



**UPCOMING MEETING DATES (2019)**

Thursday, July 11, 7:00 pm  
Thursday, September 12, 7:00 pm  
Thursday, November 14, 7:00 pm

*All Meetings will be held in the WHCP Meeting Room  
516 Race Street, Cambridge, MD 21613*

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

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**CURRENT LINKS:**

- **CAN Meeting Minutes - Board Meeting May 9, 2019; Executive Committee Meeting June 26, 2019**
    - <https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/meetings/can-meeting-minutes/can-meeting-minutes-2019/>
  - **Commissioner’s Corner –**
    - Ward 1: Cambridge Matters: Messages from Commissioner Steve Rideout  
<https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/commissioner-posts/>
- Note: CAN invites messages from all City Council Commissioners for its Newsletter and Website.*
- **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 – WHY CAN?**

The Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods is a city wide civic association dedicated to improving Cambridge. That's nice in theory but what does it actually do?

CAN is trying to get the collective voice of the citizens to the City government in areas such as code enforcement (e.g., the Mill St. School), rental homes (e.g., making sure that landlords comply with the City Codes), changes to the City Carter (e.g., proposed change in personnel management), citizen issues (e.g., dog bites), Sailwinds park development, and other major developments in the City. All these issues require time and effort by the CAN Board and Committee members.

CAN is also involved with developing a neighborhood feel. CAN sponsors **CAN Jam** a picnic with local musical entertainment (this summer it will be held on Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup>, 3-7 pm). CAN is involved in helping our elderly neighbors with projects, such as painting, power washing and removal of trash. CAN is also involved in sponsoring neighborhood parties to get to know your neighbors.

CAN provides information to the community with this bi-monthly newsletter, which not only publishes CAN articles but also articles and notices from other non-profit organizations in Cambridge.

**CAN NEEDS YOUR HELP!** We need volunteers on the committees, we need your membership fee to finance homeowner projects, and we need your email so we can get information and surveys to you. The larger the email list we have, the more the City listens. Please support CAN and get you and your neighbors involved.

Contact Chuck McFadden at [Ragtime31@gmail.com](mailto:Ragtime31@gmail.com) for more information.

*Chuck McFadden,  
President, Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods (CAN)*

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## **CAN JAM - SUNDAY, AUGUST 25<sup>th</sup> - 3 to 7 PM - CAMBRIDGE MUNICIPAL MARINA PARK**

Come join us at the City Marina Park for the second annual **CAN Jam**. The date is Sunday, August 25<sup>th</sup> from 3:00 to 7:00 pm. There will be a food truck for eats and drinks, local entertainment including gospel singing, ukuleles, folk songs, and contemporary music plus poetry reading - Hard to beat that! Bring your chairs and join us for a neighborhood get together. See you there!

*Chuck McFadden,  
President, Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods (CAN)*

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## **POWER WASHER AVAILABLE**

CAN has an electric power washer available to members. Contact Chuck McFadden at [Ragtime31@gmail.com](mailto:Ragtime31@gmail.com) if you would like to borrow it for a project.

## **OPINION - PROPOSED CHANGE IN CITY HIRING PRACTICES - A BAD IDEA**

*- by Chuck McFadden, CAN President*

Three Commissioners, Foster, Sydnor and Cannon are proposing a radical new hiring practice for the City. They are proposing that once a City Department Head and the City Manager approve a new hire, the City Manager must then submit that hire to the City Council for approval. The three Commissioners did not give a clear reason for the change, but said that it involved "personnel issues" that they were not at liberty to disclose. The other two City Commissioners did not know what they were talking about, so the reason for the change is a secret among the three Commissioners.

The proposal by the three Commissioners will require a change in the City Charter. The first reading of the proposal is this Monday, July 8th at 6 pm in the City Council Chamber on Gay St. The second reading and the Council vote are scheduled for Monday, July 22 at 6 pm in the City Council Chamber.

