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53 Crescent Street
Cambridge, MA 02138
January 15, 2002

2002 JAN 16 A 10:38

CITY CLERK
City Council Office
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Dear Councilor

We are writing to express our concern about the need for an independent review of plans for building or site development projects that involve potential risks to public health. While this letter comes from one family, we have attended meetings with other neighbors with similar concerns and are in the process of forming an active committee that will monitor construction activities in the Agassiz Neighborhood.

Currently, our primary concern is focussed on Harvard's plans for the development of its North Campus. In particular, our group is urgently aware of potential public health problems associated with plans for construction activities on and under the site of a former parking lot (bordered by Oxford, Hammond, Gorham, and Museum Streets and other Harvard buildings) and for the construction of a diesel fuel storage tank at another site nearby on Oxford St. Construction on the former parking lot includes decommissioning a cyclotron, digging up and removal of contaminated soils, and increasing the number of vehicles that can be parked at that location, with the associated increases in air pollution and noise during and long after construction. Similarly, there are concerns about the diesel fuel tank with questions about fumes, re-fuelling, potential spills or explosions, and especially the potential for accidental interactions between the two projects during construction.

It is likely that representatives of Harvard have anticipated some or all of these concerns and will address them in their presentation at the Agassiz Neighborhood Council this evening, January 15, 2002. However, from the perspective of neighborhood residents and of the faculty, staff, and students at the Agassiz School, this communication is coming late in a process that could, and we feel should, have included earlier, frank disclosure about their projects' potential environmental and public health impacts. Furthermore, we are aware that any owner/developer of a site may feel pressured by their own internal reasons for undertaking a project and by the time and cost factors related to keeping a project on a pre-determined schedule.

Therefore, we request that Harvard work more closely and openly with its Agassiz neighbors and the Agassiz Neighborhood Council to address all environmental and public health concerns for both the parking lot and diesel fuel tank projects, and other plans for construction on North Campus. And, we urge the City Council, the City Manager, the Public Health Commission, and the city's permitting and inspectional services to require an independent review by relevant experts of their plans for these and other construction projects with potential public health risks prior to granting any permits or licenses. Obviously, an independent review would take more time than mere approval of Harvard's current plans. Yet we feel strongly that all parties will ultimately be best served by the scrutiny and recommendations of independent experts whose only goal is the protection of the health and well-being of those who live and work in the

vicinity of this project. We view the independent review of a project's plans and the possible recommendations for improvements as a fair and reassuring means of protecting all involved from health hazards. This process is akin to seeking a second opinion on treatment options for a seriously ill patient. In both instances, more information from different, objective sources leads to better decision-making and monitoring as a plan of action proceeds.

We hope we can count on your wisdom and leadership as we seek ways to confront such important concerns in a preventive, rather than litigious, manner.

Respectfully,

Kate S. Frank

Kate S. Frank

Thomas Frank, M.D. / KSF

Thomas Frank, M.D.

Copies to all City Councilors,
City Manager, Public
Health Commission, &
Permit/Licensing Commission,
Harvard representatives, &
attendees at ANC Meeting 1/15/02

To: D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk

From: Kate S. Frank

Date: 1/16/02

Re: Need for policy on Public Health review of construction projects prior to permitting

Please place this letter on the City Council agenda for 1/28/02.

Thank you.

Kate Frank

2002 JAN 16 A 10:38
CITY CLERK
SANTUCCI, FRANK & COMPANY, INC.
SANTUCCI, FRANK & COMPANY, INC.

Consent Communication #2

A communication was received from Kate S. Frank and Thomas Frank, M.D., regarding the need for a policy on public health review of construction projects.

In City Council January 28, 2002

*Referred to
City Manager
and Order #10*



City of Cambridge

O-10.

IN CITY COUNCIL

January 28, 2002

VICE MAYOR DAVIS
COUNCILLOR DECKER
COUNCILLOR GALLUCCIO
COUNCILLOR MAHER
COUNCILLOR MURPHY
COUNCILLOR REEVES
COUNCILLOR SIMMONS
MAYOR SULLIVAN
COUNCILLOR TOOMEY

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to report to the City Council on the level of technical support that the City can and will provide to the Agassiz area during the development and construction by Harvard University in the greater Agassiz neighborhood.

ORDERED: That the City Manager be and hereby is requested to report back to the City Council on this matter by February 22, 2002.

In City Council January 28, 2002.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "D. Margaret Drury".

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

CM-11

Order #10

Report to the City Council on the level of technical support that the City can provide to the Agassiz area during the development and construction by Harvard University.

Vice Mayor Davis

In City Council January 28, 2002

ORDER ADOPTED