

C. Duchay

Ordered: That the City Council go on record recommending that the public process to cut the spruce trees in front of City Hall go forward; and be it further

Ordered: That the City Council request that the City Manager create a beautification plan for City Hall landscaping, with input from the residents, as soon as possible

w/q



City of Cambridge

Committee Report #7

IN CITY COUNCIL

July 29, 1996

COUNCILLOR DUEHAY

ORDERED: That the City Council go on record recommending that the public process to cut the sparse trees in front of City Hall go forward; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Council request that the City Manager create a beautification plan for City Hall landscaping, with input from the residents, as soon as possible.

In City Council July 29, 1996

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

D. Margaret Drury

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

Chuck Colbert, 13 Cottage Street, stated that the trees should be discussed in context of the whole landscaping plan.

Vice Mayor Born requested that Charles Sullivan discuss the history. Charles Sullivan distributed historical photographs of City Hall. There was no ivy until 1969. Ivy is not good for masonry buildings. The spruce trees are way out of control. The yews on either side of the steps are overgrown. Taking out the evergreens is part of a plan that has been very comprehensively discussed.

Councillor Duehay asked if the trees have any memorial significance. Charles Sullivan said that he could not find any evidence of such.

Councillor Davis said that there is a similar problem at the library. She noted that there is another reason for not keeping overgrown trees near buildings, in that they bring wildlife into the building.

Councillor Reeves stated that a landscape plan was done by Sasaki Associates, and Mr. Dunphy has a copy of it. He stated that there needs to be a more comprehensive look at landscaping. He questions whether there is adequate coordination between The Community Development Department and The Department of Public Works. The Department of Public Works has the energy and intent to do the work, but needs more help with what it is that they should do.

Ralph Dunphy said that the copy has been misplaced. Councillor Reeves stated that he could get it. Later in the meeting Councillor Reeves distributed copies of this plan, which was actually done by Marc F. Mazzarelli. (Attachment B).

Chuck Colbert asked Charles Sullivan for more details about the 1992 planning. Mr. Sullivan said that a committee of neighborhood residents and professionals organized themselves into a committee that worked with the planning team.

Mr. Colbert stated that he has very strong feelings about trees and ivy. Perhaps the trees should be trimmed. He does not believe that the City should be modeling "tree-chopping behavior". In 1996 there are living trees that the City should consider in its plans.

Councillor Davis said that Hastings Square park shows that sometimes trees are not accomplishing their purpose, and a more thoughtful replanting can look much better.

Councillor Reeves stated that the question of removal of what is there should be informed by the decision of what would replace them. He is not sure that the bare front of City Hall is an attractive alternative, but there could be beautiful flowering trees. This question should not be phrased in the context of the bunting, but rather, what is the overall landscaping plan for City Hall. "You may have a dress that you don't like but that doesn't mean you just take off the dress," said Councillor Reeves.

Councillor Duehay asked whether it would be possible to have a plan to replace the plantings. Mr. Rossi said that it would be possible to have a plan and to have funding allocated. Obviously all planting could not be done this fall.

Vice Mayor Born asked if there was a schedule for facade restoration to the Massachusetts Avenue side of City Hall. Tahg Sweeney said that the specifications are all in place, but due to the expense, it has not yet been done. Mr. Rossi said that the plan is a five to ten year plan, but it is dependent on funding. The City Manager decided to limit and phase the projects because of the impact on taxes.

Tahg Sweeney said that he believed there were some City Council hearings at the time. He also met individually with all the Councillors.

Councillor Reeves asked when the plans were made and discussed. Tahg Sweeney said that it was 1992 and 1993.

Paula Cortes stated that she is a member of the Committee on Public Plantings. She said that there are a couple of significant issues. There is the practical aspect: the trees and ivy are damaging the building. The second issue is the City's sense of the building. Should there be a reflection of the period or a hodge podge that has come about through chance and neglect. It is clear that the trees are overgrown. There are times when trees should come down. This would seem to be such a time. Both the spruces and yews should come down.

Vice Mayor Born read from an earlier report of landscaping recommendations which suggested trimming but not removing the yews.

Councillor Reeves asked whether the City Council ever saw this report. Councillor Reeves said that there was a great deal of discussion with the neighbors; he assumes the final report did go to the City Council.

Councillor Reeves noted that the photos before the committee include many awnings and not that much bunting.

Vice Mayor Born read from the 1992 notes that the spruce trees would be removed on account of damage to the building and foundation and that the Committee on Public Plantings would have a public hearing. She said that the Committee on Public Plantings has agreed to discuss this at its next meeting.

Vice Mayor Born asked Tahg Sweeney to describe the damage that the ivy has done to the building. Mr. Sullivan described significant damage. He also stated that the plans were presented to the City Council and that the Public Planting Committee did hold a public hearing back in 1992-1993.

Councillor Duehay said that reproducing the naked look of City Hall does not excite him. The ivy is a much easier problem. It is bad for buildings and should come down. There is also the question of whether the facade work would harm the new plantings.

Councillor Davis stated that she likes the naked look of City Hall. It allows the building to make a statement.

Vice Mayor Born said that the 1946 picture does not show a naked City Hall. There are many deciduous bushes that are struggling under the spruce and yew trees. She added that she would like to see landscape architectural plans. Vice Mayor Born also noted that inappropriate plantings can do tremendous damage to buildings. With regard to ivy, it is very generally acknowledged that ivy does not belong on masonry buildings; it does enormous damage. The ivy on the front of City Hall has invaded the windows.

Councillor Reeves noted that Harvard has cut back its ivy but not completely removed it. The window sills in City Hall are badly deteriorated. If the trees are to be removed, it needs to be very clear who will be responsible for realizing the replacements. The City is about to get a new Arborist.

Paula Cortes agreed that the City really does need a coordinator of all planting and landscaping. If trees are going to be taken down, the whole aspect of what should be there should be re-assessed. The original 1992 plans called for minimal landscaping.

Mr. Rossi stated that the efforts of City departments are not piecemeal. They are coordinated, with frequent meetings of the departments and persons with responsibilities in this area.

Chuck Colbert stated that he is not questioning the hard work of city employees; however, the condition of the yews points to some additional need for vision and maintenance. He recommends that the trees first be trimmed before they are cut down. He suggested thinking about "Nature's natural bunting."

Councillor Duehay said that years ago there was a City greenhouse. Over the last ten to twelve years, the Public Works Department has been cut way back. He does believe that the present trees and bushes are quite ugly. He recommends cutting the trees and proceeding with a plan for landscape beautification as part of the 150th celebration.

Scott Levitan said that the hedges must be trimmed. You cannot even see City Hall from across the street.

Councillor Reeves reviewed the Mazzarelli report on possible landscape designs for City Hall. He stated that Department of Public Works needs more gardeners or more training in gardening. The Cambridge Housing Authority has magnificent plantings. The City of Newton made itself into a "garden city" because of Mayor Mann's cooperation with landscape architects.

Mr. Rossi said that other cities have allowed landscape architects to adopt park areas, and in exchange, have allowed them to advertise, or have a sign at the park.

Councillor Duehay moved that the committee recommend that the public process to cut the spruce trees go forward and that the City Manager be requested to create a beautification

plan for City Hall landscaping with input from the residents, as soon as possible.

Councillor Davis moved that the plan include a maintenance plan. Councillor Duehay accepted this as a friendly amendment.

Mr. Rossi described the requirements for a public hearing by the tree warden.

Vice Mayor Born questioned whether this could happen in time to allow the bunting.

Mr. Rossi stated that he believes that there is time to get the trees down by the first of September.

Paula Cortes stated that the appropriate time for pruning shrubs is the spring. She noted the need for excellent pruning, not just "low-bid" pruning.

Councillor Duehay's motion passed on an unanimous vote of the members of the committee.


Vice Mayor Born stated that another meeting of the committee will be scheduled for three weeks or a month from this date and will include a discussion of further delineation of the responsibilities.

