



October 9, 2014

To: Mike O'Dowd
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RE: **MassDOT Highway Division
Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project
8th Taskforce Meeting
Meeting Notes of October 1, 2014**

Overview

On October 1, 2014 the Allston Interchange Improvement Project taskforce held its eighth meeting. The taskforce is composed of local residents, business owners, transportation and green space advocates as well as representatives of local, State and Federal governments. The purpose of the taskforce is, through the application of members' in-depth local knowledge, to assist and advise MassDOT in developing an implementable design for the reconstruction of the I-90 Allston Interchange, the Allston viaduct and Cambridge Street in the vicinity of the interchange. The chance to reconfigure the interchange as emerged through the opportunities presented by the implementation of All Electric Tolling (AET) and the structural deficiency of the I-90 Allston viaduct. MassDOT sees the project not only as an opportunity to improve safety and connections for all modes of travel in the area around the interchange, particularly along Cambridge Street which has been noted by local resident as dangerous and acting as a barrier between Allston and the Charles River. Another major goal of the Allston Interchange project is to provide the commuter rail conditions necessary for the expansion of South Station and the eventual creation of West Station in the old Beacon Park Yard as well as the inauguration of Diesel Multiple Unit (DMU) service along the Grand Junction line from Allston to Cambridge and Somerville. While the agency has not yet secured the funding to build the rebuilt interchange, MassDOT is actively seeking to secure funding and will continue to plan for the station as part of the project.

The meeting summarized herein addressed several significant topics including the formal integration of the construction of West Station into the overall interchange improvement project. Previously, funding had only been available for the design of this important transit link. Also discussed was the project team's latest interchange concept revision 3J which changes the location of connections to Cambridge Street to protect the neighborhood along North Harvard Street from cut-through traffic and provides a safer access to the Turnpike westbound. Brief presentations on West Station's connection to South Station expansion and the GreenDOT policy were also given. While 3J was generally well-received, there was continued debate as to whether having Cambridge Street and a proposed south parallel road both as two way streets or a one-way pair it would provide a more neighborhood feel. Generally speaking, a two-way system is seen as better for cyclists and transit service, but a one-way pair would reduce the roadways overall cross-section shortening pedestrian crossings.

Two recurring themes for earlier in the taskforce process were raised again during this session. One is the idea of introducing a full vehicular connection from Babcock and Malvern Streets to Cambridge Street. This concept has been dismissed by the City of Boston in the forms of BRA and BTM as introducing a new significant traffic flow to an area, Packard's Corner, which is already significantly congested. From a MassDOT perspective, such a connection for vehicles is not desirable since it would introduce new traffic to the area around Pratt Street and require carrying a large viaduct structure back along Babcock and Malvern Streets leading to the taking of property and putting remaining properties in shadow. Both of these things

are out of keeping with two of the project goals: minimizing property impacts and protecting residential streets like Pratt and Ashford from new traffic. The other recurring theme is the idea of future traffic projections and ensuring that MassDOT and its project team create a system of streets which is in keeping with GreenDOT goals and does not induce new traffic that could be handled by transit, walking, or cycling. As noted in the meeting summarized herein by GreenDOT administrator, Ned Cod, his unit will continue to work closely with the project team to ensure that this particular effort supports his unit's policies and goals.

Along with the project team itself, the taskforce membership has become increasingly focused on design period issues. Among these include ensuring that the approach streets up towards West Station and the Turnpike are urban streets as close to the highway as possible and that they are safe, inviting, and comfortable places for pedestrians to be. In some cases, this is manifested as a desire to have much of the site decked as part of this project. While MassDOT cannot create such a deck, as it is not the land owner, the both the highway division and MBTA are conducting their planning and engineering exercises in the area to ensure that places for support columns are made should Harvard University wish to exercise its air rights in this manner. The taskforce is also deeply interested in the public involvement process following the end of the conceptualization phase. At present, MassDOT is committed to quarterly public information meetings, briefings to community groups upon request, maintenance of the project website, and response to inquiries via email and telephone as has happened throughout the current phase.

Detailed Meeting Minutes¹

Opening Remarks

- C: Ed Ionata (EI): Good evening everybody and welcome to the 8th task force meeting. I'm Ed Ionata from TetraTech and to start off I am going to run you through tonight's agenda, followed by some task force administration items, a West Station update, and then onto a GreenDOT update. We have a new alternative to show you tonight based on some of Fred Salvucci's and others comments at the last task force meeting. At the end of the presentation we'll open it up for a general discussion of the alternative and answer any questions that weren't answered in the presentation. John Fallon is here filling in for Mike O'Dowd, our project manager, until he arrives. John, do you have any announcements?
- A: John Fallon (JF): I'm John Fallon; Mike has a conflict that is delaying him a bit from being here. I will try my best to answer all of your questions although you may have to hold some specific questions until Mike gets here. Thank you.
- C: EI: The meetings with Harvard and the MBTA in terms of West Station are ongoing. We have not met with the City or any neighborhood groups since the last task force meeting however we did hold the 2nd public information meeting on September 18th at the Jackson Mann Community Center. We had the opportunity to review the Boston Society of Architects (BSA) charrette presentation and we are currently working on setting up a date to meet with them and discuss further details. At this point I'm going to hand it off to Mark Gravallesse to give you an update regarding the Road Safety Audit (RSA) and improvements to Cambridge Street.
- C: Mark Gravallesse (MG): Thanks Ed. I'm Mark Gravallesse with MassDOT. Since the last task force session we have received bicycle and pedestrian crash data from both the Boston Police Department and the State Police Department. We should be able to put together a report within 5-10 days and at that point we will start to plan and coordinate a site walk. We are moving forward and you can expect the concrete barriers to be removed within a week.

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.

C: El: Thank you Mark. As a friendly reminder, we are still aiming to reach a preferred alternative by the end of the task force timeline. I would like to restate the shared priorities which include improved safety for all modes including walking, cycling, driving, and transit; realign I-90, Context sensitive design including lessen impact of interchange, avoid inducing cut-through traffic with new configuration, reconnect sections of Allston to each other and the River; protect the neighborhood during construction, create a more vibrant Cambridge Street that serves all modes, and implement accessibility to transit at the future West Station. These shared priorities were established at the beginning of the task force process and we have used them as guidance throughout the development of all the alternatives. I'm now going to hand it off to Matt Ciborowski to give you and update on West Station.

West Station and South Station Expansion

C: Matt Ciborowski (MC): Thanks Ed, I'm Matt Ciborowski from MassDOT's Office of Transportation Planning; some of you may know me as "the train-guy." Tonight I'm here to give you an update on a few things that have been going on in the background over the past couple of weeks. The project team has stated that we have a multimodal commitment and we recognize the need for improved transit in the community. I assume everyone knows about Governor Patrick's announcement yesterday but in case you missed it, West Station is now officially rolled into the I-90 Interchange Improvement Project.

In general the West Station design and planning is a bit behind the highway plans and this project. The plans for the interchange have become very detailed early on and as you can imagine we are not at that point with the plans for West Station. Another component of the Governor's announcement was the sighting of a layover facility for the MBTA. This is an important part of the project that goes along with the planning and design of West Station. The layover facility will allow the MBTA to increase capacity as well as remove some of the strain that currently exists in the system today particularly around South Station. I want to mention another project that you will be hearing more about that will be coming up rather quickly. The South Station expansion project will parallel this project and will be looking to identify the needed location of the MBTA layover facility. The goal of the South Station Expansion project is to increase transit around the City of Boston. The environmental filing will begin at the end of October and last until the end of November. We know that the environmental filing of the interchange improvement project and the South Station Expansion project will have a bit of overlap in terms of timing and we recognize that there may be a bit of conflict. As you submit comments on the I-90 Interchange Improvement Project we will make sure they are also exchanged with the South Station expansion project to make sure you get your questioned answered.

Q: Anthony D'Isidoro (AD): Is the mailing list still active for the South Station Expansion project? I haven't received anything in a long time.

A: MC: Yes it is. The reason you haven't received anything is because we haven't sent anything out in a long time. It will become active in the next 10 days.

Q: AD: Will there be sufficient information from this project informing us about the South Station Expansion project or will we need to tap into that project separately?

A: MC: We feel comfortable with the overlap of the two projects but we are working hard to make sure that there isn't a conflict between the two. The South Station Expansion project website is active and I encourage you to sign up for the email blast to stay updated.

C: AD: Thanks Matt.

C: Wendy Landman (WL): I want to start by saying it's very exciting that West Station is going to happen as part of this project. The issue that has been raised by a number of us is regarding access to West Station. You are creating highway ramps for people and it is not conducive to people who want to get to the Station and use the trains. The real question is how you are considering land use which goes back to

the question of decking. We want to know where the plans for decking over the mainline stand. I understand if you don't have an immediate answer now.

- A: MC: I don't have a fantastic answer for you right now. The land use planning question has been recurring and is difficult for me to address because MassDOT doesn't own the land. We are working to make the Station as accessible as possible and trying to reduce the distance of the connection ramps for pedestrians who are walking there.
- C: WL: We are hoping that West Station will be integrated into the community and we see decking over the highway and rail lines as the best way to do that. We don't want to have an isolated station that can only be reached by a long walk way in the sky. This is the big question that needs to be answered before we reach a preferred alternative.
- C: Chris Calnan (CC): I'm Chris Calnan with TetraTech. The rail team is now diving into the details of this as far as grades and profiles. We hope to have something for you by the next task force session and hear your reaction. I want to remind you that in order to get to the station we are going to have to get across the rail yard and there are going to have to be some relatively long access streets.
- C: Jessica Robertson (JR): I think Wendy is talking more about the decking. We don't want to have a waste land on top of the rail yard; long ramps to the station aren't going to be nice especially for women alone at night. Some form of active land use or open space would make it a much friendlier environment.
- A: CC: Harvard has the air rights to the parcel and we are waiting to see what their plans are and what they are hoping to build.
- C: JR: We're asking you to look at decking over the area. It's much easier to do that at the beginning of the process and less offensive regardless of what goes on top of it.
- C: WL: The Big Dig is a good example to look at in terms of not decking over and having to come back and deck later; it was so expensive. West Station creates a lot of opportunities but walking thousands of feet to reach the Station is not going to encourage people to use it, in fact it won't be used. I think we can all agree that we are thrilled the investment is happening but it has to be paired with safe and healthy connection to the Station.
- C: Alana Olsen (AO): The BSA charrette spoke a lot about decking over parts of the highway. When you meet with them it would be great to report the conversation and how you considered their ideas. The announcement of West Station sort of reminds me of the announcement of this project when we were working on the Cambridge Street project.
- A: MC: We aren't going to do everything in the next 2 weeks. The Station will be coming and the planning for the project doesn't stop at the end of the task force. We will have continued review which is required but we also want it to be there.
- C: AO: At the next task force session it would be useful to lay out the road map for the remaining task force sessions and how we can participate after the task force concludes. We'll want to know how you'll be working with the City.
- C: MG: That is a good point and we have had those conversations internally.
- Q: Bruce Houghton (BH): Is the state expecting to pay for West Station?
- A: MC: The state will be paying a third, Harvard will be paying a third and another partner will be paying a third.

C: Matthew Danish (MD): I want to emphasize how grateful we are for the fact that West Station is now being arranged with this project. The decking is the most obvious solution to the accessibility issue. As Wendy said, the decking should be done before and not after. The rail yard currently exist to store trains during the mid-day hours, is that correct?

A: MC: Yes.

Q: MD: Would it be possible to use the trains that would typically be stored all day to increase the frequency of service and have a smaller layover yard as a result?

A: MC: the MBTA is always going to need to layover space to store and make repairs on trains. We don't have a transit service plan yet that shows the commuter rail off peak growth. The layover that we are talking about is one part of the needs for the system; it is not the full need as we see it today. It is certainly not anticipated that the layover area will get any smaller.

C: MD: Off peak ridership growth is based on train frequency and because it low during off peak periods ridership is low. You may have to shrink the layover area for decking purposes and eventually putting in pillars, I hope you are not precluded that.

A: MC: We are looking at designs that allow for future columns within the rail yard.

Q: Galen Mook (GM): How about the Grand Junction? Do you have any thoughts about redesigning the bridge and whether that could be include not only the train line but a bicycle and pedestrian connection as well?

A: MC: We know the Grand Junction is item that has been brought up, it's just not going to be an item that is going to be solved within the scope of this project. The State does not have a vision for the Bridge at this time and we need to create a plan for what that vision might be.

C: GM: It was mentioned by the Governor and Secretary that West Station will include access north and south. I imagine that the Grand Junction Bridge will be needed.

