



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA • NOVEMBER 9, 2020

Regular Meeting

Sullivan Chamber

5:30 PM

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 a COVID-19 update.

CMA 2020 #254

City staff gave a COVID update.

Parks Update: The City announced it will be lighting St. Peter's Field (81 Sherman Street), Hoyt Field (13 Gilmore Street), and Donnelly Field (99 Berkshire Street) until 7:30pm through December 7th. This pilot program will allow for passive use of these fields after 6:15pm on weekdays, and from dawn until 7:30pm on weekends and holidays. As it gets darker earlier, we have to ensure residents can safely enjoy open space, so I'm pleased to see this announcement. [Click here](#) for more information.

Small Business Update: Since [the Patio Heater Reimbursement Program](#) was announced on October 22nd, more than 20 local businesses have applied for reimbursement under this program. I advocated for this critical program to support our restaurants with up to \$1,250 to buy patio heaters as they winterize and prepare to extend the outdoor dining season into the cold months. Any businesses interested in taking part in the program should contact Matt Nelson at mnelson@cambridgema.gov or 617-349-4266. The Inspectional Service Department has been visiting local businesses to ensure compliance with [the Governor's executive order](#) regulating times businesses can operate, and haven't encountered many issues yet.

Homeless Shelter Update: Construction at Spaulding Hospital, where the [City's temporary emergency homeless shelter](#) will be relocated to, is underway, and the site should be ready by late November. The City is working with Bay Cove Human Services to ensure a continuum of care is maintained as homeless residents move to the new site. The current shelter, located at the War Memorial Recreation Center at CRLS, should be returned to its former state two to three weeks after the move is completed.

Flu Update: The Public Health Department will be hosting a drive-through community flu clinic this Saturday, November 14th from 9am-7pm at Cambridgeside. It's free for all Cambridge residents, and appointments can be booked by calling City's Flu Clinic Call Center at 617-349-9788 or [by clicking here](#).

Testing Update: From March, a total of 260,485 tests have been administered to Cambridge residents, including 46,189 tests during the last two weeks of October, and 18,160 tests administered by the City.

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The City is offering free COVID testing seven days a week to all residents aged eight and above regardless of health insurance, symptoms, or immigration status. [Click here](#) or call 617-665-3795 to schedule your appointment to get tested. Our local nursing homes have coordinated with the Public Health Department to ensure staff and residents are following state guidance on testing, and I hope the City can help them track staff members who work in more than one job to stop transmission between nursing homes before it occurs.

In our public schools, 2,441 tests have been administered to 825 CPS staff members between October 15th and November 5th as part of a voluntary testing program. 28 students who developed symptoms during the school day have also been tested.

Across the last two weeks of October, .2% of tests among Cambridge residents returned positive. The State also introduced a new algorithm based on population size that is used to determine if a municipality is “green,” “yellow,” or “red.” [Cambridge is still categorized as green](#) under the new algorithm.

Public Health Update: Cambridge’s [COVID case count](#) stands at 1676 cases, including 100 devastating deaths, 1,154 recoveries, and 159 active cases. The Port, East Cambridge, and Wellington-Harrington neighborhoods are seeing a disproportionately high number of cases compared to other areas of the City, so we must develop a comprehensive, targeted outreach campaign educating residents in these neighborhoods about the City’s free testing program and other public health resources available to help keep them safe.

The Cambridge Community Corps will remain active in parks, Harvard Square, and Inman Square throughout the month of November, and are working to educate residents on mask use, physical distancing, and hand hygiene. Moving forward, the Public Health Department is investigating potential drivers in Cambridge’s uptick in cases, including case increases across the country, more time being spent indoors as the weather grows colder, indoor gatherings, and a recent increase of cases at MIT. The City has also reactivated its Emergency Operations Center as we brace for another case surge, which will ensure communication across City departments and first responders.

This communication was placed on file.

2. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of an Elections COVID Response Grant, in the amount of \$70,510.50, received from the Center for Tech and Civic Life, to the Grant Fund Election Commission Other Ordinary Maintenance Account which will be used to help cover the costs associated with ballot drop boxes, location rental and cleaning, voting equipment and supplies, and other costs related to the 2020 Presidential Election.

CMA 2020 #255

This communication was adopted on the consent agenda (no discussion).

3. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appointment of a new member of the Human Rights Commission for a term of three years, effective November 9, 2020:

Stefanie Haug

CMA 2020 #256

This communication was placed on file on the consent agenda.

II. CALENDAR

CHARTER RIGHT

1. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the Community Development Department to commence the public process with the Port neighborhood and surrounding communities to determine the future use of the 35 Cherry Street parcel for affordable housing, and in conjunction with the community, determine the type of housing that would meet the most pressing needs in the area.

CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN IN COUNCIL

NOVEMBER 2, 2020

POR 2020 #246

Councillor Simmons introduced this policy order last week to ask that the City start a public engagement process to develop a City-owned parcel of land located at 35 Cherry Street into affordable housing. This land was gifted to the City by MIT as part of a 2013 rezoning petition, and while there was initially a lot of community excitement over potential uses for the land, no meaningful progress had been made towards developing the site. The order was amended to add Mayor Siddiqui as a co-sponsor at last week's meeting before Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right (discussion ended, no vote was taken, and it appears on the next agenda). He voiced concerns that this order focused only on affordable housing, and didn't acknowledge other potential uses, like open space or a community kitchen. This week, Councillor Zondervan offered amendments asking that other potential uses be considered, and that other vacant City-owned properties be included. However, as this parcel is so close to existing parks, affordable housing is such a high need in the area, and the land has been vacant for so long, the City Council rejected the amendments and instead voted to move forward with the original order. Developing other vacant lots to address community needs is still a high priority, and Councillor Zondervan expressed that he would follow up with another policy order addressing that as a separate issue.

