PLANNING BOARD FOR THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE GENERAL MEETING

Tuesday, May 14, 2013

7:10 p.m. in

Second Floor Meeting Room, 344 Broadway City Hall Annex -- McCusker Building Cambridge, Massachusetts

Hugh Russell, Chair
H. Theodore Cohen, Vice Chair
William Tibbs, Member
Pamela Winters, Member
Steven Winter, Member
Catherine Preston Connolly, Member
Ahmed Nur, Associate Member
Steven Cohen, Associate Member

Brian Murphy, Assistant City Manager for Community Development

Community Development Staff:

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GENERAL BUSINESS

1. Central Square Zoning Discussion

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HUGH RUSSELL: All right. This is a meeting of the Cambridge Planning Board. And the only item on our agenda tonight is a discussion of the Central Square.

We've received several communications from people who say they'd like to join in the discussion with us. So I'd like to kind of set the agenda for the evening, which is we've got a very detailed draft in front of It's got all -- it could be sent to the us. City Council tomorrow in terms of its, you know, state of preparedness. The question is is it ready? Is there more we have to consider to make the proposal better? ready to be sent knowing that in the process of reviewing these City Council will hold hearings, we will hold a hearing even after it's submitted. So that's the question.

I think the staff has probably got a presentation for us that's going to explain in some detail what is before us. Perhaps after that, we would ask people who think it's ready to maybe by a show of hands, and then those who are feel it's not ready, might take a couple of minutes a piece to tell us why. And then we can go on and discuss it. And we can all get home at a reasonable hour.

IRAM FAROOQ: Good evening and thank you. We're going to do a two-part presentation. And I'm just going to update the Board since we have a few new members on the process a little bit, try to keep that part brief, just so you know what the goals are and what the intention of the committee was and then we'll transition to Jeff who will actually walk you through the Zoning

So if the staff will start.

language which we'll walk you through it today.

The Zoning that you see before you is actually based on the recommendations of the Central Square Advisory Committee, which worked for a year, November 2011 to November 2012, and made a set of recommendations with broad goals for the vision of what Central Square should be in the future and that -their work was informed by many of the planning processes that preceded it, most importantly the Red Ribbon Commission report that was just submitted at the end of that year and was the result of a couple years of planning. And so the two sets of recommendations, Zoning recommendations, non-Zoning recommendations that were a result of the committee's work are now going to be advancing through the various city entities.

The Zoning recommendations are before you.

The non-Zoning recommendations will, you know, go on to the City Manger and then go to each of the various departments that are responsible for roadway work or infrastructure or, I don't know, lighting and other offset planning at community planning who look at open space. So all those groups will be working on these non-Zoning recommendations.

We wanted to just list for you the committee members. And as you see, it was a pretty well balanced committee with probably equal split of residents and businesses, non-profits.

HUGH RUSSELL: Can we by a show of hands see how many of those members are here tonight?

(Raising hands).

HUGH RUSSELL: Great, thanks.

IRAM FAROOQ: And so then we'll jump into the vision and the goals. And the primary goals set, you know, the five of them are listed here for you, but really the big focus for the committee was maintaining diversity in Central Square, the character that makes it special, the range of people, the range of building types, the range of ethnic foods, the services, and the fact that you can -- there's something for everybody in Central Square and to not lose that particular element and in fact continues to enhance that.

So we'll go to the first sets of goals which is focussed on housing and Central Square as a place for living. Right now most of the housing is outside of the square. The square is largely focussed as a commercial

district with some housing, but the committee felt strongly that we should have much more housing right in the square to create a mixed use district since it's so transit-oriented, it's the smart growth idea of concentrating density and a mix of uses right at transit nodes which is a big part of their vision. But equally important to make sure that that housing wasn't just for one sliver of the population, but it served this diverse range of people, of incomes, and household sizes as well as a particular focus on family-sized units. And so here you see some of the ideas of -- to encourage that. And part of -- one of the ideas was to think sensibly about parking requirements and ways to enable in-fill to happen. And an area where -- of particular focus where some housing would be good is the Osborne Triangle where there is

virtually no housing right now, and also the West Block which during the course and probably more towards the end of the process changed hands from quest properties to Twining and -- yes, to Twining, thank you.

(William Tibbs Seated.)

IRAM FAROOQ: I'm sorry, public spaces. So that was the second goal was to create a vibrant set of public spaces that served the community. And that once again that it would be welcoming and that it would provide a lot of opportunities for people to engage and really be focussed on community-serving public space both indoors and outdoors, which was kind of an interesting thing that we don't always see in most planning studies that focus on indoor public space as well.

So here's just a diagram of the

network. And as you see, it's a range of scales of public space, but also publicness and non and final components of which is making sure that programming that's something that invites people to the open space network.

So the key open space, I mean the key large open spaces are Carl Barron Plaza, Jill Brown Plaza, Lafayette Square Plaza, and City Hall lawn. And I guess I should point to these. Carl Barron Plaza, Lafayette Square, Jill Brown-Rhone, City Hall Plaza -- lawn and then finally University Park Common. they -- some are more successful right now than others. And so that range of ideas -so we came up with a range of ideas which I'm not going to go into today, but they're in the binder. So I'm going to digress for a moment and say that you all have a binder

before you where what we did was just consolidate a lot of the materials, or some of the key materials from the committee process that address a range of topics; housing transportation, retail, development economics, and sustainability. And so that way you can get at your leisure a sense of what, what was the range of discussion of the committee and get more details about what was discussed for each of these public spaces. But those are kind of the non-Zoning elements, so I'm going to keep going through here.

The next major focus of open space, and I think this interfaces with the Zoning material that you will be seeing, is the idea of Mass. Ave. as a great public space. And what interventions can help us get there.

And here you see a range, but I think the

most important one is how can we leverage public, private development to engage better with the street? And this is addressed in the design guidelines, but it's also what you do all the time when you review projects to try and make sure that it creates the best possible public face, but also thinking about that in the -- in this goal of creating a wonderful Mass. Ave.

So, again, similar to that the idea of improving the streetscape itself, and those, the private edges that we talked about, to create that interface between the public actual physical parks and parklets and plazas and also the private development and how the flow might continue through both of those.

This is what I mentioned, the indoor public space. The committee talked a lot about having a place that could host events

or where people could just gather. It might It might have an indoor have food stalls. farmer's or public market like you see below here. This picture found a lot of attraction. This is from Chattanooga, Tennessee, where they built this pavilion that essentially serves as the community room for the downtown where a lot of people gather for various events. And this is an interior view of the same space, so it's very programmable and modifiable. And this was one of the things -- I haven't talked about parking lots, but one of the topics of discussion was the public and private parking lots in Central Square, and the idea of capitalizing their redevelopment into something special and wonderful for the community. And this kind of idea or the idea of maybe a branch library in Central Square,

in the heart of Central Square, was another notion that would fall into this category.

(Ahmed Nur Seated.)

IRAM FAROOQ: And then finally programming as a way to gauge people and to give them a reason to be in the public space.

The next goal focussed on retail space and on cultural and non-profit diversity. And this really was all about, I think the pieces that will most engage with Jeff's presentation is the idea of how can we think of ground floors as not just retail, but being sort of like non-retail ground floors as sort of being active and engaging for people as they walk along? But also how can we support some of the institutions that we have in Central Square business like the dance complex or CCTV that everybody loves, but that need a home and not always able to

pay the same kind of first class market rate rents. So are there ways that we can optimize space or put them on side streets or on the parallel streets, not in the prime hundred percent Mass. Ave. location. So again that, there are incentives in that for the Zoning that Jeff will walk through.

And the idea, the key idea here is creating an FAR incentive by exempting ground floor retail and some of those non-profit and cultural uses as long as they meet the criteria that are provided. And then, again, Jeff -- I'm not going to go into this, because Jeff is going to talk about formula retail and how we've addressed the fast food problem in Central Square.

Are you going to talk about that?

Maybe I'll touch on that.

The fast food cap, there's currently a

fast food cap which has been a problem for a while, because if a cafe wants to locate in Central Square, it gets classified as a fast food establishment because it's based -- it's based on things like are you -- how much of your business is takeout and are you using paper plates or real china. And so a lot of businesses that you would want to see in Central Square get eliminated because there's actually a hard cap. So what we're talking about is removing that cap but instead actually addressing the businesses that people are concerned about, which is mostly banks and cellphone stores rather than cafes and ice cream shops. And so for that we have a formula retail intervention that Jeff will talk about.

And here, I think I spoke about this already, but the interesting thing is that

this set of community uses that we talked about include things that people want like daycare centers which are really hard to get otherwise. So the more incentives we can provide, especially if we're thinking about a lot of people living in Central Square, to provide the kinds of amenities that people need, especially families, that would be most helpful and supportive.

So market stalls, we talked about this in the context of the public room. But, you know, interesting short-term this could work even in the pop-up sense, like the winter farmer's market that just closed on the Blockbuster space in Central Square, but also of course there is the much loved summer farmer's market in Central Square. And thinking about can there be a more sheltered version of that in the future as things

redevelop.

And, again, connecting to things like the winter farmer's market, how can we find ways -- this is again not Zoning, but how can we best engage city, the Central Square Business Association and Arts Council and private property owners to make sure that vacant storefronts are occupied by something interesting like pop-up retail or a restaurant or a farmer's market.

The idea of walkable, bikeable connections creating strong network of connecting neighborhood to the square in a strong way, and that essentially the network exists, that's mostly a matter of how do you strengthen it and how do you enhance it? And the list is here. I think this is more of the same, but focussed on specific interventions like more vegetation and to

make things more pleasant to walk along. And the idea of scale transition is an important one between the neighborhood and Central Square. Because as you'll see when we go along, the recommendations here talk about upping the height and density for residential which means that the transitions between the neighborhood and that core become even more important. So you'll see we'll have a neighborhood edge district that gets created, again, that Jeff will point out as we go along.

And wayfinding less important here than in Kendall Square, but actually still pretty important because a lot of times people find it hard to tell when they're on Mass. Ave. what is just one block off. So it would be important to be able to direct people to some of the key locations.

And then again this notion of how can we utilize public development. I mean, private development to get us many of these amenities that we are talking about and do it in a very sensitive manner that engages best with the surrounding neighborhoods.

I mentioned the parking lots, I think I forgot I had this slide so I spoke too soon, but this is the -- this is the notion of the parking lots being used as a wonderful asset for the community, you know, anything from public space to the public library I mentioned or to middle income housing or a mix of affordable and middle income housing.

And on the sustainability end I mentioned the idea of smart growth and transitory end development, but these final sets most of which you saw in the context of Kendall Square/MIT Zoning, this is mostly

that same set of requirements. The only distinction is to the point that Hugh raised during the MIT discussion here the LEED Gold requirement is only recommended for commercial development because the committee felt that housing in Central Square was different, and actually it -- the affordability of housing could be impacted by additional requirements like LEED Gold. we tried to keep -- so we did not change the requirement for that. It would just be required to the LEED Silver as currently in the Ordinance.

And finally the idea of design guidelines, to shape development which you have a set of development guidelines in your package. So you'll see it addresses the kinds of things that you normally do through design guidelines, which is looking

transitions, looking at the public realm, how the development meets the public edge and trying to make sure that that remains the most positive experience.

This is just a series of the soft sites within the study area. The -- see, we talked about, previously about the city parking lots which are these gold elements. And the darker brown are parking lots that are privately owned. These are the ones on Prospect and Bishop Allen that we walked through the other day. And then the other consolidated ownerships are -- these are MIT parcels here. These are all owned by MIT. And then the quest parcels. I'm sorry, these colors are harder to distinguish here than on my screen, but this parcel here and then actually we're missing a few that are up here, that are the -- we call them the guest

parcels, but now they are the Twining parcels. So it's the consolidated ownership of multiple parcels. But also then there are some -- this is all colored similarity. But it's not the same ownership. It says these are different multiple owners. But they're soft if somebody were to combine them, you might find that that would be a developable parcel.

And I think I'm very close to the end.

But this is just a quick look at what we talked about in terms of the bulk control plane. This is what would be -- this is just a model of what might be allowed under current Zoning. So that's an 80-foot -- 80-foot? Is that right? 80-foot height limit. I always forget. 80-foot height limit for Central Square. And then as Mass.

Ave. edge, it's a 55-foot -- setback of 55

for and 45 degree bulk control plane.

This is actually -- these models were done during the course of the process, so I forgot to remove this. Hugh, you probably want to remove that height setback, because the committee in their discussion felt like the Mass. Ave. site setbacks were not as critical. But this shows that you could get some of the other major amenities that we had talked about, like some small component of middle income and maybe a larger public space that you would otherwise see during regular Article 19 discussions if we were to do a moderate increase, like maybe a 20 percent increase on height and density. And then this is more like a 30 percent. So now this is going up to the 120 that we had talked about in the recommendations, and then you would be able to get the larger public space,

the non-profit office and retail space as well as the middle income housing. And so that is really a set of -- that was the discussion. And where the committee ended up was actually at this final, this final diagram because they felt strongly that these were -- we should find a way to actually achieve all of these goals for Central Square, and this was a reasonable tradeoff in height and density but then it was only for -- if it was only for residential development and it came with the middle income housing requirement.

So, that is my presentation. And if anybody has questions before we go to Jeff, I'm happy to take that or we can just go forward.

AHMED NUR: I just had a quick one.

IRAM FAROOQ: And Ahmed was your

representative on the committee.

AHMED NUR: Yes.

I just had a quick question. You said something about you forgot about parking and then you showed in the lower right corner the picture of what looked like a crowded alleyway. I hadn't seen that picture before. Yes.

IRAM FAROOQ: Oh. This is the idea of connections through. So if you were to have development, if you were to do, say, housing on the parking lots, you want to make sure that there were retail and connections, pedestrian connections through to Mass. Ave. to say Bishop Allen or Mass. Avenue to Green Street. That's just an image of an active -- if there are active public connections through the site.

AHMED NUR: Pedestrian?

IRAM FAROOQ: Yes.

AHMED NUR: Okay, thank you.

PAMELA WINTERS: Iram, I just have a quick question. You had said something about vacant storefronts.

IRAM FAROOQ: Yes.

PAMELA WINTERS: And using those storefronts for temporary uses. Could you go into that a little bit more? Like, how would that work with in terms of rent or in terms of the people that own the buildings? I'm just curious. You had a Halloween -- there it is, yes. I think it's a great idea but I'm wondering how that would work.

