
CAMBRIDGEPORT

NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY



A JOINT REPORT OF THE

CAMBRIDGEPORT NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY COMMITTEE AND

THE CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



CAMBRIDGEPORT

NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY

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We would also like to thank the Cambridge School Department for allowing us to hold meetings at the Graham & Parks School and also thank Deborah Lerme-Goodman of the Graham & Parks Community School for her assistance.

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Executive Summary

The Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Committee met for 24 months from February 1997 to January 1999. During this time the Study Committee heard presentations from city staff and other invited guests, debated issues, held large public forums and made recommendations to better the neighborhood. They discussed the issues of housing, economic development, land use and zoning, urban design, transportation and open space in the neighborhood. The Study Committee discussed their opinions and beliefs about neighborhood issues and, as a committee, created a set of goals and priorities for their neighborhood.

The Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study process also incorporated a series of large neighborhood forums to help facilitate the dialogue between the Study Committee and the community. These forums served two purposes:

1. to inform the community as to the direction and intent of the Study Committee and what their preliminary recommendations were going to be; and
2. to get feedback from the community as to the appropriateness and validity of the recommendations being put forth by the Study Committee.

Through this process the Study Committee developed recommendations to help their neighborhood become a more enjoyable place. Development pressures, traffic concerns, and open space issues were all topics that the Study Committee addressed in these recommendations.

The recommendations are as follows:

Cambridgeport Study Recommendations

Housing Recommendations

1. The city should require that all large-scale residential and mixed-use developments in Cambridgeport, similar to 680 Memorial Drive (Polaroid site) and 664 Massachusetts Avenue (Holmes site), provide at least 25% of their units as affordable. These affordable units should be for a mixture of low-income and moderate-income tenants. In recognition of the fact that trade-offs may be necessary for developers to offset the cost of affordable units, the Study Committee would support density bonuses. *During the neighborhood study process the Cambridge Planning Board recommended to the City Council approval of a 15% inclusionary zoning amendment to the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. This Ordinance affects all residential projects of 10 units or more. The City Council adopted this provision to the Zoning Ordinance in March 1998.*
 2. The Study Committee believes that the housing developments proposed in Cambridgeport should reflect the neighborhood in terms of the current tenure, e.g. homeowners and renters. This mix should be required in new developments so that it reflects the current diversity of the surrounding Cambridgeport neighborhood.
 3. The city should use its municipal bond authority to raise a large capital pool for the develop-
-

ment of low and moderate-income residential housing in Cambridgeport. The city should also develop better relationships with private lending organizations in order to help provide financing for new housing in Cambridge.

4. The city should continue to invest in the non-profit housing development organizations that provide affordable housing in Cambridge because they have been very effective in leveraging the money given to them by the city and other sources.
5. New developments in Cambridgeport should complement the existing neighborhood character and this should be ensured with a comprehensive design review process that involves the community. Among other things, this process could help ensure that projects “fit in” and maintain the current mix of buildings constructed in the neighborhood.
6. Encourage the rehabilitation of old buildings where possible to help preserve the neighborhood character and reduce costs.
7. The Study Committee recommends that the Planning Board require that all residential phases of University Park include an affordable housing component. The Study Committee suggested that each new building reserve at least 25% of the units as affordable to low and moderate income people. *Affordable housing components of University Park are located in Auburn Court Phases I & II and Kennedy Biscuit Lofts. This low/moderate income affordable housing comprises 25% of all residential units planned at University Park.*

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

1. The study committee recommends that the following parks in Cambridgeport should be zoned as Open Space: Hastings Square, Alberico Park on Allston Street, Lopez Street Tot Lot and Fullerton Park between Peters Street and Sidney Street. This change was not made in the previous citywide rezoning and this omission should be corrected.
2. The Study Committee recommends that the city consider rezoning in an organized way in

order to help support neighborhood clusters of businesses. Areas of concentration:

- Brookline and Putnam
 - Pearl (between William and Lopez Streets)
 - Pearl and Putnam
 - Brookline Street and Sidney Street (lower Cambridgeport)
 - River Street
3. The Study Committee recommends that overlay districts should be proposed along Memorial Drive to ensure that the scale of development along this roadway is of an appropriate size to the nearby residential neighborhoods. In addition, to ensure that neighborhood residents are aware of these projects, the Study Committee proposes that two overlay districts are created and the base Office 3 zone be studied so appropriate changes can be made. These overlay districts would be included in the Large Project Review Process, to ensure that the public would be notified when development over 20,000-sq. ft. is being proposed in the area.
 - a) The River Street Overlay District is described as extending from Memorial Drive to the Central Square Overlay District along River Street.
 - b) The Lower Cambridgeport Overlay District is described as extending from Magazine Street to River Street along Memorial Drive.
 - c) Study the Office 3 zone (along Memorial Drive)

Consider new zoning which would:

- limit the overall heights allowed in the district, as well as limit scale and density;
- permit mixed residential, commercial and office uses; and
- encourage residential uses along the neighborhood edge.

Create an urban design plan to accompany any new zoning which would:

- place buildings with greater density and massing nearer to the Charles River/Memorial Drive side of the zoning district and away from the neighborhood, thus providing a smooth transition between this district and the abutting residential area;
 - limit heights along the edge of the residential neighborhood to match or complement those of the neighborhood;
 - Provide adequate set backs to reduce shadows and to protect the Charles River bank from inappropriate visual intrusions.
4. The Study Committee recommends that the city incorporate transition zones that recognize the density and height conflicts between the various zones and propose ways to reduce the negative impacts to abutters.
 5. The Study Committee recommends that the Planning Board require that all residential phases of University Park include an affordable housing component. The Study Committee suggested that each new building reserve at least 25% of the units as affordable to low and moderate income people. *Affordable housing components of University Park are located in Auburn Court Phases I & II and Kennedy Biscuit Lofts. This low/moderate income affordable housing comprises 25% of all residential units planned at University Park.*

Urban Design Recommendations

1. Create a more welcoming entrance to the City of Cambridge on River Street.
 2. River Street Bridge improvements - It should match character/ appearance of other bridges, needs to be renovated. It is a generic looking bridge in comparison to other bridges in Cambridge.
 3. Strengthen physical and visual links between important nodes, i.e. Central Square and Magazine Beach, 808-812 Memorial Drive and the rest of the residential neighborhood in Cambridgeport, Ft. Washington and the neighborhood - use trees, dedicated paths, lighting, etc.
4. Increase the maintenance of the street trees in Cambridgeport, too many dead trees and trees with broken limbs which go unfixed in the neighborhood.
 5. Trees should be planted on the sidewalks and in parks in the neighborhood as replacements for ones that have died. A citywide program to replace trees should be implemented by the city after inventorying the species that are currently growing on our streets and in our parks. *A street tree inventory was completed in 1996. A park tree inventory has not been undertaken to date.*
 6. Ensure that lighting throughout the neighborhood balances the need for safety with protection against unnecessary and wasteful light pollution. All street and building lighting should be focused downward not necessary outward or upward. Emphasize pedestrian oriented lighting where feasible.
 7. Emphasize transitions between land uses such as residential and commercial and residential and industrial with the use of trees, short hedges and changes in level. Increase the open space requirement through zoning, especially in "transition" areas.

Transportation Recommendations

1. The Study Committee is supportive of getting various employers and businesses in and around Cambridgeport to sponsor a shuttle that would travel between Central Square, University Park, Polaroid, Osco/Bread and Circus and make some stops into the neighborhood. The shuttle should be for both neighborhood residents and employees working at these sites. This would be similar to the bus run between Kendall "T" stop and Cambridge Galleria Mall. *University Park and Polaroid are currently both running shuttles to Central Square for their on-site employees. Public access to these and other shuttles is being explored through the City's Shuttle Demand Study.*
2. The Study Committee realized that traffic studies completed in relation to proposed development projects could be a tool which the city could use to understand traffic patterns in

and around particular areas in the city. The Study Committee recommends that traffic mitigation plans be required by the city for all developments that are above a certain threshold. *The City of Cambridge currently has a Parking Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) Ordinance that requires a plan to reduce automobile trips be approved prior to getting a building permit.*

3. The study committee supports the efforts of the Cambridgeport Roadways Advisory Committee and in principle, they also agree that the Waverly Street and Sidney Street connectors are appropriate responses to the anticipated traffic increases associated with the new development in the neighborhood (see Appendix II). Study Committee members did have some concerns with certain proposed design elements and assumptions. Particularly, the Study Committee recommended that the assumption concerning the volume of future traffic coming from Kendall Square should be reexamined as they believed there would be more traffic than is currently predicted.
 4. The Study Committee felt that traffic calming projects should both increase the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists and reduce speeds of motor vehicles. Some recommended traffic calming locations/streets in Cambridgeport are identified below.
 - a) Brookline Street - To help reduce speeds the Study Committee would support adding resident permit parking along the western side of Brookline Street where necessary and the use of traffic calming measures at major pedestrian routes (i.e. near parks, senior housing, Auburn Court, other “high children” areas). *This work will be implemented after the Cambridgeport Roadways Project is completed.*
 - b) Allston/Putnam Avenue intersection – Study Committee members believed this to be a particularly difficult intersection due to a wide angle of the intersection and commercial driveway opening into it. The Study Committee recommends that appropriate traffic calming techniques be utilized to prevent pedestrian/vehicular conflicts and reduce the speed of traffic entering Allston Street.
 - c) Cottage/River/Pleasant Street Intersection - This intersection should be redesigned with the pedestrian in mind. The Study Committee recommends that the roadway crossing distance be reduced by increasing the plaza area to create an aesthetically pleasing, safer crosswalk.
 - d) River Street - Crossing this major street can be hazardous due to the speeds of the vehicles traveling on it. The Study Committee recommends that ways to make pedestrian crossings safer be studied. This study should specifically explore using traffic calming techniques on River Street where it intersects Howard, Putnam Avenue and Cottage Street.
 - e) Erie/Waverly Street Intersection - Sightlines at this intersection are poor. The Study Committee recommends that changes be studied to alleviate any potential problems at this intersection. *This intersection is part of the proposed Cambridgeport Roadways Project and has been analyzed as part of that project.*
 - f) Magazine Street - As this street has more of an historic character in the neighborhood, the Study Committee decided to minimize alterations to the streetscape. The Study Committee recommends concentration of the traffic calming measures at the locations where a high volume of pedestrians cross Magazine Street and/or where there are visibility problems. These locations of concern occur at the intersections of Upton Street, Lawrence Street, Corporal McTernan Street and Allston Street.
 - g) Pearl Street - Pedestrian and bicycle safety on Pearl Street was a concern because of the excessive speeds at which vehicles travel from Massachusetts Avenue to Granite Street. Traffic calming measures along Pearl Street should slow the traffic
-

entering this “residential” section of the neighborhood.

- h) Granite Street - Given that one of the next traffic calming projects in Cambridgeport would be along Granite Street, the Study Committee suggested that any changes to parking would be reviewed to ensure the safety of the children attending the Morse School located on Granite Street. The Study Committee recommends that traffic calming techniques, such as “bump outs” at the intersections of Granite and Pearl and Rockingham Streets be used to provide safety for the children. *This roadwork was completed in December 1998, during the neighborhood study committee process.*
- i) Pleasant Street/Putnam Avenue Intersection - This intersection can be hazardous for pedestrians crossing Putnam Avenue. The Study Committee recommends that traffic-calming techniques be utilized to slow traffic and allow pedestrians to safely cross Putnam Avenue by increasing visibility. *The design and implementation of safety improvements at this intersection is a condition of the Planning Board permit for Spaulding and Slye’s development.*

5. Traffic Signals

- a) Memorial Drive and Western Avenue - The Study Committee understands that the traffic signal at the intersection of Memorial Drive and Western Avenue causes queuing on both streets during peak rush hours. This queuing will encourage “cut through” traffic onto Blackstone Street, Putnam Avenue and lower Pleasant Street. The Study Committee believes that this should be discouraged through changes to the signalization of this light to allow a longer left hand turn light onto the Western Avenue bridge. This would cause fewer people to use the neighborhood streets as a short cut. *In early 1999, the MDC implemented this signalization change.*

- b) Memorial Drive and Magazine Street - The Study Committee agreed that a traffic light at the intersection of Memorial Drive and Magazine Street might be problematic because of the current roadway configuration and poor sight lines. This issue should be reviewed with the MDC as part of the Charles River Master Plan to determine the most appropriate location for a traffic signal. *Adding traffic signals for pedestrian crossing of Memorial Drive is problematic as it would likely result in greater vehicular traffic into the neighborhood.*
- c) Massachusetts Avenue and River Street - The Study Committee discussed the traffic light at Central Square and made a recommendation to have the city do a study on allowing an exclusive pedestrian crossing of Mass. Avenue. This exclusive crossing would be non-pedestrian actuated. *The signal was reviewed during the redesign of Central Square and designed as it is because a concurrent pedestrian signal significantly reduces the pedestrian wait time.*

6. Truck Traffic

- a) The Study Committee supported the existing nighttime ban on truck traffic on some Cambridgeport streets. They also felt that if there was any noticeable increase of truck traffic on non-banned streets those streets should be reviewed for inclusion in the ban.
- b) The Study Committee agreed that there should be a truck traffic policy for the entire city. *The city is currently participating in a regional truck study seeking recommendations to address the needs of the municipalities, state and truckers. The study is scheduled to be completed in 2001.*

7. Bicycle traffic

- a) Continue to improve bicycle facilities to encourage alternatives to automobiles and improve safety for cyclists.
-

- b) Encourage or require all business and institutional uses in the neighborhood to have adequate bicycle parking.
- c) Improve bicycle corridors across the neighborhood. North/South corridors are adequate and have improvements pending, but east/west circulation alternatives are inadequate thus encourage bicycle travel the wrong way on one-way streets.

8. Parking

- a) Improve snow removal at curb extensions by DPW.
- b) Enforce prohibitions on placing objects in the street to “reserve” parking on the public way.

Open Space Recommendations

1. The Study Committee supports the efforts of the Friends of Magazine Beach and encourages the MDC to continue their community process with respect to the redesign of the Magazine Beach facility. *In the fall of 1999, the City and the MDC reached an agreement to renovate the Magazine Beach facility. In this agreement the City has agreed to provide \$1.5 million for renovations and \$100,000 annually for the maintenance and upkeep of this facility. In return, the MDC has agreed to give Cambridge youth athletic teams priority in scheduling of games. Existing events, e.g. Head of the Charles and Boston University graduation ceremonies will continue to be permitted.*
2. In a recent citywide rezoning, most city-owned parks were zoned to preserve open space. Some of the ones that were omitted are in Cambridgeport. The Study Committee recommends that the city submit zoning amendments to zone all parks in Cambridgeport as Open Space. The parks in Cambridgeport which are not zoned as Open Space are as follows: Hastings Square, Alberico Park on Allston Street, Lopez Street Tot Lot and Fulmore Playground between on Peters Street and Sidney Street.
3. The Study Committee recommends that the city pursue the option of expanding the park at 82 Pacific Street to include adjacent parcels. *In late 1998, the city requested that the Trust for Public*

Land (TPL) explore the option of purchasing parcels abutting this park in hopes of increasing the parkland available to residents in this area. These efforts are still on going. TPL's is a national, non-profit organization whose main goal is to conserve land for both active and passive recreation.

4. The Study Committee supports the creation of an Open Space Acquisition Trust, to be used to buy land for the sole purpose of creating more open space in Cambridge. *Since this recommendation was first put forward the City Council has agreed to establish an Open Space Acquisition Fund and has put forth \$2 million of city's funds for purchasing land to be used as open space. In addition, the City Manager created a Green Ribbon Open Space Committee, whose primary task is to establish criteria for the purchase of land to be used as public open space. This Committee completed its work in March 2000 and has submitted a report to the City Manager.*
5. The Study Committee recommends that the city add 4 or 5 picnic tables to Dana Park.
6. The Study Committee recommends that DPW add bulletin boards to all the parks in Cambridgeport that don't already have them. The bulletin boards should be of a standard size and construction and resemble the one recently placed in Sennott Park in Area Four.
7. In general, there are some changes that need to be undertaken for all the parks in Cambridgeport. The Study Committee recommends that trash cans be located near entrances/exits to the park and at a minimum should be emptied weekly. In addition, it is also recommended that maintenance be improved, especially ensuring that the water fountains are in working condition. Finally, small bags should be made available for dog owners to help them clean up after their dogs.
8. Open space is a scarce resource. Imaginative ways need to be utilized to provide both passive and active open space in the neighborhood. The Study Committee recommends that the city explore the idea of utilizing any additional space along sidewalks for the placement of benches and other amenities. Resident spon-

sorship of these sidewalk amenities could help to ensure that these benches would be used properly by giving local residents a sense of "ownership" in their neighborhood.

