



CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL

Alanna Mallon
City Councillor

TO: Paul Crane, Deputy City Clerk

FROM: Councillor Alanna Mallon

DATE: July 25th, 2019

SUBJECT: Submission – Final Report of the Mayor’s Arts Task Force

Please place the attached report, “Final Report of the Mayor’s Arts Task Force” on the City Council Agenda as “Communications and Reports from Other City Officials” for the July 29th meeting.

Special thanks to Mayor McGovern for appointing this Task Force, and to all members for their nine months of dedicated, productive work.

Thank you,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Alanna Mallon".

Councillor Alanna Mallon



Final Report of the Mayor's Arts Task Force

*Recommendations from the Arts community to increase City
support and investment in the Arts in Cambridge*

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MISSION

Artists have been engaged in a decades-long dialogue about the challenges they face in Cambridge and the lack of support from outside their own community to overcome them. For too long, artists have been plagued with obstacles, many of the City's own making: an intense focus on growing an innovation economy without the same focus on protecting and fostering our creative economy; Arts as an underfunded afterthought in a City budget that allocates hundreds of millions of dollars; an over-reliance on personal networks and insider knowledge to access opportunities; a lack of support for local artists; barriers in the licensing and permitting process; and the stifling of creativity that comes from "art by committee", and how that prompts questions of representation, equity, and bias in who gets to define "Art."

These issues combined have caused great losses in our historically vibrant arts community. Although displacement due to the skyrocketing cost of housing affects every low and middle-income family, artist displacement in particular is a problem in Cambridge. *One of the reasons the artist community has been hit so hard is that they are one of the only professions where paying to exist in multiple spaces is required to practice a craft.* The cost of paying high market rent for increasingly disappearing arts space combined with the lack of affordable housing Citywide is overly burdensome, if not impossible, for artists to shoulder.

Years of advocacy and direct community engagement work have cemented longstanding arts institutions as experts in this work, as they fill gaps left by the City. The [Community Art Center](#) is one anchor institution, serving The Port neighborhood to promote creative youth development in kids ages 5-19, as well as bringing arts straight to the neighborhoods to address racial and socioeconomic diversity gaps in the existing arts community. [The Dance Complex](#) is another - as the hub of dance-making in the entire Greater Boston Area, their executive staff regularly travels to other cities to consult about creating a vibrant dance community, but seldom is their advice sought by their own home city. Both organizations have been leaders in conversations about the issues of equity, funding, City-erected barriers, and displacement, but they have also been echoed by other arts organizations and independent artists alike.

In 2017, Olivia D'Ambrosio, the Executive Director of Bridge Repertory Theater, ran for City Council. Arts advocacy was the driving force of her campaign, and her belief that the City should be dedicating serious financial resources to the Arts was her consistent message. Her often-cited statistic, that the money dedicated to the Arts was one-tenth of one percent of the entire City budget highlighted how neglected the Arts were by a wealthy City. The 2017 election was the first time many in Cambridge outside of the Arts community became keenly aware of how this lack of systemic support has caused widespread displacement of artists in Cambridge.

The lack affordable arts space in the City of Cambridge was further highlighted in 2018 by the displacement of 200 musicians from what was formerly known as the "EMF building" in Cambridgeport. Though the building had been sold years before, the new owner began taking initial steps to redevelop this recording and rehearsal studio into office space by removing the musician-tenants in March of 2018. With no affordable rehearsal space available to move to and the discovery of how dilapidated the EMF building was, it became clear that the City had missed a major opportunity before the sale of this building to invest in and preserve not only a space, but a community.

In response to working with several long-standing arts organizations, the Central Square Business Association, and to the sale of the EMF building, Councillor Mallon submitted a Policy Order

asking that an Arts overlay zoning district be created in Central Square to incentivize developers to create and preserve arts spaces. Though this had Council support, it quickly became clear that the loss of this arts space was only scratching the surface of the challenges the Arts community faced City-wide. Cambridge is a wealthy city that is world-renowned for both innovation and creativity, but if we aren't funding priorities and intentionally looking to fill gaps, problems and inequities in our community will persist. This was an opportunity to have a much larger conversation about the City's lack of support for the Arts, and how that could change going forward.

To ensure Cambridge was focusing on this critical issue in our community, Mayor Marc McGovern called for an Arts Task Force to be convened and meet over a period of nine months to look deeply at how the City could focus on and invest in our artist community.

The Mayor's Arts Task Force was the first time that working artists from the community were brought to the same table as City leaders and key community stakeholders to address artists' most pressing concerns.

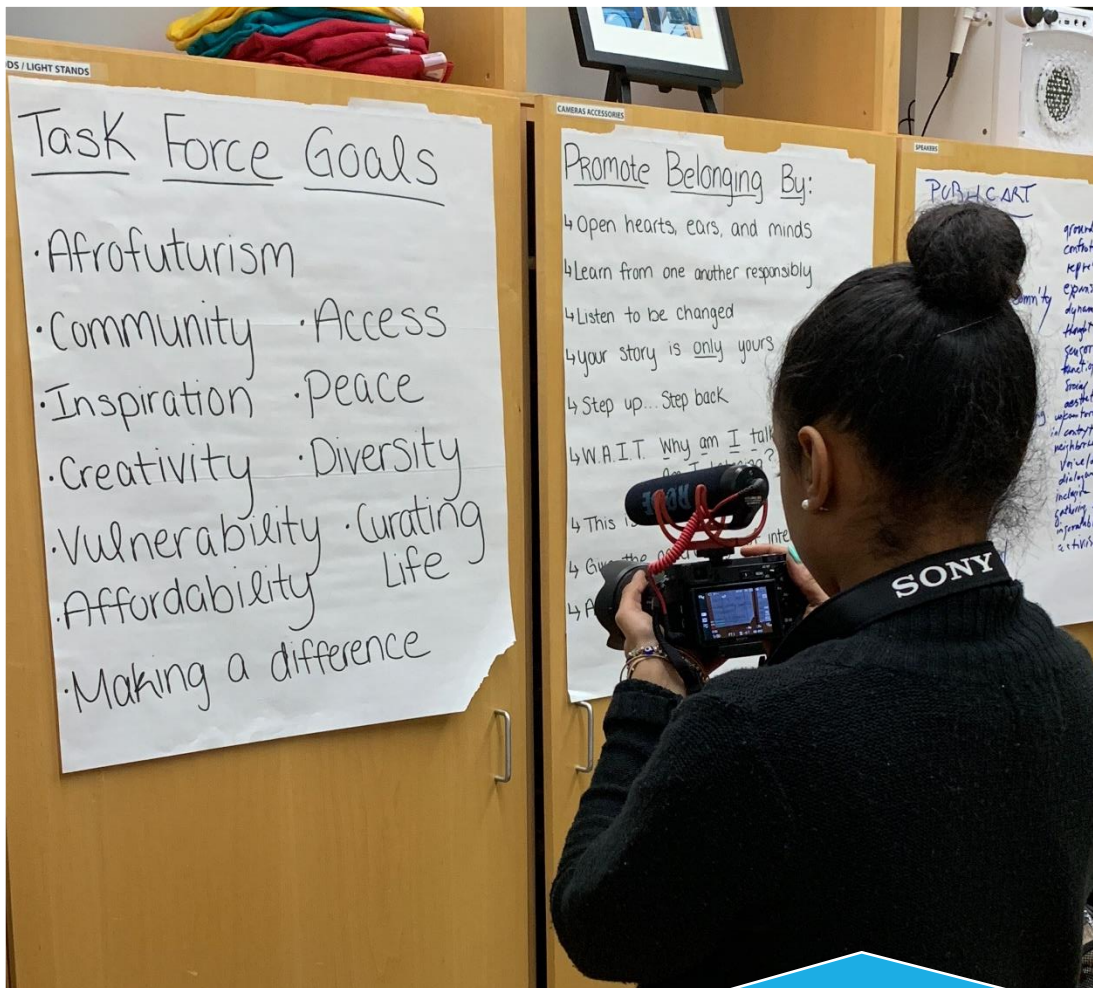
After over 50 letters of interest from qualified applicants City-wide, a 21-member task force was appointed by Mayor Marc McGovern and chaired by Councillor Alanna Mallon. The Task Force included working artists in the disciplines of dance, music, music production, theater, and visual arts, as well as specialists in developing arts spaces like studios and housing. Members all brought their individual expertise to collectively identify and address three key themes to set their agenda:

1. Policies that the City can pursue that will continue to foster and promote arts that are reflective of the diverse communities that live in Cambridge;
2. Ensuring a robust funding source for our arts community using both City resources and the resources of local companies;
3. Collaboration between the City, the Central Square Business Association, and local artists to strengthen Central Square as an Arts and Cultural District.

These goals were kept at the forefront over the 9 months the Task Force met, and every issue was approached through the lens of diversity and equity. By having a clear agenda that was crafted with input from all members, as well as representing artists of all disciplines and socioeconomic backgrounds, the group moved forward with action-oriented recommendations that will help all members of the arts community thrive.

View the Mayor's Arts Task Force member announcement [here](#).

View the Mayor's Arts Task Force website [here](#).



A Loop Lab student documents our goals

MEMBERS

COUNCILLOR ALANNA MALLON, CHAIR

Councillor Alanna Mallon is serving her first term on the Cambridge City Council and was appointed by Mayor Marc McGovern to chair the task force after introducing a policy order to write Arts Overlay Zoning for Central Square. Her work is centered around closing gaps in social services, economic development, and the revitalization of Central Square.

LIANA ASCOLESE, LEGISLATIVE AIDE TO COUNCILLOR MALLON & EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE TASK FORCE

Liana Ascolese is Councillor Mallon's Legislative Aide. Her responsibilities include taking meeting minutes, helping to plan meetings, and keeping in touch with all members with follow-ups, supplemental readings, and feedback before and after each monthly meeting.

AFIYAH HARRIGAN, MAYOR'S OFFICE LIAISON

Afiyah Harrigan works in the Mayor's Office and attended each Task Force meeting to keep the Mayor updated on its progress. She also provided logistical support for meeting locations.

JASON WEEKS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CAMBRIDGE ARTS COUNCIL

The Cambridge Arts Council both commissions and conserves public art, supports local artists through grants and professional development programs, and initiates City-wide arts programming and events. The Arts Council is a key partner in the operation of the Central Square Cultural District, and Jason Weeks is a Co-Director.

LISA PETERSON, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER

The City Manager's Office provided guidance about general City government, maximizing the use of public dollars, and ideas for additional mechanisms to support the arts community. Lisa Peterson's presence also served as a direct connection between the City Manager's Office and the arts community.

KHALIL MOGASSABI, DEPUTY DIRECTOR AND CHIEF PLANNER – COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

The Community Development Department provided expertise on land use, zoning, development, and neighborhood planning. Khalil Mogassabi educated members on these topics while hearings directly from the arts community about their needs and ideas for community preservation.

OLIVIA D'AMBROSIO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF BRIDGE REPERTORY THEATER

Founded in 2012, Bridge Rep. Theater company produces intimately staged plays to connect audiences with artists, and theater to the city. Olivia D'Ambrosio brought her expertise as an actor, director, and playwright to advocate for the specialized needs of theater.

DAVID DE CELIS, PUBLIC ARTS COMMISSION

The Public Arts Commission provides guidance and advice for administration and implementation of the City's public art program and Percent for Art Ordinance. As a member, David De Celis informed the task force of the public art process and arts in relation to development and urban design.

PETER DIMURO, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE DANCE COMPLEX

Celebrating 25 years, the Dance Complex is the hub of dance-making in the Greater Boston Area. Peter DiMuro is not only the Executive Director but also a nation-wide consultant specializing in the needs of the dance community, the integral work of longstanding nonprofits, and connecting and caring for the artist community, and brought this expertise to the Task Force.

SARAH GALLOP, GOVERNMENT RELATIONS AT MIT

MIT began the first private percent for arts program in the country and is Cambridge's largest land owner. University partnership is critical for partnerships with artists and arts organizations, arts spaces, and student engagement. Ms. Gallop brought both her passion for the arts and experience with the private percent for Art program to the Task Force.

ERYN JOHNSON, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE COMMUNITY ART CENTER

The Community Art Center is based in The Port, and connects youth ages 5-19 to arts, programming, and creative youth development. Eryn Johnson is particularly focused on equity, diversity, and community engagement. She informed the Task Force's work on both these topics and keeping equity at the forefront of public-private partnerships.

CHRISTOPHER HOPE, CO-FOUNDER AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE LOOP LAB

Focused on workforce development, The Loop Lab helps youth in The Port build audio/visual skills and connects them with paid internships. Christopher Hope brought the first Loop Lab cohort to actively participate by recording and editing meeting videos.

KRISTINA LATINO, CEO OF CORNERSCAPE

Cornerscape is a music events company that collaborates with artists and creators to put on their own events, or partners with companies to find music for their events. Kristina Latino provided her perspective on removing barriers to small arts organizations and festival organizing.

KATHERINE SHOZAWA, DIRECTOR OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AT LESLEY UNIVERSITY & MEMBER OF THE FOUNDRY CONSORTIUM

Katherine Shozawa brought her dual role as a university representative and member of the Foundry Consortium to inform the Task Force about connecting universities with the arts, developing community supported creative spaces, and effective community outreach.

MICHAEL MONESTIME, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE CENTRAL SQUARE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

Also serving as Co-Director of the Arts and Culture District, Michael Monestime is an advocate for intersecting arts and urbanism through large scale public art like the Mural Project, preserving public art landmarks like Graffiti Alley, and enhancing the cultural identity of Central Square, especially as the Business Improvement District comes online.

JERO NESSON, FOUNDER OF ARTSPACE

Artspace was an artist development collective which repurposed old buildings for artist studio and live/work space. Jero Nesson's work focused on rezoning, development incentives, and municipal partnerships. His old-fashioned slide show presentation to the Task Force showcased his past work, and was informative about artists as developers, and a memorable presentation for Task Force members.

JAMES PIERRE, VISUAL ARTIST & MANAGER OF THE PUBLIC ART PROGRAM AT THE COMMUNITY ART CENTER

James Pierre is a visual artist working out of the Community Art Center who works to connect under-served youth with the arts. Direct neighborhood engagement and making art accessible in schools are his particular areas of focus on the Task Force.

GEETA PRADHAN, PRESIDENT & CEO OF THE CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

CCF serves as the fiscal agent for a variety of community interests, including arts and culture and Central Square. Geeta Pradhan's experience in nonprofit management, giving platforms, community investment, and culture informed many of the Task Force's recommendations.

ELLEN SHAKESPEAR, CO-FOUNDER OF SPACEUS

Spaceus is a pop-up facility that displays, supports, and serves as a work and community space for artists in the Greater Boston Area. Ellen Shakespear co-founded

the organization as an MIT grad student to address both arts space needs and filling vacant storefronts in Cambridge. Her experience in serving artists' needs first hand and permitting throughout different parts of the City informed many recommendations.

KELLY SHERMAN, VISUAL ARTIST & INNOVATION CONSULTANT

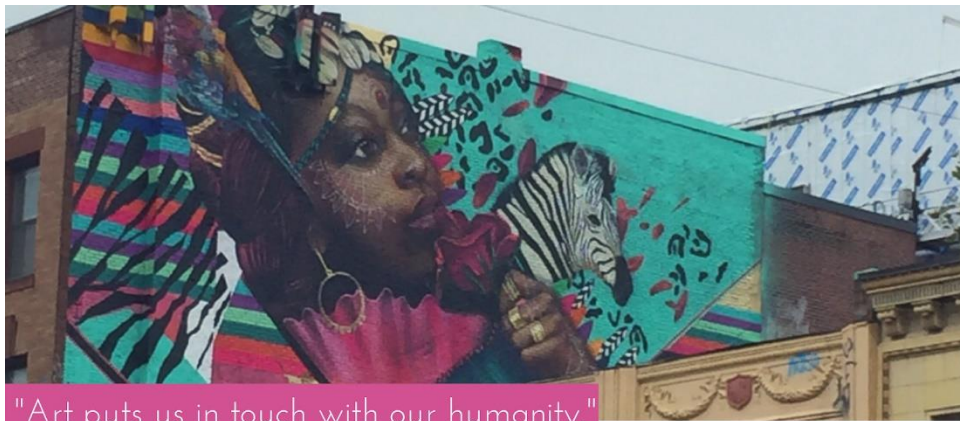
Kelly Sherman has done several projects in partnership with the City as a visual artist and is particularly interested in the connection between arts and innovation. She brought her expertise in creatively using public funding to directly support the arts community.

BEN SIMON, EMF MUSICIAN & CAMBRIDGE ARTS COALITION MEMBER

After the closing of the EMF building in Central Square, the Cambridge Arts Coalition formed to raise awareness of artist displacement in Cambridge. Ben Simon informed the group of the specialized needs of musicians and the importance of affordable spaces.

SETTING THE AGENDA

Bringing artists to the table started before the first meeting was convened. Councillor Mallon held 30-minute phone calls with each of the members appointed to the Task Force to hear their individual perspectives, take note of common themes and concerns, and begin to lay out an agenda that was based on these conversations. Each artist had a personal experience with barriers to practicing their craft, some of which were put up by the City. Our members and their relationship with the arts are quoted below:



"Art puts us in touch with our humanity."



"I believe in the power of the arts to help our society have difficult conversations."



"Cambridge residents spend a lot on 'high art' which skews the conversation toward the wealthy, and there's not enough focus on community art."



HOURS OF CONVERSATION SET THE AGENDA FOR 1 INTRODUCTORY MEETING, 7 WORKING MEETINGS, AND 1 WRAP UP/FINAL RECOMMENDATIONS MEETING. THE TASK FORCE OFFICIALLY BEGAN IN OCTOBER OF 2018 AND CONCLUDED IN JUNE OF 2019.

ADDRESSING RACIAL EQUITY AS A KEY COMPONENT OF THE TASK FORCE'S WORK

A common theme from conversations with almost every Task Force member was the lack of diversity and racial equity in the Cambridge arts community. Because many projects, benefits, and professional opportunities come from personal networks, there was no directive or concerted effort towards inclusion, which fostered an environment of exclusivity and resulted in a lack of socioeconomic diversity in the arts community.

As a high-income community with access to world renowned arts institutions like the Museum of Fine Arts, the Boston Symphony Orchestra, and others, there is an underlying bias in what the well-connected arts supporters in the Cambridge community even considered "art". Both local, independent artists and artists from underrepresented socioeconomic backgrounds had trouble navigating this arts landscape, which they often referred to as "elitist." To address equity, it was essential to address the institutional, structural, and implicit bias that would inevitably surface during topical meetings, such as public art, licensing and permitting, or the direction of the Cultural District.

"WHAT IS CONSIDERED ART? WHO IS IT FOR? WHO GETS TO DECIDE?"

These became essential questions for the Arts Task Force to address, not just as a lens to use during topic-centered meetings, but as a topic in and of itself. To get everyone on an equal playing field and give everyone the same language tools to address these issues, the Task Force engaged Malia Lazu of [The Urban Labs](#) to lead members in a deep discussion about bias, diversity, and inclusion for the entirety of their second meeting.

The Urban Labs specializes in diversity and inclusivity training for private companies and nonprofits, but Malia Lazu's additional background in the Arts allowed her to adapt anti-bias training models to fit the work of the Task Force. Members were encouraged to point out both individual and institutional biases in the Arts in a way that was reflective and invited dialogue. Members were invited to share their own personal experiences with bias in Cambridge, and whether they were a member of the City staff or a working artist, every member had a story to offer which connected them to the rest of the group, and the discussion as a whole.



She also engaged the Task Force in additional goal setting by asking breakout groups to answer the following questions:

- **What are some opportunities for the Task Force to promote belonging?**
- **What do you think is the biggest challenge the Task Force has to overcome to be successful?**
- **How will we know if we succeed?**

For many members, these breakout groups reaffirmed the upcoming topical meetings on the agenda. Groups came to a consensus that opportunities for the Task Force included eliminating the "inner circle" that was institutionally supported by the City, especially by creating and broadening access to funding and public art opportunities for a wider variety of artists. Challenges identified were: the inability for honest conversations in many public venues, the intrinsic, societal belief that art is not valuable, or that artists do not deserve to be well-compensated, and how art is siloed instead of integrated into all parts of public life. Markers of success included people of more diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and art disciplines seeing themselves represented throughout the community, and our ability to hold each other accountable to achieving our set goals.

By dedicating an entire meeting to racial equity, diversity, and inclusion, these topics were not "othered" or discussed after the fact: they became front and center in the policy discussion.

INCLUDING ALL STAKEHOLDERS TO REDUCE BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENTATION

This Task Force was the first opportunity for many working artists to interact with City leaders and advocate for real policy changes to support their community. Many of these changes would involve various City departments whose department heads were not familiar with the needs of the artist community and did not regularly interact with or receive feedback from artists.

Ahead of topical meetings that pertained to their departments, City leaders were invited to attend and participate in the Task Force meeting. This served several purposes: 1) City leaders actively listened to the dialogue and could hear about needs, feedback, and possible means of support directly from the artist community; 2) artists could hear directly from City leaders, learn more about the operation of each department, and engage in a productive discussion about how to move forward with recommendations; and 3) after listening to and engaging directly with the artist community, City leaders felt as though they had a stake in the policy process and its outcomes.

Below is a list of City leaders and other key stakeholders who generously accepted our invite to join Task Force meetings, and who have already begun work within their departments to support the arts:

GREG LAIKOS, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR: MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL

Greg joined us for our introductory meeting in October, which was spend orienting Task Force members on the mission of the Task Force, each other's work, the Arts Council, and the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC). Mr. Laikos gave a brief overview of the MCC's history, the establishment of Cultural District statewide, and best practices from other municipalities.

MEMBERS OF THE DEVELOPMENT COMMUNITY

The Task Force was joined by members of the development community at our third meeting regarding funding. Presently, the only private 1% for art program in the City is administered by MIT, and other developers were brought to the meeting to learn about how and why MIT runs this program in hopes of replicating it. Developers were also looking for connections to the Arts community, both to incorporate into their projects and to fulfill community benefits, but often had to rely on personal networks or "gatekeeper" organizations, often leading to the bypassing of local artists. Finally, developers needed to hear from artists about the effects of displacement and acknowledge their responsibility in this process. Every Task Force member and developer agreed that arts could no longer be an after-thought in development projects, and that artists needed to be brought in at the beginning of the process.

LILLIAN HSU, DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC ART: CAMBRIDGE ARTS COUNCIL

One of the goals of the Task Force was to broaden the definition of public art and expand the types of art that the City funded. Ms. Hsu attended our fourth meeting on Public Art, and presented on the City's current process while hearing feedback about the desire to incorporate the public's ability to enjoy art and the protection of artist communities into the definition of "public art."

JEFF ROBERTS, ZONING AND DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR: COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

Mr. Roberts joined us at the February meeting of the Task Force, which was the topic that had led to the convening of the group – the lack of availability of artist studio, rehearsal, practice, and live/work space. Most Task Force members were unfamiliar with zoning and planning, and Mr. Roberts was able to give the group a “Zoning 101” class on how zoning could be used as a tool to incentivize the development of arts spaces.

NICOLE MURATI-FERRER, CHAIR: LICENSE COMMISSION

Ms. Murati-Ferrer joined us for our March meeting on licensing and permitting, which was a main concern of many artists on the Task Force, especially those in performance-based disciplines such as music and dance. The dialogue between her and the artists on the Task Force immediately led to the License Commission addressing a layout issue on their website – which was a major source of confusion for performers being able to delineate which activities needed one-day vs. annual permits.

PARDIS SAFFARI, SENIOR ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT MANAGER: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION


Ms. Saffari also joined us for our March meeting on licensing and permitting and was there to provide a critical perspective on the business side of Arts. CDD is in the midst of an update to the Zoning Table of Land Uses, which is a hindrance for many small businesses, but particularly for artists whose highly-specific design needs to practice, rehearse, and perform, were not taken into account during the last update in 1961. Ms. Saffari was present to hear artists' land use concerns, but also provided her expertise on small business resources the City offers.

LUIS COTTO, PROGRAM MANAGER: MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL

Mr. Cotto joined us for the April meeting on the Cultural District both as the Program Manager of the MCC, but also as a resident of Central Square. He discussed the State's new initiative to fund Cultural Districts as well as best practices from other districts. He also participated in the working group regarding arts programming and cultural events.

THE FULL AGENDA

meeting dates	October	11	Introduction
	November	8	Racial equity training
	December	13	Funding mechanisms
	January	10	Public art
	February	7	Artist live/work, studio space
	March	13	Licensing & Permitting
	April	11	Cultural District
	May	9	Envisioning new programs
	June	10	Final recommendations



“Artists, more than any other profession, are asked to volunteer their time, talents, and crafts, so it is vital that this Task Force is action-oriented and produces immediate results.”

Councillor Mallon at the Task Force's first meeting

AN ACTION-ORIENTED MODEL TO GET IMMEDIATE RESULTS

Displacement and the high cost of both living and practicing art in Cambridge is an ongoing crisis that demands immediate action. Unlike other task forces, which followed a model of meeting for a period of time and producing a report with recommendations to be acted upon at a later date, the Arts Task Force acted as a live advisory body, producing real-time recommendations that Councillor Mallon introduced at Council meetings following Task Force sessions.



The Task Force comes to a consensus on a Policy Order to submit. The Order will go to the City Manager's Office as recommendations come out of the Task Force.

Policy orders came out of topic-based meetings and focused on short term recommendations that the City could implement in a timely manner. This was particularly true of items that would be part of the FY20 budget, as the Council held hearings on department line items in May of 2019. Topical meetings having to do with the budget, such as increasing and reallocating sources of municipal funding, were held early on in the Task Force process to give City Departments time to incorporate these new revenue streams into the FY2020 budget.

THE FOLLOWING SECTION OF THIS REPORT LISTS SHORT TERM ACTIONS RECOMMENDED BY THE TASK FORCE, AND PROVIDES UPDATES ON THEIR PROGRESS THROUGH THE CITY'S LEGISLATIVE PROCESS.

SHORT TERM ACTIONS TAKEN

DECEMBER - MEETING #3: FUNDING MECHANISMS

In preparation for the FY2020 budget, Task Force members focused on creating additional municipal funding streams and reallocating existing municipal funds specifically to the arts. The following short-term actions were recommended by the Task Force and introduced as Policy Orders at the Council's January 21st meeting:

1. Allocate 15% of the City's hotel/motel tax revenue to the Arts

The Arts are an economic driver in the City of Cambridge. According to a study by Americans for the Arts, ("[Arts and Economic Prosperity](#)") the Arts are a \$174 million dollar industry in our City alone, bringing in about \$13 million in municipal revenue annually. Since artists are playing a key role in generating this revenue, some of the money should be reinvested directly back into our arts community. A significant amount of this revenue comes from tourism; according to the same study, over 80% of nonresidents surveyed stated that an Arts event was the primary reason for their visit to Cambridge. Read a copy of this order [here](#).

STATUS: Complete ✓

The Council adopted the order and the City Manager's Office allocated 15% of the anticipated hotel/motel tax revenue from FY20 to the Arts, totaling an additional \$2 million in funding.



2. Reevaluate the City's 1% for Art Ordinance

Cambridge's [1% for Art Ordinance](#) applies to the 1% of hard construction costs for all municipal projects, but funds have historically been capped at \$100,000, with only a few exceptions. The upcoming Tobin School renovation is expected to cost \$230 million, and the City should commit the full 1% to that project – approximately \$2.3 million. The Ordinance traditionally calls for site-based art, however grants were allocated for The Port's sewer separation project - a highly

successful model the Task Force wants to move toward. A [grant-based model](#) would allow the City to fund more artists with one project, also allowing for a diversity of mediums with each funding allocation. Read a copy of this order [here](#).

STATUS: Complete ✓

The Council adopted the order and the City Manager's Office has agreed not to cap the Arts allocation at \$100,000, but to allot the full 1% of construction costs to the Arts. This additional \$2.3 million from the Tobin School Renovation will not be online until construction begins.

3. Establish the Central Square Improvement Fund

Developers who do not meet minimum parking requirements can pay into a fund where the money is reinvested directly back into Central Square. Since the City is focused on reducing single-car trips, emissions, traffic congestion, and the cost of producing housing, parking relief is increasingly granted to developers in lieu of other benefits such as the Improvement Fund. Arts, events, and programming are stated uses for this fund, but it has not yet been established despite the rezoning of the Square in 2013. With several development projects in the pipeline, the fund needed to be established immediately so that it is available for developers to contribute to. Read a copy of this order [here](#).

STATUS: Ongoing →

The Council adopted the order, but the City Manager's Office has not yet established the fund. However, no development projects that require a parking exemption are currently under review.

JANUARY - MEETING #4: PUBLIC ART

The Cambridge Arts Council oversees the creation and development of over 200 pieces of public art, largely funded by the City's Percent for Art Ordinance. As a result, the vast majority of these public art projects are site-based, visual pieces. During their discussions, the Task Force used a broader definition of public art to be inclusive of all arts disciplines, as well as the public's ability to enjoy art, the protection of the artist community, and support of arts organizations. Cambridge is a City known for innovation, but the constant push to "reinvent the wheel" can sometimes hamper the work of established non-profits doing meaningful work in the community. The following Policy Order was submitted to the City Council for their February 18th meeting:

1. Take inventory of all existing arts organizations in the City of Cambridge and their funders

There is no central location or database that keeps track of all arts organizations and arts-related nonprofits working in Cambridge. Therefore, they are often siloed, and have trouble connecting with the innovation economy – or even with each other – when new ideas, projects, and programming are sought out by the City or private entities. Often, projects that are billed as "new" are the same work that an already established arts nonprofit or organization has been doing for years. An inventory will centralize all organizations under one umbrella and help build a network of resources to connect the arts community with the public and each other.

The funding piece also presents a problem for arts organizations in the Greater Boston Area, as there are 1 or 2 large funders: The Barr Foundation and the Boston Foundation. Additionally, 80% of private donations go to large institutions like the MFA or Boston Symphony Orchestra. The inventory would help publicize small arts organizations to potential donors. Read a copy of this order [here](#).

STATUS: Ongoing →

The Council adopted the order and the City Manager's Office will be consulting with the Arts Council on the best way to implement this order.

Here's something fun to watch: The Loop Lab's student cohort recorded, edited, and produced their own video of this meeting. Check it out [here!](#)



A FEW EXAMPLES OF PUBLIC ART IN CAMBRIDGE



During this meeting, members were also asked to look at and react to existing public art in the City (both City-owned and privately funded), and ask important questions about which artists were showcased, whose art was represented, and how to broaden and diversify this process. This provoked an interesting discussion about what we should define as public art – more on that later in this report! To see more examples of the City's public art collection [click here](#).

MEETING #6: LICENSING AND PERMITTING

Initial phone conversations with Task Force members revealed that the licensing and permitting process was one of the main barriers to practicing as an artist in Cambridge. Outdated use categories, conflicting information from different departments, and confusing fee structures were only some of the barriers identified, especially for individual artists or small arts organizations who were inexperienced with the licensing and permitting processes. The following Policy Orders were submitted to the City Council as short-term actions for their March 18th meeting:

1. Build an arts-friendly, “one stop shop” on the Licensing Commission website

The License Commission plays an important role in ensuring safety and respect for residential neighborhoods, but focuses too much on what is not allowed, rather than encouraging approved activities and events. The layout and explanation of licenses, particularly the one day vs. annual entertainment licenses, was also a source of great confusion for artists. Many expressed their desire to attempt to “fly under the radar”, or not have events at all, because of the perception that their proposed performances or showcases would be off limits.

Task Force members used Austin Texas's [City Stage](#) platform as an example of an arts-friendly platform. City Stage features arts in a proactive way and shows how permitting platforms can have the dual task of ensuring safety and compliance while promoting and informing the public of arts events. Read a copy of this order [here](#).

STATUS: Ongoing →

The Council adopted the order, but the process of building a website like this is a long one. In response to the meeting, the License Commission did make an immediate change in the layout of their page to avoid further confusion about which events needed one day permits vs. which events needed annual permits.

2. Establish an arts liaison in the Community Development Department's Economic Development Division


The content of this meeting also focused on the artist and arts organizations as a business, and how artists are a unique subset of our small business community. The Table of Land Uses is undergoing its first update since 1961, as it was written with traditional retail, not arts or experience-based business models in mind. Combined with a cumbersome permitting process and the unique needs of artists, a need for more inter-departmental connections was identified, as well as the opportunity to create a new position or additional capacity for a point person in the Economic Development Division with the expertise to address artists' specific questions.

This process has been particularly complicated for artists or arts organizations who want to open a physical location or an arts-related business, as building permits, licensing, and zoning all interact in ways that often put up more roadblocks than artists can overcome. A designated arts liaison will be an asset to the business side of the arts so that they can successfully navigate the permitting process and become part of our small business community. Read a copy of this order [here](#).

STATUS: Ongoing →

The Council adopted the order, and steps are already being taken to establish connectivity between the Arts and the Economic Development Division. During budget hearings, Councillor Mallon also suggested that the Arts Council, Office of Tourism, and Economic Development Division meet quarterly to strengthen the relationship between the three departments that are vital to Cambridge's creative economy.

**THIS SEEMS LIKE AN ISSUE OF
COMMUNICATION, AND WE
NEED TO BE ABLE TO
COMMUNICATE ENTHUSIASM
FOR EVENTS THAT ARE ALLOWED.
MOST PEOPLE IN THE ARTIST
COMMUNITY ARE NOT EXPERT
USERS FAMILIAR WITH THIS
PROCESS**



~Task Force Member Kelly Sherman

Recommendations



BUILDING A CONSENSUS

The Task Force's final meeting in June focused on long-term recommendations to serve as a living Arts Plan for the City. In preparation for the last meeting, Councillor Mallon and Ms. Ascolese reviewed all previous meeting notes for common ideas and concerns among members. They were all individually noted, and similar topical areas were all placed into "buckets" corresponding with larger themes. There was also an open call via email so that Task Force members could submit their own recommendations ahead of the final meeting.

