

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

March '07

IN THIS ISSUE

ANC News: Neighbors Discuss New Harvard Garage	1 - 3
ANC News: RAD Course A Success	3
ANC Community: Time Bank Workshops	4
Citywide: Winter Care for Pets	4 - 5
ANC School Programs: Vacation Week Mardi Gras	5 - 6
ANC School Programs: Kindergarten Travels World	6
ANC School Programs: Sign up for Outback Summer Program, Be a CIT	6 - 7
Sacramento St. Gallery: Around the World -Watercolors by Robert Gardner	7

ANC News

NOTES FROM THE FEB. 28 MEETING

Neighbors Discuss New Harvard Garage's Impact on Traffic & Parking

In response to neighborhood concern about Harvard University's proposed new 700-car underground garage, ANC invited representatives from Cambridge's Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department, Harvard University, and from Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB), a transportation consulting firm, to speak at the February 28th ANC meeting. Among those in attendance were Sue Clippinger, Director of Traffic, Parking and Transportation, David Black of VHB, and Mark Johnson, John Nolan, Tom Lucey, Mary Power, and Karen Sommerlad, all of Harvard University.

"The point of this meeting," explained ANC meeting chair Stephen Diamond. "Is for Agassiz neighbors to ask questions about this project. We want everyone to know what's going on."

Sue Clippinger, Director of Traffic, Parking and Transportation for Cambridge, initiated the discussion. She explained that while the new construction is an opportunity to convert surface spaces into more pedestrian-friendly areas, the new 700-car garage replacing the existing 400-car garage was of particular concern to the traffic department. She also noted that a city-organized working group, which includes Agassiz, Area 9, the city, and Harvard, has been conferring about development issues in the north campus area.

Mrs. Clippinger stated, "We looked at a series of options for getting in and out of the new underground garage, and the best idea was to make Everett two-way between the garage exit and Mass. Ave. This will allow as many trips as possible to exit the garage directly to Mass. Ave. without diverting people through the neighborhood."

She detailed the goals the traffic department wants to accomplish in this project:

- Maximize trips to and from Mass. Ave.
- Reduce curb cuts along Mass. Ave. to enhance pedestrian environment
- Reduce surface parking, replacing it with pathways and green space
- Improve operation of the intersection of Everett St. and Mass. Ave.

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



MARCH 21 - 7:30 PM

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

AGENDA

*Welcome Rachel Hirsch of History boutique
Lesley Working Group Meeting Report
Additional Agenda Topics TBA*

- Make sure on-street parking spaces displaced by converting part of Everett into a two-way street are replaced

David Black of VHB went on to detail the planning vision his firm created for the project. He explained that they intend to consolidate as much surface parking as possible from Harvard's North Campus into the garage. Overall, the project represents 0% increase in parking for the university. Mr. Black reminded the council that the proposed Law School site plan includes:

- A new Law School building on corner of Mass. Ave. and Everett Street
- Jarvis Street will be converted into a pedestrian-only thoroughfare
- All car/service traffic will utilize the new garage
- All loading/service will take place inside the new covered loading dock

Currently, Everett has parking on both sides of the street, one car lane, and one bike lane. To make part of the street two-way, the traffic department will reduce parking on one side of the street, with a loss of ten on-street parking spaces. According to their study, once the street has been converted, fewer cars leaving the garage will turn right down Everett toward Oxford Street, most choosing to go directly to Mass. Ave. Currently about 50% of cars exiting the garage during peak evening hours on Everett St. turn right; with the partial two-way Everett, that percentage is estimated to be reduced to 20%.

Additionally, the traffic department believes that updating the existing signal equipment will improve the level of service the intersection receives. The traffic department intends to reduce wait times for both pedestrians and cars by proposing changes in timing and phasing of the light, and adding concurrent pedestrian walk signals. They will also add a fourth crosswalk to the intersection.

In regard to parking, Mrs. Clippinger explained that spaces lost on Everett would be replaced in a variety of locations around the neighborhood.

The city plans to convert some short-term metered parking along Oxford Street north of Everett into resident-only parking, and then create a number of short-term spaces for institutional use along Mass. Ave, just south of the new Law School building. She mentioned that, although part of Harvard's job is to identify spaces to add, the traffic department regulates all parking spaces.

