



CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
City Councillor

March 9, 2010

RE: Communication from City Officers

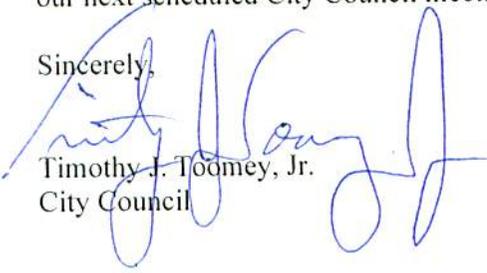
Madame Clerk

I would like to submit the following letter sent to the City Manager on March 9, 2010, for the record.

I have asked the City to seriously consider expanding our Affordable Housing stock by purchasing properties currently being offered by the Jesuits in the Harvard Square area. I feel this would help to achieve the city's goal of equitable distribution of our affordable housing stock, and is an opportunity we should not miss.

Due to the time sensitivity of the matter, I felt it imperative to communicate with the City Manager before our next scheduled City Council meeting and wish to share the communication with my colleagues.

Sincerely,


Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
City Council



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City Councillor

March 9, 2010

Robert Healy
City Manager
795 Massachusetts Ave
Cambridge, MA 02139

Mr. Manager,

It has come to my attention that there is a significant opportunity to add to the City's affordable housing stock. The Society of Jesus in New England has recently placed 7 of their properties on the market. These large homes offer a unique opportunity that the City of Cambridge should explore in order to honor our commitment to providing affordable housing options to our residents.

These homes are located in an area of Cambridge with few, if any, affordable housing options. An opportunity such as this does not present itself with any regularity. If our commitment is to create affordable housing and to evenly distribute it throughout the city, then we should seize this opportunity as a way to achieve that goal.

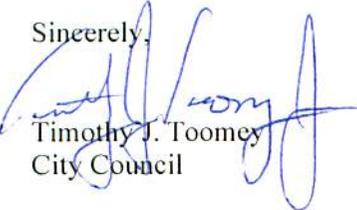
Considering the size of some of these homes and assuming the buildings are in proper condition, I feel these would offer excellent renovation possibilities to provide a substantial amount of units to deserving Cambridge residents and families.

Additionally, considering the historic nature of these properties, I would also be interested in exploring the use of CPA funds allotted for historical preservation to assist in their purchase and rehabilitation.

I ask that city agencies work swiftly, as bids are due at the end of March. I have submitted a council order in relation to this matter, but the City Council does not meet again until March 22nd, and I want there to have been significant time for departments to coordinate on this matter before the deadline.

I have attached an article with further details as well as a City Council Order for the March 22nd meeting. If you have any questions or concerns, please contact me at 617-349-4278.

Sincerely,


Timothy J. Toomey
City Council

CC:

Mayor Maher

City Council

Assistant City Manager of Community Development

Affordable Housing Trust

Just-A-Start

Home Owners Rehab

CASCAP

Cambridge Housing Authority

Jesuits selling seven properties worth millions in Cambridge

By Marilyn Jackson

Wicked Local Cambridge

Posted Mar 09, 2010 @ 09:06 AM

Cambridge —

Cambridge —

The Society of Jesus of New England is offering for sale seven distinctive single-family homes just outside Harvard Square.

They have been used as residences for the most part by more than five dozen students at the Weston Jesuit School of Theology, who come from across the country and from foreign countries.

The students will relocate to a new building on the Boston College campus across the Charles River during the summer. The building is under construction.

Four of the homes have been packaged together and are listed at \$6.8 million. They are situated on a three-quarter-acre lot. Their addresses are 40 and 42 Kirkland St., 7 Kirkland Road and 20 Sumner Road.

Three others are being sold separately. Lindsay Allison and Lisa May of Hammond Real Estate, Two Brattle Square, are marketing all of the houses. They are in the 02138 zip code.

Those homes are located at 13-15 Avon St., an 1865 Mansard Victorian; 12 Linnaean St., a two-and-a-half-story Victorian, and 66 Oxford St., another Victorian with a hip roof, gables and a conical corner.

The Avon Street property with a four-window boxed bay is listed at \$1.9 million. It features a curved staircase in an unusual round hallway, leaded glass windows and two fireplaces.

The home at 12 Linnaean St., listed at \$1.1 million, is described as a Queen Anne Victorian, built in 1884. It has seven bedrooms and two full baths, a double living room with a fireplace and a two-car garage.

Listed at \$1.5 million is a 4,936-square-foot Victorian home with 15 rooms, including four bedrooms, two baths and a fireplace. It boasts a turret and an enclosed entry porch that features fanlights above the doorway and the windows.

The enclave of the four Mid-Cambridge houses comprises four different styles of architecture. Forty Kirkland St. is a substantial Victorian with 14 rooms including four bedrooms. It was built at the turn of the last century.

No. 42 Kirkland is an aluminum-sided three-decker with a double bay front, comprising 18 rooms, including six bedrooms. According to city records, it was built in 1910.

The home at 20 Sumner Road is a single-family colonial, built in 1925. It has eight rooms, with three bedrooms and one-and-a-half baths. The fourth house is the Claver House at 7 Kirkland Road.

Showings of these properties by appointment will begin Monday, March 15. Offers are due by April 5.

“Cambridge has been low on inventory of single-family houses, and all of a sudden, seven really substantial houses, all right around Harvard Square, have come on the market,” said Allison.

“It’s a very healthy thing for the Cambridge market,” she said.

“Most have hardwood floors on the main floors and the bedrooms are carpeted. There are not a lot of baths.

“Some have two living rooms, and most have fireplaces. Some are just spectacular, like the Avon Street house, which has many original details. They have been very well maintained.”

She said the city has listed these properties as single-family homes, because they are used like dormitories, but some may have potential for additional units.

Buyers would have to explore these alternatives with zoning officials, their architects and attorneys.

Allison added that buyers should be flexible as to when they take possession of the properties in the event that the move to Boston College is delayed because construction is not completed.

She said the houses should be empty between mid-August and mid-September.

The Weston Jesuit School of Theology, now located on Phillips Place, has been in existence since 1922, first as Weston College and later as the Weston School of Theology. Fifty years ago it was integrated into Boston College under the umbrella of the Boston Theological Institute. It became the Weston Jesuit School of Theology in 1994.

Four years ago it agreed to become re-affiliated with Boston College as part of a new School of Theology and Ministry and move to the Brighton campus.