

PLANNING BOARD
FOR THE
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

GENERAL HEARING
TUESDAY, AUGUST 8, 2023

6:30 p.m.

Remote Meeting
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Mary T. Flynn, Chair
H Theodore Cohen
Ashley Tan
Diego Macias
Adam Buchanan Westbrook

Community Development Staff
Iram Farooq, Assistant City Manager
Daniel Messplay
Swaathi Joseph
Mason Wells
Adithi Moogoor
Evan Spetrini
Brian Gregory



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(6:30 p.m.)

Sitting Members: Mary Flynn, H Theodore Cohen, Ashley Tan,
Diego Macias, and Adam Westbrook

MARY FLYNN: Good evening. Welcome to the August
8, 2023 meeting of the Cambridge Planning Board. My name is
Mary Flynn, and I am the Chair.

Pursuant to Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted
by the Massachusetts General Court and approved by the
Governor, the City is authorized to use remote participation
at Planning Board meetings.

All Board members, applicants, and members of the
public will state their names before speaking. All votes
will be taken by roll call.

Members of the public will be kept on mute until
it is time for public comment. I will give instructions for
public comment at that time, and you can also find
instructions on the City's webpage for remote Planning Board
meetings.

This meeting is being video and audio recorded and
is being streamed live on the City of Cambridge online

1 meeting portal and on cable television Channel 22, within
2 Cambridge. There will also be a transcript of the
3 proceedings.

4 I'll start by asking Staff to take Board member
5 attendance and verify that all members are audible.

6 Daniel?

7 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you, Chair Flynn. Lou
8 Bacci, are you present, and is the meeting visible and
9 audible to you?

10 [Pause]

11 Absent. H Theodore Cohen, are you present, and is
12 the meeting visible and audible to you?

13 H THEODORE COHEN: Present, visible, and audible.

14 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Tom Sieniewicz, are you present,
15 and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

16 [Pause]

17 Absent.

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Hugh Russell, are you present,
19 and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

20 [Pause]

21 Absent.

22 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Ashley Tan, are you present, and

1 is the meeting visible and audible to you?

2 ASHLEY TAN: Present, visible, and audible.

3 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Diego Macias, are you present,
4 and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

5 DIEGO MACIAS: Present, visible, and audible.

6 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Adam Westbrook, are you present,
7 and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

8 ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: Present and both --
9 yeah, it's, the meeting, it's audible.

10 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Catherine Preston Connolly, are
11 you present, and is the meeting visible and audible to you?

12 [Pause]

13 Absent. And Mary Flynn, are you present, and is
14 the meeting visible and audible to you?

15 MARY FLYNN: I am present, and it is visible and
16 audible.

17 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. That is five members
18 present and four members absent, which does constitute a
19 quorum.

20 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you, Daniel.

21

22

* * * * *

(6:34 p.m.)

Sitting Members: Mary Flynn, H Theodore Cohen, Ashley Tan,
Diego Macias, and Adam Westbrook

MARY FLYNN: The first item on the agenda is an
Update from the Community Development Department. So I'll
be turning it back over to Daniel, and if you would also
introduce the Staff that are present at the meeting, please?

DANIEL MESSPLAY: Sure. Thank you, Chair Flynn.

Hi, everyone. Good evening. My name is Daniel
Messplay. I'm the Acting Director of the Zoning and
Development Division here at CDD.

Quickly introducing the other Staff we have at the
meeting, so also from the Zoning and Development division we
have Swaathi Joseph, Mason Wells, Evan Spetrini and Adithi
Moogoor.

We are also joined, or will soon be joined, with
Chris Cotter, our Director of Housing; I believe Cassie
Arnaud, our Senior Housing Planner; and Iram Farooq, our
Assistant City Manager for Community Development will also
be joining us this evening. From Urban Design, from
Community Planning we have Brian Gregory also in attendance.

1 And I believe that concludes the other Staff we have present
2 at the meeting.

3 Before discussing the upcoming items on the
4 Planning Board calendar, you might have noticed two new
5 names on the Planning Board roll call this evening, so I
6 would like to formally welcome to the Board Adam Westbrook
7 and Diego Macias, who are our two new Associate Planning
8 Board Members.

9 Adam, would you mind just quickly introducing
10 yourself, and then Diego can follow?

11 ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: Sure. Hi, everybody.
12 Good evening. My name is Adam Westbrook. I'm very excited
13 to be here serving on the Planning Board. I'm a renter here
14 in Cambridge, in West Cambridge, and have just fallen in
15 love with the city and am really excited to be able to serve
16 on behalf of the Planning Board and look forward to working
17 with all of you.

18 And I'll pass it over to Diego.

19 DIEGO MACIAS: Hi, everyone. My name is Diego
20 Macias. I've both rented and owned in Cambridge, and we've
21 established my family here. So it means a lot to be able to
22 sit in these meetings and listen and contribute to the

1 growth of the city. Thank you.

2 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thanks to both of you and happy
3 to have you here.

4 So back to just our regularly scheduled business.
5 So tonight we'll have a Public Hearing on a City Council
6 Zoning Petition to amend the Affordable Housing Overlay. We
7 will also consider an Extension Request for a special permit
8 at 4850 Bishop Allen Drive.

9 Just as a reminder, there is no Planning Board
10 meeting scheduled for next week, so Planning Board will
11 resume on August 22. And at that August 22 meeting, we'll
12 have a continued hearing on 2161 Mass Ave, as well as a
13 Design Review of wayfinding signage at Cambridge Crossing.

14 In terms of updates to City Council, last night
15 the City Council had their summer meeting, and passed the
16 Cannabis Special Permit Amendment Zoning to a second
17 reading, as well as the Alewife Overlay District Quadrangle
18 Petition. As you recall, both of these petitions received a
19 positive recommendation from the Planning Board, so it's
20 exciting to see those move forward.

21 And I know we have a lot of potential discussion
22 coming up on the item tonight, so I'm going to stop there

1 for the CDD update, and I will turn back to the Chair.

2 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you. Do any members of
3 the Board have any questions on the Updates? Okay, I see no
4 hands.

5 * * * * *

6 (6:37 p.m.)

7 Sitting Members: Mary Flynn, H Theodore Cohen, Ashley Tan,
8 Diego Macias, and Adam Westbrook

9 MARY FLYNN:

10 The next item, then, is the Approval of meeting
11 minutes. The Board has received certified transcripts for
12 the meetings held on May 16, May 23, and June 6, 2023. If
13 there are any questions from the Board, please say your name
14 and can we answer any questions. Okay. Seeing none, is
15 there a motion to accept the transcripts as the meeting
16 minutes?

17 H THEODORE COHEN: So moved.

18 MARY FLYNN: Okay.

19 ASHLEY TAN: Second.

20 MARY FLYNN: Thank you, Ashley. Daniel, do we
21 have a roll call, please?

22 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Roll call on that motion: H

Theodore Cohen?

H THEODORE COHEN: Yes.

DANIEL MESSPLAY: Ashley Tan?

ASHLEY TAN: Yes.

DANIEL MESSPLAY: Diego Macias?

DIEGO MACIAS: Yes.

DANIEL MESSPLAY: Adam Westbrook?

ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: Yes.

DANIEL MESSPLAY: And Mary Flynn?

MARY FLYNN: Yes.

[All vote YES]

DANIEL MESSPLAY: That is all members voting in favor.

MARY FLYNN: Okay.

* * * * *

(6:38 p.m.)

Sitting Members: Mary Flynn, H Theodore Cohen, Ashley Tan,
Diego Macias, and Adam Westbrook

MARY FLYNN: The next item on the agenda is a public hearing on a zoning petition by the Cambridge City Council to amend Article 2 and Article 11 of the Zoning Ordinance in order to amend the allowable maximum building

1 heights and minimum yard setbacks among other changes for
2 the Affordable Housing Overlay developments.

3 CDD Staff will first provide an update. Daniel, I
4 think we're going back to you for that.

5 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you, Chair Flynn. So this
6 is a new zoning petition by City Council. The petition
7 modifies the dimensional requirements pertaining to
8 developments under the Affordable Housing Overlay, which is
9 a citywide overlay district that was adopted in 2020 and
10 creates an as-of-right approval process for 100 percent
11 affordable housing projects that meet a series of
12 prescriptive Zoning Standards.

13 The petition itself increases the base allowable
14 heights under the AHO, as well as creates a concept of an
15 AHO Square and AHO Corridor, where additional height could
16 be achieved. And in addition to modifying the allowable
17 heights, the petition eliminates front and side yard
18 setbacks requirements, and reduces rear yard setbacks from
19 20' to 15' in certain circumstances.

20 And finally, the petition modifies requirements
21 pertaining to split zone lots and alters open space
22 requirements for small lots of 5000 square feet or less.

1 The Planning Board's action tonight will be to
2 make a recommendation to the City Council on this petition.
3 Zoning and Development Staff alongside Housing and Law
4 Department Staff have prepared a memorandum to the Board
5 that provides some additional background information and
6 considerations in response to the petition, and both Housing
7 and Zoning Staff are present to answer any questions the
8 Board may have.

9 As a final note, this item was heard last week at
10 the Ordinance Committee, and the Ordinance Committee voted
11 to forward a positive recommendation on the petition to City
12 Council.

13 And that concludes the introduction.

14 MARY FLYNN: Okay, thank you. Our presenters this
15 evening are Councillors Marc McGovern and Quinton Zondervan.
16 And I'll also note that Councillor Azeem is present.

17 And so I'm going to just turn it over to the host
18 of the presentation. You have up to 30 minutes that if you
19 can be more concise, that would be great, but please
20 introduce yourself and begin.

21 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Great, thank you. I'm going
22 to start. First of all, thanks for having us tonight and

1 welcome to all the new members. I appreciate your
2 willingness to step up. It's tough work.

3 So I'm going to just start by kind of setting the
4 table as to kind of why we're here and then I'm going to
5 kick it over to my colleagues, Councillor Zondervan and
6 Azeem to walk us through the presentation.

7 So as you know, and as we just heard, the
8 Cambridge City Council passed the Affordable Housing Overlay
9 in October 2020. And the AHO is a citywide Zoning Ordinance
10 that grew out of the Envision Cambridge process and was
11 meant to provide advantages for the building of 100 percent
12 affordable housing. This is not for market-rent housing.

13 Those advantages including additional height above
14 base zoning, additional density, and streamlining the
15 permitting process and making the Planning Board Advisory.

16 The AHO does require developers to hold at least
17 two community meetings and to come before the Planning
18 Board, which is also a public meeting to gain input. There
19 are also Design Guidelines for developers, and I'll point
20 out that every AHO project thus far has changed
21 dramatically, based on the input that's been received. So I
22 think in that sense it's working well.

1 The AHO also calls for a yearly review and a five-
2 year plan. So last night, the Council and the public
3 received this year's review, and overall I think it was very
4 positive but it did point out some information that I think
5 further supports the need for us to make some amendments to
6 the original ordinance.

7 So yeah, just to sort of ground us with where we
8 are now, the report indicated that in the last three years,
9 or in the three years since the AHO was passed, that there
10 are currently six AHO projects in some stage of development.
11 Some have broken ground, some are about to break ground,
12 some are just acquired and haven't even begun the community
13 process yet.

14 When completed, these buildings will yield 616 100
15 percent affordable units, which is great. That is far more
16 than what we would typically get without the AHO.

17 What's also exciting is that 200 of those units
18 are going to be three- and four-bedrooms, so family-sized
19 units, which we are -- we desperately need. We all know
20 that, you know, the list takes forever to get off the
21 affordable housing waiting list, but the more bedrooms you
22 need the longer it takes. So that has a great advantage.

1 What's also exciting is that you have projects
2 from Blanchard Road, which is right up on, you know, the
3 Belmont line near Sancta Maria, all the way to East
4 Cambridge. And so one of the goals of the AHO was to spread
5 out our affordable housing options and you're seeing that
6 happen.

7 But what the report also indicated that there were
8 16 parcels that were looked at for AHO development. Now,
9 seven of those 13 are still in limbo. There hasn't been a
10 decision made one way or the other if an affordable housing
11 developer is going to get that property or what have you.
12 So we don't know how those projects will play out.

13 So of the remaining nine, our affordable housing
14 partners were only able to acquire two of those units. And
15 there's various reasons for that, but either they determined
16 that the site was not conducive, often due to cost, or their
17 bid was not accepted, but basically of those nine remaining
18 only two are becoming affordable housing.

19 So we didn't know that at the time we filed these
20 units -- these amendments but it does, we believe, reinforce
21 that as great as the AHO has been so far, you know, we're
22 still leaving some opportunities on the table that could be

1 helped with more -- to create with more height and density,
2 which would create more opportunity and flexibility for our
3 affordable housing partners moving forward.

4 So I just want to end with two things and take it
5 to my colleagues. First, you've received many e-mails in
6 opposition and in support, right? This is -- people have
7 strong feelings about this, and it's pretty split. So I
8 really understand that this is hard, believe me. We've been
9 getting these e-mails too. We've been at these meetings.
10 We know that this is difficult.

11 But trying to solve a crisis is not easy. And if
12 you believe that we have an affordable housing crisis, which
13 I do, and I think my colleagues do, then maintaining the
14 status quo isn't going to solve it.

15 And I just -- an example is almost 30 years ago
16 after rent control was voted out, the City and the City
17 Council tried to figure out what were we going to do to keep
18 things somewhat more affordable. And they started the
19 Inclusionary Zoning Program.

20 And it was not without its controversy. It was
21 new, it was untested, and it was giving additional height
22 and density to for profit developers, not even affordable

1 housing, for profit developers in exchange for a relatively
2 small percentage of affordable housing.

3 And many of the same arguments in opposition being
4 made today were made then. It's going to drive up profits
5 for the developers, the buildings will be too tall, you
6 know, what's this going to do to the character of our
7 neighbor? All of those things were talked about.
8 Thankfully, the City moved forward.

9 And some 30 years later, we have 1,500
10 inclusionary units that have housed thousands and thousands
11 of people since its inception 27 years ago, or whatever it
12 was. So it -- in the moment, it's easy to say, well we
13 can't do this, it's too risky, we don't know how exactly
14 it's going to play out, we need to just, you know, plan
15 more, think more, think longer.

16 At some point, we have to have the courage to say,
17 "But we have a crisis and we've got to do something about
18 it." And they did that, and the AHO can do that as well.

19 Lastly, these conversations have a way of becoming
20 very technical, which is, you know, part of what you guys do
21 with your expertise. It's, you know, what are the
22 dimensions, what are the setbacks? Where are the windows

1 going to go? What's going to happen with the parking? All
2 of that is important, right? And that's why we're here and
3 you're here.

4 But in our opinion, none of those are as important
5 as talking about the people who are going to live in those
6 buildings. Because ultimately that's what this is about.
7 It's about who gets to live in our city and who doesn't. Is
8 our city going to remain the diverse community that we love
9 or is it not?

10 So we can't lose sight that these folks --
11 thousands of them who already live here or work here, these
12 are members of our community -- and when you look at the
13 Affordable Housing guidelines, these include teachers, DPW
14 workers, social workers, nurses, small business owners,
15 people who work in our restaurants as well as people who
16 have -- who need and have housing vouchers who may be
17 unhoused at the moment.

18 So, you know, as we think about this and as we
19 talk about this, I just -- I always want to bring that to
20 the table, because at the end of the day, I might like a 12-
21 story building, you might like a 10-story building, someone
22 else might like a six-story building, but at the end of the

1 day, we're talking about people. And we're talking about
2 our community. And so, I always want to bring that to the
3 table.

