BOARD OF ZONING APPEAL FOR THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

GENERAL HEARING

THURSDAY FEBRUARY 23, 2023 6:00 p.m.

Remote Meeting via

831 Massachusetts Avenue Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Brendan Sullivan, Chair
Jim Monteverde, Vice Chair
Andrea A. Hickey
Laura Wernick
Matina Williams

City Employees Stephen Natola



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1 PROCEEDINGS 2 3 (6:00 p.m.)4 Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey, Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams 5 6 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Welcome to the February 23, 7 2023 meeting of the Cambridge Board of Zoning Appeal. My 8 name is Brendan Sullivan, and I am Chair for tonight's 9 meeting. 10 This meeting is being held remotely, due to the 11 statewide emergency orders limiting the size of public 12 gatherings in response to COVID-19, and in accordance with 13 Governor Charles D. Baker's Executive Order of March 12, 2020 temporarily amending certain requirements of the Open 14 15 Meeting Law; as well as the City of Cambridge temporary 16 emergency restrictions on city public meetings, city events, 17 and city permitted events, due to COVID-19, dated May 27, 2020. 18 19 This meeting is being video and audio recorded and is broadcast on cable television Channel 22 within 20 Cambridge. 21 22 There will also be a transcript of the

1 proceedings. All Board members, applicants, and members of the 2 3 public will please state their name before speaking. votes will be taken by roll call. 4 5 Members of the public will be kept on mute until it is time for public comment. I will give instructions for 6 7 public comment at that time, and you can also find 8 instructions on the City's webpage for remote BZA meetings. 9 Generally, you will have up to three minutes to 10 speak, but that might change based on the number of 11 speakers, and at the discretion of the Chair. I'll start by asking Staff to take Board members 12 attendance and verify that all members are audible. 13 STEPHEN NATOLA: Matina Williams? 14 15 MATINA WILLIAMS: Present. 16 STEPHEN NATOLA: Laura Wernick? 17 LAURA WERNICK: Present. 18 STEPHEN NATOLA: Andrea Hickey? 19 ANDREA HICKEY: Present. 20 STEPHEN NATOLA: Jim Monteverde? 21 JIM MONTEVERDE: Present. 22 STEPHEN NATOLA: And Brendan Sullivan?

1	BRENDAN	SULLIVAN:	Present	and	audible.
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1 2 (6:05 p.m.)3 Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey, Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams 4 5 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: First case I'll call tonight 6 is BZA 168852 -- 35 Webster Avenue. 7 DAN ANDERSON: Good evening, Mr. Sullivan. 8 Anderson, a Partner at Anderson Porter Design. I believe my 9 client had requested a continuance on this. And I thought 10 there was a letter that had been added to the file. But if 11 the -- could have the Board's permission on this to continue this case? 12 13 I also have another case on here for the Regular 14 Agenda, Case No. 2088873. My client from that project would 15 also like to request a continuance for further neighborhood 16 discussion. 17 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Which -- I'm sorry, Dan, which 18 one was that now? That's --19 DAN ANDERSON: The continued case is for Webster Ave, the --20 21 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Right. 22 DAN ANDERSON: -- it's on the regular agenda, it's

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     2088873. It's for 231-235 Third Street.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. So requesting a
 3
     continuance on Third Street also?
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               DAN ANDERSON: As well.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. I will call that case at
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     that time. Will you be available to speak to that issue?
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     There is a number of correspondences that have come into it.
     So I suspect that the general public will probably be tuning
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 9
     in. And in case any questions, you know, come up at that
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     point, I would welcome if you would be available?
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               DAN ANDERSON: I can make myself available.
12
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: It may not be necessary, but
     I'm just wondering if you would be available at that time?
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14
               DAN ANDERSON: Sure. I can -- at the pleasure of
15
     the Board, I will appear at either.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay, thank you. Appreciate
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     that. Now, on Webster Avenue -- again, this is -- keeps
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     kicking down the road, and one of the problems is that it
     takes a time slot from somebody else: How far out do we
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     want to continue this?
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               DAN ANDERSON: This should not be very long. I
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22
     think that as the Board has already ruled in favor of a
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     special permit for this project, I think we're really just
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     looking for the appeal process to sunset, and to file with
     the Registry. So that is I think a matter of weeks. So --
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Can we mark it up for April 13?
               DAN ANDERSON: That would be acceptable.
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 6
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. I'm going to make
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     amotion, then, to continue this matter until April 13,2023,
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     on the condition that the petitioner change the posting sign
     to reflect -- and I'm going to say at 6:00 -- change the
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    posting sign to reflect the new date of April 13, 2023 and
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     the time at 6:00 p.m.
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               Should there be any new correspondence that the
    petitioner would like to submit, that it be in the file be
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14
     submitted by 5:00 p.m. on the Monday prior to the April 13
15
    hearing.
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               Marking it up to that date, and hopefully the
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    Commissioner will be available at that time should this go
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     forward. But at any rate, we'll mark it up then for April
     13, 2023.
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               On the motion, then, to continue this matter, Jim
21
    Monteverde?
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               JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?
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               ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
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               LAURA WERNICK: In favor.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?
               MATINA WILLIAMS: In favor.
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 7
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Brendan Sullivan yes to the
 8
     continuance.
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               [All vote YES]
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: This matter on five affirmative
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     votes is continued to April 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
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               DAN ANDERSON: Thank you very much.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. The other thing is
     that Third Street is scheduled for 8:00. Maybe as we get
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15
     further along, we can either give you a head's up or maybe
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     you can leave it on somehow.
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               DAN ANDERSON: I'll check in periodically to thank
18
     you.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you.
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1 2 (6:09 p.m.)3 Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey, 4 Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Next matter we'll hear is Case 5 6 No. 205192 -- 255 Grove Street. Mr. MacArthur or Mr. Linn, 7 are you on the line? 8 [Pause] Well, we are in receipt of a correspondence --9 10 Moskow Linn Architects -- dated February 17. 11 "Dear Maria, "I am writing on behalf of the petitioner, Duncan 12 and Diana MacArthur, to request a third continuance for Case 13 No. BZA 205192. 14 15 "The petitioners would like additional time to 16 work through possible modifications to the initial design 17 proposal, that would not impact the language of the 18 advertised variance, but could result in changes to the submitted plan and dimensional form. 19 20 "Thank you for your help in this matter. "Sincerely, Robert Linn." 21 22 On the motion, then, to continue this matter, next

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available date is April 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. Let me make a motion, then, to continue this matter on the condition that the petitioner change the posting sign to reflect the new date of April 13, 2023 and the time of 6:00 p.m.
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That any new submittals not current in the file -dimensional forms, supporting statements -- be in the file
by 5:00 p.m. on the Monday prior to the April 13, 2023
hearing.

On the motion, then, to continue this matter, Jim Monteverde?

JIM MONTEVERDE: Excuse me, Mr. Chair, there -this is one of several continuances, correct? For this one?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: This is the third one.

JIM MONTEVERDE: Can we make this ask that this be the last?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: We can -- I -- let me go on the record, yes, in saying that one of the problems with continuing these cases -- and I was hoping that Mr. Linn or Mr. MacArthur was on the line -- is that, and again we're here on Thursday nights, so it really doesn't matter what our caseload is or what it is, but when we reschedule cases, we do it as a courtesy to the petitioner.

Page 12

Because either they -- some issues have come up during the hearing that the Board would like to address, or potential abutters have issues and we would like the applicant to have additional time to work through whatever issues come up. And it's done as a courtesy, because we feel that additional time would help the proposal.

However, what it does is it takes somebody else's time slot. And I don't think that's fair to the general public. We're here, we're going to hear cases. But the general public who come down make an application, and all of a sudden, they're given a date two months out or something, and as they've already been waiting for drawings to be drawn up and submitted to the Planning Board -- I mean to the Inspectional Services, it's not fair to them.

And then after we have a hearing, obviously there's a number of weeks before the decision is filed with the City Clerk, but then there's a 20-day period. And again, I think it's -- our courtesy has -- can only go so far, and we ask a little bit of courtesy in return and respect.

So Jim, to your point, I would go on the record -- and this will be conveyed to Mr. Linn and also to Mr.

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     MacArthur -- that this will be the last continuance with 255
     Grove Street. They should be prepared to go forward that
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 3
     night.
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               JIM MONTEVERDE: Yeah, thank you.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: And Jim, thank you very much --
               JIM MONTEVERDE: In that case -- in that case I'm
 6
 7
     in favor.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Andrea Hickey?
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               ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
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               LAURA WERNICK: Yes, in favor.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?
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               MATINA WILLIAMS: Yes, in favor.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: And Brendan Sullivan in favor.
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15
               [All vote YES]
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Five affirmative votes, this
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     matter is continued to April 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
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     (6:14 p.m.)
 3
     Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey,
     Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams
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                                   The Board will now hear Case
 5
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN:
    No. 207647 -- 401 Concord Avenue. Mr. Plumb?
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7
               [Pause]
8
              He's on. Mr. Plumb, you may be on mute.
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              ANDREW PLUMB: Yes, I'm here. Thank you.
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              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. We can hear you
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     now. Okay. If you'd like to proceed?
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               ANDREW PLUMB: Okay, thank you. Thank you, Mr.
    Chair and members of the Board. As you know, we were on the
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     agenda for the February 9 meeting, and had requested a
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     continuance at that time in order to continue meeting with
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    the --
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              VOICE: Recording in progress.
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              ANDREW PLUMB: -- for a number of months, which we
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     did. And as a result of that meeting last week, we
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     resubmitted the proposal that you have before you this
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     evening. And I'll just sort of dive into that.
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              So the -- the petition is for -- the property has
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Page 15

an existing, single-family residence on it that's in very bad repair. And we're proposing to remove that existing single-family and garage and, in its place, build a new two-family residence. This is located at the corner of Concord Avenue and Corporal Burns Road.

And the relief that we're requesting this evening to -- this hearing to build on this corner lot within the two front yard setbacks to reduce the minimum lot area per dwelling unit per the ordinance, and to increase the maximum FAR and to -- we're looking for some relief on the minimum dimensions of private open space, and I'm happy to go through those things.

Before I get into the details of that, I do want to say that we are very proud of the process that we've been able to run with the community. We reached out back in October of last year and flyered the whole neighborhood and surrounding blocks.

And out of that group of neighbors who were interested, joined a series of Zoom meetings that we held.

And I have submitted a -- I apologize -- rather lengthy kind of summary of the process that we went through.

But just to show that we really wanted to have the

community input for -- inform the design that we came up with.

2.

And so, let's see -- to begin with, importantly, it's a two-fam residence. We feel very strongly that Cambridge is in dire need of additional housing units.

And this is a property that is zoned for twofamily and is flanked by other properties along Concord

Avenue that have existing two-families on similar lots with
similar restrictions to this one. So in our minds, this
proposal is a sort of trying to continue that pattern of
development by putting a two-family residence on this
property.

So if I could ask that we start on Drawing No. Z0.3, which is the Zoning Summary and site plan that overlays -- yep, there you go.

So the -- the sort of solid, shaded gray zone is the proposed footprint of the project. And then the dashed line with the sort of diagonal hash marks going through it represents the footprint of the existing building and its detached garage.

And so, you can see that what we're proposing if you -- in terms of the amount of the footprint that touches

the ground on the property is not terribly different than what's there with the existing residents and garage. If you were to sort of in your mind move that garage closer to the building, you would see that it's of a similar amount of area.

We're also improving the side yard setbacks on the two side yard setbacks and the front yard setback on Corporal Burns from what's existing.

And on the Concord Avenue side, we're proposing that the sort of main body of the massing of the building fall close -- that's within -- that's at 15 feet from the property line, but there's also porches that are proposed, which came out working with the movers to find some ways to tie in the new building with the adjacent buildings and the porches with something that was important to several of the neighbors.

And that sort of sits in a similar location relative to the property line, as the neighboring projects.

I want to say that the proposal that we had presented or submitted for the prior meeting had a higher floor-to-area ratio that we were seeking relief for than this one.

And we had at that time several of the abutting neighbors in support of the project, and several of the other neighbors in the neighborhood that were concerned and submitted letters of not in support. And they had cited issues of FAR being too high and a sense of the mass of the building feeling too big.

And so, what we did in the interim, but we last meeting and this one was to remove the proposed third floor of living area and its associated dormers. And actually, that would be a good time if we could just go to the elevation, the main elevation on Corporal Burns, which is -- let's see -- that's Z2.1, there you go.

And in addition, by removing the third-floor
living space, that brought the FAR that we're seeking here
to 0.72, but it also allowed us to rework the roof form.

And so, what was before a continuance roof along the entire
length that you see here with dormers -- two on this side
and two on the other -- is now broken up into two roofs and
a lower, middle roof in the zone.

And the reason for doing that was to really try to break down the mass of the building and have it relate to the scale that's present on Corporal Burns.

Page 19

And if I could ask you to go to the elevation sheet, which is of the whole block, let's see that's 2.4, there you go. I don't know if it's possible to zoom in, but you can see the top drawing up there is looking along Corporal Burns.

And you can see that the -- by breaking up the roof form and sort of treating that middle zone differently, what we kind of get is a massing that has a similar width to the single-families that are directly adjacent as you move to the left on this drawing.

And then you can see it further down at the end of Corporal Burns, there's 2 two-families that are shown in this drawing. There's actually a third one that's not in the drawing. But just to kind of, you know, show that the street has, you know, the scale of the two-family at both ends.

And so, these were the types of things that we did in response. And we met with the community on the sixteenth in the evening. I felt that it was well received. And I know that at least two of the people who had previously not supported the project rescinded their letter and instead wrote a letter of support. I don't know if others did that

as well.

But I think that I just wanted to -- you know, point out that we -- it's very important to us that there be a community process, even if it's not strictly required, and that we wanted to show the Board that we really tried hard to find and project that's viable from a development point of view, but also one that's directly informed by those who are, you know, living around it and are affected by it. And this is -- this is a very clear example of that.

One more note about the FAR: The -- we did an analysis of the -- the two families that are along Concord Avenue adjacent to this property and found a range of FAR that's existing, ranging from 0.63 to 0.74, just by taking the data that's available on the City of Cambridge assessing database and not including sort of attic space.

And so, we feel like what we're proposing here is not setting a precedent of any more FAR than is already sort of present in the amount of density that's in this neighborhood.

And if you were to look at properties along Alpine Street, which is -- you know, just the other side of one street up here, you'll find FAR in point -- mid to point

sevens, point eights, even -- even -- I saw 0.98.

So our feeling is that the -- what we're proposing here is not pushing the envelope in terms of requested FAR.

If I could now ask that we look at the open space drawings? So that would be Z0.5. I'm sorry, one more up would be the -- yeah, this one shows the -- the sort of existing open space.

And what I've done is just sort of color-coded the footprint of the building and the existing. The solid green represents sort of how private open space is -- is counted within the ordinance.

So the solid green zone is the zone that has the 15-feet minimum dimension in both directions. And then the kind of cross-hatch green represents other open space. And then we've got the sort of paved areas in the gray.

If we go to the next drawing, I will show the proposal.

So I think the headline here that I want to point out is that the amount of open space of both types, we are exceeding the requirements. The caveat is that we're looking for relief on the 15×15 dimension.

And so, if you look at the -- for the private open

space, so if you look at the solid green zones that are along Corporal Burns on either side of that sort of entry, you'll see that what we've got is -- on the Corporal Burns side is about a 10' dimension by approximately 25' on each side, and then in the corner behind the driveway that's proposed, we've got another zone there that's about 22.5' wide by about 11' or 12' in the other direction.

And so, you know, we're meeting the -- the amount of square footage of both types of open space for this -- this -- this area. And what we're looking for relief for is in the sort of 15' dimension. And I think the argument I just want to make is that it's worth it if it allows for us to put a second unit on the property and to build a second unit of housing in Cambridge.

I believe that touches on all of my sort of prepared remarks to begin with.

And actually I'll just say one more thing just to discuss the argument for hardship, which is that the -- you know, we're located on a corner lot that is smaller than the minimum 5000 square-foot lot in this Residence B district.

It's also narrower than the 50-foot requirement.

And it's also got this sort of quarter-circle

corner condition, which I believe was, you know, part of some street work to kind of make this -- the sidewalk, you know, enlarged. And that took away from this property as well.

And so, those sorts of facts when you combine that with the sort of maximum FAR that was contemplated with this district -- it was contemplated for larger, more generous lots -- what you get is an overly restrictive, if you were to apply that literally, it would mean that you, you just couldn't build two units on this property.

That and also the minimum square footage per dwelling unit. And it's simply due to the fact that we've got a lot that's under 5000 square feet. It's narrower than 50 square feet, and we've also got this geometry at the corner.

And like I said, there's ample precedent of two-families built on lots of this size or smaller, and we think that it's a reasonable request to propose this two-family residence as you see before you this evening. Thank you.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: One of the questions I always ask myself when I see -- as obviously this property needs total redo, which is what you're proposing -- been looking

at this for years and years and years -- that you're basically starting off with a blank piece of paper, because you're going to tear down the existing structures and level the site and then go from there.

So starting off with a blank piece of paper, did you look at -- and again, looking at the ordinance, you really according to numbers are only allowed a single-family there, because you don't meet the minimum lot area per dwelling unit.

And other than the fact trying to provide another unit there of housing, does a single-family not work for you, or can it work for you, or is it absolutely out of the question that it will not work for you?

ANDREW PLUMB: I'm not sure I understand in terms of does it work for me. I mean, I think that the -- what, you know, as an architect and as developer, I have -- you know, our company has a certain set of mission and values that we operate by.

And one of them is to, you know, create homes that are -- that are, you know, of high-quality that are nontoxic, that are energy-efficient, but also in the larger context of the housing crisis that exists, when we see a

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    property that can support the two-families it has, you know,
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     for the last 100 years and there's all these other flanking
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    properties, it seems to me that it's a waste to build a
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     single-family here.
 5
               And of course you can build a single-family here,
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    but to make it economically viable, you have to build a big
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     one. And it's -- that's not what Cambridge needs. We need
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     reasonable apartments that are a reasonable size, that
     families will want to live in.
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10
               And so, is it possible to build a single-family?
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    Yes. But I think it's an absolute wasted opportunity and
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     sends the wrong message.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. No, I think that's a
     good answer to my question. So let me open it up to the
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    members of the Board. Jim Monteverde, any questions or
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    comments at this time?
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               Jim Monteverde?
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               JIM MONTEVERDE: Sorry. Can you hear me?
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes.
                                        Any --
20
               JIM MONTEVERDE:
                                Sorry.
21
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- questions or comments at
22
    this time?
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JIM MONTEVERDE: Yeah. Just one related to the dimensional form. So I'm looking at Sheet Z0.3, the Zoning Analysis.

ANDREW PLUMB: Yeah.

JIM MONTEVERDE: Could you please help me understand just without a north arrow on this -- I'm not sure where east and west is -- but I'm looking at the dimensional form and where it says, "I read the minimum front yard Concord Avenue required 15, provided 9," but you've got a porch that otherwise would be 15' to the front of the building. Corporal Burns side, I think it asks for 15', you're providing 11, correct?

ANDREW PLUMB: Correct.

east end, requires 7'6" and you're providing 7'6", you're fine? And north requires 7'6" and you're proposing 22'6".

So you're fine. The only setback issue is really on the Concord Avenue side because of the porch, is that correct?

ANDREW PLUMB: Yes, although I guess I felt that, you know, with the Corporal Burns side, the 11-foot-setback—

JIM MONTEVERDE: Oh, that's right. Yeah.

1 ANDREW PLUMB: That was driven by picking up the 2 adjacent, you know, sort of prevailing setback of adjacent 3 properties. But by the letter of the ordinance, it's 15', 4 so that's why I was requesting relief in both --5 JIM MONTEVERDE: Okay. And that -- and that 11' is measured to the face of the building, not to the 6 7 areaways, not to the front steps? I'm assuming that there's 8 a porch there, but front steps, right? 9 ANDREW PLUMB: That's --10 JIM MONTEVERDE: It's the property line to base of 11 the building? 12 ANDREW PLUMB: Correct. 13 JIM MONTEVERDE: Okay. Thank you. BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey, any questions or 14 15 comments at this point? 16 ANDREA HICKEY: Yes. I just have one question 17 regarding the open space dimensioning. If I could ask the 18 petitioner, is there a plan that shows the proposed open space as what the actual dimensions? I do see the -- at the 19 20 top sort of the box in the bar where you've made the total calculations. 21 22 But is there a plan that sort of shows the actual

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     dimensions of each of these little proposed open space
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     areas?
               ANDREW PLUMB: Unfortunately, this drawing -- what
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     I've done is I've itemized the square footage of each sort
     of block, but in terms of like a dimension,
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               ANDREA HICKEY: Right. I can say for me it would
 7
     have been helpful to see --
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               ANDREW PLUMB: Yeah.
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               ANDREA HICKEY: -- sort of where you come up with
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     those numbers.
               ANDREW PLUMB: Yeah. Well, I mean it's all just -
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     - it's all directly measured from modeling it in the
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     computer, so the numbers are -- the square footages are
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     correct. But I -- unfortunately I did not include that on
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     here, the dimension strengths of these.
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               I mean, for comparison, the -- like if we look at
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     the driveway, the width that's proposed is 17'. Actually,
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     well we know that the setback from the property line to the
     building on the north side where the driveway is is 22'6"
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     anyhow. So the width of that solid green square on the --
     on the left-hand side is 22'6".
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22
               ANDREA HICKEY: Okay.
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ANDREW PLUMB: And we know that the -- along

Corporal Burns, the building setback is 11' so those solid

green areas are 11' deep by -- yeah, it's -- and we might

need to look at the floor plans to sort of -- well, I did

dimension the floor plans, so let me just see if I can find

a better drawing to look at.

