

Correspondence from residents, October 2016

Dear Fred,

I have been following the various email threads back and forth in response to Mr. Rossi's letter outlining the revised plans for the renovations at Sacramento Field. It troubles me that an adversarial spirit has been building which makes respectful discussion of divergent perspectives very difficult. It would be helpful if we could develop clearer ground-rules for our ANC meetings in order to reduce acrimony and to assure that everyone has a turn to speak.

The confusion around next meeting dates is also unfortunate. I had very much wanted to be present at any ANC-related meeting that focuses on Sacramento Field, and I am unable to attend the new date of October 13. I understand the custom of not holding meetings that conflict with religious holidays; but when a date has to be moved, it should be to a time later in the month so more people would have time to become aware of the change. At times like this, it is important to have a larger, more diverse attendance whenever feasible. As you know, I came to the first SUMMER meeting without clear knowledge of the discussions about Sacramento Field that took place over the previous 6 months. Without that background, I had no reason of my own to formulate a strong position; I had hoped that my long-term participation in ANC and my interest in group process might be an asset to deliberations about the only public green space in our neighborhood, but I did not yet have an opinion of my own.

Subsequently, I became aware that my perspective as a mildly mobility-impaired Agassiz resident might be useful. In addition, I have cared for two other members of my family with more significant mobility impairments and learned from their experiences how often they were unintentionally excluded from public spaces that could not provide more accessible surfaces, entries, even bathrooms and voting places. Small changes can make a big difference, but it requires seeing the problems from the view of those who are not currently using the space which means their needs are not fully visible to others.

Would you kindly read this letter to those assembled on October 13 as a way to frame some concerns that could be discussed on October 18th? I understand that the agenda will resume discussion of our Visions for Agassiz as a neighborhood and the ANC as a more representative council. We may wish to consider some changes in structure and process that will enable the council to feel more legitimacy for our deliberation and conclusions when we are tasked to speak not only for ourselves as individuals but also as a voice for our community.

I hope we can continue to feel pride and efficacy in our commitment to work on community issues transparently and collaboratively even when we encounter strong differences along the way.

Respectfully submitted at a time I could not be present in person, Kate

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Dear Fred,

I am writing now to supplement the letter I sent you previously to be read aloud at the Special ANC meeting scheduled for October 13, 2013.

Now that there is a formal motion for which a vote is sought, I am more than ever distressed that a time and date for such an important meeting is proceeding both on short-notice and without adequate time to give the widest possible notice to the larger school and neighborhood community. I deeply regret that I cannot be present to participate in the dialogue and to share responsibility for the way the issues around Sacramento Field renovations are eventually resolved. I wish important votes could be undertaken at regular (not Special) meetings.

On the other hand, I appreciate the emphasis in your letter that calls on all participants to approach discussions on which there are strong differences of opinion and of priorities in a respectful spirit with an emphasis on listening deeply in our efforts to understand one another. I feel this is particularly important in our neighborhood's relationship to City personnel who have been involved in the proposed renovations. It is easy to demonize or attribute motives to others with whom you disagree. I appreciate your efforts to re-ignite the kind of active, collaborative spirit that has characterized progress on decisions regarding major projects in our neighborhood over many years.

Finally, I want to applaud the very intensity of concern that has led to increased involvement in neighborhood matters, and hope this will continue as we look to re-evaluate the structure and processes that govern the ANC itself.

Thank you for your persistence in working toward these ideals.

Kate

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I live next to Sacramento Field.

To be very blunt, there is **no need** for lights in Sacramento Field. If you some people in City Council want to waste taxpayer money to put up lights, then I object and I think it's very clear from the emails being sent the **entire** neighborhood objects. The reasoning for **not** having lights is simple:

1) Since the park is closed at night, there is no need for lights. In fact, putting up lights will **encourage** people to go to the park night. I live next to the park and there is no one there at night.

2) Furthermore, there is no recorded criminal incidents or safety incidents at the park at night. Thus, these 'reasons' for lights on the park don't make any sense.

3) It seems whatever person is in charge has decided to put the lights up **regardless** of there being no reason.

Lights at the night will disturb the sleep of people living near the park, create unnecessary light pollution, and encourage activity in the park at night after the closing of the park - thus making the park more dangerous than it currently is.

So, to be 100% clear, if **anyone** at City authorizes putting up lights in clear violation of the will of the neighborhood, myself and neighbors will call for anyone involved for asking for lights in the park should be **fired** for overriding the clear desire of the neighborhood. I will be happy to begin both a petition campaign and to organize a demonstration in front of relevant city buildings - as well as work with neighbors to file any legal paperwork necessary to prevent lights for being installed in the park.

