ANC Meeting Notes

We would like to thank Venita Mathias from Community Development Department for taking notes at the February 17 ANC meeting. The complete notes are available by calling the council at 349-6287.

ANC Chair Kathleen Manion opened the meeting and turned it over to Steve Koszlyn, Chair of the Long Range Planning Committee. His committee organized this section of the meeting as part of its ongoing work. Steve explained that the purpose of the meeting was to assess the ANC in order to plan for the future. Some of the ways the ANC works to improve the quality of life for neighborhood residents includes: opportunities to take a role in controversial issues, programs to meet specific needs, production of a newsletter, subcommittees to address specific issues, monthly meetings, information dissemination and referral.

Three panelists were introduced: Eileen Woodford, Director of Neighborhood Planning from Community Development Department, Jill Herold, Assistant City Manager for Human Services and John Pitkin, Chairman of Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association.

Eileen Woodford spoke first and presented a comparison of three different neighborhood organizations in Cambridge: The East Cambridge Stabilization Committee, Ward Five Committee (Cambridgeport) and the Central Square Coalition.

John Pitkin discussed the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association, and passed out copies of their bylaws, which provided various practical suggestions for dealing with organizational issues.

Jill Herold discussed the City-wide community schools program, their development into neighborhood councils and their relationships with neighborhood associations.

The panel was able to provide valuable insight from outside the neighborhood, where the Agassiz Neighborhood Council is well known and respected. We learned that Agassiz is one of many neighborhood association models, each one tailored to the needs of a specific membership. There are very few paid employees in neighborhood organizations, but there is a City funded coordinator in each elementary school who is there to assist the neighborhood with programs and services of interest to them. Neighborhood organizations work with the coordinator and utilize resources and the school building in various ways. At Agassiz there is only one entity, the Agassiz Neighborhood Council, and all resources are under the same roof.

The various organizations that serve Cambridge neighborhoods define membership in many ways. The panelists cautioned that too narrow a view of membership may detract from opportunities, and the old school district boundaries can lead to a parochial approach.

This meeting was to glean information, and a follow up meeting will be scheduled soon to discuss specific issues as they apply to Agassiz.

After a brief intermission Joel Bard advised the council that Lesley College had contacted him and a few neighborhood representatives to let Agassiz know that the college was interested in pursuing the possibility of purchasing the Porter Exchange building. Lesley currently has 19 classrooms there now. Since Lesley has just begun to look into the feasibility of the purchase, there was little information available, but Lesley agreed to update the neighborhood if the project became a real possibility. Representatives were pleased that Lesley came to the
neighborhood directly, and wanted to work together. Concerns stated were: retention of the commercial space at ground level, parking, congestion, loss of tax revenue, and expansion of Lesley.

Janet Rustow briefly reported on the Agassiz School project, which is about to go into full swing again soon. There will be a meeting at 7:30 in the Community Room with representatives of the city, the architect, and the contractor on March 29. The agenda for that meeting will be discussed at the next council meeting on March 15. (See below)

Information on Upcoming Meetings
Meetings will be held in Community Room, 1651 Mass. Ave. (corner of Wendell) at 7:30.

March 15 Meeting
Happy Green, Director of Community Relations and Kathy Spiegelman Director of the Planning Group at Harvard, will open the meeting and discuss current planning issues. Over the past two years there has been a major assessment at Harvard to identify academic priorities for the next decade. As a result of that assessment, physical plans are being made to meet academic needs. Green and Spiegelman will report on status of that planning.

The next part of the meeting will allow time for reports, to bring up new business and to discuss future agendas and or activities.

The final item planned is to develop the agenda for the March 29 meeting (see below) regarding construction at the new Agassiz School.

March 29 Meeting
In anticipation of the construction scheduled to begin on the new Agassiz School in March, a meeting has been scheduled with Deputy City Manager Richard Ross, Architect George Metzger, Clerk of the Works and Site Coordination for the Agassiz School project. The agenda will be developed at the March 15 meeting, and flyers will be distributed prior to March 29.

Everyone is welcome to attend.

