
Cambridge Civic Journal

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NEW CENTURY, NEW FACES

The *Cambridge Civic Journal* is produced by Central Square Publications, 366 Broadway, Cambridge MA 02139. All items are written by Robert Winters unless otherwise noted. Submit articles and comments to Editor@rwinters.com.

Cambridge Civic Journal:

<http://www.math.harvard.edu/~rwinters/ccj.html>

Cambridge Civic Calendar:

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0) Foreword

Since the last issue of this Journal ten weeks ago, we've seen a Cambridge municipal election and a new millennium. The Cambridge City Council welcomes three new members: Jim Braude, Marjorie Decker, and David Maher. The School Committee will have one new member, Nancy Walser, and a returning veteran, Fred Fantini.

I don't put much value on the whole millennium thing, except as an opportunity to reflect on the history of the 20th Century and the centuries that preceded it. Considering such events as the Holocaust and two world wars, I hope we do a better job with this next century. At least we'll have better gadgets. The ability to quickly and easily communicate and publish information from just about anywhere will make things very interesting indeed.

The City Council reports included in this Journal are much briefer than my original notes. This is partly because I'd rather not publish a 40-page issue and partly because old news isn't necessarily good news. I tried to leave some of the color, but I concentrated more on the substance. Now that I'm caught up, there's a better chance that I can keep to a more regular schedule than I have over the last six months.

As always, I welcome contributed articles from one and all, subject to the erratic discretion of the editor.

Robert Winters
CCJ Editor

1) Inauguration Day and the mayor thing

January 3 marked the inauguration of both the new Cambridge City Council and the School Committee. City Clerk Margaret Drury conducted the Council's inaugural meeting as well as the first ballot for Mayor. Since no mayor was elected, Councillor Reeves will serve as Acting Mayor (and Chair of the School Committee) until a Mayor is elected.

The first ballot for Mayor went as follows:

Councillor	Choice for Mayor
Kathleen Born	Born
Jim Braude	Born
Henrietta Davis	Born
Marjorie Decker	Born
Anthony Galluccio	Galluccio
David Maher	Sullivan
Ken Reeves	Sullivan
Michael Sullivan	Sullivan
Timothy Toomey	Galluccio

As expected, the speculation about who will be mayor runs rampant in civic circles. By virtually all accounts, this is an even race between Councillors Born, Galluccio, and Sullivan. The outcome of the mayoral vote has been (at least for me) a rather predictable affair since 1989. This marks the first time since then that I cannot make the call. Kathy Born is seen as the most "progressive" choice. Councillor Sullivan is seen as the most "conservative" choice. [If you are a dedicated member of the rent control lobby, you may feel otherwise.] It's been suggested that Decker's vote could shift to Sullivan if this thing drags out. David Maher has indicated that his vote will go to a fellow Independent like Sullivan or Galluccio. Ken Reeves may still prove to be the swing vote and would also like to be Mayor.

Later on Inauguration Day, the new School Committee convened in a meeting hosted by now former School Committee member Robin Harris. Denise Simmons was unanimously elected Vice-Chair. In this capacity, she will appoint all subcommittees of the School Committee. The Mayor, when he or she is elected, will serve as Chair and the 7th voting member of the School Committee. In the interim, senior City Councillor Ken Reeves will chair the meetings (and vote).

The School Committee voted to have its first regular meeting on Jan 11 at 6pm. The (very significant) topic of that first meeting will be the restructuring of the high school. Several other controversial issues will come before the School Committee in the coming months, including the aftermath of the resignation of Deputy Superintendent Patrick Murphy. While much attention will focus on the mayoral election, the action should prove much dicier at the School Committee.

2) The Mayor Selection Process - by John Gintell

Once again we are about to witness the newly-elected City Council select the Mayor. In the past we have seen a covert process laden with allegations and denials of "back-room" deals with negative consequences on the effective operation of the city council for months or the entire term. It has impacted public perception and confidence in both the City Council and the School Committee. We deserve better than this. Can't we have an overt and publicly visible process, with candidates stating their qualifications and approach to the position followed by the Council choosing the person best qualified to perform the job?

The duties of the mayor are well specified in the Massachusetts General Laws and form a guide to the selection. First it says: "*The mayor shall be recognized as the official head of the city for all ceremonial purposes and shall be recognized by the courts for the purpose of serving civil process and by the governor for military purposes.*" This "official head" aspect of the job is time consuming and visible because there are many events and situations where this role is performed: visitors to the city, public events, group meetings, crisis management, etc. The latter portion of this paragraph is for emergency purposes for infrequently occurring situations. There certainly are significant variations in how different mayors would handle this function; but the consequences of action aren't very significant to the overall city well-being and should have little to do with the selection.

"He shall be chairman of the city council and chairman of the school committee." This is the critical function of the position and a very difficult one at that. Chairing such a political body requires great skill to manage the committee structure and agendas, to work with members of the public, the city administration, and the elected officials to address issues and iron out communication difficulties. These two bodies have well-meaning, strong-minded and politically aware individuals who compete with each other for public recognition. Much of the chairman's work is done behind the scenes and requires considerable time and effort to succeed. True leadership qualities are not about speechmaking and getting credit for actions, but about working with the individuals and small groups to make the two bodies become more effective.