Well, if you look at the first-floor plan on Z1.2, the -- now this is an interior dimension, but it's close. So the -- it's -- that's an interior dimension of about 23 feet that's of that sort of main living space.

So the width of that private open space that I'm showing on the other drawing is 23' plus another, like, foot and a half. So call it 24.5' by 11'. So it's approximately -- I apologize for not having the dimensions drawn on there. I agree that would have been useful.

ANDREA HICKEY: All right. So just moving on, is there a plan that shows us how far away the proposed two outdoor parking spaces are from the rear of the proposed structure, just so that I could see that?

ANDREW PLUMB: How far they are from the rear? So let's -- if we look at ${\tt Z0.5}$ --

ANDREA HICKEY: Yeah. What I'm calling the rear

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     is the part of the lot furthest away from the Concord Ave
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     frontage, so --
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               ANDREW PLUMB: Okay.
 4
               ANDREA HICKEY: I realize that's not the rear of
 5
     the building.
               ANDREW PLUMB: Yeah. So the width of the parking
 6
     is 17' and the width of the space of the setback is 22'6".
 7
 8
     So if I subtract, that's 5.5' over 2'. So we're about just
 9
     under 3' from the edge of the parking to the building.
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               ANDREA HICKEY: And then also accordingly about
     that same width from the lot line on the side of the --
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12
               ANDREW PLUMB: Yes.
13
               ANDREA HICKEY: -- other parking space?
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               ANDREW PLUMB: Yes.
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               ANDREA HICKEY: So about 3'. Okay. That's all I
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     have for questions now. I would like to thank you for your
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     community outreach in this case. We don't see that enough
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     in cases that come before us.
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               And in reviewing the file, it just is really good
     to see how much time you spent sort of listening to the
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21
     neighbors and doing your best to address their questions and
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     concerns.
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So thank you for doing that. That makes our job a lot easier. So that's all I have for now.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick, any comments or questions at this point?

LAURA WERNICK: Well, I'll just follow up on both of Andrea's points. One is yes, I agree the outreach has been really -- is -- is very, very helpful. And then going back to the parking places, I'm just curious as to the depth of the parking area from Corporal Burns Road.

And what I'm going -- what's in the back of my mind is could that be shortened, bring the cars closer to the street? Is there anything particularly set, that back end of the parking spaces?

As you bring the cars closer to the street, obviously you can shorten the length of the drive --

ANDREW PLUMB: Right.

ANDREA HICKEY: -- then the green area becomes wider. So I just was wondering what's the --

ANDREW PLUMB: I believe that the -- the requirement for the driveway is that you provide the parking space not within the front yard setback. I could be wrong on that, but that's -- so basically, what I've done is I've

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     taken where I've set the front yard setback and then set the
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    parking space beyond that. So that's sort of what -- that's
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    what was locating it.
              ANDREA HICKEY: Okay. Okay.
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 5
               ANDREW PLUMB: But I agree with you. I mean, that
 6
    would be -- I just don't think it's allowed, I quess.
7
              ANDREA HICKEY: Yeah. Okay. That was my only
8
     question. Thank you.
9
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams, any questions
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    or comments at this point?
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               MATINA WILLIAMS: No. I don't think so.
12
     still wondering what the hardship is, though? But that's
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     it.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. I think we will get into
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15
    that when we come back on the other side of that.
16
    would be a -- I think he's attempted to answer it in the
17
    beginning, and it's incumbent with -- with a number of
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     issues. But Andrea, if you wanted to elaborate on that now
19
     for Matina, the hardship issue?
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              ANDREW PLUMB: Sure.
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              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: How you meet the statutory
22
    requirement?
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ANDREW PLUMB: Yes. So the hardship that we're seeing has to do with the size and shape of the property, and that's it's undersized. And so, it's -- it's too small for the minimum lot size. It's too narrow for the minimum lot width. And it also has this unusual corner shape to it.

And those things taken together when you apply the ordinance literally results in an overly restrictive set of requirements for building on the lot that I don't think was intended with the way that the ordinance was written in the first place, because it contemplated with more generous lots.

And what it would mean if you did it literally was that you simply wouldn't be able to build units on a property that's zoned for two units, and which has proven to be able to easily handle two units, because there are -- you know, dozens or more two-family units on properties of this size or smaller in the neighborhood.

And so, the literal enforcement or application of the variance -- sorry, of the ordinance -- creates a situation that is overly restrictive than what is -- was intended, and also is -- well, it seems like it would be unfair to not allow building on this lot in the manner that

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1
     all these other properties have been built on in the past.
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     In fact, if you were to try to build any of these two-
 3
     families again, you'd be asking for very similar relief that
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     I'm requesting here this evening.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Matina, does that
 6
     somewhat answer your question?
7
              MATINA WILLIAMS: Yep.
8
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yep.
9
              MATINA WILLIAMS: Somewhat. It answers it.
10
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. You can mull losses
11
     over it, anyhow, and we will catch you on the back side --
12
              MATINA WILLIAMS: -- yeah.
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              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- when we come back.
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              MATINA WILLIAMS: Okay. Okay. Thank you.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Great. Let me open it -- thank
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16
     you. Let me open it to public comment. Any member of the
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    public who wishes to speak should now click the button that
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     says, "Participants," and then click the button that says,
     "Raise hand."
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20
               If you're calling in by phone, you can raise your
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    hand by pressing *9 and unmute or mute by pressing *6, and
22
    you'll have up to three minutes in which to comment.
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1 STEPHEN NATOLA: User called, "Andrew Plumb." NICOLA MOORE: Hello? 2 3 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes. NICOLA MOORE: Hi. 4 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: You can identify yourself for 5 the record. 6 7 NICOLA MOORE: Yeah, my name is Nicola Moore. I 8 live in and -- I own and live in the house, one of the two 9 houses that abut this property. I live on Concord Avenue at 10 395-397 Concord Avenue. And I -- I'm here to support this 11 project. 12 I think it will be a really nice addition to the neighborhood. And Mr. Plumb has -- he's gone above and 13 14 beyond in terms of working with the community. And there 15 were some very tough meetings. I -- and he adjusted the 16 plans and adjusted the plans and adjusted the plans. 17 And on -- you know, both to respond to the people 18 on Concord Avenue who wanted the property to sort of match, 19 you know, with the porch and things like that the way that Concord Avenue looks, and also the people who live on 20 21 Corporal Burns, who were concerned about having a large 22 block of property, a sort of massive property on Corporal

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1
     Burns.
               And I think -- I think he's really done the best
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 3
    he can to adjust the property to the community's concerns
     and also that property that he, you know, that he's -- the
 4
     lot that he's dealing with.
 5
               So I enthusiastically support the project.
 6
 7
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you, Nicola.
 8
               STEPHEN NATOLA: Another user named Andrew Plumb.
 9
               [Pause]
10
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: No, that's the petitioner.
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               ANDREA HICKEY: There may be some confusion about
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     the name.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, that's the petitioner.
13
               STEPHEN NATOLA: Yes.
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15
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah.
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               ROBERT TAGUIN: I think you're up. You're
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    unmuted.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Anybody else calling in?
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19
               JUDY BACHER: Yes, hi, this is Judy Bacher and
20
     Dave Doolittle.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes.
22
               JUDY BACHER: We are the other abutters. We are
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on Corporal Burns right next to the property 401.

And we -- we support the project as well. I support exactly what Nicola said about Andrew being very approachable and setting up all sorts of communication and meetings so we could learn and express our issues and concerns. And I believe they really have addressed the biggest concerns that the neighborhood had regarding the FAR and the massiveness.

And earlier -- this was the latest changes that they made, but even earlier they addressed one of the concerns we had, because -- you know, we're right next to them -- if they had moved the parking lot, the driveway into the center of the unit, then we would have had a big building right next to our property, which we weren't really happy about, but they -- they listened to that, and they moved the parking area to closest to our house.

And so that will really alleviate some of the blockage that we might otherwise have experienced.

So we really support this new design. And thank

Andrew for reaching out and really communicating and

listening to our concerns. So we are for it.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Great. Thank you for calling

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1
     in.
               STEPHEN NATOLA: Robert Tagiuri?
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 3
               [Pause]
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Robert?
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              ROBERT TAGIURI: Hi. I'm confused. I'm -- I'm
    here for the hearing for 65 Sparks Street variance, which I
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7
    thought was at 6:30?
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: That will be after this hearing
    on this case concludes.
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10
              ROBERT TAGIURI: Okay. And --
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              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Maybe another 15,20 minutes or
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     so.
13
              ROBERT TAGIURI: Okay. Sorry to interrupt you.
14
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Not a problem.
15
              ROBERT TAGIURI: I'm also not seeing any of the --
16
     I just see the big plan in front of me, and then somebody's
17
     face. I don't see the normal Zoom controls below.
18
    maybe they'll appear.
19
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay.
20
              ROBERT TAGIURI: Thank you.
21
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes. That appears to be all of
22
    the call-ins there is.
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Probably another half dozen letters from people who had written earlier voicing some concern or objection to the original plan who have now rescinded the letter of objection and a revised letter of support.

We've heard from a couple of the abutters, and the letters are -- have been read by the Board members and will be incorporated by reference.

I will conclude the public comment portion applicants. I will send it back to Andrew. If you have any other comments you wish to add at this point, before we take it to the Board for a vote?

ANDREW PLUMB: Nothing further at this point, thank you.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. I guess my -- let me open it up I guess for discussion with the Board. I guess my thought on this is that if -- I initially said is that when you start off with a blank piece of paper, you know, what can you do as-of-right and not have to seek relief?

And yet I think that Andrew had basically hit the salient points, that yeah, you probably could build a single-family home, but that the price point of that would be high -- not that these are not going to be reasonable.

They're going to be somewhat pricey, but then again, I think that the value is probably being put into it.

There is, obviously, acquisition costs and then building the structure -- hard costs and soft costs. And, you know, being a realist that a single-family home would probably be, you know, out of reach and yes, compliant.

However, the addition of a second unit is probably obviously some economies of scale. And to make two reasonably -- I guess for Cambridge standards -- priced units would be far more advantageous to the housing stock, and also to the neighborhood. And these are well-designed.

I think that the original plan was probably a stretch -- probably would have met with some resistance from the Board. And I think in reading the initial letters from the neighbors voicing their concerns, some of those concerns resonated with me also.

So in total, I think that is applaud -- and, you know, that other members have mentioned your outreach and your willingness to scale back the project to make it still viable, but also attractive to the abutters. And something needs to be done there.

And I think that the plan before us as far as I'm

concerned achieves that end. And it will be a win-win for the neighborhood, and also adds another unit to the housing stock for that area.

So that's my thought on it.

Jim, any thought further?

JIM MONTEVERDE: Yeah. My -- my thought is, and it goes back to the dimensional form -- I'm still concerned about the 50 percent above the required or the allowed FAR, realizing what it means in terms of the lot, in terms of how much you can build.

And I think looking at the plan, what it means is

-- and I don't think it means the only thing you can build

is a single-family home; I think what it's saying is you

can't build this plan, which is two identical, three-bedroom

units. It could be some other combination.

So at the moment, I'm still struggling over the FAR and not feeling very supportive at the moment. However, I do appreciate all of the effort they went through with the neighbors and et cetera.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, Jim, if -- if you look at the -- and again, and I wrestled with that same question -- is --

JIM MONTEVERDE: Yeah.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- are these units, two units, are they sort of -- you know, bigger than they need to be?

Can we pull back the structure or something like that? And I don't -- I did not come to the conclusion that these units, the interior spacing of the bedrooms and the other -- were overly generous or excessive.

And I thought that they are of an appropriate size that would garner a certain attractiveness to family looking for three-bedroom units, and also that the price point of it would be also somewhat attractive for the related size of the units.

So I think in proportion to the size of the units, the size of the rooms, I felt that it was adequate and to scale it back even though it does lessen the number --

JIM MONTEVERDE: Right.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- I think it may compromise the useability or the livability and the attractiveness of the units. That's the conclusion I came to, anyhow.

JIM MONTEVERDE: Yeah, I -- right. And I don't know that without, you know, not designing it in my head, but --

1 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Right. 2 JIM MONTEVERDE: -- without seeing that as part of 3 an alternative, I can't -- I can't say -- I can't get to 4 that point. And whether it would be a three-bedroom and a two-bedroom unit, you know, I don't know. But it seems like 5 6 there potentially could be a different mix, or at least that 7 could be explored to get closer to the ordinance FAR. 8 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. 9 JIM MONTEVERDE: 50 percent just seems to be a bit 10 too much of a reach for me. 11 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay, Laura Wernick your 12 thoughts? You're on mute, Laura. 13 LAURA WERNICK: Yeah. Sorry. 14 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Now you're on. 15 LAURA WERNICK: Yeah. I think my leanings are 16 along with the Chair's thoughts: that these do not seem 17 like extravagant units. I also feel like it's in keeping with the scale and the intensity of the other properties in 18 19 the neighborhood. So that's a positive consideration in my -- in my mind. 20 So I appreciate the bringing into Cambridge 2 21 22 three-bedroom units. I think this is much needed.

And it's done in a way that fits in and is comparable to what exists in this neighborhood. So it doesn't feel as if it's imposing in any way, or presenting some extravagant, large, out of scale structure that I would have a great deal of difficulty with. So I think that's what's -- that's what I'm seeing. Thank you. That's it. BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Matina, any thoughts, comments at this time? MATINA WILLIAMS: Well, I have to agree with Jim a little bit. But I also, you know, weigh in the fact that the neighbors do -- you know, have put a lot of thought and effort in. And Mr. Plumb has -- has revised his plans somewhat. I'm still not weighing in towards it, though. just can't. I don't know. BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. You know, and here's the other thought I have regarding the three bedrooms is --MATINA WILLIAMS: Mm-hm. BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- that we're finding lately is people coming down, adding bedrooms or kind of chomping up

interior space, what have you, and then that yes it can be

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used as a bedroom. Three-bedrooms are, obviously, muchneeded, as Laura says, and very attractive. But sometimes
that third bedroom becomes a home office or --

MATINA WILLIAMS: Mm-hm.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- the need for home office.

And then it can also then double as, you know, the part-time bedroom if a family member comes or whomever comes or what have you, so that this pandemic has changed societal trends on how they use their house. And that's one of the things that we keep being asked is to add some more space so that it could be used as a home office.

So I just throw that out for consideration.

Andrea Hickey, any thoughts, comments?

ANDREA HICKEY: Yes. So I struggle a bit, as Mr. Monteverde does, regarding FAR and whether we really need two identical, large -- I consider, still consider these large, large units on this site, or whether there's some sort of a compromise that could make sense for the developer to maybe have one large unit and one small unit.

I like the idea of there being an additional unit, given housing stock issues and all, but I think two big units are going to be too big expensive units, and --

1 ANDREW PLUMB: Yeah, right. ANDREA HICKEY: -- and the FAR issue still is a 2 3 little troubling to me. My other issues are going back to Matina's initial comments about hardship: I'm not 4 completely swayed that the sort of hardship bar has been met 5 with this proposal. And my final thought is that I don't 6 7 like parking spaces to -- as close to the structure as these 8 two proposed spaces are. 9 If I could ask the petitioner, has that area 10 always been used for parking outdoors of more than one car, 11 where there is a garage there now? 12 ANDREW PLUMB: I don't -- I mean, it's always been a garage with a driveway in front of it, and it's got space 13 14 for two cars. I don't know what's been parked there in the 15 past, if that's what you're asking? 16 MATINA WILLIAMS: Oh. 17 ANDREW PLUMB: And it's -- so it's always been 18 sort of the part of the property that's been utilized in 19 that way. 20 ANDREA HICKEY: Right. Well, those are my 21 comments at the moment. So Mr. Chair, I'll give it back to

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you.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. And it appears that if we were to take it to a vote, that you may not at this juncture out of the four affirmative votes that you need, the option would be -- I can proceed with a motion and a vote, or that if you want to digest what you've just heard from members of the Board and go back to the drawing board, see if you can't whittle it down, address some of the concerns.

Or you may come back and say, "You know, guys, I've tried my best and -- and, you know, it is what it is."

So those are your two options. I can either proceed, or ask for -- you could ask for a continuance and come back another night and see if you can't in the interim address some of the comments and concerns that you've heard from members of the Board.

ANDREW PLUMB: Could I ask for the opportunity to try to speak to some of these FAR comments?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah. Yeah. No, sure, yep.

ANDREW PLUMB: Okay. So one of the things that we talked about a lot in the community meetings -- and we had several -- was FAR and how much is appropriate and how much is too much, and where's the line?

And, you know, at least out of those conversations, it was sort of like a, "I don't know what the -- if there is a magic number, but there's -- there was a feeling before we made this latest change -- that, you know, that where we were at was too high.

And then after we -- after we -- you know, pulled off the third floor and brought it back in line in the midpoint of what's already there in the existing -- in the adjacent properties, that that felt like, okay, that seems reasonable. You're not setting any precedent.

And so, to the folks on the Board who aren't comfortable with the FAR that we're looking at here, I know is there a target? Because, you know, like I said, the comparable properties along Concord Avenue as they stand today all exceed the 0.5. And if you look on Alpine Street, for example, they're even higher.

And so, I guess I don't -- I don't personally follow how applying the 0.5 in this case only is -- is appropriate, given -- given the ample precedent of the other properties that are all exceeding the 0.5 FAR, and many of which exceed it by a great deal more than -- than what this proposal is for. And so --

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               JIM MONTEVERDE: Mr. Chair, can I address that for
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     a second?
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, sure, Jim. Yeah.
               JIM MONTEVERDE: So my issue is -- and I
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     understand your point, Mr. Plumb, it's not that I disagree
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    with it -- but I don't believe the ordinance gives us the
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    wiggle room to say that there's an ordinance required FAR
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     that can be modified, based on what existing or proposed
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     adjacent properties for the neighborhood present. So I
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     can't -- and it sets a precedent -- that's one.
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               Two, then, it also sets a precedent. If we were
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     to, you know, following your logic, it could apply to any
    number of other cases now and in the future, where it just
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    may not be appropriate.
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               So it -- that's -- it's a number, and that's the
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     ordinance, and that's kind of what we're stuck with. And
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     that's what -- we're the body that has to adjudicate based
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     on.
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               ANDREW PLUMB: May I respond, Mr. Monteverde?
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes, yeah.
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               ANDREW PLUMB: Just a quick question, really,
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    which is -- I hear what you're saying, but how is it that if
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you look at every single two-fam property on Concord Avenue, on Alpine Street on both sides, every single one of them exceeds the FAR? How did they get there if what you're saying has to be followed? And maybe you're suggesting that --

JIM MONTEVERDE: Oh. If it's like my neighborhood, most of what was built was before the zoning ordinance was in effect. And things are much larger than they could be.

Again, it -- but it's an issue that would have to be addressed by a modification to the zoning ordinance, which I'd be happy to see. But it's not what it reads now. And that's what we're trying to --

ANDREW PLUMB: You have any preexisting, nonconforming lot, it's too small. I mean, it -- you can't build -- you can build appropriate-sized units at 0.5 on a lot that's too small.

ANDREA HICKEY: I mean, that's what we're doing.

We're always making judgment calls on what's appropriate

when there's far -- when there are unusual lots, and what's

appropriate for the context, and what's needed in Cambridge.

And that's part of our responsibility as well.

So I think that in this instance when -- I have you know, and I have to say if my family's -- my kids grew up in a lot that was -- in Cambridge that was -- had almost no, you know, I mean it had a very large FAR and had no -- was shared space with the surrounding kids and it was an incredibly wonderful experience for them.

So I don't have the underlying prejudices and I do

-- against tight sites. I understand the purpose of the

ordinance. I think the ordinance sets a framework, which is

important.

But when there are important reasons to adjust that framework, then I think it's upon this Board to determine what has -- what values do we weigh here?

applies to the size of the lot, that case law will -- I'm sure when I don't have the actual cases in front of me, I could research it, that the courts have found that the size of a lot, even though substandard, not compliant with the existing ordinance -- is not sufficient grounds to grant a variance.

That the only test is relating to the soil conditions, the shape or topography. There are no known

soil conditions here. There is no known topography issues here -- topographical issues here.

The only other one would be the shape of the lot.

And I could understand on this particular one the shape of the lot being not perfectly rectangular -- different than other lots, other than maybe Emory's one across -- on the other side of the street there.

But that you are encumbered by having two front yards, and so, consequently two front yard setbacks. And you're encumbered by that.

To your question of how did he get to all the other houses on Corporal Burns and also Concord Avenue, well, they were built prior to the Zoning Ordinance.

The Zoning Ordinance has changed over the years, and in the divine wisdom or whatever of the Community

Development Department, Planning Board, and then ultimately the City Council has enacted that standard, that number for this particular area. So that's how those houses got built.

And even though it appears to be somewhat draconian that, you know, now I have to comply with a higher number, I need more land and I don't have it, and so consequently, you know, I can't build something similar to

what is there now.

Well, unfortunately, they with the broad brush bring in a zoning ordinance that governs an entire area -- section of town or something like that. And so, that's how you're encumbered by it. And how you can't, obviously, mirror or mimic what is the existing situation, condition on both those streets.

ANDREW PLUMB: I -- I understand, and I appreciate that. I just -- I think I feel very strongly that, or, you know, the -- the literal enforcement of the ordinance is winning over here over what seems to me to be a rather commonsense proposal here, where you can support two units.

So if that answers the question, anyhow?

You know, we're trying to build something that people want to live in in this day of age, not from 100 years ago. We're trying to build something that's done in a way that's of good quality and that, you know, construction costs have never been higher. Labor costs have never been higher. That means you need to build units of a certain size.

The units are not extravagant, they're appropriate.

And, you know, what's -- what's going to happen here is that if we can't -- if we can't get there, then we end up having to building an extravagant single-family home.

And how is that the outcome of this?