Following presentations by Mrs. Clippinger and Mr. Black, Agassiz neighbors had the opportunity to ask questions and voice concerns. One resident remarked, "We don't know what the all the large, full capacity buildings on Harvard's North Campus will bring to our neighborhood as far as traffic."

Resident Willie Bloomstein stated, "I think we're on the right path with parking; but traffic seems still up in the air. How many more cars will turn right leaving the underground garage and enter our neighborhood? With the new garage housing 700 cars, it seems it will double the numbers we have now. Additionally, I think the vast majority of cars will be traveling north on Mass. Ave, and they'll get backed up as pedestrians try to cross at the corner of Everett St. While I applaud the effort you've made with these traffic studies, I'm not yet convinced that the results are true to life."

In response, Mr. Black explained, "It's not just a question of how it will work tomorrow; Mrs. Clippinger is looking for a longer-term improvement. In our studies, we've estimated that only 20% of cars from the garage will travel down Everett towards Oxford. If you look at the math, it's better to have 20% of 700 spaces going



down Everett than 50% of 393 spaces, which is what you're dealing with now." He added, "Also, there will be an advance of time for pedestrians on crosswalks; cars will be delayed by a couple of seconds."

Other issues brought up by residents include:

- Some residents feel that the city has converted much needed residential parking spaces into meter spaces in the recent past.
- Residents mentioned that there are still unrestricted spaces on the north side of Everett St, as well as a Harvard bus stop and a loading zone –all of which can be converted into residential spaces.
- There was concern that, if area students are eligible for resident parking stickers, neighbors may have to compete with them for spaces.
- Will the city keep or change the right on red onto Mass. Ave. from Everett? Also, will cars be able to turn right on red from Everett to Mass. Ave? If both are possible, might this prove detrimental to pedestrians?
- Will there be a left turn signal onto Wendell Street?
- How many cars drive down Everett to access the other garage on Oxford Street? How will this further impact the neighborhood?
- Are 18-wheel trucks expected to access the new underground loading dock?
- What can be done about construction vehicles in the neighborhood, and construction workers who feed the meters along Oxford Street?

- Where will the displaced cars be housed during construction?

Mrs. Clippinger and representatives from Harvard responded to several questions from the neighborhood, although they also intend to provide additional answers at a later date. In particular, John Nolan of Harvard told the council, "Harvard will accommodate cars that are displaced by the construction. There will be a redistribution of parking spaces at new garages that have opened elsewhere on campus. Also, Harvard will seek approval to add tandem spaces to the 52 Oxford St. garage. We do not anticipate that the shifting of parking will create more trips in the neighborhood."

Also, Mark Johnson from Harvard told the council that the university is working with the Cambridge Department of Public Works to set a date to begin demolition and relocation of 1581-3 Mass. Ave, Baker House, and the adjoining carriage house on Mass. Ave, targeting June 23rd 2007.

Neighborhood RAD Course A Success

The four-week Rape Aggression Defense (RAD) Course, organized by Jennifer Lacroix of the Agassiz Neighborhood Crimewatch Network was successful and well attended. This course, offered by the Cambridge Police Department (CPD), is a program of realistic self-defense tactics and techniques offered free of charge for groups of ten or more women.

Ms. Lacroix extended her thanks to both CPD for providing instructors, and to Harvard University for providing a space to hold the classes. Additionally, the council voted to send a letter of support for the RAD program to the police department, city manager Robert Healy's office, and to Cambridge City Council members.

Two Agassiz residents who attended felt that the course was "incredibly valuable" and thanked Ms. Lacroix for coordinating it for the neighborhood.



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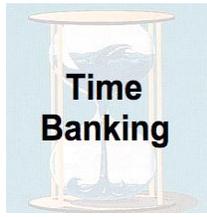
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ANC Community

TIME BANKING WITH ANC

Sign up now for a **Free Time Bank Workshop!** A Time Bank is formed when a group of individuals agree to treat time as currency as a way to build and sustain community.



For every hour spent helping someone, a person earns an hour's help in return. Time Banks reflect their members – who they are, the dreams they have, and the choices and decisions they make.

**Cambridge residents welcome!
Youth are encouraged to attend.**

To sign up for a workshop, contact ANC Assistant Director Lynn Landon at (617) 349-6287 x12 or email her at llandon@agassiz.org. See details below.

Wednesday, March 7 9:30 – Noon
Cambridge College, 1000 Mass. Ave.

