

November
1993

The Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

In This Issue

Agassiz School Construction	2
1994 Parking Permit	4
Lesley College Who to Call	5
Memorial Hall Construction	5

ANC Council Meeting Notes

Minutes from the 10/19 ANC meeting

Kathleen Manion, Chairperson, opened the meeting with news of a rumor that Cumberland Farms, the owners of **The Gulf Station** located at the corner of Mass. Ave. and Garfield St., was about to add a convenience store at that location. Calls to the License Commission revealed no application, and when Cumberland Farms was called, they would not "confirm or deny" the rumor, and suggested that the president be contacted. Terry DeLancey offered to send a letter on behalf of the ANC to find out what their plans were and to encourage them to meet with us as soon as possible if it was their intention to add a convenience store (as well as a conversion to self serve gas, which has been the pattern.)

Astrid Dodds made a request that the next council meeting be a discussion about our neighborhood association, and it was approved.

The Chair invited participants to join the Long Range Planning Committee of the ANC.

The Chair advised the council that Ken Basler had resigned as Chair of the Joint Harvard Neighborhood

Committee, and that JoAnn Hoffman would temporarily replace him on that committee.

Joel Bard reported on the Agassiz meeting with **Lesley College President Margaret McKenna**. Other members of the Agassiz community at the meeting were Joe Gerson and Ellen Friedman. Sam Turner, Special Assistant to the President (and our contact in the President's office), and Alan Fein, Vice President of Administration and Finances represented Lesley along with President McKenna. There were three areas covered:

- 1). Long range questions - Lesley was asked if there was a current master plan, and they responded that there was not an active plan. If there is one formulated, it was requested that the neighborhood be included during the planning stage.
- 2). Mid range questions - This concerned problematic issues regarding the use of buildings that are in the neighborhood, not "on campus." The neighborhood would like advance notice when buildings will change use. In this area the neighborhood could use more ongoing communications.
- 3). Day to day problems - This set of issues include trash in the neighborhood, parking and student noise.

Lesley agreed to provide a list of names and phone numbers for the community to call for problems which would be published in *The Whistler*. (See "Lesley College News" below for the list.) President McKenna agreed to attend a neighborhood meeting, meet the neighbors first hand and introduce other members of her staff who can address problems. (It has since been scheduled for December 9 at 7:30 in the Community Room, 1651 Mass. Ave.) Joel hoped that this kind of meeting would occur at least yearly.

Abutters spoke, and one voiced the opinion that the situation is out of control, and the neighborhood should not have to do the policing. One resident had real objection to the recycling center, and said he would ask city council for a public hearing on the license granted to the recycling center.

Upcoming Council Meetings

November 16

Agassiz Neighborhood Council Meeting

Agenda

- 1). New Business, Reports, December agenda
- 2). Discussion on "What is the Agassiz neighborhood association" (See p. 3)

PLEASE NOTE SPECIAL MEETING:

December 9 Margaret McKenna, President Lesley College will address the Agassiz Neighborhood Council.

Both Meetings will be held at 7:30 p.m.

in the Community Room at 1651 Mass. Ave. (at Wendell St.)

For information, call 349-6287.

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Linda Brion-Meisels, Agassiz resident, Lesley staff member, and Chairperson of the Lesley Agassiz Committee asked the neighborhood to recognize that Lesley had been in a cooperative relationship with Agassiz for many years, and Agassiz should not forget the many areas of sharing and help we have extended to one another in the past.

Oversight Committee Update was given by Janet Rustow. She advised us that Ken Basler has resigned as chairman of Oversight Committee, and the oversight issues will be folded into the regular council meeting with specific time set aside each month. The committee saw an ongoing need for people to act quickly if changes are proposed (due to budgetary issues) in the plans for the new Agassiz School.

