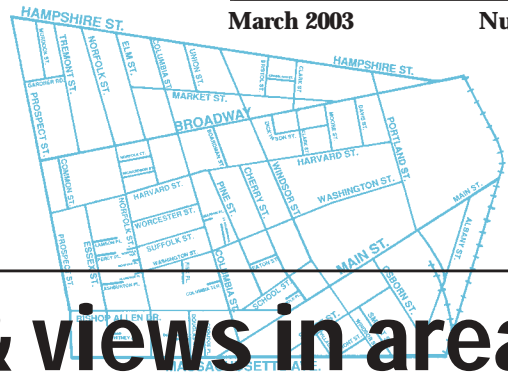


4word

March 2003

Number 15



news & views in area 4

Childcare Crisis in Area 4

“If we have to pay a living wage to our employees, we may be forced to close the Area 4 Harvard Street childcare center” said Douglas Baird, president and CEO of Associated Early Care and Education, Inc., at the January meeting of the Cambridge Living Wage Commission. If the center were to close, 19 workers would be laid off and 68 children would be left without affordable childcare.

Because the Harvard Street center receives a subsidy in excess of \$10,000 from the City of Cambridge, Associated is required, by reason of the Cambridge Living Wage Ordinance, to pay a living wage to their employees. Associated’s other childcare center, on Essex Street, is not impacted by the Living Wage Ordinance because the center receives no Cambridge subsidy. Associated has requested a hardship waiver from the Cambridge Living Wage Commission and is awaiting their decision.

The Cambridge living wage as of March 2002 is \$11.11/hour, but Associated assistant teachers receive only \$9.11, and teachers receive only \$10.22. The Cambridge

living wage increases each March 1, based on cost of living increases. Workers at Associated are unionized and UAW Local 1596 has requested that Associated be denied a hardship waiver.

Area 4 residents may remember the former Blouin Building on the corner of Columbia and Hampshire streets, which was torn down to make way for the Columbia Street Apartments in the mid 1990s. In 1993 the City permitted Associated to move their program, rent free and utility free, from the Blouin building to its current location on the bottom floor of the new Area 4 Youth Center.

A Tuition Negotiation Committee of Area 4 residents was formed in 1993 to negotiate with Associated for annual childcare tuition assistance for neighborhood families. This tuition assistance partially offsets the City’s rent and utility subsidy of Associated, estimated to be approximately \$65,000. Currently, Associated provides \$26,000 annually in early childcare tuition assistance to Area 4 families, an increase of only \$2,000 over the past 10 years. If the center were to close, this tuition assistance would also be lost.



Gerald Bergman

Associated Early Care and Education Center on Harvard Street

Level-funding of childcare fees by the state for the past two years and cost inflation, particularly double-digit annual increases in health insurance, are reasons given by Associated for their request for a hardship waiver. Associated pays medical, pension, and other workplace benefits in excess of what many private non-profit daycare organizations supply.

Many residents in the neighborhood believe that Associated should not threaten to close the center, should increase rather than eliminate tuition assistance, and should also pay the living wage, given the fact that their 2001 revenues were nearly \$13,000,000 for all of their operations in the Greater Boston area. Others have suggested that the City of Cambridge should step forward and increase their subsidy of the center, or that Associated should be allowed to reduce their tuition assistance to Area 4 families.

Because the Cambridge contract with Associated is up for renewal this year, the Area 4 Tuition Negotiation Committee could play a crucial role in crafting a solution. The City is being urged to reconvene the Area 4 Committee and to hold a public information meeting on this issue in the neighborhood as soon as possible.

inside 4word

“Una Experiencia Inmigrante,” páginas 3, 4, y 5 aparece en Español e Inglés.

- From the Editor: pg. 2
- Free Graffiti Removal—Act Fast to Enroll: pg. 2
- Rent Control Is Back on the City’s Agenda: pg. 3
- An Immigrant Experience: pg. 3
- La Experiencia de Un Inmigrante: pg. 3

- Developers Strangle the Neighborhood: pg. 6
- Cambridge Is No Winter Wonderland: pg. 6
- News from the FMA: pg. 7
- Open Space Update: pg. 7
- Port Action Group: pg. 7
- Stand Up for Justice. Stand Together in Peace: pg. 8
- ⓐ Your Calendar: pg. 8

From the Editor

Where are our political leaders when we need them the most? Congress has abdicated its leadership by turning over war powers to President Bush. On Beacon Hill the state legislature has handed over its budget authority to Governor Romney. In Cambridge the City Council and School Committee fail to meet their responsibilities regarding public safety, school closures, public health, rent control, MCAS, and a host of other issues.