C: MC: Part of the vision is to have some kind of transit service. We need to define what kind of transit service that will be, what needs to be fixed and we are not there yet.

C: GM: Thanks Matt.

C: El: We've had lots of discussion about GreenDOT and tonight we have Ned Codd, Assistant Secretary here to give you an overview.

GreenDOT Mode Shift Goals

C: Ned Codd (NC): Thank you very much for having me here tonight; I'm Ned Codd, Assistant Secretary of GreenDOT. I took this position about 7 months ago when Secretary Richard Davey created it to provide more resources to better enable internal and external GreeDOT comprehensive environmental sustainability policy. The program was launched about 4 years ago and it resulted from the Global Warming Solutions Act which was passed in 2008. The initiation resulted from the State law that requires legally enforceable reductions in statewide greenhouse gas emissions of 25% below 1990 levels by 2020 and 80% below 1990 levels by 2050. The transportation sector in Massachusetts counts for about 40% of greenhouse gas emissions. Getting a handle on statewide transportation gas emissions is critical in the 3 principle goals of the GreenDOT policy. The first is to reduce greenhouse gas emission, the second is to promote the healthy transportation modes of walking, biking and public transit and third is to support smart growth development. The focus on the newly formed GreenDOT office is largely working internally and externally. Internally we work with the divisions of shared services within MassDOT and identify ways through MassDOT's actions that we can support those goals and externally

to engage with stakeholders to communicate the GreenDOT policy and hear from them ways that we can improve.

Typically we don't review projects; we work with the divisions to ensure that projects are consistent with GreenDOT goals. This project is one that we received a lot of questions about and we have been in constant communication with the project team. I think this is an important test case to show how successful we can be with the GreenDOT policy. The project team has taken on that challenge and we are looking at sustainability aspects and consider greenhouse gas reduction. The mode shift goal to triple the use of walking, biking, and public transit between 2010 and 2030 was announced by Secretary Davey and this project offers an exciting opportunity to help reach that goal. I know the team has begun to flush out some of those details with a complete streets design approach and also looking at ways to integrate multimodal transportation throughout the urban network. We are looking for opportunities to create a Shared-Use Path (SUP) and whether it is something that can fit next to the highway or if it should be placed further inland from the highway. Implementation of AET and the removal of the toll plaza offers opportunities to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from queuing and congestion. This is a great opportunity for environmental stewardship and you'll see this in the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) that the team is working on. This project will reduce the overall amount of pavement because of the consolidation of the toll plaza and reduction of lanes within the existing toll plaza. We have had conversations discussing the construction phasing and how we can reduce construction waste and increase the amount of efficiency. That is the overview of GreenDOT and there are a lot more details that I am not going to dive into now but would be happy to discuss with you later on.

C: El: Thank you Ned. We are going to quickly move onto the presentation of Concept 3J. Mike Hall will run you through the features and the traffic performance of the alternative. Chris Calnan will review the future design elements and items that will need to be solved in the future design. Chris will also have some slides showing you the grade and ramp percentages in comparison to existing Boston streets that you are familiar with. Our goal for the next meeting is to get as much feedback on Concept 3J and evaluation criteria for the urban interchange. We also hope to produce a general 3D model by the next meeting and we are aiming to file the Environmental Notification Form by the first of November.

Discussion of Future Design Elements

C: WL: It would be easier for me to pay attention if you tell us what you're putting into the future design elements first.

A: El: Okay, we can skip forward to Chris' presentation now and then move backwards. I think that would be just fine.

C: CC: Good evening everybody, I'm Chris Calnan with TetraTech. We have all talked about certain elements and we have heard many of you question how the process will be laid out going forward. We have worked to come up with a summarized list so folks know we are not abandoning certain elements and we are continuing into the design details.

- The first item is the shared use path (SUP): we want to develop the exact location, landscaping and other features associated with the path. We will be working through those details with input from you and your neighbors. T
- The second item is the replacement of the Lincoln Street pedestrian bridge over I-90. We know it is an important component of this project although we haven't discussed it in detail.
- The next item covers sidewalk and bicycle treatment along Cambridge Street. We will be diving further into the details of layout of Cambridge Street and how much width is given to each type of user.
- Another item is the SUP Bridge over Soldiers Field Road, where it is located and where it touches down. Part of the reason we are looking to shift Soldiers Field Road is to create more open

space along the River's edge which will not only serve as recreational space but also provide space for the SUP Bridge to touch down.

- The plans and design details for West Station will continue to be developed as part of this project as Matt mentioned and we are working to develop a more detailed configurations layout of the rail yard. We will be advancing the design of the approach streets and pedestrian access lines to West Station.
- We will continue to use the Central Transportation Planning Staff (CTPS) traffic data throughout the development of a preferred alternative and into the design phase.
- We have heard concerns from Allston residents and Cambridge residents in terms of noise and air quality; this is another item that will get kicked off in more detail as we advance into the design phase.
- A few remaining items we will continue to look at in detail are the configurations of the Grand Junction line, storm water treatment plans and the construction staging for the new viaduct. There is a lot of work to do and we will continue to refine all of these items as we move forward.

C: EI: Thank you Chris, this list will be included in the ENF. The ENF will describe the process of reaching an urban interchange concept after eliminating the suburban interchange concepts. It will outline the process of the taskforce and the conclusion of reaching 1 or 2 preferred alternatives which will be advanced further. We're confident that the alternatives provide flexibility and do not preclude any future development.

Q: GM: Can I get a straight regarding the construction of the Cambridge Street overpass? Is it going to be reconstructed and if not, why?

A: MOD: First of all, Galen, have I ever not given you a straight answer?

A: GM: O.K. you have always given me one.

A: MOD: Good. We are striving to try to maintain and preserve the structure. We didn't want to come out at the beginning of the process and announce that we were going to reconstruct the entire structure for 10 million dollars. We plan to work around the substructure but the superstructure itself will need to be replaced. Chris has alternatives that preserve the structure and he also has alternatives that take it out. We're trying to refine the alternatives to ensure we can get that traffic off the local streets with the existing structure without conflicting with the existing piers.

Q: GM: Do you think the timeframe of that will be in conjunction with the ENF filing?

A: MOD: We have to get the comments back from the ENF filing first and then we'll have a better understanding.

C: Harry Mattison (HM): I'm curious to know how the other taskforce members feel about being in the state that we are in. It feels like the things we are most passionate about are not being talked about and the project team is saying that they will be further advanced in the design phase.

Q: JR: What will the format of our participation be moving forward?

Q: HM: We're not going to know where the SUP is and we're not going to know how far Soldiers Field Road is shifting. Do we accept this as a taskforce?

C: AO: It's important for us to know our level of involvement after the next meeting and into the design phase.

A: MOD: We will have quarterly design meetings after the ENF is filed and we receive comments. We received well over 50 comment letters after the September 18th public information meeting with a lot of common themes. We heard a lot of shared thoughts and many of them are very similar to what you

have expressed to us over the last several months. All of your comments and the comments we've received through the public information meetings are being incorporated into the design. When we receive the scope from the Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs and the Secretary tells us to identify the alternative with the least amount of environmental impact that is when we are going to start moving into the design. At that point we will reconvene all of you and tell you how we will start to progress those designs. This is not your last shot, there will be constant communication and consist dialog back and forth as to how we are progress the single alternative.

Q: HM: Are quarterly meetings good for everyone?

C: GM: At the Governor's announcement yesterday he stated that the taskforce has contributed to major elements of the project but we are still at the very beginning of this project. I'm expecting at 3 years until we get into the fine details. The Secretary mentioned that we need to remain active as a neighborhood and it would be nice to have some kind of framework laid out for us so we know what to expect. You've said before that we are not even at a 10% design yet and I understand you don't want to make future promises but I also understand Harry's concern. It would be nice to lay out what we can focus on after the preferred alternative is selected and you can certainly expect our comment letters.

A: MOD: We are clearing the major hurdles in order to get beyond the conceptual phase of this project. This is the foundation that we will use to advance and move forward throughout the projects history.

C: HM: We've expressed a lot of concern regarding access to West Station and it's great that MassDOT is acknowledging our concern but we've been looking at the same plans of the elevated access loop for 6 months.

Q: Wayne MacKenzie (WM): How many months are you going to be in the design phase? Does the design phase go straight into the design build?

C: HM: If we're trying to change this design we have to do something different.

A: MOD: This is not a design, it's a concept. If you are trying to change the concept I understand but we are not into the design yet. I think we've come a long way from the early concepts to where we are now.

C: HM: I was hoping we would have more of an open conversation with the taskforce.

Q: Paul Nelson (PN): We've heard the interest in knowing how we will be able to participate once the taskforce ends but my question is once the taskforce is over, what have we lost the ability to comment on?

Q: WL: I'd like to add a piece to that. I think the list Chris gave us is great and very helpful moving forward. I wrote down some of the bigger technical issues and I'm not sure if you are going to include those now or later. The first is the width of the Turnpike; is the viaduct getting wider and or is it staying at the same width? Where will the Turnpike come back down to grade? How does the design speed relate to the elevation of the rail lines and the clearance of the rail? My last question goes back to decking and whether or not it will be provided as part of this project. I think many of us would like to have those things discussed further because we don't know where they currently stand.

C: AD: At the next meeting it would be useful to give us an idea on how we're going to be moving forward from this point on. Quarterly meetings sound okay with me but I would like to know how often we're going to be communicating in between meetings and what your communication plan is between the project team and the taskforce. The bigger questions I think of are, what will the infrastructure be? What are the key items in terms of communication and what is the best way for the taskforce to communicate with the project team when this process is over?

Q: AO: I want to go back to Paul's question which was, once the taskforce is over what are we no longer going to be able to comment on? I think that needs to be discussed.

A: MOD: Those are all reasonable request.

Q: HM: Can your list be updated to include the items that Wendy mentioned?

A: MOD: Let's go through the list right now, the first item is the width of the Turnpike. We've had some lengthy and opinionated conversations on this, it's not something that's off the table, we'll continue to have that discussion.

C: CC: That is covered in the bullet of viaduct configuration.

C: WL: OK.

C: MOD: The next item is taking the Turnpike to grade. I thought we had a good discussion during the site visit. Trying to see it physically rather than identifying it in this room seemed to be easy to understand. We want to bring it to a location that will stay elevated very close to the location of West Station. We need to be able to get the clearance over the tracks; as soon as we get that clearance then we will drop the grade between 3.5-4%. We are trying to bring it down as quickly as we can.

Q: HM: Is that the maximum grade allowed?

A: MOD: Glen asked us that same question at the last taskforce meeting. It is variable and it can be anywhere between 4% -7% and those are typically the standards that guide the design.

C: HM: But you're using 3.5%.

A: CC: We are using a 4% maximum for a 60 mph design.

C: MOD: There are roadways throughout the city that exceed 4% but it is not desirable. It's not good for maintenance, it's not good for snow removal and it's not good for truck traffic.

The next item is the elevation above the rail. We recently brought on a rail designer and we are looking at the issues of clearance and the proper headroom needed. VHB is working with us now and they are going to be leading that task to develop a design of Beacon Park Yard, the rails and the Station. When we started this process the MBTA was adamant about 18'6", their optimum is usually 22'6". Yes, the Prudential Tunnel is 16'9" but that is not what we are striving for because of the limitations that imposes in terms of heat generated by train locomotives and air conditioning units on the coaches.

C: BH: Mike, you're answering the question like an engineer and I'm wondering if you could look at it from a different perspective. The community is saying that the things that are most important to them are being deferred and their concerned about their input. I'm wondering if it would be possible to think of a different format for the next meeting. Rather than quarterly meetings you have a certain expectation in the next 3 years of a certain development plan which will in fact incorporate certain aspects of this process. Until more information develops from these aspects such as the width of the Turnpike I have no great desire to talk about the Turnpike again, I think it's about the community. I don't believe quarterly meetings from a community perspective are going to work. Our tendency is to come in and receive a packet similar to the one in front of us and your expectation from us is that we will write comment. I'm wondering over the next 3 years if you could look this in your development plan, when these aspects are fed into your plan and how the will be solidified. I suggest have 2 or 3 meetings in a shorter period of time so we can discuss in more detail where the approach roads are, how it interacts with the River and the overlay of the rail yard. If you presented a group of items and gave the community time to review it and come back in, I think it would give the community the assurance that they need. Does that make sense?

C: MOD: Yes.

C: BH: I assume that is possible in your development plan.