IRAM FAROOQ: So, if it's a -- all of these things are things that either have happened in Central Square or are happening right now, but that this would just try to make that a more, more of an explicit

connection. Because there have been stores that rent out to the Halloween store, and that's just a -- they find a vendor who is there for a short time and it doesn't hinder their ability to keep looking for a longer term tenant because they know the Halloween store is going to end on October 31st.

On the other end in terms of arts or other cultural events, for instance, the Together Fest is going on right now in Central Square.

FROM THE AUDIENCE: Salvation Army.

IRAM FAROOQ: Salvation Army. There you go.

Empty space used that way. But we talked to Arts Council about a more direct connection, and they've said that they often have people who are, who would love to be in a space short term even to be able to choose

-- to use it as a gallery for instance.

PAMELA WINTERS: Right.

IRAM FAROOQ: And without committing some, a property owner to a long-term lease. Same way with the winter's farmer's market happened in the Blockbuster space. And that was, I think, a successful example of how something can happen while waiting for a new tenant.

PAMELA WINTERS: I think it's a great idea. Rather than seeing an empty, you know, piece of glass.

Thanks.

IRAM FAROOQ: Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay. Jeff, do you want to take over?

JEFF ROBERTS: Jeff Roberts. If you haven't heard from me. I guess you have heard from me. And I don't have a snazzy

slide presentation. I have 31 pages of rather dry text. And my goal is for right now, and hopefully you've had a chance to at least glance through that document. What I'd like to try to do is just to break down what's in that text into, into its components and describe what some of the intent is and it will certainly draw back into what Iram just described. And if there are any particular questions about the text itself, I think we can then dive into some of the sections a little, some of the text sections a little deeper at your discretion.

HUGH RUSSELL: So I'm thinking what we might hear your presentation, hear from the public, and then come back after a break and kind of dive into sections after we've got some more information.

JEFF ROBERTS: Good.

HUGH RUSSELL: But if somebody needs to ask a question to make something clear, we should do that I think now. Sorry, I keep interrupting you.

JEFF ROBERTS: Okay. That's perfectly fine.

So just to bring folks up to speed to begin with to kind of pick up from where we left off at the last meeting. If you recall last time we discussed this topic at the Planning Board, we circulated a list of the, basically a list of the points that came from both the Kendall Square and the Central Square study which would be, that incorporated into, into the Zoning as part of the Zoning recommendations. So what you see in the text that was distributed are basically those list of points set into the framework of the existing Central Square

Overlay District. It's a district that has existed since I think 1989 or '88 when it was established. And it is -- it modifies the requirements in the Base Zoning districts. It allows for opportunities for some more kind of detailed and nuanced provisions and requirements.

So, to go -- to sort of go through the major parts, the first part is the establishment of the district. And we are proposing some small modifications to the actual boundaries of the district. The most significant is the inclusion of the Osborn Triangle as was discussed in the recommendations. And the proposal also establishes subdistricts. It can be seen on the map behind me where the designation of three different subdistricts is proposed. The heart of Central Square, which is

everything along Mass. Ave. north of
Lafayette Square, the Osborn Triangle which
is that, the sort of bordered by Main Street
and someone's --

IRAM FAROOQ: I'm just pointing.

JEFF ROBERTS: Oh, it's Iram.

Between Main Street and Mass. Ave. And then the neighborhood edge district. And I think the -- we'll get into the specific revisions, but the main goal of establishing that neighborhood edge district is to, is to affirm that several of the provisions that are recommended in the, by the Central Square study are meant to apply only within that core part of Central Square along the major arterial streets and not to spill out into those areas that abut the residential neighborhoods. So that's the addition there.

The next section is the general purpose

section on page 2 and 3. Some minor modifications are proposed there just to retain consistency with the Central Square plan and design guidelines. They're really -- I think our view is that the Central Square, the current Central Square plan doesn't really substantially change what the purpose of what the Overlay District is intended to do, except just in the few minor ways.

The general provisions on page 3 and 4, again include some minor changes to, to reference the current C2 plans, Central Square plan and guidelines.

The next few pages describe the Central Square Advisory Committee which is an element of the existing Zoning that establishes an essentially a review board, an advisory review board that looks at projects both

whether they are, whether they're seeking relief from the Planning Board or from the BZA or in the cases -- or if they're not. And in the cases where they are seeking relief from the Planning Board or BZA, they submit a -- they review and submit a recommendation. Again, some minor changes are made there just to clarify some of the procedures. Because since that original Zoning was passed there have been some modifications in Article 19, the project There are a lot more projects now review. that go to the Planning Board for Special Permit review that we just wanted to make it clear what that, what that process should be.

So moving to the next detailed provision, pages 6 through 8, are the building height provisions. And that's where we start to get into the real essence of the

Central Square recommendations. The current regulations for Central Square Overlay say that it's a 55 max height limit by right and an 80-foot height limit by Special Permit and that there are certainly bulk control and setback provisions and various heights. And in some ways --

STEVEN WINTER: Jeff, could you define bulk control provisions for us?

JEFF ROBERTS: Bulk control is sort of an idea. It means that within -- that as you -- as a building gets to certain levels of height, there are provisions to ensure that the bulk of the building steps back further from the public way, from the street, or from abutting lots as the building gets taller. So it's done in a couple of ways, and the two basic ways that it achieves that are through step backs which are, for

instance, you go -- you have a building that can go up to -- if it can go up to 80 feet or above 80 feet, you say that when it gets to 65 feet, the building that has to have a cornus line and it has to have sort of a set in. So that there's a sort of a multiple planes to the building facade.

The other key way that bulk control is achieved is through an angled plane. So if you imagine sort of this, you know, this piece of paper, and this is where a property line is. You -- your building can go up to in this instance along Bishop Allen Drive, it's 45 feet. And then beginning at a point 45 feet in the air, you have an imaginary plane which controls how tall the building can go as you set back further away from Bishop Allen Drive. I believe that's -- I think in the design guidelines it's sketched

out a little bit more, but I'm not sure if we have that.

IRAM FAROOQ: It's in your package.

JEFF ROBERTS: It's in your package,

right.

STEVEN WINTER: Thank you.

So back to the height JEFF ROBERTS: itself. I was -- I'm glad that we covered that so now we can just talk about the height. So probably the easiest way to look at it is to look at the map. One thing, what I was about to mention is that one of the curious things about the Overlay District provisions is that they work in association with the Base Zoning provisions. And one of the -- one of the things that's been sort of a complication is that in terms of how to interpret this Zoning is that in the time since the Central Square Overlay District was created, the Base Zoning provisions have changed in a number of ways. So in certain instances the height has actually come, you know, the base height has actually come down to below to where the Overlay District height is, and that -- it creates a little bit of a confusion in the language where it sometimes the language -- in some places the language seems to suggest that the overlay allows more height than it's in the base district when the base district allows less. So part of what we're doing is sort of trying to normalize those regulations so that they fit better with what's under the existing Zoning.

The other main piece which is really
the main piece of the Central Square
recommendations, is to allow by Special
Permit greater heights for residential uses.
So in the heart of Central Square where

it's -- if you can see it's sort of a -- it shows up as a blue section. Where it says 80/140, that means that the allowed height by Special Permit is 80 feet for non-residential uses, 140 feet for residential uses, and it's -- and it remains 55 feet under as of right additions. And we already talked about bulk control.

We can go back into the details but I just wanted to sort of keep moving.

The next portion which is pages 8
through 12, starts on page 8, are the floor
area ratio provisions. Again, this is an
area where the Base Zoning has dropped either
two -- you know, since the Central Square
Overlay was created, has dropped to the point
where it's the same FAR as what's in the
Central Square Overlay or in some cases the
Base Zoning is actually less than what's

allowed in the -- under the Central Square Overlay provisions. So, again, we try to normalize that. And then we, and then we add the first provision on I think starting on page 8 and going to page 9 is recommended in the Central Square study, which is to create additional capacity for residential uses only. And we do that by establishing that the Planning Board can approve an increase of the total FAR on a lot to 4.0, and that is from -- in the Business B District, currently the residential limit is 3.0. In the Industry B, which is the Osborn -- oh, and this only applies in the heart of Central Square and the Osborn Triangle. Again, it does not apply in the neighborhood districts. The residential limit is 4.0 in Industry B, but what we've -- one of the things we've done is we've eliminated the mixed use

formula for calculating the allowed FAR on the lot. That's something that for sometime now we've recognized as complicating mixed use development, because if you, under the current mixed use Zoning formula, if you have a site that's part non-residential and part residential, you're allowed FAR kind of comes to somewhere in between what the allowed residential and non-residential limits are.

By doing this what we say is that you can build non-residential uses up to a certain point and you're capped at that point, and then above that you can build -- and in addition to that, you can build only residential. It's a little tricky.

HUGH RUSSELL: So the before is before the inclusionary bonus so it's only 5.2?

JEFF ROBERTS: Right.

HUGH RUSSELL: If it were all residential.

JEFF ROBERTS: It could be 5.2, and there is an inclusionary housing bonus that could apply. It's 30 percent of the floor area. That's a maximum floor area that's allowed. But, again, that bonus, that 30 percent bonus is only for residential uses, and half of it has to be -- half of the bonus has to be dedicated to affordable units. So let that sink in for a sec.

So there are additional pieces in the FAR provisions of the Zoning. On page 9 there's an exemption for residential balconies and an exemption for public rooftop spaces. Those were both items discussed in the Central Square to encourage -- in one case to encourage residential uses both residential use and sort of a residential

feel to the buildings. And then the second to encourage public use.

The section on page, the subsection on page 9 through 12 is a section that goes back to what Iram was describing; finding ways to incentivize that desired mix of ground floor uses which includes retail in a variety of So cultural and community-serving, scales. non-commercial uses, and public spaces that could be thought of as public. Sort of a public room space that could be, that could serve civic purposes. That could serve as an indoor public market or other uses that were envisioned in the Central Square process as contributing positively to the feeling of community and civic use in Central Square.

Creating an exemption for these types of uses adds a bit of complication to the Zoning process, particularly because, you

know, when the Planning Board approves these, it's approving a plan that for, you know, for a design that's going to be built. And so a lot of the text that's in that section deals with how to ensure ongoing compliance and how do you procedurally deal with a space which the Planning Board has approved an exemption. And the exemption, you know, let's remember it means that you get to build more housing or commercial uses elsewhere on your site in exchange for -- and, you know, the equivalent amount of other types of uses in exchange for providing this more publicly beneficial use on the ground floor. And, you know, making sure that there's a procedure to make, to allow those kinds of uses to evolve over time, because we imagine that they would evolve over time. But to make sure that they remain consistent with what the original

intent was, what was envisioned in the Zoning and was approved by the Planning Board when they came in to get their building design approved. I'm sure there will be more to talk about.

So starting on page 13 and going all the way to page 19, there's a section on special use and design provisions. This, is you know, moving from the -- sort of moving from the additional allowances and exemptions into the more strict limitations. And in many of these cases they can, the limitations can be modified by the Planning Board as they can in many of our Overlay Districts. pages 13 and 14 revise the ground floor design requirements with the intent of keeping active occupied uses on the ground floor and moving uses like, you know, mechanical loading, parking, uses that have

more negative impact on the public realm, shifting those away from the public streets and onto the interior of lots. And it's -it's just a -- it goes a little step further than what's in the current Zoning. It also goes a bit further in that it requires along Main Street, most of the frontage of buildings along Main Street are required to be an active type of non-residential use which with the idea that over time we would imagine that they would be, they could be converted into retail uses even if they're not viable as retail uses right when they're built.

And then along Mass. Ave. the frontages is required to be predominantly retail use.

There's a -- one of the issues that came up a lot in discussion is bank frontage.

And so they're on page 16. There's a

provision that limits the frontage of bank uses to 25 feet and to no more than 50 percent of the total lot frontage along a public street. The intent being to try to encourage if you do have a bank in that space, not letting it take up a massive amount of frontage, but having a smaller entrance and then maybe having, you know, the principal use, you know, the bank use is further set back into the building.

The fast order food section, Iram mentioned the reasons for removing the cap and loosening some of the requirements on retail bakeries which is also, it's part of a related provision in the Overlay District, and then implementing a provision for formula businesses. This is the first time in Cambridge's Zoning Ordinance we put a limitation on what's called formula business.

There are other communities around Massachusetts and around the country that have, that have had these provisions. idea is that you're taking some -- instead of looking at it as a, as a strictly a use issue, you're looking at it somewhat more as a design issue. You're saying that we are not, we are not essentially concerned about what kind of business you're doing, but we're concerned about whether your business presents a sort of a generic and, you know, formulaic, lends that type of character which is in fitting with the goals of Central Square, which is meant to be a more unique district and a more unique character. So a formula business, which under this definition has certain related characteristics with other businesses around the state or around the country, would be required to come to the

Planning Board and demonstrate how the particulars of their business and the look, sort of the look and feel of that business fits within the goals for Central Square.

So -- oh, and then the -- and then finally there's a provision in that section on pages 18 and 19 that is meant to provide a little bit of flexibility in use. One of the goals for Central Square is to encourage local business. And one of the things that we found, especially over the past several years, is that these more creative local businesses don't always fit neatly into a Zoning category. We sometimes get chocolate makers and, you know, gluten free bakers who come to talk to us about what their -- what kind of use they fit into. Maybe they're selling some things on-site. Maybe they're doing some catering business somewhere else.

Maybe they're providing things to somewhere else in the area. So they don't always fit neatly into one category. And we wanted to provide some flexibility in order to encourage that kind of use to let the Planning Board provide some modifications to what's in the Base Zoning.

So --

H. THEODORE COHEN: Jeff?

JEFF ROBERTS: Yes.

H. THEODORE COHEN: I just wanted to be clear that formula businesses are not just restaurants or food operations. Do I take it that's something like a GAP Store would be a formula business?

JEFF ROBERTS: That's right.

Anything that we have -- we've classified as anything that's considered a retail or consumer service.

H. THEODORE COHEN: Right.

JEFF ROBERTS: So it could be the dreaded Sprint store people bring up as an example a lot of times.

So the -- where was I?

The next section is parking and loading requirements. I won't go too much into that. We talked about that a lot in the Kendall Square discussions and the MIT Zoning discussions. The theory is similar that we would want to set a hard maximum of parking for new uses in the district. We want to provide flexibility to lower the required minimum parking, where it's appropriate to do so, and we want to allow opportunities to have shared parking arrangements among different uses in order to limit the total amount of parking, the total amount of new parking that we have to provide.

