

City of Cambridge

CAMBRIDGE CITY COUNCIL SPECIAL MEETING
FEBRUARY 8, 2012

The Cambridge City Council held a Special Meeting on February 8, 2012, beginning at 5:42 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber, City Hall. The purpose of the meeting was to hold a public hearing to consider a petition filed by Julia Bishop et al., to amend to Section 17.20 of the Zoning Ordinance-Regulations for Special District 2 located in North Cambridge along Linear Park.

Present at the hearing were Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves, Acting Mayor, Councillor Leland Cheung, Councillor Marjorie Decker, Councillor David Maher, Councillor E. Denise Simmons, Councillor Timothy J. Toomey, Jr., Councillor Minka VanBeuzekom, Margaret Drury, City Clerk and Donna P. Lopez, Acting City Clerk. City administrative staff in attendance was Stuart Dash, Director of Community and Neighborhood Planning, Community Development Department (CDD) and Jeffrey Roberts, Community Planner, CDD.

Councillor Reeves called the hearing to order and invited the petitioners to present their proposal. Charles Teague, Edmunds Avenue, made a power point presentation in support of their petition to decrease the density of Special District 2 (**Attachment A**). The petitioners displayed a wooden scale model of the petition area. Mr. Teague summarized the presentation as follows:

- Linear Park needs protection now.
- The Linear Park Neighborhood is at risk.
- Safety issues are a major concern.
- It is time to re-evaluate the Special District 2 Zoning. A lot has changed in 12 years. A comprehensive design for the whole North Cambridge area is necessary.
- Fairness requires that the existing residents not shoulder the burden of the development of this area.

Councillor Reeves then invited public comment.

Aaron Litvin, 23, Edmunds Street, Apt. #2, spoke in favor of the Bishop petition.

Dini Coffin, 91 Harvey Street, stated that on the Magoun-Whittemore Avenue side, the original proposal was for fifty-one units and it is still the same. The proposed development would bring detrimental change to the neighborhood. A large rental building is present and is an increased safety risk.

Councillor Decker assumed the chair and continued public comment.

Judith Robertson, 45 Magoun Street, urged the City Council to adopt the Bishop petition as written. She submitted a letter in support of the petition (**Attachment B**).

Gary Mello, 324 Franklin Street, spoke in support of the Bishop petition.

Martin Boikal, 120 Reed Street, spoke in support of the Bishop petition.

Tracy Wemett, 26 Columbus Avenue, urged the City Council to adopt the Bishop petition.

Dara Glass, 21 Edmunds Street, spoke in support of the Bishop petition. She moved to North Cambridge because of less traffic, the strong sense of community and the bike path. Please protect these qualities.

Silvia Barnes, Harvey Street, stated that she has lived across from Linear Park for seventeen (17) years and when she first moved there she could see Linnaean Park and now she cannot. Thirty-two (32) units were built across the street from her. By now the number of houses has doubled. She urged support for the Bishop petition.

Julia Bishop, 9 Cottage Park Avenue, noted the delicate balance of the neighborhood. She urged consideration for the area. They tried to work with developers but there should be no more than seventy-seven unit.

Marie Doucette, 41 Madison Avenue, spoke in support of the Bishop petition.

Shannon Lee Jones, 124 Harvey Street, urged support for the Bishop petition. She moved here from New York City and loves the community. She stated that she is also concerned about proposed cuts to subway service.

Gary Dmytry, 2440 Massachusetts Avenue, said that he had been a Cambridge resident for nearly twenty (20) years. If the project is well-designed and well-build, it can be beautiful and a valuable addition. Here neighborhoods are like endangered species that we must work to pass onto the next generation. He submitted a letter (**Attachment C**).

Mike Nakagawa, 51 Madison Avenue, spoke in support of the Bishop petition. In the survey of Madison Avenue, a majority favored Residence B with 60 percent of all Special District 2 residents in favor of Residence B while 50 percent would accept the density proposed in the Bishop petition.

Ann McDonald, 24 Columbus Avenue, spoke in support of the Bishop petition. She urged a comprehensive look at the zoning.

Michael O'Shea, resident of Walden Street, owner of a building at 91-95, 93-95 Harvey Street, stated that he objects to both Park 1 and Part 1A. Either would eliminate commercial uses and would create more of a hardship for him. He does not want the rules to change after he spent a great deal of time negotiating agreements with the Planning Board, BZA, City of Cambridge in the course of rehabbing his Harvey Street property. He urged elimination of Part 1 and Part 1A.

John Walker, 150 Whittemore Avenue, spoke in support of the Bishop petition.

Young Kim, 17 Norris Street, spoke in support of the Bishop petition.

Ashley Pace, 49 Madison Avenue, spoke in support of the Bishop petition. She and her husband moved to this neighborhood two years ago and intended it to be their temporary residence, but they now love the neighborhood. The developers are for a very big building with very small units, which encourages transiency and does not allow renters the option to remain as they start families.

Justin Pace, 49 Madison Avenue, spoke in support of the Bishop petition.

Robert Cyr, Cottage Park Avenue, spoke in support of the Bishop petition.

Teresa Walker, 3 Magazine Street, spoke in support of the Bishop petition. She cannot fathom how anyone can expect that the traffic will not get even worse with the number of new units the developer plans to add.

William Fox, 17 Cottage Park Avenue, spoke in support of the Bishop petition on the basis of safety.

There being no other persons desiring to testify, Councillor Decker closed public comment at 7:02 p.m.

Several people submitted email testimony. Copies are attached **(Attachment D)**

Councillor Decker then invited questions and comments from members of the City Council. All members of the City Council individually expressed their thanks and appreciation to all of the neighbors who have worked on this petition for the many hours of work that they have volunteered.

In response to a question from Councillor VanBeuzekom, Mr. Roberts explained the zoning term of "grandfathered uses."

Councillor VanBeuzekom expressed her support for greater density in the vicinity of public transportation and said that in this regard, the MBTA's proposed service cuts are of great concern. She asked whether there was any precedent for denying resident parking permits for residents of new developments near public transportation. Mr. Dash said that CDD and the Planning Board encourage measures and amenities that provide incentives to eschew automobile ownership, for example, public transportation passes for the residents and zip car parking spaces.

Several councillors expressed their concern with the comments made by business owners regarding the problems with Part 1 and 1A of the petition. Councillor Maher requested that CDD provide written comments on Part 1 and 1A by February 27th, when the petition will be ready to be ordained if the Council so chooses.

Councillor Maher moved that the petition be passed to a second reading. The motion passed on a voice vote without objection. The hearing was adjourned at 7:30 p.m.

D. Margaret Drury
City Clerk

Bishop Petition – as written

Roll back council's 30% up zoning
match CDD's "1998 Planning Board Petition"



Linear Park - 1986 Governor's Design Award

Overview

- The Linear Park, “the bike path”
- Linear Park Neighborhood
- Public Safety – existing problems
- Re-evaluate? 12 years, a lot has changed!!
- Status of the three (3) developments
- 30% roll back: the Bishop compromise
- The Model by the community

Linear Park, “the bike path”

- A carefully crafted **illusion**
 - Smaller than it looks
 - Fragile
- Important to many demographics
 - Bicyclists
 - Runners
 - Walkers
 - Dog Owners
 - Commuters
 - Abutters
 - Families





*Park protection by zoning all parcels
not just Special Permit developments*

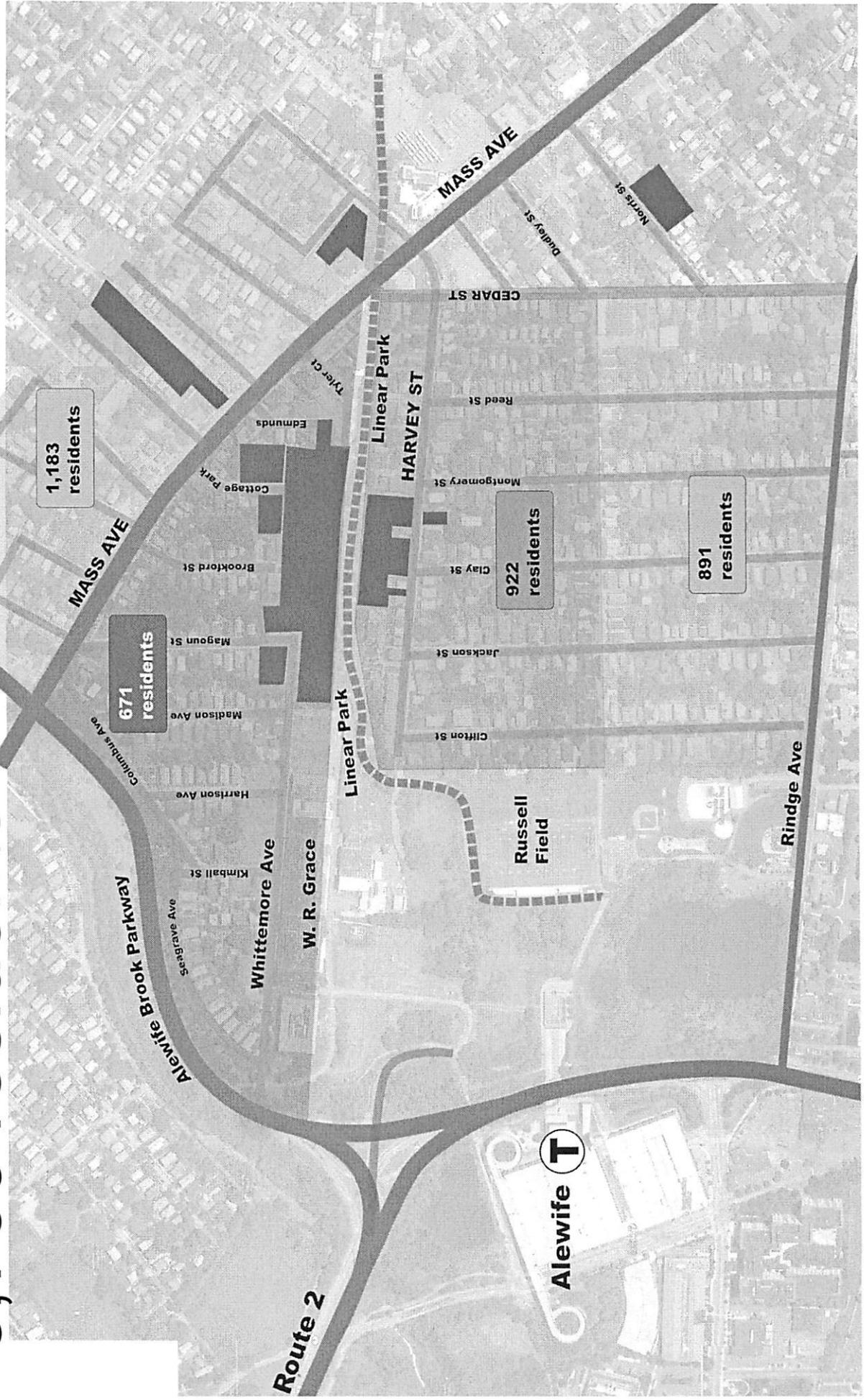


- Graffiti
- **Safety** - personal near miss
- Park relies on not being “walled in”
- 50’ SD3 setback from park, SD2 is 10’

SD2 Impacts

3,700 residents

11-3



Linear Park Neighborhood

- Existing residents
 - 671 Whittemore Triangle to Cedar St
 - 922 North of Dudley
 - 2,074 South of Dudley + across Mass Ave
- Long term and committed
 - 11-3 has highest voter turn out
 - many lived here their whole life
 - many elderly
- Truly a special community
 - nice mix of rentals within two family homes
 - backyards push houses to the street

Red Zone

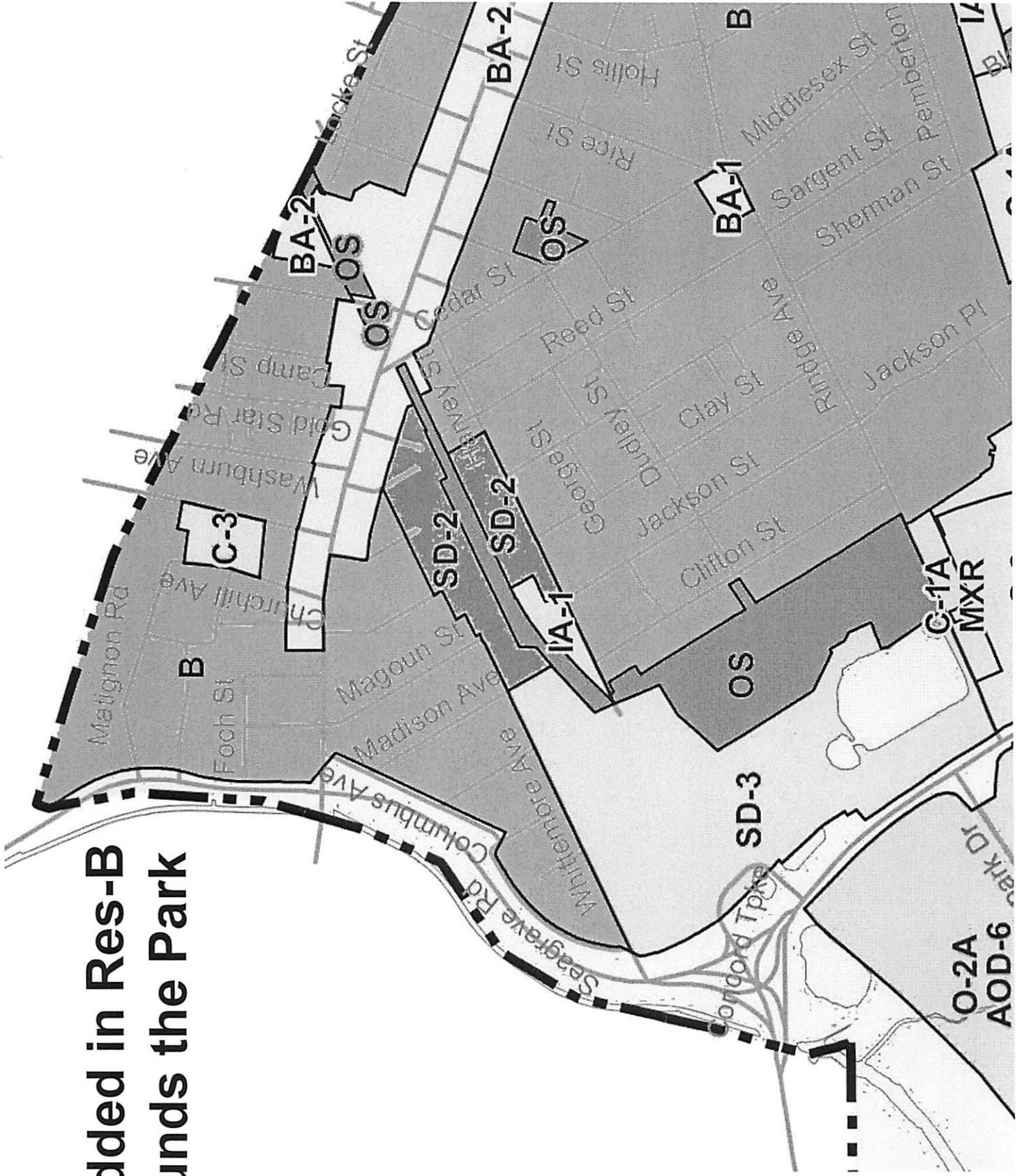
- \$106,000,000 of existing residential property
- 312 residential units
- **Unique** geography
 - bounded on three sides
 - Linear Park, Alewife Parkway, Mass Ave
- Residence B area **really** is Two Family
 - 1.8 units average
 - .55 FAR median (from CDD)

