



# City of Cambridge

26.

IN CITY COUNCIL

November 24, 1997

COUNCILLOR DAVIS  
VICE MAYOR BORN  
COUNCILLOR DUEHAY  
COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO  
COUNCILLOR REEVES  
MAYOR RUSSELL  
COUNCILLOR SULLIVAN  
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY  
COUNCILLOR TRIANTAFILLOU

ORDERED: That the attached letter regarding the problems of noise, trash and litter, improper tree-maintenance and traffic be referred to the City Manager for a report back to the entire City Council.

In City Council November 24, 1997.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Margaret Drury".

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury  
City Clerk

November 9, 1997

Robert W. Healy, City Manager  
Cambridge City Hall  
985 Massachusetts Avenue  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Mr. Healy:

We are writing to make some suggestions for improving the quality of life in the City. We think that changes could be effected easily and would significantly address problems of noise, trash and litter, improper tree-maintenance and traffic. We hope that you consider these ideas worthwhile and ask City personnel to implement them or, at least, work on addressing the underlying problems.

**1. Magazine Beach Recreation Area - Bongo Drums and Over-Amplified Sound**

We are long-time residents of the Cambridgeport area. Music and drumming sounds (often the incessant, unaccompanied beating of bongos) from the Magazine Beach area have only during the last several years become a more frequently occurring, annoying and intrusive problem. During the milder months, on weekday afternoons extending into the late night - 10:00-11:00 p.m. - and on weekends, we can regularly hear (even with windows shut) bongo drummers 2-3 blocks up Magazine Street. Indeed, sometimes the drums can be heard from as far away as Putnam Avenue. Also, recently, there have been events at which over-amplified sound systems have blasted "music" into the neighborhood. The Beach area should be used for non-intrusive, recreational activities that don't interfere with the peace, relaxation and pastimes of others. In short, we don't want to be someone else's captive audience.

Because the MDC has jurisdiction over the Beach area but the sound affects the Cambridgeport residential neighborhood, we ask that you find some way of working with the MDC to require the players to play indoors, regulate the sound or the players' location so that the sound is not transmitted beyond their immediate locale or prohibit such activities at the Beach area.

**2. Trash - Central Square Area**

Too often there is an accumulation of unsightly (if not repellent) trash strewn about the Central Square area. This is especially a problem at off-hours, when DPW crews haven't been around for a while. The DPW's vacuuming/cleaning efforts are effective immediately after completion but soon thereafter, the area starts looking "trashed" again. Wouldn't it improve things to encourage, educate and induce the public to dispose of trash properly in the first place? Some ideas follow.

- a. **Install more trash receptacles, baskets or bins at key, more convenient locations, e.g.,** outside the Dunkin' Donuts; along the block between Mass. Ave. and Green Street (where people congregate, waiting for buses) and near the seating at the Carl Barron Plaza. During construction of the Plaza, there were, at most, 3 trash bins located at its perimeters (right at the curbs), at quite a distance from the seating. Now that construction is complete, there are still only 3 trash bins plus 1 for recyclables. Why not install more trash bins closer to the

seating before people get accustomed to the DPW workers' cleaning up after them? To understand this problem, you should visit the Plaza early in the day (7 a.m.-ish) or in the late afternoon when the raised plantings, benches and ground are strewn with discarded cups, plates, napkins, bottles, bags, newspapers, lottery tickets, clothing and miscellaneous stuff.

**b. Empty the trash bins more frequently.** Sometimes they are overflowing. Consequently, people who would like to use them, cannot; and the wind redistributes the trash. Of course, if there were more bins, they might not have to be emptied as frequently.

**d. Post signs/graphics** encouraging people to keep their public open spaces clean. In other eras, we had the "Don't Be a Litterbug" and "Keep American Beautiful" campaigns. How about a "Clean-Up Cambridge" or some such campaign?

**e. Include anti-littering educational segments in the school programs.**

**f. Induce fast-food purveyors as well as organizations that operate residential and other health and service facilities in the area to encourage their consumers, clients and residents to keep the neighborhood clean by disposing of trash properly.** For example, perhaps, the fast-food merchants could post signs (inside & outside their establishments) and sponsor/adopt public trash bins near their establishments.

**g. Enforce anti-littering laws and laws prohibiting posting signs and ads on public buildings and installations.**

### **3. City Trees**

The City should do more to maintain existing trees.

**a. Devote more effort, time and money to caring for young trees.** That will allow us to enjoy mature trees (rather than a series of young and, eventually, dying/dead ones) and will be cost-effective in the long-run. For example, the newly planted trees along the 1<sup>st</sup> blocks of Pearl and Pleasant Streets suffer from the following: no protective barriers; no grating; surrounded by concrete and paving (except for a small patch of exposed soil) preventing absorption of necessary moisture; no watering or other attention, even during this year's very dry summer/fall season; and too deeply planted.

