Council Meeting Notes

General Business

It was agreed to change monthly council meetings from the second Tuesday to the third or fourth Tuesday from time to time during the year to provide greater community access. Cara Seiderman from Community Development Department discussed the committee that has been meeting to prepare a traffic plan for Cambridge that will be acceptable to the state under the clean air act. She advised us that anyone who would like more information on that committee can call Roberta Miller at 923-8896. There will be a public meeting for input on March 6th at 7:30 P.M. in City Hall.

Agenda Items

The February meeting was intended to provide an update on various outstanding neighborhood issues. We learned from the Mayor's Office that the construction phase of the Sewer Renovation project was being held up. According to Harvard University, leaking gas tanks from the former Gulf Station have contaminated the soil. This must be solved before the heavy equipment necessary for the sewer work can be used. One neighbor was outraged at the health hazards the neighbors must live with each time raw sewage floods into their streets, basements and cars. He felt the neighborhood should make their top priority issue and a lawyer should be hired to sue the city. It was agreed to send a letter out to those affected by flooding to see if there was any interest in this path.

Traffic

JoAnn Hoffman, Chairman Traffic Committee, reported on progress. It was agreed to contact Lauren Preston from the Traffic Department for a report on all the traffic studies done in the past years for comparison. It is also hoped to learn how to proceed toward our goal of a full traffic light on or near Everett and Oxford Sts. We will continue to press for other needs such as repainting of crosswalks and replacement of signs.

Snow Removal

Last month the council contacted Harvard, Lesley and the City of Cambridge regarding various problems of snow removal around their buildings in the Agassiz neighborhood. Mayor Wolf's office did respond regarding the MBTA lot on the corner of Garfield St. and Mass. Ave. Last year the MBTA advised us that they were not responsible for snow removal. The Mayor has advised them that they are responsible. We were contacted by Harvard University who advised us that the lack of snow removal from their buildings was an oversight and would not happen again. These buildings are located at 3 Sacramento (first house on the left from Mass. Ave.) and at Mass. Ave. between the Chang Sho parking lot and the MBTA lot on Garfield St.

Astrid Dodds did some research on the snow removal ordinance. She let us know that the Department of Public Works is responsible for enforcement, not the Traffic Department. There is a question about an enforcement plan, and we have contacted the Mayor's Office, who is looking into it for us. The snow removal ordinance is reprinted later on in "The Whistler." It has been suggested that if you have neighbors who do not shovel the sidewalk, a copy of this ordinance under their door may inspire cooperation. If you have a neighborhood who cannot shovel due to infirmity or age, you may contact the council office at 349-6287 and you will be referred to the proper city agency. (Due to a teen labor shortage in this neighborhood, we do not have a list of snow shovelers.)

Garage behind Porter Exchange

The license held by CDIA to build a garage behind Porter Exchange will run out at the end of February. There was some interest generated by this due to the fact that part of the parcel owned by CDIA across the street, near Mt. Vernon St., has been sold off and another developer is interested in the remainder of that property. We agreed to contact the License Commission to see what could be learned about the future of that property.

Curbside Recycling

We learned that a recycling director has been appointed, Jan Aceti. She advised us that curbside recycling will begin in July, and offered to have someone come and speak to the neighborhood before that time. She also made a strong plea for volunteers to help with the recycling at the two Cambridge sites until curbside begins.

MBTA lot at Garfield St.

There is no new information on the site that has been reserved for low income housing to be built by Cambridge Housing Authority (CHA) after the MBTA and Cambridge finish negotiations for a long term lease. It was speculated that it would be a long time before CHA could afford to build on the site, and we asked Cara Seiderman of CDD to look into the prospect of our planning a short term use for that site.

