Alewife Zoning Recommendations

May 10, 2018
Alewife Key Objectives

Create an identity and sense of place for the whole Alewife District.

- Better integrate the district with the rest of the city through new walking and biking paths, streets, and open spaces.
- Ensure that both new development and existing infrastructure, neighborhoods, and community resources are prepared for climate change, in particular the challenges of flooding and heat.
- Encourage forms of development, a mix of uses, and a range of improvements that will facilitate and encourage walking, biking, and transit use and reduce the growth of vehicular trips.
- Ensure that new development benefits the adjacent residential neighborhoods by introducing new amenities and services and creating neighborhood destinations.
Alewife Vision Benefits

Net New Housing Units at 60% Buildout

- Quadrangle ~725 units
- Shopping Center ~745 units
- Jerry's Pond ~310 units
- Fresh Pond Parkway ~330 units

Net New Jobs at 60% Buildout

- Quadrangle ~7,020 jobs
- Shopping Center ~1,030 jobs
- Jerry's Pond ~350 jobs
- Triangle ~720 jobs
- Fresh Pond Parkway ~170 jobs

Proposed Land Use

- Residential
- Commercial
- Mixed-use Retail
- Mixed-use Industrial
- Live/Work Space

Graphic illustrates 100% buildout
Urban design framework

Find a systemic solution to the impacts of climate change by aligning with the preparedness planning process

- Build to an elevation of 4’ or over for the first habitable floor level, which reduces flood risk from 2070 SLR/SS

Create a mixed-use walkable neighborhood that also promotes bicycles and transit

- Create a distributive multimodal transportation network by “completing the street grid” and making better connections to the T
- Create a “there there” for daytime and evening populations and to improve the “quality of address”
- Achieve a scaled transition of new development towards Cambridge Highlands

![Diagram showing the relationship between Flood Mitigation and Walkability]

In order to realize our vision of transforming Alewife into a resilient neighborhood with strong amenities and sense of place, we need to retain a sufficient amount of value in order to encourage redevelopment.
Urban Design Vision

• **A place of opportunity and connection.** Its urban form will encourage meeting, engagement, and interaction.

• **Varied.** It will be comprised of areas of differing character, and will accommodate a wide range of functions and uses, and serve Cambridge’s diverse residents and workers.

• **Inclusive and welcoming.** It will serve both the immediate community and the region.

• **Comfortable, beautiful, and safe.** It will offer an enjoyable environment in which to live, work, play, and shop.

• **Sustainable.** It will be designed for resiliency and environmental sustainability, and to support the communities of Cambridge.
Flood Protection: Raised Public Plinth on A Streets in Quad

Street Types
- A Streets
- B Streets
Raised Plinth

[Images of buildings and streetscapes related to the Alewife District Plan]
Quadrangle: Raised Plinth
Alewife Zoning Strategies
Alewife Zoning Strategies

What does zoning regulate?

Land Use Character
• Type of Use (e.g., residential, commercial)
• Scale of Use (height, density)

Development Standards
• Built form
• Setbacks and massing
• Open space
• Parking
Alewife Zoning Strategies

What’s the zoning now?

Base Districts
- Residence (C-2, C-1A, C-1, B)
- Office (O-2A, O-1)
- Business (BA)
- Industry (IA-1, IB-2)
- Special District 3

Overlay Districts
- Alewife Overlay Districts (AODs) – created following Concord-Alewife Plan (2006)
- Mixed Use Residential (MXR)
Alewife Zoning Strategies

… and more overlay districts

Parkway Overlay District

- 25’ green front yard w/trees
- Building frontage height 55’ or less (reduced to 50’ on parts of Concord Ave)
- Façade articulation
- Parking, trash, mechanicals prohibited from front yards
- Building entrances facing street
- 30% transparent ground floors
- Curb cuts on side streets
- Fence standards
Alewife Zoning Strategies

... and more overlay districts

Flood Plain Overlay District

- Includes area of 100-year (1%) FEMA flood plain
- All construction, alterations, and earthwork (except on 1-3 family house lots) requires Planning Board special permit
- Compensatory storage for floodwater required
- Overlaps with City Engineering and Conservation Commission review
Alewife Zoning Strategies

... and not to mention

Citywide Development Standards

- Inclusionary Housing
- Incentive Zoning
- Green Building Review
- (and more)
Alewife Zoning Strategies

“Two-tier” approach

• “As-of-right” zoning consistent with existing patterns of development

• Special permit process allows redevelopment consistent with plan goals
Alewife Zoning Strategies

**Current AOD Zoning**

- Higher-scale closer to Alewife Station
- Transfer of development rights (TDR) allows density to be moved
- Development bonus to provide public infrastructure (streets, open space, ped/bike connections)
How does the new plan align with current zoning?

