ANC Council Meeting Notes 1/24
Opens with Garfield St. Site

- JoAnn Hoffman, Vice Chair of the ANC opened the monthly meeting and introduced Len Charney, Director of Planning and Development at the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA). He was invited by the council to discuss development of the vacant lot at the corner of Garfield St. and Mass. Ave. Len opened with some information on the Cambridge Housing Authority, which was established in 1935, and currently manages 30 developments, 3,000 conventional units (elderly and family), 1,400 Section 8 units and approximately 100 state vouchers for private landlords.

Len showed us slides of a variety of housing developments in the city both large and small, some for elderly and extremely varied. There were several small, scattered sites. He mentioned the house on Hammond St. which many people remember was developed by CHA in the 80’s.

He told the council that there were separate managers, maintenance crews, and senate councils at each site. Each building is on a regular maintenance schedule. He said that CHA kept up with repairs and renovations on all their buildings which currently includes a $17 million renovation of Newtowne Court to be followed by a major renovation of Roosevelt Towers. CHA makes an effort to be both a good landlord and a good neighbor, and working with the neighborhood is a way to ensure that.

Charney gave us some history of the Garfield St. site. In 1978 the MBTA purchased the lot and razed the building for use in Red Line construction. In 1983 the CHA began to discuss and secure the parcel as affordable housing. The vent shaft was a problem in acquiring the property, and had to be kept accessible no matter what was built. The property was then owned by both the state and federal government.

Later the Urban Mass Transit Authority deemed the property as surplus, and the federal government turned it over to the state (MBTA) to be used specifically as affordable housing by the CHA. Currently there is an environmental study in progress called a 21E. The results of this should be available in the next 2-3 weeks, but no problems are anticipated. They are currently monitoring the water in wells on the site. CHA will not own this land until the environmental assessment is complete, and they expect to have site control this spring or summer.

The plans for the site have not changed which is for rental units of public housing. Original plans were for more units, but CHA expects to build 5-6 three bedroom units. There are certain restrictions related to the transfer of property which include that the land be for public use, not commercial development. CHA will honor easements to ensure passage to neighbor’s bulkhead, which had been a concern.

The first question from the floor was why the transfer of property had taken so long. Charney said he believed it was not a priority for the T. and communications between the Federal Transit Authority and the MBTA were very slow. Since the federal government relinquished the property, things have been going along much smoother.

Another resident wanted to know how the number of units would be determined between 5 and 8. Charney said an architect would develop a site plan which will study the site, the restrictions (i.e. vent shaft), the zoning and parking which will decide the number of units. The setback from the vents must be 25 feet, and this setback must be open space (no building) and it must provide easy access into the vent shafts.

Someone asked what population this development would serve and what would be the income level of the
Garfield St. Charney also promised to work with the neighborhood on these kinds of issues. One parking space per unit must also be included, and public transportation is available right on that corner.

There was concern about families being placed in that spot. How to ensure the safety of children on such a busy corner? It was noted by another neighbor that Sacramento Field could be accessed with a path with an easement from Harvard. Since Sacramento Field will soon be renovated for the new Agassiz School, this is another issue that can be considered by the committees and incorporated into those plans.

When the dangerous traffic was brought up, Charney said he was aware of the problems, and agreed that it must be considered in planning.

A question was asked about the height (three stories) parking (one space of surface parking for each unit will be provided) and how many people could live in each building. Charney said there were guidelines, and CHA determined placement on a case by case basis, but too many people would not be placed in one unit.

Some concern was voiced that 5-8 units with parking and set back could fit on a lot of that size. Charney offered to provide neighbors with tours of housing on similarly small lots and assured the council that with a good site plan, many creative architectural things could be done. It was asked if these would be detached or attached buildings, and Charney said that they had envisioned possibly town houses or row houses, but that is still unknown. Charney stressed that CHA saw this site as a real opportunity. Due to its high visibility on Mass. Ave., this is a chance for CHA to show what good housing they can create!