Chuck Colbert read Joyce Kilmer's poem.

Mr. Rossi said that in the meantime there will be seasonal pruning of the hedges.

Councillor Davis moved to adjourn. The meeting was adjourned at 11:45.

For the Committee,



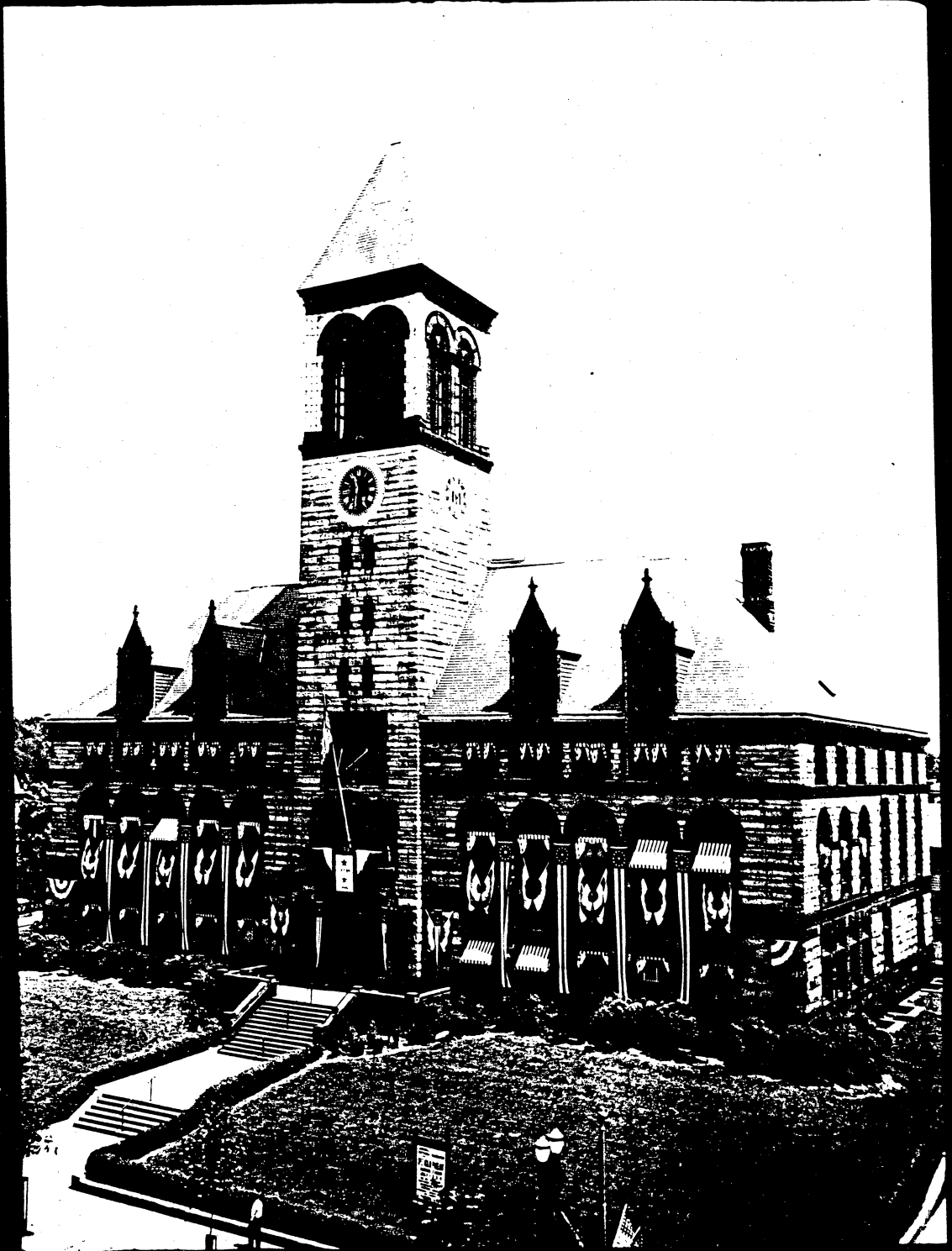
Vice Mayor Kathleen L. Born, Chair

A

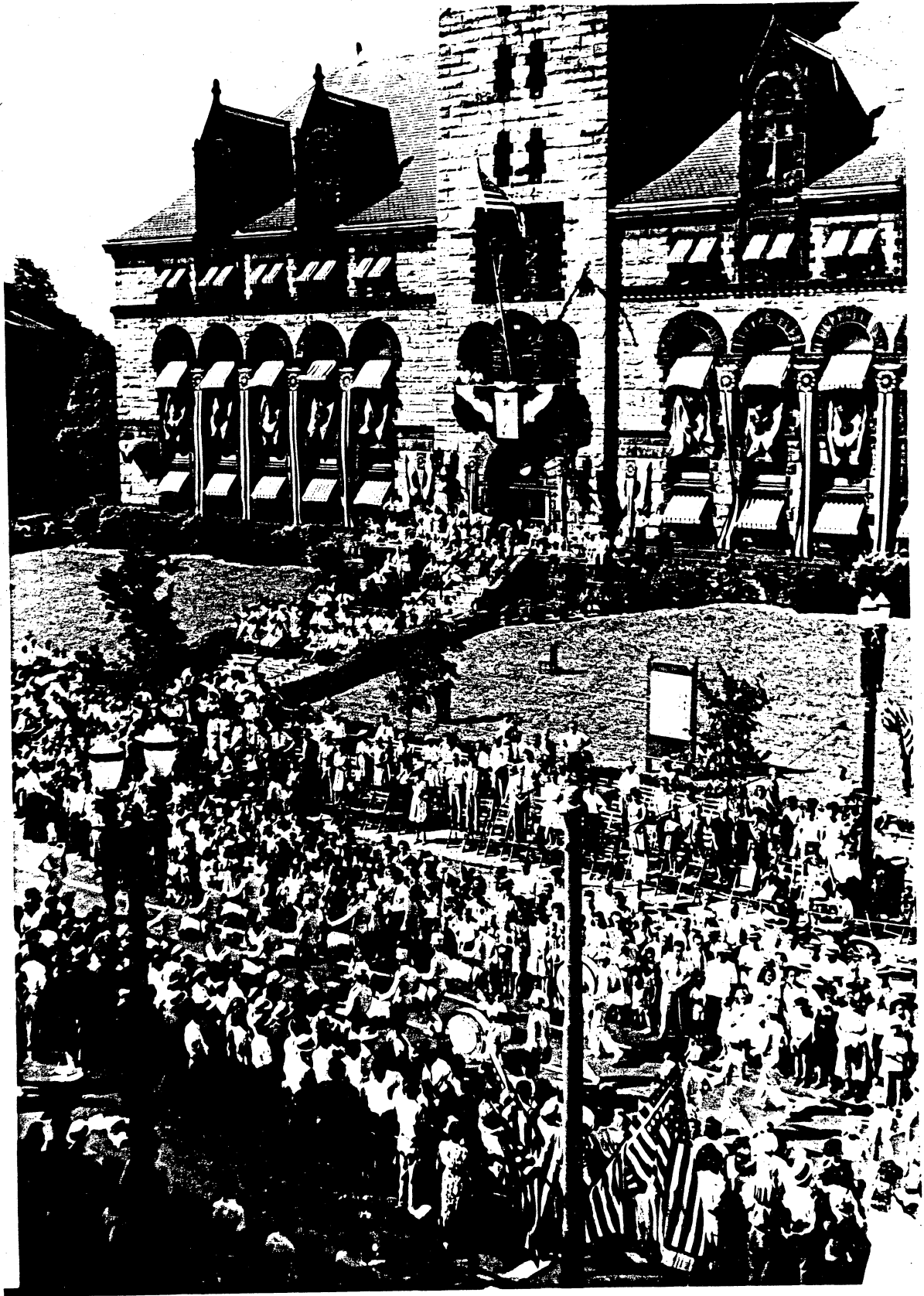


1891

A-46

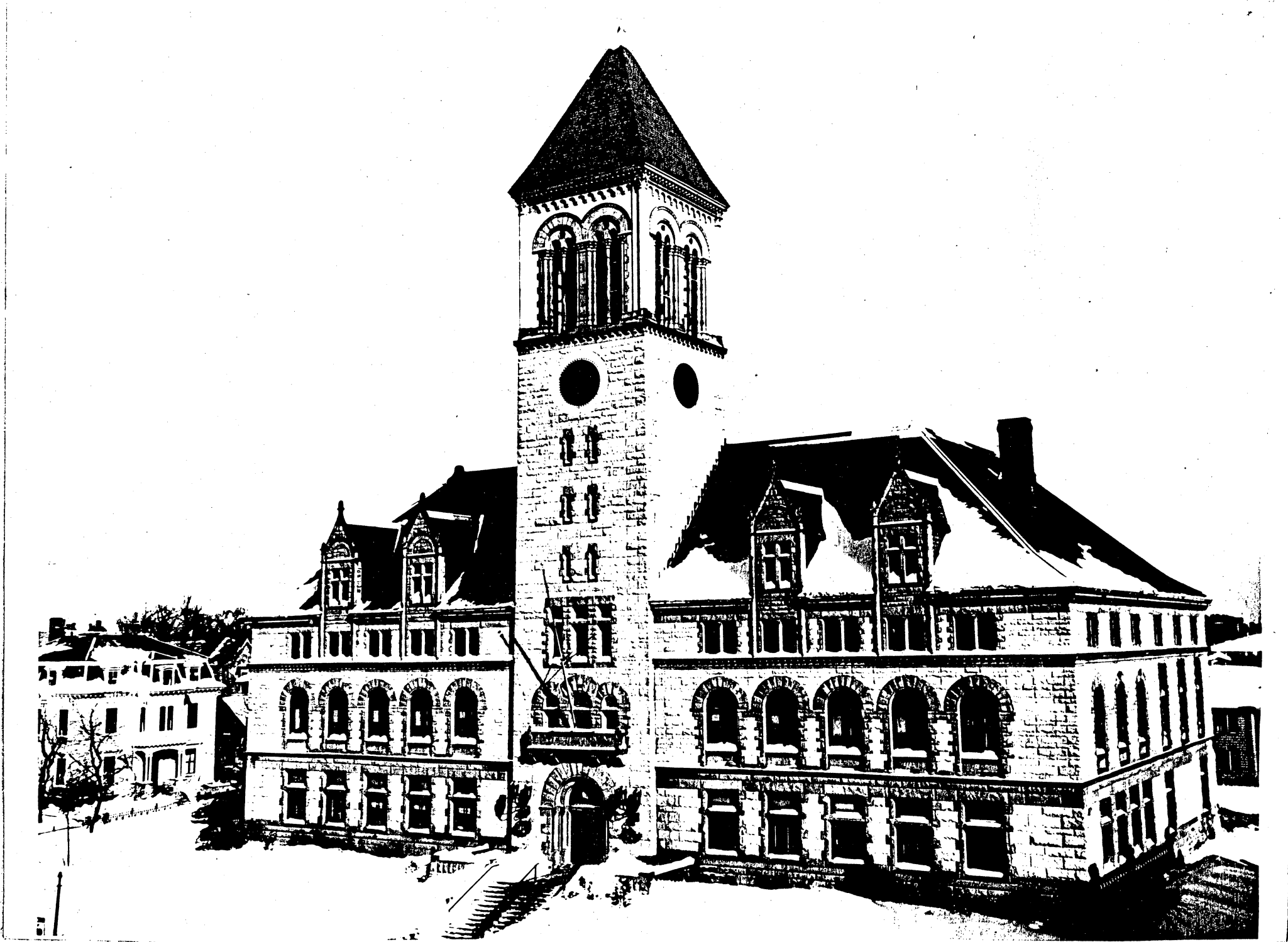


1946



1946
Centennial Parade

A-48



1946

