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Cosgrove, Marybeth

From: Lopez, Donna
Sent: Monday, June 30, 2014 4:25 PM
To: Cosgrove, Marybeth
Subject: FW: Do not support the Carlone Petition for City Council Project Review

From: randa ghattas [<mailto:randaghattas@yahoo.com>]
Sent: Monday, June 30, 2014 10:08 AM
To: City Council; Lopez, Donna
Subject: Do not support the Carlone Petition for City Council Project Review

Dear City Council members,

I am deeply disturbed by the new petition introduced by Dennis Carlone that politicizes development and makes City Council the exclusive special permit granting authority for Project Review Special Permits. It is not only problematic from an implementation POV, it is highly problematic from a representation POV. We all know that very few people have time to attend and pay attention to all the development and City Council issues on the docket. As a result, all issues will be subject to the whims of City Council members and their specific ardent supporters and lobbyists. This is precisely what has become a problem in our political arena nationally and now this petition is trying to institute it locally because of a few people who are unhappy with how things are going. By supporting this petition, you are essentially eliminating the voice of many people in Cambridge, and especially those with families, the underprivileged and working adults, who cannot attend those meetings or do not have the time to participate in these processes. Many people I know personally love Cambridge and are impressed by the work of the city staff and the Planning Board as a whole but cannot participate in these processes. We have one of the most innovative cities in the country: an example to others in its forward thinking on issues of affordability, tying development to community benefits, climate change and adaptation, etc. This is precisely because we have innovative policies, but also an innovative CDD and Planning Board that knows how to implement those policies.

There is a reason we have City Councilors and there is a reason we have professionals such as CDD and the Planning Board. The Planning Board implements our law. It is not in their jurisdiction to modify our law. Yes, sometimes this is not to the liking of everyone, but that is the reality of laws, they don't always make everyone happy. Furthermore, City Councilors make policy but are often not versed in the specific issues of development and its implications. If City Council were to get involved in implementing policy, then it will take away from the many of the important and challenging issues that we have to deal with as a city.

I urge you not to support this petition. It is truly a step backward and in the wrong direction.

Randa Ghattas
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