CHA hopes to engage an architect in the spring or summer. It was asked if neighborhood representatives could help select an architect, which Charney said was possible. He stressed the need to communicate with the neighborhood on a regular basis. It was agreed to develop a task force to meet on a regular basis with CHA and deal with the issues of concern to the neighborhood. Many people at the meeting volunteered to join this task force. [Others are welcome to contact the council office at 349-6287 to be placed on the list.]

Kathleen Manion, Chair of the ANC made several announcements. The next meeting will be held on 2/17 and our guests will include: Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services, John Pitkin, Chair of Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association, and Eileen Woodford, Director of Neighborhood Planning at Cambridge Community Development. They will discuss the various kinds of neighborhood associations and how issues of membership, conflict and structure are dealt with in other organizations around the City. Kathleen said that the ANC had been contacted by Happy Green from the Community Affairs Office at Harvard, who asked if she and Kathy Spiegelman, Director of Planning could attend the March meeting to discuss their long term planning process, which was acceptable to the council, and the meeting will be held on March 15 [more on that in the March Whistler.]
Neighborhood News

Fire at 3 Sacramento St.
The Harvard Co-op dorm located on Sacramento St. had a fire in January, which began from a candle. According to the Harvard Crimson, students have been relocated in other dorms. There was extensive damage, and work crews are already busy fixing the building.

Sewer December 18th
We had a call from a resident who had a flooding problem from a big rain storm on December 18th, prior to the snow. If you had any flooding from that storm, please call the council office. ANC keeps track of flooding incidents in the neighborhood including dates and streets.

Gulf Station Disciplined
Earlier this month the Gulf Station at the corner of Mass. Ave. and Garfield St. was brought to a disciplinary hearing at the License Commission for allowing patrons to self serve gas without a self serve license. It was of real concern to the ANC since last month we were assured by Gulf's parent company, Cumberland Farms, that no change in the station was anticipated.

Testimony was heard, and a decision will be made after The Whistler goes to press. An update will be available in March.

Whistler Available in Neighborhood Places

The Whistler is now available at many neighborhood locations including:
- Healthworks
- Brooks Drugs
- Avon Associates
- Reddog Antiques
- Oxford St. Realty
- Oxford Spa
- Central Barbershop
- Hair Connection
- Hunneman Realty

City Wide News

Urban Orchards

The ANC was contacted by the Urban Orchards program of Jamaica Plain. They are looking for open space to plant orchards. Earth Works helps organizations maintain the orchards. Can you think of an open space they could use? Call the council at 349-6287.

Shovelling Sidewalks is the Law.

Call 349-6830 anytime to report snowy or icy neighborhood sidewalks. Be prepared to give an accurate street address. Although the taped message asks for the caller’s name, sidewalk violations can be reported anonymously. The DPW issues warning tickets to the property owner for first violations, $25 tickets for violations after that. City Ordinance 12.16.110 requires the owner of property bordering a sidewalk to clear snow within 12 hrs. after snow stops falling in the daytime or before 1 p.m. after an evening snowfall. Ice must be removed or covered with sand/salt within 6 hrs. after ice forms. If you need help finding someone to shovel or sand for you, call the ANC at 349-6287.

Agassiz School Construction

for updates or to report problems,
call the HOT LINE 497-4388

Kathleen turned the ANC meeting over to Janet Rustow, Chair of the Oversight Committee, which will now deal with the New Agassiz School construction.

Janet had contacted Deputy City Manager Rich Rossi and Agassiz School architect George Metzger of HMFH for an update. Bids have been received for the construction. The house at 26 Sacramento St. will be moved soon. Sue Bergin gave a report from the Building Committee, which will meet again on February 2. The delay in the move of the house at 26 Sacramento was due to the passing of papers between Harvard and Cambridge, which was completed in December just prior to the bad weather. There were 200 contractors who requested documents, but due to the requirements of the job, fewer bids were submitted to the city. A contractor should be chosen in February, and the council will have an update on 2/17. It was requested that Sue ask the Building Committee when the redesign of the entrance to Sacramento Field would take place and will Agassiz have a representative in negotiations between the City and Harvard.

