

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

June-September 2016

Special Edition!
June - September

IN THIS ISSUE

ANC May Annual Meeting: 2016 Board of Directors, Appreciating Stephen Diamond 1-2

ANC June 14 Meeting: Neighbors Raise Concerns about Proposed Sacramento Field Renovations, What does Agassiz Want and Need?, Introducing Sunny Cambridge 2-6

Summer Neighborhood Planning Meetings: July 12th Meeting Recap, August 9th Meeting Recap 7-8

ABC Children's Programs: A Successful Summer with Outback CITs 8-9

Maud Morgan Arts: Spirit Awards '16 - Visionaries in the Arts 9

ANC News

NOTES FROM THE MAY ANNUAL MEETING

2016 Board of Directors

At the May 10th Annual Meeting, the Neighborhood Council voted unanimously to approve the slate for the 2016 Board of Directors.

Officers for a one-year term:

Andrea Walsh, Co-Chair, Eustis St.
Emily Anderson, Co-Chair, Abodeon
Hull Fulweiler, Clerk, Howland St.
Jonathan Lehrich, Treasurer, Cogswell Ave.

Directors for a two-year term:

Emily Anderson, Abodeon
Miriam Goldberg, Frost St.
Fred Meyer, Hammond St.
Andrea Walsh, Eustis St.

Appreciating Stephen Diamond, ANC Meeting Chair Emeritus

Prepared by Phoebe Sinclair, Community Liaison

In 2005, I started at Agassiz as a 'baby' Community Liaison. I had done some community organizing, but I hadn't experienced a place as unique, energetic, and responsive as the Neighborhood Council.



Stephen plays micro-harmonica with Phoebe accompanying on thunder maker

To my memory, at the time ABC Board Directors were sharing the task of chairing community meetings; it was a lot to keep up with -Board and ANC meetings on the same night. We streamlined the process, with the meetings separating to two different evenings and Stephen Diamond serving as primary Council Chair, helping set meeting agendas and acting as liaison to the ABC Board.

This is how it looked for nearly a decade: Stephen brought the passion:

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



SEPT. 13 - 7:30 PM

Maud Morgan Arts
20A Sacramento Street
2D Studio

Agenda:

- New **Harvard Development for "Bence Pharmacy" site**, corner Mass. Ave. and Everett St.
- Developing a **Vision for the Agassiz Neighborhood & Update on Sacramento Field**

- Desire to keep the community at a livable scale
- Advocating for seniors, street trees, and local businesses
- Playing firm-but-fair with City reps., institutions, and developers
- Spearheading the Mass. Ave. Demonstration Block project to help bring beauty, practicality, and small-city charm back to Agassiz's portion of "the Ave."

Phoebe brought the resources:

- Organizing, writing, and technology skills
- Curiosity about unique efforts and happenings in Cambridge and beyond
- Recalling names when they abruptly disappeared from Stephen's memory!

To my mentor and friend, I extend an overdue Thank You for your communal spirit, flexibility, and sense of good-natured mischief.

NOTES FROM THE JUNE 14 ANC MEETING

Neighbors Raise Concerns about Proposed Sacramento Field Renovations

Walking/Running Path

Residents discussed the City's plans to pave a path within Sacramento Field that is currently used by walkers, joggers, school children learning to bike, and others. The existing path/track is informal, comprised of grass and packed soil, and runs along the inner edge of the rectangular-shaped field.

"We object to the city's plan for a five-foot wide path made of asphalt or some other material," stated Taylor Milsal, Garfield St. resident and organizer of a petition to preserve the path called 'Save the Dirt'. Beginning January 2016, the group collected signatures online at Change.org and in person, totaling 150 at the time of the June ANC Meeting and 350 by summer's end. According to Ms. Milsal, more than 100 people wrote letters opposing the asphalt path.

Issues with paving the path include:

- Concern about increasing the amount of paved land in and around the field
- Reduced exposure to natural environments for children (and related health impacts such as asthma, food allergies, and respiratory problems)
- Increasing the 'heat island effect' (where urban centers are significantly warmer than less-populated surrounding areas), especially in relation to increased development and new construction in the city
- Water run-off and off-gassing from the asphalt
- Asphalt can look unattractive and be prone to falling apart
- Safety for elementary school children, who ride bikes around the field

Described by Ms. Milsal, some of the benefits of maintaining the path as-is include:

- Commitment to the health of residents and visitors to Sacramento Field
- A softer surface is preferred by some walkers and joggers
- The current path controls speed
- Some consider the current path "rustic and charming"

Ms. Milsal reported that while access to the field is a requirement of the Americans with

King Street Properties
- salutes -

**Wendy Prellwitz
&
Dr. Joseph Moore**

Thank you for your vision
& support of Maud Morgan Arts

KSP King Street Properties
Placemaking for Science.

