

the Whistler

newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

March 2004

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Concerned about pedestrian safety
in the Agassiz neighborhood
and surrounding areas?
You're not alone!
Contact Amy King at the ANC,
617.349.6287 x19 or aking@agassiz.org,
to get involved.

ANC News

Notes from the February 24th ANC Meeting

Dave Wood welcomed everyone to the meeting and set up the agenda for the night: a brief discussion of Harvard's North Yard development with Tom Lucey; an extension of the discussion on Porter Square and lower Mass Ave, begun at the February 5th meeting sponsored by the Cambridge Community Development department; and an introduction to John Moot, president of the Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods.

Tom Lucey outlined Harvard's plans for North Yard, beginning with a few FAS projects. The Laboratory for Interface Science and Engineering, or LISE, will provide space for studies in nanotechnology in a new building adjacent to McKay. The latest update has site prep beginning in mid-April, with construction beginning this June and continuing through mid-2007. The Northwest Science Building is in initial design stages. It will be a 400,000 square-foot building, half of which will be underground. Tom also mentioned that interior and exterior renovations will begin soon on Palfrey House.

Harvard Law School, which has concluded a study begun in 2002 to try to understand community issues relating to development, is examining its options for meeting its current space and facility needs while remaining on its current property. Harvard thinks it could meet the needs of the Law School by replacing the Everett Street garage with an underground garage and building on that site. This process is still in its infancy, and Harvard intends to work with the neighborhood to set guidelines for height and distance from the street once architectural and planning firms are on board.

Tom encouraged community members to contact the Harvard

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Harvard University North Yard Update

The following update is provided by Tom Lucey, Harvard's Director of Community Relations.

It is my pleasure to provide you with an update of activities around the Harvard University's North Yard as well as to reaffirm our continued commitment to keep the line of communications open.

In terms of Faculty of Arts and Sciences (FAS) projects, updates include:

The Laboratory for Interface Science and Engineering (LISE) - LISE is the facility that will be located adjacent to the McKay Lab at the south end of Oxford Street. It will be used by the scientists in several departments including Physics, the Dept of Engineering and Applied Sciences, Chemistry, and Biology for research in nanoscale and mesoscale science. Harvard presented this project to neighbors multiple times including two presentations at the ANC, and community meetings to discuss construction impacts, and displays at the Sacramento Street

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Next ANC Monthly Meeting



Tuesday, March 16th

7:30 P.M.

**Baldwin School Dining Hall -
28 Sacramento Street**

Oxford Street Entrance - press buzzer for entry

**Agenda: Beacon Street Construction
Update; discussion on
future ANC meetings (see
pg. 4)**

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Community Relations department with questions and concerns, at 617-495-4955. He also gave out the Construction Mitigation number (617-496-0857) for construction concerns. He announced two upcoming meetings: the Harvard Town Gown Report at the March 2nd Planning Board meeting, and a presentation on North Yard at the March 16th Planning Board meeting. Both meetings are at 7:30 PM at 344 Broadway.

Stephen Diamond opened discussion on Porter Square. Jeff Roberts, a CDD Neighborhood Planner for the Agassiz, Wellington/Harrington, Mid-Cambridge and East Cambridge neighborhoods, introduced himself and encouraged residents to contact him with planning and development concerns (Jeff can be reached at 617-349-4639 or jroberts@cambridgema.gov). Community members talked about their desire for Mass Ave to be something we can all be proud of. One community member announced that roadway improvements in Porter Square are set to begin in July 2004, beginning with traffic lights. One major change will be a left-hand turn out of the Porter Square shopping center. George Smith, Director of Operations and Campus Planning at Lesley, outlined Lesley's plans for their three Mass Ave properties. The parking lot at the Alamo car rental, at 1663 Mass Ave, may become dorms or office spaces for the School of Education. The parking lots opposite the Porter Exchange could be a possible home for the Art Institute of Boston or for more dorms. All of Lesley's development plans include retail space on the ground floors.

Lastly, John Moot discussed the Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods. It includes representatives from 20 neighborhoods, though there is no representative from Agassiz. John encouraged community members to get involved, stressing that many of the problems faced by Agassiz residents are similar to those of residents in other neighborhoods, and that all neighborhoods can learn from each other. The ACN meets every third Wednesday of the month, at the Radisson on Memorial Drive, at 7:30. To receive the ACN's newsletter via email, contact John Moot: johnmoot@comcast.net. The newsletter, as well as other information about the ACN, can be viewed at www.acncambridge.com.

Agassiz Neighborhood Council Seeks Board Candidates

The Nominating Committee of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council will convene this month and develop a slate of directors who will be elected in May to each serve a 2 year term. The next few years will be an exciting and busy time for the ANC board. Work will include the final stages of a capital campaign to develop a citywide community art center and a construction project to improve the exterior and enhance accessibility at 20 Sacramento Street.

