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To: Mike O'Dowd  
Project Manager

Date: January 10, 2017

From: Hannah Brockhaus  
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HSH Project No.: 2013061.14

Subject: MassDOT – Highway Division  
Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project  
Public Information Meeting 5  
Meeting Notes of December 8, 2016

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## Overview

On December 8, 2016 members of the Allston I-90 Interchange Improvement Project team and MassDOT staff associated with the job held the public meeting. Generally speaking, the task force membership is reflective of the initial task force with the addition of representatives from the Charles River Watershed Association as well as newly seated members in replacement for previously seated organizations.<sup>1</sup> The task force 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 task force is, through the application of its members' in-depth knowledge, to assist and advise MassDOT in determining a single preferred alternative to be selected by the Secretary of Transportation for documentation in a joint Environmental Assessment and Environmental Impact Report (EIR) document.

In the meeting documented herein, the project team presented concept 3K refinements, following a brief presentation by Tad Read of the Boston Planning and Development Agency regarding the results of the placemaking study conducted over the course of 2016. The concept refinements include: the I-90 turnpike and Soldiers Field Road have been realigned, new at-grade pedestrian and bicycle connection to Dr. Paul Dudley White (PDW) Path, widened open space and PDW path, three North/South streets accommodated, and reduced rail layover capacity. These elements have been incorporated primarily in response to the Boston Planning and Development Agency (BPDA and

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<sup>1</sup> A listing of task force membership can be found at:  
<http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/HighlightedProjects/AllstonI90InterchangeImprovementProject/TaskForceMembers.aspx>

formerly BRA) place making study for the Beacon Park Yard area which was completed in 2016. Documentation of the public process associated with the place making study can be found at: <http://www.massdot.state.ma.us/highway/HighlightedProjects/AllstonI90InterchangeImprovementProject/Documents.aspx>.

Public feedback was mixed, with positive commentary regarding the realignment of Soldiers Field Road, inclusion of an at-grade “People’s Pike” from Lower Allston to the River and increased open space near the river. Cambridge residents questioned the elimination of the River Street on ramp, requesting further information and a Cambridge briefing. Project team members noted that a Cambridge echo briefing is scheduled for January, 2017. This concern is shared by other members of the Cambridge community who have been in touch with the project via email.

Another point of contention was the recommendation of and subsequent inclusion of a direct connection to North Harvard Street. Several community members noted their concerns, particularly as North Harvard is currently not only a major vehicle route, but also receives heavy MBTA bus and commercial traffic. Project team members noted that, while this element of the design is pending further study which has been requested by BPDA in their place-making effort, the current thinking is that with three North/South connector roads from the BPY area, including one to Western Avenue open to general traffic, North Harvard will be bypassed in favor of this more direct route. A related request was a commercial vehicle plan for the corridor; however this was in relation to heavy commercial traffic on the final block of Harvard Avenue where it meets Cambridge Street. It is worth noting that this block of Harvard Avenue is nearly entirely small retail and heavily dependent on frequent deliveries by truck.

Several community and Task Force members highlighted their concerns regarding press and hearsay about West Station’s inclusion in the project. Project Manager Mike O’Dowd clarified for the public and the press that all components are still elements of the planning and permitting for the project, which will go through the Draft Environmental Impact Report. Members of the Task Force and larger community urged that multi-modal elements as early constructed items of the plan, citing as an example the Central Artery project and the transit elements of that plan that still haven’t been constructed, and suggesting that they would be considered construction mitigation for the neighborhood.

Task Force members, as well as the project team, reminded the community that the next major feedback opportunity would be public comment on the Draft Environmental Impact Report. They specifically called out that they would be looking for people’s views on bicycle accommodations in the three throat options.

# Agenda

- I. Welcome & Introductions
- II. Remarks from BPDA on Placemaking Study Results
- III. Discussion of Concept 3K Refinements
  - a. Placemaking Study Elements
  - b. Franklin Street Footbridge
  - c. Vehicular connection between Cambridge St. and Commonwealth Ave. via West Station
- IV. On-Going Public Outreach
- V. Discussion/Questions/Answers

We invite elected officials to speak first

## Detailed Meeting Minutes<sup>2</sup>

C: Michael O’Dowd (MOD): Good evening ladies and gentlemen. I’m Michael O’Dowd with MassDOT Highway Division. We’re here to discuss the Allston Interchange Improvement Project, which many of you are very familiar with. You’ve either attended taskforce meetings or other public information meetings over the last several years. The idea tonight is to bring you up to speed on where we’ve come in the past year. I mean that literally, because it’s been exactly one year since the last public information meeting here at this auditorium. I welcome you all here tonight. I know many of you have other places you’d rather be, but we do appreciate you all coming out. Your feedback is very important for us to ensure that this is a successful project for MassDOT and for the community.

Over the last twelve months we’ve been meeting extensively with the city, with what was formerly the BRA and is now the BPDA. We’ve also been meeting with the Boston Transportation Department, and various stakeholders including Boston University and Harvard University, as well as public officials. The idea is that when we last had this public information meeting, the city planners were communicating to you that a placemaking study would be undertaken which was just getting started. Over the last twelve months, coordination efforts have been focused on taking the results of that study that was conducted, and integrating lot of very good ideas and suggestions that came out of report into the concepts you saw a year ago. I think you’ll be pleased, I know that the taskforce members were when we met with them. They

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<sup>2</sup> Herein “C” stands for comment, “Q” for question and “A” for answer. For a list of attendees, please see Appendix 1. For received comments, please see Appendix 2.

were very pleased with the efforts undertaken by DOT to be able to take those suggestions from the city and put them into the concepts being advanced forward.

Tonight, Tad Read is with us from the BPDA. He will be providing you with a brief presentation about the placemaking effort that was undertaken by the city. In addition, Chris Calnan, from Tetra Tech, who's under contract with MassDOT and is the lead design engineer, will be giving a presentation on where we stand currently with the latest concepts and what our next efforts will be advancing the concept forward through the Draft Environmental Impact Report (DEIR) process. It's going to be an extensive document with a lot of information that needs to be assessed and reported back. The point being that we want to solicit as much feedback as we can from you, so that we can make that a more thorough and detailed report. I would ask that you hold any of your questions until our presenters have had an opportunity to do a thorough and complete presentation, at which point you will have an opportunity to ask, and as has always been the case, we won't leave here tonight until you have all the answers you need to any outstanding questions you may have. There have been a lot of reports in the newspapers, and through social media. I want to make sure you are fully knowledgeable about this project, what is being advanced forward. Later on when you do stand up and ask your questions, I would ask that you direct your name towards our transcriptionist over on the left side in the corner. They will be taking a verbatim transcript of tonight's meeting. In addition, if you haven't signed in with Nate and Hannah at the head table, I would ask that you please sign in before you leave, and leave your contact information. Our database is continuously getting populated, and it's a good way for us to stay in touch with you for future public meetings.

As I mentioned, the placemaking report has been very useful for us. Task Force members were very vocal and concerned that DOT hadn't taken the appropriate steps to consider the community's concerns, and how we're going to integrate the neighborhood and the community into this major complex project of realigning I-90, correcting deficiencies in the viaduct structure, looking at improvements being made in Allston Beacon Park Yards, the future development of West Station for commuter rail, and a layover yard for the MBTA commuter rail purposes. There's a lot of information. We have received a lot of inquiries from the city, and they are very serious about staying involved with us every step of the way. Currently, Chris' team and MassDOT are modeling the entire area for the scope of the project for traffic purposes. We had done that, originally, about two years ago, to evaluate some of the early concepts we had, but now after completion of this study with the city, there have been some tweaks and concept refinements made, so it's required to re-analyze how the traffic will impacted as a result. The evaluation of the traffic will be continuously ongoing every couple of months, and then using that information to assess the environmental impact, as well as air quality, noise quality impacts so

that can be communicated back to you in the DEIR. With that said, I don't want to hold up anyone longer than we need to tonight. I'm going to introduce Tad Read, from the BPDA.

*Remarks from BPDA on Placemaking Study Results*

C: Tad Read (TR): Thanks Mike. Good evening everyone. As Mike said I'm with the Boston Planning and Development Agency. I'm looking into the audience and seeing that at least half of you I don't usually see at Task Force meetings, which is a good thing because it means others are looking to get informed about the project. I also want to acknowledge that we've been working closely with our partners in the Boston Transportation Department. Bill Conroy and Jim Gillooly are here tonight and they've been close partners on the placemaking study. That's what I wanted to talk to you about tonight. Many of you are familiar with this but some of you are not, so I'd like to let you know a little bit about it.

I'm going to give you a little background on the report, talk about the city's goals, and talk about what we're calling the transformative placemaking recommendations, which are the really significant recommendations, and then finally talk a little bit about a letter that we submitted with the report that contains some additional requests.

It's important to note that this study was suggested and funded by MassDOT. It was a generous offer. This is not a plan, it's an evaluation of the design intended to make sure the design does not preclude a good placemaking. Good placemaking meaning making sure that a great neighborhood can eventually materialize at this location. Just want to let you know that you will see an updated interchange design this evening. What we evaluated in the placemaking study was the iteration of the design from approximately one year ago, which was called 3K-4 – that's the image on the screen now. Also in terms of orientation, most images I'm going to show you this evening are based on this image. We've taken the prior image and put the river on the north side of it. This allows you to see more easily the three dimensional components of the design. In other words, there are portions of the design that are elevated, and by positioning it at this angle, you're able to see it more clearly.

This study has the input of multiple stakeholders – the Allston I-90 task force being one of the most significant, but also there's been input from other community members, including advocacy groups, neighborhood groups, and of course other significant stakeholders such as Harvard University, Boston University, the Department of Conservation and Recreation, and many others - too many to list. When we started the study, we weren't starting from a blank slate. There have been approximately three years of planning on this project and MassDOT and the City have heard a lot of great ideas, and this encapsulates a lot of the key ideas that we heard.

People wanted to see an integrated open space network, along with an expanded riverfront park. They wanted a shared use path from Allston to the River, commonly known as the People's Pike. They wanted a high quality multimodal transit station at West Station. They wanted to look at three alternatives for the throat section – that's from the BU Bridge to roughly the beginning of Beacon Park Yards. They wanted a walkable pedestrian oriented environment. They wanted other neighborhoods that were separated by Beacon Park Yards to be reunited. They wanted connections, for example, between the BU area and the north Allston area. They wanted to take advantage of decking opportunities to create air rights development, wanted to see a transformation of Cambridge Street. They wanted to make sure that if there were any temporary conditions that they were high quality conditions, and they wanted to see high quality transit service. Those were perhaps the most salient suggestions that we had already heard. We did not start from scratch.

