

# the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

November/December 2016

Special Edition!  
November/December

## IN THIS ISSUE

<b>Editor's Note</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>ANC Oct. 4 Special Meeting: Revised Plans for New Harvard Building at Mass. Ave. &amp; Everett St.</b>	<b>1-2</b>
<b>ANC Oct. 13 Special Meeting: Sacramento Field Update</b>	<b>2-5</b>
<b>ANC Oct. 18 Meeting: Intro Cam- bridge Residents for Responsible Elections, Future Council Process to Improve Communication</b>	<b>5-8</b>
<b>ANC/Cambridge Nov. 9 Joint Meeting: Sacramento Field</b>	<b>8-10</b>
<b>ANC: City Manager Memo</b>	<b>10-13</b>
<b>ABC Programs: Thanksgiving Potluck Recap, Kids Only Holiday Sale Recap, Help Support ABC</b>	<b>12</b>

## ANC News

### EDITOR'S NOTE

Following, please find minutes from community meetings, October through November, in chronological order. Those specifically interested in the outcome of negotiations regarding Sacramento Field, find correspondence from Acting City Manager Lisa Peterson summarizing the final design on pages 10-13.

The writers and editor of this newsletter would like to recognize all who participated, whether through organizing, attending meetings, weighing in via letter and email, or by following along in *The Whistler*. Your engagement helps the Neighborhood Council and *The Whistler* stay relevant and useful. **Thank you.**

Phoebe Sinclair  
Writer and editor

## NOTES FROM THE OCT. 4 SPECIAL MEETING

### **Proposed Harvard Development at Everett St. & Mass. Ave.**

ANC hosted Tom Lucey, Harvard University's Director of Government & Community Relations for Cambridge, for a discussion about a new building proposed for 1607-1615 Mass. Ave., corner of Mass. Ave. & Everett St. The site was formerly occupied by Central Barber, 3 Aces Pizza, Crimson Cleaners, Fancy Fingers, and Looks clothing boutique, but has been vacant since 2007, when dry cleaning solvents were discovered in the groundwater beneath the building. The university has since been engaged in a remediation process to remove the contamination.



## NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



**JAN. 10 - 7:30 PM**

Maud Morgan Arts  
20A Sacramento Street  
2D Studio

### **Agenda:**

- **Neighborhood Resiliency Discussion** with Cambridge City Councillor **Craig Kelley**
- **ANC Communication Agreements** review & discussion

The Harvard representatives described plans to tear down the existing structure, which will help expedite removing the remaining contaminants. A new building will be constructed on the site. Designs were presented at a Harvard-hosted community open house on Monday, June 27, 2016 at Wasserstein Hall.

Specs include:

- 4 floors (the building will be shorter than nearby Wasserstein Hall)
- Approximately 20,000 square feet:
  - 12,000 feet reserved for a legal aid program (currently in Wasserstein Hall) and other programmatic uses such as policy and research
  - 25% reserved for retail
  - Retail space is 35 feet deep and can be divided in half
- One loading space and no additional parking (students and guests are expected to use the nearby Everett St. garage or on-street parking)

Responding to themes that arose during the community open house, Mr. Lucey reported that architects redesigned the building to include a wider sidewalk setback. Also based on feedback, the proposal now includes softer edges, a corner entrance, and a bay window.

Following Mr. Lucey's presentation, residents raised the following concerns:

- How well does design transition from Harvard to the rest of the neighborhood?
- Asking the university to honor its agreement to include retail that encourages activity past 5:00 PM
- Concern that the proposal negates an earlier agreement between Harvard and the community about preventing University expansion beyond Everett Street.

"We've long been committed to hosting small, independent retailers that benefit the surrounding community," Mr. Lucey responded.

In order to construct the new building, Harvard has applied for a number of zoning variances to the City of Cambridge, including:

- Relief of the 5-foot setback on Everett St.
- Modest relief for a 3-foot rear yard setback
- Relief for 0 lot line above the barber shop
- A special permit to allow retail (the lot is zoned C-2A residence/multi-family with a Harvard, Radcliffe, Lesley overlay, which means a developer must obtain a special permit to allow retail use)

#### Q&A

**Q:** How will the new building impact the smaller structure that houses Central Barber. Also, will the condos behind Central Barber be affected?

**A:** There will be a small parting wall between the new building and Central Barber, whose building is owned by the condo association behind it. Also, the proposed bay window will not overhang barbershop.

