



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CITY COUNCIL
AGENDA • MAY 3, 2021

Regular Meeting

Sullivan Chamber

5:30 PM

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

SUBMISSION OF THE RECORD

Minutes of the Regular City Council Meeting held on April 5, 2021 at 5:30 PM

These minutes were approved 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 a COVID-19 update.

CMA 2021 #94

City staff gave a COVID update.

Reopening Update: Last week, the City announced it [would be relaxing mask requirements](#) to allow residents to take off face coverings in public when outdoors, and when physical distancing can be maintained at all times. We'll also be advancing to Phase 4 Step 1 of the Commonwealth's reopening plan, and rescinding our additional requirements for gyms and fitness centers. The state will be advancing to Phase 4 Step 2 on May 10th, but Cambridge's more conservative approach to reopening has proved successful, as our case numbers remain low. I was also excited to hear that the Main Library Branch will be opening for limited in-person browsing on June 2nd by appointment only, which can be booked starting on May 26th. Our public libraries have been closed to the public for over a year, and considering our low case numbers and the invaluable role they play in our community, especially for kids, seniors, and those without ready access to books at home, I'm glad this resource will be available soon.

Vaccine Update: All Massachusetts residents aged 16+ are now eligible to be vaccinated, which is a safe, free, and effective way to protect yourself and your loved ones from COVID. [Click here to pre-register](#) to get vaccinated at a mass or regional site, [click here to find other appointments](#), or contact my office by emailing amallon@cambridgema.gov if you need help scheduling an appointment or finding transportation. 59% of Cambridge residents have received at least one dose, and 32% are fully vaccinated. Our community is seeing higher uptake rates among black, Latinx, and Asian residents than statewide averages, and in each age category.

As vaccines become more widely available, the City has [opportunities for residents to get vaccinated easily](#). On May 5th and May 6th, CambridgeSide is hosting a J&J vaccine clinic for anyone who lives or works in Cambridge, and Reservoir Church will host a vaccine clinic on May 7th, with no appointments or ID required for any of these options. The Metro-North Regional Vaccine Collaborative, which Cambridge has joined, has also received doses, and will be activating vaccine sites at Encore, Tufts University, and the Cambridge Health Alliance's Somerville campus. CPHD has administered nearly 5,900 doses at City-run clinics so far, and has vaccinated 104 homebound residents. As the City closes its [Homebound Vaccination Program](#), any homebound residents that haven't been reached yet can call 833-983-0485 to learn more about the state's companion program.

CPHD is continuing its multi-pronged communications campaign to educate residents on the safety and efficacy of the vaccine, and how they can access it. In addition to a City-wide robo-call that went out on Monday, May 3rd, they're also conducting outreach to Cambridge Public Schools caregivers and notifying City employees about vaccination opportunities. Outreach will also be targeted towards communities with low vaccine uptake rates as we learn more and gather more data, using social media, email blast, community forums in different languages, door-to-door efforts, and more.

Testing Update: The City is continuing to offer [free, daily COVID testing](#). Appointments are encouraged, but not required, and you can make yours [by clicking here](#) or calling 617-349- 9788. Nearly

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20,000 tests were administered through this program in the month of April, and while demand for testing has been falling since the beginning of the year, CPHD is committed to offering this program, as upcoming graduations and warmer weather invite gatherings.

Public Health Update: Cambridge's [COVID case count](#) currently stands at 6,148 cases, 9% of which are active. While cases seem to be decreasing, with a .44% positivity rate and a 7-day average of 7.2 daily cases, we've lost 122 community members to COVID, so it's critical that residents remain vigilant on practicing public health measures as we get closer to the new normal.

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

This item was placed on file.

2. Transmitting Communication from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appropriation of a Recycling Dividends Program Grant, received from, the Massachusetts Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in the amount of \$97,500, to the Grant Fund Public Works Other Ordinary Maintenance account which will be used for various City's recycling programs including carts for business and residential recycling.

