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Dear Mayor Maher and Cambridge City Councilors,

I am writing in support of the Policy Order #15 being proposed by Mayor Maher, and Councillors Benzan and McGovern that the Cambridge Community Development Department hold a series of public meetings to discuss the range of planning and zoning issues.

I have some major concerns with Policy Order #14 as proposed by Councillors Carlone, Simmons and Mazen. As a member of the C2 Committee, I feel that we had a very thoughtful and informed process which, while details could be changed or adapted, resulted in an important vision for Central Square. Our recommendations were crafted to respond to changing demographics, preserve the character and diversity of the Square, and reduce auto usage through smart growth. I would be concerned about setting a precedent that, if some residents don't agree with the outcomes of a planning process, that it be scrapped to begin anew.

I am also concerned that a master plan will result in major delays and unrealistic limits in the future development of housing which is desperately needed in Cambridge and the surrounding areas. Yesterday's *Sunday Globe* documented the incredible increase in housing prices in Cambridge and the fact that the scarcity of housing stock is a major contributor to the rising prices. "In Cambridge, where listings plunged 65 percent from a year ago, the median home price is 28 percent above the prerecession peak. Industry officials say a number of factors could be contributing to the supply shortage. First, construction of new homes has lagged in recent years even as the population has grown."

On the other hand, I applaud the idea of holding public meetings across the city to discuss planning and development for our city as proposed in Policy Order #15. Certainly the greater the understanding of the issues involved, and the greater the input of concerned residents, the better the result will be.

In addition to my concern about a master plan raised by the order submitted by Councillors Carlone, Mazen and Simmons, I feel that using City Council Committees for a public process precludes many people being involved, due to the location, timing and character of the meetings.

Like so many of my fellow citizens and neighbors, I have a deep love for the City of Cambridge. I look forward to participating in the public meetings, working to move forward on the C2K2 recommendations, and instituting the policies and plans that will preserve the city's diversity, vitality and community for our fellow neighbors today and for future residents and generations.

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