Recommendations were sorted and placed on to large poster boards so that the meeting could be visual and interactive, and fell under the following categories:

- **Public Art**
- **Cultural District**
- **Arts Economy**
- **Licensing and Permitting**
- **Nonprofit Sector Support**
- **University Responsibility**
- **Racial Equity**
- **Other Ideas**



Drafting an outline for the last meeting

"WE NEED TO TAKE CARE OF OUR ARTISTS WHO HAVE MADE A LIFE OUT OF THEIR CRAFT. WE CAN'T JUST GO FOR THE LOW-HANGING FRUIT – REAL CHANGE NEEDS TO HAPPEN."

~Task Force member Peter DiMuro

PUBLIC ART

ADD A VALUE STATEMENT ABOUT ARTS TO THE ZONING ORDINANCE

Developers have no incentive to create or preserve arts spaces, and the Planning Board's job is to adhere to the Zoning Ordinance and encourage the community benefits that are outlined there. The City's Zoning Ordinance does not list the Arts as a community benefit that developers should be providing but adding a section regarding Arts to either the General Development Standards or Design Guidelines would signal to both developers and the Planning Board that Arts should be prioritized as a community need.

BROADEN THE DEFINITION OF PUBLIC ART IN THE 1% FOR ART ORDINANCE

The City's current Percent for Art Ordinance allows an over-emphasis on site-based, visual art. This often allocates only enough funding to a single artist for a single project, while performing arts such as music, dance, and others are left unfunded by this program. The FLOW grant program that was connected with The Port's sewer separation project funded a greater variety of public art, but this was a one-off funding allocation, as the sewer separation project was not "site-based", so alternatives had to be explored. Expanding the definition of Public Art in the Ordinance will create a better roadmap for the allocation of funding for various disciplines, as well as funding multiple artists with one project.

The Task Force also discussed the idea of Art as a public good in and of itself, and that Arts are an essential part of life in any society. Members strongly believed that in addition to a diversity of art-mediums, the definition of Public Art should also include "the public's ability to consume and enjoy art", as well as the protection of artists and Arts communities themselves. A broader definition like this in the Ordinance would allow a more flexible use of public dollars, and a greater ability to fund many of the recommendations outlined in this report.



Graffiti Alley is alive with art. It embodies the urbanism, creativity, and spontaneity of the Cultural District.

ENCOURAGE THE CITY TO CONSISTENTLY COMPLY WITH ALL FUTURE PERCENT FOR ART ORDINANCES

The City's Percent for Art Ordinance was designed to allocate a total of 1% of hard construction costs on municipal projects to the Arts, but at some point, the allocation began being capped at \$100,000, no matter what the total cost of the project. Members of the Task Force could not find an explanation from City officials as to where this artificial cap had come from, but it has costs hundreds of thousands of dollars in losses to the Arts community. This arbitrary cap should be immediately lifted.

INCREASE THE PERCENTAGE ALLOCATED FOR ART IN THE PERCENT FOR ART ORDINANCE

Many Task Force members believed that only 1% of the total hard construction costs was still not enough to adequately fund the Arts. Performing Arts, such as theater and dance in particular are extremely expensive to produce well. Members expressed interest in raising this percentage. 2% was given as a starting point.

START A PRIVATE PERCENT FOR ART PROGRAM

Our Zoning Ordinance can be amended to require private developers to pay a percentage of their hard construction costs into a fund for the Arts. MIT has the first private percent for art program in the country, paying 1% of its hard construction costs for educational buildings to a public art program, which has helped them build a large collection of public art on their campus. Private money also comes with less restraints, opening up additional possibilities for projects and initiatives in the Arts community.

REVAMP THE PUBLIC ART PROCESS

Cambridge is known for its politically active community which actively engages in both community and political processes, and it's no different when it comes to public art. However, it is important for us to ask who shows up to community meetings, whose voices are heard with the greatest weight, and whether "art by consensus" yields the kind of creative and thought-provoking art that we want to see in our community.

There are alternative models for creating public artwork that don't involve checking boxes off criteria lists or holding multiple stakeholder meetings. This Spring's Mural Masters competition used that model in action: artists were given key words and concepts, and then asked simply to create. A similar model could be used here, especially for site-specific art, where a community narrative could play a key role in not only educating an artist about a particular site, but also about inspiring them to create a piece that reflects and represents the community.

PRIORITY BUMP FOR LOCAL ARTISTS

When selecting artists for public art opportunities, we can use a similar local priority bump that we do for our housing lists. This will allow Cambridge to prioritize the hiring of local artists so both opportunities, a decrease in costs associated with time and travel for visiting artists, and funding remain with artists working in our community.

MAINTAIN AND UPDATE THE PUBLIC ART WEBSITE

The City's Public Art map indicates the location, medium, artist(s), and a photograph for each piece of public art in our collection, however, the site has not been updated since the early 2000s. It is also exclusive to visual art, and therefore no other mediums that have received public funding (even if they have already been presented) are represented or advertised as funded opportunities. The site is useful for finding art in your neighborhood or exploring the City, but needs constant updating and the full representation of art mediums.

"Who are the arbiters of what public art is in Cambridge? Who gets to make art? Who gets to display art and receive commission for art? We need to especially stick up for black and brown folks who are in this critical space. We need to look around the room and ask ourselves who the gatekeepers are, and if we have the courage to help others be represented."

~Task Force member
Christopher Hope



This public art piece is a staple of our collection and one of the most widely recognized in Cambridge.



A DJ performs at the first ever Fifth Friday in Central Square.

CULTURAL DISTRICT

RECONVENE THE CULTURAL DISTRICT ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The committee is co-chaired by Arts Council Executive Director Jason Weeks and Central Square Business Association Director Michael Monestime, but it has not met since the Cultural district was redesignated, a process that happens every 5 years. The Arts Task Force members recommend regular meetings of this committee, with expanded membership from The Port and Cambridgeport neighborhoods. The committee should be focused on backwards-mapping from every redesignation so that operation of the District is goal-oriented.



CREATE A CIVIC OR CULTURAL COMPACT FOR THE BUSINESS IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT

Central Square just began operation as a Business Improvement District, or (BID), a type of public-private partnership that allows property owners to pay extra fees to provide supplemental services. The Central Square BID is focused on being a “clean, safe, and welcoming” place as well as enhancing its identity as the Arts and Culture District. But BIDs have had a history of promoting gentrification and displacement in the past, and we want to ensure that the BID in Cambridge is inclusive, intentional, and has a conscience. A cultural compact, written with the Cultural District Advisory Committee, will keep the focus on the BID from “placemaking” to “placekeeping”, and ensuring the BID operates through a lens of equity and respect for the Arts community.

ENSURE PLACES FOR THE COMMUNITY, PARTICULARLY YOUTH, TO INCLUDE THEM IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT THAT COMES WITH THE ARTS

A BID and the economic activity that comes with arts and culture events will generate prosperity in Central Square, and we want to make sure that our most vulnerable populations also share in this success. The neighborhoods in and around Central Square have a high concentration of “opportunity youth”, who often are not sought out for opportunities in the Arts. Arts Organizations such as the Community Art Center and The Loop Lab should be supported in their creative youth development work, but the Arts and Cultural District should be intentional about additional ways to conduct arts-related outreach to these communities.

CREATE AN ARTS AND CULTURE ANCHOR OR COLLABORATIVE

Arts space, particularly in the Cultural District, comes at a premium, and we are running out of spaces where artists are free to work and practice their crafts. St. Paul AME Church in Central Square is a venue that could become more accessible to the Arts community. Church leaders have been looking for opportunities for their unused space. This could open up the potential for an arts collaborative at this location. The City should also be vigilant in working with both the BID and local property owners for the availability of other spaces.

CONCENTRATE ARTS AND CULTURAL ACTIVITY IN AND AROUND THE DISTRICT

Entering Central Square should feel like an arrival, and residents and visitors alike should know that they are in an Arts and Culture District. Events such as the Jazz Festival, Riverfest, and the World's Fair have been moved out of Central Square in recent history, though Riverfest made a triumphant return this past Spring. We should do more to retain these events in the Square, as well as add new festivals and celebrations to enhance the Square's cultural identity.

THINK ABOUT THE 5 MINUTE "PEDESTRIAN SHED" WHEN PROGRAMMING AND CREATING SPACES TO KEEP THINGS ACCESSIBLE

Most people are comfortable with a 5-minute walk, and Central Square has the unique advantage of being located near a major transit node. Better wayfinding and informing visitors of all of the exciting places and events available to them in just a 5-minute walk will help drive up traffic. When programming special events, organizers should also think about the 5-minute walk to keep their event accessible to the largest audience.

UPDATE ZONING AND DESIGN GUIDELINES TO INCENTIVIZE ARTS-RELATED USES

The lack of affordable arts space is a continued challenge in Central Square, but the development community can be partners instead of adversaries in this regard. The Arts Overlay District as originally proposed serves as a blueprint for this, especially if General Development or Design Guidelines are updated to include arts as a community benefit. But developers need more "hard tools", such as FAR bumps, GFA exemptions, or height increases to produce arts space, and that's where Central Square specific zoning can help increase the availability of these spaces. Unlike many below-market arts spaces, these spaces should be safe, functional, and worthy of the artists who practice in them.

*Watch another video from The Loop Lab!
They came to our February meeting on artist
studio & live/work space to record, edit, and
produce a video recap. View it [here!](#)*



ARTS ECONOMY

OFFER SOFT SKILLS CLASSES PROVIDED BY THE ARTS COUNCIL

Many artists are skilled in their own crafts, but don't have soft skills knowledge to access funding, promote their business, or win public art opportunities. The Arts Council should offer and promote soft skills classes that focus on presentation skills, preparing budgets, community engagement, entrepreneurship, business development, grant writing, and accessing seed funding. These classes should be free and open to all artists, but especially marketed to local artists who are from underrepresented socioeconomic groups.

ARTS SPECIFIC OFFICE HOURS WITH THE ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

Office hours are already offered to small business owners, but artists often do not think of themselves as a business and have additional concerns that need to be addressed. EDD should begin marketing arts-specific office hours, so that artists have a go to place where they can drop in an ask questions about the building permit process, licensing and permitting process, and other business-oriented questions.

PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE OFFICE OF TOURISM AND ARTS COUNCIL

Local artists and arts events are a driving force for our tourism industry, as they are part of what makes Cambridge unique. However, tourism in Cambridge now focuses heavily on our institutions like Harvard and MIT, who have no true incentives for promoting tourism or the City of Cambridge itself as a destination. The Office of Tourism has a unique platform to help promote local artists, whether it's maintaining an active calendar of cultural events and festivals, highlighting an upcoming performance or showcase, or advertising new public art like Central Square's Mural Project.

PUBLIC MARKET IN CENTRAL SQUARE WITH VENDOR SPACES THAT PRIOTIZE LOCAL CULTURE MARKETS

Pop up markets like the Central Flea, Mexican Street Food Festival, and Dumpling Festival attract thousands of visitors to the Square and provide local artists with opportunities to sell their items or provide food and entertainment. Themed festivals like these are successful on occasion, but Task Force members are looking for a more permanent, artist-owned market – perhaps owned as a community land trust – that would be a permanent space for artists to have their own mini “storefronts” and vendor booths.

LICENSING AND PERMITTING

CREATE A TIERED PERMITTING FEE STRUCTURE

For-profit businesses, nonprofit entities, and small arts organizations currently all pay the same licensing and permitting fees in the City. This is a source of inequity, especially for smaller organizations or individual artists that budget carefully and don't have a lot of financial capital. Even the category "nonprofit" is huge – describing entities from MIT to The Dance Complex to an individual artist. The IRS already distinguishes tax categories for nonprofits with operating budgets over \$500,000 and those with operating budget less than \$500,000. We should make the similar distinctions in our licensing and permitting fee structure as well by implementing a sliding scale where smaller organizations pay smaller fees.

MAKE AND DISTRIBUTE A PERMITTING "TREE CHART" INFOGRAPHIC

Many independent artists and small arts organizations start the permitting process only to abandon it when things get unclear or complicated. A simple infographic that sends users down a yes/no path before they start the process would likely answer many questions ahead of time and be a proactive resource from the Licensing Commission about how to navigate the process.

STREAMLINE THE PERMITTING PROCESS FOR EVENTS AND ART INSTALLATIONS

Cambridge's special events committee meets twice per month to assist organizations that are having large events like street parties or concerts and is a streamlined venue for getting all involved parties in one room to answer questions and speak to concerns. Artists who are having smaller-scale events don't have a resource like this, however, their events are not requiring any additional City resources or likely to generate any noise or safety concerns. There should be a "small events" category with a much simpler outline and process.

ENACT AN ACOUSTIC PERFORMERS' ORDINANCE

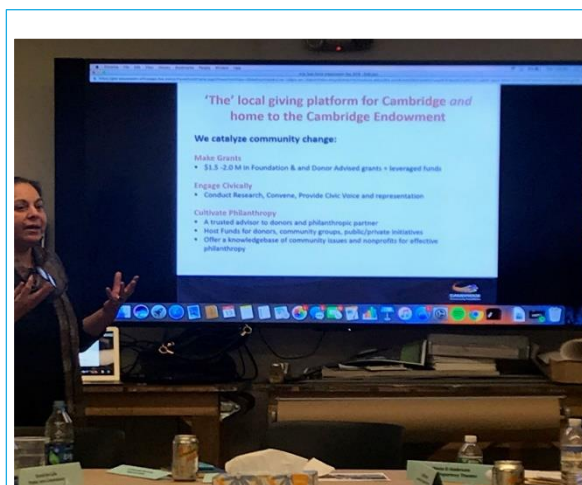
The City of Boston has enacted an Acoustic Performers' Ordinance that allows performances without amplification in business districts without a permit. The Ordinance had a sunset clause built in for 2017, but there were no major issues with its implementation, and the clause was removed, and ordinance made permanent. Vice Mayor Jan Devereux first introduced the idea during the 2016-2017 Council session and refiled it again this session with Councillor Mallon. The initiative should be discussed again and implemented.

NONPROFIT SECTOR SUPPORT

CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY FOUNDATION (CCF) SHOULD TAKE A MORE ACTIVE ROLE IN AIDING THE ARTS

The Cambridge Community Foundation (CCF) already funds a number of major community initiatives, and has expressed interest in aiding the Arts community as well. Most notably, CCF can serve as a fiscal agent for the funds from a private percent for art program, so that money is more flexible, and we reduce the occurrence of “art by consensus.” CCF can also act as a giving platform, allowing the community to set up an arts displacement fund, or start and promote a giving campaign to benefit small arts organizations.

Geeta Pradhan, the President and CEO of CCF, also expressed interest in cultural planning, especially in Central Square. Culture itself did not have as much discussion time as the Arts, but it is still an essential part of our community and integral to the operation of the Central Square BID. CCF can be an active participant and supporter of the backwards mapping work of the Cultural District Advisory Committee.



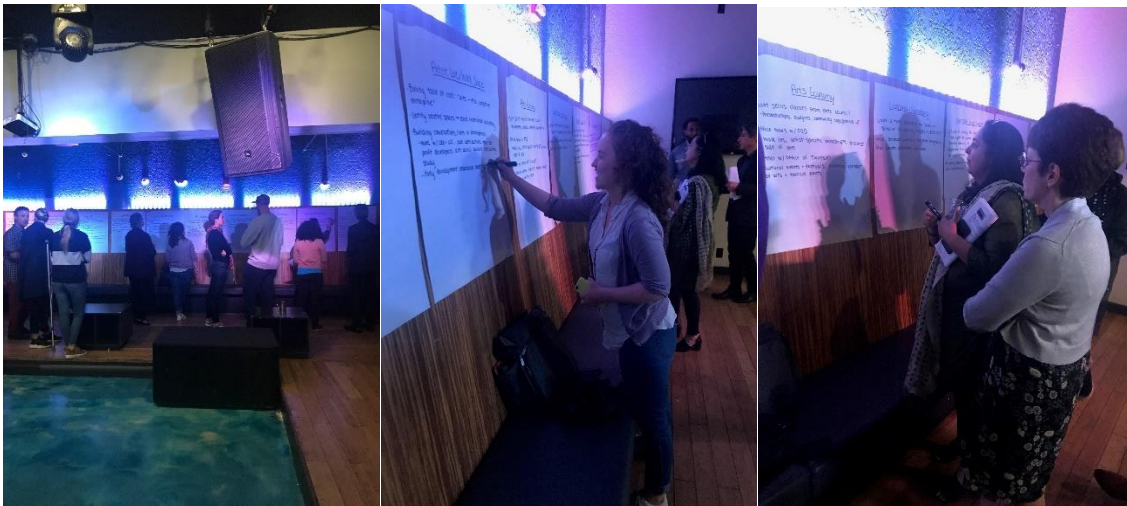
Task Force member Geeta Pradhan presents on how CCF can greater support the Arts community.

MENTORING NETWORKS BETWEEN ESTABLISHED AND EMERGING ARTS ORGANIZATIONS

Longstanding arts organizations like The Dance Complex are staffed with national experts and arts-consultants who want to share their knowledge with smaller, local arts organizations in Cambridge. Unfortunately, they lack the capacity to seek them out, or their willingness to mentor and provide knowledge is unknown to these smaller organizations. The Arts Council can help facilitate these relationships, as well as build other platforms (as discussed in later recommendations) to create networking and knowledge-sharing opportunities.

GENERAL OPERATING SUPPORT FROM THE CITY

The City allocates too few line items to the Arts, but especially to longstanding Arts organizations that are doing vital work in the community. Outside of the Arts Council, the only entity that receives direct funding is the Multicultural Arts Center, but this should be expanded to include other organizations that have a proven track record of community engagement, affordability, and access for a diverse group of artists.



Members gather at our last meeting in June, held at La Fabrica Central, to collaborate and finalize recommendations for the final report of the Task Force.

UNIVERSITY RESPONSIBILITY

PROVIDE LIVE/WORK, AND REHEARSAL SPACE FOR ARTISTS – PERMANENCE PREFERRED

Our local universities: MIT, Harvard, and Lesley, have both funds and space to spare. They can partner with our artist community to offer space for live/work studios, musician rehearsal spaces, galleries, showcases, and more. Tools like the Space Finder in the City of Seattle can help local artists find available spaces at the different universities. They should also be obligated to offer a designated amount of free or reduced-cost space for artists every year.

EMPLOY LOCAL ARTISTS

Whether it's for entertainment at an event, artwork for a new building, or an opportunity for site-based public art, universities should actively seek to employ local artists when possible. The universities have ample opportunities to increase art on their campuses, and the ability to pay a living wage, or market rate, for artists' work.

SUBSIDIZE STUDENT ATTENDANCE AT LOCAL ART VENUES AND EVENTS

A trip to AS220 in Providence informed Task Force members that Brown University subsidizes their students' attendance at local arts events. Students need only show their Brown ID, and the venue bills the university for the number of tickets used. Not only would local artists have a guaranteed, paid audience, but students who are new to the community and often seen as transient, would have a new door into Cambridge, and Arts could potentially serve as an anchor to keep them involved and invested in their new home.



AS220 is a local Arts collaborative in Providence, Rhode Island

INCREASE ENGAGEMENT BY MUSEUMS RUN BY UNIVERSITIES

University-owned museums should be constantly engaging with the Cambridge community, especially neighborhoods who are unaware that these institutions exist and are open to them. In public schools where this isn't already happening, students in particular should have easy access or even subsidized attendance, and partnerships should be established between the City and these museums so that programs like low or free admission for public housing residents can be facilitated, for example.

SHARE PARTNERSHIPS WITH EXISTING INSTITUTIONS

Too often in Cambridge, new initiatives are created without recognizing work that's already happening, especially by our universities. When beginning "new" initiatives, universities should be checking in with existing Arts institutions to see if there's an opportunity for partnership, rather than replication of work and division of resources.

RACIAL EQUITY

UPDATE ARTS COUNCIL MISSION STATEMENT AND BUDGET NARRATIVE TO INCLUDE DIVERSITY AND EQUITY GOALS

No organization can achieve racial and socioeconomic equity without those values being part of its mandate. Since representation is such a powerful part of the art and what it means to be an artist, equity and diversity should be key objectives of the Arts Council, and there should be set metrics to understand how or if they are being achieved. The mission statement and budget narratives are good places to lay this important foundation, which will help inform future progress on this issue.

HIRE A CONSULTANT TO CONDUCT AN EQUITY AUDIT

The Arts Council maintains and updates a database of all artists who receive updates and outreach regarding public art opportunities. The database is open to everyone, but many Task Force members were unaware of its existence or how to be added and expressed concern that it was not well publicized or accessible to the community as a whole, and therefore excluded many artists – especially from underrepresented socioeconomic backgrounds. A quick look at artists who have recently received direct support and funding from the City revealed a lack of diversity that Task Force members found troubling.

There also remained a discrepancy between the Arts Council and Public Art Commission as to which artists from the database received outreach regarding public art opportunities. Two methods were described: one where every artist received notice, and a second where the Arts Council vetted artists for certain criteria (medium, experience, etc.) and then did outreach to a narrowed down list.

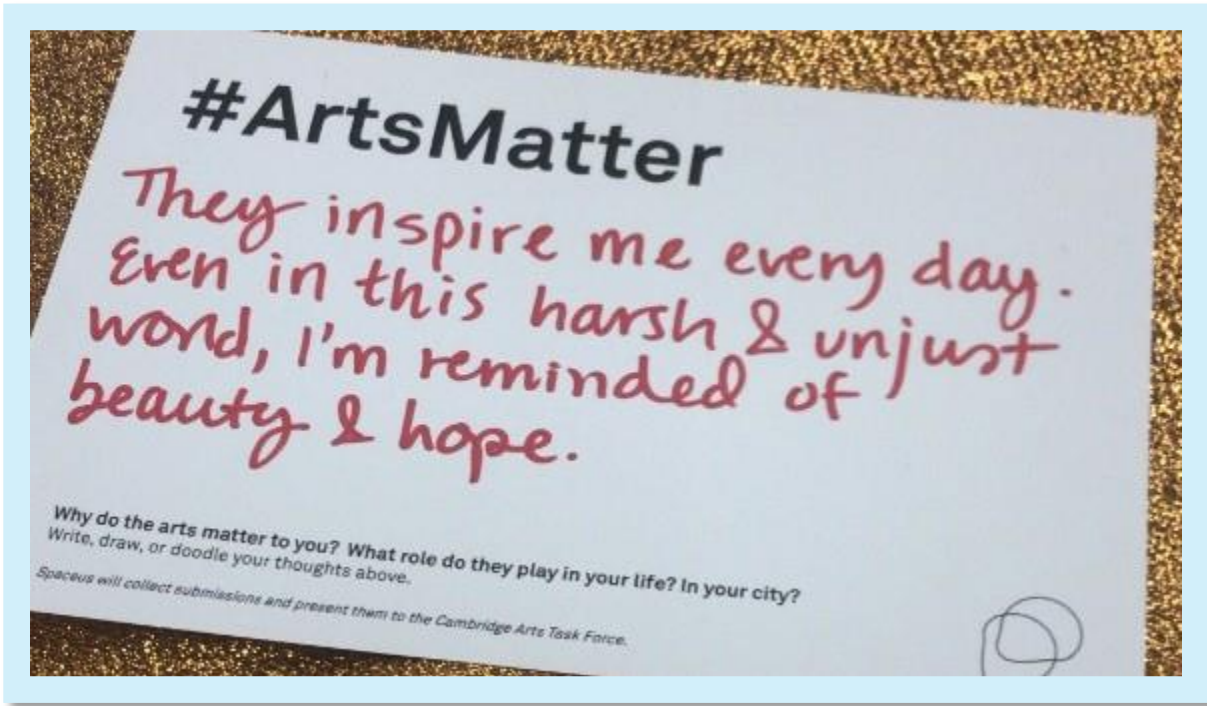
Task Force members wanted to ensure that this process was equitable, prioritized local artists, was not dependent on having inside relationships or knowledge, and was representative of the diverse community and art disciplines in Cambridge.

The City needs to take a holistic look at its diversity and equity practices in this regard. An independent consultant should be hired to examine what artists are included in the database, who receives the most outreach, whether art juries – boards of local artists and project stakeholders who select public art – are inclusive and representative of the community, and community outreach processes. Intentionally examining our practices and laying the right groundwork will benefit the whole City, by adding vibrant, diverse art to our public art collection, and by increasing well-funded arts opportunities for a more representative artist community.

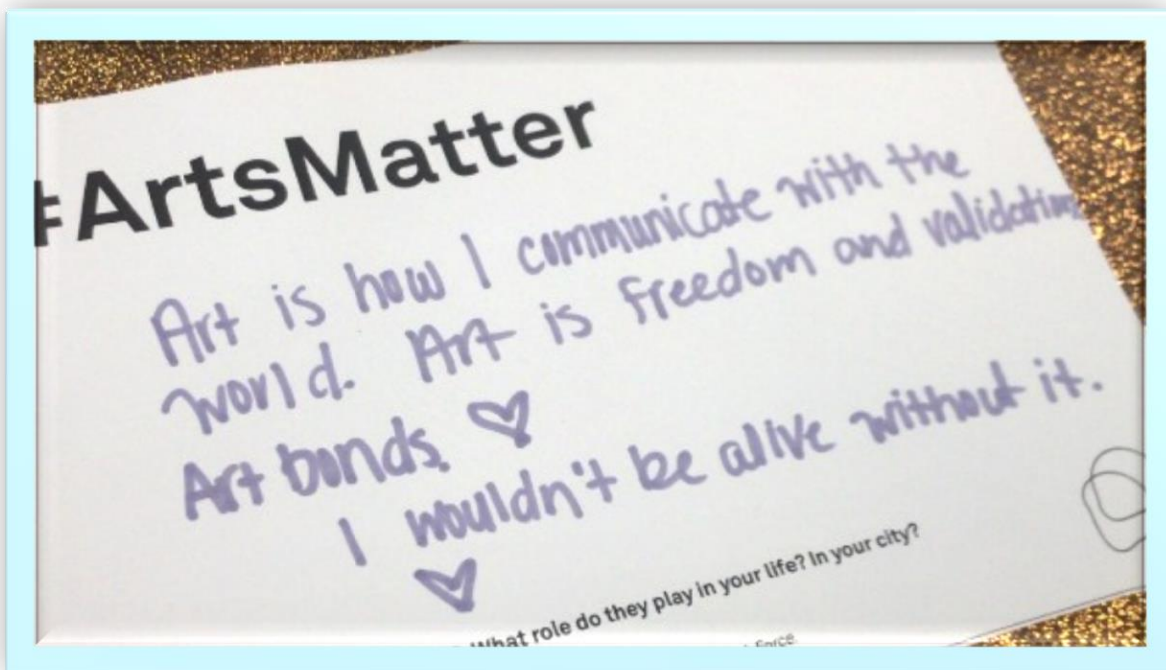
CREATE A NEW POSITION IN THE ARTS COUNCIL TO ACT AS A LIAISON TO UNDERSERVED COMMUNITIES

Pathways for “opportunity youth” often center on workforce development, public safety, or trade programs, but many of these young people are creative, expressive, and are looking for opportunities in the Arts. There are already anchor institutions that are neighborhood-based, but the City and the Arts Council have the opportunity to connect with these institutions and the youth that they serve, giving youth opportunities City-wide and beyond. We need to make art accessible to youth who didn’t know that these

opportunities existed, or thought they were inaccessible to them. A community outreach liaison would help to build these relationships.



Members of Spaceus share why Arts matter to them. Several of these cards were left out for the Task Force at the meeting hosted by Spaceus to remind us of the importance of our work.



OTHER IDEAS

Some of the Task Force's recommendations don't fit neatly into "buckets" but are supplemental to many of the recommendations listed above. Here are some additional recommendations:

ARTIST NETWORKING PORTAL

Artists not only feel siloed from the community as a whole, but oftentimes, they have trouble networking within themselves. In place of, or in addition to, the database maintained by the Arts Council, there should be a public listing of artists practicing in Cambridge – a "LinkedIn" for local artists. Not only would this allow artists to network with each other, but they could also indicate whether they are open to partnerships or mentorships, as discussed in a recommendation above. The development community and others looking to hire local artists also expressed an interest in this as well. Instead of relying on gatekeepers to connect them with artists, they would be able to connect directly with artists themselves to offer opportunities.

ARTS AND CULTURE OFFICE DIRECTOR

Culture is a vital aspect of the Arts community that often does not get enough thoughtful discussion, even within the Arts Task Force. The City hosts cultural celebrations related to Italian and Irish heritage that are consistently held annually, but events such as the Community Iftar and Caribbean Heritage celebration have been dependent on Councillors who identify with those communities. An Arts and Culture Office Director would ensure that a greater variety of cultures are recognized and celebrated, and that City resources are not distributed inequitably in this regard. They would also have the capacity to liaise with various cultural communities in Cambridge so that they are involved in the planning and celebration of their own holidays.

SEPARATE ARTS AND PUBLIC CELEBRATIONS INTO ITS OWN CITY COUNCIL COMMITTEE

The Council forms committees at the beginning of every new term, and one such committee is "Neighborhood and Long-Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts and Celebrations." The primary focus on this committee is general neighborhood concerns, like traffic calming, street safety, community development, and other neighborhood-specific concerns that arise over the course of a term. Especially with the emergence of this report, Arts and celebrations should be broken off into its own committee, so that both neighborhoods and the Arts can have committees dedicated to their issues. It is especially effective to have a Councilmember dedicated to Arts advocacy, as many of the recommendations in this report require action by the City Manager and partnerships facilitated by the City.

IMMEDIATE RESOURCES DEDICATED TO THE ACQUISITION OF REAL ESTATE FOR ARTIST SPACE

Artist displacement will continue so long as the cost of living continues to rise, and affordable artist spaces close. The City has the money in its budget to begin preserving artist spaces that are in danger, such as the dance studios at Green Street, and replacing spaces that have been lost, such as EMF. The City has already invested in The Foundry, which is a multi-use STEAM building in East Cambridge, as well as the

Multicultural Arts Center in East Cambridge, but we can do more to fill vacant City spaces with a vibrant arts community. CDD is actively conducting an inventory of vacant retail properties, and this same method could be used to identify unused City-owned spaces that could be repurposed for Arts.

DISPLAY LOCAL ART IN MUNICIPAL BUILDINGS

We have an opportunity to use more of our municipal spaces as living Arts spaces and galleries to promote local artists. The City does display art in select venues, such as the gallery at 344 Broadway or at the Water Department, but these are not particularly high-traffic areas where artists can truly showcase their work. Art should be prominently displayed and publicly accessible, and artists' biographies and information about their work should always be included.

SEEK OUT SPACES THAT CAN BE USED AFTER-HOURS

What would CRLS or other municipal buildings look like if they were used in their "second shifts" by artists? Many of our schools and municipal buildings are beautiful facilities that go unused after 6pm but could serve as temporary practice or crafting spaces for artists. Some members of the Task Force did express concern about this recommendation, and urged that it be used as a supplement, not a band aid. We shouldn't be looking to "squeeze artists in" to after-hours space only.

START AN "ARTIST IN RESIDENCE" PROGRAM

Cities like New York and Boston have started Artist in Residence programs not only to offer benefitted City employment to local artists, but also to enhance services provided by City departments. Embedding artists directly into departments that may not immediately have to do with the arts encourages creative problem solving and allows Arts to be truly integrated into the fabric of our community and operation of our City. In fact, Danahy Park was created by artist Mierle Laderman Ukeles after she was embedded with both the Department of Public Works in New York and in Cambridge. Arts and artists have the potential to improve many of our City departments if we are open to this creativity.

INVEST IN PEOPLE ACROSS THE ARTS-SPECTRUM

This recommendation goes hand-in-hand with broadening the definition of Public Art to include both the "public's ability to consume and enjoy art" and the ability of artists to exist and create in our City. One of the main focuses of this Task Force was how fund artists at a level where they can afford to live and are properly compensated for their labor and creativity. With the additional funding and flexibility that many of these recommendations allow, we can invest in the actual people who are doing the creating, art-making, dance-making, and music-making.

CONCLUSION

“Don't create programs for us without us” is a philosophy often used by the nonprofit sector, particularly the social services community, but it also applies to the Arts as well. That's why it was so vital to bring working artists to the table, so that City leaders and policy makers could hear from real experts in the Arts and implement community-driven solutions.

At the second meeting of the Task Force, Malia Lazu asked members to identify markers of success, and these included: people of more diverse socioeconomic backgrounds and art disciplines seeing themselves represented throughout the community, and the ability of the Task Force to hold each other accountable to achieving our set goals. Although no long-term recommendations have started the City's legislative process, it is still possible to look back on the Task Force process itself to answer this question.

The Task Force was the first time that many working artists in the community saw themselves not only represented in the policy process but driving it. Members were selected intentionally to represent different art disciplines, socioeconomic backgrounds, and management and work experiences. Every month, members brought their lived experiences to the table, spoke with honesty, and were unafraid to offer constructive criticism. *The Task Force wants this report to serve as the document that holds us accountable for making substantive change for artists in Cambridge. This report cannot sit on a shelf; it must remain a living document that responds to the changes, challenges, and opportunities that will be presented to the Arts community as our City evolves.*



THANK YOU TO ALL TASK FORCE MEMBERS FOR SHARING YOUR IDEAS, CREATIVITY, AND EXPERTISE OVER THESE LAST NINE MONTHS!

