

Nicole Murati Ferrer  
Chairperson

Mark Melo  
City Electrician

Terrence James Shea  
Superintendent of Streets

# CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

## POLE AND CONDUIT COMMISSION

831 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139



### POLE AND CONDUIT COMMISSION MEETING MINUTES

Thursday, August 22, 2024, at 9:00 A.M.

By Remote Participation Via Zoom

*This meeting was held remotely in accordance with Chapter 2 of the Acts of 2023 adopted by Massachusetts General Court and approved by the Governor.*

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

**License Commission Staff Present:** Cristina Casilli, Administrative Assistant.

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

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

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

*[Note: Petitions listed as #1 & 2 on the agenda were called/considered together.]*

**1. Continuation from June 13, 2024 for further coordination, ensure whether there is unusable conduit (have it removed) and if City conduit damaged, replaced (270028) - Cambridge Network Solutions, 100 Quannapowitt Pkwy, Wakefield, MA 01880, for the following: Binney Street - From existing CNS manhole by 290 Binney Street, trench approximately 177 feet and install (1) 4-inch PVC CNS communications conduit, and (1) 4-inch PVC City Shadow conduit to proposed 17" x 24" x 30" private property manhole located at 300 Binney Street.**

**Present:** Herb Bertoni, CNS; Bill Conway; Chris Cremers, Zayo Group.

**Summary:** CNS is working on the original pipe, about 2 feet per week and getting the concrete out. As of right now may not need the new trench; it is looking good. CNS put an elbow and got the handhold cleaned out completely. They also put a sweep under the pipe. They will not know for 2-3 weeks if all is usable. If it is, they will have the original path to the building.

Cremers, for Zayo Group, stated they need to come from the Verizon manhole and then get to the new building. Hence, they were going to join CNS's trench, but of CNS no longer needs it, then they will need

to dig their own trench. Zayo Group did contact Verizon to see if there is any conduit available but have not heard back.

Right now, in the current plan, there is a section in two cross walks on Binney Street which are in conflict with current project, so that portion of the dig would need to be redesigned. Conway uploaded revised plan the previous day.

**Decision:** Continue to figure out whether needed, or if existing conduit is usable.

**2. New petition (278784) - Zayo Group**, 1805 29th Street, Boulder, CO 80301, for the following: Binney Street - The Zayo specific work not covered under the previous CNS petition is as follows: Starting at Verizon MH 26/518 at the intersection of Fulkerson Street and Binney Street, trench +/- 5 feet westerly and install a proposed 24"x36" handhole, installing (2) 4-inch PVC conduits. From newly placed handhole, trench +/- 188 feet south then easterly to "point B" (CNS joint trench), installing (2) 4-inch conduits.

**Present:** Herb Bertoni, CNS; Bill Conway; Chris Cremers, Zayo Group.

**Summary:** CNS is working on the original pipe, about 2 feet per week and getting the concrete out. As of right now may not need the new trench; it is looking good. CNS put an elbow and got the handhold cleaned out completely. They also put a sweep under the pipe. They will not know for 2-3 weeks if all is usable. If it is, they will have the original path to the building.

Cremers, for Zayo Group, stated they need to come from the Verizon manhole and then get to the new building. Hence, they were going to join CNS's trench, but of CNS no longer needs it, then they will need to dig their own trench. Zayo Group did contact Verizon to see if there is any conduit available but have not heard back.

Right now, in the current plan, there is a section in two cross walks on Binney Street which are in conflict with current project, so that portion of the dig would need to be redesigned. Conway uploaded revised plan the previous day.

**Decision:** Continue pending results of CNS's review as to whether they need the new trench (see petition #270028), further coordination with Verizon to see if there is any existing conduit that can be used by Zayo Group, and further review of plan (2-1, Commissioner Shea voted to grant with typical conditions).

**3. New petition (281047) - TC Systems Inc**, 50 Mall Road #203, Burlington, MA, 01803, for the following: Bent Street - TC Systems, Inc is seeking permission to attach aerial fiber optic cable to 50 electric utility poles. The route will include Cedar Street, Dudley Street, Montgomery Street, Sherman Street and Walden Street.

**Present:** Erica Hudson.

**Summary:** There is no excavation all the work is aerial. Wholly own subsidiary of AT&T aerial fiber on 50 utility poles on Cedar, Dudley, and Sherman Street. This is required to provide relief to the

current service and bring additional capacity for service in the area. They are seeking for this to be done between November 2024 and Spring of 2025. There is no excavation.