Harvard Link Building

Kathy Speigelman shared the site plan for a building that would link two existing Harvard labs, Hoffman and Mallinekrodt, on Oxford St. near Kirkland St. This building would house
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a new lab for chemist, Jim Anderson, who builds instruments that measure chemicals in the ozone hole and will be coming to Harvard. There is an existing driveway that this building would span, and be built above. Harvard hopes to move the truck traffic from Oxford and this driveway to Divinity Avenue, located behind the building. We hope to have those designs on display in the upstairs meeting room at 20 Sacramento St. for March. Call 349-6287 for details.

Quality Inn

Meeting notes from the working committee to discuss the issues pertaining to the use of the Quality Inn as a Harvard Law School Dormitory were handed to the council and an update was given by Ken Basler. (For a detailed account see the special article on the Quality Inn.)

*** Neighborhood News ***

Miss Shaw Dies

Neighborhood resident Gertrude Shaw, age 98, died at home this February. She lived at 16 Sacramento St. in the house where she was born which was built by her father in 1884. Miss Shaw was an Agassiz School student under the principalship of Miss Maria Baldwin. She remembers "Agassiz School. On the first day [1894] I came in late because we were visiting my grandmother in Vermont. My mother was sick at the time so my Aunt Ethel was taking care of my mother and Aunt Ethel took me down to school. I remember how nervous I was because I had never been to school. Mrs. Siedman was the teacher, very friendly and very nice to the children. All the teachers were nice, the school was nice and Miss. Baldwin was lovely. We all loved her. She was very black too. She was nice to the children and very dignified. All the teachers loved her." "The neighborhood was pretty much the way it is now. Well, one has been torn down, the Crosby house over here in the garden. People would come down the street just to see that barn. It was very shabby and beautiful, it smelled sweet. Course it was covered with bees." "Behind the brick houses [Sacramento Field] was a garden, a lovely garden. The man that took care of it ran this engine. Piped the water over to Somerville to a bleachery. The water was supposed to be very clear. It was and artificial pond. We didn't ever go over there. They locked the door." "My mother had heard trouble and she wanted her sewing machine run by electricity so they put in one outlet and she had a sewing machine. The next thing was a toaster and of course the fuse would blow all the time." "The first telephone we had you had to let ring seven times, and everyone else who was on the line would answer too. Everyone all over the country was that same way. They always listened to the telephone because it was the only way they got their news." Miss Shaw was videotaped for the oral history project, and her memories will be a part of the documentary the neighborhood council is currently creating.

Renovations Almost Complete at 71 Hammond St.

The outside of Cambridge Housing Authority's Community Residence at Hammond St. is not quite complete, but the inside is done and ready for occupancy. Everyone is welcome to an informal visit of the renovated building on Wednesday March 20th between 7-9 P.M.

This is the opportunity for the Agassiz community to inspect the building and meet again with staff from CASCAP (Cambridge and Somerville Cooperative Apartment Project), the organization that will manage the facility. If you would consider participating in the 71 Hammond St. Neighborhood Advisory Committee for CASCAP, this would be a time to learn what is involved and, if you are interested, to join.

You do not need to telephone to attend, but if you do have questions or cannot visit on Wednesday evening and would like to arrange another time, please telephone Chris Weller at CHA at 497-6800.

There will be a more formal Open House for 71 Hammond St. a few months later, after the building is fully staffed and occupied and its exterior is completed, painted and landscaped.

Agassiz School Meets to Discuss Renovations

There will be a special school wide PTA meeting to discuss renovations to the Agassiz School on Tuesday March 5th at 7:15 P.M. Anyone resident who would like the literature mailed to parents to outline the school's plan can call the council office at 349-6287.

An architect has been hired to give preliminary ideas on how the site can be expanded, but no definite report from architect is expected at that meeting. The neighborhood council will keep you updated on this issue.

The Potters House Church Services at Agassiz

Agassiz School has been privately permitted by the Potters House Christian Fellowship Church for Sunday services and other church related events. Some folks have found flyers entitled "Miracle Explosion" on their cars. These flyers advertised a Miracle Healing Crusade on February 9th and 10th featuring Evangelist Rick Maestas. (This church is not sponsored by the neighborhood council or the school department.)