C: AD: Yesterday at the Governor's announcement he had some very nice things to say about the taskforce but he also reminded us not to walk about from the table. I think he was telling us to stay involved, follow the process and make this the best project we can.

C: MOD: I want to give you a quick 30 second overview because I'm holding Chris up. We are going to file the ENF in November. It's going to be a lot of what you've already seen but you will have another opportunity to see it. I'm asking you to reach out and hold meetings outside of the taskforce to talk about your comments and opinions. Each and every comment is going to go to the Executive Office of Environmental Affairs, they'll read your comments and they'll also pass them on to us. Your comments will help shape the scope of the future design elements of this project. Sometime in late November early December we anticipate holding a Massachusetts Environmental Policy Act (MEPA) hearing which will discuss those comments. Moving forward into January we will be writing individual responses to each one of those comments. You will see how the Environmental Assessment (EA) and the Environmental Impact Report (EIR) start to become populated. This is going to be an open, collaborative session over the next 2 years. You are not all going to get everything you want but as a whole everyone will see a benefit from this process on this project.

Q: HM: In terms of the environmental review process, where is the urban design process or the place-making review process or the process discussing if people feel safe walking to West Station process? The Secretary of Environmental Affairs is not going to write a scope that says, "People aren't going to feel safe, you should deck over the highway."

A: MOD: I think you'd be surprised by some of the things that have been scoped for that.

C: AO: I think the point is, the City is going to play an important role moving forward.

C: HM: At the first meeting we asked where the urban planners and landscape architects were. If you have plans to add people like that to your team it would be great to hear that.

A: MOD: We have been working with the Boston Redevelopment Authority (BRA) and they have been providing us with feedback on things that they feel work best for the future on the interchange concepts. The BRA and MassDOT are in agreement that the plans developed will not and do not preclude any future development. We are striving to reach an interchange concept that is as flexible as possible.

C: Kairos Shen (KS): I think the question Harry raised relates to the fact that you shouldn't edit your comments based on the environmental filings. I totally agree that this is a concept plan and not a design. With that said, it does layout general dimensions. It certainly needs further development and thought. If you look at the environmental certification that the Secretary issued for the Central Artery project you will see many specific guideless for urban design. This doesn't mean we are going to solve every problem but I would certainly encourage all of us to advance the stage of where we are to we can reach the environmental submission.

C: El: Thank you Kairos, we need to get through the presentation of the new alternative.

Q: Glen Berkowitz (GB): You've talked about the ENF filing in November and you'll be writing comments in January. Could you take 60 seconds to give us an overview and tell us if this project will go in a traditional final design and out to bid for construction or is it going to be a design/build?

A: El: I'll start with the State side. An ENF a scope is issued by the Secretary of Environmental Affairs followed by a draft of an EIR all with comment periods built in. An EA is on the Federal side which would

run parallel with the MEPA process and hopefully a finding of no significant impacts. As far as how the design gets advanced we currently plan to go to design build and typically in design build people will say it's roughly a 25% design which is a bid of mislabeling because the critical elements such as the SUP will be advanced to a high level of design. It's hard to put a percentage of the completion of a design build but it's in a flexible enough package to allow the design build team to detail the important features. For those familiar with it Long Fellow Bridge is a great example. Hopefully that answers your question, we really need to get to Mike Hall to present Option 3J-1.

Presentation of Option 3J-1

- C: MH: Thank you, I'm Mike Hall. I'm here to give the taskforce an update on some of the work we've been doing on the concept development and introduce a couple of new concepts. All of the concepts have the parallel road both north and south of Cambridge Street. The feedback we heard from you last time was suggesting that we look at the southern parallel road being two-way. Option 3J-1,2 and 3 are all slight modifications from Option 3I. Before I walk you through the new alternative I want to spend a moment discussing the handout we're prepared. Each alternative we have show's an AM and a PM Level of Service (LOS). As a reminder the stars show where we need exclusive pedestrian phasing and the orange represents the queue lengths. In some spots when the queue is length we used a cross hatch to show overlap.
- Q: AO: I had to leave early at the last taskforce meeting because of the fire so maybe I missed the reason but why did you leave out the intersection of Harvard Avenue and Cambridge Street? Up to this point we haven't done anything to drive the cut through traffic off of Linden Street. Harvard Avenue is the only true north to south connector.
- A: MH: We looked at it early on. In terms of Harvard Avenue we are not looking at making a north to south connection. We are focused on the north side of the Turnpike and how the ramp configuration will be laid out in order to make the interchange work efficiently.
- C: AO: It seems that we already have a problem because you didn't consider the intersection and didn't give it a LOS grade. There are kids who are trying to cross the street over there and people using my local streets as a highway. We need to address this and I'm not willing to take it off the table yet.
- C: MH: The intersection of Harvard Avenue is part of our study area but from an alternative perspective all of the different ramp configurations from the highway to Cambridge Street don't change the traffic coming down Harvard Avenue. We are not going to ignore it, it will be looked at in the EA and the EIR.
- C: AO: It's unacceptable not to look at it even if you are not creating new north to south connections.
- C: MH: As I said, we will be looking at it in the EA. We have traffic volumes for that intersection; we haven't included it in this presentation because we are focusing on ramps and their new locations.
- C: AO: It's unacceptable that you have not considered creating a new path to the Turnpike from somewhere in the Boston University (BU) area. There needs to be a new north to south connection to the Turnpike that isn't Harvard Avenue.
- Q: WM: Can we also look at the other side of the bridge? I take the Turnpike every day and I come off at Seattle Street. I have to take my life into my hands right now to get into traffic coming over the Cambridge Street Bridge because no one wants to let you in. My other questions is, are we going to have 3 more traffic lights from Soldiers Field Road to Cambridge Street?
- C: EI: I think if we let Mike finish his presentation some of your questions will be answered and if they're not we'll go back to them after.

Q: HM: Just to clarify, you mentioned protecting the neighborhood on Malvern Street, could you clarify what neighborhood that is?

A: MH: That would be the neighborhood immediately west of Malvern Street which includes Gardner Street and Ashford Street. You can also access Pratt Street through that area.

C: HM: Thanks.

C: MH: I'm going to ask everyone to hold your questions until the end of the presentation. At the end you can criticize me for whatever you want but I do need to give you this information we are looking at many more intersections than what we are showing you right now. We are focusing on a limited number of intersections in this presentation because we are trying to show you how the ramps will be changing.

If you recall we had an alternative called 3F and it provided a two-way connection to North Harvard Street from the Westbound on and off-ramps. We split that connection in Alternative J and relocated the street half way between Sorrento Street and North Harvard Street. We moved that connect to the east in order to minimize cut through traffic and make it less appealing for motorist. The second reason we shifted the connection to the east is because we are considering the function of the highway ramps. By shifting the connection point over it gives us more space along the highway to get from 2 lanes down to 1 lane. The eastbound off ramp as 3 connections; the first is to Soldiers Field Road, the second is to Cambridge Street by the Double Tree Hotel and the third is by Seattle Street. We also have 2 connection points for the on ramps heading west and we are trying to get 2 heading east as well. In terms of traffic operations it creates a slight bottle neck but it is not over capacity. Concept 3J-2 introduces a parallel roadway to the south which is a one-way street eastbound. In terms of traffic operations during the PM peak we have green LOS or better. The queue lengths are a bit long on this concept but it still isn't very bad. Concept 3J also includes the parallel road as a two-way. The key difference with this concept is by providing the parallel road we are significantly reducing the conflict of right turning vehicles and pedestrians and cyclists. To access the Turnpike vehicles will get onto the southern parallel road and off of Cambridge Street further west.

In terms of the cross-section for Cambridge Street as a one-way and shown in Concept 3J-2 we will be providing approximately 35 feet of pedestrian and bicycle space with a 38 foot roadway. The total width of Cambridge Street in this concept will be 81 feet. For Concept 3J-3 when Cambridge Street is a two-way we are providing 46 feet of pedestrian and bicycle space with a 53 foot road width. The total cross-section for this concept is 114 feet. We took a stab at grading the matrix for all the critical intersections and we believe all three options do a reasonable job reducing and prohibiting cut through traffic.

Q: MD: I noticed you put down 2035 traffic volumes. What is the increase volume you are assuming?

A: MH: CTPS is still calculating the model so these aren't the final numbers. In 2035 we assume a quarter percent growth on Cambridge Street which turns out to be 5% in total over a 21 year projection. On the ramps we assumed .75% which works out to be a 15% growth rate over the full 21 years. Based on my review of the BSA presentations it appears that there will be some fairly dense development in this area and we are making sure we don't create a system that can't support the traffic in the future.

C: MD: Using MassDOT's data I've discovered that over the last 10 years traffic in Allston as drop on every single street. Assuming an increase sounds a bit sketchy but I do understand where you're coming from. I think you're trying to predict the future again and we don't know what the future looks like. All we know is the past and it proves that traffic levels are decreasing.

A: MH: That is why Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) makes MassDOT look at a 20 year projection and that is because we have peaks and lows in our economy which are often reflected and transportation use.

- C: MD: This has nothing to do with the economy; this is a nationwide trend that has been recognized and dates back to 2003. The problem with your model is that the input and output don't include Stadium Way or East Drive. My last point relates to what you said about dense development. The purpose of dense development is to decrease capacity not to increase capacity. Dense development reduces the number of overall trips.
- A: MH: Stadium Way and East Drive are not necessarily part of this project.
- C: EI: We have heard a lot of discussion around traffic modeling and future growth. I think it would be useful to have Ned Codd up again to give the GreenDOT perspective on future growth.
- C: NC: There are certainly nationwide and statewide trends that show a flat level of growth. Unfortunately I've also seen statistics from this past year that show significant increase in vehicular use. We don't know if the rising trend of vehicular use that leveled off in 2004 is over or which direction it is heading. It is difficult to predict the future and I think there is a lot more uncertainty than there was during that 50 year trend. If we assume growth is too high we risk the chance of overbuilding the system and encouraging induced traffic. It is valid of you to ask those questions and it's reasonable to experiment with narrow cross-sections. We want to reduce the number of lanes on Cambridge Street but we don't want to cause congestion.
- Q: WM: Can you take me through the scenario of having Cambridge Street a one-way? If I was coming off Seattle Street which way would I go if I wanted to go to Memorial Drive?
- A: MH: You would go straight across at Seattle Street and take a left.
- Q: David Loutzenheiser (DL): Why did you move the connector road away from North Harvard Street? It seems like you would want to bring it closer to North Harvard Street to help disperse traffic.
- A: MH: From strictly a traffic perspective it makes sense to have it across from North Harvard. With that said it would also encourage cut through traffic on North Harvard Street and we are trying to minimize that. We also need more distance to get on the highway safely.
- C: KS: Could you please go back to the cross-section of 3J-2, I think this slide can help merge the two conversations. If you look at the cross-section that is a one-way pair you end up getting more of a neighborhood looking street. Cambridge is reconstructing Western Avenue from Central Square to the River with cycle tracks and parking on both sides. It is a very similar cross-section to what you are proposing. I believe you are much better off building the 3J-2 cross-section and adding a second direction later on rather than building the extremely wide cross-section of 3J-3.
- A: MH: 3J3 is certainly wider than the one-way version without a doubt. The current cross-section is sometimes 3 through lanes with a left-turn lane. At many points it's 6 or 7 lanes wide and the cross-section we are showing is only 4.
- C: KS: On the parallel road cross-section there's never any parking on the Turnpike side because of the right turn that's needed.
- A: MH: We haven't shown parking, but we anticipate this being a city street.
- C: KS: It would be helpful for us to see a diagram showing which streets you see as city streets and which streets you see as access streets.
- C: MH: We are envisioning that the parallel road would be a city street as well as the connector roads and of course Cambridge Street.

