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ANC News

Notes from the December ANC Meeting

Cambridge City Councillor Frank Duehay visited our December 12 meeting to explain the City's recommendations to Harvard regarding its former rent control units. The recommendations from late October are as follows:

1. That Harvard and the City of Cambridge jointly fund a program which would allow all of Harvard's formerly rent-controlled housing units to be purchased at below market costs by tenants under the City's first time low interest home ownership plan or continue as rental units owned by the City's non-profit community development corporations.
2. That the City Council, with the leadership of the Mayor and the City Manager, assume that responsibility to negotiate directly with the officers of Harvard, under the leadership of its President.

Harvard's original offer was to develop 10% of the former rent control property as affordable. There was concern that this offer was not permanent but would only last for 20 years. [In speaking with Happy Green, the ANC was told that this arrangement would be permanent.] Harvard has also agreed to voluntarily extend the duration of protections that the state law provided to its low income, elderly and disabled tenants through June 1998.

Frank pointed out that Cambridge did appreciate the fact that Harvard was willing to voluntarily offer some relief to the City. As a non profit with a great deal of money, and a great deal of property that has appreciated in Agassiz, Harvard could do more. Without Harvard's help there will be little affordable housing in Agassiz.

Fear was expressed that the neighborhood would be taken over by affiliates, a term that has confused many.

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

[Happy Green later told the ANC that for the most part affiliates were graduate students.] The affiliates would be a transient population with little tie in the community.

Although it would be very expensive for the City to realize their recommendations, bonds, much as other major City projects are funded, could be utilized for this. It was suggested that the City may be able to get tenants together to purchase larger buildings, since it appeared that they will be the ones available for purchase.

Some tenants at the meeting have been very proactive including attendance at vigils at Harvard. They urged everyone to attend them to show Harvard the need for more action in Cambridge housing. *The Harvard Crimson* was circulated to show the work being done there.

Many of the participants at the meeting were Harvard tenants interested in purchasing their units. However, in the Agassiz neighborhood, market rate is extraordinarily high, and one proposal was that Harvard reduce the market rate (the suggestion was 80% of market rate) so that people could actually buy their own units with a combination of good price and help from the City's first time home buyer programs. Although Harvard has expressed a willingness to sell to tenants, due to the high market rate in Agassiz, this was of little use to most tenants.

Frank felt there was confusion on various points due to the complexity of the issue. He believes that both sides

**NEXT
COUNCIL MEETING
JANUARY 23, TUESDAY**

7:30 p.m.

**Agassiz School Cafeteria
28 Sacramento St. Entrance**

Agenda:

- 1). Discussion of a planning process for Oxford St. reconstruction after sewer construction-see page 3
- 2). Report from Committee on Housing-see article above. (This is a tentative agenda item)



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Neighborhood News

MORE ON HOUSING . . .

Cambridge Housing Information Service CALL 349-HOME (349-4663)

This new Cambridge Housing Information Line will tell you what is out there and how and where to get it:

- How and where to sign up for potential affordable rental housing in Cambridge
- How to sign up for the Free home buyer training program
- How to get on the City's Housing Mailing list, so you are kept up to date on rental and ownership affordable housing opportunities and initiatives.
- How and where to learn about CHAP, the condo housing assistance program
- Get referrals from a member of the staff

Condo tenants lose protection

As of December 31 Rent Control protection has ended for everyone living in condominiums, properties containing 1-3 units, and properties containing 4-12 units if the owner has lived there continuously since 1/1/95. A mailing was received by the affected tenants last month from the Cambridge Rent Control Board, and it contained a great deal of information about rights and resources. It clearly explains EVICTIONS, RENT INCREASES, POOR HOUSING CONDITIONS AND RETALIATION FOR REPORTING VIOLATIONS.

Contact the Rent Control Board at 349-6161 for more information.

Housing Legal Services

Free legal help is available for people with low incomes. Call the Community Legal Services and Counseling Center at 661-1010, located at One West St. Cambridge.

- It is illegal for a landlord to evict you without a court order. You may be able to stop an eviction. You have a right to tell your side in court.
- You have a right to appeal a denial of your application for public housing.
- If you have been abused, a court can order the abuser to vacate your home

Harvard Owned Property in Agassiz

Many people have expressed interest in exactly what property in the Agassiz neighborhood is owned by Harvard. Below is a list, courtesy of John Pitkin from Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association. The total of buildings - 27, units - 131. This includes approximately 230 tenants (5% of all Agassiz residents).