Disabilities Act (ADA), she believes it is an important distinction that a paved path around the field is not required. She told the Council that this information was confirmed by several architects and a consultation with Federal ADA authorities. In speaking with Cambridge Community Development (CDD), Ms. Milsal reported that the city prefers to implement a philosophy of Universal Access.

Additionally, Ms. Milsal consulted with and received support from Adèle Naudé Santos, architect, urban designer and former dean of the School of Architecture and Planning at MIT, as well spoke with Baldwin School Principal Nicholas Leonardos.

Community Response

Council members expressed a variety of responses to the 'Save the Dirt' campaign, including:

- Need for clarity around ADA/Universal Design requirements
- Discussion of appropriate, accessible, historic, and attractive paving materials (asphalt, concrete, brick, gravel, etc.)
- The need for residents to effectively work together to preserve quality of life in the neighborhood
- Need for better audio/sound support at city and community meetings



Cambridge City Councillor Jan Devereux attended to listen and respond to resident feedback on the draft design. She mentioned having attended CDD's community presentation in May, where some of these issues were raised, and shared a memo from the City Manager that explained the project goals, community outreach and input to-date, the ADA/Universal Design requirements, and park maintenance and public safety standards.

Responding to several points, Councillor Devereux read from the City Manager's memo (a link to the memo is available at the end of this article):

- The City has a legal obligation to use Universal Design standards
- The City looked into alternate and permeable materials that would meet and maintain accessibility standards over time, and decided to use asphalt
- Sam Lipson, Director of Environmental Health for the Cambridge Public Health Department, stated that, because the asphalt path won't be sealed, there shouldn't be problems with off-gassing

"I'll reiterate your concerns about the paved path to the city and City Manager," stated Councillor Devereux. "They are listening and will continue to listen."

Dedicated Toddler Space

Mary Jo Clark, who operates a home daycare on Crescent St., recounted her efforts to pre-

An advertisement for Tuscan Brands. The top half features a close-up of several round, golden-brown breads. Below the breads, the text reads "Proud Sponsor OF THE MMA" in a mix of script and sans-serif fonts. To the right of this text is the Tuscan Brands logo, which consists of a sunburst icon above the words "TUSCAN BRANDS". At the bottom of the advertisement, there are three smaller logos for "TUSCAN CATERING", "TUSCAN KITCHEN", and "TUSCAN MARKET". Below these logos is the text "Experience Artisan Italian". On the right side of the bottom section, the website "TuscanBrands.com" is listed, followed by three addresses: "67 Main Street, Salem, NH 603.952.4875", "2400 District Ave, Burlington, MA 781.229.0300", and "581 Lafayette Road, Portsmouth, NH Coming Soon!".

serve dedicated space for toddlers in the field. Prior to her meeting with CDD, draft plans for Sacramento Field did not include a gated area for small children and their care providers.

“We’ve used the field at least twice a week for about thirty years.” Ms. Clark stated.

At the time of the June ANC Meeting, CDD had agreed to add a gated area to the field plans, and Ms. Clark was waiting to hear back about her request for play structures appropriate for very small children.



Lighting

City Manager Rossi clarified that Sacramento Field is open for public use from dawn to dusk and lighting will be limited to hours when the field is open. Lighting will be minimal, so as not to disturb neighbors.

Community Input

City Manager Rossi offered to extend the deadline for construction bids, so that the community has more time to respond to the proposed plans. The deadline for community input is October 1, 2016. Interested parties are invited to attend the next ANC meeting on the evening of September 13th (see page 1 for the full agenda).

Additional Information

Learn more about the Sacramento Field renovation project on the city’s website at: bit.ly/Sac-Field-CDD

City Manager’s memo:

bit.ly/Sac-Field-CDD, click on ‘Documents’ tab

What Does Agassiz Want and Need?

One weekend before a long holiday, ‘No Parking’ signs were posted along several blocks of Wendell St., indicating upcoming utility pole work. A resident, curious about the nature of the work and concerned by increasing numbers of items installed on utility poles, contacted the Pole Commission and the Department of Public Works (DPW). Upon discovering that no permit had been filed for the ‘No Parking’ signs, DPW removed them.