- C: KS: I suggest putting parking in now, letting volumes increase and then limit parking in the peak hours. The goal is to create and build streets that are community friendly. With Option 3J-1 we will be left with fewer roadways and less multimodal connections. We need to see a diagram of which streets will be city streets and which will be highway ramps.
- C: JR: Just as a correction these are streets not ramps. The reason I bring this up is because we hope that the highway access will run parallel to the Turnpike and everything else will be built as city streets. In terms of transportation trends, we play an active role of what the trend is going to be in the future. If Ned does his job and we do our jobs we will make the level of vehicular use go down. It seems backwards to build for more cars when we want less cars. Kendal Square is a great example. We have the ability to make the scenario happen here.
- C: Tad Read (TR): Could you go to a slide with a basic diagram, I have a question regarding the on-ramps. My understanding is that it's more than just the parallel roads to the Turnpike that will be on-ramps. My understanding is that some of the perpendicular streets leading to the Turnpike would technically be on-ramps. You must have some idea of where parallel streets could connect to those perpendicular streets.
- A: MH: This is something we are still discussing. I've been trying to use the term connector roads rather than ramps. The location of the no-access line is still a discussion point. The streets could be MassDOT jurisdiction but the no-access line could be drawn close to the frontage road.
- Q: HM: Does this design prevent future street connections?
- A: MG: This design does not preclude that but MassDOT would like to gain some control over the permits for future development so we know our interstate is not going to negatively impacted by future development.
- Q: HM: Does that mean there could be 1 cross street but not 2 cross streets?
- A: MH: That would depend on the developer. When the developer comes in and does an analysis that demonstrates that there is no impact then they will grant a no-access permit.
- C: WL: Just to be clear, we are all having a hard time understanding how this piece of land could play out over the next 50 years. If we look back at the Big Dig we don't have any access restrictions.
- A: KS: That's not entirely true. You're right about the surface on-ramps but we're still struggling with the access restrictions.
- C: WL: I guess I was turning it around and saying, if this is a City building project in the middle of the City then we should absolutely be minimizing the access restrictions. If this is going to be a multimodal project the transportation aspect needs to be balanced with the city building portion. I want to be clear that MassDOT has a long history of inserting highways into places that we don't want. Downtown Boston is a place that people come from all around the world to walk because it is a great place for human beings and we want the future of this space to be great for humans too.
- A: MOD: Our efforts to establish our access lines aren't necessarily dictated by highway operations. We know we also have to take into account the future operations for the overall community. We're in agreement with a lot of what you have to say.
- C: Nicole Freedman (NF): I have 3 quick points, the first is on 3J-3 you showed a two-way cycle track on a two-way street, you really don't want to do that. You can get away with a two-way cycle track on a one-way street but it doesn't work on a two-way street. My second point is also regarding 3J-3 and if we're worrying about the total width, you are showing a median. Medians often increase speeds and make streets feel less neighborhood-like. I thought Jessica's point was so good and I am such a strong believer in that fact that the design determines future traffic volumes. Instead of building this based on

the traffic analysis I think you should build it based on GreenDOT's goals. If we are really having a 15% increase in traffic volumes we'll all be underwater anyway, we have to do better and we don't reach out climate goals if we are not serious about them.

- Q: Bill Deignan (BD): I have a question relating to the vision and plans of pedestrian access to West Station. It looks like you have a bridge with signals but are you saying that the pedestrians are going to have to cross the intersection of the frontage road? You haven't shown any wait times or pedestrian LOS. I'm not getting the sense that this will be a friendly pedestrian space. In your diagrams you showed double left turn lanes in a lot of places but the cross-section looks much narrower.
- A: MH: We'll have an exclusive pedestrian phase there.
- Q: BD: You put in double turning lanes to minimize the wait time for pedestrians?
- A: MH: No, it's more to keep the queuing off the highway.
- Q: HM: Could you put the scorecard for these 3 options back up. I noticed that connectivity to West Station gets a green in all of the options, is that how the taskforce feels?
- A: MH: This is just from a vehicular perspective. The larger matrix talks about pedestrians.
- Q: HM: So do you have a pedestrian summary matrix and another one call bicycle summary matrix?
- A: El: We will have one at the next meeting. We want to take the overall matrix you have and have a minimal presentation where we can discuss and compare the matrix against these alternatives.
- C: KS: You've shown the cross-sections of the east and west roadways both of Cambridge Street and the parallel roads to Cambridge Street. You haven't shown any cross-sections of the connector roads that run north to south. I've said it before but I don't think that having a roadway that has vehicles, pedestrian and bicycles heading over the Turnpike is a viable option. We know what that's like down at South Bay and it doesn't work. We need to think about pedestrian and bicycle access across the Turnpike.
- A: CC: If you have specific suggestions we are happy to see them. This has been one of our challenges from the start, we have to get up and get over the highway to the platform area.
- C: KS: I agree that it is a big challenge. One of the ways we can accomplish this challenge is by thinking about air rights and how we provide these connections separate from the roadway.

Comparative Roadway Grades

- C: CC: We're going to move on now. A lot of folks have asked to see pictures of the profiles grades and we've gone out and taken some photographs of local streets that have similar grades to what we are proposing. We are going to try to get through these quickly and I'll remind you that some of the profiles are pinned up on the back wall. The first photo is of Cambridge Street and the existing grade is around 5% grade. To put it in perspective a 5% grade means you will rise 5 feet over the distance of 100 feet. For all the roads that we are proposing we want to be less than 5%. The next photo shows Babcock Street looking towards Commonwealth Avenue; the grade in this photo is just about 6%. The next photo is on Beacon Street looking towards Kenmore Square, this grade is around 5.4%. The next street is Cambridge Street downtown near MGH. This street is about 4.8% and this is representative of what we are calling the connector roads across from Seattle Street to West Station. The last photograph shows Market Street looking south. This grade is around 4% and this would be comparable to the connector road perpendicular to East Drive.
- Q: TR: How high is the West Station overpass?

- A: CC: It's approximately 35 feet over a distance of roughly 900 feet; it's a good distance. We're getting some real challenges in this section where the viaduct has to go over the railroad. We're also trying to rise to a similar viaduct elevation that will allow us to shift the traffic back and forth. In the area where the viaduct is we are working to maintain the existing grades but also get over the rail road and dive down as quickly as we can.
- Q: BH: It seems to me that one way to mitigate the feeling of the ramps relates to filling in the areas between the ramps. If you don't fill it in or deck over it will feel separated. A lot of people talked about suppressing the highway. If you build the land up to the highway you'll at least get a noise barrier and you'll get a half depression on one side. I'm wondering if the City has been looking into integrating these areas in between the elevated structures.
- C: KS: One of the ways we are trying to do this is to take the profiles and model them in 3 dimensionally. I think the big question is, one of the ways we can model them in 3D. It's not that the grades themselves are challenging, the issue is when we get to 25 feet the function more as barriers. The question is, what kinds of elements or portions between the elevated roadways can we create to make a more natural transition?
- C: BH: It sounds like it needs a lot of dirt.
- C: KS: There are also so advantages here for future development such as the parcels being below the access roadways. This advantage for development is an impediment for pedestrians until the development is built. I think the question is, what are some of the elements that we can bring to show that we have opened greater access early so we are not dependent on future development.
- A: CC: A major part of this is coordinating with Harvard and making sure we are not precluding any future development or future plans. If this is a problem with the grades I'm sure we will hear it from Harvard. These are some early ideas and we certainly have some challenges with the grades. We have to get across the rail yard to get to West Station.
- C: GM: Going back to Wendy's comment at the very beginning, if we were able to deck over some of the rail lines to make it feel like it was at-grade I think it would be nice and it wouldn't feel like you are above anything. More generally I want to think about being on site like I was yesterday for the Governors announcement. I am always struck by the City skyline and the wonderful view. I want you to think about the view of the city and I think we should preserve that view when Harvard is building up their parcels. I don't know what the solution is but I wanted to plant that in your mind and have you think of it as the gateway vision to downtown.
- Q: Name not given (NNG): Every plan you've shown has West Station south of the highway. Would you consider putting it on the north side and running the parcels underneath it?
- A: CC: That idea has been brought up in the past and the MBTA has communicated to us that in order for the rail operations to continue they need the Station on the south side of I-90.
- C: NNG: It would stay on the south side; it would just be closer to the Turnpike.
- A: KS: It is greatly preferred to have the Station not on the bend but in the relative location of where the project team is showing it now.
- C: PN: I have one comment about the configuration of the interchange. One of the things we don't completely know is what kind of intermodal center West Station will become. Just looking at the configuration as it is I encourage you to look at the ways buses will get to and from the Station. I would encourage you to look at a two-way road that provides access to West Station and also to consider West Station being a transportation hub for the regional.

- C: MD: It looks like you are showing the mainline of I-90 being super elevated and I'm curious to know how much that contributes to the pushing up of the overpasses.
- A: CC: I don't have exact numbers, but it's just a few feet. It's not a significant thing..
- C: Fred Salvucci (FS): I think you presented an incredible amount of information tonight and it's tough stuff to understand. I'm slightly concerned that at the next taskforce we're just going to be looking at the evaluation matrix. It's in everyone's interest to have as few surprises as possible with the ENF. There is a clock ticking on how long this structure is going to hold up, that's a real problem. The way to get to construction as quick as possible is to create a plan that is the most feasible option. We know that there has been a lot of discussion on something called the People's Pike. There are not specific details as to what the People's Pike is but I think we know from the BSA charrette that there is a desire to connect to an expanded part of the River. I fear that once you put the SUP in that you will hear a lot from the community and the People's Pike members about the location of the connection and what it will look like. It may end up shifting really close to Cambridge Street or it could end up closer to the Turnpike. It's not desirable to have people imaging a different type of People's Pike. I would rather see you take a stab at making an effort to show where the SUP would be and put it on a map. My understanding is that the People's Pike is a two-way SUP. It's important to get an idea of what it is before it does into the ENF.
- A: MOD: We've been struggling with the location of the SUP. It's certainly not an easy thing to incorporate.
- C: FS: You're right, it's complicated and I agree with you. No one has a good idea of what the People's Pike is or where it connections. I think it is an important part of the next meeting.
- C: MOD: We can do that. We're fine with doing that, we've put a lot of homework into making this work. For cyclists, like Galen, like Jessica, and everybody else in this room that rides a bicycle we all live in the City. We all find ourselves having to stop at the signal although some of us may blow through the signal even though you're supposed to stop. We're struggling to find a way to create an uninterrupted flow and create the ideal People's Pike from the Lincoln Street neighborhood, through the Beacon Park Yard, jumping up over Soldiers Field Road, and touching down on the River side. We face many of the challenges you mentioned and we are questioning tunnels. We don't want to have long tunnels, they are unsafe. I'd be more than happy to talk about it on October 15th if that's what people want.²
- C: FS: One thing that I think would be helpful if you included on the map and I know you often like to say things are part of a different project but the Secretary committed to the underpasses that allows the Paul Dudley White Path to be a fully separated path for bicycles and pedestrians all the way from the Science Museum to the Watertown town line. That is a dramatic commitment that hasn't been released to the public but a lot of the people in this room are aware of. At night you're still going to have to make sure there are some police present but the question is do you need two of the same thing or is it ok for the People's Pike to have signals.
- C: El: With that I think we'll wrap up. Thanks everyone, we will leave material in the back of the room.

Next Steps

The next taskforce meeting will be held at **6PM on Wednesday, October 15th at the Fiorentino Community Center**. The Fiorentino Community Center is located at 123 Antwerp Street in Allston.

² It was generally agreed by nodding of heads that this would be amenable to the taskforce.

Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
George	Batcheher	MassDOT
Joseph	Beggan	Harvard University
Glen	Berkowitz	Taskforce Member
Craig	Cashman	Taskforce Member
Jim	Cerbone	Commonwealth of Massachusetts
Matt	Cuborowski	MassDOT
John	Cusack	Allston Resident
Anthony	D'Isidoro	Taskforce Member
Matthew	Danish	Allston Civic Association
Bill	Deignan	City of Cambridge
Stacey	Donahue	MassDOT
John	Fallon	
Paola	Ferrer	Allston Resident
Nicole	Freedman	Boston Bikes
James	Gillooly	Taskforce Member
Mark	Gravallise	MassDOT
Nancy	Grilk	Office of Environmental and Energy Services
Mark	Handley	Office of City Councilor Ciommo
Bruce	Houghton	Taskforce Member
Marc	Kadish	Taskforce Member
John	Laadt	Mayor's Office of Neighborhood Services
Wendy	Landman	Walk Boston
Robert	LaTremouille	City of Cambridge
Elizabeth	Leary	Taskforce Member
Amitai	Lipton	MassDOT
David	Loutzenheiser	MAPC
Will	Luzier	Allston Resident
Mary	Maguire	Triple AAA
Christine	Marini	BPD
Harry	Mattison	Taskforce Member
Wayne	McKenzie	Allston Resident
Ian	McKinnon	Tetra Tech
Galen	Mook	Taskforce Member
Tom	Nally	Taskforce Member
Paul	Nelson	MASCO
Alana	Olsen	Taskforce Member
Bob	Pessek	Allston Resident
Tad	Read	Boston Redevelopment Authority
Jessica	Robertson	Taskforce Member
Fred	Salvucci	Secretary of Transportation (ret.)
Steve	Silveira	Taskforce Member
Donny	Dailey	MassDOT
Marini	Christine	BPD
David	Watson	MassBike

Appendix 2: Meeting Flipcharts³

Flip Chart 1:

Q: Is South Station mailing list active, nothing new of late.

