



City of Cambridge

O-20

IN CITY COUNCIL

March 18, 2002

VICE MAYOR DAVIS

ORDERED: That the University Relations Committee begin with at least one offsite facilitated meeting, and perhaps another, in which all members of the City Council and the senior administrative staff will participate.

In City Council March 18, 2002.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "D. Margaret Drury".

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

Councillor Maher responded that it would depend on what kind of process, if any, the committee ultimately chooses to recommend to the full City Council. If the Council wants a long process, with regular meetings, involving the committee, the Council, all of the institutions and neighborhood groups, it could be a relatively expensive process that could well fall within the bid/request for proposal provisions of the public procurement law. In addition, in that kind of lengthy process, some contribution to the costs from the major institutions might be appropriate. However, at this time the Council has not decided upon such a process. There is not even a proposal for a process.

Vice Mayor Davis asked whether Councillor Maher is talking about having Ms. Miller help with deciding what the first few meetings should be, and Councillor Maher replied in the affirmative.

Councillor Reeves said that most committees of the City Council are made up exclusively of members of the City Council appointed by the Mayor and asked whether some other kind of membership is being proposed for this committee.

Councillor Maher replied in the negative stating that the committee will be made up of the five members that the Mayor appointed. Councillor Maher talked about the potential of a task force as an outgrowth of the committee, which will bring community and university representatives to the table with the City Council. However, at the beginning of this committee, it is crucial to have the input of the entire City Council.

Councillor Reeves stated that he believes that it is bad strategy to invite the universities to the initial meetings.

Vice Mayor Davis said that the City Council needs to work on what they can agree upon, before the universities are invited.

Councillor Maher expressed his agreement with Councillor Reeves and Vice Mayor Davis. He then invited Roberta Miller to discuss her thoughts on how the University Relations Committee could develop a plan for a process that could lead to more productive and less frustrating relationships with the institutions of Cambridge.

Ms. Miller described her background and experience in working with city government and with the Cambridge City Council. She explained that her approach is to look for solutions that maximize democracy and public involvement. She would like to start by hearing what the committee members see as the issues and challenges.

Vice Mayor Davis said that she sees university growth and expansion, and its long-term effect on neighborhoods as central. The red line agreement with Harvard has expired. There never was such an agreement with MIT. Recent expansion of both of these institutions has led to boundaries that almost meet in Cambridgeport. She added that the purposes set out in the City Council rule describing the committee are a useful place to start. The following is a list of those purposes:

- To consider all issues regarding the relationship between the city and the educational institutions located in Cambridge.
- To develop policies that will facilitate the regular and timely exchange of information between these institutions and the city administration and the City Council, and monitor implementation.
- To work with the city and the institutions on the development and exchange of written long-term planning documents on land use, growth and development.
- To review and evaluate agreements between the city and institutions for payments in lieu of property taxes, develop policies to ensure that the agreements are fair and equitable, and monitor implementation.
- To further the development of mutually beneficial partnerships between the educational institutions and the city relative to education, philanthropy, the arts and other matters of mutual concern.

Ms. Miller stated that the first step has to be an internal process of the City Council, and also city staff. She suggested a retreat-like setting, to take a fresh look. This new committee presents an opportunity to fundamentally change the relationship that exists between the universities and the community. She said that she would propose at the first session that the Council spend time looking at what would be the characteristic of a positive relationship. The Council can also look at some other cities, including cities in other countries, and consider how their relationships look. Only after the Council has worked through its own process should the universities be invited to a dialogue in a positive vein on how there can be better relationships. While an offsite meeting is a public meeting, she suggested asking the university representatives to not attend this meeting. At this stage, their presence cannot help the Council take the steps it needs to take, and can be detrimental. Their time is better spent having their own internal processes about what they would see as a positive relationship with the city.

Ms. Miller stated that there has to be an opportunity to hear from all concerned. For example, neighbors have a different point of view from other Cambridge residents.

Councillor Reeves stated that he does not see his views as different from those whom he represents. He added that if there are going to be conversations with the universities, the real stakeholders and decision-makers must be present. He also noted that there are other expanding institutions in Cambridge, such as the Longy School of Music and Buckingham Brown and Nichols.