4 So I'm going to kick it to my colleagues now.
5 Thank you for your time and I appreciate your patience. And
6 I think, Quinton are you starting off?

7 COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: I'm happy to. But am I
8 sharing the presentation?

9 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: You're kind of quiet, but I
10 don't know if that's just me or --

11 MARY FLYNN: Yeah. I'm having trouble hearing you
12 as well.

13 COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Oh, okay. Fixed.

14 MARY FLYNN: Yeah.

15 COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Better? Am I sharing the
16 presentation?

17 COUNCILLOR AZEEM: Sure. Would you like to,
18 Councillor Zondervan? Otherwise, I can as well.

19 COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: I prefer if you do, yeah.

20 COUNCILLOR AZEEM: Okay, great. Give me one
21 moment. Okay. Can you guys see the presentation?

22 COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Not yet.

1 COUNCILLOR AZEEM: Okay. Let me try this one more
2 time.

3 [Pause]

4 Did this work?

5 MARY FLYNN: Yes, it did.

6 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Thank you.

7 COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Awesome. So next slide,
8 please.

9 So as Councillor McGovern mentioned, why do we
10 need these amendments? We have a housing emergency, and it
11 will not be solved by nibbling around the edges. We have
12 over 21,000 people on the affordable housing waiting list,
13 and of those, 6,500 of them live and/or work in Cambridge.

14 And we're not anywhere close to reaching our
15 Envision goals, which state that we'll build 12,500 housing
16 units by 2030.

17 Next slide, please.

18 So another question might be, "Well, why do we
19 have to do upzoning?" So as the Board knows very well,
20 affordable housing production, other than by the Cambridge
21 Housing Authority, requires new land acquisition. And
22 without higher density affordable housing zoning, developers

1 lose out to private buyers on more of these lots.

2 After they do successfully acquire the land,
3 usually with financial help from the City, it still takes
4 years to finance, design and build a project. So additional
5 density means that each project can produce more homes for
6 people, in addition to giving the developers market
7 advantage and reducing the per unit cost of the land.

8 And of course, by producing more homes, we can
9 clear more people off the waiting list sooner.

10 So we actually have millions of dollars sitting in
11 the Affordable Housing Trust, and this is the best way to
12 put them to work quickly is to allow the affordable housing
13 developers to build more densely than market rate.

14 Next slide, please.

15 So this is just a quick overview of the timeline.
16 And I'm not going to mention every single meeting, but the
17 legislation was originally introduced in November of 2022.
18 It has been through the Housing Committee hearings,
19 Neighborhood and Long Term Planning hearings and, as well as
20 Ordinance Committee hearings once we received language
21 review from CDD. And of course, we are in the Planning
22 Board's hearing now.

1 Next?

2 So why did we choose the corridors and squares for
3 additional height? These sites provide direct transit
4 options and the most plausible/potential "soft" sites. The
5 affordable housing developers prefer to build larger
6 buildings, because it amortizes the overhead cost of doing
7 these projects.

8 And so, on the corridors and in the squares are
9 the best locations to build larger affordable housing.

10 Many of the recent AHO missed opportunities were
11 on the main corridors. And again, that's because the
12 developers are preferentially seeking out these sites,
13 whereas smaller-sized sites are not as conducive to land
14 acquisition and affordable housing projects, because, again,
15 those are smaller sites, and they can't build as much
16 housing on each site.

17 So the focus is really to give the affordable
18 housing developers the greatest possible market advantage
19 where they need it the most, on the corridors and the
20 squares.

21 And it's important to note that these corridors
22 were picked out so that they do run through the entire city

1 in every neighborhood, because we are trying to make sure
2 that our affordable housing development is balanced across
3 the city.

4 Next slide, please.

5 COUNCILLOR AZEEM: I think I could take it from
6 these slides. I just want to make sure; can you guys hear
7 me? Okay. So I just wanted to give a quick summary of the
8 proposed zoning changes that have come through this process.

9 I just wanted to also add that both, you know,
10 this is different than what was initially introduced. What
11 we introduced you to has been through amendments both by
12 City Council, but also through CDD and their review of the
13 proposals.

14 Essentially, the original AHO allows for three
15 different districts: Four, six and seven stories. Four
16 stories covers the vast majority of the city. Six stories
17 is right abutting corridors, and then seven stories is on
18 the corridors.

19 I say this roughly. The exact district maps, as
20 you all know, doesn't quite match up. You know, northern
21 Mass Ave is not zoned for seven stories under the AHO and
22 things like that.

1 And so, we essentially took the six story from the
2 AHO and bumped it to nine, and the seven story to 13, and
3 then added the squares to go to 15 stories, and then removed
4 FAR requirements in the squares to kind of say that, you
5 know, we think that height will be the limiting factor
6 there, as well as make some adjustments to the setbacks.

7 To give you a sense of what we're talking about
8 when we talk about the squares, we really mean a very select
9 part of the city. We mean Central Square and Harvard
10 Square, as defined under the Overlays; Porter Square, right
11 next to Lesley, which is very, very small, and then even
12 smaller than that is Union, which really covers only a few
13 properties.

14 And then these streets are bolded. But these are
15 the corridors that we're defining under Albany, Alewife
16 Brook Parkway, Bishop Allen, Broadway, Cambridge Street,
17 Concord. And the goal was to try to have coverage
18 throughout the neighborhoods.

19 So, you know, we have coverage throughout the
20 city, even though we're not going deep into neighborhoods
21 through this petition.

22 And there's an open space requirement. We've

1 heard a lot of feedback about, you know, Jefferson Park and
2 other places where people would have preferred this project
3 being slightly taller in exchange for preserving more open
4 space.

5 And so, this amendment says that if you are not
6 adding more density and you're preserving additional open
7 space, you can go taller if you preserve more open space,
8 but you cannot add more density. You cannot add more units
9 throughout this process.

10 And then I would just -- like, CDD has amendments
11 that they've highlighted. This was one of them about, you
12 know, the height of an existing building on a lot, which I
13 think is specifically around Millers River and the project
14 there in East Cambridge.

15 Who will AHO projects use the heights and
16 densities? You know, in general we've heard a lot from CHA
17 and HRI. And I think that CDD can share with you the
18 thoughts that they've shared in other meetings. But the
19 petition would legalize prior projects like 2072. Cross-
20 laminated timber is allowing for more heights to be able to
21 use -- for more heights to be reached affordably.

22 The Open Space requirements in particular I think

1 get less fanfare but will make a lot more projects viable.
2 And it would make it viable on smaller lots, so we could
3 preserve more open space as well.

4 I also wanted to add at this time that, you know,
5 zoning changes are scary and nervous for people because it's
6 their homes and their neighborhoods. And I think that there
7 is a benefit to allowing more height and density in that,
8 you know, you can have projects built out.

9 But, you know, these projects even though they by
10 right are not without approval, you know, almost every --
11 not almost -- every single AHO project at this point has
12 required City funds. And, you know, if we find a price that
13 we really like, like let's say 2072, and the Zoning doesn't
14 allow it, then we're kind of stuck, we can't do anything.

15 But if we have a project that we don't like that
16 is allowed, like, perhaps the Walden project, then we still
17 have other mechanisms through restricting City funding to
18 giving feedback and other ways that we can kind of resculpt
19 those projects to something that makes a lot of sense. So I
20 think that the negative risk here is a little bit controlled
21 and managed.

22 We've talked a little bit about unit cost and how

1 we really think, you know, after you go to six stories, you
2 do have a building code change. And so, you might say, you
3 know, "Why not seven, it's just six?" But it's actually in
4 order to get back to lowering per unit cost, you really do
5 have to go significantly higher.

6 And then just to reiterate what I think, you know,
7 Councillor McGovern started with, and I think the thing that
8 really, we hear all the time from our community members is
9 that, you know, there are thousands of people in the city
10 who can barely afford rent, who are struggling and really
11 don't want to move out of the city or the homes that they
12 grew up in.

13 You know, we have 22,000 people on the waitlist,
14 of which 6,501 have a local preference. 4,488 of our
15 neighbors in Cambridge want to live in affordable housing.
16 And of those 2,912 who work in Cambridge and 327 are
17 veterans, these numbers are not additive.

18 But you know, it just goes to show that there's a
19 lot of our neighbors who are in a lot of pain and struggle.
20 And, like, we're really trying to make the rules as flexible
21 as possible. So when we find good opportunities and good
22 projects that we want to build that have community support

1 that, you know, the zoning is not the thing that gets in the
2 way.

3 And then there was just a simple question that was
4 asked many times about are mixed-use projects eligible? I
5 just wanted to emphasize that, you know, we are covering
6 corridors here. But if we -- a project can contain
7 nonactive, can contain active, nonresidential uses on the
8 ground floor, as long as those are permitted by right in the
9 base zoning.

10 And then this is just some other highlights of
11 zoning changes that CDD makes but I'll let CDD answer any
12 questions about those if they have.

13 This is all for me at this point. Thank you. And
14 happy to answer any questions or take any other comments.
15 Thank you.

16 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: And Chair Flynn, I'll just
17 point out there was one mistake with the earlier slide. It
18 said 13 stories: it's 12, just so we're consistent with
19 that. We just have to fix that.

20 And I would just say in closing, you know, when we
21 passed the AHO three years ago, it was a new thing, and we
22 were doing something that other places hadn't done. I just

1 want to point out that there are now cities across the
2 country that are doing their own version of the AHO. And
3 CDD and I have met with representatives from both Ireland
4 and Australia, you know, who are looking at Cambridge.

5 So, you know, three years ago, we took this bold
6 step and said, "We're going to do this thing that other
7 places aren't doing because we feel that we need to." And
8 it's producing units, and it's being modeled in other
9 places. So I think we should be proud of that.

10 Thank you.

11 MARY FLYNN: Well, thanks to all of you for the
12 presentations. It's much appreciated.

13 What we're going to do first before we get to
14 questions and Planning Board discussion is go to public
15 comment, because this is a public hearing.

16 Any member of the public who wishes to speak
17 should now click the button that says, "Raise hand." And if
18 you're calling in by phone, you can raise your hand by
19 pressing *9.

20 As of 5:00 p.m. yesterday, the Board had received
21 over 50 written communications on this case. Written
22 communications received after 5:00 p.m. yesterday will be

1 entered into the record. So I'm going to ask Staff to
2 unmute people who wish to speak.

3 But we also just want to take a look -- I know
4 there are many attendees this evening, and it would be
5 helpful, and I think Daniel was going to save this, but I
6 just want to say too if you could please put your hands up
7 now if you wish to speak, so that we can get a sense for of
8 how many speakers we will be having this evening.

9 So I'll give you a minute to do those, and then
10 when you are recognized, begin by saying your name and
11 address, and Staff will confirm that we can hear you. And
12 we're going to figure out how many minutes, so Daniel, let
13 me turn it over to you for a second. Let's see.

14 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you, Chair Flynn. Sure.
15 And we'll just -- you know, just a -- a last call for folks
16 --

17 MARY FLYNN: Yeah.

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: -- that you're aware, you know,
19 if you're hand's not raised, we will not call on you. So if
20 you do plan to provide comment, please, please use the
21 "Raise hand" function now. And it looks like we have about
22 14 speakers with their hands raised so far, Chair Flynn?

1 MARY FLYNN: Okay. All right. And there's always
2 also the possibility that someone else will get on the call.
3 So I think to allow for ample time for questions later from
4 the Planning Board to the proponents as well as to Staff,
5 let's limit public comment to two minutes.

6 My guess is many of the people as I move through
7 the list here, the people who have sent in written comments
8 as well, so if you would -- everybody, just try to be brief.
9 Two minutes is the limit. Try to summarize if you sent in
10 written materials, summarize it as briefly as you can.

11 And also, it would be helpful if in addition to
12 stating whether you support or oppose the petition, if you
13 do hear that people have already made comments that you were
14 planning on making, if you could just say that you're in
15 support of those comments and just add whatever new comments
16 you may have.

17 So let me turn it over to Daniel and let's begin.

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you, Chair Flynn. It
19 looks like our first speaker is Suzanne Blier followed by
20 James Zall. So Suzanne, please begin by unmuting yourself
21 and giving your name and address.

22 SUZANNE BLIER: Thank you. Suzanne Blier, 5

1 Fuller Place. And I urge you to oppose the AHO 2.0
2 amendment. We have no City plan to delineate where new
3 housing should go. We've prioritized labs, which is part of
4 the problem.

5 Envision never advised this kind of massive
6 upzoning, and the City Council -- Councillor McGovern among
7 others, said Envision is irrelevant. It's just goals, it
8 doesn't matter. So we have nowhere on this.

9 The problems with the Annual Review is that they
10 showed there's no final oversight. At nearly a million
11 dollars per unit. Where is this money going? On 1627 Mass
12 Ave, the last Planning Board meeting pointed out serious
13 problems, even at that level. Frost Terrace came up before
14 the AHO, and it was neighbors and the Planning Board who
15 were really critical in creating that project. It was --
16 without that we really are nowhere.

17 The Cambridge Day today did a report showing the
18 vast majority sums of money spent by HRI and others on
19 repairs, this is a critical issue. 2072 Mass Ave should not
20 be legal. It has only one elevator. That's now illegal and
21 ambulance drivers will not take people down from above the
22 first floor if there's no -- if they need to go up there if

1 there's only one elevator.

2 We've got no reviews from residents of these
3 units. If we go for federal and state funding, which is
4 increasingly little, we don't include teachers and others,
5 we would be able to do that if we used City funds. This is
6 not for the unhoused, about 100 of them; it's an entirely
7 different thing. This is an area national problem.

8 Councillor Azeem stated that no project would go
9 forward without neighborhood support. That's false. This
10 is intended to remove support and Blanchard Road and Walden
11 Square are not on corridors or squares. Today, what the AHO
12 has done is to double the density in current plans.

13 I'm stunned that so many Planning Board members
14 chose not to come to this meeting. It shows how politicized
15 this project; this whole effort has been. Hopefully we can
16 get a new City Council.

17 Thank you.

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
19 James Zall, followed by Rabbi Yoni. James, please begin by
20 unmuting yourself and giving your name and address.

21 JAMES ZALL: James Zall, 203 Pemberton Street.
22 And I'm speaking in favor of the amendments to the AHO.

1 Governor Healy declared a state of emergency today because
2 of the record number of households, including many new
3 immigrants and refugees seeking temporary places to live.

4 In some quarters, this is being described as an
5 immigration crisis. But it's really a housing crisis. And
6 it didn't start with the recent increase in immigrant.

7 During earlier waves of immigration like the one
8 in the early 1900s, that brought all four of my grandparents
9 here, it was common for newly arrived immigrants to have to
10 double up and share apartments with other families. This
11 arrangement was usually temporary until the newcomers
12 learned English and were able to find jobs and move in to
13 their own place.

14 In periods when the number of households exceeded
15 the available housing supply, housing builders would respond
16 by building more housing. By building more housing, the
17 high immigration rates of the early 1900s led to a high rate
18 of housing production in Cambridge and elsewhere, including
19 many of the iconic triple-deckers still standing today.

20 But now our restrictive and exclusionary zoning
21 regime largely prohibits the kind of adaptability that
22 helped make Cambridge what it is today. Small apartments

1 are forbidden. Tall buildings are forbidden. Multifamily
2 buildings are forbidden in much of Cambridge. This has led
3 to a serious shortage of housing for residents throughout
4 the region, even without the growth in immigration.

