

Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association
P.O. Box 907, Cambridge, MA 02238

June 6, 1996

Cambridge City Council
City Hall
Cambridge, MA

To the City Council:

Twenty-six years ago Harvard's commencement exercises were disrupted by a protest against the university's expansion into residential neighborhoods. A big new expansion is in the works, but without the demonstrations that are sparked by evictions.

Harvard has announced its plans for the housing units which rent control previously required it to rent on the open market. A hundred are being offered for sale for affordable housing, a hundred others sold off, and nearly five hundred will be annexed to the campus.

In requesting the Cambridge City Council's approval, the University said that the plan would not "dramatically affect the areas in which the housing units are located." If Harvard officials think that, then they are wrong.

As current residents leave, 401 of the 415 housing units in a five-block area in Harvard Square and Mid-Cambridge will be added to the campus.

The mix of town and gown that has characterized Cambridge for centuries will be replaced by a sharp new boundary between Harvard and its neighbors.

Local civic organizations and businesses will lose the population base they need for long-term survival.

The relatively calm reception of this year's plan doesn't mean that it is a good one. A thorough public review is needed before it is recognized by the City Council or anybody else.

For this reason, three organizations, the Old Cambridge Baptist Church, Harvard Square Defense Fund and Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association, are sponsoring a **Neighborhood Forum on "Harvard Campus Expansion, What Impact on Cambridge?"** next Tuesday, June 11, at 6 PM. The location is the Old Cambridge Baptist Church, 1151 Massachusetts Avenue.

The forum will include a panel discussion with questions and answers with Kathy Spiegelman, Harvard University's Associate Vice President for Planning and Real Estate, Charles Sullivan, Executive Director of the Cambridge Historical Commission, Pebble Gifford, President of the Harvard Square Defense Fund, and John Pitkin, President of the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association.

City Councilors and the public are cordially invited.


John Pitkin
President

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Consent Communication #9

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Communication was received from
John Pitkin, President, Mid-Cambridge-
Neighborhood association transmitting
concern regarding Harvard University's
plans for the housing units which rent
control previously required to rent
on the open market.

In City Council June 10, 1996

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