A-49



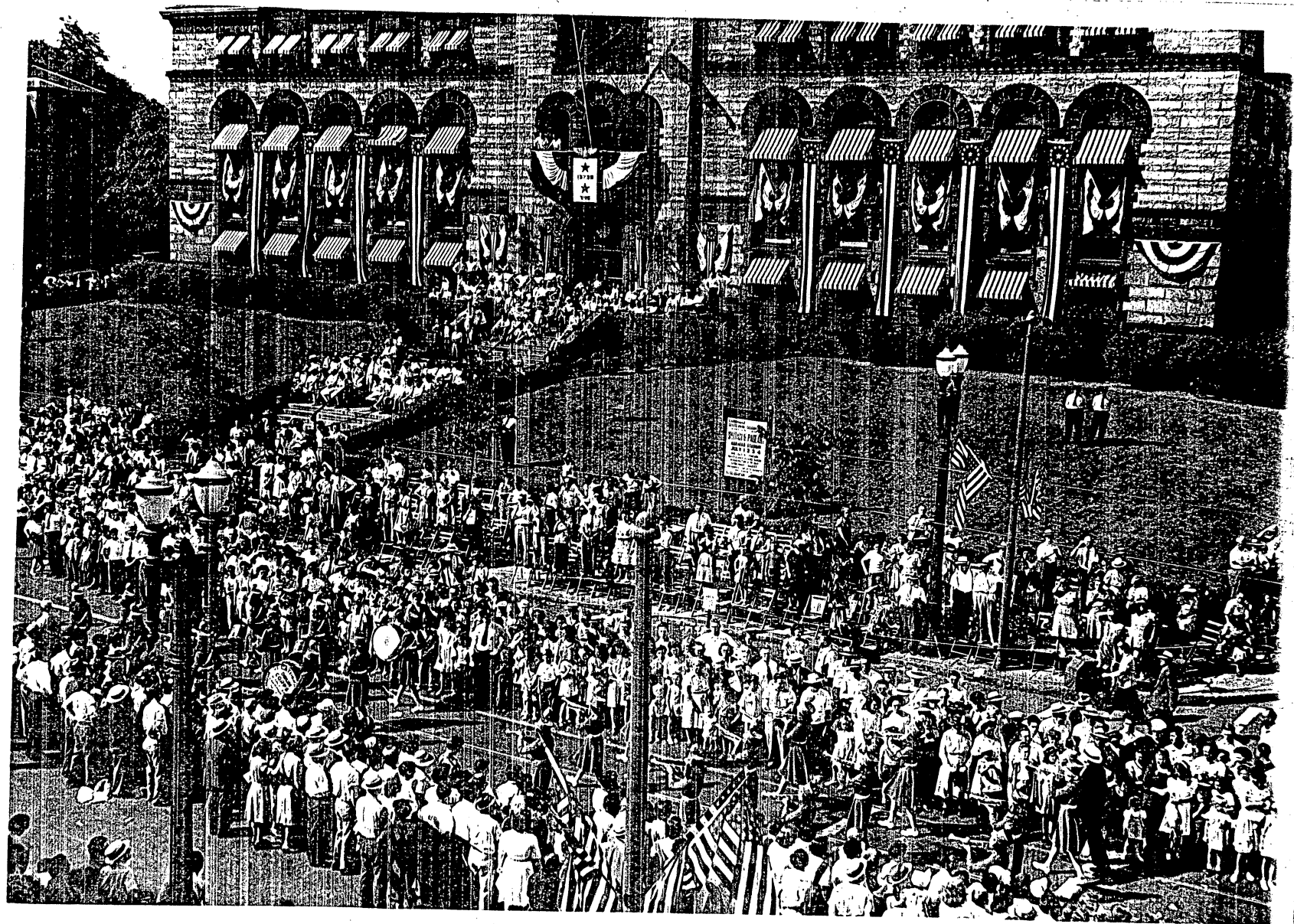
1969

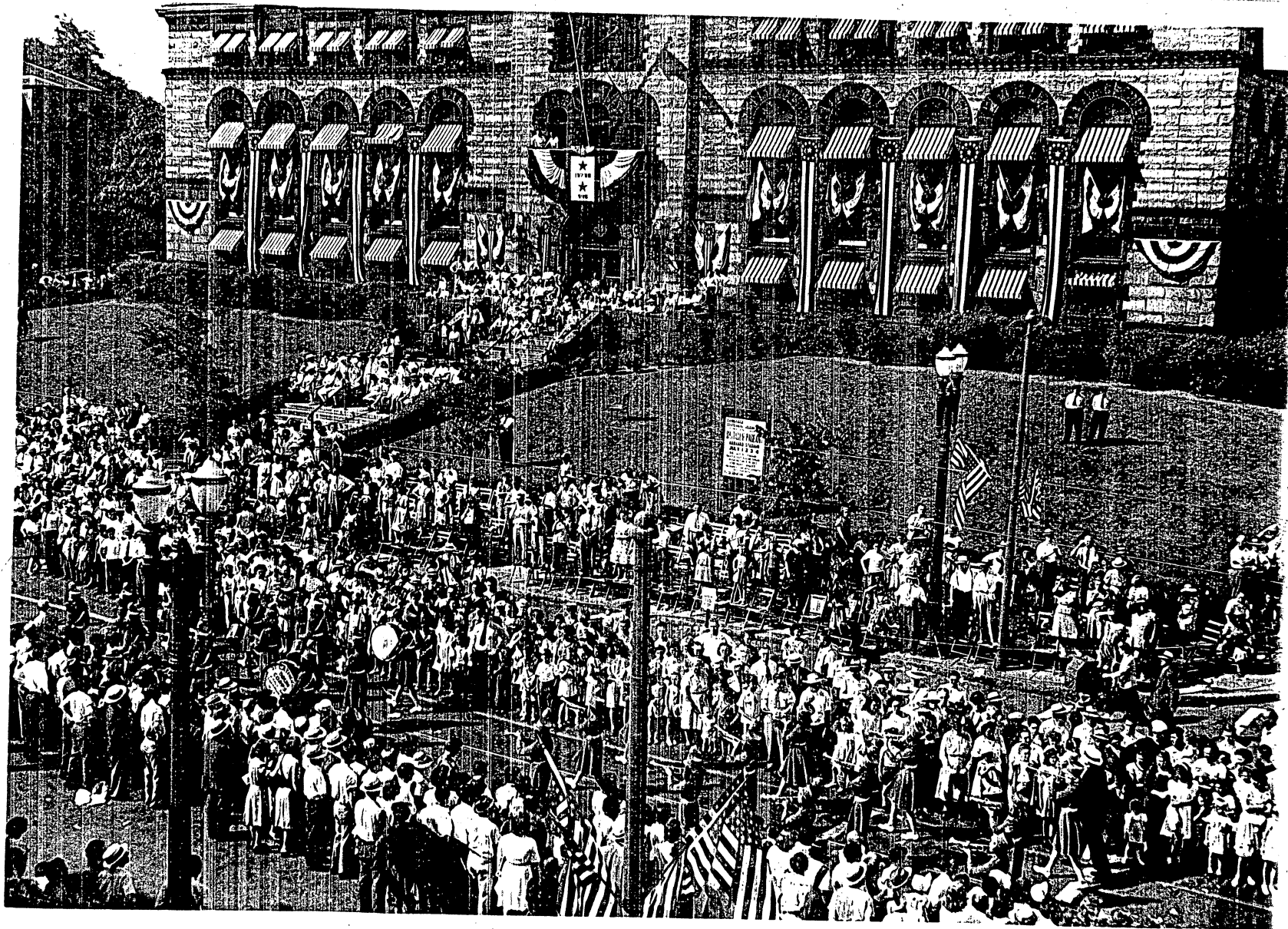


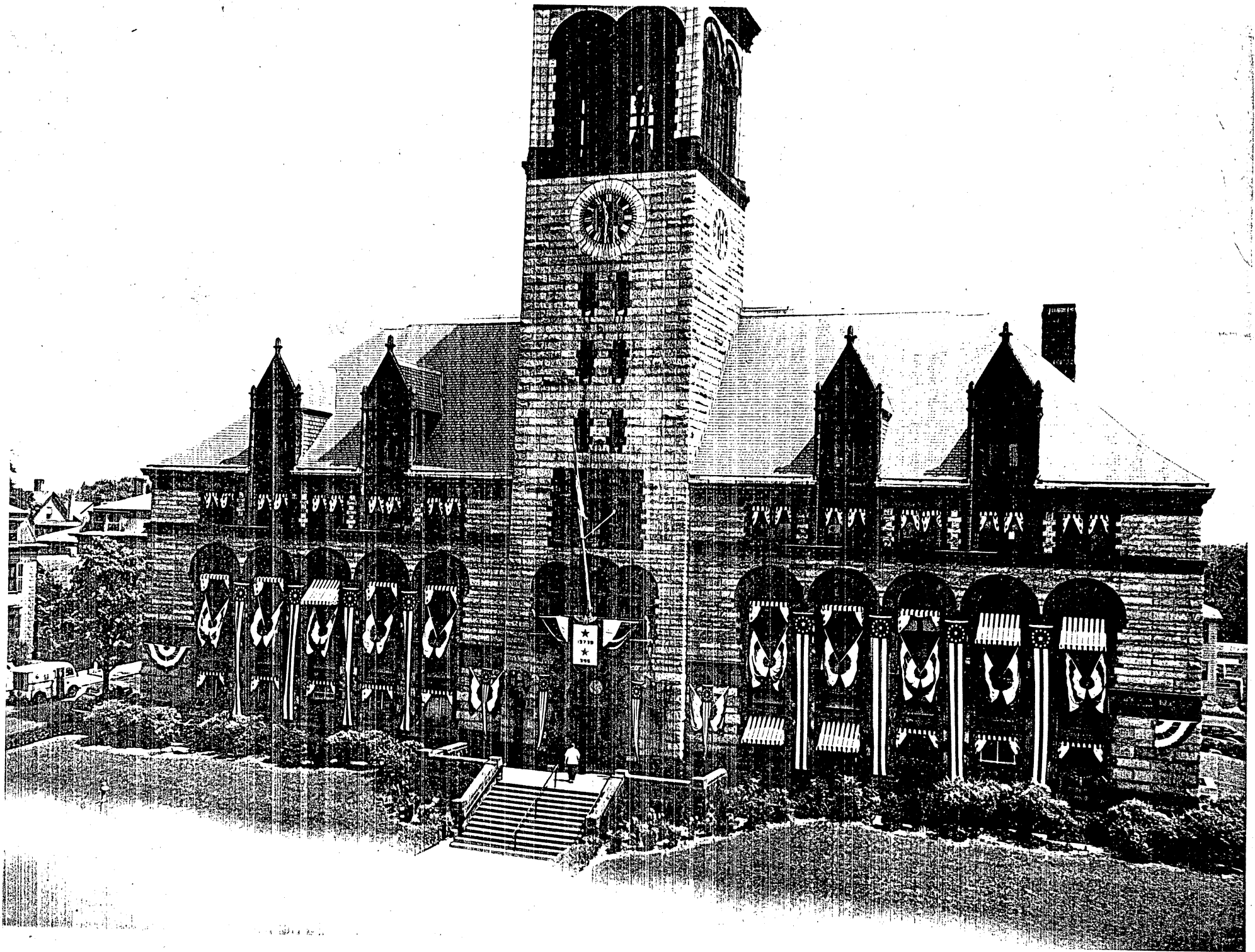
Cambridge City Hall
100th Anniversary 1889-1989
Mayor Alfred E. Bellucci
1988-1989

