



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

BRIAN MURPHY
Assistant City Manager for
Community Development

To: Planning Board

From: CDD Staff

Date: June 13, 2013

Re: **Popper-Keizer, et al. Zoning Petition – Staff Analysis**

This petition would change the base zoning designation of a portion of the current Special District 8A (SD-8A) to Residence C-1. *See attached map.*

Zoning History

SD-8A was created in 2001 by rezoning a portion of the existing Special District 8 (SD-8). SD-8 was created in 1992 by rezoning a portion of the Cambridgeport area that was previously zoned Industry B.

SD-8 was created to allow the continued operation of existing commercial and industrial uses while providing incentives for transitioning to residential and dormitory uses and discouraging future development that would be incompatible with housing. SD-8 allows a range of residential and commercial uses, with residential and dormitory uses allowed at a higher density, and height and setback requirements meant to transition to the scale of the adjacent residential neighborhood. There are added height restrictions adjacent to Fort Washington Park and adjacent to lower-scale residential districts.

SD-8A, which bases its regulations on the Residence C-1A district, is similar to SD-8 but allows only residential uses with small amounts of ground-floor retail permitted. Other commercial uses may be permitted on an interim basis within existing non-residential buildings. The allowed residential FAR in SD-8A is the same as in SD-8, and development rights may be transferred from lots within SD-8A to lots within SD-8 for the purpose of creating public open space.

Proposed Changes

The rezoning from SD-8 to Residence C-1 would make the following major changes:

- Reduction from 1.50 (1.75 for dormitory) to 0.75 allowed residential FAR
- Increase from 650 to 1,500 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit required
- Reduction in maximum height from 60' (45' adjacent to residential or open space districts) to 35'
- Increased yard (setback) requirements
- Disallowance of all commercial and many institutional uses
- Elimination of transfer of development rights allowances

Affected Lots

The proposed change would impact four lots with two distinct owners; for the purpose of this analysis the contiguous lots under common ownership are treated as single parcels. The larger of the two is the site of the proposed 240 Sidney Street residential development, currently under review by the Board.

Lots	Owner	Existing Use(s)	Total Land Area	Existing GFA (approx)
66-108, 66-135	240 Sidney St, Inc.	Office/Lab	54,017	36,408
66-29, 66-94	Massachusetts Institute of Technology	Industrial, Parking	13,336	6,334

The chart below summarizes the allowed development on the affected lots under the current and proposed zoning regulations.

Lots	Current Zoning		Proposed Zoning	
	Allowed Res. GFA [+ Inclusionary Housing Bonus]	Allowed Units [+ Inclusionary Housing Bonus]	Allowed Res. GFA [+ Inclusionary Housing Bonus]	Allowed Units [+ Inclusionary Housing Bonus]
66-108, 66-135	81,025 [105,332]	83 [107]	40,512 [52,666]	36 [46]
66-29, 66-94	20,004 [26,005]	20 [26]	10,002 [13,002]	8 [N/A]

