



The Commonwealth of Massachusetts
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Metropolitan District Commission
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20 Somerset Street, Boston 02108
CAMBRIDGE, MA.

WILLIAM J. GEARY
COMMISSIONER

April 8, 1986

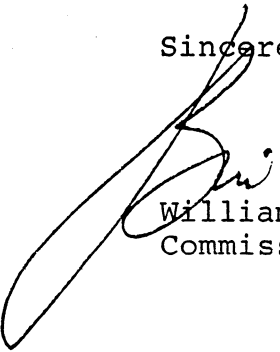
Mayor Walter J. Sullivan
City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Mayor Sullivan:

Enclosed for your information is a copy of a press release which has been sent to local newspapers in reference to Riverbend Park in Cambridge.

I commend you and your colleagues of the City Council for supporting the legislation and recognizing the need for people to enjoy open space for recreational purposes within the MetroParks system.

Sincerely,


William J. Geary
Commissioner

WJG/cmf

enclosure

cc: Cambridge City Councillors



THE COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION
20 SOMERSET STREET, BOSTON 02108

PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICE
727-5215

April 2, 1986

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Betty Anne Reilly

METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COMMISSION ANNOUNCES RIVERBEND PARK DATES

Riverbend Park, a Sunday oasis created by closing part of Memorial Drive in Cambridge to traffic will be open from the last Sunday in April through the second Sunday in November, the Metropolitan District Commission announced.

Metropolitan Police will place a 1.5 mile-long section of the drive off limits to all cars between 11 A.M. and 7 P.M. every Sunday with the exception of October 19, the date of the Head of the Charles Regatta.

Since 1975 the grassy parkland bordering the Charles River has been operated as a seasonal recreational park by the Metropolitan District Commission in cooperation with a citizens group, People for Riverbend Park. Since Cambridge is among the most densely populated of American cities with only 304 acres of parkland, the 55 acres along the river which are part of the MetroParks Charles River Reservation serve a genuine need, Commissioner William J. Geary explained.

"By freeing this area from Sunday traffic with its noise and congestion, we are true to our mission as stewards of the Charles River Reservation. This is what Charles Eliot who fashioned our parks system more than one hundred years ago had in mind when he spoke of the need for crowded populations to enjoy space for air, light, exercise and rest," Geary said.

"Riverbend Park", he added, "represents a workable compromise between the demands of urban life and the human need for relaxation in a peaceful setting." Geary commended Isabella Halsted and the other Cambridge residents who "recognized this need and fought for this people's park during the seventies."

The MDC Commissioner noted that 1986 is the first year the park has enjoyed official status under the laws of the Commonwealth. Under legislation filed by Rep. Charles F. Flaherty Jr., Rep. Peter A. Vellucci and Rep. Saundra Graham, and signed by Governor Michael S. Dukakis last October, the dates and hours for the park's operation were established. Under the law, the Metropolitan District Commission retains discretionary power to open Memorial Drive if there is an emergency or threat to public safety.

Geary said a decision will be made later in the season on whether to move the 7 P.M. closing time ahead by an hour or two after daylight saving time ends so that the park will not remain open after dark.

Riverbend Park is accessible by public transportation via the T's Red Line to Harvard Square. The Brattle Street exit is two blocks from the site.

MetroParks is a service of the Metropolitan District Commission, operating and managing a network of recreational facilities, parks and reservations for 2.5 million residents of greater Boston.

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Comm. from William J. Geary, Commissioner, MDC,
transmitting for informational purposes a copy
of a press release with regard to Riverbend
Pqrk in Cambridge.

In City Council,

April 28, 1986

Placed on file