Demolition of the Old Agassiz School Building was discussed by Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager. Also in attendance were Jim Conry, Director of Administration and Finance at the School Department, George Metzger, from HMFH, Architect for the new Agassiz School and Jim Rita, Facilities Projects Coordinator for the School Department. Mr. Rossi advised us that Mike Nicolero from Inspectional Services will serve as Clerk of the Works during salvage and demolition. Prior to demolition, gas lines will be cut and oil tanks will be removed. Inspectional Services will deal with rodents, dust, and any other issues of demolition. A pre-demolition seminar and talks with the City and Architects will be required of the contractor. Traffic patterns, hours of operation, and other details have been incorporated into the demolition documents (which are available by calling the council at 349-6287). During the salvage school historical items

will be photographed and wrapped by the contractor, then stored by the City until the builder needs them. Bids on the demolition contract for the Agassiz School are due November 12th at 2 p.m. The best estimate on time of demolition is sometime between December 1-20. Definite dates will be available later this month.

The move of the house at 26 Sacramento (closer to the house at 24 Sacramento) will be handled by its owner, Harvard University. Contracts are completed, and the move will be under separate bid that is due October 29. The construction should occur in approximately three to four weeks, and it will take approximately five weeks: two weeks preparation, one week to move, and two weeks wrap up.

Documents of construction for the New Agassiz School are due November 24th. Sub bids (masonry, electric, etc.) are due before Christmas. These bids are then given to the candidates for construction. The bid process is open to the public and will take place in the City Purchasing Agents Office, dates to be announced.

The monitoring procedures for construction are detailed, technical and complex. Architect George Metzger provided the council with a breakdown of all the various monitors-their location, quantity, purpose, and who would collect and interpret the monitoring data. Ground water, water pressure, soil shifting, and vibrations would be measured as well as any movement of the excavation support wall. There will be a preconstruction survey to record the condition of adjacent structures. There will be testing of soil and fill materials as well as a general excavation and backfill inspection. The various monitors and surveys were depicted on a map to show their physical placement.

A Clerk of the Works will be hired in January or February who will be available for all neighborhood issues and concerns on a daily basis. The clerk will be available via construction phone and a page number. He also said that the sewer construction and school construction would be coordinated. The pre demolition talks will include school bus safety and traffic issues. Police details will be used as necessary for safety.

What's Your Opinion?

In September The Whistler asked for opinion pieces, and we got our first at the October council meeting. We are starting off with an exception in length, and we would like opinion pieces to be kept to 200 words.

This is your opportunity to express your point of view. Opinion pieces must be signed with the author's name and address.


Agassiz Opinions

What is the Agassiz neighborhood association?

by Astrid Dodds

Once upon a time, there was an Agassiz Neighborhood Council. It consisted of neighborhood residents who came to its monthly meetings. The neighborhood was a geographic entity defined as the area within which all resident children attended the Agassiz School. The ANC was founded in the early 70s when the City Council decided that each Cambridge neighborhood would be enriched and empowered if it had funds for its needs and met to determine a neighborhood agenda.

Early projects of the ANC included a parent co-op pre-school, the Agassiz Co-op Kindergarten, maintaining the tot lot, lobbying for the City's purchase of Sacramento Field, creating and managing the community garden, an after-school child-care program, monitoring the Red Line extension, and keeping Harvard from buying the neighborhood.

Many school, neighborhood, municipal, and societal evolutions later, in 1985, the ANC separated from the city-run "community schools" program and became a private, non-profit corporation called "The Agassiz Neighborhood Council, Inc." Today it has a staff of 2 and \$345,000 in annual income from child care program tuition, charitable donations, advertising, and the City of Cambridge. Its mission is "to serve the Agassiz community," defined in its by-laws as:

- (1) Agassiz school children and parents (who now come from all city neighborhoods)
- (2) children and parents in ANC, Inc.-run child care programs (ditto)
- (3) residents of a geographical entity called the Agassiz neighborhood

Then came the city-state mandate to build a larger school in an area that ran out of space 90 years ago. Suddenly it was clear that the Agassiz neighborhood and the Agassiz community were no longer co-terminus. The fragile coalition called "the Agassiz community" fell apart at the seams.

