



In Council packets
5/9/03

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE • EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

Robert W. Healy, City Manager

Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City Manager

May 9, 2003

To the Honorable, the City Council:

I am pleased to submit to you two reports recently published by the Community Development Department (CDD): the Agassiz Neighborhood Study, and the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Update.

Started in 1988 to address issues arising from rapid development, CDD's neighborhood planning program has completed studies in eleven of Cambridge's thirteen neighborhoods to date. Through these studies, a committee of citizens appointed by the City Manager learns about and discusses a variety of topics, including: housing, open space, land use/ zoning, urban design, economic development, and transportation. Through conversations with staff, the larger community, and each other, these committees develop recommendations to help inform staff members working in a variety of departments within the City. The Agassiz Neighborhood Study represents the latest of these studies to be completed.

Starting in 2001, the Council recognized the need to ensure that the recommendations put forth in the neighborhood studies remain current. For this reason, CDD began the process of updating neighborhood studies, reviewing recommendations to determine which have been achieved, become obsolete, or remain to be completed (and to establish a schedule for these outstanding items). In a more abbreviated version of the original study process, a series of public meetings is held for each update, and a "Summary, Recommendations, and Action Plan," is produced. The Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Update represents the first of these updates to be completed.

I hope that these studies and updates will prove valuable to you in your work as City Councilors. These reports are also available on the Web at: www.ci.cambridge.ma.us/~CDD/ I encourage you to contact Beth Rubenstein, Assistant City Manager for Community Development, if you have any questions or would like more information.

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

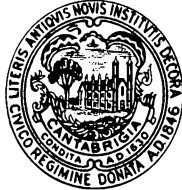
▪▪ AGASSIZ ▪▪
NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY



A JOINT REPORT OF THE
AGASSIZ NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY COMMITTEE AND
THE CAMBRIDGE COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT



▪ ▪ A G A S S I Z ▪ ▪
NEIGHBORHOOD STUDY



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Published, April 2003

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The Agassiz Neighborhood Study Committee and the Community Development Department would like to thank all the Agassiz residents who participated in the public forums and committee meetings.

We would like to thank the Cambridge School Department for allowing us to hold meetings at the Baldwin School (formerly the Agassiz School) and also Terry Delancey and the Agassiz Neighborhood Council for their helpful cooperation.

Cover Photo: Sacramento Field

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY



Cambridge Youth Guidance Center, 5 Sacramento Street

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Executive Summary

The Agassiz Neighborhood Study Committee met between April of 2000 and December 2001. During that time, the Study Committee heard presentations from City staff, discussed issues, and held public forums. Topics under consideration included housing, land use and zoning, urban design, transportation, open space, institutional uses, and economic development. Through this process of learning, discussing, gathering feedback from the neighborhood, and working toward consensus, the Committee developed recommendations to better the neighborhood.

The recommendations put forth by the Committee are as follows:

AGASSIZ STUDY RECOMMENDATIONS

Housing Recommendations

1. In order to maintain a diverse community, the City of Cambridge should explore affordable housing opportunities in the Agassiz neighborhood as they may arise.
2. The City should explore the possibility of allowing single room occupancy buildings in more residential districts and acquiring land or structures for this use.
3. The Committee recognizes that, by developing dormitories, institutions help to reduce pressure on other renters in the neighborhood. However, any new student housing construction in the Agassiz neighborhood should be low-density and compatible with the existing scale and character of the neighborhood.

4. The City of Cambridge should pursue the affordable housing funds available through the Community Preservation Act.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

1. Harvard University should implement the recommendations of the Hammond/ Gorham edge committee, in order to create a more friendly campus edge with open quadrangles.
2. The City's Community Development Department (CDD) should prepare an inventory of lots by size in the C-1 district showing the potential build out of lots over 6,000 square feet. This inventory should be presented to the Agassiz Neighborhood Council.
3. The Agassiz neighborhood should consider establishing a neighborhood conservation district.
4. A transition buffer zone should be created where the C2-A District abuts the C-1 District (where Lesley University abuts the neighborhood).

Urban Design Recommendations

1. New buildings should be harmonious with existing neighborhood residential aesthetics.
2. Pedestrian rights-of-way in the neighborhood should be preserved and maintained. Example: Francis Avenue to Museum Street.
3. Utility companies should be encouraged to place utilities underground whenever feasible.
4. The City should plant and maintain street trees.

Transportation Recommendations

1. Encourage non-automobile travel.
2. Encourage Harvard and Lesley Universities to implement intra-city transportation options for their communities.
3. Encourage the MBTA to institute a bus route from Porter Square to Kendall Square along Beacon St and Hampshire St. Although this is a natural transportation corridor, no public transport goes along the length of this route.
4. Support efforts to promote system-wide improvements in MBTA bus service. Example: Harvard Square to Coolidge Corner.
5. Encourage alternative fuel transportation.
6. Support efforts to implement urban ring transit system.
7. Implement traffic calming as neighborhood streets are resurfaced.
8. Promote safer pedestrian crossings at:
 - a. Massachusetts Avenue at Garfield Street.
 - b. Oxford Street at Kirkland Street. The Committee supports Harvard's relocation of the shuttle stop to the Memorial Hall circular driveway.
 - c. The exit from the Science Center on Oxford Street.
 - d. Kirkland Street at Irving Street. The existing crosswalk does not correspond to the one at Cambridge Street and Irving Street, disrupting a logical pedestrian route. Crosswalks should be on both sides of the street.
 - e. Kirkland Street at Holden Street. At present there is only a crosswalk on the west side of the street, not the east side. Crosswalks should be on both sides of the street.
 - f. The end of Holden Street to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences park entrances.
9. Make resident only parking at night on Oxford Street from Everett to Wendell.

10. Provide Zipcar spaces in Harvard and/ or Lesley parking lots.

Open Space Recommendations

1. The City of Cambridge should work with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) to explore the feasibility of constructing a park over the commuter rail line adjacent to the Porter Square T stop. If that fails, we recommend putting one of the many parking lots in the square underground and using the above ground area for a park. Porter Square is the location in Cambridge that is furthest from any parks, and creating a park over one of these locations is our most visionary and most expensive recommendation.
2. The City of Cambridge should pursue the open space preservation funds available through the Community Preservation Act.
3. The Committee recommends enhancing the recreational use, especially the passive recreational use, of Sacramento Field.
 - The City of Cambridge should consider renaming Sacramento Field to Sacramento Park.
 - New signage should be placed at the main entrance to Sacramento Field on Sacramento Street.
 - The recently re-opened second public access route to Sacramento Field/Park should be maintained.
4. Encourage the closing of Oxford Street for community celebrations.
5. Encourage prompt removal of all graffiti by property owners - including City street signs and U.S. mailboxes.
6. Encourage the Agassiz Neighborhood Council to continue its tree-sponsorship program.
7. Encourage residents to take advantage of the City's sidewalk tree program.

Institutional Recommendations

1. In conjunction with their residential projects, Harvard and Lesley should consider including housing for their hourly-wage employees.

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2. Harvard and Lesley should inform Cambridge residents of upcoming events open to the public.

Lesley University

1. The University should improve the landscaping at the Oxford Street side of 47 Oxford Street.
2. Lesley should work with a neighborhood committee to discuss development issues with Agassiz.

Harvard University

Note that Harvard University's proposals for the North Yard area were made public after the neighborhood study process for the Agassiz neighborhood was nearly complete. While this report recognizes the North Yard proposals, and provides recommendations regarding Harvard University, it does not offer an exhaustive review and analysis of the proposals or their effects on the neighborhood.

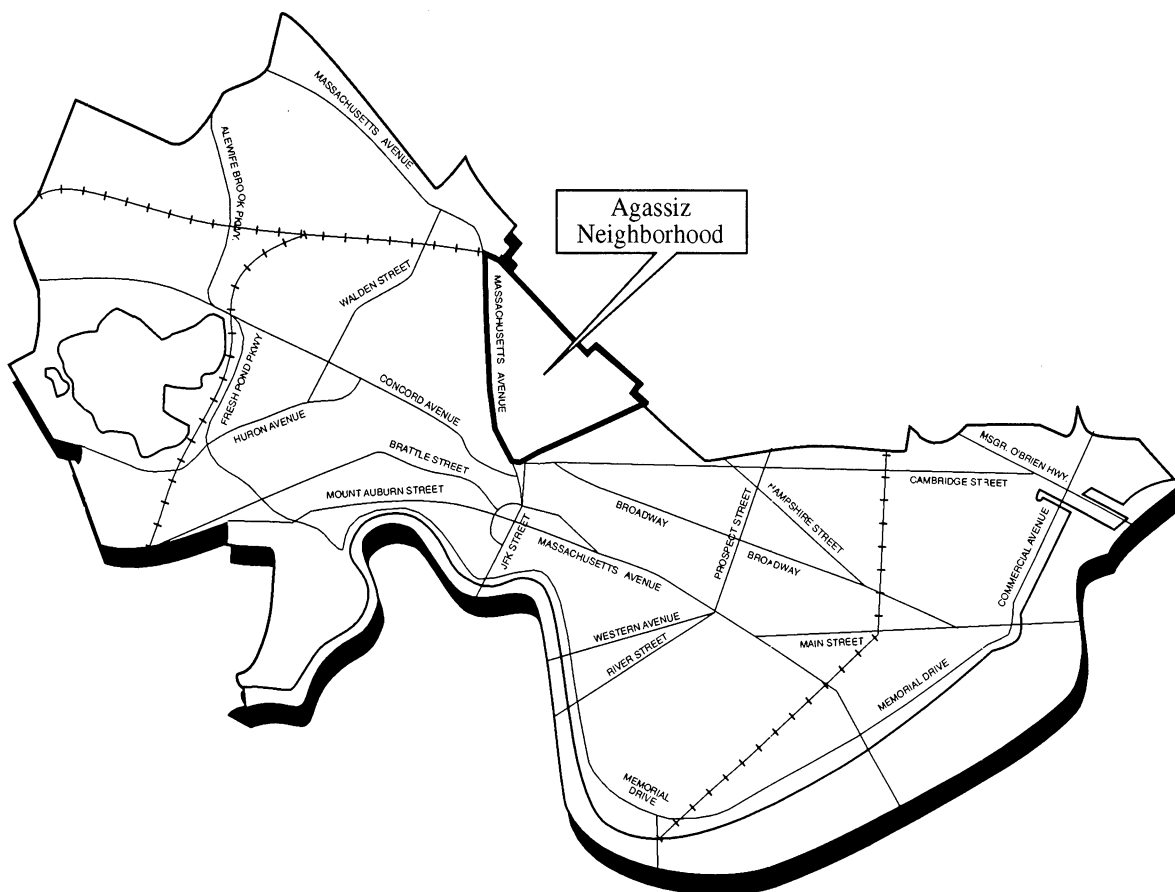
1. As the University considers the development of the North Yard, the Committee recommends the formation of a committee to work with Harvard on the issues of:
 - Density, height and open space of proposed development;
 - Construction impacts;
 - Cumulative impact of traffic;
 - Preserving neighborhood character and scale;
 - Preserving as much public use and space open to public use as possible;
 - Exploring options to reduce the traffic from the proposed new Harvard garage exiting onto Oxford Street, including:
 - a) Making Everett two-way to accommodate ingress and egress.
 - b) Making Divinity Way an entrance or exit for garage traffic.
 - c) Using Francis/Bryant Street as entrance or exit for garage traffic.
 - d) Restricting parking on Oxford Street between Everett and Wendell at peak vehicle hours.

2. The local Harvard museums should be requested to offer free admission to Cambridge residents and school groups.
3. The Committee supports Harvard's objective to extend the pattern of publicly accessible quadrangles to the neighborhood boundaries.
4. The City of Cambridge should encourage Harvard University to incorporate publicly accessible open space on Oxford Street/Divinity school property.
5. The Committee requests that Harvard University landscape the existing parking lot on Oxford Street once underground parking is constructed.
6. The Committee recommends that Harvard move the existing shuttle bus location, as both shuttle buses and tour buses clog the Oxford and Kirkland Streets intersection.
7. All of the gates at the Academy of Arts and Sciences should remain open during posted hours.
8. Harvard Law School should involve the neighborhood early in its planning process.

Economic Development Recommendations

1. The Committee encourages the creation of pedestrian-friendly, neighborhood-oriented uses of commercial spaces along Massachusetts Avenue and throughout the Agassiz neighborhood.
2. The City should develop a formalized plan to communicate with the Agassiz Neighborhood Council about types of new businesses that would be useful in the neighborhood. Example: Currently, a bakery is needed in the neighborhood.
3. The Committee supports Harvard's established practice of reduced rents to diverse retail tenants.

City of Cambridge
Agassiz Neighborhood

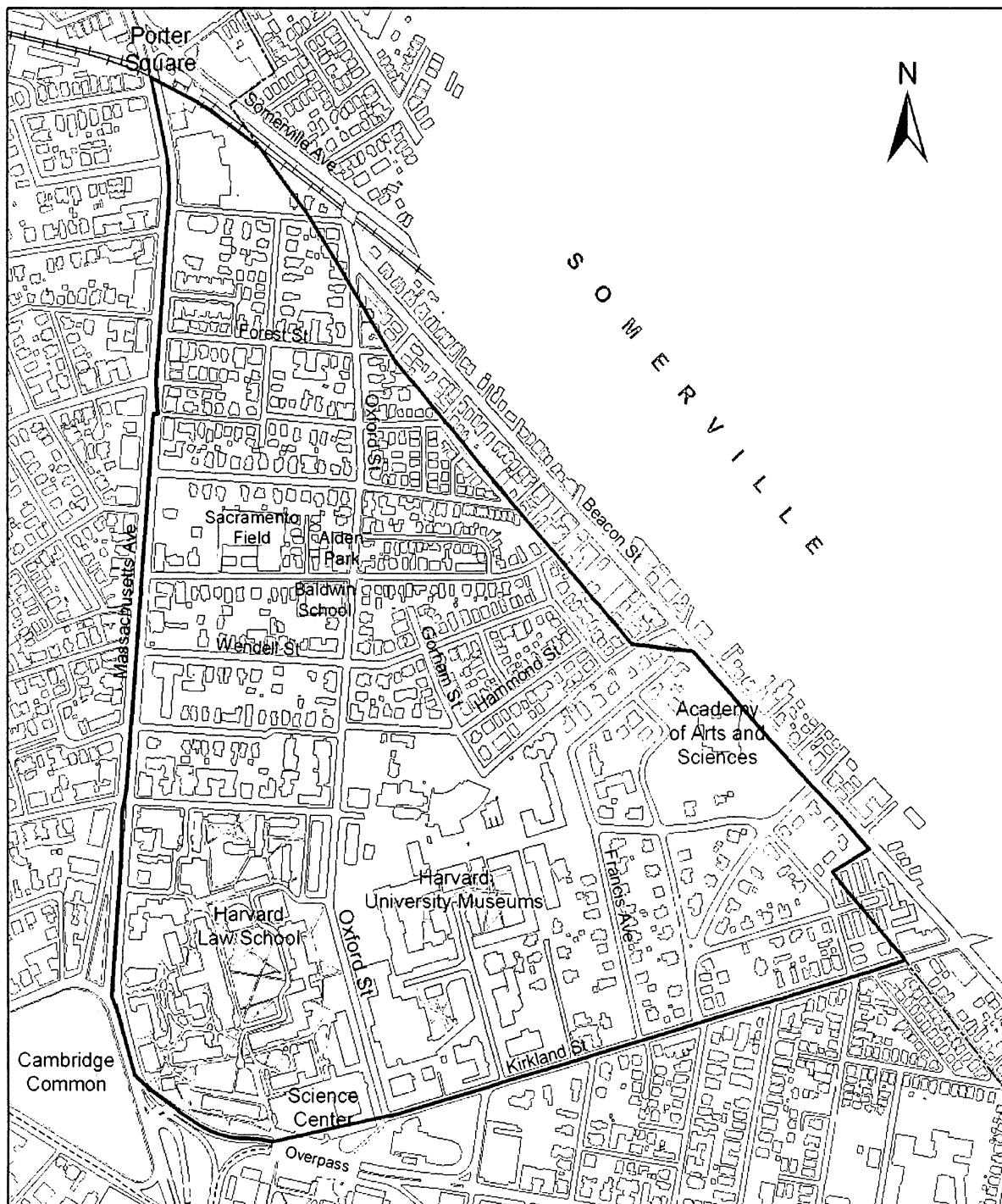


INTRODUCTION



Porter Square T-Station from Massachusetts Avenue

City of Cambridge
Agassiz Neighborhood



Introduction

Neighborhood Study Process

During the 1980s, the City of Cambridge (along with the surrounding region), witnessed a wave of commercial growth and economic development. This growth expanded the City's tax base and created new jobs and opportunities for residents. While many residents welcomed this prosperity, it also brought about an increasing awareness of issues that are of concern to neighborhood residents: increased building density, traffic congestion and parking problems, the rising cost of housing, inadequate open space, and the threat to neighborhood character and quality of life.

Since 1988, the Community Development Department (CDD), through its neighborhood planning program, has conducted comprehensive studies in ten of the city's neighborhoods. The purpose of the neighborhood studies is to identify major planning opportunities through a joint effort between CDD and a citizen committee appointed by the City Manager. Through this collaborative effort, the goal is to analyze the present situation in the neighborhood and make recommendations for a course of action. Recommendations address such issues as traffic and parking, housing affordability and homeownership, neighborhood commercial areas and employment, park maintenance, and rezoning for areas that are inappropriately zoned. As part of each neighborhood study, CDD collects data on demographic changes since 1980, as well as changes in housing markets, land use, and development potential in each neighborhood.

For each study, the City Manager appoints a committee of neighborhood residents, small business owners, institutional representatives, and civic leaders, as well as staff from CDD, to review the data, identify problems that exist in the neighborhood, and make recommendations as to how to resolve these problems. The recommendations are presented to the City Council and, where appropriate, are incorporated into the work programs of City departments for implementation; in some cases, this implementation takes place over a short period of time, in others it is part of longer-term planning.

Agassiz Neighborhood Study

The Agassiz Neighborhood Study Committee met between April of 2000 and December 2001. The Committee was composed of 8 appointed neighborhood residents, as well as one representative of Harvard University and one representative of Lesley University who attended meetings. During that time, the Study Committee heard presentations from city staff, discussed issues, and held public forums. Topics considered included housing, land use and zoning, urban design, transportation, open space, institutional uses and economic development. Through this process of learning, discussing, gathering feedback from the community, and working toward consensus, the committee developed recommendations to better the neighborhood.

Growth Policy Document

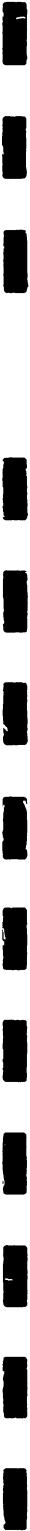
The neighborhood study process is an extension of the City's growth policy document, "Towards a Sustainable Cambridge," which outlines the City's planning assumptions and policies in the areas of land use, housing, transportation, economic development, open space, and urban design. CDD staff drafted this document in 1992 and 1993 after a series of workshops with citizen, business, and institutional representatives. It recognizes that Cambridge's diversity of land uses, densities, and population groups should be retained and strengthened. The document also calls for careful development of the city's evolving industrial districts, such as Alewife and lower Cambridgeport.