Red Zone: Nielsen

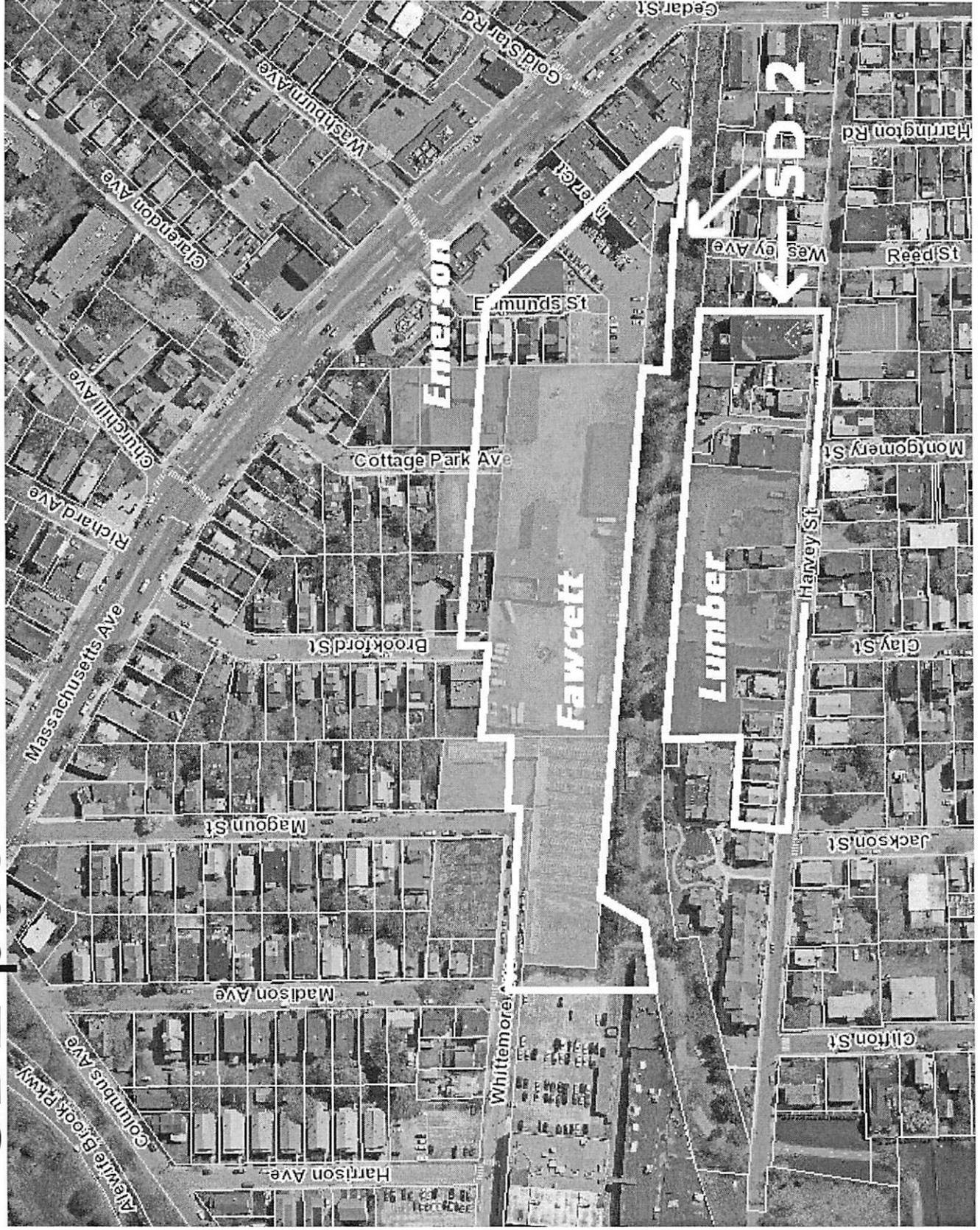
- Households: 319
- Adult population: 603
- Aggregate income: \$24,952,500 / year
- Vehicles per household: 1.5

- 1.5 cars/unit by community survey
- 1.3 parking stickers/unit – minimum
- Rte 2 to: IBM Westford, Cisco, Kiva, Oracle, Philips Healthcare, Adobe, Nokia

SD2 embedded in Res-B surrounds the Park



SD2 push into Residence B



SD2

384 Abutters of Presumed Standing



Public Safety

- Current conditions create accidents – near misses occur now!
 - Narrow streets/alleys
 - Two way because they are dead ends
 - “Doglegs” ... sharp bend in street
 - Blind entrances
 - Traffic volume
- Streets built circa 1890 are not designed well for current conditions
- Time for reevaluation

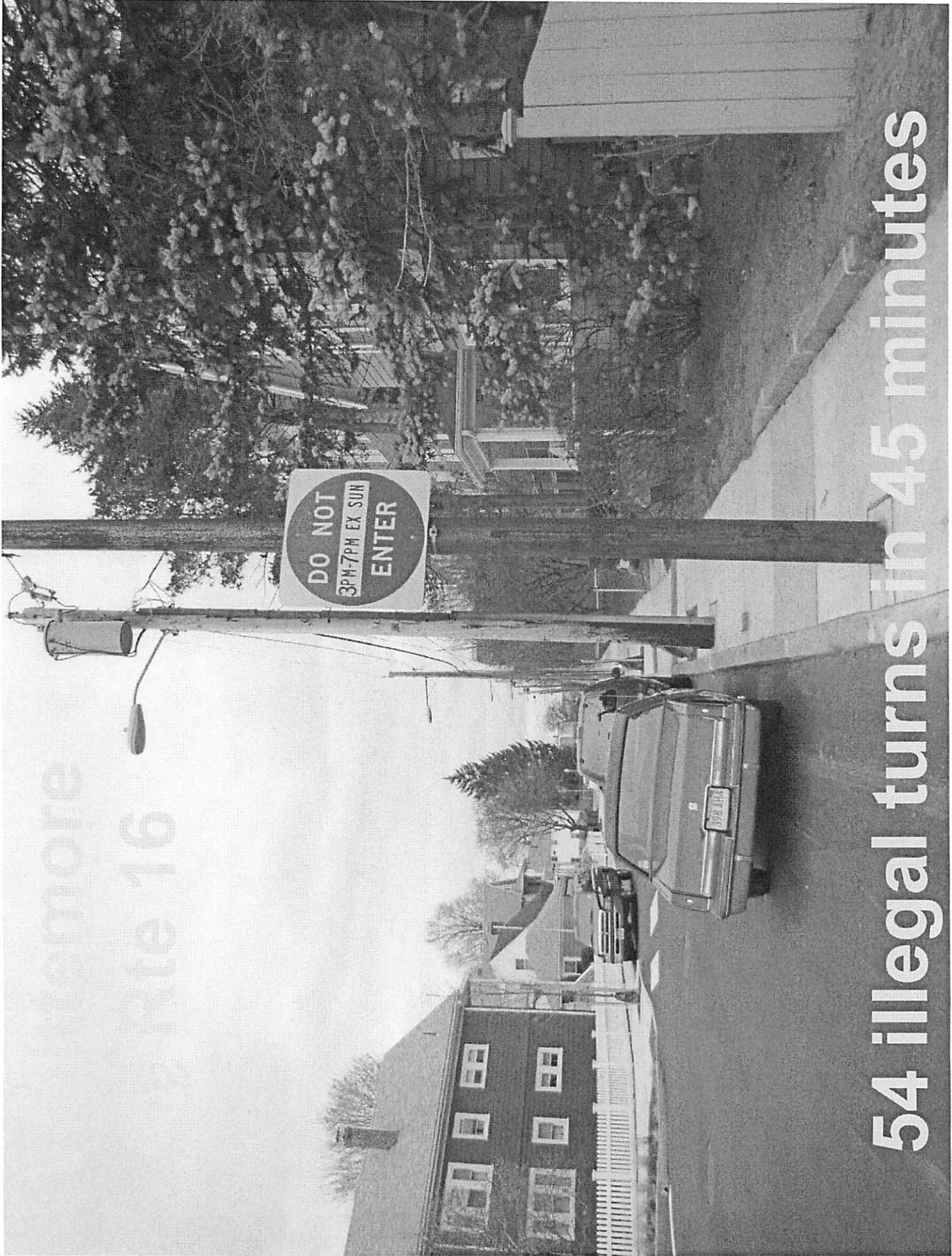
The Whittemore Triangle

99% inbound on Magoun Street 3 – 7 pm



“It doesn't have a lot of cut-through traffic ...”

NOT !



54 illegal turns in 45 minutes



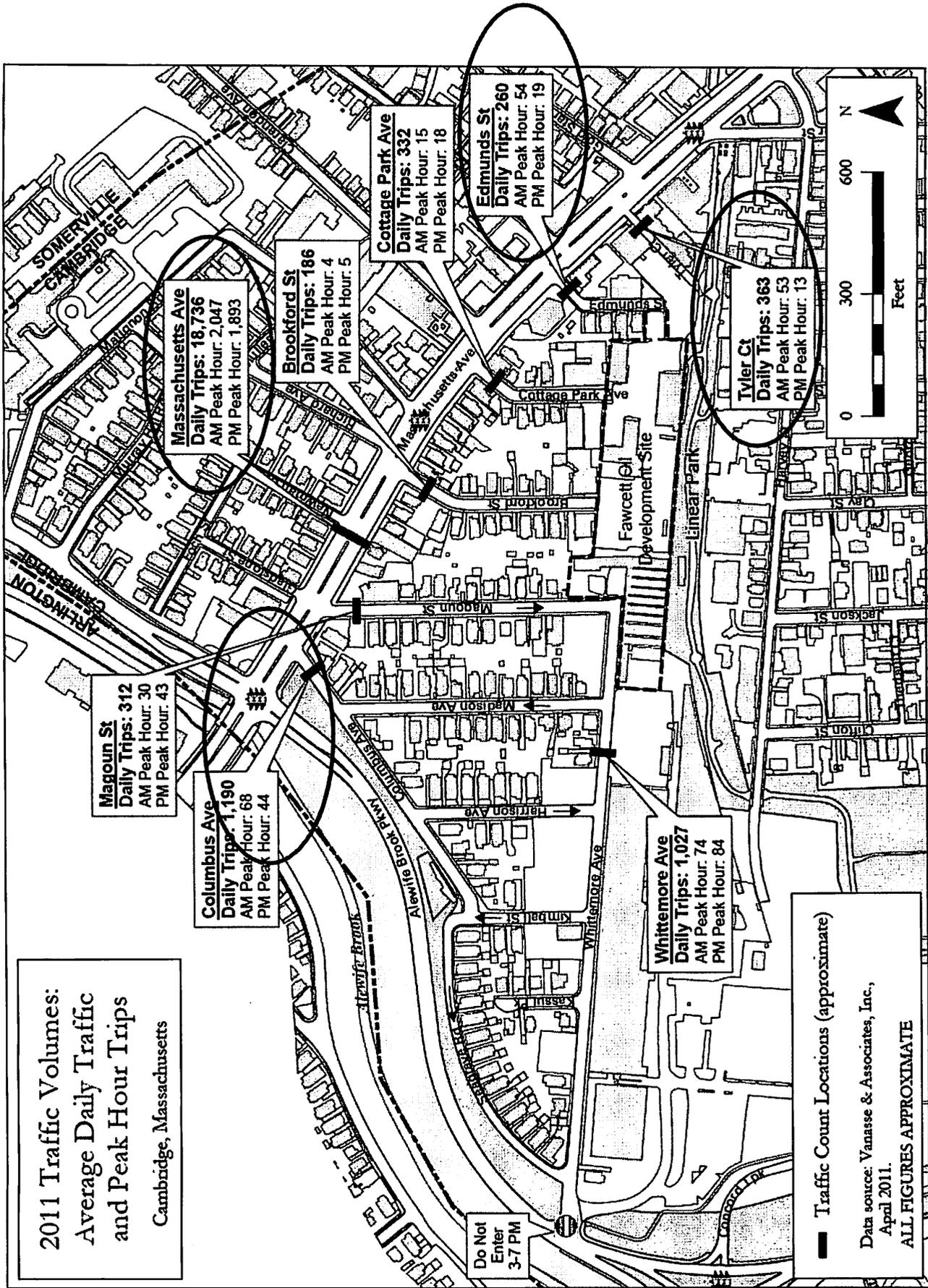
**Whittemore
@ Rte 16**



Magoun @ Mass Ave
99% of evening peak inbound

**2011 Traffic Volumes:
Average Daily Traffic
and Peak Hour Trips**

Cambridge, Massachusetts



— Traffic Count Locations (approximate)

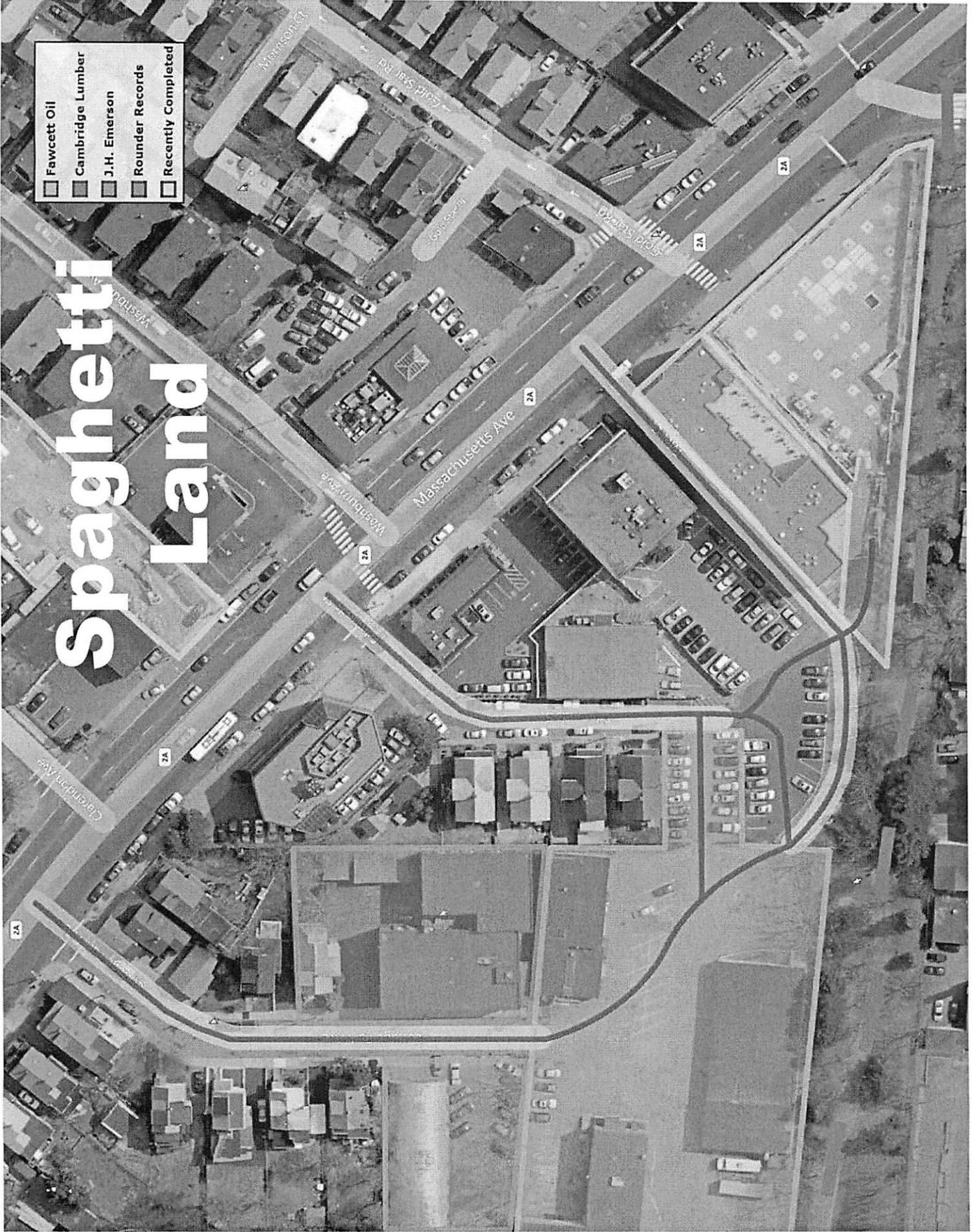
Data source: Vanasse & Associates, Inc.,
April 2011.

