



Robert C. Haas
Police Commissioner

City of Cambridge Police Department

TELEPHONE
(617) 349-3300

FAX
(617) 349-3320

WEB
www.cambridgepolice.org

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

October 5, 2010

Robert W. Healy
City Manager

Re: City Council Order No. 4 dated September 27, 2010

Dear Sir:

As requested, we are responding to the above City Council Order regarding the increase in the number of housebreaks in the area of Antrim Street. This response also considers the request to increase patrols in this neighborhood and to conduct a community meeting to inform and address concerns of area residents.

Review of Antrim Street Housebreaks:

September 14th, file # 10007118: Between 1:00 p.m. and 5:45 p.m., an unknown suspect gained access to the apartment at 6 Antrim St #1 through a small rear living room window, which appeared to have been forced open from the outside. This window was above an air conditioning unit. The suspect exited through the front door, which was found ajar when the residents returned home. The following items were taken from throughout the apartment: two laptops, two computer hard drives, two digital cameras, an iPod, a GPS unit, a game system, numerous other electronic items, and two checkbooks.

Case Status: Suspended, pending further information.

September 18th-19th, file # 10007264: While residents were asleep overnight between 10:00 p.m. and 7:00 a.m., an unknown suspect entered 130 Antrim St through an unlocked dining room window located at the side of the building. This window was easily accessible from the driveway. The suspect rummaged through the first floor of the home and stole items before exiting through the front door. It appears the suspect never went upstairs. The following items were stolen from the home: two laptops, two cell phones, a Bose stereo system, and a wallet.

Case Status: Investigation ongoing – two possible prints lifted from window and submitted to evidence/ID.

September 18th-19th, file # 10007281: Between noon on September 18th and 6:20 p.m. on September 19th, an unknown suspect entered 101 Antrim St through a rear first floor window. The window was forced open, breaking the locking mechanism. The suspect exited through the front door, which the resident found ajar. The following items were stolen from the residence: two laptops, two MP3 players, a digital camera, a flat screen television, a home theater, numerous other electrical items, and thousands of dollars worth of jewelry.

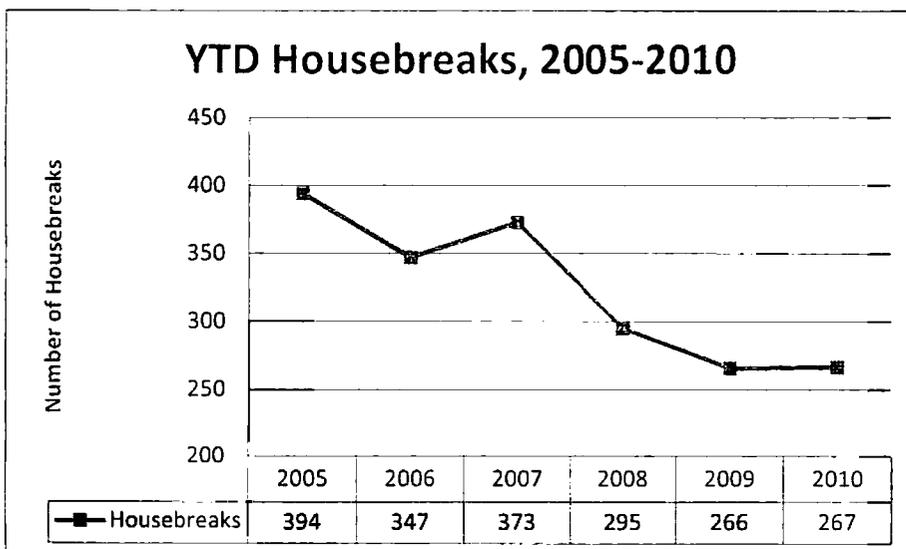
Case Status: Investigation ongoing – four prints lifted from the outside window and submitted to ID unit.

Housebreak Statistics:

Mid-Cambridge neighborhood: There were 43 housebreaks reported in Mid-Cambridge this year through September 30th (the first three quarters of the year). Housebreaks are up in this neighborhood 54% over the same time frame last year. In 2009, housebreaks in Mid-Cambridge registered a 33% decline from the previous year.

Citywide: Housebreaks citywide through the first three quarters of 2010 are up by only one incident over the number reported during the same time frame in 2009. Despite the recent increase in housebreaks in Mid-Cambridge, incidents citywide continue to remain well below the levels seen prior to 2009.

