



City of Cambridge

3.

IN CITY COUNCIL
February 28, 1994

VICE MAYOR RUSSELL
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY
COUNCILLOR WALSH
COUNCILLOR BORN
COUNCILLOR DUEHAY
COUNCILLOR MYERS
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to investigate the situation regarding sewer conditions on Franklin Street, as described in the attached letter; and be it further

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to report back to the City Council as soon as possible.

In City Council February 28, 1994.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.
Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:- *D. Margaret Drury*

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

February 7, 1994

Mr. Jerry Lucey
Superintendent of Sewers
Department of Public Works
147 Hampshire Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Mr. Lucey,

We wish to learn the sewer department's overall plan to correct what we believe is a serious problem with the sewer in Franklin Street between Hancock and Soden Streets. Several minor problems and a serious problem developed within the past month, the pattern of which concerns us greatly.

On the weekend of January 15-16, 445 Franklin Street was flooded with several feet of foul smelling sewage water. The basement tends to be damp, especially during warm, rainy weather, but the temperature on the weekend of this flooding was only 0 degrees Fahrenheit and had been below freezing for some time so there was no surface water. There was a steady stream of sewage water coming into the basement. It stopped only after people from your department worked on the sewer line in the street. They came first on January 15 but could not fix it then. They returned the morning of the 16th with machinery. The flow of sewage into the basement was then stopped. The man who came the 15th and the 16th said he found "hard spots" which meant it could not be fixed without machinery. The episode left a layer of silt on the basement floor which is probably a health hazard.

On January 16 there was also flooding in the basement of 451-453 Franklin Street, a highly unusual occurrence since that basement is normally dry. The water could not have been surface water there either since the temperature was 0 degrees Fahrenheit at the time and also below freezing for some time previously. The water in that basement was also extremely foul smelling, necessitating the use of bleach to clean it up.

On Saturday, January 22, 457 Franklin Street reported a sewer back-up in their basement due to a blockage which appeared to be between their house and the main sewer.

Residents of 444 Franklin Street have noticed sewer related problems starting with oily, foul smelling water in their sump pump area for the last several months. Most recently there has also been an odor of sewer gas detectable in that basement.

We also understand that some weeks back, there was a sewer problem at 411 Franklin where the sewer backed up into that basement and your department had to be contacted.

These events, at least those at 444, 445, and 451-453 Franklin Street seem to be the result of a leaking (cracked) or over capacity sewer problem. An explanation for a cracked sewer pipe may be the following:

Mr. Jerry Lucey 2/7/94 p.2

Shortly after the new gas and water pipes were laid and the hook-ups completed on Franklin Street in 1990, there were several days of torrential rain which washed out much of the temporary road fill. A lot of the sand/dirt subsided and settled. Several cars fell into trenches up to their axles as the sand/dirt subsided. Neighbors on the street had to assist one another in lifting their cars out of the trenches. New temporary road fill had to be put in and sidewalk bricks had to be re-laid since the settling was so severe. In the following year, the road surface was re-laid. Does it seem possible that some sand/dirt underneath the sewer pipe settled out causing an air cavity under the pipe and the eventual cracking of the pipe?

We trust that you are looking into the root cause(s) of these numerous sewer related incidents on our street. If the pipe is cracked, can it be repaired or does a completely new line have to be laid? Is a much larger sewer pipe needed for the volume of people living on the street? How old is the current sewer line?

We would greatly appreciate answers to our questions and information on your planned course of action in resolving the problems and preventing future sewer related problems on our section of Franklin Street.

Sincerely,

James D. Koger & Maureen McCann
444 FRANKLIN
492-4764

John Lambert + Cecilia Bennett
451 Franklin (354-6529)

Carol Hurd Green
445 Franklin St.
864-4122

Bruce Sylvester
453 Franklin St.
354-4461

cc: City Manager Robert Healy
Mayor Kenneth Reeves
City Councillors
Commissioner of Public
Works, Ralph Dumphrey

signed by:

James Koger & Maureen McCann
444 Franklin

John Lambert & Cecilia Bennett
451 Franklin

Carol Green
445 Franklin

Bruce Sylvester
453 Franklin



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Born, Dineen, Myers, Sullivan
Consent Order #3 Triantafillon
CM - 59
Vice Mayor Russell, Councillors
Toomney and Walsh re: Sewer
conditions on Franklin Street.

Order Adopted

In City Council,

February 28, 1994