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Download The Whistler at www.agassiz.org/Whistler.html

ANC News

Notes from the September 16th ANC Meeting

Willie Bloomstein welcomed everyone to the meeting and introduced Dave Reed from the Porter Square Neighborhood Association, who spoke about the MBTA Air-Rights project.

MBTA Air-Rights Project

Dave said that neither residents of Cambridge nor of Somerville knew about the project until June of this year, at which point the PSNA spread the word. Two bids for the project were presented at a well-attended July 30th meeting. The first was a \$2 million bid from Lesley University, which aims to use the space to build two dorms and to tie them to their Porter Exchange property and parking lot. The other bidder, Oak Tree Development, proposed a \$4 million project, though no deposit was made. Both bidders are interested in the process being public. Dave mentioned that both bidders have shown interesting ideas for the use of public space, including public walkways linking Somerville and Massachusetts Avenues. Both proposals have been conceptual – so far, there are no definite plans.

State Representative Alice Wolf said that the MBTA has a process, under law, that they must follow in order to sell their property. They must take the highest responsible bidder, and it must be a fair bid. The process has never involved the community before. Alice also explained that

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Harvard Construction Mitigation
 Call Center
 617-496-0857
 Monday to Friday, 6 AM to 6 PM
 For emergencies during non-work hours,
 please contact Harvard University Operations Center
 617-495-5560

**Roundtable Discussions
 on the Memo of Understanding
 with Harvard**

Monday, November 10th, 2003
 7:30-9:00 PM

Wednesday, November 12th, 2003
 7:30-9:00 PM

Both meetings will take place at the Agassiz
 Community Center at 20 Sacramento Street, on the
 2nd Floor.

Representatives from ACID will be present
 to answer questions. All are welcome!

Next ANC Monthly Meeting



Tuesday, 7:30 P.M.

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

Oxford Street Entrance - press buzzer for entry

- Agenda:**
- 1. DPW/Owen O’Riordan on Beacon Street Sewer Construction**
 - 2. Lesley U. Development**

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it will take at least a year for the MBTA to get through the processes required by both the cities of Cambridge and Somerville (such as the Planning Board, the Board of Zoning Appeals, etc).

Carol Weinhaus thanked Dave Reed for alerting the community to the project, and Alice for giving the community a voice.

Dave announced that there will be a PSNA meeting on Air Rights on Tuesday, October 28th, at 7:30 pm at the North-Prospect United Church of Christ, 1803 Mass Ave in Porter Square. All are welcome.

Harvard Development

Mary Power of Harvard gave everyone an update on the university's current and recent projects:

- 60 Oxford Street is occupied and 99% complete.
- Palfrey House, in response to community interest, will move next month to its new location facing Hammond Street.
- The underground Oxford Street Garage project is moving along. The roof is on, half of the first level is excavated, and the other half is getting ready to be excavated. It should be in use as of December 2004.
- The current utility work on lower Oxford Street represents some of the preliminary necessary to support the infrastructure for the new LISE.
- Harvard's Museum of Scientific Instruments will get a prominent ground floor space in LISE.

Harvard scientist Charlie Marcus spoke about LISE, the proposed new Laboratory for Interface Science and Engineering on lower Oxford Street. Charlie mentioned that he, too, is a local resident (of Kirkland Street) and announced that anyone with questions about LISE and nanotechnology, the science that will take place there, is welcome to email him at marcus@harvard.edu. He said nanotechnology is not dangerous and should not make res-

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Beacon Street Sewer Construction Update

In August, Modern Continental Construction (MCC) did test pit excavations along the construction work zone (from Miller Street to Museum Street on Beacon) to learn where were utilities were located. Additional test pits were dug in order to learn where to place the groundwater monitoring wells. MCC continues to perform preconstruction surveys of the buildings located closest to the construction. They have also installed geotechnical monitoring points in the sidewalks closest to the excavation and will be installing these points in the buildings in that area as well. Approximately 105 monitoring points will be installed. The Contractor is responsible for monitoring vibration during the excavation. These monitoring points will measure the earth's movement.

Also scheduled for August was the rehabilitation of two existing pipes (48-inch combined sewer in the middle of the street, and a 10-inch sewer line under the sidewalk on the "Cambridge" side of Beacon by O'Sullivan's) with a cured-in-place lining. This operation requires only minimal excavation but is a 24-hour a day, 7-day week operation from start to finish.

