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Discussion at Oct. CDD Meeting: Should Retail Be Mandatory on Mass. Ave.?

Almost every building on Massachusetts Ave. between Harvard Law School and Porter Square houses a store, restaurant or some other business on the ground floor level; but should first-floor retail be mandatory?

Local citizens debated this question at October's Cambridge Community Development Department meeting, chaired by Les Barber. A group of Agassiz neighborhood residents, working in conjunction with the Porter Square Neighbors Association and several residents of Neighborhood Nine, introduced a plan to encourage retail development of Lower Mass. Ave.

This group of neighbors had met earlier in the month at the ANC to devise a specific plan to present to the Planning Board. Their major concerns included the activity, light and safety that business on Mass. Ave. ensures into the evening hours. The group expressed its desire for "some activity that gives life to [the whole of] the street,

permitted but not required."

In the past, the CDD has helped foster an environment that is friendly to small, independently owned businesses by inhibiting the size and space available to businesses, and limiting accessory parking. "The neighborhood has expressed its love for the Mom and Pop businesses that characterize Mass. Ave.," said Barber. The Planning Board declined to debate the advantages and disadvantages of independent businesses vs. large chains ("Trying to get a handle on the competition between Mom and Pop stores and large chains is difficult," conceded Barber). Several of the members seemed content with the state of retail on the Ave. Little support was heard for requiring retail on ground floors of buildings.

Board member Thomas Anninger said he was "skeptical that required retail would work." The board's Hugh Russell wondered whether certain buildings would be "easily adaptable to retail."

"There's no emergency here," said Barber as the Board agreed to revisit the issue no sooner than December.

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING:

November 16 at 7:30 p.m.

Baldwin School Dining Hall -

ring buzzer for entry

AGENDA: Townscape Institute's ideas

for new zoning ordinances

BZA Chair Motions to Reconsider Long Funeral Home Plans

At the Board of Zoning Appeals meeting held on Thursday, October 14, BZA Chair Tom Sienewicz proposed a motion of reconsideration regarding plans for the Long Funeral Home site. The motion, which was carried 3-2, was proposed to allow the Board more time to gather information about the plans for the site, specifically:

1. A Floor Area Ratio site survey to determine what is being built. (There is an issue over 500 square feet of space in the basement, which could cause the Large Project Review process to be required and a reduction in building size.)
2. What are the demolition laws, how have demolition permit judgments been made in the past and how does the Historical Commission see and evaluate demolition? (Is the building under construction new construction or a partial renovation?)
3. What criteria exist and how are they used to determine the difference between new construction vs. renovation? (Very important in determining the parking requirements.)
4. What are the Mass Ave Overlay District Large Project Review thresholds (6000 and 2000 square feet) and how do we determine which one applies in this case? (A Large Project Review requires a public process, which would address the issues raised by PSNA and others.)

Thanks to Dave Reed of the Porter Square Neighbors Association for supplying his notes from the meeting, which contributed to this report.

Just in Time for Winter: Snow Removal Tips

A message from the Cambridge Department of Public Works:

Snow and ice make walking difficult for everyone: schoolchildren, mail carriers, elders and T riders. In Cambridge almost everyone walks some of the time. If you own property, remember to:

- Keep the adjacent sidewalks clear of snow and ice. If you go out of town, be sure someone else will do it.
- Clear openings at corners and crosswalks so pedestrians can walk safely.
- Dig out fire hydrants and catch basins.
- Always park your car at least 20 feet from the street corner so plows can push snow away from the crosswalks.
- Pay attention to "No Parking" signs during snow emergencies.

If you fail to comply with the city's sidewalk clearance ordinances, you will be issued a \$25-a-day fine for violations.

Don't throw snow from your sidewalks into the street. When digging out your car, don't throw snow over the sidewalk, either. It is illegal to "reserve" parking spaces; objects left in on-street parking spaces will be hauled away.

Lesley VP of Public Affairs to Take Post at AAAS

Paul Karoff, Lesley University's Vice President of Public Affairs, has resigned. He will move on to a position at the American Academy for Arts and Sciences. Paul has done an excellent job communicating Lesley's interests to the community. His presence will be missed at ANC monthly meetings.

