

Public Comments on the Draft Recommendations for PLAN: East Boston - Neighborhood Residential Areas

35 COMMENTS TOTAL

John Casamissima: Oppose

Hi Jay, thanks for hosting the meeting last night and for all the hard work that is going into the PLAN: East Boston process. I really appreciate your engagement efforts and applaud the work -- engagement like this doesn't happen in other neighborhoods and your role doesn't go unnoticed. Keep it up. After the meeting, a group of 10-15 of us have been emailing and texting trying to figure out how we can best organize and advocate against the current directions of where the recommendations are going. As I mentioned, the current recommendations are coming up far short of preserving the existing character and quality of life of Orient Heights; we want to maintain the fabric of diversity in our housing stock and need to keep our single and two-family homes in Orient Heights, while also encouraging appropriate development where we feel appropriate in the "corridors" as you all have suggested, but not in the Neighborhood Residential area(s). Not one of us expects that a three family should be torn down and turned into a single family, but we also want to ensure that the destruction of single family homes does not become the norm and dramatically change this neighborhood for those who might move here in 50 years. Six units on these lots in orient heights is not acceptable; I think as a resident-coalition, we feel that anything above 3 family isn't acceptable. I don't think there would be any opposition to allowing the accessory dwelling units (ADU's) as a compromise to be As Of Right, but we cannot destroy a neighborhood by encouraging our lower densely occupied buildings in exchange for something between 4-6 units. With that said, one neighbor has offered to start going door to door with a petition, another has contacted the Herald, one is focused on reaching out to the elected officials, and another wants to begin a Facebook group opposing the plan. I'm just wondering if you can help guide us here -- as for next steps and the evolution of the recommendations, do we need to elevate our efforts or do you think things will change? I am certain that the majority of residents in Orient Heights would never support the current state of the recommendations. The following streets, Orient, Montmorenci, Seaview, Beachview, St. Andrews, Bayswater, Thurston, Barnes, parts of Waldemar, and more, should not enable the sizable multi-fam buildings you're suggesting. I know you can understand that it's difficult to find the time to devote to this stuff and I usually stay out, but I'm incredibly concerned and honestly disappointed with what I saw last night and I'm willing to make the time to help improve the plan but am seeking your guidance on how we can be most effective and efficient. Any thoughts are appreciated.

John Casimassima #2: Thank you for hosting tonight's meeting. I just want to reiterate that I do not think the plan does enough to preserve the neighborhood's single and two family homes in Orient Heights. There's a place for density next to the subway and on Bennington St but not on orient ave, montmorenci, beach view, bayswater, etc.

We have 10,000 units going in at Suffolk Downs, we don't need to ruin the existing family homes. This would never happen on Beacon Hill or Back Bay, we cannot allow our little remaining family homes to be demolished in the name of small, soulless boxes in the name of progress. Please reduce the units allowed where an existing single or two family home exists. The neighborhood has already been steamrolled by developers who combine lots, knock down single and two family homes that are otherwise affordable and build \$900,000 condos in their place. For examples of this, look at many of the houses on Waldemar that sold for 500,000 and now have 900,000 condos. Is this really what we are trying to achieve?

John cont.

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Sean Calista: Oppose

I attended a PLAN: East Boston neighborhood residential meeting this past Wednesday. I want to voice my concern regarding what's being proposed. Zoning regulations that exist in the neighborhood shouldn't be drastically changed. I want to stress that we have many neighborhoods in East Boston with single-family homes. Specifically, we have a unique situation where many homes in Orient Heights are currently zoned to protect this (1F 4000 & 1F 5,000), specifically Montmorenci Ave, Orient Ave, Sea View, Drumlin Road, Beachview Road.

Overdevelopment / Changing the Fabric of East Boston, Especially Orient Heights

With 10,000 units coming into Suffolk Downs and this suggested zoning change, you will drastically change the neighborhood and the well-being of our residents. So why are we considering touching zoning regulations when we haven't even built the 10,000 units that will eventually be abutting Orient Heights directly?

Disincentivizes Families To Stay/Move to East Boston

My grandmother was born & raised for the first part of her life in the North End, and her family moved to Roslindale as they wanted a single-family home to raise their family. I lived in Eagle Hill and had to leave East Boston as I couldn't find a single-family home. Thankfully, I came across a single-family home in 2021 in the Heights and have moved back into the city to be part of this great community and raise a family. Unfortunately, this suggested change disincentivizes families like myself to stay or move in this neighborhood.

Weakens the Neighborhood Association & Abutters Ability

The suggested changes give a developer the ability to have the right to build multi-unit condos in an area that's currently zoned for single families without having to hold abutter meetings, neighborhood design reviews, or approval from the ZBA. Imagine owning a two-story single-family in Orient Ave, then a developer buys up a neighboring lot and crams in a building two stories taller with 4-6 units. Can you imagine the impact of having a building tower over your property and other abutting properties? That's not even including the parking, noise, and general resident quality of life issues. Thank you for your time, and I genuinely ask you to consider stopping the proposal as it is currently outlined. Please protect the existing zoning regulations and, most importantly, our single-family neighborhoods.