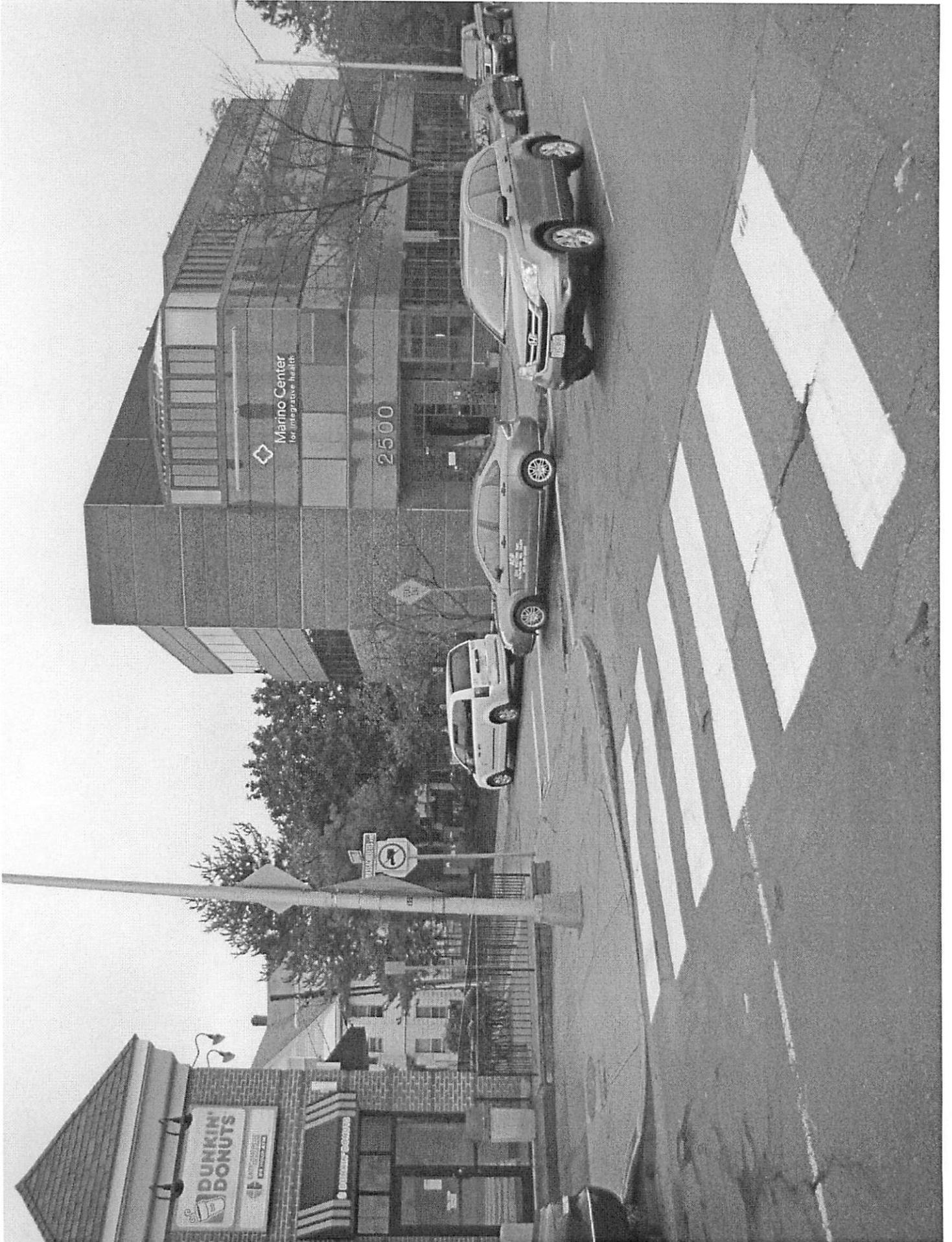
ALL FIGURES APPROXIMATE



Spaghetti Land

- Fawcett Oil
- Cambridge Lumber
- J.H. Emerson
- Rounder Records
- Recently Completed







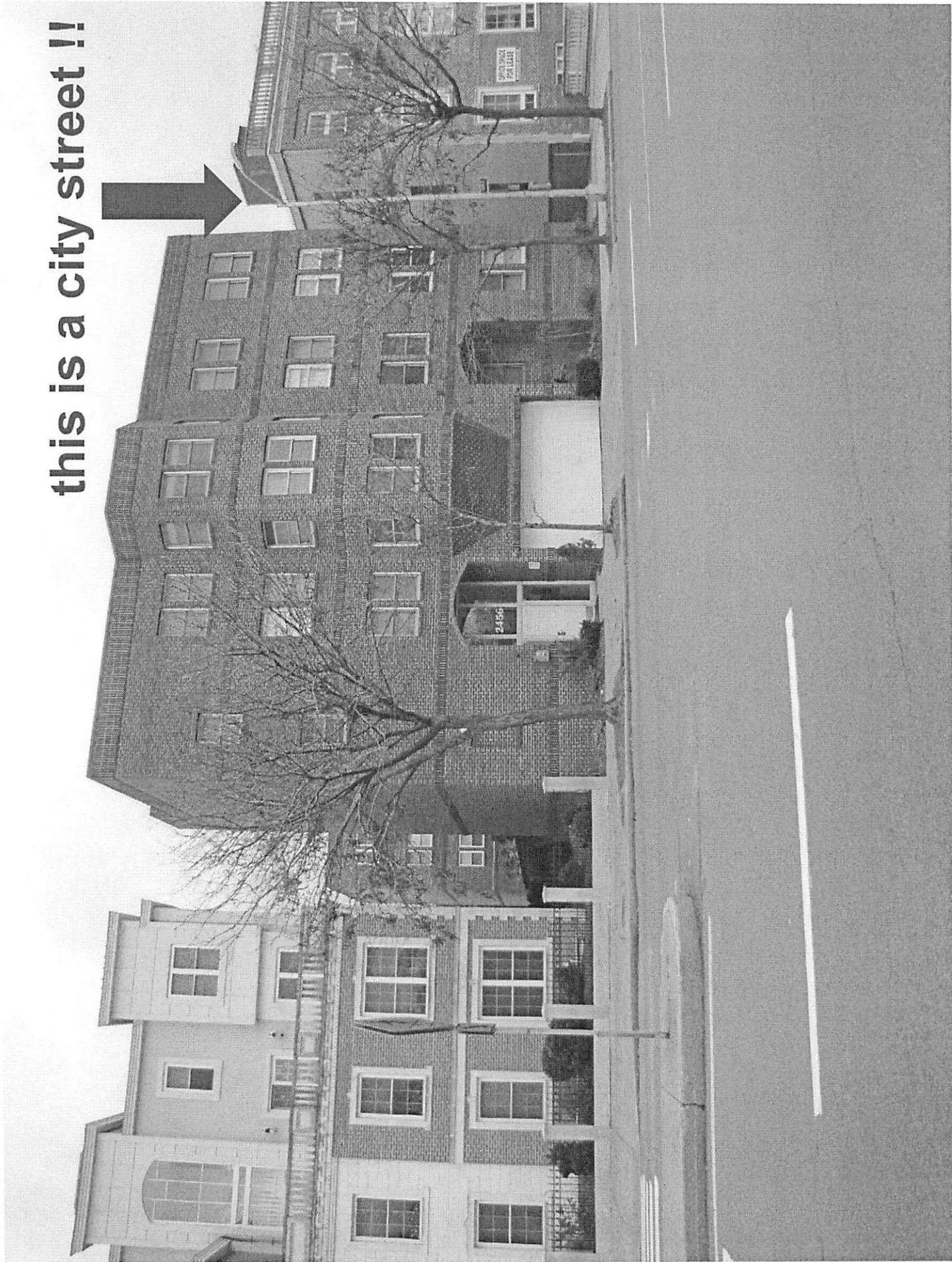


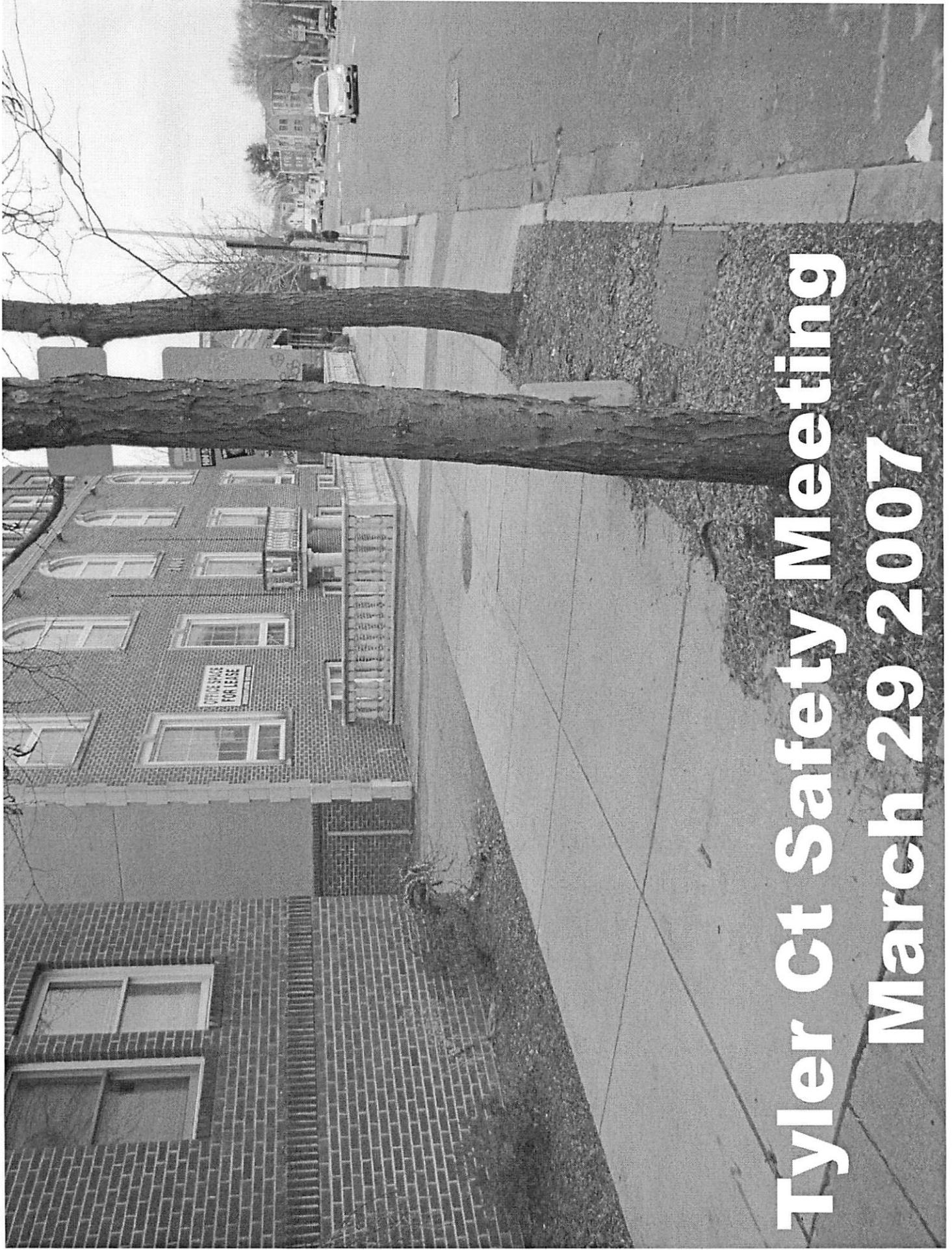
Cottage Park Ave

City Restrictions for Safety



this is a city street !!