10/10/10

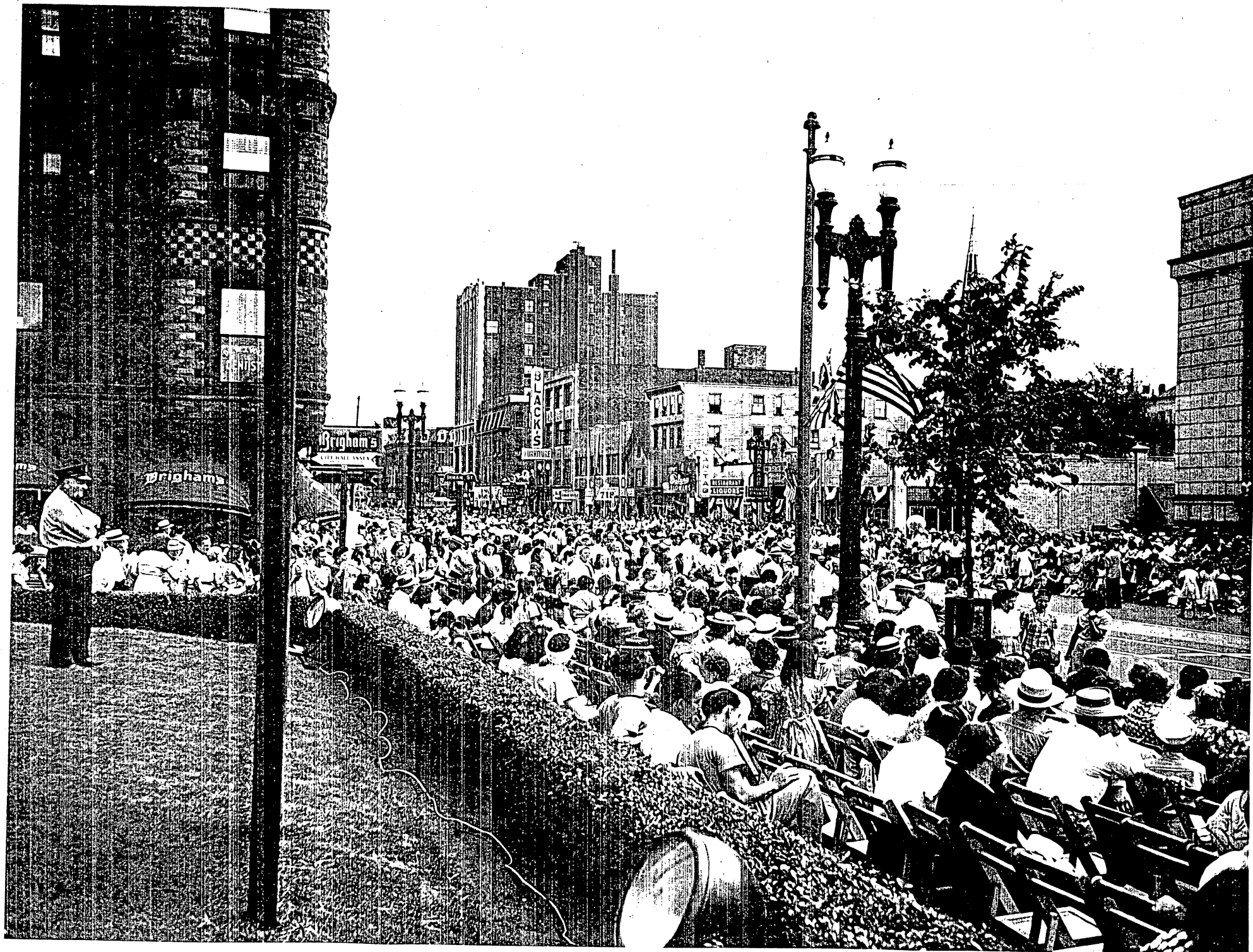
10/10/10







A-54



A-55

B

Marc F. Mazzarelli - Landscape Architecture
10 Lindall Place
Boston, Massachusetts 02114

Fax Cover Sheet

DATE: July 16, 1996 **TIME:** 11:10 AM
TO: Ms Carvello **PHONE:** **FAX:** 617-349-4287
City of Cambridge
FROM: Marc Mazzarelli **PHONE:** 617-926-7221 **FAX:** 617-924-2748
RE: City Hall Landscape Alternatives - April 1994

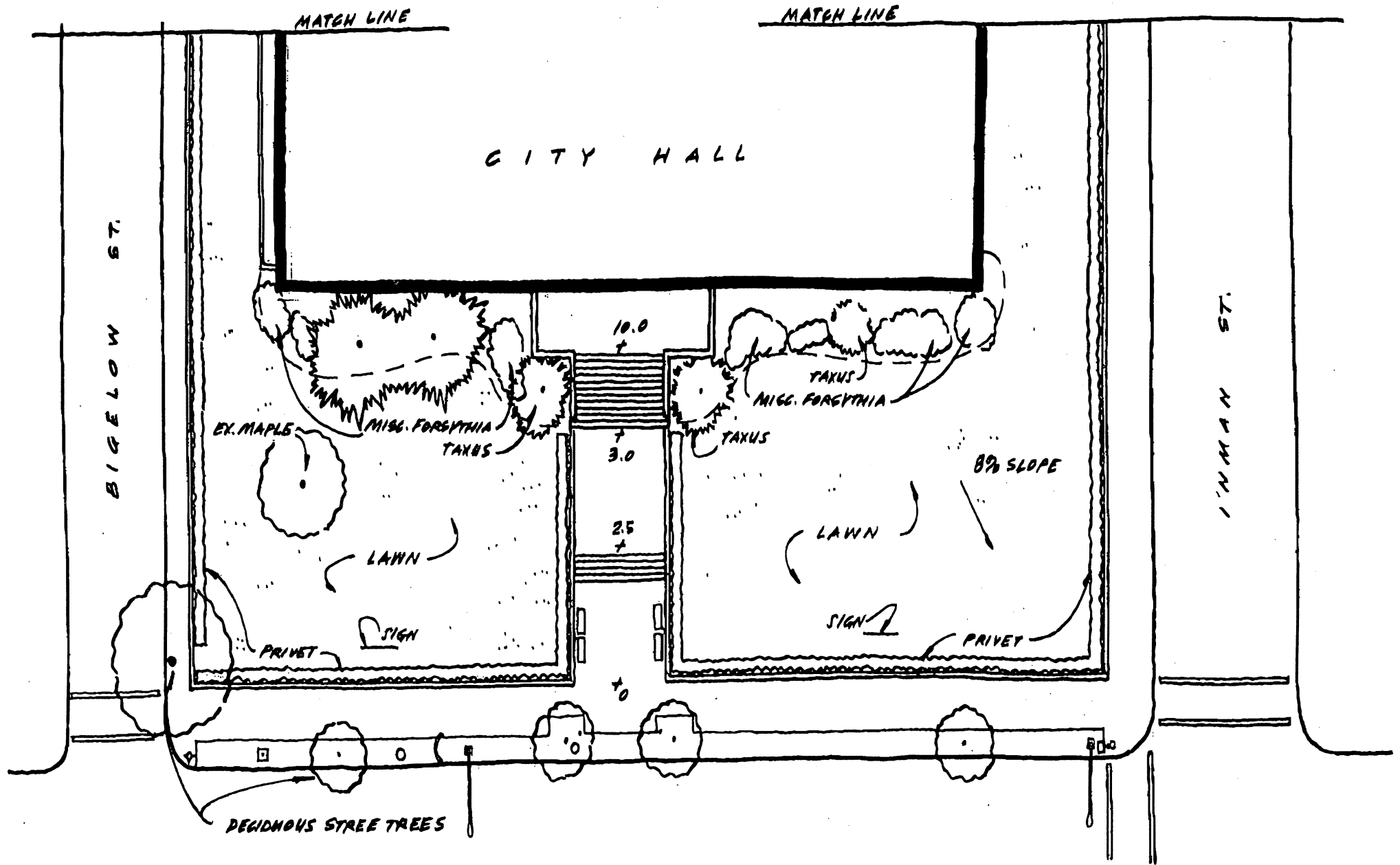
Number of pages including cover sheets: 7

Dear Mary Ellen,

Attached are the landscape alternatives you requested for City Hall. I hope that they can be of use to you and I look forward to hearing about your progress on this very exciting project.

