

**CAN's Unofficial Notes on
City of Cambridge City Council Meeting
Monday, May 9, 2022**

In Person and Virtual Meeting

Attended 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM. Meeting continued with department progress reports.
Submitted by Alison Kennedy

Agenda

Agenda approved as presented.

Update on Harriet Tubman sculpture

- presented by Adrian Holmes from Alpha Genesis.
- Looking to focus on getting the sculpture here and anchored.
- The rest of the plans for the area will be added later (i.e. meandering path, gardens, etc)
- Later in meeting, update from landscape designer.

Public Comments

- Trouble with WebEx
- Public comments on hold.

Calendar

- All events on the calendar gone over and approved by all wards.

Amendment Readings for Ordinances

- *Ordinance 1196 – (Repealing of Ordinances 881,882,934 regarding the rules and by-laws of the Cambridge Historic Preservation Commission)*
 - The city attorney read the ordinance.
 - This is second hearing on Ordinance 1196.
 - *Public Hearing – no questions from the public*
- *Ordinance 1197– (Amendment of unified development code of property sold in historic district of Cambridge)*
 - The city attorney read the ordinance.
 - This is second hearing on Ordinance 1197.
 - *Public Hearing – no questions from the public*

- *Ordinance 1198– (Amendment of unified development code of signage in Cambridge)*
 - The city attorney read the ordinance.
 - This is second hearing on Ordinance 1198.
 - *Public Hearing – no questions from the public*

Old Business

Update on Cannery Way

- Delivered by Pat Escher, Director of City Planning
- The Preservation Society of Maryland thinks a *replica of Harriet Tubman’s father’s cabin* would be perfect for the city of Cambridge in Cannery Way Park.
- Ms Tubman’s father is Ben Ross.
- The Preservation Society feels that the cabin would tie in nicely with the Harriet Tubman mural.
- Ms. Escher is looking to acquire grant money to hire a historian.
- Questions by Commissioners
 - Brian Roche, Ward 1
 - In favor of bringing in the cabin.
 - Would like to get community opinion on this.
 - Lejan Cephas, Ward 2
 - Would like community opinion.
 - Spuddy Cephas, Ward 4
 - Is in favor to make a big an impact as possible.
 - Chad Malkus, Ward 5
 - Is in favor of having the cabin here.
 - However, it should not be wedged into the parking lot.
 - Should explore getting a nice large area for the cabin.
 - Ms Escher said that looking for a larger area was a different process.
 - Will have to make a plan to acquire adjacent properties.
 - The committee will focus on the parking for Cannery Way for now.
 - Brian Roche, Ward 1
 - Asked if there was a more suitable place on the byway for the cabin (the byway goes to New York).

- Lejan Cephas, Ward 2
 - Asked who wanted it for Cambridge.
 - Ms. Escher said it was Secretary Holt and the Preservation Society wanted this for Cambridge.

- Sputty Cephas, Ward 4
 - Made a motion to approve the submission of a grant to hire a historian.
 - All wards approved.

Update from Landscape Designer of “Beacon of Hope” Sculpture

- Presented by Vincent Cammacho
- Showed a video of the proposed layout around the sculpture
- The video reflects the changes in the plan now that the project is being done in phases.
- Highlights of changes – bricks were reduced; 2 benches added that face the sculpture; low voltage spotlights around the sculpture plaza.
- There were no questions from the Council.

New Business

International City/County Management Association (ICMA)

ICMA offers professional development programs, research, publications, data and information, technical assistance, and training to create excellence in local governance and fostering professional local government management worldwide.

- The city has the potential to hire 1 or 2 individuals to take on the duties of this program.
- The city has funded 4 professional positions that are vacant.
- The Council would like to see them filled by young professionals.
- Lejan Cephas, Ward 2 asked – *Are just 2 people needed?*
 - No. The city would like to hire 2 now from pool of young people graduating now from college and looking for employment.
 - The city will look for 2 other people to fill open positions at a later date.
 - There is a post Masters degree graduate position that is paid and temporary.

Gun Violence

- Lejan Cephas, Ward 2 and Council President, read an article about increased gun violence.
- There will be a Gun Violence Awareness Day in June.
- It will be supported by wearing orange (like the hunters' vests) during the month of June.
- The Council President declared the month of June as Gun Awareness month.

