

examples of how landscaping and planting can be used to maintain a sense of urban green that Cambridge appears to be losing at an alarming rate. He opined the need to “bring the forest to the development,” and pointed to the new MIT dormitory and the surrounding area that the committee saw first as an example of the urgent need for thoughtful landscaping.

The tour proceeded to the intersection of Flagg and Banks Streets. Councillor Reeves asked that CDD provide information about Harvard’s plans for the parking lot across the street from Mather House. He said that he had just heard that Harvard has some sort of plan to build a second tower there. He pointed to the small scale of the buildings to the west, north and stated that a tower would completely overwhelm the existing neighborhood. Councillor Decker agreed. She also noted that the high fence all along Banks Street is an example of Harvard’s tendency to wall itself off from the surrounding neighborhood.

During this part of the tour, the committee and staff also looked briefly at the renovated Corporal Burns Park. Everyone present agreed that the renovations are wonderfully successful. The artwork is subtle and fits well with the park. The tree-lined promenade to the river is exactly the kind of public access to the river that the city should have to all its most beautiful and interesting places.

The bus made a final stop at the corner of Portland and Maine. Councillor Reeves requested that those present stand at the corner and look north down Portland Street. The neighborhood to the west is presented with cement and stone buildings forming a wall right to the edge of the sidewalk. It is a horrible piece of canyonization. Councillor Reeves said that no one could have desired this end result and asked how it had come about.

Ms. Rubenstein said that the buildings were allowed under the previous zoning. The downzoning and design guidelines that the City Council enacted last year will mean that this type of construction should not happen in the future. She emphasized the importance of the Planning Board, the staff and the Council paying close attention to the development of North Point.

Councillor Reeves suggested that the committee meet with the Planning Board. Ms. Rubenstein agreed that such a meeting could be informative and helpful.

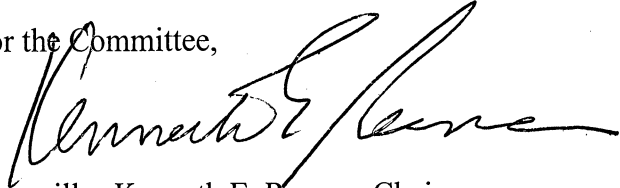
Councillor Decker asked about the status of the neighborhood updates initiated by Community Development at the request of the committee last term. She reminded Ms. Rubenstein that the Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Committee wants to co-sponsor the update process, including some of the meetings that the updates entail, particularly the public hearing and the progress report hearing. Ms. Rubenstein said that CDD staff will provide a schedule of the neighborhood study updates to the Council as soon as possible.

The committee agreed on the following items as work in which the Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Committee will engage during this term:

- Meet with the Planning Board
- Tour other parts of the city
- Continue to be involved with the neighborhood study updates
- Take a closer look at Alewife
- Encourage discussion of a “new urbanism,” particularly with regard to a new emphasis on trees and “bringing the forest to the development

Councillor Reeves thanked all those present for their participation. The meeting was adjourned at 4:56 p.m.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kenneth E. Reeves', written in a cursive style.

Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair

City of Cambridge

NEIGHBORHOOD AND LONG TERM PLANNING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

*Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair
Councillor Marjorie C. Decker
Councillor E. Denise Simmons*

In City Council May 6, 2002

The Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Committee held a public meeting on April 17, 2002, beginning at 3:07 p.m. The meeting was held for the purpose of discussing the committee's agenda for the term.

Present at the meeting were Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Marjorie C. Decker, City Clerk D. Margaret Drury, Assistant City Manager for Community Development Beth Rubenstein, Susan Glazer, Deputy Director of the Community Development Department (CDD) and Stuart Dash, Director of Community and Neighborhood Planning, CDD.

Councillor Reeves convened the meeting. The meeting format was announced as a bus tour of certain sites in Cambridge that would illustrate issues that the committee should consider this term. He explained that the sites that were chosen are located in Cambridgeport, Riverside and the eastern edge of Area Four. There are others in Mid Cambridge, Agassiz, West Cambridge, East Cambridge and North Cambridge that cannot be seen today because of time constraints.

The first stop on the tour was the corner of Pacific and Sidney Streets. Councillor Reeves noted the wall of tall buildings up to the edge of the neighborhood and surrounding the small park.

At the request of Councillor Decker, the bus next stopped at the corner of Pleasant and Putnam, where Spaulding and Slye sold 120 units of housing that is presently under construction to Harvard University. Ms. Rubenstein informed the committee that Harvard plans to use the units as homeownership units for faculty families. Harvard will be required to produce 18 units of affordable housing under the provisions of the Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance.

Councillor Decker and Councillor Reeves expressed their dismay and that of the neighborhood regarding the surprise purchase by Harvard after the neighborhood had negotiated with the developer for housing instead of office buildings on the site.

Councillor Decker requested information as to whether any of the units would be available to other Harvard workers, such as custodians and administrative assistants.

The committee then looked at two fairly new condominium complexes, both developed by David Aposhian in Cambridgeport/Riverside. Councillor Reeves informed the committee and staff that he had included these sites because in his view they are good

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Committee Report #1

Committee Report from Councillor
Kenneth E. Reeves, Chair of the
Neighborhood and Long Term
Planning Committee, for a meeting
held on April 17, 2002 for the
purpose of discussing the
committee's agenda for the term.

In City Council May 6, 2002

**REPORT ACCEPTED.
PLACED ON FILE.**