

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
CITY OF CAMBRIDGE PLANNING BOARD

IN RE: GENERAL HEARING

PLANNING BOARD MEMBERS:

Pamela Winters, Acting Chairman
Hugh Russell, Board Member
Patricia Singer, Board Member
H. Theodore Cohen, Board Member

STAFF:

Beth Rubinstein, Assistant City Manager for
Community Development
Les Barber, Director of Zoning
Susan Glazer, Deputy Director
Stuart Dash, Director of Community Planning
Liza Paden, Cambridge Community Development
Department

- held at -

City Hall Annex
Second Floor Meeting Room
344 Broadway, McCusker Building
Cambridge, Massachusetts
Tuesday, July 7, 2009
7:30 p.m.

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P R O C E E D I N G S

PAMELA WINTERS: Welcome to the Planning Board meeting for Tuesday, July the 7th. We only have one item on the agenda this evening. It is a public hearing. And it is a petition to rezone from Residence C-1 to Residence B and an area bounded by Garden, Walden and Newell Street and a line a hundred distant from and parallel to northwest side line of Huron Avenue. That would be followed by the BZA cases, and we'll begin the meeting with an update from Beth Rubenstein.

BETH RUBENSTEIN: Thank you, Pam. I don't have too many announcements tonight, although I wanted to let the Board know that right now, it looks like our next meeting, which would normally be July 21st, may be cancelled because right now we don't have anything on the agenda that's lined up to go.

And we will post that on the City's website if the meeting is cancelled, so we will let the Board members know as soon as we have made that final decision.

Right now in August, we have meetings scheduled for August 4th and 18th.

And then looking into September, normally, we meet the first and third Tuesday of the month, and I would like to discuss with the Board right now we're looking at moving to September 8th and 22nd. There are five Tuesdays in September, and the first precedes Labor Day. We thought we would go a little bit off schedule. So we'll be in touch with the Board to make sure that works for everyone, but right now, we're looking at the 8th and 22nd.

And I believe that is it.

For those who follow City Council business, the Council is now on the summer break, and the one meeting they hold in the

summer is going to be held on Monday, July 27th, and then resuming again after Labor Day. There have been some Ordinance Committee meetings on the issue tonight, the counterpetition, and others will take place, as necessary, over the summer.

I think that's all I have.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you, Beth. So, again, if anybody wants to speak this evening, please do sign up. And I think we'll start there.

Liza, do we have the list?

LIZA PADEN: I think you want the petitioner to tell you about the petition first?

PAMELA WINTERS: Okay.

HUGH RUSSELL: The presentation.

PAMELA WINTERS: Yeah. So who is -- would you like to start? Okay. Okay, Jean?

If you could state your name and your address, please, for the record.

PUBLIC HEARING

Jean Connor, et al, Petition to Rezone from Residence C-1 to Residence B and area bounded by Garden, Walden and Newell Streets and a line 100 distant from and parallel to the northwest side line of Huron Avenue

JEAN CONNOR: Jean Connor, 12 Sherman Street. And thank you so much for letting us speak.

One of the things I would like to start with is why we filed this in the first place, and what brings this group together. And when I say "we," it's our neighbors that are here with me today. We're healthcare workers, professors, lawyers, architects, musicians, horticulture and much more, but now we are communing zoning experts.

Our group has consulted with many city councilors, the building inspector, the commissioner, we went to their office, and we met with the ED for the Cambridge Historical

Commission at his office, we had the building commissioner and the inspector come to our neighborhood to view and talk to us about what we could do.

With this diverse group of neighbors, as I described, we did not come to this decision lightly, but with great thought and advice from the city experts as to changing our zoning.

The building project that started on Patriots Day weekend on 14 Sherman Street opened our eyes as to what could happen when there is, whether it's a loophole or not having the setbacks or whatever it may be. But I understand that this project fit within the guidelines of the code.

I have seen in my 50 years as a resident of Cambridge many changes, most of them I have embraced, but now from what we see of many people moving to the city that not really like the look or the culture or

haven't even explored the look of the culture, but want to change it for what they feel better serves without input from their neighbors.

I understand that we, as a city, need to grow. We are an urban city and we need to prosper, but our Area 9 has reached its limits.

Since the early '80s, I have seen the two-family house next me to turn into six units. I have seen the house across the street turn from a two-family to a four-unit. I have seen down the street turn from a two-family house to six units also. Then we have the neighbor across the street who has a single-family house that converted it to three families, for a mother-in-law apartment, for a mother-in-law that never existed.

When I looked at the zoning map with Councilor Mayer and Les and saw how many

areas of the city had changed their zoning to stop people like the architect who built up 14 Sherman Street who has come into the neighborhood and changed the landscape and the character of the neighborhood.

I looked at our Area 9 and saw that we were behind the clock. We have not stood up and said, "Look at this instead of looking at individual cases." I understand, as the Zoning Board and yourself, as Planning Board, you look at individual cases of how things go. The Zoning Board needs to stop looking at things individual projects and look at the neighborhood as a whole and that's why we decided to put this through.

Not live in fear of what, but live to make the right choices for what is going to make the best steps for the neighborhood.

Not have developers cranking out units that bring in more population that becomes more transient. We are a nice

neighborhood. We have had many families that have moved out, and we have many people that have brought in more traffic and parking problems.

Right now in our neighborhood, right on Sherman Street, we deal a fire station that the city has not provided enough parking for the people who work there. So they park all around our neighborhood.

They also house the fire station credit union. So we also get a good amount of cars that come.

All of the newer units that have come into our neighborhood have doubled the amount of cars that are parking around there.

So, I leave -- I believe those that I'm sure there are probably more that oppose this that are here today than were at City Council meeting and following through the process, but for those few that I have seen we're looking at this as a benefit for our

area. We have opened our eyes to what needs to be responsible building, not just quick building.

My parents bought this house 50 years ago. It has been in my family for over 100 years. They bought it for \$7,000, and it has increased in value ever since. So if anybody tries to tell me that doing this zoning is going to decrease your property value, they're out of their minds.

I have never seen any house in Cambridge really decrease in property value, but what problem I have seen is this overcrowding of units, like if you see on the corner of Garden and Walden Street that were built that just it's a three-unit building that they can't get anybody to buy, or down on Field Street built by the same man who built the area of 14 Sherman Street that has a permanent sign stating "only six units left" that has been there since I don't know

when.

So, I respectfully ask this committee to review it carefully and make a recommendation back to the City Council to change the zoning that is stated in our position and thank for listening.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

(Applause.)

So we have several speakers.

BETH RUBENSTEIN: Do you want Les to take us through the maps with the information about the district before the public comment or after?

PAMELA WINTERS: I think before. Les? I think that would be a good idea.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): You have before you three maps. The first deals with FAR, and the second and third maps illustrate the consequences of the proposed rezoning in terms of numbers of units permitted within the district.

The map illustrates the petition area which is the dotted black line sort've in the middle of the colored field on the map. We've gone out a little bit into the adjacent areas so that you could get a sense of how the petition area differs or is the same as development elsewhere.

On the first map, there are numbers for each lot, and that number is the FAR that's assumed for the site, and this is derived from assessor records, so it's more or less approximate, but it isn't an exact measure of FAR on a gross floor area on any single lot.