Discussion on double poles on Cedar Street - Pole 4 and 6, which would both need to be removed prior to new attachments. Pole 61 on Sherman Street is learning – they need to confirm with Verizon it is safe. Applicant stated they do not intend to replace any poles.

**Decision:** Granted pending official licenses from Eversource for attachments and the condition that double poles Cedar Street (Pole 4 and 6) need to be removed prior to any new attachments, and certification from Verizon that Pole 61 on Sherman Street is safe to be used and for additional attachments.

**4. New petition (282307) - Comcast**, 426 E. First Street, Boston, MA 02127, for the following: Harvard Street - From pole #230/3 located on Elm Street, trench +/- 51 feet southwesterly to the private property line of 213 Harvard Street, installing (1) 4-inch PVC conduit.

**Present:** Shane Flewelling.

**Additional Documents Considered:** Correspondence received from resident.

**Summary:** This is to excavate 51 feet from Pole 33 to private property line to connect to a conduit installed by the developer. There is a double pole as well. This would be for new service; this used to be an empty lot which was turned into a new 8-unit building.

There was alteration for the dig at Elm Street to be done perpendicularly. The double pole also would need to be removed before any new attachment. Resident abutter complained about lines that hit their home when wind blows, Comcast will take care of them or work with the utility that owns them to take care of them.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions, and additional conditions that they must cross Elm Street perpendicularly, provide and updated plan showing the new route, permanent trench repair, and removal of double pole prior to any new installations. In addition, Comcast must take care of the line that hits the resident's building when wind blows.

**5. New petition (280475) - Comcast**, 426 E. First Street, Boston, MA 02127, for the following: Fayette Street - Northeasterly from pole #265/5 to 12 Fayette Street, install approximately 8 feet of conduit.

**Present:** Shane Flewelling.

**Summary:** Installed by the developer when they did the home, take ownership of the conduit. No new excavation per se. This was caught back a few months ago with Eversource so this is a "clean-up" petition to close the loop on this.

**Decision:** Granted.

**6. New petition (280450) - Comcast**, 426 E. First Street, Boston, MA 02127, for the following: Broadway - From existing Comcast manhole on Broadway, trench easterly +/- 170 feet installing (2) 4-

inch conduits and place (1) new 3'x5' manhole over existing Comcast conduit servicing 90 Broadway. From newly placed manhole, trench easterly +/- 345 feet installing (2) 4-inch conduits and place (1) 3'x5' manhole. From newly placed manhole, trench easterly +/- 270 feet installing (2) 4-inch conduits and place (1) new 3'x5' manhole over the existing duct bank in the sidewalk to reconnect to the existing duct bank. This is a DPW request to remove the existing underground duct bank system from the sidewalk into the street.

**Present:** Shane Flewelling.

**Summary:** This is a forced relocation requested by and coordinated with the Department of Public Works. This is to remove duct bank out of sidewalk to make way for drain pipe, moving back into the street.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions.

**7. New petition (283002) - Comcast**, 426 E. First Street, Boston, MA 02127, for the following: Channing Street and Brattle Street - Comcast proposes to take ownership of an existing 1.25-inch conduit from pole #4 on Channing Street, 5 feet to the private property line of 170 Brattle Street. The conduit is already installed and the request came from the City Electrician.

**Present:** Shane Flewelling.

**Summary:** This is a “clean-up” petition to take ownership of a conduit that was already installed without a grant by the developer. There was a site visit and there is also a conduit for Eversource Electric for which no grant was provided. Eversource was informed of the issue.

**Decision:** Continue pending Eversource petition for conduit installed without grant of location, and site visit.

**8. Revocation of Grant of location for Eversource petition #187540 for failure to start and complete the proposed work within the allowed time set by the Pole and Conduit policy** - for the following: Western Avenue - Beginning 40 feet west of Putnam Avenue curb, extending 100 feet +/- along/within the south side of Western Avenue sidewalk, install (1) mechanical cabinet, replace gas regulator pit(s) with new control, monitor and slam shut, interconnect with buried 4-inch CSHP, 6-inch PHD HP, 8-inch CS LP, 12" CS/HDPE LP, supply/main line(s) and conduit. Install (1) handhole and (1) electrical cabinet approximately 60 feet east of Blackstone Street within sidewalk, connected with 1 ¼-inch rigid conduit. Cabinets to be protected with bollards (2 each). Connect communication line(s), transmitters and vents. Work required to improve/upgrade control monitoring protection of underground gas pipeline system.

**Present:** No one appeared on behalf of Eversource.

**Summary:** On August 18, 2022, the Board voted 3 - 0 to grant this petition. The Grant of Location was issued in January 2023. Eversource gas has been working out there but does not know whether on this. There has been email correspondence with the contractor but no information as to if and when this work will take place.

