

Alan McClennen Collection

Cambridge Historical Commission
831 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, MA 02139

Provenance: Gift of Alan McClennen's daughter, Eliza McClennen, August 16, 2011

Collection ID: CHC003

Dates: ca. 1940s-1980s

Extent: 1 cubic foot

Processing and finding aid by: Meta Partenheimer, August 2018. Contribution to spreadsheet/box list by Steve Kaiser, volunteer, August 2018

Access: Collection is available for research under the CHC rules of use

Arrangement: Materials arranged chronologically

Collection Description:

Included in this collection are maps, development studies, town reports, and traffic studies for the City of Cambridge with the bulk of the materials dating from the 1950s to the 1970s. Researchers interested in viewing the Alan McClennen Collection will be engaged by topics on community development in the City of Cambridge during the mid-twentieth century.

Historical Note:

Alan McClennen was born in Cambridge on December 16, 1916 and grew up in a large family at 35 Lake View Avenue near Fresh Pond, Mount Auburn Cemetery, and the houses of Tory Row. McClennen attended the Country Day School in Newton and graduated from Harvard in 1938. He attended the Harvard School of Law where his father had graduated in 1895. McClennen married Louise Field Herman on May 21, 1938 and around 1942 became the Assistant City Planner of the Boston City Planning Board. From 1944-1946, McClennen was an Enlisted Man and Commissioned Officer in Radar and Information Center Instruction in the United States Navy.

Following his enlistment, McClennen continued what would become a lifelong career in public service. McClennen graduated from the MIT School of Planning in 1947 and from the mid-1940s to early 1950s, he served as Secretary of Community Development in the New England Council and Associate Field Representative with the National Housing Agency. From 1950-1953 he was the Assistant Director of Planning in Cambridge. In

1953, he became the Director of Planning in Somerville and in 1958 left this position to become the Director of the Division of Planning of the Massachusetts Department of Commerce.

From 1958-1968 McClennen served as the Planning Director for the City of Cambridge. During this period, he was also Clerk of the Urban Renewal Coordinating Committee, Member of the Traffic Board, Clerk of the School Building Advisory Committee, Member of the Council on Aging, Assisted Housing Authority in site selections for projects for the elderly, and Secretary of the Cambridge Historical Commission.

McClennen was a staunch supporter of the Inner Belt project, and this earned him the ire of many Cambridge residents in opposition to the proposed highway. Plans for the Inner Belt began in the mid-1950s. Moving along gradually for the following decade, the 8-lane highway was set to loop from Boston neighborhoods through areas of Somerville, Cambridge, and Brookline. The project would have displaced thousands of residents, and consistent community outcry led to the plan's demise by 1971.

In 1968, McClennen became the Planning Director for the City of Somerville. He held this position for two years and before becoming Planning Director for the City of Waltham in 1970. McClennen retired from this position in 1982. Over the years, he volunteered in numerous areas including the Town of Lincoln Planning Board, Somerville Chamber of Commerce, Waltham Kiwanis Club, Southern Massachusetts Yacht Racing Association, and the Friends of Pleasant Bay. Alan McClennen died on July 16, 2007 in Harwich, Massachusetts.

Box Listing:

Title	Author	Date Published	Summary of Contents	Notes	No. of Copies
Zoning Ordinance – City of Cambridge	City Council	1943	Second edition of Cambridge zoning ordinance (McClennen copy)	Includes map	1
Letter Re: Eliot Square Parking Lot	Mark Fortune	1950	Letter from Fortune, Planning Director, re: plan of Eliot Square parking lot		
Mid-Century Cambridge (Annual Report)	City of Cambridge	1950	Personnel, Committees, photos – Insert: Planning for the Next Half Century		1
The Road Ahead – Progress and Goals in Cambridge	Planning Board	1950	Schools, traffic, recreation, Red Line from Harvard to Alewife, Inner Belt and Truck Route, Future of Industry		1
City Council Order on Railroad Grade Separations	Planning Board	1950	2-page memo on Federal funding for railroad grade separations, priorities for expressways		1
[No Cover page]	Planning Board	1950	Staff Report on “Bad Housing”, older than 50 years, Redevelopment Needed		1

