Neighborhood Council Notes... 

Notes from the February 14th council meeting

The first guest was Cara Siderman from Cambridge Community Development Department who gave the council an overview of what procedure must be followed when developing property along Mass. Ave. in the neighborhood. It was explained that if the developer did not need any formal review or approvals, and the project was within all codes, a building permit could be received from Inspectional Services without advising the community development department, or any other department the developer may need to approach. Currently, the only way community development could know of the project would be to go through permits by hand. Community development is initiating a computerized tracking system so that they will have information on all development. They also hope to give developers information about all requirements centrally and at the beginning of the project rather than have them find out as time goes by from each individual department.

Our second guest was Terry Lurie from the Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA), who discussed the project they have planned for Garfield St. at Mass. Ave. If they are able to acquire the property from the MBTA, they plan to build 4-6 units of family size rental units. There are no concrete plans yet. She discussed the Agassiz Neighborhood Council's endorsement from 1983-84 for affordable housing on that site, and that CHA has had the space in mind for housing all this time.

Most of those at the meeting had not been involved in the decision in 1983-84, there were many questions, and it was decided to review the possible uses for the site, making a strong outreach effort to residents, to insure good representation.

Since the property has not yet even been given an appraisal value by the MBTA, any decision by the city is in the future. Interested people can call the council to be on the mailing list for this issue. Residents on Garfield St. are working on a questionnaire, and the neighborhood council will be working on future meetings for discussion.

Other Neighborhood Updates....................

Traffic

[In our council notes from last month, we did not mention the issue of three parking spaces in front of the Busch Reisinger Museum (Kirkland St. across from Memorial Hall/Sanders Theatre.) There is concern that fire equipment heading toward Agassiz cannot pass without extensive maneuvering. This issue, along with the others will be referred to the traffic committee.]

We received a letter dated 2/9 from Lauren Preston outlining what has been done since our January meeting:

On Jan. 10, 1990, I met with residents of the Agassiz Neighborhood discuss various traffic problems. This memo will try to update you and the residents about their concerns.

The following signs have been checked and replaced if found necessary:

1. Oxford and Sacramento - bent and faded one way sign
2. Oxford and Sacramento - missing No Turn on Red sign
3. Wendell St. near Mass. Ave. - No stopping sign missing
4. Wendell and Oxford - stop sign blocked by trees
5. Wendell and Oxford - corner clearance signs faded and twisted
6. Street name signs missing at: Corham and Hammond Kirkland and Oxford Hammond and Oxford

The following problems have been discussed with Harvard University:

1. Pedestrian entrance to Harvard on Museum St. near Corham St. Harvard has agreed to paint area yellow in front of the opening. Hopefully this will alert drivers not to park there. If this does not work, we can post restrictive "NO Parking" signs.
2. The University is checking to determine if their shuttle bus route could include stops at the business school Lot and the Law School.
3. According to Jeff Smith at the Harvard Parking Office residents can generally use Harvard Parking Lot from 5 p.m. to 7 a.m. and weekends provided they obtain a special sticker. For more information call Mr. Smith at 495-4785.

We are in the process of developing a list of locations which may need traffic signals. During the spring each location will be studied and prioritized. Oxford and Forest St. intersection is on the list.

We have checked to assure that all 25 MPH signs are correctly installed and are re-installing those that are missing. When they are installed we will notify the police department.

If there are any other traffic problems in the neighborhood or if we can be of further help in your discussions with the City of Somerville please call me at 498-9042.

March Council Meeting

Wednesday March 14 at 7:30 p.m.
Agassiz Neighborhood Council
20 Sacramento St. (call 498-9066 for information)
7:30 p.m. General Business
8:00 p.m. Harvard-Agassiz Committee will meet to discuss further plans for 2 sites recently acquired by Harvard University: Quality Inn and Bence Pharmacy block. All interested people are welcome.

-Remeber to RECYCLE!!!

March 10th 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.
Nominating Committee

Officers of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council Executive Board will be appointing a nominating committee that will recommend a slate of officers and directors to be elected and installed in May. If you are interested in serving on the nominating committee, or would like to recommend someone to the committee, please call the council office at 498-9056.

The executive board is composed of a chair, vice chair, secretary/clerk, treasurer, and two representatives of community school programs. This year we hope to add a cultural representative to the board.

Oxford St. Garage

The following is the information we received from Richard Rossi’s office regarding the Oxford St. Garage tanks, located on Bussis St. It is taken from a letter to Mr. Rossi from Fire Chief Scott dated 1/29/90:

One 2,000 gallon tank was removed on 1/9/90, and two 1,000 gallon tanks were removed on 1/11/90. They were removed under the direction of Lexwood Inc. and were inspected by Lieutenant Hodgson of the Cambridge Fire Dept. and an environmental chemist from 21E Inc., Billerica. Photostats of receipts and tanks were included.