As another example, the trees planted (perhaps by the property owner) on the 1<sup>st</sup> block of Magazine Street have had to be replaced at least once since they were first planted not many years ago. Neither the original trees nor these replacements have received any TLC or barriers protecting them from vandalism. People regularly tear their branches off, leaving wounds and unsightly stubs, which invite rot and cause further damage.

**b. Prune and attend to mature trees.** We realize that the freak April 1 snowstorm caused enormous and costly damage to our precious trees that is undoubtedly still being addressed. Even before that, though, the City didn't seem to be devoting much effort to caring for its mature trees, at least not in the Cambridgeport and mid-Cambridge areas. Recently some

attention has been paid to certain trees, but there are still numerous trees that require substantial pruning, both to avoid further damage and for aesthetic reasons.

c. **Adopt-a-Tree.** Perhaps the City could encourage people and businesses to "adopt" particular trees (not for pruning) for watering and reporting problems to the City.

#### **4. New Central Square Traffic Patterns - Bicycle Lanes**

**Enforce new traffic patterns.** The new traffic patterns/markings on Massachusetts Avenue require significant enforcement efforts, especially initially, to get people used to abiding by them. Enormous amounts of resources will have been wasted if the traffic and bike lanes are blocked. Too often, cars, taxis and trucks have been using the bike lanes (which, with the widened sidewalks & other traffic-calming installations, have already reduced the width of the Avenue) to park. Such parking (whether "live" or not) creates traffic jams and dangers for pedestrians, bikers and vehicles. Traffic officials (whether police or others) should warn, fine and/or tow illegal parkers and standers. Perhaps that will induce people to park in permitted locations, where the rest of us park.

We thank you for your consideration and for your and your staff's time and attention.

Sincerely,

Individuals on Attached Sheet

cc: Sheila Doyle Russell, Mayor, and City Councilors  
Robert Boulrice, President, Central Square Neighborhood Coalition  
Robb Johnson, Chairman, Friends of Magazine Beach

11/9/97 - Letter to Robert W. Healy

Name	Address	Phone Number
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Jeff Fried	2 Gordon Place	661-7337
Mark Byers	5 Gordon Place	661-7114
C. B. [unclear]	"	"
<del>Michael [unclear]</del>	18 FLORENCE ST	491-5718
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Jim Moore	167 Magazine St.	876-4431
Anna [unclear]	167 Magazine St.	876-4431
Tom [unclear]	140 Magazine St #8A	497-6976
Sandy [unclear]	152 Magazine St	876-2993
[unclear]	4 Gordon Place	576-2181
Wynne [unclear]	"	"
Walter McDonald	172 Magazine St.	354-1397
<b>Richard A. Berman</b>	<b>132 Magazine St</b>	<b>661-4737</b>
Oliver [unclear]	133 Magazine St	661-4737

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Because the MDC has jurisdiction over the Beach area but the sound affects the Cambridgeport residential neighborhood, we ask that you find some way of working with the MDC to require the players to play indoors, regulate the sound or the players' location so that the sound is not transmitted beyond their immediate locale or prohibit such activities at the Beach area.

**2. Trash - Central Square Area**

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**b. Empty the trash bins more frequently.** Sometimes they are overflowing. Consequently, people who would like to use them, cannot; and the wind redistributes the trash. Of course, if there were more bins, they might not have to be emptied as frequently.

**d. Post signs/graphics** encouraging people to keep their public open spaces clean. In other eras, we had the "Don't Be a Litterbug" and "Keep American Beautiful" campaigns. How about a "Clean-Up Cambridge" or some such campaign?

**e. Include anti-littering educational segments in the school programs.**

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As another example, the trees planted (perhaps by the property owner) on the 1<sup>st</sup> block of Magazine Street have had to be replaced at least once since they were first planted not many years ago. Neither the original trees nor these replacements have received any TLC or barriers protecting them from vandalism. People regularly tear their branches off, leaving wounds and unsightly stubs, which invite rot and cause further damage.

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Diane O'Boy	132 Magazine St	661-4737





# City of Cambridge

26.

IN CITY COUNCIL

November 24, 1997

COUNCILLOR DAVIS

**ORDERED:** That the attached letter regarding the problems of noise, trash and litter, improper tree-maintenance and traffic be referred to the City Manager for a report back to the entire City Council.

Consent Order #26

CM-819

Councillor Davis re: Problems of noise,  
trash and litter, improper tree-  
maintenance and traffic.

2  
3

In City Council November 24, 1997

**ORDER ADOPTED**