Janet Rustow advised the council that Astrid Dodds has been working toward a Community-School History Committee to seek and inventory memorabilia from the neighborhood to be on display in the new Agassiz School. Astrid has sent a letter to Agassiz School Principal, Eva Paddock to enlist the support of the school. Astrid said that Kate Judd, teacher at Agassiz and Lynda Lytle, Agassiz neighbor and past Agassiz parent was also interested. She asked others to join this committee and help explore the many possibilities. She is also looking for someone to saw a slice of the big maple tree which was located at the corner of Sacramento and Oxford, then sand and polyurethane it for posterity. [Anyone interested in this committee or anyone who has Agassiz related memorabilia for display can call the council office at 349-6287.]

Rustow asked if there were any comments on the demolition, and if the hot line seemed to be a good way of dealing with individual problems as they came up. It was agreed that it seemed to work for the demolition. There will be problems, and it is our job to develop the best process to deal with them. In that spirit it was agreed to invite Rich Rossi, the clerk of the works for Agassiz School construction, and George Metzger to the March 15 meeting to discuss construction. If any of them are unavailable on that date, a special meeting will be set.

Janet and Astrid have developed a list of people who regularly attended the Agassiz Oversight Committee meetings, and they will all be contacted if any issues come up that require immediate attention.
Cultural Happenings

Gospel Jubilee
The Agassiz School will host a Gospel Jubilee at 4 p.m. February 26 in their temporary quarters on 15 Webster Ave. Union Square, Somerville. For more information on this event call the school at 349-6525.

Sunday Afternoon Concerts at North Prospect Church
For its monthly Sunday afternoon concert series at 4:30 p.m. on February 6th, Music at North-Prospect presents one of the Boston area's foremost classical guitarists, Richard Schilling. The three pieces in the 40-minute program will be: Bach's Partita in B minor, Gizli Regondi's Variations, Op. 22, and Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Handel by Albert Harris. There is no admission charge, but donations are requested. The 4:30 concert will be followed by a reception. North-Prospect Church is located next to Porter Exchange on Massachusetts Avenue, and there is a handicap entrance on Roseland St. For more information call 547-1448.

The March concert will take place on Sunday the 6th with members of the Eos Chamber Ensemble performing classical music.

Coyote Tales
Come and see a short production of Coyote Tales on Friday February 11 at 4:30 p.m. in Welch Auditorium, Lesley College. It is danced by members of the Agassiz Afterschool Program in collaboration with the Cambridge Performance Project. The dance class is taught by Viki Solomon. This is a good opportunity for parents and children to see if this dance class is the one for them. For more information call Jody Garber at 349-6287.

Community School News

February Begins Term II Afterschool Part time Activities
After school programs for grades K-8 will begin a second term this month. There are many exciting activities planned including: illustration classes, greeting card mini classes, drama, jewelry making, computer games, tae kwon do, story and poetry writing, cooking, comedy club, sports, book club, comic book club, sewing, science wizardry, dance, baking, chess club and much more!

For a brochure or additional information call Jody Garber, Program Director at 349-6287.

Print Gocco Valentine's Style
Create your own valentine cards or notes.
Cornley Skinner will teach a course in Print Gocco, a color printing process from Japan.
Students (grades 4-8) will create original artwork, apply inks, and print up to 50 cards or notes. Call Jody Garber at 349-6287 for more information.

Color TV needed
The Afterschool Activities Program needs a color TV with current RCA plugs for use with video production and watching movies. This is a tax deductible contribution. Call Mike after 1 p.m. at 349-6287.

Oxford Street Realty
Located in the heart of the Agassiz district.

Experience and Professional Service
Established reputation of integrity

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Excellent pre-qualified client base.
Dedicated and knowledgeable agents working in your best interests.
Landlords, call us now!

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Call (617) 354-3535 for your free consultation.

Your Full Service Real Estate Company
35 Sacramento Street, Cambridge, MA 02138
Information on Next Meeting

Join the ANC
and the Long Range Planning Committee on
February 17
7:30 in the
Community Room at 1651 Mass. Ave.
AGENDA:
WHAT SHOULD BE THE FUTURE DIRECTION OF THE
AGASSIZ NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL?

