

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

November 2009

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ANC News

NOTES FROM THE OCT. 21 MEETING

TROMP Cambridge

TROMP (Travel Responsibility Outreach & Mentoring Project) is a new community initiative that collaborates with the city and private organizations to alter the culture of traffic in Cambridge. Among their goals is to encourage residents and visitors to be more responsible and conscientious.

"It's not just about cars," explained organizer Matt Shuman, "but also train passengers, cyclists, and pedestrians. The bottom line is encouraging people to be aware of the laws, follow them, and act conscientiously towards other travelers on the road."

TROMP has organized their program into four phases: orientation, education, warning, and enforcement. In addition, they've initiated the following projects:

- Working with schools on art and theater projects
- Spreading their message via Cambridge Community Television
- Working with Cambridge Chronicle newspaper to feature a traveler of the week
- Collaborating with State Representative Alice Wolf and Senator Anthony Galluccio to increase fines for jaywalkers and cyclists who weave through traffic

Mr. Shuman reported that community response to TROMP has been very positive. Learn more by visiting TROMP online at www.trompcambridge.com.

Physical Planning for Cambridge Elders

"Ours is a compact city," stated Roger Boothe, Director of Urban Design with the Cambridge Community Development Department (CDD). "Cambridge is walk-able, has good transit, and offers many services for a city of this size."

CDD has begun to focus on physical planning for Cambridge's growing elder population. The

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



NOVEMBER 18 - 7:30 PM

Maria L. Baldwin School Library
28 Sacramento Street
(Press buzzer for entry)

AGENDA

- Update on Living Well Network with Nathaniel Meyer, LWN Volunteer Coordinator
- Information about 2010 US Census
- Report from ANC/ABC Joint Committee on improving relationship between the ABC Board and the Council
- Long-term planning for the neighborhood

city offers numerous categories of housing and zoning to allow for flexibility and growth, as well as policies to assist lower income residents. Additionally, Cambridge sponsors a program developed by CDD that helps retail businesses make physical improvements to their shops, including better signage, improved lighting, and wider aisles.

Other options being reviewed by CDD include:

- Altering the current zoning to allow for accessory apartments (dwelling units that are subsidiary to a main dwelling), where an older relative might live in close proximity to family
- Improving sidewalks and promoting street level retail
- Good distribution of drug stores, food stores, etc. for older residents who need to have such amenities nearby
- Establishing more passive spaces for elders, including rest areas with shade trees and benches with backs
- Improving lighting and accessibility
- Traffic calming measures to improve pedestrian safety

ANC meeting attendees voiced the following thoughts and concerns:

- Residents would like to reclaim the park (operated by the MBTA) located just outside the Porter Square T Station by having the city assume responsibility for its care
- Sidewalk conditions can be perilous for older pedestrians and some resort to walking in the street to avoid snow, ice, and dimly lit areas

- Some residents wanted to reduce the opportunities for cars to turn right at a red light
- Cars parked near the end of a street sometimes inhibit visibility and make it hard to cross the street
- Some residents reported sluggish action on the part of the Traffic Department in terms of communicating about and improving current traffic calming measures

Residents are invited to share their concerns and offer suggestions about physical planning for Cambridge's elders by completing an online questionnaire at www.cambridgema.gov/CDD/cp/zng/aging/aging_quest_form.cfm. For more information visit www.cambridgema.gov/CDD or contact CDD at (617) 349-4600.

Neighborhood Crime Report and Report of Armed Robbery

Sergeant Stephen Sennott and Detective Sergeant John Fulkerson of the Cambridge Police Department (CPD) provided updated crime statistics for the neighborhood, as well as a report on a recent armed robbery.

Crime Statistics

- Aggravated assaults: Two (one domestic)
- Auto theft: One (in August)
- Commercial robberies: None
- Drug-related incidents: None
- Housebreaks: Three (two successful and one attempt)
- Larceny from motor vehicles: Eleven (some thefts were car parts and some were items such as laptops)
- Malicious destruction of property: Eleven
- Street robberies: Two reported (one domestic)

Armed Robbery

Det. Sgt. Fulkerson, a night sergeant for CPD, reported that he responded personally to the report of an armed robbery where three men robbed a victim at gunpoint. Fifteen minutes after the reported Cambridge robbery, there

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was another robbery in Somerville on Highland Street near Dunkin Donuts. That victim fought back and three men between the ages of 18 and 23 years old were apprehended. Police recovered a plastic gun and stolen currency. The suspects are being held in the Middlesex County Prison.

