

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

January '06

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ANC News

NOTES FROM THE NOV. 14 MEETING

'Cambridge-Harvard Fund' Update

ANC Chair Stephen Diamond introduced Hull Fulweiler, an ANC Board Member who also sits on the 'Harvard Fund' Working Committee.

Mr. Fulweiler recounted this basic information:

- The Youth, Culture and Recreation Fund (official name) was established in 2004 by Harvard University as part of the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between itself and the Agassiz neighborhood. Harvard will transmit money to the fund in increments as they obtain approvals and permits for three construction projects with the understanding that the Agassiz community will not appeal or hinder these projects. The total amount earmarked for the Youth, Culture and Recreation Fund is \$1,050,000. The first amount, contributed at the signing of the MOU, was \$250,000. The Cambridge Community Foundation (CCF) manages the fund.
- The objective of this fund is to create or enhance programs to enrich the quality of life within the Agassiz community and the entire city of Cambridge.
- Harvard University has already set aside an

additional \$50,000 to plant trees in the neighborhood.

- The Working Committee members include Agassiz Chairperson Miriam Goldberg, Hull Fulweiler, Ellen Friedman, Mary Power and Tom Lucey of Harvard University, Bob Hurlbut and Geneva Malenfant of CCF, and Susan Richards from the City of Cambridge.
- The committee is currently searching for a new at-large (non-Agassiz) member.

During the ANC meeting, Agassiz residents raised numerous questions, concerns and suggestions. Mr. Fulweiler agreed that the committee should work on defining its processes.

These areas include:

- Determining the needs and interest level of the community.
- A process for dispersing the money (slowly, quickly, or in small grants).
- Whether to initiate pilot programs that have the potential to self-fund, or kick off programs that the city might want to adopt in the future.
- Whether to invest some or all of the money.
- The frequency with which the committee should report back to the community at ANC monthly meetings.

Mr. Fulweiler reported that an unofficial program committee (consisting of himself, Ellen

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



JANUARY 25 - 7:30 PM

Baldwin School Cafeteria - 28
Sacramento Street
(Press buzzer for entry)

AGENDA

Welcome Michelle Chouinard of
PolkaDot Pajamas - Children's Custom
Interiors

Charlotte Moore of Neighborhood 9 pro-
vides details about the "Neighborhood
Conservation District"

Friedman, and Miriam Goldberg) will review ideas that residents put forth as well consider the budgeting feasibility. He explained, "The committee will make recommendations to the Cambridge Community Foundation, who will then write the checks." So far, a number of proposals have been submitted for review. These include, but are not limited to:

- Hosting free lectures annually.
- Starting an Aging in Place program to help seniors live longer in their own homes.
- Funding scholarships for ANC's pre- and afterschool programs.
- Offering middle school activities for kids who age out of afterschool (possibly connected to the future Maud Morgan Arts Center) that also might include stipends for participating children.

Mr. Fulweiler said to expect progress reports from the program committee at upcoming ANC meetings. Also, residents who would like to propose an idea may contact Mr. Fulweiler directly at hullf@verizon.net or send their ideas to the Agassiz Neighborhood Council at 20 Sacramento Street, Cambridge, MA 02138.

Introduction to the Tree Committee

Joel Bard introduced the Tree Committee, a group of Agassiz residents who have volunteered to determine the best use of the \$50,000 set aside (as a result of the Harvard/Agassiz Memorandum of Understanding) to plant and nurture trees in the neighborhood. Mr. Bard told the ANC, "We have about \$47,000 left in the fund after planting trees in front of the

Agassiz Neighborhood Council building following a renovation."

To date, the Tree Committee has met three times in the ANC community room at North Hall. The nine members include:

- Joel Bard, the committee chair and an environmental lawyer;
- Janet Burns, who was involved with a DPW tree support group;
- Clare Walker Leslie, a professional naturalist and arborist;
- Fred Meyer, who has lived in Cambridge since 1959 and considers himself a tree enthusiast and hobbyist;
- David Morimoto, Director of Science and Math curriculum at Lesley University and an ecologist who manages a GIS based system on campus;
- Lynne Reiss, a concerned community member with a "struggling tree" near her home on Oxford Street;
- Michael Schindlinger, who is finishing his PhD at Harvard while teaching biology and ecology at Lesley, where he works with David Morimoto;
- Phoebe Sinclair, ANC Community Liaison who is responsible for the minutes at each meeting and who appreciates the urban forest environment; and
- Cynthia Smith, a principal at a landscape architecture firm who has worked with the city of Cambridge, Harvard University and Lesley University.

