

CAN Unofficial Notes on City Council Meeting

Monday, September 9, 2024

Commission Chambers - 305 Gay Street

Cambridge, MD 21613

6:00 pm

6:00 pm Mayor convened Commission in Regular Session

Agenda

1. Mayor and Commissioners approve agenda as presented 5-0.

Consent Agenda

2. Meeting Minutes, August 21, 2024, City-County Joint Meeting
3. Meeting Minutes, August 26, 2024, Regular Session
4. Cambridge Police Dept will hold “**Hispanic Festival**” on **Sunday October 13, 2024**, from 12pm to 5pm at Cedar and Race Street. Rain date of Sunday October 20, 2024.
5. Christina Wingate-Spence, Executive Director of **Cambridge Main Street** will hold these events:
 - a. “**Mistletoe on Main**” on **Saturday December 14, 2024**, from 10am to 5pm on Poplar Street. Road closure from 9am to 6pm.
 - b. “**Motown on Main**” on **Saturday March 8, 2025**, from 2pm to 6pm Poplar Stret. Road closure from 1pm to 8pm.
6. Housing Program Grant Funded Projects
 - a. Council Agenda Report from Housing Program Manager, Ed Crosby
 - Report posted on choosecambridge.com with city council agenda for 9/09/24.
 - **All events for consent calendar approved 5-0**

Ordinances for First Reading – none

Ordinances for Second Reading -

7. ORDINANCE NO. 1240 AN ORDINANCE OF THE COMMISSIONERS OF CAMBRIDGE, MARYLAND CONTINUING THE TEMPORARY JUVENILE CURFEW WITHIN THE CITY OF CAMBRIDGE for additional 12 months.

Second Reading Ordinances 1240, 1207, 1229 - temporary extension of curfew

- February 1st, 2023, Ordinance 1207 regarding the Temporary Juvenile Curfew became effective with the City of Cambridge.
- September 25, 2023, the continuation of the Juvenile Curfew Ordinance No. 1229 was passed and went into effect on October 1, 2023, and is good for a period of twelve months.
- Since February of 2023 the Cambridge Police Department has written a total of 25 curfew violations with five being repeat offenders.
- Of the 25, the age range for violations was between 11- and 15-years of age and the hours of the violations were between 11:23 pm and 4:45 am.
- There have been no citations given out.
- Letters were sent out to all parents/guardians.
- Some of the crimes committed during the curfew were motor vehicle theft, theft from vehicles, burglary tools, etc.
- Services have also been offered to several of the curfew violators’ families with some success in assisting the families of two youth.

- When obtaining crime data, there has been a decrease in total crimes by juveniles throughout the city, however, it has been found that most crimes committed by juveniles range from mid-afternoon to early evening.
- There has been no measurable impact on crime but still there are many positives regarding the curfew.
- Most important part of the curfew is safety and education along with identifying youths and their families that may need additional assistance and services that can be made available to them.
- Cambridge Police Department has been working with Juvenile Services and other community leaders to develop a teen court. This will be run by the Cambridge Police Department and called “Cambridge Teen Court”.
- The police department hopes that the Cambridge Teen Court will be up and running in the mid to late fall 2024.

b. Public Hearing

- **Shay Lewis-Cisco, candidate for Ward 2 commissioner**, shared that during a Community Vision discussion with teens from Mace’s Middle School, it was stated by the juveniles that they were in favor of the curfew.

c. Commissioner Comments on Extended Curfew

- **Sputty Cephas, Ward 4**, shared words of a teen currently incarcerated who said the curfew gave him an opportunity to think about his actions. Mr. Cephas believed that if there was no curfew, this teen would be locked up permanently or not with us at all. Should the program be reviewed annually or made more permanent?
- **Jameson Harrington, Ward 3**, said he was in favor of reviewing the program annually which would allow some flexibility to change something if needed.
- **Brian Roche, Ward 5**, shared that, at first, he thought it was going to be used as a punitive tool. However, it has proved to be quite positive for those involved and he is in favor of the curfew extension.
- **Laurel Atkiss, Ward 1**, talked in favor of the curfew extension having a positive effect on the teens. Felt it was a good conversation starter for police to use with teens.
- **Mayor Rideout** asked if it should be reviewed more often than once a year.
- **Police Chief Todd** shared that he would be willing to update the city council whenever they want about the curfew’s effect on teens in community.
- **Sputty Cephas, Ward 4**, asked if there could be a brief update on the curfew program added to the monthly police report.

