

Ruling of the Chain

City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council Feb 14, 1972

	YEA	NAY	ABSENT
Mr. Clinton		✓	
Mr. Danehy			✓
Mr. Duehay	✓		
Mrs. Graham	✓		
Mr. Moncreiff			✓
Mr. Owens	✓		
Mr. Sullivan		✓	
Mr. Vellucci		✓	
Mayor Ackermann	✓		
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The Chain is upheld

City of Cambridge

Councillor Graham

7.

In City Council,
February 14, 1972.

WHEREAS:-

There is a need in Cambridge for additional units of low-and moderate-income housing suitable for families, and

WHEREAS:-

The construction of such low-and moderate-income family-type housing units has been hindered by the high land costs in Cambridge which exceed the maximum per unit cost permitted by the various State and Federal subsidy programs, and

WHEREAS:-

The few instances of low-and moderate-income family-type housing units which are under construction have been aided by a reduction of land costs made possible through the urban renewal program, the so-called "write down" of land, and

WHEREAS:-

The amount of urban renewal funds likely to be made available to Cambridge is very limited due to the backlog of demand throughout the country for urban renewal funds, and the additional urban renewal funds which Cambridge must seek to complete the Kendall Square and Wellington-Harrington Urban Renewal projects suggests the likelihood that Cambridge will not be able to secure sufficient additional urban renewal funds in time to permit writing down the land costs for low-and moderate-income housing, and

WHEREAS:-

It has been suggested that the City of Cambridge, out of its own financial resources, might undertake a limited program of writing down land costs to encourage and expedite the construction of needed family-type low-and moderate-income housing.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT ORDERED:

That the City Solicitor be and hereby is directed to respond to the following questions concerning the City of Cambridge's legal power to undertake any or all of the following steps in the promotion of low-and moderate-income housing:

1. To acquire land in the name of the City of Cambridge for the construction of low-income housing or of moderate-income housing.
2. To expend funds raised by appropriation, transfer of existing funds, or by borrowing, to facilitate the construction of low-and moderate-income housing.
3. To sell, or to lease the land so acquired, or any other land owned by the City of Cambridge at a price which is less than the fair market value or less than would be the result of competitive bids for the land, when the disposition of such land is designated for the construction of low-income housing or moderate-income housing.

City of Cambridge

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4. To construct public improvements or site improvements such as utility lines, internal streets, drives, walks or parking areas or finish grading and landscaping of areas adjacent to or servicing low-or moderate-income housing, where the purpose of such site improvements would be to reduce the costs of occupying such housing by low-or moderate-income families.
5. To enter into real estate or other tax agreements which would permit the property to be taxed in an amount lower than that of comparable properties, where the intent of such tax reduction would be to reduce the costs of occupancy of housing for low-and moderate-income families.
6. To dispose of land to a developer of low-or moderate-income housing on the basis of the type and quality of design and construction of housing units, with reference to appropriate densities and open space and on the basis of other qualitative criteria other than highest financial offer for land.

If, in the opinion of the City Solicitor, some or all of the preceding steps are not currently allowed under Massachusetts statute, should the City of Cambridge submit a home-rule bill to provide enabling legislation, and if in the judgement of this City Council, that the City of Cambridge should proceed with filing a home-rule bill to enable the City of Cambridge to undertake a program of promoting low-and moderate-income housing does the City Solicitor feel there are substantial legal and/or constitutional problems in the ability of the Massachusetts Legislature to adopt a home-rule bill or of the courts to uphold it.

City Council. Feb 14, 1972

Adopted by the affirmative vote

of 9 members

Paul E. Healy
City Clerk

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7.

ORDER

Relative to need for additional units of
low and moderate income housing in Cambridge

February 14, 1972

Mrs. Ackermann

6 ASP.