APPENDIX 1: POLICY ORDERS



City of Cambridge

O-5
IN CITY COUNCIL
January 7, 2019

COUNCILLOR MALLON
MAYOR MCGOVERN

- WHEREAS: A robust and stable funding source is necessary to maintain a thriving arts community; and
- WHEREAS: The FY19 City Budget allotted only \$1,068,210.00 for the Cambridge Arts Council and Public Celebrations budgets combined; and
- WHEREAS: Key FY19 objectives of the Arts Council are to promote and support artists as well as commission and conserve public art, both of which take significant financial resources to accomplish effectively so that artists are paid living wages for their work; and
- WHEREAS: There are opportunities in the City Budget to increase municipal funding for the arts, including allocating a percentage of the projected \$14,400,000.00 of the City's hotel/motel tax revenue (which in June will include additional revenue generated by the implementation of the short term rental ordinance) in FY20, as well as a percentage of the additional 3% tax imposed on adult use cannabis sales; and
- WHEREAS: According to a 2015 [Arts and Economic Prosperity Report](#), the total revenue generated for local government in Cambridge due to spending by arts organizations and their audiences in that year was \$7,038,000.00, showing a robust return on investment in the arts; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to work with the Cambridge Arts Council and Department of Finance to explore options for allocating at least 15% of the City's hotel/motel tax revenue in FY20 to the arts, as well as allocating a percentage of the additional 3% municipal tax imposed on adult use cannabis sales to the arts; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager report back to the City Council in time to inform the FY20 budget process.



City of Cambridge

O-7
IN CITY COUNCIL
January 7, 2019

COUNCILLOR MALLON
MAYOR MCGOVERN

WHEREAS: In 1979, the City of Cambridge enacted its 1% for arts ordinance, which requires that 1% of all construction costs for public projects are allocated to on-site public art; and

WHEREAS: This ordinance is now over 40 years old and aspects such as site-based public art, the accessibility of the art, and the art discipline that is being funded and created have yet to be revisited; and

WHEREAS: As construction costs have increased over time, the 1% rule has not been equally applied, as the City often meets the 1% mandate for less expensive projects, but fails to reach this benchmark for other, more costly projects where the amount allocated to public art would be much greater; and

WHEREAS: It has been recently unclear as to whether or not a \$100,000 cap for the arts applies, as this cap appears nowhere in the ordinance but has been imposed on select projects over the years; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to work with the Cambridge Arts Council and Community Development Department to determine:

- Which projects have met the 1% threshold and which have fallen short
- Why the 1% threshold is met with certain construction projects but not others
- The origin of the \$100,000 cap, and whether or not it still applies to current projects
- Equity considerations related to site-based art, such as whether the art is publicly accessible (in the case of the King Open School), or whether art is concentrated in select neighborhoods

The distribution method of funds and whether it can be adjusted to account for ensuring that all mediums and disciplines of art, including live performance art, receive funding; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager report back to the City Council on this matter as soon as possible.



City of Cambridge

O-6
IN CITY COUNCIL
January 7, 2019

COUNCILLOR MALLON
MAYOR MCGOVERN

- WHEREAS: Central Square is our City's Arts and Culture District, a designation awarded to the Square by the Massachusetts Cultural Council in 2011; and
- WHEREAS: Cultural Districts come with only limited State funding, as the \$3.5 million allotted is divided between 329 local cultural councils, averaging approximately \$4,500.00 to each cultural district per year; and
- WHEREAS: This amount of State funding is helpful but not sufficient in funding cultural district initiatives in Central Square and for example, the recent and very popular Mural Project that was sponsored by the Central Square Business Association in partnership with the Cambridge Community Foundation had a total cost of over \$140,000.00; and
- WHEREAS: Section 20.304.6 3(b)(1)(i) of the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance establishes the Central Square Improvement Fund, which waives minimum parking and loading requirements if the developer makes a cash contribution to the fund in an amount equal to fifty (50) percent of the cost of construction of the parking spaces not provided; and
- WHEREAS: One of the allowed uses for funds paid to the Central Square Improvement Fund is "programming, events, and infrastructure that contribute to the Cultural District established in Central Square"; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to work with the Cambridge Arts Council, Traffic and Parking Department, the Community Development Department, and the Central Square Advisory Committee to establish the Central Square Improvement Fund; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to work with the Cambridge Arts Council and the Central Square Advisory Committee to implement a distribution procedure for funds paid into the Central Square Improvement Fund, with no less than 25% of funds paid being allocated to the arts; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager report back to the City Council in a timely manner.



City of Cambridge

O-4
IN CITY COUNCIL
February 4, 2019

COUNCILLOR MALLON
MAYOR MCGOVERN

WHEREAS: Cambridge is home to numerous arts organizations which provide our community with public art, arts and cultural events for residents, financial and professional support for artists, workforce development skills through the arts, advocacy opportunities for artists, and much more; and

WHEREAS: Many of these organizations rely heavily on private funding to cover their operating expenses; and

WHEREAS: Arts organizations in the Greater Boston Area rely on only a few large private foundations, whereas other major cities are home to a greater number of private donors, which reduces the disparities and competition amongst arts organizations; and

WHEREAS: Many Cambridge-based arts organizations have trouble acquiring funding sources outside the Greater Boston Area, as there is an assumption that their location in Cambridge comes with the benefits of robust financial resources both from private donors and municipal funding; and

WHEREAS: As the City looks for new ways to invest in the arts, we should not overlook the existing arts organizations – whether they are known to the City or not - some of which have been serving our community for decades; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to work with the Cambridge Arts Council and the Community Development Department, particularly the Economic Development Department, to conduct a City-wide survey of all existing arts organizations and their main mission; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager work with the Cambridge Arts Council and the Economic Development Department, to identify private foundations who have been regular contributors to arts organizations in the City; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager work with the Arts Council to publicize the results of the arts organizations inventory on the City's website, Arts Council page, or other easily accessible public platform, so that individual artists can access a clearinghouse of networks and communities, and so that private donors have information about organizations which they can support; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager report back to the City Council in a timely manner.



City of Cambridge

O-2
IN CITY COUNCIL
March 25, 2019

COUNCILLOR MALLON
MAYOR MCGOVERN

- WHEREAS: Artists and arts organizations are a unique subset of our small business community that need additional supports to thrive in our City, especially when their innovative business models do not fit neatly into categories laid out in the Table of Uses or permitted/allowed events; and
- WHEREAS: Opening an arts-related business requires coordination between several City departments, but artists and arts organizations often lack a single point of entry who would serve as a single point of contact and entry for artists and arts organizations seeking help with zoning, permitting, licensing, and any other aspects of operating a small business in the City of Cambridge; and
- WHEREAS: The Arts Council, License Commission, Inspectional Services Department, and others involved in the permitting process all have key resources available for the artist community, but there are more opportunities to create inter-departmental connections to provide additional support through creating a single point of entry via a City staff member; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the Community Development Department, Economic Development Department, and Cambridge Arts Council to explore the possibility of designating a staff member in the Economic Development Department as an "arts liaison"; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to report back to the City Council in a timely manner.



City of Cambridge

O-3
IN CITY COUNCIL
March 25, 2019

COUNCILLOR MALLON
MAYOR MCGOVERN

- WHEREAS: Navigating the bureaucracy of the licensing and permitting process has been identified as a major challenge by the artist community; and
- WHEREAS: The License Commission has already made improvements and adjustments to their website, particularly to clarify the types of events that do and do not require one-day permits, however there is more potential for creating a more streamlined and arts-friendly experience; and
- WHEREAS: The Arts community has expressed interest in expanding on these improvements by creating an online "one-stop-shop" to apply for licenses and permits for a diverse set of performances and cultural events, similar to cities such as Austin, Texas's [City Stage](#); and
- WHEREAS: The License Commission plays an important role in ensuring safety and respect for surrounding residential neighborhoods, but the current website messaging around arts and cultural events should convey a more positive tone in encouraging innovative and vibrant arts programming, especially for applicants new to the process; now therefore be it
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the License Commission, Cambridge Arts Council, and IT Department to explore the possibility of creating a dedicated and comprehensive page on the License Commission website which is "arts friendly", easy to navigate, regularly updated and maintained, provides a calendar of permitted arts events to avoid overlap and conflict, and creates highly-visible interdepartmental connections to serve as a "one-stop-shop" for developing arts and cultural events and spaces; and be it further
- ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to report back to the City Council in a timely manner.

APPENDIX 2: MEETING NOTES**Mayor's Arts Task Force - Meeting Notes**

First meeting of the Mayor's Arts Task Force

Date: October 11th, 2018

Location: Workbar, 45 Prospect St. - Central Square

Meeting Start: 5:37 PM

Meeting Adjourned: 7:33 PM

In attendance as members of the Task Force were: Alanna Mallon, Chair; Liana Ascolese, Aide to Councillor Mallon; Afiyah Harrigan, Mayor's Office Liaison; Sarah Gallop, Government and Community Relations at MIT; Geeta Pradhan, CEO of the Cambridge Community Foundation; Jero Nesson, founder of ArtSpace, Inc., former Brickbottom Gallery; Kelly Sherman, visual artist and innovation consultant; Michael Monestime, Executive Director of the Central Square Business Association; Ben Simon, Musician at the former EMF and Cambridge Arts Coalition; Khalil Mogassabi, Deputy Director and Chief Planner, CDD; 'Folakemi Alalade, visual artist, MatriArts; David DeCelis, architect and Public Art Commission; Martha MacKenna, Director of the Creative Commons at Lesley University; Eryn Johnson, Executive Director of the Community Arts Center; James Pierre, visual artist and public art coordinator at the Community Arts Center; Jason Weeks, Executive Director of the Cambridge Arts Council; Robert Reardon, Office of Budget and Finance; Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager; attending via Skype was Olivia D'Ambrosio, Director of the Bridge Repertory Theater.

Invited as a Guest Speaker was Greg Laikos, Communications Director of the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

Members of the Public in attendance were: Robert Goss, Alex Lemski, Joseph Stohlman, Jesse Moore, and Luis Cotto.

The meeting was audio recorded by a member of the public.

Handouts used at the meeting are attached.

Mayor Marc McGovern was present for the start of the meeting to welcome and thank everyone for their letters of interest. He congratulated those who were chosen for the task force and thanked Councillor Mallon for her willingness to lead it and pushing the agenda of arts and the artist community. Arts are extremely important to the fabric of our community because it's getting harder for artists to live and work in the City. This task force will explore how to support people doing this work. The Mayor spoke briefly and left to lead a town hall on LGBTQ youth issues in the City. He introduced his liaison, Afiyah Harrigan.

Councillor Mallon called the meeting to order at 5:37PM and made an opening statement. She stated that artists are asked to volunteer their time and crafts more than most, so thank you for volunteering for this task force. She stated that this work began with Councillor Simmons's arts plan for the City last term. Councillor Mallon also welcomed our guest speaker from the Mass

Cultural Council, Greg Laikos, who will be presenting a strategic plan as well as statewide perspective on how public policy can positively affect arts and culture in Massachusetts.

Councillor Mallon stated that this is a subject near and dear to her heart, and hopes the task force will address issues of affordable studio space, frustrations over a general lack of funding, permitting and licensing, the need for more creative placemaking, questions about the cultural district, and the lack of equity in public art. She stated we need to implement both short and long-term solutions. She stated that the economic impact of arts in Cambridge is huge, with the industry expenditures at \$174M annually in Cambridge alone, while the national median for cities our size is far less at \$35M, making it clear that we need to figure out how to effectively invest in people who are creating and making art in our community. She stated that she has enjoyed speaking to every task force member on the phone about what they will be bringing and hope to see on the task force. She stated that all of the meetings will be outside City Hall, as it is not a welcoming, comfortable, or creative place. She asked that people speak up because we do not have microphones, and that members of the public are welcome to attend meetings but since there will be no time for public comment, please take a card and send our office an email with any thoughts, feedback, or questions.

Councillor Mallon moved that her aide, Liana Ascolese, be appointed as Executive Assistant to the task force. The vote took place with all in favor, no oppositions, and no abstentions.

Councillor Mallon concluded her remarks by saying that everyone has an agenda handout with all future meeting dates and topics. Because so many members brought up the issue of race and equity over the phone, the City has hired Malia Lazu at The Urban Labs to dedicate next meeting's discussion to exploring how race and equity will affect the charge of the task force over the next nine months. She reminded everyone that the next meeting will be on November 8th at Spaceus in Harvard Square at 20 Brattle St, and that members will be receiving materials prior to our conversation with Malia.

Members of the Task Force went around the table for introductions.

Afiyah Harrigan stated that she was the Mayor's Office liaison and would be reporting back to Mayor McGovern.

Sarah Gallop stated that she serves as the Director Government and Community Relations for MIT. MIT has the first private percent for art program in the country and she stated that they want to be a partner with arts and the City.

Greg Laikos introduced himself as the Communications Director for the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the State agency supporting STEAM through grants, initiatives, and services.

Geeta Pradhan stated that she is the President of the Cambridge Community Fund, a local giving platform supporting culture and social prosperity. She stated that Cambridge is a creative city, arts foster innovation, and we need to make art accessible to everyone in the City. We need to not just consume but create art, and she expressed interest in the Foundation partnering with Central Square.

Jero Nesson gave his background in urban planning and adapting old buildings for reuse into artist-owned live/work spaces such as Brickbottom Gallery in Somerville. He has spent his career working with artists to develop studio space around surplus buildings, and is also the founder and President of ArtSpace, Inc.

Kelly Sherman stated that she trained at Massart in sculpture and text-based art. She stated she has 3 public artworks in Cambridge, does research driven work, and was a designer of the poetry banners that hung throughout Cambridge Common. She is also a design and innovation consultant who is excited to get more involved in the civic space.

Michael Monestime stated that he is the President of the Central Square Business Association. He is passionate about activating people and spaces and bringing more stakeholders to the table. He spoke about advocacy and programming to support the arts. Central Square is currently undertaking a mural project with 10 new large-scale murals. Michael stated that he would like to see more arts both in Central and citywide.

Ben Simon stated that he is a musician and after school teacher. He is the founder of the Cambridge Arts Coalition which first formed to fight the evictions from the EMF building, but stated they are sticking around to fight for other arts issues in Cambridge.

Khalil Mogassabi introduced himself as a Chief Planner at CDD. He is trained as an architect and in City planning. He stated that he has a background working with small communities in Detroit, and that he is here to help translate the recommendations of the task force into zoning language or other guidelines. He is focused on helping to transition from policy to implementation.

Folakemi stated that she is from The Port but has recently moved to Kendall Square. She gave her background as a member of the advisory board from the Cambridge Arts/The Foundry project.

David DeCelis introduced himself as an architect and member of the Public Arts Commission. He explained that we are in a rehabilitated cert building, he talked about how he was raised with arts, how they created community and were a catalyst for development in Miami. He talked about his background as a Cuban American growing up in Miami and how it's important that he's continued to engage in the arts with his kids who are students at CPS. He talked about the create the vote initiative. He also announced that the CAC was looking for new members.

Martha MacKenna stated that she was from Lesley University and directed their Creative Commons space. The goal is to collaborate and bring the university to the community, and it's important that so many voices are at the table to develop a real plan. This has been hard in the past because people aren't necessarily coordinated or connected. Lesley is also partnering with the Foundry to see how it can become another community center.

Eryn Johnson introduced herself as the Executive Director of the Community Arts Center, and stated she has a background and degree in theater. She stated that art is how we communicate,

how we love each other, and how we see the world. Art is a language and a human right. She stated that Cambridge has a public art program and she has been thinking a lot about public space, how our spaces as a City leaves space for equity, whose art gets seen, and the importance of honoring and pursuing diversity.

James Pierre stated that he was the Community Arts Center public arts coordinator and art advocate. He stated his parents had more of an emphasis on math or science growing up, but today he gets the benefit of working with young people and engaging in the arts. He talked about art's purpose in society and designing his own arts in the park program in The Port, because he wanted to plan art and arts event that looked like himself.

Christopher Hope stated that he is a founder of The Loop Lab, a recording studio open to kids in The Port. He gave background on his workforce development program for youth ages 18-26, internships and job placement, addressing direct concerns of the community when you talk about opportunity youth, what kids not in college are going to be doing, the importance of providing mentorship, and bringing perspectives from national art place making collectives.

Ellen Shakespear introduced herself as the co-founder of Spaceus, whose goal is to transform vacant and underused storefronts into arts collectives. Ellen stated that Spaceus started about a year ago because everyone benefits from artist space in a City. They are currently in Harvard Square and East Street, and are interested in how we can use physical resources to help artists.

Jason Weeks stated that he is the Executive Director of the Cambridge Arts Council. He talked about growing up with arts in his family, growing up with theater and music. He stated that we are at the center of conversation about the arts, and we now have a greater alignment that ever in the City administration and community about the importance of the arts. He also stated that he is a founding board member of Mass Creative, the statewide arts advocacy organization.

Robert Reardon stated that he is here to provide a financial perspective, such as using the City's vast wealth to help with financing mechanisms. He stated that he grew up with family having a huge emphasis on the arts and has memories from Harvard Square street performers. He talked about his appreciation and amazement at talent of artists and the importance of their work. He discussed the importance of percent for art programs, getting major private developers to contribute to the arts community, and doing art projects that involve more people. He stated that you don't realize you've lost things until they're going, and that art doesn't come free, so we need to figure out a way to support it.

Lisa Peterson gave her background from working at the City of Cambridge, working in different ranges of projects with a particular focus in public projects and construction before moving to DPW, and then becoming the Deputy City Manager. She stated she is interested in being able to integrate art into public projects in a meaningful way.

Olivia D'Ambrosio stated that she is the Director of the Bridge Repertory Theater, which was founded in 2013 and in its 2nd year of residence at the Multicultural Arts Center. This is also her 6th year teaching theater arts at MIT and she lives in Porter Square. She stressed that theater is an extremely expensive art form to produce well, budget concerns are enormous. She stated that

there is a cluster of goods that any civilized urban society should organize its resources around, and art is one that should be provided by the City, especially access to arts and culture which should be a public good.

Councillor Mallon welcomed Greg Laikos from the Massachusetts Cultural Council (MCC) to give his presentation and overview of arts policy and best practices on the State Level.

Mr. Laikos stated that MCC is the State arts agency that grew out of the National Endowment for the Arts. They are unique in that they are the only State agency that also has humanities and sciences as part of its mission. The advantage to this is that MCC tells the “whole story”, but the disadvantage is that funding for the arts is spread a little thinner because MCC must also account for humanities and sciences as well. Mr. Laikos explained that their biggest grant program is just over \$5 million to provide general operating support, and gave some examples of the 400 institutions and individual artists that MCC helps to fund. MCC also uses this grant program to combine grant making with partnerships to ensure they are fully helping organizations by providing technical assistance and connecting organizations to other sources of funding. Mr. Laikos stated that there are 329 local cultural councils and this program accounts for \$3.5 million in funding annually. The vision of this program is to take a portion of the budget and allocate it to municipalities to accomplish local goals. Mr. Laikos stated that the Cambridge Arts Council is unique because it’s a professional arts organization with a robust public arts program, funding from the City, and has a high profile in the community. He stated that smaller communities only get around \$4,000-\$5,000 per year but use it in innovative ways, and that 2,500 volunteers are the engine for this program.

Mr. Laikos also spoke about education and creative youth development, which is a term that he wants to spread in wider circles. The role of this program is to build support for a role of the arts in schools as part of the curriculum. He stated that MCC’S STARS program brings in artists to do length residencies in schools in a range of disciplines, also focusing on some humanities and science programs. The Creative Youth Development after school programs teach principles of traditional arts education combined with youth development and creative expression, particularly to give young people at risk the tools and life skills they need through social programs.

Mr. Laikos discussed MCC’s support for individual artists, and that direct fellowships to individuals in a wide range of disciplines has gone up to \$15,000. He conceded that while this is still not a lot of money, it can still make a difference for an individual artist looking to get off the ground.

Mr. Laikos stated that he is messaging around building up the MCC budget. He wants to build strong networks of arts advocacy even though this is a constant uphill climb. He explained that there isn’t a deep-seated belief in the unique power that public money has in promoting the arts. He explained that one of the biggest challenges is access and is continuing to make the case that this is important. Mr. Laikos looks forward to making MCC more available and helpful to local artists.

Councillor Mallon opened the floor to questions from task force members. She began by asking what innovative public policies are succeeding in other municipalities that could be applied to Cambridge.

Mr. Laikos responded that people in Cambridge feel a strong sense of place and that there are distinctive attributes of the community. It does depend on how the arts council has evolved and has been embedded in the fabric of the City, and Cambridge has a good model that can be built on. He emphasized the importance of having anchor institutions like the Chamber, cultural districts, and municipality, having City employees embedded in the planning department. The key is to make sure the stakeholders are together and talking as a mechanism for moving agendas forward, having constant conversations with elected leadership of the City to provide a link between the arts community and City hall. Mr. Laikos stated that he was hesitant to give other models because Cambridge has a good one. He stated a local revenue stream is a more technical question that has to be done in the right context of the political environment. He explained New Bedford's home rule petition that was approved by the legislature allowing a portion of their hotel and motel tax revenue to be directed to arts and culture tourism, which seems to be working well for them.

Mr. Hope inquired as to whether MCC funded organizations that help young adults, especially when these kids don't take traditional paths, and asked about the role of arts in workforce development because helping young adults is very vital.

Mr. Laikos responded by saying YouthReach is MCC's biggest program, and it is a new program that gives directly to young people. It is grounded in successful transition to adulthood through learning about arts and culture and many programs have a mentoring track. He stated that RAW Arts in Lynn is a good model - kids come up through programs and then become mentors to the next generations. He stated that some programs are more focused on workforce skills than others; some are built on helping young artists make a living.

Ms. Johnson emphasized workforce development as a common element of many arts funding programs.

Mr. Laikos named various organizations in the area that have workforce development models.

Ms. Johnson pointed out that Boston has a plan for the arts, there are probably others around the state. She asked that Mr. Laikos provide a statewide perspective regarding the characteristics of an effective plan for the arts community with specific attention to diversity, equity, health of the entire community.

Ms. Pradhan added to Ms. Johnson's question, stating that sometimes lifting up the arts leads to gentrification, and creators are often the ones forced out. She asked for examples of practices to help avoid this.

Mr. Laikos stated that Boston may have suffered from overly hyped expectations wrapped around the political climate. They did not have the mechanisms to meet their goals, and it's important to ask what they got out of the process. He drew attention to the fact that the City of

Lowell has a great cultural plan which resulted in the creation of the Cultural Organization of Lowell (COOL). COOL is the anchor for terrific cultural programming and expansion of access, especially for the immigrant communities of Lowell. He referred to Luis Cotto, a member of the public from MCC who was also in attendance.

Mr. Cotto informed the group that the cultural plan for Lowell goes back to the mid-80s and has been sustained throughout the entire time. He emphasized that sustainability and consistency are key in a cultural plan. He stated that students in Lowell who were potentially thinking about community college were targeted for new programming. Mr. Cotto stated that Middlesex Community College just created a new arts center which is also focusing on “back of house” use, not just performing. They offer internships after students learn to do audio and stage work.

Mr. Laikos stated that Lowell’s plan was grounded and there was a vehicle to implement the goals in Lowell (through COOL). There are now 45 cultural districts around the state and this year was the first time they all received \$5,000 in funding. He stated that the goal of the MAPC is to do consulting around cultural plans and that MCC wants to support this and make sure communities are involved when they begin this process. The goal is to build a community toolkit of best practices and principles when approaching this process. He emphasized that engaging immigrant communities in the City through grassroots organizing and planning in Lowell was key.

Mr. DeCelis brought the conversation back to Denise Simmons’s original order about an arts plan for the City. He stated that he wanted to bring the discussion back to goals about decision regarding City planning and asked what if any other examples Mr. Laikos had for public/private partnerships, particularly success stories like Lowell’s, which was a good example because zoning was involved. He wanted to specifically address City planning and the physical environment.

Mr. Laikos stated that almost everything MCC does is a public/private partnership.

Ms. Pradhan referenced a space in Providence, Rhode Island that was started by a private individual who opened his own public art gallery. Because of the success the City sold him the building for a small fee, and his gallery has a robust equity agenda for the space and those who run it.

Mr. DeCelis responded by talking about gentrification in Miami, how exclusively private development often trumps public/private partnerships and asked how we prevent this.

Mr. Laikos emphasized the importance of a strong activist arts community with a strong mission to get into the conversation early with real estate developers. He stated that it’s key to integrate arts into private development and illustrate how that is profitable for developers.

Mr. DeCelis asked what specific policies work to help artists be able to do this. He asked if there were any actual examples of public policies already, or whether Cambridge had to be the first.

Councillor Mallon asked if zoning was a tool that could be used or is it too blunt. She asked if zoning is too blunt, what are the other tools that can be used.

Mr. Laikos used an example of an arts firm in London that has inserted itself into real estate development projects, displacing the architect in many development conversations. He stated that the important questions to ask are how we make arts spaces in developments that are happening, and again used the example in London where a developer could get higher rents because they are home to valuable arts spaces.

Mr. Weeks stated that we haven't made these inroads into the development community that artists have wanted to.

Councillor Mallon asked how we can incentivize developers like those in Kendall Square to dedicate spaces for arts use. She concluded this part of the discussion and asked Jason Weeks, the Executive Director of the Arts Council (CAC), to begin his presentation.

Mr. Weeks stated that Cambridge was one of the first cities to have an arts council, which connects people, communities and neighborhoods. He stated that the one pager he handed out goes over a general role of the council and individual projects. He stated that the CAC likes to serve as a "presenter" for public art, open studios, and festivals. Mr. Weeks also stated that the CAC serves as a public-sector funder as well and has been doing this since the beginning as an integrated part of the City, which is unique because many other municipalities do not have these implementation mechanisms. He informed the group that the CAC is a public nonprofit corporation to work with the City and can serve as a fiscal agent by raising money for individuals and other arts organizations. He stated that the CAC goes into the community to raise money for events, people, and organizations. He stated that the City has an ordinance that supports public art, and as a result we now have 300 public art works and thousands of people in the City have directly participated in this.

Mr. Weeks stated that a mission of the CAC is to serve as a connector to the State and other entities around the Commonwealth, to lead by example, and connect individuals who may not be as tapped in to the arts community as others. He stated that they are an "idea factory" with resources for support, partnership, and networks for artists.

Mr. Weeks also spoke about the roles of public schools and universities. He stated the importance of being deliberate about this connection, and the fact that access should not be dependent on where you live or where you go to school. He stated the struggle is for access and partners but bringing people to the table and building relationships is helpful and we should be focused on these efforts. Mr. Weeks spoke about the process of CAC taking on Open Studios and democratizing the process. He stated it was important to ask how we reach out to people of all levels, disciplines, and neighborhoods to build partnerships with local artists. He stated that innovation doesn't stop with science and technology and that arts are a valuable and integral part of this. The CAC wants to supply people with resources such as their creative marketplace program which is the newest in the past four years. He stated developers and businesses have a place in the conversation, but artists also need places and voices, to be out in the community building partnerships.

Mr. Weeks emphasized that the CAC is a “connectors, presenter, and funder.” He talked about the opportunity to remain visionary in Cambridge, but we need to have sustainable and bigger sources of funding. He talked about what the Boston deliverables were, such as the equivalent of a CAC, a public art program, and neighborhood anchors, and that Cambridge has already reached those benchmarks. He stated that the City was the first to put money into its local cultural council, which sends a message that artists are valuable.

Mr. Mogassabi brought up the Envision Cambridge process, and asked what guidelines within the Envision process can be highlighted in the master plan as related to the arts. He asked if there was a place for the arts in the community wellbeing recommendations and pointed out the 30 statements the draft recommendations made about the arts. He asked if they will lead us in a good direction for the arts because it would be nice to have an arts and culture element of Envision. He brought up the Central Square overlay and using those types of guidelines as a starting point.

Councillor Mallon thanked Mr. Mogassabi for bringing up the Envision Recommendations, adding that some of the draft recommendations do address arts and culture and we will be seeing them unfold.

Mr. Laikos talked about two different models: one is a cultural plan specifically for the arts, and the other is integrating arts and culture into every aspect of policy making and city planning.

Mr. DeCelis spoke about “stewardship”, education, and outreach regarding our art conservation program. He asked about what the CAC does with this program and whether Mr. Weeks could elaborate on how the CAC administers this program.

Mr. Weeks stated that the CAC has an art conservation program and that Cambridge has been a leader in this, thinking about how we take care of some of our artworks which are quite old. He stated the CAC has information sharing initiatives with schools and the visual arts communities. He stated that a public art collection like Cambridge’s is a cultural resource and gave examples of public art pieces around the City.

Mr. Pradhan stated the importance of integrating arts and culture into everything, that cultural economic development strengthens organizations. She stated the need for creating economic opportunities for organizations, being deliberate about using the arts to promote economic development and growth. She stated that good things are already happening, but we are here to talk about what’s not happening, what is not accessible, and that we need to approach this in a more critical way.

‘Folakemi stated that we should have goals about creating opportunities for an arts workforce development, what can come out of design in communities, creating products that can be used. She stated some developers are willing to listen and cooperate with the artists and we need to capitalize on this, but that with others we need to insist rather than suggest, and we need to vote for people who support artist communities.

Councillor Mallon began concluding the meeting by saying she wanted to use this first meeting to orient everyone on both statewide policies and what we're doing here in Cambridge. She stated that during her pre-phone calls with members, one thing that everyone brought up was the importance of equity, inclusion, and access. She announced that the second meeting would involve Malia Lazu as a facilitator on race and equity, and that Malia deeply understands the issues of arts and equity. Councillor Mallon outlined the next meetings and what will be the subjects of each. She announced that we will try to have action-oriented policy items coming out of each meeting to grab the low hanging fruit before implementing long term solutions as the result of a report.

Mr. Weeks announced that Arts Matters day is on October 26th.

Ms. Peterson expressed an interest in a mission statement from the committee.

Councillor Mallon announced that the next meeting of the Arts Task Force is at Spaceus in Harvard Square on November 8th.

Councillor Mallon adjourned the meeting at 7:33PM.

Mayor's Arts Task Force - Meeting Notes

Second Meeting of the Mayor's Arts Task Force

Date: November 8th, 2018

Location: Spaceus Harvard Square, 20 Brattle St.

Meeting Start: 5:39PM

Meeting Adjourned: 7:34PM

In attendance as members of the Mayor's Task Force were: Alanna Mallon, Chair; Liana Ascolese, Aide to Councillor Mallon and Executive Assistant to the Task Force; Jero Nesson, Founder of Artspace; Ellen Shakespear, co-founder of Spaceus; Peter DiMuro, Executive Director of the Dance Complex; Ben Simon, EMF musician; Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager; Christopher Hope, co-founder of The Loop Lab; Eryn Johnson, Executive Director of the Community Art Center; Geeta Pradhan, President and CEO of the Cambridge Community Foundation; David De Celis, Public Arts Commission; Jason Weeks, Executive Director of the Cambridge Arts Council; Olivia D'Ambrosio, Bridge Repertory Theater; Kelly Sherman, visual artist; Martha McKenna, Director of the Creative Commons at Lesley University; and James Pierre, artist.

Invited as a guest speaker was Malia Lazu from the Urban Labs to facilitate an equity, inclusion, and anti-bias training.

Members of the public in attendance were: Catherine Siller, Robert Goss, Alex Lemski, Joe Stohlman, Jesse Moore, Liz Walker, Pat Magruder, Hannah Smith, Jannie Kitchen, Laura Jasinski, Michelle Douglas, Deidre Tao, Matt Coogan, Beryl Lipton, Jon Glancy, and Nili Ohayon.

To respect the importance of having an open, honest, and productive conversation about equity, diversity, inclusion, and bias, these notes focus on concepts and general discussion only and quotes are not attributed directly to any individual other than Councillor Mallon during her opening and closing remarks and the facilitator, Malia Lazu.

Materials related to this meeting are attached.

Councillor Mallon called the meeting to order at 5:39 and made an opening statement. She thanked Task Force member Ellen Shakespear and her co-founder, Stephanie Lee, for the use of this space, which is an amazing space for artists to create and sell their work. Spaceus in Harvard Square is a pop up open until the middle of January. She stated the importance of having a shared common language while working on arts issues and policy. Councillor Mallon referenced a New York Times article that was handed out to all members of the Task Force, citing it as a good example of why we are having this conversation tonight, and how ballet dancers and their ballet slippers are illustrative of bias in the arts. Ballet dancers have had pink slippers because they match the skin color of a "typical" ballet dancer. She cited quotes from the article about the struggles of being a dancer of color. Many of them have been dying their slippers for their whole careers because 'they didn't know any different.' The largest manufacturer of ballet slippers is now going to start selling two more colors. It highlights the important question of who belongs in

the ballet world? Who owns this space and who can walk the stage? We need to think about the simple things that we often take for granted if we have privilege. What are the places where people just don't know any different and have not thought about these things?

Councillor Mallon read a short bio introducing Ms. Lazu, tonight's facilitator: With over two decades of experience building diverse culture in the political and civic space, Ms. Lazu felt the diversity and inclusion industry was in need of disruption in the private sector. While at MIT, Ms. Lazu launched a space for diversity research and development called The Urban Labs, which has emerged as a boutique multi-cultural agency helping corporations and institutions be more effective in their diversity and inclusion efforts. Over the last few years, Ms. Lazu has experimented in attacking ongoing diversity problems, including working with the City of Boston in the startup space, creating Accelerate Boston, an accelerator for creatives. In its first five years, Accelerate Boston helped launch 20+ minority businesses and continues to support minority entrepreneurs in their search for investment capital.

Ms. Lazu opened by stating that it was great to see that Cambridge is taking on an arts task force and that race and equity are being considered upfront instead of as an after the fact. She asked everyone to introduce themselves and use one word to describe their goals for the task force. Words used included: Afrofuturism, community, inspiration, creativity, affordability, vulnerability, access, learning, curating life, making a difference, peace, and diversity.

Ms. Lazu stated the big question is "what does diversity mean for the arts task force? What traditions are we upholding, especially in art, which is so subjective?" We need to start a conversation about bias, so we can talk with each other in a comfortable way if bias is creeping up.

Ms. Lazu went over ground rules to keep the discussion productive and open.

Ms. Lazu used the metaphor of the elephant and the giraffe to illustrate the ways in which unintentional bias can present itself.

