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ANC News

Notes from the December 16th ANC Meeting

ANC Board member Dave Wood opened the meeting. The first task on the agenda was to vote on the Memorandum of Understanding between Harvard and the Agassiz neighborhood, negotiated by representatives from Harvard and ACID. Before the vote, Kate and Tom Frank wondered whether there was a certain number of votes needed to represent the neighborhood. Joel Bard said that from his memory of the ANC by-laws, the quorum is very low if there is one at all. Several people pointed out that Agassiz residents have been given every opportunity to participate in this process, so if they choose not to vote they must be satisfied with what has been done. After some discussion, a vote was conducted by a show of hands. Including residents who sent in "absentee" ballots as well as those in attendance at the meeting, there were a total of 54 "yes" votes to support the MOU, 3 "no" votes, and 3 abstentions (after the meeting, residents submitted 5 "yes" votes, 1 "no," and 1 abstention).

Next, Dave Reed spoke about the recent entertainment license application for 1815 Massachusetts Avenue (the Porter Exchange). Jack Harris Bardy, who currently operates Pho Republique and hopes to open a restaurant in the spring at the site that was most recently Giuseppe's, applied for an entertainment license for the space. Dave explained that this violates an agreement signed in 1988, when residents wanted to prevent movie theaters from opening in what is now the Porter Exchange and Porter Arcade. In addition to cinemas, the agreement prohibits live music. Dave explained that the very restrictive out-of-court agreement aimed to protect the neighborhood from over-development, and includes details such as the number of restaurant seats

Continued on page 2

**Final Results on the
 Vote for the
 Agassiz/Harvard
 Memorandum
 of Understanding:**

Yes, I support the M.O.U.:
 54

No, I do not support the M.O.U.:
 3

I abstain:
 3

Next ANC Monthly Meeting



Tuesday, Jan 20th
 7:30 p.m.

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

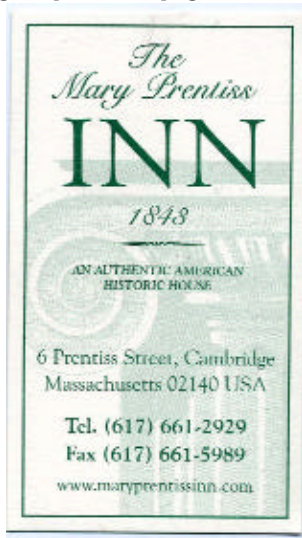
Oxford Street Entrance - press buzzer for entry

**Agenda: TBA (Call Amy King for
 details at 617.349.6287 x19)**

continued from page 1

allowed, the amount of retail space, etc. The agreement does allow one acoustic (non-amplified) instrument in the restaurant, which he said was amended in the 1990's to allow three instruments. The agreement originally took four years to negotiate. For more information on this agreement and the license application, please see page 4.

Lastly, Stephen Diamond gave an update on the Porter Square Air-Rights development. He had met that morning with architects involved in the project (both parties who bidded on the property, Oaktree Development and Lesley University, have hired teams of architects). Stephen said he favors Lesley's plan for the site over Oaktree's, as he sees the former to be more comprehensive and better for the neighborhood. Several residents at the meeting agreed. Paul Karoff of Lesley University said that the MBTA rejected Lesley's proposal and has not rejected Oaktree's. Many at the meeting wondered if there was a way that their preference for the Lesley plan could be made known to and/or influence the MBTA's decisions. Stephen urged all present to attend the Thursday, December 18th Porter Square Neighborhood Association meeting. For more on Porter Square Air-Rights, please see page 3.



CONGRATULATIONS AND THANK YOU from A.C.I.D.

Over the past two years, hundreds of Agassiz residents have participated in the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) process with Harvard.

We'd like to thank everyone in the Agassiz Neighborhood for their wisdom, patience, and insight as the neighborhood worked hard to understand Harvard's development plans; react to those plans; and negotiate a new "win win" relationship with the university based on shared trust and shared gain.

The vote in overwhelming support of the MOU was gratifying. It was clear that residents took the matter seriously, gave it great thought, and, on balance, decided that the MOU was worth implementing. We agree.

LOOKING AHEAD ...

