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Subject: MassDOT Highway Division
Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project
Task Force Meeting
Meeting Notes of July 13, 2016

Overview

On July 13, 2016, members of the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and The Cecil Group in association with the Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project held the second of two placemaking output meetings. While members of the I-90 Interchange Improvement Project Team and MassDOT staff associated with the job were in attendance, the PowerPoint, recommendations, and meeting material presented was entirely produced by the BRA and The Cecil Group. The purpose of the meeting was for the BRA's consultant, The Cecil Group, to provide in further detail their recommendations regarding MassDOT Option 3K4 and answer taskforce questions about how their recommendations bear on the option.

The meeting was kicked off by Tad Read, and under the guidance of the group it was decided to dive into comments and discussion, rather than provide a brief summary of the presentation from the last meeting. While the purpose of The Cecil Groups agenda was to present their recommendations for the MassDOT 3K-4 Alternative, it was noted that there were many positive aspects to the MassDOT 3K-4 Alternative that had resulted from extensive community engagement and input, specifically, a compact design that makes use of a compact highway alignment to create a new street grid and the creation of a robust transit presence at West Station.

The key task associated with the placemaking effort, as indicated by The Cecil Group was to convert the community's ideas and thoughts into a series of recommendations known as placemaking standards. The purpose of these standards is to ensure that future infrastructure, specifically transportation infrastructure, does not preclude placemaking opportunities within the project area. It was described by the BRA that the placemaking standards described herein should be considered as the City of Boston's checklist for evaluating the option MassDOT puts forward for public review within the DEIR.

The placemaking standards were broken down into five dimensions: *Public Realm/Open Space*, *Mobility/Connectivity*, *Development Potential/Flexibility*, *Distinctive Place/Context Sensitive*, and *Energy*

Efficiency/Sustainability. Each standard was further categorized into two types of placemaking standards referred to as *Transformative Standards* and *Other Placemaking Standards*. It was noted that the *Transformative Standards* would require modifications or refinements to the MassDOT 3K-4 Alternative while the *Other Placemaking Standards* are met within the MassDOT 3K-4 Alternative as it currently stands.

The highlighted *Transformative Standards* described in the presentation were as follows:

1. Realign portions of SFR in order to create additional park space along the River
2. Provide an at-grade pedestrian and bicycle connection to the Charles River edge combined with a boat section depressing SFR such that a vehicular off-ramp could connect into the BPY parcel east of the Double Tree hotel, with an eye towards reducing turning movements at the SFR/River Street intersection.
3. Provide for an additional east/west street connection between Cambridge Street and the West Station Area
4. Provide a third north/south arterial link known as ‘Cattle Drive’
5. Consider a direct North Harvard Street intersection alignment

Most of the recommendations were well received by the task force; however concern was voiced about the idea of a direct connection between North Harvard Street and the streets leading to I-90. This theme has been noted since 2014. Many task force members thanked the BRA and The Cecil Group for their level of detailed work and positively regarded the presented material. A significant discussion regarding the potential for a “people’s pike” through the project area was voiced with particular regard to the need for the BRA to reflect it as an essential item for this project (as opposed to being left for air rights developers to finish). There were questions regarding storm water management, open space in the “throat” section, and a North-South connector roadway.

There were additional concerns voiced in regards to the South Station Expansion and plans for the rail yard. Mike O’Dowd noted that there would be public meetings associated with the South Station Expansion FEIR, which would be a better place to voice those concerns, as there would be more rail experts with more details at those meetings.

The larger question of how the recommendations will be incorporated into the MassDOT 3K-4 Alternative was the underlying concern for most task force members. MassDOT’s response was that all of the recommendations put forward by the BRA and The Cecil Group will be analyzed to determine where they can be integrated into the existing plan for the DEIR. It is MassDOT’s stated goal not to propose anything that would preclude other improvements for the future. The BRA announced that they will be accepting comments regarding the placemaking standards and recommendations until Monday, July 18.

Detailed Meeting Minutes¹

C: Ed Ionata (EI): We are here for BRA part two. Tad Read is going to run the show now.

C: Tad Read (TR): Welcome back everyone. Thanks for coming here tonight. How many of you were here at the last meeting? How many were not? Does everyone have a copy of the recommendations? If not, we have extra copies here. We will send those around the room. The agenda for this evening is to take questions, comments and have a discussion about the recommendations we presented from the last meeting. If you would like a quick review of the high level, key recommendations we can do that, or we can get right into the questions, comments and discussion. What's the will of the group?

C: Oscar Lopez (OL): We should jump right into it. People who weren't here can catch up later; for time's sake.

Q: TR: Who would like to start?

C: Pallavi Mande (PM): I prepared a hand out. Who wants a copy of one? I made a comment about a larger vision last time, and that's clearly not part of the scope for this project, but from our standpoint it made sense to have for reference. We are not in a position to do a master plan at this point. I think we should all agree what the principles and criteria are working towards with words. I put my version of this together. Everyone has their own idea about this, but I figured if I could pass that around to see if people have comments or opinions, we could see what might fit moving forward.

C: TR: We can circulate this; it's a couple of pages. It looks like high level principles, but let's come back to this discussion after we have a discussion about the recommendations we've presented. I want to make sure that those can be fully vetted, but we can come back and talk about it at the end assuming we have time.