Mr. Bard reported that Cambridge has an adequate program for planting trees. For example, the city will share the fees with residents who elect to plant street trees through the Client Tree Program. Also available are a commemorative tree planting service and a hotline for requesting free replacements for trees that were removed from their wells by the city. However, despite the city's efforts, there are still many trees missing from tree wells and other bare spots around the neighborhood. To display this point, Mr. Bard presented a map of the neighborhood's tree canopy. He explained, "We are getting a census and sense of what we have first,

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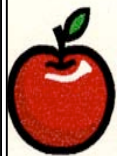
then we'll deal with barren spots and problematic areas."

So far, the Tree Committee has discussed dealing with invasive species, how quickly or slowly to spend the fund, the pros and cons of labeling trees, working with Cambridge City Arborist Kelly Writer and his crew, partnering with David Morimoto's students at Lesley to identify trees and input their conditions into an electronic database, and possibly looking into increasing habit space for helpful animals by installing devices such as bat boxes. Mr. Bard mentioned that he would also like to reinstate ANC's participation in the city's Client Tree program to sponsor two trees per year and identify caretakers for these plants. He told the ANC, "The committee is looking at education, inventory, involving students and residents, then planting trees and making sure they survive."

The next Tree Committee meeting will be held on Monday, January 9th at 5:30 pm at North Hall. For more information about urban forestry in Cambridge, see www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks/services/forestry.html.

Lesley University Update

Bill Doncaster of Lesley University told residents at the ANC meeting, "The MBTA air rights space is ideal because [the university] is not knocking down a building and they're doing something with an otherwise blank space." The university feels that the air rights space will help them create a cohesive campus while enhancing the square by putting a transit focused building on what today are rather "desolate" train tracks.



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The deal is still imminent. Mr. Doncaster detailed other changes about to happen on the Lesley campus, including:

- A commitment to move the Art Institute of Boston (AIB) classrooms over (25% of AIB students already reside on campus).
- Science labs will be built in location that the Smithsonian recently vacated in the Porter Exchange building, beginning this winter.
- Assuming naming rights for the MBTA station.
- Finalizing a decision about who is responsible for the street level plaza abutting Porter Station.
- Opening a 900 sq. foot gallery in the Porter Exchange building.

Mr. Doncaster fielded several other questions from Agassiz neighbors:

Q: What about Lesley's growth plan?

A: The college plans grow to about 1400/1500 from the current enrollment of 900. There are no plans to grow AIB as they feel 500 students is a sufficient size for an art school.

Q: Is the walkway to Somerville Ave. still in the works?

A: Yes, Lesley continues to consider this.

Q: What about the tennis courts; is Lesley planning to build there?

A: "In the short term, probably not, but it's on the pallet."

In closing, Mr. Doncaster mentioned, "First floor retail is important to Lesley University, but they'll put a space to university use if retail doesn't work out." It remains important to Lesley that such spaces be used in a way that matches the neighborhood goals of light and foot traffic on the sidewalk level.

ANC Community

A VISIT TO HOPE

On the morning of December 19, Agassiz Neighborhood Council staff took a trip to HOPE. Located one hour west of Cambridge in Gardner, Massachusetts, the House of Peace

& Education, Inc. (HOPE), sits on a quiet residential street abutted by a grassy yard and outdoor covered picnic pavilion. A non-profit interfaith organization, HOPE, founded by the Sisters of St. Joseph in 1996, serves the Greater Gardner community as a neighborhood center whose mission is counteracting violence and promoting peace through nurturing relationships and providing academic support.

HOPE Executive Director Sister Maxyne Schneider greeted ANC Executive Director Terry DeLancey, Assistant Director Lynn Landon, Preschool Director Michelle Quinlan and Community Liaison Phoebe Sinclair to accept a kind donation of funds and books from the ANC staff and greater Agassiz community. As they sat down to warm drinks and brownies baked fresh by the Sister herself, Sister Maxyne detailed HOPE's many free programs, particularly the job-skill training and personal support groups for women, relationship building workshops for mothers and children, and summer, afterschool, weekend and college-prep for kids grade two and up. Following the discussion, she led a tour of the facilities, which includes separate computer rooms for children and adults, study rooms, and several homey kitchens.

