

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

October 2013

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ANC News

NOTES FROM THE SEPT. 10 MEETING

Preservation Tools and the Agassiz Neighborhood

"The Cambridge Historical Commission offers a 'toolbox' of options for preserving the character of a neighborhood," stated Sarah Burks, Preservation Planner with the Commission. "I was asked to speak specifically about Neighborhood Conservation Districts (NCDs), but I'd like to review the full array of options available in Cambridge."

Ms. Burks briefly described the range of preservation tools, listed in the order of least to most regulation:

- Educational tools include historical markers, walking tours, and technical advice such as free restoration troubleshooting and historic paint color consultations (fee charged).
- The annual Preservation Awards program is another educational program highlighting historic properties. 20 Sacramento St. is a recent award recipient.
- The National Register of Historic Places identifies historic buildings and

establishes a dialog to help mitigate the impact of public projects. The Register includes Garfield



St. National Register District and a half-dozen individually listed properties in Agassiz.

- Demolition Delay is a citywide preservation tool for protecting significant buildings over fifty years old. The Historical Commission reviews demolition applications.
- Landmark Designation Studies are conducted by the Historical Commission and designated by vote of the City Council. 1803 Mass. Ave., 10 Frost, 114 Oxford, and 41 Sacramento St. are landmarks.
- With Neighborhood Conservation Districts, regulations can be tailored to the specific threats and development challenges of a neighborhood (applies only to exterior elements of a building). The Cambridge City Manager appoints district commission members. The current four NCDs are: Mid Cambridge, Avon Hill, Half Crown-Marsh, and Harvard Square.
- Historic Districts are state-enabling laws.

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES' FORUM



OCT 8- 7:30 PM

Lesley University
University Hall Amphitheater
1815 Mass. Ave.

Join ANC, Porter Square Neighbors Association, Neighborhood 9, Mass. Ave. Improvement Committee, and the Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods at the Candidate's Forum.

Come lend your voice and share your concerns!

Cambridge has two historic districts: Old Cambridge Historic District and the Fort Washington Historic District.

Q&A

Q: Ms. Burks asked if there are broad threats to the built environment in the Agassiz neighborhood.

A: ANC members identified the occasional fire and resulting new construction as possible threats.

Q: Are there any downsides to establishing a Neighborhood Conservation District? How would it affect property values?

A: The district distinction does create additional regulations for building projects. We find that property values often stabilize or increase.

Cambridge Police Review and Advisory Board Update

The Cambridge Police Review and Advisory Board is an independent civilian oversight agency that provides timely, fair, and impartial investigations of complaints brought by individuals against police officers. Police officers may also make use of the Board to file complaints against the Cambridge Police Department.

The Board consists of five civilians and meets on the last Wednesday of every month at 51 Inman St from 6:00-8:00 PM. Meetings are public.

Review Process

The Advisory Board works with the

Professional Standards Unit of the Police Department to review complaints. The process can include several rounds of investigations, resolution or dismissal of the complaint, and/or professional mediation.

“Most often, the Board receives complaints of rude or discourteous behavior,” explained V. Muna Kangsen, Project and Outreach Coordinator. “Otherwise, we don’t get a lot of serious complaints. I think this is due to the fact that the police really try to put their best foot forward. The Board helps ensure satisfaction and justice on behalf of both civilians and the police.”

Advisory Board member Lucy Murray-Brown added, “People can feel intimidated about complaining to the Police Department. Filing a complaint with the Advisory Board may seem less threatening.”

How to Submit a Complaint

Individuals must submit complaints via email, phone, or in person within sixty days of the incident. To be fully valid, the complaint form must be signed in person. Learn more by visiting www.cambridgema.gov/prab or calling (617) 349-6155.

Fire Command Center Update

Since the Fire Command Center first appeared, residents have requested changes to the structure that



provides egress from the parking garage beneath Harvard University’s Northwest Science Building, located at the corner of Gorham and Hammond Sts. The Center also serves as a command post in the event of fire.

According to Richard Barran, resident of Hammond Street, neighbors found the construction of the Northwest Science Building a positive experience overall. “Harvard responded well to

On November 5th, Give Minka Your #1 Vote!



