



MID CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD CONSERVATION DISTRICT COMMISSION

Cambridge Historical Commission, City Hall Annex, 57 Inman Street; Cambridge, Massachusetts, 02139, 617 498-9040.

Constance R. Hsia, *Chairman*; Ed Feinman, *Vice Chairman*; Charles M. Sullivan, *Secretary*.
Paul Andrew, Joseph Sakey, Michael VanValkenburg, *Commission Members*.
Janice Campbell, Frankie Lieberman, Andrew Oldman, *Alternates*.

13 February 1986

To the Honorable, the City Council:

On 21 January 1986, the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission held its first semi-annual neighborhood meeting as required by the order establishing the District. The purpose of the meeting was to review the programs and activities of the Commission, as well as to solicit comments and recommendations from the community.

The Commission feels that the meeting was very successful because it provided an opportunity to explain more fully our review authority, especially how it affects new construction. In addition, we received a number of positive suggestions which were helpful to us.

Enclosed are the memorandum which was read at the meeting and the minutes of the proceedings. Please accept these as the summary report required by the Mid Cambridge order. The Commission is pleased to be able to serve the Mid Cambridge community, and we ask the City Council to continue to support our efforts.

Yours,

Constance R. Hsia

Constance R. Hsia
Chairman



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To: Residents of Mid Cambridge

From: Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation
District Commission

Re: Programs and Activities of the Commission since its
Establishment in July, 1985

Date: 21 January 1985

The Commission has met on the third Tuesday of each month since its establishment on 1 July 1985. At their first meeting, the members elected Constance R. Hsia as Chairman and Ed Feinman as Vice Chairman.

A. Design Review

The Commission has reviewed two cases since July. The first case was for the demolition of the west wing of Youville Hospital on Cambridge Street and for the construction of replacement buildings. The review took two months to complete mostly because of the monumental scale of the project. The Commission issued a binding Certificate of Hardship to the Hospital with conditions concerning the design of the facade, the landscaping plan and the parking scheme. The Certificate also incorporated the agreement between the Ten Taxpayer Groups and the Hospital.

The second case was 12 Bigelow Street which is located in the Bigelow Street National District. A non-binding Certificate of Appropriateness was issued to the owner to install a window on the third floor of the front gable.

In addition, the staff has issued nine Certificates of Non-applicability for projects which did not require full review by the Commission. A record of the type of work done has been helpful to the Commission to determine what kind of exterior changes are taking place in the District, so as to better direct their education programs.

B. Education Program

The Commission has sent an introductory letter to all the property owners in the District. The letter discussed the review authority of the Commission as well as the application process.

The major project of the Commission is the preparation of a rehabilitation booklet for homeowners. Selected parts of the booklet may be run as a newspaper series.

The Commission is considering a number of other projects for the future including a school outreach program.

C. Budget

The Commission has a budget of \$10,000 for its education program. \$2,500 of this amount is dedicated to staff time for the year. In addition, the order establishing the District requires that costs for notifications of public hearing come from the budget. To date about \$700 has been spent on notifications and the education program. This leaves the Commission \$6,800, part of which will be applied to notification expenses for future public hearings and to the publication of the rehabilitation booklet.

Minutes of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation
District Commission

21 January 1986

Members Present: Ms. Hsia, Mr. Feinman, Mr. Andrew,
Ms. Campbell, Ms. Lieberman, Mr. Oldman,
Mr. Sakey

Staff Present: Ms. Woodford, Ms. Doonan

Members of the Public: see attached list

Neighborhood Meeting

The Chairman, Commission and Staff introduced themselves to the public, and Ms. Hsia opened the meeting saying that the order establishing the Mid Cambridge District required that the Commission hold semi-annual neighborhood meetings to review its programs and activities and to solicit comments and recommendations from the the residents. Ms. Hsia said that the Commission has reviewed two cases since its establishment in July. The first involved the lengthy, but successful review of the new buildings at Youville Hospital. Ms. Hsia acknowledged Vincent Dixon's contribution in resolving the parking issues in the case. The second was a non-binding determination for 12 Bigelow street which is in the National Register of Historic Places. Ms. Hsia described the educational program saying that the first step was to send a letter to all property owners in the District informing them of the Commission's review authority and describing review procedures. In addition, she said, the Commission was preparing a home rehabilitation booklet and was contemplating an outreach program for Longfellow School. Ms. Hsia then reviewed the budget saying that of the \$10,000 appropriated, \$2,500 was dedicated to staff time, and the

rest was put towards notifications for public hearings, the introductory letter, the booklet and other future educational programs.

