

Edmund G. Hamann  
106 Holworthy Street  
Cambridge, Ma 02138

Mayor Francis H. Duehay  
Cambridge City Council  
City Hall  
795 Mass. Ave.  
Cambridge, MA 02139  
Reference: North Mass. Avenue Reconstruction Project

March 12, 1998

Dear Mayor Duehay:

The following letter was printed in the Cambridge Chronicle March 5, 1998:

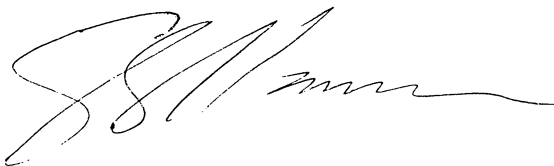
My reaction to the Open Forum article by Craig Kelley in the February 12th edition of the Cambridge Chronicle ("North Mass. Ave. pedestrians beware") is one of disappointment. It seems clear from his remarks that Mr. Kelley has not taken advantage of the many public workshops the DPW and the Community Development Department have held in North Cambridge over the past year to allow the residents of the area to reach consensus on design plans for the North Mass. Ave. corridor. Of these workshops I attended ones held on April 9, May 1, June 26, October 4, November 15, 1997, and January 24, 1998. All meetings were well attended, and at all everyone was afforded ample opportunity to express his or her opinions and make some excellent suggestions. The city has responded to these by modifying many features of the design plan.

I would also take issue with Mr. Kelley's contention that the removal of the existing continuous concrete median will result in greater danger for pedestrians crossing the avenue. I believe that the reverse will be the result: the new design calls for about double the number of pedestrian crossings, with safety islands (or short medians) installed at those, without traffic walk signals. Pedestrians, therefore, will be encouraged to cross the avenue at safe points rather than, as now, jay-walk between parked cars to and from the median as breaks in traffic allow. I was amused to hear at one of the meetings I attended some persons loudly criticizing the city planners for removing the continuous median while others were taking them to task for installing medians in some places!

The city has shown exceptional good will throughout the entire planning process and, as a result, it is developing a final plan that will enhance the value of North Mass. Ave. for its residents and businesses, as well as provide greater safety for all who use it -- pedestrians, bicyclists, and cars. What I heard at these public meetings was overwhelming approval of the project and appreciation for the city's fine effort to involve its citizens.

While I would expect the City Council to listen respectfully to those citizens who have belatedly step forward to register their protests to the design, I strongly urge it to accept the majority view, which favors the design put forward by the city.

Yours sincerely,



Copy: Susan Schlesinger, Assistant City Manager for Community Development

Comm. & Rpts. from City Officers

#2

Communication was received from  
Edmund G. Hamann, transmitting  
his concern regarding the  
Charles River MAster Plan.

S-195

In City Council March 23, 1998

**PLACED ON FILE**