



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

MICHAEL ROSENBERG,
Assistant City Manager for
Community Development

MARY FLYNN,
Deputy Director for
Community Development

To: Robert W. Healy, City Manager
From: Michael Rosenberg, Assistant City Manager for Community Development
Re: Response to City Council Order #8 of December 9, 1991 regarding the Alewife
Steering Committee
Date: January 9, 1992

With regard to the City Council Order #8 of December 9, 1991 which requests information about the Alewife Steering Committee, I report the following.

Goals and Purpose

Based on recommendations in the *North Cambridge Neighborhood Study*, the Community Development Department is carrying out a master planning study for the Alewife area. The planning process will reexamine the 1979 Alewife Revitalization Plan and create a master plan which will provide guidelines and recommend actions to achieve an appropriate environment for this part of Cambridge.

The goal is to establish a vision for the future of this 370 acre area that will enable the City to utilize its economic potential, preserve its natural resources and ensure the livability and continued vitality of its surrounding neighborhoods.

The participation of area residents and business owners is vital to ensuring the validity and the success of a new plan. To achieve this, a steering committee comprising neighborhood residents, business representatives and area property owners was appointed by the City Manager in July 1991. The Committee's role is to assist in identifying and refining the major issues affecting the use of land in Alewife, to provide Community Development staff with points of view and concerns on specific planning issues, to review and respond to Community Development-generated analyses, to react to and provide feedback on specific planning proposals, and to assist in the development of recommendations for the new master plan.

In addition to working with the Committee, the Department holds public meetings periodically to obtain broader input from both the residential and business communities. A second committee has also been established to include input from various state agencies and the towns of Arlington and Belmont. This Public Agency Committee meets regularly, although less frequently than the Steering Committee, and the two groups occasionally meet together to discuss points of common concern.

This process reflects the City Council's concerns, as articulated in Order #46 of April 22, 1991, that "There is a current need for the City to develop a new master plan for the Alewife area, with adequate input from the impacted residential neighborhoods and the concerned business community."

Membership

The Steering Committee, appointed by the City Manager, consists of five business/property owners, one representative each from Neighborhoods 9, 10, and 12, and two representatives from Neighborhood 11, one of whom is a member of the Planning Board, and both of whom were recommended by the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee. This reflects the City Council's wishes as outlined in their order of April 22, 1991, the only departure being the omission of a Committee chair. The Committee functions effectively as a working group, with facilitation by Community Development Department staff. The inclusion of a chair was not seen as necessary to the process. In addition, it was considered important that the make-up of the Committee reflected fairness and balance among the many valid interests in the Alewife area; therefore, an even distribution among resident and business communities is critical.

Please find attached as list of Committee members, as well as a list of members of the Public Agency Committee.

Work to date

The Alewife Steering Committee has covered a significant amount of ground in its first few months of work. The Committee has reviewed background information, toured the area, engaged in planning exercises to frame current issues and future visions, and discussed concerns and goals in depth. A working map which identifies these concerns and goals has been developed, and was presented at a public meeting in November for comments and additional concerns (see attached). The Public Agency Committee has also met twice, once together with the Steering Committee.

Some of the work prepared by the Community Development Department for the study so far includes the updating of land use and ownership information, collection and review of Alewife studies and reports, Geographical Information System (GIS) mapping of the entire study area (still in process), and the production of a video which highlights the primary issues and explains the planning process for Alewife to the broadest possible public audience. The video has been shown at several public forums, as well as to individual neighborhood groups at their own request.

Agenda and Timeline

Agendas for the meetings of August through December 1991 have focused on reviewing background information, and developing goals and issues.

The January 1992 through August 1992 meetings will focus on substantive planning modules, after which the plan itself will be developed.

Throughout this time period, public meetings will be held, and status reports given to the Planning Board and to the City Council.

Please see attachments for agendas and timeline.

ALEWIFE STEERING COMMITTEE

Dale Blank

Director, Facilities and
Technical Services
Genetics Institute

Robert Boyer

Corporate Facilities Manager
Bolt Beranek and Newman Inc.