MCC has placed "open for business during construction" signs in front of the businesses in the construction work zone. Please continue to frequent these businesses during the construction. Access will always be made available to these establishments.

Notices of planned construction activities will be distributed to residents and businesses in the construction work zone. P&K Deli has a bulletin board where notices will be posted. Look for another bulletin board along with a project sign at the intersection of Sacramento St. and Beacon St. on the Somerville sign. Notices will be posted on this bulletin board. These notices will also be posted on the DPW web site. Please see page 4 for the latest construction notice.



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idents feel unsafe. The function of LISE is not to provide space for new experimentation, but to provide better, larger, more sophisticated space for a discipline that is already in existence on campus.

Valeria Mazarakis, an architect working with Rafael Moneo on the building, spoke about LISE's design. The 135,000 square-foot structure includes a 10,000 square-foot clean room and 4,500 square feet of imaging labs. It will include five floors of professor suites (labs and offices) plus one floor of classrooms. There will be an underground connection to other science buildings, preserving open courtyard space for pedestrians.

Mark Reed of William Wilson Associated Architects Inc, a firm working on LISE, said that the air-handling system will be located on the roof, screened by a parapet wall. The air output and intake will be directed away from Oxford Street and residential areas. The exhaust system will be similar to the kind already existing on campus, and will include scrubbers that will maintain a safe environment even in the (unlikely) event of the spillage of dangerous chemicals. Harvard is working with the Cambridge Fire Department and Environmental Health and Safety consultants to ensure they meet or exceed all safety codes. He also said that a wind tunnel study has shown that LISE won't change the ambient velocities of the wind there; that the loading dock has been redesigned to allow trucks to turn around off-street rather than blocking traffic; and that a storm water retention tank will delay run-off water before it enters Cambridge sewers (all lab waste will be neutralized first).

To read more about this proposed building, you may download a Harvard LISE information sheet currently posted at www.agassiz.org.

ACID and Harvard: Update Report

Willie Bloomstein of the Agassiz Committee on the Impacts of Development (ACID) distributed a Summary Sheet providing an update on the discussions between ACID and Harvard regarding future development of Harvard's North Campus. The Summary Sheet outlines the proposed Agassiz Harvard relationship in four main areas:

- Impact Mitigation
- Community Enhancement
- Build-out Predictability
- Structure for a Continuing Relationship

Willie said that Impact Mitigation is the bottom line. It includes funding for expanded construction mitigation,

regular project coordination meetings with abutters, a complaint call center, a mitigation web site and on-site posting of construction updates. There's another phase: traffic and traffic mitigation. Harvard has hired a traffic consultant to do a study, which is nearly complete, working with the Agassiz-Harvard-City Working Committee. Harvard has also agreed to fund some traffic-calming measures on Oxford Street (these measures are part of the already-approved Oxford Street Traffic Calming Plan).

As for Community Enhancement, built and open space amenities include enhanced pedestrian, streetscape, open space and beautification amenities, both inside and outside the campus. Harvard has also proposed youth and education programs, such as a science program with CRLS students.

Build-out Predictability assures that Harvard will propose no further development within the next 25 years beyond the combined 1.6 million square feet already proposed for FAS and Law School build-out. The Structure for a Continuing Relationship ensures the creation of a Standing Committee and of a process assuring open communication/cooperation in the years ahead.

The question was raised of whether this agreement with Harvard is legally enforceable. Joel Bard suggested that as it is currently being written, it may not be technically legally enforceable. But accountability is

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established because the agreement is in writing and will become a "document of standing."

The community agreed that before the November 18th ANC Mtg, ACID should distribute the proposed agreement in full so community members would have a chance to review it prior to meeting on November 18th. The vote on the agreement is still scheduled for the December 16th ANC meeting.

For more information, visit www.agassiz.org or email the ACID group at ACID@agassiz.org.

Neighborhood News

An Announcement from the Cambridge Dept. of Public Works

From time to time, Modern Continental, the Contractor for the Cities of Somerville and Cambridge, may be required to close portions of Museum, Sacramento, Eustis and Prentiss Streets for short periods of time in order to do work related to the Beacon Street Drainage Improvements Project. When this occurs, a detour will be in effect with proper signage to direct traffic.

The Contractor will post "No Parking" signs in the work zone area 24-hours in advance of street closures. Please refrain from parking in these areas during the time stipulated on the signs or your car might be towed.

