

**From:** [Susana T. Arteta](#)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** Fw: Comments in regard to proposed 60 Ellery Street building  
**Date:** Friday, June 6, 2025 4:55:48 PM

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I am deeply concerned about the effect this project of approximately 28 apartments without \*any\* provision of parking will have the quality of life in our neighborhood. It is already almost impossible to park in this portion of Broadway, and surrounding streets which has the high school the main library. The impending installation of the bike lane will remove nearly 60% of the already scarce parking spaces. At the moment, most of the time it is nearly impossible to park and adding all those apartment units without parking will be a compounded hardship for those of us who are senior citizens. We cannot bring groceries and other purchases (including pharmacy and medical appointments) for those of us who depend of a car and unable to ride a bike. It is already very upsetting that I can not secure services such as electricians and plumbers who will not come to this neighborhood due to lack of parking. Recently, my 87 yr old mother needed physical therapy and providers refuse to come to the home.

It is unrealistic to believe that most of those owners or renters of those new apartments will not have at least one car. Young people are able to commute on a bike but many still own a car. If the building code does not require parking, this problem will continue to increase and will be compounded by each additional building. Please reconsider either considerably less units to allow at least one parking spot per unit (since some units have more than one car).

I know the ordinance does not require it, but this is the most densely populated section of Cambridge and it is highly discriminatory towards senior Cambridge citizens like me or my neighbors who include people with disabilities and those with young children.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Susana Arteta  
342 Broadway



**From:** [Yasemin I](#)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** Regarding proposed 60 Ellery development  
**Date:** Saturday, June 7, 2025 1:29:06 PM

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To the Members of the City Historic Commission,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed six-story, 28-unit apartment building at **60 Ellery Street**, which would replace the current 2.5-story structure. This development is not only out of scale with the immediate neighborhood, but it also threatens to disrupt the delicate balance of livability, accessibility, and character that this historic area of Cambridge has long maintained.

While it is true that there is a 4- or 5-story building at the far end of Ellery Street, and a couple of 6-story buildings on nearby Trowbridge Street, these were built with a different sense of planning and scale. The buildings on Trowbridge, for example, are situated next to expansive parking lots that accommodate their residents' vehicles. The proposal for 60 Ellery, in contrast, attempts to tightly squeeze a large building into a lot that is far too small to support it—without any provision for parking.

This feels like an attempt to make the impossible happen at the cost of thoughtful, equitable planning. It ignores the scale and design of the surrounding streetscape, undermining not only the historic character of the neighborhood but also the fundamental needs of the people who already live here.

The lack of parking in this proposal is not a small issue—it is a daily hardship for residents, especially seniors, people with disabilities, and families with children, who rely on cars for errands, medical care, and essential services. The existing parking shortage in the area is already critical, worsened by the proximity of the high school, the main library, and the impending bike lane, which will remove nearly 60% of current street parking.

To approve a project of this size without parking is not only impractical but deeply discriminatory toward residents who cannot bike or use public transportation due to age or health limitations. These impacts are not hypothetical—they are real, and they are already being felt.

Furthermore, the proposed development would eliminate green space and trees, which provide not only aesthetic value but also environmental benefits and emotional respite for residents. The loss of these natural elements further erodes the livability of this dense urban neighborhood.

There is also no clear public benefit articulated in this proposal. It is unclear who this project is designed to serve—while it appears to offer financial gain to developers, it places the full burden of its consequences on those who have built their lives in this community.

I urge the Commission to reject or significantly scale back this proposal, or at the very least, require a more appropriate density and the inclusion of parking infrastructure. Our neighborhood deserves thoughtful, inclusive development that respects the existing community and its needs.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Yasemin Isler  
432 Broadway

**From:** [Katherine Koh](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery Street - Site Visit please  
**Date:** Saturday, June 7, 2025 9:50:38 AM

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Tony Hsiao and Commission:

I am writing to urge you all to **delay any approvals to the 60 Ellery Street proposed changes and please visit the site and truly understand the full extent of what is being proposed and its potential impact on this mid-Cambridge neighborhood.** I fully **object to the proposal.** Yes people dislike change, but this is too much.

I live in the Ellery Square townhouses which would look into the back of this proposed structure and it was quite noticeable that only one of the renderings/drawings shows partially what our view would be. **How can you truly consider the complete nature of this proposal with renderings that are incomplete?** For example, anything over 3 stories will have a nice, lovely view down into our **private** courtyard for free, while our 18 units will lose any semblance of privacy and to some extent, security. You don't see that in those drawings.

Buying my home in mid-Cambridge is the culmination of my own hard work for 35 years and is my dream home. This proposal to build a SIX story building (actually 7 stories with the roof deck and all the mechanicals on the top) here is a **case of bait and switch.** **Many of us bought in this historic conservation district neighborhood for the very reasons this proposal will destroy.** The City is going too far, ruining areas that make **Cambridge a historic and special city** and isn't taking the appropriate steps to plan in a thoughtful manner.

Ellery Street is **already the most heavily trafficked by commercial vehicles** because Dana street turns one-way in the reverse direction at Broadway. Ellery Street already has 2 large apartment complexes between Broadway and Mass Ave. Dana and Trowbridge streets only have 1 large apartment complex in the same stretch. **Is the City's plan to turn Ellery Street into the most densely populated and heavily trafficked street in Mid-Cambridge? All the fire trucks and commercial traffic already use this street heavily. Will the City make Dana Street a through street too, to handle the traffic overflow from Ellery Street?**

A lot is being made of the rights of bicyclists (who don't follow vehicular law, every day I see them) and young families who dream of living in mid-Cambridge. How about the rights of the current residents which by the way includes young families too? We are tax paying law abiding citizens, why are you not factoring in our rights? **Does the City take measures to enforce the use of existing affordable housing?** Everyone knows someone who can pay market rents but got "lucky" and lives in a low rent apartment. The City should take a closer look at everyone living in affordable housing and verify that they in fact need it before rushing to develop more and more and more! I have a huge mortgage and work very hard. Don't punish citizens who are responsible and mindful. Punish those who are abusing the system instead!

We also have 5-6 months of winter and assuming that 29 units will not have a single car is completely unrealistic. **The vibe of mid-Cambridge will be altered by ugly parking arguments and competition for the few spaces, rowdy summer nights on a huge roof deck. Really? Can you envision the use of folding chairs to reserve spots on the street during the winter as you see in Boston or other cities?** That behavior will come too. The City has made decisions that are utopian in nature but not based on realistic human factors. Ellery street cannot handle further densification and traffic. Going from 4 units to 29 on such a small lot is a money grab by greedy developers. You represent the best interest of citizens not developers who don't live here. Please, this proposal overreaches and is too much for this one little street to handle.

Please delay any approvals. Come to the site and neighborhood to fully understand the implications.

Respectfully,

Katherine Koh

Cambridge resident and native (born in Mt Auburn hospital)

**From:** [Lawton, Mary Beth](#)  
**To:** [Histrncds](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery Street Project  
**Date:** Saturday, June 7, 2025 4:30:15 PM

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Dear Members of the Conservation District Commission:

We implore you to delay your decision regarding the 60 Ellery Street Project until you have had the opportunity to visit the site and meet the neighbors and abutters. We want to assure that people fully understand the impact of a 7- story building for 29 units with no parking provided on the neighbors, abutters, and Ellery Street.

We, owners of 54 Ellery, Unit 3, who share a driveway with 60 Ellery, have about 13 or 14 reasons why the proposed 60 Ellery building , as presented to the committee, not be constructed. We are open to change, support affordable housing and increased housing for Cambridge. A five-story structure made of brick (not fake brick),including a basement for 20 units seems much more reasonable to us.

We will attend the meeting Monday evening . Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

MaryBeth Lawton  
Danusa Lesqueves



**From:** [Diane Reposa](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#); [Azeem, Burhan](#); [McGovern, Marc](#); [Nolan, Patricia](#); [Siddiqui, Sumbul](#); [Simmons, Denise](#); [Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan](#); [Toner, Paul](#); [Wilson, Ayesha](#); [Zusy, Catherine](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery St  
**Date:** Saturday, June 7, 2025 10:56:09 AM

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Dear elected and appointed City officials,

As long time residents of Cambridge, we are asking for your thorough review of your approval to allow the building of a 6 story , 29 unit at 60 Ellery St. We have several concerns and it appears that your approval has not taken into account increased traffic, lack of parking and the historical nature of the neighborhood. In approving new real estate projects , do all stakeholders actually meet and discuss the impacts to Building Development, Traffic, Parking, Essential Services, City Councillors, City Manager, residents, etc. It feels like the decisions are made in a vacuum.

#### Traffic

Ellery St is one of the ONLY streets that runs through in one direction from Cambridge St to Mass Ave which makes it very desirable for efficient traffic flow and in particular fire engines and police vehicles. Many of the new owners will , of course, have cars but those who don't will cause an increase in ride services and food delivery on a very busy corner.

#### Parking

Are you kidding ? You are removing parking on Broadway and adding 29 new condos in a residential neighborhood. Those of us without a driveway on Ellery St., already have a difficult time locating a parking spot anywhere near our residence, Imagine the difficulty with adding 29 additional residences to a location already heavily used by Cambridge High School and the main public library!! Do you take any of these factors into account when making such decisions?

#### Historic District

It has long been a fact that mid Cambridge, Ellery St area, is a historic area. We needed several approvals in the past to make improvements to our home (windows, railings, paint, roof deck) . Do we no longer have standards on preserving the historic integrity of architecture of the neighborhood?

We hope you will review the particulars of 60 Ellery St. and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,  
Dana Tighe  
Diane Reposa  
43-49 Ellery St.



## Crosbie, Allison

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**From:** George Lanzillo <georgelanzillo@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 7, 2025 1:58 PM  
**To:** Histncds; Azeem, Burhan; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Simmons, Denise; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery St

Dear elected and appointed City officials,

As long time residents of Cambridge, we are asking for your thorough review of your approval to allow the building of a 6 story , 29 unit at 60 Ellery St. We have several concerns and it appears that your approval has not taken into account increased traffic, lack of parking and the historical nature of the neighborhood. In approving new real estate projects , do all stakeholders actually meet and discuss the impacts to Building Development, Traffic, Parking, Essential Services, City Councillors, City Manager, residents, etc. It feels like the decisions are made in a vacuum.

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We hope you will review the particulars of 60 Ellery St. and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,  
George Lanzillo  
43-49 Ellery

George Lanzillo  
43-49 Ellery St

Cambridge 02138

617 504-8861

**From:** [Jeanne Petropoulos](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#); [Azeem, Burhan](#); [McGovern, Marc](#); [Nolan, Patricia](#); [Siddiqui, Sumbul](#); [Simmons, Denise](#); [Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan](#); [Toner, Paul](#); [Wilson, Ayesha](#); [Zusy, Catherine](#)  
**Subject:** 60 EllerySt  
**Date:** Saturday, June 7, 2025 1:18:58 PM

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Dear All,

I am forwarding comments made by a resident about what a developer hopes to do to our lovely Ellery street. Please read and realize what families on this street will have to contend with! You might also want to consider what kind of precedent this development would have on other city neighborhoods as well. This could happen anywhere in this city. It really is insane to think that this type of development is a good thing for this neighborhood or the city in general. This plan needs to be stopped and reassessed for the good of this community. Thank you

"1) Height Overreach The building is technically six stories—but includes a large rooftop structure and mechanical equipment, making it essentially a seven-story building. This pushes beyond what the zoning intends and alters the neighborhood feel.

2) Community Disrespect The developer dismissed community input and made comments implying the units wouldn't go to families, suggesting a lack of concern for building inclusive, rooted neighborhoods.

3) Parking Woes The current site has 4 parking spaces for 4 units. The proposed 29-unit building would have zero parking. I don't think it needs to be one to one but this is crazy! This creates pressure on surrounding streets and ignores our infrastructure reality. With new safer bike lanes, reducing off-street and on-street parking, while upzoning, is not a workable plan. The city needs to recognize that people drive cars. If these types of building continue to replace beautiful buildings with no parking mega building the city will become inaccessible.

4) Unbalanced Upzoning I support more housing and would gladly welcome a well-designed 4-story brick building here. But this project maxes out the lot, nearly touching the property line, with little thought to long-term livability or impact on the neighbors.

5) Vague Affordability Promises We were told the building would be 20% affordable, but that's by square footage not units. The developer couldn't specify which units or how many would be affordable. If you are building in Cambridge, you should come prepared with your clear commitment to affordability.

6) Easement Issues A neighbor's property has an easement that would now run under the new construction. It's unclear how that would even function during the building process. Cambridge needs planning that balances growth with respect for residents, character, and the future of our city. The city needs to reconsider their rules around growth and stop these types of projects before they are being pushed by big for profit developers and changing the city we chose to call home."

Jeanne "johni" Petropoulos (617) 491-3103

**From:** [Hugh Russell](#)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** Comments on 60 Ellery St. proposal  
**Date:** Monday, June 9, 2025 7:45:08 AM

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Sender's Email: [hughadamsrussell@gmail.com](mailto:hughadamsrussell@gmail.com)

Sender's Name: Hugh Russell

Sent from a web contact form at <https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/contactforms/historicalcommission>

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This is pretty much what I feared would be the consequences of the recently enacted zoning changes.

1. This mostly luxury building will generate the need for several dozen parking spaces on a street that doesn't have excess street parking at this time.
2. The bulk of the building is out of scale with adjacent properties. At a minimum, there should be at least a 10' front setback above the 4th floor facing Ellery Street.
3. The dark version of the siding in the renderings is much worse than the lighter version, but overall neither an attractive building.

**From:** [Robert & Leita Luchetti](mailto:Robert & Leita Luchetti)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** MC-7293: 60 Ellery St.  
**Date:** Saturday, June 7, 2025 11:16:11 AM

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Sender's Email: [BobL@Luchetti.com](mailto:BobL@Luchetti.com)

Sender's Name: Robert & Leita Luchetti

Sent from a web contact form at <https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/contactforms/historicalcommission>

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To Whom It May Concern.

We live at 5 Cleveland St, which abuts the proposed 60 Ellery St. Residences project. The project will be reviewed by the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission at Public Hearing on this coming Monday, June 9th. We are submitting our thoughts on the project for consideration by the Commission before the project is approved with the goal of requiring that the project not be approved until it undergoes additional design development to improve it's conformance to the stated objectives of the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission.

The proposed project appears that it will be one of the first in Cambridge to be built using the new Cambridge Zoning with the application of the two zoning petitions related to multifamily housing.

- Removes minimum lot size and minimum lot area per dwelling unit limitations
- Removes floor area ratio (FAR) limitations for housing and incorporating height limitations based on a total number of stories above grade.
- Allows for the construction of up to four-story residential buildings as-of-right (without special approval) throughout the city. Six-story buildings are also permitted for inclusionary housing projects under specific conditions.

The 60 Ellery project does appear to conform by right to the requirements of the new Zoning Ordinance. However, it is an extreme example of maxing out the size of the building on what is a relatively small lot and replacing a single 2-1/2 story 4 unit building with a pushed to the limits 6 story apartment building.

- The lot size is 5,400 SF which is only 8% larger than the minimum allowable 5,000 SF.
- The proposed building gross floor area is 24,744 GSF, which is only 1.03% less than the allowable 25,000 GSF. At barely under 25,000 GSF, it will not, as it should, require a special permit review.
- With the proposed application of inclusionary housing, the building will be 6 stories in height with 29 apartments. The typical buildings in the neighborhood are 2 and 3 stories high.
- With the building at approx. 65-70 feet high, building setbacks will only be five feet on the street front, north and east side. The east side directly abuts and will block sunlight from the shared open courtyard at the Ellery Place residential compound.
- The existing site includes 4 parking spaces. The proposed project will not include any parking.
- The new project is presented as a "familiar" 4 story brick building with vertical bays and double hung windows engorged over and around by a much larger structure with metal and concrete panel siding and large single pane fixed and casement windows which are not in the least but indigenous to mid Cambridge.

We are not disputing the need for, and we support the building of higher density multi-family housing in Cambridge. Nor are we questioning the developer's compliance by right with the requirements of the new Cambridge Zoning Ordinance to build the project as presented. However, this project is an extreme application of the new ordinance that "pushes the limits" with the largest possible massive block of a building on the smallest possible lot with, apparently by right and in our opinion, with little or no regard for the stated objectives of the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission. This will be one of the first multifamily projects built in Cambridge using the new regulations. It will set an unfortunate negative precedent for just how poorly they can be applied.

This design of this project can and should be improved. Its impact on the neighborhood can and should be assessed and addressed. Before this project is approved, we urge the Commission to ask the developer to provide an improved design that addresses the design guidelines and objectives of the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission and in particular, we propose that the Commission and the developer use the Design Guidelines for Multifamily

Housing, draft April 2025, prepared by the Cambridge Community Development Department as a guide.

Thank you for considering our position on the MC-72934: 60 Ellery St. Project.

Robert & Leita Luchetti

**From:** [David Hattis](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#)  
**Subject:** Support for 60 Ellery St  
**Date:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 5:06:38 PM

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Hello,

I wanted to write in support of the 60 Ellery st proposal. The city needs more housing, both market rate and affordable. I hope it is granted a certificate of appropriateness.

Thank you for your consideration.

David Hattis  
393 Broadway



**From:** [David Sullivan](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#); [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** Support for 60 Ellery Street project  
**Date:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 10:53:31 AM

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Dear Mid-Cambridge NCD commissioners,

I support the residential construction project proposed for 60 Ellery Street. As a former Mid-Cambridge resident, I believe that the existing structure's historical and architectural significance are negligible, and that the proposed project will contribute significantly to the neighborhood.

Most importantly, the project will add badly needed homes for our community, 20% of which must be affordable. It is exactly the kind of proposal that the City Council wanted when it recently amended the zoning ordinance to allow more multifamily housing.

As you know, the Council's recent amendments to your own enabling ordinance (I sponsored this ordinance's original version as a City Councillor in 1981) require you to consider these important housing goals, and do not allow you to "consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the [proposed] structure" nor to "impose dimensional and setback requirements in addition to those required by applicable provision of the zoning ordinance."

Therefore, I hope you will approve the certificate of appropriateness for this project. Thank you for your consideration.

David E. Sullivan  
16 Notre Dame Ave.



**From:** [Robert Luchetti](#)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** MC-7293: 60 Ellery St.  
**Date:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 9:52:03 AM

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Robert & Leita Luchetti  
5 Cleveland St.  
Cambridge MA, 02138

June 8, 2025

**RE:** Mid Cambridge NCD Commission MC-72934: 60 Ellery St  
We are contacting you to express our concern about the proposed 60 Ellery Street Residences Project that you will review at your Public Hearing in Monday June 9<sup>th</sup>, 2025.