The colors illustrate ranges of FAR and in the bottom right-hand corner is the legend sort've describing what the map is telling you. And the colors represent ranges of FAR, and on the right-hand side are the number of lots within the petition area that are within that particular floor area range.

So, basically, the last two categories, sort of the beige and the red color are lots that have FARs that are already nonconforming because their densities are greater than allowed in the Residence C-1 District which is .175. Those two colors illustrate lots that have already had more square footage than that floor area of ratio would allow.

The green and the blue are colors which in terms of floor area ratio are conforming to the current C-1 zoning. The change, should it be adopted, essentially affects the lots that are colored green, which are about 43 of the lots in the affected area, and those green lots, should the petition be adopted, would become either nonconforming or would have no additional floor area available to them. And only the blue lots after such a zone change would have additional floor area to exploit potentially

into the future.

So that's the consequences with regard to floor area.

Then the next two maps illustrate the consequences of the zone change with regard to additional units that are available on each individual lot, and here we're talking about new units, we're not talking about cumulative total units on the site.

This is just additional units under the two potential scenarios. So, in the first map, which is the existing zoning Residence C-1, already there are 74 lots that have no additional development in terms of units, and 18 lots that could have one or more units, and the brighter the color, the more units -- additional units are permitted. And the purple color represents between four and six additional units possible.

So, if you just go to the next map, you will see that the number of lots that

have no units -- additional units remaining should the area be rezoned, Residence B goes up from 74 to 87.

And there are only five lots remaining that have any development potential with regard to dwelling units and each one of those typically is reduced in terms of the number of units that are allowed.

So there are -- there's just one lot which would have two to three units, and then four lots which would have one additional unit potentially.

Generally, you can think of the number of units and the gross floor area available as independent measures, but generally, if you're going to build an additional dwelling unit, you probably need sufficient gross floor area on your lot to make that worthwhile, and we generally think of something on the order of a thousand square feet.

If you have a much less square footage available than that, you probably are only going to use square footage for additions to existing facilities. But it isn't a perfect relationship, and there's always the possibility of converting a building to additional units if the building is large enough.

So, I'll leave it at that unless you have any questions.

PAMELA WINTERS: I have one question, Les. When you were computing this, I noticed driving around the neighborhood today there were -- there was building going on on Winslow Street.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): This doesn't reflect the current most recent development. I can't say that --

Do you know, Stuart?

STUART DASH: This is from January of this year at the earliest.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): It might be a year or more old essentially.

PAMELA WINTERS: So maybe it's off a couple units for the ones on the --

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): Yeah, one or two lots. Anything most recently issued a building permit would NOT be reflected on this information.

STUART DASH: So, it doesn't reflect the current construction going on?

PAMELA WINTERS: That's right.

H. THEODORE COHEN: Would the proposed change have any impact on setbacks?

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): Yeah. These are the two obvious measures of the consequence of the change, but there are a whole host of others. The B District and C-1 District have quite different -- not quite different, but different setbacks. Generally, they're increased when you go lower down to Residence B. Increases the lot

area per dwelling and the amount of open space required on the lot which goes up in the Residence B District. What other standards?

BETH RUBENSTEIN: Minimum lot area for zoning.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): Obviously, the minimum lot area for zoning, which we're illustrating here.

There are a number of other dimensional features, which are altered when you make the zoning change.

H. THEODORE COHEN: So, do I take that to mean that existing dwelling units that may already be at capacity in terms of FAR might still be impacted in terms if they wanted to put on an addition or something else?

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): Yeah. And you have to find -- if you're adding a unit, for instance, you have to find

room to put in a parking space, which is conforming, which may not be the case for parking spaces existing now.

So these bits of information are predictors of what is possible on the site. It's just a --

PAMELA WINTERS: Form of magnitude?

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): Well, it's -- illustrating the mathematical possibilities under the zoning ordinance, but not a prediction of what could actually happen.

HUGH RUSSELL: Isn't the other difference in Residence B you can only have a two-family house?

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): You can have two family or it can have a townhouse. That's a possibility. And if you had a very large building, you're actually have a right to convert that dwelling to multifamily, but you can't build a new

multifamily structure.

PAMELA WINTERS: Anybody else on the Board have any questions of Les?

(No response.)

So we have several people here who would like to speak, and as I call your name, if you could come up to the podium and say your name and your address. And we would like you to keep your comments under three minutes, if that's possible. Okay?

So the first person is Rosemary Kennedy.

ROSEMARY KENNEDY: My name is Rosemary Kennedy. I have live at 135 Garden Street. I've lived in Cambridge since 1967, I've owned my house there since 1984.

I moved away for five years and moved back, and I have no intention of ever moving. I love Cambridge. I moved to another part of Cambridge, but I love Garden Street. I have an 80-year-old tenant and his

wife, they love it there, too, and they especially love the garden, so I have to tell you my open space is a treasure, okay, that I want to preserve. And so it's very painful to me. I actually have to say that's the words that comes up most because I only learned about this by the letter that came in the mail within the last two weeks, so I did not know. So, I haven't been able to prepare it. In addition, my architect has been in a very serious car accident and he's in rehab after intensive care for two weeks, so I can't -- I know he calculated the FAR because I have just finished adding on a bathroom with a dormer.

And so, looking at that, I am sure it doesn't reflect it, and my number tells me it was somewhere between .5 and .75. I thought I was getting close to the .75. So, I don't quite understand that, so I am going to speak from that direction of my memory

because I can't ask him right now because he's still recovering.

This is difficult because I hate to say I don't ever agree with something and I really do understand -- I would hate there to be a building right in my garden because I love it, but it's impacting, I think, if I can add a room, and the reason I'm talking to you about it is because I'm a senior citizen, just getting there, but really facing it so there are two reasons, but I did look at the triangle between the fire station, Huron, Garden and Sherman, and I reckoned that I was the only person affected, there may be a couple, but really, I wasn't sure why we were in that category to start with, and none of my Garden Street neighbors are concerned because it don't impact them, it only impacts me. So, I am feeling very singled out especially when I didn't even know this existed, and it doesn't seem sort've of fair

to be singling me out from the rest of my neighbors.

So, that's one reason why I'm -- why it really concerns me. But I should tell you why it impacts me. I want to live there as long as I can, and I've looked at two things that might happen. One is my daughter really wants to live in Cambridge, and it's really hard for family who have grown up, who have gone to the high school, to be able to live here. And one of the ways is if they can take over your property, otherwise people can't afford Cambridge.

So if I get old enough to move down stairs, my daughter has a possibility of buying upstairs, but I know she'll need to add a room. I hope she'll have family to be able to add a bedroom in the attic in the unfinished space and I think this would prevent that.

PAMELA WINTERS: Your time is just

about up, if you could wrap up your comments, please?

ROSEMARY KENNEDY: Yes.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

ROSEMARY KENNEDY: That's my main one, or if I needed live-in help, I want to be able to stay in my property and I think for senior citizens, you know, we're facing 40 percent loss in our retirement funds that I want to protect my property and that's why I'm speaking.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you very much.

The next speaker is Jean Connor.

JEAN CONNOR: I spoke.