While the Growth Policy Document is comprehensive, it does not prescribe land uses or designs for specific sites. Each of the City's thirteen neighborhoods has distinctive needs and resources that can be identified and addressed through neighborhood studies and the City's planning policies. The Growth Policy Document and neighborhood studies complement each other by informing the community of important issues, recommending a plan of action to address the concerns, and utilizing current policies to implement change.

M E T H O D O L O G Y



Sacramento Street Community Gardens



Methodology

The Agassiz Neighborhood Study Committee produced its recommendations through an extended process of issue identification, data collection and analysis, and further review and discussion. Community Development Department staff supported this process by gathering and presenting data from a number of sources, chief among them the U. S. Census, the Cambridge Assessing Department, the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, and the City's Geographic Information System mapping database.

US Census: 1980 and 1990

The U. S. Census Bureau conducts a survey of every resident in the United States every ten years as mandated by the Federal Constitution. The Census collects demographic information on age distribution, household composition, racial makeup, income, length of residency, employment, and other socioeconomic categories. The decennial Census provides us with the most complete profile of the City and its residents.

During the period that the Study Committee met, 2000 Census data was not yet available. However, this recent Census data has begun to become available as this report went into production. Wherever possible, the most updated Census data is included here.

Cambridge Assessor's Data

The Study Committee used data from the Assessing Department to analyze the nature and quality of the neighborhood's housing stock, understand the market for renting or buying

housing in Agassiz, and examine the remaining build-out potential in the neighborhood. Housing data examined includes the number of buildings, the number of dwelling units, and the number of housing sales in each property class (1, 2, or 3 family, etc), as well as their sales prices. This analysis forms the basis for evaluating housing availability and affordability in the neighborhood. Property data such as building and lot size, were gathered for all commercially zoned areas and higher density residential zoning districts, and the information used to calculate the amount of additional building allowable in the neighborhood under current zoning.

The Cambridge Zoning Ordinance

The Zoning Ordinance, in conjunction with Assessing data, was used to determine the remaining build-out potential in Agassiz. The Zoning Ordinance is the part of the municipal code that governs how land and buildings in the City may be used. For each zoning district, the ordinance lays out three types of general regulations:

- 1) Use: what activities or mix of activities may or may not take place;
- 2) Dimensional requirements: what floor-area-ratio, density, height, or setback restrictions apply to any one building in and given zoning district; and,
- 3) Parking requirements: how many spaces, if any, must be included with a building.

Geographic Information System Maps

The Cambridge Management Information Systems Department, working closely with the Community Development Department, has

created an information base of geographic data. This data can be used to create maps with many levels of data. These maps can be used to conduct planning analysis.

NEIGHBORHOOD
OVERVIEW



Agassiz Community Center, 20 Sacramento Street



Neighborhood Overview

HISTORY

Before European settlement, the core of Agassiz was an area named Pine Swamp, located between Oxford and Kirkland Streets. The infill of this historically low-lying area with residential and institutional development has continued to impact present-day Agassiz residents, resulting in basement flooding and delaying construction of the Red Line subway extension for almost a year due to the need to pump water from the tunnel as it was dug.

Harvard College was the center of life in Cambridge at the beginning of European settlement there. During the 17th and 18th centuries, most settlement in what is now Agassiz was on Massachusetts Avenue, a pre-existing Native American path. This development took the form of houses facing the avenue with farms in the back. Massachusetts Avenue was laid out 33 yards wide all the way to Arlington (which was then part of Cambridge), because space was needed to circumnavigate bogs, boulders, and depressions in the roadway.

In 1660, Massachusetts Avenue became the way to connect with the only land route to Boston. The route was north and west of a bridge built at the foot of present-day JFK Street, making Porter Square a strategic location. This bridge was supplemented in 1793 by the construction of the West Boston (now Longfellow) Bridge, and in 1809 by a bridge in East Cambridge where the Charles River Dam is today. Following the development of the railroads, Massachusetts Avenue became one of the most prestigious suburban streets in the Boston area, lined with

large, single-family houses. Due to deed restrictions, no stores or apartment houses were permitted on Massachusetts Avenue until 1911. However, by the 1930s, Massachusetts Avenue had become the mixed-use street it is today.

Development gradually moved from Massachusetts Avenue to what are now the surrounding neighborhoods. Within Agassiz, Harvard College played an important role in leading to settlement, as professors were given opportunities for loans to build housing along Kirkland and lower Oxford Streets. The College itself continued to expand, and was joined in 1909 by Lesley College.

In 1960, the neighborhood was zoned to residence C-3. In the post-war period, the University purchased all the houses around Sacramento Field, and most of the houses on Garfield Street, the south side of Sacramento Street and a number of houses between Sacramento and Everett Street. Development discussions in the late 1960's/early 70's resulted in the publication of the Harvard plan in 1974/5. Gradually, in the 1980's, Harvard began selling the houses it had accumulated; some multi-family buildings became affordable housing.

Apartment house construction in the neighborhood continued throughout the 1950's and in the 1960's and 70's townhouses were built. The City implemented a townhouse ordinance, which encouraged construction that was meant to replace the Arlington pillbox style of apartment house that filled the zoning envelope of a site. The ordinance has been revised several times to produce more attractive townhouses.

Neighborhood Name

The neighborhood was originally named for the neighborhood school, which was named for Professor Louis Agassiz, a Swiss-American naturalist who first lived on Oxford Street. Agassiz came to Cambridge to assume the professorship of natural history in the Lawrence Scientific School of Harvard University. He was instrumental in helping Harvard grow from a small college that trained clergymen to a full-fledged university. In 1860, Agassiz founded the Museum of Comparative Zoology at Harvard. He and his wife established a private school for girls (called the Agassiz School) in their home on Quincy Street in 1855, which closed during the Civil War. In 1882, Mrs. Agassiz was involved in the establishment of the Society for the Collegiate Instruction of Women, which later became Radcliffe College.

On May 21, 2002 the Cambridge School Committee voted unanimously to accept the recommendation to change the name of the Agassiz School to the Maria L. Baldwin School. Maria L. Baldwin, an African-American Cantabrigian, served as principal and later master of the school from 1889 until her death in 1922. Under Baldwin's leadership, the school's student body grew until in 1915, the decision was made, with Baldwin's prompting, to build a new school. The present school, which incorporates some elements of Baldwin's school of 1916, was completed in 1995.

While the elementary school has changed its name, at present the title of Agassiz Neighborhood has remained in use by other community organizations.

Agassiz Today: A Demographic Profile

The City uses a variety of sources to obtain and evaluate information about demographics on the citywide and neighborhood level. Several of the most important include the decennial U.S. Census, the Assessing Department's database, and Massachusetts Division of Employment and Training's employment and wages statistics. In order to fill in gaps in this information, projections derived from statistical models employed by the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) and the Massachusetts Institute of Social and Economic Research (MISER) supplement these sources. In addition, each year the City receives a Town-Gown Report from each of the major educational institutions within the city, which includes statistics about the institution's activities during the previous school year.

At the beginning of the Agassiz Study process, the results of the 2000 U.S. Census had not yet been released. By publication, citywide information was available as well as limited neighborhood-level information. The table below provides some recent Census information for Agassiz and the City.

Population

| | Agassiz Neighborhood | | | City of Cambridge | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------------|--------------------------|-------------|-------------------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | (%) Change | 1990 | 2000 | (%) Change |
| Total Population | 5,100 | 5,241 | 3% | 95,802 | 101,355 | 6% |
| Age (years) | | | | | | |
| 0 - 4 | 141 | 120 | -15% | 4,644 | 4,125 | -11% |
| 5 - 17 | 258 | 277 | 7% | 7,075 | 9,322 | 32% |
| 18 - 24 | 1,453 | 1,527 | 5% | 18,778 | 21,472 | 14% |
| 25 - 29 | 1,021 | 1,106 | 8% | 13,129 | 14,721 | 12% |
| 30 - 34 | 538 | 568 | 6% | 10,918 | 10,481 | -4% |
| 35 - 44 | 780 | 552 | -29% | 15,325 | 13,942 | -9% |
| 45 - 64 | 636 | 873 | 37% | 14,158 | 18,010 | 27% |
| 65 and over | 273 | 218 | -20% | 9,941 | 9,282 | -7% |
| Persons per Acre | 27 | 28 | 4% | 23 | 24 | 4% |
| Group Quarters Population | 1,684 | 1,572 | -7% | 14,033 | 14,663 | 4% |

Total Households

| | Agassiz Neighborhood | | | City of Cambridge | | |
|------------------------------|----------------------|-------|------------|-------------------|--------|------------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | (%) Change | 1990 | 2000 | (%) Change |
| Total Households | 1,891 | 1,980 | 5% | 39,337 | 42,615 | 8% |
| Family Households | 651 | 676 | 4% | 17,648 | 17,595 | <1% |
| Non-Family Households | 1,240 | 1,304 | 5% | 21,689 | 25,020 | 15% |
| Persons per Household | 1.81 | 1.85 | 2% | 2.08 | 2.03 | -2% |

Family Households

| | Agassiz Neighborhood | | | City of Cambridge | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|------|------------|-------------------|--------|------------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | (%) Change | 1990 | 2000 | (%) Change |
| Family Households | 651 | 676 | 4% | 17,648 | 17,595 | <1% |
| w/ Own Children under 18 Yrs. | 262 | 258 | -2% | 7,617 | 7,503 | -1% |
| Married Couple Families | 538 | 535 | -1% | 12,685 | 12,408 | -2% |
| w/ Own Children under 18 Yrs. | 223 | 185 | -17% | 5,139 | 4,835 | -6% |
| Unmarried Householder | 113 | 141 | 25% | 4,963 | 5,187 | 5% |
| w/ Own Children under 18 Yrs. | 39 | 73 | 87% | 2,478 | 2,668 | 8% |

Housing Units

| | Agassiz Neighborhood | | | City of Cambridge | | |
|-------------------------------|----------------------|-------|------------|-------------------|--------|------------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | (%) Change | 1990 | 2000 | (%) Change |
| Housing Units | 1,988 | 2,060 | 4% | 41,979 | 44,725 | 7% |
| Owner-occupied | 513 | 597 | 16% | 11,959 | 13,760 | 15% |
| Renter-occupied | 1,390 | 1,383 | -1% | 27,446 | 28,855 | 5% |
| Vacant | 85 | 80 | -6% | 2,574 | 2,110 | -18% |
| Housing Units per Acre | 10.2 | 10.6 | 4% | 10.2 | 10.9 | 7% |

Source: 1990 and 2000 U.S. Decennial Census

Population

Between 1990 and 2000, the population of Cambridge increased from 95,802 to 101,355 residents. Only a small fraction of that growth occurred in Agassiz, which saw its population increase from 5,100 to 5,241 persons. Roughly 5% of the city's population lives within the Agassiz neighborhood. Compared to the other thirteen neighborhoods within the city, Agassiz is smaller than many in terms of both land area and population. A significant portion of land in the neighborhood is devoted to institutional uses.

Within Agassiz, the number of persons per household declined between 1980 and 1990 from 1.91 to 1.81, but increased to 1.85 by 2000. While Cambridge tends to have smaller household sizes than the US average, it should be noted that Agassiz has a small average household size compared to other neighborhoods within the city

(citywide, the average number of person per household was 2.03 in 2000). However, within the residential portions of Agassiz, the population is fairly dense.

Educational Achievement

The demographics of the neighborhood reflect the physical presence of educational institutions within the neighborhood, most notably in the high level of education among the population and the industry in which they are employed. In 1990, only Area 2 (mostly MIT) reported comparable levels of higher education. At that time, the typical resident of Agassiz over the age of 25 was much more likely to have a college degree than other residents of Cambridge or the United States. At the same time, far fewer residents were found at lower levels of education; for example, only 2.4% of Agassiz residents had less than a high

school diploma or GED, compared with 15.6% of Cambridge residents. More detailed information about education levels in the Agassiz neighborhood appears in the economic development section of this study, which begins on page 37.

Population Density

Density within the Agassiz neighborhood is comparable to that of the city as a whole, at 10.6 versus 10.9 housing units per acre. Overall, Cambridge is the 10th densest city with a population of 50,000 or more in the country. While there are some high-rise buildings within the city, the housing stock generally consists of 2, 3, and 4-story buildings, both single and multi-family.

Diversity

According to the 2000 Census, Agassiz is roughly 80% White, a figure largely unchanged since the 1990 Census. Five percent of residents are Black, 11% are Asian/ Pacific Islander, and 3% are Two or More Races. Native Americans and Other Races compose a very small percentage of the population. Cambridge as a whole is 68% White, 12% Black, 12% Asian/ Pacific Islander, and 5% Two or More Races. In 2000, approximately 6% of the Agassiz population indicated that they were of Hispanic origin. This is fairly similar to the city as a whole.

Housing Tenure

While Cambridge has had, and continues to have, a large renter population, there has been an

increase in homeownership in recent years. Agassiz's location near the retail, educational, employment, and transportation amenities of Harvard Square continues to make it a popular location for renters. In 2000, out of 2,060 total housing units, 597 were Owner-Occupied and 1,383 were Renter-Occupied.

Age Distribution

Compared to the rest of Cambridge, Agassiz has relatively few children. However, its proximity to Harvard and Lesley Universities increase its population of those of traditional college age, thus decreasing overall median age. In 1990, the median age among Agassiz residents was 28.4 years, versus 31.1 years for the city at large.

Place of Residence Five Years Earlier

According to the 1990 Census, about two-thirds of the population had moved to the neighborhood within the last five years. However, considering that approximately one-third of residents at any given time live in dormitories, and that there are others within the neighborhood who are students, the neighborhood does have a stable, long-term population of approximately 30%.

Income

In real terms, residents of Cambridge and Agassiz increased their income between 1979 and 1989. Agassiz is very near the top of Cambridge neighborhoods in terms of household and family income.

ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



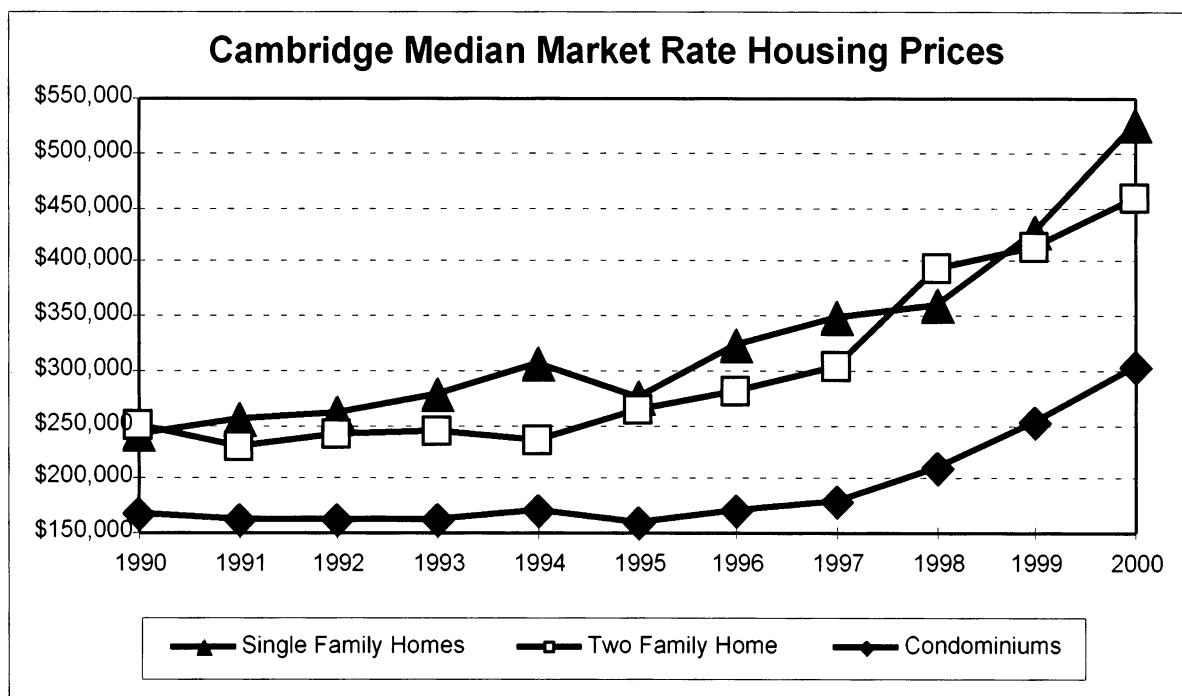
Baldwin School, 28 Sacramento Street



Housing

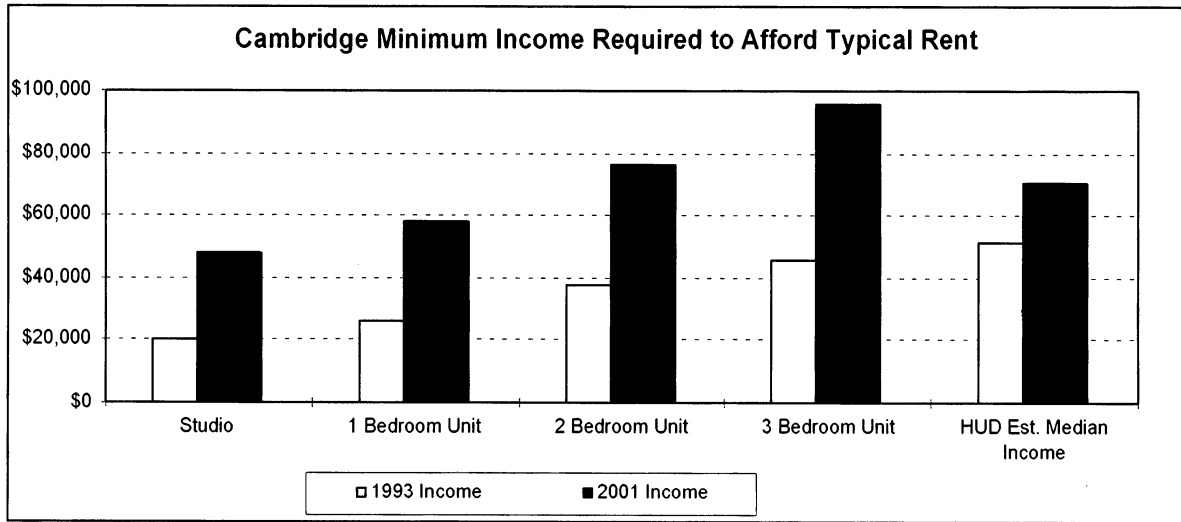
Over the last couple of decades, the availability and affordability of housing has become an extraordinarily important issue for Cambridge residents. Housing prices in the city have risen dramatically in recent years for a variety of reasons, including the end of rent control in 1994. The increased demand for housing in recent years resulted in higher prices to rent or purchase a

residence in Cambridge. Although new industries in the city have attracted a significant number of higher skilled workers that are able to afford higher housing costs, the cost of housing has, for the most part, outpaced the income of many long time residents resulting in a desire for more affordable units.

