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PLANNING BOARD

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.
CITY HALL ANNEX, 57 INMAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02139

May 1, 1978

To the Honorable, the City Council

Dear Councillors:

SUBJECT: Planning Board Recommendations on the Desmond and Riseman
Zoning Petitions

As you are aware, the Riseman city-wide institutional development moratorium petition and, to a lesser degree, the Desmond rezoning petition for the Mellen Street area involve issues with serious long-term consequences for institutions and the neighboring residential communities in the city. To that extent the Planning Board wishes to be absolutely certain that it has fully understood and discussed all of these issues prior to making a recommendation.

The property rights of institutions and the rights of residents to a quality living environment appear to be in conflict and compromise is difficult. Due to the inability of the institutions and neighborhoods to reach mutually acceptable resolutions of these differences, the Planning Board and the Community Development Department staff are currently in contact with Harvard University, Lesley College, and various neighborhood representatives attempting to establish ongoing dialogues between the parties involved in each case. The activity is consistent with the April 24th Council Order calling for work toward a comprehensive containment policy for Harvard University.


While these discussions are still at a preliminary stage, substantive results appear to be forthcoming. The Planning Board is not now in a position to make definitive recommendations on those two petitions and respectfully requests that additional time be given before further action is taken on them.

The state zoning statute has mandated a fixed time schedule to insure timely municipal action on zoning petitions. However, it may be necessary to use the time allotted by the law to permit the fullest possible consideration of complex issues such as those included in these petitions: the proliferation of institutional land uses and

the need for stable residential environments. Final City Council action is not required on the Riseman petition before July 4th and on the Desmond petition until July 25th. We hope that at least some of this legally allotted time may be used to seek solutions that will be in the interests of both parties in each case.

Respectfully submitted,

For the Cambridge Planning Board



Arthur C. Parris
Chairman

ACP:jp



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To the Honorable, the City Council

Dear Councillors:

SUBJECT: Fitzgerald/Prospect Street Rezoning Petition

The Planning Board held its public hearing on a petition by James Fitzgerald to rezone an area along Prospect Street from Residence C-1 to Office 1 on April 18th. The Board has not met to discuss this petition and cannot make a recommendation at this time. A recommendation will be forthcoming after our next meeting.

Respectfully submitted,

For the Cambridge Planning Board

Arthur C. Parris
Chairman

ACP:jp

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