



City of Cambridge

8.

IN CITY COUNCIL

December 19, 1983

COUNCILLOR WALTER SULLIVAN

ORDERED:

That all matters presently listed on the City Council Calendar which have not been acted upon be placed on file, without prejudice, subject to the condition that they may be re-submitted for consideration to the next legislative session of the City Council by notice to the City Clerk.

In City Council December 19, 1983.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of 8 members.
Attest:- Paul E. Healy, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

Paul E. Healy, City Clerk.

Agenda Item Number Seven

4-38

116

Re: Planning Board recommendations on a petition to amend the Zoning Ordinances to require low and moderate income housing units as part of certain housing and commercial developments.

12/19/83 - Placed on file pursuant to Ord #8

In City Council,

June 20, 1983

6/20/1983

TABLED BY COUNCILMAN

Reeking
See Calendar #17

OF

- August 1, 1983 -



City of Cambridge

8.

IN CITY COUNCIL

December 19, 1983

COUNCILLOR WALTER SULLIVAN

ORDERED:

That all matters presently listed on the City Council Calendar which have not been acted upon be placed on file, without prejudice, subject to the condition that they may be re-submitted for consideration to the next legislative session of the City Council by notice to the City Clerk.

In City Council December 19, 1983.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of 8 members.
Attest:- Paul E. Healy, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

Paul E. Healy, City Clerk.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS
PLANNING BOARD

CITY HALL ANNEX, 57 INMAN STREET, CAMBRIDGE 02139

June 7, 1983

To the Honorable the City Council:

Subject: Petition to Amend the Zoning Ordinance to Require Low and Moderate Income Housing Units as Part of Certain Housing and Commercial Developments

The Petition

The proposed zoning amendment would create an overlay district over the entire city and mandate a minimum number of low and moderate income housing units or equivalent money payments in conjunction with housing and commercial development.

Recommendation

The Planning Board does not recommend the adoption of the petition as filed nor does it recommend adoption in any less comprehensive form (as for instance by its application to a selective location in the City). The Board shares the view expressed frequently at public hearing that when tied directly to specific kinds of development inclusionary housing is best encouraged through the use of incentives which would not put the housing and commercial development also desired by the City at a serious competitive disadvantage.

The Board recommends as well that final council action on the petition occur before the summer recess to remove any legal ambiguities for development projects that still must continue to advance through the summer months.

Findings

The Planning Board has considered the desirability of incorporating some form of inclusionary housing requirements in to the zoning ordinance for two years. After having conducted a number of informational hearings at which housing and commercial developers as well as housing advocates had an opportunity to be heard and after testimony presented at the formal public hearing held on the subject petition the Board makes the following findings:

1. There is wide spread support for the central objectives which have given form and impetus to the current inclusionary proposal: namely the desirability of having affordable housing as part of most new housing construction in the City and of having assistance from the commercial development community to ameliorate the upward pressure on housing costs that results from demand generated by that new commercial development on a static or only slowly growing housing supply.

2. There is concern expressed by Cambridge housing developers that the existing constraints on affordable housing construction in the City (from the cost of land when available, zoning restrictions, public policy to preserve existing neighborhood fabric, costs of financing) when combined with the additional, unique cost of the inclusionary housing provisions would seriously and negatively impact new housing construction by reducing the number of new starts or leaving still more people out of the housing market because of higher housing costs.

A parallel concern from commercial developers is that the specific appeal of Cambridge as a location for office and research development would be seriously compromised by the imposition of inclusionary housing costs which would not apply in any other competing municipality in the metropolitan Boston area.

The Board shares these concerns.

3. While always advanced as just one of many tools necessary to meet the City's housing objectives, the inclusionary provisions proposed would nevertheless realize only a very modest amount of new housing assistance (10 to 20 new units of housing per year over the next decade should office construction occur at a very optimistic pace).

4. The City's ability to absorb significant numbers of new housing units is seriously limited by the constraints of space and other community objectives (such as the preservation of the existing fabric and scale of residential neighborhoods). Therefore an inclusionary housing program should more directly address the opportunities for improvement in quality and availability of the City's stock of existing housing for those groups the inclusionary ordinance is intended to serve. The proposed inclusionary ordinance does not address the myriad complications found in the other City regulations which make that option difficult to achieve.

A program designed to make private funding directly available to Cambridge's existing public/non-profit rehabilitation initiatives for lower-income households already in Cambridge might serve the City's objectives more effectively than one whose focus is the construction of new, expensive housing units.

5. While very difficult to achieve in a City like Cambridge where existing permitted development already presses the limits of acceptable growth (given the City's definition of acceptable environmental quality of life), every effort should be made to devise a program of development incentives, either through the zoning mechanism or perhaps more profitably through other kinds of regulations affecting housing and commercial development in the City to achieve the same end. Such a program might capitalize on the natural market for new housing and new offices in the City in a positive way to also achieve a more equitable supply of housing opportunities in the City.

Public Hearing

The Planning Board held a public hearing on the petition at 9:00 p.m. on May 17, 1983. Councillor David Sullivan briefly outlined the intent and details of the Council petition indicating that leveraging the new private development occurring in the City through this mechanism was a reasonable means of providing badly needed low and moderate income housing opportunities.

A number of persons spoke, indicating general support for finding a mechanism for providing more opportunities for low and moderate income household but having concerns regarding this specific inclusionary proposal.

Arthur Klipfel suggested that rental housing might be given special treatment. Harold Goyette felt the proposal was unfair and inequitable in assigning costs for low/moderate income housing to a limited segment of the Cambridge community; Alice Wolf saw the need for more definitive information.

Speaking in opposition to the proposal were David Hughes, Cambridge Chamber of Commerce; Miles Carras, 40 Pearl Street; Irving Fischman, Cambridgeport who suggested an incentives program rather than a regulatory one.

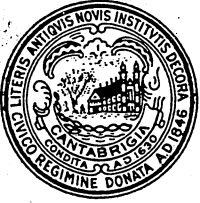
Speaking in support of the concept with some reservations as to the specific proposal was Frederic Levy, Cambridge Civic Associates and David Spiler, Cambridge resident.

Respectfully submitted

For the Planning Board



Arthur Parris
Chairman



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 498-9011

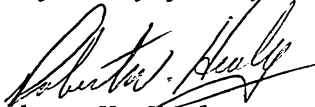
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

June 20, 1983

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed please find copy of the recommendation of the Cambridge Planning Board relative to a petition to amend the Zoning Ordinance to require low- and moderate-income housing units as part of certain housing and commercial developments.

Very truly yours,


Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mbf
Enc.

PLACED ON FILE - DECEMBER 19, 1983.

#16
0-38

Re: Planning Board recommendations on a petition to amend the Zoning Ordinances to require low and moderate income housing units as part of certain housing and commercial developments.

*12/19/83 - Placed on file
pursuant to Ord. #8*

In City Council,

June 20, 1983

6/20/1983

TABLED BY COUNSELLOR

Rechny
for Calendar #19

OF

- August 1, 1983 -