I mean, it just seems given all of the effort and energy and desire of the neighborhood and of, you know, everyone knows what's coming in terms of pressure to build more multifamily in Cambridge and every other city around the MBTA and everything like that that the result of this process is an extravagant single-family home.

I mean, yes, the question was asked, "Can you build one big one and one small one?" I don't know. I don't know, and we're already putting a third basement, the third bedroom in the basement. Does shaving off a few feet and bringing the FAR down by another 0.2 suddenly make it palatable?

I mean, it's -- it's just -- I feel like, you know, what's the magic, what's the magic number? You know? We should be able to build a two-family home here, and the reality of building in this day in age requires that you have to build of a certain size for it to be desirable in the market and you have to be able to build it of a certain

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level of quality to meet energy code, which is -- you know, in Massachusetts it's one of the most strict, thicker walls. You know, all of these things add up.
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And so, you know, as an architect, as a builder, as a developer, I'm balancing all of these things. And I feel that we're being -- well, it's -- it's just -- it's just -- it's just -- it feels very disappointing that the outcome of this is going to be an extravagant single-family home, instead of two, 2 reasonable two-families -- I'm sorry, two reasonable units.

And I -- I don't know if there's anything I can say at this point that -- that will have, won't be on the fence about the FAR rethink it, but I just feel like it needs to be said.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Well, all right. Let me throw it back to the -- the Board. Is it the sense of the Board that a continuance would be in order? Jim?

LAURA WERNICK: I just think it goes back to Mr. Plumb's initial question. What is the magic line where the FAR would be acceptable? And be reduced as a bedroom, and it's still high. So we're going to say, "Well, you know, okay, sorry, you can't do it. Do a single-family."

I think we're really getting to the point where you're going to have a much-less desirable situation and add very little to the site.

So is that -- is that the direction the Board wants to go in? If I could understand -- yeah, so that's -- that's concerning to me.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: I -- Laura, I agree with you.

And -- and your reasoning, that's my reasoning. I mean, I support the plan that is in front of us, for a variety of reasons that I have stated -- that I think that it's not excessive. Yes, it does tickle the number, but I think that the lot can support it.

I think the hardship is that he's encumbered by the change in the ordinance some years ago, and also that you're on two front yard setbacks, which further constrains the size of the building.

So anyhow, but he still has to get to four votes, and if there's no four votes there, then it's an up and down vote, it's not going to happen, and then you can't come back for two years.

So I think that if we -- my suggestion is that we step back from tonight to just Board members what, you know,

your thought is on it. Maybe you can relook at it.

Mr. Plumb, if you can suggest what the Board members have said and take another relook at it, maybe both sides can take a relook at this and come back another night, and see if we can't come to some agreement? Does that make sense, Board members and Mr. Plumb? Yes? No?

JIM MONTEVERDE: Makes sense to me.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Sure. Okay.

ANDREW PLUMB: It makes sense to me, I just would request any level of specificity of what I can do, you know, that would be helpful.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay.

ANDREW PLUMB: It's difficult to just say the FAR is too high. I don't -- you know, I don't know, if you tell me that the FAR has to be 0.5, I can tell you right now that the project doesn't work.

And, you know, so I -- it -- so is there are number, a threshold? You know, what are the things -- you just need to see that one unit's smaller? You know, is that -- so that's the kind of -- if there's any kind of specific feedback I guess of what I can look at, so that I can see if it's even possible, that would be --

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay, I -- yeah, I mean I cannot add anything more than what I've said. I mean, I support what is before us. Jim, can you --

JIM MONTEVERDE: Yeah, I'd -- I wouldn't -- I don't think it would be appropriate to state a number, because we're not charged to, you know, restate the ordinance or modify the ordinance.

But I think the comment I made before it it seems like it does appear that with the scheme that you have to get closer to the FAR, you probably would not have two identical units side-by-side.

That's -- I don't know how else to suggest it.

They're either smaller than what they are now, and I kind of agree with Brendan that I don't see -- they're not large by any means, but it basically suggests they're not the same.

They're not identical. One may still be a three bedroom; one is something else.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay, and --

JIM MONTEVERDE: And you may make the decision that that's not -- you can't market that. You can't finance that. You can't do that. Just asking you to take a look at that.

1 ANDREW PLUMB: I understand. 2 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Andrea, any -- can you add to the discussion? 3 4 ANDREA HICKEY: So I am really aligned with Jim on 5 this. And what I can say is I don't need to see 0.5. That's not what I'm looking for here. I certainly am 6 willing to make a compromise. 7 8 And if Mr. Plumb comes back and says that this is 9 the only viable project, it's either what he's presented 10 tonight or nothing, then I'd make a decision at that time. 11 But I'd like to see a little exploration about 12 perhaps two units that are not equal in size as presented this evening. 13 14 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay, Matina, any comments, 15 quidance at this point? Anything else you'd like to add? 16 MATINA WILLIAMS: No. If you can come back and, 17 you know, if we could see something different where the FAR 18 does come down, we could create -- sorry, I'm losing my 19 voice --20 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. 21 MATINA WILLIAMS: I think we said -- oh, sorry. 22 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay.

1 MATINA WILLIAMS: I think we stated to another 2 developer a few weeks ago --3 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yep. 4 MATINA WILLIAMS: -- that, you know, you buy these 5 lots and you, you know, try and max out your money. And we understand that, but we still have rules that we follow. 6 7 And so, that neighborhood's not overbuilt and things aren't 8 overbearing. And I do take into account that you did do a lot 9 10 of outreach with the -- the community. I do. And that's, 11 you know, part of my hangup is, like, okay, the community is 12 -- is -- is agreeing. How can we come to a great, a good compromise? 13 14 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. MATINA WILLIAMS: And it may be that when you come 15 back you may say, "This is the only viable option for 16 17 yourself." 18 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. Matina, thank you. 19 That was very good. Let me make a motion, then. Andrea, I'm going to continue this matter to April 13, 2023 at 6:00 20 21 p.m. on the condition that you change the posting sign to 22 reflect the new date of April 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

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1
               Any new submittals not in the file, dimensional
2
     form, supporting statements, be submitted by 5:00 p.m. on
 3
     the Monday prior to the April 13, 2023 hearing.
 4
               We already have a waiver of statutory time for a
 5
    hearing and a decision to -- so that is not the issue.
 6
               On the motion, then, to continue this matter to
7
    April 13, Jim Monteverde?
8
               JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor.
9
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?
10
              ANDREA HICKEY: Yes.
11
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
12
              LAURA WERNICK: Yes.
13
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?
              ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor.
14
15
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?
16
              MATINA WILLIAMS: Yes, in favor.
17
               [All vote YES]
18
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: And Brendan Sullivan yes.
19
     affirmative votes to the continuance. This matter is
20
     continued to April 13, 2023, at 6:00 p.m. See you then,
21
    Andrew.
22
              ANDREW PLUMB: Thank you.
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1
 2
     (7:17 p.m.)
 3
     Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey,
 4
     Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams
 5
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Going to the Regular Agenda,
     the Board will now hear Case No. 209310 -- 65 Sparks Street.
 6
 7
               ADAM DASH: Good evening, Mr. Chair. Can you hear
 8
     me?
 9
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes.
10
               ROBERT TAGIURI: Good evening. This is Attorney
11
     Adam Dash, at 48 Grove Street in Somerville. D-a-s-h,
12
     representing the applicants.
13
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. Adam, are you aware
     of the letter from Bob --
14
15
               ADAM DASH: I am.
16
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- Tagiuri?
17
               ADAM DASH: Yes.
18
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. And he is requesting,
19
     because his counsel is out of the country and not available,
     to postpone this for at least two weeks. Are you amenable
20
21
     to that at all, before we open it up?
22
               ADAM DASH: Yeah, there's more to this, Mr. Chair,
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if I may -- I don't want to get into a whole lot of detail about this. I have talked to his counsel over the past week or so and including several times today. He may be out of the country, but I have been able to reach him.

I would note that I do appear before this Board from time to time and I did want to respond. I feel like I was personally called out in some of those letters, and I don't believe that the facts are correct.

Because I have been in touch. As I said, we did have some discussions about this through Counsel. I don't want to get into that. It's not really relevant to the record.

We were unable to resolve Mr. Tagiuri's demands, but I don't want the Board to think that I or my clients were somehow ignoring him or not talking to him or not working through counsel.

There was a brief hiccup where I played phone tag with the lawyer, but we've spoken off and on a bit today as well as e-mailing. So I think -- and we were both of the agreement that -- both counsel are in agreement that this matter as far as resolving is at a dead end. So there's really no point in putting it off.

So we would rather go forward.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. All right. Well, if you want to proceed, then let me read the -- it just came in today. I'm not sure if all the Board members have received it. But let me just read it into the record anyhow. And it sent to Ms. Pacheco from Mr. Rob Tagiuri.

"I would like to request that the hearing of BZA 209310 to be postponed for two weeks. The 67 Park Street Realty Trust, the owner of 67 Spark Street, and an abutter to 65 Sparks Street opposes the granting of a variance for two dormers on the roof of 65 Park.

"The Trust does not see the petitioners have a hardship as defined by the zoning code. However, the Trust is attempting to work out a compromise with the petitioners, which has been complicated by communication issues between our counsel and theirs.

"We have submitted a proposal to the petitioners via their attorney, Mr. Dash, and we await a response.

James P. Mitchell, our attorney, is out of the country and he has had difficulties with phone service and Internet.

Attorney Mitchell will be back in Massachusetts in a few days, facilitating a dialogue.

1 "Thank you for your attention to this matter."

Then there was a further correspondence today from Mr. Tagiuri.

"I am representative of 67 Park Street Realty Trust." And he goes on:

"Over the four decades, we have maintained the architectural integrity of the building. Having worked on the exterior of property to preserve the historic façade, which includes the mansard roof.

"Our Building 67 abuts 65 Sparks. We oppose the variance for two dormers and a deck on the roof at 65 Park Street for three reasons. It is our interpretation of the zoning code that no hardship exists that would permit the granting of the variance.

"The dormers will have a negative effect on the appearance of 67 Sparks Street when the architectural integrity is violated on the roof of 65 Sparks and decrease the value of our property. The deck is adjacent to my bedroom window.

"The variance is granted, it is our plan to appeal. We reached to the petitioner by their attorney with a compromise proposal. They did not accept it. Thank you

for your attention.

"Mr. Tagliuri."

So I throw this out to the Board. If you are aware of the correspondence which came in today, and the question I throw out, and I ask for a response from Board, is whether they would proceed according to Mr. Dash's request -- he is a petitioner to counsel -- or in light of this correspondence that they feel a continuance would be in order? Jim, your thoughts?

And I don't mean to color the opposition's petition here, Mr. Dash, you know, it's just I want to make sure that the Board is fully aware. And I don't want to go through this whole long thing and then wind up having it continued because of this, that's all.

ADAM DASH: Well, I understand. I just wanted to

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: You know?

ADAM DASH: -- note for the record that I did -- after that first e-mail was sent earlier this morning, I did speak with Attorney Mitchell. I then spoke with him again after that second e-mail, of which he told me he was unaware it was being sent.

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1
              So I have had conversations with Mr. Mitchell off
2
    and on --
 3
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay.
 4
              ADAM DASH: -- for a while now.
 5
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right.
              ADAM DASH: And including several times today
 6
7
    trying to resolve this matter with Mr. Tagiuri. And it's
8
    not going to get resolved. We can put it off two weeks;
9
    it's not going to change anything. So I'm just trying to be
10
    efficient.
11
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. All right, fine.
12
    Monteverde, your thoughts on this?
13
               JIM MONTEVERDE: -- I was unmuted. I would
14
    support a continuance.
15
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Matina?
16
              MATINA WILLIAMS: I have no objection to a
17
    continuance.
18
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. Andrea Hickey?
19
              ANDREA HICKEY: Yes. I would support a
    continuance as well. They're only requesting two weeks at
20
21
    that time. Hopefully, they can have a bit more dialogue if
22
    it doesn't result in anything. I don't think two weeks
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1
    would -- I support the --
2
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay.
 3
              ROBERT TAGIURI: Thank you.
 4
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura?
 5
              ROBERT TAGIURI: May I say something?
 6
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Well, wait a minute. Let me --
              LAURA WERNICK: No, I would -- I would be in
7
8
     support of a continuance.
9
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. I'm sorry, who spoke up?
10
    Was it Adam, or -- did you speak up, or --
11
              ADAM DASH: No, that wasn't me.
12
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Oh. All right. So anyhow,
13
    Adam, I --
14
              ROBERT TAGIURI: Excuse me --
15
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- throw this out is I think
16
    with the issues raised, and the abutters have raised some
17
    issues that I think that a continuance would probably be in
18
    order.
19
               ADAM DASH: Well, certainly obviously that's the
    Board's prerogative if you like. I mean, we -- I think if
20
21
    we went through all of this, I mean, we're talking about a
22
    0.03 FAR variance. This is a very, very, very small thing.
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And there are other dormers on these buildings.

I got to say is completely disagree with the facts that Mr. Tagiuri put out. They sound good when you read the letter, but I think when you --

ROBERT TAGIURI: But --

ADAM DASH: -- see the context, I think you'll understand what we're doing here. But obviously I can't make the Board take this tonight. So it's certainly up to you.

Like, I can just tell you having gone back and forth with Attorney Mitchell as recently as this afternoon, I -- it just seems like we're not -- it would be a benefit continuance for the sake of having this same conversation in two weeks.

It's fine, but I don't -- see, my clients here,

Kiersten Kerby-Patel one of them -- has her hand up. I

don't know, one of the applicants and owners of the

property. Her husband, I guess, Feanil Patel, is here, but

he wasn't promoted. He probably -- shortly -- I don't know,

Kiersten, is there anything you wanted to add before we go

forward?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. The thing is, I

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1
     don't want to get into the merits of it.
 2
               JIM MONTEVERDE: Right.
 3
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: And -- because then we'd have
 4
     to reassemble the same -- so once I start taking testimony,
     then we're into the merits of the case. So I would just
 5
     assume hold on from that.
 6
 7
               The next available date would be April 13. So
 8
     just -- Mr. Dash, are you available on the thirteenth?
 9
               ADAM DASH: That's a good question, Mr. Chair.
                                                                Ι
10
     can check. I would also --
11
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: It's either --
               ADAM DASH: Yeah.
12
13
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- the thirteenth or the
14
     twenty-seventh of April.
15
               ADAM DASH: No, I'm available on the thirteenth.
16
     I would note that if you may recall at the last meeting,
17
     that there was a companion case to this that the Board
18
     continued until March 23, because it would be mooted by this
19
     case. So if we bump the thirteenth, we're now out of order
20
     of the cases.
21
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: I'm sorry.
22
               ADAM DASH: Aside from the fact that this has been
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1
    going on for a long time already.
2
              ROBERT TAGIURI: Not on our end. Not your end,
 3
    but on our end.
 4
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah.
               ANDREA HICKEY: Perhaps we switch the dates of
 5
     those cases and take this case on the earlier date, to
 6
     switch the dates, Mr. Chair?
7
8
              ADAM DASH: If those are our choices, I think that
    would be -- that would be better.
9
10
              ANDREA HICKEY: Right. I mean, the continuance
11
     request was for two weeks. Now sort of making the
12
    petitioners wait really a month and a half was not what I
13
    has contemplated when I was in support of the continuance.
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. On the ninth we have --
14
15
    March 9, we have eight, nine, 10, 11 -- we have 12 cases
16
     that night. On 03/13, we have eight, nine, ten. This would
17
    be the eleventh.
18
               ANDREA HICKEY: Mr. Dash, on what night is the
19
     companion case already scheduled?
20
              ADAM DASH: March 23.
21
              ANDREA HICKEY: So, Mr. Chair, could we sort of
22
    switch the Sparks Street cases and put tonight's case on for
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1
     the twenty-third?
2
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: We could.
 3
              ANDREA HICKEY: And then the one on for the
     twenty-third onto the thirteenth?
 4
 5
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: We could do that. We can't --
 6
    no, the -- we can't -- we can put another 65 Sparks Street
7
     on the twenty-third. So March 23, we already have a 65
8
    Sparks Street case.
9
              ANDREA HICKEY: Right. And -- and we could add
10
    this case on it too at 65 Sparks Street.
11
               ADAM DASH: Yeah, Mr. Chair, we would just need
12
     this case, this tonight's case heard first. Because the --
13
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Right.
14
              ADAM DASH: -- other one would be mooted, and we
15
    would just --
16
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Right. So one of -- one of
17
     them will go away, anyhow.
18
              ADAM DASH: Right. Right.
19
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: So Andrea, does that sound
     okay?
20
21
              ANDREA HICKEY: That sounds better. Yes.
22
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay.
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1
               ANDREA HICKEY: Again, I'd love to be able to give
2
     the petitioners the actual two weeks that's requested, but
 3
    we can't really pack the schedule any more than it already
 4
     is. So --
 5
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah.
 6
               ANDREA HICKEY: -- thank you, Mr. Chair.
7
    would satisfy me.
8
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. Let me make a
9
    motion, then, to continue this matter to March 23, 2023 at
10
     6:00 p.m. on the condition that there be -- well, we have a
11
     waiver already in the file, do we?
12
               ADAM DASH: You have one on the --
13
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: We do not.
14
              ADAM DASH: -- companion case, Mr. Chair.
15
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, but I would ask that you
16
     sign a waiver for this particular case, also, Mr. Dash, if
17
    you would and --
18
               ADAM DASH: We can -- yeah, we can do that, yeah.
19
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah. Sign it, get it back to
    Maria.
20
21
               ADAM DASH: Yes.
22
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Have it in by at least a week
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1 from today. So on the condition that the petitioner change the 2 3 posting sign to reflect the new date of March 23, 2023 and 4 the time of 6:00 p.m., have the signed waiver of statutory 5 requirement for a hearing and a decision to be rendered 6 thereof in the file by 5:00 p.m. a week from tonight, and 7 that any new submittals regarding this particular case --8 dimensional form, supporting statements, be in the file by 9 5:00 p.m. on the Monday prior to the March 23, 2023 hearing. 10 On the motion to continue, Jim Monteverde? 11 JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor. 12 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey? 13 ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor. 14 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick? 15 LAURA WERNICK: In favor. 16 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams? 17 MATINA WILLIAMS: In favor. 18 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: And Brendan Sullivan yes. 19 [All vote YES] 20 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: On the five affirmative votes, 21 this matter is continued to March 23, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.

22

thank you, Mr. Dash.

ADAM DASH: Thank you, Mr. Chair and members of the Board. BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Somehow, I lost my -- oh. Thank you very much. Andrea, that was a good point. Thank you. Can always count on you --ANDREA HICKEY: Thank you, Mr. Chair. BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- to do the right thing. Keep me on the straight and narrow.

1 2 (7:30 p.m.)3 Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey, 4 Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams BRENDAN SULLIVAN: The Board will now hear Case 5 6 No. 206365 -- 18 Pleasant Street. Is there anybody in --7 MATINA WILLIAMS: Yeah. 8 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: We are in continued -- we are 9 in receipt of a letter to -- addressed to Maria Pacheco 10 dated February 7, 2023. 11 "This office continues to represent The Rossmore LLC and Boston Residential LLC with regard to the above-12 referenced Board of Zoning Appeal Case No. 2066365. 13 14 "The project currently pending at 18 Pleasant 15 Street, with an upcoming schedule date of February 23. 16 petitioner respectfully requests a continuance from this BZA 17 hearing date of February 23, in order to have additional 18 time to provide an updated presentation and information to 19 the Central Square Advisory Committee regarding the project, 20 which is next scheduled to meet on March 1, as they did not 21 have any meeting in February. 22 "As this is the next CSAC meeting is scheduled for after the project's initial BZA hearing, we require a continuance in order to accommodate the same.

"As a result, the petitioner hereby respectfully requests a continuance from this date, with a request for a new continuation, continued hearing date of March 9 if available, in order to provide the petitioner sufficient time to meet with the CSAC."

March 9 is -- is booked. I'm going to say March 23, which is 18 Pleasant Street, as a case not heard. Let me make a motion, then, to continue this matter to March 23, 2023 at 6:00 p.m. on the condition that the petitioner change the posting sign to reflect the new date of March 23, 2023 and the new time of 6:00 p.m.

Any new submittals that are not in the file tonight currently regarding drawings, supporting statements, dimensional form be in the file by 5:00 p.m. on the Monday prior to the March 23, 2023 hearing. Waiver of the statutory requirement has been signed, so that is not necessary.

On the motion, then, to continue this matter to March 23, Jim Monteverde?

JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor of the continuance.

