

# the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

October 2015

## IN THIS ISSUE

<b>ANC News: Urban Agriculture: Developing an Ordinance for the City of Cambridge</b>	<b>1-3</b>
<b>Community: PSNA/ANC City Council Candidates' Forum, Annual Thanksgiving Potluck</b>	<b>3-4</b>
<b>MMA News: The Spirit Awards Benefit Honors Local Artists</b>	<b>4-5</b>
<b>LWN News: Living Well This Fall</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Citywide: Municipal Election Nov. 3, Cambridge City Council &amp; School Committee Candidate Statements, Curbside Compost Pick-up Expands in Cambridge</b>	<b>5-9</b>

## ANC News

### NOTES FROM THE SEPT. 8 MEETING

#### **Urban Agriculture: Developing an Ordinance for the City of Cambridge**

"Urban agriculture has been popping up in cities all over the world," stated Ellen Kokinda, Assistant Planner with Cambridge Community Development. "There's a lot of focus on access to healthy food and food security. Cambridge is in the process of developing an ordinance to legitimize a range of urban agricultural activities, and to determine what fits best in a city of this size and density."

The development of an ordinance that explicitly defines how both residents and commercial enterprises may grow and/or sell agricultural products will potentially allow for a greater network of healthy, local food sources within the city.

#### **What is Urban Agriculture?**

Urban agriculture is the practice of cultivating, processing, and distributing food in or around a city or town.

Ms. Kokinda stated, "To figure out what makes sense here, we've created the Urban Agriculture Task Force, which is looking across zoning districts in Cambridge and researching local and national agricultural zoning and regulations to understand best practices from other cities, such as Boston, Somerville, San Francisco, and Seattle."

Broadly, urban agriculture practices can include:

- Residential gardens
- Commercial farms and gardens
- Community and school gardens
- Rooftop gardens
- Animals (i.e. chickens, honey bees, goats, sheep, rabbits, pigs)
- Hydroponics (roots in water)
- Aquaponics (fish in tanks)
- Aeroponics (roots in air, sprayed with water)
- Other innovative gardening

### CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES' FORUM



**OCT 20- 6:30-9:00 PM**

Lesley University  
University Hall Amphitheater  
2nd Floor  
1815 Mass. Ave.

Join Porter Square Neighbors Association and ANC for a Cambridge City Council Candidate's Forum. **Come hear from the candidates!** More information on page 3.

### Urban Agriculture Task Force

The Task Force is comprised of staff from Community Development, the Department of Public Health, Inspectional Services, the State of MA, urban agriculture nonprofits such as CitySprouts, and residents, with support from the Conservation Law Foundation. The task force is working to discover best practices and make recommendations around:

- Equitable access to fresh food
- Economic development, supporting innovation around food growth and production
- Increased resiliency within the Cambridge food system, particularly in the event of dramatic climate change (e.g. how can Cambridge plan ahead, support the food system, as well as balance expectations of scale?)
- Increase support of the regional food system, such as distribution through community supported agriculture and farmers' markets

Once best practices have been determined, the task force will draft an ordinance focused on zoning regulations that will support or limit a range of agriculture activities, such as:

- Small/medium/large scale farms



- Ground level farms – including freight farms (farming in shipping containers)
- Roof level farms – open air and roof-level green houses
- Consumption, sale and donation of products that are grown in the city (sale by residents, community organizations, institutions, or schools. No sales will be allowed from city-operated community gardens)
- More flexibility as to where farmers' markets can operate (currently, they're restricted to commercial districts)
- Aquaponics and hydroponics
- Other ideas that have been added include the keeping of goats (including temporary goat rental), rabbits, and sheep

### Next Steps

This fall, the city will organize focus groups and conduct other forms of public outreach. They plan to host a larger public meeting to confirm the direction of public interests. The task force will continue to draft and refine zoning, licensing, and permitting language.

ANC members discussed and suggested the following in reaction to Ms. Kokinda's presentation:

- Water considerations
  - Concern about water uses and run-off
  - Options for treating grey water
- Soil health
  - Institute mandatory soil lead testing, especially related to selling produce
  - Easy access to soil testing
  - Concern about lead poisoning
  - Pesticide use
- How are the terms "garden" and "farm" defined?

### Q&A

**Q:** Is it wise to add more language to Cambridge's Zoning Ordinance? It's already so hard to understand.

**A:** A lot of the current zoning dates back to the 1960s. For this reason, many agricultural activities are not listed under current uses. The goal of the Task Force is to develop

zoning that explicitly mentions a range of agricultural activities. The city is looking at the zoning to determine how to weave agricultural activities into the text and determine where these items fit best.