Residents discussed other confusing, question-raising, or disappointing experiences, including:

- A utility pole at the corner of Oxford/Wendell where a large, loud fan seemingly ran day and night
- A street water-leak that residents called into the city
- Curiosity about how electrical utilities got buried on Irving and Chauncey Sts., and whether this be replicated in Agassiz
- If/how Agassiz will benefit from the DPW’s Five Year Plan for Streets and Sidewalks

Responding to a pre-meeting inquiry, John



Sullivan, Director of Communications at Lesley University, explained, “There’s been a misperception that Lesley and the city are working on a joint project. The street work undertaken as part of building the new Lunder Arts Center has been completed. The current activity in that area is the City’s sewer separation project.”

Additionally, Mr. Sullivan agreed to look into utility pole items at 47 Wendell St. that a technician, when questioned by a resident, had attributed to the university.

Residents interested in participating in neighborhood-initiated long-range planning efforts were invited to meet on Tuesday, July 12th. (see recap on page 7.)

Learn about the DPW’s Five Year Plan online at:
www.cambridgema.gov/theworks/fiveyearplan

Introducing Sunny Cambridge

Jessica Nahigian, Program Coordinator at Cambridge Energy Alliance, introduced, Sunny Cambridge, a new year-long initiative helping residents to ‘go solar.’ The city has partnered with EnergySage to provide access to an online marketplace and no-obligation quotes from pre-screened local installers.



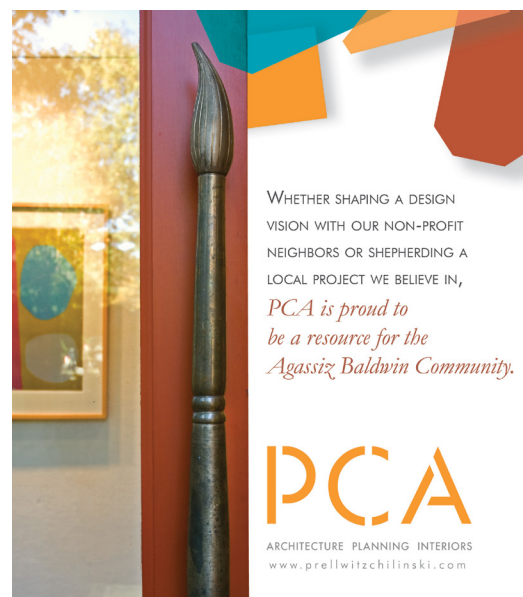
“Sunny Cambridge is part of our effort to make it as easy as possible for residents to reduce their energy use,” explained Ms. Nahigian. “If you use EnergySage, pre-screened, local solar installers will submit bids for your project. You can then compare the bids and see what different installers are offering. Cambridge is promoting the EnergySage marketplace because independent analyses have shown that using EnergySage’s competitive marketplace saves residents up to 20% of what they might otherwise pay for solar. Also, EnergySage has a free hotline service for

all your solar questions, and because they don’t install the panels, they offer frank, unbiased advice.”

For residents who own a condo or multi-family building, Sunny Cambridge provides dedicated Multi-Family Advisors to work hand-in-hand through the sometimes more complex installation options.

As described by Sunny Cambridge, a summary of benefits includes:

- Cut your electricity bill. Installing solar panels could save you more than \$30,000 over 20 years.
- Earn additional income. Solar Renewable Energy Certificates (SRECs) pay you for clean electricity generation. Ten years of solar generation can earn you an additional \$15,000 in SREC income.
- No upfront costs. The new Mass Solar Loan provides zero-cash-down loans at interest rates of 3.25% or lower, with additional rebates for low-to-moderate income residents and low credit scores.
- Increase the value of your home. U.S. Department of Energy studies show homes with solar sell for an average of \$15,000-\$20,000 more, and there are laws which prevent this added value from raising your property taxes.



- Support the local economy. Sunny Cambridge has local installers participating so the money you spend on energy stays local instead of being sent to out-of-state fossil fuel producers.
- Make Cambridge the #1 energy saver in the country! Going solar helps Cambridge win the \$5 million Georgetown University Energy Prize. Apart from bragging rights, the prize money can be used to build more energy efficiency and renewable energy projects throughout our community.

Residents will also be able to utilize the EnergySage marketplace after the partnership with Cambridge has ended; however, the free Multi-Family Advising services will be available for one year only.