Ms. Lazu outlined different types of biases and asked Task Force members to present situations in which each type of bias occurs in the art world. The first type is institutional bias: policies and practices of institutions that, intentionally or not, produce outcomes that chronically favor, or put racial or other minority groups at a disadvantage.

The task force members gave examples of institutional bias in the art world, such as:

- Whose art gets chosen to be showcased
- Applications that rely on technological skills and English language proficiency
- What different venues allow to be performed and displayed
- Certain types of art like graffiti being branded as "not art"
- Opportunities available through only social networks
- Who and what can get a permit from the City

Ms. Lazu asked the group what it takes to be an artist. Many don't make a lot of money, so this pushes people out before they can even break into the field. She brought up the discussion

of “outsider art” on an episode of Jim and Marjorie on NPR, and why certain people or types of art were considered “outsiders” and not just “art.” She stated it’s important to ask questions like what does community art mean? Who is in power? Does this truly represent the community? We need to consider the importance of terminology and the words we use to discuss certain types of art.

There was a comment about people not being able to hold more than one idea in their head about what can be “good” and “rigorous” in the art world. Dance - ballet vs. hip hop - was cited as an example.

Ms. Lazu stated that the question “who decides?” is important to consider when evaluating structural bias. Structural bias is a system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways, to perpetuate inequity. She brought up the example of norms such as the ballet shoes from the NYT article - whose feet even belong in ballet shoes? How do we ensure that norms don’t perpetuate inequity? Who is worthy of exposure and who is worthy of being paid?

Ms. Lazu stated that structural and institutional bias are things that “happen.” It’s hard to check ourselves because bias exists in institutions and structures, and we are social beings who operate within the structures given to us.

Ms. Lazu then moved the discussion to implicit bias. Implicit bias is also known as implicit social cognition, which refers to the attitudes or stereotypes that affect our understanding, actions, and decisions in an unconscious manner. This bias is deep, and often begs the question what is presentable and what is not? There is implicit bias in art and within the diversity of neighborhoods in Cambridge. It’s important to check individual implicit bias, and how will our own biases show up?

A discussion was had about Central Square and always being “stuck” with murals and graffiti. Before people saw the murals, they were skeptical that they would actually be art. This causes us to ask questions about who owns community art and who should be making decisions about it? Something that one person considers art may not be considered art in another community and vice versa.

The group moved into a discussion about exploring why people come to Cambridge and what belonging means.

A member made comments about people in Cambridge being self-righteous and too smart for their own good, they don’t want to take a step back and examine themselves, and don’t hold the mirror far enough away from themselves. The ideal collaboration is people coming together with no agenda, but too many people in Cambridge have one.

Members made comments about artist live/work space and why artists should be prioritized. There was a discussion about the bias people have towards artists and why they don’t belong - because they are poor by choice, art should be a low paying field, and that artists should just get

higher paying jobs? The fundamental value of art is lower, and art is often an afterthought instead of being integrated.

One member commented that there was implicit bias within our group - who we talk to and socialize with before and after meetings, and who we are open to. Also, not everyone wants to speak to all parts of their identity, but we do have to question our own assumptions and push ourselves to make connections even if we have a perceived difference. We are all at different levels of understanding this, some people are at different levels than others.

Ms. Lazu brought up the importance of mission statements and whether businesses or arts organizations have diversity language in their mission. There are resources to help in crafting this language, which is a good opportunity to hold a mirror up to ourselves. She referenced a Ted Talk called "Flip It to Test It" to help us challenge the assumptions we make about certain groups and help question biases within ourselves.

A discussion was held about public art, and who even has access to spaces in the first place. There are many arts spaces that are off limits to certain demographics, which is why the conversation around public art is so important because it's so accessible.

One member asked who art programs are suggested to and brought up which young people can or cannot break into the field. Only certain people are even given the opportunity to build that network and there are many biases in programming.

Many members questioned how accessible public art really is. Many people are unaware that the percent for art program is an ordinance to ensure that people have a right to art. Too many people and programs are unknown to each other - networks do not intersect.

A discussion was had about what the word access specifically means. It's often a broad term but we need to know how and why we are using it. There are many kinds of access and non-access. Is it economic? Feeling like you belong? Physical access? Time for access?

The group discussed the way we run our own institutions and accepting a business model vs. the work that artists do on their own administrating on a shoestring budget. Artists have a wealth of information about different ways to work that other institutions should adopt. There are multiple ways to look at a problem. There is something within the nature of the business model and funding for many art projects that is too exclusive.

Ms. Lazu led the group in a discussion about the "belonging framework." She went over the following definitions:

Diversity: the condition of having or being composed of differing elements

Inclusion: to take in or compromise as a part of a whole or group

Belonging: to be a member or a part of

Ms. Lazu explained that belonging is an emotional shift - it's different than including someone to check a box and not caring about they feel about being included. You can't include people and assume they should go along with the way things are, or the way you want them.

“Diversity is inviting people to the party, inclusion is asking them to dance. But belonging is asking them to help plan the party.”

The way you get to belonging is by being curious and not just making assumptions about others. Belonging involves symbols that are shared and largely recognizable, which is hugely important in the arts.

Ms. Lazu asked the group how they know they belong in Cambridge.

One member said they do not feel like they belong in Cambridge despite being a lifelong resident. The City has changed a lot and they are uncomfortable a lot of the time because of other people’s actions. Others have been talking about this for a long time as well.

“Belonging is being absolutely comfortable.”

Another member felt like an outsider in a workplace because of not being from Cambridge or living there, despite working and being part of the community. People not being from here is a uniquely New England way because many people stay here long term. There was a discussion about the means testing of belonging, such as people asking questions, testing you, looking for cues as to who belongs.

Ms. Lazu asked how public art and art programming can promote a sense of belonging. Artists are the keepers of truth, which is what is important about them. She discussed the MLK memorial proposed for the Boston Common. What is actually the spirit of the arts? There is one choice for a statue of hands, vs. the other choice of building a space where people can protest. Arts can be used as a vehicle of justice.

We need to ask ourselves if we are seeking opinions from diverse groups of people, or if we’re in our own echo chamber. We need to be curious and test our own observations.

One member talked about art during pride and the proliferation of rainbows that helped them affirm their identity but asked why this feeling of acceptance can’t be present year-round.

Another member talked about how belonging can be two ways: the belonging that we feel, and the affirming identity that others give us. The arts are where people have their stories, cultures, and experiences reflected and affirmed, so people need to see their world in art. Everyone wants to tell their story but if there’s not a place for that, they feel like they don’t belong. We have the capacity in this group to be able to create spaces, events, opportunity for diversity in Cambridge.

Another member stated that people and buildings in Cambridge have been changing in the predictable ways. The City is gearing towards wealthier people and when you’re one of the only people left, other affirmations of your identity aren’t enough. We have a culture and system of displacement that prioritizes wealthy people, and band aid solutions aren’t enough when systems are rigged against people like artists and other low-income people.

Another member stated that changes have been brought on by gentrification. Cambridge has social justice values, but they don't always translate. We as a society and culture have not had to grapple with that yet.

Ms. Lazu broke the task force members into small groups to discuss three questions amongst themselves:

1. What are some opportunities for the arts task force to promote belonging?
2. What do you think is the biggest challenge the task force has to overcome to be successful?
3. How will we know if we succeed?

Group #1 reported back:

Opportunities - we can help increase access to grants, applying for permits, helping with administrative issues if you're an artist who's not that type of person. They may have self-selected out of this process because they feel it's a tough space. Is there a possibility of reexamining these structures and policies? We need more advocacy opportunities for artists. It may be helpful to have volunteers or hiring people on a City level to help artists in this regard to provide mentorship. It may be possible to use open studios as a launch point for organizing, creating guilds/associations to help people organize and negotiate.

Challenges - creating holistic involvement for all levels of socioeconomic access. The conversation about art in Cambridge should be focused on the critical, relevant, and hard topics. Art is relevant and a necessity, empowering and creating social change.

Success - People need to see themselves reflected and connected with larger humanity, engage with art making process. We need to embed artists in the community and create opportunities to do this.

Group #2 reported back:

Opportunities - we need to ask who is not here, move to where the people are. We need to step up and step back, looking carefully at who currently takes up the most space and how do we balance this?

Challenges - we need to have an honest dialogue, sometimes we bite our tongues on issues to not hurt feelings, but we also need to have comfort in both talking and listening. The City is divided, the landscape has changed, there are more racial and class divisions. We also need to have a specific charge and ways to implement our recommendations.

Success - we need to have agreed upon outcomes and hold each other accountable. We need to integrate the two Cambridges, making art accessible and having a higher level of awareness.

Group #3 reported back:

Opportunities - to recognize the importance of arts in the innovation DNA of the City, and to lift up the value of arts to recognize it as intrinsically valuable to the success of Cambridge. We need to also focus on the people who create the arts.

Challenges - how do we lift up the arts? How do we value the arts at the level we value business or science? Public art can be inanimate, but how can we actually support the people creating it? How do we combat the marginalization of arts? Why aren't the arts a part of how we think about public health, inequity, violence prevention, etc.?

Group #4 reported back:

Opportunities - everyone that's here has an opportunity to connect and get to know each other and network.

Challenges - funding, reinforcing events that the City has for everyone to enjoy in a more multimedia, multi-pronged kind of way, especially inter-generationally and in more creative and accessible ways. Weather is an issue because we only have 5-6 months to be outside and spend time as a community together. No artists have enough resources so there is often not a lot of unity - do we collectively have the ability to look at the whole landscape in a way that's not possible with other groups?

Success - we have an opportunity to strength the arts community and we are in the process of defining how to do that. We have the potential to evaluate other City organizations and make very concrete recommendations that can be acted on to guarantee and clarify sources of funding. We need a more defined charged to know what our goals and opportunities and resources actually are.

Ms. Lazu wrapped up the training and held a short debrief.

Councillor Mallon thanked everyone for participating in the training and thanked Ms. Lazu for her facilitation. She announced that the next meeting will take place on Thursday, December 13th from 5:30-7:30. She stated that the meeting location is at the MIT Visual Arts Center - 345 Vassar St., which is accessible by the CT2 bus at the Amesbury St. @ Vassar St. stop.

Councillor Mallon adjourned the meeting at 7:34PM.

Mayor's Arts Task Force Meeting Notes*Third Meeting of the Mayor's Arts Task Force**Date: December 13th, 2018**Location: MIT Theater Arts Building - 345 Vassar St.**Meeting Start: 5:39PM**Meeting Adjourned: 7:46PM*

In attendance as members of the Task Force were: Alanna Mallon, Chair; Liana Ascolese, Aide to Councillor Mallon and Executive Assistant to the Task Force; Afiyah Harrigan, Mayor's Office Liaison; Khalil Mogassabi, Deputy Director and Chief Planner, CDD; Olivia D'Ambrosio, Executive Director of the Bridge Repertory Theater; Geeta Pradhan, CEO of the Cambridge Community Foundation; Ben Simon, EMF musician; Kristina Latino, CEO of Cornerscape; Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager; Jason Weeks, Executive Director of the Cambridge Arts Council; David De Celis, Public Arts Commission; Kelly Sherman, visual artist; Christopher Hope, Executive Director of the Loop Lab; Sarah Gallop, government relations at MIT; Martha McKenna, Director of the Creative Commons at Lesley University; James Pierre, visual artist; Peter DiMuro, Executive Director of the Dance Complex; Jero Nesson, founder of Artspace.

Members of the public in attendance were: Kristen Wainwright, Rick Harranan, Liz Walker, Rich McKinnon, Melissa LaVita, Tina Snyder, Michelle Lower, and Sal Zinno. Materials related to this meeting are attached.

Councillor Mallon called the meeting to order at 5:39PM. She thanked everyone for coming last month and participating in the Discovering Bias training. It's important to recognize inherent, structural, and institutional biases as we try to support artists. She stated that the tools we learned from Malia Lazu's meeting should be brought into all of our meetings when we talk about these comprehensive policies. Councillor Mallon asked that task force members take a few seconds to remember where we were with her when we were at a place of real truth and honesty. The task force also has its goals displayed on the board from last meeting when Ms. Lazu asked each task force member to describe their goals in one word. Councillor Mallon asked everyone to think about their words and the words of other task force members.

Councillor Mallon stated that this is our first policy-focused meeting and this is a good time to talk about funding since the City is preparing for the 2020 fiscal year. We should ask ourselves the following questions: what is our goal around art? What diversity outcomes do we want? What are our values around diversity? She stated that it's fine to have values but we need the funding behind them.

Councillor Mallon described tonight's break out groups that task force members could select from:

- 1) Increasing City investment in the arts via revenue and budget
- 2) Reimagining the City's 1% for art program
- 3) Exploring public/private partnerships, including starting a private percent for art program

Councillor Mallon explained that several representatives from development groups were in attendance to observe the conversation in break out group #3, and listen to the arts community's needs. She stated that this would be a conversation for developers to connect to the arts community and find out how they can contribute to it.

Arts Task Force members split up into break out groups for approximately 45 minutes to discuss their respective topics. Each group chose a member to report back to the entire Task Force.

Group #3: Exploring public/private partnerships, including starting a private percent for art program, presented first and Ms. Snyder was the presenter. The group talking about the following main points:

- MIT is trying to figure out how to put more money into its commercial developments to support the arts
- The Cambridge Crossing market is asking what is the best way to collaborate with cities and local artists?
- How do developers find local artists? Many have been working with the Community Arts Center, but would like ways to expand their network. What are the easy ways to find local artists?
- Is there a form of communication where developers can easily find people to collaborate with?
- Programming: how do sites continue the story after hosting just one event? There is a goal of making art continuous and consistent
 - Mechanisms to acknowledge the fact that zoning mitigation is a vehicle to encourage or require developers to support artists.

Ms. Latino added that there is a reality of trying to make things easy for developers, and how do we integrate arts early on? There is a conflict between short and long term goals.

Ms. Snyder added that developers are often thinking about permitting and getting projects going, so how do we get arts in early and in an authentic way? We need to think about the value that art will add to a place and make the process more holistic.

Ms. Gallop stated that she wanted MIT to be working towards creating art that is authentic and actually a part of the community.

Ms. Snyder stated that developers seeking artists cannot just rely on personal networks.

Mr. DiMuro asked that we expand the definition of art and keep it wider to include mediums besides visual art. He stated that he is paid as a consultant to in communities across the country to help find artists, but is not usually asked to participate in the process in Cambridge. He stated that he is here and artists are developers' best tool in planning and are eager to help from the outset.

Ms. Snyder stated that we need to think about artists when programming.

Mr. De Celis asked if future structured programming around arts and development would be helpful. he stated that a requirement might make the investment in the arts easier for developers,

because then they are just required to do it. Mr. De Celis also asked about owner buy-in and what affect this has. Owners of properties need to be brought on to all of these aspects.

Ms. Pradhan stated that constant programming needs to be prioritized, and that visual artists are always present but other mediums take upkeep.

Councillor Mallon asked Ms. Lower about the ordinance in San Francisco.

Ms. Lower responded that Alexandria has offices in San Francisco, where developers are required to contribute 1% of the hard costs of construction to the arts, and that it's amazing what they've been able to do. It's a very formal process that involves a committee that reviews proposals and presentations within the City and development side. She stated that it was an interesting model and seems as though it's successful.

Mr. DiMuro affirmed that many dancers in the City of San Francisco literally live on this money and it's a game changer for them.

Ms. Lower said that for developers in San Francisco there are two options: you can sponsor a physical manifestation of art or you can pay into a fund which is more flexible.

Ms. Gallop stated that commercial properties at MIT are voluntary but they usually opt-in, however they don't often use local artists. MIT tends to work with the architects to figure out the artist, which may not be the right process. She stated that they want to work on this more.

Mr. Zinno stated that real estate is cyclical, so we need to be aware of droughts and how that could impact artist funding.

Group #1: Increasing City investment in the arts via revenue and budget presented second and Ms. Sherman was the presenter. The group talked about the following main points:

- There are many revenue streams the City has that are not designated yet, such as Air BnB and recreational marijuana taxes
- There is a fund for developers who don't meet parking requirements for their projects. What is the relationship between this and the Central Square Improvement Fund that's mentioned in the Central Square Restoration Petition? Can we formalize this process to make sure the improvement fund is set up and money is disbursed to artists in the cultural district?
- A percentage of arts revenue from larger arts organizations should go to local or smaller artists or organizations
 - There are several ways that the City can facilitate indirect support of artists as well
 - Can we create a Find it Cambridge-like platform for art and artists? A one-stop shop where both artists and the public can look at programs, shows, find out what's happening, find local artists, find out who's doing work and where, and search for events that are happening. This could not just live on its own and would need to be actively programmed and maintained.
 - The library offers free museum passes, but they all seem to be to larger institutions like the JFK Museum, the MFA, the Science Museum, etc. Can we establish a season pass to a network of smaller organizations?
- Establishing an Arts Boston style kiosk for consumers of culture

- Ways to centralize resources that cultural producers and organizations need, such as: managing start-up costs, co-working spaces, accelerator programs. This would need to be managed by the City or some other third entity.
- Expanding the bandwidth of the Cambridge Arts Council through a partnership model between the City, industry, and culture - how do you open up the resources in our City that are easy to give away? Not just money but resources like space.
- The City budget is extremely low for arts and culture. Participatory budgeting alone is just about even with the entire budget for arts and culture. If we value art, we should put aside 5x as much money for the arts. It should not be equivalent to money that's just up for grabs.

Mr. Weeks stated that arts yield a high return on investment.

Ms. Pradhan stated that we need to think beyond one time gifts or support - how can we support more sustainable funding? This might account for the cyclical nature of real estate and make up for times when there are gaps. The innovation community values arts, but how can we make the case that arts is the first step into innovation?

Councillor Mallon stated that the Arts Council should be one leg on a 3 legged stool of partnerships - the Arts Council, community development foundations, and critical advocacy. It's hard to do advocacy work when you are the one in government, so the Arts Council needs a partner in this.

Group #2: Reimagining the City's 1% for art program presented third and David De Celis was the presenter. The group talked about the following main points:

- Program began in in 1979 and was not supposed to be administratively or financially burdensome
- Is supposed to be 1%, went through a phase where the amount of money was capped at \$100,000, but more recently, some projects significantly raised the cap thanks to advocacy on the part of artists
- Discussion of the different processes money is awarded: typical process is with the Foundry where there is an RFP or RFQ sent out to artists selected from the database that the Arts Council maintains, there will be a shortlist compiled of artists who may fit the site well, they each do a site visit and present to the community present, and a jury awards the project. An atypical process is with the FLOW grant that came with The Port project because community leaders wanted more of a "living organism" approach, took the grant approach to get more performative pieces.
- How we can reimagine the ordinance: more money, taking risks, asking if our public art collection reflects who we are, greater community process and involvement, more creative place making not just physical constructs
- We need to ask how we keep the stories of our art alive and relevant. How do we "sustain understanding?"
- Starting "friends of" groups - community members who have particular affinities or knowledges about pieces of art can be a liaison or educators to the community
- Ordinance needs to adapt to changes in art production - disciplines and production of art are changing and evolving, so how do we keep up? "We're in a post bronze gloves world."

Ms. Peterson asked how we deal with “art by consensus.” This is how many projects get watered down and don’t reflect our identity.

Mr. De Celis added another point to Group 2’s presentation: the site-based nature of public art means that areas of the City that close themselves off to construction may not have the same access to public art.

Mr. Weeks stated that we may need to reconsider how we fund arts and percent for art, and that we may need to use a grant approach instead of funding specific projects.

Ms. Pradhan stated that the first bullet was to increase the amount of money, but should this go beyond just public projects? What about private? What about a higher percentage?

Ms. Sherman asked whether we can eliminate the cap.

Mr. DiMuro stated that 1% could fund artists who are makers in the community in other ways. They could pool the funds to use at a later date in another part of the City.

Mr. De Celis said that we need diversity not just in demographics but also diversity in types of art. He stated that the group considered other measures such as:

- Consider a quota or percentage to guarantee diversity of artist makers
- Earmarking funds for performance based art specifically
- Asking how art reflects us and the community
- Getting more diverse juries, more diverse networks, ensuring that our database is more diverse
- Guaranteeing funding for performance venues and music performers, which are rapidly leaving our City

Ms. Sherman stated that she thought the point about how art is changing was interesting. Art is less classist than it historically has been, expectations for community engagement are higher, and that more people are involved in the arts and our process should reflect it. There’s so much community engagement in the Foundry project, it’s good to ask ourselves where should the funding be coming from?

Mr. De Celis explained the triple bottom line: successful projects are better for the community, environment, and make money.

Ms. Sherman said that the baseline from the past is not sufficient anymore, and we do need more of a community engagement element. However, time is money and the same dollar years ago won’t buy you the same art now.

Mr. De Celis stated that unfortunately, many people don’t want risky projects.

Councillor Mallon asked the large group which items she should consider bringing back to the

Council to put on the next agenda. The group came up with the following:

- Asking for 15% of the revenue from hotel/motel taxes
- Looking into the Central Square Improvement Fund, and getting a consensus about funding being set up, the pipeline, and the disbursement

- Seeing whether there is a percentage of the 3% of local excise tax on adult use marijuana sales that should be allocated to arts
- Asking the Arts Council to diversity both artist pools and jury pools

Ms. Sherman added removing or raising the 1% cap on the Percent for Art Ordinance.

Ms. Pradhan added expanding the idea of 1% to look at the San Francisco model. Can we do something Citywide, not just public projects? Can we get private developers on board? This would be a more robust source of funding since the City is constantly changing.

Councillor Mallon pointed out that the City budget is inconsistent with where our values lie.

Ms. D'Ambrosio asked how much free cash the City had on hand.

Councillor Mallon answered over \$230 million.

Ms. D'Ambrosio stated that it shouldn't be too hard to get the budget for the arts raised up to 5x that of Participatory Budgeting.

Ms. Peterson clarified that the City cap on percent for art had been raised, so it's really project by project at this point. There are several projects where we are reaching 1%, but for very large projects we are not reaching the percentage. Raising the cap may not get us the results we want.

Ms. Pradhan stated that we need to consider the diversity of art in what the funding goes to. We need to recognize that art is not just physical.

Ms. Pradhan then gave a short presentation on the Cambridge Community Foundation and opportunities for them to be a fiscal agent. She informed the group about what a community foundation is: special entities that had been set up in the 1900s in response to public inequities, and that these organizations were made up of funds that are contributed to by the community in general. They are governed by a community board and fund a host of community issues. Community foundations are the local giving platform of a neighborhood or municipality. She stated that community foundations have the goal of shared prosperity, social equity, and cultural richness. The Cambridge Community Foundation specifically has the goal of responding to the great wealth but also great inequities of Cambridge so that we can live up to and retain our diversity.

Ms. Pradhan stated that the Cambridge Community Foundation (CCF) makes grants, engages civically, and cultivates philanthropy. They have a \$41 million endowment and give out \$1.5-\$2 million annually in foundation and donor advised grants. She joked that they are the "Switzerland of Cambridge", a neutral entity that can engage in any issue with any partner. She stated that they are a trusted entity to be a fiscal agent, because they have been funding nonprofits for years, have a deep knowledge of the community, and have a strong reach into the City, nonprofits, and the community. Ms. Pradhan gave recent examples of CCF funded projects, such as \$50K for the murals in Central Square and being the fiscal agent for the immigrant defense fund.

Ms. Pradhan stated that one of CCF's goals was their commitment to the arts. The City has a growing immigrant population and we need to see more cultures represented everywhere. Arts and creativity are the DNA of Cambridge; people come from all over the world to work and solve problems because we are seen as the innovation center in the world - so many organizations start here and have become worldwide.

Ms. Pradhan stated that CCF supports 125 arts organizations, but cannot find data on how many artists are in the City, which is disappointing. She stated that arts and culture generates \$174 million in economic impact and asked how we harness this to fund arts in our community. She stated different grants that have been available through CCF and gave an overview of their new civic engagement component.

Ms. Pradhan discussed the potential role that CCF can play if there are additional revenue streams for the arts that require a fiscal agent. Proposals include:

- Creating funds such as: endowment funds, spend down funds, field of interest funds
- Receiving fund contributions - CCF is a 501c3 so they can receive contributions and donors can get tax deductions. They can also solicit contributions for existing funds.
- Manage money to get a high return on investment through partners like Bank of America and Cambridge Trust
- Solicit, administer, and track grants
- Offering partnerships with their community advisory boards who do research and make recommendations to the CCF board which has the fiduciary responsibility - this can help the CCF board integrate more deeply with communities
- Foster civic engagement, dialogue, and advocacy while allowing for a flexible use of funds

Ms. Pradhan stated the importance of actively getting involved in the community so that Cambridge doesn't become two cities. She stated the ability of CCF to also do report impacts, marketing campaigns, and publish research.

Ms. Pradhan outlined the principles for successful public/private partnerships:

1. Shared vision
2. Understand partners and players
3. Build trust
4. Establish clear, transparent, rational decision making
5. Consistent and coordinated leadership
6. Communicate early and often

Ms. Pradhan concluded by saying that having an arts fund has been on the minds of CCF for a very long time, because arts is what makes Cambridge special.

Mr. Mogassabi asked whether the CCF would fund something like a grant for the City to create a master plan for the arts.

Ms. Pradhan answered by saying that as a nonprofit, the City could apply and CCF could fund a master plan for the arts.

Councillor Mallon thanked Ms. Pradhan for putting together her presentation, because it tied the conversation of funding together. She stated that Boston has a great plan for the arts and that Cambridge is just starting out, but we have good ideas and quoted Councillor Simmons in that "if you don't know where you're going, any train will get you there." She stated that knowing we have partners to help us with our arts goals makes this a powerful time to pursue them.

Councillor Mallon adjourned the meeting at 7:46PM.

Mayor's Arts Task Force – Meeting Notes

Fourth Meeting of the Mayor's Arts Task Force

Date: January 10th, 2019

Location: Community Art Center, 119 Windsor St.

Meeting Start: 5:36PM

Meeting Adjourned: 7:39 PM

In attendance as members of the Task Force were: Alanna Mallon, Chair; Liana Ascolese, Aide to Councillor Mallon and Executive Assistant to the Task Force; Afiyah Harrigan, Mayor's Office Liaison; Christopher Hope, Executive Director of The Loop Lab; Jero Nesson, Founder of Artspace, Inc.; Olivia D'Ambrosio, Director of Bridge Repertory Theater; Ellen Shakespear, Co-founder of Spaceus; Kelly Sherman, visual artist and consultant; Eryn Johnson, Executive Director of the Community Art Center; Kristina Latino, CEO of Cornerscape; Sarah Gallop, MIT government relations; Ben Simon, musician and Cambridge Arts Coalition; David De Celis, architect and member of the Public Arts Commission; Jason Week, Executive Director of the Cambridge Arts Council; Michael Monestime, Executive Director of the Central Square Business Association; Khalil Mogassabi, Deputy Director and Chief Planner, Community Development Department; Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager.

Attending as a guest speaker was Lillian Hsu from the Cambridge Arts Council.

The meeting was audio & video recorded as well as photographed by students in the first cohort of The Loop Lab's workforce training program.

Materials related to this meeting are attached.

Councillor Mallon called the meeting to order at 5:36PM. She thanked Eryn and the Community Art Center for hosting. As indicated by a raise of hands, many of the Task Force members had never been to the Community Art Center and this meeting was a good introduction. Councillor Mallon informed the group of some exciting news: students from the first cohort of The Loop Lab were present to record the meeting. She gave a shout out to Christopher Hope for bringing his students and putting together a video of tonight's meeting.

Mr. Hope described the program at The Loop Lab as a social enterprise focused on workforce development and AV technology. The program runs for 6 months as young adults from The Port learn the basics of AV technology and receive hands on training. They attend the program 3 nights/week and can earn a paid internship. The first half of the program is learning the basics of work and editing. The second half of the program is more basics, but working with community partners, learning the basics like social media marketing, radio broadcasting, and programming. He introduced Matt Malikowski as the program manager, who had accompanied the cohort. The students with us tonight are young adults and are here to learn.

Councillor Mallon thanked Chris and the students for being a partner in this experience and for having a chance to show the public the work that the Task Force is doing. She updated the Task Force on the 3 policy orders regarding funding that passed at the last Council meeting. She thanked the people who came and wrote and advocated passionately for more funding, reimagining the 1% for arts ordinance, and establishing the Central Square Improvement Fund through the provision in the restoration petition and Zoning Ordinance. This is not the end of the process and there is more work to be done, she will keep everyone posted. Councillor Mallon stated that what's important is that we're not just waiting until the end of the Task Force to make recommendations in a document, but instead making these live and active meetings to push critical issues forward and get to work right away. She stated that for working artists, there is a lot of asking to donate time and volunteer. This Task Force is yet another example of that and she wants to make it worthwhile.

Councillor Mallon reminded the group that at the last meeting, they had a robust but truncated discussion about public art, so we wanted to keep that momentum going by moving it up to tonight's meeting. We will be discussing studio space at the next meeting.

Councillor Mallon stated that tonight we will be defining what we mean by public art, setting goals, discussing equity in art, artists, outcomes, and disciplines, and discussing how we can support those goals. Additionally, she reminded everyone the public art topics discussed at the previous meeting, and that there were still some questions around both the public art process and the Community Art Center's role in connecting different entities to the community.

The group did two warm up excises: each wrote down their favorite piece of public art in Cambridge, and then members were asked to write down their initial reactions to public art pieces that were displayed on cards passed around the group.

Councillor Mallon introduced Lillian Hsu from the Arts Council to speak to the process around public art.

Ms. Hsu thanked the group for having her and stated that she would give a brief overview in 10 minutes, but that anyone was invited to contact her or visit the Arts Council if they continued to have questions or want further explanation. Telling people “what we do” is hard because the Arts Council is constantly evolving and changing as they are working with a living organism that is the City and community. She listed the values that were part of their mission, including: bringing more art into the public domain, particularly for “everybody.” Ms. Hsu defined public art as something that doesn’t have operating hours, tickets, or barriers, and emphasized their social justice approach.

Ms. Hsu stated that another value the Arts Council has is expertise in the community and the field of art. The Arts Council relies on those areas of expertise.

Ms. Hsu outlined the overall public art process from project identification to completion, whatever that completion might be. She defined completion as a broad, multi-year process to be thought of as a running stream of activity. Communication with the community and other City departments is key.

Ms. Hsu outlined the main steps of the process: identifying the project, site selection, and budget discussion. The public art framework, such as whether the art itself is temporary or long term, is considered. The Arts Council asks how many projects are possible within these parameters.

Ms. Hsu clarified that the selection process is often for one or more artists. This is not always the same process every time, and there are several different ways the process has been carried out.

Ms. Hsu gave the example of Requests for Proposals (RFPs) vs. Requests for Qualifications (RFQs), which are both used as tools in the public art process. RFQs ask about the skills and experience that an artist brings to a project. They often need to turn in support material, images, or performance examples. She explained that calls for RFQs for a specific project can be put out nationally or locally, depending on what the site and scope of the project is. RFPs call for a more detailed project proposal from anyone who wants to submit one. Ms. Hsu gave the example of the MBTA, which recently had 400 proposals so far, and artists are still developing ideas and submitting. The Arts Council does not often take this path because if artists are developing entire projects and interacting with the site, they should be getting paid.

Ms. Hsu said that the arts Council gave out cards about the public art collection that belongs to everyone in the City, whether they live or work here.

Ms. Hsu went on to explain that after the RFQ process, they will select a group of artists from their submissions to further develop project proposals. When an artist is developing a proposal, they need to know more about the site, because all our art is catered and created specifically for each site. The Arts Council does not go out and buy existing art and relocate it to a site. Ms. Hsu emphasized that the site is not only its physical attributes, but also the social, historical, political, and other attributes. Artists can educate themselves or get educated about the site by going out and pursuing the information they're interested in and connecting with the community and other organizations. Because of this extensive process, the Arts Council does not have the budget to do this with multiple artists on a single site.

Ms. Hsu explained that an art jury is the Arts Council's way of using the expertise of arts professionals with a lot of experience and knowledge of art. They have seen hundreds of artists and are accustomed to evaluating artists on particular measures. The juries are made up of between 3 and 4 professionals who select finalists to develop proposals.

Ms. Hsu explained that a site committee is a larger group of 18-22 people composed of stakeholders specific to the site. She used the example of the King Open School which involved families, the principle, school liaison, businesses across the street, residents in the area, the Public Art Commission, the architect, and City departments. This group interviews finalists and looks at proposals, deliberates and shares feedback, and comes to a decision about selecting the artist.

Ms. Hsu used the example of The Port infrastructure project as a deviation from this typical process. The Arts Council worked closely with Eryn and the Community Art Center to create a series of values and rubric criteria to develop a one-time grant program called FLOW. They received 72 submissions and proposals and ended up funding 11 projects. She stated that models like this can be used to strengthen skills in the community such as grant writing, which is why FLOW sought first-time applicants. These applicants learned to ask important questions such as budgeting, putting together materials, and considering maintenance of art, especially in ice and snow.

Councillor Mallon stated that she thought some of these processes needed to be clearer on the website and to the public, and that this is some of the work that could come out of the Task Force in the Spring.

Ms. Hsu stated that educating the community is a broad topic and mentioned an initiative where the Arts Council partnered with teachers at the Tobin Montessori school. David De Celis helped the Arts Council connect to the school community and took them to see the public art in their neighborhood. The Arts Council wants to further integrate public art into the school curriculum, because every discipline exists in the public space. Whatever subject is being taught, teachers can work in the City's public art to their curriculum and the Arts Council wants to help do that. She stated that their website needs to be a lot more robust and they are always working on it because keeping up with a website and how information needs to be transmitted is a task in and of itself. She stated that the Arts Council would like the Task Force's help and feedback.

Councillor Mallon introduced Eryn Johnson, the Executive Director of the Community Art Center.

