Council Meeting Notes

Susan Sills, neighborhood representative for the Agassiz School Renovations Task Force, presented the committee's report at the December 19 ANC meeting. Each section of this report was written separately by the member most qualified to address that section. The report should be finalized by January 10, when it will be submitted to the Superintendent of Schools for review. The Superintendent will then submit it to the School Committee for review, and the School Committee will then submit it to City Manager Bob Healy for action.

A summary of the report's sections is presented below:

* A city wide assessment of school needs indicates that "One or more additional school building are needed immediately, others later." It also states that "Two of the schools, the Agassiz and the Haggerty, should either be replaced or radically renovated and enlarged immediately. They are educationally obsolete, and may be unsafe."

* The educational inadequacy and condition of the building highlighting the substandard size of the classrooms, lack of room for meetings, lunch, sports, community events, special instruction and specialists, poor placement of rooms especially in the basement, inadequate plumbing, heating and other systems.

* Neighborhood Needs require that the school be sited in the neighborhood and in scale with it. Any renovation plan should be respectful of neighborhood residents, their amenities and parking. It should allow space for community school programs and neighborhood events.

* Educational Program provides two educational visions. The overview authored by the school department and the specific school vision authored by the Agassiz community. The process which established program alternatives and recommendations is documented, and School Building Assistance Bureau standards are enumerated.

* Preservation Issues include its rich history and memorable staff (Marla Baldwin) and students (e.g. cummings), the petition for Landmark status, and the preservation of trees and specific architectural elements of the interior and exterior.

* Five options for building include: 1) renovate existing building and build an addition on existing site, 2) renovate existing building and build an addition on expanded site which includes adjacent property, 3) build new building on current site, 4) move to a new site within the neighborhood, and 5) build an annex building and renovate/build on existing site.

The council agreed to disseminate the report as soon as it was available, then hold a large neighborhood meeting at the Agassiz School to review and discuss the Report, the process and the options being considered.

The task force members include: John Hermonson, Susan Sills, Camilla Wankarer and Fred Levy—neighborhood representatives; Fran Foley, Assistant Superintendent of Schools; Kate Conway, Acting Agassiz Principal; Terry DeLancey, Agassiz Neighborhood Council; Larry Weinstein, Cambridge School Committee; Jim Conry, Executive Director for Finances for the Cambridge School Department; a representative from HMFH Architects; Phil Brown, Eric Chester, Dan Meltzer, and Bill Simmers—
parents of Agassiz students; and Charles Sullivan of the Cambridge Historical Society. This report was presented in draft form, and the report should be available January 10. Due to the length of the report, copies will be sent by request. The appendices, which run over 60 pages will be available for review in the neighborhood council office. To request a copy of the report, call the council at 349-6287. The meeting to discuss the report and neighborhood recommendations will be held on Thursday January 23, 7:30 P.M. in Baldwin Hall, Agassiz School.

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Agassiz School Principal Appointment
Superintendent of Schools Mary Lou McGrath has recommended Eva Paddock as principal of the Agassiz School. Ms. Paddock, who lives in Cambridge, taught in the Cambridge Public Schools for 15 years, most recently at the Agassiz School, before taking a position in Topsfield, where she has been a principal since 1986.

When the recommendation was made in school committee, some teachers and parents spoke in opposition to the appointment, favoring the current Acting Principal, Kate Conway, who has won their support since taking over the Agassiz School in September.

The School Committee voted to hold the meeting which will address the recommendation at Agassiz School. This meeting is tentatively scheduled for January 14. The school committee is expected to vote on the recommendation at that meeting.

Neighborhood News

Please Clean Snow and Ice from Sidewalks

SNOW REMOVAL: Owners of private property are obligated by municipal law to shovel any sidewalk adjoining their property within 12 hours of the end of a snowfall.

ICE REMOVAL: Owners of private property are also required by municipal law to make sidewalks adjoining their property "safe and convenient by removing the ice therefrom or by keeping the same covered with sand or some other suitable substance" within 6 hours of the formation of ice.