"He shall perform such other duties consistent with his office as may be imposed upon him by the city council." Special programs and the use of the mayor's office as an information and access conduit to government fall into this category but are much less important than the council and school committee chairmanship.

Cambridge faces a number of challenges that these two elected bodies must address and resolve. City councillors: I ask you to consider carefully and to select the person who is going to be the most successful at leading the council and school committee to achieving results. The majority of the public wants an overt process with respected results.

John W Gintell
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3) The 1999 Cambridge Municipal Election

The biennial municipal PR elections drew 24 candidates for City Council and 13 candidates for School Committee. Each race had two open seats. This traditionally draws a greater number of credible candidates and this year was no exception.

In addition to some incumbent councillors doing better or worse than last time and some newcomers making a good show of it, the basic result of the City Council election was that Jim Braude replaced Frank Duehay, David Maher replaced Sheila Russell, and Marjorie Decker replaced Katherine Triantafillou.

Perhaps the least expected election outcome was the defeat of Councillor Triantafillou. The pundits (a term I dislike) all had their theories for the causes of this upset. In the end, it was probably the fact that Marjorie Decker simply wanted the seat a lot more. She ran a strong campaign and was aided by heavy hitters like Alice Wolf in her quest. It is cruelly ironic that Decker, possibly the angriest person in City Hall when the votes switched from Triantafillou to Duehay in the last mayor-go-round, was the person to take Triantafillou's seat. This is an example of one of the harsh realities of this election system - your closest affiliate is likely your greatest competitor.

The School Committee election went pretty much the way everyone expected. The four incumbents Joe Grassi, Susana Segat, Denise Simmons, and Alice Turkel all returned. Fred Fantini replaced David Maher and newcomer Nancy Walser replaced Robin Harris.

Complete results of the PR Count for both races are posted at <http://www.math.harvard.edu/~rwinters/ccj.html>.

Shortly after the election was complete, the Cambridge Election Commission released the 1999 ballot data to the public. Armed with this information, I was able to run a number of tests and discover some interesting things. I calculated how many votes at each rank each candidate received, how many ballots listed each candidate, and much more. Using the same tallying software that was used in the election, I determined who would join the City Council or School Committee should any seat be vacated during this term. The replacement is determined by running the same election mechanism as the regular Count, except that only one person is to be elected and only those ballots (1878) awarded to the vacating councillor are to be used in the tally. Similarly for the School Committee. Here are the replacements:

The Replacements

Councillor	Replacement
Born	Triantafillou 807 over Winters 485
Braude	Triantafillou 724 over Snowberg 472
Davis	Triantafillou 724 over Winters 545
Decker	Triantafillou 940 over Winters 279
Galluccio	Goodwin 472 over Trumbull 398
Maher	Goodwin 606 over Trumbull 504
Reeves	Triantafillou 803 over Goodwin 216
Sullivan	Goodwin 420 over Triantafillou 292
Toomey	Peixoto 431 over Goodwin 414

Sch. Comm. member	Replacement
Fantini	Harshbarger 893 over Harding 515
Grassi	Harshbarger 672 over Harding 530
Segat	Kenney 801 over Brazo 571
Simmons	Harding 639 over Thompson 551
Turkel	Kenney 630 over Brazo 572
Walser	Kenney 998 over Brazo 576

Another interesting analysis, and one that may interest those who favor other methods of selecting a mayor, is an "Instant Run-off" Count to elect just one candidate as "mayor." Here's how that tally would proceed in the final few rounds:

Count 16: Galluccio,Born,Sullivan,Decker,Braude,Reeves
Count 17: Galluccio,Born,Sullivan,Decker,Braude
Count 18: Galluccio 5171,Born 4343,Decker 3765,Sullivan 3295
Count 19: Galluccio 6685, Born 4812, Decker 4072
Count 20: Galluccio 7195 ,Born 6810
Count 21: Galluccio 9387

It's interesting to note that the three camps, Independent, CCA, and "CCA-outlaw" each have someone in the running when there are only three candidates left.

We can do the same analysis for School Committee:

Count 10: Turkel,Simmons,Segat,Fantini,Grassi
Count 11: Turkel 4338,Fantini 4301,Simmons 3725,Segat 3560
Count 12: Turkel 5680,Simmons 4895,Fantini 4606
Count 13: Turkel 6285,Simmons 5654
Count 14: Turkel 8981

There are many other interesting questions that one can ask, e.g., how are the #2 votes distributed behind each candidate's #1 votes. The answers to many of these questions and more are posted on the CCJ web site. I will do further analysis on request and publish the results here or on the CCJ web site.

