



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA MARCH 2, 2020

Regular Meeting

Sullivan Chamber

5:30PM

Cambridge City Hall, 795 Massachusetts Ave, Cambridge, MA 02139

I. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA

1. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Surveillance Technology Impact Report regarding video recording devices on school buses.

CMA 2020 #49

Our new Surveillance Ordinance requires a "Surveillance Technology Impact Report" be submitted for any technology that could be considered surveillance. This particular STIR was on audio and visual recording devices on our school buses, and this report was tabled last week by Councillor Zondervan as he was asking for additional information from the Cambridge Public School Department COO, Jim Maloney. According to the expanded report, these recordings are used for incident investigations 30-60 times (60 was on the high side) each year, and help give parents, especially parents of young children, non-English speakers, or special needs students, peace of mind. While monitors serve as invaluable resources on our school buses, they aren't able to see or hear everything that happens on a school bus, and they are only on the buses in the afternoon. These cameras have been operational on our buses since 1999 and help keep our students and school staff safe. With the adoption of this report, the School Bus Transportation Bid (referenced in City Manager's Agenda Item #1) will ask for two bids, one that includes audio and visual recording devices as an onboard requirement for our buses, and one that doesn't.

This report was accepted and placed on file.

2. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to a request for authorization to allow the Purchasing Agent to award a five (5) year contract to a successful bidder on the School Bus Transportation Bid.

CMA 2020 #50

This item was adopted. See City Manager's Agenda Item #1 for discussion.

3. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appointment of new members and reappointments of the following persons as a members of the Human Services Commission for a term of three years, effective March 2, 2020. New Members: Collin Fedor, Christopher Fischer and Kathleen Kelly. Reappointments: Julie Asher, Christine Elow and Rev. Lorraine Thornhill.

CMA 2020 #51

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Congrats to the newly appointed members of the Human Services Commission! Glad to see former School Committee member Kathleen Kelly taking an active role in this area. This item was placed on file on the consent agenda (no discussion).

4. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the Harvard Square Conservation District Study Committee report.

CMA 2020 #52

This item was referred to the Ordinance Committee for further discussion.

5. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 19-157, regarding the Cambridge Police Department Procedural Justice Dashboard.

CMA 2020 #53

This communication is an update to a policy order I, alongside Councillor Denise Simmons, Councillor Marc McGovern, and former Councillor Craig Kelley, submitted last City Council term asking for an update to the Procedural Justice Dashboard. This Procedural Justice Dashboard will use data collected from police interactions with residents to tell us whether there is a problem with racial profiling in our police force. The Dashboard is expected to be made operational and public later this spring, and it will be automated, so as to remove the potential bias of anyone entering data. Cambridge will be the first municipality in the country to have such a Dashboard and I am looking forward to this being up and running ASAP!

This item was placed on file.

6. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$15,000,000 from Free Cash to the Affordable Housing Trust to assist in preserving affordability of units at Fresh Pond Apartments at 362 and 364 Rindge Avenue.

CMA 2020 #54

This appropriation will go towards maintaining the affordability of the Fresh Pond Apartments. The Section 8 housing units will continue to be supported by the federal Department of Housing and Urban Development, while the City will step in to fill in gaps in funding for the units that were subsidized under the now defunct Below Market Interest Rate (BMIR) units. With this appropriation, this property whose affordability commitments were set to expire in 2021 will remain affordable for years to come, and I would like to thank Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, who grew up in the Rindge Towers, for her dedication to and leadership on this issue. [Click here](#) to read more about how we are preserving the affordability of the Fresh Pond Apartments.

This item was adopted.

7. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the City of Cambridge retaining its AAA rating from the nation's three major credit rating agencies.

CMA 2020 #55

This communication announces that Cambridge has received an AAA bond rating, which it has each year since 1999. Being one of only 32 municipalities in the country that have earned three AAA ratings, this allows the City to receive the most favorable interest rates when financing projects, resulting in a lower property tax rate. With the upcoming major Tobin Montessori/Vassal Upper Lane Schools reconstruction project, this rating will help keep property taxes at a reasonable rate for Cambridge residents.

