



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY COUNCIL

AGENDA DECEMBER 14, 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 an update on COVID-19.

CMA 2020 #283

City staff gave a COVID update.

Rollbacks Update: On Sunday, December 13th, [the Commonwealth's rollback to Step 1 of Phase 3](#), which Cambridge has been at since the summer, took effect across the state. This requires masks to be worn in restaurants unless someone is actively eating or drinking, and gives specific guidance to restaurants and gyms. Boston recently announced its own rollbacks, and the City Manager has committed to working with the Metropolitan Mayor's Coalition and the Expert Advisory Panel ([click here](#) to read the most recent EAP meeting notes) on a regional strategy, which he hopes to announce by next Monday. Amid a lack of meaningful leadership from the State, I hope the City can step up and take a stronger role in implementing stringent public health requirements as we weather a new case surge and await mass-vaccination.

Homeless Services Update: [The new site of the City's temporary emergency homeless shelter](#), located at Spaulding Hospital, will open this Wednesday, December 16th. In preparation for the move, shelter residents and staff have undergone COVID testing.

Schools Update: After CPS moved to fully remote learning last week, Cambridge is now under two of three public health metrics that determine school closures. If Cambridge remains under at least two of these metrics for seven consecutive days, schools will be able to reopen for our youngest and most vulnerable learners. However, after consulting with the Public Health Department, [the Superintendent announced](#) last night that schools would remain closed through Friday, December 18th. As we heard during public comment, these school closures have been devastating for our students, so I hope we can get our learners back in-person as soon as possible if our metrics continue trending in the right direction.

Vaccine Update: The Commonwealth has received its first doses of the COVID vaccine, which will be given to healthcare workers first. For more information of the state's vaccine distribution plan, [click here](#).

CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF DECEMBER 14, 2020

Testing Update: Since March 2nd, 380,497 tests have been administered to Cambridge residents, including 41,023 tests from November 22nd-December 5th. 44,986 of these tests have been given through the City's daily testing program, free to all residents regardless of health insurance, symptoms, or immigration status. [Click here](#) to learn more about getting tested, or [click here](#) to make an appointment to get tested (appointments are NOT required). In preparation for the holidays, we've added two additional testing sites on Monday, December 21st and December 28th to meet increased demand. Testing and flu shots are also being offered to Fresh Pond Apartments residents this Friday, December 18th, 3pm-9pm. The state has 2 million rapid antigen tests in stock that were originally going to be deployed in schools, nursing homes or other high needs areas, but it's been determined that isn't an appropriate use for them. These tests could potentially be deployed by communities to determine best use, and could be used to screen restaurant diners, so I hope the City Manager will explore with the State to see if there is a way to deploy those tests here in Cambridge

Public Health Update: Cambridge's [COVID case count](#) currently stands at 2,657 cases, including a devastating 100 deaths, a number that has remained stable for months. 1,486 residents have recovered, while 617 cases remain active. Residents of color ("other," Latinx, and black residents) and our younger residents (0-39 years) are being infected at disproportionately high rates. The Public Health Department is also tracking infection in neighborhoods to determine where resources are needed most. Cambridge remains a 'yellow', moderate risk community, with 22.3 infections per 100,000 residents. We had a post-Thanksgiving surge that leveled off, but cases are starting to tick up again, so it's crucial to remain vigilant as we await mass distribution of the vaccine.

[Click here](#) for the Public Health Department's full presentation.

This item was placed on file.

2. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the transfer of \$15,000 from the General Fund Reserves Other Ordinary Maintenance account to the General Fund Women's Commission Other Ordinary Maintenance account to pay for costs associated with expanded efforts on the Mapping Feminist Cambridge: Inman Square and the Mapping Feminist Cambridge: Central Square projects.

CMA 2020 #284

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

3. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 19-74 and 19-45, regarding reviewing public monuments, memorials and markers and streets, schools and public buildings.

CMA 2020 #285

This communication announces the appointment of the Cambridge Advisory Committee on City Art, Memorials, and Markers, which will be tasked with reviewing public monuments to determine if they celebrate slavery supporters or others who engaged in similarly shameful acts, and to determine which individuals, particularly women, people of color, and other historically marginalized groups, should be newly recognized in their place.

