



City of Cambridge

167.

IN CITY COUNCIL

August 4, 1997

COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU
VICE MAYOR BORN
COUNCILLOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO
MAYOR RUSSELL
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN

WHEREAS: Property owners and residents living near 55 Montgomery Street have expressed concerns about the proposed development at that site, including concerns about process, design, parking freeze issues, lack of linkage and health issues, as set forth in the attached petition, fact sheet and issue summary; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct appropriate staff:

- 1) To meet with these residents to review their concerns and issues;
- 2) To determine whether City agencies have fulfilled their responsibilities with respect to this development proposal; and
- 3) To determine whether the City could offer appropriate technical assistance or facilitation in this matter.

In City Council August 4, 1997

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Margaret Drury".

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

KT

Whereas: Property owners and residents living near 55 Montgomery Street have expressed concerns about the proposed development at that site, including ~~your~~ concerns about process, design, parking, freeze issues, lack of linkage and health issues, as set forth in the attached petition, fact sheet and issue summary; now therefore be it

Ordered: That the CM be and hereby is requested to direct appropriate staff

- 1) to meet with these residents to review their concerns and issues, ~~and~~ ^{and} determine whether there is information, technical assistance or facilitation that the City Council provide to them;
- 2) to determine whether City agencies have fulfilled their responsibilities with respect to this development proposal, and 3) to determine whether ~~the~~ ^{the City Council offer} appropriate technical assistance or facilitation ~~to~~ in this matter

PETITION

We, the undersigned property owners and renters living adjacent to or near the property at **55 MONTGOMERY STREET**, ask the City Council to *direct* the Cambridge Historical Commission to rescind its approval of the proposed design for the site and *order* the Building Department to rescind the Building Permit granted for a large development at that site.

The **process** for the design and permit approvals, the **design** of the development, the **parking** issues, the **linkage** issues, and the **health** issues raised by residents need to be resolved before any development can take place.

THE CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL SHOULD:

- DIRECT THE CAMBRIDGE HISTORICAL COMMISSION TO RESCIND ITS ORDER OF JUNE 5, 1997
- ORDER THE BUILDING DEPARTMENT TO RESCIND ITS PERMIT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF 55 MONTGOMERY STREET
- REFER THIS MATTER DIRECTLY TO THE CITY MANAGER TO ENSURE THAT THE HISTORICAL COMMISSION, BUILDING DEPARTMENT, COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT, AND TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT PERFORM THEIR **REGULATORY** ROLES
- HOLD A HEARING BEFORE THE APPROPRIATE CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE SO THAT ALL OF THE INFORMATION REGARDING THIS DEVELOPMENT IS PUT ON THE TABLE AND ISSUES ARE RESOLVED WITH PARTICIPATION OF NEARBY RESIDENTS

| | <i>Name</i> | <i>Address</i> | <i>Phone</i> |
|----|-------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. | Mike Reynolds | 60 Montgomery St | 661-8131 |
| 2. | Marie G. Simard | 54 Montgomery St | Cambridge |
| 3. | Therese Broussard | 52 Montgomery St | |
| 4. | Katrina Linder | 46 Montgomery St. | |
| 5. | Ger-Shengwang | 40 MONTGOMERY ST | |

6. Caree Laner 36 Montgomery St. 547-4215
7. Robert J. Simard 54 Montgomery St 864-3157
8. Juan Birch 20 Columbus Ave 354-3215
9. Paul R. M. 22 Blake St 281
10. Uncle McIntosh 13 Creighton 492-0419
11. Ann Colette 50 Creighton St. 876-1734
12. Shirley Howard 102 Harow St. 864-0146

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| | Name | Address | Phone |
|----|-------------------------|-------------------|----------|
| 1. | Mr + Mrs DeGoy (Qualls) | 77 Montgomery St. | 492-4538 |
| 2. | Michael Qualls | 77 Montgomery St. | ↑ |
| 3. | Keith Qualls | 72 Montgomery St. | 492-1620 |
| | Deborah Widener | 60 Montgomery | 661 8131 |
| 5. | | | |

PETITION---Page 2

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| | <i>Name</i> | <i>Address</i> | <i>Phone</i> |
|----|------------------|-------------------|--------------|
| 1. | Michael W. Bedal | 72 Montgomery St. | 492-1620 |
| 2. | Bonne Kaul | 72 Montgomery St. | 492-1620 |
| 3. | Walter Zimmert | 73 Montgomery St. | 492-6164 |
| 4. | Edward J. Reid | 73 Montgomery St. | 492-6164 |
| 5. | Edward J. Reid | 66 Montgomery St. | 876-4021 |
| 6. | Rose H. Reid | " " | " " |

7. Herb. Montgomery St Camb. 02140
8. Lillian Gray Martin 70 Montgomery St. 02140
9. Nancy B. Ly 106 Dudley St
10. Edward W. J 106 Dudley St.
11. Agnes Tremblay 66 Montgomery St. 02140
12. Harold Z Higgins 64 Montgomery St Camb.
13. Yvette M. Higgins 64 Montgomery St Camb.