Tyler Ct Safety Meeting

March 29 2007



OFFICE SPACE
FOR LEASE
INTERIOR DESIGN CONTACT

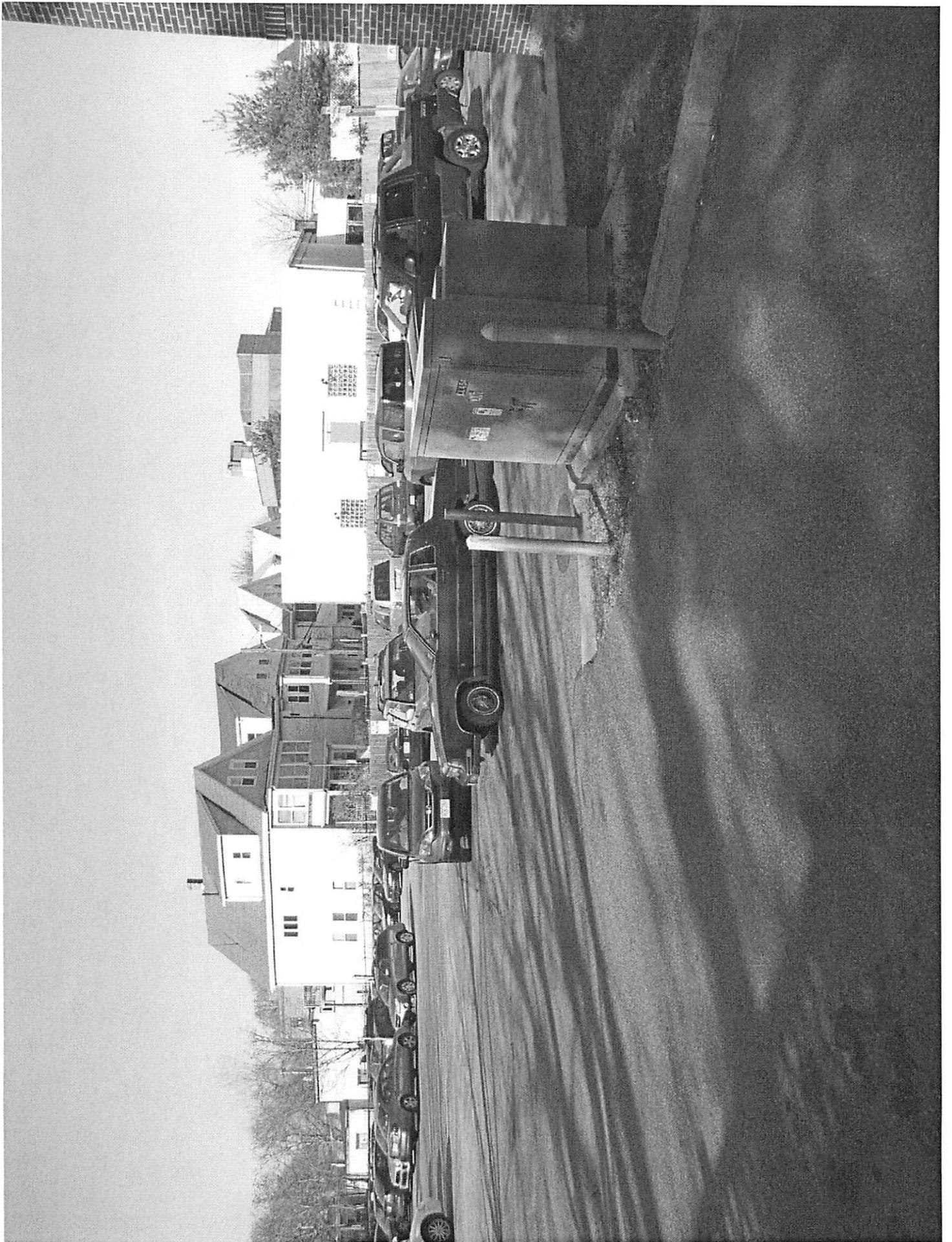
EAST

2A



42
units

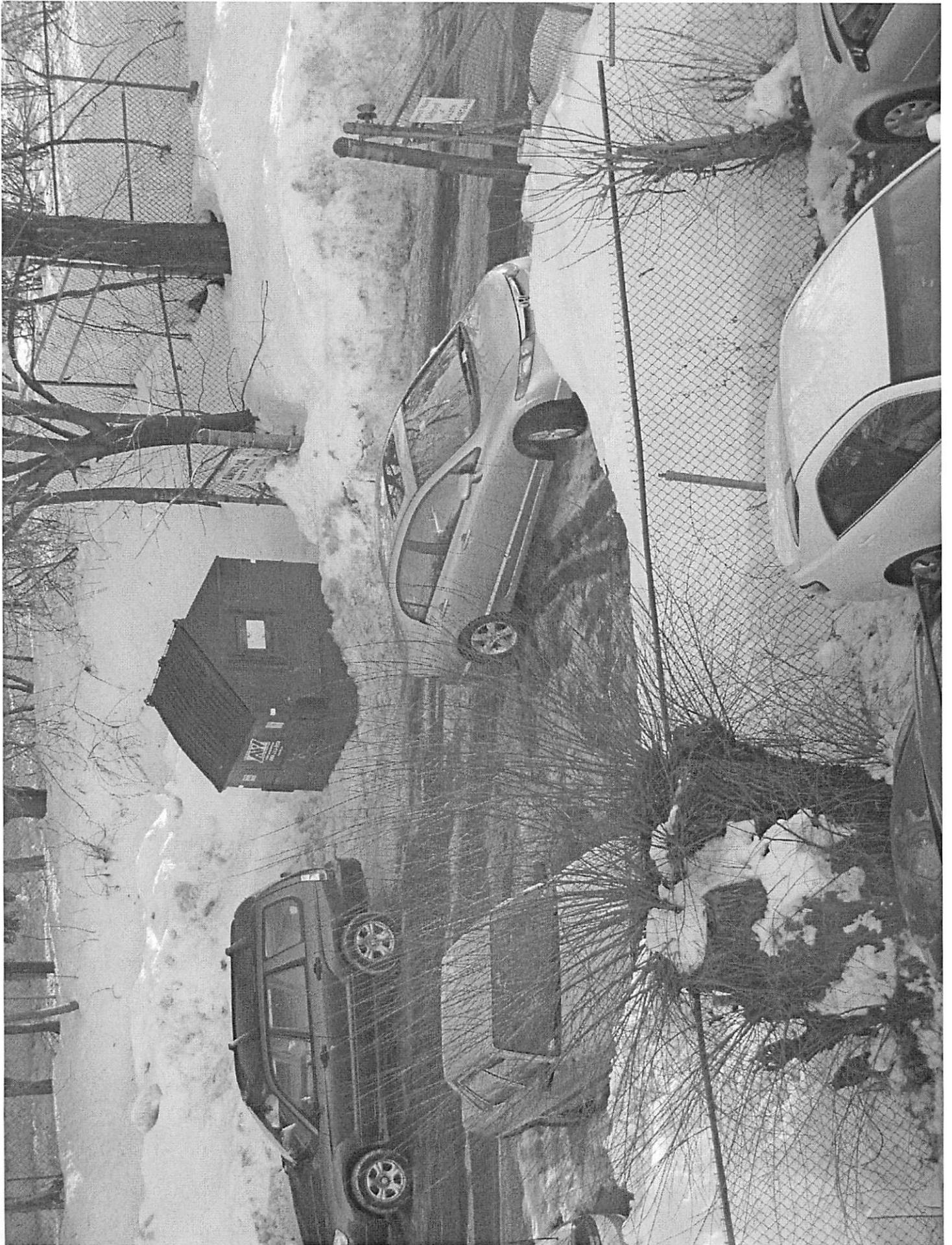




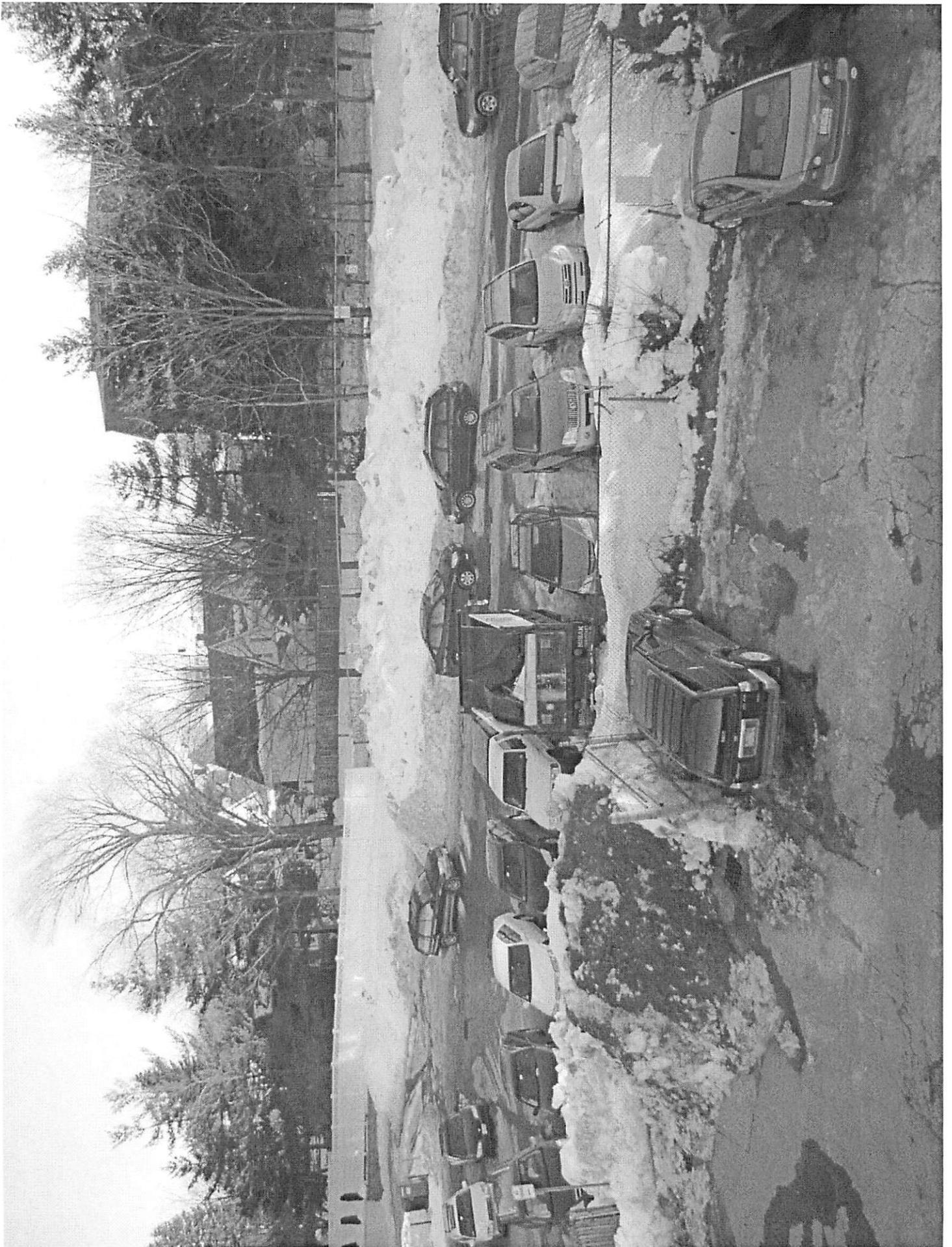


42 units

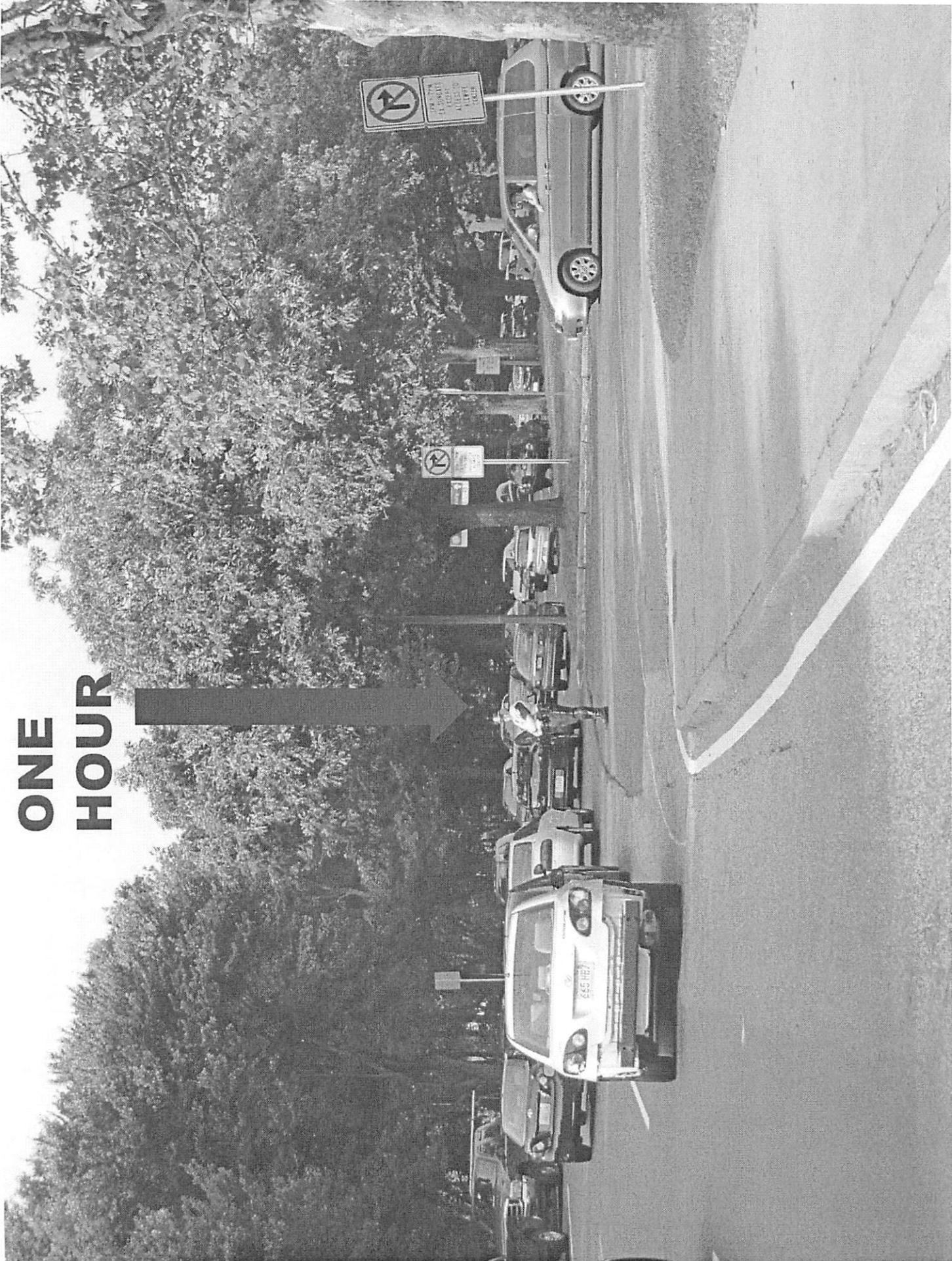