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1
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?
              MATINA WILLIAMS: In favor of the continuance.
2
 3
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?
              ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor.
 4
 5
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
 6
              LAURA WERNICK: I'm in favor, just to let the
7
    Chair know I won't be here that evening, but this has not
8
    been heard. So I don't think that's a concern.
9
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: I'm sorry, there's a case --
10
              WENDY LEISERSON: I -- yeah.
11
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, it's a case not heard.
12
              LAURA WERNICK: I'm in favor, yes.
13
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Brendan Sullivan yes.
14
               [All vote YES]
15
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: On the five affirmative votes,
16
    this matter is continued until March 23, 2023. Now, this is
17
    the last one?
18
              LAURA WERNICK: Yeah, it's March 23.
19
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: I wonder if I didn't put it in
    the other file there? All right.
20
21
22
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1
2
     (7:34 p.m.)
 3
     Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey,
 4
     Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Next case we'll here is No.
 5
    207818 -- 60 Martin Street. Mr. Firouzbakht.
 6
7
               KELLY BOUCHER: Hi, I'm Kelly Boucher, an
8
     architect for the project. I'll be presenting for Mahmood
9
    Firouzbakht -- excuse me. The homeowner is here as well.
10
    can -- at any point.
11
               ANDREA HICKEY: Excuse me for one moment. Mr.
12
    Chair, I would just like to call to the attention of the
    people that I represented the seller of this property, I
13
    believe.
14
15
               I don't see any conflict of interest, but I'd be
16
    happy to recuse myself if the petitioner does feel in any
17
    way that there would be a conflict.
18
               MAHMOOD FIROUZBAKHT: Thank you for pointing that
    out, Counselor. I have no issue with that.
19
20
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. All right.
21
              ANDREA HICKEY: Mr. Chair, then with your
22
    permission, I'll continue to sit on this case.
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1 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes. Any member of the Board 2 feel that Ms. Hickey has any potential conflict? 3 JIM MONTEVERDE: No. BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Not hearing any. Good. 4 So we shall proceed then, and Ms. Hickey will be empaneled. 5 6 KELLY BOUCHER: Great. Is it me that shares the 7 screen, or do you share the screen? 8 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Kelly, yeah, which -- yep. 9 KELLY BOUCHER: Great. Thank you. A little bit 10 of context: 60 Martin Street is a two-family home located 11 on the corner of Martin and Wright Streets. It's located in a Res B zone. It's an existing nonconforming house for a 12 few reasons: For a front yard both on Wright Street and on 13 14 Martin Street, for GFA and for open space and lot area per 15 dwelling unit. It was, the lot over time in the 1960s was reduced 16 17 when they widened both Martin Street and Wright Street, and 18 that point made our lot slightly more nonconforming. 19 And then in 1988 there was a previous zoning application where the petitioner added a great big sort of 20 21 top hat on the house, a third-story mass that was a little 22 bit incongruous with the existing house, which you can see

from the photo.

What we're here for permission to request today is two things: One, we would like to relocate some of the existing, nonconforming GFA by removing two exterior covered porches, unenclosed -- one on Martin Street and one near the parking spaces, and taking some of that square footage and squaring off the four bays that are now on the house that sort of have 45-degree angles.

The house already is nonconforming for GFA. We're looking to remove more square feet than we're putting back. So by shuffling that around, we're actually creating a 20-square-foot reduction in the total GFA for the property, still nonconforming, but it's a little bit less nonconforming than it is currently.

And to other thing we're here to request is to add a second parking space along the Wright Street front yard. There is an existing parking space now. But we would like to provide one parking space for each house. Doing this requires that we remove that porch that's sort of yellow on that drawing.

The curb cut that's there now is actually the full width of both parking spaces. So that doesn't need to

change. And the added parking space sort of slightly adjusts our open space.

So if you could flip to the next slide, please?

Scroll down. Here's just our Assessor's map showing on the corner of Martin and Wright. You can see our driveway is in gray, already sort of where we're looking to locate it currently.

Can you flip to the next slide?

Here are our area diagrams -- just the existing area is across the top and the proposed area is down on the bottom. So no changes in the basement. A slight removal of those two porches, which are on the first floor, and then squaring off the base, both on the first floor and the second floor, and no changes to the third floor.

Can you scroll to the next slide?

Here you can see get existing configuration open space plan is on the left. That little yellow area is our existing paved parking.

And you can see right now there's that covered porch and a little step that pokes into this area. We're looking to remove that, and then that would become the second parking space for the second unit of the house and

leaving the existing parking space there now.

You can scroll to the next one.

Here are just closer diagrams of our floor area. So no changes to the basement, which is on the right-hand side. On the left, the yellow areas are the square footage that are being removed. And the pink is the square footage that we're looking to add.

Same -- same here. So there's the little bit of squaring of the base on the second floor as well, and no -- no zoning work related to the third floor at all.

So here our existing and proposed elevations.

Existing is across the top. And you can see that sort of the house has had a lot of incongruous additions over the years. It's got a very steep roof; it's got some angled bays with some band moulding. It's got various porches and scrolly columns and a balustrade.

And all of it is a little -- it's a little bit much. Sort of some of it doesn't match with each other. So our intent is to try to aesthetically clean up, simplify the fenestration.

Squaring the front bays will provide two separate doors for the property on Martin Street in the bottom right-

hand corner. You can see now you sort of have to find your way between the bays and under the porch and get in the house in a shared door, but we're looking to organize it so the three-story is one unit, they have their own door. And then the two-story is a second unit and has his own front door as well.

So here you can see what the bays will look like in the proposed scheme. And the other elevation on this drawing is for the front yard of Wright Street, where there's also another bay. So a hip roof, 45-degree angles. Again, we're looking to square those off.

You could flip the next slide as well.

Great. And here are just the other -- the other two elevations. So the bottom right is the elevation that's closest to the parking spaces. You can see in the upper one of there's the roofed area, there's a little bay with a gable roof that's not the same pitch as the main roof, sort of crushed adjacent to another bay.

And we're just trying to organize all those spaces. There's really no changes to the back elevation and all the things that are on the right-side elevation, which sort of feels like the back are pretty far towards the

1 street. 2 Can you flip to the next one? 3 And here are just some 3D renderings of what the 4 house looks like now up at the top, and what we are 5 proposing that that would look like after the renovations. 6 And some photos of what the house looks like, 7 looks like originally. So that's -- that's pretty much what 8 we're proposing to do. The GFA, just to remind everyone, is 9 a special permit. 10 It's nonconforming now, it will be a little less 11 nonconforming, but still nonconforming when we're done. And 12 the second parking space is via variance request, because it's located in the front yard. 13 14 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Thank you. Jim 15 Monteverde, any questions, comments at this time? 16 JIM MONTEVERDE: A comment: I'm really not a fan 17 of parking in the front yard. That's my comment. 18 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. 19 KELLY BOUCHER: Well, there --20 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea? 21 KELLY BOUCHER: -- there -- oh. I was going to 22 say there already is an existing parking spot in the front

yard.

And by getting another car in there, within its own curb cut, we're actually not affecting any of the street parking that's there now. And we would be taking away a street spot and providing a place where the homeowners could electrically charge their car --

JIM MONTEVERDE: Yep.

KELLY BOUCHER: -- which isn't something that they
would be able to do if they had to park on the street.

JIM MONTEVERDE: Mm-hm. Thank you.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey, any questions, comments at this time?

ANDREA HICKEY: Yes. If I could just ask the petitioner's representative to confirm with respect to open space, there's no net change. Is that accurate?

KELLY BOUCHER: There is a slight net change -- if we go back, I'm not sure if you have the dim form? There's a slight net change in the useable open space, but not the overall open space of the lot.

Because we're changing the front on just sort of right above there -- can you scroll a little bit down so we can see the whole floor plan? Oh, the other way, sorry.

1 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. 2 KELLY BOUCHER: The whole site plan for example? 3 Sorry. We are removing a little bit of the permeable, but 4 not any of the usable. 5 ANDREA HICKEY: And is that --6 KELLY BOUCHER: You practically can see on here in the existing there's that little bit of green that's not 7 8 quite 15 at the end of the parking space, and all of that 9 gets slightly reconfigured in our proposed option. 10 ANDREA HICKEY: All right. 11 KELLY BOUCHER: So right now, but to answer your 12 question, our usable existing open space is at 17.9 percent. Our proposed is at 17.8 percent, which is a 1 percent -- a 13 14 0.1 percent reduction. 15 ANDREA HICKEY: All right. And what is the best 16 plan in your presentation to illustrate how close the 17 proposed parking spaces will be to the structure? Is it the 18 plan that's up now, or is there a better plan to illustrate 19 that? 20 KELLY BOUCHER: It would probably that plan.

Right now, there's 19.1 feet between the side lot line and

the house. Two 8.5' parking structures is 17', so you would

21

22

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1
    be two feet off of the existing wall of the house, with the
2
    proposed parking spots if they were parked in a -- in a
 3
     configuring sized parking space.
 4
               ANDREA HICKEY: Yeah. I can say I don't love
 5
     that. One of my pet peeves is sort of parking too close to
 6
     the structure. I know Mr. Monteverde's comment was relative
     also to adding a second space. I'll withhold my final
7
8
    decision on that issue.
9
               But otherwise, I think you've made a nice
10
    presentation here very easy to understand, and your graphics
11
    were great. So thank you.
12
               KELLY BOUCHER: Thanks.
13
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick, any questions,
14
    comments at this time?
15
               [Pause]
16
               Laura, you're on mute.
17
               LAURA WERNICK: Yeah, sorry.
18
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: There you go.
19
               LAURA WERNICK: I would just echo Andrea's concern
20
     about parking right up against the house. And -- yeah,
21
    that's all for now.
22
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Matina, any comments,
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questions at this time?

MATINA WILLIAMS: No. Just one -- one question that I did have. I notice that you mentioned that they were going to do an electric vehicle. Is that happening now or, like, are they looking for that for the future for the parking?

ANDREA HICKEY: Mahmood, who is in the process of renovating this house now, is going to wire these parking spots for electric upgrades, if the homeowner chooses to do so. Right, Mahmood?

MAHMOOD FIROUZBAKHT: That's correct. We typically --

MATINA WILLIAMS: Oh, so --

MAHMOOD FIROUZBAKHT: -- will provide the outlets next to the parking area, and then the homeowners, depending on what kind of car, electric car, you know, they have, that will require a specific kind of charger. But they'll come sort of prewired for EV charging, which is something that we're basically doing in all of the homes that we're renovating now.

MATINA WILLIAMS: Okay. So there's no -- nobody requesting it, it's just something you want to provide?

1 MAHMOOD FIROUZBAKHT: Just sort of assuming that 2 that's where we're headed in the future and if I -- if there 3 was a universal charger that all cars would comply with or sort of would be compatible with --4 5 MATINA WILLIAMS: Right. 6 MAHMOOD FIROUZBAKHT: We would install it on the system. You know, we don't know if someone's going to have 7 8 a, you know, Ford electric or Tesla or, you know, or any of the other models. 9 10 MATINA WILLIAMS: Okay. BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right, let me open it --11 12 MATINA WILLIAMS: Thank you. 13 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- let me open it to public 14 Any member of the public who wish to speak should comment. 15 now click the button that says, "Participants," and then 16 click the button that says, "Raise hand." 17 If you are calling in by phone, you can raise your 18 hand by pressing *9 and unmute or mute by pressing *6, and 19 you'll have up to three minutes in which to comment. 20 STEPHEN NATOLA: Pattie Heyman? 21 PATTIE HEYMAN: Yes. Hi, everybody. I -- I live 22 next door to this house on Martin Street. And I've lived

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1
    there for 31 years. And --
 2
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: And I'm sorry, if you could
 3
    just identify yourself for the record. Name, please?
 4
               PATTIE HEYMAN: Oh, yes. Pattie Heyman -- H-e-y-
 5
    m-a-n.
 6
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yep.
 7
               PATTIE HEYMAN: Want me to say anything now?
 8
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, yeah, sure.
 9
              PATTIE HEYMAN: Oh, okay, sure. Well, I was just
10
    commenting. By the way, Jim, do we know each other?
11
               JIM MONTEVERDE: We do.
12
              PATTIE HEYMAN: Jim Monteverde?
13
              JIM MONTEVERDE: We do. Small world.
              PATTIE HEYMAN: Yes! How are you?
14
15
              JIM MONTEVERDE: Okay.
16
              PATTIE HEYMAN: Anyway, I think it was Jim who
17
    described that parking area as the front of the house? Is
18
     that right?
19
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Well, it's in the front yard
20
    setback. There are two front yard setback for zoning
21
    purposes on this house.
22
              PATTIE HEYMAN: Oh, okay, okay. Because I've
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1
     lived -- I was going to say I've lived here 31 years, and I
 2
     always considered that the side of the house.
 3
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Correct.
 4
               PATTIE HEYMAN: So I didn't know that that was
 5
     called --
 6
               [Noise]
 7
               PATTIE HEYMAN: I always thought the front of the
 8
     house was Martin Street, and the side of the house was
 9
     Wright Street. That was my only comment.
10
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Thank you.
11
               STEPHEN NATOLA: Ryan Will?
12
               RYAN WILL: Hello. This is Ryan Will, 300
13
     Franklin Street. I just wanted to put in my support for
14
     this project. I think the changes look -- look very nice
15
     and I like the curb cut, already accommodating two cars.
16
     It's going to alleviate one -- one spot from somebody
17
     parking on the street, plus -- you know, with the ready-to-
18
     be charged or the prewired for the electric cars, I think is
19
     helpful in our city, where we want it to be green.
20
               That's all for me.
21
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you.
22
               STEPHEN NATOLA: 11 Wright?
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1
               CHRISTINE HATHAWAY: Hello. This is Christine
2
     Hathaway. I'm speaking for my husband, John Gazley, and
 3
    myself. We live right next door to this building.
               And we are both in very much favor of the plans.
 4
 5
     The developer has been nothing but transparent with the
    neighborhood.
 6
7
               And the parking we actually really do appreciate.
    And when people say, "The front yard" there's a space there
8
9
     right now. And it's -- to me I consider it a driveway spot.
10
     It's not really a -- like a yard per se.
11
               But whatever language we use, I think it's a
12
     really benefit. It does provide parking off-street, which
13
     is a huge benefit personally for me. We live right next
     door, and we have a driveway and a garage. And it's very
14
15
    nice to have off-street parking.
16
               So we're in favor of this. And I think it's
17
    beautiful so far. So thank you very much.
18
               JIM MONTEVERDE: Thank you.
19
               UNIDENTIFIED: Wow. Good thing you had your
20
     spokesperson.
               STEPHEN NATOLA: Warren Goldfarb?
21
22
               UNIDENTIFIED: Wait. Was your picture up there,
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1 John? 2 UNIDENTIFIED: John's picture. 3 UNIDENTIFIED: Yeah. You should have gotten a 4 photo. 5 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Warren? 6 WARREN GOLDFARB: Sorry. I simply agree with the 7 comments of the other neighbors. I live a couple of houses 8 away on Gray Street. And I think they're quite right. I think the new parking does not read as a front yard; it 9 10 reads as a side yard. And it's to the benefit of the 11 neighborhood that we have an extra parking space. And basically the architectural plan is -- I've 12 13 looked at this house for 40 years I've lived here. And 14 although I'll regret some of these weird excrescences being 15 removed, I think probably it's for the better. 16 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Thank you. Seems to be 17 the end of the -- people calling in. There is 18 correspondence of Sara Kimmel. 19 "I'm writing to express my support in favor of the special permit, listed by Mahmood Firouzbakht. Has kindly 20 shared his plans with us and our neighbors, and these 21 22 changes will be good for our neighborhood, 14 Wright

Street."

There is correspondence from David Lilley.

"As an abutter to the project, we are writing to support the zoning application by the owner. We believe this proposal -- proposed changes to the exterior of the building improve the overall appearance.

"The creation of an additional parking space will benefit not only the residents of these homes, but also benefit the surrounding neighborhood. Parking in this neighborhood is quite limited, and having an additional offstreet parking space will alleviate the demand for on-street parking.

"We believe the overall design and parking area will fit in with the character of the neighborhood, and we will -- and will be a vast improvement over the prior condition of the property."

Alan Savenor:

"As abutter to the project, we are writing in support of the zoning application. We met with the owner last week and reviewed the plans. We believe the proposed changes to the exterior of the building will improve the overall appearance.

1 "In addition, the creation of an additional 2 parking space will benefit not only the residents of these 3 homes but will also benefit the surrounding neighbors. 4 Parking it this neighborhood is quite limited." And that is the sum and substance of 5 6 correspondence. I will close the public comment part. 7 Kelly, anything else to add? 8 KELLY BOUCHER: No. I think that's it. 9 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Mahmood, anything to 10 There were some comments expressed by members of the 11 Board if you wish to chime in at all or address them? 12 MAHMOOD FIROUZBAKHT: Well, I think in the ideal world, we would have a condition where we could provide for 13 conforming parking spaces and create more of a buffer here 14 15 just given some of the limitations of his lot. 16 We're sort of -- we're working with what we have, 17 and the existing driveway is probably the most logical 18 location on this property to provide for an additional 19 space. 20 And we would be doing so elegantly. This would be 21 paved, in all likelihood, with city brick pavers. We would 22 provide for landscaping and lighting, and also plantings

around the parking area to sort of soften, you know, that —
the hardscape and notwithstanding the closeness of the space
to the house, we would take steps to mitigate sort of, you
know, that as much as possible.

You know, as Kelly noted, in the 1960s, there was a taking by the city to widen both Martin Street and Wright Street.

And so, on both sides, the city took approximately five feet of the lot, which resulted in I think an almost 700 square feet reduction of the lot size, and also reduced the front yard -- front yard setback on both sides.

And I was just doing the rough math. You know, if we were to go back and add that five feet in, I think we could almost and probably would be able to create conforming parking spaces with that five feet that was sort of removed as part of that taking.

And so, so here we are. We are really trying to do the best that we can, given the existing conditions. And so, you know, I think Kelly's done a wonderful job of accomplishing that.

And as you've heard, I think most neighbors would appreciate having this additional off-street parking space,

because this parking in this neighborhood is quite tight.

But happy to answer any other questions.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Thank you. Let me turn it over to the Board, and you're then, for discussions or potential vote. I guess -- let me start off, I visited this actually probably three or four times.

And I've come away that I would support the proposal that is before us. The parking in that area for someone who has worked in the area trying to find a parking during the day is challenging. Our streets are somewhat narrower around there. This type of time of the year, inclement weather adds to that.

During the other times of the years, during -- oh, street sweeping days and everybody's scurrying around trying to get off the streets and find a spot, again, is another challenge. And there is a parking space there already.

Curb cut is already being created.

And I think that it is, as some of the correspondence has pointed out, that it would be beneficial to the neighborhood to have another car off the street and onto the lot. And yes, it's a little bit tight, but I would support it.

The -- I share the concern of parking too close to the structure, and that's something that I think the people are going to wind up doing anyhow, especially if they're going to have a charging station there. I think that it's going to be close proximity to the structure anyhow.

So I would support the proposal that in front of us to trim back some of the appendages that are on the structure, and also by adding a parking space -- albeit that vicinity, front yard setback.

And I share Jim and Andrea's concerns -- and even Matina had mentioned it -- that, you know, we don't like really to park in the front yards, but I think under the circumstances it's probably somewhat warranted. So that's my viewpoint on this.

Jim Monteverde, your continued thoughts and guidance?

 $\,$ JIM MONTEVERDE: No, I had the same comments as I did originally.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Andrea, any -- any thoughts here?

ANDREA HICKEY: Well, it was helpful for me to hear from the neighbors and their sort of unanimous support

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1
     for the second parking space. So that tips the scales a
     little bit for me, and I can support what's being requested
 2
    here. Thank you, Mr. Chair.
 3
               JIM MONTEVERDE: Thank you. Laura Wernick?
 4
 5
               LAURA WERNICK: Yeah, I have no comments. I can
 6
     support this.
 7
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Matina Williams?
 8
              MATINA WILLIAMS: Yes. I agree with Andrea. I
 9
     can support this with the neighbors weighing in. It was
    very helpful.
10
11
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Great. All right, thank you,
12
    Matina. All right. Let me -- there are two forms of
13
     relief. One is the parking and that's a variance. Let me
14
    make a motion, then, to grant the request of the deviation
15
     from the parking requirement. And the Board accepts the
16
    plan as presented.
17
              And I will make the motion, then, to grant the
18
     relief requests as per the plan submitted, which is
     entitled, "60 Martin Street, ABA design" dated 01/24/23,
19
20
     initialed by the Chair.
               The Board finds that a literal enforcement of the
21
22
    provisions of the ordinance would involve a substantial
```

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hardship to the petitioner.

The Board finds that the property is located in a neighborhood which has huge demand for parking, limited space, and as such -- and I will incorporate by reference comments by the abutting neighborhoods that the addition of an off-street parking space would be welcomed by and an asset to the neighborhood.

The Board finds that the hardship is directly located to the size and location of the building on the lot, which creates a tight area, and in order to be able to park a second car, and that the lot is encumbered by the existing ordinance regarding the dimension -- front yard dimension for a parking space.

That the addition off charging stations, which would be an asset to the community, further reduces the constraints and the -- imposed by the size of the parking space that is available.

The Board finds that desirable relief may be granted without substantial detriment to the public good -- in fact, I would incorporate testimony from abutters that the public good will actually be served by the addition of this parking space and taking an additional car off the

1 road.

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And that desirable relief may be granted without substantial detriment to the public good, or nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of this ordinance to allow homeowners to locate vehicles off the street and onto the property, and also in close proximity to charging stations for electric vehicles.

On the motion, then, to grant the variance, Andrea Hickey?

ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?

LAURA WERNICK: Yes, in favor.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?

MATINA WILLIAMS: Yes, in favor.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Jim Monteverde?

JIM MONTEVERDE: Not in favor.

17 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Brendan Sullivan yes.

[FOUR vote YES, ONE votes NO]

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: On the four affirmative votes, one against, the variance is granted.

Now, there is a special permit request, and that is for some alterations to a nonconforming structure. And

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     you're citing protection under 8.22d?
 2
               KELLY BOUCHER: Yes.
 3
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. Let me pull that
 4
     up.
 5
               Let me make a motion, then, to grant the special
 6
    permit as per the plans submitted, initialed by the Chair,
     dated 01/24/23 entitled, "60 Martin Street by KDA
7
8
    Architecture."
               The Board finds that it may grant a special permit
 9
10
     for the alteration or enlargement of a preexisting
     dimensionally nonconforming, detached single-family dwelling
11
     or two-family dwelling not otherwise permitted in 8.22.1
12
     above, but not the alteration or enlargement of a
13
    preexisting, nonconforming use, provided there is no change
14
15
     in use, and that any enlargement or alteration of such
16
    preexisting, nonconforming, detached single-family dwelling
17
     or two-family dwelling may only increase a preexisting,
     dimensional nonconformity, but does not create a new
18
     dimensional nonconformity.
19
20
               In order to grant the special permit, the Board of
     Zoning Appeal is required to find -- and does find -- that
21
22
    the alteration or enlargement shall not be substantially
```

more detrimental than the existing nonconforming structure to the neighborhood.