☆☆ City Wide News and Information ☆☆

SIDEWALKS - SNOW AND ICE REMOVAL

Cambridge Ordinance #12.16.110

A. Removal of Snow from Sidewalks. The owner or occupant of private property bordering on a street where there is a sidewalk or footway shall, within twelve hours after snow ceases to fall in the daytime and before one P.M., after a fall of snow during the night, cause all snow that may be on such sidewalk or footway to be removed therefrom. In the event of an unusually heavy snowfall, the time limit shall be extended at the discretion of the commissioner of Public Works. The provisions of this section shall apply to snow which falls from buildings as well as to that which falls from the clouds.

B. Removal of Ice from Sidewalks. The owner or occupant of private property bordering on a street where there is a sidewalk or footway any portion of which is encumbered by ice shall within six hours after the sidewalk or footway becomes encumbered with ice cause such sidewalk or footway to be made safe and convenient by removing the ice therefrom, or by keeping the same covered with sand or some other suitable substance.
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#12.16.160 Violation Penalty

A. Criminal Penalty. Any person who violates Section 16.110 (Sidewalks—Snow and ice removal) shall be subject to the not exceeding fifty dollars. Each day’s violation shall constitute a separate offense.

B. Noncriminal Disposition. Whoever violates Section 12.16.160 (Sidewalks—Snow and ice removal) may be penalized by a noncriminal disposition as provided in G.L.C. 40, s. 21D. For purposes of this section, the Commissioner of Public Works shall be the enforcing authority to designate Public Works Enforcement Officers. The penalty for each violation will be twenty-five dollars. Each day’s violation shall constitute a separate offense.

Land Bank Policy

In a letter to the neighborhood dated 1/30 Michael Rosenberg, Commissioner of Cambridge Community Development Department says “Enclosed is a copy of the Land Bank Policy adopted by the Cambridge City Council on January 3, 1991. This policy provides for the creation of a Land Bank within the Affordable Housing Trust to overcome one of the major obstacles to development of affordable housing, the high cost of land in Cambridge. The City Council has specified that the Land Bank’s first resources will be City-owned lands designated by the City Council.

As set out in the land bank Policy, the first step is for the City Manager to identify surplus City Land for the council’s consideration. As part of this identification of potential sites, the City manager requests an evaluation from the Planning Board, at a public meeting, as to whether these sites are appropriate for residential use. Within 60 days of the referral from the City Manager, the Planning Board must report to the Council.

At that time the City Council will hold a public hearing to decide whether to convey the sites to the Affordable Housing Trust. The Council will “make timely and strenuous efforts notify all civic and neighborhood groups, institutions, abutters and persons with an interest in affordable housing and the particular sites being considered about this hearing.”

Commissioner Rosenberg assured us that the city council has provided for extensive neighborhood participation in the design of any housing, and before choosing a project there will be a neighborhood meeting held. There have been no sites in the Agassiz neighborhood under consideration as of this time, however.

Anyone who would like a copy of the Land Bank Policy can call the neighborhood council at 349-6287.

Winter Forum on Traffic from CCLN March 20th

Cambridge Citizens for Liveable Neighborhoods present their Third Annual Winter Forum “ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL” Stall and Crawl in the Cambridge Traffic Department... and How to Get Us Moving in the 1990’s. Guest speaker will be Bill

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McDonough, Transportation Engineer and Principal, McDonough and Sculley on Wednesday March 20th at 7:15 P.M. in the Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Massachusetts Ave. in Harvard Square. The CCLN Annual Meeting will take place directly before this beginning at 6:30 P.M. For more information contact CCLN at 354-5670. $10 requested donation, dessert and coffee will be served.

Support Our Troops

City Councillor Tim Toomey has organized a Support our Troops Rally to be held on Sunday, March 24th at 1 P.M. on Cambridge Common. Groups will be marching from various sections of Cambridge, and will meet at the common. For more information call Councillor Toomey at 576-6483 or 349-4280.