In an effort to increase enforcement of these laws, the City Council recently made floating these laws a civil rather than a criminal offense. It also directed the Dept. of Public Works to diligently enforce them.

First offence—Warning Ticket
Second offense—$25 fine

To report violations, call: 349-4830. You should ask for Daniel Evans who is easiest to reach between 8 A.M. and 2 P.M.

It's time to make the Agassiz neighborhood safe for pedestrians of all ages. You can help by reporting unsafe sidewalks. The DPW has assured us that it will respond vigorously to complaints - including mailing tickets to absentee owners. If you experience difficulty in reporting violations or see no evidence of DPW follow-up or owner compliance, please let the Agassiz Traffic Committee know by calling 354-6553. Vigorous enforcement of these sidewalk clearance laws is new terrain for the DPW; it may need our help to be effective.

Crimes

Attempted Homicide (bicyclist hit by motor vehicle)...1
Auto Theft...........................................1
Housebreaks........................................2
Larceny Bike......................................1
Larceny Building.................................1
Larceny from Motor Vehicle....................5
Commercial Robbery............................1
Street Robbery.................................2
Shoplifting.........................................1
Trespassing.......................................1
Indecent Exposure..............................1
Malicious Destruction of Property............6

Arrests

Attempted Homicide................................1
Indecent Exposure...............................1
Trespassing......................................1

Tribute to Kay Cox

Dear Community Member,
A number of us would like to acknowledge Kay Cox's many years of service to the students and families of Agassiz School. If you would like to make a contribution to a tribute or have a suggestion as to what it might be, please contact Terry DeLancey at the Community Center, 349-6287.

M. Goldberg
City Wide News and Information

Agassiz School Building Update

-The Agassiz Renovations Task Force met on 12/11 to review and edit the Report as it was described in the November issue of The Whistler.
-An outline of the Report was presented for discussion at the December 19 Council Meeting. The final version of the report should be ready by January 10, and it will be available by calling the council office at 349-6287.
-A General Meeting will be held on Thursday January 23 at 7:30 P.M. at the Agassiz School to review and discuss the Report, the process and the options being considered.
[For a summary of the Report contents, see page one, Council Meeting Notes.]

Report on University-Community Relations

The 42 page "Report of the Mayor's Committee on University-Community Relationships," also known as the Town-Gown Committee Report, was released on December 9, 1991. Copies of the report are available to read at the community center, or to receive your own copy, call the Mayor's office at 349-4321.

The following are excerpts from that report:
"Cambridge is a strong and dynamic city. Its boundaries encompass a rich and diverse mixture of people, commercial activities and organizational life. Institutions of higher education are a vital part of this Cambridge community. Harvard and MIT are two of the leading research universities in the world. Lesley College, Cambridge College and the Episcopal Divinity School are distinguished institutions in their fields. Many of Cambridge's unique qualities spring in large part from the influence and activities of these institutions. In return, Cambridge's attributes as an urban community contribute significantly to the appeal and success of these institutions as centers of scholarly activity. In short, the relationships between the universities and community is, in many respects, mutually beneficial.

On the other hand, it is also clear that these relationships have elements which can lead to significant conflicts. When universities prosper and grow, the community often experiences changes in the nature of its population, increasing competition for housing and higher housing costs, reductions in the inventory of taxable property, denser development, more traffic and changes in the number and mix of businesses and jobs. When changes of this nature are of particular concern, for whatever reason, relationships between educational institutions and their communities can become strained.

The winter of 1990-91 was an appropriate time to review these relationships in Cambridge. The task was made urgent by public concerns about the long term effects of the universities’ expanding ownership and development of taxable real estate in Cambridge. These concerns centered on the potential loss of tax revenues if these properties were to be converted to academic use and removed from the tax rolls at some point.