FACT SHEET ON THE ISSUES **AT 55 MONTGOMERY STREET**

- **PROCESS ISSUES:** The property contains an historical building, so-recognized by the Historical Commission. After carefully researching and designating the building as historical on its own initiative earlier in the spring, and identifying other historical features of the property, the Commission voted in late March to halt further development for 6 months. Without explanation, without necessity, and without notice to all interested parties, the Commission reconsidered the matter at the request of the developer in early June. At that time it granted permission to the developer to move the historical building and to demolish an historical feature of the property. This "link" in the chain of decisions by the City needs to be discussed, and this decision needs to be rescinded as well.

- **DESIGN ISSUES:** The drawings submitted to the Historical Commission and then to the Building Department as "plans" lack standard architectural detail needed by both the Building Department and the neighbors to make sense of the developer's intentions. Scales on some drawings are inaccurate. Without these details, the Building Department cannot project the types of materials and techniques needed to safely and successfully complete construction. This City agency cannot carry out its charge of ensuring that construction is safe and enduring.

- **PARKING FREEZE ISSUES:** Because of already-allowed construction on Montgomery Street and the lack of driveways for older structures, this section of Montgomery Street has unusually tight on-street parking. There is a very high percentage of older residents who still drive and need to park in front of or near their own residences. This situation is especially difficult during the winter months.

The developer has told a meeting of neighbors that he assumes that 10 is the "working number" of cars his development will introduce.

The developer's drawings call for ***only three*** new off street spaces, although the design is such that access to these spaces is particularly uninviting. The design submitted for this property creates ***two new three story buildings which will introduce up to 8 new bedrooms of living space*** in addition to those available in the existing historical building on the property.

It is expected that the tenants will be younger professionals with automobiles, including couples who may share a bedroom and ***each*** have a car. ***10 new cars is not an unrealistic number to expect...it is an unrealistic number to live with given the submitted design!*** The City Council needs to carefully involve the Traffic Department in regard to the number of cars this site will introduce.

- **LACK OF LINKAGE:** Despite the size of the proposed development, no commitment has been made to offer rental or purchase priority to current Cambridge residents, particularly residents in search of affordable housing. Neither the Historical Commission nor Building Department investigated or ruled on the developer's obligations in this regard. The City Council needs to involve the Community Development Department which administers the Affordable Housing Trust in the development process, to assure the developer is fulfilling his obligations to the community, including any legal obligation to contribute units or money to the Affordable Housing Trust.

- **HEALTH ISSUES:** The plan approved by the Historical Commission and the permit granted by the Building Department allow the developer to move the existing structure at 55 Montgomery Street, an historical building, and build *two additional three story structures* on that site! The existing building has lead paint, asbestos shingles, and possibly asbestos insulation. No assurances have been asked for or given anywhere in the planning or permit process regarding the release of asbestos or lead into the air in our small neighborhood and how that might affect young children playing on the street, in their own yards, in neighboring homes, or during the day, in any of the several family daycares maintained on the street.

SUMMARY OF THE ISSUES
AT 55 MONTGOMERY STREET

- The **process** used by the Historical Commission and the Building Department to grant approvals was faulty
- The **design** submitted lacks architectural details and contradicts the findings of the Historical Commission
- The **parking issues** created by the introduction of 10 or more cars to accommodate the many new renters at this site are not addressed by the design and have not been reviewed by the Traffic Department
- A **linkage** contribution by the developer and setting aside units for **affordable housing** have not been reviewed by the Community Development Department
- The **health issues** created by attempting to "move" an historical building on the property with **lead paint and asbestos**, as well as those related to "renovating" a building with **asbestos shingles** have not been looked at or addressed by the Building Department or Inspectional Services, despite the fact that this is a location with a very dense population of infants, pre-school age children, and family daycares



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Bon, Davis, Anghay, Gallucci
Consent Order #167
Russell, Sullivan CM-486
Councillor Triantafillou re: Concerns
about the proposed development at
55 Montgomery Street.

In City Council August 4, 1997

ORDER ADOPTED