

**Sub-Committee Name: PHYSICAL APPEARANCE & AMBIANCE**

**Meeting Date:** September 14 & 18, 2006

**Sub-committee Coordinators:**

**Volunteers:**

Jinny Nathans, Resident  
 Karen Kelley, Cambridge Local First & Cambridge Artist’s Cooperative  
 Yale and Edward Turner, Vision House Opticians  
 Robert Marshall, Harvard Book Service  
 Rich Santiago and Steve Williams, Cambridge Police  
 Nelly Dugas  
 Mark Verkennis and Mike Kuchta, Harvard University Planning Office

				NOTES
Explore ways to reduce panhandling in Harvard Square, particularly in areas of high concentration, to create a more inviting ambiance to visitors.	Remove some benches along Mass. Ave in front of Bank of America and CVS.	City/DPW		
	Identify ways to ensure that large planters do not become places for panhandlers to congregate.	City/DPW		
	Research actions that other cities have taken to address heavy panhandling.	City/DPW	Sarah Rahman	
Ensure that the look and feel of Harvard Square presents a friendly environment.	Improve the look of newspaper boxes. Design new, more uniform boxes or find a system to inform newspaper contacts when their boxes need repair.	City/DPW and Environment & Transportation		Newspaper boxes were considered as a part of the Harvard Sq. design process. Get an update from Kathy Watkins on where this issues now stands.
	Increase regular maintenance and assessment of public ways and sidewalks with regard to trash pickup, street cleaning, sidewalk repair.	City/DPW		Hold a meeting between Lisa Peterson and concerned Harvard Square stakeholders to learn more about DPW process and resources. Email out contacts for DPW hotline when meeting notes distributed.
	Improve the consistency of maintaining planting beds – some look great, some have weeds.	City/DPW		
	Enforce parking regulations to keep passenger cars from parking in delivery zones so that trucks are forced to park in front of retail stores (problem noticed on JFK Street)	City/Parking & Transportation	Yale Turner	

				NOTES
Use signage to create a welcoming atmosphere in Harvard Square.	Design creative logo and signage, banners or some other sort of marker throughout Harvard Square to identify the district and demarcate its boundaries. Examples may include banners or metal work attached to lampposts or some words or symbols incorporate into street signs.	HSBA, Harvard School of Design Student volunteers, Martin Bechthold (HSD Prof.), Rem Koolhouse, Ross Miller		HSBA making an investment into hanging brackets for acorn posts for holiday lights, hanging baskets, and possibly signs.
	Ask MBTA about signage in or around the T-station to identify Harvard Square. Examples include a large wall sign on the mezzanine level of the station or a free-standing sign outside with the T circle T and Red Line-type label of Harvard Square.	MBTA	Estella Johnson	
	Need more directional signage in Harvard Square indicating parking garages, directions to major roads, and major sites people visit (e.g. theaters, university buildings, etc.)	City		Wayfinding signs are included as a part of the Harvard Square improvement project. They may be based on the signs prepared for Porter Square and may include pedestrian and vehicular level signs directing to public places such as Charles River, main streets. Might consider round "P" Parking signs. City-funded signs cannot direct to private venues or advertise any businesses.
Consider projects that enhance the visual appeal of the streetscape.	Explore possibility of wall murals along certain exterior facades, including American Apparel along Church St. and Cambridge Savings Bank (where billboard removed)	Arts Council, property owners		If private property owners want to explore wall murals, Arts Council staff could provide technical assistance for project development, including artist selection, contract drafting, cost estimates, conservation/maintenance plan, etc.
	Encourage appealing window displays (not just top to bottom film) for existing stores as well as vacant storefronts.	Store owners, property owners		
	Establish permanent outdoor lights strung along certain parts of Harvard Square.	HSBA	Denise Jillson	
Make it easier for Harvard Square visitors to spend time browsing and shopping by changing the mix of parking meters	Review the current mix of 30-minute and 1-hour parking meters and add some 2-hour meters along stretches of Harvard Square where people like to browse.	Traffic & Parking	Cathy Botindari, (Colonial Drug) Lousie Ciampi (Clothware), Susan Lelyveld (Swiss Watchmaker)	Acquire a map of all parking meters in Harvard Square and discuss the mix with interested merchants