C: Bob Sloane (BS): I want to talk about the transformative standards you highlighted in your presentation, the ones that require modification of the 3K-4 alternatives that could become a part of the entire project. They could be integrated into initial construction, but may require phasing. I came up with five groupings that I think are basic transformative things we'd like to see. Looking through the 61 standards that you had, I can apply these to many of them. These basic principles are a thing I'd like to see to move forward.

First, is the Charles River connection. If you view all of the Charles River transformations to one project, you have a new Soldiers Field Road (SFR) connection; a new ramp from SFR to a turnpike access point; simplification of the intersection of Cambridge Street at River Street; realignment of SFR along the river creating more open space for a new park near the river; and a primary at grade pedestrian and bicycle connection. Second group is an East - West Cambridge Street through the

¹ Herein "C" stands for comment, "Q" for question and "A" for answer. For a list of attendees, please see Appendix 1. For copies of meeting flipcharts, please see Appendix 2.

station. I'll note that street would be an amenity for buses using West Station. Third, a North and South link for shuttles and buses between North Allston and Harvard. There are two - across the Turnpike and over to Commonwealth Avenue, and the second is a third North - South arterial street across Beacon park Yards in the Harvard Improvement Plan. The streets are access points to the turnpike ramps. As I understand it one proposed street might be allocated for transit. The fourth grouping is the recommendation for a direct connection between North Harvard and Cambridge Street South, to reduce unnecessary turning movements and early phase redevelopment along the Southern edges of Cambridge Street, and. Fifth, organize streets flexibly to provide a street grid that is scaled consistently and provide continuity. Those are the five transformative ideas that I found. You've done a wonderful job with the standards. Other pieces could be transformative but weren't designated as such.

Q: Emma Walters (EW): Could you clarify the North - South connection? Is the BRA recommending strictly bus and shuttle traffic between Commonwealth Avenue and Cambridge Street or will it be open to regular and commercial traffic, in order to distribute traffic.

A: Steve Cecil (SC): There are two standards here. One of the standards was that buses would be able to cross the I-90 route. Where they do that is a different discussion. However the street circulation is set up, so it shouldn't preclude future circulation. When you start looking at other vehicle connections they are more challenging to manage. There are strong desire lines to get people to and from the highway. The traffic volumes through the residential area around Pratt Street could be enormous. It's not clear to manage the capacity of the street network to make it beneficial. This is long term thinking. We want to be cautious about putting traffic there because there could be unintended consequences. Another thing is that Boston University is growing their campus over there which they wish to be bicycle and pedestrian friendly. The idea is to be cautious of where vehicle connections can come in but don't preclude it. As time goes on, it can really work.

C: EW: It's important to remember that throughout the project area, commercial traffic goes down Harvard Avenue, which is already narrow. Keeping the conversation open about creating other North-South connections is important. Commercial traffic is the major issue, because of the trucks, but all other traffic that goes through the area as well.

Q: No Name Given (NNG): How many sets of parallel train tracks will be left?

A: SC: The Turnpike alignment and the rail has been fairly well set by a number of parameters. Perhaps someone could go back through and answer specific questions, but it's included in the base scheme that MassDOT has provided.

Q: NNG: So there is no further discussion of the train?

A: Michael O'Dowd (MOD): The current concept reflects four commuter rail service tracks, and the commuter rail would have access to Back Bay or South Station. In the future there will be the opportunity to cross Grand Junction, and because of the midday layover and light maintenance, there

will be as many as fourteen parallel tracks to allow for off-peak storage of locomotives and coaches so they're not occupying live tracks of station.

Q: NNG: Fourteen parallel tracks?

A: MOD: It would be maybe seven parallel tracks to accommodate fourteen sets.

C: Galen Mook (GM): We've given the train yard more leeway and less discussion than it deserves. Do we need it - is there a better spot? Is there decking that can be done immediately so that land will not lie fallow? As I understand it, we're basing the need for all those trains on the expansion of the MBTA at its fullest. If every project on the MBTA plan within a 50 year period gets built out we need it. But what happens if the plan doesn't come to fruition? We could deck over it at the onset and build something that benefits the community as opposed to laying track that won't be used. I'm a resident that lives a block from the site. I'm not sold that it's a very good location for all these train storage facilities. I spoke to planners and I'm not sure that's the best purpose in the first place, when we could instead run more frequent service and put the trains to use. I think we can open it up for discussion.

A: Mark Shamon (MS): I don't think it's going to be built if it's not going to be used. Given that they have to find money to build stuff. In terms of justification, there is justification for South Station expansion, which was published in the DEIR and FEIR for that project. They considered a number of locations for the storage and settled on three facilities: Beacon Park Yards, where they agreed to up to 12 parked trains at any one time (fourteen tracks provide flexibility). Two others are intended for the expansion as well: Widett Circle, 30 cars, and some expansion at Reedville in Hyde Park which has another three or four. That was vetted; they looked at thirteen or fourteen options for different locations throughout the MBTA system in or around the inner city. The core principles were to be as close as they could with storage near the station and not taking away from service. The EIR explains all of that. As to decreasing the number of cars used, I don't have all the details but there is justification for why these three yards were chosen. This being on the Worcester side, has a lot of operational benefits. The EIR can explain that in greater detail.

C: GM: That's fair and I understand the full build scenario, but if that doesn't happen I want a contingency plan. I think proper decking, that allows for development and access at the onset and a southern connector road goes a long way to opening up the land. I appreciate that that was in the BRA study. You've taken steps in the right direction but I would like a more robust conversation about the uses of the train yard, and what are the benefits to the community if full expansion doesn't happen or doesn't happen quickly? I just want to know an idea of the next steps of how the expansion is going to go.

