



*CAN member meetings are announced in advance and open to the public.
Everyone interested in CAN is invited to attend.*

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CURRENT LINKS

- CAN’s Website – <https://cambridgecan.org>
- JOIN CAN FOR FREE – <https://cambridgecan.org/join-can/>
- CAN Meeting Minutes – <https://cambridgecan.org/category/meetings/>
- CAN Meeting Videos – <https://www.facebook.com/WHCPRadio/videos> or
<https://www.youtube.com/@whcpstudio4716>
- CAN’s City Council Meeting Notes – <https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/city-council-notes/>
- CAN’s Planning & Zoning Notes – <https://cambridgecan.org/category/news/p-and-z/>
- CAN on Facebook – <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cambridgeassociationofneighborhoods>
- Contact CAN – cambridgecan.org@gmail.com

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Chuck McFadden, President, CAN

The following are not the biggest issues in the City but are issues that have bothered me for some time. These are my pet peeves:

Trash Pickup

1. I live on Belvedere Ave. in the heart of the West End and the trash truck picks up my trash at 4:30am twice a week. Since I assume I am not the first pick up, what time do they start and why so early? What



is wrong with waiting until at least 7:00am to start so that the citizens can get some sleep instead of waking up to big, noisy trash trucks rumbling through the neighborhood at a very early hour?

2. The City mandated that we buy oversize trash cans for the twice weekly pickups. These trash cans are very hard to move for some of our senior people, me included. Why can't we have an option to buy a smaller trash can?
3. Because the trash cans are so big and clumsy, the trash people often don't dump them but simply reach in and pull out the big bags, leaving the small stuff in the bottom of the trash can. For me and probably others this is often poop bags with dog waste.
4. Almost 100% of the time, I've observed that the trash people do not close the lids on the trash cans. This is a problem if it rains and they did not dump the can. The trash can will fill with water and trash they did not pick up (see #3 above) leaves me and other citizens with a mess.

Street Names

1. Some street names in Cambridge are confusing. An example of the problem is giving directions to my house on Belvedere Ave. I tell visitors to turn off Rt. 50 onto Maryland Ave. which turns into Market St. and that will take you over the draw bridge to a traffic light, then go straight on Market which turns into Muse St. for one block and turn left on Gay St. for one block to the intersection of Race and Poplar St. (same street). Turn right on Poplar for one block and the street turns into Locust St. down to Belvedere Ave. Another approach after the drawbridge on Market St. is to turn right on Academy St. which turns into Spring St. which turns into Church St. to a right on Choptank to School St. to Belvedere Ave. My point? Why are there so many one block streets?
2. Another example of the confusion is Poplar St. which is only one block long. The radio station, WHCP, is at 516 Poplar St. so the even numbers are on the right when you are headed toward the High School. However, the radio station moved from 516 Race St. (the same street) which is on the left going toward the High School. So not only did they change the name of one street – Race/Poplar/Locust, but they also switched the odd/even numbers from one side to the other. I assume this is a test for Cambridge residents to see if they can keep up with the confusion.
3. Other examples of name changes include Cedar St. to Meteor Ave. when it crosses Rt. 50 and the same for LeCompte St. to Roslyn Ave., again when it crosses Rt. 50. Another is Water St. to Hambrooks Blvd. along the waterfront.

I know it would be difficult for the City to change street addresses considering deeds and postal addresses but at some point, we need to fix the problem and move forward. These are not the biggest problems for the City, just minor irritations that bother me personally.

If you have "Pet Peeves" let me know at Ragtime31@gmail.com and CAN will compile a list of what's bothering you.



CAMBRIDGE CORNER

CAMBRIDGE REAL ESTATE TRENDS

Fred and Martha Phillips-Patrick

National Residential Real Estate Developments

According to Freddie Mac, the 30-year fixed-rate mortgage moved lower this month, continuing a recent trend. The 30-year fixed rate is now 6.5%. As rates continue to drop, the number of homeowners who could refinance is expanding. In fact, the share of market mortgage applications that were for a refinance reached nearly 47%, the highest since last October. However, the recent labor market reports suggest that the economy is slowing. How did Cambridge fare in this market environment in August 2025? Let's see.

