

Nicole Murati Ferrer  
Chairperson

Mark Melo  
City Electrician

Terrence James Shea  
Superintendent of Streets

# CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

## POLE AND CONDUIT COMMISSION

831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139



### **POLE AND CONDUIT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES**

**Thursday, September 18, 2025, at 9:00 A.M.**

**By Remote Participation Via Zoom**

*This meeting was held remotely in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2025 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor.*

**Commission Members (All Present):** Nicole Murati Ferrer, Mark Melo, and Terrence James Shea.

**License Commission Staff Present:** Cristina Casilli, Administrative Assistant; and Kris Foster, Executive Officer.

**Documents Considered by the Board:** As to all petitions, the Commission considered the application submitted to it and all documents attached thereto.

**Decisions:** All votes, unless otherwise stated, were taken by roll call vote and were 3-0, unless otherwise indicated. When matters are granted with "typical conditions," those are:

- (1) Must obtain Electrical Department Utility Permit and Department of Public Works ("DPW") Permits and comply with the provisions therein.
- (2) Must pay sidewalk preservation off-set fee.
- (3) Must coordinate site visit with DPW.
- (4) Must commence work within sixty (60) days of the grant and complete within six (6) months of the date of the approval.
- (5) Must comply with any amendment City agencies make to the issued permits after the Acceptance Without Reservations is filed.

1. **New petition (1180433) - Flock Group Inc.**, 1170 Howell Mill Road, Atlanta, GA 30318, for the following: Massachusetts Avenue - Installation of both AC-powered and solar-powered license plate reader cameras on existing City-owned poles (light poles, traffic signals, surface mount to city-owned buildings) to assist the Cambridge Police Department with criminal investigations. It's for a total of 16 poles.

**Summary/Decision:** Continued to October 23, 2025.

2. **New petition (1177573) - Crown Castle**, 4545 East River Rd, West Henrietta, NY 14586, for the following: Oak Street - Crown Castle is proposing to install a new 1' x 2' handhole on Oak Street directly in front of house number 20. From there, Crown Castle is proposing to run 6 feet of conduit from the new handhole to pole #4.

**Present:** Brandi Spezzano and Sarah Feely.

**Summary:** This is an extension of Application #1166369, for the installation of a handhole going directly in front of 20 Oak Street. The original application was to upgrade equipment with no excavation but then they realized they needed to run an additional six feet of conduit from the pole to the handhold.

At the time, Crown Castle assumed the fiber would be above-ground as existing fiber is on the street, but it is actually underground. The Commission highlighted that significant street restoration would need to take place as the street is only two years old.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions and additional conditions of mill and overlay 10 feet past excavation limits, curb to curb permanent sidewalk repair, and line/traffic signal striping repair.

3. **Continuation from July 28, 2022, to obtain MBTA permit and the results of the test pits (181012) - Verizon New England**, 85 High Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Fl, Pawtucket, RI 02860, for the following: Main Street - Verizon to trench roadway 762 feet from MH26/19 to MH26/20 to MH26/21 on Main Street to place and splice new conduit.

**Present:** Alexander Marrero.

**Summary:** This application has been open since 2022, as it was missing both test pits and MBTA permitting. Verizon explained that it determined it did not need MBTA permitting because the proposed conduit would only be 24 inches under the road, and the closest the MBTA comes to the surface is 42 inches. The Commission explained that Verizon does not get to determine whether it needs permitting, but rather the MBTA does.

A test pit confirmed an existing 12-duct bank made of square tile ducts placed in 1958. These conduits are full of working cables and are crushed throughout the run between the two manholes. Verizon was unable to clear any blockages and the maximum footage they were able to rod from both ends was three feet. Verizon did not remove the crushed conduits.

Test pits were also performed between manholes 19 and 20 on Main Street, with rodding done from each end for three feet before encountering blockages. No test pits were run between manholes 20 and 21, despite the Commission previously requesting this be done.