- **Amendments to Ordinance 1240 approved 4-1.**

Old Business - none

New Business

8. Department of Transportation Reconnecting Communities Pilot Grant

a. Council Agenda Report from Grant Coordinator Steffanie Malkus

- By September 30th, the city will submit a proposal to the Department of Transportation’s Reconnecting Communities Pilot (RCP) Program. The RCP Program focuses on improving access to daily needs such as jobs, education, healthcare, food, etc.
- The city will be requesting funding for a planning grant.

- Funding will be used to develop a ready-to-implement plan detailing how to connect existing bike/pedestrian trails to five (5) Cambridge hubs, including the Packing House, Pine Street Revitalization Neighborhood, Cambridge Harbor, Main Street, and the Hyatt.
- The budget is still in the preliminary stages, but the funding request will be for approximately \$1 million. Fiscal Impact The City will be requesting approximately \$1 million from DOT.
- A 20% match is required by DOT. The City will match \$200,000 to develop this trail expansion plan.

9. DHCD State Revitalization Program Applications

a. Council Agenda Report from Grant Coordinator Steffanie Malkus

- Many applications submitted to various organizations for funding under the State Revitalization Programs to achieve goals on city projects.
- Entities offering funding include the Community Legacy, Maryland Façade Improvement, Seed Community Development Anchor Institution, Strategic Demolition Fund.
- Entities applying for grants include CWDI, Alpha Genesis, City of Cambridge, Preservation Maryland, University of Maryland Environmental Center and Habitat for Humanity. (Details available in report attached to 9/9/24 city council agenda at choosecambridge.com).
- In total, the above entities requested funding of \$6,387,536 from the state. The state requires a local government resolution approving each of these projects.
- The City respectfully requests approval from Council to move all applications forward in the selection process.
- Mayor Rideout asked if there is a formal resolution needed.
- Brandon Hesson said he talked to a representative from DHCD. If there is no action taken within 45 days, it is assumed that the council supports the Revitalization grant applications.
- **No action taken due to the response by Mr Hesson.**

10. Enough Act Grant Proposal

a. Memorandum from Mayor Stephen Rideout

- Earlier this year, Governor Moore signed the ENOUGH Act to provide funding to communities in Maryland that have high child poverty areas.
- Dorchester County and the City of Cambridge qualify for grant funding to develop one or more plans to seek further funding to address the community challenges.
- This proposal has created excitement in schools and non-profits. The grant is \$300,000 to develop a plan to meet area needs.
- The application must be in by Sep 20, 2024. Memorandum of Understanding must accompany the application.
- A person will be selected to participate in making a community plan to apply for state funding. The person must keep the city council updated and attend all meetings.

City council approved applying for this grant 5-0.

Meetings – all approved. See choosecambridge.com to see upcoming meetings scheduled.

Public Comment

Mr Luke Lloyd from Travers St. shared his concern that the city should follow code on people running for office and follow up on where candidates living.

- Brandon Hesson said that steps were taken to require documents signed by applicants for city commissioner and mayoral positions. The assumption by the city is that the documents are truthful. He had many conversations with the city attorney about what was reasonable in investigating where candidates live.
- If Mr Lloyd has a specific formal complaint, he can forward it to the city manager 's office.
- Shay Lewis-Cisco spoke up about the controversy, with her role on CWDI and now running for city commissioner for Ward 2, caused in the community. If there is a question about her transparency on this issue, she would welcome an email or phone call.

Department/Division Head Reports

11. Housing Development Presentation - PowerPoint of affordable housing initiative

a. Eddie Crosby, Housing Program Manager/Gavin Woolford, Program Specialist

(More detail available in the report by Mr. Crosby/Mr. Woolford at choosecambridge.com under city council 9/9/24 meeting agenda attachment).