Memorial Hall
We have received an update from Harvard concerning the construction taking place in and around Memorial Hall. Highlights of the project are:
* Restoration of interior finishes in Alumni Hall, Sanders Theatre and the Transept.
* Relocation of freshman dining to Alumni Hall to make way for the proposed Center for the Humanities in the existing Harvard Union. Kitchen support spaces will be augmented by a one-story addition connected to the northwest corner of the building.
* Adaptive reuse of the basement level as a "commons," including a cafe, coffeehouse, newsstand, meeting rooms, and other student services.
* Improved services and support function for Sanders Theatre to enhance its role as both a classroom and a performing arts facility. Included are new audiovisual systems, stage equipment, dressing rooms, rehearsal space, and small activity rooms.
* Greater accessibility for the disabled, including two new elevators and alternate entries to the Hall and Transept, preserving the historical elements of the building.
* All new mechanical, electrical, plumbing, and fire protection systems and improved bathrooms.

The work will be done in three phases. Phase one is in progress with work on the basement. Phase two will begin in late March with continued work on the basement and relocation of three major site utilities over an eight week period. Phase three will begin immediately after Harvard commencement. The construction will expand to all areas of the building and new addition until Sanders returns to use in fall 94. The theatre proper will be renovated in summer 95. For a copy of the complete report call the council office at 349-6287.

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Nominating Committee
Agassiz Neighborhood Council has named a Nominating Committee whose duty it is to recommend a slate for the Agassiz Neighborhood Council's Board of Directors 94/95. Members are:

Faith Chase* 26 Sacramento
Rich Curran 23 Richard Ave.
Joe Gerson 7 Eustis St.
Margaret Moore 75 Wendell St.
Julie Schlack 26 Crescent St.
Richard Silver 54B Hammond St.
Ada Snider 69 Pretiss St.

*The Chases have been temporarily displaced to Fresh Pond until their house is moved in accordance with Agassiz School construction.

If you have suggestions for board candidates, please contact the Nominating Committee c/o ANC, 20 Sacramento St. Cambridge, MA 02138 as soon as possible with a brief statement of interest and experience.

Oxford Garage Demolition
The owner of the Oxford Garage will soon have the requisite approvals to demolish the building to make way for town houses on the site. He contacted us to say that there would be some drilling in front of the garage soon in order to meet approval for the demolition permit.

Some concern regarding the demolition has been expressed by residents in a letter sent to the Inspectional Services and copied to the ANC. Inspectional services must approve the demolition permit.

Gulf Station Discipline
Last month it was reported that the Gulf Station was required to attend a Disciplinary Hearing on 1/11 at the License Commission for allowing self-service gasoline to be sold at their location on the Garfield St. corner.

In their decision the License Commission advised the Gulf Station that "the self-service of gasoline at 1725 Mass. Ave. should not occur again without permission from this Board which requires an application and hearing. If this does occur again, the Commission will suspend or revoke your garage and gasoline license following a hearing."

Traffic/Transportation
Submitted by Astrid Dodds

Sidewalk snow-shovelling thanks to:

- Harvard — for moving Guidance Center parking lot snow off the sidewalk, clearing its part of the Museum St. sidewalk, creating openings to bus stops at Wendell and at Everett and for clearing the huge mound of snow blocking the sidewalk at 26 Sacramento. • Lesley — for plowing the Oxford sidewalk between Sacramento & Wendell on the east and cutting openings to the Oxford/Wendell crosswalks after the Feb. 11-12 storm. • The City of Somerville — for plowing the Beacon St. bridge sidewalks. • The majority of Agassiz residents who did an heroic job during a difficult winter.

Street Cleaning Early Alert
If March is here, can street sweeping be far behind? To avoid being ticketed and towed, go to a calendar and note the first sweeps in Area F (Agassiz neighborhood):

Tuesday, April 19 - first even side street sweep
Friday, April 22 - first odd side street sweep
The odd side will be on the 5th Friday because the 3rd Monday is Patriots Day. We appreciate the DPW’s 1992 decision to fund a custom odd-side sweep of Area F at the end of April so the detritus of winter is gone before May.

