



# City of Cambridge

(Calendar Item No. 18)

IN CITY COUNCIL

May 23, 1983

COUNCILLOR DAVID SULLIVAN

- WHEREAS: On May 2, the Harvard student-faculty Committee on Housing approved a plan allowing off-campus students to remain affiliated with their original Houses, in order to create incentives for students to move off campus; and
- WHEREAS: According to press accounts, Harvard University is continuing to consider other steps to encourage students to move off campus; and
- WHEREAS: The City of Cambridge remains opposed to any steps which encourage more students to compete with other Cambridge residents for increasingly scarce low and moderate income housing, a view expressed most recently in Council Order No. 23 of November 8, 1982; and
- WHEREAS: In response to that Order, Harvard Vice-President Robin Schmidt, by letter of November 15, 1982, promised to discuss any such steps with the city before implementing them; therefore be it
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In City Council May 23, 1983.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of 8 members.

Attest:- Paul E. Healy, City Clerk.

A true copy;

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# College Acts to Increase Allure of Off-Campus Life

By GILBERT FUCHSBERG

A long-discussed and controversial proposal aimed at increasing incentives for students to try off-campus living gained approval yesterday from the student-faculty Committee on Housing.

Although the proposal calls for a seemingly minor change in policy, officials said that yesterday's action was part of a major effort to alleviate crowding in on-campus housing, which has reached unprecedented levels in recent years.



JOHN B. FOX JR., '59

Moreover, officials said the change holds major significance for the future of Dudley House, which the College is reevaluating this year as part of an overall review of the status of Harvard's nonresident students.

Under the approved plan, students moving off-campus who have already lived in one of the 12 residential Houses for at least a year will be allowed to remain affiliated with their original House, rather than automatically shifting to Dudley House for advising and other House services.

Previously, only seniors who moved off campus could remain affiliated with their original House.

By giving more students the option to move off-campus and still retain social and administrative ties with their original Houses, most officials believed, the College would make fewer undergraduates uncomfortable about voluntarily moving off campus.

The issue of nonresident students has attracted attention this year partly because unusual on-campus housing shortages had deprived some students of any opportunity to live in the Houses.

But despite the committee's endorsement of the change as a solution to the crowding problem, the two most senior officials of Dudley House, who were not present at yesterday's meeting, have both criticized the new policy.

Arthur M. Loeb, acting master of Dudley House, told the committee at a recent meeting that allowing a greater number of students to move off-campus and retain affiliation would

(continued on page 6)

CRIM, 5/13/83 p. 1, 1

# Housing

(continued from page 1)

undermine Dudley's ability to remain a "stabilizing force" for nonresident students.

And Dudley House Senior tutor John R. Marquand, in a memorandum to the committee last month, said that the potential decrease in Dudley's population resulting from the change could hurt Dudley's effectiveness as an advising and social center for off-campus undergraduates.

Dean of the College John B. Fox Jr. '59, who chairs the committee but who did not cast a vote on the issue, said after the meeting that the concerns expressed by Loeb and Marquand were "reasonable, but we'll have to see if they materialize or not."

Fox added that other changes in Dudley House's structure and services—including the possible use of the House for nonresident graduate students—are still under consideration, and should be viewed upon completion as a package before single elements such as yesterday's policy change are evaluated.

The Faculty Council—the Faculty's executive steering committee—and other officials will complete their discussions of the other nonresident issues before the start of classes in the fall, Fox said.

While officials refused to speculate yesterday on the change's potential effects on Dudley's population, the Faculty committee on nonresident life that earlier this term recommended the policy change noted that about 85 percent of the seniors who currently move off campus choose to retain their former House

## The Harvard Crimson

affiliation.

Marquand predicted that the change would translate, over the next several years, into a decrease by at least one-third in Dudley's undergraduate enrollment, which currently stands at about 350 students.

He also cited the change's potential of giving off-campus life "a negative reputation throughout the College," by creating a situation in which nonresidents will feel cut off from the traditional community of nonresident students.

### Strange and Unusual

Of the new juniors who have a choice between Dudley and retaining affiliation with their original Houses, Marquand wrote: "Who among such students will opt for the unfamiliar over the familiar? Virtually none. Yet they will rapidly come to feel...very strange and unusual as one of a small minority of nonresident students affiliated with their former House of residence."

Both Loeb and Marquand had proposed other incentives to decrease fears associated with moving off-campus which did not change the current rules on retaining House affiliation.

The amendments, however, failed to gain support from committee members before yesterday.

