

City of Cambridge

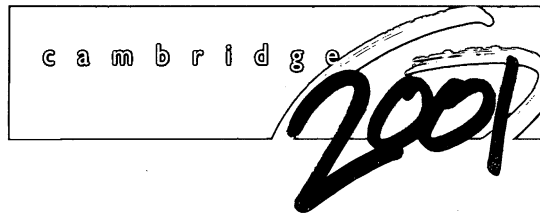
MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council March 19, 2001

Mrs. G's Consent Agenda

YEA	NAY	ABSENT	PRESENT	
✓				Ms. Kathleen L. Born
✓				Mr. James Braude
✓				Ms. Henrietta Davis
✓				Ms. Marjorie C. Decker
✓				Vice Mayor David P. Maher
✓				Mr. Kenneth E. Reeves
✓				Mr. Michael A. Sullivan
✓				Mr. Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
✓				Mayor Anthony D. Galluccio

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2.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

March 19, 2001

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 00-48, regarding a report on the construction of roof top gardens, received from Assistant City Manager for Community Development Beth Rubenstein.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Robert W. Healy". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "Healy" clearly visible.

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment





CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

BETH RUBENSTEIN

*Assistant City Manager for
Community Development*

MALAINA BOWKER

*Deputy Director for
Community Development*

TO: Robert W. Healy, City Manager

FROM: ^{BR} Beth Rubenstein, Assistant City Manager for Community
Development

DATE: February 28, 2001

RE: Response to Council Order: Report on the Feasibility of Rooftop
Gardens and a Policy to Encourage their Construction

In response to the above referenced order regarding rooftop gardens, I report
the following:

FEASIBILITY

Rooftop gardens refer to accessible vegetated areas on top of buildings. For
the purpose of this response, we include inaccessible vegetated roofs and refer
to this technology as "green roofs".

Green roofs are common in Europe, but less so in the United States.
However, there are some notable examples of green roofs in the U.S.
including The Gap headquarters in San Bruno, California, The Zoo Atlanta's
Conservation Action Resources Center, and the Fencing Academy of
Philadelphia. The City of Chicago is in the process of constructing a rooftop
garden on Chicago City Hall as a demonstration project. In Cambridge, a
rooftop garden exists on top of the Cambridge Center parking garage off
Ames Street next to the Marriott Hotel.

The benefits of green roofs can include stormwater attenuation, improved
building energy efficiency, mitigation of the urban heat island effect,
attenuation of air pollutants, and enhanced aesthetic appearance. Potential
issues include the integrity of the roof in terms of water leakage, attraction of
nuisance wildlife, irrigation needs, added structural loads, and cost. These
issues may all be successfully managed, but require attention not associated
with conventional roofs.

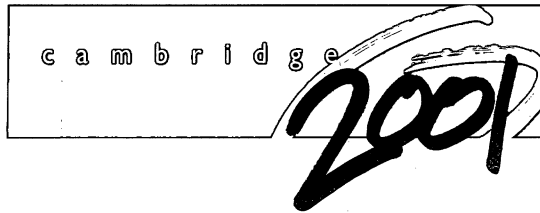
There are firms in the U.S. that provide green roofs, although we are not
aware of any in Massachusetts.

POLICY

Green roofs represent one aspect of the emerging field of “green buildings”. Under the U.S. Green Building Council’s Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building rating system, potential credits are offered in the “sustainable sites” category for projects that include green roofs. Buildings are not required to incorporate green roofs to achieve a LEED rating. The City has already committed to constructing the Main Library and 57 Inman Street projects as green buildings and using the LEED rating system.

Given a certain budget for a building project, a green roof may not necessarily be superior to other green building elements in terms of energy or environmental performance. For example, if a designer is considering several possible elements to enhance a building’s environmental or energy performance, a green roof may not provide the optimal level of benefit for the investment. In a particular circumstance, a graywater system to reuse stormwater runoff or increased daylighting with light shelves might provide higher environmental or energy performance than a green roof. Similarly, a green roof could conflict with the placement of photovoltaic panels on a roof. It would be counterproductive to constrain the designer in their choice of green building technologies by mandating the use of green roofs.

We recommend that green roofs be considered in the context of an overall green building policy for city building projects. The decision to include a green roof in a particular project should be made in the context of the range of green building elements being considered.



2.

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

March 5, 2001

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 00-48, regarding a report on the construction of roof top gardens, received from Assistant City Manager for Community Development Beth Rubenstein.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert W. Healy".

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment



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Consent Agenda #2

Awaiting Report Item Number
00-48, regarding a report on the
construction of roof top gardens.

In City Council March 5, 2001

*Meeting Cancelled
due to snowstorm*

*In City Council
March 19, 2001*

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