

M-C News

A PUBLICATION OF THE MID-CAMBRIDGE NEIGHBORHOOD ASSOCIATION
AND THE LONGFELLOW NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL

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MCNA to Host Candidates' Night October 25 at CRLS

Who is running for City Council? What are their thoughts on the expansion of the main library, truck traffic, university expansion and other issues important to our neighborhood? Come to the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association's Candidates' Night and find out!

Election time is upon us once again, with the usual staggering number of candidates for local elected positions. To help neighbors sort out who's who, and to give you a chance to hear the candidates speak on issues of concern to Mid-Cambridge, MCNA is hosting a Candidates' Night on Thursday, October 25 at the Cambridge Rindge and Latin School Media Cafeteria between 7 and 9 p.m. We have invited all candidates for City Council to attend.

The meeting will be chaired by Keren Schlomy, a Coordinating Committee member who has been serving as president pro tem since MCNA President John Pitkin declared his candidacy for City Council.

Unfortunately, with so many candidates, we are unable to have the School Committee candidates speak as well. However, you can catch the School Committee candidates at candidates' nights hosted by other organizations on October 18 at the Senior Center (see Calendar, Page 4) and on October 22 at CRLS.

Following is a list of all candidates for City Council and School Committee. All are listed by name, address, year of birth, and occupation.

Candidates for City Council

19 candidates for 9 seats

Incumbents

Henrietta Davis, 120 Chestnut St., 02139, 1945, city councillor; Marjorie Decker, 55 Magazine St., 02139, 1972, legislative aide; Anthony Galluccio, 30 Normandy St., 02138, 1967, city councillor; David Maher, 120 Appleton St., 02138, 1958, city councillor; Ken Reeves, 340 Harvard St., 02139, 1951, attorney; Michael Sullivan, 42 Huron Ave., 02138, 1959, city councillor; Tim Toomey, 88 6th St., 02141, 1953, city councillor.

New City Council Candidates

James Condit, 164 Raymond St., 02140, 1964, programmer; Vince Dixon, 287 Harvard St., 02139, 1952, consultant; Robert Hall, 364 Rindge Ave., 02140, 1950, economist; Jacob Horowitz, 101 Western Ave. #21, 02139, 1977, newspaper editor; Steve Iskovitz, 60 Bishop Allen Dr., 02139, 1960; Steven Jens, 20 Lee St., 02139, 1976, computer programmer; Ethridge King, 34 River St., 02139, 1965, assistant director; Brian Murphy, 22 Mt. Auburn St., 02138, 1964, political consultant; John Pitkin, 18 Fayette St., 02139, 1944, consultant; Helder "Sonny" Peixoto, 163 Webster Ave.,
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New MCNA Web site: www.mcna.org

It's official—the MCNA has gone digital with its own Web site: <http://www.mcna.org>. Here you'll find a calendar of community events, current and back issues of the *M-C News*, a neighborhood map with links to listings of services and resources in the area, and more.

The aim of the site is to reach more residents with more information, and to help organize, inform, and serve all the residents of the neighborhood.

In the first months, the site is an experiment, a work in progress. Perhaps new residents will learn about the association and join us, or simply learn about the neighborhood and the shops, services, and facilities in the area. New and longtime residents may find our calendar of events useful, and use the site to keep current with neighborhood issues.

However you use the site, we'd like to hear your comments and suggestions about how to make it better serve you and your neighbors.

Many thanks to Ted Carpenter, our Webmaster, who designed the site and did all of the technical work, and the members of the Web site subcommittee for putting the site together: John Pitkin, Paula Lovejoy, Elizabeth Gombosi, Rachael Solem, Joan Pickett and Abe Rosner.

Community Preservation Act on November Ballot

On November 6, Cambridge voters will be asked to vote on the establishment of a Community Preservation Act (CPA) fund allowing the city to acquire and protect more open space, preserve historic sites, and provide much needed affordable housing. The city manager, all nine city councilors and all four of our state representatives support a Yes vote.

If Cambridge votes Yes, the state would match as much as dollar-to-dollar what we contribute under the CPA to open space, preservation and housing. Receipt of the state match means that Cambridge could possibly double the amount we have historically spent on these areas. Cambridge currently spends about \$5 million annually on the items. Therefore, a yes vote could increase this amount up to \$10 million per year with no additional cost to Cambridge taxpayers.

