



UPCOMING MEETING DATES AND LOCATIONS

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

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

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BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETING May 10, 2018

**WHCP Meeting Room
516 Race St, Cambridge MD**

MINUTES

Board Members Present: Chuck McFadden (President), Judd Vickers (Vice-President), Tom Puglisi (Secretary), Mary Ellen Jesien (Treasurer), Michelle Barnes (Membership Director), Greg Boss, Roman Jesien, Sharon Smith (constituting a Quorum of the Board under Bylaws Section 11, eight of ten members being present)

Board Members Absent: Frank Cooke, Dave Thatcher

NOTE: CAN is not responsible for verifying the accuracy of attendee comments.

- 1. Welcome and Introductions.** CAN President Chuck McFadden opened the meeting at 7:00 pm by welcoming the members of the Board of Directors, and approximately 20 attendees.
- 2. Approval of Minutes.** Chuck McFadden introduced the minutes of CAN's March 10, 2018, Board of Directors Meeting, which were previously distributed via email. It was moved (Chuck McFadden) and seconded (Tom Puglisi) that the Board approve the March 10 minutes as distributed, and the motion was approved by an 8-0 vote of Board members present.

- 3. Short Announcements.** Chuck McFadden made several short announcements:
- a. CAN will sponsor an end of summer picnic on August 26 at Long Wharf Park. We hope to get local talent to sing. Ice cream might be served if Health Department requirements can be met. Singers and volunteers are needed.
 - b. ShoreRivers is sponsoring the Chop Tank Swim on May 20. Powerboat and/or jet-ski volunteers are needed to help swimmers.
 - c. Grove City Studios (aka WHCP Meeting Room, 516 Race St) will host the Trinity Blues Band tomorrow night, Friday May 11, at 7:00 pm. A portion of the profits will go to a Habitat for Humanity.
 - d. Mid-Shore Meals 'til Monday is having a "Flowers After Hours" fund-raiser on Thursday, May 17, from 5:00 to 7:00 pm at Harvest Drive Greenhouses, 4646 East New Market - Rhodesdale Road, East New Market, MD (between North Dorchester High School and Rhodesdale. Midshore Meals 'til Monday provides weekend meals for kids.
 - e. CAN appreciates working with WHCP, which always needs volunteers, especially for its Radio Reading Service for Blind Persons.
- 4. Treasurer's Report.** CAN Treasurer Mary Ellen Jesien reported that CAN now has a total of \$1,762.96 in its Treasury. There have been no expenses so far this year. The CAN Board is considering ways to use the money to benefit the community. We currently have 72 dues-paying members. The current funds have come primarily from dues payments.
- 5. Discussion of Rental Units in Cambridge.** CAN Board Member Gregg Boss described his ongoing project with the CAN Housing Quality Committee to determine the number of rental properties, rental units, and owner-occupied residences within the City. Members of the Housing Quality Committee noticed a number of poorly maintained properties in Cambridge noted that the City was conducting a Blight Study. Some of the blight seemed to be due to long-time owners who could not afford maintenance on their homes and some seemed to be due to unresponsive landlords, but CAN had no reliable data as to the impact of each. Consequently, Greg and the Committee undertook a project to find and analyze available data. The most recent available data indicate that Cambridge has 6171 housing units, of which 3236 (52.4%) are rental units and 2935 (47.6%) are non-rentals. The full presentation, including an interactive map, is available on CAN's website at <https://cambridgecan.org/can-residential-rentals-study/>. The Committee's next project will be to identify large property owners and see how that impacts the City's housing market. CAN is concerned about overall blight, housing safety, code enforcement, and similar problems, and CAN needs these data to develop reasonable solutions and represent

residents effectively. CAN's goal is to identify the gaps and determine what initiatives CAN should support. CAN also tracks non-conforming uses and tries to ensure that properties revert to conforming uses if vacant for 90 days. It has been suggested by some that the City needs to move to a permit system that is owner-based rather than parcel based.

6. Summary of the City Manager's Code Enforcement ideas. CAN Vice-President and Chair of CAN's Housing Quality Committee Judd Vickers described the Code Enforcement Recommendations that the City Manager recently presented to the City Council. A summary of the City Managers recommendations is available on CAN's website at <https://cambridgecan.org/draft-code-enforcement-recommendations/>. Although the City Council endorsed the recommendations as a whole, individual specific code modifications must be approved by the Council to bring these recommendations to implementation. There is sure to be opposition to some of the proposed changes as they are considered by the Council, so CAN needs members to attend the upcoming City Council meetings where the relevant votes will take place. It was pointed out that many renters don't know about the City's online "Citizen Requests and Feedback" portal at <http://www.choosecambridge.com>, through which anonymous complaints can be registered, or are afraid of retaliation or eviction. One approach may be to define in City Code what constitutes a "decent house" in simple terms that renters can understand. There has been some outreach to CAN from landlords who want to ensure that reasonable standards are defined and enforced fairly and consistently for landlords and residents alike.

7. Discussion of the Proposed Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) Guidelines. CAN Board Member and HPC Vice-Chair Sharon Smith described the proposed, revised HPC Design Guidelines. The new Guidelines are still a major focus for the Commission. The draft Guidelines were posted to the City website on April 13th, and a Citizen Input session was held on April 24th. Advance copies were sent to City Council and the HPC is holding face-to-face discussions with City Commissioners the week of May 7th. A formal presentation and discussion of the Guidelines will be held during the City Council Meeting of May 14th, with the presentation being led by the consultant hired to assist with developing the document. Final comments are due from the City Commissioners by May 25th. A final draft will be submitted to the Maryland Historic Trust (MHT) on June 21 for review and approval. The MHT has a 45-day window to approve the guidelines, with comments due back to HPC by August 6th. The HPC is targeting the August 13th City Council Meeting for final approval of the new Guidelines. Several Appendices are attached to the Guidelines to make them easier for residents to use. These include a summary of requirements and

recommendations and a flowchart describing the level of approval needed for different types of proposed projects. An attendee suggested that "how-to" videos should be made available on the HPC website to assist residents in designing and completing projects.

8. **Adjournment.** Chuck McFadden made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Tom Puglisi seconded the motion, and the meeting was adjourned at 8:35 pm.