**To:** Members of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission: Tony Hsiao, *Chair*, Lestra Litchfield, *Vice Chair*, Monoka Pauli, Charles Redmon, Katinka Hakuta, *Members*, and Nan Laird Catherine Tice, *Alternates*.

We live at 5 Cleveland St, which abuts a proposed new 29-unit apartment building at 60 Ellery St. The Mid Cambridge NCD Commission will review this project at Public Hearing this coming Monday, June 9<sup>th</sup>. We are submitting our thoughts on the project to you with the goal that the Mid Cambridge NCD Commission NOT approve the project until it undergoes additional design development to improve its conformance to the stated objectives of Cambridge Community Development and the Historical Commission.

The proposed project appears that it will be one of the first in Cambridge built using the new Cambridge Zoning regulations related to multifamily housing. These are INCREDIBLY significant changes that will have a major impact on everyone who lives in Cambridge. Frankly, we are surprised by and question how these changes were adopted into law without a ballot measure for everyone in Cambridge to vote on.

We are not disputing the need for, and we support the building of higher density multi-family housing in Cambridge. The 60 Ellery project does appear to conform by right to the requirements of the new Zoning Ordinance. However, this project is an extreme application of the new ordinance that "pushes the limits" with the largest possible massive block of a building on the smallest possible lot, apparently by right without requiring the due diligence of a special permit. Specifically,

Our objections to the project as presented are:

- **Too BIG:** Too large, too high, too massive, too many apartments, too much lot coverage, and the building setbacks are too small. At approx. 65-70 feet high and flat facades, the building setbacks will only be five feet on the street front, north and east side. The east side directly abuts and will block a substantial amount of sunlight from the shared open courtyard at the Ellery Square residential compound.
- **Poor Design:** The proposed building design is not in any way compatible or consistent with the neighborhood scale, building form, massing and materials. Why is it trying to look like 3 buildings instead of what it actually is? Why does the front brick section try to ape the house that will be torn down and how does this relate to the metal and cementitious panels, which are not in the least but indigenous to mid Cambridge, on the rest of the building? We know that the developer has no incentive to set back the upper stories of a building, but this would

substantially improve its scale and the amount of sunlight available to adjacent property.

- **Should Require a Special Permit:** Even though the project apparently does not require a Special Permit, it should. The gross floor area of the proposed building is 24,744 SF which is 256 SF or 1.02% less than the  $\geq 25,000$  required to trigger the need for a Special Permit. What happens if the actual building turns out to have a gross floor area  $\geq 25,000$  which is not unlikely given reasonable construction dimensional discrepancies. There is also what appears to be a contradictory section of the
- **No Vehicle Parking Anywhere-** despite the removal of 4 existing parking places.
- **Compromises Neighbor's Privacy** - Unscreened views from the back and sides of the building intrude on neighboring yards. A large transformer and trash storage is immediately adjacent to a neighboring building.
- **Inclusionary Housing** (a.k.a. Affordable). The proposed building size is based on using the increase in height and number of stories allowed when inclusionary (affordable) housing is included in the project. This allows for an increase of 2 stories, 29 feet in height and an additional 8 apartments. There is no indication on the project drawings of how the project will include 4 (20% of net usable area) affordable units and how it will conform to all the requirements, over time, of adopting inclusionary housing.
- **Additional Criteria Applicable to Larger Projects.** *Section 5.28.28.2 of the zoning regulations*
  - When a proposed project includes more than 10,000 Gross Square Feet and more than ten (10) dwelling units, and the proposed Stories Above Grade are increased above the 4 stories allowed, the Board shall evaluate the proposal based on:
    - The implications of the size or number of additional dwelling units on the anticipated demand for parking.
    - The appropriateness of the proposed layout of floor space within the building for multifamily residential use.
    - The potential mitigating effects of the proposed occupancy of dwelling units..... including options for elderly residents or live/workspaces.
  - **Easement Shared with Ellery Square:** The proposed project includes new building structure over and above a site access easement shared with abutting property which may not be permitted by the terms of the easement.
  - **Cutting down trees:** The construction of the project will require the removal of 34- large specimen trees.

The design of this project can and should be improved. Its impact on the neighborhood can and should be addressed. We request that before the 60 Ellery St. project is approved, the Historic Commission and the developer use the Design Guidelines for Multifamily Housing, draft April 2025, prepared by the Cambridge Community Development Department as a guide to improve the design of the project.

Thank you for considering our input.

Robert & Leita Luchetti

**Crosbie, Allison**

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**From:** Cary Saunders <clsauanders@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 10:30 AM  
**To:** HistComm  
**Subject:** question about June 9 hearing

Dear Commissioners,

Thank you for planning a hearing on June 9 about the proposed project at 60 Ellery Street. My home is on a property that abuts the project site, and I plan to attend.

I also attended the developer's presentation on June 6. Based on the extremely rude and inappropriate behavior exhibited by Mike Tokatlyan, the developer, during that meeting, I respectfully ask the commission to mute the microphone of Mr. Tokatlyan while someone else is speaking.

If you attended Friday's meeting, you witnessed Mr. Tokatlyan constantly interrupting people and literally yelling at them when they suggested something he disagreed with. He directed blatant hostility toward the people he invited to listen to him speak. It was, frankly, shocking, as well as disrespectful and disruptive.

I expect that, as with the developer's presentation, the microphones of the general participants will be muted unless they are granted permission to speak, to prevent disruption. I ask that you extend the same courtesy to the concerned citizens trying to participate in this important discussion.

Sincerely yours,

Cary Saunders  
9 Ellery Square



## Crosbie, Allison

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**From:** Lise Zeig <zeigowens@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 4:03 PM  
**To:** Histncds; Azeem, Burhan; McGovern, Marc; Nolan, Patricia; Siddiqui, Sumbul; Simmons, Denise; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan; Toner, Paul; Wilson, Ayesha; Zusy, Catherine  
**Cc:** David Owens; Nancy Seidman; Robert Luchetti; Ben Compaine  
**Subject:** Comments on the Proposal for 60 Ellery Street  
**Attachments:** Images - zeigowens@gmail.com - Gmail.html; D.Owens and L.Zeig comments on 60 Ellery St proposal.pdf

To the Members of the Cambridge City Council and the Members of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission.

In advance of the June 9th Commission meeting, we have attached a letter and a set of images that describe in detail why we are requesting that you:

1. Delay approval for the permitting application to assure an improved design
2. Set expectations that the developer gather input from the community and will make meaningful changes to meet your and the community's concerns.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and ideas. Thank you for your continuing efforts on behalf of the Cambridge community.

Lise Zeig and David Owens, 7 Cleveland Street, Cambridge



7 Cleveland Street  
Cambridge, MA 02137

June 8, 2025

Dear City Councilors and Members of the Mid Cambridge Historic Commission,

We are writing to provide comments on the proposal submitted to construct a multifamily building at 60 Ellery Street with 29 apartments in advance of the June 9th Commission meeting. We are long term residents on Cleveland Street.

Let us begin by saying that we are committed proponents of increasing density and housing in Cambridge. We agree that the future of Cambridge needs higher density to meet its social responsibility and to survive as a vibrant city. We also, however, think that the design of new buildings in response to the recent zoning rules must lead the way in excellent design for the city's future. This project, and all other projects in the future, will last longer than any of us and will be a record of the Cambridge City Council's leadership and intent.

We applaud the development of the expectations set for future Cambridge design through the standards articulated in the April 2025 Draft Cambridge Design Guidelines for MultiFamily Housing. As the Guidelines say, "developers and designers should strive to achieve most of these guidelines where possible and appropriate. Buildings have a responsibility to contribute positively to the places where they are built. When that happens – we are all better served."

**We have compared these Guidelines and believe the proposed 60 Ellery Street project does not conform with many aspects of their intent and will do a disservice to the meaningful changes you were hoping to achieve (as described below):**

### **Building Design**

Section 3 of the Guidelines describe the importance of responding to the existing neighborhood buildings through the design's massing, details, heights, and materials. It says further that the new construction should respect the overall height of neighboring buildings by using setbacks on higher floors and appropriate "transition[s] between the height of taller buildings and lower surrounding buildings."

**Relationship to Neighboring Buildings:** The proposed building is unresponsive to the guidance. The proposal's poor design, lack of setbacks, enormous bulk and siting on nearly all of the 5500 square foot lot, is poorly conceived. It seems that this development seeks to cram as many apartments into the available space without effectively responding to its neighboring conditions.

**Facade, Massing, Materials and Color:** The proposed building façade is currently articulated in a confusing and ill proportioned manner. The building elements, that is the placement of building details and the change of facade colors, appear to be there to distract the observer from the overall bulk and ungainly proportions of the project. In the proposal, the only actual modulation in the depth of the façade wall is with projected bays extending beyond the setback line. All other change of materials and color are on a flattened plane.

We feel that an honest use of materials and less reliance on false historicism may greatly enhance the credibility of the design. Currently, there is a reliance upon the color of brick from the existing building (a building which will be demolished and no longer part of its context) to

give it some historical meaning. Proposed window types similar to those found in the demolished building is equally unconvincing. The use of modern metal panels in a building with classical details is a particularly jarring shift in time and style. Blind obedience to the classical style elements is not a credible approach in creating an appropriate response to its context. In addition, the use of classical details that do not to rely upon realistic classical proportions is a mistake.

Well proportioned massing with convincingly deep setbacks in both the vertical and horizontal planes would help mitigate the overall bulk of the project. Use of quality materials to make those change in planes would also be helpful. That being said, we must recognize that, even in the most skilled and talented hands, sometimes an appropriate design cannot be found because of the unrealistic demands of the program. In that case, the building size should be reduced.

**Building Entrance:** The Guidelines in Part 3.3.1.b, say to “Provide shelter or shade at building entrances. Enhance entrances with features such as stoops, porches, recesses, canopies, awnings, ...[and] landscaping....” As currently proposed, the entry has none of these features and is confusing and ill proportioned. The size of the entry staircase appears tiny compared to the overall size and scale of the building. The front stairs also are misaligned with the projected bay on the facade above the doorway. This entry design is an example of how the design of the facade is mostly decorative and does not respond to the building’s inherent structure as discussed above.

### **Site Layout**

**Setback:** The Guidelines in Part 2.1 says, “In existing well developed areas, where urban patterns are relatively uniform and stable, site buildings and design landscapes for compatibility with existing urban patterns of building siting and street character. **Front yard setbacks should generally align with those of neighboring buildings.**” [Emphasis added]

The proposed design places the building with a 5’4” setback, apparently using the minimal set back for the building on the corner of Broadway and Ellery as half of its calculation. The corner building is an anomaly in the neighborhood. Nearly every building on both sides of Ellery Street has at least a 10 foot set back, most with gardens and porches creating additional visual space and interest. Even the 5 story brick building at the corner of Ellery and Harvard Street (called “the President”) which is the tallest building in the area, enjoys a 10 foot building set back.

### **Site Design**

**Open Spaces and Plantings:** The Guidelines in Part 2.2.a encourages new construction to “maximize vegetation - particularly canopy trees - to shade and enrich streets and other public spaces.” The Guidelines further establish expectations for open spaces that provide “environmental benefits and minimize impact on neighbors, while contributing to the City’s beauty.”

In fact, this proposal will remove two mature magnolia trees currently in the front and several other mature trees at the back of the site. There are only minimal replacement plantings planned on the tiny available open space at the proposed site.

Is it possible that half of the meager open space requirement proposed for this building can be met with a rooftop green space? This notion seems absurd if it is truly within the requirements

of the city's zoning rules. Creating a private open space for building residents is a substantial amenity for them. However, it has absolutely no benefit *at all* for the rest of the community as recommended in the above Guidelines.

**Mechanical Equipment:**The Guidelines in Part 2.2.p. say to "Screen loading and trash areas, meters, mechanical units, electrical transformers ... and utility equipment with plantings, fences, site walls, or other appropriate landscape elements." In addition, the Guidelines in Part 2.6.a. say, "Locate utility functions such as gas, electric, and water meters, **transformers** ... where they will be least visible from the street." [Emphasis added]

What appears to be a loading dock on the south side of the facade creates a 14 foot gaping hole on the streetscape. It is oversized and would fit more appropriately at an industrial site rather than a residential one. It is wrong for this site and community. This proposed space includes a transformer along the street edge. This piece of equipment often sends out an annoying buzz to the rest of the community and is unacceptable. A transformer vault must be provided, as in most normal buildings. The transformer would be best buried below grade and would still be accessible to the utility companies. This can be done. It would, as the Guidelines suggest, create the opportunity to establish a more pleasant streetscape rather than an unsightly one.

## **NEXT STEPS**

It is apparent that the developer has used the opportunity presented by Cambridge's new zoning rules to submit a proposal that takes advantage of the absolute outside permitted limits. In a meeting the developer organized for the community on June 6, he appeared to agree that the community could provide some input into the overall design proposal.

Given the concerns stated above, as well as those by other community members, we respectfully request the following.

### **Requested Actions for the Mid-Cambridge Conservation District Commission:**

The Mid-Cambridge Conservation District has maintained its character through the careful stewardship of its Commission. It has ensured the use of quality materials and design features throughout the area. It is essential that new construction, even construction that is more modern in its conception, complements the neighboring conditions as much as possible through effective design and high quality materials as articulated in the guidelines. Even with its changed authorities under the new zoning rules, we believe that the following actions are warranted:

1. Delay issuing approval for the application to assure an improved design that carefully considers all of the elements described above.
2. Set expectations that the developer gather input from the community for the design and will make meaningful changes to meet your and the community's concerns.

[PLEASE NOTE: We have attached (under separate cover) a series of images showing how the design principles described in our letter could be applied to the proposed program. **While this is just for discussion purposes only**, we believe it shows that a better design might be possible under the zoning requirements as currently articulated. **Still, we believe that it is significantly oversized for the site.** We could use this as an example for discussion during the input sessions requested in #2 above.]

**Requested Actions for the Cambridge City Council:**

1. Collect and consider input on the implementation of the new zoning rules as they actually are affecting communities. Gather information on affordability, traffic, parking, pollution, environmental factors such as impact on solar panels and sunlight, and responsiveness to neighboring conditions and input.
2. We are interested in continuing to understand how the number affordable housing units will be calculated. We understood from the developer that by using every possible limit of the zoning rules, only approximately 4-5 affordable units will be available (depending on square foot requirements). We question whether this number of proposed studio and small apartments will be the right size for the families we hope would be attracted to our neighborhood.
2. Amend rules if necessary.

Sincerely,

David Owens and Lise M. Zeig

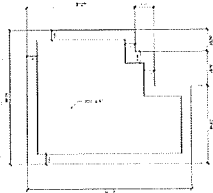
# Crosbie, Allison

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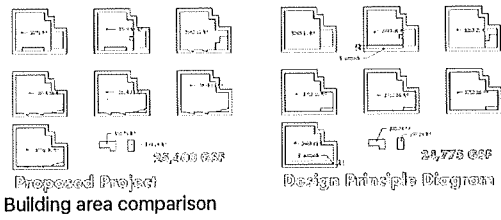
**From:** Lise Zeig <zeigowens@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 4:42 PM  
**To:** Crosbie, Allison  
**Subject:** Re: Comments on the Proposal for 60 Ellery Street

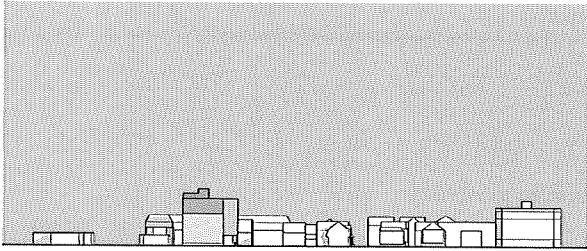
Alison - sorry for the delay in sending these images again. Thanks for your help.

FOR DISCUSSION PURPOSES ONLY. The attached images show how the design principles described in the letter from D.Owens and L.Zeig could be applied to the proposed program for 60 Ellery Street, Cambridge. We believe these show that a better design might be possible under the zoning requirements as currently articulated. Still, we believe the program as currently proposed is oversized for the site. We could use these images during the requested input sessions with the developer.

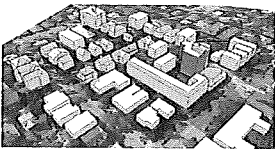


Site area take off





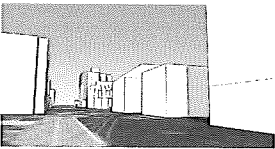
Site section through Ellery Street



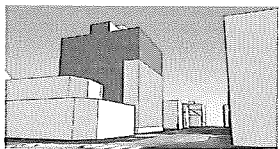
Aerial, looking southwest



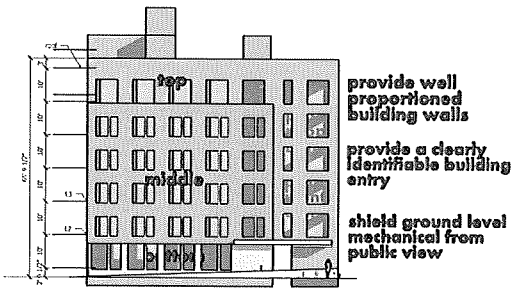
Aerial, looking northeast



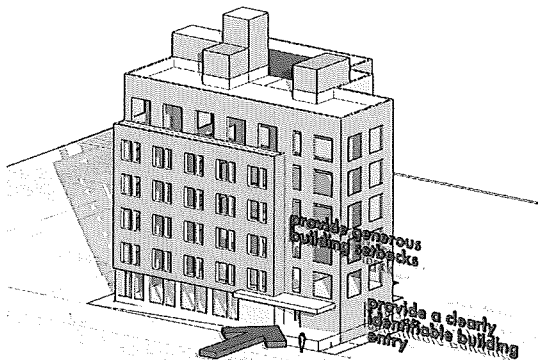
Street view looking north



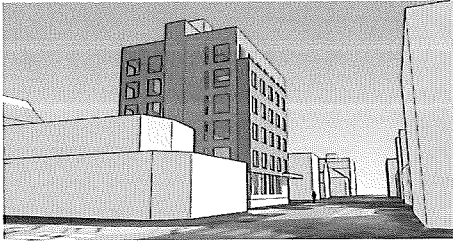
Street view looking South



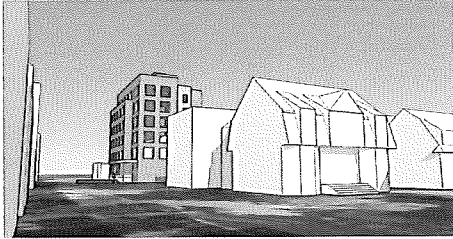
Ellery Street elevation design diagram



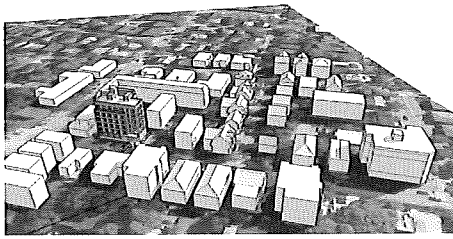
Ellery Street elevation design diagram



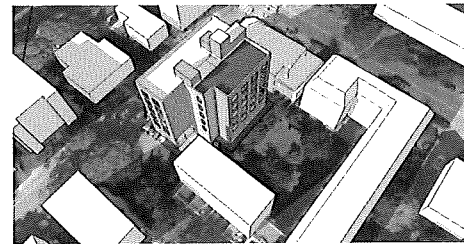
Building view from Broadway



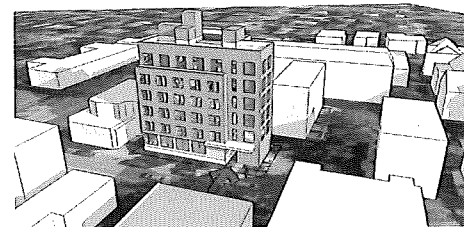
Building view from Cleveland Street



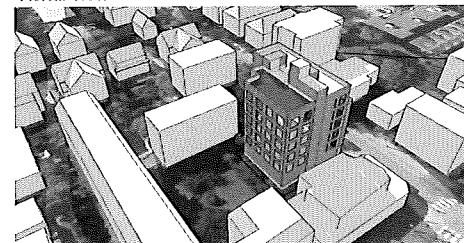
Aerial view



Aerial view



Aerial view



Aerial view

On Mon, Jun 9, 2025 at 10:03 AM Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)> wrote:

Hi Lise,

Thank you very much for your comments. I will distribute them to the Commissioners.