Of course there is much work ahead. Now that the MOU is approved, Agassiz representatives must continue to work hard to make sure its promise is fulfilled. The neighborhood must be vigilant and focused in the months ahead to make sure the MOU is successfully implemented and the needs of the neighborhood are safeguarded.

This requires ongoing communication with Harvard in an open, frank dialog via the new "Working Committee" and other forums of discussion. We look forward to participating!


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Porter Square Air-Rights Update

Architects have been hired by both Oaktree Development and Lesley University, the two bidders for the Porter Square Air-Rights. Lesley's bid, which fell short of the MBTA's requirement of \$4 million, was rejected, but the University still hopes to be involved in the project in some way. Lesley and Oaktree have met to try to determine a plan that would benefit both parties.

A key problem with the project is parking. Planners and architects need to figure out how and where it can be accommodated. One Oaktree plan proposes a parking deck on the bottom floor of an apartment building. Because nothing can be built less than fourteen feet from the top of the trains on the train tracks, and because the deck must be built to reduce sound and vibrations from the trains, this raises the height of the building significantly (the building would have four stories of housing on top of the parking deck). Another proposal suggests building parking in the Porter Exchange lot, currently owned by Lesley University. An automated parking garage would be yet another possibility.

Many Agassiz and Porter Square residents seem to favor Lesley's plans over Oaktree's, and it remains to be seen whether Oaktree's plans exceed what the neighborhood will find acceptable, or whether or not they are feasible within Cambridge and Somerville zoning laws (the area covered by the Air-Rights includes both cities). Any resident interested in learning more about the Air-Rights should contact Dave Reed, president of the Porter Square Neighbors Association, at 617-497-5184 or dmrmdmr@hotmail.com.

 Thank you! 
The Maud Morgan Visual Arts Center would like to thank the Cambridge Common and the Oxford Spa, for the delicious donations they made to the opening reception of Small Works 2003.

Cambridge Selected as one of 11 National Finalists in the Accessible America Award for Disability-Friendly Community

On December 8th, the National Organization on Disability (N.O.D.) announced the finalists in its third annual Accessible America Contest. Cambridge is one of the finalists, competing against Alexandria, Virginia; Austin, Texas; Bloomington, Indiana; Chicago, Illinois; Columbia, Missouri; Fountain Valley, California; Jacksonville, Florida; Los Angeles, California; Miami Beach, Florida; and Phoenix, Arizona for the title.

The Accessible America Award winner will be a community that has demonstrated an exceptional commitment to offering its citizens with disabilities full and equal opportunities to participate in the life of their community, including access to jobs, education, religious worship, voting, transportation, housing, emergency preparedness and the entire range of social, recreational, cultural, and sports activities.

N.O.D. presents a cash award of \$25,000 to the winning community, to recognize and encourage comprehensive disability accessibility and opportunity. The money encourages further progress and can be used to fund local disability-related efforts. N.O.D. will announce the winner on December 29th.



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License Application for 1815 Massachusetts Avenue

Residents and business-owners in and around Porter Square recently were made aware of an application for a restaurant and liquor license transfer for the space that was formerly the Cottonwood Café, Metro, and Giuseppe's, in the Porter Exchange building at 1815 Mass Ave. Jack Harris Bardy, the manager of a new restaurant, currently operates Pho Republique in the South End of Boston and hopes to open the Porter restaurant in the spring. Such a transfer of license is routine; however, Mr. Bardy also applied for an expanded Entertainment license, which included, according to the Cambridge License Commission, "live music instruments and/or live >vocalists, with amplification; dancing by patrons; karaoke; three t.v.'s; background music; and DJ only." Local residents were quick to recognize that this application violates a 1988 agreement made between the owners of Porter Exchange at that time and the City. The agreement, intended to protect the Porter Square neighborhood from over-development, was negotiated and signed in response to plans to turn what is now the Porter Exchange and Porter Arcade into cinemas. In addition to prohibiting those cinemas, the agreement states that the owner of Porter Exchange (now Lesley University) "and their tenants agree not to apply for any entertainment license to be exercised at 1815 Massachusetts Avenue, except a license to play background music which does not exceed 55 dB(A)." It does also allow one musical instrument in the dining room, without amplification. Lesley University staff who negotiated rental of the space for the new restaurant were initially unaware of these terms in the 1815 agreement, as was Mr. Bardy. As soon as they learned the terms of the agreement, the application for an expanded Entertainment license was withdrawn. The City Licensing Commission did approve a simple transfer of the existing license to Mr. Bardy.


