



**UPCOMING MEETING DATES**

Saturday, November 18, 2017, Dorchester County Public Library (303 Gay St), 10:00 am

\*Saturday, January 20, 2018, Dorchester County Public Library (303 Gay St), 10:00 am

(\* Annual Business Meeting, including Board of Directors Election)

Saturday, March 10, 2018, Location To Be Determined, 10:00 am

Thursday, May 10, Location To Be Determined, 7:00 pm

Thursday, July 12, Location To Be Determined, 7:00 pm

Thursday, September 13, Location To Be Determined, 7:00 pm

Saturday, November 10, Location To Be Determined, 10:00 am

(Locations will be announced at least one week prior to the meeting)

**All CAN Board meetings are open to the public. Everyone interested in CAN is invited to attend.**

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**CAN’s Website** – <https://cambridgecan.org>

**CAN on FaceBook** – <https://www.facebook.com/CambridgeAssociationofNeighborhoods/>

**Contact CAN** – [CambridgeCAN@yahoo.com](mailto:CambridgeCAN@yahoo.com)

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE – CAN IS MOVING FORWARD

CAN is moving forward and that's great! Here is a list of recent accomplishments.

1. We have reached out to different City Wards with door hangers and clean up projects. Michelle Barnes, our Membership Director, is organizing more outreach efforts in the near future to cover all the Wards in the City.
2. Judd Vickers organized a clean up effort around the City's fishing pier and had the help of 14 CAN volunteers.
3. Cindy Smith organized a porch painting effort on West End Ave. that helped out a neighbor and increased the visual appeal of our neighborhood.
4. CAN supported the City's efforts in enforcing housing codes when 20 members showed up (for 4 hours) at a Zoning Appeals Board meeting. Several of our members spoke armed with the research prepared by our Housing Quality Committee especially Judd, Frank Cooke, Susan Morgan, and Gregg Boss.
5. CAN also produced, through the efforts of Fred Patrick-Phillips, a very classy looking "Trash Survey" which received almost 100 responses. The survey is important for two reasons. First, the CAN Board wants to know what the members think on major issues, not just what the Board thinks. The survey system is our way of getting your input on issues. The Second reason is that it helps the City and the City Council members know where the citizens stand. CAN will be forwarding the results to the City and will try to get their ear.
6. Brooks Bridges, Fred Phillips-Patrick, and Tom Puglisi are working to update our WEB site – stay tuned!
7. The Choptank Ave Block Captains to decorated a Christmas tree at Pleasant Day Adult Day Care.
8. The Belvedere Block Captains are having a brunch social to get that neighborhood together again.

As you can see many people were involved in accomplishing these efforts and we want to thank them! We also want to encourage all the members of CAN to get involved. Whether you have a lot of time or just a little to volunteer, we need your help to make this Civic Association a success. Contact me, or any Board member, if you want to volunteer in any of our efforts. Thanks,

— Chuck McFadden, President, CAN

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Temporary  
**Bridge Closure**

Maryland Ave. over Cambridge Creek

**Monday, December 4**

through

**Friday, December 8**

The Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) will close the Maryland Avenue drawbridge to vehicle traffic during the above time period. This closure is necessary for bridge repairs. Marine traffic should not be impacted by this work as the bridge will be locked upright. Motorists and pedestrians can detour via Cedar Street.



For additional information contact Bob Rager, MDOT SHA  
Community Liaison, [rrager@sha.state.md.us](mailto:rrager@sha.state.md.us), 443-463-3768

**CAN SURVEY RESULTS – THE NEW CAMBRIDGE HOUSEHOLD WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE**

This survey, designed by Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods (CAN), was recently circulated to the CAN membership and to other non-CAN residents of Cambridge. It seeks to assess how well the new household trash collection service provided by Chesapeake Waste is going, and asks for input on ways in which it might be improved.

**Survey Results**

As of November 6, 2017, we have received a total of 93 responses to the nine questions posed. The results are as follows:

**Q1. In an effort to become more efficient and cost effective, the City contracted with Chesapeake Waste (CW) to collect household waste starting July 1. The three-year contract included collection on the same schedule as before (twice weekly), with one 96-gallon tote provided to each residence, and collection of only what would fit in that one tote. On a scale of 1 (not satisfied) to 5 (completely satisfied), how would you rate the new service?**

1 - Not Satisfied	2 - Needs improvement	3 - Okay	4 - Better	5 - Completely Satisfied	Total
7	13	32	17	24	93
7.53%	13.98%	34.41%	18.28%	25.81%	

**Q2. Given that you are limited to one tote, is the provided 96-gallon tote too large, too small, or about the right size for your twice-weekly trash collection needs?**

Way too small	Too small	Just right	Too big	Way too big	Total
0	9	44	29	10	92
0.00%	9.78%	47.83%	31.52%	10.87%	

**Q3. Is the provided 96-gallon tote a manageable size for you to handle?**

No problem	Difficult but manageable	A smaller tote would be better for me, even if I am limited to just one tote	Total
49	30	10	89
55.06%	33.71%	11.24%	

**Q4. Should you be required to remove your tote from street view when it's not being collected?**

Yes, it should be required –	No, it's not a problem –	Total –
70	22	92
76.09%	23.91%	

**Q5. Are you aware that you can ask the city to pick-up bulk items that won't fit in the tote? Bulk Trash Collection is provided by appointment only. To schedule an appointment, contact the Dept. of Public Works at 410-228-1955, Monday - Friday, 8:00 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. Bulk Trash will be collected on**

Wednesday's except for the last Wednesday of the month, for those residents who have scheduled an appointment.

I didn't know that. Thanks for the information.	I was aware of that	Total
16	77	93
17.20%	82.80%	

Q6. The following questions concern possible changes in the collection service. Would you consider making one of the twice-weekly collections for household waste and the other for recycling? There would be no change in cost to you. The same tote would be used, so you would have to separate the material during the week and then transfer it to the provided tote on the appropriate pick-up day.

No. I need twice-weekly household waste collection.	Yes. Separating household work for me on a weekly basis.	Total
29	60	89
32.58%	67.42%	

Q7. If one of the weekly pick-ups for recycling wouldn't work for you, should the City provide a recycling collection service, with additional pick-ups twice a month? If yes, at most, how much would you be willing to pay a month for this additional service?

No	Yes, but only if it is less than \$5 a month	Yes, but only if it is less than \$10 a month	Yes, but only if it is less than \$15 a month –	Yes, but only if it is less than \$20 a month	Total
31	19	20	9	14	93
33.33%	20.43%	21.51%	9.68%	15.05%	

Q8. Should you be able to exchange your 96-gallon tote for a smaller one, knowing that you are limited to what will fit in that one tote?

Yes –	No –	Total –
76	15	91
83.52%	16.48%	

Q9. Comments:

- There are lots of elderly neighbors on my street that really can't handle the big totes -- and that are not "computer" proficient that you will not hear from with this survey! They are not happy with the giant trashcans and as a neighbor who helps them - me either!
- I have two concerns. First, the City chose to fix something that I didn't think was broken, and increased the cost of the service by \$3.00 per month. I am not sure how this works - raising the fee while saying they are doing this to save money. Second, I am concerned for the safety of the men working on the trucks. They do not wear safety equipment while working in the streets among traffic. I don't see any sort of a personnel safety program. Further, I hear these men receive low pay and have no employment benefits. I think the City made a "bargain with the devil" in this change of services.
- We really need some kind of recycling pick up. We also need some kind of yard waste pick up plus composting program.