Ms. Hsia asked if any of the Commission members wanted to address the meeting. Ms. Campbell remarked that the Commission has had a difficult time getting the Inspectional Services Department to forward all building permit applications as required. City Council member David Sullivan replied that he has spoken twice to the City Manager about the problem and was concerned that it be resolved.

Ms. Hsia opened the meeting to the public for questions and comments. Joan Lorentz of 419 Broadway and member of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Association said that she was pleased that the Commission was finally established and suggested that it put out an illustrated flyer describing its functions and programs. She also suggested that the Commission send a letter to the City Council recounting its successful resolution of the Youville Hospital case and that Youville Hospital publicize the positive outcome as well.

Larry Lentz of Youville Hospital said that the Hospital was pleased with the outcome of the review procedure, but that the timing of the review had been the greatest dilemma. Ms. Woodford remarked that the Commission had sent out a press release at the conclusion of the case, and Ms. Hsia said that a memo to the City Council was a good idea.

Jack Haverty, Jr. of 19 Ellsworth Avenue asked how long the review process took. Ms. Woodford replied that applications for a certificate were reviewed as soon as they were received and that a Certificate of Non-applicability would be issued within 48 hours, and most likely immediately. For those projects which required full review, applications were reviewed within 45 days, and usually in less than a month. Scott Levitan of 11 Bigelow Street asked what were the criteria for design review. Ms. Hsia said that the general criteria were to avoid excessive infill and to preserve the character and quality of the neighborhood, and that specific criteria considered were site layout, parking provisions, volume, scale and dimensions of the building and provisions for open space and landscaping. Mr. Haverty asked if the Commission was against town house construction. Ms. Hsia said no, that each case was decided on its own merits using the review criteria as a guideline. Ms. Hsia entreated Mr. Haverty and any other prospective developers to come to the Commission with their design before applying for a building permit so as to not cause any undue delays in the project.

Bob Richards of 76 Antrim Street asked how residents were notified for public hearings. Ms. Woodford replied that the names of property owners were taken from the Assessor's list and that the names of tenants and residents were taken from the Election Commission's list as specified in the legislation.

Ms. Hsia thanked everyone for attending and for their questions and recommendations.

Mr. Sakey moved to adjourn. Mr. Feinman seconded the motion, and it passed unanimously. The meeting was adjourned at 6:45 PM.

Members of the Public

<u>Name</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Affiliation</u>
Larry Lentz		Youville Hospital
Vince Dixon	287 Harvard St.	citizen
Erika Smiltens	51 Amory St.	citizen
Juris Smiltens	51 Amory St.	citizen
Deirdre Morris	37 Highland Ave.	citizen
Richard Makman	9 Lee St.	Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Assoc.
Hanld McEmen	84 Ellery St.	MCNA
David Sullivan	323 Allston St.	City Council
Joan Lorentz	419 Broadway	citizen, former MCNA chair
John C. Haverty	19 Ellsworth Ave.	Retired citizen
Jack Haverty, Jr.	19 Ellsworth Ave.	citizen
Scott Levitan	11 Bigelow St.	property owner
Bob Richards	76 Antrim St.	self
Kathy A. Speigelman	57 Orchard St.	self



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
TEL. 498-9011

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
ROBERT W. HEALY
City Manager

RICHARD C. ROSSI
Deputy City Manager

February 24, 1986

To the Honorable, the City Council:

Enclosed please find copy of the initial report of the Mid Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission as required by the order establishing the District

Very truly yours,

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

RWH/mbf
Enc.

Agenda Item No. 3 *S-120*

Re: copy of the initial report of the Mid
Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District
Commission as required by order establish-
ing the District.

In City Council,

February 24, 1986

2/24/1986
Placed on File -