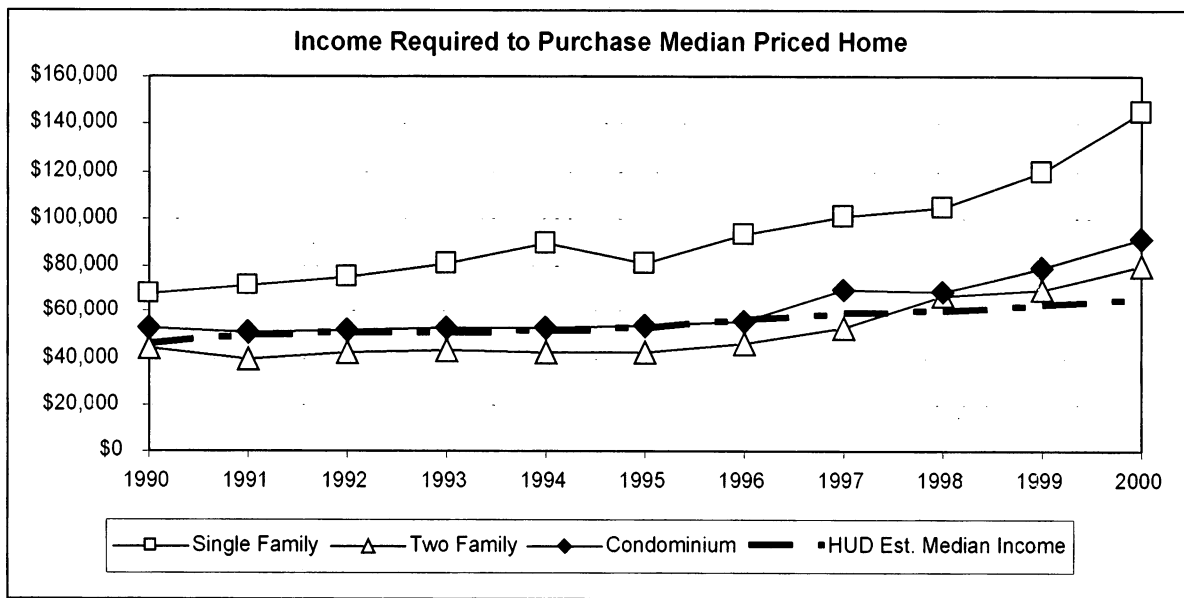


N.B.: Note that all cost figures are unadjusted for inflation

Sources: Cambridge Revaluation Office, 2001; Cambridge Community Development Dept., 2001.



Minimum incomes based on payment of 30% of pre-tax income for housing expenses. In the table above HUD estimated median income indicates level of rent affordable to a family of four with median income. Sources: Cambridge Community Development Department, 2001; HUD, 2001.



Minimum incomes based on payment of 30% of pre-tax income for housing expenses. In the table above HUD estimated median income indicates mortgage affordable to a family of four with median income. Sources: Cambridge Community Development Department, 2001; HUD, 2001.

The City of Cambridge seeks to preserve the existing housing stock and explore new opportunities to provide housing for residents at all socioeconomic levels. There are a number of affordable housing programs that currently exist in the city. Cambridge has an Affordable Housing Trust, which is a City Manager appointed board that grants deferred loans, makes funding decisions, and helps guide the City's housing policy. In 1998, the City adopted an inclusionary zoning

ordinance, which sets aside 15% of units as affordable in new residential developments of 10 or more housing units. There are also a number of nonprofit housing developers active in the city including: Homeowners Rehab. Inc. (HRI); Just A Start Corporation (JAS); Cambridge Neighborhood Housing Apartment Services (CNAHS); and CASCAP. The City also offers a First Time Homebuyer Class and provides home-buying counseling services.

The Agassiz neighborhood has some of the most expensive housing in the city. The median sale prices for different housing types within the neighborhood in 2000 are listed below.

**Median Housing Sale Prices
in the Agassiz Neighborhood, 2000**

| | Number of Sales | Median Price |
|---------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Single Family | 5 | \$675,000 |
| Two Family | 3 | \$972,000 |
| Three Family | 1 | \$1,735,000 |
| 1-3 Family | 9 | \$972,000 |
| Condominium | 17 | \$331,000 |

Source: Cambridge Revaluation Office, 2001; Cambridge Community Development Department, 2001.

Currently, due to a very limited amount of available land, there do not appear to be many immediate prospects for new affordable housing in the neighborhood. However, opportunities may

arise in the future as parcels are sold or redeveloped. Funds, such as those available through the Community Preservation Act may be helpful in capitalizing on any future opportunities.

The housing stock in the Agassiz neighborhood did not change much between 1980 and 2000, although there have been a significant number of conversions of rental units into condominiums in the neighborhood. Between 1970 and 2000 there were 298 units and 59 buildings converted into condominium use. Corresponding to these conversions, the number of owner occupied units increased between 1980 and 2000. The Agassiz neighborhood lost a considerable portion of the renter occupied units in comparison to those lost throughout the entire city. The number of renter occupied units in Agassiz decreased by 11.6% between 1980 and 2000 compared to a decrease of 3.6% for the City of Cambridge during the same time period.

Tenure of Housing Units 1980 - 2000

| | 1980 | 1990 | 2000 | Change 1980-2000 (Net) | Change 1980-2000 (%) |
|--------------------------|--------|--------|--------|---------------------------|-------------------------|
| City of Cambridge | 41,300 | 41,979 | 44,725 | 3,425 | 8.3% |
| Owner-Occupied | 8,889 | 11,959 | 13,760 | 4,871 | 54.8% |
| Renter-Occupied | 29,947 | 27,446 | 28,855 | (1,092) | -3.6% |
| Vacant | 2,464 | 2,574 | 2,110 | (354) | -14.4% |
| Agassiz/Area 8 | 2,021 | 1,988 | 2,060 | 39 | 1.9% |
| Owner-Occupied | 373 | 513 | 597 | 224 | 60.1% |
| Renter-Occupied | 1,565 | 1,390 | 1,383 | (182) | -11.6% |
| Vacant | 83 | 85 | 80 | (3) | -3.6% |

Source: U. S. Decennial Census; 1980 Cambridge, Mass. Neighborhood Statistics; 1990 User Defined Areas Program analysis of Cambridge, Massachusetts Neighborhoods; 2000 SF1 Data File analyzed by Cambridge Community Development Department.

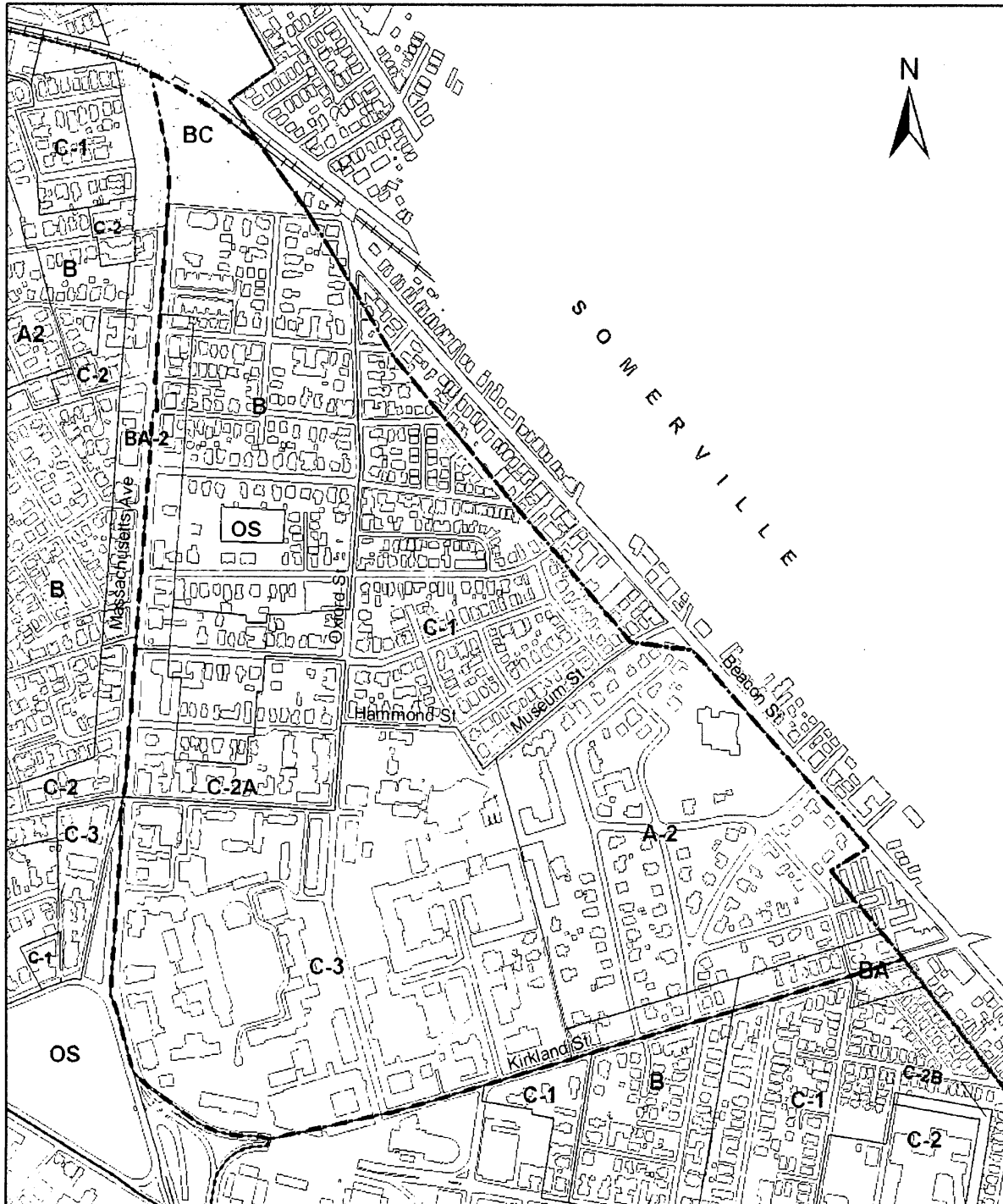
There were 1,988 housing units in Agassiz in 1990; this number increased to 2,060 in 2000. Over half of the households in Agassiz consisted of a single person in 1990, compared to 42% citywide. With 1.85 persons per household in 2000, the Agassiz neighborhood has fewer persons per household than any other neighborhood in the city. The significant number of households with only one or a few persons residing in them is most

likely due to the educational institutions present in the neighborhood and their associated dormitories. In 2000, there were 1,572 Agassiz residents, or 30% of the neighborhood population, that lived in group quarters (mostly in dormitories). Only two other neighborhoods MIT (neighborhood 2), and Riverside (neighborhood 7), had a higher percentage of residents living in group quarters.

Housing Recommendations

-
1. In order to maintain a diverse community, the City of Cambridge should explore affordable housing opportunities in the Agassiz neighborhood as they may arise.
 2. The City should explore the possibility of allowing single room occupancy buildings in more residential districts and acquiring land or structures for this use.
 3. The Committee recognizes that, by developing dormitories, institutions help to reduce pressure on other renters in the neighborhood. However, any new student housing construction in the Agassiz neighborhood should be low density and in keeping with the existing scale and character of the neighborhood.
 4. The City of Cambridge should pursue the affordable housing funds available through the Community Preservation Act.

Agassiz Neighborhood Zoning Map



Land Use and Zoning

Communities employ a variety of techniques to regulate land use patterns, physical growth, and the built environment. The principal tool used by the City of Cambridge is zoning; in addition, some small pockets in the city are regulated by specific design and development standards. Cambridge is currently divided into approximately 51 zoning districts, which regulate land use, building setbacks, height, and density, the amount of open space on the parcel(s), parking quantity, and signage.

In the early 1960s, there was a large amount of development taking place in the Agassiz neighborhood. Zoning districts in the neighborhood at this time permitted higher densities including no restrictions on the heights of buildings. Much of the property owned by Harvard University had no height limit. Land in the Porter Square area was zoned Business B which allowed a 4.0 floor area ratio (FAR).

In the late 1970's, more restrictive zoning was adopted in Agassiz. During this time, 40-45% of the neighborhood was rezoned including Porter Square, which was rezoned to a 2.0 FAR with a 50-foot height limit. A subsequent rezoning in the 1980s lowered the residential density requirement from C-1 to Residence B with a 0.5 FAR and a 35-foot height limit. A city ordinance in 1995 (Ordinance 1170) also reduced the development allowed in the Residence B district.

Excluding open space, the Agassiz neighborhood has 7 zoning districts:

- Residence A-2: Single family dwellings with a 35-foot (3 residential story) height limit and 0.5 FAR.

- Residence B: Single and 2-family dwellings; townhouse dwellings with 35 foot height limit and 0.5 FAR for the first 5,000 square feet of a lot; 0.35 for any portion of the lot greater than 5,000 square feet.
- Residence C-1: Single and 2-family dwellings; townhouse dwellings; multi-family dwellings with a 35 foot height limit and 0.75 FAR.
- Residence C-2A: (At Lesley College Campus) Single and 2-family dwellings, townhouse dwellings, multifamily dwellings, institutional use, hotels. A 60 foot height limit and 2.5 FAR
- Residence C-3: (at Harvard University Campus) Single and 2-family dwellings, townhouse dwellings, multifamily dwellings, institutional use, hotels. 120-foot height limit (12 residential stories, 8 or 9 Research and Development stories) with a 3.0 FAR.
- Business A-2: (along Massachusetts Avenue) General office and retail uses, housing. 45-foot height limit with setbacks above 35 feet (3 office stories, 4 residential stories).
- Business C: (at Porter Square) General office and retail uses, housing. 55-foot height limit but 35 foot within 50 feet of residential districts with a 2.0 FAR.

Zoning in the Agassiz Neighborhood

Most of the Agassiz neighborhood is zoned residential, with the C-3 district allowing significantly higher densities as well as institutional uses. For this reason, transitional zoning between districts of contrasting allowed heights and densities has become an important issue in the

Agassiz neighborhood. In order to address these issues Harvard University recently completed a study process with Agassiz neighbors, which resulted in the rezoning of the Hammond Street and Gorham Street edges to provide a better physical transition with the neighborhood. The zoning change adopted by the City Council in Spring 2002 created a 100 foot transition overlay zone in which building heights were reduced (generally to 35 feet), minimum setbacks were increased, and breaks in building massing were required to create a more neighborhood “feel” at the edge.

The City of Cambridge adopted a Citywide Rezoning Ordinance on February 12, 2001, in order to address issues of: future density and traffic growth; the need for more housing, including affordable units; and better opportunities for public review of large projects. Significant changes to the Zoning Ordinance are outlined below:

- The addition of new residential districts (through rezoning of former commercial districts) in order to encourage new housing.

- Increased number of housing units allowed in certain areas to reflect existing conditions as well as help facilitate the conversion of industrial and commercial buildings to housing.
- Adjustment of allowed floor area ratios (FAR) to encourage housing over other uses.
- Reduced FARs for commercial, industrial, and non-residential districts.
- Inclusion of aboveground parking structures in FAR, to make it easier to reasonably anticipate the actual bulk of a building.
- Citywide project review process establishing traffic and urban design standards for development projects likely to have significant impact on abutting properties and the surrounding environment.
- Revised parking requirements for general office and research and development uses.

Land Use and Zoning Recommendations

-
1. Harvard University should implement the recommendations of the Hammond/ Gorham edge committee, in order to create a more friendly campus edge with open quadrangles. *(See also Harvard University recommendations in the Institutions Section)*
 2. The City's Community Development Department (CDD) should prepare an inventory of lots by size in the C-1 district showing the potential build out of lots over 6,000 square feet. This inventory should be presented to the Agassiz Neighborhood Council.
 3. The Agassiz neighborhood should consider establishing a neighborhood conservation district.
 4. A transition buffer zone should be created where the C2-A District abuts the C-1 District (where Lesley University abuts the neighborhood).



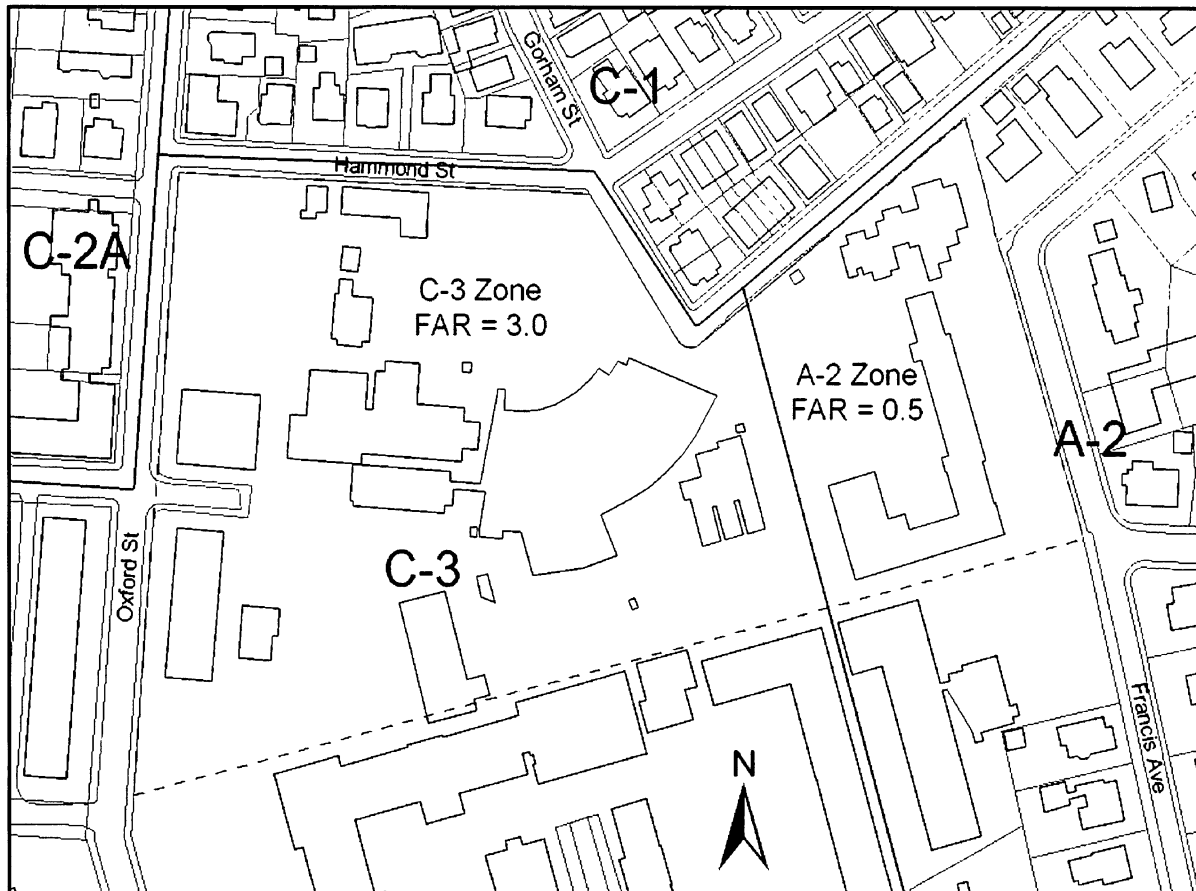
Urban Design

Many of the structures, streets, and districts in the Agassiz neighborhood have a very historic character and feel; therefore it is important for the neighborhood to plan for existing and anticipated development. Of particular concern in the Agassiz neighborhood are the protection of historically significant areas and buildings, adequate buffer zones between areas of different allowed densi-

ties, and enhancement of the existing streetscape through tree plantings, as well as pedestrian friendly street designs.

