

Gordon Brumm
2 Inman St.
Cambridge, Ma. 02139

June 2, 1980

James Sullivan,
City Manager
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Mr. Sullivan,

On May 18, in answer to my urgent complaint about the noise emanating from the sculpture in front of City Hall, you urged a wait-and-see attitude, suggesting the disturbance might diminish as the novelty wore off.

After two weeks, it seems clear that the situation is not getting better, but if anything is getting worse. In order to provide a factual basis for judgment, I have been keeping an informal log of the clangings, a copy of which is enclosed. I want to stress the fragmentary nature of this record; it represents only the times when I was home and able to note such clangings. Still, at least two significant points stand out:

- On 10 of the 13 evenings represented, there was a clanging - loud enough to be noticed - at 1:00 a.m. or later (usually later).
- This past Saturday night (5/31) the clanging was virtually continuous from 6:15 p.m. to 2:00 a.m.

It appears that whatever decrease of usage results from the novelty's wearing off, is more than offset by the increase in usage resulting from the fact that the word is getting around about this new toy. In fact, it seems that small street carnivals are becoming more and more frequent in front of City Hall - often taking place long after midnight. I hardly need repeat that this is intolerable. I would also think it might demean the dignity of City Hall itself.

As I have observed, the sculpture can be moved to the Common or some other place where it can serve its purpose without disturbance. We have gone through a trial period. The sculpture being in front of City Hall may have seemed a good idea to begin with, but experience shows it to be a definite mistake. It is time to move the sculpture elsewhere.

Sincerely,


Gordon Brumm

Encl

cc: Councillor Francis Duehay
Councillor David Sullivan

A FRAGMENTARY LOG OF THE CLANGING OF THE GONGS IN FRONT OF CITY HALL, 5/19 - 5/31

Monday 5/19 (night)

1:30 a.m. - two young adults, near side

3:05 - ringing woke me up.

Tuesday, 5/20

9:30 a.m. - young man and older man

10:30 a.m. - two young women

11:15 a.m. - one young woman, passing by

1:45 p.m. - one man

(no record made until:)

8:15 - group of people; loud

9:10 - one person

9:55 - two people (fairly loud)

11:05 - one person

11:15 - six persons

12:25 - brief up-and-down-the-scale

1:25^{a.m.} - one person (fairly quiet)

Wednesday, 5/21

11:25 a.m. - one person

11:20 p.m. - several young people (for a long time, about $\frac{1}{2}$ hour)

then about eight young people - both sides - almost continuous loud noise for almost an hour - to 12:10. (Apparently they came and went by car.)

12:25 a.m. - two people

1:00 a.m. - two people (loud)

Thursday, 5/22

12:40 p.m. - group of adults and youngsters

8:20 p.m. - several groups of people, both sides (10-20 minutes)

9:05 p.m. - three to four people - till 9:40 or later

10:10 p.m. - one person, short time. Then three children - short but loud. Then a group of people on far side

11:35 p.m. - several people, loud - till about midnight

12:05 - two people, briefly

12:30 - two persons

1:30 a.m. - two groups, one on each side - loud

1:37 a.m. - One young man got out of car, used a cane or something else of his own - loud but brief

2:05 a.m. - several loud up-and-down-the-scales

Friday, 5/23

10:05^{a.m.} - youngster, with bike - moderate

1:15^{p.m.} - one youngster, fairly loud, but short

8:15 p.m. - several youngsters

about 10:00, 11:00, etc. - up till 12:00 - various people up-and-down-the-scales

1:45 a.m. - two groups, one on each side

3:00 a.m. - several people; loud

Saturday, 5/24

(no record made until:)

2:00 a.m. (i.e. Sunday morning) - loud up-and-down-the-scale

2:40 a.m. - fairly loud

Sunday, 5/25

9:00 a.m. - a few up-and-down-the-scales (woke me up)

(fairly continuous through the afternoon)

about 7:45 to 8:00 or so - two people; loud

8:25 p.m. - Several children. (Where did they get their sticks? I had policed the area only several minutes before. Checked on this: One child used a coat-hanger; another some sort of baton; there was also a young person using a small tree branch.)

9:10 p.m. - A couple of people on each side; loud up-and-down-the-scale

Sunday 5/25 (cont.)

- 11:00 p.m. - two people; much tinklay sound
- 11:30 - two teen-agers
- 11:35 - two more, briefly
- 12:30 - group of four; loud and festive
- 12:45 - two or three people on each side - very loud

Monday, 5/26

- 2:50 p.m. - three people; loud up-and-down-the-scale, etc.
- 3:35 - two people
- 4:15 - one youngster
- 4:20 - several people, both sides
- 7:35 - one person, loud
- 8:05 - one person, very loud
- 8:35 (etc.) - one person; loud up-and-down-the-scale
- 8:50 - several people, far side; very loud
- 9:00 - two people, near side; very loud
- 9:40 - several people, both sides; loud
- (No record made for rest of evening)

Tuesday, 5/27

- (No record made until:)
- 10:45 p.m. - two people, one on each side, very loud and insistent
- 11:15 - several people
- 1:05 a.m. - several people on each side; very loud

Wednesday, 5/28

- (No record made until:)
- 2:25 a.m. (Thurs. morn.) - one person, loud

Thursday, 5/29

(No record made until:)

12:55 a.m. (Fri. morn.) - one person, near side; two on far side - loud and long

Friday, 5/30

(No record made until:)

2:30 a.m. (Sat. morn.) - two groups, one on each side - loud, for several minutes; also a little singing.

Saturday, 5/31

(No record made until:)

6:15 p.m. - two people, then several people; near side - loud, long, monotonous

7:20 - two people, far side - long

7:30 - several people, both sides

8:00 - still several people on each side - till 9:35

9:40 (after intermission of five minutes) - several people, near side; then a child; then several people, far side.

10:00 - a couple of people

10:10 - a couple of people each side

10:15 - two people, near side

10:25 - several people, near side - very loud, with chanting and moaning

10:35 - more people, both sides - louder; much yelling, a carnival atmosphere

10:55 - same people, wilder, yelling, - till 11:15

11:25 - two people, far side

11:40 - several people, near side

11:45 - several people, both sides, very loud

12:00 - two people, far side; and others - until 12:35 (loud)

12:50 a.m. - brief (but fairly loud) strumming by two passers-by

12:55 - two passers-by, using own instruments; briefly but loudly
then, one person, each side - loud

Saturday, 5/31 (cont.)

1:10 - several people, far side

1:45 - briefly, by passers-by

1:50 - two persons, far side - loud ending

2:00 - small crowd, far side - loud

also two or three people, near side.

From: Gordon Brumm

S-291
Comm. from Gordon Brumm re: chimes in front
of City Hall.

In City Council,

June 9, 1980

- Placed on File -