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CITY OF CAMBRIDGE  
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

## **North Mass Ave BA-5 Zoning District Petition**

### **Introduction**

The North Massachusetts Avenue Overlay was first adopted in 1986 to address concerns about design, housing, continuity of the mixed-use district, and to insulate the abutting residential “B” zones that surrounded it. Over the years the overlay has been amended five times to reflect the needs and concerns of neighbors and stakeholders, and to allow for specific projects to proceed that would otherwise have not been able to. Since the adoption of the overlay, which stretches from Wendell St through Porter Sq and ends just short of the Arlington border, there has been only modest growth in housing. The amendments brought throughout the past thirty-six years have allowed for some hotel growth in Porter Square and adjusted the Business C zoning district but have left large sections of the corridor untouched. In the last major change to the overlay in 2012 the Cambridge Community Development Department (“CDD”) conducted a study of the district, and the zoning was further amended. The goal of CDD’s amendment was to address “... ground floor retail, protect historic structures, and facilitate outdoor seating.”<sup>1</sup> After some discussion with stakeholders and adjustments to the petition the final language was adopted on June 30, 2012.

The proponents of this petition wish to add to the continuum of changes that have molded the overlay since its adoption in 1986 by adding a BA-5 neighborhood business zoning district to supplement the existing BA-2, to allow for a modest increase to residential development. This new zoning district, limited in size, will inject a modest increase to floor area ratios and height, and address some of the more anachronistic features of the overlay that inhibit both residential growth and the push for “moderate measured growth”<sup>2</sup> along the Mass Ave corridor, following the recommendations of the 2019 City Wide Planning Process: Envision Cambridge.

### **Statement of Facts**

Whereas the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and the City of Cambridge are facing a massive housing deficit, and

Whereas the Mass Ave Overlay, adopted in 1986, though amended many times, has not been amended to reflect the dire nature of this deficit, and

Whereas many underutilized single-story parcels continue to underserve the people of the City of Cambridge, and

Whereas the proposed district is modest in size, supports the main tenets of the overlay in creating a contiguous mixed-use district, and

Whereas the Overlay itself has been adjusted over the past thirty-six years to accommodate the needs to the community, and

Whereas the proposed zoning district fulfills the “near term”<sup>3</sup> goal of increased density outlined in the Envision City-wide planning study final report.

NOW, THEREFORE, we the Undersigned respectfully petition the honorable City Council of Cambridge to amend the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, by creating the BA-5 zoning district and amending the Cambridge Zoning Map to reflect this change and incorporate this district into the Mass Ave Overlay with the following language:

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<sup>1</sup> CDD Memo North Mass Ave Zoning Petition (June 13, 2012)

<sup>2</sup> Envision Cambridge Final Report Pg 42

<sup>3</sup> Envision Cambridge Final Report Pg 125

That the following amendments to the Zoning Map and Ordinance be referred to the Planning Board and Ordinance Committee for hearing and report:

1. That the area along Massachusetts Avenue between the intersection of Cedar Street and Alberta Terrace including Harvey Street currently Zoned BA-2 and Res B be rezoned to the newly created zoning district entitled BA-5 and included in the Mass Ave. Overlay District in its entirety.
2. To add a new Business A-5 line to Section 5.33 by adding the following language:

Add the following language to Section 5.31 Table 5-3 Table of Dimensional Requirements – Business Districts, beneath the words Bus. A-4

“BA-5<sup>a</sup>”

Add the following language on the same line referred to above underneath the column entitled (1) Max. Ratio of Floor Area to Lot Area

“1.0/4.0”

Add the following language on the same line referred to above underneath the column entitled (2) Minimum Lot Size in Sq. Ft.

“5,000”

Add the following language on the same line referred to above underneath the column entitled (3) Min. Lot. Area. for Each D.U. in Sq. Ft.