- All of these years one of the best things Cambridge had going for it was a really good garbage collection. The only problem was the people who would not put the garbage can out of sight Now that is just larger with advertising. We DO need recycling!
- I am mostly happy with the service, except for bulk pick up. It often requires multiple calls and multiple weeks before pick up actually happens. They are nice re scheduling but unreliable.
- These giant bins are pretty darn ugly, but the uniformity of service, equipment and truck containment of its contents is a definite improvement.
- I am assuming the recycling would be sorted by Chesapeake Waste. I would like to know more about how that could be done. I am currently sorting my own and taking it to the recycling location on Siding Road in Cambridge.
- Please add recycling!
- I voluntarily recycle glass, plastic, cardboard, paper, and newspaper at the recycling station on Chesapeake Rd. about every 2 weeks. Would all of the recyclables go into one bin unsorted if the city picked up?
- Great service. See evidence of less trash after pick up in neighborhood.
- Not having yard waste picked up on 2 regular days is inconvenient When the City is called to come they rarely make it on the designated day and 3 Wednesdays a month is unacceptable Ches Waste should pick up bagged yard waste the same days they empty the totes!! We are getting less service and more inconvenience and cost under this new plan!
- Since there is a tote out on the street almost every day, I feel like the City is a billboard for Chesapeake Waste--what is the purpose of the name and number on every tote? Could it have just read, "CW," for identification purposes?
- We're pleased with the service and have no issues with the change. We would like to have a recycling pickup, also.
- The old system was better.
- Twice weekly is too often. Bins are too large to clean effectively and are hard to move. More things to recycle would help. Since I compost, almost all my trash is plastic of one sort or another--all not recyclable.
- The trucks that come don't always have a working lift claw mechanism. This makes the employees lift these huge full cans themselves. I have heard they are paid not as employees and the hourly rate is low or maybe its a daily rate even any truth to the rumor? Their lift mechanism is antiquated. There are trucks that have the lifts that pick up the can all by itself from the sidewalk. So only requires a drive and maybe a sidekick if the can is not placed correctly. There is more trash on the ground now than ever was with city employees (I know some are the same). I am sure it is because the cans are so huge and life isn't always working. I like the uniformity. But folks put their bulk stuff out all week until collected. Not sure that part is working as well as the city planned.
- Thank you for the opportunity to answer these very specific questions. To me, you covered all the bases of my concerns. Thanks especially for opening up the possibility of curbside recycling. That would be great for Cambridge.
- When the trash is collected when it's raining, the lid is left open---therefore, leaving water in the bottom of the tote. I'm unable to empty the water due to a bad back and my age.
- Recycling would be very useful. I currently drive recycling to either the Cambridge center or others in neighboring Talbot County. Not sure if using the same can would work for both trash and recycling, I would probably at least want a bin or another can. With curbside pickup for household recycling, there

is the possibility to convert the current center into a recycling site for unusual items (e.g. Styrofoam, motor oil, batteries etc.).

- Please stop putting the can in the drive way after emptying
- Curbside recycling would be an extreme improvement to our current waste disposal system
- WE NEED RECYCLING! Too few drop off locations in Cambridge - we should have recycling pick up in neighborhoods. Thank you for your work!
- If recyclable material was separated out from the garbage, there would be no need for twice/week garbage pickup, which would result in an overall savings. Please assess other neighboring communities to see how they include curbside recycling as an alternative to more frequent garbage pickups. The City doesn't have to do this all on their own. To be a successful recycling community, have the City partner with local community and non-profit groups to provide education on proper recycling techniques.
- I am not at all happy with this new service.... I prefer the old way as we had our wonderful trash men that picked up the cans and emptied them totally. With this service they only grab the bag out of the container and leave anything else that has been thrown in by someone else in the bottom of the can.... this is hard for me as I am a senior citizen and these big cans are too hard for me to turn upside down. Then with the yard waste, I have had problems with them coming to pick it up.....the old way was best, in my opinion.
- Thank you for considering recycling!! and providing some options for how to do it - awesome!!
- The new Trash service does not dump my tote, they reach in and take out any large bags inside leaving me with the dog waste and small yard waste. I am paying for them to empty my trash - all of it.
- Would like another tote.
- With regard to #8, If the homeowner could only place garbage bags in the smaller can, that would be ok since the trash collectors pull those bags out of the can rather than using the lift. If the lift had to be used the larger can is the only size that fits the truck and lifting it by hand could cause injury to the workers.
- Our trash is collected on Mondays and during holidays we do not have trash collection. We need two collections a week due to increased trash. Can the Monday trash collection be reinstated even during the Monday holidays?
- I would like curb side pickup of recycling but it needs to be in a separate container than I currently use for my trash. That way I can sort the recycling without handling it twice. I can provide my own container if needed.
- We would like to return one of the totes on our property, and have been told there is no way to return it to the city
- The requested bulk pick process is very unreliable. Rarely do they pick up when you are told they will. You messed up big time changing garbage collection process. Surely the \$ saved does not contribute significantly to the bottom line of the city budget. Very short-sighted decision.
- The whole idea of the kind of containers we have been issued is that they fit nicely onto the autoloaders on the trucks -- meaning that NO ONE IS REQUIRED TO LIFT THEM!!! That is not what is happening. Instead these men who collect the trash are lifting them manually into the truck. This means that in ten to fifteen years (if that) these men will be physical wrecks and dumped on the rest of us to support through disability and unemployment payments. This is false economy -- and from the perspective of a taxpayer --- just PLAIN STUPID!!!! Ironically those who complain the most about the high cost of social services are the very ones foisting this false economy on us! I do not object in principle to outsourcing trash collection. But we should insist the contractors pay proper wages, provide proper benefits, and use machinery that is commiserate with the task. Anything less is completely irresponsible!

- The tote is so deep I can't reach in it. Sometimes garbage is left in the can if they just take a bag out instead of dumping the whole tote
- We have called for bulk pick-up a number of weeks ago, but it was not picked up and we had to deal with it in other ways, as well as have the stuff on the street for a few days while waiting. We are generally satisfied with the new system, although the large containers are somewhat difficult to store and move.
- I don't really care about the last question, but you forced an answer.
- separating recyclables would be very difficult in the 96-gal bin. I guess separate containers would be required, what would they look like?
- Certain folks would need a smaller tote.
- Bulk trash is a real problem I had to wait 3 almost three weeks for a rug to be picked up
- My preference would be for 1x/trash, 1x/recycling, per week, with separate containers. For part time residents, using the same container for both, would not work.
- The bulk trash collection has not been responsive to requests. They need call reminders. Sometimes they do not answer the phone.
- I HAVE REQUESTED SEVERAL TIMES A SMALLER TOTE. THE ONE YOU PROVIDED IS TOO LARGE AND HEAVY FOR ME TO MANAGE! Questions 6 & 7 require an explanation. On "recycle" pick up day where do I place my regular trash? You should provide a small separate bin for recycling. I am glad you are surveying! Thank you.
- More than likely some households could use a smaller tote as they do not generate as much trash. Definitely need them off the streets after collection.
- Often trash is left in the bottom of the tote. It seems the trash has to be a bag to be picked up, but the bag has to be in the tote!
- One trash pickup a week is enough for me. I would like single-stream recycling pick up the other day of the week, but using a different container with a different color.
- I have needed to schedule for a heavy pick and I the soonest pickup was 3 weeks in advance. This is not practical nor should it be acceptable considering we have less service at a higher cost.
- Would very much like to have a recycling option
- Appointment sys for bulk trash and yard waste doesn't work efficiently; I have been missed twice even after making appointments. I needed to make 3 calls over 2 weeks to get one load picked up.
- Recycling would be great! Removing from street view would be better but not practical /easy for everyone.
- Still evaluating the service. The uniform garbage totes are much better that the rag-tag cans that we had before, and there seems to be less overfill getting all over the streets. Need to make sure to use a truck that will actually pick up the totes vs the guys having to heft the larger and heavier totes. Have seen them taking garbage out of the cans so that they can lift them (!)
- The 96-gallon totes with large white waste company letters are hard to hide.
- We really need some kind of recycling pick up. We also need some kind of yard waste pick up plus composting program. Oak Park IL has such a program and it's great
- Curbside recycling saves landfills! We have curbside recycling at our house on the western shore, and our recycling volume is 3 to 4 times larger than our regular garbage volume.
- The city trash collection was much better than the current... I've had to complain several times: not all trash emptied (they want you to put all items in a trash bag inside so they only have to remove the bags inside), lids left open... The totes are very large, heavy and cumbersome. Recycling is a MUST in this day and age.



- Often, there is trash left in the bottom of the container. It seems they don't use the lift much to empty the container, just grabbing the bags that are in there.
- There are lots of elderly neighbors on my street that really can't handle the big totes -- and that are not "computer" proficient that you will not hear from with this survey! They are not happy with the giant trashcans and as a neighbor who helps them - me either!
- I am impressed by the high-quality service the pickup people are delivering. They are careful to leave no trash behind.
- Thanks to CAN for putting this survey together. I believe compostable yard waste should be collected on an as-needed basis and the material taken to a facility where it could be made into mulch or soil.
- Regarding a second pick up that would be for recycling. We actually do not need twice weekly trash pickup. And we would like the second pickup to be for recycling (choice selected) But, trying to keep recycled material separate from trash, having to use the same container for both, would be tough to do; i.e., Where do I put my trash the day I use the container for recycling? If I unload the trash bags from container and leave them in the yard for the day, I may have a varmint problem!
- I support recycling. But based on my experience using the recycling bins behind Wal-Mart (and elsewhere), would people understand what can be recycled? Another issue: I suspect neighbors (Oakley Street) take advantage of dumpsters that they are not entitled to use.
- I would prefer a separate bin for recycling instead of the same one for both. The idea to expect people to alternate uses of a single bin will surely discourage recycling!
- we are completely pleased, always have lots to throw away and we cannot imagine complaints with such an improvement, and LOVE the size of the container. The employees are wonderful and good at their jobs! We love that it wheels back and forth, which makes it completely convenient, before we had to DRAG our full cans, in and out, and when the winds came you would have to chase the cans, down the street, or go for an expedition trying to find it. If you were fortunate enough, one of your neighbors would find it before it got hit by a car. These totes are heavy enough that the wind cannot manage to send it rolling to Water Street. The recent last wind storm is proof of that! It managed to tear down tree limbs, but our trusty tote was steadfast! Love it!
- So far, so good. But a little unclear on fitting items such as tree branch bundles into regular pick-up vs. needing to call for special pick-up.
- I have complained to both the Contractor and city, These folks have no respect for folks property, are careless drivers, are sloppy We had great trash service with the City , the crews were tidy, respectful and did a great job, can't the City just fire this contractor and go back to our terrific crews we had? They certainly have been a disappointment And Oddie (?) never returns phone calls.
- A neighbor told me that you can call the city to pick up yard waste if it doesn't fit in the tote. I never considered yard waste as bulk trash. This could be made clearer on the city website or wherever there's info about trash collection. It would be also nice to see the Chesapeake Waste employees wear reflective vests for their own safety, especially when they're working in the dark.
- I am ok right now with the new totes, but winter when it is slippery underfoot will be impossible... as is moving the totes around in winter. I would need to have a pickup from where the tote is stored in deep winter - especially if the tote is placed where it is not visible from the road. Also... you raised price on regular service... I would not pay more for recycling as my income is very very small and fixed. I have to count every penny.
- Living in an apartment downtown, we never received a tote.