This design evolved a lot. We have to give MassDOT credit for evolving the design significantly from the very beginning. These are eight images here that I'm toggling back and forth between. It went from exploring a suburban design to an interchange, to being more urban, more grid-like, resembling a traditional street grid much more. That happened over the course of a year and a half of the initial design. It did assume eventually a more traditional grid street pattern, which accommodated multimodal streets (meaning multimodal streets, not just for vehicles, but also pedestrians and bicycles). To their credit, a lot of this was incorporated into the plan, at the community's request and recommendation. The city's Complete Streets guidelines are identified and reflected in the document as well as separated bicycle lanes, the inclusion of West Station, which was not in the plans initially, was added. Multimodal connections to the Charles River, which is the People's Pike, was added in, and the list goes on. A lot changed in the design as a result of DOT's listening and responsiveness. The design eventually included a new pedestrian bridge at Franklin Street, additional parkland along the Paul Dudley White Path, and I'll talk a little more about most of these later.

Again, the purpose of this study is to not create a plan but evaluate the existing plan to make sure a new walkable, mixed use, human scale district could happen here. The placemaking report also includes some recommendations for the MEPA filing, the draft EIR, which is important and I'll come back to that. It also includes some considerations for master planning that will happen at a later date, and can be used to evaluate the design going forward. I'm going to be focusing on what we're calling transformative standards. These are the recommendations that will require significant redesign. Many of these recommendations, we're very happy to say, have been incorporated by MassDOT – you'll be hearing more about that after I speak. The city is not agnostic on this. Based on all the feedback, we did identify three major goals for the

design. One, the creation of a dynamic, mixed use, transit oriented development district with strong connections to the Charles River and between neighborhoods with mixed use development and a walkable human scale; two, the significant expansion of regional transit service. Three, important to everyone, enhancement of interstate reliability, including replacing the obsolete viaduct and adding the new automated toll system. To get into the transformative recommendations, the first one calls for adding connections at Soldiers Field Road that didn't exist in the 3K-4 design from about a year ago. That meant adding new connections between the interchange and Soldiers Field Road: one connection going toward downtown, northbound, and another connection coming southbound off Soldiers Field Road. This simplifies this intersection, and it removes the southbound off-ramp which frees up space for the Paul Dudley White Path. It also puts traffic directly from Soldiers Field Road onto the interchange, and this decongests, removes congestion from Cambridge Street, so we think there are significant benefits. The additional benefits to this are creating new connections would liberate parcels in this corner for more effective real estate development. Another very significant recommendation of the placemaking study was to realign Soldiers Field Road and let it swing wider inward. That creates space for a new open space along the edge of the Charles River, an aspiration that the community has effectively called the Charles River Esplanade. Another recommendation is this - an at grade connection over Soldiers Field Road into this new open space at street level. The prior design included one that was elevated into that park. We're suggesting that more people would use it and it would be easier to cross if it were at grade.

C: John Allen (JA): The microphone is too close to your mouth, it's getting louder and louder.

A: TR: Is this good? Another recommendation of the placemaking study was to create a new roadway connection from approximately the Cambridge Street Bridge to West Station. The benefit of this is two-fold: one is that it allows traffic from the Allston area to get direct access to West Station, and perhaps more significantly, the I-90 interchange more directly without Cambridge Street. It helps to remove some traffic from Cambridge Street. It also creates an opportunity for air rights development; that's building over things like infrastructure, rail yards for example.

Another major recommendation is to provide north/south connections for bus and transit through West Station from Allston to the Boston University area and beyond. Another recommendation is to provide three rather than two street connections to the Harvard Allston Enterprise Campus. That campus includes three major new streets, and this would connect the interstate to those three streets rather than just the two. When you have more streets you have more room to distribute traffic, so we think this will work better for the street system

We also suggested making a direct connection to North Harvard Street, but, we hasten to add that we think this should be studied in the Draft EIR. We believe that by adding a third street over here, we will be able to divert regional traffic through this system here rather than down North Harvard Street. There is a concern about that, and we think it should be evaluated. We think that move should also make these parcels easier to develop. With a connection like that, it makes them more regular in shape and easier to develop. Finally, a recommendation is to add additional width to the bridges that span across the turnpike and rail yards to the new West Station, in what we're calling aprons. These are additions to the sides of the bridges that make passing over the bridge more comfortable and more pleasant, and would make it less a barren, windswept environment.

Just quickly, some examples of what we're calling non transformative changes include: The placemaking study includes a recommendation that no new streets and sidewalks have a slope of more than five percent, that's the threshold where it begins to get difficult to climb on foot and by bicycle. Another recommendation was to organize the block pattern in a way that would make parcels more developable and walkable. We went through a series of studies looking at different development concepts with shapes and sizes to make sure that would be possible.

As I mentioned before, there are also for considerations for future master planning in the study. They're not specific recommendations. There hasn't been a formal planning process for Beacon Park Yards yet. That will follow eventually. These are ideas that came up during the process that we think are useful to capture and keep in mind when that master planning phase happens.

This is where can find the placemaking report. It's on our website at this link. You can also just google "BPDA I-90 Placemaking Report" and it will be the first thing that comes up. I have a few hard copies of the placemaking report with me; this is what it looks like. I'm happy to distribute those to anyone interested. I'd just like to say that the next phase of this project is the MEPA environmental impact evaluation. MassDOT will be preparing a Draft EIR on the project. As part of the transmittal report to MassDOT we included a letter. This is what the letter looks like; I also have copies of that if you'd like to see it written. It basically reiterates the city's priorities for this new district: the rehabilitation and realignment of a key section of the region's highway system, built in a way that supports a vibrant human scale urban neighborhood which is anchored by robust intermodal transit. One of the key points in this letter is that we are aware of the fact that MassDOT is working under serious financial constraints. We've heard that not all components may get built right away as there may not be funding to do it. We don't want that funding to limit the eventual development of a great neighborhood. One of the things we're asking for as part of the environmental impact report is that that report test different

assumptions about potential new regional transit service, including more robust rail service and bus service. Fred Salvucci who I think is here this evening commented at a task force meeting, that even if certain components of the project aren't built, if we can get even them studied and evaluated in the environmental impact report, it will be much easier to build them later. We want to pave the way doing the right things on the project. That wraps it up with the placemaking study. I'm happy to take any questions before turning it back over to MassDOT. I have letter and copies of report here this evening.

A: MOD: I'd ask you to hold questions until the presentation finishes. You'll see a lot of repetitive information between what Tad's just shown you, and now what the MassDOT team is now incorporating into our concepts.

C: Robert LaTremouille (RLT): But you had no input from Cambridge. You're hurting Cambridge.

A: MOD: Please. We have been coordinating our efforts with Cambridge; there are members of the Cambridge community on our Task Force. Please, I would ask you to hold your questions. We may be able to respond to some of the questions before you ask them. Thank you.

#### *Discussion of Placemaking Study Elements*

C: Chris Calnan (CC): Good evening everyone, I'm Chris Calnan with Tetra Tech. Welcome this evening. Tonight we want to focus on all the work that Tad's done and show you the progress we've made over the last twelve months, which Mike kicked off to do. We just had the summary of the placemaking study. Next is to step through and highlight the elements that we've been working on. We're still in the concept development stage, and looking to advance the Draft Environmental Impact Report.

Three key aspects of that are the variations of the concepts we are studying. The first is the highway viaduct and rail at grade variation. That's pretty much what's out there now. We have the highway viaduct and the rail underneath. The second is a rail viaduct with the highway below it. That idea was presented to the Task Force through what we called The Amateur Planner, and the last is both the highway and rail at grade. That was pitched by A Better City to the Task Force group. Each of these variations will be advanced to the DEIR, and further. What may have been pitched earlier won't be exactly what will be shown in the Draft EIR. Those concept refinements that we're talking about are focused in the throat area. As you can see with this graphic, this area is the tightest of the project; the BU property line is on one side, the river is on the other, and there's a lot of infrastructure in between. Those are the three variations, and

that's how we're going to focus on those areas and study them further. The rest of the interchange is common to all three of those concepts.

Next I want to give folks a bit of history of the major features, and these were presented previously and are consistent with what we talked about previously, for the who were here last time. This doesn't go into a lot of detail. First, with the highway viaduct and the rail at grade, we would upgrade and replace the viaduct. It certainly has had its useful span. We would widen the Paul Dudley White path, and the ability to do that comes from shifting Soldiers Field Road slightly to the south and that will create more space there. This alternative provides some more flexibility for future rail expansion and maintenance, and opportunity for improved shoulder operations and safety for I-90. This graphic was taken from the placemaking study to illustrate this concept in a 3-D fashion.

The next variation is having the rail above and the highway below. This would remove the I-90 viaduct and have I-90 at grade. It does require the Grand Junction Bridge (over Soldiers Field Road) to be replaced, and it adds a flyover bridge for the rail to come into the interchange area. Another neat feature of this is a pedestrian path next to the rail, so that you can get through this area. It's a little tough to see on this image, but it's the little yellow strip there. It does require some other elements as far as a cut section for rail, and there may be some increased permitting challenges with this as well.

The third variation is having both the highway and rail at grade. It removes the viaduct out there today. We do have to then replace the Grand Junction Bridge (over Soldiers Field Road) and have a new bridge that comes in over the highway and into the rail yard. Again we do have some increased challenges on the environmental side. All three of those will be advanced through the DEIR process. Next to quickly go through these elements, since Tad covered a lot of them, as you heard.

We took the city placemaking study very seriously and have adopted or are looking to incorporate many of these standards. Not to go through them in any great detail, but the four we wanted to focus on tonight were highlighted at the top. The first is the Charles River edges and connections. When we look at that, some of these slides you've seen already, we're looking to add additional connections from Soldiers Field Road (SFR) into the interchange. We're looking to realign portions of SFR that will help create the open space that everyone's been advocating for. It's a terrific opportunity. We'll also provide this great pedestrian and bicycle access from the interchange on Cambridge Street South, right across Soldiers Field Road to the river, and that will be at grade. Again, we have some further detail graphics that show these elements. Other

elements include areas along and above the highway. There was some mention of trying to incorporate an elevated road or viaduct from Cambridge Street to West Station. That is something we look forward to when the development happens, when this gets built out, DOT is in a “not preclude” with this. The same goes for the North/ South shuttle link. We’re taking a very detailed study of how we could move vehicles from the North across towards BU. We have some preliminary results we will show you this evening. Tad also mentioned widening the bridge over the Turnpike. We feel that can happen, again, as the project is developed. It doesn't have to happen in the initial build, but we won't preclude that.

Then, Cambridge Street and the connections to the North, Tad already stepped through that. We are revising our interchange concepts to reflect three streets to the North, as well as considering this direct connection to North Harvard Street, which we are studying with the new CTPS traffic models that Mike mentioned. Then we get to trying to strengthen the Cambridge Street and the early redevelopment of the southern edges. We feel that the latest concept provides that opportunity, but it will be part of the development that happens going forward. The final placemaking standard of the major ones was looking at areas within the new district. Again, limiting the slopes is something we were already doing, so there's no change there. We are trying to keep our roadways as flat as they can. Organizing the streets to have efficient block spacing and a framework for adaptable streets are also incorporated in the latest refinements that we will show you now. With that I will turn it over to Jim Keller of Tetra Tech.

