

February 4, 1994

Members of the Cambridge City Council
and to Robert Healy, Cambridge City Manager
c/o Margaret Drury, Clerk
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Cambridge City Councillors and City Manager, Robert Healy

I am writing to you regarding the current proposal for the Central Artery Charles River Crossing, now called: The Non-River Tunnel alternative.

The architectural model, on view at 1 South Station, does not appear greatly distinguishable from the nearby model of the universally castigated Scheme Z. The question remains: What is the rationale for suppressing the Central Artery through Boston, only to erect a colossal, overpowering superstructure of elevated highway, crossing the Charles River into Cambridge?

An editorial in the Boston Herald, November 18, 1993, states: "If aesthetics were all that mattered, the commonwealth's choice of the "Non-River Tunnel alternative" for the I-93 crossing of the Charles River would be unsupportable.... It won't be pretty." The rationale here is that, while there are alternatives that would modify the impact of this bridge complex, they would cost additional money. It's time to close. Delays cost money.

Three years of meetings and endless debate have been costly economically and humanly exhausting. Now, we are pressured to accept an overbuilt traffic complex that will forever destroy the human scale and the potential naturalness of the park surround. Worse, these fourteen lanes are overkill, greedily excessive. They do not reflect the studies of projected highway needs.

I am writing to request a real exploration of the Modified Reduced River Tunnel Scheme alternative. This alternative has never been pursued. The command acceptance of the above alternative is a straight trade-off between aesthetics and quality of life and an estimated 300 million (3.8% of overall costs of the whole Artery trajectory). That's not much of a saving vis à vis 7 or 8 billion.

To reduce rising costs, the suppression of the Central Artery could proceed. The speedy action could be there, while a modified Charles River crossing was formulated, using both tunnel and bridge, in a scheme that was reasonable.

Additional financing for tunnel construction could come from tapping into the increased real estate values on land gained.

Members of the Cambridge City Council and Cambridge City Manager,
Robert Healy, February 4, 1994, page 2.

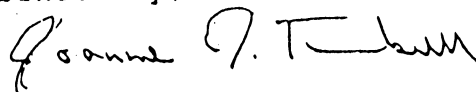
The design now proposed would destroy the continuity of the longest linear park in the United States. One of Massachusetts' greatest assets is the Charles River's downstream course, riverbanks that can be walked; vistas and open space enjoyed by countless people. We have spent millions on Boston's waterfront, to make it accessible to people. Along this densely populated area of the River, are we to spend billions and destroy this same accessibility?

The Tappen Zee bridge has nine lanes, and is gigantesque. Surely fourteen lanes should send an alarm.

The Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act Process is not finished. To rush closure on this design is to tragically throw away a tremendous opportunity to create a River crossing that will not only facilitate the flow of traffic, but will lift our spirits and add to the quality of the environment. Whatever is constructed will be a landmark, visible for miles around. It will exist into time.

I write this letter as a 35-year resident of Cambridge, and a member of the Cambridge Plant & Garden Club. With it, I enclose a Petition signed by many members of this club.

Sincerely,



Joanne J. Turnbull
167 Brattle Street
Cambridge, MA 02138

Encl.

Note: This letter was originally sent to Governor William Weld, on January 10, 1994.

The following members of The Cambridge Plant & Garden Club ask Governor Weld to direct Transportation Secretary James J. Kerasiotes to find a solution to the Charles River Crossing which respects the importance of the Charles River Basin and Boston Harbor in our Commonwealth. The Charles River Crossing deserves the same effort that was given to the design of the depression of the Central Artery in Boston. The Non-River Tunnel Alternative, in its current state, is an inadequate compromise.

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Ann C. Wyman	77 Raymond St	Cambridge, MA 02140
Eustace C. Holden	16 Lowell St.	Cambridge - Mass 02138
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Liz S. Zogoroff	10 Hilliard Place	Cambridge 02138
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Consent Communicaztion #5

S-53

Comm. and petition received from members
of the Cambridge Plant and Garden Club
regarding the current proposal for the
Central Artery Charles River Crossing.

In City Council February 14, 1994

Placed on file