Sean Calista, cont.: I understand your proposal regarding changing the zoning based on building size. I'd like to point out a few more things: From the sound of it, you aren't considering the depth of existing homes that are abutters, which can completely obstruct views, cast shadows and change the quality of life of an abutter. Your proposal will incentivize eliminating single-family homes in our neighborhood, developers will abuse this and an abutter such as myself will end up having a multi-unit building next to their property. This will drastically change our neighborhood. We should be protecting our single family homes in our neighborhood, just as it's being protected in other areas of the city (Hyde Park, Roslindale, West Roxbury etc.). We are about to have 10,000 units in our neighborhood directly next to Orient Heights. When is it going to be enough? How about we enforce our current zoning ordinances for once? Why are we making drastic changes? Based on what I heard during the last meeting, you have many residents who are against this.

Additionally, I request that in future meetings, when you are gathering feedback, each speaker mentions their name and address. I want to verify that those speaking are a resident (name / address) so it can be kept on record.

Louis Scapicchio: Oppose

Hello All I am a lifelong resident of 240 Orient Ave and I listened to the meeting last night. While I applaud the effort to make zoning rules I think the effort to make one rule that fits all neighborhoods in East Boston, is a mistake. I think rules to preserve the character of the different neighborhoods, in particular Orient Heights, have not been addressed and should be.

Joe Arangio: Oppose

After participating in the Community Workshop (virtual) last night on Oct 19, 2022 I came away deeply disturbed learning that "updated zoning" would dramatically change the character of one- family and two-family neighborhoods/residential zones in Orient Heights. Residents in these residential zones bought, built or rented homes here specifically because it provided open space, light, stability, other residents they knew and who helped one another, family living and limited congestion. In other words, a place to raise a family without leaving the City of Boston. To suggest changes in the quality of life and neighborhood dynamics for these residents is unconscionable.

Lisa Cappuccio: Oppose

I am writing in opposition of said zoning revisions in Orient Heights, in relation to the meeting held tonight.

We need to save single and two family homes with outdoor space. The plan as presented would decimate the housing stock in OH replacing it with costly condos. The maximum development in this area should stay as consistent as it has been with 1 and 2 family homes.

For over 100 years single family homes have existed in East Boston and it encourages families to stay in the City. If Covid taught us anything, numbers of families moved out of the city for more open space. Just because we live in the City not everyone wants to live condo style in cramped spaces.

I am perplexed by the message being sent by this administration. Are we looking for ways to push out families to the suburbs? Orient Heights is a great community with almost 100 percent owner occupancy which we all know is the fabric of a great community. Pride in our neighborhood and accountability in keeping our streets aesthetically attractive, safe and friendly.

I was under the impression Mayor Wu and this administration is against high end development and this project raises questions as to whether this housing stock is intended for other use.

Balance is key and this proposal sways to one side and will eventually ruin the fabric of this historical neighborhood.

Cassidy Yates: Support

First - great job responding to difficult comments! The presenters brought up great points that resonate with me.

My name is Cassidy Yates and I'm a new Orient Heights resident. I purchased a condo in a triple decker in May 2022. I sympathize with the residents that spoke about single family homes, however, I think they do not understand the scale at which East Boston has the potential to change and the importance of transit oriented development. I moved here for the benefit of being close to downtown and was fortunate enough to be able to afford to do so.

I support the proposed zoning and understand that this is a great option for increasing density without compromising the neighborhood!

Aj Gentner: N/A

I am a new resident to Eastie as of April of this year. Tonight was my first planning meeting and I'm glad that the team has put so much thought and structure into these planning sessions. I know your job is incredibly difficult given the vast opinions from residents, especially from those who are not open to change. I am a younger resident (I'm 29) and I am thankful that the future of this neighborhood is in great hands!

Jesse Borthwick: N/A

I attended your Plan East Boston Zoom Meeting on 19 October. During the presentation Kristina Ricco was explaining a slide which showed all of the Gove Street Neighborhood as NR4-60%. Could you explain what NR4 means? Would this mean Gove Street Neighborhood would no longer be a "Neighborhood Residential Character Area" as shown in the map on your Plan East Boston web site or in the Squares and Corridors May 2021 Draft Report? Also what would this proposed designation mean in terms of allowed building height/size restrictions? I was hoping to attend the GSCA Community Meeting tonight where your office plans to brief, but unfortunately Porter Street Lofts (where my wife and I reside) is having their annual meeting tonight at the same time. Could you please provide a link to where the recording of your 19 October presentation is posted, so I can share with other Porter Street Loft residents. Thank you for your assistance, Jesse Borthwick