Minka vanBeuzekom uses her experience as a business leader, parent, neighborhood activist, and epidemiologist to bring together diverse community members for positive change.

Using passion, creativity, and leadership your City Councillor Minka works hard to keep our neighborhoods safe, vibrant, livable, and affordable. On Election Day, give Minka your #1 vote.

For more info, see www.minkaforcambridge.org or call Minka at 617-596-1547.

Paid for by The Committee to Elect Minka

issues neighbors raised during construction of the Northwest Science Building. However, we were surprised by the Fire Command Center, which had not appeared on any plans the neighborhood had seen before.”

When residents initially raised issue with the Fire Command Center, Harvard hired architecture firm Arrowstreet to redesign it to better compliment the Northwest Science Building and surroundings. At the time, some ANC members, not taken with the proposed design, suggested that Harvard Graduate School of Design students be invited to work on the project.

“This delayed the process,” stated Mr. Barran. “Then the financial crisis happened and the project was taken off line. Harvard planted some trees in front of the Fire Command Center to obscure it. However, the trees are deciduous and otherwise have died. Five years have passed since the initial discussion.”

Recently Mr. Barran, with neighbors Tom Delbanco and Fred Meyer, approached Tom Lucey, Harvard Director of Community Relations and Nazreen Cooper, Assistant Dean of Campus Design, about the issue. Mr. Barran told the Council, “Harvard hasn’t offered an immediate solution, but they agreed to review the design that had been put on hold and reply to us by the end of September.”

In support of these efforts, ANC voted to write Tom Lucey, requesting that Harvard rebuild the Fire Command Center using the original Arrowstreet design.

Candidates Visit ANC

The council welcomed Cambridge City Council candidates Dennis Carlone, Marc McGovern, Sam Seidel, and Minka vanBeuzekom to the September ANC meeting. The candidates introduced themselves and presented their platforms. Read campaign statements from the above and other candidates on page 5 of *The Whistler*.

City Council Candidate’s Forum

Given the retirement of Cambridge City Manager Bob Healy, the departures of long-serving councillors, the number of potential candidates, and the issues that confront our neighborhoods, the forum sponsors believe that this election is particularly important and want to engage the community.

What: City Council Candidate’s Forum
When: Tuesday, Oct. 8, 7:00-9:00 PM
Where: Lesley University,
University Hall Amphitheater,
1815 Mass. Ave.

Be Heard!

Submit questions for the candidates to forum@portersquare.net.

Forum Sponsors

Agassiz Baldwin Community, Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods, Neighborhood Nine Massachusetts Avenue Improvement Committee, Porter Square Neighbors Association



Community

THE FUTURE OF MASS. AVE.

Prepared by Stephen Diamond, ABC Board Director

For several years a group of neighbors and business people from Agassiz and Neighborhood 9 have been working with the City of Cambridge to improve Mass. Ave. between the Cambridge Common and Porter Square. At last, some of our efforts are about to be seen.

The City of Cambridge has engaged a contractor to work on a Demonstration Block to start construction in the spring of 2014, and a test of new sidewalk paving has just been made in front of 1696 Mass. Ave. The Demonstration Block will be on the west side of Mass. Ave. from Shepard (Starbucks) to Garfield St. (Changsho).

In addition to new paving shown below, trees will be planted with better conditions for survival. Benches, art work, historic markers, and bike racks will be added. At three locations, the curb will be extended to provide for a shorter and safer pedestrian crossing.



Near Porter Square, construction of the Lesley University Art Center has begun. The first phase includes moving the North Prospect Church southward onto a vacant lot. The move is scheduled to take place in November. The photo below shows the church as it looked in 1906.



North Avenue Congregational Church, 1807 Massachusetts Avenue, after 1906. Society for the Preservation of New England Antiquities photograph. Looking north toward Porter Square, showing relocated church with awnings, corner barrels, and steeple (built 1906). Also showing rearward tower of 1787 Massachusetts Avenue (demolished 1925).

A foundation for the church is being excavated now, and steel beams for moving it have been inserted under the second floor. The second floor will be lowered to ground level for the move. (The present first floor was added when the church was moved from its original location in Harvard Square.) The recent pointed steeple has already been removed.