A large portion of the Agassiz neighborhood is comprised of the campuses of Harvard and Lesley Universities. As these institutions expand it will be important to ensure that adjacent areas of the neighborhood are not overwhelmed by new

Hammond and Gorham Streets in Agassiz



buildings and structures associated with the schools. An important area in the Agassiz neighborhood where the potential for high-density development next to much smaller structures exists is in the vicinity of Hammond and Gorham Streets. The campus of Harvard University in this area is zoned C-3 residential (120 foot height limit) while parcels across the street are zoned C-1 (35 foot height limit) and typified by a mix of 2 and 3-family wood frame structures.

Harvard University recently completed a study process with Agassiz neighbors, which resulted in the rezoning of the Hammond Street and Gorham Street edges (see map above) to provide a better physical transition with the neighborhood. The zoning change adopted by the City Council in Spring 2002 created a 100 foot transition overlay zone in which building heights were reduced (generally to 35 feet), minimum setbacks were increased, and breaks in building massing were required to create a more neighborhood "feel" at the edge.

The City's growth policy document, *Towards a Sustainable Future*, created in 1993, attempts to address similar issues.

Growth Policy #61 states that urban design standards should reflect the historic context in which change will occur while permitting design that is responsive to contemporary circumstances. For a neighborhood like Agassiz, which has a strong historic pattern, this is something that needs to be considered.

Growth Policy #62 describes the need to make better transitions across streets or property line to property line where there is a very high-density district next to a very low district.

During the study process the Agassiz Neighborhood Study Committee identified important urban design features present in the neighborhood. Features include transportation corridors, special points or nodes, landmarks, and neighbor-

hood edges. These features are an important part of neighborhood identity and attractiveness. In the Agassiz neighborhood these features should be enhanced or protected as in the case of certain historically significant landmarks. Where feasible, the urban design recommendations developed by the Study Committee should be applied to the specific features listed by the Study Committee. The features identified by the Study Committee in Agassiz include:

Transportation Corridors:

- Parking lots on Oxford Street
- Academy of Arts and Sciences
- Massachusetts Avenue to Oxford Street
- Lesley University Campus
- Behind Perkins Street on Harvard University campus to behind 29 Everett Street
- Parking lot of 28 Wendell Street to Massachusetts Avenue
- Star Market to Porter Square
- Somerville Avenue to Oxford Street and Massachusetts Avenue

Landmarks:

- Starbucks
- The Porter Exchange Building
- Palfrey House
- Baldwin School (formerly Agassiz School)

Nodes:

- Baldwin School
- Sacramento field
- Star Market

Neighborhood edges:

- Hammond Street
- Gorham Street
- Museum Street

Urban Design Recommendations

-
1. New buildings should be harmonious with existing neighborhood residential aesthetics.
 2. Pedestrian rights-of-way in the neighborhood should be preserved and maintained. Example: Francis Avenue to Museum Street.
 3. Utility companies should be encouraged to place utilities underground whenever feasible.
 4. The City should plant and maintain street trees.



Transportation

BACKGROUND

Increasingly, the impact of automobile traffic has become a pivotal planning issue, particularly in dense city neighborhoods such as Agassiz. Traffic volumes, parking availability, and travel mode of choice all affect the quality of life in the city. The key challenge is to enhance mobility while at the same time limiting the reliance on automobiles and their negative effect on quality of life in Cambridge. How can mobility needs be met without diminishing the essential qualities of Cambridge and its neighborhoods?

Auto traffic continues to increase, both from regional commuters traveling through Cambridge and from greater auto use within the city by both residents and employers. In the past two decades, Cambridge has become a regional employment center. Whereas in 1970 residents of Cambridge or abutting towns filled over 70% of local jobs, by 2000 that figure had fallen to 46%. More Cambridge residents, in turn, commute greater distances to jobs outside Cambridge.

It should also be noted that work trips are only 20% of all trips. According to the U.S. Census, the proportion of Cambridge employees driving alone—who may live in Cambridge or elsewhere—increased, from 43% in 1980 to 52% in 1990, while the percentage using car or van pools or transit declined. Meanwhile, Cambridge residents—who may work here or elsewhere—are more likely to use single occupancy vehicles: their number grew from 32% to 37% of the resident labor force between 1980 and 1990 and down to 35% in 2000.

Citywide Efforts to Address Parking, Traffic, and Transportation Concerns

The City of Cambridge has tried to be proactive in addressing transportation through its planning efforts. The City's Growth Policy Document assumes that any improvements to the roadway network should be aimed at redirecting traffic away from and reducing traffic speed on neighborhood streets. The City's Vehicle Trip Reduction Ordinance also directs the City to reduce the number of single occupant vehicle trips, expand non-automobile forms of transportation, and encourage new development near public transit nodes.

In November 1998, the City passed the Parking and Transportation Demand Management Ordinance (PTDM), which requires non-residential development that seeks to build parking to commit to a maximum percentage of employees, customers, and visitors that will arrive via single occupant vehicle. Developers must have plans for meeting these aggressive targets prior to obtaining a building permit and are required to monitor and report their performance annually. These plans are helping to reverse commuting trends in Cambridge by providing options to employees and customers and holding property owners responsible for the success of these measures.

One of the emerging processes that will affect not only transportation, but also buildings, land use, and waste management in the city is the Climate Protection Plan. This plan was adopted in December 2002 by the City Council. The plan

maps out options and a process to reduce Cambridge's contribution of greenhouse gases that cause climate change, or global warming. The City Council adopted a target of reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 20 percent below 1990 levels by the year 2010. In order to reach this target, various actions will be required that make our buildings and transportation more energy efficient, increase the use of renewable energy such as solar, encourage non-automobile modes of transportation, increase tree canopy cover, and reducing waste generation. In addition to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, these actions will also reduce conventional air pollution, reduce stormwater runoff, and improve the livability of the community.

One way of reducing reliance on automobiles is to make alternative forms of transportation safer, more accessible, and more enjoyable. Such is the goal of the City's ongoing Pedestrian and Bicycle Committees, which address a wide variety of projects and policies affecting those using Cambridge city streets.

Major Transportation Issues in Agassiz

Like many urban neighborhoods, Agassiz faces both negative and positive consequences in terms of transportation because of its location. Harvard and Lesley University draw commuters to the area, many of whom drive to get to work or class. These individuals can create increased through traffic on neighborhood streets, and can lead to non-residents parking on neighborhood streets. This pressure continues into the evening, as both Porter and Harvard Squares contain popular shops, restaurants, and bars.

However, Agassiz's location between Porter Square and Harvard Square gives it the advantage of a diversity of transit options. Both places have Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority (MBTA) Red Line subway stops, as well as many bus stops. Porter also has commuter line access. This rich transportation network gives residents access to a variety of transportation choices, while helping to encourage alternatives to single occupancy vehicle use within the City. Significant

planning projects are underway to improve both Harvard and Porter Square (described under "Completed and Ongoing Transportation Actions in Agassiz").

Completed and Ongoing Transportation Actions in Agassiz

During recent years, the City conducted major stormwater/ sewer separation work in Agassiz. While this construction project temporarily disrupted life in the neighborhood, it also provided a unique opportunity for roadway improvements. The majority of these improvements took place in the residential area east of Oxford Street. After receiving feedback at two meetings with the Agassiz Neighborhood Council, the City decided upon and completed the following actions:

- Repaved streets;
- Installed handicapped ramps;
- Improved crosswalk markings;
- Installed all-way stops;
- Added a contra-flow bicycle lane on Scott Street;
- Added a sidewalk on one side of Scott Street; and,
- Constructed curb extensions at the intersection of Scott and Beacon Street, as well as the intersection of Scott, Bryant, and Holden Street;

Additionally, smaller scale improvements have been completed at the request of residents. The City has:

- Moved the loading zone on North Oxford Street away from the intersection and closer to the retail establishment it serves;
- Installed playground warning signs at Sacramento Field; and,
- Replaced Resident Permit Parking and Street Cleaning signs throughout the neighborhood.

The City is also continuing to work with Harvard University to re-align the path through the Divinity School parking lot to better align with the intersection of Gorham and Museum Streets.

In April 2002, a committee of residents and business owners began meeting to discuss the Harvard Square Redesign Process. This Committee is charged with evaluating improvements for pedestrians, cyclists, and motorists. This includes a comprehensive evaluation of traffic, lighting, landscaping, signage, and plazas. The resulting improvements stand to benefit Agassiz by enhancing transportation and pedestrian experience at one of its major transit hubs.

A similar effort has begun in Porter Square. Funds were set-aside in the FY03 budget to complete design plans for the reconstruction of Porter Square. The City has re-convened a citizen advisory committee that last met in 1998 to meet over the next six months to consider final design details. The new design will focus on improving pedestrian and bicycle safety in the square, while also creating a new left turn from the Porter Square Shopping Center to Massachusetts Avenue southbound. The project also includes new sidewalks, a new plaza, landscaping and street furniture in many places. Construction is scheduled to begin in the summer of 2003, along with sewer separation work.

Study Committee Transportation Discussion

An area of primary concern among Committee members is the experience of pedestrians. The neighborhood has many pedestrians, both residents and visitors. Pedestrians enjoy the varied complex of streets, the permeable campuses, the

various commercial activities situated on larger streets, and the ability to walk to Harvard and Porter Squares in minutes. The Committee believes these attributes of the neighborhood must be preserved and strengthened. Pedestrian activity fosters the interaction between neighbors, makes the neighborhood safer, is good for health and environment, yet has only a light impact on physical infrastructure. The Committee encourages actions that improve the pedestrian experience, especially pedestrian safety. The committee's pedestrian recommendations (some detailed in other sections) include aspects of traffic calming (see Transportation), permeability of university campuses (see Institutions), care and maintenance of sidewalks, and preservation of alternative paths (see Open Space).

The Committee encourages property owners, residents, university maintenance, and the City's Department of PublicWorks to care for and maintain sidewalks. These are citywide concerns as well as Agassiz neighborhood concerns. Sidewalks should be safe and inviting to all pedestrians, including parents pushing a stroller, an individual in a wheelchair, persons with impaired vision, and all others. To achieve these goals, sidewalks should be level, of sufficient width, in good repair, and unobstructed. The Committee recommends that the pothole hotline be extended to include unsafe sidewalk conditions. Obstructions include snow and ice, vegetation, and personal belongings.



Intersection of Cambridge and Quincy Streets, looking toward Agassiz



Transportation Recommendations

The Committee recommends that the City or the MBTA undertake the following actions to improve transportation in the Agassiz neighborhood. Any progress made to date on these recommendations is noted in *italicized* text.

Transportation Recommendations

1. Encourage non-automobile travel.
2. Encourage Harvard and Lesley Universities to implement intra-city transportation options for their communities.
3. Encourage the MBTA to institute a bus route from Porter Square to Kendall Square along Beacon St and Hampshire St. Although this is a natural transportation corridor, no public transport goes along the length of this route.
4. Support efforts to promote system-wide improvements in MBTA bus service. Example: Harvard Square to Coolidge Corner.
5. Encourage alternative fuel transportation.
6. Support efforts to implement urban ring transit system.
7. Implement traffic calming as neighborhood streets are resurfaced.
8. Promote safer pedestrian crossings at:
 - a. Massachusetts Avenue at Garfield Street. *The Traffic Department has installed "Yield to Pedestrian" signs and has upgraded the crosswalk to a 24-inch wide international/ zebra, Thermo-plastic-type. This location will be examined as a potential location for curb extensions during future roadway construction activity in this area.*
 - b. Oxford Street at Kirkland Street. The Committee supports Harvard's relocation of the shuttle stop to the Memorial Hall circular driveway.
 - c. The exit to the Science Center on Oxford Street. *Long-term plans for traffic calming include crosswalk improvements in this location.*
 - d. Kirkland Street at Irving Street. The existing crosswalk does not correspond to the one at Cambridge Street and Irving Street, disrupting a logical pedestrian route. Crosswalks should be on both sides of the street.
 - e. Kirkland Street at Holden Street. At present there is only a crosswalk on the west side of the street, not the east side. Crosswalks should be on both sides of the street.
 - f. The end of Holden Street to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences park entrances. *During a previous traffic calming project in this area, neighborhood residents determined that a crosswalk would not be appropriate at this location. However, the City will continue to evaluate methods for improving safety at this intersection.*
9. Make resident only parking at night on Oxford Street from Everett to Wendell.
10. Provide Zipcar spaces in Harvard and/ or Lesley parking lots.



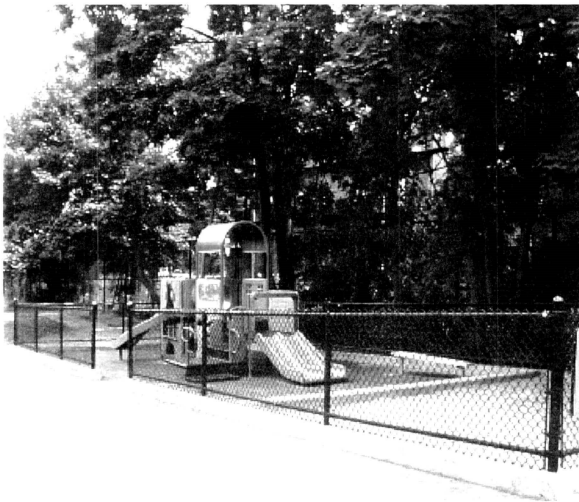
Open Space

Open space and recreational opportunities are becoming increasingly important for Cambridge residents. The amount, availability and accessibility of open space and recreational activities are significant factors in the quality of life of the City. The City is constantly exploring new ways of acquiring, creating and preserving open space in all of its neighborhoods. The city's urban, built-out character and density, along with a profitable real estate market and development pressure have made meeting open space demands challenging. This situation is especially evident in the Agassiz neighborhood. The Agassiz neighborhood's dense nature and small amount of land dedicated to public open space puts a relatively large amount of pressure on parks in the neighborhood. Based on the density and demographics of the neighborhood, the location of schools and existing open space, the Agassiz neighborhood was identified as

one of the areas most in need of open space in the Report of the Green Ribbon Open Space Committee, March 2000.

Parts of the Agassiz neighborhood are also in need of specific types of open space and parks. Porter Square is an area especially in need of more open space, having been identified in the Green Ribbon Report as needing tot lots, neighborhood parks, and community parks. Northern Agassiz was also identified as needing a community park. While tot lots and neighborhood parks are smaller and serve those living within walking distance, community parks in Cambridge range in size from 2.6 to 15 acres and serve more than one neighborhood. These parks have the capacity to sustain activities such as organized sports leagues and active recreation. Currently, Sacramento Field is the only park in the neighborhood able to support these activities.

Of the 492 acres of public open space in the city, the Agassiz neighborhood has only two facilities totaling 1.3 acres. The Agassiz neighborhood currently has only 0.25 acres of public open space available for every 1,000 residents. This is the lowest rate of open space in the city when compared to the other neighborhoods. The rate of open space per 1,000 residents age 14 and under and per 1,000 families below the poverty level are both below citywide averages but not as dramatically.



Tot lot at Sacramento Field

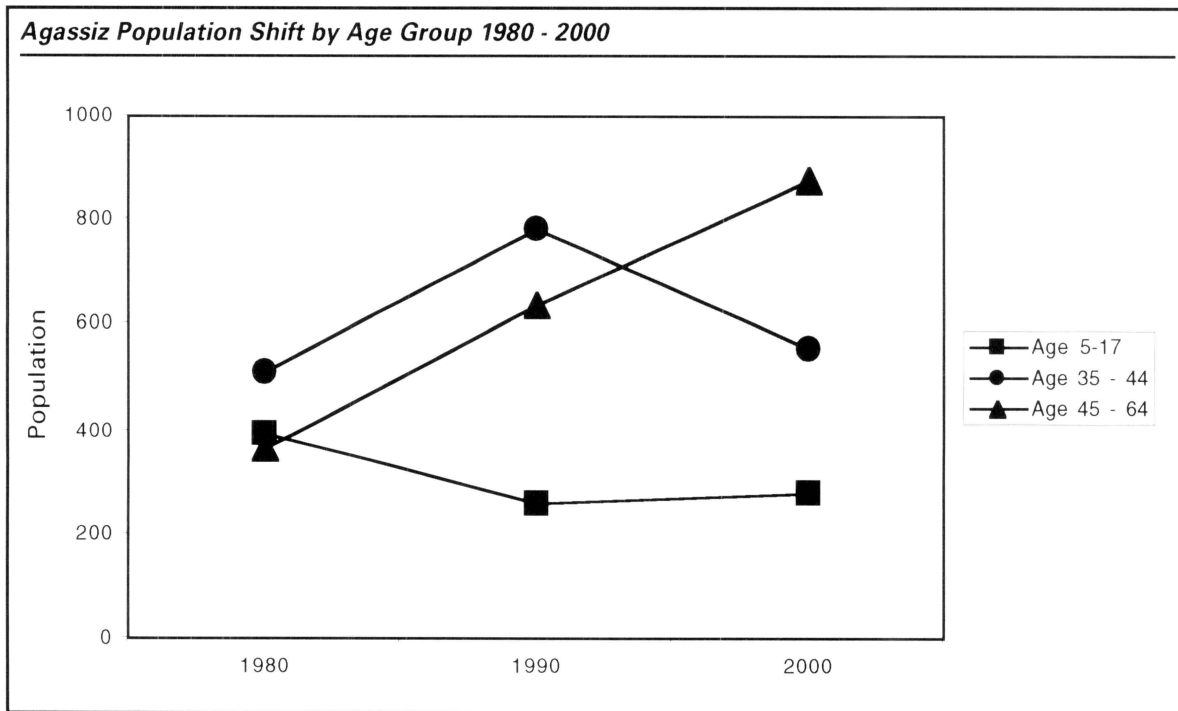
Open Space in the City of Cambridge and the Agassiz Neighborhood

| | Total Population | Public Open Space (acres) | Public Open Space Per 1000 Total Population | Population 0-14 Years Old | Public Open Space Per 1000 Population 0-14 Years Old | Families Below Poverty Level | Public Open Space Per 1000 Families Below Poverty Level |
|------------------|------------------|---------------------------|---|---------------------------|--|------------------------------|---|
| Cambridge | 95,802 | 492.8 | 5.13 | 11,512 | 42.18 | 1,273 | 387.12 |
| Agassiz | 5,100 | 1.3 | 0.25 | 347 | 3.75 | 7 | 185.71 |

Source: 1990 U.S. Census, Cambridge Open Space Plan, Revised 1999

Adult populations generally desire different types of open space and recreational uses and activities than school aged children. School aged and younger children use tot lots, playgrounds, and playing fields. Older residents are more likely to desire green space and other places to walk, sit, relax, and meet. The population of school-aged children (aged 5-17) in the Agassiz neighborhood

has decreased over the last 3 decades by 29.39%, while the adult population (aged 35 - 64) has increased in the neighborhood by 63% since 1980. In the Agassiz neighborhood the shift in population may result in increased demand for more passive open space and a wider variety of recreational uses.



Source: U.S. Census 2000

The two parks located in the Agassiz neighborhood are the Alden Park (0.1 acres) and Sacramento Field (1.2 acres).