The Nominating Committee will consider many factors including the candidates skills and interests, prior program or community participation and the ability to work as a productive board member in concert with other dedicated, civic minded citizens who willingly volunteer their time in support of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council mission.

Please send a letter of interest to ANC Nominating Committee, ANC, 20 Sacramento Street, Cambridge 02138 or <tdelancey@agassiz.org>. Let the committee know why you (or your nominee) would be a good candidate. Please include overall experience that you believe would make a good board member.

CLOTHING DRIVE



The Cambridge Public School's Family Resource Center is holding a clothing drive. Please bring all clean and gently worn clothing for all ages to their office located at 459 Broadway, Cambridge, in Cambridge Rindge & Latin School, R131.



Two Brattle Square, Cambridge, MA 02138

Carol Kelly
Myra von Turkovich
Jan Devereux

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www.agassizhomes.com

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Keep Sidewalks Clear!

Excerpts from "Snow: Our Winter Challenge: A Guide for Cambridge Property Owners and Residents," published by the Cambridge Department of Public Works

Snow and ice make walking difficult for everyone: school children, mail carriers, elders, and T riders. If you own property, remember to:

- * Keep 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 cross safely.
- * Dig out fire hydrants and catch basins.
- * Park your car at least 20 feet from street corners so plows can push snow away from sidewalks.

If you fail to comply with the City's sidewalk clearance ordinances, you will be issued a \$25 per day fine.

Don't throw snow from your sidewalks into the street. When digging out your car, don't throw snow over the sidewalk. It is illegal to "reserve" parking spaces on the street.

For people on foot, ice can be worse than snow. You are as responsible for ice on your sidewalks as you are for snow. You must remove it or melt it within 6 hours.

- * Stock up on ice melter before a storm.
- * Use ice melter with calcium chloride (CaCl_2). It's better for the environment and only a small amount is required to melt ice. Potassium chloride (KCl) is okay, too.
- * Avoid rock salt (NaCl or sodium chloride) -- it kills plants and trees.
- * Avoid sand. It makes hard ice more slippery, gets into storm drains and catch basins, and is expensive to clean up in the spring.
- * Use ice melter on your driveway entrance and sidewalks early and often to prevent snow from packing down and forming into ice.

If you are a homeowner with a low income (\$20,351.00 for a one-person household) and you are elderly or disabled, you may qualify for the City's Snow Exemption Program. If you qualify, the DPW will shovel your sidewalk. To apply, call the Cambridge Council on Aging, 617.349.6220 (TTY: 617.349.6050).

To report unshoveled or icy sidewalks to the Snow Hotline, call 617.349.4903 (TTY: 617.349.4805) and leave a detailed address.

Gallery and the Baldwin School. Site prep is expected to begin in mid-April. Construction will begin in June and is expected to continue into early to mid-2007.

Palfrey House -- The Palfrey House has been moved twice in the past 18 months -- first to make room for construction of the Oxford Street Parking Facility and second to place it near its final location above the Parking Facility. Review by the Cambridge Historic Commission was completed last fall. Renovation will begin next month on both the interior and exterior of the house. FAS will occupy Palfrey House for office space beginning in Fall 2004.

NorthWest Building -- Currently in the initial phase of design by Craig Hartman of Skidmore, Owings, & Merrill, the NorthWest building will be a 436,000 gsf structure (approximately 1/2 underground) to be located above and adjacent to the Oxford Street Parking Facility. To date, Harvard has had several meetings with neighbors who have provided the architects with input. The next meeting will include the landscape architect as well. Harvard plans to present to the ANC in the coming months. The city approval process (a BZA variance is required) is expected to take place later this year. It is hoped that construction will begin in early 2005 and continue until Sept 2007.

Other updates relate to the Harvard Law School:

As you know in 2002, the Law School began a process to assess the potential of its current site to accommodate future space needs as well as to understand community and city issues regarding possible development.

One of the findings of this study was that if Harvard Law School could replace the existing Everett Street parking garage with an underground parking structure and relocate the two existing wood frame houses, its space needs could be accommodated in Cambridge.

The Law School has now started a process of looking at architectural planning firms and hopes to select a firm over the next several months. Once in place, the planning firm will proceed with programming studies and eventually site design and building design. Of course during this time, we will be working with the community and city to shape an agreement on the overall development plan.

For further information, please contact Tom Lucey at (617) 495-4955.

Harvard's Construction mitigation number is (617) 496-0857.