The next section is a new section that we are proposing. It's a lot area, a waiver of the lot area per dwelling unit. I think we had a little discussion of this at the last meeting to -- that for in order to accommodate the types of -- type of residential development that would be, would be envisioned and perhaps to accommodate different types of residential which might include more -- people have sometimes brought up micro-loft development. It could be, you know, a different style of housing that has a different lot area size requirements, that we would want to have that flexibility that the lot area per dwelling unit requirements wouldn't get in the way of that.

The next section is the middle income housing requirements which have been discussed several times. Also discussed in

the Kendall Square Zoning and the Kendall Square recommendations. The requirement that's proposed here would be that where you exceed the Base Zoning requirements either in height or FAR. So for instance, in the Business B District, that would mean exceeding 3.0 FAR or exceeding 80 feet in height. You would take any, take any residential development that exceeds those limits and 25 percent of that should be provided as middle income housing units. That's a section of the Zoning that we still feel like we need requires some more time to work with the affordable housing trusts and our own housing staff to try to narrow down some of the details of that in terms of how those units would be, how those units would be priced, what the, what the specific standards we would want to apply to ensure

that those units fit well within our housing program across the city.

So, the next section is sustainability provisions. Again, those will probably look familiar in terms of the MIT and Kendall Square Zoning recommendations. requirements would be for new commercial development to achieve a LEED Gold standard rather than the city-wide standard of LEED Silver. To conduct energy monitoring, employ cool roofs, employ stricter storm water management requirements, and in certain areas to perform a study of utilizing district steam system for energy needs. And then there would be -- similarly there would be a Special Permit provision to allow some relief if there were a shared energy system or a co-generation system proposed to minimize heat energy waste.

So the next section is a modification to an existing section. It's the standard for issuance of a Special Permit. And we've provided those for greater consistency for the Central Square plan and design guidelines. They are, they remain very similar to what's in place now, but have added some language that is more closely related to the current Central Square plan.

There is -- the next section is on signs, but there is no change proposed there. The section on page -- and then there's the two additional sections. The final pages are new sections which are proposed to address the final issue that Iram was discussing having to do with development that's sort of the scattered site nature of ownership and existing development patterns in Central Square. The first new section of 20.307

simply allows the Planning Board to grant a Special Permit to aggregate a number of lots that may or may not be contiguous into a single, sort of a single development entity and can -- all the Zoning regulations would apply the same as they would for any other lot, but instead of having to get separate Special Permits for separate styles of development, you would need to -- you could come to the Planning Board and get one Special Permit for a development on multiple sites, and the Special Permit would include provisions for phasing, may include provisions for how those lots could be disaggregated at some point in the future In some ways it's similar to over time. what's allowed for a PUD but it's -- but it's just really a mechanism that allows for a coordinated development plan.

And then the final 20.308 is a transfer of development rights provision. That's a provision that we have in place in other areas of the city. The idea here is to, again, to allow for the shifting of development across non-contiguous lots for the purpose of allowing lots to be, allowing for historic preservation, for moving the development rights away from neighborhood edges and into the heart of Central Square and Osborn Triangle areas, and to provide new opportunities for development of housing where the -- where either the ownership patterns or just the scattered nature of lot ownership might make it difficult to utilize those development -- that development potential for housing.

So that goes through all the Zoning.

So I'm happy to either do immediate questions

or to take questions later.

HUGH RUSSELL: Well, I would -- as I said, I'd like to go dig into anything people want to dig into after we hear from the public and after we take a break.

STEVEN WINTER: Okay.

HUGH RUSSELL: But if there's something that's unclear. And so --

H. THEODORE COHEN: Can I just ask one question of Jeff or Iram?

HUGH RUSSELL: Sure.

H. THEODORE COHEN: Is it my understanding that what is in this proposal was the consensus that came out of the Central Square Study Committee?

IRAM FAROOQ: Yes, that's correct.

The only difference is that there are points where we have modified things as they emerged. As Jeff started to write the

Zoning, there are certain points that emerged where things, I think substantively, nothing has changed, but that are little details that may not have been discussed at committee that are very technical that you'll see in here.

But typical --

H. THEODORE COHEN: Right, but in terms of the broad concepts that was what came out of the consensus of the committee?

IRAM FAROOQ: Yes.

H. THEODORE COHEN: Okay.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay, so I said earlier I would ask for just a show of hands of people who were basically in support of the proposals. So if you could raise your hand and agree that this is basically a good proposal.

(Raising hands).

HUGH RUSSELL: And then I would --

I've got four names here, but how many people would like to speak on the subject of what we have to change?

(Raising hands).

HUGH RUSSELL: A dozen hands or so.

Okay, well let's start off and do that.

The usual Planning Board three-minute time
limits applies, and Pam is our timekeeper.

The first name on the list is Nancy Ryan.

And after Nancy is Lee Ferris.

NANCY RYAN: Where would you like me to be? I could probably speak from here.

HUGH RUSSELL: We'd like you to come up to the mic so it gets properly transcribed because we care about that. And your name is?

NANCY RYAN: I'm Nancy Ryan. I live at Four Ashburton Place in Central Square.

My backyard backs up to the neighborhood

And I appreciate the Planning Board edge. giving time for the people to make some I appreciate all of the detail comments. that Jeff and Iram and others have put into this. And as Iram mentions, there are some things that are very technical and the devil is often in the details. So this needs quite a lot of absorption, and especially absorption for people like me who are not technicians, who are not Zoning experts, who really need to look at the implications of I attended a lot of the Central Square this. I'm very Advisory Committee meetings. concerned about the timing. There's a rush to move this thing forward. I keep hearing that they want the city -- you all or someone wants the City Council to take this up by the summer meeting. I think that's much too fast for the kinds of height changes that are

potential here. 140-foot residential buildings in Central Square plus mechanicals, that's a big changes to the atmosphere in Central Square and we need to look at that. We're worried, and I should have said that I represent the Cambridge Residents Alliance for a group of people who are both homeowners and subsidized housing tenants and regular housing tenants. We're very concerned about the traffic and transit implications. understand that you really -- that a lot of this plan is based on the idea of transit-oriented development, but we know we have a big transit problem. So it's on the Red Line in particular and in general and the bus situation on Central Square. that's not part of your Zoning consideration but it is part of the bigger picture and it's part of the basis of the plan that all of

these details are based on.

And just one other point, we really oppose the sale of any public land. Leasing is one thing. We oppose the sale of public parking lots. So -- and you've received our letter so you have a general sense of what we, of what we have to say. So, again, I want to appreciate you for giving the kind of time that you all give and for letting some of us speak.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay, Lee Ferris.

And after Lee, Steve Kaiser.

UNIDENTIFIED MALE: Is there a list?

HUGH RUSSELL: There is a list, but

it's a short list and most people aren't on

it. I'll just call people after.

LEE FERRIS: Hi. I'm Lee Ferris. I
live at 269 Norfolk Street and I'm a member

of the Area 4 Coalition and the Cambridge Residents alliance. And I wanted to pick up on the points around housing that the Area 4 -- excuse me, that the Cambridge Residents Alliance put in its letter to the Planning Board. So the Cambridge Residents Alliance is very concerned with ensuring increased affordable housing and with protecting and preserving existing affordable housing, particularly Newtown Court and Welsh and Elm. However, we think that the added affordable housing that comes from allowing such an increase in height is not worth the negative impacts of the height shadow traffic and transit congestion and the stress on the roads and sewers and other infrastructure. And that the bonus density being proposed for the middle income housing would permit height and density that's really out of scale with

the overall neighborhood, including on Main Street where it starts to connect with two- and three-story homes.

And the other thing is that we are looking to see in Zoning some kind of mandate for the affordable units to have a certain amount of family housing. And I'm not sure if that's in there now or not, but that is a concern of ours, is family-sized units. And then I also wanted to mention that we would -- a lot of the land in Central Square's owned by MIT. The Cambridge Residents Alliance just finished saying that the Kendall Square proposal that MIT did should have had substantially more housing for its graduate students and fellows in the Kendall Square plan. They had the 300 units or so that were proposed and approved, and so consequentially since MIT didn't do housing

for its students in Kendall Square, we would be particularly interested in the creation of some kind of requirement for the large institutions in the city to house their students, particularly their graduate students, because we've seen that those students are living approximately in Area 4, in Cambridgeport, and other areas near the institutions and Harvard Square respectively on its end. And they do impact prices of rental housing in our neighborhoods. And if hundreds or even thousands of them were withdrawn, that would be a great way to create spaces that families could live at affordable, moderate rents in our neighborhoods.

PAMELA WINTERS: If you could wind down your comments, please.

LEE FERRIS: Great.

PAMELA WINTERS: Because your time's up. Thank you.

LEE FERRIS: I'm so sorry.

PAMELA WINTERS: That's okay.

LEE FERRIS: Yeah, so those are our main concerns around housing. And we -- we are very concerned that this degree of height changes even though it's for housing, is going to have lots of other adverse consequences even though we also strongly support affordable housing. We're looking for other ways to get to affordable housing like the city parking lots.

Thanks.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

So next is Steve Kaiser. And after Steve, Peter Valentine.

STEVE KAISER: Mr. Chairman, the original question was is this Zoning petition

ready to be sent out to the Council? along. My answer is an emphatic no. It is not ready for prime time. The issue here is planning versus Zoning. Planning must come There should be public hearings on first. that and public discussion. And then the Zoning can be based on the plan. And we need to have a document, a plan that we can look at. When Alewife was done, they had a copy of the plan that looked like this. They had a copy of the Zoning Petition that looked like that. Separate things that you could The problem was the plan came out read. seven months after the Zoning. Okay?

Now, I've talked to members of the CDD staff, and I'm told well, yes, that's the way the city has always done it. There's always been Zoning first and planning second. That is backwards. Absolute backwards. And if

we're doing it wrong in the past, we should do it right from now on. And now is the time to start. We should also learn from the Kendall Square experience, the MIT Zoning. There what was the state of planning? We had two incomplete master plans done by different consultants. We had an incomplete traffic study. Incomplete transit study. Housing architecture, wind and shadow, street design, historic preservation all either incomplete or not done at all. Big planning vacuum there.

Now, let's look at Central Square. We have a plan for housing incentives here and yet it is totally blind to what happened to the housing incentives under ECaPs. Where they were in there for a certain period of time, Alexandria came in and said oh, we want an upzoning so we can allow the same height

and FAR and take away -- well, basically they want the same incentives that were in-house and so we lost all the housing incentives. Again, in Central Square, traffic issues have not been completed. They don't deal with the safety of pedestrians. Transit and the Red Line again not complete. And the most fascinating one is historic preservation and neighborhood preservation. Because you have a handout tonight. First I've seen of this It's a splendid document. It shows all map. of the boundaries and it shows all of the areas that are on the National Historic Register. That's the first step in doing the plan, not the last step.

And this is wonderful work but it's dated March of this year. So the Advisory Committee could not have seen this because they haven't met since November. Wow.

So here's the policy that we should adopt: No Zoning before planning. That was the original action with the MIT Kendall Square submission. This Board said no, no, no, you gotta complete the planning first. That was the decision under the Yano Petition, that's why it was withdrawn because we wanted to allow the planning to be complete before the Zoning was acted upon. So the simple answer here is shelf the Zoning until the planning is done.

One last thing I'd like to summarize is new Zoning petitions that would come in and be concurrent were shortly following this Zoning if it does move forward. And I would be willing and prepared to submit them and others may, too. First, it would mandate the planning -- a Zoning Amendment. That would mandate the planning that must be done first

within a public hearing before there can be approval of upzoning. Upzoning being defined as higher FARs or increased height.

PAMELA WINTERS: Steve, could you wrap up your comments?

STEVE KAISER: And secondly -- one more sentence.

PAMELA WINTERS: Yes.

STEVE KAISER: One last thing is there must be compliance with Article 7 in the Declaration of Rights of the state Constitution. It hasn't been discussed by this Board publicly that I know. And this would be a way of getting the discussion out into the public. So these two items here would be basically a compliance with good planning and with good law.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

Peter Valentine.

PETER VALENTINE: Peter Valentine. Two pages. The committee uses a lot of prime words to describe what it did, but what it amounts to is crowding to make more money. Open space -- I was highly involved in the beginning of University Park, and there was supposed to be a large active open space near Central Square. Forest City stole that It created its corporate park which, space. you know, you just can walk around in. not an active park and it's not near Central Square. The University Park was supposed to uplift Central Square. And then it has events in the far distance where you can't even see the people to say it has events If it grew to make Central Square there. look like the monstrosity of downtown Boston, is that the way to achieve success by copying what everybody else does? Cambridge will easily sustain its financial success while maintaining the history of Central Square and Cambridge is founded by humans its skyline. and love and respect for the great nature works of their creator. A city in harmony with human sociality, human craftsmanship, grounded small business, places that enable family cultivation under open sunny skies. Big corporate, money-worshiping, controlled-dominating buildings have a right to exist because they are part of the everything in existence. But they cannot be allowed to destroy the environments in which humans express and experience they're wonderfully sensitive and immense cause and The residents and businesses of potentials. Central Square highly intelligent, they are aware of new things that are happening but

also aware of the deep internal everlasting things which will, which are a foundation of They're in touch with the bottom line life. reality. They will evolve Central Square into a unique place, unique place that truly is in a slow careful manner as a tree grows. There's a hidden agenda goal behind this relentless corporate expansion which is to turn humans into more easily controlled bionic cyborgs. This is part of what's the value of what's happening. Okay? Cyborgs. There's a book given out at one of their lectures in which you can, you'll see a humans with machine parts in them. It features all kinds of happy people. Here is science, mind and machine, okay, all the subtleties of human potentials and the things that humans love too bothersome to them. Ι consider corporations which have no respect

for human greatness as non-human. That's what we naturally are. And their physical size and amounts. Last sentence. You may be afraid to face this, but the future doesn't belong to cowards.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

So, now --

PAMELA WINTERS: That was exactly three minutes.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay. So I think what we're going to do is we'll start on this side and sweep across the room. So who wants to speak, raise their hand over in this area. Yes, sir.