Harvard Contacted by Neighborhood Reps

Six neighborhood associations: Harvard Square Defense Fund, Neighborhood Ten Association, Neighborhood Nine Association, Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association, Agassiz Neighborhood Council, and Cambridge Citizens for Liveable Neighborhoods have sent a letter to the newly installed president of Harvard University, Neil Rudenstine, asking him to discuss Harvard's role in the community with them. They explain that:

"At times Harvard as been the good neighbor, planning buildings which improve, opposing buildings which degrade and showing sensitivity to needs for open space and other urban values. At other times Harvard has been the greedy developer, both in its commercial and its academic properties seeking the most intensive possible use with little sensitivity to the effects of size on Harvard's neighbors."

They further state "If you do not take a position at the beginning of your tenure as president, the numerous, often conflicting constituencies with the University will result in a neutral or negative role for Harvard. We would like to work with you and the University for positive results . . ."

The letter closes with a request that President Rudenstine meet with the representatives to discuss the issues.

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point in the future. Spurred by these concerns and other events, including a new Payment In Lieu of Taxes (PILOT) agreement between the city and Harvard, several zoning conflicts and the beginning of several new university-community discussions, the Mayor asked the City Council to authorize the appointment of a Task Force on University Community Relations. This group was to examine relations between institutions of higher education and the community and to seek ways to enhance the positive aspects of those relationships while reducing the impacts of growth and change that were negative.

... our mission was to “review all key issues regarding the relationship between the city and the large institutions” and to “forge the basis for new, more productive partnerships between the City and its large institutions of the future.”

At our first meeting, we created an outline of topics for discussion. During our early sessions we spent one or more meetings discussing the following issues:

- Land use, growth, development and housing
- Fiscal issues
- The application of knowledge in the community
- Opportunities for community residents at the universities
- Economic development
- Communications

It is our conclusion that substantial benefits are to be gained from nurturing and reinforcing harmonious university-community relationships. These benefits accrue to all community members. Several general concepts have influenced our thinking about how these relationships can best be maintained and enhanced. It is important to share them before describing some of our more specific agreements and recommendations.

1. The granting of tax exempt status to universities is based on the commitment of these institutions to continue to fulfill their mission by educating leadership and increasing knowledge for the benefit of the community... A unique element of the “town-gown” linkage is that these benefits of the universities’ activities flow freely across local, state and national boundaries, while the impacts of institutional presence are felt almost exclusively in the local community. An important goal... must therefore be to achieve and maintain a mutually acceptable balance so that local impacts are balanced by local benefits.

2. Both the university and the other sectors of the community have many different elements. Universities include students, faculty, staff, buildings, particular schools within the institutions, presidents and boards of trustees. The community includes individuals, neighborhood organizations, city-wide groups, businesses, churches, and educational institutions, as well as the city’s government, which includes public agencies, the City Manager, the City Council, the School Committee and the Mayor. The number of constituents, the degree of overlap among these groups and the wide differences of opinion within the various groups make the maintenance of harmonious relationships a challenging task.

3. We believe that overall university-community relationships will benefit from improved communication within each sector of the community. In our judgement, the more neighborhood, other advocacy groups and public agencies are able to coordinate their ideas, information and positions; and the more the various schools within the universities and their central administrations are able to coordinate their policies and actions, the more fruitful the interactions between the educational institutions and others in the community are likely to be. Because city agencies have staff, resources and authority that can be helpful to neighborhood groups and to the process in general, we believe they should play an active role in supporting and facilitating these efforts.

4. Successful initiatives in university-community relationships share several essential ingredients: candid and timely communications of intentions and concerns by all parties; involvement of advocates for the varying groups and interests in the community; and mutual acceptance by all parties that each has a stake in the community and its future.

The report which follows is divided into four chapters, each containing commentary and recommendations. These chapters deal with growth and development, fiscal issues, the universities as educators, and the universities as economic entities. The recommendations in each section cover specific collaborative efforts that we think have significance for the strengthening of university-community relationships. For the most part, these recommendations rely on the initiative of existing public agencies or the universities, themselves, for something to be accomplished... While we are confident that such initiatives will prosper, and others will grow, there are a number of issues which may continue to arise and some may not be covered by these specific proposals.
Accordingly, we recommend that an Advisory Committee on University-Community Relations be appointed to carry out the following responsibilities:

1. To foster balanced, harmonious, productive relations between the institutions of higher education and other members of the community in all areas of interaction.

