

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

March '06

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ANC News

NOTES FROM THE FEB. 15 MEETING

New to Agassiz Retail Community: PolkaDot Pajamas

Polkadot Pajamas, a boutique that offers in-home design consultation and sells custom made and manufactured children's clothing, accessories, bedding and gifts, is announced by a striking, colorful sign which attracts gawkers who sometimes snap photos of it from across the street. Proprietor Michelle Bonacci, who has a degree in interior design and over ten years experience as a childcare provider, told the ANC, "I love our new location at 1695 Mass Ave!"

The business, previously located on Huron Ave., is now two years old and has graced Mass Ave. for seven months. Polkadot Pajamas is proud to support stay-at-home moms by selling their arts, crafts and handywork. The shop not only designs themed nurseries, playrooms and custom birth announcements, they also help parents transition their kids' rooms "from toddler to teen"

and do much of their sewing in-house!

To enjoy the Polkadot Pajamas experience first hand, simply drop by the boutique, call 617-868-2222, or visit them on the web at www.polkadotpajamas.net.



Cambridge Agassiz Harvard Fund Update

Miriam Goldberg, Chair of the Cambridge Agassiz Harvard Community, Culture & Recreation Fund (CAH Fund), told residents at the February 15th ANC meeting, "People who represent the Agassiz neighborhood, Harvard University, and the city at large discussed initiatives that will have a ripple effect on the city as a whole."

Among the initiatives discussed was the Aging in Place proposal, submitted by Terry DeLancey of the ANC, which details a program that would

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



MARCH 15 - 7:30 PM

**Baldwin School Cafeteria - 28
Sacramento Street
(Press buzzer for entry)**

AGENDA

Welcome Cambridge City Counselor Craig Kelley

Lesley University Update - Construction & Planning

LISE Fuel & Chemical Storage Update

support Agassiz residents who hope to remain in their own homes throughout their later years. Ms. Goldberg said, "Kate Frank, a resident who is very involved with this idea, hosted a lively and well-attended introductory meeting with people from Agassiz and other Cambridge neighborhoods."

Another proposal reviewed by the CAH Fund is for a city-wide after school program designed for seventh and eighth graders to learn how to use various media techniques, produce films and possibly collaborate with Cambridge public television stations. This program would be a joint project between Cambridge Public Schools and the ANC and would utilize the Media Arts Studio located at Rindge and Latin school.

Ms. Goldberg explained, "A third possible project focuses on art programs for adults, in particular, a series of lectures." She also informed residents at the ANC meeting that the amounts of money coming to the community through the Harvard/Agassiz Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) are being managed by the Cambridge Community Foundation. To date Harvard has put \$200,000 into the Fund and given another \$50,000 for a tree program.

Harvard Construction Updates

Tom Lucey, Director of Community Relations at Harvard University, introduced himself, Senior Director of Community Relations Mary Power, and Ed Leflore of the mitigation team to regulars and new faces at the ANC Meeting. Mr. Lucey provided a quick rundown of Harvard University's construction projects, including:

- Steel erection at The Laboratory for Integrated Science and Engineering (LISE) building is on-going and the project remains on schedule to be completed next year.
- Work at nearby McKay lab will continue through the end of 2007.
- Construction of the Northwest Science building, located on the former surface parking lots behind 60 Oxford Street, continues with steel operations and excavation activities. This is scheduled to be completed in

early 2008.

- Ed Leflore added, "The Mitigation Department is always available to talk and address concerns, you can reach us at the Mitigation hotline number: 617-496-0857"

Mrs. Power explained further, "Harvard Law planning has moved rather slowly. It's natural for people to be curious about what's happening during the lulls." She added that over the past year the Law School has undertaken detailed financial and program analysis to guide their planning. They've also studied whether they could demolish Pound Hall as suggested by community members and they are considering the possibility of eventually removing half of the building.

The Law School is also looking at sites to relocate the wood frame houses; they're considering a location at the North Hall site. In response to a question, Mrs. Power clarified that Harvard appreciates the community's desire that the businesses located in the "Bence Pharmacy" building remain since they are important to residents. She added that to do so will depend on whether the Law School will be able to meet its programmatic requirements at the Everett Garage Street site.