#### More Info

Learn more about 1607-1615 Mass. Ave. via The Whistler:

- [bit.ly/Oct\\_Whistler\\_2007](http://bit.ly/Oct_Whistler_2007)
- [bit.ly/Jun\\_Whistler\\_2007](http://bit.ly/Jun_Whistler_2007)

### NOTES FROM THE OCT. 13 SPECIAL MEETING

#### **Sacramento Field Update**

The Neighborhood Council hosted a continuation of the on-going discussion around proposed renovations to Sacramento Field. City representatives in attendance included Stuart Dash, Director of Community Planning and Owen O'Riordan, Department of Public Works Commissioner.

Residents continued to express a range of responses, from support for the city's design and positive feelings about the outcome of previous community meetings, to continued opposition to paving a path/track within the field, lighting, and off-leash hour for dogs, to disappointment

with the City's and the Neighborhood Council's community input processes.

The report below, organized by topic, is intended to represent a selection of views expressed by those in attendance at the October 13th Special Meeting, and is not comprehensive.

### **Field Elements - General**

"The renovation plan has been under revision based on community comments," stated Mr. Dash. "And the basic plan has been the plan for the last six months. One of our goals is to develop a balanced design to get the right outcome. We don't want to optimize just one or two aspects."

Mr. Dash briefly described the community engagement process:

- Notices were mailed to every house within a quarter mile of Sacramento Field
- City-arranged meetings were held during the summer of 2016 to address the key issues identified by residents

One of the City's goals is to complete renovations within a specified amount of time so as not to straddle two years.

Mr. Dash reiterated, "The City is committed to this process, listening to and incorporating feedback, as well as to coming to an agreement."

### **School Community Response**

Representatives from The Friends of Baldwin School and Cambridge Youth Soccer expressed the following:

- To resolve the current lack of a clear and easily accessed entrance to the Field, the Baldwin School community hopes the field renovation plan will move forward
- Youth soccer would not be negatively impacted by the minimal square footage lost; the current plan meets the soccer requirements and a smaller field is preferable for younger players (the league only stipulates a maximum size)

- While lights could be useful during cold weather seasons when the sun sets earlier, they would not necessarily extend playing hours for soccer
- The soccer coach supported paving the walking path/track so that the field could be utilized by children and adults with disabilities

### **Walking Path/Track**

ANC Meeting Moderator Fred Meyer relayed several questions, posed by residents:

- Does the path need to go all the way around the Field?
- Can wheelchairs co-exist with bikes and rollerblades, all of which move at different speeds?
- Continued lack of clarity around American with Disabilities Act requirements

"If a feature exists for people's use and enjoyment, it needs to be accessible," Owen O'Riordan responded. "Primarily the path needs to be firm, stable, and slick-resistant. Asphalt and concrete meet these requirements. The problem with materials like stabilized aggregate is that they rot and destabilize over time, especially after heavy rainfall or excessive use."

Mr. O'Riordan recognized residents' concerns about children falling on a hard surfaces and proposed installing a rubberized layer over the asphalt.

Additionally, Mr. Dash explained that the Cambridge Commission for Persons with Disabilities doesn't see multi-use as an issue,



“People with disabilities are always faced with this problem, and residents can work together to make it a comfortable space for everyone. The city envisions that all types of people would benefit from the paved path, including small children on tricycles, families with strollers, and others.”

Danny Hillis of Garfield St. suggested that the access path and the circumference path be decoupled, “The kids are going to be much more crowded. We are fighting for your kids --not just this generation, but for the next.”

Another resident raised concerns about limited availability of green space in Cambridge, stating, “A path shouldn’t just be built for convenience. Think about the legacy we’re leaving behind for future generations. Once it’s gone, you don’t get it back.”

### **Lighting**

Residents raised safety concerns related to installing lights in Sacramento Field, specifically related to late-night use and illegal activity. Some indicated that motion-activated lights might be disruptive.

In response, the city representatives stated that they didn’t believe lighting would encourage activity. They agreed to work directly with abutters to create a schedule. Mr. Dash also noted that attempting to add lights after the renovation is completed would be cost prohibitive and disruptive.

Residents requested that the city commit to the



lighting schedule in writing.

### **Dogs & Off-leash Hours**

Mr. Dash highlighted how the city has worked to create spaces where dogs are allowed to run off leash. Cambridge plans to pilot off-leash hours at Sacramento Field.

