

# Mass+Main 2nd Hearing

Bill Mcavinney <bmcavin@mit.edu>

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City Clerk Agenda

To:Lopez, Donna <dlopez@cambridgema.gov>; City Council <CityCouncil@CambridgeMA.GOV>;

Cc:Bill Mcavinney <bmcavin@mit.edu>;

Dear Mayor Maher and Councilors,

By now I've taken enough of your valuable time speaking on this issue, so I'm going to forego speaking again and just send you my comments. I still feel at least as strongly as ever that we need housing and that the Mass & Main project is a very good way to do that. It is within a block of Mass Ave at Central Square where very few of us have cars compared to just a block or two away, and it will set a precedent of permanent 20% affordable units for projects to come.

We have a housing crisis. Housing costs are sky rocketing.

And we have a climate crisis with too many people widely scattered and pouring carbon into our atmosphere.

Some people believe Cambridge is such a special place it is exempt from the laws of supply and demand. That's a very risky leap of faith to bet our future on. Change is happening in our city right now and if we don't get out in front of it, it will make Cambridge a city where only the rich and current homeowners can afford to live.

I'm a firm believer in do no harm. Clearly this project will not solve Cambridge's housing crisis, even less solve our climate crisis, but what about not building it or delaying it for several years? I can't believe that won't harm Cambridge. 185 fewer market rate homes for people to live, 46 fewer affordable units. That has real impact on people's lives: Many more of my neighbors displaced; more cars; more carbon; as all the new lab spaces open and their employees either outbid my neighbors for their homes, or commute long distances.

What better place to build dense housing than in Central Square, a bustling urban center and transit hub where far fewer of us own cars than even a block or two away.

And what are we losing? Some of our precious green space? Neighborhood housing? No.

Lab space. Lab space!

How often do we get the chance to displace labs with housing!

I urge you to move forward approving this project as a way of preserving more of our diversity, reducing our carbon footprint, and keeping our city a growing, alive, and welcoming place, and to be vigilant with the details and make this project the best it can be for our city.

Sincerely,  
Bill McAvinney