Mrs. Power then went on to provide a list of Agassiz-Harvard MOU milestones and accomplishments:

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 overlooking Harvard Square.
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harvardyard.com

In March 2004, Harvard University and the Agassiz community agreed on a relationship that provides predictability for community and University both. Since then the Harvard Museum of Natural History has developed a series of programs to connect to Cambridge Public Schools. They created new curriculum materials, an internship program for the High school, and professional development course for teachers. They also worked with the Baldwin school on a program that will be televised on WGBH. Also, the Harvard Museum of Natural History organized a Family Night that attracted many children and families from Cambridge public schools. Through materials that they've created, benefits of these programs and curriculums reach well beyond public schools. Commitments to create Harvard's science education program are valued at over \$500,000.

Harvard has also assisted with implementation of traffic calming, which begun last fall (involving Garfield & Wendell Streets) and should be completed in spring with the installation of two tables on either side of Baldwin School to slow oncoming cars. Most of the crosswalks have been painted and the rest should follow in several months' time.

Fuel & Chemical Storage at Harvard's LISE building

"Nanoscience," explained Eric Martin, Technical Director for Harvard University's Center for Nanoscale Systems, "is based on small dimensional items so tiny that they need advanced microscopes to be seen. Harvard has the intellectual resources and now needs the physical resources to work with these technologies."

Dr. Martin is one of the individuals Harvard University brought to the meeting to address questions about storage of diesel fuel, flammable gas and solids at the Laboratory for Integrated Science and Engineering (LISE) Building under construction on the Harvard campus at Oxford Street. Also attending the meeting were registered fire protection engineer John Eisenberg from Rolf Jensen & Associates and from the City of Cambridge, Deputy Chief Dan Turner,

Fire Marshall and Captain Sandy Francis of the CFD's Fire Prevention Division. "I'm a customer of the safest environment," Dr. Martin told residents," Faculty and students wear protective gear and clothing to protect the samples they work with as much as to protect themselves." He explained that, since the exchange of ideas is stronger where different sciences can be together, the LISE building is designed to have all the different groups working together, in particular nanotech engineers and nanoscience physicists, chemists and biologists. The facilities will have restricted access, video monitoring, toxic gas monitoring and storage for waste solvents. There will also be 1,080 gallons of diesel fuel stored to run an emergency generator, which is required by code to operate emergency life safety systems (lighting, elevators, fire pump, etc.) in the event of a normal power failure.

John Eisenberg, registered fire protection engineer of Rolf Jensen & Associates in Framingham added, "I was brought in by Harvard as part of the design team for LISE. We reviewed the design of the building at each stage. These quantities of flammable gasses and solids listed are spread throughout the entire structure, which is divided into fire-rated zones that can only contain certain amounts of materials."

Deputy Chief Dan Turner, whose office is responsible for code enforcement, explained that once it's been estimated that a certain amount of storage has been exceeded, the applicant is required to go through a permitting process. This includes notifying abutters, working with a planning board and adhering to state and federal regulations. Of Harvard's LISE project he stated,

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“Everything we’ve seen so far has met the requirements. We’re one step in the stairway of processes they’ll need to go through.”

Q&A

Q: Does the aggregate number of flammable gasses and solids concern the Cambridge Fire Department?

Mr. Dan Turner: The numbers are alarming but history has shown that this can work without being a problem. Unfortunately, the fire department cannot say exactly what the chemicals are because of trade-rights laws. That’s why the plans show the classes of flammables. As the building rises, quantities of items stored are more limited.

Q: How is it determined how much each class can hold?

Mr. Dan Turner: The building is actually built to contain a certain number, not the other way around. There’s a very complicated formula that caps the amount of product that can be stored in a building.

Q: Have local university labs had problems in the past?

Mr. Dan Turner: We’ve had small incidents but nothing we couldn’t handle. We train and prepare constantly for worst-case scenarios and have the resources to handle these emergencies. Unlike most communities, we have our own hazardous materials response team that exchanges ideas monthly with universities and companies. When there are incidents, they tend to be small in quantity and minor.

Mr. Sandy Francis: Thanks to the level of support we receive from the Cambridge community, we’ve had the ability to train and educate ourselves. The CFD has 60 nationally certified Hazardous Materials Technicians.

Q: Is there a crisis plan within the building to inform agencies?

Mr. Dan Turner: There’s planning all in place if a fire extends beyond all the other levels of precaution. Twice a year Cambridge has disaster drills with discussions afterwards about what went right and what went wrong. It’s a constant process. As the Fire Marshall for the city of Cambridge, I can tell you nothing would get approved if it were beyond our capabilities.

UPDATE: Upon the close of the Feb. 15 ANC meeting, Chair Stephen Diamond and other Agassiz residents suggested having an impartial party review the list of flammables to be stored in the LISE building. Mr. Diamond sent a letter to the Cambridge License Commission to formally request an extension of the Harvard License discussion until this term could be met. That extension was granted. The Cambridge License Commission will review the application again on March 21st.