Could you send the images again? I wasn't able to open it.

Best regards,

**Allison A. Crosbie, ASLA, Preservation Administrator**

Cambridge Historical Commission

831 Mass Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.

Cambridge, MA 02139

617-349-4683

she/her/hers

**From:** Lise Zeig <[zeigowens@gmail.com](mailto:zeigowens@gmail.com)>

**Sent:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 4:03 PM

**To:** Histncds <[Histncds@CambridgeMA.GOV](mailto:Histncds@CambridgeMA.GOV)>; Azeem, Burhan <[bazeem@cambridgema.gov](mailto:bazeem@cambridgema.gov)>; McGovern, Marc <[mmcGovern@cambridgema.gov](mailto:mmcGovern@cambridgema.gov)>; Nolan, Patricia <[pnolan@cambridgema.gov](mailto:pnolan@cambridgema.gov)>; Siddiqui, Sumbul <[ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov](mailto:ssiddiqui@cambridgema.gov)>; Simmons, Denise <[dsimmons@cambridgema.gov](mailto:dsimmons@cambridgema.gov)>; Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan <[jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov](mailto:jsobrinhowheeler@cambridgema.gov)>; Toner, Paul <[ptoner@cambridgema.gov](mailto:ptoner@cambridgema.gov)>; Wilson, Ayesha <[amwilson@cambridgema.gov](mailto:amwilson@cambridgema.gov)>; Zusy, Catherine <[czusy@cambridgema.gov](mailto:czusy@cambridgema.gov)>

**Cc:** David Owens <[david@dmowens.com](mailto:david@dmowens.com)>; Nancy Seidman <[nlseidman@gmail.com](mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com)>; Robert Luchetti <[bohl@luchetti.com](mailto:bohl@luchetti.com)>; Ben Compaine <[bcompaine@gmail.com](mailto:bcompaine@gmail.com)>

**Subject:** Comments on the Proposal for 60 Ellery Street

To the Members of the Cambridge City Council and the Members of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission.

In advance of the June 9th Commission meeting, we have attached a letter and a set of images that describe in detail why we are requesting that you:

1. Delay approval for the permitting application to assure an improved design

2. Set expectations that the developer gather input from the community and will make meaningful changes to meet your and the community's concerns.

We appreciate your consideration of our concerns and ideas. Thank you for your continuing efforts on behalf of the Cambridge community.

Lise Zeig and David Owens, 7 Cleveland Street, Cambridge



**From:** [Nasser K](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#); [City Council](#); [HistComm](#); [Simmons, Denise](#); [CMSullivan@cambridgema.gov](mailto:CMSullivan@cambridgema.gov); [Burks, Sarah](#); [CRedmon@cambridgema.gov](mailto:CRedmon@cambridgema.gov)  
**Subject:** 60Ellery  
**Date:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 10:05:48 AM

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Dear All,

I'm reaching out to you regarding the development plan at 60 Ellery Street, as it affects many of you, either through past decisions or future ones that will shape the project's direction. Unfortunately, I don't have the email contacts for the members of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District, so I kindly ask that you share this message with them today.

I will keep this email brief, as I know you all have busy schedules and believe many other neighbors may have also emailed you in the past couple of days.

My name is Nasser Khadjenoori, and I am a resident of 1 Ellery Square. I am not directly impacted by the development of the 60 Ellery project, except for the traffic, noise, and parking issues that will result from adding 29 units without allocated parking. If a few more of such developments happen in Mid-Cambridge, then we all will feel its impact regardless of where in town our residence is. Ellery Street already has high traffic as it is the only side street in Mid Cambridge, other than Inman Street, that connects Cambridge Street to Massachusetts Avenue. Any other such developments on the side streets of Mid-Cambridge will only exacerbate the situation.

As you are all aware, Mid-Cambridge is primarily residential, but its vibrant community is supported by small shops, local businesses, and cultural institutions, including museums, which contribute to its lively and intellectual atmosphere. Our city also attracts many out-of-town visitors during the weekend, holidays, and graduations. Thus far, High-rise buildings have been rare, and up to recently, new infill construction has been tightly regulated, maintaining a cohesive, low-rise, and historic urban fabric in our city. Sadly, it appears that in the next decade, we will be losing this historic urban fabric.

I fully understand the need for additional housing in the Cambridge area to address the high cost of real estate. However, what will be the cost of gaining this additional housing for the current residence? We can justify to ourselves that most of the owners of these units won't have a car, but what if they all did? Not only that but they are also entitled to a visitor parking. Imagine 29 additional cars are circling the blocks at various times of the day, contributing to traffic while searching for parking. If this development trend continues in Mid Cambridge, we will have multiple of

29 cars searching for a space to park, we may lose out-of-town visitors due to traffic congestion and a lack of parking spaces. This will ultimately affect our small shops and high-quality restaurants. Furthermore, we risk losing long-time Cambridge residents who call Cambridge home and cherish what our city has to offer today.

I think we need a more balance approach. If we are replacing parking spaces with bike lanes (I also ride a bike and benefit from the safer streets for the bikers) and adding more housing to populated areas, then I hope the city has plans for creating additional parking spaces for its residents before it becomes a bigger issue. Is there any planning being done? Shouldn't we first allow the development of 5-6 story buildings with underground parking on our major streets before allowing them to be built with no underground parking on side streets? If you are going to allow 60 Ellery to be built, have you considered making Dana Street one-way from Cambridge Street to Mass Ave, as we expect Ellery Street to be closed from Broadberry to Harvard Street often during the construction? What other traffic adjustments are being planned? What if another developer wants to build a 5-floor building on Dana Street at the same time as 60 Ellery is being constructed, as they have the right to do if they meet all the city's requirements?

I have very little knowledge regarding city development, but I know any other such developments on the side streets of Mid-Cambridge will only exacerbate the situation and make the city unlivable for its residents. I don't think this is your intention. I trust you will make the right decision to preserve our Mid Cambridge neighborhood that feels both timeless, dynamic, and deeply rooted in history. Thank you for your service to our city.

Nasser Khadjenoori  
1 Ellery Square, Cambridge  
781-367-3546  
[nk@nasserk.com](mailto:nk@nasserk.com)

**From:** [Justin Saif](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#)  
**Cc:** [histcomm@cambridgema.com](mailto:histcomm@cambridgema.com)  
**Subject:** Strong Support for 60 Ellery proposal  
**Date:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 9:05:06 PM

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Hi all,

I write to express my strong support for the proposed residential building at 60 Ellery Street. The proposed building looks nice and will fit into the neighborhood well. It will get rid of the existing surface parking lot, an ugly waste of space. Turning the parking lot into housing will greatly improve the neighborhood and reduce traffic. The location provides close access to the green space and playground in front of the library and the War Memorial recreational facilities.

The building will allow more people to live near the many amenities in Mid-Cambridge as well as Harvard and Central Squares. It will provide accessible homes with elevator access that can allow seniors to continue to live in the neighborhood and provide people with disabilities a home that works for them.

The building will also provide 5 or 6 subsidized affordable homes, a multimillion dollar benefit to Cambridge (it costs the Cambridge Housing Authority nearly \$1 million to build an affordable home)—for free! (Although height is not a consideration, it's worth noting that a shorter building almost certainly would not provide any affordable homes.)

These homes will provide a lifeline for Cambridge families who desperately need them, particularly given the likelihood of deep cuts to federal housing funding by the Trump Administration.

Read this interview with one mother learning about getting an affordable home in Cambridge:

“When I received the call, I was at my lowest point in life. I was exhausted and was contemplating moving back home and starting over again. I wanted to give up on chasing the American life so many people dream about.

I will never forget the call from CHA employee, Johanny Bouman, to offer me a two-bedroom apartment at one of their properties in Cambridge — I screamed. Poor girl, I just screamed and screamed, thanking God and feeling very ready to walk through the door of this new opportunity because my kids deserve it. This is what I've worked for and all of a sudden my patience felt like it was starting to pay off after so many years of bouncing around and trying new things.”

[Waitlist Success Q&A Series - Daisy Ozuna: We Are More Than Just Numbers - CHA](#)

Best,

Justin Saif

Hurley Street

**From:** [Lisa Randall](#)  
**To:** [Lisa Randall](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery St  
**Date:** Sunday, June 8, 2025 8:25:13 AM

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Hello

I am sure by now you have heard many messages regarding the proposed project at 60 Ellery St. I live at 11-13 Cleveland St, having recently completed a big renovation there. I don't live adjacent to the property but live close enough to care deeply about the neighborhood.

As you know this part of Cambridge is very special. It grew out of working class homes and has become a beautiful well-kept neighborhood with wonderful gardens and renovated beautiful homes. I am a professor at Harvard and many of my colleagues choose to live in the more estate-driven neighborhoods on Brattle St and Avon Hill (if they can afford them of course). I chose this neighborhood because I love the location, the character, and the beauty. Many neighbors have lived there for years and all love their space.

The proposed unit is the first after the recent bill allowing bigger ahistorical developments, and it purports to add accessible housing (despite the admission that it will add at most 2-4 such units). In doing so, it will further separate our neighborhood from the larger houses with larger lots and turn our neighborhood into a new Somerville. Somerville is not bad but Cambridge and this part in particular is special. We value outdoor space and human interaction. The building being proposed would have 29 smallish units that are clearly meant for a transient population, and would likely house foreign students whose parents buy them property.

This does nothing to solve the very real problem of people who are trying to make a living here in Cambridge.

It also is nothing like the current houses. There is no green space, no setback, and no parking.

The latter might be technically allowed now but on the street where this property would be would be very dangerous. There are bikes often nearly hit by Ubers already. If there are 29 units with no parking and no place to pull out, this will be very dangerous for all involved. The street is also an important passageway for emergency vehicles--either ambulances or fire trucks.

This unit was clearly designed with only profit in mind, despite what the developer (who we just met with last night) claims. I very much hope this is not the sort of thing the Council had in mind when passing the ordinance, which frankly runs the risk of destroying the neighborhood and setting a horrible precedent. The bill that was recently passed is certainly not what most people in Cambridge would want and this is an opportunity for you to recognize this and do better.

I hope you find a way to curtail or stop this ugly monstrosity. We hope you value Cambridge the way we in the neighborhood do.

Best, (Professor) Lisa Randall



**From:** [Barbara Sweet](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#); [Barbara Sweet](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery  
**Date:** Monday, June 9, 2025 10:59:10 AM

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Dear Allison,

I understand you are the person to write to about the proposed new 6 story new construction at 60 Ellery St.

The city needs new trees. Will there be room to plant new trees at this site?

There is little space for cars to park on Ellery Street right now. The new bldg. will not include parking. Where will vehicles of new renters/owners park?

Such a building will have a negative impact on the entire neighborhood. Is it justified in ruining the quality of life and financial wellbeing of the existing residents in order to enrich one builder? What about a 4 story building as a compromise?

How tall is the "President" at the corner of Ellery and Harvard streets? 60 Ellery could match that building's height.

Fingers crossed,  
Barbara Sweet  
39 Ellery St. #6  
Cambridge, MA  
617-945-1462



**From:** [Carvalho, Bruno](#)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** In support of 60 Ellery  
**Date:** Monday, June 9, 2025 3:12:41 PM

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Dear Commissioners,

As Mid-Cambridge residents (Dana Street), we write in strong support of this residential building. Here are some of the reasons: we can reasonably expect this project to benefit the environment, by allowing more people to live car-free; it will add a new building to the mix, preventing excessive stagnation of our neighborhood's urban fabric; it will add residents, with downstream advantages to local businesses (more costumers) and our tax base; and it will of course change the lives of those that will get to move in. Given our housing shortage and foreseeable economic challenges, we are unfortunately not in a position to be too precious about new developments and should seize on this opportunity to add multifamily housing. We believe that's the right thing to do.

With thanks,  
Bruno Carvalho + Michael Rozas



**From:** [Carolyn Fuller](#)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** Support for 60 Ellery Street Project  
**Date:** Monday, June 9, 2025 1:40:07 PM

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Hi,

I am writing in support for the proposed 6 story residential building at 60 Ellery Street.

Cambridge voters have consistently voted for a pro-housing City Council over several election cycles. Most of us know that we are in the midst of a serious housing crisis. Many of us worked hard to ensure we had a pro-housing City Council which would pass significant zoning reform in order to address this housing shortage. And our City Councillors did not disappoint.

Unfortunately, there are some who are using the NCD process to circumvent our hard won new zoning reforms. The existing structure at 60 Ellery Street is historically and architecturally insignificant. Removing the surface parking lot and replacing it with homes will be a significant improvement for the neighborhood. Please do not allow those who lost at the polls to misuse the NCDs to override our new zoning laws.

Carolyn Fuller  
12 Douglass St  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
[carolyn.fuller2018@gmail.com](mailto:carolyn.fuller2018@gmail.com)



**From:** [Casey Szilagyi](#)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** Support for 60 Ellery Street multifamily project  
**Date:** Monday, June 9, 2025 9:12:08 AM

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Dear Mid-Cambridge NCD commissioners,

I support the residential construction project that is currently proposed for 60 Ellery Street. I believe that the existing structure's historical and architectural significance are minor, and that the proposed project will be a positive for the city. The project will add much needed homes, 20% of which will be affordable. It's exactly the type of housing that the city council anticipated when the zoning code was amended earlier this year.

Regards,  
Casey Szilagyi  
20 Child St



**From:** [Esther Hanig](#)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** Support for 60 Ellery St.  
**Date:** Monday, June 9, 2025 4:10:34 PM

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Dear Mid-Cambridge NCD commissioners,

I am writing in support of the residential construction project proposed for 60 Ellery Street.

Although not a mid-Cambridge resident, as a Port resident, I live nearby and am painfully aware of the need for more housing. Given the incredible demand for housing that our university neighbors and health science businesses have created, the need for increased supply is critical. Moreover, 20% of this development will be affordable which is vital to trying to preserve as much diversity as possible in our city.

This is a wonderful opportunity to address our severe housing shortage and to provide additional affordable housing. For these reasons, I urge you to approve the certificate of appropriateness for this project.

Thank you for your consideration.

Esther Hanig  
136 Pine St.



## Crosbie, Allison

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**From:** Hugh Russell <noreply-webcontactform@cambridgema.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 7:45 AM  
**To:** HistComm  
**Subject:** Comments on 60 Ellery St. proposal

Sender's Email: hughadamsrussell@gmail.com Sender's Name: Hugh Russell Sent from a web contact form at <https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/contactforms/historicalcommission>

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This is pretty much what I feared would be the consequences of the recently enacted zoning changes.

1. This mostly luxury building will generate the need for several dozen parking spaces on a street that doesn't have excess street parking at this time.
2. The bulk of the building is out of scale with adjacent properties. At a minimum, there should be at least a 10' front setback above the 4th floor facing Ellery Street.
3. The dark version of the siding in the renderings is much worse than the lighter version, but overall neither an attractive building.



**From:** [Lawton, Mary Beth](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 60 Ellery Street Project  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 10, 2025 9:29:04 AM

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Dear Allison Crosbie: We appreciated the Commission's vote. We look forward to talking with developers. Is there a land lawyer who you recommend? Ellery Square has their own lawyer who is unable to represent our building. Thank you.

Mary Beth Lawton  
Danusa Lesque

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**From:** Crosbie, Allison <acrosbie@cambridgema.gov>  
**Date:** Monday, June 9, 2025 at 9:28 AM  
**To:** Lawton, Mary Beth <mlawton@lesley.edu>, Histncds  
<Histncds@CambridgeMA.GOV>  
**Subject:** RE: 60 Ellery Street Project

**: This message has originated from an External Source. Please use proper judgment and caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding to this email.**

Hi MaryBeth,

Thank you for your comments. I will distribute them to the Commissioners.

Best regards,

**Allison A. Crosbie, ASLA, Preservation Administrator**  
Cambridge Historical Commission  
831 Mass Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
617-349-4683  
she/her/hers

**From:** Lawton, Mary Beth <mlawton@lesley.edu>  
**Sent:** Saturday, June 7, 2025 4:30 PM  
**To:** Histncds <Histncds@CambridgeMA.GOV>  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery Street Project

Dear Members of the Conservation District Commission:

We implore you to delay your decision regarding the 60 Ellery Street Project until you have had the opportunity to visit the site and meet the neighbors and abutters. We want to assure that people fully understand the impact of a 7- story building for 29 units with no parking provided on the neighbors, abutters, and Ellery Street.