Gerald Bergman



The "Stand with Martin" march and vigil

What we see is the all too familiar blame game. Senator Kerry blames Bush for the war. Representative Toomey blames Romney for the cutbacks. The School Committee blames the Superintendent for school closures, budget deficits, and declining enrollment, and the City Council blames the City Manager when they don't keep their budget and program promises.

What we do have is a renewed effort by Area 4 residents to fight back. We oppose Saddam Hussein but we are saying "NO" to a war on Iraq that will decimate the federal budget and needlessly

cost the lives of thousands of innocent civilians. We are saying "NO" to the Bush military budget and his tax plan that would help the wealthy at the expense of working families, elderly, children, and the poor. We are saying "NO" to state budget cutbacks while we call for immediate new revenues that would eliminate the unfair burden that is put on average- and low-income taxpayers. We are saying "NO" to the School Committee and the City Council when they play the blame game.

The January 20 Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Stand with Martin" march and vigil in Cambridge drew more

than 700 people from across the city. It gave us the opportunity to reflect on a part of Dr. King's message that is largely

Gerald Bergman



Senator Barrios with neighborhood residents opposing housing cutbacks at the State House

ignored as Bush prepares for a preemptive war against the citizens of Iraq—Dr. King's message of nonviolence and opposition to war. In Atlanta, Coretta Scott King too called for peace rather than war on Iraq. "We commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr., as a great champion of peace who warned us that war was a poor chisel for carving out a peaceful tomorrow.... We must pursue peaceful ends through peaceful means. In the words of Martin, "True peace is not just the absence of tension, it is the presence of justice."

As King said, "A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on the military than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.... Our only hope today lies in our ability to recapture the revolutionary spirit and go out into a sometimes hostile world declaring eternal opposition to poverty, racism and militarism."

When will we hear our elected city, state, and national "leaders" quoting *this* Martin Luther King?



Gerald Bergman

Janet Moses (r) of Area 4 and Representative Alice Wolf (l) at City Hall in support of the Cambridge resolution opposing war on Iraq

Gerald Bergman



Police Academy cadets remove graffiti on Elm Street

Free Graffiti Removal—Act Fast to Enroll

For the past two years the *4word* has printed articles, photos, and letters to the editor about graffiti. Area 4 residents have demanded a program similar to one in Boston (the "Graffiti Busters" program) where the Department of Public Works (DPW) assists homeowners and businesses with graffiti cleanup. Our persistent advocacy has recently been rewarded with the introduction of a pilot program in Cambridge that does what the program in Boston had done for several years. The Cambridge program is being conducted on a first-come first-serve basis. In order to be eligible, properties must meet certain site conditions, such

as height and location. These conditions will all be examined during a site visit by a DPW inspector, and the removal process (power wash or paint) will be mutually agreed upon by the DPW and the property owner.

A property owner (homeowner and/or business) will need to sign and return a damage waiver form prior to the City investigating and scheduling a removal. Because this is a first-come first-serve program residents are urged to contact the DPW immediately to ask for a damage waiver form.

For more information contact DPW Operations Manager Annette C. Rodibaugh, 147 Hampshire Street, Cambridge, MA 02139 or call her at 617-349-4846.

Rent Control Is Back on the City's Agenda

by Kevin Bradley

On Thursday, January 30, a new organization, the Committee for Cambridge Rent Control (CCRC), held a public forum to discuss its proposal for a new Cambridge rent control law. The forum was the first step in a people's campaign to win a citywide referendum in support of a "home rule petition" to bring rent control back to Cambridge.

About 80 people listened to Legal Services attorney Ellen Shacter describe the human costs of the housing crisis, followed by a presentation of the proposal and campaign strategy presentations. Small groups discussed the presentations and offered their concerns and suggestions. There was simultaneous translation into Haitian Kreyol and Spanish.

The CCRC will refine the proposal in

response to the feedback from the forum. When the proposed law goes into effect, more than 15,000 rental units will be controlled. The law will have a unique provision for incentives to encourage landlords to rent to low- to moderate-income tenants. As units become vacant, landlords will be able to charge market rent for one unit in exchange for units rented to low- to moderate-income tenants. The proposed law also offers hardship relief for small property owners who can show they need it as a result of the new law.

The proposal was written by Cambridge tenants and tenant activists brought together by the Eviction Free Zone last September. The CCRC, which was created to conduct the campaign, raise funds, and collect signa-



Lawrence Prift

Regina Valentin and Jean Jeune present their small-group's ideas on rent control.

tures, solicited input from tenants, community groups, and service agencies working on housing and homeless prevention.

Volunteers are needed to collect signatures, speak about the proposal at their religious and social organizations, schools, workplaces, apartment buildings, etc., and help with fundraising.

If you can volunteer, please call the CCRC at 617-354-1300.

