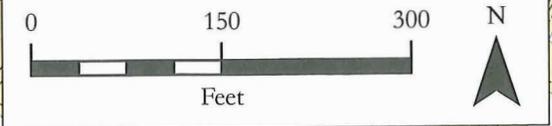
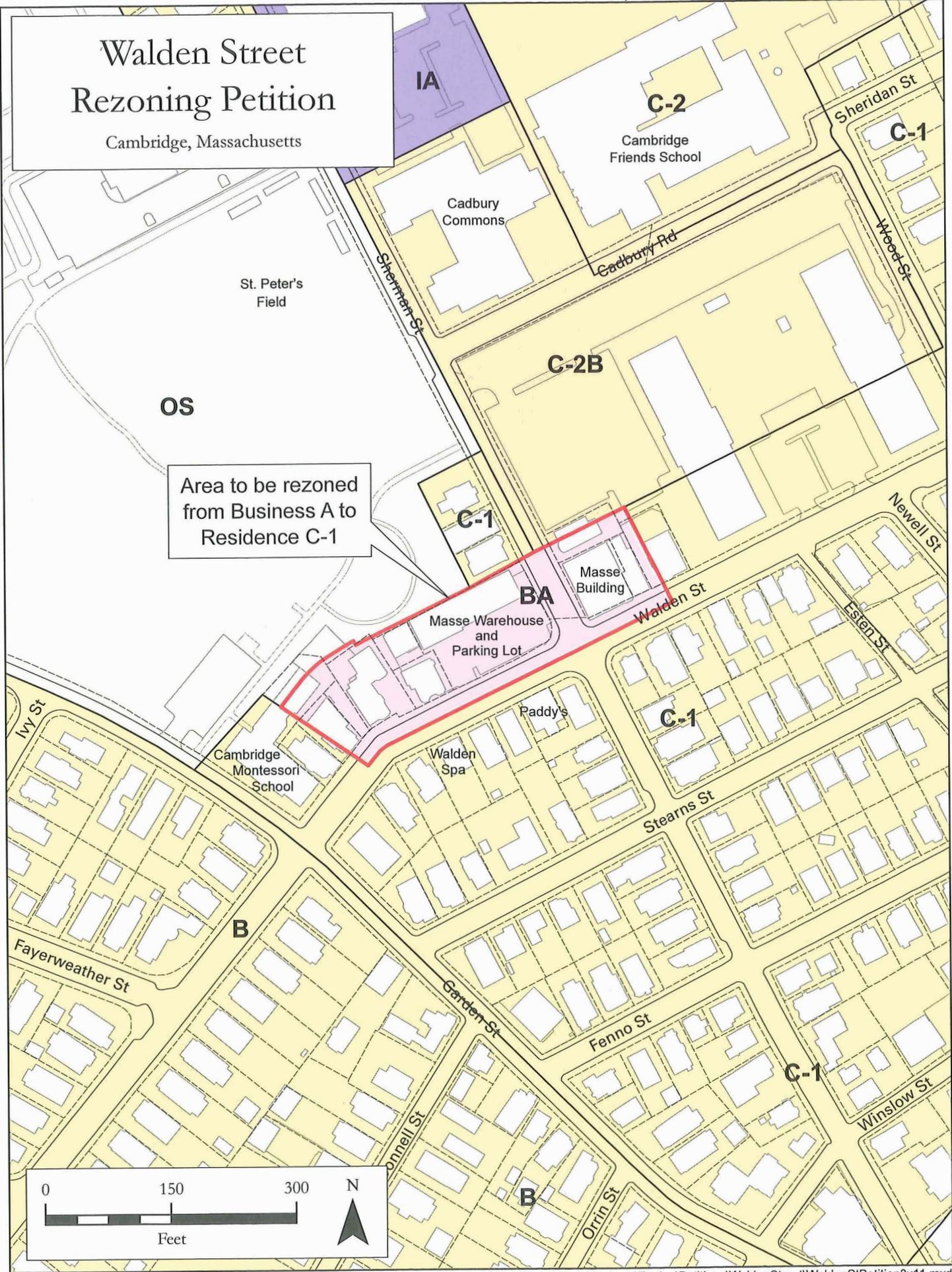


Walden Street Rezoning Petition

Cambridge, Massachusetts

Area to be rezoned
from Business A to
Residence C-1



December 15, 2014

Cambridge Planning Board
344 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Planning Board:

We urge the Planning Board to support the Walden/Sherman Rezoning Petition (the "Petition"), currently before the City Council, that would change the zoning of the Business-A ("B-A") District at the corner of Walden and Sherman Streets, continuing on one side of Walden Street to the Montessori School to Residence C-1 ("C-1"). The area includes a large lot (the "Masse's Lot"); formerly Masse's parking and storage, that is ripe for development.

