

Cambridge Human Services Commission

Minutes of Meeting 10/13/11

51 Inman Street, 3rd Floor Resource Room

5:30 to 7:30 pm

Commissioners Present: Christopher Hall, Reverend Lorraine Thornhill, Claudia Hill, Kati LaBraico, Khari Milner

Regrets: Lori Likis, NanStone, Ayse Atasoylu

DHSP Staff: Ellen Semonoff, Jolyon Cowan, Jose Soares (recorder)

Presenter: Cliff Cook, Planning Information Manager, Community Development Department (CDD).

Ellen gave a brief update on the Mayor's recent Reception for Commission and Board members held at the Atrium Lounge on October 6th.

Ellen mentioned that, given Marian Darlington Hope's recent resignation from the Commission, we will need to recruit one member. She continued that the Police Commissioner has appointed liaisons to a number of City commissions and boards, and that if the Human Services Commission wanted, we could possibly have either a police representative join as a member of the Commission or serve as a liaison. Several Commissioners thought that having a police officer attend HSC meetings would bring a different and useful perspective from law enforcement and the Cambridge Police Department's community relations to our Commission. Commissioner Khari Milner mentioned we could also recruit a member from an academic institution with a background in research and possibly develop a partnership with that institution. It was agreed to approach the Police Commissioner and begin the search process for an additional Commissioner.

Cliff Cook from the City's CDD then made a detailed presentation on the most recent data analysis from the 2010 Census and from the American Community Survey. Please see attached document. According to the 2010 Census, Cambridge has a population of 105,162, which is a 4% increase over the 2000 Census. Some highlights from the presentation included:

- Cambridge has the 4th lowest percentage of youths under 18 in Massachusetts, a figure on par with Amherst. But the birthrate in Cambridge is beginning to increase.
- There is a substantial bulge in Cambridge's population pyramid in the 20 to 34 year old age ranges, probably due to the large university and post-graduate student population. Surprisingly there are significantly more males than females in this age range.

- The population of those 65 and older is increasing and now accounts for 9.5% of the City's residents. There are almost 20% more residents 55 and over than in the last census.
- The Hispanic population is currently about 8,352, and mostly concentrated around Washington Elms and Newtown Court (area 4), Jefferson Park (North Cambridge), Cambridgeport and MIT.
- The Haitian population numbers around 2,500, and is mostly centered in Area 4 and North Cambridge.
- The Ethiopian population has increased significantly recently and is officially around 1,685, mostly around Walden Square, North Cambridge.
- The Portuguese speaking population is currently about 3,000 with an increase in Cape Verdeans, and is mostly concentrated in East Cambridge.
- 36% of households with children in Cambridge are in the low to moderate income group who can be potential beneficiaries of CDBG funding.
- Housing prices have remained stable in Cambridge despite dropping in the area, and rents continue to rise so that the median rent of a 3 bedroom condo is \$3,000.

After Cliff Cook's presentation, Ellen suggested possible future people to invite to the Human Services Commission meetings:

- Wilfred Labiosa, the new Executive Director of CASPAR, whose agency receives several grants from the City including CDBG funding, could speak about his vision for CASPAR's shelter and services in light of imminent budget cuts from the State.
- George Hinds, from the Department of Human Service Programs- Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program, could present on the past summer's youth employment in the City and the smaller fall youth employment program and associated developmental workshops.
- Carole Sousa, from the City's Community Engagement Team, which hires people of different linguistic backgrounds to perform outreach to various linguistic communities in the City, could talk about their work.

Ellen suggested polling Commissioners via email to find out which of the presentations would be the most useful for future meetings.

The next Human Services Commission meeting is scheduled for November 10th.