- Q:** Have you heard of any opposition to chickens or bees?
- A:** There's lot of support for honey bees, but the demand to keep chickens is less clear. Certainly, there are residents in Cambridge who would love to see an inclusive urban agriculture policy that allows for hens even if they themselves do not anticipate keeping them.

Ms. Kokinda stated, "The real key to keeping bees or chickens is communication and working with your neighbors. The city's question is: what does this process look like? What's the design review look like?"

In regards to developing an ordinance, regulations would set forth the number of allowed hens, setback requirements, materials, and maintenance practice. The city wants to develop an ordinance and clear guidelines to avoid potential concerns and nuisance violations (noise, odor, rodents, poor upkeep.)

- Q:** Are there restrictions on growing food in your front yard?
- A:** Ms. Kokinda was not aware of any restrictions.

**Share Your Thoughts**

Community Development invites residents to respond to the following:

1. What are you personally interested in doing in the realm of urban agriculture? (Keeping hens or bees? Growing food? If yes, where? How?)
2. What are you interested in seeing in the city as a whole?
3. What concerns do you have about urban agriculture being supported and practiced in Cambridge?

Send responses to Ellen Kokinda at [ekokinda@cambridgema.gov](mailto:ekokinda@cambridgema.gov) or call (617) 349-4618.

**Update on Sacramento Field**

The city has appropriated money to renovate Sacramento Field. The public process will begin this November. Stay tuned for more information.

Learn more about Cambridge parks at: [bit.ly/cdd-parks-projects](http://bit.ly/cdd-parks-projects)



# Community

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## PSNA/ANC CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATES' FORUM

Porter Square Neighbors Association and Agassiz Neighborhood Council will be sponsoring a forum for the twenty-three candidates for the Cambridge City Council.

- Date:** Tuesday, October 20, 2015
- Time:** 6:30-9:00 PM
- Location:** Lesley Amphitheater, University Hall, Floor 2, 1815 Mass. Ave.



### EFFECTIVE MARKETING, CARING & ATTENTIVE SERVICE

and proudly supporting our community and MMA.



The forum will be divided into three panels of candidates. Each panel will address two questions and ask the panelists to identify the most important thing they would contribute to Cambridge City Council. There will also be open time to mingle with the candidates.

### Send Your Questions

What do you want to know about the candidates? Questions will be selected from those suggested by members of our associations and the general public on the basis of relevance and importance in this election. Topics of interest might include:

- Housing
- Public transportation
- Education
- Public safety
- Health care
- Immigration and refugees
- Diversity
- Open space
- The City Manager's contract

Please email question suggestions to:  
forum@portersquare.net

### ANNUAL THANKSGIVING POTLUCK FEAST

Save the date for ABC's 43rd  
Annual Thanksgiving  
Potluck Feast.



**When:** Tuesday,  
November 24, 5:30-7:30 PM  
**Where:** Maria L. Baldwin School Dining  
Hall, 28 Sacramento St.

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.

### Volunteer

This November, help make Thanksgiving memorable by volunteering to cook a turkey or bringing a side dish ample enough for your family and a few more to share.

To learn more, contact Phoebe Sinclair at  
psinclair@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x10.



## Maud Morgan Arts

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### THE SPIRIT AWARDS BENEFIT HONORS LOCAL ARTISTS

Two of New England's most generous artists got their chance to shine on Sunday, September 20th at Maud Morgan Arts. The Spirit Awards Benefit honored photographer and filmmaker Judith Larsen and printmaker H. Peik Larsen. The event featured Judith Larsen's film, "EDGE 2 EDGE," and a printmaking demonstration with Master Printer Robert Townsend.

The Spirit Awards Benefit raised over \$55,000 for Maud Morgan Arts to expand partnerships with numerous Cambridge social service and educational organizations, and to provide scholarships for students who otherwise could not afford to attend studio art classes. The annual fundraiser celebrates the creative legacy of Maud Morgan (1903-1999), a noted Abstract Expressionist and Cambridge resident who loved a good party.

"CO+Motion," artwork by Judith and H. Peik Larsen, will be on display at the Chandler Gallery through October 23. Learn more at [maudmorganarts.org](http://maudmorganarts.org).

### Thank You Donors

The Cambridge Arts Council, Eastern Bank Charitable Foundation, Lesley University, and Hammond Real Estate were among the many organizations and individuals who contributed to this event. We are deeply grateful to all

donors and dedicated volunteers for making this event an overwhelming success.



