

Madalyn Letellier

From: Greta Pintacuda [REDACTED]
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:01 AM
To: All City Council
Cc: Public Comments; Yenal Lakes
Subject: Urgent Concern: Public Feeding of Pigeons and Associated Health Risks

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Dear Somerville City Council,

I hope this email finds you well. I am writing to bring to your attention an issue of growing urgency, particularly in light of the concerning threat of a potential bird flu pandemic.

I reside near Union Square, where I frequently observe individuals feeding wild birds—especially pigeons—by scattering bread, seeds, cakes, and other food on sidewalks and public spaces. While I appreciate that these actions often stem from kindness and a love for animals, I am deeply concerned about the unintended consequences:

1 Increased rodent activity – The food left out for birds also attracts rats and mice, exacerbating an already critical infestation.

2 Public health risks – Pigeons, in particular, are known carriers of disease, including Cryptococcosis, Histoplasmosis, and Psittacosis, with their droppings contributing to unsanitary conditions on sidewalks and public spaces.

3 Harm to wildlife – Feeding wild birds human food is detrimental to their health and disrupts natural foraging behaviors.

3 Danger to pets – Leftover food on sidewalks is often consumed by dogs, posing a serious health hazard. I personally experienced an emergency when my puppy ingested chocolate cake crumbs scattered in Union Square.

Given these concerns, I urge the city council to take initial steps to address this issue. At a minimum, placing informational posters in Union Square discouraging the feeding of pigeons would help educate the community and curb these behaviors.

I appreciate your time and consideration and hope the city will take action to mitigate these risks. Please let me know if there are any existing or planned initiatives related to this issue.

Best regards, Greta Pintacuda

[REDACTED]
Somerville

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