4) The 1941 Cambridge Municipal Election

The very first PR election in Cambridge must have been a very wild affair indeed. For City Council, there were 83 candidates vying for the 9 at-large seats. For those interested in the dynamics of a PR Count, that election had an election quota of 3487, almost twice what we had in 1999. The top 13 candidates after the 1st Count were:

Sennott, Francis L. - 4049
 Lynch, John D. - 3275
 Corcoran, John H. - 2059
 McNamara, Thomas M. - 1488
 Morton, Marcus, Jr. - 1467
 Gerould, Russell - 1345
 Sullivan, Michael A. - 1344
 Crane, Edward A. - 1180
 Hogan, William M., Jr. - 1046
 Roche, Francis J. - 983
 Serino, A. John - 954
 Reel, A. Frank - 949
 Pill, Hyman - 923

By the time the election was complete after 77 Counts, the following individuals were elected, in order of election:

Sennott, Francis L.	3487	Elected 1st Count
Lynch, John D.	3487	Elected 44th Count
Corcoran, John H.	3487	Elected 71st Count
Morton, Marcus, Jr.	3487	Elected 77th Count
Crane, Edward A.	3487	Elected 77th Count
McNamara, Thomas M.	3419	Elected 77th Count
Hogan, William M., Jr.	3246	Elected 77th Count
Pill, Hyman	3177	Elected 77th Count
Sullivan, Michael A.	2980	Elected 77th Count

Note that four elected councillors failed to reach quota and that Hyman Pill, who had ranked 13th after the 1st Count, was the 8th person to be declared elected. The candidate who initially ranked 6th, Russell Gerould, was not elected.

5) September City Council meetings

Highlights of the Sept 13, 1999 meeting:

There were two items up for reconsideration at the start of this meeting. First, the portion of the Cook Petition that dealt with those uses that would be permitted in accessory buildings was referred to the Ordinance Committee and the Housing and Community Development Committee. Councillor Kathy Born was critical of the proposal and its many possible unintended consequences, saying "There is a more appropriate approach. Define the problem before giving a solution."

Councillor Triantafillou was quite outspoken in her remarks on the proposal. She expressed concern that artists and others who work out of their homes and garages would be greatly burdened by this proposed zoning change. She astutely pointed out the many positive aspects of continuing to allow these uses, not the least of which is the additional safety provided by having eyes on the street when people are there all day long. Councillor Reeves noted the evolving nature of how people work and the increase in "virtual offices" in peoples' homes.

The second matter up for reconsideration was Councillor Toomey's order from July 26 that called for informing City Manager Robert Healy that his contract would not be renewed. That order failed on a 3-6 vote with Reeves, Toomey, and Triantafillou voting in favor. (Upon reconsideration, the vote was identical.) We were nonetheless treated to an enormous amount of rhetoric on the matter. Councillor Toomey tried his best to portray his order as being based in "fairness." At issue was the fact that unless notice was given prior to Dec 31, 1999, the contract would automatically renew until June 30, 2001.

Councillor Born stressed the length of time it would take to do a search for a city manager. She noted how much time and effort was involved in the school superintendent search and how you cannot get a talented candidate to leave a job, pull up roots, and move to a different community in the space of six months.

Councillor Reeves went over the top when he said, "Some people have become sycophants and they feel that the Manager is the only one who can hand them whatever plums and appoint their friends to whatever there is to be appointed to. They're afraid that in these last possible days they won't get all of the

pork barrel. I'm sorry but your colleagues ought to be calling you on that."

In the end, the matter was referred to the Government Operations Committee to hold a hearing AFTER the November election.

The City Manager's appointments to the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority led to a heated exchange in which he was criticized for having neither minority appointees nor residents from Area 3, Area 4, or East Cambridge. There were conflicting accounts about whether a current member from East Cambridge (Manny Rogers) had reapplied. Councillor Reeves exercised his Charter Right to delay consideration of the matter. It remains unresolved still after over three months. This is one board appointment that does require City Council approval.

A matter that was delayed from the Midsummer meeting was an order from Councillor Toomey calling for the provision of links on the City web site to candidate web sites and for the removal of any other links to sites maintained by any political candidate. There was only one such site, namely the web site of the Cambridge Civic Journal. Though my days as a political candidate are over for good, this was the source of Toomey's ire. His suggestions of conflict of interest were quite off the mark. The only conflict was an internal one that made it very difficult to be a candidate while publishing this Journal. In the end, both endeavors suffered from the conflict, but there was nothing improper about the CCJ link or any of the other links from the City web site. Criticism came exclusively from those who objected to specific content written in the Civic Journal and can only be described as censorious.

A new zoning petition (Larkin, et al) was introduced that calls for a moratorium on all development projects over 20,000 sq ft or 20 units in an area covering most of Area 3, Area 4, and East Cambridge. Though one can understand the desire to curtail further commercial development in this part of the city, putting a complete stop to all but the smallest housing developments in this area seems rather extreme and contrary to declared priorities of the City Council and the administration. It's also yet another indication of the new conservatism that is growing in Cambridge. The Planning Board report on this petition arrives at the City Council on January 10 with a positive recommendation. Two specific areas in which developments are already in process would be excluded and the restriction on new housing would be lifted completely for the conversion of existing commercial buildings to residential uses.

In what became a regular occurrence this fall, the Council spent an hour in Executive Session discussing litigation associated with the night-time truck ban passed in June.

The Committee Report on the proposed Asbestos Protection Ordinance was accepted, to be amended later, setting the stage for what would become a dramatic and very politically charged meeting on election eve when the ordinance with amendments was eventually passed.