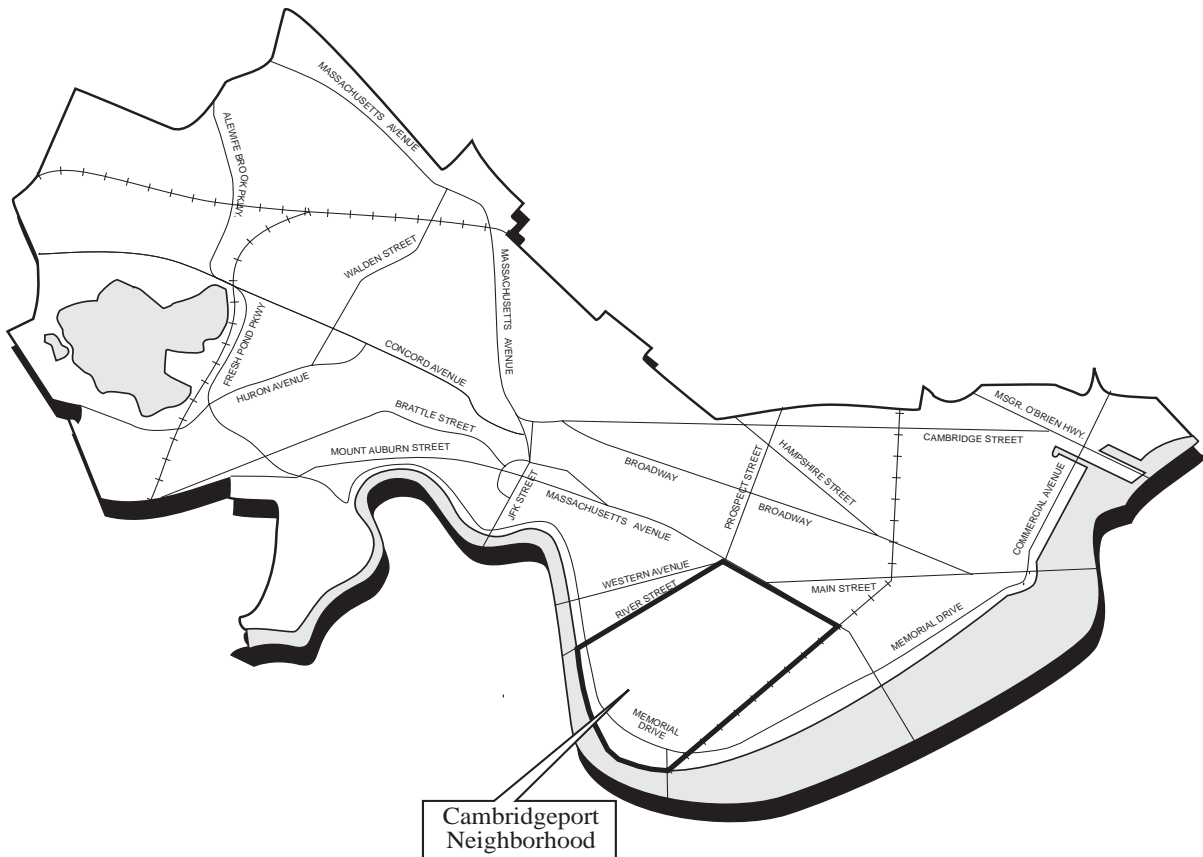
9. The Study Committee recommends that the city pursue the idea of requiring developers to link open spaces in urban developments to other open spaces in both the residential portion of Cambridgeport and other urban developments.

Economic Development Recommendations

1. Identify ways to maintain the current mix of businesses in the neighborhood. Survey current and potential small business owners regarding their challenges and needs.
 2. Help make business areas in Cambridgeport more attractive and more business friendly:
 - a) Facade improvement; like Cambridge Street and Central Square.
 - b) relaxation of parking limits during business hours
 - c) rotate parking so it is residential use at night and business use in daytime.
 3. Encourage nodes of small commercial use in significant new developments. Developments in these nodes are encouraged to be of a character similar to street corner storefronts in the rest of the neighborhood.
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I N T R O D U C T I O N

City of Cambridge
Cambridgeport Neighborhood Location



Introduction

THE NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY PROCESS

During the 1980s the City of Cambridge, along with the surrounding region, witnessed a wave of commercial growth and economic development. This growth expanded the City's tax base and created new jobs and opportunities for its residents. While many residents welcomed this prosperity, it also brought about an increasing awareness of issues that are of concern to neighborhood residents: increased building density, traffic congestion and parking problems, the rising cost of housing, inadequate open space, and the threat to neighborhood character and quality of life.

Since 1988, the Community Development Department (CDD) through its neighborhood planning program has conducted comprehensive studies in nine of the City's neighborhoods. The object of the neighborhood studies is to identify major planning opportunities through a joint CDD and community committee and to formulate recommendations for their solution. The studies address issues such as traffic and parking, housing affordability and home ownership, neighborhood commercial areas and employment, park maintenance, and rezoning of areas now inappropriately zoned. As part of each neighborhood study, CDD collects data on demographic changes since 1980, as well as changes in housing markets, land use, and development potential in each neighborhood.

For each study, the City Manager appoints a Study Committee of neighborhood residents, small business owners, and civic leaders, along

with staff from the CDD, to review the data, identify problems that exist in the neighborhood, and make recommendations as to how to resolve these problems. The recommendations are presented to the City Council and, where appropriate, are incorporated into the work programs of City departments for implementation, in some cases in the short term, and in other cases over the next several years.

CAMBRIDGEPORT NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY

The Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Committee met for 24 months from February 1997 to January 1999. During this time the Study Committee heard presentations from city staff and other invited guests, debated issues, held large public forums and made recommendations to better the neighborhood. They discussed the issues of housing, economic development, land use and zoning, urban design, transportation and open space in the neighborhood. The Study Committee discussed their opinions and beliefs and, as a committee, created a set of goals and priorities for their neighborhood.

The Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study process incorporated a series of large neighborhood forums to help facilitate the dialogue between the Study Committee and the community. These forums served two purposes. The primary function was to inform the community as to the direction and intent of the Study Committee and what their preliminary recommendations were going to be. The other function was to get

feedback from the community as to the appropriateness and validity of the recommendations being put forth by the Study Committee.

There were various neighborhood and citywide events that occurred simultaneously with this study that influenced the Study Committee recommendations. Development pressures, traffic concerns, and open space issues were all points that the Study Committee addressed in the recommendations. University Park, the Polaroid site, Holmes Family Trust site and the Bread and Circus/Osco site were all significant projects that had either been proposed or were under construction during the study process. Density, height and use were all major concerns raised by the Study Committee members with these projects as they all abutted residential land uses.

Although some of the traffic concerns involved the proposed developments in the neighborhood, there was concern that citywide and “cut-through” traffic have also increased as many people use the neighborhood to get to other parts of Cambridge and nearby area routes.

THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE GROWTH POLICY DOCUMENT

The Neighborhood Study process is an extension of the City’s Growth Policy document, “Towards a Sustainable Cambridge,” which outlines the City’s planning assumptions and policies in the areas of land use, housing, transportation, economic development, open space and urban design. CDD staff drafted this document in 1992 and 1993 after a series of workshops with citizen, business and institutional representatives. It recognizes that the city’s diversity of land uses, densities and population groups should be retained and strengthened. The document also calls for careful development of the city’s evolving industrial districts, such as Alewife and lower Cambridgeport.

While the growth policy document is comprehensive, it does not prescribe land uses or designs for specific sites. Each of the city’s 13 neighborhoods has distinctive needs and resources that can be identified and addressed through neighborhood studies and the city’s planning policies. The Growth Policy Document and neighborhood studies complement each other by informing the community of important issues, recommending a plan of action to address the concerns, and utilizing current policies to implement change.

During the course of this process the Study Committee members discussed what each of them felt would be the main priority in the neighborhood. The recommendations that they were to make later on in the process were guided by these priorities and goals. The following is a listing of the mission statement, priorities and goals established by the Study Committee during the beginning of the committee process:

MISSION STATEMENT

The Study Committee should make recommendations for establishing priorities in the community and promoting community harmony in Cambridgeport.

The Study Committee also wants to make sure that the public has ample opportunity to make comments on critical situations/sites.

GOALS/PRIORITIES

Maintain Diversity

- maintain diversity with respect to population, building types and land uses

Community Enhancing Measures

- encourage interaction among residents (e.g. add picnic tables, community bulletin boards, and designate a central place for information about activities in the neighborhood)
- promote multiple physical use of public buildings (i.e. incorporate both daytime and nighttime use)
- strengthen physical links among buildings and neighborhoods (don't let buildings or spaces become isolated islands in the neighborhood)

Safety

- better determine park and street lighting locations to maximize safety for residents
- improve communication between neighborhood and police

Housing

- preserve/build housing for low and moderate income people – rental, ownership opportunities
- allow density increases (backyard development) for affordable housing only
- target 50%-80% median income levels
- preserve existing housing where possible
- allow density bonuses when creating low/moderate housing in reusing non residential structures

Maintain/add parks, trees

- maintain the existing parks
- when open land is available do not assume use as housing by default
- increase tree planting on streets
- reduce asphalt and impervious surfaces

Preservation of existing neighborhood businesses

- maintain “rough edges” in neighborhood, neighborhood is better with “lived in quality (allow small auto-repair garages, spas, small businesses, etc. to stay in neighborhood)
- encourage “low density” employers

Transportation modifications

- explore adding on-street parking for commercial establishments
- support incentives for alternatives to cars
- reduce speed of vehicular traffic through neighborhood
- route traffic patterns away from residential areas (Waverly Street connector is a good example)
- increase pedestrian and bicyclist amenities (crosswalks and bike lanes)

Maintain commercial areas/jobs for all income levels

- increase neighborhood clusters of bakeries, cafés, etc.
- create small BIDs (business improvement districts)
- maintain both “expensive” and “inexpensive” establishments

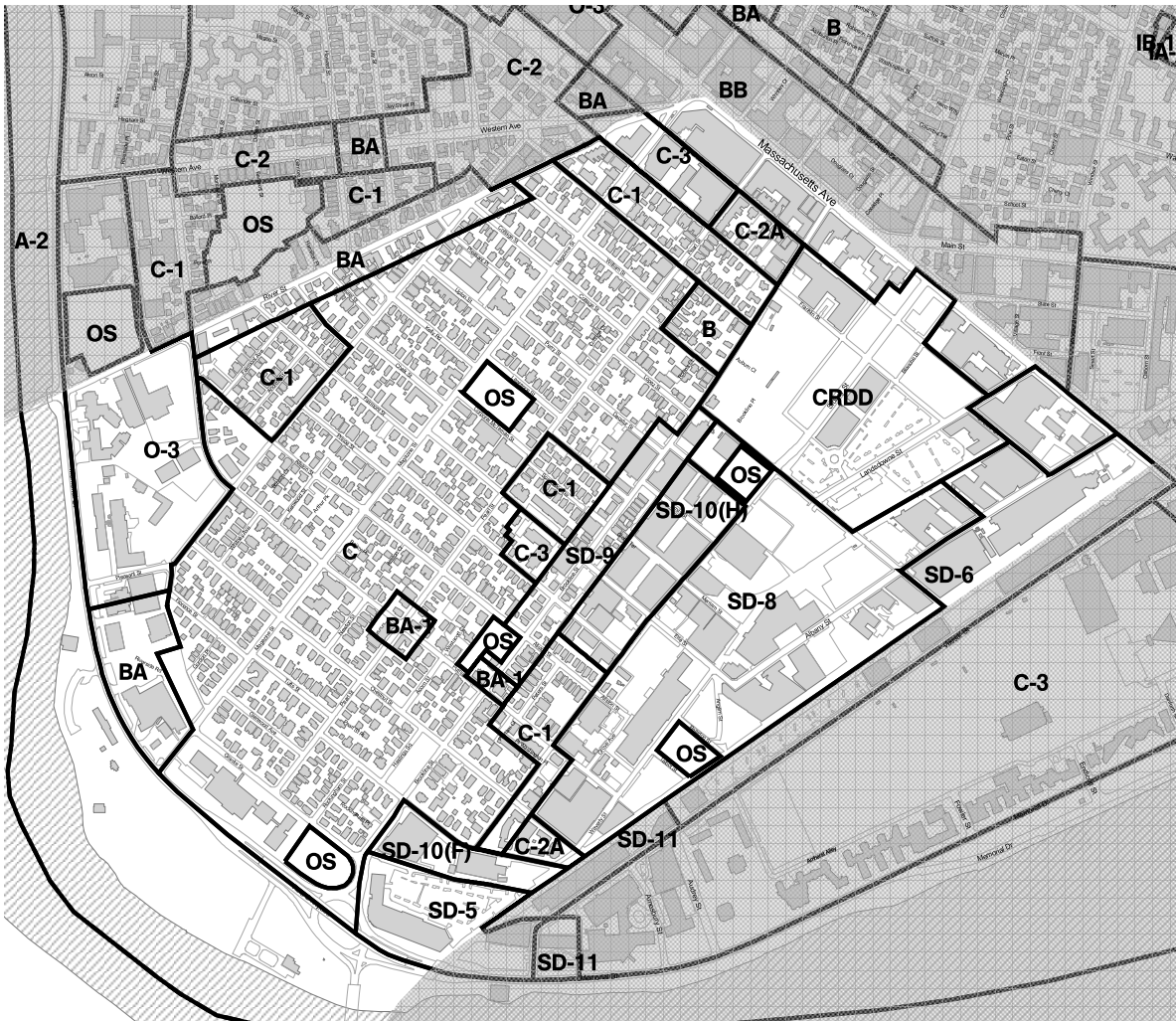
Change physical appearance to enhance neighborhood

- improve urban aesthetic; traffic flow; River Street “entrance” to city; connection, by pedestrians, of 808 Memorial Drive to rest of neighborhood (currently it is isolated), beautify River Street bridge
- allow change of use of “industrial” looking buildings
- improve maintenance of streets, parks, etc. – regularize maintenance
- diversify industry

Neighborhood input to city decisions

- increase input to commercial development in Cambridgeport

Cambridgeport Neighborhood Zoning Map



M E T H O D O L O G Y

Methodology

The Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Committee produced its recommendations through an extended process of issue identification, data collection and analysis and further review and discussion. Community Development Department staff supported this process by gathering and presenting data from a number of sources, chief among them the U.S. Census, the Cambridge Assessing Department, the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, the G.I.S. Mapping database, and random telephone surveys of Cambridgeport residents.

U.S. Census: 1980 and 1990

The Census is a survey of every household taken every ten years by the U.S. Commerce Department Census Bureau as mandated by federal law. It collects demographic information on age distribution within the population, household composition, racial makeup, income, length of residency, ancestry and other categories. In theory, the Census is a survey of every household and provides us with the most complete profile of the City and its residents. Census data is available from the Community Development Department.

1991 and 1997 Random Telephone Surveys of Cambridgeport Residents

In 1991 the City contracted with the consulting firm, Atlantic Marketing Research Co., Inc., to conduct a random telephone survey of 386 households in Cambridgeport to determine the demographic composition of the neighborhood. The survey also recorded neighborhood residents' perceptions and attitudes on issues of community

concern. As there were many changes in Cambridge since the previous survey was undertaken, a new survey was conducted in 1996 and published in April 1997. In this survey 352 households were contacted and this information was compared with the earlier survey.

The survey instrument in the 1997 survey was comprised of 71 questions designed by CDD with assistance from the consultant. It is a combination of open-ended questions and objective questions with a specified range of answers. The instrument includes four broad categories of questions: general demographics, housing, employment and attitudinal.

Cambridge Assessor's Data

The Study Committee used data from the Assessor's Office to analyze the nature and quality of the neighborhood's housing stock, to understand the market for renting or buying housing in Cambridgeport, and to examine the remaining build-out potential in the neighborhood. Housing data included the number of buildings in each property class (one, two, three-family, etc.), the number of dwelling units, and the number of housing sales in each property class and their sales prices. This data forms the basis for analyzing housing availability and affordability in the neighborhood. Property data such as building and lot size were gathered for all commercially zoned areas and higher density residential zoning districts. This information was used in calculating the amount of additional building allowed in the neighborhood under current zoning. All data reflect conditions in 1997.

The Cambridge Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance, in conjunction with Assessors data, was used to determine the remaining build-out potential in Cambridgeport. The Zoning Ordinance is the part of the municipal code that governs how land and buildings in the City may be used. For each zoning district, the ordinance lays out three types of general regulations:

- 1) use: what activities or mix of activities may or may not take place;
- 2) dimensional requirements: what floor-area-ratio, density, height or set back restrictions apply to any one building in any given zoning district; and
- 3) parking requirements: how many spaces, if any, must be included with a building.