Jordan Zimmermann: Support

I am a resident of East Boston, living in Harborview. I was in Orient Heights last time I provided feedback. My family of four lives in a condo which was recently converted before we purchased it. I mention that because we are dedicated to raising kids in this urban environment and care about the future of the neighborhood. We are a single-car household and regularly walk and take public transit around the neighborhood and broader city. I support change, even if it makes my life less convenient in some cases, because I believe it is (should be) good for the future of our city, the environment and residents. I think zoning changes should be accompanied by sustainable infrastructure that offsets some of the challenges, such as (and I know some of these have been part of your work, but just to be clear about supporting them):

Increased comprehensive bus routes (Silver line and more), bike-sharing, bike-paths, accessible car-sharing programs - to reduce the need for personal vehicles and parking

Improved pedestrian experience (raised intersections!!) to offset car usage and improve safety

Public green space throughout to relieve heat island effect, provide shade, absorb stormwater, improve air quality and provide space for residents to occupy - to offset added density in other areas

Incentives NOT to have a personal vehicle; I believe with improved alternate modes of transit though, it will become less of an issue naturally I believe these public infrastructure improvements need to be prioritized and implemented early, which will increase the resident confidence in positive benefits of these changes.

Comments split into buckets:

Affordability: I agree with your responses during the meeting regarding the importance of adding units in a meaningful way throughout the neighborhood. David Lank made a relevant comment, giving his example of building a family home with an income unit in order to make the finances work. While we need to build housing for renters and those who cannot afford current rents/mortgages, this shows that even those with access to funding & financing need to take advantage of additional income in order to live here. I support up-zoning across the neighborhood and do not think select areas should be exempt from participating in this change.

Unit Size: I understand this is a tough aspect to manage long-term with zoning, as market demands evolve over time. I do support incentives to create larger, family-friendly units which are accessible to families (like mine). A condo, even renovated, was more affordable for us than a single family that needed massive investments. It's also a nightmare for a family to try to purchase property, when developers are assuming they can get endless units approved. We need to normalize pricing with predictable zoning so we can all compete on the same playing field, as best we can. I support offering an additional floor or FAR when units are family-sized. I am hoping naturally that larger lots will provide larger units as well, since allowed SF will be greater but unit count not increased compared with some areas with smaller lots.

Resilience & Sustainability: I support an additional floor for areas where equipment should not be placed in basements and/or first floors need to be raised off ground level due to flood-prone nature. I also support potential incentives, which probably only make sense on larger lots in select locations, for added building height as a trade off for more green space (smaller building footprint).
Architecture: While I do support measures for preserving historic buildings and providing support for preservation of existing structures, I do not think we need to ensure the style of new buildings maintain what is currently here. I am excited to see a neighborhood like Eastie have a palimpsest of architectural styles, a visual reminder of the evolution of the neighborhood. It's OK for different eras to produce different styles- it makes it interesting and allows the historic structures to stand out, rather than being watered down, surrounded by bad, cheap versions of themselves. The current population, style and housing type needs are different than they were 50-100 years ago and that's great. Both old and new can and should exist together.

Representation: I am curious who you are getting comments from on these meetings and via comment/email. Are the demographics of comments representative of the population of East Boston? If not, how can that be addressed? Is it possible for me to see the comments that were given in Spanish or other languages?

I want to see Boston being bold and thoughtful about this zoning change so we are not wishing more had been done in 5-10 years when variances are still being requested over and over again in these 2F and 3F zones. I hope the BPDA achieves the goal that development becomes a by-right process for small projects.

Andrew Pike: Oppose

I am writing in opposition of the proposed zoning changes in Orient Heights. The properties that are currently zoned single family should remain as such. I completely understand that zoning changes need to take place to reduce the fact that the good majority of properties in East Boston do not conform to the current code as it stands, however changing an area such as this from single family to potentially multi-family housing does nothing for the neighborhood. We need to maintain single family options for those residents looking for housing like this. I am a realtor who does most his work in East Boston and I am constantly being asked for single family options. We end up losing these families to the suburbs as such limited inventory like this remains even as of now.

I understand that I am not a resident of Orient Heights, but I have many friends in that area and I'd just hate to see the uniqueness of that neighborhood be changed due to density. Please reconsider this change. Thank you for your time.

Vickie DiLorenzo: Support

I live in Orient Heights and believe that East Boston needs, and would benefit from, increased housing density and a reduced focus on accommodating private vehicles and parking. I disagree strongly with the view that we should have single-family zoning anywhere in this neighborhood. I also support efforts to increase access to public transit on main streets and in squares (e.g., through the placement of bus and Silver Line stops). However, I share the concerns that housing justice advocates have voiced about how the increase in by-right building would make it harder to identify concerns about affordability and bad actors, and hope this issue will be addressed with a different policy intervention/interventions. Thank you!

