

Save Our Neighborhood

May 10, 1994

Cambridge City Council
City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

To the Honorable, the City Council:

In response to requests by individual councillors, I am forwarding herewith a copy of a recent **Save Our Neighborhood** circulated in the Cambridge neighborhood.

Cambridge neighbors have found this presentation to be particularly valid and convincing. Many feel it echoes their own concerns. Some have already been in contact with individual councillors by phone on these issues.

I especially draw your attention to the Youville Hospital example. Excellent Hospital administrations, with all the best intentions, can sometimes go overboard. Unfortunately, both they and the neighborhood pay the price for generations.

We appreciate your attention, and look forward to speaking with you in the future.

Sincerely yours,

Joseph Manley
Chairman SON

Attachment

JPM/hd



Save Our Neighborhood

May 4, 1994

Dear Neighbor,

As many of you know, there are several of us in the neighborhood who are actively working to reduce the scope, put a hold on, or stop the Cambridge Hospital expansion. Would you please take a few moments to read this and then possibly follow through with some suggestions?

We would first like to mention that SON is the group that is most active in the concerns of the immediate neighborhood. Most of us are disaffected members of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association and we are aware that there are a large number of MCNAers who do not favor the expansion.

OUR REASONS FOR OPPOSING THE HOSPITAL PROJECT AS PLANNED:

1. At present, major successful hospitals are closing sections of their facilities, merging with compatible hospitals, and significantly reducing medical personnel. What effect will Health Care Reform have in the future? Wouldn't it be wiser to wait and see?

2. There has been obvious unchecked expansion of Cambridge Hospital. In the past ten years the Macht Center was renovated for the sole use as private Doctors' offices, the reason at that time as well as now being to provide a better mix at the Hospital. The Hospital has since completely occupied this large building itself. It has also added onto the main building, moved into at least 3 locations in the neighborhood (Remember the Erikson Center!), and then let's not forget the "temporary" Trailer Park out back. The rate of increase in the population of Cambridge does not explain this growth, especially with expansions at Mount Auburn Hospital during the same time frame. What is growing, for whose medical benefit, and does it belong in our neighborhood?

3. Does it belong in our neighborhood? It has been proposed that the City could obtain property at the CASPAR/Simplex site near MIT where a subway stop has been approved by the State, and there are already plans for a nearby garage. Bad public transport along Cambridge Street does not argue for the expansion as planned, neither does our congested neighborhood. If management and all psychiatric services were moved, would this not seem a more reasonable solution? The CASPAR/Simplex site does not have an immediate neighborhood to plague!

4. Is a parking garage necessary? This is a good time for the hospitals in Cambridge to consider an effective shuttle service for patients and employees, as well as subsidized T passes, and other incentives. Their attempts in the past have been lackluster at best.

5. Past experience with Youville's expansion of their School of Nursing is comparable with our current dilemma. This resulted in an enormous building and auditorium (compared to the original school) which was stopped short of being put in our backyards by the City Council. Visible to us, it has been under-utilized and the School has apparently failed, leaving Youville administrators floundering for a new use for this building. Do we need another mistake of this magnitude?

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6. Although this expansion affects all Cambridge Taxpayers, it is unfortunate that it is always the immediate neighbors who wind up taking a hard look at the impact. This is all occurring while City employees will not see a pay increase due to City budget constraints. We do not wish the Hospital any hardship, but we do think there are serious questions about their use of space, what their projected needs will be in the future, and if there are not better sites and/or mergers available. 40 million dollars makes weighing all the options a necessity. The project is already 6 million dollars over budget and has not even started yet.

7. The one NIMBY issue is that 5 years of construction is going to make life unbearable, especially for those of us who work at home during the week. There has already been flight. Even if every consideration is taken, (and that has not been effectively done in the past) it will still be a nightmare of noise, dust, trucks and increased parking.

In summation, we need to make a very strong and PERSONAL appeal to the City Council to re-evaluate its decision. Is this a wise move to make at this time and is there not a more favorable site for future expansion? If we cannot get a reasonable response from the City Council, our recourse then is to appeal to the Public Health Department's Determination of Need hearing. We already have legal representation extended for free, but we would like to spare the City any further expense, and everyone the added stress.

We want to make an even stronger appeal to you. We are very aware that there are many, many of you out there but so far only a very small percentage have taken any action. We need to speak up TOGETHER IN NUMBERS.

If you agree with our position, we are asking you to write the City Council, or call them. Do whatever you can do to contact the City Council and/or individual Councillors to strongly urge them to reconsider. Since this is a citywide issue we feel that input from all residents across Cambridge would be extremely valuable. If you can do more, please call friends and see if they could also act. It is going to take a GREAT EFFORT to get the Council to recognize what we see as a mistake. The largest possible number of us at crucial Council hearings and votes in May will make a big difference. We will send you flyers with the dates. Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Mary McKinnon

Mary McKinnon
19 Leonard Ave.

Libby Barringer

Libby Barringer
4 Leonard Ave.

John Clark

John Clark
4 Leonard Ave.

SON Neighborhood Coordinators

Write to: Cambridge City Council
City Hall
795 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Call: 349-4280 (all Councillors)
FAX: 349-4287 " "

Councillors: Mayor Kenneth Reeves, Sheila Russell, Tim Toomey (722-2220 or home: 576-6483), Frank Duehay (547-0271), Kathy Born 491-BORN, Jonathan Meyers, Michael Sullivan, Katherine Triantafilou, Bill Walsh (547-1772 or FAX 491-0923).

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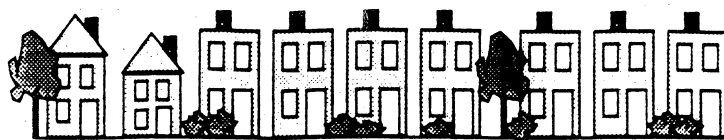
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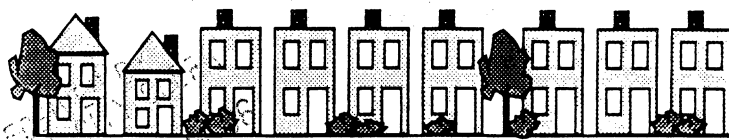
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Ms. Margaret Drury
Cambridge City Clerk
City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

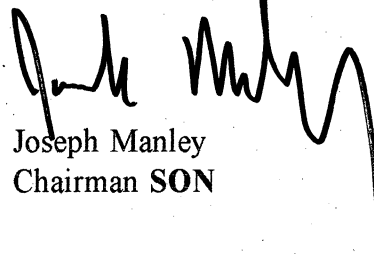
Dear Ms. Drury:

I hereby request that the enclosed letter and attachment be incorporated into the permanent records of the Cambridge City Council.

Because the attachment is printed "front and back", I attach 2 copies to avoid any difficulties in reproduction of the document.

As always, we appreciate your assistance and cooperation.

Sincerely yours,



Joseph Manley
Chairman SON

Attachments (2)

JPM/hd

Consent Communication # 1

Comm. from Joseph Manley, Chair of the ⁸⁻²³⁸
Save Our Neighborhood, regarding the
expansion of the Cambridge Hospital.

In City Council,

May 16, 1994

Placed on file