We, owners of 54 Ellery, Unit 3, who share a driveway with 60 Ellery, have about 13 or 14 reasons why the proposed 60 Ellery building , as presented to the committee, not be constructed. We are open to change, support affordable housing and increased housing for Cambridge. A five-story structure made of brick (not fake brick),including a basement for 20 units seems much more reasonable to us.

We will attend the meeting Monday evening . Thank you for your consideration of this request.

Sincerely,

MaryBeth Lawton  
Danusa Lesqueves

**From:** [Barbara Sweet](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#); [Barbara Sweet](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 60 Ellery  
**Date:** Tuesday, June 10, 2025 1:43:36 PM

---

Hi Allison --

Any chance that the builder might reduce the number of stories to 4 or 5, or is 6 stories set in stone now?

Thanks for your helpfulness!

-- Barbara

On Tuesday, June 10, 2025 at 11:42:39 AM EDT, Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)> wrote:

Hi Barbara,

The case was continued which means that the applicant agreed to return to the Commission with a revised proposal.

Best,

Allison

**Allison A. Crosbie, ASLA, Preservation Administrator**

Cambridge Historical Commission

831 Mass Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.

Cambridge, MA 02139

617-349-4683

she/her/hers

**From:** Barbara Sweet <[bgsweet39@yahoo.com](mailto:bgsweet39@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, June 10, 2025 10:19 AM  
**To:** Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)>; Barbara Sweet <[bgsweet39@yahoo.com](mailto:bgsweet39@yahoo.com)>  
**Subject:** Re: 60 Ellery

Hi Allison,

Since I was not able to view the meeting last evening, if you have time, would you be willing to email me the final outcome regarding 60 Ellery Street? I would greatly appreciate it!

Kind regards,  
Barbara Sweet  
39 Ellery St., #6

On Monday, June 9, 2025 at 01:48:13 PM EDT, Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)> wrote:

Hi Barbara,

Thank you for your comments. I will distribute them to the Commissioners.

Best regards,

**Allison A. Crosbie, ASLA, Preservation Administrator**

Cambridge Historical Commission

831 Mass Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.

Cambridge, MA 02139

617-349-4683

she/her/hers

**From:** Barbara Sweet <[bgsweet39@yahoo.com](mailto:bgsweet39@yahoo.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 9, 2025 10:58 AM  
**To:** Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)>; Barbara Sweet <[bgsweet39@yahoo.com](mailto:bgsweet39@yahoo.com)>  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery

Dear Allison,

I understand you are the person to write to about the proposed new 6 story new construction at 60 Ellery St.

The city needs new trees. Will there be room to plant new trees at this site?

There is little space for cars to park on Ellery Street right now. The new bldg. will not include parking. Where will vehicles of new renters/owners park?

Such a building will have a negative impact on the entire neighborhood. Is it justified in ruining the quality of life and financial wellbeing of the existing residents in order to enrich one builder? What about a 4 story building as a compromise?

How tall is the "President" at the corner of Ellery and Harvard streets? 60 Ellery could match that building's height.

Fingers crossed,

Barbara Sweet

39 Ellery St. #6

Cambridge, MA

617-945-1462



**From:** [Cary Saunders](#)  
**To:** [mike@cbuilderscorp.com](mailto:mike@cbuilderscorp.com)  
**Cc:** [Histncds; Ellery Square board](#)  
**Subject:** Ellery Square contact details  
**Date:** Friday, June 13, 2025 1:14:47 PM

---

Dear Mr. Tokatlyan,

I write to follow up about the hearing held on June 9 regarding your proposed property development at 60 Ellery Street in Cambridge.

We are pleased that you agreed with the Commission's direction to contact the abutting neighbors to discuss your proposal. In order to make it as easy as possible for you to reach the residents of Ellery Square, which has 18 single-family homes, each with a different owner, I can give you one email address that will expedite that communication. Please direct messages to [boardesoa@gmail.com](mailto:boardesoa@gmail.com). This will reach the three members of the Ellery Square Owners Association Board of Managers. The board can easily forward any messages to the other owners.

All 18 homes are owner-occupied; there are no rentals. For U.S. mail, please continue to send things to the owner's street addresses. However, for communicating within the short time frame before the next MCNCDL hearing, please do so via [boardesoa@gmail.com](mailto:boardesoa@gmail.com).

We look forward to hearing from you.

Regards,

Cary Saunders  
President, Board of Managers, Ellery Square Owners Association



**From:** [Cary Saunders](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#)  
**Cc:** [Ellery Square board](#)  
**Subject:** question about process re: 60 Ellery Street  
**Date:** Wednesday, June 18, 2025 12:15:22 PM

---

Dear Commissioners,

Could the commission please advise us on what would be a reasonable amount of time to expect to go by before hearing from the developer or architects for 60 Ellery Street? We at Ellery Square have the understanding that they would be contacting us to discuss their proposal before the next hearing, because we thought the commission directed them to, and they did say they would.

With the next hearing scheduled for July 7, on a Monday after a major holiday weekend, we're concerned about the shrinking window of time left, now at 2-1/2 weeks.

Not having been in this situation before, we'd appreciate your guidance on whether our understanding is correct and what a reasonable response time would be.

Sincerely,

Cary Saunders  
President, Board of Managers, Ellery Square Owners Association



**From:** [Nancy Seidman](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** Follow-up on 60 Ellery  
**Date:** Friday, June 27, 2025 7:12:31 AM

---

Hi Allison,

I hope you are well and survived the heat wave ok.

That was a quite a hearing earlier this month. Thank you to the Commission and you for answering our questions and hanging in there.

A couple of follow-up questions if I might:

- does the continuance have a time limit?
- Was something issued by the Commission that we (neighbors/abutters) can refer to? And if so, where is that located?
- When would you expect the next hearing to be held? Does that depend on the developer?
- What are the conditions that lead to the next hearing?
- Lestra told me she resigned from the Commission (unfortunately); do you know when the position will be advertised to be filled? Does it have to be filled with someone from the District?

Please let me know if any of this is unclear. And thank you for your work.

Nancy Seidman  
Cleveland St.

Sent from my iPad



## Crosbie, Allison

---

**From:** Adam Kurth <akurth@meeb.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 30, 2025 3:51 PM  
**To:** Crosbie, Allison  
**Subject:** RE: Question on Submission Deadlines

Appreciate that clarification and good to know on the alternate timing for the submission of public comments prior to the hearing. I'll alert the ESOA, and thanks again for your feedback.

Have a great rest of the day!

Best,  
Adam

Adam T. Kurth, Esq.  
MARCUS • ERRICO • EMMER • BROOKS  
45 Braintree Hill Office Park, Suite 400  
Braintree, MA 02184  
**DIRECT LINE – 781-849-3639**  
781.843.5000 (x139)  
781.843.1529/fax  
[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)



**From:** Crosbie, Allison <acrosbie@cambridgema.gov>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 30, 2025 3:46 PM  
**To:** Adam Kurth <akurth@meeb.com>  
**Subject:** RE: Question on Submission Deadlines

Hi,

We accept comments up to the day of the hearing. The 7/14 deadline is only for the applicant because I have to advertise the cases twice before the hearing as well as send out abutters notices.

Best,

Allison

**From:** Adam Kurth <[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 30, 2025 3:34 PM  
**To:** Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)>  
**Subject:** RE: Question on Submission Deadlines

Hi Allison,

Thanks for the prompt reply today, and pardon me that my initial question wasn't clear. Yes, on public comments, or more specifically, is that 7/14 deadline applicable if the ESOA wants to submit something further in writing on the 60 Ellery Street project application before the August meeting?

Best,  
Adam

Adam T. Kurth, Esq.  
MARCUS • ERRICO • EMMER • BROOKS  
45 Braintree Hill Office Park, Suite 400  
Braintree, MA 02184  
**DIRECT LINE – 781-849-3639**  
781.843.5000 (x139)  
781.843.1529/fax  
[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)



-----Original Message-----

**From:** Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)>  
**Sent:** Monday, June 30, 2025 2:26 PM  
**To:** Adam Kurth <[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)>  
**Subject:** RE: Question on Submission Deadlines

Hi Adam,

I'm not sure what you mean by submissions by members of the public for matters that area already pending. Are you referring to public comments?

Best,  
Allison

Allison A. Crosbie, ASLA, Preservation Administrator Cambridge Historical Commission  
831 Mass Ave., 2nd Fl.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
617-349-4683  
she/her/hers

-----Original Message-----

From: Adam T. Kurth <noreply-webcontactform@cambridgema.gov>  
Sent: Monday, June 30, 2025 9:22 AM  
To: Crosbie, Allison <acrosbie@cambridgema.gov>  
Subject: Question on Submission Deadlines

Sender's Email: akurth@meeb.com  
Sender's Name: Adam T. Kurth  
Sent from a web contact form at [https://link.edgepilot.com/s/9bdb36ab/2gWO-aKB\\_0SVsAnB4tV3og?u=https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/contactforms/allisoncrosbie](https://link.edgepilot.com/s/9bdb36ab/2gWO-aKB_0SVsAnB4tV3og?u=https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/contactforms/allisoncrosbie)

-----

Hello Ms. Crosbie,

I hope all is well with you. I'm reaching out at the Ellery Square Owner's Association's request, and I'm hoping you can clarify something for me on timelines for submissions to the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission.

I am aware that the Commission's July meeting is cancelled, and that the application filing deadline to be added to the agenda for the Commission's August meeting is July 14th. My question is - is that 7/14 deadline also applicable for submissions by members of the public for matters that are already pending before the Commission as well?

Thanks in advance for your feedback, and I look forward to hearing back at your convenience.

Best,  
Adam T. Kurth, Esq.



**From:** [Nancy Seidman](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** Fwd: Request for an Update on 60 Ellery  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 8, 2025 7:23:31 AM

---

Hello Allison,

Below is an email chain I had with Mike Tokatlyan yesterday. One of my neighbors suggested I forward this to you since he is not planning on meeting with the neighbors again before the Aug 4 meeting and isn't committing to meet afterwards either for that matter. Some of us were under the impression that MCD had asked him to continue meeting with us. Is that correct and is he obligated to do that?

Others suggested that Charlie Sullivan at the Cambridge historical commission should see this too since he is following our project. But I only see a contact form on that website, not Charlie's email. Could you forward this to him, or let me know how I should do that? I can fill out the contact form to let him know as well.

Thank you Allison. I hope you had a restful July 4 weekend.  
-Nancy

Sent from my iPad

Begin forwarded message:

**From:** Mike Tokatlyan <mike@cbuilderscorp.com>  
**Date:** July 7, 2025 at 8:08:26 PM EDT  
**To:** Nancy Seidman <nlseidman@gmail.com>  
**Cc:** lise david zeig owens <zeigowens@gmail.com>  
**Subject:** Re: Request for an Update on 60 Ellery

Nancy at the current time we are not planning on having two separate meetings for each edit. We had a neighborhood meeting to introduce the project prior to the city hearing. For the time being, we will have the updated meetings that the city holds. If additional or private meetings with neighbors are scheduled, I will reach out.

On 7/7/25, 7:40 PM, "Nancy Seidman" <nlseidman@gmail.com  
<mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com>> wrote:

Hi Mike,

Sorry but I'm not sure I understand your reply. You're saying that the Aug 4 meeting will happen before another meeting with neighbors, and pending that



meeting then you'll decide whether to meet with the neighbors? I just want to be sure I understand.

I think most of us are expecting that given the results of the initial hearing with MCD, and their (and our) concerns, that you were willing to meet with us again.

Please clarify your timeline.  
Thank you. Nancy

Sent from my iPad

On Jul 7, 2025, at 1:46 PM, Mike Tokatlyan  
<mike@cbuilderscorp.com <mailto:mike@cbuilderscorp.com>>  
wrote:

We will have the meeting initially as planned, then make a decision on a follow up at the meeting. We can always communicate after the meeting as well.

On 7/7/25, 10:07 AM, "Nancy Seidman" <nlseidman@gmail.com  
<mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com> <mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com  
<mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com>>> wrote:

Hi Mike,

Thanks for your response. Would you consider having a community meeting after the MCD meeting? I imagine we will have questions that could be addressed outside of the hearing. Or would you consider delaying your hearing in order to meet with the community before the hearing?

Thanks for considering this. -Nancy

Sent from my iPad

On Jul 7, 2025, at 9:54 AM, Mike Tokatlyan  
<mike@cbuilderscorp.com  
<mailto:mike@cbuilderscorp.com>  
<mailto:mike@cbuilderscorp.com  
<mailto:mike@cbuilderscorp.com>>> wrote:

Hi Nancy,

We will be presenting on the Aug 4th date, there are not prior meetings scheduled prior to that date as we will not have enough time, the new set is still in development. Should anything change, the city reaches out and or updates on their website.

On 7/7/25, 8:31 AM, "Nancy Seidman"  
<nlseidman@gmail.com  
<mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com>  
<mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com  
<mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com>>  
<mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com  
<mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com>  
<mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com  
<mailto:nlseidman@gmail.com>>>> wrote:

Hello Mike,

I hope you have had an enjoyable 4th of July weekend. I am writing with a couple of questions about your proposed development for 60 Ellery. We heard that you have asked for another hearing with the MCD Commission on August 4th.

My questions are:

- do you expect to hold to the Aug 4th date? (I understand you can adjust if you'd like)
- will you hold another meeting with the neighbors before you go before the Commission again? I believe you were asked to revise your design and we'd appreciate seeing that in advance of a hearing.
- have you purchased 60 Ellery?

I look forward to your response.

Thank you.

Nancy Seidman

Sent from my iPad

**From:** [Mary Beth Lawton](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery  
**Date:** Tuesday, July 8, 2025 3:06:02 PM

---

Sender's Email: [mlawton@lesley.edu](mailto:mlawton@lesley.edu)

Sender's Name: Mary Beth Lawton

Sent from a web contact form at <https://www.cambridgema.gov/historic/contactforms/allisoncrosbie>

-----

Dear Allison: The developers of 60 Ellery are not planning to meet with neighbors and abutters as instructed to do by the MCCDC. We (Mary Beth Lawton and Danusa Lesqueves) abut 60 Ellery, in fact we share a parking lot with 60 Ellery. We are quite distressed about this development. Mary Beth and Danusa.



**From:** Cary Saunders <[clsauanders@gmail.com](mailto:clsauanders@gmail.com)>  
**Sent:** Monday, July 21, 2025 9:28 AM  
**To:** Histncds <[Histncds@CambridgeMA.GOV](mailto:Histncds@CambridgeMA.GOV)>  
**Cc:** Ellery Square board <[boardesoa@gmail.com](mailto:boardesoa@gmail.com)>; Adam <[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)>  
**Subject:** August 4 hearing

Dear Commissioners,

Regarding the hearing to be held on August 4, I don't see any design proposals available online, as there were for the June hearing. When will those be posted? It's nearly impossible for us at Ellery Square to prepare for this conversation without plenty of time to review the plans. It would give the developer an unfair advantage over us and the other neighbors.

I want to make sure the commissioners, and Charlie Sullivan, are aware that Mike Tokatlyan, the developer for 60 Ellery Street, has outright refused to communicate with the neighbors at Ellery Square and elsewhere, even though he was directly asked by several. He replied that he is not required to and will not, and that any information will be shared by the commission. You'll recall that at the June 4 hearing, the commissioners directed him to communicate particularly with Ellery Square, and he agreed to do so. We are aware that you cannot enforce that, but it is a dismaying breach of ethics, trust, and civility. It certainly does not bode well for our dealing with Mike in the future should he be granted permission to proceed with this project.

It goes without saying that the Ellery Square community remains strongly opposed to this out-of-scale and wildly inappropriate project as proposed, and we are calling on the commission to use its powers to deny the demolition permit.

Respectfully,

Cary Saunders, president, ESOA Board of Managers



**From:** James Stathis  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#); [City Council](#); [HistComm](#); [Simmons, Denise](#); [CMSullivan@cambridgema.gov](mailto:CMSullivan@cambridgema.gov);  
[CRedmon@cambridgema.gov](mailto:CRedmon@cambridgema.gov); [Burks, Sarah](#); [Nolan, Patricia](#)  
**Subject:** Re: Objection to Ellery Street Development (60 and 84-86)  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 23, 2025 10:59:19 AM

---

I also live at Ellery Square (#4), and wish to add my voice to the email that Nasser K sent to you. In addition to the concerns he raised, the City should examine whether the the resulting “affordable” units will actually be more affordable than the existing units.

There are better ways to increase housing affordability in Cambridge than by letting greedy developers destroy our neighborhoods and streetscape; it is crucial that the City Council ensure the new zoning is having the intended effect of creating housing, especially inclusionary housing, and not simply replacing or reducing existing naturally occurring affordable housing.

James Stathis  
jstathis@gmail.com

Begin forwarded message:

----- Forwarded message -----

**From:** Nasser K <[nk@nasserk.com](mailto:nk@nasserk.com)>  
**Date:** Tue, Jul 22, 2025 at 10:31 AM  
**Subject:** Objection to 60 Ellery Street Development  
**To:** <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)>, <[CityCouncil@cambridgema.gov](mailto:CityCouncil@cambridgema.gov)>, <[histcomm@cambridgema.gov](mailto:histcomm@cambridgema.gov)>, <[dsimmons@cambridgema.gov](mailto:dsimmons@cambridgema.gov)>, <[CMSullivan@cambridgema.gov](mailto:CMSullivan@cambridgema.gov)>, <[CRedmon@cambridgema.gov](mailto:CRedmon@cambridgema.gov)>, <[SBurks@cambridgema.gov](mailto:SBurks@cambridgema.gov)>

Dear City Officials,  
(Unfortunately, I don't have the email addresses for the members of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District, so I kindly ask that you share this message with them today.)

I am a resident of 1 Ellery Square, Cambridge, and I appreciate our city's efforts to find ways to provide additional and affordable housing. At the same time, like many in our community, I deeply value the preservation of historic character and fabric of our Mid-Cambridge neighborhood. This area's charm and livability are rooted in its distinctive architecture and longstanding community spirit;



**From:** [Drew Volpe](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** Aug 4th hearing length ?  
**Date:** Monday, July 28, 2025 11:50:03 AM

---

Allison,

Do Commission hearings have a time cut off?