As further discussed below the current commercial zoning would permit development:

- That is wholly out of character with the surrounding neighborhood
- That consumes virtually the entire footprint of the lot and whose width and density far exceed those of other structures in the neighborhood
- Whose height is more than 25% higher than the one, two and three story residences of the surrounding neighborhood
- That would exacerbate traffic and parking issues at the Walden/Sherman intersection and on the surrounding streets

These are not just our views but the predominant views of those in the community who attended a meeting on November 25 to discuss the proposed development on the Masse's Lot, as reflected in their responses to a survey given out at the meeting and completed by 46 individuals (the "Survey"). We would be glad to make the results of the Survey available to the Board if that would be helpful.

This letter also refutes the suggestion, previously made, that approving the Petition would amount to spot zoning, and finally comments on the December 10 Report of the Cambridge Development Department Staff to the Planning Board on the Petition (the "CDD Report").

The Context: the neighborhood

Residences in substantial numbers were built in this area beginning, for the most part, in the early 1890s. The houses, small and close together, were primarily for the workers of the ubiquitous clay pits and brick factories in this part of Cambridge. Second and third generation neighbors often referred to them as "Irish Workers" cottages.

Over the years, neighbors beautified their homes and yards, enhancing the residential quality of the neighborhood. Today, our former 19th century working class neighborhood



Sherman Street near Walden

is a diverse, vibrant urban village, with one, two and three family houses, lots of kids, dogs and cats, students and seniors, families and singles. Children play rollerblade hockey on its leafy, narrow streets and parents and grandparents push strollers to the ball fields and green spaces of Danehy Park. There are two private schools (Montessori and Friends) and the Tobin Montessori Public School, all within easy walking distance for the local children who attend.

Mass/Density

The existing zoning would permit residential development that is too wide and too dense for the neighborhood. As illustrated in the CDD Report at pages 6 and 7, minimum lot area would be 600 square feet per unit, maximum units (including bonus units) 29, and only 15% of the lot would be kept as open space. By contrast, if the Petition is approved, minimum lot area would be 1,500 square feet, maximum units (including bonus units) 13, and 30% of the lot kept as open space. The difference between 29 units or 13 units is substantial and would have a dramatic effect on the resulting structure and the number of residents entering and exiting onto the streets.

A development under the existing zoning would mean a hulking structure, design aside, that would dwarf its neighbors and be completely out of character with the existing neighborhood.

Building Height

Current zoning would permit a 45' building over much of the Masse Lot. A 45' building is inappropriate for this intimately scaled neighborhood and will exert a powerful, and potentially negative, influence on the physical and psychological character of the neighborhood.¹ The experiential difference between a wood frame building of 35' and a brick and mortar structure at the height of 45 feet is profound. Getting the right height for a building is as important to the contextual fabric of the neighborhood as is the building's use or its materials.

A 45' high, four story building, rising up as an opaque wall to fill the lot, will also forever impact the safety and quality of life surrounding it by casting shadows, diminishing light and obscuring sightlines which have always been unobstructed at that site. Loss of sightlines in particular will add to the already stressed nature of the Walden/Sherman intersection (see further Congestion/Parking, below).

Approval of the Petition would require any future building to be 35' in height and to conform to the residential character of the surrounding C-1 zone. Maintaining the scale of our neighborhood seems like common sense to us. And the mystery is: why is protecting height and scale an issue for discussion at all when it is already written as planning policy? Policy One from Cambridge's plan for growth *Toward a Sustainable Future* drafted in 1993 and updated in 2007 says:

¹ As one neighbor put it in a comment on her response to the Survey form: "I am very concerned that my block will change in character—RADICALLY—with high traffic congestion (car and possibly foot traffic) and my home will be dwarfed/ marginalized (Cynthia Flamm, 281 Walden.)"

Existing residential neighborhoods, or any portions of a neighborhood having an identifiable and consistent built character, should be maintained at their prevailing pattern of development and building density and scale.

Congestion/Parking

Neighborhood streets are often jammed with cars at rush hour, and the intersection of Walden and Sherman Streets is particularly problematic. Sherman Street has become an artery carrying substantial traffic to and from Cambridge to the suburbs west and northwest.

Additional traffic is generated twice daily during the school year by the two schools (Friends and Cambridge Montessori) in the immediate vicinity. Outside the school year, during the summer, the many teams that use St. Peter's Field and the playing fields at Danehy Park, and the special events which take place there, are a further source of congestion. Motorists, often frustrated by waiting in traffic through numerous light cycles, rush at their turns and make pedestrian crossings perilous.