Cambridge Market Update

Realtor.com characterizes Cambridge as a Buyers Housing Market, which means prices tend to be lower and homes stay on the market longer. In July 2025, the latest data available, the median home price in Cambridge was \$300,000, flat year-over-year. However, the median home sold price was \$300,000. On average, homes in Cambridge sell after 68 days on the market. The trend for median days on the market has gone up since last month, and up slightly since last year. Homes in Cambridge sold for approximately the asking price on average in July 2025.

Sales

Currently, Realtor.com shows that there were 208 homes for sale (154 single family homes and 54 condos, townhouses, and multifamily units) in the Cambridge area. There are also 39 farms and plots of land. The property asking prices range from \$15,000 for a small plot of land on Center Street to \$3,100,000 for a 46.4-acre farm on 4890 Drawbridge Road.

Realtor.com details that in August 2025, 27 houses, condos, and townhouses were sold in Cambridge. The properties sold ranged in value from \$85,000 on Douglas St. to \$1,345,000 on Casson Neck Rd.

Table with 3 columns of property addresses and their sale prices, including 2696 Marsh Elder Rd (\$585K), 306 Maryland Ave (\$120K), 2703 Marsh Elder Dr (\$480K), etc.



As can be seen above, four similar homes were sold on Blue Wing Court, and two similar homes were sold on Winterberry Lane in August.

City of Cambridge Boards and Commissions Vacancies

According to a recent memo from Cambridge’s website, “The City of Cambridge is still accepting applications from residents interested in serving on various Boards and Commissions. These positions offer a meaningful opportunity to contribute to the City’s growth and governance. Interested individuals are encouraged to apply by completing the application form available on the City’s website:

<https://www.choosecambridge.com/FormCenter/City-Hall-14/Board-and-Commission-VolunteerInterest--84>.” “Alternatively, citizens may also submit a letter of interest and resume to the City Manager’s Office via email at gsteckman@choosecambridge.com or deliver it in person to City Hall/City Manager’s Office Attn: Boards & Commissions.”

Of particular interest are the openings on the Historic Preservation Committee. “The Historic Preservation Committee (HPC) is responsible for safeguarding Cambridge’s heritage by reviewing and approving all proposed changes (including new construction) on the exterior of any property in the designated historic district. Appointees must possess professional or academic qualifications or have demonstrated a special interest in historic preservation through training, education, employment, experience or membership in a related organization. This committee meets monthly on the third (3rd) Wednesday. “

The Harmful Impact of Excessive Social Media Negativity on Cambridge Harbor

Barbara Knepp – Historic West End

The Cambridge Harbor project is a 30-acre waterfront development along Maryland’s Choptank River, bringing homes, retail, a boutique hotel, and public parks to the city. Managed by Cambridge Waterfront Development, Inc. (CWDI), it mirrors the success of other revitalized waterfronts. Recent milestones, including the promenade groundbreaking in December 2024 and ongoing hotel negotiations, show real momentum. But this progress is increasingly overshadowed by negativity on social media — criticism that risks investor confidence and future development.

Public scrutiny is not only appropriate — it’s essential. Taxpayer dollars and community resources deserve accountability, and asking tough questions about potential conflicts of interest or transparency helps keep projects on track. But when scrutiny turns into relentless, repetitive attacks, often fueled by misinformation, it stops being productive. Instead, it spreads confusion, divides the community, and discourages the very investment needed to make Cambridge Harbor succeed.

Examples of this are clear: false claims about secret YMCA zoning or unfounded accusations about board appointments linger online, even after being disproven. A small but vocal minority, including former officials, repeats these narratives across platforms. Over time, investors and insurers who monitor public sentiment see more risk than opportunity, which can delay funding, increase costs, or cause developers to walk away entirely.



The distinction is important: thoughtful oversight strengthens a project, but excessive, all-over-the-board attacks weaken it. Cambridge cannot afford to let a handful of online voices jeopardize a once-in-a-generation opportunity. As the saying goes, *keyboard debates won't build parks or hotels; action and engagement will.*

To safeguard the future of Cambridge Harbor, stakeholders must double down on transparent communication and community engagement. At the same time, residents must recognize the difference between constructive accountability and counterproductive negativity. Social media may feel like a public forum, but endless criticism there accomplishes nothing. Real progress comes through collaboration, meetings, and solutions—not comment threads.

To protect this once-in-a-generation opportunity, stakeholders must prioritize transparent communication and active community engagement. Addressing misinformation quickly, emphasizing facts, and highlighting the tangible benefits for Cambridge can help restore investor confidence. Cambridge Harbor is more than development—it's economic growth, public spaces, and a revitalized waterfront. Social media attacks may seem small, but their consequences are real. Countering misinformation and fostering community unity is essential to ensure the project succeeds for the city and the region.