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This item was placed on file.

8. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to an update on the proposed Eversource substation on Fulkerson Street.

CMA 2020 #56

Several communications were received this week regarding the possible relocation of a proposed electrical substation that had been planned for Fulkerson Street. This substation has been the subject of much discussion over the last year, as it was planned to be over 100' tall and directly across from the Kennedy Longfellow elementary school, which is a school with a large number of vulnerable students. The entire City Council was united in finding a more appropriate location and asked the City Manager and his team to work with the development community and Eversource to locate an alternate spot. After many months, a location has been proposed on a Boston Properties parcel on Binney Street, where the Blue Garage is currently sited. This site was planned to have 420,000 sq ft of residential square footage in the MXD district. As part of this proposal, Boston Properties has advised that they will seek 2 400K sq. Ft. Commercial buildings on the site of the blue garage, plus the new electrical substation. Boston Properties is still committed and obligated to build the residential square footage, but it will be in another part of the MXD PUD (Planned Unit Development). While an additional 800K sq ft of commercial is a lot of net new square footage, this seems like the best solution to move an unwanted substation out of a residential district across from an elementary school. Boston Properties will need to present this new plan, and the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA) will be helping guide the process.

This item was placed on file.

II. CALENDAR

ON THE TABLE

1. That the City Manager is requested to direct the City Solicitor, Community Development, Public Works, Inspectional Services and any other related departments to review the proposed amendments regarding the prohibition of Natural Gas Infrastructure in New Buildings.

TABLED ON JANUARY 27, 2020

POR 2019 #339

No action taken.

2. A communication was received from City Clerk, Anthony I. Wilson, transmitting a compilation of the Surveillance technology Impact Reports tabled by the City Council on February 24, 2020.

TABLED ON FEBRUARY 24, 2020

COF 2020 #14

This item was placed on file. See City Manager's Agenda Item #1 for discussion.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

3. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 18-108, regarding a report on offering early voting in City Council and School Committee Elections.

PENDING RESPONSE FROM LEGISLATURE

CMA 2018 #286

No action taken.

4. A Zoning Petition Has been received from Suzanne P. Blier regarding Harvard Square Zoning Petition.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING ON FEBRUARY 18, 2020, TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER MARCH 2, 2020

APP 2019 #80

This item was ordained as amended.

5. A refilling Zoning Petition Has been received from Joseph T. Maguire of Alexandria Real Estate Equities, Inc. transmitting a proposed revised amendment to the zoning ordinance by creating the Grand Junction Pathway Overlay District.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING ON FEBRUARY 10, 2020, TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER FEBRUARY 24, 2020

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APP 2019 #82

This re-filed zoning petition, the Grand Junction Path overlay district, was ordained last night on a vote of 9-0. This petition will allow for Alexandria Real Estate to redevelop the old Met Pipe parcel on Binney Street into a research and development facility. In exchange for the additional height and density, Alexandria has assembled the parcels needed to build the Grand Junction Path (a multi use pathway from the Somerville line on Gore Street to the Charles River) from Cambridge Street to Binney Street, a critical piece of this pathway. Alexandria went through an extensive community and neighborhood process with the Linden Park neighborhood to make adjustments to the size and scale of the proposed building. However, due to the Eversource parcel directly adjacent to the Met Pipe parcel, the City Council was unwilling to move forward with voting on this re-zoning until an alternate location was found for the substation. As discussed in City Manager agenda item #8, an alternate location was found, and all 9 City Councillors voted to move this forward.

This item was ordained as amended.

6. That section 11.202(b) of Article 11.000, entitled SPECIAL REGULATIONS, of the Zoning Ordinance of the City of Cambridge, be amended the table as follows: January 28, 2020 (Annual Adjustment) \$19.10 per square foot.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING ON FEBRUARY 24, 2020, TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER MARCH 8, 2020

POR 2019 #387

No action was taken.

III. APPLICATIONS AND PETITIONS

1. An application was received from Alexandra Offiong, requesting permission for a curb cut at the premises numbered 53 Bow Street; said petition has received approval from Inspectional Services, Traffic, Parking and Transportation, Historical Commission and Public Works. No response has been received from the neighborhood association.