The ANC staff was touched and excited to note the similarities between the programs that HOPE offers and their own outreach and enrichment efforts. They look forward to seeing more of HOPE and building a relationship that is mutually beneficial to both community organizations. Stay tuned to learn about the next

chapter of partnership between the ANC and the House of Peace & Education!

To learn more about HOPE, please visit their website at www.hopegardner.org



Terry Delancey presents gifts to Sister Maxyne

AGASSIZ BABY AND TODDLER GROUPS

ANC's baby and toddler playgroups provide a place for parents and children to greet, meet and grow. Three groups are currently meeting at the North Hall Community Room, a large, comfortable space contributed to the neighborhood by Harvard University in 1991. Participants may make use of numerous toys, throw rugs for the young ones to crawl on, a changing table, couches, and a kitchen stocked with fixings for a cup of coffee or tea.

Parent Kim Schader, who attends both the Wednesday morning and Friday afternoon baby playgroups, told *The Whistler*, "This is a great space to use!" Other parents said they learned about the groups via on-line list serves or through word of mouth, but Mrs. Schader cited a notice printed last year in *The Whistler* newsletter. She also mentioned that an important distinction between Agassiz and other local parents' groups is that the Agassiz groups provide a space for children, not just parents, to interact, socialize and share ideas.

For more information or to get involved with one of the groups below, contact Lynn Landon at 617-349-6287 ext. 12.

Wednesday Afternoon Baby Group – begins 2:30 PM



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Friday Morning Toddler Group – meets from 9:30 – 11:00 AM

Friday Afternoon Baby Group – begins 11:00 AM

Also, ANC's North Hall space is available most days of the week for other community activities and special events. It's free, clean and easy to reserve! To inquire about availability, call Lynn Landon at 617-349-6287 ext. 12 or email llandon@agassiz.org.



Relaxing with the Friday afternoon playgroup



Agassiz School Programs

IN THE KITCHEN WITH AFTERSCHOOL

Afterschool Gourmet Food Festival

Prepared by Mahbub Husain

The idea first came to me last year when several kids from the gourmet cooking choice suggested we combine both choices everyday in one special week. This would mean I'd have to skip some of the other favorite choices I organize, such as catapult, bridges, velvet painting, soccer, etc. I decided to consult with parents and former afterschool "master chefs" who've been part of the cooking scene for the last few years, and together we came up with an idea that turned out to be even better than a full week of gourmet cooking.

Our current grade one through five kids were the main participants of the festival. We also reached out to our alumni (afterschool kids who were participants in our original Friday gourmet cooking choice in 2003) and invited the kindergarten kids to sample some of our dishes. In addition, we printed out the recipes before the event and passed them around to interested parents. During our festival, we prepared from

scratch two basic dishes: Aloo gobi masala (potato, cauliflower, tomatoes, and peas) and Began bhaji (eggplant cooked with diced potatoes.) All the dishes were served with a multi-layered bread called Paratha.

Our objective, to allow kids K through five and older to participate in a single project, turned out to be a resounding success! We're already planning our next gourmet-cooking extravaganza where our afterschool kids prepare all the necessary ingredients for the dishes and selected parents actually help us cook them on that day.



Aloo Gobi-matar Masala Recipe

Ingredients:

Cauliflower	one
Potatoes	two
Onion	one
Tomatoes	two
Bell pepper	one
Peas	1/4 pound
Garlic	4-5 pieces
Fresh Ginger	4-5 small pieces
Bay leaf	two
Coriander ground	1/8 teaspoon
Cumin ground	1/8 teaspoon
Turmeric powder	1/4 teaspoon
Paprika	1/4 teaspoon
Salt	1/4 teaspoon
Vegetable oil	2 tablespoons

Method:

Separate the florets from the cauliflower. Wash and drain. Cut potatoes into small chunks. Thinly slice tomatoes and bell pepper. Thaw frozen peas and leave them in an open bowl.

Heat oil in a pan and add onion and garlic pieces, fry till translucent.

Now add ginger, the rest of the spices, and salt.

Stir and after five minutes add potatoes. Cover to cook.

When potatoes are half-done add the rest of the vegetables (bell pepper, cauliflower florets, tomatoes, green peas) and mix thoroughly.

Cover to cook for ten minutes. Serve hot with paratha bread.

