



**UPCOMING MEETING DATES**  
*Contingent Upon COVID-19 Restrictions*

Thursday, September 10, 2020

Thursday, November 12, 2020-

*All Meetings will be held at 7:00 pm 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 Board of Directors and Executive Committee Meeting Minutes
    - <https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/meetings/2020-meeting-minutes/>
  - Commissioners’ Corner –
    - Messages from City Council Commissioners  
<https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/commissioner-posts/>
- Note: CAN invites messages from all City Council Commissioners for its Newsletter and Website.*
- CAN Planning & Zoning Notes – <https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/p-and-z/>
  - 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 – RE-EVALUATING CAN UNDER COVID-19

CAN is going through a re-evaluation process, just as most of you are these days. Things we used to do – clean up campaigns, ice cream socials and CAN Jam – have gone by the wayside as a result of COVID-19.

We continue to focus on housing with Judd Vickers keeping us up to date on zoning issues, and Fred and Martha Phillips-Patrick keeping up with real estate trends for us. We also have monitored a number of issues with the City on various housing situations and the continuing saga of the Mill St School.

Discussions with the CAN Board led us to get involved in **Cambridge Community Conversations (CCC)**. We have joined forces with WHCP Community Radio, the Dorchester Banner, and the Dorchester Chamber of Commerce to produce a biweekly “conversation” with a person (or persons) of interest to our Community.

The first effort, led by WHCP, featured the Dorchester Department of Health, and was followed by a conversation with the Mayor Victoria Jackson-Stanley, produced by CAN. Last week, the Dorchester Chamber of Commerce hosted a conversation with representatives of the business community.

In the future, we have lined up conversations with:

- Ken Kozel, President of Shore Regional Health (July 1);
- David Bromwell, Superintendent of Dorchester County Public Schools (July 15);
- Angie Hengst, Ironman/Eagleman Chair (July 29); and
- Patrick Comiskey, the Cambridge City Manager (August 12).

So how does this involve you and our community? Well, it is hard to get local information out to the community with COVID-19 restrictions in effect, so we are trying to keep you informed about the major issues in the City. This seems like a good solution, at least until we can get back together again.

We are looking for ideas for new Cambridge Community Conversation programs, and as always, we are looking for volunteers to help put on these programs. Each show requires a producer, a moderator, a question analyst and a tech person. We could also use help in advertising these shows.

We hope you are enjoying the shows and hopefully you can help put them on. If interested in helping or you have an idea for a show contact me at Ragtime31@gmail.com.

*Chuck McFadden, President, Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods (CAN)*  
*Ragtime31@gmail.com*

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## HISTORIC PRESERVATION COMMISSION UPDATE

The Historic Preservation Commission (HPC) continues to meet by conference call. Agendas (with call-in numbers) and accompanying applications are available on the Cambridge City website Agenda Center at <http://www.choosecambridge.com/AgendaCenter>. HPC members look forward to returning to in-person meetings, dates TBD.

## CAMBRIDGE REAL ESTATE TRENDS

*By Fred and Martha Phillips-Patrick*

**COVID-19 Update:** According to the latest statistics from the Dorchester County Health Department (as of June 24, 2020), there were a total of 13 active cases in the County, with a total of just one person hospitalized. In Montgomery County, which is just outside of Washington, D.C., there were a total of 80 active cases (three-day average), with a total of 61 hospitalizations, averaged over the last three days. Given these data, we have often heard from local realtors that folks in the DC area are looking for safer places to which to move. Has this affected Cambridge? Let's see what the numbers suggest.

