

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

May 2015

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ANC News

NOTES FROM THE APR 14 MEETING

Special Discussion Of Snow Removal in Cambridge

"Four major storms fell within a month," stated John Nardone. "All on Mondays. With nearly 80 inches of snow in a short period of time, it'd take us at least a full week to get through most of the clearing, and then another storm would hit!"

Mr. Nardone, Deputy Commissioner for the Cambridge Department of Public Works attended the April 14th ANC Meeting with Joseph Barr, the new Director of Traffic, Parking & Transportation. Mr. Barr, who introduced himself as having a background in public transit and operations, previously worked for Community Development and identified improving the bus system as a priority in his new role.

Several city departments, including Public Works (DPW); Traffic, Parking & Transportation; Human Services; Water; and the Police work closely to clear streets and address safety. Annually, the city clears snow and ice from 125

miles of public streets and 23 miles of public sidewalks, as well as enforces the city's Snow and Ice Removal Ordinance.

Since last presenting updates to their snow program at an ANC meeting, the city has focused their efforts on pedestrian operations and public transportation.

"ANC has been a positive influence on us," Mr. Nardone added. "[When we met with you in 2011], we were inspired to see what we could do about clearing more snow."

The city changed its snow removal contracts related to pedestrian ramps and bus stop clearing, and now clears two-thirds of all bus stops, and sidewalk ramps on major streets servicing bus lines. Additionally they continue to clear snow around all school and city properties, major squares and parks, and city-owned parking lots and garages.

Q&A

Q: Can the city use the street sweeping program for snow emergencies? Also, is it possible

YOU'RE INVITED



MAY 12 - 6:00 PM

Maud Morgan Arts
20A Sacramento Street

Join us to honor **Terry DeLancey** outgoing Executive Director and meet **Maria LaPage**, incoming Executive Director

6:00 PM - Reception

7:30 PM - Election of Officers to the Board of Directors

to add more snow emergency parking-ban signs?

A: That's a good idea and we'll look into it. This year, there was so much snow that the city really couldn't get parking back on a lot of the streets. Due to cost and space constraints, we very rarely remove snow, but this year we had no choice. We removed snow from Oxford St. several times.

Following an internal debrief, we realized we want to think differently about the Snow Emergency system, giving ourselves more flexibility as well as maintaining the ability to use private off-street parking. We may extend the snow emergency parking ban flip-down sign program.

Q: Can we increase taxes to add more snow removal?

A: "It's not just money," responded Mr. Barr, "It's also a resource issue."

As an older city with many narrow streets and sidewalks, Cambridge's infrastructure is not designed around snow clearing and removal like in other cities (e.g. Montreal.) Additionally, the city needs to think about and prepare adaptation strategies in response to climate change-related weather conditions.

Mr. Nardone added, "We focus our efforts on streets related to emergency services and prioritize plowing accordingly. In a typical winter, the city will spend less than a million dollars, this year we spent six million with much of that allocated to removing snow. We worked very closely with a significant number of contractors, but area cities are all using the same people. After many weeks, we have really dead-tired people trying to get the job done."

The city has had success instituting social media to encourage residents to get involved. This year they added a new app called

"Shovel Me" that identifies catch basins and fire hydrants needing to be cleared. Find it online at: bit.ly/CambMA-shovel-me-app

Q: Even if there are no cars parked in the parking lanes, the plows seem to go down the middle of the street. Can the plows include the sides?

A: The plows try to get back as far to the curb as possible, but they won't go in and out between cars.

Q: Is Cambridge investing in snowmelting machines?

A: The city has looked into but not yet made use of snowmelters. We find our current snow removal process of hauling snow to storage areas very efficient but, due to land constraints (i.e. places to put the snow), the city may need to begin thinking differently about melting.

Q: Is Cambridge open to collaborating with Somerville or other cities to purchase snowmelters?

A: Somerville has its own operation, but Cambridge is willing to open those lines of communication.

Q: Although the neighbors look out for each other on my street, we've reached a point where we can't shovel. We paid for someone to clear spaces, but then other people parked there, including Harvard employees. I ended up using a space saver because I didn't know what else to do, there were no other places to park. Will the city consider permits for space saving? This is an important aspect of aging in place in the city.

