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Councilor Cheung Council Order March 19, 2012 concerning a fast food establishment
(Dunkin Donuts) variance request at 1678 Mass. Ave.

ORDER 17-MARCH, 19.12
CHARTER RIGHT

I speak in opposition to a variance for a fast food establishment at 1678 Mass. Ave. midway between Waterhouse Street and Upland Road.

My name is Ron Axelrod, 26 Shepard Street and I sit on the Steering Committee established by the City representing Neighborhood Nine for **the Master Plan for Streetscape Improvements on Mass. Ave. from Waterhouse Street to Upland Road.**

Over the past two years, the City has developed and is in the final stages of issuing the Master Plan for Streetscape Improvements. The master plan is a balanced approach to improving the Avenue, which is the commercial center of two neighborhoods. The Community Development Department assisted by Traffic and Parking, Department of Public Works and the Agassiz and Neighborhood Nine neighborhoods have worked on this master plan over the past year **to promote the business environment, improve pedestrian safety, and promote the neighborhood street character.**

The variance requested for a fast food establishment, or Dunkin Donuts in this case, is in opposition to the master plan goals of establishing a diverse business climate, balanced loading zones with no loss of parking, and public safety.

A fast food establishment (**Dunkin Donuts**) would be the 15th place to get coffee between Waterhouse Street and Upland, hardly a hardship as a condition in the ordinance. People cite that there is a Starbucks a block away. In the late 1990's, it fulfilled a neighborhood need of a coffee shop as it replaced the Shepard Pharmacy which, shortly before its closing, had a soda fountain counter which was enjoyed by the neighborhood. There was only one other place along the Avenue to get coffee at that time, now there are 14.

In addition, the Master Plan seeks pedestrian safety, and a fast food establishment would:

- **Create traffic problems** with double parking, as there is no loading zone in front of 1678 Mass. Ave.
- **Encourage double parking** on Mass. Ave. and also on residential Bowdoin Street behind the proposed Dunkin Donuts and cars circulating the neighborhood streets.
- **Threaten public safety** in the street for bicyclists in the new bike lane on Mass. Ave. from disembarking cars in the street.

The master plan encourages locally owned businesses that serve the needs of the neighborhood. In developing the master plan, the City conducted a survey of businesses to maintain optimal curbside parking spaces while accommodating business loading zones. **A fast food establishment, by it's name, encourages "run in and out" business, not helpful to parking, traffic, or reinforcing contiguous shopping.**

Thank you for considering my comments and our two neighborhood's plans and needs.