 Council Programs

Children's Program Notes

Afterschool Programs - April first will begin the last term of afterschool activities, which will run through the last day of public school. Children in grades K-6th Grade may sign up for a variety of activities from one to three days. Brochure will be out in mid March. As soon as Cambridge School Kindergarten assignments are out, fall registration will begin for new children who will need full time child care programs afterschool. Preschool - Our preschool program is currently enrolling for September. Summer Camp - Outback Summer Camp brochures and Counselor in Training registration forms will be out in late March. Call 349-6287 for information or brochures on any of the above programs.

 Cultural Happenings

DIGNITY IN DECAY -Photographs by John Gordy

The Sacramento St. Gallery is proud to announce a new exhibition of photographs by local artist, John Gordy. DIGNITY IN DECAY, which runs from March 1 through 31, features color photographs taken at sites of industrial waste and disintegration. Gordy’s vision of decay finds a beauty that only an artist’s eye could reveal for us.

A derelict quarry, abandoned train yards, and other images of things that were once the shining gems of the Industrial Revolution are the subjects of Gordy’s work. These brutal visions of decay would perhaps be depressing in black and white, but the deep, rich colors lend an strange attraction to this deterioration. Gordy’s work is a study of texture using saturated colors. The works are generally composed on a flat plane with a geometric pattern as the focus. There is a clever juxtaposition of unlikely objects and a precise organization of diverse forms. One can literally define the subject’s identity and abstractly enjoy their beauty.

John Gordy, a Boston area resident, has studied at the School of the Museum of Fine Arts and the Art Institute of Boston. He has been working on this project for the past two years, and he is currently a teaching assistant of Photography at Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School.

Hold Tuesday April 9th for a Party !!!!

Harvard Real Estate, Inc. has renovated the exterior of the Agassiz Community Center building located at 20 Sacramento St. As our way of thanking them we are planning an open house for April 9th from 6-9 P.M.

On display in the Sacramento St. Gallery will be our community designed mural created by neighborhood artist Wen-Ti Tsan.
Reception will be held on March 7th from 7-10 P.M. Hours will be 10-6 Mon-Fri, 1-4 Saturday, or by appointment. Call 349-6287. The address is 20 Sacramento St. Cambridge.

An Original Musical at Agassiz

The Agassiz Afterschool Players 5th and 6th graders present an original musical in Agassiz School’s Baldwin Hall on Friday March 22 and Saturday March 23rd at 7:30 P.M.

"In A Nice Neighborhood Like Ours" will help to celebrate Cambridge Multicultural Month with a theme that will provoke thought about different cultures living together. The setting, a nice neighborhood like ours, is disrupted by lack of understanding when a Vietnamese family moves in to run the corner store. This piece represents the tradition of the AAP, a program in which children are encouraged to search their own feelings and ideas while writing lines and performing.

The Agassiz Afterschool Players are directed by award winning playwright Carol E. Hantman, whose works have been produced locally, throughout the U.S. and at the Fringe of the Edinburgh Festival. Ms. Hantman has also written for children's television, notably the show 3-2-1 Contact. She is joiner for this production by Ada Snider, a member of the Boston Symphony’s Tanglewood Festival Chorus and Choral Director for the Dexter School, the Powers Music School and the Agassiz Neighborhood Youth Chorus. The two have collaborated to bring about this surprising musical, with original songs and lyrics.

Many of the children have been with the Agassiz Afterschool Players for the past 4 years, and their sophistication and experience produce a show of high quality, one that both children and adults will enjoy. This is theatre by children at its finest. The cast includes: Maya Antic, Rachel Applebaum, Melita Avery, Hannah Carlson, Ned Colby, James O. DeLancey, Emily Griffin, Sarah Groff, Tamar Leffert, Luc Schuster, Rafig Solier and Henry Towener.