C: Jim Keller (JK): Good evening everyone. I'm here to discuss a bit more of the detail of some of these placemaking standards, and how we got here through the last twelve months. This is the previous concept (3K-4), so if you came to last years' meeting (as Mike said on December 8<sup>th</sup> exactly), you would have received this handout, just like you received one tonight called concept 3K. The one you received tonight incorporated several of what we're calling concept refinements, many of which came from the placemaking study. The ability to provide these came from a couple of major contributing factors. Number one was the land owner. Throughout this process of this conceptual design, many of these standards that have come out now through the placemaking study, the public has been asking for along the way and we've been trying to incorporate all along. Now that there's been more detailed coordination and the landowner has made some of land available for some of them, it's become more of an actual possibility. These placemaking standards as we've just heard about have been a big contributor, as well as one of the big developments over the last couple of months now: the removal of the Houghton Railroad spur. The removal of that spur has allowed for some of these concept refinements to come to fruition as a possibility. We'll get into some of that detail.

We'll start with I-90 itself. As a result of some of the coordination between the landowner and MassDOT, the landowner looked at things from an air rights and land development perspective, and looking at what options they had, and are now looking to free up parcels for development and maybe not have as much ability with the air rights as they would've liked. We looked at some realignment possibilities for I-90. At this time we're able to take I-90 from where we had it in 3K-4 and shift it to the south even further. This was the alignment on 3K-4 and this shaded area is how far we've been able to shift south for the alignment we're currently showing in the handout tonight. The further we get from Cambridge Street the more we're able to decrease the slopes of any of the connected roads that have to be elevated. That's a bonus for that. It also allows for an adjusted street network, and we'll get into that further in a second. One of the biggest developments and one of the major placemaking standards as well as developments we have for concept refinement is that the landowner has made more land available. A lot of that has to do with the removal of the Houghton spur. The at-grade crossings in here are now removed, and with that we're able to look at realigning Soldiers Field Road even further into the interchange area. That has a dramatic effect on the realignment as well, with additional open space and the incorporation of an underpass.

The dashed line is the previous realignment, which was going to make available two acres of land along the Paul Dudley White Path in addition to what's there today. Now with this realignment and the underpass, this is what will happen with vehicular access. All of the outbound traffic heading out of the city toward Cambridge Street will be affected because the current outbound ramp at River Street will no longer be accessible. All outbound traffic will now head down Cambridge Street South. On 3K-4 this was shown, and now we're able to relocate it further south to make that connection. Also with the removal of the River Street access we can look at how folks will get to River Street. They would come through off the new outbound ramp that ties into Cambridge Street South, would come through the connecting district roads and streets, and head to River Street via Cambridge Street.

The additional open space provided by this SFR realignment is approximately two acres of additional land, for a total, depending on which variation we're looking at in the throat area, between three and four acres of total open space created by the project along the Charles River. This underpass allows for the Cambridge Street South connection to be at-grade and it allows for an at-grade bicycle and pedestrian route to the Paul Dudley White Path, which is a major concept refinement and is something that the public and the Task Force have been really hot on ever since the inception of the project. Coordination between the landowner and MassDOT, removal of the Houghton spur, and looking at several opportunities here has allowed this refinement to be further studied, and that's what is taking place. The removal of the outbound

ramp to River Street allows for the path along the narrows to be widened and there will be open space created in that area, which is another major refinement.

Really quick, I'll discuss the north/south streets. Previously in 3K-4 there were two. The landowner further developed the design in this area. There have been some varying streets and connectors added, so MassDOT is looking at adding a third north/south street and tying it into the interchange and West Station. That's critical for how transit will work. Worthy of note is Stadium Way, this one, was always there. All of these will tie into Western Avenue, but it looks like Stadium Way is being studied as a connection all the way through to North Harvard Street.

One other area quickly worth noting is that previously in the 3K-4 there was a skewed intersection at Lincoln Street. A lot of people didn't like that intersection including the City of Boston, so we're further studying a more direct connection to North Harvard Street. It opens the parcel here, makes the development potential much greater, and the addition of the Lincoln Street connector would help with some of the traffic issues we've been having throughout the process – the North Harvard connection hadn't worked well and we're getting closer to that.

It's worth noting that all along in 3K-4 we've had the major pedestrian and bicycle route to the river from the Allston Village area through to the Paul Dudley White Path. We just want to highlight that with the at-grade crossing it's much more feasible and approachable path for pedestrians and bicycles. This is a quick cross section showing how the north side of Cambridge Street South. That would be an at-grade connection to the river.

With that I'm going to pass it over to Mark Shamon from VHB to talk about the rail concept refinements.

- C: Mark Shamon (MS): Thank you Jim, Good evening everyone. I will talk about some of the railroad refinements that are necessary because of the other concept refinements we've been talking about. Obviously as the I-90 alignment has tightened to the south it creeps into Beacon Park Yards and has an effect on the railroad and some of the things we were originally planning to put there. MassDOT is considering reducing the layover capacity from fourteen train sets, which we've shown you before, to something less than that based on the recommendations that have been made through the placemaking study, such as improvements to the grid north of the I-90 alignment. The reduction in the layover capacity results in increased land development opportunities. MassDOT and the MBTA are still going to have to consider what the long term implications are to the operating needs with respect to the South Station Expansion Project and the increased service they want to put on the railroad. There are still studies that need to be done making sure that what we're looking at planning here will work for the system overall.

Concept refinement: there have been changes. As part of this refinement and in discussions with the MBTA, they are looking to eliminate the idea of putting the covered pit track, the wheel truing facility, and the car wash, which had been previously presented, and putting them elsewhere in the system, somewhere on the South Side.<sup>3</sup> They would retain the ability within Beacon Park Yards for light housekeeping maintenance, which would include changing out brake pads, exchanging lights, doing some sanding which they need for traction on the railroad, delivering fuel, and then cleaning out the cars, pumping out sanitary and adding fresh water during the midday layover period. Those functions would remain but there wouldn't be buildings associated with them – everything would be brought in and out on a daily basis. We'd still have a crew quarters so there is one building that would be necessary on site. It would be smaller than it was originally conceived, because there won't be lots of maintenance people using the site, but we have conductors that have to get off during the midday, have someplace to stay, change clothes, use sanitary facilities and such. There would be minimal materials stored on site as well.

Things that are not changing as part of the overall concept that has been presented before: West Station remains part of the overall master plan that would include four service tracks and two platforms and the bus station that goes up above. We would not preclude Grand Junction, so we would include those two tracks through Beacon Park Yards and to some point where in the future you could add two tracks going across Grand Junction. Bicycle and pedestrian access from the north to the south or vice versa would still be maintained across Beacon Park Yards. Air rights development would be preserved, even though there's more terra firma that's being developed on the north side, we're still looking to provide air rights development on the south side and allowing for whatever supports would be needed in the future. There's still a plan to include the noise barrier along the Pratt and Wadsworth Street neighborhoods.

To look at the previous rail design, we had space for fourteen layover cars, which included nine coaches and a locomotive at each. We had a pit track right down the middle; at one point there was a car wash at the end and a wheel truing facility out here. We were and still are providing two platforms and tracks for revenue service. As we look at the new plan under the concept refinement, with the tightening of I-90 we've lost some space in here and now have four tracks in this particular concept that would allow for eight layover trains. We still have the two platforms, the four revenue service tracks, we've eliminated all the other facilities except for a relatively small crew quarters facility at the top side here, and we have a bit more opportunity to provide

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<sup>3</sup> Herein the term "South Side" refers to those commuter rail lines radiating out from South Station, as opposed to "North Side" lines which radiate from North Station. The line which runs through Allston is considered a "South Side" line as it originates at South Station.

(potentially) for storm water management which is a critical issue because of the Charles River. These are some of the changes. Again, the noise wall doesn't change, we still maintain emergency access for vehicles down Babcock Street, but those are the changes that are being conceived right now. None of the changes would have any effect on the throat options, as Chris mentioned, we can make these refinements inside the yard with the throat options, so none of that is precluded by any of this. Just to give you a summary of overall what's being conceived here, not just with the railyard but to transition to the next part of our discussion: we have a tighter alignment, a smaller yard, a more regular grid through the north side, increased parkland along the Charles River, the new underpass and direct access from Soldiers Field Road into the new development area, a widened Paul Dudley White Path toward River Street – the narrow pass where bicycles and pedestrians currently have trouble would be improved, we are maintaining bicycle and pedestrian access across Beacon Park Yards and I-90, reduced the rail yard size, eliminated the buildings, and maintained the four tracks and two platforms. With that I am going to turn it over to Etty who will talk about the Franklin Street Pedestrian Bridge.

#### *Discussion of Franklin Street Footbridge*

C: Etty Padmodipoetro (EP): I'm with Urban Idea Lab; I'm part of the project team. I'm now going to talk about the pedestrian and bicycle connection, and talk more about Franklin Street Footbridge pedestrian connection. The main concept that we have in is making sure the pedestrian connection and bicycle connection really work in tandem with what Tad was talking about, which is to make sure there's a lot more connections, and try to address what is now the existing deficiency, and beyond that, the lack of connection. We also want to make sure that what we're doing will be strengthening the neighborhoods, by connecting Lower Allston to Allston Village, making sure that there's a connection between Commonwealth Avenue and Cambridge Street, and to make sure there's the big one, which is connecting from all of Allston down to the river. We want to follow the context sensitive design that the city has set, and also want to make sure that new bicycle and pedestrian connections will enhance the whole area.

This is one of the things that happened before: by having I-90 built, Franklin Street was completely disconnected. We will have a new pedestrian and bicycle connection, which will allow for a connection from Cambridge all the way to Brookline, which is an awesome addition. We will also be able to connect Cambridge Street all the way to Commonwealth Avenue through both Malvern Street and Babcock Street, and we are going to connect the Allston neighborhood all the way to the Charles River. This is the actual bridge area - the area we will be bridging. I'm going to show you three options for the Franklin Street Pedestrian Bridge, and it's shown here in the context of the Soldiers Field Road connection that we've all been talking about, as well as the

Malvern and Babcock Street connection. This is a very preliminary sketch of where they're located but the design is not yet done.

Now, I'm going to be talking about the Franklin pedestrian connection. This was a street that existed and was disconnected when the railroad was built, so when we make a connection, from an urban design perspective, you really want to create a pedestrian location where the desire line is - where the old Franklin Street was before. Unfortunately, the area now is so full of utilities (as you can see here), including on the tunnels, which show that this has become a utility corridor, so there's not really a good place for us to land the piers, but fear not. We are going to make sure the location of the pedestrian bridge will still make the gesture of the real connection of Franklin Street. Also as you can see here, you're coming from here, but it actually goes back as close as possible to Franklin Street. On this side it's the same thing - you come in, go around and over. This is to allow for bicycles to not have to dismount - it all connects and gets close as possible. On this option we're putting the ramp on the overflow parking for Regina Pizzeria, but we're not touching the Ace ticket building that's there. On this option, basically the whole overflow parking lot is taken.