CMA 2021 #95

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

3. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appointment of The Port Infrastructure Project Working Group, effective May 3, 2021 for a period of 12-15 months.

CMA 2021 #96

[Click here to learn more](#) about the Working Group members and their qualifications.

This item was placed on file.

4. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the appointment of the following persons as Public Weighers for the calendar year 2021 to operate scales at Boston Sand and Gravel, 118-R Industrial Park, Cambridge.

CMA 2021 #97

This item was placed on file.

5. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 21-25, regarding a report on monitoring drought conditions and an update on demand projections.

CMA 2021 #98

This communication outlines the steps that the Water Department is taking to monitor and address the risk of drought, and educate residents on water conservation techniques through mailers, social media engagement, and more.

This item was placed on file.

6. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-66, regarding a report on establishing a Black and Brown-Owned Business Task Force.

CMA 2021 #99

This communication responds to [a policy order](#) that Councillor Simmons, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Toomey, and I sponsored calling for the establishment of a Black and Brown-Owned

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Business Task Force. Small businesses owned by BIPOC residents are bearing the brunt of the pandemic, and we need additional insight into how the City can best support these small businesses, so I was glad to learn that the City will be creating a Cambridge BIPOC Business Advisory Committee to amplify these voices.

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

7. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to the FY2022 submitted budget and appropriation orders.

CMA 2021 #100

This communication includes the appropriation orders for the upcoming fiscal year, ahead of the budget hearings on [May 11th](#), [May 18th](#), and [May 20th](#), beginning at 9am each day. A hearing on just the School Department's budget will be on [May 19th](#) at 6pm. [Click here](#) to read the full appropriation orders.

This item was referred to the Finance Committee.

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II. CALENDAR

CHARTER RIGHT

1. That the City Manager is requested to present a plan to the City Council to increase the affordable homeownership stock over the next 10 years by financing the construction of affordable homeownership units through a bond issue of no less than \$500 million.

CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR SIMMONS IN COUNCIL APRIL 26, 2021

POR 2021 #83

This order originally asked the City Manager to commit to investing \$500 million to create affordable homeownership opportunities over the next ten years, with a preference for first-generation, first-time homebuyers who grew up in Cambridge. Last week, Councillor Simmons, a co-sponsor, exercised her charter-right (discussion ended, no vote was taken, and it appears on the next agenda) to give her time to work with stakeholders before introducing amendments this week. These amendments encompass the City Council's preference for affordable homeownership opportunities rather than rental, ensure this order won't impact the City's ability to borrow money at low interest rates, and maintain compliance with fair housing laws.

This order was adopted as amended.

2. That the City Manager is requested to work with the Cambridge Police Department to present a plan to the City Council for demilitarization, including the destruction and recycling of all rifles and shotguns, and elimination of the Lenco Bearcat.

CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR SIMMONS IN COUNCIL APRIL 26, 2021

POR 2021 #85

This order asks the City Manager to work with the Cambridge Police Department (CPD) to demilitarize CPD's inventory. Last week, Councillor Simmons exercised her charter-right before discussion began as she had concerns on the language's tone. This week, Councillor McGovern and Councillor Simmons introduced amendments to acknowledge the progressive steps that Police Commissioner Bard has taken to reduce police inventory and promote restorative justice, while recognizing that there is additional work to be done. As a committee hearing would present a valuable opportunity to discuss the police inventory at length, this order was amended to ask for a report on steps taken to address community concerns and reduce police inventory of weapons and other equipment, which will be sent to the Public Safety Committee.

This order was adopted as amended.

ON THE TABLE

3. A communication transmitted from Louis A. DePasquale, City Manager, relative to Awaiting Report Item Number 20-64, requesting Home Rule language to allow for acoustic live entertainment performances in small businesses under certain conditions without a license.

TABLED IN COUNCIL FEBRUARY 22, 2021

CMA 2021 #32

No action was taken.

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4. That the City Council shall have its own budget for outside legal research to be utilized at the discretion of the Council when designated by a majority of members in pursuance of the Council's authority to exercise the legislative powers of the City as specified in the City charter.

