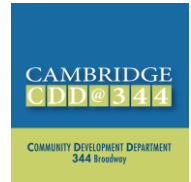




# ALEWIFE ZONING COMMUNITY MEETING

## MEETING NOTES



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Thursday, November 3, 2022

6 – 8:30pm

Virtual meeting

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**Meeting Overview** The purpose of the meeting was to present draft zoning principles for review and discussion by the community. The following notes summarize public conversation at the first Alewife Zoning Community Meeting.

### Discussion/Questions by working group after presentation

#### 1. Density and Land Use

- Divergent opinions: a) That it will be too much development – Alewife will be too like Kendall Square, b) That higher density is what makes Cambridge special, distinct from the suburbs
- Preference for residential over commercial buildings
- Preference for lower building heights near the Highlands
- Retail should serve the full range of residents and workers, not just the most wealthy

#### 2. Transportation

- Importance of transit – improvements to the MBTA and commuter rail station are critical
- Concern about the amount of traffic. The area is already congested and will become more so
- What about Terminal Road connection? How can we move E/W in Alewife and not put all the traffic onto Concord Ave.?
- Importance of road network connectivity
- Keep bicycle and pedestrian paths separate

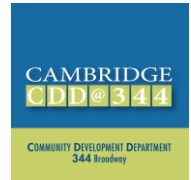
#### 3. Public Benefits

- Are there zoning tools to require transit improvements (type of transit, how frequent) that trigger bonuses – re: commuter rail – look at examples like Boston Landing
- Bridge should be built
- Flood storage solution – need to use apex of City zoning power to make people go above and beyond for flood resilience
  - Flooding is a critical issue and will only get worse, importance of green infrastructure. Open space and flooding are linked.
  - Importance of green roofs
  - Upfront investment in critical infrastructure
- Terminal road connection is important for east – west connectivity
  - Connection between Wheeler and Fawcett and then to Moulton
  - Wheeler would then connect between Trader Joe's and Eversource substation to Terminal Road



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- Preference that the infrastructure be constructed before the development occurs
- Can zoning put a rent subsidy in place? Or require that commercial spaces be affordable?

#### 4. Infrastructure

- Can green infrastructure handle sewage?
- Need for the pedestrian and bike bridge
- Need to deal with stormwater and sewage first
- Can the city fund infrastructure, such as the bike/ped bridge?
- We should think of infrastructure investment as having combined benefits, such as performative open space (flood storage and open space), a bridge for bike/ped and a station, etc.
- Flooding will only get worse. Need both hard and soft infrastructure to deal with this (storage tanks and stormwater retention in open spaces)
- Like to see some focus on green infrastructure, co-benefits, rather see that kind of investment go into open space like the Alewife constructed wetland, more creative approach

#### 5. Open Space

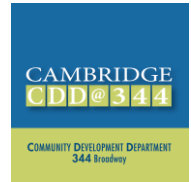
- City should be buying property for public parks
- Connectivity to existing open spaces is important
- There should be two connections over the tracks - One bridge connecting to Triangle, and another to connect to Rindge and Danehy
- There should be both large and small parks
- Open space connectivity to local parks is critical. There's so much green space around Alewife, but few ways to connect them
- How will the city pay for open space? Will this have to be a joint venture with developers?
- The city should buy property for dedicated open space
- Flooding is a major concern. Green infrastructure can help with biodiversity. City should invest upfront
- Need to plant a variety of tree species to maintain a healthy urban forest
- Heat island is real. Urban form can impact its intensity. We need to think about height of buildings and width of sidewalks
- We also need to plant more trees and preserve others
- Would like to see additional open space, trees, parks, and protect mature trees

#### 6. Economy



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- a. There should be jobs for blue collar workers, light industrial jobs
- b. Inclusionary housing – how we will ensure retail/businesses cater to residents across the economic spectrum?
- c. Light industrial uses are important and should be maintained where possible