And that the alteration or enlargement satisfies the criteria in 10.43.

Under 10.43, the Board makes the following findings: That it appears that the requirements of the ordinance can be met. Traffic generated, or patterns of access or egress would not cause congestion, hazard, or substantial change in the established neighborhood character.

The Board finds that continued operation of or development of adjacent uses, as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance, would not be adversely affected by the nature of the proposed use.

The Board finds that there would not be any nuisance or hazard created to the detriment of the health, safety and/or welfare of the occupants of the proposed use, or to the citizens of the city.

And the Board finds that the proposed use would not impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district, or otherwise derogate from the intent and purpose of the ordinance to allow property owners to adjust, alter

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1
     their structure to make the structure more energy-efficient,
2
    and also more livable in today's norms.
 3
               On the motion, then, to grant the special permit
 4
    as per the application, Andrea Hickey?
 5
               ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
 6
               LAURA WERNICK: Yes, in favor.
7
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?
8
9
              MATINA WILLIAMS: Yes, in favor.
10
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Jim Monteverde?
11
               JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor.
12
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Brendan Sullivan yes.
13
               [All vote YES]
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Five affirmative votes; the
14
15
     special permit is granted.
16
               COLLECTIVE: Thank you.
17
              MAHMOOD FIROUZBAKHT: Thank you, Mr. Chair --
18
              KELLY BOUCHER: Thank you.
19
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN:
                                  Okay.
20
              MAHMOOD FIROUZBAKHT: -- members of the Board.
21
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you. I'm just going to
22
    skip a little bit here and take it out of order.
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 2
     (8:09 p.m.)
 3
     Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey,
     Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams
 4
 5
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: The next case I'm going to call
     will be 231-235 Third Street. That's 208873. That would be
 6
 7
     -- Mr. Anderson, are you still on the line?
 8
               DAN ANDERSON: Hello, Mr. Sullivan. I am here.
 9
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Let me -- I think we can
10
     dispose of this very quickly, and then I don't need to have
11
     you hanging around.
12
               DAN ANDERSON: I appreciate it. It's always
13
     interesting and engaging to hear you guys. So not a
     hardship here.
14
15
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. So let me call the case
16
     then. The Board will now hear Case No. 208873 -- 231-235
17
     Third Street. So you are requesting a continuance?
18
               DAN ANDERSON: Yes, sir. So Dan Anderson, a
19
     Partner at Anderson Porter Design. So on request from my
20
     clients to have time to further engage the neighborhood, we
21
     would like to request a continuance.
22
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. Any -- and it's a
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1
     case not heard? We're into April 13? I'm sorry, could I
2
    have that sheet? Either April -- or April 27?
               DAN ANDERSON: Is it a choice between the two?
 4
    Because I'll take the thirteenth if it's available.
 5
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: I'm sorry? Yeah, so we have
 6
     four and three. Yeah. Okay. And that one of them is going
7
     to go away anyhow, so -- I know that one's going away.
     right, sorry.
8
9
               April -- April 13, Dan?
10
               DAN ANDERSON: That would be outstanding. Thank
11
     you.
12
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Let me make a motion,
     then, to continue this matter to April 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
13
14
     on the condition that you sign a waiver to the statutory
15
     requirement for a hearing and a decision to be rendered
16
     thereof. That such waiver should be in the file by 5:00
17
    p.m. or one week from tonight.
18
               That any new submittals be in the file -- plans,
19
     dimensional forms, supporting statements, by 5:00 p.m. on
20
     the Monday prior to the April 13 hearing.
21
               And that you change the posting sign to reflect
22
    the new date of April 13, 2023 and the new time of 6:00 p.m.
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1
               On the motion, then, to continue this matter, Jim
 2
     Monteverde?
               JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor of the continuance.
 3
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?
 4
 5
               ANDREA HICKEY: Mr. Chair, I'm going to abstain.
     But I don't think you need me anyway in order for the
 6
 7
     continuance to carry.
 8
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Great. Laura Wernick?
               LAURA WERNICK: In favor.
 9
10
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?
11
               MATINA WILLIAMS: In favor.
12
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Brendan Sullivan yes.
13
               [FOUR vote YES, ONE abstains]
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: On the four affirmative votes,
14
15
     this matter is continued to April 13, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.
16
               DAN ANDERSON: Thank you very much. Have a good
17
     evening.
18
19
20
21
22
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1
 2
     (8:12 p.m.)
 3
     Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey,
     Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams
 4
 5
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. Returning now to
 6
     the regular agenda, Case No. 208300 -- 65 Banks Street.
 7
               [Pause]
 8
               65 Banks?
 9
               [Pause]
10
               RABBI HIRSCHY ZARCHI: Hello?
11
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes. Rabbi Zarchi?
12
               RABBI HIRSCHY ZARCHI: Yeah, hi. Good evening,
    Mr. Chair --
13
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, just introduce yourself
14
15
     for the record.
16
               RABBI HIRSCHY ZARCHI: Sure. It's -- I'm Rabbi
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     Hirschy Zarchi. Some people -- known to many as Rabbi
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     Hirschy. I'm here with my wife Elkie.
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               We come before you, Mr. Chairman, and the
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    Committee this evening on your suggestion while we convened
     last time on a discussion of granting the permanent change
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    of use for 65 Banks Street to serve the permanent Cambridge
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Preschool of the Arts community that has been offering the - the educational opportunities for our families in our
neighborhood for the last several years.

My wife, Elkie, who's the Head of School, is here to answer any questions, along with many members of the community whom -- who are available and eager to speak if necessary.

But what we understood from you last time and from the long discussions we've had, this was a technicality that needed a separate scheduled hearing, because it -- it wasn't advertised as such at the time.

But we were thrilled to receive wonderful and enthusiastic support from Mr. Chairman and the Committee last meeting. So, you know, hopefully we can achieve that this evening.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. I think in your pleadings you basically have said that even though you are on a time -- we gave you a time that it would expire, August 31, 2024, and that according to your supporting statements, you are encumbered by that, because it somewhat prevents some of the people who use the day care, long-term planning.

And I guess also that it also inhibits some of

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     your long-term planning, financial -- also your ability to
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     know, I guess, where the structure is going or what your
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     future needs would be with that August 31 date hanging over
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    your head.
               Is that sort of a brief summation of where we're
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 6
    at?
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               DAN ANDERSON: Certainly.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah. Okay. Let me open it up
     to questions from members of the Board. Jim Monteverde, any
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     questions you have at this time?
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               JIM MONTEVERDE: No. I was just curious if there
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    had been any neighborhood input?
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Well, there is one. There's
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     one letter that came in today from an abutter who had spoken
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     the last time we met. And I have not had a chance to read
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     it, because it just -- it just came to my attention. So I
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    will read it into the record anyhow.
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               DAN ANDERSON: Okay.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: So -- during public comment,
    but -- or maybe I should read it now, and that will help?
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    Why don't I do that? I'm going to take this a little out of
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    turn. This is Doris Jurisson and Reed Alexander, a
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correspondence that came in February 23 at 10:43.

"To Maria Pacheco: I do not believe I will be able to attend the meeting this evening. I would appreciate if someone read this letter on our behalf. We have lived at 22 Bank Street for 23 years and walked our daughter Garden Nursery School in Harvard Square, so understanding the value and need of local preschools.

"This is the second letter that we have written on this matter, and we have attached the original note, which I was not clear that the Zoning Board had received a copy at the time.

"The core of our objection to the location of the preschool at 65 Banks Street is the safety of the children during drop-off and pickup, the congestion on the street and the impact to the neighbors.

"Since the last meeting, we have not observed any improvement to traffic or safety issues. There are Harvard buses, delivery vehicles for a neighborhood store, FedEx, Amazon, Uber and Lyft vehicles, to name a few, going up the road as well as the neighborhood traffic.

"Additionally, it is an emergency route to Peabody
Terrace. So fire trucks and emergency vehicles go down the

wrong way on Banks Street.

"Adding the nursery school traffic with 65 children that need to be dropped off and picked up on a postage stamp-sized lot without any infrastructure to manage, support this activity creates a burden to the neighborhood.

"This property was not the first choice of the POTA School. And the temporary variance was based on a more appropriate location imminently becoming available.

Unfortunately, that did not work out. But that should not mean that the temporary variance is granted permanence.

"The location does not provide fundamental traffic safety to the children, and if Harvard would make a similar proposal for a preschool, I am sure they would be required to meet basic traffic safety standards.

"Lubavitch of Cambridge, Inc., parking spots are full, so neither available drop-off, nor safe if they were available, given every car would need to drive in and back out during the busiest times.

"The Lubavitch of Cambridge, Inc. does own three other properties on the east side of Banks Street that abut each other, providing an expansive frontage area.

"The middle structure at 48 Banks is set back from the street, creating the potential to design a safe, off-street area for dropping off and picking up children. This area could be designed to reduce the impact to throughtraffic and neighbors, as well as keep traffic out of the bike lane.

"While the school is providing a valuable service, it is also an institution sharing resources with its neighbor, and at the time of the day the neighborhood is overwhelmed.

"In the previous meeting, we heard promises for addressing this situation, but these issues have not been addressed, and the current traffic safety issue should be resolved and documented before a permanent variance is granted.

"We would like to see the Lubavitch of Cambridge,
Inc. work with the Zoning Board and neighborhood to come up
with a reasonable alternative that supports their mission,
addresses the safety of the children, and reduces
neighborhood impact.

"We don't think it's fair to allow a situation where some neighbors are so concerned about the children's

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     safety, they are afraid to use their cars during the drop-
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     off and pickup hours.
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               "Thank you, Doris Jurisson and Reed Alexander."
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               That is the correspondence that we have received.
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     So, Jim, digesting that, any thoughts or comments?
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               JIM MONTEVERDE: No. That's what I was curious
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     about. Thank you.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. Andrea Hickey, any
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     comments, thoughts?
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               ANDREA HICKEY: Yeah, Mr. Chair, I just have a
    procedural or a technical question. If we were to deny the
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     request tonight, would that prevent the petitioners from
     coming back for two years, given that their current approval
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     expires on 08/21/24?
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               I'm just, like, wondering how our decision tonight
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     impacts that deadline that already exists?
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN:
                                  This is --
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               ANDREA HICKEY: If I'm not asking my question the
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     right way.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- a request basically to do
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    away with the August 31, 2024 hearing. If we were to deny
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    this, my interpretation is that they would be precluded from
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     coming back for two years, because it would be an
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     unfavorable action regarding their request.
               ANDREA HICKEY: Right. That's my thought exactly.
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    And I don't know whether the petitioner has sort of
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     contemplated that.
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               Perhaps he might like to reply as to at least our
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     interpretation that a decision tonight, especially an
8
    unfavorable one, would mean you'd have to wait two years to
    come back.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: It would have to come back or -
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     - and again, this is where maybe the Law Department would
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    have an -- I did not anticipate that scenario.
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               But if we were to deny the request to do away with
     the original condition, then the condition stays in place
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15
    until August 31, 2024. Then the question is, do they come
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    back and then extend that?
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               ANDREA HICKEY: Or can -- my, my question --
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: So it's a little bit of a
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     Catch-22, because --
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               ANDREA HICKEY: Right.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- If we were to deny the
22
     request now, they can still operate until August 31, 2024.
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1 ANDREA HICKEY: Right.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Prior to that expiration date, they potentially could come back and seek an extension of that date.

ANDREA HICKEY: Right.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Possibly not a doing away with it totally.

ANDREA HICKEY: Right. So if an extension versus eliminating it is considered a substantially different petition, then I agree with you.

So I'd like to put it back to the petitioner to ask have you sort of considered the ramifications of what happens tonight and how that impacts the good through date, put it that way, that you have at present.

RABBI HIRSCHY ZARCHI: I'm not sure I understood fully understood, you know, what you're saying, but I will make two -- I should make two points here. But we're here today because this is what we were advised to do by the Committee and the Chairman of last hearing.

We can come immediately back and fix this issue, because of it was -- it was no, no reason at the time why this would not be granted its permanent status, considering

the very wide support and appreciation for this and its essential service to the entire community.

So that's why we're here today, because that's what we were advised to do by the Committee.

With regard to the timing, please understand that on August 8, we can't run a -- most people that enroll their children and most schools are built (sic) a full year in advance at a minimum is when enrollment happens.

So for example, enrollment for next year, at Preschool of the Arts on 65 Banks Street, has been essentially completed already now. That's --

ELKIE ZARCHI: So we were on an epidemic calendar. So we're fully enrolled already for September of 2023.

ANDREA HICKEY: Right. No, I understand why you would want to do away with the date. And I apologize for not being as articulate as I'd like to be about the issue that I -- the potential issue that I see.

Are there any of my colleagues that could perhaps help me and talk through the issue that I see with the date, if this petition is denied this evening?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: I think I'm starting to get into a little bit of an uncomfortable zone here and not

being exactly 100 percent sure that an unfavorable action tonight would preclude them from coming back with the same request that my reading of it would be that they could continue until August 24.

Prior to that, they could come back and ask for an extension to that, and we could set it for four years, five years, 10 years, whatever.

But what that does is it really pushes the calendar down to seriously affecting their operation. So what I'm uncomfortable about is I would feel better if I were to raise this scenario with the Law Department, and they gave me a legal interpretation that either I correct or that I may not be correct.

And because I think no matter what we decide here, if we decide unfavorable tonight, Rabbi, I think that it could have serious ramifications. And I just want to make sure that we are 100 percent correct.

ANDREA HICKEY: Right. That's -- that's my concern Mr. Chair. I don't know for sure either what an unfavorable decision tonight, what impact that would have on the dates certain of 08/21/24.

I mean, I suppose we could continue to discuss it,

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     and if it seems as if the Board is leaning toward an
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     approval, then perhaps that discussion would be moot, Mr.
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     Chair. But I defer to you on how you'd like to proceed.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. All right. All right,
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     so that we may be able to come back to this, Laura Wernick,
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    what are your thoughts --
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               LAURA WERNICK: Well, I was just --
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              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- on the request?
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              LAURA WERNICK: Yeah. We're proceeding with
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     discussion, right? We're not considering doing a
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     continuation of the hearing, is that correct? I mean we're
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     already, it's already open. We've already --
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              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: I'm sorry, I wasn't paying
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     attention, Laura. Sorry, sorry.
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              LAURA WERNICK: Okay, so --
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: What was that question again?
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              LAURA WERNICK: Okay, so we're still discussing
     the case itself, in addition to the -- the --
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              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: The --
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               LAURA WERNICK: -- potential of what happens if we
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     should deny it. I'm just curious to hear Rabbi Hirschy's
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    response to the letter, and if there are any potential --
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what he sees as issues that were raised about the issues that were raised in the letter.

RABBI HIRSCHY ZARCHI: Yeah, no, we're actually very eager to do that. And I'm going to turn it over to Elkie and if you'll invite the community to speak to it in terms of the, you know, I'm told that it is, is that's under those discussions of safety and other discussion.

The only thing I wanted to remind you is if you listen to the letter, it speaks of Amazon trucks, UPS trucks, Ubers. We have 18-wheelers parked in front of the school every day to drop off the liquor multiple times a day from the liquor store on the banks and coupled with across the street from the school there's a gut renovation going on. There's constantly construction vehicles.

And this is -- we don't deny that, but the point that this applies is that all this traffic is happening unrelated to the school. Most of the families who are enrolled in the school walk to school, it's a neighborhood school. And there's an amazing system in place.

But then I'll let Elkie -- Elkie had some other future parents who are here to speak to.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, Elkie, if you could just

identify yourselves, your name and the address, just for the record, for the transcripts.

ELKIE ZARCHI: So Elkie Zarchi. And I'm the Head of School. I will say that we live on Main Street too. So we've lived here for 25 years. And we have raised six children here, our oldest being 25 and our baby being 8.

So I agree that the traffic on Main Street is -you know, can be scary. But we have never, ever, run into
any incident where any of our hearts started being fast.

And I will tell you that we have a huge parking lot -- not huge, but relatively speaking for Cambridge, we have a nice parking lot in our West Cambridge location, and we have much scarier situations there. We've never had any scary, unsafe situation happen.

The children are young. They're -- they hold their parents' hands if they're crossing at the crosswalk. They hold our hands if they're crossing the crosswalk. They're in buggies, they're on roads. I mean, they -- they're -- I have never worried about their safety, and I worry about them, you know, 24/7.

I will also say that there have been a few incidents this year when a neighbor has come up to us and

said, 'Oh, the cars parking, you know, there's a car blocking my driveway."

And either Kathryn who's our Site Director and outside every single morning every morning in drop-off have run over to the car, and they have not been related to POTA. And I think, you know, we've become the easy, "Oh, it must be POTA."

But we're definitely not delivering there,
although I'm sure some of our parents and teachers would
love that. But we're not delivering there and the Amazon
and FedEx trucks will be there with or without us.

And as a mom, and as someone who's responsible for these 66 children, we would never let something unsafe happen for even a minute, and we would not be in denial about it.

So I think it's true there's traffic on Main Street, but in the same way that we were able to raise our six children safely, we have great systems in place. And the children at POTA are felt -- they're safe.

They're, you know, these are educated parents.

They've chosen our school for good reasons, with a lot of thought and with a lot of intention. And I don't think that

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they would continue to deliver their children to us if they didn't feel safe.

And lastly, the only thing I will say is that it's -- it may -- I don't remember how it came about. And it is true that perhaps we were first going to be on Main Street as a temporary solution.

But our other centers are also over capacity. And we have a huge waitlist for all four locations. And it's hard -- it's hard to turn people away when you know that they depend on you. They depend on you to be able to go to work, to provide for their families, and be able to live in Cambridge.

So we have huge waitlists in all four locations, and this didn't happen because one of our locations fell through. All of our locations are full, and have, you know, very long waitlists.

And obviously, you know, there are doctors in our school. There are students in our school, there are faculty members, there are scientists, there's everything -- artists. And we're just -- we're so blessed and feel so fortunate to be able at home for these children.

And it's brought, you know, we raised our children

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     on Main Street. And I keep telling you, we'll -- we've
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     always loved living here. But the joy and the sense of
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     community that POTA -- and this is not us, this is obviously
     reflective of our community.
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 5
               But the joy and the neighborhood feel, and the
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     family feel that it's brought to Main Street is so
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    magnificent, and Main Street is just so alive and vibrant --
8
     full of children's laughter and people, you know, standing
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     on the street corners just to catch up and say hello, it's
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     really heartwarming.
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               So I hope that the Board would understand that we
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    would never take safety lightly.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Good.
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               ELKIE ZARCHI: Honest people feel responsible for
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     others.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right.
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               LAURA WERNICK: Can I have a motion follow-up
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     question, Mr. Chair? Could I have a follow-up question?
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes. Is this Larua?
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               LAURA WERNICK: Yeah, there's -- I'm sorry, this
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     is Laura.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah.
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               LAURA WERNICK: Yes. Would it ever be appropriate
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     to have some kind of -- or would it be at all helpful in any
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    way even just to reduce neighbors' concerns to have a
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     crossing guard in the morning or afternoon to assist parents
     as they're bringing their children to and from school?
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               ELKIE ZARCHI: I mean, we would be open to that.
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     I don't -- I don't know if it's needed. Of course, we'd be
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    happy to have a crossing guard. But it's not -- children
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    aren't walking by themselves. The oldest child in our
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     school is 5. So every child --
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               LAURA WERNICK: No, I realize that. I realize
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     that. Thank you.
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               ELKIE ZARCHI: Yeah.
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              LAURA WERNICK: That answers my question.
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              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Thank you.
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              LAURA WERNICK: Thank you.
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              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams, any comments,
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     questions at this time?
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               MATINA WILLIAMS: No questions at this time.
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               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Jim, going back to you,
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    any thoughts?
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              JIM MONTEVERDE: No comments, no questions. Thank
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you.

JIM MONTEVERDE: Okay. Let me open it to public comment. Any member of the public who wishes to speak should now click the button that says, "Participants," and then click the button that says, "Raise hand."

If you are calling in by phone, you can raise your hand by pressing *9 and unmute or mute by pressing *6, and you'll have up to three minutes in which to comment.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Eliza Haviland?

ELIZA HAVILAND: Hi. Thank you very much for your time. I'm glad to be here, and I appreciate the concern of the counsel and the concern of our community.

I've lived in Cambridge for 14 years, and one of the things I love about Cambridge is the fact that it is a neighborhood community and people care about those around them. So it's heartwarming to hear that there are neighbors on Banks Street who care about the children, and who are glad to see that they are safe.

You know, I think that we have a very thoughtful community, and Elkie and the team at POTA have done a wonderful job of letting the community know -- the POTA community know that there's concern in their neighborhood.

And the extent that there was anything that was sort of worth being of note, I think there's been a huge response to that.

This morning for example, in the middle of a snowstorm and an ice storm when most people were not going to work or were not being in person, the teachers for our schools so that our children could still go and be educated still showed up.

And as I dropped my daughter off walking, because we walk to school every day regardless of weather, a car pulled in through the driveway at Elkie's house -- Elkie and Hirschy leave their driveway at their house for cars to pull in so they're not in the road -- and four teachers got out, all carpooling together.

And I know for a fact that those teachers don't live together. Some of them don't even live close to each other, but they're listening and they're responding. And it's a thoughtful community. And are taking the time to try to make a difference for the neighbors who are sort of feeling concerned.

If we really were thinking about concern for the street anyway, I would argue that the greatest sort of

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safety concern would be the fact that the decision was made at some point prior to put a one-way bike lane the wrong way down a one way street, so that the bikes are going the opposite direction of the cars.
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But I would not say that the -- you know, my daughter is 3. She doesn't even -- she doesn't, you know, leave the table without asking me if she can get down. She doesn't do anything by herself. She's not going somewhere by herself and she's not unsafe.

