The Annual Meeting of the Agassiz Neighborhood was held on June 4th, with over 100 people in attendance. Many representatives from Harvard were invited in thanks for the renovations to the community center. Present were Kristin DeMong, President Harvard Real Estate, Inc., John Shattuck and Marilyn Lyng O'Connell, from the Office for Community and Government Affairs, and Kathy Spiegelman from the Harvard Planning Group.

New Agassiz Neighborhood Council Board Members were installed, and they include Andrea Averill, David Chilliniski, Rich Curran, Chris Guerrero, Kathleen Manlon, Jim O'Neill and Varyvoti Snell-Doyle. Officers will be elected at the first board meeting.

Agassiz School Renovations

The committee to renovate the Agassiz School, known as Agassiz School in the 21st Century Committee, invited members of the community to a meeting held on June 26. At this meeting plans were presented by the architectural firm HMFF, which was chosen by the committee and hired by the school department to make preliminary plans for a new Agassiz School. These plans were based on review of the building and the committee's educational ideas and future plans. Several plans were presented, and the plan favored by the committee was detailed. Plans for renovation of the existing building were discarded because they will be as expensive as new construction. The state will not fund renovations that cost as much as new construction. The plans assume expansion of the existing building to provide for a school that would have 2 class rooms for each grade from K-8, rooms for specialists (art, music, physical education), community rooms, and multipurpose and teacher space.

The committee reported that after a meeting with the state's School Building Assistance Bureau (SBAB) in June, the committee had to deal with several important community issues. The SBAB, which can fund the project up to 90%, advised the committee that it would look more favorably on the Agassiz expansion application if it could acquire the portion of Sacramento Street between the Alden Tot Lot and the Agassiz School property at least during school hours. This would expand the Agassiz School lot, and it would make crossing and bussing safe for the projected maximum of 450 children. The SBAB also suggested that the Agassiz School have exclusive use of the Alden Tot Lot during school hours.

At the June 26th meeting the committee agreed to do the following things:
1. They would make a report to the community, outlining their progress so far and their specific recommendations for the new school.
2. The architects would provide a model of the proposed new building on view for the public in the Agassiz Community Center at 20 Sacramento St. from mid-August until the September 12th neighborhood meeting. There will be a comment book available, and those comments will be discussed at the meeting for those who will be unable to attend.

The report is provided below. Please read it carefully. The model is currently on view in the community center daily from 9 A.M.-5 P.M. It will be there until the Thursday September 12th meeting which will be held at 7:30 in the Agassiz School, 28 Sacramento St.


Background:
The Agassiz in the 21st Century Committee has been working throughout the year on the development of the program for the renovations to the new school. For the past few months, the architects for the project, HMFF of Cambridge, have been developing several alternative ideas for how the program could be implemented. This past June 26, the Committee hosted an open meeting, with the architects present, to show what it felt were the most promising or interesting of the ideas. Also presented were the requirements of the School Building Assistance Bureau ("SBAB"), the Massachusetts agency which could potentially fund 90% of the cost.

The discussion at the meeting settled on a number of critical issues, which are listed below:
1. The Program. The School has existed with serious space
deficiencies for a long time, limiting its educational mission. In addition, the majority of parents and teachers agreed that it was important to keep a K-8 program with 2 full classes per grade level. Using current standards, this means doubling the area of the school, from 27,000 SF to 58,000 SF, with a maximum population of 450 children (current maximum is 315, current population is 280).

2.) The Ideas. The architects showed four ideas incorporating the program, one of which was a renovation/addition, the other three being new buildings. These ideas, shown in the form of scale plans, are accurate but highly schematic (that is, not very visualized at actual buildings). These plans are useful for the preliminary assessment of such issues as internal organization, positioning of spaces to their best advantage, height and volume of the physical building, ground space and zoning setbacks, parking and traffic requirements, and relationship to the surrounding buildings and open space. All the schemes show a larger building, both taller and covering more of the site, in order to meet the program requirements.

3.) The Best Idea: Of the four Ideas presented the Committee thinks Scheme "F" is the most educationally sound and exciting. The architects will represent the idea with a model which will be displayed at the Community Center beginning in mid-August through September 12th so that people can visualize the idea better. A "Comment Book" will be provided, and the Agassiz Neighborhood Council will take any comments into consideration at the Wednesday September 12 neighborhood council meeting. Remember that this idea is at a preliminary stage, and there is some room for modifications in response to concerns.

