



City of Cambridge  
Community Development Department

# 35 Cherry Street

Virtual Community Meeting | September 23, 2021



# Agenda

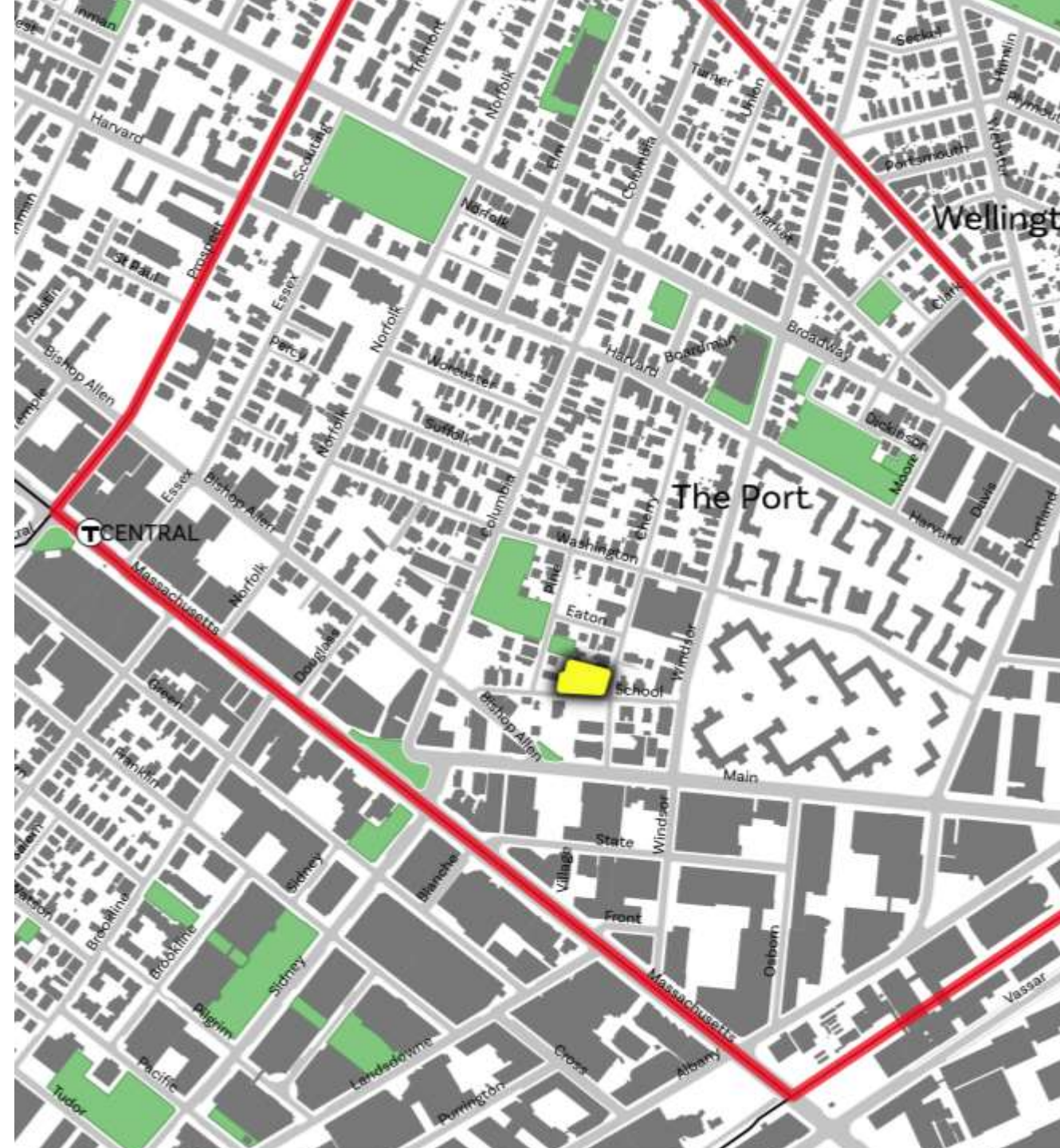
- Welcome & Introductions
- Project Update
- Proposed Project Goals, Design Principles, and Siting Possibilities
- Breakout Room Discussion
- Report Back and Next Steps

