

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

December 2010

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ANC News

NOTES FROM THE NOV. 17 MEETING

Neighborhood Crime Report

"Cambridge is very safe, but it's still a city," stated neighborhood Police Sergeant Steven Sennott. "You always have to be aware of your surroundings."

In light of recent muggings, neighbors were concerned there might be an upsurge in crime in the city. Sgt. Sennott reported, "Actually, for the most part, crime is down."

However, he provided details about what he referred to as "a spree" of robberies between October 9 and October 15. The incidents involved women who were approached from behind while walking close to their residences. The Cambridge Police Department (CPD) worked with the Somerville Police Department

to produce three arrests related to these muggings.

"Follow your intuition if you feel like something is wrong and you're being followed," instructed Sgt. Sennott. He added that making eye contact is a good defense but reminded residents not to resist a robbery –valuables are far less important than safety.

Additionally, the Agassiz neighborhood has been experiencing housebreaks, particularly on Friday and Saturday nights. Suspects forced windows open and primarily stole laptop computers. Related to this, the Sergeant suggested that residents take advantage of CPD's free Residential Security Service where officers will assess homes (inside and out) and make recommendations on how to better secure them. For more information, call (617) 349-3236.

CitizenObserver Alert Network

The CitizenObserver Alert Network allows CPD to instantly update residents about crimes, emergencies, and other important information.

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



DEC. 15 - 7:30 PM

Maud Morgan Arts
20 Sacramento Street, rear
2D Studio, 2nd Floor

AGENDA

FOREST STREET RECONSTRUCTION PROJECT

Presentation by Owen O'Riordan of
Cambridge Department of Public Works

MASTER PLAN FOR MASS. AVE.

Cambridge Common to Porter Square,
discussion of city reaction to report

Alerts can be delivered via e-mail or text and residents can also communicate with CPD. Sign up at: www.citizenobserver.com/registration.

BridgeStat Program

Residents can now go online to view crime reports, citywide as well as for specific neighborhoods, using BridgeStat. Reports are updated monthly and yearly. Learn more at <http://bit.ly/gdDsax>.

Prescription Drop-Off Program

Cambridge Police Department, the Public Health Department, and the Prevention Coalition are collaborating to offer an ongoing prescription drop-off program. The drop box is located in the front lobby of the police station's Record Unit at 125 Sixth Street. Drop-offs are anonymous and accepted 24/7.

Reasons to turn in unused prescriptions include:

- Children and animals could be harmed if they find and swallow drugs
- Drugs can be scavenged and sold illegally
- Unused pharmaceuticals are environmental toxins; flushing them down the toilet can release them into our drinking water and soil

To learn which items are accepted, contact Gisela Rots at (617) 349-6283 or open@cambridgema.gov.

Snow Removal On Sidewalks



"It's a spotty situation," stated Stephen Diamond, ANC meeting chair, of city sidewalks in winter. "You often can't walk more than two or three blocks until you come to a place that is either a danger or impossible to pass. Corners get neglected or clogged by street plows as they clear the streets.

The city will issue warnings and fines to property owners for sidewalks that aren't cleared of snow and ice twelve hours following a storm. However sidewalks and corners often remain neglected. As described at previous ANC meet-

ings, various approaches for clearing sidewalks include:

- Individuals can contact neighboring property owners directly to request that they clear uncleared walks.
- Uncleared sidewalks can be reported to the city via the Snow Hotline at (617) 349-4903 or the city's website at http://bit.ly/cambridge_snow
- A group of neighbors can purchase a snow blower and share the responsibility or hire a contractor
- The Commission for Persons with Disabilities is sponsoring "Adopt a Street" and "Adopt a Corner" initiatives
- Households can take part in discounted fee-for-service programs such as ABC's Living Well Network Snow Removal (www.agassiz.org/living-well/snow-removal-program)
- College or high school students can be hired to shovel. (a council attendee volunteered to develop a list of students willing to shovel in the Agassiz area)
- Close-knit neighbors might shovel for one another

When ANC asked the city to estimate snow removal costs, the city declared it infeasible to clear every sidewalk within a twelve hour period due to costs and logistics. If clearing sidewalks becomes a city responsibility, the tax rate would likely increase, which some Agassiz residents voiced objections to. In light of this, Mr. Diamond stated, "I think an interesting alternative would be for the city to agree to just plow

	Peter G Meyersohn, CFP Financial Advisor
	
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the pedestrian crossings at the corners. The city could do second round after clearing streets.”

Following the discussion, the council decided to ask Cambridge to estimate the cost, in terms of the tax rate, of clearing all sidewalks as well as the cost to plow only the corners.

Help Find A Solution!

Concerned about snowy, icy sidewalks and want to help? Volunteer to research comparable cities that use public funds to clear sidewalks. For more information, contact Phoebe Sinclair at (617) 349-6287 x10 or psinclair@agassiz.org.

Proposed Improvements to Sacramento Field

Council members and neighbors discussed and suggested changes to a list of proposed improvements to Sacramento Field that ANC will include with a letter to Cambridge Community Development and the Parks Division. To view the list or learn more, download the October 2010 edition of *The Whistler* newsletter at <http://bit.ly/hiuvSu>.

