

ENVISION CAMBRIDGE

Envision Cambridge Advisory Committee, Meeting 02

06/29/2016

CDD 4th Floor Conference Room

Committee Attendees

Marlinia Antoine, Joe Maguire, Matt Wallace, Dennis Swinford, Tom Stohlman, Risa Mednick, Ruth Allen, Tom Sieniewicz, Josh Gerber, Ebi Poweigha, Bill Kane, Robert Winters, Zeyneb Magavi, Alexandra Offiong, Ruth Ryals

Staff/Consultants Present

Staff: Iram Farooq, Stuart Dash, Gary Chan

Utile: Tim Love, Meera Deean

Committee Members Absent

Bethany Stevens, Frank Gerratana, Jeff Kiryk, Naia Aubourg, Zuleka Queen-Postell

5 attendees from public.

Meeting Overview

Presentation and discussion of key challenges and opportunities facing Cambridge.

Committee Feedback

- Much of the growth has been in “former industrial areas” e.g., parts of East Cambridge, Cambridgeport
- Health and learning are community core values
- A comparison of cities by educational attainment would be helpful
- Concerned about offices locating in 1st floor retail spaces
- It is hard to fill retail spaces; large property owners have an interest in maintaining active retail as well
- Does retail viability vary throughout city?
- There is volatility in retail. How can we support retail? Subsidies? Where would those be viable?
- Mixed use and commercial viability go together
- Would be good to have an analysis of what kinds of small businesses there are, and map where they are relative to what people want. What kinds of small businesses are left in the city?
- Where are children and families? Where are they going to school? Where are they staying?
- Economic opportunity: there is a mismatch between residents and economic opportunities— e.g. residents growing up in the shadow of high tech development
- Cambridge is “weird,” very progressive. “Weirdness” also means leadership of ideas. There are elements of living in Cambridge that cannot be captured by demographics, but that are important to what life is here

ENVISION CAMBRIDGE

- We should be encouraging livability, diversity, and equity for all of Cambridge—for those on support, who have been here for some time, and for those who are coming in. We mix—that is what creates sense of place.

Comments from Public

- Rapidly rising property values means that despite low tax rate, increases still have impact, but maybe less so than it could; Residential taxes remain an issue if you're on a fixed income