2. To brainstorm together about broad community concerns and problems and possible new joint efforts between the city and the universities to address these issues, and to make recommendations to the city and the universities regarding steps that can be taken to advance these proposals.

3. To maintain a record of agreements and commitments between the universities and the community.

4. To enhance the understanding of the community at large about the relationships between educational institutions and the city...

(The following are the recommendations for action from all four chapters of the report. Not included here are the principals which were recommended in each section for the City of Cambridge to adopt.)

University and Community Growth and Change

1. Use the Growth Policy Document process to undertake joint discussions about university growth.

[The City of Cambridge is currently studying the City's existing and potential growth policies. They intend to complete a Growth Policy Document in 1992 which will address city-wide and neighborhood growth and development issues, and will include recommendations regarding land use, the intensity of development, traffic and parking, open space planning, development of particular areas and parcels in the city, and other planning issues.]

2. Universities should create plans for the future and update them annually.

3. There should be an annual joint review of university and community needs and plans.

4. The city should continue to support and help coordinate neighborhood planning efforts.

5. A university data base should be jointly developed.

6. Existing collaborative efforts with neighborhoods should be continued.

University and Community Fiscal Health

1. The City Manager's office should continue to have primary authority in this area.

2. There should be a voluntary joint policy on removing properties from the tax rolls.

3. There should be a PILOT (payment in lieu of taxes) type agreements with all educational institutions in the City.

4. The city and the universities should consider advocating for state and federal subsidies for communities that host universities.

Universities as Educators

1. The colleges and universities should collaborate with each other in services to Cambridge.

2. Joint plans should be developed for specific educational programs.

3. Central communications points should be established for coordinating educational efforts.

4. An evaluation system should be established for these efforts.

5. A program should be developed for connecting Cambridge's youth with the city's institutions for higher learning.

Universities as Economic Enterprises and Neighbors

1. University efforts to provide coordinated technical assistance should be continued and expanded.

2. The city and the universities should explore the possibilities of expanded community access to university facilities.

3. Professional requirements should be established for exchanging information about resources and needs.

4. Efforts should be made to increase public awareness of potentially useful university resources.

DPW Announcements

Large appliance pickup will cost $15

The Department of Public Works (DPW) has advised us that beginning January 1, 1992, your large appliances cannot be disposed in Massachusetts landfills. Large appliances will be recycled. The hazardous substances contained within the appliances will first be removed and properly handled. The metal will be recycled to make other useful products.

A special sticker needs to be put on each large appliance. The appliance then must be placed on the curb on a date specified by the DPW. In the same location you would place your other rubbish. Stickers can be purchased at the DPW, 147 Hampshire St. between 8:30-5 P.M. Monday -Friday for $15 per appliance. At the time you purchase the sticker, your item will be scheduled for pickup. For more information call the DPW at 349-4800.

Barriers to Save Parking Spaces Illegal

We have received a letter from Commissioner Healy of the DPW, and the following is an excerpt:
Now that winter is almost upon us, I would like to remind all Cambridge residents that it is unlawful to reserve curb parking by setting up barriers, old chairs, trash barrels, or any other place holder on the street or sidewalk. This practice is against City Ordinances which prohibit obstruction and littering of public ways.

It is very difficult to keep the streets clear of snow and ice in Cambridge due to the density of the City, its narrow streets, traffic volume and lack of off street parking. Placing barriers in the street to reserve a parking space severely hinders the DPW's ability to keep the streets safe for vehicular and pedestrian traffic.

Therefore, it will continue to be the practice of the DPW to pick up these barriers and dispose of them on a daily basis. The city will not take responsibility for these barriers being disposed of after they are removed.