Accident Report
In February, a neighborhood driver pulled out of the east block of Wendell onto Oxford and was hit by a vehicle northbound on Oxford. The problem? Visibility reduced by a parked vehicle, of course.

Traffic & Parking tickets care parked on the east side of Oxford at Wendell in the areas posted "Tow Zone - No Standing" but only 9-5 Mon.-Fri. Call T&P’s Parking Violations Bureau at 349-4705 with complaints. Nights and weekends, call the Police at 349-3300. Theoretically, a vehicle parked in a "Tow Zone - No Standing" area can be towed at any time, but only by order of the Police Dept. which often seems reluctant to do it. Please report accidents involving pedestrians, cars or bicyclists anywhere in the neighborhood to the ANC office (349-6287) so we know where the problem areas are. Official city accident statistics do not always reflect reality.

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Bicyclist Responds

To the Editor:

In the January Whistler, an article appeared which described an accident at the intersection of Beacon St. and Somerville Ave. in which a bicyclist was killed in a collision with a car. The article went on to suggest licensing of bicyclists to spare motorists anxiety about hitting bicyclists. On behalf of bicyclists everywhere, I wish to express shock and disgust that no concern was expressed for the loss of the bicyclists life or the danger to bicyclists of such accidents, that this article implicitly blamed the bicyclist with no evidence whatsoever that he was at fault, and that it disingenuously used this accident and death as a pretext for suggesting that bicyclists should be restricted for the advantage of motorists, purportedly to spare them, the motorists, such terrible anxiety. This article shows the irrational prejudice against bicyclists which must be eliminated before citizens can safely exercise their right under state law to bicycle on our roads.

The article failed to say that the Somerville Journal reported that the driver in question, a taxi driver, had been convicted of drunk driving and other motor vehicle offenses, had been subject to a six-month suspension of his taxicab license, and had regained that license only shortly before this accident and under questionable circumstances and that the driver has been charged with motor vehicle homicide in connection with this accident. A rational, civilized response would seem to be concern about bicyclists' safety and not about drivers anxiety about hitting bicyclists.

This article also contained factual mistakes. Contrary to statements in the article, traffic laws pertaining to bicycles can be enforced without licensing bicyclists—such laws are enforced elsewhere in this country with no licensing requirement—and, to the best of the knowledge of the Cambridge Bicycle Committee, no state in the union requires licensing of bicyclists nor does any foreign country. Furthermore, law enforcement is not the only way to influence the behavior of bicyclists, contrary to the implications in the article; education is another, necessary way.

Apropos of this accident, one might add that motorists who are so "fearful of collision with bicyclists" should address this fear by respecting the rights of bicyclists to use of the roads, a right equal to that of motorists, guaranteed by state law, and by driving safely and lawfully as should all users of the road.

In sum, this article, with incomplete and inaccurate presentation of the facts, disparages the lives and safety of bicyclists. This article reduces the life of a bicyclist to a mere cause for anxiety for motorists. Such misinformation and thoughtlessness make the roads more dangerous for bicyclists and others. The Agassiz neighborhood is disserved by the expression of such ungenerous sentiments. On behalf of bicyclists everywhere and particularly those in our neighborhood, as a bicyclist, moreover a law-abiding bicyclist, a citizen of Cambridge, and a resident of the Agassiz neighborhood, I expect more respectful and considerate treatment of bicyclists both in The Whistler and on the road.

Douglas Kline, Member, Cambridge Bicycle Committee and Agassiz resident

The Cambridge Bicycle Committee has taken this opportunity to provide us with the safety tips that follow

TRAVEL SAFELY - SHARE THE ROAD

In light of the tragic death of the bicyclist in the Agassiz neighborhood near the bridge on Beacon Street (see editorial this edition), the Cambridge Bicycle Committee would like to offer the following practical tips and information regarding safety for bicyclists, motorists and pedestrians who share the road:

Tips for Motorists

• **Think bike!** Start looking specifically for bicycles. Since bicycling is the most popular participatory activity in the U.S. - more than 100 million Americans ride bicycles - motorists should always be aware of the possible presence of bicyclists on the road.