## Living Well Network

### LIVING WELL THIS FALL

The Living Well Network is excited to continue our programming that informs, entertains, and inspires our community to stay healthy! Take a class or get involved this fall.

#### Computer Lounge & Classes

**When:** Wednesdays, 1:00-3:00 PM  
**Where:** North Hall, 1651 Mass. Ave.  
**Cost:** Free for LWN members, \$20 per session for non-members

#### Forever Creative Art Classes

**When:** Mondays, 10:00 AM-12:00 PM  
**Where:** Maud Morgan Arts Center, 20A Sacramento St., Cambridge  
**Cost:** Free for LWN members

#### Yoga

**When:** Saturdays, Oct. 17, 24 & 31  
9:30-10:30 AM  
**Where:** University Hall, 1815 Mass. Ave.  
Rm. 4-010  
**Cost:** \$10  
**Bring:** Yoga mat & loose clothing

#### Tai Chi

**When:** Saturdays, Oct. 17 & 24  
(no class Oct 31)  
10:45-11:45 AM  
**Location:** Lesley University Hall, 1815 Mass. Ave., Rm. 4-010  
**Cost:** \$10

For questions, or to learn about LWN Snow Removal, Cooking with Kids, or other programming, please contact Colin Barr, LWN Coordinator, at [cbarr@agassiz.org](mailto:cbarr@agassiz.org) or (617) 349-6287 x21.

## City Wide

### MUNICIPAL ELECTION - NOV. 3

Vote for Cambridge City Council and School Committee candidates on **Tuesday, November 3, 2015**. Agassiz residents vote at the Maria L. Baldwin School, 28 Sacramento Street. Polls open at 7:00 AM and close at 8:00 PM.

### CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL CANDIDATE STATEMENTS

#### Dennis A. Benzan

As Vice Mayor, I am honored to serve our city and I am seeking re-election to a second term to continue the work that residents entrusted to me in 2013.



During my first term, I fulfilled my campaign promises to push for the creation of a homegrown workforce for the surging innovation economy. Through my leadership, and that of many of my colleagues on the Council, if re-elected, I will continue to lead the way for Cambridge to be a world class STEAM city; and work to increase access for aging communities and people with disabilities to new technology, housing, and smart transportation services.

#### Leland Cheung

Throughout his tenure on the City Council, Leland Cheung has maintained a style of progressive leadership akin to the moral, cultural, and intellectual climate of Cambridge.



Leland lives in Neighborhood 9 and has worked to create more affordable housing, preserved local businesses and neighborhood feel, and has brought countless innovations to the city, including participatory budgeting, curbside com-

posting, open data, and more. Most importantly, Leland has worked to ensure that Cambridge is built on a foundation of community input – one that listens to the suggestions, criticisms, and ideas of its residents. Leland’s cell is publicly available: (617) 444-9080  
www.LelandCheung.com

**Mike Connolly**

Mike Connolly is running for the Cambridge City Council to protect the affordability, sustainability, and livability of our neighborhoods and squares. Mike’s commitment to the community comes from his own personal experiences.



Raised in a public housing project by a single mother who struggled with health issues, Mike spent time in foster care before earning a scholarship to Duke University and working his way through Boston College Law School. After moving to Cambridge with his wife Kacy, Mike emerged as a leading advocate for residents, working directly in City Hall on planning, transportation, open space, environmental protection, and housing issues.

**Mariko Davidson**

I’m an urban planner, MIT grad, trained in how to design cities for people. Rather than working for a high-paying developer, I chose public service. I served in Mayor Menino’s administration and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Now I lead the region’s premiere civic-focused Engagement Lab at Emerson College as the Managing Director.



As a civic activist, renter, and a year-round cyclist, I am passionate about making our city more equitable and affordable. Government should serve us-- not special interests. As your councillor, I will fight for a \$15 minimum wage,

more affordable housing, protected bicycle infrastructure, and real community engagement-- in-person and online. Visit: [votemariko.com](http://votemariko.com)

**Plinio Degoes, Jr.**

I am an immigrant who speaks Portuguese, Spanish, and English. I graduated from Harvard’s Romance Languages Program with a doctorate.



Why get involved? Aside from marrying a native Cantabrigian, I had my son at Mt. Auburn Hospital and began thinking about the city he would grow up in. I concluded that it would be less diverse socioeconomically. I object to Cambridge following that path. As such, I am the Green Party’s candidate and am reaching out to new voters. Greens have been elected at the local level - and it’s about time we elected one in Cambridge.