PAMELA WINTERS: That was you. Sorry. I'll speak again because I...

I think it's Samuel Bayer, I think, is the pronunciation.

Mr. Bayer, will you spell your name?

SAMUEL BAYER: B-A-Y-E-R like the

aspirin.

PAMELA WINTERS: Your address, sir?

SAMUEL BAYER: One Stearns in Cambridge. I live in the blue triple decker at the corner of Stearns and Garden Street. It's one of the highest FAR ratios here on our map.

I live in a house that couldn't even be built under the current zoning regulations, and I'm looking at the map that was so kindly provided to us here, and another thing -- by my calculations under the proposed revision, 80 percent of the houses in this neighborhood would now be nonconforming.

One of the reasons I moved to this neighborhood was because of its density, and I really enjoy our neighborhood. I walked around to the -- to look at the houses on Winslow this morning, and while I commend the petitioner for such an articulate

presentation and understand her concerns about the number of units, the density on that lot felt appropriate to the neighborhood just in the few blocks that I walked between my house and the construction on Winslow.

For me, the current zoning that we have is a wide use of valuable urban land and I would like to preserve it, so I oppose the petition. Thank you.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

The next speaker is Steve Bardige, to my knowledge.

STEVE BARDIGE: My name is Steve Bardige. I'm here with my wife Beverly. We live at 55 Stearns Street. We lived there for 33 or 34 years. We raised our children there. So terrific neighborhood. We support the petition. We think the notion of maintaining open spaces so the neighborhood could attract new people and could attract those of us who want to stay there for a long

time. It's just a terrific place.

We think the petition actually enhances the property values of our house because it maintains the integrity of the neighborhood that encourages new people to move in as others move out to raise their children there, to send them to both to public and private schools, to be valuable parts of the neighborhood, and we think the petition is an valuable resource that would enable that to continue.

We've gone a couple times to Winslow Street and seen what's being built and what is potentially going to be built at the far end of Winslow Street.

If you look at the map, we're one of the green houses under the petition. We'll lose the ability to add a unit, and we're prepared to do that in order to maintain the integrity of the neighborhood.

And for -- you know, as of previous

speaker who opposed said he likes the density of the neighborhood, we like the density of the neighborhood, too, and we like the fact that the density permits open space and the gardens and lawns and the shrubbery that people have invested in the neighborhood.

So, if it could happen on Winslow Street, if you look at what's at the ages of some of us who live on the corner lots on Stearns Street, not during our lifetimes, I hope, but after we're gone, we can see that happening in those areas as well and we would hate to see that happen.

And so for those reasons, we strongly support the petition.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you, sir.
Next speaker is John Hopkins.

JOHN HOPKINS: Thank you for the opportunity to speak. My name is John Hopkins, I'm here with my wife Hillary. We're relatively to newcomers to the area.

We have only been here since 1990, and we expect to be here for a long time to come.

PAMELA WINTERS: Could you give your address, please?

JOHN HOPKINS: Yes. It's 30 Winslow Street directly across the street from the new construction and at the corner of Sherman and Winslow. And so we're particularly distressed at seeing a handsome and elderly but handsome house with a nice little lot, and very nice kind of home for a person to have a garden, a real small garage, turned into an apartment complex is what it looks like. Two-, three-story dwellings have been added there, as I'm sure you have seen today and it dramatically changes the entrance to the street, and it will certainly change the lot and the number of people there and the feeling we get walking just around Cambridge these days and the amount of construction going on that this is clearly a place where

the developers are coming and moving as hard and fast as they can. I guess it means that there's not as much of a recession in values here as in some parts of the country.

At any rate, we feel that maybe it's gone a little too far in our immediate area. I notice on the chart, as just been mentioned, many of the era homes in our district, our proposed district, are already a little beyond the limit. Now, we can certainly live with that. We're not against people adding rooms and so forth. I know that can be a very difficult process for them, getting variances and such. I don't much about that, but I know it's difficult, everybody says that. But I do not think our concern to enable people to occasionally do improvements can be balanced really against the concern that we really may lose large amounts of open space which are quite central, and when you replace the garden and

open area, for instance, that was across the street from us, or up at the other end of Winslow, when you replace them with buildings, they're gone and they're gone forever. I think that does not add to the area. I think the build to the general area is fine.

Also, more people come with these buildings. That's the way they have them.

And even with parking requirements, there still tend to be an excess of cars and that means get more traffic.

So, there's a lot of things that go with a more dense neighborhood than we've already got. I'm not trying to turn back the clock and say everybody has to live in something smaller. But I do feel that the failure to nexus this at some point is going to lead on until it's absolutely maxed out all the use of space and I would hate to see that happen.

And as I say, I do hope there are provisions or can in the future be provisions that will make that not quite so onerous for people who want to make improvements to their property, sometimes making the house larger to meet their personal needs, as we've already heard about tonight. I would not be against that kind of thing. It's when we get new buildings bumped in that are enormously larger multifamily dwellings that were not there before.

Thank you very much.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

The next speaker is Dany Adams.

DANY ADAMS: I think I am probably the newest person in the neighborhood. My name is Dany Adams, I live at 16 Stearns Street Dan which is one of the currently compliant houses.

I have lived in the neighborhood since February, and I was very lucky to move

here. I sold a beautiful Victorian house in Jamaica Plain because I got to move to this neighborhood into the home of the love of my life.

PAMELA WINTERS: Well, welcome to Cambridge.

DANY ADAMS: Thank you very much.

I am a research professor at Tufts University. I believe I'm the type of person that people in this neighborhood want to stay. And I'm afraid that one of the really -- what I think is really important statistic that's not on here is the actual square footage as opposed to the FAR.

And Joe, who will be speaking next, when he bought the house, he was a single person, it was 800 square feet. It's the smallest house on the block by a long shot. And he was a single person. He's now no longer single. And he now works at home, and 800 square feet just doesn't cut it.

So I confess to have a personal stake in this, although we're already not compliant, so we need a variance anyway.

What I want to reiterate is what Sam said that 82 percent of the neighborhood will be noncompliant if this happens. If 82 percent is noncompliant, I don't quite understand what this zoning means anyway except to prevent people coming in from fully using the land that they have. Changing this will not fix the parking problem, and I think if there's a parking problem, we should deal with that.

I think being somebody who is new to the neighborhood, I can tell you that there's no way I could afford to move into this neighborhood if I did not have the opportunity to move into the small house on the block, and I feel like this will unfairly impact those people who are trying to move into this neighborhood.

The smaller houses have the smaller lots, which means that people who already have less are going to be the ones who are restricted from trying to have the beautiful houses that 82 percent of the people already have. And I just I think that's really unfair. I think it's an unintended consequence, but it's a real consequence.

I think just in summary, I think that changing the zoning and having this affect every single person in the neighborhood is throwing a very heavy wet blanket over a lot of people in response to someone having lit a match on Winslow Street, and I don't think that that's an appropriate response to any of the issues that have been raised.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

Our next speaker is Joe Maguire.

