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To the City Clerk for entry into the consent communication:

Steps Cambridge could take to make the city pleasant during the frozen months:

1. Regulate how wide a path residents must shovel: One-half the width from the inside of the sidewalk to the curb. This would reflect the need on busy streets where the sidewalks tend to be wider. Most sidewalks would then be already cleared wide enough to get a snowblower down (See #2 below).
2. Manage the clearing of pedestrian-travelled streets: Use snow blowers up and down Mass Ave, then Concord Ave and Cambridge Street, then Harvard Street and Garden Street and Prospect and Western, etc. If you need to fund this project, send ticketers ahead of the snow blower.
3. Clear the snow from intersections that city road clearance has piled there. It is ludicrous that we spent hundreds of thousands of dollars of federal money putting in handicap access at all the street corners, then blockade them two to four months out of the year, imprisoning lots of our citizens in their apartments.
4. When the city "clears" the sidewalks around city property, send shovellers behind the machinery to shovel their end points. It is a waste of taxes to leave huge piles of snow in the middle of the sidewalk so that people still have to walk in the street, as the city does on Norfolk street and Market street (and on Bigelow street until I badgered the city manager's office.)
5. Institute a significant fine of \$100 or \$200 for property owners who pile snow from their parking lots into the sidewalk. Require the ticketers to return every twenty four hours until the problem is fixed. OR BETTER, use the fine money to send city machinery down to clear the sidewalk.
6. Regulate the people who move the snow with trucks and other machinery: Some don't have license plates. Many deliberately leave their licenses covered with snow. The police should be looking for unmarked snow equipment. Make them put a name on the cab of their vehicles. Fine them for moving snow onto the sidewalks or onto city streets. License them and make them acknowledge that these are law violations.
7. Give the police the authority and directive to respond to complaints of people piling snow in the sidewalk.
8. Give a list of priorities to the DPW people responsible for ticketing unshovelled property: They should attend to frequently travelled streets first. They should be persistent with people who flagrantly pile snow in the middle of the sidewalk. Whatever priorities they have should be published and subject to citizen review. It is a travesty that they give multiple tickets to octogenarians on Aspen street and do nothing to multimillion dollar businesses that pile snow in the middle of the sidewalks of major thoroughfares in spite of multiple complaints.

(More)

9. The traffic department exacerbates the problem. After fifteen years of observation of the factory loading zone next door, I can say that it is not just "snow emergency" places that they give tickets to when there is no expectation of clearing the lane. They do not normally ticket the factory loading zone at night, but after winter snow storms they usually do. This is just a sleazy way to meet their quota for the year. It makes the parking situation tighter. It makes residents angry at the city. It is just bullying by city workers and should not be tolerated.

9A: Laws should be changed to say that loading zone violations are for business hours only.

9B: Regulations should say that snow emergency lanes are to be cleared/ticketed only when there is the intention to plow the lane.

9C: Do not permit "24 hour stowage" tickets to be written whenever the streets are still covered with snow or ice.

10. Use the meter maids to ticket people who don't plow their sidewalks. This would be far better than the majority of bully tickets they write in snowy conditions.

11. Make notices like the recyclers have that you can put on the chairs, garbage cans, etc. that people put out to save parking spaces. The notices should say that it is illegal to block the parking spaces and give a phone number for people to call when spaces are blocked. This way, even the garbage bags people put out (because the city might pick up their chair, etc) will be tagged, then put back out of the way.

12. Require that the DPW spend a percentage of their snow removal budget on clearing paths for pedestrians. (Much of this should go to clearing intersections that their trucks have ploughed in.)

13. On those warm days when snow starts melting fast, send workers to break the ice jams around drains so that the canal-like streets don't freeze over solid again.

14. Don't make residents move their cars after a large snowfall. It can be dangerous and stupid. Meter maids are not even-handed about enforcing this anyway. Again it is a bullying maneuver and a fundraising ploy, little else.

15. DPW should be more diligent about keeping residents from holding parking spaces with household paraphernalia. It has already taken in most neighborhoods, but in East Cambridge, it's still dangerous to try to park because of this ploy. Just a little diligence could stop this from happening.

16. Work with the MDC to clear the river pathways so people can get out and exercise and enjoy the beauty too, not just climb around the dirty street snow.

17. The city should be exemplary in clearing its own sidewalks. All year it has not plowed its sidewalk on Binney Street, and people have to walk in the middle of the street (because they won't do anything about Metropolitan Pipe across the street which not only doesn't plough, but also piles snow in the middle of the sidewalk.)

18. Fine people who put the snow back in the middle of the roadway after the plow has been by. I am not aware that this is even illegal now.

19. Organize neighborhood groups to give warning tickets, to tag and remove objects from parking spaces. Give the groups guidelines. Have city ticketers return twenty four hours later to follow up on a list of warning tickets given.

20. Regulate oblique intersections better. Currently both the city and property owners pile snow at the point of the intersection, so that pedestrians are forced dangerously into busy streets like Broadway.

Tom Reisz

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Cambridge, Massachusetts

March 11, 1994

Consent Communication #11

5-101

Comm received form ~~XXXXXX~~

~~XXXXXX~~ Tom Reisz re: suggestions
for the City during the frozen months.

In City Council March 21, 1994

Referred to City
Manager for report
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