

the Whistler

Newsletter of the Agassiz Neighborhood Council

October 2021

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ANC News

NOTES FROM SEPT. 14TH MEETING

ANC Members Reflect on 2021

Returning from a summer recess, Agassiz Neighborhood Council gathered virtually for its September 14th meeting. For the second year in a row since the initial virtual meeting in 2020, attendees were asked to reflect on and respond to the following questions:

- Considering the past year, what stands out for you about living in your neighborhood at this time?
- Describe an 'act of community' that you witnessed or participated in.

Many attendees felt that there was a resurgence of life and activity in the newly renamed Baldwin Neighborhood, especially with students returning to school in-person.

"I live adjacent to Sacramento Field and, in

March 2020, it went completely silent," Skip Schiel shared. "Just a week ago, the sound really picked up. The kids are out there, basketballs are out there. In the past, those sounds would annoy me, but I was so grateful to hear them. It reminded me that there is life before and after the pandemic."

"Recently, I became very aware of how much the rhythm of the neighborhood is dependent on Harvard," Robert Blumfoe said. "For us, what stood out was Harvard coming back. It just completely changed our whole world. The place is buzzing with activity, and it's been really nice to see."

In addition to seeing a boost in activity around the neighborhood, attendees also shared the experiences and "acts of community" they were grateful to have witnessed or been part of.

"Many residents have lived here a long time and known each other for years, so there's a lot of talking over the fence and 'how are you' that I find wonderful," shared Hull Fulweiler, who is also a member of the Agassiz Baldwin Community Board of Directors.

"I moved to the Baldwin Neighborhood in

NEXT ANC MONTHLY MEETING



November 9, 7:30 PM

ZOOM - RSVP by visiting

<http://bit.ly/anc-rsvp>

AGENDA

- Learn about Lesley University's new Campus Plan
- Brief update on organization & Council names

September of last year,” Jon Schwarz said. “My impression of this first year is that I’m grateful to have this home, the neighborhood is beautiful, and I’m really enjoying getting to know my neighbors.”

He also shared that in late July, he happened to pass by an opera singer giving a balcony concert on Oxford Street.

“It was a spontaneous act that really brought a lot of joy to people,” he said.

Sarah Nordberg, who works for State Representative Marjorie Decker and attends ANC meetings on her behalf, said she was able to “virtually witness a lot of things in the Cambridge community over the course of the pandemic.”

“Our office coordinated calls to seniors across Rep. Decker’s district,” she explained. “Many volunteers from the Cambridge Women’s Center were very helpful with those calls, and I imagine they called people across this neighborhood. We had a lot of wonderful conversations with people in a tough time.”

“Usually we’re so busy, and this was the first year we spent everyday walking outside and meeting people,” said Johan Paulsson. “That was a big positive change in our lives.”

And, of course, many reflected on the neighborhood name change process that began in 2020 and concluded in August 2021.

“The thing I’d like to particularly point to is the opportunity to be part of the group working towards changing the neighborhood name,” Kate Frank said. “It was as if we had weights because of the pandemic. Despite the process being imperfect, and in spite of strong vocal opposition, we were able to work through it and it was a wonderful experience.”

“I share Kate’s feelings about the neighborhood

name change process,” Tom Delbanco said. “We got the job done, and now we have more to do.”

“It was wonderful to hear people from all generations and backgrounds speak up about what they believe in,” Jill Delbanco added.

ANC will continue to meet virtually for the foreseeable future. Anyone interested in attending a meeting should RSVP at <http://bit.ly/anc-rsvp>. (Please RSVP by 12 Noon on the day of the meeting you wish to attend.)

Discussion of Neighborhood Council Name

On August 2nd, Cambridge City Council voted to officially adopt a policy order to rename the neighborhood after Maria L. Baldwin, removing the name of Louis Agassiz. Now that the neighborhood is renamed, there comes the question of the Neighborhood Council’s name. To begin the discussion, Community Liaison Phoebe Sinclair asked attendees of the September meeting how they felt about the council name and if they had suggestions for a process to rename it.

Reactions to Ms. Sinclair’s prompt varied from “it’s a ‘no brainer’ to change the name to the Baldwin Neighborhood Council”; to a desire to better understand how “ANC has evolved in a semi-separate but linked connection to the Board of Directors”; to a preference for the name to “be consistent between ABC/ANC [and the neighborhood].”