• **Pass with caution.** Motorists who approach or pass a person on a bicycle are required by state law to slow down and pass at a safe distance.

• **Share the road.** Bicyclists have the same legal right to use the road as motorists. Motorists should share the road with bicyclists and treat them as they would any other vehicle.

• **Be alert when turning.** Before turning right, check for bicyclists on your right side blind spot by looking back over your right shoulder, especially if you've just passed a bicyclist. Do not turn in front of a bicyclist just as you would not turn in front of a motorist. Watch for pedestrians at intersections and when turning into driveways.

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**Be predictable.** Always signal well in advance of turns so that bicyclists, other motorists and pedestrians know what your intentions are.

**Watch out at intersections.** Be particularly careful at intersections, yielding the right-of-way to bicycles as you would to any other vehicle. Most accidents between motorists and bicyclists occur at intersections. Yield to pedestrians in crosswalks, and stop before the crosswalk.

**Respect bicyclists.** Bicycles can travel surprisingly fast - never underestimate their speed. You should yield to bicycles as you would to cars.

**Tips for Bicyclists**

- **Be seen.** Wear bright clothing and position yourself in the portion of the lane where it is most likely that you will be seen.

- **Obey all traffic rules.** Bicyclists have the same responsibilities for observing traffic laws as motorists have. Follow traffic rules for cars, or dismount and follow pedestrian rules.

- **Go with the flow.** The safest way to ride a bicycle is as part of the traffic, going with the flow of the normal traffic pattern. Wrong way cycling is a major cause of accidents with motorists and pedestrians who are crossing your line of travel and looking the other way.

- **Be predictable.** Establish and hold your position so that motorists can anticipate your location. Ride at least three feet from parked cars or the curb.

- **Be aware.** Look ahead and anticipate situations in road conditions, traffic and any potential hazard (e.g., car doors opening or vehicles emerging from driveways). Never rely on eye contact only as a sign that a driver has seen you. Do not use headphones when you ride.

- **Always wear a helmet!** The most common fatal injuries to bicyclists are head injuries. Wearing a helmet substantially reduces the risk and seriousness of injuries.

- **Use signals.** When it's safe to do so, a bicycle operator should signal, by either hand, his/her intention to stop or turn.

- **Use a head light.** When operating a bicycle at night, you are required to have a white light on the front, a light or rear reflector, and reflectors or reflective material either on the pedals, the sides of the bicycle or on your legs.

- **Pass with caution.** Pass on the left when you are moving fast and a lane is free. If you pass on the right, do it very slowly and watch out for pedestrians and car doors.

- **Respect the rights of pedestrians.** Bicyclists are prohibited from sidewalks in designated business districts. In other areas, you may ride on the sidewalk when necessary in the interest of safety unless prohibited by local ordinance. You are sharing space with pedestrians; go slowly and give maximum leeway when passing. You must yield the right of way to pedestrians and give an audible signal before over taking and passing any pedestrian.

**Tips for Pedestrians**

- **Cross streets at designated intersections and with the light.** Jaywalking (crossing a street at mid-block) and crossing against the light are very dangerous.

- **Look both ways before you cross.** This maxim applies equally to children and adults. Remember to look for bicyclists as well as motorists. If you cross when the signal indicates, either by a "Walk" light or symbol, always watch for turning vehicles.

- **Be aware of others and be predictable.** When on a shared use path (e.g. the Paul Dudley White Bike Path along the Charles River or Linear Park), you should stay to the right and be aware that other users may be behind you or want to pass you. Don't suddenly dart across the path without looking behind you to see if someone else is coming. If a bicyclist calls out "on the left" s/he means that s/he is going to pass by on your left. Unless the path is particularly congested (in which case you should move to the right) just continue walking straight on in a predictable manner.

It is in the interest of motorists, bicyclists and pedestrians alike that traffic rules are observed. Some of the most common accidents occur from bicyclists riding the wrong way (against traffic) or running red lights, or from motorists who do not recognize the rights of bicyclists, and therefore do not yield to them or pass at unsafe distances and speeds. Bicyclists, motorists and pedestrians must work together to ensure that travelling is as safe as possible for everyone.

