



**CITY OF CAMBRIDGE**  
**PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT DEPARTMENT**

City Hall Annex

Inman & Broadway

EXTENSION 344

**To** John H. Corcoran, City Manager

**From** Robert A. Bowyer

RAB

**Date** 10/19/73

**Subject** North Cambridge Footbridge

The following information is in response to your request of October 15, 1973 for a status report on the proposed North Cambridge footbridge.

As Dick Lockhart reported to you in his memo of August 13, 1973, (copy enclosed) the military cannot help us with this project. It does not qualify either as a training project or as disaster relief.

The recently passed Federal Highway Act, however, does offer some promise of help. For the first time, it allows the construction of pedestrian and bicycle facilities as part of a highway improvement program, and does not require that these facilities be within the highway right of way. Thus, it is possible that the Alewife Brook Parkway improvement project that came out of the BTPR effort could include a footbridge over the railroad in the location we desire. The Department of Transportation will have to issue administrative regulations to flesh out the Congressional action; these have not yet been promulgated and the regulations may well work against the footbridge. Yet, the sign is hopeful, and we can look forward with cautious optimism to realization of the footbridge in two or three yearstime.

In the meantime, the Department staff is monitoring the situation at DOT, and at the request of Mayor Ackermann is investigating the use of the old brick yards tunnel under the railroad as an interim measure.

**John H. Corcoran, City Manager**

**Richard A. Lockhart**

**August 13, 1973**

**Footbridges and Playgrounds**

I was informed by telephone the other day that the Mass. National Guard cannot help us on the North Cambridge footbridge any more than the Army Engineer Reserves. Their reasons were similar to those of the Reserves: the size and sophistication of the job, related to time, equipment, and manpower required, and to competition with private industry.

This effectively ends our pursuit of help from the military, and we must rely upon Federal or State funding assistance for a permanent footbridge. Ned Handy and his transportation staff are researching the new highway bill that is awaiting the President's signature, and we will apply for every relevant program. A member of Congressman O'Neill's staff called me about the matter recently and I asked him to work on our behalf with the Department of Transportation there in Washington. Ned and I are also keeping in touch with David Hayes, the DOT Area Representative.

Enclosed is a letter for your signature to Col. Rogers of the Army Reserve Engineers. The Colonel and his staff were particularly helpful in their review of our footbridge request and even if we do not get the footbridge from them, we might get some playground work. Public improvements, such as grading, drainage, construction of timber shelters, jungle gyms, and similar small structures are within the Engineer reservists' training purview. Colonel Rogers has encouraged us to request his unit's help on such projects and I recommend that we proceed accordingly. I have discussed this with Paul Cowles, and suggested that we inventory our park and playground needs that are not otherwise being met through the Open Space Program.



## CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139  
Tel. 876-6800

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT  
JOHN H. CORCORAN  
City Manager  
JAMES L. FARRELL  
Assistant City Manager

October 29, 1973

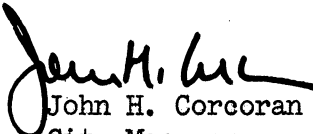
To the Honorable, the City Council:

I transmit herewith a communication from Robert A. Bowyer, Director of Planning and Development, relative to request of your Honorable Body for a status report on the proposed North Cambridge Footbridge.

I can also advise your Honorable Body that Mr. Conrad Fagone is investigating with the Boston and Maine Railroad the old underpass that was used by the New England Brick Company to transport clay from the clay barn on the dump site to the brick manufacturing process which is located on the northern side of the railroad tracks. While this tunnel has been filled in it might offer the solution to this pedestrian problem at this location.

This matter is being carefully researched at this time by Mr. Fagone. When I have further information I shall be happy to advise your Honorable Body.

Very truly yours,

  
John H. Corcoran  
City Manager

JHC/b

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Agenda # 1  
Status report on the North Cambridge  
footbridge from Planning and Development

In City Council:

October 29, 1973:

10/29/73

*Placed on file*

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