Alden Park is a small park located across the street from the Maria Baldwin Elementary School (formerly the Agassiz School). The park consists of a playground and an adjacent small paved play area. Parks of this type are generally smaller in nature and intended to serve children under 12. Because it is directly across the street from the Baldwin School, the park must meet the needs of the student population during school hours.

Sacramento Field is located off of Sacramento Street and consists of a small soccer/ softball field, a play structure, and basketball court. The City identifies this park as a neighborhood park. These types of parks generally provide opportunities for both passive and active recreation for a variety of age groups. Because Sacramento Field is the only park of its type in the neighborhood it is a very valuable resource to residents.

Harvard University and Leslie University also own a large portion of land in the Agassiz neigh-

borhood. Some of this land is green and/or open space. However, these areas are owned by the respective institutions and are not necessarily accessible to the public or protected from other future uses. As these institutions expand, the Study Committee felt that the possibility of creating new publicly accessible open space should be explored.

Due to the developed character of the Agassiz neighborhood there appear at this time to be few opportunities to acquire new land for public open space. The Study Committee felt that as existing parcels in the neighborhood are redeveloped, the City of Cambridge should seek ways to encourage the creation of new open space. Existing open space facilities in the Agassiz neighborhood should be enhanced and maintained in order to meet the needs associated with increased use by residents. Furthermore, the city should explore new ways of working with the institutions in the neighborhood to create new open space.



Basketball courts at Sacramento Field



Open Space Recommendations

-
1. The City of Cambridge should work with the Massachusetts Bay Transportation Authority to explore the feasibility of constructing a park over the commuter rail line adjacent to the Porter Square T stop. If that fails, we recommend putting one of the many parking lots in the square underground and using the above ground area for a park. Porter Square is the location in Cambridge that is furthest from any parks, and creating a park over one of these locations is one of our most significant recommendations.
 2. The City of Cambridge should pursue the open space preservation funds available through the Community Preservation Act.
 3. The Committee recommends enhancing the recreational use, especially the passive recreational use, of Sacramento Field.
 - The City of Cambridge should consider renaming Sacramento Field to Sacramento Park.
 - New signage should be placed at the main entrance to Sacramento Field on Sacramento Street.
 - The recently re-opened second public access route to Sacramento Field/Park should be maintained.
 4. The City of Cambridge should encourage Harvard University to incorporate publicly accessible open space on Oxford Street/Divinity school property.
 5. The Committee requests that Harvard University landscape the existing parking lot on Oxford Street once underground parking is constructed.
 6. Encourage the closing of Oxford Street for community celebrations.
 7. Encourage prompt removal of all graffiti by property owners - including City street signs and U.S. mailboxes.
 8. Encourage the Agassiz Neighborhood Council to continue its tree-sponsorship program.
 9. Encourage residents to take advantage of the City's sidewalk tree program.



Institutional

Institutional uses in the Agassiz neighborhood are likely to have a significant effect on future development. Currently, there are two institutions of higher education located in the neighborhood, Harvard University, and Lesley University. These institutions comprise a substantial portion of the land in Agassiz. The buildings and land affiliated with the universities are privately owned and controlled. However, much of the open space is accessible to the public and the schools provide a number of cultural and recreational amenities to the neighborhood. The universities occasionally sponsor events that are open to the general public.

Harvard University

Historically, institutions have had a noticeable impact on the development of the Agassiz neighborhood. In 1817, the main development in the Agassiz neighborhood was Harvard University's Professors Row. This was a series of houses built by senior professors starting at the location of the current Science Center to Kirkland Street and out to Irving Street. Harvard University's North Yard (area north of Harvard Yard) is located in the Agassiz neighborhood. The North Yard area consists of a number of university-affiliated buildings as well as surface parking lots. The Harvard Peabody Museum and Natural History Museum are located in the North Yard and are visited frequently by elementary schools in Cambridge.

Based on the existing zoning in the area there is the potential for a significant amount of new

development, specifically along Hammond Street and in the existing parking lots located on Harvard University's land. This area is zoned C-3 residential, which allows single and two-family dwellings, townhouse dwellings, multifamily dwellings, institutional uses, hotels, a 120 foot height limit, (12 residential stories, or 8 to 9 research and development stories) and a floor to area ratio (FAR) of 3.0.

Recently, Harvard University initiated a study process with Agassiz neighbors, which resulted in the rezoning of the Hammond Street edge. The zoning change, adopted by the City Council in Spring 2002, created a 100 foot transition overlay zone in which building heights were reduced (generally to 35 feet), minimum setbacks were increased, and breaks in building massing were required to help protect the character of the neighborhood in the area.

Lesley University

Lesley University's Cambridge campus is located almost entirely in the Agassiz neighborhood. The school was first located at the corner of Everett and Oxford streets in the neighborhood in 1909, and was known as the Lesley Normal School. Today, Lesley University has about 8,000 students, however, most of the student body is located on campuses outside of Cambridge. The Lesley University campus in Cambridge consists of a number of Victorian Houses, as well as larger buildings for classrooms, offices, and dormitories. Most of the University's main campus is located on Everett, Mellen, Sacramento, and Wendell

Streets. In 1994, the university acquired the Porter Exchange building on Massachusetts Avenue, which features retail, administrative offices, and classrooms.

Study Committee Discussion

The Agassiz neighborhood has one of the highest percentages of residents living in group quarters. According to 2000 U.S. Census data the Agassiz neighborhood consisted of 1,572 residents in group quarters or 30% of the neighborhood population. This is virtually all (98.7%) due to

dormitories and apartments associated with Harvard and Lesley Universities.

The Study Committee sought to address a number of issues regarding the institutions located in Agassiz. Of particular concern were the future development plans of both universities. The Committee also discussed housing for university employees, landscaping on the campuses and along campus edges, and community involvement in university events and programs.



Lesley University, 63-69 Oxford Street

Institutional Recommendations

1. In conjunction with their residential projects, Harvard and Lesley should consider including housing for their hourly-wage employees.
2. Harvard and Lesley should inform Cambridge residents of upcoming events open to the public.

Lesley University

1. The University should improve the landscaping at the Oxford Street side of 47 Oxford Street.
2. Lesley should work with a neighborhood committee to discuss development issues with Agassiz.

Harvard University

Note that Harvard University's proposals for the North Yard area, including the rezoning of the Hammond Street edge, were made public after the neighborhood study process for the Agassiz neighborhood was nearly complete. While this report recognizes the North Yard proposals, and provides recommendations regarding Harvard University, it does not offer an exhaustive review and analysis of the proposals or their effects on the neighborhood.

1. As the University considers the development of the North Yard, the Committee recommends the formation of a committee to work with Harvard on the issues of:
 - Density, height and open space of proposed development;
 - Construction impacts;
 - Cumulative impact of traffic;
 - Preserving neighborhood character and scale;

- Preserving as much public use and space open to public use as possible;
- Exploring options to reduce the traffic from the proposed new Harvard garage exiting onto Oxford Street, including:

1. Making Everett two-way to accommodate ingress and egress
2. Making Divinity Way an entrance or exit for garage traffic
3. Using Francis/Bryant Street as entrance or exit for garage traffic
4. Restricting parking on Oxford St between Everett and Wendell at peak vehicle hours.

2. The local Harvard museums should be requested to offer free admission to Cambridge residents and school groups.
3. The Committee supports Harvard's objective to extend the pattern of publicly accessible quadrangles to the neighborhood boundaries.
4. The City of Cambridge should encourage Harvard University to incorporate publicly accessible open space on Oxford Street/Divinity school property.
5. The Committee requests that Harvard University landscape the existing parking lot on Oxford Street once underground parking is constructed.
6. The Committee recommends that Harvard move the existing shuttle bus location, as both shuttle buses and tour buses clog the Oxford and Kirkland Streets intersection.

7. All the gates at the Academy of Arts and Sciences should remain open during posted hours.

8. Harvard Law School should involve the neighborhood early in its planning process.



Harvard University, Kirkland and Quincy Streets

Economic Development

The City of Cambridge works to promote and maintain a healthy economic environment, through business support and job creation. A supportive business climate is essential to maintaining high employment levels in the city as well as attracting new companies. The City of Cambridge is a regional employment center with approximately 4,000 businesses (excluding self-employed persons with no employees) and over 100,000 jobs. Local businesses provide many goods and services desired by residents. The tax revenue generated by companies enables the City to provide municipal services to residents that enhance the overall quality of life. Furthermore, because two thirds of the city's property taxes are paid by businesses, the tax burden placed on residents is eased.

Throughout the 1990s the economy of Cambridge continued to shift from a former manufacturing base to high tech, institutional, research, and service based industries. In addition, the presence of a relatively large number of top institutions in the region, including Harvard University and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, has helped to create an entrepreneurial environment for start-up firms and ventures. This atmosphere is favorable to businesses of all sizes associated with high tech research and products, including software, medical, and biotech companies.

Other factors that enhance the overall business climate and attractiveness of Cambridge include the availability of capital from numerous banks, investors, and venture capitalists; the

quality of life in the city; a pedestrian scale; a diverse population; relatively low crime; and entertainment, cultural and recreational opportunities.

Porter Square is located on Massachusetts Avenue on the borders of the Agassiz neighborhood, Neighborhood 9, and North Cambridge and is the primary commercial district in the Agassiz neighborhood. Within Porter Square are a number of retail, commercial, and educational establishments. There are several types of commercial uses of varying size and specialty in an outdoor shopping center; a medium sized mixed-use commercial and educational center; and a relatively small indoor shopping center. In addition, there are various retail, restaurant, and office uses along Massachusetts Avenue in the area. In addition to being a source of jobs, the businesses present in Porter Square provide goods and services to the Agassiz neighborhood as well as other areas of Cambridge, and to some extent the region.

There appear to be very limited opportunities for the addition or expansion of commercial uses in the Agassiz neighborhood. Much like the rest of the city, the Agassiz neighborhood has a small supply of available commercial real estate. Any new commercial development will most likely occur as a result of redevelopment or new establishments replacing existing ones, rather than any extensive new construction.

Educational institutions in the neighborhood are also a significant source of employment for Agassiz residents. Harvard University and Lesley University are located within the neighborhood

and almost 40% of the workforce in the Agassiz neighborhood is employed in education.

The education and skill levels of the labor force in the Agassiz neighborhood appear to be suited to meet the demands of new industries in Cambridge. Residents in the Agassiz neighbor-

hood over the age of 25 have a higher level of education than the city as a whole. The percentage of residents in the Agassiz neighborhood with a college degree is 83.4% while the percentage of city residents with a college degree is 54.2%.

Education Level of Cambridge Residents 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | 1990 | Change | (%) Change | (%) of 1980 City Population | (%) of 1990 City Population |
|---|---------------|---------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Cambridge (25yrs and older) | 58,013 | 63,471 | 5458 | 9.4% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Less than 9 th grade | 8,393 | 4,501 | -3892 | -46.4% | 14.5% | 7.1% |
| Some high school | 5,428 | 5,430 | 2 | 0.0% | 9.4% | 8.6% |
| High school graduate or equivalent | 12,280 | 10,057 | -2223 | -18.1% | 21.2% | 15.8% |
| Some college, or Associate Degree | 6,911 | 9,098 | 2187 | 31.6% | 11.9% | 14.3% |
| Bachelor Degree or Graduate/Professional Degree | 25,001 | 34,385 | 9384 | 37.5% | 43.1% | 54.2% |

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, UDAP Analysis of Cambridge Neighborhoods, 1990

Education Level of Agassiz Neighborhood Residents 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | 1990 | Total Change | (%) Change | As (%) of 1980 Neighborhood Population | As (%) of 1990 Neighborhood Population |
|---|--------------|--------------|-----------------|---------------|---|---|
| Agassiz (25yrs and older) | 3,063 | 3,248 | 185 | 6.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Less than 9 th grade | 63 | 26 | -37 | -58.7% | 2.1% | 0.8% |
| Some high school | 83 | 52 | -31 | -37.3% | 2.7% | 1.6% |
| High School graduate or equivalent | 273 | 181 | -92 | -33.7% | 8.9% | 5.6% |
| Some college, or Associate Degree | 282 | 279 | -3 | -1.1% | 9.2% | 8.6% |
| Bachelor Degree or Graduate/Professional Degree | 2,362 | 2,710 | 348 | 14.7% | 77.1% | 83.4% |

Source: U. S. Census Bureau, UDAP Analysis of Cambridge Neighborhoods, 1990

Agassiz Neighborhood Employment by Occupation 1980 and 1990 (top categories)

| | 1980 | 1990 | Total Change | (%) Change | As (%) of 1980 Neighborhood Population | As (%) of 1990 Neighborhood Population |
|-------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--|--|
| Total Employees | 2,697 | 2,665 | -32 | -1.2% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Exec/Admin/Managerial | 366 | 446 | 80 | 21.9% | 13.6% | 16.7% |
| Professional/Specialty | 1,312 | 1,217 | -95 | -7.2% | 48.6% | 45.7% |
| Technical/Tech. Support | 156 | 267 | 111 | 71.2% | 5.8% | 10.0% |
| Sales | 163 | 170 | 7 | 4.3% | 6.0% | 6.4% |
| Admin. Support/Clerical | 298 | 261 | -37 | -12.4% | 11.0% | 9.8% |

Source: 1990 U. S. Census Bureau, UDAP Analysis of Cambridge Neighborhoods, 1990.

Agassiz Neighborhood Employment by Industry 1980 and 1990 (top categories)

| | 1980 | 1990 | Total Change | (%) Change | As (%) of 1980 Neighborhood Population | As (%) of 1990 Neighborhood Population |
|-----------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--|--|
| Total Employees | 2,697 | 2,665 | -32 | -1.2% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Wholesale/Retail Trade | 292 | 233 | -59 | -20.2% | 10.8% | 8.7% |
| Person/Enter't/Rec.Services | 98 | 151 | 53 | 54.1% | 3.6% | 5.7% |
| Health Services | 264 | 222 | -42 | -15.9% | 9.8% | 8.3% |
| Education | 1,080 | 1,006 | -74 | -6.9% | 40.0% | 37.7% |
| Other Prof/Related Services | 347 | 439 | 92 | 26.5% | 12.9% | 16.5% |

Source: 1990 U. S. Census Bureau, UDAP Analysis of Cambridge Neighborhoods, 1990.

According to the 1990 US Census, Agassiz ranks second in the City in terms of median family income (\$55,407 versus \$39,990 for the City as a whole). Only 4.0% of the Agassiz civilian workforce was unemployed in 1990 (compared to 5.2% of the City as a whole). As the above tables indicate most residents in the Agassiz neighbor-

hood are employed in professional and specialty occupations (46%) compared to 31% for the City of Cambridge (U.S. Census 1990). In 1990 the industry that employed the largest number of Agassiz residents was education (37.7%), which in contrast employed 26.2% of all city residents.

City of Cambridge Labor Force 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | 1990 | Total Change | (%) Change | As (%) of Total 1980 Neighborhood Population | As (%) of Total 1990 Neighborhood Population |
|-------------------------------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|--|--|
| Cambridge (16 yrs. or older) | 82,461 | 83,720 | 1259 | 1.5% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Civilian Labor Force | 52,014 | 57,038 | 5024 | 9.7% | 63.1% | 68.1% |
| Unemployed | 2,332 | 2,941 | 609 | 26.1% | 4.5% | 5.2% |

Source: 1990 U. S. Census Bureau, UDAP Analysis of Cambridge Neighborhoods, 1990.

Agassiz Neighborhood Labor Force 1980 and 1990

| | 1980 | 1990 | Total Change | (%) Change | As (%) of Total 1980 Neighborhood Population | As (%) of Total 1990 Neighborhood Population |
|-----------------------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|-----------------|--|--|
| Agassiz (16 yrs. or older) | 4,884 | 4,715 | -169 | -3.5pop% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Civilian Labor Force | 2,760 | 2,776 | 16 | 0.6% | 56.5% | 58.9% |
| Unemployed | 63 | 111 | 48 | 76.2% | 2.3% | 4.0% |

Source: 1990 U. S. Census Bureau, UDAP Analysis of Cambridge Neighborhoods, 1990.

The Agassiz Study Committee felt that diverse types of businesses should be encouraged in the

neighborhood, especially establishments for which there are a need in the neighborhood.

Economic Development Recommendations

1. The Committee encourages the creation of pedestrian-friendly, neighborhood-oriented uses of commercial spaces along Massachusetts Avenue and throughout the Agassiz neighborhood.
2. The City should develop a formalized plan to communicate with the Agassiz Neighborhood

Council about types of new businesses that would be useful in the neighborhood. Example: Currently, a bakery is needed in the neighborhood.

3. The Committee supports Harvard's established practice of reduced rents to diverse retail tenants.



Porter Exchange Building, 1815 Massachusetts Avenue

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C O N C L U S I O N



Alden Park



Conclusion

The goal of the Agassiz Neighborhood Study is consistent with that of all neighborhood studies: to provide a framework for incorporating local knowledge and concerns into the decision-making process of City officials, staff, and boards charged with long-term planning. While these decision-makers must balance a wide variety of interests, considerations, and constraints, it is hoped that the preceding study can provide clear guidance for the issues of concern in the Agassiz neighborhood.

In many ways, the concerns reflected in the recommendations of the Agassiz Study Committee are similar to those of Cambridge residents generally. Both within the Agassiz neighborhood and throughout the city, people have indicated the need for greater availability and affordability of housing, effective regulation of development, management of traffic and parking pressures,

improvement and expansion of open spaces, and strengthening neighborhood businesses. However, by looking at these issues of broader concern on the neighborhood level, the Agassiz Study Committee has developed detailed descriptions, recommendations, and proposed actions to help inform specific responses to complicated issues affecting quality of life.

In keeping with the spirit of the recently developed policy of updating neighborhood studies, this report should be viewed as a living document that will evolve as the result of both intentional actions and unexpected circumstances. Specifically, it is anticipated that the recommendations and proposed actions of the Agassiz Neighborhood Study will be reviewed and updated periodically.



Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study

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Summary, Recommendations and Action Plan



City of Cambridge ▪ *Community Development Department*

March 2003

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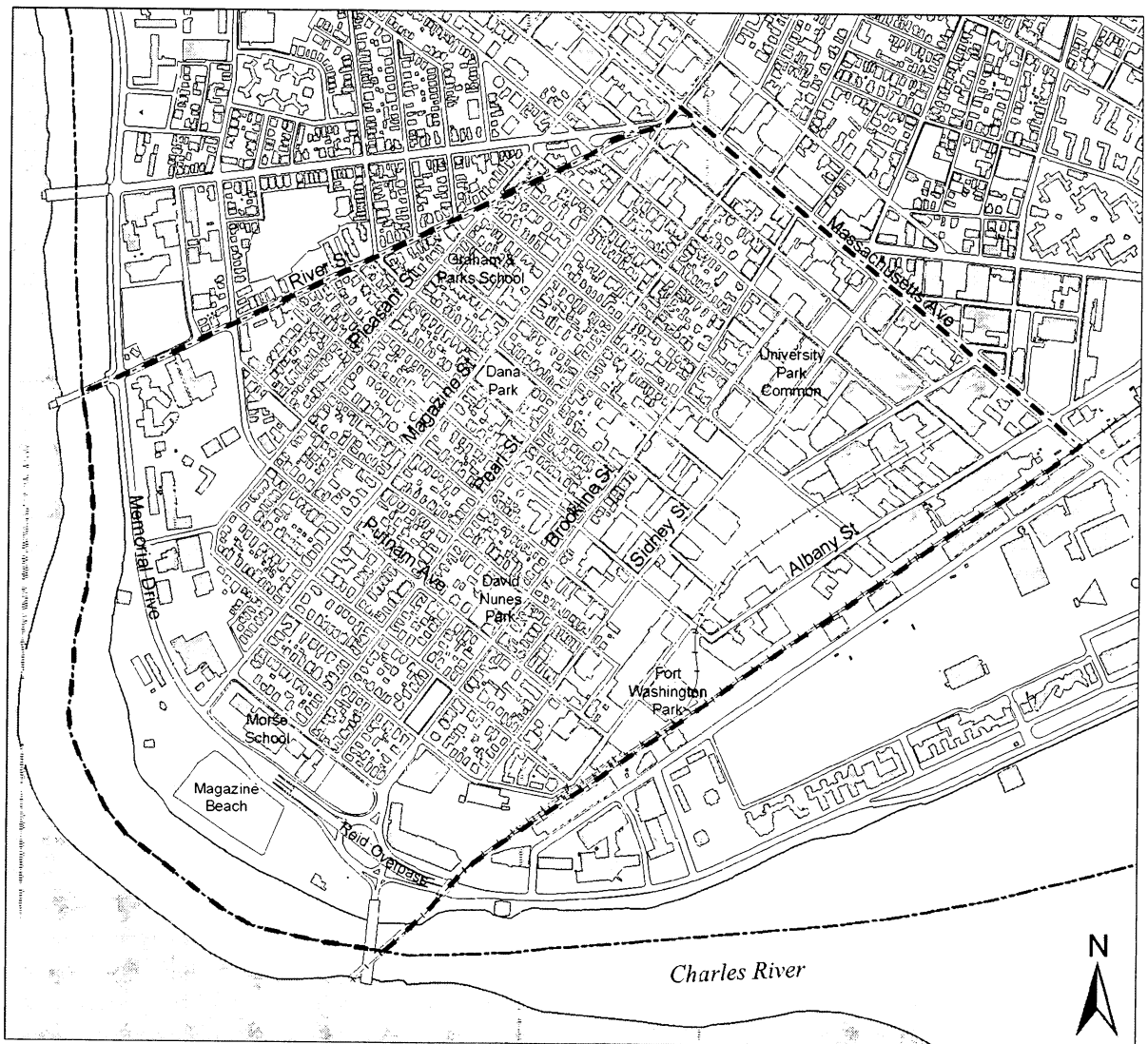
Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study

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Summary



*City of Cambridge
Cambridgeport Neighborhood Boundaries*



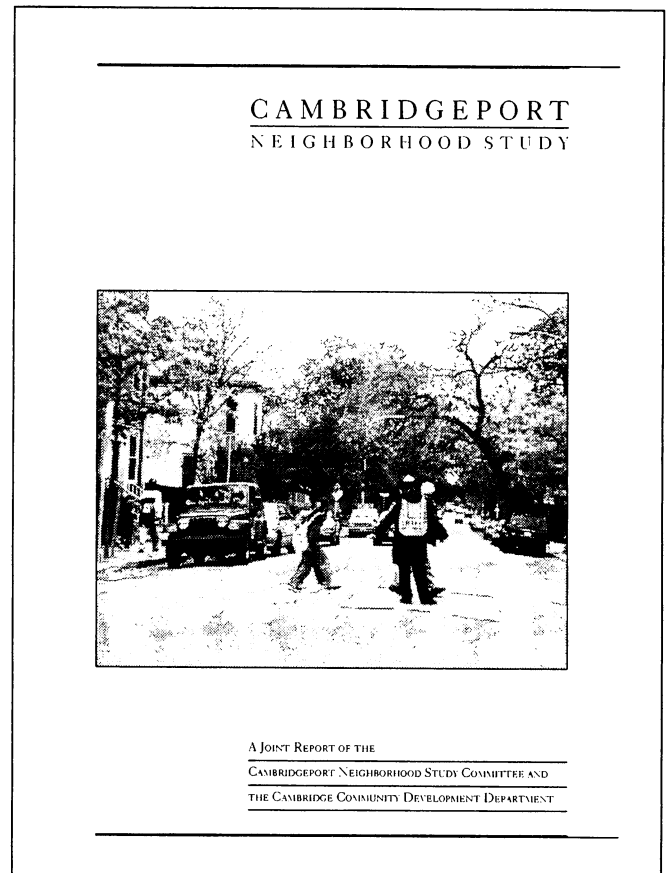
Neighborhood Studies

During the 1980s, the City of Cambridge (along with the surrounding region), witnessed a wave of commercial growth and economic development. This growth expanded the City's tax base and created new jobs and opportunities for residents. While many residents welcomed this prosperity, it also brought about an increasing awareness of issues that are of concern to neighborhood residents: increased building density, traffic congestion and parking problems, the rising cost of housing, inadequate open space, and the threat to neighborhood character and quality of life.

Since 1988, the Community Development Department (CDD), through its neighborhood planning program, has conducted comprehensive studies in ten of the city's neighborhoods. The goal of the neighborhood studies is to analyze each neighborhood in terms of assets and needs, and provide recommendations to address residents' concerns. The recommendations from each study were formed with the guidance of an appointed study committee and deal with issues such as: traffic and parking; housing affordability and homeownership; neighborhood commercial areas and employment; park maintenance; and areas that are inappropriately zoned and may need rezoning. The recommendations have been, where appropriate, incorporated into the work programs and budgets of City departments for implementation.

Neighborhood Study Updates

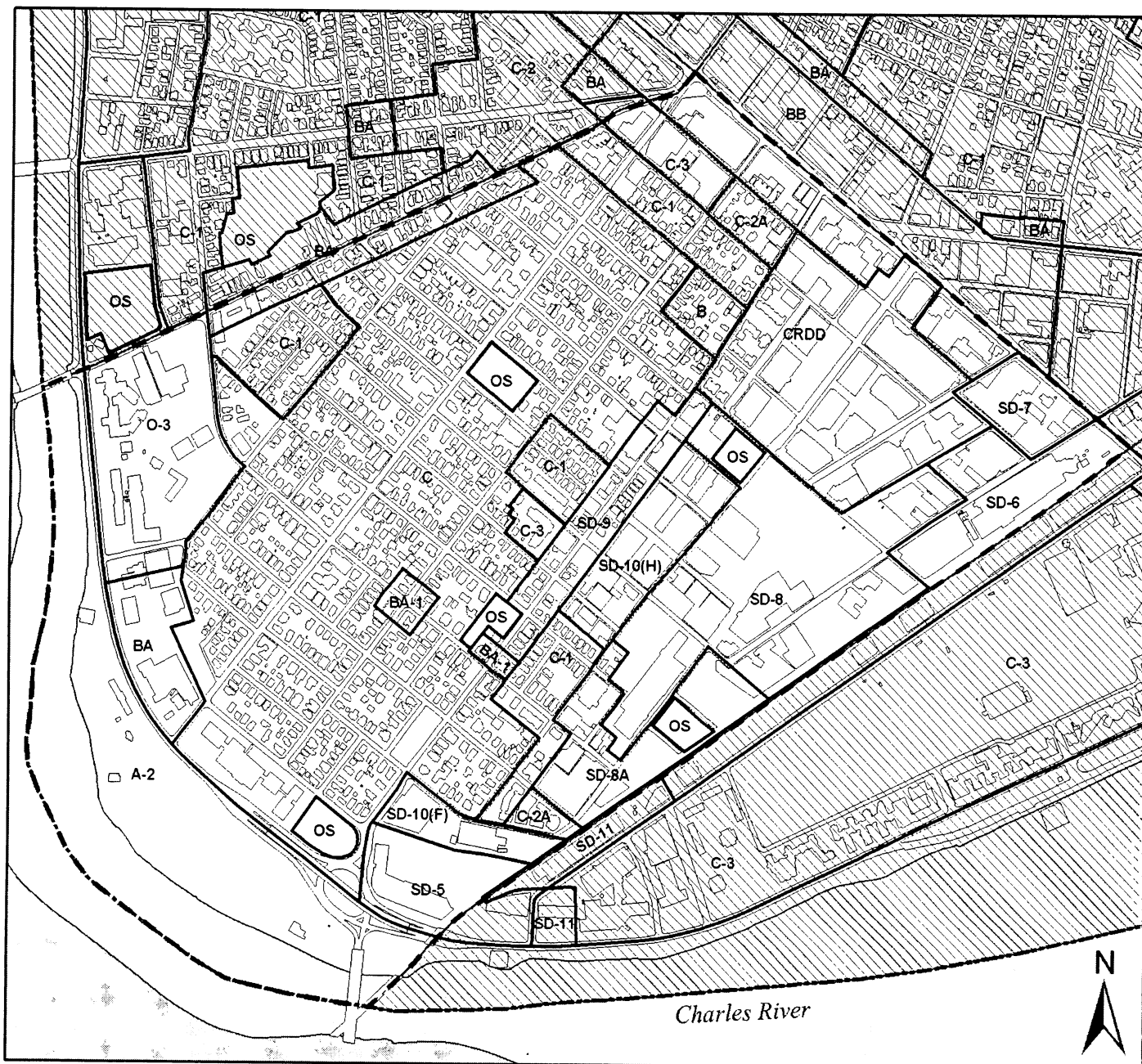
To ensure that the neighborhood studies remain current and useful, each study is updated to review changed circumstances such as demographics, housing conditions, the economic situation, desires of residents, city policies and programs, and needed actions. As part of the neighborhood study update process community members are invited to comment on the original study recommendations, suggest new items, and prioritize issues. In conjunction with the community component of the update process, city staff created an action plan based on the progress of the original recommendations as well as new issues that were identified by residents. The result is a Neighborhood Study Update with Summary, Recommendations and Action Plan, which is made available to the public, City Council members, and city staff. The Community Development Department intends to update each neighborhood study and action plan approximately every three to five years.



Cambridgeport Study Update Summary, Recommendations, and Action Plan

The Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Committee met for 24 months from February 1997 to January 1999. The Neighborhood Study process included a series of four neighborhood forums to discuss the study topic areas. The committee developed specific recommendations for the neighborhood regarding: Housing, Land Use and Zoning, Urban Design, Transportation, Open Space and Economic Development. The completed Study was published in May 2000. Since that time a number of the recommendations have been completed, are underway, remain as future action items for the city, or call for no action at this time.

The Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Update Summary, Recommendations, and Action Plan 2003, is a report back to residents and city staff on the recommendations made by the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Committee in the original study, the progress to date on the actions identified by the city, and an action plan for the future. The Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Update process consisted of a series of community meetings including a specific meeting on traffic and transportation issues in the neighborhood. The report takes into account new recommendations from



Cambridgeport Zoning Map

public meetings as well as, demographic shifts, updated housing and economic data, and new city policies and programs.

History of the Cambridgeport Neighborhood

Since the founding of the City of Cambridge in 1630 up until the late 18th century, the Cambridgeport neighborhood was primarily agricultural. The construction of the West Boston Bridge (where the Longfellow Bridge now stands) in 1793 created new commercial opportunities for the area including the possibility of a port, giving the neighborhood its name. Although a port was never built in the area, the neighborhood developed as a residential suburb and was an important link between Boston and the farming communities of Middlesex County. It was the industrial

and residential growth of the second half of the 19th century, however, that gave Cambridgeport much of the form and character prevalent today. Since World War II, the expansion of MIT and the related redevelopment of Kendall Square and University Park have brought profound changes to the eastern part of the district, as heavy industry and manufacturing facilities continue to be replaced by office and laboratory space.

Cambridgeport Today

The original Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study utilized demographic data from the 1990 U.S. Census. As the update process began, a portion of U.S. Census data for the year 2000 was becoming available. Where available, 2000 U.S. Census data is used. The table above compares some of the 2000 U.S. Census data

Demographic Information for Cambridgeport and the City of Cambridge, 1990 and 2000

| | Cambridgeport | | | City of Cambridge | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|--------|----------|-------------------|---------|----------|
| | 1990 | 2000 | % Change | 1990 | 2000 | % Change |
| Total Population | 9,100 | 10,052 | 10.5% | 95,802 | 101,355 | 5.8% |
| Area | 0.53 square miles | | | 6.36 square miles | | |
| Persons per sq mile | 17,170 | 18,966 | 10.5% | 15,063 | 15,936 | 5.8% |
| Households | 4,203 | 4,598 | 9.4% | 39,337 | 42,615 | 8.3% |
| Family Households | 1,744 | 1,787 | 2.5% | 17,648 | 17,595 | -0.3% |
| Non-Family Households | 2,459 | 2,811 | 14.3% | 21,689 | 25,020 | 15.4% |
| Housing units | 4,430 | 4,760 | 7.4% | 41,979 | 44,725 | 6.5% |
| Owner-Occupied | 1,070 | 1,266 | 18.3% | 11,959 | 13,760 | 15.1% |
| Renter-Occupied | 3,107 | 3,332 | 7.2% | 27,446 | 28,855 | 5.1% |
| Vacant | 253 | 162 | -36.0% | 2,574 | 2,110 | -18.0% |

Source: U.S. Census 1990, U.S. Census 2000, and City of Cambridge Community Development Department

available at the neighborhood and municipal levels with data from the 1990 Census. The population of Cambridgeport increased by over 10% between 1990 and 2000, twice the rate of the City of Cambridge. During the same period, the number of households and housing units increased by comparable rates for the City and the Cambridgeport neighborhood. In addition to new demographic data available with the 2000 U.S. Census, there have been a number of significant new initiatives and projects that have taken place in Cambridgeport and the City as a whole since the completion of the original Cambridgeport neighborhood study. Some of the new programs that directly affect the Cambridgeport neighborhood are summarized below.

In 2001 the City of Cambridge adopted a **Citywide Rezoning Petition** that included significant changes to the city's zoning ordinance. Among the changes is a new public process for the review of new developments greater than 50,000 square feet throughout the city, to involve the community and provide guidelines that encourage built character consistent with the neighborhood. Similar standards are applied in an administrative review for projects between 20,000 and 50,000 square feet.

In November of 2001, Cambridge voters approved the **Community Preservation Act (CPA)**. The CPA will make a total of 13.5 million local and state dollars available during FY2002 and FY2003 for affordable housing, open space, and historic preservation in Cambridge. An appointed committee, which heard testimony at a public hearing in April of 2002, determined that 80% of the funds from the CPA should be devoted to the creation of affordable housing, while 10% should be devoted to open space and historic preservation respectively.

During the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study process, City Council approved an **Inclusionary Zoning** amendment to the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance, which sets aside 15% of units in new housing developments as affordable to middle and low income residents and families. The City has also recently begun a **Middle Income Homebuyer Assistance Program**. The program provides grants or low interest loans to Cambridge residents with incomes up to 120% of the area median to purchase a home in the City.

In the fall of 1999, the City and the Metropolitan District Commission (MDC) reached an agreement to **renovate Magazine Beach** and facilities. The City has agreed to provide funding for the renovations and maintenance of the facility. In return, the MDC agreed to grant Cambridge youth athletic teams priority in scheduling of games. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2003. The **Green Ribbon Open Space**



Committee produced a report in March of 2000, which outlined criteria established for the purchase of land to be used as open space. Since the original study, the City has designated more than \$2 million in funds towards the purchase of open space.

In 2002, the design plans for the **Cambridgeport Roadways Project** were completed. Yearly traffic monitoring is also included as part of the project, which is expected to go into construction in the spring of 2003. The **EZ Ride Shuttle** has recently been established and travels between North Station, Kendall Square, and Cambridgeport including stops on Sidney Street at University Park; and, as a result of interest expressed in one of the update public meetings, Sidney and Erie Streets; and Brookline and Erie Streets. This service will be used to guide further efforts to provide

publicly accessible shuttle services.

The City along with surrounding communities, MassHighway, trucking associations, the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) and MAPC completed a **Regional Truck Study** in the summer of 2002. Cambridge City Council has also recommended changing the existing through-truck ordinance. As of fall 2002, the City's Ordinance Committee and Planning Board are discussing the issue.

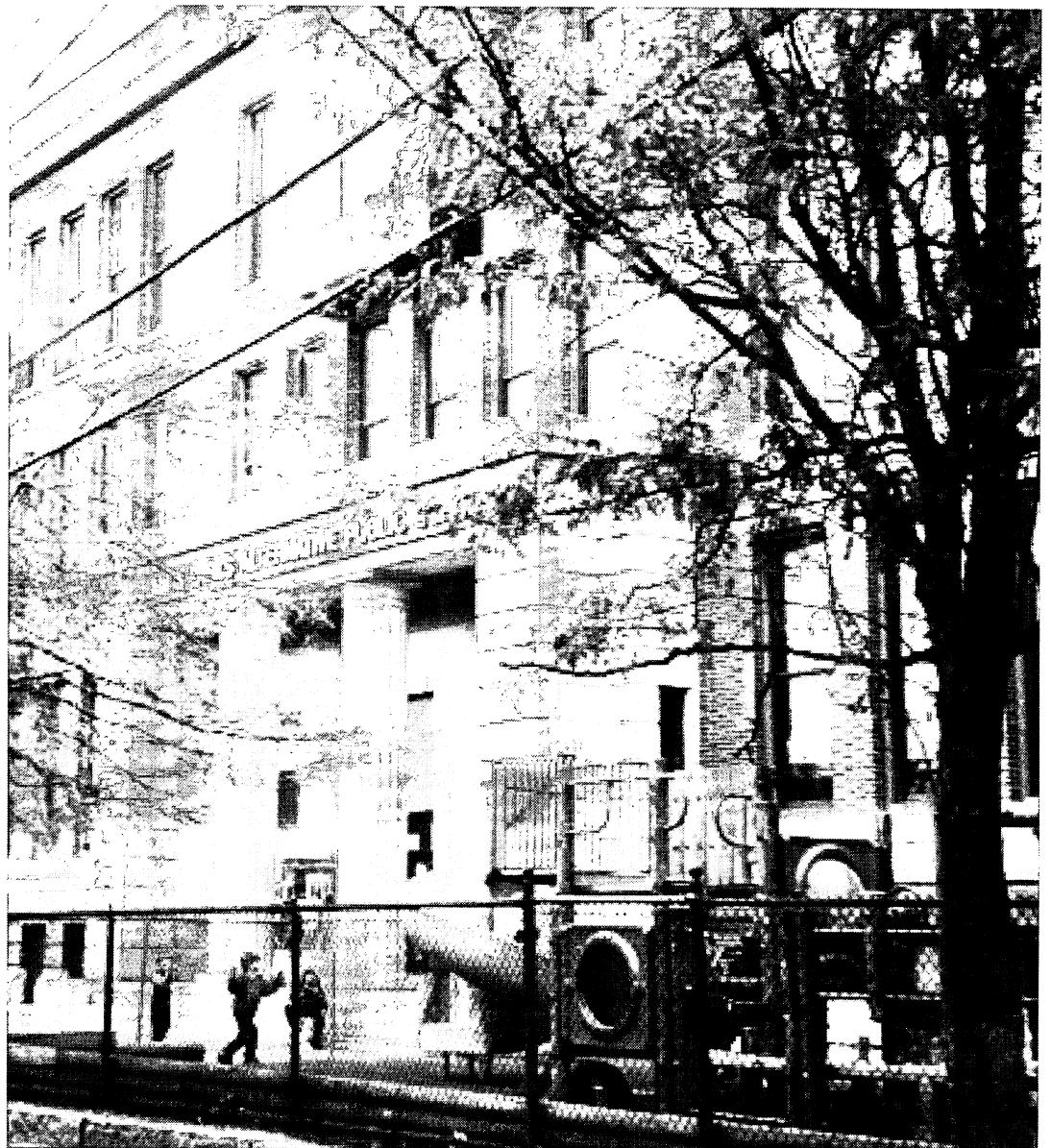
All of the changes noted above are incorporated into the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Update and are described in greater detail throughout the following report where applicable. These changes along with the original recommendations and progress to date provide the framework for the Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study Update, Recommendations, and Action Plan.