Mr. Delbanco asked whether the Board of Directors of Agassiz Baldwin Community would be responsible for this decision?

Hull Fulweiler, a Director with the ABC Board as well as a Council member, explained. “The Board is going to change the name of the organization, but we want to listen to the Neighborhood Council and see what [this group] wants to do.”

In June 2020, the Board released a statement renouncing the name and legacy of Louis Agassiz and embarking on a process to rename the organization. Mr. Delbanco suggested that ANC unanimously ask Hull to report to the Board that the council wants to change its name to Baldwin Neighborhood Council.

The discussion continued around clarifying the relationship between the Neighborhood Council and ABC's Board of Directors, with those present trying out and discarding a number of ideas of how to proceed.

"I know we're all tired of meetings, and especially those that don't come to a conclusion, but underneath this issue of name change is a more complicated one of representation," Ms. Frank concluded. "I think if we take all the authority to ourselves, then we have only ourselves to be responsible if other people choose not to participate because they weren't included in our decisions."

The Council decided to convene a smaller working group to discuss next steps.

Harvard University Updates

Tom Lucey, Director of Government & Community Relations at Harvard University, joined Agassiz Neighborhood Council to provide updates on two proposed housing renovation projects in the area: 5 Sacramento Street and 13 Kirkland Place.

In his overview of these projects, Mr. Lucey said that both properties would allow Harvard to accomplish multiple goals, many he believed to be shared by the Baldwin Neighborhood, such as housing its students, performing a sensitive and appropriate historical preservation, and bringing the properties in line with Harvard's sustainability goals. Both properties are proposed to house Harvard graduate students and faculty, taking pressure off the local housing market as they will comprise large units that can accommodate families.

13 Kirkland Place is proposed to have five units, with two 2-bedroom units and three 4-bedroom units, for a total of 16 bedrooms. 5 Sacramento Street will have seven units consisting of one 2-bedroom, one 3-bedroom and five 4-bedroom units - a total of 25 bedrooms. Kelly Boucher, Principal at Kelly Boucher Architecture shared renderings of the properties with ANC.

In both buildings, there will be very little change to the street facade, with an emphasis on preserving the exterior while renovating and reconfiguring the interior, and making upgrades to their energy efficiency, safety, and accessibility.

After sharing these plans, Mr. Lucey opened the floor for comments and questions.

Q&A

Q: "Will there be any changes to the parking lot?"
- Skip Schiel, Sacramento Street

A: "There are no plans to change the parking lot."

Q: "I noticed that there seems to be [part of the structure] coming out towards where I live, leading directly into our driveway. I don't understand physically how that would work? The bigger question is, what's your plan for parking and density on the street? This is a big change and it raises questions about where you are going to park the cars, and what restrictions will there be on parking?"
- Jerry Murphy, Kirkland Place

A: "We are adding 1,200 square feet. The footprint is the same, the dimensions are relatively the same, but it doesn't go over the existing height. The side door is directly across from where you have your side doors coming out to your driveway. We can't have more than two parking spaces. It will be very clear in the lease that [additional] parking is not available. Parking would also be enforced by Harvard and Cambridge Police Departments."

Q: "How will the parking lot at 5 Sacramento Street be impacted by construction and will it impact the field entrance?" - Kate Frank, Crescent St.

A: “When we meet with the abutters prior to beginning construction, we [can discuss] fencing or other strategies to protect the path folks use to enter the field. It’s not heavy construction, so we won’t need the entire parking lot for laydown and logistics.”

Q: “Previously, 13 Kirkland Place was a single family home, and we had many neighbors complain when it was a 3-unit house about how traffic was handled. People in those units rely on car deliveries, and faculty who rent a 4-bedroom unit will [likely] bring a car. To me it seems that if Harvard really wants this to happen, why can’t it take the burden to the back of the house?” - Johann Paulson, Kirkland Place

A: “Earlier, I mentioned the two spaces on the property, but we operate under a different regulatory framework with the city in terms of parking, so we are able to provide tenants with parking in other Harvard parking lots not located on Kirkland Place.”

Q: “As a mom, I am concerned about all the kids on the street. I’m concerned about the visitors, the Uber drivers . . . they drive fast. It makes me really uncomfortable, and it makes it very unpleasant to be raising kids here. I want to second what Johan was saying about moving access to this building to Divinity Avenue.” - Celeste Peterson, Kirkland Place.