## COMMUNITY REMINDER REGARDING TRASH COLLECTION PROCEDURES

To make our neighborhoods more attractive and safe for all, please cooperate with these guidelines and encourage your neighbors to do likewise. Thank you!

City ordinance NO. 812 was enacted in 1995 "to remedy the neighborhood nuisance kind of problems associated with trash being set out far in advance of pickup and/or emptied containers being left out long after pickup."

1. Trash is not to be placed at curbside prior to 5:00 p.m. the day preceding the scheduled collection day.
2. Emptied trash bins are to be removed from curbside as soon after collection as possible, no later than 9:00 AM the day following the scheduled collection.

Additional procedures in place since the City of Cambridge contracted with Chesapeake Waste Industries, LLC, to provide for household trash collection in July of this year.

1. Household trash will only be collected in the 96 gallon tote provided to each household by Chesapeake Waste Industries. Collection is still twice a week on the same pick up days in effect prior to July, 2017, but each collection is limited to the one 96 gallon tote provided. Additional trash in other receptacles and/or bags will not be collected and should not be curbside on regular collection days. (See below.)
2. Bulky trash items that will not fit in the provided tote will be collected by City staff every Wednesday of the month except the last Wednesday of the month BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. To schedule an appointment for a Wednesday bulky trash pick-up, contact the Dept of Public Works at [410-228-1955](tel:410-228-1955).
3. Metal Bulk item pickup will be scheduled with the Dept of Public Works on the last Wednesday of every month, also BY APPOINTMENT ONLY. Call [410-228-1955](tel:410-228-1955) to schedule an appointment.
4. Bulky trash items and metal bulk items for pick up must be set out at curbside by 6 a.m. on the arranged collection Wednesday, but NOT EARLIER THAN 6 p.m. the Tuesday night before your scheduled collection on Wednesday.

If you have any questions regarding the special Wednesday pick-ups of bulky trash and/or metal bulk, please don't hesitate to contact the Department of Public Works at [410-228-1955](tel:410-228-1955). For questions or concerns regarding regular residential household trash collection, please contact Chesapeake Waste directly at [1-866-742-4557](tel:1-866-742-4557) or [410-742-0099](tel:410-742-0099).

A note: Some residents have had difficulty dealing with the size of the 96 gallon tote provided by Chesapeake Waste. Chesapeake Waste is aware of this concern and will be discussing *the possibility* of providing a smaller alternative tote for those residents.

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## CAN's MISSION

The Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods (CAN) fosters neighborhood cohesion and community involvement to (a) enhance the quality of community life for all residents of Cambridge through community events, social activities, and neighborly assistance; and (b) protect and enhance the value of properties in Cambridge by improving building and zoning codes, supporting adherence to those codes, and engaging constructively with City Government, including the Historic Preservation Commission.

CAN engages the Cambridge Community by encouraging the development of self-identified neighborhood “blocks” through which members both (a) address their own neighborhood-specific concerns (e.g., individual neighbors needing assistance/support), and (b) leverage the combined energy and influence of CAN to advance common goals (e.g., zoning standards and enforcement).

CAN is committed to transparency. Timely notification is provided to all CAN members of the Annual membership meeting, special membership meetings, and meetings of the Board of Directors. All meetings of the Board of Directors are open to the entire membership. Meeting minutes are posted to the CAN website in a timely fashion. Financial audits will be conducted annually and posted to the website.

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## CAN MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION

CAN welcomes members from **any and all Cambridge neighborhoods** who are interested in organizing and working together, building a diverse membership reflecting the diversity of Cambridge residents.

**Individual Membership.** Any person at least 18 years of age residing within or owning property within the limits of Cambridge is eligible for individual membership in CAN (thus including full time residents, part time residents, property owners, and renters). **Organizational Membership.** Any business or other entity located within the city limits of Cambridge that is interested in fostering CAN’s goals is eligible for organizational membership. **Dues.** Annual membership dues for both individuals and organizations are currently set at \$20. Dues are reviewed annually by the CAN Board of Directors and may be modified based on CAN’s financial needs. The Board of Directors also welcomes proposals (e.g., volunteer work) to reduce dues for low-income individuals and non-profit organizations interested in membership.

Additional membership information is available on the CAN website at <http://cambridgecan.org/join-can>

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## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION (HPC) UPDATE

Good news on the Historic Preservation Commission front! After a three-month vacancy in the staff position supporting the HPC, the city has ungraded the position from assistant to Planner 1 and hired a new employee. Herve (rhymes with "survey") O. Hamon, A.I.C.P., R.A., LEED AP is a certified planner and registered architect, and brings with him an international perspective from his professional activities in Paris, France as well as practicing architecture in New England. HPC can now get back on track with it's ambitious improvement plan.

An important process in preserving and improving our historic district, and our appeal as a destination and place of residence, is to ensure that the city historic and building codes are enforced. There is an apparent increase in applicants filing for historic and building permits *after* they have completed renovations and someone reports them. This makes it difficult for the HPC to recommend improvements in historical accuracy unless the renovation design is egregious and forces a removal or modification to the completed work. Furthermore, the offenders are rarely fined, which simply encourages neighbors to follow suite. The city thus far has refused to fill the position of a second code enforcement officer, despite having a large budget surplus. The current enforcement officer stays busy writing violations for residents not maintaining their lawns to a proper height.

The second good news is the city has finally received grant money for an update to our historic guidelines, which is the source of all decision-making by the HPC. The current guidelines are twenty years old, and are silent on issues such as solar panels and outbuildings and have not kept pace with the development of modern replacement materials. An attempt to re-write our guidelines with internal resources three years ago was not successful. The contract for updating our guidelines was given to David H. Gleason Associates Inc. Architects in Baltimore. Staff and HPC had their first working session with Richard Wagner, AIA from Gleason on October 23rd. To allow for public input and city council, the target release date for the new guidelines in July, 2018. Mr. Wagner has many years of experience in the field including writing historic guidelines for many cities and towns. More on guidelines as the process unfolds.

-- Sharon Smith, Vice Chair, Cambridge Historic Preservation Commission and CAN Board Member

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### CAN NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – CAN NEEDS NEIGHBORHOOD VOLUNTEERS

CAN is still in need of a **VOLUNTEER** to **CHAIR** the **Neighborhood Development Committee**, as well as volunteer **“BLOCK CAPTAINS”** so we can reach **every neighborhood in Cambridge**.

**Neighborhoods** are the heart and soul of CAN. Neighborhood **“Blocks”** are loosely defined to meet the needs of each **self-identified neighborhood group** – The “Block” is defined by those neighbors willing to work together to address neighborhood concerns. **“Block Captains”** organize activities through which people get to know their neighbors, identify concerns, and work together to address those concerns.

Please contact Chuck McFadden at [Ragtime31@gmail.com](mailto:Ragtime31@gmail.com) or [CambridgeCAN@yahoo.com](mailto:CambridgeCAN@yahoo.com) to volunteer.

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### CAN NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – CHOPTANK AVENUE NEIGHBORHOOD

Choptank Ave Neighborhood crew consisting of Kay Klepfer, Linda Starling, and Martha Phillips-Patrick recently decorated a Christmas tree for Pleasant Day Medical Adult Day Care Center.



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### CAN HOUSING QUALITY COMMITTEE — FAVORABLE DECISION BY THE BOARD OF ZONING APPEALS

Almost 20 CAN members attended the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting on October 24th to support the City's determination that 203 Choptank Avenue should be returned to conforming use as a single family home. It was a very busy agenda and 203 Choptank Avenue was the last item. As a result, members waited

almost four hours to voice their concerns. The Board of Appeals voted unanimously (one recusal) to uphold the City's determination and ruled the property must be returned to conforming, single family use.

