



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

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Community Development

To: Planning Board
From: CDD Staff
Date: November 15, 2013
Re: **Chun, et al. Zoning Petition**

This petition proposes to rezone the residential portion of the Cambridge Highlands neighborhood (shown on the attached map) from Residence B to Residence A-2. The chart below summarizes the differences in regulations between these two zoning district designations.

	Current Zoning Residence B	Proposed Zoning Residence A-2
Allowed Uses	• Single-family detached dwellings • Two-family detached dwellings • Townhouse dwellings • Elderly oriented congregate housing (by special permit, unless converted from an existing dwelling)	• Single-family detached dwellings • Conversion of a single-family to two-family (with no exterior changes) • Elderly oriented congregate housing (by special permit, unless converted from an existing dwelling)
Maximum FAR	0.50 for the first 5,000 square feet of lot area 0.35 for additional lot area	0.50
Minimum Lot Area per Dwelling Unit	2,500 for the first 5,000 square feet of lot area 4,000 for additional lot area	4,500
Maximum Building Height	35 feet	35 feet
Minimum Ratio of Open Space to Lot Area	40%	50%
Minimum Front Yard	15 feet	20 feet
Minimum Side Yard	7.5 feet (sum to 20 feet)	10 feet (sum to 25 feet)
Minimum Rear Yard	25-35 feet	25-35 feet
Minimum Lot Size	5,000 square feet	6,000 square feet

Based on a review of available Assessing Department data for the 124 parcels in the area of the proposed rezoning, the following charts provide some information to help determine how the proposed rezoning would generally impact the properties in the district. **ALL FIGURES ARE APPROXIMATE.**

Use Category	Number of Parcels	Percent of Total
Single-family dwelling	79	64%
Two-family dwelling	38	31%
Three-unit townhouse	2	< 2%
Three-unit multifamily	1	< 1%
Four-unit townhouse	1	< 1%
Five-unit townhouse	1	< 1%
Seven units, multiple townhouse buildings *	1*	< 1%
Vacant *	1*	< 1%

* These two parcels are partly in the Residence B district, partly in the abutting Industry B-2 district.

Lot Size	Number of Parcels	Percent of Total
Less than 5,000 square feet (Res. B)*	59	44%
At least 5,000 and less than 6,000 square feet **	30	24%
At least 6,000 square feet (Res. A-2)	35	28%

* These lot sizes are currently non-conforming under the existing zoning

** These lot sizes would become nonconforming under the proposed rezoning.

Lot FAR	Number of Parcels	Percent of Total
Less than 0.50/0.35 (Res. B)	93	75%
Up to 0.50, more than Res. B standard *	6	5%
More than 0.50 (Res. A-2)	25	20%

* These FARs are non-conforming under the current zoning, but conform to the proposed rezoning.

Existing Units Compared to Allowed Units (based on Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit limitations)	Number of Parcels Current B Zoning	Number of Parcels Proposed A-2 Zoning
Parcel has more units than allowed	21 (17% of total)	74 (60% of total)
Parcel has the allowed number of units	65 (52% of total)	47 (38% of total)
Parcel has fewer units than allowed	38 (31% of total)	3 (2% of total)

Information on yard setbacks and open space are not readily available, and it would require more extensive study to determine the potential impacts.

The following general conclusions can be drawn:

Uses

All parcels except one appear to conform to the allowed uses in Residence B. Under the proposed Residence A-2 zoning, about one-third of parcels could become non-conforming based on their use. However, this number could be smaller if it is the case that some of the existing two-family structures were originally single-family structures that were converted to two-families without making exterior changes to the building.

Lot Size

About 44% of the parcels in the district currently conform to the lot size requirements in Residence B, but only 28% would conform to the lot size requirements in Residence A-2.

FAR

There would be little impact in terms of FAR because the allowed FAR is similar under current and proposed zoning. However, the current Residence B district is actually more limiting than the proposed A-2 in the amount of floor area allowed on lots larger than 5,000 square feet. Therefore, a handful of larger parcels that currently exceed the allowed FAR would become conforming under the proposed rezoning, and could potentially add some residential square footage.

Unit Density

Currently, about half of the parcels in the district have exactly the number of units allowed under zoning. Less than one-third of the parcels could add one or two units to their existing development (only one parcel remains undeveloped). Under the proposed zoning, about half of the parcels would have more units than allowed, and only a handful would be allowed to create additional units.

Cambridge Highlands Residence B Zoning District

Cambridge, Massachusetts

