



City of Cambridge

92.

IN CITY COUNCIL

September 14, 1992

MAYOR REEVES

WHEREAS: The member of the MBTA Beautification Brigade, part of the 1992 Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program, researched the trash patterns of Central Square as a major component of their job responsibilities; now therefore be it

RESOLVED: The attached report, developed by the MBTA Beautification Brigade, describes the research results and includes the Brigade's recommendations for informational purposes.

In City Council September 14, 1992.

Adopted by the affirmative vote of nine members.

Attest:- D. Margaret Drury, City Clerk.

A true copy;

ATTEST:-

D. Margaret Drury

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City Clerk

MBTA/CENTRAL SQUARE BEAUTIFICATION BRIGADE REPORT

INTRODUCTION

For the Summer of 1992, the City of Cambridge Mayor's Summer Youth Employment Program hired a group of 26 teenagers from the ages of 14-18 along with 2 counselors to form what is called the MBTA/Central Square Beautification Brigade. The goal of the Brigade was to keep Central Square clean while at the same time find out why Central Square gets so dirty. We also wanted to find out how we could solve this problem. In order to accomplish this we had to ask ourselves the following questions:

1. Why does Central Square get go dirty?
2. What time of day it is dirtiest?
3. Where are the dirtiest AREAS in Central Square?
4. How can we solve this problem?

As to why Central Square gets so dirty, we found out that most just do not care about their community or their environment. This attitude is prevalent among both residents and non-residents of Central Square. Something that we have seen frequently is people going into restaurants, coming out, and throwing their trash on the ground rather than in one of the many barrels that you can find. People also have a bad habit of throwing their cigarette butts on the ground. This is a big problem because the cigarette butts get stuck in the crevices of the sidewalk and gutter. Nature also contributes to the mess in Central Square, leaving behind many leaves and blossoms.

QUESTIONNAIRE

To include another dimension in our research, we developed a questionnaire to receive feedback on how people perceive Central Square. The questionnaire is made up of the following six questions:

1. Where to you live?
2. What brings you to Central Square?
3. Do you think Central Square is a clean AREA?
4. Why do you think Central Square gets so dirty?
5. Where do you think all the trash comes from?
6. How do you think we can prevent Central Square from becoming so DIRTY?

After developing the questionnaire we interviewed a 100 people in the Central Square area and recorded the following information.

- * We found that 48% of the people we interviewed were from Cambridge, 52% were not.
- * The most frequent answers for question 2, were 1. work, 2. the bank, and 3. shopping.

- * We found out that 68% of the people we interviewed believed that Central Square is a dirty place.
- * When asked why Central Square gets so Dirty most people felt that it was just because people don't care if Central Square is clean or not, because they don't take any pride in their community.
- * We also found out that people believe the trash comes mostly from the restaurants (McDonald's, Burger King, Papa Ginos, etc....) and that people don't throw their trash in the barrel.
- * The most frequent responses to question 6 were:
 1. Clean it more often.
 2. Hire more people to keep Central Square clean.
 3. MAKE STRICTER littering laws.
 4. ENFORCE the laws that we have now.
 5. MAKE PEOPLE AWARE of the PROBLEM and TEACH them how to solve it.

DIRTIEST AREAS

Throughout the first four weeks of our program we have found that there are four specific areas that remain dirty day after day. The first area is in front of the fast food restaurants such as McDonald's, Burger King, Papa Gino's, Hi Five and Dunkin Donuts. It seems that this problem exists because people discard their trash onto the sidewalk rather than take the time to put it in the trash. The second place that seems to remain dirty is the alley way and parking lot behind Libby's Liquors. The alley is a heavy traffic area and the parking lot is often used as a place to hang out and drink. The trash in this area mainly comes from food wrappers and liquor bottles and cans. The third area of concern is Bishop Allen Drive. Bishop Allen Drive has been dirty every day for the past four weeks. The trash collects in front of houses and in gutters, with the most polluted area lying between Essex and Norfolk Streets. The dirtiest area of all is the public sitting area across the street from Sermans Clothing Store and FFC. These areas remain dirty because the train stations are right there with people travelling through the entire day. There always seems to be a wind tunnel in this area that is constantly blowing the trash around in a circular area. The trash deposits in this area mainly consists of big paper cups, leaves and cigarette butts.

DIRTIEST TIMES OF THE DAY

The dirtiest time of the day in Central Square is about 8:00 in the morning. The reason for this is trash accumulates from 4:00 in the afternoon from the previous day to 8:00 the next morning. This makes for a lot of trash because Central Square is a highly travelled area in the late afternoons and early mornings due to people travelling back and forth from work. Between the hours of 11:00 in the morning and 1:00 in the afternoon the square get pretty dirty as well. This is obviously due to the lunch traffic that fills the Square daily. In order to alleviate the

heavy trash build up between the times of 4:00 in the afternoon and 8:00 in the morning, the City may want to have a night work crew pick up at some points through the evening.

SUGGESTIONS

We propose the following suggestions be implemented as a means to keep Central Square clean.

1. Sand pit ashtrays should be added to the Square to combat the number of cigarette butts that find their way onto the sidewalks and streets.
2. Store and restaurant owners should be responsible for keeping the area in front of their property clean.
3. Add signs with the following logo to Central Square:

"TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR COMMUNITY, DON'T LITTER"
"LITTERING IS ACCOMPANIED BY A FINE"
"LITTERING LAWS STRICTLY ENFORCED"

4. Enforce laws by having police or "LITTER CONTROL OFFICERS" hand out tickets.
5. Add recycling bins in the busiest areas.
6. Make stricter littering laws.
7. Have work crews that clean between 4-12:00 p.m. every day.
8. Do something about the foul odor found in certain parts of Central Square, specifically the alleyways.
9. Have a TAKE PRIDE IN YOUR COMMUNITY RALLY in Central Square.
10. Educate people about the problem.



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K. Margaret Drury

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Consent Order # 92

5-687

Mayor Reeves report of the MBTA
Beautification Brigade.

In city Council,

Sept. 14, 1992

Order Adopted