On this, the second option, the reason we're taking a little more of the parking area in terms of parking spaces is that if you do this, you go up and this is located near but not at where it is now. This again allows the bridge to go down into Franklin Street and connect Franklin Street to Franklin Street, and connects all the way up Lincoln Street. One of the good things about this is that you're not behind a building - from Harvard Street you can see it and come up; you're next to Cambridge Street and you minimize the loss of parking, because the whole parking lot remains intact.

This third one is a bit drastic. On this one we take the Ace Building, and by doing this we do still take a lot in terms of footprint, but what was the footprint here is moved over. In terms of potential future development, this is much more consolidated. Of course, if do this there's definitely a lot of opportunity for placemaking from an urban design perspective. This one comes closest to where the connection used to be. Again, you go around and land back onto Franklin Street, so you're maintaining that connection. We've done a few sketches - this is just two of them. A lot of people were concerned about safety, so when we design the pedestrian and bicycle bridge we will make sure safety will be resolved in terms of lighting and other visual connections. That's what we have so far. Now Erik is going to talk more about traffic.

*Discussion of Vehicular connection between Cambridge St. and Commonwealth Ave. via West Station*

C: Erik Maki (EM): Thank you ETTY. What I will talk about today, building upon what ETTY just mentioned, is the North/South connection. We've heard from the stakeholders, the public during meetings like this, the Task Force, and the city through the BPDA placemaking process that there's a desire to have a North/South connection through the project site for the neighborhood. It's part of the MEPA scope to review this. For full vehicular access, we have an opportunity with the creation of West Station. That's a point where we have a platform over the rail yard and I-90 so that we could land a street. It aligns well with Malvern Street, which is shown here with the white arrow. Malvern Street would give us the opportunity to create that connection from, Commonwealth Avenue to West Station directly. We're looking at this for full vehicular access, and CTPS is adding this connection to their regional model, and this will be one of the runs they will do to tell us how much desire and demand there will be on this new roadway link. They did that last year, and now with these refinements to the network they will be altering their models again based on the refinements.

What's illustrated here in this spider web map is called a select link analysis. This is showing the demand to use the link of this new Malvern connection that they've put in their regional model. The thickness of lines represents the numbers of vehicles that want to use that new connection – it shows where they're coming from and where they're going to. Today on Windham Street there's a connection that comes through the south; also up on Commonwealth Avenue, Brighton Avenue, Babcock Street through Malvern Street we're seeing very heavy demand, because it's a better shortcut than using Linden or Harvard to get over to Cambridge Street to access the turnpike. We've created a new, quicker route to get there. The model is showing heavy demand for it. If we look at the morning peak period we've got upwards of 1,640 vehicles per hour that would use that, and in the afternoon peak that increases to upwards of 2,000 vehicles per hour. The breakdown between the northbound and southbound flow is shown. That means on a daily basis is that we've made a connection that would want to handle up 20,000 vehicles per day through the B.U. campus and the neighborhood area to directly access the turnpike. Models work as links that are connected, and it shows the flow on the links but it doesn't take into account the operation of traffic signals and delay. The model is showing us that we've increased the amount of traffic in this section of the city for the northbound Malvern connection, and we're drawing traffic away from Linden Street and North Harvard because it's the quickest route to get to the ramps and the district. This doesn't make traffic disappear on those streets of course and it represents a dramatic change on Malvern Street.

From a vehicular impact, we're seeing initially that in order to make the connection happen we'd have to take the parcel at 76 Ashford Street to allow for the ramp to go up to the West Station platform. We'd also need to remove parking on at least one side of Malvern Street to allow more room on the side of street for these 20,000 cars. We'd have to add a traffic light at the end of West Station to meter that flow, and we'd be looking at a major reconstruction of Packard's Corner. Today it's a three way intersection and we'd be adding a major new fourth leg to that intersection. We'd not only have to modify the curbing to allow cars to go in and out, but today there's no left turn out of Malvern Street, and we'd be enabling that with this new connection. We'd also have to change the signal phasing at Packard's Corner to allow for that. This picture shows that tail end of Malvern Street today and that is basically where the ramp would go up and connect to the train station that would be built in the future.

As we look at these impacts, what we're seeing is that it will be very difficult to create a major north/south flow that connects directly to the new I-90 on and off ramps. We don't want to create a situation like Exit 17 in Newton where there is always traffic backing up onto the mainline. What you would tend to do would be to prioritize the ramp movement to keep the mainline free of queued vehicles. That will put a constraint on the north/south movements that want to use the Malvern street connection. Because of the close spacing of the signal at the end of West Station to the eastbound off-ramp there's not a lot of distance there, so it will be challenging to make that work well. We're seeing that we would have backups down Malvern Street which could potentially foul up the Packard's Corner intersection. As I mentioned on that spider web map, we also see a lot of new traffic through the neighborhood and through the BU West campus area, and we understand from them that they are trying to redevelop that area to be more pedestrian friendly as they get down there.

Because of the impacts from the full vehicular access, we also wanted to look at it from a transit connection point of view. As Tad mentioned, a lot of the development that we would want to see in this area would be transit oriented development. We have the new West Station for commuter rail, active bus routes, and the green line, so it makes sense for us to prioritize a transit connection to enable that transit oriented development to happen. We're looking at four options for transit connections: the Malvern Street connection, also using Babcock Street, Buick Street, and the existing street network.

Looking the Malvern Street connector, this is what I just mentioned for full vehicular, but for a bus or transit connection, there would be fewer vehicles using that section of road. We have the same types of impacts: Packard's Corner is a very challenging intersection; the green line is going through it. Basically, Boston is a hub with heavy east/west movements, and not so much

north/south. There's a very heavy demand on Commonwealth Avenue/ Brighton Avenue in the east-west direction. When we try to create a new north/south flow it disrupts that and you get poor traffic operations. Even with fewer vehicles that are just transit, we're expecting a difficult time at Packard's Corner as well as on some minor cross streets.

This is a blow up of Packard's Corner. I'm trying to illustrate that to allow the transit vehicles to get out, we'd be creating a new left turn maneuver that's not there today, and that would mean a brand new signal phase added to the intersection. One of the big drawbacks of that is the geometry of the intersection. It's a very wide intersection, with the carriage roads on Commonwealth Avenue. Today, Malvern Street is limited to right turns in and an unsignalized left turn, also going in. To allow a left turn out we'd have to signalize it for buses. Because of the geometry we'd have to have very long clearance intervals in the red and yellow time, to allow those vehicles to go through the intersection before allowing the conflicting movements to go. That is what helps contribute to the degraded levels of service and operations here, being that the geometry is very wide.

To try to improve upon the Malvern connection, we were looking at a secondary connection, which would use Babcock Street, which already has a traffic signal and we could have the outbound buses use the Babcock connection. Looking into that we have some of the same challenges – very heavy east/west flow, and the side streets are very narrow. For Babcock Street, some of the additional impacts we see include that we potentially have to make Malvern Street one way, to allow better movement of the buses with the corner radius. Vehicles that normally come down on Malvern would need to take Gardner to Alcorn Street to come back out. This is the same thing; we would need to make some alterations to the traffic signal at Packard's Corner for those inbound moves. In addition, we would most likely need to make Gardner one way with parking restrictions, so that we could enable buses to make the turns onto Babcock Street. In order to make the signal work a little more efficiently for the increased northbound flow for the buses, we'd need to remove the on street parking to have two lanes coming into the intersection, again, because of the very heavy East/West movements. Once we try to add more traffic to the side streets, we'd have to make them work more efficiently.

The third option is to use Buick Street. Coming off the end of West Station we'd have a section of elevated ramp that would touch down right behind the field at the corner of Agganis Way. This would allow the buses to come out Buick Street. There's the viaduct ramp and we'd be looking at a circulation pattern where we would potentially be impacting operations at Agganis Way and Buick Street. Those are both private ways. We're seeing that running a bus route behind the University out Buick Street has its challenges because it's the back of house operations for the

campus and Agganis Arena. I believe they hold over 200 events per year with the parking in the back. They have special traffic patterns for allowing vehicles out of the parking garage. They basically turn Agganis one way to allow westbound vehicles and Buick one way for eastbound vehicles, so a bus route back there would be pretty disruptive to that operation. We also looked at trying to make that work a little bit better by making this section of Buick Street one way. That would require the inbound traffic to go around the block in order to use Agganis to come in, and have the outbound flow to Buick. We think that's going to be too disruptive to the Campus and their operations in the back and at Agganis Arena.

The fourth option on the table is to use existing street network. Using Malvern Street inbound as buses would come up from Longwood Medical Area (LMA), coming up Commonwealth Avenue, getting to West Station, to continue to either Harvard Square or Central Square, and as they come back down to get back to the LMA, they could use the existing on ramp to the Pike and head eastbound on the Pike, get off at the next exit, the Prudential head South on Huntington to get to the LMA area. This is a quicker route than the surface ride along Commonwealth Avenue because there's not as many traffic signals. It's a bit longer but quicker. As we continue through the DEIR, and get traffic numbers through CTPS, we'll continue to look at all four options for transit connectivity. Next I'd like to turn it over to Nate for public outreach.

#### *On-Going Public Outreach*

C: Nathaniel Cabral-Curtis (NCC): Thank you Erik. I'll make this very quick because you've been very patient. You can see up here a listing of how many meetings we've had since we last time we saw you – we're now up to 29 Task Force meetings including several with our friends at the BPDA (ne BRA). We've had a bunch of these public information meetings; we've also done periodic public meetings and briefings upon request. The next step, as you've heard, is to get the DEIR drafted and out and into your hands to comment on with the items we talked about tonight. This is the schedule that you're familiar with this, we've just moved the arrow over to indicate where we are. I will leave that up, so you can see that while we talk. You're all familiar with how we do this: elected officials first, then members of the community second. I will invite you down by badly pronouncing your last name in batches to keep things moving and at the end we'll hear from Task Force members who get to spend lots of time with us.

#### *Discussion/Question and Answer Session*

C: NCC: I do see Senator Brownsberger standing up; do you have a comment, sir?

C: William Brownsberger (WB): No, thanks to everyone for being a part of this project.

C: NCC: Okay. Do we have any other elected officials that have come in the back that would like to comment? No? Okay, on to the general audience.