Saturday, March 10 9:30 – Noon
Agassiz Community Room, North Hall 1651 Mass. Ave.

Thursday, March 22 7:00 – 9:30 PM
Cambridge Citywide Senior Center
806 Mass. Ave, 2nd Floor

Saturday, March 24 9:30 – Noon
Agassiz Community Room, North Hall 1651 Mass. Ave.

Tuesday, April 3 9:30 – Noon
Cambridge College, 1000 Mass. Ave.

Wednesday, April 4 7:00 – 9:30 PM
Cambridge Citywide Senior Center
806 Mass. Ave, 2nd Floor

City Wide

Please be mindful of your pets' special needs this winter season. Cambridge Animal Commission prepared the messages below.

A Good Neighbor Scoops the Poop

Benefits of scooping:

- Enjoy a healthier environment –reduced spread of parasites and disease to both dogs and people.
- Enjoy a cleaner environment –dog waste is unsightly and unpleasant.
- Save money –less visits to the veterinarian for parasite medication and exams. Less tax dollars being spent on cleanups of parks ruined by dog waste.
- Encourage good neighbor relations –dogs will be more welcome.
- Allows everyone to enjoy the open space –limited open space is available to people and pets that live in the city.



Consequences of Not Scooping:

- Fines –up to \$50.00 for repeat offenders.
- More restrictions on dogs –could lead to dogs being prohibited from using parks and other areas.

So next time you take your dog out for a walk, bring a plastic bag or scooper to pick up after him/her. You will be promoting better relationships with your neighbors, improving the quality of your environment, saving money, and you



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I strive to exceed your expectations.

will be adhering to the law.

Be Considerate – Leash and Scoop
Call Cambridge Animal Control at (617) 349-4379 with any questions or violation reports.

Cold Weather Tips for Pet Owners

The Cambridge Animal Commission would like to urge residents to consider using pet friendly ice melt or just sand, cat litter or any other substance that will make the walkway safe for everyone and also safe for the dogs in the City of Cambridge. If you do need to use the “salt” ice melt, please remove the salt once the ice has melted.

Pet owners should wipe off their dog's paws once the dog is back in the house. Check their sensitive paw pads, which may bleed from the salt or encrusted ice in them. Also, salt, anti-freeze or other chemicals can hurt your dog if s/he ingests them while licking their paws.

Some other cold weather tips for pet owners include:

- Keep your cat inside. Outdoor cats can freeze, become lost or stolen, or be injured or killed by a car.
- Never leave your pet alone in a car in the cold weather. A car holds in the cold, and your pet can freeze to death.
- During the cold months, outdoor cats may choose to sleep under the hood of a car where it tends to be warmer. Bang loudly on your

hood before starting your engine to allow the cat to escape.

- Never let your dog off leash on snow or ice, especially during a snowstorm. Dogs frequently lose their scent in snow and ice and easily become lost. More dogs are lost during the winter than any other season.
- Make sure your companion animal has a warm place to sleep far away from drafts and off the floor, such as a dog or cat bed with a warm blanket or pillow in it.
- If you haven't already licensed your dog, put an identification tag on your cat, or put a microchip on your pet, please do so. Winter is a miserable time to be lost.



Agassiz School Programs

STARS EMERGE AT VACATION WEEK

MARDI GRAS

Prepared by Afterschool
Director Alex Lewis

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday were spent in preparation for Friday's big event.

Children created necklaces, floats, crowns, capes and instruments. This was in conjunction with Nomi's theme of Korea, in which bubble tea taste testing, exotic fruit tasting and duk bok ki (healthy and delicious) was made.



Mardi Gras Float

On Friday, everyone got glammed up; the sparkles and face paints came out! Yoni, 4/5th grade site director, brought his rock band “Yoni and the Goods” to play. At the end of the show Yoni opened up the stage to volunteers. One child bravely volunteered to sing a song from the Broadway show “Wicked,” and a number of children took the stage to play Yoni's guitar; budding rock stars in the making!

Costumes and face paints were shown off in a

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procession before children and afterschool staff tucked into some tortillas for snack. Then, with the majority of the celebration over, everyone settled down to watch a movie for the rest of the afternoon.

I'd like to thank all the teachers for their creative choices last week, especially Yoni and his band for volunteering their time and energy to making Mardi Gras an event to remember



KINDERGARTEN PROGRAM TRAVELS THE WORLD

Prepared by Lydia Kim

The "Travel Around the World" theme has been a big, big hit here at the Kindergarten Afterschool. All the children who wanted to participate in this trip had an opportunity to learn the importance of passports, and each constructed his or her own passport for the trips.