This item was placed on file on the consent agenda.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF DECEMBER 14, 2020

4. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-62, regarding providing interpreters at polling locations.

CMA 2020 #286

In November, Mayor Siddiqui and I filed a policy order with Councillors Nolan and Sobrinho-Wheeler asking the City to provide Spanish, Amharic, Bengali, Haitian Creole, Mandarin, Portuguese, and American Sign Language interpreters at each polling place to ensure language never serves as a barrier to civic engagement for our residents. Currently, we use some bilingual poll workers, but they don't and can't address the need for multiple different languages. This report back explains that it would be difficult to have in-person interpreters, considering how many languages are needed, how many polling places Cambridge has, and the need for physical distancing. It instead recommends using telephone interpreting services over a City-issued phone, to ensure all languages can be accommodated. During discussion, Mayor Siddiqui also mentioned the possibility of using bilingual CRLS students as interpreters to offer meaningful career development opportunities for them, while removing the language barrier to access, and I look forward to exploring these options further as we prepare for our next election.

This item was placed on file.

5. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-54, regarding a report on drafting an ordinance requiring the city to only purchase goods that are made in full compliance with USA environmental and labor standards.

CMA 2020 #287

This report responds to [a policy order](#) filed by Councillors Nolan, Sobrinho-Wheeler, McGovern, and Mayor Siddiqui in October asking the City Solicitor to draft an ordinance that would prohibit the City from purchasing goods that aren't made in compliance with USA environmental and labor standards. The City Solicitor has opined that it would be "difficult and problematic" to create a law, as it may conflict with state purchasing laws, and it may make it difficult for the City to procure certain goods.

This item was placed on file.

II. CALENDAR

CHARTER RIGHT

1. 105 Windsor Street

**CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR ZONDERVAN IN
COUNCIL DECEMBER 7, 2020
POR 2020 #285**

This policy order, filed by Councillor Zondervan, Mayor Siddiqui, and Councillor Carlone last week, asks the City Manager to initiate a community process to develop an underutilized City-owned property at 105 Windsor Street in the Port into an economic empowerment community space for the neighborhood. Last week, Councillor Zondervan exercised his charter-right (discussion ended, no vote was taken, and it appears on the next agenda) to give himself time to work on amendments with Councillor Simmons, who lives in the Port. This order was amended to acknowledge two policy orders I've previously filed asking the City to create an inventory of vacant City-owned properties, to ask the City Manager to issue recommendations on how to develop underutilized properties across the Port, and to give the City Manager flexibility as he develops a larger, neighborhood plan for development of these underutilized spaces. This order was further amended to include Councillor Simmons as a co-sponsor.

This order was adopted as amended.

2. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-12, regarding the feasibility of adding bike parking rings to parking meters.

**CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR NOLAN IN
COUNCIL DECEMBER 7, 2020
CMA 2020 #275**

This communication reports back on [a policy order](#) filed by Councillor Nolan, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, and Mayor Siddiqui earlier this year that asked the City Manager to explore the feasibility of adding bike parking rings to parking meters. This communication explains that adding bike parking rings to active parking meters wouldn't be feasible, but these rings could be installed on "orphaned" parking meters where curbside parking has been eliminated. Councillor Nolan expected to get a deeper level of analysis on a timeline and projected costs, so she exercised her charter-right last week. Since then, she's had conversations with City staff on those specifics and was satisfied with the City's commitment to placing bike parking rings on dormant parking meters.

This item was placed on file.

3. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to a Home Rule Petition seeking special legislation from the Legislature which would authorize the City of Cambridge to provide police, fire and other emergency services ("Emergency Services") to portions of the Cambridge Crossing project that are partially located in the cities of Boston and Somerville, with one such property wholly located within Somerville.

CITY COUNCIL MEETING OF DECEMBER 14, 2020

CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR SOBRINHO-WHEELER IN COUNCIL DECEMBER 7, 2020

CMA 2020 #274

Some small parts of [Cambridge Crossing](#), a mixed-use redevelopment project mainly situated in East Cambridge, are partially in Boston in Somerville, and the layout of the project would make it difficult for first responders from Boston or Somerville to access the site. This communication instead asks the City Council to approve of a home rule petition that, if then approved by the state legislature, would allow Cambridge to provide emergency services to all of Cambridge Crossing. Last week, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler exercised his charter-right on this communication to ask some follow up questions with City staff, and having had his concerns addressed, this item was adopted.