After the move in November, a domed steeple reproducing the 1906 one will be added and a new building constructed along Roseland Street. The two elements will be joined by a glass link. The completed construction will provide an Art Library on the first floor of the moved church, an art gallery on the first floor of the new building, and art classrooms.



ANNUAL THANKSGIVING POTLUCK FEAST

Save the date for our 42nd Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Feast.



When: Tuesday, November 26, 5:30-7:30 PM
Where: Maria L. Baldwin School Dining Hall, 28 Sacramento St.

Our Tradition

This November, help make Thanksgiving memorable by volunteering to cook a turkey. We will deliver a free turkey and roasting pan to

volunteers' homes the week of the potluck.

Volunteers drop off the cooked turkey (no stuffing, please) before dinner begins on the evening of Tuesday, November 26th. We need eight volunteers to cook turkey, and four to help carve just before and during the event.

VIP Guest List

That's you! We welcome everyone from the neighborhood, Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs, Living Well Network, Maud Morgan Arts, and Maria L. Baldwin School communities to come together for an evening of celebration, good company, and delicious food.

Please remember that while we will host kids' activities at the event, parents are ultimately responsible for their children.

Can't Cook a Turkey?

Bring a side dish ample enough for your family and a few more to share. Salads, stuffings, cranberry sauce, or dessert --your contributions are important.

City Wide

MUNICIPAL ELECTION - NOV. 5

Vote for Cambridge City Council and School Committee candidates on **Tuesday, November 5, 2013**. Agassiz residents vote at the Maria L. Baldwin School, 28 Sacramento Street. Polls open at 7:00 AM and close at 8:00 PM.

(Read School Committee candidate statements in the upcoming November Whistler.)

Dennis Carlone

My campaign is "Planning for People" because Cambridge is at a crossroads. More development, more than the equivalent of twelve John Hancock towers, was started in the



past two years than built in the previous twenty.

As an urban designer/architect who trained at Harvard, taught at Harvard, and did the award-winning East Cambridge Riverfront redevelopment, I see that we are losing our community to development that puts profits before people. It doesn't have to be that way. With a city-wide Master Plan that puts people first, socially-just development can preserve our communities. And I'm not taking any developer money.

Janneke House

The city needs to shape development, not be controlled by it. We need a comprehensive, city-wide strategy to make sure Cambridge grows in a positive way that doesn't impact open space, price out local businesses, or destroy a neighborhood.



We need a 311 number system where residents can call a human operator and report problems. Residents deserve openness, innovation, and accountability in the delivery of high-quality city services, no matter where they live in Cambridge.

Residents need elected officials who work in a collaborative, respectful, and positive manner with each other to get things accomplished.

Craig Kelley

I believe no one knows a neighborhood better than the people who live there and I try to listen to those people as often as possible. The greater-Porter Square area is in the midst of a major transformation as Lesley continues to develop its campus and larger buildings with more intensive uses replacing what we've been comfortable with for decades.



Greater density leads to higher land values and increased pressure to build even more and we must be careful to hear, and respond to, all voices as we discuss what these new challenges and opportunities might mean to our community.

James Lee

I am James Lee, a proud longtime resident of Cambridge.



As someone who has recently become a US citizen, I am running for the City Council because I care deeply about serving the common good of my beloved Cambridge community. Serving on the Council is a way for me to give back to this community.

As your City Councillor, I will fight for you and strive to make Cambridge an even better place for everyone, not just the most vocal or deep-pocketed interest groups.

I invite you to take a look at my campaign website: www.electjameslee.org.

Logan Leslie

My wife, daughter, and I live in West Cambridge. After over eight years in the Army with multiple tours to Iraq and Afghanistan, I am now pursuing my education at Harvard on the GI Bill.



I will bring a fresh perspective to the Council with my strong leadership experience and personal connection to the issues that families here are experiencing --whether it's the rising cost of living, our public school system, or responsible development. I'm not one to simply talk about problems and explain away mediocrity; I'll roll up my sleeves and tirelessly work to solve them with professionalism.

