**Cambridge Citizens Coalition**

**2023 Questionnaire for City Council Candidates**

**Doug Brown**

I How strongly do you support these issues before the city? #1 is high (for); #2 is moderate; #3 is low (against)

1. **More Accountable City Government:** Your support for greater transparency/accountability in the city.
   1. 1. 2. 3 \_Circle the number that most represents your views.
   2. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_How have you personally been involved in addressing this? Explain.

I have advocated for greater transparency and accountability for over a decade. In addition to filing numerous records requests for information related to City projects (Huron Village Street reconstruction, Tobin School redevelopment, Alewife pedestrian bridge, etc.), I have also done extensive research on municipal campaign donations. I also support registration and reform efforts for municipal lobbyists and term limits for elected and appointed staff.

1. **Housing:** Your support for new AH0 (Affordable Housing Overlay) up-zoning amendment
   1. 1. 2. 3 \_Circle the number that most represents your views.
   2. How have you personally been involved to address this? Explain.

I have spoken extensively about my concerns regarding both AHO amendments. At the same time, I was a co-author along with Patrick Barrett of the citizens’ zoning petition that expanded opportunities for Accessory Dwelling Units across the City and eliminated basements from FAR calculations. I also recently proposed additional modernizations to the Zoning Ordinance to make more homes conforming to current zoning and moderately expand the allowable densities within existing neighborhoods.

1. **Transportation:** Your support for re-evaluating city’s bike lane/traffic/parking infrastructure and plans.
   1. 1. 2. 3 \_Circle the number that most represents your views.
   2. How have you personally been involved to address this? Explain.

As a parent of three young children who bike, I am a strong advocate for safer streets. I also support the broad vision laid out in the City’s Bicycle Network Plan. However, I also believe that the City’s process for bike lane implementation has been deeply flawed, and that the results are often confusing for both cyclists and drivers alike. I believe that the City needs to do more to fully realize many of its off-street, fully separated network segments, such as the Greenway extension north of Concord Avenue, the completion of the Grand Junction Path, multiple crossings at Alewife, and a continuation of the Belmont Community Path south of the commuter rail tracks. I participated actually in the Alewife rezoning process to push for these outcomes, and I also founded the Friends of the Watertown-Cambridge Greenway for advocate for that path’s creation and completion.

1. **Environment:** Your support for keeping our mature trees (in schools, housing, parks, & other contexts)?
   1. 1. 2. 3 \_Circle the number that most represents your views.
   2. How have you personally been involved to address this? Explain.

I was the original author of the Climate Safety Petition and served as co-chair of the City’s Climate Resilient Zoning Task Force that recently passed new climate resiliency requirements for development across the City.

II. We are interested in how knowledgeable and active candidates are in city issues. (Short answer – 1-2 sentences)

1. What is the one key problem/issue you want to achieve in City Council next term?

I would like to see the City commit to produce an implementation guide for the Cycling Safety Ordinance that is comprehensive, collaborative, and adequately considers the needs of all stakeholders.

Explain any role you have had as Councillor or resident in related actions.

In general, I have not been involved directly in this issue, primarily because I find the rhetoric quite heated on both sides. I would like to see a more constructive approach developed in the future.

1. What City Council decision over the last term are you most supportive of?

I am a strong supporter of the Council’s decision to hire City Manager Huang, an outsider not afraid to pursue new ideas.

Explain any role you have had as Councillor or resident in related actions.

I have approached my dealings with the new City Manager with an open mind, and tried not to let past communication issues influence my opinion of him. I have found him to be open, honest, and respectful of all views.

1. What City Council decision were you most disappointed in the last Council term?

I was most surprised and disappointed by the Council’s decision to pursue new amendments to the Affordable Housing Overlay with zero community process.

Explain any role you have had as Councillor or resident in related actions.

This year I submitted a citizens’ petition (The Brown Petition) to incrementally modernize the current Zoning Ordinance. I believe that incremental changes are more responsible than the Council’s radical proposal.

1. What City Staff decision over the last Council term are you most supportive of?

I was overjoyed to see the City administration finally decide to revise their Block Party rules and provide more support to those of us who regularly organize such events.

Explain any role you have had as Councillor or resident in related actions.

I am the organizer of the Standish Street Halloween Block Party which draws 700 children every year.

1. What City Staff decision were you most disappointed in the last Council term?

Lack of any known progress on Alewife infrastructure projects, including the long promised pedestrian bridge between the Quadrangle and Triangle districts.

Explain any role you have had as Councillor or resident in related actions.

Following a meeting with neighborhood leaders, in March I submitted to the City Manager a list of 15 different projects for which the City has committed to and allocated funding for, but for which no current status is known. Sadly, I have yet to receive a response.

III. What Issues Help Define You? Highlight those core interests/goals for the 2024-6 Council and explain why.

\_\_\_\_More balance in commercial and residential needs

\_\_\_\_More budget accountability

\_\_\_\_More engagement by residents

\_\_\_\_More equity in healthcare, environment, schooling, housing, and related issues

\_\_\_\_More transparency in Council and City decision-making

I will commit to sharing my daily calendar publicly, so that voters can see who I am meeting with and why.

\_\_\_\_More prioritization of historic building reuse

I currently serve on the board of History Cambridge

\_\_\_\_More support for local businesses

\_\_\_\_A more multi-dimensional and resident-engaged city planning

I served as a member of the Envision Cambridge Alewife Study Group.

\_\_\_\_A more inclusive environmental policy

\_\_\_\_A more comprehensive transportation policy

\_\_\_\_Other (explain in 1-2 sentences)

* Increased support for middle-income families, including expanded middle-income housing, child care, and after-school options
* Continued pursuit of climate resiliency goals
* Zoning reform to simplify and modernize the current code

IV. What incident or set of concerns got you interested in running for City Council?

The continuing polarization of local politics by certain Councilors and by factions such as ABC motivated me to run.