Community News

Neighborhood Council Notes

The following is a report from the notes of the 5/10 neighborhood council meeting:

Peter Sturges representing the Committee to Stop Proposition 1-2-3 addressed the council. This issue of Proposition 1-2-3 will be taken up by the council this fall before elections, but anyone interested in the Committee to Stop Proposition 1-2-3 should call 491-STOP.

Kathy Spiegelman, Director, Harvard University Planning Group, addressed the council on Harvard’s acquisition of the Quality Inn on Mass. Ave. See below for a letter from Ms. Spiegelman explaining Harvard’s point of view, and an article by Joel Bard, explaining the neighborhood’s concerns.

Nominating Committee

The slate for the 1989-90 Officers for the Executive Board of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council has been named by the Nominating Committee:

Chairperson: Karen Vaters
Vice Chairperson: Ken Basler
Secretary: Paul Bicilunas
Treasurer: To Be Announced

next council meeting...

June Council Meeting
Wednesday June 14th at 7:30 p.m.
Agassiz Neighborhood Council Annual Meeting
20 Sacramento St. (call 498-9056 for Information)

4:30 p.m. Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) will update us on community residence at 71 Hammond St.
Elections

8:00 p.m. Celebrate the year with a party!
Dessert with music by Ed Wells on the keyboard
Don’t come alone, bring a neighbor!

Letter from Harvard U. Planning Group
May 30, 1989
Dear Neighbors,

On May 10, 1989, I attended a meeting of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council to notify neighborhood residents of Harvard’s acquisition of the Quality Inn property on Massachusetts Avenue. The university purchased the land and has entered into an agreement to purchase the hotel operating lease. The current operators will continue to operate the Quality Inn through December 31, 1990, at which time the operation will be Harvard’s responsibility.

As I stated at the Neighborhood Council meeting, the University is committed to working with all of you in an open and informed process to discuss the schedule and alternatives for future use of the site. Because of its proximity to Harvard Law School, one of the likely uses is to meet the Law School’s housing demands.

I intend to set up a series of meetings with representatives from the Planning Office, the Law School, and the neighborhood to discuss this site in relation to a request from members of the Agassiz Council that Harvard institute broader planning discussions that include the university’s planning policies and real estate practices as they impact your neighborhood.

Sincerely,
Kathy A. Spiegelman (Director Harvard U. Planning Group)

Summer Vacation

Traditionally the Agassiz Neighborhood Council does not publish The Whistler or conduct monthly neighborhood meeting in July or August. Staff take vacations, and plan for the upcoming year.

If an important issue comes up, please contact the office, it will be staffed all summer, and messages are reviewed regularly.

OUTBACK CAMP is in session from July 3 – August 25.

The next Whistler will be out in September. The deadline is August 18th.
Harvard Buys Quality Inn by Joel Bard

At the May 10 meeting of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council, Harvard's Director of Planning, Kathy Spiegelman, described Harvard's plan to buy the Quality Inn at the corner of Wendell St. and Mass. Ave. The university owns the land and the hotel lease and is now negotiating to buy the building.

Does this sound like the game of monopoly? Many residents expressed grave concern at Harvard's new appetite for commercial buildings on Mass. Ave. The Quality Inn purchase is the second Harvard acquisition within a year. They have also purchased the commercial block at Everett St. (Bence's Pharmacy, 4 Aces Pizza, etc.).

While Ms. Spiegelman had asked to attend the meeting to supply information, answer questions and identify concerns, many residents were primarily interested in telling Harvard to stop purchasing the neighborhood. In response to questions, Ms. Spiegelman said Harvard had no specific development master plan but the university evaluated buildings as they became available. In the case of the Quality Inn, however, Harvard sought the property even though it was not for sale.

As for the future of the building, she said it would probably continue to be a Quality Inn through 1990. It is thereafter likely to become a law school dorm, although no decisions have been made.

Some of the residents comments were:
- the pool is a valuable resource to neighborhood residents who pay to swim there in summer.
- the hotel has provided convenient and reasonable priced accommodations for friends and family of Agassiz residents.
- the City tax rolls will lose yet another property due to Harvard's non taxing status.
- the commercial conveniences of Mass. Ave. are threatened by these Harvard acquisitions.
- the building is unattractive and could be greatly improved.

In light of the overriding concern, it was asked if a delegation of Agassiz residents could meet with the President of Harvard to express concern and displeasure over this emerging pattern.