A: “We will arrange a time that we can meet with abutters; I’ll have the appropriate people from Harvard Housing with me to facilitate further dialogue about these concerns.”

Q: “What do you see as the process for moving forward? There is a lot of concern over the number of units and parking. I think we could do some brainstorming, presumably, with enough time to come to some kind of consensus before [your application] goes to the Cambridge Zoning Board.” - Mr. Murphy

A: “I will consult with my colleagues to see if there’s some middle ground or consensus we

can find with the neighbors of 13 Kirkland Place and go from there.”

Contact

Questions can be directed to Thomas Lucey, Dir. of Government & Community Relations at: thomas_lucey@harvard.edu

Existing



Proposed



Existing (proposed rendering not available at the time of Whistler publication)



Community

FOOD PANTRY DELIVERY VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

Prepared by Cambridge Bike Safety

Cambridge Bike Delivery is seeking additional volunteers to help deliver food by bicycle from the Cambridge Community Center pantry to Cambridge households and community fridges.

Each week volunteers will deliver food to twenty households in Cambridge who rely on this food and cannot make it out to the pantry, due to limited mobility, childcare responsibilities, or covid risk. This is a great opportunity to support your fellow community members, meet other bikers in the area, and enjoy a nice bike ride. We deliver Monday, Wednesday, Thursday to community fridges, and on Friday to households.

To join our email list and receive weekly emails about bike delivery opportunities please fill out

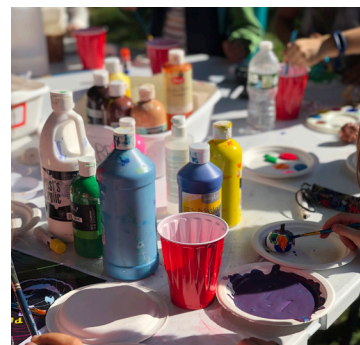
this sign up form: bit.ly/bikedeliveryvolunteer
For questions, email: cambridgebikedelivery@gmail.com

Cars Also Welcome!

Don't bike but interested in volunteering? In addition to our bike fleet, we like to have a few weekly car volunteers who can take multiple households or deliver in inclement weather. Interested? Contact Phoebe Sinclair at psinclair@agassiz.org or (617) 349-6287 x10.

INTRODUCING OUR UPDATED AFTERSCHOOL PROGRAMMING!

Running out-of-school-time programming throughout a pandemic has forced us to make a lot of changes in a short amount of time. Last year, we offered a full day



of programming while students attended school virtually, and merged our afterschool and arts curriculums. While that change was out of necessity due to our reduced capacity in program participants and staff, we saw that it fulfilled a community need we've long wanted to address.

We recognized that our former model of having separate Maud Morgan Arts classes with their own registration and gaps in programming throughout the year was not ideal or accessible for a lot of families, especially those in need of reliable childcare. This year, we were proud to announce a new structure for our afterschool programming that better aligns with our organization's mission statement and values.

When registration opened in August, families had the option to enroll their child in certain days of "arts afterschool," which would guarantee programming on that day for the entire school year, just like in our traditional afterschool

FOOD PANTRY BIKE DELIVERY

Help deliver food to Cambridge households that cannot make it to the pantry!

DELIVERY FROM CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY CENTER TO COMMUNITY FRIDGES
MON. WED. THURS - ANY TIME 12:30-5 PM

DELIVERY FROM AGASSIZ BALDWIN COMMUNITY TO CAMBRIDGE HOUSEHOLDS
FRIDAYS - 12-15 PM

Fill out our volunteer form to start receiving weekly sign ups for food pantry deliveries.

Go to bit.ly/bikedeliveryvolunteer to sign up.

Working Together for Cambridge
Cambridge Bicycle Safety

program. In this new model, groups get to try a number of different arts media, such as ceramics, printmaking, drawing, and painting, over the course of the school year. Families could register for arts afterschool only if they just needed part time care, or mix it into a full-time afterschool schedule if that better fit their childcare needs.

We also expanded this programming to include middle school youth, as we heard feedback from families in the community about the challenge of finding out-of-school time activities for that age group. Later this school year, we hope to run our teacher-in-training (TNT) program again, which allows 6th-8th graders to assist teachers with younger children.