G.I.S. Mapping

The Cambridge Management Information Systems Department working closely with the Community Development Department has created an information base of geographic data. This information is in the process of being linked with tabular data to enable information to be accessed on properties and areas quickly and efficiently. Aerial photographs of Cambridge were taken in the winter of 1994.

N E I G H B O R H O O D
O V E R V I E W

Neighborhood Overview

HISTORY¹

From the founding of Cambridge in 1630 to the opening of the West Boston Bridge in 1793, the history of Cambridgeport was quiet and uneventful. Primarily agricultural, the area looked west to Old Cambridge rather than east to Boston. The building of the West Boston Bridge (where the Longfellow Bridge now stands) opened up new commercial possibilities, including plans for the development of a port – hence the name Cambridgeport. Although these plans were short-lived, the area did develop as a residential suburb and as a commercial link between Boston and the inland farming communities of Middlesex County. Cambridgeport's most significant growth occurred in the latter half of the 19th Century, when industry moved in and extensive housing was built to accommodate the rapidly increasing population. The industrial-residential character established in those years prevails through most of Cambridgeport.

The early 20th century brought Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) to the district. Facing Boston across the newly formed Charles River Basin, the institute turned its back on industrial Cambridgeport and had little immediate effect on its surroundings. Since World War II, however, the expansion of MIT and the related redevelopment of Kendall Square and University Park have brought profound changes to the eastern part of the district, as heavy industry has been replaced by office and laboratory space. Residential Cambridgeport is also

changing, partly due to expansion of the university communities and the repeal of rent control in 1994.

Industrialization came to Cambridgeport in the mid-1800's and rapid transportation growth in the 1850's and 1860's laid the groundwork for its development. The multiplication of street railways had an important effect on the Cambridgeport development, for the lines stimulated commercial and residential activity along the thoroughfares they followed. As a result Cambridgeport did not fan out from a single center or even from one single line but rather stretched along a patchwork of crisscrossing railroad lines. Building then spread out from these early beginnings.

CAMBRIDGEPORT TODAY: A DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Population

Between 1980 and 1990 the Cambridgeport population grew by 3.5%, or approximately 7 times the growth rate of the city. Out of the twelve other neighborhoods, six of them grew over the decade, five of them at a faster rate than Cambridgeport. The other six neighborhoods lost population.

Household Characteristics

Cambridgeport contained 4,203 households of all types in 1990. Of the 2,459 non-family households in Cambridgeport in 1990, 1,768 consisted of single persons living alone and 691 consisted of

¹ This section was taken from the *Survey of Architectural History in Cambridge, Report Three: Cambridgeport, 1971*.

roommates. In 1990 the proportion of the population residing in group quarters in five other Cambridge neighborhoods exceeded that found in Cambridgeport. These five neighborhoods include the majority of the Harvard and MIT campuses. The number of persons per household in Cambridgeport decreased from 2.11 in 1980 to 2.06 in 1990. This mirrors the trend over the decade both citywide, 2.13 to 2.08, and throughout the United States, 2.76 to 2.63.

Race

The proportion of non-white residents in Cambridgeport increased from 20.9% in 1980 to 28.7% in 1990. During the same period, the proportion of non-white residents in the City of Cambridge increased from 17.7% of the population to 24.9%. In 1990, four of the twelve other Cambridge neighborhoods had a higher number of non-white residents than Cambridgeport and eight had fewer. Between 1980 and 1990, the number of Native Americans residing in Cambridgeport more than tripled, while the number of those residents with Asian ancestry doubled. The proportion of Hispanic residents in Cambridgeport increased from 3.6% in 1980 to 6.4% in 1990, which matches the 1990 citywide percentage.

Place of Birth/Language Characteristics

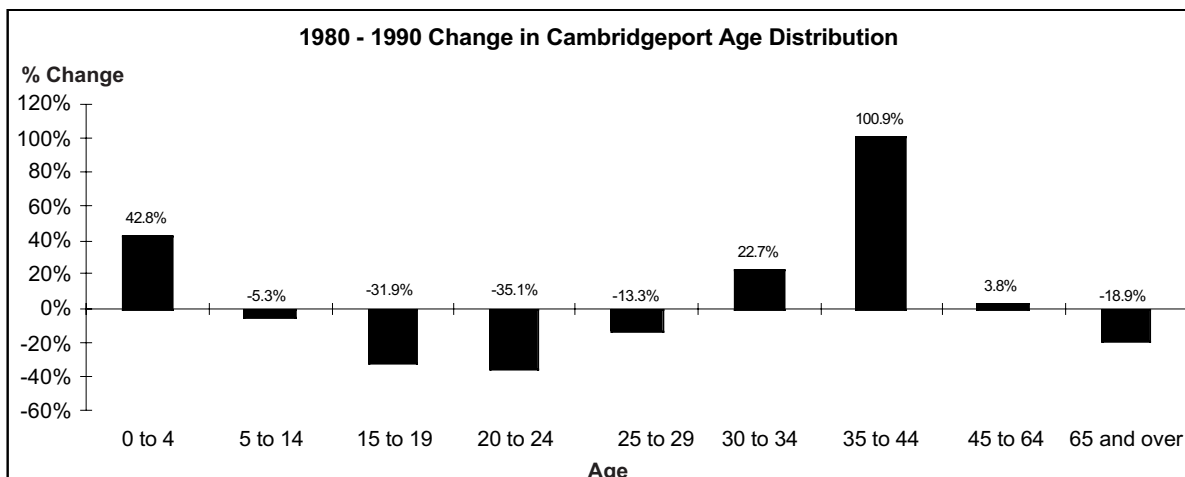
While the number of foreign born Cambridgeport residents decreased slightly from 1980 to 1990, the citywide percentage increased by almost 4%

of the total population. Seven Cambridge neighborhoods housed a larger percentage of foreign born residents in 1990. Six neighborhoods had a larger proportion of residents who primarily speak a language other than English at home.

Despite a decrease in foreign born residents, the proportion of Cambridgeport residents speaking a language other than English at home increased from 14.9% in 1980 to 22.2% in 1990, an increase of more than half and not much different from the citywide 1990 figure of 24.9%. Where an increase in foreign language speakers occurred citywide, it can be attributed to an overall increase in the population of the foreign born. The increase in Cambridgeport could be due to foreign born parents having families and the children speaking the parents' native language while at home.

Age

In comparison to the 1990 citywide population, proportionally more 0 to 5 and 30 to 44 year olds resided in Cambridgeport. These patterns suggest that proportionally more families with young children are to be found in the neighborhood than citywide. The neighborhood experienced an increase of at least 40% in each of these age categories from 1980 to 1990, see *1980-1990 Change in Cambridgeport Age Distribution* graph. Similar, but smaller, increases are evident citywide. During the period from 1980 to 1990 Cambridgeport experienced a population decrease



in the 5 to 29 age range. This suggests an outflow of school age children, college age individuals and those who have recently completed their education. This trend was also found citywide, though it was more pronounced in Cambridgeport. Between 1980 and 1990 there was an 18% decrease of the population over 64 years old in Cambridgeport, compared to an 8% decrease citywide. This is interesting because the neighborhood includes two large Cambridge Housing Authority developments, the Manning Apartments and the LBJ Apartments, which have housed 300 or more elderly throughout the period. The decrease in the elderly population therefore can be attributed to the private housing stock in the neighborhood and the population decrease in that housing stock is proportionally greater than that suggested above.

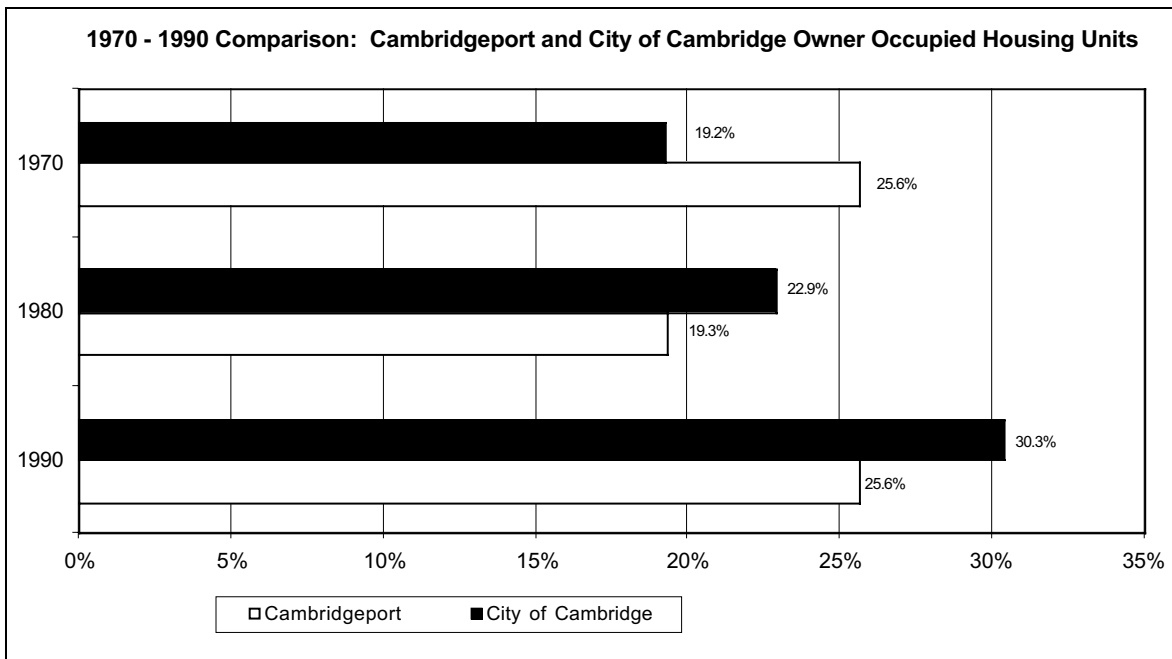
Length of Residency

The proportion of Cambridgeport residents who have lived at the same address for at least five years increased from 39.2% in 1980 to 48.4% in 1990. The proportion for the city as a whole increased by only 2.6% over the same period, to 42.9%. Comparing households that own to households that rent, 62.9% of 1990 households

that own had lived at their Cambridgeport address for five year or more, compared to 40.8% of 1990 households that rent. Among long term Cambridgeport residents, 27.3% of households that own and 5.8% of households that rent had resided at the same location for more than 20 years at the time of the 1990 US Census. In 1990, five of the twelve other Cambridge neighborhoods housed a higher proportion of residents who had resided in the same home five years ago.

Household Tenure

An increase in the level of Cambridgeport homeownership from 1980 to 1990 indicates a community where the stability of the population is increasing. While the same event can be observed citywide, the graph below shows this trend of increasing homeownership that extends over the period 1970 through 1990. In the case of Cambridgeport, the rise in home ownership found in 1990 represents an abrupt reversal of the trend found between 1970 and 1980. In 1990, seven of the twelve other Cambridge neighborhoods included a larger proportion of owner occupied housing units and five neighborhoods included a larger proportion of renter occupied units.



Educational Attainment

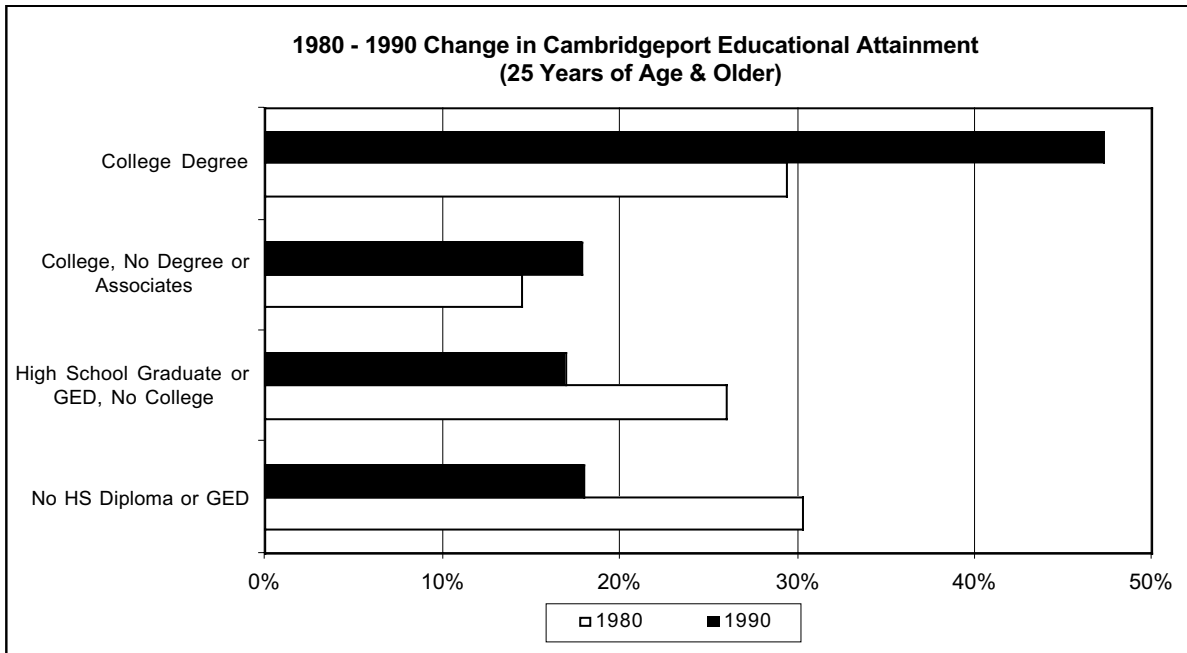
During the period, 1980 to 1990, the proportion of Cambridgeport residents 25 years of age or older with at least a college degree increased by more than half to 47.2%. During the same period, persons 25 years of age or older who had not earned a high school diploma or GED decreased from 30.2% to 18.0%. The same trends were evident citywide over the period 1980 to 1990. However, their magnitude was not as great, which suggests that Cambridgeport underwent a more extreme shift during the decade. Compared to Cambridgeport, six Cambridge neighborhoods in 1990 had a greater proportion of the population over 25 who held a bachelor's degree. Five neighborhoods had a greater proportion of the population over 25 who had not earned either a high school diploma or GED.

Industry and Occupation

The most common occupations among Cambridgeport residents in 1990 included Professional & Specialty, Administrative Support & Clerical and Executive, Administrative & Managerial. The most common occupations citywide included Professional & Specialty, Executive, Administrative & Managerial, and Service Occupations.

Between 1980 and 1990, Cambridgeport residents registered the greatest occupational increases in the categories of Professional & Specialty, Executive, Administrative & Managerial, and Technical & Technical Support, in general, all white collar occupations. The largest Cambridgeport decreases occurred in the categories of Service Occupations, Precision Production & Crafts and Fabricators, Operators & Laborers, in general, all blue-collar occupations. Between 1980 and 1990, citywide increases of at least 18% occurred in Executive, Administrative & Managerial, Professional & Specialty, Technical & Technical Support, and Sales Occupations. All other occupations experienced a decrease in numbers. In 1990 the category employing the largest number of Cambridgeport residents were Education, Other Professional Services and Wholesale & Retail Trade. These categories were also the three largest citywide.

From 1980 to 1990 Cambridgeport experienced almost a threefold increase in employment in the Other Professional Services sector. Other primarily white collar categories, as defined above, experienced increases of more than 35%, including Finance, Insurance & Real Estate, Personal &



Entertainment, and Health. In 1990, Education employed 20.3% of Cambridgeport residents and 26.2% of Cambridge City residents. Other Professions employed 18.1% of Cambridgeport residents and 15.5% of all city residents.

Income

From 1979 to 1989, the median income for all Cambridgeport households increased by 40.5% to \$28,466², while the median family household

income increased by 17.1% to \$32,432³. Thus, in Cambridgeport the gap between these two figures narrowed over the course of the decade.

Citywide, during the period 1979 to 1989, median household income increased by 30.3% to \$33,140⁴ and median family income increased by 25.2% to \$39,990⁵. In 1989, the citywide median household income exceeded the Cambridgeport median household income by 16.4%. A comparable figure for median family income was 23.3%.

