



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

BETH RUBENSTEIN

Acting Assistant City
Manager for Community
Development

To: Robert W. Healy, City Manager

From: Beth Rubenstein, Acting Assistant City Manager for Community
Development

Date: March 23, 1999

Re: Council Order #010, dated 3/1/99: Report on the Possibility of Purchasing
Land in Adjacent Communities to Build Affordable Housing and to
Provide Additional Open Space for the Benefit Cambridge Residents

As noted in this Council Order, the *Boston Globe* reported last month (2/20/99) on a plan by the Lawrence Housing Authority to develop affordable housing in neighboring communities. The question has been asked whether Cambridge ought to adopt a similar approach to meeting the housing needs of our low and moderate income residents.

This approach, which would have the effect of providing assistance to Cambridge residents to move out of the City, would undercut efforts to meet the policy goal of preserving the diversity of the Cambridge population. To maintain diversity the City uses its available resources to provide affordable housing in Cambridge for its residents. A diversion of resources to adjacent communities would result in less affordable housing in Cambridge.

If Cambridge were to implement such a plan, it could invite neighboring communities to adopt the same approach. The City of Boston, for example, could decide to develop affordable housing in Cambridge for current Boston residents. Given the size of Boston's low and moderate income population, this could increase the competition for scarce housing resources in our City.

Local housing market conditions are leading to the displacement of Cambridge residents. Many of these displaced residents are moving to adjacent communities. We do not believe that the City needs to facilitate this process by developing additional affordable housing outside of Cambridge, and we recommend that the most effective use of resources is to develop the maximum amount of affordable housing opportunities within the City.

The order also asks about acquisition of open space in other communities. In a similar manner, it would be more desirable to have open space located in close proximity to Cambridge residents, whether it is used for organized sports, other active recreation or passive enjoyment. The Green Ribbon Committee is now meeting regularly to develop criteria to guide the acquisition of additional open space in the City.



City of Cambridge

Consent Agenda # 2

IN CITY COUNCIL

March 29, 1999

COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to provide this City Council with a report on the possibility of acquiring land in adjacent communities to be used for open space.

In City Council March 29, 1999.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest: - D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "D. Margaret Drury".

ATTEST: - D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL. 349-4300
FAX. 349-4307



2.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

March 29, 1999

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 99-43, regarding a report on the possibility of purchasing land in adjacent communities to build affordable housing and to provide additional open space for the benefit of Cambridge residents, received from Acting Assistant City Manager for Community Development Beth Rubenstein.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment

Consent Agenda #2 S-205 ~~S~~

Relative to AW Rpt. #99-43, regarding
a report on the possibility of
purchasing land in adjacent communities
to build affordable housing and for
open space for the benefit of Cambridge
residents.

In City Council March 29, 1999

PLACED ON FILE

Order adopted
Referred to
City Manager - Open Space
issue