La Experiencia de Un Inmigrante

por José Pérez

Yo nací en Yucuayquín, El Salvador. Vine a los Estados Unidos en 1982 y vivo en Massachusetts desde 1984. Desde 1990 he vivido en los alrededores de Central Square, y ahora vivo en Bishop Allen Drive.

Aunque normalmente soy un poco tímido, comparto un poco de mi historia con la esperanza de que otros conozcan nuestra experiencia como inmigrantes. Yo, como muchos otros inmigrantes, vine a este país porque no tenía otras opciones. Nosotros los inmigrantes venimos a trabajar duro y nuestras condiciones de vida muchas veces son difíciles, especialmente porque tantos de nosotros no tenemos un estatus legal permanente. Yo finalmente soy un residente, finalmente tengo mi "green card," pero me costó casi 20 años. Gracias a organizaciones como Centro Presente que continuaron luchando para conseguir que el Congreso de los Estados Unidos aprobaran un programa para ayudarle a personas como yo.

Cuando vine a los Estados Unidos, dejé a tres niños y a mi esposa, Rosa, quien estaba embarazada con nuestro cuarto hijo. Yo vengo de una familia humilde del campo. Habíamos vivi-

continúa en la página 4

An Immigrant Experience

by José Pérez

I was born in Yucuayquín, El Salvador. I came to the U.S. in 1982. In 1984 I moved to Massachusetts and since 1990 have lived around Central Square, now on Bishop Allen Drive.

Although I am normally shy, I share a little bit of my story in the hopes that others will understand our experience as immigrants. Like many, many other immigrants, I came to this country because I had little choice left. We come here to work really hard and our living conditions often are difficult, especially because so many of us do not have permanent legal status. I am finally a legal permanent resident. I finally have a "green card" but it took me almost 20 years. It was thanks to organizations like Centro Presente that kept on fighting to get the U.S. Congress to approve a program to help people like me.

When I came to the U.S., I left behind three children and my wife, Rosa, who was pregnant with our fourth child. I come from a very poor peasant family. We had lived off the land, picking cotton, coffee, and sugarcane. With the civil war, there was violence and danger everywhere, and ways to earn a living almost disappeared. I had to take

continued on page 5



Elena Letona

José Pérez (derecha) trabajando en la campaña de postales para los derechos de los inmigrantes

José Pérez (right) participating in the immigrant rights postcard campaign

La Experiencia de Un Inmigrante

continuado de la pagina 3

do de la tierra, cortando algodón, café, y caña. Con la guerra civil, hubo violencia y peligro por todas partes y ya no se pudo vivir de la tierra. Yo tenía que cuidar de mi familia y aunque la decisión de dejarlos fue difícil, para asegurar mi sobre-vivencia y la de mi familia, no tuve otra opción.

El vivir lejos de mi familia no ha sido fácil. Rosa me visitó en varias ocasiones pero siempre regresó. No soportaba la idea de dejar a los niños en el cuidado de otros, ni siquiera su propia mamá. Ahora, somos padres orgullosos de seis hijos. Sus edades son entre los 11 y los 26 años. En el año 2001, Rosa y nuestro hijo mayor Edwin finalmente se mudaron a los Estados Unidos. Para ese entonces, Rosa se sentía más cómoda dejando a nuestros hijos menores en las manos de nuestros hijos mayores.

El vivir separados de la familia a sido duro, pero dos cosas han aliviado mi pesar: la comunicación constante por teléfono y la fe de que estando aquí mi familia ha podido sobrevivir y salir adelante. He mandado a El Salvador todo el dinerito que me ha sobrado después de pagar por mis necesidades. Ahora, Rosa y Edwin hacen lo mismo. Cualquier persona que nos visita pueden ver que Rosa, Edwin y yo vivimos humildemente. Tenemos poco. Esto sacrificios han dado su fruto. Hemos comprado una casita en El Salvador y hemos educado a nuestros hijos. Nuestros hijos mayores en El Salvador son estudiantes universitarios y son buenos chicos.

Yo trabajo en Ames Packaging como un operador de máquinas. He trabajado allí desde 1984 y he tenido el turno de noche por 10 años. Edwin trabaja en el mismo lugar. Yo también tengo un "part-time" como trabajador de limpieza. Rosa trabaja en Royal White.

La vida de un inmigrante es difícil. Vivir sin un estatus legal migratorio es vivir en un constante temor. Aún si uno tiene un permiso de trabajo, uno no tiene la libertad de viajar. Así fue como viví en los Estados Unidos por casi 20 años sin poder viajar libremente y ver a mi familia en El Salvador. Organizaciones como Centro Presente hacen de nuestra vida como un inmigrante un poquito mejor. Yo he sido

un miembro de Centro Presente desde que conseguí mi primer permiso de trabajo. Años después, cuando Rosa y Edwin llegaron a los Estados Unidos, también fueron a Centro Presente y consiguieron sus permisos de trabajo.