Rush hour 8 am 12-10-14

The density of residential development permitted by the current B- A zoning would mean perhaps 35 or more vehicles passing through the intersection of Walden and Sherman Streets daily, appreciably increasing the congestion and creating more severe bottlenecks and pedestrian hazards.

Similarly, 35 or more additional vehicles, some of which would be parking on the street, would exacerbate what is already a scarcity of available parking along Walden and Sherman Streets, especially in the winter. Many neighborhood residents rely on on-street parking. In the winter



Snowblowing Stearns St 2012

after a snowfall a number of on-street parking spaces become unusable because even if cleared, they are not cleared close enough to the curb for cars to safely park given the narrow dimensions of the street.² The situation may persist for weeks, forcing residents who are lucky enough to have a space to forego moving their cars or risk having to search for a spot, perhaps blocks away, on their return.

Bicycle traffic should also be considered. Sherman Street is so narrow that if there is traffic going both

² Even without snow anyone parking on Sherman Street who does not hug the curb does so at his peril. One of the residents of 51 Sherman Street who parks on the street has twice in the last few years had the mirror on her parked car sideswiped by passing vehicles.

ways on the street, it is difficult or impossible for a car to pass a bicyclist going the same way. As a result the bicyclist will set the pace for cars on that side of the road. This, in turn, leads to frustration on the part of drivers and the temptation to engage in reckless or dangerous driving to get around the cyclist.

It is likewise not a pleasant situation for a cyclist to be squeezed by traffic. Some cyclists, especially children and teenagers, resort to bicycling on the sidewalk, presenting a danger to pedestrians and to themselves.

The City of Cambridge is rightly encouraging cycling as an alternative to driving. However, the infrastructure surrounding the Masse site will simply not support a significant influx of cyclists, which would be another predictable consequence of the number of additional dwelling units permitted by current zoning. The rezoning under consideration would of necessity give rise to less disruption on the adjacent streets.

Retail

Residence C-1 zoning would not permit the use of the Masse's Lot for retail purposes.³ We are not opposed to retail at that location, which historically has been used for commercial purposes; we would have no objection at all to a mixed use or entirely commercial development which conformed in height and mass to the surrounding area.⁴ Current conditions, however, make it overwhelmingly likely that with or without rezoning this parcel is destined for residential development.

Mr. Masse, having closed his store, did not sell it to another retailer, hardware or otherwise. He is instead seeking to convert the building that housed the store to all residential use. Similarly, he is selling the Masse's Lot to a developer who has applied to build an exclusively residential development. The Walden Spa, a convenience store across Walden Street from the Masse's Lot, went out of business this fall and that location remains empty. Paddy's, a unique and much-loved neighborhood bar for over 80 years, also across Walden Street from the Masse's Lot, is the sole remaining nonresidential establishment on Walden Street between Huron and Richdale Avenues. Similarly, there are no commercial, business or retail establishments of any kind on Sherman Street from its start at Garden Street to beyond Walden Street. The conclusion is inescapable that the "highest and best use" of the Masse's Lot, in real estate parlance, is for residential purposes.

Be that as it may, we reiterate that we have no concern with retail use per se and would welcome it so long as the structure to be built on the Masse's Lot, whether exclusively commercial or mixed use, was of a height and scale appropriate for the neighborhood. If a

³ We note that the rest of the site under consideration for rezoning, except for the building that formerly housed the Masse Hardware store, across Sherman Street from the Masse's Lot, has long been residential. The CDD Report notes that a change to C-1 zoning could render some of these parcels nonconforming and suggests (at page 5) that they might be zoned C-1A in order to avoid this result.

⁴ Ironically, the current BA zoning contains a significantly smaller maximum FAR (1.0) and height (35 feet) for non-residential structures than it does for residential.

choice must be made, however, between preserving the possibility of retail use and getting the building right, getting the building right is far and away the more important goal.⁵

Spot Zoning

At the City Council meeting at which the rezoning petition was introduced Mr. Masse suggested that the proposed rezoning amounted to spot zoning. The fact is that the proposed rezoning bears none of the hallmarks of spot zoning and cannot reasonably be so characterized. However, because the subject has been raised it needs to be addressed.

