

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

February 2017

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ANC News

NOTES FROM THE JAN. 10 MEETING

Neighborhood-Based Resiliency in Cambridge

“What does resiliency mean to you?” asked Cambridge City Councillor Craig Kelley, addressing members of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council. “The question is intentionally undefined. Rather than tell you what I think, or what the committee has learned, we want to hear what you think could help your community bounce back from adversity.”

Councillor Kelley attended the January 10th ANC meeting to introduce the Mayor’s Special Committee on Neighborhood-Based Resiliency (CNBR). Established in 2016, the committee is chaired by Councillor Kelley and includes fourteen members. Tasked with developing recommendations for the city, they meet on the last Tuesday of each month and are currently engaged in research. As stated on CNBR’s website, their mission is to: “give Cambridge a vision for addressing and adapting to future challenges in a way that utilizes the unique institutional and human resources of the City.”

Thus far, the committee has interviewed: Cambridge Community Development; Public Works; the Public Health Department; Police and Fire

Departments; the Water Department; the Salvation Army; Harvard Business School; Boston’s Chief Resilience Officer; Biogen; Boston Properties; the Cambridge Innovation Center; Harvard University; Lesley University; MIT; Mt. Auburn Hospital; and other local institutions. Among the neighborhood groups, the committee has met with Porter Square Neighborhood Association and North Cambridge Stabilization Committee, and they plan to meet with the East Cambridge Planning Team and Cambridgeport Neighborhood Association in the near future. Additionally, the committee visited WE ACT, an environmental justice group in Manhattan, NY, and Councillor Kelley hopes to attend a class on cyber security.

ANC members discussed a number of concepts around resilience, including:

- Neighborliness and willingness to help
- Encouraging residents to participate in community more consistently. At ANC, residents often don’t get involved unless there’s an emergency
- Contacting Emergency Services for help, and feeling that this is a safe option
- Neighborhood problems, like flooding, can encourage people to come together

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



FEBRUARY 14, 2017

Maud Morgan Arts
20A Sacramento Street

Agenda

- **Weigh in on a new walk signal at Mass. Ave. & Wendell St.**
- **ANC Communication Agreements review & discussion**

- Cultural competency
- Using all modes of communication to get the word out, and how the city disseminates information

Suggestions for tools or methods to cultivate resilience:

- Problem-solving via informal neighbor-to-neighbor relay
- Universal and affordable access to the Internet; public Wi-Fi
- 311 or a one-stop phone number where residents can find answers to a wide range of questions
- Ombudsmen
- On-call social workers
- School resource officers (who don't look or behave like police)
- Access to trainings like Mental Health First Aid (a national program that teaches skills for responding to the signs of mental illness and substance use)
- Learning de-escalation practices
- Training sessions on new city services, such as Commonwealth Connect, (an app where citizens can report problems with city infrastructure)

Conclusion & Next Steps

"I ask people two questions: what makes you nervous, what makes you feel safe?" stated Councillor Kelley. "I get a lot of different responses. [Here at the ANC] no one mentioned climate change but in North Cambridge, we talked a lot about flooding, electric capacity, and development overload. Personally, I think, as a city, we're going to be challenged by aging-in-place.

"[Broadly], we've also heard that people want good communication and they want to be able to pass on information. Also, they want to know their neighbors --not to be best friends, but to band together [to solve problems]."

Councillor Kelly thanked the Neighborhood Council for hosting this discussion and invited residents to contact him or CNBR with additional ideas.