### **Preserving Natural and Cultural History**

Mr. Meyer reminded attendees that Sacramento Field is the last remnant of the cedar swamp that once covered the neighborhood. Its water was utilized as a reservoir by a textile-finishing factory, started in 1820 (on Somerville Ave. where Conway Park is now.) That use lasted more than 100 years and prevented the developer of the area from building Victorian-style houses on the lot.

Community member Joshua Fay spoke of the importance of preserving a natural environment, including the reported health benefits of childhood exposure to the bacteria present in dirt in preventing the development of allergies. He also addressed the need for more darkness in urban areas and criticized harsh lighting.

### **Critique of Community Process**

Some council members took issue with ANC’s process leading up to the October 13th Special Meeting:

- Notice went out less than a week in advance, allowing insufficient time for members and residents to adjust their schedules
- The meeting was scheduled for a different day than usual
- A motion (presented for vote at the meeting) was shared with the community just eight hours in advance, limiting the opportunity for review and comment

Others pointed out that outgoing City Manager Richard Rossi had already published ‘final’ plans for the Field, and the bids to implement them were being collected from contractors.

Mr. Meyer noted that ANC needed to respond

quickly, which shortened the time available for community outreach.

### **Extension Request**

Willie Bloomstein, long-time resident and neighborhood activist, led the Council in an exercise to identify the key items to be resolved. These included:

- The walking path/track
- Lighting and lighting schedule
- Decreased space in the field

### **Council Motion and Vote**

A motion was presented by Taylor Milsal and Danny Hillis, with edits suggested by Fred Meyer, for a vote by the Council: “Motion to ask Acting City Manager Lisa Peterson to postpone all construction meetings for Sacramento Field until serious and reasonable community concerns can be reviewed and addressed by the City.”

Amendments were suggested requesting that the postponement be limited to 30 days and several other content edits. Council members voted for the amendments: 11 in favor, 3 opposed.

The final motion was passed by a vote of: 15 in favor, 3 opposed, and 2 abstaining.

### **Update**

Fred Meyer and Phoebe Sinclair compiled the final motion and accompanying materials, which included correspondence from community members, historic information, and research on possible paving options, and delivered it by hand to Interim City Manager Lisa Peterson.

Read the motion online at:  
[bit.ly/ANC\\_Motion\\_102016](http://bit.ly/ANC_Motion_102016)



## **NOTES FROM THE OCT. 18 ANC MEETING**

### **Introducing Cambridge Residents for Responsible Elections**

Anne Taylor of East Cambridge introduced Cambridge Residents for Responsible Elections (CRRE), an independent group working towards bringing campaign finance reform, specifically publicly financed elections, to the city.

“I think the level of the money that influences politics is dangerous,” Ms. Taylor stated. “Campaign finance reform is about changing the political system as it is. It’s about transparency, making sure residents’ voices are heard, and leveling the playing field of candidates for office.”

Cambridge Residents for Responsible Elections is comprised of participants from all around the city, ranging from high school students to older adults. They meet weekly on Thursdays. Occasionally, they receive administrative support from City Councillor Nadeem Mazen’s office, working with his Legislative Aid to research questions around policy and procedure.

Ms. Taylor became interested in this effort related to a development project in her neighborhood, where she felt powerless to influence the outcome. She stated, “I wondered, was my voice being heard?”

There are different models of campaign finance reform, many revolving around getting a large number of small donations from individuals which are then typically matched by public funding such as grants. To receive public funding, candidates must adhere to certain guidelines.

During the summer, CRRE was tasked to make a presentation to two committees, Government Operations, Rules & Claims; and Neighborhood & Long Term Planning, Public Facilities, Arts

& Celebration. They made their first presentation in August to the latter committee, inviting experts from: Common Cause, a political advocacy group; Free Speech for People, a national non-partisan organization that advocates for limiting campaign spending and repealing corporate personhood; and The New Haven Democracy Fund, which provides public matching funds and public financing grants to Mayoral candidates who voluntarily agree to restrictions on how campaign funds are raised and spent.

Among CRRE's accomplishments are drafting a policy order and gaining the support of the City Council's Neighborhood & Long Term Planning Committee. They've met with nearly all the City Councilors about the barriers to and potential benefits of establishing campaign finance reform in Cambridge.