Spot zoning is described in our case law as “the singling out of a particular parcel for different treatment from that of the surrounding area, producing, without rational planning objectives, zoning classifications that fail to treat like properties in a uniform manner.”⁶

By contrast, the proposed rezoning would apply to multiple parcels, not just one: it would include the entire district now zoned B-A. In addition and most importantly, it would not give rise to different treatment from the surrounding area or failure to treat like properties in a uniform manner. Quite the opposite—it would *conform* the B-A district, which has itself become something of an aberration with the closing of Masse’s Hardware, to the surrounding parcels, which on all sides (apart from Danehy Park) are zoned residential, and overwhelmingly C-1. Or, as the CDD Report puts it, Residence C-1 “is the predominant zoning designation in the surrounding neighborhood.”⁷

It bears reminding that Mr. Masse has no plans to preserve the commercial character of either of the two lots in the B-A district which have historically been commercial. Both are slated for residential development. The perceived benefit of B-A zoning for its proponent is rather that it permits construction of a *residential* structure which is grossly out of place with its surroundings and which would not be permitted under the surrounding residential zoning. Preserving this benefit should weigh less in the balance, we submit, than preserving the character of the neighborhood.

CDD Report to the Planning Board on Walden/Sherman Rezoning Petition

The CDD Report is informative and thorough, and we commend the CDD staff for the time, effort and thought that obviously went into producing it.

We respectfully disagree, however, with the conclusion stated at the end of the Report with respect to the Masse parking lot parcel.

By contrast, we completely agree with what leads up to that conclusion:

⁵ Consistent with this view, in the Survey lack of retail came in last as a primary concern about the proposed development on the Masse’s Lot, well behind mass/density, height, parking/congestion, and above-ground parking.

⁶ *National Amusements v. City of Boston*, 29 Mass. App. 305,312 (1990). *Shapiro v. Cambridge*, 340 Mass. 652, 659 (1960).

⁷ The zoning in the neighborhood is illustrated in the Map on the last page of the Report.

“The more interesting challenge [than zoning for the lots in the B-A district that are already residential] is to determine what is the desired character of the lots at the immediate Walden/Sherman intersection that were recently vacated by the Masse company, which will need to transition to some new use. ***A change to Residence C-1 would indicate a desire for the corner to transition to housing of a moderate scale surrounded by yards and open space, with parking potentially on the surface or partially covered by the building. This option would result in stronger uniformity with the surrounding district and probably result in the least impact on traffic.***” (Emphasis supplied.)

We submit that “housing of a moderate scale” as described is precisely what the neighborhood wants and should have, and for the reasons stated: it suits the character of the neighborhood as it now is (“stronger uniformity with the surrounding district”) and it will minimize collateral adverse consequences that would result from development on a significantly larger scale (“the least impact on traffic”). That should be the end of the discussion.

The Report, however, does not stop there. The above quoted passage is immediately followed by a statement that a change to Residence C-1 “could inhibit or delay the redevelopment of the parking lot and warehouse site so that it remains in its existing condition.” No one can know what would be the effect of rezoning on development of the Masse’s Lot. Speculation that development might be delayed beyond the date that development would otherwise begin is just that—speculation—and in any event is not a legitimate basis for denying a zoning change which is in the best interest of the surrounding community, as the Report itself concedes. A delay, if indeed there is one, will be well worth it to get this right.

The Report finishes with something of a half-a-loaf recommendation for the Masse’s Lot, involving “neighborhood-serving retail space at the ground floor and a residential density that is incrementally higher than the surrounding residential neighborhood,” leaving vague exactly what form the zoning would take.⁸ The only stated basis for this recommendation is “past use patterns and the relative prominence of that intersection”. The reference to “past use patterns” is presumably an allusion to the historical use of the site for commercial purposes. That time may be past, but we reiterate that we would be entirely comfortable with a mixed use structure *so long as it was of a suitable height and density for the neighborhood*. There is no reason that we can perceive, nor is one offered, why any structure should have an incrementally higher residential density.

The meaning of the “relative prominence of that intersection” as an additional basis for the CDD Report’s recommendation is puzzling. We submit that the prominence of the intersection should prompt the City to do everything it can to ensure that the development that occurs on this

⁸ Page 7 of the CDD Report, containing a chart comparing the current zoning, proposed zoning, and “Alternative (C-1A) Zoning” as applied to the Masse’s Lot suggests that C-1A is being proposed as an alternative to C-1 rezoning, C-1A zoning, although preferable to B-A in that it would reduce the maximum number of units, retains most of the other objectionable features of the current zoning, most notably the height allowance of 45’.

14,000 square foot lot, the largest by far in the B-A District, furthers its own stated policy quoted at page 2 above: to maintain existing neighborhoods having an identifiable and consistent built character at their prevailing pattern of development and building density and scale. That objective mandates approval of the Petition now before the Board, or of an alternative designation permitting retail/commercial uses that would mirror the C-1 requirements for residential structures.