Brooke Machado: Oppose

My name is Brooke Machado, and I am writing as an East Boston resident to voice my opposition to PLAN East Boston's Neighborhood Residential Areas proposal.

The BPDA's plan allows for construction of 6 to 8-unit residential buildings on parcels that are currently zoned for single- or two-family use in my neighborhood of Orient Heights. The breadth of this large-scale construction will stain the fabric of our unique Boston neighborhood community. If permitted, these buildings will be crammed in amongst one- and two-story homes, many of which are settled on lots with ample yards, open space, and natural landscape. Those that frequent Orient Heights say it looks like the suburbs, and that is because it is settled like a suburb; however, this proposal, if successful, will denigrate the architectural character of our quiet, low-density neighborhood, the reason for which families love to make Orient Heights their home and stay for decades, if not a whole life time.

The danger of the BPDA's plan is that it will encourage continued moves by developers to raze modest family homes in Orient Heights. As a member of this community, I have been witness to increasing proposals all around my home put forward by developers who seek out single-family homes to demolish to construct large-scale residential buildings*. These proposals are aimed to maximize developers' profits, most always with buildings that occupy the entire parcel, and encroach and tower over neighboring homes. Historically, these proposals have been strongly opposed by Orient Heights residents during the community processes. If this plan goes through, neighborhood associations and abutters will lose our voices in opposing such development.

I am an extremely proud Boston resident and am grateful to reside in Orient Heights. It's my chosen home, and I am raising my family here. Permittance of this proposal will dampen the quality of our lives and tarnish the landscape and anatomy of this neighborhood. I am asking PLAN East Boston to make significant revisions of this proposal to preserve 1F and 2F zoning.

*18 Crestway - Demolition of existing single-family home and ground up construction of two new structures consisting of five new condominium homes

116 Waldemar - Demolish the existing 1 family structure and erect a twenty unit residential building with fourteen parking spaces
92, 96 and 104 Waldemar - Raze 3 existing single-family homes to erect 3 new residential structures each with 3 units and 3 parking spaces

Sandra Arangio: Oppose

To Whom it May Concern:

I am writing to express my opposition to the BPDA proposal entitled Plan: East Boston.

I have lived in Orient Heights for 52 years, forty-seven on Beachview Rd. in a home we built ourselves. I grew up in East Boston and went to Girls Latin and then to college and graduate school in Boston. My husband came to Orient Heights from the West End as a nine year old boy. He attended East Boston High School and was president of his graduating class. He too went off to college and then got his B.S., masters and doctorate at BU. He was a teacher and principal in Boston, including Boston Technical High School, for many years. I worked in the insurance industry. We were the first in our families to graduate from high school and college. My husband and I raised three children here who all went to Boston Latin and then off to college and graduate school. Orient Heights has been a good place to raise a family. Despite dealing with the airport, tunnel and other challenges, it is far more attractive to us than a suburb.

We believe the changes proposed in the Plan: East Boston which eliminate the protections provided to homeowners and residents living in 1F, 2F and 3F residential zones in Orient Heights will dramatically and negatively change the quality of life my husband and I have worked so hard to establish in our home and neighborhood. We believe we and our neighbors have been unfairly targeted for changes that no other homeowners and residents living in any other district or neighborhood in Boston are facing. Eliminating the protections that zoning affords us to avoid over development; higher density; taller, wider and deeper buildings; congestion, diminished privacy; more noise; less indoor and outdoor space; more and deeper shadows; and transient neighbors who rarely establish roots, relationships, or a sense of care for those who live around them will destroy our lives. To us, it is unbelievable that this proposed change is even being considered by rational, sensitive and fair-minded planners.

Richard and Donna Ceruolo: Oppose

I am a life long resident of East Boston. I have seen many many changes over the years. Some good and some bad! This is the worst proposal I have seen.

About 70% of denied variances get approved over the voice of the people. East Boston has our fair share of buildings popping up everywhere. Traffic is a mess and I live in fear that if we had an emergency the ambulance wouldn't get out of East Boston. East Boston shouldn't be the only ones targeted with this new proposal. My husband and I strongly disagree with it!

Thank you,
Richard and Donna Ceruolo

Deb Frizzi:Oppose

My name is Deborah Frizzi, I attended the meeting on November 28, 2022 regarding the proposed changes for our neighborhoods and I just want to go on record that I OPPOSE the changes that they are suggesting. East Boston has given more than most neighborhoods and it is about time for other neighborhood throughout the city to do the same. We deserve to continue to have our say as abutters also!