Q: Marc Kadish (MK): There has to be 30 more train sets to store, but then I heard an additional eight. Am I mistaken?

A: MS: I can't answer that last part. I don't know what the documents say.

- A: MOD: At Beacon Park Yards there was a desire to achieve 28 consists. That was independent of Hyde Park and Reedville. Since then with various conversations, they're now looking at a combination of the three locations to accommodate the demand they see on expected rail service.
- C: MK: I don't doubt you, but the DEIR was different than that.
- Q: GM: It doesn't mention DMU's and other types of service which could be in the realm of possibility for these rail lines. Not that I don't trust the numbers, but I want a more robust conversation. I want to have more conversation on the use of the train yard. How will it benefit the community to the fullest extent?
- A: MOD: I don't want to push off your question. I think there will be some meetings relative to South Station, and the question would be best asked there, because there will be more rail people there to answer your questions.
- Q: NNG: I am a resident and a homeowner and am concerned about the traffic increase. What are the plans to not have the street overwhelmed with traffic? I'm concerned about an increase in bus and truck traffic. Right now the traffic is unbearable. Could you respond to that?
- A: SC: In the recommendations we've provide in the placemaking study, there is a fundamental approach to create more choices for traffic to be distributed to and from Cambridge Street. We say in the standards specifically that by doing this, there may be an opportunity to mitigate any impacted to North Harvard Street, but it has to be studied. The point is to avoid loading more traffic onto Harvard Street. That's a clear message that was received. You can see in the recommendations, an opportunity to distribute traffic, so it doesn't get concentrated.
- A: Ralph DeNisco (RD): That's one of the fundamental ideas behind the third North - South connector through the IMP area. We're saying one street should continue across Western Ave all the way to North Harvard Street, to have another route to relieve traffic on North Harvard Street.
- C: NNG: Right now there is parking and lots of buses on North Harvard Street, and it's dangerous to ride a bicycle next to all those heavy vehicles. I ride on the sidewalk. There's not room for all those vehicles. I'm afraid to get in an accident because the vehicles don't see you on a bicycle.
- C: Fred Salvucci (FS): I am a lifelong resident. I am speaking to my city and the BRA but also MassDOT. I've seen a lot of this stuff before. If it's important to the job, I want to insist it be done at the start of the project, so it doesn't get deferred and not done. At the Big Dig, where we built the Greenway we can walk on it, it's nice. Where the decks were built near North Station, they're building affordable housing. Where the decks were not built, there was supposed to be a YMCA, a Museum, a performing arts center, which were part of the environmental process. But the decks didn't get built and the facilities didn't get built.

This is about placemaking. One issue that is most important to making this a place is West Station as a node not just as a transit stop (on one line) but as a transfer stop like the intersection of two rail lines at North Station. When you got intersection of rail lines, you have TOD: Park Street, Downtown Crossing, Government Center, and North Station to some degree. Where you have a single line, you don't have the connectivity. There were some references I was delighted to see but some elements were left for later. The sooner that service starts, the sooner this will become a place, not just a highway interchange. I want to see full connectivity at West Station both to North and South Stations and the open areas all decked from the beginning. I know there are issues with the federal government not being as generous and not giving the proper funding, but the Prudential Center was built when there was no federal funding. They decked it over and made it a real place. It's essential.

Connectivity to the river for pedestrians is especially important. You highlighted that. There was a hint of "maybe later" in the language; however that's a critical element to set the context so the private developers decide that this is a place to invest in. Please become more aggressive in insisting that this project is done right from the beginning.

Q: TR: When you mention open areas being built from the beginning, what specifically are you referring to you?

A: FS: South Station DEIR acknowledged that increased rail activity, which is good for the region, will cause noise issues in the environmental justice community along Pratt Street and there's an obligation to mitigate that. Cambridge Street bypass is an excellent way to do that. It's a good spot to include the People's Pike. You could connect it to an at grade solution, which would provide continuity. From the Paul Dudley White Path you would have two protected paths: one along the river and one along the backside of the BU buildings and along the Cambridge Street bypass. Those really work to create a place. The other element that's mentioned is to keep the grades of the streets of the urban bridges reasonable. A five percent grade is pushing it and is not conducive to what's desirable. The cause of that elevation is the viaduct at the throat. I would urge you to pursue at a grade solution. If it was placemaking, if the highways are at grade, and then the streets will be low to moderate grades and contribute to more sense of place. I'm urging more emphasis on doing it right from the beginning. The most information of why are those 5% grades are there – the reason is the viaduct, so get rid of it. I think the report is a great job. This is the best urban development opportunity since the Prudential Center. If it's done wrong it will look like Newton Pond.

C: TR: The conclusion of the report is that most if not the entire street grade are less than five percent grade and thus acceptable. The report wasn't recommending reducing it.

A: FS: On the connectivity to Commonwealth Avenue, for cars and the rest of traffic, the consequences of not including that now is a traffic analysis with more traffic on Cambridge Street and in the neighborhood. That's not an acceptable outcome, you've heard that before. In the spirit of doing it right, size Cambridge Street assuming that connectivity exists. In other words, downsize Cambridge Street to something acceptable to the community. The risk of high levels of traffic is not a risk, it's the reality on

Linden and Harvard Street. Now is the time to do something about it. At the very least, don't allow overdevelopment of Cambridge Street because of what you might not be willing to do on the other side. Be as considerate of the existing neighborhood as the one that doesn't exist yet. The existing community deserves priority, and once you adjust the size for that you can work it out with BU. That risk should be absorbed, not dunked on the backs of the people that live on Cambridge Street.

