



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

COMMITTEE MEETING

~ MINUTES ~

Wednesday, November 30, 2022

1:00 PM

Sullivan Chamber
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

The Neighborhood & Long Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts & Celebrations Committee will hold a public meeting to receive and update on the latest recommendations from the Alewife Zoning Working Group.

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

A public meeting of the Cambridge City Council's Neighborhood & Long-Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts & Celebration Committee was held on Wednesday, November 30, 2022. The meeting was Called to Order at 1:00 p.m. by the Chair, Councillor Carlone. Pursuant to Chapter 20 of the Acts of 2022 adopted by Massachusetts General Assembly and approved by the Governor, this public meeting was hybrid, allowing participation in person, in the Sullivan Chamber, 2nd Floor, City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, MA and by remote participation via Zoom.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Carlone – Present

Vice Mayor Mallon – Present

Councillor McGovern – Present

Councillor Nolan – Present

Councillor Zondervan – Present/Remote

Present – 5 Absent – 0. Quorum established.

Councillor Carlone gave opening remarks and noted that the focus of the meeting was to receive an update on the latest recommendation from the Alewife Zoning Working Group. Also present at the meeting was Councillor Simmons. Councillor Carlone opened public comment and noted that anyone who signs up before 1:30p.m. would have a chance to speak at today's meeting.

Public Comment

Ann Tennis, 71 Griswold Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke on working group.

Ann Stewart, 25-31 Wheeler Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke on long-term planning committee meeting.

Mike Nakagawa, 51 Madison Avenue, Cambridge, MA, spoke on Alewife Zoning.

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Nov 30, 2022 1:00 PM (Committee Reports)

Councillor Carlone introduced Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager for Community Development Department (CDD), who was joined by her team Melissa Peters and Daniel Messplay, who would be giving a presentation at today's meeting titled, "Alewife Zoning Working Group Project Update" (ATTACHMENT A). Iram Farooq introduced other City Staff present at the meeting, which included Kathy Watkins from the Department of Public Works (DPW), Megan Bayer from the City Solicitor's Office, other team members from CDD, Drew Kane and Erik Thorkildsen, and noted that the Deputy City Manager, Owen O'Riordan, was joined in the meeting remotely.

Melissa Peters, Director of Community Planning for CDD, reviewed the working group and project schedule. They also summarized the Alewife District Plan and noted that a goal was to try and build a community with a cohesive mixed-use district. They briefly went over residential development and affordable housing.

Daniel Messplay, Senior Zoning Manager for CDD, did an overview on the three tiers of zoning standards, which are the base requirements, site special permit, and planned unit development (PUD) permit.

Melissa Peters reviewed what the next steps would be for the Alewife Zoning Working Group and noted that to move forward there would have to be a critical sums analysis, residential test fits, and refined zoning framework.

Councillor Carlone gave thank you remarks to the presenters and opened Public Comment.

Public Comment

Suhas Kodali, 7 Seagrave Road, Cambridge, MA, spoke on Alewife Working Group Zoning Recommendations

James Williamson, 1000 Jackson Place, Cambridge, MA, spoke on Zoning.

Eric Grunebaum, 98 Montgomery Street, Cambridge, MA, spoke on Alewife Zoning.

Councillor Carlone noted that there were some issues with Public Comment sign up and made a motion to suspend the rules to re-open Public Comment after the 1:30 sign-up deadline to allow those who were experiencing difficulty signing up for Public Comment to speak.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the role.

Councillor Carlone – Yes

Vice Mayor Mallon – Yes

Councillor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Zondervan – Yes.

Yes - 5 No – 0. Motion passes.

Public Comment

Doug Brown, spoke on Alewife Zoning Working Group.

Lee Farris, 269 Norfolk Street, Cambridge, MA spoke on concerns with the Alewife Zoning Working Group presentation.

Councillor Carlone made a motion to close Public Comment.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Carlone – Yes

Vice Mayor Mallon – Yes

Councillor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Zondervan – Yes.

Yes - 5 No – 0. Public Comment closed at approximately 2:08p.m.

Councillor Nolan had clarifying questions regarding climate change and coastal flooding, and if the Alewife Working Group has considered what that area would look like in the future. Iram Farooq and Kathy Watkins, acting Commissioner of DPW, both responded respectively. Councillor Nolan also noted that it would be important to include a new school in the Alewife area if a new neighborhood is being built and encouraged the working group that it is something to work towards in planning.

Councillor McGovern noted that it is important for the City to have conversations with the MBTA to ensure that they are on board with a new Commuter Rail stop. He also made remarks regarding commercial space and useful open space for residents. Councillor McGovern had clarifying questions and comments on the increase of residential heights and zoning with new development, to which Councillor Carlone and Melissa Peters responded.

Vice Mayor Mallon thanked presenters and members of the working group. The Vice Mayor had clarifying questions on housing and what the process will look like to get housing and if there would be benefits proposed to buyers from developers. She also looked for answers regarding housing financing. Daniel Messplay responded by reviewing what the requirements of public benefits are and Melissa Peters noted that there have been studies done in regard to financing. Vice Mayor Mallon also noted the importance of having arts and cultural spaces with new development.

Councillor Zondervan had question on street grids and the developer's involvement with making street grids possible. Melissa Peters responded noting that the challenge in Alewife is that it is mostly private property, and that the developers would have to work with current property owners to accomplish the street grid and to redevelop. Iram Farooq also responded to help clarify Councillor Zondervan's question on street grids. Kathy Watkins also offered comments regarding street grids.

Councillor Carlone made comments that a priority for new development should be housing and open space. He noted that where there is commercial space the first floors should be available for public uses such as a library, universal pre k, or public arts.

Councillor Nolan made a motion to extend the meeting 10 minutes.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Carlone – Yes

Vice Mayor Mallon – Yes

Councillor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Zondervan – Yes.

Yes - 5 No – 0. Motion passes.

Councillor Carlone continued speaking on zoning, density, and heights of buildings with new development. He noted that there will be an urban design plan that will include information on heights and density, which will then help with the zoning plan. He reiterated the importance of housing and public uses within a neighborhood.

Councillor Nolan made clarifying comments on housing and referenced a Policy Order (POR 2021 #127) that was presented on June 14, 2021, on the City buying property in the Alewife area to address City goals. Iram Farooq responded by noting that the working group has been working on zoning strategies and it is something that could be readdressed.

Councillor Carlone made a motion to adjourn the meeting.

Clerk of Committees Erwin called the roll.

Councillor Carlone – Yes

Vice Mayor Mallon – Yes

Councillor McGovern – Yes

Councillor Nolan – Yes

Councillor Zondervan – Yes.

Yes - 5 No – 0. Motion passes.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 3:09p.m.

Attachment A: Presentation titled “Alewife Zoning Working Group Project Update”.

Clerk’s Note: The City of Cambridge/22 City View records every City Council meeting and every City Council Committee meeting. This is a permanent record.

The video for this meeting can be viewed at:

[Nov 30, 2022 1:00 PM - Neighborhood & Long Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts & Celebration Committee - Committee Meeting \(granicus.com\)](https://www.granicus.com/ViewVideo.php?video_id=1000000)

All meetings are “closed captioned”. After each meeting the “closed captioned transcripts” are available online at: <https://app.box.com/s/9qormcahynjt4pzpt1n5opixogl3q7k5>

Please note that there is no editing of these “closed captioned transcripts” and they do not constitute a verbatim transcript prepared by a certified transcriber

A communication was received from Assistant City Manager Community Development Iram Farooq, transmitting a presentation regarding Alewife Zoning Working Group Project Update.

Attachment A

Alewife Zoning Working Group Project Update

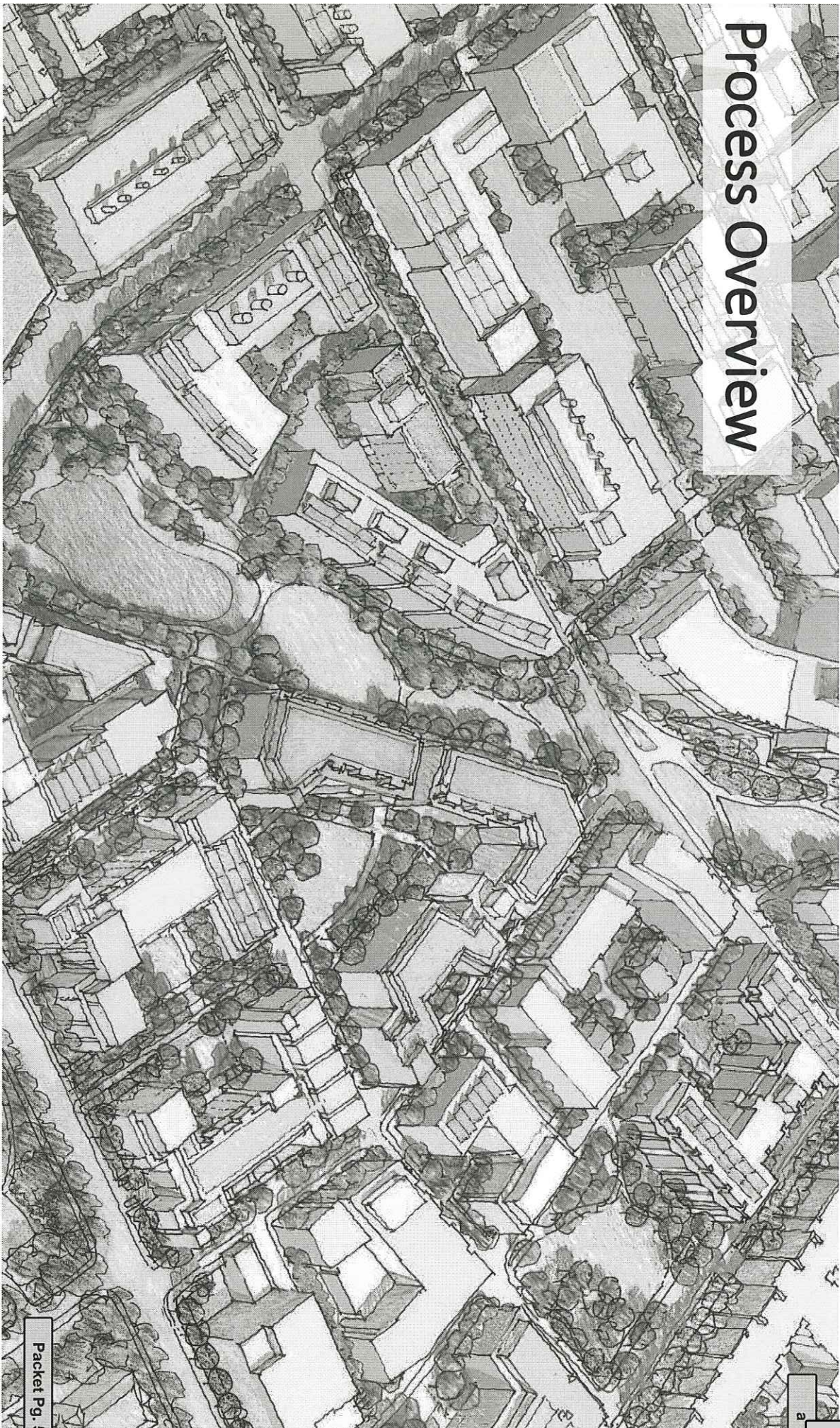
City Council NLTP Committee
November 30, 2022

