ANC Meeting Notes

Notes from December 9

Chairperson Kathleen Manion opened the 12/9 meeting at 7:30 p.m. and turned it over to Joel Bard, who had organized the meeting between Lesley College President Margaret McKenna and neighborhood representatives this Fall. At that meeting, President McKenna agreed to address the neighborhood, and this evening she came with Alan Fein, Vice President for Finance and Administration; Nancy Galvin, Acting Dean of Students; Stephen Crawford, new Communications Director; David Erlandson, Head of Building and Grounds; and Sam Turner, Liaison to the Agassiz neighborhood in the President's Office.

President McKenna said that Lesley wanted to be a good neighbor. She mentioned Oxford Garage and said that it was an internal problem. She said that contrary to rumors, there is no long range facilities plan for Lesley in the Agassiz neighborhood. McKenna said that this problem cannot always be solved to every person's satisfaction, but that Lesley wants to hear about problems.

Neighbors brought up many chronic day to day problems that had not been resolved and in many cases had not been listened to by Lesley. They included general lack of notice about Lesley activity, dorms that disrupted sleep and general quality of life on a regular basis, construction disruption like start times as early as 5:30 a.m. in the summer, and noisy workers at early hours on a daily basis. Neighbors said that they had contacted Lesley representatives over and over again. Calls were generally not returned. One person said that although she was sometimes left unsatisfied, she was always contacted.

For some of the complaints, suggestions were discussed including one contact at Lesley for all concerns, more Lesley information in The Whistler, penalties for construction companies who begin prior to contract starting times and outdoor carts with less noisy wheels.

Clearly these issues could not all be resolved in the short time available at this meeting. A smaller group of interested neighbors volunteered to get together with Lesley representatives to plan a process that will work for Lesley and the neighborhood. This group will formulate a process that can address problems and promote cooperation on neighborhood issues of mutual concern. Interested persons should contact the council office at 349-6287. [The first meeting has been set up for January 6, Thursday at 5 p.m. at 20 Sacramento St. Call 349-6287 for more information.]

There was time after the discussion for neighbors with particular concerns to discuss them in the next room with the Lesley representatives on hand.

The application to the Planning Board for an 18 space parking lot located at 3-5 Linnaean St. (corner of Mass. Ave.) was discussed. A waiver of the North Cambridge Overlay District regulations was necessary to permit the lot. A vote was taken, and it was agreed to oppose any changes in the Overlay District.

We decided last month to invite Cambridge Housing Authority to discuss the Garfield Street site at a council meeting prior to any work beginning. Terry DeLancey reported that Len Charney was able to come on January 24, Monday. (See Next Council Meeting Information and Neighborhood News.)

Steve Kosslyn, of the Long Range Planning Committee, requested council time for an informational meeting on the topic: "What is the most effective form of organization that will allow a community to respond effectively to issues?" Eileen Woodford of Community Development, had offered to help the long range planning committee, and it was suggested that she could help prepare a panel.
CHAD was recently granted a license by the "T" enabling a qualified engineering firm to access the site on behalf of the CHAD to complete a 21E Environmental Site Assessment Survey. During December engineers gathered samples of soil (some drilling was required), and installed monitoring devices to test ground water flow and conditions. This survey is standard and no environmental hazards or contamination is suspected.

The land should be transferred from the MBTA to CHAD soon, and Len Charney from CHAD's planning department has agreed to come to the 1/24 council meeting to discuss the site, their plans so far and to hear neighborhood concerns and suggestions. Come at 7:30 to the Community Room at 1651 Mass. Ave. (corner of Wendell) on Monday January 24.

Hold the date Thursday February 17 at 7:30 p.m. at the Community Room, 1651 Mass. Ave. The Long Range Planning Committee has put together a meeting on "What Makes a Good Neighborhood Organization" which will include Assistant City Manager for Human Services Jill Herold, Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association Chair John Pitkin and Community Development Planner, Eileen Woodford. Look for a more information on this informational meeting.

Shoveling Sidewalks is the Law.
Call 349-4830 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 pm 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.

Traffic/Transportation
Information submitted by Astrid Dodds

Everett/Oxford Traffic Signal: The underground work is being done in December before the ground freezes, but final installation of the signals must await delivery of the aluminum poles.

