



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA • FEBRUARY 1, 2021

Regular Meeting

Sullivan Chamber

5:30 PM

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

SUBMISSION OF THE RECORD

1. Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting on June 1, 2020
These minutes were adopted and placed on file.

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I. CITY MANAGER'S AGENDA

1. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to an update on COVID-19.

CMA 2021 #7

City staff gave a COVID update.

Rollbacks & City Services Update: The City Manager announced that the City will return to a modified [Phase 3, Step 1](#) next Monday, February 8th, allowing museums, movie theaters, and more to reopen under stringent public health guidelines. The City will also begin offering in-person appointments again on Tuesdays and Thursdays each week, with virtual services offered each week day. I was also glad to hear that contactless holds pick-ups at Cambridge Public Libraries will resume next week, ensuring our residents can access this critical resource.

Vaccine Update: The Commonwealth entered [Phase 2 of its vaccination rollout plan](#) this week, and all residents age 75 or older are now eligible for the vaccine. Eligible residents can find a vaccination site and make an appointment [here](#). There currently isn't a site to get vaccinated in Cambridge, though not for a lack of trying on the part of City leadership. The state controls where vaccination sites are, and the City is advocating to use the existing infrastructure at the CambridgeSide testing site as a vaccination site. In the meantime, [Somerville-Cambridge Elder Services](#) are offering seniors rides to vaccination sites, and if you're having difficulty making an appointment, don't hesitate to contact my office at amallon@cambridgema.gov for assistance.

After vaccinating first responders and homeless shelter guests and staff these past few weeks, CPHD is shifting focus to vaccinate senior housing residents on-site. Cambridge Community Corps ambassadors are visiting senior housing sites to pre-register residents and answer questions, and CPHD began vaccinating seniors today, February 4th. Based on its vaccination clinic for first responders, CPHD can vaccinate 500 people per day, although vaccines are capped at 100 doses to municipalities each week. CPHD continues to request more vaccines, and is advocating for additional doses to set up a vaccination clinic for our roughly 3,000 CPS educators and staff when the time comes. If they're unable to get that supply, CPS staff will still be eligible to get vaccinated at mass-vaccination sites in the region. As we approach mass-vaccination for the general public, CPHD has begun pushing out the latest information in emails, on [the City's website](#), and on social media in eight different languages. A Town Hall series is being developed, and CPHD's dedicated vaccine call center received 400 calls yesterday alone.

Testing Update: The City continues to offer [free, daily testing](#) to everyone who works and lives in Cambridge. [Appointments](#) are recommended, but not required. CPHD hit a new record in January, administering over 30,000 tests. On February 16th, CPHD will be onsite at the Rindge Towers offering residents free onsite testing.

Over 13,000 tests have been administered to 1,182 CPS educators and staff since October through the voluntary testing program, with the average staff member having been tested eleven times. An additional 300 symptomatic students and athletes have been tested as well.

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Public Health Update: Cambridge's [COVID case count](#) currently stands at 4,389 cases and 117 devastating deaths. Although new infections have been declining since January, they're still very high and near peak levels. Since it's hard to predict how long numbers will decline, and since cases had been steadily increasing since November, CPHD is urging residents to remain vigilant. Currently, there are 22.3 confirmed cases per 100,000 residents, with a positivity rate of 1.31%, compared to 3.61% across the Commonwealth. There currently isn't evidence of widespread transmission of [COVID variants](#) in Massachusetts, but genetic analyses of the variants have, nevertheless, been ramping up, with the Broad Institute planning to analyze 1,000 samples a week. CPHD is continuing to conduct wastewater surveillance, and nine consecutive weeks of data indicate that Cambridge's wastewater counts are considerably lower than regional counts. While wastewater surveillance can be a helpful tool, CPHD explained that it's still a new technology that should be used in conjunction with other metrics.

[Click here](#) for CPHD's full update.

This item was placed on file.

2. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to new appointments and reappointments to the LGBTQ+ Commission effective February 1, 2021.