In the spotlight of divisive issues which have taken 2 years to resolve, it became clear that the ANC, Inc.,

is first and foremost a child-care business. Its income is chiefly child-care tuition and it devotes most of its time to running stellar child-care programs. The child-care operation has, of necessity, become ever better organized and run. But the neighborhood agenda (and volunteer resident participation in it) waxes and wanes. To some of us it seems as though the neighborhood association — from which all else originally flowed — has been reduced to "a program" of a nonprofit child-care corporation.

- What is the relationship between the neighborhood association and the ANC, Inc., Board of Directors?
- Can one body tell the other what to do?
- Why do the neighborhood association and the Bd. of Directors of the child care operation share a Chair?
- Is the *Whistler* the voice of the neighborhood or of the ANC, Inc.?
- How is the Executive Director's relationship to the neighborhood association defined and by whom?
- Is the neighborhood association a beggar at the table of child-care program tuition or are there ANC, Inc., resources to which it is entitled?
- Is it in the neighborhood's best interest to be part of a nonprofit corporation the main mission of which is a citywide child care program?

If the neighborhood wants a clearer identity, more autonomy and continuity, how can that be achieved? What made sense in 1972 and 1985 may not make sense today. If you, too, think this is a discussion worth having, please come to the Tues., Nov. 16 Agassiz Neighborhood Council meeting.

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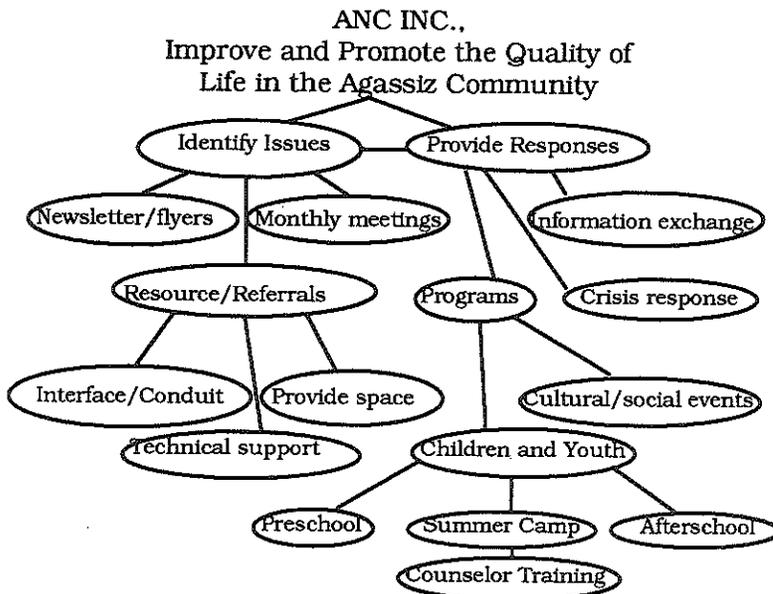
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**Neighborhood
News**

Wanted: Help with Long Range Planning

The Long Range Planning Committee, which began its work last year, would like to share its agency diagram with you. This is the model that will be reviewed, assessed and developed in the coming months:



Members of the community are welcome to join in the Long Range Planning and work toward a five year plan for the agency. Especially needed are people who have experience in community assessments and non-profit strategic planning, but a real interest in the Agassiz Community is the only qualification. Call the council at 349-6287 for more information.


**City Wide News
and Information**

Utility Bill required for Parking Permit

The Department of Traffic and Parking will begin issuing Cambridge Resident Parking Permits as usual this fall at 57 Inman St. beginning on November 1, Monday - Friday 7:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

*We have been advised that the Traffic and Parking Department will enforce the requirement that each resident must have a **current** gas, electric, New England Telephone or cable bill in addition to a*

current Massachusetts registration for each vehicle. You must submit the portion of the bill imprinted with your name and address where the service is rendered. Only original bills are accepted, no copies. for just a visitor permit, you must submit the above minus the vehicle registration.

You may purchase a sticker by mail, but you must submit a legible photocopy of your Massachusetts vehicle registration and a current bill as described above, original only. A check or money order for \$8. payable to the City of Cambridge must be submitted for each permit which will include one visitor permit. Visitors permits only also cost \$8. but no registration is required.

