

What's Next?

The Concord Alewife Study Committee will continue to meet approximately once a month through mid-2004. All Committee meetings are open to the public. For upcoming meetings, visit our schedule at <http://www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/meetings.html#cpconcale>. The next public meeting will be scheduled for Spring 2004.

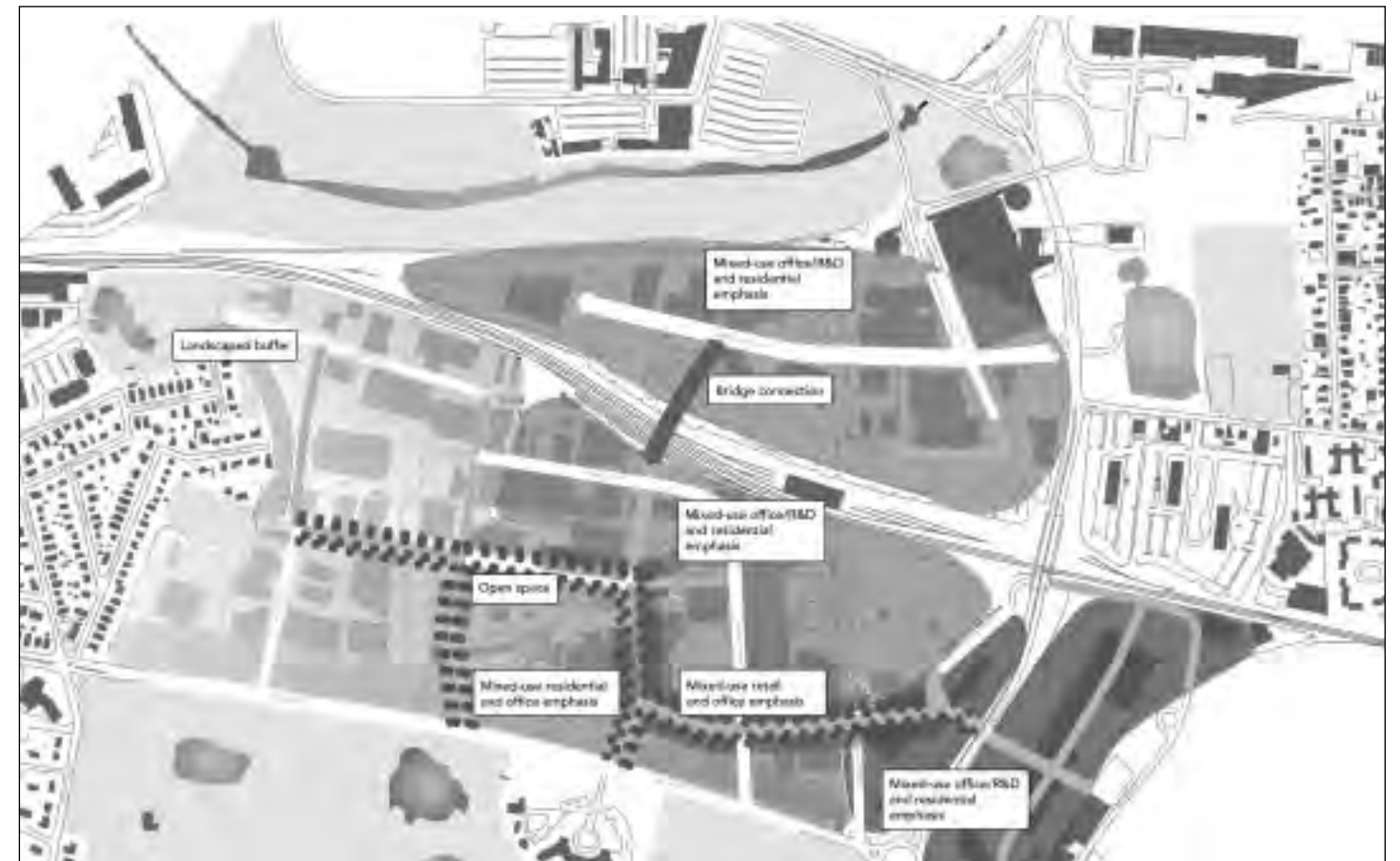
Additional information is provided on the Concord Alewife Planning Study webpage at:

<http://www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/commplan/zoning/concalew/index.html>

If you have questions about this project or would like to be included on the mailing list for notification of upcoming public meetings, please contact Iram Farooq at 617-349-4606 or ifarooq@cambridgema.gov.



City of Cambridge
Community Development Department
238 Broadway
Cambridge MA 02139



Land-Use Concept Plan, December 2003

The Concord Alewife Study Committee has been meeting since February 2003 to develop a vision for the area and formulate zoning and non-zoning recommendations to achieve the vision. The work of the Committee is informed by public input received during the process, particularly through public meetings such as those held in March, June, and December 2003.

Following the June 7, 2003, public meeting, the Committee continued to refine the goals that had been identified during the early phase of the Planning Study: to further develop the land use vision, to identify preliminary zoning recommendations, and to study traffic implications of the proposed recommendations as well as specific transportation and stormwater issues for the area.

Starting with a set of agreed upon goals, the Committee produced a series of Development Principles that focus on creating in Concord-Alewif a place of enhanced social, environmental, and economic value. These Principles, listed on the following page, will in turn continue to shape the Planning Study's land use, transportation, urban design, environmental, and other recommendations.

The concept plan shown above incorporates the goals and emerging development principles to create a vibrant mixed-use area that improves pedestrian and bicycle access to transit, creates a sense of place, and preserves the character of the Cambridge Highlands.