HOW TO PREPARE FOR WINTER STORMS A Message from the Cambridge Emergency Management Office

A major winter storm can be lethal. Preparing for cold weather conditions and responding to them effectively can reduce the dangers caused by winter storms.

BEFORE THE STORM

- * Be familiar with winter storm warning messages.
- * Service snow removal equipment and have rock salt on hand to melt ice on walkways and sand or kitty litter to generate temporary traction. Please remember that the Ordinances of Cambridge require that sidewalks be shoveled.
- * Make sure you have sufficient heating fuel; regular fuel sources may be cut off.
- * Insulate walls and attic.
- * Caulk and weather-strip doors and windows.
- * Install storm windows or cover windows with plastic from the inside.
- * Have safe emergency heating equipment available: a fireplace with ample supply of wood or a small, well-vented, wood or coal stove with fuel.
- * Install smoke detectors and check smoke detector batteries.
- * Contact the Cambridge Emergency Management office (498-1590) or American Red Cross chapter (375-0700 ext.263) for more information on winter storms.
- * Keep pipes from freezing.
- * Wrap pipes in insulation or layers of old newspapers.
- * Cover the newspapers with plastic to keep out moisture.
- * Let faucets drip a little to avoid freezing.
- * If pipes run through closets or kitchen cabinets keep the doors open.
- * Know how to shut off water valves.
- * Have disaster supplies on hand, in case the power goes out: Flashlight and extra batteries (DO NOT use candles, which present a fire hazard), portable, battery-operated radio and extra batteries, first aid kit, one-week supply of food (include items that do not require refrigeration or cooking in case the power is shut off), non-electric can opener, one-week supply of essential prescription medications, extra blankets and sleeping bags, fire extinguisher (A-B-C type) .
- * Please check on elderly neighbors or neighbors with disabilities and see if they need help getting medicine, food or other supplies before the storm.
- * Develop an emergency communication plan in case family members are separated from one another during a winter storm. Ask an out-of-state relative or friend to serve as the "family contact." After a disaster, it's often easier to call long distance. Make sure everyone knows the name, address, and phone number of the contact person. Teach children how and when to call 911, police, or fire department, and which radio station to tune to for emergency information.
- * Kerosene heaters are illegal in Cambridge. They are a severe fire hazard and should never be used inside a residential building.

Do you know what to do each month to make your financial choices easier? Receive a free financial planning session with us!



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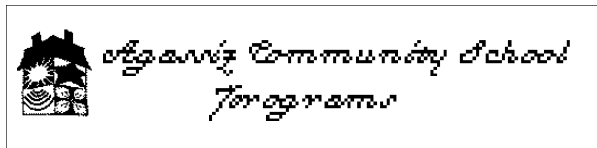
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Donate Your Skills!

The Agassiz Afterschool is looking for volunteers to offer 1 hour per week of time to teach After School children in the following areas:



- * Chess
- * Handicrafts such as knitting, crochet, needlepoint and/or sewing
- * Drawing
- * Juggling and other circus skills

If you are interested, please contact Sharon Reidbord, Program Director:
617-349-6287 x10 or sreidbord@agassiz.org



toddler art classes

Room is still available in our art classes for ages 18-36 MOS.

What are you doing this winter? Bring your toddler to something new and different to help your child investigate the world in a creative way! Our experienced teachers will guide you and your child into:

- * Thematic painting
- * Recycled art
- * Watercolor play
- * Drawing
- * And much more!

in a nurturing, process-oriented environment. Each class has a core theme to focus play and learning.

Classes will meet in the Community Room at North Hall, at the corner of Mass Ave and Wendell Street. Winter session begins Monday, January 5, 2004. Join the 18-24 month-old class or the 24-36 month-old class.

Questions? Sharon Reidbord, 617-349-6287 x10 or sreidbord@agassiz.org.

