

CENTRAL SQUARE BUSINESS ASSOCIATION, INC.

614 Massachusetts Ave • Cambridge, MA 02139-4088

16.

Carl F. Barron, President
Putnam Furniture Leasing Co., Inc.
614 Massachusetts Avenue
617.354.3358

December 8, 1994

**All Members of the Cambridge
City Council**

RE: BICYCLE RIDING ON SIDEWALKS

Arnold B. Goldstein, Vice Pres.
SEA Consultants, Inc.
485 Massachusetts Avenue
617.497.7800

I am enclosing herewith a letter from Mrs. Bette James regarding problems with sidewalk bicycle riders.

George R. Metzger, Vice Pres.
HMFH Architects, Inc.
130 Bishop Allen Dr.
617.492.2200

On May 11, 1994, I wrote to Councilor Sheila T. Russell relative to a nerve racking and near-serious injury episode as a result of a number of bicycles being used on the sidewalks in Central Square. Unfortunately, I have not noticed any corrective measures taken despite a state law and a city ordinance that prohibits the riding of bicycles on the sidewalks in certain heavily traveled areas, including Central Square.

Bob Twitchell, Treasurer
Cambridgeport Bank
689 Massachusetts Avenue
617.661.4900

I am sympathetic to those who use bicycles when they have regard for pedestrians. I am not sympathetic to bicycle riders who both ignore the city and state ordinances which are to protect pedestrians. These ordinances should be enforced since pedestrians, including people of all ages, and especially the elderly, are usually helpless when confronted by high-speed bicycles, especially when approaching pedestrians from the rear.

I do not believe that a referral to a Bicycle Commission is adequate where no remedial action is taken. I suggest the possibility of the following:

Norman T. McIver, Asst. Treas.
Cambridge Trust Company
326 Main Street
617.349.1564

1. All bicycles must be registered with the Bicycle Commission or the Police Department.
2. At the time of registering, an acknowledgment be signed that the recipient has received a copy of the city ordinance forbidding bicycle riding on the sidewalk and agrees to comply with same.
3. A penalty of \$50 to \$100 be imposed for violation. This is a cheap penalty to pay for endangering the physical well being of people who are accustomed to safe passage of the sidewalks of this city.

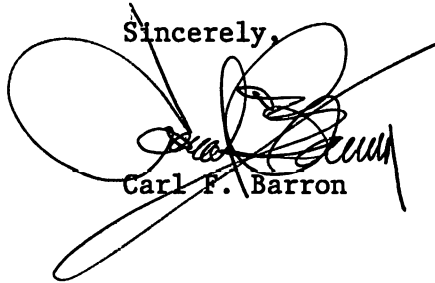
Richard A. Foot, Corresp. Sec.
Cambridge Family YMCA
820 Massachusetts Avenue
617.661.9622

Regina DeWitt, Recording. Sec.
Economy Hardware
438 Massachusetts Avenue
617.864.3300

All Members of the Cambridge
City Council
December 8, 1994
Page 2

I trust that prompt and favorable consideration will be
given to this request.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Carl F. Barron', is written over the word 'Sincerely,'. The signature is stylized with large loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Carl F. Barron

CFB/b.Bicycle

Encl.

cc: Perry L. Anderson, Police
Commissioner
Richard C. Rossi, Deputy City
Manager
Mrs. Bette James
CSBA Board of Directors
Mr. Robert B. Boulrice, President
Central Square Neighborhood
Coalition

DEC 14 1994
11:33

Bette James & Associates

Office Support Services - Since 1977

December 7, 1994

Mr. Carl Barron
Central Square Business Association
614 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

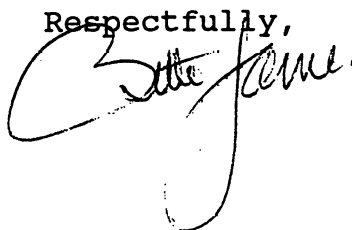
Dear Carl Barron,

Residents of Harvard Square have been fighting the battle of sidewalk bikers for over ten years. Personally, I have been hit at least six or seven times during this period. Once, I was admonished by the biker that I was "walking in the wrong lane."

A year ago when we moved to Central Square, I thought how wonderful it was that the bikers used the street. But when spring arrived, so did the sidewalk bikers. And not just an occasional biker, but in pairs. Once I ducked back into our office building because there was a squad of bikes racing down the sidewalk.

I realize the police can't spend their time chasing bikers off the sidewalk, but it would be nice if they would move them along when the bikes are right in front of them. It is a state law, right?

Respectfully,



May 11, 1994

Hon. Sheila T. Russell
5 Hawthorne Park
Cambridge, MA 02138

RE: BICYCLE RIDING ON SIDEWALKS

Dear Sheila:

With the advent of removal of snow from our sidewalks, I have been experiencing a number of occasions when bicycles have been ridden on sidewalks in Central Square. Last week I had an experience that was very frightening and I was not alone, since the same bicycle riders endangered a number of other people of all ages, by absolutely disregarding the safety and security of pedestrians on a sidewalk.

On Sunday, May 1, 1994, while walking from Pearl Street to my office at 614 Mass. Avenue, I found myself in the narrow part of the sidewalk between the subway entrance on my right and the adjacent building on my left. Absolutely without any warning nor sound, a bicycle rider passed me at high speed on my immediate left. Instinctively, I took a step to the right, and found that I also had a bicycle rider on my right-hand side and I was hemmed in between the two, unable to move. I had no warning whatsoever. In total, there were 7 bicycles in the group, and I was caught in the middle of that narrow sidewalk with no possibility of moving, even to turn around and see how many more were coming.

Article XII concerning bicycle regulations within the city do not provide for prohibition of bicycle riding on sidewalks. In all other respects they are treated as moving vehicles, including a description about "operating a bicycle upon a roadway shall ride as near to the right side of the roadway as practicable", but not stating that bicycles are prohibited from the sidewalks. I am enclosing a photostatic copy of same herewith.

I would greatly appreciate your consideration in providing an amendment to the existing regulations for bicycles that would accomplish this.

Page 2

It is fortunate that my nerves are fairly good, but I am sure you could imagine what might have happened to another person of 78 years of age, fragile with no personal control who might have blundered into one or the other of those 7 bicycles which crept up on me absolutely without sound. Incidentally, they were strewn over the sidewalk in front of Purity Supreme, covering the entire width of the sidewalk from the entrance to Purity Supreme to the edge of the curb with utter disregard for pedestrian rights. All of the riders were between roughly 15 to 18 years of age.

I would also request that, upon implementation of the above by the City Council, instructions should go to the Police Commissioner requesting that all Police Officers strictly enforce the prohibition of bicycle riding on sidewalks. It is not a joke for the elderly or very young children to find themselves confronted by this danger to their physical safety in an area that is supposedly safe for them to walk upon.

I also believe that this is a very simple way to help to eliminate the erroneous perception that Central Square is not a safe place. Fast-moving bicycles would frighten anybody when ridden on the sidewalk and create a sense of danger, not the perception of safety.

Please call me concerning any question of feasibility of the above.

Sincerely,

Carl F. Barron

CFB/b.3528

Encl.

cc: CSBA Board of Directors.

33

H-183
Consent Communication #16

A comm. was received from the Central Square Business Association with attachments from Betty James regarding bicycles on sidewalks.

In City Council December 12, 1994

Referred to the
Environment Committee
12/20/94 - copy sent to
Environment Committee (cc)