

In City Council,
June 5, 1972.

WHEREAS, the City of Cambridge has important residential neighborhoods of historical significance and current viability, and

WHEREAS, these neighborhoods contribute to the economic and social well-being of the total community, and

WHEREAS, the future of these neighborhoods is being jeopardized by loud, noxious, and disruptive truck traffic, and

WHEREAS, the residents of these neighborhoods have taken the initiative in exposing a major issue and providing valuable information to the total community,

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, THAT the City Council of the City of Cambridge is against through truck traffic in neighborhoods that are predominantly residential in character.

FURTHERMORE, that the City Council instruct the executive branch of the City to originate and vigorously participate in three specific actions that conform to the above City policy:

1. To enforce existing laws and regulations, including speed, weight, and size limits for trucks, and to develop a noise pollution control ordinance that will successfully deal with excessive environmental and human degradation.
2. To negotiate with the appropriate state agencies and neighboring municipalities for a Cambridge ban of all non-dangerous cargo vehicles during the non-business hours and on week-ends.
3. To cooperate with the BTPR and all appropriate agencies, local, state and regional, in determining the total environmental and human impact of the existing truck routes as well as proposed alternative truck routes and to act with swift and meaningful vigor in providing for the most reasonable solution to eliminate unnecessary truck traffic in Cambridge neighborhoods.

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City Council June 5, 1972

Adopted by the affirmative vote

of 6 members

Paul E. Healey
City Clerk

City of Cambridge

In City Council,

June 5, 1972.

ORDERED:-

That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the appropriate department concerned to draft an anti-noise ordinance for the consideration of the City Council.

City Council June 5, 1972

Adopted by the affirmative vote

of 6 members

Paul E. Healey
City Clerk

City of Cambridge

In City Council,

June 5, 1972.

ORDERED:-

That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to consult with the Director of Traffic and Parking with a view towards securing the passage of legislation which will eliminate truck traffic on a twenty-four hour basis from all residential areas of the City of Cambridge.

City Council June 5, 1972

Adopted by the affirmative vote

of 6 members

Paul E. Healey
City Clerk

THE EASTERN CAMBRIDGE CITIZENS COMMITTEE AGAINST DESTRUCTIVE
TRUCK TRAFFIC IN RESIDENTIAL NEIGHBORHOODS

Our group of Cambridge Citizens intends to develop proposals for a unified City Policy to regulate truck traffic through residential neighborhoods east of Harvard Square. We know that the neighborhood truck problems of East Cambridge, Wellington-Harrington, Cambridgeport, Riverside, and Model Cities are all caused by the same root causes. We also know that isolated neighborhood associations can not generate sufficient political influence to help themselves, partly because of inter-neighborhood conflict which we must eliminate and partly because most authority to regulate trucks rests in the State Government which is too large and complex for neighborhood groups to deal with. A unified City Policy, which doesn't play one neighborhood off against another and which would solidify all the City's political influence around one set of proposals, is our only recourse.

In order to emphasize the importance of our Committee's activities, we request the Cambridge City Council to officially proclaim the existence of ourselves as a standing committee of representatives from each of the above named neighborhoods with the mandate to perform the following tasks:

1. Determine the extent of destruction from truck traffic by soliciting neighborhood opinion about noise pollution, house destruction from truck vibration, broken street surfaces from over-sized trucks, safety hazards, etc.
2. Outline these problems for the whole area in neighborhood association meetings as well as for the City Council and in the general news media, the latter because most important policy changes must take place at the state level.
3. Recommend new City Policy for the coordinated direction of all relevant city personnel in a sustained effort to remove all loud and over-sized trucks from residential streets.

