951

Plan For Cambridge Highlands



KEY TO PROPOSALS

- 1 new culvert, pond filled
- 2 recreation area
- 3 new industry
- 4 new homes
- 5 sanatorium residences
- 6 landscaping
- 7 pedestrian walks
- 8 street widening
- 9 intersection improved

KEY TO LAND USES

- | | EXISTING | PROPOSED |
|-----------------|------------------|------------------|
| RESIDENCE | [White box] | [Dotted box] |
| T.B. SANATORIUM | [White box] | [Dark green box] |
| RECREATION | [Green box] | [Dark green box] |
| BUSINESS | [Hatched box] | [Hatched box] |
| INDUSTRY | [Dark green box] | [Dotted box] |

100 0 100
scale in feet

CAMBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD 1952

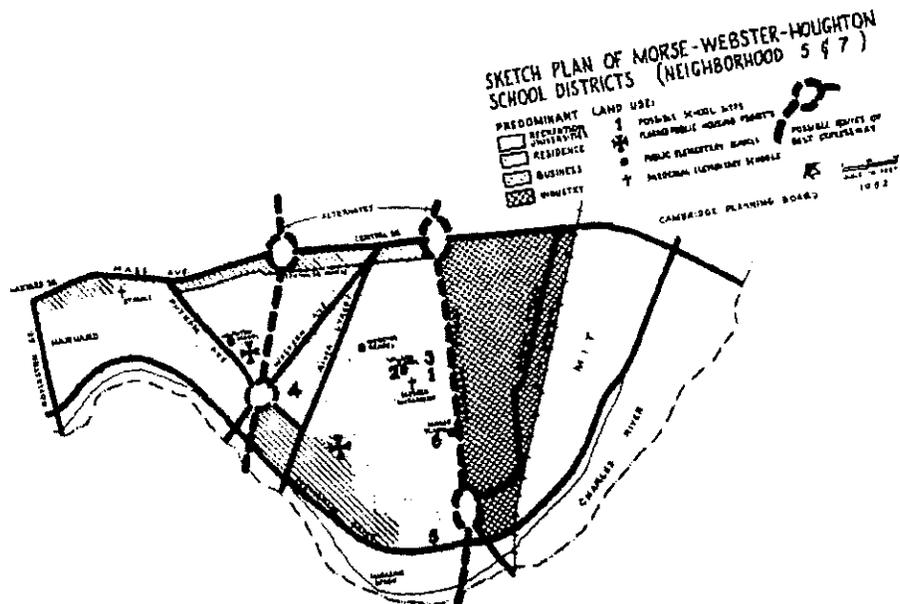
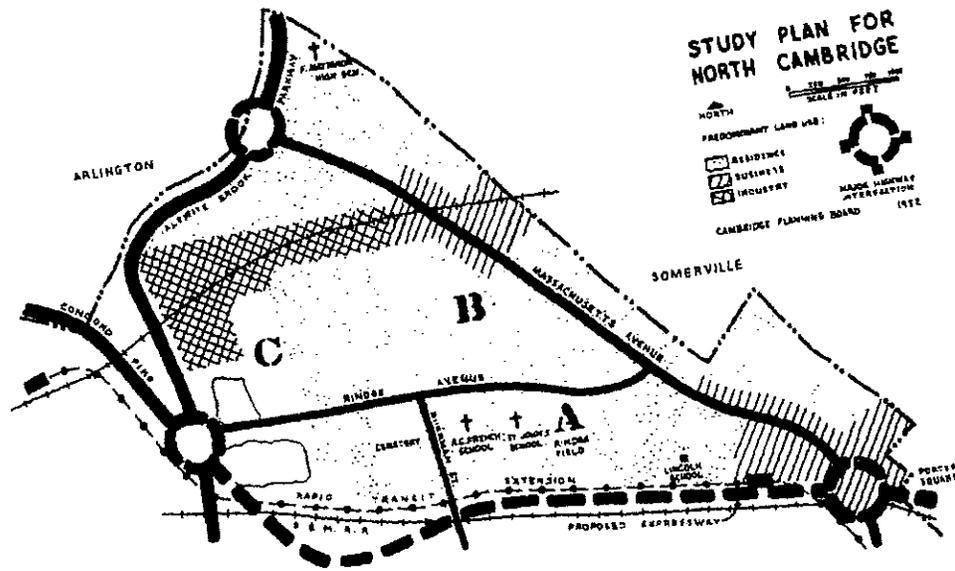
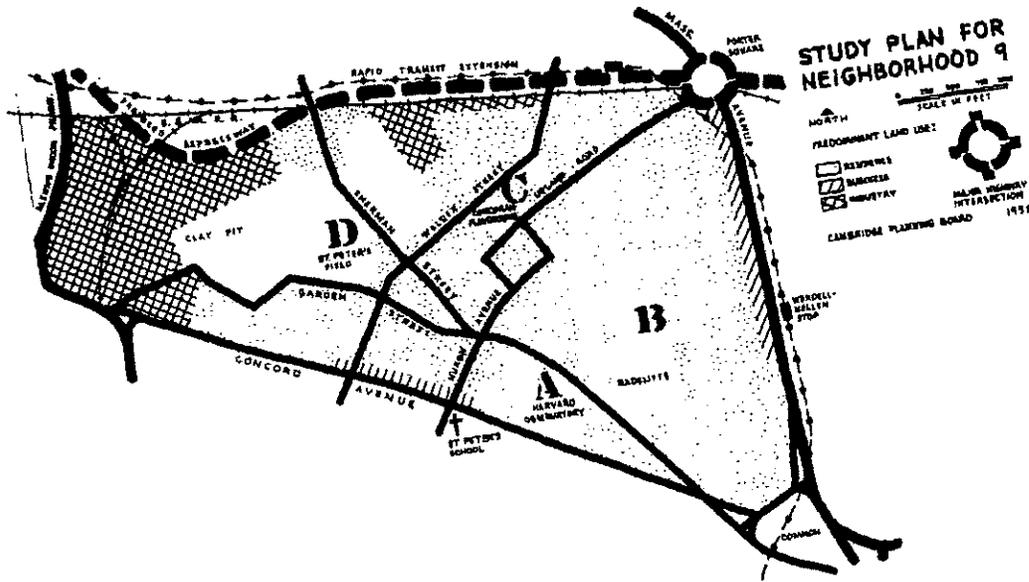
the Cambridge Advisory Committee on the School Building Program has considered new schools in terms of their use as neighborhood centers for all age groups. Among the rooms and spaces that can be made to serve many age groups on a round-the-clock schedule by proper planning are the auditorium, the cafeteria, the health clinic, the shops, the arts and crafts rooms, the gymnasium and lockers, and the school playground. Many of the existing school buildings in Cambridge which will not be replaced by new schools could also be remodelled or enlarged to serve as neighborhood centers. The plan for Strawberry Hill (see Illustration 2), for example, calls for the addition of health and gymnasium facilities to the Haggerty School to serve both school and neighborhood needs.

Neighborhood Conservation and Rehabilitation

Cambridge residential areas, like those in many other cities, are constantly subject to threats of deterioration and blight. Organized on a neighborhood basis, citizens' protective and improvement associations would be of great benefit in conserving or rehabilitating residential values. There are many instances where undesirable business and industrial intrusion into a residential district has been prevented by alert and united citizen action. Protection of homes and environment of Cambridge families is as much a matter of concern to local citizens as it is to City officials. The neighborhood unit principle offers a sound framework for the organization of "grass roots" programs to preserve and improve residential areas.

left: ILLUSTRATION 2: COMPLETED PLANS FOR CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOODS: These two neighborhood plans were published by the Planning Board in 1952. The Strawberry Hill plan calls for provision of a neighborhood center wing on the existing Haggerty School along with ultimate expansion of the school playground. These and other proposals are designed to make this conservation neighborhood more attractive and livable. Special emphasis is placed on the health and safety of mothers and children.

The Plan for Cambridge Highlands stresses protection from industrial encroachment, provision of neighborhood recreation space, and beautification of streets and public property. This neighborhood is a special case in that it will never be large enough to support an elementary school. Children must be transported by bus to schools in another neighborhood.



Planning for Urban Redevelopment and Public Housing

It is axiomatic that urban redevelopment projects of a residential nature and public housing projects should be conceived in terms of their close interrelation with the residential neighborhood of which they form a part. Corcoran Park, the most recent Federal public housing development of the Cambridge Housing Authority, is an example of a public housing development planned to harmonize with its neighborhood setting. By coordinating programs of improvement to local facilities, such as recreation areas and schools, and programs of housing conservation and rehabilitation with public housing and redevelopment projects in the framework of a neighborhood plan, trends toward residential decay can be reversed.

Neighborhood Councils

Many City agencies deal with the public at large in public informational or educational activities. In addition to the Planning Board these include the Health Department, the Library Department, the Civic Unity Committee, the Civil Defense Agency, and the Recreation Commission. These agencies frequently find it difficult to find existing channels of communication to carry on local programs within the limits of their available personnel. The organization of non-partisan neighborhood councils of local residents interested in common problems would help fill this gap. Such councils would also be valuable to non-official agencies carrying on health, welfare and other social services. They could likewise be effective in preventive programs dealing with vandalism, juvenile delinquency, and other social problems. The organization of such neighborhood groups can probably best be carried out by local social agencies. In the final analysis they depend on local initiative and enthusiasm for their success. Once set up, however, they could be a valuable creative tool for responsible democratic government.

left: ILLUSTRATION 3: STUDY PLANS FOR CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOODS: These three sketch plans have been prepared prior to the completion of final neighborhood plans in order to evaluate the best location for new elementary schools and neighborhood centers. The letters and numerals on the plans refer to alternate sites that were considered. The diagrams show how residential areas served by one elementary school are unfortunately divided by non-residential land uses and major traffic routes. In the ideal neighborhood residential areas would be grouped around the school without such intervening barriers.

VI DESCRIPTION OF MAPS

Reference Maps Included

Map 1 shows Cambridge neighborhoods and Maps 2-9 show the other existing subdivisions of the City with a physical, associational, statistical, or service connotation that were of major consideration in adapting the neighborhood unit principle to Cambridge conditions. There are, of course, other divisions of the City such as Police, Fire, and Sanitation Districts. These were not taken into account as they are simply administrative service areas and not elements in a neighborhood consciousness.

The following descriptions of the subdivisions of the City shown on Maps 1-9 include, wherever possible, reference to the pertinent agency, the date of most recent revision, the basis for definition, and relevant comments.

MAP 1: NEIGHBORHOODS: The thirteen neighborhoods of Cambridge were defined by the Planning Board staff and approved by the Planning Board in 1952 after several years of study. A definition of the neighborhood and a description of its application to Cambridge make up Parts III and IV of this report.

MAP 2: PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICTS: Public elementary school districts were adopted by the Cambridge School Committee on November 1, 1937. Map 2 was drawn from the School Department's Street Index of School Districts issued in January 1942. Among all other maps in this series school districts are unique in that they do not always make use of streets or other physical barriers as subdivisions between districts. The zig-zag lines between some school districts are caused by the fact that addresses on both sides of a main street fall in one school district whereas addresses on the intersecting side streets fall into an adjacent district.

For practical purposes school districts individually or in combination, coincide closely with the neighborhoods designated on Map 1. In most cases only a relatively slight revision of school district boundaries would be required to obtain complete conformance with neighborhood boundaries.

MAP 3: PARISH DISTRICTS: Parochial school districts generally correspond to the parish district for each affiliated church, all district boundaries being determined by the Archbishop. Parish boundaries are adjusted from time to time as the need arises, although the last complete parish was formed in 1926 - Immaculate Conception in North Cambridge.

Map 3 locates the eight parish parochial schools (including Sacred Heart in East Watertown that serves Cambridge) and four nationality schools - three in East Cambridge and one in North Cambridge - which serve Italian, Polish, Lithuanian, and French nationality groups in the general area.

Parochial schools in Cambridge have developed in number and size with the growth of the Catholic Church. In the early part of the nineteenth century St. John's Parish (now Sacred Heart) in East Cambridge covered the entire City of Cambridge. By 1848 the population had grown so that a new parish - St. Peter's - was established in Old Cambridge, and Prospect Street became the dividing line between the two districts. By 1867 the districts were further divided and part of each was given to a new parish - St. Mary's in Cambridgeport.

Within the next decade part of St. Peter's district became the basis for a new St. Paul's Parish (1875). In 1883 the original St. John's (in East Cambridge) was changed to Sacred Heart and a new Church was dedicated. In 1893 another section of the rapidly growing St. Peter's became the new St. John's in North Cambridge and twelve years later part of St. Mary's became the Blessed Sacrament.

In 1908 the western half of Sacred Heart became St. Patrick's, and in 1926 the Immaculate Conception Parish was formed in North Cambridge, taking in parts of Cambridge, Arlington, and West Somerville.

In the meantime five nationality parishes had been established - four in East Cambridge and one in North Cambridge, as follows: Notre Dame de Pitie (French) in North Cambridge (1892); St. Anthony's (Portuguese, 1902); St. Hedwig's (Polish, 1907); Immaculate Conception (Lithuanian, 1910); and St. Francis of Assisi (Italian, 1917) all in East Cambridge. All but St. Anthony's now have schools operated by the parish church and serve specific nationality groups in the general area.

The only diocesan school in Cambridge (i.e. under the jurisdiction of the Archbishop) is the Matignon High School in North Cambridge (not shown on Map 3).

While the local Roman Catholic Church and its affiliated schools is an important organization making for homogeneity and group loyalties in the areas of service, because of the size of parish districts conformity with neighborhood divisions is not always possible. It should be noted, however, that the parish districts for the Sacred Heart Church in East Cambridge, for the Blessed Sacrament Church in Cambridgeport and for St. John's in North Cambridge coincide to substantial extent with important neighborhood boundaries.

