

ORDERED: That the City Manager is authorized to transfer the land and property at 273 Harvard Street to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust, subject to the recommended condition that this Trust be requested to convey sufficient funds to the City Treasurer/Collector to satisfy tax delinquency and maintenance associated with this property, for consideration of One Dollar (\$1.00) and other valuable consideration for the construction of from twenty to twenty-five housing units which shall be affordable to low and moderate-income elderly household; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager is hereby authorized to execute and deliver to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust, in the name of and on behalf of the City of Cambridge in such form as the City Manager shall approve (such approval to be conclusively evidenced by such execution and delivery) such documents, instruments, agreements, deeds, licenses, warranties, indemnifications, releases or certificates, or amendments thereto, required by the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust, as the City Manager may deem necessary, desirable or appropriate to enable the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust to redevelop the land at 273 Harvard Street to accommodate the intent of the foregoing resolutions; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager is hereby authorized to execute, accept, and deliver such supplemental or ancillary documents as are reasonably necessary to implement the intent of this Order and to execute, accept and deliver amendments thereto.

In City Council January 6, 1997

Adopted by a ye and nay vote:-

Yeas 9; Nays 0; Absent 0.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-


D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk



City of Cambridge

Calendar #2
--Agenda Item No. 25---

IN CITY COUNCIL
--December 16, 1996--
January 6, 1997

- WHEREAS:** There exists in Cambridge a severe shortage of decent housing affordable to low and moderate-income residents of Cambridge; and
- WHEREAS:** The City Council desires to increase the supply of affordable rental units, now and in the future, for low and moderate-income Cambridge residents to reside in decent, affordable housing; and
- WHEREAS:** Rent control protections end for all protected tenants December 31, 1996, including 319 elderly households; and
- WHEREAS:** Pursuant to Section 15A of Chapter 40 of the General Laws, as amended and accepted by the City Council on November 26, 1990, the City Council may, by a majority vote, transfer municipal land to another board or officer of the City for the purpose of constructing affordable housing; and
- WHEREAS:** The City of Cambridge owns a certain parcel of land situated in Cambridge, Middlesex County, Massachusetts at 273 Harvard Street (the former Harvard Manor Nursing Home); and
- WHEREAS:** The land and property at 273 Harvard Street was acquired by the City of Cambridge in 1996 through property tax foreclosure and the City Manager has determined that the best use of the land and property at 273 Harvard Street is for the construction of affordable housing; and
- WHEREAS:** The City Manager has recommended transfer of the property to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust Fund for development of affordable rental housing for the elderly, subject to a condition that the Trust be required to convey sufficient funds to the City's Treasurer/Collector to satisfy tax delinquency and maintenance associated with this property; now therefore be it

City of Cambridge

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council 1/6, 1997

Charter Right # 2

YEA	NAY	ABSENT	PRESENT	
✓				V.M. Kathleen L. Born
✓				Ms. Henrietta Davis
✓				Mr. Francis H. Duehay
✓				Mr. Anthony Galluccio
✓				Mr. Kenneth E. Reeves
✓				Mr. Michael A. Sullivan
✓				Mr. Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.
✓				Ms. Katherine Triantafillou
✓				Mayor Sheila T. Russell

9 0 0 0



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
Finance Department
City Hall, Cambridge Massachusetts 02139

RECEIVED
96 DEC 12 AM 10:50
OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER

Administration 349-4212
Tax/Utility Coll 349-4220
Treasury 349-4212
Payroll 349-4290

December 11, 1996

Robert W. Healy
City Manager
City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

RE: City of Cambridge v. QT Services, Inc., Land
Court Tax Lien Case No. 64816 (273 Harvard Street,
Cambridge, MA)

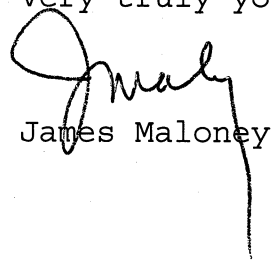
Dear Mr. Healy:

Please be advised that the City has foreclosed all rights of redemption with regard to the above-mentioned property and now owns this real estate. You will recall that this property was operated as a nursing home for many years and ceased operation as such while under a Court supervised Receivership.