(Anyone interested in participating on a committee to deal with these issues should call the council office at 498-9056).

THANKS from Dept. of Human Services

The Preteen Program Committee would like to extend their gratitude to the parents and youth who answered our preteen program interest survey. If you are interested in final results please contact Laurel Shepard at 498-9072.

Other Neighborhood Updates

Porter Square Development Update

There will be a joint Agassiz / Neighborhood 9 meeting on June 8th at 7:30 p.m. at the Peabody School (44 Linnean St. use Walker St. entrance). Developers from Porter Exchange (CDIA) will present updated plans for deck parking behind Porter Exchange and development on Mt. Vernon Street lots.

These plans are the latest updates plans from CDIA, and it is important that our neighborhood be heard from. Please try and make it. Call 498-9056 for more information.

Fresh Pond Cinemas to Reopen

Neighborhood 9 has formed a committee to discuss the cinemas that will be renovated and reopened sometime in the future in the Fresh Pond Shopping Center. If you are interested in being a part of that committee, please contact the council office, and we can put you in touch with a Neighborhood 9 Association contact.

Rep Alvin Thompson held office hours

On Wednesday May 24th between 6-7 p.m., State Representative Alvin Thompson held office hours at the Agassiz Community Center, 20 Sacramento St. Various neighborhood issues were addressed including the MBTA owned vacant lot on the corner of Garfield St. and Mass. Ave. Representative Thompson agreed to get back to the neighborhood after speaking to the MBTA and arrange a meeting. People interested should call the council office.

There was waste. He told us he is in favor of waiting for a comprehensive tax package, rather than increasing various taxes one at a time. If you have opinions on these subjects, call Representative Thompson at the State House.

Representative Thompson also asked those in attendance for their opinions on new taxes. Most people were in favor of increasing taxes to keep current services, but cutting where

Voter Registration

On Thursday May 25 between 5:30-8:30 p.m., the Ward 7 Democratic Committee held a voter registration night at the Agassiz School. They were able to register 25 new voters.

This summer you can register to vote at the Porter Square T stop on Wednesdays between 3:45-6:45 p.m. and at the Porter Square Shopping Center in front of Underground Camera on Saturdays between 10:45 a.m. and 1:45 p.m. through September 30 (no registration on July 1 or September 2).
**Holiday Spa Settles Racial Discrimination Case**

(The following was taken from a report to the City Manager from the Cambridge Consumers' Council)

The Holiday Health Spa settled the lawsuit filed in February by the Civil Rights Division of the U.S. Justice Department which contained allegations that nationwide Holiday Health was engaging in racially discriminatory practices in its offering of membership.

The federal Consent Order provides for significant changes in the advertising, sales and management practices of U.S. Health, Inc. (corporate owner of Holiday Health Spa) in its 46 present or soon to be opened nationwide clubs. It also provides for relief to possible victims of the alleged racial discrimination that started this probe.

Highlights of the Consent Order include:

- Advertising must contain specific notice of a non-discriminatory policy;
- Relief will be given to individual victims of this policy and company must publicly promote this offer;
- Signs must be posted in all Spa locations containing a non-discrimination statement;
- All present and future spa employees must receive specific instructions about their duties under Title II of the 1964 Civil Rights Act, the Equal Credit Opportunity Act and this Consent Order.

The Justice Department will be given immediate access to the company's records to help identify possible persons who might be entitled to relief;

- The submission of detailed records, the advertising requirements, employee training and monitoring by the U.S. Justice Department is to continue for a period of four years.

Even though there is no admission or denial of any of the many allegations raised by this Civil Rights lawsuit, the willingness of the U.S. Health, Inc. officials to reach this extensive settlement quickly is significant. The Investigation of the Cambridge Consumers' Council can be given partial credit for such a quick settlement, as we provided a blank application to the Justice Department (obtained during our probe), with the evidence that the word "BASIC" on the form was actually a racial/ethnic code to identify Blacks, Asians, Spanish, Indians, and Causasians.

Anyone who is interested in obtaining the federal Consent Order or for more information, contact Paul Schiavo at the Cambridge Consumers' Council 499-6150.

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**FOR SENIORS**

**Brown Bag Medication Program**

Bring in your medication (prescriptions and over-the-counter) in a bag to be reviewed individually by a registered pharmacist.