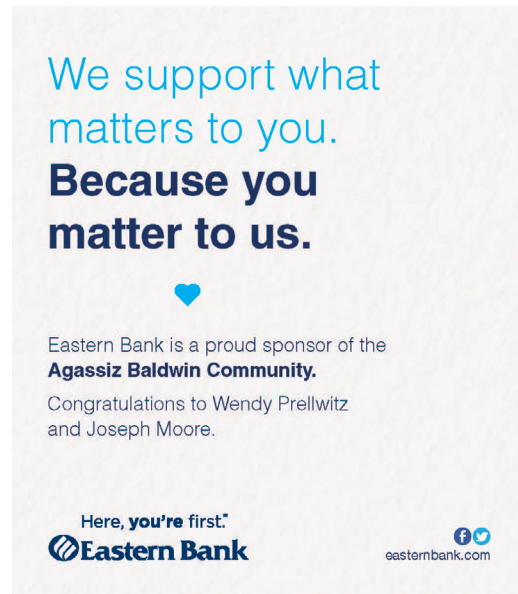
Q&A

- Q:** I heard that some houses don't qualify. How can a person find out if their house can utilize solar panels?
- A:** It's true that solar isn't the right fit for all houses, depending on how shaded a roof is, for example. A MIT-based company has mapped the solar potential of every Cambridge roof, and residents can see a preliminary estimate at cambridgema.gov/solar. However, the only real way to get detailed information is to get an estimate with Sunny Cambridge!
- Q:** Is the city encouraging businesses to go solar?
- A:** Commercial spaces are more complicated. The advisors we hired do commercial advising. However, Cambridge's program is mostly meant for residential use.

Additional Information

Learn more at www.sunnycambridge.org or 1(888) 838-4638. Ms. Nahigian can be contacted at jnahigian@cambridgema.gov.

Quickly check your online solar potential and



get a theoretical cost breakdown by going to cambridgema.gov/solar

MassSaves Energy Assessments

Cambridge encourages residents to get free MassSaves Energy assessments for instant-saving methods and home energy reports.

Everyone receives:

- No-cost:
 - Energy-efficient LEDs and CFLs
 - Water-saving devices
 - Smart power strips
- Rebates of up to \$400 on appliances

Homeowners also receive:

- A free energy report
- Access to rebates for upgrades like:
 - No-cost air sealing to eliminate drafts
 - Up to \$2000 towards additional insulation
 - Rebates on heating and cooling equipment, refrigerators, and washing machines
 - 0% financing through the HEAT Loan Program

Learn more at:

www.cambridgeenergyalliance.org/save

SUMMER NEIGHBORHOOD PLANNING

JULY 12TH MEETING RECAP

Reprinted from July 25th ANC Community Notice email

At the July 12th community meeting, Agassiz residents discussed a number of issues and concerns, including:

- Proposed renovations at Sacramento Field
- Problems with bicyclists on sidewalks and not following the rules of the road
- Wifi towers/utility poles
- Fast-moving vehicles on neighborhood streets
- Crosswalks

Mayor E. Denise Simmons attended and was very helpful in addressing one of our main concerns: how to get the City Council to take action on Agassiz issues. Mayor Simmons detailed community organizing methods as well as gave suggestions on how to have more influence with the City Council.

Utilizing the Mayor's suggestions and continuing with the agenda of the July 12 meeting, those in attendance decided to set-up two working groups:



- The first would gather and detail/delineate the issues that are of concern to Agassiz residents.
- The second working group would map out the neighborhood by block areas and assign these areas to "information captains" who would be responsible for gathering news and sharing it with everyone in their areas.

The Neighborhood Council realizes that people are connected via the Internet, via smart phones, and via standard mail - we endeavor to reach everyone in our area.

It is our understanding that we are all interconnected. What may seem to be a particular streets' parochial issue actually affects ALL of us. The goal of this current organizing effort is to develop a more unified "force" in order to be more effective with the city. We encourage you to participate in a working group.

Feedback and ideas are welcome. Contact Phoebe Sinclair, Community Liaison, at psinclair@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x10.

AUGUST 9TH MEETING RECAP

At the August 9th community meeting, residents discussed the following:

- Establishing a central group to identify and frame issues and follow up with residents
- Dividing the neighborhood into manageable portions and enlisting block captains/leaders to help disseminate and gather information
- Comparing the Cambridge Residential listing and ANC members lists to create a more comprehensive contact list
- Visioning:
 - Short term project: Sacramento Field
 - Long term project: Organizing for a representative voice
 - Establishing a process by which divergent opinions can be collected and expressed
 - Developing a statement of purpose and a mechanism to inform neighbors

Update on Sacramento Field

A working group of Council members/residents (Taylor Milsal, Danny Hills, Jack Chun, Fred Meyer, Kate Frank, and one resident who wishes to remain anonymous; absent Mary Jo Clark) met with City Manager Richard Rossi, Asst. City Manager Lisa Peterson, and city staff Stuart Dash, Ellen Kokinda, Owen O’Riordan, and Iram Farooq about concerns related to the path, lighting, programming, and the historic significance of Sacramento Field.

