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Cambridge City Hall  
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Cambridge, MA 02139

To the Honorable; the City Council:

We are a group of low- and moderate-income Cambridge residents living in housing (472-474 Broadway) owned and operated by Harvard University (a non-profit institution). Our address and our names have been featured quite frequently over the past two months in several Cambridge newspapers because of the stunningly large rent increases Harvard Real Estate is seeking to impose upon us. For your convenience we have collected the relevant publications and enclosed them with this letter.

Through petitions to the Rent Control Board (cases currently pending) Harvard is asking to increase our monthly rents (we all live in modest one-bedroom apartments) by at least 75% (on average, from \$335 to \$590 for most tenants, but up to \$690 for others). The proposed increase is the accumulated effect of two factors: huge exterior capital improvements (\$83,000 in one year, necessitated only by long-term neglect) and the desire of Harvard Real Estate to double its profit margin on our building (from \$35,000 to \$70,000 per year, after all operating expenses).

A third factor, added to the two above in the case of certain tenants, is based on the cost of gut rehabilitations (about \$18,000 per unit) being made to all apartments in sequence as they are vacated, which has become more frequent as tenants flee from the threat of the pending increases. While some plumbing or electrical repairs may be necessary, there is no reason why--and Harvard Real Estate presented no evidence at any hearing to support claims that--a major renovation of any of the apartments was called for. Unfortunately we did find out at one of the hearings that the former Executive Director of the Rent Control Board signed an agreement with Harvard Real Estate giving them blanket authority to renovate all our apartments upon vacancy.

You are probably aware that Harvard Real Estate is submitting petitions to increase the rents in most of its masonry buildings. Our situation seems, though, to be most urgent and extreme: the Rent Control Board is scheduled to decide on the case on December 3, and the proposed increases are especially shocking.

We are appealing to you for your support. We hope that you will read carefully the enclosed articles, and we would welcome your presence on December 3 when the Rent Control Board meets to decide our case. It does not seem

reasonable that the Cambridge Rent Control laws would endorse such an action of a large landlord like Harvard to seek rent increases so substantial that tenants are having to face decisions about moving out.

Thank you for your interest. Please feel free to contact us if you wish.

Sincerely yours,

Eleanora Mendonça 354-6738  
474 Broadway Apt. 6

Susan Hunt 661-5924  
472 Broadway Apt. 8

Jayne Novotny  
474 Broadway Apt. 1

Dia Philippides 876-5521  
474 Broadway Apt. 4

Sophia Lewis  
472 Broadway Apt. 1

H. Tsuji  
474 Broadway Apt. 3

Kenneth Lakritz  
Lesley Lakritz  
472 Broadway Apt. 6

Barbara Callahan  
Stephen Jennings  
474 Broadway Apt. 5

Terry Regan  
Trudy Regan  
472 Broadway Apt. 3

Joan Carroll  
472 Broadway Apt. 4

Suzanne Teuteberg  
474 Broadway Apt. 6

Enclosures:

- 1) Letter: "Rents Out of Control" (Cambridge Chronicle, Thursday, October 2, 1986)
- 2) Front page article: "Tenants, HRE Clashing on Proposed Rent Hikes" (The Harvard Crimson, Tuesday, October 7, 1986)
- 3) Letter: "HRE" (The Harvard Crimson, Tuesday, October 7, 1986)
- 4) Article: "Harvard Seeks Rent Hikes in Rent-Controlled Mid-Cambridge Properties" (The Cambridge Tab, October 28, 1986)

PS: The Rent Control Board meeting to decide our case is scheduled for 9 p.m. on Wednesday, December 3 at the Rent Control hearing room at 678 Massachusetts Avenue (5th floor). The Report of the hearing examiner will be available at the Rent Control Office from Wednesday November 26 on.

market, located at 1006 Cambridge St., told police on Sept. 19, that someone came into his store and stole \$650 worth of lottery tickets.

A Somerville man told police on Sept. 19 that while operating his cab at the intersection of Cherry street and Washington avenue, he was robbed at gunpoint by two males.

A Florida resident stated to police on Sept. 20, that while she was staying at the Sheraton Commander Hotel on Garden street someone entered her room and stole \$360 in cash and clothing.