**Sales:** Currently, according to Realtor.com, there are about 98 single family, condos, and townhomes for sale in the Cambridge area. They include 86 single family homes and 12 condos and townhomes. The average listing price was \$225K and the median sold price was \$175k

From May 1<sup>st</sup> through June 23rd, according to Realtor.com, 28 single family, townhouses, and condo sales were completed, varying in price from \$620,000 to \$15,000, with a median value of \$188K. They are:

1503 Hambrooks Blvd, \$500K	29 Algonquin Rd, \$280K	5120 Paw Paw Rd, \$215K
404 Robbins Farm Rd, \$252K	121 Teal Ln, \$231K	2631 Rebecca Ln, \$65K
5115 David Greene Rd, \$450K	911 Springfield Ave, \$122K	719 Washington St, \$15K
105 Talbot Ave, \$260K	336 Appleby School Rd, \$188K	706 Travers St, \$76K
2818 Persimmon Pl, \$285K	606 Water St Apt 6, \$90K	41 Algonquin Rd, \$175K
103 Shawnee Cir, \$300K	2643 Rebecca Ln, \$75K	610 Earle St, \$140K
812 Pinehurst Dr, \$209K	806 Locust St, \$42K	105 Sailors Ln, \$175K
2718 Luthy Lane Rd, \$340K	5518 Whitehall Rd, \$276K	6206 Castle Haven Rd, \$620K
208 Wood Duck Dr, \$135K	7 West End Ave, \$135K	5452 Tates Bank Rd, \$550K
301 Boundary Ave, \$51K		

**Median Sales Price:** Given the relatively small number of sales, median sales prices can vary quite a bit from month to month. 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 over the last month was \$188K, based on the above 28 home sales, down from their February high before the epidemic.

**Home Values:** Zillow estimates the median home values (not sales prices) over time. According to their data, median home values have fallen about \$4K from the beginning of this year, through June. According to Long and Foster, the median home value in Cambridge, MD is \$191,000. This is higher than the county median home value of \$150,000. The national median home value is \$231,815. The average price of homes sold in Cambridge is \$191,000. Approximately 39% of Cambridge homes are owned, compared with 45% rented, while 16% are vacant.

**Conclusion:** While 28 houses, townhouses, and condos have sold over the last two months, the median sales price has not changed all that much, and are down from their February highs. A quick perusal of houses currently listed shows a significant number with recently reduced offering prices. Our conclusion is that the data indicates that the surge in demand for Cambridge homes from the DC suburbs has not yet materialized to the extent we might have hoped.

## DEVELOPER MAKES ON-SITE PRESENTATION FOR MILL STREET SCHOOL

*By Rick Klepfer*

**NOTE:** THE CAMBRIDGE ASSOCIATION OF NEIGHBORHOODS (CAN) HAS NOT ENDORSED, AND AS AN ORGANIZATION WILL NOT ENDORSE, ANY SPECIFIC PROPOSAL FOR DEVELOPMENT OF THE MILL STREET SCHOOL PROPERTY. CAN'S GOAL IS TO FACILITATE OPEN DISCUSSION ABOUT ANY PROPOSED DEVELOPMENT AND TO KEEP CAN MEMBERS ACCURATELY INFORMED AS PROPOSALS ARE CONSIDERED. CAN ENCOURAGES MEMBERS TO MAKE THEIR VIEWS KNOWN TO THE CITY AND TO PROSPECTIVE DEVELOPERS, BUT CAUTIONS THAT MEMBERS SHOULD NOT REPRESENT THEIR VIEWS AS THOSE OF CAN.

On Tuesday, June 16, the developer for the Mill Street School property conducted an on-site, informational presentation on their plans to renovate and develop that site. The lead for this project is Donald Dougherty, who identifies himself as a Partner in Cambridge School House Associates, LLC. This organization, while having a Washington DC phone number, has a local address of PO Box 1153, Cambridge. Mr. Dougherty started the meeting at 6:30 in the evening and about forty-five neighbors and interested parties were in attendance.

As people who have followed the negotiations on this property over the years know, the many complexities of this site have not been easy to work through in order to arrive at a solution that would satisfy the majority of the neighborhood. There have been previous proposals that maximized the available real estate with a total of 23 units, and some with a lesser number of units. Any of these proposals, including the one now under consideration, will require a special exception to the present zoning of the site. The legality of such a re-classification is not clear. The current zoning is NC-3, which only allows single-family, detached homes, with a few conditional and special exceptions. This means that the present school structure is non-conforming; any change to a zoning classification should make the non-conformity less, not increase it, as apartments would do.