This item was adopted.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

4. 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.

5. 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.

6. A Zoning Petition has been received from BMR–Third LLC c/o BioMed Realty, L.P. regarding a Zoning Amendment Petition for a new Planned Unit Development PUD District CDK.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING AS AMENDED ON NOVEMBER 30, 2020. TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER DECEMBER 21, 2020.

APP 2020 #34

No action was taken.

III. APPLICATIONS AND PETITIONS

1. An application was received from Donger Lei representing The Nudo Society, requesting permission for a projecting sign at the premises numbered 125 River Street. approval has been received from Inspectional Services, Department of Public Works, Community Development Department and abutter.
APP 2020 #47
This application was approved on the consent agenda.
2. An application was received from Bill Kuck representing Wachusett Brewing Company, Inc. requesting permission for 3 projecting signs at the premises numbered 33 Dunster Street. approval has been received from Inspectional Services, Department of Public Works, Community Development Department and abutter.
APP 2020 #48
This application was approved on the consent agenda.

IV. POLICY ORDER AND RESOLUTION LIST

1. Elimination of Single Family Zoning

Councillor Nolan, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Simmons
POR 2020 #289

This order asks the Neighborhood & Long Term Planning Committee and the Housing Committee to convene a joint hearing to discuss the possibility of eliminating single or two family only zoning. Other cities across the country have started to eliminate single family only zoning in their communities, and this hearing would be the start of a broad conversation on whether Cambridge should follow. In certain neighborhoods, single family homes are the only homes that can be built as of right (meaning, without a special permit process), limiting the creation of new housing, contributing to our affordable housing crisis, and perpetuating racial and socioeconomic housing segregation. With the passage of the Affordable Housing Overlay earlier this year, the City Council has already begun to ease restrictive zoning practices, and I look forward to having this discussion in Committee with the community on how we can better alleviate the affordable housing crisis.

This order was adopted.

2. The City Manager will work with the COVID-19 advisory board to help the city identify the parameters upon which each strategy and technology reduces the risk to public health and the control of the spread of SARS CoV-2

Councillor McGovern, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler
POR 2020 #290

This policy order asks the City Manager to work with the small business community to explore rapid testing programs undergoing approval at the FDA, and providing funding for small businesses implementing rapid assurance testing, contact tracing, and other public health interventions. This order was amended to reference the COVID-19 Expert Advisory Panel by its official name.

This order was adopted as amended.

V. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. A communication was received from Paula M. Crane, Deputy City Clerk, transmitting a report from Councilor E. Denise Simmons, Co-Chair and Councilor Jivan Sobrinho-Wheeler, Co-Chair of the Housing Committee for a public hearing held on October 22, 2020 to receive an update from the Community Development Department and the Affordable Housing Trust Fund on potential changes made to the eligibility preferences for the Inclusionary Housing Program.

CRT 2020 #12

This communication contains minutes from the October 22nd Housing Committee hearing on the Inclusionary Housing Program. [Click here](#) for more information on that meeting.

This report was accepted and placed on file.

2. The Public Safety Committee met on October 7, 2020 to conduct a public hearing on the Surveillance Technology Impact Reports and annual reports on ShotSpotter, BRIC, and COPLINK, and other outstanding surveillance annual reports, time permitting.

This communication contains minutes from the October 7th Public Safety Committee hearing on surveillance technology used by CPD. [Click here](#) for more information on that meeting.

This report was accepted and placed on file.

- A. The City Manager is hereby requested to work with the Police Department to provide data on Shotspotter, BRIC and Coplink to the City Council.

POR 2020 #291 Councillor Zondervan

This policy order was drafted during the October 7th Public Safety Committee meeting to ask the City Manager and Police Department to provide specific data on the efficacy of and access to ShotSpotter, BRIC, and COPLINK, surveillance technologies used by CPD. This order was amended to fix a small grammatical error.

This order was adopted as amended.

VI. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM OTHER CITY OFFICERS

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

COF 2020 #77

This communication from Mayor Siddiqui outlines the work she and the School Committee are doing to support our CPS scholars as they make the difficult transition to fully remote learning. [Click here](#) to read her full update.

This item was placed on file.