Pero lo mejor de Centro Presente es como siempre andan organizando a personas como yo para mejorar las leyes de inmigración. Por ejemplo, hay miles de salvadoreños y guatemaltecos que vinieron a este país huyendo de las guerras civiles. Con organizaciones como Centro Presente, hemos luchado para conseguir que nuestra situación sea reconocida por el gobierno de los Estados Unidos y que se nos conceda una residencia permanente.

En Julio del 2002, finalmente conseguí mi residencia permanente. Antes de eso, con la ayuda de Centro Presente, trabajé con otros quienes, como yo, han estado esperando largos años en una campaña de tarjetas postales pidiéndole al Servicio de Inmigración que contratará más oficiales para revisar nuestros casos. Juntos elaboramos el texto y conseguimos firmas de otros y de ciudadanos. Trabajando en este grupo me di cuenta de que no estaba solo en mi frustración. Pocos meses después, me llamaron a mi entrevista y me otorgaron mi residencia. Ahora ya puedo viajar a El Salvador sin ningún problema y ver a mis otros hijos. También puedo pedir a mis hijos para que vengan a los Estados Unidos. Ese es mi sueño y el de Rosa: que estemos todos juntos como familia.

Todavía hay mucho más trabajo que hacer. Hay muchos salvadoreños y guatemaltecos que han trabajado por muchos años, califican para convertirse en residentes permanentes, pero continúan esperando por que hay tantos retrasos en inmigración. También hay muchos otros que tienen el permiso para trabajar legalmente, pagan sus impuestos, pero no son residentes permanentes y no pueden viajar fuera del país. Por eso, tenemos que continuar trabajando con Centro Presente para que otros puedan gozar de la paz y tranquilidad de una residencia permanente.

Centro Presente: Desde 1981, Centro Presente ha trabajado para desarrollar la auto-suficiencia y la auto-determinación de la comunidad inmigrante centro y latinoamericana. Centro Presente presta servicios legales migratorios, imparte clases de inglés, computación, alfabetización y ciudadanía, tiene



Centro Presente

Centro Presente marchando por los derechos de los inmigrantes

Centro Presente marching for immigrant rights

un programa de arte y liderazgo para jóvenes, y trabaja con la comunidad para incidir en la política migratoria. El enfoque de Centro Presente es el de mejorar la política migratoria para hacerla más eficiente y humana. En las condiciones que vivimos hoy en día, este enfoque es muy desafiante. Personas interesadas en unirse a estos esfuerzos de abogacía política pueden llamar al 617-497-9080. Centro Presente está ubicado en la 54 Essex Street, segundo piso.

Nota del Editor: Debido a recursos limitados, la revista *4word* ha tenido que imprimir ediciones únicamente en Inglés. Sin embargo, artículos escritos en el idioma nativo del narrador es la única manera de comunicar exactamente y en la voz del autor. Este artículo fue publicado en Inglés y Español educar acerca del hecho de que aquellos que hablan idiomas diferentes al Inglés muchas veces son ignorados por las agencias gubernamentales a nivel local, estatal y federal. En Cambridge, agencias locales raramente traducen información como boletines, volantes y otros. Personas que no hablan el Inglés muchas veces son marginadas de los procesos de planificación y toma de decisiones a nivel local. Agradecemos a todas esas agencias comunitarias que ayudan a los residentes con la traducción de *4word*.

En Cambridge, más del 26% de residentes sobre la edad de cinco años hablan en sus casas un idioma diferente al Inglés. En Cambridge, 7.5% de la población de 101,355 es Hispana o Latina de acuerdo al Censo del 2000. En el Area 4, casi el 16% de los 7,263 residentes son de origen Hispano (origen de una país de habla española), el porcentaje más alto de cualquier barrio en Cambridge. Históricamente, y mucha veces por razones políticas, el Censo no ha contando a la exactitud el número de personas que no hablan el Inglés como los inmigrantes y los refugiados.

An Immigrant Experience

continued from page 3

care of my family and although leaving them was tough, in the end it was the only choice for survival.

Living away from my family has not been easy. Rosa came and visited several times but she always went back. She could not bear to leave the children with anybody, not even her own mother. We are now the proud parents of six children, ages 11 to 26. In early 2001, Rosa and our oldest son, Edwin, finally moved to the U.S. By then, Rosa felt better about leaving the younger children in the care of our older children.

Living separately as a family has been tough, but two things have eased the pain: constant communication via telephone and the absolute conviction that by being here my family was better off. I have sent back to El Salvador all income that I do not need to take care of my most basic needs. Now, Rosa and Edwin do the same. Anyone coming to our apartment will see that Rosa, Edwin and I live very humbly. We own very little. These sacrifices have paid off. We have been able to buy a house in El Salvador and educate our children. We are very proud of them. All of our older children who are still in El Salvador are university students and they are good kids.