JOE MAGUIRE: Hi there, I'm Joe Maguire. I live at 16 Stearns Street and I

am the love of somebody's life. And I'm, also, apparently out of my mind because I actually see my property values going down as a result of this petition. We have some drawings in place now to enlarge the house and these are not preposterous drawings. This is not an extravagant modification at all. We're merely trying to get the bed out of the dining room. And with these drawings, we would actually be 20 percent over the proposed FAR, which would still make us, with these drawings, the smallest house on the street.

So I very much oppose this thing because it personally damages my ability to stay in the neighborhood. We talked about -- a previous speaker spoke about wanting to encourage people to move into the neighborhood. I moved into the neighborhood less than two years ago to be near my neighbors, whom I have known many years, my

across-the-street neighbors I have known for 25 years, I have known a number of the children on the street for a lot of years, and this actually would force me to move out. So that is surely not a consequence that is intended.

As far as liveability of the neighborhood and family friendly of the neighborhood, you know, from my office window, I don't perceive a problem. I see children playing on the street, the three children next door, the two children next door and across the street from them, the three children next door to them, or the three children across the street from them, they play in the street very safely, ride their bicycles and skateboards, whatever. I don't really see that there's a problem that needs to be solved here in terms of making the neighborhood family friendly or liveable.

So, I don't really want to move, and

from a broader perspective, I think this is an opportunity to think globally and act locally where density is what makes cities sustainable, which is good for the planet and the way to think globally -- the way to act locally here is to not break something -- not fix something that is not broken in this neighborhood. The reason why we want to preserve this neighborhood is because it grew up under -- it became what it is based on the current zoning, so I oppose this petition. Thank you.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you. The next speaker is Helen Abraham.

HELEN ABRAHAM: Hi. I'm Helen Abraham. I live at 34 Winslow Street, which is right across the street from the construction. I have lived on Winslow Street originally in the '70s across the street actually on 29 Winslow, which is -- would be, today, right next door to the construction

site and I now live at 34, which is across the street, and my son grew up there in the '70s.

So, I've lived on Winslow Street for a long time. I really love it. I've seen -- the street itself changed quite a bit in terms of condos going up, et cetera, but I love the street, obviously. I've stayed on the street all this time. The street has my heart. I like the people. I like knowing the people. There's a -- this is a person who talked about being a senior citizen and some of us are senior citizens, I'm one of those, I have chronic ill health, so it's an issue for me. I would like to stay in my house for a long time.

I think one of the -- it was a real shock when they just -- they came in and they with -- with no warning, Patriots Day weekend, demolished the garage and started tearing apart the house, and it just boggled

my mind to see these three little houses jammed into this space.

Now, the person that lived there before was my next-door neighbor for many, many years, Agnes McAnn and she was 94 years old and I knew she would turn over in her grave if she could see this.

My feeling -- what I feel is I'm -- number one, I would like see the quality of the neighborhood stay as it is. And what I would like -- but not in the sense of denying people variances as the lady was talking about, you know, wanting to have a mother-in-law apartment or add another room, that's not the issue to me. And I support this change.

The issue for me is more for a developer to come in, be able to just knock down everything and build the maximum amount with no respect to the neighborhood or the community, and I would be willing to

participate in changes in the zoning or whatever so that people can get variances more easily. I know when my next door neighbor -- they're in Europe right now -- they got a variance, and they're right up next to my house and I wrote a letter supporting him. He's an artist, they expanded, so he has a studio, et cetera, and so anyway --

PAMELA WINTERS: If you could wind down your comments?

HELEN ABRAHAM: Thank you for the opportunity and I do support this strongly.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you very much. Our next speaker is Virginia Sawyer.

VIRGINIA SAWYER: I'm Virginia Sawyer, I live at 49 Winslow Street, it's one the big lots there that I could build quite a few units. Winslow Street, I think, is different from some of the other streets, and it has a lot of land that could be developed

still in spite of these two that are going on.

And one of the nice things about it, it has lot of dense housing and it has -- not dense housing, it has a lot of gardens, and when we realized that all those other places that are blue there could be intensely developed like the one on the corner, it would not quite be the same, it would not have that kind of feeling of gardens, apartment buildings, single-family houses and so forth. It makes that street so pleasant.

So what -- the people -- the people most affected are right around Winslow Street and Sherman Street, those seem to be the people who are most concerned about what could happen if all those places were to go.

If my lots were developed the way it is now, I could build more units. It seems to me if everybody build more units, then it

wouldn't be as pleasant and maybe actually if you built fewer units and still had a garden rather than just house, house, house, then actually it might be so far as you're getting income from the sale. It seems to me you might do just as well if you had two or three in a lot, for instance.

But I think up around the top here where Newell Street and Stearns Street meet, I can see why that's a concern to people, if we change it and they can't make those tiny houses bigger, so I don't know what to say. I think density is the way of the future, too, in a way, but on the other hand, I think it's nice to have a pleasant neighborhood with gardens and I -- that's what I have to say.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you. Our next speaker is Ruth Ryan Allen.

RUTH ALLEN: Hi. Thank you for putting this together. Thank you for

listening to us.

My name is Ruth Ryan Allen. I live at 48 Fenno Street, Cambridge. I'm not a Winslow Street person. I live in a house that grew up in, my mother grew up in and my grandparents were the first owners in 1926.

I also own a little business right on Walden Street. So, in addition to Fenno Street, I also own a little business. So, as far as density, I love density. I am the first one to go, as many people you can get in that area -- it's walking area, there's no parking. So the poor girl that came from Jamaica Plain, welcome, but there is no parking in our area.

A couple things, I was on the map on Fenno Street, I'm one of the beige people, and I am -- I had a small house as the gentleman who is looking for to increase his house. My mother was very ill and my dad was very ill, he was a Cambridge fireman for

years and had COPD and congestive heart failure because he was putting out the fires in the '60s at Harvard and MIT when you didn't know what was going in there so.

So, far as that goes, I was able to get variances, and I think still even when we're a B area, you will be able to get variances. You have to show that there's need for it. You don't have to show that you need another house built on your lot, but you need to say, "I have a bedroom in the living room, can you put it in?" That's what I had to do with my mother. We've lived there all our lives. I still had to go for a variance. So it's available to be able to stay in our houses.

So changing it from a C-1 to a B is not going to change that. You can still go for the variances. I love our neighborhood. I had a chance to live in Arlington, which a lot of gardens and things, I chose to move

back to Cambridge because it was -- it's home. I came back also because my mom wanted to die in the same house that she was born in. So I enabled her to do that. So I have full heart strings for any person that wants to stay and wants to keep our neighborhood. I don't plan on leaving our neighborhood. I plan on being buried in the back of our neighborhood.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: You'd need a variance.

RUTH ALLEN: Well, they can also sprinkle me. What did break my mother's heart, however, was in the back of us in Winslow Street, there was a beautiful garden once upon a time, and basically it's now the beige area .87 where there's now six housing units. It was a beautiful garden by the Georges who actually started PG Bleach Company, historical, and although we love our neighbors now, when I have a party or

anything, or if I'm talking loud to my husband, they can hear everything I say, because these six townhouses, four in the back with me, so we get calls because our dogs are parking in our houses, we get calls because we're having a party or sitting outside having a barbecue.

So, in addition, I fully, fully support this petition. I think we need to not add houses. We need to -- they're pushing the city more bikes, bikes, you know, less cars, we're putting in houses that are taking up greenhouse gases like crazy. I have no frontage.

