



City of Cambridge

O-12
IN CITY COUNCIL
January 14, 2013

COUNCILLOR DECKER
COUNCILLOR CHEUNG
MAYOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR KELLEY
COUNCILLOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR REEVES
VICE MAYOR SIMMONS
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY
COUNCILLOR VANBEUZEKOM

- WHEREAS: Harvard University has expressed its desire to sell Putnam Square Apartments, a apartment building located at 2 Mt Auburn Street which provides affordable housing to 94 low-income elderly and disabled tenants; and
- WHEREAS: Putnam Square Apartments has been an important affordable housing resource for low-income seniors which has been owned and operated by Harvard University for more than 40 years; and
- WHEREAS: Harvard University has committed to selling Putnam Square Apartments to a buyer that will maintain the affordability of the building for at least an additional 30 years; and
- WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge believes the affordability of this building is legally bound into perpetuity in exchange for the agreements and variances Harvard was granted prior to the development of 2 Mt Auburn committing it as an affordable building to Cambridge seniors; and
- WHEREAS: Under the requirements of M.G.L. Chapter 40T, Harvard University notified the city, the state and tenants of its intention to offer the building for sale, and the state designated Homeowner's Rehab, Inc. to make efforts on its behalf to purchase the building so that the affordability of these units can be preserved for the long-term; and
- WHEREAS: The Council requests that Harvard maintain its commitment to the affordability for seniors currently living in the building and into the unforeseeable future by donating a 100% of the profits from the sale of the building to the City's Affordable Housing Trust Fund; and

- WHEREAS: Harvard's reasoning for selling the building is offered that the University is not in the business of managing affordable housing; and
- WHEREAS: This was true when Harvard agreed to the deal that enable Harvard to further develop in exchange for the building of Putnam Square Apartments; and
- WHEREAS: The Council requests that a portion of the sale profits be used to establish a fund that would be used to further enhance the quality of life of seniors who continue to age in Putnam Square Apartments; and
- WHEREAS: The 2 Mount Auburn Street Tenants Association has prepared a Statement of Position, signed by over 90 tenants in the building, asking Harvard University to sell the property to Homeowner's Rehab, Inc.; and
- WHEREAS: Putnam Square tenants have expressed the need for significant capital improvements at the property so that the needs of elderly and disabled tenants can continue to be met; and
- WHEREAS: Homeowner's Rehab, Inc. has successfully preserved and renovated hundreds of affordable housing units in the city, most recently completing the preservation and rehab of the 116-unit Inman Square Apartments; and
- WHEREAS: Homeowner's Rehab, Inc. has submitted to Harvard University an offer to purchase Putnam Square Apartments; and
- WHEREAS: Harvard University has been a steadfast partner in the City's efforts to preserve affordable housing for residents, and has a successful track record in working with the City and Homeowner's Rehab, Inc. to preserve affordable housing for low-income residents; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the City Council go on record urging Harvard University to give serious consideration to Homeowner's Rehab's bid to purchase Putnam Square Apartments; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Council go on record urging Harvard University to work closely and cooperatively with the City, Homeowner's Rehab, Inc., tenants and others to ensure a successful sale of the property to Homeowner's Rehab, Inc. so that Putnam Square Apartments may continue to provide affordable housing for current and future elderly and disabled tenants; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward a copy of this order to the 2 Mount Auburn Street Tenants Association, Homeowner's Rehab, Inc., and to Harvard University with the request that Harvard University share this order with buyers considering purchasing Putnam Square Apartments so they may be aware of the history of this community resource, the needs of current tenants, and the need for Putnam Square Apartments to continue to be available to meet the housing needs of low-income elderly and disabled residents.

In City Council January 14, 2013
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.
Attest:- Donna P. Lopez, Interim City Clerk

A true copy;

ATTEST:-


Donna P. Lopez, Interim City Clerk