The True Cost of Passive Code Enforcement in Our Neighborhoods — And Why It Fails Our Community *By Barbara Knepp, Historic West End*

This is the second article in a series aimed at raising awareness, educating residents, and advocating for stronger code enforcement in Cambridge. The purpose is clear: to show why enforcement matters, what happens when it fails, and how fair, consistent enforcement can solve many neighborhood problems – from blight and safety hazards to declining property values and resident frustration. Well-documented studies confirm that effective code enforcement improves livability, reduces crime, stabilizes property values, and strengthens community pride.

Passive Enforcement in Cambridge

In Cambridge, code enforcement largely relies on a passive, complaint-driven approach. The city responds to citizen reports rather than conducting regular proactive inspections. This system often leaves obvious violations—mattresses on curbs, overgrown sidewalks, overflowing trash cans—unaddressed for weeks or months, even in high-traffic areas like Glasgow Street, Cedar Avenue, Maryland Avenue, Washington Street, Pine Street, High Street, Race Street, and Locust Street. How can such visible issues persist when enforcement staff likely pass by them regularly?

Who's Responsible?

While citizen reports are important, placing the burden of monitoring on residents instead of trained inspectors creates uneven enforcement and community strain. This reactive system leads to:

- Everyday eyesores that persist: overgrown lawns, peeling paint, broken fences, illegal dumping, and blocked sidewalks.



- Neighborhood tension: Reporting neighbors' properties can foster resentment and mistrust.
- Declining standards over time: Minor violations left unchecked escalate into blight, safety hazards, and more costly repairs.

Historic District and HPC Oversight

Enforcement challenges are especially acute in Cambridge's **Historic District**, where properties must comply with **Historic Preservation Commission (HPC)** guidelines. These rules cover building alterations, materials, signage, and property maintenance, ensuring the preservation of the district's historic character. However, many violations go unchecked because code enforcement staff often lack HPC-specific training. Some city staff have even expressed that they would prefer to see the HPC eliminated, undermining enforcement and threatening historic properties. Passive enforcement in this context endangers the integrity and value of the district, placing the burden unfairly on residents to monitor compliance. Residents should know: timely intervention is critical because historic features, once altered or removed, cannot be restored. Proactive inspections and staff training are essential to preserve the unique character of the district. If hiring specialized staff is not possible, the new city planner should serve as the primary contact for HPC-related violations.

Some common HPC violations that may occur in the Historic District:

- Unapproved Exterior Alterations - Replacing windows, doors, or siding with materials that do not match historic standards (e.g., vinyl or aluminum instead of wood).
- Demolition or Removal of Historic Features - Removing original porches, cornices, shutters, or decorative trim without HPC approval.
- Inappropriate Additions or Construction - Building new structures or additions that are out of scale or incompatible with the historic character of neighboring properties.
- Signage and Lighting Violations – Installing commercial signs, awnings, or lighting that do not comply with HPC design guidelines.
- Neglect of Historic Properties - Allowing peeling paint, broken siding, deteriorating masonry, or missing roof elements to persist, which can compromise structural integrity.
- Chimney Alterations - Cannot remove or alter chimneys without HPC permission.
- Satellite Dish Placement - Satellite dishes must be placed in the rear of properties and should not be visible from the street to maintain historic character.

If you suspect Historic District guidelines are being ignored, you have the right to file a complaint with the **Maryland Historical Trust (MHT)**: 100 Community Place, 3rd Floor, Crownsville, MD 21032-2023; Phone: (410) 697-9591. Review & Compliance: Dixie Henry, (410) 697-9553, dixie.henry@maryland.gov.

The Discontinuation of Foot Patrols

In November 2023, Assistant City Manager Brandon Hesson launched foot patrols, with officers walking neighborhoods three days a week to:

- Ensure equitable enforcement across all neighborhoods.
- Increase officer visibility and community engagement.
- Identify violations that are easily missed from a vehicle.



These patrols emphasized thorough inspections and consistent enforcement, addressing past concerns about uneven coverage. However, the program was discontinued due to budget constraints and staffing shortages. The city faced challenges in maintaining the program's funding and ensuring adequate personnel to carry out the patrols effectively. Despite the positive impacts observed during the foot patrols, such as increased community engagement and improved property maintenance, the city's financial limitations necessitated the program's suspension.