² this figure is \$39,852 in 1999 dollars based on the Consumer Price Index (CPI) for the Boston region

³ this figure is \$43,459 in 1999 dollars based on the CPI for the Boston region

⁴ this figure is \$46,396 in 1999 dollars based on the CPI for the Boston region

⁵ this figure is \$53,586 in 1999 dollars based on the CPI for the Boston region



A N A L Y S I S A N D
RECOMMENDATIONS

Housing

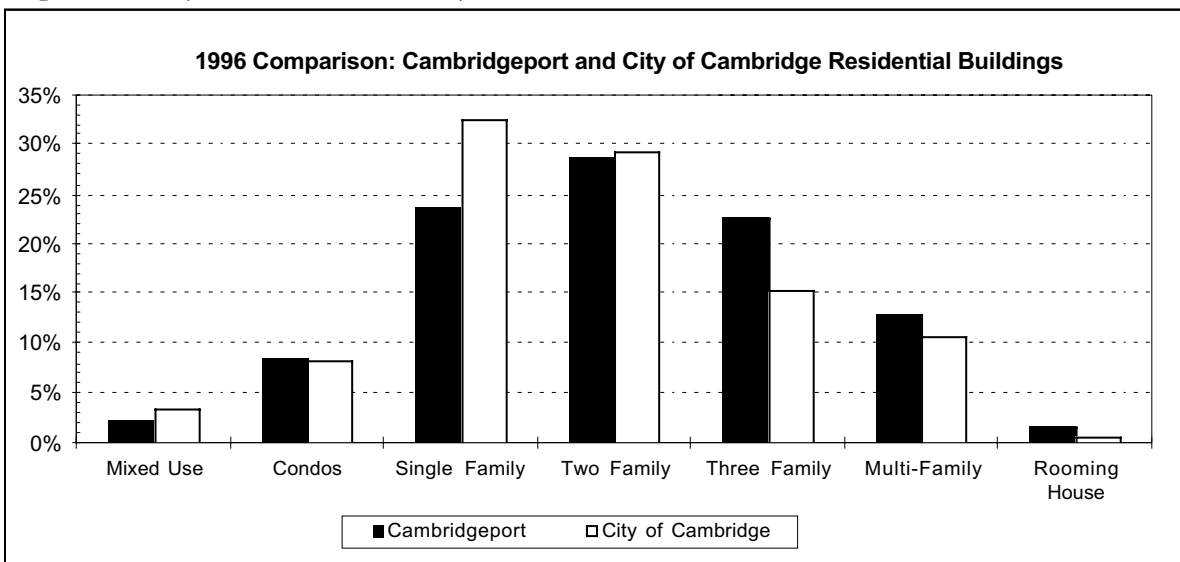
BACKGROUND

Cambridgeport, like most of Cambridge, has many different types of housing. Whereas there are more two family homes in Cambridgeport than any other type of residential buildings, the City of Cambridge has more single family homes than any other type of residential building type (see *1996 Comparison: Cambridgeport and City of Cambridge Residential Buildings* chart). Three family buildings and multifamily buildings are also in abundance in the Cambridgeport neighborhood. These building are what remain from of a once thriving manufacturing center, east and north of the neighborhood.

The majority of multifamily housing built this century in the neighborhood has been three-decker housing, but within the last 50 years the high rise variety has added substantially to the

overall housing stock. Examples of the high rises in the neighborhood are the Lyndon B. Johnson Apartments with 199 units, the Frank J. Manning Apartments with 181 units and 808-812 Memorial Drive at 301 units (only 212 of the 301 units are affordable). These three buildings have approximately 600 housing units or 60% of the affordable units in Cambridgeport. Multifamily buildings in Cambridge house more than one third of all households in the neighborhood.

Presently, a majority of Cambridgeport households are composed of renters. Homeowners comprise approximately 25% of the households in Cambridgeport. This number is smaller than the percentage for the city, which is 30%. Of the renters in Cambridgeport, nearly 75% of them have lived in the house they are currently in for less than 10 years. This also closely follows the



citywide trend of renters in the same location for less than 10 years, which is almost 4/5 of all renter households.

Rent Control

In the early 1970's, Cambridge established a system of rent control that regulated rents and evictions for nearly all rental properties built before 1969. This system was terminated in 1994 by a statewide referendum and was phased out by December 1996. The effects of the end of rent control have been quantified, to some extent, in a Community Development Department telephone survey completed in January 1998. This report was undertaken to "help the city understand and manage the process of change that has occurred and will continue form rent deregulation of a large portion of its housing stock." (*Rent Control Survey, 1998*) Generally, the 1998 telephone survey found that all rents in the city had increased by 36% between the end of 1994 and the summer of 1997. It also estimated that 2/3 of the tenants of decontrolled units had not moved since the end of rent control.

SURVEY RESULTS - HOUSING

Cambridgeport residents were more likely to be renters than homeowners. This was less pronounced as the length of residence increased. Accordingly, the percent of homeownership is higher for the respondents who have lived in the neighborhood longer than 5 years. In addition, the respondents with the highest income were more than twice as likely to be homeowners than the respondents with the lowest income. Among the high income residents approximately 1 in 2 of the group were renters, while 4 in 5 of the low income group are renters.

Rents were found to be substantially lower for those renters who had been in the neighborhood five or more years. Eighty percent of this group had rents less than \$900 month, while approximately 50% of the group which had been in the neighborhood less than five years were paying more than \$900 per month.

Respondents in general were twice as likely to say that rental opportunities were needed as opposed to homeownership opportunities, 37% to 19%, respectively. There was also significant support for low income and moderate income housing in the neighborhood. Approximately 92% of the Hispanic respondents said that they would support this type of housing, while 90% of the African-American respondents and 75% of the white respondents stated they would support it.

Between the 1991 and 1997 telephone survey, there were some changes in attitudes about the housing issues most important to Cambridgeport residents, see *Housing Issues in Cambridgeport by Level of Concern Expressed* table below. Affordable housing for low and moderate-income families has been a high concern in both surveys; the number of respondents who listed this as a major concern was 77% in 1991 and 70% in 1997. In addition, displacement of low income and moderate-income residents due to high rents was a major concern in both 1991 and 1997. Overall, the housing issues with the largest decrease in concern were condominium conversions and townhouse or backyard construction. Although the concern for these items has decreased between the 1991 and 1997 telephone survey, there is still substantial concern for these issues. The following chart shows all of the housing issues of concern.

Housing Issues in Cambridgeport by Level of Concern Expressed

| <i>Issue</i> | <i>Major Concern</i> | <i>Minor Concern</i> | <i>No Concern</i> | <i>Don't Know No Answer</i> |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|-------------------|-----------------------------|
| <i>Rental Prices</i> | 70.2% | 16.5% | 10.0% | 3.3% |
| <i>Displacement Due to High Costs</i> | 65.0% | 20.0% | 6.7% | 8.2% |
| <i>Condition of Housing</i> | 52.0% | 35.2% | 7.3% | 5.5% |
| <i>Housing Prices</i> | 51.2% | 25.4% | 11.4% | 12.0% |
| <i>Condominium Conversion</i> | 27.8% | 35.4% | 21.8% | 15.0% |
| <i>Townhouse/Backyard Construction</i> | 18.5% | 41.7% | 21.9% | 17.9% |

Source: Atlantic Marketing Research, Inc., 1997, Cambridgeport Survey.

Support for Development of Additional Low and Moderate Income Housing in Cambridgeport

| | <i>Support</i> | <i>Don't Support</i> | <i>Don't Know/ No Answer</i> |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|
| All Respondents | 82.5% | 9.6% | 8.0% |
| By Tenure | | | |
| Owners | 71.9% | 17.6% | 10.4% |
| Renters | 87.4% | 5.9% | 6.7% |
| By Age | | | |
| 15-34 | 82.0% | 11.1% | 6.8% |
| 35-44 | 83.9% | 8.6% | 7.5% |
| 45-64 | 82.1% | 8.7% | 9.2% |
| 65+ | 84.1% | 8.8% | 7.1% |
| By Income Level | | | |
| Low | 96.4% | 3.6% | 0.0% |
| Moderate | 91.8% | 1.8% | 6.4% |
| Middle | 74.5% | 13.2% | 12.3% |
| High | 75.7% | 19.1% | 5.2% |

Source: Atlantic Marketing Research, Inc., 1997, Cambridgeport Survey.

Despite the decrease in the amount of respondents listing housing price as a major concern, there was still a majority, 51%, of respondents in 1997 who listed it as a major concern for the neighborhood. A majority of the renters, 74%, expect to own a home in the future. Unfortunately, only 20% think that they will be able to live in Cambridgeport when they finally get in the position to purchase a house.

STUDY COMMITTEE HOUSING DISCUSSION

The Study Committee’s discussion on housing centered on several topics:

1. The need for affordable housing units,
2. The need to promote housing for middle income families,
3. Their definition of “affordable” and finally,
4. Possible funding sources that could be used to help at risk residents.

These topics also turned out to be similar to the list developed by the community as a whole. During the neighborhood forums, meetings where the committee heard from the community, many neighborhood residents echoed these ideas. In addition, diversity of housing stock and diversity of affordable housing opportunities (e.g. rental

and ownership) were also identified as neighborhood concerns.

Affordable housing was a central theme that came up repeatedly throughout their discussions. This was, in part, because rent control had recently been repealed in a statewide referendum.

Acknowledging the repeal of rent control, the Study Committee had several discussions on what to do about the decrease in the number of low and moderate-income people living in the neighborhood. The Study Committee used anecdotal information as well as the telephone survey information to help guide their discussion. In general, the Study Committee members wanted to see the current mix of incomes remain in the neighborhood. They felt that diversity was worth maintaining in their community as it allowed them more opportunities to interact with a variety of different people.

Questions arose concerning the necessity of creating or requiring more affordable housing in Cambridgeport as the 1997 telephone survey showed that there were currently equal percentages of low, moderate, middle and high income residents in the neighborhood. It was generally felt that although there was an even distribution of incomes currently in the neighborhood, this was changing and in the future there might not be such a diversity of incomes if something wasn’t done.

A pattern was also identified in Cambridgeport where the existing housing was being renovated to provide larger units with fewer people living in them. This meant that fewer large families with extended families could live in



Perry Street



Upton Street

Cambridgeport, as there was a reduced amount of housing stock from which to choose. The number of persons per household in Cambridgeport decreased from 2.11 in 1980 to 2.06 in 1990. This mirrors the trend over the decade both citywide, 2.13 to 2.08, and throughout the United States, 2.76 to 2.63.

This discussion also brought about the topic of “affordability” and how best to define it. The Study Committee felt that this was an important definition, as it would help them in their recommendations. Most of the Study Committee members agreed that this definition should include middle as well as moderate-income households. In addition, it was felt that middle income families should be one of the main focuses, as they were most at risk.

The Study Committee felt it necessary to emphasize the need for the city to continue to use its leverage to broker deals with local institutions, banks and the state and federal governments. Specifically, the Study Committee recommended

that the city work with local banks to provide more qualified low and moderate residents with financing so they may become homeowners.

As rent control was completely phased out by the end of 1996, the Study Committee spent many meetings discussing the topic of affordable housing during the study committee process.

Housing Goals

The Study Committee came up with the following list of goals for their neighborhood to help them in defining their housing recommendations:

1. *Maintain the current diversity and affordability* - Currently there are roughly equal portions of low, moderate, middle and high-income peoples living in Cambridgeport. The Study Committee seemed to like this mix and wanted to help preserve the number and type of people living in the neighborhood.
2. *Preserve the range of affordable options* - The idea here was to make sure that low income households and moderate income households were given opportunities equally so that neither group was left out of the housing market in Cambridgeport.
3. *Target outreach efforts to populations in need.* - The populations in need may not be the lowest income people. The Study Committee members thought that there could be a growing number of people who were of moderate income whose rents were going up and were being forced out of the neighborhood because of their inability to afford the rising rents or qualify for subsidized housing.

Federal, State and Cambridge Income Limits for Housing Programs* as of March 2000

| Household Size | 50% of Median (Low Income) | 60% of Median | 80% of Median (Moderate Income) | 95 % of Median | 100% of Median |
|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|----------------------|--|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| 1 persons | \$22,950 | \$27,500 | \$35,150 | \$43,600 | \$45,900 |
| 2 persons | \$26,200 | \$31,400 | \$40,150 | \$49,800 | \$52,400 |
| 3 persons | \$29,500 | \$35,400 | \$45,200 | \$56,050 | \$59,000 |
| 4 persons | \$32,750 | \$39,300 | \$50,200 | \$62,200 | \$59,000 |
| 5 persons | \$35,350 | \$42,400 | \$54,200 | \$67,150 | \$70,700 |
| 6 persons | \$38,000 | \$45,600 | \$58,250 | \$72,200 | \$76,000 |
| 7 persons | \$40,600 | \$48,700 | \$62,250 | \$77,150 | \$81,200 |
| 8 persons | \$43,250 | \$51,900 | \$66,250 | \$82,200 | \$86,500 |

* These limits are determined by the U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, and are subject to change.

-
4. *Information on homeownership/rental opportunities and programs should be presented in various languages and should utilize various media types.* - Because some of the low/moderate income families in Cambridgeport do not speak or read English they may not be aware of the housing programs which are being offered to them. Outreach efforts should be made to them in a variety of languages and in various locations to try and inform these populations of assistance that they may need.
 5. *Provide for growing families by maintaining a variety of low and moderate-income housing properties.* - This idea was introduced by one of the members of the public who made the point that families were not static and they needed to be able to grow and live in Cambridgeport without being restricted by the number and type of housing which was available in neighborhood. This could be addressed by providing a variety of housing unit sizes to meet the needs of the differing housing types.
 6. *Bring back the “sweat” equity programs from the 1970s where the people who were to live in the affordable housing would provide their time and*

energy in renovating and maintaining the units. - The idea of “sweat” equity programs was a popular initiative in the 1970s to help instill a sense of pride in ones place of residence and to help keep the cost of renovation down. The idea has since lost its appeal, but maybe this is the time to give it another try.

7. *Information on homeownership/rental opportunities and programs should be presented in various languages and should utilize various media types.* - Because some of the low/moderate income families in Cambridgeport do not speak or read English they may not be aware of the housing programs which are being offered to them. Outreach efforts should be made to them in a variety of languages and in various locations to try and inform these populations of assistance that they may need.
8. *Maintain the current mix of low and moderate income housing in the neighborhood.* - Preserving the current mix of low, moderate, middle income families in the neighborhood is one of the main points which was echoed by all of the Study Committee members.

Housing Recommendations

-
1. The city should require that all large-scale residential and mixed-use developments in Cambridgeport, similar to 680 Memorial Drive (Polaroid site) and 664 Massachusetts Avenue (Holmes site), provide at least 25% of their units as affordable. These affordable units should be for a mixture of low-income and moderate-income tenants. In recognition of the fact that trade-offs may be necessary for developers to offset the cost of affordable units, the Study Committee would support density bonuses. *During the neighborhood study process the Cambridge Planning Board recommended to the City Council approval of a 15% inclusionary zoning amendment to the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. This Ordinance affects all residential projects of 10 units or more. The City Council adopted this provision to the Zoning Ordinance in March 1998.*
 2. The Study Committee believes that the housing developments proposed in Cambridgeport should reflect the neighborhood in terms of the current tenure, e.g. homeowners and renters. This mix should be required in new developments so that it reflects the current diversity of the surrounding Cambridgeport neighborhood.
 3. The city should use its municipal bond authority to raise a large capital pool for the development of low and moderate-income residential housing in Cambridgeport. The city should also develop better relationships with private lending organizations in order to help provide financing for new housing in Cambridge.
 4. The city should continue to invest in the non-profit housing development organizations that provide affordable housing in Cambridge because they have been very effective in leveraging the money given to them by the city and other sources.
 5. New developments in Cambridgeport should complement the existing neighborhood character and this should be ensured with a comprehensive design review process that involves the community. Among other things, this process could help ensure that projects “fit in” and maintain the current mix of buildings constructed in the neighborhood.
 6. Encourage the rehabilitation of old buildings where possible to help preserve the neighborhood character and reduce costs.
 7. The Study Committee recommends that the Planning Board require that all residential phases of University Park include an affordable housing component. The Study Committee suggested that each new building reserve at least 25% of the units as affordable to low and moderate income people. *Affordable housing components of University Park are located in Auburn Court Phases I & II and Kennedy Biscuit Lofts. This low/moderate income affordable housing comprises 25% of all residential units planned at University Park.*



Land Use and Zoning

BACKGROUND

The City employs a variety of techniques to regulate changes in the built environment. They include the zoning code, the building code, historic conservation districts and regulations governing flood plains, wetlands and other environmentally sensitive areas. While the City's Zoning Ordinance is the clearest statement of land use policy, it cannot encompass all of the problems that arise from late twentieth century development in a nineteenth century (or earlier) environment. The quality of the built environment — and the quality of urban life more generally — also depends on factors such as landscaping, scale, materials and building design, as well as the integration of open space and pedestrian connections with buildings. Only

small portions of the City, such as University Park, are regulated by specific design and development standards.

For zoning purposes, the city is divided into 39 discrete zones to control land development through requirements governing setbacks, height, density, use, open space, parking quantity and signage. The following zones are in effect in Cambridgeport (*see Cambridgeport Neighborhood Zoning Map, on page 6*): Residence C, Residence C-1, Residence C-2A, Residence C-3, Office-3, Business A-1, Business A, Business BB, Business B, Special District 5, Special District 6, Special District 7, Special District 8, Special District 9, Special District 10, Open Space and the Cambridgeport Revitalization Development District.