"We've met with Councillors individually, and many have said fundraising is tiring," Ms. Taylor stated. "The cost of campaigns has risen. Candidates for City Council now need to raise on average \$60,000. In Cambridge, a campaign finance reform model would allow candidates who don't have a lot of money or a large constituency to run for office. We're also exploring whether it's possible to limit the amount they spend, and what they spend it on, especially for candidates who take public financing."

City Council members have expressed concern for public financing on a number of issues, including:

- How to balance spending some of the city budget on public financing versus issues such as affordable housing
- How to ensure leveling the playing field if there are both publicly and privately funded candidates in an election
- How to ensure publicly funded candidates are truly qualified to run for office

"We're not experts," concluded Ms. Taylor. "This is an ongoing effort. For now, we plan to continue meeting with neighborhood groups and investigate the possibility of a ballot

initiative, which will help us better understand how the residents feel about this issue."

#### Q&A

**Q:** Where would the funds that candidates receive via public campaign financing come from?

**A:** The model we are looking at would have it come from the city budget. We estimate it would be about 1%, coming from the General Fund.

**Q:** Would the public financing be in addition to private financing?

**A:** We have found that public financing programs must be voluntary. If a candidate volunteers to participate, they cannot take private funding. But you can have both publicly and privately funded candidates in an election.

**Q:** Could any candidate get public financing?

**A:** Yes and no. Candidates would need to meet a certain criteria, proving that they have the background to run for public office.

**Q:** Is there any conflict with Massachusetts' state law?

**A:** The City Solicitor and City Manager have been tasked, per CRRE's August presentation, with looking into whether campaign finance reform would be legal in Cambridge.

**Q:** What's your vision for this effort, if it succeeds?

**A:** Ideally, our City Council would better represent the people by whom they're elected. I'm not saying that doesn't exist now, but we're hoping for a Council that is more apt to listen to a variety of citizens, as opposed to special interest groups that have given multiple and larger donations.

**Q:** What are the big spending items for City Council candidates?

**A:** Candidates have to pay for mailers, campaign staff, fundraising parties, and support

for the volunteers and canvassers. Not many candidates in Cambridge pay for TV ads.

For more information about CRRE:

- Sign up for updates at:  
<http://tinyurl.com/CRREsign-up>
- Follow on Facebook at:  
[http://bit.ly/CRRE\\_Facebook](http://bit.ly/CRRE_Facebook)

Contact Anne Taylor at [ataylor40@gmail.com](mailto:ataylor40@gmail.com).

### **Future Council Communication Process**

Kate Frank, long-time Agassiz resident and Council member, led a discussion of how members of the Neighborhood Council can better communicate during meetings without the threat of misrepresentation or rebuttal.

“When people are impassioned, they can lose the ability to communicate with one another. The intensity of discourse and/or the implied atmosphere of mistrust can make it hard to think,” Ms. Frank explained. “I’ve lived in this community since 1970, and there have been times where issues have gotten heated enough to go beyond helpful discourse.”

Essential Partners, a local nonprofit where Ms. Frank and Phoebe Sinclair have received instruction in communication practices and meeting design, suggests using guidelines that participants agree to in advance. This tool can help improve communication without losing intent and meaning.

### **Communication Agreements**

Communication agreements provide a framework that can help bring a contentious discussion back to the point where all participants feel able to interact and express themselves. Established agreements also benefit a moderator by providing a neutral process to fall back on, as well as by encouraging participants to self-correct.

“Different groups have different agreements, but

the central value of civility is important.” Ms. Frank explained.

Agreements suggested for ANC:

Regarding the spirit of our speaking and listening

- 1.) We will speak for ourselves and allow others to speak for themselves, with no pressure to represent or explain a whole group
- 2.) We will not criticize the views of others or attempt to persuade them
- 3.) We will listen with resilience, “hanging in” when something is hard to hear

Regarding the form of our speaking and listening:

- 4.) We will participate within the time frames suggested by the facilitator and share airtime
- 5.) We will not interrupt except to indicate that we cannot hear a speaker
- 6.) We will pass or pass for now if we are not ready or willing to respond to a question

Regarding confidentiality:

- 7.) When we discuss our experience with people outside the group, we will not attach names or any other identifying information to particular comments unless we have permission to do so

### **Discussion**

Fred Meyer, ANC Moderator responded, “When things get contentious, I prefer people to address the moderator rather than one another. A lot of hurtful sentences began with the word ‘you,’ so I think it’s important to address the room instead of attaching a viewpoint to a particular person.”