A: According to a city ordinance, space savers are not permitted. However removing them is low on the city's list of priorities. The city will consider options for identifying and assisting people who are particularly vulnerable, without encouraging abuses of such a system.

Learn more at: bit.ly/space-savers-in-CambMA

Community Response

Council members discussed the following:

- Corners and drains re-blocked by the city plows
- How to encourage universities and students to go out into the neighborhoods to help
- How to address the universities or institutions dumping snow into the street or public parking spaces (suggested response: report incidents to DPW)
- Residents often walk in the street after a snow storm because they're better plowed and seem safer than the sidewalks
- Disinclination to report un-shoveled residential sidewalks to the city (possible solution: emphasize that the first ticket is a warning as a way to encourage residents who are otherwise reluctant to 'tell' on their neighbors)
- Prioritizing outreach for the snow hotline phone number for residents who don't have access to smart phones or the Internet
- Increasing access to 'snow farms' (parking lots and other large spaces where snow can be left) for city operations
- It's not clear on Cambridge's website whether space savers are legal

City Snow Exemption Program

The city offers an exemption program for low-income elderly people and person with disabilities. Learn more at:

<http://1.usa.gov/cambridge-snow-assistance>

Snow Hotline

To report an icy or unshoveled sidewalk, call the Snow Hotline at (617) 349-4903.

Cambridge Apps

iReport (commonly requested city services):
www.cambridgema.gov/iReport

Mobile Maps & Apps:

bit.ly/CambMA-mobile-maps



Community

2015 ABC BOARD SLATE

The following slate of officers and directors for the Agassiz Baldwin Community Board was presented at the April 14th ANC meeting. This slate will be voted on at the Annual Meeting on May 12th.

Officers for a one-year term:

Andrea Walsh, Co-Chair, Eustis St.

Emily Anderson, Co-Chair, Abodeon

Hull Fulweiler, Clerk, Howland St.

Jonathan Lehigh, Treasurer, Cogswell Ave.

Directors for a two-year term:

Hull Fulweiler, Howland St.

Susana Segat, Wendell St.

Stephen Diamond, Frost St.

Wendy Prellwitz, Wendell St.

Jonathan Lehigh, Cogswell Ave.

Gao Wen Shao, Fayette St.

Agassiz Baldwin seeks candidates for board membership on an ongoing basis. Candidates will be considered when vacancies occur or as directors retire at the end of their terms. Those with expertise in law, finance, representatives of local businesses, and people with children in ABC programs are often sought.

Candidates should send a statement that explains their interest in the Board as well as relevant experience and a resumé, if available, to tdelancey@agassiz.org or Agassiz Baldwin Community, Attn: ABC Nominating Committee, 20 Sacramento Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S RECEPTION

After more than thirty years at the helm of the Agassiz Baldwin Community, Executive Director Terry DeLancey has announced her retirement.

It is thanks to her exemplary leadership that the Maud Morgan Arts Center was conceived, constructed, and is now flourishing.



Terry's successor will be Maria LaPage, the current Director of Children's Programs at the Agassiz Baldwin Community.

Join us for a reception honoring Terry and introducing Maria. Refreshments will be served.

When: Tuesday, May 12, 6:00 PM
Where: Maud Morgan Arts,
20A Sacramento St.

REMEMBERING JEAN CHAPIN SMITH

Jean Chapin Smith was born in Boston, grew up in Washington, DC, and Vermont, and moved to Cambridge in 1957. She graduated with a BA from Oberlin College in 1952, and earned her Masters degree from the Smith College School of Social Work in 1954. Meeting Eleanor Roosevelt was a high point of her college years.



Jean's career in social work spanned six decades. She began her private practice in 1982, with a focus towards family systems and the LGBT community. She loved her work, and only reluctantly retired from practice in her early 80's.

Jean had many passions, which she explored tirelessly and shared enthusiastically. These ranged from a lifelong commitment to social justice, to her love of music, dance, art, travel, reading, and good food. She was an active participant in the neighborhood, an enthusiastic supporter of Maud Morgan Arts, and will be

sorely missed at Agassiz Baldwin Community events.

Jean Chapin Smith died in March 2015 at age 84, surrounded by her children and friends, music and flowers. She leaves three daughters, grandchildren, former husband, and other family.