The mission of the Cambridge Neighborhood Revitalization Plan is to build upon the efforts to local stakeholders, the City of Cambridge, and the State of Maryland to create a thriving community in the Pine St area. Residents will be offered quality affordable housing opportunities and a chance to build household wealth while creating a healthy, uplifting neighborhood environment.

- The city has been awarded several grants designed to assist low- to modest-income prospective homebuyers with the purchase of a new affordable home or repairs of an existing home.
- The Maryland Department of Housing and Community Development (DHCD) has provided \$3MM under the Home Ownership Works (HOW) pilot program for the Predevelopment, New Construction, Marketing, and Sales of new affordable homes.
- Since meeting in March, plans for the Chesapeake Court and School House Lane Subdivision have been approved for the construction of 10 new single-family homes to be sold at 80% of AMI and is expected to begin in the Spring of 2025.
- Presently, permits have been approved and preconstruction has commenced to build four new single-family homes sold at market rate.
- On August 1, 2024, the Housing Department was at the Summer Housing Symposium for the Maryland Municipal League (MML) in Annapolis, It was an opportunity to highlight the City of Cambridge Revitalization Efforts in the Pine Street Historic Neighborhood District. The Housing Development team was asked to help facilitate a walking tour of the Pine Street Historic District at the Fall Conference which will be held in Cambridge at the Hyatt the week of November 6-8.
- A community meeting is planned to share housing information and answer questions related to the ongoing construction at Douglas Street and future construction on Chesapeake Court and School House Lane. o A letter will go out to four community groups including the Empowerment Center, United Way of Easton, Dorchester Community Services and MD Dept of Housing, and promoted on various social media platforms, City of Cambridge website and radio.

- Homebuyer Education and Classes offered at The Packing House. Summer classes were held in July with average of 20-25 people attending. Fall classes have been scheduled in October 2024.
- Other grant funded programs (to be expanded on later) include:
 - 3 Year, \$1.8MM, HUD-Lead Reduction Capacity Building grant – identify units in need of lead abatement and remediation and provide education.
 - FY24, \$340K, Homeowner Helper Program is designed to provide seniors (50 and above) with financial assistance to offset the cost for critical repairs needed in their homes.
 - 1 Year, \$1.1MM, MD-18-CD-31 (CDBG-Horizontal Infrastructure) and 2 Year, 1.8MM MD-22-CD-9 (CDBG-Vertical Construction) of new homes on the green space areas bordering Chesapeake Court, School House Lane, and Waugh Cemetery.
 - One-time grant, \$17,500, Land Bank Feasibility Grant awarded in June of 2024 from the Department of Housing and Community Development. Ability to hire a consultant to conduct a feasibility study and strategic plan for the Land Bank Authority.

Fiscal Impact/Equity Impact/Environmental Impact

- Significant investment of public funds will create a stable environment which will attract future private. investment by existing residents and others.
- Benefit to Low- and Moderate-Income Persons by providing affordable home ownership units for sale to buyers who meet the low- and moderate-income threshold restrictions.
- Contractor trailer, equipment, and parking areas will not impair ingress or egress to Cornish Park or residential housing areas.

City Manager Comments

New city manager, Glenn Steckmann, getting acclimated to new position in Cambridge.

Mr Steckmann wants to meet with city commissioners individually to hear their ideas and thoughts.

Commissioners' Comments

Laurel Atkiss, Ward 1 – Dorchester Goes Purple Moving Forward event last weekend was inspiring

Lajan Cephas, Ward 2 – talked about learning how to administer Narcan to a person who needs it.

Sputty Cephas, Ward 4 – attended funeral of pillar of the community – Mr Smith. Welcomed Mr Steckmann to Cambridge.

Brian Roche, Ward 5 – Talked positively about The Packing House which creates opportunity to learn the art of crafting food to go into restaurant business, food preparation.

Adjourn

Written by Alison Kennedy, CAN member