Agassiz Performances!

Below: An original song-and-dance number from the Agassiz Afterschool Players production of "Going to Hawaii." Right: Sacramento Street Preschooler Sam Holtzman and mom Arlene assist the magician at the Preschool Family Day's Amazing Magic Show.



The Whirler February 2004

Cultural Happenings - Call 349-6287 for information

Sacramento Street Gallery



presents

DISSECTIONS/SELF-PORTRAITS A show of work by PATRICIA WHITE

JANUARY 5TH-FEBRUARY 13, 2004

Gallery Open Weekdays 9:00-5:00

Artist's Reception:

Thursday, January 8th, 2004

5:00-7:00 PM



FUNDING PROVIDED IN PART BY



MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL

Introducing Art: A Performance Series for Children

will not be holding any performances during the months of January or February, as there are no Early Release Days for the Cambridge Public Schools during those months. However, please mark your calendars for our last two performances of the school year, in March and May...

Len Cabral, Storyteller: Tuesday, March 9th




Little Theatre of the Deaf: Wednesday, May 19th



Baldwin School Stage, 2:00 PM
28 Sacramento Street, Cambridge
Questions? Amy King, 617.349.6287 x19





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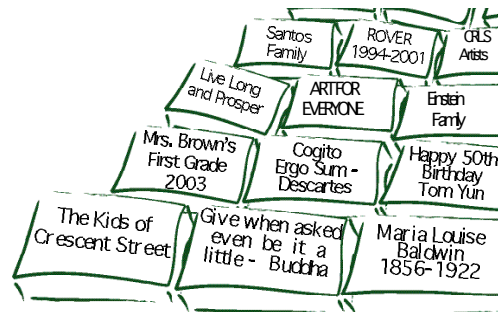
www.freshpondballet.com

BUY A BRICK TODAY!



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

3rd Annual Leap Year Dance Marathon

Saturday, February 28, 2003 6:00 PM to 6:00 AM
\$20 donation or \$50 pledge sheet

The Dance Complex 536 Mass Ave, Central Square, Cambridge 617-547-9363



Winter 2003 Education Programs

Penguins, Parrots, and Pelicans for 2nd-3rd Graders

January 17, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Enter the wonderful world of birds. Find the fastest animal on earth, see the largest egg ever laid, and ponder the purpose of eating your own feathers! Learn what birds eat, how they survive, which ones are endangered or even extinct. Finish up with a feathered craft to take home.

Inside Skeletons for Adults

January 17, 9:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

\$30 non-members / \$27 members

Bone up on your bones! Join us for an in-depth look at the wonders of skeletons. We'll start by examining our own bones and how they form, grow, and function. Then we'll compare the skeletons of other animals -- from frogs and bats to whales and owls -- to learn how their bones are designed to help them perform amazing feats and survive in the wild.

Call 617-495-2341 for reservations -- classes fill up early!

The Harvard Museum of Natural History is located at 26 Oxford Street, Cambridge 02138
www.hmn.harvard.edu

Community Calendar

THURSDAY, JANUARY 1ST		NEW YEAR'S DAY ANC closed
THURSDAY, JANUARY 8TH	5:00-7:00 PM	ARTIST'S RECEPTION for DISSECTIONS/SELF-PORTRAITS: A show of work by Patricia White (Runs through February 13th)
MONDAY, JANUARY 19TH		MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR DAY ANC closed
TUESDAY, JANUARY 20TH	6:00 PM	ANC Board Meeting 20 Sacramento Street 2nd Floor
TUESDAY, JANUARY 20TH	7:30 PM	ANC Monthly Meeting (See page one for agenda) Baldwin Dining Hall, 28 Sacramento Street
THURSDAY, JANUARY 22ND		CHINESE NEW YEAR

JANUARY IS NATIONAL MENTORING MONTH, NATIONAL POVERTY AWARENESS MONTH, AND NATIONAL HOT TEA MONTH!

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The Whistler January 2004



AGASSIZ NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL
20 Sacramento Street Cambridge, MA 02138
(617) 349-6287 Fax and Hot Line (617) 497-4388
www.agassiz.org email: whistler@agassiz.org

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