We will begin to:
• Identify problems with the current Council structure
• Discover if there are precedents for solutions in other neighborhoods
• Discuss ways to apply those solutions to our problems

To help the neighborhood in this endeavor
the Long Range Planning Committee has invited:
* Jill Herold, Cambridge Assistant City Manager for Human Services
* John Pitkin, Chair, Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association
* Eileen Woodford, Director of Neighborhood Planning,
Cambridge Community Development
to speak at the meeting. Our guests have wide experience working with Cambridge neighborhood associations. Using their experiences in Cambridge, they will address many of the issues that concern members of neighborhood:

How are other neighborhood associations structured?
Who can be a member, who can vote?
How are policy decisions made?
How does a neighborhood decide to take a stand on a controversial issue?
How do they represent the widest constituency possible?

There are many other issues to consider when assessing the effectiveness of our neighborhood association including: our neighborhood newsletter, The Whistler, as an effective tool in keeping neighbors informed and connected; our monthly council meetings as a grassroots forum for discussion and action on neighborhood issues; and other subcommittees on neighborhood issues; our ability to refer neighbors to information and services in the City; access to space for neighborhood meetings and social events; programs that enhance the quality of life in the neighborhood. If you have issues you would like to add to our list, please call Terry Delancey at the council office at 349-6287.

Jill Herold has worked for 25 years in the Cambridge human service community. Her City department oversees staffing and provides major funding for the twelve other neighborhood councils in Cambridge. Jill is well versed in issues of service delivery and advocacy for neighborhoods, and she has consulted with and facilitated for many Cambridge neighborhood agencies and associations on issues of governance and structure.

John Pitkin ran for Cambridge City Council in the last election. He would like to see representatives of neighborhood organizations meet with the City Manager on a regular basis. As the Chairperson for the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association, John has had first hand experience with divisive issues (rent control) and development issues (Cambridge Hospital), and he was a founding member of the Harvard-Joint Neighborhood Committee.

Eileen Woodford has worked as the Director of Neighborhood Planning for almost five years. She oversees the neighborhood planning initiatives undertaken by the Community Development Department. She has been the staff person for the East Cambridge Stabilization Committee and has conducted neighborhood studies in Riverside and Neighborhood Nine (now underway). She has also worked on open space planning, Growth Policy, and the Central Square revitalization effort.
Lesley College News

Agassiz Residents Invited to Use Lesley Library

When the Lesley-Agassiz Resources Committee was first formed approximately fifteen years ago, one of its first projects was to establish a relationship between the Agassiz Community and the Ludeke Library at Lesley. The library maintains an open-door policy which welcomes Agassiz neighbors to visit. People are invited to utilize the collections while in the library and to avail themselves of the services offered by the reference librarians. In addition, check out privileges have been made available to Agassiz School teachers and Agassiz Afterschool staff.

You might be interested in taking a look at two recently added periodicals with a multicultural appeal: Multicultural Review is published quarterly. Each issue reviews multicultural materials - both print and non print - for all ages. This journal includes informative articles on specific topics of multiculturalism. This periodical can be found in the Main Library Periodicals Collection on the first floor of the library.

Skilling Stones: a Multi-Ethnic Children's Forum is a multilingual, environmentally aware magazine which aims to be a forum for children of diverse backgrounds to share their ideas, experiences and cultures. This periodical can be found in the Kruseg Center Periodicals Collection on the second floor of the library.

The Ludeke Library welcomes Agassiz residents to visit!

Lesley Events Calendar

FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH AT LESLEY

2/1 Film: "Identifiable Qualities: Toni Morrison" 4 p.m. in the Multipurpose Room.

2/3 Presentation: Michael Williams; "History of the African American Family" Noon in the Multipurpose Room.


2/10 Presentation: Cortez Collins, Orator. African American Literature Noon in the Multipurpose Room.

2/15 Martin Luther King Celebration 4 p.m. Multipurpose Room.