Cambridgeport Neighborhood Study

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Recommendations and Action Plan



ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| ED1 | Maintain the current mix of businesses in the neighborhood. Survey current and potential small business owners regarding their challenges and needs. | See progress to date (Med range) | NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: As of March 2003, a women and minority owned business survey has been conducted and a directory published. |
| ED2 | <p>Help make business areas in Cambridgeport more attractive and more business friendly</p> <p>a) Facade improvement; like Cambridge Street and Central Square</p> <p>b) Relaxation of parking limits during business hours</p> <p>c) Rotate parking so it is residential use at night and business use in daytime</p> | <p>a) Continue to implement facade improvement in Cambridgeport</p> <p>b) See progress to date</p> <p>c) See progress to date</p> | <p>a) UNDERWAY: The facade program is being offered citywide. The first citywide facade workshop took place on July 30th 2002.</p> <p>b) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: The purpose of time limits at metered spaces is to allow many customers to use them within a day. Without the time limits there is an increased risk of business owners and employees monopolizing the spaces.</p> <p>c) UNDERWAY: This is done where appropriate (i.e. when metered spaces are not needed for restaurants, and certain other commercial/retail activities at night).</p> |
| ED3 | Encourage nodes of small commercial use in significant new developments (as in the new MIT dorms along Pacific Street). Developments in these nodes are encouraged to be of a character similar to street corner storefronts in the rest of the neighborhood. | See progress to date (Short to med range) | <p>NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: As adopted in the Citywide Rezoning Petition, Project Review guidelines for projects >50,000 square feet encourage street level retail and character consistent with neighborhood.</p> <p>The MIT graduate dorm at Sidney and Pacific streets, has come on line with 346,000 square feet of housing with some accessory uses on the first floor. The loading and parking area at the rear of the building was designed to enhance the pedestrian environment by relocating the driveway and decreasing the size of the loading area. The Sidney and Pacific corner was designed to ensure good sight lines. The architecture was required to reflect the residential buildings in the area rather than the office building. There are .5 bike racks per dormitory bed. This building utilized transferred development potential from the abutting Pacific Street Park.</p> <p>MIT, as the tenant of the building, will maintain the T subsidies, and report annually on the commuting patterns of their population.</p> <p>There are intersections at Mass Ave, which are being improved, and MIT is cooperating with the work.</p> |

KEY

Future Action Items are highlighted in italics

PROPOSED ACTION - Timeframe

Short Range - less than 2 yrs; **Medium Range** - 2-6 yrs; **Long Range** - 6-10 yrs

HOUSING

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|--|--|---|
| H1 | <p>The city should require that the all large-scale residential and mixed-use developments in Cambridgeport, similar to 680 Memorial Drive (Polaroid site) and 664 Massachusetts Ave. (Holmes site), provide at least 25% of their units as affordable. These affordable units should be for a mixture of low-income and moderate-income tenants. In recognition of the fact that trade-offs, may be necessary for developers to offset the cost of affordable units, the committee would support density bonuses.</p> | <p>See progress to date (Med range)</p> | <p>NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: During the Cambridgeport neighborhood study process the City Council approved a 15% inclusionary zoning amendment to the Cambridge Zoning Ordinance. Both the Holmes and Polaroid projects include 15% affordable units. 103 units are completed or under covenant under this program. A recent initiative with Harvard University provides money for a moderate income (\$78,000 for family of four) pilot homeownership program. The City has also recently begun a Middle Income Homebuyer Assistance Program. The program provides grants or low interest loans to Cambridge residents with incomes up to 120% of the area median to purchase a home in the City.</p> |
| H2 | <p>The Study Committee believes that the housing developments proposed in Cambridgeport should reflect the neighborhood in terms of the current tenure, e.g. homeowners and renters. This mix of types of tenures should be required in new developments so that it reflects the current diversity of the surrounding Cambridgeport neighborhood.</p> | <p>See progress to date (Short to med range)</p> | <p>UNDERWAY: City sponsored housing developments include homeownership and rental, reflecting available funds. The Inclusionary Zoning Ordinance requires the same type of affordable unit in terms of tenure as the market rate units in the proposed development.</p> |
| H3 | <p>The City should use its municipal bond authority to raise a large capital pool for the development of low and moderate-income residential housing in Cambridgeport. The City should also develop better relationships with private lending organizations in order to help provide financing for new housing in Cambridge</p> | <p>See progress to date (Med range)</p> | <p>COMPLETE AND ONGOING: Since the end of rent control, the City has contributed over \$27 million to affordable housing through FY 2002, and actively seeks new relationships with lenders for financing. In November of 2001, Cambridge voters approved the Community Preservation Act (CPA). The CPA will make a total of 13.5 million local and state dollars available during FY2002 and FY2003 for affordable housing, open space, and historic preservation in Cambridge. An appointed committee, which heard testimony given at a public hearing in April of 2002, determined that the need for and cost of creating affordable housing was of priority concern in Cambridge. It therefore determined that 80% of the funds from the CPA should be devoted to the creation of affordable housing, while 10% should be devoted to open space and historic preservation respectively.</p> |

KEY

Future Action Items are highlighted in italics

PROPOSED ACTION - Timeframe

Short Range - less than 2 yrs; **Medium Range** - 2-6 yrs; **Long Range** - 6-10 yrs

HOUSING - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|-------------------------------|--|---|---|
| H4 | The City should continue to invest in the non-profit housing development organizations that provide affordable housing in Cambridge because they have been very effective in leveraging the money given to them by the city and from other sources. | See progress to date | COMPLETE AND ONGOING: The City continues to support the non-profit housing development organizations. |
| H5 | New developments in Cambridgeport should complement the existing neighborhood character and this should be ensured with a comprehensive design review process that involves the community. Among other things, this process could help ensure that projects "fit in" and maintain the current mix of buildings constructed in the neighborhood. | See progress to date (Short to med range) | COMPLETE: As adopted in the Citywide Rezoning Petition, Project Review for projects greater than 50K square feet involve the community and provide guidelines that encourage built character consistent with neighborhood. Similar standards are applied in an administrative review for projects between 20K and 50K square feet. |
| H6 | Encourage the rehabilitation of old buildings where possible to help preserve the neighborhood character and reduce costs. | See progress to date. (Ongoing) | NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Existing Homeowner's Rehab Inc. (HRI) and Just-a-Start Housing Improvement Programs work to rehabilitate older buildings into affordable housing. There is an Affordable Housing Rehab Loan Program offered through Cambridge Neighborhood Apartment Housing Services Inc. (CNAHS) which provides financing to private owners for rehabilitation of multifamily properties in return for a set aside of units at affordable rents for low and moderate income tenants. |
| H7 | As the new development at University Park is a significant addition to the residential part of the neighborhood, it should reflect the current composition of the neighborhood. The Study Committee recommends that the Planning Board require that all residential phases of University Park include an affordable housing component. The Study Committee suggests that each new building constructed have at least 25% of the units made affordable to low and moderate income people. | See progress to date (Ongoing) | COMPLETE: Affordable housing components of University Park are located in Auburn Court Phases I and II and Kennedy Biscuit Lofts. (At Auburn Court Phase I: 46 low and moderate income units out of a total of 77. Phase II: 45 low and moderate income units out of a total of 60. At Kennedy Biscuit Lofts there are 64 affordable units out of a total of 142.) This provides a total of 155 affordable units out of 279 total units or 55%. |

LAND USE AND ZONING

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|--|---|---|
| LU1 | The Study Committee recommends that the following parks in Cambridgeport be zoned as Open Space: Hastings Square, Alberico Park on Allston Street, Lopez Street Tot Lot, and Fullerton Park between Peters Street and Sidney Street. This change was not made in the previous citywide rezoning and this omission should be addressed. | Designate city parks as open space on the zoning map: Hasting Square, Alberico Park, Lopez Street Park, and Fullerton Park (short range). | <i>FUTURE ACTION ITEM: Submit implementing zoning language to City Council in April 2003.</i> |
| LU2 | The Study Committee recommends that the City consider rezoning in an organized way in order to help support neighborhood clusters of businesses. Areas of concentration: | Consider rezoning the following areas to support neighborhood businesses: (short range) | The proposed Neighborhood Business zone currently under consideration by the Riverside Study Committee allows continuation of retail activity currently in the indicated locations without allowing significant new expansion and might be helpful for some areas in Cambridgeport as well. |
| | a) Brookline and Putnam | a) Brookline and Putnam | a) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Brookline and Putnam is currently zoned Business A-1, which is a low-density business district. |
| | b) Pearl (between William and Lopez Streets) | b) Pearl Street between William and Lopez Streets (short range) | b) <i>FUTURE ACTION ITEM: Submit implementing zoning language to the City Council, after appropriate outreach, by the end of the fiscal year 2003.</i> |
| | c) Pearl and Putnam | c) Pearl and Putnam | c) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Pearl and Putnam is currently zoned Business A-1, which is a low-density business district. |
| | d) Brookline Street and Sidney Street (lower Cambridgeport) | d) Brookline Street and Sidney Street (lower Cambridgeport) | d) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: The area is zoned residential and there are currently no existing non-conforming uses. |
| | e) River Street | e) River Street | e) UNDERWAY: River Street is currently zoned Business A, however, the area is principally residential in character with some retail. The new neighborhood business district for the area is under consideration by the City Council and the Planning Board. |
| | f) Magazine Street | f) Magazine Street (short range) | f) <i>FUTURE ACTION ITEM: Submit implementing zoning language to the City Council, after appropriate outreach, by the end of the fiscal year 2003.</i> |
| | g) Brookline and Henry Streets | g) Brookline and Henry Streets | g) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Brookline and Henry Streets - There currently are not any non-residential/open space uses at the corner of Brookline and Henry Streets. Given the traffic patterns and existing land uses the zoning present will remain. |

KEY

Future Action Items are highlighted in italics

PROPOSED ACTION - Timeframe

Short Range - less than 2 yrs; Medium Range - 2-6 yrs; Long Range - 6-10 yrs

LAND USE AND ZONING - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|--|---|--|
| LU3 | <p>The Study Committee recommends that overlay districts be proposed along Memorial Drive to ensure that the scale of development along this roadway is of an appropriate size to the nearby residential neighborhoods. In addition, to insure that neighborhood residents are aware of these projects, the Study Committee proposes that two overlay districts are created and the base Office 3 zone be studied so appropriate changes can be made. These overlay districts would be included in the Large Project Review Process, to ensure that the public would be notified when development over 20,000-sq. ft. is being proposed in the area.</p> | <p>a) Evaluate River Street Overlay District</p> | <p>a) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Adoption of the proposed new neighborhood business district along River Street, in combination with recently adopted citywide project review provisions accomplish the objectives this recommendation was meant to address.</p> |
| | <p>b) <i>The Lower Cambridgeport Overlay District is described as extending from Magazine Street to River Street along Memorial Drive.</i></p> | <p>b) <i>Apply design standards (e.g. landscaping, location of parking, building character, etc.) for development abutting Memorial Drive from Magazine Street to River Street (med range).</i></p> | <p>b) <i>FUTURE ACTION ITEM: Submit implementing zoning language to the City Council, after appropriate outreach, in the fiscal year 2004.</i></p> |
| | <p>c) <i>Study the Office 3 Zone along Memorial Drive</i></p> | <p>c) <i>Consider alternate districts for specific areas along Memorial Drive (Med range).</i></p> | <p>c) <i>FUTURE ACTION ITEM: Submit implementing zoning language to the City Council, after appropriate outreach, in fiscal year 2004.</i></p> |
| | <p><i>Consider new zoning which would:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>• Limit the overall heights allowed in the district, as well as limit scale and density;</i> <i>• Permit mixed residential, commercial and office uses; and</i> <i>• Encourage residential uses along the neighborhood edge.</i> | <p><i>Consider new zoning where appropriate along Memorial Drive (Med. range).</i></p> | <p><i>FUTURE ACTION ITEM: Submit implementing zoning language to the City Council, after appropriate outreach, in fiscal year 2004.</i></p> |

LAND USE AND ZONING - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|--|--|--|
| LU3(cont.) | <p>Create an urban design plan to accompany any new zoning which would:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place buildings with greater density and massing nearer to the Charles River/Memorial Drive side of the zoning district and away from the neighborhood, thus providing a smooth transition between this district and the abutting residential area; Limit heights along the edge of the residential neighborhood to match or complement those of the neighborhood; Provide adequate set backs to reduce shadows and to protect the Charles River bank from inappropriate visual intrusions | <p>Create an urban design plan to accompany new zoning along Memorial Drive (Med range).</p> | <p><i>FUTURE ACTION ITEM: Submit implementing zoning language to the City Council, after appropriate outreach, in fiscal year 2004.</i></p> |
| LU4 | <p>The Study Committee recognized the need for transition zones to be created which recognize the density and height conflicts between the various zones and proposes ways to reduce the negative impacts to abutters.</p> | <p>See progress to date.</p> | <p>NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Since the formulation of the recommendation, changes to the zoning ordinance as well as physical changes to the neighborhood have addressed this issue.</p> |
| LU5 | <p>Require that all residential phases of University Park include an affordable housing component. The Study Committee suggested that each new building reserve at least 25% of the units as affordable to low and moderate income people.</p> | <p>See progress to date.</p> | <p>COMPLETE: Affordable housing components of University Park are located in Auburn Court Phases I and II and Kennedy Biscuit Lofts. (At Auburn Court Phase I: 46 low and moderate income units out of a total of 77. Phase II: 45 low and moderate income units out of a total of 60. At Kennedy Biscuit Lofts there are 64 affordable units out of a total of 142.) This provides a total of 155 affordable units out of 279 total units or 55%.</p> |

KEY

Future Action Items are highlighted in italics

PROPOSED ACTION - Timeframe

Short Range - less than 2 yrs; **Medium Range** - 2-6 yrs; **Long Range** - 6-10 yrs

OPEN SPACE

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|---|--|---|
| OS1 | The Study Committee supports the efforts of the Friends of Magazine Beach and encourages the MDC to continue their community process with respect to the redesign of the Magazine Beach facility. | See progress to date (Ongoing) | <p>UNDERWAY: In the fall of 1999, the City and the MDC reached an agreement to renovate the Magazine Beach facility. The City has agreed to provide \$1.5 million for renovations and \$100,000 annually for the maintenance and upkeep of this facility. In return, the MDC has agreed to give Cambridge youth athletic teams' priority in scheduling of games. \$1.5 million will pay for about half of what Friends of Magazine Beach would like to see happen at the site.</p> <p>The project is moving forward in three stages due to budgetary issues. Phase 1b includes renovations to the fields. Construction is expected to begin in the fall of 2003, and paid for through city funds. Phase 1b is supplemental to the Department of Public Works' Sewer Outfall Project and will involve the restoration of the river edge for the length of the playing fields. Phase 2 includes site improvements to the remainder of the park including picnic areas, play area, and water play area. Funding for Phase 2 has not been secured at this time.</p> |
| OS2 | <i>The Study Committee recommends that the following parks in Cambridgeport should be zoned as Open Space: Hastings Square, Alberico Park on Allston Street, Lopez Street Tot Lot and Fullerton Park between Peters Street and Sidney Street. This change was not made in the previous citywide rezoning and this omission should be corrected.</i> | <i>Zone the following parks as open space: Hastings Square, Alberico Park, Lopez Street Park, Fullerton Park (Short range)</i> | <i>FUTURE ACTION ITEM: Submit implementing zoning language to City Council in April 2003.</i> |
| OS3 | The Study Committee recommends that the city pursue the option of expanding the park at 82 Pacific Street to include adjacent parcels. | Continue to work with the Trust for Public Land, MIT, and surrounding businesses to expand the park at 82 Pacific Street | UNDERWAY: The City has been working with The Trust for Public Land (TPL) to explore the option of purchasing parcels abutting this park. |

OPEN SPACE - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|-------------------------------|--|--|---|
| OS4 | The Study Committee supports the creation of an Open Space Acquisition Trust, to be used to buy land for the sole purpose of creating more open space in Cambridge. | See progress to date. (ongoing) | NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Since this recommendation was first put forward the City has designated more than \$2 million of City funds for purchase of open space. In addition, the Green Ribbon Committee established criteria for the purchase of land to be used as open space. In November of 2001 Cambridge voters approved the Community Preservation Act (CPA). The CPA will make a total of 13.5 million local and state dollars available during FY2002 and FY2003 for affordable housing, open space, and historic preservation respectively. |
| OS5 | The Study Committee recommends that the city add 4 or 5 picnic tables to Dana Park. | See progress to date. (Short range) | NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: This will be considered during the Dana Park planning process, which will take place in early 2003. Placement must be considered in context of light fixture placements, and full park design. |
| OS6 | The Study Committee recommends that DPW add bulletin boards to all the parks in Cambridgeport that don't already have them. The bulletin boards should be of a standard size and construction and resemble the one recently placed in Sennott Park in Area Four. | See progress to date. | UNDERWAY: As part of the park renovation at Dana Park a new bulletin Board will be installed. The city standard for bulletin board designs will be used. The standard design is similar to the ones at Paine Park, Bergin Park, Sleeper Park, and the King School Park. |
| OS7 | In general, there are some changes that need to be undertaken for all the parks in Cambridgeport. The Study Committee recommends that trash cans be located near entrances/exits to the park and at a minimum should be emptied weekly. In addition, it is also recommended that maintenance be improved, especially ensuring that the water fountains are in working condition. Finally, small bags should be made available for dog owners to help them clean up after their dogs. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Locate trashcans near entrances/exits to parks (ongoing). b) Improve maintenance (ongoing). c) Make small bags available to dog owners (ongoing). | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) UNDERWAY: This has been a part of DPW's work. b) UNDERWAY: This has been an important component of DPW's day-to-day activities. c) UNDERWAY: This has been a part of DPW's work. |

KEY

Future Action Items are highlighted in italics

PROPOSED ACTION - Timeframe

Short Range - less than 2 yrs; **Medium Range** - 2-6 yrs; **Long Range** - 6-10 yrs

