



February 2, 2017

Dear Mr. De Pasquale,

We are writing to express relief that Cambridge Police Department's charges against Cleon Hodge have been dropped.

As leaders of organizations that work to create equity and fairness in our community and, as people who have watched the same video footage as many others, we were concerned that the charges against Mr. Hodge were unwarranted.

The community's safety was not compromised by the kind of everyday street interaction that occurred between Detective Sgt. Ahern and Cleon Hodge on October 13, 2016. What transpired after the shoulder bump is the problem. A sworn officer of the law chose to escalate confrontation rather than deescalate tension. That decision compromises public safety and erodes public trust.

That Detective Sgt. Ahern's actions were directed at a young Black man cannot be ignored. In the context of deadly police brutality targeted largely at Black men across the country, we must hold our police to the highest standard of fair and just interaction and response.

Under Commissioner Haas, the Cambridge Police Department took important steps toward educating its employees about the principles of procedural justice, police legitimacy and trauma-informed policing.

It is critical that you assure that this initiative is continued and expanded as the Department transitions its executive leadership. We urge you to lead the City in asserting and affirming a commitment to human rights and racial justice that will advance community and police relations going forward.

Because the community organizations we lead are key stakeholders in supporting a safe and healthy community, we request that you include a representative from the Cambridge Nonprofit Coalition in any search committee that is formed to hire the next Police Commissioner.

As always, we appreciate your time and would welcome a discussion with you about our concerns, the City's course of action on this matter going forward and the protocol for handling matters of this nature should they occur in the future.

Sincerely,

Christina Alexis, Margaret Fuller Neighborhood House  
Eva Martin Blythe, YWCA Cambridge  
Ben Clark, Enroot (formerly Cambridge Community Services)  
Michael Delia, East End House  
Elaine DeRosa, Cambridge Economic Opportunity Committee  
Kathryn Fenneman, Tutoring Plus of Cambridge, Inc.  
John Froio, Community Legal Services and Counseling Center  
Bob Gittens, Cambridge Family and Children's Service  
Jane Hirschi, CitySprouts  
Eryn Johnson, Community Art Center, Inc.  
Darrin Korte, Cambridge Community Center  
Maria LaPage, Agassiz Baldwin Community  
Risa Mednick, Transition House  
Maisha Moses, Young People's Project  
Elissa Spelman, Breakthrough Greater Boston  
Joan Squeri, The Union Partnership For A Whole Community