Learn More

www.cambridgeresiliency.org
www.facebook.com/CambridgeResiliencyCommittee

Contact

Office of Councillor Craig A. Kelley
City Hall, 2nd Floor
795 Massachusetts Ave
Cambridge, MA 02139
ckelley@cambridgema.gov
(617) 349-4279

Executive Assistant to the Committee
Wilford O. Durbin
wdurbin@cambridgema.gov

YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL - LOOKING BACK AT 2016

In 2016, Agassiz Neighborhood Council provided a forum for discussion and action on numerous topics, including, but not limited to:

- Planning for the future of the neighborhood and Mass. Ave.
- Zoning updates for Mass. Ave. between Cambridge Common and Porter Square
- Sewer and stormwater separation
- New Harvard University building proposed for the corner of Mass. Ave. & Everett St. ("Bence Pharmacy" site)
- ANC summer community organizing
- Sacramento Field renovation discussions and community input

Our community is stronger when citizens take an active part. Attend a Council meeting, suggest topics for discussion, volunteer on a subcommittee --get involved!



Visit: bit.ly/agassiz-neighborhood-council



Community

NEW WALK SIGNAL AT MASS. AVE. & WENDELL ST.

Prepared by Astrid Dodds, resident

On about January 20th, 2017, the Cambridge Department of Traffic, Parking & Transportation changed the walk signal timing at the corner of Mass. Ave. & Wendell St. to “concurrent.” Prior to the 20th, the walk signal was on simultaneously for all four crosswalks – an “all-ways walk”. The new “concurrent” setting invites pedestrians to cross Mass. Ave. while the cars lined up on Wendell St. have a green light. Motor vehicles exiting Wendell to turn left toward Harvard Sq. now compete with pedestrians in the Mass. Ave. crosswalk.



The city views concurrent walk lights as pedestrian-friendly. To many of us, however, concurrent walk lights at Mass. Ave. and Wendell create an unacceptable level of conflict between pedestrians and cars.

How You Can Help

Do you have an opinion? Before you answer, please go to MA & Wendell and cross a few times –carefully! If possible, go twice at different times of day. Yes, this is an unscientific survey, but your perspective will be much appreciated.

Email feedback to: Astrid Dodds at astrid.dodds@earthlink.net.

Please include your name, street, approximate date and time of your observation, and any other relevant information (your name will not be shared.) Reply by Sunday, February 12, 2017.

21ST ANNUAL HIP HOP FESTIVAL

The annual Hip Hop Festival, a showcase of dance and music, features talented young performers from all over Cambridge. Held on stage at the Maria L. Baldwin School, this popular event has delighted audiences for over twenty years! .



- What:** 21st Annual Hip Hop Festival
- When:** Thursday, February 23, 2:00-3:00 PM
- Where:** Baldwin School Stage (basement level), 85 Oxford St.
- Tickets:** \$2 per person, \$5 per family; Agassiz Baldwin Children’s Program families free; after-school programs free but please call ahead

View photos from last year’s event: bit.ly/hip-hop-fest-photos-2016

NEW MAUD MORGAN ARTS WEBSITE

We’re excited to present Maud Morgan Arts’ new home on the web! Visitors can now easily search for a class, workshop or event; view our comprehensive calendar; view and purchase prints and one-of-a-kind art by our late namesake Maud Morgan; and more.



The website was generosity supported by Fay Chandler, and designed by Gill Fishman Associates. Bookmark maudmorganarts.org in your favorite browser.

Let us know what you think! Send feedback to Phoebe Sinclair, Community Liaison and Webmaster, at psinclair@agassiz.org, or call (617) 349-6287 x10.

Community Calendar

February 2017

Tuesday, February 14	7:30-9:00 PM	ANC Meeting (see page 1 for agenda) Maud Morgan Arts, 20A Sacramento St., 2D Studio All are welcome, please join us!
Wednesday, February 15	6:00-7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome
Monday, February 20		Presidents' Day holiday, ABC & MMA closed
Thursday, February 23	2:00-3:00 PM	21st Annual Hip Hop Festival for school-age children, Maria L. Baldwin School Stage, 85 Oxford St.

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Agassiz Neighborhood Council
20 Sacramento Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
P: (617) 349-6287 F: (617) 497-4388
www.agassiz.org, www.maudmorganarts.org

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