Packet Pg. 3

Agenda

- 01 Process Overview
- 02 What We Heard
- 03 Draft Zoning Framework
- 04 Discussion

Process Overview



Charge of Working Group

- Recommend new zoning for adoption based on the community's planning and urban design priorities.
- Incorporate lessons learned from zoning and development review processes over the past few years since the completion of the Alewife District Plan.



Alewife Zoning Working Group

Residents

- Doug Brown, West Cambridge
- John Chun, Cambridge Highlands
- Lizzie Feigenbaum, Cambridge Highlands
- Jennifer Gilbert, North Cambridge
- Eric Grunebaum, North Cambridge
- Suhas Kodali, North Cambridge
- Mike Nakagawa, North Cambridge
- Ann Stewart, Cambridge Highlands
- Ann Tennis, Cambridge Highlands

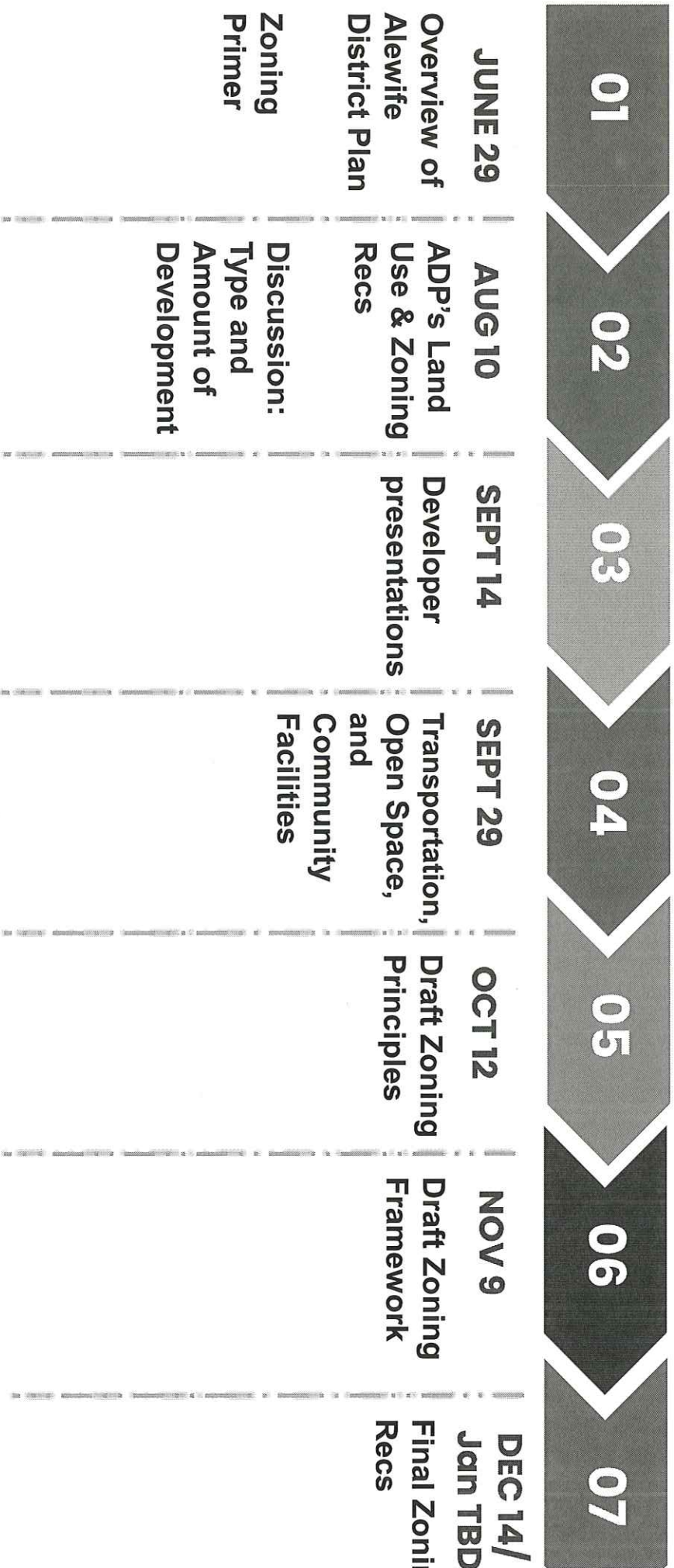
Business Representatives/Property Owners

- Jane Carbone, Homeowners Rehabilitation Inc.
- Chris Chandor, The Davis Companies
- Igor Ivanovic, Iggy's Bakery
- Kelvin Moses, Healthpeak
- Joseph Poirier, Longleaf Lumber
- Joe Sultan, West Cambridge Science Park

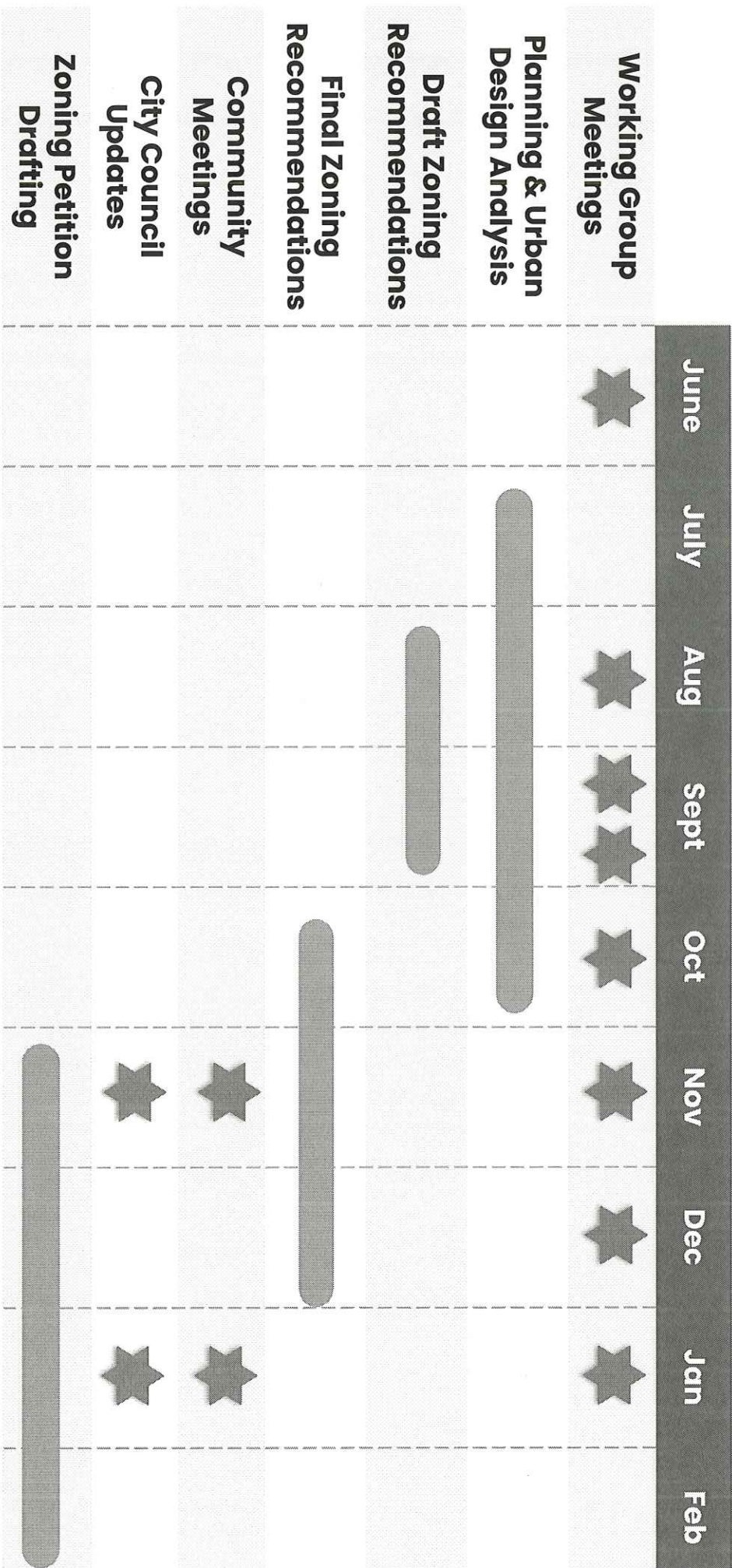
Institutional/Non-Profit Representatives