The CPA does allow for a 3% property tax surcharge. However, the amount of money generated by a 3% surcharge in Cambridge is about equal to the amount the city currently spends on these initiatives. Therefore, by using existing tax dollars and directing them to the creation of a Community Preservation Act fund, the effect of the 3% levy will not result in a tax increase to Cambridge residents. Once monies have

been earmarked for use in the CPA fund, they cannot be used for any other purpose.

Both the city manager and city treasurer represent that there will not be an increase in overall taxes in Cambridge as a result of the CPA. This is an important distinction for Cambridge voters to understand as other communities, including Boston, will see a tax increase and groups may mount opposition to the passage of the CPA. Cambridge, however, is in a unique position to

More information on the CPA will be available at Candidates' Night on October 25

benefit from its passage without raising taxes.

Additional information on this topic is available by visiting the <http://www.voteyeson1.com> Web site, which was still under construction as of this writing. The MCNA Coordinating Committee has invited CPA representatives to attend our upcoming Candidates' Night Forum on October 25 to answer any questions the MCNA community might have on this important ballot initiative.

CNAHS helps restore Roberts Road building

In 1998, the owner of a blighted six unit building on Roberts Rd. came to Cambridge Neighborhood Apartment Housing Services to seek a solution to his property's dilemma. Due to the condition of the building, two units were vacant and the building's cash flow was poor. The owner wanted to provide housing for low to moderate income families and was willing to make a commitment to affordable housing for the long term.

Working with CNAHS, the owner was able to obtain the financial and technical services necessary to restore the building and provide an affordable home for six families and receive a decent profit. CNAHS's staff provided the owner with a complete finance package, including a deferred payment loan for the major improvements the building needed. The technical services provided included determining the level of rehab needed, locating competent contractors and monitoring of the rehab to ensure quality work.

The building was gutted down to studs and sheathing. The plumbing, heating and electrical systems were completely replaced. CNAHS secured the services of other city agencies. The front of the building was

renovated to retain its historic significance. Every apartment was delead. The staff worked with a private contractor to create state of the art energy systems that meet the latest federal energy standards. The building's structural weaknesses were corrected. Its layout was reconfigured, making it more efficient and responsive to tenants' lifestyles. A fire suppression system (sprinkler) was installed.

The rehab of this property has not only affected the needs of the tenants and the owner, it has also helped to stabilize property values for neighboring buildings. As a matter of fact, a ripple effect began soon after renovations started and several surrounding properties underwent rehab. The property is home to a diverse occupancy that includes families of different ethnic backgrounds. The owner is committed to providing needed affordable housing in Mid-Cambridge for the long term.

Property owners wishing to see how they can work with CNAHS's Affordable Housing Rehab Loan Program can call 617-491-1545.

Harvard moves forward with Knafel plans

Harvard has been very quiet as it moves forward with its plans for construction of the Center for Government and International Studies (formerly known as the Knafel Center), a large two-building complex to be built in the Cambridge Street/Sumner Road area.

This summer a mock-up of the exterior was erected behind Coolidge Hall to give the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission a sense of the terra cotta cladding and window treatment. Both were approved by the Commission.

The project has two regulatory hurdles still to overcome. The first is finishing the details that must be presented to the MCNDC, most notably, a construction mitigation plan. The second is obtaining city council approval for construction of a tunnel under Cambridge Street that would connect the two buildings.

At a July meeting with residents on mitigation, a number of issues were raised, and Harvard personnel took the responsibility for addressing them. The largest mitigation issues are parking (there will be a net loss of 24 parking spaces for most of the three-year construction period), and enforcement--how to make sure that Harvard meets the commitments made in the plan.

MCNA is on the record as opposing this project, at least until Harvard files a master plan for construction in the neighborhood. Neighborhood residents have

talked with city councilors who expressed two additional concerns: the appropriation of city land under the street for private uses, and the re-engineering of the newly-laid sewer system under Cambridge Street.

At the last meeting of the Joint Committee for Harvard Consultation, Harvard informed us that this fall, it will begin the formal process for obtaining an easement from the city to construct the pedestrian and service tunnel that will connect the North and South CGIS buildings. This process will include a community meeting to discuss the tunnel project, and hearings before the Planning Board and Ordinance Committee of the city council, as well as a vote of the city council.

