

136 Oxford Street #1
Cambridge, Mass. 02140
3 May 1983

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OFFICE OF CITY CLERK

MAY 5 4 00 PM '83

CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Cambridge City Council
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Mass. 02139

Honorable Members of the Council,

Enclosed please find a copy of a letter sent to Mr.
Keating at the DPW concerning an incident which occurred
last Friday, 29 April.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

John E. Anderson

John E. Anderson

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Mr. Bob Keating
Department of Public Works
City of Cambridge
147 Hampshire Street
Cambridge, Mass. 02139
CAMBRIDGE, MASS.

Dear Mr. Keating,

Captain Lange in the Traffic office at the police department told me that you are the man who decides when the streets are cleaned.

Last Friday, 29 April, my brand new Volvo was towed due to an unscheduled street cleaning. My wife and I walked to work at 7 A.M., thinking nothing of leaving the car parked where it was, because the regular street cleaning days for Oxford Street are the third Monday and Tuesday of the month, as indicated on the permanent metal signs erected on the street. We had, in fact, watched a street cleaning machine that Monday in April as it went around parked cars; those cars were not towed--they were not even ticketed! (Incidentally, on that day our car was parked on the side of the street scheduled for cleaning on Tuesday.) So when my wife got home from work last Friday and the car was not there, she was hysterical. Since the streets had been cleaned already, she thought the car had been stolen. Even after discovering that the car had been towed, she was upset, and when I found out about it, I was upset too. We had hoped that our new car would never be towed, and we have always been careful to park legally to avoid that happening. We once had a car that was towed, not for street cleaning, and it was never the same afterwards. And now our new car had been broken into and towed.

We had to go to the police station in Central Square to get a claim check for the car, which we had to take all the way out to Cambridge Towing Company at Fresh Pond. There we had to pay \$30 to get the car back, and on the car was a ticket for \$15. All this travelling about was done by public transportation, an additional expense.

Now I know that you claim to have posted signs 24 hours ahead of time saying that the streets were to be cleaned, but this is simply not true on our end of Oxford Street. When my wife parked the car on Thursday afternoon, she surely would have noticed such signs if they were posted in sufficient number, and she did not. Perhaps you should have sent notices around in the mail or stuck flyers onto residents' cars. In the future I would suggest you do this.

I want a written explanation from you of why you decided to clean the streets last Friday, and an explanation of the behavior of the street cleaning machine on the scheduled day last month, which was Patriot's Day. If cars were not ticketed and towed as a show of leniency because it was the first cleaning of the season, that was admirable. But why not show the same leniency on an unscheduled street cleaning? If it was because it was a holiday and the streets were not supposed to be cleaned, then what was the machine doing out there, burning up Cambridge citizens' tax dollars?

In light of the circumstances discussed above, the towing and ticketing of our car was grossly unfair, and we are appealing the ticket on this basis. Furthermore, we want a check from the Department of Public Works in the amount of \$30 as reimbursement for the towing charge. In view of the emotional distress both my wife and I went through, and the potential damage which might have been done to our new car, the DPW may consider itself fortunate that we are contemplating no legal action at this time.

I do not know, Mr. Keating, if you were elected, appointed, or rose through the ranks to your present position. But I am sure that Mayor Vellucci and the City Council, as elected representatives of the people of Cambridge, will be sympathetic to our case.

With utmost sincerity,

John E. Anderson

John E. Anderson

cc: Mayor Alfred Vellucci
Cambridge City Council
Parking Clerk, City of Cambridge

6.

S-267

Comm. from John E. Anderson, 36 Oxford St. Re:
the towing of his car during an unscheduled
street cleaning on Oxford St. on April 29th.

copy sent to the City Manager
5/10/83 mch

In City Council,

May 9, 1983

5/9/83

**Referred to Mayor
for Report in
ONE WEEK -**