



Agassiz Committee on the Impacts of Development
A Committee of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council (ANC)

Date: March 25, 2003
To: Harvard University
Re: ACID Wish List

The Agassiz community welcomes the opportunity to work together with Harvard to build a win-win partnership based on shared benefits, shared interests, and shared gains.

The Agassiz Committee on the Impacts of Development (ACID) has been authorized by Agassiz residents to embark on a negotiation with Harvard in the form of a "Wish List" or set of community-sanctioned recommendations in the following four categories:

- I Quality of Life
- II Design and Open Space
- III Community Benefits
- IV Process

This "Wish List" is designed to make Harvard's proposed FAS/North Campus and Law School/Everett/Mass Ave expansion a win-win for both parties. Harvard would be able to pursue its expansion plans with speed, predictability, and flexibility. For the Agassiz community, the expansion would become an acceptable – and survivable – experience.

Agassiz has already compromised on two key issues.

To demonstrate our commitment to building a partnership, Agassiz residents, after months of considering the pros/cons of the situation, voted unanimously on March 18, 2003 to remove two items from the Wish List that Harvard had stated were "sticking points":

Density – Harvard has asked the community to support a total build-out of about half (50%) of what current zoning allows. The community has agreed to accept this build-out as it is currently proposed (half of allowable density under current zoning). This means the community accepts, in principle, a total of 1.1 million new square feet – and another 500,000 square feet of rebuilding – between both sites (North Campus and Everett/Mass Ave) per the university's previously-submitted "framework" documents. *This assumes there are no increases in density from the "framework" documents we have already seen.*

Peabody Museums - Harvard says it has no current plans to move the Oxford Street museums, but it has asked for flexibility in future museum plans, e.g., the potential of moving the museums to Allston one day. The community understands and accepts this reality without opposition.

*We offer you these very important concessions.
In return, we respectfully submit the ACID Wish List.*

* This Wish List is the result of more than 1.5 years of exploration and discussion by ACID and other Agassiz residents with Harvard officials, City officials, and members of the neighborhood. It reflects priorities explored in countless meetings and verified in two separate Neighborhood Surveys that generated more than 206 written responses from residents.

** This Wish List does not purport to include all issues relating to Law School expansion along Everett/Mass Ave Corridor. The Law School is in a much less developed phase than FAS. There are unknowns that are not reflected here. ACID reserves the right to work with Harvard on Wish List adjustments as new information becomes available.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Divinity Ave should become a second entrance/exit into the Oxford St. garage. *Harvard already agreed to this in principle last summer.* There MUST be a permanent second way in/out of the 750-car garage to help divert traffic from the already-congested Oxford corridor, which will be even more congested when the underground garage is completed. Oxford Street is already plagued with traffic issues, and we cannot afford to make it worse.

Retail on Mass Ave. Preserving Mass Ave as a commercial area is critical for the Agassiz neighborhood and for Cambridge's economic development. Shops along Mass Ave encourage foot traffic and help make Agassiz one of the City's safest neighborhoods. Small retail space should be encouraged. Harvard should subsidize rents as necessary in order to preserve the mix of small independent shops and businesses. This includes development of the Law School properties (North Hall dorms and Everett St. garage).

No delivery trucks north of Everett. One reason Divinity Ave should become a permanent second entrance/exit into the site is to accommodate all of the delivery trucks, garbage, food, chemical disposal, etc that will be visiting the area once new buildings are occupied. All delivery trucks should flow in/out of site on Divinity, with nothing north of Everett on Oxford.

Hazards/Environmental Impacts. We don't know what Harvard has planned in terms of chemicals, lab work, and hazards. City public safety staff must get involved in how these materials are brought into and taken out via Divinity Ave. An environmental review should evaluate impacts of entire development – both FAS and Law School.

Transportation Study. A comprehensive study to assess long-term cumulative impacts on transportation and traffic flow. This must reflect the totality of Harvard's build-out of North Campus *and* Mass Ave/Everett/Law School. Must also look at parking issues including:

- Short-range parking impacts from construction workers and temporarily displaced parking spaces
- Worst-case scenario – what are cumulative impacts on parking in this region?

No additional parking spaces added to either FAS or Law School from Harvard's parking pool. *Harvard has already agreed to this last summer re FAS/North Campus.* The neighborhood is already plagued with parking issues, and we cannot afford to make it worse. Harvard must hold to its pledge and make sure its new PTDM (submitted in 2003) reflects this. In addition:

- No new spaces should be added to proposed *new second underground garage on Everett/Mass Ave* (when completed, parking spaces should be same as current number)
- No institutional parking should be allowed to creep into the neighboring streets

Construction Mitigation. All construction mitigation measures already in place for Oxford Street underground garage should expand to incorporate all new construction. This includes *no construction trucks on Oxford Street north of Everett Street, on-site mitigation teams to handle daily issues, etc.*

Pedestrian Safety. Rather than narrow passthroughs between massive walls, we recommend open walkways. Harvard should install lighting and emergency communications kiosks where phones will connect back to Harvard's security office.