**Decision:** Denied for failure to complete the application in a timely manner, address the concerns of the Commission, complete all test pits as required and provide complete information on results, and failure to communicate with the MBTA. Once the petitioner has addressed all matters, obtained all required information, and removes the crushed or abandoned conduit (or at least have a set plan for doing so), it may submit a new application.

4. **[Matter originally heard April 25, 2024 and reconsidered on May 16, 2024] Petition 262636 - Verizon New England**, 85 High Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Pawtucket, RI 02860, for the following: Lansdowne Street - Verizon to place 192 feet of conduit from MH617C to a handhole in front of 266 Massachusetts Avenue on Lansdowne Street.

**Present:** Alexander Marrero.

**Summary:** This application is to place one new four-inch copper encased conduit running along Lansdowne Street to a Crown Castle handhold. This is an upgrade to a small cell.

On May 16, 2024, the Commission denied this application because it was “reserving” space for a possible future installation. Verizon shared that there is already a small cell on the pole with a client to be serviced, as well as an existing handhold.

A site visit was performed to confirm the existing Crown Castle handhold. Verizon seeks to run fiber to this shared handhold. The Commission expressed concern that it has requested several actions from Verizon, which it has not complied, including failing to respond to the Commission’s requests for updates on the application. Furthermore, at the 2024 hearing, it was discussed that the conduit was full, but now they indicate they have not checked on that.

**Decision:** Denied for failure to provide an update to the Commission in a timely manner, verify in person that there is no existing conduit coming out of the manhole and feeding the Crown Castle site, to clearly address whether the issue is full conduit or no conduit, and communicate with Crown Castle as to whether it too needs to do work with regard to this site. Once the petitioner verifies what is existing at the location, including physically going into the manhole and verifying whether there is existing conduit and what it feeds, and fully and properly addresses the Commission’s concerns, a new application may be filed, if required.

5. **New petition (1180089) - Eversource Energy**, 101 Linwood Street, Somerville, MA 02143, for the following: Brattle Street - Southwesterly from manhole (MHC194), approximately 140 feet southwest of Palmer Street, to private property at #26 Brattle Street, install approximately 15 feet of conduit.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway.

**Summary:** This application is a service upgrade to provide electric for a new Korean barbecue restaurant.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions and additional condition of permanent sidewalk repair.

6. **New petition (1180082) - Eversource Energy**, 101 Linwood Street, Somerville, MA 02143, for the following: Garden Street - Northwesterly from manhole (MHC995), across from Berkeley Street to private property at #19 Garden Street, install approximately 62 feet of conduit.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway.

**Summary:** This is a service upgrade for a 56-unit building at 19 Garden Street. Two PVC pipes will be installed.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions and additional condition of permanent sidewalk repair.

7. **New petition (1181421) - Eversource Energy**, 101 Linwood Street, Somerville, MA 02143, for the following: White Street - Easterly from Pole 725/6, at the Cambridge/Somerville line, install approximately 28 feet of conduit.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway.

**Summary:** This is to provide electric service to 14 White Street in Somerville. The service request is for a new 25-unit building in Somerville.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions and additional condition of mill and overlay curb to curb.

8. **New petition (1181936) - Eversource Energy**, 101 Linwood Street, Somerville, MA 02143, for the following: Pleasant Street - Westerly side, across from Pleasant Place, install new anchor and hip guy at Pole 550/23.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway.

**Summary:** This application is to install a new support pole due to the proposed removal of a stub pole by Cambridge mandate at DPW's request. There will be no trenching. This will be a permanent installation to support the pole. Commissioner Melo met the applicant on site and determined that a hip guy would be best. Eversource will coordinate the exact site with the project team.

**Decision:** Granted with the condition that there be coordination with DPW as to the exact location.

9. **New petition (1175775) - Comcast**, 426 E. First Street, Boston, MA 02127, for the following: Brattle Street - From existing Comcast manhole located on Brattle Street, excavate +/- 50 feet in the public way, installing (1) 2-inch conduit to the private property of 145 Brattle Street to connect to a private property telecom handhole. This is for a relocation of a Comcast line which runs over roofs off a pole on Sparks Street.