An Ash street resident reported his "much 10 speed bicycle stolen from his home on Sept. 20.

A woman reported to police on Sept. 21, that when she was in a driveway on Huron avenue a male asked her for some change. When she refused to give him some money he started to walk away and then returned and grabbed her handbag which was on the ground. The suspect then ran to his car and pulled away with her handbag.

A Somerville woman reported to police that a man stole her handbag, which contained an Olympus camera and \$65 in cash, on Sept. 22 at the Antab Lounge.

A resident of Woburn reported to police on Sept. 22 that someone took \$1000 worth of carpet from a Cambridge construction site.

A resident of Kentucky reported to police on Sept. 22, that while he was staying at the Hyatt Regency someone took a book he had left on his bed and then left the room. When he returned back to the room, the book was gone, and missing with it in the book, were his tickets home on Piedmont Airlines.

Two incidents were reported ten minutes of each other last Sept. 22, of a man who attempted to rob two individuals in a Franklin street apartment house. In one of the incidents, a man asked if he could use the phone, and afterward attempted to take the resident's pocketbook. When the suspect realized that the person was not the resident, the suspect fled from the room. In the other incident the suspect attempted to forcibly gain entrance to an apartment, after which the inhabitant locked the perimeter. In both cases, identical descriptions of the man were given.

Harvard street resident told police on Sept. 22, that someone entered her apartment through her room rear hallway window and stole \$400 worth of cash and jewelry.

...resident reported to police Sept. 26 that she had heard the front gate being opened up and assumed it was the other tenant coming in. However after checking the cellar she noticed that the door was pried and the light bulb unscrewed. Missing were some clothing, cash and personal property.

## Arrests

Douglass Crowley, Chelsea, attempted larceny Sept. 20.

On Sept. 20, Wanda Bullock, 30

# Letter CAMBRIDGE (MASS.) CHRONICLE

THURS., OCTOBER 2, 1986

## Rents out of control

page 5

We are tenants living in an eighteen-unit rent-controlled property at 472-474 Broadway in Cambridge, owned by Harvard University and operated by its subsidiary Harvard Real Estate, Inc. Soon, however, many of us will be forced to leave our homes, since we will no longer be able to pay the rent on our apartments. We are all faced with an imminent rent increase of 75 percent (a jump of \$250 per month), the effect of two separate cases now being heard at the Cambridge Rent Control Board. This means that from current rents of about \$335 per month we will all at once have to pay about \$585 (and some close to \$700 — see below) for apartments with one small bedroom.

Harvard Real Estate bases its request for this increase on the following two factors: 1) they claim to have spent last year a total of \$83,000 on capital improvements, mainly tuckpointing, to the exterior of the building; 2) they seek to double the already substantial profit margin on our building.

Harvard claims that the costly external capital improvements were necessary, yet many seem entirely cosmetic. The sudden large outlay for improvements was certainly increased by the repairs being long overdue, a result of systematic long-term neglect, about which tenants challenged Harvard University ten years ago; timely repairs would have been less costly. Not only are we being asked to pay for all the owner's investments in his equity, but we are also being asked to shoulder its desire for an increased profit. From the figures presented by Harvard

counts of Assault and Battery, Larceny.

On Sept. 22, Henry D. Martin, Dorchester, breaking and entering, possession of burglarious tools.

On Sept. 22, Felton Dyouss, 57 Hancock St., assault and battery with a deadly weapon; shod foot.

John Grady, 364 Rindge Ave., disorderly person, possession of a deadly weapon; knife.

On Sept. 22, juvenile, illegal possession of firearm, illegal possession ammunition.

—ROBERT BUONASPINA

By Anthony G. Paolillo  
Chief of Police

I would like to bring to the attention of the citizens of Cambridge a recent decision by the Supreme Judicial Court. In this case where the Supreme Judicial Court held, for the first time, that a social host who furnishes alcohol to an adult guest is liable for a death caused thereafter by the guest's negligent operation of a motor vehicle under the influence of alcohol.

Although not a criminal case, I believe this illustrates the growing awareness of changing societal attitudes about alcohol.