City Leadership Matters

Responsibility for code enforcement falls on city leadership, including the Code Enforcement Division, department heads, and elected officials. Administrative roadblocks often slow enforcement, even when residents report issues correctly. City Manager **Glenn Steckman** has demonstrated a proactive approach, introducing initiatives like rental registration, regular inspections, and housing code enforcement, reflecting a commitment to maintaining community standards.

How Residents Can Help

When violations persist, residents should:

- Document the problem: Photos, logs of dates, and notes on city interactions.
- Follow up in writing: Email or certified mail ensures a clear record.
- Escalate if necessary: Contact supervisors, city managers, or elected officials; attend city meetings to raise concerns.
- Engage the community: Neighborhood associations can amplify concerns and advocate for consistent enforcement.

Code enforcement is more than rule enforcement—it protects safety, preserves property values, and maintains community pride. Only a proactive, accountable system can achieve these goals.

Reporting a Code Violation

Residents can report issues through the city's **OpenGov portal**: <https://cambridge.maryland.opengov.com>. Sign up for an account, log in, submit a detailed report, and track responses.

Key Contacts for Code Enforcement Concerns

- Glenn Steckman – City Manager, gsteckman@choosecambridge.com, (410) 228-4020
- Brandon Hesson – Assistant City Manager, bhesson@choosecambridge.com, (410) 221-6074
- Sandra Wyatt – Head of Building & Safety, swyatt@choosecambridge.com

Mayor & Council Contacts: Mayor Lajan Cephas and all city council members' emails are available at www.choosecambridge.com.

Residents deserve timely, consistent enforcement. Proactive inspections, trained staff, HPC compliance, and strong leadership will lead to safer, cleaner, and more vibrant neighborhoods for all.



COMMUNITY NEWS – COOPERATING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONS

CAMBRIDGE EMPOWERMENT CENTER

Judy Prah

Our Pre-K Program (For 3 – 5 year olds)

9am – noon; Monday through Thursday, September through the end of the school year

- Building social skills and learning pre-kindergarten basics for a good start
- Physical activity with fun learning experiences to control the need to move
- 100% favorable parent survey after our first year
- Your cost from September to the end of school – Just \$25

After School 2025-2026

3:00 - 5:30PM; Monday – Thursday; Enrollment is open now

- After school help with homework
- After school snack
- Focus on grade level reading
- Your cost from September to the end of school – Just \$25

How to Enroll Your Child

- Call us: 410-901-1357
- Send us an email via our website (cambridgeempowermentcenter.org) and we'll call you
- Stop by and check us out: 615-B Pine Street, Cambridge MD
- We still have openings in our Pre-School and After-School programs

About the Cambridge Empowerment Center

The Cambridge Empowerment Center is a nonprofit organization dedicated to supporting the educational and personal development of youth in the Cambridge area through academic programs, enrichment opportunities, and community engagement. After-School, Pre-K or Summer - every child learns something if they come to us. We will be exhibiting at *Taste of Cambridge* and the *DCA Showcase*, please stop by!

HABITAT FOR HUMANITY CHOPTANK

Emily Brohawn

Habitat Choptank Signature Event – Hard Hats & High Heels with Golden Ticket Raffle

Habitat for Humanity Choptank is excited to present their Signature Fundraising Event – Hard Hats & High Heels – happening on October 18th, 2025, at 447 Venue in Cambridge. Join us for a night of fun, cocktails, delicious Eastern Shore inspired cuisine by The Catering Company, live and silent auctions, live music by The



Everyday People Band, dancing and more! Tickets are on sale now, with individual tickets priced at \$125 (including two drink tickets) or \$1,200 for a table of 8 (complete with wristbands for free drinks all night, a table by the stage, and a pre-event reception). Consider purchasing a table with friends and sharing the inclusions! Tickets and tables can be purchased at <https://bit.ly/hardhats25>.

This year, an exciting Golden Ticket Raffle is available! Tickets are \$100 and only 100 tickets will be sold. The Golden Ticket raffle winner will choose from the following destinations: Cabo All-Inclusive Resort, Kentucky Bourbon Experience, Tuscany & Wine Delivery, or Sedona. The winning ticket will be pulled at our Hard Hats & High Heels event at 8:30pm, however, you do not have to be present at the event to win! For more information on the destinations or to purchase your ticket now, visit <https://bit.ly/goldenticketforhabitat>.