A Council member stated, “I think this comes down to a question of respect: if you don’t respect the person’s right to have an opposing opinion [that can be a problem]. I think the word ‘respect’ is an important one in a meeting.”

“People who get too nasty can end up making themselves into a caricature of their position,” added another participant.

“[I fear that] people seem less concerned living in community together,” stated another Council member. “Individualist-thinking is a problem in the United States, and not just our meetings.”

### **Discussion and Next Steps**

Council members expressed an interest in communication processes which:

- Prevent people from disparaging one another
- Decrease interruptions
- Use a visible device to enforce timed speaking

As a next step, a draft of communication agreements will be presented for review and discussion at an upcoming ANC Meeting. To get involved or learn more, contact Phoebe Sinclair, Community Liaison, at (617) 349-6287 x10 or [psinclair@agassiz.org](mailto:psinclair@agassiz.org)

### **Q&A**

**Q:** How would you present communication agreements to random groups of people?

**A:** Communication agreements are a useful tool whether people meet once or often. For groups like ANC, agreements would be presented at the start of the meeting.

### **Improving ANC Outreach**

ANC members briefly discussed how to increase opportunities for communication between ANC and the neighborhood, between the Baldwin School community and ANC, and between ANC and the City.

### **Learn More**

Essential Partners, formerly called Public Conversations Project, works with communities, educational institutions, religious groups and others locally, nationally, and internationally. Their method combines elements of family therapy, neuroscience, and mediation. Learn more at: [www.whatisessential.org](http://www.whatisessential.org).

## **NOTES FROM THE NOV. 9 JOINT ANC & CITY MEETING**

### **Updated Sacramento Field Design**

Agassiz Neighborhood Council and the City of Cambridge together hosted the November 9th meeting as a follow-up to multiple community-led discussions, city-hosted public meetings, and an official letter from ANC to the City Manager’s Office requesting a 30-day extension to continue working out issues. City staff in attendance included Stuart Dash, Director of Community Planning.

Interim City Manager Lisa Peterson introduced the revised design concept for Sacramento Field, “Everybody has a perspective of what they’d like to see in the field. We really have been listening . . . and we hope we now have a field [design] that reflects what the community needs.”

A presentation and discussion included review of and feedback on several outstanding issues.

### **Walking/Running Path**

Some residents had been concerned about City plans to pave a path within the field that is used by walkers, joggers, school and neighborhood children on bikes, and others. The City’s desire to formalize the path and make it more accessible by paving it was met with concerns about increasing asphalt within the field, health issues, and a desire for the field to remain as ‘natural’ as possible.

Community members, led by Taylor Milsal and Danny Hillis of Garfield St., worked on the issue over summer 2016, which included meeting with numerous city staff and departments, and several trips to visit parks, fields, and natural spaces in other Cambridge neighborhoods and in Brookline to consider what materials might be appropriate for the path.

“The loop path is very much an element of the park,” explained Mr. Dash. “It’s part of the enjoyment of the park. It’s not fancy, but

it's fun. Even if the city doesn't create a path, people would still make it. We also care about Universal Design enormously."

The city proposed paving the path with StaLok, which is a material made from a fine grain of granite mixed with soil and a natural binder to form a firm material. This option would replace the previously proposed asphalt with rubber overlay.

"This is a very thoughtful design," Danny Hillis responded. "I believe it meets our concerns related to safety and preserving the natural aesthetic."

### **Lighting**

Although Sacramento Field is open dawn-to-dusk, the city plans to install LED fixtures for visibility and safety in the early evening. Some residents opposed the lighting and requested that the city decrease or omit it.

The city proposed to install fewer light fixtures, along with some footings where lights could be installed in the future. They will also start the lights at a dim level and meet with abutting neighbors to adjust levels if needed.

### **Basketball Court**

Reviewing plans to change the arrangement of hoops within the basketball court, some residents requested that the court remain so that adults or older children could easily play full-court games.

Because the court is fenced off, the city's goal is to make it feel like part of the field.

### **Play Elements**

Play structures have been included in the design to encourage "different kinds of play for different kinds of children, in particular a more social type of play."

When some residents asked if the city could install bleachers instead of playground elements

on the hill near the basketball court, Mr. Dash noted, "Adding some play structures to the hill still allows for observing other play on the field."

A Baldwin School parent responded, "There is a good balance [between preserving the green space and adding play structures]."

