

City of Cambridge

The Committee on Human Services and Youth conducted a public hearing on Thursday, March 15, 1990, beginning at 12:18 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall.

Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Chair of the above referenced Committee, convened the hearing and introduced Committee Members Councillor Francis H. Duehay and Councillor Timothy J. Toomey, Jr. Councillor Myers stated that the purpose of this hearing was to receive reports from the Program and Private Sector Committees; discuss the idea of a summit meeting with school, businesses and community leaders; and, continue discussions for the coordination and expansion of youth employment programs.

At this time, the Committee heard from Mr. Gerry Mimno, spokesperson for the Private Sector Committee, for a report and recommendations. Mr. Mimno stated in the Committee's findings that the following actions were needed: 1) A catalogue of programs offered by both sectors accompanied with description, guidelines and employment status (full-time or part-time); 2) A youth employment summit with participants from the public and private sectors; 3) Greater exposure to math and science courses; and, 4) To use and build upon existing programs to meet the needs of the youth of Cambridge.

Mr. Steven Swanger reported out the findings and recommendations of the Program Committee to include: 1) A directory (see recommendation #1 of the Public Sector Committee); and, 2) The establishment of a goal statement to include short term and long term action plans. Short term action plan to

include a workshop for employers on such activities as interview techniques and how to employ youth. Long term action plan to include guidelines for the creation and operation of a City Youth Employment Office.

Councillor Myers presented to the Advisory Committee a proposal for the creation of a centralized City Youth Employment Center. The proposal calls for an Amendment to the Municipal Code, Chapter 2.66 entitled Cambridge Employment Plan so as to include the Department of Human Service Programs to administer the new component of the plan and to allow for the continuation of the Community Development Department of the existing component.

At this time, the Chair recognized Ms. Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services to brief the Committee on the discussions held between D.H.S.P. and the School Department. Ms. Herold stated that the discussions were in the preliminary stage and the direction of the talks centered on two elements: 1) Identification of an accessible site for the center (possible site - Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School); and, 2) Designation of service provider to serve as a technical resource with experience to administer the operation of the Center.

Councillor Myers stressed the fact that for the Center to achieve the objectives and meet the needs of the youth, it would require the participation and cooperation of existing service providers.

Ms. Herold on a follow-up to Councillor Myers' comments stated that the Center's focal point would be to provide information and serve as a link to and with the private sector.

Mr. Robert Lewis of the Chamber of Commerce suggested that the business community be brought in at an early stage in the organization of the Center so as to serve as a resource.

Ms. Ginny McCabe of the Cambridge School System, spoke of the successes realized in the past through a program initiated by Ms. Ruby Pierce which brought together the public and private sectors on a regular basis to discuss needs and opportunities. She further stated that the Center must offer programs to ensure job preparedness.

Ms. Mary Jane Clancy also of the Cambridge School System cited the Teen Health Center located at the High School as a model for accessibility.

Ms. Ellen McBride, 38 Prince Street, Cambridge, disagreed with the possible location of the Center at the High School. She felt that location does not serve the needs of all the City youth. She endorsed the concept of the Center serving as a clearing house.

Councillor Duehay stated that the proposed Center would have to address two sets of variables in its dealing with the employment opportunities for youth. Those variables would include: 1) In school; and, 2) Out of school youths.

Mayor Alice K. Wolf stated that the proposed Center would also have to deal with two sets of issues: 1) Coordination of what is presently available; and, 2) what can be done to meet the needs that are not being met in the present.

Ms. Susan L. Golden, Associate Director of the Cambridge Community Services, commented on existing non-profit organizations services, suggested

the need for greater outreach and given the reality of limited financial resources available to non-profits, she hoped that existing programs would not be cut to make resources available for the Center.

Councillor Myers responded that it is the objective of the Center to add existing services and not reduce them.

Mr. John Shattuck, Vice President of Government, Community and Public Affairs at Harvard University questioned the scope of the Center as it relates to: 1) Short term (summer) employment; and, 2) Other forms of youth services. In response, Councillor Myers stated that at this juncture, the focus of the Center would be exclusively on youth employment.

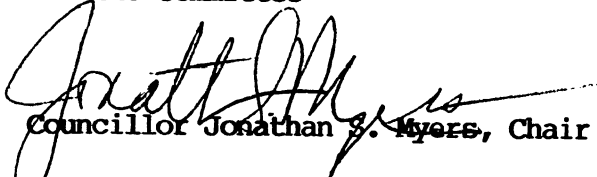
Mr. Joseph O'Connor, Vice President of Draper Laboratories, suggested the need to sharpen the priority of the Center to include such critical areas as: 1) Vehicle to bring back drop-outs; and, 2) Identification of above-average students.

Councillor Myers announced plans for a business/service provider workshop to be held in May or June, 1990, to deal with such issues as employer sensitivity.

Councillor Toomey questioned the Chair on the definition of sensitivity. Councillor Myers described the concept as the relationship established between employer and employee and to offer counseling if necessary to ensure successful youth employment.

Councillor Myers thanked the participants for their feedback. The hearing was adjourned at 1:30 p.m.

For the Committee


Councillor Jonathan S. Myers, Chair

3-354
COMMITTEE REPORTS

Report from the Human Services and Youth Committee, for a hearing held on March 15, 1990 relative to receiving reports from the Program and Private Sector Committees; to discuss the idea of a summit meeting with the school, businesses and community leaders and to continue discussions for the coordination and expansion of youth employment programs.

In City Council,

April 2, 1990

Report accepted