RICHARD GOLDBERG: Thank you. My
name is Richard Goldberg. I live at 170
Harvard Street. I'm on the leadership of the
Area 4 Neighborhood Coalition. I'd like to
actually correct a misapprehension that came

out earlier in the meeting. The Area 4 Coalition is the oldest neighborhood group in the city. We were not invited to participate in the C2 process and none of our members were on it. So it's actually not fair to say that the community spoke or at least all members of the community spoke. We have sent a letter to the Planning Committee detailing our opposition to upzoning. I won't go over every point of that letter. I would like to say that we actually challenge the basic premise of C2 conclusion, which is that if you go higher, you're going to get more affordable housing. We think that what's going to happen is you're going to go higher and that's going to disrupt the existing neighborhood. And we would like to see a lot more attention paid to the transition from large towers in Central Square to an existing

residential neighborhood in which parking is already a problem. We are not opposed to an affordable housing. We'd like to see a lot more of it. We're kind of suspicious of the fact that city land, city parking lots, is going to be given away to private developers and we're not sure how much affordable housing is going to result from that give away. Many of us are committed to the farmer's market in Central Square. It's one of the great amenities that makes the city quite livable, and we see no provision for that farmer's market. The infrastructure complaints that have been raised outside of the C2 Committee, parking, public transportation, have not really been addressed. We would like to know that things like the H-Mart utility boondoggle whereas the building can't be built because there's

insufficient electricity isn't really going to affect services in the existing neighborhood. So in short, I think what I'd like to say is that there's a plan to have a kind of step down from the project into the neighborhood, and we're very leery that that actually is going to exist. What we see happening is that there's going to be pressure on rents in the existing neighborhood as a result of massive market rate building in Central Square.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

Who else wants to speak?

Alex, sure. And then --

ALEX TWINING: Hi. My name is Alex Twining. Members of the Planning Board, we appreciate the many meetings and the broad scope of the lengthy several years community

process assessing Central Square, including the Red Ribbon Commission and the C2 Advisory Committee. As the owners of portions of three blocks of the heart of Central Square at the strategic intersection of Mass. and Main, we look forward to creating a lively mix of shops, restaurants, apartments, offices, and open space. We hope to bring back a level of excitement, activity, and vibrancy not seen in Central Square as the heyday of downtown Cambridge in the 1920s to the 40s. We hope to re-establish the historic identity of Mass. Ave. and Main Therefore, we are keenly interested Street. in this new Zoning and its ability to enable a bright new future that can transform Central Square and reclaim it as the true center of Cambridge, the downtown. We will study the proposed Zoning carefully and be

back to the Board with our thoughts on the Zoning and how it can enable a great project on our site. As you know from our pioneering efforts in Kendall Square, we're highly interested in creating a diversity of housing, exciting retail, and great open space like we've developed at Watermark and Cambridge Landing. Cambridge, like most older cities, continues to have a serious need for all types of housing. While the factories of Kendall and Central are long gone, the high tech economy is booming and driving demand for more places to live, play, shop, and dine. The new Zoning for Central and Kendall attempts to solve the city-wide housing crisis with isolated programs for middle income housing separate from the successful city-wide affordable housing program and tied to urban forum. We believe

to truly address the needs of middle income housing, the city needs to establish a program that draws on the economic abundance from across Cambridge from Harvard Square to North Point. The city should expand its affordable housing program to include funding for middle income housing from office, lab, retail, hotel, and housing in all areas of the city and not just be isolated to housing built in Central and Kendall.

If Central needs more middle income housing, than the millions of square feet of new tech space across the city in new hotels, retail, and housing should help to pay for it. This is active of all parties and beneficial for producing more housing expeditiously.

Finally as the Board evaluates the detailed Zoning language, we believe it would

be extremely helpful to consider just what all these words translate into in terms of building form in order for you to visualize the future of Central Square. This may lead you to consider some further refinement to allow more form-based Zoning approach such as in the North Point master plan. Form base Zoning would enable the city to promote a vision for Central Square, reinforced by an inspired urban design like the great cities of Paris and Washington, D.C.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Could I ask you a question? You said you're going to be making recommendations to us. What's the time frame for that?

ALEX TWINING: Probably in the next couple of weeks.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay, thanks.

DENNIS CARLONE: My name is Dennis

Carlone, 16 Martin Street in Cambridge is

where I live. I worked in Central Square for

about 15 years, and feel I have a pretty good

understanding of it. And I think a lot of

the policy that's been discussed makes sense.

I think the plan does need more work and

refinement. But just a couple of thoughts.

One goal on the front page says encourage housing as a dominant use -- thank you. As a dominant use. And my concern is I don't know if a district anywhere where there is biotech life science buildings and housing that work successfully together. And what I mean by that, is that when we did the old Hyberdon (phonetic), now Pfizer building on the river, one of the first things that the engineers did was study the exhaust, and they said thank God there isn't housing within two

Now that has stayed with me. blocks. there's an impact there. And the first one in if it's R&D or biotech, whatever, could impact the partners -- the neighbors. So I, I totally agree with, and I think most people do, the goal of housing in Central Square, the area and Osborn Triangle makes sense. Well, let's guarantee it. In North Point there was a percentage of housing versus commercial development. Also there was a height transition that respected the East Cambridge neighborhood more directly perhaps than here. I'm not a hundred percent sure of that, but that's my sense. So I would encourage you to think about both of those things. MIT is the major owner of Osborn Triangle. If indeed they're thinking of housing and biotech R&D, they might come to that conclusion on their own. But there are

other owners. And I think that's really up to the city to say if we really want a thousand units of housing, where should they be? And emphasize that. No. 2.

No. 3, environmental sustainability. I've mentioned this to some of my colleagues in the department. All glass buildings are They might pass LEED because LEED not green. was blackmailed into cutting its guidelines on the amount of glass by a certain group of people which I am a part of. And Toronto has the same climate as Cambridge. And Toronto now regulates, says you cannot have more than 40 percent glass in any wall. And the reason is -- the name of that study, by the way, is called Heating the Night Sky. buildings after about ten years heat the night sky because most developers, I think, unlike the one who just spoke before us, do

not maintain their glass wall systems. And in fact, that's what happens. And I think that's -- when we talk about being a green city, that's fundamental. There are other issues about glass and the amount of energy it takes to make that and aluminum, but I'll let that one pass.

And finally, this is a complex Zoning package. No question about it. It needs refinement, sure, like any Zoning package. That's why you're here and that's your comments. We're not discussing design guidelines tonight. What I learned 30 years as a consultant with the city is the design guidelines -- I know -- the design guidelines are absolutely critical. The stronger and more specific they are, the better it is, not just for the neighborhood, but for the developer, for the city itself, for you, for

everybody in this room. And we haven't discussed them. And to me they go hand in hand with Zoning. They are one in the same as far as I'm concerned.

And one of the things -- I briefly looked at the guidelines, I thought actually we would discuss them tonight, is fitting in with the scale and breaking down the scale of the building. And one of the buildings that were used as an example is the little glass building that Harvard built on Mount Auburn Street as glass as a good alternative. Well, it's good when it's about 70 feet long like that building. But when it's 300 feet long, something's missing. It has no -- little character.

And finally, in the design guidelines, this overview -- you probably all know about the public space work done in New York City

in the 70s, 80s, and 90s and these cut-throughs, and the developer if you built a plaza you could go higher and all that. Well, most of those spaces have turned out to be pretty worthless because there was no follow through and the guidelines were not thought out. I would encourage you to take what you have and refine it and really work on the guidelines and think about North Point as a model, especially with the height concerns that you hear spoken today. A lot of the policies are great. Policies are not a plan. Policies set up the plan.

Thank you.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

Yes, Ma'am.

CAROLYN SHIPLEY: Carolyn Shipley,
Laurel Street, Cambridgeport. I live in

Cambridgeport which Central Square is part of Cambridgeport. I don't know if any of you here live in that neighborhood. Great, wonderful. It's -- let me backtrack.

I've lived here 32 years, but prior to that I lived in Boston but I worked in Cambridge. So going back 40 years I have been going through Central Square. I go through Central Square almost every day now, but even then I did. Thank you.

Central Square has been changed twice, upgraded twice, made beautiful, you know, new Carl Barron Plaza, etcetera, etcetera. Alvin Thompson Plaza.

Cambridge -- Central Square was a problem 40 years ago. We had the same problem this year 40 years later. This study has lovely photographs in it. They're not photographs of Cambridge. They're not

photographs of Central Square. They're beautiful photographs maybe from San Francisco, I don't know, Atlanta, somewhere They're not Cambridge and they're not else. Central Square. All the talk about building buildings is about glass, mortar, and steel. It is not about people. We have people in Central Square that we've had for 40 years. You know who I'm talking about I think. These are the wounded veterans with PTSD. These are the abused women who were thrown out of their house by their husbands. live on the street or they live at -- on the rise or in a shelter, but they're in Central Square. These are the alcoholics. These are the disabled people. These are the people who can't find work. We have two officers, the city has assigned to work with them. Officer Helberg (phonetic) and Price, officer Price who are working with them and have found some of them housing. A lot of the people, though, that are in Central Square are housed but they have these problems. They have these psychological problems. myself have gotten -- helped two people, two women who came from abused situations get into -- get through the system and they're housed. But there are many more out there. And these women were sleeping on the street. This is -- these people will be there when you build these beautiful little plazas and like at that. I'm sorry, I find -- we have to think of the people. We have -- we can't throw them out. We can't build big buildings.

Another thing is there's a group called Vision Central Square that was started by Rachel Gunther and her husband Ethan Sedan

(phonetic). They started it because they have two children and they live near Central Square and they were really worried about this environment for their children. And so they wanted to help upgrade Central Square and get rid of the trash, the litter, maybe beautify Central Square, make it safer, get the police to be more vigilant. I posted something last week on their list serve about the fact that the city wants to plan family housing on Mass. Avenue in Central Square. If I had children, I wouldn't want to raise them in that environment right on the street, you know, no playground. But parents on that list serve spoke up, wrote back and said, we are concerned right now. We're living in Central Square. We are concerned for the safety of our children now, and they cannot imagine as I cannot imagine bringing more

families into Central Square, more children into this -- not just the people that hang out, but we have stabbings and --

PAMELA WINTERS: Could you wind down your comments, please.

CAROLYN SHIPLEY: The Hi Fi Pizza, and we have brawls and other things going on at Middle East. We have all kinds of crime. We have drug dealing. We have alcoholic people. I would not want my child to be brought up in that environment. So to say we're going to build family units, and that means three bedrooms, and bring families into Central Square, bring children into that environment, I think you have to think about that and realize that all those beautiful pictures are not Central Square.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay, thank you very much.

was gridlock. I left the library area at 3:45 today trying to drive to Belmont. It took about 40 minutes. I couldn't get out of Cambridge. That's now. So you want to bring more workers, more employees in here, more people, and that's from the mid-Cambridge. Can't get out of Cambridge.

So thank you very much for your time.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay.

Yes, in the back row.

JACKIE KING: Hi, my name is Jackie
King and I live at 40 Essex Street and I'm a
member of the Area 4 Coalition and the
Cambridge Residents Alliance. I actually
have a letter here from some Essex Street
neighbors that have raised many of the same
concerns that people have been talking about,
about the increased traffic and transit, the

lack of a proper study. The fact that the coming of H-Mart needs to be included in this I mean we know what it's like overall plan. to live there. We know how hard it is to find a place to park. And we certainly have the image of, you know, hundreds more cars, you know, going around our streets looking for places to park. So it's not, it's something that we're worried about. But the main thing I wanted to talk about was something that other people have also touched on, which is this idea about the need for housing and especially affordable housing as well as middle income housing. Well, as far as we can tell, the huge development juggernaut that is underway in Cambridge, both commercial development and residential development, the idea that these tall towers are gonna be built in Central Square and

filled primarily with market rate and luxury housing and then you'll reserve a few units for affordable housing and say well, that's really all you can get. That's all that's realistic. And we want to say that we don't think that's true. We think that, in fact, what happens is that more people get driven out of the city by doing that than the number of affordable units that you create to keep people in the city. So that in the end it -what ends up happening is essentially a displacement of one population by another. So it's not that, you know, we have anything against high tech workers or people that are making good salaries, and many of us are like that, it's just that Cambridge is undergoing such a radical transformation that it requires a certain kind of bold vision on the part of the Planning Board and the City

Council to try to keep and actually keep a diverse population here as opposed to just using those words. I know everybody says they want to keep diversity in Cambridge, but it's going to require -- I mean, we'd like to see those city parking lots have, you know, 100 percent affordable housing or 50 percent, not 10, 11, 12 percent affordable housing. And we think that there are programs and there are ways that that can be done if everybody put their heads together in cooperation with the neighborhoods, we could do that.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

GARY DMYTRYK: I have mobility

limitations can I speak from here.

HUGH RUSSELL: If you speak really loudly.

GARY DMYTRYK: I'll speak really loudly. Just a simple request -- oh, thank you. My name is Gary Dmytryk, D-m-y-t-r-y-k. I live at 2440 Mass. Ave.

I want to say that it's difficult for me to imagine from looking at the map what the numbers are, what Central Square would look like under these new Zoning guidelines, and I'm wondering if it might be possible to have some kind of a model that would -- a physical model or a computer model that we could access over the internet that would show us what Central Square would look like if it were both out to these new Zoning guidelines and compare it to what it is now for instance if that would be possible.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay, thank you. Yes, sir.