### **Off-Leash Dog Hours Pilot**

Regarding allowing dogs off-leash in the field, some residents expressed concern about feces and barking, while others asked about the possibility of a fenced-in dog run. The City will run a pilot of designated off-leash hours, followed by assessment and community feedback.

In the meantime, dog owners can visit other local dedicated facilities:  
[bit.ly/camb-dog-parks](http://bit.ly/camb-dog-parks)

### **Community Response**

Fred Meyer, ANC Moderator, reminded attendees not to attack one another personally while making comments.

Jack Chun, Sacramento St. resident, stated, "It makes sense that the school has priority for use of the field. Sacramento Field is the smallest field in the city with a high number of students using it, plus after school and summer program use. Other schools have access to much larger fields and more playground space. We owe it to the Baldwin School students to provide them the large field space possible."

A resident stated, "I think the park is being overbuilt and that some of the equipment is unnecessary."

A parent stated, "Children are citizens and have a right to this public land. They have a right to a space to play."

Another Baldwin School parent concluded, "I want to urge the city managers to please move forward with the bid process."

**Q&A:**

**Q:** Can the path be made shorter, coming up to the edge of the soccer field requirement instead of going around the whole field?

**A:** Creating a discontinuous path within the field would be a problem for children who ride bikes, and the resulting sharp turn might be too difficult to navigate.

**CITY MANAGER MEMO**

**December 13, 2016**

I am pleased to share that the City, working with the Agassiz community, has resolved outstanding issues over the design concept for the renovation of Sacramento Field. The formal park bid process will proceed in order for the renovation to be completed in the coming year. The City appreciates the time and effort the neighborhood has committed to the process, and we look forward to delivering a great neighborhood park to be enjoyed by all.

The following memo highlights the design changes that were made to the plan as a result of the recent November 9th community meeting. This memo also includes a list of other commitments the City has made throughout the process.

**Background**

Between June and September, a number of changes were made to the initial Sacramento Field renovation design concept as a result of public input. However, there were a few outstanding concerns about elements of the plan including the loop pathway and lighting around the field. In response, the City extended the formal bid time to allow for further public discussion. On November 9, 2016, the City and the Agassiz Neighborhood Council hosted a joint meeting to discuss the proposed design concept and to hear from all interested parties. City staff facilitated the community discussion and responded to questions about the elements of the design.

**Key Agreements from the November 9th Community Meeting**

**Paving Material for the Loop Path**

The City has continued to be committed to a pathway plan that meets both state and federal accessibility standards, as well as Universal Design (UD) principles. In order to make the loop path accessible, the City chose an asphalt path to provide an accessible surface that holds up over time, requires little maintenance and may be used throughout the year. The City then followed up and proposed a 1" rubber surface over the pathway due to concerns about safety. At this time, staff continued to search for other options that might meet UD standards.

On November 9th, staff presented three paving materials that met Universal Design standards including asphalt, rubber, and a third material, StaLok, a compacted, natural paving material consisting of crushed stone and granite. Based on the community discussion, the City has agreed to use StaLok as the paving material for the path surface.

**Lighting Installation**

The City has remained open to additional modifications concerning the lighting so long as the lighting is set to a level necessary for basic public safety and visibility without encouraging off-hours activity. Based on community input, the City has agreed to fewer light fixtures (a total of 8 LED light fixtures, 5 of which will have shields to restrict light trespass on adjacent properties). The lighting will be for the areas of the path that connect the garden entrance with the natural play area. For the remainder of the path, the City will install wiring and bases allowing future installation if needed. All wiring and base installation will be below grade and protected to prevent hazard and/or disruption to the field and play areas.

The City has committed to a process for the lighting that will have lights begin at low levels to start followed by a meeting with our

Electrical Department and residents on site right after installation to verify there are no major problems with light trespass on adjacent properties. Lights will be turned off at 7:00 PM in the evening. Designated park hours will continue to be from dawn to dusk.

### **Configuration of the Basketball Court**

Feedback from the community meeting indicated a preference for the full court layout over the regulation half-court. To allow younger children to use a lower hoop, the basketball hoop at the north end of the court will be made adjustable to accommodate a lower hoop. The hoop will normally be left high, but adjusted to lower setting only by the Agassiz Afterschool program and Baldwin School. The hoop is to be returned to the high setting after each use.

### **Off-Leash Shared Use Hours Policy for Dogs**

The final off-leash dog policy is still undetermined. Based on community interest, the City has agreed to explore a pilot off-leash hours approach that will allow for dogs to be off leash during designated hours (dogs and owners must be in compliance with the City's off-leash regulations). A final policy will be determined at a later date.