5 A recent report on zoning in the New York Times
6 noted that "Zoning codes have grown sprawling and more
7 prescriptive." I'm quoting here. "They've often been used
8 to protect narrow interests over societal ones, and we've
9 developed over time more rigid ideas about the built
10 environment; that housing should gain value indefinitely;
11 that politicians should ensure that that's so, and that
12 property owners have a right to veto change around them."

13 This system is not helping, it's not benefitting
14 the City of Cambridge, it's not serving us well, and I ask
15 that you give this a favorable recommendation and help bring
16 about some change to our zoning.

17 Thank you.

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
19 Rabbi Yoni, followed by Esther Hanig. Rabbi Yoni, please
20 begin by unmuting yourself and giving your name and address.

21 RABBI YONI: Hi. I'm -- this is Rabbi Yoni. I'm
22 speaking very strongly in favor of the AHO amendments. I

1 live in Central Square within one of the defined squares
2 there.

3 I -- the dearth of housing impacts low-income
4 households and their friends, the hardships and local house
5 ownership. We're losing core members and are constrained in
6 our growth because community members cannot find reasonably
7 priced rentals within walking distance.

8 And this crisis situation is so dire, and time is
9 vanishingly short however, so I support these amendments. I
10 think we should at the same time consider the Tower of
11 Babylon dynamic that may be set up by building very big
12 buildings and balanced with better governance.

13 For example, managers of Inclusionary Housing have
14 asserted inaccurate ledgers against nearly 30 percent of
15 inclusionary tenants, in particular in a particular
16 building. And some managers even issue notices to quit one
17 after the other, even when a tenant owes no rent.

18 I believe it's time that we consider a way to have
19 a compliance of the CDD against Inclusionary Housing
20 landlords, similar to some of the power that CHA has to
21 actually fine landlords for abuse of the tenants, and to
22 allow the Cambridge Human Rights Commission to enforce CDD

1 Zoning and have regulations against Inclusionary Housing
2 landlords, and also to provide that some -- a tenant who's
3 prevailed in Probable Cause has protection against
4 retaliation for six years as a finding rather than as a
5 presumption.

6 Thank you. Please support the AHO amendments.

7 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
8 Esther Hanig followed by Helen Walker. Esther, please begin
9 by unmuting yourself and giving your name and address.

10 ESTHER HANIG: My name is Esther Hanig and I live
11 at 136 Pine Street. I'm here today to state my strong
12 support for the Overlay amendments, and to urge you to
13 recommend it swift passage by the Cambridge City Council.

14 I never miss an opportunity to voice my support
15 for measures that increase our affordable housing stock,
16 because of the many families you've heard about tonight who
17 are in desperate need of affordable, safe, and secure
18 housing who are currently unable to find it.

19 I think of those families living in motels,
20 shelters on the streets or crowded into small spaces with
21 family and friends. I think about the anguish of the
22 parents worrying about the effect these situations are

1 having on their children.

2 I also think about the wonderful opportunity to be
3 able to welcome more families to our city and to strengthen
4 its diversity.

5 I've heard concerns about the impact of these
6 additional buildings in the neighborhoods where they would
7 be built. As a member of the Cambridge Neighborhood and
8 Apartment Housing Services Board, an adjunct of HRI, I have
9 witnessed time and again how hard the staff works to respond
10 to neighbor concerns.

11 I witnessed that again in the numerous meetings
12 that I attended on the Cambridge Housing Authority's project
13 at 116 Norfolk. The CHA staff made many revisions and
14 changes to address neighbors' concerns. I saw the same
15 thing again at meetings about Just-A-Start's new street
16 project.

17 The passage of this amendment would allow our
18 affordable housing developers the fiscal feasibility to
19 compete and hopefully acquire additional properties to
20 produce this critically needed affordable housing. Not only
21 is this the moral and decent thing to do, but I also know
22 that we can depend on our affordable housing developers to

1 create energy-efficient and attractive projects, and to
2 engage and respond to neighborhood input.

3 I thank you in advance for your support of this
4 important initiative.

5 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
6 Helen Walker followed by Robert Camacho. Helen, please
7 begin by unmuting yourself and giving your name and address.

8 HELEN WALKER: Can you hear me?

9 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Yes. Please go ahead.

10 HELEN WALKER: I'm Helen Walker of 43 Linnaean
11 Street. I'm an architect. Thank you for this opportunity
12 to comment in opposition.

13 One counselor wrote to me, "It's important to note
14 that the AHO includes strict Design Guidelines and Community
15 Engagement Requirements, giving residents a voice in shaping
16 their neighborhoods."

17 May I offer a couple of quotes from those same
18 original Design Guidelines, which the Planning Board is
19 familiar with and values.

20 Quote, "It is expected that affordable housing
21 projects will be designed in a way that is compatible with
22 their existing neighborhood's context. Relate new building

1 height, massing scale and form to that of existing.

2 Incorporate stepbacks to relate to the heights of adjoining
3 buildings and to the scale of the streets, such as building
4 configuration and massing to maximize access to sunlight,
5 air and sky.

6 "Locate and orient new buildings so that their
7 front yard setbacks relate. Locate open space in relation
8 to adjacent yards, residential units and public spaces."

9 Now compare the amendments allowing building
10 heights vastly out of scale with neighborhood context, where
11 there are no minimum front and side yard setbacks, where FAR
12 allowances negate stepback requirements, and where minimal
13 to no open space is allowed. The existing AHO Design
14 Guidelines, which we all value, become inapplicable.

15 As for resident voice, we've just seen nonbinding
16 Planning Board review in action at 1627 Mass Avenue. You
17 were there, I just read about it. But apparently there was
18 general praise for providing affordable housing, but
19 criticism of the project for not relating to the
20 neighborhood. If this was merely six stories not 12 or 15
21 -- 12 or 15 stories are much more likely to not relate.

22 Please reject these amendments to the AHO.

1 And I'm sorry you did not invite Councillor
2 Carlone to make his presentation about how we should meet
3 our goals with mid-rise housing. That's a whole 'nother
4 story to tell, and I wish you would consider it.

5 Thank you.

6 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is Robert
7 Camacho, followed by Cathleen Higgins. Robert, please
8 begin by unmuting yourself and giving your name and
9 address.

10 ROBERT CAMACHO: My name is Robert Camacho. I
11 live across from Corporal Burns Road in Cambridge. I
12 speak to you to urge that you not approve the AHO 2.0
13 before you for this meeting. This amendment will allow
14 12- and 15-story buildings in our squares and avenues,
15 potentially setting up a 12-story housing development with
16 no setback adjacent to a two- or two-and-a-half story
17 single-family home, all without design oversight by your
18 Board.

19 Letters and appeals in opposition to AHO 2 were
20 submitted to the City Council, but a majority of this
21 Council has chosen to totally and blatantly disregard these
22 citizens. The only point of the AHO 2.0 Ordinance is to

1 remove neighborhood and professional Planning Board
2 approval.

3 This Council has refused to undertake and approve
4 an actual City plan as our surrounding cities and towns have
5 done, and the Cambridge taxpayers have already paid millions
6 of dollars for a City plan, and yet here we are now, and the
7 City Council has refused to come up with any City plan.

8 I strongly urge the Planning Board to provide
9 negative recommendation for this fiasco of AHO 2, which is
10 only an example of this Council's politicizing of so much in
11 the city, largely for real estate developers' interests, and
12 certainly not for the interests of the residents of
13 Cambridge.

14 Never in history has it been possible for a city
15 to accommodate everyone that wants to live there. And for
16 this Council to think that they can do it is the height of
17 absolute arrogance. Thank you.

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
19 Cathleen Higgins, followed by David Halperin. Cathleen,
20 please begin by unmuting yourself and giving your name and
21 address.

22 CATHLEEN HIGGINS: My name is Cathleen Higgins. I

1 live at 345 Norfolk Street.

2 As a longtime renter in Cambridge who knows the
3 struggles and anxiety attached to finding, keeping,
4 financing a rental apartment, I'm in strong support of the
5 AHO amendments currently before the Planning Board.

6 What it comes down to fundamentally, of course, is
7 what people have said, is that we need more affordable
8 homes. We need to listen to and consider primarily those
9 not able to be here tonight who will benefit from the
10 passage of these amendments whose lives are unnecessarily
11 burdened by high rents and unsafe housing. These amendments
12 are not radical, they are common sense, reasonable
13 modifications.

14 At the July 31 Ordinance Committee meeting, there
15 were many speakers who supported the amendments who spoke
16 very eloquently from their personal experience about why
17 they had urged a yes vote. If you haven't heard it, I urge
18 you to listen to those comments.

19 I just want to point out a couple. Joe McGuirk,
20 candidate for City Council said, "Displacement of lower- and
21 middle-income residents is a much bigger threat to Cambridge
22 than changes to our skyline."

1 And also, "It is easy to be dismissive of
2 imperfect solutions to our housing crisis when you don't
3 have to worry about where you're going to live in the next
4 few months. Those of us who do not own our homes, even
5 imperfect solutions are better than the status quo. Lower-
6 and middle-income residents are essential to the will being
7 of our city."

8 And echoing James Zall, another perspective not
9 often heard which was heard that evening was spoken by the
10 person who said supporting the amendments was an issue of
11 gender and trans justice.

12 As families and young people are fleeing many
13 states that put their lives at risk, they need to move, but
14 they can't. They want to come to places like Cambridge.
15 They can't, because they really don't have enough housing.

16 If we really are a compassionate beacon we claim
17 to be, we need to offer much more housing and be more
18 welcoming to those fleeing persecution.

19 Thank you very much.

20 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
21 David Halperin, followed by Heather Hoffman. David, please
22 begin by giving your name and address.

1 DAVID HALPERIN: Hi. David Halperin, 14 Valentine
2 Street. I'd like to offer my strong support for these
3 amendments. I live just a few blocks over from LBJ
4 Apartments, which is much taller than all the buildings
5 surrounding it in my neighborhood.

6 And, you know, it's an important community space.
7 And it, you know, having a tall building nearby is really no
8 downside for me at all, and it gets to be the homes for, you
9 know, the many people who are very happy to live there.

10 None of the downsides you're going to hear from
11 anyone tonight, you know, are proportional to the upsides
12 of, you know, what these homes will mean to the people who
13 are in such desperate need.

14 We had, you know, 20,000 people on our affordable
15 housing waitlist, and if we can loosen our zoning and get
16 more units built than we otherwise could, then I think
17 there's a real moral responsibility we have to do that.

18 Thank you.

19 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
20 Heather Hoffman, followed by Marilee Meyer. Heather, please
21 begin by unmuting yourself and giving your name and address.

22 HEATHER HOFFMAN: Hello. Heather Hoffman, 213

1 Hurley Street. I want to correct a misimpression that was
2 left by the very first sentence of the presentation. The
3 AHO did not come out of Envision. Envision didn't talk
4 about anything like this. All of the housing stuff that I
5 heard going to Envision meetings was cast aside because
6 someone decided that the AHO sounded like way more fun.

7 So no, it has nothing to do with Envision.

8 And I didn't appreciate the sneer at my
9 neighborhood of East Cambridge. We in fact has several 100
10 percent affordable developments and one is on the way that I
11 personally support and had hoped that that particular site
12 would become affordable housing.

13 Now, there's another thing. We keep talking about
14 the corridors and squares, but this upzones every last
15 parcel in this city. And I wish that someone would
16 acknowledge that instead of just putting it in the
17 gobbledygook of numbers that are spread out that don't say,
18 "We're upzoning everything."

19 And that is something that I think people who
20 currently live in affordable housing might have been asked
21 about. Do they want to live in places that stick out like a
22 sore thumb because they're so much bigger than everything

1 else? Do they care if they have any green space? Do they
2 care if they have trees?

3 People forget that the loudest voices speaking
4 against 2072 Mass Ave were the residents of the Burns
5 Apartments right next door -- the Russell Apartments, excuse
6 me, right next door.

7 So I hear all of the talk to developers, but I
8 never heard a single word that people went and talked to the
9 people who currently live in affordable housing and asked
10 them what was good and bad, and what could be done and what
11 should be done.

12 Thanks.

13 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
14 Marilee Meyer, followed by Federico Muchnik. Marilee,
15 please begin by unmuting yourself and giving your name and
16 address.

17 MARILEE MEYER: Hi. Marilee Meyer, 10 Dana
18 Street. And this really is a full-court press with three
19 Councillors. It's rather intimidating.

20 The original AHO isn't even cold yet, let alone
21 honoring the five-year review. You should be addressing
22 practicality, feasibility, implementation, technology,

1 materials, design.

2 You can't -- you cannot legislate a motion, and I
3 bet other places dealing with the AHO probably have
4 exceptions that we do not have. Yes, we need housing. But
5 there needs to be analysis and financial problem solving.
6 And it does upzone all the city, we're not just talking
7 about the corridors and squares.

8 5 percent protected open space can allow unlimited
9 height. Not all corridors and blocks are appropriate for
10 one-size fits all with no accommodation for nuances or
11 exceptions.

12 Watchdog [unclear] departments are only now
13 advisory. Unlike the original AHO, neighborhood transitions
14 are eliminated. 15 stories is excessive in the small,
15 historical triangle of Harvard Square. Construction
16 technology isn't available yet for compliant 100 percent
17 electricity.

18 The laminated wood of mass timber construction may
19 be a nightmare for people with chemical sensitivities, and
20 nobody has looked into that. It could even be PFAS.

21 The original AHO respected Neighborhood
22 Conservation districts with nonbinding reviews. Now NBCs

1 are separately being stripped of their guidelines, including
2 dimension, mass, height and setbacks dovetailing with the
3 new AHO.

4 Zoning Guidelines and Regulations are being
5 inundated for faster development with no sober analysis.
6 Add in the politics, special interests, developer money and
7 the election, and you have an irresponsible policy.

8 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
9 Federico -- Nick, I apologize if I'm mispronouncing your
10 last name. Please begin by unmuting yourself and giving
11 your name and address.

12 FEDERICO MUCHNIK: Yeah, it's Federico Muchnik, 82
13 Richdale Ave. Well, look guys. I'm let's put it this way:
14 This is a pretty divisive topic. And AHO 2.0 is not ready.
15 I think you have to concede that the amount of dissidence
16 and acceptance and the amount of noise and the amount of
17 opposition that you're facing for voting for ratifying this
18 thing is quite intense. And there is a lot of opposition to
19 it.

20 And I think that that should be the writing on the
21 wall that says that this has got to go back to the Council
22 for reconsideration. I don't think you've seen anything

1 like this, you know, in a long time.

2 So that's one item, which is that it's just not
3 ready for primetime. It's just not. And you're
4 overlooking, if you approve this, too many opposing voices
5 and opposing perspectives.

6 Case in point, I sent you guys today a petition
7 with close to 500 signatures for people opposing the slabs
8 at Walden Square.

9 And if we were to take the Walden Square Winn
10 development saga as a case in point, we would very clearly
11 see that the idea of going -- tear up a road, create a
12 tunnel to build 95 units when the folks at Walden Square who
13 are barely able to speak English, not registered to vote,
14 not involved with City politics, and will wake up with this
15 nightmare on their hands because of the infestation of
16 rodents and so on and so forth that the construction will
17 precipitate.

18 What we're seeing is the City playing dead and
19 essentially giving carte blanche to the developers. Send it
20 back, folks. Send it back.

21 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
22 Justin Saif, followed by Teresa Cardosi. Justin, please

1 begin by unmuting yourself and giving your name and address.