A: Yes, been working on South Station environmental document, coming about 10 days.

Q: Has there been info shared between projects?

A: Yes. May be small disagreements but can work them out.

Q: Excited on West Station. Access shown on plans not conducive to transit use. How to bring in decking and land use to make it attractive to access.

A: No immediate answer. Land use issue there but not ours since DOT doesn't own land.

Flip Chart 2:

Q: Issue of integrating station into community so we don't have a walk away in the sky.

A: Rail team diving into this, grades and profiles coming tonight. Access has to go across tracks. As Station starts to get defined will get into that.

C: Decking over rail yard safest friendliness

A: Harvard has air rights. DOT team is not looking at deck.

C: We are asking you to look at building the infrastructure.

C: Parcels not decked on CA/T still highway. Afraid station would be used. Wendy says taskforce needs an answer.

C: One BSA charrette showed deck. Want to hear more about that.

Flip Chart 3:

Q: With West Station coming into this, can we be done?

A: West Station not stopping planning in 2 weeks. A lot more public involvement coming in design. Continued process coming.

Q: Please lay out our involvement after this process at the next taskforce session.

A: Already development that.

Q: How paid for on West Station?

A: MA = 1/3, Harvard = 1/3 one more unassigned.

³ To increase accessibility to this document for the visually impaired, transcriptions of the meeting flipcharts have been presented rather than photographs of the charts produced at the meeting. Images of these charts have been made and may be had upon request.

C: Grateful on West Station. Needs to be pleasant to walk to station. Reason for rail yard = storage (yes) why not have more service + less layover.

A: We need the space. No current service plan that gives your answer. Beacon Park Yard is one part of assuming needs.

Flip Chart 4:

C: More off peak service = more ridership and less trains stored. Want columns in rail yard for decking.

A: Yes, definitely looking at that.

Q: What about Grand Junction Line more trains, bicycles and pedestrian.

A: Not as part of this project, creating the vision and extent of service.

Q: Can you tell us what's in the future design?

A: Yes, we'll ship to Chris.

Q: Can I get a straight answer, will any of these reconstruct Cambridge Street overpass?

A: Didn't want to put \$10 million into bridge before finding out if we could keep it. Chris has alternatives which work with both that bridge and without. If we can keep it we will. If we can commit to an alternative which keeps it, we will look at progressing. After ENF comments

Flip Chart 5:

Q: Many of us feel passionately about issues you know little about. What is our method to provide input? Is it just oh well, Okay are we eating broccoli now for dessert next month?

A: All part of design review comments. Got many comments on 9/18, your key themes in there and we are incorporating there. When we get END scope, we can reconvene you and show progressing designs. Not last shot at this.

C: We have contributed to this, we expect a long timeframe. This is an ongoing process. Want a framework for this involvement. Understand your concern Harry, but you laid thus out in slide. These are aim next battle.

Flip Chart 6:

A: 1st hurdle to get over.

C: Tell me about the design phase.

A: We're in concept phase and come a long way.

C: Found out what we can still comment on, what's gone after ENF.

Q: Want to know if Turnpike gets wider? Where does Turnpike come to grade, where is clearance over the tracks established and when does deck come in and how much is there?

A: For next meeting give idea of how taskforce will function going forward and how do we consolidate our comments between sessions.

Q: And what is off the table?

Flip Chart 7:

- A: Width of Turnpike on the list is viaduct configuration. Viaduct stays up beyond tracks and then will drop at 3.5% – 4% (could be 4% - 7%). Preferable at 4% we have 6% and 7% on ramps, but not on mainline for snow, braking, maintenance. Elevation over rails, trying to get as much as we can in terms of cut. VHB reaching task on rails. Some give and take there. Trying to lower rail as it makes our life simpler. MBTA is adamant for 18.5' MBTA likes 22' but we need this for heat dissipation, if they even wanted to go to electrification, they need the space.
- C: All of these things are important, but being defined. Rather than quarterly meetings, until these aspects start to development, if meetings quarterly,

Flip Chart 8:

- C: Continued: say when aspects one solidified and have meetings more closely grouped and give time for community to respond to reassured community they are being heard.
- C: Get list of when people will learn about key elements.
- C: Governor said, "Don't walk away, community wants to stay involved."
- A: ENF in November, bit of rehash for you, not for public. We want all your comments to EOE. That shapes design. Site visit and MEPA hearing early December. January written replies to all comments, then asset alternatives. In 1st quarter layout timeframe for you and EA/EIR development. Open, collaborative process over 2 years. I expect you to stay.

Flip Chart 9:

- Q: When is urban design, place making process?
- A: You would be surprised.
- Q: Do you have plans to add urban designers?
- A: Been working with BRA. BRA and DOT agree that we reflect flexibility. A lot of people thinking on this.
- C: Kairos: agrees this is concept design and BRA comment will address Harry's issues. Environmental certification for CA/T discussed urban design city and state will address it. I encourage us to advance this environmental submission so we can address this. I'd want planner and architect on final design team.

Flip Chart 10:

- Q: Is this project going to final design or design build?
- A: ENF to scope to DEIR and EIR with comment periods. Parallel EA process with hope for FONSI. Current plan is 25% design build. A bit of a misnomer because key things will be further advanced. Flexibility for build, not features. Similar to Long Fellow bridge.
- Q: Want to see more about pulling traffic off north and south roadways.
- A: Not making vehicle connections from Cambridge Street Babcock. Too many property and community impacts.

C: Still want to see more on Linden Street.

A: That space doesn't change. Won't ignore. We will look at it in the EA.

Flip Chart 11:

C: Marc Kadish wants to see vehicular connections to Cambridge Street from Boston University.

C: Concern over Allston Village and large delivery trucks.

C: Want to look at Seattle Street onto North Harvard

Q: What neighborhood is beyond Malvern Street?

A: Houses to the west of there. Pratt Street is one of them.

Q: 2035 traffic volumes, what was increased assumed?

A: CTPS still doing final model 1/4% growth per year 3/4% growth per year on ramps. BSA look includes density. Want to support it but don't want to overbuild Cambridge Street.

C: Over last 10 years, traffic has dropped 10%.

A: This is why FHWA makes us look at congestion trends.

C: Density will reduce trips. Will push walking. Problems with inputs and outputs. Don't see how you can assume valid numbers without Stadium way.

A: That's what north parallel is for

Flip Chart 12:

A: Ned Cod: Trends in VMT of that trend, which is great, but new numbers from past years with increase in VMT. Is it a blip? We don't know yet. More uncertainty, but we need to consider it. Don't want to overbuild and induce traffic. As we narrow alternatives could reduce lanes.

Q: How to go to Saint E's in 1-way? Just a right. SFR use south parallel. All north and south connectors are 2-ways.

Q: Why moved away from North Harvard since dispersing traffic.

A: From strictly traffic makes sense, but trying to protect North Harvard. Also gives us safe distance onto highway.

C: Trend is away from 1-way pairs.

A: Yup, which is why we looked at 2-way.

C: Kairos: But 1-way is more neighborhood street like. Cambridge Western Avenue like this 1-way is most neighborhood like street.

Flip Chart 13:

A: We do agree but 3-J3 could have trees and green median. Ability for parking limited by where turn-lanes are.

C: Kairos: want to see the limited access line.

A: Cambridge Street and north/south parallels when development comes along could put in parking.

C: Kairos: put in parking now and limit it later. Partial to J2 and j3. Want more roads built now. J1 has fewer connects for all modes.

A: That's true.

C: These are streets, not ramps.

A: Doing my best on that but the project has both.

C: Things considered highway access and just parallels to highway. All else is city streets. 10 year trend of traffic is real. Playing a role in shaping future. Can make line go down, can make this smaller.

Flip Chart 14:

Q: Where is limited access line?

A: Still up in the air. Roads could be DOT but maybe not. Will need to demonstrate that design new streets won't back up.

Q: Does concepts preclude future streets.

A: No, but would need to look at future development.

C: Wendy: Wants limited access line at edge of highway.

A: Kairos: Says ok to parking lot this issue and shoot for maximum flexibility.

C: Wendy: Wants to minimize limited access line.

A: Not dictated fully by highway operations. Generally agree with you Wendy. This is ongoing discussion.

C: 3J3, 2-way cycle track on 2-way street unsafe. 3J3 median could come out to be more neighborhood like. Build this for GreenDOT goals.

Q: Do pedestrians have to cross through Turnpike off traffic? Want to see more detail on that.

Flip Chart 15:

Q: What about bicycle and pedestrians matrix?

A: Can do next time.

C: Kairos: E/W roadways. You can imagine aggregating traffic together. Need cross-sections on access roads and disaggregated pedestrian and bicycle connections like West Station access.

A: Send us your ideas. Got to get over railroad tracks. Part of air rights is to provide some connections.

Q: One way or another to mitigate ramp feeling, city needs to fill in the space between. Can make it feel like a hill. Maybe fill spaces with earth.

- A: Kairos: Major urban design consideration. Modeling ways to create natural transition topography. Same advantages in leaving space for parking. Question of detaining transition without waiting for future development. Kairos seems willing to hand shorter, steeper ramps. If flat sections are possible.
- A: Must get across rail yard.
- Q: If we can deck over rail lines would be cool. Thinking of south west corridor when him on site struck by skyline, think about city view shed so viaduct isn't blocking eyesore. Visual gateway to downtown.
- Q: Would you put West Station on North side?
- A: MBTA needs the rail operations where they are. MBTA prefers current layout.
- C: Access to West Station is a challenge. Encourage you to look at ways to get buses in and out maybe 2-way road and think super long term.
- Q: How much does super elevation of highway raise build?
- A: A few feet.
- C: Fred Salvucci: Lots of good stuff. If everyone's interested to have ENF go smooth. Clock ticking here on viaduct. Seek more consensus earlier. Know from BSA power point wants to connect to River. Maybe try to pair this down. Somewhere between south Cambridge and Turnpike frontage road. Shortens stacking room. Please take a stab at putting power point on maps. Important to get that idea out there.
- A: Not easy to incorporate.
- C: I think Fred wants a best shot option at next meeting.
- A: Okay with doing this. This is urban interchange. Introduce signals. Struggling to find uninterrupted route. We'll handle tunnels and not so desirable. Good to look at security issues. To be talked through on the 15th.
- C: Fred Salvucci: Power point could have signals.

Appendix 3: Comments Received

Mike, Ed, and Nate,

Thank you for including the BSA Charette Review in the agenda for tomorrow's meeting. Will this include presentations by the two BSA design teams, and could you share with us approximately how long this segment of the meeting will be?

Regards
Harry

Hi Nate,

Thank you for the agenda.

Could you forward to the Task Force before tomorrow's meeting the current design for Concept 3-J, including plan, section, and three-dimensional views?

Regards
Harry

Good Afternoon Harry,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. I'm in receipt of both of your notes. I will check in with the project team and get back to you.

Regards & Good Wishes,
-Nate

Thanks Nate. There's one more topic about which I've been meaning to follow up with you.

It was suggested recently that rebuilding the Mass Pike viaduct is like making an addition on an old home.

If I was going to put on an addition, I would use insulated walls, storm windows, and GFI plugs. I wouldn't match the old single pane window in the living room that leaks heat like a sieve or the old two prong plugs which won't take a modern device just because the rest of the house has those items in it. The same principle is at work on Allston. You build to current standards, not the old standards elsewhere on the property.

I'd like to take a moment to suggest that this analogy does not apply to this project. Here's why...