Of interest to the Neighborhood

School Committee Orders study to start

Larry Weintraub, Cambridge School Committee has provided us with an order from 2/6 that he sponsored with James Rafferty:

ORDERED:

That the Superintendent be authorized to begin the process of program needs assessment and consultation with architects on possible replacement or expansion and extensive renovation of our two oldest un-renovated buildings, the Agassiz and Haggerty Schools. And, further, in light of fiscal constraints likely to exist during the next few years, that care be taken in this matter to conform to process guidelines for eventual partial reimbursement through School Building Assistance Funds of the Commonwealth, and that other sources of funding or partial funding be explored as well.

Cambridge’s Own Television Station from CCTV

Cambridge Community Television will be throwing a party in the living rooms of 18,000 Cambridge households that will include 8 great days of local programming beginning March 11.

There will be a LIVE PREMIERE of “55 Live” on channel 55, and every Monday at 7:30 p.m. Cambridge residents will be given an open microphone to express themselves.

There will be LIVE programs on Channel 18 including:

Sunday March 11
- 6th Annual International Women’s Day Video Festival
- Drug Testing in the Workplace

There will be more premieres and programs throughout the week. All cable subscribers will receive a schedule in the mail, or contact CCTV at 225-2500 for a free schedule.

Budget Hearings Cambridge Schools

The Agassiz School Improvement Committee would like to remind all residents that School Budget Hearings will be held on March 14 beginning at 7:00 p.m. in the Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School Cafeteria.

Agassiz School’s budget requests this year include the following:

- Math personnel (staff developer K-8 and upper grade math help)
- Classroom aide (due to multigraded classes Agassiz should by school dept policy have one more aide in the school)
- Custodian (Due to no lunchroom and multiuse of all common areas including afterschool, there should be an afternoon/evening shift custodian)
- Lunch/breakfast aid (There is only one aid who serves all breakfasts and lunches in one four hour shift — there should be another)
- K-3 Model (A literacy and enrichment program in place in most Cambridge schools which includes staff and supplies)
- Full time librarian (Supt. McGrath commented on the poor condition of this library in the fall)
- Staff developer for computer center
- Full time parent coordinator
- Assistant principal
- Increased language instruction (currently 9 hours weekly)
- Transportation for afterschool activities (the gym does not have a standard court for sports making intramurals and team sports impossible for the upper grades)
- Physical needs: lockers, computer equipment, furniture of the right size and quality for children and multise

Call Agassiz School Parent Liaison, Marcia Duran at 498-9258 for more information.

MWRA Begins Working Group

The Massachusetts Water Resource Authority has begun a working group in Cambridge which they hope will represent all neighborhoods in discussions of the Combined Sewer Overflow Project. This project involves building a 15 mile underground tunnel 350’ in depth to run beneath the Charles' banks and out to the harbor. It is a project that will ultimately help clean both the Charles River and the Boston Harbor.

This project is not to be confused with the Cambridge Sewer Renewal (Phase VI) Project that was due to go out to bid this spring. We were advised that the MWRA project will have no effect on the flooding in the Agassiz or Cambridge, it will only control the flow of waste water once it gets out of the Cambridge system. [However, it was mentioned at that meeting that the Cambridge project may not go out to bid as planned due to fiscal problems.]

The group will meet to discuss the impact of this immense project on Cambridge. They anticipate the impact will be in the way of construction near the Charles and in the North Point area, and also the huge increase in water and sewer costs.

The Agassiz Neighborhood Council sent a representative to the first meeting. If you are interested in this group, please contact the council at 498-9056.
Children's Art Contest

The Agassiz Neighborhood Council is sponsoring an art contest for youth through age 14. Pencil, paints, markers, collage, or other materials can be used to create a picture with themes of the Agassiz neighborhood or school now or in the future or in the past. There will be prizes in three age categories, and all entries will be placed in an April show in the Sacramento St. Gallery of which all contestants will be notified. For a flyer of rules, call the council at 498-9056 or pick one up at 20 Sacramento St. Deadline for entries is MARCH 17. All Cambridge residents up to age 14 are eligible.

BALDWIN HALL TO BE REDEDICATED

Agassiz School and Neighborhood Council are gearing up for the week of March 11-17 when a week of festivities will be held celebrating the life of Maria Louise Baldwin, first black female head master in all New England.

The Rededication of Baldwin Hall in honor of Miss Baldwin will be held in Agassiz School on Thursday, March 15 at 7:00 p.m. Vice Chairperson of the Cambridge School Committee, Fran Cooper, will be Master of Ceremonies, and Mayor Alice Wolf will rededicate the Hall in Maria Baldwin's honor. Awards will be given, Baldwin Scholarship recipients from 1922 to present will be honored, monologues and singing will be performed by Agassiz students, and the play "Miss Baldwin of Agassiz" [See Lelsey College News and Events] will be performed.

The Rededication Committee [Kay Cox, Terry Delaney, Carol Hantman, Lenore Jennings and Kate Judel] is finalizing some special touches including the re framing of Miss Baldwin's picture, the refinishing of the original 1922 plaque, souvenir coffee mugs with the Agassiz seal, a new curtain for the Baldwin Hall stage, and a wonderful display of pictures and memorabilia. A videotape of all the events is in the works, and the rededication will be taped in full.

