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It is always worth appreciating this new atmosphere in the city council which values an organic process –one where new ideas and a third way might emerge out of proposals and where community concerns from the campaign era are being honored.

In that vein, I am appreciative of the initiative of the proponents of the policy order which call for a master plan. A plan for a coherent development process with an eye to traffic, height, housing, affordability, sustainability, open space etc across the city has been a major priority for many of us. A master plan can imbue a city wide vision in new regulations, and it can be the ground for evaluating individual proposals with community-based criteria - getting us away from the current practices of setting or trying to put out wild fires of building.

**Policy 14 assesses what I perceive to be true - that the current “master plan “idea is one “composed of a growth policy document, the Zoning Map, the Zoning Ordinance, and various other studies that have focused on individual parts of the city at different points in time” which has done little to put out a comprehensive view and nothing to stop the neighborhood by neighborhood development fires catalyzing so many of the new community groups springing up in arms about the latest proposals.**

I share Policy 14 assessment of the current problem. **“The city's growth policy document has not been updated since 2007, and since that time,** development pressures have intensified, with dramatic increases in the cost of housing and reports of worsening traffic congestion and gentrification across the region; **and In recent years, it has also become clear that** issues of wealth inequality, transit justice, and climate vulnerability are all growing in severity.” This is not a situation where we have had many benefits from development with a only a few specific glitches.

So what to do? There are two policy orders which suggest a process – one guided by the City Council and one by CDD. To the extent that order 15 proponents feel that community outreach/ involvement is not sufficient, I hope some of that language can be added to 14, similarly their language about housing. I also hope that CDD will be utilized but not to run a community process, rather to inform one. We have an opportunity to ask CDD to serve the needs of the Council and our neighborhoods by researching and offering options which address the dire concerns of traffic, parking, affordable housing and some of the issues raised by both orders.

**How wonderful to have CDD present options which preserve a life in Cambridge for the low and moderate families currently being pushed out., address new ideas which recognize that greater density, higher buildings for this city with less than 1% vacancy rate has not and will not create affordability. The 11% set aside has increased the costs of housing for most and segregated and isolated the few low income people living in the 1 or 2 or 4 units. Maybe we can learn from Somerville now exploring a master plan with calls for 35% affordability.**

*more housing w/ more affordable policy.*

I also want the Council to be at the helm – so that citizens are being heard by those we elected and those who not only can but should be making policy. – *and can determine when + how to hold forum*

*to hold forum there*

In the likely blending of these 2 proposals which I hope will be good spirited, there is a crucial piece to be included - the “in the meantime” question. Any process of creating a master plan, or even laying the ground work with broad community involvement, will take time. And in the meantime, many new facts on the ground can be established. A local developer who came to the Residents’ Alliance mentioned one example, Boston Properties, which made it known at the end of the March 18 Planning Board meeting that they will be proposing 1 million more square feet of upzoning development in the next 3 months. The Planning Board is currently operating with 3 expired members and a 4<sup>th</sup> this week. There are already many plans underway which lack traffic

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studies, coherency, sustainability (now that we know about rising water levels) and none of them are subject to a big city-wide let alone regional picture. I worry that the even the possibility of a real master plan will invite even greater waves of proposals than what we are already burdened with.

We have real momentum for a new day - from Fresh Pond where over 100 people came to recent meeting, East Cambridge with now 2 community groups working collaboratively to stop the court house, city-wide coalitions around the Foundry, and new voices adding to the existing efforts in Area 4, mid-Cambridge and cambridgeport. This council has played a part in listening and energizing these efforts. Let's keep it going.

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