Since the city is the current owner of the property, it is not being taxed. I understand that there is some interest in transferring this property to the Affordable Housing Trust. The city's interest in the property for tax collection purposes would be served, if, as a condition of the transfer, the Trust were required to convey sufficient funds to satisfy the delinquency and maintenance associated with the property. Subject to such a condition, this property would no longer be needed for tax collection purposes.

Thank you for your attention in this regard.

Very truly yours,


James Maloney

REPORT ON THE DISPOSITION OF 273 HARVARD STREET (QT SERVICES, INC. d/b/a HARVARD MANOR NURSING HOME)

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

On July 1, 1996 the City gained ownership of the former Harvard Manor Nursing Home (273 Harvard Street) through tax foreclosure proceedings. Subject to the condition noted below, the City Manager recommends that City Council approve the transfer of this property to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust for the development of affordable rental housing for the elderly.

The recommended transfer is subject to the condition that the Trust be required to convey to the City's Treasurer/Collector sufficient funds to satisfy the tax delinquency and maintenance associated with the property. Assuming compliance with this condition, the property would no longer be needed for tax collection purposes.

Upon approval of the transfer, the Trust will issue a Request for Proposals to select a developer. The developer will be asked to build 20-25 one-bedroom apartments affordable to elderly residents with incomes no greater than 50% of area median. Residents will pay 30% of their monthly income towards rent. Residents will be aged 62 and over and include frail elders who can take advantage of supportive services on-site as well as existing services in the neighborhood.

With rent control ending in two weeks, and over 300 elderly households losing their protected status, there is a clear need for more elderly housing. The development of high quality, well-managed affordable housing for the elderly will benefit the community by:

- using a City asset for affordable housing,
- helping to meet the demand for affordable housing caused by the end of rent control,
- providing compensation for unpaid taxes,
- improving the neighborhood by restoring a vacant, deteriorating building,
- meeting the critical need for housing for the elderly and frail elderly, and
- helping to meet the City's top priority - the creation of affordable

housing.

II. DESCRIPTION OF THE CITY PROPERTY

The property is a vacant 16,000 square foot building on a 21,245 square foot lot located at 273 Harvard Street between Inman Street and Prospect Street in mid-Cambridge. The building is a mix of concrete block, stucco, and wood frame. The balance of the lot is paved with asphalt. The center part of the building is an 1867 wood frame structure, currently encased in stucco. There is a two-story concrete block addition on the front and a one-story concrete block addition to the rear. The property has been vacant since 1993 and is in poor condition. The property was last assessed in FY96 for \$340,600.

The site is located on a residential block. The buildings on the block are primarily large, multifamily rental and condominium masonry buildings. The abutter adjacent to the property at 277 Harvard Street is a smaller wood-frame multifamily building. The abutters to the rear of the site, on Broadway, are a mix of residential and commercial uses.

III. HISTORY OF THE SITE

The site has served as a nursing home for elderly residents of Cambridge for over 50 years. Prior to that time, the property was used as a rooming house. Before it was closed, the Harvard Manor Nursing Home was licensed for 95 residents. The following is a brief chronology of the site's recent history:

- 1979: Property committed to tax title due to delinquent taxes
- 1982: City began foreclosure proceedings in the Land Court; taxpayer made partial payments toward delinquent taxes
- 1988: Taxpayer filed petition in Bankruptcy Court
- 1991: Petition in Bankruptcy Court was dismissed
- November, 1992: Nursing home failing; state appoints receiver;
- February, 1993: Receiver recommends relocation of residents and closing of home
- June, 1993: Residents relocated and nursing home closed

On July 1, 1996 a final judgment was entered in the foreclosure proceedings, the effect of which was to vest ownership in the City.