Everett/Oxford Right Turn on Red: The Neighborhood Council voted on 12/9 to ask Traffic & Parking to make the entire intersection NO Turn on Red out of deference to pedestrians. But T&P Deputy Dir. Lauren Preston insists that state and federal requirements for NTOR are so stringent that he must begin with RTOR and see what happens. If there are problems, he will reconsider. A 1983 study showed that during an average weekday morning rush hour, 115 cars turn from Everett right onto Oxford.
Agassiz School News

History of the New Agassiz School

For those of you who have recently become interested in the Agassiz School project, it is helpful to know that members of the neighborhood have been involved in the planning for this construction for several years. You can call the hot line for a quick up-date on the process, or leave a message to advise us of a situation. If you would like to discuss a concern, there are some very well informed residents willing to call you back and explain a specific area of the project in detail. Better yet, come to the meetings and get involved. Agassiz School construction discussion is a regular part of the ANC meeting agenda for as long as construction continues.

SCHOOL BUILDING UPDATE

Agassiz School Comes down

Amid the dust and noise, the Old Agassiz School came down beginning on Friday, December 17 through Saturday and on Monday. Everyone was grateful for the rain which helped to keep the dust down. At Whistler press time the debris removal was still in progress, and it is scheduled for completion by 12/31.

The City Manager’s Office was on top of the project. Although there were problems, Deputy City Manager Rich Rossi responded to the problems immediately and contacted the neighborhood council about them in person. The contractor agreed to stop demolition when fire men were late with hoses on Monday. The inspector agreed to test soil samples at the lot and the city manager’s office agreed to sweep the lot when the debris is completely removed.

If you have concerns about the demolition, be sure to show up at the next council meeting (see p. 1) so they can be discussed. Construction on the new building is scheduled to begin March 1, 1994.

Hot Line Log

12/11 Call regarding safety after tree limb hit resident’s car. Rich Rossi, Deputy City Manager, agreed to have police detail for remainder of demolition work. City contacted resident to pay for damage.

12/13 Call regarding lack of specific date for demolition. Mr. Rossi agreed to give 24 hr notice prior to demolition.

12/13 Call regarding concern that snowing and sanding continue on a regular basis during winter around Agassiz School. Letter requesting that was sent to Mr. Rossi, and he agreed to see to the snowing.

12/15 Call with concern about safety during demolition. ANC was advised that police, fire, inspectional services and school department representatives would be present. There would be dust and noise, so residents were advised that it would be best to avoid the area if they were worried about these issues.

12/17 Call to remind council that video was agreed to be taken. Ned Casey from School Department did videotape demolition at 11 a.m. (Sue Bergin has taken many still photos before and after demolition as have many other residents.)

12/20 Two people called with concerns over dust and fear of pollutants in that dust. Mr. Nicolato of Inspectional Services agreed to test soil and Mr. Rossi agreed to sweep lot lot after demolition. Another call to say that firemen were not hoising when demolition continued on Monday. Contractor agreed to stop until firemen came, and firemen were soon on site with hoses.

12/21 Call with concern over start time of construction at 7:30 a.m., and a request that it begin later. The contract specifies a start time of 7:30 a.m. and that time is part of the demolition contract.

Late December update from Rich Rossi

General bids on school construction will be opened in three weeks. The city now owns the land at 26 Sacramento (transferred from Harvard), and the house there will be moving soon. Agassiz School construction is scheduled to begin March 1.

Sacramento Field Planning

The council office contacted Deputy City Manager Rich Rossi, who advised us that discussion on Sacramento Field would not begin until after the first of the year. If you are interested in meetings, please call the council at 349-6287, and we will put your name on the Sacramento Field mailing list.

Preliminary discussions were begun last spring, and issues of concern to residents included lack of open space during construction, recreational uses of the field, access to the field, and general design concerns. The field is not part of the Agassiz School contract, but a separate contract will be developed, and at this time work is anticipated to be done between Fall 94 and Fall 95.
Traffic/Transportation continued from p. 2

while 2.58 pedestrians per minute cross Everett, so it’s hard to imagine that this won’t be another case of RTOR defeating the purpose of a crosswalk and walk light.