- Diana Marsh, Fayerweather School

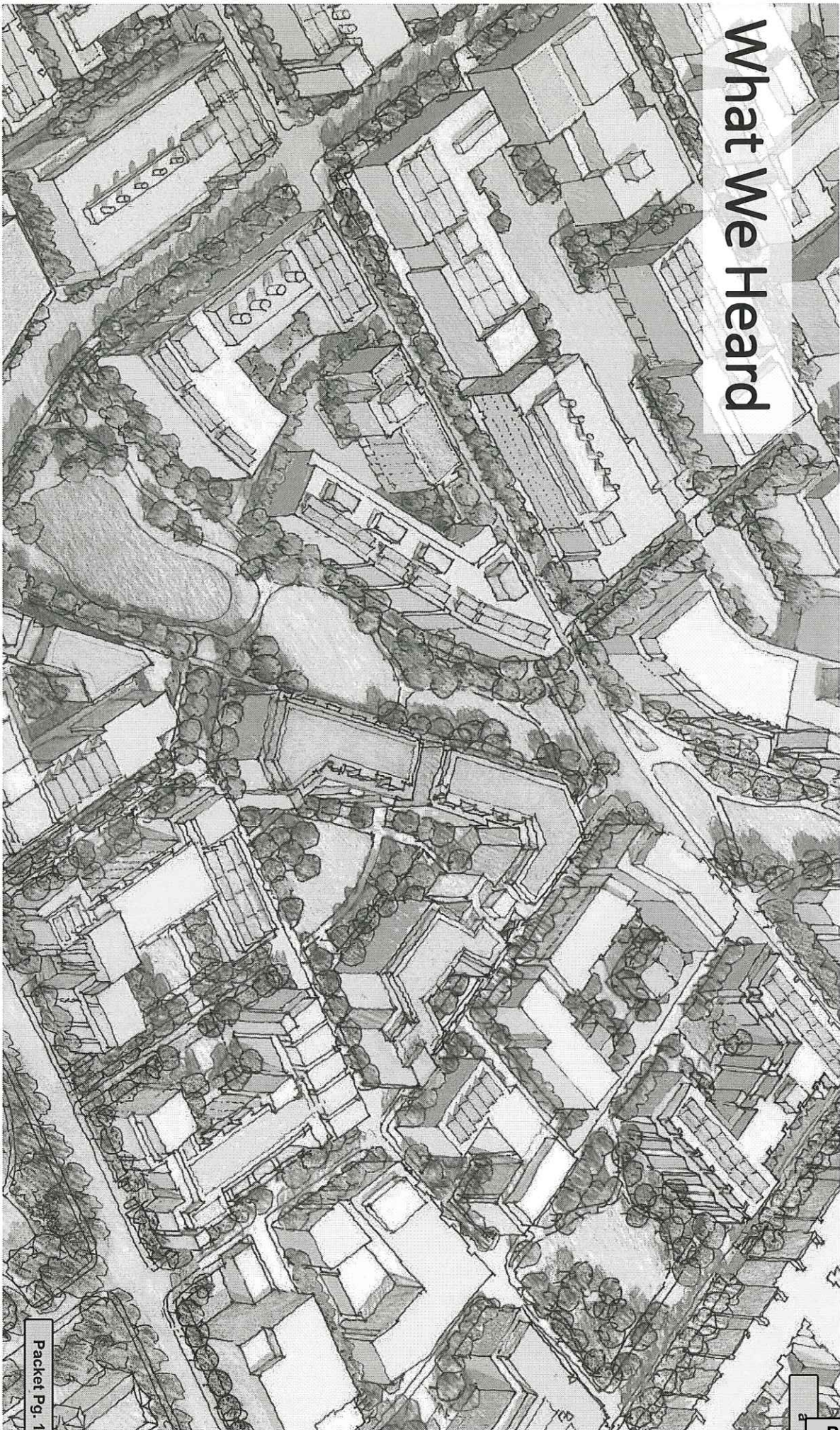
Working Group Schedule



Project Schedule



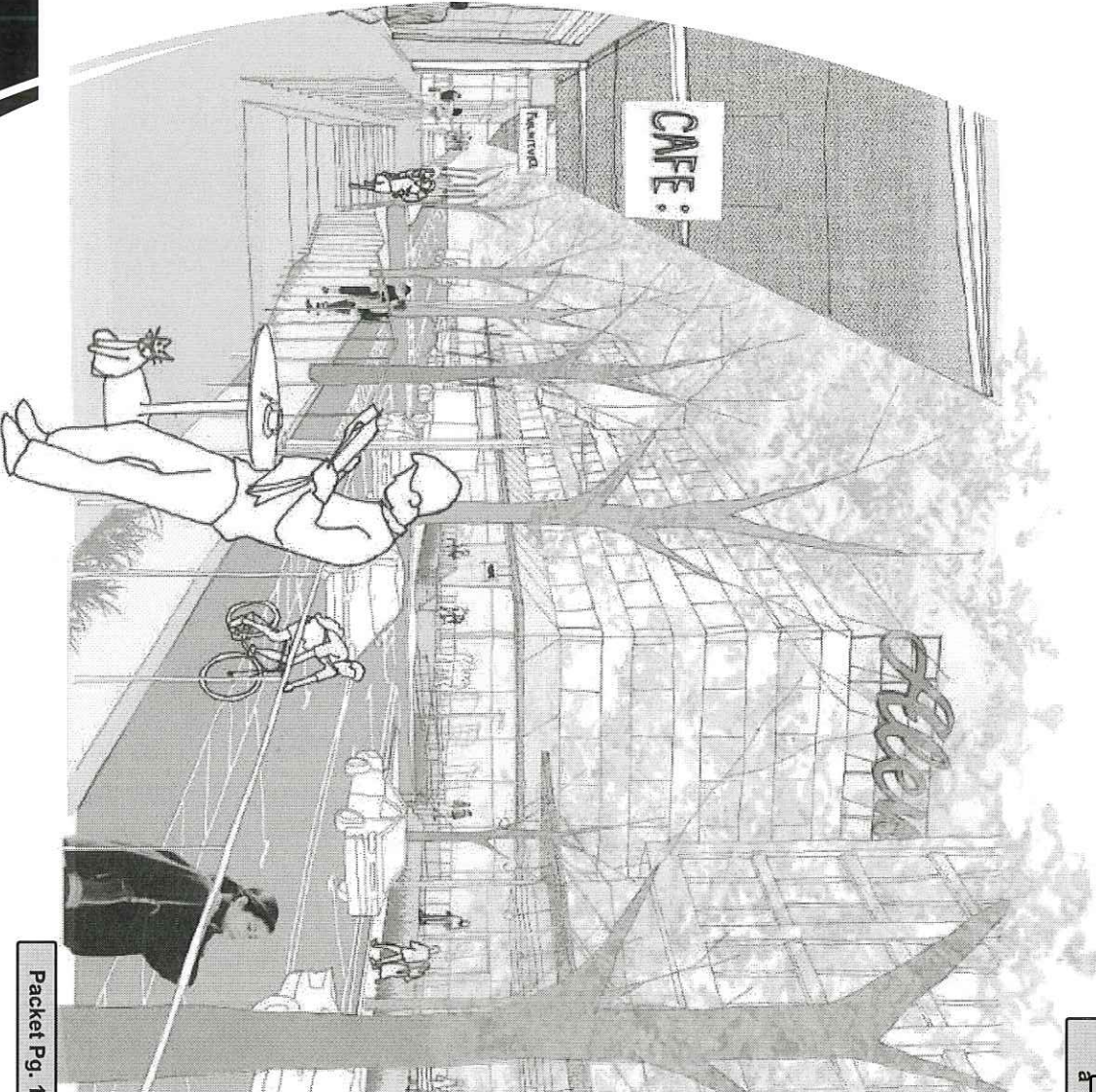
What We Heard



Packet Pg. 10

Alewife District Plan

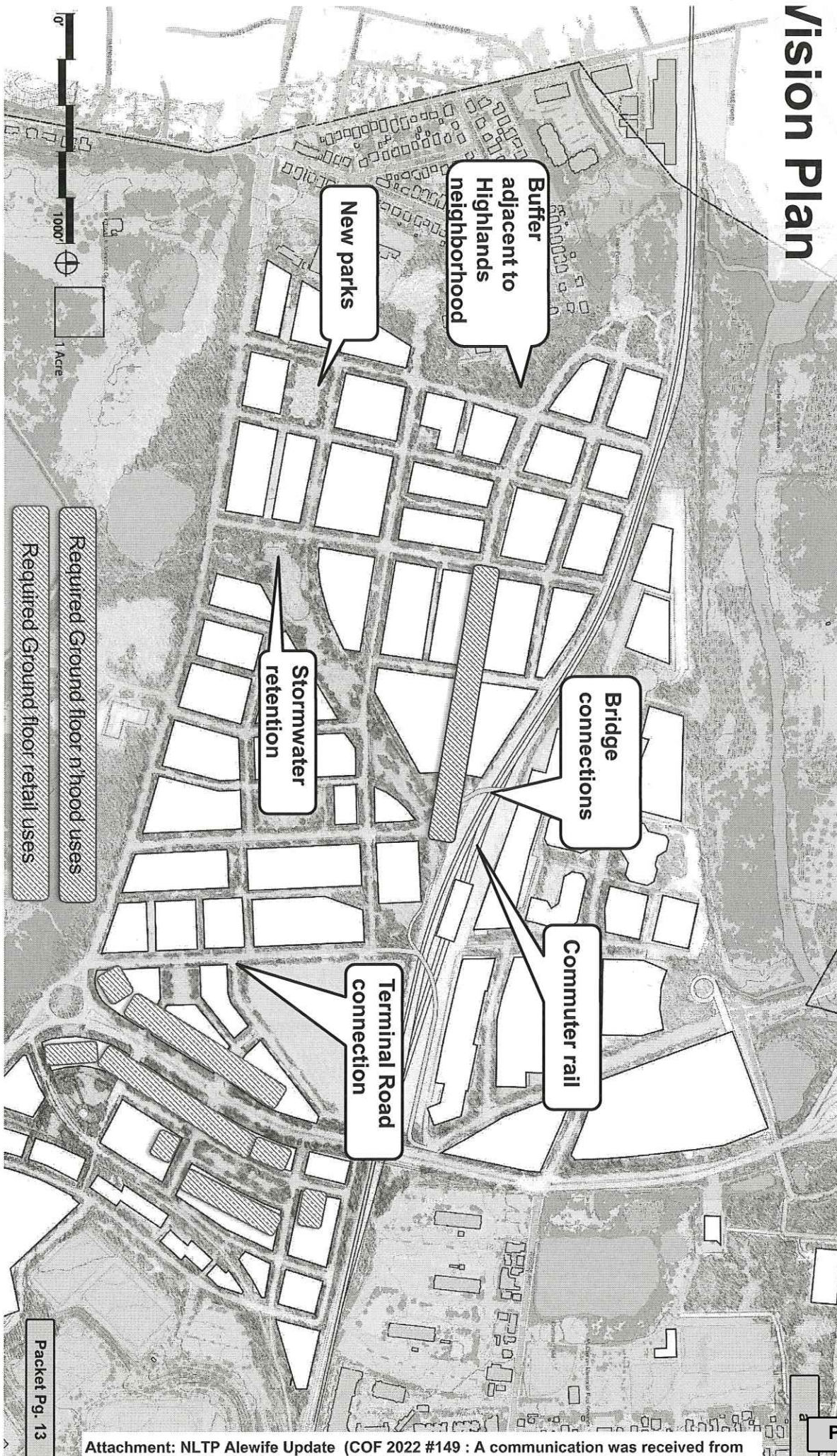
- Build a cohesive mixed-use district
- Balance economic growth with housing development districtwide
- Retain and create good-paying, low barrier to entry jobs
- Create a resilient, pedestrian-friendly public realm
- Promote sustainable transportation and reduce growth in vehicular traffic
- Create a continuous open space & recreation network