In this decision the drinking age was 18 and the principals involved were 18. The Court, however, discussed other cases from other jurisdictions where social hosts were liable for the consequences of serving alcohol to minors. Before this decision social hosts were liable for:

## Biracial parent

Given the racial and cultural diversity of Cambridge, it is not surprising to find a sizeable number of biracial families residing here. What is surprising is the absence of support services for them. To address this need, the Roberts/Maynard Neighborhood Council is sponsoring a support group for parents of biracial children.

"I see the group as a way for parents of biracial children to get together, to provide support for each other, and to talk about ways to heightening their children's self-confidence and self-esteem," said Val Hinderlie, the support group leader and mother of two biracial children. "It is a support group, not therapy or counseling service. Some of our plans include having specialists such as a child psychologist, a family therapist, a public school teacher talk to the group. These people are not child specialists in their fields, but are partners in interracial relationships."

The group will meet on alternate Thursday evenings beginning October 9, from 7 to 8 pm at

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# Tenants, HRE Clashing On Proposed Rent Hikes

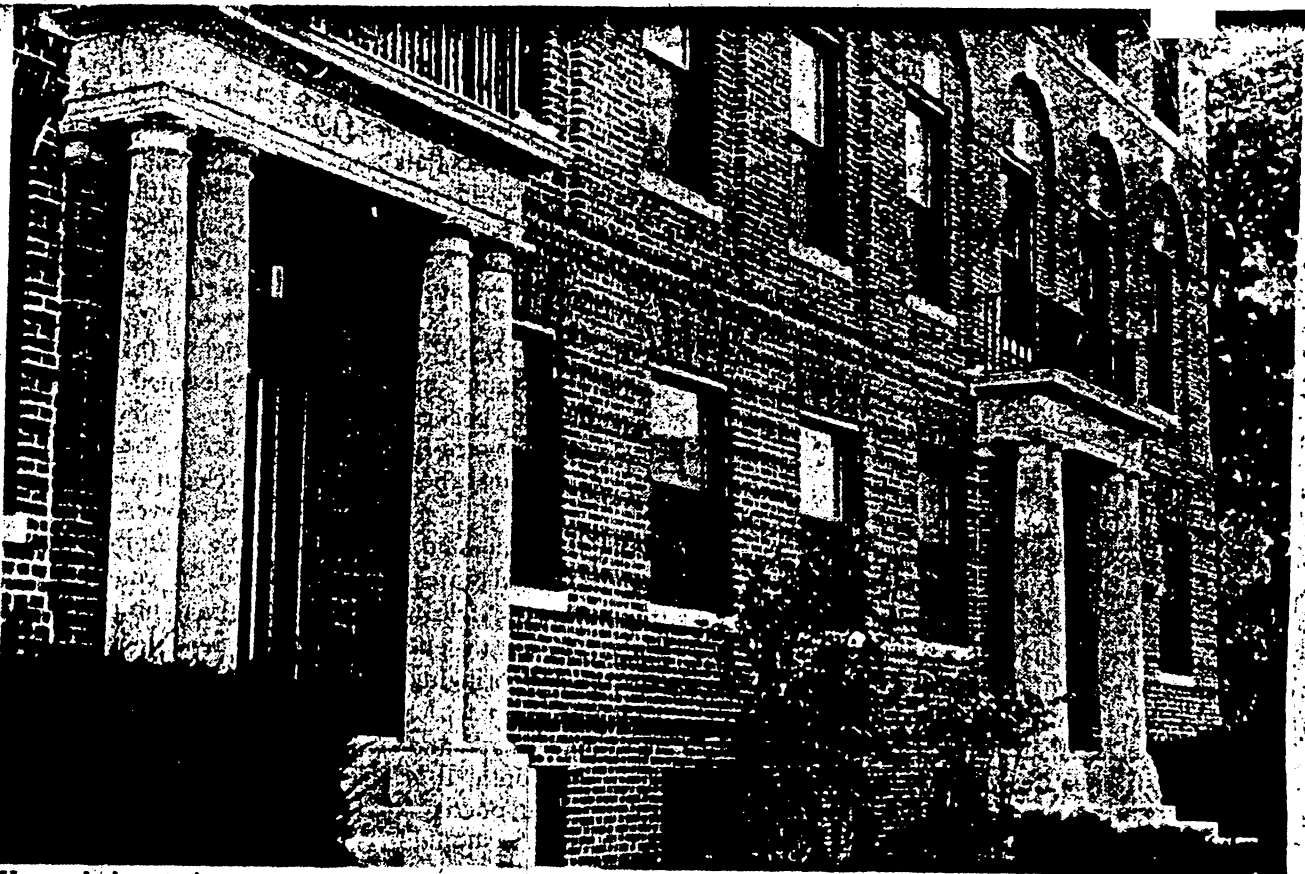
By EUGENIA BALODIMAS

Tenants living in a Harvard-owned apartment building charge that the University is funding expensive capital improvements to raise their rents by exorbitant rates. But the University's real estate management firm says these rent hikes are within

the city's rent control guidelines. Harvard Real Estate, (HRE) Inc., notified the residents of 472-474 Broadway St. that they will be hit with three separate rent hikes, estimated to increase their monthly housing costs between 75 and 100 percent.

Tenants say the rent increases may force them to leave their homes, and look elsewhere for low-cost housing. One resident of the rent-controlled apartment building, Dia Philippides, said that HRE's "75 percent increase doesn't seem to along with the spirit of rent control."

Rent control is Cambridge's method of regulating the amount a landlord can charge tenants in 17,000 of the city's housing units. The (continued on page 5)



Harvard plans to increase the rent in 472-474 Broadway have angered many tenants. Crimson/Lisa P. Clark

# Chernobyl Little Impact

only as a result of human error, said Morris Rosen, director of the Division of Nuclear Safety at the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna.

"There was nothing basically wrong with the reactor," he said. "As far as Russian technology is concerned, it is probably on par with what exists in much of the rest of the world."