“300”

Add the following language on the same line referred to above underneath the column entitled (4) Minimum Lot Width in Feet

“50”

Add the following language on the same line referred to above underneath the column entitled (5) Minimum Yard in Feet Front

“none”

Add the following language on the same line referred to above underneath the column entitled (5) Minimum Yard in Feet Side

“none”

Add the following language on the same line referred to above underneath the column entitled (5) Minimum Yard in Feet Rear

“none”

Add the following language on the same line referred to above underneath the column entitled (6) Maximum Height in Feet

“80”

Add the following language on the same line referred to above underneath the column entitled (7) Min. Ratio. of Private Op. Sp. To Lot Area

“none”

Add the following language in the section 2. Footnotes under footnote “p” designated footnote “q” that includes the following language:

- 1) Notwithstanding Section 20.104.1 (Maximum Height) the maximum height allowed in the BA-5 Zoning district shall be 80’. For any portion of a building within thirty-five feet (35’) of a residential district, the height of that portion of the building shall not exceed thirty-five feet (35’)
  - 2) Notwithstanding Section 20.110.31 (FAR) the maximum allowed FAR in the BA-5 Zoning District shall be 4.0.
  - 3) Notwithstanding Section 20.100 or any other section of this ordinance Sections 20.110.21 (2), (4), (5), and (6) shall not apply to the BA-5 Zoning District.
  - 4) All ground floor commercial spaces shall be exempt from FAR calculations.
  - 5) Notwithstanding any other section of this ordinance roof decks on any floor of a building are exempt from gross floor area calculations provided the roof deck is not within 20’ of a residential district.
3. To add a new use category Section 4.30 by adding the words “Bus A-5” beneath the words Bus A-3 in the sixth column of Section 4.31
  4. To amend Section 6.36 by adding the following language to the second column after the words Bus A-4  
“Bus. A-5”

For Illustration:

Bus. A-5 <sup>q</sup>	1.0/4.0	5,000	300	50	none	none	none	80	None
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<sup>q</sup> 1) Notwithstanding Section 20.104.1 (Maximum Height) the maximum height allowed in the BA-5 Zoning district shall be 80’. For any portion of a building within thirty-five feet (35’) of a residential district, the height of that portion of the building shall not exceed thirty-five feet (35’).

2) Notwithstanding Section 20.110.31 (FAR) the maximum allowed residential FAR in the BA-5 Zoning District shall be 4.0.

3) Notwithstanding Section 20.100 or any other section of this ordinance Sections 20.110.21 (2), (4), (5), and (6) shall not apply to the Bus. A-5 Zoning District.

4) All ground floor commercial spaces shall be exempt from FAR calculations.