Everett St.
15-19 Everett St.
27 Everett St.

Garfield St.
44 Garfield St.
54 Garfield St.

should meet and discuss the issue as soon as possible. Members of the ANC agreed to send a letter to City Manager, Pres. of Harvard, Mayor Reeves, and the newspapers in support of the city's position on Harvard housing after rent control, and to urge them to sit down and talk as soon as possible.

The council also agreed to develop a committee known as the Agassiz Housing Committee including tenants and home owners as well as people of all incomes who were interested in keeping Agassiz a community that included a mix of those groups of people. It was agreed to write a letter that described what the Agassiz community now is and why affordable housing is an important part of the community. This letter could be circulated widely in the Agassiz neighborhood and shared with the Harvard community so they could understand the importance of their help in this neighborhood. Members agreed to check back, and possibly be back for our January meeting (Jan. 23). For more information on this issue, or to be on the mailing list, call Terry DeLancey at the council at 349-6287. To see a list of property owned by Harvard in the Agassiz neighborhood, see Neighborhood News below.

January Meeting ~ Tuesday 1/23 7:30 p.m. Oxford Street Reconstruction

Traffic Committee representatives will meet with City representatives in early January to shape the process of planning for street and sidewalk reconstruction on Oxford St. in a comprehensive way once the sewer project is finished. This should include safety and beautification and will benefit everyone who uses Oxford St.: pedestrians, bicyclists and motorists.

This meeting will be the basis for a discussion at the council meeting 1/23 in the Agassiz School.

Some follow up on a December discussion about Harvard's formerly rent controlled properties in the neighborhood is tentatively scheduled.

Call 349-6287 for more information.

Hammond St.
 3 Hammond St.
 74-76 Hammond St.
 87-89 Hammond St.
 97-99 Hammond St.
 100-102 Hammond St.

Howland St.
 10 Howland St.

Mellen St.
 10 Mellen St.
 12 Mellen St.
 14-16 Mellen St.
 18-18a Mellen St.
 20 Mellen St.
 84-86-90 Mellen St.

Oxford St.
 64 Oxford St.

Sacramento Place
 17-19 Sacramento Place

Sacramento St.
 5 Sacramento St.
 9-19 Sacramento St.
 21-23 Sacramento St.
 22 Sacramento St.
 24 Sacramento St.
 26 Sacramento St.

Wendell St.
 23 Wendell St.
 25 Wendell St.
 84 Wendell St.

Traffic and Transportation

Plans to Improve Oxford St. Safety

Oxford Street is still a dangerous place. Although traffic has slowed thanks to a combination of improvements over the past few years, a child was hit by a car in mid December (thankfully not badly hurt) in front of the school.

The traffic committee has plans in the works to make the sewer project (still several years away) work for the Agassiz neighborhood. After the sewer work is completed, this committee intends to have a comprehensive plan for the reconstruction of Oxford St. and its sidewalks that will make Oxford St. a safer and more neighborhood friendly street for all who use it.

An early January meeting is planned with Rich Rossi, Deputy City Manager and other City representatives who will assist neighborhood representatives to plan for street and sidewalk reconstruction after the sewer work. The group will discuss the necessary components of such a planning process and its structure. The January meeting will include representatives from the Agassiz traffic committee as well as representatives from the Cambridge Traffic, Public Works, Community



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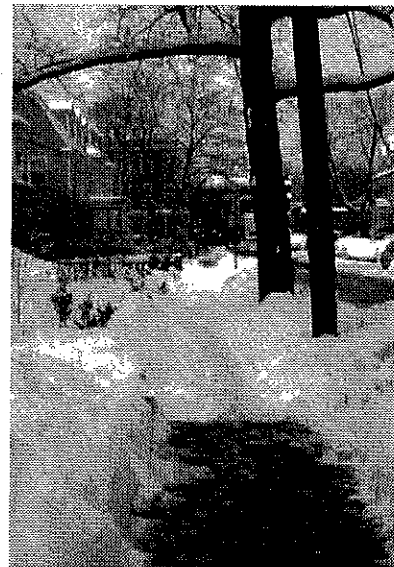
35 Sacramento Street, Cambridge, MA 02138

Development as well as a representative from Harvard.

