



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 344 BROADWAY, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02139

Date: April 21, 2015

Subject: Chestnut Hill Realty Zoning Petition (Basement Housing Overlay District Modifications)

Recommendation: The Planning Board recommends ADOPTION.

To the Honorable, the City Council,

The proposed amendment is technical in nature and does not change the original intent or substance of the Basement Housing Overlay District that was adopted in 2011. The analysis performed when the original zoning was adopted contemplated that the provisions could apply to buildings that are on split-zoning lots, so long as they are at least partially within a multifamily residential district and meet all of the other qualifying requirements. During the building permit approval process, it was determined that the current zoning text is not clear in this regard. Therefore, the proposed change will clarify that the buildings identified when the zoning was first adopted would be eligible for the special permit relief afforded by the provisions of the overlay district.

The proposed changes have been reviewed by staff of the Community Development Department and the Law Department, and no concerns have been raised.

The current zoning places requirements for new basement units to employ measures to reduce the risk of flooding and sewer backflow, and review by the City Engineer and Commissioner of Inspectional Services is required. In written material and oral testimony from the public, the Board heard comments regarding practices for maintenance of backwater valves and other considerations. While the Board believes that these are advisable measures, it is not necessary to include these into the language of the Zoning Ordinance.

Respectfully submitted for the Planning Board,



H Theodore Cohen, Chair.