For more information call the Traffic and Parking Department at 349-4700.

Ground Breaking for Sewer Project

Councillor Alice Wolf called the ANC to let us know about the ground breaking, which occurred in late October, for the Sewer Reconstruction Project Phase VI. It will come to our neighborhood in about 2 years. The construction has begun at the Charles River, and *The Whistler* will keep you updated.

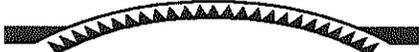
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Lesley College News

Lesley College is eager to work with the Agassiz community to maintain positive community relations. In this spirit, President McKenna along with other pertinent members of the college will be attending an Agassiz neighborhood meeting scheduled for December 9th at 7:30 p.m. For your convenience, the following is a list of appropriate people to contact at Lesley for various concerns:

LESLEY COLLEGE CLIP AND SAVE

Alan Fein; Vice President of Administration and Finance **349-8700**. Contact Mr. Fein for real estate issues/questions.

David Erlandson; Director of Plant Operations **349-8880**. Contact Mr. Erlandson with issues concerning buildings and grounds.

Nancy Galvin; Acting Dean of Students **349-8530**. Contact Ms. Galvin regarding any student related issues including concerns about the residence halls and student activities.

Linda Brion-Meisels; Faculty member/Agassiz resident, Chair of Lesley Agassiz Resource Committee **349-8940**. Contact Ms. Brion-Meisels if you have any agenda items that might be of interest to the committee, or as a general liaison between the two communities.

Sam Turner; Special Assistant to the President as well as Lesley's Representative on the Agassiz Neighborhood Council **349-8500**. Contact Mr. Turner with all other concerns.

Kids Only Holiday Sale

The Annual Kids Only Sale provides school age kids an opportunity to shop for holiday gifts in a safe environment. This year, due to space limitations, the sale will be held one day only in combination with:

The Agassiz School International Food Fair
Saturday December 4
Noon - 3 p.m

15 Webster Ave. Somerville in Union Square at the former St. Joseph's School. For information call 349-6287.



Harvard News

Memorial Hall Update

(This is part two of an article submitted by Astrid Dodds, member of the Memorial Hall Renovation Committee. The construction project has begun at Lowell Lecture Hall and will begin at Memorial Hall in June. The first half of this report appeared in the October Whistler, You can obtain it by calling the council office at 349-6287.)

Traffic/Transportation Pedestrian & Bicyclist coexistence

Harvard set out at the beginning a vision of turning the overpass between the Yard-Science Center-Littauer-Quincy St. into a pedestrian oasis. The student entrance to the freshman dining hall will be at the west end of Memorial Hall — where the portico faces the Science Center. The question arose of what to do about the present conflict on the overpass between pedestrians and bicyclists. Everyone strained, without success, to find a bicycle route *around* the overpass; some bicyclists have not given up hope of a designated bicycle lane *through* the underpass. (VHB noted that the underpass is now an isolated "speed-up" zone ; adding a separated bicycle lane would reduce the underpass' motor vehicle capacity/speed but only to the traffic conditions which obtain at both ends of it.) There seemed to be no way to completely separate pedestrians and bicyclists on the overpass. Many participants supported a proposal to make the overpass a "Walk your bike" zone. Because this suggestion was opposed by the bicycle lobby — as well as by the Cambridge Bicycle/Pedestrian Coordinator — the overpass will instead be posted "Bicyclists: Yield to Pedestrians." (It has not yet been possible to determine what "yield" in this circumstance means in a city that refuses to enforce the state law requiring headlights and warning bells



Agassiz School News

Come to the
2nd Annual International Food Fair

Saturday December 4 from Noon - 3 p.m.

At the temporary site of the Agassiz School in Somerville's Union Square, 15 Webster Ave. Enjoy food and games.

The Annual "Kids Only Sale" will also be held there this year. Support the fund raising efforts of the Agassiz School and the Agassiz Community School. Call 349-6525 for more information

on bicycles.) VHB will work on ways to re-align and widen paths in the belief that this will reduce pedestrian-bicyclist conflict. The problem of wrong-way and sidewalk bicycling on the Quincy block between the Fogg and Harvard Yard remains unresolved, although enticing north & west/-bound bicyclists to use Prescott St. has been suggested. Harvard is committed to providing more bicycle parking racks.

