

Lopez, Donna

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**From:** Carol O'Hare [c.burchardohare@att.net]  
**Sent:** Monday, October 21, 2013 3:49 PM  
**To:** Rossi, Rich; City Council  
**Cc:** Peterson, Lisa; O'Riordan, Owen; Lopez, Donna  
**Subject:** Rossi & City Council: Report on Ways to Improve Cleanliness - #013-42  
**Attachments:** Rossi - DPW Memo 131016 - Central Sq. Cleanliness.doc

Re: Awaiting Report Item #013-42: report on ways to improve cleanliness of Central Square - Acting DPW Commissioner Owen O'Riordan

Dear Mr. Rossi, Mayor Davis and City Councillors:

I know City officials and personnel, businesses and neighborhood groups have long been exploring, designing and implementing various programs to "improve the cleanliness of" of the City. And, I sincerely applaud their efforts. Mr. O'Riordan's review (copy attached) includes a variety of programs, strategies and plans for addressing this quality of life problem in Central Square.

Am I naïve in suggesting a simple low-cost program to keep the City, **not just Central Square**, cleaner in the first place, rather than having to constantly clean-up-after? I'm thinking about how the various "Pay It Forward" campaigns across the nation have caught on recently to inspire people to pay for coffees and fast-food for people behind them in line. In that same spirit, can Cambridge initiate a "Keep Our City Clean," instead of Clean Our City Up campaign?

- Yes, *Cleanup Days*, *Cleanup Weekends* and *Cleanup Weeks* are common programs here and elsewhere, and they work for a time. But they don't change people's trash-tossing habits, whether in Central Sq., at the banks of the Charles, in our parks and squares or on our streets. Don't such designated "clean-up periods" just reinforce the concept that someone else will clean up for you?
  - Pro-active seems to be the word of the decade. So, why not institute and promote a positive Do-It-Yourself model, a year-round "Keep Cambridge Shining" campaign. Remember the nation-wide campaigns: "Don't be a Litterbug," Ladybird Johnson's "Beautify America," "Pooper-Scooper" and others. They were simple and worked.
  - Install eye-catching, well-designed permanent "Keep Cambridge Shining" signs on select trash bins and receptacles and elsewhere around the city, especially where there's a litter problem. The additional cleanliness will make up for the additional sign-clutter, especially if these signs are well-designed graphically. Maybe just an image that says it all.
  - Award prizes for good ideas and designs for implementing out an ongoing program. Call them "Pitch-In Prizes."
- Add more and closer trash and recycle receptacles in problem areas. The Holyoke Center/Mass Ave. block, there are 4 or 5 receptacles, at the street edge of the sidewalk. And, there's also one within Au Bon Pain's outside seating area.
- Include an age-appropriate curriculum-segment at several school grade-levels about garbage/trash, recycling and keeping our environment clean.
- Give free showings of WALL-E\* in schools and libraries throughout the city.  
<http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0910970/plotsummary>.
- Have the businesses (esp., restaurants, fast-food and around the Square educate their customers with posters inside their stores about keeping Central Square litter-free. How about prizes (free fries, coffee, etc.) for people who sign-up to "Keep Cambridge Shining" year-round. How about attractive, free buttons or wristbands. I know the Central Sq. Business Assoc. has been working on this for some time, and I'm sure they have many good ideas.
- Institute an ongoing, city-wide volunteer program to Keep Cambridge Shining. Use as models: DPW's "Tree Keepers" (volunteers commit for 2 years to "adopt"/care for new trees), Junior Foresters (volunteers weed, water, mulch, remove litter, report tree injury), Tree Ambassador/Water-By-Bike, Recycling Neighbors; Cambridge School Volunteers; and, probably others.

- Others groups and people will certainly have more than these few ideas prompted by Mr. O’Riordan’s thoughtful report.

**Bottom Line:** The City should lead by promoting and teaching: DIY - Keep Cambridge Shining! Even though fast-food and other business may be the source of much of the unsightly trash, businesses shouldn’t and can’t be responsible for curing people’s bad-trashing habits. Inspire people to Pitch-In, literally and figuratively.

**Note:** This may not be the best, catchiest slogan. Someone can certainly improve it. Though I do think the slogan should be positive, not just “Pitch-In.”

***Keep Cambridge Shining***

Thank you, as always, for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Carol O’Hare  
172 Magazine St.

Cc: Lisa Peterson, Deputy City Manager  
Owen O’Riordan, Acting Public Works Commissioner  
Donna Lopez, City Clerk – Please file this email with the Official Records.

P.S.

If “Keep Cambridge Shining” doesn’t work, then try “Make Cambridge Shine,” as other municipalities have done.



But NOT for just for “One Day/Weekend/Week & Done”-campaigns like the one below and gazillions of others:

