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CAMBRIDGE MA.

89 Irving Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

October 17, 1995

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

Dear Ms. Drury:

Enclosed are an original and three copies of written testimony which I am submitting in connection with the public hearing regarding truck traffic to be held by the City Council on Monday, October 23, 1995 at 7:00 p.m.

Sincerely,



Thomas B. Bracken

TBB/jw
Enc.

PUBLIC TESTIMONY

To: The Cambridge City Council

Re: Public hearing on truck traffic on residential streets
Monday, October 23, 1995

My name is Thomas B. Bracken and I live at 89 Irving Street. Upon recently moving into my home, which is two houses from Kirkland Street, my wife and I became aware of loud noises and strong vibrations caused by 18 wheelers and other large trucks on Kirkland Street, particularly beginning at about 5:00 a.m. We have noticed that some of these trucks are carrying hazardous cargos and many frequently exceed the speed limit, thereby posing a safety risk to people in the area, including children waiting for school buses at the corner of Irving and Kirkland Streets. An investigation by concerned neighbors, confirmed by the City's Traffic and Parking Department, indicates that many of the trucks are not making local deliveries, but, instead, are long-haul carriers going from Route 93 and the McGrath Highway to the Mass. Pike, using Kirkland, Brattle, Mount Auburn and other City streets as a short-cut through Cambridge instead of either circling the City on Route 128 or using the City streets specifically designated as truck routes.

This problem will get even worse when the Central Artery/Charles River Crossing Project is completed because the City of Boston bans trucks carrying hazardous and flammable products from tunnels. The City has stated that this ban will apply to the Artery tunnel despite the fact that it will utilize sophisticated, state-of-the-art ventilation and sprinkler systems. This means that trucks carrying these products, which currently use the elevated Central Artery to reach the Mass Pike and the Southeast Expressway, will not be able to travel on the Artery when it is depressed. We can expect that the alternative route for many of them will be through Cambridge since trucks travelling south on Route I-93 with destinations to the south and west of Boston will be required to get off I-93 before they reach the Charles River Crossing. It seems inevitable that many of these trucks will use the Kirkland - Brattle - Mount Auburn Streets route to reach their destinations. Moreover, it can be expected that trucks carrying flammable cargo from the petroleum tank farms in Everett, Chelsea and East

Boston to destinations south and west of the City also will use City streets to reach Routes 2, 3 and 128 and the Mass. Pike when they no longer will be allowed on the Artery. This increased truck traffic will exacerbate the already serious noise, air pollution and safety problems created by trucks on residential streets.

Several years ago, the City's Traffic and Parking Department recommended to the City Council that it ban trucks over 2.5 tons from Kirkland Street. The Traffic Department determined that such a ban would not shift traffic to other residential streets in the area because large trucks would not find nearby through streets, including Broadway and Cambridge Street, convenient for fast travel through the City. The City Council voted to approve the ban and submitted it to the Massachusetts Department of Highways for approval as required by State law. However, the State disapproved the proposed ban, because it found the alternative route proposed by the Traffic Department was "too circuitous and to be of a disadvantage to truck traffic."

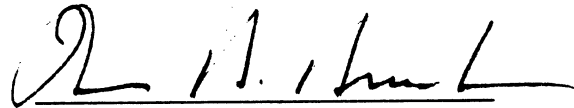
The alternate proposal was that trucks use: "Mass. Avenue to Main Street to the western connector to Binny Street to Commercial Avenue to McGrath Highway." It seems that this proposed alternative was not reasonable because it would have required all truck traffic to go through Harvard Square, making dangerously sharp angled turns and causing further congestion in an area already heavily clogged with cars and trucks making local deliveries. Also, the alternative route did not show a connection with the Mass. Pike.

I believe that a viable alternate route connecting Route 93 and/or the McGrath Highway with the Mass. Pike would be from Commercial Avenue to Binny Street to the Western Connector to Main Street, then a short distance along Mass. Avenue to Western Avenue/River Street (depending on the direction of travel) across the Charles River to the Mass. Pike at the Alston toll booth. A better solution would be to build the proposed Waverly Connector between Mass. Avenue and the B.U. Bridge, and thereby eliminate all truck use of River Street/Western Avenue. If this is not done, significant noise/vibration relief to the residents would be provided if trucks were banned on Kirkland Street between 7:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m. as they now are on River Street and Western Avenue. Finally, if trucks are not banned from Kirkland Street, I

suggest that consideration be given to dispersing the nuisance among the residential neighborhoods, i.e. banning trucks on Kirkland on alternate days at which time they could use the Western Avenue/River Street route and banning the trucks on Western Avenue/River Street on the days they are allowed to use Kirkland Street.

I urge the Council to address this problem at the earliest opportunity and to seek approval from the State of restrictions on truck traffic on residential streets which will provide significant relief to many people now suffering from the noises and vibrations caused by trucks in their neighborhoods and reduce the risk of bodily injury caused by trucks carrying hazardous and flammable products.

Dated: October 17, 1995

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'T. B. Bracken', written over a horizontal line.

Thomas B. Bracken

Consent Communication #6

S-325

Communication was received from
Thomas B. Bracken, 88 Irving
Street, transmitting written
testimony in connection with the
public hearing regarding truck
traffic.

In City Council October 23, 1955

*Referred to the 7:00 p.m.
hearing*