More information on pedestrian safety is available in two brochures published by the City's Traffic and Parking Department entitled "Marked Crosswalk" and "Pedestrian Signals". Call 349-4700 for copies. For information on the City's Bicycle and Pedestrian Mobility Program, call Environmental Program office at 349-4604.

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The Whistler March 1994

City Wide News and Information

Planning Board Vacancy
City Manager Robert Healy is seeking applicants to fill a vacancy on the Cambridge Planning Board, which issues special permits for specified developments, recommends changes to the zoning ordinance, undertakes planning studies and advises the city on land use and physical planning matters. The board meets on the first and third Tuesday of each month.

Send a letter of interest to Robert Healy, City Manager, 795 Mass. Ave., Cambridge 02139.

Mass Planning and Development Act
We have been advised by the Community Development Department that a new piece of planning legislation known as the Massachusetts Planning and Development Act (the "Growing Smart Bill") is before the Legislature's Joint Committee on Local Affairs. It proposes a new framework for planning in Massachusetts. An executive summary is available by calling the council at 349-6287.

A meeting will be held in Belmont on March 24 at the Belmont High School on this issue. For more information, call Mary Flynn at 349-4600.

I desire parking space only during day, five days per week in Agassiz neighborhood. Ask for Rino 495-9616.

1993 Year End Review:

After recording an all time low in 1992 the target crime rate in the Neighborhood #8 area is somewhat stagnant. The Agassiz area is one of the only city neighborhoods to record a decline in larceny from motor vehicles. Street robbery totals in this neighborhood were down by 20% from 1992. In contrast to the citywide total. The Signal 86 Dispatch/Parade Walk program has been successful in deterring this type of activity. The 100% increase in malicious destruction can be attributed to spray painting around the Agassiz School playground, slashed tires on Forest Street and along Mass Ave.

Neighborhood #8 is encompassed by the patrol boundaries of CAR 6 (a two-officer car) and CAR 6R (a one-officer car). It is also covered by walking route NORTH 17

Annual Average for Target Crimes
Based on decade of 1980's...1981 to 1990

Housebreaks..............67 per year
Street Robbery.............11 per year
Auto Theft..................45 per year
Larceny from MVs...........47 per year
Malicious Destruction.....45 per year

COMPARISON OF TARGET CRIME STATISTICS...1992/1993

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<th>1992 TOTAL</th>
<th>1993 TOTAL</th>
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CRIME REPORT 1993


DRUG ARRESTS

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Agassiz School Construction

For updates or problems, call the HOT LINE 497-4388

Hot Line Log

There were only two calls to the hot line since last month, both snow related. One call complained about plowing in the middle of the night, which the City Manager's Office said was work contracted out. They agreed to make a complaint on it. The other call was concerning the mound of snow on the Sacramento St. between the school and Harvard's property. The city was contacted, then Harvard, and the snow was removed.

26 Sacramento St.

By mid March, the house at 26 Sacramento should be back on its own (new) foundation. Weather has confounded the construction.

Meetings Scheduled in Anticipation of Construction

On March 15 at the ANC meeting (see front page for details) there will be an opportunity to develop the agenda for the March 29 meeting with the principal players in the Agassiz School Construction: Deputy City Manager Rich Rossi, Architect George Metzger, Clerk of the Works Lou DiNapoli and the site manager from Eastern Construction Co. of Framingham, the company that has been awarded the contract for the Agassiz School.

The March 29 meeting will be held at 7:30 p.m. in the Community Room at 1651 Mass. Ave. (corner of Wendell). Everyone interested in Agassiz School Construction is encouraged to attend the meetings.

Lesley College News

Process Worked Out

Members of the Lesley community and the Agassiz community met to discuss a process to best communicate and respond to mutual issues.

As the meeting unfolded, it was obvious that a variety of communication methods and forums would be necessary to provide everyone with what they needed.

It was agreed to continue the Lesley Agassiz Resource Committee as is with meetings twice yearly. That committee is a large group representing the widest community, and it deals mainly with shared resources.