Judith Campbell

Neighborhood Ten

Karl P. Fagans

Vice President
Arthur D. Little, Inc.

Kevin Hassey

Assistant Vice President
Spaulding & Slye

Jack Joseph

Neighborhood Nine

Carolyn Mieth

North Cambridge,
Planning Board Member

George Spartichino

Cambridge Highlands

Al Wilson

Wilson-Cambridge Realty Trust

Jonathan Yeo

North Cambridge

**ALEWIFE PUBLIC AGENCY
COMMITTEE**

Lawrence Berkowitz

Richard Perlman

Massachusetts Department of
Public Works

Joan Blaustein

Dan Fortier

Metropolitan Area Planning
Council

John Krajovic

Julia O'Brien

Metropolitan District
Commission

Alan McClennan, Jr.

Department of Planning &
Community Development
Town of Arlington

Lou Mercuri

Town Planner
Town of Belmont

John Reinhardt

Mystic River Watershed
Association

Kathryn West

Massachusetts Bay
Transportation Authority

Community Development Staff

Mary Flynn

Project Manager
Deputy Director for Community
Development

Gene Gebolys

Project Planner
Economic and Employment
Planning

Cara Seiderman

Project Planner
Neighborhood Planning

Josh Anderson

Project Intern

Community Development

Department

57 Inman Street

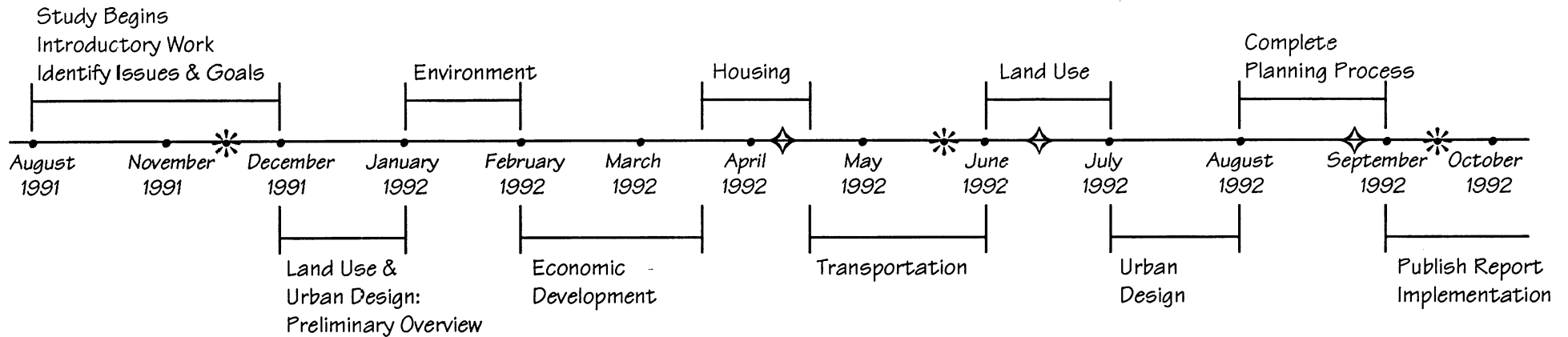
Cambridge, MA 02139

Tel. 349-4600

ALEWIFE MASTER PLANNING STUDY

PROJECTED TIMEFRAME

November 22, 1991



* - Public Meeting

◇ - Status Report to City Council

NB: A formal presentation will be made to the City Council in the Fall of 1992. The Planning Board will receive status reports at regular intervals throughout the process.

I. Background Work

DATE	ALEWIFE STEERING COMMITTEE	ALEWIFE PUBLIC AGENCY COMMITTEE
August 6	Introductory Meeting • Introductions • Purpose of Study • Review Process • Work to Date	
August 21	Issues and Goals I • Review previous Urban Design Plan • MetroPlan 2000, Growth Policy	
September 11	Alewif Walking Tour	
October 9	Issues and Goals II	
October 18		Introductory Meeting • Purpose of Study • Work to Date • Agency Issues/Concerns
October 23	Issues and Goals III • Recap from 10/9 • Report on Public Agency Meeting • Prepare for Community Meeting	
November 13	Public Agency Issues • Discussion with Public Agency Committee	
November 20/21	Public Meeting • Explain Study Purpose & Process • Hear Issues/Concerns	
December 6		• Report on Public Meeting & Steering Committee Work to Date. • Agency Feedback.