ANC Community

SAVE THE DATE - APRIL 5TH! RETIRE IN CAMBRIDGE

Cambridge residents are cordially invited to a free presentation cosponsored by the ANC and the Cambridge Council on Aging. Judy Willet, Executive Director of Beacon Hill Village (BHV), will give a presentation on this innovative, nationally reconized program that helps persons age 50 and older who live on Beacon Hill and in its adjacent neighborhoods enjoy safer, healthier and more independent lives in their own homes –well connected to a familiar and attentive community.

The event will be held on **April 5th** at the **Cambridge Council on Aging** (also known as the Senior Center building, across from City Hall), in the **Milne Ballroom, 806 Mass. Ave.** at **7:30 pm.**

For more information, contact Lynn Landon at 617 349-6287x12 or email her at llandon@agassiz.org. To learn about Beacon Hill Village, visit www.beaconhillvillage.org.

Donations

The Agassiz Neighborhood Council is seeking donations (see list below) for our office and



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- Educational Macintosh software and games for children grades K through 5
- Mac computer/iMac that runs OS9 or OSX
- Filing cabinets
- Silverware
- Cutting board
- Kitchen strainer
- Cheese knife
- Serving platter
- Mac-friendly digital camera
- 5' x 7' rug in good condition



Agassiz School Programs

A Preschool Lunar New Year

On February 2nd, the Preschool celebrated the Japanese holiday Setsubun, a lunar "New Year's Eve". The most common custom associated with Setsubun is the scattering/throwing of beans to chase away the bad.



Oni Mask

After Sacramento Preschool children constructed their Oni masks, they wore them outside to toss soybeans off the front porch with the help of Director Michelle Quinlan

who led them in declaring, "Fuku wa uchi! Oni wa soto!" Good luck in and devil out, or, as Michelle



explained to the pre-schoolers, "In with the good luck, out with the yucky luck"

Afterwards, they followed the custom of eating the number of roasted soybeans corresponding to their ages, which is said to bring good fortune!



Preschoolers create Oni Masks



Counting out the soybeans

2006 Outback Summer Program Registration begins in March

Registration has started for our popular summer program offered exclusively to kids entering grades 1 through 6 in the fall of 2006. We are proud to offer families a flexible summer schedule. Children may attend for just one week, all eight weeks, or any combination of weeks throughout the summer. We also offer two different daily schedules. Our regular day runs from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM and our extended day runs from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM.

Registration

Applicants are accepted on a "1st come 1st served" basis. The program opens on Monday, July 3rd (closed on July 4th) and runs for eight weeks through Friday, August 25, 2006.

Registration Fee: \$50 for 1st child, \$25 for each additional child attending Outback.



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Cost per week:

- \$165 for regular day 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM
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Contact the ANC For Additional Information

Program-specific questions: Barb MacEachern, Outback Director @617-349-6287 X 11

ANC Scholarships information: Lynn Landon, ANC Assistant Director @ 617-349-6287 X 12

Registration or billing questions: Roger Hucek, ANC Administrative Assistant @ 617-349-6287 X 19

NOTE: You may also download an Outback 2006 Registration Form at www.agassiz.org.

Introducing Arts Event - March 15

Join us on Wednesday, March 15 at the Baldwin School Stage to meet and enjoy musical selections from The Wild Band of Sneer!

Grammy nominated cellist Rushad Eggleston was the first string player to win a full scholarship to Berklee College of Music. Since then, he's toured widely with folk band Fiddlers 4 and neo bluegrass band Crooked Still and played at Carnegie Hall and The Kennedy Center.



Rushad will set the Baldwin Stage rocking with his wacky, inventive songs and sing-along-magic! Don't miss it!



When: Wednesday, March 15, 2pm
Where: Baldwin School Stage, 28 Sacramento Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

How Much: \$2 per person, \$5 per family, afterschool groups free



City Wide

Cambridge DPW Winter Parking Warning

It is illegal to reserve parking spaces on public streets with trash barrels, chairs or other items. The DPW will be enforcing this provision, beginning Thursday, Feb. 16. Confiscated items will be disposed.

Life After Sixty – A FREE Forum open to the public!

Harris Sussman, PhD, nationally known author and consultant, will be speaking on "The Next Big Thing." Refreshments and open discussion will follow.

