

Regarding Flock cameras in Milton - Concerned residents

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To sb@miltonma.gov

Date Wednesday, July 15th, 2026 at 9:55 AM

Good Morning,

This email pertains to the Town of Milton's procurement and installation of Flock ALPR devices, leased in December 2024 and installed March through May of 2025.

We have obtained background information on this procurement from Nick Milano + team and PRRs from MPD, and now bring some concerning information to the Select Board.

For those unfamiliar with Flock Group: Flock is a surveillance technology and data sharing company best known by their flagship product name, Flock Safety. Flock develops devices which capture information on passerby, most notably vehicle details and/or plate numbers.

These products are installed in public areas by way of lease agreements with municipalities and property owner-operators. Once commissioned, the captured data is fed offsite to a cloud service, where the data can then be accessed by the lessee.

The appeal to law enforcement is well known. On its surface, Flock Group offers a turnkey ALPR system far simpler to deploy than the conventional ALPR/VMS products used by law enforcement for over a decade. (It's solar-powered and uses LTE data, which eliminates the need for local network and electrical service.)

The issues lie in the storage and governance of the data, which again, concerns the day-to-day whereabouts of our residents. Once Flock has housed this data, the Flock subscriber – police - can choose to make the data searchable by other agencies at local, state and federal levels.

This is a textbook example of "network effect." The more agencies participating, the more valuable the data becomes, and the stronger the draw to participate.

The unfortunate byproduct is authorities at all levels being equipped to reconstruct (and even infer) the movement patterns of an increasing pool of individuals in the US from a website, and often without a warrant.

This functionality of course invites abuse. Flock has faced condemnation from many civil rights groups, including the EFF and ACLU, over misuse of its products in personal vendettas, stalking ex-partners, ICE operations, and - famously - an investigation into a woman seeking out-of-state reproductive health care.

Further compounding this problem is the surprising lack of public transparency in their adoption by the town. Despite Flock being an instantly-recognizable brand and the subject of much national controversy, the term 'Flock' does not appear to have ever touched a town meeting warrant before being implemented, nor has it appeared in any meeting minutes.

This is because, despite Milton residents having *just* passed a budget authorizing \$90,000 in capital improvements for public way camera upgrades, we are now learning MPD had already entered into a separate \$39,500/yr lease agreement with Flock Group using only their operating budget, with no presentation having been made to the Warrant Committee in any place of public record.

Let's shelve the ALPR debate for a moment. **The notion that the entire town can be committed to such a broad, invasive lease agreement with a private entity through a single department's operating budget without public disclosure/debate is, holistically, outrageous.**

Municipalities in MA and across the country have been concluding their contracts with Flock Group, having grappled with a similar dilemma and reaching the same conclusion. We're asking the individuals on this email to perform a postmortem on this activity and explore options to do the same.

There is a roadmap to a positive outcome here. As we saw in May, the cost appetite for traditional camera upgrades is very healthy; residents are well aware of the road conditions and who protects them. New technological capabilities such as ALPR also merit careful discussion but a happy medium is absolutely achievable. If MPD would like to host a discussion or public RFC on ALPRs in the community, acknowledge the very real oversight/transparency issues inherent to these systems, and discuss costs for Fy27 to introduce a system which speaks to these concerns, a tremendous shift in the narrative could be achieved here.

But first, Flock has to go. (Any discourse while the contract is active would not be conducive to a productive discussion.)

I've cited sources below. Please let me know if there are any additional details we can provide, and any stewardship you can offer here will be greatly appreciated.

Thank you for your time,
Jack Kelly
Milton, MA

Sources

Discovery - Correspondence with WC and PRR's from MPD

[Proton Drive Shared Folder, last updated July 14 2026]

<https://drive.proton.me/urls/PVTSM4YHVR#S8szkRtqLH2F>

Media - Flock Contract Cancellations

[Jan 28 2026] Natick Select Board squashes Flock license plate reader pilot; Police chief apologizes and explains

<https://www.natickreport.com/2026/01/natick-select-board-quashes-flock-license-plate-reader-pilot-police-chief-apologizes-explains/>

[Jan 28 2026] Watertown Cancelling Contract for Flock License Plate Reading Cameras

<https://www.watertownmannews.com/2026/01/28/watertown-cancelling-contract-for-flock-license-plate-reading-cameras/>

[Dec 10 2025] Cambridge Ends Contract with License Plate Reader Amid Concerns Over 'Breach of Trust'

<https://www.thecrimson.com/article/2025/12/10/cambridge-ends-flock-contract/>

[June 25 2026] Framingham Police will not renew Flock Safety contract after months of resident opposition

<https://www.boston.com/news/local-news/2026/06/25/framingham-police-will-not-renew-flock-safety-contract-after-months-of-resident-opposition/>

[July 11 2026] LAPD Suspends Flock Safety contract over data privacy disagreements

<https://www.foxla.com/news/lapd-suspends-flock-safety-surveillance-contract-privacy>

Media - Cases of Flock Abuse

[July 7 2026] 5 Albany police officers arrested for misusing license plate readers

<https://www.fox5atlanta.com/news/5-albany-police-officers-arrested-misusing-license-plate-readers>

[June 16 2026] (Roundup article) Over a dozen police officers arrested for using Flock cameras to stalk citizens across America

<https://cambridgeanalytica.org/surveillance-privacy/police-flock-cameras-stalking-arrests-51112/>

[May 27, 2025] ICE Taps into Nationwide AI-Enabled Camera Network, Data Shows

<https://www.404media.co/ice-taps-into-nationwide-ai-enabled-camera-network-data-shows/>

[Dec 30 2025] Electronic Frontier Foundation's Investigations Expose Flock Safety's Surveillance Abuses: 2025 in Review

<https://www.eff.org/deeplinks/2025/12/effs-investigations-expose-flock-safety-surveillance-abuses-2025-review>

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