

Notes for CLF cheung hearing:

fk presents history of our founding

I'm frank Kramer the former owner of Harvard Book Store a 75 year old independent bookstore which was sold to another local owner on 10/1/2008. A few years before I sold, when bookstores in Cambridge and across the country were closing at an alarming rate due in large part to the rapid growth of the internet sellers like Amazon.com, local business alliances began forming in many cities. As a member of a national booksellers group I learned that bookstores were often the catalysts for these groups and I watched as groups appeared in Boulder, Colorado, Bellingham Wa and Austin Texas. In each case hundreds of locally owned businesses combined their energies to educate the public and their governments about the many advantages and benefits to communities of shopping locally. A bookseller in Boulder gave me a book called the Home Town Advantage which I bought and gave to many colleagues here in Cambridge. Simon Shapiro of Tag's hardware joined me and we met with then Mayor Sullivan and Estella Johnson seeking support. We found quickly that there is huge emotional support for our concept, but it was going to be hard to get started with anything concrete. In early 2005, Laury Hammel a man who had cofounded several lba's as well

as a national umbrella organization called BALLE contacted us and he helped us bring together a group of about 15 locally owned businesses and within a few short weeks we had formed a steering committee made up of local business owners. We quickly became a 501 c3 non profit and invited other businesses in our neighborhoods to join our organization.

Within a short time we produced a decal for their windows and a directory for the public to use when they were seeking local providers for goods and services. These directories are available in all member businesses, three community banks, city offices and every police officer has been given one to help people find the listed businesses.

In the last 5 years our numbers have grown to 285 strong and our decals are ubiquitous on business windows and doorways throughout the city.

We are delighted to be invited here this evening to find ways to work together with you to improve our community and strengthen the Cambridge economy.

Mission of the Local Economy Communities Initiative (LECI)

The Local Economy Communities Initiative (LECI) is a program designed to engage elected leaders and municipal governments in promoting and building strong local economies.

This initiative emphasizes the importance of residents, businesses, non-profits, and government agencies in making the 10% Shift, and goes beyond this important message to include a comprehensive and multi-faceted approach to building strong local and regional economies. It recognizes that everyone in the community needs to be engaged in localized economic development. Furthermore, this initiative makes it clear that in order to build a strong local economy a community needs a strong and effective local nonprofit organization dedicated to this mission.

Local Economy Community Initiative Resolution

Resolution for Cambridge to Become a Local Economy Community

Whereas Cambridge, the United States, and our planet are confronted with a major economic crisis.

Whereas the solution to these economic challenges is in strengthening our local and regional economies.

Whereas there is a growing grassroots movement in every region of the U.S. committed to localizing our economy and building healthy, vibrant and sustainable communities.

Be it therefore resolved that the City of Cambridge become a "Local Economy Community" and implement the following five steps toward building a local economy as soon as possible:

Identify and establish policies that directly support the growth and development of locally owned and independent businesses in ~~Somerville~~ Cambridge.

Shift at least 10% of municipal procurement from nonlocal businesses to locally owned independent businesses.

Shift at least 10% of all money deposited in banks from non-local banks to locally owned and/or regionally owned independent banks.

Shift at least 10% of all food served by our local government agencies from non-local food to locally grown and produced food.

Partner with and help fund Cambridge Local First to enable it to more effectively do what is necessary to build a strong local and regional

economy.

Beyond this of course, is Cambridge Local First's and the city of Cambridge's mutual commitment to make our city a better environmental model including encouraging and actively helping local businesses "green up" their business practices. The connection to the Sustainable Business Leader Program, for example, is one way we at Cambridge Local First have been part of a dynamic movement to help create a better environment, educate businesses on actions they can take to be healthier members of the community, and sometimes even help those businesses save money by using sounder and safer products and services. More to the point, this shows the level of our commitment to not only help our locally owned and independent businesses grow but to be consistent in our message that locally owned businesses in partnership with residents and government officials are the key in creating a better community and being a model for the rest of the Commonwealth...and country.