Annual Report of Planning Board to City Council, 1950	Planning Board	1951	1950 accomplishments, City-wide General Plan req. for urban renewal; civil defense concerns		1
Narrow Streets in Cambridge	Planning Board	1951	Identification of streets 30-ft wide or less; 231 in city		1
Supplement to “Narrow Streets in Cambridge”	Planning Board	1951	Proposals to add regulations for various roads 30 to 40+ feet wide		1
A Plan for Redevelopment Study Area 10-B in relation to The General Plan for Cambridge	Planning Board	1951	Need for redevelopment plan for 5 blocks near Sparks Street in Neighborhood 10; Mt. Auburn-Brattle at Sparks		1
Zoning Change to allow parking lots in residential areas	Planning Board	1951	Planning Board to Council on allowing parking lots in residential districts in the city		1
Recommendation on the All-Night Parking Problem	Planning Board	1951	Parking problem, proposals and changes – not adopted		1
Planning for the Belt Route	Planning Board	1951	Four alternatives including Lee and RR route– First rec of Brookline St; 3 interchanges in Cambridgeport		1
Planning for the Belt Route [preliminary draft]	Planning Board	1951	Text of “Planning for the Inner Belt Route” (1951) without graphics		1
Solutions to the All-Night Parking Problem	Planning Board	1951	Alan McClennen detailed study requiring off-street parking and zoning requirements.		1
Zoning Change: Parking Lots	Planning Board	1952	Planning Board to Council on allowing parking lots		1
Survey of Trucking Conditions in Neighborhood 5	Planning Board	1952	Three-page staff recommendations		1
Annual Report of Planning Board to City Council	Planning Board	1952	1951 Accomplishments, 1952 Problems and Opportunities, Traffic, Transport, Renewal, Schematic Plan		2
Plan for Cambridge Highlands	Planning Board	1952	Includes Planning for the Belt Route & 1950 Planning Board Report (Preliminary) Report on All-Night Parking		1

Proposed Curb Parking Changes in Harvard Square	Planning Board	1952	Identification of metered and unmetered spaces on-street		1
Housing Conditions in Part of Cambridge	The Committee on Home Hygiene	1952	Study of primary area between Brookline & RR tracks		1
Social Characteristics of Cambridge Neighborhoods	Planning Board	1953	Penalties for poor housing, social problems	A supplement to Thirteen Neighborhoods: One City - An Analysis of Residential Areas	2
A Study of 2 Federal Housing Projects	Study Committee of Social Agency Executives	1953	Land Use and Sociological study, including social problems, poor housing, crowding		3
Federal Housing Projects in Cambridge: An Evaluation of Impact on Family Life	Study Committee of Social Agency Executives	1953	Preliminary Draft, Study Committee Fortune/McClennen, similar to Social Characteristics (1953)		1
1953-1958 Capital Outlay Program	Planning Board	1953	Preliminary Draft Program and financing		1
Summary of Capital Outlay Program	Planning Board	1954	Five-page summary, 1954 for capital outlays		1
Kellogg Grant Aids Housing Rehabilitation Cambridge	Cambridge Home Hygiene Committee	1954	12 Members, including Alan McClennen, CHA Development Director (Resigned November 1953)		1
Proposed Workable Program for Urban Renewal	Cambridge Coordinating Committee on Urban Conservation and Renewal	1955	Requirement of Housing Act of 1954: workable plan before federal funding		1
Cambridge Capital Improvement Program: '54 Progress '55-'60 Proposed Program	Planning Board	1955	Morse School, City Hospital, project description, Libraries, Recreation, Schools, MIT underpass, Inner Belt, Route 2		1
Annual Report of the City of Cambridge, 1959	City of Cambridge	1960	1959 Annual Report, newspaper edition. p. 9 Rogers Block before and After		1

Annual Report of the Planning Board, 1959	Planning Board	1960	Given to the City Council. Primary focus on urban renewal and transportation, especially Inner belt, city plan		1
Building Zone Ordinance of City of Somerville	City of Somerville	1960	Includes copies of public notices for zoning changes of 1963 and 1968		1
Harvard Square Traffic and Parking Study	Bruce Campbell	1962	Booklet prepared for Planning Board and Harvard University, Harvard Trust, and Harvard Coop	Pamphlet-sized studies	2
Harvard Square Traffic and Parking Study	Bruce Campbell	1962	For Cambridge Planning Board, private sponsorship (see also 1967)	Complete report	1
Social Characteristics of Cambridge Neighborhoods	Planning Board	1962	Revised Version of 1953 Edition. (includes 1960 Street Directory)		2
East Cambridge Traffic Study	Planning Board	1962	Goal for a truck route around East Cambridge, under direction of Bob Bowyer, Associate Planner		1
Cambridge Zoning Ordinance	City Council	1962	Major zoning change, removing height limits, adding required off-street parking for new construction		1
Final Report of the Historic Districts Study Committee	Historic Districts Study Committee	1962	Final report to City Council Proposed Cambridge Historical Commission ordinance, map of historic districts 1962		1
Observations on the Development of the Bennett Street Yards	Planning Board	1963	Report on Four bidders for new 1 million square foot development at Harvard Square.		1
Topographical Development of Cambridge 1793-1896	Wendell D. Garrett	1963	Historical study read by Mr. Garrett to the Cambridge Historical Society on January 22, 1963		1
Technology Square Promotional Brochure	Cabot, Cabot & Forbes	ca. 1963	Promotional brochure for the opening of technology Square – no date		1
An Analysis of Blight in Non-Residential Districts	Planning Board	1964	Draft of 31 October 1964		1
Cambridge Constructs: A Guide to Contemporary Architecture	Planning Board	1965	Pamphlet with images of 34 modern buildings in Cambridge up to 1965		2