MAP 4: CENSUS TRACTS: Cambridge Census Tracts were set up for the 1940 Census by a Local Census Tract Committee, which was organized at the request of the U.S. Bureau of the Census. Miss Elizabeth Morrison, at that time Executive Secretary of the Family Society of Cambridge, was Chairman of this Committee.

The U.S. Census Tract Manual (Third edition, January 1947) describes census tract procedure at some length. Following are quotations from the Manual's definition of tracts.

"Ideally, tracts should be as nearly equal in population as possible and should have an average population of about 7,500...In the densely populated sections of the City, tracts of very small area will have large populations, of course; but in no case should the population of any one tract exceed 12,000...Size and homogeneity of population and uniformity in characteristics of dwellings rather than area should be the basic criteria in laying out tracts. Each tract, however, should be compact...

"It is important that the boundary lines of the tracts be definite. These boundary lines should ordinarily be the centers of streets. Rivers, railroad tracks, and park boundaries may be used where these are definite and permanent dividing lines between one section of the city and another. Alleys should not be used since they tend to disappear as the City develops. Neither should "imaginary" or "described" lines be used since they cannot be identified in the field...

"So far as practicable, each tract should contain a population reasonably homogeneous both as to racial characteristics and as to economic status. The type of living accommodations of the area affords the best available index to economic status... It is recognized that the racial and economic characteristics of the population may not be maintained over a long period of years. In general, however, the same changes will occur throughout a small area so that eventually there will again be homogeneity although the characteristics may be different from those of the original population. In any case, any one tract should not originally include areas with widely dissimilar characteristics. It would be unfortunate to have one part of the tract composed of expensive homes and the other part composed of slum dwellings since over-all or average statistics for the tract would not reflect the status of either group.

"Especial care should be taken to include all of a given housing development in one tract. If the development is large enough, it may constitute a separate tract.

"It is a good idea to allot a single tract to each very large, permanent institution within the city...

"A few cities have had the same ward boundaries for a long period. In these instances, they have found it advantageous to design tracts to

conform with ward boundaries, since many agencies have previously maintained their records on a ward basis and since population data from previous censuses are also available by wards. If ward boundaries are not likely to remain permanent or if they violate the other criteria for tract boundaries, a good design of tracts should not be sacrificed for the sake of conforming to ward boundaries."

The original Cambridge Census Tract Committee gave especial emphasis to physical boundaries and social factors - population, race, nationality, neighborhood loyalty, and economic level - in tracting the City. Population in each original tract ranged from 3,000 to 5,000. Ward lines were maintained wherever possible. Economic and population factors were fairly consistent within each tract but ethnic groups were considered too fluid in Cambridge to form the basis for tract definition.

Prior to the 1950 Census a new Census Tract Committee was set up at the request of the Bureau of the Census. Professor Douglas P. Adams of M.I.T. is the Chairman of this Committee. After some consideration of the desirability of changing tract boundaries, it was decided to retain the original tracting for the 1950 Census in order to facilitate the comparison of 1950 Census figures with 1940 figures.

This Committee has prepared a Census Tract Street Index which shows the tract in which every street number in Cambridge is located. This Index may be obtained upon request from the Cambridge Community Services..

Because of their general disregard of major physical and traffic barriers between residential areas, the boundaries of Census Tracts in general do not coincide with neighborhood boundaries. The table of neighborhood data shows what Census Tracts are contained in each neighborhood. East Cambridge (Neighborhood 1), the Agassiz area (Neighborhood 8), and North Cambridge (Neighborhood 11), correspond most closely to individual or groups of Census Tracts. It would be desirable to consider revising Census Tract boundaries for the 1960 Census so that groups of tracts can be combined to form neighborhoods on a City-wide basis.

MAP 5: WARDS AND PRECINCTS: Wards and precincts in Cambridge as they now stand were defined in 1934 by the City Council. They are set up by authority of Sections 1-10 of Chapter 54 of the General Laws of Massachusetts. Section 1 states:

"In 1924 and every tenth year thereafter in December a city by vote of its City Council may make a new division of its territory into such number of wards as may be fixed by law. The boundaries of such wards shall be so arranged that the wards shall contain as nearly as can be ascertained and as may be consistent with well-defined limits to each ward an equal number of voters."

Section 2 designates the manner in which wards are divided into precincts, as follows:

"Each city shall be divided into convenient voting precincts designated by numbers or letters and containing not more than 2,000 voters. Every ward shall constitute a voting precinct by itself or shall be divided into precincts containing as nearly as may be an equal number of voters consisting of compact and contiguous territory entirely within the ward and bounded so far as possible by the center line of known streets or ways or by other well-defined limits..."

The City Charter under which Cambridge was incorporated as a city in 1846 provided that the City be divided into three wards. By 1857 the number had been increased to five and section 8, Chapter 75 of the Acts of 1857 required that "the City shall in the month of October, 1857, and every fifth year thereafter revise the boundaries of said wards...for the convenience of the inhabitants."

Previous to the creation of an Election Commission in Cambridge in 1921 all business pertaining to wards and ward boundaries was handled by the City Clerk's office for the Common or City Council. Beginning in 1921 the Election Commission took over this function, and now operates under Chapter 54, Sections 1-10, G.L.M. quoted above.

The work of the Commission has almost doubled since it began. The number of polling places has increased from 36 in 1920 to 55 in 1952, one for each of the 55 precincts in the City. Although State law allows a City to have as many as 2,000 registered voters in each precinct before requiring a change of boundaries, it has been the practice in Cambridge to limit the number as much as possible to 1,000 for greater efficiency of operation. With the substantial increase in voter registration in the fall of 1952, however, several precincts now exceed the 1,000 limit set by the Commission.

In addition to being a convenient administrative device for organizing and carrying out elections the ward and precinct organization is probably one of the most important elements in civic life. Although the present wards in Cambridge show little relationship with neighborhoods, the reorganization of wards according to the neighborhood unit principle would be an important step toward relating civic interests with functional physical areas.

MAP 6: PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES' DISTRICTS: Public health nurses' districts were last defined by the Cambridge Health Department in the summer of 1952. Each of the fifteen districts of the City is covered by one public health nurse. In addition there are special nurses for the City at large and a supervisory staff.

The nurses' districts are set up to equalize the work load on each nurse. As approximately two-thirds of each nurses work is spent in the schools, the local school population is an important factor in determining the size

of the district. Other considerations include the work load imposed by home calls and by well-child conferences. Method of transportation available is also a consideration, as the nurses in three of the districts make their calls on foot. Shifts in population, especially among the lower income groups caused by housing projects, and other developments influence the need for nursing services and are the major cause for revision.

Nurses' districts are an element in building neighborhood loyalties in that the nurse can be an important, frequently-seen friend of the family, especially among the lower income groups.

MAP 7: LOCAL PLACE NAMES: Map 7 has been plotted by the Planning Board staff on the basis of considerable research into Cambridge history. While not inclusive of all names given to various parts of the City, the map shows those where there is general agreement and sound historic foundation.

Avon Hill refers to the general area of Avon Hill Street (formerly Jarvis Court) and named so by W. A. Mason in 1882 since it was practically an extension of Avon Street up the hill.

Cambridge Highlands is the small residential area adjacent to the Cambridge Sanatorium. Its name dates from early subdivision plats and has been adopted as the name for Neighborhood 12.

Cambridgeport was the name given to the original village which developed around Lafayette Square. Canals and docks were developed in this area prior to the Civil War with the hope of converting Cambridge into a seaport. Cambridgeport has been designated as the name for Neighborhood 5.

Captain's Island was the name given to a small hillock once situated in a salt marsh in the Charles River at the end of Magazine Street. At high tide this hillock became an island. In the early 1630's the town granted this area "for cowyards" to Captain Daniel Patrick, who as a former "common soldier of the Prince's Guard in Holland", was employed to exercise and drill the militia of the Colony. His name appears with seven others in the list of inhabitants at Newtowne in 1632. Although he owned the land for only a short time it has been known as Captain's Island ever since. In 1817 the Commonwealth of Massachusetts purchased this land from the heirs of Francis Dana and the following year built a "public magazine of powder" from which Magazine Street got its name.

Coolidge Hill was named for Josiah Coolidge, farmer and florist, who at one time owned most of the upland east of Coolidge Avenue and south of Mt. Auburn Street.

Dana Hill derived its name from the Dana family, who owned a large estate in the vicinity of Dana Street and who attached certain development regulations to their lands when subdivided. For years these were known as the "Dana deed restrictions".

East Cambridge was the name given to the new village on Lechmere Point which developed after the opening of the Craigie Bridge in 1809. It has been adopted as the neighborhood name applying to the residential area east of the Boston and Albany Branch Railroad, which was its original connotation.

The Gold Coast is the name given by Cambridge people in the neighborhood to an area of Harvard residence halls in the vicinity of Claverly and Westmorley Halls, where wealthy men's sons lived.

Kerry Corner was the name given to Bank Street in the block between Flagg and Cowperthwaite Streets because the majority of residents there came from County Kerry, Ireland.

Larchwood is presumed to have been derived from the same source as Larch Road—a long row of larch trees along the easterly line of what was the John C. Gray estate.

The Marsh, as its name indicates, was a swampy area in the vicinity of Foster and Mount Auburn Streets. Of the many marsh areas along the Charles River it is the only one which has survived in name to the present day.

North Cambridge, so-called because of its location in relation to the rest of the City, has been designated as the name for Neighborhood 11.

Observatory Hill is so-called because of the Harvard Observatory which was first located there in 1846.

Old Cambridge is the original settlement founded in 1620 in the area of Harvard Square.

Strawberry Hill was the name given to the section of Cambridge south of Fresh Pond by local residents in the last century. It has been adopted as the neighborhood name for Neighborhood 13.

The Village, a contraction for "Greasy Village", is the name given to an area a few blocks square east of Brookline Street in the vicinity of Allston Street. It is derived from the fact that Reardon's soap factory was located there for many years.

West Cambridge applies generally to the industrial area west of the Alewife Brook Parkway.

In order to strengthen local neighborhood loyalties, it would be desirable to have a name for each of the neighborhoods of Cambridge. However, no generally accepted names could be found for most of the residential sections of the City. This may be considered as an indication of a lack of associational and civic life related to the home and its surroundings.

MAP 8: PREDOMINANTLY RESIDENTIAL AREAS: This map was drawn by the staff of the Planning Board in 1952. The pink areas comprise about 1,718 acres—about 38% of the total area of Cambridge.

MAP 9: RAILROADS AND MAJOR TRAFFIC ROUTES: This map was drawn by the staff of the Cambridge Planning Board in 1952 from traffic flow data. The widths of the bands are in a general sense proportionate to the amount of traffic. This traffic system has its origin in the eighteenth century when a system of radiating turnpikes was developed from Boylston Street, which connected with the first bridge across the Charles linking Boston with the north and west. Other major streets were laid out following the construction of the other bridges in the nineteenth century. As the City grew, blocks of homes were built on the farms and wastelands lying between the old turnpikes. The major traffic streams that cross residential areas today are the outcome.

DATA ON CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOODS

NEIGHBORHOOD DESCRIPTION

AREA

POPULATION

OCCUPIED DWELLING UNITS

No.	Name	Public elem. school	census tract no.	Total land & water area in acres	Regionally residential land use, no. streets in acres	Predominantly residential land use, no. streets in acres (a)	1950 (c)		1950 (b)		1950 pop. adjusted	1950 pop. change 1940-1950	1950 density in persons per acre	1950 change		
							pop.	pop.	1940 pop.	1950						
1	East Cambridge	Thorncliffe (K-8)	1, 2, 3; part of 4	432	73	60.7	9,043	8,232	-	9,232	-	811	113	2,103	2,208	+ 105
2		none	11; part of 4	440	29	24.0	913	4,118	2,295	1,273	+ 3,205		63	226	494	+ 268
3		Kelley (K-8) Gannett (K-3) Wellington (K-8)	6, 7; part of 4, 8, 9	139	79	65.8	10,616	9,627	-	9,627	-	989	122	2,619	2,666	+ 47
4		Fletcher (K-8) Roberts (K-8)	4, 5; part of 8, 10, 11	182	109	90.9	11,202	11,319	-	11,319	+ 117		104	2,694	3,190	+ 496
5	Cambridgeport	Morse (K-8) Allard (K-8) Debuter (K, K-8)	12, 13, 14; part of 10, 11	395	175	145.8	14,353	13,767	-	13,767	-	586	79	3,390	3,814	+ 424
6		Longfellow (K-8)	part of 9, 10, 17, 18	291	210	174.2	15,092	17,459	1,512	15,947	+ 2,367		76	4,288	4,817	+ 529
7		Houghton (K-8)	15, 19; part of 10, 17, 18	167	69	57.4	7,012	9,314	2,337	6,977	+ 1,902		101	2,078	2,290	+ 212
8		Agassiz (K-8)	16; part of 25	168	93	77.5	4,717	6,728	1,384	5,353	+ 2,021		57	1,408	1,805	+ 397
9		Peabody (K-8)	part of 20, 21, 25, 26, 27	406	207	172.6	10,578	12,615	801	11,814	+ 2,037		47	3,220	3,884	+ 664
10		Russell (K-8)	21, 22, 24; part of 20, 23	754	378	315.2	12,007	12,798	68	12,730	+ 791		34	3,217	3,768	+ 551
11	North Cambridge	Kills (K-8)	28, 29, 30; part of 25, 27	575	224	187.0	11,914	12,237	-	12,237	+ 323		55	2,854	3,271	+ 417
12	Cambridge Highlands	Russell (K-8)	part of 23, 26	356	18	15.0	451	478	-	478	+ 27		27	102	124	+ 22
13	Strawberry Hill	Baggerty (K-8)	part of 23	174	54	45.1	2,181	2,098	-	2,098	-	143	38	518	524	+ 6
TOTAL CITY				4,487	1,718	1,431.0	110,879	120,710	8,397	112,343	+ 9,861		70	28,717	32,795	+ 4,078

Notes: (a) Streets assumed at 20% of total residential land area. Areas devoted to college and university dormitories not included.