The meeting ended eight hours after it began.

Sept 27 Special City Council meeting:

There was a Special City Council meeting to approve the filing to the Dept. of Revenue that determined the residential and commercial tax rates for the next year. At the meeting, members of the group CCURE trying to put a rent control initiative petition on this November's municipal ballot tried unsuccessfully to have the City Council vote to put the matter on the ballot.

Amidst some very serious public comment on this matter, Peter Valentine caused several jaws to drop when he declared that, "The money worshipers have had their way for thousands of years. A comet is being sent to this planet, due to affect the planet in October. This is a judgment on the use of the land. There will be a new tone on the Council. Be ready to adopt a new set of values." [Though public comment can be rather unusual and hostile at times, I believe this is the first time anyone ever threatened the Council with interplanetary projectiles.]

Though it was already questionable for the matter to be voted upon at a Special Meeting called for another purpose, the vote to suspend the rules to take the vote failed on a 5-4 vote. Six votes are needed to suspend the rules. Councillors Galluccio, Russell, Sullivan, and Toomey voted against suspension. The meeting was followed by a roundtable discussion on the City's Capital Plan, including the new Main Library and Police Station. No votes were taken at the roundtable meeting. It was not televised and there was no public comment.

The Special Meeting opened with a presentation by the City Manager explaining the votes that needed to be taken prior to determining the tax rates. Mr. Healy noted that the average changes to tax bills would be:

	FY95	FY00	\$Change	%Change
Single	\$3776	\$3799	\$23	0.6%
2-family	\$2984	\$3065	\$81	2.7%
3-family	\$2625	\$2918	\$293	11.2%
Condo	\$1453	\$1538	\$85	5.8%

Healy pointed out that despite aggressive infrastructure and capital improvement programs and a new extended day program, increases over five years have been "extremely modest and moderate."

In response to an assertion by Stash Horowitz that each dollar of revenue is being outstripped by the need for more than a dollar in expenditures, City Treasurer Jim Maloney said that Cambridge always looks at this and it's false. As a fully developed City, we don't have to build new roads, hire more firefighters or police, or anything. Revenue always outstrips added expenditures for us, unlike some suburban towns.

Councillor Sullivan highlighted the fact that Cambridge currently spends \$4.5 million per year from free cash or property tax towards affordable housing and about \$20 million over last five years, the most in Massachusetts and possibly in the country. This amount leverages several times as much from other sources. Councillor Galluccio noted that neighboring

towns are only now having to look at affordability of housing and that changes need to be made in tax policy at the state level.

In response to inquiries from Councillor Triantafyllou, Jim Maloney noted that the average residential value for a single-family house is now \$467,502. The average value of a condo is \$233,000, a two-family averages \$391,000, and a three-family averages \$376,000.

After some discussion about the pros and cons of dipping into free cash, Mr. Healy reminded the Council about 1991-92 when the City hit the levy limit. He noted that the cost of construction of the Big Dig is having an effect and that the state is borrowing money against the future. He sees a day of reckoning when there will be a reduction in the amount of money available to cities and towns.

Jim Maloney noted that we are actually down to 6.3% reserve, that the target ought never be less than 5%, and that ideally it should be around 8%.

All of the required votes passed unanimously.

6) October City Council meetings

October 4 meeting

Much of the public comment at this meeting centered around the proposed Asbestos Protection Ordinance. Several others spoke in favor of the Lippincott (block containing the Swedenborg Chapel) and Vickers (Area 4, near Main St.) zoning petitions. Both of these petitions were ordained unanimously at this meeting.

There was a continuation of the discussion of the Sept 13 meeting on appointments to the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority. The matter was eventually sent back to the Manager for further consideration.

Councillor Reeves offered us yet another soliloquy on what's wrong with Central Square, especially the all-day use of benches in the Square as a "living room." He suggested that the Manager convene a summit on Central Square. Councillor Sullivan chimed in with further criticism of the street furniture.

Councillor Born restored a sense of proportion when she called her fellow councillors on their assertions that Central Square (and elsewhere in the city) would be better to have less benches or less comfortable benches. She said that this is a sorry state when we get to this, namely to not put in a bench because of fear that someone may sleep on it. She said, "Homelessness and public drinking are big problems, but not because we have benches. We need to give these people help. It is not a bench problem." [I couldn't help but applaud her for saying this. Benches cause neither alcoholism nor homelessness nor will their removal cure either condition.]

Councillor Galluccio added: "Let's inject a little reality. The problem is homelessness, not how benches are constructed or where they are located. Central Square poses some unique issues. This is tied in with the CASPAR shelter, a draw for people who cannot control their substance abuse. It's a difficult job for police officers. They cannot go after someone with a bag and a shopping cart. It's not a bench issue, it's a homelessness issue."

The Council had yet another discussion on the recent changes to the Rules of the City Council, especially in regard to public comment. While all seemed to agree that it would be better to revert to having all public comment at the start of the meeting, Councillors Triantafyllou and Russell strongly defended the other rule changes.

