

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT

City Hall Annex - Inman & Broadway - Cambridge, Mass. 02139

(617) 876-6800
EXTENSION 344

November 10, 1972

Mr. John H. Corcoran
City Manager
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Mr. Corcoran:

In accordance with the City Council's request of October 30, 1972, we have obtained the following information relative to the feasibility of constructing a municipal parking area at the southern end of Seventh Street. We recognize that the need for additional parking spaces has increased since completion of the R. F. Kennedy Elementary School. The construction of a parking lot at this location would make parking spaces available for the staff of the Kennedy School during the day, and for the residents of the area during the evening.

As indicated in sketch #1, Seventh Street consists of two and three story dwelling units, which for the most part are situated very close to the street. In addition to the houses, there are three vacant lots.

One possible solution to the present parking situation in the area would be to acquire Lot A. As shown in sketch #2, the construction of a parking area on this parcel would provide space for eight cars, with a planting area around the periphery to act as a buffer. This solution, however, has several drawbacks. First, the required curb cut for this parking area would be approximately seventy feet; existing zoning regulations prohibit cuts which exceed twenty-five feet in length. In addition, the construction of a lot in this location would eliminate the four parking spaces which now exist along the street, and thus there would be a net gain of only four spaces.

A second solution would be to close Seventh Street at the southern end and to acquire Lot A and Lot B (see sketch #3). A parking area could then be constructed which would accommodate sixteen cars. This solution would require the elimination of present parking spaces on both sides of the street (a total of eight spaces) and the net gain would be eight spaces. However, one of the principal pedestrian routes to and from the Kennedy School is along Seventh Street. A parking lot located at the end of Seventh Street might interfere with pedestrian traffic and consti-

tute a safety hazard to school children who use this route. In addition, if Seventh Street were to be closed at the southern end, two way traffic would have to be allowed on the remainder of the block; the Traffic Department has expressed its reluctance to make this change, as it would disrupt the traffic pattern on neighboring streets.

Both of the solutions discussed above would require land acquisition. At this time, we do not have information on the cost of acquiring the two parcels mentioned, but we can assume that the fair market value is two to three times the assessed value. In the case of Lot A, the assessed value is \$1200, and thus the assumed acquisition cost for this parcel would be between \$2400 and \$3600. Lot B is assessed at \$500, and under the above assumption its fair market value would be from \$1000 to \$1500.

If it is determined by the City Council that parking spaces should be made available at either of these locations, appraisals would be necessary, as well as detailed estimates of construction costs. Financing of acquisition and development could be provided in part by the Parking Fund which would draw some of its revenue from parking meters placed at each space.