### **Here are the reasons this is a BAD idea:**

(1) Each City Department Head is the technical expert and can evaluate the technical qualifications of a new hire. The City Manager is a trained professional who has seen several personnel hiring systems, has received training in hiring and personnel management, and has experience managing over 100 people. The City Commissioners have none of this expertise, training or experience managing large groups of people. So what could the Commissioners add to the City Manager's list of qualifications? - Politics - that's what they know.

(2) Under the Commissioners' new proposal, the whole process of hiring would slow down. The City Manager would have to wait until the Council met, and then have a private meeting with them. He would have to present the new hire qualifications and, if asked, discuss the other candidates that applied for the job. The Council would then have to review the application, ask questions, and then vote. So some applicants would be hired on a 3 to 2 vote, certainly not an ideal way to start your career with 2 Commissioners against you looking for a third to get you fired. Besides the time, the process would set up the City for numerous legal complaints.

(3) The Council would be the final hiring authority and would also have the authority in a review process to override a City Manager's decision to fire a city employee. This could make for serious lawsuits especially if the Council votes involved were split.

(4) Cambridge has never had a system like this before. The Mayor was the final say in the process before the City Manager was introduced into the process. The City Manager is a full time position with a professional background in management and personnel. While the Mayor and the Council have the responsibility to give vision and direction to the City employees, they have limited time at their disposal and should not be wasting that time trying to find out if "Jane Doe" is qualified to be a rookie police officer.

**Come out on July 8th and July 22 and express your opinion at the beginning of the City Council meeting. The meeting is at 6 pm - don't be late!**

## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION -

### June 18, 2019 Meeting on Mill Street School Historic Significance

As we know, the Planning & Zoning Commission has submitted to the City Council a proposed text amendment to the UDC to create a temporary overlay zone for the Mill Street School site to provide some flexibility to potentially redevelop the site and rehabilitate the old school building. As a step in their deliberations, the City Council asked the Cambridge Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) to determine if this structure significantly contributes to the neighborhood either historically and/or architecturally.

A special meeting was held on June 18 by the HPC to respond to Council's request. If the HPC felt that the building was no longer significant and not a contributing building then a strong case was required because the HPC decision would have to be presented to Maryland Historical Trust (MHT) since the HPC would be overturning their designation. If the building was reaffirmed as being contributing or historically significant then it is a simple reaffirmation of the MHT findings.

During the meeting, public comment was allowed as it relates to the historic significance or non-historic significance of the Mill St. School. Persons wishing to speak were allowed 2 minutes to express their views. Several people from the neighborhood spoke, and all stated their support of the historical significance of the building. There were no statements made by the public in support of degrading the building to a non-contributing status.

The Mill St. School (MHT Designation D-341) has been certified as an historically significant contributing building by the MHT using the Secretary of Interior National Park Service Bulletin 16a as recently as 24 February 2010 by Architectural Historian Paul Tourat (document D-341). The original designation as an historically significant contributing building was made on 11 November 1976 by Catherine Moore with additional information added by Terrance Walbert. HPC Chair George Vojtech contacted Paul Tourat who is still active and reevaluating properties for MHT and explained the purpose of the hearing. He could not attend the hearing due to prior commitments but provided a letter just prior to the meeting reaffirming his earlier decision.

After public comment and considerable discussion, the HPC voted unanimously to reaffirm the Mill Street school building and site as historically and architecturally significant. The proposed text amendment for zoning of the Mill Street School property now returns to City Council for action.

Residents of the Mill Street neighborhood have expressed a strong preference for lower-density development of the School property. CAN encourages the neighborhood, and all concerned Cambridge residents, to continue to monitor Council activity on this issue.