Suggested Goals of a Cambridge City Plan	Planning Board	1965	Housing, employment, schools, transportation, and parking		2
Cambridge Massachusetts 1965	Planning Board	1965	Data summary, population, housing, income, employment, University, Architectural Landmarks, Churches		2
Suggested Capital Improvement Program	Planning Board	1965	Goals, costs, future projects, housing (App. A) Beautification		1
Suggested Capital Improvement Program	Planning Board	1965	Mimeo version of plan without graphics		1
A Suggested Housing Program for Cambridge	Planning Board	1965	Planning Board Staff (McClennen) draft of March 5, citizen role critical		1
Better Schools for Cambridge	Planning Board	1965	Report of School Building Advisory Committee for new schools 1965 – 1969		2
City of Cambridge Annual Report 1966	City of Cambridge	1966	Printed report with photos		1
Community Facilities of Cambridge: A Plan, A Program, and A Budget	Planning Board	1966	Schools, recreation, libraries, roads, lights, parking		2
Memo from Oliver Brooks to J. Gray and Alan McClennen	O. Brooks	1967	OB of Cambridge Corporation “groping for some handles.”		1
Cambridge Historic and Other Preservation Areas	Cambridge Historical Commission	1967	Survey response for EMRPP Study (Eastern Massachusetts Regional Planning Project) written by Robert B. Rettig, CHC Associate Survey Director		1
Map of Model Cities Area	Planning Board	1967	Map of Cambridge showing public housing areas, including Model Cities		1
Highlights: Application for Model Cities Planning Grant	City of Cambridge	1967	Proposal by Justin Gray to Housing and Urban Development for planning funds, Model City overlaps Inner Belt Route		1
“Harvard Square”	Unknown	ca. 1967	Mockup of report and proposals for development at Harvard Square		1

Alewife Brook Park	AD Little/Cambridge Corporation	1968	Massive development proposal atop Alewife T station, fills triangle 7.6 million square feet; 8,500 parking		1
Sewerage and Drainage Facilities Cambridge	Maguire & Associates	1968	Sewer & Drainage Plan for Cambridge – Combined & Separate		1
Elementary School Building Study	Cambridge Planning Dept	1970	Seven-volume study: supply, demand, sites; Planning Director Bob Bowyer		1 set
Green Franklin and Pearl	City of Cambridge	1972	Brochure on housing, library and parking garage for 290 spaces; plan by Gund-Montacelli		1
1799 Harvard University Commencement Address by President Joseph Willard	Found and published by Reverend W. Wyeth Willard	1977	Earliest Known Commencement Address in English delivered by a Harvard President	signed by Willard	1
Going Underground	MBTA	1978	Harvard to Alewife public information and schedule for construction includes “Green Light on the Red Line” and “Going Underground 1978”		1
East Cambridge Riverfront Plan	Cambridge Community Development Department	1978	David Vickery & Dennis Carlone (Community Development Department) Plan for East Cambridge		1
March 24, 1982 Harvard Square	MBTA	ca. 1979	Brochure for the opening of the Red Line at Harvard Square		1
Alewife Revitalization Urban Design Study Phase II	Cambridge Community Development Department	1979	David Vickery & Chris Dame (Community Development Department) Plan for Alewife area, Route 2 and Parkways		1
Internal Draft of Housing Policy	Unknown	No date	Loose sheets by unknown staff person		1

Related Resources:

Inner Belt Scrapbook (CHC021)

Transportation Collection (2 boxes)

Cambridge Planning Board Collection (CHC013) and CDD Materials