Gus Serra: Oppose

My name is Emanuel Serra and I served as the State Representative from East Boston for 30 years. As a Legislator from East Boston I was born in Boston and lived in East Boston since 1945. My grandfather sought out this location for his family members. All three of his daughters living side by side with their families in a spacious Urban area escaping the concrete jungle of the old West End. I recall the Hill section of East Boston as the onetime Jewel of our Community. It still is. Today my granddaughter lives in that same house while she is attending Tufts Medical School. I am certain her great, great grandfather is smiling down on her. It is my intention to keep my home in our family for generations to come. As the Representative for East Boston for more than 30 years I have had the opportunity to serve with many different Mayors. Most were fine people but none were from East Boston. None of them had the experience of living with an airport, 100's of thousands of cars a day an abundance of daily jet noise. Homes and parks taken by eminent domain and turned into runways. Often the Cities ideas as to what was good for East Boston was almost never what the people of East Boston wanted. To have some so called expert in traffic or zoning tell us what is best for us was usually filled with a great deal of intellectual expertise and a substantial amount of disappointment and failure. I have historically fought for open space in East Boston ever since the disgraceful destruction of our 78 acre wood island park. I struggled for years to recapture that open space. I passed legislation that created the Belle Island Bird Sanctuary. I drafted and passed into law legislation to take from Logan its Piers along the East Boston waterfront in order to create Piers Park attempting to restore open space that was taken. I fought long and hard for the creation of the Bremen Street Park. You may not recall that the City Traffic Department along with the Secretary of Transportation opposed me at the time. Their proposal by the Traffic Department was to create a simple berm in order to separate homes on Bremen St. from the Airport while still leaving Park and Fly and other traffic producing businesses on that site. These ideas proposed by City and State, were theirs not mine or the people of the District I represented at the time. Our concept was to move them all either on the Airport or further north on 1A and to create the beautiful park with exists today. It takes years to create open space and days to destroy. The 78 Acre Park known as Wood Islands was destroyed in one night. I still recall the sadness I felt when I looked out my window on Orient Avenue and saw hundreds of full grown trees fallen to the ground in one night of being bulldozed and chain sawed.

I tell you this in order to prepare for your next fight. This absurd proposal spawned by someone in City Hall who pretends to know what should happen in Orient Heights. They want to eliminate one and two family zoning in Orient Heights in order to increase the density of the individual lots. Density already exists in the area, just look at the back side of the hill. It blows my mind to think that this proposal is drafted specifically for East Boston. Nowhere else in the City, not Hyde Park, not Roslindale, Southie, or Dorchester. Just Orient Heights wow very interesting proposal. My counter proposal to the City and my neighbors is simple. Demand that all our local elected officials, our City Councilor, State Representative and Senator, set up a meeting with Mayor Wu along with a few of our well spoken neighbors in order to voice our strong opposition to this absurd proposal which will only serve to deepen the density within our City limits. Without that meeting and a commitment from the Mayor Wu and our officials we have nothing. Hundreds of people attended the community meeting in order to voice their strong opposition to this proposal. The Mayor must understand that there is political consequence when the people are not heard.

Mary Berninger: Oppose

At this time, I am writing to convey my displeasure with the planned rezoning of the IF and 21' parcels in East Boston. The concept has been met with significant pushback by residents in this neighborhood. I unequivocally support and join in those efforts. Residents have heard repeatedly about the need for more housing, i.e., more density, in the region. The term "region" is important to the discussion. There are many, myself included, who believe the housing issue must be addressed by every city and town. It must not be solved by forcing only certain areas to bear the burden of unrestrained development and its accompanying stresses that impact day-to-day living of those areas' residents.

When the topic of 50,000+ units was raised a few years ago, it was embraced by many. However, there was an understanding that the development would be smart, thoughtful and would not unduly alter the fabric of long-established neighborhoods. Residents were led to believe that their opinions mattered about what should become the built community. With this new zoning consideration, it would appear that the playing field has changed and it is not in the interests of neighborhoods. East Boston has accepted an exorbitant number of the targeted units and the neighborhood has had to accept that reality, but not always in a willing fashion. Zoning by variance has changed the landscape of this community and has done irreparable harm to the quality of life for many of its residents. Soon, the Suffolk Downs project will bring another 10,000 housing units to the East Boston community. That is a glaring example of how our neighborhood has been asked to bear the greatest impacts in new housing. East Boston has done its fair share and should not be expected to endure more disruption. Enough is enough.

Now, along comes a blatant attempt by the city government to further erode the quality of life for those living in the Orient Heights section because of the large numbers of single and two-family dwellings. Individuals who live in the area have long maintained their properties, they have enjoyed setbacks that provide space, light and air that greatly contribute to the quality of life all deserve. They

have raised generations of families in those homes and they do not want to be forced to endure **narrower** setbacks and building heights/density that will threaten the neighborhood. Please provide an answer as to why East Boston is the only neighborhood being asked to absorb the impact. What about the other sections of Boston? What's the rationale behind such a targeted disregard for balance in the housing solutions?

Please use your individual and collective political might to stop this plan from coming to fruition. The removal of 11 and 2F designations must not be allowed. In the opinion of the hundreds who attended a recent community meeting to discuss the plan, there was agreement that no compromise would be considered, no modification would be entertained by neighbors. On the contrary, the neighbors want this plan to be stopped, period.