Background: 203 Choptank was constructed and occupied as a single-family dwelling and later converted to a two-family dwelling. A house converted to a two-family apartment style dwelling is a non-conforming use, under the current zoning ordinance. The two-family use ceased for a number of years and the property was vacant. The lapse in use requires that the property return to conforming use as a single-family dwelling. The new owner was appealing the City's decision that requires 203 Choptank to be brought back into conformance as a single-family dwelling.

The Housing Quality Committee continues to monitor non-conforming uses throughout our neighborhoods, and to monitor meetings of the Policy and Planning Committee. Notes on these meetings are available on the CAN website at <https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/p-and-z/>.

– Judd Vickers, Chair, CAN Housing Quality Committee

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## CAN HOUSING QUALITY COMMITTEE – PLANNING & ZONING MEETING NOTES - OCTOBER 3, 2017

### New Business:

- PZ 2018-005 Concept plan discussed for a Church at the corner of Greenwood and Cosby Avenue. Changes to landscape, driveway and building location on parcel suggested.
- PZ 2018-006 Commission deferred a Special Exception request to place a “food cart” on a vacant lot at 647 Washington Street. Food cart/trailer would be permitted as seasonal sales (6 months of the year) and operate 7 days per week, March – Sept, 9am to 8pm. Deferred pending health department requirements and how to address restroom (or lack thereof) issue on the site.
- PZ 2018-007 Concept plan presented and discussed for an AutoZone store to be built on the site currently occupied by Pizza Palace, which would be demolished. Commission took a positive, but strong stand that AutoZone should improve architectural appearance above and beyond the “corporate” standard. Representative supportive of requested changes and upgrades to exterior appearance. Parking configuration and circulation to be changed.
- PZ 2018-013 Commission recommended and referred to the Board of Appeals a Special Exception for a Solar Use on the 319 acre Egypt Road site, together with approval for a substation off Bayly Road and the connecting electric line. The property is currently comprised of 675 +/- subdivided single family lots (without subdivision infrastructure). Utility scale solar array would generate 50 +/- megawatts. Commission remains concerned on screening and request by applicant to eliminate the berm requirements. Applicant to return with landscaping/buffer plan for approval. Public Service Commission hearing on October 12.

### Discussion Items:

- Dollar General – Wants to construct a store on 1 acre of a 15 acre commercial zoned parcel located near the intersection of Maple Dam Road and Rt. 16 (Cambridge Beltway). Commission encouraged applicant to return with a plan for the entire commercial zoned parcel, access, etc. before approval would be considered.
- City to review/adopt septic tier map, working in conjunction with Tracey Gordy with the MD Dept. of

Planning.

- Training available for public bodies re closed sessions. Not typically an issue with the Planning Commission, however 2 members will take training.
- Drug Rehab facilities are currently not defined in the UDC and have often been accommodated within a medical office classification. Commission agreed that a definition should be adopted with use guidelines.
- Commission approved flagpole height @ Cambridge Marketplace to be raised from 35' to 40'.

– Judd Vickers, Chair, CAN Housing Quality Committee

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## CAN BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING MINUTES (September 14, 2017 – Open to the Public)

**Board Members Present:** Chuck McFadden (President), Judd Vickers (Vice President), Mary Ellen Jesien (Treasurer), Michelle Barnes (Membership Director), Tom Puglisi (Secretary), Jackie Vickers, Roman Jesien, Frank Cooke, and Dave Thatcher, constituting a Quorum of the Board under Bylaws Section 11 (nine of ten members being present)

**Board Members Absent:** Sharon Smith

- 1. Welcome and Approval of Minutes.** CAN President Chuck McFadden opened the meeting at 7:00 pm by welcoming the members of the Board, as well as approximately 20 members of the public in attendance. Chuck indicated that Cindy Smith is looking for volunteers for the community jazz event tomorrow and Judd Vickers needs volunteers for the Community Cleanup on Sept 30. Chuck introduced the minutes of the July 27, 2017 meeting, which were distributed via email earlier this week. It was moved and seconded that the Board approve the July 27 minutes as distributed, and the motion was approved by a 9-0 vote of Board members present.
- 2. Treasurer's Report.** CAN Treasurer Mary Ellen Jesien reported that CAN now has a total of 70 members and 48 others have expressed interest in joining. Mary Ellen will send CAN postcards to the 48 persons who have not yet formally joined.
- 3. Code Enforcement.** CAN President Chuck McFadden stated that he has recently learned that the City of Cambridge performs no proactive code enforcement. He expressed concern that most Cambridge residents may not be aware that code enforcement in Cambridge is almost entirely driven by individual citizen complaints, and that the preferred method for registering complaints and concerns is through the City website's new "COMCATE" system, which ensures that citizen concerns are systematically recorded, tracked, and resolved. Chuck then introduced City Council Commissioner Steve Rideout to describe the City's current code enforcement practices.
- 4. Commissioner Rideout.** Stressing that CAN represents an embodiment of the kind of community involvement that is critical to the growth of Cambridge as a viable city, Commissioner Rideout encouraged CAN to intensify its efforts to recruit and engage residents from all neighborhoods throughout Cambridge.

**City Advisory Council.** Before addressing code enforcement, Commissioner Rideout briefly summarized his attempts and those of Commissioner Hanson to activate the “Citizens’ Advisory Committee” (which had been authorized by the City Council in 1976, but not implemented in the recent past) by proposing that the City Council appoint Advisory Committee members. While several Commissioners argued that Cambridge lacks enough people to fill its current committees, Commissioner Rideout countered that Cambridge currently has too many inactive committees or committees that could easily fall under the Citizens’ Advisory Committee umbrella, that active members of existing committees could be appointed to the Citizens’ Advisory Committee, and that the genuinely meaningful Committees could become subcommittees of the Advisory Committee. Nevertheless, the City Council rejected the proposal by a 3-2 vote. Commissioner Rideout had also proposed Operating Procedures for the City’s current committees that provide more structure to city committees and allow members to be removed when they chronically fail to attend meetings. These Operating Procedures adopted on September 11<sup>th</sup>.

**Code Enforcement.** Commissioner Rideout noted that Cambridge is over 300 years old and has experienced evolving housing standards over that time. For many years, however, Cambridge has relied upon the standards of the BOCA National Building Code as adapted with appropriate amendments to serve local needs. He acknowledged that code enforcement has been a serious area of concern for a significant number of Cambridge residents, including himself, for many years. For some months now, Commissioner Rideout has been talking with the City Manager to find ways to make code enforcement more effective, consistent, and objective. He indicated that the City Manager recognizes that the City currently lacks the staffing to accomplish everything that needs to be done and that she is conducting a Management Study of code enforcement procedures to determine root causes and identify solutions. She wants to find out if the problems are simply due to under-staffing or if there are also systemic problems.

Commissioner Rideout emphasized that citizen involvement is needed at this time to ensure that code enforcement becomes more effective and consistent. Both he and Commissioner Hanson have sought improvements, but hard numbers from citizens about code enforcement are needed to inform the City Manager’s Management Study, without which the perspective of the Department of Public Works could hold sway. Commissioner Rideout indicated that the “COMCATE” tool on the City’s “Choose Cambridge” website is the most effective way to register complaints, suggestions, and compliments and ensure that all complaints are tracked to resolution.

In discussions with the City Manager, Commissioner Rideout has learned that the City acts on code enforcement complaints, but does not conduct proactive code enforcement. The City Manager needs valid complaint data to include in her Management Study to justify any changes that might take place. It is important that citizens not give up on code enforcement, especially at this time. The City Manager receives a copy of all complaints, and she monitors responses; but substantive citizen complaints (i.e., hard data) are needed to substantiate the need for change. The City Manager understands that there has been lack of consistency (and perhaps favoritism) in the past, and she is committed to fair and even enforcement.

In addition to inconsistency and the lack of adequate staffing, the court process needs to be addressed. Historically the practice of issuing repeated citations and fines for the same code violation have resulted in the some of the citations being dismissed by the judge. Commissioner Rideout also noted that issuing citations is an ineffective enforcement technique for many owners, especially less responsible landlords,



as they just result in liens against the property, which are not addressed until the property is sold. It may be that the City Council needs to change the code so that landlords who do not comply with City requirements lose their license to rent.

Commissioner Rideout noted that Salisbury University students are preparing a report on housing conditions in Cambridge, and that many citizens may not have the financial resources to make the repairs necessary to bring their houses up to code. Although the full report about the entire City from the Salisbury University study is not yet complete, the City has received a \$200,000 grant from the State to help Ward 3 home owners in the Pine Street Area improve their houses, and 68 people attended a meeting and have applied for that assistance. Another \$100,000 for home improvements will become available from the City when the Beazer lawsuit is settled. Commissioner Rideout has advocated for the City to hire an outreach person who could help people find needed resources and resolve problems early. Failing the willingness of the property owners to work on solutions, stricter code enforcement would come into play.

