



SARA MAE BERMAN
23 FAYETTE STREET
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

MAY 14, 1979

HONORABLE CITY COUNCILORS:

LACK OF OPEN SPACE IS THE PROBLEM WE HAVE HERE IN MID CAMBRIDGE: LACK OF OUTSIDE PLAYGROUND SPACE FOR LONGFELLOW SCHOOL AND LACK OF RECREATION SPACE FOR ADULTS, YOUNG AND OLD IN OUR NEIGHBORHOOD. IN MANY PARTS OF THE CITY THE NEIGHBORHOOD SCHOOL'S PLAYGROUND PROVIDES RECREATION SPACE FOR THE NEIGHBORHOOD AFTER SCHOOL HOURS - NOT SO IN MID CAMBRIDGE.

WHEN THE LONGFELLOW SCHOOL WAS BUILT ALMOST 50 YEARS AGO, THE PLANS INCLUDED A PLAYGROUND IN BACK OF THE SCHOOL. THE CITY HAS NEVER MOVED TO ACQUIRE THE LAND IN BACK OF THE SCHOOL - OR ON ANY OF ITS SIDES, FOR THAT MATTER. IF THE CITY HAD HAD A POLICY, EVEN IN THE LAST 20 YEARS, OF ACQUIRING PROPERTY NEAR THE SCHOOL AS IT CAME ON THE MARKET, WE WOULD NOT BE HERE TONIGHT - THERE WOULD ALREADY BE ENOUGH OPEN LAND. WE'VE ALL HEARD ABOUT COST - WELL, LAND IS NOT GETTING CHEAPER.

THERE ARE PROBLEMS THAT NEIGHBORS NEAR A PARK OR PLAYGROUND HAVE ABOUT MAINTENANCE AND SUPERVISION. MID CAMBRIDGE AND THE CITY SHOULD WORK TOGETHER TO DEAL WITH THESE PROBLEMS.

THE QUESTION WE OUGHT TO CONSIDER IS WHETHER WE SHOULD LET DEVELOPERS DO OUR CITY PLANNING FOR US, OR OUGHT WE NOT INSIST THAT THE CITY GOVERNMENT TAKE ITS PROPER ROLE AND BE IN CHARGE OF PLANNING FOR NECESSARY LAND USAGE. THE CITY NOW HAS AN OPPORTUNITY TO ACQUIRE A NON-RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY, THE ONLY ONE AT ALL CLOSE TO LONGFELLOW SCHOOL TO PROVIDE SOME SPACE FOR THE SCHOOL AND OUR NEIGHBORHOOD. LET'S DO IT.

LET'S ALSO GET THE CITY TO ADOPT A POLICY OF ACQUIRING LAND AS IT COMES ON THE MARKET NEAR THE SCHOOL, SO WE WON'T HAVE TO WAIT ANOTHER 50 YEARS !!

SARA MAE BERMAN

S-410