2 JUSTIN SAIF: Justin Saif. 259 Hurley Street.

3 Good evening members of the Planning Board. I'm in strong
4 support of amending the Overlay to provide more affordable
5 housing, so our local homebuilders who testified in support
6 of these amendments time and again throughout the process
7 can succeed in their attempts to buy more parcels on which
8 to build more affordable homes.

9 We have a housing crisis in Cambridge and
10 desperately need more affordable housing. Time and again,
11 Cambridge residents have stated that housing costs are far
12 and away the most important issue for leaders like you to
13 address in Cambridge.

14 Getting a spot off CHA or the CDD waitlist is
15 life-changing, as CHA has made clear in a series of waitlist
16 profiles that I hope each of you has had a history chance to
17 read. And if not, is hope you do so.

18 I live in East Cambridge. We have several, taller
19 affordable housing buildings, including the Truman
20 Apartments. And I'm sure they faced strong opposition when
21 built, but now they're part of the neighborhood. And not
22 even on a corridor or in a square; next to two-story homes.

1 Similar buildings are present in many other Cambridge
2 neighborhoods.

3 And you should know that some groups are spreading
4 false information about the Overlay and the amendments. The
5 fact is, we have 6,500 households on the waitlist with a
6 local preference; at least almost 4,500 of those are
7 Cambridge resident households.

8 The role of the Planning Board should be to help
9 Cambridge plan to produce more affordable homes so that
10 these thousands of households in dire need do not have to
11 wait nearly a decade to find a home they can afford.

12 Speaking of Envision, we're not on pace even to
13 meet our much too low Envision goal of 3,175 additional
14 affordable homes by 2030. So far, we only have 414 new
15 homes, with 212 rebuilt. And some from the Inclusionary
16 Zoning [indiscernible].

17 We need to expand the AHO and increase our
18 affordable housing. Please vote in favor of expanding the
19 Overlay tonight. Thank you.

20 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
21 Teresa Cardosi followed by Joan Pickett. Teresa, please
22 begin by unmuting yourself and giving your name and address.

1 TERESA CARDOSI: Hi. My name is Teresa Cardosi,
2 and I live at 7 Woodrow Wilson Court, which by the way is
3 affordable housing. I grew up in Cambridge, and if I didn't
4 have this affordable housing unit, I wouldn't be here in
5 Cambridge.

6 The AHO does work. As Councillor McGovern said,
7 the AHO 2023 Annual Review does show that 6 AHO projects are
8 in development, and many of those units are two-, three- and
9 four-bedrooms, which are really the most needed.

10 There is some misinformation going around. So
11 for-profit developers would not use the AHO, because AHO
12 requires 100 percent affordable units, deed-restricted in
13 perpetuity. So no market rents allowed ever, permanently.

14 And another thing is that AHO amendments are not a
15 one-size-fits-all, because the corridors and the main
16 squares allow the 12- to 15- story height. But other areas
17 of Cambridge allow height proportionate to the area.

18 But AHO restrictions have prevented units from
19 being built. One example is 116 Norfolk Street housing,
20 which has supportive services from the chronically homeless,
21 some of which are mentally ill. This housing connects them
22 to constant care.

1 I ask that you see affordable housing as people
2 and not as buildings. Renters are no different than
3 homeowners; we also want secure housing. So please support
4 the AHO amendments.

5 I also want people to know if you Google the 2020
6 Ivory Prize Top 10, the AHO was a finalist of the Top 10 for
7 that national price.

8 And one other thing: As a public housing tenant,
9 as an affordable housing tenant, I don't mind if I were
10 living in a tall building. I don't mind if there were
11 50,000 tall buildings close to me or near me, because those
12 people are the people that I would enjoy, whether you are in
13 two stories or one story or a million stories. Because you
14 make the community. And in all communities, the more people
15 that you can deal with, the better the community is. You
16 get all different points of view.

17 Thank you for your time.

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
19 Joan Pickett, followed by Monica Raymond. Joan, please
20 begin by unmuting yourself and giving your name and address.

21 JOAN PICKETT: Good evening. This is Joan
22 Pickett. And I live at 59 Ellery Street. And I'm not going

1 to repeat some of the things that have already been said,
2 but I would like to emphasize a few points.

3 And I want to start by saying that I'm asking the
4 Planning Board to not give a favorable recommendation to the
5 zoning that's outlined in AHO 2.

6 Really all the provisions of the original AHO that
7 were developed as part of a lengthy public process just
8 several years ago are now being abandoned here. And this is
9 where I have my biggest problem.

10 With this version, neighborhoods and adjacent
11 property owners will have no say in height, setbacks, open
12 space, undermining preexisting rights and uses of adjacent
13 property owners.

14 And, as we found out, the Planning Board is
15 excluding her many oversight roles in these decisions. And
16 I do not think this is an acceptable outcome.

17 I just want to challenge everyone to think isn't
18 there a way to provide some type of relief within the
19 context of the neighborhoods without doing a one-size-fits-
20 all heights. Because we know that one size usually fits
21 none.

22 In the Housing meetings, the affordable housing

1 developers, they did not ask for 12 stories, and they did
2 not ask for 15 stories. They asked for some height relief,
3 which is not defined.

4 And so, I just want to challenge us to think about
5 that and keep the features that were in the original AHO
6 around the process and input from neighborhoods and adjacent
7 property owners.

8 Thank you.

9 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
10 Monica Raymond, followed by Amy Waltz. Monica, please begin
11 by unmuting yourself and giving your name and address.

12 [Pause]

13 Monica, it looks like you are unmuted, but we are
14 unable to hear you.

15 [Pause]

16 Monica, we're still having difficulty hearing you.
17 Give you one more moment, and then we can try to return to
18 you at the end of the comment.

19 [Pause]

20 Still not hearing you, Monica, so just stay put
21 for right now and we will try you at the end.

22 The next speaker is Amy Waltz, followed by Marie

1 Elena Saccoccio.

2 Amy, please begin by unmuting yourself and giving
3 your name and address.

4 AMY WALTZ: Hi, can you hear me?

5 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Yes. Please go ahead.

6 AMY WALTZ: Thanks. Hi. My name is Amy Waltz
7 from 12 Blakely Street in Cambridge.

8 The Affordable Housing Overlay Amendment is
9 environmentally, fiscally, and socially irresponsible. We
10 urgently need you to close this major citywide zoning
11 change. The impact of this zoning change is grossly
12 understated as an amendment to the Overlay, when in reality
13 it is a major upzoning that will affect the entire city,
14 having potential for tenfold of the original Overlay's
15 impact.

16 This representation alone should disqualify it
17 from approval. It feels bizarre that a pro-builder majority
18 City Council could potentially pass this in a matter of
19 days, in spite of the wide public disapproval, as residents
20 begins to understand its impact.

21 The amended Overlay cedes expansive rights far in
22 excess of current zoning laws to developers and investments

1 without sufficient accountability to the community or for
2 the environment. While we all want additional affordable
3 housing, this requires particularly careful planning in a
4 city that is already the most densely populated for its size
5 in the U.S.

6 Some sites are appropriate for building and some
7 sites are not. This is simply a reality, as people will be
8 displaced, and lives will be upended. There are a myriad of
9 human considerations when building housing for redeveloping.
10 They all require careful planning and accountability to the
11 community.

12 It's fiscally irresponsible. The housing being
13 built has an unjustifiable price tag of near \$1 million
14 dollars per unit without even owning the property being
15 developed. There is surely a better method of securing
16 housing that will actually be affordable. Purchasing
17 property seems crucial as well as competitive bidding for
18 development.

19 MARY FLYNN: Ms. Waltz, could you wrap up, please?
20 You've gone beyond your time limit.

21 AMY WALTZ: Yes. Okay. Of greatest concern is
22 the staggering environmental impact of redevelopment at a

1 critical moment when the climate crisis is nearing a tipping
2 point. Additionally, most of the people are --

3 MARY FLYNN: Ms. Waltz --

4 AMY WALTZ: -- seem to have financial --

5 MARY FLYNN: Yeah, conclude because you're well
6 over the time. Thank you. You can send any comments you
7 want to us in writing --

8 AMY WALTZ: Okay.

9 MARY FLYNN: -- in addition. Thank you.

10 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The next speaker is
11 Amy Waltz, followed by Regis DeSilva. Please begin by
12 unmuting yourself and giving your name and address.

13 Amy Waltz, you have the floor.

14 AMY WALTZ: I already spoke.

15 MARY FLYNN: We just did Amy.

16 DANIEL MESSPLAY: I apologize. I apologize.

17 MARY FLYNN: Yeah, let's --

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Our next speaker is Regis
19 DeSilva. Regis, please begin by unmuting yourself and
20 giving your name and address.

21 REGIS DESILVA: I'm Regis DeSilva, 40 Larchwood,
22 Cambridge. I've just one point to make. We are already the

1 fourth most populous city in Massachusetts after Boston,
2 Worcester and Springfield. We're only four square miles.
3 Each of these cities are 10 times the size of Cambridge.

4 The population in the last 40 years that I've
5 lived here has increased from about 80,000 to 120,000. In
6 the last 20 years it's increased from about 100,000 to
7 120,000 which is about a 20 percent increase.

8 We have seen increased traffic, and if you build
9 20,000 units let's say, you're going to have two people per
10 unit and that will be another -- anywhere from 20- to 40,000
11 people in the city.

12 The traffic is already terrible. It takes half an
13 hour now to get from Huron Ave in the area where I live to
14 Fresh Pond between the hours of 2:00 to 6:00 p.m. This
15 increases pollution. We have problems with climate, and as
16 the previous speaker spoke to this issue, I will not repeat
17 that.

18 But I think the congestion is a health hazard, and
19 the number of accidents have been increasing. And I don't
20 think that the quality of life in Cambridge will improve.
21 It's wonderful to take care of people who want to live here,
22 but I think we have to think about the environmental impact.

1 Thanks a lot.

2 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. The last speaker is
3 Marie Elena Saccoccio. So Marie, let's try again.

4 MARIE ELENA SACCOCCIO: Hi. Good evening. Marie
5 Elena Saccoccio, 55 Otis Street. I'm a lifelong resident
6 and I'm here to speak against adoptional recommendation of
7 AHO 2.0.

8 Earlier today, I did forward to the Planning Board
9 -- it's a study in excess of 100 pages called, "Quorums are
10 how the free market houses the poor." Essentially, it's a
11 study of how slums came about. And it was always pre-
12 zoning.

13 And I see -- you know, I'm sure people are saying,
14 "Oh, that's not what we're talking about tonight, but to
15 really assess this plan, it's essential that you consider
16 the real basis for zoning, and what it really was created to
17 protect us against.

18 The plan in front of you essentially exempts AHO
19 2.0 from the protections and restrictions of Zoning and
20 Historic Commission oversight that your other residents
21 enjoy. Somehow, this class is not worthy of setbacks or
22 height restrictions or fire restrictions or even parking.

1 At the presentations, over and over I see Millers
2 River and Truman Apartments presented as some kind of gold
3 standard. Well, that's rather ridiculous.

4 There was no objection when they're being built;
5 they were built by MIT with MIT money as a gift to the city.
6 Nobody was going to object to that. And they were built
7 exclusively for elders. So that's very different than
8 planning for families. High rises for elders can work, I
9 mean obviously.

10 AHO 2 is all about warehousing people, as if
11 they're widgets devoid of appreciation of privacy, space,
12 history or architecture. We all realize that more housing
13 is part of the plan for this city but that's not even our
14 controversy. It's the exemption of all restrictions that
15 are based on health, general welfare, and historic and
16 architectural conduct. Please do not recommendation
17 adoption of the AHO 2.

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. There is an
19 additional speaker on the list. Maybe we'll just give this
20 opportunity for one last call. If you do want to public
21 comment on this item, please use the to "Raise hand"
22 function now. And that speaker is James Williamson. James,

1 please begin by unmuting yourself and giving your name and
2 address.

3 JAMES WILLIAMSON: Can you hear me?

4 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Yes. Please go ahead.

5 JAMES WILLIAMSON: Okay. James Williamson, 30
6 Churchill Ave in Cambridge. I hope you've been requiring
7 all of the speakers to give their home addresses tonight.

8 What happens is the people who are the heads of
9 entities that do this so-called affordable housing, I don't
10 think any of them -- any of the current ones who actually
11 live in Cambridge, they're basically suburbanites who drive
12 in from the suburbs in their single-occupancy vehicles and
13 have their dedicated free parking spaces -- the housing that
14 they live in is actually much more affordable than what
15 they're proposing and building here in Cambridge.

16 Like, it's almost a million dollars a unit, but if
17 you bought condos in the suburbs where they live, you'd
18 probably have enough to give people keys to electric cars
19 and have money left over. I actually resent that. I resent
20 people who do not live in Cambridge dictating to us what our
21 housing and zoning policies ought to be.

22 There are alternatives, which are not discussed.

1 The two proponents of this are both MIT graduates. Why have
2 we stopped talking about MIT requiring MIT to house all of
3 the graduate students on land they already own, in
4 attractive apartments attractive enough to get them
5 interested, and at rents that are affordable?

6 That would be approximately -- years ago that
7 number was approximately 1,000 MIT graduate students, and
8 Barry Bluestone among others pointed out that if you pulled
9 those out of the basically traditional family housing, you'd
10 free up family -- traditional family housing for
11 Cantabridgians.

12 We were sold a bill of goods originally that this
13 was all about restricted -- restrictive zoning, the kind of
14 restricted zoning that is out in those suburbs where those
15 people live. But nothing -- all of the building took place;
16 it's all about doubling down on density where poor people
17 already live.

18 Almost all of the projects -- none of them were in
19 the privileged neighborhoods. And now we're being sold a
20 new bill of goods that, "Oh, don't worry. We're really not
21 going to go to the limits that are being proposed. Don't
22 worry." I mean, come on. Thank you.

1 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. Next speaker is
2 Susan Miller-Havens. Susan, please begin by unmuting
3 yourself and giving your name and address.

4 SUSAN MILLER-HAVENS: Thank you. Susan Miller-
5 Havens, 24 Bradbury Street, over 50 years a resident, both a
6 renter and an owner.

7 I just -- I'm just so struck by the fact that I
8 believe there are nine members of the Planning Board, and
9 only four of you are here. And one of the individuals who
10 is absent perhaps has the most experience of any of you and
11 is the most knowledgeable about this.

12 Instead, we have two City Councillors who are pro-
13 development. I don't know what to make of it, but it
14 doesn't feel right.

15 And the other thing is this whole idea of okay,
16 here's all this housing. You know, the City Council has
17 been so involved in making sure that we have bikes
18 everywhere so that we might partly cut down the amount of
19 cars and traffic that we have.

20 You bring in this kind of building, I can't
21 imagine how the streets the way they are -- in my humble
22 opinion, they sort of look like a board game that's gone

1 mad. And we're just trying to deal with that.

2 So anyway, I'm sorry I'm rambling, but I think the
3 biggest thing is that I don't feel comfortable about not
4 having at least eight of your members at this meeting.

5 Thank you.

6 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. Chair Flynn, that
7 concludes the speakers on the list, so I will turn it back
8 to you.

9 MARY FLYNN: Thanks. Okay. Thank you to all of
10 the speakers and to all of the folks who wrote in with their
11 public comment.

12 We're now going to move from public comment to
13 Board discussion. If this hearing is continued to a future
14 date and additional information is received, there will be
15 opportunity for public comment on the additional materials.
16 Additional written comments may also be submitted.

17 So first, I want to start with Board member
18 questions, and then once we've gotten through that, we will
19 move on to discussion as to how to proceed tonight. So does
20 anyone have questions for either the proponent or CDD Staff?