Also to be performed that night will be "Stolen!: A Gumshoe Caper". This is an original mystery written and performed by the younger group of Agassiz Afterschool Players, and the cast includes: Emily Bennett, Maggie Bennett, Gino Gaynor, Sara Hall-Nourse, Joanna Levy, Margaret Levy, Makao Takahashi, Bushra Makiya, Jonathan McMullen, Marisa Murphy, Aaron Novod, Sean Ragon, Zach Roberts, Kate Silver-Heilman and Ming Wang.

Ads and Announcements

Neighborhood Scientist Wins Award

Carl L. Wunsch, has been awarded the 1990 Maurice Ewing Medal for Leadership in Marine Geophysics. It was presented by the AGU and US Navy.

Taekwondo Begins March 5th

Taekwondo classes for children (ages 7+) will be open to new members for a ten week period starting March 5th. New students will join the already existing core of 7-9 year old who meet every Tuesday and Thursday from 5:30 to 6:30 P.M. Boys and girls are both welcome.

Adult classes began for adults (ages 17 or older) on February 5th, and they are designed for men and women who are interested in the ancient Korean martial art of Taekwondo along with practical self-defense techniques. It focuses on enhancing flexibility, concentration, self-discipline, physical conditioning, self-esteem and the ability to defend oneself when confronted. Classes will meet Tuesday and Thursday at 6:30 P.M.

All classes will be held in Baldwin Hall at Agassiz School.

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The instructor, Heather Tallman, is a black belt. She has competed in Taekwondo both nationally and internationally, holds two national titles in the women's welter weight division and has competed in two consecutive world championships. She placed second in the Olympic trials in 1988.

The cost for 10 sessions is $80. Call 349-6287 for more information or to enroll.

Shintado Classes at Agassiz

On Monday evenings from 7:45 to 8:45, you have the chance to try something new at the Agassiz School. Shintado is a modern body movement from Japan, developed through the long tradition of martial arts, but designed to emphasize spontaneity and cooperation as well as precision and focus. The founder of Shintado, a painter and karate expert who lost most of his family in the Second World War, wanted to create a new movement which would reflect his desire for peace and incorporate a Western sense of artistic self-expression. The result is an exercise which is sometimes aerobic and strenuous, sometimes slow and contemplative; sometimes controlled an exact, and sometimes freeform and expressive like an abstract painting. Classes at the Agassiz School are designed for beginners. A typical class will start with a long sequence of gentle warmups, continue with some vigorous leg-strengthening exercises to get your blood flowing, and then work on forms and conclude with partner exercises. There is an emphasis throughout class on relaxing your body while sharpening your imagination. First class is free--and people of all ages and physical conditions are welcome. For more information call the instructor, Eva Thaddeus, at 564-5873.

IM A Local College Student doing good work! Need to go money for school. Experience in: carpentry, painting, cleaning, babysitting, house sitting, and more. I have excellent neighborhood references. Amo Gulinello 876-3472.

Seniors News

Transportation Available

The SCM Community Transportation Corporation is a nonprofit organization that provides non-emergency medical transportation to Cambridge residents who are at least sixty years old, or who have a transportation handicap. They operate handicapped accessible vans, and go to most medical destinations in the Boston Cambridge area. They request a 50 cent or one dollar donation per trip and this is optional.

The demand is high, so call in advance to schedule a ride. The phone is 625-1191. If you would like a brochure explaining the service we have them available at the council office. Call 349-6287.

Volunteers Wanted

The Cambridge Council on Aging Volunteer Visitor Program enables elders to maintain more independent and interesting lives within their community. The council is seeking volun-
Harvard University and the Development of the Quality Inn

During the past 2 years Harvard University through its real estate department purchased commercial sites on Mass. Ave. in the Agassiz neighborhood. The first site was the single story group of stores located on the corner of Mass. Ave. and Everett St. and referred to as the Bence site (prior location of the Bence Pharmacy). This site was purchased for the expansion of the Harvard Law School. The second site purchased was the Quality Inn between Wendell St. and Mellen St. on Mass. Ave. This site was purchased for the Harvard Law School to be used as a dormitory. Neither purchase was discussed with the community prior to the purchase and was presented as a matter of fact after the fact.

