

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

December 2017

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ANC News

NOTES FROM THE NOV. 14 MEETING

Construction at 39 Hammond Street

At the November 14th ANC meeting, community members had a chance to take a closer look at plans for new construction at 39 Hammond Street. The final plan for the site will yield a total of three residential homes; two of which exist in the original building and the third being a ground-up single family style home at the southeast end of the property. David Paul, a member of the project's building team, attended the meeting as a representative of the property's owner, 39 Hammond Street, LLC.

Mr. Paul shared plans for the construction, giving an idea of what the new building will look like when finished. Including:

- 2500 square feet over the basement, first, and second floors
- 1 off-street parking space for each home

As construction has already begun, the design



is not open to community feedback. However, according to Mr. Paul, the landscaping has yet to be extensively planned. Community members requested the opportunity to share their ideas and concerns.

“Wherever there isn’t going to be parking, there will be grass,” Mr. Paul stated of the landscaping that will begin in the spring. He added that there will also be bushes and greenery planted on the roof of the new building.

Community Response

Some residents raised concerns about how the new construction will change the appearance of the neighborhood, especially in terms of green space. To make room for the second structure, a large, dead tree was removed from the property.

Two abutters to the property felt they hadn’t

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



Jan 12, 7:30-9:00 PM

Maud Morgan Arts,
20A Sacramento Street

- The December 12th ANC Meeting has been canceled. Please join us in the new year.
- Have an idea or issue related to life in the Agassiz Neighborhood? Contact us: (617) 349-6287 x10 or psinclair@agassiz.org

been properly notified of the new building and expressed doubts about the project's permits.

Mr. Paul responded that he didn't believe there was a requirement to notify abutters in writing, and that owner's plans followed zoning requirements and went through public channels at the Inspectional Services Department. However, this assurance did not diminish residents' concerns and some stated that even without legal requirements, it would have been courteous to receive notice before construction began.

"The rooftop balcony looks right into my windows," said one abutter. "It would have been neighborly [to hear about it]."

"I have the impression that [Senné] has honored the letter of [the zoning], but not the spirit," stated another.

Q&A

Q: Does this project meet or exceed the floor area ratio (FAR?)

A: It meets FAR. If the project was not complying, the city would not have issued a permit.

Q: Are two houses allowed on one lot?

A: Yes.

Q: Is the construction meeting setback requirements? (It seems very near the street.)

A: The project does meet setback requirements.

Q: Will the developer plant trees of a reasonable size and beauty to enhance the neighborhood?

A: Mr. Paul showed on his blueprints where there was room on the lot for extensive landscaping. He said they would "plant as much as possible" on the property.

Q: Have any of the new units been sold yet?

A: Mr. Paul was unable to speak to this question.

Q: When will the construction be completed?

A: They hope to be done by early summer 2018.

Next Steps

Mr. Paul said he would speak with the owner of Senné Development, LLC to relay the Council's interest in seeing landscape plans when they become available. He also took note of residents' desire to schedule a special meeting specifically for abutters.

Learn more about Senné Development at www.senneresidential.com or (617) 314-9400.

Melissa Peters, Urban Planner with the City of Cambridge, offered to look into notification requirements for abutters.

Local Paving with Impermeable Materials & the Climate Crisis

Agassiz resident and photographer Skip Schiel joined ANC to present his case for more environmentally-conscious paving materials in the city.

Mr. Schiel pointed specifically to a property owned by Harvard University on Sacramento Street with a parking lot, previously gravel, that was recently paved with what he referred to as "impermeable material." Impermeable materials, such as asphalt or concrete, do not allow the passing of liquids.

According to Mr. Schiel, the proportion of Cambridge currently paved with impermeable surfaces is growing. Not only does this increase the risk of flooding, asphalt surfaces trap heat and can increase temperatures, a phenomenon known as "heat islands."



Copyright Skip Schiel 2017 teeksaphoto.org

“We all have a stake in how this is handled,” he said. He wants fellow Cambridge residents to take action to first find out if there is any existing legislation at the city and state levels and, if not, propose ways to regulate which materials are used in paving.

