**CAN’s Unofficial Notes on the Special Session of the**

**Cambridge City Council**

The Mayor opened the work session on the Hearn Building at 5pm on Nov 14th, 2022. The purpose of the meeting was to get an analysis from David Wilk, a professor from Temple Univ. who the City hired to do an analysis of the feasibly of converting the Hearn Building into affordable Housing. Also, Owen McEvoy, Deputy Director of the Maryland Dept. of Housing and Community Development spoke about the State support for the project. Here are the highlights:

1. The Hearn Building is located at 505-511 Race St. and is a vacant shell being held up by massive steel beams. Several attempts have been made to have it developed by commercial developers, but the rehab costs are too high.
2. The State of Md. has spent $1.5 million to stabilize the building
3. NCall a Delaware based non- profit has owned the building since 2019 and cannot find any developers to improve the property. They have contacted Green St., an affordable housing development company to take over the property, if certain conditions can be provided.
4. The cost of the rehab is $20 million and will provide for 44 one- or two-bedroom apartments and some small commercial space.
5. The building would have units aimed at residents with family income between $39,000 and $65,000 a year.
6. The only way this building can be saved is by getting State grants and tax credits for affordable housing. The cost to the City to demolish the building would be several hundred thousand and we would be left with a vacant lot in the middle of the commercial district.
7. The Council asked several questions about the viability of this effort and how it would affect other rental units in the area. The consultant stated that there is a shortage of updated apartments in Cambridge and that these units would not affect the rental market.
8. Since this was a work session no vote could be taken by the Council at this meeting, but the general feeling was that this was the best solution to a very difficult problem.

Meeting adjourned at 6pm.

By Charles McFadden, President, CAN