Just last year, the Cambridge Street sewer lines were dug up and divided into storm and sanitary lines. The new construction would involve re-routing all of the Cambridge Street sanitary sewer up Sumner Road--a major excavation--and hooking it into the Kirkland Street sewer, where the sanitary and storm lines are still combined. So until the Kirkland Street sewer separation is complete, we would lose the entire benefit of separating storm and sanitary sewers along Cambridge Street from Inman Square. This creates a large potential environmental impact.

Candidates' Night

(Continued from Page 1)

02141, 1972; E. Denise Simmons, 188 Harvard St., 02139, 1951, public official; James Williamson, 17 Perry St., 02139, 1951, "public interest advocate."

Candidates for School Committee

10 candidates for 6 seats

Incumbents

Fred Fantini, 4 Canal Pk., 02141, 1949, assistant treasurer; Joe Grassi, 393 Cambridge St., 02141, 1967, school committee; Susana M. Segat, 94 Wendell St., 02138, 1956, administrator; Alice Turkel, 12 Upton St., 02139, 1956, housewife; Nancy Walser, 335 Huron Ave., 02138, 1959, school committee.

New School Committee Candidates

Fred Baker, 109 Inman St., 02139, 1971, research engineer; Vincent Delaney, 7 Jackson Gardens, 02139, 1966, family liaison at Kennedy School; Marla Erlie, 23 Greenough Ave., 02139, 1946, editor; Richard Harding, 187 Windsor St., 02139, 1972, administrator; Alan Price, 15 Corp. Burns Rd., 02138, 1963, consultant.

Where Have All The Red Signs Gone?

You may have noticed that the familiar red "Neighborhood Notice" signs the MCNA uses to post notices of meetings and community events have been missing from our neighborhood's streets lately.

Never fear, they will soon reappear. After many years of use, the signs were beginning to show their age, so the MCNA Coordinating Committee has removed them for renovations. For the past several weeks, the committee has been hard at work building, sanding, painting, and lettering a new set of brand-new signs.

Special thanks goes to Coordinating Committee member Martha Osler for donating her garage for the cause, and for organizing the work sessions. Others who helped out were Frankie Lieberman, Rachael Solem, Ted Carpenter, Yvonne McQuilkin, David Osler, Elizabeth Gombosi, Keren Schlomy, Joan Pickett, and Paula Lovejoy.

New projects underway in Mid-Cambridge

The Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Conservation District Commission is reviewing many new projects underway in mid-Cambridge, with several more slated to begin.

At its September meeting, the Commission approved plans for the Robert L. Pann Company to construct a three-story office building on its **Prospect Street** site.

Neighbors and commissioners expressed concerns regarding landscaping, lighting, HVAC noise, traffic impacts, and parking, to name a few. Ultimately, the Commission voted 5-0 to accept the project with several conditions, however, requiring the applicant to return with additional details on exterior finishes, signage, and traffic flow issues. In response to community input, the owners are also considering another

option, which is to build housing on the property instead of offices.

A large National Register property at **27 Maple Avenue** was also approved for external renovation, which will include replacing and changing some windows, rebuilding the front deck, restoring damaged trim and relandscaping. The owners plan to turn the 3-family Victorian residence into two sellable condo units.

Other projects reviewed and approved by the MCNDC include the three units at **49 Trowbridge Street**, now almost fully constructed, and plans for a new two-unit townhouse on **Myrtle Avenue**, directly behind the Kirkland Street laundromat.

In addition, the Commission is still deliberating on many of Harvard's Knafel Center conditions, and will be reviewing plans for the addition to the Main Library.

NEIGHBORHOOD CALENDAR

Thursday, Oct. 25, 7-9 PM MCNA Candidates' Night, Cambridge Rindge and Latin School media cafeteria, 459 Broadway. Membership and meetings are open to all residents of Mid-Cambridge.

Sunday, Oct. 28, 2-4 PM Annual Halloween Party in Hancock Park. Prizes, food, entertainment. Children should wear costumes.

Fall term Longfellow Community School classes have begun, including music and recorder. There are openings in some classes. Please call Penelope Kleespies at 617-349-6260 for information.

Thursday, Oct. 18, 6:30 PM School Committee Candidates' Night, Senior Center, 806 Mass. Ave. For info, call Alan Dobson at 497-6660.

The M-C News is published by the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association and the Longfellow Neighborhood Council. *Editors:* Paula Lovejoy, Keren Schlomy. *Reporters:* Laura Roberts, Martha Osler, Joan Pickett, Paula Lovejoy, Keren Schlomy.

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P.O. Box 907
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CANDIDATES' NIGHT
Thursday, Oct. 25