Entrances to the Field

Although there is an easement to the field on Sacramento Place, the entrance is not always available (a nearby homeowner sometimes locks the gate abutting their property) and not maintained by the city.

Council members were in favor of developing a new passage along the west edge of the Sacramento Street Garden.

Lighting

Although a resident requested that lights be installed on the field to discourage loitering, other residents worried that new lighting would disturb abutters. The council decided to request unobtrusive lights to improve security after the park closes at dusk.

Chemical Toilet

Although opinions differed, the council agreed to ask the city to consider installing a chemical

toilet for daytime use only, under the conditions that it be well maintained and secured at night.

Off-leash Hours for Dogs

A council member is in the process of collecting signatures from Agassiz residents to petition the city for morning off-leash hours for dogs.

Your Thoughts

Contact psinclair@agassiz.org with comments or suggestions.



Community

LWN SNOW REMOVAL PROGRAM

Welcome to another cold weather season in New England! Living Well Network (LWN) has again contracted with S+H Construction, Inc. to provide a discounted snow removal service for members of Agassiz neighborhood and adjacent communities, age 50 and older.

For a charge of \$50 per hour, S+H Construction will shovel and snow blow driveways, paths, and steps. Unlike most companies which charge a flat fee for snow removal each time, S+H only charges for the time it takes to remove the snow. For example, a home that requires fifteen minutes of work would only be charge for those fifteen minutes, and not for a full hour.

To sign up or learn more, please contact Phoebe Sinclair at psinclair@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x10.



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Call me with your real estate questions.

Some Cambridge residents who are elderly or disabled may qualify for snow removal assistance from the city. To learn more, see below:

Snow Exemption Program
Cambridge Council on Aging
(617) 349-6220 (voice)
(617) 349-6050 (TTY)
www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks/services/snow.html

TAKE A LWN YOGA CLASS THIS DECEMBER

In a recent yoga class, teacher Christine Palamidessi taught a “digestive” pranayama and asana series, which was very relaxing for the spirit and challenging for the abs. This December, LWN will host two Saturday yoga classes in Lesley University’s beautiful dance studio with skylights that overlook Cambridge and Somerville. The fee is \$10 per class.

Date & Time: December 4, 9:30-10:30 AM
Focus: Hips and legs (to prepare for shopping treks!) and Aikido footwork

Date & Time: December 18, 9:30-10:30 AM
Focus: Holiday stress release, relaxation poses, and Aikido breath work

Location: Lesley University Hall (aka Porter Exchange), 1815 Mass. Ave., Room 4-009, take elevator behind the security desk to fourth floor

Bring a yoga mat (blocks and belts will be



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provided) and wear loose clothing. To sign up, contact Phoebe Sinclair at psinclair@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x10.

IMAGES FROM THE 39TH ANNUAL THANKSGIVING POTLUCK FEAST

ABC extends thanks to this year’s nine turkey cookers, four turkey carvers, Agassiz Baldwin staff, Baldwin School custodial and kitchen staff, and all who donated a dish and contributed good company and conversation. We look forward to seeing everyone’s smiling faces at next year’s (40th!) event.



Leave a Dish?

Did you leave behind a dish or utensil at this year’s Thanksgiving Potluck Feast? Check out the photo below to see if you recognize your long-lost item. Unclaimed items will be donated to the Agassiz Baldwin Children’s Programs.

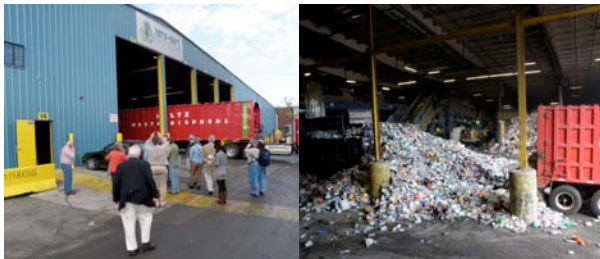


TOUR OF SINGLE STREAM RECYCLING FACILITY

Prepared by Stephen Diamond

At our ANC meeting on September 15th we were invited by Randi Mail, Cambridge Recycling Director, to see the new process of single stream recycling. Because of its simplicity for Cambridge residents, it is expected to increase our recycling volume ten to twenty-five percent. Casella Waste Systems, the Zero-Sort single stream recycling facility in Charlestown, hosted a tour for Cambridge residents on November 18th.

Trucks from several towns, schools, and businesses in our area deliver unsorted recyclable materials to the facility.



The processing plant is full of a maze of machines connected by fast moving conveyer belts.



By means of ingenious mechanical, magnetic, air jet, and optical recognition methods, the machines gradually separate the unsorted material into various papers, metals, and plastics.



The machines can even separate by different types of plastic bottles.



Although highly mechanized, the plant must still employ people to remove unusable materials that will disrupt the machines and can not be recycled, such as light weight, grocery store plastic bags, video tape, and heavy metal objects.



At the end of the process, neat bails of the sorted materials are stacked for sale around the world to plants that will convert them into new products.



Vice Mayor, Henrietta Davis was one of the members of this informative tour.





Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs

AFTERSCHOOL UPDATE

Prepared by Maria Laine, 1st-5th Site Director

November has been a busy month at the 1st-5th grade afterschool! Preparations for our annual Flying Zucchini Café are well underway. The café is a restaurant open for two evenings every year, run by afterschool students who do everything from making and serving the food, to restaurant design, to entertainment, to selling their handmade merchandise, to helping raise funds for the café and a local food bank.



This year's theme for Flying Zucchini Café is "Around the World." Students have been hard at work applying for positions within the café and going through the interview process; taking reservations; practicing recipes; creating flags, tablecloths, and lanterns to decorate; making jewelry and other items to sell; producing menus; designing T-shirts; and many other things!

November has also been a month of performances. We hosted "The Do It Your 'Darn' Self" film festival, which featured films made by youth and was organized by teenagers from Cambridge Community Art Center. A film of Agassiz students from a previous Zucchini Café was shown and well received.

We also had flamenco dancer Yvonne La Lyre accompanied by a Spanish guitarist perform for the students.



On an early release day, we had a special treat—a performance by magician and shadow puppet extraordinaire, Leland Faulkner. Leland's show was a real crowd pleaser and afterwards he was kind enough to put on a workshop for some of the older students in the program.




KIDS ONLY HOLIDAY SALE 2010

Kids, grab your shopping list and enlist the help of Agassiz Baldwin Afterschool and ABC staff to purchase fun and inexpensive gifts for your family and friends!

- Dates:** Weekdays, Thursday, December 2-Friday, December 10
3 PM to 6 PM
- Location:** Chandler Gallery,
20 Sacramento St.

ABC extends a special thank you to Joie de Vivre of 1792 Mass. Ave, Greenward of 1764 Mass. Ave., and a anonymous donor for their continued, valuable, and much appreciated support of this event

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City Wide

AUTHOR EVENT AT CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC LIBRARY

Ashley Bryan, beloved illustrator and author of over thirty-five books including “Ashley Bryan’s Words to My Life’s Song,” “All Things Bright and Beautiful,” and “Beautiful Blackbird” is coming back to Cambridge.



Come and join his joyful presentation of poetry and stories.

When: Thursday, December 16th, 6:00 PM
Where: Fletcher-Maynard Academy, 225 Windsor Street, Cambridge
RSVP: Registration required. Call (617) 349-4409 or (617) 349-4102

For ages six and up. This program is free and open to all. Pizza will be served.

RENEW YOUR RESIDENTIAL PARKING PERMIT



Don't forget to renew your residential parking permit! Permits may be obtained by mail or in person. If you qualify, you can apply on-line

at http://bit.ly/Cambridge_parking_permit.

Residents can also fill out a mail-in application and send it to the address below, or go in person to:

Traffic, Parking & Transportation
City of Cambridge
344 Broadway
Cambridge, MA 02139

Sacramento Street Gallery

HELP IMPROVE OUR GALLERY AND EXHIBITION SPACE

What kind of shows do you want to see in the Chandler Gallery? Help us review the mission and organization of our gallery as well as the new exhibition space at Maud Morgan Arts by taking our survey! Visit: http://conta.cc/mma_gallery_survey.

SNAPSHOTS FROM MAUD MORGAN ARTS

The images below are examples of artwork produced in last semester's Stamp and Stencil, Rub and Roll class for 3rd-5th grade students, taught by Nancy Popper, an art educator and printmaker living in Cambridge. In this course, students used recycled and found materials to create monoprint and relief printings.



WINTER/SPRING AND VACATION WEEK OFFERINGS AT MMA

Maud Morgan Arts (MMA) is a newly constructed community art center where you can study with some of Boston's finest professional artists/educators. Studios are designed for ceramics, printmaking, sculpture, drawing, and painting. We offer day and evening classes for all ages, preschool through adult, and for all levels, beginner through professional.

Look for course listings and online registration in December! Visit www.maudmorganarts.org.

Community Calendar

December 2010

Thursday, December 2		Hanukkah begins at sundown
Thursday, December 2	3:00-6:00 PM	Kids Only Holiday Sale, Chandler Gallery, through Friday, December 10
Wednesday, December 8	6:00-7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome
Wednesday, December 15	7:30-9:00 PM	ANC Meeting (see page 1 for agenda) Maud Morgan Arts, 20A Sacramento St., 2D Studio All are welcome
Friday, December 24		Christmas Eve Holiday, ABC School Programs and office closed through Monday, December 27
Sunday, December 26		Begin Kwanzaa holiday

The Whistler is published monthly September - June by the Agassiz Baldwin Community. Call (617) 349-6287 to receive by mail or e-mail. The newsletter is also posted each month online at www.agassiz.org. 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 December 2010



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DO NOT FORWARD

DID YOU KNOW?

- Help us review the mission and organization of the Chandler Gallery as well as the new exhibition space at Maud Morgan Arts by taking our survey:
http://conta.cc/mma_gallery_survey.
- **In January, ANC meetings will move to the second Tuesday of the month.** Join us in the 2D studio at Maud Morgan Arts Center, 20A Sacramento Street.