We have found a lot of success in this new structure so far, as well as more harmony between our afterschool and arts programs, and are excited to continue growing and improving.

All programs currently have wait-lists. However, interested families are welcome to apply by completing this form:

<https://bit.ly/school-year-enrollment>

Questions? Please feel free to email: registration@agassiz.org



Maud Morgan Arts

RELIEF PRINTMAKING DEMO

Maud Morgan Arts is pleased to launch the next “out of the box” printmaking kit: Relief Printmaking Box - Lino & Color Reduction with artist Chris Wallace.

We will be hosting a sneak-peek demonstration of the box contents on Saturday, November 13th at 11 AM in the MMA driveway. We'll have tents set up for rain or shine. The demo is free and open to the public.

Our take-home boxes will include all the materials you'll need, and guidelines to start your printmaking projects.

Participants of this program will also receive a short video tutorial from Chris, as well as the opportunity to share your artwork in an online exhibition on our website!

When: Saturday, November 13th, 11:00 AM

Where: 20 Sacramento Street, driveway

Info: https://bit.ly/relief_printmaking

WHAT A RELIEF...

Printmaking Demo with Chris Wallace
Sat. Nov 13th, 11am
free & open to the public

Our team is putting together another, amazing, printmaking kit for our 'Out of the Box' Series

Join us for an outdoor sneak-peek-demo
RIGHT HERE IN OUR DRIVEWAY
Saturday November 13th
Rain or Shine! (We have tents)
Demo starts at 11am



Living Well Network



LIVING WELL SAMPLER SERIES FALL 2021

What can you do to remain active, healthy, and connected with others this fall as the air cools and the days shorten? Join others and the Living Well Network for a seven-week series including:

- Pilates, to build strength, balance, and flexibility
- Walking, for heart health and connection
- Cooking lessons, to inspire new healthy habits
- Connecting with others, to stay engaged and motivated

Sessions will be online with a few outdoor, physically distanced sessions. If you are not comfortable meeting outside with others, we will suggest alternate opportunities.

Pilates will be online with one or two brief sessions to support our walks. We will walk together safely in pairs or triads. Cooking classes will be tailored to you, the participants, and focus on healthy seasonal eating. Help will be available to get you working on Zoom if that is a challenge.

There will be seven Monday afternoon sessions at 2 PM. Space is limited. The suggested fee is \$25 but you may pay what you can afford from \$0 up.

If you are interested in signing up for this program, please use this link:
<https://bit.ly/LivingWellSampler>

If you are interested, but concerned about meeting in person or have questions. please email Kathy at: kdalton@agassiz.org

- When:** Beginning Monday, November 1 2:00-3:15 PM
- Where:** Online via Zoom, with some outdoor sessions
- Info:** <https://bit.ly/LivingWellSampler> to sign up for the program, or email questions to kdalton@agassiz.org

City Wide

MUNICIPAL ELECTION NOVEMBER 2

Vote for Cambridge City Council and School Committee candidates on Tuesday, November 2, 2021.

Baldwin neighborhood residents vote at the Maria L. Baldwin School, 28 Sacramento Street. Polls open at 7:00 AM and close at 8:00 PM.

Ballot Questions

This November, Cambridge voters will be responding to three ballot questions. Learn more online at: <https://bit.ly/ballot-questions-2021>

View Candidates' Forum Recording

Did you miss the City Council Candidates' Forum hosted by Porter Square Neighbors Association, Agassiz Neighborhood Council, and the Association of Cambridge Neighborhoods on Thursday, October 21 at 7 PM? Now you can view it online at: <https://vimeo.com/639215172>



Community Calendar

November 2021

Tuesday, November 2nd		Municipal Election
Tuesday, November 9th	7:30-9:00 PM	ANC Meeting (agenda page 1) To receive ZOOM link, RSVP at http://bit.ly/anc-rsvp All are welcome, please join us!
Thursday, November 11th		ABC & Maud Morgan Arts programs and offices closed in observance of Veterans Day
Saturday, November 13th	11:00 AM	Printmaking demo with Chris Wallace at 20 Sacramento St, free and open to the public
Thursday, November 25th & Friday, November 26th		ABC & Maud Morgan Arts programs and offices closed in observance of Thanksgiving

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

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