Main Themes

- Desire for a mixed-use district
- Incentivize residential development through increased height and density
- Importance of affordable housing at various levels of affordability
- Desire for a variety of ground floor uses, including but not limited to light industrial
- Support for a “main street” with active ground floor “neighborhood uses” (Fawcett Street)
- Priority infrastructure include bike/ped bridge, commuter rail, Terminal Rd connection, and new open spaces

Vision Plan



Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Nov 30, 2022 1:00 PM (Committee Reports)

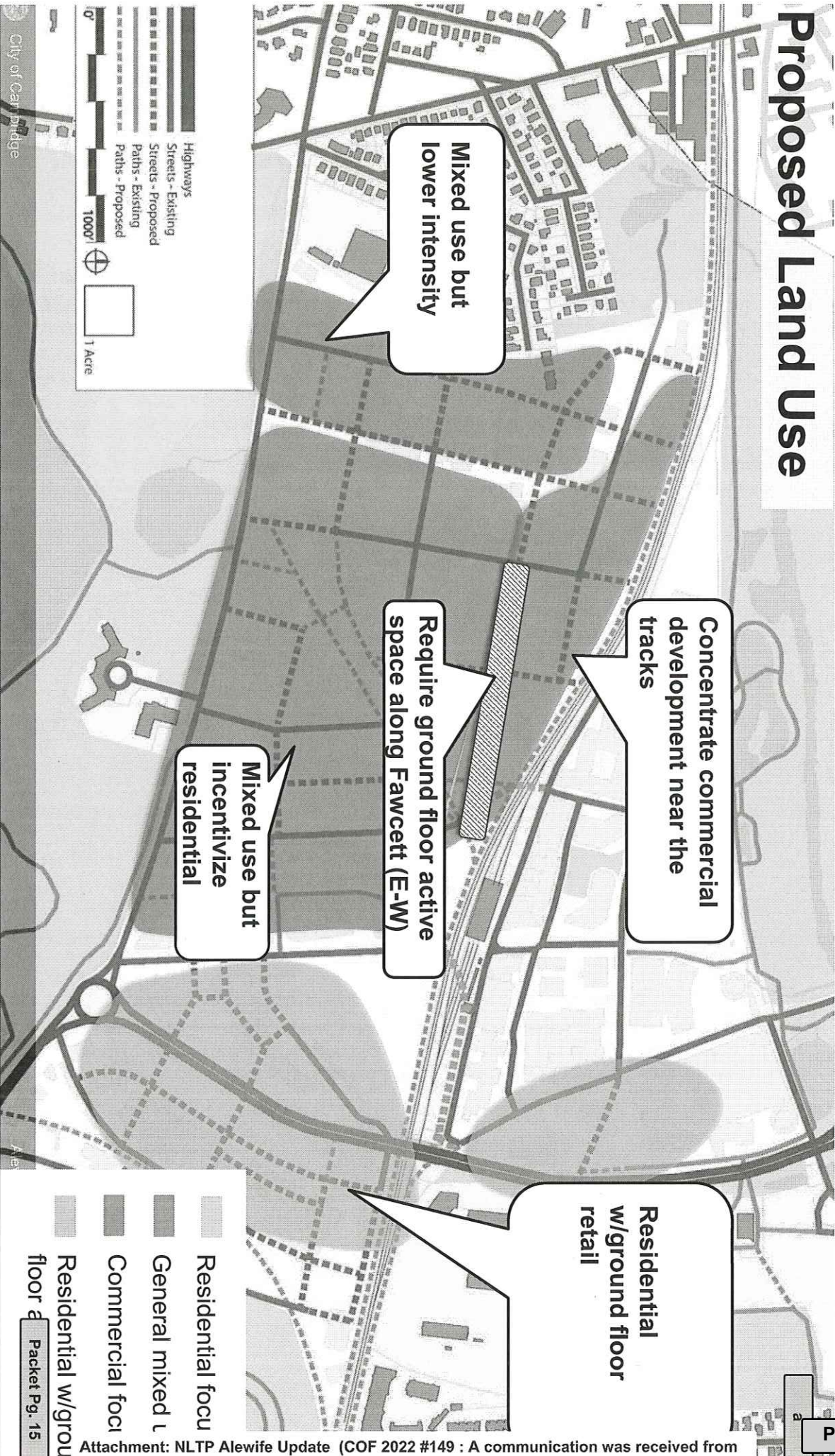
Public Benefits and Bonuses

- Support additional density/height to incentive desired public benefits (e.g., bridge, housing, ground floor active uses, open space, etc.)
- Scale the bonus to the size of the public benefit provided
- Language on the density bonus should be clear about what needs to occur to obtain it
- Include phasing requirements to balance the delivery of important infrastructure (e.g., bridge) with additional density/development

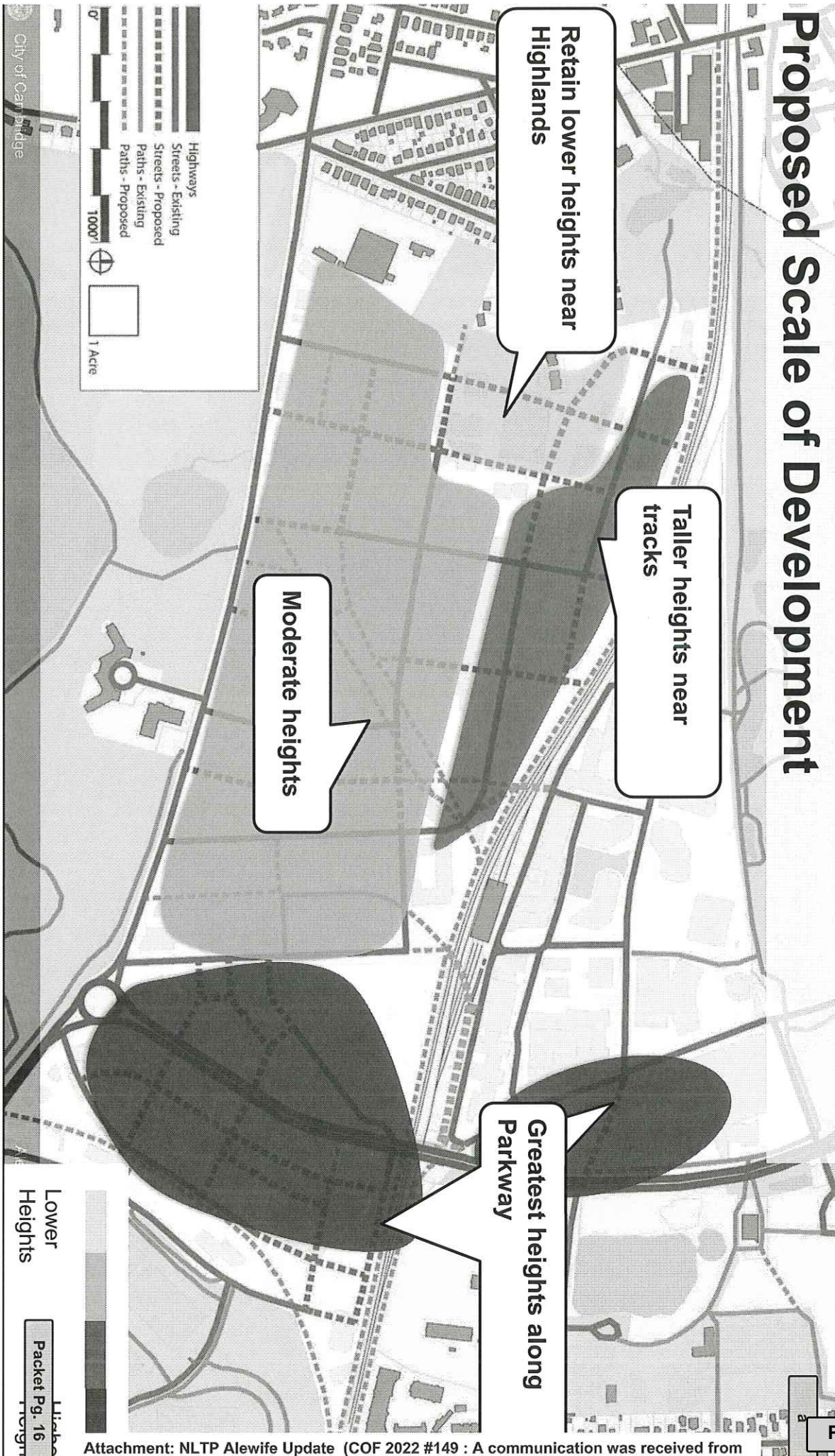
Public Benefits

- Terminal Road connection
- Bike/ped bridge
- Commuter rail station
- Ground floor active space
- Open space
- Affordable housing