(b) U.S. Census Tract Data interpolated according to neighborhood as necessary.

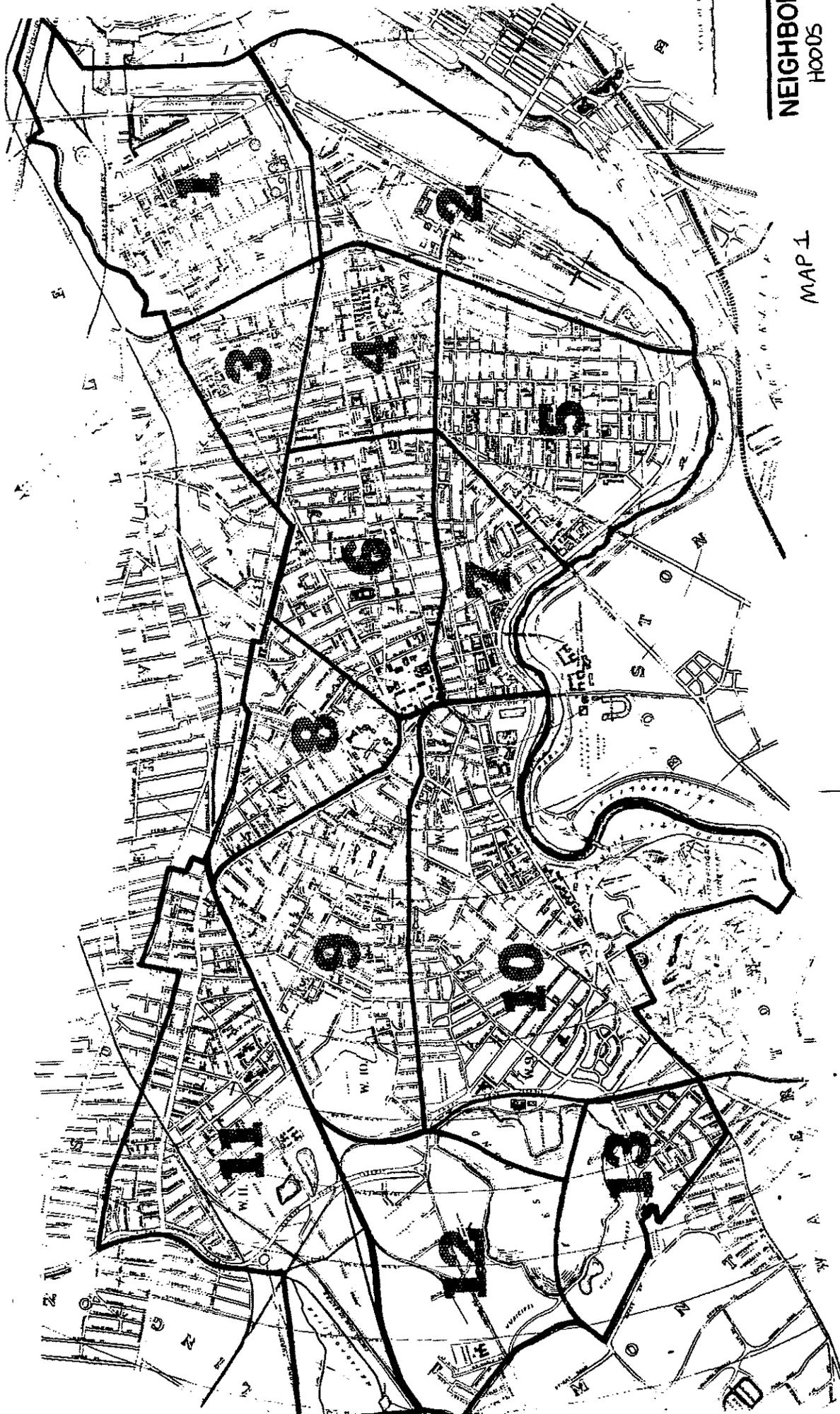
(c) Students and wives and children of students living in college and university housing as reported by college and university authorities.

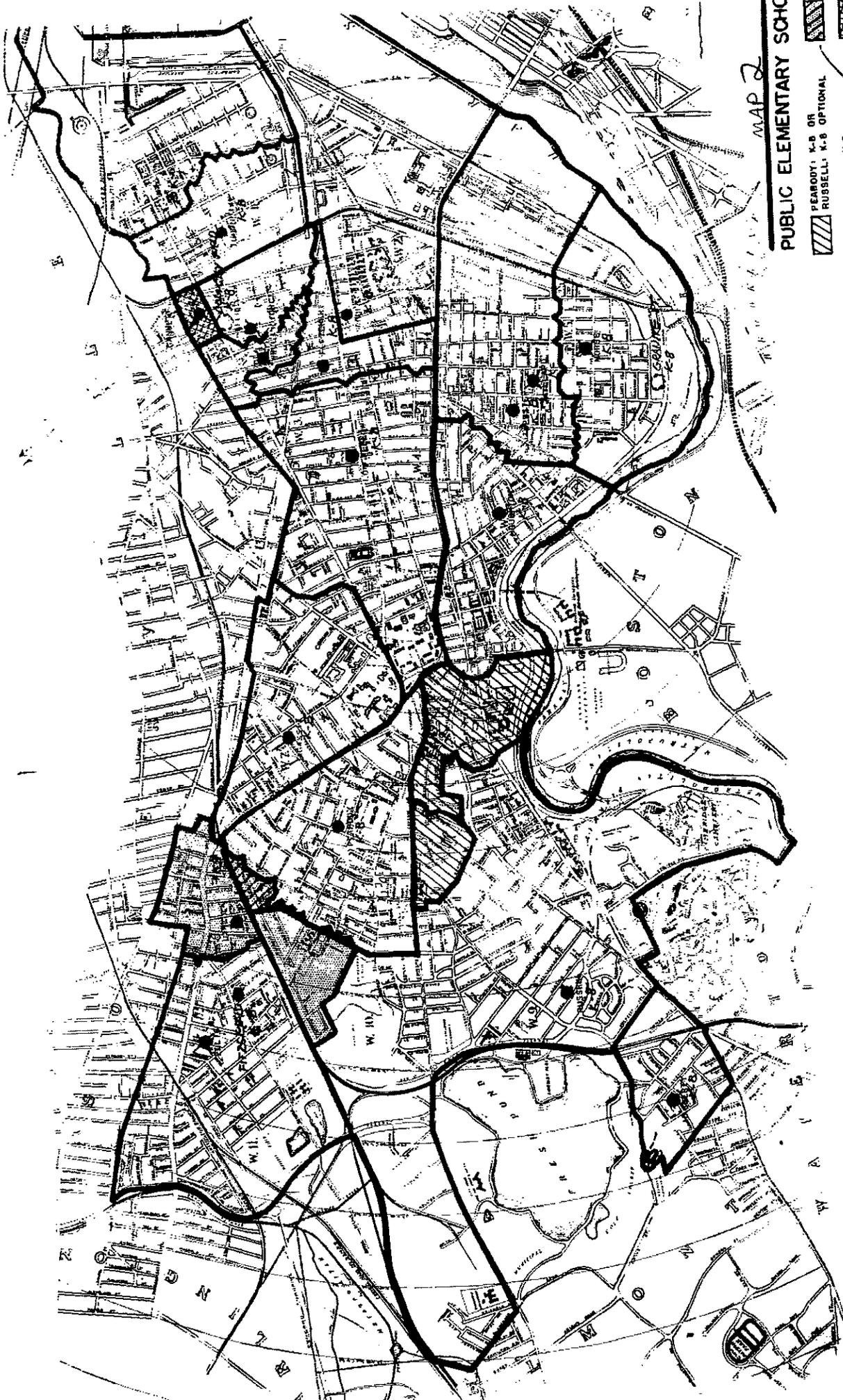
(d) Density based on ratio of adjusted population to predominantly residential land, including residential streets.

Source: Compiled by staff of Cambridge Planning Board

NEIGHBORHOODS

MAP 1

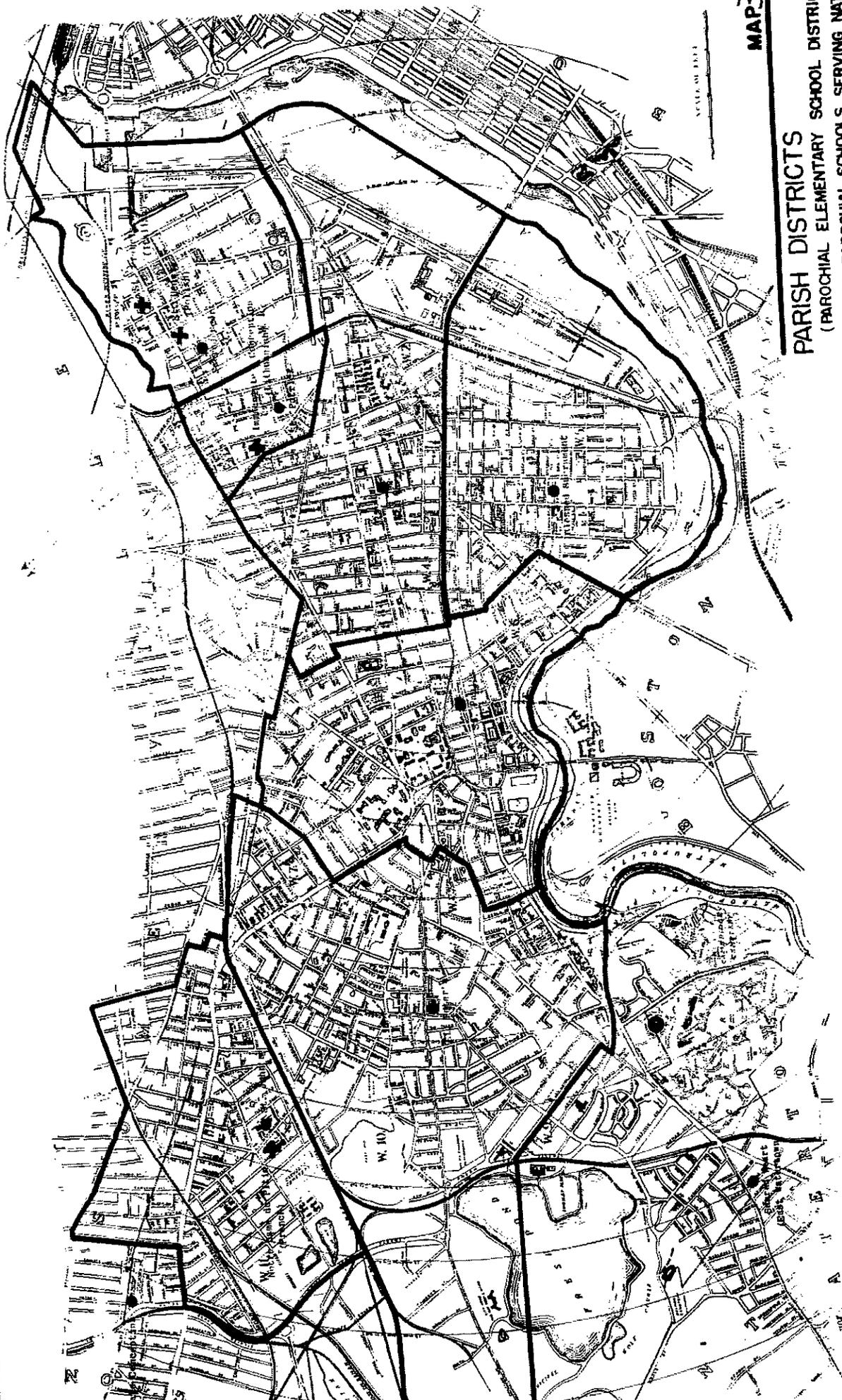




MAP 2
PUBLIC ELEMENTARY SCHC

- PEABODY: K-5 OR RUSSELL: K-8 OPTIONAL
- LINCOLN: K-5
- ELLIS: 7-8

Lincoln: in K-6
 Peabody: in 7-8
 Granvett: in K-3
 Wellington: in 4-8



MAP 3

PARISH DISTRICTS

(PAROCHIAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL DISTRICTS)
OTHER PAROCHIAL SCHOOLS SERVING NATI
ALITY GROUPS ARE WITHOUT SPECIFIC P
BOUNDARIES.

