

Dear City Clerk

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CAMBRIDGE MA

The Cambridge Boat Club calls itself the champion of CRLS's rowing program; yet the team already rows, -- at the Newton Community Boat Club, where the Brookline and Boston teams also row. Nor did the Boat Club make include CRLS in their original petition to the Conservation Commission. The reason was the requirement of handicapped accessible toilets. However these could be provided within the original building. The Club's real desire was to insulate and refurbish the Club in order to attract more Function revenue. The proposed addition was planned to house a year-round tenant, the Head of the Charles. Adoption of CRLS was proposed only last fall to provide a community cover-up and was secondary to the Club's desire for income.

Boat Club membership requires sponsorship and a fee of \$200/yr. The Club rents out its facilities at a high price mainly to private parties. For the fabulous view and a twelve car parking lot it pays only \$3,000/yr in taxes. Is this fair? If not, why is it ethical for the CCC to bless the deal?

The answer lies in part to Cambridge's refusal to plan long term goals benefiting all its citizens. By splintering its regulatory agencies, the City allows well-heeled and politically-connected developers to easily attain their goals, if one has a professional rep who attends the many Hearings required, permission is inevitably granted. These so-called "Open Meetings", advertised only in the back pages of one local paper, rarely encourage public participation. After three CCC sessions I was allowed but two minutes to speak. The Boat Club's final Open Hearing will be held October 16th, when the Club will receive the green light from from the BZA despite its violations. As only taxpayers, our objections are useless.

While demand for River access soars, Boat Clubs yearly take over more public parkland. The River and it's banks are fast becoming their private domain, though by Federal law the Charles River remains a public waterway.

These Clubs enjoy extraordinary privileges. Why should not they not offer the public something in return, be it only day-time bathroom privileges or boating opportunities for the public at off times. for a small fee? Why is permission being given only to CRLS's students? The very young and those over thirty appreciate the River just as much as the students. And actually, there are more of us!

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9-12-97

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Consent Communication #31 S-763

Communicatoin ws received from Sheil G.
Cook, regarding the facilities of the
Cambridge Boat Club.

In City Council December 15, 1997

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