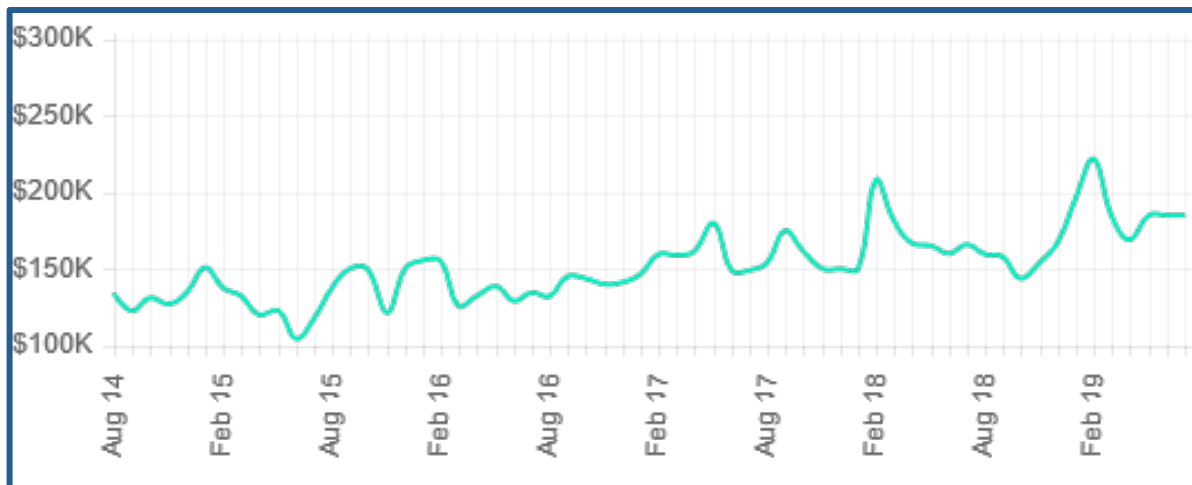
**City Council will receive the HRP report during its July 8 meeting. Come out on July 8th and express your opinion at the beginning of the City Council meeting. The meeting is at 6 pm - don't be late!**

**CAMBRIDGE REAL ESTATE TRENDS**

**Sales:** Currently, there are about 160 homes for sale in the Cambridge area. They include 135 single-family homes and 25 condos and townhomes. The average time on the market before sale improved to 84 days, with the median listing price of \$199.9k. In June, according to Realtor.com, 20 single-family homes and condo sales were completed, varying in price from \$682,500 to \$25,000. They are:

108 Riverside Dr, \$682.5k	113 Sailors Ln, \$165K	806 Seabreeze Rd, \$375K
900 Marshy Cove Unit 308, \$192K	508 Edlon Park Dr, \$220K	402 Shepherd Ave, \$145K
708 Lincoln Terrace, \$25K	710 Locust St, \$52K	305 Maryland Ave, \$50K
403 Edlon Park Dr, \$149.9K	5559 Bonnie Brook Rd, \$141K	309 Nathan Ave, \$119.5K
114 Somerset Ave, \$190K	701 Stiles Cir, \$38K	900 Marshy Cove Unit 406, \$185K
900 Marshy Cove Unit 411, \$164K	2127 Church Creek Rd, \$169.6K	2700 Willow Oak Dr 407D, \$355K
202 Robbins St, \$57K	310 Willis St, \$139.5	

**Median Sales Price:** Given the relatively small number of sales, median sales prices can vary quite a bit from month to month. With this in mind, this graph shows the median sales price trend over the last five years for the Cambridge area (source: Trulia). Since November 2013, monthly median sales prices have been as high as \$222,000 in February of this year, and as low as \$104,250 in June of 2015. The median sales price for homes in Cambridge for over the last two months was up, to \$195,000, based on 44 home sales.



**Home Values:** Zillow estimates the median home values (not sales prices) over time. According to a Zillow report, the median home value in Cambridge is \$131,000. Cambridge home values now have declined -2.2% over the past year and Zillow predicts they will fall -3.1% within the next year. The median price of homes currently listed in Cambridge is \$223,495.