Pedestrians

Harvard paths and walkways and some city sidewalks and crosswalks will be widened and/or re-aligned in such a way as to encourage Harvard students to use Harvard Yard and the pedestrian overpass to reach Memorial Hall and the Kirkland/Divinity Ave. area. A new crosswalk will be added to connect Lowell Hall's new main entrance (at the rear of that building) to the Science Center across the street. When the traffic signals are installed at Everett/Oxford (not later than March 1994), a crosswalk will be added across the south side of the Everett intersection and there will be an exclusive pedestrian "Walk" phase. In some locations where the present Right Turn on Red conflicts with the "Walk" phase of a traffic signal, RTOR will be eliminated. As a direct result of these meetings, one pedestrian-activated Walk light button that didn't work now does: on the SW corner of Broadway & Quincy.

Tourists

We urged Harvard to do a better job of orienting the pedestrian tourist to his/her location—thus relieving area residents of a heavy seasonal burden. Posted semi-permanent maps indicating "you are here" and key features of the Harvard landscape would help not only tourists but Sanders Theater patrons who arrive by MBTA in Harvard Sq. for the first time. We will ask that the truck restriction on Oxford apply to tour buses as well with an eye to preventing them from traveling north of Everett.

Parking

The Harvard Shuttle Bus - The Shuttle presently parks next to Memorial Hall at the intersection of Kirkland & Oxford where it often backs up into the newly-painted zebra crosswalk. This shuttle stop has to be relocated before Mem Hall construction begins. We are asking that it be relocated this fall to on-street parking spaces reserved exclusively for the Harvard shuttle—a remedy that will require extensive cooperation from the city Traffic & Parking Dept.

Harvard's Visitor Parking Plan - Harvard is developing

a visitor parking plan. If it doesn't work, it will be fine-tuned. More forcefully requiring Sanders Theater event sponsors to promote patron parking at the Broadway Garage and use of the MBTA is one approach. Harvard wants to get visitors off neighborhood streets without attracting more cars to an already-congested area. Harvard cannot charge event patrons and visitors for parking because that would make Harvard a commercial operator of a parking facility and thus violate the City Parking Freeze.

VHB's Survey of Visitor Parking - VHB surveyed patrons of two sold-out performances, one at Sanders (cap. 1265) and one at Paine Hall (cap. 437) to establish where they came from, how they got here, and where they parked. Of the 366 cars that came to the Sanders event, 77% parked on the street, 11% in a garage, 3% in a Harvard lot. Of the 121 cars that came to the Paine Hall event, 61% parked on the street, 0 in a garage, 34% in a Harvard lot. Of the 281 Sanders event cars parked on the street, only 37 were Cambridge cars. Which leaves a substantial mystery: where did the other 244 park? VHB attempted to corroborate anecdotal evidence of parking pressures on adjoining neighborhoods, but was thwarted by the discovery that the Cambridge Traffic & Parking Dept. does not keep records of parking violations by location. We will point out that parking pressures are not limited to actual violations of parking law. If 37 "resident only" parking spaces in one neighborhood were legitimately claimed by patrons of a Sanders event, that alone creates "parking pressures." It is unclear how many areas adjacent to Harvard are ticketed after 4:30 pm or on weekends. Parking within 20' of an intersection is a common example of parking pressure that receives little enforcement attention nights and weekends.

The Future

Two more meetings are scheduled, one to review transportation issues and one to review the design of the addition to Memorial Hall. Updates on neighborhood discussions with Harvard will appear as necessary in future issues of the Whistler.

Grace Margaret Moore was born at 7:59 p.m. on October 9, at Mt. Auburn Hospital. She weighed 7 lbs. 2.5 oz. The proud parents are Larry and Margaret Moore at 75 Wendell St.

Recycling News

Recycling Drop Off Center Now Accepts More Items!

