



City of Cambridge

O-2
FIRST IN COUNCIL
January 10, 2022

COUNCILLOR NOLAN
COUNCILLOR MCGOVERN
MAYOR SIDDIQUI
AZEEM

- WHEREAS: In 1979, the City of Cambridge Community Development Department created the Alewife Revitalization plan, intended to fill the Fresh Pond - Alewife area with a mix of residential, business, and industrial structures (as shown in the attached graphic); and
- WHEREAS: Forty years later, the 2019 Envision Alewife plan still visualizes Alewife as a mixed-use district, with development promoting the creation of good-paying, low barrier-to-entry jobs, and additional housing with no lab uses (as shown in the attached graphic); and
- WHEREAS: Over two years the City Council debated an up-zoning petition for part of the Quad area that included some housing, some retail, and some office/lab space which was voted down out of concerns that it was not aligned fully with the areawide vision as articulated in the plans, and a commitment to connections was uncertain; and
- WHEREAS: The climate resiliency issues in this district are important, and this area is the subject of discussions by various departments, committees and task forces, with increasing urgency due to the rapid changes in climate leading to a need for more urgent and aggressive actions in this flood prone area with the visions consistently showing the need for a pond or water retention system/green corridor; and
- WHEREAS: In the past two months, Denver real estate investment firm Healthpeak Properties has spent close to \$400 million in this part of Cambridge, purchasing to date 19 separate parcels as outlined in the attached chart; and
- WHEREAS: All of these purchases are located in the Alewife “Quad” area, where Cambridge has planned a variety of different developments. Future purchases from HealthPeak Properties are expected since an additional LLC, LS Alewife IV, was created and has not yet acquired property, while LS Alewife V has; and
- WHEREAS: HealthPeak is known for owning and developing real estate mostly in the healthcare industry, including medical offices and labs; and
- WHEREAS: The original plan for Alewife included some office space and labs, though expected a wide variety of development; and
- WHEREAS: Cambridge continues to struggle with housing affordability and availability, and therefore housing must be an integral part of all future development; and

WHEREAS: Long-needed public infrastructure, including pedestrian and bicycle connections through and across the district, a rail stop for those commuting to and from the area, publicly accessible open spaces, and urgent municipal needs such as DPW and Fire Department facilities, remains lacking; and

WHEREAS: City staff has not produced new zoning for the district in line with the plans, including the recent Alewife Envision Plan; and

WHEREAS: The City Council passed a Policy Order asking for a moratorium on development in the Alewife Quad area on November 18, 2021, yet an Ordinance Committee meeting was not scheduled in time to meet the legal timeline; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That Article 20.90- Alewife Overlay Districts 1-6 of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance be amended to insert a new section entitled Section 20.94.3- Temporarily prohibited uses to read as follows:

“No Office or Laboratory Uses as listed in Table 4.34- Office and Laboratory Use shall be permitted within Alewife Overlay Districts 1-6 until December 31st, 2023, or until such time as new Alewife District zoning is ordained by the Cambridge City Council, whichever shall be sooner.

“Such new district zoning shall be created in consultation with neighborhood residents from throughout the Alewife District and from each bordering district, including Cambridge Highlands, North Cambridge, Neighborhood Nine, and West Cambridge.

“Specifically, such new district zoning shall be guided by the vision, goals, existing studies, and recommendations contained in the City publications Alewife District Plan: A report of the Alewife Planning Study Fall 2019 and Alewife Design Guidelines Fall 2020, and shall address the following areas identified in those reports:

- Land Use
- Open Space
- Urban Form
- Mobility
- Climate and Environment
- Housing
- Economy

“In addition, such new district zoning shall also reflect any recent reports and planning recommendations developed by other relevant citizen committees, task forces, and working groups, including but not limited to the following:

- Bicycle, Pedestrian, and Transit Advisory Committees (City of Cambridge Bike Plan 2020, City of Cambridge Pedestrian Plan)
- Climate Protection Action Committee (City of Cambridge Climate Protection Plan)
- Net Zero Task Force (City of Cambridge Net Zero Action Plan)
- Urban Forest Master Plan Task Force (City of Cambridge Urban Forest Report: Healthy Forest Healthy City)
- Climate Change Working Group (final report pending)
- Climate Resilience Zoning Task Force (final report pending)”

Attachments:

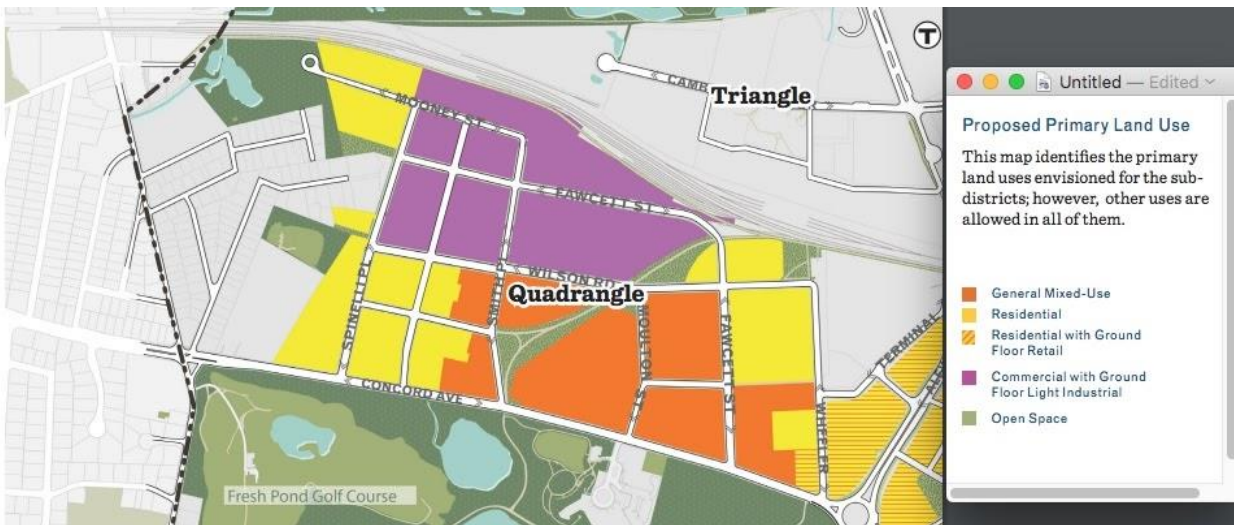
1979 Alewife Plan



Alewife Envision



The conceptual illustration shows the proposed green linear open space in the Quadrangle, stretching from the proposed pedestrian/bicycle bridge to Fresh Pond. This open space link will benefit connectivity, stormwater mitigation, and overall quality of life.



Name/Corporation	Total Cost of Acquisitions	Date of Last Acquisition
LS Alewife I LLC	\$180 million	9/9/2021
LS Alewife II LLC	\$73 million	10/4/2021
LS Alewife III LLC	\$120 million	11/16/2021
LS Alewife IV LLC	\$0 to date	N/A
LS Alewife V LLC	\$62.8 million	12/22/2021