



CAMBRIDGE CONSUMERS' COUNCIL

831 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge, MA 02139

Tel. (617) 349-6150

349-6153

City Of Cambridge

Paul J. Schlaver
Executive Director

serving the
residents of:

Cambridge
Boston

TO: Robert W. Healy, City Manager
FROM: Paul Schlaver
THROUGH: Benjamin Barnes
DATE: December 2, 1998

RE: Calendar Item #13, dated 9/28/98 RE: Report on the Ithaca Hours Program

The Ithaca Hours Program is an initiative that is not a municipal run program but a non-profit community-based operation. The Ithaca Chamber of Commerce and non-profit agency network in Ithaca provided most of the development and support for the program. 370 local businesses and organizations are active participants. The municipality does accept "Ithaca Hours" in exchange for the payment of health services at the City Health Center and the Mayor of Ithaca, prior to his election, did help to pioneer the concept.

It appears that the primary leadership and organizational effort needs to spring from the private non-profit sector in Cambridge as well as the business community in partnership. The City's Chamber of Commerce or one of the business associations in Harvard Square or Central Square would need to step forward as well as a non-profit foundation or organization to initiate a feasibility study to determine the level of interest here for such a project. It is possible that the pending development of a Business Improvement District (BID) in Central Square could lead to a serious look at this Ithaca Hours Program.

The City could certainly play a supportive role if an initiative emerges in the manner I suggest above. The Mayor's Office and City Council could then request that the appropriate city departments lend some staff support to this leadership effort of the business and non-profit community that is needed to get this started.

There is a very thorough Internet web site that can be reviewed to learn more about this program. The web address is: <http://www.lightlink.com/ithacahours>. While it appears from a review of the information presented that the mission is to impact the economic development, economic stability and quality of life in Ithaca in a very positive manner, the program has strong political, economic and social policy-driven overtones that can only realistically be asserted by a non-profit or independent organization. This does not mean that the city government cannot encourage the public to participate in the program or support the actual implementation of it. I just believe that the mission and goals of such a community effort need to be "institutionalized" in a non-profit corporation overseen by a its board of directors rather than by a municipal governmental body.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL. 349-4300
FAX. 349-4307



12.

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

December 7, 1998

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 7, regarding a report on the Ithaca program, received from Executive Director of the Consumers' Council Paul Schlaver.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
Attachment

Consent Agenda #12

Relative to AW Report #7 regarding
a report on the Ithaca Program.

In City Council December 7, 1998

PLACED ON FILE