### **Commitments Moving Forward**

The City is committed to making the following improvements and enhancements to Sacramento Field as part of the renovation process.

- **Enclosed tot lot and entrance gates:** Commitment to include a 20 x 40ft enclosed flat toddler play area to accommodate younger children that includes seating and a sand play area as well as an additional infant and toddler play structure that includes a slide, cleated toddler incline, toddler stairs, steering wheel, mirrored panel, and deck with covering. Additional commitment to add gates upon entry to the field at both entrances.
  - **Nature-based Play Area:** To include a re-imagined natural-based play area that achieves a less artificial look. The design will be able to accommodate winter sledding.
  - **Sitting areas and other park amenities:** To provide amenities that currently do not exist including seating and tables, bike parking, a message board, a historical marker, benches, and a water fountain.
  - **Commitments to Sacramento Community Garden:** The square footage loss from the community garden for the new path will be replaced with an equivalent amount of area at the back of the garden. Selective tree pruning management over a period of several years will be undertaken by the City arborist, including the removal of the mulberry tree. In addition, there will be new garden fencing and gates, water spigot, message board, and raised planter beds. Sequencing of improvements will be carefully worked out in advance with gardeners.
  - **Landscaping Improvements:** To incorporate landscaping improvements with native tree plantings as well as buffer planting of shrubs and vines to visually soften the edges, create shade, attract birds, and give more privacy to abutters.
  - **Multi-use Hard Surface Ball Court:** To resurface and re-line the court, replace the timber retaining wall with masonry wall, and fencing.
  - **Drainage and Storm Water Management Improvements:** The City will ensure that when the field is redone that it has grades
- **Two Park Entrances:** To create two entrances to the park that are visible, accessible, safe and well-identified by park signage providing a convenient way for the neighborhood to access the park.
  - **Open Space:** To preserve the openness of the field to support a variety of active and passive activities. The design concept will be able to meet youth soccer field space needs as confirmed by Cambridge Youth Soccer leadership.

to better cooperate with the catch basins, e.g. a crown in the center of the field to take water to basins better. In addition, DPW has renewed a commitment to maintain the nine catch basins on a regular schedule.

Lisa C. Peterson, ICMA-CR  
Acting City Manager  
(617) 349-4300  
www.cambridgema.gov

**Note:** View design rendering on page 13.



## Community

### THANKSGIVING POTLUCK RECAP

Thank you to this year's Thanksgiving Potluck volunteers who cooked eight delicious turkeys, as well as to Agassiz Baldwin staff, Maria L. Baldwin School custodial staff, and all who contributed a delicious dish, good company, and conversation. We look forward to seeing everyone at next year's 46th annual event!



See photos online at:  
[bit.ly/thanksgiving\\_potluck\\_photos\\_2016](http://bit.ly/thanksgiving_potluck_photos_2016)

#### Leave a Dish?

Did you leave behind a dish or utensil at this year's potluck?

Contact Phoebe Sinclair at (617) 349-6287 x10 or [psinclair@agassiz.org](mailto:psinclair@agassiz.org)



### KIDS ONLY HOLIDAY SALE

The 2016 Kids Only Holiday Sale, was held on Friday, December 9th, 3:00-6:30 PM and Saturday, December 10th, 10:00 AM-1:30 PM.



This year's event featured teen volunteers who assisted children in choosing gifts, as well as a gift wrapping station on Saturday. We made over \$1,000 in support of Agassiz Baldwin Children's Program scholarships.

Thanks to all the young shoppers! We look forward to seeing returning and new faces next year.

Kids Only Holiday Sale extends a hearty thank you to Joie de Vivre and community members for donating items to this year's event.