**Jan Devereux**

A 22-year resident of West Cambridge and mother of three, I am lucky to call Cambridge home. Dismayed by the pace and scale of piecemeal development around Alewife, I co-founded the Fresh Pond Residents Alliance to educate myself and neighbors about sustainable growth planning and city governance. Future development must better preserve livability and human scale neighborhoods, while preparing for climate change and creating more affordable housing. I am not accepting donations from large real estate developers. As a Councillor, I will make it my full-time job to give residents a greater voice in decision-making.



**Nadeem Mazen**

I’m excited to be running for my second term as City Councillor in Cambridge! As a relative newcomer to Cambridge politics I’ve had an amazing time in the last two years, and I

consider my freshman term to have been a resounding success. Last election I ran on a platform of more innovative and inclusive government, and this has been the key to my success in policy making. I'm committed to involving the community in key decisions, from participatory budgeting to citywide planning to community organizing. Thank you for your support!



**Marc McGovern**

As a lifelong Cambridge resident and father of four, I love our community. In just my first term on the City Council I have provided bold, responsible, collaborative leadership on many important progressive issues ranging from affordable housing to poverty, early childhood education to the environment. I am seeking re-election because as great as Cambridge is, we have more work to do to ensure every member of our community has access to a safe, secure, and sustainable future. I ask for your #1 vote on November 3rd so I can continue fighting for our community.



**E. Denise Simmons**

Denise Simmons is a lifelong resident of Cambridge, currently serving her seventh term on the Cambridge City Council. Denise has spent the past three decades working to better her community – first as the Executive Director of the Cambridge Civic Unity Committee in the 1980s, then as a member of the Cambridge School Committee in the 1990s, and since 2002, as a member of the Cambridge City Council. From 2008–2009, Denise served as Mayor of Cambridge, and she hopes to continue working to make City Hall more accessible and more



accountable to a greater number and scope of people.

**Minka Y. vanBeuzekom**

I'm campaigning to return to the Cambridge City Council. My priority is a healthier Cambridge for all residents. I will fight to promote a healthier, more balanced city in three distinct but overlapping areas. Increasing the health of families, the environment, and the economy of our city will lead to an overall healthier Cambridge. No other challenger in this year's race has the experience, qualification, and commitment to the voters that I have. Please visit [MinkaforCambridge.org](http://MinkaforCambridge.org) to learn more or connect with the campaign. If you want a healthier Cambridge, give me your only #1 vote November 3rd.



**Romaine Waite**

I am running for Cambridge City Council because I want to help our community stay as vibrant as it has become known for being, which I was lucky enough to be raised in. We are faced with several pressing long-term problems in the coming years and need to address them proactively rather than waiting until we are left only with non-ideal solutions. We will need to work cooperatively to ensure that everyone's voice is heard in this coming discussion. I want to work with you to continue my passion discovered a dozen years ago, my passion to serve our community.



**James Williamson**

Having lived in Cambridge for over forty years I know very well the problems and challenges we face in this increasingly unaffordable, congested, and over-built



(read: unlivable) city. These problems are bound together but our government is either asleep, or too often in the pockets of developers (and, unfortunately, their short-sighted Building Trades Union partners) at the expense of community. The awful “Changsho” project? Why is Beacon Street in such a disgraceful state?? We can change this, but we need your active participation, and we need your votes. (Of course, a #1 vote for James Williamson would be a great place to start!)

**CAMBRIDGE SCHOOL COMMITTEE CANDIDATE STATEMENTS**

**Manikka Bowman**

I’m running because I’m qualified to lead. Public education should be the institution that allows children from all backgrounds to unlock their talent and tap into their full potential. I will advocate to ensure this is true for ALL children in CPS. I know the importance of quality public education because I grew up in subsidized housing and education was my bridge to opportunity. I am committed to ensuring that CPS provides all Cambridge children a pathway to opportunity by tackling the following issues:



- Universal pre-K to stop the achievement gap before it starts
- Supporting Educators and Administrators
- Supporting Minorities and Girls

**Jake Crutchfield**

My name is Jake Crutchfield, and I am running for Cambridge School Committee. While getting my M. Ed in Secondary Education from Lesley University, I’ve worked as a substitute teacher in almost every Cambridge public school and in every grade level. In addition



I’ve worked as a community organizer around education. I believe our school district must strengthen its lines of communication in and out of the school system, and improve access to opportunities for all of our students. Moreover, Cambridge should reexamine the degree to which high-stakes testing affects our students and explore alternative assessment models.

**Emily Dexter**

I am running as a first-time School Committee candidate. Both my daughters went through the Cambridge Public Schools, K-12, and I am an educator and educational statistician trained at the Harvard Graduate School of Education. For the last several years I have been an outspoken advocate for providing better resources and staffing at the school and classroom level. I’ve served on many advisory boards and have kept parents informed about the CPS budget and policies through my blog: “Public School Notes: Essays, Reports, and Grassroots Information about the Cambridge Public Schools.”