Please be assured that access will always be maintained to homes and businesses during street closures.

Because of the short duration of the street closures (usually 4 to 8 hours), written notices will not be

delivered throughout the neighborhood.

If you have any questions about this procedure, please contact Bruno Cardarelli, Chief Resident Engineer for S E A Consultants Inc./Montgomery Watson Harza, the Cities' engineering consultants at (617) 492-5804, or Judy Kavanagh, Community Relations Manager at (617) 498-4710.

Fast Hobby Pauses For Stops in Agassiz

Model race cars, traveling in excess of 1,000 scale miles per hour, can be seen here in the neighborhood on both October 11 and November 1, when the New England championship for the tiny racers makes its annual visits. Sacramento Street's Catfish International Speedway is the site, and everyone is invited to come by to see the action.

The electric racers, known as slot cars, are an excellent hobby for mechanically-inclined children and their parents to pursue together. The racers at the October and November events will include several national champions, and everyone is happy to answer questions and show off their cars and equipment. For more information, contact Rob Hayes at 617-747-2566, or rhayes@berklee.edu, or see the raceway web site at catfishinternational.com.



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is asking you to do? Do you know
how to get the most out of your
neighborhood?

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Get involved in the Democratic Party
with fellow neighbors!

The Ward 7 Democratic Committee, covering the Agassiz neighborhood, seeks new members and associate members. To find out more, please contact:
Larry Field at Lfield1007@aol.com or
617-354-4779 (work phone).



Agassiz Community School
Tongassamu

Agassiz Afterschool

A note from Sharon Reidbord, Director of Programs

We've had a great start to our After School this fall. Kindergarteners have made homemade pretzels and pizza with Mikey, enjoyed nature walks with Isaac, and painted and made jewelry with Emily. Of course the children have been playing outside as much as possible

New 1st-5th Teacher Aaron has engaged kids in learning comedy improvisation skills, and has also introduced the 1st through 5th graders to Korean Martial Art Chung Do Kwan. Other 1st through 5th grade activities have included bridge-building, glider flying, field games, tot lot, drawing, sculpture, quiet games, and our new Homework Club.

Our music, drama, dance, art, and yoga specialists started the week of September 22nd to rave reviews from the children. Children who choose to take specialist classes spend 10 weeks taking a more in-depth look at the art form they choose.

Would you like to enroll your child in the Agassiz Afterschool? Contact Sharon at 617-349-6287 x10.

Drop-In Basketball for Teens and Adults

Starting in October in the Baldwin School Gym, 28 Sacramento Street! For more information, contact Sharon Reidbord at 617-349-6287 x10 or email sreidbord@agassiz.org.

Look for the Agassiz Neighborhood Council table at the Harvard Square Oktoberfest!



Sunday, October 12th
Noon-6:00 pm

We'll be making free crafts with kids -- come and join us!



Children at the Sacramento Street Preschool explore their artistic sides with teacher Tanika Odell.

Tutoring Plus of Cambridge is looking for Tutors and Mentors for Cambridge students in grades 1 through 12!

Spend *one evening per week* working one-on-one or in small groups with children who need your help! Opportunities are available Monday through Thursday from 6:00 – 8:00pm, and on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:00 – 8:30pm. For more information, visit www.tutoringplus.org, email info@tutoringplus.org or call 617-547-7670.

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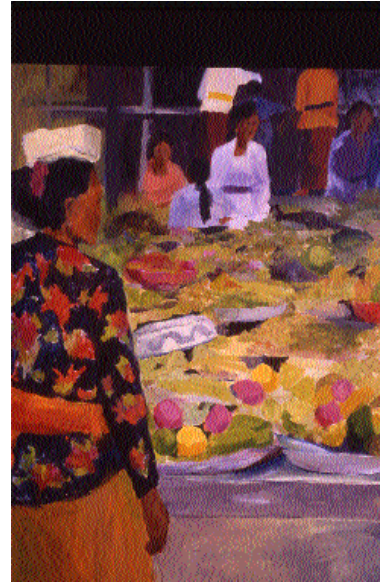
Sacramento Street Gallery

Daily Rituals: Women of Bali

A show of paintings by
LORI LANDER

OCTOBER 10-NOVEMBER 7, 2003
Weekdays 9-5

Artist's Reception:
Friday, October 10, 2003 6:00-8:00 PM



FUNDING PROVIDED IN PART BY



MASSACHUSETTS CULTURAL COUNCIL

Introducing Art: A Performance Series for Children Presents

The Rob Mitzner Jazz Trio

Thursday, October 16th 2:00 PM

Baldwin School Stage

Children will learn about jazz and the way different instruments interact to form a jazz group.