### Council Programs

All Agassiz Afterschool Activity Programs will begin a new term on January 9 Monday. If you are interested in afterschool programs for children ages 5-14, call the Community School Office at 349-6287.

### Ads and Announcements

#### Parenting Course for Single Mothers

Beginning in late January, the Cambridge Youth Guidance Center will offer a Parenting Course for single mothers. The eight session course focuses on the themes of communication, self-esteem and family rules.

One of the Guidance Center's most popular programs, the Parenting Course offers education, support, and hopefully, a few moments of relief.

The Guidance Center has offered this program for over fifteen years, but this is the first time the course will be geared specifically toward single mothers. According to Tania Erlig, who will co-lead the course with Joyce Colman, "Parenting is a difficult, often thankless job. When you're a single mother, it's even tougher. This course will give mothers the opportunity to take some time out in an environment which understands the challenges they face and teaches them concrete skills."

The course will be offered at the Cambridge Youth Guidance Center, 5 Sacramento St., on Tuesdays, from 10 AM to Noon. Fees are charged according to a sliding scale, and childcare is available for $3 per session. Preregistration is required. Call 354-2275 and ask for Joyce Colman or Tania Erlig.

#### Early Childhood Community Forum January 9

These forums, held monthly, are for parents, teachers, early childhood program providers, administrators and community workers. The forums meet some of the Office for Children training hours required for staff, and Cambridge Public School teachers and support staff may earn inservice credit.

This month’s offering is:

**Working Collaboratively to Overcome Frustrations:**

- **Parents as Partners**
- **Building Support Among the Classroom Team**

Nancy St. Clair and Betty Allen will be the speakers.

The forum will take place on January 9 at the King School, 100 Putnam Ave. from 6-8 PM. Admission is free. Bring a snack or sandwich, hot and cold drinks are available. For more information call 349-6448.

#### Cambridge College to Visit Agassiz January 20

**Cambridge College-An Institution for Lifelong Learning**

Cambridge College has been part of the Cambridge Community for many years. It has grown and changed to meet the needs of a diverse adult population eager for graduate level education. At present there are over one thousand adults currently attending. The programs currently being offered are as diverse as those attending the college. In addition of our our new Weekend College program we have a Masters in Management and a Master's in Education. Under the Master's in Education students pursue study in counseling psychology, education, integrated studies and organizational and professional studies.

We believe we have a unique and challenging program to offer. For all the students that enroll in Cambridge college, 82-85% finished their program of study. With a retention rate that high we must be doing something right! We would like you to have an opportunity to get to know us better. On Monday, January 20, Stephen G. Wright, from the Cambridge College admissions staff will be at the Agassiz Community Center from 6-8 PM. He will speak on what the college can offer and will answer questions you may have about any of the programs currently available.

For more information please feel free to contact Mr. Wright at 492-5108 x 220.
The Whistler January 1992

Agassiz Scholarship Fund
Honors Roll

The Agassiz Neighborhood Council would like to particularly thank those of you who have believed in our work enough to support us at a time when you are asked by so many to give.

Anonymous
Averyoff Restaurant
Deborah Belle
and Stephen Piper
Janet Burns
Cristina E. Callan
Judith Cassarella
Central Burger Shop
Mary Connolly
Jon Cummings
Mary Donaldson
Ginna Donovan
Miriam Z. Eust
Jeanne Feng
and Robert Skelton
Juquan Gao
Ruth Goodman
Jane C. Gottschalk
Harry and Clarie Groden
Walter Gundy
and Jennifer Morris
Harvard University

1991-1992 Fund Drive

Kripalu Yoga Classes/Therapy Winter 1992
All classes and sessions are held at 25 Carver St. by Danielle Levi Alvares for every age and condition. For more information and fees call 354-2113.

Starting Monday January 6
The Yoga Experience 6:7-15 PM A 12 week session.

Starting Tuesday January 7
The Yoga Experience 12:30-1:45 PM and 6:7-15 PM.
Two 12 week sessions.

Starting Wednesday January 8
The Phoenix Rising Yoga Therapy 6–8 PM FREE SESSION and 11 more sessions.