Q: NNG: Did the BRA find any difference in the noise study that MassDOT conducted in terms of where to put noise barriers?

A: SC: As we understand it, where the Mass Pike and the rail alignment is close to being at grade with the neighborhood to the south right now. The current ideas are to create sound barriers along that edge. What we have commented on is just to ensure the visual and environmental qualities of the barriers are good. We are suggesting that should be a part of the plan. That would be one of our standards.

C: NNG: Regarding the barrier along property lines, don't you want one to capture where the sound originates from? There's going to be something about capturing tire noise, because that's what you hear now, and the sound varies based on the direction of the wind. We have a strong prevailing wind. In the summer with a prevailing south wind, there's less noise usually. Have you done that study?

A: SC: No, but not necessarily the wind, that would be incorporated into the typical environment impact report that they're getting ready to prepare – noise impact evaluations – what happens if they don't do anything, if they do the project with the barriers in place and what the shifts are. A fair amount is known about how the noise barriers work. That will have to be in the technical information. We recognize the importance of it and it's recognized in our standards.

C: GM: I want to echo everything that has been said. I agree entirely with Fred's point about some pressure valve so that Harvard and Linden don't get all the traffic. As a resident, I want to reaffirm that you can't get much more residential than Lindon Street. It's a neighborhood that needs protection. This is an opportunity to alleviate some intense pollution and traffic concerns.

My real point is the connection to the Charles River from Commonwealth Avenue, which I mentioned at the last meeting. I want to reiterate that. I'm speaking to points 4, 5, 6, and 7. You've done a great job with making connections to north side of the Turnpike, and connecting two sides of the triangle, but there's not a lot of permeability on the south side of the project specifically to connect Commonwealth Avenue back to the river. If a viaduct is built it will probably be impossible. We heard from people from Brookline that their main desire line and destination is St. Paul Street from Brookline. This is an opportunity to think about non-vehicle traffic reconnected back to the Charles River. A few months ago when we were talking about an open space study we hammered in that it's about having open space but more importantly getting to that open space. You can have all the parkland you want but if it's nestled in between roadways or inaccessible it won't serve what we are trying to accomplish. At the pinch point of the throat, you have here "maximize the quality of the constrained open space in the throat area." I want to make it clear that I hope that doesn't mean just more riverfront property but rather finding a

way of punching through the throat area to connect bicyclists and pedestrians to the river. There was a missed opportunity when the BU Bridge was built to do this. If this is another missed opportunity; are we going to wait another 50 years for this?

A: SC: That's something we've been thinking a lot about. We worked hard to think how we can widen the green space and make it more generous, and where there are specific opportunities like where Charles and SFR turns. The connection to Commonwealth Avenue would be over or under Soldiers Field Road, whether the solution is at grade or with the stacked solution. We still have a problem getting to the other side in that zone. We have been thinking about how that would happen, and anticipate not only should it happen but it will happen. That will come in concert with air rights development in that corner and the extension of pedestrian connections in that corner. There are several different pieces that have to come together. We'll go back and look at how we framed it and think a little bit more about how that's set up. We see it's as a very important idea; you should be able to come from Commonwealth Avenue to the Charles River via bicycle. There should be a simple way to get there.

C: GM: The Commonwealth Avenue grade is fairly high. Eight years ago there was a design to nestle up the Charles Bridge with Commonwealth Avenue. They were trying to connect it but, because that project fell through, we are relying on this project to fix it.

A: SC: You're living this. It's a function of the air rights as well. It's a good component to be focused on. We'll make sure we're clear about it. We see that

C: GM: I'd like to see whatever you come up with at the end. Thanks.

A: SC: Understood.

Q: BS: I have a process question. I went through the five transformative things before. The Charles River involves one, two, three, and four, which will be combined into something from the Charles River to the bridge. I don't see that happening. How do you take the five transformation things and integrated them into what the state is doing? Do you have a mechanism for working with them? Is Cecil going to work with them? How will it happen? You will not be writing the DEIR, but your standards should be in it.

A: TR: This work product itself will serve as a checklist recommended for the Draft EIR. It becomes our criteria for commenting on the Draft EIR. There's also advocacy that's going to need to happen as well. Bureaucratically, the mechanism is commenting on the Draft EIR.

Q: BS: But before the Draft EIR, did anyone at all think about that mechanism?

A: MOD: A lot of good recommendations have been put forward especially by the BRA. Many of them we still need to discuss our efforts with DCR and we need to take into account transportation benefits, storm water, parking, impacts, climate change, etc. These are still discussions we need to have internally and with the city to see how we can integrate them or at least make sure we don't preclude them. There are many transformative components that may need to be phased in.

Q: BS: You'll keep the Task Force informed?

A: MOD: Of course.

Q: Harry Mattison (HR): Thanks to the BRA and Cecil Group. There are so many great ideas in here that we've been talking about for two years. Following Bob's question, how and when are we going to start trying to put these more discretely into a new version of this plan, called 3L that would be a further iteration that is more consistent with these recommendations?

Q: MOD: I would disagree if I understood you correctly – that of the 60 points, the majority are not reflected in concepts we've developed. Many of them are there in the concepts we've developed. Do you agree Steve?