Sign of the Dove Artisans' Co-Op Prepares for the Holiday Season

Sign of the Dove holiday artisans' cooperative (formerly The Christmas Store) will be at a new location this season: 36 JFK Street, Cambridge. The popular gallery of local fine crafts, now in its 34th year, opens on November 11 and closes on Christmas Eve.

"Our dedicated fans start looking for our red and white sign in early November as they cruise Massachusetts Avenue," says cooperative member Susan Tornheim. "We've always been in the Porter Square area, but this year we're making a dramatic leap to Harvard Square, right next to the Garage. It's a challenge finding a space for just two months, but we always pull it off."

The 49 artisans who are members of the cooperative run all aspects of the business; there are no paid employees. "When you shop at Sign of the Dove, you get to meet the craftspeople who make the work," says Tornheim. "We're a varied group. The person who helps you may be a New Zealander who carves intricate bone pendants, a soap maker from Maine, a knitter from Brazil, or a potter from Jamaica Plain."

Sign of the Dove, 36 JFK St., Harvard Square, Cambridge, (617) 491-3505; Hours: Mon.-Sat., 10-5; Sun., noon-5; open Fridays 10-8 in December.
www.signofthedoveco-op.com

THE ANC IS SEEKING DONATIONS!

Upgrading your digital camera this holiday season? If you have one that you no longer use, the ANC would be glad to take it off your hands. Call (617) 349-6287 if you wish to donate a used digital camera. The donation is tax deductible.

Porter Square Books Opens for Business

Porter Square Books, a self-described "(fiercely) independent bookstore" opened its doors last month and has quickly lined up a distinguished array of authors for in-store appearances.



Located in the Porter Square Shopping Center, the store will next feature Jeffrey Cramer, who's responsible for a fully annotated edition of Thoreau's *Walden*. He'll appear Thursday, November 4, at 7. Also on tap are authors Gregory Maguire (*Mirror, Mirror*) at 4 P.M. on Saturday, November 13, and David Kertzer (*Prisoner of the Vatican*) at 7 P.M. on Thursday, November 18. On Wednesday, December 1 at 7, the store will present *100 Best Books for Children* author Anita Silvey.

Special thanks to the following for making Start the Art a success:

Adriane Bishko, Deby Buchness, Cambridge Common Restaurant, Faith Chase, Ellen Fairbend, Deb Hoover, Malinda McPherson, Oxford Spa, Kate and Sara and Tonio Pinelli, Wendy Prellwitz, Erica Raine, Cynthia Smith and Bill Zamparelli

At the Sacramento Street Gallery...

Small Works Show 2004

October 22 - December 1

Gallery Hours: Monday - Friday 9AM - 5 PM
Saturday Noon to 5



Michael Mazur

Waves I
etching and aquatint, 2004
7" x 4" image
17" x 12" paper

This Month, Introducing Art Presents...



MANGUITO

Tuesday, November 16 at @2:00 P.M.
The Baldwin School Stage

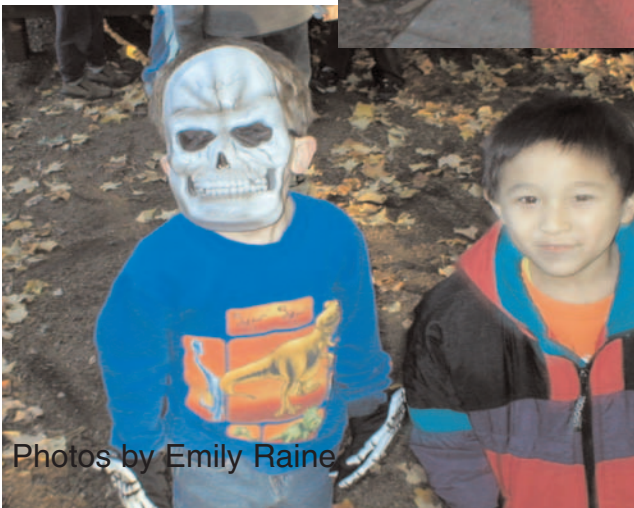
Experience the joyous music of Latin America such as the rumba, the bamba, the plena and the Dominican merengue. Five internationally known Latin American musicians take students on a musical tour of the Caribbean as they play the rhythms of Puerto Rico, Cuba and the Dominican Republic on Latin musical instruments. In addition, this program provides students with an appreciation of the unique fusion of Spanish, African and Native American cultures in Latino culture.