IV. EXISTING ZONING

The site is located in a C-1 Residence zone. In accordance with section 4.30 of the Zoning Ordinance (Table of Use Regulations), conversion of an existing dwelling for elderly oriented congregate housing is allowed as a matter of right. The lot area is 21,245 square feet. With a requirement of 600 square feet of lot area per dwelling unit, a maximum of 35 elderly oriented congregate housing units would be allowed. If the height or footprint of the building changes, then further review would be required subject to the dimensional requirements of Table 5-1.

For elderly oriented congregate housing, 1 parking space for every two units is required. There is provision to reduce the number of spaces provided, but not below 1 space per four dwelling units.

V ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVE USES

The site is located in a predominately residential neighborhood, predisposing it to residential use. Accordingly, there appear to be three potential alternative uses.

1. Open Space: While mid-Cambridge enjoys less open space resources than other neighborhoods, this site is located within a three-block radius of four parks: the newly renovated Sennott Park on Broadway, Payne Park on Amory Street and St. Mary Road, West Street Park on West and Lee Streets, and Cooper Park on Hancock and Center Streets. Given the number of parks within the immediate neighborhood, additional open space is not considered to be a good use of the site. In addition, staff of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission have expressed a clear desire that the original building on the site be preserved. Demolition of that building would be necessary if the site were to be used for open space.

2. Family Housing: Eighteen townhouse units could be built. Given the number of cars, traffic, and building mass on the site, the potential impact on the neighborhood would be too great. Participants in the neighborhood meeting expressed a clear preference for elderly rather than family housing. In addition, there is an existing 46 unit family public housing development (Jackson Gardens) located on the same block.

3. Elderly Housing: Elderly housing is considered to be the best use of the site. It will continue the historic use of the site, lower the density from its former use, require less parking than a family use, and minimize overall impacts on the neighborhood. In addition, the need for elderly housing, especially housing with supportive services for frail elderly is reaching critical proportions. There are over 300 elderly households losing their rent control

protection at the end of December; the Cambridge Housing Authority has 616 elders on its waiting list - 225 of whom are Cambridge residents. The CHA also reports that there is a growing number of residents aging in place who require supportive services, and the Elder Service Plan of the Cambridge Hospital cites the lack of affordable housing as a major obstacle to the health and well-being of their clients.

VI. DESCRIPTION OF THE PROPOSED USE OF THE SITE

A. The Planning Process

As noted above, the City's full ownership of the property occurred in July, 1996. Since that time the Community Development Department (CDD) has been looking at the alternative uses for the site, focusing on the development of elderly affordable housing. The following groups have been involved in the planning of the project: neighbors and abutters, the Cambridge Historical Commission, and CDD staff.

Notices were sent to 110 neighbors and abutters of the property announcing a November 26, 1996 meeting to discuss plans for the property. The majority of the 30 people in attendance were in favor of the proposed use of the property for affordable elderly housing. Neighbors thought it was an appropriate use of the site and would have the least impact in terms of traffic and density. The biggest concern expressed was that the development have sufficient parking for residents, staff, and visitors. Other issues raised concerned the tenant selection process, impacts on the neighborhood during construction, and the possibility of non-elderly residents living in the new development. CDD staff will continue to involve neighbors and abutters throughout the planning and development of the site.

CDD staff also consulted with the Cambridge Historical Commission and Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission staff. Both expressed a very clear goal that the 1867 wood frame building (the original building on the site) be preserved and restored. As a result of this, CDD proposes to include in the development guidelines for the site that the front concrete block addition be removed, the original building restored, and that any new building take place at the rear of the original house, roughly within the footprint of the existing rear addition.

The plan for this site is consistent with the City Council's identification of the creation of affordable housing as a top priority of the City. With rent control ending in two weeks, and over 300 elderly households losing their protected status, there is a clear need for more elderly housing. Given the rapidly escalating cost of real estate, using City property for affordable housing is a unique opportunity. In addition, there is no elderly housing with supportive services being built that is affordable to low and moderate income elderly. By taking advantage of the opportunities that this property

offers, the City can provide affordable elderly housing with supportive services, continue the historic use of the property, and minimize impacts on the neighborhood.