Oct 18 City Council meeting

Political hints were woven into a discussion about the proposed North Mass. Ave. sewer project and the street reconfiguration that will accompany this project. The project has been delayed and will have additional opportunity for public input and revision. Several councillors noted the level of misinformation that has been spread around this project by those pushing the "Save the Median Strip" campaign in North Cambridge.

Councillor Davis noted that her mother, who is not a resident of Cambridge, received a letter about this. [Indeed, North Cambridge activist Craig Kelley mailed a now infamous letter to people who had contributed to Davis' Council campaign.]

A report from the Community Development Department on what the City might do to respond to the closing of Barsamians was sent back to the City Manager for a better report. Several councillors were bothered by the passive tone of the report from CDD. Councillor Reeves suggested that by allowing a building to be constructed on the parking lot that used to be next door, this contributed to the closing of the store.

The two proposed versions of the IPOP extension were passed to a 2nd Reading. The meeting ended with the Council adjourning to move to yet another Executive Session on truck ban litigation.

7) November City Council meetings

Nov 1, 1999 City Council meeting:

The meeting opened with Mayor Duehay taking note of those killed in Cambridge's sister city in Yerevan, Armenia, including the Prime Minister. He introduced a delegation of exchange students from Yerevan.

Marcia Cannon, Cambridge Postmaster, unveiled new postage stamps on breast cancer and prostate cancer. This was accompanied by remarks by Harold Cox, Cambridge's Public Health Officer.

The public comment portion of the meeting opened with a bang when Peter Valentine introduced himself as National Officer in Charge, US Military and Planetary Command. He asserted that we were in imminent danger and accused "the authorities" of failure to investigate. After claiming that government authority had now been vacated, he began quoting from the Manual of the General Court. When the beeping sound indicated that his time was up and Mayor Duehay informed him that his time was up, Valentine wagged his finger at Duehay and said, "No. My time is not up." and told Duehay to call the police. Duehay had to call a recess when Valentine would not behave. This is why some call Channel 1 the Comedy Channel.

A series of residents stepped to the microphone to give testimony in support of the proposed Asbestos Protection Ordinance and several late amendments.

Further evidence of the City administration's commitment to affordable housing came in the form of a request to authorize a loan guarantee of \$2,500,000 towards the purchase of 95 units of affordable housing in Areas 1,3, and 4. This will leverage a total of over \$13 million. Since 1995, 1500 units of housing have been preserved.

Councillor Galluccio noted that if we had Tom Menino's press secretary, this would be on the front page of the Globe - \$2.5 million leveraging almost \$14 million in housing. He thanked the City Manager for his leadership and said that this is exactly what we should be doing. The loan guarantee passed unanimously.

Councillor Galluccio opened the discussion on a request from the Manager for an additional \$65,000 from Free Cash for environmental testing at Russell Field. In response to a question from Councillor Reeves, the City Manager reported a 3-year total of \$462,000 in appropriations for testing of Russell Field. He suggested that a definitive resolution of the contamination issues associated with Russell Field would be possible after this appropriation and that there is a "stand still agreement" with WR Grace and the MBTA that will allow the City to seek compensation should it be determined that one or both of them is the source of the problem. The appropriation passed 9-0.

Councillor Triantafillou's motion to pass the Asbestos Protection Ordinance with several late amendments led to some tense, politically charged moments. A column by Eileen McNamara in the Boston Globe a day earlier contributed to the high-stakes atmosphere. Support for the basic ordinance was pretty much unanimous as a common-sense augmentation to the somewhat limited protections guaranteed by DEP regulations.

What was at issue were proposed amendments that might have unintended consequences. Councillors Davis and Russell tried to allow testimony from those involved in the final drafting of the ordinance, but Councillor Triantafillou blocked this, saying, "I do not, in all due respect, want to hear from the Public Health Commissioner again about why we disagreed on point A or B or if someone wants a comma where I want a period. It doesn't matter at this point. If we have to clean it up later, we'll do that. We'll never have a perfect ordinance. Tonight we have an ordinance which is better than what we have now. We can meet again if there's fine-tuning. We need a little bit less discussion and a little bit more action. That's what we're here for." Other councillors, concerned about the possible political consequences of raising any issues, backed down.

The amended ordinance was substituted for the original language and the ordinance passed unanimously.

Moments later, the Council voted unanimously to pass the version of the six-month IPOP extension that was introduced by John Moot with a minor amendment by Councillor Russell. The Planning Board version of the IPOP extension was tabled to die.

Councillor Galluccio spoke on a committee report dealing with the issue of open access as a requirement for the Cable TV

license transfer for MediaOne/ATT. The City Manager informed MediaOne that it was his intention to require open access to all Internet service providers. He subsequently denied the license based on several failures to adhere to conditions in the original Cable TV license agreement.

The meeting closed with Mayor Duehay wishing best of luck to all running for reelection the next day.

Nov 15 City Council meeting:

There were several positive developments at the meeting dealing with the acquisition of open space in Cambridge. First, there was a presentation by State Rep. Jarrett Barrios and several others celebrating the finalization of plans for Cambridge to have priority use of MDC-owned Magazine Beach in exchange for a maintenance agreement. The Friends of Magazine Beach were singled out for their efforts that led to this result.