I live next to 60 Ellery St and wanted to join for that project. However, it's last on the list and I imagine 84 Ellery St will take a long time. Do meetings always get through the agenda or is there a chance it would be ended and continued at a later date? And is that likely in this case?

cheers,

Drew

12 Ellery Sq

--

Drew Volpe  
[drew@dewdrops.net](mailto:drew@dewdrops.net)  
[@drewvolpe](#)



**From:** [Cary Saunders](#)  
**To:** [Mike Tokatlyan](#); [HistComm](#)  
**Cc:** [Ellery Square board](#)  
**Subject:** accurate images of property for 60 Ellery St presentation  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 30, 2025 5:17:44 PM

---

Dear Mike,

On behalf of Ellery Square, I have a request to make concerning your revised plans for your building proposal at 60 Ellery Street in Cambridge.

Regarding page 20 in particular, the photo montage of the 60 Ellery and abutters' frontage completely omits the walkway and that portion of the easement that benefits Ellery Square. Nowhere in any part of this proposal, as far as I can tell, is that piece of property rendered accurately. In your drawings, it appears to be merely a sidewalk to the entrance of your building. It is not portrayed as a throughway or access to another property, which it is and will remain. According to your proposal, that very important piece of the property, in fact, seems to be nonexistent.

I request that you correct that inaccuracy so that your plans legitimately represent the property as it is and as you propose to change it. To help you with that, I've attached a few current photos of that area. It would be appropriate to incorporate these into your plan, in time for the hearing on August 4, 2025.

I'm also requesting by way of this message that the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood District Commission display these photos during any relevant part of the discussion on Aug. 4, especially if you find you are unable to add one or more of them to your presentation by then.

Sincerely,

Cary Saunders  
President, Board of Managers of the Ellery Square Owners Association



**From:** [Lawton, Mary Beth](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery St  
**Date:** Wednesday, July 30, 2025 8:26:30 PM

---

Dear Allison Crosbie: It just occurred to me that you may not have received our communication regarding 60 Ellery as it was sent on the invitation for the August 4th hearing.

We urge the MC-NCDC to deny or delay a demolition permit for 60 Ellery. The developers have not spoken to either abutters or concerned residents even though being instructed by the MC-NCDC to do so.

Also, 60 Ellery, as it exists currently, is in excellent condition and in keeping with the surrounding structures. Adding additional units to the existing structure would accomplish the goal of increasing available housing units in the City of Cambridge.

Please share our sentiments with Tony Hsiao, Kathryn Moll, Nan Laird, Catherine Tice and other members of the Commission.

Thank you.

Mary Beth Lawton  
Danusa Lesqueves



**From:** [Adam Kurth](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Cc:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery Street (Case NO. MC-7293) - Submission on Behalf of Ellery Square Owners Association  
**Date:** Friday, August 1, 2025 12:09:32 PM  
**Attachments:** [Final Letter to Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Commission 8.1.2025.pdf](#)

---

Hello Allison,

Attached is a letter that I submit on behalf of the Ellery Square Owners Association regarding the above referenced application.

The original will follow by Fedex delivery to the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission on Monday in advance of the Commission's meeting on Monday evening.

I would politely ask that you confirm receipt of this email at your convenience.

Best,  
Adam

Adam T. Kurth, Esq.  
MARCUS • ERRICO • EMMER • BROOKS  
45 Braintree Hill Office Park, Suite 400  
Braintree, MA 02184  
**DIRECT LINE – 781-849-3639**  
781.843.5000 (x139)  
781.843.1529/fax  
[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)





Adam T. Kurth  
781.843.5000 ext.139  
[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)  
admitted in: MA, NH

August 1, 2025

*Via Email and Overnight Delivery*

Mid Cambridge Neighborhood  
Conservation District Commission  
831 Massachusetts Avenue, 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.  
Cambridge, MA 02139

**Re: Proposed Multi-Family Building (Case No. MC-7293); Applicant: Contempo Builders; Property Address: 60 Ellery Street, Cambridge, MA**

Dear Commission Members:

As the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission (the "Commission") is aware, I represent the Board of Managers of the Ellery Square Owners Association ("ESOA") in connection with their concerns about, and opposition to, the above-referenced project.

In anticipation of the Commission's August 4, 2025 meeting on the above-referenced application, I write on ESOA's behalf to (i) reiterate the numerous concerns ESOA raised about the project at the Commission's June meeting on the project; and (ii) further demonstrate to the Commission how the application does not conform to applicable requirements of both the Cambridge Code of Ordinances and the June 8, 1992 Order of the Cambridge City Council creating the Commission (the "1992 Order"), despite the changes in design shown in the updated plans submitted to the Commission by the applicant.

**ESOA Concerns and Reasons for Opposition**

In summary of the questions and concerns raised by myself and other members of the ESOA community at the June meeting, the ESOA strongly opposes the project because of adverse effects it will have on ESOA property rights and the ESOA land for the following reasons.

- The ESOA has easement rights over a portion of the 60 Ellery Street property leading to Ellery Street, and the proposed development cannot and should not interfere with those long standing valid legal rights of ESOA.

- ESOA appreciates that the developer and their team did make design changes to the building, but the proposed height remains unchanged and ESOA remains greatly concerned about shadows that will fall on ESOA properties and common areas and have a detrimental effect on them for significant portions of the year.
- It is difficult to see how portions of existing trees on the ESOA property would not be affected during the construction of the project as well, particularly ESOA's magnolia tree proximate to the gate leading to ESOA's easement area on 60 Ellery. This is even more apparent from the revised plans.
- The existing structure on the property already takes up a significant portion of the lot, and the proposed larger structure will create even less open space at ground level on the lot than the limited amount that currently exists.
- Despite some design changes in the updated plans, structures on the roof still add to the overall height level of the building, and there is still a likelihood of increased noise looming over the neighborhood when new home owners in the building use the roof deck both in detriment to the ESOA residents and land.
- The proposal removes the existing four parking spots and includes no additional proposed parking despite the significant amount of increase to new units in the proposed building. Other properties in the immediate neighborhood have their own on-site parking, such as ESOA and 54 Ellery Street, so this proposed development without on-site parking is not within the character of the neighborhood.
- Even without in-building parking, traffic in the neighborhood will increase due to Amazon, food and like deliveries, as well as services and trades vehicles, given the number of proposed units.
- Commission should NOT allow perfectly good existing buildings to be entirely demolished and replaced with a much larger structure, when a continued use of, or potential re-design of the existing building could also provide additional housing in the city while allowing general character of the neighborhood to remain.

### **City Ordinance Requirements**

Chapter 2.78, Article III, Section 2.78.220 of the Cambridge Code of Ordinances outlines several factors both the main Cambridge Historic Commission and the various neighborhood commissions can consider in evaluating applications before them. More specifically, the Commission must consider "among other things, the historic and architectural value and significance of the site or structure, the general design, arrangement, texture and material of the features involved, and the relation of such features to similar features of structures in the surrounding area."

ESOA urges the Commission to consider that the existing building has been located on the property since 1923 and is in excellent condition according to City records. The 60 Ellery Street property where the project is proposed, the ESOA land, and the nearby 54 Ellery Street property were also all once in common ownership, and the person that owned those properties granted certain easement rights between the properties, including valid easement rights that ESOA holds and exercises over the 60 Ellery Street land.

Attached hereto as **Exhibit A** are copies of a Deed filed with Middlesex County Registry of Deeds Registered Land Division as Document No. 573738 and Registered Land Plan 32810B. For the Commission's reference, 60 Ellery Street is Lot 2 shown on that plan, the ESOA land is Lot 4, and the 54 Ellery Street property is Lot 3. The common owner of these properties intended for them to be harmonious and compatible with each other, as evidenced by the granting of the easement rights between the properties.

As described in the attached deed, the ESOA land has the right to "construct, reconstruct, repair and maintain... such sidewalks, landscaping, trees, shrubbery, and fences as [ESOA] deems appropriate and/or desirable, provided, however, that [ESOA] shall bear the entire expense of all such sidewalks, landscaping, trees, shrubbery and fences..." The ESOA further has the right to "pass and repass by foot to and from Ellery Street" over the easement area on the 60 Ellery land.

The Commission should determine that the proposed project is not appropriate because the proposed design of the new building will unreasonably and impermissibly interfere with ESOA's easement rights over 60 Ellery Street.

This is even more clearly demonstrated by the updated plans submitted by the developer, as Sheet A-100 shows that portions of the ESOA easement are located within portions of the newly proposed building on the right side, including in one of the units on the first floor. This appears to be an even bigger encroachment on the easement than what was shown in the original plans.

It remains impossible to see how the use of the walkway within the easement area and even various portions of the ESOA's land will not be significantly disrupted during the construction phase of the project, at a minimum.

More importantly, under the terms of ESOA's easement rights, ESOA is responsible for maintaining the easement pathway to Ellery Street and improvements to it at their sole cost. **Will ESOA be responsible for increased costs to maintain the walkway as a result of the proposed design of that area of the development where the easement is located, and how can the Commission put that burden on ESOA if the Commission approved the project when ESOA has not joined the application with the developer?** The Commission should not grant approval here for that reason alone, and ESOA has also provided numerous other valid

reasons why the proposed project will adversely impact the neighboring ESOA land as discussed on Pages 1-2 of this letter.

The ESOA understands that a 2023 vote and order by the Cambridge City Council placed some limitations on what the Commission and other neighborhood commissions in Cambridge can do in evaluating applications before them. This includes the limitations noted in Section 2.78.220 that the Commission “shall not consider the appropriateness of the size and shape of the structure... [and] shall not consider interior arrangements or architectural features not subject to public view.”

Despite such limitations, the ESOA urges the Commission to consider and evaluate the proposed project under other criteria of Section 2.78.220 that is still within the Commission’s authority for the reasons discussed above in this section and elsewhere in this letter.

#### **Review Standards From City Council Order Creating Commission**

As importantly, the Commission is also allowed to evaluate the proposed project based on criteria outlined in the 1992 Order creating the Commission. This project does not comply with the following criteria under that order.

Section 4.A of the 1992 Order describes the general criteria the Commission should consider in evaluating applications before it. Not only must the Commission consider the extent of a proposed project on the neighborhood district as a whole, there must also be evaluation of “the potential adverse effects of the proposed construction, alteration, relocation or demolition on the surrounding properties and on the immediate streetscape and the economic assessment of the alternatives to the proposed action.”

The ESOA has described numerous valid reasons why the proposed project will have adverse effects on the ESOA land, both on Pages 1-2 of this letter and in the discussion of ESOA’s easement rights on the 60 Ellery Street property in the section above. Given the nature of the numerous concerns raised, including interference with neighbors’ property rights, the negative effects that will result to common areas and vegetation on ESOA land both during construction, and even more so afterwards as demonstrated by the developer’s own shadow study; and the increase in noise in the neighborhood due to the proposed roof deck, among others, the Commission cannot determine this project is appropriate for the neighborhood. Multiple concerns raised by ESOA will not just affect ESOA directly, but others in the neighborhood as well.

Section 4.A of the 1992 Order further notes that one of the general objectives of the described general criteria is to “[e]ncourage preservation of neighborhood buildings”. The proposed demolition of a long-standing existing building that is in excellent condition in the neighborhood is in complete opposition to this general objective.

Section 4.B of the 1992 Order also notes several elements the Commission can consider in evaluating projects involving proposed new buildings, including “site layout”, “provisions for parking”, “provisions for open space and landscaping”, and “the scale of the building in relation to its surroundings”.

ESOA has described and demonstrated how the proposed site layout of the new building will unreasonably and inappropriately interfere with ESOA’s valid easement rights of the 60 Ellery land. There is also another concern beyond ESOA’s comment that the new building having no proposed parking is not in character with other portions of the neighborhood. That is, even without additional cars from residents, there will still be a significant traffic increase from Uber, food, and Amazon deliveries and the like, as well as service and trade vehicle traffic, in an already very congested area of Cambridge.

ESOA appreciates that the developer proposed additional vegetation in certain areas at ground level and also reconfigured portions of the roof design in the updated plans, but the existing structure on the property already takes up a significant portion of the lot, and such larger structure will create even less open space at ground level on the lot than the limited amount that currently exists.

We understand ESOA has questions about the accuracy of how certain existing conditions are depicted on the updated renderings that were included in the updated plans submitted, and that ESOA made a request to the Commission and the developer that those be updated again prior to the hearing. Even so, the updated renderings already submitted demonstrate how the proposed new building will not be in scale with other buildings in the immediate area of the neighborhood, even compared with the ESOA buildings and structure. See Sheets AV-2, AV-5, AV-7, and AV-8 of the revised plans.

The 1992 Order also includes criteria for the Commission to evaluate the proposed demolition of a building as is the case here with this project. Factors the Commission can consider include “the physical condition of the building”, “a claim of substantial hardship, financial or otherwise for the owner or occupants”, and “the design of the proposed replacement structures, if any.” See Section 4.C of the 1992 Order.

By considering these factors in relation to the proposed project, the Commission cannot determine that the demolition of the existing building on the property is appropriate. According to the City’s own records the condition of the building is labeled as “excellent”, and at the start of the June hearing on the application, the Commission’s own staff detailed additional history of the building, which also confirmed that renovations to it had been completed in the late 2000s, mid 2010s, and as recently as 2021. Why does an existing building in such good condition need to be demolished?

ESOA is also not aware of any claim of “substantial hardship, financial or otherwise” by the actual current owner of the property, a Biorichland LLC. In fact, ESOA understands there were multiple existing tenants living in the building as recently as earlier this year, and they

Mid Cambridge Neighborhood  
Conservation District Commission  
August 1, 2025  
Page 6

believe there are at least two different residents still living there. If there is no actual hardship experienced by the actual owner of the property, and there is no indication in the application that is the case, the Commission cannot allow the demolition of the existing building.

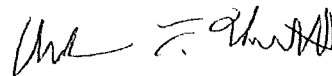
This is further confirmed by considering the third factor here of the “design of the proposed replacement structures” as the ESOA has demonstrated the proposed new building will have numerous adverse effects on the neighboring ESOA land and the property rights ESOA holds on 60 Ellery Street for the reasons discussed in this section and elsewhere in this letter.

For at least the reasons stated above in this letter, the Commission should deny the application.

Thank you for your attention and consideration of the requests and additional comments on the proposed application raised herein. I also respectfully request that the Board alert the applicant of this submission.

Very truly yours,

MARCUS, ERRICO, EMMER  
& BROOKS, P.C.



Adam T. Kurth

cc: Board of Managers of the Ellery Square Owners Association (via email only)

**EXHIBIT A**

Deed and Registered Land Plan

(beginning on following page)

37 Wendell Street  
Cambridge

708P/178

573738

THE WORK OF GOD, INC., a corporation duly organized under the laws of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, of Boston, Suffolk County in said Commonwealth for consideration of \$80,000, paid grants to ROBERT L. WOLFF, JR., of Cambridge, Middlesex County, Massachusetts with quitclaim covenants a certain parcel of land with the building thereon situated in said Cambridge containing 5400 square feet of land being shown as Lot 2 on Land Court Plan No. 32810<sup>B</sup> entitled "Subdivision Plan of Land LCC # 32810<sup>B</sup>" Cambridge, Mass. Scale: 1 inch=18 ft. July 31, 1978, Fred R. Joyce Co. Surveyors and being more particularly bounded and described, according to said plan as follows:

LOT 2

Northwesterly by Ellery Street, 86.575 feet;  
Northeasterly by Lot 1, 70.35 feet;  
Southeasterly by Lot 4, 57.075 feet;  
Southwesterly by Lot 4, 11.50 feet;  
Southeasterly by Lot 4, 10.00 feet;  
Southwesterly by Lot 4, 18.00 feet;  
Southeasterly by Lot 4, 19.50 feet;  
Southwesterly by Lot 4, 40.85 feet.

LAND COURT, BOSTON, The land herein described will be shown on our approved plan to follow as  
AUG 8 1978  
Plan 32810<sup>B</sup> Lot 2  
(Examined as to description only)  
R. L. Woodbury, Engineer  
R.C.C.

Said premises are conveyed subject to the perpetual right and easement for the benefit of and appurtenant to Lot 4 on said plan: 1) to construct, reconstruct, repair and maintain within, over through, across and on that area of Lot 2, marked "easement" on said plan, such sidewalks, landscaping, trees, shrubbery, and fences as the record owner of said Lot 4 from time to time deems appropriate and/or desirable, provided, however, that the record owner of said Lot 4 shall bear the entire expense of all such sidewalks, landscaping, trees, shrubbery and fences; and 2) for the record owner or owners of said Lot 4 or any subdivision thereof to pass and repass by foot to and from Ellery Street together with others now or hereafter entitled thereto over said sidewalks.

Said premises are conveyed with the benefit of the perpetual right and easement for the benefit of and appurtenant to Lot 2 on said plan: 1) to construct, reconstruct, and maintain a driveway and parking spaces on that area of Lot 4 on said plan marked "easement"; and 2) to pass and repass to and from Ellery Street over said driveway by foot, vehicle or otherwise in common with others now or hereafter entitled thereto. Said right and easement shall not be used for access to Lot 4 on said plan.

Said premises are conveyed with the benefit of the perpetual right and easement for the benefit of and appurtenant to Lot 2 on said plan: 1) to construct, reconstruct, and maintain a driveway on that area of Lot 3 on said plan marked "easement"; to pass and repass to and from Ellery Street by foot, vehicle, or otherwise in common with others now or hereafter entitled thereto over said driveway. Said right and easement shall not be used for access to Lot 4 on said plan.

By acceptance of and recording of this deed the within grantee agrees for himself and his successors in title: 1) that the cost of maintaining the said driveway on Lots 3 and 4 shall be shared by the record owners of Lots 2 and 3 on said plan as follows: 3/7 of all expense is to be paid by the record owner of Lot 3 and 4/7 of said expense is to be paid by the record owner of Lot 2; and 2) that the record owner of said Lot 3 shall have the right to pave, repave, plough and otherwise maintain said driveway and to require the record owner of Lot 2 to pay 1/2 the cost thereof.

Said premises are conveyed subject to the restriction imposed for the benefit of Lot 1 on said plan that said premises for a period of Thirty (30) years from August 9, 1978 are not to be used as a retail food and/or grocery store.



13

For Seller's Title see Certificate of Title No. 116896.

Executed as a sealed instrument this 8th day of August, 1978

THE WORK OF GOD, INC.

Vote 573732

By Carl B. Schmitt, Jr.  
Carl B. Schmitt, Jr., Vice President



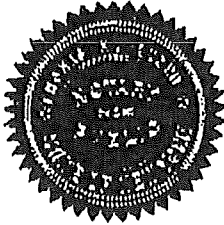
STATE OF NEW YORK, COUNTY

August 8, 1978

OF NEW YORK, SS

Then personally appeared before me the above-named Carl B. Schmitt, Jr., the Vice President of said corporation and acknowledged the foregoing instrument to be the free act and deed of said corporation.