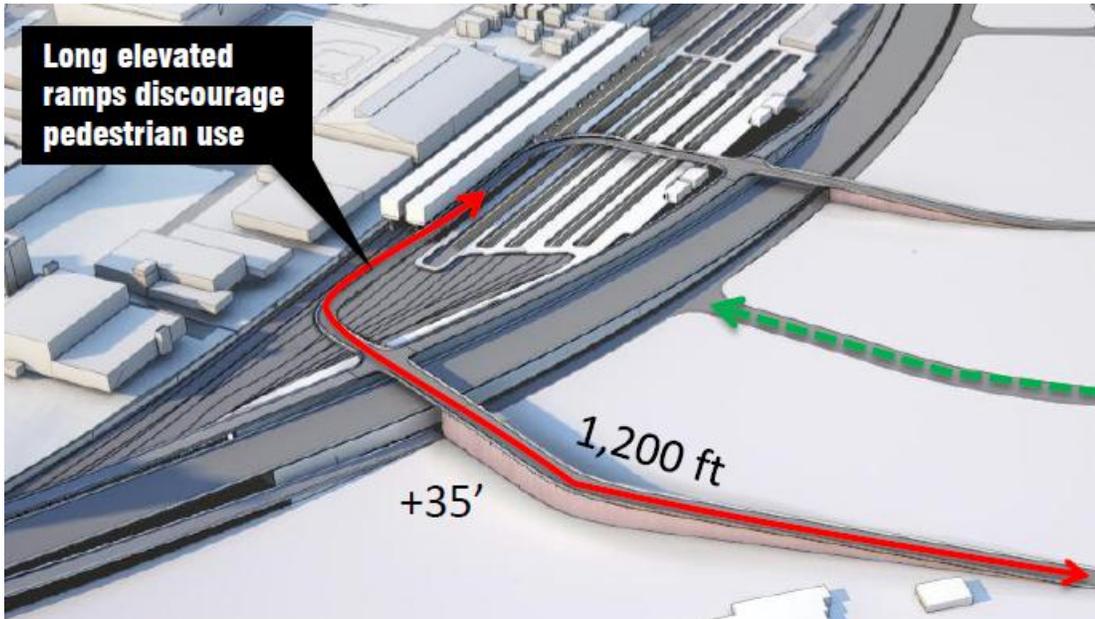
The Mass Pike in Allston is part of a system, which is the Mass Pike Extension from the Weston Tolls to I-93 and the airport. When the system is constrained in one location, that constraint applies to the entire system. Sort of like "a chain is only as strong as its weakest link". Without a feasible scenario to increase the clearance under the Pru and throughout the entire system, it is hard to find any utility of building a higher clearance in the Allston portion of the system.

The clearance at the Prudential Tunnel for rail is 16' 9". Perhaps there are places on the Pike Extension where the rail clearance is even lower. For this project in Allston, my understanding is that MassDOT is using a design clearance for rail of 18' 6", which is 1' 9" higher than the Pru Tunnel.

The Boston Society of Architects teams and others believe that a problem with what we understand to be the current design is the height of the highway west of the viaduct as shown in the image below. We believe that clearances, design speed, and slopes need to be used so that the highway to reach grades while still east of Babcock Street. This would have benefits for cyclists, pedestrians, land use, access to the River, access to West Station, and the decking of the highway and railyard.

It would be an important step forward if MassDOT could find a way to have the highway reach grade east of Babcock Street. Design standards that exceed those elsewhere in the system may be standing in the way of achieving this goal.

Regards
Harry



Hi Nate

Could you please send me PDF copies of all comment letters received by MassDOT at and since the September 18 public meeting?

Thanks
Harry

Michael:

By way of re-introduction, I am the President-elect of the BSA and the organizer of the recent BSA Charrette focused on Beacon Yards. During the Q&A session after the presentation of your consultant team at the September 18th Task Force meeting, I offered to make a "greatest hits" presentation to you and your consultant team at the Transportation Building and you expressed interest.

In addition, we can provide your consultant team a fairly well-worked out Rhino model of one of the recent preferred scenarios.

Let me know if you are still interested in arranging a meeting - and some options to meet.

We have been impressed with the process to date and hope to make meaningful contributions to the discussion as the scheme evolves.

Best regards,
Tim

--

Tim Love
Principal / Utile
50 Summer Street
Boston, MA 02110

Associate Professor / Director of Graduate Programs
151 Ryder Hall
School of Architecture / Northeastern University
Boston, MA 02115

Thanks Tim and I do recall speaking with you.

I am interested in seeing your presentation which unfortunately I was unable to attend on the 18th.

I will coordinate with other team members and get back to you. No doubt there will be ideas that we can take from it to improve our concept during design development stage.

Thanks again,

Mike

Thanks Mike - and I'll bring the Rhino model on a CD too.

And FYI - I am generally NOT available after 11am on Mondays and Thursdays because I teach at Northeastern starting at 11:30am those days.

Good Afternoon Harry,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. It was nice to see you out at the announcement in Beacon Park Yard yesterday afternoon. A solid week prior to today and we'd barely seen a cloud. The one day we want to be nice to stand around outside, down it comes. It almost sounds like a set-up from a Chevy Chase film. With any luck you are staying drier than we both were yesterday. You sent me several emails yesterday, but I am going to combine my reply into one big one so you get all your answers in one shot.

First on the topic of railroad clearances. While I agree with you that generally speaking, a system's capabilities are defined by their weakest link, as you correctly note there is little point in allowing a train access east of Allston just to have it unable to pass through the Prudential Tunnel, there are reasons for designing to modern standards beyond adding height capacity. Adhering to the 18'6" over top-of-rail standard provides an additional margin of safety and comfort. While a train can operate under a 16'9" bridge, it cannot stay there for any period of time without developing a significant bubble of heat trapped between the ground and the underside of the structure. Over the long term, this is not particularly good for the structure. Add to this the heat generated by commuter rail coach air conditioning units and you begin to generate a great deal of warmth indeed. Given that we are now committed to building West Station as part of this project and that we expect to see more rail service through this area with the eventual inauguration of DMU service, this is a very real consideration. All of this is to say that the foot plus difference between 16'9" and 18'6" is about making an investment in the comfort of those waiting for trains and the long term health of the new viaduct structure. This would be especially true if Harvard were to eventually avail themselves of the air rights they retain over the transportation easement and create a deck. Moreover, the general principal in infrastructure construction is to, whenever possible, build to current standards and not continue to build old limitations into new infrastructure regardless of whether that old infrastructure is nearby.

From the rest of your note on this issue, I take it that you are more broadly concerned about the grade of the approach streets up to West Station, their length, and the potential to deck the rail yard area based on the height of the highway. In terms of the grade of approach streets, our whole project team is aware of this issue. During the 10/1 taskforce meeting, we will show you our proposed grades as compared to other streets around Boston and you will see they are not extreme. Everything will be ADA compliant. We have heard from you, Wendy Landman, and other members of the taskforce your concern for lengthy approach streets, but as you saw in our June 25th presentation we have already started working on ways to make these streets a comfortable place for cyclists and pedestrians. This will continue to be developed further as we get into the 25% design process. Lastly, on the issue of decking over the station and rail yard, as part of maximizing the land owner's ability to develop the land in the future, as we would with any project, we will do nothing to obstruct the air rights above the tracks.

On the topic of the BSA charette, members of the project team, including our project manager Mike, have been through the two presentations that all members of the public can see here: <http://www.architects.org/programs-and-events/urban-design-workshops>. Our goal tomorrow is principally to reassure members of the taskforce that nothing we are doing is incompatible with what has been shown in the BSA charette. We do have to be careful, as a project team and agency, about not commenting too much one way or another on the BSA materials since it's not within our purview to say one BSA approach is better or worse than another, but that as with the rest of the land-use discussion our plan is to ensure maximum flexibility.

With regard to concept 3-J, our approach is going to be to share this with everyone tomorrow, at the taskforce meeting, followed by emailing out of a PDF to the taskforce following our session, followed by posting it to the project website. 3J, as you can probably guess by its name, is a continued evolution of the series 3 urban interchanges we have been looking at thus far. The reason we are taking the approach I have outlined above is twofold: one, it allows every taskforce member the opportunity to see the presentation at the same time and with the same narration so that everyone gets the same baseline understanding and two, it allows our hardworking project team the maximum amount of time to continue making refinements to the presentation without muddying the waters on Wednesday night by having to pause and explain where this presentation is different from the one folks saw the day before.

One last item before I bid you a good afternoon until 6PM. All of the comments received between the 18th and 29th of September as part of the comment period associated with the public information meeting will be made available as an appendix to that set of meeting minutes. We'll post them on the website and email them out to the taskforce as we have done with all of the documentation of the taskforce sessions and the initial public information meeting back in April.

Regards & Good Wishes,
-Nate

Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis

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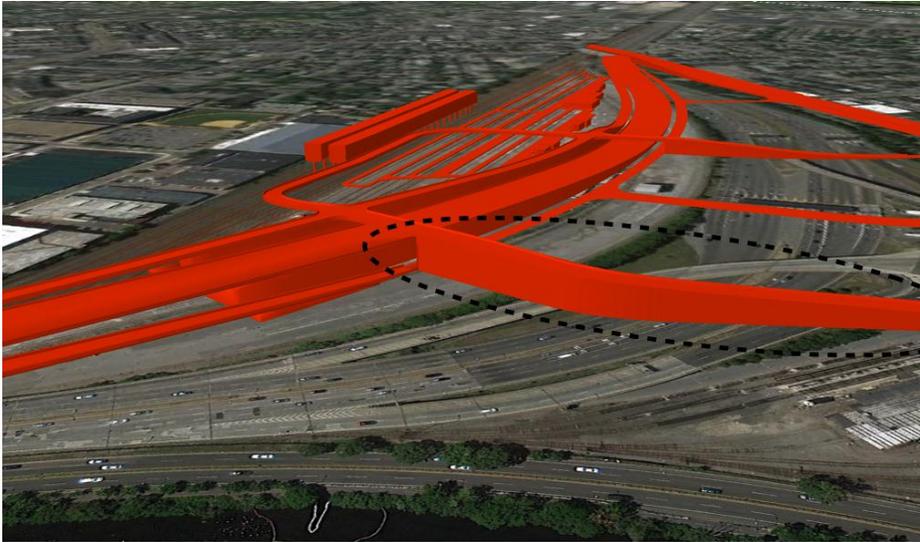
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Please Note Our New Address

Hi Michael,

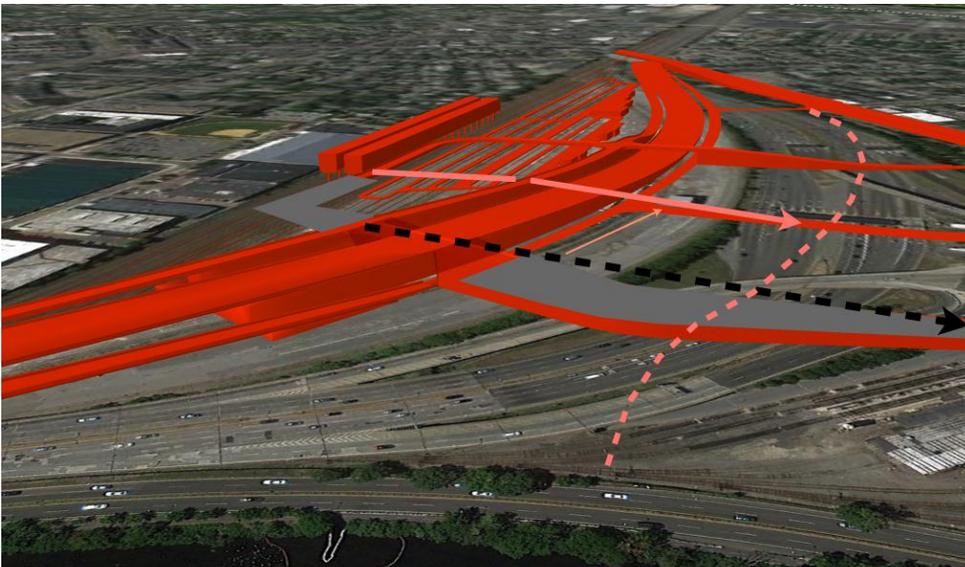
Just a quick follow up to my earlier comment about the ramp design. These two images capture the urban planning dilemma created by the Great Wall as I've taken to calling it. I'm sure there are some logical transportation reasons for deploying the ramps in this manner but the price you pay in term of urban design and place-making is very steep (no pun intended). The BSA model illustrates the problem. I'm sure the team is well aware of this by now and working on it.

Herb



The Great Wall

A three story high ramp wall bisects and disrupts the site



Moving back or eliminating the eastern most ramp

Allows a central boulevard to organize and unify the site

Why are the Task Force meetings invisible on the MassDOT website? I could not find the public Task Force meeting listed anywhere on the MassDOT site, not even the most obvious place, the project web site. These are meetings open to the public and must be noticed on the MassDOT website.

Please post the meeting agendas on the documents page. The meeting "minutes" are very hard to read and don't readily convey the point of the meeting. Having the agenda available would tell what the meeting was about.

Thank you for addressing these requests.

Anne McKinnon

Hello Mr. Curtis;

I am contacting you to see if there are any opportunities to become a member of the task force. It may be too late, but I wanted to inquire.

I am a life-long Cambridge resident -- and a realtor -- with a keen interest in regional, inter-model transportation and housing, and I would welcome the opportunity to be involved in the project in some way.