Admission \$1.00.

Contact Amy King at 349-6287 x19 or email <aking@agassiz.org>.

Groups must reserve in advance. All Cambridge after school programs admitted at no charge.



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Saturday, October 18th 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.
Agassiz Community Center, 20 Sacramento Street
Admission \$5/Families \$15
For more information, call Amy King at 617-349-6287 x19

Other Local Cultural Events and Programs



**Club Passim
Culture for Kids
2003**

Multicultural Community Program
for Children Ages 8-12

**October 20th (3:30-5:30):
The Iroquo Confederacy**

An afternoon filled with the music, dance,
and cuisine of the Native American Iroquois
Confederacy presented by Grammy nominee
Howard Lyons
Limited to 35 children

**October 25th (3:00PM-4:00PM):
Billy Jonas**

A children's recycled percussion concert with
the Parents' Choice Award winner
*Parents \$10/ Children \$5

Both events located at Club Passim,
47 Palmer Street, Cambridge.

For reservations or information, contact Laura at
617-491-2382 or email Laura@clubpassim.org
Full schedule available online at
<http://www.clubpassim.com/cultureforkids/>

FORD HALL FORUM 2003

**Up Close and Personal: Embedded Reporter Gets
Inside the War in Iraq**

Thursday, October 9, 2003 at 6:30 p.m.
Northeastern University, Egan Center/Raytheon
Amphitheater, 120 Forsyth Street, Boston
with Brian Macquarrie, Reporter, The Boston Globe

**Remembering the Ladies: Boston Celebrates a
New Women's Memorial**

Monday, October 20, 2003 at 6:30 p.m.
Old South Meeting House, 310 Washington Street,
Boston
with Meredith Bergmann, Designer and Sculptor of
the Boston Women's Memorial; Henry Louis Gates,
Jr, Director, W.E.B DuBois Institute for Afro-
American Research; Andrea Moore Kerr, Historian
and Lucy Stone Biographer & Celeste Walker,
Associate Editor of The Adams Papers, Mass.
Historical Society

**A People Adrift: The Crisis of the Roman Catholic
Church in America**

Tuesday, October 21, 2003 at 6:30 p.m.
Old South Meeting House, 310 Washington Street,
Boston
with Peter Steinfels, Author and "Beliefs" Columnist
for The New York Times

Community Calendar

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5TH	SUNDOWN	YOM KIPPUR -- through sundown October 6th
FRIDAY, OCTOBER 10TH	6:00 PM	Artist's reception: DAILY RITUALS: WOMEN OF BALI, a show of paintings by LORI LANDER THROUGH NOVEMBER 7, 2003 Sacramento Street Gallery, 20 Sacramento Street
SUNDAY, OCTOBER 12TH	NOON	Harvard Square OKTOBERFEST
MONDAY, OCTOBER 13TH		COLUMBUS DAY Cambridge Public Schools Closed
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21ST	6:00- PM	ANC Board Meeting 20 Sacramento Street, 2nd Floor
TUESDAY, OCTOBER 21ST	7:30 PM	ANC Monthly Meeting (See page one for agenda) Baldwin Dining Hall, 28 Sacramento Street
WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 22ND	2:00 PM	INTRODUCING ART presents The Rob Mitzner Jazz Trio Baldwin School Stage, 28 Sacramento Street

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The Whistler



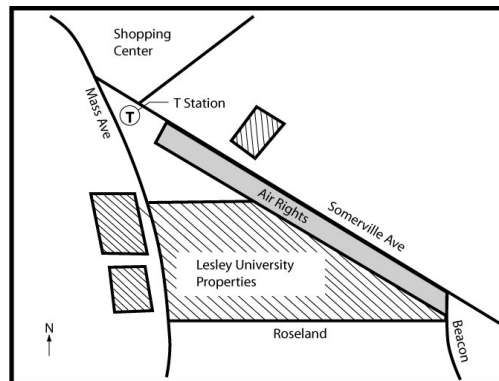
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DO NOT FORWARD

You are invited to a public meeting to discuss potential uses and development of a 50,000 square foot MBTA Air Rights Space in Porter Square. The meeting is sponsored by Alice Wolf, State Representative, the Porter Square Neighbors Association and the Agassiz Neighborhood Council.