TABLED IN COUNCIL APRIL 26, 2021

POR 2021 #75

This order, in its amended form, asks the City Manager to include a line item for outside legal research in the Fiscal Year 2022 budget, as the City Manager has the sole authority to propose budget items. Shortly before discussion began last week, the City Solicitor prepared a memo (Calendar Item #5) arguing that City Councillors conferring with outside legal counsel would break the City's charter. Given unanswered questions, these items were tabled until this meeting. However, City Councillors already consult with outside lawyers in drafting policy, and this order simply asks that this process be formalized to increase transparency, and that the lawyers be paid for their work. As the legislative body, we also often ask the City Manager to create new City positions, and the City Solicitor's memo appears to misinterpret a section of the charter prohibiting the City Council from forcing the City Manager to remove appointees from their positions. When we work with lawyers, it's often to gain insight and get help drafting ordinances, which are the most direct tool we have to implement change in our community, so ensuring we have ready, formal access is an important part in moving towards our goals for Cambridge.

This order was adopted as amended.

5. A communication was received from City Solicitor, Nancy E. Glowa, transmitting Legal Opinion Regarding Request to Have Legal Resources Committed to Assist City Council with Legal Research and Drafting of Ordinances Pursuant to Orders Voted Upon in Public at Scheduled City Council Meetings.

TABLE IN COUNCIL APRIL 26, 2021

COF 2021 #40

See Calendar Item #4 for further discussion.

This item was placed on file.

UNFINISHED BUSINESS

6. 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.

7. A Zoning Petition Has been received from Amy Oliver, regarding that the City require the installation of GREEN ROOFS vegetated or BioSolar on future construction and significant rehab of buildings that are 20,000 square feet and larger.

PASSED TO A SECOND READING IN COUNCIL APRIL 12, 2021

APP 2020 #46

This petition, championed by local advocacy group Mothers Out Front, would amend the City's current [Green Roofs Ordinance](#) to require vegetative or biosolar roofs be installed on all future non-housing, non-municipal construction projects over 25,000 square feet. Non-affordable housing and

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municipal buildings would also have a solar-only option, while affordable housing would be exempted entirely. Councillor Nolan introduced amendments to clarify these uses and provide a broad definition of biosolar after hearing feedback from the Community Development Department, but I was disappointed to see this, and other previous amendments from Councillor Nolan, that would prevent all construction projects from having a solar-only option. Giving developers the most flexibility with these requirements will ensure they can choose the best option for their specific sites, and by excluding a solar-only option for most projects, we're losing out on a crucial opportunity for onsite renewable energy capture, which is one of the most effective ways to address the climate crisis head on. While I'm disappointed over this lost opportunity, this petition is a step forward towards achieving our environmental goals, and it was ordained as amended.

This petition was ordained as amended.

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III. APPLICATIONS AND PETITIONS

1. An application was received from Eric Grunebaum, for Friends of Jerry's Pond, requesting permission for two (2) temporary banners to be hung on one light pole in the Russell Field parking lot and the second pole left after the bus shelter announcing Historic Jerry's Pond on April 29, 2021 thru April 29, 2023.
APP 2021 #19

This application was approved on the consent agenda.

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VI. POLICY ORDER AND RESOLUTION LIST

1. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to ensure that additional funding for Housing Stability shall be made available throughout FY22 if the City Council advises that the need is present

Councillor Simmons, Councillor McGovern

POR 2021 #90

Housing is a key indicator for public health, but amid a pandemic that is upending housing stability as many residents struggle to make rent, the City needs to step up and do even more to support our community members. That's why this order asks the City Manager to increase funding for rental assistance, mediation services, and tenant legal assistance, to complement [other housing resources](#). This order was amended to add Mayor Siddiqui as a co-sponsor. Any residents who need housing help can contact the [Multiservice Center](#) for free assistance by calling 617-349-6340 or [submitting an inquiry here](#).

This order was adopted as amended.

2. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department, the Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation, and other relevant City and State departments to explore and implement strategies to enhance safety at the intersection of Memorial Drive and DeWolfe Street

Vice Mayor Mallon, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Nolan

POR 2021 #91

I filed this order with Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, and Councillor Nolan to call for safety improvements at the intersection of Memorial Drive and DeWolfe Street. This intersection has long posed a safety threat to pedestrians and cyclists, especially at night, and after [a pedestrian was seriously injured](#) at this intersection last week, we must act swiftly to protect vulnerable road users.

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

3. That the City Manager be and is hereby requested to work with Community Development and Traffic, Parking and Transportation to include an EV requirement in their review of development projects, including that a minimum of 25% of all parking spaces shall be EVSE-Installed, meaning a parking space equipped with functioning Level 2 Chargers, or the equivalent thereof must be provided, and that all parking spaces be EV-ready, meaning raceway to every parking space, adequate space in the electrical panel, and space for additional transformer capacity; the City approved EV Requirement Equivalent Calculator must be used if chargers other than Level 2 Chargers are installed

Councillor Nolan, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Carlone

POR 2021 #92

This order asks the City to require all new parking garages to set aside at least 25% of their parking spaces for electrical vehicle (EV) charging stations, and ensure that all other spaces are EV-ready. Although reducing car use is a key environmental goal, parking garages will continue to be built anyways, so this order will help ensure we're ready to accommodate electric vehicles while exploring other strategies for promoting sustainable transportation.

This order was adopted.

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4. That the City Manager hereby is requested to confer with the Director of the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department on parking solutions, such as the feasibility of implementing resident parking in this area and report back to the City Council.

Mayor Siddiqui

POR 2021 #93

Residents of the Finch Apartments have recently expressed concerns about the lack of residential parking near the intersection of Concord Avenue and Smith Place. This order responds to their concerns by asking the City to explore the feasibility of allowing Finch residents to park on Moulton Street.

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

5. That the Cambridge City Council goes on record in support of the Bathroom Bill of Rights being sponsored by Free to Flush

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

POR 2021 #94

Cambridge is home to many unhoused residents who lack safe, dignified access to bathrooms, a problem that has been exacerbated by this pandemic and its corresponding building closures. That's why this order has the City Council go on record in support of the Bathroom Bill of Rights, which [outlines clear ways](#) that bathrooms can be made more accessible for our homeless neighbors. The order also asks the City to work towards enacting these rights to ensure the basic needs of our vulnerable community members are being met.

This order was adopted on the consent agenda.

6. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the Community Development Department, the Affordable Housing Trust, and other relevant City departments to provide options to update the HomeBridge and Affordable Home Ownership Programs to better align with the City's values, and promote racial equity and socioeconomic justice

Vice Mayor Mallon, Mayor Siddiqui

POR 2021 #95

The City's [HomeBridge Program](#) and [Affordable Homeownership Resale Pool](#) serve as invaluable resources for our low and middle-income residents, helping them purchase affordable homes. In exchange, residents have to agree to stringent requirements, like just a 2% cap on equity, and not being able to pass the home down to their children. As we address the continuing impacts of racist housing policies, like redlining, that historically shut people of color out of homeownership opportunities, it's clear that these programs need to more closely focus on generational wealth-building, and closing the racial wealth gap. That's why I'm sponsored this policy order with Mayor Siddiqui supporting that these programs be re-imagined to better align with our community's goals of racial equity and socioeconomic justice. White residents benefitted from government programs in the 1950s, like the GI Bill, that made homeownership more accessible, and updating these programs will help ensure residents of color have these same wealth-building opportunities now. This is a crucial piece of the puzzle as we move towards greater housing stability by investing in affordable housing City-wide, so I was glad to see this order pass unanimously. This order was amended to reflect suggested verbiage changes from the Community Development Department, and to add Councillor Nolan as a co-sponsor.

This order was adopted as amended.