Asian/Pacific Islanders/Native Americans/Hawaiian Heritage Month

- The month of May is celebrating the heritage of these people and their contributions and achievements.

Solid Waste Contract Extension Update

- The May 23rd city council meeting will have an update on the data needed to go forward with the motion to extend contract.
- The city manager is concerned about the price of gas which was outside the bounds of the original contract.

Spot Shooter Program

- Head of the police department spoke about this program.
- The program uses a "shot spotter".
- Sensors are placed in the area where most of the shots are coming from.
- The police department will be contacted right away when shot detected.
- Have to spend the money for the program by June 3, 2022.
- Service is for 1 year.
- Cost is \$14,200/year.
- At the end of 2 years, will know if it is a good fit for the city of Cambridge.
- Have also applied for another grant that addresses violence.

CWDI (Cambridge Waterfront Development) Update

- Development of Cambridge Harbor will be presented at the next city council meeting on May 23.
- By-law changes that will be needed will be presented at that time.

Updates on the City of Cambridge (of public interest)

- Presented by the city manager
- **Courthouse** has been closed during the Covid pandemic. Planning to re-open soon.
- **Bradford House** – Will have a new management company. Seems to be active in accommodating the residents and working with the city.
- **Blue Ruin** has purchased the Chesapeake Equipment property.
- **American Rescue Plan** monies
- City manager has been working with department heads on a **budget for the city**. May have to have work session on this.

Commission Vacancies

- Presented by the City Planning Director, Pat Escher.
- There are openings for 7 commissioners on various City Commissions.
- Sometimes Commissions do not have a quorum
- The vacancies in the Planning Commission are most critical
- Some positions are mayoral appointments.
- Jamison Harrington, Ward 4 and Chad Malkus, Ward 5 both stated that they have been interviewing prospective commissioners from their wards for appointment.
- Both Wards 4 & 5 said that they would have candidates chosen by the next meeting.
- Two commissioners were re-appointed to the Planning Commission.
- All wards approved this motion.
- Ethics Commission re-appointed Katy Day. Her term had expired.
- All wards approved.
- Traffic and Safety Commission – if want to be part of this by May 23, send email to Lejan Cephas, Ward 2.
- ADA (Americans with Disabilities) Committee – has 1 vacancy.
- Historic Preservation Commission – Needs an alternate.
- Planning Commission – has 2 more vacancies.
- All Commission heads were alerted to send email to Council President, Lejan Cephas, if want to be part of filling the commissioner vacancies.

Bikeways Network Grant

The program supports projects that maximize bicycle access, fill missing links in the state's bicycle network, and enhance last-mile connections to work, school, shopping and transit.

- Requires an \$8,000 match by the city.
- Comments
 - Brian Roche, Ward 1
 - Would like to use the grant money to do a feasibility study to make a better plan for bicycles, pedestrians and people with limited abilities to move around the city.
 - Chad Malkus, Ward 5
 - Proposed a motion to pursue the grant
- All wards approved this motion

Public Comment

- Thank-you to the police department for giving \$25 voucher from Advanced Auto to citizens needing car repairs.
- Thank-you to Council for the street closure to allow neighbors and families to get together.
- Election for Mayor – when will this take place? Answer: It will be discussed at May 16 work session.
- Commissioner -at-large position – change the by-laws to add another position. Answer: Will be discussed at May 16 work session.
- Thank-you for the Gun Violence proclamation and Shooter program.
 - Can there be a police presence on the streets (Maces Lane) when the children are dismissed from school?
 - Kids are getting jumped/beat up on way home from school
 - Resident scared when juveniles “hit” her house on way home from school.
 - Gunshots heard on 3 occasions over the last 3 months.
 - What is timeframe of gunshot response *now*? Answer: more than 45 seconds. The Shooter program will be much quicker and around 45 seconds.
- Community is changing
 - Trying to get people of color more engaged in the community.
 - Council members could be mentors to develop cultural programs for children of color to increase self-worth.
 - Should start in elementary school and continue to middle school.

- Would cost about \$5,000 for a pilot program to last 2 to 3 years.

Department Heads read progress reports.