The Public Meeting is Tuesday October 28, 7:30 to 9:30 pm, at the North Point United Church of Christ, 1803 Mass Ave.

In June the MBTA requested bids to build in Porter Square over the train tracks between the Porter Square T station and the Beacon Street Bridge along Somerville Avenue and Lesley University's parking lot. The bid winner would get an 85 year lease. The property is in Cambridge (zoned commercial) and Somerville (split zoned commercial and residential).



On July 30th Oaktree Development and Lesley University submitted bids offering different uses of the space. The MBTA ruled that Lesley University's bid, having been well below the minimum bid sought, was non-responsive. The T has asked Oaktree to continue work with Lesley and the community before it decides whether to move ahead with the Oaktree proposal.

This meeting is meant to inform the community and elicit responses.

AGENDA

Moderator Alice Wolf, State Representative: *Purpose of this meeting and agenda overview.*

Mark Boyle, MBTA Head of Real Estate: *The T's rationale and process for Porter Square Air Rights development plan.*

Stuart Dash, Cambridge Director of Community Planning, & Les Barber, Cambridge Director of Zoning: *The city of Cambridge approval processes when a development proposal is put forward.*

Paul Karoff, Lesley University: *What a Lesley-centered use of the Air Rights Space could be in the context of Lesley's long range plans.*

Chuck Redman for Oaktree Development: *The Oaktree Proposal - What a housing centered use of the Air Rights Space could be.*

Dave Reed, President Porter Square Neighbors Association: *Where we are now and what happens next.*

There will be ample time for public comment.

PSNA Brief History of the Porter Square T Air Rights Experience

June 4 – The T releases an Invitation to Bid to build on 50,000 square feet (about 65 feet deep by 775 feet long) over the train tracks between the Porter Square T station and the Beacon Street Bridge along Somerville Avenue and Lesley’s parking lot.

The winner would get an 85 year lease for a minimum bid of \$4 million. The property is in Cambridge (zoned commercial) and Somerville (split zoned commercial and residential).

Both cities, legislators and all neighborhood organizations are surprised and push back on the T for lack of community process.

Rep. Alice Wolf sends a letter to and meets with the MBTA, and requests the bidding process be stopped to allow the community to discuss the T’s proposal.

PSNA responds with Focus Points and a letter of concerns to the MBTA supporting Rep. Wolf’s request that the bidding process be stopped to allow for the community to discuss the air rights proposal.

The T proceeds and gets two non-complying “bids” on July 30. Oaktree bids \$4 million to build 80+ condo units in three buildings of housing but no deposit check until community and permitting processes are clear. **Lesley bids \$2 million to build 3 dorm buildings. Both packages are conceptual starting points and not finished designs.**

The MBTA process to lease the air rights above the commuter rail for development in Porter Square is now on **“pause” for community input and is to be continued in November.**

Although no bid has been officially accepted, the MBTA has agreed to allow Oaktree Development to explore the contingency in its bid to build condominiums (which include the city requirements for affordable units). Oaktree wanted to gather public input on its proposal to gauge community support before it is willing to sign the lease. A second bid from Lesley University was rejected because it failed to offer the minimum bid of \$4 million.

As a first step in community process, PSNA invited both bidders and the MBTA to its August 21 meeting to present their proposals and to answer questions. Given that this was the third week in August, the attendance was surprisingly good, as were the questions.

The terms of the invitation to bid restricted the proposals to the narrow strip above the tracks. In preparing for the August meeting, **PSNA met with both bidders and found that the conversation moved quickly to the Square as a whole.**

Lesley, which owns several properties around the Square, is developing a master plan for its campus. Oaktree is interested in looking at how to improve the T plaza for community purposes and in integrating its project with Lesley’s campus planning. Oaktree is working with Cambridge Seven, the architectural firm that designed the Porter Square station. Oaktree and Lesley are talking – it is unclear if a joint proposal will happen.

PSNA is interested in a plan that shifts the focus from piecemeal development of adjacent parcels to making improvements in the Square itself so as to better absorb the impact of inevitable development by Lesley and to generate revenue for both cities. We believe that an area plan, based on meaningful community input, is in the best interests of all parties.