Respectfully Submitted,



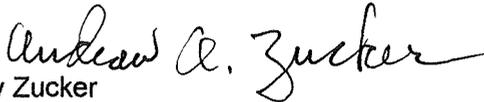
Heddi Siebel
41 Stearns Street



Virginia Coleman
51 Sherman Street



Steve Bardige
55 Stearns Street



Andy Zucker
35 Winslow Street

cc: Members of the Cambridge City Council

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT C

From: James Mahoney [j.j@mahoney.com]
Sent: Tuesday, December 16, 2014 10:52 AM
To: Lopez, Donna
Cc: Cheung, Leland
Subject: Masse's Corner Testimony for 12/18/14 Ordinance Committee Meeting
Attachments: James Mahoney Masse's Corner Ordinance Testimony.docx

Hello, Ms. Lopez,

Attached please find written testimony intended for the Ordinance Committee's consideration of the rezoning petition for Masse's Corner at their meeting on December 18.

Please let me know if you have any questions or need further information.

Thanks and regards,

James Mahoney
234A Walden Street
Cambridge, MA 02140
(617) 945-9280

ATTACHMENT C

James Mahoney
234A Walden Street
Cambridge, MA 02140
617.945.9280

December 16, 2014

City of Cambridge
Ordinance Committee
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Ave
Cambridge, MA 02139

RE: Proposal to Develop/Rezone Masse's Corner

To Whom It May Concern,

I live on Walden Street, close by Masse's corner—in fact, I can see it from my windows—and attended the two neighborhood meetings on the development of the former parking lot. The neighborhood goal of positively influencing the development of the lot is a good one.

Based on what I've seen and learned at the meetings, I think that rezoning is unnecessary and possibly even counter-productive. Rather, I'm confident that we can work cooperatively to craft a solution that will meet both the neighborhood's and the developer's goals. Consider:

- The developer is a local, lifelong resident of Cambridge who appears to have the best interest of the city and the neighborhood at heart.
- The original plan was "as of right," and required no special permits.
- He altered the plans to reflect desires and other feedback that he heard at the first neighborhood meeting. The revised plan now needs multiple variances or permits that the initial plan didn't require. This complicates his development process, and he did not have to do that.
- His stated goal is to provide housing for middle and upper-middle class residents. He notes that this class of resident is largely ignored in city developments, which tend to target lower-income and luxury residents.

From my point of view, our neighborhood has an interested, engaged developer who is very open to compromise and accommodation.

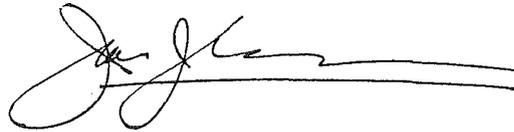
Here's a specific example of this: At the first neighborhood meeting, he said that because of the topography of the neighborhood—a thick layer of clay and a high water table—putting the parking below grade would cost as much, or almost as much, as the rest of the building. Yet, he listened to the concerns about at-grade parking and introduced below-grade parking in the second plan.

Separately, many attendees expressed a desire for retail space at ground level. The revised plan reflects this. Changing the zoning to C-1 would eliminate any retail because, as I understand it, retail/commercial use is not allowed in C-1, as it is in BA.

For the record, I did not know Eric Hoagland prior to the neighborhood meetings. But from what I see, I think we can trust him to create a project that is as beneficial as possible to the neighborhood and city within the bounds of fiscal responsibility, and to not figuratively clear-cut silver maples just because he can.

To a greater or lesser extent, we all have different thoughts about what would be best to have on that lot. But as Eric said near the close of the second neighborhood meeting, the final outcome will not be 100% satisfactory for every one of us (him included). But that is the nature of the situation, and we will all benefit more from working cooperatively.

Thank you.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'James Mahoney', with a long horizontal line extending to the right.

James Mahoney

ATTACHMENT D

December 15, 2014

City of Cambridge Ordinance Committee
C/O
Donna P. Lopez, City Clerk
Office of the City Clerk
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

2014 DEC 17 AM 10 48

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Opposition to Zoning Petition re: Garden/Walden Streets Property

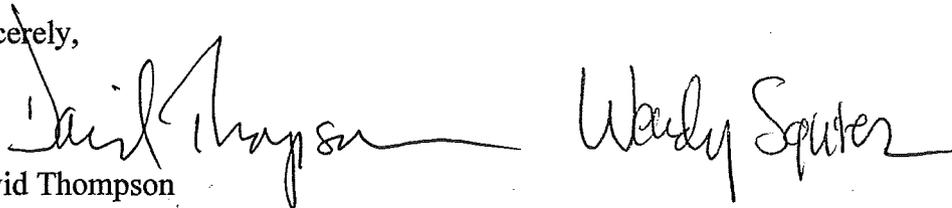
Dear Members of the Cambridge Ordinance Committee:

As homeowners who have lived in this neighborhood for 26 years, we are writing to oppose a zoning petition by the Cambridge City Council that the areas bounded by Garden and Walden Streets and the park straddling Sherman Street currently zoned Business A be rezoned to Residence C1 to be consistent with the surrounding area.

