

I am here in support of the initiative put forward by Councillor Carlone for the City Council to take on direct responsibility for the approval of large scale projects in the City during the development of the master plan proposal.

I think the City Council has heard loud and clear that there is a problem with the approval process of large-scale developments and that the parking and traffic issues created by these developments are not adequately addressed in the current granting of Special Permits.

There is also no dispute that the City of Cambridge has undergone an immense amount of change in the past several years and there are significant changes that have already been approved and are in the pipeline –these immense changes require a comprehensive, citywide Master Plan to ensure that the City of Cambridge remains the desirable, liveable, community-oriented City Cambridge has been.

In the meantime, more urgent solutions are necessary. Where large developments directly impact the quality of life of Cambridge residents, the City Council, like other municipalities, should have to agree on the approval of the Special Permit before residents are subjected to the impacts created by these developments. I have heard from several City Councillors regarding the Sullivan courthouse project that the project will severely impact the neighborhood but that the City Council has no control over the Planning Board or what it will do. I am hopeful that the added oversight of the City Council can ensure that the City's development is responsible development.

I am very heartened to hear that the City Council is taking the planning issues head-on, both with the long-term solution of a Master Planning process, and, I hope, by adopting this smart short-term solution laid out in ~~Policy Order #~~ Councillor Carlone's petition.

I can't stay for the debate, but will be watching on TV at home. I hope that there is unanimous support for this proposal.

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