Lesley “Loading Zone”: We have asked Traffic & Parking to better demarcate the Lesley loading zone on Oxford at Everett with two new signs and to add to the length of the posted loading zone in an effort to discourage double-parking by delivery trucks.

Reconfiguration of the top of Oxford: A final 5 pm rush-hour test of the modified-peninsula-with-island alternative will be run soon, weather permitting. There is still hope that this joint Cambridge-Somerville project will be built by mid-1994.

Crosswalk painting: Zebra-stripping Wendell at Mass. Ave. and Oxford at Prentiss are still on the fall crosswalk painting schedule despite the onset of winter. We would like more crosswalks zebra-striped (i.e., Garfield at Mass. Ave.); if you would, too, talk to your city councilor about increasing the city budget for crosswalk painting.

Posting the SW corner of Oxford/Wendell “No Standing” 20’ back from the corner: Despite stepped-up ticketing by Traffic & Parking, vehicles are parked on Oxford 2-10’ from the corner nearly continuously. Asked again to post Oxford “No Standing” 20’ from the corner, T&P has again demurred — citing the cost of signs, the precedent set by using signs to reinforce already-existing law, and continued hope for the efficacy of ticketing. T&P has indicated its willingness to resort to a sign “It ticketing doesn’t work,” so we will continue amass the evidence in ever-greater detail.

Abicyclist was killed at the intersection of Somerville Ave. & Beacon St. — just over the bridge late one night in Sept. Reports in the Somerville Journal failed to note whether the bicyclist had the white light in front visible from 500’ required by state law or whether anyone involved ran a red light. Drivers fearful of collision with bicyclists should understand that enforcement of state bicycle law is impossible until the state law is amended to require licensing of bicyclists and registration of bicycles. Other states do it; we can, too. Call State Rep Alvin Thompson (722-2783), City Councillor/State Rep Tim Toomey (722-2220), or State Senator Mike Barrett (722-1280) to let them know what you think.

The Big THANKS Dept. Thanks to Somerville DPW Commissioner Bob Trahan who will once again clear snow from the Beacon St. bridge sidewalks this winter; to T Commuter Rail for shovelling the sidewalk between the bridge and Porter Station; and to Somerville for adding a crosswalk on Beacon at Sacramento across from the Star Market.

If you have traffic/transportation concerns bring them to the business portion of any Neighborhood Council meeting (next one is 1/24) or call Traffic Committee Chair David Valenstein (354-2065) or Astrid Dodds (354-6553). One neighborhood motorist has reported driver confusion about which signal applies on Somerville Ave. eastbound, just before the Beacon St. bridge. If you’ve witnessed or experienced this confusion, please call one of us.

Pedestrians, Unite! A city-wide pedestrian advisory group is now being formed under the aegis of municipal Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator Cara Seideman of the Cambridge Environmental Department. One of the group’s goals will be to influence Cambridge transportation policy so Cambridge becomes a more walkable city. We will start by compiling an inventory of the areas in which Cambridge is inhospitable to people on foot — T riders, school children, the elderly, and everyone in between. If you would like to participate in Cambridge pedestrian advisory group meetings, or if you would just like to be on the mailing list, call Astrid Dodds at 354-6553, or drop her a note at 73 Wendell St., Cambridge, MA 02138.

Our Police Commissioner Perry Anderson has "Call In" Tuesday and Thursday. You get to talk to Perry Anderson in person, and you don’t have to leave your name. Call 5-7 p.m. Tuesday and Thursday, and take advantage of this excellent opportunity! Call 349-3377.
City News & Information

Linnaean St. Parking Voted Down

The ANC learned of the plans to develop an 18 space parking lot at the corner of Linnaean St. and Mass. Ave., the evening prior to the hearing of the Planning Board on December 7. The request was for a special permit to waive the requirement of the North Mass. Ave. Overlay District that this lot be devoted to green space. A second meeting of the Planning Board was held on December 21, and the waiver was unanimously voted down.

Recycle Bulletins

Recycle Your Christmas Tree and Junk Mail

There will be a special Christmas tree collection from January 3-14. Just put your tree out on your regular trash day and a truck will pick it up the next business day.