Memorial contributions in Jean's name can be made to Community Change, Inc. (www.communitychangeinc.org) or Maud Morgan Arts (www.maudmorgan.com). A private memorial gathering will be held in the spring.

Questions may be sent to Picaryalexsmith@gmail.com. For obituary or to send a condolence, visit www.keefefuneralhome.com

**SAVE THE DATE: PLAY DAY!
A COMMUNITY PARTY**

Come celebrate our community and the arts at our fifth annual Play Day!

What: Play Day! A Community Party
When: Saturday, June 13th
1:00-4:00 PM
Admission: Free

- Enjoy . . .
- Snacks!
 - Bocce!
 - Raffle prizes!
 - BIG blue building blocks!
 - GIANT bubbles!
 - Community art projects!

Check out photos of last year's event on Flickr: bit.ly/2014-play-day-photos





Living Well Network

MAKING SPACE FOR OLDER BICYCLISTS

To celebrate Bay State Bike Week, the Living Well Network has teamed up with the City of Cambridge to offer two events aimed at older cyclists: a bike maintenance workshop and an opportunity to practice urban cycling on Memorial Drive.



“We want all Cambridge residents to feel comfortable with using public spaces and recreational resources that are available,” says Living Well Network Coordinator Colin Barr.

Along with a bike maintenance demonstration, the first workshop includes a discussion about barriers to bike riding in Cambridge. The information gathered will help the city make cycling more accessible for everyone.

Improving accessibility is, as always, a collaborative effort. At the urban cycling workshop, MassBike, a coalition for safe bicycling, will offer tips and training, a physical therapist will teach exercises to improve strength and balance, and Urban AdvenTours will provide free bikes to use during the event. Then, while Memorial Drive is closed to automobile traffic, participants will embark on a one-hour ride that will be pure fun.

“Bicycle Maintenance Basics Workshop” will be held on **Monday, May 11 from 11:00 AM-1:00 PM** at the Agassiz Baldwin Community, 20 Sacramento Street in Cambridge.

“On-Bike Urban Cycling Refresher Course” will be held on **Sunday, May 31 from 10:00 AM-2:00 PM** at Memorial Drive. For exact location,

RSVP to Jennifer Lawrence: jlawrence@cambridgema.gov or (617) 349-4671.

The City of Cambridge will be offering additional bicycling-related events during May.



Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs

CHILDREN STORM THE ART WORLD

For anyone who is despondent over the state of today's youth, “From the Studios: Artwork by ABC and MMA Students” at the Chandler Gallery provides a hopeful perspective on the next generation.



The outpouring of youthful creativity from students enrolled in Maud Morgan Arts classes and the Agassiz Baldwin Afterschool program is charming: when given the opportunity to make animal benches, students in 2nd-5th grade sawed, hammered and painted a llama, a platypus, a unicorn, and Dr. Seuss's Yertle the Turtle.

Notable pieces include story quilts from 1st-5th graders with accompanying cards describing the scenes in each quilt, hand-bound books, and a balsa wood bicycle. Students also collaborated to assemble plastic beads into the Mona Lisa, and they used a painter's palette as the setting for a 3D landscape made of clay. As for the duct tape, the children have wrangled the popular adhesive into the shape of . . . a duck.

“From the Studios: Artwork by ABC and MMA Students” is on display at the Chandler Gallery from June 1-19. **The opening reception will be held on June 4 from 5:30-6:30 PM.** The Maria L. Baldwin School will hold its annual art show from May 21-29.

Community Calendar

May 2015

Monday, May 11	11:00 AM -1:00 PM	Bicycle Maintenance Basics Workshop, 20 Sacramento St., back yard
Tuesday, May 12	7:30-9:00 PM	Executive Director's Reception & Annual Meeting (see page 1 for agenda) Maud Morgan Arts, 20A Sacramento St. All are welcome, please join us!
Wednesday, May 20	6:00-7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St., 2nd Floor Public welcome
Sunday, May 31	10:00 AM-2:00 PM	On-Bike Urban Cycling Refresher Course, Memorial Drive, (info on page 5)

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Agassiz Neighborhood Council
20 Sacramento Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
P: (617) 349-6287 F: (617) 497-4388
www.agassiz.org, www.maudmorganarts.org

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