As an example, Mr. Schiel highlighted two zoning ordinances passed in Somerville in 2012 that encourage the increase of permeable or “pervious” materials. One sets minimum requirements for pervious surfaces on residential properties and the other requires property owners to obtain a permit before paving.

In his presentation, Mr. Schiel said the same could be accomplished in Cambridge, and could be extended to other types of property owners, such as commercial property or that owned by educational institutions.

Comments and Questions

“Could Harvard University have used different material [to pave the parking lot at the Guidance Center/Riverside Health]?” asked one resident.

“I don’t think there were any regulations that would have prevented them from paving with regular asphalt,” Mr. Schiel said, adding that he was investigating potential alternative materials.

While some residents shared which permeable materials they would prefer to see in Cambridge or have used on their own property, such as brick, Kate Frank, longtime Agassiz resident, explained why she thought many property owners and city officials showed a preference for asphalt.

“It’s less expensive, more easily maintained in terms of snowplowing and patching, and accessible for wheelchairs. [Previously,] I don’t know if there were as many choices of materials,” she said. “I didn’t choose [asphalt for my own home] because I like it.”

However, Ms. Frank noted that there are newer permeable materials that achieve the same

accessibility, such as the porous paving (StaLok) that is being used for the path around Sacramento Field.

Next Steps

Members of ANC unanimously voted on a motion to present to the City of Cambridge:

“After discussing problems of a local impermeable parking lot at 7 Sacramento Street, owned by Harvard, we recommend that there be a hearing with the city’s environment committee to hear the concerns about impermeable paving and the environmental effects of paving and the alternatives people and the city have.”

In addition to presenting that motion, Agassiz resident Susan Redlich suggested proposing a hearing before the environmental committee to discuss paving alternatives. Melissa Peters, a Project Planner for the City of Cambridge, shared that she may be able to set up contact with someone from the Department of Public Works.

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

Envision Cambridge

Creating a Shared Vision

What do you want Cambridge’s future to look like? That’s what Envision Cambridge, a three-year citywide planning process, is asking residents to consider in order to “create a shared vision for our future” and eventually put a plan into action “for a more livable, sustainable, and equitable Cambridge.”

Melissa Peters, who works as a Senior Urban Planner for Community Development and is the Project Planner for Envision Cambridge, shared project updates and next steps with ANC.

What started as the City’s response to citizen requests to create a comprehensive development plan for the city resulted in collaboration between

city departments and independent consultants to create a three-year plan that better prepares Cambridge for the future.

In her presentation, Ms. Peters explained that 2016 was “all about listening to the community” through a variety of engagement strategies, such as panel discussions, public workshops, focus groups, surveys, and social media. Through these channels, Envision Cambridge has been able to reach different communities and neighborhoods throughout the city and establish a vision, core values, and preliminary goals (listed below).

Vision

Cambridge is a forward-thinking, welcoming, and diverse city. We enjoy a high quality of life and thrive in a sustainable, inclusive, and connected community.

Core Values

- Sustainability & resilience
- Livability
- Diversity
- Equity
- Community health & wellbeing
- Economic opportunity
- Lifelong learning

“The core values make sure that we have a checklist around the goals we come up with,” Ms. Peters explained. “We make sure that we have a goal that addresses each different value.”

2017, according to Ms. Peters’s presentation, has been focused on “evaluating the possibilities,” which includes analyzing different potential scenarios and how to address them. The plan for 2018 is to “prepare for action,” which means identifying strategies, integrating district studies, and drafting the final plan.

To help the city carry out its vision and maintain the core values, Envision Cambridge identified five key issues and “opportunities” to focus on.

These include:

1. Growing population
2. Affordability
3. Economic growth
4. Inequality
5. Climate change

Ms. Peters pointed out how some of these issues are connected. For example, she noted data that showed Cambridge’s population reaching its 1950 peak, while average household sizes have decreased to less than two people. This trend, in conjunction with expanding education institutions and an influx of student and faculty populations, is causing housing and rent prices to rise. This then impacts who is able to live in Cambridge, which affects the city’s diversity.