Proposed Land Use

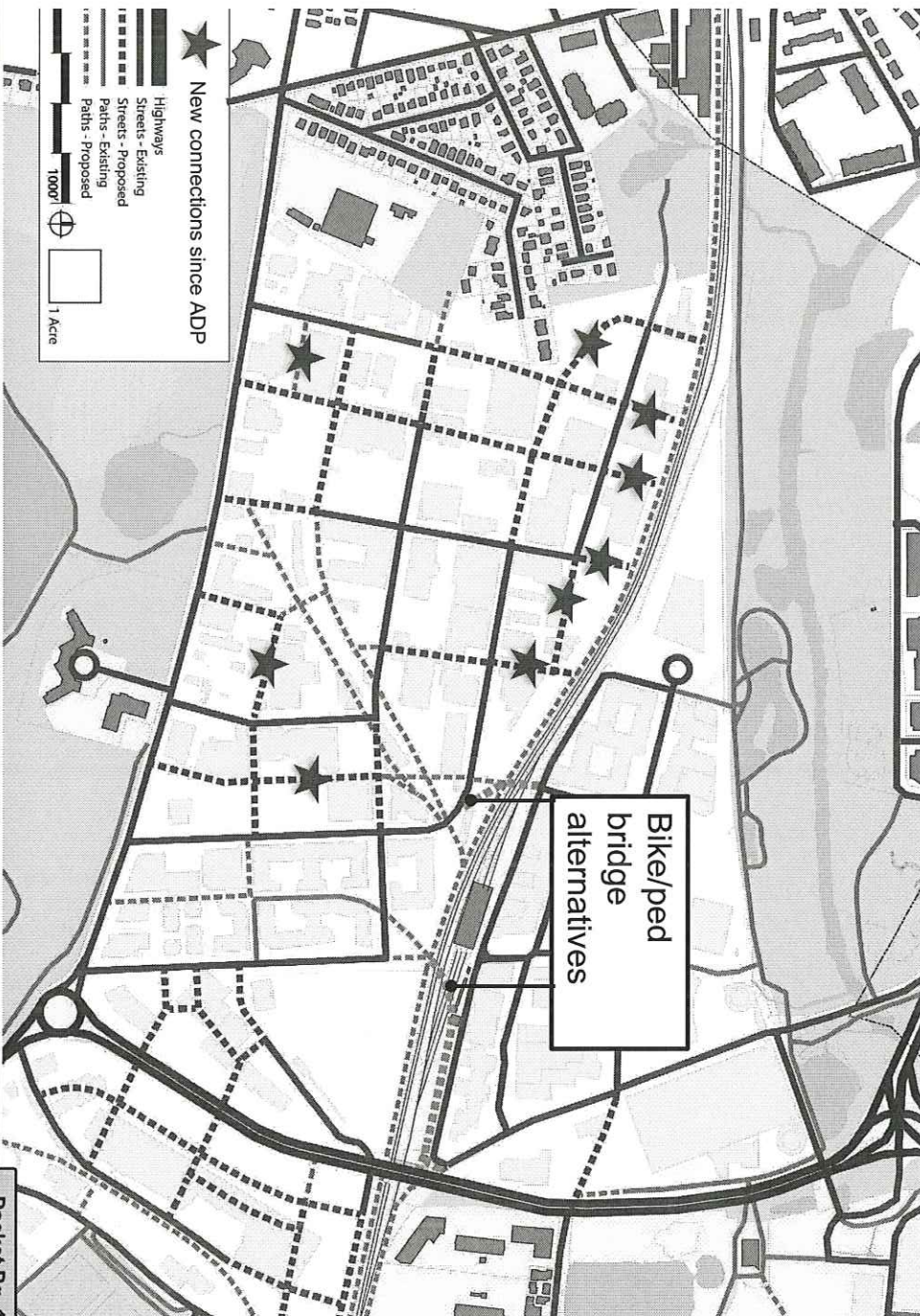


Proposed Scale of Development

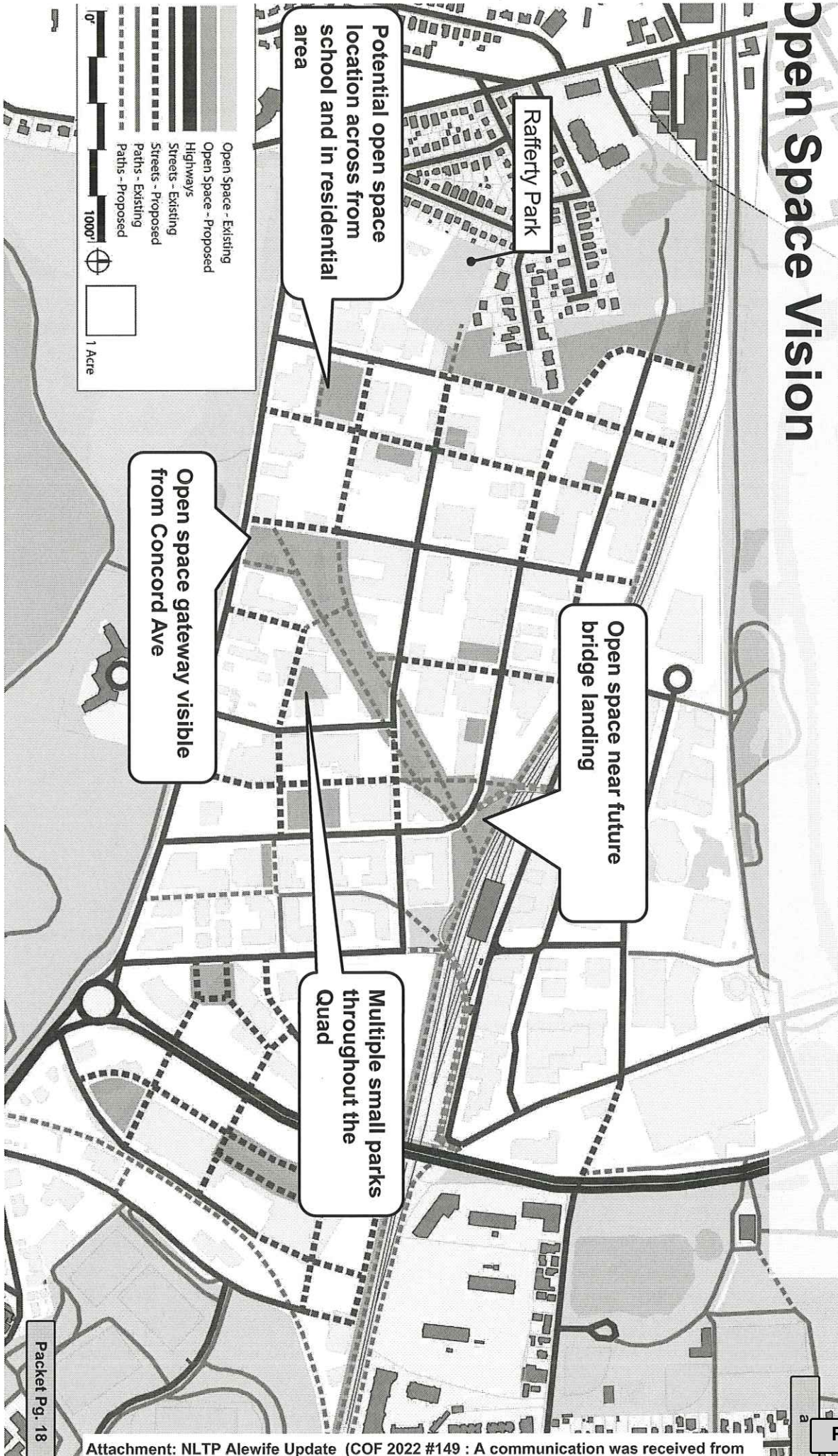


Proposed Street Network

- Reduction of light industrial floorplates allows for smaller block sizes.
- Bike/ped connections to the T are necessary
- Priority investments:
 - Bike/ped bridge
 - Terminal Road connection
 - Commuter rail station



Open Space Vision



Overview – “3 Tiers” of Zoning Standards

Base Requirements	Site Special Permit	PUD Special Permit
<p>Baseline standards for all development</p> <p>Requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Permeable + green open space • Maximum parking ratios • Setbacks to match future street network <p>Allowed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Low-scale commercial • Low-scale residential • Neighborhood uses <p>Advisory review process</p>	<p>Increased development on a single building site</p> <p>Extra requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ground-floor neighborhood uses required in priority areas • Pocket parks, playgrounds • Transportation, infrastructure, housing contributions (funds or in-kind) <p>Allowed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Medium-scale commercial • Higher-scale residential • Neighborhood uses (incentivized at ground floor) <p>Planning Board review + approval</p>	<p>Large, phased development across multiple sites</p> <p>Extra requirements:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Substantial up-front public infrastructure – bridge, other bike/ped connections, facilities • Large public open space • Minimum housing • Minimum neighborhood uses <p>Allowed development:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Higher-scale commercial • Higher-scale residential • Neighborhood uses <p>Extensive Planning Board review + approval process</p>

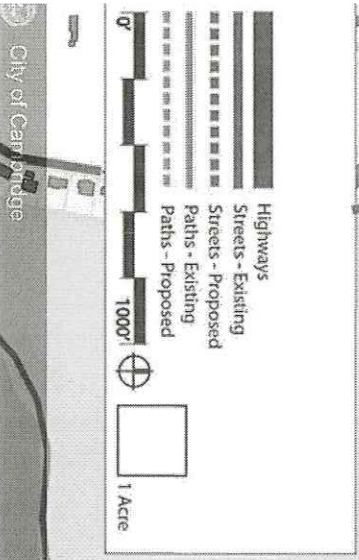
Summary of Allowable Heights

	Base	Site Special Permit	PUD Special Permit
Res.	3 stories	6 stories	6 stories
Non-res.	2 stories	3 stories	3 stories

	Base	Site Special Permit	PUD Special Permit
Res.	3 stories	10-12 stories	10-12 stories
Non-res.	2 stories	4 stories or 5 stories w/ active ground floor use	8 stories

	Base	Site Special Permit	PUD Special Permit
Res.	Varies 3-6 stories	18-20 stories	18-20 stories
Non-res.	Varies 2-4 stories	4 stories	5 stories