4.) Community Space: This will be integral to the building, with some rooms reserved for community use, and others available after school hours, with direct access separate from the rest of the building. Ease of access is an important part of the desired plan.

5.) Traffic and Open Space: a larger school takes up more land, and needs adequate space around it for recreation, safe movement, and bus drop off. This new idea would require the closure of Sacramento St. at the Oxford St. end, either on a temporary basis during school hours, or permanently. The SBAB (State administration and finance agency, see above) desires that the street be blocked off in order to guarantee school use of the space.

The Committee recommends that Sacramento Street be permanently blocked off to provide better open space and recreational facilities. No part of the new building would be actually built on the street, however.

6.) Traffic and Parking: In order to implement the street closure, Sacramento Street would have to be made two way, in order for cars to get back to Mass. Ave. It would have to be determined with the Traffic Department whether there would be loss of parking on one side, since the street is only 26' wide.

The new school would provide a minimum of 21 parking spaces, covered and secure. Neighbors might have access to these spaces at night.

Garfield and Eustis Street would probably get more traffic as a result of the closure.

7.) Use of Neighborhood Open Space: the SBAB expressed a strong desire to have complete access to the open part of the lot and to Sacramento Field during school hours. This use of the City’s property is now a de facto situation.

The preschool area and seating would remain for the exclusive use of the community.

8.) Timetable and Procedure: the immediate goal is to prepare for a SCHOOL PLANNING CONFERENCE in September with the SBAB. At this meeting will be the Agassiz 21st Century Committee, Cambridge officials and the SBAB. The documents presented at this meeting will be:

a. A School Needs Assessment, which is a commissioned study of city wide school needs.

b. City officials’ statements of support for the project.

c. A report on the Agassiz Community’s perspective.

If the SBAB gives its approval, work will proceed on design of the building, which is due on June 1, 1992. If the project is approved for Fiscal Year 1993, construction would proceed in the spring of 1993, probably taking 1.5 school years. Rented space would be used for students during the construction period.

Neighborhood Crime Meetings

A meeting on crime was called by residents of Wendell St. after an assault on that street. The representatives contacted Nancy Ryan of the Women's Commission, who helped them to organize the first meeting on July 1. There were approximately 25 people in attendance who shared information on neighborhood crime. It was found that there had been another assault at 6 A.M. on the corner of Mass. Ave. and Wendell St., and many house breaks were discussed.

At that time it was agreed to get more involved in crime prevention. Two committees were established, one to compile a mailing list, create and distribute a flyer for the next meeting, and another committee to walk through the neighborhood and determine unsafe spots. They would identify those until or overgrown places where someone could hide. Since everyone wanted more information, it was agreed to invite a representative from the police to the next meeting who could share neighborhood crime statistics and provide residents with safety tips.

The second meeting, held July 22 in the Agassiz Community Center, was attended by approximately 40 people. It was disappointing that although the police department has been advised of the meeting well in advance, the officer who attended the meeting was not given enough advance notice to prepare the information that was requested. He did, however, advise the meeting that there were a number of early morning assaults on women in the area, but since an arrest had been made, there have been no more assaults of this kind.

The Neighborhood Council notes with deep regret that JITENDRASINH OF WANKANER passed away on July 8th after a long illness. Jitendra was one of the founders of the Sacramento St. Gallery. He contributed a great deal of his time and energy to the Agassiz School and the Agassiz Community. He will be greatly missed.
Specific tips on safety were discussed at that meeting. Doors and windows should be secured and lighting should be used inside and outside of homes as much as possible. A lighting devise was described which was motion sensitive and would turn on when someone walked past. The walking committee reported on various addresses in the neighborhood that could use better lighting or thinning of bushes and plantings.

The police advised everyone to report suspicious activities to them, and they will investigate. When reporting suspicious activities it is most helpful when specific observations can be made about the person (physical characteristics, clothing, actions) and the activity (vehicle description, exact place of activity)

Nancy Ryan has advised us that the Women's Commission will sponsor a Safety Awareness Workshop entitled STREET SMARTS, to be held in the Agassiz Neighborhood at Lesley College in the Multipurpose Room on September 19th from 7-9:30 P.M. For more information call 349-4697.

