

The City held lots of meetings but somehow didn't hear,
Though our feelings were made quite crystal clear,
That losing the median was our greatest fear.
They refused to do studies, they said they knew best
They heard what they wanted, they ignored the rest.

What the City will tell you is what they've said all along
"This redesign's good and our critics are wrong.
"There might be one or two small, little pains
"but we think that's nothing for installing bike lanes.
"And you've got to remember, we're the ones with the brains."

But if this plan is so good and the City so smart
Why will this project tear North Cambridge apart?
Why has it been so unloved from the start?
Those are the questions you might want to raise
To those people who sing the redesign's praise.

Why, you might ask, did the City refuse
To survey the locals to determine our views?
Could it be the City knew if we got to choose
That their redesign plan would certainly loose?
With half of the median ripped from the street
And the distance between crosswalks up to five hundred feet
It would seem that this plan wouldn't be hard to beat
This plan of the lifted median.

And just at the point when when we thought all was lost
We found out that the City can't cover the cost
It seems a perfect time for this plan to be tossed.
But no, says the City, this plan's carved in stone
It does not matter how much you all snivel and moan.

But we live here, we play here, we're the ones with the grip
On the safety provided by our median strip
And we wish that the City would answer our questions
And seriously consider our thoughtful suggestions
Our Median Strip is a very safe space
The City should do the right thing and leave it in place.

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TO: CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL
FROM: CRAIG KELLEY
RE: THE MASS AVE MEDIAN STRIP

AT THE NORTH END OF CAMBRIDGE

At the North end of Cambridge, near the Arlington sign
A big chunk of concrete hides an old trolley line
And the neighborhood people like that arrangement just fine
On the street of the lifted median.

What is the median and why is it there
And why would the City take and lift it somewhere?
And why in the world would anyone care
About an old piece of concrete with a neglected air?

Perhaps we all care 'cause it's well understood
That the City's plan will result in no good.
We know that just crossing the street will be tough
And the driving will become terribly rough
With left turns and right turns and u-turns as well
Getting 'round town will be scary as hell.

We folks from North Cambridge lived through it all
We questioned the wisdom of City Hall
and waited in vain for the Council to call.
But we learned all too quickly we were in it alone
We heard, when our Councilors answered the phone,
"This deal is done, plus we don't like your tone."

To find out what happened you don't talk with us.
We don't know the truth, we just bother and fuss.
Plus, no one who lives here can honestly say
Why the City would take the median away
So go a few miles South where the Manager works
Don't tell him we sent you, he thinks we're jerks
And search in the shadows where the Traffic Czar lurks
To find the truth of the lifted median

Well, I use the word truth, but that's not what I mean
The real word is something far more obscene
That describes the City's constant smokescreen
On the case of the lifted median.

Consent Communciation #33

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A communication was received
from Craig Kelley, relative to the
Mass. Ave. median strip at
the north end of Cambridge.

In City Council June 14, 1999

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