Ms. Johnson stated that she was honored to follow Ms. Hsu's presentation, as the Arts Council has been making public art for years, but the Community Art Center is recently breaking into this field, though the Center itself is not new. The mission of the Community Art Center is to engage youth in art to transform their neighborhood and their world. Ms. Johnson stated that the Center was crowded tonight, but hopefully as Task Force members walked through, they were able to gauge the energy and spirit as they observed the space while the kids were still here. She stated that many alumni still come back and send their kids here, because this place holds the cultural identity of this neighborhood, but also of Cambridge and how we imagine ourselves to be.

Ms. Johnson described the Community Art Center as an interdisciplinary art space with programs for ages 5-19, but they are now working with people in their early 20s. Although students come from all over the City, much of their work is focused on The Port. Programs focus on creative and active organizing, building skills in the arts and personal/career development, program development, and what's called creative youth development. She stated that creative youth development is focused on taking arts skills and applying them to the world. The Center is a licensed after school program that also offers teen media and a public art program.

Ms. Johnson explained that in 2010, the Community Art Center wrote a strategic plan and interview a lot of young people and community members. She explained the result of this was

people talking about opportunity, growth, and change. There is a lot of these things in the City, but people from The Port often feel they are not a part of it.

Ms. Johnson explained that the Community Art Center has always been a “place-based place”, so many people have never been here before, because it’s one of those places where if you know about it, you’re in the know. The Center realized they cannot just keep their art there anymore and needed to address the feelings of alienation from growth and opportunity around them. The Center has established relationships with corporations in Kendall Square and with MIT. Their teen program was started when the Center used to be a Polaroid Building through a collaboration with that company. The neighborhood has an amazing history around technology and AV, which is why it’s cool that The Loop Lab now exists. The Center has an archive of Port photography if people are interested.

Ms. Johnson explained the Center’s relationship with Novartis, when the company asked them to put up art on their construction site. The Art Center proposed a year-long project where kids would put up 4 murals and an outdoor gallery as the construction progressed. This initiative was meant to get ideas, faces, and people in the community “the other side of Mass Ave.” and to build positive relationships. Each mural had a connection between people from Novartis and the community, as the company helped the kids to make the murals.

Ms. Johnson stated that the Art Center knew a lot of artists but didn’t have the public art experience, so this project was a good first step to put their stake in the ground and get to know the public art process. They want to continue their positive relationships.

Ms. Johnson stated that another important piece to this program was funding. She stated that businesses are not always interested in art organizations, but this mural initiative was a way for people to explore common interests. She stated that developers think about space and what it looks and feels like, but that neighborhood organizations also think about space and who is represented and taking up that space. It’s important to ask who is here and why. She recognized the interesting affinity in these 2 worlds and began starting collaborations with new developing spaces. The Art Center has now done 6-7 temporary murals on the side of construction sites, and each one has gotten more involved in the way that the community is engaged.

Ms. Johnson spoke to why people sought out the Art Center. It has less to do with art than it does with community, because Cambridge is changing and a lot of the individuals who work in corporations understand this in their efforts to engage who is here, they come to the Community Art Center. Ms. Johnson stated that she is lucky to run an organization that is loved by the City,

and that for developers, this is a way they show goodwill towards the City and community. The Art Center has really been able to grow their community program which allows them to make art in their own neighborhood. She explained that it had been hard to make art in their own neighborhood, and they received a National Endowment for the Arts grant for the Brown Mural, Port Mural, Port T Shirts, and Port Art Truck. They are thinking of ways to use art in public space. Ms. Johnson stated that one of the most exciting parts of more funding was hiring James Pierre full time, as he is an artist from the neighborhood. She stated there are currently two groups of young people doing projects: one group in the neighborhood, and one collaboration with MIT.

Mr. Pierre stated that after hearing the history, he realized he was part of the first public art project that the Art Center did after working for the City for a good amount of years. He stated that as a kid, he was not into sports like everyone else was, especially basketball. As he grew older, he often asked himself why so much attention and funding were put towards sports, but as someone who was in to art, wondered why the arts wasn't given the same amount of attention. He stated that being part of the Art Center and an arts advocate is incredible and the partnerships are valuable. He stated that it's important to prepare young people for the workforce and that this can be done through arts: you have a client with expectations just as if it was an intensive sports program. The values of punctuality, a team effort, and learning how to produce a finished product are all the same.

Ms. Johnson stated that the Art Center's biggest struggle is their wanting to put up permanent work. She stated that they do have funding and will be putting up a sculpture called The Port Rose in the coming 6 months. She stated they are proud of the temporary work and it's great for visibility and learning.

Ms. Johnson stated that the Art Center always has a visiting artist, and they do a lot of commission work now. When we allow young people to make their own art, installing it permanently signals that we are investing in a community and that creation will be there permanently. She stated that corporations have been trusting them temporarily for longer periods of time, but that permanent art is still a challenge.

Ms. Johnson stated that people go to the Arts Council when they are looking for art. People go to the Community Art Center when they are looking for community. We need to ask who we call for art, what community art is, and recognize the fact that we often use the term "community art" to refer to "art that's not ours."

Councillor Mallon thanked Ms. Johnson for tying that all together and stated that we are going to have a real discussion about goals, what art is, and diversity and equity. We have talked about arts workforce development tonight, which people never talk about, but we need to create these opportunities for our young people.

Councillor Mallon stated that she has been talking with Allyson Esposito at the Boston Foundation and one of the concerns is that artists don't always have soft skills such as presentation, budgeting, etc. but that these skills can be taught. We can't just say "local artists can't do this." Using local artists is also good for the City – it cuts down on travel time and costs, and we are bringing in people from our own community.

Councillor Mallon reminded everyone of Malia Lazu's "rules" for discussion and asked everyone to reorient themselves to think about bias in art. She stated she will be moderating more and asking people to step up and step back. Please ask yourself why you are talking and if you are listening and listen to be changed. She stated that listening is the best thing we can do at this table so that we actually hear what people are saying – it's important to understand and connect on this piece. She stated that we all come to the table to strengthen the systemic support for artists, and that people have a lot of feelings about art and public art and the way they experience it emotionally.

The group came up with the following words to describe public art:

- *Accessible*
- *Statues*
- *Equity*
- *Driven by community*
- *Emotional*
- *Landmarks*
- *Symbolic*
- *Educational*
- *Placemaking*
- *Placekeeping*
- *Story-holding*
- *Free*
- *Identity*
- *Colorful*
- *Interactive*
- *Playful*
- *Inspirational*

- *Necessary*
- *Historical*
- *Grounding*
- *Confrontational*
- *Representative*
- *Expansive*
- *Dynamic*
- *Thought-provoking*
- *Sensory*
- *Functional*
- *Social*
- *Aesthetic*
- *Comfortable & uncomfortable*
- *In context*
- *Neighborhood*
- *Voiced*
- *Dialogue*
- *Inclusive*
- *Gathering spot*
- *Inscrutable*

Councillor Mallon stated that she was reading through people's comments on our City's public art and pointed out the example of the Irish Famine Statue as one that doesn't feel like it captures the time. She stated that the Queendom mural had hearts and flowers drawn on it. She stated that people expressed the rocks at Riverside Press Park being a wonderful place to sit and was art that brought the community together. She cited Mr. DiMuro as saying that this shouldn't be just permanent visual art, but that celebrations, festivals, and performances are other ways to think about art.

Mr. DiMuro stated that art has the antithesis of everything. He stated he was just at a conference in New York City and they were discussing the Vietnam Wall, and how people were complaining about it because it was "too abstract." We need to ask ourselves how humans engage with art because we know the story, but what about 20 years from now? We need to ask ourselves who keeps stories alive. He used an example of immigration, and what people are running to and from now as opposed to later, and that putting a lens on things from the current day can help people engage.

Ms. Sherman stated that even though there are drawbacks to temporary art, it creates room for risk that isn't there in permanent art. We can use temporary art to start to push people and educate them through the in-person experience with art. Temporal can be valuable.

Councillor Mallon talked about the Greenway and the temporary mesh light-up. Some thought it was weird and others loved it, but now that it's gone, everyone wants to know where it went. She asked the experts if this is where we're headed in the art world, or if there was a balance.

Mr. Weeks stated that there is an increasing appetite for the temporary and we practice that in Cambridge too. The temporary gives artists an outlet for risks and can be nimble both physically and in definition. He stated that artist practice is not just one thing, there's a host of issues that artists are trying to explore and find out about.

Ms. Sherman agreed that not all art is appropriate in a permanent capacity, but that doesn't mean it's not good art.

Mr. Monestime stated that his joy of graffiti alley is the "here today, gone tomorrow" effect. You have to value and enjoy everything that appears there in the moment.

Mr. Weeks stated that we have a permanent collection of art in the City, so artists can respond to an existing collection. People may pass physical artwork and respond to it, but not know what it is or its context. Artists also have these interactions, and it gives them and new audiences a chance to experience art in their own time.

Mr. De Celis stated that it is beneficial to look at history, but also the funding element and whether there's a correlation between temporary and permanent. There is a perception that temporary pieces cost less in the short term, but many pieces that are supposed to be temporary end up staying long term. This speaks to the question of trends of temperance to deal with funding issues.

Mr. DiMuro asked if pieces for "gathering" are built into the budget to withstand 10-15 years of upkeep, and how people engaged with this art over time.

Ms. Sherman commented that MIT builds in a renovation/conservation reserve fund for every project as part of the budget over time, and this could be interesting to think about with more time-based mediums.

Mr. DiMuro spoke about a lesson he learned from the Gardener Museum, which is that performers can humanize the space. He spoke about the sidewalks of Central Square on parking day and the value of animating parking spaces in the Square. People walking down the street when they are no longer there will think about it when it was – the street becomes a greatly made place.

Ms. Johnson commented that the issues of time are interesting to play with, and that art that gets taken away may be invited back. However, she felt that art was not a place to play and can't be taken for granted, like you can't take your home for granted. She spoke about the growing trend in offices where people don't have desks, and if you feel secure in the world, then temporal pieces may be good for you. But for people who feel as though they don't belong, they need to be urgent and take a stand over the pieces of our history that we don't want to lose. Ms. Johnson did not feel playful, because public art is activism and that is beautiful. She stated temporal is the opposite of what we're trying to work for, because we're here and this place is ours, which is not something that can or should be taken for granted.

Ms. Latino asked if activism could be added to the “what is public art?” list. She suggested instead of thinking of art as temporary, to think of it as living. Live performances, musicians, and dance all represent the people who are currently living in the community. Our collection will evolve to be representative of our history and help our story be told. She thought that old statues can be dead, but things like graffiti alley are the most living examples she could think of.

Councillor Mallon pointed out that when considering something like graffiti alley vs. statues that there are a lot of people who consider one of those things art, and the other not.

Mr. Simon asked if he could speak about the Cambridge Arts Coalition.

Councillor Mallon asked him to keep it in the context of public art.

Mr. Simon stated that the way this is curated keeps the Coalition perspective off the table. He stated that he is against using more money to fund public art, because this conversation is not fundamentally an arts issue, it is an issue about what we value as a society and as a City, which is

messed up. Developers and corporate landlords have the de facto right to control buildings, demographics, and they decide who gets to live here and who doesn't. He expressed frustration with the fact that arts spaces are disappearing and so are cheap housing and cheap eateries, and that there is a difference between arts infrastructure and the arts community. We need to ask who is benefitting from the changes that we're making, as it's not always beneficial to ask how we protect art, because not everyone makes a lot of money. He stated the discussion should take into account the larger problem of not just the art itself but who has been contributing to art. There's no way we can protect people without recognizing that there's an enemy which is corporate landlords and developers. He stated that John DiGiovanni stated that people don't have a right to live in their community, and longevity doesn't matter. He asked what contributions to the community actually do matter. He stated that people are lining the pockets of developers.

Ms. Johnson asked Mr. Simon the role he thought that art-making and the presence of art could play or does play in activism. She asked in what ways can the production of art making and art as activism move us towards something better.

Mr. Simon stated that he is concerned that the status quo is morally bankrupt, and that if we just do these art things without addressing the larger issue, than beautifying the City without protecting people only expedites displacement. When property values go up, people won't be able to stay, and people in a precarious situation will only be moved out faster. There can be an intent of activism and social justice behind art, but we need to look at the big picture of how Cambridge is changing and growing. Mr. Simon stated that he does not feel like he lives in a community, but that he lives in a luxury hotel with open-air hallways. He stated that art could have a role in transforming the City in a positive way, but he doesn't see that happening without recognizing larger trends.

Councillor Mallon thanked Mr. Simon for giving a name to these problems and expressed that everyone is grappling with them in their own ways, and that everyone knows someone who has been displaced from the City and is dealing with that in their own way. She asked how we can use this group to bring that fact to the forefront and how we use public art to talk about what's going on in the community. She mentioned a moment in the first Task Force meeting when Ms. Gallop was talking about art as a means of talking about displacement and asked if others had thoughts.

Mr. De Celis asked Mr. Simon to educate the group more about the EMF building and asked about the connections, activism, and outreach the building did in its heyday. He stated that he did not know a lot about EMF and that he would like to learn about this experience and brainstorm.

Mr. Simon responded that the building was primarily a rehearsal space and recording studios for local bands. About 4-5 bands would share each room or rehearsal space and compared the setup to a dance studio. It is completely necessary to have such a space if you are going to be a band, but they're disappearing all over Boston and the private sector can't provide this.

Mr. DiMuro expressed sympathy because he has been doing political work as a dance artist, advocating for dancers to be seen as "whole artists", not just people who perform in tents at festivals. He expressed hope that the meeting on studio space would help us with this problem, because there's a lot that we can do in investing in public art and we should be looking at the percentages. He stated there isn't an either order of making public art or supporting the people who make public art.

Ms. Sherman had an idea about prioritization and was hearing a huge push for supporting the artists who live here, especially when it comes to space. She also thought that we're not just going to stop funding public art, but knowing that protecting people is a challenge, asked how we can use the tool of public art funding to address these challenges. She brought up the idea of public art residencies, using the example of Novartis hosting a venue where once a quarter there are performances. We need to ask ourselves about the priorities across everything. It seems that our meetings are structured around the different tools and channels we can use, so we can look across and say what are our priorities and how can we use these tools.

Ms. D'Ambrosio stated that her and her wife have now moved to Worcester, so she is commuting from Worcester to Cambridge to make art. She stated that people think art is statues, open spaces, and other things that people can see. She stated that surely what she makes is not private art, and that her lowest ticket prices are fractions of what someone would normally pay to go to the theater. She asked if we have new sources of arts money, where is it going to? She asked if we can expand the definition of where public art money goes, or if public art needs to expand into five units of artist housing. We may need to ask ourselves if we need to do things that are not statues in public spaces, but instead recognize that art lives in this space that is both public and private at the same time, so we need to figure out how to negotiate that.

Mr. DiMuro stated that art can't be separated from humans and humanity. Placemaking is new, but we have been doing community engagement in our world for 60-70 years, and this cannot be separated.

Mr. Monestime stated the connection between temporary/permanent art and places like the EMF, Community Art Center, and Dance Complex. Are all these places temporary? He asked if not,

how we make sure that they are permanent. He mentioned Caleb Neelon having a mural on the EMF wall that says “the future of what we used to be.” He asked how we make these institutions more permanent.

Mr. Hope asked who the arbiter of what is considered public art in Cambridge is, who gets to make art, display art, and receive commission for art. He stated that he had to advocate for black and brown folks, particularly women of color who are critical in this space. He stated he is looking around the room and we need to ask ourselves who the gatekeepers are and if we have the courage to help others be represented.

Mr. Pierre referenced the warm-up exercise and said that his favorite public art piece in Cambridge is the Grease Pole Statue in Clement Morgan Park. He mentioned that he didn't know what the piece was until Dennis Benzan told him the story of Dominican festivals being held in the area and the practice of greasing the poles. Years later, it's valuable to know the story when looking at the Clement Morgan Statue. The Port and Columbia Street are often referred to as “that neighborhood” in Cambridge that people don't go near. He stated that to have an activity like the grease pole memorialized is important. Other conversations have been stymied by gatekeepers, but bias isn't always malicious. He stated that he comes from a certain background and studied at a certain school, and now that he's a gatekeeper, he can call on people from his community who he is familiar with.

Ms. Johnson stated that Mr. Simon's statement about not wanting to fund more public art is radical. She agreed that if we get more money, we shouldn't just put it towards art without a goal. We need to ensure we have representation and can't afford to have the City or private entities produce art that isn't accounting for the future we want to see. There is a place for more diversity murals and it's important to think together about the world we'd like to exist, like the practice of saying things until they're true. She stated that she would not support more public art unless we have goals.

Councillor Mallon stated that we have systems of funding in place, but what she's hearing is focused on the gatekeeper aspect. She asked if we need to look at an inventory of our practices, such as workforce development, diversity, and equity, to identify a process that we've all bought into and that we know is inclusive and equitable.

Mr. De Celis stated that he had been listening to Mr. Simon, Mr. Hope, and Ms. Johnson. He stated that there are two sides of the coin and to play devil's advocate, we could stop funding public art, or we could be more expansive about what public art actually is and what it means.

We can turn things inside out and tackle them simultaneously, being more expansive. We can explore funding policies that buy the opportunity for people like Ms. D'Ambrosio not to be commuting an hour and a half from Worcester to make her art.

Ms. Harrigan suggested that we move from thinking about public art to thinking of the public's ability to enjoy art to honor what Mr. Simon said. Rather than thinking of art as just stationary and something to be looked at, we need to protect those that are creating the art. If we do this, we are not only preserving public art, but the public's ability to enjoy it and the artists' ability to create it.

Ms. Latino asked if there was a way to for the City to create a small, accessible fund for community members to purchase tickets to access art. She stated that she "stole" the tiered pricing model from the Bridge Repertory Theater and that the Dance Complex does it as well. She stated that perhaps a new way to enjoy public art is to get more people to be able to access it.

Ms. Sherman brought back the idea from a previous discussion of passes and access.

Ms. Johnson stated the problem of some people not feeling like they have permission to call themselves artists, practice art, or create their own art. Many people who are creators don't feel invited into the club because their work has not been approved by an institution, and this feeling spans race and class lines.

Mr. DiMuro stated that the public should be more informed about what the artistic process is. The demystifying of art will make it more understandable, especially for people who don't feel like they belong. We need to make artists feel like weird or like outsiders.

Ms. D'Ambrosio agreed with many of the concerns here. She expressed concerns that when the government or private individual finances art, it makes them a stakeholder in the outcome. She suggested that the role of Cambridge City government is not to be the arbiter or gatekeeper of art, artists, or tickets, but to promote arts consumption. We need to be less granular in picking which art to support, but instead take a City-wide branding exercise approach that is not so lazar focused and more on the consumer side.

Councillor Mallon asked Ms. Shakespear about her artist clients at Spaceus, and whether or not they had expressed any of these concerns to her.

Ms. Shakespear stated that performance artists are having a hard time because things in the City are changing and locating space is difficult. She stated that when she tells people they're leaving a storefront, they are sad but have also come to expect it as a sign of the status of art in Cambridge: fleeting and temporary. She asked how we get institutions with more teeth. She stated that as an organization, Spaceus thinks that what's great about cities is the ability to facilitate things quickly and the excitement of being fast and modular. However, they need to increasingly balance this with caretaking, because they want to be a place where people come to know and trust in their neighborhood. She stated this discussion has been helpful when grappling with these issues.

Ms. Gallop stated that she was not an artist and had no trouble asserting that, so this may be naïve, but asked whether it was possible to have a framework for art. She stated that spontaneity had tremendous value and can also disrupt spaces and people remember those experiences, even though they may be fleeting. She mentioned a memory of flash mobs and dance troupes in the City Council.

Councillor Mallon asked if we could bring those back.

Ms. Gallop stated that temporary art invites people into a dialogue, while permanent art is about belonging, history, and being a part of something. These things are all important, and we should recognize that in this effort. There are reasons for each of these kinds of art.

Mr. Weeks thought that public art and funding for art were two things that stood side by side but aren't necessarily valued in the same way. He observed what we spend on the process of caring vs. what we spend on individual artists and ideas, the second of which is sorely underfunded. He stated that many of our good ideas are just woefully underfunded, and that he did not disagree that how we think and organize with the community to make art is important, but that we needed more money available for those ideas to percolate and take hold. We need to think about putting money on the table to fund ideas, people, organization, and things we haven't yet thought of that will draw us together. We need to be enormously positive, exciting, productive, and have an unrestricted outcome. The community can decide who is going to create, but the money being received is just too little.

Councillor Mallon stated that she would love to have more grant funding so that artists submitting work actually get money to do this. She mentioned going back to race and equity in our process.

Ms. Peterson stated she thought about Ms. D'Ambrosio's comment about not wanting public art where the City gets veto power and used the example of CCTV vs. Cambridge Municipal Television. She cited CCTV as an example of complete free speech without any City integration, because they can say and air whatever they want. There's always a push/pull between full freedom of expression from a public artist who is funded by the more conservative City side. She stated that maybe she was getting a little into the weeds, but that she would love additional funding as well as a nonprofit with a separate board that's in no way accountable to the government. We need to think about this tool because there are times when you don't want the government involved. She stated we need to take an expansive view about what is public.

Councillor Mallon reminded the group about Ms. Pradhan's presentation of the Cambridge Community Foundation as a fiscal agent. She mentioned that she had the opportunity to talk to Alyson Esposito from the Boston Foundation, who helped the City spend 2 years revamping their processes from an equity lens. Because they're a foundation they can put their money towards more controversial things.

Ms. Johnson stated that as a group, we should prioritize investing in cultural institutions that already exist, and that sometimes in Cambridge she wants to put a moratorium on new ideas. We are a City that prides itself on innovation and being a land of heroes and geniuses, but it breaks her heart to hear Ms. Shakespear's struggles because it shouldn't be this hard in a City with so much wealth. She stated that the government and Arts Council need to look at how they can help existing institutions, because the Art Center often does not get funded specifically because they are in Cambridge, and funders assume they are ok. She asked whether there was a process in which we could figure things out, because we don't need new positions, systems, etc. She expressed her frustration that the Art Center was already competing with the Foundry for a grant, and the building isn't even online yet.

Councillor Mallon stated that she is also in the nonprofit world and that it's hard to get funding when you're not constantly doing something new and cool. She agreed with Ms. Johnson that because her organization is in Cambridge, it's hard to attract donors because people assume we have money pouring in the door.

Mr. DiMuro stated that when he was in New York City, someone asked him "how dare you ask for money when you're in Cambridge."

Councillor Mallon stated that one of the things Ms. Esposito did was take an inventory of arts organizations that exist vs. the number of organizations that are funding them. The Boston area has thousands of arts organizations that are only benefitting from 1-2 donors. We need to do an inventory like this in Cambridge because we know we have a problem, but we need data.

Councillor Mallon stated that there were only 5 minutes left in the meeting and asked if there was anything that she should bring to the Council.

Ms. D'Ambrosio heartily supported the action of supporting existing arts organizations.

Mr. De Celis would like to see the inventory of all existing arts organizations, because many of them are not visible to the naked eye, but we do have an amazing inventory. For example, if you walk by this building, you don't get to see all the beautiful artwork inside.

Ms. Sherman would like to see a framework defining the diversity of art.

Mr. De Celis agreed with Ms. Peterson's recommendation of a nonprofit or independent group to help with the expansive definition that is public art to guarantee independence and creativity of arts production.

Councillor Mallon asked Ms. Peterson to clarify.

Ms. Peterson clarified that we need governance and a separate decision-making process, and that this would benefit from more discussion. It's a kernel of an idea we should continue to talk about.

Ms. Harrigan emphasized protecting the public's ability to enjoy art, because it might help to solve some of the problems we currently have. This would also create and foster a respect for art that might encourage more funding down the line. It seems there's a lot of fighting from the outside in, so we need more public support and to create community.

Mr. DiMuro stated in addition to thinking about equity, diversity, and inclusion, we need to think about artists as underpaid and overworked in a transactional world. We need to think about flattening these hierarchies and learn from other movements that are happening now.

Mr. Simon discussed the idea of killing two birds with one stone to address the bigger economic system that is causing the disappearance of arts and arts spaces. We need to ask who is driving displacement and tax them, using the revenue to build actual affordable housing like the Viennese model, which integrates mixed incomes all into one housing project. He stated that funding from the private sector has failed, and we are losing music venues and cheap eateries. He pointed out that Harvard is the 2nd wealthiest private institution in the world after the Vatican, and that they should pay property taxes. They can do more to benefit society instead of being concerned with their own ability to amass lots of wealth.

Mr. Hope agreed with Ms. Johnson on the cultural preservation of institutions which are a critical part of the fabric. We don't need to think of an either/or between innovation and institutions, but instead as an and. He asked whether there were ways that innovation could help cultural centers. He stated that he could only speak for The Loop Lab, but that they would not exist if there wasn't a need and desire from young adults in The Port who felt a gap. He stated that many people have never been to the Community Art Center, and that there needs to be more awareness, such as an arts awareness month that prompts actions among government and private organizations around specific events.

Ms. Johnson wanted to clarify that there was a lot of innovative things coming out of the Community Art Center.

Ms. Sherman wanted to move from thinking about public art to thinking about public artists.

Mr. Pierre asked when we were going to have enough permanent artworks or statues and what comes next. He asked if we should have more education in the school system. He asked whether this conversation would happen again in 50 years because we all moved on and don't have advocates. He stated that most people in the City don't have time to enjoy art when they're working 2 jobs and taking care of 3 kids, and asked how we could get people like them to enjoy art.

Ms. Latino asked if the City has a definition of public art.

Mr. Weeks replied that there is a general definition, but it changes according to practice and needs to be revisited. In thinking about action items, we need to have a discussion or declaration of public art and what it is.

Mr. DiMuro added considering what we want art to be.

Ms. D'Ambrosio added now that we have new funding, the definition of art will be important because that's what gets the money.

Ms. Peterson stated that there was a definition in the Ordinance, but it was broad.

Councillor Mallon stated that this is an important conversation and she was glad that everyone was here to engage honestly. The next meeting will be on artist live/work space and will be held at Workbar. She asked that everyone reach out after the meeting with thoughts and other things that weren't covered. She thanked everyone for coming.

Meeting adjourned at 7:39PM.

Fifth Meeting of the Mayor's Arts Task Force

Date: February 7th, 2019

Location: Multicultural Arts Center

Subject: Artist Studio and Live/Work Space, Affordability, Zoning

Start: 5:39pm

Adjourned: 7:27pm

In attendance as members of the Arts Task Force were: Alanna Mallon, Chair; Liana Ascolese, Executive Assistant to the Task Force and Aide to Councillor Mallon; Christopher Hope, The Loop Lab; James Pierre, visual artist; Jason Weeks, Executive Director of the Arts Council; Jero Nesson, Founder of ArtSpace; Eryn Johnson, Executive Director of the Community Art Center; Geeta Pradhan, President and CEO of the Cambridge Community Foundation; Ben Simon, musician and Cambridge Arts Coalition; David De Celis, architect and Public Arts Commission; Peter DiMuro, Executive Director of the Dance Complex; Ellen Shakespear, Spaceus; Kristina Latino, Cornerscape; Olivia D'Ambrosio, Director of the Bridge Repertory Theater; Kelly Sherman, visual artist; Afiyah Harrigan, Mayor's Office Liaison.

Councillor Mallon thanked everyone for coming and stated that tonight's meeting would be about affordable studio space and housing for artists. A couple housekeeping announcements: The Loop Lab is here, and students from their workforce development meeting will be taping and recording the work of the Task Force. She also thanked member Olivia D'Ambrosio for hosting at the Multicultural Arts Center and thanked her for donating tickets to a performance of "*Who is Eartha Mae?*" directly after the task force meeting.

Councillor Mallon welcomed Jeff Roberts from the Community Development Department, who is the Zoning and Development Director.

Councillor Mallon reminded the group of the discussion last month and advised that a Policy Order that came out of last month's discussion asking for an inventory of all arts organizations as well as the foundations that support them financially passed at the Council and will help promote community and access among local artists, as well as give us good data to use about support needed going forward. She will keep the Task Force posted.

Councillor Mallon stated that there will be two presentations tonight. Mr. Roberts from CDD will be giving us a “Zoning 101” presentation, regarding how zoning is related to arts, a possible update to the Ordinance, and strategies to include arts in our zoning to make sure artists exist and are represented. Mr. Roberts will speak about how zoning is a tool to incentivize but not guarantee arts-related uses, as well as about the possibility to amend the table of uses, ease permitting, and speak about the potential for an Arts Overlay District in Central Square. Mr. Roberts will walk us through the CDD response to Councillor Mallon’s policy order asking for this zoning overlay.

Task Force member, Jero Nesson who founded ArtSpace will also be presenting about creating affordable artist space and cooperatives and give us tools on how artists can come together to create spaces if the City or an arts-related foundation was gifted land or space.

Councillor Mallon also described a report by the City of Portland, OR. She said that it was a comprehensive overview of actions that could be taken to increase arts spaces. Part of the reason for the Task Force was around the closing of the EMF building, where 200 musicians were displaced. Musicians are examples of artists that need specific space. They cannot work from home and need a place where they’re renting a space to perform a craft. If an artist is living in an unaffordable City as far as housing, and unaffordable as well as artist space, it’s a “double whammy”, and can cause artist displacement. She cited that task force member Ms. Olivia D’Ambrosio traveled from Worcester every day to practice her art and this is not sustainable. We need to be in a much stronger space.

Councillor Mallon introduced Mr. Roberts.

Mr. Roberts stated that he had been with the City for 15 years working on zoning, which he described as both an art and a science. He stated that it’s about being able to think creatively about the City’s plans and how they can integrate into a document that serves as a regulatory path for the future. Zoning is very technical, and everyone is at different levels. He will try to talk about the underlying principles and how it works, how it is a foundational tool, and the planning challenges the City deals with and how zoning can help.

Mr. Roberts stated that he wants to hear from the people around the table, because he often relies on Jason and Lillian (from the Arts Council) when he needs help or advice on the arts but doesn’t always get the opportunity to speak directly with the arts community. Mr. Roberts stated that he brought some zoning maps, because zoning is very geographic and

based on an understanding of the City and how we break it down into different parts. He stated that there are different requirements in each of our districts, and the document gives a sense of how we chart patterns of development in the City.

Mr. Roberts explained that zoning regulates land use, and it's the way in which we regulate what people are allowed to do with their land, whether it's homes, offices, junkyards, retail stores, or arts studios. These uses are embedded into the Zoning Ordinance, which breaks the City apart into districts and zones. He stated that in each one there's a set of regulations applied uniformly such as: what kind of use, how big, how tall, the floor area, and the intensity of uses which varies from different districts, which he defined as density. He also stated that zoning gives a basic sense of what the scale and use of a project can be, and also imposes development standards such as setback, open space, parking, bicycle parking, sustainability, and inclusionary zoning provisions. The important thing about zoning is that it doesn't regulate people, who owns a property, who space is leased to, commerce, type of business activities, and doesn't infringe on other laws or codes.

Mr. Roberts stated that you can use zoning to set up a framework, but property owners are the ones who choose what they want to do. A good question to ask is "are your zoning incentives encouraging property owners to make the choices that you want?"

Mr. Roberts stated that in the context of arts uses, CDD prepared a report. He educated the group about zoning impediments, such as things that may intentionally or unintentionally create roadblocks for all kinds of uses that we're interested in promoting. He stated that he was interested in hearing more about arts-related uses and asked the group to be more specific about what they were talking about. He asked if the group wanted these uses to be broadly or narrowly defined. He stated that Somerville created a designation of arts-related uses that include lots of different things like graphic design and are almost tech-based. He asked the group what they needed in Cambridge.

He explained that there are many impediments to zoning. When you look at our Zoning Ordinance, it's fairly permissive when it comes to artist studios, and it's one of the few non-residential uses that can be found in some residential districts. The Ordinance is permissive of live/work space, and you can have a customary home occupation as long as you're meeting the requirements of home occupation, you can establish one easily.

Mr. Roberts stated that sometimes there are unintended consequences of zoning, and he would like feedback on this. He asked the group if anyone has tried to do something where Inspectional Services put up a roadblock, or if they had zoning issues they had run into. He restated that unintended consequences are common, and that you have to be careful creating new definitions or categories of use, because once you define something you might be over-regulating it. If things are working fairly well and you're not careful, you might get into trouble creating new things.

Mr. Roberts spoke about zoning incentives in relation to the CDD memo. He explained that there was a little ju-jitsu to it because all zoning does is regulate space, and incentives are the negative space, creating requirements that don't apply. Only doing this doesn't work, because if economic incentives aren't there, property owners still won't do what you want, and will lean toward the more economically advantageous option. He gave an example of the limitations on floor area (FAR) on a particular lot – by exempting certain uses such as retail or affordable housing, it can provide an economic incentive to say that this space “doesn't count”, and a property owner can have more floor area for other things that generate more value.

Mr. Roberts stated that in Central Square, the City has a zoning overlay which is two-tiered. There's base zoning, which says what you can do “as of right”, or without special permission, such as a height limit of 55 feet. He explained that a special permit can raise the height limit to 80 feet, and in exchange for that, the planning board reviews different criteria to see if a developer meets it. These criteria are important and what they are will influence what we want in exchange for extra height or other development bonuses. The review process allows a chance for residents to weigh in, and stakeholders can say what they want or what they are concerned about.

Councillor Mallon asked if we could revisit the two-tiered process, and if there was a way to revisit the way it's currently worded to explicitly value arts and culture to tell developers that we're trying to move that forward and make it stronger in the language. She stated that the concern right now is that Central Square is changing, and it may change in a negative way unless we are intentional. She wondered if there's a way to express this vision or a tool that we can use.