SCENES FROM AFTERSCHOOL - HIP HOP PERFORMANCE

Inspired by their analysis of November's early release performance, NE String Ensemble's "String Fever," a group of afterschool students decided to create an arts performance of their own. With the help of afterschool teacher Kelly Lynch, the students, a collection of first through third graders, began work on a Hip Hop dance show in November. Third grader Elana Williams-Leonard (on right in photo below) choreographed the entire 20-minute performance, which debuted on December 27th to an enthusiastic audience of kids, afterschool teachers, and parents.

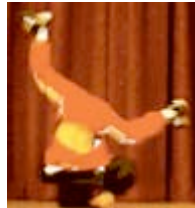


PRESCHOOL UPDATE

Sacramento Street Preschool's enrollment has continued to grow over the past months. However, space is still available for perspective children in our cozy environment.

The preschool has recently become a member of the Cambridge Community Partnership for Children (CCPC). We share CCPC's philosophy in that both programs are committed to quality care for children. This membership also provides a plethora of resources for the preschool staff, including monthly director meetings to discuss early childhood education issues. The Sacramento Street Preschool is also in the process of becoming a member of NAEYC (National Association for the Education of Young Children). As always, feel free to contact the Preschool Director, Michelle Quinlan, at 617-349-6287, ext 14.

NEXT MONTH'S INTRODUCING ART EVENT: THE ANNUAL HIP HOP FESTIVAL




Mark your calendars for the **Thursday, February 23rd** performance at **2pm!**

City Wide

SIDEWALK SNOW & ICE REMOVAL 2005

The following is a message from the Public Information Office of Cambridge's Department of Public Works. This and additional information can also be found on the DPW website at www.cambridgema.gov.



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Jan 6, 2005

Property Owners Please Take Note

The City's Sidewalk Snow & Ice Removal Ordinance requires Cambridge property owners to remove snow from all sidewalks next to their property or business within 12 hours after snow stops falling in the daytime, and before 1 PM when the snow has fallen during the night. Property owners must also clear ice off sidewalks or treat them with an ice-melting substance within six hours of the time the ice forms. Violations of this ordinance will be enforced with a \$25 fine.

If your home or business is on a corner or a crosswalk, please shovel an opening wide enough to enable passage from the sidewalk to the street. If your business is next to a crosswalk, please shovel an opening wide enough to enable persons with strollers or in a wheelchair to get onto the sidewalks safely! Also, don't forget to shovel the side-street sidewalk as well as the sidewalk in front of your business.

Make openings in snow banks between the sidewalks and bus stops. Make sure catch basins are clear of snow and debris so they can work properly and control flooding.

Plowing City Streets

The Cambridge Department of Public Works (DPW) will clear the streets as soon as possible. Our goals are to chemically treat all major arteries within three hours of when snow begins (treating most traveled roads first), to keep main arteries plowed during all stages of a storm, and

to clear all streets and the sidewalks bordering City property once a storm has stopped.

Please don't take it personally if the DPW plows snow back into your driveway. Pushing snow into a driveway opening or along a car parked on the street is really unavoidable as we work to keep streets passable during all stages of a storm.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

EMERGENCY

Emergency: Dial 911
Cambridge Emergency Communications (Police/Fire): 617-349-3300
Public Works Dept.: 617-349-4800

NON-EMERGENCY

24-Hour Recorded School Link Line: 617-349-6513
Snow Emergency Parking: 617-349-4700
Sidewalk Snow Clearance Hotline: 617-349-4903
Snow Exemption Program for Elderly/ Disabled Persons-Council on Aging: 617-349-6220
Street Lights: 617-349-4925
24-Hour Snow Plow/Salt Request Line: 617-349-4846
Trash Pick-Up: 617-349-4800

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christmas tree collection

dec 27 - jan 13



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- ✓ Do not put in a plastic bag.
- ✓ Weather permitting, all bare trees will be collected for recycling on your regular trash day.
- ✓ Remember that collection is delayed one day during holiday weeks.

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use the comics as gift wrap
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Community Calendar

January 2006

Sunday, January 1

Happy New Years Day!

Monday, January 16

Martin Luther King Day - School Closed
ANC Pre & Afterschool Closed

Wednesday, January 25 6:00 - 7:30 PM

ANC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento Street, 2nd Floor
Public Welcome

Wednesday, January 25 7:30 - 9:00 PM

ANC Monthly Meeting (see page 1 for agenda)
Baldwin School Dining Hall, 28 Sacramento Street
All are welcome

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The Whistler January 2006

Agassiz Neighborhood Council

20 Sacramento Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

(617) 349-6287 Fax & Hot Line (617) 497-4388

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