Ms. Peters demonstrated how Envision Cambridge listened to community concerns in Alewife and was able to develop a plan that would help retain industrial jobs while contributing to economic growth in the area as well as help prepare the area for climate change and flood risks. The plan includes diverse innovation spaces that provide low-barrier-to-entry jobs, a walkable shopping center, development that is sensitive to maintaining green space, improved biking and walking connections, and a focus on Jerry’s Pond as a neighborhood amenity.

Q&A

Q: What did Envision Cambridge ask residents and how have they responded?

A: What we heard is that it’s expensive to live in Cambridge. [There’s] traffic congestion, [people] don’t like the new buildings and high rises. [There are] not a lot of jobs that have low barrier of entry. It’s hard to live and work here.

Q: What does Envision Cambridge suggest for supporting small and locally-owned businesses?

A: [We plan to] regulate formula-based businesses and utilize the existing fast food ordinance to put more restrictions on chain

restaurants like McDonald’s or Taco Bell. We’re also looking for other ways to support smaller business and disincentivize uses that don’t benefit the surrounding community.

Next Steps

Closing her presentation, Ms. Peters stated, “It will be great to hear if you agree or support these kinds of ideas.”

In December 2017, there will be working group meetings to review public feedback on Envision Cambridge’s goals, gain consensus on actions that will be written into the plan as recommendations, and identify 3-5 indicators in each focus area that the city will measure on an ongoing basis after the plan is released.

In January 2018, Envision Cambridge will host a public meeting to analyze different scenarios and potential responses.

Envision Cambridge is based on community feedback, so residents are encouraged to ask questions and share their input. To do either, go online to www.envision.cambridgema.gov.

Ms. Peters can be reached at (617) 349-4605 or mpeters@cambridgema.gov.



Community

AGASSIZ BALDWIN COMMUNITY ANNUAL FUND

It’s wonderful to see our community thrive thanks to the support of many generous people who understand how important it is to invest in local organizations that educate, empower, and include everyone. We invite you to support our Annual Fund this year, and keep our community strong!



Thank You! Your gifts will go beyond our core programs. Every contribution in the past has helped create a place where people regularly go out of their way to take care of one another. This year ABC is highlighting a few of these “Acts of Community” that happen every day.

Community is built one small act at a time. Our community is stronger because . . .

- An afterschool teacher walked a student home when there was an emergency and her grandmother was too ill to pick her up.
- A teacher at Maud Morgan Arts shared her screen-printing expertise to help a student intern create t-shirts for her track team.
- A Living Well Network staff member accompanied Computer Lounge members to the Apple Store to help them get what they needed.
- Children came to the Backyard Block Party to support their afterschool teacher who was performing with her rock band.

Building community is fun! If you have a story you would like to share, please send it to dmontenegro@agassiz.org. We will post all stories on our social media.

To donate to the Agassiz Baldwin Community Annual Fund, visit: bit.ly/donate-to-ABC or send a check to Agassiz Baldwin Community, 20 Sacramento St., Cambridge, MA 02130.



THANKSGIVING POTLUCK RECAP

Thank you to this year's Thanksgiving Potluck volunteers, who cooked seven delicious turkeys, as well as to Agassiz Baldwin staff, Maria L. Baldwin School custodial and kitchen staff, and all who contributed a delicious dish, good company, and conversation. We look forward to seeing everyone at next year's 47th annual event!



See photos online at:
bit.ly/thanksgiving-potluck-photos-2017



KIDS ONLY! HOLIDAY SALE 2017

Come to the Annual Kids Only! Holiday Sale. ABC staff members and student volunteers will be on hand to help young shoppers browse and purchase fun and inexpensive gifts for someone they love. Most items cost between \$0.25 and \$10 so that everyone can find something special to give to family or friends.



Typically found at the sale:

- Toys
- Games
- Books
- Jewelry
- Kitchen items

- Handmade crafts
- And more!

When:

Saturday, December 16, 10:00 AM-1:30 PM
Monday, December 18, 3:00-6:30 PM
Tuesday, December 19, 3:00-6:30 PM
(while supplies last)

Where: Maud Morgan Arts, 3D Studio, 1st Floor, 20A Sacramento St.

Saturday Gift-Wrapping Station

On Saturday only, we will provide a gift wrapping station and FREE hot chocolate. Supplies are limited.

Bring Your Own Bag

Help reduce plastic! Please send your child with a reusable bag.