The Cambridge Recycling Drop-off Center in the Public Works yard at 147 Hampshire St. can now accept a mixture of the following paper items for recycling on Tuesday and Thursday evening between 4:30-6:30 p.m. and Saturday 8:30 a.m.-3:30 p.m.:

- Telephone books
- Junk mail
- White and colored paper
- Manila envelopes and folders
- Cereal and shoe boxes (remove inner liners)
- Fax paper
- NCR Forms

Please do not bring self stick envelopes, carbon, foil paper, was paper or egg cartons.

You can also drop off serviceable clothing, hats, belts, shoes, handbags, towels, linens and blankets. All items must clean, dry and in a paper or plastic bag. These items are purchased by the Garment District, a Cambridge company. Revenues are donated to the CASPAR homeless shelter.

Get Ready for Falling Leaves

To ensure that autumn leaves are picked up at the curb by the City's recycling service, residents are reminded to follow these simple steps:

- Use 30 gallon paper bags or clearly marked barrels (leaves in plastic bags, including "biodegradable" plastic, will not be picked up).
- Paper bags are available at most supermarkets and hardware stores.
- Call 349-4800 for free "yard waste" barrel labels.
- Put leaves and yard waste out by 7 a.m. on your trash day
- No branches "thicker than your thumb or longer than your arm." Tie branches with string.
- Put dirt with trash, not yard waste.
- Leaves and yard waste, other recyclable and trash are all picked up at different times of the day on trash day.
- If your yard waste isn't picked up by 6 p.m call 349-4860.

Odd Jobs Available

There are many neighborhood residents who need leaves raked, snow shoveled and other odd jobs filled. If you (or a teen you know) is interested in doing odd jobs, call the council at 349-6287.

Cultural Happenings

SUNDAY AFTERNOON CONCERT

North-Prospect church, 1803 Massachusetts Avenue, Cambridge (near Porter Square T) resumes its free concert series Sunday November 7, at 4:30 p.m. in the church sanctuary. Featuring Levon Hovsepian, piano; Faith Kasparian, soprano. Performing music by Chopin, Liszt, Satie, Ireland and Babajanian. Open to the public; wheel chair accessible. Donations requested \$2. Telephone 547-1448.

The Mass. Cultural Council

invites you to attend a public forum to discuss issues facing the Massachusetts' cultural community, as well as other activities of the MCC. The public meeting will be held 7-9 p.m. on Monday November 29 in the South End, Boston, at the Jorge Hernandez Cultural Center in Villa Victoria at 85 West Newton St. Call the Mass Council at 727-3668 for more information about the meeting.

Children's Workshop Toy Store

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<p>November 3-6 November 10-13 November 12</p>	<p>DOLL SALE PlayMobil SALE PlayMobil PLAY DAY Win a Pirate Ship or 1-2-3 Train</p>
<p>November 17-20 November 20</p>	<p>LEGO SALE LEGO Building CONTEST</p>

Weekend Performances
November 7, 14, 21, 27
Call for Schedule and Details
1963 Mass. Ave. Cambridge
(Near Porter Square T Stop)
(617) 354- 1633



November 1993 Community Calendar

- November 2, Tuesday Election Day Vote!
- November 11, Thursday Veterans Day No school
- November 16, Tuesday 7:30 p.m. Agassiz Neighborhood Council Meeting
Community Room 1651 Mass. Ave. at Wendell St.
- November 24, Wednesday Cambridge school Half Day-Afterschool in session
- November 25-26 Thursday Friday No School or Afterschool - Thanksgiving Recess
- December 4, Saturday Noon - 3 p.m. ... International Food Fair and KIDS ONLY Sale
Agassiz School Temporary Site- St. Joseph's School
15 Webster Ave. Union Square Somerville
- December 9, Thursday 7:30 p.m. Agassiz Special Meeting with Lesley College
Special Guest President Margaret McKenna
Community Room 1651 Mass. Ave. at Wendell St.
(for more information call 349-6287)

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.



**November 1993
The Whistler
Agassiz Neighborhood Council
20 Sacramento St.
Cambridge, MA 02138
349-6287**

DO NOT FORWARD