Mr. Roberts responded absolutely. He stated that Central Square is already an area of special planning concern, which means that at some point in the past we have identified this area as special, and we are going to establish real goals and objectives. The two-tiered approach is a mechanism resulting from a process that took place in 1987 that was put into

place. The values of historic preservation, active uses, and pedestrian friendliness all got incorporated into the Zoning Ordinance. There are specific provisions, but if you want to build to a full potential, you have to come to the Planning Board and demonstrate that you meet the aforementioned goals. There was another planning study completed in 2013, which was both interesting and contentious. The recommendations were controversial at the time and still are today. The zoning emerged from the Central Square Business Association members to try and amend some zoning, and was adopted in 2017, but it wasn't comprehensive in its goals and objectives. Identifying arts and culture as a key driving force in Central was part of the process, and it's not unreasonable to ask how this can be built into the Central Square overlay.

Councillor Mallon said that this would give the Planning Board more grounds to really address the uses we want.

Mr. Weeks asked if incentives have teeth or if they are just desires.

Mr. Roberts answered that you have to be creative with zoning, and that incentives actually need to be incentives. On the other hand, you can be too heavy handed and discourage redevelopment entirely. He stated that he wanted to remind himself to say this because in Cambridge it's the primary thing. He explained that one of the principles of zoning is the idea of "nonconformity." This means that when a building was put in place, it may have been within the rules at the time and can continue to be maintained in perpetuity even if zoning changes at some point in the future. Zoning only kicks in when there's a significant change to the use of a building, or something is rebuilt, and property owners always have a choice to maintain what they have as existing. This is important because our Ordinance was adopted in 1924 and is close to 100 years old. Mr. Roberts explained that in 1924, most of the land in Cambridge was already developed, and aside from bits and pieces, everything was done even though a lot had been changed and redeveloped. Many of the buildings and uses in Cambridge are still nonconforming, because there was no zoning when they were built, so that's a key issue with zoning in Cambridge: you're never starting from scratch. Mr. Roberts asked everyone to think about what the current use of something is and if zoning is encouraging or discouraging change. He stated that economic forces are always playing into these complications as well, and you can always try to put incentives in place, but they don't always work the way we want.

Mr. Weeks asked if we had an arts-aware or arts-friendly Planning Board.

Mr. Roberts said it was hard to say, but we had a thoughtful Planning Board that takes their role very seriously. He explained that part of their role is to understand the Ordinance. If a guideline says arts need to be considered they will, the Ordinance may just need to be specific and clear, and the Planning Board will take that seriously.

Mr. Weeks replied that if the work of this committee can better inform the Planning Board that would be great.

Mr. Roberts said that it depended on what level you're talking about. Studio spaces or spaces where you're making a building into a usable arts space aren't the types of projects that come to the Planning Board. Their job is to read zoning petitions and get involved when there is a significant redevelopment. He explained that the Planning Board had been positive about the arts center at Lesley and were talking about the space last Tuesday and how open and engaging it is. He explained that they are most interested in arts-related and institutional uses and how they engage with the general public. They are very supportive of arts to the extent that they've been reviewing arts-related proposals.

Councillor Mallon stated that the Planning Board seemed to be agnostic in one direction or another. If they're looking at zoning incentives, something needs to be included in the Ordinance to encourage them to ensure arts related uses are involved in the project.

Ms. Johnson asked how zoning is influenced by diversity, equity, inclusion, and related overarching goals. She asked what the values are. She also asked Mr. Roberts to talk about how the arts overlay could support us in our diversity goals, or how it could work against that. She stated that it's common knowledge that gentrification and arts are mixed, and even if it's unintentional there could be possible pitfalls with the arts overlay.

Mr. Roberts replied that stepping way back, zoning has a very troubled history when it comes to inclusion, because the nature of zoning is dividing and regulating, which intentionally or unintentionally – and there are persuasive arguments for intentionally – can promote inequity. For example, zoning that restricts areas to single family homes on one acre lots is a recent example of restrictive zoning resulting in outcomes that are inequitable. In Cambridge, we try to do zoning in a way that's positive, but you always have to be mindful that when you're restricting, you're going to constrain a resource in a City and let

the economy do the rest, which often lets the wealthy and those with access have more access to scarce resources.

Mr. Roberts stated that zoning doesn't make more land – we have the land that we have and the building stock that we have. If there's growth, you can see how growth is driven by strong economic forces, but if you don't have any growth than the space that's available becomes even more precious and in-demand that results in rising prices and more difficulty of access. This is the big picture of how zoning affects inclusion. He stated that Cambridge has policies like inclusionary zoning, which is something more communities have been embracing, but it's a little bit of a specialized use of zoning with questions about how and where it is appropriate for Cities to use this type of regulatory power to say you can do X, but the City has to receive Y benefit. He stated this is a touchy area but something we're always thinking about and working on. We need to be careful that we get the result that we want and need to do things in a way that's legal.

Mr. Roberts made a final point about the arts overlay, which is that he is personally averse to using the word overlay. Overlay means that you are modifying your base zoning but talking about an “overlay” only is too abstract. You should be talking about what you want to do, whether it's being more restrictive or more permissive, or offering incentives. When you figure out what you want to see, you can figure out if they are economically and legally feasible and ask what the right zoning tool is to try to accomplish that. Sometimes an overlay isn't the best approach.

Ms. Johnson asked if there was arts or equity-oriented zoning in other cities.

Mr. Roberts replied that in the memo related to arts, CDD focused on Massachusetts because different states have different zoning laws. Lowell has an artist overlay district and it was hard to figure out how theirs was more permissive than Cambridge's, because it actually says that some projects require a special permit whereas in Cambridge we don't. One of the benefits of Lowell is that they created an arts overlay to produce more arts-related housing, which may not have as much to do with zoning as it does the City's values. Lowell invested in the community and people were attracted to making this investment as well, and they can partner with the city to do that. Somerville was the other example used because of their zoning in Union Square, which is basically the equivalent of Kendall in that it's a major redevelopment. Somerville incorporated a 5% allocation of overall development to the arts as part of their zoning master plan. They grabbed different categories of arts-related use and said that this board set of uses all qualifies.

Mr. Weeks as if this kicks in for mixed use redevelopment.

Mr. Roberts replied yes, this plan is a large-scale master redevelopment.

Mr. De Celis highlighted the examples from Portland and Seattle in that they have implications for people up and down the economic scale. We want to expand the definition of the arts and be more inclusive to make sure that they stay with us. He wanted to unpack the fact that zoning doesn't regulate commerce because he thought it did. He stated that not everyone has the budget for a 2 million square foot development, and that substantial alteration triggers can stop a lot of small nonprofits from developing into galleries. Second, incentives can only do so much. Mr. De Celis agreed with this statement but the readings that were provided tonight really thought outside the box and beyond traditional textbook zoning. We also need to not underestimate the altruism and philanthropy in Cambridge, and be open to things such as certifying buildings, people, and places as create spaces, which is a really great example of being expansive and blurring boundaries.

Mr. DiMuro stated that he was thinking about what an overlay is, like fondant on a cake. He asked if this is more of a lens that we're getting people to see through. He stated that it's not just about arts but artists who need to be included in the conversation. Zoning is one thing, licensing and permitting is another. He gave the example of the Dance Complex paying \$1 for their entertainment license because they're an "exhibition hall" not a "theater" because of some rule in 1928. This is an example of how one thing like the historical nature of a building affects another, and how if the City isn't handholding and making the connections, they aren't being made.

Mr. Roberts stated that licensing is a separate issue because of different laws and regulations, and that we operate in a constellation of laws and systems, and what Mr. DiMuro said was important, that we can't just look at one thing, we need to look at how everything works together from our end. From a property owner's perspective, it's about how it all comes together on a particular site. Mr. Roberts stated that he is interested to see if there have been zoning issues in relation to licensing because in order to get licensed, you need to establish that your use is allowed by zoning.

Mr. DiMuro stated that the Dance Complex is fine as they are now, but they want to be more of an artist-citizen organization, so things may grow and change. Artists shouldn't be behind closed doors and need to find ways to work together.

Mr. Roberts stated that this is a key issue more presently and is what happens when you have uses and activities in buildings that evolve to incorporate different types of functions and activities. Economic development and retailers are concerned about this too, because we need to look at the table of uses, which lays out how we categorize all these different uses. There are things we need to make clear and resolve issues such as retailers that want to hold classes – are they a school or a retailer? He stated that every situation is unique, but zoning is a uniform thing that you have to apply, and we try to work where we can to help people.

Ms. Pradhan stated that we need to lead with vision and see what it will take to make that vision possible. She asked what zoning changes we would need to make. She stated that we have one cultural district and need to make sure everyone is behind it, such as the Planning Board, Council, City administration, and residents. She is worried that we get caught up in technicalities like zoning and permitting, and we need to remind ourselves that vision is front and center. When we look at incentives, it's a small portion of big development that will go towards our vision, and we need to make it bigger and more prominent.

Mr. Roberts stated that he couldn't agree more, and that we need to ask what outcome we want, what we're trying to achieve, and what problem we're trying to solve. We need to answer this question before we know if zoning will be a tool to use.

Mr. Monestime stated that he wanted to piggyback and that it sounds like there's something missing from the Central Square zoning, such as an art piece component. He asked whether there were other priorities and pointed to what Somerville was trying to include. He asked if we could modify some of the current zoning to include arts.

Mr. Roberts stated that there is a lot to modify in the original Central Square overlay. He stated that the petition was a community-led initiative focused mostly on housing and promoting more housing growth to add activity and to the number of people in the square. Arts and culture are not included in the petition but could've been and could still be.

Councillor Mallon stated that housing brings people into the Square, but we need to ask who the people are. In thinking about Mass and Main, a massive number of units are market rate – they are not artists or people who can afford to live there. We need to have intention around these units and see them through a diversity and equity lens, which should be explored here as this conversation moves forward.

Ms. Sherman stated that she found the Somerville descriptions are confusing, and if there was a need for all of them. She asked if they did something that's different than what's already allowed.

Mr. Roberts replied that as far as retail, this is a project we are thinking about. The question is how we identify what counts as a different use, and this is a delicate balance, because it can be really specific and individual line items can add up to hundreds of uses. Other communities are broader, and a whole range of different uses or activities can fit all into one category. He stated that Cambridge is in a funny place because our use table is dated and originates from 1961 and has only changed a little bit. If you define things more narrowly it means that you have to make more decisions when you're trying to regulate what's allowed and what's not, or what's incentivized and what's not. No matter how you classify, you'll always have something that you're not sure where it goes.

Ms. Sherman asked how we can bridge uses that fall on a line.

Mr. Roberts replied that what she's asking is why Somerville created so many things under their "arts and creative enterprise" category. He advised of the want to be broad because you don't know what kind of activity is in a certain space, and you need to leave room to be inclusive of things you haven't thought of before. The upside is that a creative use is still allowed. The unintended consequence is having a use you don't like. He stated that you do need to have some specificity in advance based on land use and can't just make arbitrary judgements uses you like or don't.

Councillor Mallon thanked Mr. Roberts for his presentation and for the robust conversation about zoning, which can be difficult to understand.

Councillor Mallon stated that in the Lowell example, one thing that jumped out was that maybe it was just the municipality saying that arts and culture is a focus and a value which was powerful. It's something that we as a City can do in a more formalized way in talking about leading with vision. She stated that in terms of Central Square, it is an area of special planning concern, and it's a place to be bold and do innovative things. She suggested that we write our vision into the overlay around arts and culture so that developers, the Planning Board, and planners know what we want to see in Central Square.

Councillor Mallon stated that Mr. Nesson will now be giving a presentation about his long history of creating cooperative arts spaces in repurposed buildings in Massachusetts.

(Note: the slides were photos shown on a slide projector, not a powerpoint presentation and are unable to be included in this report)

Mr. Nesson began his presentation by stating that studio space is the number one issue facing visual artists in almost every urban area, and it is a major issue for performing artists as well. He stated that providing affordable studio and live/work space is an economic issue, and that it helps to have a friendly zoning and building code, but nothing can happen without developers doing something significant. He stated that the slides he's showing reflect several projects where the developers were the artists themselves or an arts or nonprofit organization. There were no fees or public funding, and projects were financed through private banks because the projects were looked at as conventional real estate deals that made sense. He stated that all projects were fully occupied and committed before a project was ever undertaken and that in the 20-30 years that they have existed, there has never been a vacancy.

Mr. Nesson asked how we can take this vision and bring it to Cambridge. We cannot possibly buy buildings, and for-profit developers do not provide these spaces. He stated that the City of Cambridge could rehab old buildings on City-owned property where there are no land costs. He stated that the process is cookie-cutter, but individual stories are fascinating.

Mr. Nesson asked if everyone was familiar with the Fort Point neighborhood, where there are millions of square feet of mill space. This particular building was originally a wool storage area, and that he was working with the Fort Point board to maintain a community of 370 artists after they were repeatedly displaced from other areas. Unfortunately, all of the buildings in Fort Point were owned by Boston Wharf Company, and even years of

negotiations left them unwilling to sell. This one particular building was not owned by them, and a notice was put out to artists of Fort Point after an architectural and financial analysis showed that the building was viable for live/work space. Each artist put down \$500 for a nonrefundable deposit, and even though the building was risky, it was marketable. The project grew into a limited equity artist live/work co-op where if you wanted to resell your unit, you're limited to the consumer price index of 1-2% per year and could only sell to another artist.

Mr. Nesson described the building as open mill space, decent windows, and somewhat functioning steam heating, sprinklers, and elevators.

Mr. Nesson stated that artist participants met every week to make decisions about the project and went to various banks in the Boston area before finding a bank that would finance the project. He described their special permit process and that they needed one for residential use in an industrial area. They lost their initial appeal but won again a short time later. The math worked out to \$20 per square foot and \$5 per square foot for equity and worked out to a total rent of \$5 per square foot per year. He stated that the artists who took part in the project were courageous and risk takers but pulled it off. He stated that the renovation of the space was bare bones and minimal, with minimal outlets and kitchen amenities. The average studio was large, however, at 1,500 square feet.

Mr. Nesson showed slides of Brickbottom Gallery, which was an old A&P warehouse on McGrath Highway in Somerville. It was abandoned and seemed to work from a financial and architectural standpoint. Within a few weeks, 100 artists put down a \$500 deposit and became the developers. He stated that the Mayor of Somerville was fully supportive and facilitated the zoning change, which allowed residential use in an industrial area. The same bank the financed Fort Point financed this project as well, and the idea was to create an artist cooperative. In this project the top floor was sold as market rate condos and the proceeds were used to finance the co-op.

Mr. Nesson showed a photo of an "extravagant studio of a large-scale sculptor." He stated that the condition of the studio was bare bones: a cheap, simple kitchen with unfinished walls. Artists could leave it that way or spend money over time. The rent was \$45-\$50 per square foot. He stated that the architect peeled back the roof of half of a one-story connector to provide outdoor space.

Mr. Nesson showed a surplus school in Newton that a group of artists proposed to develop as artist live/work space in a residential neighborhood. They were competing with market developers and the neighbors supported their proposal.

Mr. Nesson showed the group a two-story studio in the space. A husband and wife artist team had spaces on two separate levels. He also showed the group a picture of an old gym and explained that the artist who occupied that space did all the interior construction by herself.

Mr. Nesson described Harry the Greek's building in the South End at the corner of Washington & East Berkley, a building owned by Boston Redevelopment. The artists were competing for the building against the Harry the Greek store owner who was very politically connected. The BRA designated both Harry and the artists as developers and reached an agreement in which the artists got the top two floors, a storefront on the first floor, and an arts co-op existed within the condominium.

Mr. Nesson also described spaces that were for studios only, such as the Lawrence School in Wellesley. Artists were contacted by the abutters when the building became surplus because they didn't want the use to be a community college. The building ended up providing studio space for 35-40 artists, and very little building was involved because the building was so usable as-is. He explained that the artists had a 10-year lease until the town took the building back. He stated that the artists wanted to stay together but Newton and Wellesley were unaffordable but ended up finding a space in Framingham.

Mr. Nesson showed pictures of the Old Concord High School, where a group of artists petitioned the town to occupy on an interim basis, but subsequently worked out a long-term arrangement. There were about 45 artists in this space and they had small studios, large teaching facilities, a clay area, a large theater, and a dance studio. He explained that after some years, Carlisle asked if they wanted an additional surplus school, which they converted to studio space as well.

Mr. Nesson described the Artspace in Maynard, which was made up of an old middle school of 3 interconnected buildings. The school moved to a new facility and artists took over the next day. The space was 55,000 square feet and not as large as Brickbottom or the space at Fort Point. There was a large gallery downstairs.

Mr. Nesson showed one last photo of an installation in the 1980s reflecting all of the artist buildings and spaces in Boston that no longer housed artists. He explained that these spaces could be applicable in Cambridge, because we have publicly owned spaces and parcels with large and small spaces, spaces over publicly owned garages, or spaces on vacant lots.

Ms. Sherman stated that she was amazed at Mr. Nesson's involvement with these projects, and that they stand out because they're private studio spaces not for public engagement or studios, except for select classrooms.

Mr. Nesson replied that the key to the project is keeping it simple and leaving it to just artist studio space. Many projects want to be all things to all people, and they get complicated and slow down. He stated that this is an important rule to live by.

Ms. Sherman asked if there was pushback from cities who came to the artists arguing that there wasn't a community engagement component of these projects. She expressed her surprise that cities were ok with private spaces.

Mr. Nesson replied that in most places, the artists were the best choice for development. In Wellesley, neighbors didn't want a community college next to them. In Carlisle, the School Committee didn't want strangers and traffic. Both cities saw artists as a low density and low impact use.

Ms. Latino asked which of these projects was the most recent.

Mr. Nesson replied that the last project completed was in 2001.

Ms. Latino asked if there were others in the area since then.

Mr. Nesson replied no, but referenced Lowell, and said that Western Avenue studios had a lot of support from the City to convert mill space to artist use. Large open mill space was converted to semi-private space. He explained that the walls only go up 8 feet, so sound is an issue. The developer started marketing live/work space in these projects.

Ms. Latino stated that she grew up in Worcester and thought the old courthouse was being developed into live/work space.

Mr. Nesson replied that every building owner in Worcester had inflated their value during that time, and projects there didn't seem to work back then.

Ms. Johnson asked what strategies Mr. Nesson would recommend to account for the race and cultural diversity of artists who were using these spaces.

Mr. Nesson replied that there were very few minority participants in these projects, and that when these projects were being done, most commitments were for local artists. He explained that there was an attempted project in Mission Hill and Roxbury on City-owned land, which would have been a diverse project, but it wasn't feasible architecturally.

Ms. Pradhan stated that she was curious that most of the projects were financed as regular real estate deals, but the equity was minimal. She asked where the equity came from.

Mr. Nesson replied through a bank loan.

Mr. De Celis asked if there was a partnership through the abandoned buildings that were public.

Ms. Pradhan stated that in her experience, banks were pretty tough on making sure that deals were financially solid, and that artist incomes are not predictable. She stated that she was impressed that these deals were able to be financed and asked if there were particular banks that were friendly, because conventional financing is tough.

Mr. Nesson stated that 60% of the artists at Brickbottom were low-income and that some needed co-signers for their spaces, or to bring in tax returns to see how much space they could afford. He stated that it's easier to organize artists around a real project and not an idea, and that finding artists to fill these spaces was easy.

Ms. Sherman asked if there was a template or key ingredients to make this work well. She highlighted the bare bones and simple design, the properties that were gifted to artists from municipalities, hiring architects who were understanding and could work with groups, and finding friendly banks. She asked about Mr. Nesson's role in connecting these dots.

Mr. Nesson replied that the artists were the developers and that he focused on zoning and finance. He clarified that others oversaw the construction.

Ms. Sherman stated that she was trying to recreate this effort and asked what it really took as far as leadership and organization.

Mr. Nesson replied that it takes moving forward even when things don't go the way they were planned when opportunities come up.

Mr. Weeks stated that he was interested in the requirement of only being able to sell to artists and used the example of 75 Richdale. He asked how to control for that.

Ms. Pradhan responded with a deed restriction, like in affordable housing.

Mr. Nesson responded that if you're involved with buying City-owned property, the City ensures that it's restricted.

Mr. DiMuro commented that most artist lofts are for visual artists, but he was thinking of performing artists. He stated that in Philadelphia there was an old garage they wanted to

make into a European hostel-type space, where dance companies could come visit and they wouldn't have to pay high prices for hotels. He explained there were other kinds of models where space is low maintenance but accessible, and that local artists could stay long-term, but visiting artists could access it.

Councillor Mallon asked Mr. Nesson if he was in charge of working with municipalities to coordinate spot-zoning through regulatory requirements.

Mr. Nesson replied that he was involved with working with the Mayor to change zoning from industrial to residential as part of a special permit, so that would be spot zoning.

Mr. Roberts said that in 2001 the Citywide rezoning took into account the conversion of nonresidential buildings into residential and takes all variances and put them into a Planning Board Special Permit to make it simpler. Those cases can be controversial. He gave examples like conversions of church buildings in neighborhoods and stated that some neighbors are nervous about bringing in new residents.

Mr. Nesson stated that Boston didn't mind changing zoning, but it didn't want to restrict it to residences. He stated that at Fort Point they were opposed to a blanket allowance of residential use because artists that were living and working would be displaced by condos.

Councillor Mallon asked if the residences were owned.

Mr. Nesson responded that live/work space was owned whereas studio space was rented.

Councillor Mallon stated that she was thinking of the School Department building on Thorndike Street because it's about to be empty. The Archdiocese is interested in renting the space but not selling because they need the revenue. She stated that the building is ancient but a good spot and wanted to make sure that we could talk about a rental situation.

Mr. Weeks stated that he also wondered about the former Graham and Parks school and the Longfellow School across from the annex, because they are perfectly positioned to do the type of thing that Jero is saying.

Mr. Nesson responded that he is interested in new construction because it's just as hard to do a big project as it is a small one, so the struggle should be for something significant, and that owning means you're there forever.

Councillor Mallon thanked everyone for their time tonight and adjourned the meeting at 7:27pm.

Mayor's Arts Task Force Meeting #6***Licensing and Permitting****Date: March 13th, 2019**Location: Cambridge Community Foundation**Meeting began at 5:43pm*

Members of the Task Force in attendance: Alanna Mallon, Chair; Liana Ascolese, Aide to Councillor Mallon and Executive Assistant to the Task Force; Afiyah Harrigan, Mayor's Office Liaison; Jason Weeks, Executive Director of the Cambridge Arts Council; Geeta Pradhan, President and CEO of the Cambridge Community Foundation; Katherine Shozawa, Lesley University; Khalil Mogassabi, Development Director and Chief Planner, Community Development Department; Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager, Peter DiMuro, Executive Director of the Dance Complex, Kristina Latino, CEO of Cornerscape; Kelly Sherman, visual artist and consultant; Michael Monestime, Executive Director of the Central Square Business Association; David De Celis, Public Arts Commission; Sarah Gallop, Government Relations at MIT; Ben Simon, musician and member of the Cambridge Arts Coalition.

In attendance as guest speakers were Nicole Murati-Ferrer, Chair of the License Commission and Pardis Saffari, Senior Economic Development Manager

Councillor Mallon welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming. Tonight's topic is on licensing and permitting and introduced Nicole Murati-Ferrer, the Chair of the License Commission, and Pardis Saffari, the Senior Economic Development Manager from the Economic Development Department. She stated that almost everyone on the Task Force had referenced the licensing and permitting process as a barrier to arts in her initial phone calls with members to set the agenda of the task force. Artists were asking for clarity and help.

Councillor Mallon wanted to do a quick recap of what the Task Force has accomplished so far. We had a previous meeting on funding where we discussed the 1% for arts ordinance not being capped at \$100,000 but instead allocated at the full 1% of the hard construction costs. She stated that Lisa Peterson had a big announcement about this.

Ms. Peterson stated that there was a meeting with the City Council and School Committee regarding the Tobin and Vassal Lane school construction, which is estimated at a total cost of \$250 million with construction costs at \$200 million. She announced that the City Manager has committed to a full 1% for arts in this project, bringing the total for art to almost \$2 million. She stated that in the ordinance conversation there was discussion of an arts fund, so we are not envisioning that the whole \$2 million be site-specific to art at the school, but that some of the money would go into an established fund to be distributed as arts-grants for projects in other areas of the City as well.

Councillor Mallon thanked Ms. Peterson for her commitment and announcement. She stated that the City Manager would be looking to the Arts Task Force for guidelines on what to do with the full 1% of the incoming Tobin funding. She informed the Task Force that there would be updates coming shortly regarding allocations from the hotel/motel taxes, and that when we get to the

conversation about the Cultural District, we will be talking about how the City may help support that in a bigger way.

Councillor Mallon stated that last month we talked about zoning in the Cultural District, and that she and Liana were putting together some definitions and zoning language to incorporate into the Cultural District that we'll be more prepared to talk about at the next meeting. It's important to get this to the Council so that we're getting work done and not waiting until the end for recommendations.

Councillor Mallon welcomed Nicole and Pardis again and went over some housekeeping items and meeting procedures including Malia's Rules to familiarize our guests with them.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer introduced herself as Chair of the License Commission and stated that they issue different types of licenses related to one-day and annual entertainment for businesses under Chapter 138 (alcohol) and Chapter 140 (restaurants and hotels).

Ms. Saffari introduced herself as the Senior Economic Development Manager who helps entrepreneurs and small business owners either get started, grow, come to, or stay in Cambridge. Her department offers workshops as well as educational and technical assistance.

Councillor Mallon informed the task force that she had an initial meeting with Ms. Murati-Ferrer to talk about the needs of artists and arts organizations in Cambridge, and there were a few things that came out of that. There is no one stop shop to encompass artists and everything they need from the Licensing Department, Inspectional Services Department, Arts Council, and more. Other municipalities have this, but in Cambridge it's hard to navigate especially if you're new to the system or not used to it. She asked Ms. Latino to kick us off to talk about whether permitting could be more nimble for the arts, particularly for music.

Ms. Latino stated that her organization hosts multidisciplinary, intimate pop-up music events, usually featuring acoustic musicians in Cambridge, Somerville, Boston, and Greater Boston, so she has had a taste of different permitting experiences. She stated that her #1 challenge is getting different answers from different people across departments about what is needed for events. She stated that if local creative people feel that if what you're doing is small enough, it's easier to fly under the radar that seek out the appropriate license, which creates a snowball affect. Artists who try to do the right thing and get a license sometimes find that they have bitten off more than they can chew when it comes to a simple event with 25 people and a guitar. She stated that we should democratize hosting small, low volume, intimate events and make the process clear for people who only want to host occasional events. These events are better for the City, but organizers have been frustrated when asking about events and getting conflicting answers. There's a level of confusion even if you've been doing it for awhile and you never quite know what you're going to encounter when putting on an event.

Councillor Mallon stated that many events want to have small music portions but don't want to deal with licensing, so they just don't have music and this is a missed opportunity. She asked if anyone else had concerns.

Mr. DiMuro stated that there are lots of shifts in the process. For example, the Dance Complex had a \$1 fee per year and now it's \$1,000, and wondered if he should even be paying \$1,500. He stated that a one size fits all approach doesn't work when it comes to permitting. For the Dance Complex, they are a non-profit, maker community with a small 100 seat theater that they try to cap at 85 people so that the space isn't uncomfortable. He would like to see encouragement of the maker community, and that people should be encouraged to see dance through low costs.

Ms. Latino stated that one additional challenge is that artists can get around the licensing process by hosting events in a private space and not charging for tickets. Many artists do this to create rich, creative community because they don't have to pursue licenses and instead operate as donation-based, but this holds them back from getting paid. In order not to get a license, you can't charge for access or publicly advertise, which holds so many careers back. We need to encourage artists to take the leap, but many can't incur additional expenses or the administrative hassle to collect money for sharing their talents.

Mr. De Celis thanked Mr. DiMuro for bringing up his point, and asked if there was a separate licensing category for non-profits. He asked how they are called out, treated differently, and if they are not, could they be treated different. He wanted to discuss distinguishing non-profits as a separate category.

Ms. Murat-Ferrer stated that Ms. Latino was talking about one day entertainment licenses while Mr. DiMuro was talking about annual licenses. She spoke to Kristina's concerns first, saying that she can't speak to other municipalities and their challenges, but generally they are all equally as frustrated with Chapter 140 and the way they have to license under it, and some have even tried to introduce legislation to clean up 140 under the State Legislature. She stated that in terms of one day licenses she doesn't disagree that it can be bureaucratic but that in Cambridge we've done a good job of trying to get rid of that. The online permitting system is a few clicks for the applicant who doesn't have to physically come to the Police Station and bring back paperwork. The board does have to vote at a public meeting which can be a little infuriating because you have to plan that in advance, but she stated that there was an emergency need today where a woman got a last minute license because the commission did everything in their power to hold a same day vote, and she got a license in 35 minutes. She stated the process is not perfect but more City departments are getting on their online viewpoint platform and the process will be easier to centralize.

She moved on to Mr. DiMuro's example, stating that years ago the Dance Complex had asked for a fee waiver but instead the board had granted them at \$1 license fee for one year which ended up carrying over for multiple years. This came out in a recent audit which is why their bill went up significantly. The board had done a comprehensive review of fees so that they all made sense. For example, they used to license whether you had a CD, iPod, or radio which did not make sense, so that was gotten rid of. She stated that they did contemplate doing a nonprofit category but did not go through with it because then nonprofits such as universities would not have to pay fees. She stated that the commission did get a legal opinion stating a nonprofit category was not a good idea for this reason, however they did get rid of many fees which they thought were not tied to specific services or were unnecessary. They also rolled back fees that

were too high, like paying \$500 for poetry, and tied it to the actual costs of permitting and enforcement.

Councillor Mallon asked to revisit the Solicitor's decision, and if there was a way to differentiate between a nonprofit like the Dance Complex and a nonprofit like MIT.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer stated that she would be happy to do that but that it had been discussed as a difficult, slippery slope because there is no legal distinction between a 501c3 such as the Dance Complex and a 501c3 like MIT, so that the City might be creating a category that courts think is discriminatory and capricious.

Mr. DiMuro stated that because of licensing we've gotten into so much more regulation. He stated that in a different era when the Dance Complex was created, so now it's harder to instill those rules in regulations in artists that do want to be "corporate." He asked what we could do as a body to support organizations that fall under this category and the difference between profitable and not profitable organizations.

Councillor Mallon stated that multi-use facilities are subject to more fees, and small organizations have found the process onerous. She asked if there was a way to think about having a multi-use category with a fee cap so that poetry, trivia, videogames, etc. were all covered under one category. She referenced a gallery in Central Square that came to her to talk about this, which made its artists apply for a one day permit every time they wanted to host an event to avoid bureaucracy, which actually just makes more work for the commission. She asked how we show old movies, dance, and make art all in one space to cultivate Cambridge as a place welcoming to arts organizations.

Ms. Sherman was reminded about the last conversation about zoning and referenced how Mr. Roberts stated that we should keep things more open to scenarios that we didn't anticipate. She stated that she looks at the Boston acoustic performers' ordinance as more of a blanket statement that they are open - they start with openness and then figure out which things need to be restricted. She asked what the scenario is that really does trigger a need for having licensing, and whether it was the scale of the event or the institution hosting it.

Mr. DiMuro stated that the categories were written in 1884 when the Dance Complex was built, and that their content is different than what MIT does and is a real thing to look at rather than just a blanket 501c3 category.

Ms. Pradhan stated that the IRS has different accounting rules for small organizations under a \$500,000 operating budget, and understood the slippery slope but was wondering about the possibility of an organization being under or over a certain size having a different set of rules. She stated that there was a precedent because of how people report finances and what accounting they have to do. She stated we should look at this if we want to animate the City with social capital and opportunities for relationship building and connection with the arts.

Ms. Latino asked what the closest thing Cambridge has to Boston's acoustic music ordinance?

Councillor Mallon answered that the City Council just reintroduced an order to bring forth this ordinance here. She stated that Boston has been very successful in enlivening arts and this also helps businesses succeed, because they don't have to apply for a permit every time they want to have an event.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer stated that the response to this order was circulating internally and there may be some legal matters different than Boston. She stated that Cambridge is more dense and zoning is a bigger issue because Cambridge is mostly zoned as residential. She referenced the Sunset Cafe and that they had a fantastic concept for music but that they weren't zoned for it aside from once a month as an accessory use. She stated that she understood zoning is a serious hurdle in Cambridge. She stated that Boston's ordinance had a sunset clause in 2017 but they have removed it. They do not track who takes advantage of the ordinance but they know that some are using it, as it applies to all types of businesses - hardware stores, supermarkets, etc., not just galleries, dance, and restaurants.

Councillor Mallon clarified that a sunset clause is an ordinance that gets put in with an end date and revisited, but that it can be removed if there's no major problem.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer stated that the first draft said effective immediately and ended in December 2017. She stated that in November 2017 Boston removed the clause and the ordinance is now permanent. She discussed that they had talked about petitioning the state for permitting changes but that had never happened, but perhaps it's still in the pipeline.

Councillor Mallon asked whether the ordinance applied to inside or outside businesses, as some people had concerns about sidewalk cafes.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer stated that if Cambridge did something like this it would be based on State law and zoning, and that one thing to consider is the street performer ordinance and perhaps limit the acoustic music ordinance to inside so as not to encroach on street performers.

Mr. Weeks stated that he frequently saw people do outdoor cafes with canned music that encroached on street performers.

Councillor Mallon moved on to a different topic, stating that there was no middle ground in permits between one day and annual. She reference Spaceus, who is in one place for three months and then another for three months. She asked Ms. Saffari to speak to retail strategy and how to activate vacant fronts with the arts with permitting in mind.

Ms. Saffari stated that the Inspectional Services Department (ISD) allows temporary occupancy and use permits, but that organizations need to be cautious, because permits are for the space that they are in, they cannot move across the City without being reissued. She stated this also applies when the manager of a business changes and they need a new license because it's now under a different person, and talked about retail additions to zoning. She stated that this won't change the opportunity to change space requirements, however.

Ms. Latino asked what a temporary occupancy permit covered.

Ms. Saffari answered that in the example of Spaceus, they will have a permit to display or sell art in one space, and then they have to get a new permit for the same activity somewhere else.