[www.publicschoolnotes.wordpress.com](http://www.publicschoolnotes.wordpress.com)  
[www.emilydexterforcambridge.com](http://www.emilydexterforcambridge.com)

**Fred Fantini**

Honorable and ethical community service is important to me.

My priorities over more than thirty years have been that every Cambridge child be prepared for college and career success, our district be managed effectively, parents and community members participate and value diversity and openness of our actions, and that we retain the best educators and professionals we can.



As one of the longest-serving elected officials and as a municipal finance and operations pro-

fessional, I bring invaluable institutional knowledge, focused skills, and strong and respected relationships within the city, the state, the business community and neighborhoods in Cambridge, including yours.

**Elechi Kadete**

My name is Elechi Kadete and I am running for Cambridge School Committee. This is my second time running. My entire elementary and high school education was attained in Cambridge. I attended the then Joseph Maynard School, the Maria Baldwin School, and Cambridge Rindge and Latin High School. I am running for School Committee because I believe I can make a difference as I am in touch with Cambridge youth. I would like to see equal opportunity for all Cambridge students as the city spends a large amount of money on each student. I ask for your Number One vote.



**Patty Nolan**

I am passionate and focused on making our district even better. My broad management experience, analytical ability, and insistence on research-based decision-making allow me to have positive impact. I continually learn - from my parent experience (our children attended CPS K-12), listening to teachers, and reaching out to educators in Cambridge and beyond. Hard-working and effective, I've delivered on promises from directing more funds into classrooms to reworking discipline policies, to leading on environmental sustainability. My courageous stands and principled voting on tough issues like consulting contracts confirm my independence and commitment to do what's right rather than what's easy.



**David Weinstein**

I am the only candidate who has served as a full-time classroom teacher, and one of the few with a young child in CPS. My master's degree at the Harvard Graduate School of Education focused on school reform and leadership. I have served on a school council, a principal search committee, and the Citywide School Advisory Group. Priorities include: junior kindergarten for all four-year-olds; support and strengthen the still-new upper schools; thoughtfully induct the new superintendent to move forward with a direction shared by the schools and community; increase the percentage of teachers of color to at least 30%. [votedavidweinstein.com](http://votedavidweinstein.com)



**CURBSITE COMPOST PICK-UP EXPANDS IN CAMBRIDGE**

Curbside pickup of food scraps is expanding in Cambridge! The pilot program of 600 households in North Cambridge was so successful that it will expand to 5,000 more households. From October 6-14, eligible residences (twelve units or less with city trash service on Monday) will get: how-to instructions, a kitchen bin with compostable bags, and a green curbside bin (to share at multi-family buildings). Free weekly collection begins **Monday, October 19**.

For more info, visit [CambridgeMA.gov/CompostPickup](http://CambridgeMA.gov/CompostPickup)

**Volunteer**

The city is looking for 40-50 volunteers on three weeknights (October 13, 14, 15) to help educate North Cambridge residents about curbside composting. If you are interested in canvassing for an evening or two, please sign-up with this form: [tinyurl.com/CambridgeCompost](http://tinyurl.com/CambridgeCompost)

# Community Calendar

## October 2015

Monday, October 12		Columbus Day Holiday, ABC programs & office closed
Wednesday, October 14	6:00-7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome
Tuesday, October 20	6:30-9:00 PM	City Council Candidate's Forum, Lesley University Auditorium, University Hall, 1815 Mass. Ave.
Saturday, October 24	10:00 AM-12:00 PM	Sacramento St. Preschool Open House, learn more at: <a href="http://bit.ly/sacramento-st-preschool-open-house">bit.ly/sacramento-st-preschool-open-house</a>

The Whistler is published monthly September - June by the Agassiz Baldwin Community, distribution 2,000. Call (617) 349-6287 to receive by mail or email. The newsletter is also posted each month online at [www.agassiz.org](http://www.agassiz.org). Items of interest to the neighborhood should be submitted for consideration no later than the 15th of the month prior to publication date.

## The Whistler October 2015



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**DO NOT FORWARD**

### **VOLUNTEER WITH AGASSIZ BALDWIN**

Volunteer to cook a turkey for  
our 43rd Annual Thanksgiving  
Potluck Feast (November 24)!  
Details inside . . .



@agassizbaldwin  
@maudmorganarts



/agassizbaldwin  
/maudmorganarts