Learn Sign Language

8 Week Course - Starting February 22
When: Tuesdays 6-7 p.m. and 7-8 p.m.
Where: 35 Sacramento St.
Cost: $75 per person.
Please contact Ami White, ASL/ESL Teacher at 438-5569.

Ads and Announcements

Survivors of Sexual Abuse Groups

Marcie Miller, M. Ed. runs a variety of workshops, discussion groups, and therapeutic exercise classes for the survivors of sexual abuse and their partners. Some are one day or evening meetings, others are series of classes or meetings.

For more information call Marcie at 497-5283

Babysitter Available

Lesley sophomore majoring in Special Education seeks baby-sitting jobs. Call Adena at 497-9570.

Want to Go to Sweden in June?

Swedish family whose daughter is a CRLS senior seeks furnished Cambridge apt. for the month of June. Can be in exchange for their 4 BR townhouse (4-Audi) 20 minutes north of Stockholm. For more information, call Nancy Woods 661-7533.

Seniors News

REAL ESTATE TAX BREAKS FOR THE ELDERLY

The City of Cambridge Assessing Department is getting ready for the Fall real estate tax bills. State Law provides a variety of tax exemptions for certain qualifying elderly persons. These exemptions can result in deductions of $75 to $1,000 from real estate tax bills.

There are income and/or assets limits for each of these exemptions. Assets include savings accounts, stocks and bonds, and real estate other than a one to three family house or condominium. The table below shows the most commonly granted elderly exemptions and gives the basic qualification information.

In calculating an individual’s or a married couple’s income for purposes of qualifying for an elderly exemption, certain types of income are not fully counted. If you have the slightest suspicion you may be eligible for an elderly tax break, call the Assessing Department at 369-4343 for more detailed information.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exemption</th>
<th>Basic Qualification</th>
<th>Income Limit</th>
<th>Asset Limit</th>
<th>Exemption Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>1TD</td>
<td>Age 70 or older or Surviving Spouse</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>$40,000</td>
<td>$75 - $350</td>
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<td>4LC</td>
<td>Age 60 or older single</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$38,000</td>
<td>$500 - $1,000</td>
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<tr>
<td>4LC</td>
<td>Age 60 or older married</td>
<td>$13,000</td>
<td>$38,000</td>
<td>$500 - $1,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2L</td>
<td>Veterans with 10% Disability or Purple Heart</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>None</td>
<td>$175 - $350</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are additional exemptions available for veterans with more severe service related disability. Call the Assessing Office for more information.

As soon as you get your Fall Real Estate Tax Bill from the City of Cambridge, either call the Assessing Department or go to the Assessors’ offices on the second floor of City Hall to find out if you qualify and to file an application if you do qualify.

By state law, applications for elderly exemptions must be filed within three months of the fall tax bill date.
### WHAT THE AGASSIZ NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL CAN DO FOR YOU

The Agassiz Neighborhood Council is a private non-profit corporation whose mission is to improve and promote the quality of life in the Agassiz Community. To that end, we provide many services and programs. This month we would like to explain one service: Resource and Referral.

Your neighborhood council archives neighborhood information, including copies of the Whistler from 1971. There are files on issues the neighborhood has discussed over the past ten years; many files go back farther. There are reference books like a street address directory, the zoning code, current reports and maps (including a full set of blueprints for the new Agassiz School) which may be used in the council office.

If your needs are simpler, we still can help. You may not know what department to call for help, and the council office can direct you to most Cambridge services and programs, whether they are run by the City or not. If you can’t get help from city departments or city councillors, bring your problems to the monthly ANC meeting where committees are born.

