



City Council
General Government
Meeting

36 Court Street
Springfield, MA 01103
<http://www.springfieldcityhall.com>

Councilor Hurst (Chair)

~Final~

February 19,
2026

5:00 PM

City Hall - Room 200

Roll Call

In Person

Justin Hurst
Gerry Martin
Victor Davila
Chris Cignoli (Dir. DPW)
Jeanette (Masslive)
Marybeth (Pres. Spfld College)
Mike Jari VPSC
Oman DeGavo
Johnny Ray McKnight

Zoom

Lavar Click-Bruce
Tracye Whitfield
AACS Office
Spfld College
Ken Shea

Constituents

A.J. Buffalo
Cynthia Davis
Pernese
Rhonda Sherell (Old Hill neighborhood Council)
Antonio Delesline
AP
Bea Dewberry
Becky Lartigue
Danielle
Desi

Esther Hudson
 Hannah Cheney
 K
 Mark Jenkins LICSW
 Nicole
 Rachelle Lee
 Renee Dingman
 Shandreka
 T
 Tania
 Wayne Barbour
 Earvin Earl Carelock Jr

Attendee Name	Title	Status	Arrived
Brian Santaniello	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Gerry Martin	City Councilor — Ward 7	Present	
Maria Perez	City Councilor — Ward 1	Excused	
Malo Brown	City Councilor — Ward 4	Excused	
Zaida Govan	City Councilor — Ward 8	Excused	
Kateri Walsh	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Justin Hurst	City Councilor At Large	Present	
Victor Davila	City Councilor — Ward 6	Present	
Michael Fenton	City Councilor — Ward 2	Excused	
Jose Delgado	City Councilor At Large	Excused	
Lavar Click-Bruce	City Councilor — Ward 5	Virtual	
Melvin Edwards	City Councilor — Ward 3	Excused	
Tracye Whitfield	City Councilor At Large	Virtual	

Call To Order

5:00 PM Meeting called to order on February 19, 2026, in Hybrid Room 200, 36 Court Street, Springfield, MA 01103.

Public Portion

1. Wilbraham Avenue / Discontinue

Minutes:

Springfield City Council General Government Subcommittee Meeting Summary

Date: February 19, 2026

Time: 5:00 p.m. (convened at approximately 5:05 p.m.)

Purpose: Discussion on the petition to discontinue Wilbraham Avenue (segments north and south of Alden Street) as a public way, with ownership to transfer to Springfield College.

DPW Presentation – Chris Cignoli:

Chris Cignoli provided background on the discontinuance proposal: discussions began 5–6 years ago during nearby street reconstruction. Springfield College initiated the request during planning for the Health Sciences Building. A prior petition was tabled approximately two years ago pending public meetings and a traffic study. Springfield College held multiple public meetings in 2024 and 2025, attended by DPW staff.

Key points:

- Alden Street would remain open and under City control.
- Two segments of Wilbraham Avenue (north and south of Alden) are proposed for transfer to the College.
- Increased pedestrian traffic near the campus raises safety concerns.
- DPW reviewed an independent traffic study and raised no objections.
- Utility easements or transfers may be required.

Springfield College Presentation:

Mary Beth Cooper highlighted safety concerns at the Wilbraham/Alden intersection due to increased foot traffic, package deliveries, and prior student-vehicle incidents, including one serious injury. She confirmed that Alden Street would remain open and emphasized that the proposal is intended to address pedestrian safety rather than restrict community access. Four public meetings with Old Hill and Upper Hill residents were held over two years.

Mike Jari presented safety data:

- Over 70 incidents reported since 2010, with 28 vehicle-related incidents and 8 injuries since 2020.
- Independent 2023 traffic study showed crash rates above state averages.
- Study concluded discontinuance would not materially impact surrounding traffic patterns, though minor inconvenience may occur.

Council Discussion:

- Chair Hurst expressed concern over the item appearing on the full Council agenda without prior neighborhood engagement. He confirmed with Cignoli that Springfield College would own the discontinued segments and could potentially place barriers at

intersections, while Alden Street would remain City-owned. Hurst suggested a written agreement to maintain Alden access and discussed the College's tax-exempt status and potential PILOT considerations. Cignoli and Cooper noted no such agreements had been discussed.

- Councilor Davila emphasized safety but questioned whether full discontinuance is necessary. He requested clarification of the exact segments, updated traffic impact data, environmental considerations, and formal neighborhood council input.
- Madam President Whitfield asked whether other traffic calming measures (temporary speed signs, flashing lights) had been fully explored. Cignoli and College representatives noted prior measures had limited effectiveness.

Public Comments:

- Pernese Morris (Upper Hill) opposed discontinuance, citing inconvenience for residents, emergency access, and preference for traffic calming.
- Johnny Ray McKnight suggested updated traffic study, police presence, crossing guards, or speed bumps prior to closure.
- Esther Hudson (Old Hill) expressed concern over traffic rerouting, requested Alden Street access guarantees, and raised tax burden considerations.
- Rhonda Sherrell (Hickory Street, Old Hill Neighborhood Council) cited congestion, emergency access, and pedestrian behavior concerns; preferred traffic calming.
- Cynthia Davis (resident, College alum) requested details on traffic impacts and questioned absence of PILOT agreement.

Chair Hurst also read an email from Springfield College student Mia Tulin requesting increased campus privacy and safety.

Closing Actions:

- Item will remain in subcommittee.
- Springfield College will provide:
 1. A clear diagram of affected segments, access points, and proposed barriers.
 2. Updated information to Old Hill and Upper Hill neighborhood councils.
 3. Exploration of alternatives to full discontinuance.
- Another subcommittee meeting will be scheduled, likely after March neighborhood meetings. Full Council consideration expected, possibly in early April, but likely continued.

Adjournment:

Motion to keep the item in committee and adjourn were approved unanimously. Meeting adjourned shortly after 6:00 p.m.

[MIN_SIGNATURES]