All trees collected will be turned into gardening mulch, which is available to the public from January 4-22 at the Recycling Drop-Off Center.

You may also drop off phone books and junk mail. The Recycling Drop-Off Center is located behind the DPW, 147 Hampshire St. Hours are Tuesday and Thursday 4:30-6:30 p.m., Saturdays 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.

There will be special hours for junk mail and phone book drop off through March 31 at:
Cambridge Main Branch Library, 449 Broadway
Monday through Friday 9 a.m.-9 p.m.
Saturday 9 a.m.-5 p.m. Sunday 1 p.m.-5 p.m.
North Cambridge Branch Library, 70 Rindge Ave.
Monday through Thursday 8:30 a.m.-8 p.m.
Wednesday and Friday 8:30 a.m.-5:30 p.m.
Call 349-4800 for more information.

Community School News

Term Two for part-time Agassiz Afterschool registration will soon be mailed to participants for a start date of the first week in February. Exciting after school programs are available for school age children, and newcomers are welcome to join us in Term Two. We have many exciting activities including a Sports Specialist, Agassiz Afterschool Players Drama troupe, dance class in collaboration with Cambridge Performance Project, cooking, creative writing, book club, computer lab and chess, and other enjoyable recreational activities. For information call Jody Garber at 349-6287.

Cultural Happenings

School Age Dance

Aspiring dancers of all ability levels are welcome to join a Friday Agassiz class (grades 2-5) with teacher Vicki Solomon. Classes are held at Lesley College as part of the Agassiz Afterschool in collaboration with the Cambridge Performance Project. Come to the informal production with your child that will take place in Lesley's Welch Auditorium and see for yourself. The show will begin at 4:45 p.m. on Friday January 21. Call Jody Garber to enroll or for further information at 349-6287.

The Cambridge Performance Project holds many other exciting classes in theater and dance at other Cambridge Schools including; Graham and Parks, Maynard, Morse, Tobin and Cambridgeport Schools on other days of the week. Call Judy Bibbins at 349-6235.

AAP Performs at Lesley

The Agassiz Afterschool Players presented Four Fabulous Folktales: The Wave (from Japan). The Big Wide-Mouthed Toad Frog (from North America). The Magic Tree (from the Congo), and Baba Yaga (from Russia) on December 14 in Lesley College's Welch Auditorium. The show was directed by Amy Freedman, and it was a most enjoyable event.

The players will begin a new term in February, and another play will be presented in the spring. The commitment is two afternoons a week, and the only prerequisite is enthusiasm. Call Jody Garber at 349-6287 for more information.

Gospel Event January 28

There will be an exciting show featuring several gospel choirs 7:30 p.m. on Friday January 28 in the Fitzgerald Auditorium at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School, 459 Broadway. Cost is $7, (students, seniors and advance sales $5). For more information or reservations call Roz Shoy at 349-6230.

"Life Every Voice" is an annual gospel event produced by the Multicultural Committee of the Cambridge Department of Human Services.
Lesley College News

Middle School Dance for Agassiz

Lesley is pleased to announce that the first Middle Grades Agassiz School Dance of the year was held at Lesley College in early December! Traditionally, the Agassiz dances have occurred in Baldwin Hall, but now that the students are in temporary quarters, they found themselves short of social space. The only large room available in the school's rental facility is already reserved for Bingo! Therefore, Lesley welcomed 57 sixth-eighth grade students to our campus. Mrs. Paddock reported that a wonderful time was had by all.

Agassiz is Invited

Some Lesley events of interest to the Agassiz neighborhood are listed below. All events are free. For more information or directions call Erik Rosengren in the President's Office, 349-8509.

JANUARY EVENTS

1/11  “The Foundation for Children’s Books” presents Lois Lowry, author of A Summer to Die, Count the Stars and The Giver. Lesley had allotted ten tickets to Agassiz Community members first come, first served. Call Brigitte Grossman 926-8190 to reserve.

1/14  Lecture: Bob Stake; “Using case studies to do evaluations of educational programs” 9:30 - 11:30 a.m. Porter Exchange Building, Room 305.