Robert Gale, an American bone marrow specialist who flew to Russia to help treat radiation victims, presented statistics of the long-term health effects of the accident.

In a worst-case scenario, 25,000 Russians could die of cancer as a (continued on page 8)

# Harvard Hospital to Join Chain in Venture

## Unusual Arrangement Will Not Affect Management or Ownership

By PETER C. KRAUSE

A Harvard-affiliated teaching hospital and the nation's largest for-profit hospital chain last week announced an unusual multi-faceted agreement designed to improve care

and reduce costs. Under the three-year plan, the Brigham and Women's Hospital will assist the Hospital Corporation of America in raising the quality of its patient care and, in exchange, the

corporation will allow the 720-bed Harvard-affiliate to purchase equipment at bulk-rate costs, officials jointly announced Thursday. Neither the management nor the ownership of the two institutions will

be affected by the arrangement, still in its planning stages. The Hospital Corporation operates nine hospitals in Massachusetts, and 470 world-wide.

### Common Interests

"This agreement recognizes our two organizations' interest to work together in specific areas toward our mutual goal of delivering high-quality, cost-effective care," the two chief executive officers said in the joint statement.

The deal, which could mean hundreds of thousands of dollars to

# Falwell Explains Evangelical Politics

Moral Majority leader Jerry Falwell in a speech last night at the Law School said that because fundamentalists vote as a group their

members voted overwhelmingly for Reagan in 1984.

In an interview before the speech,

following his speech, Falwell had



# ANC Supports Violence To Reform S. Africa *Tenants Blast Rent Hike*

A representative of the African National Congress (ANC) in a speech last night sponsored by campus divestment organizations said that violent conflict was necessary and inevitable to bring change to South Africa.

In front an audience of close to 200 at Emerson Hall, Susan Mnumzana, a member of the ANC international bureau, said that while the group firmly advocates democratic, multi-party rule of South Africa, the organization holds violence as an acceptable means to that end.

"We will not hesitate to bomb those [South African] installations," she stated.

Mnumzana's speech lasted for a half hour and was followed by a lengthy question and answer period. Members of the Spartacus Youth League, a radical Trotskyist group, interrupted the question period.

Mnumzana came to Harvard as part of a publicity drive by the ANC, which is outlawed by the South African government, that will take her on a month-long tour of the United States.