Residential Districts

| Zone | Description | FAR | Maximum Height | Minimum Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit | Maximum Dwelling Units Per Acre |
|-------------|--|-------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| <i>C</i> | <i>Residence, multifamily</i> | <i>0.6</i> | <i>35 ft.</i> | <i>1800 sq. ft.</i> | <i>24</i> |
| <i>C-1</i> | <i>Residence, multifamily, Apt. and dorms</i> | <i>0.75</i> | <i>35 ft.</i> | <i>1500 sq. ft.</i> | <i>29</i> |
| <i>C-2A</i> | <i>Residence, multifamily</i> | <i>2.5</i> | <i>60 ft.</i> | <i>300 sq. ft.</i> | <i>145</i> |
| <i>C-3</i> | <i>Residence, multifamily, high rise buildings</i> | <i>3</i> | <i>120 ft.</i> | <i>300 sq. ft.</i> | <i>145</i> |

Office District

| Zone | Description | FAR | Maximum Height | Minimum Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit | Maximum Dwelling Units Per Acre |
|-------------|--|------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| <i>O-3</i> | <i>Offices and multifamily housing</i> | <i>3.0</i> | <i>120 ft.</i> | <i>300 sq. ft.</i> | <i>145</i> |

Business Districts

| Zone | Description | FAR | Maximum Height | Minimum Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit | Maximum Dwelling Units Per Acre |
|-------------|---|------------|-----------------------|---|--|
| BA | Business / Residential | 1.0 / 1.75 | 35 / 45 ft. | - / 600 sq. ft. | 72 |
| BA-1 | Business / Residential | 1.0 / .75 | 35 / 35 ft. | - / 1500 sq. ft. | 29 |
| BB | Office, retail businesses, high rise residential, multifamily | 4.0 | 120 ft. | 300 sq. ft. | 145 |

Other Districts

| Zone | Description | FAR | Maximum Height | Minimum Lot Area Per Dwelling Unit | Maximum Dwelling Units Per Acre |
|-------------|---|------------------------|-------------------------------|---|--|
| CRDD | University Park mixed use development | varies | varies from 70 ft. to 225 ft. | N/A | N/A (min. 400 total units) |
| OS | Open Space | 0.25 | 35 ft. | - | - |
| SD-5 | Transitional residential use area | 1.5 (up to 2.0 w/ SP) | 85 ft. (up to 100 ft. w/ SP) | 600 sq. ft. | 72 |
| SD-6 | Residence, multifamily, high rise buildings | 3.0 | 120 ft. | 300 sq. ft. | 145 |
| SD-7 | Business, retail, office buildings, and residence | 3.0 (up to 3.75 w/ SP) | 55 ft. | 300 sq. ft. | 145 |
| SD-8 | Industrial, dormitory, residential use | 1.25 (up to 1.75 w/SP) | varies from 45 ft. to 60 ft. | 500 sq. ft. | 87 |
| SD-9 | Transitional residential use area | 0.6 | 35 ft. | 1,800 sq. ft. | 24 |
| SD-10 | Transitional residential use area | 0.6 | 35 ft. | 1,800 sq. ft. | 24 |

While the City and citizen groups have attempted to match what is allowed under zoning with what exists on the ground, the actual built environment in these zones is the product of historic evolution in regulatory standards, design styles, demographics and the cycles of the real estate market. It should not be assumed in every case that what the applicable zoning district allows is what is seen “on the street”. Also, the same regulations may produce vastly different results in diverse settings, given differences in context and scale.

Most of the zoning districts in Cambridgeport have been changed within the past fifteen years.

The following chart, *Cambridgeport Zoning Changes Since 1986*, lists the changes that have occurred in the last two decades.



Industrial residential mix

Cambridgeport Zoning Changes Since 1986

| Zone | Date | Rezoning Process |
|---|-------------|---|
| <i>Residence C-2A</i> | <i>1986</i> | <i>Project Proponent Petition - rezoned from Industry B</i> |
| <i>Residence C</i> | <i>1987</i> | <i>Resident Petition - rezoned from a Residence C-1 zone</i> |
| <i>Residence B</i> | <i>1988</i> | <i>Salem/Watson/Brookline Streets changed from Residence C to Residence B.</i> |
| <i>Cambridgeport Revitalization Development District</i> | <i>1988</i> | <i>Resident/City proposal to rezone this area from industrial to a mixed development district which only applies to this location. In addition, it established urban design guidelines and traffic volume maximums for the project.</i> |
| <i>Special Districts: 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10(F), 10(H), 11</i> | <i>1992</i> | <i>Resident Petition - city staff and rezoned this area to these special districts</i> |
| <i>Office C-3</i> | <i>1997</i> | <i>Resident petition made citywide changes in several zones. This zone was given a height limitation at 120 ft. There was no previous height limitation.</i> |
| <i>Residence C-3</i> | <i>1997</i> | <i>Resident petition made citywide changes in several zones. This zone was given a height limitation at 120 ft. There was no previous height limitation.</i> |
| <i>Business A</i> | <i>1997</i> | <i>Resident petition made citywide changes in several zones. This zone, in particular, had its height capped at 45 ft.</i> |
| <i>Open Space</i> | <i>1998</i> | <i>At City staff recommendation, the City Council adopted a change to the zoning map that rezoned all city owned parks as Open Space.</i> |
| <i>Residence C-1</i> | <i>1999</i> | <i>City staff proposal changed minimum allowable lot area per dwelling unit from 1200 sq. ft. to 1500 sq. ft.</i> |

During the last 13 years there have been three major zoning changes in the Cambridgeport neighborhood. These zoning changes primarily affected nearly all of the land in Cambridgeport. The first of these zoning changes occurred in 1987 and resulted in the creation of the Residence C zone.

Another significant change in zoning that occurred in Cambridgeport was the result of a Blue Ribbon Commission report published in 1986. This change in zoning occurred in 1988 and established the Cambridgeport Revitalization Development District (CRDD) and was the first major one that was focused primarily on the Cambridgeport industrial district. Many factors led to the changing of this district from a predominantly industrial one to a mixed-use development. This area, once owned by the Simplex Wire Company, was bought in the 1970s by MIT whose main interest was in creating an urban research and development campus to complement their academic campus to the east and north. Public concerns about the lack of diversity of job opportunities, density, height and afford-

able housing prompted the city to enter into an agreement with MIT and Forest City Development. Through these discussions design guidelines were agreed upon and thresholds concerning heights, allowable vehicular trips, parking spaces and affordable housing were also created using the Blue Ribbon Commission Report as a guide. The CRDD established design guidelines, residential and non-residential use thresholds, height and density limits, traffic volume limits and parking space requirements.

The final major rezoning occurred in 1992 and concerns the area just south of Pacific Street and east of Waverly Street. Once a thriving industrial district, in the 1970s the industries had all but left the City and there was concern that this area would become blighted. Planning Board and citizen initiatives were begun in early 1990s so the zoning could be changed to something that more accurately reflected the nearby residential character of Cambridgeport. As there were a myriad of complex issues involved, a decision was made to separate this area into several different zoning districts. Businesses were also allowed in the

district and this area is now the home of many small and medium sized biotech and software companies as well as increasing conversion to residential uses.

SURVEY RESULTS - LAND USE AND ZONING

There was a significant change in the opinions expressed in the 1991 telephone survey and the 1997 telephone survey concerning development issues. In the 1997, 51% of the respondents felt that the effects of new development activity were positive. This is contrasted with only 33% saying the same thing in 1991. Also surprising was the decline in the number of respondents saying that the development would have a negative effect on the neighborhood. In 1997 the number was 9%, while the 1991 figure was 32%. Of the respondents in 1997, homeowners felt more strongly than renters that the effects of development were positive, 60% vs. 47% respectively. The more educated the respondent the more likely they were to feel that the effects of development were positive. Of the respondents who indicated they only had some high school education, only 39% felt the effects of development were positive, while nearly half, 52%, of the post college degree respondents felt that effects of development were positive. Most of the respondents, 42%, felt that MIT had an overall positive impact on the neighborhood. This is even more pronounced because only 15% of the survey respondents felt that MIT had a negative impact on the neighborhood. These numbers were somewhat different in 1991 with 39% of the respondents saying MIT had a positive impact and 28% saying it was a negative impact. Despite the seemingly positive outlook on development in Cambridgeport, 71% of the respondents felt that they didn't know enough about development plans in their neighborhood. This number was very similar to the 1991 figure of 75%.

STUDY COMMITTEE LAND USE AND ZONING DISCUSSION

The Study Committee's discussion on land use and zoning encompassed numerous topics, as there were many complex issues to be considered. They discussed issues such as preferences for the pattern of development in and around the neighborhood, several currently proposed projects and some possible zoning changes that they felt were necessary in Cambridgeport.

The vision for the neighborhood the Study Committee decided upon was that of diversity. They all expressed a desire to maintain a mixture of building types and uses in their neighborhood. Through their discussions the Study Committee also realized the consequence of their desire for building type and land use diversity. Conflicts between land uses were the primary consequence of allowing a variety of land uses within close proximity to each other. The Study Committee also discussed the need for better transitions that would help mitigate the impacts of these different uses.

Despite their desire for diversity in the building types and land uses in the neighborhood, the Study Committee also had some reservations about the larger developments occurring on the periphery of the neighborhood. The Study Committee felt that these projects had the potential to substantially impacting the adjacent residential neighborhood. The Study Committee didn't fully engage these projects individually. Parallel community processes, project complexities and Study Committee time constraints made detailed review of these projects unfeasible.

The project or proposals which were introduced or were in the process of obtaining city approvals included: University Park, Polaroid at 640 Memorial Drive, Bread and Circus Supermarket on River Street, the dormitories planned by

MIT on Pacific Street, and the Holmes Site. Although their discussions were not exhaustive the Study Committee did have some specific concerns which they believed needed to be addressed.

University Park

Study Committee members saw the University Park project, which is currently entering its fourth and final phase of completion, as being the project that would have the largest impact on their community. There were concerns over traffic congestion, affordable housing opportunities, gentrification, building density and mass and infrastructure capacities.

Study Committee members believed that more affordable housing opportunities could be provided for at University Park because more market rate housing was being proposed during the last phase. Their discussion on the issue of increased affordable housing was the most in-depth discussion the Study Committee had concerning this project. An ongoing Planning Board review process and time constraints on the neighborhood study process were the main reasons the Study Committee didn't discuss the entire University Park development in detail.

The Study Committee expressed their disappointment in the city not requiring better transitions with regard to height and density between the University Park development and the nearby residential neighborhood. Though

they did have several discussions concerning the University Park development they were undecided if it was an appropriate project in that location.

Polaroid

During the study committee process, Polaroid announced their plans to renovate their property located at 605 Memorial Drive. Briefly, the proposal included office space, a 400 space-parking garage, and market rate housing⁶. The Study Committee didn't discuss the specifics of this project but they did discuss how to alleviate some of the impacts that will be attributed to this development. This discussion centered on changing the requirements of the Office 3 zoning, transitions and affordable housing requirements. The Study Committee also discussed transportation issues. These issues ranged from adding traffic signals at Pleasant Street and Memorial Drive to the utilization of electric buses in the neighborhood. Out of the Study Committee's discussion of developments in the neighborhood came a recommendation for more public notice and public comments on all commercial and mixed use projects which have impacts on the surrounding residential neighborhood.

After reviewing the Riverside Neighborhood Study recommendations concerning the rezoning of the Office 3 zone, the Study Committee decided to add this recommendation to their own report.

⁶In response to concerns raised by neighborhood residents, the proposal was changed to 96,000 sq. ft of additional office space being allowed, 289 parking spaces and 120 residential units. In November 1999, the Planning Board issued its approval of this plan.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

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1. The study committee recommends that the following parks in Cambridgeport should be zoned as Open Space: Hastings Square, Alberico Park on Allston Street, Lopez Street Tot Lot and Fullerton Park between Peters Street and Sidney Street. This change was not made in the previous citywide rezoning and this omission should be corrected.
 2. The Study Committee recommends that the city consider rezoning in an organized way in order to help support neighborhood clusters of businesses. Areas of concentration:
 - Brookline and Putnam
 - Pearl (between William and Lopez Streets)
 - Pearl and Putnam
 - Brookline Street and Sidney Street (lower Cambridgeport)
 - River Street
 3. The Study Committee recommends that overlay districts should be proposed along Memorial Drive to ensure that the scale of development along this roadway is of an appropriate size to the nearby residential neighborhoods. In addition, to ensure that neighborhood residents are aware of these projects, the Study Committee proposes that two overlay districts are created and the base Office 3 zone be studied so appropriate changes can be made. These overlay districts would be included in the Large Project Review Process, to ensure that the public would be notified when development over 20,000-sq. ft. is being proposed in the area.
 - a) The River Street Overlay District is described as extending from Memorial Drive to the Central Square Overlay District along River Street.
 - b) The Lower Cambridgeport Overlay District is described as extending from Magazine Street to River Street along Memorial Drive.
 - c) Study the Office 3 zone (along Memorial Drive)
Consider new zoning which would:
 - limit the overall heights allowed in the district, as well as limit scale and density;
 - permit mixed residential, commercial and office uses; and
 - encourage residential uses along the neighborhood edge.Create an urban design plan to accompany any new zoning which would:
 - place buildings with greater density and massing nearer to the Charles River/Memorial Drive side of the zoning district and away from the neighborhood, thus providing a smooth transition between this district and the abutting residential area:
 - limit heights along the edge of the residential neighborhood to match or complement those of the neighborhood;

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- Provide adequate set backs to reduce shadows and to protect the Charles River bank from inappropriate visual intrusions.
4. The Study Committee recommends that the city incorporate transition zones that recognize the density and height conflicts between the various zones and propose ways to reduce the negative impacts to abutters.
 5. The Study Committee recommends that the Planning Board require that all residential

phases of University Park include an affordable housing component. The Study Committee suggested that each new building reserve at least 25% of the units as affordable to low and moderate income people. *Affordable housing components of University Park are located in Auburn Court Phases I & II and Kennedy Biscuit Lofts. This low/moderate income affordable housing comprises 25% of all residential units planned at University Park.*

Urban Design

BACKGROUND

Cambridgeport, like many of the other neighborhoods in Cambridge, features a dense residential core. Unlike most of Cambridge, however, this neighborhood has an industrial/mixed use periphery that has seen several developments being constructed in the 1990's. While there are still numerous businesses in the eastern section of the neighborhood, there are a growing number of residences also locating there. In the past 20 years, the changes that have occurred in the eastern section of the neighborhood have spurred many debates on how development in the neighborhood should proceed. Although these debates had many components, there were only a few major issues. Among them were affordable housing, overall density and height of the proposed developments, and traffic volumes. Through these debates also came rezonings in various parts of Cambridgeport and the establishment of development guidelines for University Park.

Residents in Cambridgeport and throughout the city are also finding that there is a need for more streetscape design and maintenance of the sidewalks and other public areas. Maintenance, such as pruning and removal of dead trees on public streets, is an issue in the city that concerns many residents.

In addition, there are two transportation initiatives that have urban design components. These are the redesign of Central Square that began in 1993 and improvements to the River Street corridor. The goal of the Central Square

redesign work was to create a more organized roadway as well as to improve the pedestrian experience in Central Square. The project was funded by the city and there were numerous public meetings and public input was frequently requested. Although there have been some criticisms of the redesign project, the overall view of the project is positive.

The other urban design issue related to transportation is the River Street corridor. As River Street is a main route into the city from the Massachusetts Pike and Memorial Drive, this roadway corridor is seen as one of the main "entrances" into Cambridge. In the past few years, City Councilors have discussed with some frequency the improvement or beautification of the entrances to the city. This beautification was also included in the Riverside Neighborhood Study Report.

SURVEY RESULTS - URBAN DESIGN

Almost half of the respondents who were living in the neighborhood for 5 years or longer said that their neighborhood quality is the same as it was 5 years ago. A little over third of the respondents who have lived in the neighborhood 5 years or more stated that the neighborhood is better than it was five years ago and 14% stated that it was a worse place to live. Comparing these last two figures with the 1991 survey data shows that the respondents who said it was a worse place to live dropped from 27% in 1991 to 14% in 1997. Among the respondents with a college education there was an even split between those who felt

the neighborhood quality was better and those who thought it was the same. Those respondents with only a high school education or less were the group which felt that the neighborhood quality was either the same or worse than it was 5 years ago.

A question was also asked about the respondents' opinion of future of the neighborhood and whether the expectations were positive or not. Over 60% of the respondents stated that they believed the quality of life in the their neighborhood would improve somewhat or greatly.

STUDY COMMITTEE URBAN DESIGN DISCUSSION

As a topic of discussion, urban design was often associated with other issues such as open space, transitions between land uses and also land use and zoning. The Study Committee members often noted how they enjoyed the variety of building types and uses in their neighborhood. They feel that this diversity is an essential part of their neighborhood.