The percent of delinquent mortgages in Cambridge is 2.2%, which is higher than the national value of 1.1%. With U.S. home values having fallen by more than 20% nationally from their peak in 2007 until their trough in late 2011, many homeowners are now underwater on their mortgages, meaning they owe more than their home is worth. The percent of Cambridge homeowners underwater on their mortgage is 17.7%.

### Update on Property Tax Increases:

As you may recall, the May edition of *Cambridge Real Estate Trends* included a discussion of the City's proposed tax increase of ten (10) cents per \$100 of assessed value on Real Property. After considering a wide range of concerns about the negative impact of such a dramatic increase, Cambridge City Council voted to increase the Real Property Tax Rate by five (5) cents per \$100 of assessed property value.

*Note: The Personal Property Tax Rate remained the same.*

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### CAN's MISSION & MEMBERSHIP

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 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. Membership information is available on the CAN website at <https://cambridgecan.org/join-can/>

- **CAN's Website** – <https://cambridgecan.org>
  - **CAN on FaceBook** – <https://www.facebook.com/CambridgeAssociationofNeighborhoods/>
  - **Contact CAN** – [CambridgeCAN@yahoo.com](mailto:CambridgeCAN@yahoo.com)
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### CAN HOUSING QUALITY COMMITTEE – PLANNING AND ZONING ISSUES

The Housing Quality Committee monitors issues affecting the quality of housing and the maintenance of property values in the City, including code enforcement. Committee members attend Planning Commission meetings to monitor zoning-related issues and report the information to the Board and Membership. *Please contact Greg Boss at [gvb21230@gmail.com](mailto:gvb21230@gmail.com) of Judd Vickers at [judd.vickers@gmail.com](mailto:judd.vickers@gmail.com) to volunteer.*

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### CAN NEIGHBORHOOD DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE – SOCIAL EVENTS & 'NEIGHBORS HELPING NEIGHBORS'

"Neighborhoods" are organized by small groups willing to work together to address neighborhood issues through small social events and "neighbor-helping-neighbor" activities. The **Social Events Subcommittee** organizes community-wide events. *Contact Chuck McFadden at [Ragtime31@gmail.com](mailto:Ragtime31@gmail.com) to volunteer.*

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### CAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE – WRITERS NEEDED

CAN'S Communications Committee desperately needs **writers** and **photographers** to develop articles about CAN and its activities, get them published in local newspapers, and have them promoted by local media *Please contact Tom Puglisi at [tom.puglisi@comcast.net](mailto:tom.puglisi@comcast.net) to volunteer.*

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COMMUNITY NEWS – COOPERATING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

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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).

**MIDSHORE MEALS TIL MONDAY**

Mid Shore Meals 'til Monday sends food home over the weekends all year round for nearly 250 food-insecure children in Dorchester County. During these summer months, we provide food to children attending summer school at all elementary schools, the Maces Lane STEM program, the Empowerment Center (Flagg Camp), the Judy Center, and New Beginnings, as well as children whose parents are counseled at Clearview Professional Center. For additional information, please visit our Facebook page or our website at <http://www.Midshoremealstilmonday.org>, or call Leslie Bishop, Director, at 703 371-5191.



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**SHORERIVERS**

**ShoreRivers** is taking its water quality monitoring data to the next level with its RiverWatch platform, which allows the public to see grades for the sampling stations as data are collected throughout the sampling season. Read more about the Choptank at: <https://www.shorerivers.org/choptank>

**ShoreRivers Annual River Report Card**

ShoreRivers reports that the entire Choptank River and its tributaries declined in water quality in 2018. Check out the full report for the rivers in our area at: <https://static1.squarespace.com/static/5983720d59cc68fa41f034db/t/5ccc7c1ae2c48310125df48d/1556904989192/2018+ShoreRivers+Report+Card+FINAL+-+WEB.pdf>