B. The Development Plan

The City Manager recommends that the City Council approve the transfer of this site to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust (Trust) for the development of affordable rental housing for the elderly. This recommendation, however, is premised on the condition that the Trust be required to convey sufficient funds to the City's Treasurer/Collector to satisfy tax delinquency and maintenance associated with this property.

If approved, subject to this condition, the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust will issue a Request for Proposals (RFP) to select a developer. The RFP will include the development guidelines established in the planning process, the development objectives listed below, and will specify the objective selection criteria that will be used to rate the proposals. The Trust will then convene a Project Review Committee to review developer proposals and provide a final recommendation.

The Project Review Committee will include both Trust members and representatives from the neighborhood. The Trust will make its final decision on developer selection, and will work with the designated developer to complete the financial packaging and final design. The Trust will convey the site to the developer at the initial project closing.

Preliminary Timeline:

Issue RFP	1/15/97
Trust Designates Developer	3/15/97
Initial Closing/Construction Start	9/15/97
Initial Occupancy	8/15/98

C. Nature and Affordability of the Proposed Development Objectives

The proposed use of the site is for affordable rental housing for elderly (age 62 and over). The development will also include the provision of support services on-site or easily accessible off-site. This will allow elderly residents access to coordinated housing, health care, and other necessary supportive services. There is currently no affordable housing being built for elderly that combines independent living with easy access to support services.

Site and Design Standards

As previously described, best efforts will be made to restore the original wood frame building, remove the front concrete block addition, and reconstruct the

rear addition to accommodate 20-25 one-bedroom units. (While 35 units are allowed by right, a lower number of units will benefit an already densely built neighborhood.) Each unit shall have a kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, and living area. There will also be common space within the building where residents may gather, socialize, and have meals. Each unit as well as the common areas shall be fully handicapped-accessible.

The design of the building must comply with the requirements of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District. Design development will also involve the input of neighbors and abutters. This process will insure that the proposed housing will be architecturally consistent with the neighborhood and will have minimal impact in terms of parking, traffic, and overall density.

Income and Rent

The rent levels of 100% of the units will be affordable to low and moderate-income elders whose income is no greater than 50% of median income. Residents will pay no more than 30% of their monthly income for rent. The income limit for a single person household is \$19,800, and for a two-person household, \$22,600.

Resident Selection

To the maximum extent allowable, this housing will be for Cambridge residents who meet the eligibility criteria. The developer will be asked to affirmatively market the housing in both mid-Cambridge and Cambridge as a whole.

Role of the Community

Upon designation of a developer, a community meeting will be held to present the proposal. The City will ask for volunteers from the neighborhood to assist the City during the design development and construction phases of the project.

VII. CONCLUSION

The City has an excellent opportunity to use its property to help meet a top priority: increase the supply of affordable housing.

The development of the former Harvard Manor Nursing Home into affordable elderly housing will:

- help meet the demand for affordable housing caused by the end of rent control,

- A. providing compensation to the City for unpaid taxes,
- B. improve the neighborhood by preserving and restoring an historic building,
- C. ensure that housing is built that works within the neighborhood, and
- D. build high quality affordable housing for elderly residents.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

December 16, 1996

To The Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed for your review is a report concerning the city owned property at 273 Harvard Street, formerly know as the Harvard Manor Nursing Home. Also enclosed is a letter from Finance Director James Maloney relative to this property.

The report details the history, existing conditions, and proposed use of the property. It concludes with my conditional recommendation that the City Council authorize the transfer of the site to the Cambridge Affordable Housing Trust for the purposes outlined in the report.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachment

Consent Agenda #25

Relative to a report concerning the
City owned property at 273 Harvard
Street, formerly known as the
Harvard Manor Nursing Home.

Cal 2
1-5

In City Council December 16, 1996

Charter Right
exercised by
Councillor Reeves

In City Council
January 6, 1997

Order Adopted. 9-0-0.