We strenuously oppose the zoning petition on the grounds that it would disallow commercial activities on this potentially vital corner. We would very much like to see retail shops allowed on this corner, which has traditionally been a neighborhood nexus. In the recent past, the intersection contained Paddy's Lunch, Walden Spa, Massé's gas station, and of course, Massé's Hardware, which was a citywide institution for more than a century. This zoning change would preclude there ever being stores in this area again, which we feel would diminish the lively quality of life here.

Furthermore, we believe that the proposed changes in spatial requirements – the minimum lot area, the yard requirements, and setbacks – would encourage development of luxury residences. In a town that already has one of the highest per capita number of milliondollar valued houses in the country and in a neighborhood that has seen the recent construction of large mansions, any further encouragement of luxury homes is a great mistake. It would only help transform Cambridge into a sterile bastion of the ultrawealthy instead of the exciting and diverse community it has always been.

Sincerely,



David Thompson
Wendy Squires
6 Chetwynd Rd
Cambridge 02140

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT E

From: Dannielle Kennedy [DKennedy@Worklab.com]
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 9:13 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: zoning

Dear Donna,

I am writing to you as a resident of Neighborhood Nine. I am concerned about the current development plans at Masse's corner (Walden and Sherman) and I support the zoning petition by the City Council that the areas bounded by Garden and Walden Streets and the park straddling Sherman Street currently zoned Business A be rezoned to Residence C-1 to be consistent with the surrounding area.

I very much appreciate your attention to this matter.

All best,
Dannielle Kennedy

123 RAYMOND STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MA 02140
TEL (617) 520 9595
dkennedy@worklab.com
www.worklab.com

CONFIDENTIALITY NOTICE

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Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT F.

From: John Bright [johndbright@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 8:55 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: feedback on Masse lot

Donna,

The intersection of Sherman and Walden street, the location of the future MASSE development, is incredibly congested during rush hour both in a.m. and p.m. and even after school. Therefore, I believe that city MUST exercise restraint in the development of it. I urge the city to pass rezoning that land as described in the current zoning petition.

Thank you,
John Bright
283 Upland Rd.
Cambridge, MA

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT G

From: Jeremiah Schuur [j_schuur@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 9:55 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: comment re: Massies Zoning

I am a resident of Cambridge on Walden and Garden and I support the proposed rezoning at the Massies site.

The Ordinance Committee will conduct a public hearing on a zoning petition by the City Council that the areas bounded by Garden and Walden Streets and the park straddling Sherman Street currently zoned Business A be rezoned to Residence C-1 to be consistent with the surrounding area. The effects of the proposed change would include but not be limited to the following: The minimum lot area per dwelling unit would increase from 600 square feet to 1,500 square feet, the yard requirements would increase, the height limit would be reduced from 45 feet to 35 feet, and only residential uses would be allowed.

Jeremiah Schuur, MD
Mobile 401-480-7468
<https://twitter.com/JSchuurMD>

What will you tell your children when they ask you "what were you doing while there was still time to address climate change?"

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT W

From: Judy Bright [judycoppolabright@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 8:49 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: comments re: Masse lot development for 12/18 mtg.

Hi Donna,

I cannot attend tomorrow night's meeting but would like to submit my comments for consideration. I live near Masse's and am wildly concerned about the impending development there. Our fair city is experiencing immense and rapid growth. I believe that we must temper it as much as we can in order to temper the congestion of our roads - and particularly in that specific locale/intersection.

I FULLY support rezoning that land as described in the zoning petition below.

Thank you,
Judy Bright

283 Upland Rd.
Cambridge, MA

Thursday, December 18, 2014

5:30 PM

The Ordinance Committee will conduct a public hearing on a zoning petition by the City Council that the areas bounded by Garden and Walden Streets and the park straddling Sherman Street currently zoned Business A be rezoned to Residence C-1 to be consistent with the surrounding area. The effects of the proposed change would include but not be limited to the following: The minimum lot area per dwelling unit would increase from 600 square feet to 1,500 square feet, the yard requirements would increase, the height limit would be reduced from 45 feet to 35 feet, and only residential uses would be allowed. **This hearing to be televised.**
(Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, 459 Broadway)

All emails to and from this email address are subject to the Public Records Law and may be made available to members of the public. Anything you do not want subject to that law should be sent to me at Craig@CraigKelley.org.