PAMELA WINTERS: I'm sorry, I need you to just wind down your thoughts.

RUTH ALLEN: I'm sorry. I need a backyard and they put houses in my backyard so I don't have that availability anymore. Putting this as a B zone would stop that, it's not going to stop the variances, but it

will stop -- I mean, come over to our house anytime. Fenno Street has a huge block party, everybody's welcome and you'll see what we deal with. I love our neighbors, like I said, but I love the density because I'm a business owner but there has to be a stop.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

So we have two more speakers, Markus Meister.

MARKUS MEISTER: Thank you. My name is Markus Meister. I live at 10 Newell Street, and I oppose this petition, although I can sympathize with the reaction to the neighbors to the new construction at the corner, I was myself surprised to see three buildings going up there in a hurry. The massing is somewhat unusual and probably won't look very pretty at the end. I still think that while I support the goals of avoiding this kind of development, I think

the proposed zoning changes is the wrong tool, and, in fact, it will work against the objectives, as far as I can see.

First of all, of course, the zoning change will not stop the current project, which is fully permitted, and in the end will be one of the few conforming parcels in the area. But when we think about the future and wants to try to avoid future development, let's look at the maps that the city provided. There are really only four lots in this entire zoning district that even under C-1 that would allow the kind of development that's going on. All these lots are on Winslow Street. One is the project we already talked about at the corner. And the second lot is currently under construction. I don't quite know what the plans are for that. And the third lot belongs to one of the signatories of the petition that leaves one lot, and so, the targets of these down

zoning petition are really only one or two lots that are located on Winslow Street on which one could imagine this kind of development happening again.

So what are the negative effects of the proposed changes? It's already been said. In my mind the biggest effect is the change in the maximum FAR from .75 to .5. As the city told us, 43 of the 92 parcels are going to fall below the limit under -- sorry -- are below the maximum FAR and the C-1, but above the limit under B. That means that these 43 owners are deprived of their right to enlarge a kitchen or add a family room except by going through a cumbersome variance process. Several people have attested to the fact that this is cumbersome. These minor building projects, I think, don't in any way alter the character of the neighborhood and there's great value in leaving them up to individual homeowner's discretion.

But in my mind, this loss of homeowners' rights is a major downside of the whole proposal.

Another point. I agree with one of the earlier speakers that downzoning will have negative effects on our property values. It's a simple economic argument. If you can have the same piece of land under a less restrictive zoning rule versus a more restrictive zoning rule, you would probably pay more if it was less restrictive. I can attest to that from my own experience as a buyer in this area.

Another aspect. In some conversations, people have wondered why shouldn't we switch the zoning to B given that the area is bordering the district that's already B. The reason is obvious once you look at the map, and these adjacent reasons most the lots are larger than 5,000 square feet, the minimum needed for a

two-unit building under B.

In our area, on the other hand, most of the lots are tiny, between 3,000 and 3,500 square feet. The lots on Winslow are really unusual in this respect and don't reflect at all what you find along Fenno, Stearns and Newell Street as some of the earlier speakers have already said.

Finally, the professed goal of this petition was to preserve the character of the neighborhood. This seems illogical to me since the neighborhood was formed under the rules of C-1 zoning or even less stringent rules earlier. Changing the code to B will necessarily alter the character of any new construction and in the long run change the face of the neighborhood to lower density.

At the same time, it cannot never look like some of the adjacent areas that we might be looking at somewhat jealously that had B zoning because our lots are too small.

So, in conclusion, I think the proposed zoning changes is the wrong tool for the stated goal and I'd encourage the city planners to think of alternates in which to control the development that the petitioners are criticizing.

Thank you.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

The last speaker is Fenton Hollander.

FENTON HOLLANDER: Thank you. My name is Fenton Hollander, I live at 21 Sherman Street. I've lived in Cambridge since 1958 and lived at 21 Sherman since 1973.

I think I appreciate the fears of some of the opponents of this measure, but I think they're unfounded. I think -- other speakers have spoken and I can attest to the fact that the variance procedure is really not that onerous if your goals are simple and

separate forward.

If the developer of the project at 14 Sherman were to come before the Board that would be a very expensive and onerous procedure requiring high-priced lawyers, exhibits, lots of meetings and it probably wouldn't succeed.

But I can speak personally that I enlarged my house to be still below the maximum FAR, but since it was a nonconforming lot, it had a nonconforming setback, it required a variance procedure, and that procedure was mostly carried out, not at the hearing, but in the back yards of neighbors chatting with them, showing them what we were trying to do and getting their support. That happened with at least four other houses in my immediate neighborhood, and, in fact, I found it to be a very see celebrated procedure where you got to know your neighbors sometimes over there or many people

contemplating a variance got to be friends with their neighbors because it was important, and then, of course, after that they were friends.

And so, I think the pressure of meeting a higher standard will not hurt the neighborhood. On the other hand, I will agree that it might not be exactly the right medicine to get what we want. But currently, we don't see any other medicine around. That is to say, I don't know of what other procedure would prevent from happening what is already beginning to happen, and my worry is that I came to the neighborhood in 1973, as I mentioned, the dump was still there, a lot of people thought I was pretty foolish to move there and to put any money into the house. And I was delighted to find I have other fools that followed me and who also invested in the neighborhood. So that now it's a much more stable friendly and

prosperous neighborhood, and I worry that if more projects like the one at 14 Sherman proliferate, people who are currently investing in their homes to make them more stable places, to make them larger, so you don't have to walk through the dining room to get to the bedroom or whatever it is, that will make the neighborhood more stable.

I have spoken actually with the gentleman who spoke previously about having a bed in his dining room, and told him that I would personally, and I thought that all of the proponents of this measure should bear it as an obligation to support opulence who had simple needed changes to make their houses more usable and I plan to support him, and I hope others will.

One of the things that the construction at 14 Sherman has done has helped us to get to know each other as a neighborhood. And I think that will help

us -- it's made us realize what we have and what we might lose, and I think the reason this is brought before you is we all think that at this point we need your help. We need your help because we want to keep our neighborhood the way it is.

Thank you.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

Is there anybody else that would like to speak that hasn't spoken already?

Yes. Would you come up to the podium, please.

State your name and address for the record.

SARAH SLAUGHTER: I'm Sarah Slaughter, I live at 11 Stearns Street in the old Banner house.

It was a real pleasure to move to this side of Cambridge. I moved to Cambridge in 1978 and now we moved in to the house we're in now in 1996 and we love the

neighborhood. There's so many wonderful interactions, we love all the elements that are part of the neighborhood and we love the density. I am opposed to this proposal because I'm a gardener, and I'm not seeing the need to remove people's rights on how they use their property because some people want to have the view out over somebody else's backyard.

The comments that were made previously are saying we want to have open space in somebody else's yard. Their property is already built up. That's not fair.

I'm done.

PAMELA WINTERS: Okay, thank you.

Yes, sir.

JIM FINGOLD: Jim Fingold. I live at 37 Winslow Street. If you look at the map, this proposal is not so unusual. As a matter of fact, it seems to be a natural

extension of the B zone. Most of the area surrounding it is B, and so we're not imposing anything on -- or a drastic change.