Learn More

Read information for parents and learn more about the history of the Kids Only! Holiday Sale online at:
agassiz.org/community/kids-only-holiday-sale

Proceeds from the sale benefit Agassiz Baldwin Children's Programs.

Thanks

Thank you to Joie de Vivre of 1792 Mass. Ave. and community members for donating items to this year's event.

City Wide

THE COLLABORATIVE LIVING PROJECT

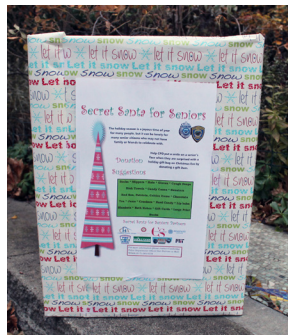
The Collaborative Living Project (CLP) is a group of activist seniors who are forming a residential aging-in-place community. In the fall of 2018 we will be moving into a larger, multi-use, multi-generational building near Tufts University and Davis Square that will also house rental apartments, an alternative school, a

restaurant, artists' studios, and some maker spaces.

CLP has three remaining condos available, and we are looking for new members to buy them and join us. If you would like to learn more about us and our future home, please contact Julie Wittes Schlack at jwschlack@gmail.com.

DONATE TO SECRET SANTA FOR SENIORS

Help put a smile on a senior's face when they are surprised with a holiday gift bag on Christmas Eve. Donate an item to the 11th Annual Cambridge Police's "Secret Santa for Seniors" gift drive. Donations will be accepted from now until **Friday, December 15, 2017**, and Agassiz Baldwin Community is hosting a box at 20 Sacramento St.



The following suggested items – unwrapped – would be greatly appreciated:

- * Socks * Slippers * Hats * Gloves * Cough drops
- * Dish towels * Candy Canes * Sweaters * Red Sox, Patriots, Celtics items * Chocolate * Tea
- * Jams * Crackers * Hard candy * Lip balm *
- Blankets * Bathrobes * Large print books

For over a decade, the Cambridge Police and the community have brought joy to thousands of senior citizens. We are looking forward to bringing even more cheer to our seniors this year.

Gifts can also be dropped off in the first floor main lobby of the Robert W. Healy Public Safety Facility, 125 Sixth St. or at City Hall, 795 Mass. Ave., in the City Clerk's Office.

Visit the program's webpage at: bit.ly/CPD-secret-santa-seniors-2017

For more information, please contact Officer Dan Burroso or Matt Nelson at (617) 349-9354.

Co-sponsored by: Cambridge Police Department, Cambridge Housing Authority, Mt. Auburn Hospital, CambridgeSide Galleria, Reservoir Church, ProEMS, Whole Foods Market, Phil's Towing, & MIT

Maud Morgan Arts

DRAWN FROM WITHIN: ABC/MMA FACULTY & STAFF EXHIBITION

The Chandler Gallery presents Drawn From Within, artwork by Maud Morgan Arts faculty artists and Agassiz Baldwin Community staff members.



Come see the range of paintings, photos, sculptures, prints, drawings and more from artists united by their connection to a community agency.

When: December 11, 2017 to January 5, 2018
Where: Chandler Gallery, 20 Sacramento St., Cambridge

The Chandler Gallery is open Monday through Friday, 10:00 AM-5:00 PM.

Learn more at: www.maudmorganarts.org/chandler-gallery

Community Calendar

December 2017

Tuesday, December 12		Hanukkah begins at sundown
Wednesday, December 13	6:00-7:30 PM	ABC Board Meeting, 20 Sacramento St, 2nd Floor Public welcome
Saturday, December 16	10:00 AM-1:30 PM	Kids Only! Holiday Sale, Maud Morgan Arts, 1st Floor, 3D Studio, while supplies last
Monday, December 18	3:00 -6:30 PM	
Tuesday, December 19	3:00 -6:30 PM	
Monday, December 25		Christmas holiday, ABC Programs & Office closed
Tuesday, December 26		Kwanzaa holiday begins
Tuesday, December 26		Agassiz Baldwin Afterschool Vacation Week, through Friday December 29, 2017

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.

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DO NOT FORWARD