- Similar in overall use and scale
- Shift use mix in new development to include more commercial
- Revised development standards to address built form goals, climate change resiliency
- Retain incentives for public infrastructure (updated to reflect Envision Alewife plan)
- Incentivize public amenity space (libraries, public bathrooms, &c.)
Alewife Zoning Strategies

What zoning strategies should be modified to support the new plan?

Flood Protection

- Protect to 10% SLR/SS elevation based on CCPR Plan (i.e., first floors at or above this level)
- Recover from 1% SLR/SS elevation based on CCPR Plan (i.e., elevate or floodproof residential units, critical building equipment)
- Protect to 1% SLR/SS elevation based on CCPR Plan in Quadrangle by elevating to 4 feet uniformly

Urban Heat Island Resiliency

- Require green or white roofs
- Tree plantings
- Other measures to be considered through CCPR planning process
Alewife Zoning Strategies

*What zoning strategies should be modified to support the new plan?*

**Transportation**

- Eliminate minimum parking (except residential), establish maximum parking ratios
- Enhanced transportation demand management (TDM) measures
- Contributions to transportation improvement fund

**Maximum Parking Ratios**

- Retail = 1.5 per 1,000-sf
- Office = 1.1 per 1,000-sf
- R&D = 0.8 per 1,000-sf
- Industrial = 0.5 per 1,000-sf
- Residential = 0.25 min - 0.75 per dwelling unit
Alewife Zoning Strategies

*What zoning strategies should be modified to support the new plan?*

**Built Form – Building Massing**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Zoning</th>
<th>Envision Alewife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Building step-backs for bulk control (varies by district)</td>
<td>Break up building massing - 200’ max. linear dimension unless broken by 40’x40’ courtyards</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Alewife Zoning Strategies

**What zoning strategies should be modified to support the new plan?**

#### Built Form – Yard Setbacks and Orientation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Zoning</th>
<th>Envision Alewife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• 15’ or 25’ green area front yards (in AODs)</td>
<td>• Front “build-to” lines to form streetscape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Waivable side and rear yards (in AODs)</td>
<td>• Sloped front yards or raised “plinths” to elevate ground floors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• 25’ green area rear yard abutting Highlands residential and open space districts</td>
<td>• No side yards along streets where continuous frontage desired</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• 30’ open space yard toward the rear of parcels</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Front “build-to” lines to form streetscape
- Sloped front yards or raised “plinths” to elevate ground floors
- No side yards along streets where continuous frontage desired
- 30’ open space yard toward the rear of parcels
## Alewife Zoning Strategies

*What zoning strategies should be modified to support the new plan?*

### Built Form – Parking Location

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current Zoning</th>
<th>Envision Alewife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Above-grade parking can be exempt by special permit from FAR (is counted elsewhere in City)</td>
<td>Retain exemption if parking is screened from streets and public open space (on up to 2 sides) by 40'-depth residential or commercial space</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alewife Zoning Strategies

Subdistricts

1. Triangle (current AOD)
2. Quadrangle Mixed-Use (modified AOD)
3. Quadrangle Light Industrial (modified AOD)
4. Quadrangle Residential (modified AOD)
5. Fresh Pond Mall (modified AOD)
6. Special District 3 (current SD-3)
7. Fresh Pond Parkway (new overlay district)
Alewife Zoning Strategies

**Triangle**

- Maintain mixed-use character
- Promote retail and active space on Cambridgepark Drive
- Allow additional uses as-of-right? (retail, hotel)
- Additional height near Alewife Brook Parkway? (Currently constrained by Parkway Overlay limitations)
Alewife Implementation Plan: Zoning & Policy

Alewife Zoning Strategies

Triangle

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limits</th>
<th>Current Zoning</th>
<th>Envision Alewife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAR (as-of-right)</td>
<td>1.50/1.95 (res) 1.25 (non-res)</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (as-of-right)</td>
<td>70' (res) 60' (non-res)</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR (special permit)</td>
<td>2.00/2.60 (res) 1.75 (non-res)</td>
<td>Allow mixed-use at res. Total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (special permit)</td>
<td>85’-105’ (res)* 125’ (w/TDR)* 85’ (non-res)*</td>
<td>125’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alewife Zoning Strategies

Quadrangle Mixed-Use

- Maintain mixed-use character
- Uniform 4’ first-floor elevation above grade
- Front “build-to” lines based on desired street typologies
- Active uses with publicly accessible “plinths” on key streets
- Retail corridor along Wilson Road (as planned)
### Alewife Zoning Strategies