C: Katherine Donahur: Good Evening. My name is Katherine Donahur and I live on Copley Street in Brookline. I want to make a couple points tonight. The first is, that in terms of placemaking study, there is a terrific opportunity that I don't yet see in your considerations, which, using the A Better City model for the throat section, would allow for a deck across the many lanes of road and railroad to the river. I think it's a wonderful opportunity to connect B.U. campus, the Town of Brookline, and all the other people who pass through the area to make that traverse, to say nothing of the vistas and remarkable kind of plaza or public space that could be created there. It could be another jewel in Boston's open space facilities. I would very much like to ask you to consider that. Earlier you had a map on the screen and it would be useful now, because it points out that the places that could happen most effectively are at the end of Agganis Way or Buick Street, where the connectivity back into St Paul Street and Pleasant Street etc. makes that a natural direct connection. I would very much like to ask you to do that.

The second thing I'd like to do is mention the traffic situation. I noted as you went through the analyses so far, I didn't see any reference to the effect of that traffic across Commonwealth Avenue on the streets that connect to the streets you're talking about: Babcock and St Paul in particular. They are already major arterials and there's no doubt in my mind that they will be affected by this. It won't stop at Commonwealth Avenue, so I want to encourage and ask as persuasively as I can that that traffic and that analysis be incorporated into the work that you're doing as you prepare for the Draft EIR.

A: NCC: I will just say before I invite the next person up that we are very much aware of the concern about traffic passing beyond Commonwealth Avenue. We don't see the world as ending there. We have presented to some extent on that in front of your Brookline traffic committee earlier this year. We're happy to do that again, and yes, Erik will look at that, and the CTPS model would take that into account as well.

C: RLT: I've got about 40 years' experience as an activist in Cambridge. I have a few initial comments. You talk about all these Task Force meetings, but I haven't seen people there. I specifically asked to be put on the mailing list. I made a lot of the meetings, but I haven't made them since because I haven't been aware they existed. You have one significant improvement here, and one very horrible thing. Going westbound on Soldiers Field Road, you've made it possible to transfer over into the project area. It's an excellent idea. By doing that, you've made it unnecessary to make a left turn at the River Street Bridge. You have not made it unnecessary to

make a right turn at the River Street Bridge. That change impacts people throughout the City of Cambridge, not just the development department controlled people, who are happy to praise it. You've been talking about neighborhood associations: it prohibits negative comments in the City of Cambridge. That's how bad it is in Cambridge. That right turn will force traffic which would've gone over that to go over the Massachusetts Avenue or Harvard Bridge, because there's no other way to make that right turn. You're talking about going through the development area which may or may not be good. You insisted that there was nothing here that would hurt the City of Cambridge, and wiping out that right turn severely hurts the City of Cambridge. You've given no meaningful input. If you've had robust input from the Development Department, heck with it! I've written more of the Cambridge zoning ordinances than any other person not employed by city. I've done it over the objections of the Development Department and their robots. I'd be very happy to tell you a secret question to ask these people in transportation, which will prove how useless the people you talk to are.

A: NCC: The only thing I say in response, Bob, is that we are aware of what that does. Bill Deignan, who is our City of Cambridge Task Force member, has expressed similar concerns to yours. It will all be laid out fully in the DEIR; it will be modeled. We understand that's a change, and it's not something that we're saying is definite, but it will be presented publically for evaluation.

C: RL: I stated before that there has been no outreach to Cambridge.

A: NCC: That's not true; we've had two briefings that have followed these meetings over in Cambridgeport, and I'm working with Bill Deignan to set one up for the first quarter of 2017.

C: RL: They prohibit negative comments. That's how useless that group is.

A: NCC: Okay. Thank you for your comment. I'll let you take up what comments Cambridge does and doesn't allow with them, but we have had the meetings. I'll take Renata next.

C: RL: You've had no meetings on that right turn – exactly zero!

A: NCC: Yes, because this is the first time it's been brought up outside of the Task Force, and we will raise it in Quarter One of 2017 with folks in Cambridge and asking their input. Thank you, Bob. Renata, please?

C: Renata Von Tschanner: I want to thank you for all the changes you have made as a result of the placemaking study, since the meeting a year ago. To see the Allston Esplanade grow in depth is wonderful; to see the at-grade connection to it is a wonderful change. We are definitely moving in

the right direction and that's wonderful to see. You briefly mentioned the at-grade solution, or A Better City solution. One thing that wasn't mentioned that B.U. needs credit for, is offering extra land, some ten feet of land that I think makes the at-grade solution better. I hope you will study that, just like Katherine Donahur mentioned, the connection from B.U. and Brookline to the river is a very important connection. As you study the noise impact of the viaduct solution, I think the at-grade solution, I hope, will become clearer as a wonderful way to bring down the volume of noise and the volume of construction, and offer a view over the river over the many lanes of traffic. Thank for bringing in the placemaking study, because this is a challenging site, but it is a place on the river and it is becoming more so.

A: NCC: Thank you. The noise characteristics of each option will be thoroughly evaluated in the DEIR and made available to you.

C: Fred Salvucci (FS): I want to comment on a couple points. First of all, I agree with Renata: the progress here is tremendous. In response to the placemaking, this is tremendous movement in a good direction. It's also been presented extremely clearly. These are the best graphics I've seen – they're very understandable so I really commend you all on your terrific work.

I would comment on one point that relates to many other points, which is the constructability issue. I'm speaking as a Brighton resident here, but I have a lot of experience on roadway and transit projects, and constructability ends up driving what's actually feasible, driving what costs turn out to be. We very badly need to see constructability analysis of more than one way of getting this very complicated thing built. I get very nervous when I hear about funding constraints, though that's not the fault of anyone here. People are saying there are funding constraints, and implicitly what we're seeing is a design that presumes the funding is available for the roadway, but there's a question about the rail. Let me take advantage of my age: I'm one of the people in the room that can remember when the Turnpike was originally built. Allston and Brighton and Newton Corner lost all of our rail stations. Getting those back is long overdue, and so West Station being included is extremely important. The sequence and timing with which these happen is also very important.

It's terrific to see the lay-up smaller than it was, but I'd make a couple of observations. If there's not enough money, then why is there money for lay-up? The final Environmental Impact Report for South Station said that environmental implications of lay-up in Allston would be dealt with in the environmental process in Allston, and obviously that hasn't happened yet. I want to strongly suggest that there should be no layup in this area until after the noise issues at Pratt Street are properly dealt with and the connectivity with the terrific possibility of the Cambridge

Street bypass. Particularly the bicycle and pedestrian elements of it should have a higher priority than the lay-up. I say that for two reasons. One, I believe that as a policy matter, and you can agree or disagree. Secondly, the layup will be nothing but trouble when it comes to constructability. You are trying to build a huge amount infrastructure here. It looks like there's a lot of land, but once you start allowing for laydown area for contractors, it's not that much land. The layup will be nothing but headaches in this area, so it ought to be the last element built in the sequence, from a constructability and a funding and policy point of you, and I would urge you to consider that.

The other issue is connectivity during construction. I think the traffic analysis of looking at Malvern Street and Packard's Corner is very important. It tended to dwell on the negative, but the extreme positive is relief for Linden and Harvard Street which is desperately needed. It's appropriate that you point out there are problems with those alternatives. I think it's important to make a couple of distinctions. For the public transportation vehicles, in our wildest dreams we might see a bus in each direction every five minutes. That's not a big deal to handle from a traffic point of view. That's not 1,000 vehicles in the peak hour which is a serious issue. The public transportation is quite tractable in this area, and we need to put some bright lines about the distinctions from good public transit access from South Allston, Brookline, across to Harvard Square (which I don't think raises significant traffic problems). The second point is that all of the delightful relief for Linden and Harvard Street comes mostly from moving the cars - that's where the problem is. Mike, I'm talking as me and nobody else.

You ought to take a hard look at creating an eastbound off ramp to Beacon Street, at least during construction, to get the traffic going over to Longwood Medical Area through the area and not on all the local streets. A lot of the traffic on St. Paul is frustrated traffic trying to get over for Longwood Medical. I think you should look at that at least as a construction technique to deal with the spillover traffic problem. A pair of ramps, with one eastbound to Beacon Street which would allow you to get over to Park Drive and Longwood, where the demand is coming from, and then returning via the Boston piece of Beacon Street. I think that could be done as construction mitigation, because during construction, you're talking about having only three lanes each way on the Pike. The space is there. I suspect that both modeling and actuality will show that that allows quite a bit of the relief that's good on Linden Street and Harvard Street, with much less complication on the streets in back of B.U., which we are appropriately being sensitive to. While you're running the numbers I would urge you to look at those numbers as well. Thanks very much for allowing me the time, and again, congratulations, this has come a long way and the presentation is very clear.

A: NCC: Thank you.

C: Scott Matalon: I'm the current president of Allston Village Main Streets, and I'm a former president of the Allston Board of Trade. I've been living in the neighborhood for 28 meetings and have been coming to these meetings since they started (as you all know). Every time I come to the meeting, I bring up the same issue, it's echoed by many other people, and 55 slides later I haven't heard the words commercial traffic mentioned once. Commercial traffic is the lifeblood of the business communities, whether it's Allston, Brighton, Brookline, Commonwealth Avenue, BU itself with its food service, construction, and laundry. All of the trucks, including box trucks, eighteen wheelers, and all the business vehicles that travel through here are not allowed on Storrow Drive, and they only come off the Massachusetts Turnpike, so they all go up Harvard Avenue. I live on Ferrington between Linden Street and Harvard Ave and I've seen hundreds of times where I've had an eighteen wheeler stuck in my street, trying to pull a U-turn. It's nice to see that some advances have been made, looking ways to get traffic over the Mass Pike including Malvern, over across the B.U. campus, which would allow some of the traffic to get shunted. However, we're going to develop an area of land that's almost the size of Back Bay that will only grow, the amount of commercial traffic will double or triple, and it has to be addressed in its own bucket. It should be addressed as a line on that slide: how are we going to handle the growth of commercial traffic? This is the lifeblood of the neighborhoods: it supports everyone who works here, shops here, lives here - everything that happens in this neighborhood.

I'm on the Board of Trade, and I work closely with the representatives from the universities. Boston University is the white elephant in the room. I have no issue with the representatives from B.U.; I know they're the messengers, but B.U. stated policy in the Board of Trade minutes, when asked about allowing commercial traffic through their campus has said "we will not allow this. It will not happen." They won't allow trucks on their campus, and they own from Kenmore Square down to Linden Street. How can this multibillion dollar tax free organization dictate to the entire community: Allston, Brighton, Brookline, Kenmore Square, the hospitals, into the Fenway, that they can't have trucks go through Boston University. I understand they are concerned about their students, but with all the engineering talent in this room, represented at this table, and at Boston University, there must be a way to help get this commercial traffic off the streets out of Allston, out of Harvard Avenue which is one lane in each direction. It has to be a priority. We've been talking about this for so long and I'm flabbergasted that 55 slides later, as much as I appreciate all you have done to listen to the neighborhood, it's not here. As much as I appreciate what you've done, I have to say this loud this time, because I've said it over and over and it's still not there. Commercial traffic is not the same as residential traffic and as Fred said as public transportation. Commercial traffic is vital, it's important, it's not going anywhere. B.U.

itself is a huge consumer of commercial traffic. I would like you to take that to heart. I would like to see that as an area of focus, in terms of the growth, particularly if you want to foster economic growth. It's not going anywhere and it will only grow. Thanks very much.