Thank you. PAUL STONE: I'm Paul Stone, 219 Harvard Street. There are a number of things about this process that have concerned me. The process of this Central Square Advisory Committee and developing these proposals. I have no bone to pick about what motivation was there, but it seemed to me from the very beginning this thing was aimed like a heat-seeking missile towards development. And the fact that we ended up with 16- or 18-story buildings on the proposal is no surprise. I think it's --I live three blocks from Central Square, from the heart of Central Square, and quite honestly I find these buildings, the heights of these buildings just absolutely unacceptable. I think the character, the rhythm, the health of the people who live there, the lifestyle is going to all be

altered by that. I also think that the two persons previous said about the gridlock is Just to get out of the Central Square true. square via Western Avenue is absolutely just a nightmare. Now especially with construction. But even though now with any rush hour. And we're talking about 18 million square feet of development over the next 20 years and nobody's doing a master I mean, it's sort of like is something plan. missing from this? And I think what Steve Kaiser said about planning is absolutely critical. I don't think you guys should allow this stuff to go through without asking for plans. You should have a master plan. You should say why is this coming to me without a master plan? Anyway, that's my opinion.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

JOHN PITKIN: John Pitkin,

P-i-t-k-i-n, 18 Fayette Street. I have an observation and a broader point. Observation is about the family housing in Central I have two daughters that have now Square. have starting families of their own. They've just relocated. I can't imagine that either one of them would consider living -- moving to Central Square even with the designs that I've seen. It's just -- with small children. It's just -- thinking of it as a place to raise a family, not just to have them going to a tot lot and then what? So it's just a reality. But my, I -- but I have another point I want to mention about sustainability, I'm glad that Dennis Carlone spoke about it. It really is part of the environment that we're dealing with. And I mean the planning

environment, not just the global environment. We've passed the time, and I think this is something that Planning Board really needs to focus on and think about it. We have passed the time for long term and gradual responses for climate changes. Central Square may see sea level surge flooding in our lifetime. It's a real possibility if you look at Hurricane Sandy, you put those kinds of conditions in the Boston area and look at where the water would be, it gets pretty darn close to Central Square. So these are things, this is part of the environment that we're living in. And one of the things that we have to do is have urgent and rapid reductions in greenhouse gas emissions. I'm glad that sustainability is on the agenda and I'm glad that Dennis Carlone said, I'm not at all sure that LEED Gold is the answer. But I will say one thing, Jonathan Rose, the President of Rose Corporation that specializes in building affordable housing spoke at Harvard a couple of weeks ago, and he said the affordable housing sector is leading the way in sustainability. So I don't see the logic of letting housing off of the hook for sustainability and low greenhouse gas emissions whether it's -- if the shell is built correctly, and I think as Dennis Carlone is right, that limiting glass is extremely important and the shell's important, but the answer may not be LEED Gold. But taking housing out of that, giving housing no obligation to be sustainable makes no sense in Central Square or anywhere else and affordability is no excuse for laxing those standards.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

Anybody else over here want to speak?

I see a hand in the middle of the back row.

PATRICK ROWE: Hi, my name is Patrick Rowe.

HUGH RUSSELL: You're next.

PATRICK ROWE: I was a member of the C2 Committee. I work within the real estate group at MIT. I'm also a Board member of the Central Square Business Association, and I'm actively involved in that organization here in Central Square. A couple of things. did want to touch on the C2 process. I thought the process was a great process in the sense of us committee members really learned a lot from each other. We learned a lot from the consultants that were brought in, CDD, as well as the public. It was a very engaged process where the public was

very active and it was a real opportunity, I think, for learning from the different members of the community here. And in many ways I think that process was a good one. I would say that I think a lot of the conclusions that came out of that C2 process were really goals and visions. And it really centered around creating incentives for things that we think are important for this community such as housing, such as base for non-profits and the arts, open space, sustainability, several of the things that Iram and others have mentioned. And I think the way that the committee really focussed on at the end was how do we create incentives to do that. But do that through incentives not through the creation of restriction beyond the existing Base Zoning that is existing today. And I think in many ways that was the focus of the committee and our vision if you will. The process that we're in now is how do we translate that vision into specific Zoning language? And that's a challenging, complex thing to do. And obviously this is a rough draft or first draft that we've all just got and are digesting within the last couple of days. I know at MIT we are in the process of digesting this language. We will have further feedback. I do have a few preliminary things to say. But our analysis of the full Zoning is ongoing at this stage.

One area that I think we do need to focus on a little bit is Osborn Triangle.

People have mentioned MIT's ownership there.

And it is important if people recall through the Town Gown report that you've seen in the last several years, we've identified two sites as future academic and research sites

within that area. These are very important. We believe that we can accomplish many of the goals of mixed use neighborhood in that area, but it's really fundamental that we retain the opportunity for those sites that are currently in our planning. And one of the aspects of the C2 process was to create these incentives but not further restrictions. Some of the Zoning, at least as I understand it, this language actually does reduce the existing rights that the Osborn Triangle specifically somewhat dramatically asa n example current heights of 20 feet as of right are reduced to 55 feet in several So there are some aspects of the areas. draft zoning language that I think really needs to get thought through. There could be unintended consequences of this language. It's a process that we're ongoing. We are

excited to be engaged fully in this process going forward, but we wanted people to understand we're just beginning to understand and we do have feedback and we'll be engaged in the process.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

PHYLLIS BRETHOLTZ: My name is

Phyllis Bretholtz, B-r-e-t-h-o-l-t-z. And I live at 65 Antrim Street. I wasn't originally planning to speak this evening, but I'm, I'm very moved by a few things that people have said and I would like to add to them.

So far -- I live in Mid Cambridge, and so far most of the people who have spoken live in the Central Square area. But the things that are being planned for Central Square are going to impact everyone in the

city way, way beyond just the people who live in Area 4 and in Cambridgeport. One of the most -- the few things that I'm deeply concerned about, one happens to be the loss of school-aged children. As a veteran of 30 years of teaching at Cambridge Rindge and Latin, I'm aware that when I started teaching there, we had more than a thousand young people attending the high school than currently attends now. Now, granted that was 30 years ago, but we are consistently losing school-age children, so I'm deeply concerned that as the housing is being considered, that it needs to be taken into consideration what's happening for families. And as many of you know, the families that are able to afford housing in Cambridge at this point are people who have a lot of money. The issue of affordability is very elastic, and my

understanding of all the young people I know who want to either rent or buy in Cambridge can't do it. They're moving out. And what we're going to get in its place is a vast number of young people who are part of the innovation hub. And I think that there are two things that we know about those young people.

One is that it's a time in their lives when they are appropriately committed to their careers. So they're not going to get involved in civic life in the same way that some of us with grey and white hair are currently getting involved. It's not an accident that of the people who are speaking tonight, there is hardly anyone in my demographic in terms of age. They're not here because they're involved in their careers and that's appropriate. But if we

bring more and more young people in, we're getting an expanded city at the expense of community. And it's community that brought me here 35 years ago. So, I feel deeply that we need to consider that.

And the issue -- I understand that MIT has put into motion a plan to study housing for MIT's community. Thank you.

And that their community, and that their -- sorry, I just lost my train of thought. Their committee is going to be ready to make some kind of proposal by June. So I just wanted to add to Steve's comment that if what we're concerned about is taking everybody's voice into consideration, certainly planning needs to predate, precede any Zoning decisions.

Thank you very much.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

So when I started, I kind of implied that members of the committee and those who supported it were supposed to hold back and not speak. But I want to relax that rule just because I think it's good for us to hear all the voices. So you can be next.

Sam Seidel, 381 SAM SEIDEL: Hi. Broadway. Just a couple of points. to start with the Osborn Triangle concept, and I want to say that I like the idea of the housing notion there and the intensity of I'm not going to commit to the height proposed. But I do think this was brought up a little bit earlier, the MIT ownership is a real challenge and that's going to need some real thinking as you go forward. I think the temptation there, at least my experience, would be that lab office R&D is going to pay a higher return on the housing unit.

actually think -- my notion is that housing is our next big challenge, and that seems to be a very good place to really tackle it in a serious way.

On the issue of heights, generally speaking, I think there are some tall buildings in Central Square already. I think the bigger issue is the urban design. fact, I walked passed a couple of them today on my way over here. They go up pretty high, but they have a dreadful street font. And I think if we don't really deal with that -- I think actually as you go towards Harvard Square, there are lots of examples of tall buildings that don't really meet the street effectively. So I want to put that on your agenda. So I think the broader concept of middle income housing is of course I think the next big challenge for us all. I think

we all recognize it. I know the city is not ready yet to commit to how they're going to define it, but it's our big challenge in front of us. And the last one I just want to support, John Pitkin and I think Dennis in his comments, sustainability has got to be top on our list for all development, all development; housing, commercial, and retail. So I want to just make the note that I think that has to be high up all of our lists.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

George, did you want to speak? And then after that you can go.

GEORGE METZGER: Good evening. I'm George Metzger. I live at 90 Antrim Street. I work at 130 Bishop Allen Drive. I happen to be the President of the Central Square Business Association. I'm not speaking on

that behalf tonight, at least not intentionally. I was also the first chair of the Central Square Overlay Commission similar to what is being continued in this process. A lot of my neighbors have spoken tonight. am part of Phyllis's demographic as well. And I think if you think back to the last Central Square process and when the Overlay was created, we had a vision then. It didn't really make much difference because not much I don't pretend to say nothing's happened. gonna happen now, but I think sometimes our fear of immediate and extensive development in the reality of how things really work in the world, it doesn't quite happen that fast. I have nothing new to add. I think everybody's talked about a lot of things I don't disagree with the people with here. whom I'm supposed to disagree. I think we're

all here because we believe in Central We believe in housing. We believe Square. in people in the city. There are a lot of contradictions you're hearing about the infrastructure and no place to park and making a sustainable city in which you don't want people to park, and so I think a lot of those things need to be thought through pretty carefully. I agree with Dennis and John and a few others in terms of making sure that the goals, which I think have been pretty clearly stated, are combined with a policy that really is integrated and sustainable so that when we're looking back on this in 15 years or 20 years, hopefully with some success, we can say that we really did achieve something. I think you have to be bold. As John Pitkin mentioned, there are lots of pressures here. It's not just

development, it's about the whole way we live in the cities. And I think the Planning Board is challenged to come up with something that really carves some boldness out of all of what you have in front of you and I encourage you to do that.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

ESTHER HANIG: Hi, my name is Esther Hanig, H-a-n-i-g and I live at 136 Pine Street in Area 4. I've lived in the Central Square area for 32 years, and I was a member of the Central Square Advisory Committee. So clearly, you know, I agree with the majority of this vision so that I don't have a lot to add on that. I think the two things that I would like to say particularly is that I think like many of my friends and neighbors who have spoken tonight, you know, one of my

main concerns is affordability. That tends to be my sort of volunteer work as real affordable housing. I think we have different ideas about how we ensure that affordable housing. I know that it's very, very difficult to find funding for affordable housing, and that the need is just huge. And so that was certainly one of the things that I was very vocal about on the committee, and that I feel good about that there is so much of that in it.

The second thing is, and I've said this before somewhat to my surprise, the other thing I care about is sustainability. I have two nephews and I want it to be a world for them. And, you know, we talk a lot about the things that I don't know how to say about LEED and silver and gold. But I think the things that was really critical for me in the

planning of this was the smart growth. That my understanding is that, not being an environmentalist, is that what we really need to do is reduce the number of cars. And I think that that was very much the intent of the work that we were doing was to try and make sure that we -- that we create a neighborhood where people live, work, shop, and play in the same area so that hopefully they don't get into their cars, you know, that they walk more. That we certainly, I think, need the T. I think we need to pay very close attention to making it easier for people to walk, making it easier for people to bike and making it easier for people to share cars and things likes that. So that was -- I just want to emphasize that that was sort of how all the pieces fit together that I think is another piece of sustainability.

I guess the only other things I would say is that I think that I certainly hope that this is one piece of how we look citywide at meeting the needs of families. Ι couldn't agree with Phyllis more that, you know, the need for middle income family housing and for civic engagement is huge with the kids in our schools. I think there are many young people who are civically engaged that care about this vision, but I do think it needs to be as you move forward, you need to look at it citywide. And the other thing is I just hope that all of the things, you know, if we see this vision, that we make sure that the commitments that come through on this, some of which I think are very exciting, that we make sure that they're adhered to in the years to come.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you.

Does anyone else wish to speak? Okay.

James you'll be next.

LORYN SHEFFNER: Hi, I'm Loryn Sheffner. I'm also on the Central Square Advisory Committee. The Committee did have divergent opinions on a lot of these issues, and we -- what we were able to come to a consensus through a lot of conversation. Ι think that the Zoning that -- and just starting to get to know represents the diligent and earnest effort to capture where I left the conversation with that group when we disbanded last winter. None of us would want that to be the end of the conversation, and I'm really interested from hearing from the property owners, businesses, everyone who's looking at individual sites within Central Square now with this document in hand and thinking about how this will play out.

So I look forward to those conversations.

Two -- well, one or two specific things in here. I was really interested in the historic map and there are also some historic definition the in the document. The two didn't seem to tie. And I'm interested in preservation issues and kind of the role of preservation within this wasn't clear at the first read. So that's something.

And then also on retail, my sense just tonight is that if anything, this document may go a little beyond con -- well, my personal view about limiting formula retail. I think incentives -- we're looking for incentives rather than preventing certain kinds of retail, and a certain portion of formula retail can be part of a great mix. Retail's one of the hardest things to deal with in planning and Zoning, and especially

because tenants will change over time. And so, you know, those sections I think should be looked at very carefully about how you -- what can or can't be locked in and promised and what the duration of those promises are.

Thanks.

HUGH RUSSELL: Thank you. After James.

JAMES WILLIAMSON: Thank you. My names is James Williamson, 1000 Jackson Place in Cambridge. I have just a couple of comments first about the sort of process and how representative or unrepresentative it may have been and some of the specifics. And I have only just now am getting a look at this, the text of the Zoning recommendations. As far as the process is concerned, I think there was a big problem with Central Square Advisory Committee. And the nature of the

problem as I see it, is that it's not that there was anything wrong with the people who were part of this committee, the problem was the people who were not part of it. And in that sense I think it was, there were important members of our community here in Cambridge who were not represented, so it was -- who were underrepresented. And I think it was as a result of that that we have the unfolding of a process that we presumably all are aware of, which is that you have a sanctioned group that got public resources to support their work and guide their work, and members of the community who had to go out on their own and begin organizing their own organization and forms of organization and forms of expression. And I think that's a shame because I think all of those people, and the one that comes to mind most readily

are the people who formed in the group called the Cambridge Residents Alliance. All of those people who put all of that work without the support of our city, should have been part of this larger process. So we have two parallel undertakings instead of a real inclusive community process, and I think that has to be recognized. Why that came about, I think sometimes people don't hear about things. There are questions of the comfort levels that various people may have with certain kinds of process. I think we have a problem in the city with the nature of governance with the inordinate power that the City Manager has typically had over many of these processes, and some people quite frankly are reluctant to participate in that kind of a process.

So, but I think there's -- this can be

rectified. And there's also the question of the specifics. And there are two things that I would comment on just on a preliminary basis.

One is actually related to these thoughts, which is the part of the recommendations that says that there should be a Central Square Advisory Committee with members appointed by the City Manager. I think we're just stuck in the same old rut here in Cambridge of having a dictatorship or a tenancy toward dictatorship by an unelected City Manager who has way too much control over what happens in the city. I favor community-based Democratic planning where all of the people who live in Cambridge get to participate; business people, business owners, heads of city agencies, and actually the people who actually live in the city.

I think this warrants more careful scrutiny and interrogation and an alternative method of choosing Democratically who are going to be making decisions.

