

Dear Council members:

As a founding member of the Cambridge Residents Alliance, this moment has been a long time coming. In the last three years, Cambridge has seen almost HALF the construction projected for the next 20 years either built or permitted. Even if we had originally planned for such dramatic and accelerated growth it would make sense to slow down just to make sure we get things right.

Well, as many would argue, we are here tonight because we have NOT gotten things right. Cambridge is riding a wave of runaway development. We are clogging our city's streets, and allowing atrociously-designed buildings to desecrate our neighborhoods. Far from creating a growing sense of community through our zoning process, we are growing our city chaotically, almost totally driven by market forces which, left to their own devices, will gentrify our city, expunge our racial and economic diversity and create something far different than the Cambridge we love.

Since 2001, the city's mission statement has been: "Grow, grow, grow!" The special permit process, the behavior of city agencies and, yes, the actions of the Planning Board have all been targeted to attract development, reward developers and fill our open spaces.

I'm here to suggest it's time we changed that mission statement to read: "Protect, protect, protect!" True, we'll be doing that with the creation of a master plan. But there is little value to a master plan that is undermined, if not neutered, by mega-developments that sneak in under the wire.

I hope you realize that rejecting the Carlone Petition will kill the *only* effective weapon you might have to ensure the Courthouse developer answers the concerns and needs of the community. Why would you cripple your ability to act on something this important to the city and your constituents? What are you risking if you take up the Carlone Petition? Why would you not welcome the opportunity to get involved in something this important?

The sorcerer's apprentice has unleashed an army of developers upon our city. Growth is good, smart growth is even better, but stupid growth disguised as smart growth will only lead to the destruction of those things we value most about living in Cambridge.

I urge you to enact the Carlone Petition as the next step in taking back control of the future of Cambridge. I also urge you to vote for Councilor McGovern's proposal to adjust the inclusionary zoning formula.

We can no longer justify an anemic inclusionary zoning formula that forces out more people than it creates affordable housing for?

Thank you, and please, I urge you to act with wisdom and courage!

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