Thomas M. Quinn  
Notary Public  
My Commission expires:



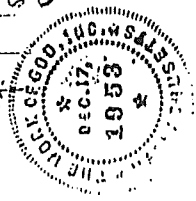
THOMAS M. QUINN  
NOTARY PUBLIC, STATE OF NEW YORK  
No. 1898  
Qualified in New York County  
Commission Expires March 30, 1979

573738

23

573738

DOCUMENT NO. 573738



FRAN ROYER 482 6655  
MAIL ADDRESS  
HOME NO. 1111

EQ. MORTGAGE LAND UNIT	1	SD	0
REGISTRY DISTRICT			
FEDERAL FOR REGISTRATION			
NO. 1			
AUG - 9 1953			
REGISTERED NO. 116876			
REG. NO. 714			
NO. 126			
ASSISTANT REGISTERED			

TRANSFER OF TITLE ISSUED  
AND TRANSFERRED INTO  
REGISTRATION EXP. 908-308-179  
COST REGISTERED IN 155,729.47

11806  
7.00  
15100

New York  
Box 231  
B

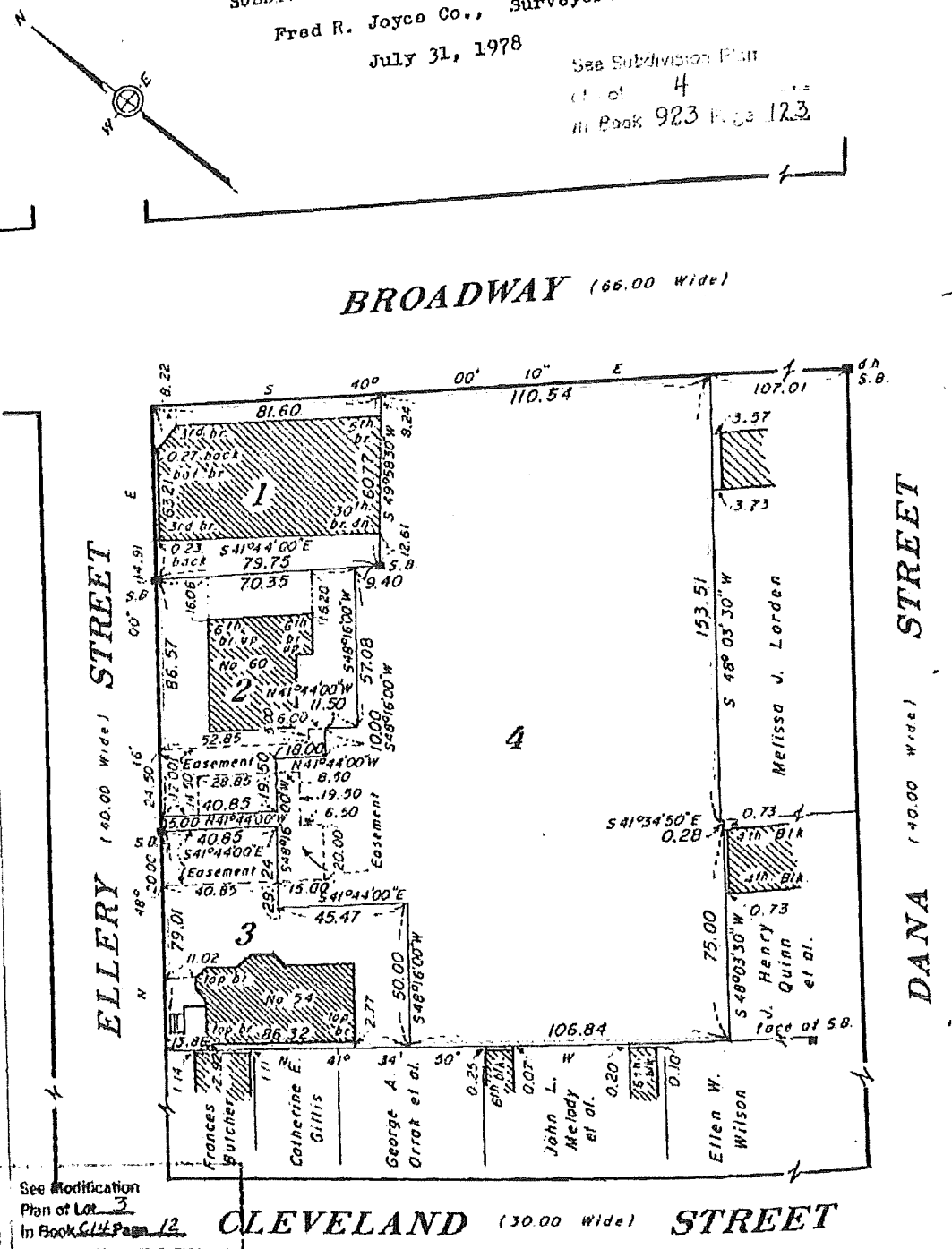
Return to:  
Robert Wolff  
37 W. 44th St.  
Cambridge, Mass. 02138

155728 965 178  
 SUBDIVISION PLAN OF LAND IN CAMBRIDGE  
 Fred R. Joyce Co., Surveyors  
 July 31, 1978

32810B

See Subdivision Plan  
 of 4  
 in Book 923 Page 123

MEMORANDA OF ENCUMBRANCES ON THE LAND DESCRIBED IN THIS CERTIFICATE



See Modification  
 Plan of Lot 3  
 in Book 514 Page 12

Subdivision of Land  
 Shown on Plan 32810A  
 Filed with Cert. of Title No. 116876  
 South Registry District of Middlesex County

Separate certificates of title may be issued for land  
 shown hereon as Lots 1, 2, 3 and 4  
 by the Court.

Middlesex County Registry District  
 RECEIVED FOR REGISTRATION  
 128 500

Copy of part of plan  
 filed in  
**LAND REGISTRATION OFFICE**  
 AUG. 8, 1978  
 Scale of this plan 40 feet to an inch  
 R.L. Woodbury, Engineer for Court

AUG. 8, 1978  
 F.F.  
*Margaret M. Daly*  
 Recorder

**From:** [Nasser K](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#); [City Council](#); [HistComm](#); [Simmons, Denise](#); [CMSullivan@cambridgema.gov](mailto:CMSullivan@cambridgema.gov); [CRedmon@cambridgema.gov](mailto:CRedmon@cambridgema.gov); [Burks, Sarah](#)  
**Subject:** Third and Final Request — Council Must Address Ellery Street Development Concerns  
**Date:** Friday, August 1, 2025 9:50:24 PM

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Dear Councilors,  
(Unfortunately, I don't have the email addresses for the members of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District, so I kindly ask that you share this message with them. Thank you!)

This is my **third and final email request** regarding the significant impacts the proposed developments at 60 and 84 Ellery Street will have on parking and traffic in Mid Cambridge. To date, neither I nor my neighbors have received any substantive response from the Council to our emails and letters; as far as I understand, our community's numerous concerns have been ignored, and no meaningful action has been taken.

I respectfully request that the City Council pause any projects related to the MFH Ordinance that are located on side streets, such as Ellery Street, until a thorough, cumulative traffic and parking impact study is conducted. I also request that meaningful mitigation measures be enforced for Ellery Street and other similar streets before these projects move forward. Please provide a formal, written response to my request from the Council, not individual members, by **Friday, August 15**.

Below are my major concerns, which I and many of our neighbors share, regarding the future livability of Mid Cambridge. While the example discussion centers on Ellery Street, these issues are equally relevant to most streets in Mid Cambridge.

**Ellery Street's Unique Constraints:**<sup>[1]</sup><sup>[SEP]</sup>As I stated in my previous emails, Ellery Street and Inman Street are the only streets connecting Cambridge Street to Mass Ave in Mid Cambridge—a narrow corridor with just one vehicle lane, one bike lane, and one parking lane. Increasing units from 17 to over 120 within a single block, on a street already facing high traffic and limited curb space, is an unsustainable strain on the neighborhood.

**Parking and Traffic Impacts:**<sup>[1]</sup><sup>[SEP]</sup>Neither the new MFH Ordinance nor current parking flexibility policies address the inevitable on-street parking crisis these projects will cause. The 2022 Parking Engagement Study clearly documents that Mid Cambridge's parking supply is already limited, with many residents relying exclusively on street parking. The study warns that "reduced minimum parking requirements...could increase demand for on-street parking without increasing supply"—the exact outcome these new buildings will accelerate.

**Delivery Traffic & Daily Congestion:**<sup>[1]</sup><sup>[SEP]</sup>With 120 new units, it is conservatively estimated that at least 15 package deliveries will occur

daily—UPS, Amazon, FedEx, USPS—each averaging 10 minutes. With no loading zones on Ellery, delivery trucks will have no choice but to double park, blocking traffic on a single-lane street. This will create regular disruptions, further exacerbated by the planned loss of parking on intersecting major streets due to new bike lane installation.

**The Frequency of Turnover:** 84 Ellery Street proposed as a rental building with more than 80 units; the frequency of tenant turnover presents another substantial concern. Given that the average tenancy is about three years, approximately 27 residents will move out and 27 new residents will move in each year. This level of turnover means there will be moving activity almost every week, with moving trucks occupying the street for extended periods. Over at least two months of every year, one can expect a moving truck to be present on Ellery Street. With the street's narrow design and lack of dedicated loading zones, these frequent moves will routinely block traffic, further increase congestion, and compound the inconvenience for all residents.

**Neighborhood Character and Density:** It's also important to recognize the unique context of Mid Cambridge's density. As the Council is well aware, aside from The Port—which is primarily a commercial district—Mid Cambridge stands as the most densely populated residential neighborhood in the city. With thousands of residents living in close proximity, every new multifamily project adds significant pressure to the finite resources and infrastructure already under strain. Council and Planning Board records, as well as the Parking Study and recent public feedback, highlight how developments of this scale threaten neighborhood character and livability—particularly without tailored mitigation for parking and congestion.

**City Council Accountability:** The Cambridge Parking Study and Council's own meeting archives show resident priorities are protecting street parking, preserving neighborhood quality, and honest engagement in city planning. Yet our voices have been left unanswered. Equitable, cohesive solutions, not silence, should be the Council's response to community input.

Thank you for your attention to protecting both new and lifelong residents of Mid Cambridge. I eagerly await your response.

Sincerely,  
Nasser Khadjenoori  
1 Ellery Square  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
[nk@nasserk.com](mailto:nk@nasserk.com)

References:

- 2022 Parking Engagement Study Final Report, City of

Cambridge.

- Cambridge Zoning and Council records (MFH Ordinance, parking minimums, process feedback).



**From:** Katherine Koh <koh\_katherine@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Sunday, August 3, 2025 11:57 AM  
**To:** histncds@cambridgema.gov <histncds@cambridgema.gov>  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery Street proposal

Tony Hsiao and Mid-Cambridge NCD:

Your next public hearing agenda features three(3) proposed developments on little Ellery Street.

I will keep this short and sweet. Please have the courage and fortitude to deny the two(2) demolition permits for 60 Ellery Street and for 84-86 Ellery Street. These developments are obviously out of character for a tiny street in Mid-Cambridge, and grossly out of scale with every other residence around them, and it is obvious to everyone who takes the time to visit the street.

I have met with 6 Cambridge City Councilors since the June hearing on 60 Ellery Street.

- 3 of them said they would support the Mid-Cambridge NCD's decision to deny permits as long as it's within the scope of your commission, which character and scale are (McGovern, Toner, Jovan).
- In addition, Sumbul Siddiqui said something along the lines of, 60 Ellery Street proposal isn't what we imagined [when passing the new zoning]. Patti Nolan about these belonging more on City Corridors or Squares, and Marc McGovern even admitted that 60 Ellery Street "checks a lot of the wrong boxes" (a direct quote).

There are a large number of massive proposed developments all across the City and we sincerely hope that you will pump the brakes by denying demolition permits for 60 AND 84-86, here in Mid Cambridge. It's quite clear to everyone that both proposals for 60 Ellery Street and 84-86 are grossly out of character and scale for a tiny and already heavily congested street.

Anti-Cambridge City Councilor sentiment is growing, and more support for your Commission is growing too. **We care about Mid-Cambridge as does your Commission.** The developers do not care about Ellery Street or our neighborhood. Please do the needful and deny both permits.

With much urgency  
Katherine Koh  
14 Ellery SQ resident and current Board member



**From:** [Nancy Seidman](#)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** Comments for the Aug 4th hearing on Ellery St projects  
**Date:** Sunday, August 3, 2025 6:03:03 PM  
**Attachments:** [Aug Ellery hearing.docx](#)

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Hello - attached please find our comments for the hearing being held tomorrow evening on 60 Ellery and 84-86 Ellery.  
Thank you.

Nancy Seidman  
Cleveland St

Sent from my iPad

Aug 3, 2025

To: The Members of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District:

Re: 60 Ellery and 84-86 Ellery

We wrote to the MCD before the June 9<sup>th</sup> hearing on 60 Ellery and our comments on that project stand. We appreciate that the Commission voted to “continue” that project at that time. The Commission asked that the developer meet with the neighborhood before returning - that did not happen. We were told there “wasn’t enough time” but today’s hearing was set at the Developer’s request. We know your request wasn’t binding but are disappointed that the developer is only doing what is absolutely necessary and ask that your actions reflect upon that lack of cooperation.

We write to oppose both projects and to ask that you NOT grant either project a demolition permit.

Our reasons are as follows:

- Both projects would demolish brick buildings in good shape and provide available housing
- Both projects are maximizing the available space without consideration for surrounding buildings – little setbacks and little landscaping
- Both projects would have roof decks that would contribute to noise pollution in the neighborhood without compensation for the neighbors
- Both projects contain mostly (3/4 of the units) studio or 1 bedroom units. These are not family friendly buildings so will not suit the stated purpose to alleviate housing needs for families
- 84-86 Ellery will demolish a particularly historic building for an ill-designed out of place, out of scale building for the neighborhood.
- 60 Ellery will destroy excellent trees
- Both projects will crowd an already dense neighborhood on a small street

Neither project is suited to the neighborhood. Please deny the demolition permit and require the developers to downsize the buildings and save the existing buildings.

Thank you.

Nancy Seidman/Claude Barden

9 Cleveland St

**From:** [Lise Zeig](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#)  
**Cc:** [Azeem, Burhan](#); [McGovern, Marc](#); [Nolan, Patricia](#); [Siddiqui, Sumbul](#); [Simmons, Denise](#); [Sobrinho-Wheeler, Jivan](#); [Toner, Paul](#); [Wilson, Ayesha](#); [Zusy, Catherine](#)  
**Subject:** 84-86 Ellery and 60 Ellery Street Proposals  
**Date:** Sunday, August 3, 2025 8:53:02 PM  
**Attachments:** [Attachment to LZ email to MCNCC.pdf](#)

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To Members of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation Commission and Members of the Cambridge City Council

I am writing in advance of the August 4, 2025 Commission meeting considering the proposals for the above mentioned applications. While I wholeheartedly support the goals of the City Council to address the housing shortage in the city, these proposals will be destructive to the overall affordability and desirability of the city.

I am strongly requesting that you DO NOT grant demolition permits for either proposal. I, as well, request that you ensure that a Traffic and Infrastructure Study be conducted prior to finalizing any permits for these proposals. A summary of my concerns are as follows: :

1. The extremely high percentage of studio apartments in the 84-86 Ellery project will likely drive up prices for apartments in the neighborhood due to frequent turnover and rent increases.
2. The quality of materials and design of both apartment proposals undermine the sustainability of Cambridge housing and will likely need to be replaced in about 25 years.
3. Ellery Street was not designed to accommodate the substantial increase in traffic that these two nearby apartment complexes would create.
4. Finally, the increased traffic patterns directly across the street from Cambridge Rindge and Latin HS will be highly disruptive to the 2000 students, the 250 faculty, their families, and particularly the bus routes for students with disabilities and others.

Please see attached letter for further explanation of some of the above concerns.

Sincerely,

Lise M Zeig  
7 Cleveland Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138



## COMMENTS ON 84-86 ELLERY STREET

*Architecture shapes and is shaped by society, and the best architecture responds, above all else, to the human need for community and connection. -Vincent Scully*

I want to begin by emphasizing my strong belief that Cambridge desperately needs more housing as well as my full support of our city's ambitious housing goals and recent elimination of single-family zoning. Cambridge's housing crisis has priced out countless potential residents and displaced longtime community members. The housing scarcity has encouraged some to use housing as a commodity to hoard and profit from. Still, I have significant concerns about how this particular proposal may exacerbate rather than ameliorate our housing crisis.

The proportion of studio apartments—58 out of a total of 81 units—raises important questions. Though studios undoubtedly fill a housing need in Cambridge, these approximately 250-square-foot units are likely to have high lease turnovers. Each time the apartment changes hands, or when renters renew their one- or two-year leases, landlords will take the opportunity to increase rents, thereby worsening Cambridge's housing crisis. Furthermore, I fear that these micro-units are susceptible to misuse as short-term or Airbnb rentals, which would undermine goals to strengthen Cambridge's neighborhood communities and have disastrous effects on rental prices.

This is certainly not a one-time issue: future developers with pure profit in mind will seek to exploit our new zoning laws. We must set the precedent that this city will not bow to over-eager developers seeking to enrich themselves and build their profiles, but that we will do what's best for the needs of Cambridge's current and future neighbors. In addition to considering the percentage of affordable units in a new building development, we must also scrutinize the overall impacts that a project such as this will have on the housing market.

To be true to the intent of recent rezoning measures and the dire crisis of the housing market in Cambridge, I urge the city to revisit the breakdown of unit types within this development. Officials must confront this question: will 84-86 Ellery Street alleviate the housing crisis in our community or exacerbate matters, increasing neighborhood rents and enriching the developer?

Thank you for your consideration of these comments and for your service to our community.

Lise Zeig  
7 Cleveland St

Cambridge, MA 02138

**From:** [Neil Resnik](#)  
**To:** [HistComm](#)  
**Subject:** Monday August 4, 2025 Mid Cambridge NCDC meeting - Supporting the Construction of New Housing  
**Date:** Monday, August 4, 2025 10:06:58 AM

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Dear Reader,

I just wanted to write in ahead of the Monday August 4th Mid-Cambridge NCDC meeting to support the construction of new housing at both 84-86 Ellery St and 60 Ellery St. The housing crisis is the largest issue this city faces today, and this type of development allows us to get a handle on it. Studies have found that rent price correlates with homelessness, that is as rent price increases so does rates of homelessness. Building new housing such as the proposed buildings at 84-86 Ellery St and 60 Ellery St will help add much needed supply of new housing to this city, which should help stabilize rent prices in the long term. Not only will this help with the housing shortage in this city, it will also have knock on effects that will help stabilize rent across the city and in the longer term, has the potential to help with the homelessness that is visible across the city. They will also be subject to the 20% affordable unit regulation of the city to make an impact on this in the short term as well.