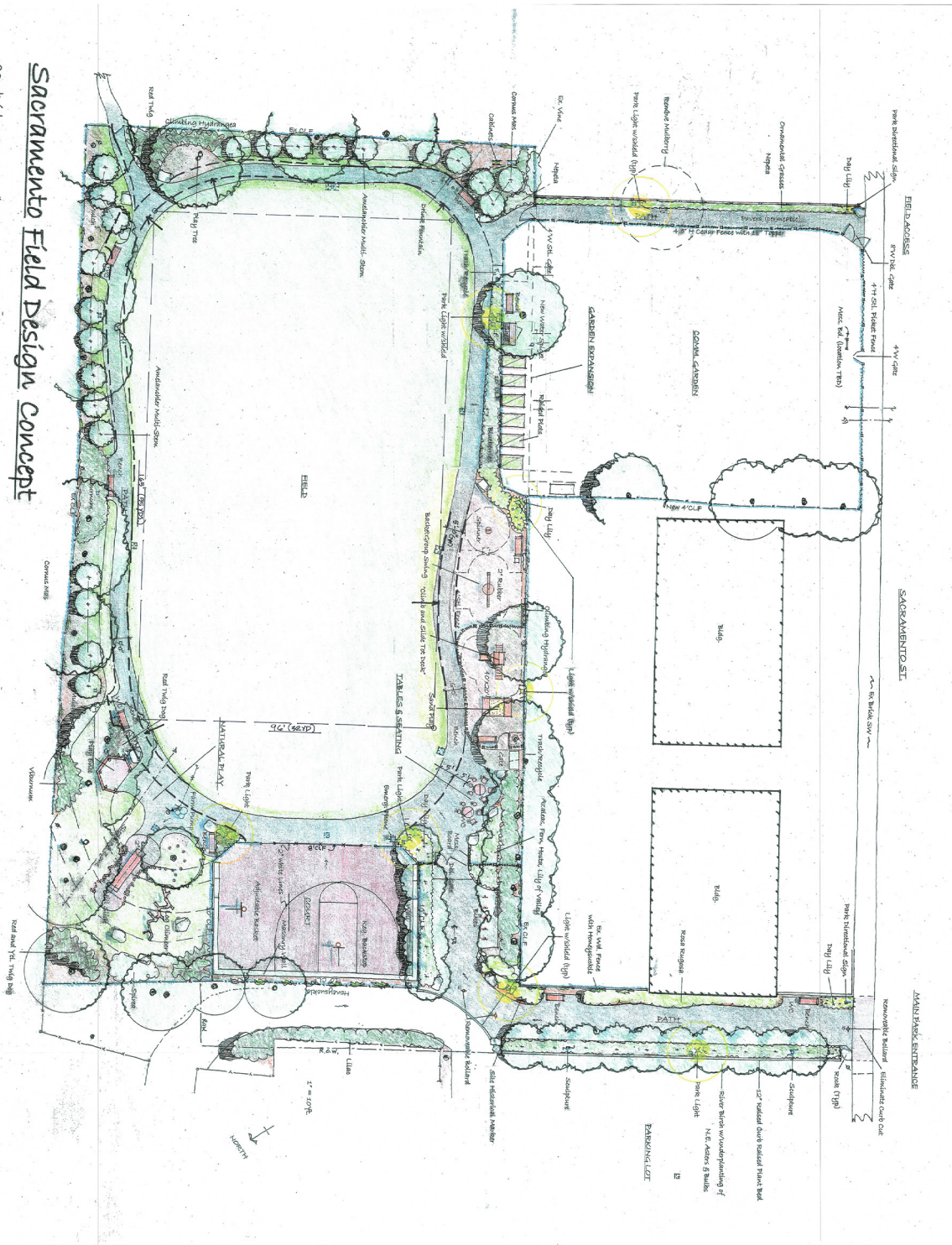
### HELP SUPPORT AGASSIZ BALDWIN COMMUNITY

Every year, more than 800 children and 500 adults come through our doors to find new opportunities and learning experiences. We asked a few of them why they believe in Agassiz Baldwin. To hear what they said, visit our website and watch our new video. Learn how a donation to ABC impacts our community.

[bit.ly/help\\_support\\_ABC](http://bit.ly/help_support_ABC)



**Sacramento Field Design Concept**  
Cambridge Community Development Department 2016



# Community Calendar

## January 2017

Monday, January 2		New Year's Day holiday, ABC School Programs & office, & Maud Morgan Arts closed
Tuesday, January 10	7:30-9:00 PM	ANC Meeting (see page 1 for agenda) Maud Morgan Arts,, 20A Sacramento St. All are welcome, please join us!
Monday, January 16		Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday, ABC School Programs & office, & Maud Morgan Arts closed
Wednesday, January 18	6:00-7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome

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 November/December 2016



Agassiz Neighborhood Council  
20 Sacramento Street  
Cambridge, MA 02138  
P: (617) 349-6287 F: (617) 497-4388

**DO NOT FORWARD**



@agassizbaldwin  
@maudmorganarts



/agassizbaldwin  
/maudmorganarts