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EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
SOMERVILLE, MASSACHUSETTS

THE REV. JAMES J. BRETTEA
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

S. LESTER RALPH
MAYOR

KEVIN T. CROWLEY
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

17 May 1972

The Honorable Barbara Ackerman
Mayor of Cambridge
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Re: Proposed Washington Street area truck route

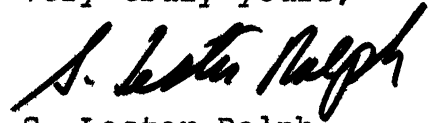
Dear Mayor Ackerman:

In recent weeks, members of the Cambridge Committee on Trucks and Cambridge's Transportation Consultant, Mr. Tunney Lee, met with members of my staff and with members of the Somerville Truck Committee. The purpose of this meeting was to seek out common grounds upon which our two cities can work in order to reduce unwanted conditions attributable to truck movement in the area. One of the questions raised at that meeting was concerned with the City of Somerville's position in regard to the truck route which would use the B & M Grand Junction right-of-way in Cambridge and either Washington Street or the old Inner Belt right-of-way in Somerville. The B.T.P.R. has already conducted engineering studies of this route. This letter summarizes Somerville's present position regarding this truck route alignment.

Somerville is extremely interested in removing trucks from local city streets. However, a truck route along the above mentioned alignment is not an acceptable solution. A route of this sort would still detrimentally effect existing residential and commercial areas along Medford, Prospect, and Washington Streets and would also inhibit certain kinds of desired development in the urban renewal area which borders along Washington Street. At this point, I feel that there are other alternatives (such as a truck route using a reconstructed Prison Point Bridge and/or pricing incentives on the Mystic River Bridge and Mass Turnpike which would induce trucks to use these facilities), which should be fully investigated.

Hopefully, this letter will aid people in your city, who are working on solutions to truck related problems, in understanding more clearly Somerville's position.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "S. Lester Ralph".

S. Lester Ralph
Mayor

SLR/rc

cc: Dick Thorenson
cc: Tunney Lee
cc: John H. Corcoran

HEAVY TRUCK TRAFFIC ON RESIDENTIAL STREETS IN EASTERN CAMBRIDGE
A DEMAND FOR NEW CITY POLICY

For the past months, representatives from five Eastern Cambridge Neighborhoods plus a representative from MIT have been meeting regularly in order to define the problem of heavy, loud trucks on our residential streets and to propose a new City Policy to alleviate it. At the present time, East Cambridge, Wellington-Harrington, Model Cities, Mid-Cambridge, and Cambridgeport endure massive destruction from noise, vibration, and exhaust pollution plus the aggravation of auto congestion due to truck immobility on narrow residential streets.

Definition of the Problem in Brief

From a series of traffic counts made primarily by Committee members (no one else has counted trucks before), we estimate that there are about 4,000 to 5,000 tractor-trailer trucks (inter-city and inter-state) using residential streets of Eastern Cambridge everyday, five days a week, with fewer but still significant numbers on week-ends (we have detailed maps of streets and truck numbers). Many straight trucks or vans, numbering 2 or 3 times that of the larger trucks, produce similar but less extreme amounts of pollution. We have focused attention on the heavier tractor-trailer vehicles, however, because they cause the bulk of the damage to people, houses and streets. We also take note of the fact that Cambridge generates part of these heavy trucks but City truck generators are concentrated in the non-residential, extreme Eastern section of the City.

As everyone in the City Government should know by now, there does not exist an adequate, non-residential road for heavy trucks in Eastern Cambridge. At the same time everyone, not just we neighborhood residents, should realize that this part of the City occupies the major North-South truck corridor connecting the massive truck generators in Everett, Chelsea and other points south and West.

Four Citizen Demands for New City Policy from the Five Neighborhood Representatives

The following are four (4) concrete proposals for immediate City action. They are a package. Successful implementation of any one depends on the coordinated effort to implement all four. Each proposal must be negotiated through either judicial or administrative channels of State Government because almost all authority to control traffic resides at the State level. The City must present all four as a comprehensive package for the step by step elimination of heavy truck pollution in residential neighborhoods. Cambridge must demonstrate to State authorities that we are determined to

implement the following reasonable policies in order to protect the citizens of Eastern Cambridge from the assault of rampaging trucks in our backyards.

(1) City Standards for Noise Emission From Heavy Trucks :

Considerations

(a) Control of noise emission is the only one of the four proposals which the City can enforce without administrative approval from State Authority. However, if a City ordinance is effective it will likely be tested in State Courts.

(b) Precedent for City enforcement of noise control over traffic is well established in courts around the nation with Chicago and Memphis being most outstanding. Also, according to Massachusetts' Law cities and towns are given the explicit right to exercise such authority.

