



# City of Cambridge

17.

IN CITY COUNCIL

December 13, 1993

COUNCILLOR RUSSELL  
COUNCILLOR DUEHAY  
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN  
COUNCILLOR WALSH

**ORDERED:** That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the Director of Traffic and Parking concerning the feasibility of conducting a traffic study on Walden Street in response to the concerns expressed in the attached letter, and report back to the City Council as soon as possible.

In City Council December 13, 1993.  
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.  
Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Margaret Drury".

D. Margaret Drury  
City Clerk

December 1, 1993

Dear Ms. Russell:

I write to express my abhorrence with the traffic situation on Walden Street. There are a number of issues at hand, but all fall under a single umbrella: safety. Speeds on the street are often high (I frequently see cars that are observing the speed limit passed by drivers who want to go faster) and very dangerous (I have seen three accidents); traffic volume is absurd; enforcement borders on non-existent.

What makes Walden Street uniquely dangerous is the unfortunate confluence of two qualities: it is the principle nexus between Huron (and thus, Fresh Pond area, Watertown, Belmont) and Massachusetts Avenues, and its width (or lack thereof) between Richdale Avenue and Massachusetts Avenue. Starting with the bridge that crosses the commuter rail tracks and extending to the Mass Ave. intersection, Walden is only 28 feet wide. That measurement is the standard for Cambridge side streets, ways that support neither the volume nor speeds (often in excess of 40 mph) that floods along Walden.

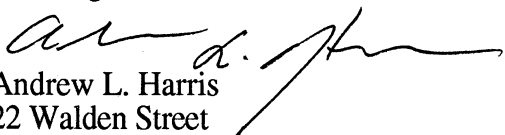
I am in the process of submitting a petition for the conduct of a traffic study. As a pedestrian, I find the street like an armed minefield: it is only a matter of time before someone takes the wrong step and loses more than a leg. As a driver, I find it a task of automotive acrobatics to turn into my driveway during rushhour.

Furthermore, with the high concentration of children in this neighborhood, I am doubly afraid that disaster is only a matter of time and therefore ask you to take preemptive steps to prevent serious injury or death. (As a footnote, the Massachusetts State Highway Department identified the intersection of Walden and Mass. Ave as the eighth most dangerous intersection in the city and #206 in the *state*! 41 accidents reported with 26 people injured is too much and can be attributed in no small part to the 'yellowlight syndrome' of drivers on Walden speeding to make the light onto Massachusetts Avenue.)

The goal of this letter, then, is twofold. First, I want to initiate my role as contributing member of the community. Second, I wish to meet with you in person. I have two requests: that you allow me to present to you a copy of the petition I have passed along for signature in the North Cambridge area, and that you consider a visit to Walden Street during morning pre-rush and rush hour. These two times are the best for viewing both the speeding traffic and the high volume.

Something (speed bumps, additional stop signs, restriction of Walden to residents only or a one-way flow) must be undertaken as a permanent measure. Please push for a stop gap measure with the Cambridge Police and Office of Traffic Safety. Some form of speed and weight restriction enforcement must be undertaken. Quite simply, laws on Walden are being violated. Sensibility dictates that a road originally designed as a secondary artery be returned to its engineered purpose.

With regards,

  
Andrew L. Harris  
22 Walden Street  
Cambridge, MA 02140



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**ORDERED:** That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to confer with the Director of Traffic and Parking concerning the feasibility of conducting a traffic study on Walden Street in response to the concerns expressed in the attached letter, and report back to the City Council as soon as possible.

*Sueley Sullivan Walsh*  
Consent Order #17 CM 354

Councillor Russell re: Request  
traffic study on Walden Street.

*Order Adopted*

In City Council,

December 13, 1993