Another essential part of their neighborhood is River Street's role as an entrance or gateway into the city from Interstate 90 (Massachusetts Turnpike) and also into the Cambridgeport neighborhood itself. The Study Committee wanted the city to create a formal entrance near the corner of River Street and Memorial Drive to acknowledge this entry location. They also believed that the whole of River Street should be improved to appropriately welcome people to Cambridge.



Sidewalk along Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square

Many committee members appreciated the diversity of architectural styles, land uses and densities coexisting with each other in Cambridgeport. They expressed a desire to see these things maintained in the neighborhood as they were all an integral part of their everyday experience. The historic nature of this part of Cambridgeport was not lost in the Study Committee's discussion either. Study Committee members frequently noted the historic qualities of neighborhood streets like Magazine and Putnam Avenue. Most of the Study Committee members felt that older buildings, including industrial buildings, should be renovated and reused. Most of the Study Committee also wanted to see the mixture of land uses maintained, but realized that it was difficult to know what the businesses concerns were since the businesses had not been surveyed. Since the Study Committee couldn't get this information they remained undecided on how to best maintain businesses in their neighborhood. They also discussed transitions between land uses and how this affected the neighborhood. This topic was generally referenced in the recommendations, but the Study Committee didn't come to consensus on how to transition between different uses.

Urban design issues concerning the development at University Park came up on numerous occasions and in the neighborhood forum several neighborhood residents raised questions as to why the Study Committee didn't specifically address this project in their recommendations. Study Committee members had several cursory discussions of the University Park development and realized that they needed more information to have an in-depth discussion on this complex topic. The Study Committee also felt that there were parallel processes for this project, which were more appropriate venues for discussing it. City Staff felt that this issue was too complex to adequately discuss in the time allotted for the neighborhood study process. They also suggested that those residents who wanted to be involved should attend the Planning Board meetings as the upcoming phases of the University Park development will be discussed.

River Street is the main route from the Massachusetts Pike, U.S. I-90, into Cambridge. During the past decade, there has been some discussion over the need to make River Street a “gateway” or “entrance” into the city. During the neighborhood forums, some residents thought that this would be a waste of taxpayer money while others felt that it is important to welcome visitors and adequately announce one’s entrance into Cambridge. Though several discussions the Study Committee came up with the recommendation to make improvements to the streetscape such as adding more trees and improved sidewalks and possibly placing a sign at Riverside Press Park. They agreed that announcing the entrance to Cambridge was important and needed to be done appropriately. There were also a few members who wanted some improvements to occur at the River Street Bridge as well. As the city doesn’t own the bridge, city staff stated that the study committee members could make recommendations on improvements to the bridge and these recommendations could be forwarded to the Metropolitan District Commission.

Another issue that came up during the Study Committee’s meeting was that of connectivity –

connecting hard to access areas of the neighborhood to the main residential neighborhood. Several Study Committee members believed that there needed to be improved connections between open/public spaces and the housing development at 808-812 Memorial Drive. In addition, lighting came up in a tangential discussion and the Study Committee decided that the main emphasis should be on the pedestrian experience. Furthermore, they felt that tree maintenance was essential to ensure the effectiveness of the light fixtures.

In both the neighborhood forums and during regular meetings, suggestions were made on how to create a more accessible connection to 808 Memorial Drive. Some members felt that there could be a pathway behind the future Bread and Circus on the corner of Putnam and River Streets. Others felt that the new Polaroid development should include a pathway that links the rest of the neighborhood to the 808 Memorial Drive housing development or to Memorial Drive. Additional comments were also made in the neighborhood forums concerning accessibility to Ft. Washington Park from the neighborhood and to the University Park open space.

Urban Design Recommendations

1. Create a more welcoming entrance to the City of Cambridge on River Street.
2. River Street Bridge improvements - It should match character/ appearance of other bridges, needs to be renovated. It is a generic looking bridge in comparison to other bridges in Cambridge.
3. Strengthen physical and visual links between important nodes, i.e. Central Square and Magazine Beach, 808-812 Memorial Drive and the rest of the residential neighborhood in Cambridgeport, Ft. Washington and the neighborhood - use trees, dedicated paths, lighting, etc.
4. Increase the maintenance of the street trees in Cambridgeport, too many dead trees and trees with broken limbs which go unfixed in the neighborhood.
5. Trees should be planted on the sidewalks and in parks in the neighborhood as replacements for ones that have died. A citywide program to replace trees should be implemented by the city after inventorying the species that are currently growing on our streets and in our parks. *A Street tree inventory was completed in 1996. A park tree inventory has not be undertaken to date.*
6. Ensure that lighting throughout the neighborhood balances the need for safety with protection against unnecessary and wasteful light pollution. All street and building lighting should be focused downward not necessary outward or upward. Emphasize pedestrian oriented lighting where feasible.
7. Emphasize transitions between land uses such as residential and commercial and residential and industrial with the use of trees, short hedges and changes in level. Increase the open space requirement through zoning, especially in “transition” areas.

Transportation

BACKGROUND

Increasingly the impact of automobile traffic has become a pivotal planning issue, particularly in dense city neighborhoods such as Cambridgeport. Traffic volumes, parking availability and travel mode choice all affect the quality of life in the city. The City plays a critical role in transportation planning through policies, ordinances and construction of transportation facilities.

The key challenge for the city is to enhance mobility while at the same time limiting the reliance on automobiles and their negative effect on the quality of the life in the city. How can mobility needs be met without diminishing the essential qualities of Cambridge and its neighborhoods? How can the quality of life in the city be improved through planning transportation? Auto traffic continues to increase both from regional commuters traveling through Cambridge and from greater auto use within the city by both residents and employees. The city's Growth Policy document assumes that any improvements to the roadway network should be aimed at redirecting traffic away from and reducing traffic speed on neighborhood streets. The city's Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance also directs the city to reduce the number of single occupant vehicle trips, expand non-automobile forms of transportation, and encouraging new development near public transit nodes. Expanding options for travel – by public transit, foot, bicycle, etc. is the best way of enhancing mobility.

In November 1998, the City passed the Parking and Transportation Demand Manage-

ment (PTDM) Ordinance, which requires non-residential development that seeks to build parking to commit to a maximum percentage of employees, customers, and visitors that will arrive via single occupant vehicle. Developers must have their plans for meeting these aggressive targets prior to obtaining a building permit and are required to monitor and report their performance annually. These plans are helping to reverse commuting trends in Cambridge by providing options to employees and customers and holding property owners responsible for the success of these measures.

There are many economic and social factors that contribute to a greater reliance on the automobile for both work and non-work trips. For example, changing employment has resulted in an increase of traffic. In the past two decades, Cambridge has become a regional employment center. Whereas in 1970 residents of Cambridge or abutting towns filled over 70% of local jobs, by 1990 that figure had fallen to 57%. More Cambridge residents, in turn, commute greater distances to their jobs outside Cambridge. The separation of places of work from residence, and the dispersion of work places, has made use of public transit or carpooling less convenient for people. Regional growth has also resulted in more vehicle trips that neither originate nor terminate in Cambridge; e.g. 60% of traffic through Cambridge from Route 2 does not have destinations in Cambridge.

It should also be noted that work trips are only 20% of all trips. According to the U.S.

Census, the proportion of Cambridge employees driving alone — who may live here or elsewhere — increased, from 43% in 1980 to 52% in 1990, while the percentage using car or van pools or transit declined. Meanwhile, Cambridge residents — who may work here or elsewhere — are more likely to use single occupancy vehicles: their numbers grew from 32% to 39% of the resident labor force during the decade.

Cambridgeport

Cambridgeport is a neighborhood in close proximity to MIT and Central Square and has undergone many changes in the past 20 years as former industrial areas were converted into a variety of uses. The largest development in Cambridgeport is University Park; a 27-acre mixed use project that is being developed in phases. Currently, out of a total 2,300,000 sq. ft of allowable residential and commercial development, 1,220,000-sq. ft. has been built. Discussions began early in the design phase of this project to understand and deal with traffic impacts on the neighborhood from this development.

To mitigate the traffic impacts of University Park on the Cambridgeport neighborhood, the City along with MIT and Forest City Development, the owners of the project, agreed to develop and implement a traffic mitigation plan. The Cambridgeport Roadways Committee was formed to develop a traffic mitigation plan for the eastern half of Cambridgeport. The Cambridgeport Roadways Committee has worked with city staff since 1996 to design a plan with the goal of moving current and future University Park and other through traffic to the eastern section of Cambridgeport onto less residential streets (see Appendix II). This proposal currently includes roadway reconstruction of Sidney Street and Waverly Street and changing both to opposing one way streets to improve traffic flow in the eastern part of Cambridgeport. In addition, Waverly Street will be extended to Brookline Street and Sidney Street will be connected to the new Waverly Street extension (see Appendix II). The city has implemented a traffic monitoring program in the neighborhood, which will continue

after the Cambridgeport Roadway is built, to monitor the results of the project. An additional commitment made during this project is to make changes to Brookline Street upon the construction of the project including changes to parking and traffic calming, with the goal of reinforcing the residential nature of the street.

SURVEY RESULTS - TRANSPORTATION

A little more than half (52%) of the respondents in the 1997 survey felt that the availability of parking was the most important issue for Cambridgeport. Although this number is significant, it is a decrease from the 1991 survey, when 63% of the respondents felt that parking was the most important concern in Cambridgeport. Another concern important to the neighborhood was traffic congestion, but again this concern decreased in overall importance between the 1991 and 1997 telephone surveys. In 1991, just over half of the respondents listed traffic congestion as a major issue. By 1997 the number of respondents who listed traffic congestion as a major issue had decreased to 43%.

The concern over the availability of public transportation decreased from 1991 to 1997, 34% to 25% respectively. This decrease may likely correspond to the increase of automobiles registered in the city in the decade from 1980 to 1990.

Very few respondents use public transportation to get to any of the local grocery stores. After driving, the most popular method to get to a grocery store is walking.

In the Massachusetts Avenue vicinity, traffic congestion was listed as concern by 90% of the respondents. Also high on the list was crime, parking and street cleanliness.



Crosswalk on Massachusetts Avenue in Central Square

Even though the percentages decreased between 1991 and 1997, concerns about the increase of traffic, noise, congestion and the reduction of available parking were among concerns mentioned most frequently by survey respondents.

STUDY COMMITTEE TRANSPORTATION DISCUSSION

The Study Committee grappled with the complex set of transportation issues throughout much of the neighborhood study process. Several goals were established for the neighborhood during these discussions:

- The study committee wanted to deter “cut-through” non-residential traffic through the residential section of the neighborhood.
- They also wanted to make neighborhood streets safer for all users; especially pedestrians, bicyclists, and other non-vehicular modes of travel.
- Maintaining current parking capacity on neighborhood streets and dealing with problem intersections in an around Cambridgeport were also important.

The Study Committee also decided to comment on the issue of truck traffic and the Urban Ring proposal, as these were discussions being held throughout the city. They were also very concerned about the traffic volumes on residential streets during peak hours. Neighborhood residents echoed this concern about traffic volumes in several of the neighborhood forums.

Traffic and Safety on Neighborhood Streets

In light of the continued build-out of University Park and the continuing design of the Cambridgeport Roadways Project, the Study Committee emphasized the need to keep “cut-through” traffic away from the residential section of Cambridgeport.

Some Study Committee members felt that University Park should not be allowed to construct any more buildings until after the construction of the Cambridgeport Roadways Project. Other Study Committee members however, felt that construction at University Park could con-

tinue with the other phases concurrently with the design and construction of the Cambridgeport Roadways Project. Study Committee members also had a difference of opinion with regard to the Cambridgeport Roadways Project design. Some committee members felt that the projected traffic volumes from the University Park development were too low and that this could minimize the effectiveness of the redesigned roadways. Other members felt that not enough effort was being done by Forest City Development through PTDM and other mitigation measures to reduce the number of single occupancy vehicles generated by the development. However, University Park has significantly stepped up PTDM measures in its later phases. Phases III and IV are both subject to the PTDM Ordinance, with a maximum of 59% of the employees, customers, and visitors to the buildings arriving via single occupant vehicle. An important issue for the Study Committee was the need to balance the ability of local traffic to enter the residential section of the neighborhood with keeping “cut-through” traffic out.

The Study Committee noted that additional development could mean more traffic in the neighborhood. To reduce the number of vehicle trips, the Study Committee felt it was important to promote alternative types of transportation. Ideas were suggested such as requiring the city to work with neighborhood businesses to help them establish an electric shuttle to travel from their offices to the Central Square “T” station as well as increasing bus service to the neighborhood.

Increasing other amenities in the neighborhood to promote non-motorized modes of travel was also introduced as a topic of discussion. Study Committee members were very supportive of the efforts being made by the city staff to include pedestrian and bicycle amenities like wider sidewalks and bike lanes. There was consensus on the need for longer pedestrian cycles at some intersections and providing a pedestrian phase at other intersections, specifically where Memorial Drive intersects with Western Avenue and River Street.

There were several discussions on transportation concerning traffic calming. The Study Committee recommended slowing cars on selected streets and increasing the safety of dangerous intersections. Some intersections were listed by Study Committee members as being dangerous because of poor sightlines. The internal neighborhood streets, which were listed as having problematic intersections, included Putnam Avenue, Erie Street and Pearl Street. The peripheral intersections of concern included Massachusetts Avenue/Pearl Street, Cottage Street/River Street, and Pleasant Street/Putnam Street to name a few. The Study Committee agreed that more study needed to occur at these intersections so that a safe solution could be designed.

Parking

The study committee felt that the lack of availability of residential parking was an issue throughout most of Cambridgeport. While supportive of traffic calming and vehicle trip reduction, Study Committee members had some reservation about creating “bump outs” at intersections because of lost parking spaces. While it was pointed out that “bump outs” don’t take the place of parking spaces at intersections, many Study Committee

members raised the concern that many residents used this space to park their cars. It should be noted that it is illegal to park within 20 ft. of an intersection in order not to interfere with emergency vehicles and endanger pedestrians. A suggestion was made to allow parking on both sides of Brookline Street as it is a wide street; additional spaces could free spaces on nearby residential streets.

Urban Ring and Truck Traffic

Truck traffic through the city and the Urban Ring project were also discussed by the Study Committee. Although the discussion was not detailed, the Study Committee members felt that “cut-through” truck traffic should be discouraged and/or prohibited and stricter enforcement was needed on the streets where truck bans currently exist. Additional truck bans could also be recommended if significant increases in “cut-through” truck traffic are noted on residential streets. The Study Committee also agreed with the general principle of having Cambridgeport as a stop on the Urban Ring, but since the project concept wasn’t fully developed, they didn’t know if an underground subway train or above ground light rail would be better for the neighborhood.