Thank you.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

Would anybody else like to speak?

(No response.)

Should we then close the hearing to public comment?

HUGH RUSSELL: So moved.

PAMELA WINTERS: And leave it open for written comment?

H. THEODORE COHEN: Seconded.

PAMELA WINTERS: So, would any members like to make -- Hugh?

HUGH RUSSELL: I have been doing a little bit of research here at the table through my collection of historic zoning maps which I have collected over the last 30-some-odd years, 34 years of public service.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: Will you speak up, please?

HUGH RUSSELL: I'll try. I'll get closer to the microphone. I have been looking at the historic zoning maps for the last -- the one that was instituted in 1924, and then it was revised in 1943, and there have been a number of revisions since the early '70s. So this area has been zoned the way it is now since 1943.

And there have been no changes in the area that's now proposing to be changed.

What's curious is that in 1924, it was actually part of three different districts, and I've colored up my map, and it may be hard to see, in general, the area west of Sherman Street was R-3 District. In 1943 they changed the names of all the districts. The R-3 District is most similar to the Residence C-1. So, that part hasn't changed much since zoning started.

Stearns Street that's east of Sherman Street didn't exist in 1924 and it had a business designation. I assume there was a business there.

MARKUS MEISTER: John Clapid (phonetic).

HUGH RUSSELL: Uh-huh, and presumably the houses on Stearns Street were built after 1924.

The rest of the area has the designation of Residence 4, and that is most similar to Residence B today.

So, from a historic point of view, if you were to rezone the whole area, a third of it would be rolling back the clock some 65 years. Now, I think little -- I think almost all the houses were probably built by 1943 with maybe a few exceptions, and, of course, there's the recent houses that are under construction, the condominiums on Winslow Street, but just looking at all the houses, I

looked at the whole neighborhood, and it appeared to me that the majority of the houses in the neighborhood were two-family houses. They had the look of two-family houses, and unlike my neighborhood, where two-family houses tend to have three names and buzzers and four meters on them because the top floor has been converted to an apartment, they seem to be mostly in two-family use. There are lot of single family houses in the neighborhood and there are some triple deckers. So it's a mixed area.

I have no idea why the City Council in its wisdom in 1943 decided to change the lines. I guess if Stearns Street had become residential that made sense. It's -- how do you -- there are sort of jumps in the zoning ordinance. What do you do with an area that's kinda in between?

It's mostly two-family houses, so

you would say, well, maybe it should be B, but as someone said, the lots are very small, so that the floor area ratio looks more like a C, C-1.

I thought the speaker just before the end, I guess whose name I did not write down, made, I thought, an interesting point, that this really affects Winslow Street more than any other part of the neighborhood.

PAMELA WINTERS: Markus Mister?

HUGH RUSSELL: Yes.

So maybe one recommendation we might make is to reduce the area, possibly back to the very old historic lines or maybe find other lines that we think are more appropriate, to add Winslow Street on to the Residence B District and that might address the issue of -- shoving the line between B and C a block or two to the north.

If you think of the area as a whole, according to the calculations on the sheets,

there could be roughly 25 to 30 new dwelling units under the current zoning. I think that would create a change, that would -- that might not be much of a change on some of the streets where there isn't any possibility, but it would be a big change on streets where there could be change.

So I'm inclined to support this either all or in part.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thanks, Hugh.
Anyone else? Patricia?

PATRICIA SINGER: Hugh, could you explain to me how you came up with 25 new units under the current zoning?

HUGH RUSSELL: I just did the math on the second sheet in our handout, so there were 13 parcels that could have the one extra unit, there were three parcels that could have two to three units and there were two parcels that could have four to six, I assume. One had four and one had six.

PATRICIA SINGER: Thank you, Hugh.

HUGH RUSSELL: And it's approximate. The number I came down with is 29. Somewhere between 25 and 30.

PATRICIA SINGER: Ted?

H. THEODORE COHEN: Hugh, thank you. I was really hoping somebody could provide historic information because I really was curious how we got to the C-1 right here.

PAMELA WINTERS: We can always count on Hugh for that.

H. THEODORE COHEN: I'm really pretty much of two minds about this. I'm not strongly convinced either way. I think it's a very interesting neighborhood. A lot of very small houses, very tightly packed together and then some pretty large houses.

Despite what some of the proponents say about the ease of getting a variance, I am concerned about the number of properties that would become nonconforming and would

need to go through a variance procedure to move the bed out of the living room, and I don't think it's a good idea for zoning to require variances. I think variances are for the unique situation and not for the general situation.

I think when looking at the map and the proposal -- and I agree the new construction going up, I'll wait until it's done, but I suspect it won't be all that felicitous in appearance, but it really does seem what this petition would do would be mostly impact the properties on Winslow Street preventing it from developing the way the other streets have historically developed. And so, I don't know whether that's a good idea or not if the rest of the neighborhood has very small houses on small lots, is there a reason Winslow ought not to go that way if it wants to. And I think if -- because the lots there are large, there

still will be potential for some development there.

PAMELA WINTERS: On Winslow Street?

H. THEODORE COHEN: On Winslow Street. And there will still be potential for development on Winslow Street, and I think -- in the first map, the 13 in green, I think the reality is that they won't add other dwelling units, they might add another bedroom or something, but they won't add, say, a second family.

So I'm concerned about the negative impacts of the petition while fully understanding the rationale for it and not sure what the answer is, but maybe what Hugh suggested that some smaller change might make more sense than changing a larger area and impacting on a very large number of people.

PAMELA WINTERS: Patricia, did you have anything else to comment on?

PATRICIA SINGER: In the interest of

time I don't want to repeat what has already been said, but I think the one thing we didn't think about was a comment that was made very early on that nobody, whether it's a developer or a homeowner, wants to make a change to a property which will result in a sign being up for years on end that says "six units still available." All people are interested in maximizing the value of their assets, whether they're private individuals or business people.

So that's one thing that I have to throw into this mix that I'm not sure which way exactly it tips the scale. Unless they -- normally, when I sort of think about rezoning proposals, I always like to listen to the history and then I think, you know, what makes this area special, what sets it apart? Why should we make a change? My preposition, unless I hear an excellent argument is to say there's nothing that makes

this area any more special than any other Res C anywhere else in the city or any other Res whatever the heck it's that somebody's coming in to ask for.

I heard some pretty convincing arrangements tonight and, yet, I remain somewhat skeptic about the change in whole because it does seem to me to be targeting specific properties and that I think is always very dangerous.

So what I would like -- I guess what I would encourage is that we rethink this proposal not to be a disproportionate burden to some, but maintain an open mind to find some sort of a compromise here.

PAMELA WINTERS: It's interesting that you use the word "compromise," Patricia, because that's exactly what I was going to say.

The speakers seem to be about 50 percent for and about 50 percent against, and

I was wondering is there something between a Res B and a C-1? Is there -- Les, I was wondering if you could possibly respond to that?

