



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: May 14, 2024

Subject: Khalida Griffin-Sheperd, et al., Zoning Petition

Recommendation: The Planning Board makes comments with no recommendation.

To the Honorable, the City Council,

On May 7, 2024, the Planning Board (the “Board”) held a public hearing to discuss a Zoning Petition by Khalida Griffin-Sheperd, et. al., (the “Petitioners”) to amend Section 11.206 “Affordable Housing Trust” of the Zoning Ordinance to add two explicit additional purposes for the Trust’s funding, require reporting of Trust business to the City Council, require payment of stipends for Trust members, require the Trust to include members affected by housing instability, and expand the Trust board from 9 to 13 members (the “Petition”).

The Board received written materials before the hearing from Megan B. Bayer, the Acting City Solicitor, heard a presentation from Kavish Gandhi, Lee Farris, and Khalida Griffin-Sheperd representing the Petitioners, heard public comment, and asked clarifying questions of the Petitioners, Housing staff, and the Acting City Solicitor. After discussion among Board members, the Board voted unanimously to send the following comments to the City Council with no positive or negative recommendation.

The consensus among Board members was that the substance of the Petition is meaningful, raises many important issues and contains ideas that should be considered by the City Council. However, the Board believes that an amendment to the Zoning Ordinance is not the appropriate first step in considering the proposed policies, which do not affect land use or development regulations. The Acting City Solicitor has explained that most of the proposed changes cannot be made without changes to state enabling legislation and other non-zoning policies. Therefore, the Board defers to the City Council, the Affordable Housing Trust Board, and the legislative process to resolve the policy issues raised by the Petition before considering amendments to the Zoning Ordinance.

The Planning Board voted 6-0 in favor of transmitting the above report.

Respectfully submitted for the Planning Board,

Tom Sieniewicz, Vice Chair.