

IV. Preservation and Development Goals for the Proposed East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District (05222021)

The goal statement and secondary goals of a neighborhood conservation district describe the aims of the NCD commission and provide a basis for decisions regarding applications for certificates of appropriateness, non-applicability, or hardship. They are incorporated into the Order establishing the district and are meant to be referenced in the findings that will be made by the NCD commission in each case that comes before it.

The Study Committee reviewed the goals of other NCD commissions in Cambridge and agreed that the following statement drafted by a member of the committee best expressed the aspirations of the members for the future development of the neighborhood:

The goals of the East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District would be to conserve the character, variety and scale of the district's streetscapes and architecture, and to enhance the livability, vitality, and socio-economic diversity of the district for its residents and the public at large. The East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission should also allow for architectural diversity and individualized alterations while respecting the current character of the neighborhood including commercial as well as residential properties. The district should also maintain the present diversity of development and open space patterns and building scales and allow for more density where applicable while preserving the existing housing stock of the neighborhood.

Subsequent discussion produced the following edits

The ~~goals-goal~~ of the East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District would be to conserve the character, variety and scale of the district's streetscapes and architecture, and to ~~enhance-support~~ the livability, vitality and socio-economic diversity of the district for its residents and the public at large ~~while acknowledging changing housing demand and conditions in the neighborhood.~~ The East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission should ~~seek to conserve significant structures and features where they exist while allowing also allow~~ for architectural diversity and individualized alterations ~~while that respecting~~ the current character of the neighborhood ~~including commercial as well as residential properties.~~ The ~~district-Commission~~ should ~~also seek to~~ maintain the present diversity of development and open space patterns and

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building scales and allow for more density where ~~applicable~~appropriate while preserving the existing housing stock of the neighborhood.¹

Following is the same statement with all the edits accepted:

The goal of the East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District would be to conserve the character, variety and scale of the district's streetscapes and architecture and to support the livability, vitality and socio-economic diversity of the district for its residents and the public at large while acknowledging changing housing demand and conditions in the neighborhood. The East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission should seek to conserve significant structures and features where they exist while allowing for architectural diversity and individualized alterations that respect the current character of the neighborhood. The Commission should seek to maintain the present diversity of development and open space patterns and building scales and allow for more density where appropriate while preserving the existing housing stock of the neighborhood.

The following secondary goals for the East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District are intended to provide general guidance to the NCD commission in a wide variety of situations. They are not intended to be applied to every project; they are statements of policy, not prescriptive measures that must be applied equally in each situation.

- 1) Conserve the diverse architectural character of the district, including its modest 19th-century workers' housing and significant civic and institutional buildings, while allowing the neighborhood to adapt to changing circumstances.**
- 2) Allow for architectural diversity and individualized alterations while respecting the traditional housing stock of the neighborhood.**
- 3) Retain significant features that characterize much of the neighborhood, including but not limited to roof pitch, historic architectural elements, and traditional window and door configurations.**

¹ Text in red shows subsequent edits.

- 4) **Allow and encourage additional housing units and density while retaining significant historic structures when appropriate.**
- 5) **Encourage contemporary design that respects surrounding context yet differentiates itself as belonging to the period in which it is being designed.**
- 6) **Sustain the vitality of the commercial environment of Cambridge Street by preserving architecturally significant or original building fabric. When this is not possible or appropriate, support creative, contemporary design for storefront alterations and new construction.**
- 7) **Encourage higher density projects on Cambridge Street, especially in mixed-use buildings, and support existing [and future](#) residential uses there.**
- 8) **Encourage trees and greenery while limiting new impervious paving to enhance the landscape amenities and beautification of the neighborhood.**
- 9) **Encourage low fences to define the street edge while protecting views of houses and through yards, while permitting flexibility to minimize the adverse visual effect of trash containers and mechanical equipment.**

These preservation and development goals, in conjunction with the following "Guidelines for Demolition, Construction, and Alterations", will be incorporated into the Order establishing an East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District.