Last fall, Mr. Dougherty made a preliminary presentation to the citizens of Cambridge during a CAN meeting held at WHCP. His concept at the time was to renovate the school building to house six residential units, and to construct a new apartment structure that would contain sixteen residential units. This plan was met with some resistance and a lot of constructive criticisms. To his credit, Mr. Dougherty listened to the comments of that meeting and came up with a revised plan, which was presented at the June 16<sup>th</sup> meeting. This plan reduced the total number of units to nineteen and reduced the amount of impervious coverage.

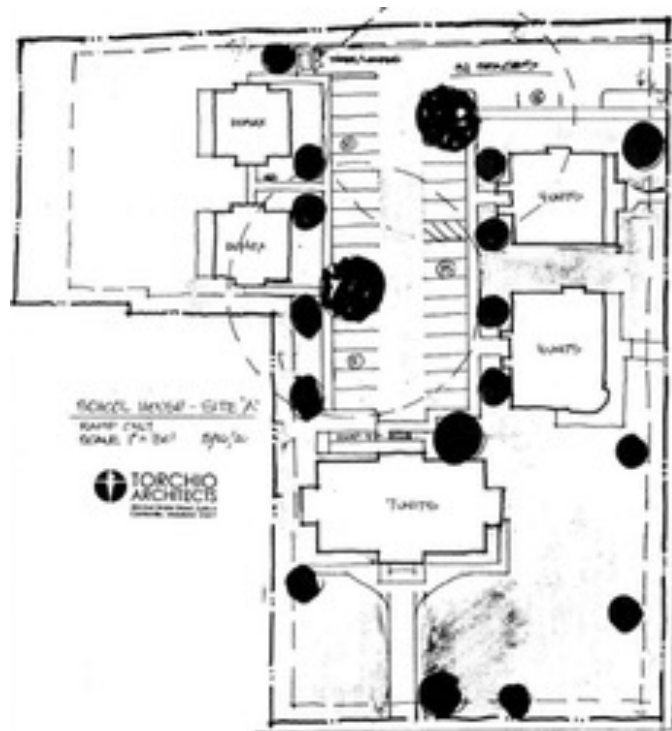
In addition to the reduction in the number of units, the new plan toned-down the scale of the project by replacing the earlier planned three-story apartment building with four two-story, house-sized buildings. The new plan also featured a public "pocket park" at the corner of Mill and School streets, all off-street parking, and a more highly developed landscape plan. Mr. Dougherty provided all attendees of the meeting a substantial handout which contained drawings and calculations for the revised development plan. There have always been concerns about the development of the school property, and a reluctance to trust that what is shown on preliminary plans will be accurately reproduced in reality. A number of attendees to the meeting expressed their concerns. Among these were the following:

- Why must the majority of the development be rentals, when Cambridge already has an overwhelming number of rental units?
- How will the project deal with the increase in traffic in the West End?
- How will narrow School Street accommodate the additional traffic?

- How will the already problematic issue of surface water runoff be dealt with?
- The proposal requires some units to be owner-occupied, how will that requirement be enforced and for what time period?
- Who is going to manage the property in the long-term and how will the initial maintenance requirements be carried forward for the long term and with subsequent owners?
- How will the spot-zoning change of this site avoid setting a precedent for future development in the historic zone?

Many attendees to the meeting felt that these questions and more need to be addressed and acceptable resolutions incorporated into the final design and felt that there needs to be more interaction between the developer, the town government, and the citizens. Neighbors and concerned citizens are encouraged to make their concerns clear and to closely monitor the approval process of the project. It will be somewhat difficult to keep aware of what is transpiring, because of the current pandemic, but the time to become informed and to act is now. The developer is moving forward on this project and if the citizens do not make any comments, the results may not be what we might wish.

If citizens wish additional information on the project, they can contact Mr. Dougherty through email at: [dkd@clieast.com](mailto:dkd@clieast.com)



Schematic Site Plan for Mill Street School  
*as provide by Douglas Dougherty*

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OPINION - WE LIVE IN INTERESTING AND IMPORTANT TIMES

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*By an old white woman (aka Ellie Ludvigsen)*

I was born in the early '40s to a Danish immigrant father and a 1st generation Danish mother. My father was a minister and we had people of all colors, from all countries, and of all faiths in our home for as long as I can remember. We had less than nothing but no one was ever turned away who was in need.