I work at Ames Packaging as a machine operator. I have worked there since 1984, and I've had the night-shift for about 10 years. Edwin works there too. I also have a part-time job as a janitor. Rosa works at Royal White Laundering Services.

Life as an immigrant can be really tough. Living without status is living in constant fear. Even with permission to work, you do not have the freedom to travel. This is how I came to be in the U.S. for almost 20 years without seeing my family back home. Organizations like Centro Presente make life as an immigrant a little better. I have been a member of Centro Presente since they helped me get my first work permit. Years later, when Rosa and Edwin arrived in the U.S., they went to Centro Presente and got work permits as well.

But the best thing about Centro Presente is that they are always organizing people like me so that we can improve immigration laws. For example, there are tens of thousands of Salvadorans and Guatemalans who came to the U.S. to escape civil war. With organizations like Centro Presente we have struggled to have our situation recognized by the U.S. government and be granted legal permanent residency.

In July 2002 I finally became a legal permanent resident. Prior to that, with the help of Centro Presente, I worked with others who have been waiting a long time to get green cards. We designed a postcard campaign asking the INS to hire more offi-



Elena Letoma

Planificando la campaña de postales para los derechos de los inmigrantes en Centro Presente (José Pérez en el centro al final de la mesa)

Planning the immigrant rights postcard campaign at Centro Presente (José Pérez in center at end of table)

cial to review our cases. We developed the text, got signatures from others like us and U.S. citizens. Working in this group I realized that I was not alone in my frustration. A few months later, I was called for an interview and was granted U.S. residency. I can now travel to El Salvador without any problems and see my other children. I can also petition for my children to come to the U.S. That is our dream, Rosa's and mine: to be together, all of us, again as a family.

There is still much work to be done, though. There are many Salvadorans and Guatemalans who have worked hard for many years, qualify to become legal permanent residents, yet must wait because of backlogs at INS. There are also many who have permission to work and pay taxes, yet are not considered legal permanent resi-

dents and therefore cannot travel freely outside the U.S. We will continue working with Centro Presente so that others can enjoy the peace and stability of being a legal permanent resident.

Centro Presente: Since 1981 Centro Presente has worked to develop the self-sufficiency and self-determination of the Central and Latin American community. The organization provides legal immigration services, adult education classes, youth leadership development, community organizing, and political advocacy. Its focus is on improving immigration policy to make it more sensible, efficient, and humane. In

today's climate, this is a tall order. People interested in joining these advocacy efforts can call 617-497-9080. Centro Presente is located at 54 Essex Street, 2nd Floor.

Editor's Note: The *4word*, due to limited resources, has had to print its editions solely in English. Yet articles written in a speaker's native language is the only way to communicate accurately and in the voice of the writer. This article was published in English and Spanish in order to draw attention to the fact that those who speak languages other than English are too often ignored by city, state, and federal agencies and planners. In Cambridge, city agencies only rarely provide translated flyers, bulletins, information, and communication links. Non-English

speakers are left out of neighborhood and citywide planning and political decision making. Thanks go out to those community agencies that help residents with translations of the *4word* (see pg. 8).

In Cambridge, more than 26% of all residents over the age of five speak a language other than English at home. In Cambridge, 7.5% of the population of 101,355 is Hispanic or Latino according to the 2000 Census. In Area 4, nearly 16% of the 7,263 residents are of Hispanic origin (origin in a Spanish-speaking country), the highest percentage of any neighborhood in Cambridge. The Census has historically severely undercounted non-English speaking immigrants and refugees, often for political reasons.

Cambridge Is No Winter Wonderland

by Erin Gullage

When I was a small child I was impatient for the first snowfall. The more snow that fell, the more opportunities I had to build snowmen and create vast caves. If I were really lucky, school would be cancelled.

Fast forward 20 years or so. The view from my window of the falling snow is still one of beauty and awe, however my physical self no longer appreciates being in snow. In fact, listening to the weatherperson predict blizzard-like conditions for early morning rush hour sends me into panic mode.



Gerald Bergman

Ice and snow block curbs and crosswalks in Central Square—two days after a January snowfall

Most adults have concerns about bad weather. Some hate to drive in the snow, others buy ten loaves of bread. But my concern is different than most. I use a wheelchair now and this winter has proven to be the hardest for me in recent memory.

One morning this past December I woke up, looked out the window, and saw about eight or nine inches of snow. I decided that my best option was to call a taxi. Bad idea. After calling several cab companies that said no accessible cabs were available, I knew I'd have to wheel myself to work. On the way to work I noticed two things right away: first, I couldn't get on the sidewalk because no one had shoveled their curb cuts, and, second, I was going to have to ride in the street heading into oncoming traffic. Was risking my life to go to work really necessary?