Starting Thursday January 9
The Yoga Experience 6:30-9:45 AM and 6:7-15 PM.
Two 12 week sessions.

Lesley College News

Letters for dorm letters in January
Lesley College has advised us that abutters to all Lesley College dorms should be receiving a letter of introduction from the Resident Assistant. The letters will provide a person for neighbors to contact in the dorm in case of any issues or problems that do not need any serious intervention.

-7-

This is a policy that was followed in the past, but has somehow fallen out of use. It is the ANC's belief that this direct contact will help us all get to know each other better and consequently make us all better neighbors. Lesley College has also agreed to institutionalize the practice of introductions to the neighbors. When orienting new resident assistants, they will advise them to send a simple letter of introduction each year to all abutting neighbors.

Scholarship Benefit for Single Mothers

As the Threshold Program celebrates its 10th Anniversary, it proudly honors a decade of invaluable service by Assistant Director Janet Senzer with the establishment of the Janet Senzer Threshold Scholarship Fund. Janet, who is on medical leave, is fighting a brave battle against lung cancer. A single parent, Janet has asked that the Fund be used to support needy Threshold students of single parent families.

On December 31, Guy Van Duser and Billy Novick will bring their wonderful mix of jazz and folk music to a benefit concert. All members of the community are invited to attend. Tickets for the 7:30 PM concert in Welch Auditorium are $10 and $25. For more information, call 668-9600 x2290

Cultural Happenings

Family Arts Opens January 19
An exhibit of artwork "FAMILY ARTS" made by parents and young children working together will open on Sunday January 19 from 3-5 PM in the Sacramento St. Gallery at 20 Sacramento St. The work includes masks, drawings, paintings, sculptures, pottery, games, dolls, fishing lures, costumes, and more. The show will run through January 31, and the gallery will be open weekdays from 9 AM-5PM.

Playwrights Platform Upcoming Events
The Agassiz Neighborhood Council hosts the Playwright Platform on Sunday evenings at 7:30 PM in the Agassiz Community Center at 20 Sacramento St. Members present semi staged readings of new plays and works-in-progress by playwrights from the New England area.

After each reading refreshments are served, and the audience is cordially invited to comment on the strengths and weaknesses of the play in a moderated discussion.

Admission is free and all are welcome.

January 12 Scenes Evening
(both scenes deal with hospitals and being ill)
"Nectar Guides" by Susan Koff
"The Ninth" by Peggy Baseman

January 19
"The Proposal" by Thomas Fogarty - a retelling of the story of Abraham and Isaac

February 2 A Fun Evening of Dracula Scenes
"Dracula 1990" by Skip Maloney
"Lucy's Attire" by Janet Kenney
### January Calendar 1992

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<td>January 6 Monday</td>
<td>School Reopens</td>
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<td>January 12 Sunday</td>
<td>Playwrights Platform</td>
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<td>Agassiz Community Center 20 Sacramento St</td>
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<tr>
<td>January 14 Tuesday</td>
<td>Agassiz School Release Day-School Closes 12:45 PM</td>
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<td>January 19 Sunday</td>
<td>Family Art Opening</td>
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<td>January 20 Monday</td>
<td>Cambridge College Information Night</td>
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<td>January 20 Monday</td>
<td>Martin Luther King Holiday No School</td>
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<td>January 23 Thursday</td>
<td>Agassiz Neighborhood Council Meeting</td>
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(See page one for Meeting Agenda)

REMINDER JANUARY IS THE TIME TO APPLY FOR CAMBRIDGE PUBLIC SCHOOL KINDERGARTEN. IF YOU HAVE A CHILD THAT WILL BE 4 YEARS OF AGE ON OR BEFORE MARCH 31, 1992, CALL 349-6550 TO REGISTER FOR KINDERGARTEN FALL 1992.

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### January 1992

**The Whistler**

Agassiz Neighborhood Council

20 Sacramento St.

Cambridge, MA 02138 349-6287

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