

## **Marc McGovern – 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: Cambridge was once a city where teachers, police officers, and firefighters could settle down and raise their families. That is quickly becoming a thing of the past, and we are losing important members of our community. I would support building additional housing and to do that we would need to build higher (how high becomes the question), I would support increasing the inclusionary zoning, building on city land and redefining who qualifies for "affordable" housing in the city.

- 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: It makes the most sense to build additional housing around public transportation. I would support ground level retail and would like meaningful community input into the types of industry that would truly benefit the neighborhood (I think we have enough banks in Central Sq. for example). I would like to see developments that promote businesses like Zipcar and offer ample bike racks and other incentives to encourage people to use modes of transportation other than their cars.

- 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: If we are going to make a dent in the housing crisis in Cambridge we need to increase the supply of housing, which means increased density. I would favor ongoing conversation with all relevant stakeholders into how much density is feasible. We should work with the universities around their graduate housing, look at building on city owned land (such as the parking lots in Central), increasing the inclusionary zoning and funding for the affordable housing trust. I don't claim to have all the answers which is why I believe in ongoing conversation with experts and stakeholders as to our best course of action.

- 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: There has to be a balance between preserving what characteristics we have and moving forward in new directions. Cities are living things, changing, growing and transforming over time. I have lived in Cambridge for all of my life and love this city from one end to the other. I love our distinctive neighborhoods but I also know that change is inevitable. I would want to ensure that any changes take place after a meaningful and productive community process.

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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: My training as a social worker, working every day to solve complex problems and bringing people together who don't always agree, are skills that will be very helpful in creating constructive engagement between stakeholders. As a member of the School Committee I have led many of these discussions, I have organized community meetings, I have brought stakeholders to the table for meaningful conversation. This is not new to me. I think true leadership is being able to have difficult conversations and taking a stand on issues despite public pressure. I have a long record of taking difficult votes and being open and honest about why I am voting a certain way. I don't hide from challenging conversations. I think our elected leaders have not always lead "open and constructive engagement". I will.

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: I agree with the majority of the recommendations made in the K2C2 report. Some that I would highlight are the recommendations that call for building additional middle income, family friendly housing, including on city parking lots. I would also support recommendations that focus on beautifying Central Sq. and ground level retail. I also found the recommendation for encouraging new development to offer community space very interesting as I have been working with early childhood providers who are looking for more indoor play space to take their children during the winter months.