Transportation Recommendations

1. The Study Committee is supportive of getting various employers and businesses in and around Cambridgeport to sponsor a shuttle that would travel between Central Square, University Park, Polaroid, Osco/Bread and Circus and make some stops into the neighborhood. The shuttle should be for both neighborhood residents and employees working at these sites. This would be similar to the bus run between Kendall “T” stop and Cambridge-side Galleria Mall. *University Park and Polaroid are currently both running shuttles to Central Square for their on-site employees. Public access to these and other shuttles is being explored through the City’s Shuttle Demand Study.*
 2. The Study Committee realized that traffic studies completed in relation to proposed development projects could be a tool which the city could use to understand traffic patterns in and around particular areas in the city. The Study Committee recommends that traffic mitigation plans be required by the city for all developments that are above a certain threshold. *The City of Cambridge currently has a Parking Transportation Demand Management (PTDM) Ordinance that requires a plan to reduce automobile trips be approved prior to getting a building permit.*
 3. The study committee supports the efforts of the Cambridgeport Roadways Advisory Committee and in principle, they also agree that the Waverly Street and Sidney Street connectors are appropriate responses to the anticipated traffic increases associated with the new development in the neighborhood (see Appendix II). Study Committee members did have some concerns with certain proposed design elements and assumptions. Particularly, the Study Committee recommended that the assumption concerning the volume of future traffic coming from Kendall Square should be reexamined as they believed there would be more traffic than is currently predicted.
 4. The Study Committee felt that traffic calming projects should both increase the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists and reduce speeds of motor vehicles. Some recommended traffic calming locations/streets in Cambridgeport are identified below.
 - a) Brookline Street - To help reduce speeds the Study Committee would support adding resident permit parking along the western side of Brookline Street where necessary and the use of traffic calming measures at major pedestrian routes (i.e. near parks, senior housing, Auburn Court, other “high children” areas). *This work will be implemented after the Cambridgeport Roadways Project is completed.*
 - b) Allston/Putnam Avenue intersection – Study Committee members believed this to be a particularly difficult intersection due to a wide angle of the intersection and commercial driveway opening into it. The Study Committee recommends that appropriate traffic calming techniques be utilized to prevent pedestrian/vehicular conflicts and reduce the speed of traffic entering Allston Street.
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- c) Cottage/River/Pleasant Street Intersection - This intersection should be redesigned with the pedestrian in mind. The Study Committee recommends that the roadway crossing distance be reduced by increasing the plaza area to create an aesthetically pleasing, safer crosswalk.
- d) River Street - Crossing this major street can be hazardous due to the speeds of the vehicles traveling on it. The Study Committee recommends that ways to make pedestrian crossings safer be studied. This study should specifically explore using traffic calming techniques on River Street where it intersects Howard, Putnam Avenue and Cottage Street.
- e) Eric/Waverly Street Intersection - Sightlines at this intersection are poor. The Study Committee recommends that changes be studied to alleviate any potential problems at this intersection. *This intersection is part of the proposed Cambridgeport Roadways Project and has been analyzed as part of that project.*
- f) Magazine Street - As this street has more of an historic character in the neighborhood, the Study Committee decided to minimize alterations to the streetscape. The Study Committee recommends concentration of the traffic calming measures at the locations where a high volume of pedestrians cross Magazine Street and/or where there are visibility problems. These locations of concern occur at the intersections of Upton Street, Lawrence Street, Corporal McTernan Street and Allston Street.
- g) Pearl Street - Pedestrian and bicycle safety on Pearl Street was a concern because of the excessive speeds at which vehicles travel from Massachusetts Avenue to Granite Street. Traffic calming measures along Pearl Street should slow the traffic entering this "residential" section of the neighborhood.
- h) Granite Street - Given that one of the next traffic calming projects in Cambridgeport

would be along Granite Street, the Study Committee suggested that any changes to parking would be reviewed to ensure the safety of the children attending the Morse School located on Granite Street. The Study Committee recommends that traffic calming techniques, such as "bump outs" at the intersections of Granite and Pearl and Rockingham Streets be used to provide safety for the children. *This roadwork was completed in December 1998, during the neighborhood study committee process.*

- i) Pleasant Street/Putnam Avenue Intersection - This intersection can be hazardous for pedestrians crossing Putnam Avenue. The Study Committee recommends that traffic-calming techniques be utilized to slow traffic and allow pedestrians to safely cross Putnam Avenue by increasing visibility. *The design and implementation of safety improvements at this intersection is a condition of the Planning Board permit for Spaulding and Slye's development.*

5. Traffic Signals

- a) Memorial Drive and Western Avenue - The Study Committee understands that the traffic signal at the intersection of Memorial Drive and Western Avenue causes queuing on both streets during peak rush hours. This queuing will encourage "cut through" traffic onto Blackstone Street, Putnam Avenue and lower Pleasant Street. The Study Committee believes that this should be discouraged through changes to the signalization of this light to allow a longer left hand turn light onto the Western Avenue bridge. This would cause fewer people to use the neighborhood streets as a short cut. *In early 1999, the MDC implemented this signalization change.*
- b) Memorial Drive and Magazine Street - The Study Committee agreed that a traffic light at the intersection of Memorial Drive and Magazine Street might be problematic because of the current roadway configuration and poor sight lines. This issue should

be reviewed with the MDC as part of the Charles River Master Plan to determine the most appropriate location for a traffic signal. *Adding traffic signals for pedestrian crossing of Memorial Drive is problematic as it would likely result in greater vehicular traffic into the neighborhood.*

- c) Massachusetts Avenue and River Street - The Study Committee discussed the traffic light at Central Square and made a recommendation to have the city do a study on allowing an exclusive pedestrian crossing of Mass. Avenue. This exclusive crossing would be non-pedestrian actuated. *The signal was reviewed during the redesign of Central Square and designed as it is because a concurrent pedestrian signal significantly reduces the pedestrian wait time.*
6. Truck Traffic
- a) The Study Committee supported the existing nighttime ban on truck traffic on some Cambridgeport streets. They also felt that if there was any noticeable increase of truck traffic on non-banned streets those streets should be reviewed for inclusion in the ban.

b) The Study Committee agreed that there should be a truck traffic policy for the entire city. *The city is currently participating in a regional truck study seeking recommendations to address the needs of the municipalities, state and truckers. The study is scheduled to be completed in 2001.*

7. Bicycle traffic

- a) Continue to improve bicycle facilities to encourage alternatives to automobiles and improve safety for cyclists.
- b) Encourage or require all business and institutional uses in the neighborhood to have adequate bicycle parking.
- c) Improve bicycle corridors across the neighborhood. North/South corridors are adequate and have improvements pending, but east/west circulation alternatives are inadequate thus encourage bicycle travel the wrong way on one-way streets.

8. Parking

- a) Improve snow removal at curb extensions by DPW.
- b) Enforce prohibitions on placing objects in the street to “reserve” parking on the public way.

Open Space

BACKGROUND

Open space is an especially important resource for Cambridge residents, offering a variety of recreational and visual experiences as well as a respite from urban congestion and a means to create community. It is particularly vital in dense neighborhoods such as Cambridgeport, where parklands are at a premium. Both the scarcity of available land and the increasing cost of land have limited the City's ability to acquire and create new sites. Despite these limits, the City has added over 70 acres of new open space since 1980, for a total of 492 acres of open space on 77 sites across Cambridge. The most prominent example, Danehy Park, was reclaimed from the former City dump. A smaller example, but important for Cambridgeport, is the park at 82 Pacific Street. This park was the result of an agreement between MIT, Forest City Development and the City of Cambridge. Currently, the city is working with the Trust for Public Land⁷ in exploring the option of expanding the park by acquiring the abutting land. Other significant parks have been created in Cambridge through zoning modifications to encourage open space in new developments.

Though Cambridgeport has mostly smaller parks, the neighborhood is the home of several playing fields. In addition, the majority of the

parkland in Cambridgeport isn't owned by the city. Magazine Beach, which is owned by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts and operated and maintained by the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC), is approximately 19 acres in size. Other open space land that has been added to the Cambridgeport neighborhood has included Lopez Street Park and Carl Baron Plaza, an urban plaza in Central Square.

City departments working in concert in the Open Space Committee coordinate management of open space resources. The City's Open Space Committee is composed of representatives from the City Manager's office, Community Development, Public Works, Electrical, Transportation and Parking, Commission for Persons with Disabilities, Parks and Recreation and the Water Department. In addition to the individual responsibilities of the member departments, the members make joint recommendations to the City's capital budget committee on open space renovations and upgrades to the open space system. Neighborhood studies such as this one are utilized when member agencies develop their recommendations. The Open Space Committee also develops long-range goals and plans, preparing an Open Space Plan every five years.

Local organizations, such as the Friends of Magazine Beach, have organized and participated

⁷ TPL has worked with the city since 1998 to purchase the properties abutting the park at 82 Pacific Street. Currently, TPL has focused its efforts in acquiring one parcel of land that would significantly add to the existing parkland. Remediation costs and owner approval are issues that have made city acquisition of this parcel uncertain.

in neighborhood clean-ups and park clean-ups in Cambridgeport for the past few years⁸. These events have been very successful in not only beautifying the neighborhood, but also in informing local residents about issues concerning open space resources in their neighborhood.

Another open space resource that been a part of the neighborhood has been the community garden. There are two community gardens presently located in Cambridgeport, Simplex/Emily Street and Peggy Hayes Memorial. Sim-

plex/Emily Street community garden is located on the corner of Emily Street and Brookline Street while the Peggy Hayes Memorial community garden is located on Watson Street. Their popularity has increased in the past few years.

The list below consists of parks and recreation areas located in the Cambridgeport neighborhood. Not included in this list are privately owned lands such as University Park Common. Magazine Beach is a publicly owned facility, and therefore is included in this list.

Parks and Recreational Areas

| Name | Type of Park | Size |
|--|--|-------------------|
| <i>Carl Barron Plaza</i> | <i>Passive Park</i> | <i>0.5 acres</i> |
| <i>Dana Park</i> | <i>Tot Lot, Passive Park</i> | <i>1.4 acres</i> |
| <i>Lopez Street Playground</i> | <i>Tot Lot</i> | <i>0.1 acres</i> |
| <i>Hastings Square/Parrow Park</i> | <i>Passive Park</i> | <i>0.7 acres</i> |
| <i>Alberico Playground</i> | <i>Tot Lot, Basketball</i> | <i>0.5 acres</i> |
| <i>David Nunez Playground</i> | <i>Tot Lot, Basketball, Street Hockey</i> | <i>0.9 acres</i> |
| <i>82 Pacific Street Playground</i> | <i>Playing Field, Passive Park</i> | <i>1.4 acres</i> |
| <i>Fulmore Playground</i> | <i>Tot Lot, Passive Park</i> | <i>0.4 acres</i> |
| <i>Fort Washington Park</i> | <i>Historic Park</i> | <i>1.0 acres</i> |
| <i>Lindstrom Field</i> | <i>Baseball Field, Basketball, Tot Lot</i> | <i>1.3 acres</i> |
| <i>Magazine Beach (owned by the State)</i> | <i>Playing Fields, Tot Lot, Pool, Passive Park</i> | <i>19.0 acres</i> |

Open space in Cambridge is a scarce resource. Cambridgeport, like many of the neighborhoods in Cambridge, has less open space than desirable for the population in the neighborhood. There are approximately 3.0 acres of open space per 1000 persons living in Cambridgeport.

SURVEY RESULTS - OPEN SPACE

The availability of open space was listed as the third most important issue in Cambridgeport behind parking availability and crime. Forty-five

percent of the respondents thought that it was a major concern while 34% thought of it as a minor concern. These responses have gone up since the 1991 survey. Couples without children are somewhat less likely than couples with children to think that the availability of open space is a major concern. Couples with children are almost twice as likely, 52% to 28%, to say that the condition of parks/open space is a major concern. The condition of open space and the availability of recreational facilities is of concern for a major-

⁸ In the fall of 1999, the City and the MDC reached an agreement to renovate the Magazine Beach facility. In this agreement the City has agreed to provide \$1.5 million for renovations and \$100,000 annually for the maintenance and upkeep of this facility. In return, the MDC has agreed to give Cambridge youth athletic teams priority in scheduling of games. Existing events, e.g. Head of the Charles and Boston University graduation ceremonies will continue to be permitted.

ity of the respondents. This is consistent with the 1991 survey as well. Couples without children are less likely than couples with children to say that the availability of recreational facilities is a major concern.

STUDY COMMITTEE OPEN SPACE DISCUSSION

The Study Committee's discussion on open space concentrated on several items:

1. making all the zoning of city owned parks uniform in Cambridgeport
2. improving and maintaining selected parks in the neighborhood
3. identifying opportunities for acquisition of land to be use as open space

The Study Committee also discussed briefly what to do about the MDC owned land which was included in the open space total for the neighborhood. These were among the issues brought up



Fort Washington Park

by neighborhood residents at the neighborhood forum on open space. Another issue introduced by residents at one of the forums concerned the creation and support of community gardens in the neighborhood.

The Study Committee discussed how to make the most of the open space they had without over-utilizing it. Events like the Head of the Charles Regatta, which occur at Magazine Beach may only be an annual event, but they cause damage to the facility. The Study Committee recommended that this event should be moved around to other locations on the Charles River to keep the Magazine Beach facility from being over utilized.

A recent citywide rezoning changed most of the parks in Cambridge to the Open Space District, but a few were omitted. A few of the Study Committee members also suggested that all of the city owned parks in Cambridgeport should be zoned as open space. After some discussion it was clear that this suggestion is problematic, as it isn't city policy to zone non-city owned land as open space.

Specific parks were also subjects of discussion by the Study Committee. Dana Park and Magazine Beach were discussed most as they were in need of the most improvement. There were other discussions by the Study Committee in which they decided that all the parks in the neighborhood should have bulletin boards for public use. The Study Committee also felt that there should be a more coordinated maintenance schedule to ensure that the parks remain clean.

Open Space Recommendations

-
1. The Study Committee supports the efforts of the Friends of Magazine Beach and encourages the MDC to continue their community process with respect to the redesign of the Magazine Beach facility. *In the fall of 1999, the City and the MDC reached an agreement to renovate the Magazine Beach facility. In this agreement, the City agreed to provide \$1.5 million for renovations and \$100,000 annually for the maintenance and upkeep of this facility. In return, the MDC agreed to give Cambridge youth athletic teams priority in scheduling of games. Existing events, e.g. Head of the Charles and Boston University graduation ceremonies will continue to be permitted.*
 2. In a recent citywide rezoning, most city-owned parks were zoned to preserve open space. Some of the ones that were omitted are in Cambridgeport. The Study Committee recommends that the city submit zoning amendments to zone all parks in Cambridgeport as Open Space. The parks in Cambridgeport which are not zoned as Open Space are as follows: Hastings Square, Alberico Park on Allston Street, Lopez Street Tot Lot and Fulmore Playground between on Peters Street and Sidney Street.
 3. The Study Committee recommends that the city pursue the option of expanding the park at 82 Pacific Street to include adjacent parcels. *In late 1998, the city requested that the Trust for Public Land (TPL) explore the option of purchasing parcels abutting this park in hopes of increasing the parkland available to residents in this area. These efforts are still on going. TPL's is a national, non-profit organization whose main goal is to conserve land for both active and passive recreation.*
 4. The Study Committee supports the creation of an Open Space Acquisition Trust, to be used to buy land for the sole purpose of creating more open space in Cambridge. *Since this recommendation was first put forward the City Council has agreed to establish an Open Space Acquisition Fund and has put forth \$2 million of city's funds for purchasing land to be used as open space. In addition, the City Manager created a Green Ribbon Open Space Committee, whose primary task is to establish criteria for the purchase of land to be used as public open space. This Committee completed its work in March 2000 and has submitted a report to the City Manager.*
 5. The Study Committee recommends that the city add 4 or 5 picnic tables to Dana Park.
 6. The Study Committee recommends that DPW add bulletin boards to all the parks in Cambridgeport that don't already have them. The bulletin boards should be of a standard size and construction and resemble the one recently placed in Sennott Park in Area Four.
 7. In general, there are some changes that need to be undertaken for all the parks in Cambridgeport. The Study Committee recommends that trash cans be located near entrances/exits to the park and at a minimum should be emptied weekly. In addition, it is also recommended that maintenance be improved, especially ensuring that the water fountains are in working condition. Finally, small bags should be made

available for dog owners to help them clean up after their dogs.

8. Open space is a scarce resource. Imaginative ways need to be utilized to provide both passive and active open space in the neighborhood. The Study Committee recommends that the city explore the idea of utilizing any additional space along sidewalks for the placement of benches and other amenities. Resident sponsorship of these sidewalk amenities could help to ensure

that these benches would be used properly by giving local residents a sense of "ownership" in their neighborhood.

9. The Study Committee recommends that the city pursue the idea of requiring developers to link open spaces in urban developments to other open spaces in both the residential portion of Cambridgeport and other urban developments.

Economic Development

BACKGROUND

Cambridge's economic base has changed radically in this century. While it continues to be a premier provider of educational services, the city no longer ranks among the state's largest centers of blue-collar employment. Its industrial based economy is now largely "mind" based, focusing on delivery of research, education and new product development. The birthplace of the Davenport sofa, the Porterhouse steak and Fig Newton cookies has moved on to new inventions, particularly in cutting edge fields such as computer software, biomedicine and high performance materials. These new industries, spurred in large part by the presence of Harvard and MIT, have changed the city's structure of employment and opportunity, as well as its population base and its built environment. Job opportunities are plentiful for those with advanced education and highly technical skills, but more restricted for those with fewer credentials. The rapid growth of the research-based economy in the last decade also added considerable new construction and renovation, strengthening the tax base while increasing traffic pressures and other side effects of growth.

Cambridgeport

There were several economic changes that occurred in Cambridgeport between the 1980 and 1990 U. S. Census. These changes include shifts in household incomes; educational attainment of

the residents; and an increase in the amount of full time employed residents.

From 1979 to 1989, the median income for all Cambridgeport households increased by 40.5% to \$39,852⁹, while the median family household income increased by 17.1% to \$43,459¹⁰. Thus, in Cambridgeport the gap between these two figures narrowed over the course of the decade.

Citywide, during the period 1979 to 1989, the gap between median household income and median family widened; citywide families increased their household income at a greater rate than non-family households did. There were some disturbing trends too with regard to poverty and children. In 1990, the poverty rates for Cambridgeport families with children were more than twice the poverty rate for families without children. This difference suggests that a disproportionate number of the families living in poverty included one or more children.

There are also some other trends that are of note. The white population has the largest proportion of all low-income households. High-income households comprise at least 25% of each racial grouping.

