

Consent Communication

To: The Honorable, the City Councillors

Date: May 2, 2002

From: Elie Yarden

143 Pleasant Street

Cambridge, MA 02139



I remained opposed to the suppression of public dialog, and the reduction of serious discourse about matters of public concern produced by the Council Rules that have been in effect for the past three years. Among these matters are those that one comes across in reading Consent Communications.

Since I have no way of knowing whether anyone heard or understood my suggestion that the Consent Communication #8 of the Council Meeting of April 22nd might be helpful for furthering an understanding of arguments for the Knafel Center tunnel easement; especially those concerning "public benefit," I am sending you a copy of my response to Yoshiko M. Herrera, together with the original Communication #8, in the hope that you, and especially the members of the University Relations Committee will find it enlightening without my having to go into the matter of "ethical imperatives."

Attachments: Letter dated April 1, 2002; Yoshiko M. Herrera to Cambridge City Council. (Time stamped April 17, 2002)

: Letter dated April 25; Elie Yarden to Yoshiko M. Herrera.

2002 MAY -2 P 4:18
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

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April 1, 2002

Yoshiko M. Herrera
17 Everett St., Apt. 31
Cambridge, MA 02138

2002 MAY -2 P 4: 10
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

2002 APR 17 P 2: 18
OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

The Cambridge City Council
City Hall, 2nd floor
795 Massachusetts Ave.
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear City Council Members,

I write to ask you to support the building of the Center for Government and International Studies, and in particular, the concourse-level tunnel. I am a faculty member in the Department of Government at Harvard and also a Cambridge resident. I currently have an office in Coolidge Hall, 1737 Cambridge Street, and I cross Cambridge street, at the intersection of Cambridge and Prescott streets, a few times each day on my way to campus and to other buildings on Prescott street.

Crossing Cambridge Street at this intersection is very dangerous for pedestrians because drivers proceeding North on Prescott street, who wish to turn right on Cambridge street, stop at the intersection and look left for oncoming cars, but they very often do not look to the right for pedestrians. I personally have jumped out the way of cars when drivers almost hit me on a number of occasions, and there have been a number of accidents at the intersections because turning cars have stopped suddenly for pedestrians and have been rear-ended by cars behind them not expecting to stop. This problem is of course worse at night and when it is raining. I now carry a yellow umbrella explicitly because this intersection is so dangerous when it is raining and at night.

Therefore, I urge you to allow the tunnel between the two new buildings. Thank you very much for your consideration. I would be happy to discuss the issue of the CGIS building and the tunnel with you if you have further questions.

Sincerely,



Yoshiko M. Herrera

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Elie Yarden
143 Pleasant Street
Cambridge, MA 02139

2002 MAY -2 P 4: 10

OFFICE OF THE CITY CLERK
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

April 25, 2002

Yoshiko M. Herrera
17 Everett St., Apt. 31
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Yoshiko M. Herrera,

I read with great interest and sympathy your letter to the Cambridge City Council dated April 1, 2002 that appeared as Consent Communication #8 for the City Council Meeting of Monday, April 22, 2002. I regret that the populace is now forbidden to discuss such communications in the period given over to public comment. Nevertheless, I was fortunate to be able to call your letter to the attention of the Council in connection with another matter and hope that its members read it carefully.

Your vivid description of the dangers for anyone attempting to cross Cambridge Street at the intersection with Prescott street is very useful. Similar situations exist in many parts of our city, and it was thoughtful of you to call attention to the one with which you are most familiar. While I personally prefer crossing streets on signalized pedestrian crosswalks — and, if at vehicular intersections, traffic signals with exclusive pedestrian phases — I can understand that there may be many residents who find it safer to cross streets in underground or above ground passages.

Have you any idea of why the University is so reluctant to consider the possibility of providing and advertising this method of crossing Cambridge Street at this intersection for all those Cambridge residents who feel as you do? While I do not know whether the public is best served by placing the pedestrian crossing of Cambridge Street below ground; I am pleased to know that, as a faculty member in the Department of Government, you believe that the public order, the welfare of the citizenry, a primary concern of good government, should take precedence over narrower special interests. You may have succeeded in bringing this to the attention of the Cambridge City Council, in an unmistakable way, and I hope that they will act accordingly.

Sincerely yours,

Elie Yarden

Copies: to the Cambridge City Council
Attachment

S-138

Communication #7

A communication was received from Elie Yarden, transmitting opposition to the suppression of public dialog.

In City Council May 6, 2002

PLACED ON FILE.