**Decision:** Grant revoked; petitioner will need to refile if intend to do the work.

**9. Continuation from October 19, 2023 for further coordination (244935) - Eversource Energy,** 101 Linwood Street, Somerville, MA 02143, for the following: Broadway - Southeasterly from MHC2141 to MHC915 at Third Street, install approximately 427 feet of conduit.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway.

**Summary:** This is for new electric service for a new laboratory building. DPW met with Eversource on the petition as there is a lot of work in the area and this will need coordination.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions, and additional condition to coordinate the work with the Department of Public Works.

*[Note: Petitions listed as #10 & 11 on the agenda were called/considered together.]*

**10. New petition (277624) - Eversource Energy,** 101 Linwood Street, Somerville, MA 02143, for the following: Highland Street - South side, approximately 290 feet east of Appleton Street, install one pole, P356/6, with an anchor guy.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway, Eversource; and Shane Flewelling, Comcast.

**Summary:** This is for a new pole on Highland to provide the customer at 22 Highland electric service. Common trench was sent out and Eversource received no response. Flewelling Comcast has a conduit at same site of pole.

Flewelling went to the site and spoke with the contractor and customer. If the customer can be fed aerially, that is how Comcast intends to do it since placing it underground is a larger expense to Comcast which would have to be transferred to the customer. Comcast has not received a response from the customer on how to proceed.

**Decision:** Continued pending confirmation from Comcast as to whether they are joining the trench (see #277626), and for more information as to where the anchor guy is necessary and, if necessary, where will be installed with the notation that it cannot be on the sidewalk.

**11. New petition (277626) - Eversource Energy,** 101 Linwood Street, Somerville, MA 02143, for the following: Highland Street - Southwesterly from pole 356/6, approximately 290 feet east of Appleton Street, to private property at #22 Highland Street, install approximately 15 feet of conduit.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway, Eversource; and Shane Flewelling, Comcast.

**Summary:** This is for a new pole on Highland to provide the customer at 22 Highland electric service. Common trench was sent out and Eversource received no response. Flewelling Comcast has a conduit at same site of pole.

Flewelling went to the site and spoke with the contractor and customer. If the customer can be fed aerially, that is how Comcast intends to do it since placing it underground is a larger expense to

Comcast which would have to be transferred to the customer. Comcast has not received a response from the customer on how to proceed.

**Decision:** Continued pending confirmation from Comcast as to whether they are joining, and if so, pending the submission of Comcast's petition for their conduit.

**12. New petition (280310) - Eversource Energy**, 101 Linwood Street, Somerville, MA 02143, for the following: Massachusetts Avenue - Northeasterly from pole 21/1 to private property line at 2400 Massachusetts Avenue, install approximately 30 feet of conduit in Alberta Avenue.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway. Rhea Lesage, resident.

**Summary:** This is at Alberta Terrace for new service at 2400 Massachusetts Avenue for retail space. The conduit is to remain in the sidewalk and from there enter the building. Lesage only was inquiring as to the whether this was underground work.

**Decision:** Granted with amendment that the conduit must all be under the sidewalk and with typical conditions, and additional conditions that the plan needs to be updated showing that the conduit is all under the sidewalk, and permanent sidewalk restoration.

**13. New petition (282338) - Eversource Energy**, 101 Linwood Street, Somerville, MA 02143, for the following: Concord Ave - Northwesterly from MHC1616, approximately 120 feet northwest of Craigie Street, to MHC1618, install approximately 120 feet of conduit and easterly from MHC1617 to private property at #33 Concord Avenue, install approximately 6.5 feet of conduit. Purpose is to provide service to #33 Concord Avenue.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway.

**Summary:** This is to upgrade the electric service at 33 Concord Avenue. There is a large tree on manhole 1618 which will require coordination with the City Arborist. The southerly side of Concord Avenue needs to be restored with ADA compliant specs.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions and additional conditions of coordination with City arborist, sidewalk restoration for all areas disturbed, and sidewalk on southerly side of Concord Avenue must be made ADA compliant.

**14. New petition (283332) - Eversource Energy**, 101 Linwood Street, Somerville, MA 02143, for the following: Prospect Street and Harvard Street - Southwesterly then southeasterly, from MHC2398 on Prospect Street to MHC31345 on Harvard Street, install approximately 281 feet of conduit.

**Present:** Phyllis Galloway.

**Summary:** This work will be over existing duct bank to improve electric service reliability. They are using an existing manhole and installing new conduit to improve service. This work has already been coordinated with DPW.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions.