Please let me know if there is a public meeting coming up.

Thank you

Dave Wood
63 Gorham St.
Cambridge, MA 02138

Hi Nate,

Just some afterthoughts from last night's Task Force meeting.

I want to echo the sentiments of Secretary Salvucci of the need for the process to move forward with the ENF submission in February, 2015 so that the viaduct can be addressed in a timely fashion before it becomes a public safety issue. To do that we need to settle on one core option.

Also, we need consensus as to whether any of the key concepts of an Allston Esplanade can be incorporated in the Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project.

Another key concept which I believe has not been dealt with directly and continues to concern me, is the feeling of some members of the Task Force that a solution should not reflect current and future realities but that a solution should be imposed to facilitate a culture change to more public transportation, pedestrian and bicycle traffic.

There isn't one study I have seen that doesn't acknowledge that the motor vehicle still remains the dominant transportation mode for most U.S. households' everyday activities. One study states that the proportion of U.S. households dependent upon motor vehicles for transportation hasn't changed since 1989, and very likely will not change much by 2025.

According to a MassDOT planning document in 2011, Massachusetts population growth is projected on average at .5% per year (2010-2035) and Boston's population growth is projected on average at .7% per year (2010-2035). If the MassDOT forecast is accurate, there will be an additional 735,000 people in Massachusetts by 2035 with Boston claiming 110,000 of that increase.

According to a MassDOT planning document in 2011, Massachusetts household growth is projected on average at .7% per year (2010-2035) and Boston household growth is projected on average at .8% per year (2010-2035). If the MassDOT forecast is accurate, there will be an additional 434,000 households in Massachusetts by 2035 with Boston claiming 49,300 of that increase. Nationally the ratio of vehicles per household is projected to be constant at two. At the high end could we be looking at an additional 868,00 vehicles on the road by 2035?

Along with baby boomers, a big part of the new urban demographic is the millennials, young professionals between 25 and 35 who don't own cars, are moving back in with their parents or renting, putting off marriage, earning less in income, building less wealth and accumulating excessive student debt. Obviously, public transportation, pedestrian and cycle tracks are extremely important to this group. However at some point they will form households and their transportation preferences will evolve as well.

To summarize, my biggest concern and why we need to be careful in the design is the Commonwealth and Boston's ability going forward to continue to make the public investments that will coordinate the transportation system with the land uses so that people can choose to reduce their reliance on the automobile by living closer to work, living or working close to transit, and living in pedestrian and bicycle friendly areas, i.e., trails and sidewalks.

Political leadership on Beacon Hill and City Hall will change. We can never guarantee that future governors and mayors will share the same enthusiasm for the public investments mentioned above as much as Governor Patrick and Mayor Walsh seem to show today.

Tony D'Isidoro

Good Afternoon Herb,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. Both Mike and I are in receipt of your note and we will pass this on to the project team.

Regards & Good Wishes,
-Nate

Good Afternoon Anthony,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. It was good to see you at the West Station announcement and then just a day later at the October 1st taskforce session. While it can be hard to see it when you're looking at one detail, and then another, and another, and still another on a project such as this, if you think about where we started in April, we are making some real progress.

MassDOT and its project team and in complete agreement with you and Secretary (ret.) Salvucci on the issue of the ENF. We do need to file on the time table we have shared with the taskforce, November 2014, to keep the job rolling along such that the structurally deficient viaduct can be addressed in a timely fashion which does not cost MassDOT undue maintenance costs or the community undue inconvenience when traveling. Also, and this is based on my experience in projects such as these, we are arriving at a point in the project where it is entirely appropriate for us to transition from conceptualization to design. The kinds of things people, both taskforce and community at large, are asking about now, such as the width of bicycle pathways, are typically answered in design. Hanging around in conceptualization is going to keep churning up questions, but it won't give us the answers we need and the community wants. It is time to move ahead. So, we completely agree with you on the issue of pacing.

In terms of the expansion of the Paul Dudley White path, the "Allston Esplanade," it is safe to say that some shifting of Soldiers' Field Road towards Boston University is going to be part of this job when all is said and done. There are some important questions to resolve. As you saw a few taskforce sessions back, we have two options to shift Soldiers' Field Road: one is quite extreme and would require placing columns for the I-90 viaduct in the median of the parkway along with the relocation of an 8' diameter sewer. The other is less extreme and has fewer constructability challenges. This less extreme version still adds a good bit of land, around 1.3 acres of new green space. There is also the issue of providing space below the viaduct for a future double-tracking of the grand junction line. We could achieve this, but it appears thus far that this would come at a cost of having to keep at least a portion of Soldiers' Field Road on its current alignment which translates to less new green space. These are all just the sort of discussions and balancing decisions that get made once a project enters design which just goes to underscore the point I made in the previous paragraph about this project being ready for the next phase of its development.

With regard to the issue of traffic and modeling how much there will be of it in the future, MassDOT and its project team shares your concern. We will develop our picture of future conditions based on not only the work done thus far by Mike Hall (TetraTech) but also on the projections in the CTPS model which Scott Peterson explained to you during the August taskforce meeting. Some very preliminary results from CTPS' modeling effort suggest that Mike Hall's projections may be a bit conservative, that is on the high side, but not substantially so. More on that and from more qualified sources as the project moves ahead. Our project team is aware that there is a real concern in Allston about cut-through traffic and congestion. We want to make the whole project area, particularly Cambridge Street, friendlier for cyclists, pedestrians, and transit users, but we realize that we will still need to move automobiles for the foreseeable future. We want to calm Cambridge Street and integrate it better with the community, but we don't want to create a parking lot.

Your remarks regarding the automobile ownership and life patterns of folks my age certainly hits the nail on the head. Due to hitting both the 2002 and 2008 recessions at key points in our lives, my wife and I had only a single car until 2012. Now she drives to Franklin from Jamaica Plain daily, and what

with my meeting schedule, while I prefer the Orange Line and getting some reading done, I often have to drive up to three days a week. Due to how our own job histories have gone and my wife's student loans, we still haven't crossed the bridge of parenthood, but even that condition is slowly getting to a point where children are actively under discussion. So, while we remain committed to transit, cycling, shopping local, recycling, and you-name-it whatever other carbon lowering behavior you can think up, there are simply days and times when the automobile becomes the best option. It's not the only option, or even the default option. We think about it before reaching for the keys, but some days, it is the most workable option. I would wager that many people my age are in the same boat. Moreover, it is in my opinion a stronger approach to lure people out of their cars with better facilities for non-motorized transport, and I think we agree this project offers much in that direction, than to attempt to force them out by making driving a wretched experience to the potential detriment of the Allston community in the form of congestion and cut-through traffic on residential streets. The point being, as you mention in your note, to get people to choose an option rather than forcing their hand.

So, all of this is to say that in the end, our traffic projections for the future will be driven by modeling and the professional judgment of some very experienced planners and engineers on both the state and consultant side. Our projections will be subject to review during the design period by independent units within MassDOT, the Boston Transportation Department, and since we are dealing with an interstate highway, the Federal Highway Administration. All of those entities will want to see the modeling and the math in detail.

I hope all of this is reassuring. I don't know if you've been a part of one of these processes before, but if you haven't, some things can seem quite concerning to the uninitiated. Since they are our daily bread, we can sometimes magnify that sense of concern by appearing thoroughly at ease when such concerns are at their most intense for the average community member, but rest assured we hear you and are right there with you. We want to get this right just as much as you do and are daily doing our best in that direction. I hope this helps to ease your worries. I'll see you on the 15th.

Regards & Good Wishes,
-Nate

Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis

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Please Note Our New Address

Good Afternoon Dave,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. I do hope you will call me Nate in future correspondences. Mr. Curtis is my dad and he is incidentally named David, known to friends as Dave and there we have a very nice loop.

As you correctly suggest it is a little late for you to join the taskforce. The taskforce was configured by MassDOT with input from local officials back in March and April and met for the first time in May. It has met eight times to date and will be wrapping up its current phase of work at the end of this month or very early next. Cambridge is ably represented by municipal staff member Bill Deignan and if you have questions or concerns specific to Cambridge, you may ask them of me or take them to him. While it is getting pretty late in the taskforce process, it is far from late in the overall Allston Interchange project.

The next major public involvement milestone will be the environmental (MEPA) site walk and public meeting which we anticipate in late November or early December. That site walk/meeting combination will include a public comment period. Once that has been completed, we expect to launch a series of quarterly public information meetings to keep the community involved while we work through the project's design. Those meetings will include opportunities for the community to contribute both written and verbal comments. We will likewise continue to keep the website up-to-date and answer any emails we receive just as I am doing with you now. To ensure you receive notifications about these upcoming meetings, I have already put your name and contact information into our stakeholder database.

I hope all of that is helpful and gives you a sense that there is still plenty of time and space for you to be involved with this project. Should you have any other questions or concerns, please feel free to be in touch with me by telephone or email.

Regards & Good Wishes,
-Nate

Good Afternoon Anne,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. Thank you for your recent inquiry. Your suggestions regarding the posting of taskforce meeting listings is noted. I have received and forwarded to MassDOT's web unit through the appropriate channels the request to place a calendar on the I-90 Allston Interchange website from yourself and one other individual a week or so ago and I understand that such a change is forthcoming. As I do not control the website or MassDOT's web folks, I cannot say exactly when it will be added, but it is on its way and I can raise the issue again at our next internal coordination meeting. One tool that is immediately at my disposal is placing your email address in our stakeholder database for the project. Individuals in the database receive notice of the taskforce meetings along with taskforce members.

With regard to posting the agendas, I would be pleased to forward them to MassDOT's web unit for posting with the materials for each meeting. To date, I have received no other concerns regarding the quality of the meeting documentation, but if you feel having the agendas present would assist you in developing a thorough understanding of the project, I can take care of that promptly, though as noted above it may take some time for the web unit to work its magic.

Regards & Good Wishes,

Michael:

Any progress getting a meeting in the works? My students at Northeastern are tackling West Station with some rigor relative to road access and grades. Their studies might be useful for your team to see too.

Best,
Tim

Good Morning Tim,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. Yesterday, Mike (copied) directed me to get in touch with you regarding setting up a session for you to share your thoughts and findings with our project team. Would you be available on either the morning of Tuesday, October 21st or Wednesday, October 22nd?

Regards & Good Wishes,
-Nate

Nate:

They both work, with a slight preference for the morning of October 21st. Let me know if you would like to schedule an informal call in advance of the meeting to discuss any specific issues you would like me to focus on relative to the proposal.

Best,
Tim

Good Afternoon Tim,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. I'm please to say you get your wish – the 21st it is. We'd like to invite you to come to MassDOT at 10 Park Plaza at 9AM on the 21st. 10 Park Plaza is a big place and as we get closer to the date, I'll be back to you with a room number. If you would, please confirm that the date/time work for you.

Regards & Thanks,
-Nate

Great, confirming the 21st at 9am!

Hello Nate,

Thanks very much for the very thorough and informative response. I will plan to attend the site walk/meeting. It will be a good entry point to getting involved in the project. My interest is in how the new entry and exit ramps in Cambridge and on Storrow Dr. will be configured. I know that Sen. Brownsberger is working on that issue and has some upcoming meetings.

I'm also interested in the Beacon Park rail yard/West Station development and the potential use for the grand junction line into Cambridge.

It's amazing how those projects will transform the area. Who would believe there were once rail yards where the Prudential Center is now!

Perhaps our paths will cross as the project moves forward.

Regards,

Dave

Good Afternoon Dave,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. You're quite welcome for the "thorough and informative response." Any time I get that in my response email from a community member I feel as though I have done my job right for the day.

With regard to the current thinking on the connections to Cambridge Street, Soldiers Field Road, and Cambridge itself, I would invite you to check out the most recent presentations on our documents page: <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/HighlightedProjects/AllstonI90InterchangeImprovementProject/Documents.aspx>. I know that the connections into Cambridge are of significant concern to many Cambridge residents, but at the time we are not considering any changes to the two connection points adjacent to the project, the River Street and Western Avenue Bridges, as part of this job. A member of Senator Brownsberger's staff sits on our taskforce and his office has been kept up to date on our progress.

As I will attend the MEPA site walk and hearing I imagine that we will cross paths in the not too distant future.

Regards & Good Wishes,
-Nate

Thank you. I hope this finds you happy and having a swell day. Your putting my name on the Task Force mailing list is helpful to me personally, but does nothing to help others. MassDOT's charge is to make it easy for those who normally don't attend public meetings, etc. to participate. Failing to notice meetings and sending an e-mail a day in advance is completely against MassDOT's guidelines.

