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NORTH CAMBRIDGE STABILIZATION COMMITTEE

97 SEP -4 PM 5:25

CAMBRIDGE MA.

6 Saint Gerard Terrace
Cambridge, MA 02140
4 September, 1997

City Council
City Hall
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Councilors:

On behalf of the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee (NCSC) I ask your assistance in addressing development issues in the Creighton Street, Regent Street and Porter Road areas of North Cambridge. In particular, I ask you to join neighborhood representatives in touring this area and helping plan for appropriate development. Concerned residents have already formed the CPR Neighbors Association to facilitate coordination.

At several recent NCSC meetings, several residents of those streets voiced concern about the numerous townhouse/condominium complexes proposed for former industrial operations in the area. In particular, the plumbing supply store on Porter Road wants to use its property to develop six condos.¹ There are two similar developments going up adjacent to this property and still more either proposed or being planned for the neighborhood. The total number of additional units that may be added to this small area is well over twenty and may much, much higher. At least one major swath of land by the railroad tracks appears to have been purchased by a developer, which may have major traffic implications. While many people noted that they would like to see the industrial uses replaced by some sort of residential uses there was uniform concern that, absent a proper plan effectively implemented, the neighborhood may be swamped with inappropriately dense housing developments.

As I am sure you are aware, this neighborhood's proximity to the Porter Square MBTA Red and Commuter lines, as well as the Mass Ave bus service, makes it an ideal place for a developer to turn a substantial profit. In the past, the NCSC has seen industrial site owners ask artificially high sale prices in the expectation that the relevant City board(s) would grant the needed relief to build overly dense housing complexes as an alternative the existing use(s). We are concerned that such speculation not take place in the area of these three streets at the expense of the existing neighborhoods.

The NCSC would like to work with the City to guide development on Creighton Street, Porter Road and Regent Street. A detailed plan is especially needed in this area because the traditional industrial to residential shift is complicated by the close proximity of the T and the numerous apartment buildings and schools that line nearby Mass Ave. Additionally, it is our understanding that a bike path will run from Alewife to Porter Square along the rail line as soon as funding and easement concerns have been met. Major new residential construction, possibly aimed at multi-car occupants such as non-related renters, will seriously compound this already difficult situation.

As always, I would be happy to discuss these concerns or any other North Cambridge issues with you at any time. I may be reached at 354-8353.

Sincerely,



Craig A Kelley, Vice-Chair

cc: City Manager
Community Development

¹ This is a correction to a similar letter I submitted to City Council dated 31 July, 1997 in which I stated that eight units were being considered for this site. Additionally, that letter did not mention the bike path extension.

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PLEASE PUT ON
MONDAY'S AGENDA

THANKS-

CRAIG KELLEY
354-8353

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Consent Communication #1

5-560

Communication was received from Craig Kelley, North Cambridge Stabilization Committee, transmitting a correction on a letter that was submitted at the August 4, 1997 Council Meeting, requesting assistance regarding development issues in the Creighton Street, Regent and Porter Road area.

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In City Council September 15, 1997

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