OPEN SPACE - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|-------------------------------|---|--|--|
| OS8 | <i>Open space is scarce resource. Imaginative ways need to be utilized to provide both passive and active open space in the neighborhood. The Study Committee recommends that the City explore the idea of utilizing any additional space along sidewalks for the placement of benches and other amenities. Resident sponsorship of these sidewalk amenities could help to ensure that these benches would be used properly by giving local residents a sense of "ownership" in their neighborhood.</i> | <i>Explore using additional open space along sidewalks for benches and other amenities (short to med range).</i> | <i>FUTURE ACTION ITEM: The Green Ribbon Committee report recommends expanded passive recreation opportunities at the edges of open space. As parks are redesigned the City will consider utilizing additional space along sidewalks for benches and other amenities.</i> |
| OS9 | The Study Committee recommends that the city pursue the idea of requiring developers to link open spaces in urban developments to other open spaces in both the residential portion of Cambridgeport and other urban developments. | See progress to date. | COMPLETE: In the Citywide Rezoning Petition, passed in 2000, Project Review guidelines include open space linkage as a design objective. |

TRANSPORTATION

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|--|-----------------------------|--|
| T1 | <p>The Study Committee is supportive of getting various employers and businesses in and around Cambridgeport to sponsor a bus/tram that would travel between Central Square, University Park, Polaroid, Osco/Bread and Circus and make some stops into the neighborhood. The shuttle would be for both the neighborhood residents and the employees working at these sites. This would be similar to the bus run between Kendall "T" stop and Cambridgeside Galleria Mall.</p> | See progress to date. | <p>COMPLETE: The EZ Ride Shuttle, which began operation in 2002, travels between North Station, Kendall Square, and Cambridgeport including stops on Sidney Street at University Park, Sidney and Erie Streets, and Brookline and Erie Streets. This shuttle provides an opportunity, through the update process, to explore the benefits and challenges of operating a shuttle service that is open to the public and partially funded by private sector money. This service will be used to guide further efforts to provide publicly accessible shuttle services, such as the one suggested by the Study Committee.</p> |
| T2 | <p>The Study Committee realized that traffic studies completed in relation to proposed development projects could be a tool, which the City could use to understand traffic patterns in and around particular areas in the city. The Study Committee recommends that traffic mitigation plans be required by the City for all developments that are above a certain threshold.</p> | See progress to date. | <p>COMPLETE: The Citywide Rezoning Petition passed in February 2001 requires a traffic study and mitigation for all new projects over 50,000 square feet, and for high trip generating uses greater than 25,000 square feet.</p> |
| T3 | <p>The Study Committee supports the efforts of the Cambridgeport Roadways Advisory Committee, they also agree in principle that the Waverly Street and Sidney connectors are appropriate responses to the anticipated traffic increases associated with the new development in the neighborhood. Study Committee members did have some concerns with certain proposed design elements and assumptions. Particularly, the Study Committee recommended that the assumption concerning the volume of future traffic coming from Kendall Square should be reexamined as they believed there would be more traffic than is currently predicted.</p> | See progress to date. | <p>COMPLETE: 100% of the design plans were completed as of July 2002. Yearly traffic monitoring is included as part of this project. The project is expected to go into construction Spring 2003. Traffic projections for the Eastern Cambridge Planning Study were consistent with earlier assumptions on the volume of future traffic coming from Kendall Square.</p> |

KEY

Future Action Items are highlighted in italics

PROPOSED ACTION - Timeframe

Short Range - less than 2 yrs; **Medium Range** - 2-6 yrs; **Long Range** - 6-10 yrs

TRANSPORTATION - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|--|---|---|
| T4 | <p>The Study Committee felt that a traffic calming policy was needed and that such a policy should be predicated on both increasing the safety of pedestrians and bicyclists and the reduction of speeds of motor vehicles. Some traffic calming locations/streets in Cambridgeport are identified below.</p> <p>a) Brookline Street - To help reduce speeds the Study Committee would support adding resident permit parking along the western side of Brookline Street where necessary and the use of traffic calming measures at major pedestrian routes (i.e. near parks, senior housing, Auburn Court, other "high children" areas).</p> <p>b) Allston/Putnam Avenue intersection - Study Committee members believed this to be a particularly difficult intersection due to the wide angle of the intersection and a commercial driveway opening into it. The Study Committee recommends that appropriate traffic calming techniques are utilized to prevent pedestrian/vehicular conflicts and reduce the speed of traffic entering Allston Street.</p> <p>c) Cottage/River/Pleasant Street Intersection - This intersection should be redesigned with the pedestrian in mind. The Study Committee recommends that the roadway crossing distance is reduced via an increase in the plaza area in order to create an aesthetically pleasing, safer crosswalk.</p> <p>d) River Street - Crossing this major street can be hazardous due to the speeds of the vehicles traveling on it. The Study Committee recommends that strategies to make pedestrian crossings safer be studied. This study should specifically explore using traffic calming techniques on River Street where it intersects Howard, Putnam Avenue and Cottage Street.</p> <p>e) Erie/Waverly Street Intersection -</p> | <p>a) See progress to date (short range).</p> <p>b) See progress to date (med range).</p> <p>c) See progress to date (med range).</p> <p>d) See progress to date (med range).</p> | <p>a) UNDERWAY: Brookline Street - Traffic calming on Brookline Street will be completed after the Cambridgeport Roadways Project is completed. The community process is expected to begin in spring 2003.</p> <p>b) UNDERWAY: Allston / Putnam Avenue Intersection - This intersection has been added to the list for traffic calming. When roadwork occurs at this intersection, city staff will work to narrow down the throat (change the angle) of the intersection.</p> <p>c) UNDERWAY: Cottage / River / Pleasant Street Intersection - This intersection is difficult for pedestrians, cyclists and drivers and is on the list for traffic calming. When roadwork occurs on River Street this intersection will be improved. City staff evaluated the intersection to see if there were short-term improvements that could be made, however, concluded that major changes are required in order to address the problems.</p> <p>d) UNDERWAY: River Street - River Street is on the list for traffic calming. When roadwork occurs on River Street the City will look to improve the pedestrian crossings, particularly at Howard, Putnam and Cottage (see above).</p> |

TRANSPORTATION - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|---|--|---|
| T4 (Cont.) | Sightlines at this intersection are poor. The Study Committee recommends that changes be studied to alleviate any potential problems at this intersection. | e) See progress to date (short range). | e) UNDERWAY: Erie / Waverly Street Intersection - Erie / Waverly Street intersection will be reconstructed as part of the Cambridgeport Roadways Project |
| | f) Magazine Street - As this street has more of an historic character in the neighborhood, the Study Committee decided to minimize alterations to the streetscape. The Study Committee recommends concentration of the traffic calming measures at the locations where high volumes of pedestrians cross Magazine Street and/or where there are visibility problems. These locations of concern occur at the intersections of Upton Street, Lawrence Street, Corporal McTernan Street and Allston Street. | f) See progress to date (med range). | f) UNDERWAY: Magazine Street - Magazine Street is on the list for traffic calming. |
| | g) Pearl Street - Pedestrian and bicycle safety on Pearl Street is a concern because of the excessive speeds at which vehicles travel from Massachusetts Avenue to Granite Street. Traffic calming measures along Pearl Street should slow the traffic entering this "residential" section of the neighborhood. | g) See progress to date (med range). | g) UNDERWAY: Pearl Street - Pearl Street is on the list for traffic calming. When roadwork occurs on Pearl Street city staff will work with residents to design traffic calming improvements. |
| | h) Granite Street - Given that one of the next traffic calming projects in Cambridgeport will be along Granite Street, the Study Committee suggested that any changes to parking be reviewed to ensure the safety of the children attending the Morse School located on Granite Street. The Study Committee recommends that traffic calming techniques, such as "bump outs" at the intersections of Granite and Pearl and Rockingham Streets be used to provide safety for the children | h) See progress to date. | h) COMPLETE: Granite Street - Since this recommendation was made, traffic calming on Granite Street has been completed. The improvements include curb extensions, a raised crosswalk and a raised intersection. |

KEY

Future Action Items are highlighted in italics

PROPOSED ACTION - Timeframe

Short Range - less than 2 yrs; **Medium Range** - 2-6 yrs; **Long Range** - 6-10 yrs

TRANSPORTATION - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|--|---|---|
| T4 (Cont.) | <p>i) Pleasant Street/Putnam Avenue Intersection - This intersection can be hazardous for pedestrians crossing Putnam Avenue. The Study Committee recommends that traffic-calming techniques be utilized to slow traffic and allow pedestrians to safely cross Putnam Avenue by increasing visibility</p> | i) See progress to date. | <p>i) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: However, in conjunction with a DPW manhole separation project, curb extensions will be constructed at several nearby intersections:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pleasant Street at Chestnut Street • Allston Street at Andrew Street • Pleasant Street at Allston Street • Allston Street at Fairmont Avenue <p>Florence Street sidewalk will be continued across the entrance to Trader Joe's.</p> |
| T5 | <p>Traffic Signals</p> <p>a) Memorial Drive and Western Avenue The Study Committee understands that the traffic signal at the intersection of Memorial Drive and Western Avenue causes queuing on both streets during peak rush hours. This queuing will encourage "cut through" traffic onto Blackstone Street, Putnam Avenue and lower Pleasant Street. The Study Committee believes that this should be discouraged through changes to the signalization of this light to allow a longer left hand turn light onto the Western Avenue Bridge. This would cause fewer people to use the neighborhood streets as a short cut.</p> <p>b) Memorial Drive and Magazine Street - The Study Committee agreed that a traffic light at the intersection of Memorial Drive and Magazine Street might be problematic because of the current roadway configuration and poor sight lines. Therefore the Study Committee believed that a traffic signal might be better served at Pleasant Street. This issue should be reviewed with the MDC as part of the Charles River Master Plan to determine the most appropriate location for a traffic signal.</p> <p>c) Massachusetts Avenue and River Street - The Study Committee discussed the traffic light at Central Square and made a recommendation to have the city do a study on allowing an exclusive pedestrian crossing of Mass. Avenue. This exclusive crossing would be non-pedestrian actuated.</p> | <p>a) See progress to date.</p> <p>b) See progress to date.</p> <p>c) See progress to date.</p> | <p>a) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Memorial Drive and Western Avenue The design and installation of walk lights at Memorial Drive and River and Memorial Drive and Western was a condition of the Planning Board Special Permit for the "Polaroid" project. The work has been completed. Currently, the pedestrian committee is working with elected state officials to explore other improvements.</p> <p>b) COMPLETE: Memorial Drive and Magazine Street. A signal at Memorial Drive and Pleasant Street has been installed. The signal was a condition of the settlement agreement between residents and Spaulding and Slye in relation to the "Polaroid" project.</p> <p>c) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Massachusetts Avenue and River Street Adding an exclusive pedestrian phase in Central Square would almost double the wait time for the pedestrians and extend the vehicle queues. A Leading Pedestrian Interval (LPI) has been created to provide pedestrian improvements.</p> |

TRANSPORTATION - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|---|---|---|
| T6 | <p>Truck Traffic:</p> <p>a) The Study Committee supported the existing nighttime ban on truck traffic on some Cambridgeport streets. They also felt that if there was any noticeable increase of truck traffic on non-banned streets those streets should also be included in the ban.</p> <p>b) The Study Committee agreed that there should be a truck traffic policy for the entire city</p> | <p>a) See progress to date (short range).</p> <p>b) See progress to date (short range).</p> | <p>a) UNDERWAY: The recommendations of a regional truck study have been completed and the process of implementing them is now underway. The recommendations are available at www.ci.cambridge.ma.us under the Traffic, Parking and Transportation Department.</p> <p>b) UNDERWAY: The City along with surrounding communities, MassHighway, trucking associations, the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) and MAPC completed a regional truck study in the summer of 2002 and developed the recommendation that Cambridge apply for 11pm to 6am truck bans on all streets, except for the existing truck route, JFK street, and the State route system (Rte 2A, Massachusetts Avenue; Rte 16, Fresh Pond Parkway/Aberdeen Avenue, and Rte 28 O'Brien Highway), 24 hour bans on Cardinal Medeiros, Warren and Putnam streets were also recommended. To date (Nov. 2002) MassHighway has not approved the citywide bans. Therefore, Cambridge City Council recommended changing the existing through-truck ordinance. An Ordinance Committee meeting took place on November 13th, 2002, and planning board discussion on November 19th, 2002.</p> |
| T7 | <p>Bicycle traffic:</p> <p>a) Continue to improve bicycle facilities to encourage alternatives to automobiles and improve safety for cyclists.</p> <p>b) Encourage or require all business and institutional uses in the neighborhood to have adequate preferential bicycle parking.</p> | <p>a) See progress to date (ongoing).</p> <p>b) See progress to date.</p> | <p>a) UNDERWAY: Improvements to bicycle facilities are addressed in ongoing processes through the CDD Bicycle and Pedestrian Program, PTDM, city street improvement projects, and Planning Board project review.</p> <p>b) COMPLETE: The Citywide Rezoning Petition includes guidelines for improving bicycle facilities in the proposed Project Review.</p> |

KEY

Future Action Items are highlighted in italics

PROPOSED ACTION - TIMEFRAME

Short Range - less than 2 yrs; **Medium Range** - 2-6 yrs; **Long Range** - 6-10 yrs

TRANSPORTATION - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|-------------------------------|--|---|--|
| T7 (Cont.) | c) Improve bicycle corridors across neighborhood. North/South corridors are adequate and have improvement pending, but east/west circulation alternatives are inadequate thus encouraging bicycle travel the wrong way on one-way streets. | c) See progress to date. (Ongoing) | c) UNDERWAY: The Cambridgeport Roadways Project will add bike lanes along Sydney Street and Waverly Street. |
| T8 | <p>Parking:</p> <p>a) Improve snow removal at curb extensions by DPW</p> <p>b) Enforce prohibitions on placing objects in the street to "reserve" parking on the public way.</p> | <p>a) See progress to date.</p> <p>b) See progress to date.</p> | <p>a) NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Curb extensions are considered part of the sidewalk. According to city policy regarding snow removal, it is the responsibility of the adjacent property owner to clear a walking path on sidewalks, including curb extensions.</p> <p>b) COMPLETE: City enforcement of parking rules has increased through patrols of parking enforcement officers and a \$25 a day fine.</p> |

URBAN DESIGN

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|---|---|--|
| UD1 | Create a more welcoming entrance to the City of Cambridge on River Street. | See progress to date (med range) | UNDERWAY: In the last several years, a number of steps have been taken that improve the quality of the entryway into Cambridgeport. Riverside Press Park, which was created by the city about 20 years ago, was recently rehabilitated. 808 Memorial Drive was taken over by Homeowners Rehab Inc, and the agency undertook significant renovations to the building, including clean up of the exterior. Adjacent to 808 Memorial Drive on the Putnam Street side, the development of Osco Drugstore along with Bread and Circus has created a viable retail presence where there had been a less attractive use before. The River Street entryway is flanked by two gas stations, which limits how much further change is possible. It may be worthwhile to approach the property owners to see if any improvements are appropriate, such as more landscaping or better site maintenance. |
| UD2 | River St. bridge improvements - It should match character/ appearance of other bridges, needs to be renovated. It is a generic looking bridge in comparison to other bridges in Cambridge. | See progress to date (long range) | NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: The Metropolitan District Commission controls the bridge, as well as the other bridges in the vicinity. Maintaining these bridges has been challenging. The Longfellow Bridge is currently undergoing repairs. The feasibility of similar improvements in the future to the River Street Bridge would have to be evaluated by the MDC. |
| UD3 | Strengthen physical and visual links between important nodes, i.e. Central Square and Magazine Beach, 808-812 Memorial Drive and the rest of the residential neighborhood in Cambridgeport, Ft. Washington and the neighborhood. - use trees, dedicated paths, lighting, etc. | See progress to date. (Med to long range) | UNDERWAY: The City's approach to improving public ways is generally to combine any infrastructure projects with upgrading of trees, paths, and lighting so that the entire design for the streets and sidewalks is coordinated. Wherever possible in Cambridgeport, this will be done. 100% of the design plans for the Cambridgeport Roadways Project were completed as of July 2002. The project will include improvements to Sidney Street, Waverly Street and Brookline Street. The project is expected to go into construction Spring 2003. |

KEY

Future Action Items are highlighted in italics

PROPOSED ACTION - Timeframe

Short Range - less than 2 yrs; **Medium Range** - 2-6 yrs; **Long Range** - 6-10 yrs

URBAN DESIGN - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|--------------------|---|-----------------------------------|---|
| UD4 | Increase the maintenance of the street trees in Cambridgeport, too many dead trees and trees with broken limbs which go unfixed in the neighborhood. | See progress to date (ongoing). | UNDERWAY: The City has created the position of City Arborist with the goal of addressing issues relating to trees throughout Cambridge. An important aspect of the Arborist's duties is the maintenance of street trees. The general approach has been to identify sections of the city where maintenance crews systematically trim broken limbs, prune trees as needed, and replace dead trees. |
| UD5 | Trees should be planted on the sidewalks and in parks in the neighborhood as replacements for ones that have died. A citywide program to replace trees should be implemented by the city after inventorying the species that are currently growing on our streets and in our parks | See progress to date. | NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: A street tree inventory was completed in 1996. The Arborist manages systematic maintenance programs area-by-area throughout the city. |
| UD6 | Ensure that lighting throughout the neighborhood balances the need for safety with protection against unnecessary and wasteful light pollution. All street and building lighting should be focused downward not necessary outward or upward. Emphasize pedestrian oriented lighting where feasible. | See progress to date. | NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: The City Electrician is responsible for the street lighting system on city streets and in public spaces, and evaluates whether improvements are feasible in areas where light levels are either too high or too low. |
| UD7 | Emphasize transitions between land uses such as residential and commercial and residential and industrial with the use of trees, short hedges and changes in level. Increase the open space requirement through zoning, especially in "transition" areas. | See progress to date. (med range) | UNDERWAY: In the recently adopted citywide rezoning petition, project review guidelines include considerations in the design review process to help make better transitions when redevelopment occurs. In Cambridgeport, for example, there was a need for transitions at the Polaroid site, which is currently undergoing change in the form of lower scale housing along the Putnam Avenue frontage, with more dense office space further away from the neighborhood. |

URBAN DESIGN - Continued

| Rec. Type & Number | Recommendation Summary | Proposed Action (timeframe) | Progress to Date |
|-------------------------------|---|------------------------------------|--|
| UD8 | Increase parking in Central Square Green Street lot. | See progress to date | <p>NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: There are currently no plans to expand the two surface lots on Green Street. In general, there is a strong correlation between the supply of parking and traffic congestion. The City is not generally increasing parking; in fact, an important policy goal is to reduce dependence upon the automobile, and thus to constrain parking rather than add new spaces.</p> |
| UD9 | Put utilities underground in Cambridgeport Roadways work. | See progress to date | <p>NO ADDITIONAL ACTION AT THIS TIME: Careful consideration was given to the issue of putting utilities underground in the Cambridgeport Roadways project. However, because of the expensive nature of the procedure, it is cost prohibitive for the City to undertake at this time. Additionally, all private property owners would most likely be required to pay for under grounding the service lines to their property.</p> |

KEY

Future Action Items are highlighted in italics

PROPOSED ACTION - Timeframe

Short Range - less than 2 yrs; **Medium Range** - 2-6 yrs; **Long Range** - 6-10 yrs

5/09 S-170

The Asassiz Neighborhood Study
and the Cambridgeport Neighborhood
Study Update

4 May 9, 2003