Concurrent with these spontaneous meetings, there have been a series of meetings organized by Jonathan Myers, City Councillor to determine what is working in neighborhood crime watches, and how a broader safer neighborhood initiative can be developed. The neighborhood council has a representative, Chris Guerrero, who has been attending these meetings. The neighborhood council intends to invite Perry Anderson, new Police Commissioner, to address the neighborhood this fall. One major agenda item with the Commissioner will be communication between the neighborhood and the police.

Vernon St. Update

Cambridge Design and Development, who purchased a portion of the property formerly owned by Peter Wasserman directly across from the Porter Exchange, has applied for a special permit to build 14 townhouses on Mt. Vernon St. They will also need a variance to increase the FAR.

There was a joint Agassiz-Neighborhood Nine meeting to address those issues on July 18th, and the following is from a letter sent by Scott Kenten and David Apostol of Cambridge Design and Development:

...our variance hearing scheduled for August 1 and our special permit application will both be rescheduled for the first meeting in September [with the Board of Zoning Appeals]. We will also attend a Neighborhood Nine meeting on 8/8 where, among other things, a smaller group will be chosen to represent the Association and work with us to meet our mutual concerns.

Currently there is excavation ongoing at the site. As emphasized at the July 16th meeting, there is the need to proceed on certain aspects of the 11 unit by-right work, namely the underground site utilities and footings, and in 1 or 2 of the 3 proposed buildings, the foundation walls. Because it seems that the main concern to abutters in on-site parking and the amounts of curb cuts, we will try to avoid starting the foundation walls in any potions of the site where we feel that additional underground parking might be possible. We will, as much as we can, to try to keep our construction efforts concentrated on the building at the rear of the site, which is not affected as much by parking and access issues, until everyone has a better idea as to where this is all going...

To be on the mailing list for notices of future meetings on this development, call the council office at 349-6287.

Recycling

By now most residents are aware that curb side recycling began for Cambridge in July. We include some information for those of you who may have been away or missed the information.

Recyclables must be at the curb by 7 A.M. on your trash day in the blue bin provided by the DPW. If you have too many recyclables for the bin, use another container, and mark it RECYCLE.

If your recyclables have not been picked up by 4 P.M., call 349-4005 or 4860. If you see anyone other than Laidlaw Trucks removing recyclables, call 349-4005 or 4860. You must leave the bin if you move.

If you are in a large apartment, you will be phased into the curb side recycling program over the next 18 months. If you would like to drop off your recycling materials, that can be done at the DPW, 147 Hampshire St. If you are interested in coordinating recycling in your building, call the DPW at 349-4005.

Call the Cambridge Recycling Committee if you are interested in being a part of a program that will establish captains for all street blocks.

DPW To Issue Tickets

The Cambridge Department of Public Works will be enforcing several city ordinances that have been decriminalized. They will issue tickets, similar to parking tickets, for violators of certain city ordinances. This will be in lieu of taking every violator to the district court.

When a violation occurs a $25 ticket will be issued. The alleged offender can pay the fine to the City Clerk, or appeal the decision to the District Court within 21 days.

Because the DPW wants to educate the residents who may not be aware of the new process, they will issue one warning ticket to all first time offenders. There is an enforcement officer, Mr. Daniel Evans who can be reached at 349-4830 to answer any questions you may have.

Below you will see a sample ticket listing the various offenses you can be ticketed for:
Fall Agassiz Community School Programs

You will find a community school program in every Cambridge elementary school, and the Agassiz Community School currently includes: afterschool, preschool, summer camp and various miscellaneous special programs. All of our programs are licensed by the Massachusetts Office for Children. There is a director and each site has a head teacher. The usual ratio of students to teachers is approximately 1-10 for school age children and 1-6 for preschool children, with variations depending on the kind of activity and the age group being served. For a brochure or more information on any of the programs listed below, contact the office at 349-6287.

Agassiz Afterschool Programs

Afterschool Activities Grades K-4

This program is intended to provide quality child care and activities for children who attend afterschool for three days or less per week. The program opens early on Agassiz School release days, and full day vacation week programming is available as an option. The program is housed in the Agassiz School, and has its own staff of teachers who provide an afterschool snack and a schedule that includes physical activities, clubs, arts and crafts and cooking. There are specialists who provide focused activities in the arts, visual, performing, dance and music.

There are three terms each school year (Fall Winter and Spring), and children can register for as many terms as you wish. Cost is determined by term and number of days child attends. Registration is on Thursday and Friday September 5 and 6 from 2:45 until 5 P.M.

