

East Cambridge NCD Draft Goal Statements, February 2020

Draft Goals from Past Studies, Adapted to East Cambridge (CHC Staff)

The goal of the East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District is 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 will seek to enhance the unique environment and visual form of the District; preserve its architecturally and historically significant structures and their settings and encourage design compatible therewith; mitigate adverse impacts of new development on adjacent properties and areas; and maintain the present diversity of development and open space patterns and building scales and ages. The District must remain a human-scale environment that maintains the history and traditions of its location.

Secondary Goals:

- 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.*
- 4) Allow and encourage additional housing units and density while retaining significant historic structures, when possible.*
- 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 additions.*
- 7) Encourage higher density residential projects on Cambridge Street, especially in mixed-use buildings, and support existing 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.*

10) Consider traffic and parking impacts of proposed developments as they may adversely affect traditional street patterns and pedestrian activity.

Draft Goal Submittal #1 (from a member of the Study Committee, February 2020)

The goal of the East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District is to have a process for neighborhood residents to have a voice in how, when and why the neighborhood may seek to conserve the character, variety and scale of the exterior architecture of residential and commercial buildings in the District. Through this process, the East Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission would seek to both enhance and maintain the unique environment and visual form of the District's streetscapes by: (i) understanding the history of the District, (ii) acknowledging change, (iii) preserving architecturally and historically significant structures, and (iv) supporting alternative designs compatible with the District.

Draft Goal Submittal #2 (from a member of the public, February 2020)

- *Maintain the same rights and opportunities for current and future residents and businesses to shape the architectural and aesthetic character of East Cambridge that previous generations enjoyed; does not privilege the past over the future*
- *Rely on existing laws to conserve truly historic architecture, such as the city's recently strengthened tear down ordinance or land-marking tools already in place and in effective use in East Cambridge*
- *Rely on education, information sharing, and public assistance through grants, all provided by our Historical Commission, rather than regulatory coercion and financial burdens to empower residents to knowledgeably and consensually protect the historic features of their properties*
- *Create zero new regulatory or cost barriers to living or working in East Cambridge for renters, new home buyers, immigrants, entrepreneurs, long-term residents, local businesses, or anyone seeking to contribute to the fabric of our community*
 - *Create zero possibility that a conservation district will exacerbate our housing affordability crisis via new regulatory requirements that are expected to artificially raise property values*
 - *Create zero mandatory costs to property owners resulting from new materials requirements, use impairments, time spent in review processes, etc.*

Cambridge Historical Commission
April 18, 2021