Zip Cars. Harvard should buy a certain allotment of Zip cars, store them in the new Oxford Street underground garage, and make them available to its students and to Agassiz residents. Goal would be to de-incentize students from bringing cars into the Agassiz neighborhood.

DESIGN, DENSITY, AND OPEN SPACE

No Expansion North of Wendell. Harvard should commit that there will be no expansion or extension of its campus north of Wendell Street. This would send a clear signal to the neighborhood that there will be no future surprises as to more Harvard expansion or development downstream.

Minimize Building Heights Behind 100-Foot Edge. The new Data Center is 80 feet high plus mechanicals, and many think it overwhelms the neighborhood. We recommend the following restrictions: The cornice line of any flat roof and the peak of any peaked roof on all new construction *behind the transition zone* should be lower than the height of the cornice line of 60 Oxford Street. All rooftop mechanicals should be lower than the height of the rooftop mechanicals on 60 Oxford. Where possible, mechanicals should be located underground. All mechanicals should be located on the edge of the roof furthest away from the neighborhood and ventilating away from the neighborhood. Noise from mechanical equipment not to increase ambient level of neighborhood *before* construction of the North Campus began.

Optimize Green/Open Space. Make open space a top priority and a true value-add for the community. Create an inviting, accessible open space in a single large dedicated area inside the FAS campus - a genuine green space that can be used by the community. Agassiz has the least open space of any neighborhood in the City.

Re-zone Norton's Woods. Harvard should initiate a re-zoning of Norton's Woods (AAAS) so it remains as open space into perpetuity. This will prevent any development of the land regardless of who may own it in the future.

Invite Community into the Design Process. Let the Agassiz community participate in how the FAS North Yard is developed. Empower community members to play a direct role in optimizing the design so it meets the community's goals and needs. Extend this collaboration into the Law School's plans for Everett/Mass Ave Corridor.

Hammond Street Edge. Design from the perspective of the community. This approach might include adding three wood frame houses on the Hammond Street edge; and burying utility lines along Hammond Street (from Oxford down to Gorham).

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Trees and Landscaping. Harvard should plant trees in the surrounding neighborhood, creating a green blanket for Agassiz that is maintained by Harvard for 5-10 years (until trees take hold).

Endowment for the ANC. Harvard should create a separate \$1 million endowment for the non-profit Agassiz Neighborhood Council (ANC). Managed under the guidance of the Cambridge Community Foundation, it could be used to help fund non revenue-generating activities which are vital to ANC but draining its budget. If endowment was \$1 million and generated 5% return, the \$50,000 annual income could be used for:

- ANC CIVIC OUTREACH: Publication of the *Whistler*, mailings to neighborhood, and services associated with reaching the community (\$20,000/year).
- BLDG MAINTENANCE: 20 Sacramento St. maintenance (\$10,000/year).
- ANC AFTERSCHOOL: Funding to enhance quality of current programs and scholarships for underprivileged children (\$20,000/year).

Agassiz Enrichment Fund. Harvard should set up an "Agassiz Enrichment Fund" and then fund it with several million dollars. This would be an offset payment for the increased density and development posed by Harvard's proposed 15-year FAS and Law School development cycle. It could be managed as a non-profit Trust by an independent Trustee body (beyond purview of City Council or City Manager).

The money from this "development-impact payment" would be dedicated to (1) stabilizing and beautifying the Agassiz neighborhood, and (2) buying land as it becomes available in Agassiz (or, potentially, as a secondary objective, elsewhere in Cambridge) and converting it to green/open space.

EXAMPLE: One concept would be for Harvard to set up the Trust with an initial payment, then contribute to the Trust *as projects are developed*. For each square foot Harvard builds, a set dollar amount would be contributed to the Trust. Donations could take place at set intervals throughout the development cycle matching Harvard's actual pace of construction (square footage completed).

Cultural Heritage. While the community recognizes that Harvard may move the Oxford Street museums one day, we urge the university to work with us to maintain a cultural presence along Oxford Street forever. We want Agassiz to retain the cultural legacy of living adjacent to one of the world's great universities and are open to any number of strategies for making that happen.

THE PROCESS

Good faith "delay" of building permits. In good faith, Harvard should postpone applying for variances or building permits until formal agreement has been reached with Agassiz. This alleviates any concerns that Harvard will march forward with the next project on its schedule *while community is still negotiating in good faith*.

MOU or similar agreement. Once a final agreement has been reached, it must be put into a legally binding document that spells out the agreed-to terms. Harvard should cover the costs of preparing and finalizing this document.

June, 2003 Benchmark. Once the negotiation teams reach a mutually-acceptable agreement that both parties can embrace, *the Agassiz team will take it back to the larger community for review, discussion, and approval*. The goal of this negotiation is to achieve some level of verifiable progress by June, 2003 – BEFORE the summer begins. This is a vital benchmark for the community.

In conclusion, this is a time for **BIG, BOLD IDEAS** that can transform our relationship.

We believe we have already demonstrated our good faith by pull two key sticking points off the Wish List.