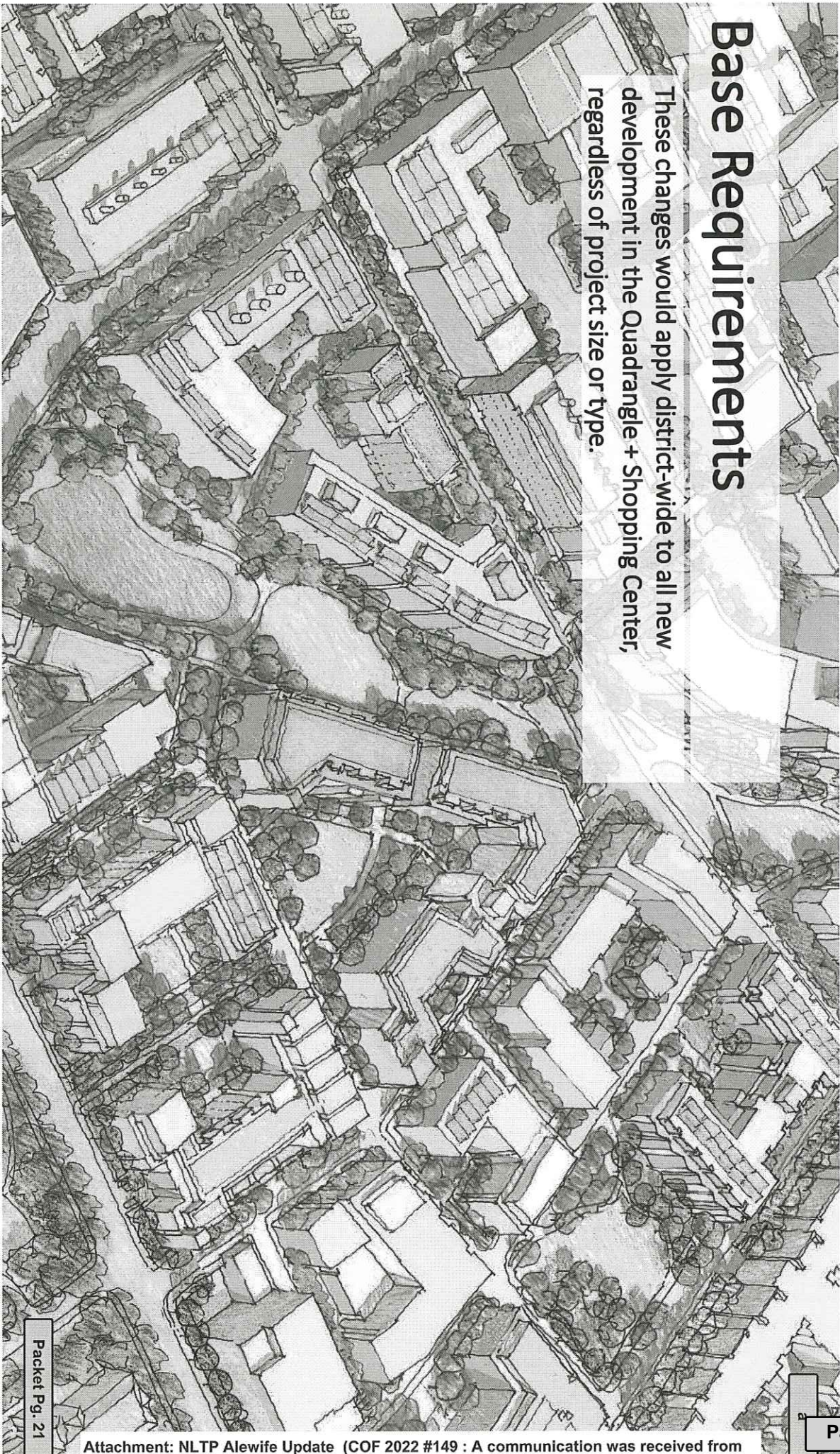
	Base	Site Special Permit	PUD Special Permit
Res.	3 stories	10-12 stories	10-12 stories
Non-res.	2 stories	4 stories or 5 stories w/ active ground floor use	5 stories



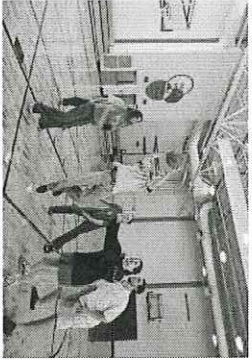
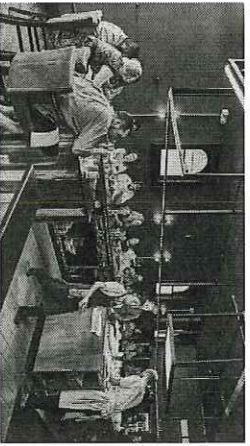
Lower Heights

Base Requirements

These changes would apply district-wide to all new development in the Quadrangle + Shopping Center, regardless of project size or type.



Base Requirements: Allow “Neighborhood Uses”



Retail & Consumer

Community

Libraries

Daycare centers

Arts & Cultural

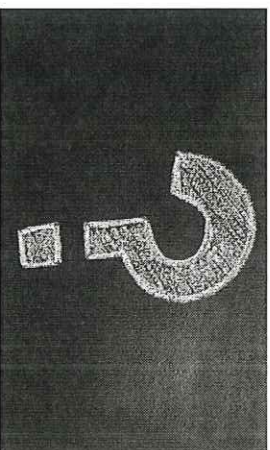
Service establishments (4.35)

gathering spaces (4.33.e.2)

(4.33.f.3)

(4.33.b.2)

spaces (4.35.q.2)



Light industrial/maker space (4.37 a through d)

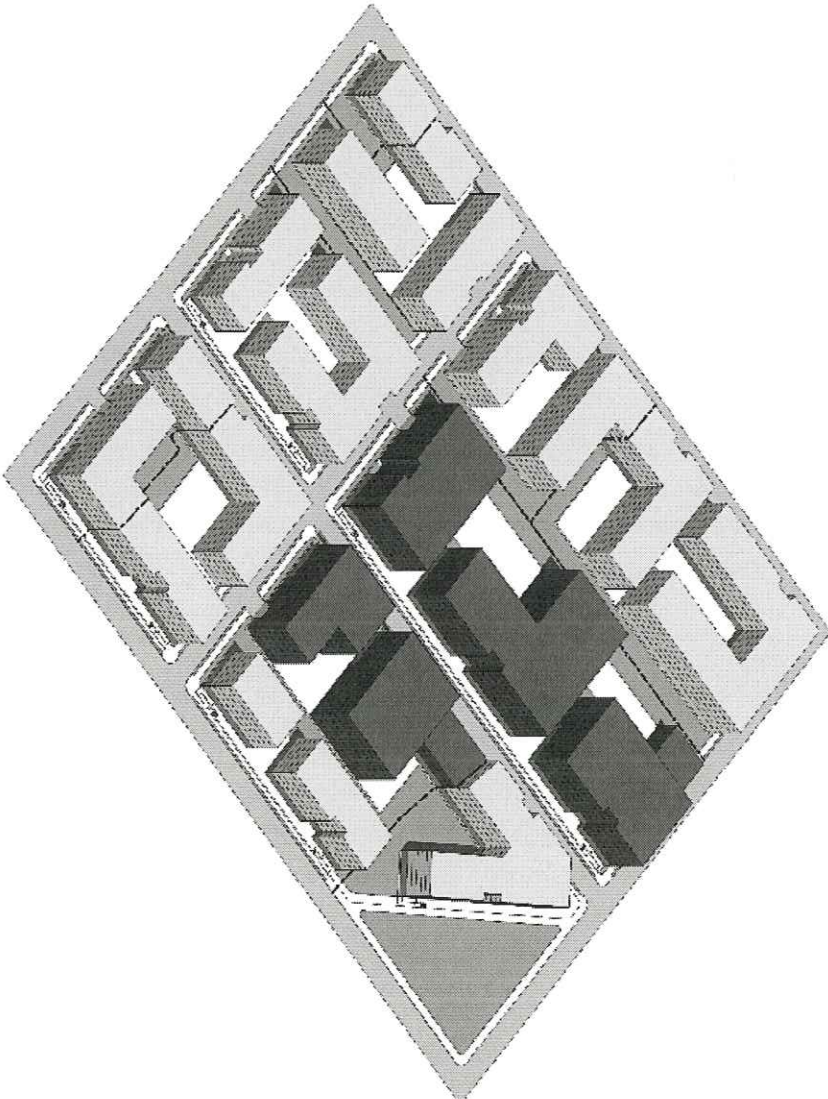
Dentist/Doctor office (4.33.b.2)

Healthcare facility (4.33.d)

Any other use subject to PB Review and Approval

Base Requirements

- **Setbacks:**
 - Build-to line to create streetwall
 - Focus open space in interior of blocks
- **Open Space:**
 - 20% minimum open space to lot area (+5%)
 - Maintain 25% permeable area requirement
 - Pooled open space
 - No reduction via special permit