## Desired Outcome:

Refine community feedback to inform developer selection process

# Project Update

- 35 Cherry Street to be acquired by City from MIT
- Future use must be determined prior to land transfer
- City Council issued a policy order requesting CDD to start a public process to plan the future use of the site for affordable housing
- Held community meeting in June and three focus groups in August



# What we heard

## General

- Mix of opinions on process with some wanting to start development process immediately while others wanting more neighborhood-level planning

## Income tiers

- Desire to focus on people with greatest need, the lowest income households
- Some felt the income limits for most programs are too high

“City should help people who make less than 50% AMI. Trend toward 80% to 120% AMI is discouraging.”

“We should serve the people with the most immediate need, so my recommendation is rental with bigger units.”

“The middle-class has disappeared in the neighborhood.”

# What we heard

## Housing tenure

- Mix of opinions on rental versus owner-occupied units
  - Those that wanted rental cited the need to serve low-income tenants understanding that owner-occupied housing typically serves residents with higher incomes
  - Those that wanted homeownership cited the importance of homeownership for wealth accumulation and as tool to address systemic racism
  - Heard criticism about affordable homeownership program

“Renting will be better because it’s what they can afford.”

“Homeownership would provide opportunities for generational wealth.”

# What we heard

## Household size

- Strong consensus for family-sized units (3+ bedrooms)

## Communities served

- Desire for mix of people at different life stages and socioeconomic levels
- Prioritize Cambridge residents

“My recommendation is rental with bigger units, not the one and two-bedrooms that have been put up recently.”

“Three to four bedrooms so that families can live there if they have more kids.”

“It shouldn't be specified towards certain individuals and should be open to everyone.”

# What we heard

## Design

- Complement neighborhood fabric
- Maximize green and open space
- Large rooms and storage space
- While some deemed parking as needed or desirable, other would like to prioritize number of units over parking

“I wish we had a backyard to go outside and play basketball or ride my scooter or something just in the backyard.”

“Not more than three to five floors.”

“I don’t want a tall building. I want more space where kids can play.”

“Large closets because closets are very small and hold almost nothing.”

# Proposed Project Goals

- 100% affordable housing
- Compatible with existing neighborhood fabric
- Include maximum number of family-sized units as financially viable
- Slight preference for rental units
- High quality green/open space for tenants/owners
- Prioritize Cambridge residents
- Parking dependent on need



# Proposed Design Principles

## Fit with neighborhood context

- Complementary size and scale
- Maximum of four floors with set back or gabled top floor
- Complementary colors and materials
- Address street with facades





# Proposed Design Principles

## Fit with neighborhood context

- Provide multiple entrances to activate streets
- Complementary level of architectural detail and window to wall ratio
- Articulate top floors – dormers, terraces, sloped roofs, etc.





# Proposed Design Principles

## Site Amenities and Environmental Comfort

- Provide street trees
- Provide amenities, such as stoops, porches, seating, etc.
- Provide small landscaped areas and open space in the interior of the site
- Provide courtyards and gathering places
- Provide private open space for units





# Proposed Design Principles

## Site Amenities and Environmental Comfort

- Treat driveways as paved courtyards
- Provide balconies and upper-level decks
- Provide visually screened parking. Avoid street facing garage entries