I would have expected posting all meeting materials including agendas to be standard practice. There is a reason the Open Meeting Law requires agendas in advance of meetings (so you can decide whether or not to attend, or the topics that require their priority attention!) and a reason it requires all materials used at meetings to be listed and made available. Even though these meetings are unfortunately not covered by the Open Meeting Law, full disclosure is what MassDOT is asking for to make it easier and more attractive for those who usually don't participate.

I advocate for everyone who might be interested and not know how to find out this information, not just myself. Pushing back and being defensive is not appropriate.

Anne McKinnon

Nate:

Thanks for the reminder.

We sent the attached comments on the public meeting presentation to MassDOT.

Tom Nally

Thomas J. Nally
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COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS
MASSACHUSETTS DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION
HIGHWAY DIVISION
ALLSTON I-90 INTERCHANGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECT
ALLSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

This sheet is provided for your comments. Your input is solicited and appreciated.

Please return your sheet, with comments, to a staff member at the meeting, or mail to Patricia Leavenworth, P.E., Chief Engineer, Massachusetts Department of Transportation, Highway Division, 10 Park Plaza, Suite 3170, Boston, Massachusetts 02116-3973.

I was in attendance at the public meeting held on Thursday night, September 18, 2014 at the Jackson Mann Community Center. The presentation provided a good summary of the work of the design team and the Task Force to date and drew a range of comments from the public. The presentation provided a concise overview of issues raised in the Task Force meetings that have been addressed by the design team. I would like to add the following general and specific comments.

Option 3I was presented as the best solution devised so far from a traffic standpoint.

The traffic benefits of the proposed connections from the interchange roads to and from Soldiers Field Road north and south of Cambridge Street that will simplify the signalization and reduce the volume in the intersection at the end of the River Street Bridge seem to be worthwhile.

3I does place the proposed West Station in the best location between Malvern Street and Babcock Street adjacent to less sensitive uses operated by Boston University rather than next to residential uses. The method for providing access to West Station over the rail yard, however, needs further development. The bridge over the Turnpike mainline and the rail yard using the same access roads as the ramp traffic shown in this option may not be desirable, particularly if delays on the ramps lead to delays approaching or leaving the station. It may be preferable to provide a connection for pedestrians, bicycles, and buses separate from the interchange ramp and connecting road system. Access from and to a location farther west may allow a lower bridge if the Turnpike mainline is at grade at that point rather than on an embankment.

From the small scale illustration drawn on the aerial view of the entire site, it is difficult to visualize and understand how the grade separated eastbound and westbound ramp system is intended to function

spatially. It would be very helpful to see larger scale sections and perhaps a model or axonometric drawing that will show the elevation differences for the Turnpike mainline, ramps and connecting roads, and the service roads in relation to the adjacent ground plane and the rail yard. We need to better understand the implications of required vertical clearances, roadway grades, and potential for nearby development. It is very difficult to picture the critical details from the small scale illustrations, even for those of us trained to think in three dimensions. It is difficult to offer well-conceived alternatives if we cannot see the constraints clearly.

The connecting roadways across the site should continue to align with the future Stadium Way and East Drive to reduce turning movement lanes on Cambridge Street and divert north-south through traffic from local residential streets.

It is important to eliminate, or at least significantly reduce, the barrier effect caused by the elevated connecting roads (shown in blue) that cross the site north of the Turnpike mainline to allow more unobstructed land for development. The issue of too much height above grade of these elevated roadways can be addressed by: 1) reducing the height of the mainline, 2) slightly raising the plane of the land to be developed between the Turnpike mainline and Cambridge Street, 3) accommodating any required grade change parallel to the Turnpike mainline in a retained fill embankment or partially depressed segment, or 4) considering alternatives to the grade separated eastbound and westbound ramps.

A preferable solution would be to bring the mainline to grade off the viaduct over the railroad as far to the east as possible. This would keep the elevation of any bridges required over the mainline as low as possible and reduce the length of transitions from the surrounding ground plane to the bridges.

If traffic volumes can be accommodated with signalized intersections, and perhaps with more lanes for storage, as an alternative to the grade separated eastbound and westbound ramps, I have two suggestions on how to connect the eastbound mainline, with the basic assumption that the ramps and any necessary grade changes in the service roads take place parallel to the mainline.

The first option would place both eastbound and westbound mainlines at grade for most of their length up to the viaduct on the east, with eastbound off and on ramps and a service road to the north between eastbound and westbound mainline. The service road would slope down to allow the connecting road to pass under the westbound mainline to a depressed service road north of the westbound mainline rising to grade at the connecting roads. A less desirable second option would have the westbound mainline slightly raised on retained fill, eastbound ramps and service road as described above, and slightly depressed with connecting roads under the raised westbound mainline. The first option has an advantage of placing more of the roadway system at grade, generating lower long term maintenance and replacement costs.

The idea of a new roadway parallel to Cambridge Street may reduce traffic volumes on that street, although for the benefit of future development, it may be preferable to keep most of the through traffic in both directions on Cambridge Street if the impact of traffic on the adjacent neighborhood can be buffered or mitigated.

A next step in the refinement of the 3I option should be to overlay the street grid concept devised by the City of Boston as well as the NBBJ led alternative prepared for the Boston Society of Architects September 18 design charrette, which is similar in some respects. The BSA concept of a Commonwealth Avenue Mall model with a pair of paths, one each for bicycles and pedestrians, for the shared use path across the site seems worthy of further study. Both street grid options should be evaluated for compatibility with the option 3I street network.

The design team with the Task Force should continue to develop methods for increasing open space along the Charles River bank by the possible relocation of Soldiers Field Road in coordination with the Turnpike viaduct reconstruction.

Finally, regarding bus access between the Commonwealth Avenue side of the site and the proposed West Station, and the connection to the Longwood area, much work was done in 2008 to develop alignment options as part of the Urban Ring RDEIR/DEIS. It is worth revisiting that work in light of the changes proposed for the Turnpike viaducts and potential relocation of Soldiers Field Road to determine the potential location and form of a connection for the Urban Ring Corridor which MEPA requires to be preserved. The results of this analysis should be shared with the Task Force.

A Better City believes that providing a bus connection between West Station and the Commonwealth Avenue side will be important for regional and local public transportation. Implementation of the 2008 plan or adoption of an alternate route may provide one means for attaining that end.

In summary, our comments are:

- Keep the connections to Soldiers Field Road north and south of Cambridge Street.
- Consider a connection from the north to West Station at a point west of the current proposed location, and separate that connection from the roads serving the ramps.
- Provide larger scale sections and axonometric views of the grade separated ramps and roadways crossing the Turnpike mainline.
- Continue to consider how to connect ramp traffic to the future Stadium Way and East Drive to divert traffic from existing residential local streets.
- Eliminate or reduce the barrier effect caused by elevated connecting roads across the site.
- Consider other alternatives to the grade separated ramps and roadways.
- Evaluate options that vary the relationship of the mainline at or above grade and ramps and service roads at or slightly depressed from grade.
- Continue to consider the function of a parallel roadway south of Cambridge Street.
- Overlay the local street grids proposed by the City of Boston and the Boston Society of Architects on the Option 3I roadway network.
- Develop methods for increasing open space along the Charles River bank and coordination of Soldiers Field Road and Turnpike viaduct reconstruction.
- Consider how to connect bus operations to and from the south to West Station and how to incorporate elements from the Urban Ring Locally Preferred Alternative right of way.

We recommend that in addition to the proposed quarterly public meetings, the Task Force should continue to meet regularly during the life of the project, and additional hands-on workshops should be held to allow in-depth exploration of specific issues.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer these comments.

September 30, 2014

NAME: Thomas Nally

ADDRESS: 33 Broad Street, Suite 300, Boston, MA 02109

TITLE: Planning Director

ORGANIZATION: A Better City

6136/2 aitrp930

Hi Nathaniel,

I live in the area of the proposed Mass Pike improvements including the new West Station. I would like to be added to any informational mailing lists related to the Allston I-90/West Station project.

Additionally, I have a question: in the presentation linked to below I see that slide 33 discusses option 3I which includes pedestrian connections being made between West Station and the Commonwealth Ave. side of the Mass Pike. Has this design option been selected? If not, I would like to note my strong support of these pedestrian connections under whichever plan is selected as it will make the station far more accessible and useful to residents and visitors of Boston (south of the Pike) and Brookline.

http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Portals/8/docs/HighlightedProjects/AllstonInterchange/pubMeeting_091814.pdf

Thank you,
Joshua Benedikt
6 Hamilton Rd #2, Brookline

Good Afternoon Josh,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. As mentioned in my earlier note your information has been added to our stakeholder database and you will begin receiving project emails.

I see from your link that you were looking at our September 18th public information meeting presentation. In that presentation, we used what we call Option 3I to introduce some of the elements we have been considering with our taskforce to the community. All of our option 3 series of interchange concepts are all variants on an "urban interchange" type which packs the highway infrastructure into a smaller space, slowing traffic as it transitions onto city streets and generally taking up less room for roadway transportation. 3I was and is one of many concepts we have considered, but since September 18th, we have evolved onto concept 3J which you can see in our October 1st presentation:

http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/Portals/8/docs/HighlightedProjects/AllstonInterchange/task_Presentation100114.pdf

At present, we have not settled on just which option or options from our suite of urban interchanges we will take into our environmental filings. The good news from your perspective is that MassDOT is committed to providing the bicycle and pedestrian connections from the area around Boston University over to Cambridge Street that you saw in the September 18th presentation paired with option 3I regardless of which interchange replacement we ultimately select. Indeed, several options which would work from a traffic perspective but did not allow for those connections to be made have been discarded by MassDOT and its project team from further consideration. Your strong support for these connections is noted, appreciated, and shared by MassDOT. Should you have any further questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to be in touch by telephone or email.

Regards & Good Wishes,
-Nate

hi Nathan, I hope you are well. You may have heard about the Charles R Basin Connectivity Study that Alta and Halvorson are finishing up for MassDOT and DCR. Anyhow, the de facto ped/bike/trail master plan includes a map showing our recommendations for trail enhancements in the vicinity of the BU Bridge/River Street Bridge stretch of the Charles River. Is there a preferred plan yet in the works for the I-90 interchange project? At the very least, I will include a fat dashed line around the interchange/rail yards site and label as "ongoing I-90 interchange study"...however, if there is a draft design alternative that has been shown to the public, I'd prefer to include that (especially if it may have some impact on our path recommendations along the south bank of the river). Let me know.
thanks!
-Phil

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**** Please note our new address and office phone number ****

Creating active communities where bicycling and walking are safe, healthy, fun, and normal daily activities

Good Afternoon Phil,

I hope this note finds you well and having a good day. Thank you for your recent inquiry regarding the I-90 Allston Interchange Improvement Project's associated bicycle and pedestrian improvements. As you have probably seen in the materials available at the project website, MassDOT and its project team view the Allston Interchange Improvement as a multimodal job with vehicular, non-motorized, and transit components. I would also underscore that at present, our project is at something less than 10% design so what I can tell you is perforce still a sketch.

While this is a generalization, our project sees approximately three major zones of bicycle and pedestrian improvement as part of the larger Allston job: along Cambridge Street between the Cambridge Street viaduct and the Charles River, through the interchange parcel itself, and then along the Paul Dudley White bicycle path roughly speaking adjacent to the I-90 viaduct. On Cambridge Street, we anticipate creating a new bicycle accommodation, most likely a cycle track, on either side of the street which would bring cyclists down to the river where they could either cross into Cambridge or access the Paul Dudley White path. In the interchange parcel itself, we expect to create a shared use path running from approximately Lincoln Street out to the Paul Dudley White path via a new pedestrian/bicycle overpass which will cross Soldiers' Field Road and land on the riverbank in a similar fashion to those further to the east in the Back Bay. The exact touch down point of this structure will be determined as we transition the project into design. In the vicinity of the I-90 Allston viaduct, we believe we will be able to shift some portion of Soldier's Field Road under the rebuilt highway bridge with the resulting newly available space returned to the green space associated with the Charles River reservation. Exactly how much new space can be created and how we will allocate it between passive green space and active area for use by cyclists and pedestrians will likewise be determined during the upcoming design process.

As you can see from the above paragraph, as your work is achieving fruition, ours is really just starting, but I hope what I have outlined above gives you enough information on which to hang your hat. Should you require anything further, please don't hesitate to be in touch by telephone or email.

Regards & Good Wishes,
-Nate

Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis

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Please Note Our New Address

ok, this is very helpful. thanks NAte
-Phil