Sincerely,

Marc F. Mazzarelli, ASLA



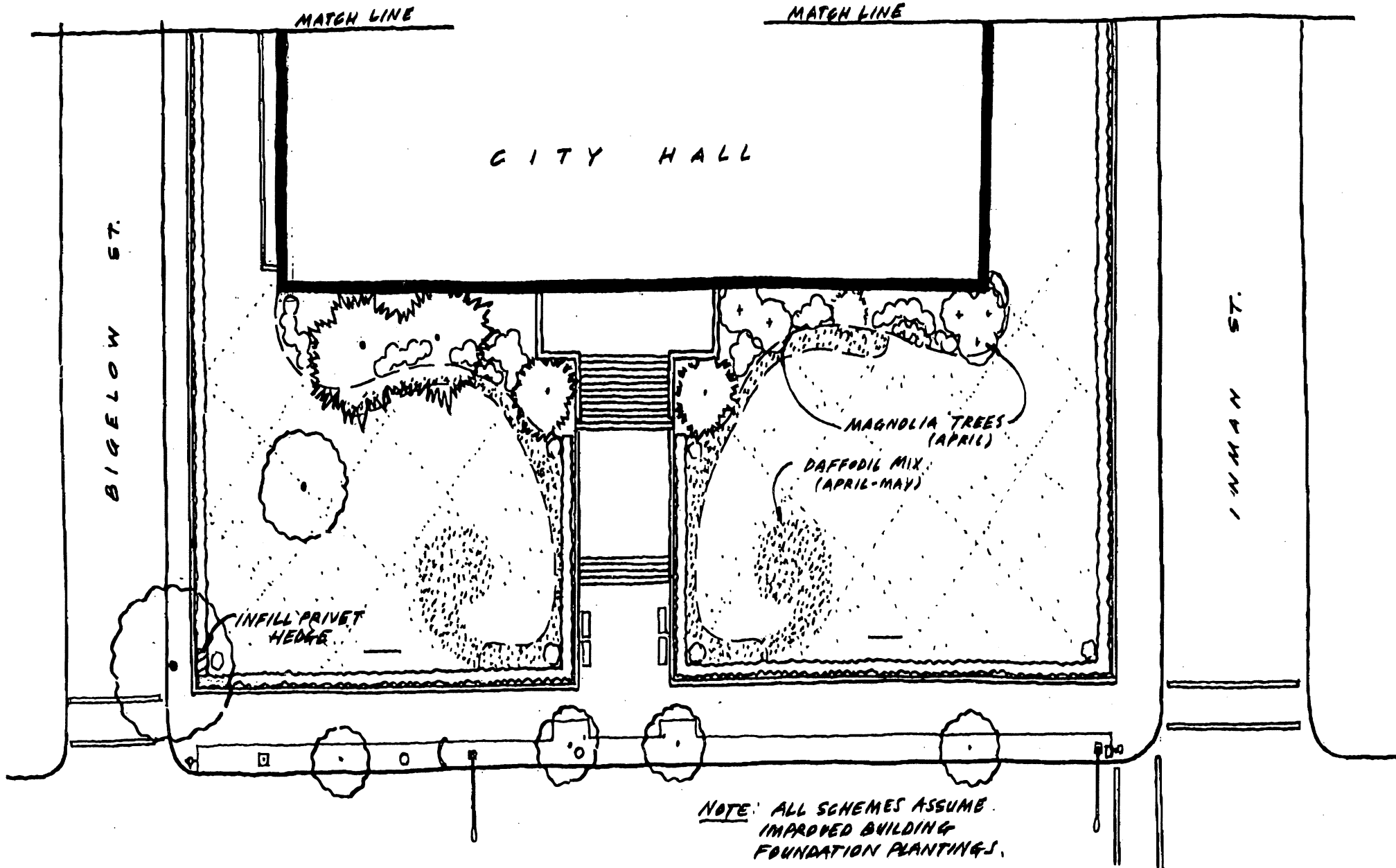
EXISTING SITE CONDITIONS

MASSACHUSETTS AVE.

①

APRIL 3RD 1994, M.F. MAZZARELLI





MATCH LINE

MATCH LINE

CITY HALL

BIGELOW ST.

INMAN ST.

INFILL PRIVET HEDGE

MAGNOLIA TREES (APRIL)

DAFFODIL MIX (APRIL-MAY)

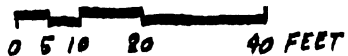
NOTE: ALL SCHEMES ASSUME IMPROVED BUILDING FOUNDATION PLANTINGS.

MASSACHUSETTS AVE.

