

## **CRAIG KELLEY – Response to A Better Cambridge Candidate Questionnaire**

- 1. DIVERSITY: ABC is committed to strengthening the social, cultural, and economic diversity of our neighborhoods.**

*If elected, what policies will you support or propose to help strengthen the diversity of our community through increased affordable housing and greater economic opportunity for all residents?*

RESPONSE: We need a much better understanding of our current housing situation in order to develop and implement a plan to make the future Cambridge more of a City we've planned than a City that grew in response to regional, national and global pressures. I will continue to pursue better and broader data collection so when discussing housing and economic opportunity we can all use the same information about who is living where, for how long, how old they are and with how many kids and so forth. I suspect the data will tell us that an aging population wants more single floor, elevator served units with accessible, affordable shopping and entertainment, that relatively few of new units have school-aged children and that car ownership drops in larger buildings, but until we have solid data on those key issues, and more, it's difficult to actually promote specific policies.

- 2. SUSTAINABILITY: ABC wants to build a strong and sustainable community where current and future residents will be able to work, shop, and play near their homes.**

*If elected, what policies or initiatives will you support to ensure that there is adequate housing near public transportation that supports sufficient retail to meet neighborhood needs, meets the needs of current and future residents, reduces auto usage and encourages energy efficiency?*

RESPONSE: I will promote residential development that encourages car-free living through increased car-sharing opportunities, better pedestrian and bicycle facilities on City property and more appropriate bike storage and maintenance options in new developments. I support ground-level retail and commercial projects with parking facilities without direct access to the associated building, creating more street level public interactions. I will support proposals that increase size for projects that clearly limit automotive use in Cambridge with enforceable provisions. Both residential and commercial development should be maximized near T stations, realizing that there are limits to what already established communities like Central Square and Porter Square should expect in terms of future development. Housing, retail and laboratory needs are regional and if we try to accommodate too much of that growth within Cambridge we'll change the basic nature of our City in a manner that I think will damage our traditional residential core.

- 3. GROWTH: ABC is working to preserve and expand the diversity of our community by supporting sustainable growth and appropriate density.**

*Do you agree that in order to support diversity and meet the housing needs of sustainable growth in Cambridge, increased density may be necessary? If elected, what specific policies or initiatives will you support to achieve sustainable urban growth and to increase low and moderate income housing for all populations, including families?*

RESPONSE: Increased density is necessary to keep Cambridge the thriving community it is now, but the appropriate density is often either what zoning currently allows or very close to that. Increased property values, new construction techniques and changing residential desires may encourage developers to envision larger projects than current zoning allows and an area can reasonably absorb and we should look at related upzonings very carefully. Housing, both income specific and market rate, is a regional concern and Cambridge should have a data-driven plan for housing investments and developments to create and maintain the City we want. One key to attracting and keeping families in Cambridge's market rate units is to make sure that CPS offers educational opportunities that encourage families to enter and stay in our District's schools. Data shows that concerns about the quality of education, not housing prices, may be the biggest factor in families leaving the District

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- 4. LIVABILITY: We want to reinforce the distinctive character of our neighborhoods, ensuring that new development builds upon and enhances their defining traits.**

What traits of Cambridge neighborhoods do you find most distinctive? If elected, what policies or initiatives will you support to help reinforce these characteristics through new development, public and open spaces and other means?

RESPONSE: Cambridge's general human scale development is its most distinctive trait, underscored by large, dense developments that define specific residential and commercial areas such as North Point and Kendall Square. The ability to walk by homes and businesses with individual front doors, rather than concierge services and lobbies, encourages people to become more connected to their neighborhoods and puts individual faces on what, when too big and inaccessible, become faceless places. Creating large-scale projects that encourage residents and customers to go outside onto the street, generally by prohibiting direct access to parking, will help create the network of connections in denser areas that we typically see happening organically in our smaller scale business and residential communities, where people interact on the sidewalk or in stores themselves. Any drive towards denser development must be tempered with an understanding that bigger buildings and denser areas do not automatically create interactive, human scale neighborhoods.

- 5. DIALOGUE: We want to support open and constructive engagement between all parties to the planning process, based on mutual respect for differing views.**

In your opinion, do public planning processes in Cambridge support open and constructive engagement between stakeholders? If elected, how will you help ensure transparent and mutually respectful planning for the future of Cambridge?

RESPONSE: I think public planning processes in Cambridge do support open and constructive engagement between stakeholders but I also believe that once the general planning is done, the overall permitting process, to include Special Permitting, administration of minor amendments and processing relevant zoning changes is tilted towards the parties with the most resources, which is generally the developer/zoning change proponent. I also think that the general public, which has less familiarity with the rules around development (such as the discretion the Planning Board has in granting Special Permits) often finds itself in the frustrating position of expressing very clear views, based on detailed neighborhood knowledge, and feeling ignored when the final decision is made. To some extent, these issues are unavoidable, but I think we could, and should, do more to help members of the public express their thoughts in a more formal fashion during all parts of the planning process.

- 6. Earlier this year the Central Square and Kendall Square Advisory Committees (K2C2) proposed recommendations to guide the future development of these key residential and commercial districts in Cambridge.**

Which three K2C2 recommendations do you believe should be top priorities for the City of Cambridge over the next few years? What specific policies or initiatives recommended will you support to ensure these priorities are achieved during the next City Council term? Are there policies and recommendations that you oppose?

RESPONSE: The three general themes reflected in the K2C2 recommendations that I think we should be especially focused on are Transferable Development Rights (TDR), vehicular traffic enforcement and working sidewalks. Other than TDR, these issues could be addressed now and the results incorporated into future plans. For example, keeping cyclists off sidewalks in Central Square might open up the space for Seniors and create new opportunities for using our common spaces which, in turn, might change the area's problematic social dynamics. Similarly, if drivers pay more attention to safety, we may see streets like Mass Ave become less of a dividing street feature and instead start allowing greater collaboration between businesses on both sides. With TDR, a major limitation associated with much development becomes more flexible as FAR can move between sites, but I don't think migrating FAR should result in the creation of overly high or appropriately massed structures.