A: NCC: You're welcome sir.

Q: Robin Clemens (RC): My two questions are: how long is the project expected to take, and how much will it cost?

A: CC: In terms of time for construction, we're a little ways off from doing any detailed analysis. But for now, we're in the planning stages, and we're saying it will take about five years. Cost right now is undetermined. We have to get through the DEIR with the concepts, and when those are advanced further, we'll have more firm cost estimates for the project.

Q: RC: Within a year?

A: CC: Yes, and those will be public.

C: RC: I second what the man had said before: a lot of people go to St. Paul Street because they're frustrated, and we need an alternate route to Longwood Medical Area through a Beacon Street off ramp. Thank you.

A: NCC: Okay.

C: Patrick Greenwell (PG): I'm an Allston resident and a member of Transit Matters, which focuses on better transit for Boston. I like that you ran some numbers for the Malvern Street connection, but at the same time, we don't see any planned routes or transportation study around putting these bus connections in place. We're still talking about vehicles per hour, not people per hour. We're focused on how the traffic will be affected - cars per hour. Most vehicles that are traveling along Commonwealth Avenue and through these intersections are only holding one to two people, maybe three to four here or there. So, some focus on the number of people we're moving, not just the number of vehicles would be useful. I know that your software might not take that stuff into account. I'd like to see an estimate round how that would focus, as well as moving people through West Station. Right now there's only bicycle and pedestrian connections there, but if we have some sort of transit, ie: buses moving through there - that would greatly benefit the movement of people. You'd have a much faster connection to Harvard Square, which has a red line stop, to the green line. It would fill in the urban ring concept that the MBTA has put forward several times. They mainly focus around B.U. Bridge, but this would present an

opportunity for that. I don't know how often you are talking to the MBTA, but dedicated bus lanes may be something to look into for movement of transit through these routes.

The road looks extra wide to me from this vantage point. That may not be the best option for people walking and bicycling through this area, especially if we're looking for transit oriented development. Most of these streets look like the width of Cambridge Street and Commonwealth Avenue right now, which we know are very difficult to cross as a pedestrian. If you've ever been in front of the Star Market next to the Green Line near Babcock Street, people dash across the road to make it across safely. Could we slim some of them down? I know we have dedicated bicycle and pedestrian facilities along these routes, but the roads seem very wide from my vantage point.

I have one more point. We've talked about decking over the Pike in several instances with both the A Better City and Amateur Planner plans, for the People's Pike. We've talked about decking over near West Station, and decking to enable air rights, but why can't we do that anyway as a noise reduction/ mitigation item? If we're going to have noise coming through the area from the Pike and from the trains and being a transit hub, and we're talking about putting noise mitigation in place for the abutters along the rail line at Pratt Street, why not take that into account and get it out of the way upfront? That might make it more easy for the landowner to have air rights development, if things are already decked over. I know that might complicate things, but it might be a good look.

- A: NCC: Patrick, much of what you've said, we've heard from other folks. I would note that on all these roadways, we're looking at full protected intersections with the new MassDOT guidelines. The intent is to get folks across the intersections in one go, and avoid staged crossings. Erik's been looking very seriously at that and we do take that into account.
- C: John Harris (JH): I live just off Babcock, south of Commonwealth Avenue. I'm also co-chair of Climate Action Brookline, and a founder of an organization called Biking Brookline. Let me just thank everyone for the improvements that have been made over the last year. I was particularly impressed with the new open space against the river. I have a couple things to quickly say about bicycles and how important they should be through all of this planning. Every trip that is made by bicycle means a trip that is not made by a fossil fuel car or truck. Both in terms of climate change and the footprint of the vehicle, the more we encourage bicycle travel north/south through the area it just makes life more healthy, less dense, and more pleasant for everyone. That leads me to two concerns. Speaking about the Franklin Street Footbridge, there was talk about needing to dismount bicycle to pass that?

A: NCC: No, that's a no dismount connection.

C: JH: Okay. Second, looking at the maps, at West Station in particular, the white area for bicycles and pedestrians seems to stop at the northern edge. The red seems to stop at the southern.

A: NCC: The connectivity would be there. It's not as through it would drop off. If you're on a bicycle, you would be able to pass over West Station. The goal is to get you to Cambridge Street on your bicycle.

Q: JH: You'd be able to walk or bicycle straight through, and also it looks like they are narrow bicycle and pedestrian areas. I just want to make sure they are wide enough to accommodate both groups, so that we don't have bicycle versus pedestrian.

A: NCC: Yes. I have been and am still on a number of MassDOT projects where a great deal of attention is paid to avoiding conflicts between bicycles and pedestrians, and, where a mixing zone is inevitable, giving it appropriate treatments. We are aware of that concern.

C: JH: I want to echo what other folks have said about the importance of getting south of Commonwealth Avenue, having some hard evidence based estimates on traffic densities of these different options would be very important.

A: NCC: Yes, we will note that.

C: Paula Alexander (PA): I'm a resident and homeowner on North Harvard Street in Allston. I spoke at the last meeting we had at Charlesview. I was concerned about the direct funneling of cars off the Mass Pike onto North Harvard Street. I have the same comment as the gentleman from the Board of Trade with commercial vehicles. We have a tremendous amount of heavy trucking equipment and buses, and to get even more traffic funneled onto North Harvard is disturbing. I see you've agreed to further study the traffic on North Harvard but as an example, the Route 66 bus stops in front of my house and this morning one bus stopped, which was jam packed with people. Another bus was right behind it with a dozen people on it, and that was followed by two more buses trying to pass each other so that they could continue. The problem is that directly across the street is another MBTA bus stop, where there were three buses lined up there in front of Rockland bank. This is during rush hour. With the snow in the winter, the street is narrowed even more. There's parking on both sides, there are bicycle paths, kids on skateboards, joggers, and there's not room for all that

A: NCC: If I may, I'm very familiar with North Harvard Street as it was along the route to my high school. In 2014, the project manager Mike O'Dowd and I and some of the other team members went on site bicycle ride with some of the Task Force members. One of the things they told us was that the neighborhood along North Harvard Street is one of the last bastions of owner-occupied homes in Allston; much of the rest of it is now for better or for worse used by students. We're sensitive to that. For a long time we couldn't find any way to make that work without funneling lots of additional traffic there, and that's not our desire. One of the things that's important regarding the three streets going off to the north is that the goal behind at least one of those is to connect all the way to North Harvard Street up around the Stadium. The idea is to provide a route that wouldn't be North Harvard Street. If people were making regional trips, say, going north to Harvard Square, they can cut off earlier. Again, its additional study and maybe there's too much sensitivity over it. It will be modeled in the DEIR, we will present exactly how it works and you can comment on it. We've heard since 2014 that there's a lot of sensitivity around that, and we will be treating it very carefully. I've brought up my time on that site walk over and over again with the BPDA as well in our dealing with them through the placemaking study. I'm carrying that torch for you, if you will, and will continue to do so.

C: PA: Thank you. I'd like to see some sort of a truck route, like the other gentleman was saying, and a bus route. I think that would be really helpful if you could figure out how to do that.

A: NCC: I think for people who live on North Harvard, they would probably like to keep Route 66 as a way to get around, but lose some of the trucks. Thank you, ma'am.

C: David Montague (DM): Thank you for all the progress. You all have done a great job. From a year ago, this looks tremendous. There are a huge number of cars that get off the Mass Pike at this exit every day. Wouldn't it be great to siphon off a percentage of those immediately – get them out of cars and onto bicycles? I'm the founder of Park and Pedal, which is a network of parking areas that are located within cycling distance to areas of employment, where people can park their cars; get out of their cars, onto bicycles and ride to work. We work with MassDOT and with DCR, and have 20 locations around the Boston area. None of them are even remotely as convenient as right in this area. If there were any way for you to consider putting Park and Pedal locations that could syphon off vehicles that would be great. I don't think anyone wants traffic coming off the Mass Pike to continue, so if we could stop cars right then and there, so please consider it. Thanks.

A: NCC: That sounds good. I'm sure as this gets built out that will be considered. I know the city is extremely fond of Hubway and those kinds of things, and I'm sure opportunities will be looked

for to get something in there that's bicycle friendly. Thank you for the comment. Before we move onto the Task Force, I know there are a few folks that wanted to check off their name but didn't.

- C: Brent Whelan (BW): I live on North Harvard Street. I've been coming to these meetings from the beginning. As Paula said and many others have said over and over again, from the beginning our biggest concern has been with this change to the access and egress from the Pike, that our rather precarious neighborhood would be the place that traffic would be using to cut through and away from the Pike. I know we've talked about this and received assurances that you would do everything you could to make that not the case.

Looking at this design, it's very disappointing to see that North Harvard Street is still perfectly aligned with the entrance onto the Pike and to see that as you take traffic off Storrow Drive heading westbound onto South Cambridge Street, that South Cambridge Street also perfectly aligns with North Harvard, so that it makes it the most logical way that traffic would go to head north and westbound. I see all of the traffic coming onto the Pike using Soldiers Field Road and the Western Avenue Bridge, coming all the way down from Memorial Drive and the suburbs to the west. That's the major way traffic gets onto the Pike now, at Soldiers Field Road. I'm trying to think why those cars wouldn't look at North Harvard as the logical on ramp. I'm not hearing any real dissuasion; I'm not seeing how cars won't make that choice, because it's so logical since the streets are aligned that way. At one of these meetings, I also suggested that one possible way to discourage that would be to use traffic calming measures. I haven't heard that tonight, so I don't know if that idea was considered. That is one way to encourage traffic to take one route and not another.

I know from being on the Harvard Allston Task Force that long ago Stadium Way was understood to be a road to enable traffic in and out of the new Harvard campus, and bypass the residential parts of the neighborhood. I see now that Stadium Way is here and also includes something called the Stadium Way Connector, but it stops short of connecting to the Pike. Although it is the most westbound of the three roads you're talking about and the one that would be most logical as an alternative to Harvard, it doesn't seem like traffic heading for the Pike would use it because they can't use it to get to the Pike, except by taking about three turns after it dead ends at South Cambridge Street. It seems as though Stadium Way won't fulfill its function to actually draw traffic away from the neighborhood, and onto what is not a residential street. I know that we've received assurances, and you see this plan as addressing this problem, and to me it doesn't look that way at all. I haven't heard a detailed analysis of what traffic would go where, but it looks as though the alignments are exactly wrong from the North Allston neighborhood point of view. I'm very concerned about that.