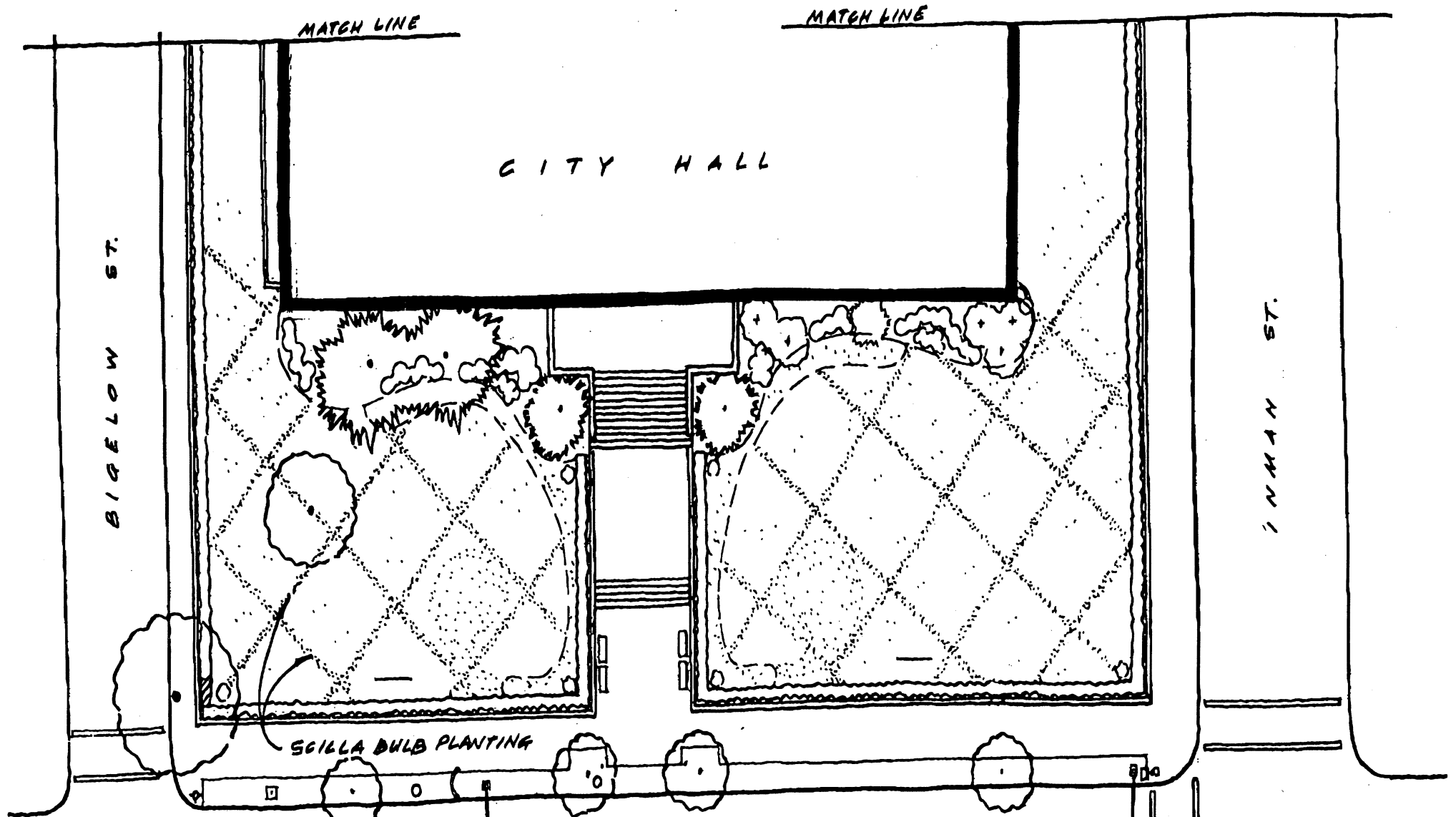
APRIL DAFFODIL BULBS

②

APRIL 6th 1994 M.F. MAZZARELLI



A-58



MATCH LINE

MATCH LINE

CITY HALL

BIGELOW ST.

INMAN ST.

SCILLA BULB PLANTING

NOTE: THIS SCHEME WORKS IN CONJUNCTION WITH SCHEME ② THE DAFFODIL BLOOM WOULD PRECEED THE SCILLA BULBS BY ONE-TWO WEEKS.

EARLY SPRING BULBS

MASSACHUSETTS

AVE.

③



0 5 10 20 40 FEET

APRIL 6TH 1994. M.F. MAZZARELLI

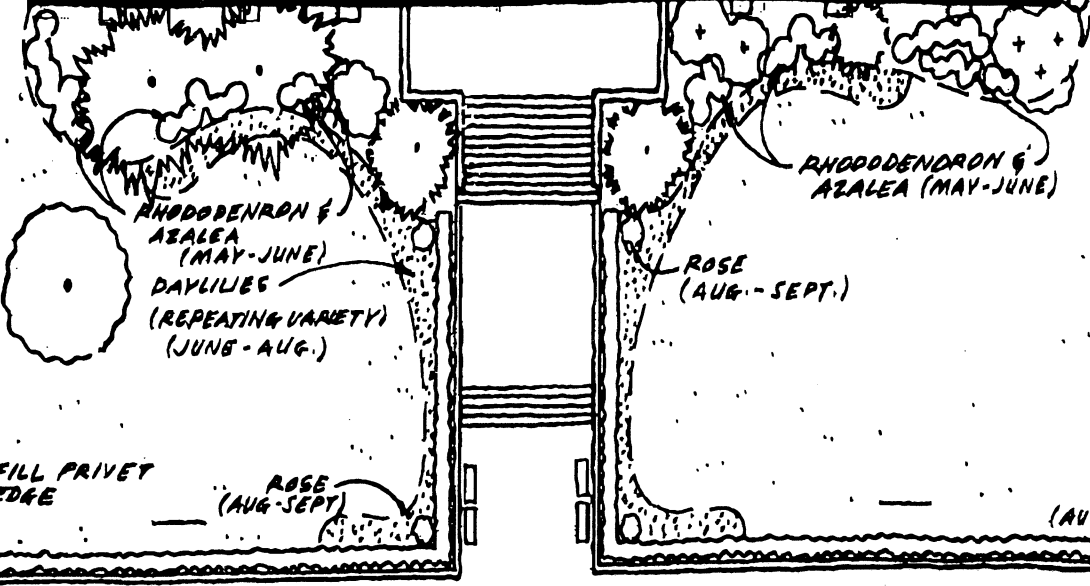
MATCH LINE

MATCH LINE

CITY HALL

BIGELOW ST.

INMAN ST.



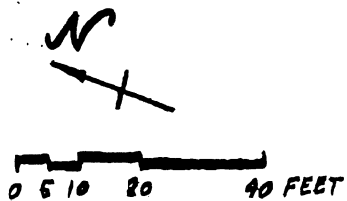
NOTE: THIS SCHEME WORKS IN CONJUNCTION WITH PREVIOUS SCHEMES 2 & 3, & USES PERENNIAL FLOWERS WITH DAYLILY PLANTING.

LATE SPRING & SUMMER

MASSACHUSETTS

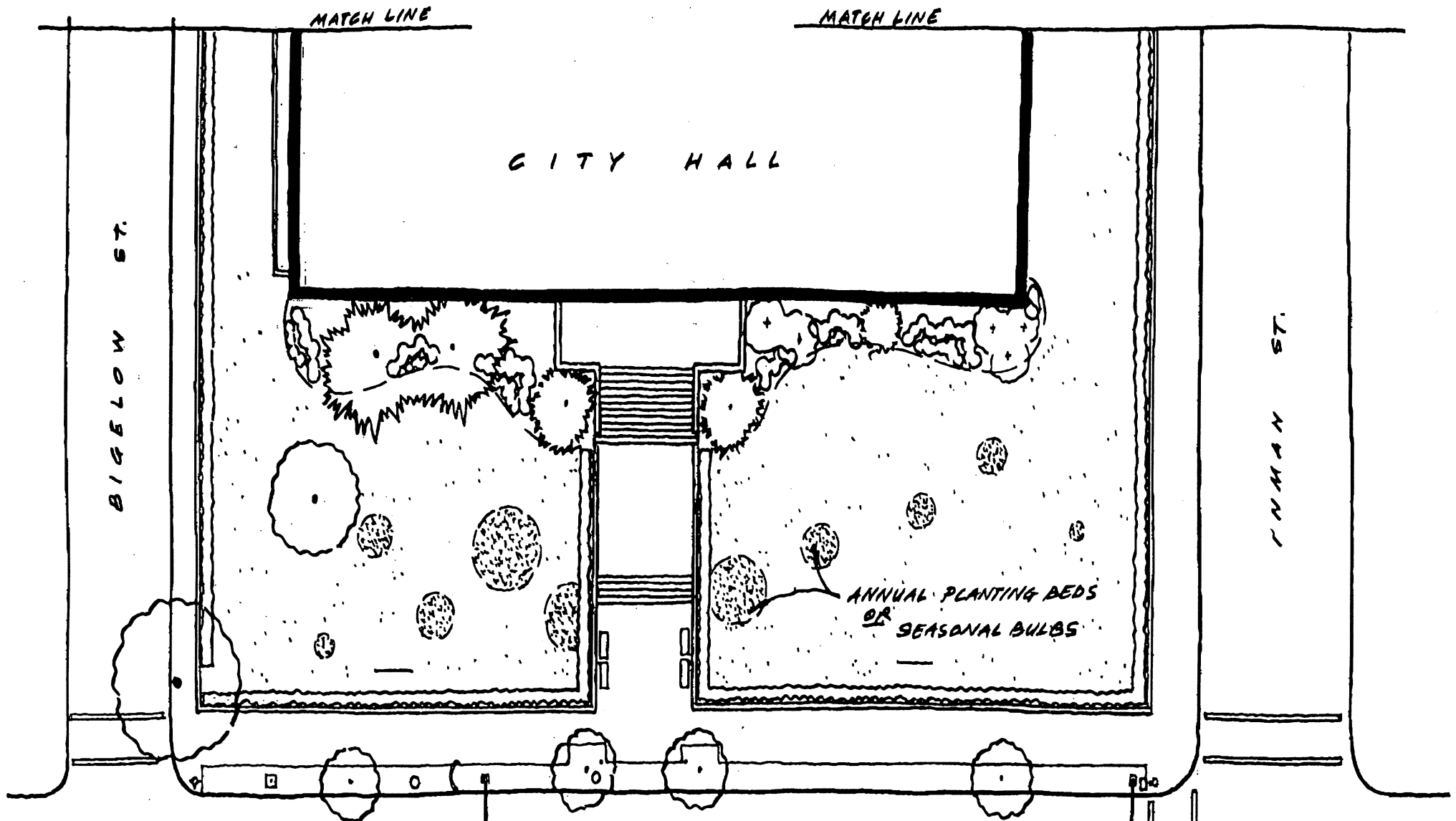
AVE.