I would like a clear letter from City Council stating they will not put up lights. **entire**

thanks,
harry

My husband and I are against this motion.

We have pressed the city to undertake this work since we moved to Garfield Street in 2003.

The park desperately needs renovation and we like the final plan very much, believe the consultation with the community has been far more than adequate, and strongly disagree with the objections that have been made to the plan.

Garfield St. Resident

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Dear Mr. Meyer, City Council Members and Fellow Sacramento Field Neighbors,

Thank you Mr. Meyer for serving as Moderator and your comprehensive and accurate summary of communications that have transpired throughout our various meetings, as detailed in your summary below. I personally also want to thank you for the thoughtful and thorough research that you have performed regarding viable, Proven & natural options to many of the City's plan's details, most notably using wooden chips rather than paving the pathway around our community's Field.

I am currently out of state & unable to attend Tonight's meeting.
I am therefore requesting you will consider my absentee vote as follows.

As a 20+ year homeowner on Garfield St. & having attended planning meetings for Sacramento Field, my Vote is to Halt Now any further action by the City until the plans do in fact reflect the input that has been voiced by a majority of the community throughout this process.

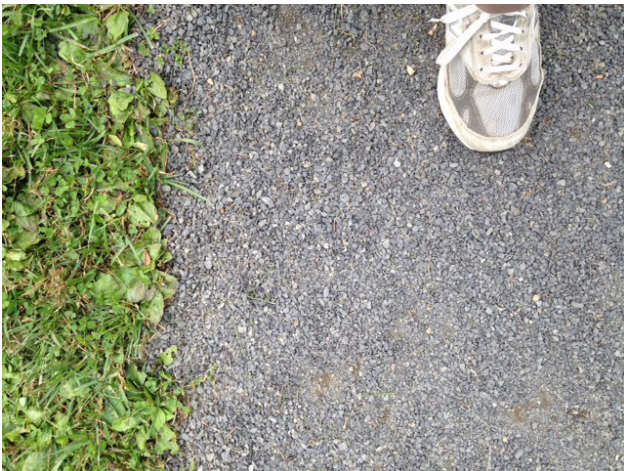
The City Official's plans for Illumination, paving materials, acreage to be paved over, and the types of activities that will be promoted by this design, (i.e. Roller blading, people sleeping/ using the park after dusk) demonstrate a lack of regard for the majority of the community's concerns, suggestions & opposition to what has been presented by the city. The nearly 300 signatures by community members and medical evidence supporting the benefits & majority's desire to keep a natural dirt pathway around the path have been completely disregarded! I would also request that city officials examine the reports by the American Medical Association which affirm the health risks to people caused by LED lights, and as have also been voiced by the community.

And finally, I believe that the current plans totally disregard the fact that this natural field is located within a Historically registered district, in which home owners have lovingly and painstakingly taken measures to preserve and respect the historical beauty & significance of these houses, the land & neighborhoods. Sacramento Field is one of the last remaining open parcels of undeveloped land in the City. It is shameful that the City feels the need to develop another amusement park when nearly 21 fully developed parks already exist. If this continues to be the case, I believe that water and land samples must be examined, in light of this park having housed a hide tanning company in the late 1800's when the field was a natural body of water.

For all of these reasons, and those highlighted in red in Mr. Meyer's summary below, I strongly request that the City delay their actions in order to reexamine & digest what the neighborhood community has in fact voiced throughout the planning process, and recreate plans that truly reflect what we the community, the American medical association US historical society & Disability Act Believe.

Diane Sullivan
Homeowner 49 Garfield Street

Here is a “stone dust” path that works well for everyone. It does need frequent raking.
-Stephan Diamond, Agassiz resident



Fred -

I am not able to attend the meeting tonight but did attend the last one where a “draft plan” was presented. I would cast my vote FOR the motion below. A new plan must meet the needs of the wider area of Cambridge but must also respect the concerns of the abutters. A compromise is needed.

- I support hard paving at the two entry's and between them on the south of the field. Compacted stone dust may be used to complete the track.
- Lights just along the south path should be sufficient for safety.
- The basket ball area should be oriented with the fixed basket at a short end so that a two hoop game is possible wIth a portable basket.
- A seating area should be located at the midpoint of the south path so that “spectators” of the sports activities on the field can watch.

Stephen Diamond