Park access



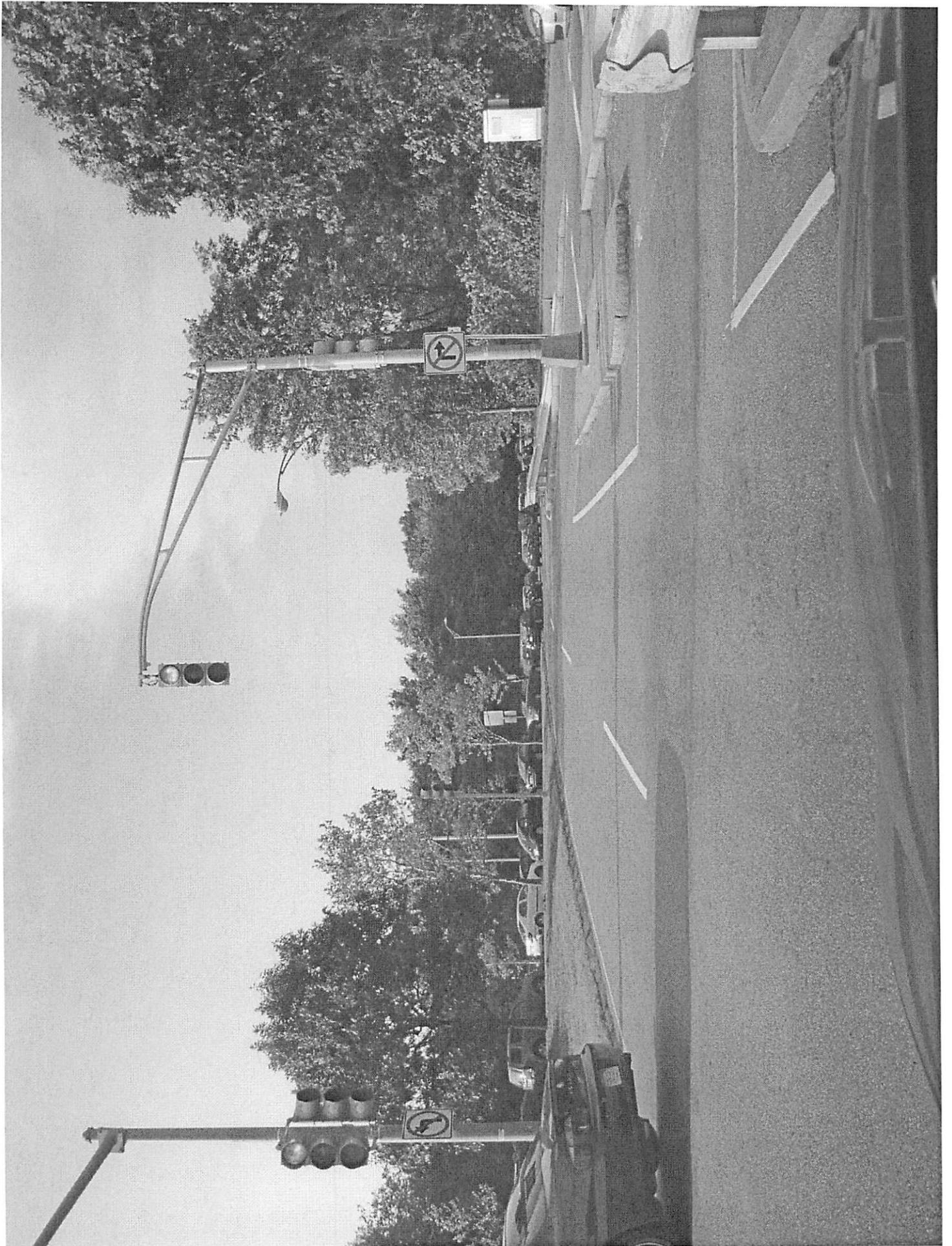


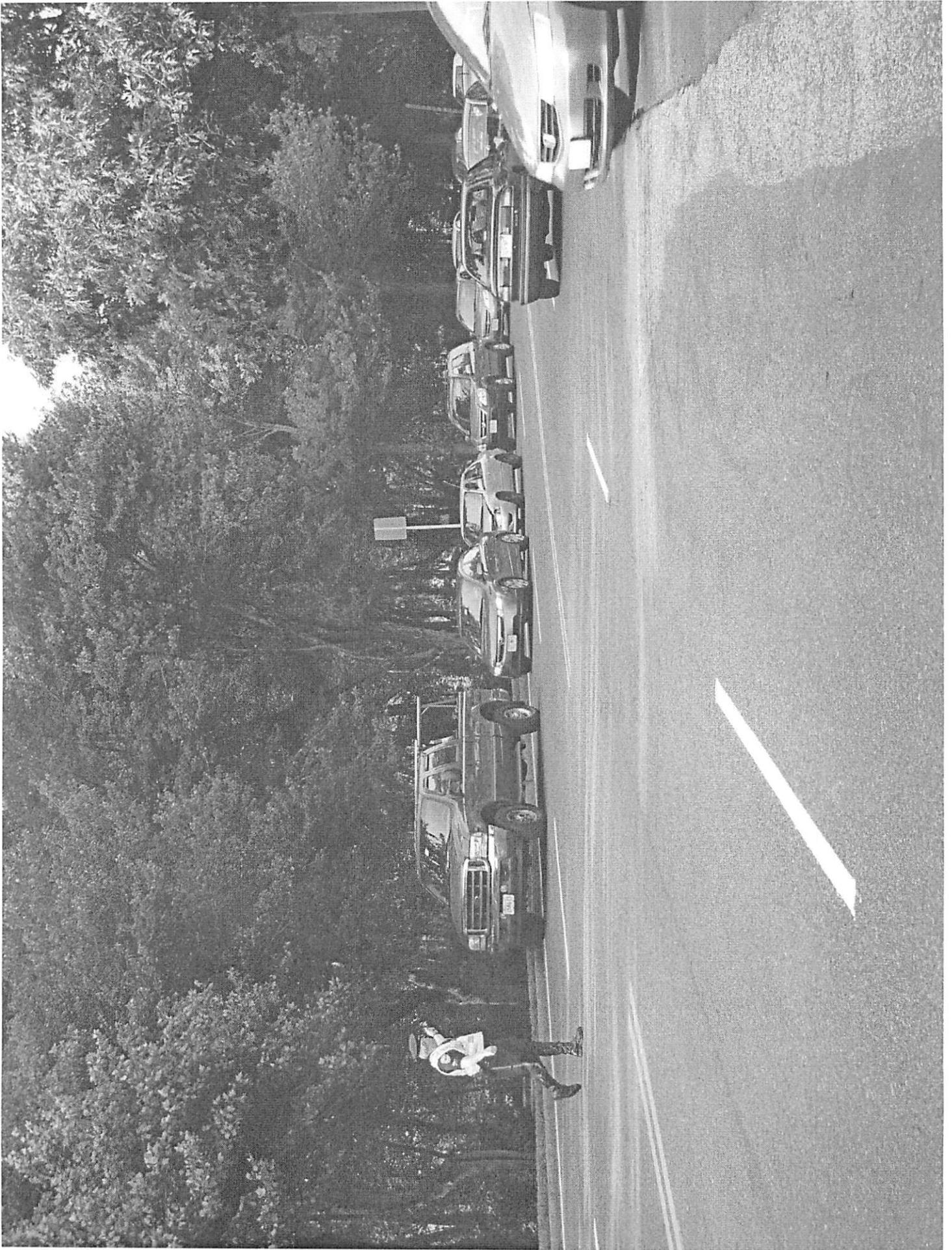


**ONE
HOUR**







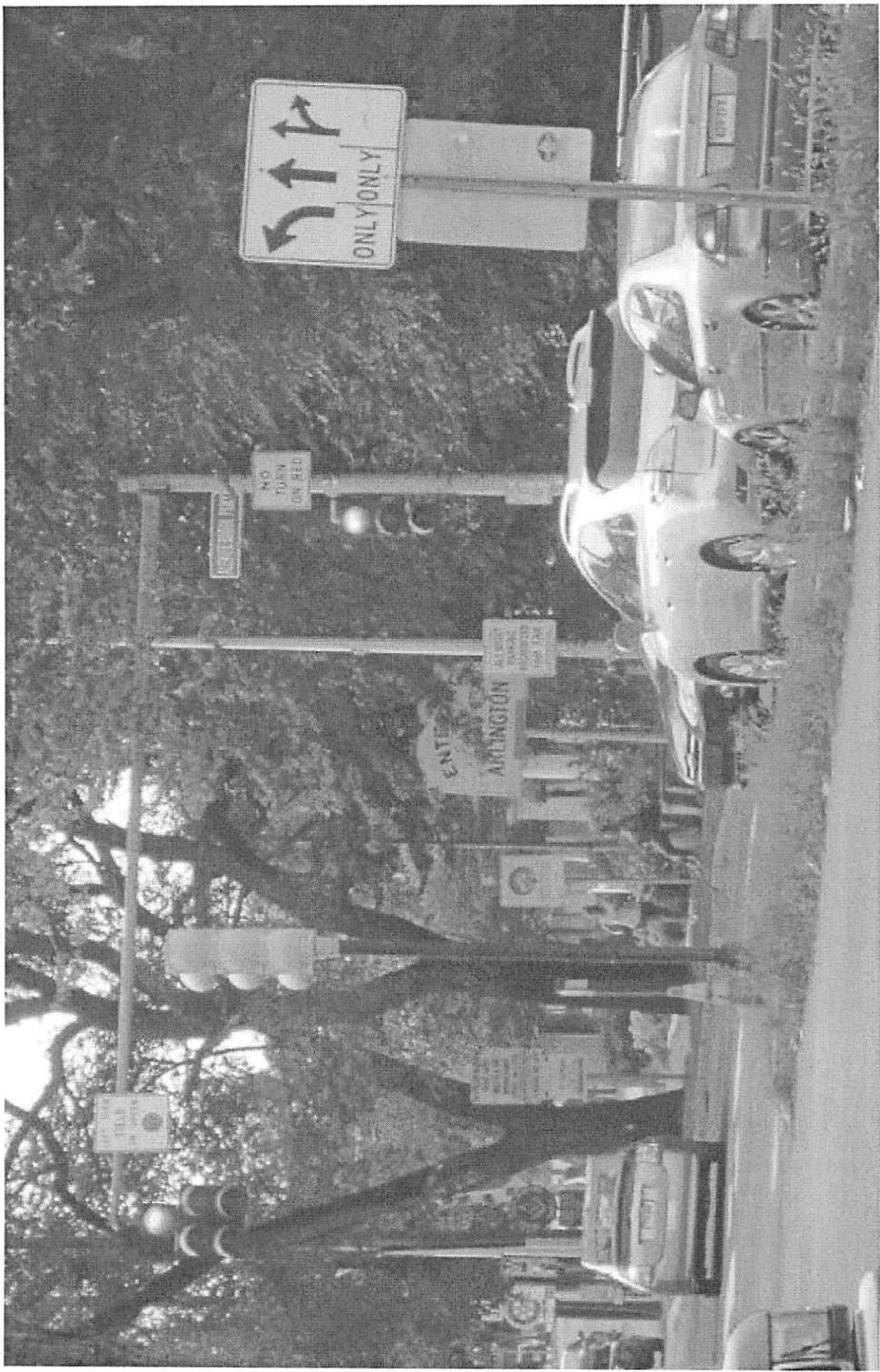




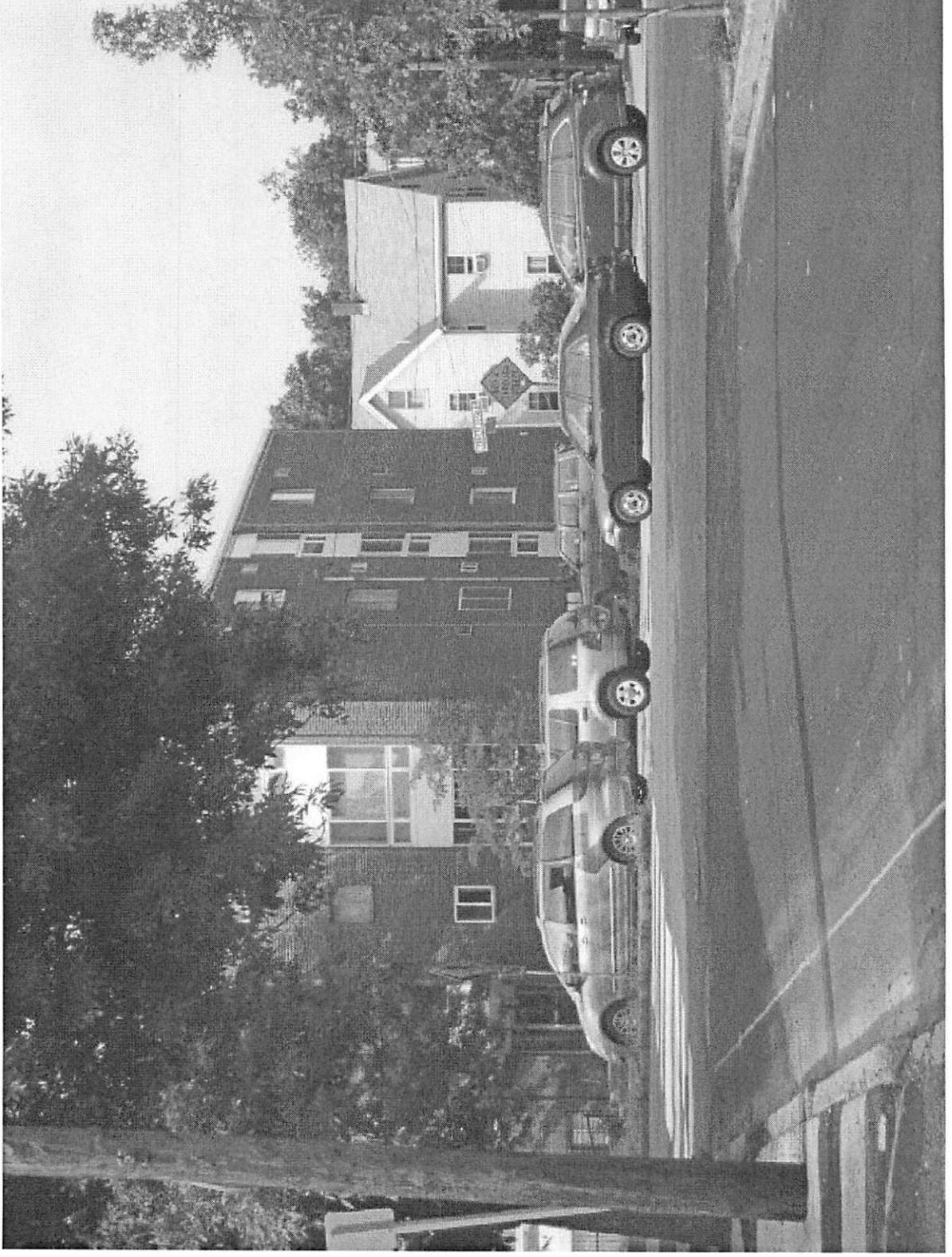
5:32pm car at end of median
nine cars will make Rte 16



