

ACENDA

CAMBRIDGE COMMON CONCERT COMMITTEE

20 May 1970

Mr. John Sears
Metropolitan District Commission

Dear Mr. Sears:

First, on behalf of the Common Concert Committee, please let me express our thanks to you and the Commissioners of the MDC for taking the time to help us in finding alternative sites for Common concerts.

As a result of the riots in Harvard Square, and the obvious tension in the youth community, we felt it best that the concerts not be moved for at least a month after the start, so that the lines of communication between the committee and the people attending the Sunday concerts could be resolidified. As things stand now, we are planning to make our first move June 14, to Smith Field, a Harvard-owned area. We should like to ask for use of MDC land sometime later on, probably in early July, if that's workable.

Pursuant to our discussion of two weeks ago, we examined the area of Hell's Half Acre. Unfortunately, at the meeting I wasn't familiar with it at all, and so was unable to judge its potentialities for use as a concert site. It's a very pleasant place to wander through, a kind of mini-nature park; but I'm afraid it's not too well suited for use by large numbers of people. There is only one open area of ground, which is rather stubbly, and not too good for sitting; and it doesn't look capable of accommodating several thousand people. Also it's quite a hefty hike from Harvard Square--at least twenty minutes' worth. Parking seems limited; there is only space for perhaps thirty cars in the driveway, and even closing off some of the roads wouldn't yield more than another thirty spaces or so, I think. The easiest access by foot crosses two roads with no stoplights, which probably couldn't be closed off, since they go across the bridge. Foot traffic would then seem to require several extra traffic police. And perhaps the most worrisome thing, from a civic point of view, is that the only open ground is on a direct sightline with Mount Auburn Hospital, which is just across the cloverleaf. The problem with sound is that the lower frequencies, the "beat", are the ones people hear most

easily, are projected the farthest, and are very hard to baffle. They radiate omnidirectionally too, so that, no matter which way the sound system is pointed on the open area, there would still be radiation directly toward the hospital, which would be unfortunate.

If there is any possibility of asking for alternate sites again, we would like to do so. We checked the use of the tot-lot near the Institute of Contemporary Art, and it does seem to be well-used on Sundays. But would it be possible perhaps to use it maybe just one Sunday or two, rather than a whole series of days?

I talked with George Davis of Summerthing in Boston, and he mentioned the possibility of doing something, perhaps in conjunction with then, in the Hatch Shell, which I believe the MDC governs. Would this be a feasible alternative for several concerts? We would certainly make every attempt to clean up and preserve the facilities. I've been to several very pleasant rock concerts there in the past, and it seems to have worked beautifully for them.

We haven't yet gotten up to the Breakhaart Reservation, but have received good reports about it. It's probably too far away to act as a replacement for the Sunday concerts, since many people who regularly come to Cambridge Common would have difficulty getting there. But many people who are more mobile, or who live north of Boston would certainly enjoy something there. We would like to plan a Saturday concert for the middle of the summer there, if that would be acceptable.

If these, or other alternatives, seem practical to you, please call me at 876-6797, or Rev. Murray Kenney at Christ Church, Cambridge, and we will be happy to meet with you at your convenience.

(s)

Again, let me thank you for your time and efforts in our behalf.

Sincerely,

James Parry

James Parry, for the Cambridge Common
Concert Committee

cc: Mr. James Sullivan, Cambridge City Manager

MAY 26 4 22 PM '70

MAY 1

XX

XX

XX

XX

XX

XX

XX

XX

()



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Tel. 876-6800

EXECUTIVE DEPARTMENT

James L. Sullivan
City Manager

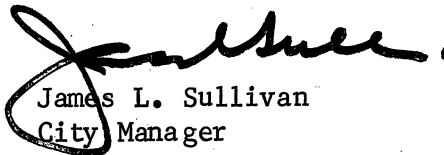
John H. Corcoran
Assistant City Manager

June 1, 1970

To the Honorable, the City Council:

I transmit herewith copy of communication from the
Cambridge Common Concert Committee, dated May 20, 1970,
to Mr. John Sears of the Metropolitan District Commission.

Very truly yours,


James L. Sullivan
City Manager

JLS/eb

(2)

145

COMMUNICATION
from the City Manager trans-
mitting one from the Cambridge

Common Concert Committee dated May 20, 1970
to Mr. John Sears, Metropolitan District Com-
mission

June 1, 1970

Placed on File -
Copies to ALL COUNCILLORS