And the last observation that I'll make on a preliminary basis is a concern that I have about the heights.

PAMELA WINTERS: Okay, if you could just do it very quickly.

JAMES WILLIAMSON: Sure.

PAMELA WINTERS: Okay.

JAMES WILLIAMSON: When I look
through and see that there are heights
recommended of as high as 100 feet with a
Special Permit, 140 feet, I'm very concerned
that these heights are going to be willfully
inappropriate for the historic -- for the
historic retail core of Central Square.
They're gonna overwhelm the liveability of

Central Square. And I have particular concerns about the area around Lafayette Square which includes the Osborn Triangle and that we don't kill what I think has been widely recognized to have been actually a successful development in that area and inordinate heights are going to be a problem there especially I think.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Mark. We're all fading here. We've been sitting for two hours.

MARK BOYES-WATSON: I'll be very brief. Mark Boyes-Watson. I live at 222 Eerie Street, Cambridgeport. I've been a Cambridgeport resident for 27 years and building in the city, designing in the city for a similar amount of time and was a member of the Advisory Committee. And I'm a great

regretter of this bifurcated process where we have -- we had the Red Ribbon which I participated in, and then we had Central Square Advisory Committee, which I participated in. And at some point the community, there was a building consensus around actions that, the whole sort social and physical kind of bifurcated. But I think that -- and so we sort of have an oppositional group that now sort of seems to be in opposition to a group where the consensus was formed on the committee. But I totally share the opinion that we are all very similar in what we fear and what we hope for. So I'm always confused about this conversation. And just from a -- I'm going to speak from a Zoning point of view. Right now in Central, in the heart of Central we have 80-foot height limit permitted

everywhere and a floor area of 3.0. But most of the square is not built out that way. I think that maybe things are changing and new pressures are coming on to Central. think that the committee realized that, and what they were looking for is exactly the same thing I think shared by the whole community. That biotech not come washing over the square like an immense force. That led the committee to focus on all ways to incent housing over uses. There were also liveability issues relative to retail, and much advice we got from professionals that suggested that higher residential densities would increase the survivability of retail in Central which in all parts of the country is under threat. So I think that I'm uncomfortable with the 140-foot height limits, and I think everybody should be. But

it doesn't mean you shouldn't do it. if we do it, we have to do it very, very carefully which I know you all will. I think that because we share the same fears, we have to take up some tools that allow us to get to where we want to go. So I think that's shared by everybody in this room, whether you be a developer, MIT, or you know, individuals. So I think as we struggle with this, I think it is true that everything that the Advisory Committee did was to say, okay, we have Base Zoning, but we want this, this, and this. How do we incent the things that we want? And I think those are the recommendations that are in your package, and I think the city staff have faithfully carried out an intention to implement those incentives so I wish you luck.

Thanks for your time.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you, Mark.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay. I'd like to take a break now.

CHARLES TEAGUE: I can do like one minute.

PAMELA WINTERS: Are you the last speaker?

CHARLES TEAGUE: I was, you never got all the way to me before and then you went back the other direction.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay.

CHARLES TEAGUE: I'll be the last.

PAMELA WINTERS: Okay.

CHARLES TEAGUE: Very quickly.

Charles Teague, 23 Edmund Street. I was going to say you basically get LEED Gold for being near the Red Line. And for MIT it's not a hardship to be far better. Harvard's work shows that they did double platinum on

Blackstone Street by simply doing academic lifetimes of buildings rather than commercial lifetimes. And it's not a hardship because MIT just signed yet another sustainability agreement.

I just want to say about the 140 feet, that's -- I disagree with city staff. And I -- transfer of developments rights will be used because the highest value in the residential building is the highest floors. The historic buildings are going to have access development rights. And on the transfer areas out on the edges when you can sell all your rights and not -- and still be able to build buildings, you will be selling those rights. So the heights we're looking at are actually 160 feet from City Hall down to Main Street and 180 feet in the Osborn Triangle, which is actually MIT's North

Campus according to them. That, so the 3-D model that Gary Dmytryk asked for is critical for understanding this. And it should be on-line, interactive, and everybody should be able to look at it.

And finally we all know there is no plan, no plan at the state level to even preserve the capacity of Red Line let alone increase the capacity of the Red Line. And when you have no plan, you cannot have smart growth. No plan is not smart.

Thank you.

PAMELA WINTERS: Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay, thank you. So we're going to take a break now and try to regain our energy and our ground and our center and discuss it a little bit afterwards.

(A short recess was taken.)

HUGH RUSSELL: We're going to get back into session. I'm going to get back into -- since I'm not a professional planner I'm going to make the argument on what -what's planning in a city like Cambridge? And I'm doing a -- working on a project in what's called South Field, which it was the former Weymouth Naval Air Station, which was 500 acres that had basically airplane hangars and a few military housing buildings and a little tiny house that's got a label that says Town Hall. And planning there was a matter of drawing a plan. You know, here we're going to do housing. Here's where the roads are going. Here's the commercial development. Here's the golf course. here are all the wetlands because the reason the land was available in 1942 was because it was a wetland. That's why they were able to

maybe take it for their base.

Planning in the city that like Mid Cambridge has no vacant lots unless you (Inaudible) side yard. Which she would not. And there are underdeveloped parcels in Central Square, that is to say parcels which have Zoning potential and have the ability for people to make more money and change things. And so planning is what we're doing right now. It's -- it's the committee process of getting people together and discussing goals and methods and strategies. Now it would be nice if the committee books had been available, you know, and we'd say oh, here's everything all written down and it's logical. Instead those pieces are, you know, in our notebooks and they come to us verbally and in maps and other things. But we are actually planning and now we're

talking about the consequences of the planning we've been doing which is Zoning language. So I think we're doing what we should be doing in an urban city where we're not ripping everything down and saying let's do it all differently. We're talking about how to enhance what we have.

So that's my big picture answer to the people who say we're not doing planning here. I think we are doing planning.

WILLIAM TIBBS: Do you want any other opinions on that?

HUGH RUSSELL: Bill, you know that we think about things very differently and so I really value hearing your comments.

WILLIAM TIBBS: No, I actually agree with you somewhat except for I do think that there are -- I understand to go from goals and visions to Zoning is -- there is a little

something in between that I think that is considered planning, and I think that's really coming up with effective tools and ways of getting to the outcome that you want. And we always say that Zoning is a rather blunt tool to do that, so -- and I know even as I look at all this stuff, I look at the Zoning language which I think is a great start and it gets you thinking about those things. And I think part of planning is coming up on an effective way of getting to what you want. And it's so much easier, as you just said, when you have control of the land. Universities complain because they own the land and they can visions. And people say they like to see a map or a model of stuff. It's easy to do. It's harder to do when you're dealing with desperate ownership patterns and you're looking at the probably

the strongest mechanism that this, that this, that's the outcome here is this incentive piece. You're hoping that by giving some incentives, you may get some things that are slightly less desirable to get some things that you think are more desirable. think that's part of the planning process, And I think you would even agree that too. Zoning -- it's kind of a jump, but we are doing that. I mean, we have to go to the jump and then sort of see and then kind of bounce back and forth. But I do think that planning also is trying to get other -getting the public and folks to understand what that vision is, too. And I think that to the extent that folks -- when folks are saying they don't see this stuff, we see it maybe, and we have the books and stuff, but it, you know, having something that -- and I

think actually Cambridge has been very good in the past at doing area plans and stuff like that, which really gives a vision and then you work out the things on how do you do that. What things do the city control? What things do private people control? And how can you do that? And I'm just basically feel that's part of the planning. So I'm agreeing with you that we're doing it, but I'm also agreeing with them that it's, it's hard for them to see it sometimes. And Zoning by itself is not, is not planning. It's an outcome of planning and there are other things including Zoning to really make this It's how do you get all this stuff to work. put together.

HUGH RUSSELL: So I had -- when I was in the back room, I asked Brian, well, what should we be doing? And his response

was give us homework. And I think the nature of the homework is really what are the things that we need to know in order to evaluate the Zoning proposals in front of us, and some of those things are perhaps in our notebooks that we got today. But I think if we try to lay out things -- I've got 12 asterisks here from things that I picked up when people were talking. I have a few folded corners in the Zoning book. So I would suggest that we dig in and I'll hold back. And so we often go this way so maybe we should go from this end today.

CATHERINE PRESTON CONNOLLY: Does that mean I get to start?

HUGH RUSSELL: That means you get to start.

CATHERINE PRESTON CONNOLLY: Oh, very exciting.

I guess the first thing that I would be interested in hearing more about is the impact of additional market rate housing on the existing housing stock. There was a point raised that luxury high rises end up having a net negative affect on affordable housing available in the whole area, even for the -- even where there's a percentage of affordable included in that luxury high rise. That was an intriguing idea to me about the larger market effects and I guess I'd like to get some staff input on how true that is and what evidence we have one way or the other.

I personally would -- am going to go through what was pointed out. There was some extensive transportation studies that are in our notebooks that I want to understand a little better, but as a general rule, I think that Cambridge is pretty well served to

tolerate density and has been very good at building the infrastructure for biking and walking and supporting transit that makes that possible. So as a general rule, I think the idea of Central Square being a good place for more density is worn out by the investments the city has made but I do want to see those details a little more.

And then I guess the last thing I had was on the issue of LEED certifications for affordable housing. I appreciated John Pitkin's comment that affordable housing developers have been really leading the way in finding ways of making more sustainable housing and really reducing the greenhouse gas emissions on housing, and I guess my thought is that if we're requiring them to be LEED certifiable as silver anyway, and therefore presumably have gone through the

exercise necessary to determine that they are certifiably silver, I'm not sure what expenses we're saving them by not having them go to gold and I'd like some feedback on exactly what difference in somebody's monthly rent is it going to make if we're talking LEED Silver versus Gold. That's what I've got.

AHMED NUR: Well, I'll try to be really short because I was part of also the Central Square Advisory Group and so I expressed a lot of my support there. I just wanted to go back and give a quick background because I've heard from the public a lot of times that we -- maybe the advisory group did not represent, that were not part -- some of the people were not part of us, so on and so forth. And I wanted to give a little background of who I am in the Central Square

Committee.

So I have three children that I raised with my wife and we started out in Union Street, corner of Union and Market. At the time it was pretty -- in the 80's obviously there was a lot of (inaudible) and Lithuanian culture and so on and so forth, and it was small houses. And the owner would rent to people like us and so on and so forth. And so we had a two-bedroom apartment and, you know, all of a sudden condos. The word condos just broke loose, '85, '86 something like that. And so we couldn't afford to live there. Someone bought the place and says, oh, I'm just going to turn this into a condo and the rent just doubled. It had nothing to do with the Zoning and the city. At the time it was real estate and the wish of the owner of the land, whoever was selling. So we

moved to Washington Street, pine and Washington in Central Square. Fireworks literally. Gunshots, drugs, you name it. It's right here just on the other side of Bishop Allen. It was pretty bad. But we survived. We knew the neighborhood, the neighborhood knew us and what not. what we could afford. And then the economy thrived and we moved up closer to Harvard Square and that's where we live now. not much after a neighborhood where we live. There's no families. It's usually Harvard professor, you know, has a whole house to themselves. And us, you know. And so we do come down to Central Square at the dance complex where the kids are doing ballet even though some of them are in high school, and my younger one is seven-years-old. still enjoy ballet and dancing. So we come

to Central Square a lot to have our coffee, ice cream, here and there. You know, Central Square to me, to all of you, is a place that has family values. It's -- you look at Kendall and it's MIT and now it's Silicone Valley, you know, business people and the It's not a bad thing, have a cup of coffee and go back to work. You look at Harvard Square and there's no residents in neighborhood. There's no houses abutting Harvard Square. It's the Harvard housing students living there and it's Harvard properties and there are some also professor's houses on the outskirt of Harvard Square. But I don't really see a family housing in the nearby Harvard Square. So you have people coming by train, from either a foreign country or a foreign city and go on tours. Central Square is the downtown

families of Cambridge. It has a rich culture for families. It has this thing that where people, there's houses on Bishop Allen and there's houses on Green Street and there are houses everywhere, and there are families They are disappearing. So my point there. being, things are changing and things are going to change no matter what. Zoning and planning takes place, you know, the city to do something about it when things fail. And we saw failure at Harvard and Central Square. We saw real estate and the retail moving out. Just to -- a lot of shut downs and a lot of, you know, safety issues. A lot of homeless, a lot of this, a lot of that, and so concern. You know, everything was this building. So let's go back to Mass. Ave. on the other side of the river. Western Avenue and Mass. Avenue and that corner on the 80's was pretty

You know, there was Boston Symphony bad. Hall and then the Berklee School of Music. In between there's nothing really. And so on and so forth. And now if you look at it thrives. So something happened there and it's moving this way. And like it or not there's going to be a change in Central Square. Right? So when I joined the Central Square Committee on the behalf of the Planning Board or on behalf of my neighborhood or my wife and children, I didn't have an interest. I wasn't being I got there because I loved Cambridge. paid. I love Central Square and I wanted to know what's going on. And so there are mothers, there are grandfathers, there's grandmothers, everyone is sitting there in Central Square. We didn't come to a complete consensus, for example, on parking. I said in the

summertime maybe we could have -- a lot of us said let's have farmer's market where the parking is. Let's have a little more green and grass. And then in the wintertime maybe we can change it back into parking because, you know, it's cold and people don't have to Other people say delete it. for deleting parking for the sake of traffic. Traffic's not going to go away if you have If there's car, there's parking. parking. There is no parking there's no car. Simple as that. I don't drive if I don't have a And so, having said that, now that parking. I want to come back that I give you that background, I second on Hugh's point as well as Loryn's point, this is not written through stone. People sitting there and spent all that time for the past year Central Advisory Committee, was a recommendation and planning.

And the planning still is here and that's why the mic is open to the public to say what you need to say about this so that way it's being recorded, and it will come to final and so we're all part of this.

Now, I want to move on to the point of what I commented on in terms of digging into I do like the idea of limiting the this. storefront of banks in Central Square. When I walk, I don't want to see an empty bank closed curtain wall open. So it's great to have that set back. Hide the bank back there and do something with the store frontage that people like. So I liked that. And I also like to include if it's not gyms and fallen stores and real estate. All these into offices should have the limited store frontage to -- and they should be things that they're interested in. No one talks about

the Phoenix Landing and I love it. I used to spin music back in the day. That place is literally, I mean now a days America loves soccer so they're there six a.m. You know, all the Europeans wake up, and the Irish, go out there to watch their soccer live. You know? And so things like that. I like the idea of when store closes, such as the ones that you mentioned, Iram, the Blockbuster, have something else baby-sit there. Whether it's a yoga studio or stretch and plays and children art place, let us have control over that if we can I suppose. And I think, I'm going to leave that because I can go on forever.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Steve.