The suspects, residents of Medford, are not charged with the Cambridge robbery because the victim was unable to identify them. Det. Sgt. Fulkerson explained that CPD believes the suspects may have been involved in other robberies around the city.

Det. Sgt. Fulkerson reminded residents to be vigilant about reporting suspicious activity to the police. This includes:

- Furtive or secretive behavior
- Persons gathering or looking around/ acting as lookouts
- Persons concealing items on their person
- Persons meeting on the street and walking into yards/behind houses
- Large groups becoming loud or boisterous
- Youth with the same color clothing, handkerchiefs, etc.
- Any activity that is criminal, disturbing to the neighborhoods, looks out of place, or feels otherwise unsafe

Improvement to Neighborhood Streets and Sidewalks

Owen O’Riordan, Cambridge city engineer, and John J. Struzziery of SEA Consultants updated the Council on improvements to neighborhood streets. The repairs are being completed in association with the Department of Public Work’s (DPW) on-going sewer/storm water separation project.

In the Agassiz neighborhood, gas lines have been replaced on Prentiss Street in preparation for street reconstruction. Once the street has been restored, the sidewalks will be reconstructed with materials matching the existing materials (for example brick sections will be

replaced with brick), unless residents request a different material. DPW strongly encourages residents to request concrete sidewalks to improve accessibility.

Concurrent to work on Prentiss Street, DPW will reconstruct Oxford Street’s sewer line. Both projects are expected to begin this winter and continue despite the weather (the contractor will remove snow during construction). Prentiss Street should be completed by Fall 2010. It is presently proposed that this work will be followed on an annual basis by work on Forrest Street, Frost Street, and finally Newport Road and Roseland Street. For each street, DPW will coordinate with residents when and how the work will be conducted.

Parking/Traffic During Construction

DPW’s contractors will work from 7 AM to 4 PM on weekdays. Prentiss Street will be closed to everyone except for residents, and parking prohibited during posted hours. Resident-sticker on-street parking will be available in the evenings, except for four spaces reserved for the excavator. Residents must move their vehicles in the morning before construction begins. There will be a police detail during the day to assist with cars moving on and off Prentiss Street.

Finally, the City Engineer indicated that another meeting will be held within the next month or so for residents who live on streets where the construction will occur. More details will be provided by the city in communication with

	Peter G Meyersohn, CFP Financial Advisor
	
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ANC, and by flyering the neighborhood in advance of the meeting.

Q&A

Q: Residents requested that DPW pay particular attention to signage, as it can be very confusing and residents don't always realize they can park at night and on weekends.

A: An engineer will be on-site to organize the signage. Also, residents can sign up for emailed construction updates. To sign up, contact DPW at www.cambridgema.gov/TheWorks.

Q: A tree was removed as part of the street construction. Will it be replaced?

A: Yes. Residents are welcome to offer suggestions as to where to place the new tree.

Q: Will the city work out an arrangement with Star Market for neighbors to park during the construction?

A: DPW can look into this. The department has a good relationship with Star Market as a result of previous projects in the neighborhood.

Update from Lesley University

Following a change in zoning adopted by the City Council last summer, Lesley University is moving forward with its plans to bring the Art Institute of Boston (AIB) to Porter Square. Bill Doncaster, Lesley's Director of Public Affairs, explained that the architectural design of AIB, which had been suspended until after the zon-

ing change, resumed last month.

"We're continuing our work with architects and planners towards a new facility, working within the new zoning," stated Mr. Doncaster. "The drawings shared during the re-zoning process were massing studies –a rough representation for the space needed. From there, they will work on a more detailed analysis and site studies from within the context of the real-world constraints of site, including budget and educational purposes."

Mr. Doncaster also confirmed that there has been legal challenge to the zoning approval. "We continue to believe that the City acted within its legal requirements, we're working with the City to defend it, and we remain very proud of the process that led to its adoption," he added.

Announcements

ABC Board to Report at Upcoming ANC Meetings

Beginning with the November ANC meeting, members of the ABC Board will present updates on Board activities at Council meetings.