And I guess I would just close by saying I have extreme confidence in Elkie and the POTA team. I have extreme confidence in their ability to care for, teach, love, and keep my child safe. And I would not send my child anywhere where I didn't feel that that was true. So I'm --

ELIZA HAVILAND: -- really grateful that they're a part of the community, and I'm grateful that they're where they are.

Thank you.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you for calling in.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Emily Jacobstein?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Emily?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN:

EMILY JACOBSTEIN: Hi. Emily Anne Jacobstein. I

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am a parent of a child at POTA. I'm also a Cambridge resident. We walk our son across Harvard Yard every day and I have never doubted the safety of it.

I will say that child care is very, very hard to come by in this area. My husband and I both work. When we were looking for day care, we applied to nine different schools. We were so thankful when we got the e-mail from POTA. It's an incredible program.

And when the children are out, when they walk to the playground, they are either in the group strollers, or they'll walk holding onto a rope.

This past weekend, we were walking around town and my son, who's 3, asked where the rope was for safety. And then he sang to me a song about safety and safely walking around the street that he learned from his wonderful educators at POTA. I have no concerns at all about his safety when he's there.

And I've seen drop-off in a regular morning, pickup in a regular morning, and then as the previous speaker said, on a day like today, there were parents that were walking their kids very safely in a snowstorm to get there. It's an incredible addition to the neighborhood.

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And for families like ourselves, if POTA wasn't there, we would have to either drive somewhere, which is going to be worse for traffic and worse for everyone, or consider moving outside of Cambridge.
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So fully, fully support the permanent location. Thank you.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you. How many people in line? 11? Okay, there's a number of people in --

STEPHEN NATOLA: Tuvia Tendler?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- line to comment. So I would -- it's the Chair's discretion -- reduce the comment to two minutes, please?

TUVIA TENDLER: Hi. I'm Tuvia Tendler. I'd like to voice my strong support for the school and their petition. You know, I do drop-off every single morning, never saw anything that looked unsafe in the slightest.

There's -- you know, a large range of drop-off times. Most of the times when I'm dropping off, I see one or two other families at the same time. It's not the type of school where you have, you know, 60 kids at an exact same time.

And, as others have noted, you know, it's an

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amazing neighborhood. It's in the neighborhood, walk there every day. And if -- if -- if not for that, and I walk there every day, and then, you know, pick up a bike on Cowperthwaite -- if not for that, I would have to drive somewhere and then park -- you know, drive to work afterwards, pay for parking in Boston.
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You know, really having the school in this location makes the area just so much more livable and more pedestrian-friendly, and for me and for everyone really a better place.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Great. Thank you.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Caleb Neufeld?

CALEB NEUFELD: Good evening. Can you hear me?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes.

CALEB NEUFELD: Thank you so much for taking the time for this comment period. I've lived in Cambridge since 2013. Both my son and my daughter attend POTA. My son was literally on the waitlist since he was a fetus, because child care is in such high demand here.

And I essentially exclusively walk both of my children every day to Banks. We hear and register the multiple remonstrations that Elkie and Kathryn have had to

not use the cars in a roadblocking fashion. So even today when there was the snowstorm, I was there, pushing my kids through the snow.

And most other parents also arrive at POTA on foot. I would also like to add that I think that the POTA is totally willing to adapt to any circumstances that might arise and is committed to being flexible. And thank you so much for your -- your listening to me. And -- well, that will be all.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you for calling in.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Elizabeth Foote?

ELIZABETH FOOTE: Hi. I'm Elizabeth Foote, and I live at 29 Surrey Street. My back door is across the street from the school. And we use the back door not only for our driveway there, but also that's our main coming and going. So we do run in both on foot and in traffic from the driveway and from leaving the house.

I want to remind people that we're not at all insulting the school. We're talking about something that I did not consider a technicality.

When we agreed in 2021 to a temporary school, there was a group of about 25 people -- children in the

school. The neighbors talked together and said, "We let this temporary thing happen until the other part -- the other building opens."

It was an understanding that was blown up last year when the request was to increase to 66 children with -- and an expansion to the basement without the consideration of the technicality "it's a temporary place." Without taking pictures or asking you to be here during drop-off and pickup times, it becomes a he said, she said.

And Doris -- all the people on the street, Doris's letter that you read that a group of us got together on, the problem is here. And it is dangerous. And we need you to know that.

If there were something that was going to happen that would allow for drop-off and pickup -- it's not there now -- we would certainly entertain the thought of that.

The crosswalk is at the corner of Cowperthwaite and Surrey. And the next one is up at Grant Street. People drop their kids, and I know that people have spoken of walking their kids to school and that's great.

But it isn't safe in our street. And the temporary 25 children is blown up to 66 and it is definitely

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less safe today than it was a year ago.
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So we would love to see those things addressed.

We are very uncomfortable seeing parents drop kids off
stopping on sidewalks and -- our driveway is crossed every
single day. There is no one out there saying, "Don't do
that." And I don't want to go out and say that.

I -- you know, carrying children around, 3-yearolds around is not easy. And I have great sympathy for them trying to get their kids across the street.

So I guess that I said what I need to say, unless you have a question.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you for calling in.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Rachel Bernard?

RACHEL BERNARD: Hi, can you hear me?

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes.

RACHEL BERNARD: Hi. My name is Rachel. I'm a

Pediatric Critical Care Nurse Practitioner. I work at

Boston Children's Hospital, and I would not be able to do so

if not for POTA. As someone previously mentioned, child

care is very hard to come by here in Cambridge.

We love the preschool and as a mandated reporter myself, if I saw anything that was suspicious at all for

unsafe activity, I would first mention something to the school administration as well as report, which obviously I have not seen. I feel so safe sending my child to this school.

And as others have mentioned, it seems like when I do drop-off and pickup when I'm not working, the majority of parents are walking their children to school and respectful of crosswalks.

And while it's unfortunate that sometimes we have to cross people's driveways to get from Point A to Point B, they're on the sidewalk and crossing of the driveway, what seems perfectly legal and perfectly safe. I think parents always have their children's best interest in mind, as does the school, and are doing everything to keep their children safe.

So I would really hope that everyone can see the value added in having this preschool and would vote accordingly.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you for calling in.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Mara Laderman?

MARA LADERMAN: Hi. My name is Mara Laderman. I am a parent of a child at POTA. My daughter's been at POTA

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for two years. I've lived in Cambridge for 15 years and would not be able to continue to live here and work if it weren't for a neighborhood preschool like POTA.
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Like many of the other parents, I walk my daughter every day. I have never had any concerns about her safety.

As many of the other parents have said, if I saw anything that was worrisome, I would certainly speak up about it.

You know, I think -- I think that the lack of child care in this neighborhood is a significant issue. I'm certainly sympathetic to neighbors who do have lots of foot traffic on their street. And, you know, I think living in a city, living in an urban area, having foot traffic is just kind of a fact of life.

And I hope that the Board will vote in support of being able to keep child care in the area for families that really need it to be able to continue to work and live in Cambridge. Thank you.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Flo Braunstein?

FLO BRAUNSTEIN: Hi, can you hear me?

STEPHEN NATOLA: Yes.

FLO BRAUNSTEIN: Great. Thank you very much. I

am a parent of two children at POTA who started this year.

My son is 3 years old, and my daughter is 5 years old. It

was the best decision I think we've made as parents.

We stayed isolated all during pandemic our own concern for my son, who has a cardiac condition. And he had never played with another child until September, other than his sister. And it's been miraculous.

And I couldn't be more confident than I am in the people who work at POTA and the strategy, and all the care and thought that's been put into everything that they do.

I'm continually surprised. I'm continually impressed with the decisions that have been made.

I grew up in Harvard Square, and I went to a
Harvard Square preschool when I was a child. And, you know,
we walked. We walked around. We learned how to be good
little pedestrians, just like we learned he would to share,
and our ABCs and our 123s.

And delivery trucks are -- delivery trucks especially now since everyone gets things from Amazon, they are a fact of life. And I was concerned due to our isolation that my children were not getting this incredible valuable skill to safeguard themselves with proper

pedestrian, you know, etiquette and safety.

And I have seen the teachers teach them, exhibit to them and keep them in line. You know, they're 3 and 5-years old. Sometimes they need gentle encouragement.

They've -- the teachers and the administration are taking care to help us as parents learn better how to teach them when we're doing with them. And both of my kids, you know, they look for crosswalk. They look as we cross the crosswalk. They wave to vehicles when they stop for us. You know, they pay attention when they hear a siren to look around.

It's -- I -- I think it's a public good for stakeholders -- you know, for the community, for all of us that children not, you know, be relegated to strip malls that their parents have to drive to to drop them off so that they never learn how to be a pedestrian in a walking community.

I love seeing pictures of my kids walking on the sidewalk, you know, paying attention, mailing things in a mailbox. These are valuable skills -- going to the playgrounds, the wonderful playgrounds that are in the Harvard Square area. The libraries. It's -- it's exactly

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1
    what I would want for them.
2
              And I see the care at each level that the
 3
    administration and the teachers put. They're always looking
 4
     around to see if there's a situation that they can jump in
 5
    and help.
               I feel I am safer on the sidewalk when I am in
 6
7
    view of the teacher -- when I am, you know, in view of POTA
8
     than I am at any other point in time with my children on the
9
     sidewalk. And it's just getting better and better for what
10
    they're learning.
11
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Great. Okay.
12
              FLO BRAUNSTEIN: Okay. And that's --
13
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Please wrap it up.
14
              FLO BRAUNSTEIN: Thank you.
15
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: We have a number of people on
16
    the line, so we're trying to -- yeah. All right. Thank
17
    you. Again, I would ask people to --
18
               STEPHEN NATOLA: Katie Ford?
19
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- limit their comments to two
    minutes, please.
20
21
              KATIE FORD: Yep, got it. And thanks for the time
```

today. I am also a parent of a child at POTA. I am a

22

Page 141

student at the Harvard Kennedy School. And to be honest, I had deferred one year, because it was hard to find child care. And because also my child has a cardiac condition as well.

And I wasn't even sure I was going to be able to go to Harvard and bring my family here from D.C. if not for POTA, which was able to give me timely acceptance to the program after having applied to many, like so many other parents here. And so I'm so incredibly grateful to it.

In terms of Banks Street, I heard the arguments as to why Banks Street was trafficked. And I agree that, you know, of course there's trucks all over Cambridge. And it's not unique to Banks Street. And certainly there's other ways for emergency vehicles to access the Harvard buildings. I know there's back ways there.

And in terms of what POTA has taught my daughter,

I mean, I second everyone's opinion that they taught my

daughter how to cross the street. And she actually sings

the same song about how to cross the street. And when POTA

heard the concerns from the community about the parking

situation and they sent a very detailed note to all of the

parents asking them be cognizant as we do drop-off.

```
1
               I try to walk my child whenever I can, but I
2
     sometimes do drive her. And I'm very cognizant of the
 3
     neighborhood and making sure I don't park in anyone else's
 4
     space or block anyone's driveway. And I hold my daughter's
    hand across the street.
 5
 6
               Finally, I'll just close with that -- this is
7
     actually my younger daughter, I do have an older daughter --
8
     and I have to say I had a great preschool back in the D.C.
     area, but POTA just has gone far above and beyond in the
9
10
     services that they can provide. And it's so critical to
11
    have a wonderful preschool like they have a wonderful
12
    preschool like POTA close to Harvard Square, especially for
    people in my situation.
13
14
               Thanks so much.
15
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you. How many more have
16
    we got? Again, we're going to ask people if they would be
17
    brief --
18
               STEPHEN NATOLA: Frannie Weinograd?
19
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- in their comments. We get
20
     it. So.
21
               FRANNIE WEINOGRAD: Hi. My name is Frannie
22
    Weinograd. And I have a daughter at --
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1 STEPHEN NATOLA: Sorry about that, Frannie. 2 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. 3 FRANNIE WEINOGRAD: Can you hear me? 4 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes. 5 FRANNIE WEINOGRAD: Okay. So I have a daughter at 6 POTA, and I just want to say thank you to the community for 7 worrying about the children's safety. 8 But you don't have to worry. The teachers at POTA 9 are the most attentive grownups that -- they care about the 10 kids, they listen to the kids, they're constantly 11 interacting with them and seeing how they can help them 12 navigate what's around them. 13 My daughter knows how to cross the street because 14 -- she tells me to look left and right, and left. She's 15 telling me. She's teaching me things that I didn't learn as 16 a kid that she knows as a little kid. 17 She -- the -- the administration's very 18 flexible, like the previous callers said. We got an e-mail 19 explaining how the -- what we should do at drop-off and 20 pickup. 21 The Zarchis are the most -- they're gems of 22 people. They really are the best partners to work with.

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1 And I think their goal is to have a peaceful neighborhood.
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2 And we all want to work towards that. So, you know, I think 3 that strong support for POTA.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Elchanan Mossel?

ELCHANAN MOSSEL: Hey, hi good evening. I just want to echo what so many of the parents have said. We have two kids at POTA. And we actually felt -- all the kids, we had two other day cares in Cambridge, and I think this is the safest drop-off among the three day cares that we tried in Cambridge.

It is a city. We have to be careful. Most of the days we walk -- it's about 10 minutes' walk from where we live. Today, for instance, we drove. We found a parking -- a legal parking spot on Putnam Street. We walked for another five minutes.

I think most of the parents are very, very careful and very aware of the neighborhoods and the parking rules of Cambridge.

And what I'm learned, especially from my other kid, is that he's so disciplined about crosswalks, that I'm often being -- he's often comments on, you know, how unsafe