### Quadrangle Mixed-Use

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limits</th>
<th>Current Zoning</th>
<th>Envision Alewife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAR (as-of-right)</strong></td>
<td>Varies by base district</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Height (as-of-right)</strong></td>
<td>35'-45' (res) 35' (non-res)</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FAR (special permit)</strong></td>
<td>2.00/2.60 (res) 1.50 (non-res)</td>
<td>Allow mixed-use at res. total</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Height (special permit)</strong></td>
<td>70' (res)* 105' (w/TDR)* 70' (non-res)*</td>
<td>85'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alewife Zoning Strategies

**Quadrangle Light Industrial**

- Manufacturing space on first floors
- Residential prohibited
- Standard 4’ first-floor elevation above grade
- Front “build-to” lines based on desired street typologies
- Hybrid manufacturing/retail with publicly accessible “plinths” on key streets
- Retail corridor along Wilson Road
- Green buffer on n’hood edge
Alewife Zoning Strategies

Quadrangle Light Industrial

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limits</th>
<th>Current Zoning</th>
<th>Envision Alewife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAR (as-of-right)</td>
<td>0.75/0.98 (res) 0.75 (non-res)</td>
<td>0.75 (non-res)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (as-of-right)</td>
<td>35’</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR (special permit)</td>
<td>1.50/1.95 (res) 1.50 (non-res)</td>
<td>1.50 (non-res) manufacturing exempt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (special permit)</td>
<td>65’-85’ 80’-105’ w/TDR</td>
<td>85’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alewife Zoning Strategies

Quadrangle Residential

- Promote transition to moderate-scale residential over time
- Variety of housing types including townhouse and live-work units
- Standard 4’ first-floor elevation above grade
- Front “build-to” lines based on desired street typologies
Alewife Zoning Strategies

Quadrangle Residential

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limits</th>
<th>Current Zoning</th>
<th>Envision Alewife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAR (as-of-right)</td>
<td>0.75/0.98 (res) 0.75 (non-res)</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (as-of-right)</td>
<td>35’</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR (special permit)</td>
<td>2.00/2.60 (res) 1.50 (non-res)</td>
<td>Non-residential increase for institutional use only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (special permit)</td>
<td>65’ (res)* 80’ w/TDR* 55’ (non-res)*</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alewife Zoning Strategies

Fresh Pond Mall

- Phased, mixed-use (residential, office, retail) redevelopment at current allowed density
- Creation of “Alewife Square” as a major civic space
- Internal street grid and pedestrian/bicycle connections
- Include 45,000+ SF grocery store
- Additional height near MBTA station in exchange for greater open space?
**Alewife Zoning Strategies**

### Fresh Pond Mall

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limits</th>
<th>Current Zoning</th>
<th>Envision Alewife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAR (as-of-right)</td>
<td>1.75/2.27 (res) 1.00 (non-res)</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (as-of-right)</td>
<td>45’ (res) 35’ (non-res)</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR (special permit)</td>
<td>2.00/2.60 (res) 1.25 (non-res)</td>
<td>Mixed-use at total for res.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (special permit)</td>
<td>55’-85’ (res)* 105’ w/TDR* 70’ (non-res)*</td>
<td>85’ (or more in exchange for open space?)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Special District 3

- Phased, mixed-use (residential, office) redevelopment at current allowed density
- Restoration of open space around Jerry’s Pond for public use, stormwater retention
- Internal street grid and pedestrian/bicycle connections
- Flexibility in height, setback requirements by special permit (current zoning does not include master plan review)
Special District 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limits</th>
<th>Current Zoning</th>
<th>Envision Alewife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAR (as-of-right)</td>
<td>0.45 (across district)</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (as-of-right)</td>
<td>55’ (35’ or 70’ in some areas)</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR (special permit)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (special permit)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>Relief through PB review in exchange for open space improvements</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alewife Implementation Plan: Zoning & Policy

Alewife Zoning Strategies

**Fresh Pond Parkway**

- New overlay district
- Promote mixed-use with ground-floor retail along parkway
- Allow modest additional height/density in exchange for public open space connections (e.g., Tobin-to-Danehy)
Alewife Zoning Strategies

Fresh Pond Parkway

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limits</th>
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<th>Envision Alewife</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FAR (as-of-right)</td>
<td>Varies by base district</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (as-of-right)</td>
<td>35’-45’</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FAR (special permit)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>No change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Height (special permit)</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>55’ on FPP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>10’ increase for OS connection</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Alewife Implementation Plan: Zoning & Policy

Alewife Zoning Strategies

Questions:

• Do the zoning strategies support the planning thus far?

• Which strategies might need more discussion?

• Are there important items missing?

• Additional thoughts or ideas?