21 And I see Ashley your hand is up. And for the new
22 members of the Board, if you just hit that "Raise hand"

1 button if you do have a question, then I will acknowledge
2 you that way.

3 ASHLEY TAN: Thank you, Madam Chair.

4 MARY FLYNN: Go ahead, Ashley.

5 ASHLEY TAN: I'll start with an easy one. I'll
6 list them off, but first one is where can we get a copy of
7 that one year report and maybe ask the question, I don't
8 know if it's for Staff or the City Councillors.

9 And then going into -- relating to this actual
10 amendment, the first question is how were the AHO corridors
11 decided? I don't know if I got much clarity about that.

12 And then another question for the City Councillors
13 were, I guess, like, what other programs are there in the
14 city that are available to encourage affordable housing. I
15 know others have mentioned it's, you know, really expensive
16 to build.

17 And so I was just wondering what other programs
18 are out there.

19 And then maybe I should approach the Staff, but I
20 wasn't quite sure, I couldn't make out what changes to the
21 amendment were proposed by a Staff versus what were by CDD,
22 versus what was originally proposed by the City Councillors.

1 I know there was a quick slide about that at the end, but I
2 didn't get to read that either.

3 Thank you.

4 MARY FLYNN: Okay. All right. Thank you.
5 Councillor McGovern, do you want to field questions for your
6 team?

7 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Well, I'm --

8 MARY FLYNN: And I think in this one it's really
9 the question of the AHO corridors.

10 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Sure. I'm going to kick
11 that to Councillor Zondervan to answer.

12 COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Thanks. Yeah. So we
13 started with the Envision corridors that were identified.
14 But then we also looked at making sure that we had good
15 coverage of both, you know, geographic coverage of the city,
16 and then also coverage of potential-- quote, unquote-- "soft
17 sites," so sites that might yield affordable housing in the
18 future.

19 It's not an exact science of course, but, you
20 know, I think we came up with a reasonable map that sort of
21 optimizes those two strengths.

22 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you. I think it might

1 actually make sense for Staff to chime in on the next two.
2 One was the question about other housing programs. I know
3 there are members of the Housing Staff here. And then
4 Daniel, you can probably speak to the amendment and the
5 redlining.

6 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Sure. And I can -- thank you,
7 Chair Flynn -- and I can speak maybe briefly to where the
8 copy of the Annual Report might be available.

9 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

10 DANIEL MESSPLAY: And kind of -- this -- it's a
11 bit clunky to navigate the website, but we have the Open
12 Meeting Portal part of the City Council, the City website,
13 and if you go to the City Council meeting from yesterday,
14 you can see the Annual Report there as part of the
15 submission and review that. It might also be posted, if it
16 hasn't already been posted to the Affordable Housing Overlay
17 webpage on the CDD site it will be shortly.

18 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Daniel? I'm sorry to
19 interrupt. I just put the link in the Chat for anybody who
20 wants it.

21 MARY FLYNN: Yep.

22 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. As far as what

1 changes were proposed by Staff versus what changes were
2 proposed by City Council, there were two changes that were
3 proposed by City Staff.

4 The first one was about the allowing an AHO
5 development to match the height of an existing building on
6 an adjacent lot.

7 And the second one is sort of -- it's tucked away
8 towards the end of the petition under the Open Space
9 section. And it relates to waiving the Open Space
10 Requirement for an extremely small lot, so lots of 5,000
11 square feet or less where that lot is adjacent to a public
12 open space of at least 1,500 square feet.

13 So that provision we've talked with some
14 affordable housing developers who identified some sights in
15 residential zoning districts that naturally have just a
16 smaller lot size than what you would find say along a
17 corridor or in a mixed-use area.

18 And they found that complying with the Open Space
19 Dimensional Standards once you factor in like a typical Open
20 Space requirement, which would be for instance 30 percent
21 under the AHO, once you sort of subtract that from a really
22 small lot area, you end up with a floor plate that's just

1 not really buildable.

2 So this was a provision that we plugged in that
3 would allow an AHO development to move forward on a small
4 lot, but also ensured that residents of that AHO development
5 would have access to a public open space that would be
6 immediately adjacent to it.

7 MARY FLYNN: Okay, thanks. Now, your other
8 question had to do with other programs that help with the
9 affordable housing, that the city offers. So I don't know
10 whether Chris Cotter if that's something you want to address
11 that would be helpful.

12 CHRIS COTTER: I'm happy to. Can I just ask that
13 a question be repeated just to make sure that I've got it
14 correct?

15 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

16 ASHLEY TAN: I was -- mostly was curious what
17 other programs outside of, you know, strict zoning
18 amendments are there to encourage affordable housing
19 developments, at least from the City side. Because I know
20 it is very expensive to build.

21 CHRIS COOK: Sure. Well, outside of the programs
22 that we're talking about today that would create housing

1 through the Overlay with funding from the City and other
2 public funders, the other big producer of new housing is the
3 Inclusionary Housing Ordinance, which Councillor McGovern
4 mentioned up top in the presentation that's produced about
5 1,500 more affordable units over the last 20 plus years.

6 So as far as bringing in new units online, it's
7 really inclusionary in the City-funded housing that's built
8 by groups like Homeowners' Rehab, Just-A-Start, Cambridge
9 Housing Authority and a number of other developers of
10 affordable housing.

11 We also have a comprehensive program to preserve
12 existing affordable housing. That's been a big focus of us
13 over the last 10 to 12 years, so we've preserved about 1,200
14 units where restrictions -- affordability restrictions were
15 at risk of expiring.

16 So that was a big focus with the preservation of
17 Fresh Pond Apartments out by Alewife being the last in that
18 group, and now the focus has been more on building and
19 adding to the affordable housing stock with new development.

20 A last thing I'll say is we have a comprehensive
21 homebuyer program -- education counseling and then financial
22 assistance, which includes HomeBridge. And the HomeBridge

1 is the program through which we offer funds to first-time
2 homebuyers, so they have a preapproval to go out and shop
3 for homes on the market. Those homes when someone buys with
4 the HomeBridge assistance do become part of the City's
5 affordable housing stock throughout the long-term.

6 MARY FLYNN: Iram, did you want to add something?

7 IRAM FAROOQ: So thank you, Chair. I just wanted
8 to add one item to what Chris spoke about, which is just to
9 really zoom out and to look at all of the components that we
10 need for affordable housing to really successfully be built.

11 And one of the key components to that is funding,
12 as some of you have noted. And that's something that comes
13 from the incen-- you know, part of it comes from things like
14 the Community Preservation Act Funds that the City gets from
15 the state, and the City has consistently allocated the
16 maximum possible allowable amount for affordable housing
17 from that source.

18 It comes from Incentive Zoning provision, through
19 commercial development, and it comes from City -- from the
20 City's budget through taxes.

21 And the City has as of this year dedicated --
22 Chris will correct me if I'm wrong -- but approximately \$40

1 million dollars just for the year to affordable housing
2 purposes. So that, you know, in terms of the funding,
3 that's something that the City is putting in this is getting
4 channeled into construction of new affordable housing
5 through the Affordable Housing Trust.

6 And regardless of whether a developer or builder
7 is using the AHO or is using the State's provisions, that
8 funding can support them.

9 The second thing we need is, you know, policies
10 that really allow the -- well, actually, I'd say sites, you
11 know, we need land on which to build. And the affordable
12 housing builders are competing in the open market for that
13 land.

14 When the City has land, there's a lot of
15 discussion about City-owned land, and a parcel on Cherry
16 Street is one that the City is allocating to affordable
17 housing. There's an RFP out for that right now. We're
18 looking at the City-owned parcels in Central Square to think
19 about what might be future uses for that. And affordable
20 housing is a central piece of that.

21 But really the sites -- access to sites is one of
22 the biggest challenges, given how constrained Cambridge is

1 with our 6.25 square mile land area. And so, policies like
2 the AHO are really key to helping us, whether that be the
3 City going out to acquire land or whether that be our
4 builders going out to our non-profit and other partners who
5 build affordable housing, go out to acquire those sites,
6 it's really helpful to have an advantage for affordable
7 housing. And that's what when we worked on the AHO, that
8 was a key piece that we were trying to accomplish.

9 So I just wanted to sort of zoom out and put that
10 in context, in addition to all of the programs that Chris
11 has spoken about.

12 MARY FLYNN: Great. Thank you. Ted, your hand is
13 up. What are your thoughts? Questions, actually?

14 H THEODORE COHEN: Just questions now.

15 MARY FLYNN: Yes, questions.

16 H THEODORE COHEN: So I think the questions are
17 for Staff. I would like some clarification on the
18 circumstances in which a -- there isn't unlimit (sic) to the
19 height that a building could be constructed. And similarly,
20 I'd like some clarification on the circumstances where
21 protection, where increasing open space, would allow for
22 increased density.

1 MARY FLYNN: Daniel?

2 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Sure. Thank you, Chair Flynn.

3 I can take that one. And Councillor McGovern or Councillor
4 Azeem or Councillor Zondervan might pass to you if there's
5 -- if you want to add anything about sort of the intent or
6 the rationale, don't want to get too far over my skis.

7 But the provision in the petition says that an AHO
8 project can exceed the allowable height without limitation,
9 but subject to the residential density limitations that
10 would otherwise apply.

11 So as you remember from the AHO, for AHO
12 developments, there's either an FAR cap of 2.0 or the FAR is
13 unlimited over a certain point. So in this case you could
14 exceed the height without limitation, subject to that FAR
15 cap 2.0 or if you're in an area that otherwise would not
16 have an FAR restriction, you sort of back into an FAR
17 restriction by taking the lot area and subtracting the open
18 space that would be required on that lot, and then
19 multiplying the remainder by the allowable height that would
20 apply on that parcel.

21 So it says unlimited, but in reality, there is
22 sort of a height limitation that would apply because you

1 kind of back into a floor area ratio restriction just based
2 on subtracting the minimum open space that would otherwise
3 be required and multiplying what is left over by the
4 applicable height in the district.

5 Again, I don't want to get sort of too far over my
6 skis in terms of rationale, so I would defer to the
7 petitioners but I think, you know, one of the challenges
8 with the AHO, especially when you have a really large lot
9 that ends up getting redeveloped.

10 So for instance the JP Federal site is one that we
11 talked about a lot, is that you have that sort of -- that
12 height cap that applies to the whole site, and you end up
13 with a site that when it's redeveloped sort of looks like
14 everything is at an even plane.

15 And there really isn't an opportunity under the
16 AHO currently to mold some of those heights so that you can
17 maybe have a taller building towards the interior of the lot
18 and then scale down as you get towards the adjacent lots.
19 Because the height limit that applies applies to every
20 building on that lot.

21 So this would allow sort of a little bit of a
22 reshaping, more flexibility to the height if you wanted one

1 of the buildings, for instance, to exceed the allowable
2 height that would otherwise apply under the AHO you could do
3 that, but there would still be sort of an overall floor area
4 restriction that would apply.

5 And the only time that you would be able to take
6 advantage of that provision is where you have existing green
7 area open space that will be preserved on the lot that
8 consists of at least 5 percent of the total lot area, and
9 that the AHO development will exceed the minimum open space
10 that would otherwise be required on that lot.

11 I don't know if the Councillors wanted to add
12 anything else, since that was one of their revisions.

13 MARY FLYNN: Councillor Azeem has his hand raised.
14 So I'll turn it over to you.

15 COUNCILLOR AZEEM: Thank you, Madam Chair. I just
16 wanted to add that, in general, there's two ways to add
17 restrictions on construction.

18 In my opinion, there's height and then there's
19 FAR. And oftentimes I think that in the City FAR is being
20 more restricted than the height, where even if you can build
21 up to a certain height, the FAR ends up being a much more a
22 limiting factor.

1 And I think that we were kind of taking that
2 approach where the FAR is more limiting, but the benefit of
3 FAR is that it does allow you to preserve more of a
4 community's open space.

5 And so, in, like, very select parcels we've seen
6 where people, like you know CHA doesn't build up to the
7 maximum FAR anyways. They don't want to necessarily add
8 more units or density. But, like, they would like to
9 preserve more open space. And rearranging those units could
10 be helpful.

11 So I think that the real intention behind that
12 provision is to allow people to -- you know, if you have 100
13 units and you think of them as, like, Lego blocks, to
14 rearrange them in a way that allows more, you know, open
15 space to be preserved, rather than, you know, somehow that
16 specific provision allowing for more units to be created.

17 Thank you.

18 MARY FLYNN: Councillor Zondervan, did you want to
19 add to that?

20 COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Thank you, Madam Chair, to
21 you; yes.

22 So in terms of rationale, another example that

1 came up during our discussions was 116 Norfolk Street, where
2 everyone agreed that -- including the neighbors -- that they
3 would prefer a slightly taller building in exchange for more
4 preservation of the green open space on the land and
5 including the preservation of some of the trees. But
6 because of the limitations of the AHO, they were not able to
7 go taller.

8 And so, what this provision does, it allows -- it
9 would have allowed them in that particular case to build
10 slightly taller and slightly skinnier; they still would end
11 up with the same FAR, but the building would be a little bit
12 taller in exchange for more open space protection on the
13 ground.

14 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. Back to you, Councillor
15 McGovern.

16 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Thank you. And I think one
17 of the ways I've been trying to sort of talk about this is
18 that when we're looking at, when we're talking about the
19 height because we're talking about up to 12 stories, right?
20 It's not that it's always going to be 12 stories.

21 Even if you look at the HRI project on Mass Ave
22 that you all did met last week, even under the current AHO,

1 they could go to seven stories, but they're not maxing that
2 height out.

3 And so, you know, I think some of this -- you
4 know, I think our affordable housing developers do a good
5 job. I think they've been part of this community for a
6 really long time, and I don't put them quite in the same
7 boat as I put some of our for-profit developers who are
8 trying to maximize profits.

9 And so, you know, if you think about it in terms
10 -- they all said, and we've heard in public comment the
11 affordable housing developers didn't ask for this -- they
12 have all said several times including at our most recent
13 meeting, that these amendments will give them more
14 opportunity and more flexibility and allow them to right
15 size projects with more flexibility and also to produce more
16 units. They are on record saying that.

17 And so, you're not -- just because you can go to
18 12 doesn't mean that you're going to get 12 with time.

19 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. Diego, your hand is up
20 with a question?

21 DIEGO MACIAS: Yes. I guess I have two sort of
22 topics that I have questions that I would hope to get

1 elaborated on.

2 The first is sort of the idea with these new
3 heights and the lack of setbacks that buildings might get to
4 close to another, and there won't really be much of a view,
5 and sort of if someone could elaborate more on that. I'm
6 not sure if it's a Councillor or the Staff.

7 And similarly, if that does happen, you know, I
8 guess a question would be, which one of the public
9 commenters brought up was sort of if there were any surveys
10 on whether people would want to live in such a situation or
11 current affordable housing, I'm just really not sure.

12 I didn't see anything in the documentation if
13 that's been reviewed, or if there were, you know, questions
14 about that to the public. And then that's sort of one
15 topic.

16 And then the second topic is infrastructure. I
17 guess I'm just curious if any thought was put into sort of,
18 you know, loading traffic or, you know, buses and the
19 current transit that we have for public transportation.

20 Thank you.

21 MARY FLYNN: Great. Thank you. Let me turn it to
22 the proponents first. And Councillor McGovern, did you want

1 to start? I didn't know if your hand was up newly or from
2 the last time?