A: SC: There are some things we'd like to not see changed, that have made good progress. The purpose of this was to bring a placemaking study in front of the DEIR before the version that is being used for the DEIR is submitted. This puts MassDOT in a position to really understand and take in your ideas before the DEIR. The ball is in their court, we're transmitting the findings into our final report.

Q: HM: The transformational elements of this are not in the 3K-4. How are we going to work together to incorporate changes into the plan?

A: MOD: We will draft the final report taking into account the comments that you have made. I and senior MassDOT staff will discuss these issues with Harvard, property owners, the city, we'll have a better idea what we can include and ensure that we don't box out or prohibit based on these transformative standards. Not all of these will be incorporated, but it is critical to us that we don't preclude them from future development.

Q: HM: What Fred and a lot of us have said is that there are great ideas in this study that we want to see built, like the third connector, bigger park along the river, etc., that ripple through study area. The question is if you want some additional weeks to go back and think it over, will you come back in August with a work plan for how we can identify items to integrate into a 3L series?

A: MOD: We don't disagree that these are great ideas. How many can we implement in this project, I'm not sure. That won't be decided by August, but we will let the Task Force know how and when. It's on us to make that decision.

Q: HM: If you submit a DEIR in early 2016, what happens? Between that preliminary, how will discussion happen if you're going to file a DEIR three or four months later. Or is the plan to submit three or four month later and have this as an addendum?

A: MOD: The DEIR submission is contingent on MassDOT being comfortable with the concepts that address the guidance that has been brought to us by the Task Force and the BRA.

C: FS: I have some sympathy for Mike's position, for doing something complicated in a finite amount of time. I suffered through a supplemental report, which took seven years which were added to the project. Everyone thought that was outrageous. The Green Line extension project had two years wasted because the draft included a maintenance facility that was unacceptable in Somerville. Even after the Secretary agreed to the new plan, there were two additional years of environmental filing. It makes sense to either put these good ideas into the core proposal, preferred, or do the same thing Secretary Pollack agreed to do with the throat and have two options. That way the public can comment on both. You don't want to leave things out, get comments, and then be told you have to go back to a supplementary document. Inflation is the enemy. You have two paths to avoid that risk: one, agree with some things, which I hope you can, or two, the recommendation disagreeing.

The public can comment. A lot of decision making will happen after draft. But get anything people really care about or your stuck with supplemental.

At the Charles River, it's very hard to get permits to go into the river. We have a circumstance that could solve that problem: the Charles River Conservancy and lots of allies have been pushing underpasses for pedestrian and bicyclists to accompany bridges crossing the Charles River. Because that came in late on the Anderson Bridge, it's been accepted by MassDOT, but has taken a long time to process. If it had been included since the beginning, it would be under construction already and be almost done. The Western, River, and Grand Junction bridges all have that desire. You can fill into the river, cantilever, use a vertical wall, or one of those tricks. It would give the community some comfort that they have a good idea where this is going to go. The planning process would be in place and permitting could start before those bridges start being rebuilt. You have given a grant to the BRA which has been a great success. Give a grant to DCR so they can have a parallel process of how those bridge underpasses and accompanying parks could be handled in those future projects. Build confidence with the community that ideas aren't all happening in the future. Get the planning done ahead of time so it doesn't inhibit the ability to move forward with the interchange. These are intended as friendly suggestions to make sure the project moves forward as expeditiously as possible. We'd be riding on the Green Line Extension if that nonsense hadn't happened.

Q: NNG: In terms of standards, are they weighted in any way? Are the ones in front more important?

A: SC: No.

C: NNG: Well, number 48 and 49, open space being about 20 percent of the development parcel ratio is quite a bit. I think quite a few of the comments you're hearing come from the point of view that it isn't that amount of open space, desires to look at storm water systems and connections at the level of infrastructure rather than parcel lots. It's interesting to look at the infrastructure scale system within this design. I suspect that is a goal that quite a few people here have.

A: SC: We're not looking at every aspect of infrastructure that occurs in this area. We're looking at particular ones. The preliminary vehicular and transit circulation in the revision of this interchange so

the future infrastructure can be adapted to comprehensive ways like adapting or development of open space are we are we losing any of the choices? We're asking, is this a solution that could be easily adapted to good solutions for storm water? There is more than one way to do it, one piece is thinking about where the open space system is going, being more robust along the river. We think the root of the connections to Charles River should be part of comprehensive development. In the EIR, need to make sure clear strategies for district solutions, but that's not in our scope.

C: NNG: I think we're saying almost the same thing. We don't want to see a vehicular infrastructure that precludes certain kinds of open space systems from being realized. The information missing is that it hasn't been looked at in order to suggest that that is the case. The studies I've seen describe a parceled open space system, in the same way block development might happen, not linear. Does that mean kids on bicycles have to get off at each intersection? What are the underlying controls for systems like that? I'm not looking for a definitive master plan but more the kinds of connections to the community across the throat area. Have they been tested relative to the amount of open space you're looking at? I suspect it could change something in the road layout.

A: SC: I brought the analyses we presented back a while ago. We tested with those numbers and I could go back through it. One thing that was emphasized is the need for a connection from the riverfront through the neighborhoods. It probably makes the most sense to have them be at the intersections. It's possible you could do an overpass. We've looked at a lot of different options. We're suggesting the street grid isn't quite finished. We've looked at adding streets, changing elevations, many robust options.

Q: TR: Would the task force be interested in reviewing those ideas? We have some of those in process.

A: NNG: Absolutely.