Regards,

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On behalf of the members of ACID

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Agassiz Community Survey (on ACID "Wish List")

SURVEY RESULTS - March 18, 2003

The Community Survey was sent out to the Agassiz neighborhood via both email and regular mail in February, then re-sent via email again in March. We received 83 responses from Agassiz residents (both leaflets and emails). Here are the tabulations.

(POSTSCRIPT: SINCE DOING THESE TABULATIONS, WE HAVE RECEIVED 30-35 MORE SURVEYS FOR A TOTAL OF APPROX. 115)

TRAFFIC, MITIGATION

Divinity Ave should become a second entrance/exit into the Oxford St. garage

Highest (#3):	53
High (#2):	<u>22</u>
Subtotal:	75
Lower (#1):	3
Can Remove (#0):	2

Retail on Mass Ave

Highest (#3):	51
High (#2):	<u>16</u>
Subtotal:	67
Lower (#1):	8
Can Remove (#0):	3

No delivery trucks north of Everett once bldgs are occupied

Highest (#3):	50
High (#2):	<u>17</u>
Subtotal:	67
Lower (#1):	6
Can Remove (#0):	2

Hazards/Environmental Impacts

Highest (#3):	45
High (#2):	<u>22</u>
Subtotal:	67
Lower (#1):	8
Can Remove (#0):	1

Traffic/Parking Study

Highest (#3):	51
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High (#2):	<u>14</u>
Subtotal:	<u>65</u>
Lower (#1):	10
Can Remove (#0):	1

No additional parking spaces added or relocated to the North Yard from Harvard's parking pool

Highest (#3):	45
High (#2):	<u>20</u>
Subtotal:	<u>65</u>
Lower (#1):	8
Can Remove (#0):	3

Construction Mitigation

Highest (#3):	42
High (#2):	<u>21</u>
Subtotal:	<u>63</u>
Lower (#1):	11
Can Remove (#0):	2

Pedestrian Safety

Highest (#3):	42
High (#2):	<u>19</u>
Subtotal:	<u>61</u>
Lower (#1):	15
Can Remove (#0):	0

Zip Cars

Highest (#3):	17
High (#2):	<u>25</u>
Subtotal:	<u>42</u>
Lower (#1):	22
Can Remove (#0):	14

DESIGN, OPEN SPACE

No Expansion North of Wendell

Highest (#3):	51
High (#2):	<u>18</u>
Subtotal:	<u>69</u>
Lower (#1):	7
Can Remove (#0):	2

Minimize Building Heights

Behind 100-Foot Edge

Highest (#3):	38
High (#2):	<u>27</u>
Subtotal:	65
Lower (#1):	8
Can Remove (#0):	4

Optimize Green/Open Space

Highest (#3):	42
High (#2):	<u>21</u>
Subtotal:	63
Lower (#1):	11
Can Remove (#0):	2

Re-zone Norton's Woods

Highest (#3):	38
High (#2):	<u>25</u>
Subtotal:	63
Lower (#1):	14
Can Remove (#0):	1

Invite Community into the Design Process

Highest (#3):	35
High (#2):	<u>26</u>
Subtotal:	61
Lower (#1):	8
Can Remove (#0):	1

Hammond Street Edge

Highest (#3):	27
High (#2):	<u>32</u>
Subtotal:	59
Lower (#1):	12
Can Remove (#0):	0

BENEFITS TO COMMUNITY

Trees and Landscaping

Highest (#3):	19
High (#2):	<u>38</u>
Subtotal:	57
Lower (#1):	13
Can Remove (#0):	3

Endowment for the ANC

Highest (#3):	34
High (#2):	<u>21</u>
Subtotal:	55
Lower (#1):	8
Can Remove (#0):	12

Agassiz Trust for Open Space

Highest (#3):	35
High (#2):	<u>18</u>
Subtotal:	53
Lower (#1):	12
Can Remove (#0):	10

THE PROCESS**Good faith "delay" of building permits**

Highest (#3):	51
High (#2):	<u>17</u>
Subtotal:	68
Lower (#1):	5
Can Remove (#0):	2

MOU or similar agreement.

Highest (#3):	46
High (#2):	<u>20</u>
Subtotal:	66
Lower (#1):	8
Can Remove (#0):	1

June, 2003 Benchmark

Highest (#3):	42
High (#2):	<u>19</u>
Subtotal:	61
Lower (#1):	8
Can Remove (#0):	2

ALSO:

Project Size/Density ...

How many "top priority" (#3's) did each item receive?

Divinity Ave - 53
Retail on Mass Ave - 51
No Expansion North of Wendell - 51
Traffic/Parking Study - 51
Good faith "delay" - 51
No delivery trucks - 50
MOU - 46
No additional parking spaces - 45
Hazards - 45
Optimize Open Space - 42
Construction Mitigation - 42
Pedestrian Safety - 42
June, 2003 Benchmark - 42
Minimize Building Heights - 38
Re-zone Norton's Woods - 38
Agassiz Trust for Open Space - 35
Invite Community into Process - 35
Endowment for the ANC - 34
Hammond Street Edge - 27
Trees and Landscaping - 19
Zip Cars - 17