The discussion included:

- City Manager Rossi’s commitment to Universal Design for the path/track
- Lights in the park would be dawn-to-dusk; the city was willing to negotiate on placement
- Responding to the working group’s request for more time, the city postponed construction bids for the field to December
- The Working Group will meet further with experts, collect input from the broader Agassiz community, and respond to Manger Rossi and CDD by October 1, 2016



Agassiz Baldwin Children’s Programs

ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL SUMMER WITH OUTBACK CITS

Prepared by Ashley Yee, Registration Coordinator & ABC Children’s Program Staff

Agassiz Baldwin Community is proud to report another successful summer with our Counselors-in-Training (CIT)



at the Outback Summer Program! This year saw a regained focus in our CIT program, as we had teachers working directly with our middle school youth to support them as they

gained a range of important job-related skills. We also strengthened our relationship with the Cambridge Middle School Network (MSN); working with MSN liaisons and community leaders to spread awareness of our summer youth employment program.

CITs committed to a session of two weeks each, and were split up in AM and PM “shifts.” They learned how to complete timecards and communicate with peers and supervisors. They were responsible for supporting teaching staff and helping to maintain our indoor and outdoor spaces to ensure the fun and safety of children K-6th grade attending Outback. Over the course of two weeks, our CITs gained invaluable experience which will prepare them for future employment.

After completing their sessions, we asked the 2016 CITs to take a quick survey so we could assess how the program impacted them. Here are some of the most exciting findings from their responses:

- When asked if they felt confident in their ability to communicate with peers to identify and solve problems, an overwhelming 97% responded positively.
- Beyond working with peers, our CITs also learned how to effectively communicate with their supervisors. In this skill, around

**Every great
pursuit begins
with creativity.**

Lesley University is proud to celebrate former president Joseph Moore’s contribution to the arts in Cambridge and beyond.



90% indicated that they felt confident in their ability.

- Additionally, 93% of CITs also expressed confidence in setting their own goals to accomplish tasks. Those goals apparently paid off, as 73% felt a strong sense of pride in what they accomplished at Outback.
- In their own words, the CITs were able to describe some of the important values they developed that could help them in future employment. These included skills based in communication, leadership, teamwork, and responsibility.

We also asked parents of CITs to provide their own input on the experience for their children.

“I thought it was a well-run program and very, very good for Adlin,” one parent wrote.

“This was a great experience for Jalen, and I wish there were [more] programs like this . . . He will definitely see you guys next year,” another said.

If you’re interested in learning more about our Youth Employment Program, please visit: agassiz.org/childrens-programs/teen-programs.



Maud Morgan Arts

SPIRIT AWARDS 2016: VISIONARIES IN THE ARTS

Please come and enjoy a night of Art, Music, Friends and Fun at the Spirit Awards! Your support helps us provide scholarships and expand programming that fulfills Maud Morgan Art’s mission of connecting, inspiring, and transforming individual lives by building community through the visual arts.

Each year Maud Morgan Arts honors one or two artists who embody the “spirit” of Maud

Morgan and the community arts center that bears her name. This year, the Spirit Awards benefit honors art leaders and advocates who worked to establish two of Cambridge’s major resources for artists and art-lovers.

Wendy Prellwitz

Artist and architect Wendy Prellwitz was a major force behind the conception, design, and creation of Maud Morgan Arts. During the eighteen years from grand idea to grand opening in 2010, Ms. Prellwitz worked tirelessly to make the art center a reality.

Joseph Moore

Joseph Moore, President of Lesley University (2007-2016), is a long-time champion of the arts and was an early supporter of Maud Morgan Arts.

We look forward to having you join us for this celebration.

- What:** Spirit Awards 2016: Visionaries in the Arts
When: Sunday, September 18, 2016
6:30-9:30 PM
Where: Maud Morgan Arts,
20A Sacramento St.
Tickets: \$40 in advance, \$50 at door
bit.ly/spirit-awards-2016

For more information, contact Catherine Kernan, MMA Director, at (617) 349-6287 x15 or ckernan@agassiz.org

Can’t attend? Please consider making a donation to support Maud Morgan Arts:
www.maudmorganarts.org



Community Calendar

September 2016

Tuesday, September 13	7:30-10:00 PM	ANC Meeting (see page 1 for agenda) Maud Morgan Arts, 20A Sacramento St. All are welcome, please join us!
Wednesday, September 14	6:00-7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome
Sunday, September 18	6:30-9:30 PM	Spirit Awards Fundraiser, 20 Sacramento Street, backyard For tickets, visit: bit.ly/spirit-awards-2016

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. 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 September 2016



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