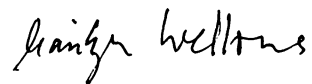


I ask you to steer the City of Cambridge to the protection of these geese and the restoration of their habitat, rather than toward their destruction. Our city is foolishly squandering a priceless natural resource to chase after yet more development and its consequent displacement of yet more humans from their habitat. Who gains from this?

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Marilyn Wellons".

Marilyn Wellons

Encl.

651 Green Street
Cambridge, MA 02139
June 1, 2000

To the Honorable, the Cambridge City Council:

With other friends of the Charles River white geese, I have leafleted passers-by in cars, on bikes, and on foot, weekdays since March. Our fliers tell of these animals' plight: that through the combined actions of the Metropolitan District Commission, Boston University, and the City of Cambridge, the main portion of their nesting area on state parkland in Cambridge between the BU bridge and the Conrail tracks has been destroyed. Further, more destruction of their habitat at the hands of the same institutions is yet to come.

During these thirteen weeks of leafleting, I have discovered that the vast majority of people from the metropolitan region and visitors to the area from the United States and overseas find the geese fascinating and charming. There is a great reservoir of affection for these animals and a corresponding alarm when people learn that plans for the area eliminate them. The argument advanced by the MDC, that the geese are immigrants who do not belong here, offends them. The argument advanced by others that the geese are diseased and dangerous animals, is contradicted by the beautiful creatures themselves--and by scientists at the Centers for Disease Control and Massachusetts Fisheries and Wildlife.

The only argument that explains actions against these geese, who have lived here and been cherished for nearly twenty years, is that they interfere with plans for the development of the area. These are the plans for Magazine Beach and a possible river crossing for an important new T line, the Urban Ring. Robert La Tremouille has outlined those plans in detail in his letter to you of this date. To his analysis I add one item for your consideration.

The City of Cambridge has voted to spend \$1.5 million to develop Magazine Beach. Construction is scheduled to finish July 2, 2002. It is possible that less than a year later, as early as the spring of 2003, the work would be completely undone by new construction of storage tanks and buildings for the Cottage Farm CSO facility on the very playing fields so recently finished. Officials at the Massachusetts Water Resources Authority and the Department of Environmental Protection say that a study now underway, and one to begin this summer, will allow the DEP and the Federal Environmental Protection Administration to decide whether such tanks and buildings are necessary. Thus while the tanks and buildings are not certain, they are certainly possible.

Is it wise for the City of Cambridge to invest taxpayers' dollars in a project that may require a second such investment, simply to gain four months' playing time in 2002? I enclose a reduced photocopy of MWRA Figure 25.2-7, "Location Plan for Incremental Storage Tank Alternatives for the Cottage Farm CSO Facility." You can see that the tanks would be directly under the playing fields at Magazine Beach, and the above-ground portions of the project would be on top of those fields.

Consent Communication #24 1585

A communication was received from
Marilyn Wellons, relative to the
Charles River white geese.

S-158

In City Council June 5, 2000

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