APP 2020 #12

This application was approved on the consent agenda.

2. An application was received from the Community Development Department requesting permission for a temporary banner across JFK and Mount Auburn Streets announcing Cambridge Energy Alliance from March 23, 2020 thru March 30, 2020.

APP 2020 #13

This application was approved on the consent agenda.

IV. POLICY ORDER AND RESOLUTION LIST

1. Dedication Request for Brother Blue and Ruth Hill

Councillor Simmons

POR 2020 #42

This order was adopted.

2. Policy Order re Preparations for Coronavirus Outbreak
Councillor Simmons, Councillor Toomey, Councillor Nolan
POR 2020 #43

This order asks the City Manager to report back on the steps the City is taking to address the coronavirus at our next City Council Meeting on March 16th. As coronavirus becomes a bigger threat in the United States and worldwide, it is crucial to ensure the City and its residents are informed on how to stay healthy, what items to prepare for a potential quarantine, and what City, State, and federal resources are available to them. While we will not hear back from the City Manager until March 16th, the City's Department of Public Health has already started and will continue taking steps on this issue, and the School Committee will discuss how they will prepare for the coronavirus in our schools tonight. This order was amended to include Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui as a co-sponsor.

This order was adopted as amended.

3. That the Mayor is requested to schedule a Roundtable/Working Meeting for members of the City Council and School Committee for Thursday, March 24, 2020.
Mayor Siddiqui
POR 2020 #44

This roundtable will be on the School Budget for next year, and will likely be more of a working group meeting, than the last roundtable meeting was. This order was amended to change "Thursday" to the correct day of the week, "Tuesday."

This order was adopted as amended.

4. That the City Manager be and is hereby requested to confer with the Economic Development Division of the Community Development Department to prepare a report on any steps it has taken to work towards developing a Vacant Storefront Registration Policy
Vice Mayor Mallon, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Carlone
POR 2020 #45

This policy order, which I sponsored with Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, Councillor Quinton Zondervan, and Councillor Dennis Carlone, asks the Economic Development Division of the Community Development Department to report back on the work it has done towards developing a Vacant Storefront Registration Policy. The Economic Development Division will report this information back to the Economic Development and University Relations Committee, which I chair, during our April 7th hearing. Vacant storefronts can have a devastating effect on both our local small business community and on customer experience, so it is crucial that the City Council takes all steps

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necessary to mitigate the impact they have on Cambridge. [Click here](#) for more information on the April 7th Economic Development and University Relations Committee meeting,

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

5. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct staff to begin including a “Racial Equity Impact Statement” on all relevant agenda items including, but not limited to, appointments, appropriations, ordinances, legal opinions, policies, procedures and regulations, beginning on March 9, 2020.

Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Simmons, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler
POR 2020 #46

This order and similar iterations have been adopted by municipalities across the country to help eliminate institutional racism in government. By requiring Racial Equity Impact reports on certain agenda items, we will be able to better learn where we can fill in gaps in equity, and better support our diverse City. This order was amended to note that it will be further discussed in the Civic Unity Committee.

This order was adopted as amended.

6. City Council support for legislation that would allow for the adoption of fees on the transfer of real estate for use in creating new funding for affordable housing trusts, including H.2457, H.2552, and the consensus bill.

Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Carlone, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Simmons
POR 2020 #47

This order asks the City Council to go on record as supporting bills being considered in the State Legislature that would allow municipalities to institute real estate transfer taxes. Other cities and towns that have already implemented such a tax have enjoyed increased financial support for their affordable housing programs. A real estate transfer tax could become a reliable funding source for our Affordable Housing Trust, and considering the substantial number of real estate transactions that occur in Cambridge each day, the City may elect to have the tax apply to only commercial real estate transactions, not residential real estate transactions.

This order was adopted as amended.

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V. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM OTHER CITY OFFICERS

1. A communication was received from Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, transmitting information regarding preserving the affordability of the Fresh Pond Apartments.

Mayor Siddiqui

COF 2020 #15

This communication was placed on file. See City Manager's Agenda Item #6 for discussion.