



# OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

(617) 349-4260

FAX (617) 349-4307

tty/TDD (617) 492-0235

D. MARGARET DRURY  
CITY CLERK

DONNA P. LOPEZ  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

TO: Cara Seiderman, Community Development  
FROM: <sup>DMJ</sup> D. MARGARET DRURY, CITY CLERK  
DATE: October 28, 1996  
RE: Bicycle Committee

\*\*\*\*\*

Enclose are copies of Consent Communication #8 and #10 which the City Council referred to the Bicycle Committee.

If you have any questions, please call me.



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DONNA P. LOPEZ  
DEPUTY CITY CLERK

**TO:** Rosalie Anders, Community Development  
DMD  
**FROM:** D. MARGARET DRURY, CITY CLERK  
**DATE:** October 28, 1996  
**RE:** Pedestrian Committee

\*\*\*\*\*

Enclose are copies of Consent Communication #8 and #10 which the City Council referred to the Pedestrian Committee.

If you have any questions, please call me.

*To Purple Comm.*

Testimony for Cambridge City Council

October 21, 1996

LaVonne Davidson

1. Introduction.

- a. Madame Mayor, Members of the City Council: My name is LaVonne Davidson, and I live at 287 Harvard Street, Cambridge. I have lived in Cambridge for 36 Years. I am 78 years old, have had two hip replacements, and am legally blind. *I am here because I am desperate.*
- b. Many thanks for all the nice things you have done for the elderly and handicapped, such as the senior center, meals, etc. \
- c. There are, however, some groups in Cambridge who are indulging in some extremely dangerous behavior which results in potential violence toward every resident of Cambridge and actual violence to some. I

personally feel terrorized every day on my short walk

to the Senior Center for my noon meal. *I note not one traffic violation per week, but 5-10 or more every day.*

2. Lawless Groups.

These groups which are threatening me are:

- a. Bicyclists;
- b. Auto operators;
- c. Other wheeled vehicles, usually operated by juveniles.
- d. Another group which can be dangerous by being disruptive to traffic is pedestrians.

### 3. Bicyclists.

- a. Ride on sidewalks in Harvard and Central Square, ~~and~~  
in front of the Senior Center on Massachusetts  
Avenue, *and in front of City Hall.*
- b. Do not stop for any red lights, walk lights, or  
pedestrians in crosswalks.
- c. Ride between buses letting off passengers and the  
curb.
- d. Ride the wrong way on one way streets.
- e. Ride dangerously fast on sidewalks where they are  
legal, *such as in front of my residence*
- f. Juveniles between the ages of 9 and 13 ride especially  
dangerously everywhere.

- g. Handicapped access ramps are used by bicyclists for access to sidewalks. *Don't dare to use one if you are handicapped*

4. Automobile Operators.

- a. Will not stop for pedestrians in cross walks even if one is carrying a red and white cane
- b. ~~Often run red lights and walk lights~~
- c. ~~Park in bus stops.~~
- d. ~~Frequently race fire engines and ambulances to crossings and do not pull over and stop.~~
- e. ~~Make U turns on Mass. Ave. and turn left illegally at Mass. Ave, Western Avenue and Prospect Street.~~

## 5. Pedestrians

- a. Do not wait for walk lights
- b. Cross Massachusetts Avenue right in traffic, often with their children in baby carriages.
- c. Expect any vehicle to stop on a dime.
- d. Attempt to cross streets before fire engines and ambulances.

## 6. Other Vehicles and hazards.

- a. Roller Bladers
- b. Skate Boarders
- c. Brick Sidewalks - I cannot walk on brick sidewalks.

## 7. Problems and solutions.

- a. Bicycle regulations are ~~sketchy and faulty~~ and are not known by many. *outdated and not helpful*  
*Need to be consistent with state laws.*
- b. State Laws (chapter 85) need to be changed
  - i. \$20 fine  
*I.D.*
  - ii. Arrest *powers*
- c. Police need to know both state and local laws and enforce them
- d. Police must be supported in their efforts to regulate traffic.
- e. Education Programs have failed but should be continued



- strike a pedestrian with
- f. To ~~be struck by~~ a bicycle should be considered as assault and battery with a dangerous weapon, *unless it's clearly pedestrian's fault.*
- g. Bicycles should be prohibited from ALL SIDEWALKS.
- h. Traffic and walk lights are often set improperly for safety and are too dim or out. *Should be corrected NOW*
- i. Message to our youths:

It is terrible to think they grow up thinking they do not have to obey any traffic laws. They must start early learning differently.

## 8. Cambridge — a unsafe city — solutions.

- a. Cambridge is not safe because of traffic violations.
- b. Let's make it safe by having a big campaign concerning all traffic.

- c. Call in State Troopers and National Guard if necessary.
- d. Support the police- give them laws at state and local level with teeth and insist that they be enforced.
- e. None of your efforts are currently working. Situation is worse than ever.
- f. Should declare emergency.
- g. Would like some discussion as to why traffic is way out of control and immediate measures that can be undertaken now

## 9. Defensive Measures

- a. Can't walk on brick sidewalks, so have to walk in street. Very carefully
- b. Wear bicycle helmet *while walking*
- c. Stop going to senior center and order meals on wheels.
- d. Not step out my front door because bicycles are riding on sidewalks.
- e. Move out of Cambridge where I have lived for 36 years, and live in an institution (10-13 yrs?)
- f. *Ride to end of line and back again to avoid crossing streets*

Oct 8 1996

Cambridge City Council  
City Hall

OFFICE OF CITY CLERK  
96 OCT 10 PM 1:21

Central Square  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Title - TRAFFIC: Bicycles, autos, pedestrians  
and related matters.

Ladies and Gentlemen:

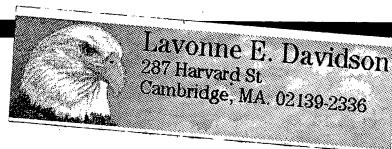
I am 78 years old, have two hip  
replacements and am legally blind.

I wish to address the Cambridge City  
Council about my concerns for traffic  
safety (or the lack of it) in Cambridge.  
This includes bicycles, autos, pedestrians and  
all wheeled vehicles. The lack of enforcement  
of traffic regulations or lack of regulations

to me constitutes violence toward every  
Cambridge resident and conveys the wrong  
message to our youths and  
and every operator of a wheeled vehicle  
of any kind. If we do not have  
proper laws, then we must get them.

Sincerely,

Lavonne Davidson



Communication was received from Lavonne E. Davidson, 287 Harvard Street, regarding lack of enforcement of traffic regulations or regulations for traffic safety including bicycles, autos, pedestrians and all wheeled vehicles.

In City Council October 21, 1996

Referred to City Manager  
with the request he refer to  
Police Department. Referred  
~~to~~ the Bicycle Commission,  
Pedestrian Commission and  
Traffic and Transportation  
Committee on the Motion  
of Councillor Daehay.

(See Sundries orders  
adopted October 21, 1996)

Copies sent 10-22-96 mc