A Spooky Afterschool Halloween

Agassiz Afterschool kindergarteners looked their ghoulish best at their Halloween Party on Friday, October 29th. Beware - the pictures below are seriously scary:



Thanks to Deby Buchness, SaDaryl Parham and Hannah Varden, who helped with the Halloween party.



Photos by Emily Raine

Photos from Start the Art!

On October 22, the Agassiz Neighborhood Council celebrated the new renovations to 20 Sacramento St. with a gala open house. Among the activities was the opening of the 4th annual Small Works Show, which helps raise money for the Maud Morgan Visual Arts Center.



This quilt was designed by Clara Wainwright and features images of Agassiz Afterschool Children, who also helped in its creation.



State Rep. Alice Wolf chats with Kathleen Manion.

Guests peruse the selection of work by four dozen local artists.



Upcoming Cultural Events in Cambridge



"Do It Your Damn Self!" National Youth Video & Film Festival

Totally Original, 21st Century Flicks
Curated By Cambridge Teens
617-868-7100

save the date!

Dear Friends,

Join us for the 9th annual "Do It Your Damn Self!" National Youth Video and Film Festival.

Date: November 20, 2004
Times: 7:30 & 9:30pm
Location: Bartos Theatre, M.I.T. Wisener Building,
20 Ames St. (off Main St.), Kendall Sq., Cambridge
Tickets: \$10-25 sliding scale, \$5 under 18
Contact: Saquora Lowe-McLaurin, 617-868-7100 x15

This year's films are produced by youth from around the country covering topics that are important to today's young people. Films include documentaries, experimental, public service announcements, music videos, and some good, old comedy.

Thank you for supporting the DIYDS festival! We hope to see you and all your friends on Nov. 20th.

Yours truly,

DIYDS Festival Coordinators
Teen Media Program
The Community Art Center

www.doityourdamnself.org

Learning from Performers
and the Harvard Jazz Bands present

An Exploration of Improvisation
with composer/soprano saxophonist

JANE IRA BLOOM



FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 12 at 3 PM
Winthrop House Junior Common Room
32 Mill St. (at Holyoke St.)
Harvard University, Cambridge
Admission free, tickets or RSVP not required
617.495.8676, www.fas.harvard.edu/ofa/

LONGY SCHOOL OF MUSIC

"The Tortoise and the Hare" and "The Emperor and the Nightingale"

Sunday, December 5, 2004
Edward M. Pickman Concert Hall
2:00 pm
Admission: \$5 general

These magical fairy tales by Hans Christian Andersen are brought to life by music in this magical journey for children of all ages. Composed by David Mullikin and performed by Mistral, the new ensemble in residence of the Andover Chamber Music Series, featuring faculty artists Julia Scolnik, Thomas Kraines and Randall Hodgkinson. Suitable for ages 4 + up.

Community Calendar

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 11TH

VETERANS DAY (ANC closed)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH 2:00 p.m.

**INTRODUCING ART presents:
MANGUITO
Baldwin School Stage, 28 Sacramento Street**

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH 6:00 p.m.

**ANC Board Meeting
20 Sacramento Street 2nd Floor**

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 16TH 7:30 p.m.

**ANC Monthly Meeting (See page one for agenda)
Baldwin Cafeteria, 28 Sacramento Street**

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 23RD 6:00 p.m.

**Thanksgiving Potluck
Baldwin Cafeteria, 28 Sacramento Street**

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 25TH

THANKSGIVING (ANC closed)

Download The Whistler at www.agassiz.org.

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Call (617) 349-6287 to receive by mail or to be advised by email of its posting on the web each month at
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later than the 15th of the month prior to publication date.