Date & Time: Friday, March 10, 2006, 1 PM

Location: Cambridge College School of Education, 80 Prospect St., 2 blocks from Central Square.


Sponsor: the Cambridge Senior Volunteer Clearinghouse (CSVC)

Contact: CSVC at 617-864-6688

Skatepark Update

The Conservancy has raised over \$800,000 towards bringing a world-class skatepark to the banks of the Charles River! As part of the Supplemental Capital Budget Bill, the state legislators have approved funding earmarked for the design and construction of the Charles River Skatepark; the House approved \$75,000 and the Senate approved \$150,000. The budget will now be sent to conference committee to decide on the amount before it goes to Governor Romney for final approval.

If you want to learn more about the skatepark project, purchase a custom Charles River Skatepark board, donate, or read recent articles about the skatepark visit www.thecharles.org/projects/Skatepark/index.html.

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Sacramento Street Gallery

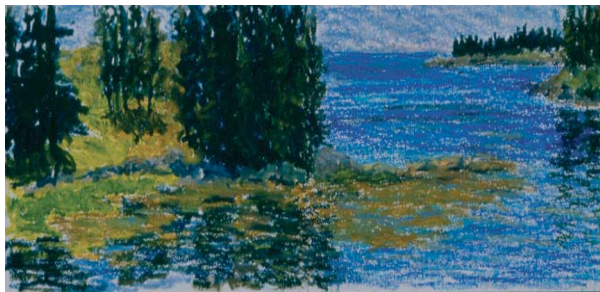
Ellen Stutman Show "The Water's Edge"

March 24 - April 28, 2006

Opening Reception: Friday, March 24, 5 - 7 PM

Gallery Hours: Monday to Friday, 9 - 5 PM

The Sacramento St. Gallery is proud to present a show of oil pastels by Cambridge resident Ellen Stutman. The artist says about her work: "For years I have been fascinated by the point at which water meets land. That edge can occur in a harbor or a tidal basin, a river and its salt marsh, or islands in the ocean: anywhere the land stops and defines the water and yet constantly changes the boundary . . . Most of the works were done on a Maine island, some were done near the Essex River, but all of them deal with the sensuous and sinuous forms that water can take. Intimate in scale, they evoke the continual transformation of the water's edge."



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Art Fresh/Art Local

Showcase Your Art!

The Sacramento St. Gallery seeks work by emerging artists for its third annual ART FRESH/ART LOCAL, a group exhibition opening in May. To qualify for consideration, artists 1.) must not have had more than two exhibitions of their work; 2.) must live, work or attend school in Cambridge, MA and 3.) must be enrolled in or be a recent graduate of a BFA/MFA program. Artists working in all media and styles are encouraged to apply (due to gallery constraints, large-scale video work cannot be accommodated). The annual exhibition will consist of work by no more than five artists.

To apply, please submit the following:

- Slides or color reproductions (8 max) identified with title, media, date & dimensions
- Artist statement (1 page max)
- Resume/biography (1 page max)

Please do not send electronic images on disks, although images on web sites will be considered in lieu of slides or color reproductions on paper. To ensure return of submissions please include a self-addressed stamped envelope (SASE).

Address application to:

Phoebe Sinclair
Agassiz Neighborhood Council
20 Sacramento Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Those interested should email their intent to psinclair@agassiz.org by March 20th. For more information, contact Phoebe Sinclair at (617) 349-6287 ext. 10 or email the address listed above.

BEST OF LUCK!



Community Calendar

March 2006

| | | |
|---------------------|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Wednesday, March 15 | 2 PM | Introducing Arts - Cellist Rushad Eggleston Baldwin School Stage |
| Wednesday, March 15 | 6:00 - 7:30 PM | ANC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento Street, 2nd Floor Public Welcome |
| Wednesday, March 15 | 7:30 - 9:00 PM | ANC Monthly Meeting (see page 1 for agenda) Baldwin School Dining Hall, 28 Sacramento Street All are welcome |
| Monday, March 20th | | First day of Spring! |
| Friday, March 24th | 5:00 - 7:00 PM | "The Water's Edge" - Opening Reception, Sacramento Gallery, 20 Sacramento Street |

The Whistler is published monthly September - June by the Agassiz Neighborhood Council, distribution 2,000. Call (617) 349-6287 to receive by mail or to be advised by email of its posting on the web at www.agassiz.org each month. Items of interest to the neighborhood may be submitted for consideration no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication date.

The Whistler March 2006

Agassiz Neighborhood Council

20 Sacramento Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

(617) 349-6287 Fax & Hot Line (617) 497-4388

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