**15. Continuation from May 16, 2024 to explore option suggested by Commissioner Melo on the short dig rather than aerial feed (256376) - ExteNet Systems LLC**, 31 Chesterfield Road, Milton, MA 02186, for the following: Gore Street - The Applicant seeks permission to install a Small Cell Facility per plans submitted. This installation will include the following: an antenna mounted to the top of the pole; a shroud for radios mounted to the pole. The fiber and power connections will be done utilizing the existing pole lines.

**Present:** Bryan Simmons; and Karen Lavesque.

**Summary:** This is for an installation on a wooden utility pole at 61 Gore Street. The existing pole is 38 ft tall and will remain in place and at the same height. The closest structure is 62 feet away and the installation would be set aside from any public residences. The power would be fed aerially, there is existing conduit that will follow the same current path that will go aerial that can feed this installation. The installation complies with the provisions of the Small Cell Policy including but not limited to size, distance and ADA requirements.

Once again the question as to why the current route was being chosen when it appears that they are using Cambridge utility poles and going back to Somerville line. Verizon explained that only using Cambridge facilities and doing a dig to place new conduit rather than using existing conduit would be more disruptive to the residents. In addition, the area encompasses a newly paved road and sidewalk which would need to be restored to original condition. The dig, even though a shorter route, would be more disruptive than just popping in and out of the existing manhole and then just using the lines on the poles to connect.

**Decision:** Granted.

**16. New petition (281007) - Verizon New England**, 125 Lundquist Drive Braintree, MA 02184, for the following: Cambridge Park Drive - Verizon to place (4) new manholes and approximately 2,157 feet of conduit from proposed manhole, MH477d, on Cambridgepark Drive to the intersection with Alewife Brook Parkway.

**Present:** Bryan Simmons; and Karen Lavesque.

**Summary:** This would be to place four new manholes on Cambridgepark Drive. They have begun conversations with DCR for parkway work and have a draft of the permit; they were waiting for the conclusion on the hearing. They have an MWRA 8M permit which was uploaded to the record.

There was question as to whether there is enough space in the corridor, so test pits will need to be performed. Applicant questioned the needed for test pits since their plans were drawn up by an engineer. The Commission made clear that a 2,100 foot run without any previous notification, or coordination with the City is not appropriate and there should have been discussions prior to the submission of the petition with the City. In addition, the plan and proposed route ignore the duct bank that is on the opposite side of the street – this raises questions as to why they are not using the existing duct bank. Also, have any conduit surveys been done to use existing viable conduits rather than installing new ones.

**Decision:** Continued for: confirmation of DCR approval for work on Alewife Brook Parkway; MWRA 8M permits which need to be uploaded to the petition; test pits for the entire length of the corridor; confirmation as to whether they looked at using existing duct bank on the opposite side of the

street and if so reason why they are not using it; and survey results of existing conduit which need to be uploaded to the petition.

**17. Continuation from July 18, 2024 while Verizon and Crown Castle coordinate and provide more information to the Commission as to the previously approved related petitions so the petition can be properly reviewed. If there is no previously approved petition for the fiber/electric service, a petition to address that must be submitted (275965) - Crown Castle's petition was #241257 - Verizon New England, 125 Lundquist Drive Braintree, MA 02184, for the following: Vassar Street and Amesbury Street - Verizon to place 107'x2' of new conduit from pole 77 on Vassar Street to Crown Castle shared handhole on Amesbury Street.**

**Present:** Bryan Simmons, Verizon; and Brandi Spezzano, Crown Castle.

**Summary:** Place 107 feet of new conduit to shared manhole. Spezzano testified Crown Castle had already submitted a petition and received a Grant of Location for this work (#241257). The light pole at issue is a City light pole, and therefore, Eversource will need to feed the power to it (this is included in the Castle petition). No excavation has yet been done.

**Decision:** Granted with typical conditions.

**18. Commission Acknowledgment of Crown Castle changes to current antennas.** The antennas being modified are located on pole #12 at 25 First Street, pole #245 at 170 Gore Street and pole #160 at 25 Granite Street. Currently the existing antennas are 4' x 1.2', the new antennas will measure 2' x 1.2'.

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

**Summary:** This is basically placed on the agenda for the Commission to acknowledge the replacement of a smaller installation on a current one. However, only for one of the locations, 25 Granite Street was a grant of location found. It was agreed that any previous grant of locations would be manually entered by the Commission staff into the online system so that the updated plans could be uploaded and a Commission acknowledgement could be done. For the other two addresses, a Tolling Agreement would need to be entered while further review of records is done and if no grant of location is found, then there would need to be a new petition for a grant of location filed (and any current installation removed while a grant is provided).

