



*Joseph E. Connerton*

**THE ATHENAEUM GROUP**

Athenaeum House  
215 First Street  
\* Cambridge, Massachusetts 02142  
617-492-2155

September 20, 1990

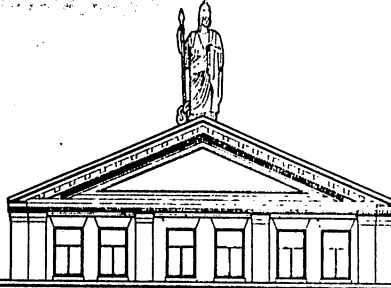
Robert W. Healy  
City Manager  
Cambridge City Hall  
795 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Mr. Healy:

I am writing in response to the City Council order introduced September 10, 1990 by Mayor Wolf regarding the Orson Welles Cinema. You may recall that The Athenaeum Group voluntarily agreed to hold a public meeting at One Kendall Square this past spring to introduce the Orson Welles Cinema. Unfortunately, the City Council asked that the meeting be cancelled with less than 24 hours' notice.

Notwithstanding this setback, the License Commission did convene a public informational meeting regarding the Orson Welles Cinema in mid-July. A number of neighborhood residents attended this meeting. No opposition for the Cinema was voiced. Most of the discussion centered on our collective desire to put a cap on the number of alcoholic pouring licenses in the neighborhood.

Additionally, The Athenaeum Group commissioned a public opinion survey of Cambridge voters and the Area 3 neighborhood in particular regarding their attitudes towards the Orson Welles Cinema. I am happy to report that 74 percent of the neighborhood population and 78 percent of the City population favored the Orson Welles Cinema at One Kendall Square. I think this unusually strong show of support was evidenced by the lack of turnout at the formal License Commission hearing held September 11, 1990. Most of the neighborhood representatives who attended the September 11, 1990 meeting did so to protest the location of a new liquor license at 201 Broadway. A petition of almost 400 names was submitted in opposition to that license; there was no such opposition to the Orson Welles.



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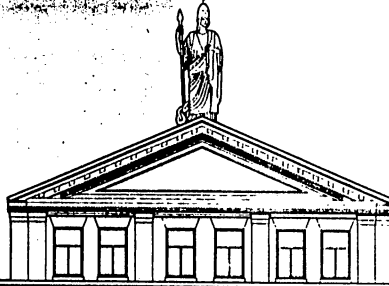
In fact, only two people spoke at the License Commission hearing on the Orson Welles Cinema, and I urge you to review the transcript of that meeting to determine for yourself if their comments were in opposition to the Orson Welles Cinema or in favor of the License Commission acting on our proposal for a cap on the number of licenses at One Kendall Square.

In short, I believe that The Athenaeum Group has cooperated with the City Council, the License Commission, and area residents in soliciting input regarding the Orson Welles Cinema at One Kendall Square. The process may not fit the "model" that was established for Porter Square and University Park, but it was a genuine and sincere effort to inform residents in advance, solicit comments, and to structure a favorable working relationship with community groups.

Two items which we presented at the License Commission hearing may be of interest to you and the City Council. First, we authorized a traffic study to analyze the impact of the cinema vs. the programmed retail space. The results of that traffic study suggest that peak hour traffic will be diminished significantly from the substitution of the Orson Welles Cinema for retail space. This is consistent with traffic objectives espoused by a number of groups in the neighborhood as well as the espoused transportation policy of the City.

Second, we indicated to the License Commission that we had made it a condition of our lease agreement with the Orson Welles that no X-rated films be shown. While The Athenaeum Group does not want to get involved in determining what local community standards may or may not be, we do believe our neighbors do not want X-rated films shown and we made that a condition of our lease negotiations. The Orson Welles was willing to comply with this standard. Other national chains that approached us were not. We think this is evidence of our responsiveness to our neighbors.

In short, The Athenaeum Group has worked cooperatively with the License Commission and with a number of area residents. Several



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advertised public meetings have been held when the subject of the Orson Welles was discussed in detail. We are not opposed to listening to any neighborhood resident who has a question, but we do not feel the City Council has acted appropriately by submitting this order one day before the formal public hearing. The City Council has known of the Orson Welles' proposal for almost six months; why did Mayor Wolf wait until the eleventh hour to act?

To wait until the last minute to propose still another process is not fair in our opinion.

We look forward to hearing from you regarding this Council order. Under state law the License Commission is required to act within a specified time period and the clock has started. We think the Orson Welles Cinema would be a valuable addition to the One Kendall Square complex as well as the entire neighborhood. The evidence suggests the neighborhood and City agree. We hope resolution of their application can be handled forthwith.

Sincerely,

David Clem

DEC:rmf

cc: ✓ Joseph E. Connarton, Cambridge City Clerk  
Robert E. Jones, Partner  
Transnational Cinemas



# City of Cambridge

58.

IN CITY COUNCIL

September 10, 1990

MAYOR WOLF

- WHEREAS: The Cambridge License Commission will hold a hearing on the granting of a license for an over 1300-seat cinema and for live entertainment at One Kendall Square; and
- WHEREAS: For Porter Square and Cambridgeport proposals, the City Manager established a committee of local residents to work with the License Commission to assess plans and make recommendations; now therefore be it
- RESOLVED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to establish immediately a committee of neighborhood residents to work with the License Commission on the issues surrounding the granting of the entertainment and cinema licenses; and be it further
- RESOLVED: That the License Commission be requested to grant no license until the committee has met, raised its concerns, and made its recommendations.

In City Council September 10, 1990.  
Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.  
Attest:- John E. Flynn, Deputy City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature of John E. Flynn in dark ink.

John E. Flynn  
Deputy City Clerk.



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City Council SEP. 10 1990

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of 9 members

*John E. Flynn*  
 City Clerk  
*Deputy*

Order # 58

429

Mayor Wolf re: entertainment and cinema  
licenses at One Kendall Sq.

In City Council,

Sept. 10, 1990

*Order adopted*