A smaller group from Lesley representing Communications (Steve Crawford), the President's Office (Sam Turner), the Dean of Students (Nancy Galvin), Building and Grounds (David Erlanson) and Administration (Alan Fein) and the Agassiz Lesley Resource Committee (Linda Erion-Meisels) will meet with representatives of Agassiz twice yearly to discuss issues of development and planning, and just to keep in touch. Either community could call this group together if they felt it necessary.

Lesley has agreed to use the ANC meetings to gather community input on issues. Sam Turner from the President's Office (and other appropriate representatives) will attend ANC meetings when the agenda includes Lesley issues, and either community may suggest agenda items. The ANC office will keep in touch through regular communication with the president's office which will continue to provide ANC with news and calendar information on a regular basis for The Whistler.

When there are individual problems with noise or construction, Agassiz residents will be referred to the appropriate Lesley representative by the ANC. If a resident does not feel Lesley responded to them, the resident will be urged to attend a council meeting, where the issue can be discussed by council members.

Lesley representatives said that they had worked through many of the problems addressed early this winter. Quiet wheels have been installed on mail carriers, work crews are parking away from apartment buildings, and dormitory personnel have been trained. We have been promised that work crews will adhere to reasonable hours in the summer. Sam Turner agreed to come to the April ANC meeting to follow up on all issues.

If you have any additional input for this process or if you need to know who to call for a Lesley related problem, please contact the council office at 349-6287.

Threshold Program

The Lesley Threshold Program will be initiating an exciting new program that will be of great benefit to the Neighborhood as well as the Threshold students themselves. This new program will offer the helping hands of Threshold students to folks in the neighborhood who may need assistance. Ideas that have been discussed include shoveling sidewalks, helping with heavy grocery bags, general neighborhood clean up or simply a visit to chat with someone who may not get out much. We think this program could be really beneficial for many people, and of course it would provide valuable human service experience for the students. We anticipate being able to organize and implement this program by the Fall of '94.

Threshold is a program that was founded in 1981 for young adults with learning disabilities. Its curriculum is designed for students who are motivated to continue their education after high school but would have difficulty succeeding in a traditional college program. The Threshold students develop a variety of skills for independent adulthood through its practical courses and field placement with majors in early childhood, adult human services, and clerical services.

If you have any questions concerning the Threshold Program or suggestions for the helping hands program, feel free to contact Threshold, 29 Everett St., Cambridge, 02138, 349-8181. We'll keep you posted.

Sunday Afternoon Concert

A wind and string quartet from the Gramercy Ensemble will be performing works by Beethoven, Mozart, Jacob, and Stieber in a one hour concert at North Prospect Church on the corner of Mass. Ave. and Roseland St. on Sunday March 13 at 4:30 p.m.

There will be an opportunity to meet the musicians at a reception following the concert. Handicap entrance. For more information call 547-1448.
Community Calendar

March 8, Tuesday
Elementary School Half Day

March 10, Thursday
5:30-7 p.m.
Agassiz Community School Open House
20 Sacramento St. For information call 349-6287.

March 13, Sunday
4:30 p.m.
Sunday Afternoon Concert
North Prospect Church 1803 Mass. Ave.

March 15, Tuesday
6:30 p.m.
ANC Board of Directors Meeting
7:30 p.m.
Agassiz Neighborhood Council Meeting
Community Room 1651 Mass. Ave. (corner of Wendell)

March 17, Thursday
St. Patrick's Day - Schools Closed

March 23, Wednesday
7:30 p.m.
Workshop on Self Esteem cosponsored by Agassiz Community School and Agassiz School for parents. Agassiz School 15 Webster Ave., Somerville. For information call 349-6525.

March 29, Tuesday
7:30 p.m.
Agassiz School Construction Meeting
Community Room 1651 Mass. Ave. (corner of Wendell)

The Whistler is published monthly September - June by the Agassiz Neighborhood Council, distribution 2,000. Neighborhood residents may be added to the mailing list by calling 349-6287. Items of interest to the Agassiz neighborhood may be submitted for consideration to address below, no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication date.

March 1994
The Whistler
Agassiz Neighborhood Council
20 Sacramento St.
Cambridge, MA 02138
349-6287

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