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Porter Sq/Lower Mass Ave Meeting

On Thursday, February 5th, the City of Cambridge Community Development Department held an informational meeting at the Baldwin School to discuss development in Porter Square and on Massachusetts Avenue from Beech Street to Wendell Street. The well-attended meeting began with an introduction by Beth Rubenstein, Assistant City Manager for Community Development, who explained the CDD's desire to start a "community conversation" about the issues in this area. Stuart Dash, Director of Community Planning, reviewed discussion topics for the meeting: the MBTA Air-Rights Project, the Lesley University Master Plan, the Porter Square roadway improvements project (tentatively planned for 2005) and the preservation of Mass Ave retail. After a review of the zoning in the area by Les Barber, Director of Land Use and Zoning, the meeting was opened up for community questions, concerns and comments. Mark Boyle from the MBTA fielded questions about the Air-Rights project, and confirmed that Oaktree Development is the selected developer, but clarified that no final decision has been made to move forward, as Oaktree is working on a dialogue with Lesley. Several residents wondered why the dividing line for the area of discussion was drawn at Wendell Street, and the CDD explained that south of Wendell, there's an institutional focus due to Harvard's presence there. Other community concerns included pedestrian safety improvements, particularly for women; the need for community input for all development; a need for overall planning in the city rather than by neighborhood; the relationship between population density, parking availability and traffic in the Porter area; and support (including beer and wine licenses) to help small restaurants survive. The Community Development Department can be reached at 617.349.4600. Copies of information handed out at the meeting, as well as additional information on Porter Square/Lower Mass Ave projects, can be accessed at www.cambridgema.gov/~CDD/commplan/zoning/psql-ma/index.html. In addition, discussion on Porter Square was continued at the February 24th ANC meeting. For notes from that meeting, please see page 1.

Do you have a question about your property?
Is it time to sell or lease? Cleaning out your home?
Please call for free assessment services and advice!

WADDELL & REED
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(781) 923-1267 Fax (781) 923-1268
O'BRIEN O'BRIEN
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Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 491-3880

WHAT MATTERS TO YOU?

The Agassiz Neighborhood Council Board of Directors would like community assistance in setting priorities for the next year of activity. What topics would you like to see covered at our monthly neighborhood meetings? To weigh in on these topics and suggest others, please do one of the following:

* number the following choices in order of priority, add new suggestions, and mail to Amy King at 20 Sacramento Street, Cambridge MA 02138

* call in your suggestions at 617.349.6287 x19

* email them to aking@agassiz.org

* come to the March 16th ANC meeting, to participate in a discussion on which issues we should include on our agendas.

Issues include:

- Harvard Law School's development plans
- Lesley University's development plans
- MBTA Porter Sq. Air Rights development proposals
- Envisioning Massachusetts Avenue
- Updates on City of Cambridge issues:
 - Sewer construction progress
 - Snow plowing procedures
 - Parking procedures
 - Schedule for street/sidewalk repair & rebuilding
 - School department programs and issues
 - Maud Morgan Visual Arts Center plans & programs
 - Others: _____

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*Agassiz Community School
Programs*

Sign up now for the
OUTBACK
Summer Program!

For over thirty years, the Outback Summer Program, located in the big backyard behind the Agassiz Neighborhood Council building at 20 Sacramento Street, has been providing summer-time care for children in Cambridge and beyond. OCCS-licensed and run by a team of diverse, talented counselors and specialists, Outback provides children with opportunities to learn, play, relax, cool off, explore, and make new friends in a safe, inclusive, fun environment. Children choose their activities based on daily offerings, and enjoy Thursday field trips to local beaches and recreation areas.

Outback begins Monday, July 5th and ends Friday, August 27th. Children may sign up for all eight weeks, only one, or any number in between! Full-day and part-day options are available. Children must be entering grades one through six. Counselor-in-Training opportunities are available for children entering grades seven through nine.

Registration has begun!
Contact Director of Programs Sharon Reidbord,
617-349-6287 x10 or sreidbord@agassiz.org.

**Kids Create
Toddler Art Classes**



Adam Kiryk and son Dimitri get creative at a Kids Create Toddler Art class.

**Maria L. Baldwin School
Rededication Ceremony**

On Thursday, February 12th, the Baldwin School held a special ceremony to honor African-American educator Maria L. Baldwin and to officially rededicate the school (formerly Agassiz) in her name. Miss Baldwin served at the Agassiz School for forty years, first as a teacher and then as a principal.

At a school-wide assembly, Baldwin students, as well as special guests and families, listened to speeches by former Agassiz/Baldwin principal (now principal of CRLS) Dr. Sybil Knight, City Councillor Denise Simmons, Deputy Superintendent Dr. Carolyn Turk, and keynote speaker Sara-Ann Shaw, president of the Women's League for Community Service and WBZ television personality. Speakers read poems by Langston Hughes, recounted Baldwin's life, and spoke about their own pride in being African-American women. Following the assembly, Baldwin principal Mary Eirich and various guests and students went outside to unveil the Baldwin School's new sign, pictured at bottom.