Somehow I made it to Mass Ave. where I thought surely the sidewalks would be cleared and I would be safe. I was wrong. None of the businesses had shoveled their storefronts and the curb cuts were nowhere to be seen. I wheeled all the way to Windsor

St. with cars honking at me to get out of their way. I was pretty upset but knew that within a day or two everyone would be done shoveling and doing their part for the city. Or would they?

For two weeks I rode into oncoming traffic staying as close as possible to the snow banks that protruded from the sides of parallel-parked cars. I came very close to becoming unidentifiable road kill and I was mad. How could people shovel and dump all the snow onto curb cuts, which are needed by wheelchair users, moms with strollers, and the elderly? Even the Central Square post office did a terrible job cleaning up after the storm.

Is it just that people don't realize how important snow removal is to people with disabilities? If so, I suggest that the City start educating home- and business owners about how to properly remove snow. I'd be willing to help educate all the Mass Ave. business owners about why snow removal helps everyone. I've seen nondisabled people fall while trying to negotiate snow that should have been removed. I know my grandmother stays inside her apartment for fear of falling and breaking her bones.

In a modern city like Cambridge snow removal should be second nature, but it's not. I'm a native Cantabridgian who wants to see some much needed change.

Editor's note: Erin Gullage was born and raised near Inman square. She now lives in a



Gerald Bergman

Erin Gullage going to work in Area 4

wheelchair-accessible apartment near Central Square. She uses her motorized wheelchair to go to and from work in Area 4.

A Cambridge ordinance states that snow must be removed from all sidewalks next to a property or business within 12 hours after snow stops falling in the daytime, and before 1 p.m. when the snow has fallen during the night. All ice must be cleared off sidewalks or treated with an ice-melting substance within 6 hours of the time it forms. The fine for violation of this ordinance is \$25. Call the sidewalk hotline at 349-4903 to report uncleared sidewalks.

Apparently no one is in charge of clearing ice and snow from sidewalk curbs, especially in Central Square. The city snowplows pile up ice and snow across ramps and crosswalks, and there it remains, often for several days. Call the Mayor's office at 617-349-4321 and make your voice heard.

Developers Strangle the Neighborhood

Draper Lab, with the support of the past Cambridge City Council, recently won final approval for its new seven-story 156,000 square foot development on Broadway adjacent to Area 4. Hundreds of additional cars will now park in the garage across from Washington Elms, spilling their exhaust fumes across the neighborhood, especially into low-income family housing.

Now another developer is coming before the Planning Board to seek permission to build an eight-story 230,000

square foot development on the corner of Cardinal Medeiros Avenue and Binney Street, just a couple of blocks from the Draper development. This development will be built directly across the street from a residential neighborhood.

The first public hearing on this development was held on February 18. For more information call Liza Paden of the Community Development Department at 617-349-464 and come to the Area Four Neighborhood Coalition meetings (see calendar, page 8).

News from the FMA

Under the federal “No Child Left Behind” Act, students in low-performing schools can transfer out under guidelines set by the State Department of Education. The Harrington, Fitzgerald, and Fletcher-Maynard Academy (FMA) were designated as “low-performing” schools based on standardized tests such as the MCAS.

The *Cambridge Chronicle* suggested that students would transfer out of these three schools in such high numbers that the schools would be forced to close, thereby ending the current political firestorm that is raging over school closures in Cambridge. The parents, teachers, and staff of the FMA said the *Chronicle* was wrong. In fact, the State Department of Education said on January 25 that the FMA had the smallest number of “No Child Left Behind” transfers of any school in Massachusetts.

The following is excerpted from the letter written by the FMA in response to the *Cambridge Chronicle*:

“Every member of the FMA staff was, and still is, totally committed to raising the educational expectations and outcomes for all our children. We know that these changes will not happen overnight, or even in one or two years, but we remain undaunted by the task.

“While the Department of Education may perceive progress only as increased MCAS scores, FMA teachers look at progress using a far wider lens. [We] take pride in better attendance, reduced discipline forms, increased initiative to attend the voluntary homework centers, and more parental involvement. It is paramount to us that we are continually measuring not just the academic growth of each child, but also the social and emotional growth. In the spring of 2002, the FMA was acknowledged as one of the most improved schools in Cambridge.