Anyone interested in joining this process is welcome. Please call ANC and we will put you on the mailing list for information on meetings. Plan to attend the next council meeting on January 23, Tuesday (see page one for details) where this topic will be discussed at length.

SNOW INFO

Do you need to remind your neighborhood that it is their responsibility to shovel their walks? Do you want to thank a neighbor for doing a great job on their walk? We have friendly reminder cards that we will send to you (or just drop in at 20 Sacramento St. and get a few). These cards were developed last year (but not much needed then due to little snow) by the COP (Community Oriented Policing) Leadership Council.



Do you need some help getting your neighbors to shovel? Call the **Snow Hot Line at 349-4903**. This is part of the Department of Public Works who will send an inspector out to look at the property. The inspector will cite anyone who is in violation of the law. The Snow Hot Line is available from December 1 - April 1.

For other issues call the DPW at 349-4800.

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Beverage cartons should be washed out to avoid odors and insects. While plastic pour spouts on the cartons are acceptable, do not include any wax-coated cups, ice cream cartons, or takeout food containers. In addition to plastics numbers 1 and 2, stiff plastic containers marked on the bottom numbers 3-7 are now accepted. This does not include any plastic bags or foam packaging. Containers should be rinsed clean, crushed if possible, and have lids removed. Aerosol cans must be empty. Beverage cartons, plastic containers, and aerosol cans should be placed in the blue recycling bins with other bottles and cans, and paperboard should be put out with other paper items, in a paper bag.

Put your curbside bin out by 7:00 a.m. on your regular trash day. If your bin is lost, stolen, or too small, we will deliver either a replacement or a larger/extra bin for free - - call 349-4800. Call 349-4836 if you have any questions.

City Wide

Cambridge Inaugural January 1.

City officials will be sworn in at a 10:00 a.m. ceremony. New Council and School Committee are listed below:

CITY COUNCIL

- Kathy Born
- Henrietta Davis
- Frank Duehay
- Anthony Galluccio
- Ken Reeves
- Sheila Russell
- Michael Sullivan
- Tim Toomey
- Katherine Triantafyllou

SCHOOL COMMITTEE

- Fred Fantini
- Joe Grassi
- David Maher
- Susana Segal
- Denise Simmons
- Alice Turkel

Selection of the mayor will be discussed at that time, and may or may not be completed at the January 1 meeting.

CHRISTMAS TREE PICK UP

Between January 2-19th Cambridge DPW will pick up your old Christmas tree for recycling. Leave it out on the day following your regular garbage pick up.

New Year's Resolution-Recycle MORE !

Curbside recycling now includes paperboard (cereal and shoe boxes, etc.), beverage cartons (milk and juice cartons, as well as "juice boxes"), plastic containers numbered 3-7, and empty aerosol cans. These can now be picked up with your other recyclables.

Porter Square Neighbors Association

The PSNA held the Envision Porter Square meeting on December 2, and if turn out is a measure, it was a great success with well over 100 attendees. City officials from both Cambridge and Somerville, business representatives and residents of all abutting neighborhoods were in attendance.

The new association is off to a good start in helping Gravestarr plan for renovations to the Porter Square Shopping Center, anticipated to begin sometime this spring. There is a special committee dedicated to that project, and all are welcome.

Another project includes federal funding to improve the traffic (bike and pedestrian) patterns in Porter Square. Pedestrians, bike riders, motorists and shoppers from Somerville and Cambridge area all welcome according to President Paul Myers. Call 547-2531 for more information.

Crime Watch

Common Patterns in Cambridge Street Robbery

One of the most feared crime situations is street robbery which includes mugging, purse snatching, and any confrontation with a weapon. We are told that in any given year there will be between 200-350 street robberies. The police identify eight distinct variations:

Bikejacking- In this scenario, two to four males between the ages of 10-18 approach a victim who is riding a bike. They intimidate the victim to give up the bike. In some cases the victim, usually 10-15, is forced with threats or weapons to give the bike up.

The Bullyboys-In this scenario, males between the ages of 10-15 will know the perpetrator who will intimidate the victim on the way home from school, or recreational areas. Things stolen include clothing and money.