### Questions and Comments from Attendees

NOTE: CAN TAKES NO RESPONSIBILITY FOR VERIFYING THE ACCURACY OF ATTENDEE COMMENTS

- Although it is possible submit complaints anonymously to COMCATE, it is not clear whether there is a way for anonymous complainants to track resolution of their complaints.
  - Commissioner Rideout will follow up with the City to obtain the answer. See follow-up note from Commissioner Rideout below.
- If a complainant identifies her/himself in submitting a complaint to COMCATE, does the City identify the complainant to the relevant property owner in following up on the complaint?
  - Commissioner Rideout will follow up with the City to obtain the answer. See follow-up note from Commissioner Rideout below.
- Can the property owner find out who has submitted complaints about their property (for example under a Maryland Freedom of Information request)?
  - Commissioner Rideout will follow up with the City to obtain the answer. See follow-up note from Commissioner Rideout below.
- Isn't it the City's responsibility to protect the identities of persons who make valid complaints?
  - Commissioner Rideout understands that identities of citizens in the possession of the City may be subject to Freedom of Information requests but will seek further clarification on this issue. Commissioner Rideout indicated that he would be happy to file legitimate complaints in the event a citizen was concerned about doing it about a neighbor for fear of damaging a relationship. Chuck McFadden also indicated that CAN would also be willing to file complaints. See follow-up note from Commissioner Rideout below.
- Actual numbers about code enforcement complaints and their resolution should be required from the City staff by the City Council on a regular basis. There should be regular reports required from the Department of Public Works, much like regular reports are required from the Police Department.
- Public Works Reports and Policy Reports would be posted prominently on the City website.
  - Commissioner Rideout will explore this possibility. See follow-up note from below.
- People do not know about lack of proactive enforcement or how important it is to make complaints. CAN needs to get the word out to people.
- The most obvious link for complaints on City webpage does not work.
  - Commissioner Rideout will follow up with the City to fix this link. Following the meeting, he went on the

City webpage and found that the link does now work.

- Maybe we have so many substandard rental properties because there is no annual inspection and no proactive code enforcement.
- The City's rental registration requirement is not effective because it is a self-report system.
- Letters have gone out to non-owner occupied properties in Dorchester County. Annual inspections at the County level are also being considered. The City and the County need to form a partnership and work together on this issue.
- Good landlords should get incentives for compliance.
- The City needs a code enforcement process that works more quickly and effectively, perhaps including having police and EMS report obvious violations.
- Cambridge has more than 50% of housing in rental property – and landlords have all the power in that they could de-populate the city if they decided to act together.
- Section 8 housing requires an annual inspection – the State is supposed to conduct these inspections annually, but results and effectiveness are unknown.
  - Commissioner Rideout will investigate this.
- The City currently has one full-time employee inspector and one full-time contract inspector. The City has had significantly more inspectors in the past.
- In the past there were 5-6 code inspectors, but it was reported that they ignored landlords who had chronic problems.
- In the past, a landlord spokesperson objected to a City Council proposal to increase rental fees by \$5 yearly to improve enforcement, and the Council voted down the proposal. Perhaps this proposal should be reconsidered.
- Many renters are being exploited by substandard rental conditions – the quality of life for these residents is also an important concern.
- Is it possible to cap the number of rental registrations in the city? Do we have an over-supply of cheap rental housing that draws people to Cambridge from elsewhere?
- The City Manager should consider that once people realize there is no proactive code enforcement, the City could be flooded with complaints in excess of what they would have to deal with if the City did systematic enforcement.
- Good landlords know that it is better economically to keep their properties well maintained.
- Annual renewal of licenses should be contingent upon code compliance.
- We need to go to City Council meetings to raise the code enforcement issue before the Council. Silence is acceptance.
- COMCATE can also be used to thank the city for a quick and helpful response, so be sure to do that when responding to any report back by the city to your complaint.

CAN President Chuck and the audience thanked Commissioner Rideout for spending time with CAN and for listening seriously to attendee's complaints. Chuck reiterated that CAN needs more volunteers to help residents who can't afford to maintain their properties.

- 5. USING COMCATE.** CAN Vice-President Judd Vickers reviewed use of the COMCATE system, available on the City website at [www.chooscambridge.org](http://www.chooscambridge.org). See Handout below. Judd would appreciate it if CAN members would report to the CAN Housing Quality Committee any complaints they make through COMCATE (or by other means) and their success in hearing having those complaints resolved.

6. **Adjournment.** Chuck McFadden made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom Puglisi seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.
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**Follow-up Note from Commissioner Rideout:**

There were some questions that came out of the CAN meeting for which I did not have answers. I sent them along to the City Manager, and her responses **in red** are below. I hope that these help clear up some of the concerns from the meeting.

1. Although it is possible to submit complaints anonymously to COMCATE, it is not clear whether there is a way for anonymous complainants to track resolution of their complaints. Can you tell me if anonymous complaints can receive feedback? **When the complaint is anonymous, we do not have a person to respond to, so no. We respond to anonymous complaints, based on seriousness of the issue. Keep in mind that sometimes Comcate “complaints” are more comments than requests that we do something specific. An example: trash collectors should be paid more.**
2. If a complainant identifies her/himself in submitting a complaint to COMCATE, does the City identify the complainant to the relevant property owner in following up on the complaint? **No, we do not reveal the identity of the complainant.**
3. Can the property owner find out who has submitted complaints about their property (for example under a Maryland Freedom of Information request)? **We are not sure, but tend to think they can. We will try to add a disclaimer that the complainant’s identity may be subject to disclosure under the Maryland Public Information Act or other applicable law and that the complainant may file an anonymous complaint if he/she desires.**
4. Actual numbers about code enforcement complaints and their resolution should be required from the City staff by the City Council on a regular basis. There should be regular reports required from the Department of Public Works, much like regular reports are required from the Police Department. Would this be possible? For instance the number of complaints filed. The number of valid complaints. Complaints resolved and pending. Complaints resulting in citations or action by the City such as cutting grass. Maybe separate the building complaints from tall grass, etc. **If you or any Council member wants to see the reports on number of complaints, types and resolutions, they can come to my office. I have access. Not all you list here is available, such as “valid/invalid” and complaints resulting in citations. That data has to be hand compiled. Keep in mind that before a citation is issued, we send a letter asking for correction, and sometimes we extend the correction period, working with the property owner.**

-- Steve

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**How to File a Concern, Suggestion or Complaint with Cambridge City Government**

1. Navigate your web browser to [www.choosecambridge.com](http://www.choosecambridge.com)
2. At the top of the City website, move your mouse to the topic “City Services” and click on the option “Report a Concern.” This will take you to the “COMCATE” page. You can also go the “Citizen

Concern and Feedback” button on the left side of the City website. This button will take you to the “COMCATE” page as well.

3. The “COMCATE” page will provide you with a list of topics. For this example, let’s select “Code Enforcement.” A dropdown list will provide you with several additional options and for this example, we’ll choose “Overgrown Weeds and/or Landscaping.”
4. After selecting “Overgrown Weeds and/or Landscaping,” click on the “Next” button, which will take you to a page where you “Provide Contact Information.” Here, you would register as a “New User” or “Existing User,” or choose to “Remain Anonymous.”
5. This is the final “Enter Your Request” page. You will want to summarize the issue and provide the address
  - If you have registered, you will be able to log on and see the issues you have reported.
  - Sometimes, City staff will reach out to you directly by email for more information.
6. When you register, you will receive a password. Once you have logged on, you are able change the password to one that is easier to remember. That is totally up to you.

**Adjournment.** Chuck McFadden made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom Puglisi seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 7:40 pm.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS – COOPERATING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

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### WHCP – RIBBON CUTTING AT HIGH NOON

On Friday, October 27, the Dorchester Chamber of Commerce arrived, red ribbon, giant scissors, and banner in hand for the official ribbon cutting ceremony at the new WHCP studios at 516 Race Street. Local officials, sponsors, and members who came by to participate in the ribbon cutting and photo op had a chance to tour the studios, mingle, and enjoy lunch. Senator Addie Eckardt, County Council Chair Ricky Travers, Chamber President Jeff Hubbard, and WHCP President Mike Starling took turns at the microphone. Senator Eckardt praised WHCP for “playing an important part in our community.” Mike Starling thanked sponsors and members for their support of Cambridge Community Radio – WHCP. WHCP’s Chief Administrative Officer Susan Klise introduced Kevin Kahl - Chief Construction Engineer for the renovation of the Cambridge Gas Works building that is now home to WHCP. Kevin was joined by his right hand (and fiancée), Lisa LeCompte, who, along with Kevin and her son Chris, continue to work tirelessly to complete the buildout of the fantastic new studio and performance spaces.