Base Requirements

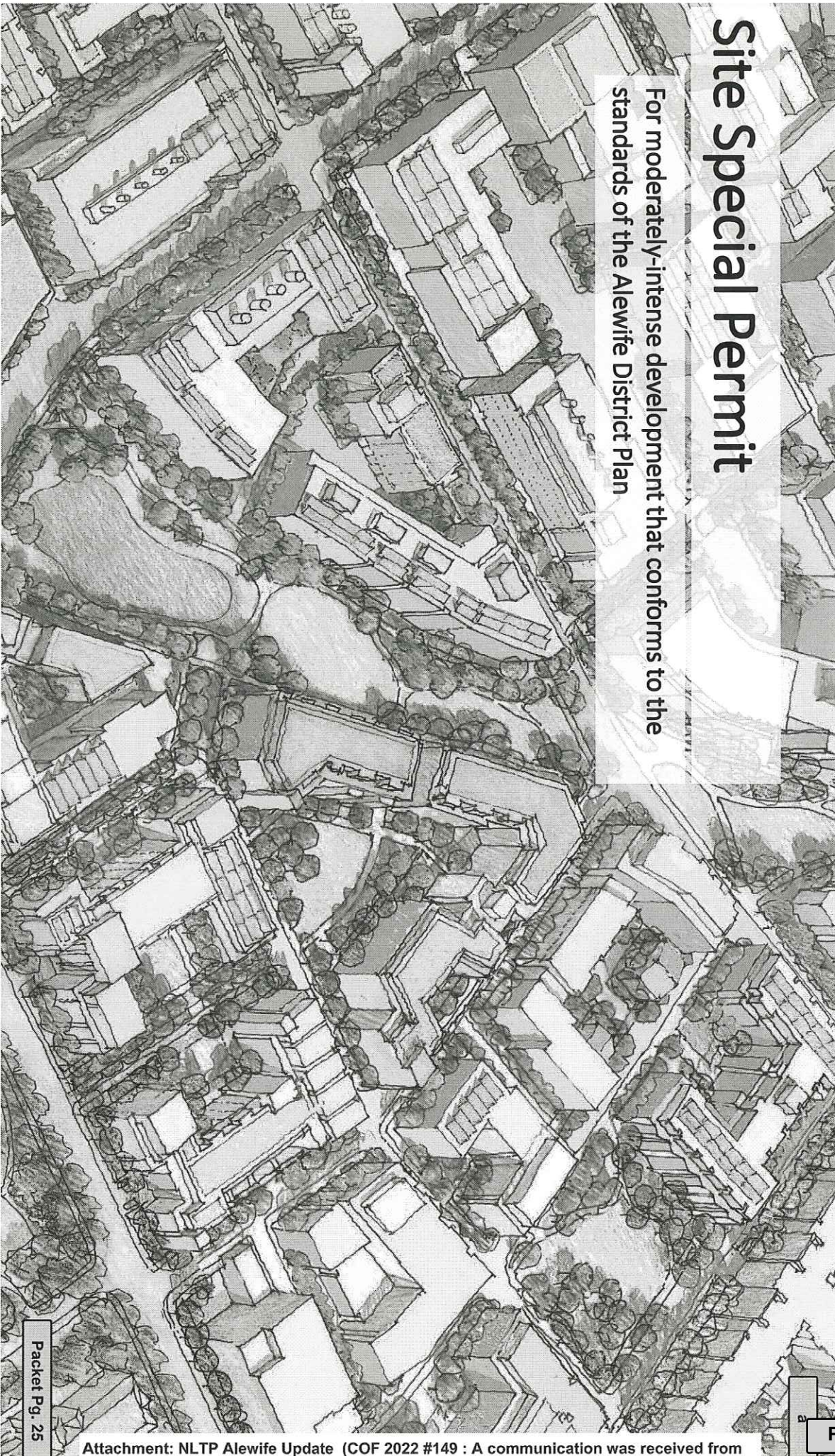
- **Parking and Loading:**
 - Maximum parking ratios
 - For larger developments, permit parking as a principal use to enable public parking/district parking solution
- **Sustainable Design:**
 - Green Building Requirements (25,000+ SF)
 - Flood and Heat Resilience (Climate Resilience Zoning)

Maximum Number of Parking Spaces	
Retail	maximum 1.5 per 1,000 SF
Office	maximum 1.1 per 1,000 SF
R&D	maximum 0.8 per 1,000 SF
Industrial	maximum 0.5 per 1,000 SF
Residential	maximum 0.75 per dwelling unit minimum .25 per dwelling unit

public realm 20'-0"	public realm 20'-0"	public realm 20'-0"	public realm 20'-0"
High-SRI paving	High-SRI paving + Turf	High-SRI paving + Turf + Planting area + Medium tree	High-SRI paving + Turf + Planting area + Medium tree + Large tree
0.15	0.28	0.57	1.02
Cool Factor Score			

Site Special Permit

For moderately-intense development that conforms to the standards of the Alewife District Plan



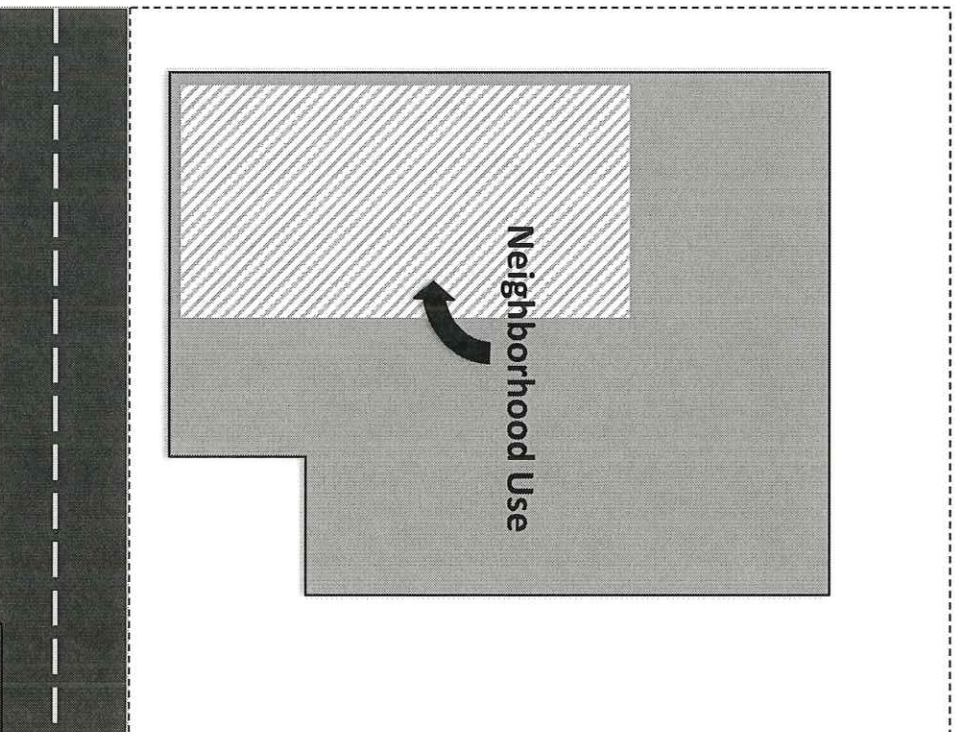
Site Special Permit: Applicability & Process



- Requires Planning Board public hearing and discretionary approval
- Required pre-application community engagement per Planning Board rules
- Public contributions to offset increased development (e.g., contributions for Transportation/Infrastructure improvements)

Site Special Permit: Uses

- **“Neighborhood Uses” Required on Priority Streets:**
 - Retail & Consumer Service establishments (4.35)
 - Community/gathering spaces (4.33.e.2)
 - Libraries (4.33.f.3)
 - Daycare centers (4.33.b.2)
 - Light industrial/maker space (4.37 a through d)
 - Dentist/Doctor office (4.33.b.2)
 - Any other use subject to PB Review and Approval

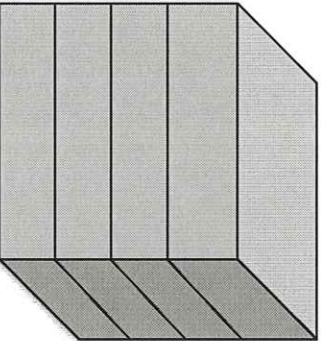


Site Special Permit: Increased Development Standards

- Increase Non-residential FAR and Residential FAR to realize increased heights

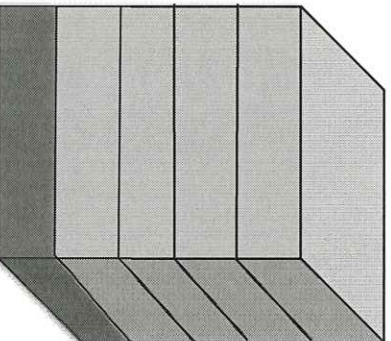
Non-Residential:

- On priority streets → permit up to 5 stories and require ground-story Neighborhood Use
- On non-priority streets → permit up to 4 stories OR 5 stories with a ground-story Neighborhood-Supporting Use



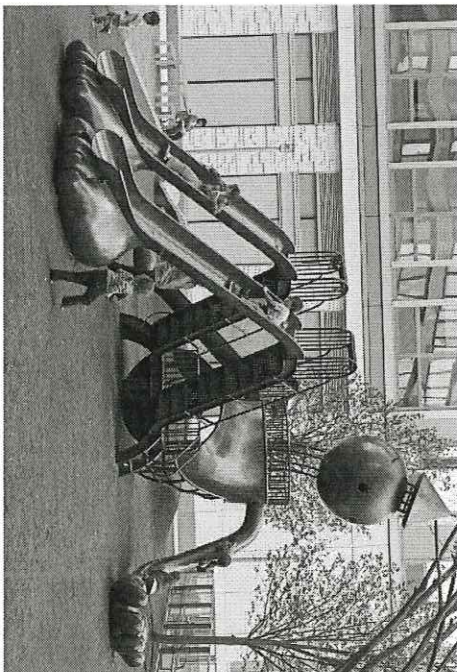
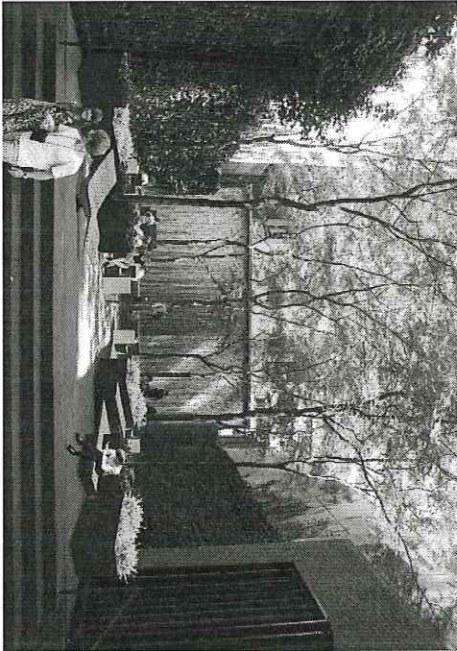
Residential:

- TBD: Currently modeling options for residential at taller heights
- Considerations:
 - Design standards for taller heights
 - Required family-sized units (3 bedrooms or more)



Site Special Permit: Open Space

- Require a certain percentage of open space be publicly-beneficial open space
- E.g., Plazas, pocket parks, playgrounds, &c.