Afterschool Child Care Grades K-4

This program is intended to provide quality child care and activities for children who attend everyday afterschool. The program opens early on Agassiz School release days, and full day vacation week programming is available at no additional cost. The younger children are housed in the Agassiz Community Center, with their own staff of teachers who provide an afterschool snack and activities in a cozy and secure atmosphere with their own outside play space. Occasionally activities are planned for this group in conjunction with the Activities Program located in the Agassiz School.

The older group of children (3-4th graders) are housed in the Agassiz School, and participate in the activities provided by teachers and specialists for the Afterschool Activities Program. Special projects and clubs are also planned.

The cost includes all vacations and half days. Tuition is $215 per month, and children must enroll for the entire school year.

Activities Grades 5-8

Specialists will provide focused, in depth courses and activities to children in grades 5 to 8, and these activities are either based in the Agassiz School or in the Agassiz Community Center. Children may enroll for up to three days of activities in each ten week session. Activities vary from term to term, but options usually include the arts, cooking, sports, and trips.

Children in grades 5-8 are not developmentally suited to the kind of child care provided for younger children. They will receive a snack each day, they may come early on Agassiz School release days (when suitable activities will be provided until their specialist arrives), but there is no vacation week child care program for this age group.

There will be three terms, Fall, Winter and Spring with one mini term between Thanksgiving and Christmas. Activities will vary from term to term. Cost is determined by term and number of days child attends. Registration is on Thursday and Friday September 5 and 6 from 2:45 until 5 P.M.

Preschool

Sacramento Street Preschool is licensed for 18 children who attend five days a week from 9 A.M. to Noon. A snack is provided, and there are two teachers assisted by an aide when fully enrolled. The preschool calendar follows the Cambridge Public School Calendar, with all the same holidays and vacations. It is housed in the Agassiz Community Center.

Children must be at least 2 years and 9 months to begin, and they may stay until kindergarten. This is a traditional preschool with emphasis on socialization and developmentally appropriate activities. The small size of the school encourages an individual approach. This school attracts children of students from other countries, which contributes to a varied cultural atmosphere.

Children must enroll for the whole school year, and tuition is $215 per month from September through June.

A Sampling of Upcoming Special Events
in the Agassiz Neighborhood
sponsored by the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

September
Model of the new Agassiz School on View Sacramento St. Gallery
October
Abby Nelson: Sculpture and Photography, Sacramento St. Gallery
November
Thanksgiving Pot Luck Dinner Baldwin Hall, Agassiz School
Agassiz Afterschool Players, Baldwin Hall, Agassiz School
December
Kids Only Sale Agassiz Community Center
Holiday Crafts Sale Sacramento St. Gallery
March
Agassiz Afterschool Players, Baldwin Hall, Agassiz School
April
Open House: New Community Space North Hall (formerly Quality Inn)
June
Community School Barbecue Backyard Agassiz Community Center
Annual Meeting Agassiz Community Center
Agassiz Afterschool Players Baldwin Hall, Agassiz School
Cultural Happenings

Agassiz Afterschool Players to begin 5th Season

The Agassiz Afterschool Players (AAP) will begin their 5th season this year under the direction of Carol Hanman. The players create an original theatre piece, then perform it in a fully staged production. The Players are organized into two age groups, the Littles: Kindergarten-4th Grade, and The Bigs: 5-8th Grade. During the school year there are separate pieces created by each age group for productions in November, March and June. An abbreviated experience can be found in the summer at Outback Camp, when a major production is presented every August.

Children who sign up with the AAP during the school year attend a 2.5 hour session twice a week after school (through the Agassiz Afterschool Activities Program) for ten weeks, with some additional rehearsal time just prior to the production. Ideas for the productions originate from the children, who also help write the script. After the script is written, children begin to learn their parts, work on acting techniques, and begin rehearsals. As they participate, children become familiar with the many aspects of the final production.

The AAP subscribes enthusiastically to the concept of a non-traditional color blind casting. In the professional theatre, this procedure translates as best actor for the role regardless of ethnic considerations. In the AAP's world, it means that insofar as possible the actor who wants a particular role gets it and that choices of theme and subject matter are not determined or limited by the composition of the group.

Prior to the final production, parents and friends help with sets, props, make up, and more. A flyer is produced, press releases are mailed out, a program is written, volunteers and staff are found to help with lights and prompting, video taping. After the show there is a reception for families and friends, and when the set is struck, the children relax at a pizza party.