The other major open space initiative was the surprise request from City Manager Healy for a negotiated eminent domain taking of a parcel of land near the Maynard School for future use as open space. The City Manager explained that the City had to act quickly or the parcel would have been sold that evening. It was satisfying to hear that the City Manager would likely be recommending, after a public process, a street closure of a portion of Clark St. to join two parks into a much more significant open space. I had suggested this during the public comment.

Councillor Born noted that this acquisition was precisely the kind of opportunity she had in mind when she proposed the Open Space Acquisition Fund. She and Councillor Sullivan reveled in the fact that the City had, in the space of just a few weeks, acquired two major open space additions to the City's inventory and 92 units of affordable housing. Councillor Born called it a real feather in the cap of this Council and this administration and suggested that some people will have to reassess their criticism. Councillor Sullivan pondered what else the City Manager would come up with in the upcoming meetings.

Councillor Russell and Mayor Duehay introduced an order for the City Manager to purchase a new podium for public comment to be dedicated to William C. Jones. The podium was dedicated in style at the December 20 meeting.

There was an interesting procedural matter that arose at this meeting. A new zoning petition whose first signatory was Robert Carlson of Hingham St. was cosigned by an additional 128 people. Councillor Davis said that it was Mr. Carlson's intention to withdraw the petition at this time. Mayor Duehay and Deputy City Solicitor Don Drisdell correctly noted that even if Mr. Carlson drafted the petition and was its principal advocate, he did not have the right to withdraw a petition without the permission of all its cosigners. Consequently, the petition would have to go through the whole process. The petition was then referred to the Ordinance Committee, the Planning Board, and the Law Department (for a ruling on the procedural aspect). Mayor Duehay noted that the introduction of a zoning petition is not a matter to be taken lightly.

8) December City Council meetings

Dec 6, 1999 City Council meeting notes

Perhaps the most significant agenda item at this meeting was the proposed sale of the old Kendall Square Fire Station and the adjacent Deacon and Dock Streets. The plan was to preserve the original building and convert it to a bed & breakfast (actually a hotel - the Mary Prentiss Inn). Due to some unresolved questions, Councillor Sullivan moved that the matter be referred to the Finance Committee for a further hearing. Proceeds of this sale are earmarked for the Open Space Acquisition Fund. Preservation of the building and the prospect of the hotel/motel taxes to be generated by this use of the property were additional factors in the city administration's decision to propose this use.

An Ordinance Committee report on a proposal to change the Plan E Charter to allow the City Council to make appointments to boards and commissions (most notably the Planning Board) reported that the matter would remain in committee.

The proposal to create a Harvard Square Historic District was passed a 2nd Reading. (It remains as Unfinished Business.)

The Brown and Frankelton 3 petitions dealing with the land surrounding Linear Park in North Cambridge were both passed to 2nd Reading.

Mayor Duehay informed the City Council that the Immigrant Voting Rights Campaign wanted a hearing to present their proposal to allow non-citizens to vote in School Committee elections. The hearing was set for the December 13 meeting.

Councillor Russell and Councillor Reeves noted the death of Mel Robbins, the artist who did many of the portraits of former mayors in the Sullivan Chamber, including those of former Mayors Sheila Russell, her husband Leonard Russell, and Ken Reeves.

Several councillors commented on the closing of the Porter Square Health Stop by Beth Israel. Seniors are very concerned about this, especially because of the loss of particular staff people at that facility. It was suggested that the Cambridge Health Alliance get involved in some way. Mayor Duehay explained that in many urban neighborhoods, hospitals are competing for market share by putting up neighborhood health clinics to build up their clientele, later to be referred to their hospital. He also suggested that the Cambridge Health Alliance might be able to make some special arrangements, possibly by having limited hours at the 2050 Mass. Ave. Senior Center.

There was a rather comical communication from resident Jonathan Soros calling for the City to call residents warning them of street sweeping and towing and to play the Beatles song "Good Day, Sunshine" when the sweepers came through. The matter was referred to the City Manager for a report.

Near the conclusion of the meeting, the City Council stood for a moment of silence in memory of the six Worcester firefighters who lost their lives several days earlier.

Dec 13 City Council meeting

The main item of business this evening was the approval of the subleases to finalize the Neville Manor project. John Moot, who has been critical of a number of aspects of this project since

its inception, offered some warnings to the Council prior to the vote. He asked: "What is the financial commitment by the City? Who are the organizations with whom leases are being made? What is their motivation for signing a 99-year lease for building a facility to serve customers who cannot afford to pay for the services rendered? What is our motivation? Wouldn't a 33-year lease be adequate? What if any one of the tenants vacates the property?" He recommended deferring the decision until more facts are known.

When the matter came up for a vote, Councillor Sullivan moved that some of the language be changed in order to provide greater assurance that the preference for Cambridge residents would be respected. Any change to this policy would require City Council approval. The subleases were then unanimously approved.