Development Principles

- Encourage a mix of uses, with a significant housing component.
- Shape densities around proximity to transit.
- Respect existing neighborhoods in terms of scale, use, open space transitions, and management of traffic impacts.
- Enhance connections within the sub areas and to open space resources.
- Create an enhanced pedestrian environment that weaves the site together, including open space, transit, retail/ shopping.
- Create a public realm of landscaped boulevards, parks, and squares.
- Create places on public streets that encourage people to gather and socialize.
- Improve the quality and the quantity of stormwater in both the public and private realm. Use water for inspiration in planning and design.
- Encourage alternatives to single occupancy vehicles through transit, bike, and pedestrian access, while reducing anticipated auto trip growth.

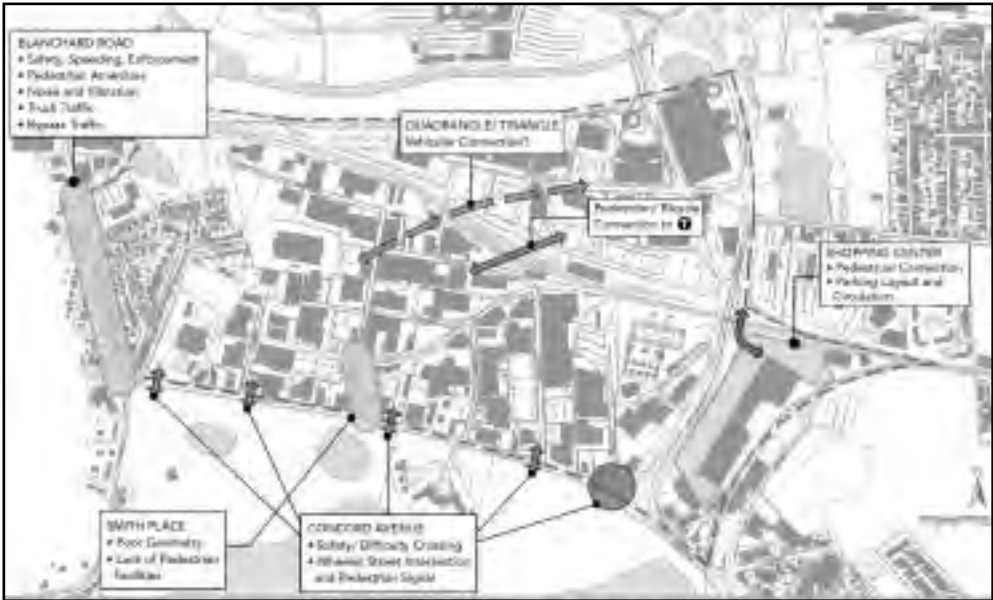
Example of rain garden as approach to stormwater mitigation



Illustrative sketch showing possible placement of rain garden in potential new development.

Zoning and Transportation

The Committee is reviewing a series of preliminary zoning concepts that will help shape the ultimate Plan and contribute to the realization of its goals. Derived from the Development Principles, these concepts are aimed at supporting desired densities and uses throughout the Study Area, as well as mechanisms to generate needed public amenities such as roadway improvements, open space, and stormwater management initiatives. They also reflect the desire to improve on the trip generation that would occur if the current zoning continued unchanged.



Transportation Issues Under Analysis

The Committee, along with City staff and the consulting team, continues to study a wide range of transportation issues. Key issues include traffic on study area streets such as Blanchard Road and Concord Avenue, connecting various parts of the study area, including the feasibility of a connection between the Triangle and the Quadrangle, and creating a coherent roadway network, particularly within the Quadrangle.

December 10, 2003—Third public meeting: Putting the Vision in Place

At the December public meeting attendees were updated on the Committee’s work and the emerging recommendations. Nearly 75 people participated in the public meeting and began applying the development principles, preliminary zoning concepts, and transportation goals to Concord-Alewife.

Break-out groups focused on one of five parts of the Study Area: Cambridge Highlands, the western segment of the Quadrangle, the eastern segment of the Quadrangle, the Triangle, and the Shopping Center.

Reports back from each of the groups clearly showed how participants perceived the different strengths within each part of Study Area. Key ideas that emerged were as follows:

- A buffer between the Highlands and the Quadrangle should serve as a public greenspace linking the major open spaces near the Study Area and help to mitigate the area’s stormwater run-off.

- The western Quadrangle should contain smaller blocks, neighborhood retail along with housing along Concord Avenue, and a series of active and passive parks.
- The conversion of Smith Place into a “boulevard” would provide the impetus for new, desirable, and significant development within the Quadrangle. Both Quadrangle groups discussed the desirability of finding connections across the commuter rail tracks via shuttle or other means.
- In the Triangle along Alewife Brook Parkway, there is potential for higher, mixed-use density and, thus, for an increase in Concord-Alewife’s “imageability.”
- Housing as a part of the Shopping Center area’s future is vital to creating an urban village.
- Easier access to the Shopping Center, with a reduction in the amount of parking and an increase in the amount of green space, were identified as challenges.

These comments will inform the Concord-Alewife Committee’s work as it finalizes recommendations and implementation strategies for the study area.



Who’s on the committee?

Patricia Amoroso	Pat Goddard
Arben Arapi	Mitchell Goldstein
Nigoghos Atinizian	C. J. Mabardy
Joseph Barrell	Hom Sack
Doug Brugge	Ann Tennis
Margaret (Peg) Callahan	Linsday (Peter) White
Susan Glazer	Albert Wilson, Jr.

The Study Committee has been working with City staff and the consultant team throughout the process and will help to formulate recommendations that will be transmitted to the City Manager. Any proposed changes to the Zoning Ordinance will be transmitted to the Planning Board for further review and then submitted to the City Council for consideration.