# Proposed Design Principles

## Building Amenities

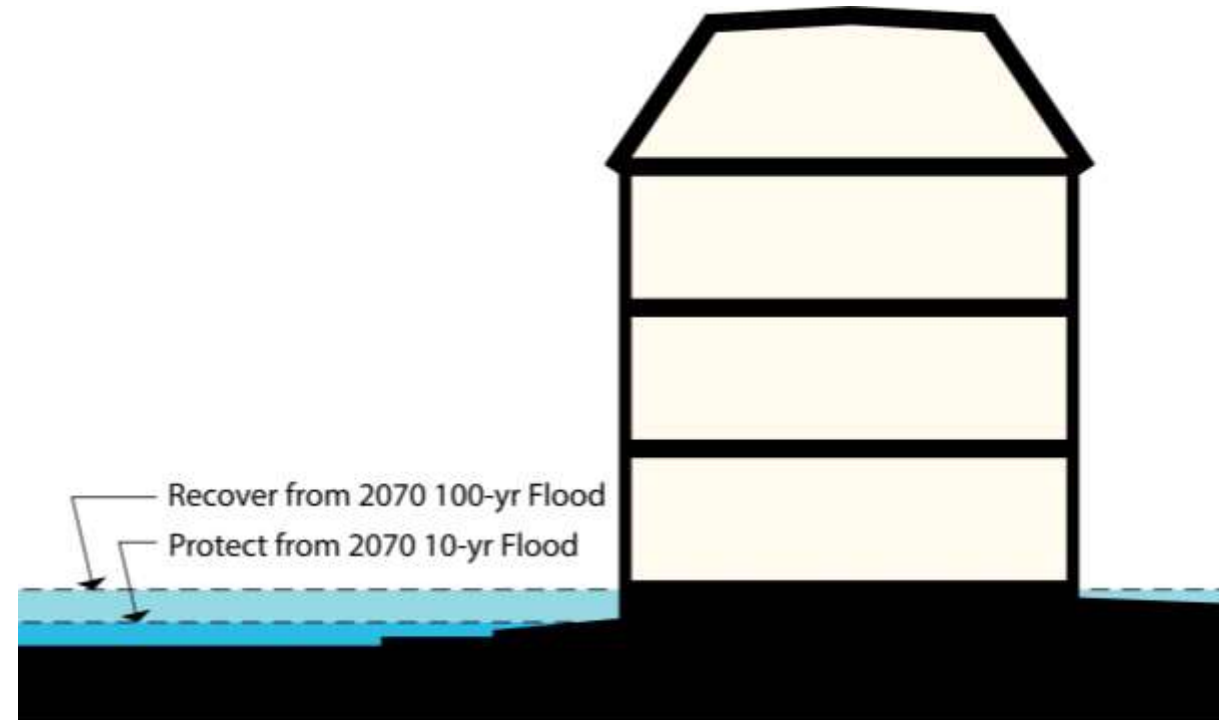
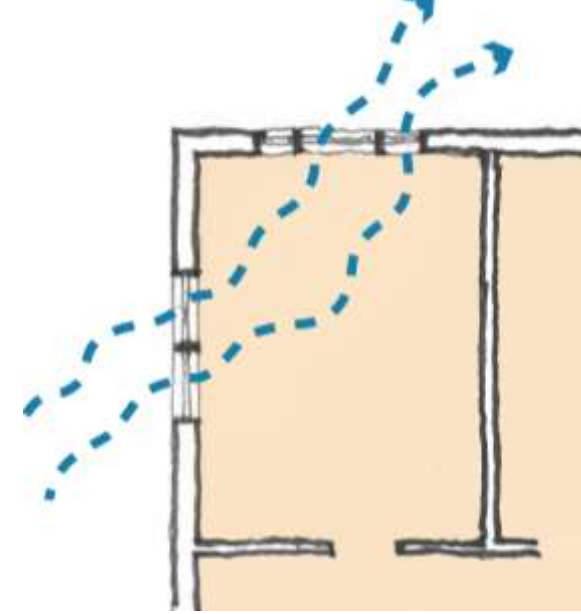
- Gracious interior spaces
- In-unit laundry equipment
- Storage space
- Large windows providing interior daylighting



# Proposed Design Principles

## Sustainability & Resilience

- Energy efficiency
- Flood protection
- Minimize the urban heat island effect with high albedo roofs, green roofs, and canopy trees
- Photovoltaics
- Natural ventilation





# Siting Possibilities

These represent range of options and are not recommendations or proposals



# Breakout Group Discussion

- Facilitation led by staff
- Assign notetaker
- Identify spokesperson to summarize comments and report back to larger group

***Do you have any additional feedback?***

***Are there any key considerations we missed?***

## Proposed Project Goals

- 100% affordable housing
- Compatible with existing patterns of development
- Include maximum number of family-sized units as financially viable
- Slight preference for rental units
- High quality green/open space for tenants/owners
- Prioritize Cambridge residents
- Determine parking based on need



# Next Steps

- Refine project goals and design principles accordingly
- Include community feedback in developer selection process
- Start development process