This is the time for the city to stand firm **in** its commitment to its residents. We will be watching to see how other zip codes will be participating in the creation of housing. We will be watching for signs of true advocacy by elected and appointed city leaders to ease the burdens in East Boston

Saul Pelera: Oppose

I am writing to let you know my strong opposition to eliminating single-family and two-family zoning in the Orient Heights neighborhood. The proposed changes in current zoning laws will forever negatively impact our quality of life by removing the zoning protections that the current zoning laws provide every property owner, which goes against the intent of existing zoning laws.

I oppose the elimination of single and two-family zoning due to the added density proposed in Orient Heights which will destroy the current way of life for all its residents in years to come. Also, there should be a parking requirement unless within 1/10th of a mile of a subway station. The current proposal to eliminate parking within a quarter mile needs does not consider the unique topography of Orient Heights. We've done our part in the Orient Heights by adding 10,000 new units at Suffolk Downs.

Dennis Nahas: support

I know this plan will get a lot of push back by residents in my neighborhood, but no area of any city anywhere should remain single or double family zoning. We have a massive housing shortage in Boston and the Greater Boston area, and there is not enough housing to accommodate everyone who wants and needs to live in the area. This is reflected in prices - a home in my area goes for nearly a million dollars, for houses built before WW2. The best thing we can do for the environment and the quality of life for everyone is to allow more housing in the city, and to be clear: East Boston is the city. It is not the suburbs. Let cities be cities. If people want the single family zoning and car-dependent lifestyle of suburbs, there are hundreds of them in MA, but there are precious few transit-rich cities. Please do not give in to the complaints of entrenched homeowners who purchased their house at a fraction of the current price before the turn of the century and continue to force suburbanization on the city. Exclusionary zoning is a hoarding of that valuable resource that denies it to others. If we don't build up in the form of increased density, we'll be forced to build out in the form of sprawl, which means more driving, which means more pollution, and more traffic, and a degradation in the quality of life. Orient Heights is a fantastic place to live: it's walkable and bikeable, with multiple T stations and bus stops. Denying future residents the chance to live here in order to maintain single family luxury (based on the price) zoning is regressive. The people who I encounter at my local neighborhood meetings don't realize this, because the average age is ~65 and they have not had to look for and purchase a home for a generation, but it is brutal out there. Futures are slipping away or destroyed on the backs of spiraling home prices. I spent a decade sacrificing and saving to be able to afford just a small space, because we have let a housing shortage fester and snowball for decades to appease homeowners complaining about and whining to elected officials as soon as they hear someone might want to turn the house down the street into a 5-unit building. They got their home and now want to deny anyone else except the rich from living near them.

Ann Marie Lopresti: Oppose

My name is Ann Marie Lopresti, I live at 23 Waldemar Avenue, East Boston. I have been a life long resident of East Boston for 75 years. I was born on Webster Street and moved to the Orient Heights section of East Boston when I got married 52 years ago. I have seen many changes in this town but none so upsetting as the selling of our little island to large developers from outside the area. This is the last bastion of a neighborhood in Boston and to see it being crept upon slowly by slowly to build large apartment buildings is, to say the least, upsetting. We have the Suffolk Downs race track now being converted into another full sized neighborhood, encroaching on Waldemar Avenue. I abutt the racetrack and my back yard will soon face the back of town houses, hotels and large apartment buildings, instead of an open space. What was once a tree lined street with family homes is now becoming a race way for exits to the highway, letters from builders wanting to buy our homes and a future of 20 years of construction in our back yards. When will this stop? Do we want our island to become another Bronx New York with skyscrapers everywhere. We will lose our sunlight, wind tunnels will be created, as in downtown Boston, and neighbors will now become transients coming and going when their jobs change. We have a city environment on the other side of the tunnel, we do not need that environment on this side of the tunnel. We abutt towns, Winthrop, the city of Revere, Chelsea going north to Melrose, Saugus, etc. This side of Boston should be kept apart from the inner city feeling of down town Boston and the now defunct neighborhoods of Southie, the south end and the north end. I respectfully oppose any change to the zoning of East Boston and ask that you

consider the inhabitants of this island rather than the real estate professionals and special interest groups dictating what happens to our neighborhood. thank you for your interest in my opinion and most heartfelt wish that East Boston stays a neighborhood.

George Arrigo: Oppose

We strongly oppose the Plane East Boston zoning change and ask why only E. Boston. Why not all neighborhoods ? Why change the character and makeup of a wonderful neighborhood to raise our families.

Thomas Bruno: Oppose

I oppose the plan to rezone one and two family lots in East Boston. This plan is discriminatory towards current residents in East Boston that own one and two family homes.