A glimpse of the Hard Hats & High Heels venue.



Jim Thomas (Habitat Choptank Construction Project Manager) and wife Kim excited to enjoy an evening of fun!

Habitat Choptank ReStore Position Opening – ReStore Donations Coordinator

Habitat for Humanity Choptank is currently seeking qualified candidates for a part-time Donations Coordinator position working up to 16 hours per week with flexible hours during normal store hours. This position is responsible for scheduling donation pick-ups and drop-offs as needed. The ReStore is located at 8610 Commerce Drive in Easton and is a retail business that sells donated building materials, furniture, and appliances at discounted prices to generate revenue to support Habitat for Humanity Choptank in its mission to build homes, community and hope in Dorchester and Talbot Counties. To apply, please email a resume to info@habitatchoptank.org.

SHORERIVERS

Bethany Ziegler

This fall is a busy time for ShoreRivers, with lots of upcoming events scheduled and ways for the community to get involved in our mission.

First up, we've got a pair of expeditions offering different ways to explore our watersheds. On **Monday, September 29**, the community is invited to join Meredith Davies Hadaway for a reading and generative poetry workshop for both aspiring and experienced poets who want to explore the connection between the



inner and outer landscapes that create our world. And on **Thursday, October 2**, ShoreRivers and American Rivers are co-hosting a tour of the Cypress Branch Dam removal and restoration, where we'll talk about the importance of restoring damaged rivers and watersheds. More info on both can be found at shorerivers.org/events.

We're also in the middle of our annual photo contest! Have you ever been told you have an eye for capturing the moment? Perhaps a passion for photography? Do you love your local waterways and want to promote and protect them? **We're accepting submissions through October 31 so send us your favorites of our beloved Choptank.** Your photo could be seen across the Eastern Shore — contest photos are featured in ShoreRivers' print and digital publications as well as at our events, which collectively reach thousands of people each year. Contest winners will be announced December 1 via email and on social media.



"Flipping in Bellevue"



"Parsons Creek Patriot Point"

CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY GARDEN AT WAUGH CHAPEL

Kathy Burtman

Did you know that the Cambridge Community Garden is located behind Waugh Chapel United Methodist Church on High Street? There are more than 50 garden plots that are 4' x 12' and are either 12 or 24 inches deep. The cost to "rent" a plot for the year is only \$5.00. There are two Master Gardeners, Kathy Burtman and Robin Herman, who are in charge of the community garden. They are a great resource for advice, questions and suggestions.

Anyone interested in a plot should email Kathy Burtman at communitygardenwaughchapel@gmail.com. This summer has been our tenth growing season and we had a very productive harvest - over 200 pounds of produce has been donated to One Mission Cambridge and we're still growing. Life begins in the garden!



CAN MISSION, MEMBERSHIP, BOARD of DIRECTORS, and COMMITTEES

MISSION. The Cambridge Association of Neighborhoods (CAN) fosters neighborhood cohesion and community involvement to enhance the quality of community life for all residents of Cambridge through community events, social activities, and neighborly assistance. CAN protects and enhances 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's Bylaws can be found on the CAN website at <https://cambridgecan.org/welcome/about/bylaws/>.

MEMBERSHIP. CAN welcomes members from **all Cambridge area neighborhoods** (broadly defined) who are interested in organizing and working together, building a diverse membership reflecting the diversity of Cambridge residents. **Membership is FREE** – information is available on the CAN website at <https://cambridgecan.org/join-can/>

CAN BOARD OF DIRECTORS. CAN is governed by a Board of Directors elected by CAN members at its annual January Business Meeting. Board Members: President – Chuck McFadden; Vice President – Roman Jesien; Treasurer – Dave Thatcher; Secretary – Alison Kennedy; Members at Large – Andre Duerinckx, Mary Ellen Jesien, Brad Rice, Sharon Smith, Donna Tower, and Judd Vickers.

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 Raqttime31@gmail.com to volunteer.

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 Raqttime31@gmail.com to volunteer.

CAN COMMUNICATIONS COMMITTEE – WRITERS NEEDED. CAN'S Communications Committee needs writers, including volunteers to take unofficial notes at public meetings. *Contact* Chuck McFadden at Raqttime31@gmail.com to volunteer.

POWER WASHER AVAILABLE - CAN has an electric power washer available to members. Contact Chuck McFadden at Raqttime31@gmail.com.