Ninth Annual Small Works Show

Small Works Show will host its opening reception at 5:00 PM on Friday, October 23, 2009. This exhibition and sale features the work of 57 Cambridge artists. Half the proceeds from the show will benefit the Maud Morgan Visual Arts Center, currently under construction behind 20 Sacramento Street.

"Breaking Ground" Exhibit

Check out "Breaking Ground," an exhibit detailing the development of the Maud Morgan Visual Arts Center, at Cambridge Arts Council, 344 Broadway. On Monday, November 2, from 6:00-8:00 PM, the public is invited to attend a reception to meet the eight artists whose artistic creations (such as benches for the site, light switch covers, and back splashes) will be featured at the art center.

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Art Classes for Adults: Session Two

Session Two of the Maud Morgan Adult Classes begins on Tuesday, October 27 and runs through Tuesday, December 1:

Illustration with Raul Gonzalez
Tuesdays from 1:00-3:00 PM
Sacramento Street Gallery
20 Sacramento Street

Visit our website to download a registration form or to learn about Maud Morgan Art Classes for middle school students. For more information, contact Micah Eglinton-Woods at mwoods@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x19.

Traffic Calming Table at Oxford and Wendell Streets

ANC is waiting on a written report from the Department of Traffic, Parking, and Transportation detailing their plans for improvements to the traffic-calming table at the junction of Oxford and Wendell Streets. Residents have requested that vertical stripes be painted on the platform to better indicate the crosswalks and improve pedestrian safety. Residents interested in this issue should contact the ANC by emailing psinclair@agassiz.org or calling (617) 349-6287 x10.

Chair an ANC Meeting

ANC seeks volunteers to chair meetings, which are typically held the third Wednesday of each month (excluding July and August) at 7:30 PM in the cafeteria of the Maria L. Baldwin School. To volunteer or learn more, contact Phoebe Sinclair, Community Liaison, at psinclair@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x10.

ABC Community

VISIT ABC'S NEW WEBSITE

After more than a year of planning, writing, building, and testing, the ABC web team has finally launched our new and improved website! Many heartfelt thanks go out to our team and advisors, including:



- Michael Bryne (site designer)
- Micah Eglinton-Woods (web team)
- Julie Shaw (web team advisor)
- Anna Eckert Byrne (web team advisor)
- Terry DeLancey (web team advisor)
- Marsha Stewart
- Jacy Edelman
- Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs staff
- Miriam Goldberg
- Nicolai Cauchy (volunteer photographer)
- Carl Tashian
- Heather Hubbard
- Sean Effel
- Stephen Diamond
- Fred Meyer
- Ted Live
- Alison Rhodes
- Karen Renzi
- Nathaniel Meyer

Check out the new site at www.agassiz.org and let us know what you think.

SEEKING FOUR VOLUNTEERS TO COOK TURKEYS FOR ANNUAL POTLUCK

Haven't yet signed up to roast a turkey for the 38th Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Feast? There's still time! We need four more volunteers to roast turkeys and deliver the cooked birds to the feast at 28 Sacramento Street on the evening of Tuesday, November 24, between 5:00 and 5:30 PM. We will deliver the free turkey and roasting pan to your home the Monday before the potluck.



Can't cook? We also need a few more volun-



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teers to carve turkeys the evening of the event. To volunteer, contact Phoebe Sinclair at (617) 349-6287 x10 or psinclair@agassiz.org.

ANNUAL THANKSGIVING POTLUCK

A long-standing tradition, the 38th Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Feast welcomes everyone from the Agassiz neighborhood, Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs, and Maria L. Baldwin Elementary School communities to come together for an evening of celebration, good company, and delicious food.

Neighbors and friends are encouraged to bring a side dish ample enough for their family and a few more to share. We look forward to seeing everyone and enjoying food inspired by one another's family traditions.

- Date:** Tuesday, November 24th
- Time:** 5:30-7:30 PM
- Location:** Baldwin School Dining Hall, Maria L. Baldwin School 28 Sacramento Street
- Note:** Please remember that while we will host children's activities, parents are ultimately responsible for their children.

TRY YOUR HAND AT SLOT CAR RACING

Slot car racing is a great hobby for kids and parents who like working with their hands. It promotes hand-eye coordination, teaches the proper use of hand tools, and instills a good sense of goal setting and competition.