**Present:** Shane Flewelling.

**Summary:** This application is to install one two-inch conduit to private property, 50 feet from an existing manhole. The Commission discussed whether an MWRA permit was needed, and it was determined that it was not for this section of Brattle Street.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions and additional conditions of mill and overlay, and permanent sidewalk repair.

10. **New petition (1177928) - Comcast**, 426 E. First Street, Boston, MA 02127, for the following: Hancock Street and Massachusetts Avenue - From existing CATV manhole on Hancock Street, excavate +/-13 feet in the roadway and through (1) sidewalk panel to core into the basement of 922 Massachusetts Avenue, placing (1) 4-inch conduit. This is for a new service connection.

**Present:** Shane Flewelling.

**Summary:** 922 Massachusetts Avenue is being renovated and this would represent a new pathway into the building. There was an existing path rising in the back of the building that will be abandoned and removed.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions and additional condition to remove the existing conduit that is being abandoned.

- 11. New petition (1177082) - Cablevision Lightpath**, 100 Quannapowitt Pkwy, Wakefield, MA 01880, for the following: Blackstone Street - Cut one existing Lightpath 1.25-inch sch 40 PVC conduit and place two schedule 40, 90 degree sweeps into proposed 24"x36" handhole in grass area. Place one 1.25-inch schedule 40 PVC conduit into basement of 46 Blackstone Street.

**Present:** Herb Bertoni.

**Summary:** This plan is to cut existing conduit and turn that conduit into a handhold in a grass median, and place 1 ¼ inch PVC in the basement of 46 Blackstone street. It will be an approximately 10-foot dig. They will coordinate with the City arborist because it may be a tight location to fit a handhold.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions and additional condition to coordinate with the City arborist.

- 12. New petition (1181411) - Cablevision Lightpath**, 100 Quannapowitt Pkwy, Wakefield, MA 01880, for the following: Broadway - Placement of fiber optic cable in an existing private Boston Properties conduit from Level 3 manhole L3 0515-2800 Galileo Galilei Way to the property line of #145 Broadway within the public way.

**Present:** Herb Bertoni.

**Summary:** This application would install new fiber cable through existing Boston Properties conduit. The conduit exists and they are looking for a grant to place cable in a public way in that conduit.

**Decision:** Granted.

- 13. Consideration of Meeting Minutes** - August 14, 2025.

**Decision:** Approved.

**Matters Considered at Meeting – Not Previously Posted on the Agenda**

*Unless otherwise indicated, the below listed matter was considered and voted upon by the Commission without public testimony. The summary of what is considered is the identifying information of the matter as listed herein.*

- 14. Commission Discussion.**

Commissioner Shea raised an issue whether any terms/conditions regarding restoration work should be completed within one year after the grant of location is completed. They have noticed outstanding issues with noncompliance.


Chair Murati-Ferrer stated that per the Commission's current policies, and the typical conditions added to grants, the work should be completed within six months. Commissioner Shea explained that for mill and overlay work, a three-month waiting period for conditions to settle is preferred, so work may not be done in six month. Chair Murati-Ferrer suggested making it a condition but DPW would have to follow

up on them. The Commission's conditions say that work must commence within sixty days and complete within six months of approval. The Commission agreed to discuss this further.


Cristina Casilli explained that when she follows up with utilities and restoration is not complete, they do not close the record; the record is only closed upon completion, including restoration.

The Commission questioned what kind of recourse it could have regarding noncompliance since the conduit work would already be complete. It may be a matter of authority as to the permits issued by DPW.

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**Minutes Approved:** October 23, 2025

MM\_\_\_MM/

**Minutes Posted:** November 4, 2025

TJS\_\_\_TJS/