II. Planning Modules

DATE	ALEWIFE STEERING COMMITTEE	ALEWIFE PUBLIC AGENCY COMMITTEE
December 11	Land Use/Development Policies/ Urban Design - Preliminary Overview 1. Frame the plan: What is the overall picture; how should each module be examined in a consistent manner, keeping in mind the land use and urban design implications	
January 8, 1992	Environment 1. Natural Resources • Wetlands, buffers, public access issues 2. Hydrology • Watershed, 100-year floodplain, groundwater, drainage 3. Soils • Geology - implications for development (foundations), contamination and hazardous waste	
January 29		
February 13		Public Agency Committee Meeting Review and comment on Steering Committee work
February 19	Economic Development 1. Economic trends: types of businesses, companies in or likely to come to Cambridge and attracted to Alewife 2. Employment issues	
March 11		
April 1	Housing 1. Housing needs in Cambridge (Study) 2. Appropriateness for area	Public Agency Committee Meeting Review and comment on Steering Committee work
May	Transportation 1. Infrastructure issues 2. Vehicular traffic, impacts 3. Alternative transportation Public Meeting	
June	Land Use 1. Kind of development (what uses & where) 2. Amount of development (what is appropriate, what is possible, what is desirable)	Public Agency Committee Meeting Review and comment on Steering Committee work
July	Urban Design 1. What is overall image 2. Aesthetics/urban design guidelines 3. Big picture	
August	Complete the Master Plan	Public Agency Committee Meeting Review and comment on Steering Committee work
September	Implementation Public Meeting	

Keep open option to extend Red Line.

Consider Commuter lots outside Cambridge.

MDC Reservation

Everyone agrees it's a positive resource.
How much access? How restricted?
Need for improvement.
Concern about environmental damage.

Bike Path: Status?

Future of Route 2
Character of Entry to Cambridge
Future of Route 2 Strip?

Alewife Station

Improve other transportation links,
eg. vanpools, buses.
Limit amount of parking.
Safety = big issue.

...?Bikes?...

Alewife Center

Plan generally acceptable.
Tie into Alewife Station.
Status of Parkway vis-a-vis project?

Future of Triangle

Office emphasis = OK.
More open space needed.
More active uses needed, including nighttime.
Better connections to surrounding areas.

Connect Triangle & Quadrangle

Put utilities underground; landscape parking.

Commuter Rail Station
Opportunities for better connections.

Extend Housing Use?

Infill residential along Concord?

Future of Quadrangle

Mixed use, but what range of uses?
Light industrial, r & d, office.
Housing? Where? How much?
Retail? What scale? Encourage ground-floor, office-related, street-related.
Need for improved internal roadways.
Some rehab desirable, but not all buildings worth saving.

Extension of new road to rest of area?

More pedestrian crossings of Concord.

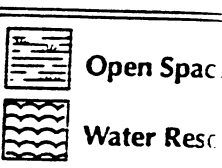
Jerry's Pond
Upgrade. How much access?

New Bridge. New Landscaping.

Better pedestrian connections needed.

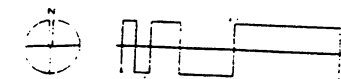
Encourage better signage & landscaping in shopping areas.

Hazardous for pedestrians and bicyclists.



Alewife Steering Committee

Issues and Goals 10/23/91





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FAX 349-4307

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

January 27, 1992

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Attached please find a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 13, regarding an update on the Alewife Steering Committee's developments, received from Michael Rosenberg, Assistant City Manager for Community Development.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mev
attachment

CONSENT AGENDA ITEM NO. 3

S-83

Awaiting Report Item No. 13 regarding an
update on the Alewife Steering Committee's
developments.

In City Council,

January 27, 1992

Placed on file