- Bring your vitamins, minerals, and nutritional supplements in another bag to be reviewed by a registered dietitian.
- North Cambridge Senior Center
- Tuesday June 6 12:30 until 2 p.m.
- Lunch at noon

**Community School Staffing for the Fall**

The Community School is pleased to announce that two new full time staff positions have been added. Anne Mahoney has been named Site Director at the Agassiz School and Dawn Greene will be returning to our programs as Site Director at the Community Center. They will direct and co-ordinate all programs at their respective sites. For the summer they will co direct Outback Camp.

We have hired Terry Mann as Head Teacher for the preschool and Marjorie Cox as Preschool Teacher. They come to us highly recommended and with a total of more than 20 years experience in preschool.

We are sorry to loose Emily Winston, who has been a teacher in our Afterschool Activities program for 5 years. We will miss her sense of style, but wish her well at Joie De Vivre, where she will be working full time!

**CAMBRIDGE RECYCLES !**

Second Saturday of every month 9 a.m. - 2 p.m.
Newspapers- tied or in paper bags-no magazines
Glass - lids and caps removed-separate clear from color
Two drop off centers:
1). BFI Transfer Station off McGrath-O'Brien Highway
2). Sherman St. behind St. Peter's Field
SPONSORED BY: City of Cambridge and the Cambridge Recycling Committee
To volunteer or for more information call 498-9078
Special Cultural Programs

Lotus awards $1,000 for neighborhood mural

The Agassiz Neighborhood Council was awarded $1,000 by Lotus Development Corp. to create a mural on the wall of the newly renovated Alden Tot Lot. The mural, originally scheduled to be erected this summer, will be designed by the neighborhood as a celebration of our cultural diversity and executed by neighborhood artist Wen-Ti Tsen. Now set for the fall, this was to be the final activity in a year long project to study Agassiz history.

Because of the interest in oral history and the study of Maria Baldwin, and due to the dedication of Baldwin Hall scheduled for next year, the project will continue into next year.

We will need additional dollars, so the council will be fundraising in the neighborhood. If you wish to support the mural project, you can send a tax deductible contribution to the Agassiz Neighborhood Council (we are a 501(c)(3) tax exempt non profit corporation), 20 Sacramento St. Cambridge, MA 02138 or call 498-9056 for more information.

Remember the old neighborhood?

On Tuesday June 6th from 2-5 p.m., 30 long time Agassiz residents will meet in Alumni Hall at Lesley College to tell their stories and share their memories of our neighborhood. Their conversations will be audio and videotaped and later developed into a document about neighborhood life in the not too distant past. Those residents who are unable to join us will be interviewed at home.

This is the first activity of an oral history project sponsored by the Agassiz Neighborhood Council to gather neighborhood history. In the fall we hope to involve Agassiz School students through the Lifelines project and gather more perspectives on our history through interviewing other residents.

If you would like to participate or for more information call the council office at 498-9056.

Cambridge Performance Project Spring Concert

Come and see the spring concert of the Cambridge Performance Project on June 8th at 7:30 p.m. It will be held in the Kennedy School, 158 Spring St., East Cambridge. Tickets are $3, $1.50 for children and seniors. For more information call 498-9072.

Carol E. Hantman in Annual Festival

The Playwright's Platform Annual Festival of One Acts will present excerpts from "Smitty's Blues", written by neighborhood playwright Carol E. Hantman. Performances will be held at 8 p.m. on Thursday June 15th, Friday June 23rd, and Saturday July 1st at the Performance Place, 277 Broadway, Somerville. "Smitty's Blues" will be presented with two other one act plays: "Paper Whites" by George Sauer and "Stump Legs" by Klayt Westland. The subject matter of these plays is adult.

Tickets are $6. Call 254-4482 for tickets and additional information.

Southeast Asian Folk Art and Contemporary Art

The Children's Museum at 100 Congress St. Boston presents two interesting programs this summer. First is the Southeast Asian Folk Art Festival on June 23, 24 and 25. It will include folk dances, music, wood carving silk weaving and basket weaving from Cambodia, Viet Nam and Laos as well as other cultures in Laos: Hmong, Khmu and Leu.

"Arts Inside Out" is a month long program for July in celebration of contemporary art. Throughout the month, visitors can become a part of the innovative spirit behind contemporary art and enjoy performances, activities and exploratory programs in an outdoor exhibition.

For information call the Children's Museum at 426-6500.

