

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

October 2012

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Special Insert: Cook a Turkey for the Thanksgiving Potluck Feast 2012

ANC News

NOTES FROM THE SEPT. 11 MEETING

Your Neighborhood Council

The Agassiz Neighborhood Council (ANC) provides a forum for discussion and action. Since the early 1970s, ANC has enjoyed great success in engaging residents, City departments, and local institutions such as Harvard University and Lesley University for the benefit of the community.

Stephen Diamond, Meeting Chair and Board Director, stated, "Here, everyone's views are welcome, and we strive to treat one another with respect and dignity. Come participate with us."

Meetings are held the second Tuesday of the every month, September through June.

For more information, or to download earlier editions of ANC's newsletter *The Whistler*, visit www.agassiz.org/agassiz-neighborhood-council.

Mass. Ave. Master Plan Progress

The Mass. Ave. Master Plan, a collaborative effort between residents and the city to improve the streetscape along Massachusetts Avenue

from Cambridge Common to Porter Square, is nearing completion. The city will soon publish a report indicating standard elements to be used going forward, such as:

- Concrete sidewalks lined with brick pavers
- Larger tree pits with increased soil volume, metal grates, and open planting areas at the tree bases to create a permeable surface and increase unobstructed walking space
- Curb extensions at crosswalks to decrease crossing distance for pedestrians
- Benches, bike racks, public art, historic markers, and more

Next summer, the city plans to implement a demonstration block at Wendell/Shepard going north to Garfield Street, using the new standards.

Ron Axelrod, Neighborhood 9 resident, stated, "We've had wonderful support from everyone going forward, including Rich Rossi, Assistant City Manager, and Lesley and Harvard Universities."

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



OCTOBER 9 - 7:30 PM

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

Agenda

- **Upcoming Construction on Frost and other Agassiz Streets with Cambridge Department of Public Works**
- **Planning for Sidewalk Snow Clearing - Learn About Community Initiatives**
- **Living Well Network Fall Programming**

Lesley University Updates

Bill Doncaster, Director of Public Affairs at Lesley University, provided an update on the status of the Art Institute of Boston (AIB), to be located at the corner of Mass. Ave. and Roseland St.

- The university is approaching 70% of the funds needed to begin construction.
- Art studio spaces and classes for AIB are now in operation at University Hall on the lower level.
- As mentioned previously, AIB will be comprised of a renovated North Prospect Church and a new building, with a connector between.
- The library, main art gallery, and student gallery have all been sponsored/named.
- A legal challenge to the zoning was decided in Lesley’s favor. Additional challenges to the Historic Commission and Special Permit remain in court.

Mr. Doncaster reported that Lesley could break ground for AIB in spring 2013. In the meantime, they are working on a construction mitigation plan.

AIB 100th Anniversary

To commemorate AIB’s 100th year, the college has organized a storefront exhibition featuring the work of fifty artists from the Porter Square shopping center to the corner of Mass. Ave. & Everett.

On Wednesday, October 10, community members are invited to a tour of the installations from 5-6 PM, followed by a reception in the new AIB space at University Hall with artists and members of the Lesley community, beginning at 6 PM.

Please visit lesleyalumni.org/aibstorefront. Call (617) 349-8583 for more information or to RSVP.

Harvard University Updates

Groundwater Remediation

Tom Lucey, Community Relations Director at Harvard, reported that work continues on cleaning groundwater contamination at the corner of Mass. Ave. and Everett Street (referred to as the “Bence Pharmacy” site.) Most of the remediation in front of the building has been completed, and currently the focus is on cleaning beneath the site. It’s expected that this portion of the work will likely continue through the next year.

Recap:

- A dry cleaner existed at that location for fifty years.
- Contamination (dry cleaning solvent) has leached beyond the footprint of the building and site.
- Exploration and remediation has been in process since 2010.
- Remediation activities are an iterative process involving treatment and further testing; these activities are challenging due to the geology at the site.
- Harvard and the community share a goal to have retail return to the site.

Q&A:

- Q:** Can Harvard tear the building down and dig the pollution out?
- A:** As the building materials are saturated with pollution, it’s unclear whether the structure can be saved. The University is considering removing the building and will work with the community if they come to this decision.



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Reconstruction of Cambridge St. Tunnel & Overpass

Work continues to reconstruct the Cambridge Street Tunnel and Overpass, a joint effort between Harvard and the city.