She said that the group was engaged in the current public relations campaign in order to

educate the American public to the complexities of the South African political situation, to solicit financial support for specific ANC projects, and to popularize the leadership role of the ANC in the struggle against the white minority government.

Mnumzana commented on both the domestic and international fronts of the crusade against apartheid, emphasizing that the limited sanctions enacted by Congress last week were but "a drop in the sea" of actions necessary to force change in South Africa.

While commending the divestment movement in America, she noted that "sanctions are not going to bring liberation. The brunt of the struggle is borne by us, on our shoulders."

Campus politics dominated the conclusion of the event as the Spartacists debated with the Democratic Socialists of America (DSA) over the best approaches to the issue of anti-apartheid activism. An umbrella group of campus activist groups, with varying perspectives on the South African issue, sponsored the ANC speech, including the South African Solidarity Committee (SASC), TransAfrica, the Rainbow Coalition, and DSA.

## Grads Pick Public Sector

(continued from page 1)

dergraduate participation in community service has increased steadily during the past five years, Leape said. Only 38 percent of the Class of 1982

William T. Stack, a recruiter for the program. "Our recruiting efforts are always more successful when the economy is better," he said. Stack

(continued from page 1)

University is the largest rent control landlord in Cambridge.

HRE officials have met with the tenants three times in the last three months before the Cambridge Rent Control Board, and there has been no resolution to the dispute.

### Harvard's Side

But HRE President Sally H. Zeckhauser defended the rent increases, citing the need for external renovations to the turn-of-the-century building and increases in operational costs.

"We aren't asking for any more than the rent control board will ask that we charge, and as responsible landlords, we have asked for increases to defray our costs," Zeckhauser said yesterday afternoon.

Zeckhauser also said that HRE offered to help tenants who felt pressed by the proposed increases by discussing the possibilities of finding cheaper housing and by phasing in the increases. HRE's president said that no tenants have responded.

### \$250 Jump

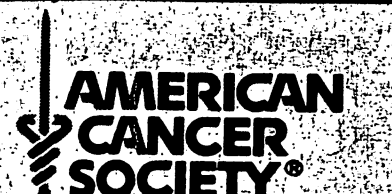
Each of the 18 units at 472-474 Broadway St. will be hit with two proposed rent hikes—one for capital

improvements and the other for operational costs. That means tenants with one bedroom apartments could face an added \$250 on top of their current rent of \$335 per month.

An additional charge—which would apply only to those units recently vacated and renovated—will increase some rents there by an extra \$259. HRE calculated these rent increases according to a formula set by the city's rent control board, which regulates housing costs.

The city is expected to rule on the case after a hearing examiner presents the case to the seven-member board.


"I understand that rents have to increase, but this kind of increase is unfair," said Susan Hunt, one of the building's residents who is employed in a Harvard research center. "A 10 to 20 percent increase is heard of, but a 75 percent increase is unheard of. Now I feel victimized and helpless."



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steps to keep the United States at arm's distance from the South African regime, while keeping America's beneficent influence at work bringing about constructive change."

He's been doing that—and it has killed 130 Blacks a month. It is time to end the horror and hypocrisy of U.S. foreign policy. The U.S. should begin to

Botha to his peep-show and begin taking the real steps in freeing South Africa's Blacks—military aid. "Apartheid will be dismantled and its victims will remember who helped to destroy this evil system," said Bishop Desmond M. Tutu, "and President Reagan will be judged harshly by history."

question: What will you test? Will you test positive and those who test negative? Those who test positive would undoubtedly be informed of the dangers to their own health and the potential for losing their jobs. Meanwhile, those who test negative—surprise!—would be informed of the dangers to their own health and the potential for losing their

or participating in athletics, institutions gain a whole new dimension of power over individuals. Access to that kind of knowledge about a population creates a whole new network of social controls. Power is no longer in a white-domed building in Washington, it reaches out and takes a blood sample.