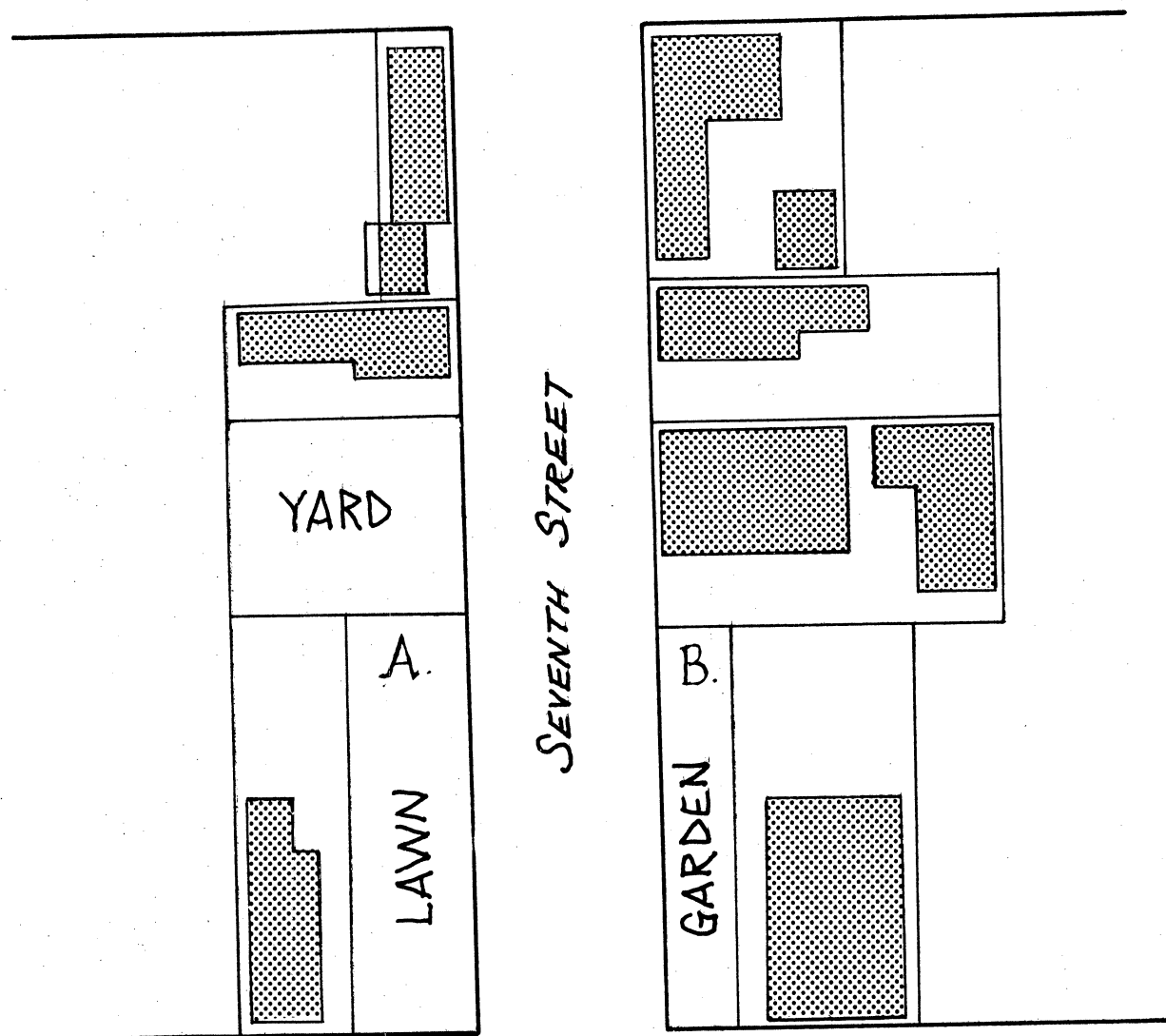
Based on the information which has been obtained so far, however, it is not clear that the net increase of four or eight parking spaces warrants the expenditures which would be necessary for acquisition and development. Although this Department generally endorses the principle of using vacant and unused land to create additional off-street parking spaces, these particular lots, under their present use, enhance the physical appearance of the neighborhood and relieve the sense of overcrowding which is particularly prevalent in East Cambridge. The Planning Department does not feel that it can give a strong positive recommendation for either of the solutions described above. We note that additional parking behind the Kennedy School might provide some relief from the parking congestion in the streets.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Bowyer

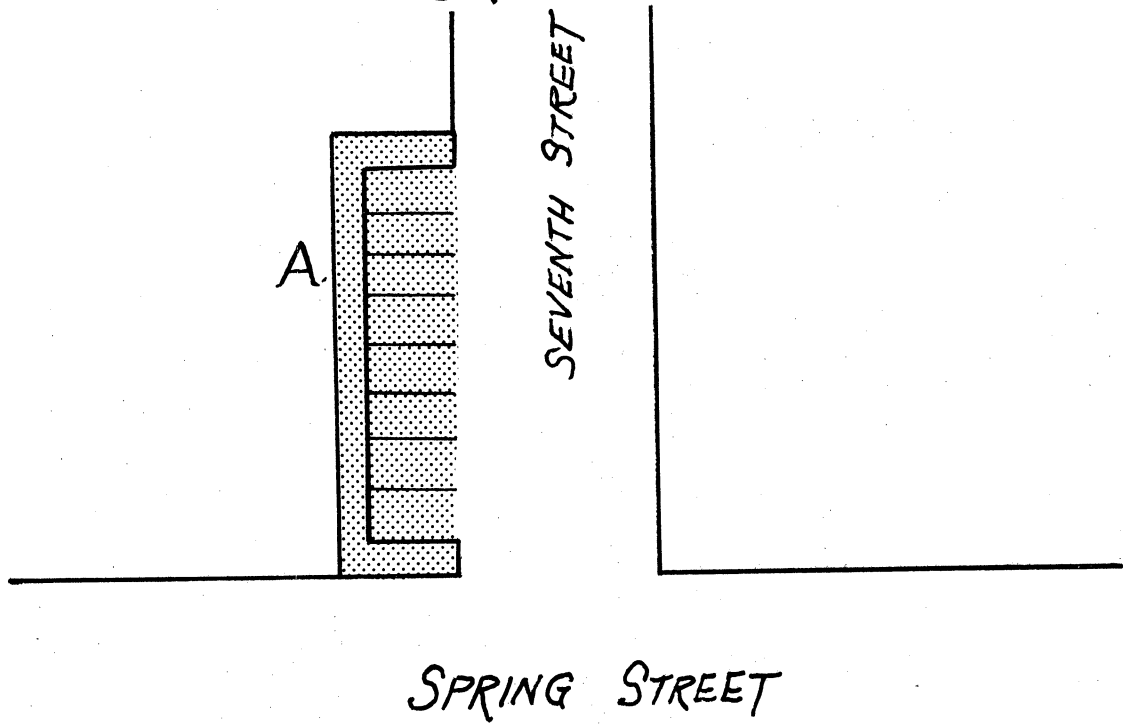
Robert A. Bowyer, Director
Planning and Development Dept.

