

Subject: Public Comment signup time and Snow readiness

From: John W Gintell <gintell@shore.net>

Date: Wed, 17 Dec 2003 15:27:33 -0500

To: Margaret Drury <mdrury@cambridgema.gov>

CC: Henrietta Davis <hdavis@cambridgema.gov>, Michael A. Sullivan <msullivan@cambridgema.gov>

I showed up for the Monday Dec 15 council meeting at 5:45 intending to signup to speak on Henrietta Davis's snow order. The rules as I recall them say signup is until 6 PM; these rules are on the city web site (see below). In the past, 5:45 was an ample time since the council meeting hadn't even started.

When I arrived, Public Comment was over and Henrietta was already speaking about her amendment to the order and the vote was about to be taken so it was too late for public comment on this topic.

Mayor Sullivan has been running a tight ship at council meetings so they are quick and efficient (a welcome change from some of the meetings in the past). Have the rules changed? Or was he just being pragmatic due to the short agenda and small number of members of the public?

I wanted to ask for even more expansion of this order. I don't think the city is doing very well on support for pedestrians and busses - and that seems to be inconsistent with one of the council goals - cited below.

For a few examples: the crosswalk in front of City Hall was never cleared! And that bus stop was incompletely plowed even as of Monday - a week after the storm. The busses must stop on the other side of a big mound of snow and riders have to climb over it to get onto the bus. Such actions will hardly induce people to use the T. Last Saturday night when I returned from Jamaica Plain I was close behind a #47 bus which got stuck on Pearl Street because the street plowing didn't go to the curb and parked cars made the gap too narrow for the bus to pass!

Residents and/or property owners are supposed to clean their sidewalks and some do, but some don't. But what about cross walks many of which have had big piles of snow at them?

Enforcement of the snow removal ordinance is spotty at best. If warnings were given out frequently, I am confident that the word would spread through the grapevine and cause more people to do a better job on their own sidewalks.

I think the next council should consider a Round Table on this general topic.

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>From City Council Goals for FY04

Foster improvement of air quality, in particular through creative approaches to traffic, parking and transportation needs of residents and businesses within the context of growing congestion.

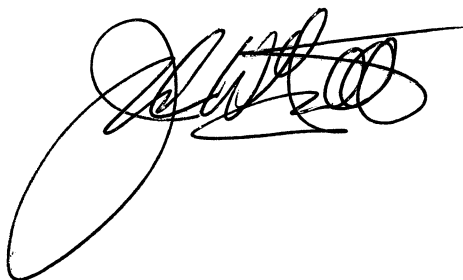
Policy guidelines include:

- Continue to explore the questions around density and livability
- Develop coexistence strategies for bicyclists, pedestrians, T-users and drivers
- Continue to support non-single occupancy vehicle transportation options for employees and residents

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Public Comment Policy on web site

"Members of the public may speak at the public comment section of the scheduled business meeting for up to three minutes on any matter that is being considered by the City Council for action at that meeting. You may sign up to speak by calling the City Council Office at 349-4280 on Mondays between 9:00 a.m. and 3:00 p.m., or by signing up at the meeting between 5:00 p.m. and 6:00 p.m."



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Communication #1

A communication was received
from John Gintell, regarding snow
readiness.

In City Council December 22, 2003

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