

The City Council of Cambridge
c/o The City Clerk
City Hall
Central Square
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Mass. 02139

1 June 2000

To the Honorable Members of the City Council of Cambridge:

Please save the Charles River white geese. Please help restore their nesting site in the goose meadow.

Not only are these geese endangered by changes made to the meadow, but, in the long term, the quality of life of the city of Cambridge is threatened by the current and prospective changes here to the landscape which affect the natural green space available to local wildlife and to those that treasure local wildlife and use such areas for passive recreation.

The wholesale alteration of the nesting area of the geese appears to be linked to planned construction of new T (train) lines and T stops for the proposed Urban Ring. But the destruction of the area where the geese nest was undertaken apparently without public notice—it was simply executed. I believe that those who undertook this project ought to be required by the City to restore what had been a natural wild to its former state.

As a Cambridge resident who neither owns a car nor knows how to drive and who therefore depends on public transportation, I certainly favor the Urban Ring. But the possibility of a T stop near the goose meadow would not, in my view, truly resolve the need for increased access to the T. Construction of a T stop there may well raise land values in the eyes of developers and bring further physical alteration to the landscape in the form of new buildings, probably high-priced residential structures. Would this change serve current residents of the City? No, in my view, although it would serve developers. Not any more, in my view, than changes there have served the white geese nesting along the Charles. Winged or not, such biped residents may be forced out of Cambridge, as others have been before them.

Arguments lodged against the Charles River white geese have included that they bring disease dangerous to human beings and that they are not native to the area. To the first argument I respond that the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta, Georgia, has said that these geese are not a health hazard and that the Massachusetts Department of Fisheries and Wildlife has said that the goose poop offers no danger to human beings. To the second argument I respond with a question: Who among us is native here? We—or our ancestors—all come from elsewhere, which has been a fundamental tenet of America society, a tenet that itself is now becoming an endangered species.

Sincerely yours,

Ellin Sarot

Ellin Sarot
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Consent Communication #25 1595

A communication was received from
Ellin Sarot, relative to the
Charles River white geese.

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In City Council June 5, 2000

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