3 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: No, no, no. It's new.
4 Thank you, Madam Chair. I'm getting better at putting my
5 hand down when --

6 MARY FLYNN: It's always hard to --

7 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: So I'll answer the second
8 part of that first question a little bit. So, you know,
9 we've had several meetings on this topic. There have been
10 meetings where people who live in taller buildings in
11 Cambridge -- in affordable housing buildings whether it was
12 the Manning or Millers River, who called it and talked quite
13 eloquently about -- that they have strong communities in
14 these buildings.

15 You know, there was a letter written by people who
16 live in Rindge Towers saying, "Please stop using us as an
17 example, as what living in a tall building is terrible and
18 awful. We love our community."

19 I think anybody who -- you know, I've had the
20 great pleasure t last few weeks to go to events -- you know,
21 it's the summer -- to go to barbecue events both at 808
22 Memorial Drive, Rindge Towers; I was just at Millers River.

1 There are really strong communities there.

2 And there was a slide earlier on -- and I'll have
3 to see if I can dig it up -- from the CHA in one of our
4 first presentations that talked about the thousands of
5 people whose first choice, because when you get on the list
6 you can choose where you want to live -- whose choices are
7 these taller buildings.

8 The CHA has lots of different -- they have smaller
9 buildings and taller buildings, and there's lots of
10 different options, but a lot of people are choosing these
11 taller buildings.

12 So look, some people like living in taller
13 buildings, some people aren't going to like living in taller
14 buildings. But I just spent Thursday -- a couple hours on
15 Thursday -- with a 56-year-old woman and her disabled son
16 who are getting evicted from their unit and they have
17 nowhere to go. They're going to be homeless. And they're
18 not on any list yet, and it's going to take years for us to
19 try and find them something.

20 If she -- if we could offer her an apartment on
21 the seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth floor of a building --
22 twelfth floor of a building -- I promise you that she would

1 take that. And, you know, I think we have to -- it's not
2 the only answer, right? We need a variety of types of
3 housing.

4 But this idea that just because it's a certain
5 number of stories that in some sense is arbitrary, that
6 somehow people aren't going to want it, that's just not what
7 we're finding. People have been very outspoken about it.

8 Now, it doesn't mean it's always perfect for sure,
9 right? There's a lot of work we have to do. But -- and
10 again, these -- we're talking major corridors here, right?
11 So these aren't tall buildings that are isolated on the
12 outskirts of town.

13 So anyway, just for that part of the question,
14 yes, we have heard from folks. And again, it's not that
15 everybody thinks it's perfect, but no housing is always
16 perfect.

17 But yes, there are -- and there are numbers to
18 show that people are asking to live in these buildings.

19 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. Councillor Azeem, your
20 hand is up also.

21 COUNCILLOR AZEEM: Thank you, Madam Chair. I
22 wanted to first begin with the infrastructure question, and

1 to say that, you know, I think we often think about in terms
2 of traffic patterns in terms of cars where it certainly is
3 true that if you have more drivers on the road, you know, it
4 can become more difficult to get to places.

5 I also want to acknowledge that it's the opposite
6 for other forms of transit, right? Train ridership and bus
7 ridership gets better the more people that use it. And in
8 fact, a huge problem that we're facing before the MBTA right
9 now is that ridership is down compared to pre-COVID levels.

10 And transit is something that moves dramatically,
11 right? Like, New York, which is more dense than we are, has
12 much more trains -- much easier to get a train everywhere
13 than we do here. You know, just to get a sense of, like,
14 you know, sometimes it's -- it could help if it would be
15 easier to get around from places to place.

16 And I think that, you know, it's certainly true
17 and what we found in the evidence, like percentage of car
18 ownership in affordable housing, that a lot of people do use
19 mass transit, and I think that is something that will
20 benefit.

21 And that's also what was the intention among the
22 co-authors, in that we introduced something that was really

1 focusing on squares in particular and corridors, because
2 that is where transit is successful, right?

3 Harvard Square has not only a T station, but also
4 is one of the biggest bus depots in the system. Central
5 Square has obviously a train system and buses, but under the
6 Bus Network Redesign, which I worked on this term, it will
7 become one of the biggest bus hubs in the state.

8 Porter Square has the -- you know, Red Line of
9 course, but it also has a commuter rail Station this is
10 getting extensive work done. You know, these are really,
11 really transit-accessible places, and that's why we focused
12 so much on the square definition in particular.

13 And then to the other point about people's -- you
14 know, whether people want to live in these buildings, I
15 think we both heard in some public comment from, you know, I
16 think that it's always -- at least some people in public
17 comment who, like, live in public housing and do want to
18 live there as well as, you know, like, I think in the
19 broader conversations that we've had about people -- you
20 know, like people in the Rindge Towers and other people --
21 really do love their homes.

22 And I would say, you know, two additional things,

1 that, like, one, you also get more services, right? Like,
2 as -- you know, the son of a mom who does not speak
3 particularly great English, maybe my English needs some work
4 as well, but -- you know, like, you know, a lot of these
5 larger public housing communities also offer the direct
6 services to inbuild tenant support. They're really making
7 it a community you can thrive in, versus having to live in a
8 more separated community where you don't have that 24 asset
9 and access.

10 And, you know, I think that it can be really easy
11 to get drawn into some of the parts that we don't like. But
12 you know I would not be here today -- like I don't enjoy
13 this process either of going through having to talk about
14 this bill for eight months, get lots of negative feedback,
15 lots of people upset, it's not a fun process for me either.

16 You know, we were actually here because, like, we
17 really do believe that, you know, we need affordable housing
18 and that it can make things better, and that people really,
19 really, really are struggling, you know.

20 Like, I think that we are now the third-most
21 expensive metro area in the U.S. after New York and SF, and
22 that really takes a toll on so many people. You hear about

1 it every single day. And, you know, that's why we're doing
2 this. So thank you.

3 MARY FLYNN: Thanks. Daniel?

4 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Just real quickly; I think
5 Councillor Azeem covered infrastructure in terms of transit
6 and cars. So just to speak about the stuff underground, the
7 sewer and water, just want to quickly note, you know, AHO
8 developments are subject to the same, you know, City
9 technical standards and requirements that would otherwise
10 apply to all other developments in the city.

11 So our Department of Public Works reviews building
12 permit applications and AHO proposals for AHO developments
13 to ensure that there will be adequate water and sewer
14 capacity, for instance, energy for the building.

15 And so, AHO developments aren't treated any
16 differently than other developments in that regard. Just
17 wanted to note that.

18 MARY FLYNN: Great, thank you. Okay. Any other
19 questions from the Planning Board members?

20 Adam?

21 ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: Thank you, Chair. And I
22 just want to say thanks to all the community members who

1 have shared their perspectives, both tonight and in writing
2 over the past several weeks it sounds like.

3 My -- you know, there are a lot of critiques it
4 sounds like of AHO 2.0. And I'm curious of the petitioners
5 could say a little bit more about what's wrong with AHO 1.0
6 that AHO 2.0 really would do so much better?

7 I mean, on the one hand it increases density, and
8 that's a piece of it, but are there other things about AHO
9 1.0 or any negative outcomes with AHO 1.0 that 2.0 would do
10 much better?

11 MARY FLYNN: Thank you.

12 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Sure. And I will point out,
13 you know, through you, Madam Chair, that yes there are
14 critiques. There's also a lot of people speaking positively
15 about it.

16 And I think we focus so much in these
17 conversations about, you know, what are people upset about
18 as opposed to listening to the voices of people saying, "No,
19 actually, you know, this is good."

20 So I would say from my perspective from what we've
21 heard, so the AHO has been in existence for three years. We
22 know that land costs continue to go up. We know that

1 construction costs continue to go up.

2 And so, we sometimes get criticized for having
3 spoken to developers on this subject, but of course we went
4 to our affordable housing developers and said, "What's the
5 landscape look like? What's working, what's not working,"
6 right? They are the ones who built it. They know the
7 affordable housing financing better than anybody.

8 And we engage in conversations where, you know,
9 what came up -- and Councillor Zondervan mentioned this
10 earlier -- is that it was more -- it was still cost
11 prohibitive for them to build sort of deeper into the
12 neighborhoods, right?

13 So but that they felt that there were
14 opportunities along corridors that were more viable for
15 them, and that if there was -- if they had a little more
16 flexibility in the height, that they could spread the costs
17 out over more units which gets you more units, which is
18 wonderful in its own right, because we need the number -- we
19 need the units, but it would allow them more flexibility to
20 purchase property, get involved.

21 And again, the funding for affordable housing is
22 so complicated, and it takes so long, that it's really hard

1 when a private developer comes in with a suitcase full of
2 unmarked bills and says, "You know, I'm going to pay you
3 three times what the assessed value of your property is, and
4 here you go."

5 And so, the whole point of the AHO -- and this
6 goes to the concern that this is going to open up 12 stories
7 for everybody -- the whole point is to give affordable
8 housing developers a little bit more of an advantage to get
9 their foot in the door to get property, and to take
10 advantage of that.

11 Because if you leave it up to the market, they're
12 going to lose. And so, for-profit developers who want to
13 build luxury housing actually don't like this because we're
14 creating more competition for them.

15 And so, for me, it's really that this would allow
16 them more opportunity and more flexibility. That makes it
17 better. That makes it an improvement on the -- you know,
18 the first version of the AHO.

19 But again, as I said, I think the first version is
20 working well but we should tinker with it, and we should,
21 you know, make it better where we can.

22 Thanks.

1 MARY FLYNN: All right. Thank you. Chris? You
2 have your hand -- oh, I'm sorry. Before you I see
3 Councillor Zondervan has his hand up, and it has been up for
4 a while.

5 COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Thanks. Sorry. Could you
6 repeat the question again?

7 MARY FLYNN: His question was about AHO 2 -- 2.0,
8 why is it -- why does -- why -- what does it correct in AHO
9 1. And if I'm not saying this right, Adam, please -- you
10 know, sort of like what's the -- what is really improved
11 over AHO 1, and are there any negative impacts from your
12 proposal?

13 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Thanks.

14 COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN: Right. So one of them is
15 of course this open space flexibility piece that we are
16 trying to correct for there explicitly.

17 But the other one is that, you know, even the
18 original AHO part of the goal was to say let's get
19 affordable housing built everywhere across the city, right?
20 And it's just not practical, because in the lower density
21 parts of our city, the property values are very high.

22 And, you know, because there's a lot of single-

1 family homes there that are sold for millions of dollars.

2 And it just doesn't make any sense for the
3 affordable housing developers to buy that expensive land to
4 build low-rise affordable housing.

5 And furthermore, even if they were to do that,
6 those projects would be smaller because they're limited by
7 height and density. And so, it doesn't amortize across the
8 land cost and the fixed costs of those projects.

9 So it just doesn't add up, right? And so, you
10 still get this concentration of affordable housing in the
11 denser, lower value neighborhoods.

12 And so, by upzoning along the corridors and in the
13 squares, the thinking is that we would get more projects in
14 those areas, which does spread out the development across
15 the city a little better. It still doesn't go deep into the
16 neighborhood, but that was never practical -- at least not
17 for income-restricted rental housing.

18 Where that does occasionally happen is more
19 affordable home ownership, but the developers do very few of
20 those projects, because the funding is limited. They are
21 smaller projects. And so, again, you don't get good cost
22 amortization.

1 So, you know, but they still do them occasionally.
2 And so, hopefully we will continue to see some of that
3 happening deeper in the neighborhoods, where that type of
4 affordable housing is more appropriate to build some
5 affordable homeownership into the neighborhoods.

6 But the larger affordable rental housing really
7 belongs on the corridors in the squares, so that's what
8 we're trying to optimize.

9 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. Councillor Azeem, did you
10 want to respond to that question?

11 COUNCILLOR AZEEM: Yes, please. Thank you. So I
12 think that the -- my fellow Councillors have done a great
13 perspective talking about the bill and its benefits. I just
14 wanted to talk a little bit about the context, right?

15 Like the Affordable Housing Overlay is an
16 interesting bill in that its goal is to create, you know,
17 competitive advantage. So that means it has to be better
18 than the base zoning, right, in order to do that.

19 And so the landscape has changed in ways that, I
20 think -- you know the three of us Councillors introduced a
21 bill that removed parking minimums last year.

22 So I think -- and the reason that we support --

1 but the original Overlay in my mind kind of did three
2 things: It removed parking requirements for affordable
3 housing, it let four stories in the neighborhoods, and then
4 it let six to seven stories on the corridors.

5 Now at this time, we don't have parking
6 requirements for market-rate housing.

7 H THEODORE COHEN: Mm-hm.

8 COUNCILLOR AZEEM: We're talking about ending
9 Exclusionary Zoning and perhaps allowing triple-deckers
10 throughout the city. And three and four have small
11 difference, but it's much smaller than the difference that
12 exists.

13 And I think at most, you know, between Alewife and
14 northern Mass Ave studying the potential zonings throughout
15 the other city (sic) I think that it's likely that, you
16 know, if not six stories but we're heading to something
17 similar there for a lot of corridors and squares, which I
18 think is, you know, even more popular than the AHO.

19 I think most of the City Councillors have talked
20 in support of six stories for market-rate housing, you know,
21 up and down Mass Ave on major corridors.

22 And I think at that point, if you look at the

1 environment, then the AHO essentially becomes a one-story
2 bonus, and it's a much, much smaller benefit than it was
3 initially intended to. And I think that's a real shame,
4 because affordable housing really deserves a big benefit.

5 And I think, you know, our goal here is to kind of
6 futureproof it so we're not coming before you guys every
7 time we make a change to the base zoning to also have to
8 maintain a similar level of density bonus for affordable
9 housing.

10 Thank you.

11 MARY FLYNN: Chris, you've been very patient.

12 CHRIS COTTER: Thank you. No, no, no, I'm happy
13 to go after Councillor Azeem, because I wanted to raise the
14 same point about parking.

15 And going back to what Iram said up top about the
16 original intent of the Overlay was to create an increment to
17 give an advantage to affordable housing builders. A big
18 piece of that was in the adoption AHO 1 was the elimination
19 of parking requirements for affordable housing and builders.

20 That was a huge piece of that, and really an
21 impactful one, as we would often see that development
22 outcomes were almost dictated by how much parking you needed

1 to build. And so, having that flexibility was big piece of
2 the Overlay, and really gave a huge advantage to the
3 affordable housing builders.

4 As Councillor Azeem knows, that's now available to
5 market-rate builders, you know, with the elimination of
6 minimum parking standards citywide, and when that change was
7 made, we have now seen that market-rate developers are also
8 looking at sites now without that minimum parking
9 requirement in place.

10 So in some way, they have the flexibility that was
11 offered to the affordable housing builders, exclusively AHO
12 1, which really diminishes that advantage somewhat.

13 And so, we have seen stronger competition for
14 sites that maybe there would have been that bigger increment
15 over the last year plus, as developers across the board have
16 that flexibility to not include parking if they don't think
17 that it's needed.

18 And so, in some ways looking at changing the
19 advantage here for affordable housing is a reasonable
20 response to that elimination of the advantage the parking
21 difference provided there. So that's just one change I
22 think in the context that is helpful when you look at AHO

1 2.0 versus the original.

2 MARY FLYNN: While you're here, let me just add I
3 agree with you. I mean, I can remember when the Planning
4 Board was discussing the minimum parking requirement
5 elimination, that we did talk about how it was giving away
6 the advantage to the developers who would want to do
7 affordable housing under the AHO.

8 So, you know, I think part of the problem is that
9 there are so many tradeoffs that the City has to make,
10 between environmental needs and then also, you know, wanting
11 to produce as much affordable housing as possible.