STEVEN WINTER: Thank you,

Mr. Chair.

The first thing I want to do -- I'd like to do is thank Jeff and his colleagues for the outstanding work. And this is a huge amount of work to do what you did for us. And also the presentation was really terrific with the notes on the margins. It was very helpful.

Can people hear me all right? I'm not sure.

IRAM FAROOQ: Yes.

STEVEN WINTER: Well, first of all, and I also want to say let's not lose site of the fact that one of our main goals is to increase housing stock. And if we're going to say that and make that a main goal, well, we can't just talk about it. There may be some sacrifice in it, there may be things that we have to do that we don't really want to do, but if that's really our goal, then

let's make it a goal. If it's not something we really want, if it's something we're little wishy-washy about, well, let's get it off the table now. I want to keep it a goal. I want to do a little testing on the issue that we have a transit problem on the Red I want a little bit of methodology that shows how to project residential numbers in Central Square based on the kind of building that we are talking about, and I want to look at whether or not the Red Line can handle the -- manage the additional ridership. And I think that the MBTA ought to be involved in some way. I know that they're extremely cooperative in every way and I think they'll be more helpful with this. And I think that's a place to start. And I'd like to know more about that.

I was very intrigued by the statement

that the gentleman challenged the premise. He said, look, there's no correlation between height and density and increased affordable housing. Well, I think we need to find out if there's existing research on that. I think we need to find out if there's any other knowledge on that. We heard from two people that said I don't -- I challenge the height and density equal increased affordable housing. And I think we need to take a hard look at that the best way that we can.

I also heard a gentleman say that a well-funded municipal housing program is really what we're looking for, not a wider scope of inclusionary housing programs. And I would really like to hear a staff response on that as well, because my own experience is that there isn't any more money in this country for these kinds of things. I heard

-- I just want to make a comment, it's not an ask, that the -- we're saying that the design guidelines are as important as the Zoning and I think the design is a big part of what we're talking about here. I want to keep that in mind.

I think that we need to do, and this can be, you know, if you would do this, it can be horribly expensive, but I would like to look into whether or not we could use visualization tools to see what Mass. Ave. would look like in various scenarios so that users could create scenarios and actually get a visual of what the avenue would look like. I don't think we all -- I don't think we have that picture. You know, what does a 20-story building look like on the avenue? I don't think we have that.

I also heard from a very respected

voice that the greater downtown density -excuse me, as a retail driver is under fire
all over the country. And I would like to
test that as well. I think we need to, we
need to do a little bit of research on that
question to say is that true? Or is it just
not true? I'd like to have somebody get back
to me to say, you know, our best research
says that it is true. Or our best research
says that it is not true. It doesn't have to
be our research. I'm sure the research is
out there. And that's it.

HUGH RUSSELL: Steve, I missed the premise as to what is true or not in that last statement. I was writing something else and I missed it. I'm trying to take notes.

STEVEN WINTER: Oh, oh. Yes, that the greater downtown density as a retail driver is under fire in different parts of

the country. That was the statement made and again by a very respected source. So I would like to look into that. I feel that we need to know more about that. And those are, those are the things that I would like to look at.

H. THEODORE COHEN: Well, I think most people have covered my points, but just -- I want to start out with I moved here 40 years ago and lived down in Inman Square for many years and went through Central Square twice a day for years and years. I think 40 years ago Central Square was more abund (sic), I think it's more abund now. I think we've gone through an enormous building boom since 1972 when I lived here, and I don't see any buildings in Central Square. It looks the same as it did then. I think it's necessary that we do something, and I think

the most important -- the two most important things I think are having -- building housing. And I think given the status of the absence of any land, that means you've got to go up high. I don't think that -- I'm not afraid of 140 feet, 160 feet, 180 feet. I'm afraid of bad buildings and unattractive, ugly buildings that don't, you know, relate to the ground and to the neighborhood. And so I think the design guidelines which we've talked about before and are in our packet are some things that we really have to go over again in greater detail. We saw them before sort of in the abstract and now when we're relating them to Zoning, I'd like to go through it again. As an aside I absolutely agree with Steve. Staff has done a fabulous job in putting together the Zoning -proposed Zoning Ordinance. I've done, I've

written Zoning By-Laws and Ordinances for years and years, it's very difficult to have somebody tell you this is where we want to end up, and to have somebody actually be able to right write it down so that we the Planning Board knows what it means and the owners and developers know what it means and it's necessary, and the court knows what it means to be able to support it. I think you've done a great job.

In doing the housing, doing the residential, I am interested in whether we should or could mandate the amount of affordable housing. I also am interested in whether we should or could mandate that there actually be family units; three bedrooms, four bedrooms. You know I've been talking about three-bedroom units all over the city. I think we've really -- you know, I think

Central Square is a great place to have -- be a family and to raise kids.

Ahmed, if you want to come to North Cambridge where I live, that's a great neighborhood.

PAMELA WINTERS: It's a good family neighborhood.

H. THEODORE COHEN: It is. But I think Central Square has been and can be. And it just needs the right mix of housing stock and people who want to live there. And people will want to live there if they have the housing and also if they have the retail. And I think we have to look at the retail in great detail. I think the incentivization that you've been built into this, the committee has been building into it, is great. And I, you know, I'd like to scrutinize it a little bit more, but I think

the concept is good. I also think the, as one of the committee members commented, perhaps the formula, formula retail goes a little bit too far. I don't see anything wrong with the GAP if it can fit into, you know, the mix. You know, I know we're not wild about McDonald's and banks and other things of that nature, but I think they're all part of urban environment and, you know, some people go to McDonald's, you know. That's what they want, that's what their kids want and it ought to be available, not that it's forcing out the other types of businesses that we want to keep.

One thing we didn't discuss today, but was noted in the proposal, was a difference of opinion about off-street parking for residential use and what the percentages should be and whether that could be waived

either 50 percent or I guess some people argued completely. I'd like to hear a little bit more about that.

And finally I agree it would be great if we could have some sort of visual aid as to what Central Square might look like, but I think what's really important is what one of the committee members said, that Zoning's always allowed 80 feet and we haven't gotten many 80-foot buildings. And even if we do have provisions that will allow for 140 feet and FAR is a fourth, it's not going to be the whole length of Main -- of Mass. Ave. and the whole Osborn Triangle. And, you know, that we have to be reasonable and rational about what is likely to be built in the next 20, 30, 40 years and some visual aids of -- to show us what might really occur in this economic climate would be great. That's it

for me.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay. I'm going to pass and let me colleagues finish up and if there's anything left at the end, I will bring it up.

PAMELA WINTERS: Okay.

Hugh, I have a question. What is the timing of this?

HUGH RUSSELL: We're going to get everything, we're going to understand it, and we're going to send it out to the Council when that happens.

PAMELA WINTERS: Okay. Is there a deadline I guess is my question?

HUGH RUSSELL: No.

PAMELA WINTERS: Okay, great. The reason I was asking is because Mr. Twining, I believe, and also the representative from MIT who said that they were digesting the Zoning,

they needed a little bit more time in order to bring forth their recommendations. And I would like to see what they have to say, you know, before I okay this. I just think it would be at additional information.

I also think that somebody raised the issue about MIT putting in more student housing in Central Square, and I think that that would be a good thing. I'm always pushing for that.

I love the idea of some sort of computer-generated model or something in 3-D so that I could get a better handle as to what this would look like built out. And also Mark Boyes-Watson's comment about the 140-foot height limit. Why? So I'd like to, you know, perhaps know how that number came about.

Ted, I know that you're a fan for

higher is good, but I would just like to know how the 140 feet, you know, came about.

And also John Pitkin's comments about sustainability and housing being sustainable and his concern about greenhouse gas I think that was a very important emissions. There was an article recently in, I comment. don't know whether it was the Wall Street Journal or the New York Times that I was reading, and I gave it to my husband to read. And there was a graph about CO2 levels in this country from 1990 to the -- to this year, and it was pretty scary actually. I just -- I could not believe that the CO2 levels -- I mean, the line went, you know, like this (indicating). And so I think it's really important that we consider that. You know, trees, I'm always a big fan of more trees, more greenery because they absorb the

CO2 levels. And I think one tree absorbs 40 pounds of CO2 emissions per year. So that's something that I think is very important is to look at sustainable housing. And I think that is -- I mean, there were other things, too, but those were just my major, my major concerns.

WILLIAM TIBBS: I think I'll go back to what I said before which is what is effective. I think one of the things that's very clear to me is that Central Square and the issues around Central Square are just very different than almost all of the areas that we've looked at. And the one reason why is that it's different in understanding. I know in this book you all looked at that. But I think as to really we need to bring that forward. The ownership pattern is very different. It's an area that has a lot of

vision and a lot of desire to do things, but not a lot of triggers to get it done. And quite frankly almost all of the other areas that we look at has a trigger. It either has an MIT that has the resources to start something. It has -- North Point has owners and they, you know, that's gone through very many watchamacallits. And so I think having a good understanding of that. Because I think quite frankly in order for this to work -- I think George's comment about the fact that, you know, this area has a lot of underutilized properties in its current Zoning is a very valid point. And the real question is why. And I think we have to get at that. We have could have all the visions in the world. We can have all the Zoning in the world, but I think the reality is what is it about this that makes it different and if

we're going to be successful, we need to understand what those triggers are. We're suggesting some things like incentive formula retail and incentive -- incentives. And those incentives -- I love those drawings you had where you said, you know, this is what it looks like if you kind of left things as they And this is what it looks like if you are. have modest height in the form of density and this is what it looks like, and this will get us all that stuff. But how? And I think that even, even in trying to do some kind of computerized drawing, you have to kind of go and say what is the most likely property that's going to be the one that's going to bring, bring forth some of the development? One of the -- true. And obviously we, you know, we currently have that, but I think that's really part of it. Because quite

frankly, if you look at how Alexandria, you look -- I mean look at almost everything we visit, something there that could be the catalyst for getting things done. without that you're going to have, you said 20, 30 or 40 or years waiting for that to happen and trying to understand what that is. And I for one would just like to know this whole issue about density and height and does it create affordable housing? Do we have examples and is incentives working? I've always, from Day 1 I just have that question. I'm not saying that I'm for it or against it. I just have the question do they work? What's our history in the city of them working? And are we getting what we want and how that works? I remember the design guidelines that we set up in North Cambridge and we got some very strange stuff. And then we had to go back and kind of change it. So

I just want to just make sure that we know it
is and acknowledge that Central Square is
very different.

Very specifically I was particularly interested, Jeff, and you may have an answer to it, but I was particularly interested in as we look at the incentives and how they're applied to commercial and retail and housing, what are the mix use kinds of scenarios? You began to talk about that in terms of some of the formulas and stuff that you were trying to get at, but I think that's, I think that's important because -- or have we done enough of the study to know that the likelihood is to always have one property that's all housing and one property, you know, how are we going to handle that stuff?

The comments about family in Central

Square. One, if you look at that map, there's lots of families in those yellow And I think we have to remember that Central Square itself is not a neighborhood. It's -- Central Square as a place, that bridges neighborhoods. You have Cambridgeport, you have Riverside, you have Area 4, and they are families there. just a few blocks down from Central Square and believe me there are kids. They're hanging right outside the Pearl Street Market waiting to get on the school bus every morning. So we see that. But the reality is what does that mean in terms of what's there.

The whole issue of the people in Central Square, as much as I like to say it, there are people that have mental issues and alcoholic issues in Central Square, and we have to come to that reality. And they can

make it not as comfortable as we would like it to be and the kind of vision that we sort of have. So, that's one.

So I think -- and so I think having some understanding of the family demographics as best you can with the information you have for the city would be helpful. For instance, Auburn Court which is the housing development that was done as part of University Park has kids. Maybe while they're playing there in the little courtyards and stuff as I walk through to go to the Star Market. So I think having an understanding of that and what the mechanisms are. And if we're saying we want families there, we need to kind of understand that, that means that they're going to be doing all their stuff at Central Square or looking at other resources that are there. But my biggest question is just making sure

that whatever tools we're using in the Zoning, that we just do a little research as to how effective they have been in other places and within our own area to make sure they're helpful. And what makes it unique in this particular area which is different than obviously the other area. Maybe North Cambridge might be a good example, or maybe even Cambridge Street which has a kind of similar dynamic where you have lots of things that -- what are the things that we're trying to do to make this work? Because I don't think, I don't think we're going to have a hundred -- you know, 40 feet buildings just marching down because that's the mechanisms and the triggers aren't there to do that. But looking at the things that you're doing, which is transferring of rights and having people developing that, those are some --

you're in a sense trying to -- you're trying to -- you're trying to do things because of that knowledge. And if you're -- where the likely cases where that could happen and what kind of vision do you get when you do that?

PAMELA WINTERS: Hugh, excuse me, I left out one asterisk. Should I wait for Steve to finish?

STEVEN COHEN: Go ahead.

PAMELA WINTERS: Is that all right?

STEVEN COHEN: Sure.

PAMELA WINTERS: It was Dennis

Carlone's comments that I thought was

interesting, and the one of housing to

biotechs. I thought that was an interesting

comment and one that we need to consider.

And also your issue around glass buildings

and design guidelines. I think that they

were interesting comments, also. So perhaps

we could look into that a little bit more,
too. And I'm sorry to interrupt. Go ahead.
STEVEN COHEN: Thank you.

I would just preface my comments about the proposal with my thoughts about density. I'm a strong supporter of density in urban development. And the alternative to density is what, suburban sprawl? We have been there, done that. I think we should be favoring density and where should that density be? Well, it should be in the cities. And within the city where should that density be? Well, I think it would be a good idea to do it about transit hubs. it would seem to me that Central Square is just, you know, the ideal candidate. location for density, the traditional downtown Cambridge on the transit line, I think that's the place to do it. What's the

alternative?

So coming from that perspective generally I'm very supportive of the thrust and underlying policy implications of this proposed Zoning Amendment. And I, too, have to compliment the staff on doing an amazing job on it.

Some specific comments and thoughts as I, as I went through the actual amendment.