(c) The Citizens Committee has technical and legal assistance at hand to write and implement an effective City ordinance if the City will appropriate the following amounts: \$3,000 for technical and legal advice in writing the ordinance and for testimony in court if the ordinance is tested: \$1,000 for technical equipment to measure noise levels, and the salary for one person to operate equipment and issue warnings and summonses to violators.

(d) Such a noise ordinance would of course be useful to other sections of Cambridge and also to other cities with similar problems with trucks. Somer lle has already expressed interest.

Given these considerations, we expect the City Council and City Manager to legislate and fund a noise control ordinance which should eliminate the worst 30 to 40% of the offenders who will either have to install better mufflers or use other routes.

(2) City Initiate Long Term Planning for Future Heavy Truck Traffic in the Non-Residential Corridor of Extreme Easter Cambridge :

Considerations

(a) Noise control is only a partial solution. Legal maximum levels for noise emission will eliminate only the most noxious noise, leaving noise still at intolerably levels. It will do

nothing about vibration which slowly wrecks houses and exhaust fumes which make streets smell like factories. The only final solution is to eliminate all heavy trucks from residential neighborhoods and to make this the ultimate goal for City policy.

(b) As the BTPR has already concluded, the most likely solution to the truck problem is the "do nothing" alternative. No other city wants the trucks and no other area of Cambridge wants them either. We definitely will never support any solution which merely moves trucks from our neighborhoods into other residential neighborhoods. But if the trucks must use Cambridge, and it seems certain that they will, then there is a non-residential corridor which must be explored - the industrial university corridor in extreme Eastern Cambridge.

(c) We have considered the following suggestions for an alternate non-residential road for trucks:

1. Build a new bridge over the Charles, underneath the BU Bridge, and build a new, special purpose truck highway up the Grand Junction Railway all the way to Somerville.
2. The same as above but only as far as Main Street, then dog-leg to the right over to Commercial Avenue and over the proposed new Prison Point Bridge.
3. Only build the bridge and connect to the present Vasser Street with modifications to intersections at Main Street and at Main and Commercial Avenue, so the trucks would follow Vasser to Main to Commercial and over the new Prison Point Bridge.
4. Memorial Drive from the bridges at River Street and Western Avenue to Commercial Avenue and over the new Prison Point Bridge or else to the Northern Artery.
5. Present residential streets, assuming that people will move out when they no longer can stand the noise and when they can afford to move.

(d) We are adamantly opposed to options 1 and 5 and also opposed to 4 because it would destroy the river environment. We prefer option 3 because it involves the least engineering difficulty, expense and time.

(e) The City must assert and implement the planning priority for truck movement in this non-residential section of the City. Both the CRA and MIT are hastily developing this area without any consideration for truck movement.

(f) We want to emphasize that we are not proposing a modified version of the INNER BELT! We have advised the BTPR that we will support only a special purpose truck route, not a new multi-lan commuter highway. They have advised us that the City and State could probably have access to 90-10 Federal money if the City made a serious effort to plan for a strictly truck road.

Therefore, we proposed that the City Council and Manager serve notice to the State, the trucking industry, the CRA and MIT that the present residential streets are only temporary. The City should proceed to negotiate with the State in order to construct alternative facilities in the non-residential, extreme Eastern section of Cambridge.

(3) **Interim Solution: A City-Wide Ban on Heavy Trucks in Residential Neighborhoods During Non-Business Hours and on Weekends :**

Considerations

(a) During the 14 non-business hours (6pm to 8am) and on weekends people use their homes as places to relax and to enjoy family activities.

(b) During these hours, heavy trucks can use non-residential alternative routes which are both built for such weight and which would not be congested with commuter traffic. All non-dangerous cargo trucks could be using the Tobin Bridge, the Central Artery and the Mass Pike in Boston to cover the relevant North-South distance. Many of these trucks would be doing this at present if it weren't for the \$2 toll on the Bridge and the Pike. In effect, residents of Cambridge pay these tolls now.