Catfish International Speedway, here in the Agassiz Baldwin neighborhood, is open on most Wednesday evenings for an informal introduction to this hobby.

To learn more contact Rob Hayes at (617) 747-2566 or email rhayes@berklee.edu.



Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs

INTRODUCING ART PRESENTS VERONICA ROBLES

Agassiz Baldwin Community Introducing Art and Club Passim Culture for Kids presents Veronica Robles.



Well known as La Mera, Mera (The Real One), singer Veronica Robles is one of the most authentic representatives of Mexican music and culture in New England. With a recording career that spans ten years, five albums, and over fourteen years performing in venues, this energetic performer delights her audience with her amazing voice and spontaneous wit.

- When:** Thursday, November 19, 2:00 PM
- Where:** Maria L. Baldwin School Stage, 28 Sacramento Street
- Tickets:** Afterschool groups free, \$2 per person, \$5 per family School groups please RSVP

For more information, call (617) 349-6287. We hope to see you there!

PRESCHOOL UPDATE

Prepared by Priscilla Browne, Preschool Lead Teacher

October was an exciting month in the preschool classroom. We observed and discussed the fall season, including the colorful leaves. We also learned about apples, tasted different varieties, baked, and made art projects with apples. Finally we started learning about and discussing pumpkins. Last week we discussed the concept of make believe, which culminated with a party.



KIDS ONLY HOLIDAY SALE 2009

Calling all kids! Calling all kids! Come to this December's **Kids Only Holiday Sale** to buy fun and inexpensive gifts for your family and friends. Need help picking out a gift? Just ask our staff.

The sale will be held in the Sacramento Street Gallery at 20 Sacramento Street (which you probably remember if you came last year!)

Mark your calendars!

- What:** Annual Kids Only Holiday Sale
- When:** Weekdays, December 9-Friday December 18, 3-6 PM
- Why:** 'Cause the holidays are coming!

Proceeds from the sale benefit the Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs Scholarship Fund.

City Wide

ASHLEY BRYAN COMES BACK TO CAMBRIDGE

Join a joyful, lively celebration of poems and stories with Ashley Bryan at the Cambridge Public Library (CPL). Ashley Bryan is the beloved author and illustrator of over thirty-five books including *Beautiful Blackbird* and *Words to My Life's Song*. He has won three Coretta Scott King Book Awards, the Haggerty School Peace Prize, and many other honors.



This free event is for children age six and up. Pizza will be served and books will be available for purchase. Registration is required

- What:** Free reading featuring author/illustrator Ashley Bryan
- When:** Thursday, December 10 6:30 PM
- Where:** CPL, Main Library 449 Broadway, Cambridge
- Information:** (857) 235-9844



Sacramento Street Gallery

NINTH ANNUAL SMALL WORKS SHOW

Small Works Show, an annual display remarkable in its scope and diversity, features the work of fifty-seven Cambridge artists. Half of the proceeds from the show will benefit the Maud Morgan Visual Arts Center, a new art center that will provide children and practicing artists throughout the city with programs and work-space.

Small Works Show 2009 runs from Friday, October 23 to Friday, December 4th.

- Gallery hours:
- Monday-Friday 10:00 AM-5:30 PM
 - Saturdays Noon-5:00 PM

Special appointments are available, call (617) 349-6287 for details.



"Four Legged Dome"
Peter Haines



"Minnie in Mexico"
Ellen Wolfe

Community Calendar

November 2009

Wednesday, November 11		Veteran's Day Holiday ABC School Programs and Office closed
Wednesday, November 11	6:00-7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome
Wednesday, November 18	7:30-9:00 PM	ANC Monthly Meeting (see page 1 for agenda) Maria L. Baldwin School Library, 28 Sacramento St. All are welcome
Thursday, November 19	2:00 PM	Introducing Art & Club Passim's Culture for Kids present Veronica Robles
Tuesday, November 24	5:30-7:30 PM	38th Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Feast 
Thursday, November 26		Thanksgiving Holiday Cambridge Public Schools, ABC School Programs and Office closed through Friday, November 27

The Whistler is published monthly November - June by the Agassiz Baldwin Community, distribution 2,000. Call (617) 349-6287 to receive by mail or email. 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 NOVEMBER 2009



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