Both, the location of these buildings is an obvious place to build more housing. Both 60 Ellery St and 84-86 Ellery St are served by both the 68 and 69 buses directly. In addition they are next to the Library, High school, a multitude of stores on Broadway and Cambridge St, and have easy walking access to Iman Square. They also have walking access to Harvard Square and Central Square, and the Red line as well. As they are well served by the existing neighborhoods and public transit, there are no major issues with more units on these lots.

Furthermore, given the restrictive environmental laws that new construction must abide by, which is a good thing, they are limited in aesthetics. While perhaps there is room for some improvement to their aesthetics, if this would increase cost I believe that is a worse outcome. They are making a dent in the housing crisis, and are more environmentally friendly in the long term.

Thank you for your consideration,  
Neil Resnik  
Cambridge Resident



**From:** [Adam Kurth](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Cc:** [clsauanders@gmail.com](mailto:clsauanders@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery Street (Case NO. MC-7293)  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 5, 2025 2:57:17 PM

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Hi Allison,

Appreciate your efforts in helping run the meeting of the Mid-Cambridge Commission yesterday. ESOA President Cary Saunders is also copied on this email, and I'm following up with a polite request now that the meeting is completed.

I'd ask you to please alert us when the Commission's decision on the 60 Ellery Street matter is filed with the City Clerk, and if possible, to please also forward us a copy of that decision once filed.

Best,  
Adam

Adam T. Kurth, Esq.  
MARCUS • ERRICO • EMMER • BROOKS  
45 Braintree Hill Office Park, Suite 400  
Braintree, MA 02184  
**DIRECT LINE – 781-849-3639**  
781.843.5000 (x139)  
781.843.1529/fax  
[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)



**From:** [Adam Kurth](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Cc:** [clsanders@gmail.com](mailto:clsanders@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** RE: 60 Ellery Street (Case NO. MC-7293)  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 5, 2025 3:03:45 PM

---

Thanks Allison, and I appreciate the quick response to confirm same. We will look out for your follow up.

Best,  
Adam

Adam T. Kurth, Esq.  
MARCUS • ERRICO • EMMER • BROOKS  
45 Braintree Hill Office Park, Suite 400  
Braintree, MA 02184  
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[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)



**From:** Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 5, 2025 3:01 PM  
**To:** Adam Kurth <[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)>  
**Cc:** [clsanders@gmail.com](mailto:clsanders@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** RE: 60 Ellery Street (Case NO. MC-7293)

Hi Adam,

I'm happy to send you a copy of the Certificate when completed.

Best,  
Allison

**Allison A. Crosbie, ASLA, Preservation Administrator**  
Cambridge Historical Commission  
831 Mass Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
617-349-4683  
she/her/hers

**From:** Adam Kurth <[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, August 5, 2025 2:57 PM  
**To:** Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)>  
**Cc:** [clsanders@gmail.com](mailto:clsanders@gmail.com)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery Street (Case NO. MC-7293)

Hi Allison,

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I'd ask you to please alert us when the Commission's decision on the 60 Ellery Street matter is filed with the City Clerk, and if possible, to please also forward us a copy of that decision once filed.

Best,  
Adam

Adam T. Kurth, Esq.  
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[akurth@meeb.com](mailto:akurth@meeb.com)





**From:** [Lawton, Mary Beth](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 60 Ellery St  
**Date:** Tuesday, August 5, 2025 5:45:33 PM

---

Hi Allison Crosbie: The Mid Cambridge NCDC did not focus on one of their own goals. The MC-NCDC ignored the second bullet of their own goals and what the Commission can or cannot do presented on the screen of Allison Crosbie. I pointed this out and Ben Compaigne of Ellery Square did as well. The meeting was instead steered toward approval by Tony Hsiao. Speakers were told that their comments were irrelevant. Nan Laird was sadly outvoted. Please pass these comments on to the members of the commission. Mary Beth Lawton and Danusa Lesqueves

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**From:** Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)>  
**Sent:** Thursday, July 31, 2025 9:48:41 AM  
**To:** Lawton, Mary Beth <[mlawton@lesley.edu](mailto:mlawton@lesley.edu)>  
**Subject:** Re: 60 Ellery St

**: This message has originated from an External Source. Please use proper judgment and caution when opening attachments, clicking links, or responding to this email.**

Hi Mary Beth,

I will forward your comments to the Commissioners.

Best,  
Allison

**Allison A. Crosbie, ASLA, Preservation Administrator**  
Cambridge Historical Commission  
831 Mass Ave., 2<sup>nd</sup> Fl.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
617-349-4683  
she/her/hers

---

**From:** Lawton, Mary Beth <[mlawton@lesley.edu](mailto:mlawton@lesley.edu)>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, July 30, 2025 8:26 PM  
**To:** Crosbie, Allison <[acrosbie@cambridgema.gov](mailto:acrosbie@cambridgema.gov)>  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery St

Dear Allison Crosbie: It just occurred to me that you may not have received our communication regarding 60 Ellery as it was sent on the invitation for the August 4th

hearing.

We urge the MC-NCDC to deny or delay a demolition permit for 60 Ellery. The developers have not spoken to either abutters or concerned residents even though being instructed by the MC-NCDC to do so.

Also, 60 Ellery, as it exists currently, is in excellent condition and in keeping with the surrounding structures. Adding additional units to the existing structure would accomplish the goal of increasing available housing units in the City of Cambridge.

Please share our sentiments with Tony Hsiao, Kathryn Moll, Nan Laird, Catherine Tice and other members of the Commission.

Thank you.

Mary Beth Lawton  
Danusa Lesqueves

**From:** [Katherine Koh](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#)  
**Subject:** Re: 60 Ellery Street proposal  
**Date:** Monday, August 4, 2025 9:30:28 PM

---

Tony Hsiao and Mid-Cambridge NCD:

You had the opportunity to stick up for your neighbors in Mid-Cambridge today, to pump the brakes on the first, ill advised cases on the new zoning with the proposal to demolish **60 Ellery Street- but sadly you chose not to do the right thing and bent to the Developer's will, a non-resident.**

Do you know how much these insane proposals for a tiny side street in Mid-Cambridge are stressing and ruining the health and well being of current residents of Mid-Cambridge? Your decision to approve the demolition of 60 Ellery Street (which is seriously still NOT appropriate) gave ABC supporters who don't even live in Mid-Cambridge something to celebrate today.

Nan and Monika thank you for your rational comments about 60 Ellery Street. Nan, thank you for the No vote especially.

Katinka, you appear to be aligned with ABC and the people calling in from Somerville or Boston, not Cambridge, in support of this thoughtless proposal and biased against current residents so no thanks to you.

Tony, you sought to find a balance in your comments, but today you had an opportunity to protect a building in Excellent condition which you did not even acknowledge. Approving this is so very disappointing. I was looking to your leadership to stand up for this neighborhood.

There are many developments in flight in Cambridge, in non Conservation districts. Why did you not stop 60 Ellery Street? This is incredibly disappointing. This was the chance to show you care about Mid-Cambridge because this proposal is still bad, the developer has shown NO interest in working with us and you lacked the courage to stand up for this neighborhood.

What do you recommend that this neighborhood do now? "Work" with the developer? Unlikely! You saw a glimmer of how he showed up at the very first abutter zoom meeting. And you did nothing but encourage him today.

I would appreciate a response from Tony Hsiao or Nan or Monika to understand how to process this. I am beyond disappointed.

Katherine

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**From:** [Easley Hamner](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery Street - Design Review Committee  
**Date:** Saturday, September 27, 2025 1:35:46 PM

---

To: Mid-Cambridge Design Review Committee

I write as an architect, not merely as an abutter to the proposed building at 60 Ellery Street. As an experienced professional, unlike some of my neighbors, I support Cambridge's decision to allow increased density and to eliminate parking to stimulate new housing. However, as one of my design professors challenged me, I ask, "Is this the best that you can do?" This so-called "final design" does not rise to that challenge. It is visually disruptive to the neighborhood.

Rightly or wrongly, by virtue of its timing, it will set a new standard for development. Throughout Cambridge, apartment buildings are almost all clad in brick. The city should require that this new building be clad entirely in brick to its four-story height, with a brick cornice. An alternative material could be used above that height. This latest design proposal has increased the use of fiber cement panels on the street facade; this is a step backward, not forward. Such a material should only be used above the fourth floor.

Our neighborhood is fortunate in having your committee to represent our interests in good design. What we are presented with is pastiche, clearly defined by compromise. Real progress was made as a result of the first design review, namely by relocating the transformer to an underground vault, and increasing the setback on Ellery Street from 5' to 10', and it is important to acknowledge that.

One of the notable characteristics of our neighborhood is its leafy character that will be seriously compromised by this new development. We will lose the two mature trees in the rear of the property. More importantly, the two extraordinary magnolias in the front yard are endangered.. One of the magnolias could conceivably be preserved, should the city so demand. The other could be moved if discussion were possible with the developer and abutters.

Finally, the idea of a mural near the entry of the new building is not nearly as interesting as would be a 'green wall' as suggested by one neighbor. Such a wall would be a small but meaningful contribution to the quality of our leafy neighborhood.

Sincerely,

W. Easley Hamner, FAIA  
3 Ellery Square  
Cambridge, MA. 02138  
617-835-1458



**From:** [Katherine Koh](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#); [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery Street - Finalize design with Abutters input  
**Date:** Sunday, September 28, 2025 3:27:06 PM

---

Tony Hsiao, Allison and the Mid-Cambridge NCD Commission:

As you already know, the proposed development at 60 Ellery Street is offensive to nearly all who abut or live on Ellery Street, and yet has been approved to much frustration and angst. This development barely meets the square footage requirements for the new zoning - and must include the easement, which is the main pedestrian egress for 18 other homes at Ellery SQ - which will be allowed by the City Council to be treated as a garbage tunnel.

We appreciate the Mid-Cambridge NCD's care and attention to development proposals for Mid-Cambridge and that you try to safeguard aesthetic and design standards of this lovely area that we call HOME.

A reasonable request: in addition to the Architect's Review meeting on Monday, that you allow the architects who directly abut 60 Ellery Street to provide input **before it is finalized**. They have incredible experience and will have to live with looking at this building, from our homes, every day. **You have repeatedly asked this developer to work with abutters, but he has YET to reach out to us throughout this process** and it seems will not do so without being made to. Note, this developer does NOT live in MidCambridge and will not have to live with what is built.

There are 4 architects that live in Ellery SQ and 2 on Cleveland, all well established, most retired. Every single one of them cares very much about the design of the proposed building and understands development imperatives. I believe they all support densification as well, but **none of them thinks this design is right / appropriate**.

Whether there is a precedence or not, I make a reasonable **request that abutter representatives be given the opportunity to provide input before it is finalized**. The submitted designs, fall short of Mid-Cambridge standards, in my opinion, but I would really trust a design vetted by both the NCD and my neighbors.

I will ask this at Monday's meeting if questions and comment are allowed. If not, I hope you will support and facilitate this request.

Thank you,  
Katherine Koh



**From:** [Tala Klinck](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Subject:** MC NCD Architects Committee  
**Date:** Monday, September 29, 2025 4:16:12 PM

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Hi Allison,

I am writing to add a comment for tonight's meeting. This project only recently came to my attention, so I apologize if my comments are overly broad for where they are in the process.

I am an architect and mid-cambridge resident/homeowner - I have lived in Cambridge for 27 years. It is my opinion that the building proposed on Ellery street is just too big for this street. I am concerned that it will have a negative impact on the neighborhood and set a negative precedent for future Cambridge housing endeavors. I urge the developer and architect to consider reducing the size of the building to match the scale of the adjacent buildings and the street.

While I appreciate the need for additional housing in Cambridge, and especially for affordable housing, neighborhood scale and streetscape scale need to be taken into consideration. There are some streets in Cambridge that are wide enough to accommodate a building of this scale - mainly streets that have 2 lanes of traffic and parking for example. But one-way streets such as Ellery are already tight with restricted views and natural light. A building of this scale will further reduce the natural light that trees and residents deserve (and I am not just referring to direct sunlight).

As for setting a precedent, imagine every lot of allowable size in mid Cambridge were replaced with buildings of this scale. This might be OK on streets like Broadway and Cambridge Street but on the one-way streets 6-story buildings will overwhelm smaller lots and block sunlight and views.

Considering how stringent (and sensitive) Cambridge zoning rules are, I am shocked that they were modified to allow a building of this scale to and disrupt the scale of a street like Ellery. I think we can do better than this and put more thought into examining the qualities of a site that allow for a building of this scale to be built without overwhelming the surrounding neighborhood fabric.

Meanwhile, as the zoning stands currently I guess I would offer that just because a building can be built - doesn't mean that it should be built.

Many thanks,

Natalie Klinck

-

(pronouns: she/her)  
e: [tala@post.harvard.edu](mailto:tala@post.harvard.edu)  
p: 617.230.3148

\*\*\*\*\*

Hi everyone,

The Mid Cambridge NCD Architects Committee will meet on Monday, September 29 at 6pm to review the final design of 60 Ellery Street. Attached is a notice with login information. Please forward to other interested parties.

Drawings are available at this link, [mc729360ellerysdreduced.pdf](#)

Please submit comment letters by midday Monday so there's time to distribute them to the Commissioners.

If you have any questions, just let me know.

Allison

## Crosbie, Allison

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**From:** Lise Zeig <zeigowens@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 6, 2025 8:35 AM  
**To:** Crosbie, Allison  
**Cc:** David Owens; Nancy Seidman; Robert Luchetti  
**Subject:** Following up on 8/4/25 Commission determination on 60 Ellery Street

Dear Alison,

Thank you for your tireless efforts supporting the work of the Mid Cambridge Preservation Commission. From our perspective, you are valiantly managing the complex environment of the commission during these changing times and, as well, enabling our community to be heard.

Despite the disappointing outcome regarding the 60 Ellery project, we are hopeful that the intervention of the “architects advisory committee” (I am not quite sure that is the correct term) will be able to help significantly improve the design. I am writing to better understand their role, how they function, and if there is any way the community can participate in their work.

As I think you know, there are several practicing and retired architects among the abutters to this project. In fact, several of the redesigned elements of the project as it is currently proposed were suggested by them (including preliminary architectural diagrams). In this next phase, their contributions could prove to be equally as valuable.

Please let us know if there is a way the community can stay involved to improve the design through the Commission’s architects advisory committee. Thanks for your help.

Lise Zeig and David Owens  
7 Cleveland Street  
Cambridge



## Crosbie, Allison

---

**From:** David Owens <david@dmowens.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 29, 2025 10:38 AM  
**To:** Crosbie, Allison  
**Cc:** Lise Zeig; Nancy Seidman  
**Subject:** Comments from David Owens and Lise Zeig on 60 Ellery Street for 9/29/25 Commission meeting  
**Attachments:** Note Sep 28, 2025 (2).pdf

Hello Alison, below we have attached our comments in PDF form. I hope you can print and read this version. There are some sketches on the last few pages that we hope can be included. Thank you so much for your patience.



## Notes on Ellery Street building

We appreciate the work that has been done and the architect's openness to our previous comments and recommendations. The responsiveness to the community's input is appreciated.

However, as currently designed it appears that the architect continues to grapple with the oversized scale of this project in a small community context. The problem of the building's bulk and proportions remain. Trying to disguise it through material uses will not work. Changing materials does not change the bulk of the building. Instead, the design highlights the building's excess scale and is currently is too deferential to a vague sort of historicism to be successful.

Most importantly, this design has not responded to the Commission's recommendations at its last meeting to offer a design that is more bold and modern reflecting the time that we are living in today. The building bulk and material choices call for a more sophisticated manipulation of forms, proportion and style, one that will be a landmark appropriate for this location. (Successful modern examples include the main library addition and the King Open School complex on Cambridge Street.)

With that said, we have considered the most recent design and have attached sketches for your consideration. These address materials, facade proportions, and massing and recommend changes that could improve the building if the commission is merely considering minor details.

1. Building materials: The building exterior materials need to be open to public review. Test panels, placed at the site, need to be provided for community review and comment.
2. Façade proportions: Materials should be of lighter color to provide for more bounced sunlight to reach street level. We also suggest that you do not try to copy the brick of the demolished building. Its memory is not important. Such an approach seems illogical. We ask the architect recognize the importance of the side elevations, which will be seen from the oblique views.
3. Building mass: While we prefer that the building be only five stories, if that cannot be accomplished, reduce the height of the building's north wall, adjacent to Ellery Square, to provide more daylight down to their courtyard. This cannot be accomplished without some sacrifice on the part of the developer. We suggest providing an additional unit in the basement and the elimination of two north facing units on the sixth level. Bike racks that are

currently provided for within the basement area may be placed in other locations within the project area.

