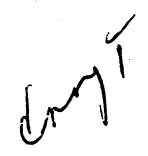


21 Gibson Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
2 August 1987



Mayor Walter Sullivan
City of Cambridge
City Hall

Dear Mayor Sullivan:

I am writing to you at the suggestion of my neighbor and your former colleague, Barbara Ackerman. Barbara has taken pity on me and on my friends of the tot lot by 1010 Memorial Drive, the playground I take care of through the MDC Adopt-a-Lot Program. This is the tot lot where you had Sheila Russell read your very kind words at the dedication in the spring of 1986, the same day that Isabella Halsted was honored for her work in establishing Riverbend Park.

In addition to the plantings in and around the tot lot, I plant around 6 trees along the Mt. Auburn Street sidewalk and around 11 along the bikepath on the river side of Memorial Drive.

Our task this summer has been extremely difficult in the current drought, and it forces me to think about the future viability of this effort unless a better solution can be found for providing water. Until two days ago, all water was carried to the site by hand from across Mt. Auburn Street, either from my house on Gibson Street or from Shaler Lane. This is not only physically challenging but is becoming increasingly dangerous as the traffic volume on Mt. Auburn Street increases.

Mrs. Ackerman said that the City had provided a water source for the playground she tended in North Cambridge. She felt that ours was a similar situation and one in which the City could surely be of help since the tot lot serves, for the most part, Cambridge residents, including a local kinder-garten. On Sundays, of course, the influx of park users is even greater.

Commissioner Bill Geary of the MDC had hoped that a bubbler connection existed and only needed to be reactivated with a hose attachment. I don't remember a bubbler on this site. One of my neighbors, however, George Haddad, seems to recall one between the tot lot and 1010 Memorial Drive, toward the river side of the space.

In the absence of such an existing connection, two other solutions would be possible. The first could be done with no digging involved, and that is simply to attach a "watering fitting" to the existing fire hydrant, as is done in many other cities. This solution has one drawback: the hose would traverse the busy sidewalk, and would have to be prominently marked in order to avoid pedestrian accidents. The second solution -- the one I prefer -- would be to create a watering connection either outside or inside the fence on the Mt. Auburn Street side, on a line with the concrete animal that bears an M (the moose). This would mean that the plantings in one of the beds would have to be disturbed for the installation, but that would be well worth the replanting effort in view of the long-term benefit. Due to this central location, watering could then be done with a few hoses (which I can provide) which could reach the entire area in and around the tot lot. How lush and beautiful things could be!

Could you give this your immediate attention? We would be so grateful. For the last two days we have been permitted to use a connection at 1010 Memorial Drive, but they granted this ON A TEMPORARY BASIS only.

RECEIVED

AUG 5 1987

This has enabled us to rescue many of the costly plants newly put in this year (lilies, coreopsis, etc.), but the overall impression is still sad compared to what it could be with proper watering.

During the current year, I have devoted an average of two hours per day to work in and around the park. Most of that time has to be spent picking up trash and watering. But the hard work has its rewards. Last Sunday, a family spread out a blanket and had a picnic on the Mt. Auburn side of the park; they obviously found it inviting to sit near well-tended flower beds. People are always offering comments, but the most frequent ones have to do with how much it means to see the land cared for.

For the most part, people have been very supportive and helpful. Occasionally there are problems (such as this morning, when I found I had to remove human excrement from the marigolds!), and we do have difficulties with the professional plant snatchers. One of the problems that could be easily solved has to do with the people who park along Mt. Auburn Street and dump their trash in the gutter. I swept the entire length of the sidewalk and gutter this past trash-sweeping day for this Cambridge area. I took the opportunity to speak with the man in the sweeper to ask if he could come more frequently -- once or twice a week -- particularly since no cars are parked along this stretch before 10:00 AM. He said he would try. Would you be kind enough to reinforce this request next time you have contact with those responsible for this area? That would certainly help a great deal!

As you can see from the enclosed list of "1987 Friends of the Tot Lot" many people care enough about this area to offer their time and money to help make it more attractive.

Please help us in this effort as much as you can.

I will be leaving Cambridge on August 15th for an extended period. May I hear from you about this before then? If you have questions, do not hesitate to call me at 547-9103.

