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OFFICE OF THE CITY MANAGER



**Continental
Cablevision®**

February 26, 1996

Robert W. Healy
City Manager
City of Cambridge
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Mr. Healy:

I am writing in response to your letter of January 25, addressed to Joyce Conroy Hillcoat, which advised Continental Cablevision of Council Order No. 35, dated January 22, 1996.

Continental Cablevision is committed to providing the best possible programming package to our subscribers in Cambridge. To this end, Continental conducts regular surveys of our entire service area, in which the preferences of subscribers are registered as scientifically as possible. As Continental faces the prospect of intense competition in the the Cambridge market, we are well aware that our programming choices and the price at which we offer them to our customers will be critical to our ongoing success.

On the local level, the Office of Cable Television of the City of Cambridge conducts regular public hearings, most recently on December 6, 1995, which are extensively advertised throughout the city, and at which all citizens are invited to make known their views on any aspect of cable television service in Cambridge. Continental has always made every effort to be responsive to concerns or suggestions of its subscribers at these occasions, and at every point of contact with any of our customers.

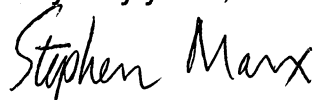
One factor that does influence our program lineup in Cambridge, for better or worse, is the extraordinary number of local channels that we carry in this city. In addition to Continental's own TV3 (Channel 3) and the City's Municipal Channel (Channel 37), Continental carries four channels operated by CCTV (Channels 19, 54, 55, and 66) and two operated by the Cambridge Public Schools (Channels 36 and 47), for a total of eight locally generated channels, or about 12% of Continental's current channel capacity. While this makes the Cambridge system one of the most locally oriented cable systems in the country, it also constrains to some extent Continental's ability to offer new commercially available programming, such as The History Channel, Comedy Central, Golf, etc.

Continental Cablevision shares the City Council's interest in providing Portuguese programming in Cambridge. To that end, we have been attempting to work out an arrangement with RTPI, a provider of such programming. Continental made an proposal to RTPI on November 30, 1995, in which we offered to provide their programming free of charge to any subscriber to our basic service who requests it. We received RTPI's response within the last 2 weeks, and will reply to them within the next 10 days or so. We will be happy to keep the City Manager and/or the City Council informed as to the progress of this negotiation.

For your information, Continental has approached both CCTV and the Public Schools to determine whether they would be willing to sell back to us some of their channel capacity and thereby enable us to bring our programming in Cambridge more in line with what we offer in other communities.

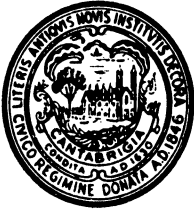
Continental Cablevision is particularly proud of its service, called the Voice of Cambridge, which provides visually impaired subscribers with an hourly audio version of our community notice board. We have been able to make this service available in part because of software developed in our Cambridge office, which coordinates the Voice of Cambridge with the primary software running on the notice board computers, an application called SCALA. A recent upgrade to SCALA proved to be incompatible with the software we had developed to run the Voice of Cambridge. Although we will probably need to refine our original software further over the next 2-3 weeks, as of this writing, the Voice of Cambridge is fully operational. Continental is proud to be able to offer the Voice of Cambridge to our subscribers, and is committed to maintaining and improving it as technology permits.

Very truly yours, etc.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Stephen Marx".

Stephen Marx
Director,
TV Production & Programming

cc: Joyce Conroy Hillcoat, General Manager
Mary McLaughlin, Counsel & Director of Government Affairs, New England
Roberta Fusari, Director of Public & Government Affairs, Metro Boston



EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

TEL. 349-4300
FAX. 349-4307

March 4, 1996

To The Honorable, The City Council:

Please find attached a response to Awaiting Report Item No. 12, regarding Continental Cablevision programming, received from Stephen Marx, Director of TV Production & Programming for Continental Cablevision.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mec
attachment

Consent Agenda #9

S-84

Relating to Awaiting Report
Item Number Twelve, regarding
Continental Cablevision programming.

In City Council March 4, 1996

Placed on File