Below is a Clip and Save of Important Names and Numbers in Cambridge:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DEPARTMENT</th>
<th>HEAD</th>
<th>PHONE #</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Affirmative Action</td>
<td>William Gomes</td>
<td>4332</td>
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<tr>
<td>Animal Commission</td>
<td>Mark McCabe</td>
<td>4376</td>
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<tr>
<td>Arts Council</td>
<td>Palace Lombardi</td>
<td>4380</td>
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<tr>
<td>Assessor’s Office</td>
<td>Sally Powers</td>
<td>4343</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Clerk</td>
<td>Margaret Drury</td>
<td>4260</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Council Office</td>
<td>Sandra Albano</td>
<td>4280</td>
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<tr>
<td>City Manager</td>
<td>Robert Healy</td>
<td>4300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Deputy City Manager</td>
<td>Richard Rossi</td>
<td>4300</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cable Television</td>
<td>Ned Casey</td>
<td>4296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Community Development</td>
<td>Michael Rosenberg</td>
<td>4600</td>
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<tr>
<td>Conservation Commission</td>
<td>Alex Strysky</td>
<td>4680</td>
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<tr>
<td>Consumer Council</td>
<td>Paul Schlaer</td>
<td>6150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Election Commission</td>
<td>Teresa Neighbors</td>
<td>4361</td>
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<tr>
<td>Environmental Program</td>
<td>Elizabeth Epstein</td>
<td>4604</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fire Chief</td>
<td>Kevin Fitzgerald</td>
<td>4900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Disabilities Commission</td>
<td>Gail Enman</td>
<td>4692</td>
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<td>Health/Hospitals</td>
<td>Melvin Chalfen</td>
<td>1000</td>
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<td>Historical Commission</td>
<td>Charles Sullivan</td>
<td>4683</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Rights Commission</td>
<td>Margot Kosberg</td>
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<tr>
<td>Human Services</td>
<td>Jill Herold</td>
<td>6200</td>
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<tr>
<td>Inspectional Services</td>
<td>Robert Bernsani</td>
<td>6100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Law Department</td>
<td>Russell Higley</td>
<td>4121</td>
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<tr>
<td>License Commission</td>
<td>Alex Rodriguez</td>
<td>6140</td>
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<tr>
<td>Library (Main Branch)</td>
<td>Susan Flannery</td>
<td>4040</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mayor’s Office</td>
<td>Ken Reeves</td>
<td>4321</td>
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<tr>
<td>Peace Commission</td>
<td>Cathy Hoffman</td>
<td>4694</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### CITY OF CAMBRIDGE IMPORTANT NAMES AND NUMBERS

- Police Commissioner: Perry Anderson, 3300
- Police Review Board: Malvina Monteiro, 6155
- Public Works: Ralph Dunphy, 4800
- Rent Control: Terry Morris, 6161
- School Department: Mary Lou McGrath, 6400
- Traffic: George Teso, 4700
- Veterans: William Cabral, 4760
- Water: Nancy Barnes, 4770
- Women’s Commission: Nancy Ryan, 4697

### SCHOOL COMMITTEE MEMBERS 349-5520

- Henrietta Davis
- Alfred Fantini
- David Maher
- Joseph Grassi
- E. Denise Simmons
- Robin Harris

### CITY COUNCIL MEMBERS 349-4280

- Ken Reeves, Mayor
- Sheila Russell, Vice Mayor
- Francis Ducheay
- Jonathan Myers
- Michael Sullivan
- Timothy Toomey, Jr.
- William Walsh
- Kathy Born
- Katherine Triantifilou
February 1994
Community Calendar

February 6, Sunday 4:30 p.m. Music at North Prospect Church
1603 Mass. Ave. (at Roseland St.)

February 10, Thursday  
Agassiz School half day

February 11, Friday 4:30 p.m. Coyote Tales Dance Recital
Welch Auditorium, Lesley College

February 17, Thursday 7:30 p.m. Agassiz Neighborhood Council Meeting
Community Room 1651 Mass. Ave. (at Wendell St.)
(See page 5 for information.)

February 21, Monday  
President’s Day/First Day Agassiz School Vacation

February 26, Saturday 4:00 p.m. Gospel Jubilee Agassiz School
15 Webster Ave., Union Square, Somerville

March 6, Sunday 4:30 p.m. Music at North Prospect Church
1603 Mass. Ave. (at Roseland St.)

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.

February 1994
The Whistler
Agassiz Neighborhood Council
20 Sacramento St.
Cambridge, MA 02138
349-6287

The Whistler is printed on 100% recycled and recyclable paper.