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning):
There's a zoning district that is multifamily Residence C District which is -- it's not quite halfway between the two, but it's a multifamily district, less dense than Residence C-1. So, you know, there are a number of choices in addition to just adopting the petition as it is. You could do the sort of thing Hugh is suggesting is adjust the boundaries to perfectly match the differences within the districts, or you could take the approach of choosing a different zoning district for the whole petition area or some subset of that petition area if you felt that was appropriate.

PAMELA WINTERS: Okay. Thank you.

Well, it's difficult.

PATRICIA SINGER: I, for one, would like to see a map that would show me that, quote, unquote compromised position and what impact it would have on the neighborhood.

PAMELA WINTERS: I think that wouldn't be a bad idea.

Hugh, what are your thoughts? Do you still like adjusting the boundaries versus changing the zoning or...?

HUGH RUSSELL: I think we could ask Les to do an analysis of what Res C would look like, go back to Richmond Monroe at the GIS division and ask him to do --

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): I don't do this analysis. There are others who do it.

HUGH RUSSELL: Right. He put his name on it. So that would give us a tool to look at.

PAMELA WINTERS: Right.

HUGH RUSSELL: The other thought is

that I couldn't sort out the people who were in favor and against geographically, but maybe there's a different line that could be drawn that includes the supporters in a smaller district and excludes the people who are opposing. I simply don't know whether that's possible. I think that -- I just -- that would be something I think that probably the petitioner would might want to think about that if there was a different line that might work more in terms of all the people in the room.

JEAN CONNOR: Hugh, while I really appreciate your history, I agree with you. We're looking for some way to make our neighborhood better. And as Fenton had pointed out -- he was the last speaker -- is that we're looking for some way you don't have a way for us to do it. We're not trying it make anybody not be able to do what they need to increase their living. I will say be

careful of how you look at the neighborhood of not seeing the bells on the doors that you think that there are a lot more three-family homes than you think there are. There are many homes that have converted from two to three, that you don't see that. So even though the neighborhood looks like it's one or two-family there are quite a few three families. Some of the construction that people have said that are here have completely taken down and reconstructed . So, I know that there's areas that we can work on, but we're willing to work with the city with what we need, but as we -- when talking to Les in the very beginning, this was the way to go.

HUGH RUSSELL: I would like to make another comment that's not in response actually. I am probably the only person in the room that actually voted for a thousand variances because I was on the Zoning Board

for ten years and roughly a thousand cases came to us, and we almost always granted the mud room the extra bedroom. The dormer, and I believe that we looked at the agendas, we see those agendas now at the Planning Board, that's the majority of the cases, and I think if the Zoning Board was not approving them that there was quite a ruckus that we would hear about. And I personally actually went and got a zoning variance to put an addition on my own house a few years ago, and it was actually sort of instructive because last year I had a new partner move in and I had a 600 square foot area and two people in 600 square feet is not enough. I'm an architect so I draw up another addition and I went to my next door neighbor and talked to him briefly about, and I could tell he didn't like it and he was a nice guy, he was not gonna exactly say, so I reevaluated it and put in a loft and didn't change the size of

my building, and my retirement fund dropped as everybody's retirement fund did, and I thought just as well I didn't do build that addition.

But in terms of the process of talking to your neighbors, you sometimes -- sometimes you get the advice that you don't necessarily want, but it may be good advice.

And that process around the zoning grant is really the key to getting a variance and working with your neighbors. And if you walk in the Zoning Board having done that and having these conversations and your neighborhoods say, "Yeah, this guy really needs this," then, yeah, it takes a couple months to do and you got to plan ahead and it's annoying, but it's not very difficult.

H. THEODORE COHEN: Just one other comment. You said interestingly, it appears everyone who lives on Winslow Street who spoke, spoke in favor of the petition. And

so I'm not sure that it's the larger lots on Winslow Street that are the issue here. But the opponents, I think, are people who own a lot of the other properties who may be considering the impact of the petition on their perceived or real small properties and want the ability to expand them at some time.

PAMELA WINTERS: Would they have to get a variance anyway, though, Ted?

H. THEODORE COHEN: That would depend upon --

RUTH ALLEN: We have to get a variance. We had to get a variance to put an extension on our house. I live on Fenno. So anything -- it's not just Winslow. It's going to affect -- I know it will affect Sherman, it's going to affect our parking for Fenno, Sherman, every place else, it's not just...

MARKUS MEISTER: As long as they stay beyond the maximum FAR, you can build by

right to a certain amount.

HUGH RUSSELL: The problem is all of the houses are nonconforming as to setbacks. And so, you end up having to go for a variance to make an addition that could be very difficult to put a conforming addition onto a building and have it be usable. And we can go into the theory of all this, but my own viewpoint is all this stuff should be by special permit and not by variance.

RUTH ALLEN: That's all we're asking.

PAMELA WINTERS: Beth, what is the time frame on this?

BETH RUBENSTEIN: The deadline for action by the City Council is September 30th. So my sense is that there's certainly time. If the Board would like the staff to do the Res C maps, we would be happy to do that.

PAMELA WINTERS: That would be great.

BETH RUBENSTEIN: I would like to say to the public is I think we're not certain at this point if we would bring that back in July or August, so I'd ask you to check our website and obviously give us a call any time for the next meeting, and if we have your name and address, we'll let you know about the next meeting.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you. One more question?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I was wondering if there's a mechanism for the Planning Board and the other people who are interested to approach some idea of compromise. In other words, can we -- can you ask us and we ask you can we have some convergence on it because I think it's needed.

HUGH RUSSELL: Our role is to make a recommendation and the Council, I think -- the Council tends to make the compromises in that forum. We would put forward options or

ways of looking at it. You know, if we can encourage the supporters and the opponents to figure out a compromise, we would give our opinion as to whether that compromise made planning sense. But we tend not to generate -- make strong recommendations on options when it's unclear what people think.

PAMELA WINTERS: We did leave the hearing open to written comment, so feel free to write us your thoughts.

BETH RUBENSTEIN: I would add to that, I was having the same thought. If you have thoughts for the Board, you certainly should send them into the staff and we'll make sure that the Board gets them. And also, if you had thoughts and ideas about compromise, I would encourage you to communicate those to the City Council as well.

PAMELA WINTERS: So I think we're through.

Yes, sir?

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'd just like to comment. I've lived in Cambridge since 1958 and this is about my most extensive interaction with city government, and I'm very pleased with what I see.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

THE AUDIENCE MEMBER: I'm impressed with the technology that has been brought to bear to make sure it's based on real information.

PAMELA WINTERS: Well, thank you and you should thank the staff, too.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: I do.

(Short recess.)

BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL CASES

LIZA PADEN: Okay. Board of Zoning appeal cases for July 9 does anybody have any questions? I was gonna -- I thought that I had arranged for somebody and I spoke with him to come in about the Cambridge Side

Galleria. The PF change sign and I don't seem to see him. He's not in the hall, is he? I looked around I didn't see anybody.

H. THEODORE COHEN: Where is the PM changes?

LIZA PADEN: The Cambridge Side Galleria is taking over the Italian restaurant space.

HUGH RUSSELL: The last --

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): It's where Papparazzi used to be under Filene's.

LIZA PADEN: I have the drawings for them.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): Roger and I had looked at it and it's a large illuminated projected sign, but it seems sort've appropriate and kinda fun actually at this location, so we were quite positive about it and would actually support it.

