

# Please Let Normandy Tower Up-zoning Petition EXPIRE

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City Clerk Agenda

To: City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>; Paden, Liza <lpaden@cambridgema.gov>;

Cc: Lopez, Donna <dlopez@cambridgema.gov>;

Dear Counselors,

Given the overwhelming consensus that new construction in Central Square should prioritize affordable housing it seems to me that the main disagreement is the question of how best to accomplish this. Is the request by Normandy Development really the best we can do? I believe the answer is NO - here are my reasons.

There are a variety of odd parcels in Central Square used for parking. Some are owned by the City and others by developers. I happen to live on a block with a large lot on the corner of Prospect and Bishop Allen owned by Intercontinental. They floated development on one side of Prospect keeping parking lot on the other. What a waste of precious space! Then there is the 10 Essex development, already approved that abuts the City parking lot on Essex and Bishop Allen. If C2 zoning had been discussed and implemented this project would have been improved. So Mass+Main is one of MANY DEVELOPMENT PROJECT that need to be considered in a wiser, larger picture way in Central Square. Of course each developer is going to want to maximize their profits. I do not begrudge them the ability to make money. Even giving money to City Counselors. That's how things work. However, the real estate market in Cambridge is not gonna tank and we don't need to worry about them losing money or going away.

The City Council has the moral responsibility to achieve the most good for ALL RESIDENTS of our wonderful city. There need to be limits to profits and compromises to some things. Everyone agrees we need more affordable housing and that the market forces, if left alone, will gut our City of working and middle class residents.

But Central Square is not lacking in residential density! The businesses and people who live in Central Square need parking and access to sustainable transportation. Surface lots are ugly and a bad use of space. Developers like Normandy need some zoning requirements and financial incentives to build below ground parking AND preserve some of the space for open public uses as well as provide affordable housing. I believe that Counselor Carlone's proposal was offered in the hope that people would open their minds to the possibilities of everyone winning something with better, clearer zoning, better design and a public/private partnership for use of the city parking lots - more affordable housing, lower heights, access to public open space, varied, enlivening commercial space and appropriate parking for cars, car sharing and bikes.

This is NOT just a pipe dream - but it requires the leadership of the Counsel and City Planning. Please let the Normandy petition expire without a vote.

PLEASE SET POLICY FOR THE ENTIRE COMMUNITY, NOT JUST ONE DEVELOPER.

I look forward to an ongoing discussion of development in Central Square and the City as a whole.

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