We started the journey by visiting Europe. The children enjoyed learning about France, Germany, Spain, Italy, and Switzerland. In France, we ate croissant and in Italy we had delicious Italian cookies!

Next we went to Asia. When we visited Korea, the children had a taste of Korean noodles. The children were excellent at using chopsticks! We also visited Nepal and China.



After we left China, we went to Africa. We visited Kenya, Madagascar, Egypt, Uganda and Ghana. On our trip to Egypt, we made pyramid scenes with colored sand. Afterschool teacher Jackye also made drums out of plastic cups with the children on our trip to Uganda.

In February, we visited Australia and Antarctica. We ended the trip in North America, making a couple of stops along the way before heading back to Massachusetts! We visited sunny California, Washington D.C. the Big Apple, New York City, Florida, and North Dakota.

The teachers have received positive feedback from the children who went on this journey, as well as from the kindergarten families.

2007 OUTBACK SUMMER PROGRAM REGISTRATION BEGINS IN MARCH

Register now for our popular summer program offered exclusively to kids entering grades 1 through 6. We offer a flexible summer schedule --children may attend for just one week, all eight weeks, or any combination of weeks throughout the summer. Choose from two different daily schedules, "regular day," which runs from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM, or "extended day" from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM.



Registration

Applicants are accepted on a "first come, first served" basis. The program opens on Monday, July 2nd (closed on July 4th) and runs for eight weeks through Friday, August 24, 2007.

The registration fee is \$50 for 1st child and \$25 for each additional child attending Outback.

The cost per week is as follows:

- \$200 for regular day, 8:30 AM - 2:30 PM
- \$250 for extended day, 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM

Families with more than one child attending will receive a 10% sibling discount.

Contact Michelle Quinlan, ANC Director of Children's Programs for additional information. She can be reached at (617)-349-6287 X 11 or mquinlan@agassiz.org.

Note: You may also download an Outback 2007 Registration Form at www.agassiz.org.

BE A CIT IN THE SUMMER!

Apply now for our Counselor-in-Training program for youth entering grades 7 to 9. This eight-week summer program offers four two-week CIT sessions, each running Monday through Friday from 8:30 AM to 2:30 PM. Participants are expected to complete all ten days of each session.

Every CIT will be paired with an Outback Summer Program staff member as their mentor. CITs receive a party and stipend at the end of a successful experience.

How to Apply

Contact the ANC for an application form at

Fred Meyer, Realtor
 83 Hammond Street
 617-876-1200

Owner, University Real Estate,
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 Past President, MA Assoc. of Realtors.
 Licensed real estate appraiser.

See all available homes now at
agassizhomes.com
harvardyard.com

(617) 349-6287 or download it from the web at www.agassiz.org/OutbackSummerProgram.asp. New CIT applicants will be interviewed by the Program Director prior to acceptance in the program. As there are limited CIT positions available each session, we may not be able to place every applicant.



Sacramento Street Gallery

Last chance to see long-time Cambridge community member Robert Gardner's wildly successful show! Visit the Sacramento St. Gallery to view:

Around the World: A Collection of Aquagraphs*

by Robert Gardner

Dates: January 28 – March 16, 2007

Times: 9:00 to 5:00 PM, Monday - Friday

58 original pieces, priced from \$150 to \$175.

All proceeds will benefit the Maud Morgan Visual Arts Center.



* An aquagraph is an enhanced giclee (pronounced zheeclay). A watercolor is painted, scanned into a computer, modified, spray-printed on watercolor paper, and them com-

Community Calendar

March 2007

Wednesday, March 14	6:00 - 7:30 PM	ANC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome
Friday, March 16		Evacuation Day Baldwin School closed, Afterschool & Preschool closed for staff Professional Day
Friday, March 16		Final day of Robert Gardner show at Sacramento St. Gallery - "Around the World: A Collection of Aquagraphs"
Wednesday, March 21	7:00 - 8:30 PM	ANC Monthly Meeting (see page 1 for agenda) Baldwin School Cafeteria, 28 Sacramento St. All are welcome
Wednesday, March 21		First Day of Spring!

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THE WHISTLER MARCH 2007



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DO NOT FORWARD