5:34pm car second in line for Route 16 turn



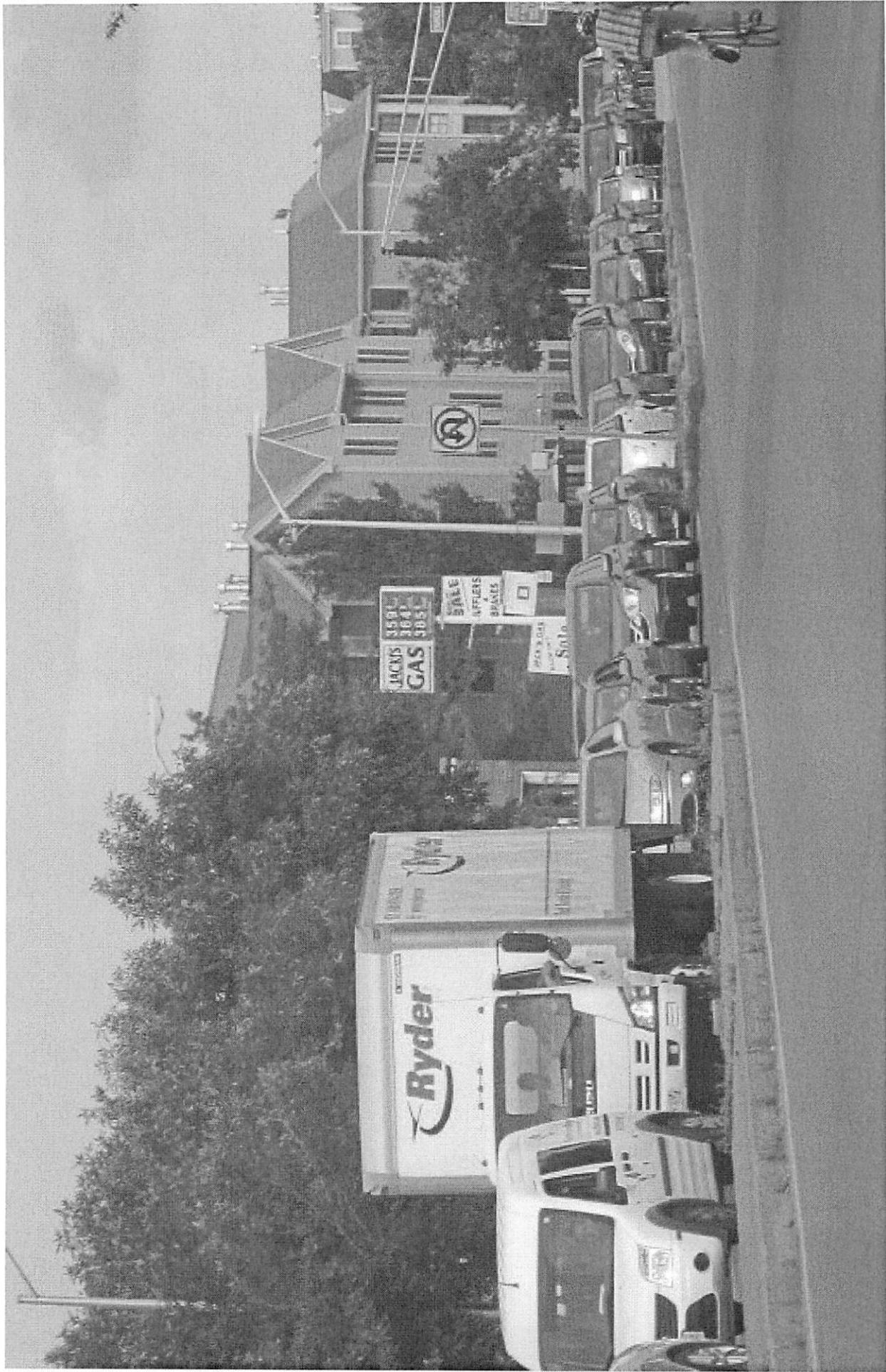
top of Magoun at 4:30PM



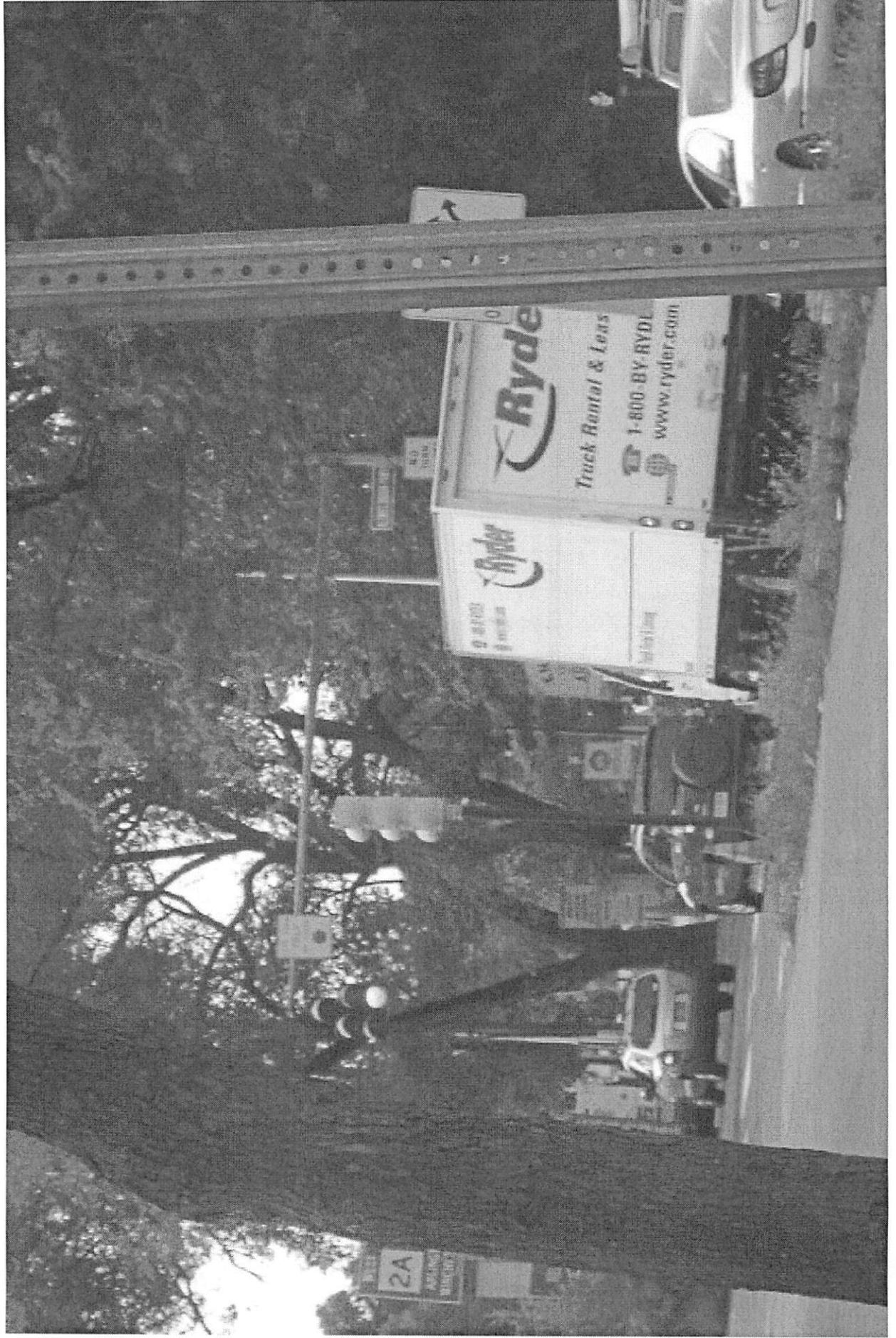
@ 4:56PM



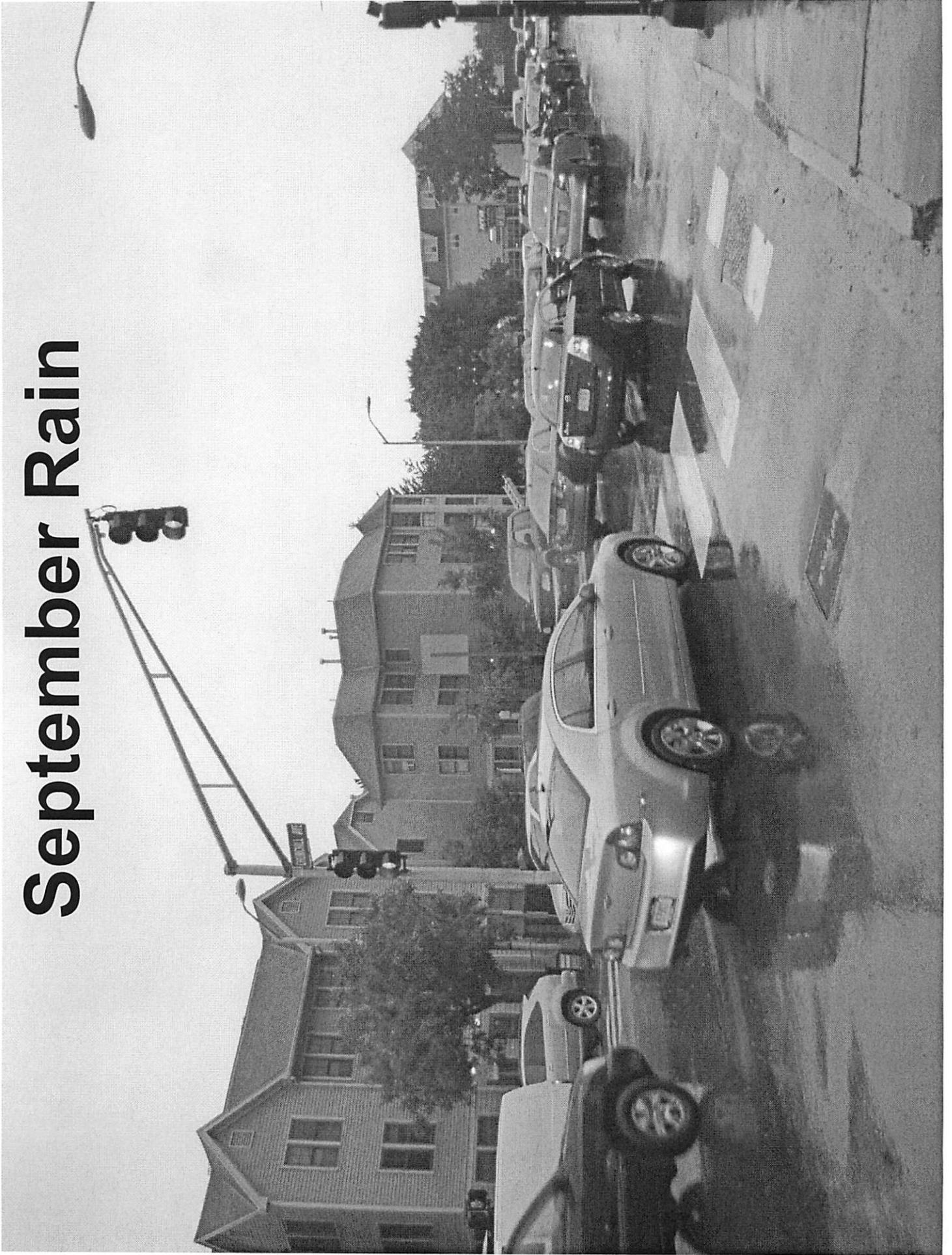
@ 4:57PM



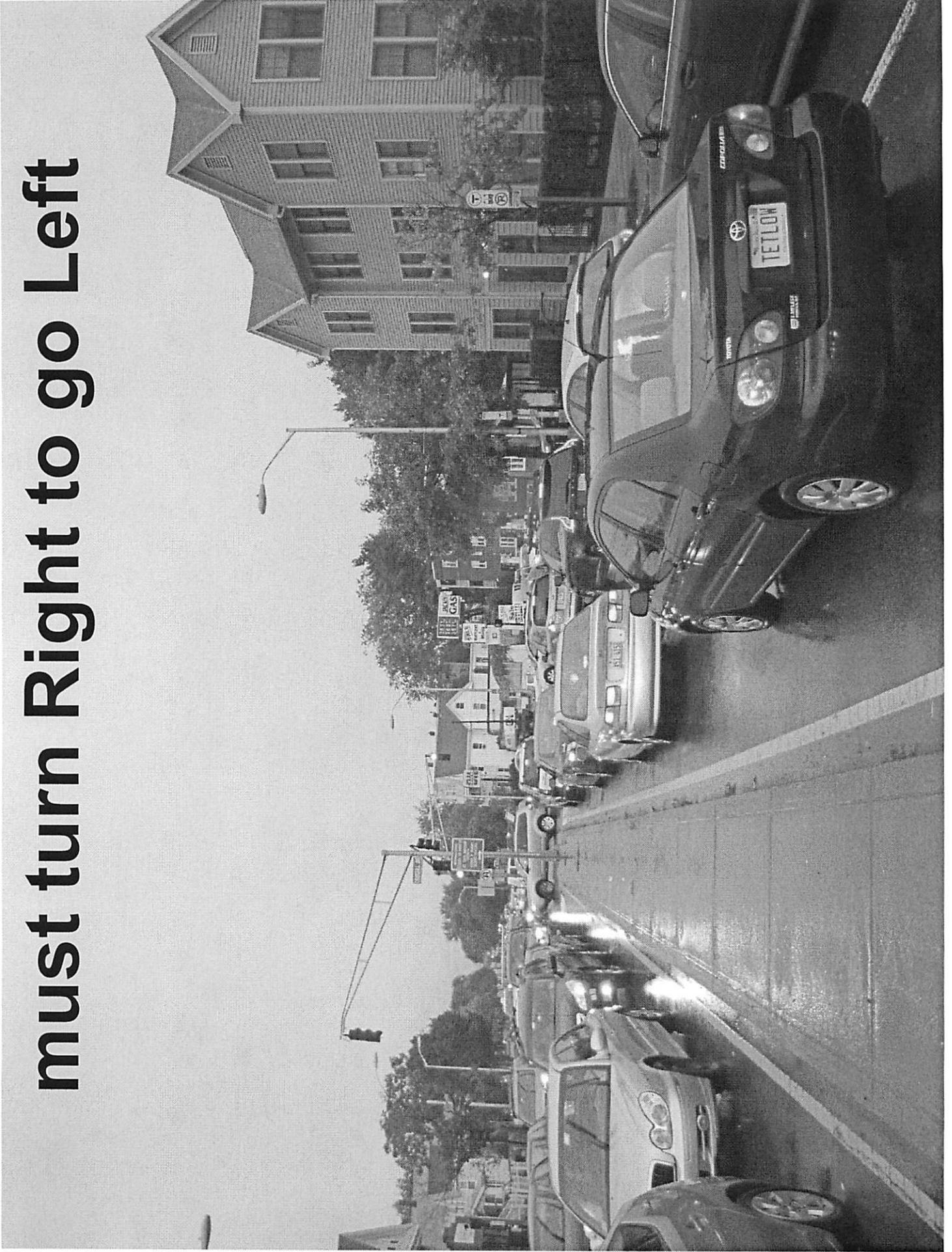
@ 4:59PM



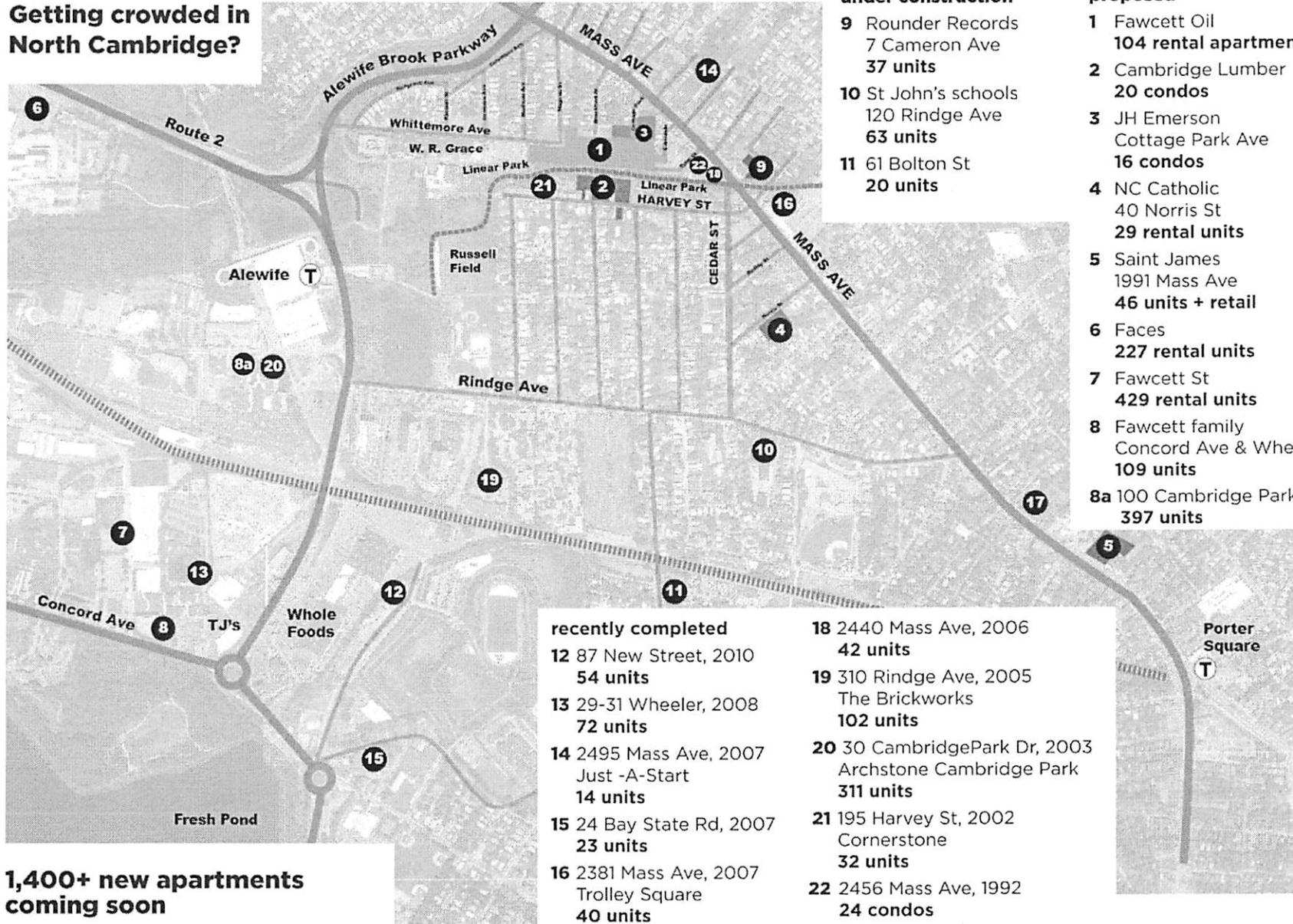
September Rain



must turn Right to go Left



Getting crowded in North Cambridge?



under construction

- 9** Rounder Records
7 Cameron Ave
37 units
- 10** St John's schools
120 Rindge Ave
63 units
- 11** 61 Bolton St
20 units

proposed

- 1** Fawcett Oil
104 rental apartments
- 2** Cambridge Lumber
20 condos
- 3** JH Emerson
Cottage Park Ave
16 condos
- 4** NC Catholic
40 Norris St
29 rental units
- 5** Saint James
1991 Mass Ave
46 units + retail
- 6** Faces
227 rental units
- 7** Fawcett St
429 rental units
- 8** Fawcett family
Concord Ave & Wheeler
109 units
- 8a** 100 Cambridge Park Dr
397 units

recently completed

- 12** 87 New Street, 2010
54 units
- 13** 29-31 Wheeler, 2008
72 units
- 14** 2495 Mass Ave, 2007
Just -A-Start
14 units
- 15** 24 Bay State Rd, 2007
23 units
- 16** 2381 Mass Ave, 2007
Trolley Square
40 units
- 17** One Russell St, 2007
24 units
- 18** 2440 Mass Ave, 2006
42 units
- 19** 310 Rindge Ave, 2005
The Brickworks
102 units
- 20** 30 CambridgePark Dr, 2003
Archstone Cambridge Park
311 units
- 21** 195 Harvey St, 2002
Cornerstone
32 units
- 22** 2456 Mass Ave, 1992
24 condos

1,400+ new apartments coming soon
700+ new apartments already here

Status: SD2 Developments

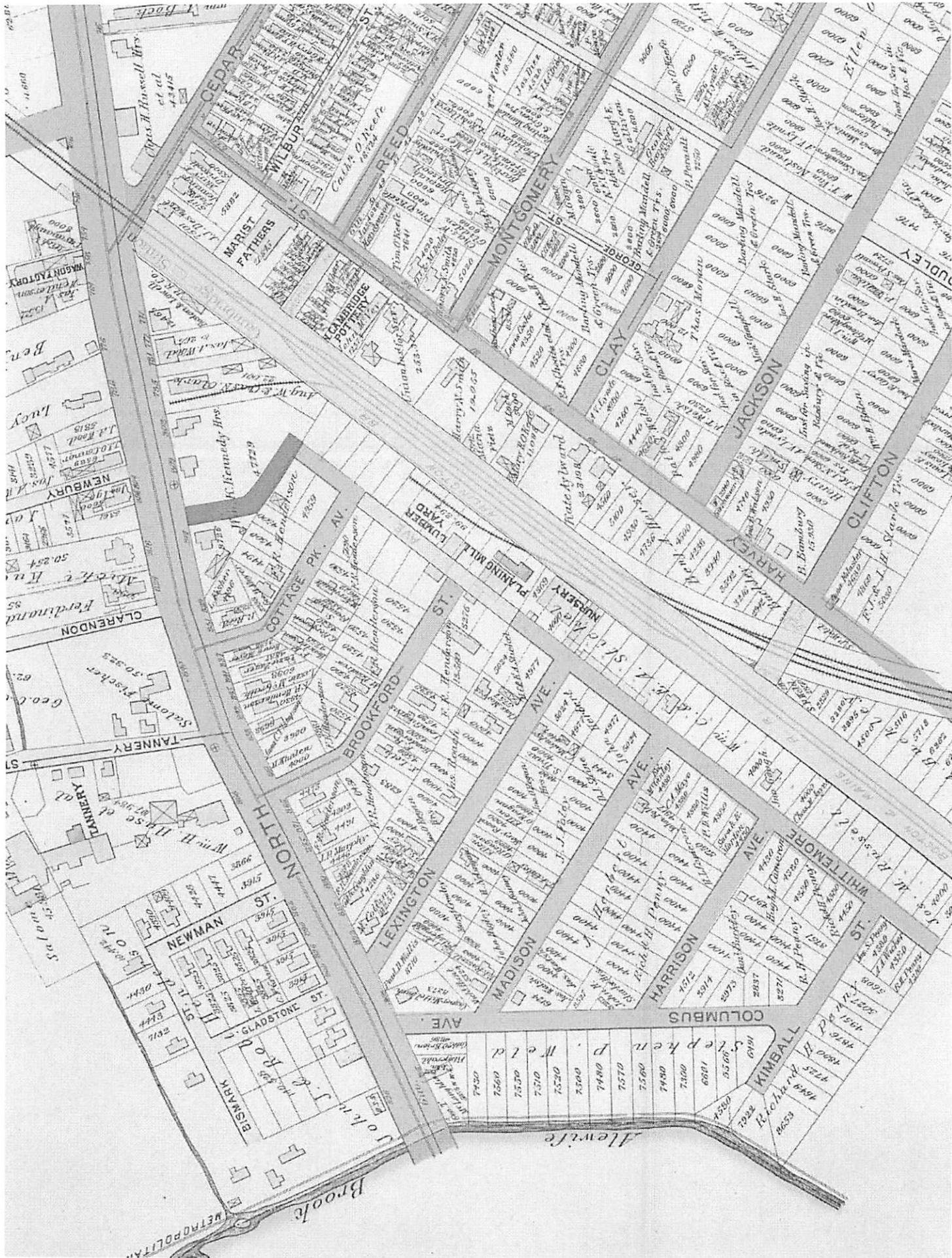
- Emerson Lofts on Cottage Park Ave
 - 50% reduction
 - needed and got Variances
- Cambridge Lumber
 - accepted Bishop Petition
 - Well, maybe
 - 30% reduction
 - needed and got Special Permit