- A: NCC: I would repeat what I told Paula. The other thing is that in terms of traffic trying to access the Pike from Soldiers Field Road westbound, the idea is to pick them up here, and here and now they're able to access the ramp system without getting that far. If their goal is to get off the turnpike and onto the highway, they won't make it that far, to Cambridge Street original flavor.
- C: BW: If they're getting onto the Pike, that's true. If they're not getting onto the Pike...
- A: NCC: Let me just finish, and I can also have Erik answer this maybe. The other thing I would note is when I talked about those protected intersections, there would be efforts made at traffic calming. We're a ways out from figuring out exactly what traffic calming measures we would use, because we're still working through that stuff. They typically come at a later stage, beyond the DEIR. Again, you increasingly see MassDOT looking at those things, as opposed to flushing through cars. We're very aware that there is a neighborhood north of original flavor Cambridge Street. Erik, can you say a few things about the streets to the north?
- A: EM: That's definitely something we're looking into, especially with the new model. As far as traffic calming, I think some of the best traffic calming will be that you will have five more traffic lights to go through, if you wanted that to be your route on North Harvard. It would be simpler to stay through the underpass, through the next underpass, and make it to the interchange at North Harvard much quicker than negotiating through the district streets that will be trying to handle the off ramp traffic. That's natural traffic calming that you will see. Also, these graphics don't connect to the north, but these three streets will connect to Western Avenue; Stadium Way will run beyond Western Avenue to North Harvard. That effectively is a bypass to North Harvard.
- Q: BW: I can see how East and Cattle will serve that purpose. Are they each one direction, or are they two directional?
- A: EM: They are both two directional. Each one connects to the ramp system, and as a side note, we're looking at more connections through, we're just not there yet.
- C: BW: That's the mystery to me: why Stadium Way can't also be that connector, particularly as if it comes all the way from North Harvard Street, it would be the best way to remove traffic before it gets into the residential corridor of North Harvard. If doesn't get to the Pike no one will use it.
- A: EM: That's purpose of having the three total streets. There are more connections possible. There's also the potential that Stadium Way could be used in one direction or the other to help enable the transit connections. Soldiers Field Road will still be in place with an underpass and

the removal of the River Street ramp, and East Drive and Cattle Drive which connect directly to Western as well. The ability to pick up Stadium Way to North Harvard would be there.

Q: BW: I can't see how Cattle and East meet that huge traffic flow coming down. It's hard to tell whether people will use it – will they come off Western, and not Soldiers Field Road?

A: EM: Yes. Those would connect to Western Avenue.

C: BW: They don't meet Soldiers Field Road at all? So you go across the bridge, and then you'd get on East or Cattle, your choice, they do exactly the same thing.

C: EM: Yes, but they connect to different ramps. One of them connects to eastbound, the other to westbound.

Q: BW: So they'd be signaled as the right way to get onto the Pike either east or westbound?

A: EM: It's the same with the signs – we would give a preference for one or the other. In general what we're looking at is providing more connectivity north/south through the district, giving effectively a bypass route to North Harvard, making a better connection off Soldiers Field Road, which will reduce some of the traffic demand for the section of Cambridge Street, and taking away the high speed connections you have today. Today when you come off of North Harvard, you have a high speed ramp that continues out, and those will be gone. It will be a slow speed connection that will be competing with traffic coming off the highway.

C: BW: I follow the logic and it feels like you're well on your way.

A: EM: We're still studying it.

C: BW: Discouraging North Harvard traffic and encouraging Stadium Way feel to me like the next steps.

A: NCC: Brent, I hate to be that guy, but vast holes have opened in the audience. Erik and I will be more than happy to talk with you at length, but we have two people waiting.

C: BW: That's fine. I'm going to be living with this the rest of my life, so I appreciate the time to talk about it.

A: NCC: I'll be living with it for the rest of my life too, so we're all good. Go ahead Carol. Sorry to make you wait.

- C: Carol O'Hare (COH): I am from Cambridge. You've heard this before, it's about noise. I haven't heard a peep about anything that's happened in the last year since the last Task Force meeting about noise. I live quite close to the river. So do many other residents. I haven't heard a word about Cambridge, which is astonishing. We also will be affected by this, in terms of traffic and in terms of noise, though not anywhere near as much as the Allston residents. I don't get it. We have one representative on the Task Force and it is filled with Boston representatives.
- A: NCC: Carol, you have three now: Bill Deignan, Susanne Rasmussen, Henrietta Davis.
- C: COH: There still hasn't been mention of Cambridge. The only mention I've heard of Cambridge was that you said that Bill Deignan made the same point that Bob LaTremouille made, which is why are you removing the right turn onto the River Street Bridge. You said he disagreed with that decision, and I heard nothing about that decision, or what it's rational or pros and cons were in this presentation. So, what about Cambridge? What about noise?
- A: NCC: I'll give you a quick brief on noise and then Erik can talk to you about the intersection. On noise, as you saw we have established with help from BPDA this street grid through here, and it is more or less what we'll take into the DEIR. Then in this area...
- C: COH: I'm talking about construction noise as well as post construction noise.
- A: NCC: Correct, both. We have three variations for the throat area. Now that we have this nailed down, we can run the noise analysis which will be represented in the DEIR document. Erik, do you want to speak about the traffic situation?
- A: EM: With regard to the right turn traffic. We have traffic counts on the River Street ramp, there's a total of 336 cars using the ramp today Morning peak and 87 of those make a right turn to go over into Cambridge – that's about 25%. In the afternoon peak there are a total of 724 cars using that ramp, and 151 make the right turn – that's 21%. The project is eliminating the ramp completely, creating a new underpass movement. The 20% of that traffic that wants to go to Cambridge would have to drive into the district to make that turn. I think a benefit for noise is that you're eliminating the hundreds of cars that are normally up on that ramp. That's a closer proximity to the other bank, and that's going to be completely eliminated and will be a benefit for cyclists and pedestrians. That's a very narrow sidewalk shared with the two lane off ramp. So, the 724 cars today in the afternoon peak would be completely gone and be able to get on the Turnpike much quicker, because they'll benefit from South Cambridge Street and the new underpass. Just in terms of noise studies, there has been a lot of noise analysis.

- C: COH: I'm talking about the noise from the viaduct area.
- A: NCC: That would be looked at through the DEIR. In terms of the traffic piece, I am working with Bill to set up a briefing in Cambridge that will echo this for quarter one of next year, and I can bring back more on that.
- A: EM: Regarding the throat, we want to hear from people about viaduct or at-grade. For me that's especially in relation to the bicycle path. If you're on the bicycle path, what will it be like to be near twelve lanes of traffic, or today with some of the cars on the viaduct? That's an important thing to consider, and we'd like people to talk about that with the DEIR.
- C: John Allen (JA): First let me talk about two things. The improvement along the river – the added parkland and width for the bikeway is great. Safe thing for the Franklin Street overpass although I'd go for alternative one or three. Alternative two has the same problem you have now, where you're coming down the sidewalk on Cambridge Street and have to cross two legs of the intersection to go down Harvard Avenue, so that's not so good. I have problems with the idea that putting a bicycle path adjacent to a major road and crossing five major roads, each with a signalized intersection, to get from the river into Allston is any kind of useful bikeway. What you'll have there is multiple long delays at traffic lights, and people getting impatient and crossing illegally – it happens, I don't do it but other people do it. It doesn't work. We had a concept that's run through these discussions of a People's Pike which is something grade separated from the cross streets and it still looks to me with the elevation differences with the streets over West Station that you can cross those streets certainly at-grade underneath the overpasses, and the others would need engineering finesse. The road that's supposed to go out to Linden Street that is proposed might incorporate some of that, though it's not in the plan as it shows. If bicycles are going to have a useful route through here it has to be both comfortable and safe. Separating a bikeway from the roadway makes it comfortable but crashes happen at the intersections, and a bikeway adjacent to the street has a poor record for safety, particularly if you're riding opposite the direction of traffic in the adjacent lane, because vehicles coming around the corner have drivers looking the other way for traffic. In Helsinki the rate of crashes for that movement was ten times the rate of any other movement on a bikeway adjacent to a road. Let's have a real People's Pike.
- A: NCC: I think at this point we're probably down to Task Force members. The only thing I would say is some of those turning crashes and the protected intersections I mentioned are designed to cope with those issues. The other piece I'd note is that if anyone is here from Boston Cyclists Union, Livable Streets Alliance, and other cycling organizations, we've had a lot of varying input

about what's preferable in terms of bicycle accommodations. At one point we had bicycles tucked up against the Turnpike, that had some long tunnels, and we heard from people that they couldn't get back onto the streets, and it wasn't very safe, and so we moved it back toward the street for more connectivity and eyes on the road. It has seesawed back and forth since I started on the project in 2014, so do write in on that and give us your thoughts. It does seem to play back and forth over time. Before I give the microphone over to Task Force folks who've been very patient, are there any other general audience members who didn't have a shot. Okay, Harry you're up.

C: Harry Mattison (HM): I want to thank my neighbors and everyone else who came out to the meeting tonight. I hope everyone will send in a comment to the state in the next couple weeks, and my question is if could clarify Mike if West Station is going to be built?

A: MOD: I can't clarify anything right now. The point of tonight's meeting is to present the same information to the public as was presented to the Task Force, looking at the entire plan. Until DEIR and the process of identifying revenue financing for the project, I'm not in a position to say if and when it is necessary to stage components of the project.

Q: HM: Is building West Station more important or less important to you than other aspects of the project?

A: MOD: No, it's all equally important.

C: HM: That's not how it seems; because I think what you said at the last taskforce meeting was that basically West Station isn't in the project anymore.

A: MOD: That's not exactly what we said. There's also been a lot of inaccuracy printed in the press as well. If there was a misunderstanding, hopefully that has been cleared up. The fact of the matter is that we had mentioned at the last Task Force meeting that if the necessary funds are not in place, that a decision will be made at that point as to whether certain components are constructed ahead of others. We did not say West Station will not be built.

C: HM: Does that make sense to everyone else?<sup>4</sup> The sense we all got was different. When you say that West Station is still in the Master Plan, what even is the Master Plan?

A: MOD: You're looking at what will be proposed in the DEIR; what will be evaluated, and what we will be assessing the environmental impacts on.

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<sup>4</sup> Several attendees nodded, indicating that they had understood.

Q: HM: The commitment that the governor made a year plus ago with a ribbon cutting still exists?

A: MOD: Our commitment to the public hasn't changed. We've continued to work with the Task Force and demonstrate to you that we are looking at all components. Not only has Chris and his team laid out the plans for the public but also the planning and development agency as well. We are looking at all aspects, and that's what has been presented here tonight.

C: HM: That's great to know. My other comment was that I happened to be bicycling down Ashford Street behind an eighteen wheeler. I'm not sure where it was going or coming from, but it was able to navigate Ashford Street and make its way to Commonwealth Avenue just fine. When B.U. has sporting events there, they bring in all kinds of big charter buses off Commonwealth Ave to Ashford Street and that's perfectly fine. The totally anti-transit presentation we saw about how a bus every five minutes will just destroy everything from Commonwealth Avenue to Ashford Street was incredibly disappointing. It would be nice in the 21<sup>st</sup> century to have a more pro transit approach. If you look at the Imagine Boston 2030 plan, everyone who lives here, works here understands the importance of connecting Harvard Square, Harvard's campus in Allston, this new district, Commonwealth Avenue, Boston University, and Longwood with buses and this plan, the way you drawn it and with the attitude we saw earlier really was a letdown, so I hope to see improvement next year. Thank you.