One comment on the streetscape. Retail is required on Mass. Ave., but as we turned down Main Street, retail is not required. Office and labs are permitted on the street level which struck me as surprising, at least for those first few blocks of Main Street, perhaps as far as at Windsor Street I think is probably the logical break point. It's largely retail now except for those portions on the other side of the street that aren't

developed. And I think that should be retail. And I think I heard it mentioned by somebody on our walking tour that perhaps there isn't enough demand for retail yet. Well, you know something, that's not a bad thing if there isn't enough demand to fill that retail, they're going to have to drop the rents. And that demand will materialize at a lower rent. And one of my concerns, similar concern as has been voiced about housing, is that retail rents can get too high. And I'm, you know, have some concern that we'll be left with lots of retail but only upper end retail. And I think it's important that we try to retain a diversity of retail. And also, you know, retail that serves the needs of ordinary people, working people, and not just high income people.

Anyway, I'd support a requirement for

retail there.

One of our big goals we've heard a lot about today is housing in general and affordable housing in particular. And we question well, you know, do we have any evidence that these changes will, you know, produce any desirable housing outcomes? Well, first of all, if I understand it correctly, I mean, there's a requirement for, you know, what we're calling moderate income housing here. So we don't have to speculate about that. If somebody's going to take advantage of the increased height and density which is built into the Zoning Amendment, they have to provide 25 percent of the increased gross floor area as moderate income housing.

I do have a question, however, first of all, what exactly is moderate income? So who

are we serving? What really is their income level? We're defining it in part not only by their income level but also that the rents or carrying costs, if it's an ownership unit, can't exceed 30 percent but 30 percent of what? It was a different measure of income than the definition of moderate income. like to get a sense of, you know, who exactly we're providing the moderate income for. then I bear in mind that we have the affordable income components with pretty substantial FAR bonus. And I'm kind of, I was unclear as I went through it, how those two programs interact. And in particular the 25 percent requirement for middle income housing is for all additional gross floor area, but it is included in that additional gross floor area, the additional gross floor area you get through the inclusionary Zoning

provisions? I would just like to get a clarify how that works. If not for me, then for some owner/developer down the road so it's real clear what needs to be provided. And then if you can go through it and really give us a clear sense, okay. If somebody takes advantage of the new bonuses, you know, and they build it, what are we going to end up with in terms of inclusionary and middle income and, you know, housing? How many units? How much gross floor area? And who are they? What are the income levels? So we understand who exactly we're benefitting here. And of course for those people who question whether this is really going to help the housing market. I guess the theory or part of the theory is that not only providing additional explicitly affordable units, but by increasing supply at least in theory that

should be reducing the upward pressure on rents. Well, that's only true if we're not drawing additional demand into the city by building it. And I don't know if you can you really can produce evidence one way or the other on that. I guess I wouldn't mind hearing your thoughts on that question since the whole question of affordable or moderate income housing is so central here.

I guess I have one last general comment and lots of folks are really concerned that the increased height limit we're going to end up with, you know, too much new development. I'm a little bit concerned that actually as drafted, that we're not going to get much new development at all. I mean, we've had some pretty good limits in the past and it hasn't generated income -- development. We're increasing the height. That's interesting.

But, you know, we're not increasing the permissible FAR all that much. I mean, we're going to four. I think from a maximum of three. And here we are, we're talking about buildings which could be 10 or 12 or I guess even as many as 16 stories high, but there's still only permissible FAR of four. And we're talking about a real urban location where, you know, a lot of coverage is likely to be, you know, close to 100 percent. I mean, it's not a suburban location where there's going to be big green areas, I don't think. And when you think of -- I mean, they're relatively small lots and only with a FAR of 4. I don't know whether any of this is going to happen anyway. We're perhaps spinning our wheels and deluding ourselves perhaps. Now for some folks that may be a good thing that's not going to happen.

development here and trying to encourage more housing here, I'm not sure that the FAR afford actually gets us there. And we -- Iram, we talked about this a little bit before the meeting, and actually you thought my concerns were not well-founded -- not the first time that's been said to me.

But I thought something that you might do would be to take, I don't know, a representative lot or maybe, you know, only one or two of the lots that you'd like to see developed in the years to come that you've characterized someplace in the presentation as, you know, likely candidates for redevelopment and actually show us on one of those lots what can be done under the new Zoning. Give us a little massing study or do it on sketch-up and show us what can be done

there and sort of geometrically. Can you even get to that height with that kind of And while you're at it, you tell us, FAR. well, how many affordable units can we get into that structure that you've showed us. If you give us a concrete sense. I mean, I think it would be tough to do. People have asked you, though, show us what Central Square would look like. I think it would be tough to do. It would be nice if you could do it, but I think it would be tough. If you could take a representative lot or a specific lot that you've targeted and show us what can be done there, I think for me anyway, that that would, that would be really, really helpful because I'm unclear where it would go at this point.

And just one last -- going from big issue to little issue, detail. We've talked

about formula retail and, again, people have been concerned about whether you're regulating it too much or not too much. My understanding, and please correct me if my understanding is wrong, my understanding is not that formula retail is forbidden or precluded in any way, it's more of a design matter. And my understanding is that it's really like the Dunkin' Donuts in Harvard It's a Dunkin' Donuts. But you made Square. it, or somebody, made it not look like a Dunkin' Donuts. It's got a different name, different signage.

HUGH RUSSELL: Pebble Gifford.

STEVEN COHEN: Oh, is that Pebble?
All right for Pebble.

But is it my understanding of where you're going? It's just, you know, changing the design presentation and the aesthetics

and not saying that it's forbidden. And we the GAP and Sleepy's and, you know, any of those things that are clearly formula retail, would be permitted but they don't have to look like every other Sleepy's in the universe.

I guess that's it for me. Thank you. HUGH RUSSELL: Okay, well I'm left with bits and pieces here. So I'm going to, I'll start by following up on the retail bit. I would like to see somebody spend a morning measuring ceiling heights in retail, successful retail businesses. Let's just say on Mass. Avenue from Albany Street to, I don't know, Regent Street. Just walk in there with some laser thing and see if there's a relationship between like formula business and ceiling heights and not. a feeling that by requiring 15-foot retail

ceiling heights, you're going to encourage formula businesses because those businesses are not going to go in the places with lower ceiling heights. And that there are a lot of good retail businesses that don't have 15 feet ceiling heights. And part of our goal is to have a mix of sort of national providers and local providers, then we've got to do something to make, to shift the balance to the locals.

So making a comment on the affordable.

I worked for many years for corporate Genesis

Company and they were really pioneers in

mixed income housing communities, and they

told me that it was really crucial for them

to have low income units, moderate income,

and market rate in the same buildings in the

same projects because that allowed them to

not have to throw people out because the

income went up. If you didn't have a moderate component and somebody's income went over the line, they couldn't afford the market rates, they weren't eligible for the affordable rate, so they had to move. And that seemed to them to be a very bad thing for a stable residential community. And so my feeling is that the general response is actually, is -- should be that we have to relook at our affordable housing and market rate housing as one continuous program with one set of rules that is citywide as I think it was Alex who said that. I think that has to be -- and, you know, do you hold up all of this to work out that very thorny problem? I don't know. But I think we have to ask the question of why don't we look at it that way?

On the sustainable things, I'll tell you a story. I had been sitting in the same

location in the same office for 37 years. And when I moved into the office, you could see the sycamore trees out my office window on the river. That's when the MBTA had a railroad yard in Harvard Square. And so gradually, you know, that whole rail yard got redeveloped. Harvard built a couple of buildings that blocked that segment. what -- I think it was it was the Wadsworth Building that got built, that was two blocks from me that got built and that blocked another thing. The intercontinental project that built some nice housing and moved that house and did a number of very nice things. Took another little slice out of my view. now I don't see the river, but actually I have to keep my blinds closed because the guy who owns Dickson Brothers next to me put a white roof on his thing and it's about eight

feet below my window and the glare off that roof means I have to keep my blinds closed or I can't see my computer screen. So, who rules indiscriminately everywhere can produce negative consequences for the people who are right next to them. And so I -- the idea that you tell people that every roof has got to be bright white, may have unintended consequences and I think we should think about that.

I've been an advocate for not pushing too hard on LEED, but the industry's catching up and so I think it may be LEED Gold is achievable in Central Square for housing.

Now why does the affordable housing developers leading the way on affordability?

There are essentially two reasons:

They have a lot of different kind of subsidies. They did a project in Somerville

in which there were 14 funding sources. And one of those funding sources said, you shall follow the Energy Star rules which are actually a little more rigorous than the LEED Silver. You know, you don't go for LEED certification on an eight-unit building, because you just don't do that. But, you know, affordable housing costs more to build. Because the guys with the money are saying do it, we'll give you extra money to make it This then ties into the, somebody on happen. the Board said well, what's the city doing? Well, the city is doing more -- as I understand it, is doing more to support affordable housing than any other city in the United States. We are more generous. have more programs. We have -- and part of it is Zoning and part of that are in other ways, but, you know, we have the Community

Preservation Act, we put money into affordable housing. And so, that's -- is it meeting the need? No. But we're doing better than anybody else right now because the feds have dropped the ball and the state has dropped the ball, and so we all agreed to pay more federal and state taxes we're not going to do the things that we need to do.

So nobody's mentioned the question about Bishop Allen Drive and the transition to the neighborhood. I just think we deserve to have a brief presentation on what's in the proposal? Is it any different? Is what's there now good enough? Just run us through that because it's very important. You know, Green Street is also in a transitional district. Green Street is a pretty strange street in Central Square. It's not very nice to tell you the truth and for many of the

blocks. And so I guess it's the block between Reed and Franklin, that's the transition zone. Franklin is one of the most interesting streets in the city. It's got enormous diversity and lots of wonderful things happen along Franklin Street.

The design guidelines people mentioned,

I think you've got them here. We have to
have a working session on them.

And oh, yes, the relationship of the historic map we have to the regulations. I think it's, I can't -- I couldn't tell you what that relationship is now so I'd just like to see how that works in.

I think everybody else has done all the things that I starred from the comments we got. There's quite a bit of overlap in what we said. I think it might be nice if, you know, in a week or two you'd send us a list

of what you think you've heard and what you think, what are the pieces that you think we asked you to do and then we can feedback on that list. It's not going to be the 23 items here because there's enough overlap and you're good at kind of -- I believe you've done -- a lot of this stuff is already in the can so to speak or in the book, but we need to go through it so we understand it.

AHMED NUR: Hugh, can I just -- I'm sorry.

HUGH RUSSELL: Sure.

AHMED NUR: I was waiting for you to end the two things that I remembered that I wanted to -- one was a comment was made with regards to the Central Square, the people that live there, the veterans and battered women and all this. I'd like to know what, if any, what would benefit them or what would

be the outcome of if this was to go ahead? Or disadvantages for them. Advantages for them just because they live here. And I'm pretty sure like you mentioned, the city takes care of the and the like. And so I just wanted to put that out there.

And the second one was this could be just obsession of mine, but I really like -and this is not LEED so don't shoot me down. Cobblestone to me, wherever there is a cobblestone or less hardscape, less asphalt, you know, for the sake of environment, you know, there's a lot of pedestrian walking so on and so forth. So I just wondered, I mean, it wouldn't cost a lot of money from Albany to the fire station to Prospect up on Mass. Avenue, what would it be to do just what our European ancestors did, just cobblestone instead of asphalt? And cut part of that

concrete sidewalk --

IRAM FAROOQ: It's ADA. You need to be able to have wheelchairs --

AHMED NUR: Yes, that's where you do the crossings. The whole world has it.

HUGH RUSSELL: They're probably
there down a couple layers. Maybe between
the streetcar tracks.

AHMED NUR: I'm sure.

And in conclusion, yes, Cambridge to me doesn't have the architectural (inaudible).

Roger can comment on this if he has the time for it, but I think masonry buildings make more sense. Harvard started it. This is where the entire nation construction started in architectural, American architectural so on and so forth. But red bricks to me is what I look for in Cambridge, not curtain wall and glass. And so the cobblestone down

and somewhat, I thought that might -- just a comment.

Thank you.

HUGH RUSSELL: Any closing comments from anybody else?

WILLIAM TIBBS: I think the only comment I would have that was on my list that I didn't mention is the whole issue of the open space because when they said when you look at the vision we have about how that open space could be other than those parking lots, we don't really have a lot of opportunity there and just coming up with would our mechanisms free that up, if possible. Because the -- particularly what you presented, the open space is a nice thing. But then you look at the map and you sort of look and see what, you know, what you can do. You're not doing too much on City

Hall Plaza. The parking lots are there, but obviously there's a lot of competition for that what could be. I'm not a -- I too am not a fan of the University Park open space because it seems more like a corporate front yard than a real active city open space which is what I think we intended way back when. And even though it looks nice and we've gotten awards for it so I want to make sure. And obviously we have the big plaza where Mass. Ave. and Main Street come together which isn't open space really (inaudible) -the other thing is the, the city's -- was is the stuff that the city controls other than the parking lots, the city can do. I mean, you know.

FROM THE AUDIENCE: Bill, can you use the mic?

WILLIAM TIBBS: Oh, I'm sorry.

I was just saying one of the things that the city does control that it can do, obviously the city is one of the triggers that I talked about and to get things kind of rolling and going.

HUGH RUSSELL: So I'm going to have to then follow up on your comments. And which is one of the most exciting things I saw in all was maybe a covered community meeting place and that's part of the open space.

WILLIAM TIBBS: Yes.

HUGH RUSSELL: And I'm not as, you know, I'm not -- are we doing, what do we have to do to get that?

Sorry, Catherine.

CATHERINE PRESTON CONNOLLY: That's okay. Having gone first the disadvantages is you don't have the benefit of everyone else's

comments. So the thing that came up that I would be interested in hearing more about is regarding formula retail. I think one of the comments that you had as a side bar to the Zoning is that formula retail has not only been adopted by upheld in Massachusetts. Having reviewed this for a number of clients, I'd be interested in if upheld means the Attorney General has allowed municipalities to approve it --

JEFF ROBERTS: Yes.

CATHERINE PRESTON CONNOLLY: -- with a lot of warnings about the Constitutionality or it's actually been challenged and upheld.

JEFF ROBERTS: I used the shorthand, sorry.

HUGH RUSSELL: That's having lawyers.

STEVEN WINTER: Or not.

HUGH RUSSELL: Okay. I think we are complete and we are adjourned.

(Whereupon, at 10:40 p.m., the Planning Board Adjourned.)

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