Patty Kaczmarek and Mike Starling cut the ribbon on the new WHCP home at 516 Race Street, and Mike Starling presents a token of appreciation to Kevin Kahl while Lisa LeCompte looks on.

## WHCP – 2018 CALENDAR

The gorgeous 2018 WHCP Community Calendar is here! Filled with photographs of our community and surroundings taken by your friends and neighbors, the calendar has holidays, DNR and school dates and many other notes of interest including the latest WHCP Program schedule. The Calendars are on sale around town at Thomas's Fine Jewelry and the Main Street Gallery on Poplar Street, at Frame of Mine on High Street, and at Oh La LA! Salon out on Route 50.

You know you need at least one for your frig and you'll want to purchase extra copies as presents for friends, relatives and fans of the Eastern Shore! They are \$12 each and we also have them at the station. Please let us know if you plan to stop by WHCP at 516 Race St. as we are not always there! You can call [443-637-6000](tel:443-637-6000) or email [susan@whcp.org](mailto:susan@whcp.org) to arrange a pick up time. We are asking that folks pay in cash or by check. All the proceeds from the sales of the calendars will go towards supporting the great programming you have come to know and love on WHCP, 101.5, Cambridge, MD. It is a great place to be! Thanks for your support! See you soon!

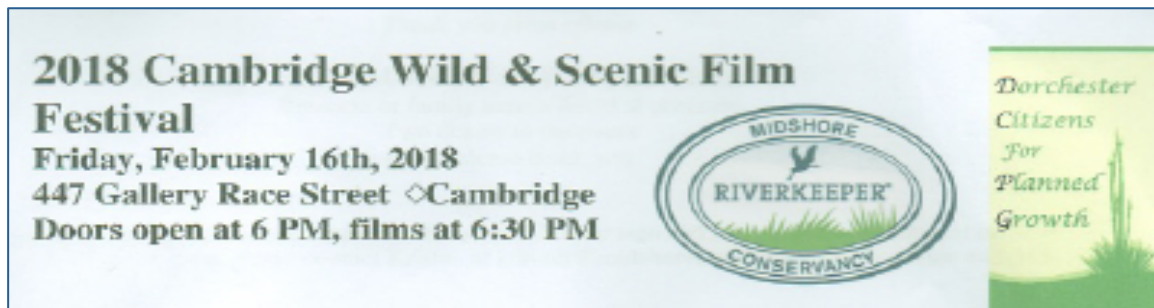
-- Susan Klise, WHCP CAO and Calendar Chair



Cover photo taken at Blackwater by Graham Slaughter.

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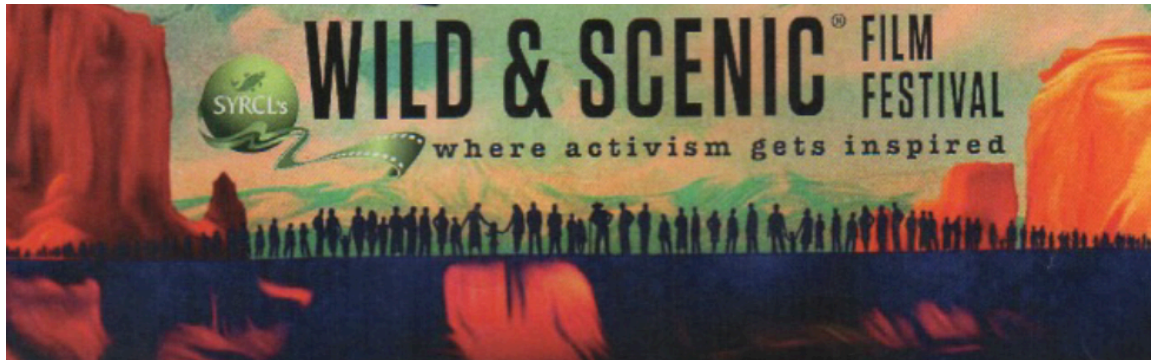
## DORCHESTER CITIZENS FOR PLANNED GROWTH & MIDSHORE RIVERKEEPER CONSERVANCY – 2018 WILD AND SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL



The Wild & Scenic Film Festival is returning to Cambridge for a third year. Join us at 447 for an evening of local food, drinks, and award-winning environmental short films that inspire. Last year, we filled 224 with 120 people coming to celebrate and recognize community partners and efforts in protecting the Choptank River and the land surrounding it.



Supporting the Film Festival is a great way to inform our local community about your support for our local rivers and environment. Sponsors and guests of the Cambridge event will view a unique hour-long program while enjoying local brews and fare from the community. Join national sponsors that include Patagonia, Kleen Kanteen, and Clif Bar. To learn about sponsorship levels (Premier Festival Funder at \$500; Choptank Sponsor at \$250; Community Partner at \$100) and sponsor benefits (eg, event tickets, program ad/listing) please contact Kristan at [kdroter@midshoreriverkeeper.org](mailto:kdroter@midshoreriverkeeper.org), call 443-385-0511, or mail check to Midshore Riverkeeper Conservancy, c/o Kristan Droter, 114 S. Washington St #301, Easton, MD 21601.



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## NATHAN OF DORCHESTER

The Skipjack Nathan of Dorchester sails May through October on the beautiful Choptank River from historic Cambridge. The Nathan was commissioned on July 4, 1994. Funded by contributors and built by volunteers, the Nathan was built to preserve the wooden boat building skills and maritime heritage of the region. She was the last Skipjack to be built as an oyster dredge boat. The Nathan is always on the lookout for experienced volunteers and licensed Captains. For information call 410-228-7141, access our website at [www.skipjack-nathan.org](http://www.skipjack-nathan.org), or email us at [info@skipjack-nathan.org](mailto:info@skipjack-nathan.org).

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## COMMUNITY EMERGENCY RESPONSE TRAINING (CERT)

The Dorchester County Department of Emergency Services is pleased to announce the dates of our next Community Emergency Response Team (CERT) training, scheduled to begin in January 2018. CERT is a great opportunity to learn basic disaster and emergency response skills to help yourself, your family, and your neighbors during a crisis. And, perhaps most importantly, this class is FREE! You do not have to be a resident of Dorchester County in order to take this course; it is open to residents and employees in the county.

CERT is a 30-hour certification, so each week has a different topic discussed. Here are the standard modules addressed over the course of the certification:

- **Disaster Preparedness:** Addresses hazards specific to the community. Materials cover actions that participants and their families take before, during and after a disaster as well as an overview of CERT and local laws governing volunteers.
- **Fire Suppression:** Covers fire chemistry, hazardous materials, fire hazards and fire suppression strategies. However, the thrust of this session is the safe use of fire extinguishers, controlling utilities and



extinguishing a small fire.

- **Medical Operations Part I:** Participants practice diagnosing and treating airway obstruction, bleeding and shock by using simple triage and rapid treatment techniques.
- **Medical Operations Part II:** Covers evaluating patients by doing a head to toe assessment, establishing a medical treatment area and performing basic first aid.
- **Light Search and Rescue Operations:** Participants learn about search and rescue planning, size-up, search techniques, rescue techniques and rescuer safety.
- **Psychology and Team Organization:** Covers signs and symptoms that might be experienced by the disaster victim and workers, and addresses CERT organization and management.
- **Course Review and Disaster Simulation:** Participants review and practice the skills that they have learned during the previous six sessions in a disaster activity.

-- Anna Sierra, Director, Dorchester Department of Emergency Services, O: 410-228-2726, C: 443-205-0790

## EMERGENCY EVACUATION PET SHELTER

We need volunteers for the pet care section of the emergency evacuation shelter as well. We have one pet friendly shelter at Cambridge South Dorchester High School but with more volunteers our north shelter can be one too. People can contact me if they want to volunteer. I would love for them to have this training before volunteering. Thanks so much.

-- Cindy Smith, Dorchester Emergency Evacuation Pet Shelter Manager, [caosserv@aol.com](mailto:caosserv@aol.com)

## Hurricanes, Tornadoes, and Nuclear Power Plants, Oh MY!

CERT is a nationally recognized, FREE program designed to prepare residents for disasters in our community. Topics covered by CERT include:

- Disaster preparedness for man-made and natural disasters
- Hazardous materials
- Basic fire suppression
- Basic first aid
- CPR



All community members over the age of 15\* are welcome to attend this FREE training!

\* Young adults under the age of 18 are required to have parental approval to attend class.

When disaster strikes in Dorchester County, be prepared to help yourself, your family, and your neighbors by attending training for...