Not including all neighborhoods in the City of Boston to comply with this new zoning code change isn't only discriminatory but also biased to the residents of East Boston.

The shortage of housing in the City of Boston shouldn't and cannot be the responsibility of only East Boston residents. There is a housing shortage city wide, state wide, and nationally that needs to be addressed at all three levels of government. If this rezoning initiative is approved, it should apply to all neighborhoods of Boston not just East Boston.

Owning your own house is the American Dream. Eliminating this dream after many of us had to scrimp and save to achieve our goal of home ownership is unconstitutional.

East Boston residents already have to deal with Logan Airport, three tunnels and all the negative impact that derive from them. Adding additional Density to our living standards adds another Negative Impact. This seems like a Gentrification that the city and investors seek to use against current residents.

All involved with this decision must meet with the residents of East Boston before any decision is made.

Brock Treworgy: Oppose

First, to introduce myself, my name is Brock Treworgy, I moved to East Boston a little over four years ago, and I first lived on Bennington Street. This year, we moved to Falcon Street when my wife and I saved up enough to make East Boston our long-term home. As a young commuter that loves East Boston and practicing Spanish and Portuguese (my favorite classes in school) with my neighbors, I have found this neighborhood to be a perfect fit. I grew up in a small town in Maine, but I had always dreamed of moving here. I am really thrilled about this opportunity to be here and be part of this community and support my neighbors and their businesses as well as our church on Bennington Street. I actively use the T and have had a monthly MBTA pass for almost six years now. In my view, the proposals to remove access on Meridian (and in general) materially impairs the livelihoods of Eagle Hill residents and only marginally increases the utility of the local bus service. In my experience, the local bus service already offers reliable transportation during the week, and there is no immediate substitute for transportation to adjacent towns anytime in the near future. The bus may be a bit slower due to parking during peak commute home times in the afternoon/early evening, but this is a small portion of the overall day/week. Creating a new bus lane would only marginally speed up transportation to the city, while it would severely impact resident capacity to access other nearby areas. The parking in East Boston is already in a precarious state (as I'm sure you know) and many residents rely on their cars for transportation to their jobs, to see friends and family, or take advantage of the many educational and entertainment opportunities that this State has to offer. In my view this proposal renders Eagle Hill less viable for commuting to other parts of the Greater Boston area, which would reduce its attractiveness as a residential area (such as a young couple in which one spouse works downtown and the other works in a nearby town, or a family whose child or children attend daycare/school/religious worship in another area). The other problem with this proposal, in my view, is that the bus is unreliable on evenings and weekends. I can say with confidence this has nothing to do with congestion as these are the least congested times in East Boston. I have checked the schedule and tried to use this service numerous times, and for whatever reason, I have found the bus is simply not there when attempting to take the bus into the city or within East Boston on the weekend and later in the evening. Consequently this proposal would force residents to rely on an unreliable service during those times. In my view, and I would imagine the view of others, the primary beneficiaries of this proposal are in Chelsea, and not East Boston. While I appreciate that Chelsea residents have transportation needs as well, I would instead request proposals that provide incremental or net benefits to the community as a whole rather than punishing Eagle Hill residents (who have weekend needs as well) in order to slightly expedite transportation downtown or to get home a bit quicker during the week. As it is only about a mile from the bridge to Chelsea to Maverick, I would imagine incentivizing residents to get to Maverick (or back to their homes) through other means such as biking, electric scooting, or walking would alleviate some of the congestion without negatively affecting the livelihoods of residents. These incentives could take the form of small tax credits or MBTA discounts/vouchers. The Blue Bikes could be integrated into the MBTA system, for example, which would allow residents to come and go at their leisure rather than waiting on the bus. This would also positively reinforce community sustainability and healthy lifestyles. As I am sure you know, technology and transportation are rapidly evolving fields and there could be a wide range of new options available to the city a decade from now. Particularly with new work from home trends, I do not view now as a good time to focus on marginally increasing the speed of the buses to Maverick at the expense of residents who rely on their cars for their livelihoods. I would greatly appreciate it if you would not move forward with this proposal and instead ask that the city consider alternatives (including long-term solutions) to solve community transportation needs. It seems from your feedback sessions there are a lot of suggestions in regards to improvements on biking/walking infrastructure. Why not start with that low-hanging fruit and then build the infrastructure out from there as new technology rolls out? Thank you for your consideration,

Jane Manning, Oppose:

I'm a resident of Orient Heights and writing to express my disapproval with the proposed zoning changes as part of the BPDA's Plan: East Boston. Orient Heights is being asked to increase density in some cases by 600% or more, which is something not being asked of other neighborhoods in the city or within East Boston and will forever destabilize the neighborhood of many long term residents.

