

Dear members of the Cambridge Planning Board,

I'm writing on behalf of Friends of Alewife Reservation, utilizing the many maps and reports available to the public on our website:

www.friendsofalewifereservation.org

Thank you all for reading facts which recommend updating, and verifying the purpose and intent of the Alewife Floodplain Overlay District. Other towns and cities are trying to enforce these regulations, which should not be over-ridden by any development plan, but regulations should be amended and reinforced by you representing the city of Cambridge.

Unfortunately, many builders are inspired by precedent of the city to utilize "Special permitting" to build in a floodplain (55 Wheeler and 95 Fawcett). All of Mr. Mckinnon's were Special Permits around the AOD. Highly confused as to why others did not hold feet to regulatory AOD fire.

See map below for AOD areas.

I'm surprised you have not moved forward with stronger interpretation of these regs. after you saw the "Special Permit" status of 55 Wheeler, which, in the past, has shown to have contaminated soils and is in a floodplain, and the major first or second to be permitted in the Quad. A building permit should not be given. Attached are the regulations for Alewife Floodplain Overlay Zoning and a copy of 55 Wheeler Street's plans. While their design firm claims adequate flood storage for past requirements, I request the Planning Board to note that climate change circumstances have changed so that storage capacity standards should be higher than the ratio between previous 2 years storage and 25 year storm storage estimates.

We must also begin to utilize Massachusetts Adaptation Guidelines from the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, and elsewhere because New York, Houston and Florida have happened, and we have a present-day civilian obligation to plan beyond past non-climate change standards.

Please, at least click on my links which may help with examining the regulations and using an 'improvement process' to Floodplain overlay zoning regulations on the books which is most often circumvented with

one designer and one figure which states there is adequate compensatory flood storage.

https://www.cambridgema.gov/~media/Files/CDD/Maps/Zoning/cddmap_zoning_overlay_aod_2016.pdf?la=en

https://www.cambridgema.gov/~media/Files/CDD/ZoningDevel/Ordinance/zo_article20_1397.ashx

55 Wheeler St.

- [Special Permit Criteria](#)
- [DPW Memo - August 29, 2017](#) • [TP&T Memo - August 29, 2017](#)
- [CDD Memo - August 31, 2017](#)
- [CDD Memo - October 19, 2017](#) • [TP&T Memo - October 20, 2017](#)
- [Supplemental Staff Documents - December 13, 2017](#)

GRADUATING to a higher level of climate change projections using the Overlay Flood Zoning interpretation from Sudbury Ma. and its amended, federally supported regulations, emphasizes that no building encroachments can be made within the floodplain zoning and these laws at Alewife (AOD) supersede regular zoning laws. This link shows you how standards are being raised because of rapid climate change from the national Association of Floodplain Managers.

https://www.floods.org/ace-files/documentlibrary/committees/3-13_Higher_Standards_in_Floodplain_Management2.pdf

Tens of thousands of people will be affected beyond the QUAD via water displacement, discharging into already impaired waters with a 'D' EPA status, not to speak of future climate change needs and developing a cheaper, very viable "natural systems" approach via storm water wetland - as a result of over-development at the Quad impacting Somerville, Arlington, Belmont and Medford.

Article shows we are fortunate to have these AOD zoning laws (the link is to an archived version because the original is no longer available):

<https://web.archive.org/web/20170902022301/https://www.forbes.com/sites/scottbeyer/2017/08/30/did-houston-flood-because-of-a-lack-of->

[zoning/](#)

I suggest to go beyond what seems obvious or Planning Board precedent. Purchasing land in the Quad for climate change is a very doable goal. This land could be restored to a 'natural sponge' and carbon sink for Cambridge residents for safety and recreation and habitat conservation.

Former developers are not obliged to include climate change monies in their linkage fees most often used for affordable housing.

Mitigation linkage must be required that developers pay for climate solutions, and could be used at Alewife.

Councilor Quinton Zondervan has a pre-election statement and has put action behind this: <https://votequinton.com/climate/>

Sudbury's new overlay zoning protections (regulations) emphasize that no encroachments can be made in the floodplain zoning and these laws (AOD) supercede regular zoning laws.

<https://sudbury.ma.us/planning/wp-content/uploads/sites/328/2014/08/FloodPlainOverlayDistrictarticle.pdf>

A building permit should not be granted to 55 Wheeler St., especially since previously appointed city Alewife Committees have not completed their deliberations and soil contamination concerns are additionally noted beyond the regulatory matters raised here. These Committees were officially appointed and were not given time to conclude their work in behalf of public health and safety and rapid climate change events. Developers must not pressure the process for our form of government to work.

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