On Thursday, October 22, 2026 the City of Cambridge hosted a community meeting regarding 25 Lowell Street. Thank you to all that participated, asked questions, and provided thoughtful feedback.

To approximately 70 attendees, representatives from the City Manager's Office and the Capital Building Projects Department presented on the following topics related to the city-owned 25 Lowell Street property:

- Introduction and project background
- Property overview and history
- Building improvements and maintenance
- Disposition ordinance and community process
- Alternative use evaluation
- Previously collected feedback
- Current recommendation and next steps

The full presentation can be found on the City website.

After the project team's presentation, community members offered feedback and asked questions.

Feedback and comments included:

- Comments emphasized the high-quality music education the New School of Music (NSM) provides to the community. Attendees described the school as warm, but still highly professional.
- Multiple speakers attributed the education they received at NSM to long-term, professional music careers.
- Community benefits extend past NSM students, volunteers from the school have brought music and music education to local senior housing and Cambridge Public Schools.
- For families, the school vacation programming solves logistical issues, but also offers a chance to connect with other families in the area.
- The NSM's student population is diverse, and their teachers have created a space where everyone feels comfortable and can learn from new perspectives.
- A comment was made about keeping the building and park in their current forms and felt that an affordable housing development would not be a good use of this space.
- Other commenters wanted to preserve this building from an architectural and historical perspective.
- The Cambridge Art Association (CAA) has a great reputation among local artists and associations.
- The CAA serves both emerging artists and established artists. Speakers mentioned how valuable the CAA's resources are to the local art scene.
- CAA members discussed how many spaces for arts and culture are disappearing, and how the CAA is one of the few spaces people can see art for free.

- Multiple attendees spoke to the affordability of the NSM and CAA, and that these organizations are what make music and art accessible to their families.
- The lack of a long-term lease brings uncertainty in regard to future programming and the opportunity to secure funding.

Common questions included:

- Who makes the final decision on what happens to this property?
    - Now, the City will compile all public comments and feedback into a report with an analysis done by City staff. The report will be presented to the Planning Board at a public hearing, and the Board will give their recommendation to the City Manager. The City Manager will make a final recommendation based on all feedback and analysis. Finally, this recommendation will be presented to and voted on by the City Council at one of their regular public meetings.
- Will the decision-making process be public?
    - Yes, all materials through this process will be available to the public and all decisions will be made during public meetings.
- Does the community get a say in what happens?
    - Yes, community feedback is an essential part of this process! Feedback from this community meeting, previous meetings, future meetings, and all written comments will be incorporated into the report and recommendation.
- Would the current tenants get priority in a potential leasing process?
    - If the current recommendation is approved by the City Council, the lease for 25 Lowell Street would go through an open procurement process, as required by Massachusetts General Law.

Interested community members are encouraged to sign up for the project newsletter to receive updates and information about future meetings.