RAB:jw
Enclosure

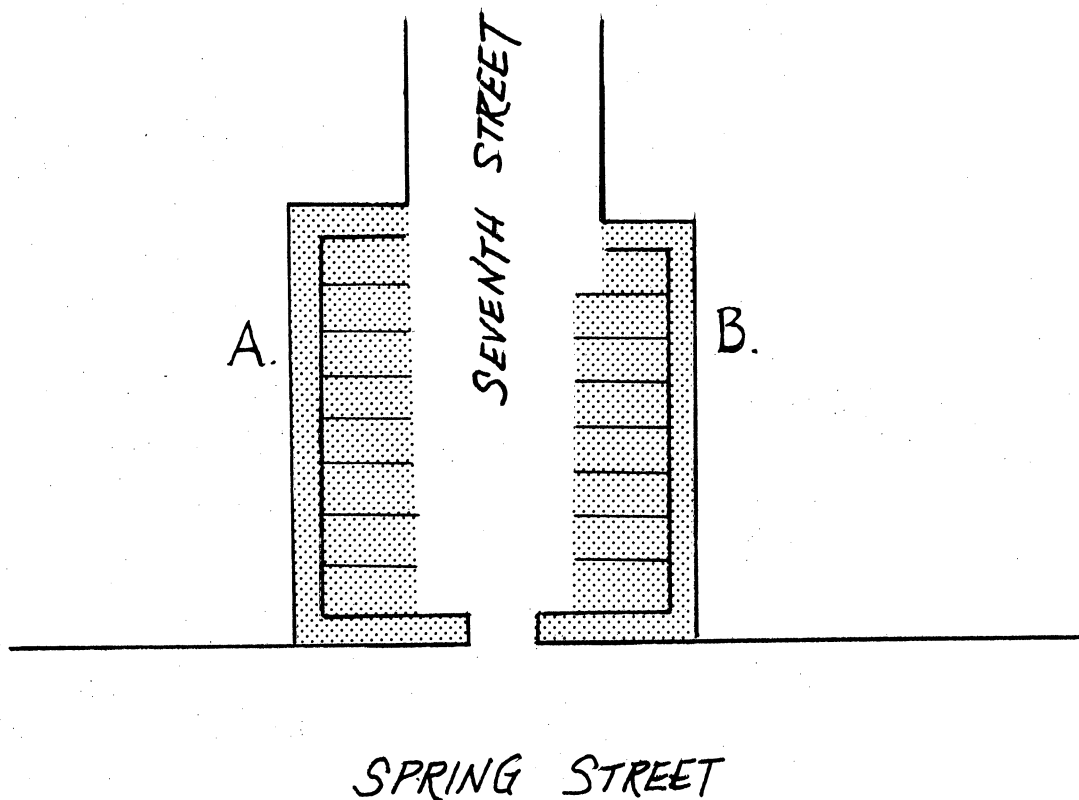


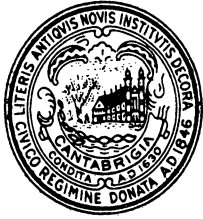
SKETCH #1

SKETCH #2



SKETCH #3





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Tel. 876-6800

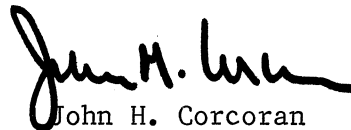
EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT
JOHN H. CORCORAN
City Manager

November 13, 1972

To the Honorable, the City Council:

With reference to request of your Honorable Body as it pertains to the feasibility of constructing a municipal parking area at the southern end of Seventh Street, I transmit herewith report of the Planning Department relative to this matter. I believe the report is self-explanatory.

Very truly yours,


John H. Corcoran
City Manager

JHC/b

Comm. from John H. Corcoran with report
from the Planning Dept. relative to the
construction of a municipal Parking area
at the southern end of Seventh St.

In City Council

November 13, 1972