



# City of Cambridge

~~159.~~  
Calendar #28

**IN CITY COUNCIL**  
~~July 27, 1998~~  
September 28, 1998

COUNCILLOR BORN  
COUNCILLOR DAVIS  
MAYOR DUEHAY  
VICE MAYOR GALLUCCIC  
COUNCILLOR REEVES  
COUNCILLOR RUSSELL  
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

**ORDERED:** That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to review the two attached letters, one complaining about police disregard of bicyclists and one complaining about a citation of a bicyclist going through a red light and report to the City Council what the stated policies of the police department are with regard to the issues raised.

In City Council September 28, 1998.  
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.  
Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Margaret Drury".

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury  
City Clerk



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**CHARTER RIGHT EXERCISED BY COUNCILLOR TOOMEY.**



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*Robert B. Colvin, M.D.*

159



MASSACHUSETTS  
GENERAL HOSPITAL



HARVARD  
MEDICAL SCHOOL

James Homer Wright  
Pathology Laboratories  
55 Fruit Street  
Boston, Massachusetts 02114-2696  
Office: 617-726-2966. Fax: 617-726-7533

Robert B. Colvin, M.D.  
Chief, Pathology Service  
Benjamin Castleman Professor of Pathology

Robert Moscow  
Clerk/Magistrate  
District Court Department of the Trial Court  
Cambridge Division  
PO Box 410338  
Forty Thorndike St  
East Cambridge MA 02121-0003

June 24, 1998

Re: Control # 6101102

Dear Mr. Moscow,

I will be unable to attend the hearing on 6/30/98 for the above referenced bicycle ticket. I have a previous scheduled meeting with a review board of the National Juvenile Diabetes Foundation, regarding a multimillion dollar grant for medical research. Your office has not answered my many phone calls to the listed number, so I am writing this letter to plead my case.

The ticket is for allegedly going through a red light on a bicycle on 5/15/98. I have ridden my bicycle to work at Massachusetts General Hospital almost every day since 1968 and this is the first time I was given a ticket, which to my knowledge is the first time this rule has been enforced. While I do not fault the rule, which is appropriate, the first violation noted should be a warning.

Cambridge has in general done an excellent job supporting bicycling with its bicycle lanes and paths. Please continue to encourage those of us who are non-polluters, non-parking space users and daily take our lives in our hands in the sometimes hostile traffic.

Sincerely,

Robert B. Colvin, M.D.

cc: Kathy Born, Cambridge City Council ✓

PARTNERS. HealthCare System Member

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Call of J. [unclear]

Lisa Emily Olsson  
40 Pemberton Street  
Cambridge, MA 02140

July 16, 1998

Police Commissioner Ronnie Watson  
5 Western Ave.  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Commissioner Watson:

I had a disturbing, and potentially harmful encounter with two Cambridge police officers this morning that I think you should know about. While bicycling between my home in North Cambridge and my office in Kendall Square, I had a near accident with a Cambridge police cruiser. The officer driving the cruiser cut me off and I narrowly avoided a collision because of it. Following that encounter, his fellow officer on a motorcycle indicated to me, that despite my having the right of way, I should have yielded. I regret that I was unable to get the officer's names, badge numbers or license plate numbers. However, I am sure given the time and location, that the police department can identify the officers. The following is a description of the incident.

On July 16<sup>th</sup> at approximately 8:15am I was travelling east on Hampshire Street. I noted that a car was edging out of Elm Street going north into the right of way of Hampshire. (At that intersection, Elm has a stop sign, Hampshire has neither light nor stop sign.) I rang my bell to alert the driver of my presence travelling down Hampshire. I also looked at the car to make eye contact and ascertain whether the driver saw me. I noted that the car was a Cambridge police cruiser, without lights or siren on. The officer and I made eye contact. The officer saw me and saw that I was a short distance from him. The officer then pulled out in front of me to cross Hampshire Street. I hit my breaks and had to swerve to avoid a collision as the police cruiser cut me off. As a last attempt to alert the officer I called out "Hey, you cut me off!" As a response, a motorcycle policeman, who was behind the cruiser, said to me "You should slow down". I was travelling at a speed of 10 to 15 mph.

I am writing to you about this incident because I find it very troubling. If Cambridge police officers willfully disregard a bicyclist's right of way, how can we expect them to enforce traffic laws to ensure bicyclist's safety? I am a safe and law abiding cyclist. I obey street lights, cross walks, stop signs and all other traffic regulations. However it is a near daily occurrence that I have cars make unsignaled turns, jump red lights or cross streets dangerously into my right of way. I know you and the City Council are working to make Cambridge safe for automobile alternatives. Unfortunately, my experience from this and prior incidents is that many Cambridge Police officers are not working with you for bicyclist safety.

Sincerely,



Lisa Emily Olsson

Cc:

Mayor Francis H. Duehay  
Vice Mayor Anthony Galluccio  
Councilor Kathleen L. Born  
Councilor Henrietta Davis  
Councilor Kenneth E. Reeves  
Councilor Sheila T. Russell  
Councilor Michael A. Sullivan  
Councilor Katherine Triantafillou  
Councilor Timothy J. Toomey, Jr.



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Consent Order #159 *CM 509* *Cal. 28*

Councillor Born re: review the policies  
of the police department with regard  
to bicyclists in the City.

In City Council July 27, 1998

**CHARTER RIGHT**  
BY Councillor *Toomey*

*9/14/98*

*Tabled on motion of C. Russell*

SEP. 28 1998

**ORDER ADOPTED**