**Decision:** For 25 Granite Street, acknowledged/approved pending submission of updated plan; for 25 Frist Street and 170 Gore Street Tolling Agreement pending submission of updated plans and any existing grants of location, if no grant of locations exist, must submit application for grant of location/installation.

**19. Crown Castle request to withdraw petition #193116 at 95 Dunster Street and petition #193118 at 6 Appian Way as requested in their letter dated August 13, 2024** - The customer, Verizon Wireless, does not wish to pursue the installation of the 5G Antenna Equipment. Each site will remain, approved under original petition number 137788, for the 4G installation.

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



**Summary:** They seek to fully withdraw Petition #193116 – for 69 JFK (even though the plans say 79 JFK) based on the GOL on #137788 of 69 JFK confirming that regardless of the address of the plans on #193116, this is all for 69 JFK.

Confirmed that Petition #193116 incorrectly states it includes a second installation. Petition #193116 has nothing to do with any installation or grant for 95 Dunster.

Petition #193118, is being fully withdrawn for 61 Brattle based on the GOL on #137788 for 69 Brattle on the basis that it is the same installation/location regardless of the difference in addresses. Confirmed the GOL on #137788 incorrectly states that the installation is on 69 Brattle rather than 61 Brattle.

Confirmed that Petition #193118 incorrectly states it includes a second installation. Petition #193118 has nothing to do with any installation or grant for 6 Appian Way.

**Decision:** Granted, applications stopped. Grant of location at 137788 updated to show proper addresses of where the installations are located.

**20. Crown Castle request for variance/waiver from the provisions of Cambridge Small Cell Policy for two locations, 4 Marion Street and 371 Green Street, which were respectively part of petitions #258883 and #258876** - Both installations are upgrades of previously approved locations. Modifications are needed to these sites in order to comply with new technology, as these sites were originally installed in 2009, to allow for increased bandwidth and reliability for residents and businesses, to enhance emergency services, and to continue to allow collocation of multiple carriers on a single pole, reducing the wireless installations on surrounding poles.  
For 4 Marion Street, the distance from the edge of the cabinet/shroud to the building at this location will be approximately 5.78 feet.  
For 371 Green Street, the distance from the edge of the cabinet/shroud to the roof of the nearest building will be approximately 3.8 feet.

**Present:** Brandi Spezzano; and Sarah Feely. Robert Snider, attorney for 259 Green Street.

**Summary:** They are requesting a variance based on the deviation from the policy would not be that significant. #258883 would be 5.78 ft away. There was discussion on how there is a current variance petition to erect additional floors on the structure to use as a hotel. For #258876, the installation would be 3.8 feet away and the antenna is higher than the building not making it an issue for the health care facility in place.

Petitioner argued that the measurements are done in a more conservative way than allowed by the FCC. In addition, they argued that the part of the installation that gives off radiation would not be close to the public.

Snider, on behalf of their client, spoke in opposition to the variance. Their client has a large number of outpatients going in and out of the door, the pole is somewhat leaning and there is a transformer at the top. Snider questioned why the need to install in that particular pole which is right at the entrance of a health care facility.

**Decision:** Denied.

**21. New petition (280427) - Crown Castle**, 1800 West Park Drive, Westborough, MA, 01581, for the following: Broadway - Upgrade existing location to provide the community with better service. The proposed work includes replacing existing cabinet which is approximately 4' x 2', with proposed new 5.8' x 2' cabinet and replacing existing cabinet, which is 50.1" x 29.7" and antenna, which is 48" x 14.6", with proposed 69.8" x 22" cabinet.

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

**Summary:** This petition is for two upgrades to existing equipment. The antenna portion of the upgrade is worded funny. The new antennas being installed are smaller, the shroud boxes are larger. The upgrade is necessary to provide community with better service. The installations comply with the provisions of the Small Cell Policy including but not limited to size, distance and ADA requirements. There will be no excavation on either location.

On Broadway the electrical meter must be removed. Crown Castle confirmed the meter is not for them and that they have a flat rate charge for small cell installations.

**Decision:** Granted.

**22. Consideration of Meeting Minutes** - July 18, 2024.

**Decision:** Approved.

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NMF  \_\_\_\_\_

**Minutes Approved:** September 19, 2024

MM  \_\_\_\_\_

**Minutes Posted:** September 19, 2024

TJS  \_\_\_\_\_