Pictured, left to right: Dr. Sybil Knight, City Councilor Denise Simmons, Sara-Ann Shaw, and Dr. Carolyn Turk.



The Whidder March 2004



Cultural Happenings - Call 349-6287 for information
The Agassiz Neighborhood Council

presents

Adventures in Art:
Work from the Agassiz Community School
A show of original artwork by children from
the Agassiz Afterschool and the
Sacramento Street Preschool



Drawing by
Ahmet, age 6

March 5th-31st, 2004
Opening Reception: Friday, March 5th, 5:00 PM

Holyoke Center Arcade
1350 Massachusetts Avenue, Harvard Square, Cambridge

Introducing Art: A Performance Series for Children presents



**storyteller
Len Cabral**
Tuesday, March 9, 2004 at 2:00 PM

Len Cabral uses mime, poetry, song, humor and vivid characterizations in his lively retelling of Cape Verdean, African and Caribbean folktales as well as original tales and tales from around the world.



Baldwin School Stage,
28 Sacramento Street, Cambridge
Questions? Amy King, 617.349.6287 x19 or aking@agassiz.org
Admission \$2.00. Groups must reserve in advance.
All Cambridge after school programs admitted at no charge.




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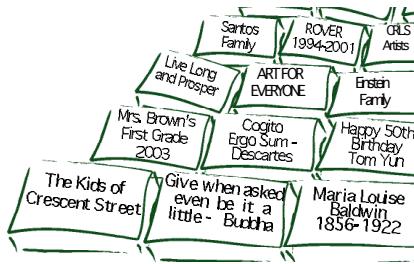
BUY A BRICK TODAY!

TO SUPPORT THE MAUD MORGAN VISUAL ARTS CENTER



Engraved bricks will be placed in the walkways surrounding the new art center to honor people, provoke thought and inspire all who visit. Each brick will have three lines (a maximum of 16 characters per line). Be creative! Honor someone, quote a hero, remember a loved one, or mark a special occasion.

Bricks cost \$250.
Contact Amy King at 617 349-6287 x 19 or
<aking@agassiz.org> for information or a brochure.
Thanks for your support!



Other Local Cultural Events and Programs

The Cambridge Symphony Orchestra's 18th Annual Children's Concert

Saturday, March 6, 2004 at 11:00 AM
Cambridge Rindge and Latin School
459 Broadway, Cambridge

Saturday, March 13, 2004 at 11:00 AM
Somerville High School
81 Highland Ave, Somerville

FREE ADMISSION!



Featuring music by Rossini, Bellini,
Copland, von Suppe, and
CSO Music Director Mark Latham.



The Orchestra will be joined
on stage by members of the
Cambridge Public Schools'
All City Orchestra
for part of the program.

For further information, visit the CSO website at www.cambridgesymphony.org

Blacksmith House Poetry Series

sponsored by the CCAE

Monday, March 1
Kai Maristed and James Wood

Monday, March 8
D.A. Powell and Chard deNiord

Monday, March 15
Richard Fein and Scott Withiam

Monday, March 22
Brendan Galvin

Monday, March 29
Carole Simmons Oles and Rosanna Warren

All readings take place at 56 Brattle St.
Admission is \$3.00.
Readings begin at 8:00 PM.

Community Calendar

TUESDAY, MARCH 2ND	PRESIDENTIAL PRIMARY IN MASSACHUSETTS	
FRIDAY, MARCH 5TH	5:00 PM	OPENING RECEPTION FOR ADVENTURES IN ART: WORK FROM THE AGASSIZ COMMUNITY SCHOOL Holyoke Center, 1350 Mass Ave. Runs through March 31st.
TUESDAY, MARCH 9TH	2:00 PM	INTRODUCING ART PRESENTS: storyteller LEN CABRAL Baldwin School Stage, 28 Sacramento Street
TUESDAY, MARCH 16TH	6:00 PM	ANC Board Meeting 20 Sacramento Street, 2nd Floor
TUESDAY, MARCH 16TH	7:30 PM	ANC Monthly Meeting (See page one for agenda) Baldwin Dining Hall, 28 Sacramento Street
WEDNESDAY, MARCH 17TH		ST. PATRICK'S DAY Cambridge Public Schools and Agassiz children's programs closed
SATURDAY, MARCH 20TH		FIRST DAY OF SPRING

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 each month at <www.agassiz.org/whistler.html>. 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 2004



Agassiz Neighborhood Council
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www.agassiz.org email: aking@agassiz.org

DO NOT FORWARD

