

**MEMORANDUM**

**To: Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust**  
**From: Cassie Arnaud, Senior Manager of Housing Development**  
**Alexis Turgeon, Housing Development Planner**  
**Date: April 30, 2026**  
**Re: 2072 Massachusetts Avenue – Planning Board AHO Design Consultation Report**

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Capstone Communities and Hope Real Estate Enterprises have been working with staff from the Housing Department and the Community Development Department on their 2072 Massachusetts Avenue development, which will create a new twelve-story building containing 73 affordable rental units. The project recently completed the advisory design review process with the Planning Board under the Affordable Housing Overlay (AHO). The two required Planning Board advisory design consultations were held on October 7, 2025, and March 3, 2026.

The proposed design was favorably received by the Planning Board. The report noted that Capstone Communities and Hope Real Estate Enterprises were responsive to staff and Planning Board member feedback, specifically regarding the rooftop mechanical setbacks, façade articulation and fenestration, quality interior spaces including exposure of wood construction materials, improved bicycle parking access, roof-deck open space, and plans for public art installation on the ground floor. The Planning Board offered other recommendations for the development team to continue exploring, including further refinement of the south facade, increased activation of ground floor, use of different color schemes and elements, and assessing the need for safety improvements to the space between the proposed building at 2072 Massachusetts Avenue and the adjacent Russell apartments through the potential use of gates and/or lighting. The Board also recommended that the team continue to work in coordination with City staff regarding the widening of Walden Street and on aligning the pedestrian experience with ongoing City planning work regarding Massachusetts Avenue redesigns.

The AHO requires that the results of the design review process be shared with the Affordable Housing Trust. The Planning Board report is attached and includes:

- Planning Board Final Report of AHO Design Consultation (3/24/2026), including:
  - CDD Staff Memo (2/25/2026);
- Planning Board Initial Report of AHO Design Consultation (10/28/2025), including:
  - CDD Staff Memo (9/30/2025); and,
  - DPW Staff Memo (9/25/2025).

**Project Overview:**

The development of 2072 Massachusetts Avenue involves the new construction of a twelve-story building under the provisions of the AHO. The site currently contains a small, vacant fast-food restaurant that will be demolished to make way for the development. The development proposal involves the creation of 73 affordable rental units, of which approximately seventy percent will be family-sized. All units will be affordable to households earning at or below 80% Area Median Income (AMI), with some units being deeply affordable to those making at or below 30% AMI.

More information on the proposed development, including the presentation and materials submitted to the Planning Board, can be found on the Housing Department's 2072 Massachusetts Avenue project page at:

<https://www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/Projects/Housing/2072massave>.

**Housing Department Recommendation:**

Staff have received and are reviewing a Trust funding request from Capstone Communities and Hope Real Estate Enterprises to support the construction of this project. Staff expect to bring this request to an upcoming Trust meeting.

All approvals of Trust funding for AHO projects are conditioned on the Trust's review and consideration of the final Planning Board report. As the Trust has not yet considered the final funding request for this development, we recommend the Trust vote to accept this report and refer to this acceptance when reviewing the request for funding we expect to bring to the Trust at an upcoming meeting.