Vice Mayor Davis said that the Planning Board's views are an important part of the equation. The Planning Board has a great deal of contact with the universities and their plans.

Councillor Simmons said that some of this conversation must engage the School Department and School Committee. The universities have many interconnections with the schools. An important question is how to make these relationships less fragmented.

Vice Mayor Davis asked Mr. Healy about city administrative staff connections with Harvard. Mr. Healy said that there are multiple meetings. He, Deputy City Manager Rich Rossi and the three assistant city managers meet at least quarterly with MIT and Harvard staff in what is called the Administrative Working Group. From former Mayor Alice Wolf's work on the town-gown committee, there is the ongoing town-gown report which Harvard and MIT submit to the Planning Board each year. In addition, there are separate meetings in which the PILOT payments are negotiated.

Ms. Miller said that this committee could be used over time as a point to check back in on how new relationships are working, to look at specific events and learn from actual experiences.

Vice Mayor Davis moved that the following order be recommended to the full City Council:

Ordered: That the University Relations Committee begin with at least one offsite facilitated meeting, and perhaps another, in which all members of the City Council and the senior administrative staff will participate.

The motion passed on a voice vote without objection.

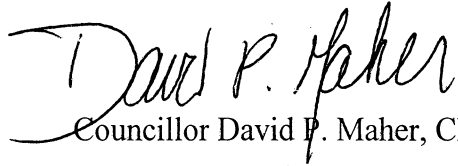
Roberta Miller emphasized that this discussion has identified the following crucial issues that must be addressed:

- Listening to neighborhood concerns.
- What about other institutions besides the universities?
- The role of the Planning Board.
- The involvement that the universities have with the School Department. Does the City even keep track of all of the programs?
- How can changes in the relationships be institutionalized?

Councillor Maher requested that Roberta Miller provide a proposal for the facilitated initial offsite meeting or meetings, and that City Manager Healy look at any issues involved in paying for this work. Councillor Reeves stated that there could be a role for the Mayor's Office in the funding issue.

Councillor Maher thanked all those present for their attendance. On the motion of Vice Mayor Davis, the meeting was adjourned at 3:50 p.m.

For the Committee,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David P. Maher". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "D".

Councillor David P. Maher, Chair

City of Cambridge

UNIVERSITY RELATIONS

In City Council March 18, 2002

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Councillor David P. Maher, Chair
Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Vice Chair
Councillor Brian Murphy
Councillor E. Denise Simmons
Councillor Timothy J. Toomey

The University Relations Committee held a public meeting on March 6, 2002, beginning at 2:40 P.M. in the Ackermann Room for the purpose of discussing the work of this new committee.

Present at the hearing were Councillor David P. Maher, Chair of the Committee, Vice Mayor Henrietta Davis, Vice Chair of the Committee, Councillor Brian Murphy, Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Councillor E. Denise Simmons, Councillor Timothy J. Toomey and City Clerk D. Margaret Drury. Also present was City Manager Robert W. Healy.

Councillor Maher convened the hearing and explained the purpose. He thanked all those in attendance for their interest. He noted the presence of Roberta Miller, consultant/facilitator and trainer. Councillor Maher explained that he had requested that she come to the meeting for a discussion of whether these skills could be useful in beginning a new committee to consider issues that the City Council has struggled with for a long time. Councillor Maher said that he would like to start with a discussion among all members of the City Council to identify and prioritize all of the issues. He stated that at some point the committee will have to have discussion with the institutions as well.

Vice Mayor Davis asked whether the Chair envisioned involving the community, and Councillor Maher replied in the affirmative.

Councillor Toomey requested that Councillor Maher explain the role of Roberta Miller.

Councillor Maher said that there is no proposal at present. He invited Ms. Miller to talk to the committee and make recommendations about what role a facilitator could play. His thought in doing so was that there are so many different parties and individuals interested in city/university relations that to try to have one conversation involving all would be overwhelming and unproductive. Some sort of structure is necessary.

Councillor Toomey asked whether a public bidding process would be required.

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Committee Report #3

Committee Report from
Councillor David P. Maher,
Chair of the University Relations
Committee, for a meeting held on
March 6, 2002 to discuss the work
of this new committee.

In City Council March 18, 2002

Report accepted

PLACED ON FILE

ORDER ADOPTED

See Order #20