Status: Fawcett-Nordblom

- 104 units in one building Jan
- ... in two buildings July
- Bishop filed, garden sale “on hold” 1-Aug
- **first plans to community** 31-Aug
- 95 = 91 + 4 on garden
- 99 = 85 + 10 + 4
- 89 = 75 + 10 + 4 + various side deals 5-Dec
- 91 = 77 + 10 + 4 17-Jan

Past Public Policy Decisions

- Federal, State, City decisions for Linear Park
 - 1985
 - Could well have been a street
 - easily could have had cross streets
 - City decision in 1970 for Fawcett access
 - Tyler Court, Whittemore, railroad right-of-way
- Streets never improved for access
 - Instead old maps show reduction!
 - Unfortunate building at Tyler & Mass Ave
- **Tragically Flawed Site**
 - ***cannot support current zoning***



Fawcett-Nordblom

275 properties with legal recourse



Abutters of Presumed Standing

Zoning law requires “Uniformity”

- Residence B nominally
 - Two family
 - 0.35 FAR for large lots
 - 0.5 FAR for minimum size lot
 - 35’ high
- Special District 2
 - Multi Family
 - 0.84 FAR after 30% Affordable bonus
 - 40’ high

Fawcett-Nordblom Example

- Residence B
 - 50 units
 - 69,000 SF
 - Bishop Petition = 1998 Planning Board
 - 77 units
 - 96,000 SF
 - Current SD2 Zoning
 - 104 units
 - 124,000 SF
- ← Bishop compromise squarely between Res B and Current

“17.22 Purpose. It is the intent of this Special District 2 to encourage the establishment of residential uses in the district in a form and density compatible with the adjacent residential neighborhood. ... “ (Res-B)

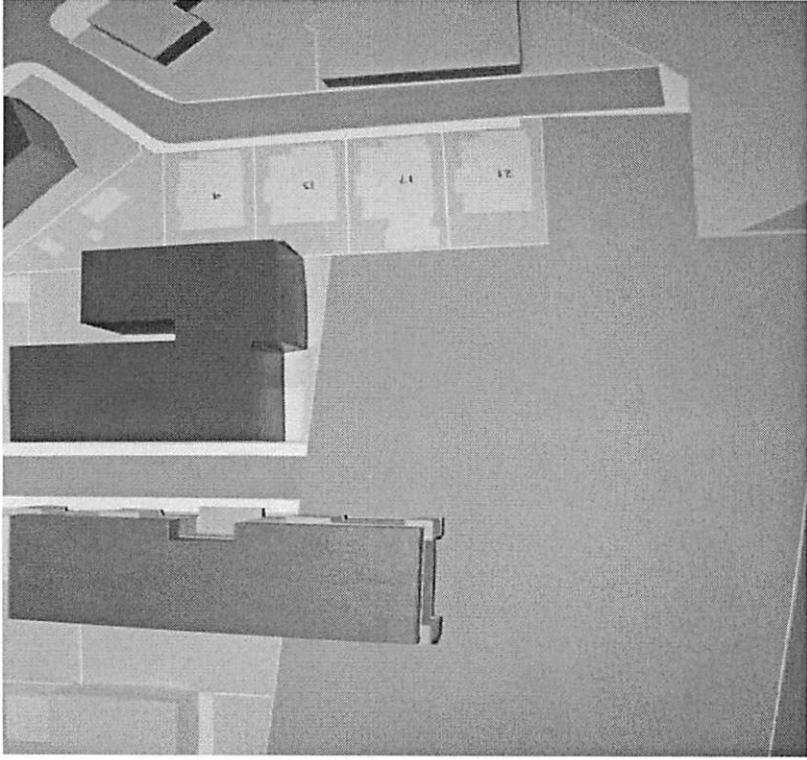
- *Will a Giant Rental Project ever fit in?*
- Reverse Gentrification
- Reverse Mitigation

Reverse Mitigation Possibilities

- Decreased Parking in spaghetti-land
 - Health Clinic loses 30 spaces
 - Edmunds loses 4 – 10 spaces
 - Cottage Park loses 6 – 10 spaces
 - Tyler Court loses 1 space
- Decreased Safety
 - BUT Residence B just extended across Cottage Park to increase safety

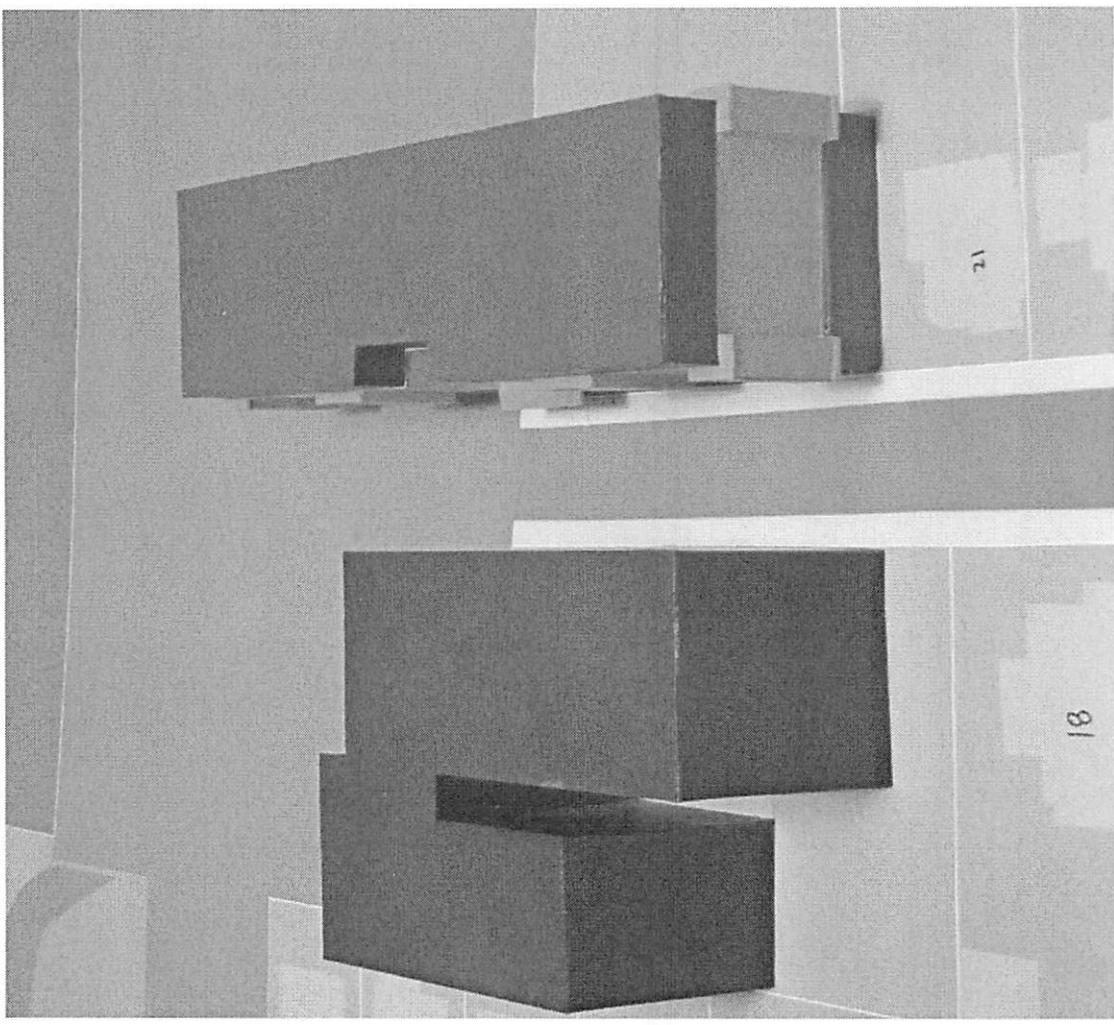
Public Good v. Private Gain

PURPOSE of this Ordinance to lessen congestion in the streets; conserve health; to secure safety from fire, flood, panic and other danger; to provide adequate light and air; to prevent overcrowding of land; to avoid undue concentration of population; to encourage housing for persons of all income levels; to facilitate the adequate provision of transportation, water supply, drainage, sewerage, schools, parks, open space and other public requirements; to conserve the value of land and buildings, including the conservation of natural resources and the prevention of blight and pollution of the environment; to encourage the most rational use of land throughout the city, including the encouragement of appropriate economic development, the protection of residential neighborhoods from incompatible activities



16 units

35 units



Reverse
Gentrification

The Model

- Built by the community
 - Tired of “sketches”
 - this is a GIANT project for this community
 - Look at the entire community
 - Show the dog-legs
 - Show the cars
- *Streetworks* says “always a scale model”

Summary

- Linear Park needs protection **now**
- Linear Park Neighborhood at risk
- Safety – existing problems
- It's time to re-evaluate:
 - 12 years - a lot has changed!!
 - Multiple, simultaneous developments
 - Need comprehensive plan for North Cambridge
 - To cover all developments
 - **NOT** splitting a project into smaller parts
- “Fairness” ... burden not by existing residents

Judith Robertson, Owner
45 Magoun St.

B

My focus is not on numbers, even though the numbers on Magoun/Whittemore have not changed since the beginning of this proposal. Original proposal 52. Today the total (including the five 2 families) remains 52 on our northeast side of the development.

My focus is on the neighborhood: People have lived on these affected streets for a lifetime, have raised their families and love the neighborhood. It is about to change...and drastically change. Change is not bad in general, but change in this case is detrimental to the fabric of the neighborhood. How many people in the neighborhood are elderly...need safety now more than anytime in their lives? I am astounded by how many residents were born and raised in this North Cambridge area and remain living in their same homes all their lives. Magoun Street, a short street overall, houses more than several seniors who have lived there for 80 or 90 years... Also, some these families have the next two generations living with them.

People come home to the North Cambridge area and know where they can park their cars....know when the night is quiet and know the sounds they awake to in the morning. The proposed development, because it is not Res. B, is going to create a 24/7 environment where these neighbors I speak of will no longer have any peace and security ... Renters of large buildings in general will have a different attitude. They will be a majority of renters who have no idea what the triangle or the abutting streets such as Cottage Park Ave etc. is all about. No one will know who belongs in the neighborhood....this is unhealthy, unnecessary and unsafe. There needs to be a more comprehensive evaluation of what is occurring with this particular project.

City of Cambridge has done a wonderful job lining the sidewalks with trees, improving the streets and sidewalks on the Magoun/Whittemore side. Please pay attention to what this particular project will entail. I know you want the people who have supported you to feel safe in their senior years? Keep up the good work and make this current situation result in the best interests of all who need your assistance.

I might also mention that

Another face changer will be Linear Park. It needs protection. This development as it stands is an encroachment on the park. We owe it to ourselves and prosperity to maintain this area, keep it safe from overdevelopment.

Simply put "If the shoe doesn't fit, don't wear it."

PLEASE ADOPT THE BISHOP PETITION AS WRITTEN. THANK YOU

Bishop Petition Hearing Comment

My name is Gary Dmytryk, and I live at 2440 Mass Ave, where I am a trustee of the condo assoc. There are a few people here tonight from my building, but unfortunately, not many. Most cannot be here. Some work in the tech companies out along rte 128, or work late, or have children and need to be home with their kids, and for other reasons, although they are interested, they are unable to be present at this hearing.

Particularly, the parents in my building or the young couples planning to have children, I'd like to say a word for them. North Cambridge has the reputation of being a close-knit community that is a good place for raising a family, and that's why they are living here. These young families moved here from other parts of Cambridge, or Somerville, or someplace else in the area particularly for the purpose of bring up their children here, in our neighborhood. They purchased their condos, their homes, invested their savings, and in so doing invested in our community and its future. We are here in order tell the Council of the importance of maintaining that community and its family friendly reputation, and not just for us but for future generations, to protect our neighborhood from poor, heedless planning and from developers' intentions to construct buildings that are too large for the setting - the interior of our neighborhood - and that would irreversibly alter the character of our small, historic community.

We have an opportunity with the land coming available for development along the Linear Park, on the Cambridge Lumber and Fawcett Oil properties, to grow our neighborhood a little bit, to convert these commercial properties and make on these properties nice places to live. But this needs to be done carefully, with respect for the environment, and not just the natural setting but the human environment, the built environment, the scale of the surrounding streets and homes and services. A large rental property business is simply not compatible with the surrounding community. Furthermore, these properties are right along the Linear Park. We as a city, need to protect the experience of the park for the thousands who use it daily. We know that. At the same time, the park could be a great asset for the developers. Wouldn't it be desirable to live in a home along this park? Your kids could run up the path to play in the Russell Field. If this is done well, this new housing would be very attractive for new residents, produce value for the developers, and contribute to a good experience for people strolling through the park, while respecting the character and nature of the surrounding neighborhood.

Politicians in this city should be aware that our neighborhoods are among our most precious possessions. And Cambridge is a city of neighborhoods, each with its own personality. This variety contributes greatly to our city's charm. Everybody here has an idea of what North Cambridge is like. We have our personality and our reputation, but maybe you don't know what it is like to live here. It's the kind of place that is knit together by families who have been here for generations. Where newcomers are welcomed and encouraged to stay, to plant roots, and to make a commitment to the community. Where neighbors watch out for the kids and look after our senior citizens.

Where people are loyal to one another and care for one another. This may be the most neighborly of neighborhoods in the entire city. And for us it is home. Never again will another neighborhood like ours be built. And this is an important point. Neighborhoods like North Cambridge will never again be constructed in this city or anywhere else around here. We all know that. Our neighborhoods are like an endangered species that we want to pass along for the enjoyment and wellbeing of the next generation, and the generation after that. It is our responsibility. We have a Preservation Commission for buildings, and perhaps we should consider something analogous for our communities, an approach to planning for the future of our communities, toward recognizing the value of a closely knit, small scale community, the kind of place where people really want to stay and raise their families and live their lives. North Cambridge has been this kind of place for generations. Let it continue to be this way for many more.

Drury, Margaret

From: Carolyn Russ [clynruss@earthlink.net]
Sent: Saturday, February 04, 2012 2:19 PM
To: City Council; Drury, Margaret
Cc: 'Kellogg, Jarvis P.'; 'Joshua Walker'; 'Ted McKie'; Chris Kellogg
Subject: Bishop Petition

Dear Councilors Cheung, Davis, Decker, Kelley, Maher, Reeves, Simmons, Toomey and VanBeuzekom,

I am writing this to oppose the Bishop Petition, which would change zoning in North Cambridge on both sides of Linear Park.

The Bishop Petition seeks to change zoning that was established only about 10 years ago. The SD2 zoning is appropriate for this neighborhood. We are close to the Alewife T and many local amenities, Davis Square, and major employers such as Forrester Research, Pfizer, etc.. This is prime, urban, walking area, a short distance to the Alewife T stop in Russell Field, perfect for many who would like to reduce their use of cars.

SD-2 rightfully encourages housing in previously industrial parcels. The allowed density is appropriate and only requires the use of good architecture and planning to make it work. Most of the neighborhood on both sides of the Linear Park is zoned Residence B, and therefore we are not in danger of being overwhelmed by multifamily proposals. We should encourage the construction of housing, which is in such high demand in Cambridge that both rents and purchase prices are unaffordable for many. The harder we make it to build, the more we restrict Cambridge to those who can afford these rents and purchase prices.

What the Bishop Petition proposes is not an appropriate use of zoning. Zoning can't just be repeatedly changed, otherwise it is no longer zoning. I believe that if neighbors have specific concerns about proposals, they can be dealt with via other means.

Thank you for your consideration. Please remember that the North Cambridge Stabilization Committee does not represent this neighborhood.

Sincerely,

Carolyn Russ
186 Harvey St.
Cambridge, MA 02140

Drury, Margaret

From: yuan chan zhao [emily_zyc@msn.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 04, 2012 3:26 PM
To: City Council; Drury, Margaret
Subject: [SPAM] ADOPT Bishop Petition as written

Importance: Low

2440 Mass Ave #16

Emily Zhao

Drury, Margaret

From: Brian Murrhly [brian.murrhly@hotmail.com]
Sent: Saturday, February 04, 2012 5:02 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition as written

Dear City Councillors,

I am a resident in North Cambridge. I urge you to adopt the Bishop Petition as written at the upcoming hearing on February 8th. I cannot attend the meeting as I have to attend a class; I therefore want my voice to be heard via email.