With the end of this Council term approaching and talk of who would be the next mayor in the air, Councillors Toomey and Reeves both made statements indicating who they would be voting for when the new Council was inaugurated. Toomey announced he would cast his vote for Anthony Galluccio on January 3, saying, "We must work together. It's clear from last month's election that voters want the City Council to end partisan squabbles. New councillors Braude, Decker, and Maher made this a cornerstone of their campaigns." Citing an atmosphere of mistrust that grew out of last mayoral election, he said that he would vote for Galluccio because of his close personal working relationship with the City Manager. He noted that last time Councillor Galluccio joined with CCA members to elect Mayor Duehay and that he hoped that CCA members would now choose Galluccio on the first ballot.

Councillor Reeves declared his support for Michael Sullivan amidst comments about this wonderful holiday season.

A new zoning petition was introduced by Ralph Yoder et al, that calls for the rezoning in the Alewife area of a region north of the Little River (where the Arthur D. Little properties are located) from a maximum FAR of 2.5 down to an maximum FAR of 0.5. Existing built areas would be rezoned from Office-2 to Office-1. The expressed goal is to return this region to a wilderness area.

A report from the Government Operations Committee laid out a proposal for new City Council subcommittees for the next term. Also included was a report on the meeting held relative to the future status of the City Manager's contract. Mr. Healy gave no indication whether he would seek a further extension beyond June 30, 2001. His simple statement: "Absent any notice from the City Council, I look forward to continuing to serve as the City Manager, building upon the accomplishments of the past 18 1/2 years."

Regarding the proposed Council subcommittees, the 19 existing committees would be consolidated down to 14 committees with some of the more active committees possibly having co-chairs. A complete list of the new committees, their members, and their chairs will be given in this Journal as soon as a mayor is elected and the committees appointed.

The proposed rules changes that have been discussed over the last several months were introduced at this meeting. Public comment will be returned to the start of each meeting with a 90 minute cap. The limitation to one motion to suspend the rules per meeting per councillor will no longer apply to motions "to suspend the rules to move reconsideration hoping the same will not prevail." The rules were finalized at the following meeting.

Councillor Galluccio raised the issue of yet another proposed rate increase by MediaOne. He theorized that MediaOne has been building their Broadband network on the backs of cable consumers, having them pay to make MediaOne a competitor in this multi-trillion dollar field. He expressed hope that the City Manager would soon announce an agreement with RCN, a competitor.

Twenty-five people, including seven brownies, stepped to the microphone in support of a proposal to allow non-citizens the right to vote in local School Committee elections. Included were State Rep. Jarrett Barrios, School Committee members Denise Simmons and Alice Turkel, and a number of activists. A motion was introduced to refer this to appropriate committees in the new Council for prompt consideration and a home rule petition.

There were extensive comments on the propriety of this Council making such a recommendation to the newly elected Council. Eventually the proposal was rewritten to merely suggest this action to the new Council. Councillor Galluccio expressed his hesitance to support such a proposal, arguing that it could be a disincentive to people who might otherwise wish to seek citizenship. Councillor Triantafillou countered with extensive comments on the history of voting rights in the United States, arguing that restrictions of voting rights to citizens came about only after the emancipation of slaves as a means of preventing former slaves from voting.

Councillor Toomey asked why the advocates for this did not also seek voting rights for non-citizens in the City Council elections. The proponents explained frankly that they chose to play it safe and to seek only what they thought they could get.

A cryptic conversation took place, initiated by Councillor Sullivan, on a proposal that the City try to acquire the Harvard Vanguard property on Cambridge Street for open space in Mid-Cambridge. References were made to the company's need to dispose of some of their properties and of plans to possibly rent other facilities nearby. Councillor Sullivan (and others) hinted at such a nearby property. Mayor Duehay spoke positively of this proposal.

Councillor Davis spoke on an order calling for greater public process on an MIT proposal for a 350-student dormitory opposite Fort Washington Park. The building as proposed would be 10 stories tall, 350 feet long, and would be covered in a shiny aluminum facade. This led to some rather wry comments from Mayor Duehay on the mirror-like quality of the building such as "With the sun shining on that building, will the sun shine into the eyes of those driving by? This could be a public safety issue. Would people be able to see their own images if they stood close to the building? "

Dec 20 City Council meeting

This meeting opened with the dedication of a new podium for public comment in honor of William C. Jones. Billy delivered a memorable speech as he recalled mayors and city managers and all sorts of people who have passed through City Hall over the years. Billy was accompanied by the Roma Band and received the Key to the City in a ceremony that had everybody in high spirits, especially Bill Jones. City Hall employees purchased a new coat for Billy for the occasion. It was great.

Since this was the last meeting for three outgoing city councillors, farewell remarks by Sheila Russell, Frank Duehay, and Katherine Triantafillou were in order. Councillor Russell gave a brief speech and left her magic wand for the next mayor "to use wisely."

Katherine Triantafillou's farewell remarks lasted over twenty minutes and were written largely, as she said, "for another occasion" - a reference to her unsuccessful 1998 bid to be mayor. Supporters saw this as a marvelous speech. She did, however, make several references to "the pundits" as if to suggest that her failure to be reelected was caused by her critics.

Mayor Duehay's farewell remarks were brief and ended, in typical Frank Duehay style, with a reminder that the Council still had business to attend to.

There was a moment of silence for John P. Good, former member of School Committee and Library Trustee, who passed away that week.