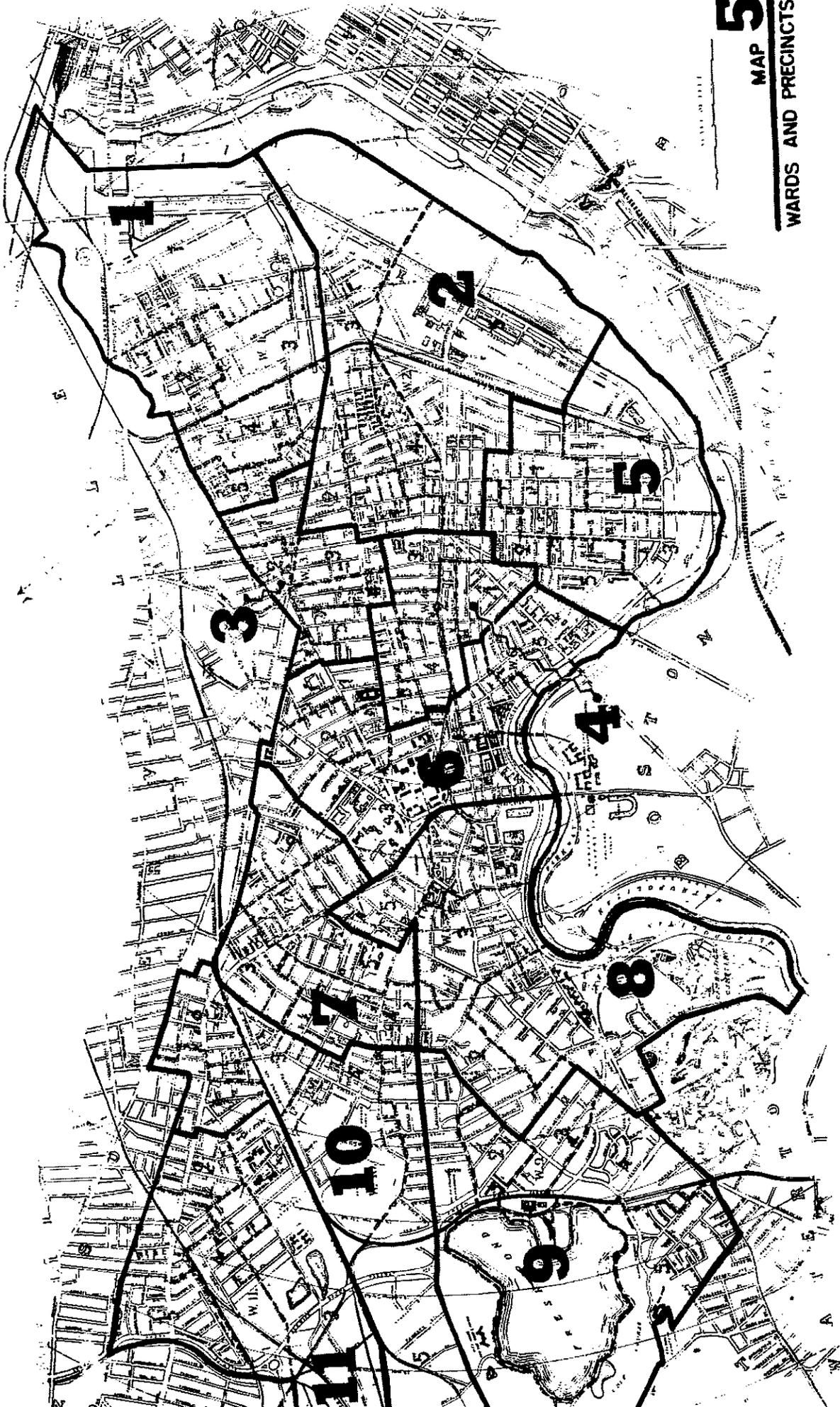


MAP 4

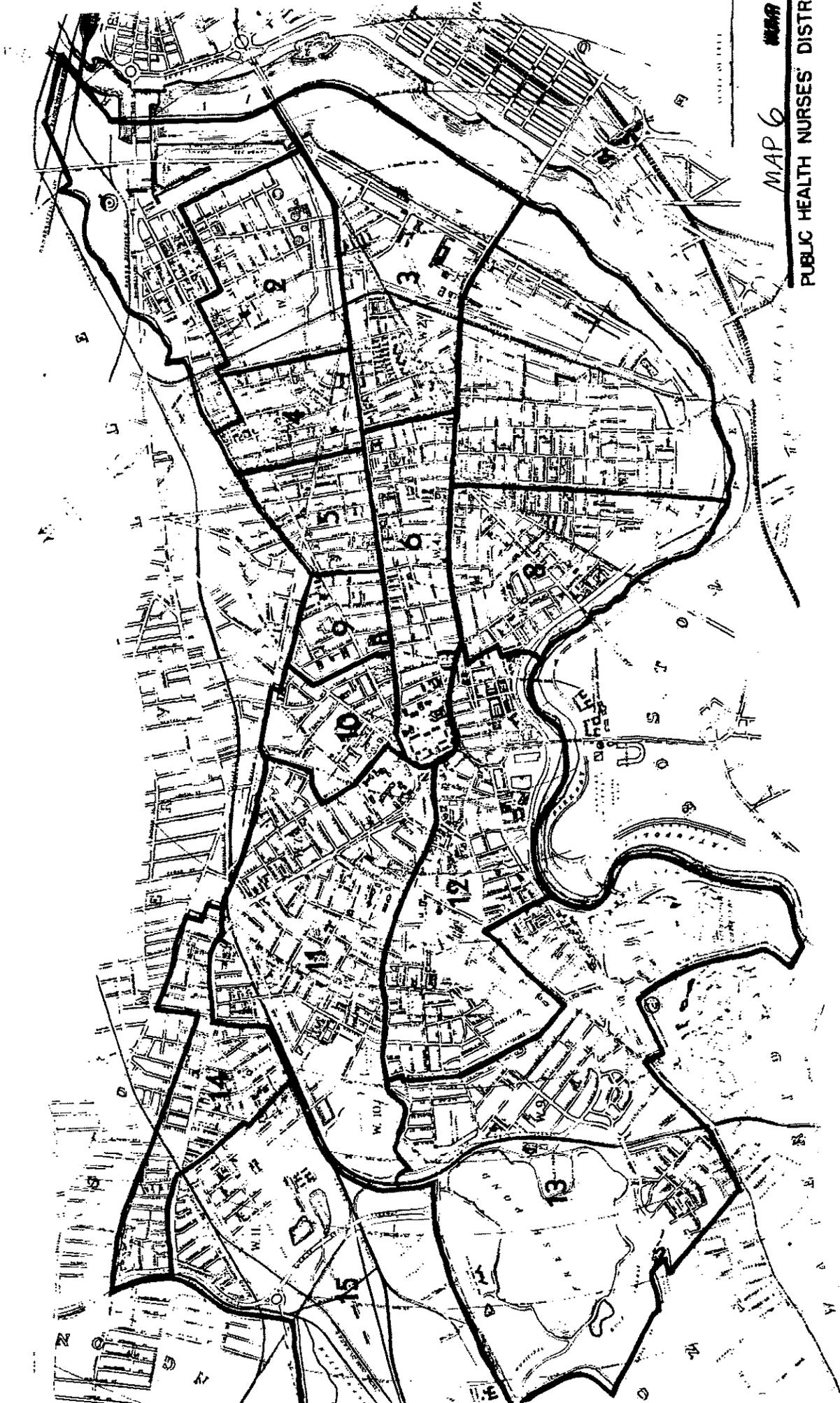
CENSUS

TRACTS

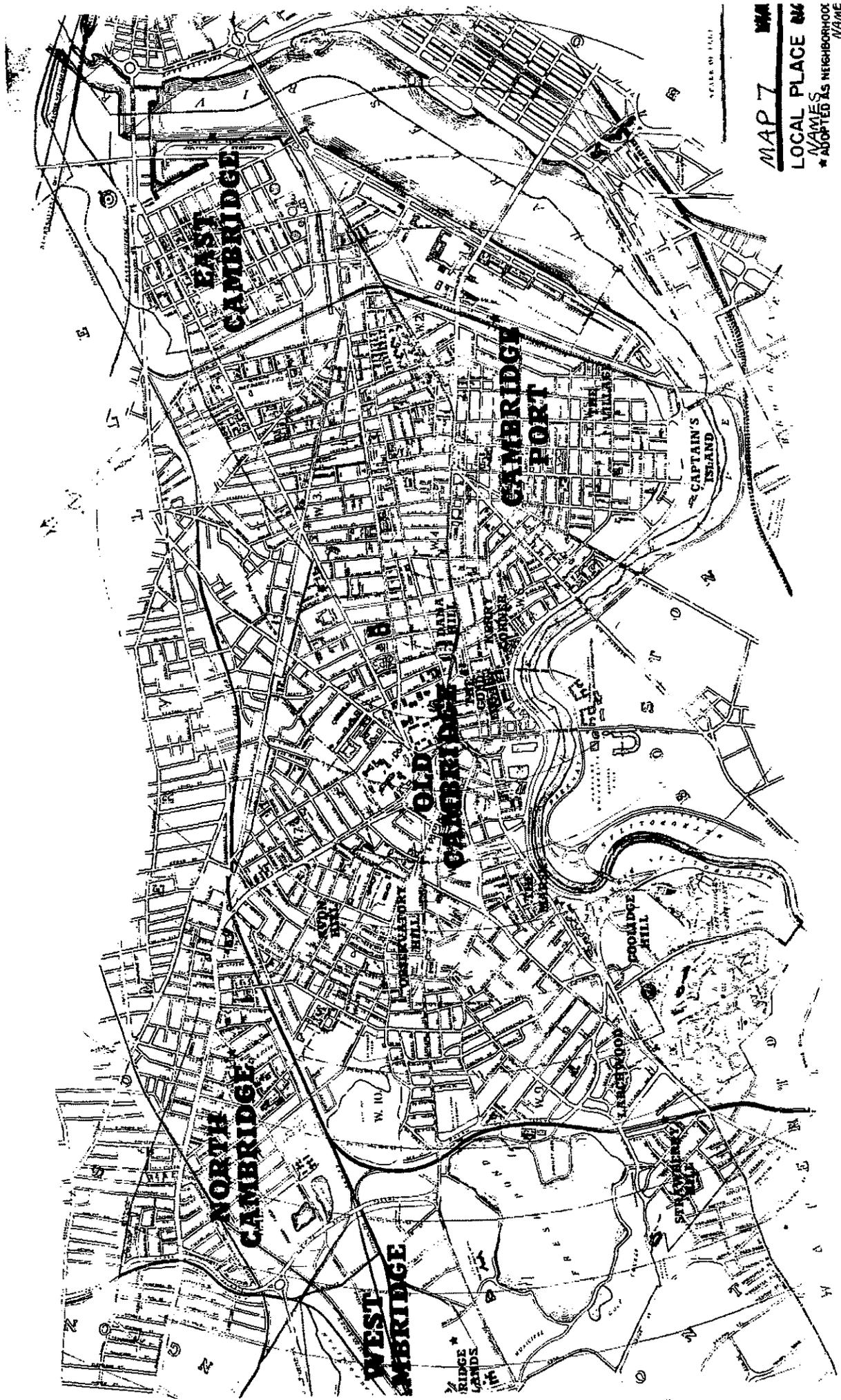




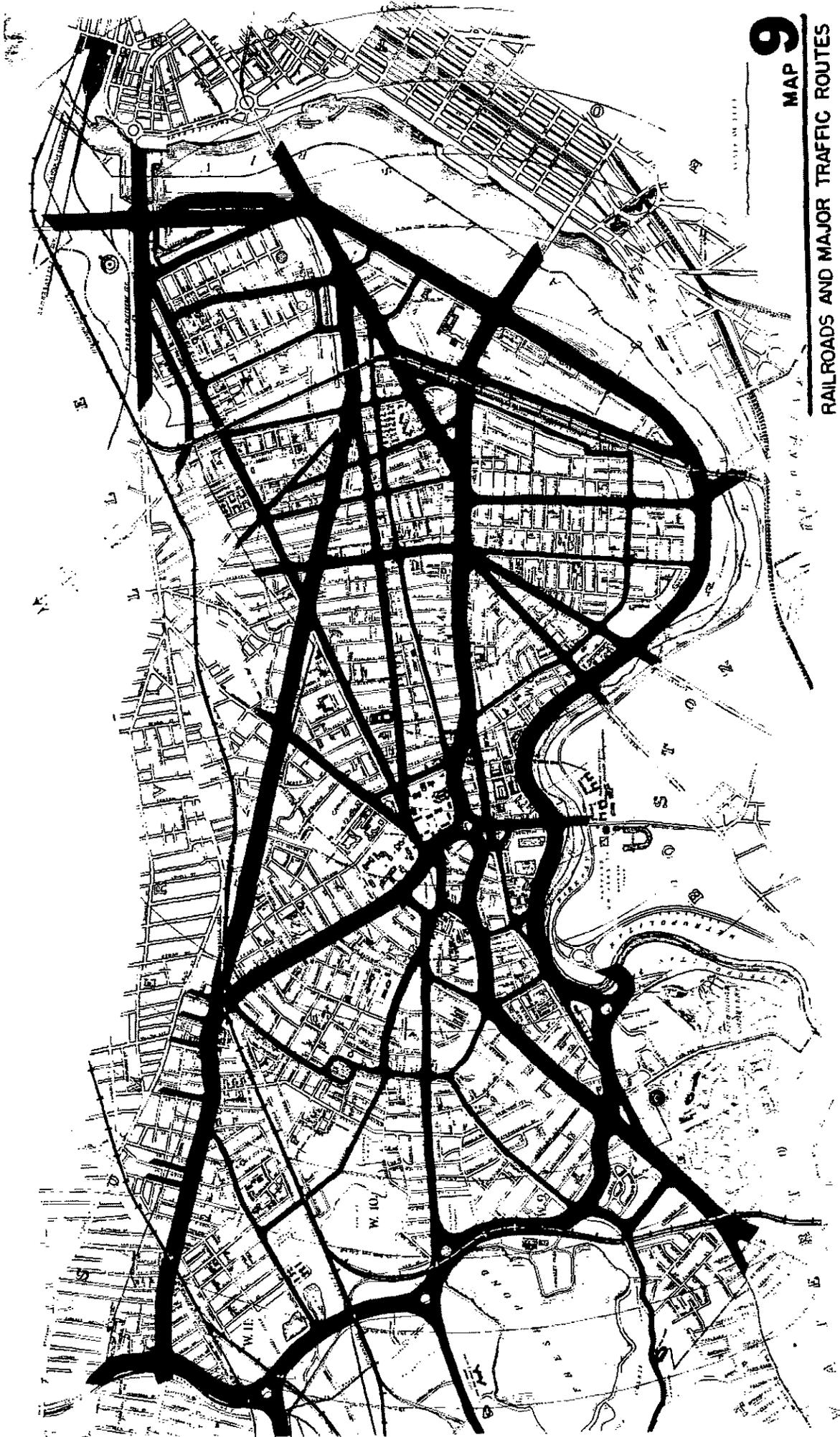
5
MAP
WARDS AND PRECINCTS



MAP 6
PUBLIC HEALTH NURSES' DISTRICTS



MAP 7
LOCAL PLACE NAMES
* ADOPTED AS NEIGHBORHOOD NAME



9

MAP

RAILROADS AND MAJOR TRAFFIC ROUTES

T H I S S T U D Y is part of a development plan for Cambridge. Other major published reports which form part of the plan are as follows:

Recreation in Cambridge*, 1947: Analysis of Municipal Recreational Facilities.