7. Free The Vaccine Resolution

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Councillor Zondervan, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Nolan
POR 2021 #96

Vaccines will serve as a critical tool in safeguarding public health and getting us closer to the new normal, but 75% of COVID vaccines globally have gone to just ten wealthy countries, while others scramble to hold on until 2023 for ready, widespread access. Accordingly, this resolution has the City Council go on record in support of an international waiver that would allow local manufacturing of the vaccine by pausing Pfizer and Moderna's intellectual property rights. Pre-existing racial and socioeconomic health disparities have only been exacerbated by COVID, and amid a global pandemic that has taken so many lives, we must put public health before profits.

This resolution was adopted.

8. That the City Manager be and is hereby requested to work with the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department to apply for the Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program and if grants are received to work with the community before implementation of a program

Councillor Nolan, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler
POR 2021 #97

This policy order calls for the City to apply for the state [Shared Streets and Spaces Grant Program](#) as part of the City's effort to re-imagine our public spaces. Last summer, a municipal parking lot was transformed into a place for people, with [Starlight Square](#) serving as a safe, outdoor venue for performances, dance classes, youth groups, and more, pivoting to host Popportunity and open-air farmers' markets during the winter. This has been an incredible opportunity for our residents that I've been proud to champion, and I hope we can continue finding creative ways to transform our streets, so this order was amended to add me as a co-sponsor.

This order was adopted as amended.

9. That the Cambridge City Council go on record standing in solidarity with the MNA nurses campaigning for fair contract negotiations with Cambridge Health Alliance

Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor Zondervan, Councillor McGovern
POR 2021 #98

This resolution has the City Council go on record standing in solidarity with the Massachusetts Nurses Association nurses advocating for a Cambridge Health Alliance (CHA) contract that reflects their invaluable service during this pandemic. It also urges CHA to begin good-faith negotiations with the nurses as soon as possible.

This order was adopted.

VII. COMMITTEE REPORTS

1. The Ordinance Committee met on December 9, 2021 to conduct a public hearing on the Cannabis Delivery-Only Zoning Ordinance petition.

This committee report contains minutes from [the December 9th, 2020 Ordinance Committee meeting on the Cannabis Delivery-Only Zoning petition](#). A [follow-up Ordinance Committee meeting](#) is scheduled for Wednesday, May 12th at 5:20pm.

This report was accepted and placed on file.

- A. That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to instruct the Community Development Department and the Law Department to report back to the council with recommendations pertaining to Cannabis delivery ordinance including but not limited to expanding the use beyond B1 and B2 zoning districts, zoning issues, parking requirements and special permits

POR 2021 #99

Councillor Simmons, Vice Mayor Mallon, Councillor Carlone, Councillor Sobrinho-Wheeler, Councillor McGovern, Councillor Nolan, Mayor Siddiqui, Councillor Zondervan

This order asks the Community Development Department and the Law Department to develop recommendations on the Cannabis Delivery-Only Zoning Ordinance and the best path forward for implementing this zoning change ahead of our next committee hearing.

This order was adopted.

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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 #41

This communication from Mayor Siddiqui serves as an update on the work she and the entire School Committee are doing to support scholars, CPS staff, and caregivers. [Click here](#) to read her full update.

This item was placed on file.

2. A communication was received from Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, transmitting charter assessment: review and reform.

COF 2021 #42

The City Council is in the process of exploring the possibility of reforming Cambridge's charter, the rules that form our government structure. [This memo from the Collins Center](#) for Public Management offers recommendations and next steps on this process.

This item was placed on file.

3. A communication was received from Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, transmitting questions for the COVID-19 update.

COF 2021 #43

This communication contains questions asked by City Councillors that were answered in the City Manager's COVID update (City Manager's Agenda Item #1).

This item was placed on file.

4. A communication was received from Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui and Councillor Quinton Zondervan, communicating information about helping India in this time of COVID-19 crisis.

COF 2021 #44

This letter lists organizations that residents can donate to in order to support India and its vulnerable residents as the country experiences a massive surge in COVID cases. [Click here](#) to see that list.

This item was placed on file.