To date, I feel poorly consulted about this development. Having learnt about the current proposals for the development at Fawcett Oil and Cambridge Lumber it seems obvious that they are significantly oversized. The current proposal greatly concerns me, it will have many harmful impacts to the way of life here in North Cambridge.

The proposed development would detrimentally impact the amenity of the North Cambridge community, for a number of reasons. First, the proposed density of the development is ludicrous; the road network in this area cannot absorb such a proposed increase in residents. Secondly, the Linear Park area is a very tranquil and beautiful area. I would prefer to see a more thoughtfully planned proposal, with a greater amount of green and open space, commensurate with the sub-urban traditional buildings of this area.

Overdevelopment is irrevocable and so I strongly urge you to adopt the Bishop Petition as written to protect this community. The development needs to be more thoughtfully planned so that it is more fitting, and preserves the reasons why people love to live here in this clean and peaceful environment.

Regards,

Brian Murrhly

MIT Sloan School of Management
MBA Candidate 2012
Mobile : +1-857-246-0940

Drury, Margaret

From: Brigitte Tersek [brigitte_tersek@hotmail.com]
Sent: Sunday, February 05, 2012 12:37 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition as written

Dear Councilors:

I have been a resident in 2440 Massachusetts Ave since 2007.

With this email I support the Bishop Petition as written.

Based on my daily life in the community and information provided by the NCSC I am concerned about the impact of large-size projects such as the Fawcett Oil proposal.

The Bishop Petition is a step towards thoughtful planning that would ensure that North Cambridge will remain an attractive community not only to current residents but also future residents of new developments.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,
Brigitte Tersek

Drury, Margaret

From: Pbsopan@aol.com
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 6:38 AM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition as Written, Please

Dear City Council Members:

Re: Final City Council Hearing on Bishop Rezoning Plan, 02/08/12

As a long-time resident of Harvey Street I am very concerned about the negative impact of having two huge proposed housing developments in this very pleasant, relatively safe, ethnically diverse, and livable neighborhood. I am lucky to be able to enjoy the sunlight which is not blocked by tall housing units, I love the bike path and parks. I do not begrudge sharing with others but the proposed large numbers of new residents will seriously test the natural and other resources in this area. Any amount of crime is unacceptable but I would expect the crime rate to rise in proportion to the greatly increased population in this small area. I fail to see the need for a great increase in rental units in this area. Numerous single-family homes and multifamily homes remain empty and unsold. The current economy does not provide enough employment for people to want to rent in this area. Our small streets will not accommodate a great increase in traffic readily. We own one vehicle and rely greatly on public transportation, where costs will soon go up and services are continually being cut back, but I believe most local residents appear to own multiple vehicles and parking, traffic and road safety will become problematic as the resident population increases. During a typical winter traffic and parking are a virtual nightmare (we are lucky to have spared that so far this winter).

I am not opposed to responsible development which fits in with the scale of existing homes. If the Bishop Petition is supported as written, I believe it is a step in the right direction. Please exert some needed control over development in this area with an eye toward the best possible future for all of us, old and new residents, and pass the Bishop Petition as written.

Thank you for your consideration.

Pat Brelvi

Drury, Margaret

From: julia.bishop@comcast.net
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 6:50 AM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: The Bishop Petition

Councilor Cheung,

As you know, our neighborhood has been active in hopes of passing the Bishop Petition, which would restore the SD-2 zoning to its original density as suggested by the planning board in 1998. Having visited our neighborhood last year, I am sure you can appreciate our concerns regarding the numerous proposals the Fawcett Company has offered, all with a unit count 10 to 20 units higher than the Bishop Petition.

According to a survey of the neighborhood, 68% of neighbors actually believe the Bishop Petition (77 units) is too dense and wish to see the Fawcett development consistent with Res-B zoning; which the neighborhood believes is more compatible with the form and density of the existing Res-B surrounding area.

SD-2 -- 104 units
-- 54 units

Bishop Petition -- 77 units

Res-B

We believe the Bishop Petition is a reasonable negotiation down from 104 units. The neighbors have been asked to negotiate with Fawcett Oil, and we have done this but without success in the area of density. The message we keep hearing is that for the Fawcett project be attractive, fit in with our neighborhood, create thoughtful traffic patterns, produce an architectural form that will be at all compatible with the existing residential neighborhood, our best bet is to accept the Fawcett's current 87+(4 units possibly on the garden site). This number is up from the Fawcett's proposal in December of 85 units.

The question that keeps haunting me is, "Why is the accomplishment of the above left up to a neighborhood of concerned property owners?" Is it not in the city's best interest to have a well-planned, carefully considered development on this unusual parcel in the vulnerable part of the city? The people in the neighborhood have been consistent in our efforts to bring the *already existing* traffic, parking, and safety issues to the attention of the City Council, Ordinance Committee, Community Development Department, and the Planning Board. We are trying to protect a unique area of Cambridge and we need your full support.

In closing, I would ask you to consider that the Fawcett development is not the only major change up here in North Cambridge. Again, this area of the city needs support. Massachusetts Avenue and Routes 2 and 16 are major roadways in and out of Cambridge and they border our neighborhood. It is my hope that you will take a comprehensive look at the Fawcett proposal and the neighborhood's needs and support the Bishop Petition (77 units), **with a demand from the city that the developer includes all the "extras" that we have been promised with 87+ units.** The proposed Cambridge Lumber Yard project has achieved this using 30% lower density than the current SD-2. We should expect the Fawcett family to do the same.

Thank you.
Julia Bishop

Drury, Margaret

From: Theresa [theresa.r.mattson@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 10:20 AM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret; Bruce Hoppe; Brigitte Tersek; Jack Foley
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition as written

Please attend the Feb 8 hearing and adopt the Bishop Petition as written.

For future consideration, I believe that there should be zoning which requires all future developers to provide a given number of parking spaces per bedroom. I have lived in communities which understand that each unit has an expected demand for visitor and resident parking. Each development must provide for that. The growing inconvenience in finding parking will not reduce the number of cars people will have, it will reduce the market here in residential real estate and in retail sales. People don't tend to give up their conveniences, they tend to find a way to keep them.

Additionally, too often the bus transit is backed-up. I walked a mile along Mass Avenue without a single 77 bus passing me by. This after waiting at a stop for 15 minutes. The city cannot have it both ways
-- reduced parking and reduced or poor mass transit.

Please keep our city an attractive investment. Provide adequate zoning and zoning enforcement and provide decent transit.

Thank you for your kind attention to my concerns,

Theresa R. Mattson
2440 Mass Ave, Unit 8
Cambridge, MA 02140

Drury, Margaret

From: Penny Antonoglou [penant@gmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 3:30 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition As Written

Dear Councilors,

as a homeowner and resident of North Cambridge I request that you adopt the Bishop Petition as written. I am in favor of development in my neighborhood, but only of development that is within scale of the existing surrounding neighborhood character.

Current zoning introduces an "island" of high density residential use within a low-density residential neighborhood. This high-density "island" will introduce a large number of users of narrow access roads (that were not built to serve large traffic volumes), as well as a large number of users of existing utilities infrastructure (that was designed/built for a smaller number of users).

The Fawcett development, as currently proposed, is simply too large for our neighborhood: it proposes big buildings and a big parking lot. Please help change that, and support the petition that would allow appropriate-scale development in our neighborhood.

Regards,

Penny Antonoglou
2440 Mass. Ave. U40
Cambridge, MA 02140

Drury, Margaret

From: maryann helmuth [helmuthmaryann@yahoo.com]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 8:21 PM
To: council@cambridgema.gov
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: bishop petition

I am requesting that you ADOPT the bishop petition as written.

thank you in advance

HELMUTH MARK EDWARD HELMUTH

MARY ANN HELMUTH HAROLD F

BRITTANY ANN MCCARTHY

MICHAEL MCCARTHY CAROL MCCARTHY

IRENE SAWYER .

CAMBRIDGE MA 02140.

RESIDENTS 57 MAGOUN STREET

Drury, Margaret

From: Jeeyuen Yu [jeeyuen@hotmail.com]
Sent: Monday, February 06, 2012 9:43 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: Support Bishop Petition

Dear Councilors,

I am writing to support the Bishop Petition.

Best regards,

Jeeyuen Yu

2440 Massachusetts Ave., Unit 33
Cambridge, MA 02140

Drury, Margaret

From: Zemene Afework [zemeneafework@yahoo.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 10:33 AM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition as written

Zemene Y Afework

2440 Massachusetts ave, unit #32

Cambridge MA 02140

Dear/Sir/Madam

Please accept my support to Bishop petition as written

Sincerely,

Drury, Margaret

From: aileen callahan [acallahan30@gmail.com]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 11:33 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition as written

Dear City Councilors,

I live at 69 Harvey Street, North Cambridge , and cannot attend the City Council Hearing on Bishop Zoning Change tomorrow. I wish to fully support the Bishop Petition **as written**.

To allow developers to make large oversize projects is very negative to any neighborhood. What anyone wants , no matter where, is a project which reflects the scale, the "sense" of the streets in a neighborhood. This is what makes neighborhoods wonderful places to live in. Things look and feel right!! Cambridge is a marvelous city. Good decisions have been made. This can be another one!

Unfortunately, some developers are oblivious to the idea of "enhancing" an area. We, at 69 Harvey Street, had the good fortune of a beautiful development across from us---only four new lovely town houses!

Please support keeping the neighborhood of North Cambridge Linear Park attractive, in scale, normal in development numbers (not oversize), and well-designed for the density and form of existing homes.

Please support the Bishop Petition *as written*.

Thank you so much.

Aileen Callahan

Drury, Margaret

From: Amy Helfman [helfman@MIT.EDU]
Sent: Tuesday, February 07, 2012 6:51 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition as written

Please attend the February 8th hearing and vote in favor of the Bishop Petition as written. I do not want to see my neighborhood destroyed by oversized developments.

Drury, Margaret

From: North Cambridge [noca04@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 6:34 AM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: Please attend Feb 8 hearing

Hello,

I am writing to request that you attend the Feb 8 meeting and also adopt the Bishop petition a written.

I live in North Cambridge on Madison Avenue and while I believe there is some room for development and growth in our neighborhood, I do not believe that Fawcett's current plans are feasible.

First, I question whether or not the Cambridge Police are able to police such an increase in population. We rarely see them as it is and that is probably because it's a safe neighborhood. I'd like to keep it that way for our citizens.

Second, I think we would have a dreadful parking problem. For all the claims that there will be parking spaces--I think we all know that when people rent, they often pack others into that unit and with those others come cars. We see this in N. Cambridge all the time. When the rental units on our street are full of students, there is no parking. We share one parking spot at our condo. And I am fortunate because Grace allows me to park in their lot. Otherwise I would have to park blocks away from my house---not a good option for an older woman.

Moreover, I think the increase in rental units over ownership units changes the balance of our community. Most of us own our homes and as we all know, there is a significant difference in atmosphere when home owners are caring for their properties.

Also, I question the impact on traffic. I am not sure where all the traffic would be routed but I can tell you that these North C. streets are narrow and full of parking on both sides---we need a big study on this.

I do think we can have some development. It is great to have to old greenhouses gone and perhaps some nice buildings there will be a good thing. And perhaps some units on the Fawcett property can be managed as well. But the number of rental units proposed---I don't think those are in any way reasonable. As for the Cambridge Lumber project---I see no parking allocated there so that makes me question its wisdom.

We have a nice community here. Safe, manageable. I think we all would like to keep it that way for all of us---seniors, children, homeowners.

Jennifer Craig

Drury, Margaret

From: Tom Lynott [tlynott@comcast.net]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 7:42 AM
To: Drury, Margaret
Subject: FW: ADOPT Bishop Petition as Written

Tom Lynott
131 Whittemore Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02140
Cell: 617.335.7817

From: Tom Lynott [<mailto:tlynott@comcast.net>]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 7:41 AM
To: 'council@cambridgema.gov'
Cc: 'mdrury@cambridge.ma.gov'
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition as Written

Please attend Feb 8 hearing in support of the Bishop Petition.

Thank you.

Tom Lynott
131 Whittemore Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02140
Cell: 617.335.7817

Drury, Margaret

From: Hecht, Steven [steven.hecht@hologic.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 11:23 AM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret; friendoflinearpark@gmail.com
Subject: ADOPT the Biship Petition as written

Dear Cambridge City Councilors,

My name is Steven Hecht. I live at 24 Madison Avenue in Cambridge, around the corner from the Fawcett Oil company site where a proposed development is currently being evaluated. I fully support the Bishop petition as written, and urge all of you to attend the hearing this afternoon.

Furthermore, I would like you to know how this development is going to impact me. The traffic situation in the "CAM400" area is already very difficult, especially at rush hour. As you probably know, commuters are not allowed to use our neighborhood as a "shortcut" to avoid the massive traffic backup on Alewife Brook Parkway between 3 and 7 PM. However, the policing of this is uneven and oftentimes commuters cut through anyway, often speeding along the narrow streets in the neighborhood. This is a safety, as well as an esthetic issue.

On street parking can be difficult, and the additional vehicle load with this development will make that even worse.

Linear Park, which runs behind where the proposed development will stand, will also be impacted by the addition of so many housing units.

While the former greenhouse was certainly an eyesore, the City of Cambridge needs better vision and planning for the development of this area.

Finally, as a result of this large number of new units being placed so close to my house, I fear that my property values will drop significantly, thus have put my home up for sale before this can happen.

Thank you kindly,

Steven Hecht
24 Madison Ave
Cambridge, MA

Drury, Margaret

From: Gary Dmytryk [dmytryk@gmail.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 12:17 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition as written

Please adopt the Bishop Petition as written. We are afraid that our neighborhood will be harmed by building projects that are too large.

Gary Dmytryk
2440 Mass Ave

Drury, Margaret

From: Sanda Aung [sanda_aung@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 12:21 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: ADOPT Bishop Petition as written

I am writing to ask you to vote to adopt the Bishop Petition. Housing projects that are too big for their setting will be bad for the neighborhood and for the Linear Park.

Sanda Aung
2440 Massachusetts Ave.

Drury, Margaret

From: Curtiss Dap [curtissdap@yahoo.com]
Sent: Wednesday, February 08, 2012 4:10 PM
To: City Council
Cc: Drury, Margaret
Subject: SUPPORT Bishop Petition as written

Hello,

Oversize projects in North Cambridge will hurt me personally. The impact on our streets, our safety, and our North Cambridge community will surely be huge, and make people like myself flee to Arlington (which we don't want to do). We love our neighborhood and would like it to be preserved and enhanced through thoughtful planning.

Our Linear Park neighborhood is rare & special, a real community. We know and are friendly with our neighbors and want to stay that way. Once lost, it is gone forever.

We need better planning and study of impacts—on traffic, parking, utilities, parks and environment—which will improve North Cambridge for everyone. Safety is my first concern, as I have a young child.

I support development of well-designed residences that fit with the density, scale, and form of existing homes.

I urge you to please support the Bishop Petition as written.

Thank you,
Jen Feinstein
163 Harvey

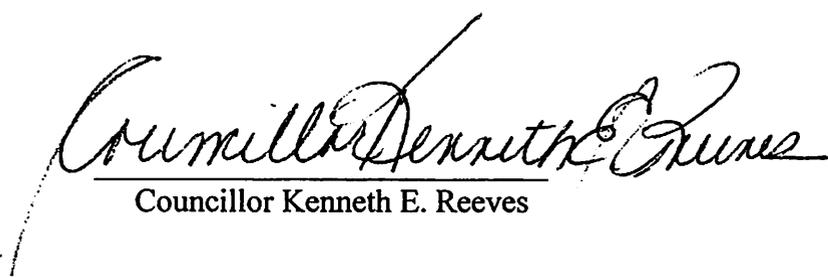
City of Cambridge

January 27, 2012

Dear Councillor:

You are hereby notified to attend a *Special Meeting* of the City Council for **Wednesday, February 8, 2012 at 5:30 p.m. in the Sullivan Chamber.**

By order of the Acting Chair of the City Council.


Councillor Kenneth E. Reeves

The purpose of the meeting is to hold a public hearing on the proposed amendment to the Zoning Ordinance on the petition filed by Julia Bishop, et al. and refiled by the City Council to amend Section 17.20 of the Zoning Ordinance - Regulations for Special District 2 located in North Cambridge along Linear Park.

This meeting shall be subject to the Rules of the City Council as amended.

MEETING HELD.