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT I

From: Cristina Ullmann [cristina.ullmann@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, December 17, 2014 8:53 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: Masse's development

I am a Cambridge resident and neighbor of Masse's property on Walden Street. I fully support the rezoning as stated below:

rezoned to Residence C-1 to be consistent with the surrounding area. The effects of the proposed change would include but not be limited to the following: The minimum lot area per dwelling unit would increase from 600 square feet to 1,500 square feet, the yard requirements would increase, the height limit would be reduced from 45 feet to 35 feet, and only residential uses would be allowed.

Thanks, Cristina Ullmann
186 Walden Street

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT J

From: Susan Koechner [skoechner@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, December 18, 2014 9:01 AM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: Fwd: comments re: Masse lot development for 12/18 mtg.

Dear Donna,

Although I cannot attend tonight's meeting, I would like to contribute my thoughts on the zoning for the Masse site:

As a nearby neighbor, I completely support rezoning the land as described in the zoning petition below.

Thank you,
Susan Koechner
83 Washington Avenue

Thursday, December 18, 2014 5:30 PM

The Ordinance Committee will conduct a public hearing on a zoning petition by the City Council that the areas bounded by Garden and Walden Streets and the park straddling Sherman Street currently zoned Business A be rezoned to Residence C-1 to be consistent with the surrounding area. The effects of the proposed change would include but not be limited to the following: The minimum lot area per dwelling unit would increase from 600 square feet to 1,500 square feet, the yard requirements would increase, the height limit would be reduced from 45 feet to 35 feet, and only residential uses would be allowed. **This hearing to be televised.**
(Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, 459 Broadway)

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Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT 1C

From: Eva Alpert [bevalasvegas@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, December 18, 2014 11:07 AM
To: Lopez, Donna
Cc: judycoppolabright@gmail.com
Subject: Masse Site

Hello Donna:

I am a resident of Cambridge, living in the Porter Sq area the last 10 years. I am concerned about the development of the site where Masse Hardware used to be. I oppose any large development at the site, anything tall or large. That site is right on a tiny intersection and already the surrounding area has lots of traffic and is often backed up with cars at rush hour.

I would like to see that area zoned as Residence C-1.

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

**Eva Alpert
28 Regent St
Cambridge MA 02140**

617-378-1606

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT 2

From: Tab Vevers [tabvevers@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, December 18, 2014 11:56 AM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: Rezoning petition near Masse's

Dear Donna Lopez,

I live on Richdale Ave in Cambridge. While I think growth & development can be a positive thing, I am extremely alarmed by both the scale and number of real estate development projects in the Porter Square area. Where there is money & demand, development will follow, so it is especially important at this pivotal moment that the city of Cambridge take a leading role in ensuring that current & future development be done with respect for the scale & quality of our neighborhoods. In addition, there are already serious problems with traffic flow as well as drainage & infrastructure in the area.

I am writing in favor of the zoning petition by the City Council that the areas bounded by Garden and Walden Streets and the park straddling Sherman Street currently zoned Business A be rezoned to Residence C-1 to be consistent with the surrounding area. The effects of the proposed change would include but not be limited to the following: The minimum lot area per dwelling unit would increase from 600 square feet to 1,500 square feet, the yard requirements would increase, the height limit would be reduced from 45 feet to 35 feet, and only residential uses would be allowed.

Thank you,
Tabitha Vevers

Sent from my eyePhone

ATTACHMENT M

December 17, 2014

City of Cambridge Ordinance Committee
C/O Donna P. Lopez, City Clerk
Office of the City Clerk
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

2014 DEC 18 AM 11 55
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Dear Members of the Cambridge Ordinance Committee:

We are writing to **oppose** a zoning petition by the Cambridge City Council that “the areas bounded by Garden and Walden Streets and the park straddling Sherman Street currently zoned Business A be rezoned to Residence C-1 to be consistent with the surrounding area.”

We are homeowners who have lived in the vicinity of this site for many years and in that time enjoyed the diversity of the residents of the area and the retail shops that have over the years provided an array of services.