The FMA learning community

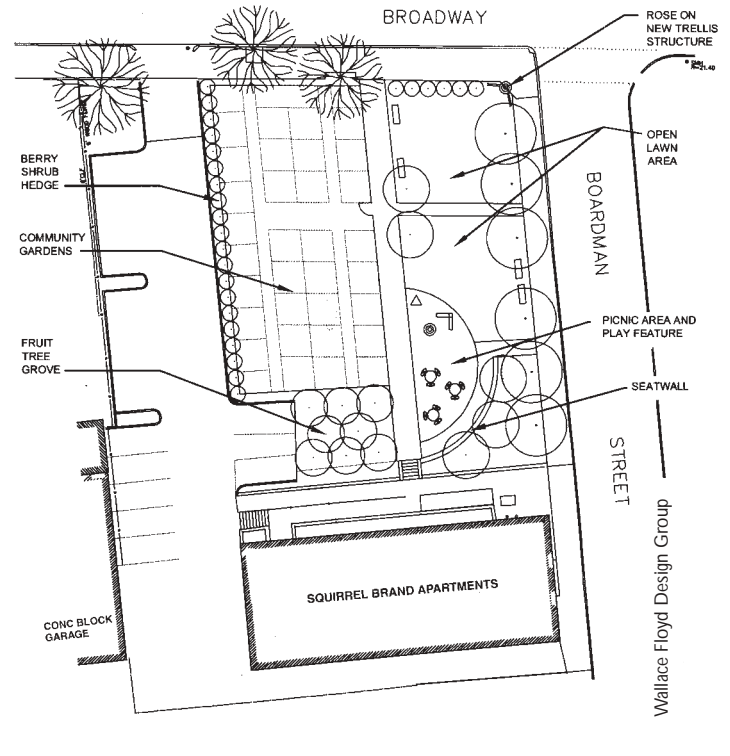
“‘I am curious. I ask. I listen. I learn.’ That is one of the eight Core Values of the FMA community. We invite every curious person in Cambridge to visit us to see the progress that we have made. Ask. Listen. Learn.”

This letter was signed by Margot Lacey, Program Developer; Peggy Silverio, Assistant Principal; and Robin Harris, Principal.

Open Space Update

In October, a landscape architect showed the neighborhood three general design layouts for the community garden/open space on Broadway and Boardman Street. Based on comments, she developed two new layouts. At a public meeting on January 30, Area 4 residents discussed these layouts, and decided that one general plan (shown here) would best meet the needs of a variety of users. This plan would preserve 4,918 square feet for the community garden (a minimum of 34 10' x 10' plots, paths and other amenities), and would provide a picnic/seating area of 4,832 square feet and a fruit tree grove of 824 square feet. A final design meeting will be held in March. Can you suggest a name for the new park?

To be placed on the mailing list or for more information, contact Rebecca Sozanski of the Community Development Department: 617-349-4639/TTY 617-349-4621, or email: rsozanski@ci.cambridge.ma.us.



Port Action Group

Neighbors and community groups have been meeting regularly since the violence of last summer, facilitating communication between residents, the Police Department, city agencies, and the City Council.

At the height of violence last summer, the City Council committed itself to finding the resources necessary to respond to critical safety issues in Area 4. The Port Action Group has asked the Mayor, the City Council and the City Manager to fund and focus their attention on the following priorities:

- Funding of a community liaison for Area 4
- Development of the Street Workers program with at least one worker assigned to Area 4
- A program of outreach and case management for 20–30-year-olds who are transitioning back into the community
- Attention to the issues of community policing in Area 4
- Culturally appropriate mental health services

- Funding of a three-year series of annual Area 4 Community Pride Days

The Port Action Group meets regularly at the Area 4 Youth Center, 243 Harvard Street. For information contact Susan Richards 617-349-4099.

Stand Up for Justice. Stand Together in Peace.

by Nancy Seymour

Between 5:30 and 6:30 p.m. every Wednesday since January 22, people from Area 4 have joined other Cambridge residents in the Central Square vigil for justice with peace. You may have seen us waving at your car, leafleting, or holding signs and banners on one of those freezing midweek evenings.

Everyone, especially people from Area 4, is welcome. Help swell our ranks! We meet at the plaza in Central Square. Bring your friends, neighbors, and co-workers. We have some signs and banners, but look forward to seeing what you can do too.

The roots of the Central Square vigil are many, but two events in Area 4 led the way: last summer's peace and non-violence march from the Harvard Street park and the flash-light vigil on August 6. These events exemplified the Port Action group's work to advance community self-empowerment, nonviolence, and safety.

Gerald Bergman



The "Stand with Martin" peace march and vigil

United for Justice with Peace/Cambridge (a coalition formed in response to the events of September 11, 2001) and the Area Four Neighborhood Coalition sponsor the weekly vigil. More co-sponsors are welcome. Please join us.

4 your calendar

The Area Four Neighborhood Coalition holds its regularly scheduled meetings on the **second Thursday of every month** from 7 to 9 pm., at the Area 4 Youth Center, 243 Harvard Street. The next meetings will be on **March 13, April 10, and May 8**. Free food and refreshments from local restaurants are served beginning at 6:30 pm. Everyone is invited.

