



June 6, 2007

From: Lisa Peterson,  
DPW Commissioner

To: Robert W. Healy,  
City Manager

**Re: Harvard University House Moves on North Massachusetts Avenue on June 22-25, 2007.**

As part of Harvard Law School's capital improvements, three 19<sup>th</sup> Century buildings are being moved from 1581-1583 and 1587 Massachusetts Avenue to 1637-1653 Massachusetts Avenue. These buildings are being moved to open the site for a new law faculty building and to preserve the 19<sup>th</sup> Century homes. Harvard Law School project managers, engineers and consultants have worked closely with city staff and state agencies to ensure a seamless and safe plan for the house moves. We have reviewed and identified the various components within the public way that will require removal and reinstallation during the house moves occurring between June 22, 2007 and June 25, 2007, with contingency days for weather delays between July 6 and July 9, 2007. The plan generally involves closing Massachusetts Avenue from Waterhouse St. to Wendell Street beginning at 6PM on June 22, 2007, and having a traffic management plan in place throughout the weekend and into Monday. Once closed, MBTA crews will begin removing all catenary lines, the City Electrical Department will remove 8 cobra heads and 2 light poles, and Traffic and Parking will remove traffic signals. Shawmut Design and Construction will be the lead company, working on behalf of Harvard University, responsible for coordinating with the Department of Public Works and other City departments during the move weekend. After the three buildings move on Saturday, June 23, 2007, the aforementioned agencies will begin reinstalling their systems with the main goal of opening this portion of Massachusetts Avenue up to traffic by 5:00 AM on Monday, June 25, 2007.

Harvard's team of engineers and contractors, working with the various City departments and the MBTA, has planned the relocation of these structures with great care. The roads, sidewalks, curbing and medians are in reasonable condition and adequate to carry the load. The inspection of these items is documented on video tape. There are no overhead electric wires owned or operated by the City on the route of the move. The MBTA will be temporarily disassembling and later reinstalling the overhead catenaries system along the route of the move. All work relative to the catenaries system will be completed by the appropriate MBTA staff. MBTA officials are coordinating this work with the Harvard Law School project team and the City. The project engineers have set the loading of the houses to meet the HS-20 requirements, which shows that the weight of the houses will not be greater than normal truck traffic. The structural engineers have determined that the houses have been prepared in a manner that is safe for the move and this documentation has been given to the City's Inspectional Service Department. In addition, Harvard's consultants have determined that in their professional opinion the city utilities under the street

will not be impacted by the house moves. The sewer and drain lines have been videoed and will be inspected again after the move is complete. Should damage be discovered, which a result of the house moves is, Harvard Law School will cause its contractor to take all reasonable steps to correct the damage so that the condition is at least equal to its pre-move condition.

In addition, as part of the house moves, there will be miscellaneous tree pruning required to help facilitate the passing of the houses on Massachusetts Avenue. Working closely with the city arborist, Harvard Law School has reviewed the condition of various trees on Massachusetts Avenue from Everett to Wendell Streets and has agreed to perform routine maintenance for 2 seasons on any tree that is pruned in preparation for the house move project. There will be a total of (10) ten trees and the pruning and maintenance plan has been reviewed and agreed upon by the city arborist. All tree pruning that will take place is planned to be performed within reasonable tolerances so as not to adversely affect the trees. There is, however, a Norway maple tree on the southbound side of Massachusetts Avenue whose canopy has been in competition with a larger residential tree canopy and has shown signs of decay at approximately 7 feet from ground level. Harvard will contribute \$50,000 to fund tree and streetscape enhancements along Massachusetts Avenue between Wendell and Waterhouse Streets. This contribution can be utilized to replace the aforementioned species and to fund other improvements that will enhance the pedestrian character and unique environment of this section of the Massachusetts Avenue corridor. This planning and work will be coordinated among the City, Agassiz and Neighborhood Nine residents.

Harvard will reimburse the City for all costs associated with the house relocations. The University has also coordinated the appropriate insurance coverage with the City's Law Department. In addition, all City emergency service departments have been properly notified. The University and the all City emergency service departments will continue to coordinate throughout the work associated with the house relocations.

In conclusion, I am satisfied that the planning and engineering associated with this work adequately protects City infrastructure and interests and that Harvard University has made all reasonable accommodations to minimize disruption to the community and insure public services are minimally disrupted and that public safety is comprehensively addressed.