C: Ari Ofsevit (AO): I just want to start by thanking everyone for coming and having this great meeting and presenting this information. I think there's a lot of progress that has been made, especially along the river north of the throat area. Getting the turn off from River Street, improving that bicycle and pedestrian facility which today is completely substandard, adding parkland and getting that is a major improvement in this plan going forward. That's top notch. I have a few comments and a couple of questions. There were some comments that the Amateur Planner and the ABC plan would require the rebuilding of the Soldiers Field Road Grand Junction Bridge. It was sort of presented as a detriment to those plans. It is an 86 year old bridge, so by the time we get to building it we'd be closing in on 100 years old. It would be providing us a couple of opportunities including making a better grade for the Grand Junction, which would be good. One of the great things it would allow would be building a somewhat longer bridge and instead of having the Paul Dudley White path go on the boardwalk, which has some pretty tight corners and you can't really clear snow well, it would allow a straight through path there, which would be a much better bicycle and pedestrian facility. I know that's on the edge of the project scope but perhaps it's something that we could look at as a really big improvement.

As Harry was saying, West Station is a pretty important part of the project, and we need to make sure that goes hand in hand with the rest of the project. We've heard that this is a multi-modal project again and again, and if it turns out that it's a road project that might have some other elements, that would be disappointing. We've sort of seen that in the big dig, where we had a road project with a bunch of transit projects that were attached to it, and then when we couldn't quite find the money we were happy to build the road and the transit projects still haven't been done – we're now looking at 2021 for the Green Line Extension, 2020/never for the Red/Blue connector, and things like that. Looking at the north/south connectivity, Buick Street is the route for the B.U. shuttle right now – they run a 60 foot bus every ten minutes, so that should be possible to run more buses on. There are definitely things to look at to make sure that is done as appropriately as possible. There are certainly streets in Boston where you can't run a bus because they're too narrow, and I don't think Buick Street is one of them. They have one there already.

I did like the line that someone said that we're trying to keep the roadway as flat as we can.

One other thing is that I went for a run yesterday. I try to take a lot of runs along here, because if I go for a run I might as well take a look at what we have and what we're going to replace. Yesterday it was about 1pm. The entirety of the bicycle path was in the shadow of the Turnpike. When we hear that one issue is how we feel about running or bicycling next to twelve lanes of traffic, one of the issues out there now is that in the winter, you're not in the sun, you're in the shade. It's not B.U. it's actually the bridge. If we build a viaduct wider and closer to the river there will be even more time when there will be no sun there. There are two pieces to that: a lot of people would trade a bit of traffic, since there are already four lanes, for a better experience and being able to see the sky. Finally, I think the question that a lot of us have is when we go into the DEIR, we want to know how wide the roadways are in the grid section. Are we able to look at roads that are on the Back Bay scale, where its eight feet building to building and four or five lanes, or are we looking at six to seven lane road grid? That has a lot of impacts for the walkability and bikability of the district. It goes back to West Station. If we build wide roadways and no transit we will get something that is car dependent and has a lot of vehicles and is not pedestrian friendly. If we build to a bicycle friendly, pedestrian friendly scale with good transit we will get a much better outcome

A: NCC: Thanks Ari.

C: Tom Nally (TN): I'm from A Better City. I want to make three quick points. We're very pleased to see that so many of the ideas out of the placemaking study are being incorporated in the plan.

That's a step in the right direction and we hope that you will continue to fill in your analysis, discover beneficial additions to the project. The second point I want to make does relate to West Station. We hope to see at least an interim West Station put in service sooner rather than later. For example, it could be something like Yawkey Station where the platform was built and it was later expanded. If there are limited funds, as long as tracks are there, we'd love to see something happen in the interim basis. Finally, A Better City is continuing to refine options for an at-grade solution in the throat area. We look forward to working with MassDOT and the consultant to further refine that concept so that we can come up with the very best solution to be included in the Environmental Impact Report. We think there's a ways to go to make improvements, and we're working on that. One quick example is that we believe there is a way to separate the elevation of the Paul Dudley White Path from the sixteen lanes of traffic which will reduce the amount of noise impacts and do in a straightforward way. We're still looking at that but we're happy to share that with you in the future.

A: NCC: Thank you. It's now five past nine, and I've lost great swaths of the audience, and I see no new hands going up. Emma?

C: Emma Walters (EW): I'll keep it quick. I'm the Executive Director of Allston Village Main Streets. First I want to thank you for the progress that you've made on this project. It's exciting to see it move in a wonderful direction. I have a couple things. First, the north/south connections. It's great to see you working on that. I understand that there are definitely some negative impacts, but it would be awesome to see what the positive impacts are. The reality of the situation is the Harvard Avenue and Linden Street are currently at capacity, or truly, overcapacity, and the fear is with growth in Allston, with the new units and developments coming in we do not have the infrastructure to handle more traffic on these roads. If you could continue to look at that, that would be fantastic. On the Franklin Street Pedestrian Bridge, I believe that should be an early action item. It would be a wonderful benefit to our community, and it would be great to see it connect Franklin Street to Franklin Street. I think that's a more natural shuttle into Allston Village from Lower Allston. I also think it would be a powerful statement to our community, a community that was once divided by the Pike. I think that would be a beautiful thing. Another thing is West Station. I will just reiterate what everyone else has said, but its really important to have the station there, in order to increase the multi-modal access to the neighborhood and to other neighborhoods that surround us. I also think it would be a fantastic was to get construction mitigation when you start taking down the Pike and moving it. That leads me to my last point which is construction mitigation. I would love to know when we'll start having that conversation as a community. I think it's a pretty big project and will have massive implications on the way our community works once construction starts.

C: NCC: In saying good night, I will note that that discussion about the mitigation piece is still a bit of a ways out. We need to have a design first, and have to get through the DEIR, but it is something that will come – it may be a while though. If anyone has a historic picture, I would love to see a historic picture of Franklin Street connected, because the earliest picture I can find is of the underpass that’s now filled with utilities ducking under the railroad. With that I will wish you good night, Merry Christmas, Happy Hanukkah, have a wonderful 2017. Good night!

## **Next Steps**

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On Thursday, January 19<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 PM, the project team will hold an echo briefing for Cambridge to cover the contents of this meeting.

## Appendix 1: Meeting Attendees

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Paula	Alexander	Community Member
John S.	Allen	Waltham Bicycle Committee
Alyssa	Baril	Community Member
Joe	Beggan	Harvard University
Glen	Berkowitz	A Better City
Marina	Bolothkwa	Community Member
Jogen	Bowman	Brookline Bicycle Advisory Committee
Jorge	Briones	MBTA
Hannah	Brockhaus	Howard Stein Hudson
Mlorman	Brown	Bayside Engineering
William	Brownsberger	Task Force Member
Preston	Buehrer	Community Member
Shawn	Burns	Boston Police Department
Nathaniel	Cabral-Curtis	Howard Stein Hudson
Chris	Calnan	Tetra Tech
Jim	Cerbone	MassDOT
Litang	Chen	Community Member
Robin	Clemens	IWJ
Chris	Clemens	Community Member
Bill	Conroy	City of Boston
Brian	Conway	Community Member
Gina	Crandell	Brookline Resident
Donny	Dailey	MassDOT
Catherine	Donaher	Brookline Resident
Guus	Driessen	Town of Brookline
Paula	Dube	Community Member
Rich	Ferrante	Community Member
Dan	Gastler	Community Member

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Jim	Gilooly	City of Boston
David-Marc	Goldstein	Community Member
Tim	Goodin	Office of Councilor Ciommo
Anna	Greenfield	Skanska
Patrick	Greenwell	Community Member
Karl	Haglund	DCR
Gary	Hall	Parsons
Kelsea	Hanks	Community Member
John	Harris	Community Member
Mark	Hicks	MassDOT
Elizabeth	Hill	Community Member
Sarah	Hosman	Community Member
Marc	Kadish	ABOT
James	Keller	MassDOT
Don	Kindsvatter	Urban Idea Lab
Tom	Lally	Community Member
David	Lanphear	Community Member
Murray	Lapides	Community Member
Robert J	LaTremouille	Friends of the White Geese
Elizabeth	Leary	Boston University
Young	Lew	Gaza Real Estate
Nick	Pesiridis	Boston Liquors
Ted	Pesiridis	Boston Liquors
Effie	Pesiridis	Boston Liquors
Oscar	Lopez Jr	Office of Representative Honan
Erik	Maki	Tetra Tech
Christine	Marini	Boston Police Department
Ninette	Marzooke	Community Member
Scott	Matalon	AUMS ABOT
Harry	Mattison	Task Force Member

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Andrew	McFarland	Livable Streets Alliance
Anne	McKinnon	Community Member
Kevin	McLaughlin	Office of Councilor Ciommo
Cornin	Meise-Munns	Charles River Watershed Association
Larry	Merrily	Community Member
Robert	Miller	Community Member
David	Montague	Park and Pedal
Thomas	Nally	A Better City
Hannah	Natanson	Harvard Crimson
Paul	Nelson	MASCO
Ari	Ofsevit	Livable Streets Alliance
Mike	O'Dowd	MassDOT
Carol	O'Hare	Community Member
Warren	O'Reilly	Mayor's Office
Maria	Pantos	Community Member
Joan	Pasquale	PCBG Inc
Etty	Padmodipoetro	Urban Idea Lab
Bob	Pessek	ACA
John	Pusateri	Transit Matters
Tad	Read	BDPA
Robyn	Reed	CRC
David	Rooehnitz	Community Member
Fred	Salvucci	Task Force Member
Mark	Shamon	VHB
Zachary	Shedlock	Community Member
Jeff	Shrimpton	MassDOT
Bob	Sloane	Walk Boston
Chris	Smith	Office of Senator DiDomenico
Martha	Smith	Community Member
Christine	Spont	Community Member

First Name	Last Name	Affiliation
Barry	Steinberg	Community Member
Pete	Sutton	MassDOT
Gloria	Tatarian	Community Member
Tony	Timpern	Community Member
Lisa	Tran	Health Community Champion, Allston Brighton CDC
David	Trevett	Community Member
Steven	Van Dyke	Community Member
Geri	Vatan	MassDOT
Renata	Von Tschanner	CRC
Emma	Walters	Task Force Member
Robert	Weber	Community Member
Brent	Whelan	Community Member
John	Wicks	WSP Sells
Alan	Wirzbicki	Community Member
Jack	Wofford	Community Member
Farah	Wong	Community Member
Sheila	Yancy	Community Member

## Appendix 2: Received Comments

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Start comments here