Puppet Festival July 9-15

M.I.T. will hold the Puppeteers of America National Festival 1989 from July 9-15. Shows will be held at the Kresge Auditorium for families and children age 5 and older. Tickets are $5. There will be evening and afternoon shows.

Included are a lavish marionette production of H.M.S. Pinafore by Frank Ballard; Animal Folktales of the Americas by the Magical Moonshine Theatre; Moussorgsky's Pictures at an Exhibition by Das Puppetispel; Seasons of the Foal by Niculescu Lewandowski; and Bill Baird's Marionettes II, Pinocchio. For more information contact The Puppet Showplace Theatre in Brookline, 731-6400.
LESLEY COLLEGE News and Events

The neighborhood council would like to thank Lesley for graciously hosting our June 6th Oral History Meeting and allowing us to use Alumni Hall.

Bob Lewis, former Vice President, was honored at a reception in Alumni Hall in May. A representative from the Agassiz neighborhood dropped in to present him with an Agassiz T-shirt.

Tennis Court Regulations

Spring is here, and it is time to publish the updated Lesley College Tennis Court Regulations again. (The courts are located on Wendell St.) These are in abbreviated form, but for the complete rules, call 498-9056 or call Lesley College.

1. In order to reserve the court, you must prove you are a member of the Agassiz Neighborhood, and if you do not have proper identification when playing you may be asked to leave.

2. Playing times are:
   Weekdays and Saturdays 8 AM - 8 PM
   Sundays and Holidays 9 AM - 8 PM

3. Sign-up sheets are in the Security Office in White Hall. You may only reserve one hour, and reservations must be made in person.

4. On weekdays Agassiz residents may reserve space after 8:00 AM. The security office may be called at 547-2297 to check availability, but reservations are made in person.

5. On weekends Agassiz residents may reserve the court between 8 and 9 PM the day before in person.

6. The courts will be locked when the court is not in use. Courts open for the spring on April 1 and close November 30.

   If you have a Lesley College affiliation, court reservation is more generous. Check with Lesley

Take Care of the New Trees

Many streets in our neighborhood have had new trees planted on them. The Committee on Public Planting reminds us that the success of the trees’ survival depends on all of us. If you have a new tree in front of your house, take care of it! The tree must be kept well weeded, and it must be watered with three pails full of water per week for the first year, regardless of rainfall.

To allow for better penetration of water into the tree’s roots, the Committee suggests that you create a lip toward the edge of the tree well around the tree trunk. For more information call the Committee on Public Planting at 498-9048.

HELP WANTED

Mother of two month old boy seeks parent interested in finding and sharing babysitter. Full time September. Call 661-6096.

Water plants and feed pets. Family on vacation needs Care for pets and plants July 1-15. Call 547-0249.

FOUND- Cordless phone behind bushes on Wendell St. Call 498-9056.

Calligraphy - Call Ruth Hobeika 492-5241

Student wanted to read to Miss Shaw. Call 876-9491.


Amazing new odor control product that eliminates any odor from any source: smoke, pet, waste, chemical. Non toxic, non chemical, all natural minerals. Call 497-4159.
Community Calendar

June 1989

6/6 Tuesday..........................Oral History Meeting Lesley College Alumni Hall 2-5 p.m.
6/8 Thursday.........................Joint Agassiz-Neighborhood 9 Meeting Peabody School
(Walker St. entrance) 7:30 p.m. Sharon Cerney from CDIA will present the latest plans for Porter Exchange deck parking and Mt. Vernon St. lots
6/8 Thursday..........................Cambridge Performance Project Spring Concert
7:30 p.m. Kennedy School 158 Spring St.
$3 adults, $1.50 children. Call 498-9072 for information
6/12 Monday..........................Agassiz School Improvement Committee
3 p.m. Agassiz School - Resource Room
6/13 Tuesday..........................Annual Barbeque Agassiz Community School
5:30-7:30 behind 20 Sacramento St. (Rain date 6/15)
6/14 Wednesday.......................School closes, after-school opens 12:45 p.m.
Agassiz 8th Grade Graduation 7:30 p.m.
6/14 Wednesday.......................Agassiz Neighborhood Council Annual Meeting
7:30 p.m. 20 Sacramento St. - Come to a party!
6/21 Wednesday.......................Last day of school and after-school for year
7/3 Monday...........................Outback Camp begins

THE WHISTLER

Agassiz Neighborhood Council
20 Sacramento Street
Cambridge, MA 02138 498-9056

June 1989