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1
     I am. And I don't cross at the middle of the crosswalk
2
    very, very carefully.
 3
               So I think you know the safety of the children is
 4
     really a very high priority for the day care. And this is
 5
     an amazing day care, so we love it. And for us, life would
    be more difficult -- more commute, more congestion -- and we
 6
7
    wouldn't get the quality of education that we get. So I
8
     support --
9
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you. Thank you for
10
    calling in.
11
               STEPHEN NATOLA: Nina?
12
              NINA FORZIKI: Hello. Hi. I'm sorry. I'm on a
    plane, but I felt this was really important and I wanted to
13
14
     just comment. My son is a 3-year-old who's been at --
15
               THE REPORTER: Can you please provide --
16
              NINA FORZIKI: Sorry. My name --
17
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, please give your --
18
              NINA FORZIKI -- is --
19
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- your name and address,
20
    please.
21
              NINA FORZIKI: My name is Nina Forziki (phonetic).
22
    And I am at 10 Ellery Street. And I am a mother of a 3-
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1
     year-old who goes to POTA.
2
              And I just wanted to add that I feel like the most
 3
     dangerous walk or biking to the school every day, and I'll
 4
     actually -- the most dangerous part is crossing Mass Ave,
 5
    which is funny. So when we get onto Banks Street, I always
 6
    have a sigh of relief.
7
              And I just want to support -- and I'm also
8
     thankful that the neighbors care so much and that we will be
9
     respectful of the neighbors as well, as much as they care,
10
     are respectful of our children. So thank you so much.
11
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you.
               STEPHEN NATOLA: James Williamson?
12
13
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: James?
               JAMES WILLIAMSON: Yeah. Can you hear me?
14
15
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes.
16
               JAMES WILLIAMSON: So thank you. I wasn't
17
    planning to speak to this, but listening to the comments, it
18
     occurs to me to make a contribution that might be --
19
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: You still live at 1000 Jackson
     Place?
20
21
               JAMES WILLIAMSON: Oh, oh, yeah. Sorry.
22
    Actually, 30 Churchill Ave. They're tearing down Jefferson
```

Park.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Oh, that's right. Okay.

JAMES WILLIAMSON: Yeah. So listening to the speakers as I'm waiting for another case, it occurs to me the key thought is, you know, I hear a lot of people who obviously have kids who go to the school, the preschool and are happy, very happy about the situation.

But there is the anecdotal quality. And I think maybe not so much perhaps for this particular case, but in general, this is -- you know, we're living in a city where everybody's talking about data-driven everything.

And that would seem to be a situation -- this would seem to be the situation as others in the future where actual data could be easily gathered and be part of the discussion as the Board make your evaluation of the extent of a potential issue here in response to however many of neighbors have been expressing their concerns.

So it's not just, "Well, we walk to school." I think it's like, "Okay, how many of the 60 or 65 families walk to school and how many drive? I don't think that's something that should be that hard for -- to be gathered and presented, if the Board felt that that were sufficiently

1 relevant.

I also remember -- I'm not going to go into the details, but years ago permits of a certain kind were distributed to people on Banks Street. Quite familiar with Banks Street, and friends of mine have lived there and around the corner for a long time going back many years.

And a niece lived in Peabody Terrace.

I could -- I'm not going to go into the details, but you can imagine the distribution of special permits when Harvard were expanded in that neighborhood by a particular City Councillor would shed light on goes on in this city around parking sometimes. But I'll leave it to your imagination.

Thank you.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you for calling in.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Kathryn Nassberg?

KATHRYN NASSBERG: Hi, yes. So I'm another parent of two children, one who currently has -- this is his second year at POTA -- I have another son who will be joining this fall.

And I also want to express my -- my support for -- for POTA. I think they have done a wonderful job of keeping

my son safe.

And I know I'm another piece of -- you know, another piece of anecdotal evidence, but -- you know, we walk our son to school every morning cognizant of the traffic around us.

And honestly, to kind of echo the sentiment of some of the other people, I feel more relaxed once I've hit Bank Street versus some of the other, you know, walking around crossing Putnam or now that we've moved to Dana Street, of, you know, having to cross Mass Ave.

I also want to reiterate that POTA has made a concerted effort with parents to ensure that they are cognizant and aware of the surroundings in terms of parking. We have received several e-mails reminding -- you know, reminding parents to be aware of the situation with parking, to try to avoid it, to be respectful of the neighbors and the neighborhood in general.

So I think there is a very good faith effort that's being put there. So I too would like to express my support to POTA in their location there.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Right. Thank you.

KATHRYN NASSBERG: We couldn't do what we do

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1
    without -- without having them there.
2
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you. Any more?
                                                          All
 3
     right we're going to have three more callers, please.
 4
               STEPHEN NATOLA: Haley Shore?
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: And two minutes each.
 5
 6
               DAVID SHORE: Hello. This is David Shore, husband
     of Haley Shore. We live at 91 Clarendon Avenue on the
7
8
    borderline of Somerville and Cambridge. I'm a doctor as
9
    well as a therapist, lawyer, and a parent of a student.
10
               You know, I think walking kids to school in a city
11
     and walking kids in a city in general is just entirely safe
12
     and natural and part of being a parent. It's really a
     loving community with exceptional teachers. I -- I
13
    honestly, as many have said, I don't think safety is a real
14
15
     concern.
16
               And I really wonder if the motivation of the
17
     letter was -- was really not around safety at all. You
18
     know, one can consider that question. In terms of, you,
19
     drop-offs it's really a narrow window of the day. And so, -
     - so I would think that, you know, we can think about that.
20
21
     It's not really all day long, it's specific times.
22
              And, you know, I hate to hear that anyone's
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inconvenienced by the cars, but I would empathize that the school has been very actively, especially in recent weeks and months -- emphasized that -- that we do need to be parking in the proprietary spaces that they make available. And I think many people has been part of that effort.

So the school has certainly been doing its part to -- to keep the community focused and together on, you know, regulating how people are using the public spaces during drop-off.

So just wanted to say that. You know, I think it's a well-meaning community and a school that deserves to be there. Thanks much.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you. Two more callers.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Sara Greenberg?

SARA GREENBERG: Hi. This is Sarah Greenberg, with my husband, Amone Sheffler (phonetic). We have a daughter at POTA. We just moved this year to the area and chose to live in Cambridge because of POTA. So we see it as a remarkable educational institution. We feel incredibly safe dropping off our daughter. And we just wanted to voice our support for the school and what it's doing for the community.

And we're constantly reminded by Elkie and the POTA Staff about being respectful of the neighborhood. So appreciate everyone's concern.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you for calling in. one more caller.

STEPHEN NATOLA: Avishay Sasson-Gordis?

AVISHAY BEN SASSON-GORDIS. Hi. Hello. Thank you very much. I'd like to thank the neighbors for the concern -- my name is Avishay Ben Sasson-Gordis, and I live on 4 Athens Terrace, so also a neighbor and a parent at POTA, but also a parent at another day school, because my youngest child currently doesn't have room in a Harvard Square school.

And therefore, as a result of the fact that there aren't enough schools, what I do every morning is add another vehicle driving around the neighborhood to Somerville because I can't walk my other -- my second child to school.

So that's one perspective that I would like to add to what's been said so far, which is that the parents living in this area, either Putnam -- either on Putnam, Peabody

Terrace or the vicinity, are either adding cars or walking

their kids elsewhere on the same street.

So while I'm grateful for the neighbors for their concern for my child's safety, and I'm -- I'm really heartened to hear that the concerns about parking from last year are no longer a concern -- I was on the hearing last year as well -- I would like to point out that there is an alternative cost to not enabling this in the same concern that is driving the neighbors' very well-meaning letter and voice in this meeting today.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. Thank you for calling in. That is the sum and substance of the call-ins. I'm going to halt the public comment portion. I -- other correspondence was from Doris Jurisson and Reed Alexander, which I read into the record initially. So.

I will send it back to Rabbi. Any very brief comments that you would like to make before I send it over to the Board?

RABBI HIRSCHY ZARCHI: Yeah, it seems -- yeah,

Elkie just pointed out to me that what may have been a

concern about vehicles a year ago has now -- they've shifted

to the issue of pedestrians, I think.

I think we've been hearing that people are walking

across people's driveways, right? It seems to be what we're hearing from everyone is that no child walking at any moment is unaccompanied by an adult.

So -- you know, it's -- it's -- and listening to our families, it made me realize maybe I'm not fully appreciating the -- some of the neighbors who have expressed concern for their children. I believe it comes from a very good place, and it's heartening to know that they're concerned about the safety.

But I think it's been demonstrated and expressed so eloquently and compellingly by such a diverse group of parents, who are the ones who are most concerned for the welfare of their children that we're deeply appreciative of the concern, but we're -- we're actually confident about the safety of our children and the way the school is managing drop-off and pickup and any other aspect that can be in other circumstances unsafe.

It seems to be incredibly safe here and having vibrancy and life and joy to the neighborhood. And I think that's --

ELKIE ZARCHI: Yeah. I would just add, if anyone does have a suggestion on how to be even safer or even more

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1
     generous and respectful of our neighbors, we're obviously so
2
     willing and would love to hear recommendations and
 3
     suggestions.
 4
               We took your suggestions last year. We sent out
 5
    multiple communications about reminding parents about
    parking in the neighborhood, and neighborhood neighbors --
 6
7
     and, and not blocking anybody -- anyone's driveway. We
8
     stand outside every morning.
 9
               So most of our parents walk, but if there are any
10
     other suggestions, we'd love to hear them, and we'll be
11
     thrilled to implement them as well.
12
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Great. Thank you. All right.
    Let me send it back to the Board. Jim Monteverde, now that
13
14
     you have ingested and digested all the comments, any
15
     thoughts?
16
               JIM MONTEVERDE: No comments. No questions.
17
     Thank you.
18
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey, any more
19
     comments?
20
               ANDREA HICKEY: No, thank you, Mr. Chair.
21
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
22
               LAURA WERNICK: I'm -- I imagine that the school's
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1
     already done this, so this may be totally redundant, but you
2
     know having a time when the neighbors could come to speak to
 3
     them specifically about whatever their concerns are.
 4
               You know, I think live in a neighborhood that has
 5
     a school and when I -- I always have to be very careful
 6
    background out of my driveway, because I have to look three
7
     times to make sure that there's not a parent and child
8
     approaching if I'm --
 9
               So I can see that there could be concerns that
10
    maybe haven't been articulated precisely. And so, that
11
     would be my only thought. But yeah, it was a very moving
     series of comments this evening. Thank you.
12
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN:
13
                                  Thank you.
14
               LAURA WERNICK: No further comments.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams, any thoughts,
15
16
     comments at this time?
17
               MATINA WILLIAMS: No. No comments at this time.
18
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Are we ready for a
    motion, then?
19
20
               The motion would be to eliminate the August 31,
21
     2024 special permit expiration date, and to make the special
22
    permit permanent. So that would be the motion. Any
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comments from the Board, other suggestions or not?

All right. Let me take it to -- let me make a motion to grant the relief requested to make the entire building long-term day care operation use permanent under the previous granted special permits BZA 121039 and BZA 172275.

The violations are in Article 4, 4.33b2, which is a day care use and Institutional Use Regulation. You go to 4.33b2, then the Table of Uses would be the preschool day care, which is what this establishment falls under. That then says yes, it is allowed. If we go to then footnote 43.

Footnote 43 says yes, except in Residence C-1, which is what the zone that this location is in. And then you are subject to the Regulations under Section 4.50, which is the Institutional Use Regulations.

That then refers you to Section 4.56 C-1, which reading through all of that says it is allowed by means of a special permit. And we have to find that the criteria for the special permit has been met.

So that's how it got us all through all of that in the book to this. So let me make a motion, then, to grant the relief requested as per the application. And that the

requirements of the ordinance -- it appears that the requirements of the ordinance can be met.

The Board finds that the requirements of the ordinance have been met since the granting of the initial special permit for temporary day care use, and it is the position -- petitioner's position that the requirements of the ordinance will be -- will continue to be met under a permanent day care use of the subject property.

The petitioner is not changing the day-to-day operations of the day care. The petitioner is not planning to make any structural improvements to the structure on the subject property. The number of children enrolled in the program is not anticipated to increase. And sufficient parking will continue to be provided.

The Board finds that traffic generated, or patterns of access or egress would not cause congestion, hazard, or establish change in the neighborhood character.

The Board finds, again, that the petitioner's statement does not anticipate any issues under the permanent day care use, as the petitioner does not plan to change its day-to-day operation.

The Board finds that the continued operation of or

development of adjacent uses, as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance, would not be adversely affected by the nature of the proposed use.

As a matter of fact, the Board finds that since the inception in 2021, that the -- has not been any adverse development or impact by the proposed use. And in fact that the -- the zoning ordinance would not be adversely affected.

The Board finds that there would not be any nuisance or hazard created to the detriment of the health, safety and/or welfare of the occupants of the proposed use, or to the citizens of the city.

The Board finds that the applicant has made sufficient actions to ensure the safety of the children who use the space, the parents who drop them off, pick them up, and that the Board takes that as face value.

The Board finds that the proposed use would not impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district, or otherwise derogate from the intent and purpose of the ordinance.

The Board finds that the day care use has proven to be supported by many community members, and has been fulfilling a need -- needed service in the district. The

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1
    permanent use will allow families to make long-term plans
2
     and the petitioner to continue to serve the families well
 3
    beyond 2024.
 4
               The petitioner further notes -- and the Board
 5
     accepts -- that the special permit granted in 2021 found
 6
     that the day camp use furthers the intent and purpose of the
     ordinance because it encourages educational services and day
7
8
    care services that are not necessarily offered in the public
9
     schools, and not for the children of age who will be
10
     attending the petitioner's day care.
11
               On the motion to grant the special permit, Jim
    Monteverde?
12
13
               JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor of the special permit.
14
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?
15
               ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor.
16
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
17
               LAURA WERNICK: Yes, in favor.
18
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams? Yes, in
19
     favor.
20
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Brendan Sullivan yes.
21
               [All vote YES]
22
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: On the five affirmative votes,
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the special permit as per the application is granted. RABBI HIRSCHY ZARCHI: Thank you so very much, Mr. Chairman, and Committee, if you're listening. BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Good luck. RABBI HIRSCHY ZARCHI: Thank you. MATINA WILLIAMS: Mr. Chair, can I get five? BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes. MATINA WILLIAMS: Thank you. LAURA WERNICK: Taking a five-minute break? BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yes. (BREAK)

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1
 2
     (9:20 p.m.)
 3
     Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey,
 4
     Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams
 5
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: The Board will now hear Case
 6
     No. 208345 -- 41 Linnaean Street, Unit 36. Sarah Rhatigan?
 7
               Sarah?
 8
               PAMINA FIRCHOW: Hello.
 9
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Pamina?
10
               PAMINA FIRCHOW: I'm Pamina Firchow. I'm the
11
     owner -- of the --
12
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay.
13
               PAMINA FIRCHOW: -- apartment.
14
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right.
15
               PAMINA FIRCHOW: I believe that Sarah Rhatigan is
16
     representing me, but some -- I don't see her here on the
17
     list.
18
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Sarah's on? Oh, okay. Pamina,
19
     did you want to present the case, or do you want Sarah to,
20
     or do you want to contact Sarah? I can go to the next --
21
               PAMINA FIRCHOW: I had been in contact with her,
22
    and she and she told me that she was online. I'm not sure -
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```
1
2
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: She's not coming up.
               PAMINA FIRCHOW: Oh, she says -- she said 10
 3
    minutes ago, "We're up next." Is she not online?
 4
 5
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Apparently not. No, she is
 6
    not.
7
               PAMINA FIRCHOW: Okay. Well, I can start, and I
8
    hope that she logs in.
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah, she -- actually it's
9
10
     funny, because she has the next case too. So -- or I could
    go to the case after that, and if you want --
11
12
               PAMINA FIRCHOW: She says, "I'm not getting
13
    promoted." So I think she's having some issue being put into
    the Presenter View.
14
15
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Well, we're trying to get
    through to her now.
16
17
               PAMINA FIRCHOW: Okay.
18
               SARAH RHATIGAN: Hello?
19
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Sarah?
20
               SARAH RHATIGAN: Hi. It's Sarah Rhatigan.
    not sure what is happening with the --
21
22
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Video?
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1
              SARAH RHATIGAN: -- with the logging in.
2
     I'm going to try again to go through the link. I apologize.
     I know it's been a long night. Let me see if I can find a
 3
 4
    way in through the usual link.
 5
              LAURA WERNICK: Just continue as you are.
              SARAH RHATIGAN: I could. But this is so
 6
    unsatisfying for me.
7
8
              COLLECTIVE: [Laughter]
9
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Well, you have the next case
10
    also, so --
11
              SARAH RHATIGAN: I do. I am now -- and
    again, I apologize. I'll start talking in a minute. I'm
12
    trying to log in through a separate link. Okay, well.
13
14
              STEPHEN NATOLA: I can rename you to Sarah if you
15
    want.
16
              SARAH RHATIGAN: Okay. Sure. I'm named as,
17
     "Asha"? Oh, I see. Okay. I'm not sure what happened there
18
    but thank you. And you can't see me, but that's all right.
19
    Great.
20
              So thank you for taking this case this evening.
    This is from 41 Linnaean Street. And Pamina Firchow has
21
22
    already introduced herself. That is my client. I'm Sarah
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Rhatigan from Trilogy Law, LLC, 12 Marshall Street, in Boston.

This is a variance case to seek to reestablish to condominium units as separate units. Technically, this is called a conversion to additional dwelling units, but the story here is that Ms. Firchow acquired essentially two Condominium units from her godfather guite recently.

Her godfather had lived in this property actually originally as a renter, and then acquired one unit, then acquired the unit directly above it in this large apartment building.

And then at some point in the 1990s, he did construction work to essentially combine the units by installing a stairwell that connected the fourth floor to the third floor.

And he maintained them as separate units in all other respects, to two kitchens, two baths, you know, no modification to the condominium documents, you know, separate Condominium association fees, and everything that would identify these as separate units.

However, when Ms. Firchow went to the Building

Department to seek a building permit, in order to do some

much-needed renovations to the top floor, she was told by Inspectional Services that because the units had been connected by the stairwell, and the -- you know, fire separation had been removed, that they had been deemed merged essentially for zoning purposes.

And unfortunately, this building is a large -- I think it's approximately a 34-unit building that's located in both a C-2 and a Residential B district, which as you know only allow for up to -- usually up to two units approximately for, you know, sort of most unit -- most lot sizes.

There was no way of complying with current zoning if we were to divide what's now considered two -- one unit back into the -- those two units. So that's the reason for the variance under 5.26 and 5.31. A variance is required for us the -- again, to reestablish these as separate units.

Not allowing for this ischemia causing both financial and a practical hardship for Ms. Firchow, due to the difficulties that she would have renting this one large, connected unit, which does not lend itself well to doing so.

And also for her own reasons, she would -- she would want to be able to rent these as separate units, and

also would want to be able to ultimately move back in to one of these units once -- once she is back in town. I believe she's on sabbatical now.

So the -- you know, the hardship is -- is based -- based on the, the unique circumstances of having this large preexisting, nonconforming apt building built into approximately 1922 before the City imposed such things as lot size, lot number -- I'm sorry, dwelling units per lot size requirements and, you know, resulting in a difficult situation for the current petitioner.

There's also some good arguments for a variance in the sense that there's really no detriment to either the neighborhood or the condominium association or the condominium of the condominium neighbors. I believe that these units have been used as separate units for many years.

The work that's entailed in separating the units is literally internal work, which would be to demolish the existing stairs that connect these two, and to -- to re -- to separate these units in terms of fire safety.

And I think that's it. I do have -- we do have -- obviously we have plans in the file. And I'm sorry, I'm feeling very unattached here to the system. Okay, great.

The plans are pretty basic. These were the plans that were submitted with the building permit. And you can see removing the existing staircase is shown on the Unit 46 Demolition Plan.

And then you can see -- you can see on the next page, I believe, 36 where that -- where that opening will be closed up on the left side. Thank you.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yep.

SARAH RHATIGAN: And I think that the other thing that's helpful is the photos that we included. So that's the outside of the building. And then here you can see the staircase, that next photo. Thank you. You can see the staircase that was installed. And, you know, removing that staircase is going to -- is going to be very beneficial to -- to both units.

Next photo just shows the narrow hallway leading to that stairwell.

And then there's just a series of photos that's just showing you how these properties are separately situated with separate egress, separate kitchens. That second kitchen is all, you know, partially demolished.

There's a -- they're separate -- those wooden doors are

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1
     showing separate storage areas in the basement, separate
 2
     trash, separate mailboxes.
 3
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay.
 4
               SARAH RHATIGAN: And that concludes the
 5
    presentation.
 6
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Good. All right. Jim, any
 7
    questions at this point?
 8
               JIM MONTEVERDE: No questions. Thank you.
 9
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura?
10
               [Pause]
11
               Laura's on mute.
12
               LAURA WERNICK: No questions.
13
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Oh, okay. Andrea?
               ANDREA HICKEY: Just a quick question. Attorney
14
    Rhatigan, when the two units were combined, that was done
15
16
    pursuant to a building permit?
17
               SARAH RHATIGAN: It was.
18
               ANDREA HICKEY: All right.
19
               SARAH RHATIGAN: Yes.
20
               ANDREA HICKEY: Great. That's all I have.
                                                           Thank
21
     you.
22
               SARAH RHATIGAN: Thank you.
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BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina?

MATINA WILLIAMS: No questions.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. And I have no questions either. Let me open it to public comment. Any member of the public who wishes to speak should now click on the button that says, "Participants," and then click the button that says, "Raise hand."

If you are calling in by phone, you can raise your hand by pressing *9 and unmute or mute by pressing *6, and you'll have up to three minutes in which to comment. We are in communication -- we are in receipt of communication from the Renzi -- R-e-n-z-i Bulger Group dated February 1.

"To whom it may concern,

"The Trustees of the Peabody Condominium

Association write to support Pamina Firchow's application

for a variance in order to restore the separation between

unit 36 and 46 in 41 Linnaean Street, Cambridge,

Massachusetts.

"Our Condo Association already treats these units as separate, evidenced by the following: Two separate Condo Association fees, two separate mailboxes, two separate entrances and egresses, two separate storage units, two

votes on the election of Trustees, and two separate deeds.

"Since we already treat the two units separately, we support Pamina Firchow's removal of the stairs that currently connect the two units internal on behalf of the Peabody Court Condominium Trustee Property Manager, Renzi -- R-e-n-z-i Bulger Group, LLC."

And that is the sum and substance of any correspondence. So I will close public comment portion, send it back to Sarah for any further comments before we take it to the Board.

SARAH RHATIGAN: No, not unless there are questions, which we are happy to answer.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: No. Apparently, there are not. So let me make a motion, then, to grant the relief requested as per the application, supporting statements, and the drawings. The drawings submitted [are] entitled, "interior renovation 41 Linnaean Street, Cambridge, A-1, A-3, A-1 and initialed by the Chair."

The Board finds that a literal enforcement of the provisions of the ordinance would involve a substantial hardship to the petitioner, as it would preclude the petitioner from being able to separate the two units, which

inadvertently were merged for zoning purposes.

Somewhat of a technicality -- probably the petitioner or the homeowner at the time didn't realize the consequences of combining the both units.

The Board finds that the hardship is owing to the existing and unique shape of the building, location of the building on the -- on the lot that straddles both Residence C-2 and Residence B.

As such, the density of the units, which has been de facto decreased by one, would not be allowed to increase by this one under the current zoning ordinance. And as such, the homeowner, petitioner is encumbered by the existing ordinance.

The Board finds that desirable relief may be granted without substantial detriment to the public good.

In fact, the public good would probably be enhanced by the addition of an additional residential unit.

The petitioner's testimony is that it would be rental, something that is most sought after in this particular area, and that it appears that it may very well be a long-term rental initially, short-term for two rental units, and then eventually as the petitioner moves back, it

would be one rental unit.

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Desirable relief may be granted without nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the ordinance, so that it would further the goals of the city to increase the housing stock in allowing necessary renovations and improvements to the existing housing stock to bring residential units up to code-compliance, and also more efficient, livable space.

On the motion, then, to grant the relief requested, Jim Monteverde?

JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor of the relief.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?

ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?

LAURA WERNICK: Yes. Laura Wernick yes in favor.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?

MATINA WILLIAMS: Yes, in favor.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: And Brendan Sullivan yes.

[All vote YES]

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Five affirmative votes; the variance as per the application is granted. Good luck, Pamina.

1 2 (9:37 p.m.)3 Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey, Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams 4 5 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay, it being at least 7:45, the Board will hear Case No. 208880 -- 18 Clinton Street. 6 7 SARAH RHATIGAN: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This is Sarah Rhatigan, Trilogy Law, LLC, 12 Marshall Street in 8 9 I am here representing the petitioner, an 18 10 Clinton LP. And that's Asha Daniere, who I believe is 11 online. 12 And also with us are the architects from Sam Kachmar Design -- Steve Hoheb I believe is going to be here 13 14 presenting with me. 15 I'll give you a brief introduction, and then turn 16 over to Steve, who will run through some slides. Steven or 17 Olivia, would you mind bringing up the slide presentation for us? 18 19 So while that occurs, this is a case that you may 20 recall was originally filed as a special permit not heard. That case was not heard and continued. We refiled this as a 21 22 variance after some advice on that issue.

The house -- the photo is on the left, the yellow home on 18 Clinton Street just off of Massachusetts Avenue and just outside of Central Square. This is a home built in I believe 1856. This is in the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood District and was granted -- this project was granted a Certificate of Appropriateness by the Historical Commission in the fall.

And Ms. Daniere actually grew up or spent some years in her younger childhood at this home. Her mother purchased it in 1983 -- Nirmal Daniere -- and lived here and rented to tenants over many decades. And it's currently, and for several decades, been a six-unit dwelling.

What you can't see quite so well in this photo, but you'll see it the others is that historically this was a main house, and then it was a horse barn in the back. And then over years, the two structures were combined together, when the units were divided up into what are now six, things got a little unique and hectic inside is I guess what I would say.

And when we go through the plans, we'll show you how the current unit sizes and dimensions are -- are very difficult and kind of unworkable.

Could you go to the next slide, please? Second. Third slide. Thank you. This is a good view. So the reason to be here today for a variance and special permit are -- the proposed renovations to this property are some small additions, and there are improvements in the basement and creating more livable space and bedrooms -- codecompliant bedrooms in the basement that are creating some window wells, and as a result of these, these are increasing current nonconformities in the setbacks.

And also the addition of these window wells, as this Board I'm sure is aware, once you change window wells, then you're changing the calculated height of the building, because the average grade is -- is changing slightly.

So we have -- again, there's no change in the roof height, but there's a technical increase in height because of the way the ordinance defines height.

And as I said, Steve will go through the plan modifications in some detail.

But reasons for these changes relate to both creating more code-compliant situations in the basement, and also improving some -- creating some livable space there, the additions which removed some very constrained

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conditions, and then being able to convert this to a two-
unit, as opposed to the six-unit conditions.
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Ms. Daniere and her family want to ultimately be able to live in the rear unit, and then by the renter or perhaps more likely sell the front unit in order to be able to finance what's going to be a very, very significant renovation project.

Steve, I'm going to turn this over to you to run through the plans.

STEVE HOHEB: Thank you, Sarah. Olivia, could we go to the top of the presentation, and I'll try to officially go through the drawings. We could start on the first sheet, on the cover page. Oh, that's perfect. Thank you.

So as Sarah said, we're SKA. I'm Steve Hoheb.

I'm here with Axel Ramirez-Palacio --

AXEL RAMIREZ-PALACIO: Mm-hm.

STEVE HOHEB: -- and Sam Kachmar. On the screen here we have two photos of the 18 Clinton residence. The image on the left is the photo of the existing house in yellow. And on the right is the proposed rendering in blue.

As mentioned, the property is being converted from

a 6-unit property down to a two-family dwelling. We met with the Historical Commission and were approved on September 6 of last year, and we were also in front of the Zoning Board for a special permit on January 12.

On the Board's recommendation, we are here tonight to pursue a variance to seek relief on the property conversion.

Next slide, please?

On the bottom left of the screen, we have a lot map of the building along Clinton Street.

Next slide, please?

Here we have the bird's eye renderings of the property with the proposed work for comparison. On the right along the driveway, the second floor is being infilled above the existing first-floor footprint. It is also highlighted in the following floor plans.

Next slide, please?

This shows the zoning calculations. We've added to the Zoning Board a few times and it's a unique situation where the FAR is going from a 9.6 to a 0.73, bringing the FAR into conformity. We are adding additional square footage shown in blue on the left side of the sheet.

We had several discussions with ISD and met with the Building Commissioner on January 9 of this year, where we ended with the understanding that the basement is exempt from the proposed FAR calculation once those six units were converted into a two-family dwelling.

Sarah can go into more detail if there are any questions regarding this.

Next slide, please?

These pages show the existing and proposed street views from the left side of the property. We've omitted the shrubs and bushes for visual clarity.

Next slide, please?

These street views show the front of the building, which preserve the historic detailing of the building.

Next slide, please?

On this page, the street views from down the street show how visible the property is from this angle of the street. Only a small section of the property is visible from this. The yard and rear unit can't be seen from this angle.

Next slide, please?

Here we're showing the existing and proposed

shadow studies of the site. The proposed work does not cast additional shadow on the neighboring properties.

Next slide, please?

Here's the basement plans. The setback lines are shown in blue, and we've highlighted the area we're seeking relief in red. And Sarah mentioned the window wells that are highlighted as the building height is increasing, due to the decrease in the average grade caused by the window wells. The roof ridge is not increasing, and the existing condition will remain.

Additionally, along gridline A, and between gridlines 5 and 8, the wall is being infilled as shown in the highlighted region.

Next slide, please?

On the first floor, highlighted in red along gridline A and between gridlines 4 and 8, we are seeking relief for additional windows and the infills shown in the hatch region.

An additional window is being added along gridline 9 and between gridlines A and B on the right side of the sheet -- all covered using the following elevations.

Next slide, please?

On the second floor, the areas highlighted show the proposed area that adds square footage. On the right, along gridline 9, an additional window is being added between gridlines A and B.

Next slide, please?

On the third floor, along -- one dormer along gridline B is being widened by 30 inches but remains within the Cambridge Guideline requirements. The other dormers on the south side of the house are remaining the same size.

On the right, we've highlighted the skylights to within setbacks. I don't believe we need relief for the skylights, but we've highlighted these for clarity.

Next slide, please?

This is the overall roof plan, which again shows the skylights within the setbacks. The proposed roof at the rear entry is also highlighted.

Next slide, please?

This is the front elevation. And shows the preserved historic detailing. No changes needing relief here.

Next slide, please?

On the south elevation, the additional areas are

highlighted to show we infilled the regions above the existing first-floor footprint, along with the skylights within the setbacks.

Next slide, please?

On the -- I'm sorry, on the east elevation, two windows are within the setback. We met with the neighbors on January 9 and made the changes in an effort to address the neighbors' concern over privacy. As the windows overlook the neighbors rear yard, the horizontal window will allow for more light and provide privacy for the neighbor, for the neighbor's request.

Next slide, please?

On the north elevation, the proposed windows and skylights that are within the setback are highlighted in red.

Next slide, please?

You can scan the QR code with your phone camera, and for an aerial walk through of the project. We've also included supplementary photos of the existing house on the following pages, though you also included the existing plot plan. I believe we also have three letters of support included in the file.

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1
               Thanks for your time. I'll turn this over to
2
     Sarah, who can summarize the variance application. Thank
 3
    you.
 4
               SARAH RHATIGAN: Thanks very much, Steve. Just
 5
    briefly, I wanted to show you also some photos of the
 6
     interior, which we thought would be illustrative of the
     conditions inside. Olivia or Steven, if you could just page
7
8
     through to the additional photos after the site plan. We've
    seen a bunch of street views.
9
10
               It looks like this might not be the presentation
11
     that I had sent to you, which has photos -- additional
12
    photos. Do you have those on hand?
13
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Well, there's photos of the
14
    property, Sarah, but --
15
               SARAH RHATIGAN: If not, I can share my screen if
16
    I'm allowed to --
17
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- there's, yeah, there's none
18
     in the --
19
               SARAH RHATIGAN: There we go.
20
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- file.
21
               SARAH RHATIGAN: Thank you. Thank you. These are
22
    the -- these were part of the set that I had sent earlier.
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Perfect. Thanks. So you can see some lovely basement conditions. I believe that there may have been a legal apartment in here at some point. There was some signs of that.

Next page, please?

This is showing the side entry to the basement, and then showing the entry, the basement egress in its current condition.

Next slides, please?

And you can just scroll through slowly. I just wanted to give a sense to the Board of what the, you know, kind of the cramped interior conditions and its current configuration as a six-unit, as a six-unit property.

Just briefly on the variance, on the hardships, I think we've touched on all these, but I just wanted to make sure that we kind of summarized for you in terms of meeting a standard of hardship, our -- our circumstances are pretty unique for this property. It's an oddly-shaped, multiple level historic home.

So you have the floor plates of the original home not meeting the -- the floor plates of the carriage house in the rear. And there's sort of, you know, efforts that were

made to connect those two buildings with the buildings, but that were not very efficient or not workable at this point.

The interior has been modified over decades to allow for the six units, small units, and kind of substandard units.

The location of the structure, the rear portion of it is very close to the left side and to the rear of the lot, so that any of those changes that we're proposing in those areas are within setbacks, and so, you know, extending existing nonconformities.

And also additionally being in the jurisdiction of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District, this constrains in some ways what one could do with the property in order to, you know, sort of accommodate the needs of modernizing, bringing code-compliance and doing so within the ordinance restrictions.

So we hope that the Board sees this as a valuable property, a valuable project that really works within an existing historic structure, finds a -- you know, a way of redeveloping it and to provide quality housing.

There's really low to no impact on abutters, and none of the negative impact that you sometimes are concerned

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1
     about, and also is encouraging the preservation and reuse of
2
     the existing home.
 3
               And we are happy to answer your questions.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Jim Monteverde, any
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 5
     questions at this time?
 6
               JIM MONTEVERDE: I see a Certificate of
7
    Appropriateness from the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood
8
    Conservation District Commission dated September 7 of last
9
    year. Have those --
10
               SARAH RHATIGAN: Yes.
11
               JIM MONTEVERDE: -- comments been incorporated in
12
     the set that's dated February 20?
13
               SARAH RHATIGAN: I'm going to ask Steve to comment
14
     on it specifically. But my recollection is that none of the
15
     comments requested any modifications to the design.
16
     were some requests with respect to landscaping. Were --
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               JIM MONTEVERDE: Well, the planting is pervious --
18
               SARAH RHATIGAN: -- there any comments, Mr.
19
    Monteverde --
20
               JIM MONTEVERDE: -- paving, and it says -- yep,
21
    consider delineating the addition from the original house on
22
    the façade facing the driveway, such as a corner board or --
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1 SARAH RHATIGAN: Mm-hm. 2 JIM MONTEVERDE: -- changing color tones, and then 3 consider keeping the more visible chimney above the roofline or install chimney to preserve, da-da-da-da. 4 And then consult CHC Staff on paint colors and 5 details. It's those last three. 6 7 SARAH RHATIGAN: Okay. Sure. Steve, are you able to respond to those? 8 9 STEVE HOHEB: Yeah, yeah. So -- yes, we 10 incorporated all those changes. The -- the Board had 11 mentioned that in regards to color, that was -- that they 12 had urged us to proceed with a more [connection interference] color. 13 14 But they -- they had also stated that it was a 15 down to the owner's preference as to the overall color 16 selection. But we have incorporated all those changes. 17 JIM MONTEVERDE: Okay. I'm looking at the proposed 18 site axonometric. Is there a chimney somewhere I'm not 19 seeing in the proposed? 20 STEVE HOHEB: There's not a chimney, just because there was a discussion as to whether or not to go all-21

electric or to remain gas powered. And the only reason to

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     keep the chimney was for, like, gas exhaust.
               So just as a decorative element itself in the
 2
    historical discussion, we talked about it's sort of an
 3
     antiquated element, and that it would only -- they've only
 4
    been utilized in that building not for fireplaces, but just
 5
     for ventilation of old equipment.
 6
 7
               JIM MONTEVERDE:
                               Yep.
 8
               STEVE HOHEB: So it was kind of discussed that it
 9
    would be let go.
10
               JIM MONTEVERDE: Okay. But that's the discussion
     you had with the Conservation District Commission?
11
12
               STEVE HOHEB: Yep, correct.
               JIM MONTEVERDE: Okay. Thank you. That's all.
13
               STEPHEN HISERODT: Andrea Hickey, any questions,
14
     comments at this time?
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16
               ANDREA HICKEY: I have no questions, Mr. Chair.
17
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick, any questions,
18
     comments?
               LAURA WERNICK: How long -- how many -- I didn't
19
20
     catch, I'm sorry -- how many bedrooms are in the proposed?
     The new home? The front home?
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               STEVE HOHEB: There are -- for the new home
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     there's a total I believe of seven bedrooms between the two
2
    units.
 3
               LAURA WERNICK: Between the two units, there's
 4
     seven?
 5
               STEVE HOHEB: Correct.
 6
               LAURA WERNICK: Okay. Thank you.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams, any questions,
7
8
     comments at this time?
9
               MATINA WILLIAMS: No. Not at this time.
10
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you. Let me open it to
11
    public comment. Any members of the public who wish to speak
     should now click the button that says, "Participants," and
12
     then click the button that says, "Raise hand."
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               If you are calling in by phone, you can raise your
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15
    hand by pressing *9 and unmute or mute by pressing *6, and
16
     you'll have up to three minutes to comment.
17
               There appears to be nobody calling in. We are in
18
     receipt of correspondence from Asha Daniere, A-s-h-a D-a-n-
     i-e-r-e. It's addressed to Maria Pacheco.
19
20
               "I am the homeowner of 18 Clinton Street.
21
    Rhatigan is away this week, so I am forwarding the below e-
22
    mail I received in support of our application to you
```

