**Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods Unofficial Note on**

**City of Cambridge – City Council Meeting**

**Monday, February 14, 2022**

**In Person and Virtual Meeting**

Attended 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM. Meeting continued after 8:00 PM

Submitted by Alison Kennedy

**Agenda**

Dennis Carmichael’s presentation on Packing House design work was taken off the agenda list.Approved by all Commissioners.

**Consent Calendar**

Commissioner Sputty Cephas asked if there were any conflicts with activities and programs coming up. The Acting City Manager said he would check on that.

**Ordinances for Second Reading**

* Ordinance 1181 – To provide that restaurants are a permitted use with conditions in the industrial zoning district.
* ***Public Hearing - Comments***
* Mr. Vincent spoke on behalf of Hooper Island Oysters (HIO).
* HIO sells seafood on Chesapeake Ave in Cambridge which is in an industrial park.
* They want to expand their business to include a restaurant.
* HIO wants to make sure that they have met the requirements to do that in the mixed area industrial park.
* ***Commissioner Comments***
* Commissioner Chad Malkus, Ward 5 ,thought the wording in Ordinance 1181 was restrictive to having restaurant growth in an industrial area. The reference to ancillary use in 13A should be stricken.
* Commissioner Sputty Cephas, Ward 4 asked the Planning Commission if Mr. Vincent’s primary business is shucking oysters. The answer was yes.
* **There were 3 Yeas and 2 Nays on Ordinance 1181. The motion carries.**
* Ordinance 1183 – To regulate panhandling in the City of   
  Cambridge,
* ***Public Hearing – Comments***
* The concern is what kind of cycle is being started with the imposed fines.
* Commenter suggested mental health referrals.
* Also, for aggressive panhandlers, give the police a say.
* A comment made that most panhandlers are harmless just don’t have any money.
* Another comment was that there should be a holistic approach.
* Police could refer the panhandlers and situation to the proper organization and resources.
* Incarceration should not be first line of defense.
* Police already refer the panhandlers to social work and mental health organizations.
* The comment was that the fines are just another tool for the

Police to use for aggressive panhandling.

* It was stated that referrals to social work organizations have not been successful for aggressive panhandlers.
* One commenter discussed in detail what happened when one particular panhandler was located in an apartment in a residential setting. The professionals came together to try to solve the problem. There was evidence that this particular panhandler was endangering himself by walking in the middle of the street flagging down cars.
* ***Commissioner Comments***
* Commissioner Brian Roche, Ward 1
* Aggressive panhandlers need to go before a judge.
* They must be arrested and awarded guardianship by a judge.
* Language in the Ordinance 1183 was modeled after the Tacoma Park Ordinance.
* Commissioner Jameson Harrington, Ward 3
* Getting aggressive panhandlers before judge is the best tool we have.
* All resources have been exhausted.
* Commissioner Lajan Cephas, Ward 2
* A lot of the feedback received said that if the social services was rejected, there was nothing that could be done.
* Commissioner Sputty Cephas, Ward 4
* The councilmen have reached out to different agencies for solutions to panhandling.
* There is nothing the agency can do unless there is a court order.
* Commissioner Chad Markus, Ward 5
* The police department has tried all that they can.
* The aggressive panhandler must go before a judge.

**Old Business**

* Request to Purchase City Property on Phillips Street
* Ms. Escher, the Planning & Zoning Commission director, commented on the outcome of the meeting with Groove City that wants to buy the property from the city. The amount of money the city paid must be allocated back to the state.
* ***Commissioner Comments***
* All wards said that the support letters asked for in a previous meeting were great.
* Commissioner Chad Markus, Ward 5. If Groove City defaults, the city should have first right to get the building back.
* Commissioner Sputty Cephas, Ward 4. Would like to see some kind of financial commitment from Groove City.
* Commissioner Jameson Harrington, Ward supported comments made by Wards 4 and 5.
* Brian Roche, Ward 1.
* The city could benefit from a land banking trust plan.
* The city would have the option to purchase buildings throughout the city to help rejuvenate neighborhoods.
* It should be built into the process that if an organization defaults, the property automatically goes back to the city.
* There ensued a discussion about the details of the purchase by Groove City from the city of Cambridge.
* The council needs more information on Land Building Trust.
* Need the ordinance written and approved before the building can turned over to Groove City.
* The building must be deemed surplus.
* The total cost of the transfer must be determined.
* Discussion about Form of Government (Mayor vs. Commission President)
* The city attorney said there would have to be changes made to the charter.
* There could be a provision put in for flexibility and make it a 2-year role.
* Could elect for a 4-year term; however, the chairman and vice chairman could have the option of switching roles after 2 years.
* The Council plans to put this on the city website so the public can see what the choices are.
* GFNY Cycling Race
* Previously, the council had requested that testimonial letters be forwarded to them from host cities that have sponsored this race.
  + GFNY complied with this request and the outcome was very positive.
* Susan Banks, one of the Iron Man race coordinators, spoke very positively in support of having the GFNY race come to Cambridge.
* This would be a 3-year commitment.
* The first year would bring in about 1,000 athletes plus 1 to 2 guests per athlete.
* Felt this was a good compliment to the Iron Man.
* Investment needed from the city of Cambridge is $11,250.
* ***Commissioner Comments***
* Commissioner Jameson Harrington, Ward 3. $11,250 for this race is a good investment.
* Sputty Cephas, Ward 4 . Agreed with Ward 3.
* Chad Malkus, Ward 5. A little bit of money will go a long way
* Lejan Cephas, Ward 2. This year’s funding for the race would come out of the general fund.
* **Approved by all the wards.**
* Harriet Tubman Statue Update
* The organization responsible for the statue is asking the city of Cambridge to contribute $50,000 to this project.
* Originally, the whole project was estimated at $150,000 but prices have gone up.
* The base of the statue is granite from Vermont.
* After being carved out, the base will go to Delaware for engraving.
* Looking to have statue installed on base in September 2022.
* Dorchester County is covering the cost of the pavers.
* The surrounding hardscape of the project will be addressed in future fund raiser efforts.
* $25,000 would be the deposit needed to be made by Cambridge.
* The total needed from the city of Cambridge is $50,000.
* The city manager will be looking into where the monies will come from.
* All anticipate that the city of Cambridge will benefit from having the Harriet Tubman statue in town.
* **All wards approved of expenditure for the statue.**

The meeting continued on from 8:00 PM with the following items on the agenda:

* Council Vote on Chair Pro-Temp position
* FY2023 Budget Discussion
* Upcoming Meetings
* Public Comment
* Department Head Reports
* Acting City Manager Comments
* Commissioner Comments
* Closed Session