Site Special Permit: Public Benefits Bonus

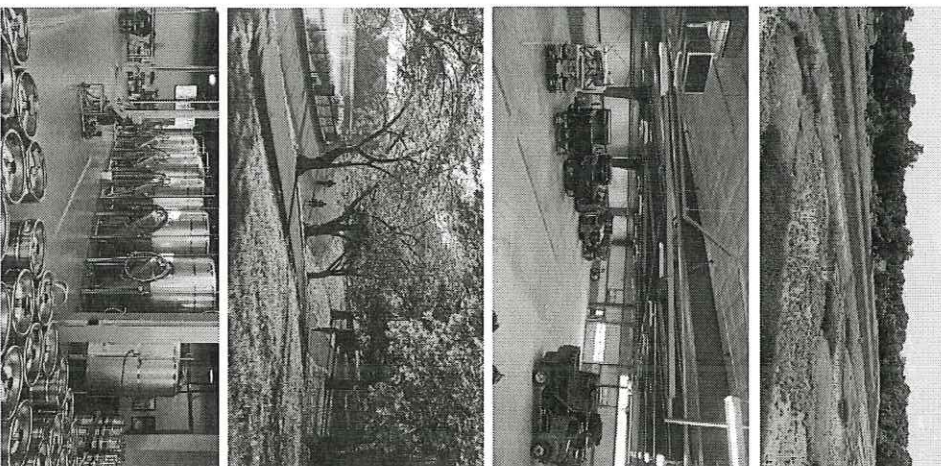
Option

Provision of one or more of the following public benefits:

- Additional public open space
- District flood storage solution
- Public/community space
- Civic uses (e.g., schools, libraries, DPW facility)
- Light industrial uses
- Completion of ADP recommended street/path segments

Bonus

Additional GFA/FAR proportional to the size of area provided Subject to Planning Board Review + Approval

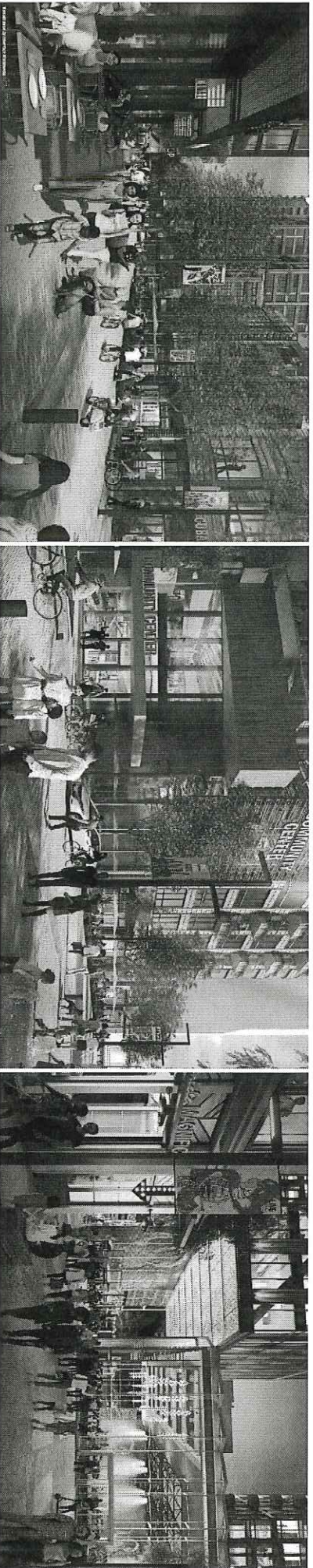


Planned Unit Development (PUD) Special Permit

Moderate-to-high intensity development in exchange for more substantial public benefits, permitted as a phased multi-site plan

PUD Special Permit: Overview & Applicability

- Opportunity for a large, multi-parcel/multi-building development to proceed in a phased way, with more substantial public benefits delivered
 - Utilized elsewhere in Cambridge (Cambridge Crossing, Volpe, MIT NoMa/SoMa)
- Minimum acreage of land under common ownership or square feet of development on contiguous *or* non-contiguous lots



PUD Special Permit: Overview & Applicability

Development Benefits

- 1 Flexible development approach (relaxed dimensional standards and customization possible)
- 2 Higher density development potential; taller heights possible
- 3 Consolidated review via PUD approach (single process for multi-site development)

Public Benefits

- 1 Required % minimum total GFA for housing
- 2 Required public open space
- 3 Required delivery of bicycle/pedestrian bridge connecting the Quad and Triangle
- 4 Ability to take advantage of same public benefit bonuses from Site Special Permit

PUD Special Permit: Bridge/Commuter Rail Stop Bonus

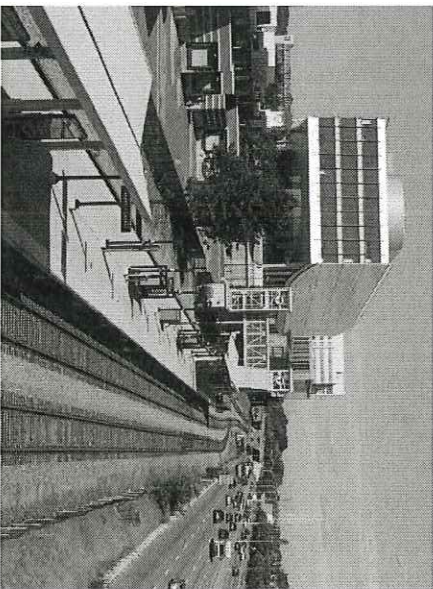
Option

- 1) Delivery of a bicycle/pedestrian bridge connecting Triangle and Quadrangle.
- 2) Delivery of a commuter rail stop in Alewife.



Bonus

Additional FAR; applied to whole
lot area
Subject to Planning Board
Review + Approval



PUD Special Permit: Review Process

Step 1: Development Proposal

- 1st required public hearing at Planning Board; issues a "Preliminary Determination" with requests for additional information and suggestions for refinement.

Step 2: Final Development Plan

- 2nd required public hearing at Planning Board; approves special permit with conditions related to phasing, public benefits, and future design review

Step 3: Individual Design Reviews

- Individual buildings/parks subject to design review approval at the Planning Board

Step 4: Building Permit + Construction

*Note: Preapplication
community engagement
procedures apply*

The Bottom Line

- Update requirements so all development meets Alewife District Plan recommendations and other standards seen in recent projects in the City:
 - Increased open space
 - Parking maximums
 - Larger range of permitted uses
- Gradate heights so taller heights and densities are achievable along the railroad tracks and further east.
 - To take advantage of increased heights and densities, provide one or more defined public benefits
 - Require ground-story neighborhood uses along priority “main streets”; incentivize elsewhere
 - Minimum residential development required to balance new commercial development; residential development incentivized by taller heights and densities compared to commercial development
- For largest landholders/developers, provide a pathway for a flexible development approach that results in the delivery of specific, prioritized public benefits.

Next Steps

- Critical sums analysis
- Residential test fits
- Refined zoning framework

Final Alewife Zoning Working Group Meetings:

- December 14
- January TBD



Let's Discuss!

Perez, Lori

From: Doug Brown <douglas_p_brown@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 1:35 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Cc: 'Doug Brown'
Subject: Comment's for today's NLTP Committee Hearing on Alewife Zoning
Attachments: Comments to Committee regarding Alewife Zoning.docx

Importance: High

Please accept the following comments for today's hearing of the Neighborhood and Long-term Planning committee in regards to the Alewife Zoning Working Group. The Presenter link shared with me did not work, I was unable to sign in on the City Council's Public Comment Signup page, and I attempted to Raise My Hand on Zoom but was not called on.

Thanks,

Doug Brown
35 Standish Street
Member, Alewife Zoning Working Group

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Nov 30, 2022 1:00 PM (Committee Reports)

Comments to Committee regarding Alewife Zoning

- 1) I just wanted to take a moment to thank everyone who has been involved in this process so far:

- from the original community activists who pushed for a Master Plan;
- to the Councilors and staff members who supported that effort;
- to those who served on the first Envision Alewife committee;
- and now the members of this latest working group.

We have accomplished so much together.

- 2) Though late to the party, I wanted to particularly thank Healthpeak for being such an ACTIVE, TRANSPARENT PARTNER in this process.

We appreciate you.

- 3) Next I want to emphasize that this effort is not about height or density or open space percentages or parking minimums, though all of those things are important.

Instead, it's about making a NEIGHBORHOOD that we can all be proud of, that has its own unique identity, and that others want to visit and maybe even make a life within.

- 4) Finally, I think it is very important to mention that the City has a long history of making promises and commitments to this community, many of which have never been realized despite decades of support and discussion and money set aside.

This leads to suspicion and distrust.

I believe that in the future, the City must take a more active role in fulfilling the promises that it makes and has made. Infrastructure is a municipal responsibility.

We can do this.

We must do this.

Thank you.

Perez, Lori

From: ann stewart <ahstewart@yahoo.com>
Sent: Wednesday, November 30, 2022 1:31 PM
To: City Council; City Clerk
Subject: comment to long-term planning committee november 30 2022

To: The Neighborhood & Long Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts & Celebrations Committee, Cambridge City Council

From: Ann Stewart, 25-31 Wheeler Street

Date: November 30, 2022

I want to acknowledge the Council for its interest in this part of Alewife, particularly Councilors Carlone, Nolan, and Toner, who have been sharing ideas about transforming the Quad.

I also acknowledge Healthpeak, the Quad's dominant land-owner, for listening and responding even on weekends.

Also Melissa Peters and CCD staff for organizing meetings and the walk this summer.

We all know it took years for the City to finally recognize the value of Jerry's Pond. Thank you, Mayor Siddiqui and committed activists.

Now it's time for the City to recognize the Quad's unique location between Fresh Pond Reservation and Alewife Brook. Rezoning the Quad must include permanent protection of open spaces for wildlife corridors, flood control, and public uses.

It's also time to get serious about connectivity. When the Parkway and the MBTA commuter rail tracks separate Alewife, rezoning the Quad must include paths and bridges, or a tunnel under the tracks between Rindge Avenue and Danehy Park. Being able to talk and meet with each other is real diversity.

Thank you for dedicating a meeting specifically to the Quad.

Minutes Acceptance: Minutes of Nov 30, 2022 1:00 PM (Committee Reports)