

Thank you. It's amazing to see so many friends here today.

- neighbors and college classmates,
- friends I've made through my children's schools,
- on the sidelines of youth soccer games,
- walking my dog at Fresh Pond,
- current and former work colleagues,
- and through my community involvement with
- Many Helping Hands/MLK Day and the FPRA.

Cambridge has been my home since 1993.

Each if you has helped to make it a community I care deeply about making an even better place to live and put down roots.

My awareness of the some of the biggest challenges the city faces has grown since I began working at Community Charter School of Cambridge 3 years ago.

I want to take a minute to acknowledge three CCSC students who are here today to help: Claudlyne, Ishrat and Perardine.

They all live in Cambridge and are members of our National Honor Society.

They are all bright, hardworking young women who will make our city proud one day.

We owe them the opportunity to live and work here when they graduate from college.

So in their honor I want to frame my remarks around 4 words that they hear every day because they are the school's values and initials: Commitment, Citizenship, Scholarship and Courage.

1st, Commitment:

If you know me at all, you know I don't do things by half measures. So I think all of you can trust that if I'm elected, I will be 110% committed to doing an excellent job for the city.

And being your councilor would be my full-time occupation.

2nd, Citizenship:

Running for office is not something that was part of my life plan, but it feels important, even critical, for someone with my experience, skills, and creativity to step up to serve the city in this way, at this moment in time.

So I'm taking the leap and a big personal risk to win the opportunity to work for you.

3rd, Scholarship:

Cambridge is the nation's intellectual and innovation capital, world renowned for innovation. Ask yourselves, do we have a council of the equivalent caliber?

I've always been an excellent student. I am that lifelong learner that schools aim to produce.

You can count on me to always do my homework and to bring more critical thinking, creativity, accountability and transparency to the council.

Qualities that I think have been sorely lacking (present company excluded).

Finally, Courage.

We have some big decisions and challenges ahead of us

- a 3-year master plan process starting,
- climate change resiliency and Net Zero action plans in the works,
- a city manager contract up for review,
- a search for a new school superintendent,
- and much more.

The council needs members who aren't beholden to special interests to keep them in office term after term -- and who aren't afraid to challenge the status quo and question traditional assumptions.

Who are *forward thinking leaders*.

Two recent examples of where the council has let us down in the vision department:

- supporting the Normandy/Twining up-zoning in Central Sq and
- opposing a bike lane on Pearl St.

Both have sparked heated debates.

You may wonder why I'm taking on this fight -- why I'd leave a good job working with people I admire and for a mission I feel passionately about -- creating opportunities through education for young people who didn't win the birth lottery.

My answer is that I think that if more people like me aren't willing to step up, then we have only ourselves to blame when we are unhappy with what we see happening in the world.

Look outside – the Alewife area is what you get when you leave the decision making to people who don't have the courage to stand up to the entrenched interests and say, "We can do better."

We *can* do better -- but it won't be easy.

I'm looking forward to working with Nadeem Mazen, Dennis Carlone, and any other councillors who will pledge to supporting *sustainable* growth policies that prioritize working people, strong neighborhoods, and the environment we leave our children.

It's exactly 6 months to the day until the election.

What I need you all to do between now and Nov. 3 is to talk to your friends and neighbors about the values Nadeem, Dennis and I stand for.

We need to engage more residents in local issues so they know what's at stake when they go to the polls.

Too many people vote without being fully informed about whether their councillors are working for them, or for special interests.

Too many people don't vote at all. We need to bring them into the process.

I'm assembling a team of talented young women to work with me – my campaign manager Nora Bent grew up in Belmont and is graduating in a few days from American University with a degree in politics concentrating on gender and race. She's interned in Elizabeth Warren's office and volunteered for Ed Markey's campaign. I'm also bringing on a rising senior at Princeton's Woodrow Wilson School of Public Policy, who grew up in Concord. And some other young women will be helping too. We need more women in politics. I'm hoping my campaign can both train and inspire younger female leaders.

There are clipboards to sign-up to host a coffee or tea in your home and for put up a yard sign this fall.

Thank you for coming today and thank you for caring about the kind of city we are creating for the younger people in this room.