

CambridgeMA.gov

Search



HOME

DEPARTMENTS

CITY MANAGER

CITY COUNCIL

MAYOR'S OFFICE

JOB5

PUBLICATIONS

PAY BILLS ONLINE >>>

GO TO THE CALENDAR OF EVENTS >>>

Living Working Visiting

## CITY COUNCIL

Printer-friendly version

### Policy Order Resolution

O-29  
IN CITY COUNCIL

July 29, 2013

MAYOR DAVIS

- WHEREAS: The Planning Board recognizes that there are problems regulating and enforcing appropriate outside lighting; and
- WHEREAS: These problems require careful consideration to create durable and effective solutions that diminish existing problems as well as address problems that may be created by new development; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to create a short term task force that will consider drafting a municipal ordinance related to outdoor lighting; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the task force have representation from the City's Planning team, the City Solicitors Office, as well as community representation; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager engage a qualified lighting expert to work with the taskforce; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager report back by the end of the year proposing language for municipal code and also for the zoning ordinance if appropriate.



---

**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
Community Development Department

---

**BRIAN P. MURPHY**

*Assistant City Manager for  
Community Development*

To: Richard C. Rossi, City Manager

From: Brian P. Murphy, Assistant City Manager for Community Development

Date: August 28, 2013

RE: Council Order #29 dated July 29, 2013 regarding CDD drafting a municipal ordinance related to outdoor lighting

Exterior lighting is customarily allowed in Cambridge, and helps to promote safety and appropriate use of outdoor spaces after dark. However, excessive lighting can have negative impacts on abutters, in terms of light trespass and glare, and on the environment, in terms of light pollution and energy usage. In their discussions related to the Teague petition, the City Council, Planning Board and Community Development Department supported the need to assess the customary characteristics of light fixtures and ensure the negative impacts are mitigated.

The City Manager will appoint a task force to work with City staff and a lighting consultant to evaluate existing standards, offer guidance for the creation of a new ordinance, propose new regulatory approaches if needed, and develop enforcement mechanisms. The proposed task force will comprise representatives from City departments, including Community Development, City Solicitor's office, Electrical Department, Inspectional Services, License Commission, and Police, along with Cambridge residents, property owners, and business representatives.

The task force will consider existing Cambridge lighting standards, as well as concerns raised in the Teague Zoning Petition. In connection with the consultant's efforts, the task force will review industry standards and technology innovations that can address environmental, safety, and economic concerns. Finally, proposed enhancements to Cambridge lighting standards will be evaluated from a legislative and compliance perspective to recommend best practices for implementation in both existing and future fixtures and developments.

It is our goal that the task force and consultant will begin work in October 2013 and endeavor to finalize recommendations at the beginning of 2014.

---

344 Broadway  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
Voice: 617 349-4600  
Fax: 617 349-4669  
TTY: 617 349-4621  
[www.cambridgema.gov](http://www.cambridgema.gov)

---