When I was around 10, a group of KKK came to our house late at night and burned a cross in our front lawn because my father helped a Black soldier, walking back from Washington State to somewhere in the south. I had never seen my father so angry. He pointed out men he knew in their white pointy hats and told them how unchristian they were and to get out of his yard. My father had a temper but I had never seen him so angry before that and I never saw him so angry after. *I value that education.*

As a Danish immigrant, he had been a minister in a Danish church in Iowa closed down because groups of people speaking in a foreign language were outlawed there. He had learned English but he and many others could understand worship nuances easier in their first language than their second or 3rd or 4th. He was shunned and ridiculed his whole life because he had a heavy accent. *I value that education.*

After the KKK incident, he decided to leave the active ministry, and started a religious bookstore in Denver, where we lived. I remember growing up among books and clergy of all faiths, including pastors, ministers, priests, rabbis, & Imams who came because he would order books for them and was always interested and open to learn about and discuss theology of any kind. *I value that education.*

My mother became an attorney years before most woman were even allowed to go to college, fully supported by her immigrant parents. She was an author, storyteller, sought after speaker, and bank VP. I learned, without consciously knowing it, what an independent woman was from her! *I value that education.*

What I have learned from my upbringing, my dealing with sexual harassment & assault, my working with street gangs and the criminal justice system in NYC, is that no one is better than anyone else. If any of us decides that we are better than others because of color of skin, religion, sexual orientation, gender, financial status, whether we rent, own our own home or are homeless, have no education or have advanced degrees, have the ability to work or not, whether we like cats or dogs, have a disability, are fit or unfit, fat or slim, or any other criteria we use to divide us, we only demean our own self. *I value that education.*

*What did you learn growing up?*

These are uncomfortable times for many people. Let us be concerned, active, and embrace that discomfort so we can strive to do something about what millions of others are feeling all the time. Let us open up lines of communication and confront bias with those who surround us. If we don't act, we have only ourselves to blame.

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COMMUNITY NEWS – COOPERATING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

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**MIDSHORE MEALS TIL MONDAY**

*MidShore Meals 'til Monday* sends food home over the weekends all year round for nearly 250 food-insecure children in Dorchester County. During summer months, they 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. During a “normal” month *MidShore Meals 'til Monday* provides food assistance for about 500 students.

*MidShore Meals 'til Monday* is providing extra food and meals to the children of Dorchester County during the school closures amid COVID-19. They have provided 4,752 meals of food over the last 30-day period as compared to 1,640 in the previous 30-days.

*Meals 'til Monday* needs your support in order to keep providing essential nourishment to our children. Donations are fully tax deductible and can be made at <https://www.mscf.org/donate-online/>. For more information about *MidShore Meals 'til Monday*, please call Leslie Bishop, Director, at 703-371-5191, or visit their Facebook page or website at [www.midshoremealstilmonday.org/](http://www.midshoremealstilmonday.org/).



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**LOCAL CORONAVIRUS INFORMATION**

The best resource we have found for up-to-date, local information about the Coronavirus is the Maryland Department of Health Coronavirus website at <http://coronavirus.maryland.gov/>. The site includes a dashboard with the most current statistical data from every Maryland County, as well as information on symptoms, resources, and frequently asked question. **As of June 25, Dorchester County has registered 184 COVID-19 cases and 5 confirmed deaths.** Statewide, Maryland has registered 65,777 cases and 3001 confirmed deaths. Marylanders are advised to take precautions to slow the spread of COVID-19, as follows:

- Wear a mask in public
- Practice social distancing
- Wash your hands often with soap and water
- Cover your mouth and nose while sneezing or coughing and avoid touching your face
- Avoid contact with sick people, and if sick, stay home and call your health care provider
- Avoid handshaking, hugging, and other intimate types of greeting

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## CAN's MISSION & MEMBERSHIP

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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/>.

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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* Chuck McFadden at [Ragtime31@gmail.com](mailto:Ragtime31@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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## 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.