War Memorial Site Survey*, 1949: Prepared for the Veterans' War Memorial Advisory Committee.

Harvard Square Parking Study*, 1949.

Planning for the Belt Route*, 1951: Analysis of Free-way Location.

Schematic Plan for Future Cambridge, 1951: In 1950 City Annual Report.

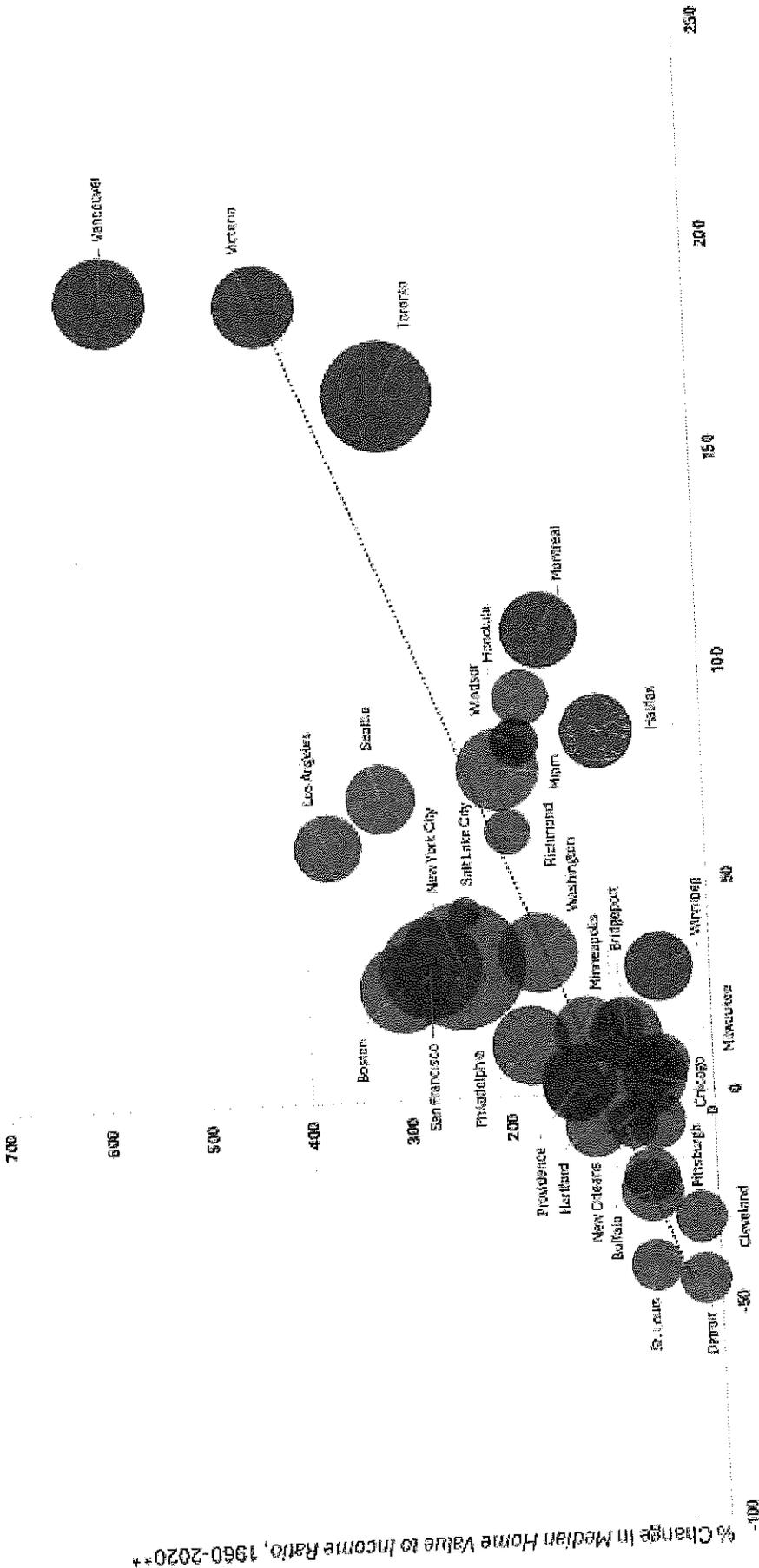
Housing Conditions in Part of Cambridge, 1952: Findings of the Housing Survey conducted for the Committee on Home Hygiene.

Plan for the Strawberry Hill Neighborhood, 1952.

Plan for Cambridge Highlands, 1952.

* Out of print

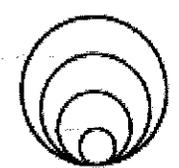
Housing Construction and Affordability in North American Centre Cities: 1960-2020



This chart compares centre cities to each other. Centre cities are municipalities in the centre of metro regions which have not expanded their geographic footprint (built up area) to include post-war sprawl. That is, almost all new units are built through intensification of existing urbanized land.

1960-2020 comparisons in the chart compare data from within the same exact boundaries. This means 2020 data for some cities has been separated out from its enlarged/amalgamated present boundary to match its 1960 boundary.

% Change in Housing Units, 1960-2020
 1 3 6 12 Thousands of people per km² (2020 Population Density)



● American City ● Canadian City*

*Canadian cities data is from 1961 to 2021, while American cities are from 1960 to 2020.

**The affordability ratio is calculated by dividing the median home value by the median household income. The vertical axis charts the percent change of this ratio between 1960 and 2020 (i.e., a 500% change means it takes 500% more years of earning the median household income to buy the median home).

Data Sources:
 1961 Census of Canada (Statistics Canada)
 2021 Census (Statistics Canada)
 2020 Decennial Census (U.S. Census Bureau)
 1960 Census of Population (U.S. Census Bureau)
 1960 Census of Housing (U.S. Census Bureau)

Erwin, Nicole

From: Matthew Keeter <matt.j.keeter@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 9:23 AM
To: City Clerk; City Council; City Manager
Subject: Support for Cambridge St upzoning

Good morning,

I recently received an unattributed flyer in my mailbox about upzoning in Inman Square.

In advance of today's Ordinance Committee meeting, I would like to write in and express my **strong support** for the upzoning proposal. I am fortunate enough to live in Inman Square, and would like for more people to have that opportunity. I also strongly support as-of-right zoning; every additional veto point slows down new construction, raises the price point for what *does* get built, and biases the voices of those with the most time to attend advisory meetings.

Sincerely,
Matt Keeter
94 Amory St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Henry <henrycollard@earthlink.net>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 9:02 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Cc: chjc@cambridgehousingjustice.com
Subject: Proposed Zoning Changes

Dear Cambridge City Council,

I am writing to express my disappointment and alarm that the new up-zoning petitions are being considered for voting, for the following reasons:

1. I am a 27-year resident of Inman Square. What sets Inman Square apart is its unique character, a blend of lower-scaled development and a diverse range of small businesses. Encouraging buildings up to 10 stories along Cambridge Street will destroy this character, and make Inman Square virtually indistinguishable from Kendall Square. No offense to Kendall Square, but few people would argue that it is anything but a generic hub with little sense of identity.

2. The thought of this level of new development without creating commensurate parking (as is my understanding of the proposed zoning changes) would exacerbate our current parking issues. I rely on street parking, and it fills me with dread and fear that for people like me it may become harder to find a parking space in my neighborhood than it is in midtown Manhattan.

3. I am skeptical that the proposed zoning changes will deliver anything close to the amount of affordable housing that the city has long sought.

4. I am not aware that there has been any sort of public process related to these proposed zoning changes. As an architect who has worked on several projects in Cambridge, I know that typically very little gets done around here without community involvement, which in my opinion only strengthens the quality of the built environment. It is distressing to consider that changes of this magnitude could transpire without engaging the residents who will be most affected by it.

For these reasons, I would urge you to consider postponing the vote on these proposed changes until the community has had a fair chance to register its collective opinion.

Thank you,

Henry Scollard
140 Antrim Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: Michele Keough <mkeough197@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 9:00 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: request to postpone

Dear All,
As a resident of Fayette St, I am deeply concerned about the possibility of upzoning along Cambridge Street.
Please postpone this decision until January to allow more time for citizen discussion.
Best regards,
Michele Keough

--
Michele Keough
cell: 617.642.6497

Erwin, Nicole

From: Deb Mandel <nyalmond@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 8:57 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Proposed Building Heights on Cambridge ST.

Dear Cambridge City Clerk,

I am a long time Inman Square resident and have participated in numerous discussions over the years about improvements for bike safety and green space in the neighborhood. My neighbors and I are now discussing the proposed construction of eight to 10-story and higher residential buildings from Inman Square to Lechmere Square, along Cambridge St. I wholeheartedly support affordable housing, but this upzoning proposal does not ensure that likelihood, nor take into account the impacts such density will have on the population.

More open discussions are needed. Please delay your final decision about this, at least to January, so there is more opportunity for community review and public discussion.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Debra Mandel
242 Hampshire St.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Trudi Goodman <trudigoodman@yahoo.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 2, 2025 4:57 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Please let the Mass Avenue and Cambridge Street Zoning Expire.

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am writing to The Cambridge City Council requesting that the Proposed Petitions for Upzoning both to the Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street Areas be postponed rather than ratified.

Allowing the Petitions to expire, would make it possible for Public Meetings to be held.

This is necessary because neither Community, (especially Cambridge Street) has been able to have Public Community Input as to how these changes will affect Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street Areas.

The Zoning Petition for Massachusetts Avenue would increase the allowed residential heights from 6-7 floors currently, to 12 floors.

The Zoning Petition for Cambridge Street increases allowed residential heights from 6 floors currently to 8 floors along its length and up to 10 floors in Inman Square; up to 12 floors in the Webster Avenue and Windsor Street area and up to 15 floors in the Lechmere Area.

I am very concerned that these changes will drive up the cost of land in these Communities, and make 100% Affordable Housing uncompetitive.

There needs to be a Housing Plan that creates an advantage for 100% Affordable Housing. Truly Affordable Housing is a necessity in Cambridge.

The proposed changes in these petitions would not allow that to happen.

There has been very little to no Public Process for these Potentially Impacted Communities.

Residents have a right to know and assess what these new proposed heights will create in their neighborhoods.

There needs to be New Public Meetings held.

These changes are considerable in terms of height and density
And the use of As Of Right to allow newer height dimensions does not allow for Community Input.

These newer Proposals no longer reflect what has been previously been stated as Housing Heights for these areas.

Please allow The Petitions to expire so that there is sufficient time for Public Meetings and for an Up to Date Analysis of The Impact of the Height Changes to the AOH Housing.

There is an acute need in Our City for Truly Affordable Housing in Cambridge.
These Petitions as currently written will not allow that for to happen.

Given these issues, I am requesting as a concerned 45 year resident of Cambridge, particularly of The Inman Square Area that these petitions should be allowed to expire in January 2006.

The Communities that would be impacted have a right to review all new changes to building heights and how these changes will effect Residents.

This has not been done.

Public Meetings were not held in The Cambridge Street Areas at all !

There needs to be a genuine assessment as to how these changes will effect The Cambridge Street and Massachusetts Avenue Areas.

Given all these very substantial issues, these petitions should not pass.
These petitions should be allowed to expire.
A deeper study needs to be put in place.

It is what is fair and equitable for the Residents in the Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street Areas.

Sincerely,

Gertrude(Trudi)Goodman
1221 Cambridge Street
Apt. 708
Cambridge, MA
02139-1349

Cell: 857-334-6757

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sara Mae Berman <saramaeb@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:36 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: upzoning on all sides of Cambridge, Hampshire, & Prospect Sts.

Dear Councillors,
Let me express my complete disagreement with the proposal to allow (encourage) taller buildings and therefore denser development. Cambridge won't look like Cambridge any more. (it will look like downtown Boston or Manhattan) We have lived here since 1958. Our street (our neighborhood) feels like a much smaller town than our already densely packed city is. At present, the city is small enough so we can know our neighbors.

Besides, what are the cities around us doing to create more housing? How will their plans affect what we do for development?

On Bishop Allen Dr and Prospect Sts, there is a large empty lot next to a parking lot. If you need space for more housing, how about that area?

Thank you for your attention,
Sara Mae Berman
23 Fayette St.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sheli Wortis <sheliwortis@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 9:20 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Fwd: On the two zoning proposals before the Ordinance Committee

----- Original Message -----

From: Sheli Wortis <sheliwortis@comcast.net>
To: "council@cambridgema.gov" <council@cambridgema.gov>
Date: 12/01/2025 9:18 PM EST
Subject: On the two zoning proposals before the Ordinance Committee

Dear Councillors:

I am writing to urge that the Ordinance Comm. vote unanimously to recommend that the City Council allow both the Mass Avenue Zoning Petition and the Cambridge Street Zoning Petition to expire.

The heights of some buildings proposed in the two zoning petitions were not discussed in public meetings that were held. This denied community input in the zoning petitions that you are now considering.

There has been little data presented about the potential consequences of the rezoning for 100% affordable housing as a result of the development that is proposed in the zoning petitions. The high densities proposed in the petitions should only be considered for 100% affordable housing. More time is needed for both the community and for the new City Council that takes office in thirty days to consider the impact of upzoning on the neighborhoods affected and on the opportunities for affordable housing developers to compete favorably with market rate developers. Also, the City Council should take the time to consider whether hotels should be considered as equivalent to residences when they are commercial investment properties.

For these reasons, please let these petitions expire so that the new City Council may take the time to hear community reactions and consider these high density, high building zoning proposals in order to better meet the needs of low and moderate income residents whose ability to remain in Cambridge is dramatically threatened by the increased gentrification of the city.