We strenuously oppose the zoning petition on the grounds that **it would disallow commercial activities on this potentially vital corner**. We would very much like to see retail shops allowed on this corner, which has traditionally been a neighborhood nexus. In the recent past, the intersection contained Paddy’s Lunch, Walden Spa, Masse’s gas station, and of course, Masse’s hardware store, which was a citywide institution for more than a century. This zoning change would preclude there ever being stores in this area again, which would permanently diminish the quality of life there. At the same time, the developer in possession of the site at 253 Walden Street has proposed placing small commercial spaces on the ground floor. Down-zoning the site would make this impossible.

Second, we believe that **the proposed changes in spatial requirements** – the minimum lot area, the yard requirements, and setbacks – **would encourage development of luxury residences**. Severely limiting the allowable number of dwellings on the site will perforce raise the cost of the dwellings, whether they are rented or sold. The resulting rents or for-sale prices would preclude households who earn from \$40,000 to \$100,000, a group which has increasing difficulty finding housing they can afford. In a town that already has one of the highest per capita number of million-dollar valued houses and a neighborhood that has seen the recent construction of large mansions, any further encouragement of luxury housing is a great mistake. It would only help transform Cambridge into a sterile bastion of the ultra-wealthy instead of the exciting diverse community it has been in the past.

Sincerely,

Alexander von Hoffman & Glenna Lang

Alexander von Hoffman
Glenna Lang
43 Stearns Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT N

From: Lise Motherwell [lise.motherwell@gmail.com]
Sent: Thursday, December 18, 2014 12:47 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Cc: Lise Motherwell
Subject: Masse's development

Dear Ms. Lopez,

I live on Upland Road in Cambridge near the Masse's development site. While I am for the continued development of residential housing, I am very concerned about both the scale and number of real estate development projects in our neighborhood. Currently, there are at least five development projects within a square mile of Upland Road. The City of Cambridge needs to ensure that current and future developments are done with respect for the scale and quality of our neighborhoods. We already have serious problems with traffic going towards Mass. Avenue off Walden and Upland, and getting through Porter Sq. on Mass. Ave. There are parking shortages, and drainage and infrastructure problems in the adjacent neighborhoods. More development will only increase these problems.

I am writing in favor of the zoning petition by the City Council that the areas bounded by Garden and Walden Streets and the park straddling Sherman Street currently zoned Business A be rezoned to Residence C-1 to be consistent with the surrounding area. The effects of the proposed change would include but not be limited to the following: The minimum lot area per dwelling unit would increase from 600 square feet to 1,500 square feet, the yard requirements would increase, the height limit would be reduced from 45 feet to 35 feet, and only residential uses would be allowed.

Thank you for your consideration.

Lise Motherwell

:: Lise Motherwell, PsyD
:: 617-872-0446

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Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT 0

From: R. S. Steinberg [rss@post.harvard.edu]
Sent: Thursday, December 18, 2014 2:48 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Cc: Lise Motherwell; DKennedy@worklab.com
Subject: The Masse's corner

Dear Ms. Lopez,

As a near neighbor of the evolving changes at the former Masse's Hardware, I am worried that too large or too commercial a structure will change the precious character of the neighborhood. Traffic on Upland and Walden streets is a present and worsening problem, especially for drivers who wish to turn left on Mass. Ave; Porter Square is harder and harder to negotiate; parking is scarcer than it used to be.

I support the petition to rezone the areas bounded by Garden and Walden Streets and the park straddling Sherman Street from Business A to Residence C-1, to keep it consistent with the surrounding area, my neighborhood. I understand that the proposed change would increase the minimum lot area per dwelling unit from 600 square feet to 1,500 square feet, increase the yard requirements and limit height limit to 35 feet, and allow only residential uses. All of that would be good for my neighbors, and good for me.

Sincerely,

--R. S. Steinberg, 195 Upland Road

Lopez, Donna

ATTACHMENT P

From: Lena Olsson [lenaolsson@verizon.net]
Sent: Thursday, December 18, 2014 3:29 PM
To: Lopez, Donna
Subject: Support new Zoning petition

My name is Lena Olsson Noonan
19 Shepard Street #22
Cambridge MA 02138

Please pass suggested petition below. Thank you.

The Ordinance Committee will conduct a public hearing on a zoning petition by the City Council that the areas bounded by Garden and Walden Streets and the park straddling Sherman Street currently zoned Business A be rezoned to Residence C-1 to be consistent with the surrounding area. The effects of the proposed change would include but not be limited to the following: The minimum lot area per dwelling unit would increase from 600 square feet to 1,500 square feet, the yard requirements would increase, the height limit would be reduced from 45 feet to 35 feet, and only residential uses would be allowed. **This hearing to be televised.**

(Henrietta S. Attles Meeting Room, 459 Broadway)