STREET ROBBERIES BY NEIGHBORHOOD THROUGH SEPTEMBER 30 TH			
AREA	2008	2009	2010
Mid-Cambridge	41	28	43
North Cambridge	24	42	32
Area 4	34	22	31
Inman/Harrington	45	23	31
Cambridgeport	20	36	30
Peabody	42	36	25
Riverside	14	26	22
West Cambridge	30	15	20
Agassiz	15	8	16
East Cambridge	23	27	14
Strawberry Hill	6	1	3
Cambridge Highlands	1	2	0
M.I.T. Area	0	0	0
Total	295	266	267



Pattern Identified:

The three housebreaks on Antrim Street were identified as part of a residential burglary pattern by the Crime Analysis Unit on September 20th, 2010 and the details were furnished to the Command Staff and published in Roll Call. The pattern consisted of a series of eight breaks since September 7th in Mid –Cambridge .The incidents were clustered above Broadway between Inman Street and Ellsworth Ave. Entry was being gained to first floor apartments by entering through unlocked and forced rear and side windows. Laptops and other electronic items were the main target of the thieves. The majority of the breaks were on weekend afternoons between the hours of 1:00 PM to 6:00 PM. The outlier being the late break on Antrim on the night of September 19th. A known offender from Boston has been arrested but the series of incidents has continued in a sporadic manner.

Police Response Strategy:

Utilizing statistical and strategic information provided by the Crime Analysis Unit, the following actions were taken by the Cambridge Police Department:

- Deployed patrol units, bike units, and major crime units to saturate potential target areas while enlisting the traffic unit to target motor vehicle violations with a zero tolerance policy.
- Deployed resources for a door-to-door campaign in the Antrim Street area during the weekend of September 25th and 26th. Officers knocked on doors and left information sharing tips (see attachment) on how residents in the area could protect their property.
- Released a community update bulletin to the Mid-Cambridge neighborhood through our Citizen Observer program, our website, social media outlets (Facebook and Twitter), and to the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association email listserv.
- A presentation and community discussion with the Cambridge Police Neighborhood Sergeants and Lieutenant is scheduled to take place at the Mid-Cambridge Neighborhood Association meeting on October 21st.

Results:

The saturation patrol strategies employed over the past two weekends appear to have displaced offender activity across the border into Somerville. While there have been zero weekend breaks reported in MidCambridge, Somerville has experienced dramatic increases in housebreaks over the final weekend of September and the first weekend of October.

Cambridge and Somerville Police are now collaborating on a joint strategy in response to the housebreak activity affecting both cities. A complete review of ongoing strategies can be found in the September version of BridgeStat (released on the first Friday of every month) which is now

available on our website as the most recent item under "News & Events" on the department's homepage, or at http://www.cambridgema.gov/CityOfCambridge_Content/documents/BridgeStat_Sep2010_FIN_AL.pdf

Arrests Made:

John McHale of 402 Massachusetts Ave. Cambridge was arrested on October 2nd in connection with a housebreak that occurred at 295 Harvard Street at 2:17 AM. He was also in possession of property stolen from several motor vehicle breaks that occurred on 10/1 & 10/2 on Inman St. Clinton St. and Hancock St.

Martin White of 40 Alexander St. Roxbury was arrested on September 17th after officers assigned to the Mid-Cambridge neighborhood to target recent housebreaks caught him fleeing from a housebreak that occurred on Hancock Street.

Should you require additional information please contact me.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Robert C. Haas". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Robert C. Haas
Police Commissioner

RCH/bk



Preventing Residential Burglary

- Try “casing” your own home, at night and during the day. Attempt to gain access to your home when the doors and windows are locked and “secure.” Make sure you have some identification on you in case your neighbors call the police.
- **ALWAYS lock your doors and windows.** Doors should be made from strong wood or metal and should be locked with a deadbolt. Install guards on windows that prevent them from being raised more than a few inches.
- **Leave a light on** (perhaps on a timer) when you go away, even for the evening. Leave a television or radio on as well.
- **Install motion sensor lights outside your home** and out of reach so burglars cannot unscrew the light. Also, buy variable light timers to activate lights in your home.
- **NEVER prop open the door or let someone in behind you** if you live in an apartment building. If the building has a main entryway, make sure that security is enforced at the main door. Report residents who do this to your landlord.
- **Be vigilant.** If you suspect suspicious activity around your home, your neighbors’ homes, or in your neighborhood, please report it to the police immediately by calling 617-349-3300.
- **Document serial numbers of all electronics and take pictures of all valuables.** Keep this in a safe place to provide to the police in the event you are burglarized.
- **Request a Residential Security Survey** from the Cambridge Police Department, which provides a general assessment of the vulnerability of your residence. For more info, please call (617) 349-3236.