A: TR: I want to slightly amend the response to your question. The section you're talking about is the last section of the document. These are simply ideas that have come up through public discussion or internally. Once there is a master planning process, they should be a part of that. They are not specifically related to this project, but they are ideas we think should not be lost. The study is an evaluation for the design, not a master plan. But once master planning is underway, these are things that we want to see considered. They are not related to an infrastructure plan.

C: SC: As the infrastructure starts to be refined, we'll keep the ideas in mind. But they're a different flavor, which is why they're called considerations.

C: NNG: I think the audience would like to see those moved up to the front.

A: SC: That would be more part of a master planning process with property owners. We did this in South Boston. You need to know where the basic roads are going to be before you can get into that.

C: NNG: Connecting the subway stops at silver line way in South Boston could have been done better.

A: SC: I won't speak to that. We're trying to do the best job we can. That's why want to leave reasonable flexibility and not tie the future's hands unnecessarily. We're laying solid groundwork. Those other stages will come. How will Harvard come forward and how will the city adjust - these are all valid questions. But we're not losing track of these ideas which we think are fundamental building blocks.

C: NNG: We're talking about creating an amazing asset on the river by moving Soldiers Field Road. There is so much interest to how that is connected to different neighborhoods. This is open space infrastructure. I'm concerned that the way it's described here may not give it the importance.

A: SC: We've been lining all of these with background evaluations. We used diagrams to express it because it's not our job to redesign all the pieces and it allows us to look at different kinds of solutions. The diagrams talk about exploring how you create that network that leads to the neighborhoods. We used diagrams instead of specific layouts but we tested this including the road layouts.

Cambridge Street is a connector consideration. The basic idea is to create connections between neighborhoods and so there can be lots of options. One thing we used in Providence is that you don't have one direct linear connection but a series of connections cutting across diagonally. We've talked about the fact that some of these are actually superblocks and you may find that framing the open space with frontage roads would work. You want to work it out in conjunction with development, adequately flexible. We're confident that big picture roads will work with these options. We have to make sure that the intersections and corners work. Midblock crossings are dangerous, but that's a detail. These were in addition to other studies we've done. These are presentations we've done about desire lines, and it's been seven months so I recognize that. But I wanted to address this overall sense of the iterations we've done. These are all recorded in presentations we've gave back then.

Q: TR: Can you talk about storm water?

A: SC: There a lot of different ways of dealing with storm water of course. There are various types of storm water - infiltrated into the ground, coming through area from adjacent areas, and we have to account for the volume to take care of what we've experienced in past, but from resiliency standpoint we need to have more capacity. Fundamentally, one of the solutions is to bring that up to the surface and have it incorporated to open space. There are pros and cons to that. When it's dry there's no water there but when it's wet you have to make sure there's not destruction of nearby property or parkland. One of the complications is that other utilities go well below and above grade. There are all kinds of systems below ground. Our guess is it will be a combination of systems. We don't see why a composite system that has all of the elements of surface treatments and elements underground is precluded. Before you start building roads, in that EIR we need to be shown that there is a clear system. You don't want a premium cost on later folks to solve a problem that could be solved now.

This is an important opportunity for property owners. If you take a look at South Boston, it's broken up in many parcels. This is a single property owner. Before this starts, having an integrated idea of how storm water will be managed would be really great and making sure there is a location relative to

infrastructure. It's a little like open space thing. We know there are lots of good solutions and the roadways won't get in the way of that but we need to make sure it's resilient and sustainable. That's how it will be solved.

C: PM: I want to build on what Fred said about infrastructure done right at the beginning and also open space. In terms of typologies you've referred to, the linear, midblock ideas, what we've been talking about is that it's one way to look at it. There are real infrastructure reasons for open space to be monitored for a configuration to work. It's not a random choice. If we make sure the reformative standards and rationale for locating open space connections are specified and articulated well, I'm not sure what we call it. It's not at a point of having master plan. I don't think all the goals we've articulated necessarily need a master plan, as long as everyone feels comfortable that the principles are based on real reasons for having infrastructure located and accommodating storm water management. This is one way to do it, a description of recommendations, and having framework plans to make sure it's not just a consideration but an idea that gets integrated at the right time whether its Harvard thinking about the future or MassDOT planning regulation standard for storm water management. This is the time to do it before we get into the DEIR. Opening this as a discussion point, how do we put the pieces together given that there were infrastructure move have to be made by MassDOT that will impact how Harvard will develop moving forward? We don't know their master plan. There has to be agreement between land owners and MassDOT.

C: Glen Berkowitz (GB): We'll have some notes to you by the deadline. Tom asked me to mention this. Referencing slides 24, 25, 26 dealing with realigned portions of Soldiers Field Road, in combination with the notion of additional park space along the Charles- considering these transformative principles, we want to encourage your team to be open to the idea that enhanced parklands be considered in totality throughout the corridor. We encourage you to be open to enhanced parklands along river where possible by realigning SFR. Those can supplement narrower portions that might have to be put in place. The benefits of having more generous open space in this area seem worthwhile and ABC agrees that park land with Paul Dudley White Path should be assessed in combination and in totality across the linear distance. Additions should be made to the Paul Dudley White Path where they make sense, such as relocating SFR away from the river in the so called bend segment. Open space will likely be constrained in areas such as the throat, where each of the three alternatives have some constraints. Indeed the additional parklands and Paul Dudley White Path width that could be obtained outside the throat may influence what's acceptable in the throat when considering the pros and cons between the viaduct and at-grade options. Finally to quote Slide 25, as illustrated in that slide, portions of the esplanade downriver have benefited from wider park nodes which are connected by narrower corridors.