Ms. Latnio stated that a big part of the Spaceus mission is that they host events at night and asked whether it was possible to get a temporary use permit to cover that as well. She stated that right now it seemed like that requires a separate one day use permit.

Councillor Mallon stated that when she spoke to the operators of Spaceus they informed her that they had poetry but they close it off to members of the public so that they don't have to get a permit, which is a lost opportunity to have publicity.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer clarified that there was no one day license for poetry, it's only for activities that are amplified such as live theater, disco, light shows, dancing by patrons. She stated that there are no one day permits for a one-off poetry night or trivia, and that the commission just concentrates on activities they think would generate a noise complaint and draw large crowds. They are not licensing things like trivia for one night in a gallery. She clarified that there are two different departments that issue temporary use permits, them and the health department which she cannot speak to. She stated that there were two different permits: one day vs. a chunk of time. She did not have a comparable example to Spaceus but referenced a group of dancers who wanted to do 10 performances over a period of time. She stated that they just submitted one application and that served as their charge for 10 performances. She stated that she had not seen the board consider a 3 month temporary license, and advised the group to stay away from that as much as possible, because for a one day license you do not have to go through zoning, whereas you do for a 3 month temporary license.

Councillor Mallon asked about the fee structure and how that was clear when applying.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer stated they didn't advertise that, but it is possible to request relief or waivers and the board will look into it. They have said no in the past but sometimes give breaks to groups like students.

Ms. Sherman stated that this seems to be an issue of communication, and at what point do we ask how we communicate. She asked what the hard rules were because this group is interested in how we can communicate enthusiasm for the events that are allowed. She stated it's hard to make sense of the process and asked about the \$135 fee to read poetry.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer clarified that those fees are for businesses not individual artists. She stated that some places say they do poetry, for example, twice a year and we say it doesn't make sense in the fee structure. Some businesses go through zoning and apply for everything under the sun and get approved, and then for licensing they ask only for the things that apply and take everything else off the application.

Ms. Sherman stated that this was an example of an expert user, and that most people like the artist community are not expert users who are not familiar with this. She stated that after talking to Ms. Murati-Ferrer it doesn't seem as complicated but it's still not as friendly as she can wrap her head around. She asked again about communication, and brought up an example of MIT

bathroom stalls and how they have tree charts in “what if...?” scenarios outlining the consequences of decisions. She asked if we can have something like that in permitting which would be basically a tree chart with yes/no questions showing you to the next step and outcome. She asked for a more interactive interface and how permitting can communicate enthusiasm for events that are totally harmless but really benefit the vibrancy of the City while letting people know what permits they need.

Mr. De Celis stated that the overarching theme is who this is benefitting, and wanted to come back to best practices in other cities. He wanted to underscore and reference the readings that Councillor Mallon sent. He stated that Austin’s website is so welcoming in comparison to Cambridge’s, and that we’re all visual and performing artists or working with creative community. This population can all understand visually and performatively the difference between Cambridge’s link, which is beautiful and has lots of time and energy, compared with Austin’s link, which was a lot more engaging, much more user friendly, not as intimidating, and not just three categories mono-chromatically. He stated that the link featured news - it seemed live. giving schedule for events in city right on the bottom right. He brought up the visual of Austin City Stage. It listed upcoming street closures, checklist for event planning like tree chart, over to bottom right there was a schedule for all cool things coming up. He stated that you can see kindred spirits who are also hosting events. He stated that this group is here to encourage advocacy, kindred spirits, and community. He stated that he appreciated Geeta’s point about 501c3s. He stated that he was a data hound as an architect, and has to wear the hat of minutia and following the letter of the law, however he doesn’t want to lose sight of the fact that there’s got to be some way to differentiate between Harvard/MIT and the Dance Complex, or for that matter “friends of” organizations that are trying to raise some funds for kids to go to the Museum of Fine Arts, the Worcester Museum. He asked how can you even put them and MIT in the same category when it comes to permitting. He stated he understands legal department advice and we shouldn’t ignore it, but that we should keep talking about this.

Mr. Monestime stated that we needed to get there on small frequency items, and has personal experience from producing events as a one-off, and that something the City has as an asset is the special events committee. He stated that he would like to see this model for smaller events. He informed the group that if you want to hold a special event the City holds bi-monthly meetings with all stakeholders and listed City departments that were present. He stated that this is a resource for larger scale events where all your questions are answered at once, stakeholders tell you what to do and where to go. He cited Central Flea as an example and that he applies once for the season so that he’s in the system and can go from there. Peddlers change but this is a change the City handles well, and asked whether there could be a committee that helps navigate smaller events.

Ms. Peterson stated that the committee has their own website. She stated that it could be better and that she liked Austin’s website.

Mr. De Celis referenced the Public Art Commission.

Ms. Peterson stated that the committee more helps facilitate large events like River Festival.

Mr. Weeks stated that it's where you go to make contacts with departments.

Ms. Peterson asked if there was a way to help smaller, nonprofit organizations and to balance that. She stated that noise is one of our biggest complaints in such a dense community even though one of the things we love is multi-use, like a restaurant on the first floor and housing above it. She stated that this is why we have licensing but it is a bureaucracy, and that serving food and alcohol is an even higher burden.

Mr. Weeks stated there is a difference in messaging, because the special events committee makes it clear that events are welcome and the City wants to support them, but that this is lost somewhere in the smaller, pop up events.

Mr. De Celis asked if we could be clear what messaged was.

Mr. Weeks clarified that he should've used the word communication.

Councillor Mallon stated that she thought the committee sent a positive message.

Mr. Weeks Stated that the committee likes the spirit of the events, was welcoming, and that they wanted these events to happen in the City.

Ms. Sherman stated that sometimes when you look at the permitting list it's intimidating

Ms. Murati-Ferrer stated that she was confused as to why people are coming back to the list, but had figured out why this is confusing and that she will change it tomorrow. She stated that the one day permit should be taken off this list and make sure it says it's for annual only. She stated that one day should be removed from the table and will make sure that one day permits are clear on the fee schedule about what qualifies and what doesn't. She stated that she never hears from artists, and artists don't communicate with the commission, but that when we do she thinks the commission is helpful. She stated that clarifying the one day category is one of the ways we can look into making communication better.

Mr. Weeks asked about clarifying the schedule and that if he doesn't see his event represented, do we have flexibility. He asked if these were state or municipal definitions.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer answered that they are state categories and that she is not inclined to add categories to license because that isn't the message we want to send. She stated that under the law these are the categories that we have to license.

Ms. Latino stated that she agreed with Michael that larger events are easier and the answers are more robust and clear. She stated that very small events are more experimental and that lines get blurred. She wanted to get back to messaging in terms of tone, because it made her sad that the commission never heard from artists but she's partially guilty. She stated that the Boston ordinance is so common sense and that events are quiet and don't cause a lot of problems, and that at blanket way to have them sends such a positive tone. She stated we want hardware stores that have big empty spaces to have poetry once a week, and that business owners are interested but

don't want to deal with the structure for a big event to put on a small event, and that there were perhaps more perceived hurdles than actual hurdles.

Mr. DiMuro stated that the Dance Complex talks about expanding into the streets because everyone should have dance in their lives. He stated that makers and producers can be allies to City Departments and that we put too much pressure on Jason and the Arts Council's finite staff to do that. He likes the respect the Dance Complex has after 28 years and wants to contribute to the vitality and help other artists.

Ms. Latino states that we talk about the future and death of retail all the time, but that it's an economic driver to put an acoustic musician in a store and drive people in. She stated that art for art's sake is important but that you can use it to creatively activate retail.

Ms. Pradhan stated that the website's messaging starts with problems we're trying to deal with like noise or safety and asked if we could have an interface that starts with those concerns in the background. The front face should be what we want to encourage and happen. She stated that the application process is where we deal with what we want and don't want going on. She used an example of the CCF redoing their grant process that started with applicants filling out whether they are a small or large organization and moved on appropriately from there. You don't need to make a small organization jump through hoops to apply for a \$5,000 grant, and asked if we could apply the same principle to arts permitting.

Councillor Mallon stated that Food for Free did the same thing in thinking about appropriateness for grants. Something like \$5,000 should be simple vs. going for something bigger. She stated she heard good ideas about putting together a comprehensive website whether it lives in Licensing, Arts, or Economic Development.

Councillor Mallon stated that Mr. Monestime will talk about his role in the Central Square Business Association (CSBA), and the roles of business associations and how they're beneficial. She stated that artists don't always consider themselves a business, and in addition to a permitting process that's friendly and welcoming, asked if we want a person to help.

Mr. Monestime named all the business associations and referenced the Chamber of Commerce for larger entities, and Cambridge Local First for independent businesses. He stated that they interface with property owners, engage with businesses, and helped them understand the bureaucracy. He talks about interfacing a lot and the entry points that associations can help navigate, so that the journey doesn't become the destination. He brought copies of CDD's "Doing Business" booklet and read highlights.

Ms. Saffari mentioned that the booklet is available in six languages.

Mr. Monestime stated that there was a lot to navigate and that once you're open there is a list of services that CDD offers so that you can become more knowledgeable, like workshops and grants. He stated that people come to business associations because of the local factor and they want a way to connect to the community, network, and interact with other businesses. There is also marketing and promotional support such as newsletters that talk about events, artists. He stated

that Cambridge does a lot around street performers and that the Arts Council now offers a calendar of events, festivals, and recurring programs. He suggested a one-stop-shop on the City side where artists can reach out if they have creative businesses and need help, maybe a hybrid of the Arts Council and CDD, and artists could go to either department. He would like a one-stop-shop similar to the special events committee.

Mr. Monestime gave the example of Revolutionary Clinics which is a medical marijuana dispensary. The property owner referred the business to the CSBA and abutters, and they had to go through zoning and special permits. They have different concerns than 1369, for example. He referenced an arts organization that's trying to open in the Greek Political Club at 288 Green Street that's having trouble opening because there's no entry point and checklist with a list of supports. This is one case study where if the owner had more guidance from the start and permitting was a little more nimble, the owner could've been more proactive than reactionary.

Councillor Mallon thanked Mr. Monestime and stated this was a classic case of not having a single point of contact: now, Central Square might lose something cool that could've been in the cultural district.

Mr. Mogassabi stated that we all have something to take back and participating in this is helpful. There is room to improve the website not just with EDD but even the overall website could be more friendly. He stated that he is happy to take this dialogue to CDD that deal with zoning to make this more friendly, because he and Mr. Roberts are already working on how we can improve the zoning ordinance to make it more arts friendly.

Ms. Saffari added that her role is supposed to be the point of contact for individuals and business owners and she can talk with them if they don't know where to go. The table of uses is a huge hindrance and they are working on zoning for small scale uses. Retailers should be able to have music and it's helpful to hear needs.

Councillor Mallon stated that EDD provides specific workshops and asked if there could be an arts focused one.

Ms. Saffari answered she'd be happy to explore that.

Mr. DiMuro stated that the arts community can be a resource for the City, and the City can help artists who are not civic-savvy.

Mr. De Celis stated that the City has done a good job encouraging women and minority owned businesses and encouraged artists to step forward as well.

Mr. Pradhan said that residents don't always see a distinction between departments, and that inter-agency coordination and behind the scenes could work better to make that obvious. There can be one virtual door that artists walk through to get connected to everyone and be directed to the right place.

Ms. Harrigan stated that the Mayor's Office tends to be the actual door and that they get it all. Artists don't come to them but they hear from Mr. Weeks. However, if you're not connected you're not being heard, and people don't usually know the locations of things, they just walk in to the office and ask questions. Departments are confusing for people trying to navigate the system, and too many resources can actually be a burden. We need a one stop shop, but how do we get that out to the public? People need to know that there is a place they can go for help and everyone gets pointed in the same direction.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer stated that for the record she hears from maybe 1-2 artists per year, and what she meant to say was that the bulk of licensing questions she deals with come from businesses and associations that call on their behalf, not an individual artist.

Ms. Shozawa stated that she agreed about the user friendly portal, integrated permitting, and having mechanics concealed behind the scenes. She thought of the coordinated pop ups that Lesley is part of and how their celebrity series street pianos were an easy permitting process. Cambridge Arts really made this seamless. She also thought about Parking Day which is a coordinated pop up and how well that is integrated.

Councillor Mallon said there was an overall tone of welcoming as a theme tonight.

Ms. Sherman thought about having an advocate and sensed Mr. Monestime's role as being an advocate. She stated that she is not necessarily asking the system or messaging to change, but to have a liaison who is an insider and knows the system, like how both Mr. Weeks and Mr. Monestime are advocates. We need proactive messaging while respecting the role of the commission, which not to say hey let's throw lots of parties but more to regulate activities and protect homeowners around businesses.

Mr. Weeks stated that he only has jurisdiction over street performers and not brick and mortar, ut we do try to help map out ideas for placemaking and capacity building.

Mr. DiMuro stated that we have a police substation in Central Square, but can we have a facility for arts where people drop in? They come to the Dance Complex and ask questions, so sort of like a Lucy's advice/psychiatric stand for artists.

Ms. Saffari stated that EDD has small business office hours to bring their department to businesses to answer questions and create a sense of listening and welcoming.

Councillor Mallon stated this goes back to the special events commission and how we can create an atmosphere where people can drop in and talk to a person.

Ms. Saffari referenced national small business week and hosting people with the licensing commission at the annex. They want to encourage artists to come and to hold these sessions more frequently.

Mr Monestime stated that he loved how Ms. Shozawa brought up parking day because it's a great example of interdepartmental coordination. Each little spot is its own thing, and he asked if

we could have more of that like small business week. It could be an inter-department thing where we focus on music pop ups, touch points like this throughout the year.

Ms. Gallop stated that they are spoiled at MIT because they have a whole department that just deals with their permit process, and that this conversation really helps her understand the things that individuals or small businesses need to interface with the City.

Councillor Mallon stated that it goes back to Ms. Pradhan's tiered system for small organizations having a smaller fit, more personal, and heard a few things tonight as a central theme: a one-stop-shop where everyone can go that serves as a link between departments that's also friendly. She stated that she liked the tree idea. Also important to have a single point of contact/advocate/or liaison to sit at the Arts Council or EDD.

Ms. Murati-Ferrer stated that there should be a response to an acoustic ordinance soon.

Councillor Mallon stated that she wanted to push back on the 501c3 ruling and using the IRS to differentiating non-profits.

Mr. De Celis stated that he got involved with the Arts Commission through the schools and thinks a lot about actual vs. virtual space. He stated that he kept getting "no results" messages online when he searched for terms related to the arts and that we need to improve this. We've talked about how we can improve the actual built environment but we need to replicate that virtually.

Ms. Sherman observed that we don't know how many people are going on the website and abandoning their applications, and at what step in the process they are doing so. She asked if we had a way to recognize this and follow up with people.

Ms. Latino stated that tone came up a lot and people want to do the right thing but get afraid. We need to take the fear out of licensing and talk to people face to face.

Councillor Mallon thanked Cambridge Community Foundation for hosting and having dinner.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:30.

Mayor's Arts Task Force - Meeting #7*Cultural District**Location: The Dance Complex**Date: April 11th, 2019**Start: 5:39PM*

Attending as members of the Task Force were: Councillor Alanna Mallon, Chair; Liana Ascolese, Executive Assistant to the Task Force and Legislative Aide to Councillor Mallon; Afiyah Harrigan, Mayor's Office Liaison; Ellen Ellen Shakespear, Co-Founder of Spaceus; Geeta Pradhan, President and CEO of the Cambridge Community Foundation; David De Celis, Public Art Commission; Kristina Latino, CEO of Cornerscape; Jason Weeks, Executive Director of the Arts Council; Michael Monestime, Executive Director of the Central Square Business Association; Jero Nesson, Founder of Artspace; Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager; Khalil Mogassabi, Community Development Department; Eryn Johnson, Executive Director of the Community Art Center; James Pierre, visual artist; Kelly Sherman, visual artist; Peter DiMuro, Executive Director of the Dance Complex; Luis Cotto, Program Manager at the Massachusetts Cultural Council

Councillor Mallon thanked everyone for attending and thanked Mr. DiMuro for offering to host at the Dance Complex. Tonight's meeting is about the Cultural District in Central Square, which is an exciting conversation for us, because we've been working up to talking about this special place. Luis Cotto is joining us once again to talk about Cultural Districts Statewide and inform us of best practices. She informed the group that we would be doing three breakout sessions tonight to talk about different aspects of the Cultural District:

1. Events and programming
2. Marketing and branding
3. Equity and community

Councillor Mallon informed the group that the Cultural District was just re-designated, so we should ask where we want to be in five years when we re-designate again, and backwards map from there. We need to ensure diversity, inclusion, and equity that we know can exist in the Square. We need neighborhood representation and equity in the arts mediums so that everyone can feel represented and empowered.

Councillor Mallon introduced Mr. DiMuro to give a brief welcome, and stated that Mr. Monestime and Mr. Weeks, who are co-directors of the Cultural District, will give a presentation of the District, and Mr. Monestime will talk about the possibilities that will be available with the BID. Next, we'll move into the breakout sessions and do an idea swap to wrap up the meeting.

Mr. DiMuro welcomed everyone to the Dance Complex. He explained that there was a theater tech class going on above us, with five more studios above that. They also have an after-school program, modern dance, Afro-Caribbean dance, and something generally going on every night. He joked that he infiltrated our handouts with information about the Dance Complex and what they have and do, plus information about their budget and money serves as a reality check for what arts organizations deal with day to day. He also announced that we may have some surprise visitors throughout the meeting, and not to be surprised if they burst into song or dance.

Mr. Weeks presented a deck of images that were original to asset mapping when Central Square was first designated as a Cultural District. He stated that this was a recommendation from the *Red Ribbon Report on the Concerns and Delights of Central Square*. The Cultural District began when Anita Walker from the Massachusetts Cultural Council began to think about Cultural Districts and communities, along with cultural economic development. Central Square was seen as an opportunity for this and the City applied for the designation. Much of this work contained asset mapping seen here, along with community conversations and gatherings. He stated that the team looked at the cultural assets in Central that were significant: schools, churches, open space, and more - and that the boundaries originally started all the way at Broadway because the Central Square area had so many assets. He stated that although MCC wanted to only designate a small, walkable space, there's also a larger constellation of assets that are still part of the District. The map was a negotiation that took several conversations to figure out the map. The Mayor and City Council also needed to buy into the process and did so fully, as the language of the resolution states that the City is totally behind this. He stated that most importantly, the residents and community organizations were very supportive of a Cultural District designation.

Mr. Weeks continued with the slideshow showing the original banners on cross streets announcing the Cultural District. They had to think about branding. Originally, no money was attached to the designation. He stated that Central Square and its values led it to become an area of focus for the City once it became a Cultural District. The River Festival was moved to Central to energize this opportunity and was therefore 2 years before the jazz festival was moved to University Park for 3 years. He stated there was a combination of historic and new events. He gave examples of the Dumpling Festival, Taste of Cambridge, and the Together Festival.

Mr. Weeks continued on about the Cultural District Values, and that there were 4 key values and goals that were identified to the MCC. We have an opportunity to look at these again and rethink them to make sure what we're talking about and how we brand is something we all believe in.

Mr. Weeks stated that during year 5 of the designation, Mr. Monestime came on as the Director of the CSBA, which was an opportunity for the District to build on what they had

done previously. The 25th anniversary of the Dance Complex was celebrated, there was a brand refresh and the Central Square Mural Project. Representatives from MCC and other Cultural Districts from all over the State were invited to come to Central Square for a celebration and all-day meeting and workshops as they were in the midst of painting the IDEO building.

Mr. Monestime pointed out the vibrancy of the Square within the Dance Complex and right outside the window. His presentation included highlighting events, the murals, brand presentation, and the Taste of the BID.

Mr. Monestime highlighted the events that have gone on in the Square recently: The Flea with over 100 artisans, food trucks, live performances with opportunities for community building from elders to youth to families, Joyce Chen's birthday celebration and dumpling festival, Dragon and Lion dancer, and the upcoming Mexican Street Food Festival on April 28th with mariachi bands, a sangria bar, and street food vendors. These events bring a lot of people to the Square, which supports small businesses who report higher sales during events.

Mr. Monestime highlighted the gala at Sonia with a pop-up performance by the Dance Complex and comedy by improv. He also highlighted the Loving Day Event, where they held an actual wedding that was contributed to entirely by businesses in the Square.

He talked about the pop up 5th Friday during the Taste of the BID, which featured a pop-up gallery with Bridgesound, and that even the folks who hang out in Carl Barron plaza during the day came in the participate in the event. It was similar to the City dance party.

He stated that the Central Square murals took \$140,000 to raise on their Patronicity platform to unlock the grant from Mass Development. MIT was a huge contributor as was the City, CCF, the Arts Council, and Biomed Realty. The mural project led to repurposed signs, added murals over old graffiti, and highlighted the duality of Central Square during the day and night, as a historic neighborhood and a social service node. The murals contribute to the vitality of the Square. The CSBA worked with Ms. Johnson and the kids at the Community Art Center to paint the electrical boxes. He stated that the murals were inspiring other young artists in the City, who based their projects off of them. The Central Square Library mural was recently decommissioned, but a photo of it will go up next to the new library mural which is coming later in the year.

Mr. Monestime stated that they re-branded the Square by replacing negative connotations with positive connotations. The CSBA went over the visual lens of Central Square by observing the colors of businesses and notable institutions, activity and movement, and spontaneous interactions. This all led to the color wheel C.

Mr. Monestime explained what a BID is by quickly saying that it's when property owners, government, merchants, and nonprofits come together for the good of the District. There are 8 in the Commonwealth and over 1,000 in North America. He explained that the enabling legislation in Massachusetts was 40-O. The BID can encapsulate our vision through the assessment of what property owners will pay, and supplemental services will be beyond the capacity of City government. This is a great time to think about the Cultural District through economic development and the community so that we can build, foster, and retain what we have. Mr. Monestime stated that he liked Ms. Johnson's saying that we should think about placemaking vs. place-keeping. We need to think about how we keep Central Square the authentic place that it is in the face of growing pressure.

Mr. Monestime stated that 70% of the District has signed on in support and the petition will be delivered to the City government. The City Council will vote, and he asked that everyone on the Task Force support the BID.

Councillor Mallon stated that this was an exciting time in Central Square. The BID is coming online, the City is getting involved with direct funding for the Cultural District, and a culmination of recent events makes the Square's standing more powerful: the success of the mural project and the fact that people are getting excited about Central. She described being at an arts fundraiser recently where all of the artwork was inspired by Central because it's funky and creative, but we should be asking ourselves how to bring it to the next level and really keep this a great place for the neighborhood as well. Two thirds of residents live in an around Central Square, and as we move forward we need to ask how we're integrating the neighborhood, maintaining equity for residents, and a diversity of art.

Councillor Mallon said she thinks about Malia Lazu's presentation every time she plans a meeting. We need to ask how we think about how bias comes up in our conversations as well as bias in art more generally. Equity is the lens we need to see these policies through. When we brand, who is it for? Do arts and events represent the neighborhood and people around us? She explained that members of the Task Force could choose a breakout session, but to remember to come to the session with a diversity and equity lens. She asked about a civic compact for the district and instructed everyone to think about the values that Mr. Weeks called out and how to reframe those in an equitable way.

Task Force broke out into their three working groups

Before the groups reported back, Councillor Mallon asked Luis Cotto from the Massachusetts Cultural Council to speak. She stated that he was here to talk from not only his perspective as Program Manager but also as a resident of Central Square.

Mr. Cotto introduced himself as the Program Manager for the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a job he has held for six months. He Stated that he would like to acknowledge this work and space of indigenous peoples. He stated that Central Square is unlike any other district because he lives here and has a responsibility for this space. He stated that it's important to ask who this space is for, and that the last three weeks have been good in Cambridge: the passing of the bike ordinance, the concept of an affordable housing overlay, but that art and culture do not belong in a vacuum, and that there are so many extenuating circumstances. It's great to have protected bike lanes, but if people can't afford to be here, who are they for? He stated that he is privileged to live in Central and be in a City with wonderful resources and that he loves the Square. He stated that he walks Central at 10pm with his family and that there's always something happening, but the same time it's not overprogrammed.

Mr. Cotto stated that there are 46 Cultural Districts right now and they are all very varied. He believes every City has a Cultural District, but the State designation only means that there's been a process. He spoke about the walkability of Central Square and the uniqueness of people being able to self-navigate, that they don't really need boundaries. He stated that he loves that the sign for Central Square is in the middle of the Square and doesn't define or mark boundaries of where culture "ends."

He used the example of Maynard's Cultural District as a small town, and that they do work with a lot of artists to focus on place-keeping. He stated that place-making is often for outsiders.

He cited the best practice example of Lowell, because they don't benefit from the resources or "shine" of Boston and Cambridge, but they have had an arts and culture plan since the 1980s. The job of MCC isn't to dictate what is arts and culture, that is up to the community. He stated that backwards mapping like we're doing in this meeting is a great exercise and used the example of Egleston Square and their identity of promoting literacy, and how that became central to their brand as a district.

He stated the impressiveness of Central Square's assets: dance, skits, improve. There's not much to compare Central to because it's an impressive district, and MCC is using Central as a context for how they want to be better. He stated the way the Task Force is run is unique – reports aren't just written at the end of six months and left on a shelf, the City is actually responding to the direct need.

Councillor Mallon thanked Mr. Cotto for his comments and introduced Ms. Johnson's breakout group as the first group to report back.

Ms. Johnson's group reported back on equity and community in the Square:

Ms. Johnson stated that her group's work was a reminder of the Task Force's work from the second meeting. They discussed institutional, structural, and implicit bias, and that public art often favors national artists over local artists. They discussed how money and ownership equate to decision making power, and diversity "markers" vs. real commitment. Ms. Johnson stated that her group further discussed zoning, permitting, and licensing, and how they restrict artists who already have limited time and means. The group also discussed neutralizing art so as not to offend the general public, and how this isn't actually art for the whole community because it does not foster questions or curiosity. They discussed how visual arts are prioritized over performing arts and the barriers that reinforce this – music can't be played without a license, graffiti and hip hop often aren't considered art, and major institutions own much of the art in Cambridge. The group also discussed the challenges of philanthropy and where money goes, because 80% of money contributed to the arts in Boston goes to the Boston Ballet or Boston Symphony, which are both major institutions.

Ms. Johnson's group also made a list of to dos for the BID: having a diverse board that includes artists, arts organizations, and businesses and cultural institutions. We need mechanisms to check ourselves and multiple ways to interact and belong. The BID needs to take care of artists, including having studios with live-in areas. The BID should have a set of bylaws that says they'll work only with companies with diverse boards. They also addressed existing inequities of Central, such as arts organizations not working together, the T station not being accessible, and the ability to perform in Carl Barron Plaza.

Mr. Cotto replied that he liked the idea of diversity of board for the BID, because property owners have to sign off on having a BID, but who are they representing? They probably don't have diverse boards.

Mr. Monestime stated that he added into the BID petition that the BID would be a convener for nonprofits and businesses to build relationships that didn't already exist.

Councillor Mallon asked the group if they had thoughts about Ms. Johnson's point about mechanisms to check ourselves on diversity.

Mr. DiMuro stated that these were great suggestions but there's conflict and territory over art forms. We need ways to problem solve and state our policies, and a living document that changes when problems change. He described that at the Dance Complex, they take all suggestions from the year and have a series of community meetings from December through January to discuss changes to recommend to the board. They then change operations and even bylaws if necessary.

Councillor Mallon stated that we can build in equity and diversity into the values of Central Square statement, which could be a way to always go back and check ourselves.

Ms. Johnson stated that there was a turning point in her group's conversation when they discussed the difference between hitting diversity markers and actually emphasizing diversity. We need to highlight certain cultures and ask what the actual positions of power are and who is in them. Who is empowered to make decisions and what is their long-term commitment? We need to be truly critical about where power lies.

Mr. DiMuro stated that power and equity shift, and at a future time, there may be a different "other" in the room, and we need to be able to hold the future accountable to always bring someone new to the table.

Ms. Harrigan suggested that Carl Barron Plaza be a street performing area where performers could bypass zoning and licensing issues, which would put the arts at the center of the Square. Arts and culture can connect here and be seen, and there are also seats where people can gather and appreciate art.

Councillor Mallon stated that the whole area is being redesigned and reimaged through a reconstruction, and that the committee should be able to incorporate ideas from the Task Force.

Mr. Mogassabi stated that there will be a community meeting which would be a good opportunity to bring our ideas.

Mr. De Celis emphasized the importance of institutions like, but not limited to, Harvard and MIT, and what they have to offer in terms of public-private partnerships. He stated that kids should be equally comfortable walking through Harvard Yard and walking through Central Square. How we include these initiatives is important.

Ms. Latino stated that we all have an individual responsibility to be checking ourselves and our own power, and how to bring new people into the conversation. Lots of people want to be more involved and there are more people who could be sitting in these chairs. We all need to ask ourselves how to create more space, and sometimes the best thing that we can do is step back and let others take over.

Councillor Mallon asked if the Cultural District had a committee or commission.

Mr. Weeks said yes but it hasn't been convened since redesignation.

Councillor Mallon stated this might be a good opportunity, because when you serve on a board too long, you need to step back and allow a fresh face.

Mr. Monestime's group reported back on branding and marketing of the Square:

Mr. Monestime stated that his group discussed other cities that know how to market and brand themselves, such as Salem, MA and Nashville, TN. These cities embraced their identities as music capitals or their history of witches, Halloween, spookiness. We need to celebrate who we are and what our brand is. The group discussed that Central is welcoming, inclusive, unique, spontaneous, and has a sense of discovery.

The group asked who we were attracting and the desire to utilize the neighborhoods as assets and attract residents in. Central is a special place in Greater Boston – it's just over the river and is connected to so many different communities. It has a student population of MIT and Harvard, a youth culture, and is home to young people and families. Can schools become an audience?

The group wanted the Square to be less regulated to evolve and grow on its own – too much regulation alters what the Square is. The group wants to bring in local youth to get people walking through the neighborhood, and employ them at businesses so they become invested, part of the ecosystem, and share in the Square's prosperity. We need to give communities access by going to their meetings and making ourselves present to speak about what's available.

The group talked about printing a monthly local zine that lists every event during a particular time. The group also wanted way finding to unique and hidden pockets in the Square.

Mr. Monestime talked about a recent field trip to an arts maker-space in Providence, RI called AS220. He talked about the idea of "community curators", which the group learned about in Providence, and wanted to bring the idea to Central Square to have "district takeovers." Different people from the community would be given the "keys" to Central Square so that they could produce their own event. This could also happen in the virtual world with list servs, hashtags, and logos. Efforts shouldn't be siloed but involved the entire community.

Ms. Sherman's group reported back on events and programming in the Square:

Ms. Sherman stated that her group focused on experiencing art and asking what we're doing, who it's for, and what's possible. She listed the events that already happen such as

River Fest, food festivals, the dance party, programming on City Hall lawn, murals, and graffiti. She stated that spontaneous events capture imagination and the idea of collision was very inspiring.

Ms. Sherman asked what we imagine at each event, but also how we invite spontaneous artistic activities. We need to encourage people with smaller platforms. They also discussed architectural invitations like blank walls and areas with benches. The group discussed “audience hacks”, which involve the mixing and mingling of audiences who would normally all go to a different event or bringing together people who were previously siloed. The Square could riff on the idea of little free libraries by hosting little free museums, something she’s experience before. Ms. Sherman focused on spontaneous artforms like buskers who have real crowds for a short window of time, gospel singing that’s happened, or partnering with Albertine or Bow Press for pop-up print making. The group wants to continue events like 5th Friday.

The group also talked about activating the busy time of 5pm, before night falls and activities start, but work has just let out. There is potential here.

They also discussed activities in the spirit of participatory budgeting – we can invite the community and youth to do something arts-related that’s totally up to them.

The group also discussed partnering with property owners including City Hall to activate “endangered space” for artists, asking how artists can stake out these properties and make them their own.

Councillor Mallon asked about the proposal about youth activation and the process of getting some grant money. She stated that youth don’t feel like Central Square is for them, but that they need to have a stake in the game.

Mr. Monestime stated that we don’t have to create something new, we can use the Community Art Center or CCTV.

Ms. Latino asked if we could do a zine every month, getting different visual artists to make it every month.

Mr. DiMuro stated that we need to find a balance between the Arts Council and the Cultural District and take care of artists who have made a life out of their craft. We can’t always just go for the low hanging fruit. Something deep needs to happen too.

Ms. Johnson stated the need to throw our net wider than just art. We need to ask who is creating culture in our communities, and we'll get so many more people participating in this way.

Councillor Mallon made closing remarks.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:42pm.

Mayor's Arts Task Force Meeting #8 – Breakout Groups*Date: May 9th, 2019**Location: Workbar, Central Square**Meeting Start: 5:41pm*

Members of the Task Force in attendance: Councillor Alanna Mallon, Chair; Liana Ascolese, Executive Assistant to the Task Force and aide to Councillor Mallon; Afiyah Harrigan, Mayor's Office Liaison; Jero Nesson, Co-Founder of Artspace; David De Celis, Public Arts Commission; Peter DiMuro, Executive Director of the Dance Complex; Christopher Hope, Executive Director of the Loop Lab; Ellen Shakespear, Co-Founder of Spaceus; Kristina Latino, CEO of Cornersape; Kelly Sherman, visual artist; Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager; Khalil Mogassabi, Development Director and Chief Planner, Community Development Department; Eryn Johnson, Executive Director of the Community Art Center; James Pierre, visual artist; Geeta Pradhan, President and CEO of the Cambridge Community Foundation

Councillor Mallon opened the meeting with some points about housekeeping and explained how the breakout sessions and working groups would proceed. There are three outstanding topics before our last meeting next month, which will be centered around our recommendations going forward as well as topics the Task Force did not get to address. Tonight's meeting will be about workshopping some of the conversations that are still unfinished and have been cut short.

Group #1 will be workshopping a new definition of public art and "buckets" for the funding that will be coming in from the 1% for art revenue from the Tobin School. 1% of the hard cost of construction will be roughly \$2 million, so where will that funding be going? This working group should be establishing some guidelines.

