

## **Remarks by Cambridge Mayor Sumbul Siddiqui, George Floyd Memorial Vigil 6-1-20**

Thank you Rev. Thorhill.

Good evening everyone, thank you for being here with us today.

I, like many of you, am still navigating waves of anger and sadness as I think about George Floyd's life, his family, and community— and about this country's history of criminalizing blackness. His death should not have happened. His murder is among too many that came before him. May he rest in power.

As the Mayor of Cambridge, I want to reiterate to all of you that my priority is to keep you safe, well, and connected. When I became Mayor, I took a pledge to improve the response to instances of racism, and I called on all of us to get to work. The allyship of our community members—those of us who are white and non-black people of color— plays a tremendous role in creating the seismic, cultural shift that we need. This starts with checking in on our Black friends, and colleagues to ask how we can support them— understanding that our country's Black community is navigating an extremely traumatic, painful, and never-ending experience. We have to come to terms with our own privilege and it won't be easy, as we process feelings of guilt, anger, and shame.

- Like you, I am angry. I am sad. I am processing emotion. These feelings are fueling my passion to say no more to these senseless acts of violence\_. What will you do with these feelings? How will you use your anger, sadness and privilege to end racism? We must come together in this moment and listen.

We, as leaders, too often invoke Black Lives Matter in the wake of a racist incident or a tragic death. This is not enough. It must be part of our daily work, centered as we think and legislate about housing, public safety for all, education, transit, youth development, mental health, and the arts.

The City of Cambridge and I stand against these killings. We can no longer hear “I can’t breathe” as the final words of black and brown people. I stand with all Cambridge residents and say: not one more.

Now, I’d like to invite former Mayor and Councilor E. Denise Simmons to share her remarks.