Specific concerns include:

1. A plan to remove all parking requirements within a quarter mile of any subway station. This does not factor in the unique topography of Orient Heights.
2. The elimination of single-and two-family zoning with a significant reduction in side yard setbacks and a significant increase in the footprint allowed for any new structure.
3. Additional height allowances for new buildings allowing them to hover over the existing housing stock while ruining lines of sight in rear/front yards.
4. The lack of representation for Orient Heights in the planning process and the BPDA's failure to appoint new representation as members dropped off over the years.
5. The disenfranchising and lack of feedback from the older population in Orient Heights since all meetings have been held by Zoom with minimal communication.
6. The lack of serious planning capabilities demonstrated in the meetings that have been held. We still do not know how many units can be built per floor, parking requirements are ambiguous at best and the "plan" is a mere Power Point document lacking significant details for such a serious impact.
7. The creation of one new zoning code for all of Orient Heights without taking into consideration the uniqueness of the neighborhood from the hill to the beach.
8. The lack of any consideration of the impacts that 10,000 units at Suffolk Downs will have on the neighborhood. An example of this is the traffic study and plan for Bennington Street which is based on 2018 traffic data.

There is no turning back if we get this wrong. We are asking for the City of Boston to require other neighborhoods to experiment first, given that East Boston has contributed so many new units already on the waterfront and the thousands more in the pipeline at Suffolk Downs. We deal with Logan Airport, crumbling subway infrastructure, tunnels that will be closed for months at a time and yet, what we hear from the BPDA is that we are so close to downtown. This is not a reason to destroy the fabric of a neighborhood which has 10,000 new units approved and very few open lots. This plan will do nothing but incentivize outside investors to continue to tear down our existing housing stock and build new luxury apartments or condos for people who may or may not move here at the expense of existing residents

Donna Baptista-Bean (Oppose)

SAME AS ABOVE

Mark O'Brien (Oppose)

SAME AS ABOVE

Paul Travaglini (Oppose)

SAME AS ABOVE

There is no turning back if we get this wrong. We are asking for the City to require other neighborhoods to experiment first given that East Boston has already contributed so many new units on the waterfront and the thousands more in the pipeline at Suffolk Downs in addition to the 1141 Bennington Street proposal (220 units).

We deal with the impacts of Logan Airport, a crumbling subway infrastructure, congestion on neighborhood streets, tunnels that will be closed for months at a time and yet, what we hear from the BPDA is that we are so close to downtown. This is not a reason to destroy the fabric of a neighborhood which has 10,000 new units already approved and very few open lots.

This plan will do nothing but incentivize outside investors to continue to tear down our existing housing stock and build new luxury apartments for people who may or may not move here at the expense of existing residents.

My wife and I chose to start and raise our family in Orient Heights for a reason- because of the fabric of this very neighborhood. The strength of that fabric is dependent upon decisions such as this.

Theresa Foster (Oppose)

SAME AS ABOVE

Denise Wilson (Oppose)

I'm a resident of Orient Heights and have lived here all my life. I'm writing to you to inform you that I strongly disagree with your proposal on the zoning changes.

I feel your new zoning code for all of Orient Heights is not fair to the people who live here. I also feel that East Boston has contributed our share to so many new units already at waterfront and elsewhere and thousand more to coming up at Suffolk Downs. PLEASE don't destroy our family neighborhood.

Lawrence Wilson (Oppose)

I am a lifelong resident of Orient Heights in East Boston and writing to express my strong disagreement with the proposed zoning changes. I feel the new zoning for all of Orient Heights is not fair to the people who live here.

I feel that East Boston has contributed their fair share to the housing market with all the units that have been built at the waterfront and other areas and with thousands of units to come at Suffolk Downs.

Please, do not destroy our neighborhood with these new regulations regarding height requirements and setbacks and footprints of buildings.

Christine Tringali (Oppose)

I'm a resident of Orient Heights and writing to express my disapproval and serious concerns with the proposed zoning changes as part of the BPDA's Plan: East Boston. Orient Heights is being asked to increase density in some cases by 600% or more, which is something not being asked of other neighborhoods in the city or within East Boston and will forever destabilize the neighborhood of many long term residents.

Specific concerns include:

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4. The lack of representation for Orient Heights in the planning process and the BPDA's failure to appoint new representation as members dropped off over the years.
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There is no turning back if we get this wrong. We are asking for the City to require other neighborhoods to experiment first given that East Boston has contributed so many new units already on the waterfront and the thousands more in the pipeline at Suffolk Downs. We deal with Logan Airport, crumbling subway infrastructure, tunnels that will be closed for months at a time and yet, what we hear from the BPDA is that we are so close to downtown. This is not a reason to destroy the fabric of a neighborhood which has 10,000 new units approved and very few open lots. This plan will do nothing but incentivize outside investors to continue to tear down our existing housing stock and build new luxury apartments for people who may or may not plan to make Orient Heights their long term home at the expense of existing long term residents and residents who plan to make this their forever home.

Frank/Mary Bocchino (Oppose)

SAME AS ABOVE