Another event that will compliment the activities in school will be a gallery show, "The Reunion" 100 years of social, cultural and economic links between Boston and Cambridge African-Americans, sponsored by the Ethnic Foundation. It will be on display for the week between 2-4 p.m. in the Sacramento St. Gallery, 20 Sacramento St. with an opening on Sunday March 11 between 4-5 p.m.

The final neighborhood event will be a community art workshop on Saturday March 17 from 12-2 p.m. to help design the community mural that will be created this spring for the Alden Tot Lot across from the Agassiz School. It will be held in the Agassiz School.

FOR INFORMATION ON THE REDEDICATION AND TO BE ON OUR MAILING LIST, call the council office at 498-9056.

Help support the production of the play "Miss Baldwin of Agassiz," the programs, flyers, postage, and many expenses to put on an event of this size by purchasing a souvenir mug. On sale at the community center for $5. Call 498-9056 for more information!

*** LESLEY COLLEGE News and Events ***

Lesley College will be the host to three March events from the neighborhood council.

1. "Miss Baldwin of Agassiz" an original play for children written by Carol E. Hantman, Director, Agassiz Afterschool Players, and performed by the players. The play will be presented on March 5 at 7:30 p.m. in Welch Auditorium as a part of Womens History Month at Lesley. There will be an introduction by Lesley College President Margaret McKenna. Admission is free, and a reception will follow. [The play "Miss Baldwin of Agassiz" will also be presented at Bentley College on March 21, and at Agassiz School in Baldwin Hall on March 14 and 15.]

2. The Agassiz Neighborhood Youth Chorus will present its annual concert on March 16th at 7:30 p.m. in Welch Auditorium. The concert sponsored by the Lesley Agassiz Resource Committee, will present songs from the Fifties Rock Musical Grease.

The Agassiz Neighborhood Youth Chorus, which is entering its fourth season this winter, is a group of students ranging in age from nine to thirteen. They attend many different public and private schools, but come together for weekly rehearsals on Fridays at Lesley. The chorus is supported in part by the Agassiz Neighborhood Council.

The concert is open to the public, and is free of charge. For more information call the chorus director, Ada Park Snider at 661-2961, or the council office at 498-9056.

3. The Chakhov Theatre Company will present a musical play for all ages: Thumbelina and Maybe a Little Bit More based on a tale by Hans Christian Anderson with music by David Haas. The show will open on March 17th in Welch Auditorium with a matinee at 1 p.m. and an evening show at 7:30 p.m. Performance dates are: March 17, 18,24,25,31, and April 1 and 8. There are Saturday and Sunday matinees at 1 p.m. and Saturday evenings performances at 7:30. Tickets are $12; $10 for students and seniors,$7 for children. Call 547-8688 for group rates or more information.

Help design the mural at a free workshop

A Workshop will be held on Saturday March 17 from noon to 2 p.m. All members of the community, whether you work, attend school or live in the neighborhood; all ages adults and children, are welcome. Rich Curran, in collaboration with mural artist Wen-Ti Tseng plan separate themes with various art media for each workshop. You don't need to be an artist, just come with all your creative energy. Meet at the Agassiz Community Center, 20 Sacramento St. [Parents should be prepared to supervise young children]

To have a flyer and more specific information sent to you, please call 498-9056.

STAND UP AND BE COUNTED !!!

Your U.S. Census answers can help your community make important decisions about needed services. Answer the census. It good for all of us. April 1, 1990.
March Community Calendar

3/5 Monday .................................. "Miss Baldwin of Agassiz" to be presented in Welch Auditorium, Lesley College 7 p.m. Free.

3/8 Thursday ................................ School half day, Afterschool opens 12:45 p.m.

3/10 Saturday ................................ Recycling at 147 Hampshire, Sherman St. behind St. Peters Field 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Every 2nd Sat. For info call 498-9078.

3/14 Wednesday ................................ Agassiz Neighborhood Council Meeting 7:30 p.m. 20 Sacramento St. agenda pg 1

3/14 Wednesday ................................ School Committee Budget Hearings at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School beginning 7 p.m. Call Marla Duran at 498-9258 for more information

3/15 Thursday ................................ REDEDICATION OF BALDWIN HALL Agassiz School in honor of MARIA L. BALDWIN 7:30 p.m. (See article)

3/16 Friday .................................. Agassiz Youth Chorus to perform in Welch Auditorium Lesley College 7:30 p.m. admission free, (see article)

3/17 Saturday ................................ Community Mural Design Workshop noon - 2 p.m. Free - Agassiz School (see article)

3/17 Saturday ................................ Chekhov Theatre Company presents "Thumbellina and Maybe a Little Bit More" 1 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. Welch Auditorium, Lesley College through April 8th $12, $10 students, seniors, $7 children (see article)


March 1990
THE WHISTLER

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

Maria Louise Baldwin 1856 - 1977