The education attainment of neighborhood residents also underwent many changes according to the 1990 U. S. Census (see chart below, Income Range by Educational Attainment). During the period 1980 to 1990 the proportion of Cambridgeport residents 25 years of age or older with at least

⁹ in 1999 dollars based on the Consumer Pricing Index (CPI) for Boston region

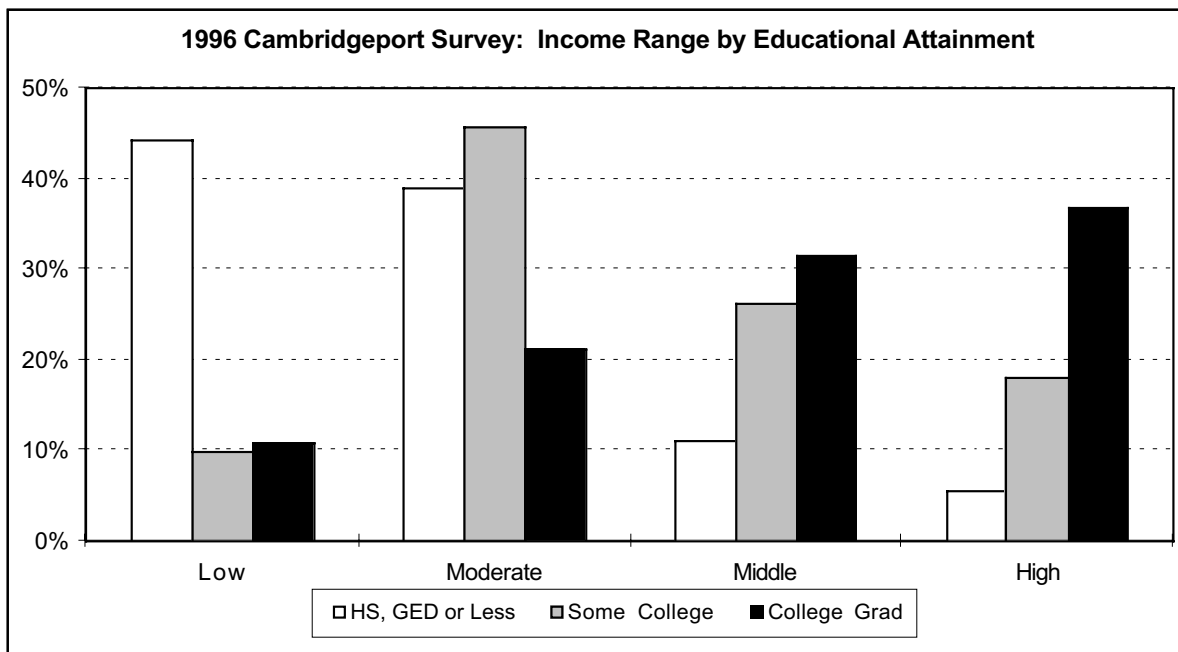
¹⁰ in 1999 dollars based on the CPI for Boston region

a college degree increased by more than half to 47.2%. During the same period, persons 25 years of age or older who had not earned a high school diploma or GED decreased from 30.2% to 18.0%. The same trends were evident citywide over the period 1980 to 1990. However, their magnitude was not as great, which suggests that Cambridgeport underwent a more extreme shift during the decade. These numbers are significant as it has meant that households were becoming more educated, which has had a direct relationship on the income levels in the neighborhood. As seen below, the level of income increases in direct proportion to the amount of education of the residents.

SURVEY RESULTS - ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The 1996 survey of Cambridgeport found that the number of high income households exceeds the number of low income households by about 2.5 to 1, where as the 1990 survey found the representation of the two groups to be nearly equal. Also note that telephone surveys like the one conducted in 1996 in Cambridgeport tend to undercount lower income residents.

The amount of family household living in poverty in Cambridgeport decreased from 1990 to 1980. As you can see in the table below, Persons Living in Poverty, the trend in Cambridgeport



Income Levels in Cambridgeport: 1990 and 1996

| | Cambridgeport 1990 | Cambridgeport 1996 |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Low Income | 22.2% | 13.2% |
| Moderate Income | 28.5% | 25.9% |
| Middle Income | 26.7% | 28.8% |
| High Income | 22.6% | 32.1% |
| Total | 100.0% | 100% |

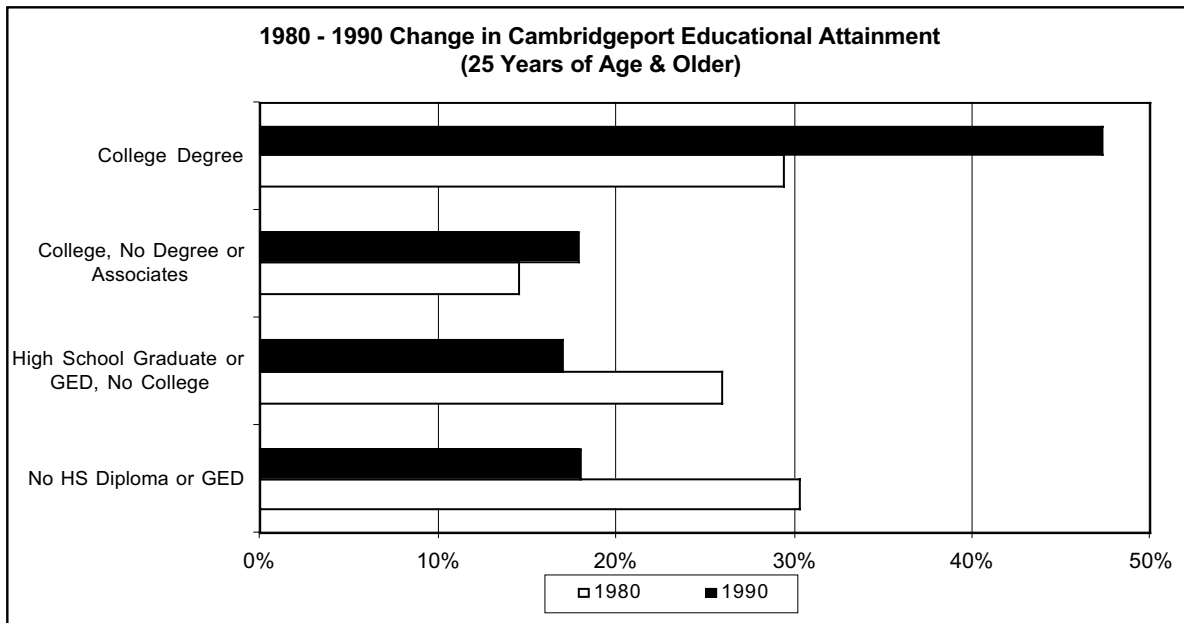
Source: 1990 & 1997, Atlantic Marketing Research, Inc., Cambridgeport Surveys.

also reflects the citywide trend of fewer families living in poverty. The one exception to this trend is in the number of persons over 65 years old that are living in poverty in Cambridgeport, which increased from 1980 to 1990. This may be in part due to the number of elderly housing facilities located in the neighborhood in the 1980s and 1990s.

Persons Living in Poverty

| | <i>Cambridgeport</i> | | <i>City of Cambridge</i> | |
|------------------------------------|----------------------|-------------|--------------------------|-------------|
| | <i>1980</i> | <i>1990</i> | <i>1980</i> | <i>1990</i> |
| Families Living in Poverty | 13% | 7% | 11% | 7% |
| Persons under 18 Living in Poverty | 24% | 16% | 20% | 15% |
| Persons over 65 Living in Poverty | 13% | 19% | 10% | 11% |

Source: 1980 & 1990, U. S. Census.



**STUDY COMMITTEE
ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DISCUSSION**

During the neighborhood study process, the City of Cambridge published the Economic Development Policy Document. It established a “framework for understanding the economic challenges and opportunities facing Cambridge and to serve as a basis for making a decision about what programs and interventions to pursue.”

The policies introduced and explained in the Economic Development Policy Document were presented to the Study Committee at one of their meetings. Generally, the Study Committee agreed with the policies in the city’s Economic Development Policy Document and they also believed that certain issues should be stressed in their neighborhood. These issues included maintaining neighborhood-based economic

development and a diversity of local economy as well as promoting a healthy business climate.

Study Committee members felt that neighborhood-based economic development was a necessity in maintaining a vibrant community. They also believed that community input on developments occurring in the neighborhood was essential. The study committee therefore wanted the city to develop a better mechanism to secure ongoing neighborhood input on developments occurring in their neighborhood. Creating and preserving neighborhood commercial clusters was also a concern the Study Committee members raised during their discussions. Many of the Study Committee members wanted to have retail and service businesses located within walking distance of their homes. Some Study Committee members believed that many people were

attracted to having the ability to walk to neighborhood stores and to a commercial/transportation center like the Central Square MBTA station. Other issues discussed included encouraging low-density employers in the neighborhood and supporting a policy that would secure local jobs for local people. Several of the Study Committee members stated that by encouraging low-density employers they would be reducing traffic impacts on the residential streets.

The Study Committee also felt strongly about creating a diverse local economy. They suggested that effort should be made to maintain both “expensive” and “inexpensive” commercial establishments while preserving local diversified

service and product choice. They also supported the formation of local minority owner and women owned businesses.



Commerical cluster on Magazine Street

Economic Development Recommendations

-
1. Identify ways to maintain the current mix of businesses in the neighborhood. Survey current and potential small business owners regarding their challenges and needs.
 2. Help make business areas in Cambridgeport more attractive and more business friendly:
 - a) Facade improvement; like Cambridge Street and Central Square.
 - b) relaxation of parking limits during business hours
 - c) rotate parking so it is residential use at night and business use in daytime.
 3. Encourage nodes of small commercial use in significant new developments. Developments in these nodes are encouraged to be of a character similar to street corner storefronts in the rest of the neighborhood.

C O N C L U S I O N

Conclusion

The Cambridgeport neighborhood is one that is in transition. The population is shifting and new buildings are being constructed for offices and residences. The number of elderly residing in the neighborhood is decreasing, while the number of married couples with children is increasing. Housing prices, educational attainment and median incomes are also increasing and a greater number of professionals have also moved into the neighborhood during the 1990s.

In addition to demographic changes, there have also been physical changes to the neighborhood in the 1990s. University Park has seen substantially constructed in the past 10 years, Central Square has become a bustling Main Street again, and the Charles River has seen the renovation of the Polaroid Worldwide Headquarters as well as the renovation of the old Ford Assembly Plant site near the Boston University Bridge. These developments have not occurred without some controversy. Some residents had issues with building heights, density and traffic concerns and

the dialogue with the community has resulted in changes to or more study of the planned developments.

Although the study committee did not address all of these projects individually, they did discuss ideas and made recommendations concerning increased affordable housing requirements, zoning changes that more appropriately regulate Memorial Drive developments, and general traffic safety effecting the neighborhood. They wanted lower, less dense buildings along Memorial Drive that are more in tune with the adjacent residential neighborhood, and slower traffic on neighborhood streets that can provide safety for all.

The recommendations in this report were made to help guide the city administration as it makes decisions concerning this neighborhood. Through this citizen participation process, Cambridgeport will remain as an enjoyable place to live.

A P P E N D I X I



City of Cambridge Housing Activities

The Housing Division of the Community Development Department is responsible for developing policies and programs to increase and preserve affordable housing opportunities for low and moderate income residents of Cambridge. The Housing Division, in conjunction with the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust, spearheads the CityHOME Initiative and uses federal (CDBG and HOME) and state resources to accomplish its goals.

The CITYHOME Initiative represents the City's primary response to the major changes occurring in the Cambridge housing market, including both the termination of rent control and policy changes in federal housing programs. The goal of the Initiative is to preserve and increase affordable rental and homeownership opportunities for low and moderate income residents of the City.

The City funds, combined with other federal and state funds, have led to the creation or preservation in housing development projects of over 1,200 affordable units in the 2 1/2 years since the commencement of the CITYHOME Initiative. This includes projects that have been completed between July, 1995 and December, 1997 or that are currently under development.

The main programs undertaken in this Initiative include:

Non-Profit Acquisition and Development of MultiFamily Properties: With financial support

from the Trust, the City's non-profit and public housing organizations have acquired existing formerly rent controlled properties for long term affordable housing use, as well as taken advantage of rare opportunities for new development;

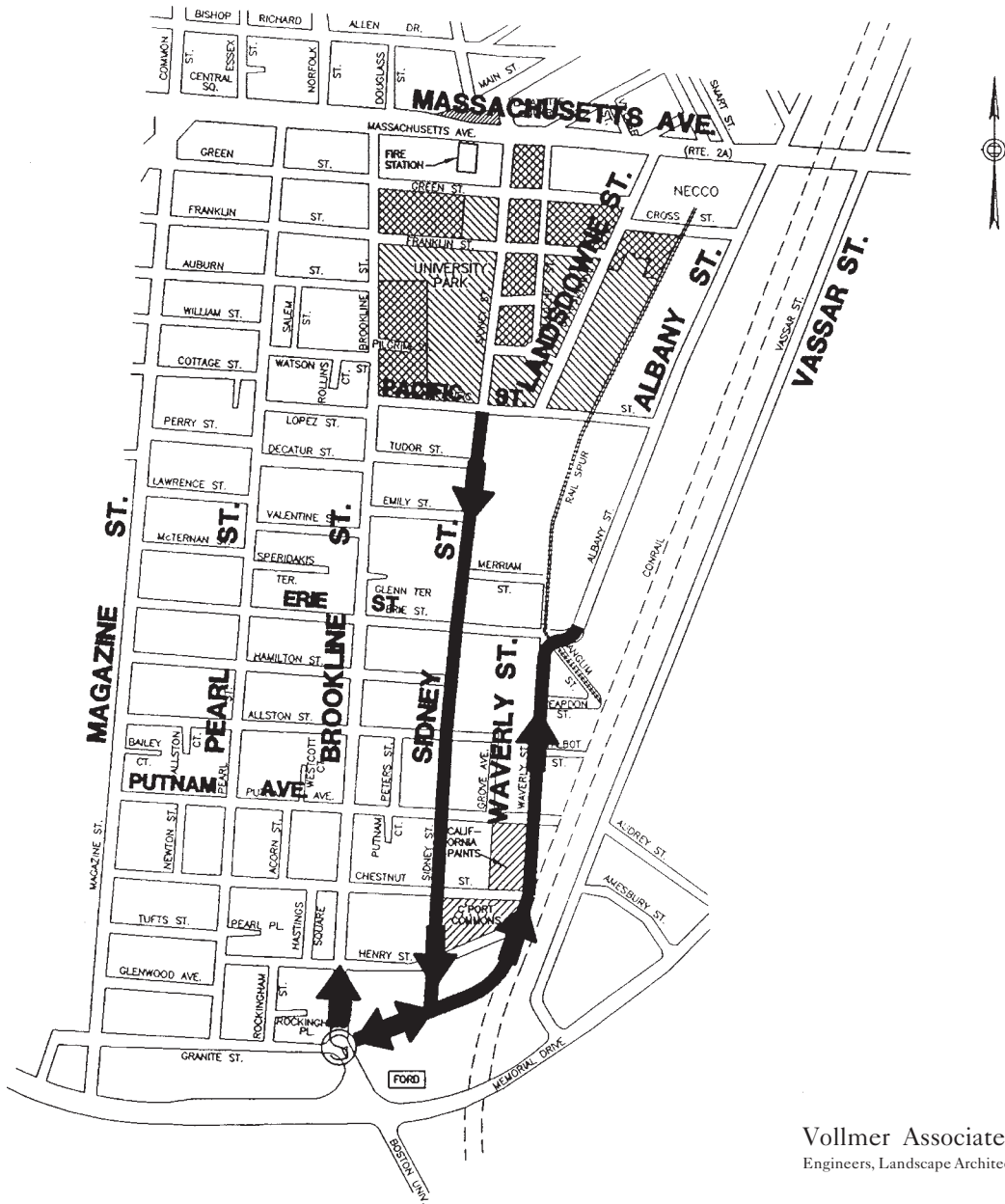
Affordable Housing Rehab Loan Program: Working with the City's non-profit partner, Cambridge Neighborhood Apartment Housing Services, Inc. (CNAHS), this program provides rehab financing to private owners of multifamily properties in return for a set-aside of units at affordable rents for low and moderate income tenants;

Condo Buyer Initiative: This homeownership program provides financial and technical assistance to first time homebuyers purchasing units in Cambridge;

Preservation of Expiring Use Restriction Properties: The City has devoted significant resources to preserving the existing stock of federally-assisted rental housing facing expiring use restrictions. These resources include technical and financial assistance to tenants and owners of these properties. These efforts have succeeded in preserving the long-term affordability of three of these expiring use properties with a total of 590 affordable units.

A P P E N D I X I I

Cambridgeport Roadways Project - Conceptual Plan



Vollmer Associates, LLP
Engineers, Landscape Architects, Planners





City of Cambridge