There was extensive public comment on the proposed Harvard Square Historic District. Speaking for the proposal were Pebble Gifford, Crosby Forbes, Elizabeth Klein, Bonnie Smith, M. Wyllis Bibbons (Chair of the Study Committee), William B. King (Chair of the Historic Commission and member of the Study Committee.), Frank Kramer (member of the Harvard Square Business Association and business owner), Charlotte Moore, and James Williamson. Robert LaTremouille predictably railed against the proposal as is often the case for anything he had no part in writing. Mr. Williamson took the opportunity to warn that Central Square would soon lose its character, affordability, funkiness, and accessibility to ordinary people, artists, and blue-collar workers.

Ultimately, the Harvard Square Historic District proposal did not come to a vote at this meeting, much to the disappointment of those who had come to City Hall to speak in favor of the proposal. The deadline for action is February 15.

Lisa Birk of North Cambridge spoke on the depth of her disappointment at the election loss of Councillor Triantafillou. She gave an account of all the help given by Councillor Triantafillou on the Asbestos Protection Ordinance during the days and weeks prior to the election as well as on other matters over the last several years.

James Williamson spoke against the new Council Rules that do not permit a citizen to speak on any topic he pleases simply by sending in a letter on the topic. He also characterized the Plan E Charter as undemocratic because of the fact that the City Manager is not directly elected and is the appointing authority for City boards and commissions.

The Ordinance Committee report on the proposal to change the Plan E Charter to make the City Council the appointing authority for boards and commissions was placed on file without comment.

Before adjourning to rather unceremoniously ending this Council term by moving to Executive Session to discuss litigation about the truck ban, Councillor Triantafillou closed out the term with "To all a Merry Christmas and a good night."

9) City Council Scoreboard

Council Orders of June 21 through December 20

P (policy-related), **I** (requests for info), **R** (rules and procedural items), **M** (maintenance - potholes, traffic, etc.), **D** (deaths), **C** (congratulatory orders), **A** (announcements), and **F** (foreign and national policy). Here's the tally of orders introduced:

Councillor	P	I	R	M	D	C	A	F
Born	18	11	7	6	0	7	1	1
Davis	17	11	4	6	9	17	1	0
Duehay	9	0	3	1	4	52	23	1
Galluccio	8	1	4	2	228	55	5	0
Reeves	8	2	2	1	13	20	3	0
Russell	2	1	1	2	30	21	1	0
Sullivan	22	5	2	2	147	44	4	0
Toomey	12	9	4	7	71	56	8	0
Triantafillou	17	4	3	1	42	32	6	0
Total	87	42	20	27	269	262	42	2

Note: All but two of the death resolutions sponsored by Councillor Triantafillou occurred at the Dec 6 meeting. She must have been competing with Councillor Galluccio, the undisputed king of death resolutions.

10) Civic Bits

Make a New Year's Resolution this year that really makes a difference! Resolve to tutor an elementary or high school Cambridge public school student. Cambridge School Volunteers, Inc., needs people of all ages and backgrounds to help in elementary classroom, libraries, and homework centers and to tutor high school students. Tutors are needed immediately for Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School in all subjects and for after-school Learning Centers at each of the city's 15 elementary schools. Just two hours a week before, during, or directly after school CAN make a difference in a student's life as well as in yours. Contact Cambridge School Volunteers, Inc. at 617-349-6794 or via e-mail at <CSV@cps.ci.cambridge.ma.us>. Carolyn Musicant is Director of Volunteer Recruitment.

A Nov 22 City Council Roundtable on homelessness was accompanied by a very informative report entitled "Report of the Multidisciplinary Working Group: Addressing Issues of Homelessness, Public Intoxication, and Nuisance Behaviors." This report responded to a series of City Council orders and contains a great deal of interesting information and resources. Copies should be available through the Office of the City Clerk or the Cambridge Public Health Department.

Cambridge Civic Calendar:

Mon, Jan 10

5:30pm City Council meeting (Sullivan Chamber)

They'll try again to elect a mayor for Cambridge.

Tues, Jan 11

6:00pm School Committee meeting. (CRLS Media Cafeteria)

The main topic of this meeting will be the (controversial) restructuring of the High School.

7:30pm Planning Board meeting. (Cent. Sq. Senior Center)

CDD update of general business and joint meeting with the City-Wide Growth Management Advisory Committee (CGMAC) to discuss transportation, housing incentives, and project review. Contact Liza Paden at 349-4647 or lpaden@ci.cambridge.ma.us for more information.

Mon, Jan 24

5:30pm City Council meeting (Sullivan Chamber)

Mon, Jan 31

5:30pm City Council meeting (Sullivan Chamber)

Mon, Feb 7

5:30pm City Council meeting (Sullivan Chamber)

Mon, Feb 14

5:30pm City Council meeting (Sullivan Chamber)

Tues, Jan 22

7:30pm Presentation of the City wide Growth Management

Advisory Committee (CGMAC) proposed zoning revisions before the Planning Board. (Cent. Sq. Senior Center)

Mon, Feb 28

5:30pm City Council meeting (Sullivan Chamber)