

RECEIVED BY
OFFICE OF CITY CLERK
BELLIS CIRCLE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION

1989 JUN -8 AM 11:38
CAMBRIDGE MA.

40 BELLIS CIRCLE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02140
TEL. (617) 253-0155

5 Jun 1989

Steve Davis
Massachusetts EPA
100 Cambridge Street - 20th floor
Boston, Massachusetts 02208

Dear Steve,

I am writing to comment on the ENF for the Alewife Immediate Action (EOEA #7700) on behalf of the Bellis Circle Neighborhood Association, of which I am chair.

I have had an opportunity to read both the ENF and Mr. Stephen H. Kaiser's remarks on it. I have followed this area and its issues for most of the 15 years I have lived in North Cambridge, including as a member of the Mystic River Watershed Association and now as Co-Chair of the Cambridge Citizens for Liveable Neighborhoods, a city-wide coalition of neighborhood associations. I have testified at several opportunities, including to a sympathetic Bill Geary advocating state open-space acquisition of a portion of the properties involved (the Babo's & Lehigh sites as a Emerald-Necklace-like linkage from the Alewife Reservation to the New Street Park). In my view, the proposed roadway has little to recommend it at all; in particular it achieves virtually nothing and does so at high cost both in dollar and environmental terms.

The dollar and environmental costs are cast as an analysis of cost-effectiveness - *i.e.* the best expenditure of funds conditional on an assumption of road-building, rather than on cost-benefit - *i.e.* the valuation of the fundamental usefulness of the proposal over its life-cycle and across its entire region of impact. While that eases a methodologic burden, it fails to see the forest for the trees. However, even the more modest goals of cost-effectiveness analysis can be enabled by fully costing the project, especially were there an open and public intent to apportion those costs to their beneficiaries alone.

That is what is especially troubling, the blindingly poor quality of the cost accounting in this project. Look at the DEIR for this project - it pays so little attention to costs that are anywhere outside the narrow envelope of the roadway build itself. It is as if roadway building is an unqualified good, and amelioration of its side effects is the only open question. This is ludicrous. My neighborhood fronts *only* on Sherman Street, a two lane city street that already serves as an overflow corridor for the knowledgeable Route 2

avoider. Moving the bottleneck from the Dewey & Almy intersection to the Fresh Pond Rotary will immediately and adversely affect us. Already, rush hour traffic interacting with the Fitchburg-bound commuter rail results in backups that lock us into our street. Increasing the apparent value of Sherman Street to the commuter is antithetical to our neighborhood interests, and to other abutters on Sherman Street. We are certain that residents of Walden Street, Concord Avenue, Garden Street, *etc.*, share our views and fears.

I can provide examples replete enough to ensure this letter is too long to read. Accept my word for them - the sacrificing of human scale, clean air, the integrity of the Alewife Reservation, the creation of a new bottleneck a thousand yards south, *etc.*, are no bargain.

Very truly yours,



Dan Geer
Co-Chair, BCNA

cc: Cambridge City Council ✓
Fred Salvucci, EOTC
Daniel Greenbaum, DEQE
all Cambridge neighborhood associations
Cambridge Citizens for Liveable Neighborhoods
Coalition for Alewife
Cambridge Chronicle
Cambridge TAB

7.

S-458

Comm. from Dan Geer, Co-Chair, Bellis Circle
Neighborhood Assoc., transmitting a copy of
his letter to the Mass. EPA commenting on the
Environmental Notification Form for the
Alewife Immediate Action (EOEA #7700).

In City Council,

June 12, 1989

Placed on file