Mr. Lucey reported, "This has been a very difficult logistical project, but we're about a month away from opening the sidewalks on Peabody Street, as well as the sidewalk that connects the tunnel surface to Quincy St./Broadway. Once this happens, the majority of the work area will be condensed to the tunnel's surface. Pathways across the top of the tunnel will be maintained at all times during the construction."

Next steps include:

- The tunnel's surface will be restored and pavers placed to help ensure that the surface is impervious; current repairs are the result of water damage to the concrete tunnel structure.
- In the spring, Harvard will install plantings near the science center and at the edge of Harvard Yard, in part to provide shade on the plaza.
- Harvard will install surface improvement to enhance pedestrian and bicycle safety, and will offer open areas for programming such as the Farmers' Market, community ice skating rink, and food trucks.

Learn more at:

<http://bit.ly/cambridge-st-reconstruction>.

Other Campus News

Hubway at Harvard

Harvard worked with the city to open Hubway, a regional bicycle sharing system, by sponsoring seven bike stations. Look for a new station at the Graduate School for Design and in the Quad area (Garden/Shepard/Walker Sts.) soon; these are public stations available for student and resident access.

Stair Railing at Hammond/Gorham

A Council member asked after the "missing"

railing on the stairs near where Hammond and Gorham Sts. meet. Mr. Lucey reported that the railing is "seasonal," installed annually for winter conditions.

Stairs at Harvard Law School's Wasserstein Hall

There was concern that the entrance stairs at Wasserstein Hall are a tripping hazard due to insufficient color variation between the steps and the sidewalk.

Mr. Lucey responded that the University increased the width of the public sidewalk in this area by setting the building back further from the street. In addition, lights were installed on the steps to ensure that pedestrians are aware of the location of the building's entrance. However, as the concern was specifically about visibility during daylight hours, he agreed to follow up on the issue.



Community

HELP CREATE A NEW NEIGHBORHOOD WALKING PATH

Community members are gearing up to create a second edition of the Agassiz Neighborhood Path, a walking route through the neighborhood that identifies places and plants of interest. Volunteers are needed for planning and research, with the goal of creating a new booklet/map in Spring 2013.

Come to our meeting in mid-October to help us plan. To volunteer or learn more, contact Phoebe Sinclair at psinclair@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x10.

You can find the original Agassiz Neighborhood Path map and brochure online at www.agassiz.org/living-well/agassiz-neighborhood-path.

Please share this invitation with neighbors and friends.

Community Calendar

October 2012

Monday, October 8		Columbus Day holiday, ABC programs and office closed
Tuesday, October 9	7:30-9:00 PM	ANC Meeting, see page 1 for agenda Maud Morgan Arts, 20A Sacramento St., 2D Studio All are welcome
Wednesday, October 10	6:00-8:00 PM	An Evening for Telling Stories, The World of William Wainwright, Chandler Gallery, 20 Sacramento St., for more info visit: www.maudmorgan.com/gallery/currentexhibition.htm
Wednesday, October 24	6:00-7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St., 2nd Floor Public welcome

The Whistler is published monthly September - June by the Agassiz Baldwin Community, distribution 2,000. 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.

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DO NOT FORWARD

Volunteer with Agassiz Baldwin!



- Help create a new **Neighborhood Walking Path**
- Volunteer to **cook a turkey** for our **41st Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Feast (November 20)**

Details Inside . . .



This November, help make Thanksgiving memorable by volunteering to cook a turkey for our **41st Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Feast**.

How It Works

Our tradition is to deliver a free turkey and roasting pan to volunteers' homes the week of the potluck. Volunteers drop off the cooked turkey (no stuffing, please) before dinner begins on the evening of Tuesday, November 20th. We need **eight volunteers to cook turkey**, and **four to help carve** just before and during the event.

Who Is Invited

We welcome everyone from the neighborhood, Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs, Living Well Network, Maud Morgan Arts, and Maria L. Baldwin School communities to come together for an evening of **celebration, good company, and delicious food**. Please remember that while we will host kids' activities at the event, parents are ultimately responsible for their children.

Can't Cook a Turkey?

Bring a side dish ample enough for your family and a few more to share. Salads, stuffings, cranberry sauce, dessert --your contributions are important.

Save the Date

Date: Tuesday, November 20
Time: 5:30–8:00 PM
Location: Maria L. Baldwin School dining hall, 28 Sacramento St.
Contact: Phoebe Sinclair at (617) 349-6287 x10 or psinclair@agassiz.org