When told of the committee's decision yesterday, Marquand refused to comment. Loeb could not be reached for comment.

Several committee members yesterday explained that their decision was aimed at maximizing student choice and at the same time was a vote of confidence in Dudley House's ability to provide adequate services for nonresident students who do not choose to retain their original House affiliation.

Earlier this year, College officials raised a variety of proposals to be considered over the course of this term's review, including one that called for Dudley to be eliminated entirely.



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
**COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

City Hall Annex      Inman & Broadway      EXTENSION 344

**To** Robert W. Healy, City Manager

**From** *KA* Kathy A. Spiegelman, Assistant City  
Manager for Community Development

**Date** November 16, 1982

**Subject** City Council Awaiting Report Item #26

Attached please find a letter from Robin Schmidt, Vice President for Government and Community Affairs at Harvard University, regarding an article in the November 5th edition of the Harvard Crimson suggesting room rents be raised to encourage students to live off-campus.

Mr. Schmidt indicates that no such proposal is currently being considered by the university administration. Mr. Schmidt has also agreed to discuss with us proposals which are considered relative to off-campus housing for students.

Attachment

# HARVARD UNIVERSITY

ROBIN SCHMIDT  
Vice President

MASSACHUSETTS HALL  
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138  
617-495-1703

November 15, 1982

Ms. Kathy Spiegelman  
Assistant City Manager  
Cambridge Community Development  
57 Inman Street  
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Kathy,

As a follow up to our conversation Tuesday, I write regarding Harvard's policy on non-resident undergraduate students. As you know, unlike most urban universities, the majority of our undergraduate population, approximately 86%, lives on campus and is assigned to the various dormitories, which are regarded as the centers of undergraduate life.

This year Dean John Fox of the College has chosen to focus his Annual Report on a discussion of how Harvard might best serve its small population of commuter students. College administrators are concerned that off-campus residents may not be receiving the full benefits of a Harvard education because of their distance from many student events.

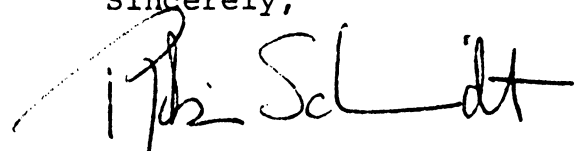
In addition, the Admissions Office, at the urging of various members of the University, is looking at ways to increase the number of local students accepted to Harvard College, particularly from public high schools in Cambridge and Boston. One way to offer more local students acceptance is on a commuter basis.

At this time no specific proposals have been approved by Dean Fox and no committee exists to consider radical alterations in our existing policy.

Increasing room rents specifically to encourage more students to move out of the Houses into off-campus quarters is not, as the Crimson article of 11/5/82 suggests, being considered. In fact, a program of extensive renovations to the Houses is currently underway which, when completed, will considerably improve on-campus housing for undergraduates, thereby making it more desirable.

I am fully aware of your concern about any change in Harvard policy which would result in increased competition for already scarce housing. Therefore, when Dean Fox completes his report, I will discuss specific proposals with him and you so that all can be assured that there will be no unintended negative impact on Cambridge residents.

Sincerely,

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Robin Schmidt  
Vice President for  
Government and  
Community Affairs

RS:mr



# City of Cambridge

23.

IN CITY COUNCIL

November 8, 1982

COUNCILLOR GRAHAM

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- ORDERED:** That the Assistant City Manager be and hereby is directed to meet as soon as possible with the officials of Harvard University who are concerned with this proposal and report back to this City Council the results of this conference without delay.

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TABLED ON MOTION OF COUNCILLOR CLINTON. COPIES TO ALL COUNCILLORS.

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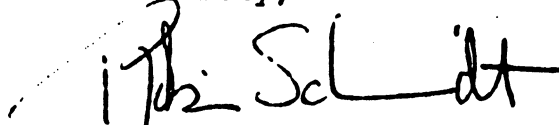
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Order # 9 #18 F-145

C.D. Sullivan order re: in opposition to the  
May 2, 1983 plan of the Harvard student-  
faculty Committee on Housing plan to allow  
off-campus students to move off campus.

5/23/83

C.D. Sullivan moved  
this item from the  
table  
to the agenda from Hrd  
at objection  
#18 order adopted  
EDJR/AF/A  
see order by Mayor Velloci

In City Council,

May 16, 1983

CVT

- Order Tracked -  
By C. Clinton -  
Copies to all  
City Councilors  
OF  
Housing Plan off Campus