12 But my question for you is in terms of the report
13 that's been done in terms of the sites that were looked at
14 and rejected for one reason or another, how much analysis
15 does the City get from the affordable housing developers as
16 to the reason why the housing didn't work on the site?

17 CHRIS COTTER: It's a good question. And it
18 varies depending on the site. There are some sites that
19 we're more aware and wanted to understand how they're
20 looking at it, and if there's something that's not feasible,
21 then to pull in a different agency to have them also take a
22 look. And then there are other sites that they're looking at

1 on their own where we're not as aware.

2 The other piece that often comes up is -- as was
3 noted in the report -- there are a number of sites that are
4 under consideration and continue to be.

5 And so, oftentimes there's an issue of timing as
6 well that comes in if, you know, there are three or four
7 offers pending at one point in time if one is moving
8 forward, then the others either continue or an agency might
9 decide to prioritize one over the other or push the other
10 out a little bit.

11 So it varies. We're aware of some of the reasons
12 To the extent that we know them, we put them in that report,
13 just to give some context. And, as noted, there are -- as a
14 -- a number of sites that the analysis is continuing, or the
15 discussions are continuing.

16 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. Ted?

17 H THEODORE COHEN: Yeah. I mean, all of the
18 reasons for AHO 1 have now been mostly put out and
19 explained. But the biggest one from my point of view was
20 that AHO 1 was not a discretionary permit, but it was
21 allowed as of right. And so, developers of affordable
22 housing knew that they were not going to be challenged in

1 court and end up in a multiyear litigation.

2 Similarly, they didn't have to know -- they knew
3 in advance how many units they could actually build, and
4 what the cost of everything would be for them, which put
5 them in a much better situation than non affordable housing
6 developers, who never were sure what the Planning Board or
7 the ZBA would authorize.

8 Maybe some people don't recall, but the St James
9 housing in North Cambridge was challenged and took 10 years
10 from the time the permit was initially granted until the
11 time they resolved all the litigation and were able to go
12 forward building that housing.

13 Now that's not 100 percent affordable housing, and
14 so, that was one of the main rationales from my perspective
15 of the need for the AHO and the benefit of the AHO.

16 MARY FLYNN: Thank you.

17 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Madam Chair?

18 MARY FLYNN: Yes. Councillor McGovern, before you
19 --

20 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Thank you.

21 MARY FLYNN: -- before you address that, can I
22 just throw one more thing in, so maybe you can address that

1 at the same time. And that is a few people noted that under
2 the new AHO 2.0 that there would not be the kind of review
3 that we do have under an AHO 1, which I realize is very
4 limited. It's advisory what the Planning Board does, et
5 cetera.

6 I haven't read anywhere in the documents --

7 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: No.

8 MARY FLYNN: -- that any of Board review is
9 eliminated. So --

10 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: No.

11 MARY FLYNN: -- they just want to clarify that.
12 So --

13 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Yeah, thank you, Madam
14 Chair. That was the point that I was going to make.
15 There's a lot of confusing and misinformation that's going
16 around. And in some ways people are trying to relitigate
17 the original AHO and what was put in there.

18 This version doesn't touch -- this isn't taking --
19 this isn't changing anything regarding the input of the
20 Planning Board and the community. We made that decision
21 three years ago. And we voted it.

22 So when people say, "Oh, these amendments are --

1 you know, taking that away, these amendments don't --
2 they're silent on that. That's not what we're talking
3 about. This is -- and so, that is I think a
4 misunderstanding that's out there.

5 Now, people may want to say we didn't like that
6 then and we don't like it now, that's fine. That's fair.
7 But the -- to say that these amendments are somehow
8 weakening what was already decided three years ago is
9 completely inaccurate.

10 MARY FLYNN: And just in terms of Urban Design
11 Guidelines, I know obviously we have them for the AHO
12 projects, but I would assume that they need to be revised
13 and updated, should this petition be passed, you know. And
14 there's a lot of difference between a -- you know, a 12-
15 story building and a six-story building and its impacts, et
16 cetera.

17 So has any work been done at this point in terms
18 of Design Guidelines revisions?

19 Daniel?

20 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Sure, thank you Chair Flynn. I
21 realize Erik Thorkildsen, or resident Urban Designer, isn't
22 present tonight but we have had some preliminary

1 conversation with the Urban Design folks about, you know,
2 updating those Design Guidelines should the petition move
3 forward. And that would be the plan, that the Design
4 Guidelines would be updated to address, you know, taller and
5 larger buildings that would be allowed under the petition,
6 probably adding sections for towers, dealing with massing
7 and articulation, relationship of the towers to the street
8 walls, shadow and wind impacts.

9 So I think that the guidelines would probably need
10 to be fleshed out and added onto to sort of reflect this new
11 height scale that would be added under the petition. And
12 that would be Staff recommendation, should it move forward.

13 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. Okay. So why don't we
14 now move to Planning Board discussion, since we've thrown
15 out some questions, which doesn't mean you can't ask another
16 question if you have one, but I think it would be helpful to
17 get the Board's -- get a sense of where the Board is on this
18 proposal, and see what type of action, if any, we would want
19 to take tonight.

20 So do I have a volunteer to begin the discussion?
21 Ted? Thank you.

22 H THEODORE COHEN: Okay. Well, the first thing

1 I'd like to say in the discussion is that in all my years on
2 this Board I have never known any of my colleagues to shy
3 away from a controversial subject.

4 And so, I really take umbrage at the suggestion
5 that why some of my colleagues are not here tonight -- and I
6 have no knowledge why -- but that it was because they're
7 afraid of being in this hearing or having to be part of this
8 discussion.

9 I think no one should take anything away from why,
10 you know, the makeup of the Board this evening.

11 MARY FLYNN: Yeah. Well said. Thank you.

12 H THEODORE COHEN: So I don't think it will come
13 as a surprise that I think the most important aspect of what
14 we need in the city is more housing and need more affordable
15 housing. And also, that I like tall buildings. And so, the
16 height of these buildings is not a problem for me.

17 I also think, you know, the Councillors have
18 pointed out a lot of the misconceptions that already have
19 been stated. But I think the biggest misconception is that
20 thought that there are going to be dozens and dozens of
21 proposed affordable housing towers throughout the city.

22 Knowing how expensive it is to build any housing,

1 and, you know, the private developers' desire to make a
2 greater profit, I think we will see some towers. And I
3 don't even know that you could call a 12-15 story building a
4 tower -- but some larger buildings than we've had before --
5 but I just don't think there are going to be that many.

6 We get similar discussions for non-affordable
7 housing whenever there's a suggestion about something being
8 larger. We hear the same effect arguments all the time;
9 it's going to ruin Cambridge, it's going to destroy the
10 neighborhoods, it's going to ruin the environment when, in
11 terms of the environment, as one of the Councillors pointed
12 out, New York is considered one of the most environmentally
13 friendly cities because of its large, tall and dense
14 buildings on top of a lot of public transit.

15 And I think that the environmental tradeoffs that
16 some people might worry about in terms of shadows is going
17 to be offset by the increased density and putting people
18 together on top of transit-oriented locations in the squares
19 and in the corridors.

20 I think there are some questions about some of the
21 language in the proposal that Staff has done a great job of
22 pointing out in their memo, and I think that, should this be

1 adopted, it ought to go back to Staff and the City
2 Solicitor's Office to clean up some of the language to make
3 sure that is the says exactly what the City Council intends
4 it to say but I think, you know, bottom line is we need
5 housing. You know, we need middle-class housing, which this
6 probably went too much for. Maybe we'll get -- you know,
7 maybe the City Council will seek to get -- reinstate rent
8 control at some point. But, you know, we need housing at
9 all levels, and we certainly need affordable housing in the
10 city.

11 And so, I think the increase in density and the
12 increase in height that AHO 2 provides and proposes can only
13 be beneficial.

14 [Pause]

15 Mary, we can't hear you.

16 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. That's the other thing I
17 wanted forget to do besides putting down my own hand is
18 unmuting myself.

19 Ashley, you're next.

20 ASHLEY TAN: Thank you. First of all, thank you
21 for all the City Councillors for coming here tonight and
22 spending a lot of time with us.

1 You know, in my own work I get to work with a lot
2 of affordable housing developers in other municipalities,
3 and I always point to them and say I wish other
4 municipalities had something like the AHO where developers
5 can -- or at least affordable housing developers can try to
6 get projects through without having to get a discretionary
7 permit. And that's huge.

8 And I agree with Ted that we do need more
9 affordable housing and we do need a mix. And I'm
10 surprisingly also on the same page as Ted about height. I'm
11 actually fine with the height. And the one -- with that
12 said, I think just my one concern is -- I think the height
13 is fine; I think the squares are fine.

14 The corridors based off of the map -- I was
15 looking at one of the memos -- seemed to cover unscientific,
16 but looking at the map looks like the corridors cover a lot
17 of ground, a lot of land area -- maybe a fifth to even a
18 quarter of the available -- of the land area in Cambridge.

19 And so, that part is the part that worries me a
20 little, and I didn't think about this until I was retaking
21 my oath last week where it made me reread the preamble of
22 our lovely Zoning Ordinance, which I'm going to read a

1 little of, you know, it says "The purpose of this Ordinance
2 is to lessen congestion, conserve health, secure safety from
3 fire or panic/other attack, provide adequate light and air,
4 prevent overcrowding of land."

5 It goes on. It does say "Encourage housing for
6 persons of all income levels, infrastructure," and all of
7 that. But I guess my long-winded way of saying I'm not the
8 corridor person, I'm a little concerned about -- just
9 because I haven't -- I understand it was for coverage over a
10 lot of area, but I'm not sure what the impacts are.

11 And the other -- and I don't know if it's related
12 to this particular petition that this reminded me of last
13 time we had an AHO petition, which was maybe a month ago.
14 And, you know, that meeting was also very long.

15 And one thing Vice Chair Connolly pointed out was
16 that the current AHO as we have it doesn't seem to have much
17 clarity on what we're expecting at the first hearings versus
18 the second hearings.

19 And I -- maybe this is for a future date, but I
20 would love for maybe Staff or maybe a City Councillors to
21 see what we can do to kind of clean that up, because -- you
22 know, that did provide a lot of intention and lack of

1 clarity as to what we should be seeing in Design Review.

2 And I think lastly, I agree with Ted if this is
3 moved forward, there are tweaks that need to be made. The
4 lawyer now is able to find a way to find blocks where you
5 can have no FAR requirement, no height requirement, no open
6 space requirements and that's probably a loophole, but I do
7 think that would have to be cleaned up.

8 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. Diego, what are your
9 thoughts?

10 DIEGO MACIAS: I also just wanted to echo that I
11 was appreciative of and just thankful for everyone who spoke
12 today. That was really helpful and enlightening to hear all
13 the different perspectives and all the knowledgeable
14 perspectives and just getting history on everything.

15 I would say that my -- pretty much my only concern
16 from -- after hearing about everything is sort of the
17 connection with open space and nature in general for
18 inhabitants in taller buildings.

19 And from what I've seen of the Affordable Housing
20 Design Guidelines and, you know, I haven't seen the Urban
21 Design Guidelines yet, but I'm sure that does touch on the
22 subject, but I just feel like, you know, I also agree that

1 tall buildings bring extra services and amenities that you
2 don't get in other buildings, and I love that, but I think
3 one of the things that's harder to connect with is the
4 connection to nature and sort of being in open space. So
5 you're in a dense place and then you get to be outside and
6 you're close to that -- very close to you in distance.

7 Because I used to live in a building that didn't
8 have sort of a patio, an independent outdoor space, but it
9 was right next to a park outside and I would go there almost
10 every day. And I think that's just really helpful and great
11 for mental health.

12 And yeah, that's pretty much all of what I would
13 like to say. Thanks.

14 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. Adam, would you like to
15 add anything?

16 ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: Sure. Thanks, Chair.
17 Yeah. I'll just echo as well, I really appreciate all the
18 clarifications, especially from the Council members and the
19 petitioners. It was really, really helpful to hear kind of
20 some of the importance around the competitive edge for
21 affordable housing developers. I'm very compelled by that.
22 It almost seems, given the need for housing in Cambridge, if

1 affordable housing does not have any supportive competitive
2 edge, it won't be -- it won't have any edge at all. And so,
3 as Ted pointed out, I do think affordable housing is the
4 primary issue here.

5 If I do have some concerns, it is around kind of
6 the environmental impact. I -- you know, and just some of
7 the challenges that the MBTA system has faced over the last
8 year. There's an article in the Boston Globe -- I think
9 just last week or two weeks ago that interviewed a number of
10 people that said if you could drive somewhere faster and
11 take the MBTA, would you? And it was overwhelmingly yes,
12 because the perception of the MBTA is so low right now.

13 So I know that's definitely much beyond the City
14 of Cambridge, but I wonder if we can do things to be
15 partners with the MBTA and maybe even work closer with them
16 to hopefully come up with a strategy, given some of the
17 increased density and increased population that could be
18 coming to Cambridge if this amendment process goes through.

19 Yes. Those are my initial thoughts at this point.

20 Thanks.

21 MARY FLYNN: Just to add to that, I totally
22 support the idea of affordable housing. I think all the

1 Board members have been very, very clear on that.

2 I'm not as comfortable as Ted and Ashley might be
3 with height; this level of height increase.

4 I do think that more height along the corridors
5 and the squares makes sense, but I don't know that the
6 number being proposed is the right number.

7 And I guess part of what concerns me is that, you
8 know, it seems as if all of this is anecdotal. I mean, it
9 makes sense, you know, when I think about the competitive
10 edge and all of that, but we don't really have any hard data
11 or numbers that shows us why a particular project hasn't
12 moved for what or what you would need on certain sites to
13 really be able to do something.

14 And I worry about context. You know, we talked
15 about the project that we looked at a couple of weeks ago on
16 Mass Ave. It is a wonderful project in that it's combining
17 that beautiful historic building with the new project, and
18 yet that's only six stories but it was very close to a much
19 lower height property, lower density neighborhood. And, you
20 know, there were setbacks but it was still very, very close.
21 And so again, light and air is being blocked and all of
22 that.

1 So I think to just -- see the problem with the AHO
2 overall has always been we don't have the ability to control
3 that flexibility, to shape it in any way.

4 Yes, they can come in and talk to us and so far,
5 it's been working fine, but I just worry that when we start
6 to get some of these really higher numbers in terms of
7 height, that it's going to create more and more conflicts
8 between existing and new. Maybe that's good, maybe that's
9 bad but it's a concern to me because what I don't want to
10 see is to see any more of the sort of divide that's coming
11 up, and that seems to be building in the city over
12 affordable housing in terms of what it should look like and
13 how we permit it.

14 And I think, you know, we got over, I think, like
15 over 125 comments this time. Since I've been on the Board,
16 I have never -- that's the most by a tenfold number of
17 comments that we've received. So clearly, it's getting a
18 lot of interest from people in the city, both for and
19 against. There's no doubt about it.

20 And so, I just worry that we haven't taken enough
21 time to really study the pieces that don't work, and we're
22 just thinking, well, you know, we thought parking was going

1 to do it.

2 But then, the City has so many different goals and
3 objectives that, you know, parking was eliminated for
4 everyone, because it's environmentally preferred, right?

5 So now we have to find something else, which, you
6 know, is height. But that is going to have more of an
7 impact on existing neighbors.

8 And again, while I think everybody does support
9 affordable housing, I think people also care about the
10 character of the city and the -- you know, just the
11 camaraderie, the way the city is, you know? I mean, I
12 understand that it's a big need, but again, I won't repeat
13 all of it, but I am concerned about the higher numbers.