During the course of the school year children are invited to attend week-end field trips to professional performances often at the Wheeler Family Theatre, and discussions are held later, usually over a dinner.

Children who join the Agassiz Afterschool Players grow with the program, and there is always another step to take. Last year the March production for the older group was a musical, 'IN A NICE NEIGHBORHOOD LIKE OURS'. For this musical director Carol Hanman collaborated with musician Ada Snider. They intend to continue a musical offering every year. In the spring an Advanced Drama Workshop is held for the oldest and most experienced players. They learn the basics of make-up, production values, stage craft and acting techniques. The final project, which is part of the June production, is the development of a scene from a legitimate play having children's roles for which participants design their own make-up, minimal scenic elements and props. Next year the most advanced students will work as student directors with the littles on their productions.

Local Artist Abby Nelson to Show Work

Abby Nelson will show her work in the Sacramento St. Gallery beginning on October First. The Gallery is located in the Agassiz Community Center, 20 Sacramento St. The show will include both sculpture and photography.

Hours for the Gallery are unavailable at this time. To receive an announcement for this show, and other shows scheduled for the Sacramento St. Gallery, please call the neighborhood council office at 349-6287, and we will add you to our mailing list.

Open Call to Artists from CMAC

Visual Artists — Community Organizations — Performing Artists — Curators — Folk Artists are invited to submit proposals for the Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center's OPEN CALL.

CMAC is seeking proposals for exhibitions, performances and other events that reflect the community's multi-cultural issues; Cambridge residents and community organizations are particularly encouraged to respond. Proposals can embrace any discipline or be multi-disciplinary, including combinations of visual arts with dance and/or theatre. Selection will be made by the CMAC program committee.

The deadline will be October 1, 1991 for the center's Spring season of events (January-June). For more information about the application process contact CMAC at 577-1400 or stop by 41 Second St. East Cambridge.

Cambridge Performance Project

The Cambridge Performance Project is sponsoring a special program this year called YEAR OF NATIVE PEOPLES; TRADITION STILL STRONG, focusing on New England Native Americans, especially their commitment to care for the earth.

The opening event of the year long project will be held on Thursday September 19th at 7:15 P.M. at M.L. King School, 100 Putnam Ave. Native drummers, and dancers together with children from the Cambridge Performance Project will present a colorful and informative evening. Free admission.

For information about fall semester classes in dance theatre and percussion for ages 5-14 or for the event, call Judy Bibbins, at 349-6235.

This Just in on 6 Prentiss St.

(6 Prentiss St., site of the former nursing home, was granted a variance to become a Bed and Breakfast this Spring. There was talk of plans to reorganize it as a nursing home, but those plans have fallen through, and renovations at 6 Prentiss are soon to begin. The following was sent to us by Charlotte Forsythe.)

The Mary Prentiss Inn Update

The renovations of the property at 6 Prentiss St. is about to begin. The plans are in to the building department for final review. Upon issuance of the building permit, work will begin on restoring the historical house including painting. A dumpster will be placed on the side of the house for construction debris.

Demolition of the newer brick building will begin late January 1991. In the interim it will be used for a site office and storage. Also we plan to have family members and other borders live in the buildings as this will give some protection to the property and aid with income during the renovations.

BEACON ST. LAUNDROMAT
358 Beacon Street
SOMERVILLE/CAMBRIDGE LINE
864-8654
## September 1991

### Events

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<tr>
<td>Thursday September 5</td>
<td>First Day Agassiz School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday, Friday September 5-6</td>
<td>Registration Agassiz Afterschool K-8 Activities Program 2:45-5 P.M., 20 Sacramento St. Call 349-6287</td>
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<tr>
<td>Monday September 9</td>
<td>First Day Agassiz Afterschool</td>
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<td>Thursday September 12</td>
<td>Agassiz Neighborhood Council Meeting</td>
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<td>Thursday September 19</td>
<td>Self Defense Course &quot;STREET SMARTS&quot; 7-9:30 P.M. Multipurpose Room, Lesley College. Call 949-4697.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thursday September 26</td>
<td>Tentative Date Agassiz School</td>
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<td>Open House 28 Sacramento St. Call 349-6525 for information</td>
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<tr>
<td>October 1-October 19</td>
<td>Abby Nelson - Photography/Sculpture Sacramento St. Gallery</td>
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