1/19  Musical Performance/Discussion: “Women of Note Series” 7-8 p.m. Alumni Hall

1/28  Jill Titus Memorial Lecture - Helen Landgarten: “A Commitment to self and others: Artist/Art Therapist” 7:30 p.m. Alumni Hall.

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.

More About the ANC

Our Neighborhood Association

The Agassiz Neighborhood is committed 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 Monthly Council Meetings.

Council meetings are scheduled each month (July and August as needed). All community members are welcome, and agendas are driven by the participants. This is an opportunity to learn about your community, meet your neighbors and express your opinions.

The upcoming council meeting is always advertised on the front page of this newsletter in the lower left hand corner. The usual agenda has two parts: 1) general business and, 2) one specific community issue. (This fall the council agreed to reserve one hour each month for issues concerning the demolition and construction of the new Agassiz School which has become the final agenda item.)

The meeting is chaired by the Chairperson of the ANC Board. Often portions of the meeting will be turned over to subcommittee chairs or active residents. During general business you may hear committee reports and follow up reports from the last meeting. General information is exchanged including newsworthy information from neighbors and calls or correspondence to the council office. There is an opportunity to bring up issues ideas for future agendas. Sometimes special meetings are planned. Notes from the meeting will always be found as the first item in The Whistler.

The planned portion of the meeting includes a specific community issue. Often a speaker is invited to provide information and receive neighborhood feedback. Sometimes there will be opposing points of view inside the neighborhood, and more than one speaker will be invited.

Council meetings and special meetings are advertised in may ways. Notice will always be found in The Whistler, but you may see it listed in the Cambridge Chronicle, the

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The Leffert Family
for an Apple computer
Bette Noble
for a Macintosh computer
Mary Nagatomi
for an IBM compatible computer
All for use in our computer lab!
Boston Globe or Cambridge cable TV bulletin boards. If you have attended a meeting related to the issue at hand previously, you may receive a flyer, and sometimes flyers are distributed door to door.

The May council meeting is the ANC Annual Meeting at which elections are held for the Board of Directors. This usually is a short business meeting with a social following.

If you are unable to attend a meeting and would like additional information, call the council office (349-6287) for more information.

Ads and Announcements

Home Wanted

His name is Jan Henning Assmus. He will be 18 years old next summer. He is completing his studies at the gymnasium (which is the German equivalent of an academic high school). He lives in a town near Mainz, Germany with his mother and sister, and he speaks English well.

His mother is my friend. She has visited Cambridge and stayed at my house. I have been to their house.

Jan-Henning is an intelligent, very well mannered young man and very mature. He would like to spend a month in New England during the summer, possibly as early as June 15, and he must be back in Germany around August 6. He would like to live in a family with a son around his own age, and he would like to do things with the family. If the son would like to visit Germany, the son would be welcome at Jan-Hennings house (an “au-pair” arrangement).

For more information call Joan Lorentz collect at 813 360-7345 and say concerning Jan-Henning.

Trees & Shrubs for Your Community

is an excellent 25-page booklet featuring the selection, placement, and care of trees and shrubs in urban areas. Com Electric has made copies available to interested Agassiz residents; if you’d like one, call the ANC office at 349-6287.

Thank again to Rosie’s Bar and Grill for the use of their function room by the Agassiz After-school Players this fall.

OXFORD STREET REALTY
35 SACRAMENTO STREET, CAMBRIDGE, MA 02138
354-3535
Rentals • Property Management

AT LONG LAST
Oxford Street Realty is pleased to announce to its neighbors that two custom made display windows have been installed and are now available to the community. Call 354-3535 or drop in for details.

STAN STRICKLAND AND ASCENSION
ARE PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THE RELEASE OF THEIR DEBUT RECORDING

SEND CHECK OR MONEY ORDER PAYABLE TO:
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CDS: $15.75 TAPES: $10.50 T-SHIRTS: $16
INCLUDES SALES TAX PLUS $2 POSTAGE FOR EACH ITEM FOR MORE INFORMATION CALL (617) 491-8491

SNOW SHOVELERS WANTED
FOR Homes in the AGASSIZ neighborhood.
Call 349-6287. Earn some money, get some exercise and do a good deed!