Q: Ken Miller (FHWA): How do these recommendations get integrated or operationalized? Theses nothing that precludes the process as many alternatives some recommendations may not be able to come up with one alternative that answers everything. I don't like weights because everyone evaluates in different weights. But if you have different packages of things that have a mix of good things, it may be

helpful to look at alternatives rather than an evolution so that you can cobble together elegant solutions.

- C: BS: Following up on that point. I might be right to consider a map that talks about the transformative things you like to see. We've never seen Soldiers Field Road moved on a map or the ramp you've talked about into the Turnpike. The Task Force hasn't seen three roads from Harvard, or an East-West road and how that connects to West Station. We'll have to have a map at some point. We need an alternative but we haven't seen these concepts on the ground. I don't know whose job that is.
- A: SC: That's part of the process. We're trying to bring information that will influence the actual map that will become the point of action. That's pending what will be happening over the next six to eight weeks seeing how it may evolve or not. But it would be most helpful if we're all working off a single set of ideas, we're focusing on the getting *the* scheme. If a scheme gets advanced that incorporates these, that's simpler than alternatives.
- C: GM: To give a bit of history, before there was a Task Force, we coined the term People's Pike. The concept was that we should have an off-street multi-use pathway that parallels the pike along the river. I assumed that that was in this presentation and in everyone's mind but I understand now that it's under potential considerations for future master planning. There may be an east west green corridor if everything lines up. I want to ask if that's true. Are you requesting that there is an off-street pathway, not a buffered bike lane with paint or an intersection riddled pathway on the street (residents will not ride on the street)? A year and a half ago we were talking about whether it would go up and over or would there be a series of tunnels. I assumed we were going to have in all this project area some sort of safe pathway. We talked about where it would go, sketching it out. Where are we with that?
- A: SC: The term "People's Pike" has been used in many ways. What we've understood is there are two parallel routes we see forming up here. One is within the district itself and not on the street but a robust bicycle - pedestrian path that includes green space that goes along the edge down to the river. Because of the grade, we had not suggested that it had to be elevated at every block- it would be within the city. It would be within the street system. That would be incorporated within the district - there would be a corridor of green space with bicycles and pedestrians that's not a widened sidewalk. We will make sure that's clear. There was also a concept for connector street or roadway going from the Cambridge Street Bridge and down to West Station is a direct vehicular, bicycle pedestrian connection without any cross streets that goes from somewhere up by Cambridge Street overpass to the node of West Station, and will continue further south as that gets resolved including incorporating that in to air rights development. Some of that may be coming with air rights development, at which point a connection over to the riverfront park should occur too, but it's harder to figure out where that goes because it gets incorporated into air rights level. Unless we've misunderstood, we have two separate routes that we're calling for over time.
- Q: GM: As long as it's incorporated into the project from the outset and not in future master planning. That's essentially a commuting corridor. Point 48 and 49 Are you referring to point 48 and 49?

- A: GA: Also look at number four. As you submit your comments, think about if there are elements you'd like to see clarified but that was intended to say we're not working out every detail but the idea that there is a safe, separated, low stress pedestrian and bicycle corridor to the river is one of our core values.
- A: SC: There is a distinction. The Southwest Corridor has streets to cross. This will have to cross streets. We've been working on a system of intersections that are brought down to the smallest size that they can. It would be raised up at the air rights above the highway. But beyond that, the Southwest Corridor was a rail corridor so the grid stopped on both sides. But part of the idea here is to have a district that is connected. That's in our understanding. We're not building a secondary highway for vehicles or bicycles that change grade. That's how we've understood it. One path is integrated in fabric of district and one is more of a "pike".
- C: GM: I think that's fair. I think you're talking about two pathways. I was worried because it was under future considerations. There's a vision of Grand Junction also being a bike path connecting to Kendall, McGrath and beyond. That's not a dissimilar connection to make with Southwest Corridor Park. I would like to keep the mentality that bike and pedestrian accommodations are primary. Commonwealth Avenue doesn't really accommodate the 8 to 80 year old range of cyclists.
- C: SC: From an urban design perspective I get the idea of parallel systems. From what I've seen around the world, Commonwealth Avenue considered a great urban place. The idea was setting the stage for a district that has streets, sidewalks, spaces and places and is very supportive of bicyclists and pedestrians and it's not just sidewalk, it's open space integrated into the community and leads at grade to the river, and has a separate system build over what will be continuous line where the rail and highway will be.
- Q: GM: I'm mainly concerned with separation and intersections you have to cross and character of where you're riding. The kids outside, would they be comfortable riding?
- C: GA: Part of what you're asking is if the crossings at the streets are going to be elevated or at-grade.
- A: SC: It has to be carefully designed.
- C: GM: As long as the conflict is mitigated. I grew up in a town that had street and pathway network in tandem that doesn't interfere. The town started as cow fields and is now 80,000 people and it shows that its possible. I'm worried we won't get a quality pathway system if it's happening at the end. The train lines are mapped out, street lines are stamped out, but the bicycle infrastructure which was the impetus for this Task Force is waiting on funding.
- C: HM: The People's Pike idea has been consistent for the last three years as a low stress pleasant East - West connector through project area. This goal and need for it for the community and the Task Force has never had any doubt. The idea that 'we'll build an eight lane highway and maybe in twenty years when Harvard gets around to it there might be a place to ride', doesn't work from a fair balanced

multimodal standpoint. We hope in your final report, you recommend a specific alignment, and most importantly, for it to be an essential piece of the project. The Commonwealth Avenue Mall is nice but you're crossing two lane streets every few blocks, and it's crossing a five lane connector. There's got to be a solution. It should be added into the final report.