The issues raised by these two projects go to the core of the town/gown concerns over the past ten years.

1). What is the role of the community and the city in regards to Harvard University as a developer?

2). In an age of decreasing tax revenue what is Harvard's responsibility to its neighbors when it purchases such major tax producers as the Quality Inn and to a lesser but equally important extent the Bence site. Can they remove them form the tax role because of their educational use?

3). Why is Harvard purchasing such major sites when they already have acres of open space adjacent to Oxford St. that could be developed?

4). If the University goes ahead and purchases building that are not in the best interest of the community, who should hold Harvard accountable?

With these and many more issues raised, a small working committee comprised of members of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council, Neighborhood 9 Association (David Chilinsky, Ken Basler, Terry DeLancey, Susan Kashiwa, Jody Garber and Howard Medwed) and Harvard University (Director of Planning Kathy Speigelman, President of Harvard Real Estate Inc. Kristin Demong, and Administrative Dean Harvard Law School Sandra Coleman) have been meeting weekly since January 29. The goals of this group have been to hammer out a plan for the Quality Inn that will be presented to the neighborhood at the next council meeting for neighborhood input. Graphic illustrations will be on display in the 2nd floor meeting room at 20 Sacramento St. for the month of March. Call the council at 349-6287, or stop by between 9-5.

Short term issues that have been discussed, in no particular order are:
- landscaping around the site
- improvement of building's appearance
- improvement of and possible entrance from Wendell St. side
- rental car operation
- generation of additional traffic
- parking lot use and possible options
- continued operation of swimming pool
- community use of space
- restaurant disposition (including liquor license)
- Harvard's responsibility in terms of taxes

Long term issues, again in no order, are:
- neighborhood initiated plan for new building
- screening back of building
- location of dumpster
- affordable housing
- affordable neighborhood retail space
- parking and traffic concerns
- taxes
- linking this development to Bence Pharmacy Site
- future development on site

Attend the Tuesday, March 19th Council Meeting beginning at 7:30 P.M. in the upstairs meeting room at 20 Sacramento St. The series of meetings will be over, and a proposal should be available. Residents are invited to respond to the proposal.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Event</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>7:15 P.M.</td>
<td>Agassiz School Renovation Committee Meeting Agassiz School Baldwin Hall 28 Sacramento St.</td>
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<td>Call 349-6525 for information</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 6</td>
<td>7 P.M.</td>
<td>Mayor Wolf hosts a Cambridge Town Meeting</td>
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<td>March 7</td>
<td>12:45 P.M.</td>
<td>Agassiz School Release Day</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 7</td>
<td>7-10 P.M.</td>
<td>DIGNITY IN DECAY-John Gordy photography show opening Sacramento St. Gallery 20 Sacramento St</td>
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<td>March 18</td>
<td>7:30 P.M.</td>
<td>Agassiz Neighborhood Council Meeting 20 Sacramento St. upstairs meeting room</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 19</td>
<td>7:30 P.M.</td>
<td>St. Patrick's Day Holiday No School</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 20</td>
<td>7:15 P.M.</td>
<td>CCLN Annual Forum Old Cambridge Baptist Church 1151 Mass. Ave. $10 donation For information call 354-5670.</td>
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<td>March 22</td>
<td>7:30 P.M.</td>
<td>Agassiz Afterschool Players Present &quot;In A Nice Neighborhood Like Ours&quot; and &quot;Stolen!: A Gumshoe Caper&quot; Baldwin Hall, Agassiz School, Donations accepted at door Call 349-4280</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 23</td>
<td>1 P.M.</td>
<td>Support Our Troops Rally Cambridge Common</td>
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