CMA 2021 #8

This communication announces new appointments to the LGBTQ+ Commission for the following members: Bill Barnert, Susan Bernstein, Jessica Daniels, Rachel Oppenheimer, Robert C. Bordone, Soltan A. Bryce, Lauryn A. McNair, Noelani C. Gabriel, Cameron Van Fossen, Kathryn D. Harrison and Warner Santiago.

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

3. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the supplemental appropriation of the FY20 Shannon Grant for \$10,231.68 received from the Metropolitan Mayors Coalition's Community Safety Initiative (CSI) through the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) to the Grant Fund Police Department Salary and Wages account (\$10,231.68) which will fund hotspot patrols, Metro Gang Task Force participation, and the Focused Deterrence program, and the Regional Youth/Police Dialogue Session.

CMA 2021 #9

This item was adopted.

4. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of the FY21 Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) STOP Grant in the amount of \$45,250, received from the Executive Office of Public Safety and Security (EOPSS) to the Grant Fund Police Department Salaries and Wages account (\$41,506.00) and to the Other Ordinary Maintenance account (\$3,744) which will be used to continue contracting with a civilian advocate to implement the Police Department's Trauma Informed approach to policing.

CMA 2021 #10

This funding is used to employ an assistant to Alyssa Donovan, CPD's current civilian advocate. Together, they do instrumental work in supporting victims of sexual violence, domestic abuse, and stalking by helping them navigate the criminal justice system and connecting them to resources to help them heal and escape dangerous situations. [Click here](#) to learn more about the critical work they do.

This item was adopted.

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5. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$5,717,250 from the Mitigation Stabilization Fund to the Public Investment Fund Department of Public Works Extraordinary Expenditures account. Funds were received from contributions to the East Cambridge Open Space Fund and will be used to fund the design and construction of three new parks in the East Cambridge/Kendall Square area; Timothy J. Toomey, Jr. Park, Triangle Park and Binney Street Park.

CMA 2021 #11

This item requests an appropriation to fund the design and construction of three new parks in East Cambridge. There has been an extensive community process in designing these parks to ensure they respond to residents' needs while adhering to sustainability guidelines. These parks are relatively expensive compared to others in surrounding municipalities, some areas also need remediation, as they're former landfill sites, increasing construction costs. The City has been willing to pay these increased costs to ensure our residents have additional open space to enjoy, in an area that desperately needs it. This item was adopted.

6. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the transfer of \$85,000 from the General Fund Employee Benefits (Insurance) Salary and Wages account to the General Fund Public Works Travel & Training (Judgment and Damages) account which will be used to cover medical bills and settlements for Public Works personnel injured in the course of their job.

CMA 2021 #12

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

7. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 19-142, regarding a report on determining the feasibility of expediting the demolition and rebuilding permitting process in the event of a natural disaster.

CMA 2021 #13

This communication responds to [a policy order](#) I filed in 2019, asking the City Manager to explore the feasibility of expediting the demolition and rebuilding permitting process in the event of a natural disaster. After a potentially traumatic event like a natural disaster, the City should ensure it's not placing an extra burden on victims who need to demolish and rebuild their homes with burdensome financial costs and long delays. This response explains that while the City can't waive all permit requirements in the event of a natural disaster, it can designate a specific point person to assist victims in the permitting process. Additionally, if a building is unsafe, the Commissioner of Inspectional Services can take emergency measures to protect public safety.

This item was placed on file on the consent agenda.

8. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-63, which requested a review of the granting of an extension for the 605 Concord Avenue project.

CMA 2021 #14

Councillor Nolan exercised her charter-right as she has some unanswered questions on this response.

Councillor Nolan exercised her charter-right.

9. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to a Planning Board recommendation to adopt with comments and suggested modifications, the Alewife Quadrangle Northwest Overlay District (Srinivasan, et al.) Zoning Petition.

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CMA 2021 #15

This communication contains the Planning Board's recommendation to adopt the Alewife Quadrangle Northwest Overlay District Zoning Petition with modifications. [Click here](#) to read the Planning Board's full recommendation.

This item was referred to the Ordinance Committee for further discussion on the consent agenda. The next Ordinance Committee hearing on this zoning petition is next Wednesday, February 10th at 5:30pm.

10. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$3,174,389 from Free Cash to the Mitigation Revenue Stabilization Fund which will be used to fund specific future projects, which will require separate individual appropriations by the City Council.

CMA 2021 #16

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

11. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$115,300 received in donations received from MIT Real Estate, Museum of Science, and CambridgeSide to the Public Investment Fund Community Development Department Extraordinary Expenses account which will be used for costs associated with the BlueBikes bikeshare system.

CMA 2021 #17

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

12. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of \$452,600 from the Mitigation Revenue Stabilization Fund received from various sources to the Public Investment Fund Community Development Extraordinary Expenditures account which will be used for the purchase and expenses of Bluebikes bikeshare equipment.

CMA 2021 #18

This item was adopted on the consent agenda.

13. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-56, regarding establishing a plan that will allow for greater outreach and technical assistance to women- and- minority-owned businesses and small businesses that have not yet received financial assistance to assess any future City funding.

CMA 2021 #19

This item was placed on file on the consent agenda.

14. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number Awaiting Report 19-75, regarding the feasibility of partnering with a local research institution to conduct a study that determines how many ridehail vehicles are on the roads during both on and off-peak times and their impacts on congestion and safety.

CMA 2021 #20

In 2019, I filed [a policy order](#) with former Councillor Kelley and former Vice Mayor Devereux asking the City to partner with a research institution to gather data from Transportation Network Companies (TNCs), like Uber and Lyft. TNCs are notoriously secretive about their data, especially with government entities that could be subject to public information requests, so working through a private research institution would grant an additional layer of privacy, and may help us build relationships with TNCs. This report back announces that the City has begun initial discussions with MIT to obtain this data, and asks what policy initiatives may come from this, to guide the data collected and analyses performed. Although it is difficult to ascertain what policies may come from data that hasn't been captured yet, I'm filing a communication for next week's agenda highlighting some of the data I hope we can gather on

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TNCs, to ensure any policies are data-driven. If this relationship with MIT and TNCs moves forward well, we may start seeing data in the next six to twelve months. As this pandemic has transformed the way we work, learn, and get around, I'm hopeful this analysis will include pre-pandemic data, and can continue past this public health crisis.

This item was placed on file.

15. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 19-151, regarding the feasibility of making Porter Square and Massachusetts Avenue between Roseland Street and Beech Street a quick-build complete street with bus priority.

CMA 2021 #21

This communication responds to [a policy order](#) filed in 2019 asking the City to make certain sections of Porter Square and Massachusetts Avenue a quick-build complete street with bus priority. The report explains that this section is covered under the Cycling Safety Ordinance that I co-sponsored, and will include two-way, separated bike lanes. The Traffic, Parking, and Transportation Department is currently working on hiring a consultant for this project, which is expected to start by early spring.

This item was placed on file.

II. CALENDAR

CHARTER RIGHT

1. That the City further investigate renting space from the New England school of English to house appropriate members of our unhoused community.

**CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR SIMMONS
IN COUNCIL JANUARY 11, 2021**

POR 2021 #13

This order originally came from a [Human Services and Veterans Committee hearing](#) held last November, and originally asked the City to investigate renting space from the New England School of English to use as non-congregate shelter space for homeless residents. Since that meeting, the State partnered with local non-profit Solutions at Work to run a shelter out of that space with around fifty rooms, but it's possible that the state will end their contract for the space in April. If that happens, the City would have to step in to fill in the resource gap left, so this order was amended to ask the City to investigate possible non-congregate shelter spaces in general. During discussion last week, Councillor Simmons exercised her charter-right to ensure she could discuss the matter with stakeholders. The Biden Administration has since announced that the federal government will reimburse municipalities 100% of the costs for non-congregate shelters through September, removing financial barriers, and that information was added to the order. There was a further amendment to ask the City to only investigate potential shelter spaces inside Cambridge, as the City wouldn't be able to provide emergency services to a shelter in a different municipality. I voted for this amendment as it seemed that the City Manager had been asked that question and already advised it was not possible. That motion failed and will go to the City Manager for a report back.

This order was adopted as amended.