4



APRIL 5th 1994. M.F. MAZZARELLI

A-60



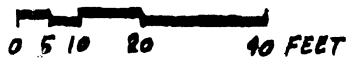
NOTE: SCHEME 5 & 6 ASSUME ANNUAL FLOWER PLANTING AND THE CREATION OF BEDS. SCHEMES WITH BULBS IN LAWN WILL NOT IMPACT EX. LAWN.

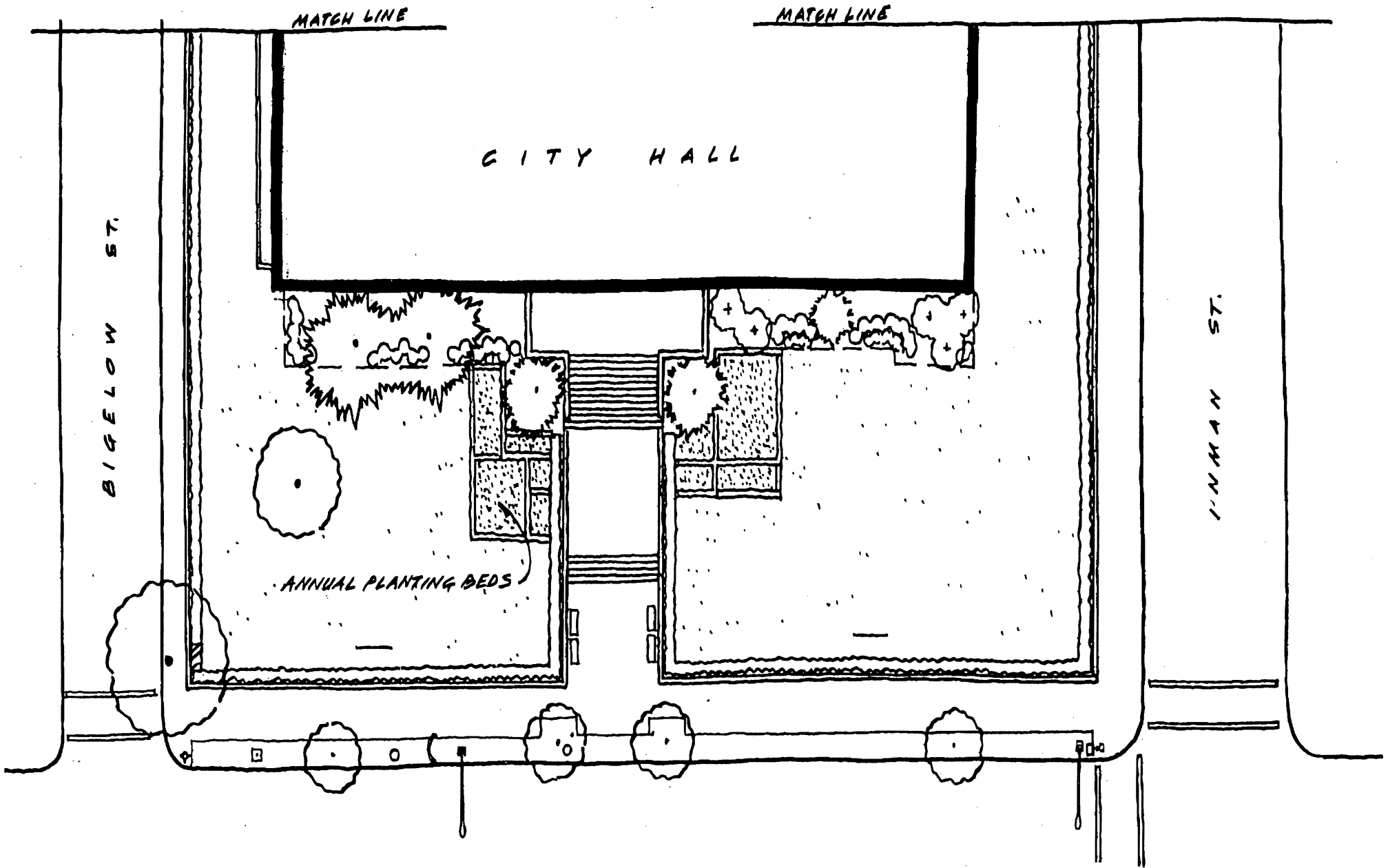
EARLY SPRING OR SUMMER

MASSACHUSETTS AVE.

(5)

APRIL 04 1994 M.F. MAZZARELLI



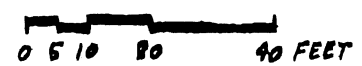


SUMMER ANNUALS

MASSACHUSETTS AVE.

⑥

APRIL 8TH 1994 M.F. MAZZARELLI



1
2

City of Cambridge

The Public Service Committee held a public meeting on July 16, 1996, beginning at 10:10 a.m. in the Ackermann Room for the purpose of discussing landscape and site improvements to the front of City Hall in preparation for Cambridge's 150th Anniversary Celebration.

Present at the hearing were Vice Mayor Kathleen L. Born, Chair of the Committee, Councillor Henrietta Davis, Councillor Francis H. Duehay, Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves and City Clerk D. Margaret Drury. Also present were Richard Rossi, Deputy City Manager; Ralph Dunphy, Commissioner of Public Works; Gerald Boyle, Supervisor of Public Construction, Department of Public Works; Charles Sullivan, Executive Director, Cambridge Historical Commission; Tahg Sweeney, architect, Donham and Sweeney; Mary Ellen Carvello, City Manager's Office, Paula Cortes, landscape architect, Cortes Associates, Bigelow Street, Scott Levitan, 11 Bigelow Street; Carolyn Wood, 34 Bigelow Street; and Chuck Colbert, 13 Cottage Street.

Vice Mayor Born convened the hearing and explained the purpose. Two changes are under consideration. One is the possible removal of the two spruce trees at the front of the building and the other is removal of the ivy from the front of the building. Vice Mayor Born stated that the issue has arisen in connection with the 150th celebration. It would be impossible to decorate the building with bunting without removing the trees, and it would be difficult to decorate without removing the ivy. Both the trees and the ivy have done damage to the building.

Vice Mayor Born requested that Richard Rossi report on the status. Mr. Rossi said that the City undertook a study of repairs needed for City Hall. Some projects have been completed. Restrooms have been renovated to be handicapped accessible. The tower was rehabbed; the clock was repaired. Stone repairs were done to the front of City Hall. There is a plan to add more parking for workers and customers, which has not been implemented. As part of the plans, there was a full landscaping plan which included removal of the ivy and some trees. The ivy has damaged the masonry. Mr. Rossi invited Gerry Boyle to make additional comments.

Gerry Boyle provided additional details regarding the work that has been done. The work has been phased because of cost. Phase one is almost completed. The rear of the building will be finished in four weeks.

Charles Sullivan, Executive Director of the Historical Commission, distributed historical pictures of City Hall, beginning in 1891, when there were no trees and no plantings, up through 1989, when the spruce trees were obviously overgrown. (Attachment A).

Tahg Sweeney discussed the planting. The planting committee strongly recommended that the hedges and the cucumber magnolia tree be retained.

Committee Report #7

S-382

A report from Vice Mayor Born
Chair, Public Service Committee,
for a meeting held on July 16, 1996
for the purpose of discussing
the petition for independent traffic
and environmental studies at and
surrounding the W. R. Grace site in
North Cambridge.

In City Council July 29, 1996

Report accepted.
Order adopted.