

# 35 Cherry Street

CET Focus Group | Haitian Creole-Speaking | 2nd Meeting | November 1, 2021

## Project Summary & Community Engagement Process

The City of Cambridge is leading a public process to decide the future use of 35 Cherry Street, an approximately 11,000 sf vacant property in The Port. 35 Cherry Street will be acquired by the City as part of a real estate development agreement with Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT). This transfer includes the stipulation that the parcel be used in perpetuity in a way that directly benefit residents in the Port neighborhood (formerly Area Four) and surrounding communities. The City Council identified the site for affordable housing.

On November 1, 2021, staff from the Community Development Department led a focus group with Cambridge residents who speak Haitian Creole. Staff presented the results of the preceding engagement events and the group discussed additional feedback. This focus group was attended by eight community members and one outreach worker from the Department of Human Service Programs' (DHSP) Community Engagement Team (CET).

## Meeting Notes

### Project Massing and Height

- One participant stated that having more units for people with lower incomes is more important than height limitations.

### On-Site Amenities

- Two participants stated that 35 Cherry St. should have accessible design, including elevators.
- One participant said units should be arranged in a way to minimize noise between units. This person expressed concern that the noise of children playing disrupts neighbors.

### Unit Size, Bedrooms

- Participants agree with consensus from the public meetings, that 3-4 bedroom units are preferred.

### Level of Affordability

- One participant said we should prioritize constructing new housing for people with the lowest incomes.
- A participant stated that if the project is homeownership, it should be for people with very low incomes.

### Rental or Homeownership

- Three participants stated they prefer rental because it enables access for people with lower incomes.
- One participant noted that affordable rentals are scarce, and it is difficult for people moving to Cambridge to find affordable units.

- One participant who currently lives in an affordable rental unit is personally interested in more homeownership opportunities because she wants space for her children to play. She recognizes her needs are different than those who are currently unhoused and are looking for housing.