Dial-a Victim-A delivery person is intercepted and robbed before entering a phony location. This crime usually includes weapons.

Domestic-This situational robbery has increased over the past few years. In this case, an ex-boyfriend uses force in the street to take back cash or jewelry.

The Homeless-In this scenario the homeless rob one another, often occurring in Harvard and Central Squares and while both are intoxicated.

The Lone Wolf-This robber works alone at night. He seldom will roam from his territory which is comprised of Area 4, Cambridgeport, Riverside and Mid-Cambridge. His prey is a female between 20-40. He is between 20-30 years of age, a career criminal with 10 years of purse snapping experience. He is unarmed with little intent to cause injury. He approaches from behind, strikes and flees with the cash.

Pack Robberies- In this situation a group of 4-8 males between the ages of 14-18 will stalk victims around T-stations, shopping malls and recreational areas. Crimes often occur on Friday or Saturday nights after parties. The victim is usually a 15-25 year old male walking alone. Not weapons, but strong arm tactics are usual.

The Predator-This situational street robbery type has the greatest effect on the public safety consciousness of the citizens of the City. A suspect is armed with a gun or knife in a predatory confrontation on the street. The elements of serious injury are ever present.

Cambridge statistics for the first three quarters of 1995

Bikejackers	18
Bully Boys	15
Dial a Victim	3
Domestic	8
Homeless	11 (considered under-reported)
Lone Wolf	40
Pack Robberies	28
Predatory	49

Agassiz Public School

LIGHTS FOR THE NEW PARKING LOT

Due to some concern expressed by teachers at the Agassiz School, lighting is scheduled to be put in the school's new parking lot for safety. This lot is next to the tot lot, across from the Oxford Spa on Oxford St. The ANC would like to hear any comments on this proposal.

FAN IS FINALLY QUIET


The ANC has had calls from a few neighbors who have advised us that the loud and annoying noise from two fans on top of the new Agassiz School have been fixed. We have had no further complaints to date.

SCHOOL CONSTRUCTION ODDS AND ENDS

Almost all "punch list" items (unfinished or incorrect details) in the Agassiz School are scheduled to be completed during school vacation week at the end of December. There will be a few outdoor items that will remain for good weather.

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Agassiz Cultural Happenings

Authentic Spanish Flamenco Dance January 28



Join us for the Sunday performance of Ramon de los Reyes Spanish Dance Theatre for a view of traditional flamenco dancing, fully staged and costumed with live music. The event will take place January 28 at 3 p.m. on the Agassiz School stage, 28 Sacramento St. entrance.

The *Boston Herald* has called it "...the best of passionate Spanish dancing ... a powerful performance ..." *The Boston Globe* has said "captivating and elegant" and *Dance Magazine* described it like this: "Fiery flamboyance is the hallmark of the Ramon de los Reyes Spanish Dance Theatre ... this attractive ensemble brings freshness and vitality to everything it does."

Children in grades 4/5 will enjoy an intensive workshop a few

days prior to the event given by the performers. It will explain the art form more deeply, allowing children to experiment with castanets, try out some steps and see the costumes up close.

Although this is part of Introducing Art: A Performance Series for Children, adults are most welcome to join us and will thoroughly enjoy the show. Admission is \$1. thanks to a generous grant from the Massachusetts Cultural Council and support from the Agassiz Neighborhood Council, who presents this event.

Sacramento Street Gallery



ANDREA HORNBEIN
AN OTHER NATURE - Sculpture and Drawing
January 9 through February 2
Weekdays 9:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Sacramento St. Gallery, 20 Sacramento St.,
Cambridge.
Opening reception January 13 3:30-6:00 p.m.