### From Our Readers

## HRE

#### To the Editors of The Crimson:

We are tenants living in an eighteen-unit rent-controlled property at 472-474 Broadway in Cambridge, owned by Harvard University. Soon, however, many of us will no longer be able to pay the rent on our apartments. We are all faced with an imminent rent increase of 75 percent, the effect of two separate cases now being heard at the Cambridge Rent Control Board. This means that from current rents of about \$335 per month we will all at once have to pay about \$585 for apartments with one small bedroom.

### Mail

Harvard Real Estate, Inc. bases its request for this increase on the following two factors: 1) they claim to have spent \$83,000 last

#### TALK BACK

The Crimson welcomes comments from its readers. Please type all letters double-spaced and include your name, address and telephone number. We will withhold names on request, but they must be included for verification. We reserve the right to edit for length.

Address mail to:  
Editorial Chairman  
The Harvard Crimson  
14 Plympton St.  
Cambridge, MA 02138

year on improvements to the exterior of the building; 2) they seek to double the already substantial profit margin on our building.

Harvard claims that the costly external capital improvements were necessary, yet many seem entirely cosmetic. The sudden large outlay for improvements was certainly increased by the repairs being long-overdue, a result of systematic long-term neglect, about which tenants challenged Harvard University 10 years ago; timely repairs would have been less costly. From the figures presented by Harvard Real Estate to the Rent Control Board it is clear that Harvard Real Estate is well able to meet all its operating expenses for the building at the current rent rates; even the recent external capital improvements would be absorbed by the current rates. Why should any landlord, especially Harvard, a non-profit institution, be allowed to seek great and sudden increases in profit?

Some tenants are facing yet a third increase, bringing new rents as high as \$682 for the same size of apartment. Harvard Real Estate has been gutting units as they are vacated, then renovating and remodeling them to the tune of about \$18,000 each. Like the external capital improvements to the building, these interior renovations seem to a large extent cosmetic; the remaining repairs are due to long-term neglect and lack of adequate routing maintenance.

Harvard Real Estate is using rent control to get, all at once, high market rates for our modest apartments. This practice obviously contributes to the shrinkage of affordable housing units in Cambridge. Some tenants have already had to move out of the building

because of the proposed rent hikes.

The Cambridge community should be aware of what is happening in our building. Since the Rent Control Board has not yet

decided on these cases, it should be able to avert the sudden increase and rein in this kind of unbridled landlord activity.

Eleven Tenants of 472-474 Broadway

### Boyd's Eye View

WITH THIS BUNCH OF JUNIOR LEAGUERS, WE'LL BUILD A GREAT TEAM!



tractive urban mall, area residents are wary a development larger than Boston's Copley Place will bring unwanted traffic into their neighborhood.

Karp says he is tentatively planning 600,000 square feet of retail space including three large "anchor" department stores. Lechmere will remain on the site, and Karp says he is talking with officials from Sears, Filene's and two other stores to fill the other two "anchor" slots.

Approximately 100 condominiums and 120,000 square feet of office space are also planned for the 11-acre site between First Street and Commercial Avenue from the Lechmere Canal to Charles Street.

Karp says he hopes to begin construction in the spring on the first phase of the development, building a new structure for

"an extensive traffic study," he adds.

Karp says two consultants already have conducted traffic studies for his company, concluding that once the ongoing expansion of Commercial Avenue and other nearby roadway improvements are complete, the roads will be able to handle the traffic from the planned development.

East Cambridge Planning Team member Paul Dodds is doubtful. "That's a huge development. The area is too small, the roads are too heavily used. The neighborhood will be swamped," he says.

Karp, who developed the Arsenal Mall in Watertown and Liberty Tree Mall in Danvers among other malls in Massachusetts and New Hampshire, argues the mixed uses will keep traffic problems to a minimum because busy times for office

traffic problems, Dodds says. Area neighborhood groups are calling for a review of the impacts of those developments before new projects are approved, he says.

Kellogg says while the first phase of Lechmere area road improvements — First Street and the O'Brien Highway — is finished, the second and third phases — the widening of the bridge on Commercial Avenue over the Lechmere Canal and the widening of Commercial Avenue to six lanes — are being held up because the contractor, Baker Construction Company, went bankrupt recently.

Those phases will be finished in late 1987 or early 1988, Kellogg says, noting no store in the mall will open before the roadwork is complete.