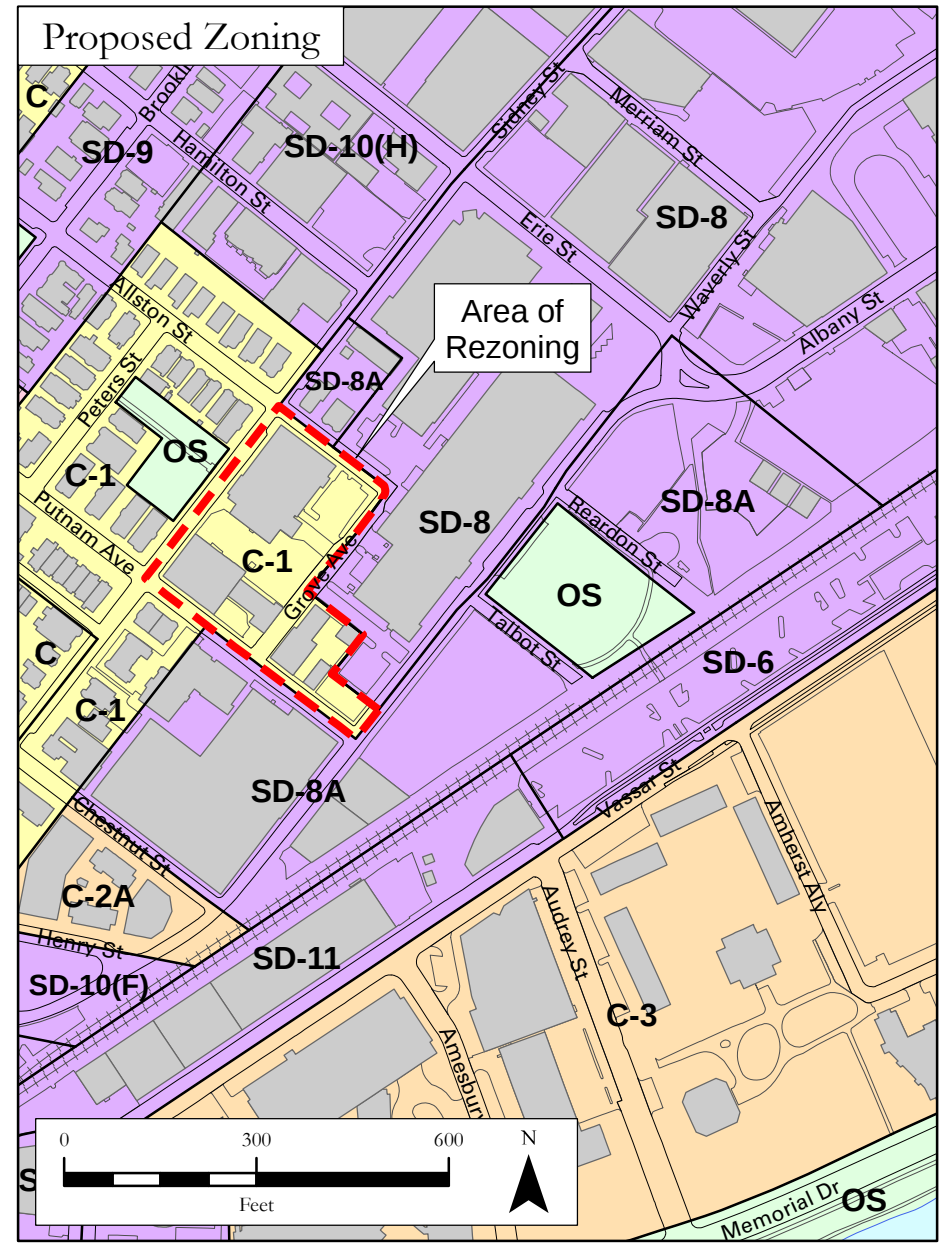
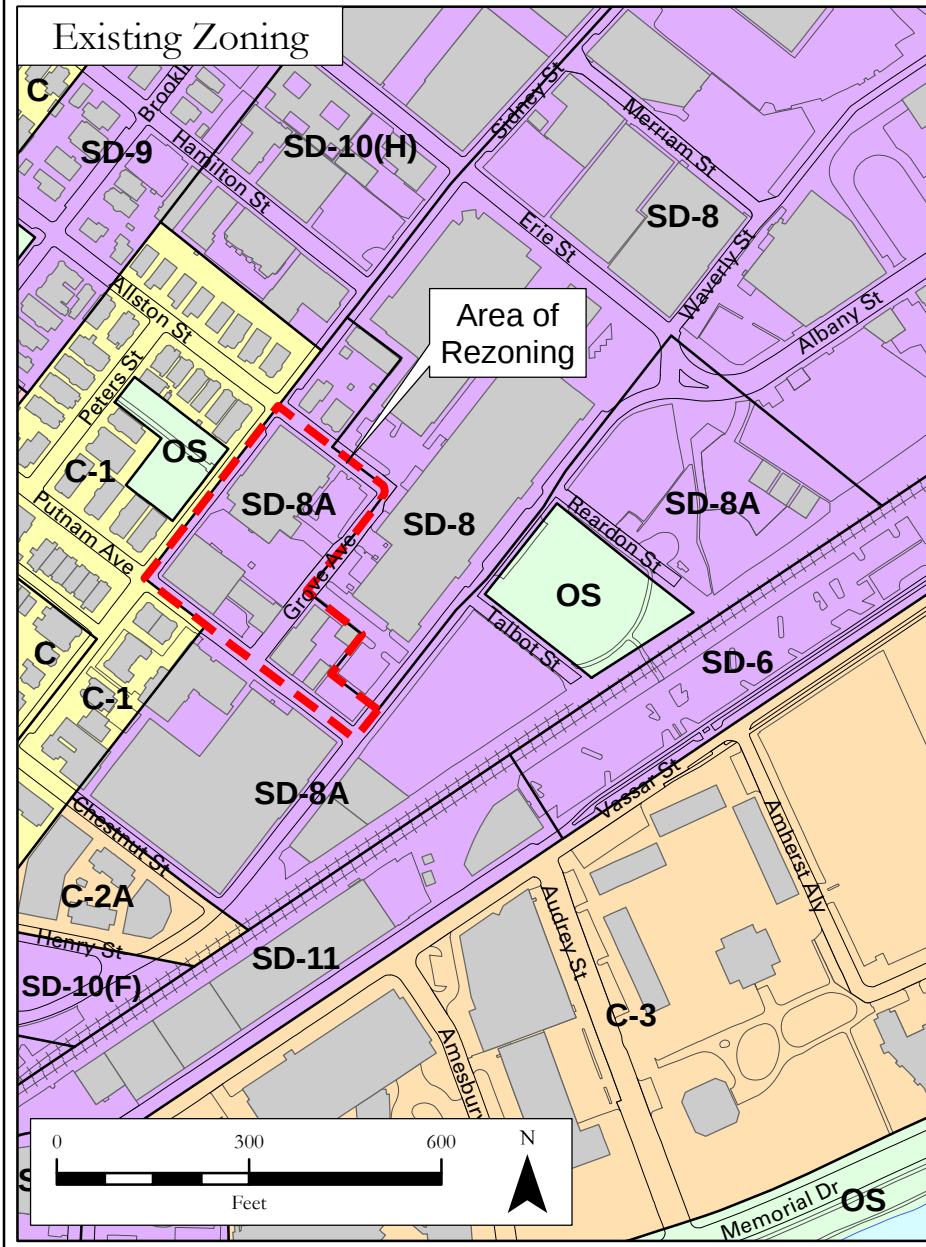
NOTES: Land Area and GFA (Gross Floor Area) figures given in square feet. Existing GFA (approx) is based on Cambridge Assessing Department information. **ALL FIGURES APPROXIMATE.**

Surrounding Neighborhood Context

This part of Cambridgeport contains a mix of building types and land uses. In the eastern portion are many older industrial buildings of varying sizes, some remaining industrial in use, and others having been converted to residential, office or lab uses over time. Some buildings were built in the 1980s and 1990s, including newer lab and office buildings along Sidney and Waverly Streets and the Cambridgeport Commons residential development at Chestnut and Sidney Streets. Some sites contain vacant lots or buildings, most notably the former California Paint facility along Waverly Street. To the west is a residential neighborhood with a mix of houses, townhouses, three-deckers and apartment buildings with some smaller-scale commercial uses and public parks.

The attached map summarizes the existing residential density on a few example blocks close to the proposed rezoning area, in order to provide a basic comparison of the existing residential scale and density to the existing and proposed zoning regulations. In general, the scale and density allowed under the current SD-8A zoning is similar but slightly less than the scale and density of the Cambridgeport Commons block at the southern edge of the neighborhood. The proposed C-1 zoning would allow a similar but slightly reduced residential scale to the residential blocks to the west.

Popper-Keizer, et al. Zoning Petition Proposed Map Change



Popper-Keizer, et al. Zoning Petition

Cambridgeport

Existing Residential Density

Cambridge, Massachusetts