Group #2 will be creating a budget for the additional funding commitments that the City has made. The City Manager and Deputy City Manager have agreed to additional funding for the arts in the form of 15% of the revenue taken in from hotel/motel taxes, which will be around \$2 million. This group will have guidelines for existing deficiencies, funding goals and opportunities, and establishing benchmarks to evaluate effectiveness of funding. If we have the additional revenue, it needs to work for artists.

Group #3 will elaborate on our last conversation about the BID and Cultural District, which was an abbreviated conversation but yielded good feedback. This group should discuss whether we want to put together BID bylaws or a cultural compact bringing stakeholders together, and what that would look like. This group has an example from Melbourne, Australia of a cultural compact that brought all stakeholders together to ensure everyone was on board and codified best practices. This will be a continuation of Ms. Johnson's breakout group from last meeting on the BID.

Councillor Mallon asked that everyone turn in their worksheets after so that we can collect notes on each breakout group's work.

Because of the common focus on funding and interest from members on both topics, breakout groups 1 and 2 combined.

Notes from breakout groups:

Group #1

The group had a discussion of what we are allowed to do with public dollars, because all funds allocated have to serve the public good and be publicly accessible. The group discussed the importance of asking who the definition of public art is for, especially if it's for administrators who will be coming at it from a bureaucratic, not artistic, point of view. The group decided to list what they wanted funding to go toward, and then tackle the question of whether that funding would come from hotel/motel revenue or the Tobin School reconstruction.

The discussion turned to the funding of programmatic elements, rather than actual art itself:

- Art objects and experiences in publicly accessible space
- Long term funding for arts institutions
- Student exposure to the arts
- A program structured like Live Arts Boston, which puts money into the hands of creators themselves
- Artist in residency program
- Arts in the park
- City-owned arts facility, akin to the EMF building
- Outdoor public theaters
- Paid internships for young, aspiring artists
- Taking a closer look at arts in public education
- Reserving a classroom in every school for an artist in residence and program around their work
- Adding a City position that would be a “grant manager” for these new sources of funding
- Installing neighborhood kiosks like Arts Boston – two models were discussed: advertising for professionally programmed kiosks vs. kiosks curated by specific neighborhoods
- Embedding artists in municipal departments to encourage creative problem solving and not isolating the arts budget
- Interactive exhibits at City Hall similar to the Science Festival

The group also discussed broader themes, like the ways in which arts relate to equity. It is important to ask who the gatekeepers are and recognize that every person has the potential to be an artist. The City needs to create an atmosphere where art is a public good, so that we can make the case for funding individual artists themselves and not over-programming from the top. Art making is also not formalized, and there's yet to be a conversation that has really focused on culture, and how for many, art is really about food, storytelling, religion, decorating, or festivals.

The group also discussed how we can loosen up programming, suggesting that the City could have dates and funding available, and artists could apply for grants to program the City or a space. The group also suggested that any of the programs above could be turned into pilots which could be evaluated to see if it's something that is deserving of a greater investment.

To address the issue of equity and effectiveness of funding, the group suggested that the Task Force could continue on and become an adjudicator based on an equity rubric. Different benchmarks could include neighborhood and socioeconomic diversity, community engagement, and generating arts innovation.

Group #2

Group 2 discussed the overall mission of the BID, and the history of BIDs as tools of gentrification, and how to prevent that here in Cambridge. The people who are setting up the BID right now are extremely conscious about this issue, but we need to future proof the BID to ensure that it takes care of not only the arts community, but also all members of the community that gather in Central Square.

The group discussed ideas such as:

- Does the BID have a board with a mission, and if so, how is arts part of that?
- The BID could hire a community engagement consultant who specializes in anti-gentrification to write a strategic plan for the arts
- Is there a neighborhood driven, interactive design process for the BID?
- Can the BID bylaws formalize the relationship between the BID and Cultural District?
- The Cultural District “limits” can be expanded – should they be?
- How can the BID steering committee express our arts values?
- Ideas about an open public market
- The Baptist church as an arts and culture space
- Should this specific BID have a focus on arts, culture, and equity?
- The idea of a “pedestrian shed” – new urbanist/urban design
- How to we incorporate art into every day practices like cleaning and safety?

Groups came back together for a report-out

Ms. Ascolese gave a report-back for group #1. She stated that the group wanted to focus on art as a public good, so they did not want to be funding specific public art initiatives, but instead put more money in the hands of the creators themselves. She stated that in outlining what the group wanted funded, the theme was centered around more programmatic, educational, and community engagement elements than actual, physical art or performances.

She stated that the group discussed how arts can be involved in more City departments and no longer be siloed in its own department by starting an Artist in Residence program and using artists for creative problem solving in City government. She also stated the group’s suggestion for a “catch-all fund” that would allocate grants to different artists for pilot programs, which would be evaluated on a basis of inclusivity, community outreach, and arts innovation. If these programs resonated well with the community and made arts more equitable, they could be expanded and funded at a higher level.

Ms. Sherman added that to administer these grants, artists would need greater coordination with the City.

Ms. Pradhan stated that the group had also discussed the importance of culture and how art can be expressed differently throughout different cultures. We have not really had that conversation.

Ms. Sherman stated that the group also made a point that the City shouldn't look at art as something to be consumed, but to foster creativity in all residents.

Mr. Hope stated that he hoped funding could also be used for long term art institutions and paid internships.

Ms. Shakespear reported back for group #2. She stated that the group had come up with four questions/suggestions that the BID steering committee or board should consider as it sets up for operation:

1. How do we ensure that the BID has a conscience? The BID will be a 501c3 with a variety of interests, so how do we ensure representation among stakeholders?
2. There needs to be clarification on the connection between the BID and Cultural District. Are they separate entities? Should we have overarching bylaws or is it more strategic to give the bylaws to one entity, and where would they have the most impact?
3. What is the makeup of the BID's board and how do we ensure that it is diverse, and has nonprofit, neighborhood, and artist representation?
4. What is the physical presence of the BID? Can we have a space that's an embodiment of the values of the BID? What does street level presence look like?

Councillor Mallon added that we all love Mr. Monestime, but that he might not be around forever, so we need to future proof these values.

Ms. Johnson stated that there always seems to be a tension between art and innovation/creativity, and newness vs. culture, history, and preservation. She asked if there's a way to have both.

Councillor Mallon stated that a big reason why we're doing the arts inventory is so that we're not just throwing new revenue at new people.

Ms. Sherman stated that while looking through the budget, she saw that art is siloed, and made a list of departments where art could be more relevant and powerful if it was incorporated. That's where she thinks innovation has a place in this process, to bring these line items together around art.

Ms. Pradhan agreed that innovation was the creation of new works, bringing formal arts and culture together.

Mr. DiMuro stated that the Dance Complex is facing challenges budget-wise due to giving to the community, and he can identify with Ms. Johnson's concerns. He wanted to add that he will not be at June's meeting due to traveling with his company, but thanked Councillor Mallon for letting him be a part of this group.

Councillor Mallon stated that the next meeting would hopefully be at IDEO, and it would be centered around moving forward on recommendations and things the task force didn't get to talk about.

Ms. Johnson asked to briefly talk about what's next.

Councillor Mallon stated that it's important to ask where this work will live, and that she has some ideas that we can talk about and see what people feel good about. This has been a great way to bring together stakeholders and members have been creative and giving of their time, but there are different places where this work can live whether she is on the Council or not. She stated that she did think Council representation was important, because when she introduces orders she is bringing all the members of the task force with her. It's important to have someone constantly thinking about the intersection of arts and government, where those opportunities exist, and how to bring them forward.

Mr. De Celis stated that he was thinking about Ms. Peterson's first comment of having a tangible mission. He stated that he loves having meetings and leaving with things that can become policy, and for him it's been the joy of getting things done and having the "proof in the pudding." He wants the group to help to continue moving things in this direction.

Ms. Pradhan stated that the group has built a sense of community and common understanding, and that she thought it was a good idea to keep it as an advisory group, even if it's informal, but she could support coming together 3-4 times per year.

Councillor Mallon stated that was a great point and she was sure that other thoughts would come out. She stated that she will be working on some policy orders for the short term that have come out of our meetings that the group can sign off on that will be well thought out, intentioned, and have 23 people behind them.

Meeting adjourned at 7:10pm.

Final Meeting of the Mayor's Arts Task Force - Meeting #9 Final Recommendations and Wrap-Up

Date: June 13th, 2019

Location: La Fabrica Central

Meeting Start: 5:50pm

Members of the Task Force in Attendance: Councillor Alanna Mallon, Chair; Liana Ascolese, Executive Assistance to the Task Force and Legislative Aide to Councillor Mallon; Afiyah Harrigan, Mayor's Office Liaison; Ellen Shakespear, Co-Founder of Spaceus; Olivia D'Ambrosio, Executive Director of Bridge Repertory Theater; Geeta Pradhan, President and CEO of the Cambridge Community Foundation; Jason Weeks, Executive Director of the Arts Council; Katherine Shozawa, Lesley University; Michael Monestime, Executive Director of the Central Square Business Association; Khalil Mogassabi, Deputy Director and Chief Planner, Community Development Department; Ben Simon, musician and Cambridge Arts Coalition; Kristina Latino, CEO of Cornerscape; Sarah Gallop, Government Relations at MIT; David De Celis, architect and member of the Public Arts Commission; James Pierre, visual artist; Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager.

Mayor McGovern was also in attendance to say hello and thank the Task Force members for their work at the beginning of the meeting.

Mayor McGovern thanked everyone for their work on the Task Force. This has not been a typical Task Force, because we've all been able to see the work as it happens through the Policy Orders that have come through. He thanked Councillor Mallon for her leadership on this Task Force and on the issue of the arts.

Councillor Mallon thanked everyone for coming to the last meeting and outlined the agenda for the evening. She stated that Ben Simon will make a presentation, followed by update from The Foundry team where they also want to solicit our feedback. She stated that her and Ms. Ascolese had gone through the past 8 meetings and teased out themes and recommendations that were discussed throughout the past 9 months. They have been posted in different "buckets" on large sticky notes on the wall. The group will give feedback, contribute their own, and then we will have a Task Force wide discussion to get to a consensus.

Councillor Mallon thanked Dennis Benzan, former Councillor, who is a part-owner of La Fabrica and has generously offered the space, food, and drink tickets for a celebration at the end of the meeting.

Mr. Simon began his presentation. He gave background on his organization's attempt to fight their displacement from the EMF building that closed last year. He stated that we need to be talking about the role that development plays in erasing artists and arts spaces from the City, and that this is the most important issue we could be talking about. He thanked Councillor Mallon for allowing him to speak on this issue, and he put together some ideas that could be significant for protecting the arts community.

He stated that there is an arts crisis right now including displacement and arts spaces disappearing. This is not a standalone issue and we have to acknowledge the interconnectivity between gentrification and displacement. He stated that developers are de facto city planners and that they are responsible for the disappearance of arts spaces, affordable housing, groceries, retail, and eateries. There has been a lot of development by MIT which has razed entire city blocks for biopharma and whatever the rest of their campuses are. Low income renters don't think this is for them and they can't work there.

Mr. Simon shared demographic data which showed that The Port neighborhood has seen its white population go up 10% and black population decrease 10%. He stated that you cannot drop thousands of high paying luxury class jobs in a neighborhood and expect no displacement to happen. He asked why developers should get to do what they want and stated that arts need to be a bigger part of the conversation. He asked where we draw the line when property owners are pursuing their profit dreams.

Mr. Simon stated that there is a straightforward solution, which is democratized development where all voices of a community should be given a say in whether our city should be changing at all. He stated that it's an obvious fact that developers should be disempowered because the real estate market is out of whack, and we need massive public investment to counteract development. The private sector is unable or unwilling to provide affordability.

Mr. Simon stated that we should not be contracting public land, we should be expanding public land. He asked about making deals with developers and that we cannot assume benevolence or neutrality, and seek redress for negativity. He stated that inclusionary units do not help people. He stated that we need land to build affordable housing and community spaces.

Mr. Simon stated that the attempt to separate arts from the bigger picture won't get us fundamental change. It is connected to social justice problems. He quoted Bernie Sanders that there is a 1% that has rigged the system to their benefit.

Mr. Simon presented his policy ideas. The first was an EMF 2.0: the loss of the EMF was the loss of the only affordable music rehearsal space, and that a building like EMF is unlikely to be developed again by the private sector. He stated that the idea here is that people like himself - low income artists - need spaces. The most dire consequence of a rigged local economy is the housing crisis. There are people on the street and people being displaced. It would be right to build a dedicated rehearsal space with City money, but it would be a good idea to build City-owned housing units with community arts spaces. He stated Mike Connolly has been talking about this but that there are definitely legal obstacles. However this is what's right. He stated that as a low income renter, what we're calling affordable housing is actually inaccessible, and that Mass and Main is being billed as a great victory for affordable housing but it is not. The inclusionary unit minimum is 50% of the AMI to get a unit. Mr. Simon stated that he is on the list for a voucher but there's a 4,000 person waiting list. He stated that buildings are getting snapped up by developers, stripped, and turned into luxury units which causes real life social consequences for low income people. He stated that market housing of any sort is not the solution, but it's city-owned social housing, whatever it may be. He stated that markets are not designed to distribute things to everyone, but it gives limited resources to the highest bidder. He

stated that with education we have an idea that everyone deserves an education so everyone gets one. We are coming around to this idea with healthcare as well, but we haven't done this with housing which is a human right. We need to be talking about social housing, and an EMF space in something like that is a great idea.

Mr. Simon recommended a displacement advisory committee, which would be an ongoing advisory committee and a modest step forward in the imbalance of power. He suggested that the committee would meet monthly and would advise the City on displacement impact for proposed developments and impact on the community. The community should be taking the lead on development and advise the City on what and if developments are needed.

Mr. Simon suggested redirecting the 1% for arts funding to address the arts crisis but stated there would probably be some legislative obstacles. He stated that it's crazy that we have funding mechanisms going to something like public art when we have a crisis of displacement. We are rapidly losing artists and arts spaces, but if we have arts spaces, it will slow down artist displacement. When spaces disappear, it puts a huge financial burden on artists. He stated that places in Charlestown and Union Square are about to close, and we need to direct money into funding a City-owned EMF. He stated that the Public Arts Commission benefits one artist but City owned community arts spaces benefit the whole arts community. This is a significant amount of money generated by this funding mechanism, but the City says we can build the artist community an EMF. He stated that this is a reasonable request.

Councillor Mallon thanked Mr. Simon and stated that she wanted to speak to a few aspects of his presentation. She stated that the last meeting that he wasn't able to be at involved the Task Force recommending putting together a working group to figure out how to allocate additional revenue from both hotel/motel taxes and the Tobin School renovation. She stated that the Task Force had discussed at the last meeting how funding should not just go to site-based public art but instead be for the whole artist community. To speak to the housing piece that Mr. Simon discussed - the displacement advisory committee, Councillor Mallon informed Mr. Simon that Councillor Siddiqui had been leading a tenant protection and anti-displacement task force, and that they are looking at displacement and protections. She advised that Mr. Simon's second recommendation would likely be a recommendation of Councillor Siddiqui's task force. Councillor Mallon also informed everyone that Mr. Mogassabi, Ms. Ascolese, Mr. Roberts, and herself had been meeting to speak about zoning changes that would protect existing arts spaces and incentivize additional arts spaces with funding. She stated that Mr. Mogassabi can speak in more detail about what we may be able to move forward with.

Ms. Shozawa, who shared a spot on the task force with Ms. McKenna, gave a presentation and update on The Foundry building. She stated that their timeline to open is 2021, and gave an overview of The Foundry as a City-funded and owned STEAM space with flexible arts and performance space. She outlined The Foundry team: Martha McKenna is the director of the Creativity Commons, Sue Cusak is the director of STEAM learning and coordinating teams with external organizations and public schools. Graduate student Stephanie McKay is a musician, singer, and songwriter who has merged with churches and synagogues to build new relationships. Ms. Shozawa does work with the college of art and design. The team has had a series of 3 community-wide meetings about flexible performance space for musicians and makers

space and workshops for visual artists and crafters. She explained these community meetings informed their work.

Ms. Shozawa stated that the community-wide objectives for the building were to have a space that's culturally responsive, accessible, inclusive, reducing barriers, community trust, and benefit for this large, community-funded building that's coming online in the City.

Ms. Shozawa gave some more specifics on The Foundry. She stated that the building is 50,000 square feet total. It will have 3,300 of flexible performance space, 3,700 square feet of maker spaces, 2 funded artists in residence, 2,100 square feet of art studios, multi purpose community meeting rooms, and 19,000 square feet of office, operating space, and a demonstration kitchen. The market rate office space will fund the rest of the programs in the building so that it's self-sustaining. The Foundry team has been great at the attention and ethos of how we care for the arts in the City asking what people want and why. Community feedback informed architectural design and programming to foster community and community-ownership with an emphasis on East Cambridge residents - mainly youth and seniors. Their mission is to bridge the socioeconomic gap and be good stewards of a building that is a vessel of possibility.

Ms. Shozawa stated that artist Candy Chang was being brought to Cambridge this fall in partnership with The Foundry. She is famous for projects such as "I Wish This Was" and "Before I Die." Artists should be in the realm of public space, community engagement, and social equity. Art should elevate the voices of those not heard.

Councillor Mallon stated that it was interesting to watch this progression, because the City was gifted the building and had a years long conversation about what to do with it. She stated that STEM was big at the time but now it's really taken on an identity as an arts space. She stated that Biomed Realty is having a conversation and community meetings about the site that was supposed to be the Constellation Center, at 50,000 square foot arts space, but that didn't happen. Biomed has purchased the space and is going to build the arts component. Jennifer Hanley and Sal Zinno, who are working on the project, have been attending almost every Arts Task Force meeting and other community meetings to answer the question of what the community needs. They are having a great opportunity for artists and the community to add their voices to this conversation at their open house on June 27th.

Stephanie Couch from The Foundry team added to Ms. Shozawa's presentation, saying that it's easy to talk about improvements that they need to make, but that she thought The Foundry was an example of getting it right. She stated that she did not know of another City that was providing a space for both arts and STEM to come together under one roof. This offers so many possibilities. She stated that her generation did not invest as much in the arts as prior ones did. She stated that she was interested in building connections between artists and those who live and work in Kendall Square so that we can rekindle investment in the arts and adding more than 1% contributions. She stated that she heard a lot of interest among artists who want to explore the intersection of arts and opportunity.

Ms. Johnson stated that she appreciated Mr. Simon's presentation. She asked that he think through his comments about displacement and new arts spaces, and to think about community

organizations that already exist. She stated that her work at the Community Art Center is the hardest but most beautiful thing she would ever do. She stated that The Foundry isn't supposed to compete with existing organizations, but that it will and it already does. Cambridge has a congested nonprofit space already and she would like to see concrete ways in which this is going to be addressed, especially since the City is investing so much money in the space.

Councillor Mallon thanked Ms. Johnson for her comments and asked everyone to think about them as we move into the recommendations section of the meeting.

Ms. Pradhan stated that change is happening at a rapid pace and that we don't need another task force or advisory committee to solve problems. She stated that we need to put into immediate action the recommendations for this process. She stated that this task force has dealt with fundamental problems of losing our artists, organizations, and spaces, and that we can come up with a very powerful recommendation. She stated that we can explore land trusts and City property, and that once you lose arts spaces, it's very difficult to bring them back. We have lost a lot, but we still have a lot to save.

Councillor Mallon instructed everyone to look at the posted recommendations and to start ones that we should be moving on at the Council immediately so that we can prioritize. She asked people to write in recommendations where they thought things were missing, and that if their recommendation didn't fit neatly into a "bucket" that there was a blank sheet for other ideas.

Ms. Latino stated that she was excited for The Foundry but was nervous about people and organizations that aren't the first in the door. There is a perception in the arts community that if you're not first, you lose out on a space, and some organizations have greater connections and ability to make their presence known and get in the door. She asked The Foundry team to ensure that as the building comes to fruition to make sure that individuals know that no matter what, the door is open and they haven't been locked out. They need to find a way to keep bringing new artists and creators into the space.

Ms. Couch stated that the way The Foundry is structured, all spaces are shared and an artist can book them for free, market rate, or nonprofit rate for varying lengths. No one person or organization gets to own anything and it will constantly turn over. There's also criteria to make the process fair.

Mr. De Celis asked whether the artist residency would address this.

Ms. Couch replied that right now they can only afford 2 artists in residence, and that there was also public accountability because the Cambridge Redevelopment Authority (CRA) still has a public advisory committee.

Ms. Monestime asked if the building was run by a committee or a board.

Ms. Couch stated that they were setting up a nonprofit, so there will be both a board and an actual staff for The Foundry. The staff will report to the board.

Mr. Monestime stated that the BID has been newly approved and that they are working on putting together a board. Ms. Johnson had asked how we build a conscience into the BID, and stated the importance of values being set in place on day 1. He stated that she will be chairing one of the BID committees so that the BID will have bylaws that reflect values and we will have a vision we can constantly revisit.

Ms. Couch stated that bylaws came out of a public process and they have to stay true to the mission of the building. She stated that the consortium only has a 5 year lease, so if there are concerns that they are not good stewards of the building, the CRA will not renew their lease.

Councillor Mallon went over the accomplishments of the Task Force so far:

- A commitment for the full 1% of hard construction costs for the Tobin School (about \$2 million)
- An allocation from the annual hotel/motel revenue directly to the arts (about \$2 million)
- Establishment of the Central Square Improvement fund where at least 25% of the funds will be allocated to the arts in the Arts and Culture District
- Undertaking an inventory of all existing arts organizations and their funders
- Beginning to build an arts-friendly, “one-stop shop” on the Licensing Commission website
- Establishing an arts liaison in the Economic Development Division

Councillor Mallon also stated that she heard recommendations about creating land trusts, taking an inventory of available real estate (buildings, open space) that could be used for arts space development. She also stated that she will be sending out a note to see who from the Task Force might be interested in continuing on a working group that will outline guidelines of how to allocate additional funding from the Tobin School. She stated that it would be great to have an artist in residence like in New York City, for creative problem solving. She stated that in NYC they have them in DPW to help the department think creatively.

Councillor Mallon also discussed recommendations related to incentivizing free spaces for artists. We currently have a 1% for art program for public funding, and MIT has a private 1% for art program. She stated that we should incentivize other private developers through zoning and other mechanisms to fund the arts. We also need to support the arts in K-12 schools.

Ms. D’Ambrosio stated that it’s amazing to have \$4 million coming online, but that \$5 million for an entire City is still very very small. She stated that if it were her, a concentrated large change using a critical mass of money each year might be more effective, visible, and tangible than such a thing spreading of the money - i.e. allocating \$5,000 to each artist as opposed to using \$5 million to do something that the entire community can benefit from. She spoke to quality vs. quantity.

Ms. Latino also asked if there was a way to set aside half the funding per year for several years. We can use some money now and spread it around, but then save a few million per year so that one day we could do something like buy a building.

Ms. D’Ambrosio agreed that if you saved \$2 million per year, we could have \$10 million at the end of 5 years for a large project.

Councillor Mallon stated that we won't decide this tonight and that it would be the job of the working group to figure out how to proceed. She stated that we can also use this money to attract greater investment, and that CCF can help us connect with organizations that will match gifts or do challenge grants. We can figure out how to make this small piece bigger.

Ms. Pradhan stated that we don't want to spread our money so thin that we cannot see the impact and that every year we should commit to something big.

Ms. Johnson asked how the money is being distributed.

Councillor Mallon stated that there would be a working group coming out of this task force to decide.

Ms. Peterson stated that Councillor Mallon has been successful in getting the percentage of the hotel/motel tax, which is annual funding, which is what you really want. Annual money is a base that you don't have to go after every year, and that we need to focus on what percentage of the hotel/motel taxes arts gets annually.

Ms. D'Ambrosio confirmed that ultimately the working group would make a recommendation to the City Manager who would then make a recommendation to the Council.

Ms. Peterson stated not to discount the role Councillor Mallon has played because everything needs to come back for Council approval.

Mr. Weeks stated that the Barr Foundation money has been critical and has accomplished a tremendous amount for the arts in Boston.

Ms. Johnson stated that statewide, arts organizations are missing liquidity which stifles creativity.

Councillor Mallon stated that if Mr. DiMuro was here, he would be arguing that we need to take care of our existing organizations so they don't continue to get lost.

Ms. Pradhan stated that one of the issues with public benefits money and new development is that it often gets disbursed into small things or put into issues that consistently come up, or used in ways that benefit newcomers. She stated that people who really live through changes like Mr. Simon and other artists get left out of the equation, and that we need flexible money that gets distributed based on what the needs of the community are. She suggested that money is an arts issue and that we need to get money that people can voice their ideas about instead of always tying it up and stifling creative potential.

Councillor Mallon stated that there are some development projects where part of the community benefits packages are now including money for arts. She stated that many developers were at our meeting on funding, which kickstarted a conversation on how they're displacing people and what responsibility they have to support the community and artists.

The Task Force split up to review, make, and prioritize final recommendations.

The Task Force went over recommendations “bucket” by “bucket” with members stopping to call out certain recommendations that they had questions about or wanted prioritized.

Public Art

- Value statement in Zoning Ordinance
 - Purpose, applicability, use, general development, design guidelines
- Revamp public art process
 - Include a vision/community narrative, transparent, diverse in socioeconomic and art mediums
- Priority bump for local artists
- Broaden the definition of public art in the percent for art ordinance
- Maintain and update the public art website
 - Include community narrative for each piece
- Increase percent for art ordinance higher than 1%
- Encourage the City to be fully compliant with all future percent for art ordinances on all new projects

Ms. Harrigan asked what a priority bump for local artists was.

Councillor Mallon answered that when we put out a call for artists, local artists will get a preference.

Cultural District

- Reconvene the cultural district advisory committee
 - Backwards mapping for redesignation
 - Consider expanding the committee to add the Port and Coast neighborhoods
- Update zoning and design guidelines to incentivize arts-related uses
- Create an arts and culture anchor or collaborative
- BID civic/cultural compact
 - How does the BID have a conscience?
 - Create placekeeping and equity mission for the cultural district
- Concentrate arts and cultural activity in and around the district to communicate the range of arts activities and programming for the highest visibility
- Ensure places for the community, particularly youth, to include them in the economic development that comes with the arts
- Think about the 5 minute “pedestrian shed” (5 minute walk) when programming and creating spaces to keep things accessible

Councillor Mallon stated that the Council just signed off on the BID Monday night and Mr. Monestime did a great job explaining how it will have a cultural impact. The BID has a conscience and an arts and culture component, not just cleaning, safety, and that’s it.

Mr. Monestime stated that the BID is concerned with quality of life, arts and culture, transit, and business association, and that there will be more to come online.

Councillor Mallon asked about a recommendation to concentrate programming and visibility in the cultural district that communicated the range of arts activities available.

Ms. Pradhan answered that was her recommendation. She meant that you should feel like you've arrived in arts and culture when you walk into the district. She stated you feel it in the evening with lights, but in the daytime we need more murals, buskers, and more so you feel like you're in a place.

Mr. Monestime stated that resident Peter Valentine wants the Square renamed Starlight Square and the telephone polls painted pink.

Ms. Johnson stated that she wanted to add the Port and Coast neighborhoods to the advisory committee.

Mr. De Celis explained the district boundaries and the 5 minute pedestrian shed, which is what most people are comfortable walking. If you live in the Port or Coast you're able to walk to the Central Square Theater. He stated that this is a best practice to keep in mind.

Arts Economy

- Soft skills classes from the Arts Council
 - Presentation, budgets, community engagement, entrepreneurship, business development, seed funding
- Office hours with the Economic Development Division
 - Walk-ins, artist specific workshops, business side of arts
- Partner with the Office of Tourism
 - Cultural events and festivals, maintain a calendar of arts and tourism events
- Public market in Central with vendor spaces prioritizing local culture markers
 - Owned as a community land trust
 - Include culinary as a "craft"

Councillor Mallon stated that there are soft skills classes with the Arts Council but they need to be better funded. She stated that during the budget process, she asked EDD, the Arts Council, and the Office of Tourism to convene monthly to figure out how to make a bigger impact in the community, especially as economic drivers in the City that can all work together.

Mr. De Celis asked if the three departments would have access to the City Manager.

Ms. Peterson responded that she would also be at the meetings. She informed everyone that the Office of Tourism is 95% City funded and should be focusing on the local and bringing people in on a more neighborhood level. They want to engage with businesses and local artists.

Councillor Mallon stated that the recommendation of a public market that is community owned could go back to the mention at a former meeting of using the AME Church as an arts space or anchor.

Licensing and Permitting

- Create a tiered permitting fee structure
 - Based on IRS operating budgets that are either greater or less than \$500,000
- Make and distribute a permitting tree chart infographic
- Enact acoustic performers' ordinance
- Streamline permitting process for events and art installations

Nonprofit Sector Support

- CCF role in aiding the arts
 - Fiscal agent for private percent for art funds, cultural planning especially in Central Square, arts displacement fund or giving platform for small arts organizations
- Mentoring between established and emerging arts organizations
- General operating support from the City for longstanding cultural institutions and initiatives

University Responsibility

- Engage with museums run by universities
- Employ local artists
- Provide live/work/rehearsal space for artists, permanent preferred
 - Use tools like the space finder in Seattle
 - Permanent space held in land trusts
- Subsidize their students' attendance at local arts venues
 - Outreach to our public school teachers as well
- All new place-based or Cambridge-based arts initiatives should require a shared lead partnership with an existing Cambridge arts or culture institution
 - Don't create new things on your own
- Where will the ART theater in Harvard Square be going? What will happen to that space?

Ms. Johnson emphasized that academic institutions should not create new things on their own, and that they should partner with existing institutions.

Ms. Pradhan stated that ART is moving from Harvard Square and asked what was happening to the space. She stressed that universities have enormous arts resources like the museums, and that we don't really have a reference to that in our task force discussions. We should think about what our goals for our relationships with these museums are.

Racial Equity

- Hire a consultant for an equity audit
 - Art juries, community outreach, RFQ process, artists/artwork represented
- Update Arts Council mission statement and budget narrative to include diversity and equity goals
- Create City position for liaison to serve communities underserved in the arts

Mr. Pierre stated that he had a new recommendation to present to the group to piggyback off of a comment Mr. Weeks had made. He stated that we need to be honest about arts living up to diversity goals and talk about going into communities that don't have the same knowledge, experience, and love of arts that we do. Perhaps aren't high on their priority list because of where they are economically or they're facing other challenges. We need to go into these communities and talk about the benefits of having arts in their lives, and help them become artists themselves.

Councillor Mallon stated that this goes back to Ms. Latino's point about how people not "in the know" access spaces that are opening.

Ms. Latino added that people have to feel that they have access and belong. She referenced the recent incident at the MFA. She stated that even if you have a free ticket to a venue, how do you feel like you can go and belong.

Councillor Mallon stated that we don't talk about culture enough, and to think about cultural events like the Iftar at City Hall, which shouldn't only happen because we have a Muslim City Councillor who is responsible for the event. The events in our City need to fully represent the cultures that are here. We also have some events at City Hall that are still going on, and she isn't sure why, or that they should still be happening.

Ms. Pradhan stated the importance of celebrating the amazing richness of cultures that we have.

Other Ideas

- Displace local art in municipal buildings with artists' bio and info
 - Should be effectively/prominently displayed and publicly accessible
- Future arts and culture office director
- Artist networking portal
 - A "LinkedIn" for artists - ways to for developers, event planners, artists to network
 - Can establish a group on LinkedIn so that artists can join and follow each other
- Write an arts plan and implementation strategy for the City
- Separate arts and public celebrations into its own Council committee
- Role clarity re: the Arts Council
- Immediate resources dedicated to the acquisition of real estate for artist studios and rehearsal space
 - Ex) EMF, Green St. studios, so that we don't lose more spaces
 - Inventory of City property that can be dedicated to arts
- Invest in actual people across the arts spectrum
- Ask what spaces can be used at night or after-hours
 - Ex) CRLS

Councillor Mallon also discussed the recommendation that all of these recommendations can be consolidated into a living arts plan for the City. We also need to ask what will happen to the task force, because in the future we need to ensure that we're still bringing people's voices to the table. She clarified the recommendation about breaking off the arts and celebrations aspect from the neighborhood and long term planning committee. She stated that the committee mostly

focuses on neighborhood issues, and that it would be effective to separate the arts piece so that there is a Councillor responsible and has the ability to bring forward ideas.

Ms. Harrigan commented that it's true that certain cultures get attention at the City level, such as the Caribbean Heritage celebration that just happened, but we need to ensure that all cultures are recognized, seen, and get equitable funds and resources. She stated that it's a complaint that they get in the Mayor's Office, that some cultures get more resources and celebration than others.

Ms. Johnson stated that it's important that in the future, we seek to deeply understand why we use arts and culture separately.

Ms. D'Ambrosio stated that we need an examination of the Arts Council, its jobs, and the jobs within the Arts Council. She stated that sometimes things seem like an octopus where each arm doesn't know what the other is doing.

Ms. Harrigan emphasized the recommendation of dedicated arts spaces within existing properties.

Ms. D'Ambrosio asked if there were pockets of time within these properties that could be shared. She stated she hates saying this because artists shouldn't be squeezed into after hours space, but there could be creative opportunities here.

Mr. Pierre asked what CRLS would like like if, once students left, there were a whole group of people that came in at 6 or 9pm. There is no other building as nice and it's a shame the lights go out at 6pm.

Ms. Johnson stated that the City has too much money, which causes us to keep seeing a need and generating a new thing. She stated the importance of having a cohesive approach and plan.

Ms. Pradhan agreed and stated the need to make this a living document so that not everything is fractured.

Councillor Mallon briefly thanked the group for tonight's meeting, and for sharing their thoughts, dreams, and hopes for the past 9 months.

The meeting was adjourned at 8:00pm.