Class Information  
START DATE: January 17, 2018  
END DATE: March 21, 2018  
Every Wednesday evening from 6pm-9pm  
Cambridge Public Safety Building  
8 Washington St., Cambridge, MD  
Pre-registration is required. To register call the Dorchester County Department of Emergency Services Emergency Management Office at 410-228-1818 or email EM Planner Steve Garvin at [sgarvin@docogonet.com](mailto:sgarvin@docogonet.com)

## **MIDSHORE RIVERKEEPER CONSERVANCY (MRC) – AGRICULTURAL CONSERVATION GRANT**

MRC was recently awarded a grant of \$451,960 from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) Chesapeake Bay Stewardship Fund to create a regional program that advances the implementation of conservation drainage practices and tests new agricultural best management practice technologies that have great potential to reduce nutrient and sediment from entering the Chesapeake Bay.

This work will create a framework for a conservation drainage program that can be used to justify the funding of a state-run program administered by the Maryland Department of Agriculture. In addition, the program will provide a blueprint for other Bay states to adopt their version of a conservation drainage program. This program will help bring Maryland to the forefront in addressing agricultural drainage pollution and help position our farm community to be more economically and environmentally sustainable. MRC's program will focus on four watersheds—the Choptank, Nanticoke, Pocomoke/Tangier, and Chester—that span eight Maryland counties.

MRC has obtained commitments from private and state sources to provide a match of \$467,980, enabling the organization to devote a total of \$919,940 to this important work. For more information contact MRC Staff Scientist Tim Rosen at 443.385.0511 or [trosen@midshoreriverkeeper.org](mailto:trosen@midshoreriverkeeper.org).

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## **COMMISSIONER'S CORNER**

### **CAMBRIDGE MATTERS: MESSAGES FROM COMMISSIONER STEVE RIDEOUT ([swrideout@aol.com](mailto:swrideout@aol.com))**

Previous "Cambridge Matters" messages may be found on the CAN Website at <https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/commissioner-posts/>

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## **CITY COUNCIL WORK SESSION – NOVEMBER 1, 2017**

Thanks to all of you who attended the City Council work session held this morning. As I had previously mentioned, City Council met to discuss the possibility of changing the City Charter. The session had been sought by Ward 3 Commissioner Foster. When Commissioner Foster failed to appear for the meeting, Commissioner Sydnor sought to explain possible reasons for looking at a different form of government for Cambridge. He and the Mayor indicated that they liked the current form of government. When asked by the Mayor what our opinions were of making any changes, Commissioner Hanson, Commissioner Cannon, and myself indicated that we were not in favor of making any changes. I do not recall if Commissioner Sydnor was asked so do not know what, if any, response he gave.

At this point in the meeting Commissioner Sydnor got up to leave, possibly not realizing that there was an additional item on the agenda, which was to consider next steps in the search process for a replacement for Sandra Tripp-Jones, who will be retiring June 30, 2018, as Cambridge's first City Manager. As a result of that discussion, while no final decisions were made, as they cannot be made at a work session, the consensus was pursuant to the Charter that the Mayor would lead the search with the assistance of a Search Committee that is made up of herself and one representative from each Ward in the City. Odie Wheeler will be her chief staff support, as the City Manager has a number of items on her list of priorities that she hopes to complete before she leaves office. The consensus of the Commissioners with one disagreement was that a professional should be hired to help organize and coordinate the search process.

The City Manager hopes to bring back to City Council at our first November meeting some specific next steps that will need to be adopted in order to move forward along the above lines.

-- Steve

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### **CITY COUNCIL MEETING – OCTOBER 23, 2017**

Several announcements and a number of decisions were made at this meeting of the Cambridge City Council. If you want to see everything that happened on your computer, please go to [www.townhallstreams.com](http://www.townhallstreams.com) and find the City of Cambridge. You can find the October meetings on the right side of the page and watch for yourself.

After coming out of a closed session, the City Manager announced that she will be retiring effective June 30, 2018, and that a search for her replacement would be led by the Mayor and supported by Oden Wheeler and the Commissioners. There was a stated desire by a majority of the Commissioners and the Mayor to hire professional help to assist in the search. A determination will be made at a later time regarding the funding for that assistance.

The City Council has approved a list of matters that it desires the City Manager to concentrate on during the next 8 months. The details of how the search will take place will be worked on in the coming weeks. In addition, the City Council agreed to have a work session to look at the current city charter and any possible changes that might be required prior to starting the actual search process. If changes are required, it appears that the search process will be delayed by up to 6 months.

The work session regarding possible charter changes will be public so that citizens can observe the discussion but not participate in it and it will take place on November 1, 2017 at 10:30 p.m. at a location to be determined. As soon as that is determined, the public will be notified. I would strongly encourage everyone who reads or hears Cambridge Matters and lives in the city to place this meeting on your calendar for attendance, if you are available. If the City moves forward with any Charter Changes, that will significantly delay our ability to find a new City Manager.

Commissioner Hanson was elected to be the President of the City Council for the remainder of this term that will end in January 2021. In addition, Commissioner Foster was elected to be Chair Pro Tem of the City Council for a period of one year. That means that she will chair City Council meetings in the absence of the

Mayor.

The City Council then approved the agenda for the meeting and heard from several individuals regarding the proposed street closure policy for events in the city that was item 6 on the agenda under Old Business. Concerns were raised regarding the proposed policy. Diane Miller, Acting Superintendent of the Harriet Tubman Underground Railroad National Historical Park, then sought permission to install a wayside exhibit in Cannery Way on Race Street. Upon motion properly made and seconded, City Council approved the request to install the exhibit and authorized the Mayor to execute the agreement that provides for the installation and maintenance of the exhibit subject to the approval by the City Attorney as to form.

Under the Consent Calendar the following items were approved:

The Meeting Minutes of the City Council meeting of October 10, 2017.

The request from the Dorchester County Christmas Parade for permission to hold their 69<sup>th</sup> annual Cambridge-Dorchester County Christmas Parade on December 2<sup>nd</sup> starting at 5:00 p.m. along with a noise ordinance variance conditioned on providing proof of insurance prior to the event protecting the city during the event.

The request of Cambridge Main Street for permission to hold their New Year's Eve Boat Drop on Poplar Street on Sunday December 31, 2017 from 9:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m. and to allow attendees to carry drinks outside on Poplar Street during the street closure along with a noise ordinance variance all conditioned on providing proof of insurance prior to the event protecting the city during the event and having an approved liquor license from the county.

Under Old Business, the first item discussed was the Downtown Street Closure and Events Policy that has been worked on by the Traffic and Safety Committee, Main Street, the Chamber of Commerce, and other local businesses during 2017. As mentioned there were a few comments made earlier in the meeting. In addition, I have a number of concerns regarding the language of the proposal and the complexity of some of it. Upon motion it was referred to the Ordinance Committee to revise and clean up the language and also to make sure that the issues that I and others raised were addressed. The policy and a proposed resolution will be brought back to City Council along with a list of concerns if the draft policy does not adequately address them for further discussion among the Commissioners.

The next item was the awarding and funding of the contract for a Pavement Management Assessment. This is an issue that I had raised months ago to help us find a better and more cost-effective way to address the condition of our city streets. Staff had found that all of the applicants were well qualified and recommended awarding the contract to IMS Infrastructure Management Services in the low bid amount of \$29,939. The contract was approved and the funding for the project was provided. The report is expected in approximately 4 months, and it should help staff and City Council make better decisions about maintaining and improving our city streets.

The next item is a bit difficult to explain in detail because it has several moving parts. It is, however, about the city spending monies to address some important and needed capital repairs that have been pending for a number of years. The monies for these projects come from a surplus from last year's budget along with a portion of the money recently received from past due Beazer tax payments, savings that came from going to private sanitation trash collection, and using some reserves from existing water and sewer reserves.

The following are the results of the above:

- The FY 2018 General Fund Capital Budget was increased by \$827,000 for High Street Infrastructure repair and brick replacement, the Housing Authority drainage repair, and a speed control trailer.
- The FY 2018 Sewer Fund budget was increased by appropriating \$156,000 from the undesignated Sewer Fund Balance so that those funds could be used for the High Street infrastructure repair and replacement.
- The FY 2018 MUC budget was increased by \$102,000 from undesignated MUC Fund Balance so that those funds could be used for the High Street infrastructure repair.
- \$195,000 was assigned to the General Fund Balance for potential funding for the Macses Lane Community Center project and Parks Equipment that have conditions before they can be used.

This means that the 300 Block of High Street will be repaired and rebricked and the Housing Authority will be able to have its flooding problems solved. You will recall with the 300 Block of High Street that there was a proposal to increase city taxes to pay for this repair that was voted down by City Council. That was not because we did not think it was important but rather that we did not feel it appropriate to increase the tax rate that was proposed.

With New Business, the city received a number of grants for projects, and City Council needed to make formal decisions on the acceptance and use of those grant funds.