Yours very sincerely,



Patricia Sekler

"the plant lady"

Copies to: Commissioner William Geary

Barbara Ackerman

Ruth Glover of 1010 Memorial Drive

Councillor Frank Duehay

Enclosures: Copy of "1987 Friends of the Tot Lot" sign as posted at the park.
Four photographs of the tot lot plantings.

DEAR VISITORS!

If you enjoy the flowers in and around the Tot Lot and around the trees by the river, these are the people who make these plantings possible, The 1987 FRIENDS OF THE TOT LOT. They help by donating plants, bulbs, or funds and by planting, weeding and watering.

MARGARET WEITZ

ITA DEGE and STEVE DEGE

EPHEN LUSSIER of The Dutch Flower Garden

MARA B. SINGER

JEVE DUNCAN of Ann and Hope

J. C. ROY

ALL AUGUST

JCE HARTMAN

MARY ROCHE

ROBERT SHENTON

DOREEN O'LEARY

1010 MEMORIAL DRIVE

JOHNNY'S LANDSCAPE SERVICE, INC.

LORENCE MENZEL

DR. SAMUEL LOWIS

MRS. LEE DAY GILLESPIE

ESTHER Z. MELTMAN

REBECCA C. BRADFORD

PETER SCULLY

MR. AND MRS. HASKELL COHN

MADELINE R. GLEASON

MICHAEL GRAHAM } AND JULIA
JANET GALIPO }

JOAN A. SHURCLIFF
WILLIAM A. SHURCLIFF

EVELYN MORASH

PATRICIA D. WALSH

DANIEL CANDEE

RUTH GLOVER

LEO and CINDY ROSENBERG

QUINN ?

BARBARA PAINE

CALVERT MAGRUDER

NORMA WASSEL and LEE

THE MARK HYMAN FUND

ALFRED and FAY CHANDLER

CLARA MONEO

GEORGE HEIN and EMILY ROMNEY

BILL COTTRELL

THE ANONYMOUS DONOR OF 3
FORSYTHIA BUSHES

ANITA MAGRUDER

ANNE E. MEYER

YAYA BLOUT

LAURENCE WYLIE

MARION BECKER EISEMAN

THERESA J. MORSE

RUTH D. ABRAMS

GINNY THORNBURGH

FLORENCE HENDERSON

FRANCES BRAGG

BETSEY MAYER

INGRIT MEYER

LEILA SUTTON

LE JARDIN

SAMUEL ?

TWO ORGANIZATIONS THAT PREFER
TO REMAIN ANONYMOUS

GAIL AND RAVEN FEILLY

THE CHILDREN AND TEACHERS OF
THE DELPHI ACADEMY

JANE JOHNSON

THE ANONYMOUS PASSERSBY WHO
HELP WATER THE PLANTS BY
THE RIVER

ROBERTA AND MEL HACKEL

JOHN ATHERTON

Tommy's Lunch
Kathy Glover



City of Cambridge

7.

IN CITY COUNCIL

Mayor Walter J. Sullivan

September 14, 1987

WHEREAS: In cooperation with the M.D.C. Adopt-a-Lot Program, Patricia Sekler has supervised the care of the tot lot by 1010 Memorial Drive, and been instrumental in planting trees along the bike path on the river side of Memorial Drive; and

WHEREAS: The problem of provision of water adequate for the needs of the project, is outlined in the attached letter and enclosure from Patricia Sekler, dated August 2, 1987; now therefore be it

ORDERED: That the City Manager direct the Superintendent of the Cambridge Water Department to assign staff personnel to examine and do what is possible/necessary to station a water connection at the site as specified; and be it further

ORDERED: That in this regard, personnel of the City of Cambridge work closely with the M.D.C. Commission and with Commissioner Geary's office, if need be, to insure that the program which has been started will be able to continue with new success and additional benefits to those who use the area. Further, that the City Manager report back to the City Council on this matter within eight (8) weeks of this Council Meeting.

(ATTACHMENT)

In City Council September 14, 1987.
Adopted by the affirmative vote of 9 members.
Attest:- Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk..

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

Joseph E. Connarton

Joseph E. Connarton, City Clerk.

Order #7 F-367

Mayor W. Sullivan order re: City Manager to direct the Water Dept. Superintendent to assign staff personnel to examine & do the necessary to station a water connection at the location outlined in the attached letter with regard to the MDC Adopt-A-Lot Program & the care of the tot lot at 1010 Mass. Ave.

In City Council,

September 14, 1987

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