A: SC: We'll make sure it's clarified. It's nothing we haven't been hearing or understanding. We're trying to create two different systems. We haven't used the term People's Pike but we'll make sure it's clearer.

C: HM: We hope to work out the details with MassDOT, but we want you to affirm that it's essential.

A: TR: I want to reiterate that we have asked for all written comments by next Monday July 18th. By approximately mid-August, we will turn around the final document. That's our goal.

C: GA: Comments can be sent to me. If anyone doesn't have my email address, see me after the meeting

C: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis (NCC): The email address was in the material sent out to the group.

C: GA: Or you can talk to me.

C: GB: You've used the phrase "parallel bicycle routes" several times. I kept getting confused, because I took the word "parallel" literally. They're really more perpendicular. The one in the local district (which I hear no objection to) is parallel to Cambridge Street from South to North (to the river). I heard Galen talking about the People's Pike as more of a diagonal East/West pike. It's a different type of system. It seems like you are agreeing with each other more than disagreeing.

A: SC: The problem with a triangle is that there isn't a North, South, East side, so what we are trying to do is make diagrams to clarify, but that's true.

C: GM: Thanks Glen.

C: PM: You're all getting to the point of imagining things that might differ after reading these things. Could you provide diagrams to clarify what it could be? That's not to say that it's a definite solution but to help us all understand what phrases mean or could mean and minimize confusion. Since we have this diagram up (which shows the development of open space network), I wanted to comment. It's already serving functions for storm water and resilience. Not to put Joe in the spotlight but I imagine Harvard would support innovative solutions for this development moving forward. There is no way around this. It is something that needs to happen. You can only provide so many culverts to account of the amount of water that needs to be treated, etc. There is a new type of open space for example the Muddy River, is another way of dealing with issues. For us to have that which will provide certain standards that will help comply with phosphorous loading requirements would be useful. Back to Fred's point, if you front load environment goals, there are ways to use open space to provide multiple benefits. We need to recognize that as a driving force for giving more meaning to where open space

occurs and how street network responds to those and making those standards make sense from a design as well as requirements perspective.

- A: SC: We're not doing a drawing of the whole area. We are trying to say that the world is evolving around us because of the sustainable practices and the list of techniques is growing constantly. We don't want to say there is only one way of doing it. The important thing is a high level of confidence that a thought process is in place so that those pieces don't get expensive to do later. We'll try to express that as clearly as possible. This is an unusual opportunity with a district instead of a set of parcels. We can all find ways of leveraging that.
- C: Bob: We have an invitation to Task Force members and residents. Fourteen groups and residents have signed this letter to the mayor and then Secretary Pollack expecting that the revised design alternatives and DEIR will reflect what was done in the city's study. It's a good idea for the city and state to work together. We'll send it to all the elected officials. We invite anyone else who would like to sign to join us.
- C: GM: I want to thank Tad and Gerald for spearheading this. It's important to let the people get involved. The city is stepping up and participating and this is how we're able to influence what we've been trying to say for over two years. I know we came across as toothy but you asked us to.
- C: Warren O'Reilly (WR): Hi, I'm the new Allston-Brighton liaison to the mayor.
- C: GA: He will become a fixture in the neighborhood as have all the past liaisons.
- C: NCC: Get me your contact information, and before the next meeting you will be added to this group. We don't have a date set for next meeting, but it will be mid to late September.

Next Steps

The next Task Force meeting will be held on September 22, 2016 at the Fiorentino Center, located at 123 Antwerp Street, Allston.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Gerald	Autler	BRA
Joe	Beggan	Task Force Member
Glen	Berkowitz	ABC Consultant
Jorge	Briones	Task Force Member
Nathaniel	Cabral-Curtis	Howard Stein Hudson
Steve	Cecil	Cecil Group
Donny	Dailey	MassDOT
Bill	Deignan	Task Force Member
Ralph	DeNisco	Nelson Nygaard
Stacey	Donahoe	MassDOT
Courtney	Dwyer	MassDOT D6
Elizabeth	Flanagan	Howard Stein Hudson
Mark	Fobert	TetraTech
Dan	Gastler	Public
Karl	Haglund	Task Force Member
Kevin	Honan	Task Force Member
Ed	Ionata	TetraTech
Marc	Kadish	Task Force Member
Jim	Kelleher	TetraTech
Elizabeth	Leary	Task Force Member
Oscar	Lopez	Task Force Member
Sean	Macaluso	Task Force Member
Amy	Mahler	Task Force Member
Clancy	Main	Office of Councilor Ciommo
Pallavi	Mande	Task Force Member
Harry	Mattison	Task Force Member
Ken	Miller	Task Force Member
Galen	Mook	Task Force Member
Paul	Nelson	Task Force Member
Michael	O'Dowd	MassDOT
Ari	Ofsevit	Task Force Member
Tad	Read	BRA

Fred	Salvucci	Task Force Member
Mark	Shamon	VHB
Jeff	Shrimpton	MassDOT
Bob	Sloane	Walk Boston
Emma	Walters	Task Force Member
Josh	Weiland	BRA