1 directly."

This is from Molly Howard, M-o-l-l-y Howard, H-o-w-a-r-d.

"Hi, Asha. I am Molly and together with my husband Nick Nanda, N-a-n-d-a, we own 15 Clinton. Thanks for your nice note. We're excited to see the continued improvement of houses on Clinton Street and are supportive of your renovation plan. Good luck with all of the zoning permitting processes.

"Best, Molly."

We are in receipt of a Certificate of

Appropriateness from the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood

Conservation District.

"The Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation

District hereby certifies pursuant to Chapter 2, Title 2

Chapter 2.78 establishing the Commission that the

construction described below is not incongruous to the

historic aspect or architecture character of the building or

district. Construct a second-floor addition, alter the

fenestration, replace siding and trim and remove chimneys.

"The Commission approved the proposal as submitted with the following recommendations: Consider additional

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plantings and landscaping on the site. Reduce pervious paving as much as possible. Consider delineating the addition from the original house on the façade facing the driveway, such as corner board or change in color tone.
```

"Consider keeping the more visible chimney above the roofline or install faux chimneys to preserve the historic character of the neighborhood. Consult with CHC Staff on paint colors and architectural details, plans, specifications that were submitted with the application are incorporated into this certificate, which is nonbinding.

"Case No. MC6545C, date of certificate September 7, 2022."

And the that is the sum and substance of any correspondence. I will close the public comment, send it back to Sarah for any further comments at all?

SARAH RHATIGAN: Mr. Chairman, I do believe there were two other letters in the file that came from other neighbors in support.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: I'm sorry. Yeah. That was stuck together here.

SARAH RHATIGAN: That's all right. And don't feel that you need to read them, they're long.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Yeah.

"Our name is David and Patricia Wagner. We live at 12 Clinton. We live two buildings away and writing to voice our support for Asha's proposed project, 18 Clinton."

5 And that's basically it. And then from Sue

6 Butler?

SARAH RHATIGAN: Correct.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: "I am delighted to write a letter of strong support for the proposed changes, improvements to the building at 18 Clinton. I abut the property on two sides, because I own 14-16 Clinton and 17 Clinton.

"I have lived on Clinton Street for 41 years, and care deeply about my neighborhood and my community. We have a variety of small apartments and condos and a few larger ones.

"Asha's proposal will bring a better balance of unit size and affordability to our street. The reduction of units is very appropriate. These units will provide housing for families.

"There are single-family houses and three-bedroom condos on Clinton Street this are lived in by families now.

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1
     There are two families. Asha's proposed changes are fully
 2
     fitting with the neighborhood, and I endorse them with
 3
     unqualified enthusiasm."
 4
               And let's see if I can unstick any more here.
     Nope, that's it. Okay. And I will close the public comment
 5
 6
     part.
               Anything else, Sarah?
 7
 8
               SARAH RHATIGAN: No, thank you.
 9
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. Are we ready for a
10
     motion, then, Board?
11
               JIM MONTEVERDE: Ready.
12
               COLLECTIVE: Yes.
13
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Let me make a motion, then, to
14
     grant the relief requested. Now, we're asking for two for
15
     most of relief, the variance to the preexisting,
16
     nonconforming dwelling conversion to a two-family dwelling,
17
     including the additions, new window wells within the setback
18
     and increase in the calculated height.
19
               Also a special permit for the new and modified
     windows and doors within the setbacks.
20
               So first on the variance, let me make a motion,
21
22
     then, to grant the relief requested.
```

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The Board finds that a literal enforcement of the provision of the ordinance would involve a substantial hardship the the petitioner, because it would preclude the petitioner from making the commitment necessary alterations, repurposing of this building, which over years has fallen into great disrepair that the interior space is somewhat unworkable, potentially illegal and not safe for occupants of the structure, and that the petitioners proposal will attempt to alleviate that and to create two family-size, up to date, modern, energy-efficient apartments -- residential units, so there were.

The Board finds that the hardship is owing to the unique siting of this particular lot and the house contained thereon, which was built prior to the existing ordinance, that it is encumbered by the existing ordinance, in that so any alterations of this particular nation (sic) which the Board finds somewhat de minimis in nature, as to the modest additions, which will actually bring it closer to conformity.

And that it's a reduction of the FAR, and that does not create any new nonconformities.

The Board finds that desirable relief may be

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granted without substantial detriment to the public good, or would -- relief may be granted... Yes, it is a great long night, Sarah, thank you. Desirable relief may be granted without substantial detriment to the public good.

The Board notes the letter of Appropriateness from the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation Commission -- also letters of support from adjoining properties.

That the public good will be enhanced by a totally refurbished premise, which will add to the streetscape and to the preservation of existing housing stock.

The Board finds that relief may be granted without nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the ordinance.

The Board finds that the proposal is consistent with Massachusetts General Laws 40A, Section 10. The variance is being granted to encourage the rational use of land throughout the city, including the encouragement of appropriate economic development to create the quality housing within close proximity to public transportation.

The Board finds that it will not result in a use or activity not otherwise permitted in the ordinance, and there would be no negative impact regarding traffic,

```
1
    population density, blight or pollution. And that it would
2
     encourage the preservation of and reuse of preexisting
 3
     structures, which adds to the amenities of the city.
 4
               On the motion, then, to grant the variance as per
 5
     the application, supporting statements, dimensional forms,
 6
     initialed by the Chair and drawings provided, Jim
7
    Monteverde:
8
               JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor of the variance.
 9
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?
10
               ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor.
11
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
12
               LAURA WERNICK: Yes, in favor.
13
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?
14
              MATINA WILLIAMS: Yes, in favor.
15
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Brendan Sullivan in favor.
16
               [All vote YES]
17
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: The five affirmative votes, the
18
    variance is granted. Now on the special permit, the special
    permit is for new and modified window, doors openings with
19
     as per the plan submitted.
20
21
               The Board finds that it appears that the
22
    requirements of the ordinance can be met. Traffic
```

generated, or patterns of access or egress would not change
-- would not congestion, hazard, or substantial change in
the established neighborhood character.

The Board again notes and incorporates by reference the Letter of Appropriateness from the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation Association; also letters from adjoining property owners in favor of this project.

The continued operation of or development of adjacent uses, as permitted in the Zoning Ordinance, would not be affected by the nature of the proposed use.

There would not be any nuisance or hazard created to the detriment of the health, safety and/or welfare of the occupants of the proposed use, in fact, it would be enhanced by an upgraded property, code-compliant, with modern amenities and utilities.

The Board finds that the proposed use would not impair the integrity of the district or adjoining district, or otherwise derogate from the intent and purpose of the ordinance.

And the Board notes the previous granting of the variance and the language used then to support the granting

```
1
    of the variance, enhancing the purpose of the ordinance and
 2.
    how it meets that criteria.
 3
               On the motion, then, to grant the special permit,
     Jim Monteverde?
 4
 5
               JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor of the special permit.
 6
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?
 7
               ANDREA HICKEY: Yes in favor.
 8
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
 9
               LAURA WERNICK: Yes, in favor.
10
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?
11
               MATINA WILLIAMS: Yes, in favor.
12
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Brendan Sullivan in favor.
13
               [All vote YES]
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: five affirmative votes; the
14
15
     special permit part is granted also. Good luck.
               COLLECTIVE: Thank you very much, Thank you, Mr.
16
17
    Chairman.
               MATINA WILLIAMS: I think there's one more case,
18
19
     right?
20
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. We have one more case.
21
22
```

1 2 (10:05 p.m.)3 Sitting Members: Brendan Sullivan, Andrea A. Hickey, 4 Jim Monteverde, Laura Wernick, and Matina Williams 5 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: The Board will now hear Case No. 207927 -- 151 Sherman Street. 6 7 [Pause] 8 151 Sherman? 9 LISA SIMON: Hello. We're Matt Tobey and Lisa 10 Simon. We're the owners at 151 Sherman Street. 11 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. LISA SIMON: And we're here also with Jim McGrath, 12 who is kindly going to be presenting the plans in our 13 14 request. 15 BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. If you would tell 16 us what you would like to do and why we should let you do 17 it. 18 LISA SIMON: Sure. We're proposing to have a patio on the side of our townhome be enclosed, to be used as 19 an additional office space. 20 The requested variance is for an additional 6", 21 22 which would not result in an extension beyond the existing

```
1
    vertical wall.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. How -- the building
2
 3
     isn't that old. What is it, three or four years old or so,
     is it? Or --
 4
 5
               LISA SIMON: It was built in 2015.
 6
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Oh, okay. Time does fly, then.
7
     [Laughter] Okay. And you don't use the space, or you feel
8
     as if you could put it to better use, is that --
9
               LISA SIMON: Yeah, we recently had a baby, who's
10
    now 6 months old. But it means that we lost one of our
11
    previous office spaces in the home.
               So we love our neighborhood in Cambridge and are
12
     really trying to squeeze every possible use out of the
13
14
     spaces in our home so we can stay here and be a part of the
15
     community for as long as possible.
16
               MATT TOBEY: Yeah, the house has another patio,
17
     and we don't use this space as it's currently laid out.
18
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. All right. Let me open
     it up to questions from the Board. Jim Monteverde, any
19
20
     questions at this time?
               JIM MONTEVERDE: Just one question. I notice from
21
22
    the floor plan that the new enclosure, it's 4' wide out to
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```
1
     out. Is that the space you're using for a workspace or
2
    planning to use for a workspace?
 3
              LISA SIMON: Yes. That's what we're planning on
 4
    using for a workspace.
 5
              MATT TOBEY: Yeah. It's narrow, but it's -- you
 6
    know, 4' does feel fairly, you know, workable.
7
               JIM MONTEVERDE: Okay. Thank you.
8
              MATT TOBEY: Thank you.
9
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?
10
              ANDREA HICKEY: I have no questions at this time.
11
     Thank you.
12
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
13
              LAURA WERNICK: I have no questions.
14
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina?
15
              MATINA WILLIAMS: I have no questions at this
16
    time.
17
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: All right. And I have no
18
     questions either. Let me open it to public comment. Any
19
    member of the public who wishes to speak should now click
20
    the button that says, "Participants," and then click the
21
    button that says, "Raise hand."
22
               If you are calling in by phone, you can raise your
```

hand by pressing *9 and unmute or mute by pressing *6, and
you will have up to three minutes in which to comment.

[Pause]

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: There appears to be nobody calling in. There is no correspondence received by us, so I will close the public comment part. Anything else to add, or pretty simple?

LISA SIMON: No. Thank you all for your time.

BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Okay. There appears to be no comments or questions by the Board. Let me make a motion, then, to grant the relief requested. Let me make a motion, then, to grant the relief requested, to enclose the second-story patio as per the dimensional form, supporting statements and drawings as submitted, the work being in conformance with the drawings, which are prepared by Dean Architects dated 22-04-01...

I'm sorry, it's not dated -- dated 10/25/22 for the property at 151 Sherman Street.

The Board finds that a literal enforcement of the provisions of the ordinance would involve a substantial hardship to the petitioner.

The Board notes that the -- it would preclude the

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petitioner from gaining some much-needed interior space by capturing what is now exterior space.

The Board finds that the addition of a family member has constrained or potentially eliminated what was a home office area that they were using, and as such needs to some additional interior living space, and that this is the only possible area in which to capture much-needed space.

The Board finds that the hardship is owing to the siting of the structure, the size of the structure, and the siting of the structure on the property, and that they are encumbered by the existing ordinance with regard to additional floor area ratio, even though this proposal is quite de minimis.

The Board finds that desirable relief may be granted without substantial detriment to the public good, and feel that the public good will have -- it would be -- there would not be any detriment to the public good. It would actually be a benefit to anyone who occupies the space.

And that desirable relief may be granted without nullifying or substantially derogating from the intent and purpose of the ordinance to allow homeowners to update their

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1
    homes in a fair and reasonable manner.
2
              And that the Board finds that the requested
 3
     addition is quite de minimis and will have absolutely no
 4
     consequence at all on adjoining properties.
 5
               On the motion, then, to grant the variance as per
 6
    the application, Jim Monteverde?
7
               JIM MONTEVERDE: In favor.
8
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Andrea Hickey?
9
              ANDREA HICKEY: Yes, in favor.
10
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Laura Wernick?
11
              LAURA WERNICK: Yes, in favor.
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Matina Williams?
12
13
              MATINA WILLIAMS: Yes, in favor.
14
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: And Brendan Sullivan yes.
15
               [All vote YES]
16
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Five affirmative votes; the
17
    variance is granted for the work. Good luck.
18
               COLLECTIVE: Thank you very much.
19
               LISA SIMON: Have a great evening, everybody.
20
               TOBY SIMON: Thank you.
21
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: and that concludes the meeting.
22
    Thank you all --
```

```
LAURA WERNICK: Thank you.
 1
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- once again --
 2
               COLLECTIVE: Thank you.
 3
               BRENDAN SULLIVAN: -- you were excellent.
 4
 5
               MATINA WILLIAMS: Thank you, Mr. Chair.
              BRENDAN SULLIVAN: Thank you.
 6
7
              ANDREA HICKEY: Goodnight.
     [10:12 p.m. End of Proceedings]
8
9
10
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12
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22
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1	CERTIFICATE
2	Commonwealth of Massachusetts
3	Middlesex, ss.
4	I, Catherine Burns, Notary Public in and for the
5	Commonwealth of Massachusetts, do hereby certify that the
6	above transcript is a true record, to the best of my
7	ability, of the proceedings.
8	I further certify that I am neither related to nor
9	employed by any of the parties in or counsel to this action,
10	nor am I financially interested in the outcome of this
11	action.
12	In witness whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this
13	<u>third</u> day of <u>March</u> , 2023.
14	
15	
16	Notary Public
17	My commission expires:
18	July 28, 2028
19	
20	Catherine M. Burns Notary Public COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
21	My Commission Expires July 28, 2028
22	

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