Low income housing proposal fails city council by one vote

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Sullivan speculated that "but for MIT," the proposal would have passed. MIT "fought tooth and nail," against linkage, he said, as did Harvard.

Linkage is a proposal to change the city zoning laws. Such changes ordinarily need the approval of two-thirds, or six members, of the City Council. The proposal needs the approval of three-fourths, or seven members, of the council if the owner of 20 or more percent of the affected land protests.

The Simplex site owned by MIT constitutes more than 20 percent of the land affected by linkage.

Sullivan said he will introduce the linkage proposal again after the City Council election in November, when all council seats are being contested. He thinks it is "likely" that at least one additional supporter of linkage will be on the council if the owner of 20 or more percent of the affected land protests.

Sullivan's linkage proposal he sponsored in City Council. Sullivan's "linkage" proposal was "killed" large new developments to housing by requiring the developers to provide a certain number of units of low and moderate income housing. Such developments include Cambridge Center and MIT's planned development of the Simpex site.

Large developments create jobs, leading to increased demand for housing, Sullivan explained. Furthermore, these jobs are generally high-paying, and the people who take them can afford expensive housing, he added.

Major developments therefore drive up housing prices in their vicinity. Sullivan intends the linkage proposal to counteract this effect.

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