ON THE TABLE

2. Resolution on the Death of William Leeds.

TABLED BY COUNCILLOR SIMMONS IN COUNCIL JANUARY 11, 2021

**CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR SIMMONS IN COUNCIL
JANUARY 4, 2021**

RES 2021 #5

No action was taken.

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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 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 Zoning Petition Has been received from Cambridge Redevelopment Authority regarding a Zoning Ordinance to reflect the proposed changes to the KSURP.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING IN COUNCIL JANUARY 11, 2021 TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER JANUARY 25, 2021

APP 2020 #35

Two years ago, Eversource announced plans to build an energy substation at 135 Fulkerson Street, across the Street from the Kennedy-Longfellow Elementary School, and in a residential neighborhood. City leadership, the neighborhood, and local businesses emphasized the need to move the planned substation to an alternative site. This zoning amendment would allow Eversource to instead build the substation underground where the Blue Street Garage, owned by Boston Properties, currently sits. The petition has received a favorable recommendation from the Planning Board, and this vote was the final step in ordaining it. This application was amended to include additional materials, including a letter of commitment with a timeline for implementing affordable housing ownership units, submitted by the petitioners, which can be found [here](#).

This item was ordained as amended.

6. That Chapter 2.78, Article III, Section 2.78.150 of the Cambridge Municipal Code, entitled “Definitions for Article III” be amended.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING IN COUNCIL DECEMBER 21, 2020 TO BE ORDAINED ON OR AFTER FEBRUARY 1, 2021

POR 2020 #297

This order contains two minor amendments to zoning definitions used in the Harvard Square Overlay District.

This item was ordained.

III. APPLICATIONS AND PETITIONS

1. A Zoning Petition Has been received from Carolyn Fuller - Ordinance #2021-2 Cambridge Missing Middle Housing Zoning Petition.

APP 2021 #3

This Missing Middle Housing Zoning Petition proposes ending the ban on multifamily housing and ending residential parking minimums. We took a procedural vote to refer the petition to the Ordinance Committee and the Planning Board for further conversation. There's also a related [joint Neighborhood and Long Term Planning Committee and Housing Committee Meeting](#) on the possibility of eliminating single-family only zoning scheduled for Tuesday, February 17th. [Click here](#) for more information on the Missing Middle Housing petition.

This application was referred to the Ordinance Committee and the Planning Board for hearing and report.

VI. POLICY ORDER AND RESOLUTION LIST

1. Spending Disparity Study PO
Vice Mayor Mallon, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Toomey, Councillor Nolan
POR 2021 #15

I filed this order with Councillors McGovern, Toomey, and Nolan to ask the City to conduct a spending disparity study on City purchasing with businesses owned by minorities, women, veterans, disabled persons, LGBTQ+ folks, and other historically disadvantaged groups. Boston's own spending disparity study uncovered that, of the \$664 million spent on contracts in 2018, just 1% went to minority and women-owned businesses, and conducting a similar study in Cambridge would provide clear, quantitative proof of any potential City purchasing disparities, and allow us to address those disparities in a data-driven way. With a total budget of over \$1 billion for the current fiscal year, the City infuses a lot of money into our local economy, and if we want to close gendered and racial wealth gaps, and address the pandemic's financial impacts on our small business community, we have to ensure that money is being distributed in an equitable way.

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

2. Policy Order re Establishing an On-Site Vaccination Program
Councillor Simmons, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Vice Mayor Mallon, Councillor McGovern
POR 2021 #16

This policy order came out of [a Housing Committee hearing held on January 12th](#), and was submitted as an order by itself, rather than in committee meeting minutes as policy orders from committee meetings typically are, to ensure it could be addressed as soon as possible, as there is usually some delay in preparing committee minutes. This order asks that CPHD works with local affordable housing providers to develop on-site vaccination plans for seniors and low-income residents. CPHD has already begun vaccinating residents and senior housing buildings, as we heard during the COVID update, and this order will help ensure we're ready to mass-vaccinate younger affordable housing residents efficiently.

This order was adopted.

