

AGASSIZ BALDWIN COMMUNITY SURVEY

Date: December 9, 2008
Topic: Lesley University Development in Porter Square
Survey: Conducted by Agassiz Baldwin Community

SURVEY RESULTS

The Agassiz Survey on Porter Square was sent out to Agassiz and Neighborhood Nine residents via email in November, 2008. It was also handed out at the November Agassiz Neighborhood Council (ANC) meeting and other events. We have received a total of 127 responses (92 emails, 35 hard copies) so far. Here are the tabulations across all neighborhoods and respondents.

Breakdown of neighborhood responses (incomplete, many respondents never identified which neighborhood):

Residents from Agassiz Baldwin:	51
Residents from Neighborhood Nine:	47
Residents from Porter Square (PSNA):	2

MIXED USE

At the corner of Roseland and Mass Ave, the AIB plans to have a public Art Gallery on the first floor of the new building with public art exhibitions and lectures. How valuable is this new public Art Gallery to you?

Highest Priority (#3):	34
Medium Priority (#2):	57
Low Priority (#1):	25
No Priority (#0):	9

Lesley plans to lower the church entrance to street level and move it south on Mass Ave. The current plans for the church include an Art Library with public access. How valuable is this new public Art Library to you?

Highest Priority (#3):	25
Medium Priority (#2):	41
Low Priority (#1):	34
No Priority (#0):	21

Lesley has committed not to build dormitories on the parking lots across from Porter Exchange building. Instead, the ground floor of the two new buildings will have useable retail on the first floor to generate foot traffic and increase economic vitality of Porter Square. How important is the addition of retail – or other community-related active use – in the Porter Square area?

Highest Priority (#3):	67
Medium Priority (#2):	36
Low Priority (#1):	13
No Priority (#0):	7

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This new retail should be smaller owner-occupied businesses (vs. larger retail chains such as Citicorps or Starbucks).

Highest Priority (#3):	78
Medium Priority (#2):	25
Low Priority (#1):	4
No Priority (#0):	15

OPEN SPACE

Open/green space is vital. The new Lesley development should include some dedicated open green space for shared use by both Lesley and the public.

Highest Priority (#3):	92
Medium Priority (#2):	12
Low Priority (#1):	13
No Priority (#0):	8

This open space should be on Mass Ave, perhaps at corner of Mass Ave and Roseland St.

Highest Priority (#3):	53
Medium Priority (#2):	22
Low Priority (#1):	19
No Priority (#0):	28

This open space should be behind Porter Exchange building, along Roseland St.

Highest Priority (#3):	20
Medium Priority (#2):	23
Low Priority (#1):	39
No Priority (#0):	38

The design of the building at the corner of Mass. Avenue and Roseland should encourage street level activity, light, and interactivity between art students and the public. (One design includes a courtyard one floor below street grade, behind a glass wall.)

Highest Priority (#3):	68
Medium Priority (#2):	39
Low Priority (#1):	9
No Priority (#0):	6

BUILDING HEIGHT/DENSITY

Building heights and massing are vital. Many people are worried about turning Mass Ave into a "canyon." The overall height of the AIB should be minimized as much as possible.

Highest Priority (#3):	77
Medium Priority (#2):	14
Low Priority (#1):	17
No Priority (#0):	16

Building heights along Roseland St. and adjacent to abutters should be minimized.

Highest Priority (#3):	65
Medium Priority (#2):	33
Low Priority (#1):	18
No Priority (#0):	7

One respondent said: Along Roseland - #0, next to abutters - #3

A "tradeoff" that allows higher buildings in exchange for more open/green space with community access should be considered.

Highest Priority (#3):	44
Medium Priority (#2):	34
Low Priority (#1):	19
No Priority (#0):	26

Within the past 80 years, there have been only four zoning changes to this area. Any zoning changes should not encourage increased heights on any adjacent (non-Lesley) properties.

Highest Priority (#3):	83
Medium Priority (#2):	18
Low Priority (#1):	6
No Priority (#0):	15

PARKING

Lesley should commission a professional Traffic and Parking Study to examine the potential impact of the AIB on parking in and around Porter Square. We need to understand how parking may be affected, especially when there are public lectures and art openings. This study should be commissioned immediately – before the Overlay District is approved.

Highest Priority (#3):	97
Medium Priority (#2):	18
Low Priority (#1):	7
No Priority (#0):	3

If it is deemed necessary, Lesley should finance and provide additional parking spaces to accommodate the AIB facility at Porter Square. Neighborhood street parking is already overloaded. (Even if Lesley limits faculty parking as a policy, staff or visitors who have a Cambridge sticker could park in the neighborhood.)

Highest Priority (#3):	98
Medium Priority (#2):	17
Low Priority (#1):	5
No Priority (#0):	4

If there is to be a new parking facility (additional parking spaces), the new spaces should go underground (vs. at ground level).

Highest Priority (#3):	93
Medium Priority (#2):	17
Low Priority (#1):	5
No Priority (#0):	7

TRAFFIC

Traffic flow should be carefully studied to assess potential impact of AIB-related traffic in and around Porter Square. This is esp. true at Frost/Roseland Streets, which may see increased traffic as visitors drive to AIB. Traffic impacts must be mitigated.

Highest Priority (#3):	94
Medium Priority (#2):	21
Low Priority (#1):	8
No Priority (#0):	4

The intersection of Mass Ave and Roseland St should be studied (and potentially re-designed) with the aim of improving pedestrian safety and traffic flow.

- Highest Priority (#3): 85
- Medium Priority (#2): 27
- Low Priority (#1): 9
- No Priority (#0): 3

Trucks cannot be allowed to traverse on neighborhood streets. Delivery trucks carrying supplies etc. to the new AIB facility must have a designated to/from route that keeps them off neighborhood streets.

- Highest Priority (#3): 95
- Medium Priority (#2): 19
- Low Priority (#1): 8
- No Priority (#0): 3

CONSTRUCTION MITIGATION

This construction mitigation plan should include rules to protect the neighborhood, with phone numbers to call day and night if/when there are issues (reaching a live person), no construction before 7:00 a.m., and penalties on Lesley vendors/contractors when there is non-compliance.

- Highest Priority (#3): 96
- Medium Priority (#2): 15
- Low Priority (#1): 7
- No Priority (#0): 3

During construction and after building completion, all trash should be stored and removed from dumpsters behind Porter Exchange.

- Highest Priority (#3): 72
- Medium Priority (#2): 37
- Low Priority (#1): 13
- No Priority (#0): 2

PEDESTRIAN SAFETY

Improvements should be made that include easy access to the MBTA through parking lot in the rear of Porter Exchange, adequate lighting for pedestrian safety, and emergency call boxes at the corner of Mass Ave and Roseland St.

- Highest Priority (#3): 77
- Medium Priority (#2): 30
- Low Priority (#1): 13
- No Priority (#0): 4

How many "highest priority" (#3's) did each item receive?

Additional parking as required	98
Parking and traffic study	97
Construction Mitigation plan	96
Traffic flow	95
Trucks on neighborhood streets	95
Parking underground	93
Open space/green space	92
Traffic - Mass Ave/Roseland St intersection	85
Non-Lesley properties	83
Smaller owner-occupied retail	78
Pedestrian safety/improvements	77
Overall height of AIB	77
Trash storage	72
Interactive design	68
Additional retail	67
Heights along Roseland St	65
Open space - Mass Ave	53
Tradeoff between height/open space	44
Public art gallery	34
Public art library	25
Open space - behind Porter Exchange	20