Thank you!

Sheli Wortis, 106 Berkshire St. 02141

Erwin, Nicole

From: Sam Polzin <sam.polzin@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 8:06 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: SUPPORT for North Mass Ave and Cambridge Street Zoning Petitions

Hello:

I'm writing to voice my **strong support** for the zoning petitions currently set before the Ordinance Committee. Please consider the following points.

- The proposed zoning is the product of extensive community planning processes (i.e., Mass Ave Study and Our Cambridge Street) with broad stakeholder support.
- Rezoning our corridors and squares is essential to meeting our housing and affordability goals, especially as these areas experience the greatest demand.
- Allowing more homes on transit corridors reduces car dependency, cuts emissions, and enables residents to live in efficient, all-electric buildings.
- These corridors include significant underutilized retail, and adding housing will enable better land use while supporting local businesses with more customers.

Overall, these zoning petitions are strongly beneficial to Cantabrigians -- present and future -- and should be passed in their strongest form.

Sincerely,
Sam Polzin
31 Garfield St

Erwin, Nicole

From: Carolyn Magid <cmagid@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 7:53 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Zoning on the agenda for Tuesday Dec. 2 Ordinance Committee

Dear Mayor, Vice Mayor, and Councillors:

I am writing about the zoning petitions to be considered by the Ordinance Committee Tuesday Dec. 2.

I see 3 problems with the proposed zoning:

(1) It will be harder to build both more 100% affordable housing and social housing. By increasing the allowable heights for market-rate projects to those allowed for 100% affordable housing, it will be harder if not impossible for 100% affordable housing developments to compete. We will be losing 100% affordable projects to projects that have at best 20% inclusionary, although even that amount is in question going forward. There is so far no plan to advantage social housing, so that will also lose to market-rate projects.

(2) Although there were public meetings about zoning on Mass Ave and Cambridge Street, the heights in the zoning petition are much higher than what was discussed, and there was no discussion about these heights being allowed as of right. Moving ahead without a better public process is a grave mistake.

(3) The proposed zoning allows the same heights and as of right adoption to hotels as to private housing developments. We can expect hotels to outcompete private housing developments, 100% affordable developments, and social housing. Why would we provide them with that or any advantage?

Here are my asks:

- 1. Let the Mass Avenue and Cambridge St zoning expire.**
- 2. Bring new zoning that doesn't disadvantage 100% affordable and social housing. Our greatest need is housing for low and moderate income residents.**
- 3. Remove any advantages to hotels (both as of right and height).**
- 4. Have a robust public process in which the public can engage with what is actually proposed and hold it at times the public can show up.**

Best regards,
Carolyn Magid
71 Reed St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Beth Gamse <bethgamse@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 5:26 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council; City Manager
Cc: Judith D. Singer; Beth Gamse
Subject: Up-zoning in Cambridge

Dear City Councillors, City Manager, and City Clerk-

We write to urge you to proceed more slowly and planfully with respect to the proposed changes to the Zoning Law. As long time residents of Cambridge, we are deeply concerned about the city's rush to development with little or no meaningful review and only rhetorical community input. We support reasonable development projects on the major corridors, but not on residential streets. Please consider doing feasibility studies to determine the impact on utilities, greenery, traffic, and other infrastructural elements before launching major new developments that upend residents, result in years of construction, noise, loss of greenery, as well as loss of parking to construction vehicles and construction workers.

Thank you for your consideration.

Beth Gamse & Judy Singer
Beth Gamse
617-448-4860

Erwin, Nicole

From: Mary Akerson <mary.akerson@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 5:18 PM
To: City Manager; City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Inman Square, Cambridge Street, Height of New Residential Buildings

Dear City Manager, City Clerk, and City Council,

I strongly oppose the building of 10 story, and taller, residential buildings all along Cambridge Street between Inman Square and Cambridge Crossing/Lechmere "as of right".

I think the cityscape should be preserved in a manner that maintains a relatively consistent height in our residential neighborhoods. The architecture should be fitting with the fabric of the neighborhood.

I have lived on Fayette Street for more than 40 years, and appreciate the history and the tradition of our local streets.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Mary Akerson
26 Fayette St.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Lynne Hall <lynnehall43@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 5:15 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Upzoning petition- please take no action

Dear Ordinance Committee,

Please let the Cambridge Street upzoning petition die by taking no action. We want you to delay the final vote and then reintroduce the petition after the new year. It is critical that there be a community process to better inform residents of the proposal and **that** there be a process for community response to these new Cambridge Street heights, especially as they impact/are proposed for the Inman Square area.

Thank you for your consideration,

Lynne Hall
154 Auburn Street
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Shelley Rieman <shelleyrieman@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 5:03 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Cc: Lee Farris; Susan Markowitz; Richard Krushnic; Phyllis Bretholtz
Subject: proposed upzoning in Inman Sq

Dear City Council,

Please do not immediately vote for 10 story buildings in Inman Sq and on Cambridge St. This is a proposal that needs to be studied and discussed by MANY Cambridge citizens, especially those who would be most affected by this type of massive development. The construction alone would be disruptive to abutters and residents for months and months. And then the final structures would cast shadows on nearby homes, cause parking problems galore, affect pedestrians, and probably put too much pressure on the electric grid.

Please table this proposal until January 2026.

Thank you,

Shelley Rieman
201 Frankln St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Emily Gianetta <emily.gianetta@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 4:33 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; citymanager@camridgema.gov
Subject: Inman Square - 10 Story Buildings As-of Right?

Good Evening:

My name is Emily Gianetta, and I live in Inman Square with my husband, three young children, and our au pair. We have lived in Inman Square for almost a decade (since 2016) and have chosen to raise our family here. My girls attend Baldwin down the street, and we have put down roots in the community here through the various activities we all participate in on a regular basis.

Last week, while we were away celebrating Thanksgiving with family, we were notified by neighbors that there is currently **a proposal to allow 10-story buildings along Cambridge, Prospect, and Hampshire Streets as-of-right**. Apparently there is a meeting tonight to discuss this -- we were not given any advance notice (only found out through the neighbor who back-channeled to us), and of course we cannot attend as it is a school night and our daughters have extracurriculars.

While it isn't entirely clear to us what the proposal is because nothing has been shared with the neighborhood, needless to say, we are very worried about what will happen right in our backyard if 10 story buildings are allowed as-of-right. That is a huge departure from what is currently along Cambridge Street, and not to mention, half of the street level businesses on this corridor are vacant. Wouldn't a better use of our time and resources be to deal with that issue, or even incentive landlords to come in and repurpose those buildings into small apartment buildings before we start building skyscrapers next to single-family houses?

This is a proposal that needs to be seriously vetted and absolutely deserves to be subject to scrutiny from those of us who live here. Rather than push this through quickly during the holiday season, **we're requesting that the petition be (1) fully disclosed to the neighborhoods that will be affected by it, and (2) reintroduced again in January when everyone is back from celebrating the holidays so that there can be time for public meetings where residents can learn about the petition and discuss their feelings and concerns.**

Thanks very much for your attention to this matter, and we hope that you will consider delaying this proposal so that it can be properly considered.

Best,

Emily Gianetta

--

Emily E. Gianetta
emily.gianetta@gmail.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Skip Schiel <skipschiel@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 4:15 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Cc: chjc@cambridgehousingjustice.com
Subject: Concerning City Council's Ordinance Committee's two zoning petitions for increased heights for market-rate residential buildings on Mass. Ave. and on Cambridge St.

dear committee,

as a low income, elderly resident of cambridge, living in a very special home owner's rehab (HRI) building on sacramento st thanks to my housing voucher, i urge you to consider the impacts of these two petitions on affordable housing. i have concerns that should the petitions be okayed affordable housing will suffer along the two streets in question.

thank you.

—Skip Schiel

Erwin, Nicole

From: Rosalind Michahelles <rosalind@dominick-jones.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 3:50 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: WHY LUXURY HOUSING?

Good afternoon Councilors, City Clerk, and City Manager --

Why is Cambridge disrupting neighborhoods to build luxury housing -- when what is needed is affordable housing?

According to Councilor Zusy's Nov.30 email to constituents, that is the plan: "**54 Hayes St.**, a small dead end in Riverside, and ... **96 Jackson St.** in North Cambridge. Nine **luxury** units will be built at each site, without parking." (Italics mine)

Surely neighborhoods are important in any city, ours included. Please think of helping the residents before you think of helping the developers!

Sincerely, Rosalind Michahelles (6 Hurlbut Street)

--
Rosalind Michahelles
617-491-3239
rosalind@dominick-jones.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: hwalker434@rcn.com
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 3:34 PM
To: City Manager
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street Zoning Petitions

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

I hope you have enjoyed a pleasant Thanksgiving holiday.

With the Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street Zoning Petitions before Ordinance Committee again tomorrow, I write to ask your help in ensuring that the new housing to be built will create an environment in which people want to live. Too much attention has been spent counting theoretical numbers of units, and way too little attention has been paid to livability for the new residents.

Proximity to public transportation is not an unalloyed benefit. One ignores the heavy cloud of exhaust fumes that can hang over Mass. Ave. during rush hour – surely a threat to those with asthma or heart conditions, as well as a known cancer risk.

Then there is the noise, whether from traffic at 6:30 AM, or from Springsteen-imitators revving engines and blasting radios at 11:00 PM, or from late-night carousers from the Abbey, or from the unhoused people's drum circle at Porter at midnight, or from the lone guy on the electric micromobility device carrying a boom box.

On November 13 we were told that one reason to avoid ground floor open space was so as "not to take away from [business] activity on the street." Please consider the next four to five months, with the little tables and sale racks all gone, the potted plants all dead: how nice are CDD's wide vacant sidewalks? CDD was wrong to shut down the discussion of open space by invoking the aura of "Green Factor Standard." Most buildings can meet the Green Factor Standard with a partial green roof and no plantings whatsoever at grade.

Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street as they are to become are not inherently places one would choose to live *unless we take care to make them so*. **Please make a minor change to the zoning petitions so that there will be a modest open (even green) space requirement for buildings up to eight stories along Massachusetts Avenue and buildings up to six stories along Cambridge Street.** The pre-WWII developers of multifamily housing, to whom we so frequently refer, knew something about the value of a couple of rhododendrons and yew to create a sense of place and of hope during the cold dark months. We need to heed their example.

With many thanks for your consideration,

Helen Walker
43 Linnaean Street

Erwin, Nicole

From: kelli <qeli@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 3:25 PM
To: City Council; City Manager; City Clerk
Subject: Cambridge Street upzoning

10 stories in Inman Square (and the other up zoning on Cambridge Street) is too much! When I moved to Inman Square, part of the attraction was that it is close to everything I need, but off the beaten path. Now you're trying to make it the beaten path, which doesn't sit well with me and my neighbors. Six stories will be a huge enough difference to get used to, and most of us don't even want that much height.

Furthermore, you cannot expect to "encourage" people to give up their cars simply by denying them parking. Do you plan to require tenants of these new megastructures with no parking to sign a contract promising not to own a vehicle? You have already obliterated so much street parking, favoring bicycles over businesses (with plans to continue the bike lanes without regard for the consequences), and now you want to further increase the competition for parking by adding hundreds of residents with no accommodation for their vehicles. If you allow taller buildings, you **MUST** include adequate parking, either in lots or multi-level parking structures.

Please delay any decisions on this matter until you have addressed these and other concerns from the residents that will be affected.

Susan Kelly Foster
Fayette Street homeowner

Sent from my iPhone

Erwin, Nicole

From: Susan Yanow <susan@susanyanow.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:46 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Proposal to dramatically upzone Cambridge Street

Dear City Council,

I have just learned that the Ordinance Committee will be considering a zoning petition on Dec 2 that would allow the Manhattanization of Cambridge Street and would eliminate so many of the small businesses that are part of the fabric of our community. Please press pause on this hearing until more of our neighbors can be made aware of this proposal and can share their opinions on this proposal, which will dramatically change our neighborhood.

Thank you.

Susan Yanow

221 Norfolk Street

--

Susan Yanow
Reproductive Health Consultant
Cambridge MA
617 492 1155

Erwin, Nicole

From: BRIAN COSGROVE <brian.cosgrove1@verizon.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 1:02 PM
To: City Clerk
Subject: New Cambridge Zoning

Sent from my iPad I am opposed to the new zoning for Cambridge St. This should be a matter the entire city votes on.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Richard Krushnic <rkrushnic@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 2:27 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Cambridge St. and Mass Ave. upzoning

So we are where we were the last upzoning round. It is clear that this upzoning will pass. Last time many in the community tried to reduce height a bit and improve affordability a bit, and that seemed to work. Could we pull this off again? Not without several amendments.

For various reasons it is difficult to build affordable housing in Cambridge above 6 stories, so AHO incentives would be diminished by this upzoning. The proposed heights will have to be reduced to maintain any real AHO incentive. One could argue that the same could be accomplished by increasing maximum AHO heights in the areas of these two petitions. However, given the difficulty of building AHO buildings tall, it is doubtful that increasing AHO heights here would provide the necessary incentives. Lowering the increase in height in the two petitions would preserve the AHO incentive more successfully. At these heights, at least a 3 story, and better a 4 story differential for AHO should be preserved.

Tops on Mass Ave should be 10, not 11. What about lowering them everywhere: 16 in Porter, 12 in Lechemere, 8 in Inman Sq, 10 in Webster/Windsor.

The views regarding commercial ground floors expressed by the East Cambridge Business Association should be amended to the Cambridge petition.

This upzoning is perhaps the coup de grace for existing residents without their own parking. The city is continuing to treat these residents as if they really don't matter. Each upzoning, when no parking is required for the new developments leaves them totally ignored and screaming. Additional parking for residents without their own parking should be required under this zoning. Developers using this zoning should pay the city a fee per unit to cover half this cost, and the city should cover the other half. It would probably mean the city would have to acquire land for few small structured parking garages for these residents.