3. Policy Order Re Documenting Affordable Housing CBO Developments
Councillor Simmons, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Zondervan
POR 2021 #17

This is another policy order that came out of the January 12th Housing Committee meeting. It asks the City Manager to work with our local affordable housing developers and the Community Development Department to update the City Council on upcoming affordable housing projects. As City Councillors, a major part of our job is to connect vulnerable residents with resources, and being updated on the progress of these affordable housing projects will ensure we're well-prepared to share these housing opportunities with residents.

This order was adopted.

4. Policy Order re Covid-19 Protocols at Affordable Housing Worksites
Councillor Simmons

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POR 2021 #18

This order asks the City to conduct random check-ins at public and private housing sites being renovated to ensure COVID safety protocols are being followed. Some residents in public housing have been reporting that construction personnel in their buildings haven't been following COVID safety protocols, and it's critical to ensure these guidelines are being met to protect both residents and construction workers.

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

5. That the Mayor be and hereby is requested to schedule a virtual Roundtable/Working Meeting for members of the City Council and School Committee for Tuesday, February 9, 2021 at 6:00 p.m. in the Henrietta Attles Meeting Room at the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School, 459 Broadway, begin discussions on a preliminary School Department budget for Fiscal Year 2022.

Mayor Siddiqui

POR 2021 #19

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

6. Policy Order re Renaming Fairmont Avenue

Councillor Simmons

POR 2021 #20

This order asks that Fairmont Avenue be renamed to avoid confusion with Fairmont Street.

Councillor Simmons exercised her charter-right.

7. Vaccinating CPS Staff Plan PO

Vice Mayor Mallon

POR 2021 #21

I filed this policy order to ask the City to develop a comprehensive plan to efficiently vaccinate CPS staff and educators when the time comes. We learned last week that teachers had been moved down the priority list for vaccination in the Commonwealth, and with an expansion of in-person learning slated to begin on March 1st, it's critical to ensure staff and students feel safe in our schools. Given that CPHD explained their planning for vaccinating CPS staff and the potential for a vaccination site for teachers during our COVID update, I asked for this order to be placed on the table.

This order was placed on the table.

8. Supporting the School Committee

Councillor Nolan, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Toomey, Councillor Simmons

POR 2021 #22

This resolution has the City Council go on record in support of the School Committee's decision to reopen schools for in-person learning for families who choose it. Balancing the needs of our students and their families with the needs of our educators and staff has been tricky, and I hope the School Committee will continue working to ensure our students and staff are being protected in our schools.

This order was adopted.

9. Eliminating Hostile Architecture

Councillor Zondervan, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor McGovern, Mayor Siddiqui

POR 2021 #23

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This order asks the City Manager to ensure hostile architecture is removed from our public spaces. Hostile architecture, like the bench bars that were recently placed in the Central and Harvard T stations, is a design strategy to intentionally make unhoused residents feel unwelcome, and as a City that prides itself on being welcoming to all, hostile architecture has no place here. As there are concerns about accessibility, as bench bars could, for example, help a senior get off a bench, I proposed an amendment that would engage the City's Department of Human Service Programs, the Council on Aging, and the Commission for Persons with Disabilities to ensure our public spaces address the needs of all community members. Given the late hour and the need to discuss the amendment, Councillor Nolan exercised her charter-right.

Councillor Nolan exercised her charter-right.

10. That the City Manager be and is hereby requested to direct city staff to work with the City's state and federal partners in support of decriminalizing all Entheogenic Plants and plant-based compounds
Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Zondervan, Councillor McGovern
POR 2021 #24

This order asks the City Manager to work with federal and state partners to advocate for the decriminalization of Entheogenic Plants and plant-based compounds. Entheogenic Plants include a wide variety of plants, fungi, and natural materials that can be used for medicinal purposes, and decriminalizing these substances is another step our community can take to mitigate the impacts of the War on Drugs on our black and brown residents, and treat substance abuse as a public health issue, rather than a criminal issue.

This order was adopted.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. Health & Environment Committee met on August 11, 2020 to discuss the Net Zero Action Plan FY20 progress report and to receive a general update on the plan including the upcoming 5-year review process

For more on the August 11th, 2020 Health & Environment Committee hearing, [click here](#).

This report was accepted and placed on file.

VIII. COMMUNICATIONS AND REPORTS FROM OTHER CITY OFFICERS

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

COF 2021 #6

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