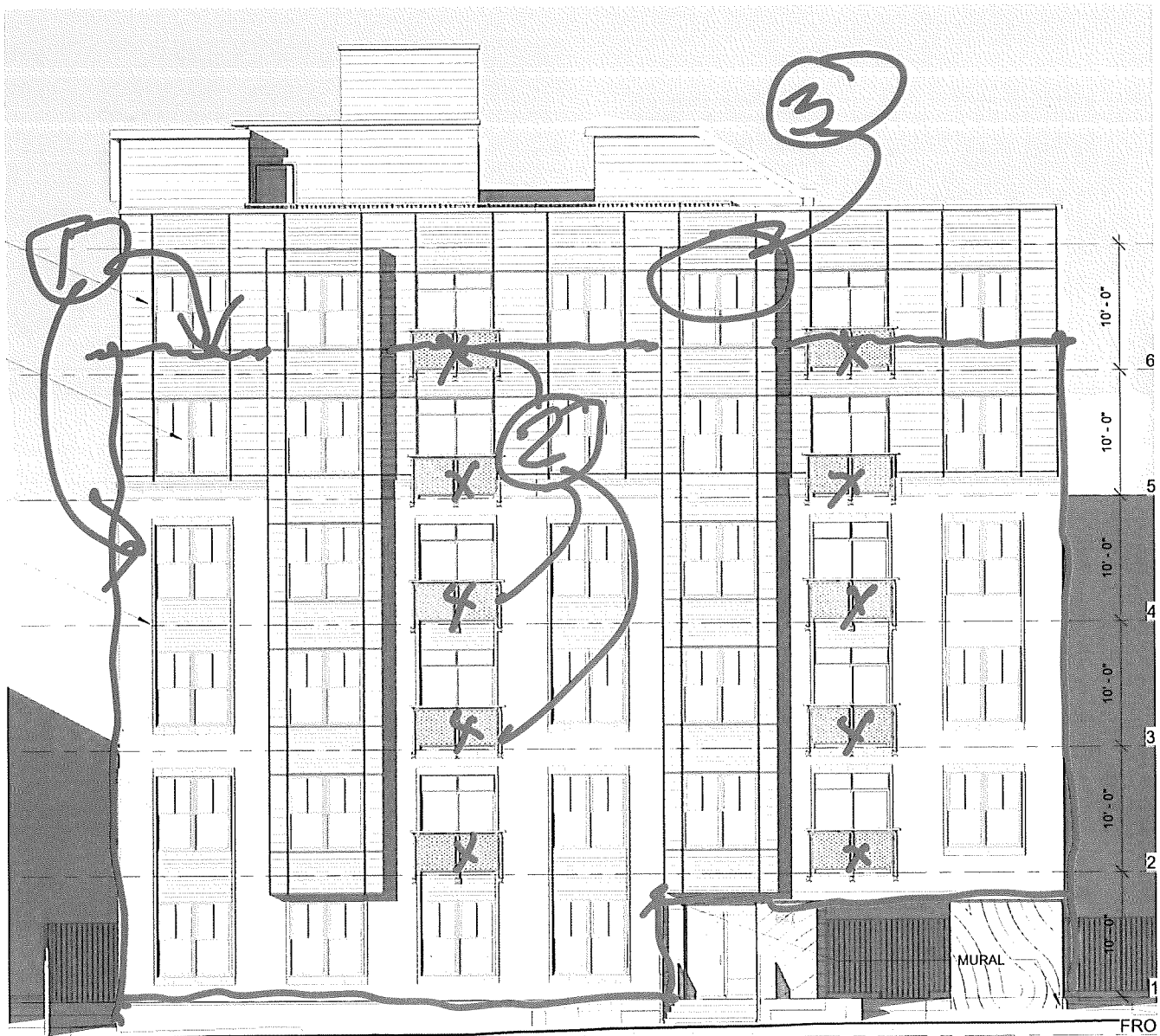
Cities are a cultural phenomenon, supported by the flow of capital. What makes for a great city is when the priorities are placed in the correct order. We have to ask "What are we building for?". We think we are building for a growing Cambridge that invites long term residents who will thrive in our city.

Right now, we have a gross, overarching plan to increase the density without the tools to correct for individual sites when needed. This is especially true when public utilities, public transportation, traffic patterns, and appropriate public open space is not intelligently dealt with beforehand, as is the case here. Intelligent urban design to support this new development is absolutely necessary.

In the meantime, to ensure that this new development doesn't set a precedent for poor design and unsupported density, we strongly believe that the building should be reduced by one floor, the plans for increased infrastructure be developed simultaneously, and that the Commission hold the developer to the quality of design that will set high standards for years to come.

David Owens and Lise Zeig

7 Cleveland Street  
Cambridge



(1) FRONT ELEVATION Copy 2  
 1/8" = 1'-0"

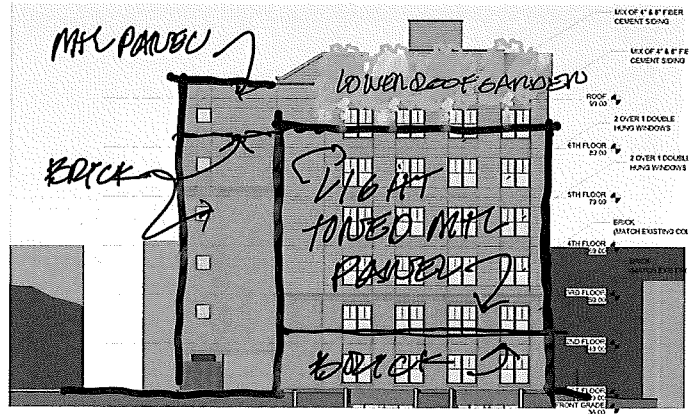
1. Raise brick portion of the façade one story at the upper levels. Drop brick portion of the façade, one level at the lower portion of the building. Referred to attached drawings for all elevations.
2. Delete non-functioning applied balconies. Try to avoid superfluous application of nonfunctioning details.
3. Simplify window system. Delete center mullion in upper sash on all windows. Duplicate window type shown whether there is an applied balcony.
4. Lower the roof garden on the north side of the building one level to provide light and better proportions for Ellery Square residents. Refer to attached plans for further explanation.

LIGHTEN VALUE OF MTL CURBONITS

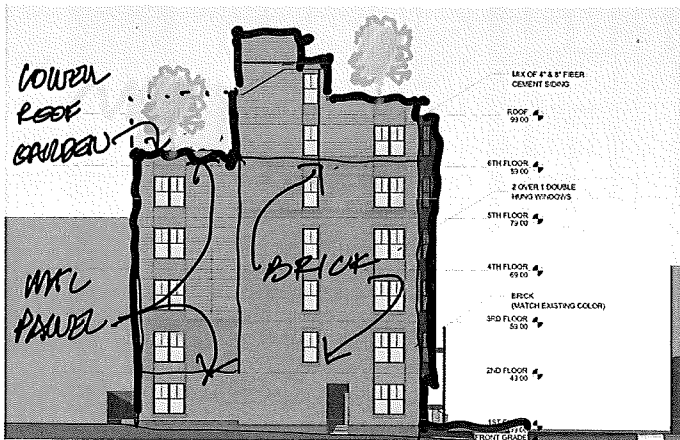
RAISE BRICK CLADDING ONE LEVEL TO REDUCE THE TOP HEAVY LOOK OF THE EXISTING DESIGN



1 FRONT ELEVATION 13' x 11'0"

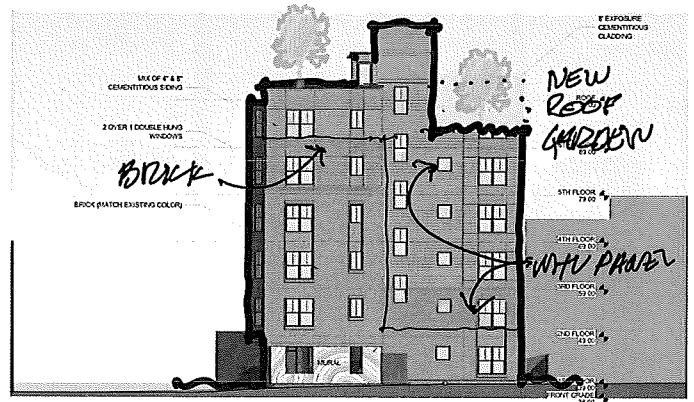


1 REAR ELEVATION 13' x 11'0"



2 LEFT ELEVATION 13' x 11'0"

ELLERY STREET



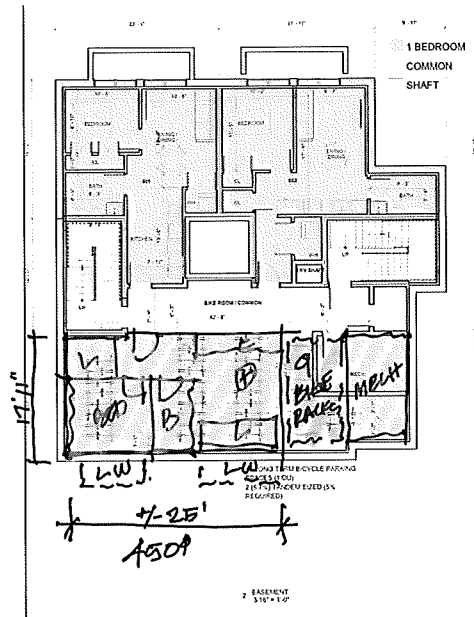
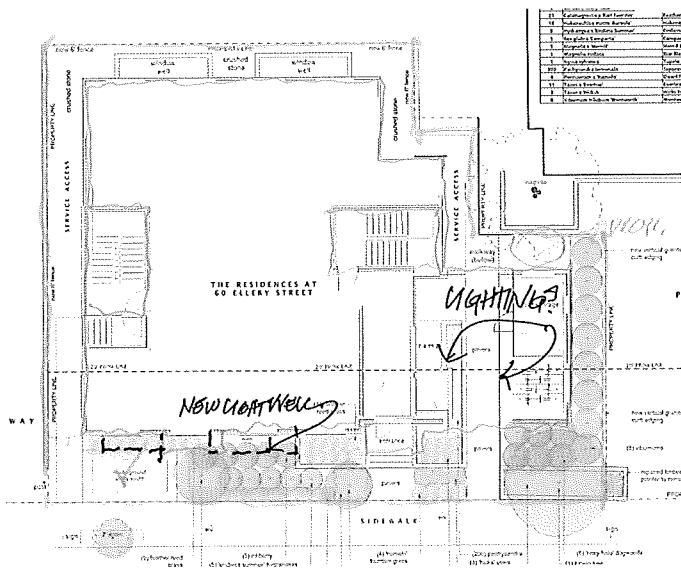
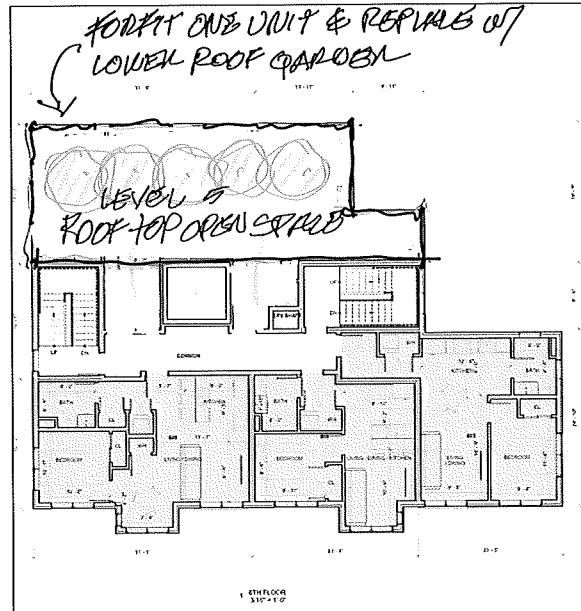
ELLERY STREET

3 RIGHT ELEVATION 14' x 12'





2 ROOF  
310' x 110'





## Crosbie, Allison

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**From:** Abigail Ransmeier <aransmeier@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, September 29, 2025 4:23 PM  
**To:** Crosbie, Allison  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery Square - Comments  
**Attachments:** 250929\_Letter\_Mid Cambridge NCD Arch Comm\_60 Ellery.pdf

Dear Allison Crosbie,

Please find attached a letter regarding the 60 Ellery Street Multi Unit Housing proposal. I have also cut and pasted my comments below. Many thanks for your work with this important committee.

\*\*\*\*\*

Dear Mid Cambridge NCD Architects Committee,

I am writing to express my concern regarding the proposed multi-unit housing project at 60 Ellery Street. I am a Cambridge-based architect with 20 years of experience working in both Europe and the United States, and a Mid-Cambridge resident for more than a decade. Over these years, I have walked past 60 Ellery Street daily with my children on our way to school. Our family has long appreciated the scale and texture of the existing building, the blossoming tree in the front yard, the grass roof at Swissnex Headquarters, the remarkable plant collection at neighboring Ellery Square, and even the bunnies nibbling the lawn.

While the current building may not be a landmark, it is a right-sized, well-suited member of Mid-Cambridge's fabric. Before upending that fabric, we must carefully consider whether the proposed development truly aligns with the City's aspirations. Perhaps, ideally, the existing building would remain and be re-worked. But if redevelopment proceeds, the neighborhood is right to expect a project scaled to respect its character.

As an architect who began my career in supportive housing development and who has consistently advocated for high-quality housing for all, I understand the challenges of balancing community needs with development pressures. I also know that not every project, no matter how well-prepared, should be built. Many in our community share my concern that this proposal, if approved, may be one Cambridge regrets, due to its scale, style, form, and the rapid policy changes that have enabled its advancement.

If the project moves forward, I hope the Committee considers the following measures:

- **Footprint:** Limit the building's footprint to that of the existing structure. Do not permit encroachment onto, or bridging over, the historic right of way, which has long been a valued, shared path for the Ellery community.
- **Height:** Reduce the height to that of the existing building (or a maximum of four stories). While zoning may allow more, the site is not suited for it. The proposed scale is disproportionate and insensitive to its context.
- **Sunlight & Vegetation:** Limiting both footprint and height would reduce harm to existing vegetation and preserve established sun patterns.

- **Rear Setback & Massing:** Require a rear setback where the building abuts the residential community. Upper-level step-backs should mirror the scale and rhythm of the existing structure.
- **Trash Storage:** Relocate trash storage away from the 24-hour residential pedestrian easement. If trash collection for multiple units is required, it should occur on the less active side of the building, with appropriate distance and access.

Although the developer's current proposal may comply with zoning and code, your Committee could assess its massing, urban impact, and architectural merit. I urge your Committee not only to review small details, but to question the overall scope.

Lastly, there are parcels, streets and locations throughout Cambridge where dense housing should exist and flourish, but I am concerned that recent zoning changes have unintentionally diminished residents' influence while accelerating demolition, developer driven development. This approach conflicts with principles of sensitive urban design and progressive values that prioritize reuse and repair over waste. With your leadership, Cambridge can model a more balanced approach, supporting high-quality housing while ensuring the right scale and density for our neighborhoods. Taking the time to reassess this building's advancement could be a win for the zoning process in general. Yes, Cambridge is progressive on housing. Yes, you listen too.

Thank you for approaching this discussion with the care it deserves. My hope is that all those shaping Cambridge's future (planners, commissioners, and developers alike) can collaborate to create communities that are welcoming and lasting, rooted in the scale and character of their neighborhoods.

**From:** [Cary Saunders](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#)  
**Subject:** 60 Ellery St revised plans  
**Date:** Wednesday, October 29, 2025 6:44:02 PM  
**Attachments:** [MCNCDC\\_Oct 29.docx](#)

---

Dear Commissioners,

Please find attached a letter regarding the recently posted plans for 60 Ellery Street. My family and I own a home at the abutting property of Ellery Square. The plans as posted remain startlingly inappropriate.

Sincerely,

Cary Saunders  
9 Ellery Square



October 29, 2025

Dear Members of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission,

I write to express my dismay regarding the revised plans for the proposed 60 Ellery Street development, to be reviewed by the commission's architectural committee on October 30, 2025. I'm referring specifically to the drawings made publicly available on October 29.

The proposed building remains wildly out of scale in relation to its own lot, the other buildings around it, and the street. It looms over the tallest nearby buildings by 2.5 to 3 stories. It seems clear that it still fails to meet the criteria for an allowable project according to the MCNDC's charge.

The exterior design is a hodgepodge of materials and colors, abjectly out of character for the neighborhood. It's difficult to tell whether the "mural" is meant to be funny or part of the actual design. It's hard to believe the MCNDC finds all of this acceptable according to the criteria they are addressing.

I find one perspective especially perplexing and impossibly inaccurate. The "rear perspective" "AV-10" depicts the building as though it has an expanse of space behind it. The setback behind the building is as noted on the plans is 5 feet, 3 inches. The space showing brick pavers, grass, and trees in this image is misleadingly portrayed to be part of 60 Ellery Street's property when it is actually part of the abutting property at Ellery Square. This image is misleading; the commission should correct that in this public meeting. The commission and the public need to see an accurate image showing the fence that is already located there to give a more realistic idea of the building's miniscule distance from the property line.

It appears that the roofline has gotten higher since the last set of plans, to create a wall around the edge of the roof. Is that allowable? It will only increase the already devastating amount of shadow that will be cast most of the afternoon over all of the courtyard and building facades at Ellery Square, cutting off sunlight to even our top-floor windows.

Finally, I ask the commission to consider the fact that 60 Ellery's rear side does not face the rear of another building; it faces the fronts of 16 houses at Ellery Square. We do not front Broadway or Ellery Street; we front Ellery Square. It is effectively our street. This 60 Ellery St. proposal is situated and scaled inappropriately for such a location.

Respectfully,

Cary Saunders and family  
9 Ellery Square  
Abutting neighbors to 60 Ellery Street



**From:** [Cary Saunders](#)  
**To:** [Histncds](#)  
**Subject:** Attn: Tony Hsiao. Invitation to visit Ellery Square  
**Date:** Monday, November 10, 2025 1:48:35 PM

---

Dear Commissioner Hsiao,

I write on behalf of my neighbors at Ellery Square to invite you to visit the property before the public meeting regarding 60 Ellery Street to be held on November 20.

We wonder if a site visit might be helpful to you as you prepare for the meeting. I would encourage you to consider seeing 60 Ellery from the physical perspective of the homes at Ellery Square if you haven't visited the property before. The experience is quite different than from the street perspective, as I'm sure you can imagine.

To keep it simple, we would limit the participants to the three members of the board of the homeowners association. Any other members of the MCNCDC would be welcome to join if they'd like to.

While we're disappointed by the commission's decision to allow the demo permit, we are thankful for the enormous amount of serious thought, consideration, and expertise you have brought to the project so far. It's a lot of weight for one volunteer to shoulder, and your efforts have been noted and appreciated.

Please let me know if you would be able to visit, and if so, any times that might work for you.

Kind regards,

Cary Saunders  
9 Ellery Square  
President, ESOA Board of Managers



**From:** [Adam Kurth](#)  
**To:** [Crosbie, Allison](#)  
**Cc:** [Cary Saunders](#)  
**Subject:** MC NCD Architects Committee - Follow Up on Site Visit At 60 Ellery Property  
**Date:** Wednesday, December 3, 2025 3:31:25 PM

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Hi Allison,

I hope you could enjoy time with family and friends over the Thanksgiving holiday. I'm following up with a question on behalf of the Ellery Square Owner's Association Board now that the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Architect's Committee site visit was completed at the 60 Ellery Street property on November 20<sup>th</sup>.

I understand the Committee requested that the developer submit further revised plans based on the discussion at the site visit. Appreciating there might not be solid scheduling yet, can you confirm that there will be one more Architect's Committee meeting held before the decision is issued here?

Thanks in advance for your feedback at your earliest convenience.

Best,  
Adam

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