BETH RUBENSTEIN: It's a projection

sign?

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning):

It's a projected sign.

BETH RUBENSTEIN: It says

protection. Probably a typo.

H. THEODORE COHEN: Right. I

thought it was like an emergency exit sign.

PATRICIA SINGER: That's what I

thought and I was like why is there an issue.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): At

other locations you may know they put these big blinds sort've of things out front which they can't do here because it's the public street and there is not enough room. So the alternate, they were considering going with a projecting sign.

LIZA PADEN: When I was looking at

the application, a lot of it appears to be the characteristic of the sign itself. It's not that they're putting a sign.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning):

They have enough square footage.

HUGH RUSSELL: I think we can rely on Roger.

PATRICIA SINGER: So is a design in the aesthetics is in question?

LIZA PADEN: Well, they have to get a variance because it's more two inches or six inches from the wall.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): Yeah, it's too tall and big and it's illuminated, and so there are a variety of elements that make it --

HUGH RUSSELL: Roger's heavily invested in this project in this area of the area and he feels it's the right thing to do. He's on dangerous ground.

PAMELA WINTERS: The Fogg Museum, we've already made our comments on?

LIZA PADEN: Yes. Don't go anywhere.

There's another meeting in July,

July 23rd, since we're not meeting on the 21st, I was wondering if you could look at these cases as well, one for 16 Stearns Street.

PAMELA WINTERS: What is going on at Ash Street, Liza?

LIZA PADEN: Okay. At Ash Street Harvard University, specifically the School of Graduate -- the Graduate School of Design is proposing to take over this home of Howard -- it's an architect, he's very well-known -- Phillip Johnson House was constructed in 1942 and what they're proposing to do is to take over the house and convert the use to institutional and it would be used by the Graduate School of Design for small symposiums, possibly overnight guests, things like that. There's no physical changes per se to the building.

So, this would be a variance to allow the institutional use in the Residence

A-2 District.

HUGH RUSSELL: So there's an interesting story about the construction of this house. Phillip Johnson came to the Harvard School of Design in his 30s, I believe, after being curator of architecture at the Museum of Modern Art, and the Museum of Modern Art was very young and he decided he wanted to do it. So, he came to Harvard and this house represents his thesis, and he built it himself, and apparently, the final jury was held in the house, and so, it started at least for an instant with an institutional use by the GSD.

LIZA PADEN: Right.

HUGH RUSSELL: I think preserving this building is very desirable.

PAMELA WINTERS: It is.

HUGH RUSSELL: It seems like a use that would preserve it. It's across the street from the graduate student residence,

so it's -- it doesn't represent the real isolating institutional use, so...

LIZA PADEN: Okay.

HUGH RUSSELL: The way I think we might want to support this on the grounds of preservation and maybe -- once Harvard owns it, then it goes under the sort've the formal protocol of review by the Historic Commission should somebody get some crazy idea.

LIZA PADEN: They want to modernize it.

PAMELA WINTERS: I agree with putting in a vote for "yes" for that.

LIZA PADEN: The preservation is desirable.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): It might be a way ultimately for the public to get to see it on occasion.

H. THEODORE COHEN: Right. I've always wanted to see the inside.

HUGH RUSSELL: Do you have drawings

on 1643 Cambridge Street? I'm guessing this is the pillbox structure on Cambridge Street? There's several buildings there.

LIZA PADEN: Yes. This attractive structure.

HUGH RUSSELL: That's not the worst one there.

LIZA PADEN: It's at the corner of Trowbridge Street and across from the swimming pool and they haven't been able to use the balconies for awhile. So, their proposal is when they remove the balconies, they would like to make the balconies larger and they're already in the setback. I think the other complication is this is a C-1 District that went up from Cambridge Street north to the curb line.

H. THEODORE COHEN: That's interesting.

LIZA PADEN: Are there any other comments?

BETH RUBENSTEIN: It looks like we're on August 4th, Lisa?

LIZA PADEN: Yes. I have one more thing. So Mount Auburn Hospital has started operating their new addition, and one of the things that happened -- one of the things they discovered, which you will see in this letter is they've asked to modify the ramping system that leads into the hospital, and a lot of this has to do with the traffic flow and the dropoff and pickup, and Catherine Rafferty from Mount Auburn Hospital delivered a set of plans to Sue Clippinger and Sue Clippinger sent an email saying that she thought actually this was an improvement over the original proposal.

So this was part of the review that the Planning Board did on the hospital, so I wanted to bring it back to you and make sure that you didn't have any concerns or comments that needed to be addressed in depth and we

can have them obviously come back and talk to you if you do.

Part of what happened was they -- they were doing tunnel work underneath, they found with the landscaping there was another problem they had, so they had to shift things around. In this particular case the -- how does this go? So if you look at the plans, you will see that the new wall is shifted over towards the addition, so it's -- the ramp is not as wide for the entire length and it has the function of being able to deter the negative behavior that's been starting up when people drop off patients. Well, they're not supposed to have live -- they're not supposed to -- they're supposed to drop off people and move along, and what they were doing is dropping off and getting out of their car and leaving their car there. And unless the security officer was there, they -- this started to have a problem and

for the flow.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning):

They move along, but then they park on the exit ramp which makes it impossible or difficult for other cars to go around, and they want to create a couple of parking spaces that people can lay over very briefly.

PAMELA WINTERS: This is the front entryway to the hospital?

LIZA PADEN: Not the new part. This is the existing part which is underneath that overhang.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning):

You can see the -- it's this exit ramp here and they just widened it a little bit so they can have a couple parking spaces. They moved everything over. You can see the wall remained. They just moved the pedestrian ramp over to that existing wall and maintaining the buffer planting. It reduces the amount of green area by a little bit, but

allows the functioning of that whole system.

BETH RUBENSTEIN: Where is says "ramp," that's the pedestrian ramp?

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): The yellow is the pedestrian ramp. You can see the exit ramp is a little wider to accommodate the parking spaces.

BETH RUBENSTEIN: This one is the MOB, medical office building?

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): This is the new entry. (*Indicating*). Is the blue part of the new building?

LIZA PADEN: No.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): The old part.

LIZA PADEN: Does anybody want to have Mount Auburn come in and explain it?

H. THEODORE COHEN: It seems fine.

PAMELA WINTERS: It seems fine.

LES BARBER (Director of Zoning): This was just a site plan that was part of

the building that you reviewed so we thought we would make sure that you were comfortable with the change.

LIZA PADEN: That's all I have.

PAMELA WINTERS: Well, that's the end of the meeting.

(Whereupon, the meeting was adjourned at 9:15 a.m.)

CERTIFICATE

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
NORFOLK, ss.

I, Jill Kourafas, a Certified Shorthand Reporter, the undersigned Notary Public, certify that:

I am not related to any of the parties in this matter by blood or marriage and that I am in no way interested in the outcome of these matters.

I further certify that the proceedings hereinbefore set forth is a true and accurate transcription of my stenographic notes to the best of my knowledge, skill and ability.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand this 23rd day of June 2009.

Jill Kourafas
Certified Shorthand Reporter No. 149308
Notary Public

My Commission Expires:
February 26, 2010

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