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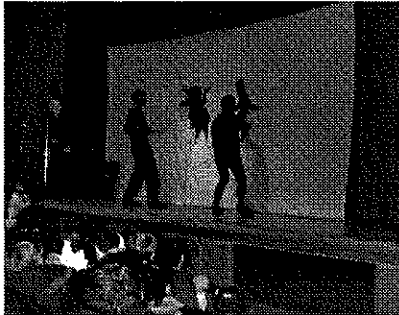


ART CLASSES

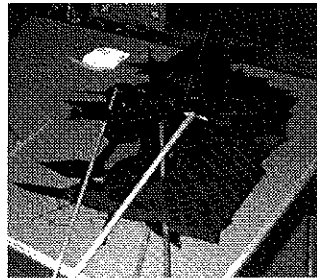
Carolyn Boriss-Krimsky, artist, registered art therapist and licensed mental health counselor is providing art classes and art therapy sessions for children in her neighborhood studio during after school hours. For more information call 547-8444

The Whistler January 1996

The Firebird Comes to Agassiz



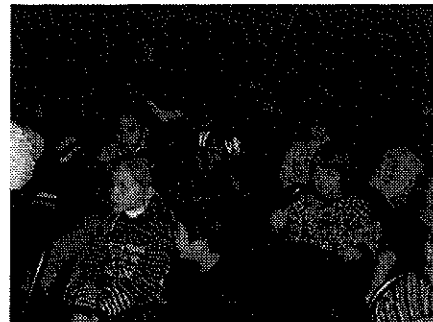
A demonstration after the performance



Backstage

The *Firebird* was a great success with over 350 adults and (mostly children) in attendance for the gala shadow puppet performance set to Stravinski's *Firebird Suite* on December 12. There were after school groups from the Haggerty, Fitzgerald and the Morse Schools.

Also presented was *Till Eulenspiegel*, set to music by Strauss.



Members of the audience

Lesley College

AIDS AWARENESS IN FEBRUARY

Lesley College is pleased to announce AIDS Awareness Week from February 5-9 with events to be held on the main campus and one in the Agassiz School Cafeteria. All the Agassiz Community is invited to attend these important and informative events and fund-raising activities.

There are two events of special interest: "Living On" is a moving, theatrical performance created by a Lesley alumna. Her characters span age, race and life experience, making the message accessible to just about anyone twelve years and older - parents are encouraged to bring your children. Also to be scheduled is a workshop offered through the Red Cross "How to Talk to Kids" about AIDS.

Agassiz Neighborhood Council has agreed to cosponsor the Rock Benefit for AIDS featuring rock bands who have donated their time to raise money for AIDS.

The schedule is as follows:

Monday, February 5th

"Living ON" an AIDS awareness theater production in Welch Auditorium 7:15 p.m. Admission free

Tuesday February 6th

Interfaith Service of Memory and Hope followed by a simple reception 7:15 p.m. Multipurpose Room

Wednesday February 7th

AIDS Action Committee Speaker, Multipurpose Room

Thursday February 8th

Festival of Film Shorts in Welch Auditorium 8-11 p.m. Admission Free

Friday February 9th

Rock Music Benefit for AIDS-featuring SenseSurround, Spool, Miles dethmuffin and Ellie Marshall (from Modern Lovers) in the Agassiz School Cafeteria, 8-11 p.m. Donations at the Door

(All proceeds to benefit Boston City Hospital Pediatric AIDS, The Boston Living Center and other local AIDS organizations.)

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**THE WHISTLER ~ Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council
COMMUNITY CALENDAR ~ JANUARY 1996**

January 1, Monday		New Year's Day Holiday - No School
January 10, Wednesday		Cambridge Elementary School Half Day
January 13, Saturday	3:30-6:00 p.m.	Opening Reception-Andrea Hornbein- <i>AN OTHER NATURE-Sculpture and Drawing</i> Sacramento St. Gallery, 20 Sacramento St.
January 15, Monday		Martin Luther King Holiday - No School
January 23, Tuesday	6:30-7:30 p.m. 7:30-9:30 p.m.	ANC Board Meeting (Open to the Public) ANC Monthly Meeting Agassiz School Cafeteria, 28 Sacramento St. Entrance
January 28, Sunday	3:00-4:00 p.m.	Ramon de los Reyes ~ Spanish Flamenco Dancing Agassiz School Stage, 28 Sacramento St. Entrance Admission \$1 Children and Adults welcome!

February 5-9th AIDS AWARENESS WEEK at Lesley College - See Page 5

The Whistler is published monthly September - June by the Agassiz Neighborhood Council, distribution 2,000. Neighborhood residents may be added to the mailing list by calling 349-6287. Items of interest to the Agassiz neighborhood may be submitted for consideration to address below, no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication date.



January 1996
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Cambridge, MA 02138 349-6287
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