

City of Cambridge

The Human Services and Youth Committee conducted a public hearing on Tuesday, February 11, 1992 beginning at 1:11 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall.

Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Chair of the above referenced Committee, convened the hearing and stated that the purpose of this date's proceedings was to receive a draft report of the Human Service Resident Needs Survey, dated January, 1992 from the Human Services Department and the Strategic Planning Committee. Present at the hearing were: Councillor Francis H. Duehay and Deputy City Clerk John E. Flynn.

To begin the presentation, the Chair recognized Ms. Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services, for an overview of the methodology employed in the survey sample. Ms. Herold stated that the telephone survey was conducted during the months of October and November, 1991 reaching 311 respondents with a provability sample of 132 male and 179 residents of Cambridge. Noting the fact that a slight bias may exist due to the use of a telephone survey, Ms. Herold stated that she felt comfortable with the survey sample. She further stated that additional input is being solicited before a final report is issued and presented to the Committee.

As this time, Ms. Stephanie P. Ackert, Division Head/Planning and Development for the Department of Human Service Programs, outlined to the Committee the various composites of the survey. Statistics were compiled on the following compositions of the sample:

- *Racial/ethnic composition
- *Income distribution of the household
- *Sources of household income
- *Employment and Training
- *Children and childcare
- *Services
- *Older persons
- *Households with Disabled Persons
- *Nutrition
- *Language
- *Neighborhood and Crime; and
- *Future Needs.

Ms. Ackert also stated that the survey was conducted through a randomly computer generated telephone listing restricted to households with up to a ten (10) call-back provision. Ms. Ackert also provided to the Committee a comparison of the sample of respondents to the census population.

Upon conclusion of the presentation of the survey's findings the Chair then solicited public testimony.

Mr. Gerald Bergman, 27A Essex Street, questioned the size of the survey sample with regards to the nutrition section of the report stating that it was too small and was not sure how questions were asked to the respondents and how reflective of the poor and non-English speaking. He further stated that he does not support telephone surveys.

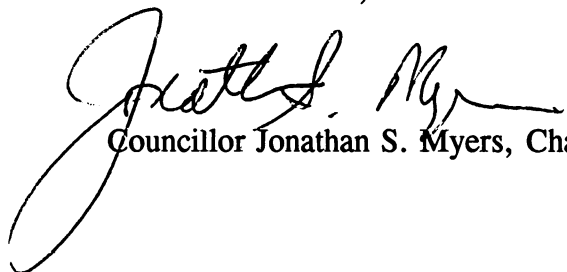
Councillor Myers in response stated the report's findings is not the be all and end all in the establishment of public policy. He further stated that the information gathered serves a purpose and was not wasted.

Councillor Duehay also stated in response that this survey would be coupled with other studies to look at redirecting the limited resources of the City to meet present and future needs.

The Chair concluded the hearing by thanking the staff and participants for their cooperation.

The hearing was adjourned at 2:09 p.m.

For the Committee,



Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Chair.

1.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report from the Human Services and Youth Committee, for a hearing held on February 11, 1992 relative to a draft report of the Human Service Resident Needs Survey from the Human Services Dept. and the Strategic Planning Committee.

In City Council,

March 2, 1992

*Report accepted
Placed on file*