Amendments should take care of open space concerns as outlined by Patty Nolan in her recent missive.

Hotels must be withdrawn from as-of-right, since including them seriously damages housing and AHO incentives, since hotels do not have to have 20% affordable rooms.

Big mistake, not retaining enforceable design review. Cambridge needs charm, and filling it with square boxes maximizing sf is not what the City needs.

The fact that these new heights were never considered in the Cambridge St. and Mass. Ave. community processes, they must not be voted on until a new community process addresses this. The AHO concern has not been publicly addressed either. Several amendments are desirable. All this means that final decision must be postponed until next year, and after a community process on the new heights.

I continue to believe that as long as demand remains around the same level, that building tall buildings with 80% market units drives more people out of the city than it protects. This applies uniquely to Cambridge, because of the uniquely high demand here. Greater Boston supply/demand arguments have little to tell us about our City, where, for the last two decades building more housing hasn't had any impact on demand, but plenty of impact on land prices, where increasing supply has just driven land prices UP. The 80% has been so profitable that developers have been willing to pay higher and higher prices for land. The ripple effect induces more and more to sell. Even as the avalanche of highly-paid young techies begins to level off, the effects will continue, until there is a

local tech contraction. This could happen, even as soon as next year, but until it does we will continue to push more people out than we protect.

Now comes the new move: drastically increase building heights along Mass Ave and Cambridge St. Just as there was a leveling of land prices on the horizon, the City moves to suddenly increase them along the corridors, to induce owners to sell to housing developers. If demand remains where it is, the corridor and ripple land value increases will continue to push more people out than it protects through inclusionary.

As if that weren't enough, now we're considering reducing the inclusionary requirement for two stalled projects, which of course means that the same would happen to many other projects.

I like the European (Paris) central city model of 6-8 story buildings, not just on corridors but over wider areas. The oppression, environmental issues and bad design inherent in skyscrapers is avoided and a sunnier community with just enough above to support commercial below strikes the right balance. It's quite sad that the City cares so little now about the urban design issues inherent in the upzonings.

The failure of the recent 4/6 upzoning to protect naturally affordable 3-deckers from being replaced by single families or by larger structures without a single affordable unit demonstrated how little the council or city staff care about protecting existing residents in the only naturally affordable housing in the City.

Please let the petitions die, so we can have a little more time to debate the issues.

Erwin, Nicole

From: JOHN MARTIN <jackjdy2@comcast.net>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 1:20 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Upzoning Inman Square to Lechmere

I demand that the Ordinance Committee of the City Council let the Cambridge Street upzoning petition die by taking no action. This action seems timed over the Thanksgiving holiday and coordinated to exclude citizen comment and participation, which is simply unacceptable. It is critical that there be a community process to better inform residents of the proposal and that there be a process for community response to these new Cambridge Street heights, especially as they impact/are proposed for the Inman Square area.

John Martin
72 Antrim St.
Cambridge, Ma 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Nella LaRosa-Waters <nella75@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 1:03 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Mass Ave and Cambridge st.

Let zoning ordinance on Mass Ave and Cambridge Street expire so it can be amended.

Thank you,

Nella LaRosa-Waters

54 Crescent St. Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: helen snively <hmsnively@aol.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 12:57 PM
To: City Manager; City Clerk; City Council
Subject: please no upzoning on Cambridge St until community can comment

Dear Ordinance Committee and City Council,

I am aghast to hear of the plans to upzone Cambridge Street with hardly any resident input.. Just like we've seen all over the city. Please do not take action on it at this point.

It is critical that the city create a robust community process so that all residents have a good chance to hear about the proposal and respond to it. These new Cambridge Street heights will have an enormous impact, especially on the Inman Square area.

It's just not fair to impose development on residents without first informing them and letting them comment.

Helen Snively
Fayette Park

Erwin, Nicole

From: Jason Frost <jhfrost314@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 12:47 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: North Mass Ave and Cambridge St Zoning Reforms

Dear City Council members,

I am writing to respectfully urge you to support the North Mass Ave and Cambridge St zoning reforms at tomorrow's Ordinance Committee meeting in the strongest possible form.

Housing, particularly near transit corridors and the main streets of our squares, is critical to everything that I love about Cambridge - its vibrancy, quiriness, local businesses, and most importantly, its people. Building new, energy efficient housing near transit and businesses, and decreasing the amount that residents have to drive, is also one of the best ways to strengthen Cambridge's commitment to sustainability.

As a young professional and a student, I've experienced firsthand how difficult it is to find housing in Cambridge - and I'm fortunate in having found housing here at all. So many former or would-be Cantabridgians have instead been priced out, and we as a city and our local businesses lose so much every time that happens. Our constrained housing supply also deprives people of all the opportunities that Cambridge has to offer.

These zoning petitions are necessarily compromises. While I personally think there are opportunities for greater density and I'm uncertain about the feasibility of certain stepback requirements, these petitions have come out of years of collaboration and compromise to gain broad support (I participated in the Our Cambridge Street process when I was living near Inman Square). Now, these proposals are a critical step in the right direction at a time when we can't afford to wait to tackle the cost of housing.

Thank you for your consideration and for your efforts to improve housing affordability in Cambridge.

Sincerely,
Jason Frost
143 Albany Street Apt 401

Erwin, Nicole

From: Xi Yu <xyu119@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 11:52 AM
To: City Clerk
Subject: Concerns about Upzoning Petition

Dear Cambridge City Council Ordinance Committee,

My name is Xi "CiCi" Yu, and I'm a longtime resident of Cambridge. I currently live at 61 Antrim St.

I am writing because I want the Ordinance Committee of the City Council to let the Cambridge Street upzoning petition die by taking no action. I want them to delay the final vote and then reintroduce the petition after the new year. It is critical that there be a community process to better inform residents of the proposal and that there be a process for community response to these new Cambridge Street heights, especially as they impact/are proposed for the Inman Square area.

Thank you,
CiCi

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ketan Ahuja <ahuja.ketan@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 10:12 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Cc: Siddiqui, Sumbul; Nolan, Patricia; McGovern, Marc; Mallon, Alanna; Simmons, Denise; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toomey, Tim; Zondervan, Quinton; Carlone, Dennis
Subject: Proposed zoning changes around Inman Square

I'm writing to oppose the zoning changes around Inman Square.

I'm one of the most pro-housing people in Cambridge. I think Cambridge would be a nicer city if the population doubled. And I think you're going about zoning changes around Inman sq totally wrong.

This got really long so here's an executive summary:

- You should aim to make dense housing as nice as possible, rather than as dense as possible. This will build density but also build community support, allowing these changes to last for the next 30 years rather than be litigated at every election.
- 6 story row houses are the nicest form of housing in cities (think Park Slope or Cobble Hill or Fort Greene in Brooklyn, or the South End, Back Bay, and Beacon Hill in Boston). Tall apartment buildings are not that nice or where people want to live/settle down for the long term (eg Kendall Sq, Fenway, Williamsburg).
- The city council shouldn't just liberalise zoning, it should also do things to increase building, like aggregate lots, coordinate building many versions of the same type of unit and encourage experimentation to bring down construction costs. Cambridge now is in the top percentile of liberal zoning laws (with recent changes), and this should be the focus of future efforts rather than further liberalisation of zoning. Get the most out of the zoning changes you've passed.
- Inman Square is fundamentally a residential neighbourhood rather than a major transit corridor. It is different from Kendall, Central, Harvard and Porter Squares. Ten-story buildings are oversized for Inman Square. Six stories is enough.
- A good rule of thumb is that the ratio of building heights to width of streets should not be more than two to one. Places with very wide streets like Porter Square can have very tall buildings but in Inman Square, you would feel like you're in a canyon.
- One of the nice things about Inman Square is that it has lots of independent shops, businesses and places to hang out, rather than large chain stores that are generic price highly. To maintain this, we need rent subsidized commercial premises in the same way that you have affordable housing requirements for residential premises. Marylebone is the nicest neighborhood in London because it curates the commercial premises that it allows quite heavily.
- You should also get rid of restrictive covenants on commercial premises, such as the covenant on the Bank of America building in Inman Square that says you cannot build a restaurant or cafe that competes with S&S. Inman Square also needs an affordable grocery store that is not a Whole Foods.
- You need to encourage developers to build nice units (high ceilings, good layout/light/airflow) rather than super dense studios. Otherwise developers will cut corners and people won't be able to find places they want to buy and settle down in.

I am very pro-housing. I am not a NIMBY. You are making a mistake around Inman Square. I'd be very happy to talk more about these issues. Please give more time for consideration and postpone decisions until January or February.

Longer form discussion:

The general philosophy of the Council seems to be to push through the maximum permissive zoning change in the shortest period of time, ignoring all objections and only going through the formalities in terms of seeking local input. It also seems like most councillors are willing to let Burhan Azeem steamroll them on these changes, rather than listen to local input and represent constituents. The approach also seems to be very free market in that it involves making very permissive zoning rules and letting developers do most of the building work within them.

You have succeeded in doing this for the last zoning change of six stories across the whole of Cambridge (which I supported). This has made Cambridge in the 99th percentile of lax zoning laws in the entire US.

A better approach is to try and increase density and build more housing for sure, but do it in a way that builds support among the local community. Support for housing policy is a long-term thing in a city. Developers cannot build 20,000 units in a two year term. You want to design policies that build support of local communities as they get implemented, rather than sap support and increase bad will. The way you're going about it means that pro-housing policies will lose support over the coming decade, and future city councils will water down the changes.

The way to do this is to be laser focused on making neighborhoods really nice while you build more housing in them. This requires a strong vision that is realistic about what sorts of neighbourhoods most people want to live in.

Across major cities the nicest neighbourhoods are five or six story row houses with a mix of smaller one and two bed apartments, and larger family-sized apartments. These are also some of the densest parts of cities, with very high carrying capacity for population. In Boston, this describes Back Bay, Beacon Hill and the South End, which are the nicest neighbourhoods to live in - Most people in Cambridge would be happy living in these areas. In New York, this describes neighborhoods like Cobble Hill, Fort Greene, and Park Slope. These neighbourhoods are much nicer and more desirable than than neighborhoods which made worse or less consistent design choices like Williamsburg in NY or Fenway, Kendall, or Seaport. This dense mid-high building also describes much of the best parts of European cities.

This level of density is plenty high enough to solve the local housing problem. I know that the zoning you're currently going through around major transit corridors is expected to result in a lot more units than the citywide six-story limit over the next decade (I understand something like 9k units from the transit corridor upzoning vs 4k units from the citywide changes). But the important thing to bear in mind is that you're not competing for just a building boom over the next decade. Your aim is to demonstrate a model of building in cities that garners support in Cambridge so it doesn't get repealed, and spreads to Somerville, Medford, Jamaica Plain, and other areas.

The number of projected units from developers is also very fungible. I know this from my work in economic modeling. This is where the mental model you have of letting the market build the units once zoning restrictions are relaxed is wrong. Policy can do a lot to make it easier to build more of the right sort of housing, and this is where City Council effort should now move. Things like aggregating lots into larger

parcels to make it more economic for developers to build, compelling owners of parking lots to build, producing standardized designs, coordinating building across many parcels to leverage economies of scale, will all be very beneficial. It is so expensive to build housing in the area, even where zoning permits it, that we need a lot of coordinated effort to drive down the cost of building. This is the sort of coordination that developers cannot on their own do, and there's a role for the city to play here.

This brings me to Inman Square.

Inman Square is one of the nicest squares in Cambridge. What makes Inman Square so nice is that it has lots of small independent shops and restaurants where people know your name. It also has consistent mid-level density and public spaces that are clean, safe and nice to hang around in. It has a neighborhood community feel where I very often run into people I know, and people get together for community events. This is not at all true of the other major squares in Cambridge, like Kendall, Porter, Harvard, or Central. These squares are large, impersonal, full of chain stores, people do not know your name and it does not feel particularly nice to hang out in their public spaces.

You should aim to make Inman Square as nice as possible, rather than as dense as possible. Inman sq would for sure be nicer if it were a whole lot denser instead of filled with parking lots and gas stations. But 8 or 10 storey buildings are totally oversized for the neighbourhood, and for the width of the streets in Inman Square. Six stories is plenty dense for this neighbourhood. The city should consolidate the parking lots and gas station in Inman Square and encourage one big development of nice six story buildings. That would create plenty of housing.

You also need to make sure small independent shops can survive in Inman Sq. There are lots of nice small shops in Inman Square because rents are cheap. Rents in the major squares like Porter, Harvard and Central are so expensive that only large or chain stores can survive. This means that there should be affordability requirements for commercial premises and limits on chain stores in Inman Square. Many commercial premises in Inman Square also have restrictive covenants that S&S put on their properties, meaning that they cannot be restaurants or cafes. For example, the Bank of America building. City rules should take out these requirements, enabling more nice businesses that attract foot traffic like restaurants and cafes and events spaces. The other thing Inman Square needs is an affordable grocery store (We're sandwiched between two very expensive whole foods).

If you want to add more dense housing in Inman Square (above six stories), the way to do it is to build density on the city-owned trash processing lot, a few blocks from Inman and move trash processing to an industrial area such as by Lechmere.

The final thing is controlling for the type of housing that gets built. The exact style of unit makes a really big difference in people's lives - Sometimes you walk into houses that just make you feel good, and other times you walk into houses that are cramped, pokey, dark or have a poor layout. There's just something about them that doesn't make you feel good. Developers tend to produce uninspiring units nowadays because they cut corners. They therefore produce units with low ceilings, or units with a funny layout, or try and squeeze in a balcony in a unit where there isn't really space. These units languish on the market for cut price values, and no one really wants to live in them anyway. The current zoning rules incentivise many, many small units and studios. This may succeed in producing more housing, but it won't be particularly good value for people who want to live in Cambridge. Cambridge will get known as a place with Pokey, poor quality apartments, rather than airy, nice apartments. You won't get as many

families settling here or people wanting to make lives in Cambridge, if they don't fall in love with the specific units that they're able to buy.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Fuzzy Dice <bappigna@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, December 1, 2025 6:36 AM
To: City Council; City Manager; City Clerk
Subject: Highrises!!!