Marc McGovern

I am running for City Council because after eight years of serving on the School Committee, I want to be part of the broader range of conversations happening in our city. With Mayor Davis and Marjorie Decker not seeking re-election, I am concerned about who will be the voice for children and families, early childhood education, affordable housing and worker's rights.



As a life-long Cantabrigian, a four-term elected official, and social worker with at-risk families, I have the commitment, experience, and proven record to make a positive difference for our City. I ask for your #1 vote on November 5th.

Gary Mello

You guys who live twixt Harvard and Lesley are keenly aware of the city's PILOT (Payment in Lieu of Taxes) program. It's kind of a peace pipe arrangement to square things up with the 'hood. Principals MIT, Harvard, and Lesley total up to around \$5.5 mil.

The PILOT money directly and distinctly benefits city employee programs. Nothing for you. PILOT is almost unique in the city budget. Another behind the curtains misdirection found in our "well managed" finances.

I will expose the PILOT sham as councillor, re-purpose the money for affordable housing and neighborhood benefits, and pursue other book-keeping tricks.

Mushtaque Mirza

My priorities as a city councillor will be protecting the environment, increasing availability of affordable housing, and managing Cambridge's growth with smart, comprehensive city planning.



As an environmental engineer, I have experience in all these areas. I have managed multi-million-dollar public works projects, such as reducing extraneous water flow into the sewer system. This work protects our environment and saves taxpayers money. I am also a professional construction supervisor and began my career by designing and building low-income housing.

I would bring this experience to the city council and would be honored to receive your #1 vote.

Kenneth Reeves

I ask for your #1 support because I have a record of leadership and experience that I feel are crucial during this City's time of transition.



Accomplishment in which I've led the efforts include: creation of the Citywide Senior Center; creation of the Baby University program which works with parents of children ages 0-3; creation of the Office of College Success which works with students to and through College; construction of the New Main Branch of the Cambridge Public Library; as well as the LEED certified renovations to CRLS and the War Memorial Recreation Center. Thank you for your consideration.

Sam Seidel

I am running for reelection to the City Council because Cambridge deserves a government that works. I can help bring the Council together—to tackle the tough issues and take effective action. In this time of change, we will only develop the policies we need and find our way forward as a community, if our Council works together to meet the challenges facing our city.



I am happy with the work we have been able

to do together over the years, especially the ongoing Mass. Ave. streetscaping project, and I look forward to continuing to work with you, if elected.

Tim Toomey

It is an honor to serve as your City Councillor. I ask for your No. 1 vote on November 5 so I can continue to serve our community. Cambridge is changing, but my commitment to levelheaded, thoughtful leadership and quality constituent services endures.



This term, I fought the transport of dangerous chemicals on city rail lines, worked to fund a multi-use pathway, and continued to be accessible to you. Together, we can keep Cambridge's finances sound and ensure that development-related mitigation benefits impact neighborhoods.

With your No. 1 vote, we can make Cambridge an even more vibrant place to live.

Minka vanBeuzekom

My name is Minka vanBeuzekom and I serve as your voice on the City Council. You asked me to listen. I have. You communicated what is important. I acted. In my next term, I will continue to listen and act.



With my experience, I will continue to ask tough questions and provide critical oversight of the City finances. I will increase Cambridge's use of renewable energy. I will make our communities vibrant and enjoyable to live in by encouraging the arts, building an exceptional public education system, and increasing affordable & middle-income housing stock.

On November 5th, choose MINKA #1.

Community Calendar

October 2013

Tuesday, October 8	7:00-9:00 PM	City Council Candidate's Forum, Lesley University Auditorium, University Hall, 1815 Mass. Ave.
Wednesday, October 9	6:00-7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome
Monday, October 14		Columbus Day Holiday, ABC programs & office closed
Tuesday, October 15		Eid al-Adha Holiday, ABC programs closed, ABC office open

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The Whistler October 2013



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DO NOT FORWARD

VOLUNTEER WITH AGASSIZ BALDWIN

Volunteer to cook a turkey for our 42nd Annual Thanksgiving Potluck Feast (November 26)!
Details inside . . .