(c) Dangerous cargo trucks, or about 20% of the total, could use streets in extreme Eastern Cambridge which do not enter residential neighborhoods: from the Northern Artery to Commercial Avenue, to Main Street, to Vasser Street, to Memorial Drive, and to the bridges at River Street and Western Avenue.

(d) State authorities, who at present primarily represent the trucking industry, will probably not accept either route because they involve extra trucking costs in tolls and a little extra time. The MDC does not want trucks on Memorial Drive, although trucks presently use part of our proposed route. Also, MIT, which has several laboratories near Vassar which will be jostled by truck vibration, does not want "our" trucks near their campus. In all cases, the City must decide against wealthy business, bureaucratic and university interest who can make adjustments financially. The City should decide for ordinary citizens of old established neighborhoods, who for the most part can not afford and do not want to move to other housing.

Therefore, we propose that the City Council and Manager make explicit public demands on the State, the MDC, and MIT that they approve as a partial solution to the truck problem, truck traffic during the 14 non-business hours and weekends on the two alternate routes outlined above. These demands must be made forcefully, including the threat that the City may institute an effective ban on the use of residential streets during these hours through a more rigorous enforcement of the noise control ordinance.

- (4) Interim Solution: A City-Wide Ban on Heavy Trucks 24 Hours A Day from Using Narrow, East-West Residential Streets Used Merely to Dodge Traffic Lights and Congestion.

Considerations

(a) Particularly in East Cambridge, narrow residential streets are being used merely to save a couple of minutes stopping time in congested intersections or at traffic lights along primary truck routes.

(b) Many sharp turns are almost impossible for large trucks which are consequently a constant menace to signs, hydrants and legally parked cars, not to mention noise, vibration, exhaust fumes, and danger to children.

(c) Such trivial time saving is not a major consideration for any trucking company and should be prohibited immediately.

Therefore, we expect the City Council and Manager to make immediate request to State authorities to have this form of neighborhood destruction by trucks stopped immediately.

To: Cambridge City Council

From: Transportation Sub-Committee on Heavy
Trucking in Eastern Cambridge (Resolution #)

Request for Council Hearing to Submit Final Report

The Eastern Cambridge Citizens Committee Against Destructive Truck Traffic in Residential Neighborhoods has completed its work. Our final report in the form of a five page statement and a detailed map presentation is presently being circulated to neighborhood associations and to relevant City departments.

We request the opportunity to present our conclusions to the City Council at the earliest possible date. This report contains four proposals for City action which should precede City discussions with the ^{Transportation} Boston/Planning Review which will have to be completed in the next month. The BTPR intends to complete its study of Cambridge Transportation problems during the summer. * The four proposals in our report also affect the CRA development of the Kendall Square area which will also be coming before the City Council shortly.

We also request that the City Manager instruct the heads of relevant City Departments to send representatives who may comment on the feasibility of our four proposals.

Our preference for a meeting date is June 5.



Richard Thoreson in cooperation
with Councilor Duehay

Communication from Richard Thoreson
submitting a final report of the Trans-
portation Sub-Committee on Heavy
Trucking in Eastern Cambridge and re-
questing a hearing on June 5, 1972

May 22, 1972

Hearing on June 5
8 P. M.

City of Cambridge

In City Council June 5, 1972.

The

Committee on Transportation

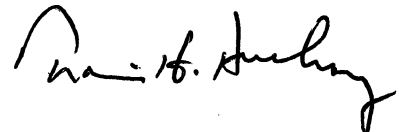
to which was referred a communication from Richard Thoreson in behalf of the Eastern Cambridge Citizens Committee against destructive truck traffic in residential neighborhoods, after hearing on Tuesday, May 30, 1972 in the Walnut Room at City Hall, Cambridge

Reports,

Recommending that the City Council consider the adoption of the following orders -

- (1) ORDERED:- That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to direct the appropriate department concerned to draft an anti-noise ordinance for the consideration of the City Council
- (2) ORDERED:- That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to consult with the Director of Traffic and Parking with a view towards securing the passage of legislation which will eliminate truck traffic on a twenty-four hour basis from all residential areas of the City of Cambridge.

For the Committee



REPORT

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Committee on Transportation

Relative to heavy trucking in
residential areas

June 5, 1972