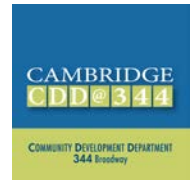




# ALEWIFE ZONING WORKING GROUP

## INITIAL DRAFT ZONING PRINCIPLES + FRAMEWORK



***Working Draft – Last Updated October 6, 2022***

*All text in red has been added since the last Zoning Principles + Framework Draft. The prior versions can be found on our website in the Meeting Materials section.*

### **I. Use**

- a. Not as wedded to inclusion of Light Industrial uses at the ground floor – stronger priority is having a greater variety/diversity of uses
- b. Support concept of “Active Use” on ground floors, which could encompass:
  - a. Arts and culture uses
  - b. Certain residential amenities
  - c. Light industrial or maker space
  - d. Retail & Consumer service uses
  - e. Daycare uses
  - f. Uses like what’s there now – gymnastics, climbing
  - g. Civic uses, schools
  - h. Priorities: Interesting facades, activity at the ground floor, feeling of safety for people walking
- c. Want to see greater proportion of housing to office/lab uses in the district
  - a. Incentivize housing?
  - b. Importance of affordable housing at various levels of affordability
    - i. Want to see family-sized units (3+ BR)
  - c. Employment will also help support retail and other services w/daytime population
  - d. Is there a better way to ensure a mix of uses throughout the district, not just one or the other?
- d. Support for a retail “main street” in a defined location, where ground-story retail and/or active uses would be required.
- e. **Support for the inclusion of a DPW facility civic use on the western side of Mooney Street.**
- f. **Affordable Housing – Inclusionary zoning might not be sufficient to satisfy the demand for affordability in Cambridge.**

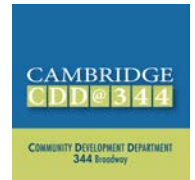
### **II. Height**

- a. Generally, agree with a transition to less height in the west and a gradual step-up to more intense heights to the east and along the railroad tracks
- b. Support increasing residential heights to what is permitted in the Triangle
- c. If incentivizing residential, need heights of 120+ feet because of building code requirements (high-rise steel becomes economically viable at 10-12 stories) – note though that building codes always changing, new methods e.g., mass timber
- d. Concerns expressed:
  - Light/shadows



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- Trapping heat – need for vegetation
- Scaling down close to the Highlands neighborhood (per current zoning)
- Don't think 80' buildings contribute to a sense of neighborhood

#### III. FAR

- a. Support density that accommodates the higher heights above desired ground-story uses (CDD to help determine)
- b. Important for both residential and commercial to incentivize a greater variety of ground-story uses

#### IV. Open Space

- a. Importance of larger, centralized open space (1+ acre) as well as pocket parks
- b. Don't want open space to just be from front setbacks
- c. Importance of pocket parks and variety of open spaces
- d. Incentivize property owners to provide greater amount of open space in accordance with urban design goals (by giving greater height, density, etc.).
- e. Stormwater retention function
- f. Connecting open spaces is important
- g. Improve and restore Blair Pond
- h. Maybe open spaces on top of buildings?
- i. **Open space locations should be tied to where the needs will be greatest (e.g., near housing).**

#### V. Yard Setbacks

- a. Like the idea of a design-based approach to setbacks, to ensure a continuous street wall and active public realm.

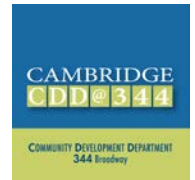
#### VI. Parking/Loading & Deliveries

- a. Support lower parking requirements, but want to get a better understanding of the district's traffic issues
  - i. Importance of supporting other transportation infrastructure and multi-modality (bike lanes, sidewalks, etc.)
  - ii. Acknowledge that it is still very difficult to get through the area by car – Who is creating the traffic issues (i.e., is it employees within the district or thru-traffic)?
- b. Underground/internalized parking is difficult and impractical; support limited off-street parking when on-street parking is available.
- c. **Should think about the delivery and operational needs for existing legacy industrial uses in the Quadrangle.**



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#### VII. Sustainability

- a. Require taller buildings incorporate techniques to mitigate heat island/solar heat effects, such as green roofs with trees, sunshades, low glazing ratios, heat-absorbing materials, etc.
- b. Support green facades and other techniques that do not direct solar reflectance downwards.

#### VIII. Bonuses/Funds for Improvements

- a. Support the use of bonuses but want to make sure the bonuses are enough to incentivize the types of development we want to see (housing, active uses, open space, etc.).
- b. Consider giving bonuses to make it easier to support lower-rent-generating uses
- c. Density/height bonuses to help fund infrastructure improvements, like street connections
- d. Transportation fund proposed in Alewife Plan at \$5/sf for new commercial development should be increased.
- e. Agree with scaling the bonus to the size of the public benefit being proposed (like how Alewife Overlay District functions now).
  - i. Development bonus should be greater than 0.25 FAR, depending on the benefit.
- f. Language on the density bonus should be clear about what needs to occur to obtain it (current language seems vague/squishy).

#### IX. Infrastructure

- a. Timing of bridge is important
- b. How to balance the delivery of important infrastructure with additional density/development.