14 Again, I'm perfectly -- I would be perfectly
15 willing to see more height, I just am concerned what's being
16 proposed is going to be too much in certain circumstances.

17 So those are my concerns. So I think we're kind
18 of all over the map on this one tonight.

19 So we have some options. Let me go through them.
20 So we can make a recommendation tonight if we feel strongly
21 about it, or we can continue the hearing.

22 And our alternatives would be that we could either

1 recommend the petition be adopted, which could include
2 comments or suggestions for changes, recommend the petition
3 not be adopted with an explanation why, or we could provide
4 comments without a recommendation. And then the last is to
5 continue the hearing to a further meeting and discussion.

6 So would someone like to propose an avenue that we
7 should take at this point?

8 [Pause]

9 All right, well Ted. Thank you.

10 H THEODORE COHEN: Okay. I don't know that
11 continuing the hearing and having further discussion was
12 going to be of any particular value for me or --

13 MARY FLYNN: Mm-hm.

14 H THEODORE COHEN: -- perhaps for the Board. My
15 personal recommendation would be that we make a positive
16 recommendation to adopt amendments to the AHO, but
17 acknowledging that in making that recommendation that there
18 are concerns about whether the heights that are specified
19 are indeed the correct heights, and whether the descriptions
20 of the corridors are the correct locales, and that there
21 needs to be some modification of the language for, you know,
22 the City Solicitor's Office to review to make sure that it

1 accurately reflects what is intended to be accompanied.

2 That would be my preference. I certainly would
3 not recommend a -- I do not recommend, the other alternative
4 is to just list -- not make a recommendation one way or the
5 other and just list comments that were made this evening,
6 but I think there's a benefit from my point of view to
7 actually making a positive recommendation.

8 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Thank you. Other thoughts?
9 Okay. Then I agree with you that it makes sense to make a
10 recommendation, Ted. And I don't really want to make a
11 negative one either. But I feel in a way like the message
12 needs to be really clear.

13 And I -- what the concerns are, and I'm just
14 afraid that if we send positive recommendations, even with
15 those changes, that there's less likelihood that the Council
16 will seriously consider them.

17 Ashley, what are your thoughts?

18 ASHLEY TAN: I'm on the same page with you, and I
19 was also going to -- I know the Staff normally does this,
20 but I would also feel more comfortable if all the -- I know
21 we mentioned there were, like sixty some letters, but to
22 actually list out which ones were in support versus which

1 ones were in opposition I think just to add to the notes I
2 think would be helpful.

3 MARY FLYNN: Okay. The other concern I have, and
4 I understand what you're saying, Ted, about, you know, not
5 wanting to continue the hearing, but I am -- I'm not
6 concerned that our other Board members aren't here, because
7 I don't think they -- I agree with you, they're not trying
8 to avoid the issue, I think it's just summer and it's
9 scheduling and all that sort of thing.

10 But there are several members of the Board who
11 have had very key thoughts on the AHO all along. And
12 there's a part of me that feels like it would be really
13 helpful to get their input into it as well.

14 So another alternative would be to just continue
15 the hearing so that we have the opportunity to hear from the
16 other members of the Board. I appreciate the new Board
17 members who are here, and I appreciate your confidence. I
18 think they've been very on point.

19 But there are people who have, you know, just a
20 bit more history that I think would be really helpful.

21 Yes, Adam?

22 ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: I was just going to say

1 that I think that that makes a lot of sense to me as well.
2 I think given what you said about the history of Board and
3 this being one of the maybe most controversial things that
4 have come to the Board an the most number of comments that
5 have come in, I think getting input from the other Board
6 members could be really helpful as well.

7 So I just want to say I'm in support of that
8 thought.

9 MARY FLYNN: Okay. So Daniel, turning to you, in
10 terms of scheduling, if we did -- I just want to sort of be
11 sure that our schedule syncs with the City Council schedule
12 if we do continue the hearing. It's obviously going to be
13 very important that the Council has our comments before they
14 come back into session, which I believe is the second week
15 of September, maybe?

16 So from a scheduling standpoint, would we be able
17 to accomplish getting -- continuing the hearing to a certain
18 date? And then getting the report to them in time?

19 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Sure. Thank you, Chair Flynn.
20 And I might lean on our Planning Board schedule expert here
21 in Swaathi Joseph. But I believe the shortest we could
22 probably turn around to a future date would be the August 29

1 meeting of the Planning Board, which would be a tight
2 turnaround.

3 Assuming the Planning Board makes its formal
4 recommendation at that time, you know, the City Council
5 could take this up again at its September 11 meeting.

6 There would still be the need to pass it to a
7 second reading, so I think we would have enough time to be
8 able to turn a recommendation back to the City Council in
9 writing, should the Board have that continued hearing on the
10 twenty-ninth.

11 But Swaathi is -- am I getting that right? Just
12 wanted to confirm.

13 SWAATHI JOSEPH: Yes. Thank you, Daniel. So if
14 the Board is taking a decision to continue the hearing, then
15 continuing it to August 29 has to be announced at today's
16 meeting, because we do not have time for the legal notice to
17 be advertised for that date. So that --

18 CHRIS COOK: Well, let me ask you this, if I may.
19 Just interrupt. We have a meeting on August 22 as well.
20 What does that agenda look like? Is that really packed?

21 SWAATHI JOSEPH: Yes. At this point --

22 MARY FLYNN: Yeah.

1 SWAATHI JOSEPH: -- we have one Public Hearing, a
2 Design Review, and a Special Permit Extension.

3 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Okay. Okay. All right. So
4 the twenty-ninth would have to be it. Now, Ted, I know you
5 won't be at the twenty-ninth.

6 H THEODORE COHEN: I'm not certain. I don't know.
7 Can I ask Swaathi or --

8 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

9 H THEODORE COHEN: -- Daniel a question?

10 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

11 H THEODORE COHEN: I know it's not a special
12 permit, but can we add -- if we continue the hearing, can we
13 add members who were not at the hearing this evening?

14 SWAATHI JOSEPH: We can, after exercising the
15 affidavit, the Mullin affidavit --

16 MARY FLYNN: Oh.

17 SWAATHI JOSEPH: -- after the recording.

18 H THEODORE COHEN: Okay. They would have to
19 relisten to the recording or --

20 SWAATHI JOSEPH: Yes. Becoming this is still part
21 of the Public Hearing and not a General Business item.

22 H THEODORE COHEN: Mm-hm.

1 MARY FLYNN: Right. So they would have to have --
2 hear all of the testimony, et cetera, et cetera. Okay.
3 Well, that does put a bit of a burden on them but, I guess,
4 you know, we could proceed with that, and if for some reason
5 they are unable to do it, then we're back to this group,
6 although without Ted or even -- just in case he isn't able
7 to attend --

8 ASHLEY TAN: I will also be absent that day.

9 MARY FLYNN: Oh, you will be? Okay. All right.
10 All right. So this is presenting a bit of a conundrum then.

11 SWAATHI JOSEPH: I mean, Mary if needed we can
12 continue this to August 22. We do have a combination of
13 three special permit amendments for August 29 so between the
14 two, it might relatively be the same, I think, in terms of
15 what --

16 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Ashley and Ted, are you
17 available? Well --

18 H THEODORE COHEN: Yes. I'm available on the
19 twenty-second.

20 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Let's start, then. Because I
21 think as long as Board members have signed the affidavit and
22 we know that they're up to speed, I don't know, we probably

1 do still have to go through a public comment period, which
2 hopefully won't be as lengthy as tonight's.

3 But I think we can get to a conclusion relatively
4 quickly, because our questions have been answered. And I
5 think the other Board members can probably weigh in on this
6 without too much further explanation.

7 So let's -- so could I have a motion then, to --
8 oh, Daniel?

9 DANIEL MESSPLAY: I'm sorry, Chair Flynn, you were
10 on a roll. Yeah, I apologize. If it's at all possible,
11 I'll make maybe one last pitch for August 29.

12 MARY FLYNN: The twenty-ninth.

13 DANIEL MESSPLAY: I realize that Ted and Ashley,
14 we won't have you there, but I think we have gotten the
15 benefit of at least getting your comments at this meeting,
16 and, you know, we'll obviously carry those forward as well.
17 I think the twenty-second will be a bit of a marathon if we
18 try to tack this one as well.

19 So I would just -- if at all possible, make one
20 last pitch for the twenty-ninth, if we can.

21 MARY FLYNN: All right. Is there any chance of
22 moving anything from the twenty-second to the twenty-ninth

1 without having to jump through hoops?

2 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Unfortunately, not, because
3 those legal notices have been sent out.

4 MARY FLYNN: Okay. All right. All right. Well,
5 I've tried my best. All right. So is there a motion, then,
6 to continue this hearing to August 29, yeah, for further
7 discussion.

8 ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: Yeah, a motion.

9 MARY FLYNN: Who said that? I'm sorry, I missed
10 it.

11 ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: That's Adam.

12 MARY FLYNN: Oh.

13 ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: Yeah. Motion.

14 MARY FLYNN: Thank you, Adam. Okay. So I have
15 one motion. And is there a second?

16 ASHLEY TAN: Ashley second.

17 MARY FLYNN: Seconds. Okay. Is there -- can we
18 have a roll call, please, Daniel?

19 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Sure. This is a roll call on
20 the motion to continue the hearing until August 29.

21 H Theodore Cohen: Yes.

22 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Ashley Tan?

1 ASHLEY TAN: [No audible reply].

2 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Diego Macias?

3 DIEGO MACIAS: Yes.

4 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Adam Westbrook?

5 ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: Yes.

6 DANIEL MESSPLAY: And Ashley, I apologize. I'm
7 going to go back to you real quick just so it's clear for
8 the record, because I think you got muted right before your
9 vote was recorded.

10 ASHLEY TAN: Yes.

11 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you. And Mary Flynn?

12 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

13 [All vote YES]

14 DANIEL MESSPLAY: That is all members voting in
15 favor.

16 MARY FLYNN: Great. Thank you, everyone. Thank
17 you, Councillors. Your input has been very helpful. And
18 again, thank you to everyone who testified. And I
19 appreciate the patience of the Board in terms of continuing
20 this so our other colleagues can weigh in on it.

21 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Madam Chair?

22 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

1 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Just a quick question.

2 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

3 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Thank you. Are you going to
4 need us to -- do we have to do the presentation again, or
5 what is the --

6 MARY FLYNN: No.

7 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: I mean, we should be here,
8 we should be there to answer questions, obviously, I think?

9 MARY FLYNN: Correct. Yes.

10 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Okay.

11 MARY FLYNN: No, I don't think the presentation is
12 necessary again. I think, you know, that -- do we have it
13 online, Swaathi, or we could put it online for the Board
14 members to be able to see it.

15 DANIEL MESSPLAY: It -- I'll chime in there.
16 Thank you, Chair.

17 MARY FLYNN: Yeah.

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Yeah, the presentation is
19 available online. We also also have this meeting recording
20 available as well for --

21 MARY FLYNN: Okay.

22 DANIEL MESSPLAY: -- the other members.

1 MARY FLYNN: Right. And they'll all have read the
2 transcript of the meeting or listen to the meeting. So yes.
3 I think just to be here for questions would be perfect.

4 COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN: Great. Thank you very much
5 and thank you for your time tonight.

6 MARY FLYNN: Great. Thanks to all of you. Much
7 appreciated. Okay. So we're going to move on then.

8 * * * * *

9 (9:07 p.m.)

10 Sitting Members: Mary Flynn, H Theodore Cohen, Ashley Tan,
11 Diego Macias, and Adam Westbrook

12 MARY FLYNN: The next item on the agenda is a
13 request for an extension of time for a hearing and decision
14 on Planning Board Case PB-396, a special permit under
15 consideration for a residential development located at 48-50
16 Bishop Allen Drive. And CDD Staff are going to provide an
17 update on this.

18 And Daniel, I'll turn it over to you.

19 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Thank you, Chair Flynn. This
20 special permit was heard by the Board earlier this summer
21 and was continued. At that hearing, the Board provided
22 several comments related to the building's flood elevations,

1 its design, its community engagement process.

2 And the applicant has been working diligently to
3 be responsive to all of the Board's comments in order to
4 fully address those comments, however, and also submit
5 updated plans for Staff Review before it comes back to the
6 Board. The applicant has requested additional time for
7 filing that decision.

8 MARY FLYNN: Okay. Great. Are there questions
9 from the Board in regards to the extension?

10 [Pause]

11 No. Okay. Just for the background of Adam and
12 Diego, the Board really did have a lot of concerns and
13 issues they basically wanted the proponent to look at. So
14 it's understandable that it could take them this additional
15 time.

16 So is there a motion to agree to the extension of
17 time until December 23, 2023, as requested by the applicant?

18 H THEODORE COHEN: So moved; Ted.

19 MARY FLYNN: Thank you. Second?

20 ASHLEY TAN: Ashley second.

21 MARY FLYNN: Thank you Ashley. And Daniel,
22 another roll call, please?

1 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Roll call on that motion: H
2 Theodore Cohen?

3 H THEODORE COHEN: Yes.

4 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Ashley Tan?

5 ASHLEY TAN: Yes.

6 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Diego Macias?

7 DIEGO MACIAS: Yes.

8 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Adam Westbrook?

9 ADAM BUCHANAN WESTBROOK: Yes.

10 DANIEL MESSPLAY: And Mary Flynn?

11 MARY FLYNN: Yes.

12 [All vote YES]

13 DANIEL MESSPLAY: That is all members voting in
14 favor.

15 FLYNN: Excellent. Thank you. Okay, that
16 concludes the business on the agenda. Do any of the Board
17 members or CDD Staff have any other items to add?

18 DANIEL MESSPLAY: No, nothing from the City Staff.
19 Appreciate the Board's time and input this evening.

20 MARY FLYNN: Yeah. We appreciate all that you did
21 to prep for all of this too.

22 So again, welcome to Adam and Diego. We're really

1 happy to have you on the team. You started on a very
2 difficult night. Yeah. You know, this was a tough one for
3 sure so baptism by fire, I guess.

4 Anyway, great to have you here and Ahsley and Ted,
5 if we don't see you at the next meeting, I hope you have a
6 lovely evening, hopefully on vacation.

7 H THEODORE COHEN: Well, I plan to be around for
8 the twenty-second.

9 MARY FLYNN: Mm-hm. Okay. Good. All right. All
10 right. So we'll see you then. All right. Very good.
11 Well, thank you, everyone. The meeting is adjourned.
12 Goodnight.

13 ASHLEY TAN: Thank you.

14 DANIEL MESSPLAY: Goodnight.

15 [9:09 p.m. End of proceedings.]
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E R R A T A S H E E T

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I have read the foregoing transcript of the Planning Board meeting, and except for any corrections or changes noted above, I hereby subscribe to the transcript as an accurate record of the proceedings.

Name

Date

CERTIFICATE

Commonwealth of Massachusetts

Middlesex, ss.

I, Michele Dent, Notary Public in and for the
Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify that the
above transcript is a true record, to the best of my
ability, of the proceedings.

I further certify that I am neither related to nor
employed by any of the parties in or counsel to this action,
nor am I financially interested in the outcome of this
action.

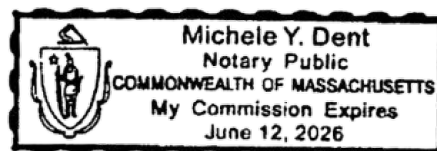
In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this
12th day of September, 2023.



Notary Public

My commission expires:

June 12, 2026



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