— E. Dennis

though the development firm agreed to a narrow path and an extension of the park, it refused to put the building any further away from the tree.

The tree now is protected by the historical landmark designation from the city's historical commission. But fearing that protection may be lost if the city loses the suit, city councillors last spring denied Spaulding and Slye permission to build a pedestrian bridge between two of its Cambridgepark Drive buildings in North Cambridge until the company resolved the tree issue with Riverside residents.

The status of the tree and the bridge were on hold until several carpenters appeared at the October 6 city council meeting, saying they were being denied work because the bridge was being held up.

Vellucci, seeing himself caught between two important constituencies — tree lovers and union workers — decided to take the matter into his own hands.

At last week's council meeting city legal counsel Birge Albright explained the city has been trying unsuccessfully to get Spaulding and Slye to grant the city an easement for the pathway that would protect the tree.

City Manager Robert Healy argued that the tree is protected now by the landmark designation, and councillors have no reason to link the bridge issue to the beech tree. "One is a bridge and one is a tree," he said.

But Vellucci retorted, "I want the bridge, and I want the tree." He said he would negotiate with Spaulding and Slye to get the easement.

Deirdre Morris, who has researched the history of the tree, thinks Vellucci and the tree advocates will get what they want. "He doesn't fool around," she says.

— D. Gaffney

— E. Dennis

## Harvard Seeks Rent Hikes in Rent-Controlled Mid-Cambridge Properties

Harvard University is seeking large rent increases at a number of Mid-Cambridge rent-controlled apartment buildings, including a Broadway apartment building where it is seeking rental increases of 75 percent.

The rent increases Harvard University is seeking would affect rents in approximately 350 apartments in the following seven buildings: 9-13a and 18-20 Ware St., 472-474 Broadway, 64 Oxford St., 50-52 Trowbridge St., and 22-24 and 85-95 Prescott St. The rent increases have been requested to pay for capital improvements and to allow the university to receive the largest profit possible under rent control laws, says Sally Zeckhauser, president of Harvard Real Estate Inc.

"What they're doing is creating market-rate rents under rent control," says Michael Turk, a tenant activist. "They want to get more profits from their buildings."

Harvard is seeking rent adjustments at these buildings to pay for capital improve-

ments over the last four or five years, Zeckhauser says.

The university also is "aggressively pursuing" so-called "Regulation 72" rental adjustments — which allow landlords to adjust individual building rents to account for inflation — because many of the buildings had their rents decreased in the general rent adjustment voted by the Cambridge Rent Control Board last year, Zeckhauser says.

However, tenants say Harvard's requested rent increases will merely boost the university's profit margin and only provide tenants with many unnecessary improvements to their buildings. Harvard will more than double its profit margin from the Broadway building if it wins desired rent increases from the rent board, according to Turk. He cites landscaping alterations at the Broadway building as an example of unnecessary improvements.

The hikes will hit tenants hard. For example, Broadway tenant Susan Hunt says

the \$330 she pays for a one-bedroom apartment would increase to \$576 if Harvard's rent increases are approved by the rent board. And Dia Philippides, another tenant at the Broadway building, says her rent would rise from \$335 to \$583. Philippides' rent has only risen from \$230 since 1978, she says.

"There must be a better way," Hunt says. "I could see if they had gradual increases. That wouldn't be such a blow to tenants."

"It's absolutely against the spirit of rent control," adds Philippides. "To have such an abrupt and huge increase all at once just baffles me." Philippides says one tenant has already left the building and another plans to leave because they can't afford the proposed rent increases.

"We felt they were necessary," says Zeckhauser of the capital improvements. "We didn't do them for frivolous reasons."

— D. Gaffney

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The Cambridge Tab

Oct 28, 1986 p. 3

8. S-657

Comm. from Eleanora Mendonca, Susan Hunt, et al, residents of 472-474 Broadway Re: pending petitions before the Rent Control Board by Harvard Real Estate to increase their monthly rents substantially.

In City Council,

December 8, 1986

Referred to the City Manager  
and  
Rent Control Board

Copy sent to the City Manager &  
Margaret Drury, Rent Control Board  
12/10/86 wh