The Area Four Neighborhood Coalition has set aside limited funds to help Area 4 individuals and community groups hold **neighborhood celebrations**, block parties, and special events that can help unify and celebrate our neighborhood. Up to \$400 for first-time grant recipients (\$200 for repeat recipients) is available for each event.

The *4word* is planning a special issue in September 2003 devoted to a **walking tour of Area 4** which will highlight places, events, people, and the history of our neighborhood, past and present. The *4word* wants your stories, ideas, and any photos you can share that depict events, people, and places. Please contact Gerald Bergman, the editor of the *4word*, 617-354-2648, e-mail: gerrberg@aol.com.

Translating the 4word

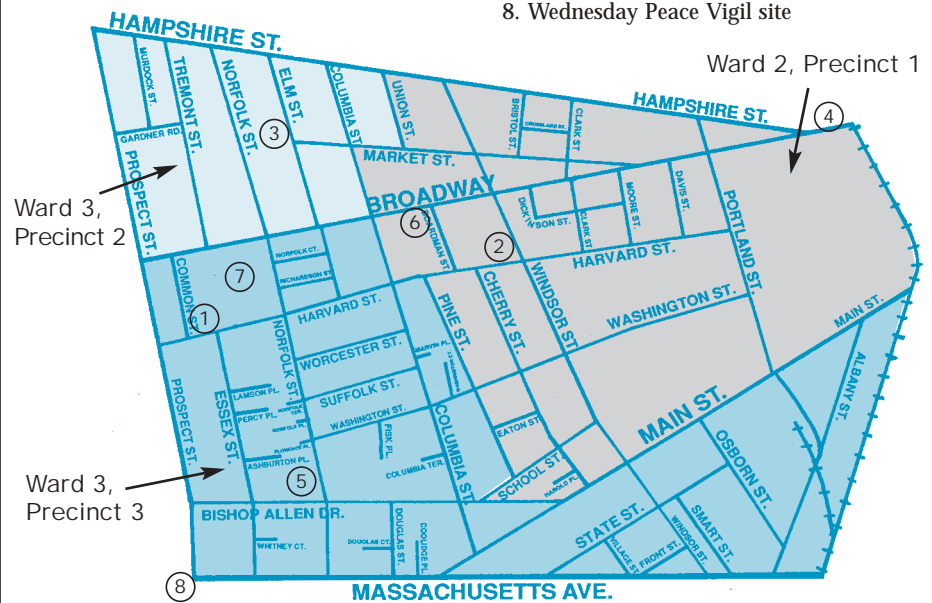
Para Residentes Que Falan Português
Se precisa de ajuda com traduções ou qualquer outro assunto, a MAPS oferece serviços de traduções assim como assistência social a pessoas de lingua portuguesa que residem na zona. Para mais informações, por favor contacte a MAPS através do número 617-864-7600. A MAPS está aberta de segunda a sexta feira das 9:00 da manhã às 5:00 da tarde.

Pou Rezidan Ki Pale Kreyol
Si w yon moun bezwen èd pou li JOURNAL ZON 4 LA e pou nou byen konpran enfòmasyon yo tou. Silvouplè rele Biwo Ayisyen: 617-349-6351.

Para Residentes Que Hablan Español
Si necesita ayuda en inglés, tenemos intérpretes que le pueden acompañar a sus citas y traductores que pueden traducir sus documentos personales por escrito. Sólo llame a Concilio Hispano al 617-661-9406 y comuníquese con Sandra o Cecilia. Nuestro horario de atención es de lunes a viernes de 9:00 a.m. a 5:00 p.m.

LOCATIONS MENTIONED IN THIS ISSUE OF 4WORD

1. Harvard Street childcare center and the Area 4 Youth Center
2. Fletcher-Maynard Academy
3. Cambridgeport School
4. Draper Lab development
5. Eviction Free Zone office
6. Broadway/Boardman open space
7. Sennott Park
8. Wednesday Peace Vigil site



Ward 3, Pct. 2: Rep. Tim Toomey (617-722-2230) & Sen. Jarrett Barrios (617-722-1650)
Ward 3, Pct. 3: Rep. Paul Demakis (617-722-2460) & Sen. Pres. Robert Travaglino (617-722-1500)
Ward 2, Pct. 1: Rep. Tim Toomey & Sen. Pres. Robert Travaglino



The *4word* is funded by a UDAG grant from the Area Four Neighborhood Coalition. We thank the Community Art Center for administering the grant. Suggestions about articles and interviews and contributions to People Pride, the Walking Tour, and Your Calendar are invited. Contact Gerald Bergman, *4word* editor, PO Box 390768 (02139), telephone: 354-2648, fax: 864-2519, e-mail: gerrberg@aol.com.

Read and review all 15 editions of the 4word in PDF format at mit.edu/dryfoo/Area4/4word