Under item 9 of the agenda, Habitat Choptank will be managing and implementing a home rehabilitation program in the Pine Street Area. The funding is coming from the state, but the money is a pass through from the City to Habitat Choptank. To do this there has to be what is called a “Sub-Recipient Agreement” signed between the City and Habitat Choptank, as Habitat Choptank will oversee the work, and City Council approved doing that. \$330,037 will be made available to Habitat Choptank to assist a limited number of qualified homeowners (not landlords) in the Pine Street Area to have repairs made to their homes.

Under item 10 a state Community Legacy Grant in the amount of \$50,000 was awarded for Façade Improvement in the Pine Street Community of which \$25,000 is to assist the Beasley project at 711 Pine Street. Under item 15 that was added to the agenda another \$25,000 Operating Assistance grant was awarded by the state for the Beasley project that will help Edward Beasley secure funding for a proposed business on Pine Street. City Council approved the acceptance of these funds for their stated purpose and authorized the Mayor to execute the required agreements on behalf of the City.

Under item 11 there was a separate \$25,000 Operating Assistance grant for the city to help provide technical assistance to the City regarding the Pine Street Area that was combined with a \$25,000 city match and placed in the budget of Planning and Zoning.

With item 12, the City Council appropriated \$400 into the Cambridge Police Department budget to help support their Trunk-or-Treat project, which is an outreach effort to the community. This money came from donations by Craig’s Drug Store and Michael Wheatley.

Under item 13, City Council approved a contract with Direct Energy Business LLC starting July 2018 that locks in the City’s electric power rate at 5.32 cents/kWh with some minor fluctuations that will save the city

approximately \$70,000 a year over the next 4 years.

The final item for discussion involved a memo that I had written regarding governance issues. The details of my concerns will put you to sleep but are important, I think, for us to improve our governance processes. The first issue I want to address is establishing rules and procedures for the appointment, reappointment, and responsibilities of city commissioner liaisons. The second issue is about the establishment of a consistent policy for the creation and dissolution of ad hoc city committees.

I have raised both of these matters due to my research on them and the inconsistencies that exist in how they have been done in the past and are currently done. A work session will be set to discuss these matters. I am attaching a copy of my memo to the City Manager to help you understand my concerns, if you are interested.

That is all for Cambridge Matters for now. Happy Reading.

-- Steve

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## CITY COUNCIL MEETING – OCTOBER 20, 2017

Tuesday's meeting was our first City Council meeting that was streamed over the internet. You can find it at [www.townhallstreams.com](http://www.townhallstreams.com) and then select Cambridge, Maryland. Be sure the volume on your computer is turned up so that you can hear everything. I have gone to the website and the meeting is there ready for viewing.

During the time for public comment two citizens raised issues concerning the IronMan event from last weekend. One had concerns regarding the cost of the event to the taxpayers of Cambridge and the other was concerned about the use by the IronMan organization of unregistered ATVs on the city streets. Another citizen rose to express her support of the work being done to preserve a portion of the Maces Lane School.

Next on the agenda was a request from the President and members of the Cambridge Alumnae Chapter of Delta Sigma Theta Sorority, Inc. and the Mid-Shore Council on Family Violence to receive a proclamation from the city regarding Domestic Violence Awareness Month. After the Mayor read the proclamation, the members of City Council voted unanimously to approve it and have the Mayor sign it.

The Consent Calendar included the following items, all of which were approved unanimously by City Council:

- The Meeting Minutes of the September 25<sup>th</sup> City Council Meeting
- The request from Dorchester County Department of Social Services to use the city property at Race and Cedar Streets on October 21, 2017 for their 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Fun Fest.
- The request from the Hyatt Regency Resort for permission to display fireworks on August 25, 2018 for approximately 15 minutes
- The request from Charles Fairchild and Fairchild Properties for permission to display fireworks on October 31, 2017 for approximately 7-10 minutes on the grounds of Cambridge Marketplace with the fireworks being launched from the Hyatt.



- The designation of Mayor Jackson-Stanley to receive training on the requirements of the Maryland Open Meetings Act.

Next on the agenda were a series of Ordinances for 2<sup>nd</sup> reading, public hearing, and possible approval. All but one of the proposed ordinances was approved. They were identified as correcting errors from when the Unified Development Code was adopted. Those Ordinances adopted were 1106, 1107, 1110, 1111, and 1112. The Ordinance that was rejected was Ordinance 1108 that was meant to rezone two parcels of real property on Boundary Avenue from residential to Industrial. A neighboring homeowner appeared and testified against the proposed change due to a concern about Delmarva Power being then able to expand its substation next to that location. The request of the city to postpone the vote on this Ordinance in order to look into the concerns of the residents was rejected.

Under Old Business City Council amended its FY 2018 budget in order to shift monies to hire someone for the newly created Planning and Zoning Assistant position and to adopt Resolution 17-004 that establishes the city salaried positions. This action responds to the need for City Council to be open and transparent about how and for what purpose city taxpayer funds are being spent. The City Council had voted to take this action at an earlier meeting, and this was the formal vote to accomplish that action.

As the result of the Beazer Corporation paying back taxes and interest, the city having a surplus from its FY 2017 budget, and savings from the city moving to private sanitation services, additional monies are available either to use on specific needs of the city and/or to deposit in city reserves. At a public work session in September, City Council members identified some possible projects for funding. The City Manager was seeking at the October 10<sup>th</sup> meeting direction from City Council to return at a later meeting with budget amendments that would authorize those allocations. That was approved.

The potential projects for funding consideration include the following:

- Maces Lane Community Center – contingent on a business plan and only as matching funds to other monies provided by other resources - \$65,000
- Housing Authority Drainage – The city sought a grant for this project but was not approved for grant funding. Due to the conditions at the housing authority when there is heavy rain, this was a high priority established by the City Council - \$275,000
- 300 Block of High Street – Brick and Infrastructure Replacement – In past years the city has sought grant funding for this project and was unsuccessful – The condition of the 300 block of High Street and what lies beneath it requires significant work - \$542,000 from the General Fund - \$102,000 from the Water Fund - \$156,000 from the Sewer Fund = \$820,000
- Portable Electronic Signs – To help address traffic congestion, rerouting of vehicles, and publicizing events - \$10,000

With New Business, the funding for a Cultural Diversity Training Grant was put over to another council meeting as representatives of the Local Government Insurance Trust were not able to attend the meeting to present the check for \$6,000. This training is for the Cambridge Police Department. The city also accepted a donation of body armor vests for the Cambridge Police Department valued at \$16,000 that was provided by the Spirit of Blue Foundation.

City Council voted to increase the Mayor and Commissioner Budgets by \$7,000 from the appropriated reserve funds for travel and meeting expenses over and above those initially funded. With 2 commissioners elected in 2017 who had no prior experience as commissioners – Dave Cannon and I – and with greater involvement of elected city officials in the work of the Maryland Municipal League and education provided by it, the amount of funding originally established was inadequate.

The election of the Chair Pro Tempore and Council President were moved into a closed session of City Council and the results of those elections will be reported on at the 1<sup>st</sup> November meeting of City Council.

Upon recommendation of the Traffic and Safety Committee, a 4 way stop sign was approved for the intersection of Robbins and Pine Street to help slow traffic along Pine Street. In addition a number of street lights were approved for different locations in the city where they were needed for which an additional \$5,500 was appropriated from the Appropriated Reserve to the Public Works budget for those costs.

Before City Council moved into a Closed Session regarding personnel issues, the results of which will be reported on at the 1<sup>st</sup> City Council Meeting in November, 2 appointments were made to the Housing Board of Review, one of whom was Janeen V. Ford. Her term expires August 31, 2019. With regard to the City Ethics Commission, Katie Day was appointed to a four year term ending September 1, 2021.

Upon completion of the Closed Session mentioned above, City Council members had the opportunity to mention issues of importance to them. The successful IronMan event and the good work of city staff was a theme. In addition I sought permission from City Council to have the Ordinance Committee undertake a review of the Trash Ordinance given the fact that we have moved from the city doing all of the collection to it now doing a limited amount and a private contractor doing the majority of the work. That was approved.

I also requested that the Mayor and Commissioners and members of the public attend public meeting of the Maryland Department of Transportation on November 7<sup>th</sup> at the County Board Chambers at the County Office Building at 7:00 p.m. The reason that this is important is the reduction years ago of what are called Highway User Revenues that are provided to the counties and cities by the State to maintain local roads and streets.

When there were budget shortfalls several years ago, the state reduced the distribution of prior levels of the Highway User Revenues to cities and counties in order to use that money elsewhere. While the amount of money being sent to cities and counties for the Highway User Revenues has increased since then, they are not yet back to the former levels. The Maryland Municipal League is urging all of the cities in the state to attend these public meetings that are being held around the state to let the state officials know that we want this funding returned to its prior higher levels. November 7<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. at the County Office Building is our time to do that. Please attend. I will send you more information on this issue by separate email.

Thanks. That is all from here.

-- Steve