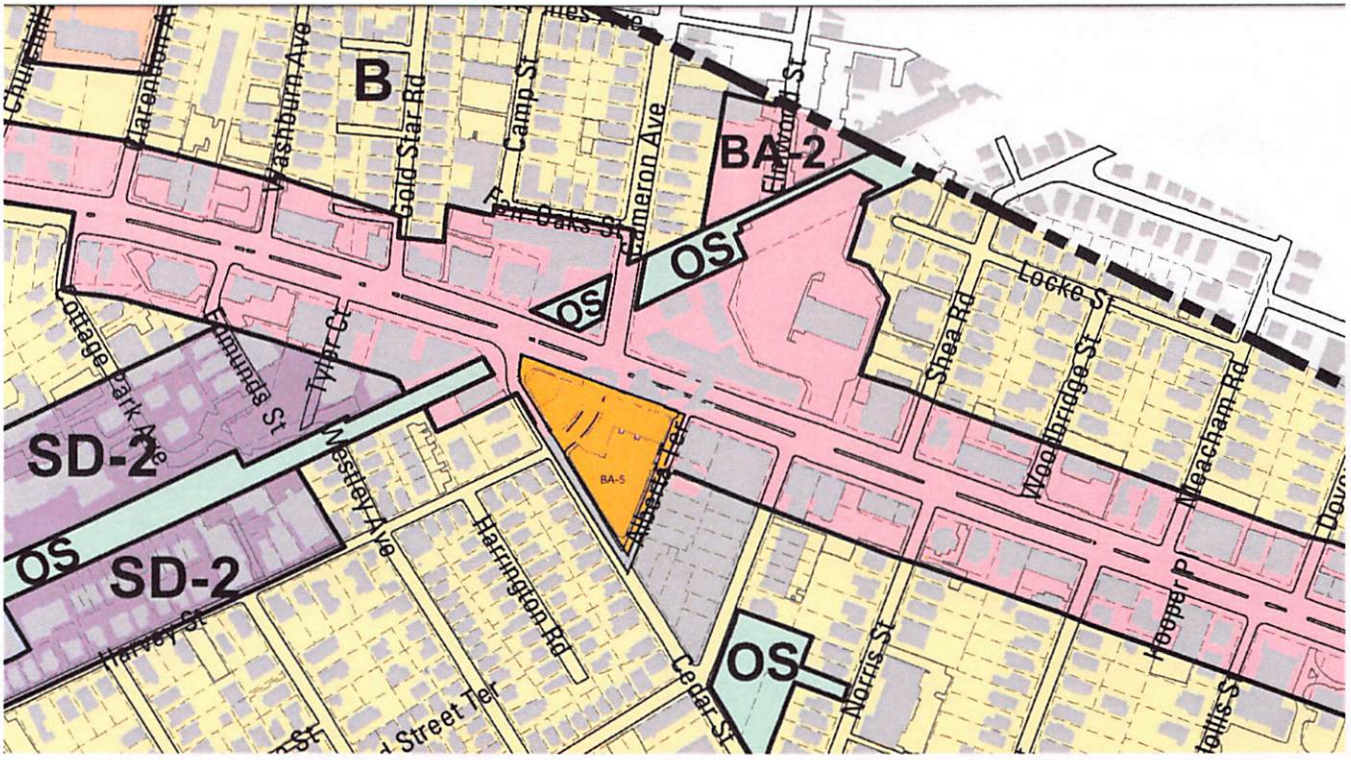
5) Notwithstanding any other section of this ordinance roof decks on any floor of a building are exempt from gross floor area calculations provided the roof deck is not within 20’ of a residential district.





Property Info	
Property ID	191-112
PID	15866
Address	2400 MASSACHUSETTS AVE
Land Use	RETAIL-OFFIC
Land Area	0.64 acres / 27717 sq ft
Living Area	19472 sq ft
Property Card	
Recent	
Comparable Sales	
Parcel Block Map (PDF)	
Owner Information	
Name	GLAZIER, SUSAN E. TRUSTEE OF
Address	2204 MASSACHUSETTS AVE
City	CAMBRIDGE
State	MA
Zip Code	02140

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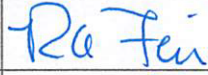
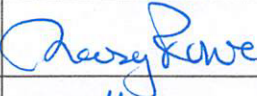


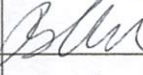





# NORTH MASS AVE BA-5 ZONING PETITION

BA-5

North Mass Ave Zoning Petition

Date: 10/20/2022

Name	Signature	Address	Phone	E-Mail
✓ Robert Fan		39 Linwood	617-510-4419	
✓ MARY ROWE		39 Finnea	617 901 4893	
✓ RICHARD MINER		2 Hemlock Rd	617 800 0000	
✓ Corinne Nagy		2 Hemlock Rd	617 642-9381	
✓ Rebecca Walsh		314 Harvard St.	617 869 6637	
✓ 	Nicholas Fuhrer	314 Harvard St	617 388 7840	
✓ HANS AGRAWAL		40 Inman St, #6	794-617-2893	
✓ Inain Elstein	JUDITH ELSTEIN	60 Wendell St #1	617-461-7617	
✓ Sam Seidel	SAM SEIDEL	43 HARRIS ST	617-548-1267	
Margaret Rowe		<del>64</del> 64 Gorham St	617-945-6497	