Dear Councillors, Mr. Huang, and Ms. Crane,

The escalation of building elevations since the initial zoning change that permitted multifamily housing and higher buildings, is getting out of control!

We are astonished to hear that there are plans for high rises along Cambridge Street of 8-15 stories, and even higher-rises in Porter Square, than we believed the City Council had allowed with recent up-zoning.

Much of this building takes all if the land for structural entities, leaves absolutely NO greenspace, NO parking, and potentially damages or removes existing trees! (Rat control??)

We have no idea what limitations the City will place on QUALITY of construction either. Shoddy construction, rapid expansion with little oversight, architectural leniency - will we end up with catastrophes? (Riverview...At least no one was hurt.)

You are envisioning a different city than the one we have chosen to live in. Cambridge has unique neighborhoods and historic features that reflect the wishes of the people who live here, not outside DEVELOPERS.

Sadly we write,

Barbara Appignani and Steve Blacklow

Erwin, Nicole

From: Ethan Frank <ethandf2@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 6:29 PM
To: City Council
Cc: City Clerk
Subject: Is 8 stories enough on cambridge street?

To the Ordinance Committee,

The petitions are great, but I too wonder if 8 stories is enough. 10 would be better, but it's interesting the rules regarding "fundamental changes to the petitions character" and refiling seem designed to obstruct change. Reducing to 6 stories is allowed because $6 < 8$, even though this nullifies the purpose of the petition, but increasing to 10, which I believe more strongly captures the fundamental character of the petition (as the goal is to make more housing), isn't allowed because $10 > 8$?

If it's faster to pass as-is then try to change later to 10, or refile to get it to 10 first, either is fine with me.

Sincerely,
Ethan Frank
632 Mass Ave

Erwin, Nicole

From: Matt Kelly <mkelly@radicalcompliance.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 4:52 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Please delay votes on Cambridge Street up zoning

Dear Councillors,

I live at 13 Oakland Street in Inman Square. I'm writing about the proposed upzoning changes for Cambridge Street, including the idea of permitting 10-storey residential developments in Inman Square by right.

Please postpone any decisions in the upzoning changes, by either the Ordinance Committee or the full council, until sometime in 2026. This would be a huge change to Inman Square and to all of Cambridge Street, and it has caught residents by surprise. It needs much more review and input from residents who would be affected by such a dramatic change.

My understanding of the Housing Overlay Ordinance was always that Cambridge would loosen rules for new housing **four to six** stories high. Now suddenly I hear that the city might push through a rule change for **10** stories in Inman, and even higher further down toward Lechmere.

Ten stories is not what we were told! The first I heard of this was only just before Thanksgiving, and I follow city news regularly.

Personally, my property would suffer significantly if a 10-storey development came to Inman Square. I live just behind the commercial row that contains the Post Office. I put solar panels on my house in 2022. They cost me \$23,000, and essentially provide free electricity from March through November. If those shops were replaced with a 10-storey high-rise, it would block all the sunlight for my townhouse all day long.

Who would make me whole for all my expenses then rendered worthless? Who would pay my electric bills for the next 20 years I plan to live here? I did what the city wanted me to do by going green and paying for solar panels — and now I'm supposed to eat those costs to let a property developer build high-end condos that leave my unit in perpetual gloom?

I'm not the only one in the neighborhood in this situation. We have many questions about the wisdom of this upzoning, and the protections we'll get from losing the value of our homes. Inman Square residents are trying to organize a meeting to gather our thoughts, but we need more time. Please delay any further votes on these new height proposals until we have a chance to understand the situation and express our concerns.

Thank you,

Matt Kelly
13 Oakland St.
Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: Nate Sharpe <nssharp@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 2:39 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Writing in support of upzoning Cambridge St.

Hello,

I understand that this Tuesday, the Ordinance Committee is considering recommending to the council to approve the following upzonings as of right:

- 8 stories along all of Cambridge St. between Inman Sq. and Cambridge Crossing/Lechemere
- 10 stories residential in Inman Square
- 12 stories residential around Webster/Windsor
- 15 stories residential around Cambridge Crossing/Lechemere

I think Cambridge is an amazing place to live, and understandably more people want to live here! The only way to keep that accessible and affordable is to build more housing, and to do that we need to build up. I live on Inman St. between Inman Sq. and Broadway, and strongly support this upzoning.

Best,
Nate Sharpe
109 Inman St, Cambridge, MA 02139

Erwin, Nicole

From: Shawn Harriman <shawn1harriman@gmail.com>
Sent: Sunday, November 30, 2025 7:39 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Subject: Request for Postponement of Zoning Upzoning Decision (Cambridge Street Area)

To the City of Cambridge (Council, Clerk and City Manager),

On November 29th, I received a flyer in my door containing details of upzoning recommendations for Inman Sq, Webster/Windsor Streets and Cambridge Crossing/Lechemere.

I am writing to you as an engaged resident of the Inman Square/East Cambridge area to respectfully and urgently request that the Ordinance Committee postpone its recommendation to the City Council regarding the proposed upzonings along Cambridge Street until January 2026.

The current proposal involves significant changes, including:

- 8-15 stories along Cambridge Street/Lechemere
- 10-12 stories residential/commercial in Inman Square and Webster/Windsor streets

The notice I received indicates that the Ordinance Committee is scheduled to meet and possibly consider recommending the upzonings to the Council on Tuesday, December 2.

While I appreciate the need for development and planning, the timeframe provided for citizen review and discussion of changes of this magnitude is inadequate. Allowing only a few days between the neighborhood meeting (Monday, December 1) and the scheduled Committee meeting (Tuesday, December 2) does not provide residents sufficient time to:

- Fully understand the implications of the complex zoning changes.
- Discuss the impact with neighbors.
- Formulate comprehensive, informed feedback for the Committee.

I ask that you allow for a full month of public discussion and consideration before making a final recommendation. A postponement until January 2026 would demonstrate a commitment to thorough civic engagement and ensure that all community voices are properly heard and considered on these "BIG CHANGES."

Please accept this email communication as my official request for the postponement be granted. I look forward to participating in a more robust discussion next month.

Sincerely,
Dr. Shawn Harriman
90 1/2 Inman Street Cambridge

Erwin, Nicole

From: John macomber <j.macomber@comcast.net>
Sent: Friday, November 28, 2025 10:36 AM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: Re: Please vote NO on the proposed upzoning

Sent from my iPad

> On Oct 30, 2025, at 11:29 AM, John macomber <j.macomber@comcast.net> wrote:

>

> Honorable Members of the Cambridge City Council,

>

> Please vote NO on the massive proposed upzoning on Massachusetts Avenue and Cambridge Street, which would permit buildings rising to 8, 12, 15, and 18 stories and possibly higher in some places without adequate parking, viable publicly accessible open space or setbacks. This proposal would displace local businesses and eliminate naturally affordable homes. It would also make it far more difficult for AHO (affordable housing) developers to acquire such properties because this upzoning precludes legal appeal, parking, open space requirements and more.

>

> These plans also differ significantly from the decisions made by working groups had agreed to, circumventing public process itself. The new zoning allowances also run counter to our city's new 2025 design guidelines.

>

> John R. Macomber

> 25 Buckingham St.

> Cambridge 02138

>

>

>

> Sent from my iPad

Erwin, Nicole

From: Adam Baratz <adam.baratz@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 26, 2025 3:52 PM
To: City Clerk; City Council
Subject: Mass. Ave. and Cambridge St. petitions

I support these zoning petitions and hope the council will pass them as-is.

They resulted from substantial public process. I live near Mass. Ave. I felt well-informed that the petition was in the works. From my participation, I got a good sense of what was going to be produced and I'm not surprised by what's under discussion.

Building higher on Mass. Ave. is appropriate. This area is full of single-story retail, which isn't the best use of a major corridor. Similar development has already come to Central, where I used to live, and I would welcome it in Porter. We are not on track to meet our housing production goals. It's reasonable try to make more progress by making it easier to build higher.

I appreciate the design guidelines to introduce public spaces and greenery. There is currently very little breaking up the rhythm of existing buildings, so this petition would improve things. I also appreciate the provisions to make it easier to bring in more entertainment and nightlife. It's energizing to be on Mass. Ave. when people are spilling out of restaurants onto sidewalk patios. I would like more of that in my neighborhood.

Adam Baratz
37 Walker St.

Erwin, Nicole

From: Paul E Fallon <fallonpaule@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, November 25, 2025 1:31 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: In Support of Zoning Change for North Mass Ave and Cambridge St Corridors

Dear Cambridge City Council,

As a longtime Cambridge resident and homeowner, I strongly support the North Mass Ave and Cambridge Street zoning petitions to allow more housing along those corridors.

Each of those portions of our city have excellent access to public transportation, yet stretches of each corridor have relatively low density development. This proposal will incentivize the development of new housing, thus helping the city reach our 2030 growth goals in ways that are sustainable.

Thank you for your support of this zoning change, and all the other progressive you take as representatives of Cambridge.

Sincerely,

Paul E. Fallon
618 Huron Ave
fallonpaule@gmail.com

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Paul E. Fallon
618 Huron Ave
Cambridge, MA 02138-4531
617-661-9464
www.paulefallon.com
www.howwillwelivetomorrow.com
www.theawkwardpose.com

Erwin, Nicole

From: Linda Moussouris <rosemous@rcn.com>
Sent: Monday, November 24, 2025 4:39 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk; City Manager
Cc: rosemous@rcn.com
Subject: RE: Urgent -- Please postpone final vote on Mass. Ave and Cambridge St. rezoning to weigh issues enumerated

From: Linda Moussouris <rosemous@rcn.com>
Sent: Monday, Nov. 23, 2025
Subject: FW: Urgent -- Please Postpone Final Vote on Mass Ave and Cambridge St. Rezoning to weigh issues enumerated

To: The City Council, City Manager & City Clerk

Having recently been alerted that a vote is occurring this evening at the City Council on the MFH upzoning for Mass. Ave. & Cambridge St., I have already sending off an email summarizing my objections to proceeding with that immediate vote. Furthermore, I am surprised to discover that I concur with affordable housing advocate, Lee Farris, on most of the points she raised in a recent email as to why a final vote on these two upzoning ordinances should be postponed & rather than proceeding. Given the potential large-scale impacts on the cityscape that the MFH upzoning ordinances might exert, we certainly need more time for public process as well as further deliberations to ensue.

As to the question of the allowable heights on the two corridors, having lived on N. Mass. Ave. (opposite Season to Taste) for nearly 7 years, I have been frankly astonished at the potential heights that the 'towerization' of these streets will allow under the MFH upzoning ordinance – 8-9 stories as of right on the Mass. Ave. corridor (12 stories with ground-level retail) & up to 18 stories in the squares (e.g., Porter SQ.). If such developments were to proceed, I can well envision what might occur on Gold Star Rd. (directly across N. Mass. Ave. from my windows): i.e., what residents of the 2- & 3-family houses clustered tightly together on that street will experience during the process of demolition & construction -- not to mention how it will feel being 'towerized' by a high-rise development looming over the entire street. Of course, left unsaid in all these deliberations has been the fate of the naturally occurring affordable housing that is present on these side streets where much of the city's stock of smaller, older wood-frame houses still resides. However, the problem of 'towerization' is even more threatening on Cambridge St.: i.e., though defined as a 'corridor' in the MFH upzoning ordinance, it is really an older, narrow 2-lane road packed with local businesses. Consequently, while many of the smaller structures (1-2 stories) on this corridor merit redevelopment (e.g., to 3-, 4- even 5-story buildings, 'towerization' is something else entirely on this street whose dimensions & usages reflect the 19th century roots of the current city's development.

Furthermore, I concur (with Lee) that the proposed zoning ordinance will produce market-rate developments that will surely outcompete affordable or 'social housing' by raising property values still further: i.e., is it now possible to find a 'renovated' 2 bed/2 bath condo unit in a triple decker that goes for much under \$1 million? What is more, as Lee points out, social housing will be unable to simply increase heights even more in order to compete with market-rate development -- as building higher elevates costs even further for affordable developments

As a native New Yorker, I am well aware of the affordability crisis consuming that city: leading to the election of a 34-year-old Democratic Socialist, Zohran Mandami, as its mayor -- whose primary mission is to immediately tackle the housing crisis. However, I am also aware of the multiple problems that have ensued in my hometown as 'towerization has proceeded apace: i.e., luxury high-rises have thrown Central Park into shadow -- sparking a community outcry; other luxury buildings recently erected have already generated multiple construction problems -- prompting their occupants to launch massive lawsuits; demolition & construction of high-rise edifices threatens smaller buildings immediately adjacent (e.g., ranging from 5-stories to 20). Finally, this native of Manhattan who is dreading attempts to 'Manhattanize' this old, dense city of Cambridge (with its narrow, twisting warrens of streets) is even more concerned about the environmental impacts of what unchecked development will do to its aging infrastructure & existing green space. Having recently read an account of a middle-aged woman returning to the Cairo of her youth to find the city she remembered so fondly unrecognizable in the 21st century -- i.e., transformed by anonymous blocks of high-rise buildings -- I would hate to imagine the same fate for Cambridge (& at what environmental cost?).

I concur that the Boston area as a whole urgently needs more affordable housing, but to ram through these wholesale policy prescriptions without a more deliberative policy process may trigger a large-scale transformation of the cityscape not easily undone. Indeed, as a lifelong city dweller who can well remember the large-scale errors of the past -- i.e., from Pruitt-Igoe in St. Louis to the wide swath cut through the Bronx by the Cross-Bronx Expressway, I urge you all to please desist from acting prematurely, and allow for a more deliberative process to ensue.

Thanks for your consideration --

Linda Moussouris
2440 Mass. Ave.