This order was adopted as amended.

2. An application was received from Jesse Aguilar, requesting permission for a curb cut at the premises numbered 87 Cambridge Park Drive; 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.

CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR NOLAN IN

COUNCIL NOVEMBER 2, 2020

APP 2020 #43

Councillor Nolan exercised her charter-right on this curb cut application last week as she and some other Councillors had some concerns over the drawings submitted for this project. As the petitioners submitted [clarifying communications](#), the City Council approved this application.

This application was approved.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

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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 was taken.

4. The City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the City of Cambridge Law Department to review the above changes to the language of the Domestic Partnerships Ordinance and report back to the Council.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING IN COUNCIL JULY 27, 2020.

TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER SEPTEMBER 14, 2020

POR 2020 #180

No action was taken.

5. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to a response to Policy Order O-13 of October 5, 2020, regarding a draft Truck Safety Ordinance.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING IN COUNCIL OCTOBER 19, 2020 TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER NOVEMBER 9, 2020

CMA 2020 #234

This communication contains language prepared by the City Solicitor for a Truck Safety Ordinance that would require that trucks contracted by the City have certain safety improvements. Although the idea had been floated around for years, no real progress had been made towards creating one until it was discussed again at [the September 16th Transportation & Public Utilities Committee meeting](#). After a cyclist and a pedestrian were killed in Harvard Square less than a year apart, it's clear that we urgently need safety enhancements to protect vulnerable road users, and requiring that contracted trucks include safety features is just one small way we can create safer, healthier streets. This ordinance was amended to include technical changes on its place in the City's Ordinances, and to delete duplicate language.

This item was ordained as amended.

6. Green Energy Analysis Zoning Amendment.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING IN COUNCIL NOVEMBER 2, 2020 TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER NOVEMBER 23, 2020 POR 2020 #147

No action was taken.

III. APPLICATIONS AND PETITIONS

1. An application was received from Jeffery Sarra representing Sweet Green, requesting permission for a projecting sign at the premises numbered 145 Broadway approval has been received from Inspectional Services, Department of Public Works, Community Development Department and no abutter's available Sweet Green at the moment has no abutters. The store fronts are currently vacant around the premises.

APP 2020 #44

This application was approved on the consent agenda.

IV. POLICY ORDER AND RESOLUTION LIST

1. Policy Order Seeking Appropriate Memorial for Joan Qualls Harris
Councillor Simmons
POR 2020 #254
This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

2. Policy Order Seeking Dedication for Eva Martin Blythe
Councillor Simmons
POR 2020 #255
This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

3. That the City Clerk be and hereby is requested to forward this order to the Dedication Committee for their review and approval.
Councillor Toomey
POR 2020 #256
This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

4. That the Executive Assistant to the City Council confer with the Dedication Committee to consider the request from Councillor Toomey for a street corner dedication in the vicinity of the corner of Otis Street and Sciarappa Street in honor of the late Joseph and Mary Szulewski.
Councillor Toomey
POR 2020 #257
This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

5. That the City Council go on record as supportive of all efforts to fund the MBTA without any cuts to service.
Councillor Nolan, Mayor Siddiqui, Vice Mayor Mallon, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler
POR 2020 #258
The MBTA recently announced its [“Forging Ahead” Plan](#) that would address budget deficits by introducing drastic service cuts, including a 20% reduction in subway service during peak hours, a 40% reduction in subway service during off-peak hours, the complete elimination of ferry service and weekend commuter rail service, as well as severe eliminations and shortenings of bus service. Public transportation is a lifeline for so many people, and reducing service will only make train cars and buses more crowded, endangering the health and safety of riders and employees, especially our low-income residents who are already facing disparate health impacts of COVID. By forcing some people to travel further to reach an operational bus or subway stop, slashing hours of operation and frequency, and creating more crowded conditions, more riders may opt to drive their cars instead, negatively impacting our climate and sustainability goals. These service cuts will be discussed by the State Legislature soon, and these cuts could be avoided by raising progressive revenue at the state level to offset the budget gap, so I hope our state legislators will heed our call to avoid service cuts in this late policy order. This order was amended to add the full City Council as co-sponsors.

This order was adopted as amended.

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V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Transportation & Public Utilities Committee - Committee Meeting - Sep 16, 2020 1:00 PM

This report was placed on file. See Calendar Item #5 for discussion.

That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to work with the Transportation Department and Solicitor to provide the City with an update on the progress toward a draft Ordinance as soon as possible and with the draft of an Ordinance by October 19, 2020.

POR 2020 #258

**Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Toomey, Councillor Nolan, Councillor Zondervan,
Vice Mayor Mallon**

This order was placed on file. See Calendar Item #5 for discussion.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM OTHER CITY OFFICERS

1. A communication was received from Mayor Siddiqui, communicating information from the School Committee.

COF 2020 #65

This communication from Mayor Siddiqui outlines the work she and the School Committee are doing to support CPS scholars. [Click here](#) to read her full update.